
The Inquiry

SAVE was a Rule 6 Party in the inquiry, led by James Potts of 39 Essex Street, acknowledged to be one of the top planning Barristers under the age of 35 by Planning Magazine earlier this year. The grounds for the inquiry, as outlined by the Secretary of State and expanded by the Inspector Christine Thornby were as follows:

- 1) good design
- 2) conserving and enhancing the historic environment
- 3) empty homes
- 4) other matters including whether the scheme creates a healthy inclusive community, challenge of climate change, wider planning framework for both matters
- 5) planning balance i.e. whether this is consistent with national and local policy

The Team and summary of our case

SAVE had a great team including forming planning and design officer Alec Forshaw, architect Trevor Skempton, former Director of Empty Homes charity David Ireland, structural engineer Ed Morton, local Beatles historian Dave Bedford, estate agent Paul Sutton, and architectural historian Gareth Carr. We also had support from the National Trust, Professor of Architecture at Liverpool University Dr Neil Jackson, and local Beatles historian Phil Coppell. Fiona Deaton of Maisna Heritage put together an illuminating Heritage Statement about the architectural and cultural significance of the area. This included new evidence about the architect of the buildings, Richard Owens, the subject of a recent PhD thesis by our witness Gareth Carr. Thanks to his research it was established that the houses were 20 years older than was originally thought and were part of a larger estate by Owens, one of

several he laid out for Liverpool at this time of great expansion for the city. Carr believed that the Welsh Streets and Owen are pivotal to the understanding and the development of the terraced house nationally and even internationally, not just in Liverpool. Owens is the architect of 200 Methodist chapels in Wales: both Carr and Trevor Skempton underlined the significance the Welsh Streets have for Welsh culture in Liverpool.

The Heritage Statement also included information about the importance of the street as a whole for the understanding of Ringo Starr. Not only was he born here and lived the first five years of his life here, his best friend lived opposite, whose mother taught him to read, his aunt lived at No.21 and his grandparents lived at the end of the street. Ringo Starr later moved to Admiral Grove across the street, before finally moving to London on hitting fame. Of all the Beatles' stories, Ringo's is the most rags-to-riches. SAVE holds that not only is this culturally important, but it also is extremely significant from the point of view of Beatles tourism, which is a huge earner for Liverpool. It is astounding that Liverpool Council should think of killing the goose that lays the golden egg in this manner, when the site is visited by thousands of people every year and has huge potential to be a much-needed driver for the regeneration of the wider area.

Trevor Skempton persuasively argued that the proposed designs for the replacement 153 houses are of poor quality, detracting from the adjoining Prince's Park Conservation Area. In addition it reduces the density to a suburban level, which is not appropriate in a large metropolis like Liverpool where the population is on the rise again after a long period of decline.

Our planning case was particularly strong seeing as demolition on this scale is in direct and blatant contravention of national planning policy. Staggeringly, witness for Liverpool Council Mark Kitts argued that Pathfinder was a success, despite its total condemnation by the government, independent auditors and politicians of all parties as a failure, and by thousands of residents affected by it in several northern cities over the last 10 years.



63

From Maisna Heritage’s Heritage Statement for SAVE showing the properties in the Welsh Streets and the immediate vicinity that were part of Ringo Starr’s life and upbringing

Our planning witness Alec Forshaw made the important point that there are empty sites within the Welsh Streets that could be built on, and also local empty sites, some cleared under Pathfinder but left vacant. These would provide enough space for houses with gardens. In addition, the two-bed houses offered by the Welsh Streets are ideal accommodation for young families and those living alone, especially in the light of the lack of such small properties in Liverpool and the new ‘bedroom tax.’

Part of the site, referred to as Phase B, is still mostly inhabited and permission here is sought for demolition and outline planning only. Of this area Forshaw said in his evidence: “The degradation of the area, coupled with the lack of maintenance and repairs, all over a long period of time, have persuaded some residents to believe that the offer of a new house is the only alternative, and that demolition accordingly has to take place. However, some residents would rather remain in a refurbished

property, and even those who might want to move can appreciate that the existing houses could provide good accommodation for others. Some existing residents have strong roots in the area and want to stay. Total redevelopment will involve more upheaval and erode the social cohesion and sense of community that survives.”

It transpired in the first days of the inquiry that the residents of Phase B would not in fact be given new houses on the demolished site, but would be rehoused elsewhere, apparently contrary to what they had been led to believe by the council.

Forshaw made the point that a policy of ‘managed decline’ in the streets, has resulted in deliberate neglect. This means that the condition of the houses should not be taken into consideration when considering the application.

