



An  
Coimisiún  
Pleanála

## Inspector's Report ACP-323434-25

<b>Development</b>	Demolition of house and garage and construction of 3 houses with associated works.
<b>Location</b>	Thornberry, 4 Granville Road, Blackrock, Dublin, A94RH95
<b>Planning Authority</b>	Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council
<b>Planning Authority Reg. Ref.</b>	D25A/0445/WEB
<b>Applicant(s)</b>	Conor Sheeran
<b>Type of Application</b>	Permission
<b>Planning Authority Decision</b>	Refuse
<b>Type of Appeal</b>	First
<b>Appellant(s)</b>	Conor Sheeran, c/o Armstrong Planning Limited
<b>Observer(s)</b>	None
<b>Date of Site Inspection</b>	14th November 2025
<b>Inspector</b>	Suzanne White

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## **1.0 Site Location and Description**

- 1.1. The appeal site has a stated site area of 0.186ha and is located on the northeast side of Granville Road, in the south Dublin suburb of Blackrock.
- 1.2. The site contains a detached two storey dwelling house with detached single storey garage on its southern side. The site is served by two vehicular entrances from Granville Road, providing an 'in and out' access arrangement. The existing boundary treatment to the front consists of a low rendered boundary wall, behind which is mature hedging and trees which provides significant screening from the road. The site narrows to the rear, though includes a generously proportioned rear garden relative to the existing dwelling footprint. The rear garden includes mature planting on the boundaries, particularly along the boundary with No. 6 to the south and with the adjoining dwelling to the rear.
- 1.3. Granville Road consists predominantly of detached, two storey, pitched roof dwellings, however I note 1A & 1B Granville Road nearby to the north which comprise two single storey infill dwellings. Some variation in the form, massing and architectural style is also evident in the streetscape.

## **2.0 Proposed Development**

- 2.1. The proposed development as originally submitted is for:
  - Demolition of existing dwelling of c. 257.17sqm and detached garage of c.43sqm.
  - Construction of 3no. detached two storey over basement four bedroom dwellings of 240.8-266.04sqm each, with private amenity spaces of 208.3-403.2sqm.
  - Removal of existing front boundary wall and planting and provision of 3no. new vehicular entrances.
  - Two in-curtilage parking spaces provided per dwelling.
- 2.2. A revised design proposal has been submitted with this appeal, featuring the following amendments to the original submission:

- Setting back of the proposed houses, allowing for the existing access arrangements to the site to be retained and facilitating retention of the existing boundary treatment and existing street tree on Granville Road, with some minor alterations. Unit 4C switched from House type A to the smaller House type B as a result.
- Provision of winter gardens/conservatories instead of terraces at first floor level to the front of the dwellings.
- Simplification of the front façade to House Type B, removing the previously proposed external staircase.
- Reduction in size of dining room windows at first floor level on the rear elevations.

### **3.0 Planning Authority Decision**

#### **Decision**

The Planning Authority resolved to refuse permission for two reasons, by order dated 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2025. The reasons for refusal were:

1. Having regard to the nature of the proposed development, which includes the demolition of an existing dwelling house, the proposed development fails to accord with Policy Objective CA6: Retrofit and Reuse of Buildings and Policy Objective PHP19: Existing Housing Stock – Adaptation, nor would it accord with the provisions of Section 12.3.9 Demolition and Replacement Dwellings of the Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Development Plan 2022-2028 by reason of the absence of a structural report justifying the demolition of the existing dwelling on site and/or a report detailing why a retrofit is not appropriate in this instance. Therefore, it has not been demonstrated that the existing dwelling is uninhabitable or unsuitable for retrofitting. Therefore, to permit the development, as proposed, would set an undesirable precedent for the demolition of structurally sound dwellings within the County and would, therefore, be contrary to the provisions of the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan 2022-2028, and to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

2. Having regard to the overall scheme proposal including siting and design, it is considered that the proposed development represents a visually incongruous and discordant form of development imposed on the subject site which fails to respond to the character, scale and form of the surrounding development, which if permitted would adversely impact on the existing levels of residential amenity afforded to the established dwellings which would detract from the existing amenities of the area. Therefore, the proposed development would not accord with the provisions of the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan 2022-2028 regarding Additional Accommodation in Existing Built-up Areas, namely Section 12.3.7.7 Infill and would therefore be contrary to the provisions of the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan 2022-2028.

## **Planning Authority Reports**

### Planning Report

The main points of the Planner's Report include:

- The application site is subject to Zoning Objective 'A', which seeks to provide residential development and improve residential amenity while protecting the existing residential amenities. Residential development, including extensions to existing dwellings, is permitted in principle.
- The principle of the proposed works may be permitted where the Planning Authority is satisfied that the development would be compatible with the overall policies and objectives for the zone, would not have undesirable effects, and would otherwise be consistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
- Justification for the demolition of a relatively modern dwelling has not been set out to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority. Reference is made to Section 12.3.9 of the Development Plan which states a preference for the deep retro-fit of structurally sound, habitable dwellings as opposed to demolition and replacement. From site inspection, the property appears to be currently lived in. Further details required in respect of structural condition and potential for deep retro-fitting of the existing property. The principle of demolition has not been established.
- Application site considered to be located within an 'Urban Neighbourhood' for the purposes of the Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlement Guidelines 2024, which anticipates a density range of 5—250 units per hectare. Section 3.3.6 of the Guidelines, relating to exceptions such as in

the case of very small infill sites, is noted however the report concludes that, as a rationale for the low density proposed has not been submitted, the principle of c. 16no. units per ha is not accepted.

