

**Planning Committee**

**10th February 2022**

**Reference:**  
**APP/21/01773**

**Area Team:**  
**Development  
Management Team**

**Case Officer:**  
**Mrs S Williams**

**Ward:**  
**West Kirby and  
Thurstaston**

**Location:** 35 MACDONA DRIVE, WEST KIRBY, CH48 3JH  
**Proposal:** Loft extension to incorporate a rear dormer, front and rear balconies.  
Installation of two, larger first-floor south facing windows, alterations to  
existing windows and internal alterations

**Applicant:** D Roberts  
**Agent :**

**Qualifying Petition:** No

**Site Plan:**



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**Development Plan designation:**

Primarily Residential Area

### **Planning History:**

No planning history

### **Summary Of Representations and Consultations Received:**

#### **1.0 WARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

1.1 No comments received.

#### **2.0 SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS**

##### REPRESENTATIONS

Having regard to the Council's Guidance for Publicity on Planning Applications, 9 notifications were sent to adjoining neighbouring properties. At the time of writing this report 16 objections have been received, which raised the following concerns;

1. No notification being sent out (1 Wordsworth Walk);
2. Height of the dormer - Out of character;
3. Loss of privacy to habitable rooms and gardens;
4. Balconies to rear dormer causing loss of privacy;
5. Balcony to the front out of character/loss of privacy;
6. Vague mention of external materials;
7. Work has commenced;
8. Overbearing;
9. Out of scale;
10. Size of dormer windows should be reduced to be consistent with first-floor windows;
11. Dormer extension fails to meet the required separation distance of 21m;
12. Lack of consideration to neighbouring properties;
13. Front extension of the porch and a further extension/protrusion of a balcony is so close to the pavement, likely causing residents to cross the road to socially distance from the occupiers.

##### CONSULTATIONS

Highways - Raised no objection.

#### **3.1 Reason for referral to Planning Committee**

3.1.1 16 objections have been received and therefore under the scheme of delegation, the planning application must be determined at Planning Committee.

#### **3.2 Site and Surroundings**

3.2.1 35 Macdona Drive is a detached, two-storey dwellinghouse. The property is located within a primarily residential area of mixed design comprising of detached two-storey dwellings and bungalows. It is finished with brick at ground floor and render at first floor.

3.2.2 The property contains an open plan frontage which accommodates off-street parking. There is a flat roofed, detached garage projecting along the northern rear boundary of the site which adjoins the garage at 33 Macdona Drive.

3.2.3 The rear garden measures approximately 13.6m in length and is enclosed by wooden fencing and sporadic vegetation. The rear elevation of No.35 is orientated towards the rear garden of 7 Heath Close.

#### **3.3 Proposed Development**

3.3.1 The proposal is for a loft extension to incorporate a rear dormer, which includes a Juliet balcony. An additional Juliet balcony is proposed at first-floor level on the rear elevation. The proposal also includes a balcony to the front elevation, together with the installation of two, larger first-floor south facing windows, alterations to existing windows and internal alterations.

- 3.3.2 The applicant has submitted amended plans to try to resolve their neighbours' concerns and these were received on 11th January 2022. The overall depth of the balcony to the front of the property has been reduced and the dormer has been reduced in scale. The lower panes of glass on both Juliet balconies to the rear and the balcony to the front will consist of obscure glass.
- 3.3.3 The proposed balcony to the front would project approximately 1.31m forward of the principal elevation. This part of the proposal would measure approximately 5.94m in width.
- 3.3.4 The rear dormer extension would be set in approximately 0.78m from both gable ends of the roof, its ridge height is set significantly lower than the original roofline of the dwelling and is set back from the original rear wall.
- 3.3.5 New windows would be installed throughout the dwelling, some of which would be larger in scale than original windows
- 3.3.6 It is acknowledged that much of the rear dormer has already been constructed.

### **3.4 Development Plan**

- 3.4.1 The application property is located within land designated as a Primarily Residential Area in Wirral's Unitary Development Plan, and the property falls under the use class C3 as it is a dwelling house. Wirral UDP Policy HS11 – House Extensions, and Supplementary Planning Guidance 11 – House Extensions (SPG) are directly relevant in this instance.
- 3.4.2 With regards to Policy HS11, it is considered that extensions should be designed in such a way as to have no significant adverse effect on the appearance of the original property, the amenities of neighbouring properties, through overlooking, or an adverse effect on the area in general. SPG11: House Extensions acts as a supporting document in relation to HS11.

### **3.5 Other Material Planning Considerations**

- 3.5.1 The National Planning Policy Framework states that the Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people.

### **3.6 Assessment**

- 3.6.1 The main issues pertinent in the assessment of the proposal are;

- Principle of development;
- Design;
- Highways; and
- Amenity

#### 3.7 Principle of Development:

- 3.7.1 The principle of extensions to residential properties within a primarily residential area is considered acceptable, subject to the policies listed above.

#### 3.8 Design:

- 3.8.1 The proposal would incorporate several alterations and new additions to modernise the property as a whole. A rear dormer is proposed, with two Juliet balconies to the rear and a new balcony to the front.
- 3.8.2 The external materials used within the construction and alterations throughout the proposal would consist of brick and render, with new windows being black framed. The rear dormer will incorporate zinc cladding.
- 3.8.3 In terms of the dormer's appearance, although the modern use of zinc cladding is not widely used within the immediate surrounding area it is deemed an acceptable domestic

construction material that will add some modern visual interest to the property's rear elevation. Given that the dormer is to the rear, it will have minimal impact on the character of the wider street scene.

