



44 Westbere Road, London, NW2 3RU

Planning Statement

Westbere Property Developments Ltd.

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Planning

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This is an explanatory planning statement to accompany the application for full planning permission for the subdivision of the existing vacant dwelling house, at 44 Westbere Road to provide 5 high quality flats (Class C3) comprising 2x studios, 1x1 bedroom unit and 2x2 bedroom units, with associated minor external alterations including dormers to the roof, rear ground floor half width extension and covered bicycle and waste storage.
- 1.1.2 The site is situated on the east side of Westbere Road, close to its junction with Minster Road. The site is currently vacant. The site falls within Class C3 of the Use Classes Order. The proposal represents an opportunity to provide 4 additional residential units.
- 1.1.3 This proposal brings forward the potential for significant benefits, including:
- The provision of a mix of residential unit sizes to meet local needs
 - A net increase in the number of residential units, contributing to Camden's total housing stock.
 - The provision of 40% of 'very high' priority 2 bedroom units.

1.2 Planning Statement

- 1.2.1 The statement provides an introduction to the application site and the surrounding area and will examine the planning issues raised by the current development proposals for the application site. In particular, this statement identifies and describes the key opportunities presented by the proposed subdivision of the site and an expansion to Camden's housing stock and improvements to its quality.
- 1.2.2 The statement also provides a comprehensive analysis of the relevant planning policy framework at national, strategic and local levels. As such, our planning statement is structured as follows:

Section 1: Introduction

Section 2: The Application Site and Surrounding Area – sets the context the current proposal and provides a detailed description of the application site and its previous uses;

Section 3: The Proposal – describes the proposed development;

Section 4: Relevant Planning Policies– summarises the planning policy relevant to this proposal at national, strategic and local levels;

Section 5: Planning Considerations – reviews the proposal in terms of the relevant policy context and other material considerations; and

Section 6: Conclusion

1.3 Supporting Application Documents

- 1.3.1 This planning statement should be read in conjunction with the following additional documents, which accompany the application:
- Design & Access Statement and Full set of Drawings – prepared by DMFK Architects.

- Lifetime Homes Assessment.

2.0 The Application Site and Surrounding Area

2.1 Site Description & Location

- 2.1.1 The application site is situated on the east side of Westbere Road, close to the junction with Minster Road.
- 2.1.2 The property comprises a two storey building with loft storage. The dwelling has a rear garden and a two storey rear closet wing.
- 2.1.3 The site is not in a Conservation Area nor is it a listed building.
- 2.1.4 The total existing floor space is approximately 215sqm. The proposed development will increase the floor space to 289sqm.
- 2.1.5 The site has a PTAL rating of 4, which indicates a good level of public accessibility. The site is situated between the National Rail Stations of Cricklewood and West Hampstead. To the south are several Jubilee Line stations, the closest being Kilburn. The bus route C11 (between Brent Cross and Upper Holloway) stops directly outside the application site.

2.2 Surrounding Area

- 2.2.1 The wider area is characterised by residential properties. The frontage of the property is similar in design to other properties along Westbere Road creating a uniform appearance to the street scene; however there is a mix of roof profiles along the street and within the surrounding area.
- 2.2.2 A number of properties within the street have been extended to the rear and some have full width rear extensions. 22 Asmara Road has been granted a single storey side extension (2014/4816/P) and 39 Westbere Road was granted permission for a single storey rear extension with a habitable loft conversion (2008/5630/P).
- 2.2.3 A few dwellings along the street also appear to have been converted from a single dwelling house into flats. 72 Westbere Road was granted permission to divide the family dwelling into 4 self-contained flats (2011/0448/P). 54 Westbere Road subdivided further from 2 flats into 4 self-contained flats (2004/3309/P). 28 Minster Road was granted approval to divide the property into 11 flats (F3/1/1/18369). Additionally, there is a history of properties converting from multiple units into single units. 25 Westbere Road converted from a 1x1bed and 1x3 bed units into a single family dwelling (2010/1930/P). 30 Westbere Road was granted permission to convert a ground floor flat and first floor/attic maisonette into a single dwelling (2010/2735/P). This area therefore has a precedent for changing the requirements to suit local housing needs.
- 2.2.4 The rear of the site backs onto the gardens of residential properties that front onto Asmara Road. Properties on Asmara Road are characteristically terraced dwellings. Hampstead School, a secondary and sixth form school is located nearby. Windmill Medical Practice is the nearest healthcare facility, approximately a 5 minute walk away. There are also a number of local convenience stores located in close proximity to the application site.
- 2.2.5 The site does not appear to be designated within an area with a relatively low proportion of large dwellings.

