



An
Coimisiún
Pleanála

Inspector's Report

PL-501761-DS-26

Development

Planning permission for attic conversion with dormer to rear roof & to continue to front roof a with Dormer extended from ridgeline to create additional bedroom, bath, all with associated ancillary work

Location

3 Ambassador Court, Pembroke Lane, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4

Planning Authority

Dublin City Council

Planning Authority Reg. Ref.

WEB2109/26

Applicant(s)

Lauren McDonnell

Type of Application

Permission

Planning Authority Decision

Grant permission

Type of Appeal

First party

Appellant(s)

Lauren McDonnell

Observer(s)

None

Date of Site Inspection

12 September 2026

Inspector

Killian Harrington

Table of Contents

1.0	Site Location and Description	4
2.0	Proposed Development	4
3.0	Planning Authority Decision.....	4
4.0	Planning History	6
5.0	Policy Context	7
6.0	EIA Screening	10
7.0	The Appeal	10
8.0	Assessment.....	11
9.0	AA Screening	15
10.0	Water Framework Directive	16
11.0	Recommendation	16
12.0	Reasons and Considerations	17
Appendix A: Form 1 EIA Pre-Screening		17

1.0 Site Location and Description

The subject site comprises a two-storey mews style property with a stated area of 0.020ha and is situated on Pembroke Lane, just off Wellington Road in Ballsbridge. No.3 Ambassador Court forms part of a terrace of similar though not identical properties. No.2 Ambassador Court and No.31 Pembroke Lane adjoin the property. The Lansdowne Hotel (Nos 27-29 Pembroke Road) abuts the site to the north (rear) and this is a protected structure as is the entire Pembroke Road terrace to the north. No. 3 Ambassador Court is characterised by a pitched roof with chimney adjoining neighbouring no. 31 and red brick facade. The first floor contains a balcony. Vehicular access is off Pembroke lane, with the boundary defined by a painted brick wall with roller shutter door, pedestrian door opening and service outlet.

2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1 The proposed development comprises an attic conversion with dormer to rear roof that is to continue to the front roof with a dormer extended from ridgeline to create an additional bedroom, bath and all with associated ancillary works.

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

3.1 Decision

Dublin City Council granted planning permission, with the following relevant conditions:

2. The development shall be revised as follows: a. The proposed roof of the dormer shall not exceed the ridge level of the existing house. b. The dormer shall be setback a minimum of 500mm from the eaves and sides of the existing roofscape. Development shall not commence until revised plans, drawings and particulars showing the above amendments have been submitted to, and agreed in writing by the Planning Authority, and such works shall be fully implemented.

Reason: In the interests of orderly development and visual amenity

3. The attic space hereby approved shall not be used for human habitation unless it complies with the current building regulations. Reason: To provide for an adequate standard of development

3.1.1. Planning Authority Reports

The proposal in principle was considered to be in line with the Z2 zoning objectives to protect and/or improve the amenities of residential conservation areas.

The new floor level at attic level in the application would be approximately 30 sqm. The proposed internal floor to ceiling height was noted as 2.57m. The proposed dormer sits 340mm above the ridge line of the roof, with a 300mm setback from the eaves. The existing ridge height is approximately +7.66m

The proposed setback from the eaves level was noted as policy compliant. In terms of the proposed dormer roof, the proposed extension above the ridge level in a conservation area 'Z2' was deemed not acceptable. At a minimum, the height of the dormer should not exceed the existing ridge level of the house. The planner's report considered that an amendment can be addressed by condition to decrease the height.

The dormer has an external width of approximately 7.78 metres and represents the full width of the roof. The proposed materials are metal cladding. Appendix 18, Section 5.0 seeks to retain more of the existing roofscape and a setback of 500mm from each side and a maximum width of 3.9 metres is required. Materials should also harmonise with adjoining properties. It was proposed in the report that suitable conditions should be attached to remedy these design issues. The Planning Authority raises no issues with the proposed rooflights.

