

Plan Red Ltd
11th Floor, 3 Piccadilly Place
Manchester
M1 3BN
info@planred.co.uk

5 June 2024

Our ref: 240515 alston ln cov
ltr ver 1
Your ref: Case ID 22289

Planning Team
Ribble Valley Council
Council Offices
Church Walk
Clitheroe
BB7 2RA

FAO: Liam O'Donnell, Enforcement Officer

Dear Sir,

PLANNING APPLICATION BY ADAM AND HAZEL RICHARDSON FOR RETENTION OF GARAGE WITH INTEGRAL STUDIO (IN ROOF) CONSTRUCTED NOT IN CONFORMITY WITH PLANNING PERMISSION REF NO. 3/2020/0199 AT RIVERSIDE BARN, ALSTON LANE, LONGRIDGE, LANCASHIRE, PR3 3BN

This covering letter was drafted by Plan Red in support of a planning application made to Ribble Valley Council on behalf of Adam and Hazel Richardson for retrospective planning permission for the retention of a garage with studio accommodation (in roof) not constructed in conformity with planning permission ref no. 3/2020/0199 at Riverside Barn, Alston Lane, Longridge, PR3 3BN.

Plan Red is playing the role of application agent.

The planning application comprises:

- Application form.
- Certificate.
- Relevant application fee.
- Planning application red line plan.
- Application drawings.
- Covering letter.
- Planning statement

The application is made following an investigation by the council in early 2024 regarding an alleged breach of planning control at Riverside Barn which is linked to the fact a garage development as built at the property does not accurately reflect the plans approved for the development granted under planning permission ref no. 3/2020/0199.

The Plan Red planning statement submitted in support of the application sets in detail the key differences between the proposed development, which we acknowledge is built, and the version granted under planning permission ref no. 3/2020/0199.

From discussions with the council (applicants and Plan Red) we understand these are potentially a key concern for the council. We say potentially as we suspect the council regards the height of the garage as built to be taller than is actually the case. Indeed, it is only now that the garage as built has been fully dimensioned that we are able to properly understand and compare the differences between the consented scheme and the scheme as built.

Before considering this we would point out that we estimate the height of the comparable garage in the rear garden area of Beech House to the north to be 5.9m – 6m to ridge level. This is some 0.34m – 0.44m greater than the 5.56 m height (to ridge) envisaged under the applying planning permission, permission ref no. 3/2016/0664.

This is not an issue to the applicants and other neighbours nor we understand the council as this was not investigated as a breach of planning control. This garage is lower in height than the heights of Beech House and Riverside Barn. It does not dominate in terms of its general height and massing. It is of a high quality in build terms. It has the character and feeling that it was once part of the original farm complex. As such it fits its site and immediate development contexts well.

Table 1 at paragraph 4.4 of the Planning Statement by Plan Red confirms the differences between key dimensions and massing indicators of the proposed development as built and that granted under planning permission ref no. 3/2020/0199. From this it can be seen that the differences, in the main, are not significant. We set out key ones below:

- Width: as proposed/built: 6.76m; as permitted: 7m; difference: -0.24m/-2%
- Length: as proposed/built: 9.52m; as permitted: 9m; difference: +0.5m/5%
- Height to haunch: as proposed/built: 3.84m; as permitted: 2.82m; difference: +1.02m/+35%
- Height to ridge: as proposed/built: 5.96m; as permitted: 5.56m; difference: +0.4m/6%
- Overall floorspace (GIA): as proposed/built: 118 sqm; as permitted: 90sqm; difference: +28 sqm/+30%
- Volume (GEA): as proposed/built: 315m³; as permitted: 263m³; difference: +52m³/20%

Regarding the width of the garage, the as built proposed development is actually very marginally narrower in width than the consented version.

On the length of the garage, the as built proposed development is slightly longer, but only to the tune of 5%, which in the context of a structure of this size makes the difference virtually indiscernible.

A key difference is height to haunch. The difference is +1.0m or 35% compared to the consented scheme. This is an obvious difference. However, we would say this measurement is not significant. As it is simply the height to where the roof starts/guttering is positioned rather than the height to the top of the roof. The increase introduced to create more and more usable floorspace at studio/first floor level in the roof. With the consented option the roof accommodation has to take greater account of the slope of the roof which has the effect of delivering less usable floorspace: 38 sqm as opposed to 40 sqm. The proposed development, whilst enjoying more usable floorspace at studio/first floor level, achieves this by reducing the width and without discernibly increasing the length of the garage but rather by increasing the height of the side elevations to haunch level. As such, while the difference relating to haunch height appears to be a big change, we regard the change as acceptable, as the key consideration is the overall height of the building. And as we go onto describe the increase in overall height is very minor.

So, regarding height to ridge level, the proposed development as built is +0.4m or 6% taller than the consented development. This is a minor change. 0.4m is just over a foot in old money and 6% puts the change in the scope of what planning terminology usually terms and regards as de minimis. These are works/development that might otherwise fall within the definition of development but are so minor in nature that they fall outside of the scope of the planning system, i.e. they are de minimis. The Oxford English Dictionary defines 'de minimis' as "too trivial or minor to merit consideration, especially in law." An example of 'de minimis' works might include changes to the external appearance of a building or how a consented development is built out.

On floorspace, as already confirmed, the increase is not large: +9 sqm, which equates to +10%. This is achieved not by growing the ground floor rather just the studio/first floor accommodation and this by increasing the height to haunch level and altering the pitch of the roof. This allows the usable area at studio/first floor level, i.e., area that can be stood up in, to be increased, although this is still less than at ground floor level. The current as built arrangement makes the building more efficient. However, we would stress that it only involves a 0.4m increase in the overall height of the roof. As such it is our view that the increase in floorspace can be regarded as acceptable.

Regarding volume, the same points made about floorspace above, least the key principles as to how the increase is achieved, also apply to volume increases, which are +52m³/20%. This is also achieved through the very minor/de minimis increase in the proposed development's overall height.

Based on the above, it is our overall view that the changes to the development as built, the proposed development, when compared to the development consented under planning permission ref no. 3/2020/0199, can be regarded as minor. And they also reflect the height of the built garage to the north, in the garden of Beech House, which suggests that, overall, the proposed development, can be regarded as acceptable.

As such, and taking all other planning, development, land use and site related factors into account, including the fact it is our view the proposed development accords with development plan policy and is supported by other material considerations, it is our view the planning application and the retrospective planning permission it seeks can be supported and should be granted.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully



John Francis, Director

Plan Red Ltd



cc. Adam & Hazel Richardson