



An  
Bord  
Pleanála

## Inspector's Report

### ABP-319094-24

<b>Development</b>	Renovation of existing two-storey detached house with conversion of attic to include dormer to the rear, a two-storey over basement extension to the side of existing dwelling with amendments to all elevations, the demolition of existing garage and new relocated garage, relocation of entrance, with amendments to existing front boundary wall and ancillary site works.		
<b>Location</b>	Shannon View, Cortober, Carrick-on-Shannon, Co. Roscommon.		
<b>Planning Authority Ref.</b>	2360226.		
<b>Applicant(s)</b>	Brendan Simon.		
<b>Type of Application</b>	Permission	<b>PA Decision</b>	Refuse Permission.
<b>Type of Appeal</b>	First Party	<b>Appellant</b>	Brendan Simon
<b>Observer(s)</b>	None		
<b>Date of Site Inspection</b>	21 <sup>st</sup> May 2024	<b>Inspector</b>	Des Johnson

#### Context

##### 1. Site Location/ and Description.

1.1 Cortober is towards the southern outskirts of Carrick-on-Shannon, Co. Roscommon. Shannon View is a local road (L 5080) linking the N4, a short

distance to the south-west of the river crossing, to the R368 further to the south-west. The appeal property is a large site, located to the southern side of Shannon View on an elevated site.

1.2 There is an existing two storey dwelling with attached single storey garage on the site. The front of the dwelling faces north-west on to the L 5080, and the rear of the dwelling faces south-east towards the River Shannon. There are mature gardens to the rear of the dwelling, which slope significantly downwards towards the south-east boundary. Adjoining the appeal site to the south-east is a two-storey dwelling, and there is a mature deciduous boundary between the two properties.

1.3 There is a living room bay window at ground floor level in the south-western elevation of the appeal premises, and two small windows at 1<sup>st</sup> floor level serving a bedroom and study.

1.4 Buildings on the north-western side of Shannon View vary from two storey terraced dwellings north of the appeal site, to single storey and single storey dormer dwellings to the south of the appeal site, at least one of which is for holiday letting.

1.5 Shannon View has a narrow carriageway with speed ramps adjacent to the appeal site front boundary. There is no footpath on the south-eastern side of the carriageway along this stretch. There is a narrow footpath on the other side of the carriageway northwards from a point opposite the existing vehicular entrance to the appeal site. There are public lights on the south-eastern side of Shannon View along this stretch.

## **2. Description of development.**

2.1 The proposal is for the renovation of existing two-storey detached house, with conversion of attic to include dormer to the rear, a two-storey over basement extension to the side of existing dwelling with amendments to all elevations, the demolition of existing garage and new relocated garage, relocation of entrance, with amendments to existing front boundary wall and ancillary site works.

2.2 The site area is stated to be 0.221ha, the gross floor area of the existing building is 151 sqm, the gross floor area proposed is 462 sqm, and the gross floor area for demolition is 16 sqm.

2.3 It is proposed to connect to public sewer. Surface water disposal is proposed to soakpit.

### **3. Planning History.**

3.1 None on file related to the appeal site. Two previous incomplete applications are recorded.

### **4. National/Regional/Local Planning Policy (see attached)**

4.1 Roscommon County Development Plan 2022-2029 came into effect on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2022.

Section 12.8 relates to House Extensions (Urban & Rural).

*Extending existing dwellinghouses to meet changing family needs is an acceptable form of development which is positively viewed by the Council.*

*In general terms the extension shall be:*

- *Subordinate to the existing dwelling in its size, unless in exceptional cases, a larger extension compliments the existing dwelling in its design and massing*
- *Reflect the proportions, detailing and finishes, materials, and colour of the existing dwelling, unless a distinctive high quality contemporary and innovatively designed extension is proposed*
- *Avoid unacceptable loss of private open space.*

*Where an extension increases the potential occupancy of the dwelling, the adequacy of the on-site sewage treatment (in un-serviced areas) should be demonstrated in the application.*

### **5. Natural Heritage Designations**

5.1 Lough Arrow SAC (Site Code 001 673) – c. 15km to the north-west.

Lough Arrow SPA (Site Code 004 050) – c. 15km to the north-west.

