



**12 & 12A Westbere Road
London
NW2 3SR**

Supporting Planning Statement for
Minor Material Amendment to
'2013/7688/P'

15th January 2018



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1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement accompanies an application to regularise minor alterations that have occurred during the construction of two new houses approved by the London Borough of Camden (LBC) (reference '2013/7688/P' and amended by '2015/4515/P').
- 1.2 This Planning Statement should be read in conjunction with the submitted plans and supporting documents.

2 The Site and Surroundings

- 2.1 The site is located to the eastern side of Westbere Road and comprises two recently constructed semi-detached houses, approved in 2013 (LBC reference 2013/7688/P). The houses are known as No.12 and No.12A Westbere Road.
- 2.2 No.12A comprises a two storey house with accommodation at basement level. This house has private outdoor amenity space to the front at ground (street) and basement level.
- 2.3 No.12 comprises a three storey house with accommodation at basement level. This property also has outdoor amenity space to the front at ground floor (street) level. A private second floor roof terrace provides further outdoor space for the occupants of this property.
- 2.4 Both properties are solely accessed from Westbere Road. Refuse storage is accommodated to the front of both properties within the front garden/patio areas. A side walkway provides access to the side and rear of No.12A for maintenance purposes only.
- 2.5 Both properties are built into a hillside, accounting for a steep increase in gradient which occurs through the site. The land level rises from Westbere Road through the site, levelling to the rear of the site with the gardens of the adjoining properties which front Sare Road to the north-east.

3 Relevant Planning History

3.1 The relevant planning history for the application site are outlined below:

2013/7688/P - Erection of a part 2 part 3 storey and basement level building to provide 2x3bed residential dwellings following demolition of houses. Approved 8th May 2014.

2015/4515/P - Addition of privacy hedge and glass walk on roof light as an amendment of the approved scheme granted under reference 2013/7688/P dated 09/05/14 for erection of a part 2 part 3 storey and basement level building to provide 2x3bed residential dwellings following demolition of houses. Approved 1st September 2015.

2015/0689/P - Details of materials required by condition 7, landscaping required by condition 9, privacy screen required by condition 10, engineers details required by condition 14 and foundations required by condition 15 of 2013/7688/P dated 09/05/2014, (Erection of a part 2 part 3 storey and basement level building to provide 2 x 3bed residential dwellings following demolition of houses.) Approved 16th December 2016.

4 Relevant Planning Policy

London Borough of Camden Development Plan Policies

4.1 The Development Plan for Camden comprises the Camden Local Plan (2017) and the Camden Planning Guidance SPDs. Of particular relevance are Policies:

Camden Local Plan 2017:

- H1 'Maximising housing supply'
- A1 'Managing the impact of development'
- A5 'Basements'
- D1 'Design'

Camden Planning Guidance

- CPG1 (Design)
- CPG4 (Basement and Lightwells)
- CPG6 (Amenity)

National Planning Policy

- 4.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on 27 March 2012, and sets out the Government's planning policies for England. The approach of various key sections of the NPPF, where it may relate to the application proposals for Minor Material Amendments, are summarised below.
- 4.3 Looking to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings, along with encouraging the effective use of land by re-using land which has been previously developed, are core land use principles of the NPPF.
- 4.4 Paragraph 14 of the NPPF explains that the presumption in favour of sustainable development is a golden thread that runs through both plan making and decision taking. With regard to decision taking, where the development plan is absent, silent or out of date permission should be granted, unless the adverse impacts in doing so significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, or the framework indicates development should be restricted.
- 4.5 Paragraph 17 of the NPPF sets out a series of core land use planning principles, with bullet four confirming that planning should always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupiers of land and buildings, with the former reinforced by section 7 of the NPPF.
- 4.6 Paragraph 56 of the NPPF states that "*Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development*".
- 4.7 Paragraph 58 of the NPPF, states that planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure development "*will function well and add to the overall quality of the area,*" responding to "*local character and local history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation.*" Furthermore, developments should promote development that is "*visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.*"
- 4.8 Paragraph 60 of the NPPF states, that "*planning policies and decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms or styles.*"

5 The Proposal

5.1 The part retrospective aspect of the development for which a minor material amendment is sought, comprises:

- Alteration to the approved fenestration of the rear elevation with the omission of x2 full-height windows to the rear elevation at ground floor level (street level) to accommodate altered land levels at No.12 and 12A;
- Revised roof lights to serve internal light well to 12 Westbere Road;
- Alteration to side ground floor window at No.12A to accommodate altered land level;
- Proposed alteration to the first floor window at 12A Westbere Road to reduce its size and introduce a restricted opening panel; and
- Proposed alteration to flat roof structure to rear, at ground floor level.

5.2 The application is considered to represent a minor material amendment of the approved plans, given the modest scale of proposed amendments and the nominal associated impacts beyond the approved scheme '2013/7688/P'. On this basis and the fact that the development has already been carried out, a Section 73(a) application is therefore made.

6 Scope and Impact of the Proposals

Principle of Development

- 6.1 The minor material amendments for which permission is sought, do not fundamentally alter the principle of the original approved scheme (LBC reference 2013/7688/P). The proposal in no way modifies the quantum or scale of development, or the external massing of the original planning permission and subsequent approved amendments (LBC reference 2015/4515/P). The development on the ground remains broadly in accordance with the approved plans, with no material changes to internal layouts, massing, height, position or access.
- 6.2 Since planning permission was granted in 2013, and latterly in 2015, the LBC have adopted a new Local Plan. The Camden Local Plan (2017) replaced the Camden Core Strategy (2010) and Development Policies Document (2010). The policy context is therefore different to that used to assess the original application. Nonetheless, because the minor material amendments would not alter the overall function of either planning unit, or the established land use, the principle of development is unchanged with permission for two near identical residential properties in place.

