LISTED BUILDING CONSENT APPLICATION

BY

MR AND MRS J AND M HINDLE

TO

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

FOR

CLEANING OF EXTERNAL STONEWORK

AT

58 CHURCH STREET, RIBCHESTER, PR3 3YE

LISTED BUILDING CONSENT SUPPORT STATEMENT

MAY 2014

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Support Statement has been prepared to accompany a listed building consent application by Mr and Mrs J and M Hindle, to Ribble Valley Borough Council.

1.2 This Statement should be read in conjunction with the listed building consent application forms, plans, and Heritage Statement also submitted with this application.

2 THE APPLICATION PROPOSAL

2.1 The proposal is for the cleaning of external stonework at 58 Church Street, Ribchester. The works have already been carried out. The applicants did not appreciate the need for listed building consent to be obtained. No other works have been carried out or are prosed to the external stonework. The applicant has ceased all other works at the property pending the outcome of other listed building consent applications made at this time.

2.2 Re-pointing works have also been carried out at the property. However, that was carried out on a 'like-for-like' basis and as such has had no effect on the character or appearance of the listed building. The rainwater and soil pipe have also to be replaced, and the fascia boards to which the rainwater gutters are to be fixed have already been replaced. These works have been / will be carried out on a 'like-for-like' basis and as such has have no effect on the character or appearance of the listed building. Thus, listed building consent is not required for these other external works.

2.3 Planning permission is not required for any of the above works.

3 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

3.1 The application property is situated on the north east side of Church Street in a central location within Ribchester. The application property is an end-terrace, stone-built, slate-roofed dwelling, within an area of other similar and some more modern property.

4 PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 The relevant planning history at the site is as follows:

- 3/77/975 – Proposed alterations and extensions (including first-floor extension over existing single-storey side extension). Proposed works constituted permitted development, 9 November 1977; and
- 3/88/0863 – Replacement windows. Listed Building Consent granted 13 February 1989.

4.2 A Housing Act 1974 Improvement Grant for 'improvements, repairs and replacements' was granted on 18 August 1978. The works are not specified in the available paperwork. However, it is understood that the works were as per those shown in the 3/77/975 proposal and included the installation of an internal bathroom.

4.3 Following a re-survey of the statutory list of buildings of architectural and historic interest carried out in the early 1980s, the terrace of properties 50 to 58 (consecutive) were listed as grade II on 22 November 1983. The listing description is:

> *Row of houses, late C18th. Squared sandstone with slate roofs and brick chimney caps. 2 storeys. Each house of one bay, with a door to the right. All the windows are modern, those to nos. 53-56 having plain stone surrounds, those to nos.57 and 58 having plain reveals. The doors have plain stone surrounds, except that to no.57, which has plain reveals. The ground-floor window surround to no.54 is wide and possibly reconstructed. No.55 has an additional ground-floor window to the left, with plain reveals, possibly in a former tunnel doorway. No.56 has a doorcase with fluted pilasters, fluted frieze and open pediment on console brackets. Above is a plaque dated '1795'.*

5 RELEVANT POLICY AND GUIDANCE

5.1 The main component of the Development Plan, as relevant to the application, is the Ribble Valley Districtwide Local Plan (adopted in June 1998).

Ribble Valley Districtwide Local Plan

5.2 The following saved policies of the adopted Local Plan are relevant to the proposal:

- Policy ENV16: Conservation Areas – within conservation areas development will be strictly controlled to ensure that it reflects the character of the area in terms of scale, size, design and materials; and
- Policy ENV20: Listed Buildings – proposals for the alteration or repair of listed buildings should be sympathetic to their character and appearance. The most important features of any listed building will be preserved.

5.3 The Local Plan Proposals Map shows the application property to be within the Ribchester settlement area and a Conservation Area (ENV16).

National Policy

5.4 The NPPF clearly states '*that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable* development' (paragraph 6). Paragraph 197 confirms that '*in assessing and determining development proposals, local planning authorities should apply the presumption in favour of sustainable* development'.

5.5 The main body of the NPPF addresses the components of sustainable development. The component of relevance to the application is:

- 'conserving and enhancing the historic environment' – '*in determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance'* (paragraph 128). '*Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or loss of significance of a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent*' unless various criteria are met (paragraph 133).

National Guidance

5.6 The relevant provisions of the recently published (March 2014) online Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) are outlined below.

5.7 In defining the circumstances in which Listed Building Consent is required the PPG refers to '*any works to demolish any part of a listed building or to alter or extend it in*

a way that affects its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest require listed building consent'. It adds that '*for all grades of listed building, the listing status covers the entire building, internal and external, objects fixed to it and sometimes also attached and curtilage buildings or other structures*'.

5.8 In explaining why 'significance' is important in decision-making, the PPG refers to '*heritage assets may be affected by direct physical change or by change in their setting. Being able to properly assess the nature, extent and importance of the significance of a heritage asset, and the contribution of its setting, is very important to understanding the potential impact and acceptability of development proposals*'.

