# PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE 12 December 2013

Item No:

<u>UPRN</u> <u>APPLICATION NO.</u> <u>DATE VALID</u>

13/P1028 23/04/2013

Address/Site Delatre Media Ltd, 3 Palmerston Road, Wimbledon SW19 1PG

(Ward) Abbey

**Proposal:** Outline planning application for extension to existing offices at

ground, first, second, third. fourth and fifth floor levels.

**Drawing Nos** 572/005/P1, 007/P1, 009/P1, 011/P1, 013/P1, 014/P1, 015/P1,

022/P1, 024/P1, 026/P1, 034/P1, 032/P1 and Design and

**Access Statement** 

**Contact Officer:** Richard Allen (8545 3621)

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

**GRANT Outline Planning Permission subject to completion of a S.106 Agreement and conditions** 

#### **CHECKLIST INFORMATION**

- Heads of agreement: Sustainable Transport
- Is a screening opinion required: No
- Is an Environmental impact statement required: No
- Has an Environmental Impact Assessment been submitted: No
- Press notice- No
- Site notice-Yes
- Design Review Panel consulted-No
- Number neighbours consulted:11
- External consultants: None
- Density: n/a
- Number of jobs created: n/a
- Archaeology Priority Zone: No

# 1. **INTRODUCTION**

1.1 This application has been brought to the Planning Applications Committee due to the requirement for a S.106 Agreement.

#### 2. **SITE AND SURROUNDINGS**

2.1 The application site is located just within the Wimbledon Town Centre Area as designated in the Proposals Map attached to the Adopted Merton Unitary Development Plan (October 2003). It forms the transition between the commercial properties to the north along Wimbledon Broadway and the predominantly residential properties to the south. Currently to north of the site is an open surface level car park that adjoins Wimbledon Theatre, a Grade II Listed Building. It is envisaged that the car park area will be the subject of future mixed use development. The South Wimbledon Club and St Mary's Primary School are situated to the rear (south west) of the site. To the east on the opposite side of the site is the Bethel strict Chapel (129 Broadway). The application site is within a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ W4) and has a PTAL of 6.

#### 3. **CURRENT PROPOSAL**

- 3.1 The current proposal seeks Outline planning permission for extensions to the existing offices, with approval being sought for layout and scale. Access, appearance and landscaping are all reserved. The existing office building is proposed to be extended upwards from four to six storeys across part of the building, set away from the townhouses to the south to create a height transition. At the rear it is proposed to construct a new west wing of four storeys connected by a link/breakout space. At first floor level, over the rear parking area, it is proposed to construct a terrace, accessed from the first floor offices and reception area.
- 3.2 In relation to the two storey extension to part of the existing building, the top floor would be set back to form an attic storey, giving a parapet line of five storeys to Palmerston Road. The upper floors would also be set back from the boundary to reduce the impact on the adjoining town houses to the south. The new west wing will have an overall height of four storeys, with accommodation stepping back from the western boundary at second and third floor levels away from existing buildings on Russell Road. The proposed first floor terrace has been amended to be set further away from adjoining residential gardens.
- 3.3 In terms of design, the existing building dates from the 1980's and is of utilitarian appearance constructed in red/brown engineering brick with aluminium windows. The proposed extensions would be of lightweight appearance with the use of glass to the upper parts of the building. Where the proposed extension abuts the adjacent Council owned site there would be a blank façade so as not to inhibit future development.

3.4 The schedule of floor space is set out below for information, giving a net increase of 643 square metres.

Floor Areas	Gross Internal Area	
	Sq metres	
	Existing	Proposed
Ground Floor	172	225
First Floor	227	384
Second Floor	227	336
Third floor	227	299
Fourth Floor	0	132
Fifth Floor	0	120
Totals	853	1496

The proposal would involve the loss of 5 parking spaces, with 7 spaces and 22 cycle spaces being provided for the extended office accommodation.