- 3.8.4 In relation to the scale of the dormer extension, revised plans were submitted which reduced its overall scale. Wirral's SPG11 requires dormer extensions to be set in 0.5m from the gable end of the roof. Additionally, a 0.5m set back from the original rear wall of the dwelling is required along with the ridge height being set significantly lower than the original roofline of the property. The proposed dormer complies with these requirements.
- 3.8.5 With regards to the front facing balcony, the overall size and scale has also been significantly reduced from the original proposal. Its presence is not considered to overly dominate the dwellinghouse or the garden area to the front. The addition of a balcony adds some interest and depth to the character and appearance of the property. It is considered to be in keeping with the modern approach proposed. The street scene of the area contains a variety of different property types - both in terms of scale and design. Given this, it is considered that the introduction of a relatively small balcony to the front of this property, together with the window alterations to the front elevation, will not harm the overall character of the street scene.
- 3.8.6 Overall, the design, size and scale of the dormer extension and front balcony are considered acceptable. These features are not considered inappropriate within the property and do not detract from the dwellings original size, scale, character or appearance. This aspect of the proposal is therefore considered to comply with Wirral UDP Policy HS11, SPG11 and the NPPF.
- 3.9 Highways:
- 3.9.1 The property currently benefits from a front driveway providing off-road parking for at least two vehicles, and garage accommodation to the rear. The locality does provide opportunity for on-street parking. The proposal is not considered to pose sufficient harm to the highway.
- 3.10 Amenity:
- 3.10.1 Several concerns have been raised relating to the rear dormer extension, first-floor windows and front balcony. The rear garden of 35 Macdona Drive measures approximately 13.6m in length. The outlook from the dormer extension and the first floor (floor to ceiling window) would offer views straight down the rear garden of the site, and are a sufficient distance from the rear boundary, where it adjoins the rear garden of 7 Heath Close. The windows will only offer angled views of neighbouring gardens which is common with most first/second floor windows in residential areas throughout the country. The revised plans incorporate frosted glass within the Juliet balconies. A separation distance of 21m (window to window) is normally required - however, the windows to the rear do not directly face any other properties due to the layout of the area and this is therefore acceptable.
- 3.10.2 Concerns have also been raised relating to the front balcony causing loss of privacy. This part of the proposal has been reduced, with the glass balustrade incorporating frosted glass. The balcony will be set back approximately 5.62m from the highway and an approximate 25.7m separation distance would be achieved to the residential property directly opposite, 36 Macdona Drive. Additionally, due to the natural curve of Macdona Drive, the application property is angled away from neighbouring properties 33 and 37 Macdona Drive. Any immediate views provided from the balcony would be of the road itself, with only limited views of the front garden areas of neighbouring properties - limited privacy are already provided within these front gardens, as would be expected, and therefore the introduction of the balcony would not result in any unacceptable levels of overlooking of neighbouring properties.
- 3.10.3 Larger windows will be installed within the southern elevation of the property, facing towards 37 Macdona Drive. These windows would be secondary windows to Bedroom 1, which has large primary windows to the front and rear elevations. Due to the close proximity of these windows to the boundary with No.37 (less than 2m away) it is deemed necessary to attach a condition to fix and obscurely glaze these windows to protect the

residential amenity of the neighbouring property.

3.10.5 Overall, it is considered that the proposal would not cause any harm to the character and appearance of the area. The proposal is not considered to have a harmful visual impact on its surroundings or an adverse impact to the amenities that the occupiers of neighbouring properties expect to enjoy. The proposed development complies with relevant Council policies and is therefore considered acceptable.

3.11 Other:

3.11.1 In relation to other objections, it should be noted that all statutory publicity requirements have been met, including the direct notification of all properties which share a boundary with the site.

#### **Summary of Decision:**

Having regards to the individual merits of this application the decision to grant planning permission has been taken having regards to the relevant Policies and Proposals in the Wirral Unitary Development Plan (Adopted February 2000) and all relevant material considerations including national policy advice. In reaching this decision the Local Planning Authority has considered the following:-

The proposal is not considered to have a harmful visual impact on its surroundings or an adverse impact to the amenities that the occupiers of neighbouring properties expect to enjoy. The proposal complies with NPPF- Requiring Good Design, Policy HS11 - House Extensions and SPG11 and is therefore considered acceptable.

**Recommended Decision:**                      **Approve**

#### **Recommended Conditions and Reasons:**

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.

**Reason:** To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans received by the local planning authority on 11th January 2022 and listed as follows: PLANOPT 2 Revision F.

**Reason:** For the avoidance of doubt and to define the permission.

3. Prior to the first use of the room labelled Bedroom 1 on plan PLANOPT2 Revision F, the first-floor (south) windows facing towards 37 Macdona Drive shall be glazed with obscured glass and fixed shut up to 1.7m above the finished floor level of the room and thereafter be permanently retained as such.

**Reason:** To safeguard the amenities of occupiers of neighbouring properties and to comply with Policy HS11 of the Wirral Unitary Development Plan.

4. Prior to the first use of the rooms labelled Bedroom 2, Bedroom (within the new dormer extension) and the front balcony, all glass balustrades on plan labelled PLANOPT2 Revision F, shall be glazed with obscured glass and thereafter be permanently retained as such.

**Reason:** To safeguard the amenities of occupiers of neighbouring properties and to comply with Policy HS11 of the Wirral Unitary Development Plan.

**Last Comments By:** 05/11/2021 16:45:48

**Expiry Date:** 22/11/2021