This was supported by surveys carried out by structural engineer Ed Morton on a sample of 19 properties on the site, with detailed assessments of five. Permission was not given for access to houses in Phase B, which we found puzzling. Ed Morton working with Wilf Jones Quantity Surveyor of the John Pidgeon Partnership, established that the worst case scenario for the refurbishment of the houses in the poorest condition would be in the region of £66,500. Local estate agent Paul Sutton confirmed that if demolition status was lifted he would be able to sell the houses for £80-85,000, indicating a clear potential for profit. `

In the light of this Urban Space Management founding director Eric Reynolds wrote to the Planning Inspectorate before the inquiry opened, proposing a regeneration model for the area, that he would be able to implement, with the aim of bringing the houses back into use. Indeed, it also transpired during the course of the Inquiry that other developers had approached local group the Welsh Streets Home Group as recently as March this year, expressing interest in bringing the Welsh Streets back into use. Like all previous offers, they were met with a wall of silence at Liverpool Council.



Thousands of tourists visit Ringo's birthplace at 9 Madryn Street every year – such as this coach load of Spanish young people we met in 2014 (Pic © SharetheCity.org)

21 Madryn Street – The Re-vamp!

In preparation for the Public Inquiry, SAVE undertook to redecorate our property, the former home of Ringo Starr's aunt, and performed our very own 'Changing Rooms'. Wayne and Tilly Hemingway of HemingwayDesign undertook a redesign and encouraged many of their suppliers to provide us with free product.

SAVE's Project Manager Lesley Mullally did a sterling job of getting the house finished in time for the Inspector's visit. Thanks to the team we received free product from British Ceramic Tiles who donated beautiful HemingwayDesign tiles for the bathroom and elegant white tiles for the kitchen; Dulux kindly donated some paint for our cheerful bright orange new door; Howdens Kitchens generously

donated a new kitchen; plumber Michael Barrett gave us discounted prices; local paint and building suppliers Palace Chemicals donated paint; Hot Pots and Planters gave a planter for flowers outside the door; HemingwayDesign kindly gave of their time and expertise, and also donated some art, while Emma Bridgewater pottery provided a cheerful tea set for the kitchen.

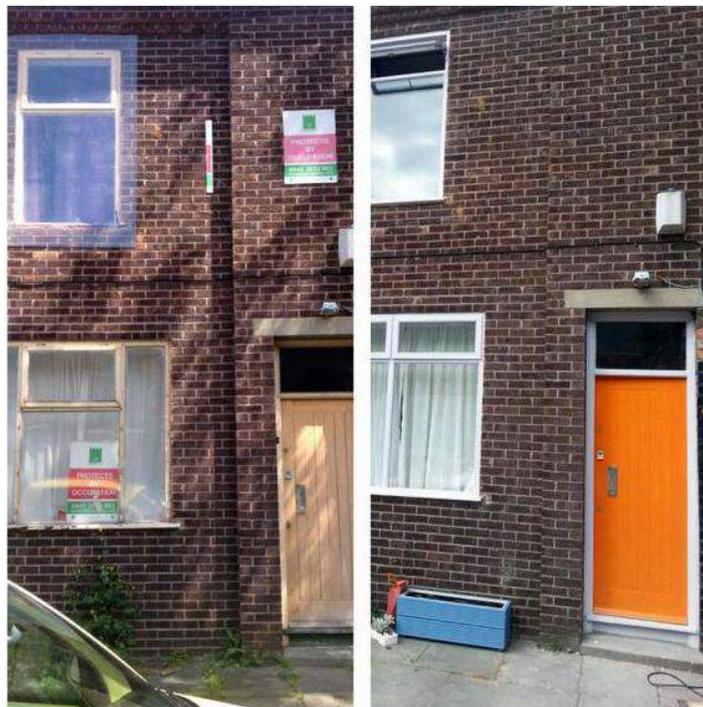


Above: HemingwayDesign Tiles in the bathroom, and the fiery painted staircase

Many thanks to everyone involved. This major bit of work illustrated beyond a shadow of a doubt that with only a little investment it is possible to give these terraced houses a real uplift. And thanks to residents Chris and Leah for their patience, and to their trusty dog Lilo and cat Loki - an essential part of the household as they catch the vermin so rife in the largely empty streets!



Above: Emma Bridgewater making use of the tea set she kindly provided for the house



Above: Before and after shots of the front of 21 Madryn Street

5. Quotes from Evidence

For a flavour of the inquiry, below we lay out the central arguments for our case, starting with a quote from our opening statement.

