

Princes Park / Riverside  
STATUS – Public

HSG/9

<b>Portfolio:</b> Housing and Social Care	<b>Executive Member/Director:</b> Cllr Clucas, OBE/Charlie Parker
<b>Date of submission:</b> June 2005	<b>Subject:</b> Declaration of Princes Park Renewal Area
<b>Report No. EDR/135/05</b> <b>Background papers:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neighbourhood Renewal Assessment - final report prepared by Pennington Consultants</li> <li>• Welsh St Resident Survey information</li> <li>• Private Sector Renewal Strategy</li> <li>• Housing Market Renewal Delivery Plan</li> <li>• Housing Strategy Statement</li> <li>• NRA Executive Summary</li> </ul>	<b>Contact Officer: Elaine Stewart</b> <b>Tel: 708 0902</b>

## 1. Executive summary

The purpose of this report is to advise the City Council of the outcome of the Neighbourhood Renewal Assessment (NRA) undertaken in the Princes Park area as depicted on the map attached as Appendix 2 and to seek City Council support to declare this area as the Princes Park Renewal Area.

## 2. Historical Context and Community Involvement

The Princes Park area is located within the “Inner Core” and lies within the City Centre South Housing Market Renewal Initiative (HMRI) boundary. It is contained within the Princes Park and Riverside Wards and comprises a number of neighbourhoods defined by existing resident group boundaries. There are approximately 3000 dwellings contained within 2653 properties within the area.

The area is a mix of larger properties on the arterial routes with a mix of smaller Victorian and more recent local authority and RSL infill properties in the smaller side streets. The frontage properties in Devonshire, Belvidere and Princes Roads are within the Princes Road Conservation Area. The Victorian estates in the proposed area have been included in housing regeneration programmes in the 1970's and early 1980's resulting in the improvement of many properties and these programmes extended the sustainability of the neighbourhood.

The area has a high Black and Minority Ethnic population with 76.2% of the Liverpool total being concentrated in the five old wards, Abercromby, Arundel, Picton, Smithdown & Granby.

The City Council has adopted a Neighbourhood Management model (INclude) in the Dingle area which it is intended to extend to the rest of South Central Neighbourhood.

The INclude Housing & Environmental Delivery Plan 2002 – 2007 set out a programme for the development of Neighbourhood Plans. Neighbourhood Planning Groups were

established in 2002 in the Welsh Streets and Camelot Neighbourhood, and these groups have developed a Community Plan for regeneration. Part of the remit of the Neighbourhood Renewal Assessment was to review and evaluate these emerging plans. In recent months, a separate group has formed called the Welsh Street Home group, and whilst they have been a recent vocal lobby against the clearance proposals, they have not previously been involved in the Neighbourhood Planning process, although they have been invited to be part of the process.

### **3. The Neighbourhood Renewal Process**

In February 2004 Pennington Consultancy, an independent company appointed by the Council with community involvement, were commissioned to undertake a Neighbourhood Renewal Assessment (NRA), which is a required part of the process when considering the declaration of a Renewal Area. The purpose of the NRA was to identify options for this housing priority area, identified in the HMRI Prospectus as an area appropriate to target investment and provide the opportunity to create a more sustainable housing market.

As previously mentioned, the brief to Pennington's was that the NRA should review and build on the work already undertaken with the Welsh Streets Neighbourhood planning process, started in 2002 and the Camelot Neighbourhood Planning process started in 2003.

The NRA included a survey of the condition of the properties and a detailed questionnaire to establish the socio economic circumstances of residents, in order to generate and evaluate various options.

### **4. Key Physical and Socio Economic Findings of the NRA**

#### Deprivation Index

The NRA area incorporates dwellings in the Princes Park and Riverside wards of the City. Statistics from the National Index of Multiple deprivation show that the old Granby ward within which most of the study area lies ranks 10<sup>th</sup> in the Index of Multiple Deprivation.

#### Physical Condition of Properties within the NRA area

Unfitness levels vary within the NRA area. The area known as the Welsh Streets has an unfitness level of 7%, flats and houses in Princes / Devonshire Road have a 24% unfitness level. This compares to the national average of 4%, a Liverpool HMRI area average of 13.4% and a Liverpool average of 8.6%.

Over 31% of properties failed or potentially failed decency standards.

