

3.84 *A small landlord.* Owner of just one house, the landlord was a company secretary and director. He had bought the house in 1926 as an investment. Now he had an old tenant and would sell on obtaining vacant possession. No improvements had been made to the house over the last five years and it had virtually no amenities. As the tenant was so old and 'didn't want the upset', no amenities were going to be put in. Nor did he think making a change in the grant scheme would affect landlords' actions; 'in the long run it depends on his own financial position'. Every four years the house was repainted; this year a new gate and a new ashbin were also necessary. Usually he made a profit of £8 or £9 but this year, because of repainting, nothing.

3.85 *A small landlord.* This elderly landlord can be reported virtually verbatim. 'I bought these 4 houses just before the war for an investment for my old age—but all it is is a worry, as it turned out—no security at all. In fact I make nothing out of them. The tenants won't buy and you wouldn't be able to sell to anyone else without vacant possession'. About the improvement grants, he said 'I don't know enough about it, how much rents can be raised and the conditions. But I am over 70 and can't spend hundreds and draw it back in sixpences, I won't live long enough to collect it'. He showed his quarterly accounts from his agent for the houses, which showed a regular small deficit. Last quarter's deficit was high, £20. His weekly income was under £5.

3.86 *A medium landlord.* This elderly landlord owned eight houses. Still active and conscious of good management standards, he felt both houses and tenants a burden. 'Tenants will not co-operate, they will do nothing to your property themselves. One of my tenants begged for a washhand basin, and said they would pay extra rent if I put one in. It was a different story, however, when it was in; she would not pay sixpence a week more. That's what you're up against'. He said the tenants wanted all the improvements, but for nothing. When his accounts for the last year were discussed, the crux of the matter was seen to be the relationship between the low rent and the high cost of repairs. In the last year, on one house he made a net loss of £24 11s 8d and gave the account shown below. Other houses had not needed such extensive repairs but the line between a profit and a loss on any one house was extremely close, if repairs were done. As the list of repairs and expenditure for most landlords shows, they were mostly left undone.

<i>Gross rent income 1963–1964</i>	<i>Expenditure 1963–1964</i>
£44 3s 4d	Rates £23 0s 0d
	Fire insurance 15s 0d
	Roof repairs £45 0s 0d
	Total debits £68 15s 0d
	Net loss <u>£24 11s 8d</u>

The landlord made no charge in his account for any management costs.

3.87 *A medium landlord.* This landlord, in his late fifties and a labourer, had inherited the nine houses from his elderly aunt, who had recently died. The houses had been in the family since 1890. His main aim was to sell the houses as quickly as he could; he had tried to sell them to the sitting tenants but they refused to buy them. He recognised the poor condition of the houses—'they need painting, repointing, a lot of plastering, but it's not worth it'. He also thought 'they probably will be knocked down'. Discussing the possibility of making improvements on one house, he explained that he hoped to sell when the opportunity arose. He also thought that the houses were too small for all the improvements. The only repair that had been done in the last year was the putting on of a few slates. No structural alterations or large-scale repairs had been made during the past five years. His accounts for this for the last twelve months were:

<i>Gross rent income 1963–1964</i>	<i>Expenditure 1963–1964</i>
£22 2s 2d	Rates £10 1s 4d
	Fire insurance and management £ 2 10s 0d
	Slates (estimated) £ 3 0s 0d
	<u>£15 11s 4d</u>
	Net profit <u>£ 6 10s 10d</u>

This landlord had another house in the sample which was also discussed. These tenants were younger and were keen to make improvements. They had put in a sink and he 'gave them a pound towards it'. Otherwise new windows had had to be put in and burst pipes mended. The accounts for this second house were:

<i>Gross rent income 1963–1964</i>	<i>Expenditure 1963–1964</i>
£31 6s 2d	Rates £10 1s 4d
	Fire insurance and management £ 2 10s 0d
	New windows and burst pipes £25 0s 0d
	<u>£37 11s 4d</u>
	Net loss <u>£ 6 5s 2d</u>

By his own estimate, his net return was 5% of the rent, which he felt was not a reasonable profit. Even though his percentage was probably more nearly 7½%, the cash value of this, for the two houses in the year 1963–1964 was only £3 4s 10d. He felt dissatisfied, was unwilling to spend

any more on improvements or repairs and was very conscious of the better bargain to be gained by selling.

3.88 *A large landlord.* The Rochdale Equitable Pioneers, the town's co-operative society, demand a special note. Their housing policy as landlords is tied in with their historic social role, and they occupy a middle position between a private landlord and a local authority, in many ways analogous to the contemporary housing association, balancing between welfare and profit considerations. The Pioneers own considerable mixed residential and commercial property in Rochdale, including 400 houses. In Deeplish alone they own 84 houses and trade properties, and are by far the biggest landlord. They own 5% of all Deeplish property and 14% of all rented property. Initially, the houses were built in 1860 by the Pioneers in the Larkfield District to provide decent housing for their members, and houses are let only to members now.

3.89 The Manager thought that the houses, considering that they were built a hundred years ago, were in reasonably good repair. The repairs were done by their own works department and were always regularly carried out. During the last six months, the block belonging to them had had its joinery tidied and had been repainted. This assessment of the houses as being fairly well-built and just adequately if not lavishly maintained, was confirmed by the surveyors' reports. The houses were on the other hand inadequately equipped with modern amenities, and the very small 2-bedroom houses did not lend themselves to modernisation. The Pioneers have not recently tried to initiate a policy of modernisation although they have tried to make improvements when tenants have asked for them. Just before the war they turned some of the back-to-back houses into through houses. As action was limited by capital shortage, they were very favourable to the idea that loans with easy repayments should be available with the grants for improvements, to cover the whole costs. They thought it would help to renovate the houses capable of improvement. Although it was felt that they made a reasonable return on their houses, like most other Deeplish landlords, they were anxious to sell. They had tried, not very successfully, to sell to sitting tenants; now as any house came vacant, they sold it where possible on the open market. Lately three houses had been put up for sale: one for £600 (with new fireplaces) and one for £450 in Equitable Street. The third, in Pioneer Street, was to be sold for £525, but the sale failed to materialize, as the houses are marked with a life of only nine years in the development plan and might be cleared even sooner. The Pioneers had not tried to sell to the local authority, feeling that it would give them less than the market value. At the same time, they felt that a vague suggestion of redevelopment had depressed the market value of the houses.

3.90 We were unable to discuss individual houses and their costs. However, the balance sheet for all 400 Rochdale houses is given below. As the average rents of a Deeplish house and a Pioneer house anywhere in Rochdale are identical at 16/2d. a week, the full balance sheet and the average give some idea of the repairs, management expenditure and profit of the Pioneer houses in Deeplish.

(a) *Gross rent income 400 houses 1963/64*  
£17,000

<i>Expenditure</i>	
Rates	£6,000
Repairs, much repainting and management	£7,000
Total expenditure	£13,000
Net profit	£4,000

(b) *Average gross rent for a single house*  
£42 0s 0d

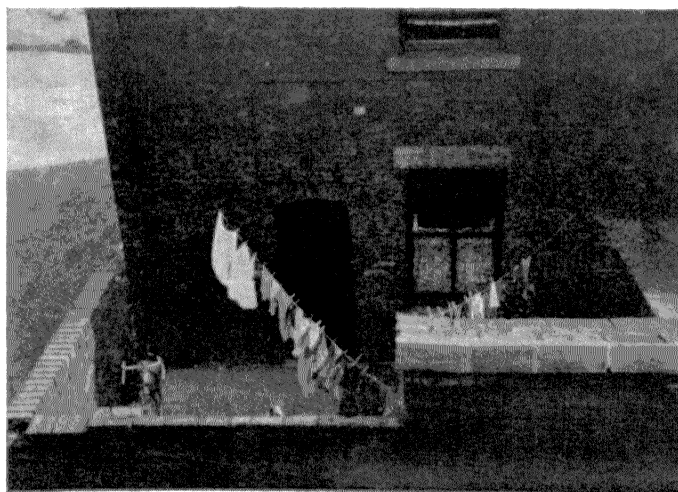
Rates	£15 0s 0d
Repairs and maintenance	£17 10s 0d
Total expenditure	£32 10s 0d
Net profit	£ 9 10s 0d

The figure of £9 10s 0d as net profit from the house is not untypical and shows that even for a landlord with a large holding there is little leeway for manoeuvre between loss and profit. Really adequate maintenance and a level of amenities acceptable to today's values and standards would rapidly consume this modest sum.

## Chapter 4 Improvement possibilities



**illustration 10** The typical house : two up and two down, with no front garden. Small back yards with restricted access



4.1 Detailed studies were made of the physical characteristics of a typical house and a small sector of housing in order to examine their capacity for modification and improvement, and the costs of different proposals were analysed. Three levels of investment in the improvement, conversion and repair of the houses were considered, named 'basic', 'medium' and 'high', and three composite studies were made of investment in the houses and environment.

### Improvement of the houses

4.2 In the following pages nine different house improvements are illustrated. Each of them provides the five standard amenities (bath, inside W.C., wash-hand basin, hot water supply and a ventilated food store); but the way this is done, and the standard of repair, vary, and some provide more than the standard amenities.

4.3 The cheapest and simplest improvement is referred to as the 'basic improvement'. The next three illustrate a medium level of investment and are called 'medium level improvements A, B and C'. The remaining five are 'high level improvements A to E' and include some conversions.

4.4 In each case the cost includes estimates for repairs, which are estimates based on average figures for a small sector of housing and must be viewed with caution.

4.5 Two further conversions were considered, the first making three existing houses into four flats and the second making three existing houses into two larger houses. The estimates of cost made it clear that these cannot be considered economic propositions.

4.6 Where a bathroom is formed within an existing bedroom one bedspace is lost and it would be difficult to apply industrialised building methods to this conversion. It is already widely used.

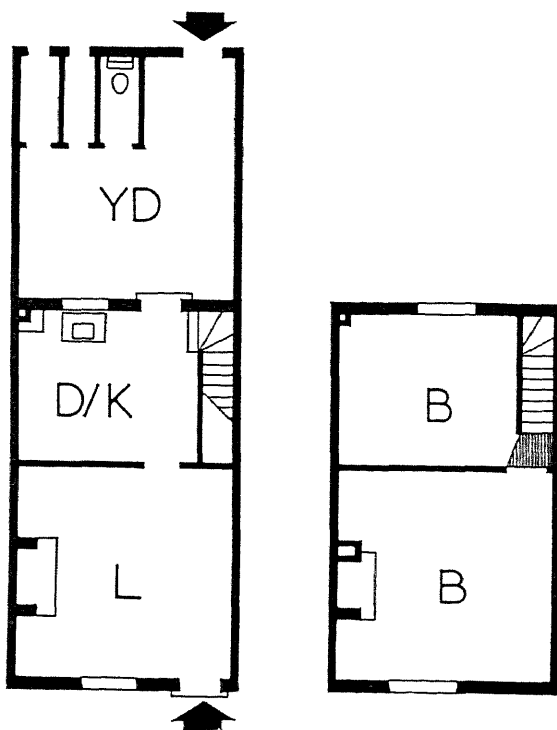
4.7 The addition of an external bathroom causes very little disturbance inside the house, no bedspaces are lost, but it is necessary to demolish the existing outbuildings and re-model the yard. If industrialised building methods could be applied to this extension, on-site labour and costs might be reduced.

4.8 Most of the houses in Deeplish were built to standards set out in the byelaws of the 1870s. There is, therefore, a notable similarity in the size, plan and layout of houses throughout the area – they are commonly referred to as ‘byelaw’ houses, or ‘two up and two down’ houses. One plan is common to 56% of the houses in Deeplish and this type was chosen for detailed examination. The plan below (left) shows a typical house type. The house is a narrow (average 15 ft) terrace type with two double bedrooms, and sometimes there is also a small attic and/or non-habitable cellar. Usually built with 11-inch cavity external walls and 4½-inch internal walls (including party walls) they are sturdy enough, but have the inherent defect of poor sound insulation between neighbouring dwellings. The basic sanitary provision is a cold water supply to the kitchen sink and an outside W.C., though many of the houses have already been improved beyond this. The typical house has no front garden but a small backyard with restricted access.

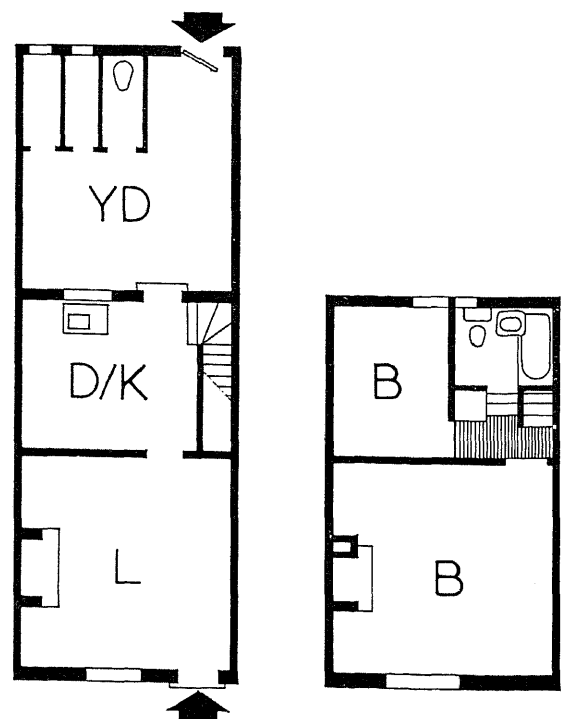
#### Basic level improvement

4.9 This improvement consists of forming a bathroom inside the house. The cost allows for the essential structural repairs to conform to the requirements of the standard grant.