From the Opening Statement of Barrister James Potts of 39 Essex Street:

“The Council has criticised the Secretary of State for calling-in Plus Dane’s planning application, and SAVE for campaigning for greater refurbishment rather than demolition, and it has been said that they have delayed regeneration. Far from delaying progress, it appears the public inquiry has effectively brought matters to a head: only in the last couple of months (despite demolition of the Welsh Streets having been proposed for a decade) have the Council and Plus Dane set out a funding scheme for the proposals, proposed a tenure mix, obtained a detailed site valuation, and signed Heads of Terms.”

From Architectural Historian Gareth Carr’s evidence:

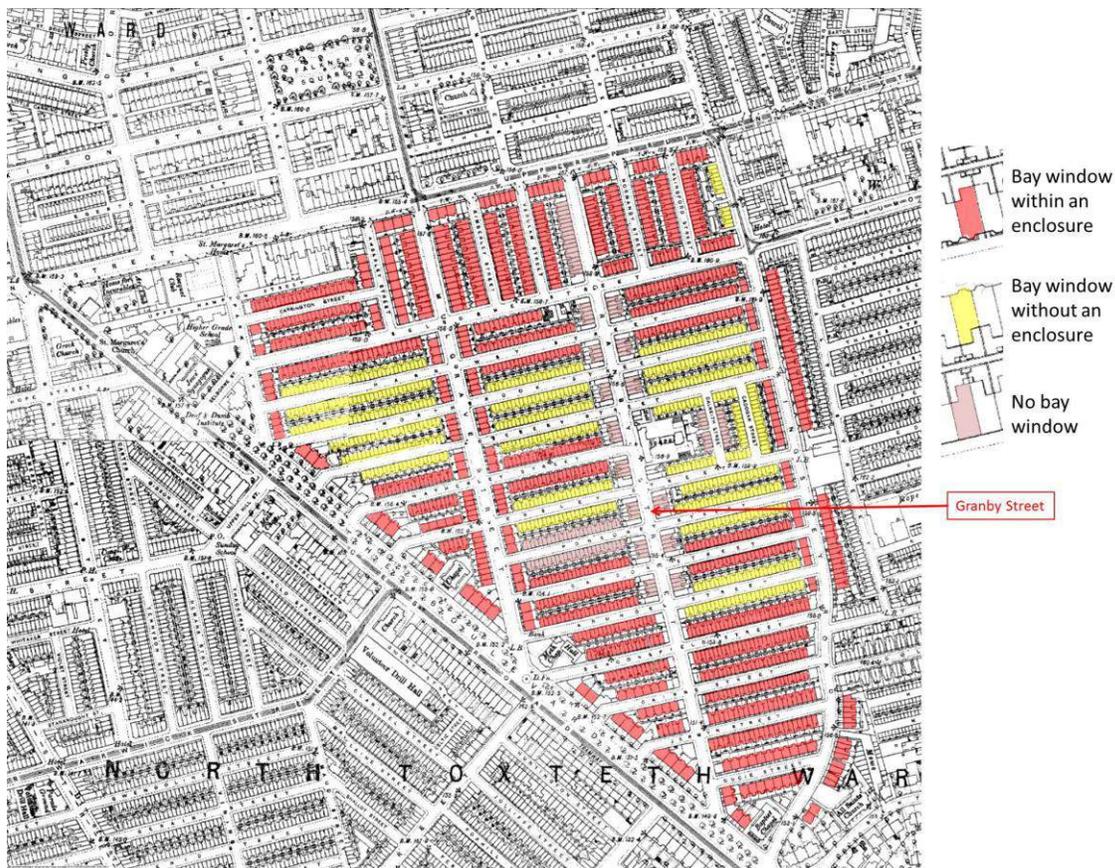
“In terms of the demographics of cultural ethnicities within Victorian Liverpool, the ‘Welsh Streets’ are amongst the last reminders of a once thriving Welsh community, self-sufficient in the acquisition of land, the provision of labour, the importation of construction materials and the entire means with which to accommodate its own growth.

“The ‘Welsh Streets’ should be considered in the wider context of the four estates developed by Richard Owens for D Roberts, Son and Company so that their significance in the history of town planning in Liverpool becomes clear. The ‘Welsh Streets’ were an integral part of an extensive and sophisticated private sector intervention in the fields of Toxteth Park, the scale and careful orchestration of which were unprecedented in the development of the City.



