



Home > News > Daily News

# DSDHA bags planning for Westminster homes

15 February, 2012 | By Richard Waite



## DSDHA has finally won planning permission for a new luxury, 275-flat scheme in Westminster, central London, for Berkeley Homes

An original decision on the £60 million two-block scheme, which will replace a pair of 1980s former Ministry of Justice buildings known as Abell and Cleland House, was deferred in November 2011 to allow councillors to visit the plots.

[Berkeley Homes](#) snapped up the sites on the corner of John Islip Street and Page Street in November 2010 and carried out [extensive consultations on its proposals](#).

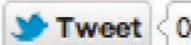
The designs were drawn up with planning consultants Gerald Eve, Belgian landscape architects Wirtz International and townscape consultant Peter Stewart.

Construction is due to start in late 2012.

### The architect's view

**Cleland House** creates a gateway to the development. The articulation of the façade responds to its axial relationship with St John's, Smith Square to the North. We have considered it to have taken an 'urban imprint' from the eighteenth century Baroque church. Its verticality and carved form echoes the grand porticos and towers. The roofline gently recedes resulting in a classical 'Casino', or outside room, which offers delight and intrigue at high level, in much the same way as the towers of St John's take on an aedicular form that suggests occupation and an animated skyline.

**Abell House** aims to provide a sophisticated transition between the surrounding larger scale developments of the modern twentieth century city and the earlier smaller scale residential Millbank Estate to the south. The generous entrance with a tripleheight lobby has been aligned with Art Walk to the east and the archway of Westminster Gardens to the west, resulting in a long view from Marsham Street through the gardens enhancing the sense of visual permeability and connectivity through the site. The envelope of Cleland House is echoed on Abell House, with subtle variation in materiality, hierarchy and articulation, resulting in a pair of entirely complementary buildings. Where Cleland House is more classically hierarchical, reflecting a more graded system of proportion, Abell House is more manifestly modern and systemised in its architectural articulation.



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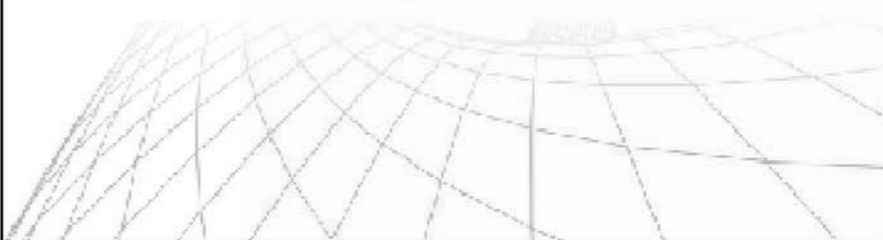
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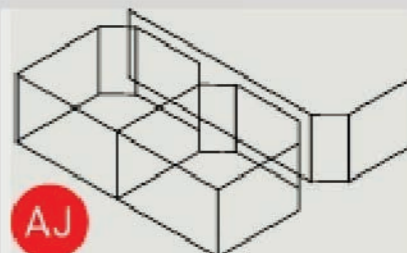
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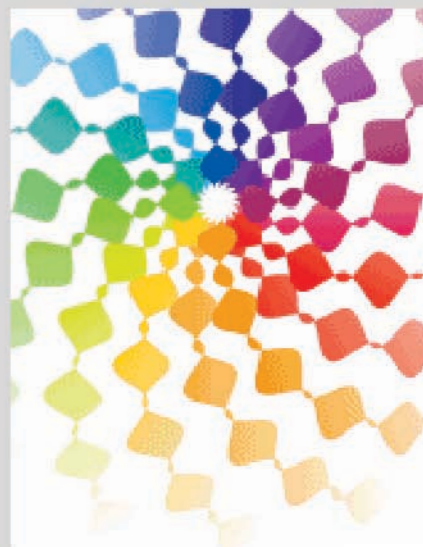
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