

Development Management Officer Report Committee Application

Summary	
Application ID: LA04/2025/0607/F	Committee Meeting Date: Tuesday 9 th September 2025
Proposal: Amendments to previously approved application(LA04/2023/4093/F). Proposal includes raising of ridge, fenestration changes to side and Juliet balcony to front.	Location: 5 Squires Hill Road, Belfast, BT14 8FJ
Referral Route: Paragraph 3.8.5 (a) of the Scheme of Delegation (application by an Elected Member)	
Recommendation:	Approval
Applicant Name and Address: 5 Squires Hill Road, Belfast, BT14 8FJ	Agent Name and Address: Kevin Lennon 75 Annacloy Road Downpatrick BT30 9AJ
Executive Summary: The application seeks full planning permission for amendments to previously approved application (LA04/2023/4093/F). The proposal includes raising the ridge of the dwelling, fenestration changes to side and Juliet balcony to front. The main issues to consider are: - Scale, Massing & Design - Impact on neighbouring amenity - Impact on character of area No third-party representations were received by the Council. Due to the minor nature of the proposals, no consultation was necessary. Recommendation - Approval Having regard to the policy context, the proposal is considered to be acceptable and planning permission is recommended for approval. Delegated authority is sought for the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the wording of the conditions and deal with any other issues that arise provided that they are not substantive.	

