

**FURTHER SUBMISSION FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY BOARD. Re:-
THE EXECUTIVE DECISION ON OLDER HOUSING IN MIDDLESBROUGH
DATED 20TH JULY 2005**

Dear Chairman and Members,

Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott has stated in a written response to a high powered influential Commons Select Committee, that ' Large scale demolition's (such as those proposed for Gresham ward Middlesbrough, with up to 1,500 homes scheduled to be demolished by Middlesbrough Council) are not envisaged and schemes that do propose them, will NOT be supported'.

In fact Mr Prescott has told planners currently drawing up the North-East Housing Pathfinder Programme, that wholesale demolition is not on his agenda. The Commons Select Committee advised the ODPM 'The Government needs to set out clear procedures for the Pathfinder Programmes, including I would suggest those now proposed for the Gresham area of Middlesbrough which I would interpret as large scale demolition.

Clear decisions must be made in which housing should be demolished and the reasons why, clearly conveyed to all residents who will be effected. It is clear from the Deputy Prime Ministers advice that various options for refurbishment and development must first be considered, again with meaningful discussions taking place throughout the communities to be effected. **THIS HAS NOT HAPPENED IN MIDDLESBROUGH PRIOR TO THE DECISION ON THE 20TH OF JULY 2005.** And as one of the three ward Councillors representing Gresham ward I can publicly state on oath that I was not consulted on this massive demolition programme in my ward until it was a fait accompli.

Mr Prescott has insisted 'The Housing Market Renewal Programme has been wrongly portayed in some quarters'. (I believe this is certainly the case here in Middlesbrough) He stated. "Here's a programme to restore sustainable communities to places which have an imbalance of housing demand and supply and which have seen abandonment, dereliction, poor services and poor social conditions as a result". I would challenge publicly any argument by this council which would place in the main the well maintained roads and streets identified for demolition in the councils report to the Executive dated 20th of July 2005 covering the destruction of up to 1,500 homes of families in my ward as being in this category. Most of the streets and houses identified under option four fall outside the Deputy Prime Ministers guide lines.

I would welcome the opportunity to accompany members of the Scrutiny Board in a walk around the roads and streets of Gresham ward that the Mayor so passionately believes should be demolished. In doing so I would also welcome the councils

identification of all 800 void houses that are supposedly and therefore logically predominant in the areas earmarked for demolition by Middlesbrough Council.

These proposals with the misleading heading 'Building Sustainable Communities in Inner Middlesbrough' fly in the face of the report published by the House of Commons Select Committee, but more important, I believe them to be in total conflict to Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott's public commitment, NOT TO FUND WHOLESALE DEMOLITION OF OLDER HOUSING IN ANY NORTH-EAST HOUSING PATHFINDER PROGRAMME. This proposal which effectively will demolish a whole community bordering Linthorpe Road, Parliament Road, Union Street and Borough Road Middlesbrough taking out 1,500 homes. I contend is against the Deputy Prime Ministers policy and therefore that of the ODPM.