



An
Coimisiún
Pleanála

Inspector's Report

PL-501272-DR-26

Development	Attic conversion with three dormer windows to front, one dormer window to rear.
Location	19 Atkinson Drive, Belmont, Stepaside, Dublin 18, D18VP92
Planning Authority	Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council
Planning Authority Reg. Ref.	D26B/0119/WEB
Applicant(s)	Emma & Gary Curran
Type of Application	Permission
Planning Authority Decision	Grant Permission
Type of Appeal	First Party/Variation
Appellant(s)	Emma & Gary Curran
Observer(s)	None
Date of Site Inspection	13 th July 2026
Inspector	Barry Diamond

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Appendix 1 –EIA Screening

1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1. The application site is circa 0.18ha and comprises an existing two storey semi-detached dwelling with a rear single storey annex and an integral single garage. The dwelling is finished in a painted render, it has a gabled roof with a flat concrete roof tile and there is a single half dormer window on the front elevation. The existing dwelling fronts onto the public road and there is a rear garden area which is enclosed by 2 metre high fencing.
- 1.2. The application dwelling adjoins No. 20 Atkinson Drive which is located to the northeast of the site and is of a similar design, height and finishes. To the southwest is No. 18 which is a two and half storey detached dwelling which is finished in red brick and has three dormers on its front elevation. The site backs onto the rear garden of No.1 Darley Lane which is a two storey semi-detached dwelling.
- 1.3. The site is set within a residential area, with a mixture of semi-detached and detached houses along with apartment blocks. The surrounding dwellings have a mixture of finishes with dormer and half dormers being evident on the front of dwellings and larger box dormers being evident on the rears of some dwellings in the area.

2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1. The proposed development comprises an attic conversion for storage and includes three dormer windows to the front roof slope and a large horizontal dormer to the rear roof slope.

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

3.1. Decision

On the 23rd April 2026 the Planning Authority issued a decision to grant planning permission subject to conditions.

3.1.1. Conditions

2. Prior to the commencement of development on site, the Applicant shall submit for the written agreement of the Planning Authority, revised drawings showing: a) the external width of the rear dormer reduced to 6 metres. b) revised window pattern

which details a reduction in the scale of the opes relative to the reduced width of the dormer.

Reason: To protect the residential amenities of the area and orderly development.

3.2. Planning Authority Reports

3.2.1. Planning Reports

The report of the planner reflects the decision to grant planning permission. It includes the following points:

- The rear dormer is sufficiently set down from the ridge line and is sufficiently set up from the eaves;
- There is a sufficient separation distance of 18 metres from the dwelling directly opposite the rear of No.1 Darley Lane;
- The scale and massing of the dormer is considered excessive and should be reduced to protect the amenity of the neighbouring dwelling to the rear;
- A condition requiring a reduction in the external width of the dormer to 6 metres is required;
- The three dormers to the front of the dwelling are considered to be minor works and in accordance with Section 12.3.7 of the Development Plan;
- The proposal does not lead to any significant concerns in relation to Appropriate Assessment and Environmental Impact Assessment.

3.2.2. Other Technical Reports

- None

3.3. Prescribed Bodies

None

3.4. Third Party Observations

There were no third party representations received during the processing of the application by the Planning Authority.

4.0 Planning History

Site

No relevant history

Setting

D21B/0296 - Permission was granted in August 2021 for the development of 1no dormer type window and 1no velux type window to the rear and 3no velux type windows to the front of existing terraced house at 15 Atkinson Drive, Dublin 18, D18 P963.

Permissions Raised as Precedent

D23B/0581 & ABP-319268-24 – Permission was granted on appeal for an amendment to D22B/0330 for a new dormer window and construction of an extension at 1 Belmont Drive, Woodside, Dublin 18, D18 WK81.

D19B/0152 - Permission was granted in May 2019 for a single storey ground floor extension to the rear with flat roof for extended kitchen use, an attic conversion with dormer roof extension to the rear for additional room spaces at 1 Fernhill Road, Belmont, Stepside, Co Dublin.

