



An
Coimisiún
Pleanála

Inspector's Report PL-501385-SD-26

Development	Attic conversion, raising of gable wall to change roof profile with projecting dormer to rear roof, new playroom, also 2 new Velux windows to front roof.
Location	18, Rockwood Finnstown Abbey, Lucan, Dublin, K78K209.
Planning Authority	South Dublin County Council
Planning Authority Reg. Ref.	SD26B/0095W
Applicant(s)	Barry Doherty & Gill Rapple
Type of Application	Permission
Planning Authority Decision	Grant Permission
Type of Appeal	Third Party
Appellant(s)	Gary Waters & Fran Rafferty
Observer(s)	None
Date of Site Inspection	28 th August 2026

Inspector

Emer Doyle

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1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1. The appeal site is located at 18 Rockwood, Finnstown Abbey, Lucan, Co. Dublin. This section of Rockwood is in a cul de sac located in close proximity to Griffeen Valley Esker Park and Lucan Village.
- 1.2. The application site comprises of a two storey semi-detached dwelling which has been extended previously, together with a shed in the rear garden. The subject streetscape comprises of similar two storey semi-detached properties.

2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1. Permission is sought for the conversion of the attic space comprising of modifications to the existing roof structure to include velux windows to the front and a dormer window to the rear together with the raising of the existing gable. The proposed attic space is to be used as an attic den/ playroom and has a stated area of c. 27.6m².

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

3.1. Decision

- 3.1.1. Permission granted subject to 3 No. conditions which are standard in nature except for Condition 2 which required the following amendments:
 - (a) The attic level gable window on the southern side elevation shall be fitted with obscure glazing, and such obscure glazing shall be maintained in perpetuity.
 - (b) The bathroom element of the attic conversion is omitted from the development.

3.2. Planning Authority Reports

- 3.2.1. Planning Reports

- The planner's report considered that the proposal would comply with the provisions of BFP 1 and BFP 5 of the SDCC House Extension and Design Guide.

3.2.2. Other Technical Reports

- None.

3.3. Prescribed Bodies

- No reports.

3.4. Third Party Observations

- One third party submission was made to the Planning Authority. The issues raised are similar to those raised in the appeal.

4.0 Planning History

- The planner's report notes that there were no previous applications on the site.
- The planner's report details a significant number of planning applications within the Rockwood housing estate at this location.

5.0 Policy Context

5.1 Development Plan

The South Dublin County Development Plan 2022-2028 is the operational plan for the area.

Relevant Policies and Objectives

Policy QDP7: High Quality Design

Policy H14: Residential Extensions- support the extension of existing dwellings subject to protection of residential and visual amenities.

H14 Objective 1: To favourably consider proposals to extend existing dwellings subject to protection of residential and visual amenities and compliance with the standards set out in Chapter 12: Implementation and Monitoring and the guidance

set out in the South Dublin County Council House Extension Guide, 2010 (or any superseding guidelines).

South Dublin County Council Design Guide 2025

Relevant Sections

Section 2.4 Extensions and Alterations

Section 2.5 Managing visible interventions

Section 3.0 Built Form Principles (Built Form Principles)

Section 3.1.7 BPF 1 - All Extensions and Alterations

Section 3.5 Roof Alterations

Section 3.5.2 BPF 5 - Roof Alterations and Extensions

5.4 Natural Heritage Designations

- 5.1.1. The appeal site is not located within or adjoining any designated site.

The closest designated site is Rye Water Valley/ Carton SAC (Site Code: 001398) c. 3.3km to the north west of the site.

The site is located c. 1.3km from both Liffey Valley proposed NHA (Site Code: 000128) and Grand Canal proposed NHA (Site Code: 002104).

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).

6.2. Grounds of Appeal

- 6.2.1. The grounds of appeal can be summarised as follows:
- Concerns regarding impact on residential amenity.

- It is considered that Condition 2 which required the omission of the bathroom and required obscure glazing to the attic is insufficient to address concerns in relation to impacts on residential amenity.
- It is considered that there is inadequate cumulative assessment of cumulative impacts of development on the site including a previous extension and shed.
- Concern regarding visual impact of raising of gable wall and change to roof profile.
- Concern regarding site drainage.
- Concern regarding discrepancies in drawings.
- Concern regarding intensification of development on the site.

