

# Elsecar Conservation Area



**BARNESLEY**  
Metropolitan Borough Council



## Outline Project Description for Improvement of Seven Stone Cottages on Wath Road Elsecar

by:  
**Berneslai Homes, Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO) on behalf of Barnsley MBC**

### 1. Background

Elsecar Conservation Area was designated in January 1974 . The area is centred on Wath Road and Fitzwilliam Street. Wath Road provides the main north/south route through the Conservation Area.

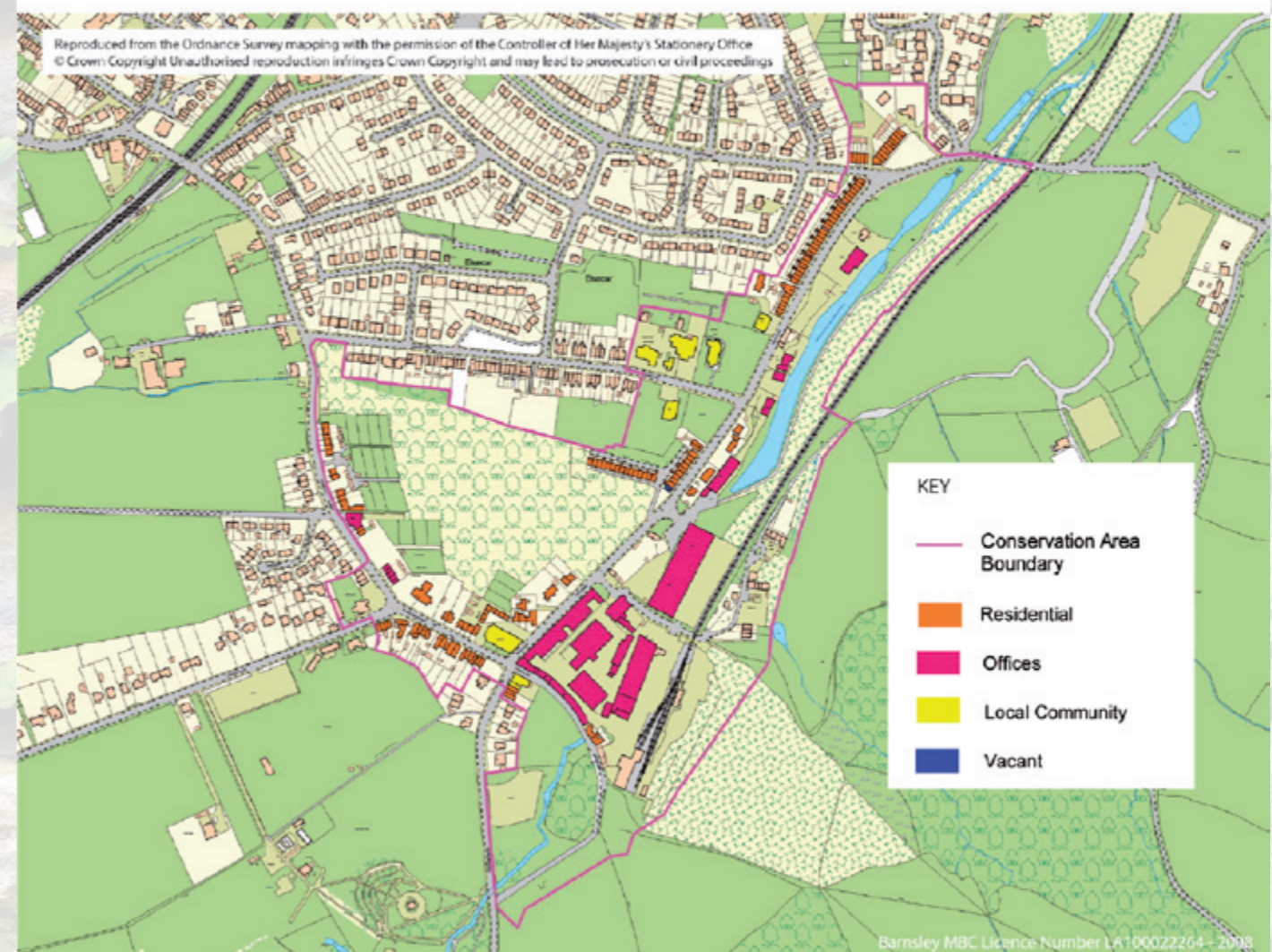
The Elsecar Conservation Area Appraisal Workshop Held: 19th February 2008 concluded:

“The Elsecar Conservation Area is a good example of a small industrial Victorian village. Much of the original fabric remains and a good sense of the character of the area can be gained during a short walk along Fitzwilliam Street and Wath Road. The Victorian architecture remains largely intact.....

