



An  
Bord  
Pleanála

## Inspector's Report ABP-308316-20

<b>Development</b>	Conversion of existing attic space to non-habitable attic room/ storage and replacement of existing hipped roof with gable roof, 1 no. dormer window and 1 no. velux roof light to front and 1 no. dormer window to rear roof profile and all associated site works.
<b>Location</b>	4 Sandyford Hall Drive, Sandyford, Dublin 18, D18 F5K3.
<b>Planning Authority</b>	Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council.
<b>Planning Authority Reg. Ref.</b>	D20A/0497
<b>Applicant(s)</b>	Eva Stack
<b>Type of Application</b>	Permission
<b>Planning Authority Decision</b>	Part Grant and Part Refusal.
<b>Type of Appeal</b>	First Party
<b>Date of Site Inspection</b>	25 <sup>th</sup> November 2020
<b>Inspector</b>	Paul O'Brien

## 1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1. Number 4 Sandyford Hall Drive, Sandyford, comprises of a two-storey semi-detached house located on the western side of this residential street and is on a stated site area of 0.02 hectares. The Sandyford Hall residential development is located off/ to the west of the Kilgobbin Road and to the south west of the M50, to the southern side of Sandyford village.
- 1.2. The area is characterised by two-storey semi-detached houses, located on cul-de-sacs off the Sandyford Hall View street. The houses have hipped roofs but include an unusual feature that appears similar to a dormer to the side, but which is not glazed, instead fitted with roof tiles to the side.
- 1.3. Several of the houses have been extended and modified over time, however the overall character of the area has been retained.

## 2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1. The proposed development consists of the following alterations to the existing house:
  - Conversion of existing attic space to non-habitable attic room/ storage and replacement of existing hipped roof with gable roof. A total of 22 sq m is to be provided.
  - 1 no. dormer window and 1 no. velux roof light to front roof profile and 1 no. dormer window to the rear roof profile.
  - All associated site works.

## 3.0 Planning Authority Decision

### 3.1. Decision

The Planning Authority decided to grant permission subject to conditions, except for the proposed dormer to the front roof profile, for which permission was refused. The reasons for refusal included:

1. 'The proposed 1 No. Dormer window to the front would be out of character with the visual amenities of the surrounding area and, if permitted, would create an undesirable precedent for similarly scaled developments.
2. The proposed 1 No. Dormer window to the front fails to accord with 8.2.3.4 (i) of the Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council Development Plan and would therefore seriously injure the amenities or depreciate the value of property in the vicinity and would therefore be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area',

### 3.2. **Planning Authority Reports**

#### 3.2.1. **Planning Report**

The Planning Authority Case Officer's report reflects the decision to grant permission for the majority of the development and refusal for the dormer to the front. It was considered that the dormer to the front would have a negative impact on the visual amenity of the area and would set an undesirable precedent for similar developments.

#### 3.2.2. **Other Technical Reports**

**Municipal Services Department – Drainage Planning:** No objection to this development.

### 4.0 **Planning History**

None.

### 5.0 **Policy and Context**

#### 5.1. **Development Plan**

- 5.1.1. Under the Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan 2016 – 2022, the subject site is zoned A, 'To protect and/ or improve residential amenity'. Residential development is listed within the 'Permitted in Principle' category of this zoning objective.

5.1.2. Chapter 8 of the Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan 2016 – 2022 refers to ‘Principles of Development’ and the following are relevant to the subject development:

8.2 ‘Development Management’ – with particular reference to section 8.2.3 ‘Residential Development’, 8.2.3.1 ‘Quality Residential Design’ and 8.2.3.4 ‘Additional Accommodation in Existing Built-up Areas’ with particular reference to 8.2.3.4(i) ‘Extensions to Dwellings’ and the following is relevant to this development:

‘Roof alterations/expansions to main roof profiles - changing the hip-end roof of a semi-detached house to a gable/’A’ frame end or ‘half-hip’ for example – will be assessed against a number of criteria including:

- Careful consideration and special regard to the character and size of the structure, its position on the streetscape and proximity to adjacent structures.
- Existing roof variations on the streetscape.
- Distance/contrast/visibility of proposed roof end.
- Harmony with the rest of the structure, adjacent structures and prominence.

Dormer extensions to roofs will be considered with regard to impacts on existing character and form, and the privacy of adjacent properties. The design, dimensions and bulk of any roof proposal relative to the overall size of the dwelling and gardens will be the overriding considerations. Dormer extensions shall be set back from the eaves, gables and/or party boundaries.

The proposed quality of materials/finishes for dormers will be considered carefully as this can greatly improve their appearance. The level and type of glazing within a dormer structure should have regard to existing window treatments and fenestration of the dwelling. Particular care will be taken in evaluating large, visually dominant dormer window structures, with a balance sought between quality residential amenity and the privacy of adjacent properties. Excessive overlooking of adjacent properties should be avoided unless support by the neighbours affected can be demonstrated.

More innovative design responses will be encouraged, particularly within sites where there may be difficulty adhering to the above guidance and where objectives of habitability and energy conservation are at stake’.

## 5.2. **Natural Heritage Designations**

None.

## 6.0 **The Appeal**

### 6.1. **Grounds of Appeal**

The applicant has appealed the decision of Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council to refuse permission for a dormer window on the front roof profile of no.4 Sandyford Hall Drive. Issues raised include:

- Front dormers have been approved by the Planning Authority in the past – refer to a grant of permission under P.A. Ref. D18B/0113 at 20 The Heights, Woodpark, Ballinteer. The development is similar to that proposed.
- A dormer is provided at first floor level at 2 Sandyford Hall Rise.
- Dormers to the front are a feature of houses in Belmont and Kilgobbin Woods, which are in close proximity to the subject site.
- The proposed development is modest and will not have a negative impact on the visual amenity of the area.
- Reference is made to a number of large residential developments in the local area that are currently under planning assessment.
- The dormer will not dominate the roof and will complement the existing character of the roof/ house. A tree to the front will screen the dormer from view.