Officer Report

1.0

Drawings

1.1

Existing Elevations



EXISTING REAR ELEVATION

Scale 1:100



EXISTING LEFT SIDE ELEVATION

Scale 1:100



EXISTING FRONT ELEVATION

Scale 1:100



EXISTING RIGHT SIDE ELEVATION

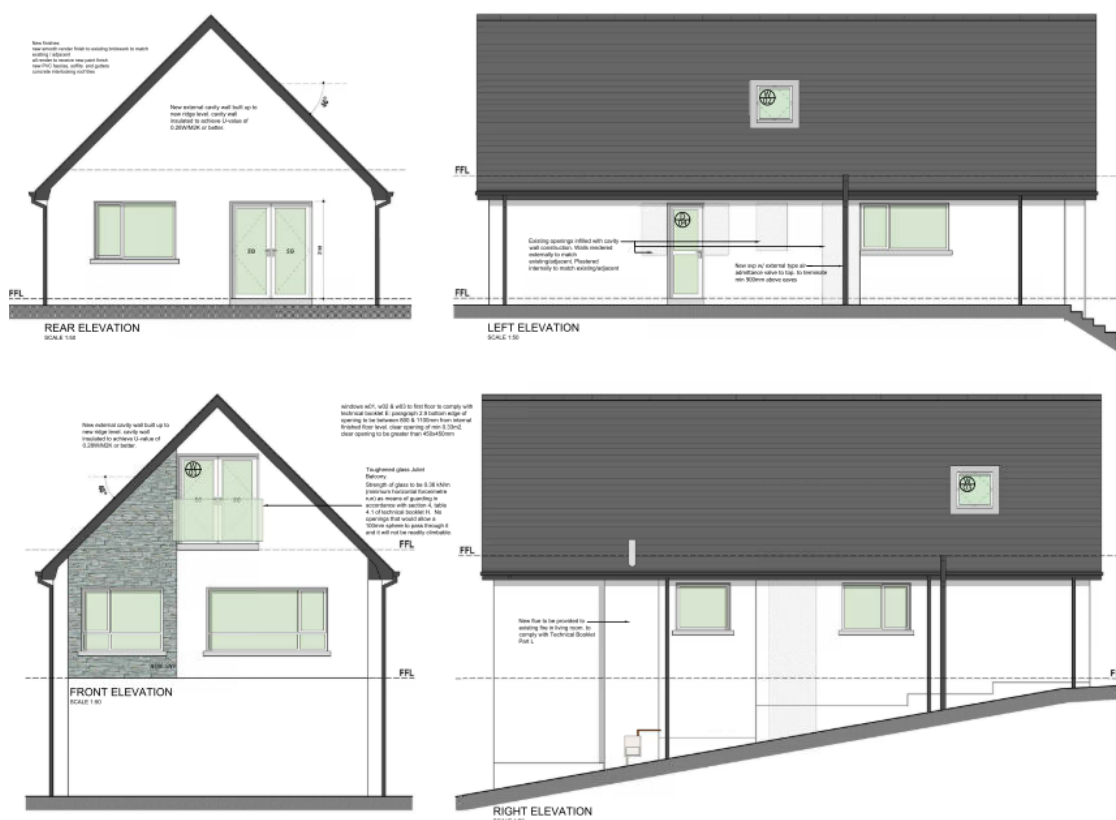
Scale 1:100



EXISTING SECTION A-A

Scale 1:50

Proposed Elevations



2.0	Characteristics of the Site and Area
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2.1	The dwelling is a detached, 1.5 storey dwelling finished in red brick, render and decorative brick and a pitched roof. The site is designated within the Belfast limits under BMAP/dBMAP.
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2.2 The prevailing character of the area is predominantly detached houses with front & rear dormers, finished in a mixture of red brick and render.

2.3 The rear garden contains a detached garage. The boundaries are a mixture of mature hedging and timber fencing.

3.0	Description of Proposal
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3.1	Amendments to previously approved application(LA04/2023/4093/F). Proposal includes raising of ridge, fenestration changes to side and Juliet balcony to front.
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4.0	Planning Policy and Other Material Considerations
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4.1	Development Plan – operational policies Belfast Local Development Plan, Plan Strategy 2035
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4.2	Development Plan – zoning, designations and proposals maps Belfast Urban Area Plan (2001) BUAP Draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 (v2004) Draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 (v2014)
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4.3	Regional Planning Policy Regional Development Strategy 2035 (RDS) Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland (SPPS)
4.4	Other Policies Developer Contribution Framework (BCC) Belfast Agenda Creating Places (DfI)
4.5	Relevant Planning History LA04/2023/4093/F. Raise ridge to accommodate dormer to side elevation and fenestration changes to front and rear elevation and 2x skylights. Approved 01.02.2024.
5.0	Consultations and Representations
5.1	Statutory Consultations N/A
5.2	Non-Statutory Consultations N/A
5.3	Representations No third-party representations were received by the council.
6.0	PLANNING ASSESSMENT
6.1	Development Plan Context
6.2	Section 6(4) of the Planning (Northern Ireland) Act 2011 states that in making any determinations under the Act, regard is to be had to the local development plan, and the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
6.3	Section 45(1) of the Act states that in determining planning applications, the Council must have regard to the local development plan, so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations.
6.4	The Development Plan is the Belfast Local Development Plan, which replaces the Belfast Urban Area Plan 2001 as the statutory plan for the city. The Belfast LDP is in two parts: Part 1 is the Plan Strategy, which was adopted on 02 May 2023. Part 2 is the Local Policies Plan, which will provide the zonings and proposals map for Belfast and has yet to be published.
6.5	Operational policies – the Plan Strategy contains a range of operational policies relevant to consideration of the application. These are listed in the report.
6.6	Proposals Maps – until such time as the Local Policies Plan is adopted, the Council must have regard to the land-use zonings, designations and proposals maps in the Belfast Urban Area Plan 2001, both versions of the draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (v2004 and v2014) (draft BMAP 2015) and other relevant area plans. The weight to be afforded to these proposals maps is a matter for the decision maker. It is considered that significant weight should be given to the proposals map in draft BMAP 2015 (v2014) given its advanced stage in the development process, save for retail policies that relate to Sprucefield which remain contentious.