Barnsley Council (BMBC) and Berneslai Homes have led and been instrumental in many aspects of the preservation, restoration and enhancement of the buildings within the conservation area.

We own and manage 53 residential properties within the conservation area. Of these 34 have already been renovated and improved to modern standards with listed building consent where appropriate. Of the 19 yet to be renovated 7 are the subject of this application and the remaining 12 on Old Row are programmed for renovation to start later in 2012.

### Current Uses and Activities



With specific regard to the housing in the conservation area comments raised in consultation include:

- Alterations carried out by Berneslai Homes should be to the best standards of Design and Conservation.
- Fragmented ownerships and ad-hoc changes stimulate development that is not uniform.
- Properties sold of to private owners appears to have no regard for the impact this has on the Conservation Area.
- There ought to be tighter control on changes on private owners and Berneslai Homes properties.
- All properties should be comprehensively renovated not the mix and match often found with owner/occupied properties.
- Affordable quality housing characteristic of the Conservation Area as in Cawthorne – would be very welcome.

The seven stone cottages owned by the council on Wath Road are located centrally in the conservation area in a prominent position. At first visual inspection the properties are very attractive.

From the above and the involvement of BMBC's Conservation Officer and the English Heritage listed buildings officer there is a clear commitment for the council and Berneslai Homes to address the future of the residential properties owned in the area sensitively.

### **The Properties which form the basis of this application**

70, 72, 74 and 76 are part of a short terrace of 10 houses (also known as Station Row) which has Grade II listed building status. On either side of the council owned properties are privately owned properties. Behind and at a right angle to this terrace is Old Row which consists of 15 one bedroom stone built houses of which 12 are owned by the council. The interrelationship of the Wath Road and Old Row does have some significance to the feasibility and opportunity cost of this project.

The remaining 3 properties 98, 100 and 102 Wath Road are part of a different terrace still within the conservation area but are not subject to listing.



Property 72, 74, 76 & 78 Wath Road.



Property 98, 100 & 102 Wath Road.

Various attempts have been made in the past to secure external funding for renovation of the remaining Wath Road property via English Heritage and approaches via Housing Associations (RP's) to secure Homes and Communities Agency funding. However following changes in funding priorities and the significant impact of the Comprehensive Spending Review financial resources from national and regional pots are severely limited.

## 2. Physical Condition

### 2.1 Overview

Although physically attractive and desirable the seven properties on Wath Road do have some major issues requiring attention / resource commitment. These include :

- Spauled stonework to the main elevations This may advance further through frost penetration and ultimately allow water penetration effecting the structural stability of the walls.
- Roof spread pushing the top of the main elevations out of plumb.  
Remedial work is required to reduce the pressure.
- As a result some of the properties part of the walls will need to be taken down and built back straight.

### Council owned residential properties Wath Road as @ 6/7/11 that are the subject of this paper

Address	Property Type	Status	Notes
70, <u>Wath Road</u>	3 bed 5p house	Tenanted – high priority for re-housing	Three storey
72, <u>Wath Road</u>	1 bed 2p house	Void – 21/7/08	
74, <u>Wath Road</u>	1 bed 2p house	Void – 3/7/11	
76, <u>Wath Road</u>	1 bed 2p house	Void – 29/1/07	
98, <u>Wath Road</u>	2 bed 3p house	Void – 13/8/07	
100, <u>Wath Road</u>	1 bed 2p house	Void – 21/1/08	
102, <u>Wath Road</u>	2 bed 3p House	Void – 26/5/08	

The requirements of listed building consent to restore or put back using materials in keeping with the character and period of the buildings. This includes, lintols, mullions, windows, doors, gutters and downpipes.

xxxx

Since 1999 Improvement works, including Decent Homes works have been carried out to 23 properties on Wath Road. The work has been extensive due to the Grade II listing and extent of the work required. However we believe the outurn units were done to a high standard and met if not exceeded the Listed building / Conservation area requirements and principles.

Numbers 98,100 and 102 Wath Road were originally included on the 2005/2006 programme but were removed due to the complex nature of the work required and the increasingly high unit cost.



There are now only seven council owned properties on Wath Road that have not had significant improvement works inside or external as listed in section 1.

