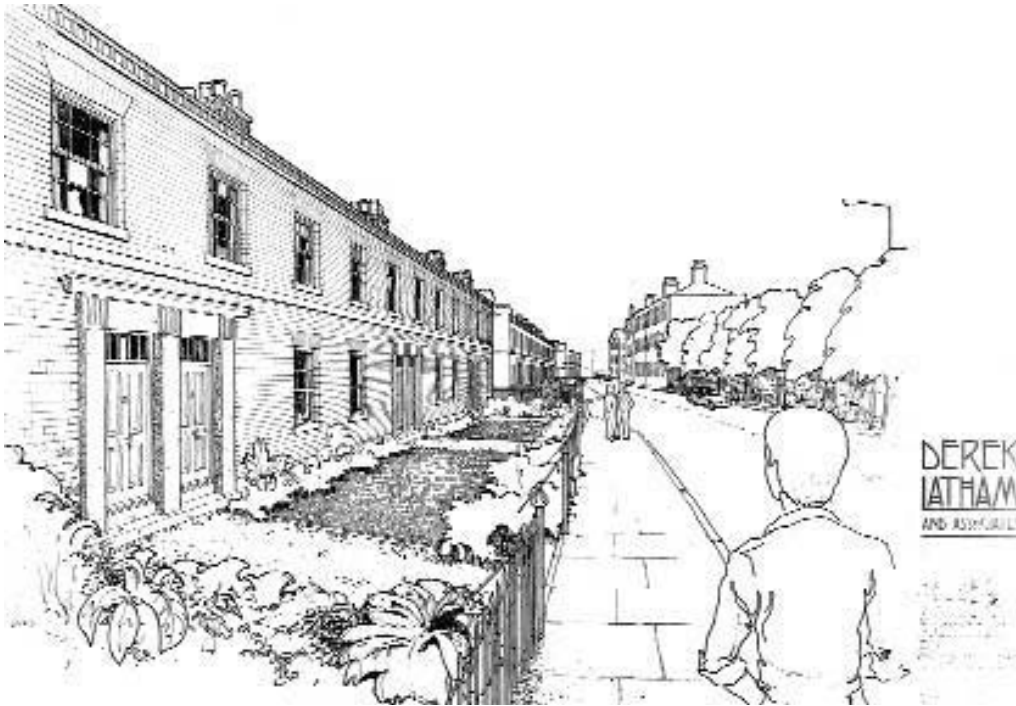


**Figure 5.21** Railway Cottages, Derby. Sketch.



reasonable alternative to council housing was the rehabilitation of the cottages for sale on the open market. With this in mind the cottages were bought by Derbyshire Historic Buildings Trust.

Agents advised that there was no market for terraced housing in Derby. The professional view of Estate Agents was that people in Derby wanted either detached or semi-detached houses. In 1979, at the start of the development process, the value of an unimproved terraced house was £5000, and £8000 when improved. After rehabilitation, it was estimated that there would be a shortfall of £2000 per house. This was not a particularly favourable market prediction.

‘The key to this conundrum lay in identifying what the market need was and delivering a product that satisfied that need in a unique manner.’<sup>25</sup> The

market identified was for conveniently located dwellings which were attractive two- and three-bedroom houses of compact form but not of minimum size. They were to have generously proportioned rooms, were to be economic to heat, set in an attractive surrounding with a defensible space outside the front door, a decent sized garden and adjacent car parking space. The result of this market research informed the project programme and set the design objectives.

The project was declared a General Improvement Area which made it possible to seek ways to improve the physical context of the properties. Roads on the edge of the site and within it were closed or part closed. This permitted the introduction of gardens with railings and some dedicated car parking space allocated to specific properties. These