- Concerns raised with regard to the siting and design of the proposed development, noting the alteration to the building line on Granville Road, contrasting gable profiles, extent of hard landscaping (including parking) in the front garden areas, provision of terraces on the front elevations and redesign of the front boundary treatment. Concludes that the proposed development would appear visually incongruous and would erode the character of the area.
- Concerns raised with regard to impact on residential amenity in terms of overlooking, due in particular to the level of glazing to front and rear and inclusion of first floor terraces. Also note no rear facing windows at first floor level to the rear and no concern raised therefore in terms of separation distances. Concern also raised with regard to noise impacts on neighbouring amenity arising from the proposed terraces. Note that no shadow cast analysis was submitted.
- Proposed dwellings noted to meet all residential design and private amenity standards applicable.
- Notes that the impact of the proposal on existing trees and hedgerows has not been addressed.
- Notes that, as presented, the proposed individual vehicle entrances do not accord with Section 12.4.8.1 of the Development Plan.
- The need for Appropriate Assessment and EIAR are screened out.

#### Other Technical Reports

- Transportation Planning: Further information sought in respect of revised proposals for the vehicular entrances, showing them to be a maximum of 3.5m in width. Other issues can be dealt with by condition.
- Drainage Planning: no objection subject to conditions relating to surfacewater runoff and permeable surfacing.
- Environmental Enforcement: no objection subject to conditions relating to noise management (for heat pumps etc), construction environmental management plan and public liaison plan.

#### **Prescribed Bodies**

Uisce Éireann: the applicant will need to sign a connection agreement with Uisce Éireann and comply with their standard codes and practices.

#### **Third Party Observations**

Three submissions were received by the Planning Authority during the application process. The main issues raised may be summarised as follows:

- Seek confirmation that trees and hedges on the neighbouring properties will not be interfered with.
- Seek details of the height and materials of any boundary wall/fence
- Seek confirmation of what trees would be felled and whether a tree survey has been completed, so as to understand impacts on neighbouring property. Note that the road is characterised by the number of mature specimens and removal of trees would have a significant and negative impact on the treescape of the road.
- Concern that proposed perimeter walls are not clear and may be on neighbouring lands
- Concern at provision of windows in the gable walls, which may result in overlooking and be a fire risk
- Potential for overlooking and loss of amenity arising from proposed terraces/balconies
- Need to maintain access to neighbouring gable walls for maintenance
- Request that building works do not commence before 8.30am on weekdays and 10am on weekends/bank holidays and finish no later than 6.30pm weekdays and 6pm weekends.
- Granville Road is characterised by larger properties. The impact of the development of smaller, compact, narrow and tall properties that go against the architectural grain of the road is concerning as regards property values.

## 4.0 Planning History

### Application site:

D07A/1633 – Permission granted for demolition of the existing two storey plus basement dwelling, and the construction of 2 no. two storey plus attic level accommodation five bedroom detached dwellings with partial basement (330 sq.m

and 325 sq.m), and ancillary site development works. The duration of this permission was extended under PA ref. D07A/1633/E but it was not implemented.

Nearby sites:

*'Langton', 6 Granville Road, Blackrock, Co. Dublin*

PL06D.202050 (PA ref. D02A/1168): permission refused for demolition of single-storey extension to side and construction of single-storey extension to rear of existing dwelling, pedestrian gate, widening of existing vehicular gate, access driveway and construction of three two-storey houses to rear of existing dwelling and associated works. The reasons for refusal were:

1. Having regard to the height, size, bulk and design of the proposed three 2 storey dwellinghouses, it is considered that the proposed development would be visually obtrusive at this location, would be out of character with the adjacent development and would seriously injure the amenities of property in the vicinity and the character of the area.
2. The proposed soakaway locations do not meet the minimum distance from buildings recommendations of 5.0 metres and the proposed development therefore would be prejudicial to public health.

*1A, Granville Road, Blackrock, Co. Dublin*

PL06D.224500 (PA ref. D06A/1109): permission granted for demolition of carport, shed and greenhouse, to construct 2 access points 3 metres wide and off street parking. To construct 2 storey dwelling 7.30 metres high to ridge to align with adjoining. To construct boundary wall at rear 2 metres high and 1.20 metres high at front, provide percolation area for surface water 16 square metres, connection to sewer and services and ancillary works. A decision to invalidate on previous application, File Reference D06A/0796 was made on 27-06-2006.

*37 Ardagh Drive, Blackrock, Co. Dublin*

ABP-302910-18 (D18A/0784): Permission granted for proposed subdivision of the existing property to contain two individual serviced dwellings. 1. Proposed two storey rear and side extension, 2. Proposed single storey front extension, 3. Proposed amendments to roof including amendments to existing dormer windows and



provision of new dormer windows, 4. Amendments to all elevations, 5. Proposed widening of existing vehicular entrance and all associated side works.

*9 Knocksinna Crescent, off Granville Road, Blackrock, Co. Dublin.*

PL06D.245911 (PA ref. D15A/0431): Permission granted for demolition of existing house and outbuildings and construction of 12 no. 2-4 bed detached and terraced units and all associated works.

*Arklow House, Granville Park and Newtownpark Avenue, Blackrock,*

ABP-249034-24 (D17A/0298): permission granted for partial demolition of an extension to an existing house and construction of a new house with all associated site works.

## **5.0 Policy Context**

### **Development Plan**

Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Development Plan 2022-2028

Site is subject to Zoning Objective 'A' – To provide residential development and improve residential amenity while protecting the existing residential amenities.

