



An  
Bord  
Pleanála

## Inspector's Report

### ABP-309968-21

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<b>Development</b>	Construction of part single 2 storey extension with rooflights
<b>Location</b>	18 Stormanstown Road, Dublin 11
<b>Planning Authority</b>	Dublin City Council North
<b>Planning Authority Reg. Ref.</b>	2088/21
<b>Applicant(s)</b>	Maeve & John Lawson.
<b>Type of Application</b>	
<b>Planning Authority Decision</b>	Grant with conditions
<b>Type of Appeal</b>	First Party
<b>Appellant(s)</b>	Maeve & John Lawson
<b>Observer(s)</b>	/
<b>Date of Site Inspection</b>	14 <sup>th</sup> May 2021
<b>Inspector</b>	Rachel Kenny

# Contents

1.0 Site Location and Description .....	3
2.0 Proposed Development .....	3
3.0 Planning Authority Decision .....	4
3.1. Decision .....	4
3.2. Planning Authority Reports .....	4
3.3. Prescribed Bodies .....	4
3.4. Third Party Observations .....	4
4.0 Planning History.....	5
5.0 Policy Context.....	5
5.1. Dublin City Development Plan 2016 – 2022.....	5
5.2. EIA Screening .....	5
6.0 The Appeal .....	6
6.1. Grounds of Appeal .....	6
6.2. Planning Authority Response .....	6
7.0 Assessment.....	6
7.3. Requirement to maintain the existing uniformity in the street.....	7
7.4. Impact on visual amenities.....	8
7.5. Appropriate Assessment .....	8
8.0 Recommendation.....	9
9.0 Reasons and Considerations.....	9

## 1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1. The appeal site is located in a residential area within Dublin City suburbs (in Dublin 11), to the north of Glasnevin, west of the Ballymun Road (and to the north of Ballymun itself) and east of Finglas. The area is characterised by well established, medium density, two storey, terraced suburban type housing. The houses would have been originally of identical/homogenous design within this general area, although there have been a significant number of additions and alterations to the facades (by way of porches), and infill housing.
- 1.2. The subject house is a mid-terrace house. The houses along this terrace were originally all identical but are no longer uniform in external appearance with numerous porches of different scale, design and material finish added to the front of each. The applicant's house appears to be unaltered, and there are also numerous examples of the original front elevation (ie no alteration to this façade).

## 2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1. It is proposed to construct a c.40sqm single storey extension and a small (c.5sqm) first floor extension to the rear of the property.
- 2.2. The extension will allow for a larger kitchen-living-dining room at ground floor and a new bathroom to serve the first floor.
- 2.3. The existing house, and proposed extension are relatively modest in size. The extension extends c.6m beyond the existing rear building line as established by the original terraced neighbour to the south. However, the neighbour to the north has already extended to the rear of this property. The first floor extension is located centrally to the rear of the property and is of a modest c.5sqm scale. The gardens are a reasonable size and following the extension will continue to provide adequate private amenity space.
- 2.4. The proposed development also includes insulation to the front of the house, and as such will result in the dry dash/rough cast render finish being replaced with a smooth render finish. The houses in the area are typically dry dash/rough cast render, albeit with different painted colours or pebble dash and some new infill and already insulated houses being smooth render.

## 3.0 Planning Authority Decision

### 3.1. Decision

The Planning Authority decided to grant permission subject to 8 conditions.

Condition 3 requires the omission of the external insulation to the front elevation.

### 3.2. Planning Authority Reports

#### 3.2.1. Planning Reports

The Planner's Report is the basis for the Planning Authority's decision. In summary it concludes:

- The proposed extension would improve the amenity of the house for the residents, and would not be injurious to the residential amenity of neighbours.
- The proposed insulation to the front elevation would result in a material change to the elevation of this uniform street, by reason of the change in elevational treatment.
- The existence of porches, and other finishes is noted, but the change in the visual appearance as a result of the proposed development, ie from rough to smooth render, is considered to more visually incongruous than the existing porches of different finishes including the introduction of brick.

The decision is in accordance with the Planner's recommendation.

#### 3.2.2. Other Technical Reports

- **Roads & Traffic:** No report
- **Drainage:** No objection subject to conditions

### 3.3. Prescribed Bodies

- **Irish Water:** No response

### 3.4. Third Party Observations

No observations received.

## 4.0 Planning History

No History noted

## 5.0 Policy Context

### 5.1. Dublin City Development Plan 2016 – 2022

- 5.1.1. Chapter 14 of the Plan refers to land use zoning. The subject site is located in an area zoned Z1 – To protect, provide and improve residential amenities.
- 5.1.2. Chapter 16 refers to Development Standards. Section 16.2.2.3 refers specifically to alterations and extensions. It is stated that ‘*Dublin City Council will seek to ensure that alterations and extensions will be sensitively designed and detailed to respect the character of the existing building, its context and the amenity of adjoining occupiers*’. In addition, it is stated that extensions should be subordinate to the existing building, retain a significant amount of garden space, and not result in the loss of roof forms.
- 5.1.3. Section 16.10.12 and Appendix 17 of the CDP contain advice generally in respect of domestic extensions and additional information on requirements for extensions to comply with, including that :

*The design of residential extensions should have regard to the amenities of adjoining properties and in particular the need for light and privacy. In addition, the form of the existing building should be followed as closely as possible, and the development should integrate with the existing building through the use of similar finishes and windows. Extensions should be subordinate in terms of scale to the main unit.*

- 5.1.4. The development plan also supports sustainable design measures to be introduced in refurbishment and extensions to existing buildings.