## 4. **PLANNING HISTORY**

- 4.1 In March 1981 outline planning permission was granted for the erection of a four storey building with 15 car parking spaces and two three storey houses with integral garages (ref.MER1006). Reserved matters were approved in November 1981.
- 4.2 In January 1996 planning permission was granted for the formation of a rear staff entrance with ramped access (LBM Ref.95/P0808).
- 4.3 In April 2007 planning permission was granted for the erection of a single storey rear extension and a first floor rear extension to provide additional B1 office space (LBM Ref07/P0188).
- 4.4 In April 2007 planning permission was granted for the erection of a single storey rear extension and first floor rear extension providing additional office space (LBM Ref.07/P0654).
- 4.5 In June 2008 planning permission was granted for the installation of mechanical plant on the roof (LBM Ref.08/P0751).
- 4.6 In September 2008 advertisement consent was granted for the display of externally illuminated logo and name signs (LBM Ref08/P0742).
- 4.7 In October 2008 planning permission was granted for the retention of two satellite dishes on the roof (one 2.4m and one 3.7m diameter (LBM Ref.08/P0742).

- 4.8 In January 2012 a planning application was submitted for the erection of a single storey rear extension providing additional B1 office accommodation. The application was withdrawn by the applicant on 1/8/2012 (LBM Ref.12/P0360/INVALID)
- 4.9 In August 2012 a Pre-application meeting was held to discuss proposal for the erection of an extension to provide an additional floor of office accommodation at fourth floor level on the existing building, and new offices/staff flat plus plant room, PV cells and satellite dishes at roof level. A part four/part five storey rear extension linked to the front block with car and cycle parking at ground level and a terrace on part of first floor, plus reception area, staircase and atrium to link the front and rear parts of the building (LBM ef.12/P1928/NEW). The current application is similar to the proposals discussed at the preapplication meeting although the current application does not include a staff flat.

## 5. **CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 The application site has been advertised by site notice procedure and letters of notification to occupiers of neighbouring properties. In response two letters of objection have been received from the owners/occupiers of neighbouring properties at 5 and 7 Palmerston Road. The grounds of objection are set out below:-
  - -extremely concerned about loss of privacy and intrusion from windows and the proposed terrace, loss of outlook and loss of light
  - -The proposed terrace would result in direct overlooking of bedrooms on the middle and top floors of 5 Palmerston Road by office workers using the terrace and use of the small garden may also be compromised
  - there are large south facing windows in the proposed new wing as well as 3<sup>rd</sup> floor terrace less than 10m from the boundary with no.5 creating privacy issues
  - concerned about additional disturbance from cars and pedestrians using the passageway to the rear parking area.
  - --The proposals incorrectly label the numbering of adjacent properties, and refer to the adjacent town houses as flats. There are also errors of the building heights with drawing 0675/04 indicating that the town houses are 26 metres high.
  - suitable and substantial compensation should be paid if approval given

#### 5.2 The Wimbledon Society

The proposal seeks to extend and add office accommodation to the existing commercial building at the top of Palmerston Road and the junction with The Broadway. It is to the rear of the current Council car park on The Broadway, locally known as the Theatre Car Park that has been designated as site P4 by Merton Council for future sale and redevelopment. The height of the proposed extension is for two additional storeys over the current building, making it 1 metre above a presumed height for the P4 site that is indicated on the

presentation elevations. Further, the proposal is for a four storey extension over the full curtilage of the site with a modelled stepping of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3rd floor with associated terraces and 1.8 metre high privacy screens to avoid overlooking the local school and residential properties. The Societies objection is to the overdevelopment and maximisation of the sites potential for office accommodation to the detriment of surrounding neighbouring properties. There is also a reduction in car parking spaces at ground level with no designated disabled car parking provision indicated. The supporting report on 'rights of light' and impact study do not take consideration of the fact that this building occupies an important location adjoining a residential row of housing in Palmerston Road and backs directly onto playground facilities for St Mary's Primary School. The Society are concerned at the potential impact of terrace lighting during winter months and that the current proposal has not demonstrated a willingness to keep the scale of the extensions to a reasonable level and provided an appropriate proposal assuming the extent of the future development of the P4 site and little consideration to the neighbouring scale of properties.