Estimated cost: £410.



Typical existing house



Basic level improvement

**Medium level improvements**

4.10 These three improvements are accompanied by a rather higher standard of repair to the structure, by the renewal or installation of electric wiring, and by the re-modelling of the backyards made necessary because these improvements involve work in the yards.

**Medium level improvement A**

4.11 For houses where a bathroom already exists; an external store is added.

Estimated cost : £300.

**Medium level improvement B**

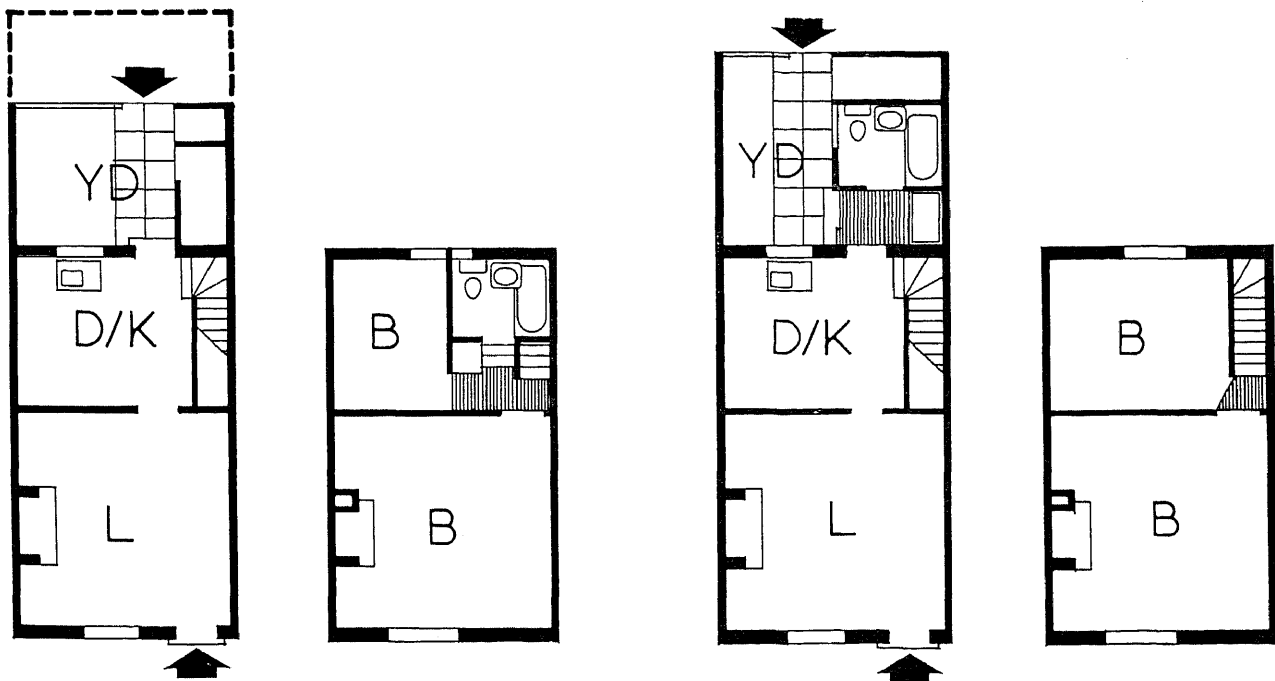
4.12 A bathroom is formed inside the house and an external store is added.

Estimated cost : £660.

**Medium level improvement C**

4.13 A single storey back addition containing a bathroom and store is added to the house.

Estimated cost : £650.



Medium level improvement A and B

Medium level improvement C

### High level improvements A to E

4.14 The costs allow for all necessary repairs, replacements and decorations inside and out; the installation of electric light and power fittings where necessary; a new floor, partitions and kitchen fittings in the kitchen/dining room; partitions and improved heating to achieve the standards of the Parker Morris Report as far as practicable; and again remodelling of the back yards.

#### High level improvement A

4.15 For houses which already have a bathroom, an external store is added and a draught lobby formed for both entrances.

Estimated cost: £980.

#### High level improvement B

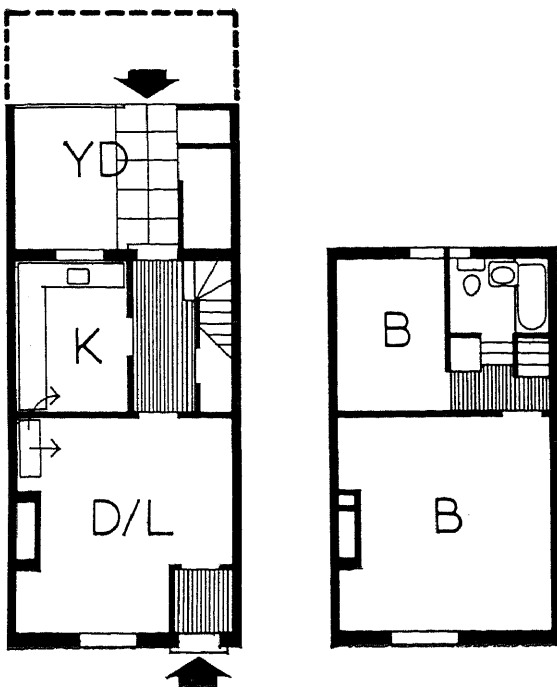
4.16 For houses without a bathroom; the same as in the previous improvement, but with an internal bathroom added.

Estimated cost: £1,280.

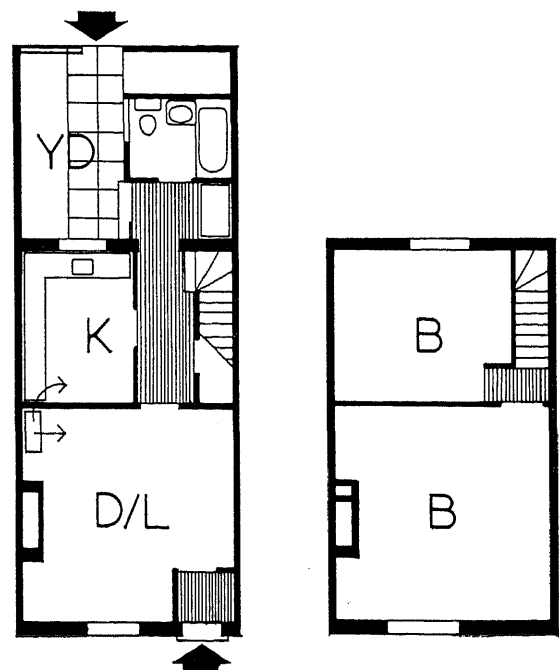
#### High level improvement C

4.17 For houses without a bathroom, the same as the previous improvement but the bathroom and an attached store are placed outside the structure of the house.

Estimated cost: £1,330.



High level improvement A and B



High level improvement C

**High level improvement D**

4.18 Conversion of a house into two one-person self-contained flats each with an internal bathroom and an external store. The upper flat can only be entered from the back of the house.

Estimated cost : £1,800 (£900 per flat).

**High level improvement E**

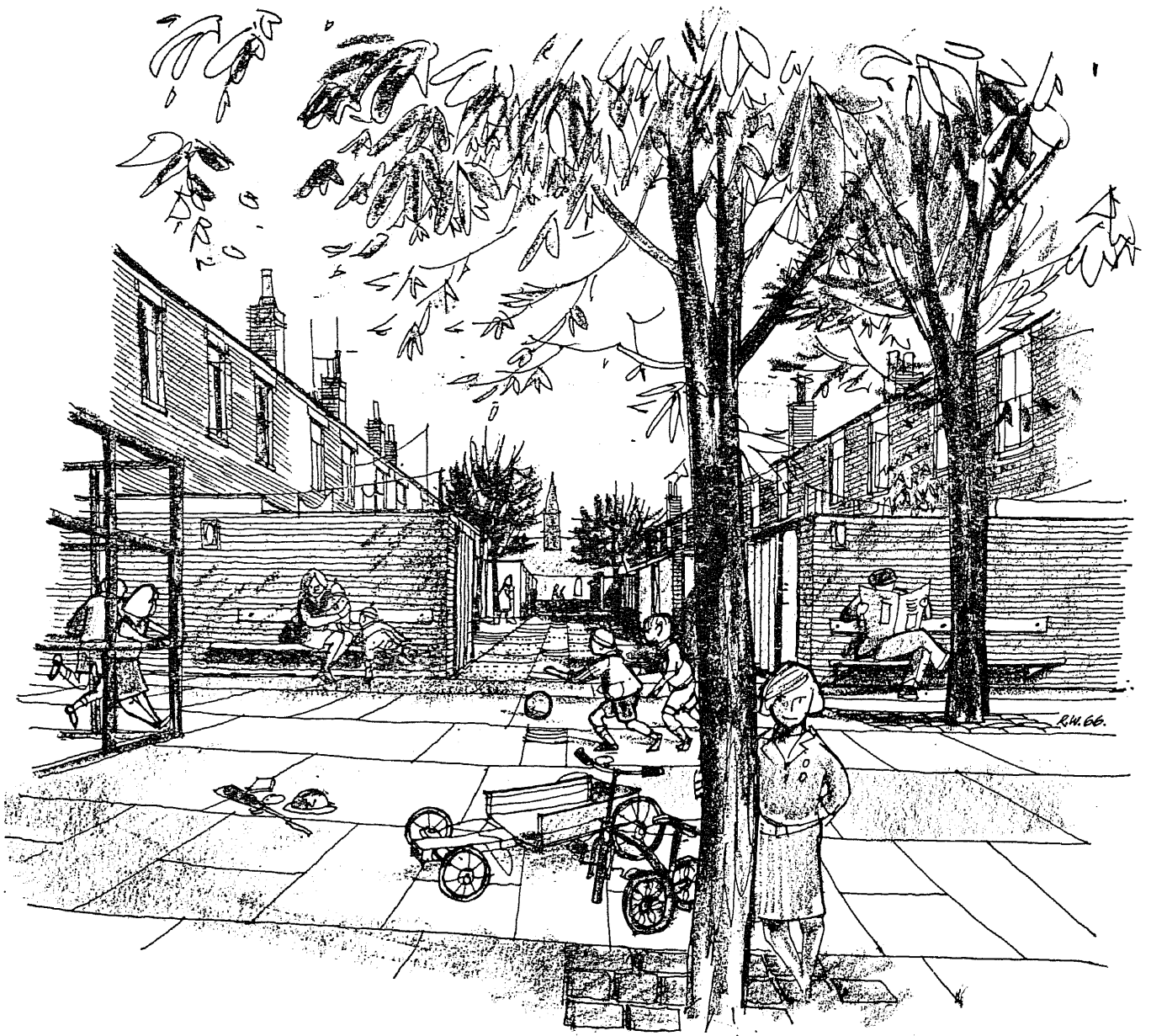
4.19 Conversion of a house into a two-person dwelling with a double garage on the ground floor, and bathroom and store added as an extension to the house.

Estimated cost : £1,410.



High level improvement D

High level improvement E



### **Improvement of the environment**

4.20 Not very many things can be done to improve the environment in a closely-built older area, as the scope for some improvements is limited by the land available, or the cost at which additional land can be freed. The following are the main possibilities.

4.21 *The creation of children's playgrounds.* The social survey of Deeplych shows the importance the residents attached to this. It is not practicable to have too specialised a division of space to suit the different needs of different age-groups, as would be possible on a new estate. The most that can be done is to provide formal playgrounds for the older children, grouped and perhaps a little removed from houses, to reduce the disturbance caused by the games of active children. It would be for the local authority to decide on the equipment and general standard of 'finish' these playgrounds need, steering a middle course between making them so elaborate that they have to be fenced, supervised and locked when an attendant is not available, and so simple that they are not interesting. It is clear that there is no substitute for imagination in laying out playgrounds, and that an 'adventure playground' is a possibility worth considering. For the smallest children, play-space has to be very close to the houses and in a district where back access to the houses is common it can be combined with a broader and improved back walk.

4.22 *Space off the street for cars.* This will be a growing need, although it is difficult to find space in densely built areas without clearing houses. There are, however, often some vacant lots which can be used for parking; spot clearance of unfit houses can sometimes yield suitable parking space and new space for parking can be created by road closures. Open hard standing space is discussed in more detail in the comment on Sector Study No. 2. The considerations applying to garages are much the same, except that the higher rent will affect the demand. De-mountable garages, which can be written off over a short period, or re-used, would be better than permanent structures which may impede redevelopment.

4.23 *The remodelling of the street pattern.* It may become desirable to exclude through traffic from residential environmental areas though the advantages of doing so will need to be weighed against the inconvenience to the residents which the necessary measures will cause. To exclude through traffic, streets offering attractive short-cuts should be stopped up, by bollards and a line of kerb (both would probably be required to prevent a hurried motorist familiar with the area from taking the short-cut). In a cul-de-sac, it is desirable to have a turning bay as well. Other streets can be turned into loop roads penetrating the area and then returning to the perimeter road so that they do not offer direct routes. If they are narrow, or if it seems

necessary to accept some on-street parking, they can be made one-way. This may increase the speed of traffic along them, so it is not a step to be adopted automatically. Other streets may be made 'play streets'. The legal powers of local authorities to achieve this remodelling are, at the moment, of doubtful efficacy.

4.24 *The removal of non-conforming uses.* In many areas the removal of a use such as a small car-breaker's yard may be a very significant part of environmental improvement. The local authority have power under the Town and Country Planning Act to make discontinuance orders and give planning permission to use the site for some acceptable purpose such as housing, garaging or light industry. To do so may materially affect the compensation payable, which is based on the depreciation in the value of the site due to the discontinuance order.