6.7	Key Issues The key issues are: • Differences in plans from LA04/2023/4093/F • Scale, Massing, Design • Impact on neighbouring amenity and character • Climate Change
6.8	Differences from LA04/2023/4093/F The report from LA04/2023/4093/F is appended beneath this report (Appendix 1). The primary difference between LA04/2023/4093/F and this application is the omission of the side dormer from the scheme. The ridge is still being raised to the same height (1.3 metres), whilst the attic conversion will be completed using rooflights. There is a Juliet balcony on the front elevation of the property. Officers consider that this scheme is of a lesser scale than the previous one due to the omission of the side dormer.
6.9	Scale, Massing, Design The principle of the development is established under LA04/2023/4093/F. The scale and massing of the proposal will be less than the previous approval due to the omission of the side dormer. The raising of the ridge was found acceptable under the previous approval. Policy RD2 of the Belfast Plan Strategy 2035 states that planning permission will be granted for extensions or alterations to an existing residential property where the scale, massing, design and external materials of the proposal are appropriate to the built form and appearance of the existing property and will not detract from the character of an established residential area. Paragraph 4.1.21 of the SPG states that extensions or alterations to the roof profile of any building can be particularly sensitive as roofs make an important contribution to a building's appearance and the overall character of the area. Officers acknowledge that the proposal will result in the dwelling having a steeper pitch than the surrounding dwellings, however, the orientation of the houses in this location makes attic conversions difficult resulting with an asymmetrical roof profile. The site sits at a lower level to most of Squires Hill Road which reduces the impact of the proposal. The primary design change to this proposal is the addition of a Juliet balcony to the front elevation at first floor level. Overlooking is not a primary concern here as the balcony will look onto the road / onto the front elevation of the dwellings across the road, which is normal in a residential street. Whilst a Juliet balcony is more visually obtrusive than a normal window, and sits on the front elevation of the dwelling, it is unlikely to unacceptably upset the character of the area. The area is not designated as an ATC or Conservation Area and displays a range of house types. From a design and amenity perspective, the Juliet balcony is acceptable.
6.10	Impact on Neighbouring Amenity and Character The proposal will not unacceptably impact on neighbouring amenity or the character of the area. The omission of the side dormer for roof lights will reduce any potential for overlooking to No. 03 Squires Hill Road. The orientation of the site means that raising the ridge of the dwelling will not cause any unacceptable impact to the private amenity space of No. 03. There may be some overshadowing to No. 03's driveway in the afternoon but this is not a private amenity space. No. 07 and the houses to the rear all sit at a higher level to the site and are orientated in such a way that they will not be impacted. The proposal will not exacerbate loss of privacy, dominance or overshadowing/loss of light to any neighbouring dwellings. The proposal will have less of an impact than

	LA04/2023/4093 which was approved at planning committee, therefore none of the amendments are of concern to planning officers.
6.1.1	Climate Change The scheme is considered to comply with ENV policies in that recycled materials will be used throughout the construction process and all insulation will be upgraded beyond the current building regulations to vastly improve the energy efficiency of the full house and significantly reduce the energy costs. These interventions comply with policy RD2 and will future proof the home for modern family living.
7.0	Recommendation
7.1	Having regard to the development plan and other material considerations, the proposal is considered acceptable. It is recommended that planning permission is granted subject to conditions.
7.2	Delegated authority is sought for the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the conditions and deal with any other matters which may arise.
DRAFT CONDITIONS: 1. The development hereby permitted must be begun within five years from the date of this permission. Reason: As required by Section 61 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011. DRAFT INFORMATIVES: 1. This decision relates to the following approved drawing numbers: 2. Please make sure that you carry out the development in accordance with the approved plans and any planning conditions listed above. Failure to do so will mean that the proposal is unauthorised and liable for investigation by the Council's Planning Enforcement team. If you would like advice about how to comply with the planning permission, you are advised to the contact the Planning Service at Belfast City Council at planning@belfastcity.gov.uk. 3. This planning permission includes condition(s) which require further details to be submitted to and approved by the Council. Please read the condition(s) carefully so that you know when this information needs to be provided and approved. It could take a minimum of 8 weeks for the Council to approve the details, assuming that they are satisfactory, and sometimes longer depending on the complexity of the condition. You should allow for this when planning the timeline of your project.	