## **Development, Decision and Grounds of Appeal**

## **6. PA Decision.**

6.1 The planning authority REFUSED permission for the following reason:

*The proposed extensions and amendments to the existing dwellinghouse by reason of scale, proportions and overall design concept and general design features are incapable of integrating with the existing traditional two storey dwelling. The proposed extensions and amendments are neither subordinate in terms of scale nor complementary in terms of design to the existing dwelling and effectively subsume the existing dwelling and would result in the loss of the original character of that dwelling. The proposed development fails to comply with the provisions of Section 12.8 (House extensions – Urban & Rural) of the Roscommon County Development Plan 2022-2028 and, if permitted, would set an undesirable precedent for similar types of development, would seriously injure the visual amenities and character of the surrounding area, and additionally has the potential to be injurious to the residential amenity of property in the vicinity. The proposed development would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.*

6.2 The Planner's Report states that no submissions/observations were received.

The extension of a dwelling house to meet changing family needs is an acceptable form of development. Section 12.8 of the CDP sets out how, in general terms, such an extension should be. No Design Statement was submitted. The proposed design solution effectively subsumes the existing dwelling and cannot be considered subordinate to the existing dwelling in terms of floor area and overall design approach. The proposal represents an insensitive approach with minimal attempt to preserve the character of the existing dwelling house. The proposed extension is not in character with, or subordinate to the existing dwelling. Proposed fenestration changes do not complement the traditional character of the house. The scale of development is excessive, and the design does not represent the proportions and detailing of the existing house. The possibility of overlooking cannot be ruled out. Vehicular access/egress proposals do not give rise to concerns. The issue of surface water disposal to soakpit could be investigated further. The proposed development is not compliant with Section 12.8 of the CDP.

## **7. First Party Appeal.**

#### 7.1 The grounds of appeal may be summarised as follows:

- The 1<sup>st</sup> Party purchased the property with the intention of redeveloping it as a workable modern family home. The house is in need of extensive modernisation. Many of the properties in the vicinity have been adapted, extended, and altered beyond their original context. The planning authority has granted permission for modern extensions and buildings in the vicinity (references 2360004 & 18188).
- Extending existing dwellinghouses to meet changing family needs is an acceptable form of development under the CDP. Extensions are generally required to be subordinate to the existing dwelling in size, reflect the proportions, detailing and finishes, texture, materials and colour of the existing dwelling unless a distinctive high quality contemporary and innovatively designed extension is proposed, and avoid the unacceptable loss of private open space
- The Planners Report accepts the principle of renovating and extending the existing house, but does not accept the approach of the design of the extension, and its impact on the character of the existing dwelling. It states that the extension dominates the existing dwelling, and the scale of development is excessive. There is potential for overlooking of a dwelling located immediately outside the south-eastern boundary of the application site. The 1<sup>st</sup> Party submits amendments with the grounds of appeal addressing planning authority concerns.
- The proposed design allows for the primacy of the existing house to be retained. While the proposed two-storey extension projects forward of the existing dwelling at ground floor level, it is masked from the public domain by an existing hedge, which is to be retained and supplemented. The 1<sup>st</sup> Party suggests amendments relating to the retention of fenestration at first floor level, and replacement of an entrance porch with a window. A ground floor canopy detailing of the fore and side of the proposed extension is removed. Proposed timber cladding at ground floor level is removed. Materials and elevations to the extension are simplified. It is proposed that stone cladding at first floor level of the building be consistent with the texture and colour with the traditional

small tile detailing on the existing building. The connection between the existing house and the proposed extension is to be completed in a hallway and glass bridge.

- The proposal does not have a negative visual impact on the streetscape. A visual assessment of the proposed amended design relative to the streetscape is submitted.
- The distance to the south-west boundary from the proposed extension is 33m. This boundary is marked by a mature hedgerow with evergreen and deciduous trees. This boundary is to be retained and augmented. Another property adjoins to the south east, and the distance between the rear of the applicant property and the front of the adjoining house is c.65m and is separated by a boundary populated by mature trees. There is no potential for overlooking.
- The 1<sup>st</sup> Party preference is for approval of the original design, but if the Board sees fit to permit the amended design, this is acceptable.
- Exact areas for the proposed development are stated as follows:

Site area	0.22ha
Existing house area	151 sqm
Proposed house area	462 sqm
Existing ground floor	68 sqm
Proposed ground floor	185 sqm
Proposed garden floor	109 sqm
Existing first floor	68 sqm
Proposed first floor	141 sqm
Proposed attic floor	25 sqm
Existing garage	15 sqm (to be demolished)
New garage	31 sqm/l

## **8. PA Response**

8.1 None on file.

## **Environmental Screening**

### **9. EIA Screening**

Having regard to the nature and scale of development and the absence of any significant environmental sensitivity in the vicinity of the site which could be affected, 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.