Objective CA6 - to require the retrofitting and reuse of existing buildings rather than their demolition and reconstruction where possible recognising the embodied energy in existing buildings and thereby reducing the overall embodied energy in construction as set out in the Urban Design Manual (Department of Environment Heritage and Local Government, 2009).

Objective PHP18 - increase housing supply and promote compact urban growth, including through infill; encourage higher densities, ensuring a balance with protection of existing amenities and established character.

Objective PHP19 – objective to conserve and improve existing housing stock and densify existing built-up areas through small scale infill development having due regard to amenities of existing established residential neighbourhoods.

Objective PHP20 - ensure the residential amenity of existing homes in the Built Up Area is protected where adjacent to higher density or height infill development

Objective PHP27 – ensure a wide variety of housing and apartment types is provided throughout the County

Objective T19 - manage carparking as part of the overall strategic transport needs of the County in accordance with the parking standards set out in Section 12.4.5

Objective OSR4 - to promote public open space standards generally in accordance with overarching Government guidance documents

Objective EI6 - to ensure that all development proposals incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)

Section 12.3.7.7 Infill - In accordance with Policy Objective PHP19: Existing Housing Stock – Adaptation, infill development will be encouraged within the County. New infill development shall respect the height and massing of existing residential units. Infill development shall retain the physical character of the area including features such as boundary walls, pillars, gates/ gateways, trees, landscaping, and fencing or railings. This shall particularly apply to those areas that exemplify Victorian era to early-mid 20th century suburban ‘Garden City’ planned settings and estates that do not otherwise benefit from ACA status or similar. (Refer also to Section 12.3.7.5 corner/side garden sites for development parameters, Policy Objectives HER20 and HER21 in Chapter 11).

Section 12.3.9 Demolition and Replacement Dwellings - The Planning Authority has a preference for and will promote the deep retro-fit of structurally sound, habitable dwellings in good condition as opposed to demolition and replacement unless a strong justification in respect of the latter has been put forward by the applicant. (See Policy Objective CA6: Retrofit and Reuse of Buildings and Policy Objective PHP19: Existing Housing Stock – Adaptation). Demolition of an existing house in single occupancy and replacement with multiple new build units will not be considered on the grounds of replacement numbers only but will be weighed against other factors. Better alternatives to comprehensive demolition of, for example, a distinctive detached dwelling and its landscaped gardens, may be to construct structures around the established dwelling and seek to retain characteristic site elements.

The Planning Authority will assess single replacement dwellings within an urban area on a case by case basis and may only permit such developments where the existing dwelling is uninhabitable.

Objective T19 - manage carparking as part of the overall strategic transport needs of the County in accordance with the parking standards set out in Section 12.4.5

### **Natural Heritage Designations**

The appeal site is not located in or immediately adjacent to a designated European Site, a Natural Heritage Area (NHA) or a proposed NHA.

## **6.0 EIA Screening**

The proposed development has been subject to preliminary examination for environmental impact assessment (refer to Form 1 and Form 2, in Appendices of this report). Having regard to the characteristics and location of the proposed development and the types and characteristics of potential impacts, it is considered that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment. The proposed development, therefore, does not trigger a requirement for environmental impact assessment screening and an EIAR is not required.

## **7.0 The Appeal**

### **Grounds of Appeal**

#### *Demolition of existing dwelling*

- Objectives CA6 and PHP19 and Section 12.3.9 of the CDP do not require the preparation of “a structural report justifying the demolition of the existing dwelling on site and/or a report detailing why a retrofit is not appropriate”. Such requirements apply to the replacement of a single dwelling with a single dwelling. There are numerous countervailing policies supporting densification.
- The existing dwelling is not of architectural heritage importance. The layout of the site, particularly the position and footprint of the existing dwelling, removes the possibility of constructing structures around the established dwelling (in reference to Section 12.3.9).
- Planning permission was previously granted for demolition of the existing dwelling under ABP ref. PL06D.228010. Policy AR5 of the DLR CDP 2004, stated that it was Council policy to encourage rehabilitation/renovation/re-use

of existing older buildings where appropriate, in preference to their demolition and redevelopment. The Planning Authority considered that the demolition of the existing dwelling was acceptable in the context of achieving a higher residential density on the site.

- A 'Sustainability Report and Demolition Justification' report has been submitted with the appeal. This finds that:
  - The existing dwelling is affected by serious structural deficiencies
  - Retention of the dwelling is possible but the works required would be disproportionate in cost and disruption, with no guarantee of long-term durability
  - A deep retrofit would only achieve a C2 BER rating. The proposed development would achieve an A1 BER rating.
  - A partial retention scenario was examined but found to be impractical and unsustainable as retained fabric would perpetuate latent defects and require extensive reinforcement

The Appellant considers that this report demonstrates that the proposed development would be in accordance with Objectives CA6 and PHP19 and Section 12.3.9 of the CDP.

#### *Climate Action Considerations*

- The proposed development aligns with climate action objectives. The proposal will deliver a 200% increase in housing units on site. The position and footprint of the existing dwelling make densification impossible if it were retained. The TENT Engineering report submitted shows that the proposed development would become more carbon-efficient than retaining the existing building within 5.2 years. The sustainable location and energy efficient design of the proposed development is also highlighted.

#### *Design*

- The Appellant maintains that the proposed dwellings will integrate into the existing streetscape in a harmonious way, thereby preserving visual amenity on Granville Road.

