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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 February 2025

**by Sarah Manchester BSc MSc PhD MEnvSc**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12 March 2025

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**Appeal Ref: APP/T2350/W/24/3355649**

**Riverside Barn Alston Lane, Longridge, Preston PR3 3BN**

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
  - The appeal is made by Mr Adam Richardson against the decision of Ribble Valley Borough Council.
  - The application Ref is 3/2024/0437.
  - The development proposed is retention of garage with integral studio (in roof) not constructed on conformity with planning permission ref no. 3/2020/0199.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Preliminary Matters

2. Planning permission (Ref 3/2020/0199) was granted in March 2020 for removal of existing conservatory and construction of detached garage with home office above. The permission has been implemented but the building has not been constructed in accordance with the approved plans. The appeal scheme varies in terms of its length, width and height, the inclusion of a Juliet balcony and rooflights, and changes to doors and windows.
3. At the time of my visit, I observed that the appeal building does not correspond to the submitted plans, including that it has not been finished externally, the Juliet balcony has not been installed and there are 2 substantial stone pillars to either side of the garage door which do not form part of the proposal. Accordingly, notwithstanding the description of the development and while I have taken into account what I saw, I have determined the appeal on the basis that planning permission is sought for the proposal illustrated on the submitted plans.

### Main Issues

4. Therefore, the main issues are the effects of the proposed development on:
  - i) The character and appearance of the area; and
  - ii) The living conditions of the neighbouring residential occupiers of Beech House, with particular regard to outlook and natural light.

### Reasons

#### *Character and appearance*

5. Riverside Barn is one of several dwellings developed following the conversion of traditional agricultural buildings that were formerly part of a historic farmstead known as Boot Farm. The building group is in the countryside to the south of

Longridge and close to the River Ribble. The appeal property and its neighbours, Beech House and Roth Holm, together with respective outbuildings, are a tight-knit group reflecting the pattern of historic farmstead development. The surrounding area is characterised by open farmed land with patches of woodland and scattered development including agricultural buildings and dwellings.

6. The proposal would be a detached building finished in render and stone and with a pitched slate roof. It would be roughly 6.7m by 9.5m, with eaves roughly 3.8m tall and ridge line just under 6m. It would be narrowly separated from and parallel to the west side elevation of its host. The building would not be as tall as Riverside Barn, but nevertheless it would be substantially large.
7. The south gable end would feature a double width garage door at ground floor, with extensive glazing and Juliet balcony above. Irrespective that it would be set back from the gable end elevation of its host, by virtue of its large 2-storey scale and extensive glazing the proposal would be a prominent and conspicuous feature. Although set back from the road, the proposal would be readily visible in juxtaposition with its host. The overtly contemporary gable end would be out of keeping with the traditional farmstead building group. The proposal would dominate its setting and it would not be readily interpreted as a subservient ancillary outbuilding. Irrespective of the use of stone and slate, the visually imposing building would not be in keeping with the local vernacular and it would detract from local distinctiveness and sense of place.
8. My attention has been drawn to planning permissions<sup>1</sup> for a replacement garage with roof accommodation at Beech House. The appellant suggests that garage was constructed up to 44cm taller than the permitted ridge height of 5.56m. Even if that is the case, that outbuilding does not appear directly comparable to the proposal in terms of its eaves height, roof pitch, openings and fenestration or relationship to surrounding buildings. Moreover, in contrast to the appeal scheme, the subservient and unassuming neighbouring outbuilding is in keeping with the local vernacular. The large, contemporary detached dwelling further south along Alston Lane, new agricultural buildings to the south and the large building north of Beech House, which is being converted into holiday cottages, are also not directly comparable to the proposed domestic outbuilding. Development elsewhere does not provide a justification for the appeal.
9. Therefore, I conclude that the proposal would harm the rural character and appearance of the area. It would conflict with Policies DMG1 and DMG2 of the Ribble Valley Borough Council Core Strategy 2008-2028 Adopted December 2014. These require, among other things, that proposals are sympathetic to their surrounding context, taking into account scale, style, design, features and the relationship between buildings. It would also conflict with the design aims of the National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (the Framework) including in relation to being sympathetic to local character and the surrounding built environment and maintaining a strong sense of place.