#### **10. AA Screening**

Having regard to the nature and scale of development, location in an urban area, connection to existing services and separation from and absence of connectivity to European sites, it is concluded that no Appropriate Assessment issues arise as the proposed development would not be likely to have a significant effect individually or in combination with other plans or projects on a European site.

## **2.0 Assessment**

### **Introduction**

2.1. There are several elements to the proposed development, namely:

- Demolition of exiting garage and provision of new relocated garage
- Renovation of existing two storey detached dwelling
- Conversion of attic to provide for bedroom, en-suite, and store, and served by dormer to the rear
- Two-storey over basement extension to the side of existing dwelling
- Amendments to all elevations
- Relocation of entrance
- Amendments to existing front boundary wall
- Ancillary site works.

2.2. The site area is stated to be 0.221ha. The existing dwelling has a stated floor area of 151sqm, and the proposed house area, with extension, is stated to be 462sqm. The garage to be demolished has a floor area of 15sqm, and the proposed garage has a floor area of 31sqm.

2.3. The proposed two-storey over basement extension to the side would provide for the following:

- Basement level – whiskey secret room, gym & services
- Ground floor – dining, living and kitchen, utility, and WC. Includes a covered patio area to the north-western and south-western sides of the proposed extension.
- First floor – master bedroom, ensuite, shoe store, and walk-in closet. Includes a south-east facing balcony

A hall (ground floor) and glass bridge (first floor) would connect the proposed extension to the existing dwelling. The existing front door and porch would be replaced by a window, with the revised entrance to the connecting hallway. The proposed extension has a flat roof with overall height of 61.2 relative to a ridge height of 62.7 for the existing dwelling.

2.4. Proposed finishes include zinc and wood cladding to the north-west elevation at ground floor level with full length Aluclad windows, and grey stone cladding to proposed extension at first floor level.

2.5. The planning authority has refused permission for a single reason stating that the proposed development is incapable of integrating with the existing two storey dwelling, is neither subordinate or complementary in terms of design and effectively subsumes the dwelling with resulting loss of character of the dwelling, and fails to comply with provisions of the CDP (Section 12.8) seriously injuring the visual amenities and character of the surrounding area. Additionally, there is potential for injury to the residential amenities of property in the vicinity.

2.6. In response to the grounds of appeal, the 1<sup>st</sup> Party requests permission for the development as detailed in the application to the planning authority, but outlines amendments that could be incorporated to address planning authority concerns in the event that the Board sees fit to permit an amended design. The suggested amendments contained in the grounds of appeal effectively simplify the proposed design through the retention of existing fenestration openings and windows at first floor level of the existing dwelling, (other than simplifying the opening sections and removing glazing bars), removal of ground floor timber cladding finish at ground floor



level, and the use of stone cladding at first floor level of the proposed extension consistent with the texture and colour of the traditional small tile detailing of the existing building. A proposed visualization drawing of the proposed development is submitted with the grounds of appeal.

- 2.7. There were no objections/observations submitted to the planning authority during the consideration of the application. I consider that the suggested amendments submitted with the grounds of appeal are of a relatively minor nature and could be considered by the Board without the requirement for further notification.
- 2.8. In the first instance, the Board must assess the wording of the reason for refusal and determine if there are any restrictions on its consideration arising from Section 37(2)(b) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. I consider that there are no such restrictions applicable in this case. The relevant section of the Act refers to situations where the planning authority has decided to refuse permission on the grounds that a proposed development materially contravenes the development plan. The reason for refusal by the planning authority in this case states that the proposed development fails to comply with the provisions of Section 12.8 of the CDP, but does not refer to material contravention of the development plan.
- 2.9. I submit that the key issues to be addressed are as follows:
- Principle of development
  - Proposed access arrangements
  - Visual and Residential amenities
  - Environmental assessments

### **Principle of development**

- 2.10. The CDP states that the extension of existing dwellinghouses to meet changing family needs is an acceptable form of development. The proposed development seeks to renovate and extend the existing dwelling to meet the 1<sup>st</sup> Party's family needs. I conclude that the proposed development, comprising renovation and extension of the existing dwelling, and the demolition and replacement of an existing garage, is acceptable in principle.

### **Proposed access**

- 2.11. It is proposed to relocate the existing vehicular entrance a short distance to the south-west, and to close off the existing access. The new access would be 4m wide. The planning authority has not raised any concerns. I see no objection to this aspect of the proposed development.