2.2.6 Westbere Copse Open Space is immediately opposite the application site; this is a local nature reserve and opens to the public. There is also extensive green space to the north of the site; Fortune Green Open Space, which accommodates playing fields for use by members of the public and a play area.

2.3 Relevant Planning History

2.3.1 Tabled below is a list of the relevant planning consents relating to this site:

Application Number	Description	Decision
2008/3805/P	Erection of a two storey rear extension in addition to the existing two storey rear extension.	Refused 09/12/08
2008/3800/P	Certificate of Lawfulness of proposed roof extensions to side and rear elevations of dwelling house	Granted 13/11/08

3.0 The Proposal

3.1.1 The proposal represents an opportunity to completely refurbish and renovate the existing vacant dwelling and increase the Borough's housing stock.

3.1.2 The proposed development is described as follows:

“Subdivision of the existing vacant dwellinghouse (Class 3) into five self-contained units comprising 2x studios, 1x1 bedroom unit and 2x2 bedroom units with associated minor alterations including dormers to the roof, rear ground floor half width extension and covered bicycle and waste storage to the front”.

3.1.3 With regards to the rear, it is proposed to add a single storey extension, to create a full width extension at ground floor level. This is in keeping with other approved extensions in the immediate area. There are no windows on the south eastern boundary. The size of the rear extension is 13.1sqm. With regards to the roof dormers, the existing building was approved permitted development rights for an extension at roof level in 2008 (2008/3800/P). The scale of this extension is comparable in scale to the one proposed in this application on the south-eastern edge. The northwest dormer is slightly larger; however this is not readily visible from the street nor is it considered to have an impact on the neighbouring amenity. The roof alterations will allow the third floor of the property to be utilised as a meaningful space, maximising the site's land use potential. The application also includes a number of internal alterations in connection with the conversion of the property into 5 flats.

3.1.4 Occupiers of flats 1, 3, 4 and 5 will access the property through the existing main entrance. The occupier of flat 2 will enter the property via the side access that separates 44 and 46 Westbere Road.

3.1.5 The proposed layout of the property will be:

Floor	Flat no.	Unit Mix	Unit Size (sqm)
Ground	1	2 bed (4p)	75
	2	Studio	39
First	3	2 bed (3p)	57
	4	Studio	37.3
Second	5	1 bed	58

3.1.6 The scheme proposes a car free development given the high accessibility level and excellent transport links. Cycle parking and plant/refuse storage is also provided at ground level in separate covered storage located towards the front elevation. 7 cycle storage spaces are proposed. The two units on the ground floor will be provided with two cycle storage spaces each in the associated rear gardens.

4.0 Relevant Planning Policies

4.1.1 The proposals for the application site take account of relevant national, regional and local planning policy. This section sets out the relevant adopted planning policy framework, against which the proposals are considered in Section 5 of this Statement.

4.2 Government Guidance (NPPF)

4.2.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) March 2012 – the NPPF sets out the Governments planning policies for England. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (Paragraph 14). The NPPF recognises that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles, which are mutually dependent and should not be undertaken in isolation:

4.2.2 An Economic Role - contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure;

4.2.3 A Social Role - supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and supports its health, social and cultural well-being; and

4.2.4 An Environmental Role - contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.

4.2.5 Paragraph 9 of the NPPF states that pursuing sustainable development involves seeking positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment, as well as peoples quality of life, including:

- Replacing poor design with better design;
- Improving conditions in which people live, work, travel and take leisure; and

- Widening the choice of high quality homes.