5.9 In assessing whether there is 'substantial harm' the PPG explains that '*what matters in assessing if a proposal causes substantial harm is the impact on the significance of the heritage asset …… Whether a proposal causes substantial harm will be a judgment for the decision taker, having regard to the circumstances of the case and the policy in the National Planning Policy Framework. In general terms, substantial harm is a high test, so it may not arise in many cases. For example, in determining whether works to a listed building constitute substantial harm, an important consideration would be whether the adverse impact seriously affects a key element of its special architectural or historic interest. It is the degree of harm to the asset's significance rather than the scale of the development that is to be assessed …… While the impact of total destruction is obvious, partial destruction is likely to have a considerable impact but, depending on the circumstances, it may still be less than substantial harm or conceivably not harmful at all, for example, when removing later inappropriate additions to historic buildings which harm their significance. Similarly, works that are moderate or minor in scale are likely to cause less than substantial harm or no harm at all. However, even minor works have the potential to cause substantial harm*'.

Emerging Local Planning Policy

5.10 Ribble Valley Borough Council is in the process of preparing a Local Plan Core Strategy. The Plan is presently at the examination stage.

5.11 The following policies of the emerging Local Plan are relevant to the proposal:

- Policy EN5: Heritage Assets – seeks to conserve and enhance heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance for their heritage value,

their contribution to local character, distinctiveness and sense of place, and to wider social, cultural and environmental benefits. This will be achieved in a number of ways including carefully considering any development proposals;

- Policy DME2: Landscape and Townscape Protection – development proposals will be refused which significantly harm important features, including townscape elements such as the scale, form, and materials that contribute to the characteristic townscapes of the area; and
- Policy DME4: Protecting Heritage Assets – in considering development proposals the Council will make a presumption in favour of the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets. Proposals within conservation areas should not harm the area, including the considerations set out in the relevant Conservation Area Appraisal. Development in conservation areas will be strictly controlled to ensure that it respects the character of the area in terms of its location, scale, size, design and materials. In conservation areas there will be a presumption in favour of the preservation of elements that make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area. Any proposals involving the demolition or loss of important historic fabric from listed buildings will be refused unless it can be demonstrated that this is unavoidable.

<u>Other Relevant Policy and Guidance Documents</u>

Ribchester Conservation Area Appraisal

5.12 The Appraisal (published in 2006) refers to Ribchester being dominated by rows of handloom weavers' cottages, many of which were built in the late eighteenth century. The summary of the area's special interest includes reference to '*narrow, closely developed streets of former handloom weavers' settlement*', '*handloom weavers' cottages, including two with cellar loomshops, particularly in Church Street and Blackburn Road*', and '*the prevalent use of local building stone*'. The Appraisal goes on to note that '*Ribchester has a high number of buildings surviving from the late eighteenth century*', with Ribchester being '*substantially rebuilt from the late eighteenth century into the early nineteenth century corresponding with its growth as an industrial village and centre of handloom weaving. The survival of these buildings in Ribchester has retained a character that would have been shared by many of east Lancashire's textile towns around 1800*'. The Appraisal identifies one

of the area's strengths to be the '*historic character and appearance of the core area*'. Negative features identified include '*loss of architectural detail (original windows, doors etc), and insensitive alteration of historic buildings spoiling the conservation area's historic character and appearance*'. The threat to the area is identified as '*continuing loss of original architectural details and use of inappropriate modern materials or details*'.

5.13 The Townscape Appraisal Map identifies the application property as forming part of a listed terrace. The view along Church Street is shown as 'important'.

Ribchester Conservation Area Management Guidance

5.14 The Guidance (published in 2006) makes recommendations intended to address the threat and negative features identified in the Appraisal. In particular, and relevant to the proposal, it refers to:

- Stonework – alterations or repairs to external elevations should respect historic fabric and match it in materials, texture, quality and colour; and
- Stone cleaning – stone cleaning must be executed with care. Consideration must be given to its impact on the historic character of the building (eg loss of 'the patina of age') especially if located in a terrace.

6 ASSESSMENT

6.1 Having regard to the nature of the proposal, its context and relevant national and local planning policies, the main issues for consideration are:

- what is the significance of the heritage asset; and
- what is the impact of the stone cleaning on the heritage significance of the building.

The Heritage Statement also submitted in support of this application addresses these issues.

6.2 The application property is a designated heritage asset, being listed as part of the terrace 50 – 58 Church Street, Ribchester and is located within the designated Conservation Area. The Heritage Statement identifies the significance of the building as part of the terrace, representing a period in local history, rather than for any particular internal or external features. However, it points to the erosion of the

terrace's uniform design over time. Indeed, among other things, stone cleaning has been undertaken to approximately half of the properties in the terrace.

6.3 The Heritage Statement assesses the impact of the stone cleaning on the building's heritage significance to be 'low'. The visual impact of the works will reduce with time as the stone recovers some of its patina, as has been the case with other properties in the terrace. It should also be noted that there is no evidence of damage caused to the face or integrity of the stone. The stonework retains the characteristic features of the type of stone used in the building's construction, including the punch faced stone to the front elevation. Furthermore, the stone facings to the building had no fine details which could have been eroded, harmed or lost by the cleaning works.

7 CONCLUSION

7.1 It has been demonstrated that the stone cleaning would have a low impact on the heritage significance of the building and, as such, would be in accord with relevant local and national planning policy.

7.2 For the reasons set out above, the Council is respectfully invited to grant listed building consent for the stone cleaning works.