



An
Bord
Pleanála

Inspector's Report

ABP-322246-25

Development

The development consists of an attic conversion to habitable status with the provision of a new Mansard Roof, a rear single storey extension, and all ancillary works necessary to facilitate the development.

Location

39 Wilson Road, Mount Merrion, Blackrock, Co. Dublin, A94P3Y9.

Planning Authority Ref.

D25B/0046/WEB

Applicant(s)

Paul Moran and Marta Zelazowska

Type of Application

Permission

PA Decision

To refuse permission.

Type of Appeal

First Party

Appellant

Paul Moran and Marta Zelazowska

Observer(s)

None

Date of Site Inspection

3rd June /
11th June
2025

Inspector

Vanessa Langheld

1.1. Site Location and Description

- 1.2. The site is located on a residential road in Mount Merrion, Co Dublin. It is an established road characterised by three bed bungalows which were built in the 1940's. The houses are relatively close to each other and are characterised by a hipped roof style that is clearly legible when viewed from the street. The houses are set back from the road with off-street parking to the front. The road slopes uphill from the front of the houses and the road (north) to the back of the houses (south). This results in the houses being somewhat prominent when viewed from the road particularly on the side of the road where No. 39, the appeal site is located.
- 1.3. Although there is some variation in house style arising from modification and extension over the years, there remains a distinct streetscape style with all the houses retaining their hipped roof profiles. There is some variation to this in terms of the insertion of dormer windows to the front and side of the hipped roofs, with alterations to the roof profile to the rear of some of the houses, but the front appearance of the houses is more or less of a similar hipped roof style.

2.0 Description of the Proposed Development

The proposed development is summarised as follows:

- Attic conversion to habitable status with the provision of a new Mansard Roof to the sides. (The Perspectives included in the application documentation and the Artists Impressions included in the appeal show that the roof which is stated to be a mansard roof has a 'Dutch Barn' type of appearance.)
- A single storey extension of 30 sq m to the rear of the existing house.
- All ancillary works necessary to facilitate the development.

The floor area of the house increases from 115 sq m to 227 sq m with the number of bedrooms increasing from three to four. The Applicants Agent

states that the rationale for the increased floor area is to maximise space for the family's needs, including the likelihood that children will stay at home for longer than was traditionally the case, and to provide space for an aging parent.

3.0 Planning History

The appeal house itself has no planning history. Other planning applications on Wilson Road, which are considered to be of relevance to the appeal site are summarised below:

D24B/0238 WEB – / ABP-320488 Wilson Road – 3 Wilson Road - Refusal by the Board and the Planning Authority for demolition of existing rear extension, construction of side and rear extension, attic conversion to habitable status with provision on new pitched and hipped roofs with dormer roofs etc.

D24A/0185/WEB – 3 Wilson Road - Permission granted for demolition of existing structures to side and rear and construction of new extension to side and rear, front and side and alterations to front elevation and other ancillary works.

D24B/0072 – 15 Wilson Road – permission granted for a single storey porch extension to the side, a front facing attic dormer and associated works. Refusal of permission for two side facing dormers for reasons of visual appearance and negative impact on the streetscape.

D23B/0458 – 41 Wilson Road – permission granted for extension and alterations to include: replacement of existing roof with new dormer

mansard type roof, changes to dormer to front and addition of rooflights to the side elevations.

D23A/0173 – 41 Wilson Road – split decision for application to replace roof with new dormer type roof, additional bay windows to the rear and dormer windows to the front and addition of roof lights to the side elevations. Permission to replace the roof was refused for two reasons relating to the impact on the streetscape and to the development potential of adjoining houses.

D19B/0341 – 38 Wilson Road – Permission granted for attic conversion and frontal dormer window and partial removal of hipped roof to rear with new pitched roof with increased ridge height and new gable roof to rear.

4.0 Policy Context

The site is zoned A *‘to provide residential development and improve residential amenity while protecting the existing residential amenities’* in the Dun Laoghaire – Rathdown Development Plan, 2022-2028. Residential development, extensions, roof alteration etc. are permitted uses within this zone. The site is not located in a Conservation Area.

