



An
Bord
Pleanála

Inspector's Report ABP-301986-18

Development	Rear dormer window and roof extensions
Location	52 Grange Park View, Kilbarrack, Dublin 5
Planning Authority	Dublin City Council
Planning Authority Reg. Ref.	2851/18
Applicant(s)	Emma & Neil Memery
Type of Application	Permission
Planning Authority Decision	Refuse
Type of Appeal	First-Party
Appellant(s)	Emma & Neil Memery
Observer(s)	None
Date of Site Inspection	6 th November 2018
Inspector	Colm McLoughlin

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1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1. The appeal site is located on Grange Park View, which is accessed off the Raheny Road (R809) or Kilbarrack Road (R104) and is approximately 250m to the west of Kilbarrack DART station and 7.6km northeast of Dublin city centre.
- 1.2. It contains a two-storey semi-detached dwelling containing three bedrooms at first floor, with a single-storey rear extension and a single-storey front porch and bay-window extension. The external finishes to the subject dwelling include rendered walls and roof finished with concrete profile tiles. To the front of the house there is a small garden and a hardstanding area for off-street parking. A single-storey outbuilding is located in the rear garden.
- 1.3. The surrounding area is generally characterised by pairs of semi-detached dwellings, many of which have been extended, fronting onto residential streets, interspersed with schools, local services and green spaces, including St. Benedict's Park. Ground levels in the vicinity are relatively level with only a slight drop moving east.

2.0 Proposed Development

The proposed development comprises:

- a rear roof extension, including a rear dormer window extension to provide an additional bedroom and storage space.

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

3.1. Decision

- 3.1.1. The Planning Authority decided to refuse permission for one reason only:
 - Reason No.1: 'The proposed development by reason of the increase in the ridge height of the existing roof and the massing of the rear dormer roof extension would be out of character with the existing houses along the street and would set an undesirable precedent for similar developments. It is considered that the proposed development would seriously injure the visual amenities of the area. The proposed development is, therefore, contrary to the

proper planning and sustainable development of the area and to the provisions of the Dublin City Development Plan 2016-2022, in particular Section 16.2.2.3, Appendix 17, and the Zoning Objective for Z1, To protect, provide and improve residential amenities.'

3.2. Planning Authority Reports

3.2.1. Planning Reports

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

- the proposed dormer extension would not comply with the provisions contained within Section 16.3.2.2 of the Development Plan, as it would not be subordinate to the existing building, as it would not be visually subordinate to the roof slope and as it would not enable a large proportion of the original roof to remain visible;
- the extension would not respect the existing roofline, in raising the ridge by half a metre;
- proposed second-floor windows would create additional overlooking to the rear gardens on both Grange Park Rise, and Grange Park View;
- a number of houses in the vicinity have similar style roof extensions projecting above the original roof ridge level, but these were not subject of recent permissions;
- a condition to reduce the ridge height and address design concerns would not be appropriate, as the necessity to reduce the dormer ridge height below the roof ridge would not provide for the additional habitable room space sought by the applicants due to the restricted floor to ceiling heights.

3.2.2. Other Technical Reports

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

3.3. Prescribed Bodies

- Irish Rail – no response.

3.4. Third-Party Submissions

3.4.1. None received.

4.0 Planning History

4.1. Subject Site

4.1.1. The following applications relate to the appeal site:

- DCC Ref. 0272/93 – Retention permission granted (May 1993) for a front porch extension;
- DCC Ref. 2054/00 – Permission granted (September 2000) for demolition of a porch and boundary walls, and the erection of a porch and bay window extension to the front and a single-storey extension to the rear.

