



An
Coimisiún
Pleanála

Inspector's Report

PL-500791-DF-26

Development

New gable wall to side of existing house, new window at attic level to side, new flat roof dormer to rear of existing roof, new Velux window to the front of existing roof, and all ancillary works.

Location

2, Ormond Grove, Swords, Co Dúblin,
K67 N9Y7.

Planning Authority

Fingal County Council

Planning Authority Reg. Ref.

F25A/1135

Applicant(s)

Laura Masterson & Austin Burke.

Type of Application

Permission.

Planning Authority Decision

Grant permission with conditions

Type of Appeal

First Party

Appellant(s)

Laura Masterson & Austin Burke.

Observer(s)

None on file.

Date of Site Inspection

1st April 2026.

Inspector

Des Johnson

1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1. The site is located in an established residential housing estate, to the west of Swords Main Street. No.2 is a two storey, semi-detached dwelling at the end of a row of semi-detached dwellings facing south on to Ormond Grove.
- 1.2. The site has a long rear garden backing on to the rear of houses on Swords Manor Crescent. Adjoining to the east, and at right angle to the subject site are the two-storey houses and gardens on Ormond Avenue. There are examples of similar type of development in the surrounding area.
- 1.3. I was unable to gain access to the rear of the subject site at the time of inspection.

2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1. New gable wall to side, new window at attic level to side, new flat roof dormer to rear, 1 Velux window to front, and all ancillary works.
- 2.2. The following gross floor spaces are stated in the application form:

| | |
|----------------------|--------|
| Existing Buildings | 112sqm |
| Proposed development | 28sqm |
| Total to be retained | 140sqm |

The site area is stated to be 0.0418ha.
- 2.3. It is proposed to connect to existing public services.

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

3.1. Decision

Grant permission subject to 9 conditions.

3.1.1. Conditions

The conditions relate to the following:

1. Clarity of development permitted
2. Clarity of development permitted

3. Gable window at attic level along western elevation to be fitted and maintained with obscure glass
4. Finishes
5. Amendments to dormer structure
6. Entire premises to be used as a single dwelling unit
7. Attic floorspace that does not comply with Building Regulations not to be used for human habitation
8. Construction hours
9. Prevention of spillage etc.

3.2. Planning Authority Reports

3.2.1. Planning Reports

The site is in an area zoned RS with the objective to provide for residential development and protect and improve residential amenity. The proposal is compatible with the zoning and permitted use on the site. There is precedent for similar development in the surrounding area. The proposed dormer would be considered excessive; this could be addressed by way of condition. It is not considered that the conversion of a hipped roof to a gable type roof would have a negative impact on the visual amenity or the existing house or the surrounding area. It is noted that the Velux window on the front roof plane is shown on submitted elevations but not on the floor plans but this is considered a minor detail. Having regard to the design and extent of development proposed, the separation distance (c.41m) from the opposing property, it is not considered that there is any potential for overlooking/overshadowing, adverse impacts on neighbouring property, or impact on the visual amenity of the surrounding area, subject to appropriate conditions.

3.2.2. Other Technical Report

None.

3.3. Prescribed Bodies

None

3.4. Third Party Observations

None

4.0 Planning History

- 4.1. F21B/0084 – On the subject site. Permission granted for new gable wall and new window to side of existing house, and a new dormer roof to the rear, and all ancillary works. Additional information was submitted. Condition 2 required the roof of the dormer to be set down by 300mm from the ridge line of the main dwelling, overall height of the dormer structure not to be more than 2m, and the width of the window not to exceed 1.5m and its height not to exceed 1m. The decision is dated 2021.
- 4.2. F20B/0155 – At 23, Swords Manor Court. Permission for ground floor extension to the rear, new Dutch hip gable wall, and new dormer roof to the rear. The decision was in 2020 under the previous Development Plan. Condition 2 required amendments reducing the ridge height of the dormer such that it is at least 300mm below the ridge line of the dwelling, maximum width of the dormer to be 2.5m, and one dormer window with a maximum area of 1sqm.
- 4.3. F23B/0081 – At 7, Ormond Avenue. Permission for loft conversion etc and dormer structure to rear. Dormer conditioned to be maximum of 3m wide, to be set down from the ridge line of the dwelling and set up at least 3 tile courses from the eaves. Decision dated 2023.
- 4.4. F25A/0046 – At 5, Ormond Grove. Permission for new gable wall to the side with new window at attic level, new dormer roof to the rear, Velux window to front, and all ancillary works. Condition 2 required ridge height of the dormer structure to be reduced to at least 300mm below the ridge height of the main dwelling, maximum width of dormer to be 3m externally, and only 1 dormer window with a maximum area of 1sqm. Decision 2025.
- 4.5. ABP Ref: 06F.317252 – At 12, Swords Manor Court. Permission granted by the an Board Pleanála for the retention of new gable wall to side, new 4.5m wide dormer roof to rear, 2 Velux windows to front of existing house roof. (The planning authority had refused permission with a reason for refusal referring to the roof addition of excessive

