



An
Bord
Pleanála

Inspector's Report ABP 301478-18

Development	Single storey rear and side extension, pitched roof dormer to side of hipped roof and new flat roof dormer to rear of existing attic space.
Location	22 Meadow Park, Churchtown, Dublin 14.
Planning Authority	Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council.
Planning Authority Reg. Ref.	D18B/0050.
Applicants	Peter and Sophie Lindsay.
Type of Application	Permission.
Planning Authority Decision	Split decision.
Type of Appeal	First Party v. refusal
Appellants	Peter and Sophie Lindsay.
Observers	None.
Date of Site Inspection	27 th June 2018.
Inspector	Dáire McDevitt.

1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1.** The application site is located along the southern side of Meadow Park, accessed via Barton Road East to the south and Beaumont Avenue to the east in Churchtown, a south Dublin suburb. Meadow Park is part of an established mature residential area situated to the east of Nutgrove Shopping Centre. Meadow Park has a mixture of semi-detached house types, ranging from single storey, single storey with dormer extensions to two storey houses. No. 22 Meadow Park forms part of a prominent row of single storey houses with hipped roofs fronting onto Meadow Park. Opposite the site is a row of two storey hipped roof houses. There is a row of two storey houses with pitched gable roofs c. 190m to the west and a dormer houses with pitched gables c. 57m east of No. 22.
- 1.2.** No. 22 Meadow Park is a semi-detached single storey bungalow set on a site with a stated area of c. 0.038 hectares. The houses along Meadow Park are set out in pairs, No. 22 is paired with No. 24 to the west. There are a number of properties in the general area with dormer windows to the rear roof slopes, including No. 20 and 24 Meadow Park which bound the application site.

2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1.** Permission for a single storey extension to the rear and side. The construction of a pitched roof dormer to the side of hipped roof and new flat roof dormer extension to the rear of existing attic space.

Site: 0.0385 hectares.

Existing three bed room house with a gfa of c.123.1sq.m

Proposed: c.35.7sq.m extension and demolition of c. 9.52sq.m.

Resulting in a four bedroom house with a gfa of c.158.8sq.m.

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

3.1. Decision

Split decision

Grant permission for ground floor side and rear extension, demolition of existing chimney to side of bungalow and partial demolition of existing single storey extension to rear and all other ancillary works.

Refuse permission for extension to side gable wall to increase existing attic space including new flat roof dormer extension to rear of existing roof space sitting on existing rear wall of bungalow for the following reason:

1. *The proposed development of a side dormer and large scale dormer to the rear by reason of their combined scale, bulk and massing, would appear overbearing and dominant when compared to the original dwelling and would be contrary to section 8.2.3.4 (i) which seeks to protect adjoining residential amenity and seeks to resist dominant dormers. The proposed development would, therefore, seriously injure the amenities and depreciate the value of property in the vicinity and be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development in the area.*

3.2. Planning Authority Reports

3.2.1. Planning Reports.

This forms the basis of the Planning Authority's split decision and the main points raised in relation to the proposed dormer elements referred to design and visual amenity.

The Area Planner concluded that while the bulk and dominance of the proposed development had been reduced from that previously refused on site under D17B/0350. It was still evident from the side and rear elevations that the works to the roof, including the rear dormer at the same height would result in a

dominant extension which would be visually obtrusive and contrary to section 8.2.3.4 (i) of the Development Plan.

3.2.2. Other Technical Reports

Drainage Section. No objection subject to conditions.

3.3. Prescribed Bodies

None.

3.4. Third Party Observations

None.

4.0 Planning History

Appeal site (No. 22 Meadow Park):

Planning Authority Reference D17B/0360 refers to a 2017 **split decision**. Permission was **granted** for a single storey extension and **refused** for an extension to the side gable wall to facilitate an increase in attic space and the provision of dormer windows to the side and rear. The reason for refusal is similar to the current reason on appeal before the Board.

Applications along Meadow Park:

No. 16 Meadow Park:

Planning Authority Reference D15B/0110. Permission was granted in 2015 for conversion of attic space with dormer windows to the side and rear.