Vacancy levels varied but averaged out at 4%.

The tenure pattern for Princes Park is generally different to the National trend with only 41% owner occupation and 59% in the rented sectors.

The majority of property is pre-1919 terraced properties

The vast majority of properties are in Council Tax Band A (98%) with a very small

proportion within Band B-G

### Socio-Economic Condition of Properties within the NRA area

Of the 22% of households in the area who completed the resident survey ;

- 21% indicated that they were dissatisfied with their property because of disrepair.
- Some 60% of residents were either fairly or very dissatisfied with the area.
- 79% have indicated selective demolition as a priority
- 78% had income levels below Liverpool & Ward average
- 61% indicated that empty properties are a problem
- 74% thought that obsolete housing needs demolishing.
- 63% of main households had an income of less than £10,000 per annum, with a further 20% of between £10,000 and £15,000.
- Only 25% of residents were in full time employment. The majority of residents receive a range of listed benefits.
- For those paying rent, 36% paid less than £50 per week and 62% paid between £50 and £100 per week.
- 44% considered anti-social behaviour as a serious problem.
- 39% considered crime as a serious problem
- 65% considered vandalism as a serious problem
- For those paying mortgage, 21% were paying less than £100 per month, 39% between £100 & £200 and 40% were paying over £200. 36% have an outstanding mortgage.

### **5. NRA Proposals**

The NRA process requires an 'option appraisal' which tests how alternative approaches contribute to achieving the aims of regenerating the area, and the costs and benefits of each type of approach.

A detailed explanation of the various options considered is given within the full NRA report but they can be summarised as follows:

Option 1 – Statutory Action Only

Option 2 – Renovation to Fitness Standard

Option 3 – Targeted Limited Intervention to a 10 year standard

Option 4 – Comprehensive Intervention to a 30 year standard

Option 5 – Clearance of whole stock

Option 6 – Clearance of stock linked to redevelopment

Option 7 – Clearance linked to renewal area framework

Option 7a – Limited clearance Welsh Streets followed by redevelopment  
(supported by Intermediate Investment in Camelot and remaining  
Welsh streets)

Option 7b – Full clearance of Welsh Streets followed by redevelopment

Option 7c - Face-lifting of properties in Princes Road with tenure diversification  
strategy for Princes and Devonshire Road properties.

These options were then considered against each neighbourhood taking into account the information gathered on the physical condition of housing in the area.

The appraisal also measured the options in terms of financial implications, in terms of delivering the vision for each neighbourhood and in addressing the issues raised by residents.

The option appraisal helped determine the way forward and the NRA now proposes a strategy based on a mixture of clearance, redevelopment and refurbishment in different neighbourhoods as outlined in Option 7 (a & c), via the declaration of a Renewal Area.

The benefits of a Renewal Area include the following:

- It enables the Council to maintain effective partnerships with residents and other private sector interests;
- Stimulates private investment alongside the use of public resources;
- Provides a local strategic framework and a catalyst for wider regeneration;
- Demonstrates the Council's long term commitment to the area in partnership with residents;
- The development of a phased regeneration over a defined period

The NRA findings broadly endorse the community's strategy developed within the Neighbourhood Planning framework, but recommend the addition of Treborth, Pengwern and part of Admiral Street to the original proposals. Previous survey data of residents in the Welsh Street area supports these decisions.

The additional changes were included in the Intention to Declare letters sent to all residents on the 11<sup>th</sup> March 2005.

The wider NRA area of Camelot, Dickens, Devonshire-Princes Rd, and part of the Welsh Streets have been identified for retention and redevelopment.

## 6. Summary of Proposals

The NRA findings broadly supports the clearance proposals identified during the Welsh Street Neighbourhood Planning process, and the retention proposals identified during the Camelot Planning process, as the basis of the approach. The recommended housing strategy for each neighbourhood emerging from the NRA study is summarised in the following table.