4.2. Surrounding Sites

4.2.1. There have been numerous planning applications on neighbouring dwellings for roof extensions, including the following:

- DCC Ref. WEB1276/15 – Permission refused (October 2015) for a rear dormer extension to No.60 Grange Park Crescent, c.250m to the south of the appeal site, as the dormer would be elevated above the roof ridge line and this would undermine the character of the house and the neighbouring semi-detached housing arrangement;
- DCC Ref. 2096/07 - Permission granted (May 2007) for an attic conversion with a rear dormer window extension projecting over roof ridge height to No.73 Grange Park Crescent, c.130m to the southeast of the appeal site;
- DCC Ref. 6209/06 – Permission granted (March 2007) for an attic conversion including raised roof ridge and rear dormer window extension to No.4 Grange Park Green, c.125m to the southwest;

- DCC Ref. 2472/06 - Permission granted (July 2006) for various extensions, including an attic conversion with a rear dormer window extension projecting over roof ridge height to No.41 Grange Park Rise, c.40m to the east of the appeal site;
- DCC Ref. 5417/04 - Permission granted (February 2005) for an attic conversion with a rear dormer window extension projecting over roof ridge height to No.70 Grange Park View, c.60m to the east of the appeal site;
- DCC Ref. 3505/04 – Permission granted (September 2004) for an attic conversion including raised roof ridge and rear dormer window extension to No.21 Grange Park Rise, c.30m to the southwest;
- DCC Ref. 3634/03 – Permission granted (October 2003) for an attic conversion including a rear dormer window extension to No.47 Grange Park Rise, c.60m to the east of the appeal site;
- DCC Ref. 1869/02 – Permission granted (September 2002) for an attic conversion to 31 Grange Park Rise, backing onto the appeal site;
- ABP Ref. PL29N.127086 (DCC Ref. 2287/01) – Permission refused by the Board (February 2002) for an attic conversion including a raised roof ridge height to No.31 Grange Park Rise, backing onto the appeal site.

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 this appendix outlines that the following principles should be observed when extending in 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

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

- an attic conversion provides the most viable means of providing additional living space to meet the applicants’ growing family needs;
- a slight increase in roof ridge height (c.0.5m) would not have a major visual impact and would not impact on the rear garden space or neighbouring properties;
- reducing the design, size and height of the proposed extension to that illustrated in Section 17.11 of the Development Plan (Volume 2) would render the space useless for habitable purposes;

- historical building techniques, including low angle to the roof pitch, make it difficult to extend this type of dwelling at roof level;
- there is extensive precedent in the vicinity for similar development, a number of which have planning permission. There has been an inconsistency in terms of the planning approach to dormer extensions in the area, which has led to the proliferation of unauthorised extensions;
- photographs of similar developments in the area are included in support of the grounds of appeal.

6.2. **Planning Authority Response**

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

6.3. **Observations**

6.3.1. None received.

7.0 **Assessment**

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. 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 of the proposed development on the visual amenities of the area.

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

7.2.1. The proposed development would comprise the conversion and extension of the house at roof level to provide habitable space in the form of a bedroom, walk-in wardrobe and storage area. The roof level extensions would comprise a dormer window extending across almost the entire width of the roof plane and rising approximately 0.5m above the existing roof ridge level. The Planning Authority decided to refuse to grant planning permission for the roof extensions, as the roof

extension would project above the original roof ridge height and the scale of the dormer extension would be out of character with existing houses. The grounds of appeal contend that the proposed additional roof ridge height would not have a significant visual impact on the area, particularly in the context of other similar developments in the area that were permitted by the Planning Authority.

- 7.2.2. While the vast majority of houses feature extensions of some sort, this has not served to significantly impact on the overall appearance, character and rhythm of housing along Grange Park View. The surrounding area, including the appeal site, is not provided with any conservation status and the appeal site is centrally situated amongst a line of 34 semi-detached houses on Grange Park View, four of which have been extended via rear dormers in the roofspace, including the adjoining house, No.50. Of the 32 semi-detached dwellings along Grange Park Rise, backing onto Grange Park View and the appeal site, five feature similar-style rear roof extensions to that proposed. Views of the proposed roof extensions would be restricted to the immediate area, including the front street area along Grange Park View, St. Benedict's Park to the north and from the neighbouring properties, particularly those properties to the rear on Grange Park Rise.
- 7.2.3. I note that the appellants include photographs of properties in the vicinity that have been extended into the roofspace, which they consider provide precedent for the proposed development. Of the nine properties identified, I note that permission was granted between September 2002 and July 2006 for six of the roof extensions, while I am not aware of the dates for the remainder of the roof extensions. The Planning Authority note that in October 2015, they refused permission (under DCC Ref. WEB1276/15) for a similar style roof extension to No.60 Grange Park Crescent, approximately 250m to the south of the appeal site, as the dormer would be elevated above the original roof ridge line and this would undermine the character of the dwelling and the neighbouring semi-detached housing arrangement.
- 7.2.4. While the additional roof ridge height would only be visible from the immediate area, it would introduce a roof ridge height that would not reflect that of the immediately neighbouring dwellings along Grange Park View. I note that the rear dormer extension to the adjacent property, No.50, does not extend above the original roof ridge line and there are other examples in the immediate area, where the roof ridge line is not exceeded. There are other examples of roof extensions in the wider area,