Subject to conditions mentioned (including Conditions 2 and 3), the proposed was considered acceptable and in keeping with the policies and objectives of the Dublin City Development Plan. The proposed development would also not materially contravene the policies and objectives of the Dublin City Development Plan 2022-2028.

3.1.2 Other Technical Reports

- Drainage Division – no objection subject to conditions

3.3. Prescribed Bodies

None

3.4. Third Party Observations

One submission was received raising the following concerns:

- The proposed dormer and windows will be clearly visible above existing screening which will overlook the Lansdowne Hotel.
- The screen fencing should be altered to maintain existing visual privacy and acoustic separation.
- The application red line includes part of the hotel grounds.

4.0 Planning History

4.1 Subject site

Reg. Ref. 3745/23 – Planning permission granted for the demolition of the portion of the front boundary wall enclosing the vehicle parking space, the construction of a replacement boundary wall of height 2.4 m, (as per existing) aligning with the property boundary to Pembroke Lane as specified in Property Registration Authority folio DN199079F, the forming of pedestrian and vehicle entrance with a multi-panel, slide & turn automated gate, paving of the enclosed parking space and associated ground works.

5.0 Policy Context

5.1 Development Plan

Under the Dublin City Development Plan 2022-2028 the site is subject to the Land Use Zoning Objective Z2 'Residential Neighbourhoods (Conservation Areas)', which aims to 'protect and/or improve the amenities of residential conservation areas'. The following Dublin City Development Plan policy objectives have specific relevance to this appeal:

Policy QHSN6 (Urban Consolidation) - To promote and support residential consolidation and sustainable intensification through the consideration of applications for infill development, backland development, mews development, reuse/ adaption of existing housing stock and use of upper floors, subject to the provision of good quality accommodation.

BHA9 (Conservation Areas) - To protect the special interest and character of all Dublin's Conservation Areas – identified under Z8, Z2 zoning objectives and denoted by red line conservation hatching on the zoning maps. Development within or affecting a Conservation Area must contribute positively to its character and distinctiveness and take opportunities to protect and enhance the character and appearance of the area and its setting, wherever possible.

Section 14.7.2 Residential Neighbourhoods (Conservation Areas) – Zone Z2

Residential conservation areas have extensive groupings of buildings and associated open spaces with an attractive quality of architectural design and scale. The general objective for such areas is to protect them from unsuitable new developments or works that would have a negative impact on the amenity or architectural quality of the area.

Appendix 18, Section 1.1 (General Design Principles)

The design of residential extensions should have regard to the amenities of adjoining properties and in particular, the need for light and privacy. In addition, the form of the existing building should be respected, and the development should integrate with the existing building through the use of similar or contrasting

materials and finishes'. Innovative, contemporary design will be encouraged. A contemporary or modern approach, providing unique designs, can offer a more imaginative solution. However, such proposals are still required to take account of the design issues outlined in this document.

Appendix 18 - Section 1.2 Extensions to Rear

Ground floor rear extensions will be considered in terms of their length, height, proximity to mutual boundaries and quantum of usable rear private open space remaining. The extension should match or complement the main house. First floor rear extensions will be considered on their merits, noting that they can have potential for negative impacts on the amenities of adjacent properties, and will only be permitted where the planning authority is satisfied that there will be no significant negative impacts on surrounding residential or visual amenities.

Appendix 18 – Section 4.0 - Alterations at Roof Level/ Attics/ Dormers/ Additional Floors

The following criteria will be considered in assessing alterations at roof level:

- 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.

Appendix 18 – Section 5.0 – Attic Conversions / Dormer Windows

The use of an attic space for human habitation must be compliant with all of the relevant design standards, as well as building and fire regulations. Dormer windows, where proposed should complement the existing roof profile and be sympathetic to the overall design of the dwelling. The use of roof lights to serve attic bedrooms will be considered on a case-by case basis. Where it is proposed to

extend the ridge height to accommodate an increased floor-to-ceiling height, the design should avoid an overly dominant roof structure. The proposed scale of the roof should retain similar proportions to the building where possible. Dormer windows may be provided to the front, side or rear of a dwelling.