4.25 *Appearance.* An area may also be greatly improved by the planting of trees, the removal of unsightly fences and sheds and the landscaping of spare patches of land. The local authority can also take a lead in promoting a scheme for the particular benefit of a group of houses by agreement among owners. But vandalism is a problem, and unless the vigilance of local people can be enlisted in looking after what is in fact part of their living space, the life of new trees, seats, swings etc., may be short.

### **Dominant features**

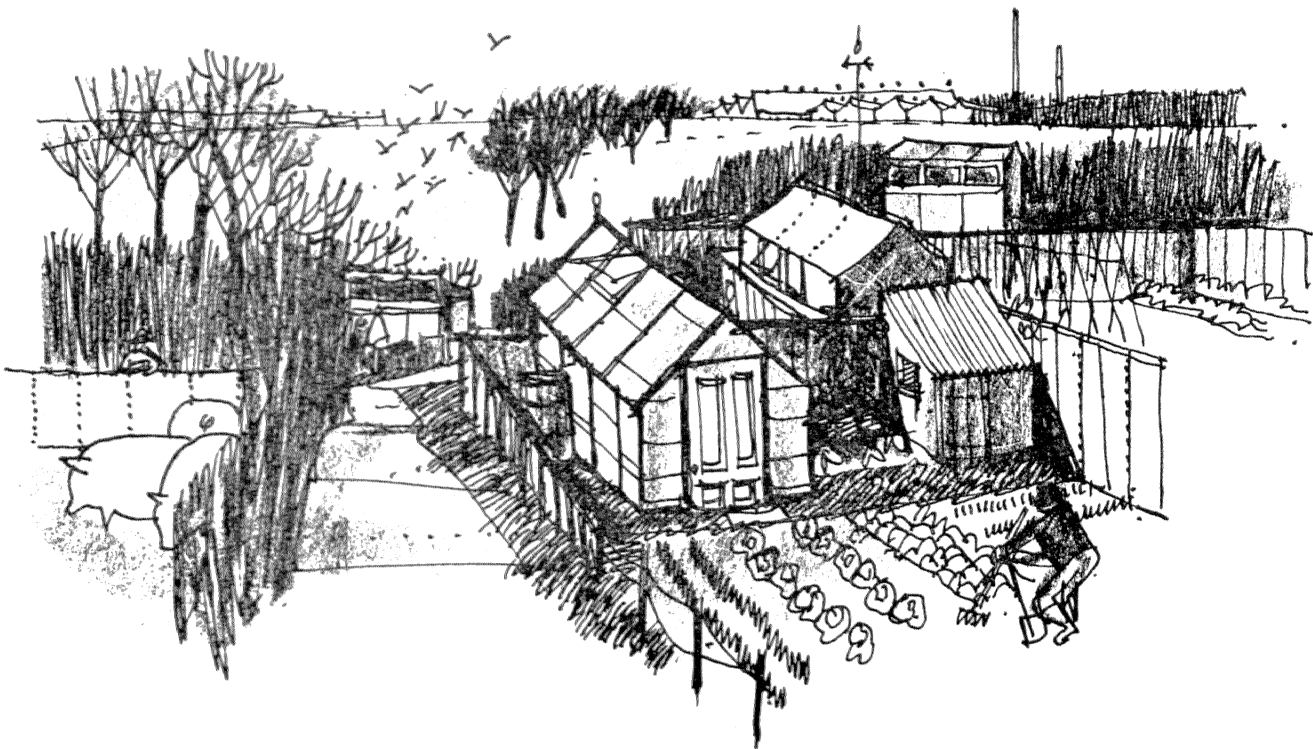
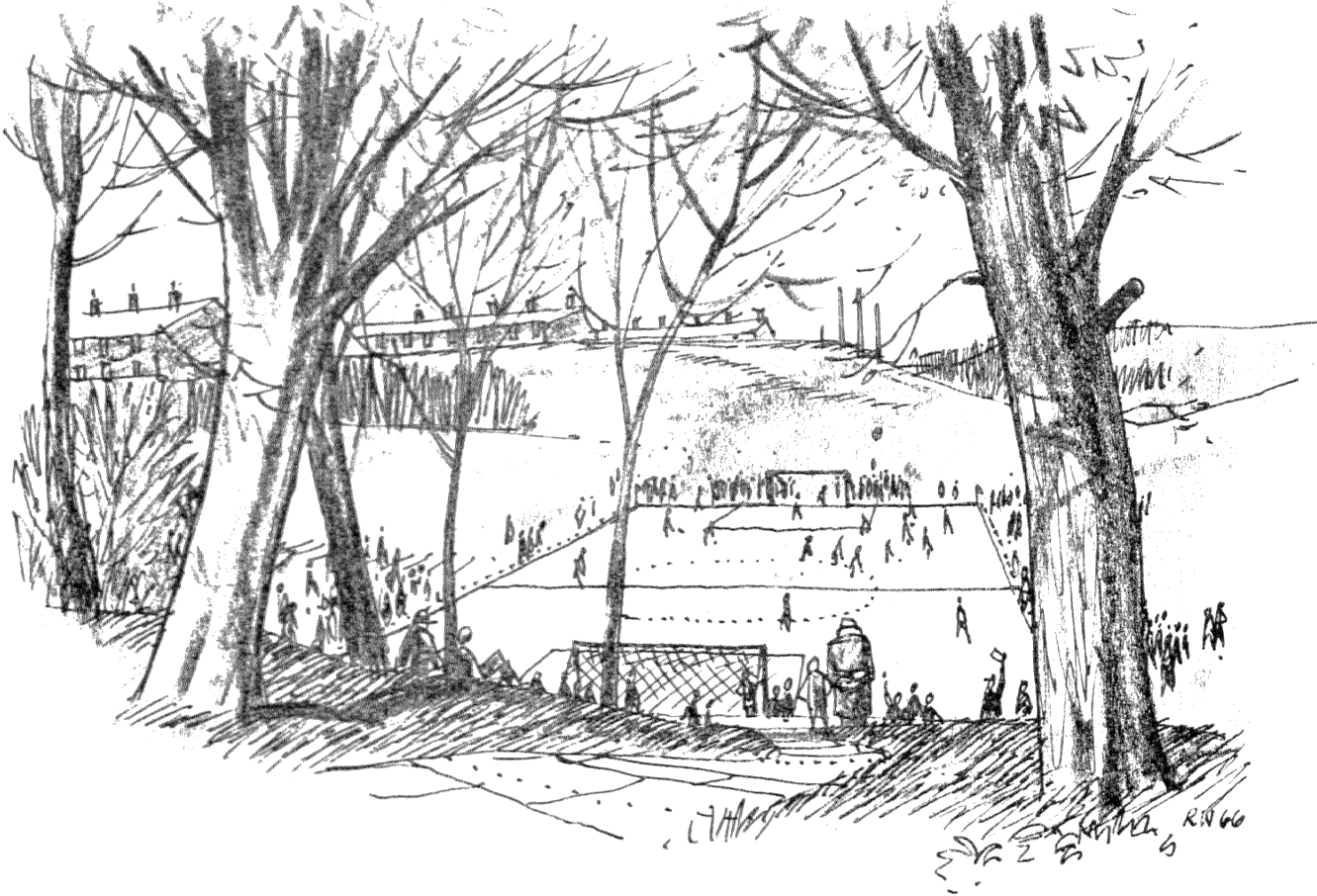
4.26 The possibilities described so far in this chapter have arisen from going methodically through the land uses, house types and street layouts. In addition to these, there are also the opportunities revealed by sympathetic visual study of the area, to use the land forms or existing good buildings to better advantage. Examples are pieces of open ground, a change in level or a Victorian church. The outstanding natural advantage of Deeplish is the valley of the Sudden Brook, running close to the houses and penetrating deep into the town. This valley could be used for recreation. Some flat sites for games could be formed by selective tipping and culverting, but mostly the valley might serve for recreation of a less organised kind. The canal and its towpath could also be used for that purpose. The valley thus improved could serve the whole town. The tops of the valley sides, next to the existing housing, could provide housing sites with good views. Any new housing should not take place as random infilling but in accordance with overall proposals for Deeplish. Illustration 13 suggests the sort of treatment for the valley which might be aimed at.

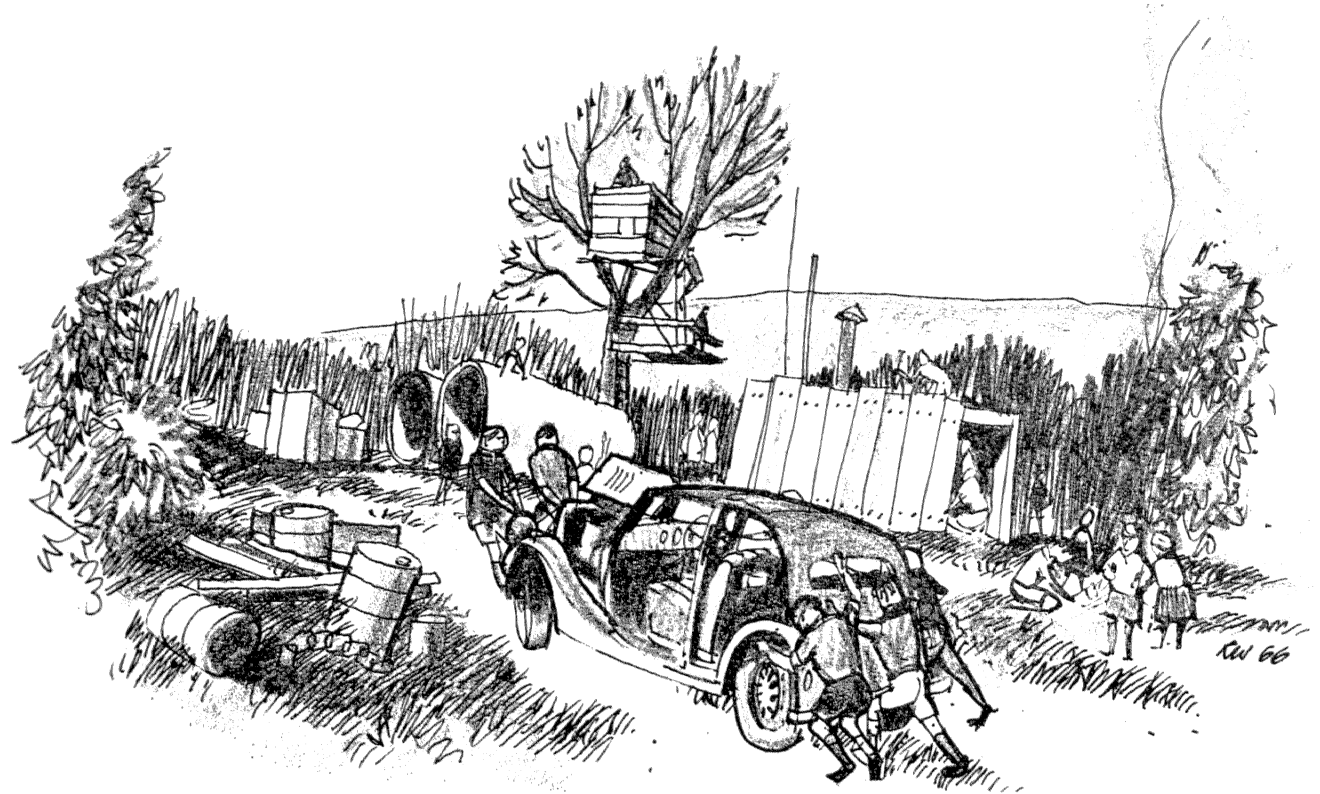
4.27 In addition to the valley, Deeplish also has some old buildings of interest. One of these is an imposing Victorian church in the sector chosen for study, and Sector Studies 2 and 3 suggest how more could be made of the church and its site as a centrepiece for the community.

