



An
Coimisiún
Pleanála

Inspector's Report

PL-500915-DR-26

Development	Amendment to planning permission D25A/0588/WEB – widening of the permitted 2.5 metre front dormer to 3 metres
Location	68 The Avenue, Woodpark, Dublin 16 D16 VH29
Planning Authority	Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council
Planning Authority Reg. Ref.	D25A/0988/WEB
Applicant(s)	John and Evelyn Murphy
Type of Application	Permission
Planning Authority Decision	Refuse Permission
Type of Appeal	First Party
Appellant(s)	John and Evelyn Murphy
Observer(s)	None
Date of Site Inspection	04 th May 2026
Inspector	Conor Hughes

Table of Contents

1.0	Site Location and Description	3
2.0	Proposed Development	3
3.0	Planning Authority Decision.....	3
4.0	Planning History	5
5.0	Policy Context	5
6.0	EIA Screening	7
7.0	The Appeal	7
8.0	Assessment.....	9
9.0	AA Screening	12
10.0	Water Framework Directive	13
11.0	Recommendation	14
12.0	Reasons and Considerations	14
	Appendix 1: Form 1 EIA Pre-Screening	16

1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1. The site is comprised of a two-storey semi-detached dwelling in the residential neighbourhood of Woodpark Dublin 16. It is located on the western side of The Avenue which is a suburban residential street connecting The Heights to Ballinteer Avenue.
- 1.2. The subject building is of masonry construction with a smooth render finish. It has a concrete tiled hipped roof and rendered chimney, uPVC windows, doors, timber fascia and uPVC gutters.
- 1.3. In front of the dwelling is in-curtilage parking for at least one car and a small garden. The rear garden can be accessed through a gate on the southern gable elevation and the boundary with the public footpath is defined by a low block wall with brick detail and the driveway.

2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1. The development comprises an amendment to an earlier planning permission D25A/0588/WEB to increase the size of a proposed front dormer window in the roof from 2.5 metres to three metres.

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

3.1. Decision

- On 18th February 2026 the Planning Authority issued notification of their decision to refuse planning permission for an amendment to an earlier planning permission D25A/0588/WEB to increase the size of a proposed front dormer window in the roof from 2.5 metres to three metres.
- The Planning Authority considered that the proposed increase in the width of the front dormer by 0.5 metres by reason of its additional scale and visual prominence, would result in a structure that is not subordinate to the main roof and would fail to respect the established roof character the streetscape, where no front dormers are present. This is contrary Section 12.3.7.1 Extensions to Dwellings (iv) Alterations at Roof/Attic Level of the Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Development Plan 2022-2028.

- Consequently, the Planning Authority further considered that this would set an undesirable precedent for similarly scaled dormers and injure the visual amenity of the area contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

3.2. Planning Authority Reports

- The planning report noted that the proposed development is within an Objective A zoning where an extension to an existing dwelling will be acceptable in principle. This is subject to meeting the relevant policies and objectives of the Development Plan.
- The planning report highlighted a recent history of permission for an attic conversion for a non-habitable room which included building up the existing hipped roof to a gabled ended roof and the insertion of front and rear dormer windows.
- The planning officer described in the report that the planning authority had concluded the front dormer was excessive in size, visually incongruous and overly dominant intervention in the principal roof plane. To address this concern a condition was attached reducing the width of the front dormer window to 2.5 metres.
- In respect of the proposed amendment to reinstate the three-metre width originally applied for the planning report concluded that whilst an altered roof could physically accommodate the dormer window this did not alter the fundamental policy position previously adopted that a window of this width would not be visually subordinate to the main roof.
- It was also concluded that a front dormer window of this size could not be accommodated in the original hipped roof without appearing disproportionately large and visually dominant. The planning officer highlighted a risk of the amended proposal setting an undesirable precedent for similarly scaled dormers and that this would ultimately undermine the character of the street.
- Consequently, the proposal was considered in the planning report to be contrary to Section 12.3.7.1 (iv) for the Development Plan as failed to respect the established roof character of the streetscape and create a precedent for properties that could not comfortably accommodate dormers of this scale.

3.2.1. Planning Reports

- None

3.2.2. Other Technical Reports

- None

3.3. Prescribed Bodies

- None

3.4. Third Party Observations

- None

4.0 Planning History

4.1. Planning Authority Reference D25A/0588/WEB – permission granted for the conversion of existing attic to non-habitable room, with raised gable wall and roof to the side, new dormer windows and rooflights to the front and rear, new frosted gable window, widening of the front vehicular entrance and replacement of the front boundary wall with a new hedge.

