

**REPORT FROM:** Neighbourhood Services Manager

**TO:** Brierfield and Reedley Committee

**DATE:** 7 February 2017

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## 6-12 Cambridge Street Brierfield

### PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide an update on improving the condition of the empty terrace at 6-12 Cambridge Street Brierfield.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

That the report is noted and officers continue to explore options to ensure the site remains safe and secure and to bring it back into use.

### REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

To ensure that empty properties in Brierfield and Reedley are managed.

### ISSUE

1. The terrace of four houses at 6-12 Cambridge Street has been empty for several years. At least two of the properties are fire damaged and the remainder are unlettable. Two of the four are owned by the owner of a local business and two by absentee landlords.
2. Building Control has visited the site to look at the walls to the rear yards and concluded that the remaining structures are not currently dangerous. The rubble from the already collapsed walling is not considered dangerous from a structural view point and therefore the use of section 77 or 78 of the Building Act 1984 would not be appropriate. In order to clean up the rear yards the more appropriate course of action would be to use a Community Protection Notice or a Section 215 notice.
3. Properties 6 and 8 were open to access at the rear. Environmental Protection is dealing with this under section 29(2) Local Government Miscellaneous Provisions Act.

4. In terms of the general condition of the properties a potential course of action would be to serve a section 79 notice of the Building Act 1984. This deals with “Ruinous and dilapidated buildings and neglected sites”. A Notice would need to be served on each owner requiring them to “execute such repairs or restoration” as necessary. In order to do this a schedule of work to bring the property back into reasonable repair is required. Alternatively, each owner could elect to demolish their particular building rather than repair it. As the four houses are in three different ownerships this could create difficulties if there was not a consensus amongst the owners to repair or demolish in order to comply with the section 79 notice.
5. The Private Sector Housing Team has been trying to contact owners to establish whether they intend to do anything with the properties or are prepared to sell. Should these enquiries fail in either respect the Team will assess the feasibility of compulsory purchase as an option to improve the site.

## **IMPLICATIONS**

**Policy:** None

**Financial:** There are currently no funds identified to compulsory purchases the properties.

**Legal:** None currently.

**Risk Management:** None

**Health and Safety:** As empty houses attract anti social behaviour there are potential risks for officers inspecting these houses. However there are departmental risk assessments in place to minimise these hazards

**Sustainability:** The reoccupation of empty properties will bring a valuable resource back into use.

**Community Safety:** Empty houses attract anti social behaviour and fly tipping. Bringing the site back into use will reduce these activities and improve the neighbourhood.

**Equality and Diversity:** None