



An
Bord
Pleanála

Inspector's Report ABP-304500-19

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| Development | Construction of extension to the side of existing house. |
| Location | Doonmaynor, Killasser, Co. Mayo |
| Planning Authority | Mayo County Council |
| Planning Authority Reg. Ref. | P19/163 |
| Applicant(s) | Vincent Broderick. |
| Type of Application | Permission |
| Planning Authority Decision | Refuse permission (1 no. reason) |
| Type of Appeal | First Party |
| Appellant | Vincent Broderick |
| Date of Site Inspection | 03/07/2019 |
| Inspector | Conor McGrath |

1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1. The appeal site is located in the townland of Doonmaynor, in Co. Mayo, approx. 5km north of Swinford and 1km north of the village of Killasser. This is a relatively sparsely populated rural area. The site has a stated area of 0.174ha and the red line site boundary extends over part of the public road. It is currently occupied by a single-storey dwelling with a floor area of 65-sq.m and a detached garage to the rear. The house is served by a proprietary on-site wastewater treatment system. The eastern site boundary comprises mature leylandii or similar evergreen trees.

2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1. The proposed development comprises a new two-storey extension of 198.9-sq.m. to the eastern side of the existing house. The gable fronted extension will project approx. 3m forward of the existing front building line. The ridge height of 7.4m is approx. 1.9m higher than the existing dwelling on the site.
- 2.2. I note one error in the submitted drawings where the western sitting room window on the plans, is not indicated on the western elevation drawings.

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

3.1. Decision

The planning authority decided to refuse permission for the proposed development on the basis that the massing, layout and design of the proposed extension would be contrary to the rural housing design guide and would interfere with the character of the landscape.

3.2. Planning Authority Reports

3.2.1. Planning Reports

The planner's report reflects the decision of the planning authority, noting that complete redesign would be required to ensure consistency with the design guidelines.

4.0 **Planning History**

There is no recent relevant planning history on the subject site. It is not clear when the existing dwelling was constructed, however, the appeal indicates that it was originally built by the county council.

5.0 **Policy Context**

5.1. **Development Plan**

Mayo County Development Plan 2014 – 2020

P-06 It is the policy of the Council to support the sustainable development of the countryside and rural villages in the County.

Rural Housing Objective RH-02: to require rural housing to be designed in accordance with the Design Guidelines for Rural Housing (Mayo Co. Co.). Consideration will be given to minor deviations from the guidelines where it can be demonstrated that the deviation will not have an adverse visual impact on the landscape or on local residential amenity in the Area.

Vol. 2 sets out planning guidance and standards for development. Section 20.2.4 notes that where it is proposed to extend/renovate a structure with an existing septic tank system, the applicant will be required to demonstrate that the existing septic tank is in working order and is suitable for the proposed development.

5.2. **Natural Heritage Designations**

There are no designated sites in the vicinity of the appeal site. The closest site is the River Moy SAC approx. 3.5km to the east and 2.7km to the south. There are no direct connections between the appeal site and the European site.

6.0 The Appeal

6.1. Grounds of Appeal

The first party make the following points in their appeal against the decision to refuse permission for the proposed development

- The extension to the 65-sq.m. house is required to provide a modern spacious family home.
- The planning authority did not offer any opportunity to revise the design or withdraw the application.
- The appeal refers to other houses in the surrounding area of similar type and design to the proposed extension.
- The proposal would not therefore set an undesirable precedent or interfere with the landscape.
- The rural housing design guidelines do not refer specifically to house extensions.
- The design accords with sections 3.3 and 4.3 of the guidelines.
- The appellant is amenable to making amendments to the extension.

6.2. Planning Authority Response

No response to the appeal has been received from the planning authority.

7.0 Assessment

7.1. It is proposed to consider the appeal under the following broad headings:

- Design and Layout
- Public Health

7.2. Design and Layout

7.2.1. The planning authority decision is based on considerations of design and visual impact, with specific reference to the Mayo Rural Housing Design Guidelines.

- 7.2.2. It is an objective of the development plan that rural housing to be designed in accordance with the Design Guidelines for Rural Housing, which contain general guidance on the siting, layout form and construction of houses in the countryside. The guidelines indicate that the form and positioning of houses should reduce the visible mass and visual impact of the house. Houses should break into several smaller forms rather than one large form, reflecting the scale, form and proportions of older traditional vernacular architecture of the immediate area. The guidelines are not explicit in terms of the approach to house design and there is no specific reference to extensions to existing houses.
- 7.2.3. The proposed extension is significant in scale and is more than three times the size of the existing dwelling on the site. The site is not extensive in area and the existing dwelling is set-back approx. 15m from the road edge. The proposed 2-storey extension which projects forward of the existing building, would constitute an intrusive feature on the landscape, when viewed from the public road on the approach from the west. In this regard the scale, mass and proportions of the structure are considered to be inappropriate. While the site could accommodate an extension to the existing dwelling, the mass and scale of that proposed in this instance is considered to be excessive.
- 7.2.4. I note reference in the appeal to other two-storey dwellings in the wider area. I have viewed the referenced houses and do not consider that they provide sufficient precedent to grant permission in this instance. The primary difference arising is the set-back from the public road and the site area available to absorb those two-storey structures which is not the case in this instance.

7.3. **Public Health**

- 7.3.1. The site overlies a Locally Important Aquifer - bedrock which is generally moderately productive, of medium vulnerability. Subsoils are characterised by moderate permeability overlain by poorly drained gley soils. The area would not therefore be of high sensitivity and the groundwater protection response would be acceptable subject to good practise.
- 7.3.2. The proposed extension is significant in the context of the scale of the existing dwelling on the site. The dwelling is served by an existing connection to a local

Group Water Scheme. The submitted plans indicate that there is an existing proprietary treatment plant (puraflo) on the site with a stated capacity of 6-8 pe. There is no record of permission having been sought or granted for installation of this treatment plant which post dates construction of the dwelling.

- 7.3.3. The application did not contain any information in relation to the suitability of the site for the on-site disposal of wastewater. The site plans submitted provide only limited information in relation to the design of the existing wastewater treatment system, including its percolation area, and its capacity to accommodate increased loading. While the application states that the number of bedrooms within the dwelling will not be increased, having regard to the scale of the extension I consider that clarification on these matters would be appropriate prior to any decision to grant permission on the site. This would be a new issue in the consideration of this appeal.

8.0 Appropriate Assessment Screening

- 8.1. Having regard to the limited nature and scale of the proposed development and the absence of any European site in the vicinity of the appeal site or any direct connection thereto, 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.

9.0 Recommendation

- 9.1. I recommend that permission be refused for the reasons and considerations set out below:

10.0 Reasons and Considerations

1. Having regard to the scale and mass of the proposed extension and its relationship with the existing structure on the site and the proximity of the extension to the public road, it is considered that the proposed development would constitute a discordant and obtrusive feature on the landscape at this

location, would seriously injure the visual amenities of the area and would set an undesirable precedent for other such development in the vicinity. The proposed development would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Conor McGrath
Senior Planning Inspector

23/07/2019