- They posit that the stepped building design bridges the built form on the adjacent sites.
- The Appellant maintains that the design of the individual houses is in keeping with the prevailing character of the surrounding built environment:
  - A large proportion of existing dwellings in the area are gable-fronted or include one or several gable elements in the front façade. The existing double fronted dwelling on site and a recent development nearby at Knocksinna Wood are noted as examples.
  - Notes very considerable variation in the form and appearance of dwellings on Granville Road and Knocksinna Court in terms of footprint, height, scale, bulk, roof type, fenestration, solid-to-void ratio and architectural expression (materials).
- The Appellant states that the design of the houses has drawn inspiration from common design elements in the area. The gable-fronted design references the existing dwelling design and others nearby. The houses would be two storey over basement, with pitched roofs and facing materials which are commonly found locally.
- Nonetheless, the Appellant has submitted a revised design proposal as follows:
  - Setting back of the proposed houses to a position broadly similar to the existing dwelling. Unit 4C switched from House type A to the smaller House type B
  - Retaining the existing access arrangements to the site, facilitating retention of the existing boundary treatment and existing street tree on Granville Road.
  - Provision of winter gardens/conservatories instead of terraces at first floor level to the front of the dwellings
  - Simplification of the front façade to House Type B, removing the previously proposed external staircase

- Reduction in size of dining room windows at first floor level on the rear elevations

#### *Other issues*

- Access: the revised design retains the existing accesses, with the northern entrance slightly widened to 3m. This is in line with Section 12.4.8.1 of the CDP.
- Privacy and overlooking: in response to concerns raised in the Planner's report, the revised design submitted for appeal reduces the extent of glazing to the rear at first floor level and adds a planter to address concerns about a pop out window
- Noise: the revised design proposes winter gardens in place of the 1<sup>st</sup> floor front terraces to address the Council's concerns with regard to noise
- Retention of mature trees: it is proposed to retain the existing mature trees and planting along the boundaries with neighbouring existing dwellings. The original design submitted would have resulted in the loss of an existing street tree, however this would be retained in the revised proposal submitted to the Commission.
- Design: The Appellant also notes that there is some variation in building design on Granville Road, including some examples of single storey, one to two storey and three storey dwellings. They also note that many of the original houses have been substantially renovated or extended and that there are examples of infill dwellings and substantial redevelopments nearby (at Knocksinna Wood and Roselawn).
- They add that the location is well served by local services including schools, parks, retail and good quality public transport.

#### **Planning Authority Response**

The Planning Authority response refers the Board (Commission) to the previous Planner's Report, noting that the grounds of appeal do not raise any new matter which, in the opinion of the Planning Authority, would justify a change of attitude to the proposed development.

## **Observations**

None.

## **Further Responses**

None.

## **8.0 Assessment**

Having examined the application details and all other documentation on file, including the submissions received in relation to the appeal, the report of the local authority, and having inspected the site, and having regard to the relevant local/regional/national policies and guidance, I consider that the substantive issues in this appeal are as follows:

- Principle of development
- Demolition of existing structures
- Density
- Visual impact
- Impact on adjoining residential amenity
- Drainage

I note that consideration was given to other relevant matters as part of the Local Planning Authority's assessment of the application, including residential standards, private amenity space, parking and transport. The Planner's Report considered that the proposed development was acceptable in reference to the objectives of the Development Plan with regard to these matters, subject to conditions, and I concur with that assessment.

### **8.1. Principle of development**

- 8.1.1. The site is zoned 'A' with the objective 'to provide residential development and improve residential amenity while protecting the existing residential amenities'. The development of additional housing units is permissible in principle under this zoning, subject to accordance with other objectives of the Development Plan.

## 8.2. Demolition of the existing structures

- 8.2.1. The proposal is for demolition of the existing dwelling and detached garage and the construction of 3no. 4bed houses.
- 8.2.2. The Planning Authority stated in their first reason for refusal of the application that the proposed development fails to accord with Policy Objective CA6: Retrofit and Reuse of Buildings, Policy Objective PHP19: Existing Housing Stock – Adaptation, and the provisions of Section 12.3.9 Demolition and Replacement Dwellings of the Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Development Plan 2022-2028 by reason of the absence of a structural report justifying the demolition of the existing dwelling on site and/or a report detailing why a retrofit is not appropriate in this instance.
- 8.2.3. Objective CA6 of the Development Plan 2022-2028 requires the retrofitting and reuse of existing buildings rather than their demolition and reconstruction where possible, recognising the embodied energy in existing buildings and thereby reducing the overall embodied energy in construction. Section 12.3.9 relates to dwellings specifically and states that the Planning Authority has a preference for, and will promote, the deep retro-fit of structurally sound, habitable dwellings in good condition as opposed to demolition and replacement unless a strong justification in respect of the latter has been put forward by the applicant. The supporting text to Objective CA6 provides that, where an existing building cannot be incorporated into a new layout and the development facilitates a significant increase in density, demolition may be considered to be acceptable to the Planning Authority.
- 8.2.4. I note that the application as submitted did not put forward justification for demolition on the basis of the structural condition of the building, however the applicant has included as part of their grounds of appeal a ‘Sustainability Report and Demolition Justification’ prepared by TENT Engineering. The ‘Structural Assessment and Justification for Demolition’ at Section 3 of this report was prepared by a chartered structural engineer. I note that the report identifies structural issues with the existing dwelling, which are summarised in the Professional Opinion at paragraph 3.5 as follows:
- 8.2.5. *“Given (i) the split level site with 3m level change and resultant differential settlement; (ii) pervasive and re-current structural cracking to envelope, roof line and internal fabric; (iii) active water ingress linked to distortion; and (iv) the extent of*



