



An
Bord
Pleanála

Inspector's Report ABP 306363-20

Development

Permission sought for an attic conversion to include a dormer window structure at attic level to the rear and realignment of main roof structure to replace the hipped design with a new gable/Dutch hip design.

Location

10 Warrenstown Garth,
Blanchardstown, Dublin 15

Planning Authority

Fingal County Council.

Planning Authority Reg. Ref.

FW19B/0129

Applicants

Dana Blahyj

Type of Application

Permission

Planning Authority Decision

Refuse Permission

Type of Appeal

First Party

Appellants

Dana Blahyj

Observer(s)

None

Date of Site Inspection

12th May 2020

Inspector

Brendan Coyne

1.0 Site Location and Description

1.1. The subject site (0.2 ha) is located on the north-eastern side of Warrenstown Garth on a junction with Warrenstown Place in Blanchardstown, Dublin 15. The site contains a two storey 3-bedroom semi-detached dwelling, with a floor area of 135sq.m. The roof profile of the dwelling is hipped, and its front elevation comprises red brick finishing at ground floor level and render finish at first floor level. The character of the surrounding area comprises dwellings of similar form and appearance.

2.0 Proposed Development

2.1. Permission sought for the following;

- Conversion of the attic to a store room (19.4 sq.m.).
- Extension to the existing hip roof to provide a 'Dutch' / half-hip ended roof profile.
- Provision of 1 no. dormer window extension to the rear roof.

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

3.1. Decision

Fingal County Council refused permission for the proposed development. The 1 no. reason for refusal was as follows;

1. *The development as proposed providing for a dormer extension to the rear roof slope of this semi-detached property, by reason of the scale and width of this feature, would result in the creation of an incongruous extension to the property which would dominate the roofscape and would be particularly obtrusive when viewed from the public area to the immediate north and west. The proposal would contravene materially Objective DMS41 of the Fingal Development Plan with regard to the design of dormer extensions and would seriously injure the amenities of the area. The development would therefore be contrary to proper planning and sustainable development.*

3.2. Planning Authority Reports

3.2.1. *Planning Report*

Basis for the Planning Authority's decision. Includes:

- The proposed development is acceptable in principle, as an initiative to deliver additional living space.
- No other house in the Warrenstown area appears to have converted its hip-ended roof to a half-hip ended roof profile.
- There are numerous examples of such roof conversions in the greater Blanchardstown area.
- The proposed attic conversion would not adversely impact on the visual amenity of the adjoining or neighbouring dwellings.
- The proposed dormer window has a width of 3.6m and would be located 0.4m from the common boundary line shared with the adjoining dwelling.
- The proposed dormer window is not centrally located.
- The proposed dormer window would be visible from the public road along Warrenstown Place.
- The proposed dormer window would adversely impact on the visual amenity of the adjoining or neighbouring dwellings.
- The proposed dormer window would not adversely impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring dwellings by way of overlooking, overshadowing or overbearing impact.
- The floor to ceiling height of the attic store does not appear to comply with Building Regulation requirements for habitable space. In the event of a grant of permission a Condition should be imposed requiring that the attic store not be used as a habitable room.

4.0 Planning History

4.1. **Appeal Site:** None for subject site.

4.2. Surrounding Area:

P.A. Ref. FW19A/0016 - 15, Warrenstown Grove, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15.

Permission **granted** in 2019 for a single storey granny flat and kitchen extension to the rear, an attic conversion to a study/storage room, with dormer window to rear; new porch to the front, a new vehicular entrance and driveway for two off street car park spaces, together with relocated pillar and dished footpath.

Note: The permitted dormer window was set down 300mm below the roof ridgeline of the main dwelling, was centrally located on the rear roof and the glazing had a width of 1.5m - as stated in the Planning report.

P.A. Ref. FW14B/0075 - 24 Warrenstown Green, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15.

Permission **granted** in 2015 for (a) an attic conversion incorporating a dormer extension to the rear; (b) a dormer extension to the side; (c) a single storey porch extension to the front; (d) a single storey extension to the rear and all associated site works.