Appendix 1

Development Management Officer Report Committee Application

Summary	
Application ID: LA04/2023/4093/F	Committee Meeting Date: Tuesday 16 th January 2024
Proposal: Raise ridge to accommodate dormer to side elevation and fenestration changes to front and rear elevation and 2x skylights.	Location: 5 Squires Hill Road, Belfast, BT14 8FJ
Referral Route: Paragraph 3.8.5 (a) of the Scheme of Delegation (application by an Elected Member)	
Recommendation:	Approval
Applicant Name and Address: 5 Squires Hill Road, Belfast, BT14 8FJ	Agent Name and Address: Andrew Hair 17 Drumcree Place Newtownabbey BT37 9JA
Executive Summary: The application seeks full planning permission for raising the ridge to accommodate a dormer to the side elevation and fenestration changes to front and rear elevation and 2no skylights. The main issues to consider are: - Scale, Massing & Design - Impact on neighbouring amenity - Impact on character of area One third party representation was received and is considered in the report below. Due to the minor nature of the proposals, no consultation was necessary. Recommendation - Approval Having regard to the policy context, the proposal is considered to be acceptable and planning permission is recommended for approval. Delegated authority is sought for the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the wording of the conditions and deal with any other issues that arise provided that they are not substantive.	

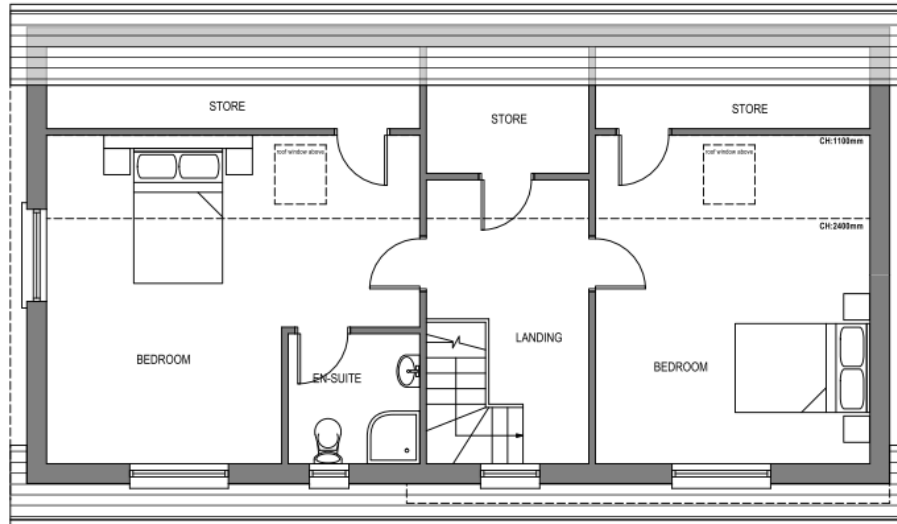
Officer Report

1.0

Drawings

1.1

Proposed first floor plan



PROPOSED FIRST FLOOR PLAN

Scale 1:50

Existing elevations



EXISTING FRONT ELEVATION

Scale 1:100



EXISTING RIGHT SIDE ELEVATION

Scale 1:100



EXISTING REAR ELEVATION

Scale 1:100



EXISTING LEFT SIDE ELEVATION

Scale 1:100

	
2.0	Characteristics of the Site and Area
2.1	The dwelling is a detached, 1.5 storey dwelling finished in red brick, render and decorative brick and a pitched roof. The site is designated within the Belfast limits under BMAP/dBMAP.
2.2	The prevailing character of the area is predominantly detached houses with front & rear dormers, finished in a mixture of red brick and render.
2.3	The rear garden contains a detached garage. The boundaries are a mixture of mature hedging and timber fencing.
3.0	Description of Proposal
3.1	Raise ridge to accommodate dormer to side elevation and fenestration changes to front and rear elevation and 2no. skylights
4.0	Planning Policy and Other Material Considerations
4.1	Development Plan – operational policies Belfast Local Development Plan, Plan Strategy 2035
4.2	Development Plan – zoning, designations and proposals maps Belfast Urban Area Plan (2001) BUAP Draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 (v2004) Draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 (v2014)
4.3	Regional Planning Policy Regional Development Strategy 2035 (RDS) Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland (SPPS)
4.4	Other Policies Developer Contribution Framework (BCC) Belfast Agenda Creating Places (DfI)