### **Visual and residential amenities**

- 2.12. The appeal site is elevated, close to the highest point on Shannon View. It is a large site with mature boundaries including evergreen and deciduous trees and shrubbery. The existing dwelling is prominent in public views from Shannon View in the vicinity of the site. The front boundary wall and hedging partially screens the ground floor level of the house from public view. Housing type in the area is mixed single and two-storey.
- 2.13. The CDP is favourable towards extensions of existing dwelling houses in principle. The Plan sets out general requirements for such extensions, but does provide for 'exceptional' cases. Generally, the proposed extension should be subordinate to the existing dwelling in size, unless a larger extension compliments the existing dwelling in its design and massing. I consider that the proposed design provides for a clear visual separation between the existing dwelling and the proposed extension. While the proposed extension, would not read as subordinate to the existing dwelling, neither would it read as subsuming the existing dwelling. The amended proposal submitted with the grounds of appeal shows revised stone cladding to the proposed extension at first floor level, and this allows for a reduced overall height of the extension, which reduces its visual impact relative to the existing dwelling. In the event of the Board deciding to grant permission, I recommend that these two amendments be included by way of condition.
- 2.14. The existing dwelling on the site is not listed for protection, but does contribute to the character of its immediate surrounds. I submit that the ground floor timber cladding finish at ground floor level does detract from the character of the existing dwelling and, in the event of permission being granted, I recommend its omission by way of condition.
- 2.15. In terms of residential amenity, the planning authority notes that the site, which falls significantly to the south-east towards the Shannon, and that there is a 3<sup>rd</sup> party dwelling and associated private amenity space adjoining to the south east. The

Planner's report is not satisfied that the possibility of overlooking of this property can be ruled out. There is a proposed balcony to be provided at first floor level in the proposed development. I note that the proposed development is c. 33m from the rear boundary, would be c. 65m separated from the front of the 3<sup>rd</sup> party house to the south-east, and that there is a mature boundary between the two properties. In these circumstances, I conclude that overlooking of the adjoining property to the south-east would not occur. There is a mature boundary to the south-west side of the appeal site screening the proposed development from the adjoining property.

### **Environmental assessments**

- 2.15.1. Having regard to the nature and scale of development and the absence of any significant environmental sensitivity in the vicinity of the site which could be affected, 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.
- 2.16. Having regard to the nature and scale of development, location in an urban area, connection to existing services and separation from and absence of connectivity to European sites, it is concluded that no Appropriate Assessment issues arise as the proposed development would not be likely to have a significant effect individually or in combination with other plans or projects on a European site.

## **3.0 Recommendation**

- 3.1. I recommend that permission for the development be granted.

## **4.0 Reasons & Considerations**

Having regard to the characteristics of the site, the established pattern of development in the area, and the provisions of the Roscommon County Development Plan 2022-2029, it is considered that the proposed development, subject to compliance with the attached conditions, would provide for an acceptable renovation and extension of the existing dwellinghouse which would not detract for the character of the dwelling, would not be seriously injurious to the visual or

residential amenities of the area, would not set an undesirable precedent, and would be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

## Conditions

1. The development shall be carried out and completed in accordance with the plans and particulars lodged with the application, 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 the commencement of development, and the development shall be carried out and completed in accordance with the agreed particulars.

**Reason:** In the interest of clarity.

2. The development shall be revised as follows:

- The timber cladding finish proposed at ground floor level of the development shall be omitted
- The overall height of the proposed side extension shall not exceed 5688mm above ground level, or the eaves height of the existing dwelling.
- The existing fenestration and openings at first floor level in the existing dwelling shall be retained

**Reason:** In the interest of visual amenities and to retain the character of the existing dwelling.

3. Before development commences details of the following matters shall be agreed in writing with the planning authority:

- Design of the windows at first floor level in the north-west elevation of the proposed extension
- Materials, colour, and texture of all external finishes, including the stone cladding at first floor level in the proposed extension

- Reinstatement of the front boundary arising from the closing off of the existing vehicular entrance.

**Reason:** In the interest of visual amenity

4. Surface water disposal arrangements shall comply with the requirements of the planning authority for such services and works.

**Reason:** In the interest of public health.

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Des Johnson

Planning Inspector

27th June 2024

I confirm that this report represents my professional planning assessment, judgement and opinion on the matter assigned to me and that no person has influenced or sought to influence, directly or indirectly, the exercise of my professional judgement in an improper or inappropriate way.