

Ribchester Parish Council

Director of Development Services
Ribble Valley Borough Council
Council Offices
Church Walk
Clitheroe
LANCS BB7 2RA

FAO: Adrian Dowd

23 July 2014

Sir

PLANNING APPLICATION No: 3/14/0553

Application: Cleaning of external stonework

At: 58 Church Street, RIBCHESTER

While the Parish Council believes that the sand blasting of stonework on a listed building is inappropriate it will not object since, however much the council might wish it, what has been done cannot be easily undone. In particular an abrasive cleaning method, including blasting of any kind, is likely to cause damage to the stonework. It is sensible for this to be used only after a small test area has been prepared to ascertain the suitability of the techniques and the effect on the fabric, character and appearance of the building.

On the broader question of conservation yet again we have a situation in relation to a listed building within the conservation area that could have been averted had the Borough Council earlier adopted a more positive attitude. This application provides a perfect example of the need for some simple guidance to be given to newcomers in the conservation Area.

Ribchester is an attractive village with Roman and pre-Roman antecedents. Church Street, at the village heart, leads down to the bank of the River Ribble and is characterised by terraces of modest houses. Typically they are built of stone with slate roofs and although some have been marred by the incorporation of unsuitable modern features they still form a harmonious and attractive whole. While, in the older part of Church Street, dormer windows and some roof lights are untypical of the roofscape the character of Church Street has still not been seriously eroded. Much of this change can be laid at the lack of a coherent

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management plan for the Conservation Area that has been apparent for some time. The Parish Council has always believed that, in fairness to property owners, the Borough Council should produce a document that sets out the reasons why we have a Conservation Area, what it is meant to achieve and how the Borough Council seeks to protect it. Without such a document home owners can be left very much in the dark and may, possibly through ignorance of the 'rules', ignore restrictions on development. New owners are particularly vulnerable to this, as they may well have moved to the area unaware of its history, although it could be argued that a more perceptive owner might have first made enquiries before embarking on a course of action.

Although not part of this particular application the Council wishes to point out that the applicant has removed the cast iron guttering from the front of the property and has partially replaced it with a barge board out of character with the remainder of the terrace.

Yours faithfully



T A ORMAND
Clerk to the Council

cc: Cllr Ian Sayers