*works required to achieve durable compliance, it is my professional opinion that demolition and reconstruction on an engineered foundation solution suitable for the site geometry offers the most safe, reliable and proportionate route to remedy. This approach removes the ongoing settlement risk, addresses current health-and-safety concerns and enables delivery of a code-compliant structure rather than a heavily compromised and uncertain repair.”*

- 8.2.6. The report includes at Appendix 3 a detailed photographic survey of the existing dwelling which shows evidence of these structural issues throughout the building. The feasibility of retention of the existing building is considered in the report and deemed to be possible, but would require extensive works including “staged underpinning across multiple foundations on a sloping site, partial demolition/rebuild of the undercroft and overhang, extensive roof replacement and re-levelling of floors, comprehensive crack-stitching/repointing of the envelope and wholesale waterproofing/roof-junction remediation”. It is stated that the building fabric has reached the end of a safe and economical service life for its construction type and that the split level site will continue to impose differential ground pressures on the structure.
- 8.2.7. I note also that the TENT Engineering report shows that the proposed development would become more carbon-efficient than retaining the existing building within 5.2 years.
- 8.2.8. I note that the Planner’s Report indicated that the dwelling appeared to be inhabited at the time of their site visit. The dwelling appeared to be inhabited on the date of my site visit also. In my view, the dwelling would likely be habitable for at least the short term, with some remedial works undertaken. However, given the nature and extent of the structural issues identified in the structural assessment submitted by the Appellant, and the lack of certainty as to the longterm success of any repairs, the existing dwelling does not appear to be structurally sound over the medium to longterm.
- 8.2.9. Section 12.3.9 of the Development Plan encourages applicants to explore alternatives to demolition, such as construction of new dwellings around the established dwelling. The Appellant, in their grounds of appeal, highlights that the configuration of the appeal site, in particular the footprint of the existing dwelling and

garage which extend across most of the site frontage, place a constraint on the potential for infill development on the site while retaining the existing structures. I concur with this view.

- 8.2.10. Overall therefore, having regard to the engineering report submitted by the applicant in support of their grounds of appeal, I consider that adequate justification for demolition of the existing structures on site and their replacement with new dwellings has been put forward having regard to Objectives CA6, PHP19 and Section 12.3.9 of the Development Plan. Therefore the first reason for refusal has been addressed.

### **8.3. Density**

- 8.3.1. The Local Authority Planner's Report considered the matter of density and, although it was not a reason for refusal of the application, it was concluded that the proposed density of 16 units per hectare was low, had not been justified and was therefore not accepted. The Applicant did not address the issue explicitly in their grounds of appeal, though they do make the point that the proposed development would increase the density of residential development on the site by 200% i.e. an increase of two dwellings.
- 8.3.2. I note that the Planning Officer, in their report, placed the site within the Urban Neighbourhood' category for the purposes of the Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlement Guidelines 2024. I would agree with this assessment, noting that the site is within 400m walking distance of an existing bus stop on the Stillorgan Road (N11) which is to be retained as part of BusConnects infrastructure. A residential density of 50-250 dph applies in City-Urban Neighbourhoods under the Guidelines. Objective PHP18 of the Development Plan seeks to encourage higher densities whilst ensuring a balance with protection of existing amenities and established character. The supporting text to this objective sets a general minimum default density for new residential developments of 35 units per hectare, though this rises to 50 uph for sites within 1km/10minute walking distance of a Core/Quality Bus Corridor. Both the Guidelines and Objective PHP18 allow for exceptions having regard to the constraints and context of the site. I consider that the site would fall to be considered under exception (c) of Section 3.3.6 which relates to very small infill sites which are not of sufficient scale to define their

own character and density. In these cases, the need to respond to the scale and form of surrounding development, to protect the amenities of surrounding properties and to protect biodiversity may take precedence over the target densities. Similarly, Objective PHP18 of the Development Plan seeks to encourage higher densities subject to the development management criteria in Chapter 12 and ensuring a balance with the protection of existing residential amenities and the established character of the surrounding area.

- 8.3.3. Having regard to the constraints of the site, particularly its shape which narrows towards the rear, and the pattern of development locally which consists mainly of detached dwellings arranged along a similar building line, and to the uplift in residential density on the site that would be achieved, I consider that the proposed development is acceptable in terms of density, having regard to the Compact Growth Guidelines and the objectives of the Development Plan.

#### **8.4. Visual impact**

- 8.4.1. The second reason for refusal in the Planning Authority's decision related to visual impact. The refusal reason referred to the overall scheme proposal, including its siting and design, constituting a visually incongruous and discordant form of development on the subject site which fails to respond to the character, scale and form of the surrounding development and which, if permitted, would adversely impact on the existing levels of residential amenity afforded to the established dwellings which would detract from the existing amenities of the area.
- 8.4.2. The Appellant maintains that the design of the proposed dwellings, as per the original plans submitted, is in keeping with the prevailing character of the surrounding built environment. They argue that a large proportion of existing dwellings in the area are gable-fronted or include one or several gable elements in the front façade and that there is considerable variation in the form and appearance of dwellings on Granville Road and Knocksinna Court in terms of footprint, height, scale, bulk, roof type, fenestration, solid-to-void ratio and architectural expression (materials).
- 8.4.3. Having visited the site and local area, I note that Granville Road and the immediate surroundings are characterised by two storey detached dwellings, most of which are

set within generously proportioned gardens. The notable exceptions to this are the single storey infill dwellings at 1A & 1B Granville Road. The architectural style and treatment of dwellings viewed within the context of the site varies, including a mixture of pitched and hipped roofs, front gable projections, front dormer windows and bay windows. The most prevalent facing materials are render and pebbledash, though there are examples of feature timber and stone cladding and brick. Roof materials are generally tile or slate, with brown, black and terracotta colours evident. The low, rendered front boundary walls, usually with hedging or planting behind them, and the street trees and grass verge which line both sides of the street provide consistency to the street and are characteristic, in my view.