illustration 12 A back corner before and after improvement



illustration 13 The Deeplish Valley. Possibilities for recreation

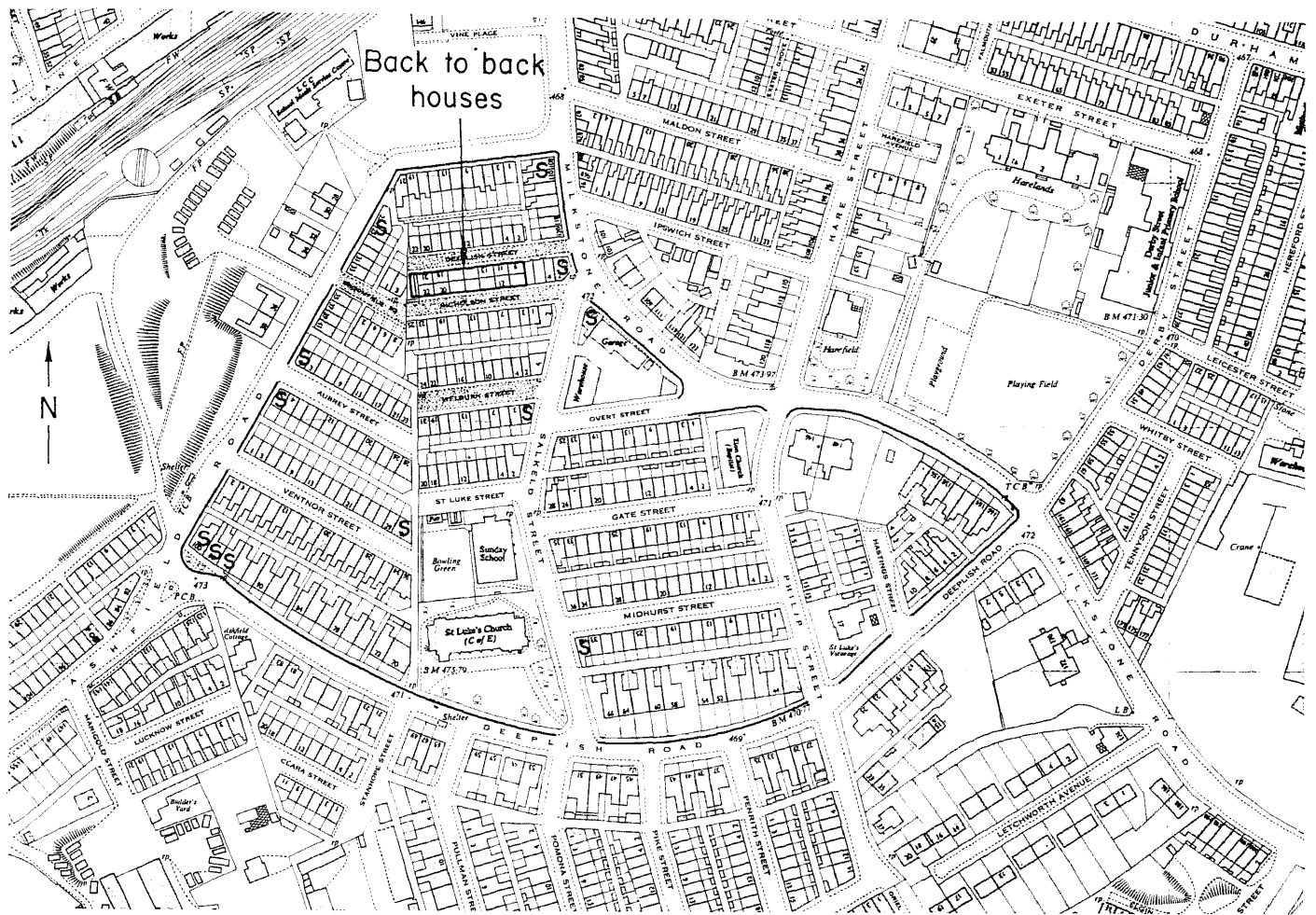




### **The Sector Studies**

4.28 The part of Deeplish chosen for detailed study was Census Enumeration District No. 57. This is in the centre of Deeplish and it includes most of the factors characteristic of Deeplish as a whole. It covers 12 acres and contains 310 houses. A plan of the sector as it is now is shown in Map 11.

4.29 Each study is accompanied by a plan illustrating it. Three studies were prepared applying to this sector most of the possibilities already discussed for improving the houses, and setting them within the framework of proposals for improving the environment. These studies are a theoretical selection among the possibilities, but they have been constructed to illustrate and examine three levels of investment in the area. They have been concerned mainly with the houses and residential land uses ; there are, however, other uses, such as shopping, which are vital to the neighbourhood.

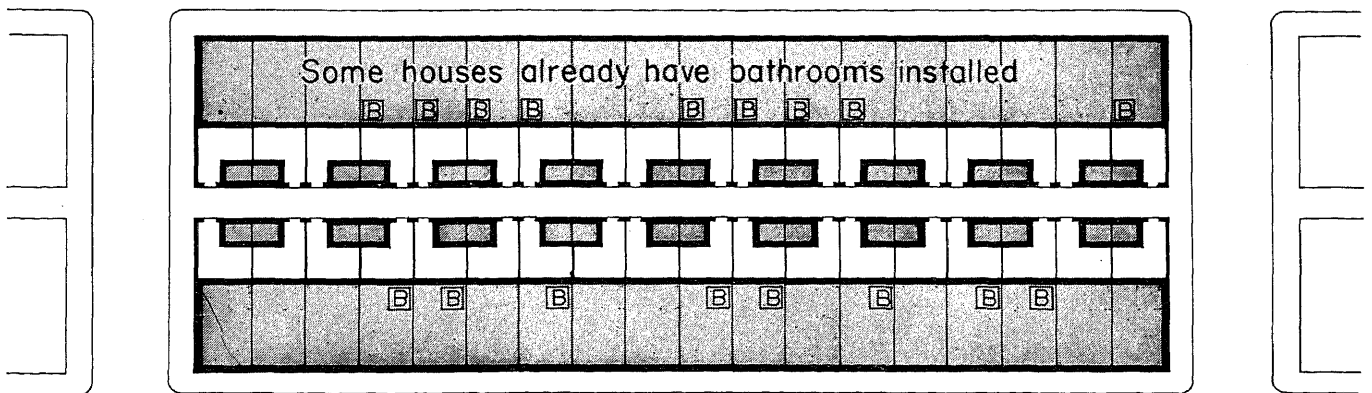


Unsurfaced road



Shops s

Boundary of Study Area ———



### **Sector Study 1**

4.30 This is a study of basic improvement to the houses which lack bathrooms together with minor improvements to the environment (map 12).

#### **4.31 Investment**

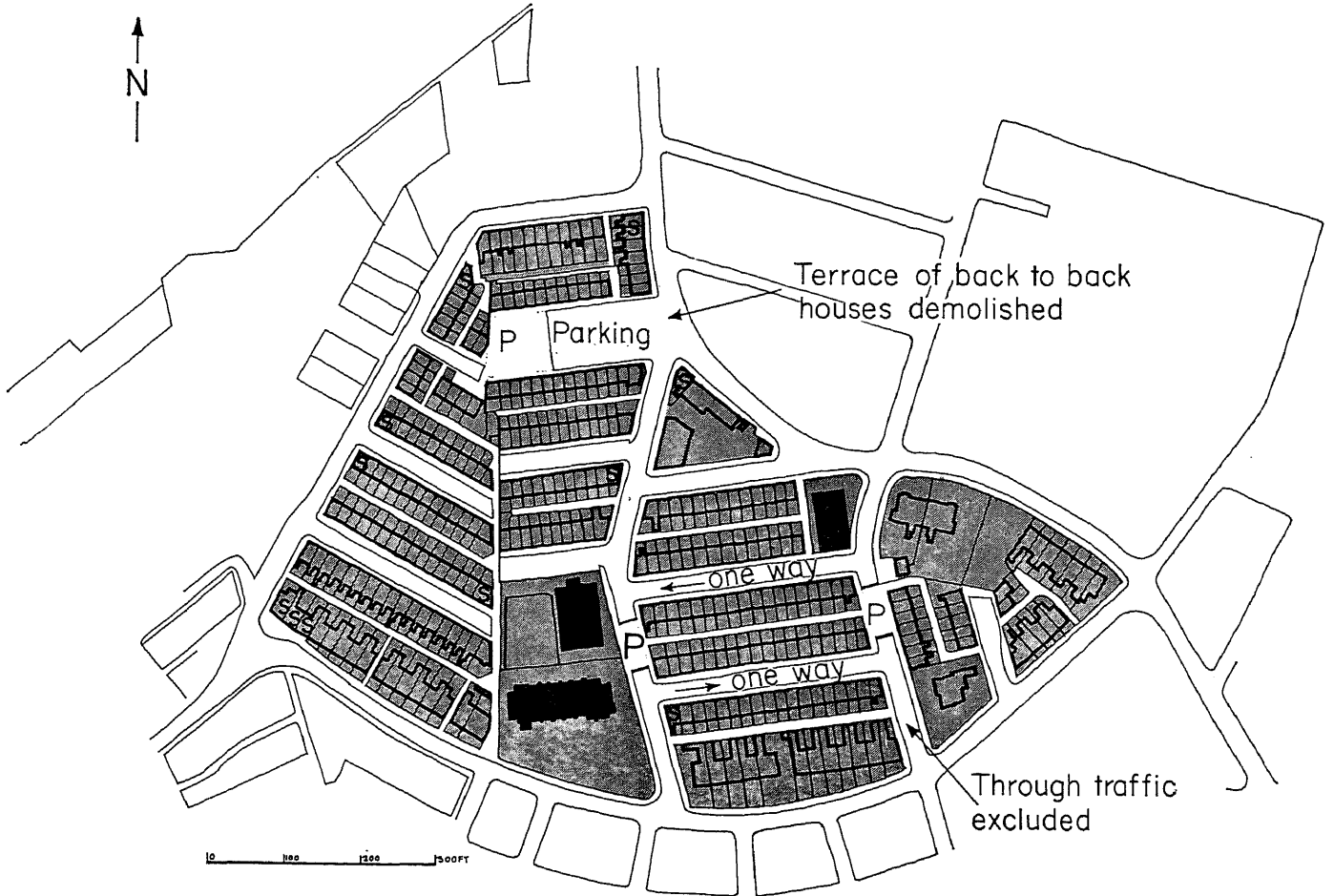
- (a) Install the five standard amenities in the 112 houses lacking them by putting a bathroom inside (the 'Basic Improvement').
- (b) Exclude through traffic by selected road closures, and by converting some streets to form one-way loops.
- (c) Pave and provide lighting for all unmade roads, back alleys and footpaths.
- (d) Acquire and demolish 18 dwellings forming a 'back-to-back' terrace.
- (e) Use part of the space gained by this clearance and by the road closures as children's playground.
- (f) Use the remainder of the space gained by the clearance for extra parking space.

### **Comment on Sector Study 1**

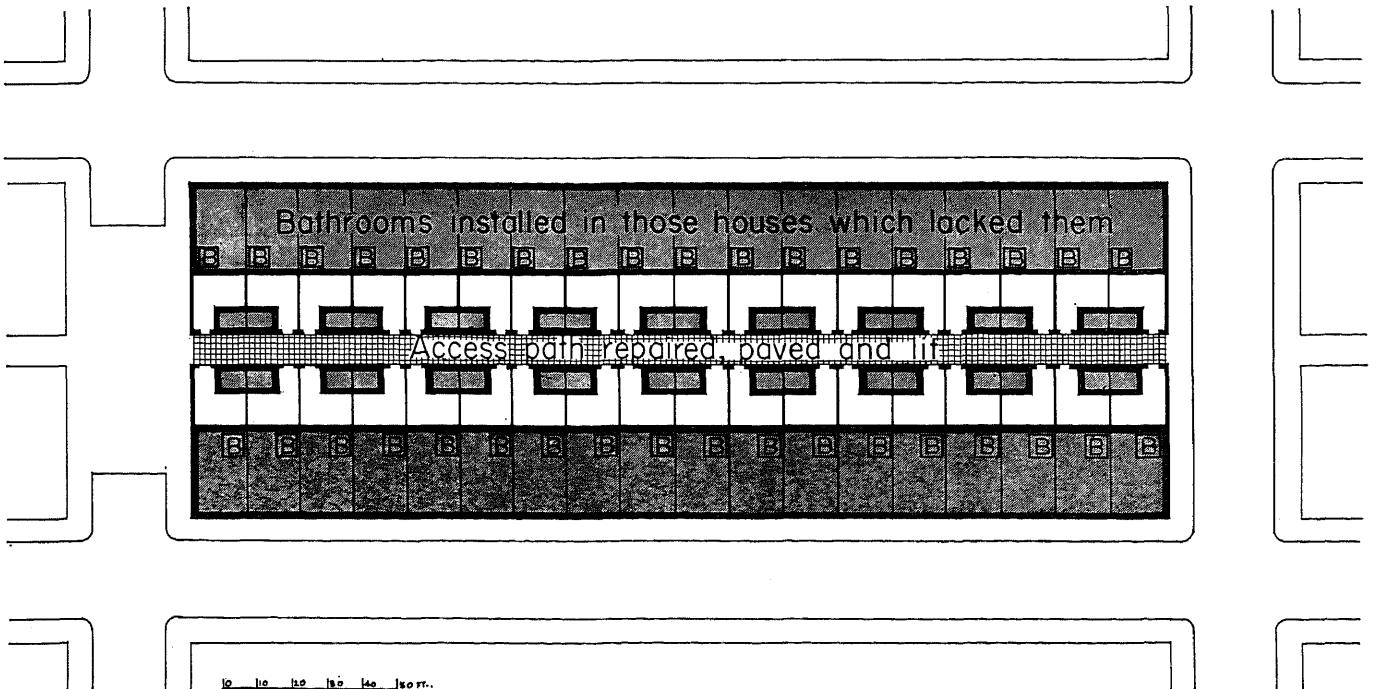
4.32 Providing the bathrooms internally means that 112 bed-spaces would be lost from the sector's total present capacity of 1,143. Using this one type of conversion would mean that the range of choice for further alterations to the houses would be narrowed. At the moment there are car-spaces for 51% of the houses, nearly all on the streets. The proposed extra car parking space provided, while cheap, would not satisfy the predicted need much beyond 1970. (See the fuller note on this subject in the comment on Sector Study 2). The traffic pattern would be slightly improved from the pedestrian's point of view. Judged by current standards, the play-space, pedestrian routes and back alleys remain far from adequate, and the houses continue to be mixed in their standard of condition. The removal of the back-to-back terrace would mean that the 18 families there would need to be rehoused.

4.33 The proposed improvements to the environment could be carried out under existing powers, except for the road closures, and (except for the clearance of the back-to-back houses) the entire scheme could be carried out without disturbing the present ownership pattern.

4.34 The cost of the improvements to each of the 112 houses would be £350, and the average repairs would take £60, making a cost per house of £410. The standard improvement grant of £155 would be payable, of which the local authority's share would be one quarter. The local authority contribution to the house improvement would accordingly be £4,340, in grant, with any loans made in addition. The local authority would have costs on acquisition and clearance, layout of play and car parking spaces, road closures and paving and lighting back alleys; these together would come to some £12,800. The cost of making up roads would be £8,700. The total investment in the scheme from all sources would be £68,000 for Enumeration District 57. About two-thirds of the total expenditure would be on the houses, one-third on the environment (see Table 26).



