From: Bayliss, Gillian
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To: Howard, Lisa; Planning (SMDC)
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Categories:

17 & 18 Riverside, Oakamoor
The application relates to the end two properties in a row of terraced housing characterised by long front gardens facing the road and River Churnet. The properties have been enclosed by low dry stone walls but recently some front boundary walls have been removed to create parking areas. The application proposes the demolition of two sections of boundary wall to create off-road parking areas for Nos 17 & 18 Riverside. Nearly all of the front wall will be removed at No.17 and about a quarter at No.18. Both properties still retain all the dry-stone boundary walls to the front and sides and have a shared pedestrian access running through the middle of the gardens. Parking is currently provided along the roadside (a dead-end road with no apparent parking pressure).

The properties lie in Character Area 1 of the Oakamoor Character Appraisal. This is the core of the 19th century workers housing for the former copper and brass works in the village– purpose built terraced rows in a planned area of housing. All terraced buildings along Churnet View Road are identified as 'positive buildings' and with panoramic view. The appraisal identifies that many properties still retain their low stone boundary walls and front gardens and their open position looking out across river adds greatly to the character of the area. Some properties have lost sections of their front boundary walls prior to the designation of the Conservation Area (and Article 4 Direction) and these have harmed the character of the buildings and wider streetscape. These are most harmful where they are grouped together and whole stretches of boundary wall have been lost. It is important that the remaining garden walls are retained to prevent a widespread proliferation of truncated front gardens (or complete loss in some cases) and parked cars close to the building frontages. The problem with the demolition of boundary walls and creation of off-road parking is highlighted in the adopted character appraisal:
Loss of Boundary Walls
8.4 Boundary walls have on occasion been removed to create off-street car parking bays. This is particularly unsightly along Churnet View Road, where the boundary walls form a strong linear pattern –once one wall has gone, the rest in the terrace tend to follow, even though there is little evidence of competition for on-street parking and no parking restrictions.

The character of the Conservation Area is dominated by uniform or repeated architectural details, the rhythm of terraces and frontages which are spoilt by ad-hoc alterations. An Article 4 Direction was introduced with the Conservation Area designation to preserve the remaining character of the area and those elements which make Oakamoor special. These include traditional building details, such as traditional boundaries to frontages. The appraisal notes that the creation of further hardstanding and partial demolition of boundary walls should also be brought under control along these frontages (Page 48).

The harmful impact of the loss of the boundary wall is recognised by the applicants in the Heritage Statement.

The application cannot be supported as the front walling to No 17 & 18 is the best surviving, consistent length in the terrace and provides an attractive frontage to the properties and strong enclosure to the road, especially prominent in views to the south-east along the road. The development will be harmful to the character or appearance of the area. It is important that tight control of these significant features is maintained to achieve the aims of the recently designated the Conservation Area and Article 4 Direction.

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