Appendix 18 – Section 5.1 – Additional Floors

It is acknowledged that converting an attic as a full floor to the elevation of a dwelling can often be successfully achieved without effecting or impacting the overall character of the area or the residential amenity. Dublin City Council will support innovative design responses to the densification of suburban housing to consolidate existing built up areas. Converting existing attic space to provide a full additional floor will be considered in this context, where it can be demonstrated that such a proposal makes a positive contribution to the streetscape and has no adverse impact on the residential amenities of adjacent properties. The provision of such densification solutions are often more suitable at the end of terrace or corner house sites where a feature/ bookend design can be facilitated. Each proposal will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Applications for an additional storey must ensure that all of the relevant internal residential standards are complied with as set out in this Appendix.

5.3. Natural Heritage Designations

The Grand Canal proposed NHA is less than 1 km from the site. The South Dublin Bay proposed NHA, South Dublin Bay SAC & South Dublin Bay and River Tolka SPA c.2km to the east. North Dublin Bay SAC, North Bull Island SPA and North Dublin Bay proposed NHA are c. 4km to the northeast

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 & Development Regulations 2001, as amended. 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 report.

7.0 The Appeal

7.1 Grounds of Appeal

The first party appeal has concerns about the planning authority's decision to restrict the height, width and use of the dormer extension by way of conditions 2 and 3. The appeal requests the following:

- (i) Delete Condition 2(a), which requires that the proposed dormer roof shall not exceed the ridge level of the existing house;
- (ii) Delete Condition 2(b), which requires the dormer to be set back a minimum of 500mm from the eaves and sides of the existing roofscape; and
- (iii) Confirm compliance under Condition 3, on the basis that deletion of Condition 2(a) is a precondition of the space complying with the habitability requirements of the current Building Regulations.

The appeal, which includes photographic evidence, makes the following points:

- The proposal sits within an established local pattern of dormer development that exceeds the ridge line of the parent dwelling, including on the immediately adjoining properties at Nos. 31 and 31A.
- The proposal projects only 340mm above the existing ridge, approximately one third of the projection of the adjoining Nos. 31 and 31A (975mm).
- The proposal has minimal visual impact from either direction along Pembroke Lane, given the established raised roofline to the east and the setback position of No. 3 behind No. 2 Ambassador Court to the west.

- The proposal enables the space to meet the minimum habitability standards under the current Building Regulations, providing an additional bedroom and bathroom that will materially improve the residential amenity of the applicant's family home.
- The appeal refers to planning precedent in the locality where the ridgeline is broken
- The appeal refers to the need for boundary legibility and not set back the dormer width 500mm on each side. It would integrate better with Nos. 31 and 31A if the dormer ran the full width of the roof, as originally proposed.
- The appeal therefore requests that the Commission delete Conditions 2(a) and 2(b), and confirm that Condition 3 is satisfied by the design as proposed, so that the dormer may be constructed as originally submitted.

7.2. Planning Authority Response

None

7.3. Observations

None

8.0 Assessment

- 8.1. The proposed development comprises an attic conversion with dormer to rear roof that is to continue to the front roof with a dormer extended from ridgeline to create an additional bedroom, bath and all with associated ancillary works. The first party appeal seeks to remove conditions 2 consisting of parts (a) and (b) and 3) of the granted permission restricting the height and width of the dormer and also to confirm compliance under Condition 3, on the basis that deletion of Condition 2(a) is a precondition of the space complying with the habitability requirements of the current Building Regulations.

- 8.2 Following a review of the file, assessment of the relevant planning policies and inspection of the site, I am satisfied that the proposed works as domestic extensions in a residential area would be acceptable in principle under Z2 zoning as outlined in section 5.0 of this report. I consider the primary concern in this appeal relates to design and visual amenity.

