



An
Bord
Pleanála

Inspector's Report ABP305639-19

Development	Attic conversion to bedroom with raised roof ridge height profile.
Location	46, Maryville Road, Raheny, Dublin 5
Planning Authority	Dublin City Council
Planning Authority Reg. Ref.	3565/19
Applicant(s)	Bryan and Sandra Leeper
Type of Application	Permission
Planning Authority Decision	To Refuse Permission.
Type of Appeal	First Party
Appellant(s)	Bryan and Sandra Leeper
Observer(s)	No observers
Date of Site Inspection	07.12.2019
Inspector	Erika Casey

1.0 Site Location and Description

1.1. The subject property comprises a two storey, terraced dwelling located on the southern side of Maryville Road, Raheny. The dwelling forms part of a larger established housing estate of similar houses bounded by the Howth Road to the north, All Saints Road to the south and Watermill Road to the east. Raheny Village lies to the east of the site and St. Annes Park is to the south. Access to the site is from the existing estate road and the front garden is hard landscaped and accommodates off street parking. To the rear is a back garden enclosed by a block wall.

2.0 Proposed Development

2.1 The proposed development comprises:

- The conversion of the existing attic space to habitable accommodation with associated internal alterations. The development provides for a dormer window and roof light to the rear and it is proposed to raise the roof ridge height profile to facilitate the conversion.

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

3.1. Decision

3.1.1 To Refuse Permission for the following reason:

“The Dublin City Development Plan 2016-2022 sets out, in Appendix 17.11, the requirements for a dormer extension. Among the requirements are: 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. The proposed dormer extension would require the existing ridgeline to be raised substantially above the baseline level such that the development would be highly visually obtrusive on the streetscape. There would also be insufficient recent precedent in the wider area to justify such a development. Furthermore, the scale, height and width of the rear dormer would be such as to dominate the rear

roof plane and, together, the height and extent of the former addition would be contrary to the policies and objectives set out in the current Dublin City Development Plan, would cause serious injury to the residential amenities of properties in the vicinity and would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.”

3.2. Planning Authority Reports

3.2.1. Planning Report (13.09.2019)

- The proposed dormer extension on the rear roof slope would have a width of 5m and a 6.6m wide plane. The dormer window would project above the main ridgeline by 625mm as well as being c. 1.5m above the eaves along the plane or one metre vertically.
- There are modest number of rear dormers in the wider estate and fewer still number of dormers whose roofs project above the established ridge line of these terraced houses. It is not considered the previous decision pertaining to no. 58 Maryville Road sets a precedent. One example from almost a decade past does not set the tone for the entire area. In the case of no. 58, the roof ridge was raised by 500mm in order to accommodate a 2.1 internal height. In this instance, the ridge height of 625mm would accommodate a stated floor to ceiling height of 2.4m.
- It is unclear how a 625mm higher roof could accommodate a 2.4m internal height and the Planning Authority have doubts as to the accuracy of the plans. Furthermore, raising the ridge would result in the flat roof of the dormer being above the line of the chimney stack and almost above the line of the chimney pots and would be visually incongruous on the streetscape.
- The rear dormer is overlarge and dominates the rear roof place, being only 800mm from each shared boundary. The development would set an undesirable precedent.

3.2.2. Other Technical Reports

Drainage Division (15.08.2019): No objection subject to conditions.

3.3. Prescribed Bodies

- No submissions received.

3.4. Third Party Observations

3.4.1 No observations.

4.0 Planning History

4.1 There is no planning history pertaining to the subject site. There is one relevant precedent in the vicinity:

Application Reference 2266/10/ABP Reference PL29N.236714 – 58 Maryville Road

4.2 Permission granted by An Bord Pleanála in September 2010 for a dormer window extension to rear of existing attic store, including increasing height of existing pitched roof, new velux rooflight to the rear. The Boards Order stated:

“Having regard to the residential zoning of the area as set out in the current Development Plan for the area, the pattern of development in the area and the nature and scale of the proposed development, it is considered that, subject to compliance with the conditions set out below, the proposed development would not seriously injure the amenities of the area or of property in the vicinity and would not, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

In deciding not to accept the Inspector's recommendation to refuse permission, the Board considered that the impact of the proposed development on the streetscape would be acceptable having regard to the general architectural character of the area (including developments already permitted) and would not appear unduly incongruous. Furthermore, it is considered that the proposed dormer construction at the rear would be acceptable in terms of the general layout of development to the rear of the dwellings in the vicinity and that any negative impacts could be adequately mitigated by conditions.”

4.3 Condition 2 stated: The cill height of the proposed dormer windows shall be a minimum of 1.1 metres above the internal attic floor level and Condition 5 stated that the attic space shall not be used for the purposes of human habitation.