Private land    ■    Shops    s  
 Playspace    P



## Sector Study 2

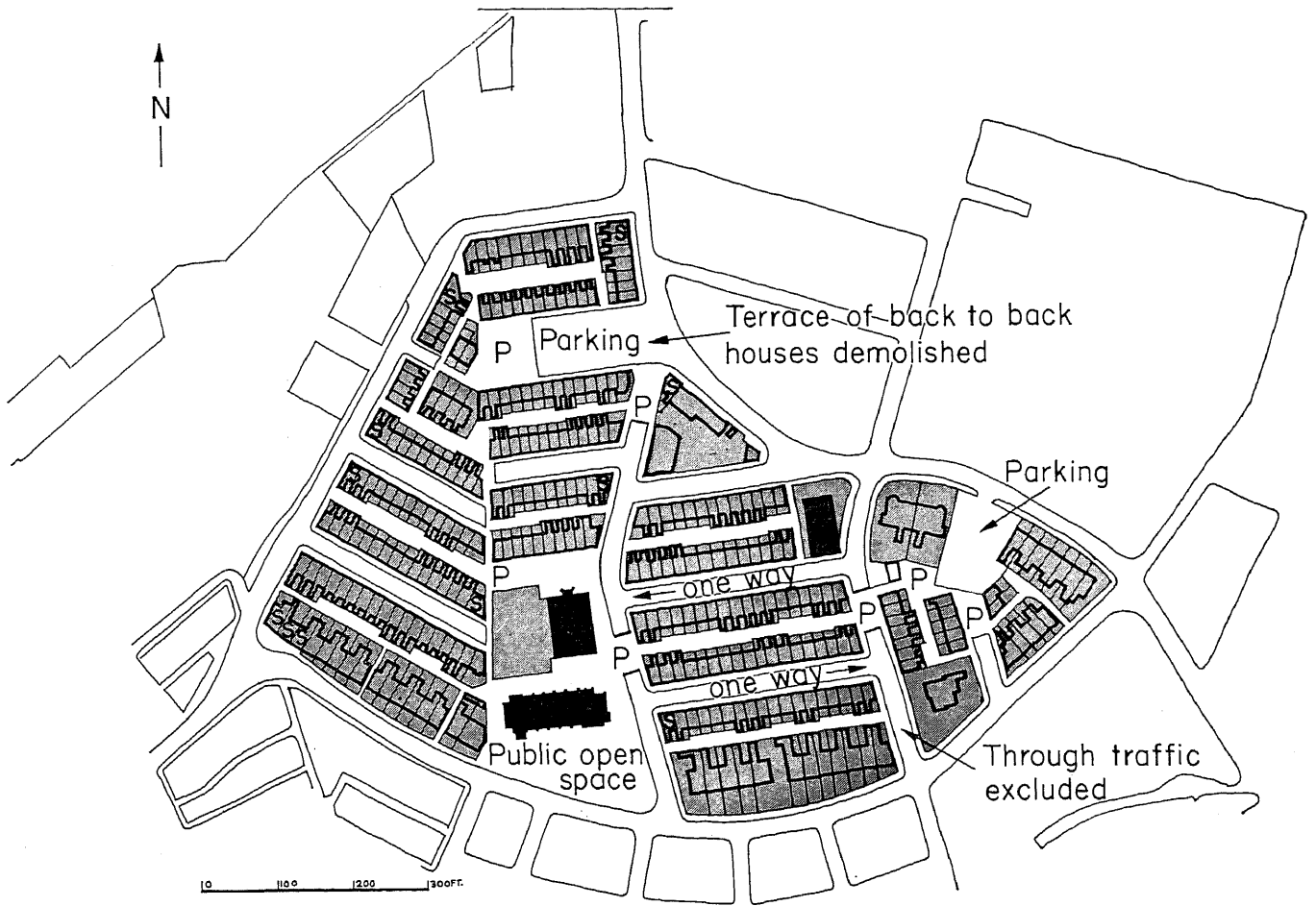
4.35 This is a study which incorporates medium level improvements to the houses without bathrooms and more extensive environmental improvements than Sector Study 1 (map 13). The items which are in addition to, or better than, those in Study 1 are in italics.

### 4.36 Investment

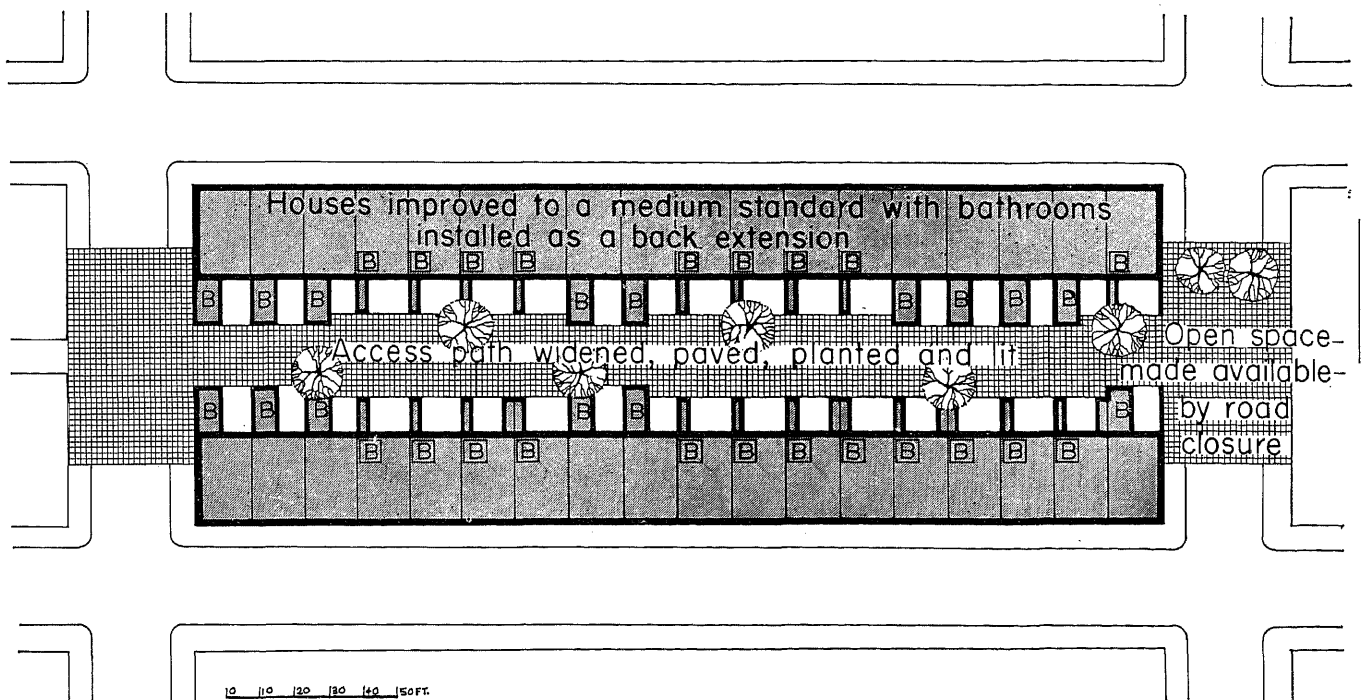
- (a) *Construct outside stores for the 143 houses which already have bathrooms* (medium level improvement A).
- (b) Install the five standard amenities in the 112 houses now lacking them *by means of added outside bathrooms* (medium level improvement C).
- (c) *All the houses would be brought to up a medium standard of repair.*
- (d) Exclude through traffic by selected road closures and by converting some streets to form one-way loops.
- (e) Pave all unmade roads.
- (f) *Widen back alleys, pave and light them, and plant some trees.*
- (g) Acquire and demolish the 18 back-to-back dwellings.
- (h) Use part of the space gained by this clearance and by road closures as a children's playground, *and use for the same purpose some space round the church.*
- (i) Provide more parking spaces by using the remainder of the space gained by demolition *and by using part the garden of one large house and some adjacent land.*
- (j) *Remove the railings from around the church.*

### Comment on Sector Study 2

4.37 The use of external bathrooms means that no bed-spaces would be lost. The possibility of making further conversions at a later date would not be prejudiced. It would be physically possible to carry out the various parts of this study without extensive acquisition of property—the back-to-back houses, and the garden to be used for parking excepted—but whether this would be feasible in practice would depend on the willingness of owners to see their back yards remodelled. The scheme includes the construction of new fences at the backs, so that the back yards, although somewhat smaller, would still be private and enclosed. They would also face on to much pleasanter back walks, and be themselves more modern in appearance; but whether these advantages would outweigh in the minds of the present residents the slight reduction in



Private land  Shops s  
 Playspace P





size, the inevitable upset of coming to agreement on the scheme and having the work done, and the apprehension that when it was done it might not come up to expectations, must be regarded as problematical. It would be very desirable that the owners of all the houses abutting on to a back alley should agree to have the improvement done at the same time, to a common plan and by a single contractor. Although an odd house could no doubt be left out of a scheme, the sight of an old back wall and outbuildings projecting into an otherwise modernised walk would do much to reduce the value of the improvement.

4.38 The provision of additional parking space would meet the rising need for space for cars further ahead—probably until about 1975, when some 64% of households in Deeplish might be expected to own cars. This would be open hard-standing space off the street, but no covered garages; the creation of new spaces would not prejudice ultimate redevelopment, whereas investment in new structures such as garages would both add to the cost of the improvement scheme and make ultimate redevelopment more difficult. Moreover, it is not clear how large a proportion of future car owners will be willing to pay the higher rents for enclosed garages and how many would be satisfied with a hard-standing. The hard-standing space should be well-chosen—i.e., central and convenient of access for a large number of houses—and economical in shape, with no waste corners or inner sites which are inaccessible in practice. It should be surfaced, and have a light to discourage malefactors; and each motorist who rents a space should have it reserved for him by some form of marking. If this were done, it should be possible to get a car on each 20 to 25 square yards, or, say, 60 on a quarter of an acre—possibly the largest size of plot for general use in areas like Deeplish. If unrestricted parking on the street were allowed, or if restrictions on street parking were not enforced, the demand for this provision would be affected. But, given these conditions, each space might be self-supporting if a rent of about 4/- a week were paid for it. This would compare favourably even with existing garage rents which are unlikely to come down as the numbers of cars in the area rise.

4.39 The space available for children's play would be about 15 square feet for each bed-space in the sector—a rather arbitrary measurement but any measure based on the number of children would be rendered out of date by fluctuations in the number from time to time. In addition to these playgrounds, which would be out of sight of many of the houses, the opening up, paving and lighting of the back walks would render these suitable for toddlers' playgrounds within sight of their homes. Toddlers and older children may not mix well, and in addition it would be desirable to keep down the level of noise and activity in

the back walks; the aim in designing the play provision would therefore be to put the swings, etc., for older children in the playgrounds.

4.40 Pedestrian routes are more attractive than in Sector Study 1, and are nearer to forming a reasonably complete system away from motor traffic, but they still fall short of comprehensiveness. The comment on road closures in Sector Study 1—that legal powers are probably not adequate for this—still applies, and, again as in Sector Study 1, there are no turning-bays at the ends of the cul-de-sacs. Large vans would probably have to reverse out, so the cul-de-sac formed in this way may prove a mixed blessing (some of the roads are cul-de-sacs already); the system of loop roads avoids this.

4.41 New housing would still be needed for the 18 families who would be displaced from the back-to-back terrace.

4.42 Basic deficiencies of sunlighting and daylighting, which are built in to the layout of the neighbourhood, would not be remedied, except in so far as more light and air would be let into the reconstructed back walks.

4.43 The pattern of costs for this scheme would be as follows:

For a three-person house already having a bath:

Repairs	£160	} total £300
Improvement	£140	

For a four-person house with no bath:

Repairs	£160	} total £650 on which discretionary improvement grant of £220 could be payable.
Improvement	£490	

The improvement of the back walks would cost about £65 per house. If it were decided that the acquisition of some houses would be justified in order to get the scheme moving—e.g., if an individual landlord was incapable of co-operating but willing to sell—the costs of acquisition would have to be taken into account. These might be about £1,050 for the house with a bath, or £800 for the house without a bath.

4.44 The total investment in this scheme for E.D. 57 might be of the order of £171,000, and again about two-thirds would be expenditure on the houses and one-third on the environment (see Table 26).

### Sector Study 3

4.45 This is a scheme which incorporates a 'high level' of investment in improvement and conversions; it involves works to most of the houses. The scheme also aims at improving the balance of the housing stock, which in practice means providing more varied kinds of dwellings. It supposes that the area would remain standing longer, and accordingly makes provision, by stages, for 100% car ownership (map 14). Apart from this, little more is achieved for the environment than in Study 2. The items which are in addition to, or better than, those in Study 2 are in *italics*.

#### Investment

##### 4.46 Stage 1

- (a) Carry out 'medium level' improvements to 25 houses (11 without a bathroom, add an outside one and a store by 'medium level improvement C'; 14 with a bathroom, add an outside store by 'medium level improvement A').
- (b) Improve 133 houses having a bathroom by '*high level improvement A*'.
- (c) Improve 12 houses lacking a bathroom by '*high level improvement C*'.
- (d) *Convert 25 houses into pairs of one-person flats by 'high level improvement D'.*
- (e) *Convert 60 houses each into a two-person dwelling with a double garage within the building by 'high level improvement E'.*
- (f) Repair all houses *up to a higher level.*
- (g) Exclude through traffic by selected road closures and by converting some streets to form one-way loops.
- (h) Pave all unmade roads.
- (i) Widen back alleys, pave and light them and plant some trees.
- (j) Acquire and demolish the 18 back-to-back dwellings *and one other dwelling.*
- (k) Use part of the space gained by this clearance as a children's playground and use for the same purpose some space round the church.
- (l) Use the remainder of the space gained by the demolition and the garden of a large house *to provide grouped garages.*
- (m) Remove the railings from around the church.

