



An
Coimisiún
Pleanála

Inspector's Report

ABP-322528-25

Development	Conversion of attic for storage space, including new rear dormer window, gable window and associated works
Location	210 Barton Road East, Dundrum, Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown, D14KT98
Planning Authority	Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council
Planning Authority Reg. Ref.	D25A/0155
Applicant(s)	James and Jessica Coates
Type of Application	Permission
Planning Authority Decision	Grant permission with conditions
Type of Appeal	First Party Appeal Against Condition
Appellant(s)	James and Jessica Coates
Observer(s)	None
Date of Site Inspection	9 th July 2025
Inspector	Tony Quinn

1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1. The site is a semi-detached, two storey dwelling at the corner of a row of similar residential properties at Barton Road East and Sweetmount Park, Dublin 14. It is situated in a largely residential area located close to Dundrum Village and Town Centre. The property is bounded by perimeter hedging and tree planting on Sweetmount Park.

2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1. The proposed development essentially involves the erection of a rear dormer window in the attic, which is to be converted for storage space. Associated works include installation of a new gable window at attic level, installation of internal stairway to attic and improvements to the driveway at its junction with Barton Road East.

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

Decision

The Council granted planning permission on the 16th April 2025 subject to 4 Conditions, the 2nd of which is the subject of this appeal. It requires the height of the proposed dormer to be decreased by 200mm, so that it is subordinate to the ridgeline of the existing dwelling. It also requires the width of the dormer to be decreased by 1m. It is this latter reduction in width that is the subject of this appeal.

Conditions

Apart from the second condition referred to above, the first condition relates to standard compliance with the application details, while the third and fourth pertain to the driveway works and any associated surface water drainage works.

Planning Authority Reports

The Planning Report concluded the following:

- As the site is subject to residential zoning objective A the principle of the proposed extension is acceptable.
- Issues relating to overlooking and overbearance would be addressed by reducing the height of the dormer. No similar requirement in typed form is stated to reduce the width of the dormer. This is inserted by a handwritten note, apparently made on the day of granting planning permission
- The position of the new gable window at attic level equally does not result in undue overlooking.

Other Technical Reports

- The Council's drainage report raised no objection subject to compliance with the two aforementioned conditions relating to the proposed driveway modifications.

Prescribed Bodies

None

Third Party Observations

None

4.0 Planning History

There is no relevant planning history pertaining to the site or immediate adjoining properties.

The appellant makes reference to planning permission (D2118/0270) for a similar dormer nearby at 143 Meadow Grove, in terms of setting a precedent for the scale and design of dormer that is appropriate for this area.

5.0 Policy Context

5.1. Development Plan

The site is subject to Zoning Objective A in the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan 2022-2028, which is to provide residential development and improve residential amenity while protecting the existing residential amenities. As a form of residential development the extension is considered acceptable in principle.

Policy Objective PHP19 relates to Adaptation of the existing Housing Stock and seeks to conserve and improve existing housing stock through supporting improvements and adaption of homes consistent with National Policy Objective (NPO 34) of the National Planning Framework (NPF). Policy PHP19 actively promotes and facilitates extension and sub-division or creation of a family unit. It specifically states that retention and adaption of existing housing stock will be further encouraged by facilitating suitably designed domestic extensions.

In the Development Management Section of the Development Plan, entitled Additional Accommodation in Existing Built-up Areas, guidance on Alterations at Roof/Attic Level is contained in Section 12.3.7.1 (iv). This guidance largely relates to impact on urban design and residential amenity. The specific considerations for dormers are recalled below.

“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.” Source: p243, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan 2022-2028

The specific criteria cited above will be addressed in the Planning Assessment section of the Inspector’s report.

5.2. National Policy

National Policy Objective 34 of the National Planning Framework supports the provision of lifetime adaptable homes that can accommodate the changing needs of a household over time.

5.3. Natural Heritage Designations

There are no natural heritage designations on or in the vicinity of the subject site.

6.0 EIA Screening

The proposed development is not a class for the purposes of EIA as per the classes of development set out in Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended. No mandatory requirement for EIA therefore arises and there is also no requirement for a screening determination. Refer to Form 1 in Appendix 1 of this report.