4.2. The grant of planning permission was subject to a condition that required the front dormer to have a maximum external width of 2.5 metres. The reason given was that this is in the interest of residential amenity.

4.3. It was detailed in the planning report for this application that the scale and bulk of the three metre dormer was not considered to be sympathetic to the architectural character of the host dwelling or the prevailing streetscape. As there was no precedent for front dormer windows in the immediate vicinity the Planning Authority argued a more modest dormer would be more harmonious to the character of the area.

5.0 Policy Context

5.1. Development Plan

- The Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan 2022-2028 (the Development Plan) is the relevant plan for the area and the site is zoned as Zoning

Objective A to provide residential development and improve residential amenity while protecting the existing residential amenities.

- The proposed development increases the size of a proposed front dormer window by 0.5 metres. Section 12.3.7.1 provides guidance for alterations at the roof/attic level of dwellings in Existing Built-up Areas.
- Section 12.3.7.1 (iv) Alterations at Roof/Attic Level states:

Roof alterations/expansions to main roof profiles - changing the hip-end roof of a semi-detached house to a gable/ 'A' frame end or 'half-hip' for example – will be assessed against a number of criteria including:

- *Careful consideration and special regard to the character and size of the structure, its position on the streetscape and proximity to adjacent structures.*
- *Existing roof variations on the streetscape.*
- *Distance/contrast/visibility of proposed roof end.*
- *Harmony with the rest of the structure, adjacent structures, and prominence.*

Dormer extensions to roofs, i.e. to the front, side, and rear, will be considered with regard to impacts on existing character and form, and the privacy of adjacent properties. The design, dimensions, and bulk of any roof proposal relative to the overall size of the dwelling and gardens will be the overriding considerations.

Dormer extensions shall be set back from the eaves, gables and/or party boundaries. Dormer extensions should be set down from the existing ridge level so as to not read as a third storey extension at roof level to the rear.

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

5.2. Relevant National or Regional Policy / Ministerial Guidelines

- None

5.3. **Natural Heritage Designations**

- The site is approximately five kilometres northeast of the Wicklow Mountains Special Area of Conservation (SAC:002122) and Special Protection Area (SPA:004040).
- The site is approximately 6.5 kilometres southwest of the South Dublin Bay Special Area of Conservation (SAC:000210) and the South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary Special Protection Area (SPA:004024).
- The site is approximately 7.5 kilometres northeast of the Glenasmole Valley Special Area of Conservation (SAC: 001209).
- The site is approximately 7.5 kilometres northwest of the Knocksink Wood Special Area of Conservation (SAC:000725).

6.0 **EIA Screening**

6.1. 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 (or Part V of the 1994 Roads Regulations). 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 the report.

7.0 **The Appeal**

7.1. **Grounds of Appeal**

- The appellants argue that the planning authority reason for refusing planning permission is not based on any objective analysis and that the proposed dormer remains modest, proportionate and compliant with policy.
- They argue that the proposed dormer remains subordinate as it is below the ridge line, retains clear separation from both gables, maintains the original roof pitch and geometry and occupies a limited proportion of the overall roof plane.
- It states in the grounds of appeal that the 0.5 metre increase in width does not extend the dormer across the majority of the roof plane nor does it present as a box

like or dominant feature. When viewed from street level the difference between what was granted planning permission and what is proposed is negligible.

- The appellants argue that no material harm is caused to the established character of the roof because the principle of a dormer has already been accepted and it is not a new type of window or different form of roof. It remains centrally positioned and proportionate to the host dwelling and the Development Plan does not impose a fixed maximum width for first dormers. It is the appellants view is that the width of three metres meets the qualitative criteria of Section 12.3.7.1 (iv).
- They also argue that the proposal preserves the substantial roof margins, avoids full width construction, maintains ridge dominance and that the dormer does not project beyond the existing roof envelope in height.
- The appellants assert that a generalised assertion of visual prominence does not constitute sufficient planning grounds for refusal where it is demonstrated that the front dormer is compliant.
- They argue in the grounds of appeal that the precedent argument is overstated and this proposal must be considered on its own merits. Should other proposals come forward they will have to be assessed and it does not follow that they will be automatically permitted.
- The appellants suggest three-metre-wide dormer windows have been allowed elsewhere in the Council area. The absence of local examples in the immediate vicinity of the site should not be regarded as policy prohibition.
- They also argue that the proposal will not give rise to overlooking or overshadowing or create additional massing that would impact on public amenity or the residential amenity of neighbouring properties. No third-party objections were received.
- Finally, the appellants argue that a 0.5 metre difference in width represents a minor dimensional adjustment within the same roof plane and that the Planning Authority has not demonstrated this increase materially alters the visual impact of the front dormer.