Note: The permitted development provides a gable end to an originally hip-ended roof profile of the semi-detached dwelling and a dormer window to the rear roof. The dormer window is not centrally located and has a width of 2.5 metres.

5.0 Policy and Context

5.1. Fingal County Development Plan 2017 - 2023

Zoning: The site is zoned 'RS' with the objective 'to provide for residential development and protect and improve residential amenity'.

Objective PM46 Encourage sensitively designed extensions to existing dwellings which do not negatively impact on the environment or on adjoining properties or area.

Objective DMS41 Dormer extensions to roofs will only be considered where there is no negative impact on the existing character and form, and the

privacy of adjacent properties. Dormer extensions shall not form a dominant part of a roof. Consideration may be given to dormer extensions proposed up to the ridge level of a house and shall not be higher than the existing ridge height of the house.

Objective DMS42 Encourage more innovative design approaches for domestic extensions.

Section 12.4 Extensions to Dwellings – Development Management Standards

5.2. Natural Heritage Designations

None

6.0 The Appeal

6.1. Grounds of Appeal

6.1.1. An appeal was received from Stephen Molloy Architects representing the first-party appellant Dana Blahyj, against the decision made by the Planning Authority to refuse permission for the proposed development. The following is a summary of the grounds of appeal.

- The applicant lives in the dwelling with her growing family and requires additional storage space to ensure the ongoing viability of her home.
- Prior to the design and submission of the proposal, the applicant looked at precedent permissions for similar development in the locality.
- The applicant noticed that Fingal County Council previously granted permission for dormer windows with a maximum width of 3.6m. Any wider were refused.
- The applicant provides a list of 10 no. precedent permissions for similar development in the County, notably in the Clonsilla, Clonee and Castleknock areas.
- The design of the dormer window is identical to the design and layout of development in the listed precedent applications.

- The proposed dormer window measures 3.6m in width and is positioned centrally on the rear roof.
- The applicant fails to understand how the proposal is not consistent with Objective DMS41.
- The reason for refusal based on visual design does not represent a material breach of the Development Plan.

6.2. Planning Authority Response

6.2.1. The Planning Authority's response is as follows;

- It is considered that the issues raised were fully assessed against the policies and objectives of the Fingal Development Plan, as detailed in the Planning Officer's report.
- It is acknowledged that permission has been granted for a number of attic conversions with dormer windows in the wider Blanchardstown area. However, each application was considered in the context of its visual impact on the surrounding area.
- The reason for refusal is considered reasonable in this instance given the location of the site, the scale of the development and that the proposal is not in keeping with existing development.
- It is considered that the proposal would detract from the character and amenity of adjoining development.

6.3. Observations

None received

7.0 Assessment

The main issue for consideration is the reason for refusal as cited by the Planning Authority. This can be addressed under the following heading;

- Scale, Design and Visual Impact.

This is addressed below.

7.1. Scale, Design and Visual Impact.

- 7.1.1. The Planning Authority refused permission for the proposed development on the grounds that the scale and width of the proposed dormer window would dominate the roofscape and create an incongruous extension to the dwelling. The Planning Authority considered that such development would be visually obtrusive, particularly when viewed from the north and west and, thereby, would be contrary to Objective DMS41 of the Development Plan.
- 7.1.2. Objective DMS41 is set out in Section 5.1 above and the applicant's Grounds of Appeal are set out in Section 6.1 above.
- 7.1.3. The proposed development provides for the conversion of the attic into a store room and extends the hip-ended roof profile of the dwelling to provide a 'Dutch' / half-hip roof profile. I noted during site inspection that dwellings to the side and rear of the site along Warrenstown Place and Warrenstown Vale are characterised with Dutch' / half-hip roof profiles. The proposed roof profile would not be inconsistent with these.
- 7.1.4. The proposal provides a dormer window to the rear roof slope of the converted attic. The roof ridgeline of the dormer window would extend directly from the roof ridgeline of the main dwelling and would maintain a setback of c. 0.4m from the common boundary line shared with the adjoining dwelling and c. 1m from the roof end. The dormer window would have a width of 3.6 metres and incorporates 3 no. windowpanes.
- 7.1.5. The subject dwelling is located on the north-eastern side of Warrenstown Garth on a junction with Warrenstown Place. The proposed dormer window would be visible from the adjacent public domain and dwellings along Warrenstown Place. Given the context of the site and the visibility of the proposal, I have concerns that the scale and extent of the proposed dormer window would be a dominant and obtrusive feature on the roof the dwelling. Such development would detract from the character and visual amenity of streetscape along Warrenstown Place. Notwithstanding this, I consider that this issue could be dealt with by way of a Condition requiring the following;

