

Address:	12 and 12A Westbere Road London NW2 3SR	
Application Number:	2006/4006/P	Officer: Matthew Durling
Ward:	Fortune Green	
Date Received:	29/08/2006	
Proposal: Erection of two part two, part three-storey dwellinghouses with basement level accommodation and courtyards.		
Drawing Numbers: C2005/P301, P302, P303, P304, P305, P306; Email from Neal Cousins (dated 29/05/2007) regarding EcoPlay Water Management System; Email from Neal Cousins (dated 31/05/2007) regarding Lifetime Homes Standards; Solar Energy Alliance Information Pack.		
RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY: Grant planning permission subject to conditions		
Applicant:	Agent:	
Mr Gino Chiappetta 1 Donnington Road London NW10 3QR	Realisation by Design 4 Dyke Lane Wheathampstead ST. ALBANS AL4 8NN	

ANALYSIS INFORMATION

Land Use Details:			
	Use Class	Use Description	Floorspace
Existing	C3 Dwelling House	(one dwellinghouse)	114m ²
Proposed	C3 Dwelling House	(two dwellinghouses)	332m ²

Residential Use Details:										
	Residential Type	No. of Habitable Rooms per Unit								
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9+
Existing	Dwellinghouse			2						
Proposed	Dwellinghouse						2			

Parking Details:		
	Parking Spaces (General)	Parking Spaces (Disabled)
Existing	0	0
Proposed	0	0

OFFICERS' REPORT

Reason for Referral to Committee: the proposal is for the erection of more than one single dwellinghouse [Clause 3(ii)].

1. SITE

- 1.1.1 The application site is located at the southern end and on the north-eastern side of Westbere Road. The application site does not lie within a Conservation Area. The site is currently occupied by two semi-detached, two-storey, single-family dwellings. Neither building is listed. Both properties have white painted rendered walls with differently pitched roofs, contrasting with the brickwork finish, height and form of neighbouring properties in the area.
- 1.1.2 The northern frontage of this particular part of Westbere Road is topographically higher than the southern frontage. Dwellings are typically elevated above street level and are set back into the site, characterised by an embankment, terraced front garden and/or stepped access to the houses. Both application properties are situated on raised ground, approximately 1.2 metres above the street level. They have small front garden areas at street level and no rear gardens or off-street parking provision.
- 1.1.3 The site referred to as No. 12 is a somewhat constrained site by virtue of its minimal site area and orientation. The urban grain of the area would indicate that the site would have originally formed part of the rear garden of No. 9 Sarre Road, situated to the north. Similarly, 12A Westbere Road (east of the site) would have formed part of No. 7 Sarre Road. In this regard, it is considered that Nos. 12 and 12A constitute 'bookends' to a fairly consistent grouping of Victorian terraced properties to the west. The rear gardens of Nos. 3&5 Sarre Road form the frontage to Westbere Road, east of the application site.

2. THE PROPOSAL

Original

- 2.1 Since planning permission was granted in 2005 for the redevelopment of 12 Westbere Road (see para. 3.1), the adjacent site comprising 12A Westbere Road has been acquired by the applicant. The current application therefore proposes to demolish both Nos. 12 and 12A Westbere Road and to erect two replacement single-family dwellings with basement level accommodation.

Revision

- 2.2 Addition of solar panels on front roofslope of 12A and flat roof of 12.

3. RELEVANT HISTORY

- 3.1 12 Westbere Road

- 06/01/2005: PP *granted* (application reference 2004/4641/P) for demolition of the existing dwelling and the erection of a new 2/3 storey single-family dwelling house. (not implemented)

3.2 12A Westbere Road

- No planning history

4. CONSULTATIONS

4.1 Adjoining Occupiers

	Original
<i>Number of letters sent</i>	37
<i>Total number of responses received</i>	8
<i>Number of electronic responses</i>	2
<i>Number in support</i>	2
<i>Number of objections</i>	6

4.2 6 letters of *objection* have been received. In summary, the following comments have been made;

- Object on grounds of visual impact; consider proposed buildings are of very different character to surrounding street and include basements;
- Do not consider there is a precedent for basements in the area and the proposal will not be in keeping with the character of the street;
- Consider the scale of the proposed development for the size of the land is significant;
- Consider the visual impact of the etched glass balustrade is completely at odds with the style of the surrounding buildings;
- Concern that a change in height of 12A Westbere Road will considerably affect sunlight to 5 and 7 Sarre Road;
- Concern that 5 and 7 Sarre Road (property and garden) will be overlooked by proposed development;
- Consider more details are required relating to the solar panels and water recycling system (mentioned in design statement); position of solar panels is not shown on the plans;
- Concern about disruption in terms of traffic, noise, dust and damage to adjoining gardens;
- Concern about risk of subsidence from proposed excavation;
- Concern that proposals will cause considerable disruption to existing utilities;
- Concern that proposals will have a serious impact on mature trees and gardens generally.

