

SAVE

PRESS RELEASE

5 September 2012



SAVE calls on the new Housing Minister to support new proposals that champion Liverpool's Welsh Streets.

SAVE Britain's Heritage welcomes the new Housing Minister Mark Prisk and urges him to continue the conciliatory work instigated by his predecessor Grant Shapps and encourage Liverpool Council to work collaboratively with all stakeholders in the Welsh Streets, on the frontline of post-Pathfinder Britain.

This Thursday, Liverpool Council will unveil their plans for the Welsh Streets - a series of streets of terraced housing in the leafy Prince's Park area of Liverpool, once inhabited by skilled Welsh artisan masons who built much of the city including these streets. The terraces, which add up to some 500 houses, were emptied by the council in 2005, apart from Kelvin Grove, the most northern street, and a single house on Madryn Street, bought by SAVE in 2011.

The plans see most of the Welsh Streets demolished, bar 32 homes. SAVE's house, currently occupied by two tenants, is to be bulldozed in the plans.

The Welsh Streets have been named the most contested area in the whole of the Pathfinder zone. Pathfinder was the name given to John Prescott's housing policy, implemented in 2003 that led to the breaking up of communities and mass demolitions all over the north of England. Formally, Pathfinder ended last November; however, millions continue to pour in from central government to subsidise schemes of mass demolition such as that to be unveiled by Liverpool Council this week for the Welsh

Streets.

Today there is a positive alternative: **stalwart local campaigners have commissioned alternative designs which use existing terraces as opposed to demolishing them.** The collaboration with local architects is called 'Design Diplomacy' and is an innovation from the Welsh Streets Home Group. The alternative plans retain large areas of terraced housing and retain the integrity of the streets, as well as offering new ideas to increase amenities and house types. They show that there is a middle way – that people can have improved housing without doing away with the city's architectural heritage.

SAVE urges Liverpool Council to consider these alternative designs and ensure that they are made available for public consultation. The consultation period for plans for the Welsh Streets continues until the 20th of September, during which time Liverpool Council is obliged to consider all alternatives for the site.

Moreover a developer has come forward who will fully finance the implementation of the alternative design proposals for the Welsh Streets, saving millions in government subsidies, helping the local housing market and avoiding wasting hundreds of homes.

In these straightened times of housing shortage, SAVE urges Liverpool Council to give an adequate public platform to alternative designs to demolition in the Welsh Streets and take the opportunity for resolution in this highly contentious zone.

SAVE's president Marcus Binney says: "SAVE has been fighting Pathfinder demolitions for over 8 years - these monstrous wasteful demolitions of terraced housing must stop immediately. The general belief is that the government has brought them to a halt, but Liverpool continues with this disastrous programme."

SAVE Director Clem Cecil says: "These streets are a vital part of Liverpool's history and can be adapted to provide decent housing. Thanks to brokerage from Grant Shapps a dialogue has opened up with Liverpool Council with a view to saving a small number of houses here – for the scheme to be taken seriously locally, more than 32 houses have to be retained."

For further press information and images, please contact SAVE Director Clem Cecil on 0207 253 3500 or on office@savebritainsheritage.org

Nina Edge from the Welsh Streets Home Group on 07971472707

NOTES TO EDITORS: SAVE Britain's Heritage has been campaigning for historic buildings since its formation in 1975 by a group of architects, journalists and planners. It is a strong, independent voice in conservation, free to respond rapidly to emergencies and to speak out loud for the historic built environment.

