



Mrs Barney in Falkner Street: one of the tenants who have to move.

Break-up of a community

FAMILIES are being moved out of their homes in the city centre... so the houses can be made into flats for lecturers and students.

This is being done by Liverpool Corporation and the university, and not by profit-hungry landlords.

The university are turning 35-59 Falkner Street and 4-22 Catherine Street into eighty self-contained bedsitters and flats, with the aid of large improvement grants.

This scheme to provide student housing near the campus has some advantages, but it raises a number of disturbing issues:

- The number of houses available to families in the popular inner area will be reduced.

- The houses have been allowed to decay over recent years, although many are owned by the Corporation. Now that they are to be improved the tenants are being moved out.

- The university will claim about £144,000 in improvement grants to convert Falkner Street houses into 30 one-bedroom flats, four two-bedroom flats and three double bedsitters; and Catherine Street houses into 43 self-contained bedsitters. But the original purpose of improvement grants, it could be argued, was to help the needy.

- Liverpool Corporation have taken on the major burden of rehousing the tenants but they have no legal obligation. Some years ago the university set up the Abercromby Housing Association to do exactly this kind of work.

- The Corporation have even con-

sidered using closing orders (declaring houses unfit) to speed up the scheme.

- The rehoused tenants, through no fault of their own, have jumped the housing list. There is no compulsory purchase order, and many of the homes, once repaired, would be quite habitable.

The Catherine Street/Falkner Street project is just part of a scheme to provide student housing in this area.

Behind the flats, the university will build five new three-storey hostels to cater for 237 students, which will border on Sugnall and Caledonian streets, once the houses are demolished.

The university only took this area because they were not allowed to build on a three-acre site in Myrtle Street or behind the Children's Hospital.

PRESSURE

Only pressure from the Planning Department has stopped the university's planning sub-committee knocking down all the houses in the Catherine/Falkner Street area.

But most of the responsibility for breaking up the community in this area lies with the Corporation. They have left the job to the Housing Associations and the university and allowed the area to decay, although they are the landlords of many of the houses.

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CITY LAND SALE SCANDAL

PROPERTY developers Galliford Estates have made about £150,000 profit in two months, by re-selling land bought from Liverpool Corporation.

They have sold the 12.4 acres in Belle Vale to millionaire builder Derek Barnes, whose own higher-priced tender was turned down by the Corporation.

Barnes, who has clashed with a number of planning authorities, is now hoping to build houses which the Corporation previously said were unacceptable.

The story of the 12.4 acres began about a year ago when the city advertised the land for housing development.

Seven schemes were put forward, but the Housing Committee decided four were invalid.

Among the rejected schemes were plans by Daleholme Estates who offered £266,000 and GCT who offered £328,500. Both firms were separate at the time, but in July 1972 Barnes, who owned GCT, took over Daleholme.

REJECTED

Daleholme's scheme was rejected because they wanted to build garages in blocks. GCT's scheme was for three-bedroom houses which, the company said, were for four people. The Corporation felt they were designed for five, which meant Barnes was trying to cram too many people on to the site.

What interests the Corporation is that Mr Broom, the architect for GCT's rejected scheme, is now architect for Daleholme.

The first the Corporation heard about the re-sale of the land was in October when the Town Clerk received a plan for the roads on the site, which was apparently Galliford's scheme, but with Daleholme's name on it.

When questioned, Galliford said: 'We have been worried by the requirements of conditions of sale, which said that we must start work within six months, and the developments to be completed in two years.'

Galliford also blamed the shortage of materials, shortage of labour and the recent militancy of the building workers.

Even the Town Clerk was sceptical about these excuses, and wrote

Their view of Barnes

THE MAYOR of Barrow-in-Furness told speculative builder Derek Barnes he was 'no longer welcome in our town' This followed complaints that he had gazumped local people by adding £1,000 on the price of new houses.

THE TOWN CLERK of Haslingden, Lancashire, told Barnes to stop work on a 299-home housing estate. He accused Barnes' firm of building some houses without full planning permission, and with foundations and floors too small.

back saying so.

As Barnes was prepared to offer £51,500 more than Galliford's a year ago, he must have paid far more than this now, for prices have rocketed.

Galliford bought the 12.4 acres for £277,000 (more than £22,000 an acre). In June this year Barnes paid the Corporation about £35,000 an acre for land off Macketts Lane, Halewood.

As the Belle Vale land is in a more select position, Barnes may have paid more than £35,000 an acre for the site (over £430,000 in all).

