



An  
Bord  
Pleanála

## Inspector's Report ABP-301399-18

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<b>Development</b>	Front rooflight
<b>Location</b>	386 Clontarf Road, Clontarf, Dublin 3
<b>Planning Authority</b>	Dublin City Council
<b>Planning Authority Reg. Ref.</b>	WEB1026/18
<b>Applicant(s)</b>	Kevin & Audrey Menton
<b>Type of Application</b>	Permission
<b>Planning Authority Decision</b>	Refuse
<b>Type of Appeal</b>	First-Party
<b>Appellant(s)</b>	Kevin & Audrey Menton
<b>Observer(s)</b>	None
<b>Date of Site Inspection</b>	17 <sup>th</sup> July 2018
<b>Inspector</b>	Colm McLoughlin

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## 1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1. The appeal site is located on Clontarf Road (R807 regional road) fronting onto Dollymount Strand, approximately 450m to the northeast of Bull bridge and 5.8km northeast of Dublin city centre.
- 1.2. The site is rectangular in shape and contains a two-storey three-bedroom mid-terrace dwelling, with one of the bedrooms in the roofspace served by two front dormer-style windows. The house features a front bay-window projection at ground and first-floor levels, as well as part-single and part-two storey rear extensions. To the front of the house is a small garden, enclosed by railings to the side and a wall and pedestrian gate to the front. The rear garden is approximately 24m in depth and includes an outbuilding structure abutting the rear service lane.
- 1.3. The immediately surrounding area is characterised by terraced dwellings of similar styles, fronting onto Clontarf Road and the coast, including views over Bull Island and Dublin Bay. Ground levels in the vicinity are relatively level.

## 2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1. The proposed development comprises the installation of a front rooflight.

## 3.0 Planning Authority Decision

### 3.1. Decision

- 3.1.1. The Planning Authority decided to refuse permission for the following reason:

‘Reason No.1 - The proposed rooflight to the front roof plane is intended to light a room already well served by the existing pair of dormer extensions which themselves form part of a visual rhythm of such structures along the roofscape of the terrace. The proposed rooflight represents an incongruous element within the established roofscape while serving no compelling purpose.

The proposed development would be out of character and, in itself and by the precedent established for unilateral alterations to the roofscape, would cause serious injury to the visual and residential amenities of the streetscape and

would, therefore, be contrary to the policies and objectives of the current Dublin City Development Plan and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area’.

### **3.2. Planning Authority Reports**

#### **3.2.1. Planning Reports**

The report of the Planning Officer (March 2018) reflects the decision of the Planning Authority. The Planning Officer notes the following in their report:

- the proposed rooflight is redundant and superfluous given the presence of the two larger dormer extensions;
- permission was refused on site under WEB1232/17 for an amendment to the dormer layout to the front due to the impact on visual amenities;
- permitting the rooflight would result in a visually incongruous addition to the roofscape, which is not critical to the amenity of the room that it would serve. Given the rooflight is not strictly necessary the Planning Authority generally seeks to restrict unnecessary visual clutter on roofscapes and so this proposal should be refused.

#### **3.2.2. Other Technical Reports**

- Engineering Department (Drainage Division) - no objection subject to conditions.

### **3.3. Prescribed Bodies**

#### **3.3.1. None.**

### **3.4. Third-Party Submissions**

#### **3.4.1. None received.**

## 4.0 Planning History

### 4.1. Subject Site

4.1.1. Pre-planning consultation under Dublin City Council (DCC) Ref. PAC0549/17 was undertaken between the Planning Authority and representatives of the applicants in November 2017 regarding the installation of a front rooflight. The applicants were advised that any rooflight should be of conservation standard and should be set into the roof plane, while the frame should match or be similar in style to the roof tiles. The following planning applications relate to the appeal site:

- DCC Ref. WEB1232/17 – Permission refused (June 2017) for a linked extension to the existing front dormer-window extensions, as the extension would not complement neighbouring properties, would be visually incongruous and would set an undesirable precedent;
- DCC Ref. 1939/04 – Permission granted (June 2004) for two front dormer window extensions.

### 4.2. Surrounding Sites

4.2.1. There have been numerous planning applications for extensions and mews developments along the immediate terrace of properties, within which the appeal site is situated.

## 5.0 Policy Context

### 5.1. Development Plan

5.1.1. The appeal site has a zoning objective 'Z1 - Sustainable Residential Neighbourhoods' within the Dublin City Development Plan 2016-2022, with a stated objective 'to protect, provide and improve residential amenities'.

5.1.2. Under Section 16.10.12 of Volume 1 to the Development Plan, it is stated that applications for planning permission to extend dwellings will only be granted where the Planning Authority is satisfied that the proposal would:

- 'Not have an adverse impact on the scale and character of the dwelling;

- Have no unacceptable effect on the amenities enjoyed by the occupants of adjacent buildings in terms of privacy and access to daylight and sunlight’.

5.1.3. Appendix 17 (Volume 2) of the Development Plan provides guidance specifically relating to residential extensions. Section 17.11 of Appendix 17 outlines that the following principles should be observed when extending into the roof:

- ‘The design of the dormer should reflect the character of the area, the surrounding buildings and the age and appearance of the existing building.
- Dormer windows should be visually subordinate to the roof slope, enabling a large proportion of the original roof to remain visible.
- Any new window should relate to the shape, size, position and design of the existing doors and windows on the lower floors.
- Roof materials should be covered in materials that match or complement the main building.
- Dormer windows should be set back from the eaves level to minimise their visual impact and reduce the potential for overlooking of adjoining properties’.

