



An
Bord
Pleanála

Inspector's Report ABP-302101-18

Development	Remove existing hipped roof to rear and construct 2nd floor extension with mansard roof incorporating 2 bedrooms and bathroom
Location	2 St. Columbas Road Lower, Drumcondra, Dublin 9
Planning Authority	Dublin City Council
Planning Authority Reg. Ref.	2919/18
Applicant(s)	Christian Moore and Miriam Herrero
Type of Application	Permission
Planning Authority Decision	Refuse Permission
Type of Appeal	First Party
Appellant(s)	Christian Moore and Miriam Herrero
Observer(s)	None
Date of Site Inspection	24 th October 2018
Inspector	Una O'Neill

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1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1. The subject site is located in the inner suburban area of Drumcondra, north of Dublin City Centre, in a well-established residential area. The site is located on the western side of St. Columba's Road Lower, north of the junction with Whitworth Road.
- 1.2. The subject site comprises a two storey end of terrace red brick dwelling with an existing two storey hipped roof extension. A laneway is located along the flank and to the rear of the dwelling, with a locked gate in place. This laneway serves the rear of dwellings on St. Columba's Road Lower and also access to the NCBI offices on the other side of the laneway west of the dwelling and fronting Whitworth Road. The NCBI head office was formerly Drumcondra Hospital, a protected structure. At the northern end of the laneway is the entrance to a burial ground.

2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1. The proposed development comprises the following:
 - Removal of existing hipped roof to rear two storey extension.
 - Construction of an additional floor of accommodation to be finished with a flat mansard roof finish, incorporating two additional bedrooms and a bathroom. A velux window is proposed in the link from the rear roof of the existing house to the stairwell access to the proposed mansard roof level.
 - The existing rear extension will increase in height from 7.3m to 8.25m. The ridge height of the mansard roof is indicated to be 90mm higher than the ridge level of the existing house.
 - The floor area of the new build is stated to be 27.75sqm.

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

3.1. Decision

Permission REFUSED for the following reason:

The proposed roof extension would impact negatively on the visual amenity of neighbouring residential properties, and the visual amenity of the public street.

A roof extension of this nature and scale is contrary to Development Plan policy on extensions, in particular Section 16.10.12 and Appendix 17, and would set an undesirable precedent for similar developments. The development would seriously injure the residential amenities of property in the vicinity and would, therefore, be contrary to the requirements of the Dublin City Development Plan 2016-2022 and to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

3.2. Planning Authority Reports

3.2.1. Planning Reports

The Planning Officer's report generally reflects the decision of the Planning Authority. The following is of note:

- There are views of the south gable of the house, and the existing rear extension, from the public road, from Saint Columba's Road Lower to the south and the junction with Whitworth Road. In addition, due to the open aspect of the site to the rear, with the old Drumcondra Hospital graveyard to the northwest, the rear of the house is visible from a large number of properties on surrounding streets including Claude Road and Saint Brendan's Road, as well as 42-45 Whitworth Road and from the NCBI headquarters. As such, a high quality of design and finish is required.
- With regard to 4 St. Columba's Road Lower, to the north of the site, this neighbouring development does not form a persuasive planning precedent. The roof extension as constructed differs slightly from that permitted. The development permitted included a dormer window set below the ridgeline of the house and set back from the eaves by several tile courses, while that constructed is closer to a de-facto second storey.
- The proposed roof extension would be overly dominant and create an incongruous roofline, which is not in keeping with the existing house or the terrace as a whole. The proposal for an extension which is higher than the existing building, which does not harmonise with the scale of the existing house or adjoining buildings, and consists of an overly large mansard style roof extension does not comply with the guidelines set out in Appendix 17 or

16.10.12. It is considered that the proposed development would create an incongruous roof profile.

3.2.2. Other Technical Reports

Drainage Division: No objection subject to conditions.

3.3. Prescribed Bodies

None.

3.4. Third Party Observations

None.

4.0 Planning History

0197/03 - RETENTION GRANTED of two-storey domestic extension to rear of existing two-storey dwelling house.

4, St Columbas Road Lower, Drumcondra, Dublin 9 (to immediate north):

1316/08 – Permission GRANTED to amend previously approved planning permission reference no. 3312/07, to construct a new pitched roof on the existing 2 storey extension, construct new attic dormer window, and utilise the new attic space as habitable space.

3312/07 – Split decision. The mansard second floor roof level was REFUSED and the two storey extension was GRANTED.

5.0 Policy Context

5.1. Dublin City Development Plan 2016-2022

- Zoning objective Z1, the objective for which is ‘to protect, provide and improve residential amenities.’
- Section 16.2.2.3: Alterations and Extensions
- Section 16.10.12: Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings

- Appendix 17: Guidelines for Residential Extensions.

5.2. Natural Heritage Designations

The site is not located within or adjacent to a Natura 2000 site.