particularly along Grange Park Rise to the south, where the roof ridge is raised different heights over the original roof ridge height. The proposed roof extension extending above the original roof ridge height would be incongruous and would fail to respect the predominant character of housing along Grange Park View. Accordingly the proposed development would have a detrimental impact on the visual amenities of the area, particularly where visible from the immediate streetscape along Grange Park View and the proposed development should be refused permission for this reason.

7.2.5. Section 16.10.12 of the Development Plan sets out requirements for residential extensions including a requirement for such extensions not to have an adverse impact on the scale and character of the host dwelling. Section 17.11 of Volume 2 to the Development Plan requires 'dormer windows to be visually subordinate to the roof slope, enabling a large proportion of the original roof to remain visible', as well as being set back from the eaves level to minimise their visual impact'. I am not satisfied that the proposed rear dormer window extension, which would be set back c.0.5m from the roof eaves level and set off both sides by c.0.2m, allows for a sufficient proportion of the original roof plane to remain visible and would therefore not be in compliance with the aforementioned provisions of the Development Plan. Furthermore Section 17.11 of Volume 2 also 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'. While the shape and size of the windows would reflect the existing first-floor rear windows to the house, the proposed position and design of the dormer windows would not be consistent with the existing first-floor rear windows to the house. Accordingly, I am satisfied that the proposed dormer window extension would relate poorly to the house on site and would be contrary to the provisions of the Development Plan.

7.2.6. Scope to amend the scale, size, height and design of the proposed roof extension via condition could normally be pursued, but I note that the applicants have specifically sought to create habitable space with adequate floor to ceiling heights, as opposed to ancillary space at roof level. The applicants also note in their grounds of appeal that any reduction in the scale of the roof extensions would render the development useless from their perspective. Accordingly, I do not consider it

reasonable or appropriate to attach a condition to address the concerns raised above.

- 7.2.7. In conclusion, I am satisfied that the proposed roof extension, extending above the roof ridge height, would form an incongruous addition to the house, visible from the immediate streetscape. Furthermore, the design and scale of the proposed rear dormer window extension would be contrary to the provisions of the Development Plan, would excessively dominate the rear roof plane and would not relate well to the existing house on site. Accordingly, the proposed development would give rise to an unacceptable impact on the visual amenities of the area and the proposed development should 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 Environmental Impact Assessment - Preliminary Examination

- 9.1. Having regard to the existing development on site, the nature and scale of the proposed development and the location of the site, there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development. The need for environmental impact assessment can, therefore, be excluded at preliminary examination and a screening determination is not required.

10.0 Recommendation

- 10.1. I recommend that planning permission for the proposed development should be refused for the reasons and considerations, as set out below.

11.0 Reasons and Considerations

- 1 Having regard to the nature, scale, design and height of the proposed dormer window extension, raising the original roof ridge height to the dwelling, dominating the rear roof plane, and its poor relationship with the existing dwelling, it is considered that the proposed development would fail to respect the character of the house on site and housing in the immediate area and would have an incongruous appearance when viewed from the immediate streetscape. Accordingly, it is considered that the proposed development would seriously injure the visual amenities of the area, would be contrary to the provisions of Section 16.10.12 to the Dublin City Development Plan 2016-2022, which require residential extensions to not result in an adverse impact on the scale and character of the host dwelling, and would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Colm McLoughlin
Planning Inspector

7th November 2018