4.2.6 Paragraph 47 of the NPPF states that local planning authorities should seek 'to boost significantly the supply of housing'.

4.2.7 Paragraph 35 of the NPPF states that plans should protect and exploit opportunities for the use of sustainable transport modes for the movement of goods or people. Therefore, development should be located and designed where practical to give priority to pedestrian and cycle movements, and have access to high quality public transport facilities;

4.2.8 Paragraph 50 of the NPPF states that to deliver a wide choice of high quality homes, widen opportunities for home ownership and create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities, local planning authorities should:

- Plan for a mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends, market trends and the needs of different groups in the community.
- Identify the size, type, tenure and range of housing that is required in particular locations, reflecting local demand.

4.2.9 Paragraph 51 states that local planning authorities should identify and bring back to residential use empty housing and buildings.

4.2.10 Section 7 of the NPPF concerns a requirement for good design and its importance in achieving sustainable development. It aims that decisions should optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development, create and sustain an appropriate mix of use and support local facilities and transport networks. The design should also respond to the local character and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation. Additionally, local planning authorities should not refuse planning permission for buildings or infrastructure which promotes high levels of sustainability because of concerns about incompatibility with an existing townscape.

4.3 The London Plan

4.3.1 The London Plan was published on 22 July 2011, forming the overall strategic plan for London. It sets out a fully integrated economic, environmental, transport and social framework for the development of the capital until 2031. It forms part of the development plan for Greater London and London boroughs' local planning frameworks are required to be in general conformity.

4.3.2 Those policies considered relevant to the development proposals are provided below:

- Policy 3.3 Increasing housing supply
- Policy 3.4 Optimising housing potential
- Policy 3.5 Quality and design of housing developments
- Policy 3.8 Housing choice
- Policy 3.14 Existing housing
- Policy 5.1 Climate change mitigation

- Policy 5.2 Minimising carbon dioxide emissions
- Policy 5.3 Sustainable design and construction
- Policy 6.9 Cycling
- Policy 6.10 Walking
- Policy 6.13 Parking

4.4 Core Strategy

4.4.1 The London Borough of Camden resolved to adopt its Core Strategy on 8 November 2010. Camden's Core Strategy details the key elements of the Council's planning vision and strategy for the borough.

4.4.2 The relevant Core Strategy policies are considered to be:

- CS3 Other highly accessible areas?
- CS5 Managing the impact of growth and development
- CS6 Providing quality homes
- CS11 Promoting sustainable and efficient travel
- CS18 Dealing with our waste and encouraging recycling

4.5 Development Policies

4.5.1 The London Borough of Camden resolved to adopt its Development Policies on 8 November 2010. Camden Development Policies forms part of the Council's Local Development Framework (LDF), the group of documents setting out their planning strategy and policies. Camden Development Policies contributes towards delivering the Core Strategy by setting out detailed planning policies that the Council will use when determining applications for planning permission in the borough to achieve the vision and objectives of the Core Strategy.

4.5.2 The relevant Development Management Plan policies are considered to be:

- DP2 Making full use of Camden's capacity for housing
- DP5 Homes of different sizes
- DP6 Lifetime homes and wheelchair homes
- DP17 Walking, cycling and public transport
- DP18 Parking standards and limiting the availability of car parking
- DP22 Promoting sustainable design and construction
- DP24 Securing high quality design

- DP26 Managing the impact of development on occupiers and neighbours

4.6 Supplementary Planning Guidance

4.6.1 The following Supplementary Planning Guidance is relevant to the proposed development:

- Camden Planning Guidance

5.0 Planning Considerations

5.1 Land Use

5.1.1 The property is currently vacant and located within a predominately residential area. An increase in residential provision is a priority for Camden, as set out in Policy CS6 of the Core Strategy and DP2 of the Development Policies Document, which both state that housing is the priority land-use of Camden's Local Development Framework. In particular Policy DP2 states that the Council is:

"expecting the maximum appropriate contribution to supply of housing on sites that are underused or vacant, taking into account any other uses that are needed on the site".