Design and visual appearance

- 6.3 The minor material amendments for which permission is sought, would see only minor external changes visible from beyond the application site, including Westbere Road and all adjoining properties. These alterations would represent only a minor visual departure from the approved plans.
- 6.4 The external alterations to the rear see the loss of a retaining wall and alterations to the fenestration of both properties, including the omission of two ground floor windows and the reduction in size of one first floor window at No.12. A pitched external roof rising less than 1 metre in height, is proposed to the rear of No.12.
- 6.5 Given the gradient of the site, these proposed alterations would be largely obscured when viewed from adjoining properties to the east. Existing boundary treatment and vegetation would obscure these alterations. These changes would therefore not affect the integrity of the overall design or appearance of the application site.

- 6.6 An extension of the rear privacy screen is proposed to enclose the roof terrace at No.12. Views of this element would be visible to the north-east. The extension of the privacy screen would sit behind an existing parapet wall and would be of a similar appearance and construction to the existing rear privacy screen. The proposed addition would appear proportionate and in keeping with the existing building.
- 6.7 The minor material amendments would therefore satisfy Policy D1 of the Camden Local Plan (2017) and adopted supplementary guidance.

Quality of residential accommodation

- 6.8 The minor material amendments principally affect the internal function of the two properties. The omission of the two openings at ground floor level to the rear of No.12 and No.12A, results in only a marginal loss of daylight to the rear of these properties. Furthermore, a high standard of internal accommodation has been maintained to both properties.
- 6.9 Both rooms at ground floor level retain a good outlook onto Westbere Road through generous sized, full height windows. Generous ceiling heights, the (relatively) shallow depth of both properties, and the open plan layouts within both properties enable good daylight penetration from the south facing windows which face Westbere Road. A glazed, ground floor level opening allows additional daylight to penetrate the plan at No.12A. A side, high level window provides additional daylight into the plan at No.12. Outlook would not be harmed given the configuration of the rear light well and proximity of the retaining wall.
- 6.10 At basement level, large (glazed) walk-on roof lights to both properties (approved by LBC reference '2015/4515/P') ensure that basement rooms receive good levels of daylight whilst retaining a generous sense of openness.
- 6.11 Additional daylight is received through an internal (glazed) aperture placed directly below the rear ground floor level roof light within No.12. This allows for daylight to enter the room at the deepest part of the plan. A light well at No.12A helps to further increase the generous sense of openness at basement level, with access to outdoor amenity space available from the basement room.
- 6.12 A dual aspect is retained to all remaining floors above basement and ground floor level to both properties, as approved. All rooms retain the approved internal room sizes and layouts. Areas of outdoor amenity space, as previously approved, would be maintained.

6.13 It is considered that despite the omission of the rear ground floor windows to both properties and the reduction in size of the side window at No.12A, both houses retain high quality and functional internal areas which offer a high quality living environment. The minor material amendments for which permission is sought, would not harmfully impact upon the overall quality of residential accommodation in comparison to that previously approved and considered acceptable by Camden Council.

Amenity

6.14 The minor material amendments would not impact upon the amenity of any adjoining properties. The only visible external change would be to the second floor roof terrace serving No.12. Here, a minor increase in the width of the external privacy screen is proposed to prevent mutual overlooking between the roof terrace and nearby properties to the east which front Sarre Road. No shadowing would occur as a result of this addition as the screen would be minor in scale and contained within the roof profile of the existing building.

6.15 The proposed alteration to the rear first floor window at No.12, is offered to help prevent the future conversion of this opening into a door. Similarly, a pitched roof is proposed to the rear projection to ensure that this space is not used as a raised terrace. The pitched roof would not exceed 1 metre in height, which given the orientation of this minor addition in relation to No.14 Westbere Road, this element would not give rise to a harmful loss of light or sense of enclosure for the occupants of this property.

6.16 The elements of this minor material amendment application, are all offered to safeguard the amenity of adjoining properties. The proposed alterations would not harmfully impact upon the amenity of any other adjoining or nearby occupiers by reason of a sense of enclosure or loss of light. As such, these minor additions would conform with policy A1 of the Camden Local Plan (2017) and adopted supplementary guidance.

Basement impact

6.17 The minor material amendments for which permission is sought, have resulted in a reduction in the total amount of land excavated beyond the approved arrangement. In accordance with Conditions 14 and 15, the relevant details were discharged (LBC reference 2015/0689/P). The building was constructed in accordance with the relevant statutory building control and construction regulations, and received the necessary permissions.

6.18 The minor material amendments, in comparison to the approved scheme, would have only a minor impact in relation to that assessed and deemed acceptable, previously. Indeed, a reduction in the total area of land excavated, would lessen any potential impact associated with excavation.

7 Conclusion

- 7.1 The minor material amendments would not compromise the overall design quality or integrity of the approved scheme. It has been demonstrated that the minor amendments would not harm the amenity of the occupiers of any adjoining properties. Importantly, the outlook for the occupants has not been compromised as rooms within both properties at basement and ground floor level maintain good outlook and ample receipt of daylight to the internal space.
- 7.2 Together, the proposed amendments represent only minor alterations which do not compromise the previously approved scheme, providing two high quality family homes on previously developed land.
- 7.3 The development proposals accord with the National Planning Development Framework, the Development Plan for the London Borough of Camden and the relevant adopted supplementary guidance.
- 7.4 It is therefore respectfully requested that permission for the minor material amendments should be granted.



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