No. 82 Meadow Park:

Planning Authority Reference D17B/0553. Permission granted in February 2018 for a two storey extension with a dormer window to the rear.

The applicants have referred to applications in the wider area in the grounds of appeal.

5.0 Policy Context

5.1. Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan 2016-2022.

Land Use Zoning Objective 'A' *To protect or improve residential amenity.*

Section 8.2.3.4 (i) refers to Extensions to Dwellings. It sets out that dormer extensions to roofs will be considered with regard to impacts on existing character and form, and the privacy of adjacent properties. The design, dimensions and bulk of any roof proposal relative to the overall size of the dwelling and gardens will be the overriding considerations. Dormer extensions shall be set back from the eaves, gables and/or party boundaries. Particular care will be taken in evaluating large, visually dominant dormer window structures, with a balance sought between quality residential amenity and the privacy of adjacent properties.

Section 8.2.8.4 (ii) refers to standards for minimum separation distances between first floor opposing windows and garden depths.

Section 8.2.8.4 (i) sets out the private open space requirements for private houses. A figure of 75 sq.m is required for a 4 bed + house.

5.2. Natural Heritage Designations

None.

6.0 The Appeal

6.1. Grounds of Appeal

The first party appeal seeks to address the Planning Authority's decision to refuse permission for the side dormer and rear dormer extension as part of a split decision. The grounds of appeal address the Area Planners assessment and compliance with Section 8.2.3.4 (i). This is summarised below:

1. Dormer extension to roof will be considered with regard to impacts on existing character and form, and the privacy of adjacent properties.

The design, dimensions and bulk of any roof proposal relative to overall size of the dwelling and gardens will be the overriding considerations.

- Photographs and Planning Application details have been submitted for precedents for side and rear dormer in the immediate vicinity.
- The size of the proposed extension in relation to the existing form and character of the area, the existing dwelling and garden area and the protection of the privacy of neighbours have all been duly considered and addressed with the subject proposal.
- The proposal is subordinate in scale and design to the main dwelling.

2. *Dormer extensions shall be set back from the eaves, gables and/or party boundaries. The proposed quality of materials/finishes for dormers will be considered carefully as this can greatly improve their appearance. The level and type of glazing within a dormer structure should have regard to existing window treatments and fenestration of the dwelling.*

- The Planning Authority has misunderstood the nature of the proposed development and appear to refer to the scheme lodged under D17B/0360 which was refused permission.
- The proposal is referred to as 'The extension of side gable to increase existing attic space including new flat roof dormer extension to rear of existing roof space sitting on existing rear wall of bungalow'. The application drawings clearly demonstrate the side and rear dormer extensions are set back from the side gable and rear wall of the existing bungalow. These setbacks address the reasons for refusal under D17B/0360
- The materials and fenestrations of the new dormer will consist of high quality finishes including zinc cladding to the rear dormer and render finish to the side dormer to match existing.

3. Particular care will be taken in evaluating large, visually dominant dormer window structures, with a balance sought between quality residential amenity and the privacy of adjacent properties.

- Precedent in the vicinity for similar developments in terms of design and scale.
- The width of the dormer extension is required to accommodate a bedroom, en-suite and staircase. The width is in keeping with other dormers in the area.
- The applicants are satisfied that overlooking is not an issue. Obscured glass is proposed to the en-suite (side dormer). Overlooking from the proposed bedroom would not result in instances of overlooking that do not already exist with rear dormers in adjoining properties.
- An appropriate balance between residential amenity and the privacy of adjacent properties has been achieved with the subject proposal.

4. Excessive overlooking of adjacent properties should be avoided unless support by the neighbours affected can be demonstrated.

- The appeal includes a letter of support from Edward Reynolds, No.22 Meadow Park, Churchtown, Dublin 14. Noting that he has no objection to the proposed development.
- Standard suburban locations such as Churchtown have many instances of rear dormer structures with windows looking directly out onto the rear garden. This is generally accepted as a usual type of overlooking from adjoining properties in suburban environments and the applicant, in this instance, does not believe the rear dormer window would result in excessive overlooking of adjoining properties.