- Consequently, they state if no measurable visual injury is established and the proposal enables improved functionality and natural light within the appellants home this is in compliance with Objective A of the Development Plan.

7.2. **Planning Authority Response**

- No new matters arise in the grounds of appeal that would alter the opinion of the planning authority.

7.3. **Observations**

- None

8.0 **Assessment**

8.1. Having examined the application details and all the other documentation on file, including the submission received to appeal, the reports of the local authority, and having inspected the site, and having regards to the relevant local/regional/national policies and guidance, I consider that the substantive issues in this appeal to be considered as follows:

- The principle of development
- The impact on form, character and privacy of adjacent properties
- The risk of creating a general precedent for similar development

The principle of development

8.2. The site is subject to zoning Objective A in the Development Plan which has the purpose of improving residential amenity while protecting existing residential amenities.

8.3. I agree with the assessment of the Planning Authority that an extension to the dwelling is acceptable in principle subject to being in accordance with the requirements of the policies and objectives of the zoning and consistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

The impact on form, character and privacy of adjacent properties

8.4. It states at Section 12.7.3.1 (iv) that proposals for dormer extensions to roofs will be considered with regard to the impacts on existing character and form, and the privacy of adjacent properties.

- 8.5. The host building is one half of a pair of semi-detached dwellings with a hipped roof that extends across both properties. The roof is unaltered and the dwellings have a similar pattern of fenestration and matching projecting hipped bay and canopy between the ground and first floor level.
- 8.6. I observe there was limited space in half the roof plane to accommodate a three-metre-wide dormer window and could only find one local example of a front dormer window visually linked to the subject site in a neighbouring cul-de-sac. The property at 6 The View has a flat roof dormer with a window of a similar in size and width to the smaller of the two windows in the front elevation of the subject site.
- 8.7. I also observe the form, scale, mass and appearance of the properties along this side of the street are similar to the dwelling at the subject site. Consequently, inserting a dormer window of the size proposed into one half of a hipped roof would in my opinion impact adversely on the form and character of the existing pair of semi-detached dwellings by reason of its size.
- 8.8. That said this is an amendment to a previous grant of planning permission for which the planning authority accepted that one side the roof can be gable ended changing the character and form of the roof plane of this pair of semi-detached dwellings.
- 8.9. The planning authority also concedes in granting planning permission that putting a 2.5 metre dormer window into the extended roof plane will not adversely impact on the form and character of the dwelling or the dwellings adjacent to and along the street.
- 8.10. Whilst the development is not commenced the established baseline is an important consideration of significant weight and I therefore confine the balance of my assessment to whether the amended design, dimensions, and bulk of the amended proposal relative to the overall size of the dwelling and garden is acceptable.
- 8.11. Having regard to the submitted plans I note that the walls either side of the proposed window are increased in width by 0.25 metres which is similar to the thickness of a timber stud wall.
- 8.12. I am satisfied that the dormer will remain set back from the eaves, gable and party boundary with 66 The Avenue. It is also set down from the existing ridge line as to not read as a third storey.

- 8.13. The materials used in the construction of the dormer window are similar to those used in the construction of the host dwelling. The render finish on the side walls, dark roof covering and uPVC window match the existing.
- 8.14. I do not agree with the Planning Authority that increasing the width of front dormer by 0.5 metres would result in a structure that is not subordinate to the main roof and would fail to respect the form and character of this or adjacent dwellings.
- 8.15. The argument presented by the appellant that the dormer does not extend across the majority of the roof plane or present as a box like or dominant feature in the roof is well founded based on my observations. I agree that when viewed from street level the difference between what was granted planning permission and what is proposed is negligible.
- 8.16. The size of the window is not increased in the larger dormer and none of the parties raise issues of privacy. I did not observe from the site visit that the proposed dormer would give rise to overlooking or would harm the residential amenity of the dwellings adjacent by reason of dominance. I do not consider the proposed dormer window to be overbearing or overshadowing.
- 8.17. I am therefore satisfied that the amended dimensions of the dormer window and bulk of the amended proposal relative to the overall size of the dwelling is acceptable and that the criteria of Section 12.3.7.1 (iv) of the Development Plan are met.