6.0 The Appeal

6.1. Grounds of Appeal

The applicant has appealed the decision of the planning authority and the grounds of appeal is summarised as follows:

- The house was purchased in 2015 and converted from flats into a family home, however the layout is insufficient for a family of 5, including a toddler and twins on the way. It is proposed to extend at attic level, similar to the neighbours at no. 4. There are numerous other examples of attic level extensions in the area. An attic level extension is preferable to a side extension given budget and speed of construction.
- The proposed development involves raising the height of the roof of the rear extension, which does not impact on the roof of the main house. The proposed design is sympathetic to the existing roof structure and does not overlook or overshadow the neighbouring property.
- The height of the existing ridge will be raised by 450mm and will not impact on the neighbouring property, who are happy with the proposal.
- The gable wall is visible from St. Columba's Road Lower with the side wall of the rear building being set back from the southern boundary of the site. The proposed development would be visible from the footpath on the west side of the road. The proposed mansard design is complementary to the existing roof when viewed from the public road with the main changes being to the angle and height of the ridgeline. The proposal is not visible from the majority of houses on Claude Road and St. Brendan's Road and is a significant distance from these houses.

- The proposed development is not dominant or overbearing when viewed from adjoining properties.
- The adjoining dwelling to the north, no. 4, and 32 Whitworth Road have large attic extensions which are visible from this house. These dwellings do not affect the applicant's visual amenity and the same applies to the proposed extension.
- This property and no. 4 are shallower in plan than the other dwellings on this street and the ridges are lower, therefore they cannot be extended at roof level in the same way as neighbouring dwellings. There is a miniscule height difference to the ridgeline of the dwelling of 90mm and it is set back 2.1m from the ridge of the front building, therefore it would not be visible from the street.
- The mansard style was designed to enhance the visual appeal and is more in keeping that a structure with vertical walls in a box shape.
- A number of precedent examples are referenced with photographs in the appeal submission, including 4 St Columba's Road Lower, 32 Whitworth Road, 23 St Brigid's Road Lower, 27 St Patrick's Road (granted by ABP), 35 Griffith Avenue (granted by ABP), 2 Home Farm Park.
- An outright refusal is considered inappropriate and an amendment in relation to roof pitch or finishes, as per 32 Griffith Avenue, would have been a more reasonable approach by Dublin City Council.

6.2. **Planning Authority Response**

None.

6.3. **Observations**

None.

7.0 **Assessment**

- 7.1. I consider that the relevant issues in determining the current appeal before the Board are as follows:

- Design and Visual Amenity of the Area

Zoning

- 7.2. The subject site is located within zoning objective Z1, the objective for which is 'to protect, provide and improve residential amenities'. The provision of residential development is considered acceptable in principle within the zoning objective for the area.

Design and Visual Amenity of the Area

- 7.3. The applicant contends that the proposed mansard roof level is sympathetic to the existing dwelling, is only 90mm higher than the existing ridge level and set back from the road such that it would not be overly visible and would not be visually dominant or incongruous.
- 7.4. Section 16.2.2.3 of the development plan states in relation to extensions at roof level that proposals should respect the scale, elevational proportions and architectural form of the building; respect the uniformity of terraces or groups of buildings with a consistent roofline; and not adversely affect the character of terraces with an attractive varied roofline. Furthermore extensions, as stated under Appendix 17, should not dominate the existing building and should normally be of an overall shape and size to harmonise with the existing house and adjoining buildings.
- 7.5. The proposed mansard second floor extension has an overall height of 2.65m and rises 90mm above the existing ridgeline, albeit I acknowledge it is set back from the existing rear roof slope. In my opinion, having regard its design, height and depth, the proposal would result in an overly dominant roof level, which would be excessive in scale and would create a three storey rear elevation which would be out of character with the existing dwelling. The extension would be visible from St. Columba's Road Lower and from the junction with Whitworth Road and given its height 90mm above the existing ridgeline, it would in my view be an incongruous addition to the existing dwelling.
- 7.6. I acknowledge the precedent of this and other attic level accommodation in the immediate and wider area and I consider the existing dwelling could accommodate a third level of accommodation, however, the design as proposed would in my view be

visually dominant and would detract from the streetscape, and would also set an undesirable precedent for similar such over scaled development in the area.

Appropriate Assessment

- 7.7. Having regard to the minor nature of the development, its location in a serviced urban area, and the separation distance to any European site, 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.

Environmental Impact Assessment

- 7.8. Having regard to the minor nature and scale of the proposed development and its location in a serviced urban area, removed from any sensitive locations or features, 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.

8.0 Recommendation

- 8.1. It is recommended that permission be refused.

9.0 Reasons and Considerations

Having regard to the policies of the Dublin City Development Plan 2016-2022 and the pattern of development in the area, it is considered that the proposed second floor rear extension, given its scale and mansard roof design, would be visually incongruous and out of character with the existing dwelling and would impact negatively on the visual amenity of the public street. A roof extension of this design and scale would seriously injure the amenities the area and of property in the vicinity and would, therefore, be contrary to the requirements of the Dublin City Development Plan 2016-2022 and to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Una O'Neill

Senior Planning Inspector

7th November 2018