“Although Richard Owens is now almost forgotten, over a period of approximately thirty years between 1863 and 1891, he was responsible for planning the development of more than 325 acres of land for speculative housing in the suburbs of Liverpool, and was to become almost a millionaire by today’s standards in the process... The extent of development shown corroborates the statement published by the Liverpool Daily Post on 29th December 1891 which described the funeral of

Richard Owens and recorded that he, “...is said to have laid out more land in the vicinity of Liverpool than any other architect of [that] period.”

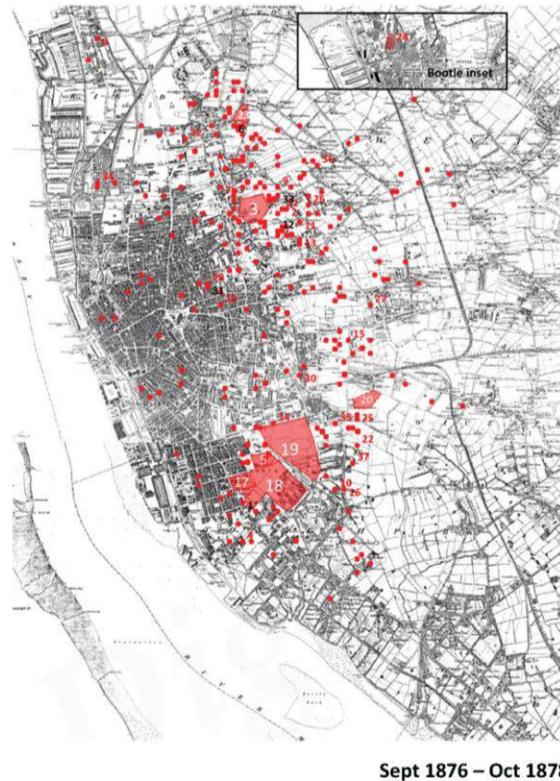


“The ‘Welsh Streets’ are of particular significance to the historic development of Liverpool, and that their loss would diminish further an already much-depleted but important physical environment, bequeathed us from the Victorian period.

“In respect of the demolition that has already taken place in the vicinity of the ‘Welsh Streets’, to fail to appreciate the former physical context which once surrounded the houses that remain, is to underestimate their historical significance.

“The ‘Welsh Streets’ should be considered in the context of the entire estates within which they were constructed, and not in isolation. The simple architectural differences between the streets which still exist are amongst the last reminders of the subtleties with which differing environmental contexts were accommodated,

during a period when the application of planning theory in the development of mass housing on such a scale was still in its infancy.



The geographical distribution within Liverpool of housing projects undertaken by Richard Owens

“That Richard Owens was able to establish such an important architectural practice in Liverpool, and to undertake the design of such extensive speculative housing developments, was due to the cohesive and industrious characteristics of the Welsh ex-patriot community within the City. Throughout the period of the career of Richard Owens, the ‘Liverpool Welsh’ found the means to purchase land, to set-out streets, to construct houses, to live in them and to worship in the many non-conformist Welsh chapels which were established within the City, numerous examples of which were constructed to the designs of Richard Owens himself.

“The ‘Welsh Streets’ should be spared in order to protect what little survives of the legacy of the Welsh contribution to Liverpool in terms of its history, culture and diversity and as being amongst the last surviving examples of the work of one Liverpool’s most prolific, and important architects.”



Architect of the Welsh Streets, Richard Owens

From Dave Bedford’s evidence on the importance of Madryn Street for Beatles tourism in Liverpool:

“Jerry Goldman, managing director of The Beatles Story, says that "close to 500,000 people each year visit Liverpool with Beatles as the main driver". He also notes an increase in Beatles tourists from China and Brazil which appear to be important new markets for Beatles tourism.

“Pam Wilsher, Head of Visitor Economy Development at the Liverpool City Region

LEP says: “The Beatles remain hugely important in attracting visitors to Liverpool, especially those who come from overseas. Visit Liverpool, the Tourist Board for Liverpool City Region which this year is promoting the Beatles’ 50th anniversary, estimates that the total spend per year by visitors drawn by the Beatles is almost £400m. More than 3 million visitors a year cite the Beatles as one of their reasons to visit Liverpool. Fifty years on, the band’s legacy, and the city that shaped them, retains an enduring appeal to visitors from all over the world.

“You can go anywhere in the world, and when you say you are from Liverpool, people will say “The Beatles”. This city depends on tourism as one of the key components in our economy.

