



An
Bord
Pleanála

Inspector's Report

ABP-304797-19

Development	Construction of a single storey porch (3.2sq.m) to front of dwelling
Location	41, Grange Downs, Rathfarnham, Dublin 14.
Planning Authority	South Dublin County Council.
Planning Authority Reg. Ref.	SD19B/0142.
Applicant(s)	Amanda and Paul Staunton.
Type of Application	Permission.
Planning Authority Decision	Grant Permission subject to Conditions.
Type of Appeal	First Party vs. Decision
Appellant(s)	Amanda and Paul Staunton.
Observer(s)	None.
Date of Site Inspection	28 th August 2019.
Inspector	Susan McHugh.

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1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1. The appeal site is located on the northern side of the Grange Downs estate to the west of a Loreto linear park and Little Dargle River, in Rathfarnham, and is approximately 1.2km from Nutgrove District Centre to the north east.
- 1.2. Grange Downs is accessed from Barton Road East Extension to the south and is in an area characterised by established two storey residential development. The houses are a mix of mature semi-detached dwellings with front and rear gardens. A terrace of houses within the adjoining residential estate to the north runs perpendicular to the rear of the dwelling.
- 1.3. The appeal site is located at the end of the cul de sac, with the eastern gable of the house addressing the boundary to the linear park. It currently comprises a two-storey semi-detached dwelling with front porch, a pitched roof and single storey extension to the rear.
- 1.4. The appeal site is stated as being 0.03Ha.

2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1. Permission is sought for the construction of a single storey porch with a stated area of 3.2sqm to the front of the dwelling.
- 2.2. The porch extends from the front elevation at the front door by 2.015m and is 2.465m in width. The door into the porch is positioned to the eastern side while two large picture windows are proposed to the front and western side.
- 2.3. The porch includes a pitched roof with a ridge height of 3.4m and is finished in brick to match existing finishes.

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

3.1. Decision

- 3.1.1. The Planning Authority decided to **grant** permission subject to 6 conditions. Condition 2 states the following;

3.1.2. *'The permitted porch shall be reduced in depth, to a depth of no more than 1.5metres as measured from the existing front building line of the house.'*

Reason: To uphold council Policy on residential extensions and to protect the residential amenities of the area.'

3.2. **Planning Authority Reports**

3.2.1. **Planner's Report**

The Planner's Report is the basis for the Planning Authority decision. It includes:

- Proposed development is consistent with the zoning objective 'RES' - 'To protect and/or improve residential amenity', and acceptable in principle.
- The porch has a solid appearance and would fit in with the character of the area.
- The depth of the porch is in excess of that recommended for front extensions in the South Dublin County Council House Extension Design Guide 2010 but can be restricted in to a depth of 1.5m by condition.
- In the absence of a report from Water Services, the standard surface water drainage condition can be applied.
- The house has not previously been extended, assessable area for development contributions is nil.

3.2.2. **Other Technical Reports**

- **Environmental Services:** No report received.

3.3. **Prescribed Bodies**

- **Irish Water:** No objections.

3.4. **Third Party Observations**

None.

4.0 Planning History

No relevant history identified.

5.0 Policy Context

5.1. Development Plan

- 5.1.1. Under the County Development Plan 2016 – 2022, the site is zoned '**RES: To protect and/or improve residential amenity**'.

Chapter 2 refers to housing and **Chapter 11** refers to Implementation. The Council has also produced guidance in the form of 'House Extension Design Guide'.

Section 2.4.1 of Chapter 2 considers residential extensions.

Policy **H18 Objective 1** states: To favourably consider proposals to extend existing dwellings subject to the protection of residential and visual amenities and compliance with the standards set out in Chapter 11 Implementation and the guidance set out in *the South Dublin County Council House Extension Design Guide, 2010 (or any superseding guidelines)*.

5.1.2. *South Dublin County Council House Extension Design Guide*

Guidance in relation to Porches states the following;

- A porch with a solid appearance (i.e. a greater proportion of brickwork or render to glazing) and a steeply pitched roof will usually be more appropriate for older houses and those of a more traditional design which have pitched roofs of 45° or more.
- A simple porch structure with a more lightweight appearance (i.e. a greater proportion of glazing to brickwork or render) and either a flat roof or a shallow pitch of 30° or less will be appropriate for a modern house with either a flat or shallow pitch roof and strong horizontal lines e.g. wide windows.
- Where a house has an arched or other distinctly decorative entrance, it is best to design a porch structure that will enhance and reveal rather than obscure it.
- Avoid the use of fussy decorative details and features not typical of the house.

Guidance in relation to front extensions states the following;

- Avoid building an extension more than 1.5m in front of the existing front wall of the house if there is a regular building line along the street.

5.2. **Natural Heritage Designations**

None of relevance.

5.3. **EIA Screening**

- 5.3.1. Having regard to the nature the proposed development, the nature of the receiving environment, and proximity to the nearest sensitive location, 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.

6.0 **The Appeal**

6.1. **Grounds of Appeal**

The first party appeal against the decision of the planning authority, was accompanied by a letter from the applicant's Medical Consultant referring to relevant health issues. The main grounds can be summarised as follows;

- Original porch needs to be knocked down as it is structurally unstable.
- The depth of the proposed porch is to facilitate wheelchair access for the applicant in the future, due to a medical condition.
- Note that the existing house is the last house in the estate and that there were no objections to the application.
- Requests that the proposed porch be permitted as indicated on plans lodged.