7.0 The Appeal

7.1. Grounds of Appeal

The first party grounds of appeal can be summarised as follows:

- The scale and nature of the proposed dormer was based on a similar one granted four years ago (D21B/0270) for a semi-detached property at 143 Meadow Grove, which is located approximately 250m from the application site.
- Referencing Section 12.3.7 (iv) of the County Development Plan relating to Alterations at Roof/Attic Level, the appellant highlights the following: the absence of overlooking due to: the presence of a large extension on the adjoining property at 208 Barton Road East; the existence of boundary planting; its corner location; and roadside tree planting on Sweetmount Park.

- No objections were received and no specific dimensions for dormers are stated in the Development Plan.
- The requirement to reduce the width of the dormer was handwritten onto the Executive Order and is not mentioned in the main body of the planner's report, which was favourable in its assessment.

7.2. **Planning Authority Response**

The planning authority relied upon its determination and had no further comment to make.

7.3. **Observations**

None

8.0 **Assessment**

This assessment is limited to consideration of matters raised in relation to the terms of the appealed condition. In this regard, it relates to the condition under appeal under section 139 rather than a de novo assessment.

Scale and design of proposed dormer

- 8.1. The absence of specified dimensions for dormers in the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan 2022-2028 implies that each application has to be assessed on its own merits. In addition to the scale and design of the proposed dormer relative to the existing house, the Development Plan places emphasis on setting it back from the ridge line, eaves line and party boundaries.
- 8.2. The proposed dormer is 2m tall and 5.5m wide, inclusive of two windows, one of which wraps around the corner with Sweetmount Park. It will comprise a grey trolal or metal finish arranged in a standing seam pattern. The scale of the dormer and its modern finish, which is fairly standard, are based on a similar dormer recently permitted by the Council in the neighbouring area at 143 Meadow Grove. Save for the adjustments outlined below, the scale and design proposed for the subject site are considered acceptable.

- 8.3. By virtue of the Planning Condition No.2, necessitating a 200mm reduction in height from the ridgeline, the proposed dormer largely manages to comply with criteria in the Development Plan. However, it is recommended that the set-back from the adjoining property is increased, involving a reduction in dormer width of 250mm, so that it is consistent with the 1m set-back from the gable end. In so doing, the proposed dormer will be centrally aligned across the expanse of the roofspace, in much the same way as the solar panels are at the front. This will allow the dormer to read symmetrically with the width of the house.
- 8.4. No explanation or justification for the Council's late, handwritten amendment to the planning condition stipulating a 1m reduction in the width of the dormer is on file. It is inconsistent with its determination for a similar dormer at 143 Meadow Grove and it is unclear how it is to be applied for the subject application. For example, does it involve simply reducing the width of the dormer evenly across the roofspace or does it involve reducing it from one side only. For these reasons, little weight can be attached to its imposition and the above recommended reduction of 250mm in width is considered appropriate.

Overlooking and overshadowing

- 8.5. Overlooking on the adjoining semi-detached property at 208 Barton Road East largely involves looking down on the roof of its large extension. Beyond the extension, views are screened by boundary planting. Any overshadowing from the dormer will largely affect the roof of the neighbour's extension.
- 8.6. The proposed dormer will face the side gable of No.60 Sweetmount Park. There are two windows on this property at first floor level at a distance of approximately 22m from the application dwelling. However, given the difference in levels with the appeal site, it is considered that a considerable degree of overlooking from the appeal dwelling already exists and it is unlikely that the proposed dormer will exacerbate this state of affairs.
- 8.7. The proposed additional window at the gable, together with the proposed corner dormer window, will not present overlooking issues for No.212 Barton Road East, which is the corner property opposite. This is due to separation distance involved,

which is well over 30m, together with the intervening presence of trees on Sweetmount Park.

9.0 AA Screening

- 9.1. I have considered the proposed dormer and associated works in light of the requirements of S177U of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended.
- 9.2. The subject site is located approximately 4 kms from the nearest European Sites, namely South Dublin Bay Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary Special Protection Area (SPA).
- 9.3. The proposed development comprises the installation of a rear dormer and a number of ancillary works.
- 9.4. Having considered the nature, scale and location of the project, I am satisfied that it can be eliminated from further assessment because there is no conceivable risk to any European Site. The reason for this conclusion is the small scale and nature of the development; together with its distance from the nearest European site.
- 9.5. I conclude that 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.
- 9.6. Likely significant effects are excluded and therefore Appropriate Assessment (stage 2) under Section 177V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 is not required.