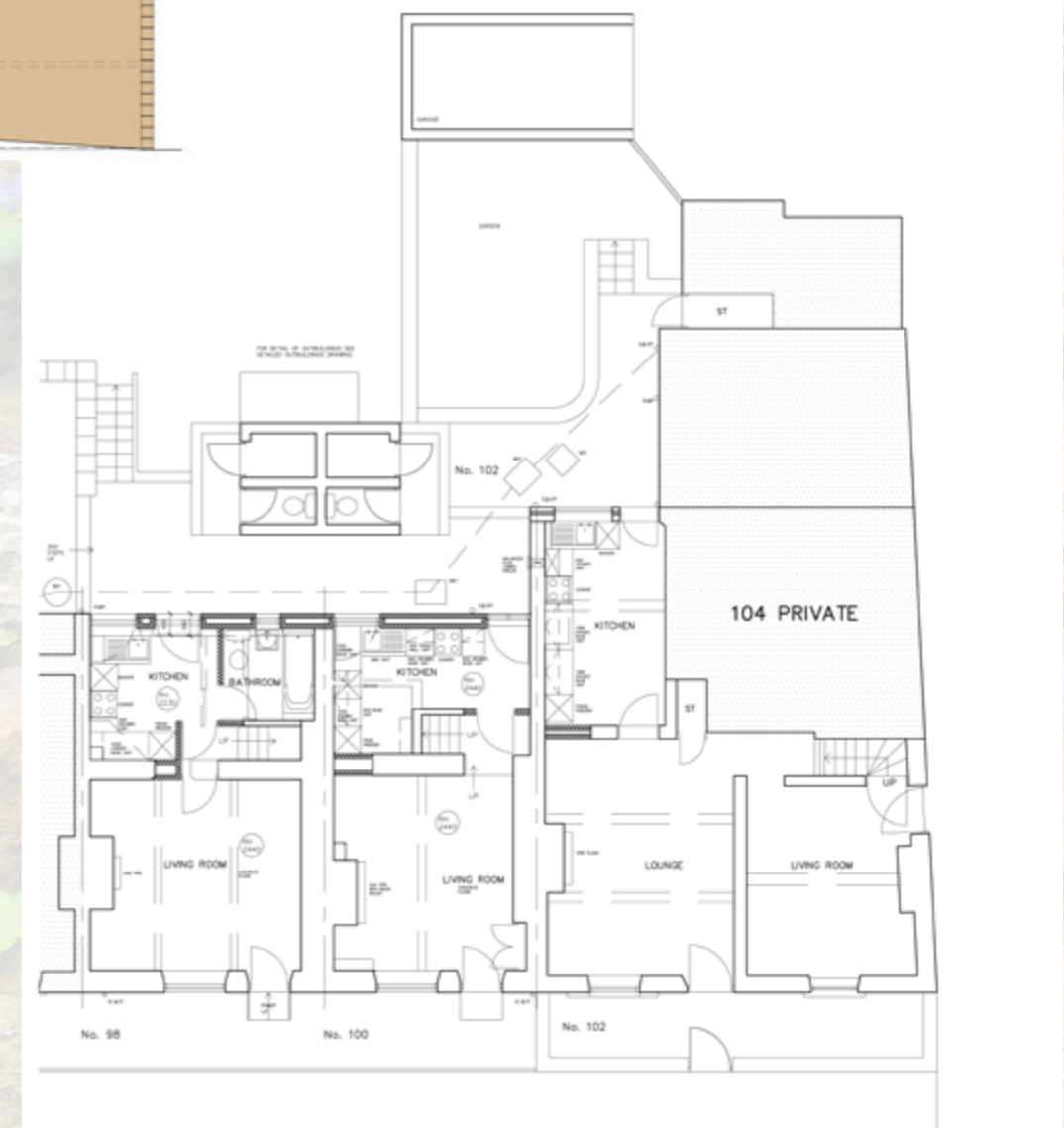
### Options Pursued to date

From the outset of this programme we have been trying to secure the long term future of these properties. The main issue being the cost of works required over and above the work that normally would be undertaken through the Decent Homes Programme (now Barnsley Homes Standard). The costs for these extra works are higher than the norm due to the nature of the stone structure, the requirements arising out of the properties being in the conservation area and the Listed Building status.

Typically the current maximum cost if all elements of the property are incorporated into a Barnsley Homes Standard programme are circa £15K plus fees (i.e. new windows / external doors, kitchen, bathroom, heating and rewiring).

The additional work required in these properties includes:

- Structural work to replace “spauled” stone and to straighten rear walls above ground floor.
- Timber treatment / replacement for dry rot and woodworm.
- Dampness treatment and re-plastering due to damp penetration.
- Replacement of internal joinery, doors etc.