##### Stage 2

4.47 Demolish 25 dwellings which would have been improved in Stage 1 to a lower level than the other houses (items (a) and (b) above) – and form additional play-spaces and garages.

### Comment on Sector Study 3

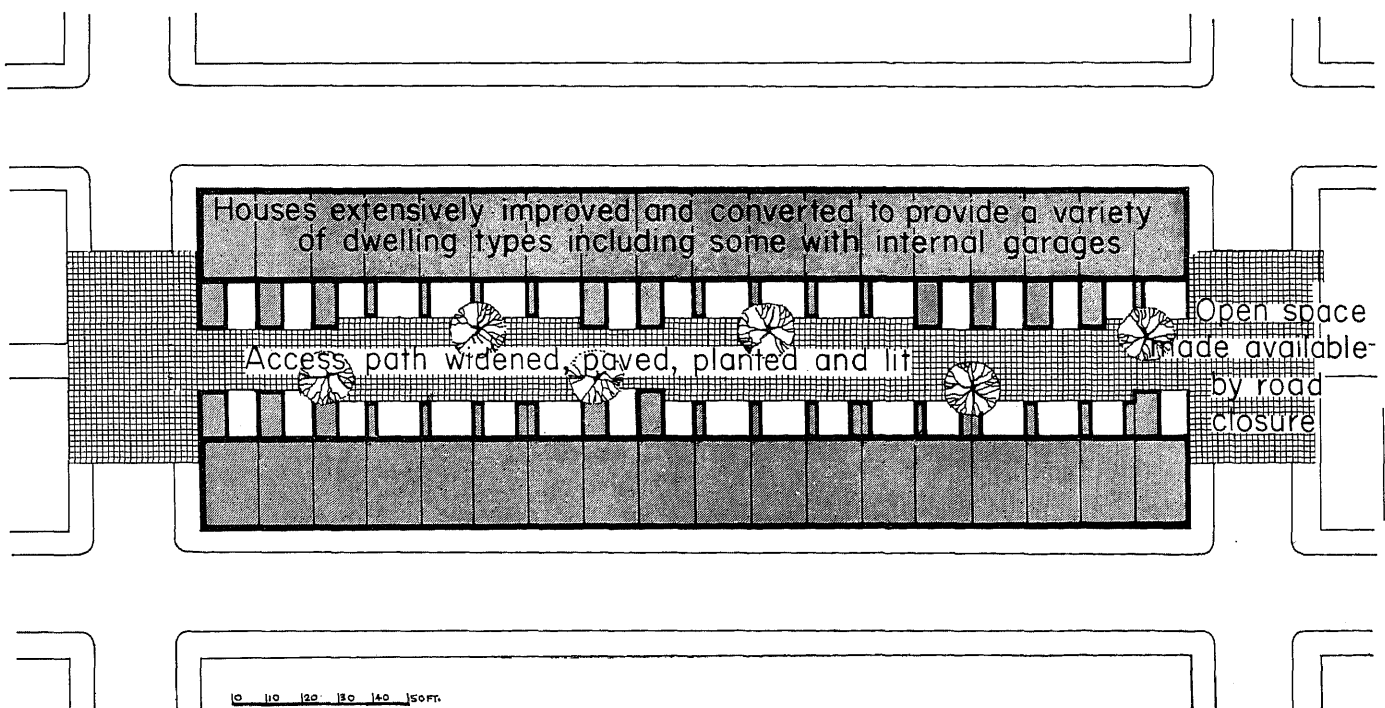
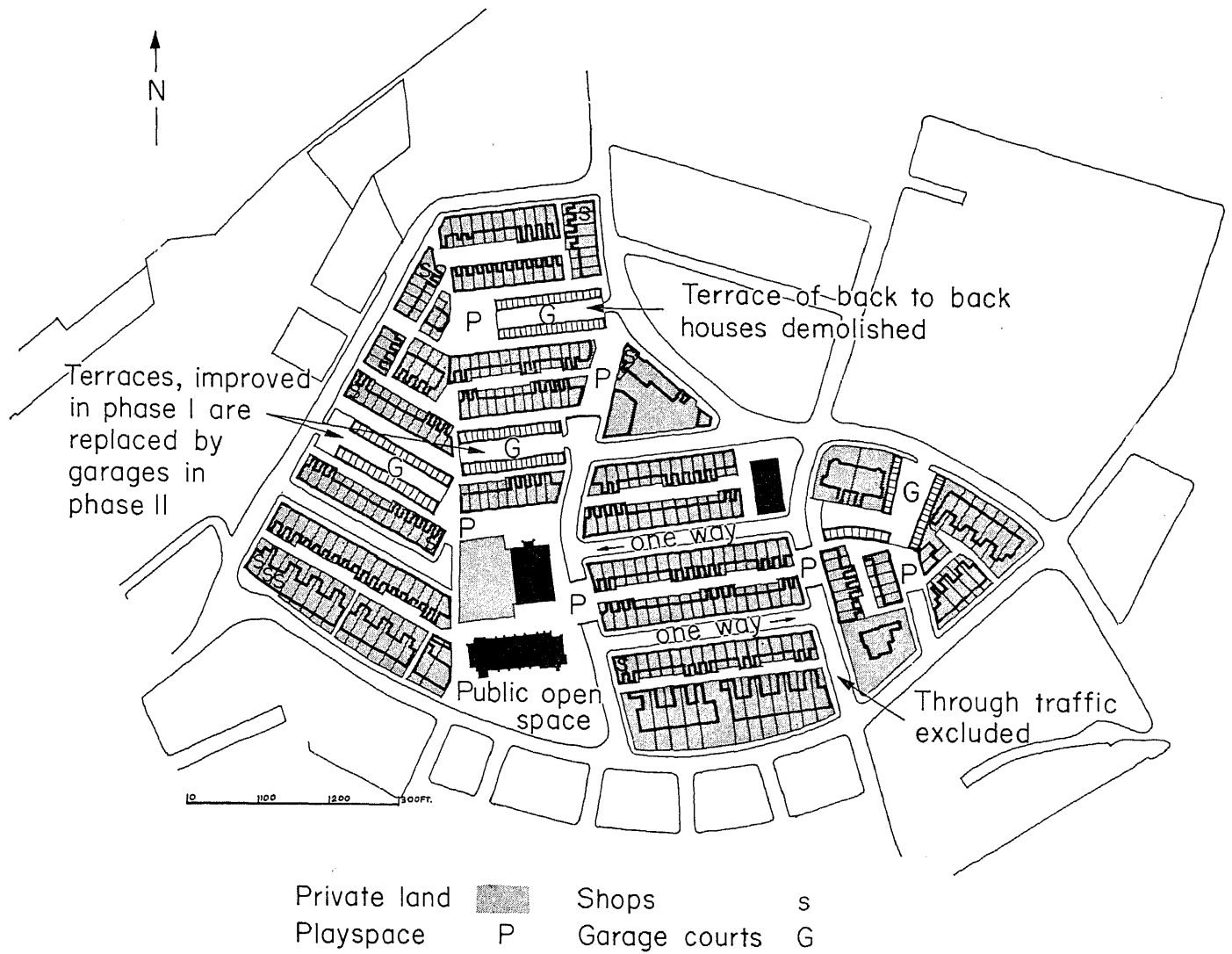
4.48 The demolition of 19 dwellings is proposed in Stage 1 but the proposed conversions would augment the loss of bed-spaces to about 230, a substantial thinning-out in a sector which now contains 1,143. The clearance of further houses for garages in Stage 2 accounts for the loss of about another 86 bed-spaces. Thus this scheme will cause considerable disturbance of residents who generally have no desire to move.

4.49 The remaining housing, after some conversion, will provide some smaller dwellings than Deeplish has now, which would give some of the variety in sizes of house which the district might be supposed, purely on the figures of household size, to need. This must, however, be set against the evidence from the social survey suggesting that the relative spaciousness of the houses for the families now in them was one of their most prized advantages.

4.50 Broadly speaking, this study must be regarded as taking the improvement of the existing neighbourhood to its limit. It would not be possible to implement the scheme without bringing most of the sector into a common ownership, presumably of the local authority. The movements of families out of the area to enable the work to be done, and then back, if they wished, into dwellings more suited to their family sizes, would also require that the area should be in the ownership of a single body with other houses available elsewhere for 'decanting' purposes. It is doubtful whether the neighbourhood would be recognisable as the same community after such a scheme were completed. New housing would be needed for 19 families displaced by demolition in Stage 1, for more at Stage 2 and for any large families displaced by the conversions. Modern recommended standards would still not have been reached in many respects, for example in room sizes, natural lighting and privacy.

4.51 The provision for cars would stand at 125%, i.e., five car spaces for four households. Even this might hardly be adequate to satisfy the ultimate need. Some old people would not have cars, or would give them up; but there would be some two-car households, plus a demand for space for visitors' cars and service vehicles. It is still assumed that random parking on the streets will be discouraged. The need is likely to be of the order of 150%, i.e., three spaces for two households, by the time the area improved to the standards here discussed is due for re-development.

4.52 The network of pedestrian walks would be at its most extensive, and would afford practically all houses an access both on to a carriageway and a walk. There would not, however, be anything approaching the quietness and safety which could be achieved by the design of a new residential area.



## Costs

4.53 This study could not be implemented without extensive acquisition, and there are accordingly many more items to be taken into account in arriving at the costs. These are as detailed in Table 23 below.

4.54 The total costs for Sector Study 3 could well be about £380,000 for Stage 1, and a further £42,300 for Stage 2. The figure for Stage 1 allows for some medium level improvement to houses that would be demolished under Stage 2 to provide space for cars.

## Redevelopment

4.55 No redevelopment plan has been outlined, but for purposes of comparison three calculations have been made. The first is of the cost of providing on a virgin site

elsewhere in Rochdale accommodation equivalent to that provided in Sector Study 3. This is described in Table 24 as Calculation No. 1. The second, in Table 25, assumes that Enumeration District 57 is demolished and the same number of dwellings and bed-spaces, on average 3.8 per dwelling, is put back on the site in new construction. Because of the low occupancy of many existing dwellings, this would mean the provision of more bed-spaces than the population would in fact occupy. The third calculation assumes that Enumeration District No. 57 is demolished, and that the same number of dwellings is put back on the site, and that the number of bed-spaces is just sufficient for the existing population, i.e. an average of 2.5 per dwelling. The results of these hypotheses are expressed as 'weekly costs', which are the costs of providing the accommodation concerned and are not intended to represent the rents of the dwellings.

Table 23 **Study 3: High level of improvement: capital costs and annual repayments amortized over 40 years**

	Capital costs per dwelling			
	3-person house with bath existing: external store added A	4-person house external bathroom added C	Conversion forming 2 B-S-R Flats D	Conversion: 2-person house and double garage E
	£	£	£	£
Acquisition	1,050	800	800	800
Repairs	180	180	180	180
Improvement or conversion	800	1,150	1,620	1,230
				25 (for a crossover)
Paving and lighting back alleys	65	65	65	65
Technical fees or salaries (5%)	46	67	91	73
	2,141	2,262	2,756	2,373
Deduct: Discretionary Improvement grant (Exchequer contribution)	105	270	380	210
	2,036	1,992	2,376 = 1,188 per flat	2,163 (1,600 house 563 garage)
	Annual and weekly costs per dwelling			
	Each flat	House	Double Garage	
Annual Repayment (Amortized over 40 years at 6% rate of interest)	135	132	79	106
Maintenance and Management	24	24	18	24
Annual Cost	159	156	97	130
Weekly Cost (not rents)	61/-	60/-	37/6	50/-
				16/-

Table 24 **Calculation No. 1 Similar new dwellings on a virgin site** (Amortized over 60 years)

	3-person flat	4-person house	Bed-sitting room flat	2-person flat	Double garage in battery
Capital costs per dwelling					
	£	£	£	£	£
Land, roads and sewers	350	350	175	350	50
Building costs	2,050	2,250	1,550	1,800	450
Technical Fees or salaries (5%)	120	130	86	108	25
	2,520	2,730	1,811	2,258	525
Annual and weekly costs per dwelling					
Annual Repayment (Amortized over 60 years at 6% rate of interest)	156	169	112	140	33
Maintenance and Management	18	18	14	18	5
	174	187	126	158	38
Deduct: Subsidy	24	24	24	24	—
Annual cost to the council	150	163	102	134	38
Weekly cost (not rents)	57/6	62/6	39/-	51/6	14/6

Table 25 **Calculations Nos. 2 and 3**

	Calculation No. 2 Redevelopment of E.D.57 to replace existing accommodation (3.8 bed-spaces per dwelling on average). New dwellings amortized over 60 years					Calculation No. 3 Redevelopment of E.D. 57 to accommodate existing population (2.5 bed-spaces per dwelling on average). New dwellings amortized over 60 years.			
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4
Number of bed-spaces per dwelling									
Capital cost per dwelling									
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Land, Roads and sewers and General Site Works	912	1824	1824	1824	1824	992	1983	1983	1983
Allocated Building Costs	1933	2183	2433	2683	2933	1765	2015	2265	2515
Technical Fees or salaries (5%)	142	200	213	225	238	138	200	212	225
	2987	4207	4470	4732	4995	2895	4198	4460	4723
Annual and weekly costs per dwelling									
Annual Repayment (Amortized over 60 years at 6% rate of interest)	185	260	276	293	309	179	260	276	292
Maintenance and Management	14	18	18	18	18	14	18	18	18
	199	278	294	311	327	193	278	294	310
Deduct: Subsidy (General and for Expensive Site)	61	89	89	89	89	60	91	91	91
Annual cost to the council	138	189	205	222	238	133	187	203	219
Weekly cost (not rents)	53/-	73/-	79/-	85/-	91/-	51/-	72/-	78/-	84/-

**Notes:**

- 1 The above figures involve arbitrary apportionment of certain costs.
- 2 Weekly costs could be varied to give alternative differentials.
- 3 Alternative mixes of dwelling types to those assumed above may cause minor alterations in cost.
- 4 All new dwellings are to Parker Morris recommendations.
- 5 Subsidies calculated under the Housing Act, 1961, but the proposals in the Housing Programme 1965-1970, Cmnd 2838, would considerably increase the Government subsidy.
- 6 Variations between items in 2 and 3 caused by greater amount of medium-height building in 2.