8.4.4. The original scheme submitted involved removal of the existing front boundary wall and planting and 1no. street tree to facilitate three separate entrances and parking for the proposed dwellings. The front boundary treatment would include short sections of wall, bin storage enclosures, new tree planting and new hedge planting setback, with wide entrances to facilitate two parking spaces at the front of each dwelling. In my view, the removal of such a large proportion of the existing boundary wall and planting, the density of vehicular entrances proposed and removal of the existing street tree and verge would have a significant negative impact on the character of this part of Granville Road. The revised scheme submitted by the applicant with this appeal proposes to retain the existing entrances, boundary treatment and planting, albeit with a slight widening of the northern entrance. In my view, the revised design presents a more appropriate response to the character of the area, which would be in line with Objective PHP19 and Section 12.3.7.7 which seek to densify existing built-up areas through small scale infill development whilst having regard to the amenities of existing established residential areas, including through the retention of the physical character of the area including features such as boundary walls, pillars, gates/ gateways, trees, landscaping, and fencing or railings. I note that the two entrances in the revised design would have widths of 3m and 3.4m, which would be in line with Section 12.4.81 of the Development Plan which sets a maximum width of 4m for shared residential entrances.

8.4.5. Other revisions to the design are noted which are related to, or stem from, the amendments to the access arrangements. A larger proportion of the front garden/shared space is shown as lawn and the ramps, external stairs and setback

walls and hedging of the original proposal have been removed. In addition, the front building line of the proposed dwellings have been set back by an additional c. 2metres, bringing them more in line with the adjacent properties. These measures provide a more simplified appearance to the scheme as viewed from the street, relate better to the existing building line and allow more space for planting and landscaping. I consider that these revisions are more in keeping with the character of the area and will assist with the integration of the proposals into the streetscape. I would however recommend that, should the Commission resolve to grant permission, that conditions are attached requiring details of the boundary treatments and landscaping to be agreed with the Planning Authority and for the bin stores to be repositioned behind the front building lines of the dwellings.

8.4.6. In terms of the design of the proposed dwellings, their ridge height would be similar to those of the adjoining dwellings to the north and south, therefore I do not consider that they would be excessive or out of character in terms of scale. They would differ from the adjoining dwellings by virtue of their gable fronted form and their notably narrower footprint. I note that there are dwellings in Granville Road with large front gable projections and, given the variety in architectural styles evident in the street, combined with the retention of the front boundary arrangement and increased setback of the building line, I consider that the gable forms of the dwellings can be accommodated within the streetscape. While the massing of the proposed dwellings is narrower than surrounding dwellings, given their two storey height, detached form and retention of the front boundary treatment, I do not consider that they would compete with existing buildings in the street or detract from the visual amenity of the area. As such, I consider that the design would respect the height and massing of existing residential units, as required by Section 12.3.7.7, relating to infill development.

8.4.7. The Planning Statement submitted with the application states that the main external finishes to the dwellings would be white brick, with zinc sheeting to the roofs. During my site visit I noted that the dwelling 'Kenley' on the opposite side of the road has been recently modified, including the addition of an off-white brick as the main facing material on the front elevation. A zinc clad dormer window had also been added. Given the existing variation in materials and architectural detailing evident in the streetscape and the retention of the front boundary treatment and planting as part of

the proposed development, I consider that the proposed white brick external treatment can be absorbed within the streetscape and would not impact negatively on the visual amenity of the area. Given also the variety in roofing treatment evident in the street at present, I consider that a dark grey zinc roof finish to the proposed dwellings could be accommodated. Moreover, I consider the indicated materials to be high quality and durable. Should the Commission decide to grant permission for the development I recommend that a condition is attached in this regard, to ensure that the indicated design quality is carried through at detailed design and construction stage.

### **8.5. Impact on adjoining residential amenity**

- 8.5.1. The Planning Authority's second reason for refusal also referred to an adverse impact on residential amenity of established dwellings arising from the proposed development. In this regard, the Planner's Report identifies concerns due to potential overlooking to the front and rear, the potential for noise disturbance arising from the 1<sup>st</sup> floor terraces and the lack of an overshadowing analysis.
- 8.5.2. In response to concerns raised in the Planner's report, the applicant has submitted a revised design which reduces the extent of glazing to the rear at first floor level, removes the pop out windows to the rear and proposes winter gardens in place of the 1<sup>st</sup> floor front terraces to address noise issues.
- 8.5.3. The zoning of the site, 'A', has the objective 'to provide residential development and improve residential amenity while protecting the existing residential amenities'. Objectives PHP18, PHP19 and PHP20 of the Development Plan are also relevant, seeking to encourage compact growth and higher densities, including through infill, while ensuring that existing residential amenities are protected. Section 12.3.7.7 of the Development Management chapter of the Development Plan requires that infill development shall respect the height and massing of existing residential units, whilst referring also to the development parameters of Section 12.3.7.5 Corner/Side garden sites, which include the impact on amenities of neighbouring residents and building lines followed, where appropriate.
- 8.5.4. In terms of potential overlooking, given that the proposed dwellings would be two storeys in height facing Granville Road and setback a similar distance as the existing

and neighbouring dwellings, I do not consider that an overlooking issue arises to the front in either the original or revised scheme. I note that the rear elevations of the proposed dwellings as originally submitted included 'pop out' windows at ground and first floor level to the rear affording views to the side (north and south) towards neighbouring lands, which was a concern raised in the Planner's Report. These have been omitted in the revised scheme and I consider that this is a necessary revision in order to prevent a material impact on amenity arising from overlooking of neighbouring lands.