4.3 2 letters of *support* have been received. In summary, the following comments have been made;

- Consider the two buildings look quite sad and unloved;
- Consider the proposals will be a great asset to the street.

5. POLICIES

Set out below are the UDP policies that the proposals have primarily been assessed against, together with officers' view as to whether or not each policy listed has been complied with. However it should be noted that recommendations are based on assessment of the proposals against the development plan taken as a whole together with other material considerations.

5.1 Replacement Unitary Development Plan 2006

S1/S2 Sustainable development	<i>Complies</i>
SD6 Amenity for occupiers and neighbours	<i>Complies</i>
SD9 Resources and energy	<i>Complies</i>
SD8 Construction nuisance	<i>Complies</i>
H7 Lifetime Homes	<i>Complies</i>
B1 General design principles	<i>Complies</i>
B3 Alterations and extensions	<i>Complies</i>
N5 Biodiversity	<i>Complies</i>
N8 Ancient woodland and trees	<i>Complies</i>
T1 Sustainable transport	<i>Complies</i>
T3 Pedestrians and cycling	<i>Complies</i>
T8 Car free housing and car capped housing	<i>Complies</i>

5.2 Camden Planning Guidance 2006

- Cycle access – parking and storage
- Energy and onsite renewable facilities
- Landscaping and trees
- Lifetime Homes standards
- Residential development standards
- Roofs and terraces
- Waste and recyclables – onsite storage

6. ASSESSMENT

6.1 The principal considerations material to the determination of this application are summarised as follows:

- The principle of the development;
- The design and visual impact of the proposal;
- Proposed standard of residential amenity;
- Impact of the development on neighbour amenity;
- Sustainability;
- Impact of the development on biodiversity and existing trees;
- Impact of the development on the local transport infrastructure.

6.2 The principle of the development;

6.2.1 That part of the application relating to No.12 Westbere Road is similar to the application approved in 2005 (see para. 3.1 above), with the exception of an additional basement level. The principle of the redevelopment of this part of the site has been established by this approval and it is for these reasons that the principle of the redevelopment of the adjacent site comprising No. 12A Westbere Road is considered acceptable also.

6.3 The design and visual impact of the proposal;

6.3.1 With the exception of an additional basement level, the proposed development of No. 12 is identical in design to the development approved in 2005. Since this approval, officers have resisted a basement level of accommodation as part of further proposals for No. 12 on the basis that basements were considered uncharacteristic of the local area. It was also considered that as a stand-alone site, No. 12 would be unable to accommodate a respectably-sized basement level and courtyard, whilst simultaneously accommodating the bulk of the proposed building above. However, in the context of the two sites being developed together (no. 12 and No. 12A), it is considered that the combined site area and extended street frontage provides a more reasonable built-to-unbuilt ratio thus offsetting the additional basement level accommodation, and that the new basement lightwells as part of a new pair of houses in an end-of-terrace situation would not harm the streetscape compared to one in a new house sandwiched between existing properties. Furthermore, the proposed wall and railing to the front boundary will effectively screen the basement level courtyard from public views. The proposed front boundary treatment is respectful of the dimensions and characteristic of the boundary wall to No. 14 and maintains a scaled consistency at pedestrian level. On this basis, the basement level accommodation will not cause harm to the established character of the surrounding area and is considered to be acceptable.

6.3.2 The proposals for No. 12A essentially comprise a contemporary interpretation of the existing dwelling. It follows a similar building footprint thus allowing for adequate setbacks from the northern, eastern and southern boundaries. Given the site's proximity to No. 7 Sarre Road, the setback to the north is of particular importance in ensuring that there is an appropriate degree of separation between the two properties. No. 12A incorporates a contrasting pitched roof profile in relation to No. 12, and its roof height and profile effectively matches the existing one. This element takes its cue from the existing dwelling, albeit with contemporary detailing, with a marginally steeper pitch. It is considered that this composition relates well to the flat roof form of the proposed dwelling at No. 12 and, as a combination of dwellings, the replacement scheme provides a suitable contemporary intervention to the streetscene and termination to the end of terraces in this part of Westbere Road.