5.0 Policy Context

5.1. Development Plan

5.1.1 The operative Development Plan is the Dublin City Development Plan 2016-2022. The site is zoned *Objective Z1: To protect, provide and improve residential amenities.*

5.1.3 **Section 16.2.2.3** of the plan addresses Alterations and Extensions to Dwellings and **Appendix 17** sets out guidelines for residential extensions. Section 17.11 specifically addresses Roof Extensions. It states:

“The roofline of a building is one of its most dominant features and it is important that any proposal to change the shape, pitch, cladding or ornament of a roof is carefully considered. If not treated sympathetically, dormer extensions can cause problems for immediate neighbours and in the way a street is viewed as a whole. When extending in the roof, the following principles should be observed:

- *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.”*

5.2. Natural Heritage Designations

5.2.1 There are no Natura 2000 sites in the vicinity of the site.

5.3 EIAR Screening

5.3.1 Having regard to the limited nature and scale of the proposed development and the absence of any significant environmental sensitivity in the vicinity, 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**

- State that a number of other residential developments in the area similar to the proposal have been granted planning permission and that these set a precedent. Note that at least 3 of these developments have raised ridgelines. Photographic evidence of other examples in the area submitted.

6.2. **Planning Authority Response**

- No response received.

6.3. **Observations**

- No observations.

7.0 **Assessment**

7.1 **Introduction**

7.1.1 The main issues are those raised in the grounds of appeal and it is considered that no other substantive issues arise. Appropriate Assessment also needs to be addressed. The issues can be dealt with under the following headings:

- The Principle of Development and Impact on Visual Amenity.
- Appropriate Assessment.

7.2 **The Principle of the Development Impact on Visual Amenity**

7.2.1 The proposed development comprises alterations to the roof profile of the existing terraced dwelling including an increase in the overall ridge height by 625mm and the

development of a significant dormer structure to the rear. The appellant has made reference to a precedent granted at no. 58 Maryville Road as well as others in the vicinity and states that in this context, the proposal should be permitted.

7.2.2 I note however, that this extension referred to by the appellant at no. 58 was permitted over 10 years ago. In that instance the ridge height was increased by c. 500mm and was for internal accommodation that was specifically conditioned not to be used for habitable use. As noted by the Planning Authority, there has been a significant shift in the policy context in the intervening time.

7.2.3 Section 17.11, Appendix 17 of the current City Development Plan sets out specific guidance regarding roof extensions and notes that as the roofline of a building is one of its most dominant features, it is important that any change to the shape of a roof is carefully considered as if not treated sympathetically, dormer extensions can cause problems in the way a street is viewed as a whole. It is also specifically stated that dormer windows should be visually subordinate to the roof slope and that a large proportion of the original roof should remain visible.

7.2.4 Section 16.2.2.3 of the Dublin City Development Plan 2016-2022 also requires that alterations and extensions at roof level are to respect the scale, elevational proportions and architectural form of the building, and should respect the uniformity of terraces or groups of buildings with a consistent roofline. In this instance, I consider that the proposed development is contrary to the guidance set out in the Development Plan. The proposed roof extension is a large dominant structure that will be clearly visible above the existing roof ridgeline. I consider that the increase in the ridgeline of the roof would result in an adverse distortion of the exiting roof profile of the terrace and would have an adverse visual impact on the streetscape. I also consider that the dormer to the rear dominates the roof slope and has minimal set backs from the adjoining properties. Given the overall scale and proportions of the dormer, it does not appear as a subservient addition to the dwelling and is overly dominant. This is unacceptable and would result in a significant adverse impact on the scale and character of the dwelling.

7.2.5 The appellant also cites a number of other examples of similar dormer extensions in the vicinity including No. 7 All Saints Park, No. 9 Bettystown Avenue, No. 2 St. Annes Avenue etc. From the photographic evidence it is clear that the majority of

these dormers are unlikely to have been recently constructed and the planning status of them is unclear. Whilst these dormers may be insitu, I consider that from the documentation submitted, that they appear in a number of instances to be inappropriate development which are visually obtrusive and detract from the character and visual amenity of the area. I do not consider that these previous inappropriate developments should be justification for the current proposal nor are they a precedent for further inappropriate development to occur on the subject site. I also noted on site that there were other properties in the same terrace and in close proximity that had dormer accommodation of a lesser scale. None of these extensions had extended the roof ridgeline to the extent proposed in this development. In this regard, I consider that there may be scope to extend the attic accommodation of this dwelling, but with a reduced scale dormer. I concur with the assessment of the Planning Authority and recommend that permission should be refused.

7.3 **Appropriate Assessment**

7.3.1 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.

8.0 **Recommendation**

8.1. It is recommended that permission for the development be **REFUSED** for the reasons and considerations set out below.

9.0 **Reasons and Considerations**

9.1. Having regard to the provisions of the current Dublin City Development Plan 2016-2022, the pattern of development in the area which generally consists of terraced hipped roofed dwellings and the policies set out in section 17.11, Appendix 17 of the Dublin City Development Plan 2016-2022 which requires dormer extensions to be visually subordinate to the roof slope, it is considered that the proposed development due to its dominant scale and height and which would require the existing ridgeline to

be raised substantially, would be at variance with this policy, would result in an incongruous form of development in the streetscape and would seriously injure the residential and visual amenities of the area and property in the vicinity. The proposed development would be out of character with the area, would result in an undesirable precedent for further such development and would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Erika Casey

Senior Planning Inspector

9th December 2019