Design & Visual Amenity

- 8.3 The new floor level at attic level as per the application drawings would be approximately 30 sqm. The proposed internal floor to ceiling height as proposed was noted as 2.57m. The proposed dormer would sit 340mm above the ridge line of the roof. The existing ridge height is approximately 7.6m.
- 8.4 The slight extension above the ridge level in a conservation area zoning 'Z2' was deemed not acceptable with the planning authority stating that the height of the dormer should not exceed the existing ridge level of the house. This was the rationale for the conditions 2 and 3 to decrease the dormer height, retain setbacks to the sides, preventing habitation, and having the materials matching existing instead of metal cladding.
- 8.5 The dormer has an external width of approximately 7.7 metres and represents the full width of the roof. The proposed materials are metal cladding. Appendix 18, Section 5.0 seeks to retain more of the existing roofscape and a setback of 500mm from each side and a maximum width of 3.9 metres is required. Materials should also harmonise with adjoining properties. It was proposed in the report that Condition 2 will enable a revised design to be submitted with respect to height and width set backs. The Planning Authority raised no issues with the proposed rooflights and as mentioned, the set back from eaves was compliant.
- 8.6 With regard to the exceedance of the ridge line, I can see that Pembroke Lane does not have any discernible roof pattern and both residential properties on either side of the subject dwelling have higher roofs (no. 2 is of similar roof type but the ridge line is higher than no.3 while nos 31 and 31A have large dormer features significantly above no. 3). The proposal seeks to project 340mm above the existing ridge and I note this would still be approximately one third of the projection of the

adjoining Nos. 31 and 31A. I would agree with the appeal that the proposal would have minimal visual impact from either direction along Pembroke Lane, given the variation of property types and the raised roofline to the east and the setback position of No. 3 behind No. 2 Ambassador Court to the west.

- 8.7 I note there have been planning approvals for dormer extensions in areas under Z2 zoning where the ridgeline can be breached if there is no established roof pattern and if broadly in line with surrounding building profiles. This is particularly the case for recent dormer extensions to dwellings between Gordon Street and South Dock Street in Ringsend for example. Consideration may also be given to the provision of a habitable room where there is minimal options to extend in other ways given the urban context. The design report submitted with this application notes that the increased height of the ridge allows for the full floor to ceiling height to be achieved and increase the usability of the attic space for the occupants of this house. Although this could be met at 2.4m height to comply with Building Regulations, the proposed 2.57m would have minimal visual impact and is acceptable at this location. There is no issue with the principle of an additional bedroom at the subject property subject to building regulations being met.
- 8.8 It is considered that the proposed raising of the ridge would result in a very minor change to the streetscape of Pembroke Lane and would not detract from the existing form and character of the area. Given the minor nature of the raising of the ridge level, it can be reasonably considered that no overshadowing or overbearing impacts would arise as a result and I am satisfied that there are no habitable rooms facing the rear of the property that would be impacted.
- 8.9 The appeal draws attention to several planning precedents on Pembroke Lane and the connecting lanes for dormer development that exceeds the ridge level of the parent dwellings. However, following an assessment of the site and surrounding area, it is considered that having regard to the existing roof variations on the streetscape and the proposed size and siting of the dormer, it will be successfully visually integrated in this instance.