6.3.3 In terms of footprint, form and height, the proposed development is considered to be acceptable. The proposed building respects the front building line as established by the Victorian terraces to the west, with two projecting bay elements at either end being aligned with the square bays to No. 14. Similarly the building steps back at the rear from the rear building line of No. 14 to account for the tapering of the site as Westbere Road merges with Sarre Road. No. 12 is a part two, part three-storey scheme that orientates its highest component towards the west, taking its cue from the height of No. 14, whilst the height of No. 12A is lower, with the form relating to

the pitched roof of the existing property. The development is considered to relate well to the existing streetscene.

6.3.4 In terms of detailed design, the development is considered to add an element of visual interest to the local streetscene. In particular, the dormer window to the front elevation of No. 12A is considered to be sensitively located on the roofslope and subordinate to the development as a whole. The proposed louvres at first floor level on the front elevation are also considered to be acceptable, as are the proposed solar panels in terms of location and size. Overall, the proposed façade treatments (front and rear) have a simple compilation, achieved by a rationalisation of openings, screens and glazing. A simple and contemporary palette of materials is proposed and it is recommended that additional details and samples of the materials be requested by condition to ensure the highest quality is achieved.

6.3 Proposed standard of residential amenity;

6.3.1 The development comprises two semi-detached single dwellings. No.12 comprises basement, ground, first and second floor accommodation and No.12A comprises basement, ground and first floor. The basement level accommodation of both units comprises a main living space with kitchen, dining and living areas plus a bedroom with en-suite shower rooms. There is also direct access from the bedrooms and living areas in the basement floors to outdoor space in the form of two courtyards comprising over 14 square metres of floorspace. The accommodation at this level will be sufficiently well lit and ventilated by large rooflights to the rear and the open courtyards to the front.

6.3.2 The main access to both units will be at ground floor level, which comprises an entrance hall, large reception room, cloakroom and a study (to No. 12A). The first floor of both units will each accommodate two bedrooms and two bathrooms (one en-suite). The second floor of No. 12 will comprise a further bedroom, study and a roof terrace. The provision of outdoor space to both properties is welcomed in this location and makes the development more suitable for occupation by families.

6.3.3 Both of the proposed units and the individual bedrooms exceed the various minimum floorspace areas specified in the Camden Planning Guidance. Both units are considered to be well laid-out with sufficient access to natural light and ventilation.

6.3.3 Policy H7 encourages all new housing development to be accessible to all and requires all new accommodation to be built to 'Lifetime Homes' standards. Both proposed dwellings have been designed to be fully compliant with Lifetime Homes standards. In particular, both units have a level approach and access with living spaces at ground floor level that have the potential to be turned into bedrooms in the future. There is also sufficient space for the installation of a stairlift and tracking hoist to the ceiling. Adequate turning space is provided in both units for wheelchairs and walls in bathrooms and toilets are capable of being adapted to fix handrails.

6.3.4 Covered refuse and cycle storage areas have been shown behind the boundary walls to the front of both proposed properties, and indeed adequate space exists in

the courtyards for further space if required. In principle this is considered to be acceptable in size and location.

6.4 Impact on neighbour amenity;

6.5.1 With the exception of some minor alterations to the fenestration pattern and location of windows on the rear and side elevation, and some amendments to the rooflights at the rear, the proposed bulk, form and design of No. **12** Westbere Road remains as approved in 2005 (see relevant history). The re-configuration of the building at ground floor level to accommodate the rooflights to the rear will not result in a material loss of daylight or outlook to any adjoining occupiers. Furthermore the proposal will not cause any demonstrable harm to the amenity of any adjoining occupiers in terms of overlooking or loss of privacy, subject to conditions requiring additional information for the 1.8m high acid-etched glass screens to the roof terrace, the hardwood privacy screen to the rear and the obscure glazing of ground, first and second floor level windows on the side and rear elevation.