5. More innovative design responses will be encouraged, particularly within sites where there may be difficulty adhering to the above guidance and where objectives of habitability and energy conservation are at stake.

- The design and layout of the proposed development is reflective of the proposed use and compliance with minimum design standards and residential amenity requirements.
- The applicants have given due consideration to the previous reasons for refusal and have reduced the scale of the proposed extension to the side and rear so as it is set back from both the side gable and the rear wall of the existing bungalow.
- The form of the proposed dormer extension is consistent with other dormer structures permitted in the surrounding area, further emphasising the appropriateness of the subject proposal.

Other

- The proposed development, including the dormer elements complies with Section 8.2.3.4 (i) of the County Development Plan and should, therefore be granted permission.
- The proposal results in over 75sq.m of private amenity space being retained which complies with the Development Plan standards for a 4 bed house.
- In the event that the Board do not consider the original proposal acceptable an alternative proposal has been submitted to extend the pitch of the roof, providing a side gable, omission of the side dormer and reducing the rear dormer in scale. The applicants have referred to No. 4 Meadow Park as a precedent for a similar roof arrangement.

6.2. Planning Authority Response

The Planning Authority welcomes the revised design that reduces the visual impact from the original proposal presented under D18B/0050. However, the Planning Authority notes that the applicants have not submitted a full set of plans (side elevations, cross section and contextual elevation have not been submitted), as a result the application cannot be fully assessed. It is, therefore,

considered that the Planning Authority's reason for refusal should be maintained by An Bord Pleanala.

6.3. Observations

None

7.0 Assessment

- 7.0.1 The First party appeal seeks to address the Planning Authority decision to refuse permission for the side dormer and rear dormer extension.
- 7.0.2 The applicants have drawn attention to the description of the development refused permission in the Notification of Decision as '*extension of side gable wall to increase existing attic space including new flat roof dormer to rear of existing roof space sitting on existing rear wall of bungalow*'.
- 7.0.3 I note that the development description in the Planning Authority's Notification of Decision was accurate. '*construction of a pitched roof dormer to side of hipped roof and new flat roof dormer extension to the rear of existing attic space. Note: Both dormers are set back from the rear wall and side walls of the bungalow and reduced in size from previous application Ref. D17B/0360*'.
- 7.0.4 The discrepancy arose in the wording of the development refused permission. I am satisfied that the applicants were not disenfranchised by this discrepancy. I note that the wording of the Planning Authority's description of the development refused permission, while inaccurate, was sufficient to inform the applicants that the dormer elements/extensions were not included in the development granted permission, resulting in the subsequent lodgement of the current appeal.
- 7.0.5 As part of the appeal the applicants have included an alternative proposal, which include changes the roof design and profile, for the Boards consideration in the event that the original proposal is not considered acceptable. The revised drawings do not include side elevations or a cross sections. I note that the scope of these changes would not require re-advertisement. This report, therefore, includes reference to the alternative proposal in the assessment.

7.0.6 The main issues in this appeal are those raised in the grounds of appeal. The issue of appropriate assessment screening also needs to be addressed. The issues can be dealt with under the following headings:

- Design.
- Appropriate Assessment.

7.1 Design

7.1.1 Permission was refused under Planning Authority Reference No. D17B/0360 (split decision) for a hip to gable extension and large dormer to the rear by reason of its scale, bulk and massing which would appear overbearing and dominant. The current application was an attempt by the applicants to address the reasons for refusal by reducing the scale of the dormer extension and setting the dormers back from the gable and rear wall of the existing bungalow.

7.1.2 Section 8.2.3.4 (i) of the County Development Plan refers to the criteria set out for domestic extensions. The Planning Authority raised concerns that the provision of a pitched roof dormer to the side of hipped roof and a flat roofed dormer extension to the rear of No. 22 Meadow Park by virtue of their combined scale, bulk and mass would appear overbearing and dominant.