If so, Galliford will have made a cool £153,000. Not bad for just submitting a tender and scheme.

Deals such as this explain why Galliford's profits last year jumped from £426,000 to £1,622,000.

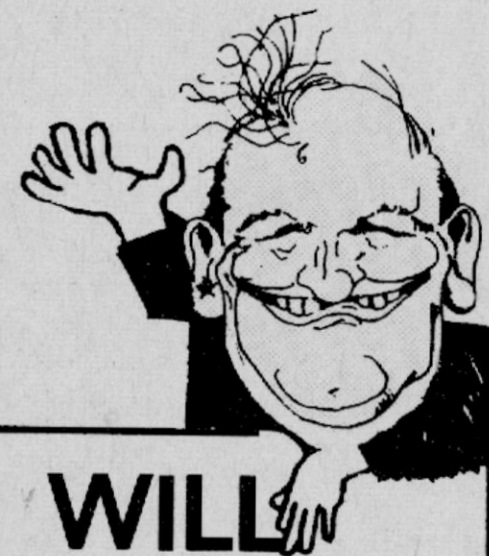
Barnes has done even better. His profits have shot up from £147,000 in 1966 to £2.8 million last year.

The millionaire builder, who has 17 sites on Merseyside, is notorious amongst building workers for using 'lump' labour which enables him to ignore all safety regulations, and which can lead to slipshod building.

But despite this profiteering, Mr Stanley Holmes, Liverpool's Town Clerk, is resisting attempts to put legal limits on companies buying and then re-selling Corporation land.

While Liverpool continues selling land the profiteering will continue. At the very least, Barnes and Galliford should never again be allowed to put in tenders.

THE HOUSE THAT BARNES BUILT - PAGE SIX



WILLIAM WILLIAM CONQUER?

BUSINESSMAN Alderman William Sefton and his right-wing Labour colleagues are worried.

For their political careers may receive a nasty blow.

Everywhere they turn they find next year's safe election seats already occupied.

For Labour wards are staging revolts against councillors who voted to implement the 'Fair' Rents Act. This has come just when the re-organisation of local government is to be introduced - which means fewer seats for councillors on the Metropolitan Council and the abolition of Aldermen.

Already all 20 safe Labour seats for the Metropolitan Council look certain to go to the 21 Labour Group (those who have kept up the fight against the Rents Act).

Old stalwarts like Ian Levin have been kicked out as candidate for their wards.

On the other hand, some of the 21 Group have been on short lists for as many as eight wards.

Now Sefton, still without a seat, and egged on by his frantic friends is trying a new tactic to stop the Left landslide.

He is writing to Labour's National Executive to point out that it is against the party constitution not to attend official group meetings.

As the 21 Group haven't attended a meeting since the rents vote, they could all be expelled and not allowed to stand for the Metropolitan Council.

However, this outcome is thought unlikely as it would split the party in Liverpool for years. But then, what's a split when prestige council seats are at stake?

By ALAN DUNN: Everton 1, West Ham United 2

The sheer pleasure of watching that footballing artist, Bobby Moore, enlivening another canvas is tempered these days by the thought that he cannot go on for ever.

But on Goodison Park's fluorescently green pitch on Saturday he was so captivatingly handsome that he seemed to have captured the secret of eternal youth.

Everton, sensible of the occasion, had Kendall present to Moore a cut glass decanter before the match and then fell victim to the man's sheer magnetism, tossing pass after pass in his direction and being unnerved by every flicker of his blond eyebrows.

THE GUARDIAN

Workers of Dunlop unite!

DUNLOP workers on Merseyside have made a remarkable gesture of unity in a bid to stop 100 Rochdale workers losing their jobs.

Recently Dunlop's Speke management announced they would be closing down their Rochdale factory and moving all the work to Speke.

But shop stewards from the Dunlop factories in Speke, Walton, Glasgow, Birmingham, Skelmersdale

and Leicester have met and agreed not to allow this transfer of work.

Mr Stan Pemberton, a convenor at Speke said: "We decided not to accept the Rochdale factory work while the Rochdale lads were prepared to fight for their jobs."

"The decision, made by the shop stewards' combine committee, has been reported back to the Dunlop management. The ball is now firmly in their court."

"The Rochdale area is notoriously short of jobs, and has a very high unemployment percentage."

The Rochdale factory is a large holding factory store and major distribution centre employing over 100 people.

The Dunlop workers are hoping this show of solidarity will be one of the best ways of stopping closures, redundancies, asset-stripping and the transfer of work.