- 8.5.5. The rear elevations of Units 4C & 4B would be at least 36m from their rear boundaries, which benefit from mature screening, therefore no issue arises for overlooking. Due to the curve of the side boundary line, the distance from the rear elevation of Unit 4A to the side boundary would vary between 9.58m and 23.04m, in the revised proposal, or 12.5-26.3m in the original submission. I note that the southern boundary benefits from mature planting, located on the neighbouring lands, which provides a good level of screening. On this basis, I am satisfied that a material impact on residential amenity would not arise for occupiers of the adjacent dwelling, No.6, due to overlooking from the rear facing windows of Unit 4A. I am however concerned about potential overlooking of the rear garden of No.6, particularly the patio area directly to the rear of that dwelling, from the 1<sup>st</sup> floor terrace on the southern side elevation of Unit 4A. The degree of overlooking has increased in the revised scheme, due to the building line being moved back. The drawings propose opaque louvers at c. 1.7m height above floor level to mitigate overlooking. I am not satisfied that this would be adequate mitigation given the proximity (c. 5m) of the terrace to the neighbouring boundary, which consists of a fence only at this point. I note the Planner's Report raises concern also that the terrace may result in noise disturbance to occupiers of No.6. Notwithstanding the proximity, given the size of the terrace and its residential nature, I do not consider that it would result in a material impact in terms of noise. The revised design submitted by the applicant converts the front terraces to winter gardens, but no change has been made to the 1<sup>st</sup> floor side terraces to address the issue. While the side terrace of Unit 4A could be omitted by condition, in the event of a grant of permission, due to separate concerns raised further below in terms of impacts on neighbouring amenity, I recommend refusal for this reason.

- 8.5.6. Units 4B & 4C also include terraces on their southern sides at 1<sup>st</sup> floor level, however as these would face the blank flank elevations of Units 4A and 4B, I consider that they would not have a detrimental impact on the amenity of occupiers. I note that the southern elevation of Unit 4A also includes 3no. windows at ground floor level serving a bedroom and two ensuites. These could be required by condition to be obscure glazed in the event of a grant of permission, in order to prevent overlooking of No. 6 Granville Road.
- 8.5.7. With regard to overshadowing, there are potential impacts for No.2 Granville Road, due to its position to the north of the site, and between the proposed units themselves. Unit 4C would be located adjacent to No.2 Granville Road, c. 1.42m off the boundary and flank elevation of that property. In the scheme as submitted, Unit 4C would be 11.3m in height and would extend c. 4m and 5.8m beyond the rear elevation of No. 2 at (upper) ground floor and first floor levels, not including the pop out window. The overhang of the roof to the rear would project a further c. 0.6m beyond the rear elevation of the proposed dwelling. In the revised scheme submitted, Unit 4C is changed from House Type B to the smaller House Type A, resulting in a shorter depth. However, as the dwelling would be setback further from Granville Road, the revised Unit 4C would extend c. 4m and 6.2m beyond the rear building line of that dwelling at upper ground and first floor levels, respectively. The overhang of the roof to the rear would project a further c. 0.6m beyond the rear elevation of the proposed dwelling. The height of the dwelling in the revised scheme is 11.1m. I note that the existing boundary treatment on this side is hedging, which is shown retained or replaced. A small group of existing trees inside the boundary on this side were observed during my site visit and provide screening between the rear gardens of the dwellings at present. These trees are not shown on the plans and, in my view, would need to be removed to facilitate the building footprint.
- 8.5.8. In the present situation, the rear building lines of Nos. 2 & 4 Granville Road are similar, although No.4 is angled away from No.2. The massing of the existing dwelling at No.4 at roof level steps downs adjacent to No. 6. The proposed development would bring development at No.4 closer to No.6, at an increased height and depth. Given the height and depth of the portion of proposed unit 4C extending beyond the rear building line of No.2 Granville Road, its proximity to the boundary with No.2 and position south/southeast of that dwelling, I consider that this unit would



be likely to create shadow over part of the rear garden and rear elevation of No.2. The applicant has not commented on overshadowing in their grounds of appeal. In the absence of an overshadowing assessment, a section drawing showing the relationship between the rear portion of Unit 4C and the existing adjoining dwelling and details of the boundary treatment, I consider that the extent of any overshadowing impact cannot be determined with confidence. I recommend refusal for this reason.

8.5.9. Similarly, I have concerns also that proposed unit 4C would, due to its height, proximity and depth relative to No.2, impact negatively on the amenity of those neighbouring occupiers due to creating an overbearing impact.

8.5.10. Overall therefore, I consider that the proposed development would result in significant impacts on neighbouring residential amenity due to overshadowing, overbearance and overlooking. Consequently the proposal would not be in accordance with the zoning objective 'A' for the site or with Objectives PHP18, 19 and 20 of the Development Plan.

8.5.11. I recommend refusal for this reason.

## **8.6. Drainage**

8.6.1. Although drainage was not included as a reason for refusal by the Planning Authority, it was noted as an unresolved issue in the Planner's Report, to be addressed in the event of a resubmission of the application. This was due to the report received from the Drainage Planning Department of the Council, which sought further information to show that all surface water runoff would be infiltrated or reused locally, including separate SuDS measures for each dwelling and for communal areas, and hardstanding areas would be permeable, in line with DLRCC policy.