### *Living conditions*

10. The extensively glazed gable end with Juliet balcony would face away from the neighbouring properties. Consequently, there would be no overlooking or loss of privacy to the neighbours' gardens or their habitable room windows.

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<sup>1</sup> Refs 3/2016/0664 and 3/2020/0283

11. The proposal would be close to the boundary of Roth Holm. The increase in built development along the boundary would result in some shading of the immediately adjoining garden during the early part of the day. However, taking into account the large size and layout of the garden of Roth Holm, the proposal would not adversely affect the neighbours' enjoyment of their garden. Moreover, the proposal would not be overbearing, unduly affect the outlook or overshadow the habitable room windows in Roth Holm.
12. Riverside Barn and Beech House appear to have relatively continuous rear elevations. The proposal is only narrowly separated from Riverside Barn and it is built very close to the shared boundary. Consequently, while the proposal would not be directly to the rear of Beech House, it would be in close proximity to the neighbouring rear elevation, habitable room windows, and rear garden.
13. The proposal would be south of the garden and south-west of the rear elevation of Beech House. By virtue of its proximity, height and scale, the proposed large gable end would significantly enclose the neighbours' rear garden, overshadow it for part of the day and it would be overbearing to the neighbours' in their private outdoor space. The proposal would be within about 5m of the rear elevation of Beech House. At this distance, its height and scale would diminish the outlook from the closest habitable room windows in Beech House. Moreover, there would be a loss of daylight and sunlight to the closest windows for part of the day and at times of year when the sun is lower in the sky. These various impacts would be cumulatively detrimental to the neighbours' residential amenity.
14. The proposal is in roughly the same location as the previously permitted ancillary building. However, the increase in the height of the eaves and the ridge would result in a significant increase in the scale and bulk of the building. The larger gable end and the greater height and thereby extent of side elevation would result in far greater overbearing and overshadowing of the neighbouring dwelling and garden. As the planning permission would not result in the same adverse effects on the neighbours, it does not provide a justification for the appeal.
15. The residential occupiers of Beech House state they would be happy with the increased height of the building subject to the north and east elevations being finished in stone. However, even accepting that a different finish would better integrate the proposal into the traditional building group and go some way towards mitigating the loss of outlook, it would not mitigate the adverse overbearing or overshadowing impact on the occupiers of Beech House. In this regard, I am required to be mindful of the impact of the proposal over its lifetime and its likely effect on future occupiers of Beech House.
16. Therefore, I conclude that the proposal would harm the living conditions of the residential occupiers of Beech House, with particular regard to outlook, overbearing and loss of light. It would conflict with CS Policy DMG1 which requires, among other things, that proposals avoid adverse effects on amenity. It would similarly conflict with the residential amenity aims of the Framework.

## **Other Matters**

17. The existing planning permission would be a valid fallback position at this site if the appeal should fail. The appeal building would be around 1m taller to its eaves and the ridge would be around 40cm taller than the fallback. Taking into account its increased size, it would be considerably more bulky than the fallback. By virtue

of its greater scale and glazed gable end, the proposal would be markedly more conspicuous and visually obtrusive than the more modest fallback. There would also be a significantly increased extent of built development close to the garden and habitable room windows of Beech House, with proportionately greater impacts in terms of outlook, overbearing and light. On the basis that the proposal would result in greater adverse impacts on visual and residential amenity, the fallback position does not provide a justification for the appeal.

### **Conclusion**

18. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the proposal would conflict with the development plan and there are no material considerations that would outweigh that conflict.

19. Therefore, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

*Sarah Manchester*

INSPECTOR