Table 26 Comparison of estimated costs and improvements in the three Sector Studies

Estimated costs for E.D.57	Notes on Studies 1, 2 and 3	Study			
		1	2	3	
				phase i	phase ii
		£	£	£	£
<b>The dwelling</b>					
1 Acquisition					
2 Demolition					
3 Improvement	<b>Study 1</b> Basic to 112 dw. <b>Study 2</b> Medium A to 143 dw. and Medium C to 112 dw. <b>Study 3</b> Medium A to 13 dw. Medium C to 11 dw. High Level A to 133 dw. and High Level C to 12 dw.	39,500	62,200	119,200	
4 Conversion into 1 Person dwellings	Convert existing 25 4-Person Houses into 50 Flats High Level D			39,300	
5 Conversion into 2 Person dwellings and double garage	Convert existing 60 4-Person Houses High Level E			70,800	
6 Repairs	<b>Study 1</b> Repairs required under terms of standard grant to improved dwellings only <b>Study 2</b> Medium Scale Repairs (slightly above that required by the 12 Pt. Standard). <b>Study 3</b> Full Scale repairs to all dwellings within the E.D.	7,000	51,000	77,000	
<b>The curtilage of the dwellings</b>					
	Demolition of existing outbuildings		7,600	7,600	
	House fencing and paving		5,100	5,100	
<b>The environment</b>					
Acquisition, demolition and site clearance	To demolish back to back houses, and to form Play Spaces, Car Parks, Garages Etc.	5,000	7,000	10,000	23,600
Garages in blocks	77 Garages Phase 1 and 68 Garages Phase 2			20,000	16,500
Car parking areas		1,500	4,500		
Paving and lighting in back alleys		3,500	18,000	18,000	
Tree planting and seats in back alleys			3,000	3,000	
Play spaces (the estimated costs do not include play equipment)		1,000	1,000	1,800	2,200
Road closures		1,800	4,100	4,800	
Making up existing roads		8,700	7,500	3,700	

<b>Totals for E.D.57</b>		68,000	171,000	380,300	42,300
				422,600	
<b>Comparable totals for the other Enumeration Districts</b>	E.D.55	78,000	174,000	376,000	34,000
	E.D.56	76,000	144,000	255,500	77,000
	E.D.58	83,000	173,000	368,400	
	E.D.59	50,000	133,000	300,800	34,000
	E.D.60	140,000	197,000	394,000	37,700

<b>Total estimated cost for Deeplish</b>		495,000	992,000	2,075,000	225,000
					2,300,000

**Comparison of those improvements in performance which can be measured (E.D.57)**

	As existing	1	2	3(i)	3(ii)
Size of dwelling (bedspaces) 1	0	0	0	50	50
2	0	0	0	60	60
3	158	255	143	142	128
4	112	0	112	27	16
5 +	40	37	37	37	37
<b>Total dwellings</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>292</b>	<b>292</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>291</b>
<b>Total bedspaces</b>	<b>1143</b>	<b>971</b>	<b>1083</b>	<b>910</b>	<b>824</b>
<b>Net residential density, dwellings per acre</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Net bedspace density per acre</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>Houses to be demolished</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>Proportion of houses continuing to be deficient in :</b>					
Daylight	57 %	49%	49%	45%	34%
Sunlight	30%	23%	23%	22%	18%
Both daylight and sunlight	27%	19%	19%	17%	13%
Standard set out in Planning Bulletin No. 5 Not less than 1 hr./day February to October					
<b>Garages</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>268</b>
<b>On street parking spaces</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>98</b>
<b>Off street parking spaces</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total car spaces</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>290</b>	<b>366</b>
<b>Expressed as % of dwellings</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>126%</b>

5.6 Although there are positive factors which can account for the satisfaction expressed, the past seems to have shaped the attitudes of the residents of Deeplish as well as their physical surroundings. They are accustomed to their living standards, and are reconciled to 'making do' with what they have got.

5.7 Nevertheless many residents suggested improvements for the district, particularly in the north-east corner where the traffic and the parked cars caused noise, danger and congestion. This part of Deeplish would in any case have to be redeveloped if the new road to by-pass Oldham Road is built. The improvements which would be welcomed by the residents include better paving and the making-up of streets, the creation of safe play areas for children within sight of all houses, and the improvement of open spaces, both large and small, so that they are attractive and can be used for recreation. The danger to children from traffic is already generally feared by mothers but since not many people own cars at present, people are not much concerned about lack of garages or parking space for their own or visitors' cars. The presentation of any plans for reshaping the environment should therefore emphasise provision for safe children's play and amenity open space.

5.8 Nearly a third of the owner-occupied houses and three-quarters of the rented houses lack the five standard amenities. About three-fifths of both tenants and owner-occupiers without these amenities say that they do not want to have them installed and bear their share of the cost. These people are mainly the elderly and the poor. On the other hand, just over half the tenants without a bath said they would like one and would be prepared to pay a higher rent.

5.9 The landlords too are usually elderly, not very well off and receiving very little net income from the houses they own. They are in similar occupations to their tenants. For the most part they regard their houses as a burden. Most look forward to selling. At the moment, this means selling with vacant possession, as there is little or no sale of houses with sitting tenants.

5.10 The landlords themselves thought that, if the grant scheme were supplemented by loans and easy repayments, they would make more use of improvement grants. This optimism has to be weighed against their past failure to take up grants and their own, their tenants' and their houses' age. Rent income is small and the cost even of the repairs that are done is relatively heavy, and only the Rochdale Pioneers are in a big enough way of business to tackle a conventional programme out of their own resources.

#### The direction of present trends

5.11 There are now about 700 houses out of 1,600 without the four main standard amenities (fixed bath, inside W.C.,

wash-hand basin, hot water installation) but over a fifth of them do not have a fifteen-year life. If no further action is taken to rehabilitate Deeplish than would occur in the course of present trends, the results might be as follows.

5.12 Some of the houses without amenities will have to be cleared to make way for the new road, or will be cleared as slums. About a third of the remaining houses without amenities, nearly all owner-occupied, are likely to have them installed in the next few years. This will leave over 400 houses with a fifteen-year life without the amenities. A hypothetical calculation based on the continuation of present trends gives the following results:

Table 27 **House improvement: hypothetical calculation based on present trends**

	Owner-occupied houses	Rented houses	Total
Houses without the 4 major standard amenities (estimate for whole district based on 1964 sample)	356	351	707
<i>Deduct</i> houses with less than 15 years life	60	100	160
	296	251	547
<i>Deduct</i> owners willing to instal them	113	9	122
Houses with at least 15 years life remaining without improvements at the end of a few years	183	242	425

5.13 The total of houses remaining without improvement would be somewhat reduced after further change of tenure from renting to owner-occupation. Meanwhile, the unimproved, mostly rented houses, will probably deteriorate and the discrepancy between the improvement to the owner-occupied houses and the dilapidation in the rented houses and in the environment, already noticed by some owner-occupiers, is likely to become more acute. Eventually, when the present generation of old people, who are accustomed to low standards, die out, more people will be dissatisfied. As people acquire more wealth and possessions, they are likely to move out of or avoid living in such a district, which would be increasingly inhabited by the poor and the old.

#### Summary of the physical survey

5.14 The conclusions of the physical survey turn upon the broad classification of renewal priorities throughout Rochdale. These suggest that even at an increased rate of building most of Deeplish is unlikely to be redeveloped within the next twenty years, or possibly longer. There is

nothing to suggest that economic changes will lead to its redevelopment on a commercial basis before then. The pockets of the worst housing will probably go, but most of the area will remain standing. Throughout the area the property is divided in small units among many owners, and this will inhibit private proposals for any but small-scale rebuilding. Although some houses have been so badly looked after that they are hardly worth repairing, the basic structure of most of them is sound and they will last for many years if they are properly repaired and maintained.

5.15 The environment has been dealt with patchily in the past, improvements have been made but the average annual level of investment in the district since the major phase of building ended has been low. It has been insufficient to check the slow advance of drabness, which will slowly get worse rather than better, and a few years' growth of car ownership will produce a new and acute pressure which could cause the rate of deterioration to quicken. Yet many of the environmental defects could be dealt with by straightforward action—mostly by the local authority—if that action were taken in a co-ordinated way. A certain amount of land is readily and cheaply available, in the highway or derelict, and use of this land to improve the environment would not be expensive and would be welcomed by residents.

### **The case for a rehabilitation policy for Deeplish**

5.16 The arguments for a rehabilitation policy for Deeplish are the length of time that most of the existing housing is likely to be in use, the favourable attitudes of the residents to the district, the structural soundness of most of the housing, and the need to check the deterioration of the environment and in the few poorly maintained houses.

5.17 The arguments against a rehabilitation policy are that nearly three-quarters of the houses are owner-occupied and the owner-occupiers have already considerably improved their own houses, and are likely to carry on with this work; whereas the landlords will be difficult to persuade to carry out improvements in tenanted property. The lack of space in the curtilages of the houses would make it impossible to bring them up to modern standards without extensive demolition and expensive conversion. Similarly, the density of the blocks of housing does not allow enough space for cars or for safe playgrounds near the houses, without expensive clearance.

5.18 In the future, however, the balance of advantage is likely to change as people become less satisfied with the Deeplish houses and environment. But radical rehabilitation of the houses and improvements to the environment which bite into house curtilages, would be very expensive, would displace existing residents and dispossess owner-

occupiers. Thus some of the present sources of satisfaction with living in Deeplish—low rents, owner-occupation and stability of residence—would be destroyed. Owner-occupiers, especially those who had improved their houses would be indignant at the compulsory purchase of their homes. Moreover, even the most extensive improvements, such as those discussed in Sector Study 3, would not bring the houses and their environment up to modern standards in many respects.

5.19 Some simple improvements in the environment could, however, be carried out relatively cheaply and would be popular with the existing residents. These need not affect the pattern of ownership; they would be compatible with the likely life of the houses and make a definite contribution to the self-respect of the residents. Similarly, some modernisation of the houses could be promoted to help those who now wish for the standard amenities, and to make sure that those who set up house in Deeplish in the future should find houses of socially acceptable standards.

5.20 Thus, taking all these factors together, a modest level of investment would seem to be the right target for Deeplish. The first scheme of improvement suggested in the sector studies would be the type of improvement policy which would be the most feasible. The improvement area procedure of the Housing Act, 1964, could be used to implement this; the boundaries of such an improvement area would need to be considered, since the survey shows that there are substantial parts of Deeplish either too poor or too good for inclusion in an improvement area. The improvements to the environment, which should be made as part of a planned programme, need not be made exactly over the same area provided that the tests set out in paragraphs 5.25 to 5.28 below are met.

### **Implications: (a) Deeplish as an improvement area**

5.21 The study examined some of the implications of making Deeplish an improvement area. It will be seen from the descriptive part of this report that the human factors involved would raise difficulties, and that the 'managerial' problems would also be substantial. This section discusses some of these difficulties and possible solutions.

5.22 The tenants were divided about whether they wanted their houses improved. Whether unwilling tenants could be persuaded would depend very much on the way the procedure was handled. Public relations work, and individual interviewing, would be necessary. The objections of a sizeable proportion could be met through co-operation with the National Assistance Board, when they could be assured that allowances from the National Assistance Board could be given or increased when the rent is increased. Such an assurance could only be given in cases

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<i>Deduct</i> owners willing to instal them	113	9	122
Houses with at least 15 years life remaining without improvements at the end of a few years	183	242	425

5.13 The total of houses remaining without improvement would be somewhat reduced after further change of tenure from renting to owner-occupation. Meanwhile, the unimproved, mostly rented houses, will probably deteriorate and the discrepancy between the improvement to the owner-occupied houses and the dilapidation in the rented houses and in the environment, already noticed by some owner-occupiers, is likely to become more acute. Eventually, when the present generation of old people, who are accustomed to low standards, die out, more people will be dissatisfied. As people acquire more wealth and possessions, they are likely to move out of or avoid living in such a district, which would be increasingly inhabited by the poor and the old.

### Summary of the physical survey

5.14 The conclusions of the physical survey turn upon the broad classification of renewal priorities throughout Rochdale. These suggest that even at an increased rate of building most of Deeplish is unlikely to be redeveloped within the next twenty years, or possibly longer. There is

nothing to suggest that economic changes will lead to its redevelopment on a commercial basis before then. The pockets of the worst housing will probably go, but most of the area will remain standing. Throughout the area the property is divided in small units among many owners, and this will inhibit private proposals for any but small-scale rebuilding. Although some houses have been so badly looked after that they are hardly worth repairing, the basic structure of most of them is sound and they will last for many years if they are properly repaired and maintained.