5.1.2 As set out in Core Strategy section CS6 and paragraph 2.6, the expected delivery of additional homes from 2010/11 to 2024/25 falls significantly short of the projected growth in the number of households up to 2026. The proposed scheme will result in the increase of additional permanent residential units and help create 4 additional homes for the borough. It will fulfil a social role by providing a mix of housing sizes and provide a net increase in housing supply in an area in supply of good local community facilities.

5.1.3 The London Plan is currently undergoing further alterations. Although this document has not yet been formally adopted, it is considered that this is a material consideration, as Camden's contribution to London's housing supply is potentially proposed to increase to 889 units per annum from the current 665 units per annum stated in the 2011 version of the London Plan. All levels of planning policy place a priority on making the best use of urban land, particularly brownfield sites in accessible locations and have a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The site provides an excellent opportunity to increase the supply of housing within the borough.

5.2 Principle of subdivision

5.2.1 The Core Strategy states that Camden has a small average household size (2.06 persons per household) and the number of single person households is growing. The proposed subdivision reflects this average household size and the demand for smaller units. The subdivision of the property is fully supported in paragraph 50 of the NPPF which states that local planning authorities should plan for a mix of housing based on current and future demographic and market trends. Furthermore paragraph 9 states that in order to achieve sustainable development a wider choice of high quality homes is required.

5.2.2 The proposal will involve the loss of a vacant 5 bedroom dwelling as part of the creation of five flats on the site. The supporting text, within paragraph 5.9 of the Council's Development Policies DPD states:

“Where a development is for the conversion of existing homes (including the creation of self-contained homes from residential accommodation that is ancillary to another use), the Council will seek to minimise the loss of dwelling sizes that are given a priority of medium or above in the dwelling size priorities table”

5.2.3 Although the proposal involves the conversion of large dwelling (5 bedrooms) classed as a market housing ‘medium’ priority in the ‘dwelling size priorities table’, this will be offset by the proposed conversion including 40% 2 bedroom accommodation (which are a ‘very high’ priority). Furthermore, the Council recognises that the nature of the stock of market housing varies across the borough, and some areas have a much higher proportion of large dwellings than others. The application site is not highlighted within the CPG as having a low proportion of large dwellings and paragraph 2.24 of the DPD states that, “A mix of large and small units in an area can help to create more balanced communities (as different size dwellings meet the housing needs of different parts of the community) and increase housing choice. Finally, the existing family dwelling is vacant and therefore is not currently contributing to the Council’s housing stock. On this basis there is considered to be strong policy support for the principle of increased residential homes at the site.

5.3 Design

5.3.1 Core Strategy Policy CS14 states that the Council will require development of the highest standard of design that respects local context and character. As demonstrated in the accompanying design and access statement the proposed scheme is intended to be of a high quality appropriate to its context and responds to the requirements as set out in the London Plan and the Council’s relevant design policies. The proposal aims to make the most of the available space which is in keeping with the street scene and the use of materials which are complementary to the host building.

Proposed ground floor extension

5.3.2 The proposed rear extension will appear as subordinate to the main dwelling in terms of its location, form, scale, proportions, dimensions and detailing. The proposal is for a half width extension to create a full width extension at ground floor level. As the extended area will be at a low level it will not be highly visible and involves a modest projection into the rear garden beyond, in line with the existing rear closet wing therefore it will not introduce an entirely new scale of built form. It is also similar to those created further along the street. A skylight is proposed to allow additional light into the living room below as well as the use of the new flat roof as a small amenity area for flat 3. The size of the rear extension is 13.1sqm. There are no windows on the south eastern boundary which reduces the impact of overlooking to the neighbouring property. The proposed extension is therefore considered acceptable within the context of the application site and neighbouring extensions.