Section 4.3.1.2 (Policy Objective PHP19: Existing Housing Stock – Adaptation)

- Seeks to preserve and improve existing housing stock and to densify existing built-up areas whilst having due regard to the amenities of existing established residential neighbourhoods.

Section 12.3.7.1 (Extensions to Dwellings)

- Subsection ii (Extensions to Rear) sets out how ground-floor rear extensions will be considered in terms of their length, height, proximity to mutual boundaries and quantum of usable rear private open space (POS) remaining so long as they harmonise with the main dwelling, whilst first-floor rear extensions will be considered on their merits and only permitted in scenarios where there are no significant negative impacts on surrounding residential or visual amenities.

In determining such applications, regard will be had to the following factors:

- Overshadowing, overbearing, and overlooking along with proximity, height, and length along mutual boundaries.
- Remaining rear POS, its orientation and usability.
- Degree of set-back from mutual side boundaries.
- External finishes and design to harmonise with existing.

Subsection iv (Alterations at Roof / Attic Level) sets out how roof alterations / expansions will be assessed against the following criteria:

- *‘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.’*

The following design and locational criteria are specified:

‘Dormer extensions to roofs, i.e. to the front, side, and rear, 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. Dormer extensions should be set down from the existing ridge level so as to not read as a third storey extension at roof level to the rear.'

The following criteria relating to materials and fenestration are specified:

'The proposed quality of materials/finishes for dormer extensions will be considered carefully as this can greatly improve their appearance. The level and type of glazing within a dormer extension should have regard to existing window treatments and fenestration of the dwelling. However, regard should also be had to size of fenestration proposed at attic level relative to adjoining residential amenities.'

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.'

(Underlining is my emphasis.)

5.0 Planning Authority Decision

The Planning Authority issued a decision to refuse permission, dated 25 March 2025. The single refusal reason stated as follows:

'1. The proposed development that includes the introduction of a mansard roof would be out of character with the surrounding area that is dominated by traditional hipped roofs. It is considered that the proposed development would be visually obtrusive and incongruous and would have a negative impact on the streetscape. This is considered to be contrary to Section 12.3.7.1 (iv) of the Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan 2022-2028. The proposed development would set an undesirable

precedent and would be contrary to the proper planning and development of the area.'

5.1 Planning Authority Reports

5.1.1 Planning Report

The report considered Development Plan Policy and it was noted that in principle the development is acceptable. Policy on roof / attic extension, however, requires that development harmonise with existing and adjoining properties. Although the ridge height remains the same, the mansard design results in a bulky and incongruous roof profile very different to the hipped style of roofs in the vicinity. Having regard to the size of the proposed roof it would have a visually dominant impact. Accordingly, it was considered that the development is not compatible with the Policy set out in Section 12.3.7.1 on roof and attic extensions.

There was an observation from the owners of the adjoining house (No. 41) on the planning file. The observation raised concern about the height and length of the single storey extension to the rear. The Planning Officer however considered this aspect of the development acceptable but found that because it extends upwards to sit under the eaves of the first floor bedroom it could not be constructed as designed without the first floor and for this reason could not be permitted.

5.1.2 Other Technical Reports

The report of the Drainage Department is noted and the recommended Condition is accepted.

6.0 Natural Heritage Designations

The appeal site is not located within or adjoining any designated site. The nearest European Sites and Natural Heritage Areas in close proximity to the appeal site are as follows:

1. South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA (Site Code 004024) approx. 2.1 km to north-east.
2. South Dublin Bay SAC (Site Code 000210) approx. 2.3 km to north-east.
3. South Dublin Bay pNHA (Site Code 000210) – approx. 2.3 km to the north-east.

7.0 EIA Screening

See Form 1 appended to this Report. The proposed development therefore does not require screening for EIA.

