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# Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 January 2023

**by M J Francis BA (Hons) MA MSc MCIfA**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 26 January 2023**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/T2350/D/22/3310831**

**Castlebank, Straits Lane, Read, Lancashire BB12 7PE**

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
  - The appeal is made by Mr and Mrs Knight against the decision of Ribble Valley Borough Council.
  - The application Ref 3/2022/0809, dated 11 August 2022, was refused by notice dated 21 October 2022.
  - The development is a proposed annex.
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## Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

## Preliminary Matter

2. An annex within the grounds of Castlebank was granted planning approval in 2020<sup>1</sup>. However, that development was not implemented in full accordance with the approved plans. Hence the submission of the planning application that is now the subject of this appeal, which relates to the revised form of development that has taken place. The annex has been constructed up to the apex of its roof, although, at the point in time of my inspection, exterior render and slates had not been applied. As such the proposal is part-retrospective and I shall determine the appeal on this basis.

## Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the annex on the character and appearance of the site and its surrounding area.

## Reasons

4. Straits Lane, where the appeal site is located, rises steeply from the point where it connects to a main road at its southern end. It is a residential area with the Lane lined, in part, by linear rows of houses and a primary school. Castlebank forms part of a semi-detached pair and is the last property on the western side of the Lane before where a playing area, fringed by trees, is located, with fields situated beyond. As such, a somewhat formal, predominantly residential and verdant character and appearance is identifiable local to the site.
5. Castlebank has a substantial extension to the side and is constructed of brick with a render finish to the first floor with a slate roof. The site is entered through a gateway at a corner of the site, which is next to a public footpath. In

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<sup>1</sup> 3/2020/0836

- proximity to the entrance and sited parallel to the public footpath, the annex has been constructed.
6. The annex, which has a first-floor level contained within its roof, is alleged to be 1.1 metres higher than the single storey building that was previously approved. Whilst the overall footprint of the building has been reduced from the annex granted planning permission, its height, and separation from other buildings, makes it appear conspicuous and somewhat out of place at the entrance to the site. This prominence is increased because the apex of the gable elevation faces the street, and the height of the building is greater than its width. This draws the eye to the top of the roof and the annex's barge boards. The annex's conspicuousness is exacerbated by the site being situated at the top of the rise where the Lane flattens out and would likely further increase should a render finish be applied as intended.
  7. The position of the site in relation to open space beyond it, promotes that the annex can be experienced in isolation of surrounding development and as an unduly eye-catching addition to the local area. It is, for example, highly visible from points upon the adjacent public footpath despite the close by presence of established planting. Indeed, where viewable from the footpath, the building towers over the low stone boundary wall.
  8. The appellant considers that the annex appears subservient to the main dwelling, being built below the eaves height of the house and partially screened by shrubs and trees. However, for reasons already explained, the annex is prominent upon the site and, as such, does not appear as a genuinely subservient or small-scale addition.
  9. Moreover, the position of a large picture window on the side elevation overlooking the path and an entrance and mock door in the gable elevation that faces the Lane are features that assist in leading to the annex loosely resembling a detached property separate from Castlebanks. Thus, the scale, position and design of the building fails to integrate successfully with the main dwelling or the site's surroundings.
  10. For the above reasons, the annex causes harm to the character and appearance of the site and its surrounding area. The scheme does not accord with Policies DMG1 and DMH5 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy 2008-2028 (adopted December 2014) in so far as these policies require development to be sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses in terms of its size, intensity and nature, as well as scale and massing.

## **Conclusion**

11. The development conflicts with the development plan when considered as a whole and there are no material considerations that outweigh the identified harm and associated development plan conflict.
12. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal is dismissed.

*M J Francis*

INSPECTOR