Proposed Roof Dormer

5.3.3 As noted above, a Certificate of Lawfulness of proposed use on development was granted in 2008 which confirmed that the existing building was approved permitted development rights for an extension at roof level would benefit from permitted development (2008/3800/P). The scale of this extension is comparable in scale to the one shown as benefitting from permitted development within this application on the south-eastern edge. The northwest dormer is slightly larger; however this is not readily visible from the street nor is it considered to have an impact on the neighbouring amenity in terms of outlook or overlooking. The roof alterations will allow the third floor of the property to be utilised as useable space, maximising the site’s land use potential. On account of this established principal, it is not believed that the proposed will be detrimental to visual amenity and privacy. The proposed details a front Velux window

to be installed. There are several properties along this section of Westbere Road that have this feature. Therefore it is not considered that this proposal is contrary to the character of the area. The front roof window offers the opportunity to increase the amount of natural light that enters flat 5 and greatly enhances the quality of the space. The proposed massing is in keeping with the surrounding context creating a positive and complementary relationship between the proposal and neighbouring properties whilst also respecting the vertical rhythm of the street.

- 5.3.4 There are no windows along the side of 46 Westbere Road that borders 44 Westbere Road. Therefore no visual privacy is compromised by the installation of 2 new windows on this side of the property. Given the length of the rear garden and distance of neighbouring properties to the south east of the site, the proposal is not considered to result in any privacy concerns.
- 5.3.5 The proposed rear and roof alterations will respect and preserve the original design and proportions of the building, including its architectural period and style. The design complements the established townscape of the surrounding area, by being in keeping with the established pattern of development and not extending further to the rear or being any higher than existing. It is considered that the alterations will not cause a loss of amenity to adjacent properties with regard to sunlight, daylight, outlook, overshadowing, privacy/overlooking, and sense of enclosure. This is because they will be sympathetic in scale, height, siting and design to ensure that neighbouring amenity is preserved.
- 5.3.6 The proposed extensions facilitate and are necessary for the conversion of the property into flats which has a benefit in providing more residential units. The proposal is also capable of complying with key residential design standards; will provide sufficient amenity space; does not result in an unacceptable relationship with neighbouring properties and achieves a high quality design solution. It is considered that the height and design of the scheme is appropriate for the site and is in accordance with Core Strategy policy CS14, Development Policies DP24, DP25, DP26, DP29 and CPG 1(Design). Further details of the proposal are considered and clearly explained in the supporting design and access statement.

5.4 Mix of units

- 5.4.1 Planning policy expresses the objective to provide a mix of unit sizes in all residential development with the aim of creating and maintaining mixed and inclusive communities. The Council has determined that, concerning market housing, 2 bedroom units are a 'very high' priority, seeking that 40% of units are 2 bedrooms over the course of the plan. This proposal will provide 2x studios, 1x 1 one bedroom unit and 2x 2 bedroom units, which equates to 40% for 2 bedroom units. The proposal will create a balance of homes along the street introducing homes of different sizes to suit single people, couples and small families.
- 5.4.2 It is intended that the residential units will be built to Lifetime Home Standards.
- 5.4.3 The proposal falls under the 10 unit threshold and therefore does not trigger a requirement for affordable housing.

5.5 Standard of accommodation

- 5.5.1 None of the residential units within the scheme face exclusively in a northerly direction with all units benefiting from a dual aspect.
- 5.5.2 It is important to ensure that the proposal will provide an acceptable level of residential amenity for the future occupants within the scheme. The majority of the units will comply with the recommended sizes for residential units as set out in

the Mayor of London's Housing Design Guide standards and the minimum overall internal floorspace as covered in Camden Planning Guidance 2 (Housing). Flat 3, falls slightly shy of the minimum space requirements. CPG2 Housing notes that the Council will be flexible in the application of these guidelines in order to respond to site-specific circumstances. All rooms within the proposed flat will be able to function for the purpose for which they are intended. It will meet all other standards in terms of shape, useable arrangement, height, insulation and natural lighting. External amenity space is also provided for this flat. This is also necessary to help create a more appropriate and balanced mix of accommodation on the site. The Council indicates that there is some flexibility in determining what an appropriate unit size should be.