- 8.10 Similarly, with regard to the width of the dormer, the appeal refers to the need for boundary legibility and the request to not set back the dormer width 500mm on each side. The appeal suggests it would integrate better with Nos. 31 and 31A if the dormer ran the full width of the roof, as originally proposed. A full width extension would likely not be acceptable on a street of similar roof styles. However I note Pembroke Lane is a street with much building form variation, including different roof styles and shapes. I agree, from looking at the drawings, that a full width extension is needed for structural integrity and sufficient head space, as set out in the appeal, and allows compliance with building regulations.
- 8.11 The Dormer Window Guidance in Table 18.1 in the Development Plan states that materials “to complement the existing wall or roof materials of the main house” should be used. I consider the metal cladding to be complementary and reflective of the materials used on this street and surrounding streets.
- 8.12 Section 5.0 states that “the use of an attic space for human habitation must be compliant with all of the relevant design standards, as well as building and fire regulations. Dormer windows, where proposed should complement the existing roof profile and be sympathetic to the overall design of the dwelling.” In addition, where it is proposed to extend the ridge height to accommodate an increased floor-to-ceiling height, the design should “avoid an overly dominant roof structure. The proposed scale of the roof should retain similar proportions to the building where possible.” I consider the design as proposed has achieved this, without the need for Condition 2 to be attached.
- 8.13 With this in mind, the proposal would meet Building Regulations with the height and width as proposed and would be suitable for a habitable room with facilities. I consider this reasonable given the urban context of the site and the genuine need for ancillary accommodation in a modest sized dwelling – noting in particular Section 5.1 of Appendix 18. I consider that Condition 3 (preventing use for human habitation) can also be removed.
- 8.14 I therefore recommend the removal of Condition 2 and 3 in their entirety. The proposal would not have a dominating or overbearing appearance and would be in

line with surrounding properties, thereby complying with Section 5.0 of Appendix 18. It would comply with the objectives of Z2 zoning and would be in keeping with the character of the area. The removal of conditions 2 and 3 of the planning permission would allow a modest improvement to a dwelling without impacting on neighbouring residential amenity or the visual amenity of the area. I therefore recommend that the Commission permit the first floor element of the development and accordingly permit the proposal as a whole.

9.0 AA Screening

- 9.1. I have considered the proposed development in light of the requirements S177U of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended. The subject site is located c. 2km west of the South Dublin Bay SAC & South Dublin Bay and River Tolka SPA. North Dublin Bay SAC and North Bull Island SPA are c. 4km to the northeast
- 9.2. The proposed development comprises an attic conversion with dormer to rear roof and to continue to front roof with a dormer extended from ridgeline to create additional bedroom, bath, all with associated ancillary work at 3 Ambassador Court, Pembroke Lane, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4. No nature conservation concerns were raised in the planning appeal.
- 9.3. 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:
- Nature of works
 - Location in an established residential area
 - Lack of connections to nearest European sites
- 9.4. 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 (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 approximately 250 metres to the east of the Grand Canal (Site Code 002104). The proposed development comprises an attic conversion with dormer to rear roof and to continue to front roof a with dormer extended from ridgeline to create additional bedroom, bath, all with associated ancillary work at 3 Ambassador Court, Pembroke Lane, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4. No water deterioration concerns were raised in the planning appeal.
- 10.2 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
 - Location-distance from nearest water bodies and/or lack of hydrological connections
- 10.3 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 and 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 Dublin City Council under subsection (1) of section 139 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 to:

- (a) REMOVE Condition number 2 and the reason therefor and;
- (b) REMOVE Condition number 3 and the reason therefor.

12.0 Reasons and Considerations

Having regard to the provisions of the Dublin City Development Plan 2022-2028, the Z2 Conservation Area zoning objectives and the proposed scale and design of the proposal, it is considered that the proposed development would be in keeping with the pattern of development in the area, would not cause harm to the surrounding visual or residential amenity and would not harm the objectives of the Z2 Conservation Area zoning. The proposal would 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 me, directly or indirectly, following my professional assessment and recommendation set out in my report in an improper or inappropriate way.

Killian Harrington
Planning Inspector
17 September 2026

Appendix A: Form 1 EIA Pre-Screening

Case Reference	PL-501761-DS-26
Proposed Development Summary	Planning permission for attic conversion with dormer to rear roof & to continue to front roof a with Dormer extended from ridgeline to create additional bedroom, bath, all with associated ancillary work
Development Address	3 Ambassador Court, Pembroke Lane, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4
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	
1. 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)	
2. 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: 17 September 2026