width and height, being an unsympathetic addition to the original roof form). In coming to the decision to grant, the Board had regard to, inter alia, the nature, scale and design of the development and concluded that the proposed development would not seriously, or disproportionately, injure the amenities of the area or property in the vicinity. Decision date 2023.

5.0 Policy Context

5.1. Development Plan

Fingal County Development Plan 2023-2029 is the statutory plan for the area. It came into effect on 5th April 2023.

The site is in an area zoned 'RS' with the objective *to provide for residential development and protect and improve residential amenity.*

The site is within Dublin Airport Zone D.

Objective DA011 refers to 'Requirement for Noise Insulation. The Plan requires strict control of inappropriate development, where necessary in Zone C.

Section 14.10.2.5 refers to Roof Alterations including Attic Conversions and Dormer Extensions. The Plan sets out criteria against which roof alterations/expansions will be assessed. There include:

- Consideration and 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 Plan details consideration for dormer roof extensions including impact on the existing structure, the privacy of adjacent structure and the visual impact when viewed from the adjoining street and public areas. Dormer extensions are to be set back from the eaves, gables and other party boundaries, and should not dominate the roof space. Window treatments should have regard to existing window treatments. Excessive overlooking of adjacent properties should be avoided.

5.2. **Natural Heritage Designations**

Malahide Estuary SAC & pNHA – c. 2.6km to the east.

6.0 **EIA Screening**

6.1. The proposal is for domestic extensions and is not of a Class for the purposes of Schedule 5. As such, the development is excluded at pre-screening stage.

7.0 **The Appeal**

7.1. **Grounds of Appeal**

The grounds of appeal relate to Condition 5a, 5b, and 5c of the permission granted and may be summarised as follows:

- The reduction in the width of the dormer from 4m to 3m is unreasonable and overly restrictive, and there is no visual gain
- The dormer is not visible from the public road or streetscape, and its visual impact is negligible. The proposal is consistent with typical residential alterations in established suburban developments
- There are dormers of greater width in the surrounding locality. There is at least one comparable case in Swords Manor Court Reg Ref: F23A/0110 where a similar restriction was appealed
- The 4m width proposed maintained balance proportions relative to roof plane, and to ensure proper alignment with internal layout and window placement
- Conditions 5a, 5b and 5c should be removed or amended. There is no adverse effect on visual amenity, or the character of the area.

7.2. **Planning Authority Response**

None on file.

7.3. **Observations**

None on file.

8.0 Assessment

- 8.1. This is a First Party appeal against Condition 5 a, b and c of the permission granted by Fingal County Council for development consisting new gable wall to side, new window at attic level to the side, new flat roof dormer to the rear, and new Velux window to the front roof.
- 8.2. This is an established residential estate. The subject premises is a two-storey semi-detached dwelling at the end of a row of semi-detached houses fronting on to Ormond Grove. The site is in an area with a residential zoning 'RS' with the objective to provide for residential development and protect and improve residential amenity. The proposal is compatible with the zoning in principle. The proposed development, which includes new gable wall altering the existing hipped roof profile, and new dormer structure to rear, would not be visually incongruous from any public viewpoints, and would not have undue detrimental impacts on the amenity of surrounding residential property. The conditioned development would not give rise to undue overlooking of surrounding property. The planning authority previously granted permission for new gable wall and smaller dormer structure. There are examples of similar types of development in the surrounding area. Having regard to the nature and scale of the proposed development, to the residential zoning for the area, the planning history for the site and to the established pattern of development, I consider that the proposed development is acceptable in principle, and that the appeal may be considered under Section 139 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended.
- 8.3. **Condition 5** under appeal reads as follows:

Prior to the commencement of development, the developer shall amend the design of the proposed development to accord with the following:

- (a) The maximum width of the dormer shall be 3m externally and the dormer structure shall be centrally located on the roof plane.
- (b) The maximum width of the dormer structure fenestration shall be 1.5m externally
- (c) The proposed dormer structure shall be set down 300mm from the existing roof ridgeline.