#### 5.3 Transport Planning

The proposal would result in the loss of on-site parking and increasing the number of employees, it is considered appropriate to seek a sustainable transport contribution to further encourage sustainable travel behaviour. A sum of £15,000 is requested.

#### 6. **POLICY CONTEXT**

- 6.1 The relevant policies contained within the Adopted Merton Core Strategy (July2011) are CS6 (Wimbledon Town Centre), CS7 (Centres), CS14 (Design), CS15 (Climate Change) and CS20 (Parking, Servicing and Delivery).
- 6.1 The retained policies contained within the Adopted UDP (October 2003) are E.1 (General Employment Policy), BE.15 (New Buildings and Extensions, Daylight, Sunlight, Privacy, Visual Intrusion and Noise), BE.16 (Urban Design), BE.22 (Design of New Development), BE.23 (Alterations and Extensions to Buildings), BE.35 (Telecommunications Development), E.1 (General Employment Policy), F.2 (Planning Obligations), ST.27 (Wimbledon Town Centre), TC.1 (Promoting Development in Town Centres), TC.8 (Land Assembly), TC.9 (Office Development), WTC.6 (Office Development) and WTC.8 (Development Facilities).
- The site lies just within Wimbledon Town Centre Area as designated in the UDP proposals map, and adjoins the 'P4' site which comprises the car park which currently adjoins Wimbledon Theatre.
- 6.3 The draft Sites and Policies Plan is also relevant.
- 6.4 The London Plan (February 2011)

The relevant policies within the London Plan are 5.1 (Climate Change Mitigation), 5.3 (Sustainable Design and Construction), 7.5 (Public Realm) and 7.6 (Architecture).

# 7. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 The main planning considerations relate to employment, design, neighbour amenity and parking issues.

# 7.2 Principle of Office Expansion

Policies CS6 and CS7 of the Adopted Core Planning Strategy welcomes proposals to enhance expand and refurbish office space within the Town Centre, consolidating its position as a diverse Major Centre, subject to their acceptability in respect of all other material planning considerations such as quality of design and impact on neighbouring properties. There is no in principle objection to the proposed office space expansion. The applicant is a sport media company that employs 71 people. The proposed increase in office floor space would enable the business to expand and it is envisaged that the number of employees will increase to 91. The proposal therefore accords with retained UDP policy E.1 in terms of maintaining employment opportunities within a Town centre location with good public transport accessibility.

- 7.3 Design and Relationship to Adjoining Wimbledon Theatre Car Park
  The car park site adjoining the listed Wimbledon Theatre (otherwise known as the P4 site) is included as site proposal 28 in the Submission Draft Sites and Policies Plan and Draft Policies Map published in September 2013. That document indicates that the Council's preferred use of the car park site would be an 'appropriate mix of town centre type uses such as retail (A1 Use Class), café and restaurants (A3 Use Class), community (D1 Use Class), cultural, leisure and entertainment (D2 Use Class), Offices (B1(a) use Class) and hotel (C1 Use Class). This site may incorporate residential development (C3 Use Class) on upper floors. Recent draft options for the car park site suggest a four storey building where adjacent to the listed Wimbledon theatre building rising to five storeys at the corner of the Broadway and Palmerston Road adjacent to the Delatre site at 3 Palmerston Road.
- 7.4 The current outline application involves the erection of an additional two floors of accommodation to the existing building and the erection of rear extensions to create a part four, part six storey building and a new part four/five storey wing. On the northern elevation adjacent to the car park site it would be six storeys in height over the main building. The 5<sup>th</sup> storey would be recessed slightly from the existing façade and the 6<sup>th</sup> storey would be set back 2m from the Palmerston Road frontage and could be constructed of lightweight materials to minimise visual impact. It should also be noted that indicative drawings of a building on the P4 site show a development of a five storey building with retail on the ground floor and flats above which would align with the top of the recessed 6<sup>th</sup> floor of the Palmerston Road elevation of the application site. The indicative building on the P4 site has a higher floor to