## 6.0 The Appeal

### 6.1. Grounds of Appeal

A first-party appeal has been lodged against the Planning Authority’s notification of a decision to refuse planning permission. The following grounds of appeal are raised:

- the proposed rooflight would be to conservation grade and would be set into the roof plane, while the frame would be similar or would match the roof tiles;
- the proposed positioning of the rooflight between the two existing dormer extensions would restrict views of this new feature;
- the proposed rooflight would serve an attic room, which offers views overlooking Bull Island, Dublin Bay and beyond, and the introduction of a rooflight would further enhance opportunities to avail of these views;

- the Planning Officer's reference to unilateral alterations along the street is not balanced given the differing character of existing dormer window extensions to each of the neighbouring terrace of properties.

## 6.2. **Planning Authority Response**

6.2.1. The Planning Authority did not respond to the grounds of appeal.

## 6.3. **Observations**

6.3.1. None received.

## 7.0 **Assessment**

### 7.1. **Introduction**

7.1.1. The Dublin City Development Plan 2016-2022 sets out general planning principles for consideration when extending dwellings, such as residential amenity issues, privacy, relationship between dwellings and extensions, daylight and sunlight, appearance, the subordinate approach and materials. For the city to achieve compact, quality, accessible and affordable residential neighbourhoods, the Plan sets out, amongst other criteria, that dwellings should be adaptable and flexible to cater for changing needs over time.

7.1.2. I consider the substantive issues arising from the grounds of appeal and in the assessment of the application and appeal relate to the design and impact on the visual amenities of the area.

### 7.2. **Design & Impact on Visual Amenities**

7.2.1. The proposed development would comprise the installation of a front rooflight to serve the master bedroom to the house, which is situated at roof level and which is already served by two front dormer window extensions that were previously permitted by the Planning Authority in June 2004 (under DCC Ref. 1939/04). The Planning Authority decided to refuse to grant planning permission for the front rooflight, as they considered that it would represent an incongruous element within

the established roofscape, while serving no compelling purpose. The grounds of appeal contend that the rooflight would be installed to a conservation grade standard, would not be highly visible and would offer views over the Dublin bay area to the southeast. It is also asserted within the grounds of appeal that the Planning Officer's reference to unilateral alterations along the neighbouring terrace is not balanced given the differing character of existing dormer window extensions to these properties.

7.2.2. The surrounding area, including the appeal site, is not provided with any conservation status and the appeal site is situated within a row of 12 no. two-storey houses, the majority of which have been extended into the roofspace and feature a pair of front dormer window extensions. Of these 12 houses, only one house features a front rooflight, No.394, while all but two, Nos. 393 & 394, feature front dormer window projections. The preponderance of pairs of dormer window extensions to the houses has not served to significantly impact on the overall appearance, character and rhythm of housing along the streetscape. Views of the proposed rooflight would be restricted from the front street area due to the positioning and size of the existing dormer window extensions, and the applicants have advised that the proposed rooflight would be installed to conservation grade and would be set into the roof plane, while the frame would be similar or would match the existing roof tiles. Given the extent of extensions at roof level on the appeal site and also to the immediately adjoining properties, including pairs of front dormer window extensions, I am satisfied that the proposed front rooflight would not be out of character with existing developments in the immediately surrounding area and the rooflight would not be highly visible from the public realm.

7.2.3. Appendix 17.11 of the Dublin City Development Plan 2016-2022 provides guidance primarily relating to dormer window extensions, however, when proposing to extend at roof level, it does not provide specific guidance in relation to rooflights. Appendix 17.11 states that 'any new window [to the roof] should relate to the shape, size, position and design of the existing doors and windows on the lower floors'. The windows at first-floor level in the subject house are timber-sash windows and it would not be appropriate or reasonable for the proposed rooflight to relate to these. The front rooflight would not impact on neighbouring residential amenities and the size of the rooflight, measuring c.0.7m by 0.95m, would not be overly dominant on the



roofslope. Accordingly, I am satisfied that the front rooflight would not be contrary to the provisions of the Development Plan.

- 7.2.4. In conclusion, I am satisfied that proposed front rooflight would have negligible impact on the visual amenities of the area and would not form an incongruous addition to the streetscape or the house on site. Furthermore, the installation of a front rooflight would not be contrary to the provisions of the Development Plan. Accordingly, the proposed development would not give rise to an unacceptable impact on the visual amenities of the area and the proposed development should not be refused for this reason.

## **8.0 Appropriate Assessment**

- 8.1. Having regard to the minor nature of the proposed development and to the location of the site in a serviced urban area and the separation distance to the nearest European site, no Appropriate Assessment issues arise, and it is not considered that the development would be likely to have a significant effect individually or in combination with other plans or projects on a European site.

## **9.0 Recommendation**

- 9.1. I recommend that planning permission should be granted for the reasons and considerations, subject to the condition, as set out below.

## **10.0 Reasons and Considerations**

- 10.1. Having regard to the zoning provisions for the site, to the nature and scale of the proposed development, and to the existing pattern of development in the vicinity, it is considered that, subject to compliance with the condition set out below, the proposed development would not be out of character with development in the area, would be in keeping with the existing house on site, would not seriously injure the visual amenities of the area or of property in the vicinity and would not be contrary to the provisions of the Dublin City Development Plan 2016-2022. The proposed development would, therefore, be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

## 11.0 Condition

1. The development shall be carried out and completed in accordance with the plans and particulars lodged with the application.

**Reason:** In the interest of clarity.

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Colm McLoughlin  
Planning Inspector

24<sup>th</sup> July 2018