Neighbourhood	Approach to housing
<i>Princes Road / Devonshire Road</i>	Retention of all properties with a programme of 'comprehensive improvement'
<i>Welsh Streets (Part)</i>	Demolition / redevelopment of properties from even side Kelvin Grove down to Admiral Street
<i>Camelot Streets/Part Welsh Streets (Dovey, Teilo, Elwy)</i>	Intermediate investment providing decanting, selective demolition (eyesore and derelict properties) and regeneration opportunities
<i>Dickens Streets</i>	Retention of all properties but with targeted action towards vacant and unfit properties
<i>The Elms</i>	Retention of all properties with limited intervention

The NRA report now identifies some 467 potential properties for demolition, of which approximately 230 are in private ownership. At the time of writing, there were 83 (17%) vacant properties in the part of the NRA area being considered for demolition. Currently, 25% of owner occupiers are voluntarily in negotiation with the City Council regarding the disposal of their properties. Discussions are ongoing regarding future re-housing opportunities for all those residents who could be displaced. The phasing of replacement new properties will be addressed in the Delivery Plan.

## 7. Progress to date

### *Regeneration Centre*

In partnership with INclude, neighbourhood staff hot desk out of the Rialto Centre for Neighbourhood Management offices. In addition, a Residents resource centre office has been established on High Park Street.

This provides a local drop in centre for the area and a base in the heart of the Renewal Area. It also provides a meeting room for consultation and co-ordination meetings. This presence gives a confidence to the community of Partners commitment to the area.

### *Appointment of Lead Partners for HMRI*

Plus Housing, the lead RSL partner for the Princes Park area, has over a number of years, in partnership with the City Council, through the INclude model, committed financial and officer resources to support the regeneration strategy for the area. Plus Housing Group has delivered a range of projects during 2005 on behalf of the City Council as part of the HMRI Living Through Change Programme.

Gleesons have been appointed as the lead developer for the South Central area and they bring with them resources to invest in the area and knowledge and experience of working with local authorities and communities throughout the country.

### *Property acquisitions*

Using HMRI funding, over 112 properties for demolition across the area have either already been acquired or are in the pipeline to aid the proposals for the physical regeneration of the neighbourhood. 60 of these are owner occupiers who live in the proposed clearance area.

The area of clearance specifically relating to the Princes Park Area is identified within the red line on the attached plan to this report.

### *Physical regeneration*

In partnership with Gleesons, new build development is now commencing on the nearby Clevedon Development with 45 properties for sale and 62 for rent / shared ownership & 24 apartments for the elderly with warden support.

Plus Housing has identified 50 properties in the Camelot Neighbourhood which they will be offering over the next 3 years as homeswaps to residents affected by clearance.

In addition, over £1million is to be invested by the Plus Group and the Housing Corporation over the next 2 years to bring properties up to Decent Homes Standard.

### *Living Through Change*

This programme provides a framework to deliver projects to support communities through change.

Living Through Change is addressing the following:

- Increased void property security
- Increased street sweeping
- Quicker removal of Fly tipping
- Regular patrols of the area to check for tipping and graffiti

- Removal of graffiti
- Increased and targeted Police action
- Increased security to occupied property next to voids
- Environmental work to vacant sites

#### *Home Ownership Advisory Officers*

There are three trained officers who will visit all owner occupiers affected by the proposed demolitions, offering a range of financial advice and loan products, to assist them relocate to homes in other parts of the area, as well as tenants who have expressed a wish to become homeowners.

#### *Community Consultation*

The community have been involved in the NRA process in a variety of ways. There have been a series of meetings with the resident groups, open days, Newsletters, home visits and a community feedback session of the key findings. In addition since 2003, residents have previously been involved in the Neighbourhood Planning process which devised some of the options considered as part of the NRA study.

The resident consultation in respect of the NRA has been co-ordinated by Liverpool City Council South Central Neighbourhood Team and Penningtons' Consultancy. All consultation leading up to the development of Neighbourhood plans prior to the commencement consultants study has been conducted by Include/LCC staff.

There have been two main residents Steering Groups involved in the Neighbourhood Planning process. These are the Welsh Street Steering Group and the Camelot Steering Group. Between July 2003 and February 2005 the Neighbourhood Planning process has included: 17 Steering Group meetings; 10 Stakeholder meetings; 5 Vision events; and 3 Study visits.

The Welsh Street Home Group is a newer group campaigning specifically against the clearance of the properties in the Welsh Streets.

The Neighbourhood Renewal Assessment included a sample survey of the condition of the properties and a detailed questionnaire to establish the socio economic circumstances of residents.

The response rate of 22 % ( 582 returns) is in excess of the normal response rates for such questionnaires and reflects the interest and support for the proposals in the area. 79% of residents who responded indicated support for selective demolition.