6.3. Applicant Response

6.3.1. A response has been submitted on behalf of the applicants which can be summarised as follows:

- The attic level accommodation is proposed as an ancillary children's playroom only and is not proposed as a bedroom, separate residential unit or habitable accommodation.
- Appendix 1 of the appeal sets out how the development complies with Policy H14 of the Development Plan and the South Dublin County Council House Extension Guide 2025.
- The applicant's accept that the space does not have sufficient height to accommodate the proposed toilet/WC and are agreeable to the removal of same as set out by Condition 2(b).
- Section 3 sets out precedent decisions for similar development in the vicinity.
- It is considered that the roof dormer is subordinate to the main roof form and would not give rise to any material additional overlooking or loss of privacy.
- Condition 2 does not indicate that the proposed development is fundamentally unacceptable, it represents proportionate safeguards to protect residential amenity.

- The roof alteration is not an incongruous addition.
- The proposal is at roof level and does not involve any increase in hardstanding or site coverage.

6.4. Planning Authority Response

- 6.4.1. The Planning Authority response confirmed the decision. It considered that the issues raised were covered in the Chief Executive Order.

6.5. Observations

- None.

7.0 Assessment

- 7.1. The following are considered to be the main issues in the assessment of the subject appeal:

- Principle of Development
- Design and Visual Impact
- Impact on Residential Amenity

7.2. Principle of Development

- 7.2.1. The subject site is located within an area designated with zoning objective RES, in the South Dublin County Development Plan 2022-2028. Zoning objective RES seeks 'to protect and improve residential amenity'.
- 7.2.2. Policy H14 of the Development Plan supports the extension of existing dwellings subject to the protection of residential and visual amenities.
- 7.2.3. The proposal provides for an attic conversion for use as a playroom together with alterations to the front of the dwelling to provide velux rooflights and a change in roof

profile, alterations to the side gable, and alterations to the rear to provide a dormer window.

- 7.2.4. I consider that the principle of development is acceptable at this location.

7.3. Design and Visual Impact

- 7.3.1. The main issues raised regarding design and visual impact relate to the impact on the adjoining semi-detached dwelling and the impacts on symmetry of both dwellings and the impact on the streetscape.
- 7.3.2. I note that the planner's report raised no issues regarding design. It is an objective of the Development Plan under H14 Objective 1 *'to favourably consider proposals to extend existing dwellings subject to protection of residential and visual amenities and compliance with the standards set out in Chapter 12: Implementation and Monitoring and the guidance set out in the South Dublin County Council House Extension Guide, 2010 (or any superseding guidelines).'*
- 7.3.3. The 2010 Guidelines have been superseded by the South Dublin County Council House Extension Design Guide 2025. This document sets out both general considerations in relation to good design, and more specific guidance in relation to different development types including roof alterations and extensions.
- 7.3.4. BFP5 requires that rear dormer elements should be located below the ridge line, set back from the eaves, inset from party boundaries and side walls/roof hips, and appropriately scaled so as not to read as an additional storey or obscure the main features of the roof.
- 7.3.5. I am satisfied that the proposed design of the rear dormer is consistent with BFP5 in that it is located below the ridge height and remains subordinate to the main roof form. I consider that the proposed changes to the roof profile, the velux windows to the front of the dwelling, and the raised side gable wall will be visible from the streetscape at this location, but I consider that these elements are acceptable and will not unduly detract from either the existing streetscape or the adjoining semi-detached dwelling.

- 7.3.6. I note that the planner's report refers to many examples of similar development in the vicinity and I also refer the Commission to Section 3.0 of the appeal which sets out a number of similar precedents.
- 7.3.7. I note the suburban context of the site and noted similar extensions during the site inspection. I consider that extensions such as this facilitate modern living requirements, and am of the view that the proposed development would not unduly detract from the visual amenities of the area.