D21B/0351 - Permission was granted in September 2021 for an attic conversion for two bedrooms with rear dormer window rear single story extension and three velux windows to the front at 12 Thornberry Close, Belmont, Stepside, Dublin, D18N8Y4.

5.0 Policy Context

5.1. Development Plan

The relevant Development Plan is the Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Development Plan 2022-2028. The site is zoned 'A' with the objective to provide residential development and improve residential amenity while protecting the existing residential amenities. Residential development, including alterations to existing dwellings, is permitted in principle under this zoning.

Chapter 3 Climate Action

Section 3.4 Achieving Sustainable Planning Outcomes

Section 3.4.1.3 Policy Objective CA7: Construction Materials.

Chapter 4 Neighbourhood – People, Homes and Place

Section 4.3.1.2 Policy Objective PHP19 – Existing Housing Stock – Adaptation

Section 4.3.1.3 Policy Objective PHP20 – Protection of Existing Residential Amenity

Chapter 12 (Development Management)

Section 12.3.7.1 Extensions to Dwellings

- (i) Front extensions, at both ground and first level will be considered acceptable in principle subject to scale, design, and impact on visual and residential amenities. A break in the front building line will be acceptable, over two floors to the front elevation, subject to scale and design however a significant break in the building line should be resisted unless the design can demonstrate to the Planning Authority that the proposal will not impact on the visual or residential amenities of directly adjoining dwellings. Excessive scale should be avoided.

- Roof alterations/expansions to main roof profiles

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.

Particular care will be taken in evaluating large, visually dominant dormer window structures, with a balance sought between quality residential amenity and the privacy of adjacent properties. Excessive overlooking of adjacent properties should be avoided.

Section 12.8.7.1 – Separation Distances.

5.2. Relevant National or Regional Policy / Ministerial Guidelines (where relevant)

‘Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities’, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, (2024)

5.3. Natural Heritage Designations

The appeal site is not located on or within proximity to any designated Natura 2000 site. The subject site is situated c. 5.73km to the northeast of the Wicklow Mountains SPA (site code SPA 004040) and the Wicklow Mountains SAC (site code SAC 002122). It is also c. 0.61km southeasteast of the Fitzsimons Wood pNHA (site code pNHA 001753) and is situated 6.75km to the south of the Dalkey Coastal Zone and Killiney Hill pNHA (site code pNHA 001206).

6.0 EIA Screening

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

7.0 The Appeal

7.1. Grounds of Appeal

The grounds of appeal against the imposition of Condition No.2 for the appellant were submitted by Kevin Tiernan Planning Consultant. The issues raised are summarised below:

- The Planning Authority has accepted the principle of development;
- The development accords with Section 12.3.7.1 (iv) of the Development Plan;
- The sole concern of the Planning Authority relates to the perceived dominance;
- The Commission approved a similar development at 1 Belmont Drive, Woodside, Dublin 18 (ABP-319268-24) which required only a 0.5 metre set back from the party boundary and gable;

- There are rear dormers of meaningful scale at 1 Fernhill Road (D19B/0152), 2 Fernhill Road, 22 Belmont Drive & 12 Thornberry Close (D21B/0351);
- There is no consistent planning basis for imposing an arbitrary 6 metre width limitation; and
- Any amendment to the design should be minor and consistent with ABP-319268-24.

7.2. Planning Authority Response

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.

7.3. Observations

None

8.0 Assessment

- 8.1. This is a first party appeal against a condition of a grant of permission. Section 139 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) allows the Coimisiún (so long as it is satisfied that the application does not require an assessment as if it had been made to it in the first instance) to give the relevant Planning Authority direction regarding the attachment, amendment or removal of the condition. I am satisfied that the development (attic conversion with three dormer windows to front, one dormer window to rear) is otherwise in accordance with the Development Plan and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, and I am satisfied that the appeal only relates to Condition 02 and does not raise any further issues. I am satisfied that the appeal may be dealt with under Section 139 of the Act, and I am going to limit my consideration to the appropriateness of the condition in question.