5.6 Sustainability

5.6.1 In accordance with Policy DP22 the scheme aims to achieve Code Level 4 (CfSH).

5.7 Amenity/ Open Space Provision

5.7.1 Camden Planning Guidance 6 (Amenity) states that all new dwellings should provide access to some form of private outdoor amenity space, e.g. balconies, roof terraces or communal gardens. Policy DP26 notes that where a garden cannot be provided alternative outdoor amenity space will be expected, for example balconies, roof gardens or communal space.

5.7.2 The existing rear garden will serve the occupiers of flats 1 (73.3sqm) and flat 2 (9.4sqm), while the new roof terrace at rear first floor will serve the occupiers of flat 3 (4sqm). This is to ensure adequate amenity space for the occupants of these units. Three out of the five residential units proposed will therefore benefit from private amenity space. Due to site constraints associated with the conversion of the dwelling into flats, it is not possible to provide all 5 flats with outdoor space. This is not unusual in a converted property and it is noted that none of the proposed dwellings are family sized (3+ bedroom) and that the site is in close proximity to Westbere Copse open space which will assist in meeting sufficient open space needs for these occupiers.

5.7.3 Due to site constraints and the fact that the scheme provides for mostly 1 and 2 bedroom units, it is unlikely that open space could reasonably be provided within the scheme. However, the site is located close to large open spaces which would offset demand generated by the proposed development.

5.8 Transport

5.8.1 The Council aims to promote walking, cycling and public transport use (DP17 and CS11). Taking into account the good level of public transport accessibility that the site enjoys and access to a range of goods, services and shops, which provides the site with a PTAL rating of 4, the scheme does not include any car parking spaces. The new units would be car permit free preventing future occupiers of the development to apply for an on-street car parking. This would be put in place by way of a legal agreement. This car-free development is supported by the Council's policy which promotes the use of sustainable forms of transport, such as cycling and the use of public modes of transport.

5.8.2 The proposed scheme produces above the minimum requirements for cycle provision with 7 spaces for 5 units. 3 spaces are located on the front driveway and 2 each are provided within the amenity space areas of the ground floor units to the rear. It is therefore considered that the proposal is in accordance with Policies, DP17, DP18, Appendix 2 and Camden's Planning Guidance 7 (transport).

5.9 S.106/ CIL

- 5.9.1 The Mayoral CIL for Camden is £50 per sqm. This charge will be levied on all new development where a net increase in floorspace is proposed.
- 5.9.2 The Council is progressing its own CIL Charging Schedule however this is likely to be adopted around March 2015.
- 5.9.3 Therefore as the Council's local CIL will not be adopted before the grant of any permission, we consider that the Heads of Terms for the proposed development are likely to include contributions towards the following:
- Open Space contribution
 - Educational Contribution- All residential developments of 5 units or more are expected to provide education contributions for each unit of 2 or more bedrooms
 - Car Free Development

6.0 Conclusion

- 6.1.1 Camden's Policies embeds the NPPF principle of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. This development proposes the conversion of the existing dwelling into five high quality flats and the construction of a minor rear ground floor extension and alterations to the roof. The proposal will create an additional 4 units, which will increase the housing stock within the borough. This is a considerable planning benefit.
- 6.1.2 Intensification of existing land is supported nationally and locally as a viable and effective method for alleviating housing problems and fulfilling the sustainability agenda. On account that the area is already well established as residential with communal and transport facilities located close by.
- 6.1.3 The roof extension of the proposed is already established in principle by the prior approval application in 2008 (2008/3800/P). The roof line projects no higher than the existing, is not readily visible from street level and is in keeping with other roof alterations along the street. The proposed rear ground floor extension matches the height and rear projection of the existing extension and is also comparable to other extensions along the street. The proposed extensions are therefore considered to have an acceptable impact on residential and visual amenity.
- 6.1.4 The proposed standard of residential accommodation is considered to be of high quality and will comply with a number of key standards. The unit mix reflects the demographic and market trend of Camden. A principle supported by the NPPF and the Council. The proposed will create two 'high priority' 2 bedroom units, to help meet this demand. Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that determination must be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise and the proposal is in accordance with Camden's Core Strategy, Development Policies Document, the NPPF and CPG.