“You can stand in Madryn Street any day and you will see numerous private Beatles tours visiting Ringo’s birthplace every hour. You will soon see how important this house is! Some visit Admiral Grove for interest, but every tour visits 9, Madryn Street as it is so important to the story, being Ringo Starr’s birthplace. It is therefore considered of more importance than 10, Admiral Grove, hence why all of the Beatles tours come to Madryn Street.

“With this background, deciding to damage that business by demolishing most of Madryn Street even while saving No.9 and only 15 other houses around it, would be seriously short-sighted. In 1973 when they demolished The Cavern they could be forgiven for not having the foresight to preserve the most famous club in the world. However, we have the information at our fingertips now, and surely we would not be forgiven for taking such liberties with this site! Below I expand on why the street as a whole to understanding Ringo’s background and not just No.9.

“Richard Starkey - known as Richy and later as Ringo Starr - was born at 9, Madryn Street on 7th July 1940, to Elsie and Richard Starkey. At the age of three, his parents divorced and his father moved out of the house, having very little contact with him initially and after that, no contact. His father, Richard Snr, moved back to 59, Madryn Street, the home of his parents. Elsie and Richy lived at 9, Madryn Street, until 1945.



Above: Ringo Starr

“I welcomed the news in 2012 that No.9 Madryn Street was not intended for demolition, as we see in this planning application it will be refurbished along with 15 others on the street. However it is not just about saving Ringo’s house, it is about saving the environment where he was born and grew up. These houses were built as entire streets and the community lived in them as such – his grandparents lived at the other end. For a visitor, it is a much more immersive and interesting historic experience to see the street in its entirety as it was. This is the case with the terraced street where George Harrison lived and it is evocative of that time.

“I would love to see 9, Madryn Street restored as it would have been for the Starkeys in the 1940s, so that visitors can really appreciate Liverpool, and Ringo Starr. I also believe that there would be wider interest for educational purposes, because these days people are increasingly interested in social history, which it is taught in schools. Schools could visit the property and study working-class living in Liverpool

in the 1940s-1960s in the house.

“It is also vital to show the street as a whole, not just for the sites of his relatives, but, as many fans want to, they need to walk the street and immerse themselves in Ringo’s childhood. If they just wanted to see a picture of the house, they can buy a book or hit Google! They need context, and to walk from High Park Street, down Madryn Street to the bottom, tells a story of working class Liverpool. The visiting fans love that walk and to see the street as a whole, where a young Ringo would have played. We also show them neighbouring streets too.

“With the thousands of Beatles fans visiting Liverpool every year, the potential income for Madryn Street and the immediate area is substantial. As reported recently, The Beatles Story had over 250,000 visitors in 2013 alone!”

From Local Estate Agent, Paul Sutton’s evidence:

“We should point out that the prospect of clearance and redevelopment has created uncertainty and instability in the market for such properties in this area which has lasted several years. Therefore an acceptable sales demand will only be achieved if there is a settled plan for the area as a whole thus removing the problem of blight.

“We are confident that there would be a steady demand from purchasers for renovated older housing stock in this location provided a settled and accepted plan for the future of the area can be adopted and approved.

“We believe there would be a ready sales market for a selection of older terraced housing in the redevelopment area if such retained housing were fully renovated and improved to a good overall standard. Such property would provide a contrast with newer housing schemes being planned and in our view would help retain the character of the area and provide a valuable historic link for the community.

“If properly executed we believe the mix of old and new housing stock would work well providing the redevelopment scheme was sufficiently comprehensive in terms

of infrastructure improvements and provided also they are sympathetic and would enhance both types of property.”