8.2. Condition No.2

Condition 02 states:

2. Prior to the commencement of development on site, the Applicant shall submit for the written agreement of the Planning Authority, revised drawings showing: a) the external width of the rear dormer reduced to 6 metres. b) revised window pattern which details a reduction in the scale of the opes relative to the reduced width of the dormer.

Reason: To protect the residential amenities of the area and orderly development.

- 8.3 The proposal includes three dormer windows to the front of the application dwelling which are spread across the existing roofscape. The Planning Authority did not raise any issue with these dormer windows and I am of the opinion that they are minor development and are characteristic of the surrounding area, including Nos. 17 & 18 Atkinson Drive to the southwest of the appeal site which both have three dormers on their roofscapes at second floor level.
- 8.4 Condition 02 specifically relates to the proposed large horizontal box dormer to the rear of the existing dwelling which will allow for the conversion of the existing attic space for the stated use as two store rooms. Section 12.3.7.1 of the Development Plan states that 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.
- 8.5 In the subject case the proposed rear dormer extends across the roof for a distance of 8.9 metres and reads as one continuous horizontal dormer set within the roof plane of the dwelling. There are three window openings within the dormer which would facilitate the development of two store rooms within the second storey of the house. The proposed dormer is set down from the existing ridge line and has a set up from the eaves. While it is set off the eaves of the gable, there is no similar offset from the party boundary with the adjoining semi-detached dwelling.
- 8.6 The Planning Authority's concern is that the proposed dormer should be reduced from a width of 8.9 metres to a maximum width of 6 metres to reduce the visual dominance of the dormer.
- 8.7 The proposed rear dormer includes three window openings, one serves a landing window, while the remaining two windows each serve a storeroom. The windows look onto the rear elevation of No. 1 Darley Lane and have a separation distance of approximately 19 metres. No. 1 Darley Lane is already overlooked by the existing bedroom window on the appeal dwelling at first floor level. In my opinion the use of the attic rooms as stores, the separation distance and the fact that the windows are not directly opposing would mean that the windows in the rear dormer would not seriously injure the amenities of the dwelling to the rear.
- 8.8 The appeal site fronts onto Atkinson Drive and backs onto other two storey properties in Darley Lane. There are limited views of the rear of the appeal building

due to the existing built form along Atkinson Drive, Darley Lane and Darley Drive. The only possible public vantage points to view the dormer are within gaps between buildings along Darley Drive and Daley Lane. From these limited vantage points I do not consider that the dormer would be overly dominant on the roofscape and would have no consequential impact on the streetscape.

- 8.9 I am of the view that the dormer does not comply with Section 12.3.7.1 of the Development Plan in that it is not off set from the party boundary. As part of the appeal submissions the appellant has put forward an option to amend the design to introduce a 0.5metre offset from the party boundary as per appeal ABP-319268-24. I am of the opinion that this amendment is necessary to ensure that the dormer is consistent with Section 12.3.7.1 of the Development Plan.
- 8.10 I note that the appellant made reference to a number of other rear dormer windows in the general area which had been approved by either the Planning Authority or on appeal, however, I have considered that the proposal is acceptable subject to amendment and I do not consider that they raise any issue of significance to this appeal.
- 8.11 I consider that provided the proposed dormer is off set from the party boundary by 0.5 metres, consistent with the amendment put forward by the appellant, that the proposed rear dormer is acceptable and condition 02 should be amended accordingly.

9.0 AA Screening

- 9.1 I have considered the development in light of the requirements S177U of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended. The subject site is located at 19, Atkinson Drive, Belmont, Stepside, Dublin 18, D18VP92 no relevant designated sites are close by.
- 9.2 The proposed development comprises an attic conversion with three dormer windows to front, one dormer window to rear. 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.