4.5	Relevant Planning History N/A
5.0	Consultations and Representations
5.1	Statutory Consultations N/A
5.2	Non-Statutory Consultations N/A
5.3	Representations Due to the minor nature of the proposal, no consultation was necessary with statutory or non-statutory consultees.
5.4	The application has been advertised and neighbours notified. The Council has received one objection to the proposal.
5.5	The objection raised the following issues: 1. Plans being unclear 2. Negative impact on resale value of neighbouring dwelling 3. The proposal not being in keeping with the character of the area 4. Negative impact on light and therefore mental health of neighbouring dwelling
5.6	These issues have been considered as follows: 1. The plans were to scale and acceptable, however an additional annotated plan was provided by the applicant to assist 2. House values are not a material planning consideration 3. This is considered within the planning assessment section of the report at Section 6.9 4. This is considered within the planning assessment section of the report at Section 6.8
6.0	PLANNING ASSESSMENT
6.1	Development Plan Context
6.2	Section 6(4) of the Planning (Northern Ireland) Act 2011 states that in making any determinations under the Act, regard is to be had to the local development plan, and the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
6.3	Section 45(1) of the Act states that in determining planning applications, the Council must have regard to the local development plan, so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations.
6.4	The Development Plan is the Belfast Local Development Plan, which replaces the Belfast Urban Area Plan 2001 as the statutory plan for the city. The Belfast LDP is in two parts: Part 1 is the Plan Strategy, which was adopted on 02 May 2023. Part 2 is the Local Policies Plan, which will provide the zonings and proposals map for Belfast and has yet to be published.
6.5	Operational policies – the Plan Strategy contains a range of operational policies relevant to consideration of the application. These are listed in the report.

6.6	Proposals Maps – until such time as the Local Policies Plan is adopted, the Council must have regard to the land-use zonings, designations and proposals maps in the Belfast Urban Area Plan 2001, both versions of the draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (v2004 and v2014) (draft BMAP 2015) and other relevant area plans. The weight to be afforded to these proposals maps is a matter for the decision maker. It is considered that significant weight should be given to the proposals map in draft BMAP 2015 (v2014) given its advanced stage in the development process, save for retail policies that relate to Sprucefield which remain contentious.
6.7	Key Issues The key issues are: • Scale, Massing, Design • Impact on neighbouring amenity and character • Climate Change
6.8	Scale, Massing, Design Policy RD2 of the Belfast Plan Strategy 2035 states that planning permission will be granted for extensions or alterations to an existing residential property where the scale, massing, design and external materials of the proposal are appropriate to the built form and appearance of the existing property and will not detract from the character of an established residential area. This proposal seeks to raise the ridge of the existing dwelling to accommodate a side dormer, a new window to the front elevation and replacing a window on the rear elevation with a door. The plans were amended as the original scheme had the dormer extend above the ridge, which is contrary to 4.1.3 of SPG 2023 Residential extensions and alterations. Paragraph 4.1.21 of the SPG states that extensions or alterations to the roof profile of any building can be particularly sensitive as roofs make an important contribution to a building's appearance and the overall character of the area. Officers acknowledge that the proposal will result in the dwelling having a steeper pitch than the surrounding dwellings, however, the orientation of the houses in this location makes attic conversions difficult resulting with an asymmetrical roof profile. All of the dwellings from No. 11 Squires Hill Road onwards have front and rear dormers. The orientation of this dwelling is such that only a side dormer is possible. The site sits at a lower level to most of Squires Hill Road which reduces the impact of the proposal. Officers consider that the proposal is of an appropriate scale. The dormer will be stepped down from the new ridge by 0.7 metres, 0.7 metres to the eaves and approx. 0.3 metres from the side of the roof. Therefore, on balance, whilst dormers on side elevations are often resisted, the dwelling presents a unique context subject to there being no issues with overlooking as considered below. Due to the significant difference in levels, No. 11's garden will not be detrimentally impacted in terms of loss of light or overshadowing their garden.
6.9	Impact on Neighbouring Amenity and Character Paragraph 4.3.8. of SPG 2023 Residential Extensions and Alterations states that the protection of the privacy of occupants of residential properties is an important element of the quality of a residential environment. Paragraph 4.1.26 also states that dormer windows to the front or side of a property are unlikely to be acceptable in areas where they are uncharacteristic. The council acknowledge that the proposal is contrary to this policy, however, given the unique challenges of the host dwelling's orientation, it is considered that the proposed dormer windows on the side elevation will not unacceptably constitute