7.1.3. Meadow Park is a mature suburban area in Churchtown built in the late 1950s. No. 22 forms part of a row of single storey bungalows with hipped roofs. The immediate vicinity is characterised by a mixture of single storey semi-detached houses and 2 storey semi-detached houses with hipped roof profiles. A number of the houses have been altered and extended over the years but have retained the hipped roof profiles. The applicants in the grounds of appeal have referred to houses in the area with pitched gable roofs. I note that there is a row of two storey houses with pitched roof gable c. 190m to the west of No. 22 and there are houses with front dormers and pitched roofs c. 57m to the east of the site.

- 7.1.4 The alterations proposed to No. 22 would provide attic accommodation containing 1 bedroom, en-suite, walk in wardrobe and staircase with a revised roof profile consisting of a pitched roof dormer to the side and a flat roof dormer extension to the rear. And while no changes are proposed to the ridge height of the main house, in my view, the proposed changes to the roof profile and dormer elements would jar with the existing pattern of development and result in a discordant feature on the streetscape and set an undesirable precedent for further similar developments.
- 7.1.5 The current proposal results in a changes to the hipped roof, which would obscure the features of the hipped roof and would be overly dominant in appearance. The modifications to the roof profile and the proposed dormer elements would detract from the character and form of the main house which is contrary to section 8.2.3.4 (i) of the County Development Plan.
- 7.1.6 The applicants included alternative proposals with the appeal, consisting of the extension to the roof to provide a gabled pitched roof to the side, omission of the side dormer and a reduction in scale of the rear dormer. The plans submitted with the appeal are incomplete, no side elevations, cross sections or detailed dimensions have been submitted. I note that the Planning Authority welcomed the revised proposals, however in the absence of detailed plans and particulars could not fully assess the modifications proposed with the appeal documentation.
- 7.1.7 Notwithstanding the absence of a full set of drawings, in my view, there is sufficient information in the details submitted to assess the impact of the proposed alterations vis a vis the streetscape along Meadow Park. I consider the introduction of a pitched gable roof along this section of Meadow Park would be to introduce a discordant element into the streetscape. It would detract from the appearance and rhythm of hipped roof houses, it would be out of character with the area and would have a negative impact on the visual amenities of the area.
- 7.1.8 The applicant has referred to houses in the area as precedents for different roof profiles in the area. In my opinion the issue of precedent does not arise as the context differs from the current site in relation to the design and scale of the

works proposed. The area is characterised by well-established semi-detached suburban housing in the immediate vicinity. No. 22 forms part of a prominent row of single storey houses. The houses present a uniform look and in the main have not been altered substantially to the front. A number of houses have small scale rear dormer windows with No. 16 being an exception with a side dormer.

7.1.9 I consider that the provision of a side dormer with a pitched roof and flat roofed rear dormer extension, and alternative proposals submitted with the appeal, by virtue of their design, bulk and scale would be overly dominant and visually incongruous and would be at variance with the predominant pattern of development in the area. The proposed development would, therefore, detract from the existing pattern of development in the area and be contrary to section 8.2.3.4 (i) of the Dun Laoghaire- Rathdown County Development Plan 2016-2022 and would set an undesirable precedent for further such developments in the area. The proposed development would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

7.2 Appropriate Assessment

7.2.1 Having regard to the nature of the proposed development and the location of the site in a fully serviced built up suburban area, no Appropriate Assessment issues arise and it is not considered that the proposed development would be likely to have a significant effect individually or in combination with other plans or projects on a European site.

8.0 Recommendation

I recommend that planning permission should be refused for the reasons and considerations as set out below.

9.0 Reasons and Considerations

It is considered that the proposed dormer extensions and modifications to the roof profile by virtue of their design, bulk and scale would be overly dominant and visually incongruous and would be at variance with the predominant pattern of development in the area. The proposed development would,

therefore, detract from the existing pattern of development in the area and be contrary to section 8.2.3.4 (i) of the Dun Laoghaire- Rathdown County Development Plan 2016-2022 and would set an undesirable precedent for further such developments in the area. The proposed development would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Dáire McDevitt
Planning Inspector

16th June 2018