In addition, a door to door survey was carried out by LCC/Include staff in the summer of 2004, when 72% of those surveyed expressed support for the emerging proposals to clear and redevelop part of the Welsh Streets.

175 residents attended a community feedback session of the NRA findings. The majority of residents who filled in comment sheets were either in favour of the

proposals or did not oppose proposals but requested further information. Further details can be found in Appendix 4.

### *Formal Pre-Declaratory Consultation*

As part of the declaration process all residents and anyone with an interest in the area (for example local businesses, landlords and RSL's) have been advised and given the opportunity to comment on the proposals via phone, personal call, letter or e-mail.

A formal letter of intent to declare a Housing Renewal Area, providing a summary of proposals was sent to all households in the area, identified by the Council Tax register, in February 2005. A notice of intent was published in the local press.

In response to these letters, officers have received three petitions, (one objecting to removal of trees in Voelas & Wynnstay Streets), 123 standard letters and a number of individual letters and emails from residents. Detailed analysis is included in Appendix 4.

An analysis of responses to the formal statutory Notice of Intent to declare a Renewal Area has shown that from residents living within the proposed Renewal Area boundary an equal number of residents support as object to the NRA proposals. 182 objections were recorded from people who live outside the proposed Renewal Area and in some cases, outside the City boundary.

Although Welsh Street Home Group representatives have argued that many owner occupiers within the proposed clearance would object to the NRA proposals for clearance, only 27 owner occupier households have formally objected.

Six local businesses, in High Park Street, South Street & Admiral Street have objected to the proposals. Business support advice will be provided to owners as part of the proposed programme.

The petitions and standard letters opposing clearance were organised by the Welsh Street Home Group which has evolved as a lobby group against the clearance proposals during the course of the Neighbourhood Renewal Assessment study period.

The Renewal Area proposals, in the main, support the residents' community plan for the area, and are a foundation for development of the 3-year delivery plan for the Renewal Area in accordance with guidance provided by ODPM on Declaring Renewal Areas. The Steering Group members who have been involved in the Neighbourhood Planning process are from well established representative Residents Associations who have been actively developing regeneration proposals for many years. The Welsh Streets Steering Group have submitted a petition to support their proposals

## **8. Next Steps**

- The declaration of the Princes Park area as outlined on the plan as a Renewal Area will facilitate focussed action by all parties and provide a legislative framework to bring about the housing regeneration
- A three year delivery plan will be submitted for Members approval in line with the advice and guidance provided by the ODPM.
- An implementation team with officers from various disciplines within the authority will be established and led by the South Central Neighbourhood Manager.
- All existing residents and anyone with an 'interest' in the area will be notified of the Renewal Area declaration and the classification of their property as soon as practical
- The City Council will always aim to acquire properties identified for demolition and redevelopment in clearance areas by agreement. However, in order to deliver the Housing Regeneration Strategy, a phased programme of Compulsory Purchase Orders will have to be implemented.

## **9. Conclusion**

As outlined the Princes Park area has been the subject of a vast amount of consultation and planning and the local community have played a major role in the development of the strategy.

The Neighbourhood Renewal Assessment endorses the declaration of a Renewal Area as the preferred method of achieving the regeneration of the Princes Park area.

The community are now anxious their involvement will be rewarded with the resources the declaration commits, so as to deliver a strategy which will improve the quality of their lives, their housing and their neighbourhoods.

The declaration of the Renewal Area will help facilitate the overall regeneration within South Central.

### **Executive Member / Director Recommendation (Councillor Flo Clucas/Charlie Parker):**

It is recommended that the Executive Board:

- 1) Accepts the Neighbourhood Renewal Assessment Report.
- 2) Declares Princes Park to be a 'Renewal Area' within the meaning of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 as amended by the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002 for a 10 year term (2005-2015)
- 3) Authorises the Executive Director for Regeneration to work with public and private sector partners to prepare a three year delivery plan that reflects the guidance provided by ODPM for Members approval

- 4) Considers any representations or comments reported to the council following the statutory notice of intention to declare the Renewal Area.
- 5) Indicates that it is prepared, in principle, to consider the making of Compulsory Purchase Orders if it proves necessary to do so to facilitate the renewal of the area.
- 6) A further report will be produced by officers to identify the delivery programme necessary to deliver the proposals, identify funding, and seek approval for the programme.