9.3 The reason for this conclusion is as follows:

- Small scale and nature of the development;
- Distance from nearest European site and lack of connections; and
- The screening decision of the Planning Authority.

9.4 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 at 19, Atkinson Drive, Belmont, Stepaside, Dublin 18, D18VP92 which is 0.27km metres north of the nearest water body.

10.2 The proposed development comprises an attic conversion with three dormer windows to front, one dormer window to rear. No water deterioration concerns were raised in the planning appeal.

10.3 I have assessed the 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 & ground water waterbodies in order to reach good status (meaning both good chemical and good ecological status), and to prevent deterioration. Having considered the nature, scale and location of the project, I am satisfied that it can be eliminated from further assessment because there is no conceivable risk to any surface and/or groundwater water bodies either qualitatively or quantitatively. The reason for this conclusion is as follows:

- Nature of works e.g. small scale and nature of the development; and
- Distance from nearest water bodies and/or lack of hydrological connections.

10.4 I conclude that on the basis of objective information, that the proposed development will not result in a risk of deterioration on any water body (rivers, lakes,

groundwaters, transitional and coastal) either qualitatively or quantitatively or on a temporary or permanent basis or otherwise jeopardise any water body in reaching its WFD objectives and consequently can be excluded from further assessment.

11.0 Recommendation

11.1. Having regard to the nature of the condition which is the subject of the appeal, it is considered that the determination of the relevant application as if it had been made to the Coimisiún in the first instance would not be warranted and it is recommended that based on the reasons and considerations set out below, that the Planning Authority are directed under subsection (1) of section 139 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended, to amend condition number 2 to the following:

‘Prior to the commencement of development the applicant is requested to submit for the written agreement of the Planning Authority revised drawings providing for the following modifications:

- (a) The redesign of the rear roof plane dormer in order to provide a minimum set back of 0.5m from the party boundary with No. 20 Atkinson Drive and the southwestern gable of the subject dwelling house; and
- b) revised window pattern to reflect the amendments to the dormer.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and orderly development.’

12.0 Reasons and Considerations

Having regard to the design of the proposed development, it is considered that subject to the modification to condition number 2, as indicated above, that the proposed development, would be in accordance with the provisions of the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan 2022-2028 and would be acceptable in terms of the visual amenities of the area, would not set an unacceptable precedent in the area and would, therefore, be in accordance 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, directly or indirectly, the exercise of my professional judgement in an improper or inappropriate way.

Barry Diamond
Planning Inspector

23rd July 2026

Appendix 1 - Form 1 EIA Pre-Screening

Case Reference	PL-501272-DR-26
Proposed Development Summary	Attic conversion with three dormer windows to front, one dormer window to rear.
Development Address	19, Atkinson Drive, Belmont, Stepside, Dublin 18, D18VP92
	In all cases check box /or leave blank
1. Does the proposed development come within the definition of a 'project' for the purposes of EIA? (For the purposes of the Directive, "Project" means: - The execution of construction works or of other installations or schemes, - Other interventions in the natural surroundings and landscape including those involving the extraction of mineral resources)	☒ Yes, it is a 'Project'. Proceed to Q2. ☐ No, No further action required.
2. Is the proposed development of a CLASS specified in <u>Part 1</u>, Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended)?	
☐ Yes, it is a Class specified in Part 1 . EIA is mandatory. No Screening required. EIAR to be requested. Discuss with ADP.	
☒ No, it is not a Class specified in Part 1. Proceed to Q3	
3. Is the proposed development of a CLASS specified in <u>Part 2</u>, 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?	
☒ 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.	
☐ Yes, the proposed development is of a Class and meets/exceeds the threshold. EIA is Mandatory. No Screening Required	
☐ 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)	

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 ☐	Screening Determination required (Complete Form 3)
No ☒	Pre-screening determination conclusion remains as above (Q1 to Q3)

Inspector: _____

Date: _____

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