6.10	overlooking to No. 03 Squires Hill Road. Whilst the windows may facilitate enhanced views of No. 03, the views are from bedrooms and not habitable rooms and will form primarily oblique views of the side elevation/roof of No. 03 due to the level difference. Furthermore, No. 03's rear amenity space is largely screened by their detached garage. Paragraph 1.1.4 of the SPG states that it is important that the desire to extend or alter an existing property is balanced against consideration of the impact of such works on the character and appearance of the individual property and its wider surroundings. It also states that it is important to mitigate potential impacts of dormers, particularly on side elevations. Paragraph 4.3.1 of the SPG states that in the case of dormer windows, restricting the size of the windows and setting it back from the eaves is usually an adequate solution that can protect neighbouring amenity. It is considered by the council that the appropriate window sizes on the rear dormer, the orientation of the site and the prevailing area significantly reduce any potential adverse impact from the dormer. The front proposed window on the front elevation will onlook onto the Squires Hill Road and the proposed rooflights minimally interfere with the roof and are therefore not considered to be an issue. Climate Change The scheme is considered to comply with ENV policies in that recycled materials will be used throughout the construction process and all insulation will be upgraded beyond the current building regulations to vastly improve the energy efficiency of the full house and significantly reduce the energy costs. These interventions comply with policy RD2 and will future proof the home for modern family living.
7.0	Recommendation
7.1	Having regard to the development plan and other material considerations, the proposal is considered acceptable. It is recommended that planning permission is granted subject to conditions.
7.2	Delegated authority is sought for the Director of Planning and Building Control to finalise the conditions and deal with any other matters which may arise.
DRAFT CONDITIONS: 2. The development hereby permitted must be begun within five years from the date of this permission. Reason: As required by Section 61 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011. DRAFT INFORMATIVES: 4. This decision relates to the following approved drawing numbers: 5. Please make sure that you carry out the development in accordance with the approved plans and any planning conditions listed above. Failure to do so will mean that the proposal is unauthorised and liable for investigation by the Council's Planning Enforcement team. If you would like advice about how to comply with the planning permission, you are advised to the contact the Planning Service at Belfast City Council at planning@belfastcity.gov.uk. 6. This planning permission includes condition(s) which require further details to be submitted to and approved by the Council. Please read the condition(s) carefully so that you know when this information needs to be provided and approved. It could take a minimum of 8 weeks for the Council to approve the details, assuming that they are satisfactory, and sometimes longer depending on the complexity of the condition. You should allow for this when planning the timeline of your project.	

ANNEX	
Date Valid	10/10/2023
Date First Advertised	01/12/2023
Date Last Advertised	01/12/2023
Details of Neighbour Notification (all addresses) 11 SQUIRES HILL ROAD 13 SQUIRES HILL ROAD 3 SQUIRES HILL ROAD 4 SQUIRES HILL ROAD 7 SQUIRES HILL ROAD 9 SQUIRES HILL ROAD 11 SQUIRES HILL ROAD	