8.0 AA Screening

I have considered the proposed development in light of the requirements of Section 177U of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended. The subject site is located c 2.1km from South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA (Site Code 004024), c. 2.3km South Dublin Bay SAC (Site Code 000210) and c. 2.3km of South Dublin Bay pNHA (Site Code 000210). The proposed development comprises the construction of new attic level accommodation, a new roof and a single storey ground floor extension. Having considered the nature, scale and location of the project, I am satisfied that it can be eliminated from further assessment because it could not have any appreciable effect on a European Site. The reason for this conclusion is as follows:

- The absence of any external impacts.
- The distance to European sites and the lack of any direct pathway to same.
- The screening determination by the Planning Authority.

I conclude, on the basis of objective information, that the proposed development would not have a likely significant effect on any European Site either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

9.0 First Party Appeal

The First Party Appeal is submitted by the Applicant's Agent, Peter Brennan, and is summarised as follows:

- The appeal property is a bungalow constructed in the 1940s. The streetscape has evolved since that time with many of the single storey dwellings adapted to two storeys by converting the attic space to facilitate additional accommodation.
- There is a clear precedent on Wilson Road for roof modification with and attic conversion.
- The neighbouring house No. 41 has a hipped roof with a dormer window to the front and a part mansard roof to the rear.
- The reason for requiring the appeal extension is to provide space for a growing family. In this regard, the Applicants viewed their neighbours house No. 41 where the design provides for a mansard roof to the rear and a hipped roof to the front prior to submitting their application. They considered that the internal constraints, which result from the frontal hipped roof are restrictive in terms of the resultant internal space and are unnecessary. Accordingly, they wish to bring the mansard roof forward to the front of the house in order to maximise internal usable space.
- The appeal design is modest in scale and its impact will be subtle on the streetscape. The design does not dominate or disrupt the streetscape, nor does it result in overshadowing. It will not be overbearing or oppressive.
- The Applicants Agent states that there were no objections from neighbours, although I note that there was an objection the DLRDCC from the owner of the adjoining house, No. 41 Wilson Road who raised concern with the height of the single storey extension to the rear and with the overall height of the northwest elevation and its impact on their southwest facing garden.

- The proposal accords with Development Plan policy relating to compact growth and consolidation, infill development within existing communities, re-use of existing buildings and adaptable homes for all life stages.
- The appeal design is a smart design, providing a long term, sustainable solution for changing family needs.

The appeal document includes photographs of other houses along Wilson Road showing a variety of different roof treatments and also an Artists Impression of how the proposed extension at No. 39 will appear on the street.

9.2 Planning Authority Response

Dun Laoghaire–Rathdown County Council has responded that the grounds of appeal do not raise any new matters which in the opinion of the Planning Authority would justify a change of attitude to the proposed development.

9.3 Observations

None

10.0 Assessment

In my opinion, the Appeal may be assessed under the following criteria:

- The principle of the extension / attic conversion.
- The suitability or otherwise of the roof design

10.1 The principle of the extension / attic conversion.

It is considered that the principle of the residential extension and attic conversion is considered to be appropriate in this zoned residential area.

10.2 The suitability or otherwise of the roof design

The issue considered to be of importance in this appeal is the style of the new roof. It is a mansard type design characterised by two slopes on each of its sides with the lower slope at a steeper angle than the upper slope. To the front and rear of the house, the design provides for a flat gable presentation. It therefore presents a more or less two storey appearance to Wilson Road and to its rear elevation. In my opinion, the style of the proposed roof is that of a Dutch Barn type of style.

The appeal submission states that there is a multiplicity of roof presentations to the houses on Wilson Road and that the houses, constructed in the 1940s, need to be adapted to provide for modern living and to maximise the provision of space. It is their contention that the insertion of a mansard type roof will not negatively impact on the streetscape as there has already been considerable alteration of adjoining roof profiles.

I have visited the site and reviewed the drawings on this application / appeal; I do not concur with the appellants agent in this regard. These

bungalows have largely retained their character, despite numerous extensions and modifications over the years. When viewed from the road there remains a similarity in the roof profile of the houses with all the houses appearing as single storey with hipped roofs. The insertion of dormer windows to the front and in some cases to the side of their hipped roofs is largely not legible from the street and has no real impact on the streetscape. Overall, the profile of the street remains one of single storey hipped roofed houses.