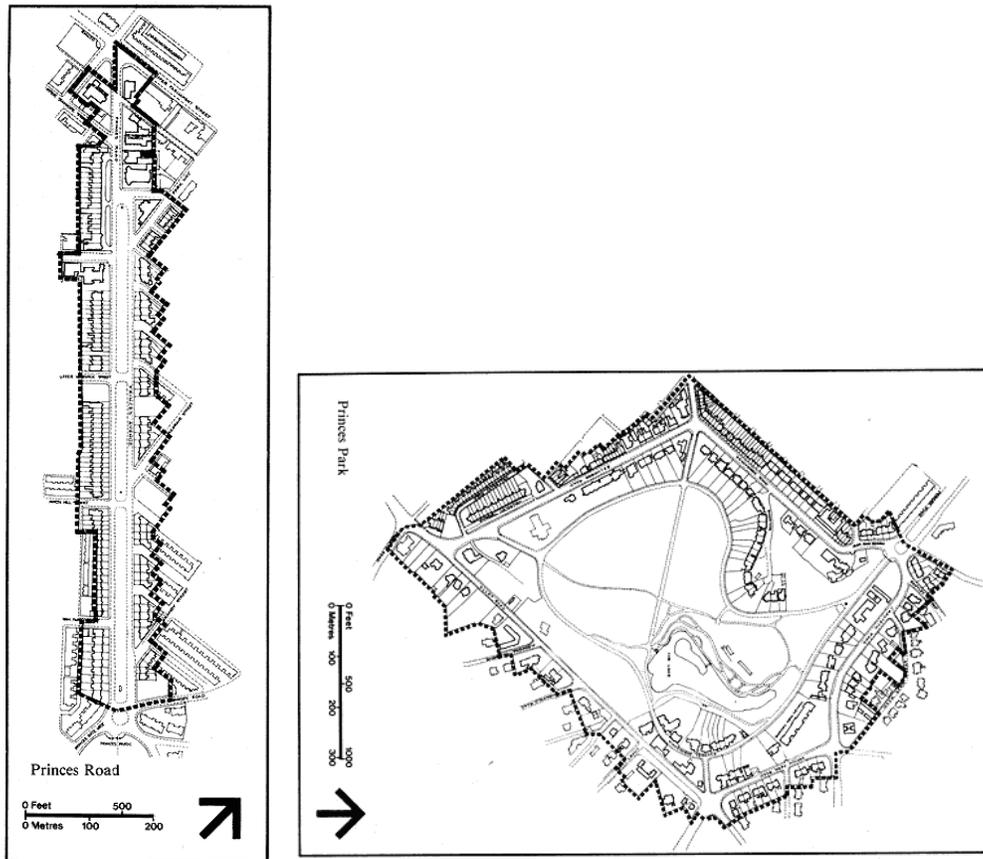
Tinned up houses and shops on High Park Street, The Welsh Streets

Extracts from the evidence of Architect Trevor Skempton:

“The 'Welsh Streets' form an integral part of the composition of Princes Park and Princes Avenue. Unfortunately, only the grander houses were included within the designated Conservation Areas. The rationale of the urban park was that it had a symbiotic relationship with the high-density communities surrounding it, such as the 'Welsh Streets'. This relationship is being damaged elsewhere by demolition coupled with replacement by lower-density suburban development. I see this as symptomatic of a ‘managed decline’, which should be resisted. The 'Welsh Streets' is an important test case.

“Liverpool's surviving legacy of Georgian and Victorian housing is of significant quality, both in the durability of its basic structure and materials, and the historic

value and effectiveness of its layouts and street patterns. Many of the terraces were built and designed by Welsh builders and architects, the 'Welsh Streets' being designed by Richard Owens. These terraces have outlived many more recent housing developments, including tenements, terraces and towers. The Victorian houses and streets have an inherent adaptability that could support gradual organic change and retention of density, rather than clearance. Consideration should be given to including the Welsh Streets in one of the adjoining Conservation Areas.



The Conservation Area boundaries are tightly drawn around the grander buildings facing Princes Avenue [left] and Princes Park [right], thus excluding the terraced streets and not addressing the vital relationship between park and people.

“With the re-establishment of the historic density would come the need for, and opportunity to provide, new local social and communal facilities. We ought to re-discover methods of healthy, organic and sustainable local urban development

specific to inner city Liverpool. The 'Welsh Streets' is not the only area where it's all gone horribly wrong, but it would be a very good place to make the decisions that would set us back on the right course.



Much of Liverpool's fine Georgian housing has been demolished, but many streets have survived and are cherished [left]. These larger buildings used the same design and construction principles as the smaller terraces, such as Madryn Street [right].

"I argue that despite the fact that much of the community has already been dispersed, the streets should be restored and retained. The historic density and character should be re-established, allowing for the possibility of gradual organic long-term change (ideally, they should be incorporated into the adjoining Conservation Areas). The street pattern, street names and characteristic townscape should be preserved. They are an important part of the context of Princes Park, and of the collective memory of many in Liverpool and North Wales.

"I will suggest that the introduction of new suburban development to the inner city is symptomatic of an overall 'managed decline', which should be resisted. The historic phenomenon of managed decline is still inherent in these proposals, which will leave the area as a low-density, suburban, isolationist residential backwater, inappropriate in this location, lacking a sense of place, rather than a vibrant area (as it once was) related to both the city centre and Princes Park. The design of the proposed new build is poor. I will demonstrate the potential of the Welsh Streets to

be restored through good design to a thriving urban community, with particular reference to the examples of Saltaire, in Bradford, and of Hindpool, in Barrow-in-Furness.