The risk of creating a general precedent for similar development

- 8.18. The planning authority in refusing planning permission highlight a risk that the amended proposal would set an undesirable precedent for similarly scaled dormers and that this would ultimately undermine the established character of the street where no front dormers are present.
- 8.19. I have already highlighted the significance of the planning history in which the Planning Authority grant a gable ended roof with a box front dormer window in the street for the first time. No issue of precedence was identified and the combination of these two design features were considered to be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

- 8.20. The appellants highlight in their grounds of appeal that the extension is designed to improve their residential amenity and that this does not mean similar design responses will come forward for other dwellings in this street in the future.
- 8.21. I did observe at the site visit that other dwellings had been extended but no two-design responses were the same. Mindful of the fallback position and that I have concluded that an increase in the width of the dormer window would not injure the visual amenity of the area I do not consider that this proposal would set a general precedent for similar development in the future.
- 8.22. This is the first extension of this type and it will not fundamentally change character of the area. The street will still be predominantly comprised of semi-detached dwellings with hipped roofs and no dormer window. I do not consider that a tipping point has been reached that would make this proposal contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area as suggested by the Planning Authority.

9.0 AA Screening

- 9.1. I have considered the proposed development in light of the requirements of Section 177U of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended.

The subject site is located approximately five kilometres northeast of the Wicklow Mountains Special Area of Conservation (SAC:002122) and Special Protection Area (SPA:004040); approximately 6.5 kilometres southwest of the South Dublin Bay Special Area of Conservation (SAC:000210) and the South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary Special Protection Area (SPA:004024); approximately 7.5 kilometres northeast of the Glenasmole Valley Special Area of Conservation (SAC: 001209); and approximately 7.5 kilometres northwest of the Knocksink Wood Special Area of Conservation (SAC:000725).

The proposal development comprises an amendment to an earlier planning permission D25A/0588/WEB to increase the size of a proposed front dormer window in the roof from 2.5 metres to three metres.

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 it could not have any appreciable effect on a European Site. The reason for this conclusion is as follows:

- The site in an established residential area and the scale of the proposed development which is an amendment to the size of a dormer window in a proposed domestic extension to a dwelling is small.
- The distance to the identified European sites and the lack of connection.
- Taking into account the screening determination by the Planning Authority.

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

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 approximately five hundred metres east of the Little Dargle and approximately two hundred metres west of a culverted section of the River Slang both of which are tributaries of the River Dodder.

The proposed development comprises an amendment to an earlier planning permission D25A/0588/WEB to increase the size of a proposed front dormer window in the roof from 2.5 metres to three metres.

No water deterioration concerns were raised in the planning appeal.

I have assessed the proposed development 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 and 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 wither qualitatively or quantitatively.

The reason for this conclusion is as follows:

- The location of the site in an established residential area and the scale of the proposed development which is an amendment to the size of a dormer window in a proposed domestic extension to a dwelling is small. Sustainable Urban Drainage is proposed as mitigation in the previous permission to reduce the impact of surface/storm water entering the drainage network if properly designed can be an acceptable form of mitigation.

I conclude 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. I recommend that planning should be approved for the reasons and considerations as set out below.

12.0 Reasons and Considerations

- 12.1. The commission is satisfied, based on the information provided, that permission is granted for an amendment to an earlier planning permission D25A/0588/WEB to increase the size of a proposed front dormer window in the roof from 2.5 metres to three metres for the reasons and considerations set out below.
- 12.2. Having regard to the existing pattern of development on this and adjoining lands, to the nature, form and scale of development proposed which is an amendment to an earlier permission to increase the width of a proposed dormer window by 0.5 metres, the Commission is satisfied that the proposed development would be in visual harmony with the existing dwelling and not negatively impact on the residential or visual amenity of adjoining properties. It would also not set an undesirable precedent for similar forms of development in the area.
- 12.3. The proposed development would therefore be in accordance with Objective A and Section 12.3.7.1 (iv) Alterations at Roof/Attic Level of the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown

County Development Plan 2022-2028. Consequently, the proposed development would be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area subject to the following conditions:

1. The development shall be retained and completed in its entirety in accordance with the plans, particulars and specifications lodged with the application save as may be required by the other conditions attached hereto.

Reason: To ensure the development shall be in accordance with the permission and that effective control is maintained.

2. The entire dwelling shall be used as a single dwelling unit and shall not be subdivided in any manner or used as two or more separate habitable units.

Reason: To prevent unauthorised development.

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.

Conor Hughes
Planning Inspector

08th May 2026

Appendix 1: Form 1 EIA Pre-Screening

Case Reference	PL-500915-DR-26
Proposed Development Summary	The development comprises an amendment to an earlier planning permission D25A/0588/WEB to increase the size of a proposed front dormer window in the roof from 2.5 metres to three metres.
Development Address	68 The Avenue, Woodpark, Dublin 16 D16 VH29
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'. Proceed to Q.2.
	<input type="checkbox"/> No, No further action required.
<p>(For the purposes of the Directive, "Project" means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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"/> 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 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)?	
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	
No <input type="checkbox"/>	

Inspector: _____

Date: 08th May 2026