6.2. **Planning Authority Response**

- 6.2.1. Decision confirmed – issues raised covered in Planner’s Report. Notes that supplementary information submitted as part of the first party appeal relating to a diagnosis of one of the applicants, was not submitted to the planning authority and therefore were not considered in the original decision.

6.3. **Observations**

None.

7.0 **Assessment**

- 7.1.1. The main issues in this appeal are those raised in the grounds of appeal and I am satisfied that no other substantive issues arise. The issue of appropriate assessment also needs to be addressed. The issues are addressed under the following headings:

- Scale and Design
- Other Matters
- Appropriate Assessment

7.2. **Scale and Design**

- 7.2.1. The development is located in an area zoned RES: 'To protect and/or improve residential amenity'. In this zone residential extensions to an existing dwelling are considered acceptable in principle and objective H18(1) states that the Council will favourably consider proposals to extend existing dwellings subject to the protection of residential and visual amenities.

Scale of the proposed front porch

- 7.2.2. The exempted development regulations provide a very useful guide as to the scale of porch extensions. Class 1 of the Regulations (Class 7, Schedule 2 Part 1, of the

Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended) allows for up to 2sqm floor area to be added, by way of new porch, to the front of a house.

- 7.2.3. The proposed porch extension, which is to replace the existing front porch, has a stated area of 3.2sqm, and as such although exceeds that exempted under the development regulations, is still relatively modest in scale.
- 7.2.4. I would also note that the proposed porch is located 3.288m from the front side boundary with the adjoining house no. 42 to the west, which has been extended to the front and side, and 3.4m to the existing side boundary to the east.
- 7.2.5. I am satisfied that the area of the overall plot, and driveway, has the capacity to absorb the scale of the proposed porch extension, which extends forward only of the footprint of the existing porch, and is therefore acceptable.

Design

- 7.2.6. I also note the South Dublin County Council House Extension Design Guide 2010 in relation to this issue. While the guidelines generally advise towards the use of simple and contemporary design that complements the style, features and materials used in the original house, they also advise against building an extension more than 1.5m in front of the existing front wall of the house if there is a regular building line along the street.
- 7.2.7. The proposed porch is contemporary in design. I am satisfied, given the house type in this instance, that the proposed porch which extends by 2.015m from the front of the existing house, has been carefully considered and is acceptable.
- 7.2.8. I noted from my site inspection a variety of modified front porch extensions, and do not consider that the proposal which relates to an end house on the cul de sac would be out of keeping with the streetscape. I am also of the view, that the proposed represents a successful design approach which complements the design of the existing house.
- 7.2.9. I am satisfied and that the applicant has provided a reasonable justification for the proposed development in the grounds of appeal relating to one of the applicants' health issues, and the structural stability of the existing porch, and also note that there were no third party submissions relating to the proposed development.

7.2.10. I am satisfied therefore, that the proposed porch is acceptable in terms of scale and design, and the first party appeal be upheld on this basis.

7.3. Other Matters

7.3.1. *Development Contributions* – The layout of the existing single storey extension to the rear which comprises a kitchen dining area is indicated on drawings submitted with the application. I would note however, that there is an inaccuracy in the planning report of the planning authority, where it is stated that the existing house has not been previously extended. This is only of relevance with respect to exempted development and the calculation of development contributions.

7.3.2. Notwithstanding, based on my calculation of the floor area of the extension to the rear which is approx. 29sqm in area, in combination with the proposed porch extension, which is approx. 3.2sqm in area, the overall development still falls below the exemption of 40 sqm for the purposes of calculation of development contributions.

7.4. Appropriate Assessment

Having regard to the nature and scale of the proposed development, being a minor residential extension in an established urban 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

8.1.1. I recommend that permission be **granted** subject to conditions.

9.0 Reasons and Considerations

Having regard to the residential zoning of the site, the scale, layout and design of the proposed porch extension, and the established pattern of development in the area, it is considered that, subject to compliance with conditions below, the proposed development would not seriously injure the residential amenity of property in the vicinity. The

proposed development would, therefore, be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

10.0 Conditions

1. The development shall be carried out and completed in accordance with the plans and particulars lodged with the application except as may otherwise be required in order to comply with the following conditions. Where such conditions require details to be agreed with the planning authority, the developer shall agree such details in writing with the planning authority prior to commencement of development and the development shall be carried out and completed out in accordance with the agreed particulars.

Reason: In the interest of clarity.

2. Water supply and drainage arrangements, including the attenuation and disposal of surface water, shall comply with the requirements of the planning authority for such works and services.

Reason: In the interest of public health.

3. Site development and building works shall be carried out only between the hours of 0800 to 1900 Mondays to Fridays inclusive, between 0800 to 1400 hours on Saturdays and not at all on Sundays and public holidays. Deviation from these times will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances where prior written approval has been received from the planning authority.

Reason: In order to safeguard the residential amenities of property in the vicinity.

4. Water supply and drainage arrangements, including the attenuation and disposal of surface water, shall comply with the requirements of the planning authority for such works and services.

Reason: In the interest of public health.

Susan McHugh
Planning Inspectorate

4th September 2019