A number of photographs have been submitted in support of the appeal.

### 6.2. **Planning Authority Response**

- 6.2.1. The grounds of appeal do not raise any new matters, so no additional comment is made by the Planning Authority.

## 7.0 Assessment

7.1. The main issues that arise for consideration in relation to this appeal can be addressed under the following headings:

- Nature of Development
- Impact on the Visual Amenity of the Area
- Other Issues
- Appropriate Assessment Screening

### 7.2. Nature of Development

7.2.1. The applicant is proposing to convert their attic space, in their two-storey semi-detached house, for non-habitable use. The submitted cross section on Drawing No: 20-R-PA-0005 indicates a floor to ceiling height of less than 2.2 m can be achieved at attic level, which is less than the standard 2.4 m.

7.2.2. In addition to the internal alterations, the applicant has proposed a box dormer to the rear roof profile, revising the side roof profile from a hipped roof to a gable end which includes a window fitted with obscured glazing and to the front roof profile, a dormer window and velux rooflight will be provided. The rear dormer and provision of a gable ended roof, will allow for an increase in useable floor area. The front dormer provides only a modest amount of additional floor area.

7.2.3. The applicant is appealing the decision to refuse permission for the front dormer. I have no objection to the other elements of this development that the Planning Authority decided to grant permission for. The rear dormer is visually acceptable and does not give rise to increased overlooking which may lead to a loss of privacy. The revised side roof profile is also considered to be acceptable.

### 7.3. Impact on the Visual Amenity of the Area

7.3.1. The Planning Authority, in their first reason for refusal, referred to the 'Dormer window to the front would be out of character with the visual amenities of the surrounding area and, if permitted, would create an undesirable precedent for similarly scaled developments'. I agree with this reason as the proposed dormer is through its design, bulky and would dominate the front roof profile. The scale does

not respect the existing front windows and if constructed, the structure would be out of character with the existing form of development on this street.

- 7.3.2. The second reason for refusal referred to non-compliance with Section 8.2.3.4 (i) of the Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council Development Plan. The Development Plan sets out the requirements for dormers and whilst elements of the development demonstrate compliance, the primary issue is that it would dominate the roofscape and would be out of character with the existing form of development.
- 7.3.3. From the site visit, it was apparent that there is a uniform style to the character of the houses on this street and the adjacent cul-de-sacs in Sandyford Hall. The proposed development would set a precedent for similar development and one which would have an adverse impact on the visual amenity of the area. The revisions to the roof including the provision of a gable end, are significant but which will not negatively impact on the character of the house/ area. The proposed dormer through its design, scale and overall alteration to the front roof profile would be visually negative. The presence of trees along the street do not provide for suitable screening as raised in the appeal.

#### **7.4. Other Issues**

- 7.4.1. The applicant has submitted a number of examples of dormers permitted to the front roof profiles of houses. I am not aware of the planning history of all of these, but the majority of the examples are not relevant to this proposal. In most of the cases, such as at no. 2 Sandyford Hall Rise, Belmont and Kilgobbin Woods, the dormers formed part of the original design/ original construction and was part of the architectural design of these houses. In such cases, the dormer forms part of the overall house design and not a later addition.
- 7.4.2. The omission of this dormer will not have a significant negative impact on the converted attic space as the proposed rear dormer and window in the side/ south west roof profile will provide most of the sunlight to this space. The location of the dormer will only benefit from morning sunlight and the floor area provided by this dormer is less than 2 sq m and would be awkward to access. The proposed rooflight to the front roof profile is acceptable and does not negatively impact on the visual amenity of the area.

## 7.5. Appropriate Assessment Screening

- 7.5.1. Having regard to the modest nature and scale of the proposed development and the location of the site in a serviced urban area and the separation distance to the nearest European site, no Appropriate Assessment issues arise, and it is not considered that the development would be likely to give rise to 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 for the proposed development, except for the front dormer which can be omitted by way of condition.

## 9.0 Reasons and Considerations

- 9.1. Having regard to the provisions of the Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan 2016 - 2022 and the zoning for residential purposes, to the location of the site in an established residential area and to the nature, form, scale and design of the proposed development, it is considered that permission be granted for the proposed development except for the dormer to the front roof profile, which shall be omitted from this development by way of condition.

## 10.0 Conditions

1.	The development shall be carried out and completed in accordance with the plans and particulars lodged with the application on the 21 <sup>st</sup> day of October 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.  <b>Reason:</b> In the interest of clarity.
2.	The proposed development shall be amended as follows:



	<p>(a) The dormer proposed for the front/ south east roof profile shall be omitted and the roof retained as is, in this location.</p> <p>(b) A single rooflight to be provided in the front/ south east roof profile, as indicted on Drawing No: 20-R-PA-0003.</p> <p>Revised drawings showing compliance with these requirements shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing with, the planning authority prior to commencement of development.</p> <p><b>Reason:</b> In the interests of visual amenity.</p>
3.	<p>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.</p> <p><b>Reason:</b> In order to safeguard the residential amenities of property in the vicinity.</p>

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Paul O'Brien  
 Planning Inspector

14<sup>th</sup> January 2021