The perspectives of the proposed development included within the application drawings and the Artists Impressions included in the Appeal document show that the proposed mansard type roof will extend out to the front building line, giving the appearance of a two storey house from the front. This would be clearly visible as a different roof profile to that of neighbouring houses when viewed from Wilson Road. Its difference would also be exacerbated by the topography of the road where the houses on the souther side of the road are upslope of the road itself and by the fact that No. Number 39 is in the middle of a row of single-storey hipped roof houses, not an end house. In my opinion, the proposed mansard roof (Dutch barn type appearance) would appear very large and obvious on the streetscape and would negatively affect the view from Wilson Road.

In this regard I concur with the DLRDCC Planning Officer that the design by reason of its bulk, scale and visual appearance would be out of character with the existing property and existing properties in the vicinity and would conflict with Section 12.3.7.1 of the Dun Laoghaire – Rathdown County Development Plan, 2022-2028, which requires that alterations at roof and attic level harmonise with the existing and adjoining structures and have regard to the impact on the streetscape. (See Drawing No. P109-110 and 111 – 3D Ortho Section Views and Perspective Views and Appendix G of the Appeal document which shows an Artists impression of No. 39 with the proposed Mansard Roof in the context of the neighbouring houses.)

10.3 Suitability of the single storey extension to the rear of the house

This 30 sq m extension to the rear of the house extends to under the proposed window of the back wall of proposed attic level and is higher than the existing pitched roof. It would not fit in appropriately in the absence of the proposed mansard type roof to which is it attached. (See Drawing P110 – 3D Ortho Section Views.)

I note also that it is 3.5 m high and will extend out 5 m from the back wall of the existing house, adjoining the back garden No. 41 Wilson Road. I do not concur with the Planning Officers Report which states that there will be no overlooking, overshadowing or overbearing on the neighbouring property. I note that the orientation is such that it will affect the evening sun to both the back garden and kitchen extension of No. 41 extending for 5 m along their boundary, albeit with a c. 1 m separation. At a height of 3.5m with a flat roof this is considered injurious to their established residential amenity. (See Image 5 and Image 6 attached to the First Party Appeal.)

11.0 Recommendation

I recommend that permission be refused for the reasons and considerations set out below.

12.0 Reasons & Considerations

1. The proposed development by reason of its design, which includes the loss of the frontal hipped roof and its replacement with a mansard style roof would be out of character with the original design and with the adjoining properties along this road of single storey bungalows with hipped roofs. The proposed development would therefore seriously injure the visual amenities of the streetscape and be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

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.

Vanessa Langheld

Planning Inspector, 11 June 2025

• **Appendix 1 - Form 1 EIA Pre-Screening**

An Bord Pleanála Case Reference	ABP-322246-25		
Proposed Development Summary	Attic conversion to habitable status with the provision of a new Mansard Roof, a rear single storey extension, and all ancillary works necessary to facilitate the development.		
Development Address	39 Wilson Road, Mount Merrion, Blackrock, Co. Dublin, A94P3Y9.		
1. Does the proposed development come within the definition of a 'project' for the purposes of EIA? (that is involving construction works, demolition, or interventions in the natural surroundings)		Yes	X
		No	
2. Is the proposed development of a CLASS specified in Part 1 or Part 2, Schedule 5, Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended)?			
Yes		.	Proceed to Q3.
No	X		No further action required
3. Does the proposed development equal or exceed any relevant THRESHOLD set out in the relevant Class?			
Yes		State the relevant threshold here for the Class of development.	EIA Mandatory EIAR required
No			Proceed to Q4
4. Is the proposed development below the relevant threshold for the Class of development [sub-threshold development]?			
Yes		State the relevant threshold here for the Class of development and indicate the size of the development relative to the threshold.	Preliminary examination required (Form 2)
5. Has Schedule 7A information been submitted?			
No	X	Screening determination remains as above (Q1 to Q4)	
Yes		Screening Determination required	

Inspector: _____

Date: _____