ceiling to the ground floor retail unit hence the five storey building has the same height as the six storeys proposed for 3 Palmerston Road Only the small set back lift over run/plant room would be marginally (less than 1m higher) than the anticipated height for future proposals for the adjoining P4 car park site and this would not be perceptible due to the setback and small footprint. The proposed extensions have been designed so that the extended building does not prejudice the future redevelopment of the adjacent Council owned car park and no windows of opening or extract ducts would be formed in the side elevation facing the car park (known as the P4 site in the UDP proposals map). The proposal is considered to be acceptable in terms of Adopted Core Strategy policy CS14 and retained UDP policies BE.16 and BE.22. and compatible with proposals for the adjoining site.

# 7.5 Neighbour Amenity

The southern elevation of the proposed new wing and the atrium forming the link with the existing building would face rear gardens of adjoining residential properties. There would be large windows and third floor terraces within the southern elevation sitting between 9m-12m of the boundary with 9 Palmerston Road (and in closer proximity to the boundaries with 5 and 7 but not looking directly towards). The applicants have indicated how issues of overlooking could be addressed as part of the reserved matters submission in relation to concerns about loss of privacy. For the windows, fixed horizontal louvres are suggested up to an agreed height above floor level to restrict downwards views with 1.8m high acid etched screens to the proposed 3<sup>rd</sup> floor terraces.

- 7.6 Originally, the proposal incorporated a large terrace over the rear parking area, with a screen to 1.8m with planting behind but in very close proximity to neighbouring gardens, giving rise to concerns about loss of privacy, potential for noise disturbance, visual intrusion and light pollution relative to adjoining residential properties, in particular 5 and 7 Palmerston Road. This feature has been significantly amended at the request of officers to form a narrow 2m wide balcony rather than a wide terrace and is considered to be acceptable subject to suitable screening.
- 7.7 It is considered that design measures such as louvres, obscure glazing and screening to terraces are feasible that would prevent unacceptable impact on the privacy of adjoining occupiers which would be required by condition. The proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable in terms of retained UDP policy BE.15.

# 7.8 Parking

The proposed extensions to the existing office building would result in a reduction in the number of off-street parking spaces from 12 to 7 spaces, one of which is a disabled space. Given the application site location within Wimbledon Town Centre with a Public Transport Accessibility Level of 6, the expansion in floor space combined with the loss of seven spaces is considered to be acceptable. However, a financial contribution towards sustainable transport initiatives in the borough would be required to mitigate the loss of parking. The proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable in terms of Adopted Core Strategy policy CS20.

# 7.9 Planning Obligations

The proposed increase in office floor space and the loss of 7 parking spaces would require the developer to make a financial contribution towards sustainable transport initiatives in the borough (£15,000) secured through a S.106 Agreement. In light of the expansion of office floor space, a further sum of £10, 000 would also be required towards public realm/environmental enhancements to the town centre

### 7.10 Local Financial Considerations

The proposed development is liable to pay the Mayoral Community Infrastructure Levy, the funds for which will be applied by the Mayor towards the Crossrail project. The CIL amount is non-negotiable and planning permission cannot be refused for failure to agree to pay CIL.

# SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

- 8.1 The proposal does not constitute Schedule 1 or Schedule 2 development. Accordingly there is no requirement for an EIA submission.
- 8.2 Policy CS15 (Climate Change) of the Adopted Merton Core Strategy requires that all minor and major development including refurbishment, will be required to demonstrate how the development makes effective use of resources and materials, minimises water use and CO2 emissions. All non-domestic development over 500m2 which does not qualify for assessment under Code for sustainable Homes, will be expected to be built to a minimum of BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environment Assessment Method) Very Good standard and meet CO2 reduction targets in line with the requirements of the London Plan or national policy, whichever is the greater. Therefore a planning condition to require the development to meet the BREEAM standard should be imposed on any grant of planning permission.