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**Key Decision:** Yes

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**Forward Plan/5 days notice/special urgency:** Forward Plan

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**Implementation effective from:** Immediate

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**Timescale for action:** 10 years

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**Reason(s) for Recommendation:** The declaration of the Princes Park study area as a Renewal Area will facilitate focussed action by all parties and offer a legislative framework to bring about the housing regeneration. Declaration of a Renewal Area enables Local Authorities to exercise Renewal Area acquisition powers as set out in ODPM Circular 05/2003 these powers will be the subject of a further report. Appendix 3 outlines for Members what these powers are.

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**Alternative options considered:** The NRA process consists of a series of logical steps which when taken together, provide a thorough and systematic appraisal method for considering alternative courses of action. A process was undertaken involving the generation of a series of options and appraising each option in order to arrive at the proposed way forward in each neighbourhood. The transformational redevelopment and improvement options (7a & 7c) were considered to be the way forward and this also supported the previous community consultation.

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**Consultation:** There has been a substantial amount of consultation work with local communities, elected members and key stakeholders, which is well documented (and summarised in the full NRA report). The NRA process also involved consultation with the local community, elected members and key stakeholders in order to develop the proposed way forward.

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**Financial Implications:** The NRA has indicated a total requirement of £54million (based on net present values). The public costs of this recommendation are £30million. This does not assume that the financial benefit of any land sales within Princes Park is made available for projects within the area. The commitment to any funding for the Renewal Area must be in line with the capital allocations available to the City Council and approved by Members. The Neighbourhood Teams working with the Housing Market Renewal Team will be putting together a three year delivery plan based on the known level of resources available. Projects beyond three years will be subject to further funding from ODPM for Housing Market Renewal and borrowing approvals for the City Council. Key agencies such as English Partnerships, Housing Associations led by the lead RSL Plus Group and the Housing Corporation are committed to the implementation of the Renewal Area plan and will allocate resources

based on projects coming forward over the next 10 years.

It is intended that should the City Council agree to declare Princes Park a Renewal Area officers will then be required to develop detailed costed programmes with the key partners. In doing so it will also be necessary to identify the sources of the required funding and indicate how the programmes are to be phased over the life of the Renewal Area status. The details of this programme will be the subject of a further report submitted for Executive Board approval.

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**Best Value:** The City Council will be seeking to maximise the available resources by working with key partners to deliver funding packages in order to take forward the proposals outlined in the NRA. A process of identifying programmes and phases based on the availability of resources will be necessary to ensure Best Value. New Heartlands have been provided with long term clearance costs for Princes Park and will be included within the next 3 year round of scheme updates and long term projections.

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**Neighbourhood Management Implications:** Declaration of the Princes Park Housing Renewal Area will further ensure the co-ordination of service delivery and encourage an integrated approach from public agencies towards the management and regeneration of the area.

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**Equality Implications:** By declaring the Princes Park study area a 'Renewal Area' the City Council will be showing its commitment to deliver the Housing and Environmental Regeneration of the Princes Park area providing all residents irrespective of their ethnicity, religion, gender or physical ability with the opportunity to access improved housing and environmental conditions. In terms of the wider regeneration agenda the ongoing commitment of the city council and other statutory agencies to deliver projects improving education, health, employment and environment will be accessible to all residents.

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**Corporate Strategy:** The proposals contained in the NRA have been considered and are in accordance with the City Councils Housing Strategy, the Community Plan, the Private Sector Housing Renewal Strategy, the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy, the Strategic Investment Framework and the Housing Market Renewal Initiative

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**Budget and Policy Framework:** The recommendations contained within the report are in compliance with the City Council budget and policy framework.

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**Community Safety Implications:** In developing the options and in the appraisal process, consideration was given in terms of which options would have the most impact in improving community safety. Consideration has also been given to managing the areas through the process to reduce the impact of anti social behaviour, crime and fire hazards. Through the implementation of a 'Living Through Change' programme the City is looking to minimise the risk to residents throughout the process.

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**Report Attached:** No

Appendix 1: Summary Plan of NRA proposals

Appendix 2: Boundary Plan

Appendix 3: Powers available to Local Authorities

Appendix 4: Analysis of residents' responses to Pre- Declaratory letters.