Reason: In the interest of visual amenity.

- 8.4. The grounds of appeal contend that the reduction in width from 4m to 3m is unreasonable and overly restrictive, with no visual gain. The grounds point to other dormers in the surrounding locality and note that the proposed dormer would not be visible from the public road or streetscape. It would be consistent with residential alterations in established suburban developments. There would be no adverse impacts of the character of the area.
- 8.5. The Fingal County Development Plan 2023-2029 includes criteria against which Attic Conversions and Dormer Extensions are to be assessed. Consideration is to be given to the character and size of the structure, its position on the streetscape and proximity to adjacent structures. In this case the visual impact from the streetscape would be minimal, and the dormer structure would not have an adverse impact on the character of the surrounding area which has similar type developments. The proposed dormer is centrally located on the proposed altered roof, set down from the ridge line of the dwelling and would not unduly detract from the harmony of the dwelling. Having regard to the separation distance from the adjoining properties to the north, the proposed dormer would not give rise to excessive overlooking.
- 8.6. The planning history indicates that dormer structures of differing widths and set down from the main ridge have been permitted in the surrounding area. Under Ref PL06F.317252, the Board granted permission for a 4.5m wide dormer structure, 100mm set down from the main ridge line at nearby Swords Manor Court to the south-east. In reaching its decision, the Board had regard to the nature, scale and design of the development and concluded that the development would not disproportionately injure the amenities of property in the vicinity.
- 8.7. I consider that the proposed dormer, set down 100mm from the main roof ridge line would not be injurious to the visual amenity and is acceptable. I consider that the size of the proposed dormer window is excessive and is visually disproportionate and out of character relative to the other windows in the main dwelling. For this reason, I consider that the requirement of Condition 5b should be retained.

9.0 AA Screening

I have considered the proposed domestic extensions, including dormer structure, in light of the requirements S177U of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended.

The subject site is located in an established residential estate west of Swords Main Street, and c.2.5km west of Malahide Estuary SAC.

The proposed development comprises new gable wall to side, new window at attic level to side, new flat roof dormer to rear, 1 Velux window to front, and all ancillary works. No nature conservation concerns were raised in the planning appeal.

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 as follows:

- The nature and small scale of the development
- The location in an established residential estate, the separation distance and absence of any connectivity to any European sites

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.

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 in an established residential area. The proposed development relates to the construction of domestic extensions with ancillary and associated works. No water deterioration concerns are raised in the appeal. I have assessed the development in the context of the objectives of the Water Framework Directive. Having regard to the nature, scale, and location of the development, I am satisfied that it can be eliminated from further assessment as there is no conceivable risk to any surface and/or groundwater bodies either qualitatively or quantitatively.

11.0 Recommendation

Having regard to the nature of the condition the subject of the appeal, the Commission is satisfied that the determination by the Commission 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, as amended to **delete** Condition 5a and 5c and the reason therefore, and **retain** Condition 5b and the reason therefore.

12.0 Reasons and Considerations

Having regard to the residential zoning as set out in the Fingal County Development Plan 2023-2029, the planning history relating to the site, the location of the proposed dormer, and to the established pattern of development in the area, it is considered that, subject to the retention of Condition 5b, the dormer structure would not seriously or disproportionately injure the visual amenities of the area, and would be consistent with 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 me, directly or indirectly, following my professional assessment and recommendation set out in my report in an improper or inappropriate way.

Des Johnson
Planning Inspector

17th April 2026

Appendix 1: Form 1 EIA Pre-Screening

| | |
|---|---|
| Case Reference | PL-500791-DF-26 |
| Proposed Development Summary | Domestic extensions |
| Development Address | 2, Ormond Grove, Swords, Co Dublin, K67 N9Y7. |
| 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? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, it is a 'Project'. |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (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) | |
| 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"/> | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No, it is not a Class specified in Part 1. | |
| 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 proposed road development under Article 8 of the Roads Regulations, 1994. No Screening required. | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, the proposed development is of a Class and meets/exceeds the threshold. EIA is Mandatory. No Screening Required | State the Class and state the relevant threshold |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, the proposed development is of a Class but is sub-threshold. Preliminary examination required. (Form 2) OR If Schedule 7A information submitted proceed to Q4. (Form 3 Required) | State the Class and state the relevant threshold |
| 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)? | |
| No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Pre-screening determination conclusion remains as above (Q1 to Q3) |

Inspector: _____

Date: _____

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