  The extension would be required to meet BREEAM requirements

# 9.0 **CONCLUSION**

9.1 The design of the proposed extensions is considered to be acceptable and will result in the provision of enhanced office accommodation within Wimbledon Town Centre and maintain employment opportunities in the borough. The size and siting of the proposed extensions and alterations to the building would not affect neighbour amenity. Accordingly, it is recommended that planning permission be granted.

#### RECOMMENDATION

#### **GRANT OUTLINE PLANNING PERMISSION**

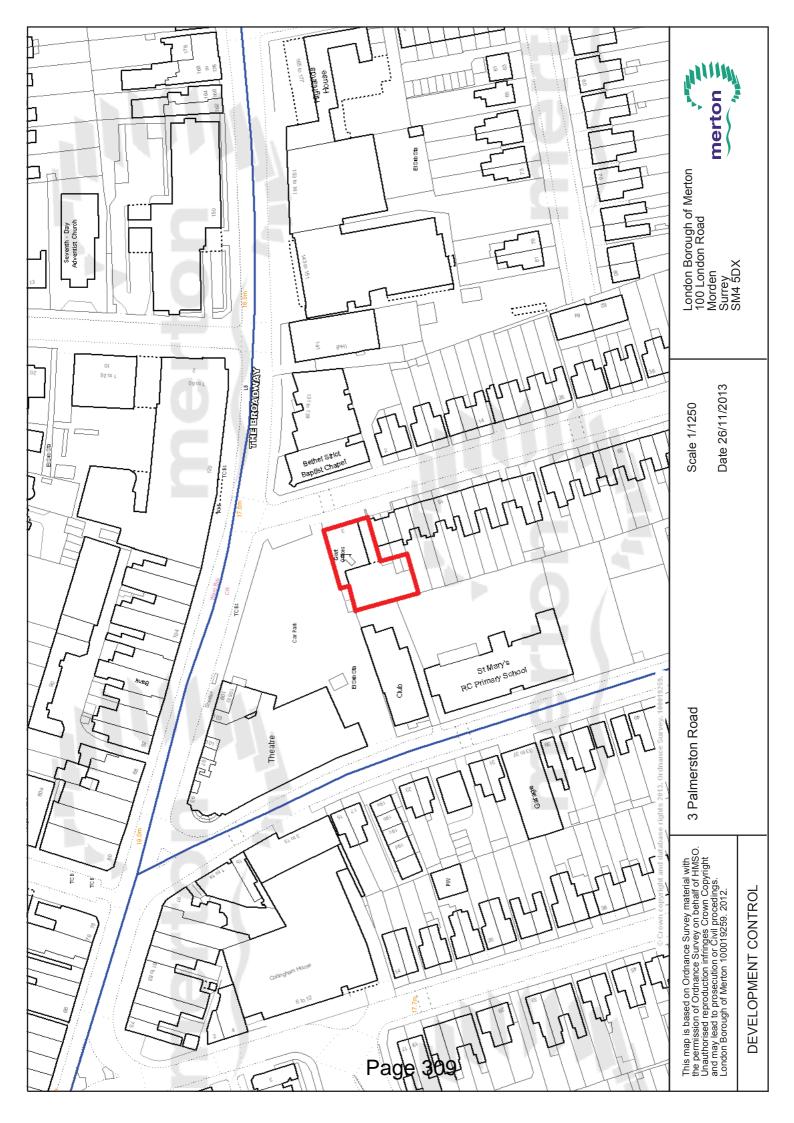
Subject to completion of a S.106 Agreement covering the following heads of terms:-

- 1. The developer making a financial contribution towards sustainable transport initiatives in the borough (£15,000).
- 2. The developer making a financial contribution towards of £10,000 towards improvements to the public realm/environmental enhancements within Wimbledon town centre
- 3. The developer paying the Council's legal and professional costs
- 4. The developer paying the cost of monitoring the agreement.