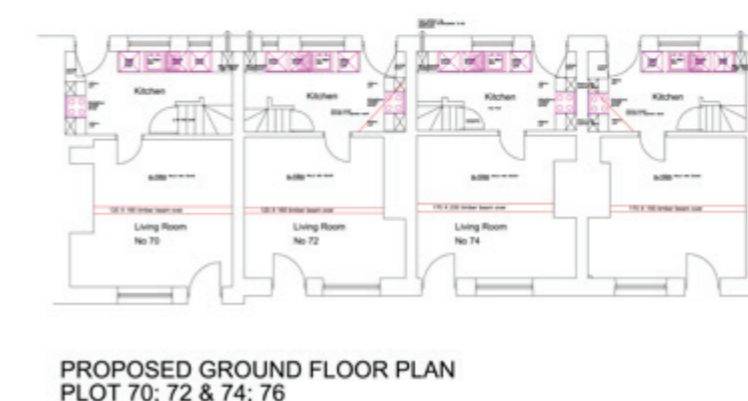
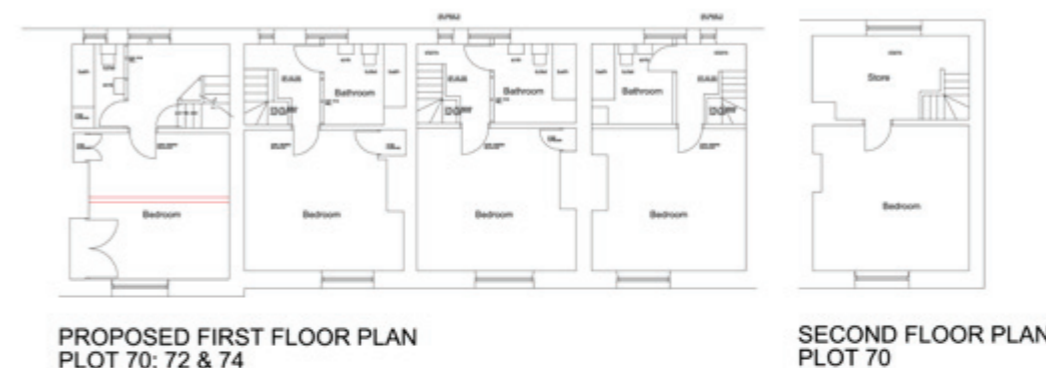
In short in most cases a full refurbishment, with the added complexity and detail of meeting structural integrity the listed building / conservation area requirements for external appearance.

Approaches to address these properties previously investigated and actioned include:

- Decent Homes plus additional major repairs work as required. Adopted 2000 – 2003/2004. Proved cost prohibitive to maintain inclusion of additional works requirements within programme.
- The 2004/2005 programme for this area primarily only included internal works.

From 2005/2006 onwards remaining properties excluded and alternative approach sought including.

- Sale of remaining units to Housing Association (RP) and application for Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) funding for refurbishment. RP unable to proceed due to refusal of grant funding. HCA's primary funding drive is for "new" social rented units and reduced grant rates. Generally not supporting refurbishment schemes through Affordable Housing Programme.
- Use of English Heritage Grant funding to deal with external works and listed building consent requirements. Use of Decent Homes funding programme for internal work. Initially quite promising but grant availability and cash limits restricted ability to proceed. Subsequently no English Heritage Grant available for this type of scheme. (Judged to be low priority for funding). Decent Homes programme now complete.



PROPOSED FRONT ELEVATION  
PLOT 70; 72 & 74; 76



- Sale of remaining seven properties on the open market.  
NB only one of the seven is still occupied although the tenant has waiting list priority. The Fitzwilliam Estate holds a charge on the properties which will allow them to claim up to 35% of the sales proceeds. Depending on the characteristics of the purchaser the CLG may retain a proportion of the remaining proceeds. This is still a live option. However in the current depressed housing market the amount of sale proceeds at auction is highly uncertain. Also the payment of the charge to the Fitzwilliam estate and a possible further claim by the CLG would significantly reduce the proceeds. Authority is required from BMBC Cabinet for the disposal and the application of any funds retained.

If we were to proceed with the last of the options the net capital receipt generated could be recycled and reapplied to other programmes. However for the reasons stated regarding the predictability of the auction market and clawback of any proceeds the amount available may be limited.

### Conclusion

In considering this application it is useful to reflect on what has been achieved by the council in partnership with Berneslai Homes to date in terms of investment in the public realm, the heritage centre and in its own housing stock to compliment and enhance the Conservation Area.

The quality of our work and investment in the housing stock that we own on Wath Road is clearly evident in the photographs and on the ground. This application furthers that commitment.



Traditional timber frame door and window in Elsecar.



Wrought Iron rain water gutters and downpipes. Rusticated quoins.

Typical Elsecar street.



Stone wall in the village with stone cappings.



Traditional timber frame windows & stone walling.

Stone porch & entrance door.



Wrought Iron balustrading and stone walling.



Wrought Iron street furniture in Elsecar.



Wrought Iron balustrading and stone steps.



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