- The width of the dormer window be no greater than 3 metres.
- The roof ridge of the dormer window be set down 0.3 metres below the roof ridge line of the main dwelling.
- The dormer window be centrally located on the rear roof of the dwelling.
- The base of the dormer window ensure a minimum setback of 0.5 metres above the roof eaves line of the main dwelling.

7.1.6. Such Condition would enable the conversion of the attic to a store room, providing an acceptable balance between an appropriate design and providing accommodation that meets the space needs of the occupants of the dwelling. I note that Fingal County Council granted permission for dormer windows of similar scale and design in Warrenstown, as detailed in Section 4.0 above.

7.1.7. Having reviewed the Drawings submitted, I concur with the Planning Authority that the proposed development would not adversely impact on the residential amenity of adjacent dwellings by way of overlooking, overshadowing or loss of outlook. Elevation finishes are stated as matching existing. It is my view, therefore, that the proposal complies with Development Plan Objective DMS41 regarding dormer extensions.

7.1.8. In consideration of the above, I recommend that the appeal should succeed in relation to the Planning Authority's reason for refusal.

7.2. **Screening for Appropriate Assessment**

7.2.1. Having regard to the nature and modest scale of the proposed development, to the location of the site within a fully serviced urban environment, and to the separation distance and absence of a clear direct pathway 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. I recommend that permission be granted subject to conditions, for the reasons and considerations below.

9.0 Reasons and Considerations

Having regard to the scale, form and design of the proposed development, it is considered that, subject to compliance with the Conditions set out below, the proposed development would not adversely impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring property or the visual amenity of the surrounding streetscape. The proposal would, therefore, be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

10.0 Conditions

1.	<p>The development shall be carried out and completed in accordance with the plans and particulars lodged with the application, and by the further plans and particulars received by An Bord Pleanála on the 13th day of January, 2020, 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 in accordance with the agreed particulars.</p> <p>Reason: In the interest of clarity.</p>
2.	<p>Prior to commencement of development, the developer shall submit for the written agreement of the Planning Authority revised drawings detailing the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(i) The width of the dormer window shall be no greater than 3 metres.(ii) The roof ridge of the dormer window shall be set down 0.3 metres below the roof ridge line of the main dwelling.(iii) The dormer window shall be centrally located on the rear roof of the dwelling.

	<p>(iv) The baseline of the dormer window shall ensure a minimum setback of 0.5 metres above the roof eaves line of the main dwelling.</p> <p>Reason: In the interest of visual amenity.</p>
3.	<p>The external finishes of the proposed extension shall be the same as those of the existing dwelling in respect of colour and texture.</p> <p>Reason: In the interest of visual amenity.</p>
4.	<p>Water supply and drainage arrangements, including the disposal of surface water, shall comply with the requirements of the planning authority for such works and services.</p> <p>Reason: In the interest of public health.</p>
5.	<p>Site development and building works shall be carried out only between the hours of 0800 and 1900 from Mondays to Fridays inclusive, between 0800 and 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.</p> <p>Reason: In order to safeguard the residential amenities of property in the vicinity.</p>
6.	<p>All necessary measures shall be taken by the contractor to prevent the spillage or deposit of clay, rubble or other debris on adjoining roads during the course of the works.</p> <p>Reason: To protect the amenities of the area.</p>

Brendan Coyne
 Planning Inspector

13th May 2020