6.5.2 The height, bulk and roof form of No. **12A** is similar to the existing building. As such there will be no harm to the amenities of occupiers in Sarre Road, and in particular to the outlook, privacy or daylight/sunlight of rooms to the rear elevations of 5, 7 and 9 Sarre Road. The large window on the rear elevation at ground floor level will be below the top of the proposed fence to the rear of the site. It is not considered that either this window or the proposed rooflights in the rear roofslope will facilitate any harmful level of overlooking of the gardens or properties to the rear. Similarly, the windows at ground floor level in the side elevation will be below the top of the boundary with the garden of 5 Sarre Road and as such will not facilitate any overlooking. It is however proposed to obscure glaze the windows at first floor level on this elevation and it is recommended this be required by condition. As before, it is recommended that an additional condition be attached removing permitted development rights for the alteration of the fenestration to the rear of No. 12 and to the side of No. 12A.

6.5.3 Concerns relating to the risk of subsidence or disruption to existing utilities resulting from the proposed excavation works are not material to the assessment of this application and in any case the site is not in an area of known land instability. Any disruption caused by the construction works themselves are also not material to this application and is regulated by separate Environmental Health legislation.

6.6 Sustainability;

6.6.1 It was originally proposed to install a rainwater storage tank to both properties; however by virtue of the physical constraints of the site this is not a feasible option. To compensate for this, it is proposed to install a water management system that recycles bath and shower water and reuses it for flushing toilets. The *Ecoplay* system has a combined capacity of 100 litres, is maintenance-free and reduces mains water consumption and drainage in a typical household by up to 30%. The incorporation of water management systems into new developments is welcomed and supported by policy SD9.

- 6.6.2 The orientation of the site and design of the buildings also lend themselves well to the incorporation of solar panels. It is proposed to install three solar panels on the sloping roof of the front elevation of No. 12A (occupying a total roof area of 12 square metres) and to install nine solar panels in three rows on the flat roof of the second storey of No. 12. These panels will be angled at 45 degrees. Cumulatively, the solar panels will produce 1125 KW/Hrs/Yr of energy.
- 6.6.3 An informative will be attached to the permission advising that the Council expects all new buildings and structures to be as energy efficient and sustainable as is reasonably practicable and welcomes the measures that have been indicated to date. The proposal is considered to have regard to policy SD9, and as such is considered suitable for recommendation for approval.

6.5 Impact of the development on biodiversity and existing trees;

- 6.7.1 The proposed development would necessitate the loss of a single Yew tree at the front of the site. The principle of the loss of this tree has been accepted as part of approved application 2006/4641/P. The Yew is approximately 10m in height and by virtue of its raised location 1m above pavement level is prominent within the streetscene. The Yew tree would however require frequent maintenance to contain its growth as it causes serious problems of overshadowing. On balance it is considered that the future amenities of the area would be better served by the replacement of the Yew with a different species more suited to the site. There are no other trees within the vicinity of the site that would be adversely affected by the proposal or are worthy of additional protection.
- 6.7.2 It is proposed to replace the Yew tree with a Monkey Puzzle tree which, although an unusual choice, is welcomed in this location. This species is however particularly slow-growing and therefore in order for the tree to make a positive contribution to the site and to the character of the area, the tree should be planted as a semi-mature specimen. It is recommended that details of the replacement tree be required by condition.

6.6 Impact of the development on local transport infrastructure;

- 6.8.1 There is no off-street parking proposed as part of this scheme, and there would be no change from the existing situation in terms of onstreet parking demand. As existing, both dwelling units are eligible for on-street parking permits and it would be unreasonable to take away those rights and place parking restrictions on the replacement units. In terms of cycle storage, a covered area within the front boundary of both properties has been identified for combined cycle and refuse storage. The provision of such facilities is welcomed, and it is considered that locating them behind the front boundary wall will enhance the security of the storage.
- 6.8.2 Concerns have been raised by traffic officers for the potential for the demolition and construction to lead to unacceptable traffic disruption and create dangerous situations for pedestrians and other road users. As such a Construction Management Plan will need to be submitted and approved before any works start on site. It is recommended this be required by condition.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The replacement dwellings are considered to provide a good standard of family-sized residential accommodation that are Lifetime Homes compliant and have regard to the sustainability agenda. Furthermore, the buildings are considered to assimilate well into the immediate urban context given the constraints imposed by the configuration and orientation of the site, and subject to conditions on glazing, will not harm local amenity in terms of light or privacy. The replacement development is considered to comply with all relevant planning policy and guidance and as such is recommended for approval subject to conditions.

8. LEGAL COMMENTS

- 8.1 Members are referred to the note from the Legal Division at the start of the Agenda.