



An
Bord
Pleanála

Inspector's Report ABP-309612-21ABP- 309131-21

Development	Alterations and extensions to house
Location	17 Gilford Park, Dublin 4
Planning Authority	Dublin City Council
Planning Authority Reg. Ref.	3528/20
Applicant	Caroline Barron.
Type of Application	Permission.
Planning Authority Decision	Grant permission
Type of Appeal	First Party vs. condition
Appellant	Caroline Barron
Observer	None
Date of Site Inspection	15 th May 2021
Inspector	Stephen J. O'Sullivan

1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1. The site is in a suburban part of Dublin c4km southeast of the city centre. The area is characterised by detached and semi-detached houses from the mid-20th century. The site has a stated area of 336m². It consists of the curtilage of a two-storey semi-detached house that has a single storey element attached to its side containing the kitchen and garage. The site is served by a driveway. On street parking in the area is controlled.

2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1. It is proposed to build a two-storey extension to the side and rear of the house. It would include an A line gable at the side of the house in place of the hipped gable over the current house. Habitable accommodation would be provided at attic level with a new dormer window in the rear slope of the roof and a rooflight on the front slope. The application form states that the development would provide another 118m² of floorspace resulting in a house of 264m² on the site.
- 2.2. Other elements of the proposed alterations to the house include a window at first floor level in the centre of the front elevation that would have a cill lower than the windows on either side, a new pedestrian gate onto the street and a widening of the existing vehicular access to 3.5m.

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

3.1. Decision

The planning authority decided to grant permission subject to 9 conditions. Condition 3 revised the proposed development and reads as follows-

The development shall be revised as follows:

a) The first floor central window to the double height entrance hall shall be amended such that the cill height is no lower than the existing central window and generally aligns with the cills of the windows to the bedrooms either side.

b) The first floor front façade shall be finished with dashed render to match as far as is practicable, the existing dashed render façade.

c) The first floor rear extension containing the master bedroom shall be amended and shall not extend further than 4.5m from the rear building line.

d) The driveway entrance shall be amended to a maximum width of 3.2m in width; and shall not have outward opening gates.

e) Details of the proposed finishes to the dormer to be provided and materials shall harmonise with the existing dwelling. Development shall not commence until revised plans, drawings and particulars showing the above amendments have been submitted to, and agreed in writing by the Planning Authority, and such works shall be fully implemented prior to the occupation of the buildings.

Reason: *In the interests of orderly development and visual amenity.*

3.2. Planning Report

The submitted observation is noted. Uniformity in the streetscape can be achieved by variety and there are other examples of extensions that replaced hipped roofs with gable ends without detriment to the streetscape. The site is not prominent and the area is not subject to designations for conservation so the proposed gable end roof extension is acceptable. The windows are generally acceptable. A condition will require the cill of the central first floor window to be raised to match the others to ensure consistency across the façade. The proposed development would extend 5.75m from the existing back wall of the house at first floor level and would be set back from the boundary of the site by less than 1m. There are concerns that this would have an overbearing impact on the neighbouring property, although it would not overshadow it due to their respective orientation. The depth of the extension should be reduced to 4.5m which would still allow an adequately sized bedroom. The proposed dormer window is acceptable. The width of the vehicular entrance should be reduced to 3.2m to protect the on-street parking bays in accordance with the advice from the Transportation Department. A grant of permission was recommended.

3.3. Third Party Observations

A submission was received that stated concerns about aspects of the proposed development. The hipped roof profile would negatively impact on the symmetry of

the pair of houses and the streetscape. The windows on the front of the new extension should match the existing windows on the front of the house. The large feature window would be a dominant feature that would detract from the visual amenities of the streetscape.

4.0 Planning History

None cited

5.0 Policy Context

5.1. Development Plan

The Dublin City Development Plan 2016-2022 applies. The site is zoned under objective Z1 to protect, provide and improve residential amenities. Section 16.10.12 of the plan says that residential extensions should have regard to the amenities of adjoining property and the form of the existing building should be followed as closely as possible, and that development should integrate with the existing building through the use of similar finishes and windows. Appendix 17 provides further guidance on extensions to houses.