“My particular interest in the Welsh Streets dates from my time as an architectural student in Liverpool. I lived in a flat near the Princes Park Gates and have re-visited the area regularly over the years. I live and work in North Wales and am well aware of the historic relationship between Liverpool and Wales. The city’s terraced housing in general, with the ‘Welsh Streets’ as a good example, is one of its most prominent manifestations.”

The ‘Welsh Streets’, the Parks and The Boulevard:

“The ring of parks around the centre of Liverpool – Princes, Sefton, Newsham and Stanley, as well as Birkenhead - were created in a symbiotic relationship with surrounding development. Large villas, terraces and crescents overlook the parks and helped in their financing.

“Behind these, local communities were housed in high-density terraced housing, sufficiently close for the inhabitants to benefit from the parkland, in terms of their health and recreation. The close relationship between the ‘Welsh Streets’ and Princes Park, and also the boulevard of Princes Avenue, is an example of this. Easy access to the park is via each end of South Street, through the main gates or across Devonshire Road. Princes Avenue (the Boulevard) is underused - an inevitable consequence of the decay, clearance and suburbanisation that has occurred since I lived in the area in the 1960s. I believe that this process could and should be reversed by consolidation of the diverse communities and restoration of densities. Both the Avenue and Princes Park are in Conservation Areas.



Road between the Welsh Streets and the back of Devonshire Road that faces Princes Park. The view from the windows of these listed buildings are of the Welsh Streets.

“Terraced houses and other ‘joined-up buildings’ are the essential building blocks of any historic city or town, not just because of their inherent efficiency in terms of land-use, but also because of their enclosure and definition of public space. These ‘joined-up buildings’ sometimes take the form of apartment blocks, in cities such as Glasgow and Edinburgh, but the main surviving Liverpool model is the terraced house. Thus streets, squares and parks are formed as part of the fabric of the city and defined by the frontages of buildings. In suburban development, the enclosure and definition of the public realm is much weaker; the focus is on the private plot rather than the collective street.

“The individual terraced house forms part of a grander composition. This is sometimes given an explicit form, such as when a Georgian terrace is given a central pediment so that the individual houses become part of a palace-type façade. Extra

expression is often given to the ends of terraced streets, to signify the presence of communal facilities or corner shops. The composition of the street, as a whole, is thus greater than the mere sum of the individual houses within it. This communal expression also supports the placing of elements of extra quality within the public space, such as stone paving and street trees (as in the 'Welsh Streets'). Conversely, the suburban model tends towards a minimal specification for public areas (outside the private plots), with areas of 'left-over' land, often associated with highways.

"In order to maintain an acceptable balance between community and privacy, a number of conventions have been developed in traditional streets. Windows tend to be vertically-proportioned, thus maximising the capture of light whilst minimising the view inwards from passers-by. The ground floor is generally raised above street level. There is usually a markedly greater degree of privacy in the front rooms of houses in a traditional terraced street than in the front rooms of modern houses in suburban avenues. Bay windows were introduced in some Victorian terraced housing (including some in the 'Welsh Streets'), capturing extra light and views up and down the street, without compromising privacy.

"The use of 'outriggers' at the rear decreases intrusive overlooking of the backyard, whilst allowing light into the centre of the home. This is a common and adaptable pattern, typically with two living rooms, a kitchen and scullery at ground level and two or three bedrooms above. An internal bathroom would be added, either beyond or above the kitchen. One of the additional objectives of some modern, well-designed terraced housing is the creation of private outdoor spaces at the back that are not overlooked by the neighbours.



Madryn Steet

“Terraced housing, with shared party walls, is inherently efficient (in comparison with semi-detached and detached housing) in terms of the cost of building and repairs, the cost of the provision of services and the use of energy. This efficiency is increased further, when considering the viability of a wide range of local facilities (shops, churches, schools, transport, parks, etc.) at the higher densities of traditional terraced housing.”

'Managed Decline' and the Promotion of Suburbia

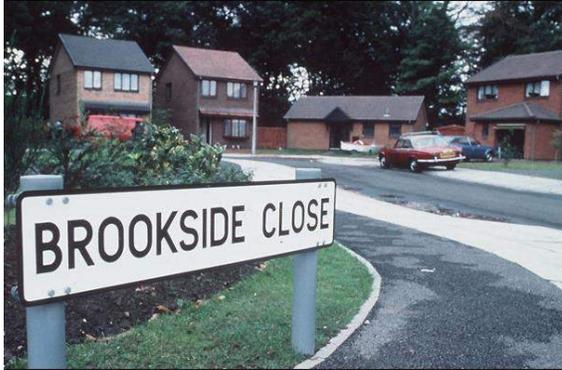
“Whatever the rights and wrongs of the historic clearance programmes in Liverpool, they developed a local momentum that went far beyond the early specific objectives. Large areas of terraced housing and tenement blocks were demolished for political/policy reasons, not because the buildings themselves were deficient. I remember, when I was a student, a concerted (and fortunately successful) campaign had to be waged to save the superb Georgian housing of Liverpool 8, around