7.4. Impact on Residential Amenity

- 7.4.1. The main issues raised in the appeal relate to the exceptionally close relationship of the parties and the semi-detached configuration. Concerns are raised in relation to overlooking and perceived overlooking towards the adjoining family home and rear private open space. It is considered that Condition 2 which required the omission of the bathroom and required obscure glazing to the attic is insufficient to address concerns in relation to impacts on residential amenity.
- 7.4.2. The proposed rear dormer would not overlook living accommodation but could give rise to some overlooking of the rear garden of the adjoining semi-detached dwelling. The level of overlooking would be similar to what already occurs from first floor bedroom windows and would not have a significant negative impact on residential amenity. The use of the proposed room is as a playroom/den. I consider that the requirements of condition 2 to omit the toilet and provide obscure glazing in the side gable window serving the stairs are reasonable. In the event that the Commission is minded to grant permission, I recommend that similar conditions are attached. The proposed development relates to the attic conversion in an existing dwelling and I do not consider that such works would have an overbearing impact on adjacent properties. I consider that the scale of development is acceptable and reflects a type of development already typical in the area.

8.0 AA Screening

- 8.1. I have considered case PL-501385-SD-26 in light of the requirements of S177U of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended.

The appeal site is located on zoned lands and the proposed development comprises of an attic conversion within an existing dwelling.

The closest European site relative to the appeal site is Rye Water Valley/ Carton SAC (Site Code: 001398) c. 3.3km to the north west of the site.

No nature conservation concerns were raised in the planning application or 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 effect on a European Site.

The reason for this conclusion is as follows: Likely significant effects are excluded and therefore Appropriate Assessment (under Section 177V of the Planning and Development Act 2000) is not required.

- The nature and scale of the proposed works and adjoining public infrastructure,
- The separation distance and intervening lands from the nearest European sites and the absence of any hydrological or other pathways,
- Taking into account the screening determination of the PA.

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.

9.0 Water Framework Directive

- 9.1. An assessment of the proposed development has been undertaken with regard to the objectives set out in Article 4 of the EU Water Framework directive.
- 9.2. Having considered the nature, scale, and location of the proposed development, it is concluded that the proposal will not result in any risk of deterioration in the status of any water body, including surface waters (rivers and lakes), groundwater, transitional waters, or coastal waters. This applies to both qualitative and quantitative status, and in respect of temporary and permanent effects. In addition, the proposed development will not adversely affect the achievement of established environmental

objectives, including the protection, maintenance, and improvement of water body status, as required under the Directive.

- 9.3. Accordingly, the proposed development is considered to be compliant with the requirements of Article 4.

10.0 Recommendation

- 10.1. I recommend that permission is granted.

11.0 Reasons and Considerations

Having regard to the residential zoning objective for the area, and compliance with the development standards of the South Dublin County Development Plan 2022-2028, the South Dublin County Council Extension Design Guide 2025, and the pattern of development in the area, it is considered that the proposed development, subject to compliance with the conditions set out below, would not detract from the character of the area, would not seriously injure the residential or visual amenities of the area and would constitute an acceptable form of development at this location. The proposed development would, therefore, be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

12.0 Conditions

1. The development shall be carried out and completed in accordance with the plans and particulars lodged with the application, except as may otherwise be required in order to comply with the following conditions. Where such conditions require details to be agreed with the planning authority, the developer shall agree such details in writing with the planning authority prior to commencement of development and the development shall be carried out and completed in accordance with the agreed particulars.

Reason: In the interest of clarity.

2. (a) The proposed window on the side elevation shall be glazed and thereafter permanently maintained with obscure glass.
(b) The proposed toilet in the attic room shall be omitted.

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity.

3. Drainage arrangements, including the attenuation and disposal of surface water, shall comply with the requirements of the planning authority for such works and services.

Reason: In the interest of public health.

4. Site development and building works shall be carried out between the hours of 0700 to 1900 Mondays to Fridays inclusive, between 0800 to 1400 on Saturdays and not at all on Sundays and public holidays. Deviation from these times shall only be allowed in exceptional circumstances where prior written agreement has been received from the planning authority.

Reason: To safeguard the amenity of property in the vicinity.

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.”

Emer Doyle
Planning Inspector

3rd September 2026

Appendix 1: Form 1 EIA Pre-Screening

Case Reference	PL-501385-SD
Proposed Development Summary	Attic conversion, raising of gable wall to change roof profile with projecting dormer to the rear.
Development Address	18 Rockwood, Finnstown Abbey, Lucan, Co. Dublin.
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?	☒ Yes, it is a 'Project'. Proceed to Q.2.
	☐ No, No further action required.
(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)?	
☐ Yes, it is a Class specified in Part 1.	State the Class here

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 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?	
☐ 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: Emer Doyle

Date: 3rd September 2026