5.2. Natural Heritage Designations

None

6.0 The Appeal

6.1. Grounds of Appeal

The appeal is stated to be against condition 3a) and 3c) of the council's decision.

- In relation to 3a) which requires the sill of the central window at first floor level to be raised, it is stated that the purpose of the proposed lower sill height is to distract from the difference in the sill heights between the existing and extended part of the house and provide light for the hallway at ground and first floor level. The sill heights of the other new windows cannot be changed

without contravening the building regulations. The front elevation of a nearby house at No. 27 Gilford Park has a central door at first floor level that sets a precedent for the proposed central window in this case.

- In relation to condition 3c) which requires the depth of the rear extension to be reduced, it is stated the council has acknowledged that the proposed depth would not result in overshadowing of the neighbouring property. The development would involve the removal of existing single storey structures on the boundary with the neighbouring property and improve the amenities for the occupants on No. 19. The proposed extension will maintain the 900mm setback from the boundary which the existing house has. A nearby development authorised by the council under 3137/18 has taller houses with separation distances of 1.8m between them, which is similar to the proposed approach in this case. The setback required by the council's condition would diminish the appearance of the house from the rear because it would break up the brick finish. The plans of the extension were shown to the neighbours who have not objected to the proposed development. The council's condition would reduce the size of a proposed bedroom and render it very compact given the size of the dwelling and its function as a master bedroom.

6.2. Planning Authority Response

None received

6.3. Observations

None

7.0 Assessment

- 7.1. The proposed extension is large and would result in an asymmetrical pair of semi-detached houses. This approach is not always appropriate, and concerns were expressed about it in a submission to the council. However neither the site nor the area are designated for the conservation of their existing architectural forms and the council explicitly addressed the issue of the acceptability of the issue of asymmetry in the report of its planner. The matter was not raised in the appeal. In these

circumstances it would not be necessary for the board to consider the application de novo. It is recommended that it treat the appeal as one against conditions only under section 139 of the planning act.

- 7.2. The proposed first floor central window with its lower cill would not be visually obtrusive and would not be out of keeping with the appearance of the extended house or the street in general. The position of the applicant on this matter is accepted, rather than that put forward by the council and in the submission on the application. It is therefore recommended that condition 3a) of the council's decision should be omitted.
- 7.3. The proposed development would present a high wall within 1m of a substantial part of the boundary with the neighbour's garden behind the house at No. 19. That garden is not particularly long, less than 15m. The visual impact of the development as proposed on the neighbouring garden would not be justified by the design features on the extension, by the size of the proposed master bedroom or by grants of permission by the council for other housing developments. In these circumstances I would agree with the council's conclusion that the appearance of the extension would be overbearing to an extent that would injure the amenities of the neighbouring property. This impact would not be significantly mitigated by the removal of the small existing structures on the boundary of the two sites, but a reduction in the length of the extension in the manner and to the extent required by condition 3c) of the council's decision would be beneficial. It is therefore recommended that that condition be retained.

8.0 Recommendation

- 8.1. I recommend that the planning authority be directed to omit condition 3a) of its decision and to attach condition 3c), and to renumber the conditions accordingly.

9.0 Reasons and Considerations

The proposed central window at first floor level at the front of the extended house would not be out of keeping with the appearance of the extended house or of the street in general. The alteration to its cill level required by condition 3a) of the planning authority's decision is not warranted, therefore.

It is considered that the height and length of the proposed two-storey extension to the rear of the existing house and its proximity to the boundary of the site with the adjoining residential property at No. 19 Gilford Park would result in an overbearing visual impact on that neighbouring property which would warrant the reduction in the extent of the proposed development that is required by condition 3c) of the planning authority's decision.

Stephen J. O'Sullivan

Planning Inspector

16th May 2021