



An
Bord
Pleanála

Inspector's Report ABP305646-19.

Development	Construct ground floor extension to front / side of house.
Location	95A Cromcastle Road, Coolock, Dublin 5.
Planning Authority	Dublin City Council.
Planning Authority Reg. Ref.	3747/19.
Applicant	Pearce O'Hanlon.
Type of Application	Permission.
Planning Authority Decision	Refuse permission.
Type of Appeal	First Party
Appellant	Pearce O'Hanlon.
Observer	None.
Date of Site Inspection	10 th January 2019.
Inspector	Mairead Kenny.

1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1. The site is located in the north suburban area of Dublin city in a residential estate which is south of Oscar Traynor Road, the R104. The site is positioned at the end of a terrace of two-storey dwellinghouses and at the entrance into a short residential cul de sac. This row of houses is visible from Oscar Traynor Road across the adjacent open space. The entrance into the overall residential area is by way of Dundaniel road where there is a small apartment scheme at the signalised traffic junction with the regional road.
- 1.2. The existing dwellinghouse was developed as a house in the original side garden of the no. 95, the house to the north. The stated site area is 235m². The stated floor area of the existing house is 55.5m².
- 1.3. Photographs which were taken by me at the time of my inspection are attached.

2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1. Permission is sought for:
 - a ground floor extension of stated area of 31m² to provide an additional living area and two bedrooms
 - modifications to the rear garden space.

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

3.1. Decision

The planning authority decided to refuse permission for the reason summarised below:

- Visually obtrusive by reason of extension beyond front building line and height. Reference also to the requirement for boundary walls to the side garden.
- Overdevelopment of a restricted site.
- Seriously injurious to residential amenities.

3.2. **Planning Authority Reports**

3.2.1. Planning Reports

The comments in the planner's report include:

- The modifications include moving forward the front garden area and bringing the front enclosure wall forward. An area of open space of 54m² is proposed.
- The existing modest house of 55.5m² is to be extended to 86.5m² which can be achieved only by projecting substantially forward of the building line. The high ridge gable front of the roof is particularly prominent. Depth proposed to the front would be incongruous and obtrusive and without precedent.
- The site is too constrained to provide the level of accommodation required.

3.2.2. Other Technical Reports

Drainage Division report indicates no objections subject to conditions.

3.3. **Prescribed Bodies**

Not relevant.

3.4. **Third Party Observations**

None received.

4.0 **Planning History**

The existing house on site was permitted under reg. ref. 1609/07. It is described as a two-storey one bedroom house.

There were two previous refusals of permission for similar development, including one which was upheld by the Board on appeal under PL29N.129319.

5.0 Policy Context

5.1. Development Plan

Under the provisions of the **Dublin City Development Plan** policy the site is in an area zoned Z1 'to protect and improve residential amenities'. The policy relating to extensions to residential development is set out in section 16.10.12. Appendix 17 sets out more detailed provisions in relation to the approach to design and consideration of the impact on the amenities of the area.

There are no conservation objectives related to the site or the immediate surroundings.

6.0 The Appeal

6.1. Grounds of Appeal

The main points of the appeal are:

- There were no objections by neighbours.
- The existing house / site is unusual.
- Inadequate accommodation for existing family.
- No alternative means of meeting these needs.

6.2. Planning Authority Response

The planning authority has not offered a substantive response.

6.3. Observations

None.

7.0 Assessment

I consider that the substantive issues in this case relate to visual and residential amenities and compliance with the development plan policies.

I note the planning authority's description of the site as being severely constrained in size and layout. That description is very accurate in terms of the size of the site (235m²) and its shape and relationship with the public realm and adjacent property including a domestic garage at the adjacent site to the south. I note that the envisaged plot ratio of 3.79 is inaccurately calculated. In terms of any quantitative assessment which might be carried out the development might not seem unduly out of character with the site or the surrounds. However, when the constraints of the site are considered it is clear that there are severely limited options for any further development on this site. The resulting design proposed is in my opinion unacceptable as described below.

The ground floor extension to the front and side would project significantly beyond the established front building line of the terrace. The existing house already projects marginally from the established building line by 1m. The proposed development would add a further 2.5m projection forward. The visual impact is somewhat mitigated by the structure on the site to the south (a domestic garage) insofar as the proposed development would serve to partly screen that structure, which although recessed behind the existing front boundary wall remains prominent in view. Nevertheless I agree with the planning authority that the proposed development when viewed from the street or from adjacent front gardens would be out of character with the existing streetscape including by reason of the significant forward projection and the detailed design.

The proposed layout suggests the provision of a 54m² rear garden which would constitute a small increase in the existing open space area. I consider that the amount of open space proposed is acceptable and generally compliant with relevant policy provisions. However, it is not clear how that area would be screened from the public realm, which would be necessary in order to provide privacy. Any such boundary wall features are likely to contribute further to the unacceptable nature of the design and its impact on the amenities of the area.

In relation to the height of the extension and the gable fronted design I agree with the planning authority that these design elements contribute to the development being visually obtrusive and out of scale and character with the streetscape. When considered in the context of the 2.5m forward projection and the required boundary walls the proposed development fails to comply with development plan requirements

to follow the form of the existing building and ensure its integration with the existing building and ensure that the scale is subordinate to the main unit and avoid significant breaches of the front building line. In my opinion the proposed development would be contrary to the development plan provisions, incongruous and out of keeping with the streetscape and the existing house to a degree that warrants a refusal of permission.

It would be possible to amend the design by condition if the Board considered that the ground floor plan proposed was acceptable. I do not recommend that approach in view of my stated opinion in relation to the overall design including the front building line and requirements for screen walls. Any required amendments would effectively result in a new design.

In conclusion, I am in agreement with the decision of the planning authority.

Appropriate Assessment

Having regard to the nature of the proposed development, which comprises modifications to a suburban dwellinghouse on serviced lands I am satisfied that 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. I recommend that permission be refused for the reasons and considerations below.

9.0 Reasons and Considerations

It is a requirement under section 16.10.12 of the Dublin City Development Plan 2016-2022 that residential extensions achieve a high standard of design and avoid an adverse impact on the scale and character of the dwellinghouse. Having regard to the detailed design of the proposed development including the 2.5m projection forward of the front building line and the gable fronted design, it is considered that the proposed extension would be out of character with the scale and form of the house and the streetscape and would be incongruous and visually obtrusive on this restricted and prominent site. The proposed development would, therefore, be

contrary to the provisions of the development plan and to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Mairead Kenny
Senior Planning Inspector

14th January 2020