10.0 Water Framework Directive

- 10.1. The subject site is located approximately 600m from the Wyckham Stream/Slang River Greenway.
- 10.2. The proposed development comprises the installation of a rear dormer window, new gable window at attic level and improvements to driveway.
- 10.3. No water deterioration concerns were raised in the planning appeal.
- 10.4. I have assessed the proposed dormer and associated works and have considered the objectives as set out in Article 4 of the Water Framework Directive which seek to protect and, where necessary, restore surface & ground water waterbodies in order

to reach good status (meaning both good chemical and good ecological status), and to prevent deterioration. Having considered the nature, scale and location of the project, I am satisfied that it can be eliminated from further assessment because there is no conceivable risk to any surface and/or groundwater water bodies either qualitatively or quantitatively.

10.5. The reason for this conclusion is as follows:

- The small scale and nature of the development.
- The distance from nearest water bodies and/or lack of hydrological connections.

10.6. I conclude that on the basis of objective information, that the proposed development will not result in a risk of deterioration on any water body (rivers, lakes, groundwaters, transitional and coastal) either qualitatively or quantitatively or on a temporary or permanent basis or otherwise jeopardise any water body in reaching its WFD objectives and consequently can be excluded from further assessment.

11.0 Recommendation

11.1. Having regard to the nature of the condition that is the subject of the appeal, I am satisfied that the determination by the Board of the relevant application as if it had been made to it in the first instance would not be warranted and, based on the reasons and considerations set out below, directs the said Council under subsection (1) of section 139 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 to:

(c) AMEND condition number 2 as follows:

The rear dormer shall be reduced in height from the ridgeline by 200mm and reduced in width by 250mm to provide a 1m set back from the adjoining property.

12.0 Reasons and Considerations

Having regard to the residential land use zoning for the site, and to the pattern of development in the area, it is considered that the proposed rear dormer and associated works by reason of its scale, nature and design, and its location with

respect to the adjoining and neighbouring properties, would not detract from the character of the dwelling and would not seriously injure the amenities of the area or of property in the vicinity by reason of overlooking or loss of privacy. Amendment of the planning authority's Condition 2 is therefore warranted.

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.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Tony Quinn', written over a horizontal line.

Tony Quinn
Planning Inspector

23rd July 2025

Appendix 1 - Form 1 EIA Pre-Screening

Case Reference	ABP-322528-25
Proposed Development Summary	Conversion of attic for storage space, including new rear dormer window, gable window and associated works
Development Address	
	In all cases check box /or leave blank
1. Does the proposed development come within the definition of a 'project' for the purposes of EIA? (For the purposes of the Directive, "Project" means: - The execution of construction works or of other installations or schemes, - Other interventions in the natural surroundings and landscape including those involving the extraction of mineral resources)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, it is a 'Project'. Proceed to Q2. <input type="checkbox"/> No, No further action required.
2. Is the proposed development of a CLASS specified in Part 1, Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended)?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, it is a Class specified in Part 1. EIA is mandatory. No Screening required. EIAR to be requested. Discuss with ADP.	State the Class here
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No, it is not a Class specified in Part 1. Proceed to Q3	
3. Is the proposed development of a CLASS specified in Part 2, Schedule 5, Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) OR a prescribed type of proposed road development under Article 8 of Roads Regulations 1994, AND does it meet/exceed the thresholds?	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No, the development is not of a Class Specified in Part 2, Schedule 5 or a prescribed type of	

<p>proposed road development under Article 8 of the Roads Regulations, 1994.</p> <p>No Screening required.</p>	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes, the proposed development is of a Class and meets/exceeds the threshold.</p> <p>EIA is Mandatory. No Screening Required</p>	<p>State the Class and state the relevant threshold</p>
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes, the proposed development is of a Class but is sub-threshold.</p> <p>Preliminary examination required. (Form 2)</p> <p>OR</p> <p>If Schedule 7A information submitted proceed to Q4. (Form 3 Required)</p>	<p>State the Class and state the relevant threshold</p>

<p>4. Has Schedule 7A information been submitted AND is the development a Class of Development for the purposes of the EIA Directive (as identified in Q3)?</p>	
<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Screening Determination required (Complete Form 3)</p>
<p>No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Pre-screening determination conclusion remains as above (Q1 to Q3)</p>

Inspector:  Date: 23rd July 2025