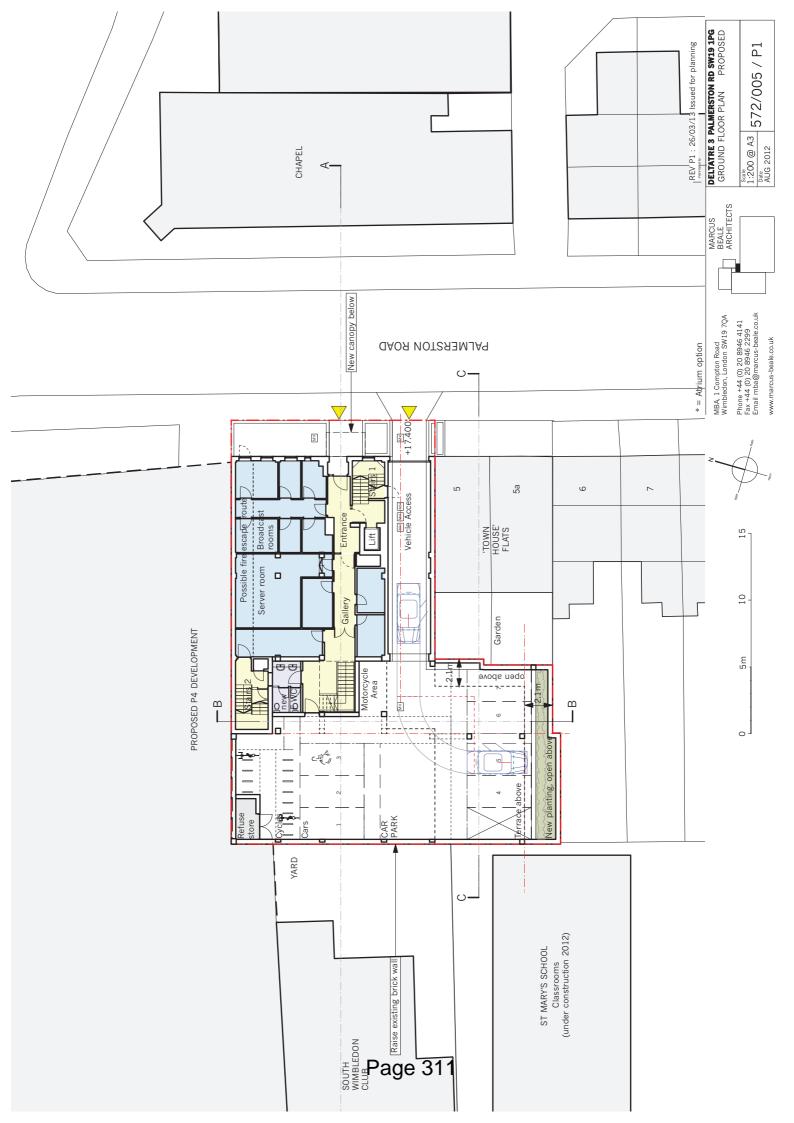
subject to the following conditions:-

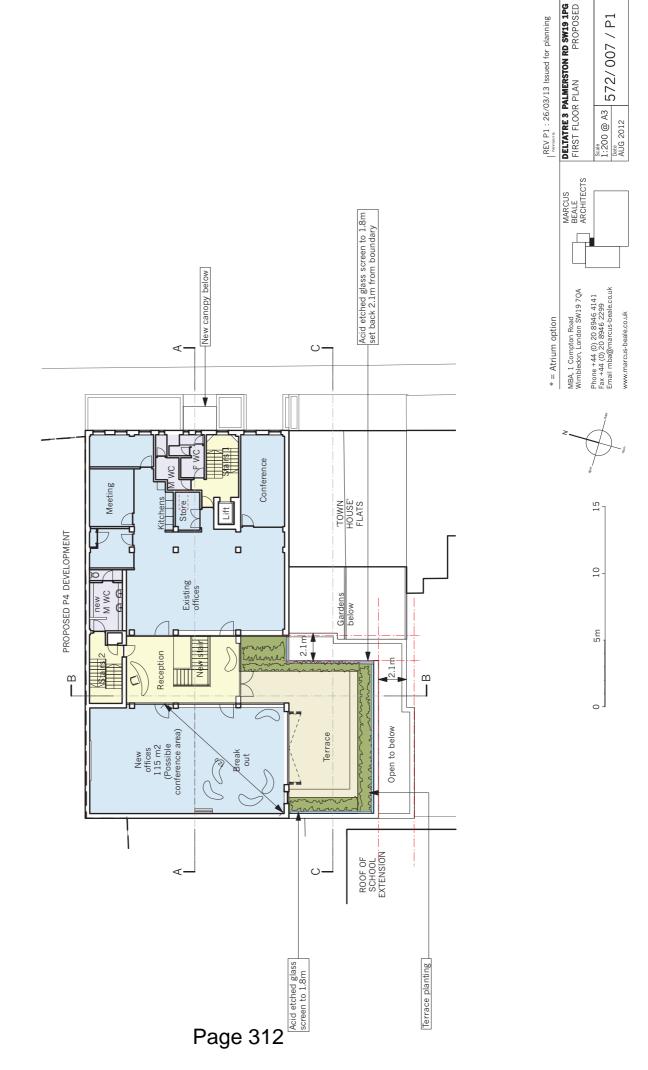
- 1. A.2 Commencement of Development (Outline Application)
- 2. A.3 Submission of reserved Matters (Outline Application)
- 3. D.11 Hours of Construction
- 6. H.9 Construction Vehicles
- 7. No plant/telecommunications apparatus, aerials or communication dishes shall be installed on the roof of the building other than the renewable energy panels shown on the plans.
  - Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities of the area and the setting of the neighbouring listed Theatre building.