Faulkner Square. Then, some forty years later, I was told by the City Council's Planning Manager: "There's nothing wrong with terraces, Trevor, it's just that we have far too many of them." Then again, when the demolition of the 'Welsh Streets' was first proposed, I discussed it with the Chief Executive of one of the large Social Landlords involved; she focussed entirely on the area's social problems and perceptions of a dysfunctional community, rather than on the nature of the buildings or the tree-lined streets themselves.

“Back in the cleared inner-city, some people were 're-housed' in new cheap and poorly-managed council housing and tower blocks, much of which has been subsequently cleared in turn (with half of the 70-year loans raised to build them being written off!). The prophecy that they would be 'slums of the future' came to pass even sooner than feared. Another panacea was sought, in the form of inner-city suburban enclaves. The notion that this type of development might be an appropriate setting for Scouse community life was promoted by the television soap opera 'Brookside'. This offered a suburban 'Close' in Liverpool as an alternative to the close Mancunian community of 'Coronation Street' and the equivalent Cockney London of 'Eastenders'. Significantly, Brookside is no longer broadcast, but the other two seem to go from strength to strength. Nevertheless, the Brookside model was promoted for a time. We can see its direct influence in the small inward-looking low-rise, lowdensity estates built right next door to Liverpool City Centre. We can see an ongoing influence, if less overt, on newer inner-city suburban-style housing, such as the proposals for the Welsh Streets.

“On a number of superficial levels the new designs may seem a positive move from the present neglected and degraded environment. However, a permanent lower density will mean that people will live their lives more isolated from each other, be more car-focused and dependent on journeys out of the immediate area, than they were when the community was intact. The symbiotic relationship between the Welsh Streets and Princes Park, as described above in Section 2, has been broken, diminishing the Park's viability as a health and community resource for local people.

This damage could be reversed if the density was restored.”



Contrasting settings for Liverpool and Manchester soap operas. One emphasised an aspirational suburban life, and the other the resilience of a more traditional urban community, in which social and communal facilities are cheek-by-jowl with homes.

Lack of Consistency of the Proposals with the Requirement of Good Design

“My main and over-riding criticism is the proposed breaking-up of the established street pattern, and the adoption of a suburban development model, with much lower development densities. This comes with a weakening of the traditional texture, which is based on a palette of high quality materials and details in buildings and streetscape: brick, stone, slate, cast iron, sliding sash windows and street trees. Also, there is a loss of the traditional proportion system, as it applies to windows, doors and the ratio of building height to street width, and even the treatment of street and pavement surfaces (with stone flags and setts being replaced by tarmac).

“My criticisms of the proposed houses, their internal spaces, layout and services, fall into three categories. Firstly, the house-types are suburban and take little account of the need for external enclosure and privacy (see also paragraph 3.4). Secondly, the modern building construction and materials are inferior, largely because of affordability within the limitations of modern relatively short-term financial borrowing facilities (whereas housing in previous eras was built on the assumption that the houses would last for a much longer period – as has proved to be the case –

see below, 6.8.). Thirdly, the consistent expression of street and hierarchy as a form of ‘good manners’ in accordance with generally accepted patterns has been lost, giving rise to oddities such as mono-pitch roofs and materials that are alien to the historic context, such as uPVC and concrete. Where criticism is a matter of personal taste, I believe it is best handled within a process of multi-disciplinary ‘peer review’ (see paragraph 6.8.1. below). This proposal has not been subjected to such a review despite the requirement also laid out in paragraph 62 of the NPPF 6.2.1. “Local planning authorities should have local design review arrangements in place to provide assessment and support to ensure high standards of design. They should also when appropriate refer major projects for a national design review. In general, early engagement on design produces the greatest benefits. In assessing applications, local planning authorities should have regard to the recommendations from the design review panel.



This photograph, showing Ringo arriving back in Toxteth in the 1960s [included as an insert in his 2008 album 'Liverpool 8'], demonstrates the subsequent erosion of the character of the area, not just in terms of the street frontages and density, but also the surfaces of the streets and pavements [which are now mostly tarmac].