### 5.2. EIA Screening

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**

A first-party appeal against the Planning Authority's decision to condition 3 was submitted by the applicants' agents. In summary it states that:

- The proposed extension including the insulation is intended to ensure that the Lawson family can enjoy the property for years to come.

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

No further submission has been received from the Planning Authority.

## **7.0 Assessment**

7.1. I have read the entire contents of the file, visited the site and its surroundings, have had particular regard to the issues raised in the grounds of appeal. As this is a first party appeal against a condition, I have decided to consider this case under Section 139 of the PDA 2000 and confine my assessment to the condition under appeal. I do not consider it necessary to consider the case "de novo". The main issues in this case are those raised in the grounds of appeal and I am satisfied that no other substantive issues arise.

7.2. To this end, I note that only condition 3 is being appealed. The issues relating to this condition (ie whether to retain or omit the insulation to the front elevation) can be dealt with under the following headings:

- Requirement to maintain the existing uniformity to the street, and
- Visual amenity.

I note that the reason for the condition includes 'in the interests of residential amenity', however it is unclear from the planner's report and from my assessment

how the change in the façade could impact the residential amenity of the area, and I propose to focus on the potential visual impact.

### **7.3. Requirement to maintain the existing uniformity in the street**

- 7.3.1. Having carried out a site inspection in the area, I am not satisfied that the street has an absolute uniformity to it, in that there are numerous different style porch extensions, introducing a raft of different materials, from brick, to render, to glazing, to 'Romanesque style columns', etc.. I would also note that the infill houses, including one visible from the application site, at the top of Stormanstown Road and its junction with St. Pappin's Road, has a different finish to its neighbours; and that the neighbouring/nearby house to this has already been altered resulting in a rendered finish and significant front extension. To this end, I do not agree with the Dublin City Planner that there is an absolute 'existing uniformity' to the street or area.
- 7.3.2. I would acknowledge that there is a general consistency in terms of streetscape in terms of scale, urban grain, roofscape, window opes, etc., but the introduction of front porches (largely through exempted development) as well as permitted infill has eroded the 'uniformity' and have done so to such an extent that the streetscape in terms of uniformity can no longer be considered pristine and therefore can readily absorb further changes such as the relatively minor one proposed.
- 7.3.3. I am satisfied that the form of the building following the proposed development will remain consistent with the other terraced houses in the street, which it should be noted is a suburban residential street within a housing estate/development, and is not on a road of any noted architectural merit and/or importance.
- 7.3.4. I am further satisfied that the houses on the street are not uniform and modifications to the front elevation of many neighbouring houses has already taken place. The modification proposed is of a modest and minor nature in terms of change of character, ie moving from rough to smooth render. Finally I am satisfied that there is sufficient justification for such a change in terms of lower fuel/heating bills and associated reduction in energy consumption. The development plan supports such sustainability measures.

#### **7.4. Impact on visual amenities**

- 7.4.1. The street and houses on the street are not within any architectural conservation area and are not particularly unique or of particular architectural merit.
- 7.4.2. Changes to the front elevations, which are numerous are not considered such as to cause an adverse visual impact to the area. I would acknowledge that while the first such addition to the street (in terms of front porch) may have appeared visually incongruous and had some minor visual impact for this reason, as the uniformity has been significantly eroded over the years, no such significance could be attributed to such minor changes to the front elevation now.
- 7.4.3. I am satisfied that there is no loss or adverse impact to the visual amenity of the area, and in particular none that would justify the omission of a measure designed to reduce fuel costs and energy consumption – which should be supported in the interests of sustainability and climate change action.

#### **Conclusion**

- 7.4.4. Having regard to precedent for varying amendments to the elevations of numerous houses in the street and within the adjoining streets also comprising this house style, and the minimal alteration resulting by way of change from rough to smooth render (albeit with a modest protrusion to allow for the insulation), I do not consider the proposed development to impact on the visual or residential amenities of the area, and do not consider them to materially alter the uniformity of the street, and I am further satisfied that the development accords with the policies of DCC development plan in respect of residential extensions.

#### **7.5. Appropriate Assessment**

Having regard to the nature and scale of development proposed and to the nature of the receiving environment, 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. Arising from my assessment above I consider the decision of Dublin City Council to omit the insulation on the front elevation by condition should be overturned in this instance as it is considered that the proposed development will not significantly impact the residential amenity or visual amenity of the area. Therefore, I am satisfied that the development as proposed would be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
- 8.2. I recommend that permission should be granted for the proposed development subject to the PA's conditions, with the exception of condition 3.
- 8.3. The planning authority shall be directed to omit Condition 3 from its Order.

## 9.0 Reasons and Considerations

Having regard to:

- (a) the provisions of the Dublin City Development Plan 2016-2022,
- (b) the modest nature and scale of the development proposed,
- (c) the extent to which the uniformity of the streets in the area have been altered,  
and
- (c) the pattern of development in the area,

it is considered that subject to compliance with the conditions set out under 2088/21, with the omission of condition 3, the proposed development would not seriously injure the residential or visual amenities of the area or detract from the character of the area. The proposed development would, therefore, be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

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Rachel Kenny,  
Director of Planning .

15<sup>th</sup> May 2021