- 8. No windows, vents, extracts or other openings shall be formed in the northern flank wall of the building facing the car park.
  - Reason: So as not to inhibit the future redevelopment of the adjacent car park site.
- 9. The proposed car parking/motor cycle parking spaces shown on drawing number 572/005/P1 shall be provided before occupation of the new offices and kept available thereafter.
  - Reason for condition: To ensure the provision of satisfactory parking provision for the site.
- 10. Details of screening
- 11. Details of external lighting
- 12. bream –pre commencement and post completion

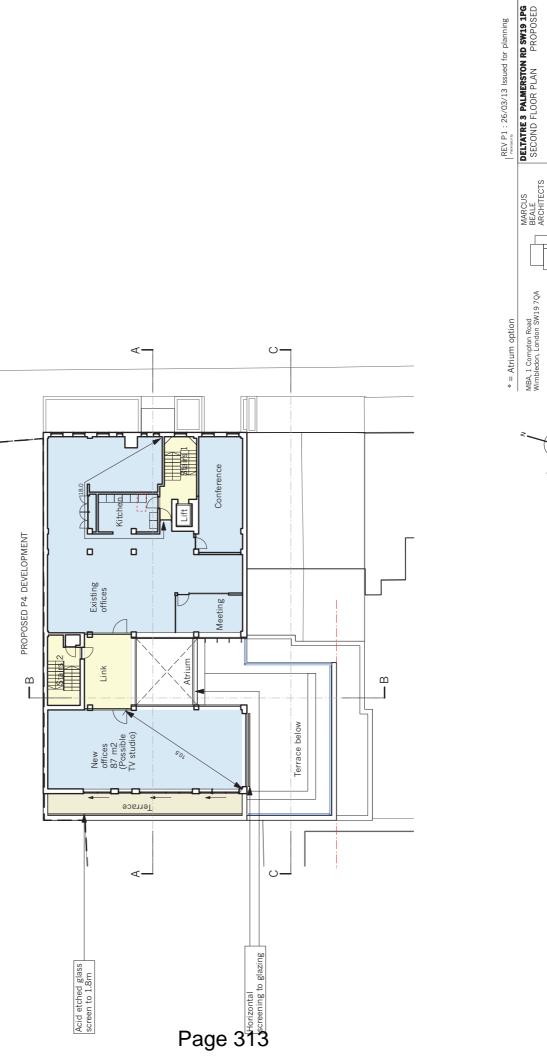
# 13. INF1 Party Wall Act











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