8.6.2. The applicant submitted a drainage statement and surface water layout drawing in response, as part of their grounds of appeal. The details submitted show runoff disposed to soakaways within the curtilage of each dwelling, with no overflow, and sized for a 1 in 100 year storm + 30% for climate change. The design is based on soil type expected, but subject to infiltration tests at detailed design stage. The design is based on the revised scheme and includes permeable paving within the shared entrance area. I consider that the details submitted address the requirements

of the Council's Drainage Planning Department and that the final drainage design, based on infiltration tests, can be secured by condition.

## **9.0 AA Screening**

- 9.1. Having regard to the nature and scale of the proposed development, its location in an urban area, connection to existing services 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.

## **10.0 Recommendation**

I recommend that permission is refused.

## **11.0 Reasons and Considerations**

1. Having regard to the height, depth, massing and siting of the proposed development relative to adjoining dwellings, to the inclusion of a terrace at 1<sup>st</sup> floor level on the side of Unit 4A and in the absence of an overshadowing assessment, it is considered that the proposed development would result in significant negative impacts on the residential amenity of neighbouring residential occupiers by reason of overshadowing, overbearance and overlooking. The proposed development would, therefore, be contrary to the Zoning Objective 'A' for the lands which seeks 'to provide residential development and improve residential amenity while protecting the existing residential amenities' and to Objectives PHP18, 19 & 20 of the Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Development Plan 2022-2028 and 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.

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Suzanne White  
Planning Inspector  
18<sup>th</sup> November 2025

## Appendix 1

### Form 1 - EIA Pre-Screening

#### No EIAR submitted

<b>Case Reference</b>	ACP-323434-25
<b>Proposed Development Summary</b>	Demolition of house and garage and construction of 3 houses with associated works
<b>Development Address</b>	Thornberry, 4 Granville Road, Blackrock, Dublin, A94RH95
<b>In all cases check box /or leave blank</b>	
<b>1. Does the proposed development come within the definition of a 'project' for the purposes of EIA?</b>  (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.
<b>2. Is the proposed development of a CLASS specified in Part 1, Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended)?</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, it is a Class specified in Part 1.  <b>EIA is mandatory. No Screening required. EIAR to be requested. Discuss with ADP.</b>	State the Class here
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No, it is not a Class specified in Part 1. Proceed to Q3	
<b>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?</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> No, the development is not of a Class Specified in Part 2, Schedule 5 or a prescribed	

<p>type of proposed road development under Article 8 of the Roads Regulations, 1994.</p> <p><b>No Screening required.</b></p>	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes, the proposed development is of a Class and meets/exceeds the threshold.</p> <p><b>EIA is Mandatory. No Screening Required</b></p>	
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, the proposed development is of a Class but is sub-threshold.</p> <p><b>Preliminary examination required. (Form 2)</b></p> <p><b>OR</b></p> <p><b>If Schedule 7A information submitted proceed to Q4. (Form 3 Required)</b></p>	<p>Class 10(b)(i) Infrastructure projects. Threshold: construction of more than 500 dwelling units.</p>

<b>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)?</b>	
<b>Yes</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Screening Determination required (Complete Form 3)</b>
<b>No</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Pre-screening determination conclusion remains as above (Q1 to Q3)</b>

**Inspector:** Suzanne White **Date:** 18<sup>th</sup> November 2025

## Form 2 - EIA Preliminary Examination

<b>Case Reference</b>	ACP-323434-25
<b>Proposed Development Summary</b>	Demolition of house and garage and construction of 3 houses with associated works
<b>Development Address</b>	Thornberry, 4 Granville Road, Blackrock, Dublin, A94RH95
<b>This preliminary examination should be read with, and in the light of, the rest of the Inspector's Report attached herewith.</b>	
<b>Characteristics of proposed development</b>  (In particular, the size, design, cumulation with existing/proposed development, nature of demolition works, use of natural resources, production of waste, pollution and nuisance, risk of accidents/disasters and to human health).	<p>The development proposed is the demolition of an existing dwellinghouse and the construction of a terrace of 3no. three-storey dwelling houses together with car parking, drainage, landscaping and associated works within an existing built up area.</p> <p>The standalone development has a modest footprint and does not require the use of substantial natural resources, or give rise to significant risk of pollution or nuisance.</p> <p>The development, by virtue of its type and scale, does not pose a risk of major accident and/or disaster, or is vulnerable to climate change. It presents no risks to human health.</p>
<b>Location of development</b>  (The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the development in particular existing and approved land use, abundance/capacity of natural resources, absorption capacity of natural environment e.g. wetland, coastal zones, nature reserves, European sites, densely populated areas, landscapes, sites of historic, cultural or archaeological significance).	<p>The development is situated in a densely populated urban area on brownfield land and is located at a remove from sensitive natural habitats, designated sites and landscapes of significance identified in the DLRCDP.</p>
<b>Types and characteristics of potential impacts</b>  (Likely significant effects on environmental parameters, magnitude and spatial extent, nature of impact, transboundary, intensity and complexity, duration, cumulative effects and opportunities for mitigation).	<p>Having regard to the modest nature of the proposed development, its location relative to sensitive habitats/features, likely limited magnitude and spatial extent of effects, and absence of in combination effects, there is no potential for significant effects on the environmental factors listed in section 171A of the Act.</p>

Conclusion	
Likelihood of Significant Effects	Conclusion in respect of EIA
There is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment.	EIA is not required.

**Inspector:** Suzanne White   **Date:** 18<sup>th</sup> November 2025