5.15 The environment has been dealt with patchily in the past, improvements have been made but the average annual level of investment in the district since the major phase of building ended has been low. It has been insufficient to check the slow advance of drabness, which will slowly get worse rather than better, and a few years' growth of car ownership will produce a new and acute pressure which could cause the rate of deterioration to quicken. Yet many of the environmental defects could be dealt with by straightforward action—mostly by the local authority—if that action were taken in a co-ordinated way. A certain amount of land is readily and cheaply available, in the highway or derelict, and use of this land to improve the environment would not be expensive and would be welcomed by residents.

### **The case for a rehabilitation policy for Deeplish**

5.16 The arguments for a rehabilitation policy for Deeplish are the length of time that most of the existing housing is likely to be in use, the favourable attitudes of the residents to the district, the structural soundness of most of the housing, and the need to check the deterioration of the environment and in the few poorly maintained houses.

5.17 The arguments against a rehabilitation policy are that nearly three-quarters of the houses are owner-occupied and the owner-occupiers have already considerably improved their own houses, and are likely to carry on with this work; whereas the landlords will be difficult to persuade to carry out improvements in tenanted property. The lack of space in the curtilages of the houses would make it impossible to bring them up to modern standards without extensive demolition and expensive conversion. Similarly, the density of the blocks of housing does not allow enough space for cars or for safe playgrounds near the houses, without expensive clearance.

5.18 In the future, however, the balance of advantage is likely to change as people become less satisfied with the Deeplish houses and environment. But radical rehabilitation of the houses and improvements to the environment which bite into house curtilages, would be very expensive, would displace existing residents and dispossess owner-

occupiers. Thus some of the present sources of satisfaction with living in Deeplish—low rents, owner-occupation and stability of residence—would be destroyed. Owner-occupiers, especially those who had improved their houses would be indignant at the compulsory purchase of their homes. Moreover, even the most extensive improvements, such as those discussed in Sector Study 3, would not bring the houses and their environment up to modern standards in many respects.

5.19 Some simple improvements in the environment could, however, be carried out relatively cheaply and would be popular with the existing residents. These need not affect the pattern of ownership; they would be compatible with the likely life of the houses and make a definite contribution to the self-respect of the residents. Similarly, some modernisation of the houses could be promoted to help those who now wish for the standard amenities, and to make sure that those who set up house in Deeplish in the future should find houses of socially acceptable standards.

5.20 Thus, taking all these factors together, a modest level of investment would seem to be the right target for Deeplish. The first scheme of improvement suggested in the sector studies would be the type of improvement policy which would be the most feasible. The improvement area procedure of the Housing Act, 1964, could be used to implement this; the boundaries of such an improvement area would need to be considered, since the survey shows that there are substantial parts of Deeplish either too poor or too good for inclusion in an improvement area. The improvements to the environment, which should be made as part of a planned programme, need not be made exactly over the same area provided that the tests set out in paragraphs 5.25 to 5.28 below are met.

### **Implications : (a) Deeplish as an improvement area**

5.21 The study examined some of the implications of making Deeplish an improvement area. It will be seen from the descriptive part of this report that the human factors involved would raise difficulties, and that the 'managerial' problems would also be substantial. This section discusses some of these difficulties and possible solutions.

5.22 The tenants were divided about whether they wanted their houses improved. Whether unwilling tenants could be persuaded would depend very much on the way the procedure was handled. Public relations work, and individual interviewing, would be necessary. The objections of a sizeable proportion could be met through co-operation with the National Assistance Board, when they could be assured that allowances from the National Assistance Board could be given or increased when the rent is increased. Such an assurance could only be given in cases

where the other conditions governing the award of an assistance allowance are fulfilled.

5.23 What would be the probable result of an improvement area proposal, put forward with tact and energy and meeting with an average amount of luck in the public response? It might lead to the installation of amenities in perhaps two-thirds of the 400 houses which are otherwise likely to remain without them over the next few years. The remaining houses without amenities would all be owner-occupied, since compulsion could, in the last resort, be used only in respect of tenanted houses. If the owner-occupiers were offered loans, and if the council would also arrange for the work to be done for them, some of them would be willing to install amenities. But the elderly poor, and people with low incomes and large families, are not likely to want to meet the extra cost, and large families would not have the space to spare in the house. The problem of large families could be solved only by moving, or in some cases by building on a bathroom at the back. As for the elderly, one way of approach might be to get the houses improved on change of occupation - perhaps through an arrangement with agents to inform the council of changes. A new occupant, who is already facing some upheaval anyway, might be willing to see the house improved for him, especially if loans for the cost of works, and the use of the Council's facilities, were available.

#### **Implications : (b) Improvement of the environment**

5.24 The association of environmental with house improvement should help to make the houses more desirable and more worthwhile for investment. Part of the effort in improving the appearance of the area must come from owners (for example, external painting of houses) and there may be things other public bodies can do to make the place more convenient to live in (telephone call boxes, or more convenient bus routes). But the lead should come from the local authority, and there are a number of things they can do under a variety of existing powers. In Deeplish those that are compatible with a low level of investment include making-up and repairing the streets and lighting them better; removing the eyesores and creating playgrounds, amenity areas and spaces for car parking. The selection among these will be governed partly by the opportunities to be found in the particular site; but there are also a number of general considerations.

5.25 A first consideration would be the broad amount of money that can be put in, after looking at alternative possibilities, and considering also the improvements to main services which the improvement of the houses may make necessary. There is obviously advantage in giving some preference to investment which will continue to be

of benefit on ultimate redevelopment. Secondly, there would be advantage in selecting as the first measures those which make some quick and obvious impact, to encourage owners and assure them of the council's intention to continue to care for the area. In Deeplish, the clearance of the rubbish-strewn vacant sites, and their transformation into pleasant places, would at once make a good impression.

5.26 Thirdly, it would be desirable to see that opportunities are preserved to provide for needs which will become more pressing later. Improvements in the traffic arrangements and provision for off-street car parking seem now most likely to be important.

5.27 Fourth, there is the need to appreciate any advantages in the site or its layout, and to see how these can be used to the greatest benefit. This is perhaps the hardest task. Chapter 4 has described what might be done with the valley and the church in Deeplish. Many areas have some point of equal potential interest, which should be looked for and developed. This would require not only a sympathetic imagination, to see what could be made of what is already there, but also a knowledge of what the town may need in the way of sites and facilities—it is valuable to realise that a hilltop is a good potential site for a school or other public buildings; it is doubly valuable to realise at the same time that a search is being made for a site for just such a building. A town such as Rochdale may well need a substantial building for recreational or community purposes and such a building could well form the focus of redevelopment in the valley.

#### **Pilot scheme**

5.28 The conclusions set out above are to the effect that, carefully planned and managed, a limited programme of improvements to the houses and the environment is physically feasible, could be made acceptable to the residents and would make Deeplish more attractive and comfortable during the years it will probably continue to stand. We therefore recommend a demonstration scheme for an appropriate part of Deeplish to show what rehabilitation can achieve on the ground, to gain experience of the management of a concerted effort of rehabilitation and of the means to secure the co-operation of residents and owners.

5.29 The pilot scheme would seek to bring as many as possible of the 'management functions' of the local authority into a single simplified pattern of operation. The aim would be to develop a co-ordinated policy for the area, embracing a number of functional policies for individual aspects of local authority work usually applied to the

whole town, and not necessarily co-ordinated in their application to any specific area.

5.30 The first task would be to stimulate interest amongst the residents, to make the Council's intentions clear and to explain the service which was being offered. The study showed that good public relations would probably produce an initial burst of interest and this opportunity could be exploited in the demonstration project. With the help of local organisations and local government representatives, it might be possible to form an advisory committee of residents and owners. This committee would be consulted about alternative plans, help to keep the residents informed about changes, and stimulate responsibility for the care of the improved environment.

5.31 As part of the 'managerial' side of the pilot scheme, the following services might be offered to the general public:

- (a) *Financial*: Information, advice, application forms for standard grants, discretionary grants, loans, mortgages with the local authority, contact with the National Assistance Board, etc.
- (b) *Technical*: Information, advice, application forms (for byelaw approval, etc.), standard letters to builders. A manual of standard conversion drawings could be assembled with specifications and estimated costs, supplemented by technical advice. Advice could be given in town planning and public health matters.
- (c) *Practical*: Maintain a list of builders. If inclusion on this list could be made really attractive to local jobbing builders, this would give a useful influence over the quality of work. There could be advantage in bulk purchase of standard fittings for resale to improvers and, later, the same might be done for standardised house extensions and structural units.
- (d) *Public relations*: The organisation of improvement will involve a certain amount of general advice and assistance. Rehousing of occupants might be necessary; house exchanges might be arranged in co-operation with the Housing Department. The varied problems of the aged, the young owner-occupier, the poorer landlords, will require a flexible approach. One accessible office, where the staff would be concerned with the work going on in the area, should be available for inquiries and advice to the public.

### General factors

5.32 During the course of the study it became clear that several factors would prove important for a local authority reviewing its district with an eye to selecting improvement

areas—a task which local authorities are required to discharge by the Housing Act 1964.

5.33 The first of these factors is the order of redevelopment priorities over the town as a whole. As Chapter 2 points out, most of the houses in Deeplish, considered simply as structures, are sound, and if kept in good repair would last indefinitely. The time when it would become imperative to replace them is a long way off.

5.34 The volume of resources of all kinds that is being devoted, and is likely to be devoted in the future, to house-building in Rochdale has to be compared with the job these resources have to do—unfit houses to be replaced, additional houses to be provided for the increase in the number of households, and houses which, although fit, must be replaced because the land they occupy is needed for other purposes such as new roads. Chapter 2 makes the point that the housing problem in Rochdale is such that it is likely to be many years before redevelopment touches substantially the middling band of housing of which Deeplish is representative.

5.35 The study has done no more than point to the housing factors to be looked at, and some of the sources of information already available for assessing them, in forming a 'town renewal programme'. But in addition to data about the houses themselves, the local authority will also have, or be in the process of acquiring, other 'appraisal data' relating to their town, such as the first outline of a primary network of main roads, an outline of the environmental areas from which through traffic is to be excluded, and an outline of areas whose architectural or townscape quality makes it desirable to make special efforts to retain or enhance them. These patterns for other aspects of the town's life and growth will need to be looked at as well before a view can be formed about the number of years of life any individual district has.

5.36 Even so, a margin must be allowed for error and for unforeseen changes in the pattern. The data available for assessing housing life and condition give their best results when applied to the two ends of the spectrum; there is rarely much doubt as to what constitutes either a very good house or a very poor one. It is in the middle, in the bands which include most of Deeplish, that reliable assessments are hardest to form. It is accordingly necessary to keep the renewal programme as flexible as possible when applied to these bands of housing. The first draft of such a programme, the study shows, can be drawn up now, using the best information available, but it must be frequently revised, and there is a case for small sample surveys to increase the accuracy of the information available for areas, or categories of property, which are particularly important to the strategy.

5.37 As authorities increasingly lift their sights above the task of clearing the known unfit houses, the situation they face becomes much more complex, and the result of acting without such a programme may be that investment is misdirected.

5.38 A second factor which the study shows up as important in this context, is the number and kind of opportunities the area offers to make investment on the houses and the environment with a satisfactory return for it. The possibilities of improvement to the houses are determined by the common house type and layouts – the width of frontage, the size of backyard, the number of bedrooms and the placing of the staircase within the house are examples of important factors. It is necessary to know what the common house types are, what their number and distribution within the area are, and to have a ready-made idea of what can be done to each type for various levels of investment. The study team went some way towards compiling a set of standardised designs for the houses which they discovered to be most common in Deeplish.

5.39 For improvement to the environment, two dominating factors in the area studied were the amount of unused or under-used space which could be made available for making up deficiencies in open space and car parking, and the characteristics of the street layout; did the layout lend itself, for example, to the formation of cul-de-sacs, or loop roads if they were justified by present or anticipated future traffic? The more open space, and the more convenient its distribution, the easier it may be to provide playgrounds, car parks, electricity sub-stations, a new primary school, some trees, or whatever the district needs most. In addition to these, other areas might have unpleasant industrial uses or heavy flows of through traffic, and it would be necessary to see whether these defects in the environment could be reduced, or kept within bounds, at reasonable expense.

5.40 The third factor which must be taken into account is the social character of the area and whether it is changing. In Deeplish most of the owner-occupiers were caring for their houses and people were attached to the neighbourhood. However, although the present residents were fairly settled and satisfied, in the future the district could run down if nothing were done to improve it. Other areas, which do not exhibit the same social stability, might already have reached the stage of obvious decline. The information collected in the course of this study relates only to Deeplish, and it would not be safe to assume that it is automatically true of all areas which superficially look like Deeplish. The social character of any area will be influenced by the general housing situation of the particular town. The opportunity to choose preferable residential areas could make a difference to the future of the area and

so to the length of time it could reasonably be expected to stand without becoming derelict. This in turn would affect the investment it was reasonable to make in it and the kinds of work into which this investment should go.

5.41 Finally, it is clear that there is a relationship between the expected life of the area and the total investment that is reasonable in it now, and that the kind of investment, as well as its total amount, can be altered by an alteration in the life expectancy. For example, it may be that expenditure by the local authority on land acquisition becomes progressively more attractive as redevelopment nears, although the progression may not be even. Investment in improvements which 'create space' such as simple playgrounds or car parks, may also be more attractive as redevelopment nears. On the other hand, expenditure on permanent structures amortized over forty or sixty years supposes a long life for the area.

