



6th January 2020

Application 2019/5117 (Battersea Business Centre, Lavender Hill SW11 5QL)

Dear Wandsworth planning team,

I am writing on behalf of the *Lavender Hill for Me* residents group with a general comment on the above application.

In broad terms we support this proposal. The current access to the complex is of poor quality with blank walls and a rather unwelcoming appearance, and does not add to the streetscape. Creating an entrance and reception area more suiting a modern business park will help ensure the longer term viability of the Battersea Business Centre, which we view as an important local source of employment, as well as (by creating trade during the daytime) as a source of trade for several other small businesses on Lavender Hill.

In design terms the proposal adopts an unambiguously contemporary style, which while not 'aligned' with the older properties either side, seems a sensible and appropriate approach for the location. It is bridging a gap between two terraces of very different ages and designs, and a more classical approach wouldn't be likely to work any better; it's also worth noting that the building opposite (the converted former medical practice) is very contemporary.

However we have two specific suggestions of potential conditions of consent:

- Before occupation, the dropped section of pavement on Lavender Hill should be narrowed to align with the new vehicular entrance – and in particular **the unofficial "parking space" on Lavender Hill that occupies the right hand side of the current dropped entrance area should be removed**. This is already painted with yellow 'keep clear' hatching, however this is routinely ignored. As this part is not used in practice for vehicles (the current gate is narrower than the entrance) it almost always has one or two vehicles parked laterally, which forces pedestrians to step out on to the main Lavender Hill roadway. This is inconvenient but also unsafe for the general public, and by blocking access to the small dropped kerb area poses particular problems for disabled people wishing to proceed along Lavender Hill. The *Google Street View* extract below is a typical example of what happens on this stretch of pavement, showing the problematic access situation the current layout creates:



The development of this street-facing plot will in any case lead to some footway reinstatement works, and we suspect that the Business Centre will wish to have a more appropriate paving area in front of the new reception (as well as the neighbouring traders who would welcome a more accessible pavement!) – suggesting this opportunity can be taken to resolve this ongoing issue for good.

- Given the constrained nature of the site, as well as concerns we have heard from some of those currently working on the premises, a **construction management plan** should be submitted for approval prior to commencement of works – to ensure consideration is given to maintaining safe access to the many premises within the Business Centre, as well as to pedestrian access along Lavender Hill, during the works. We believe that there are plenty of ways of doing this (including careful scaffolding, but also potentially a short-term additional access via the existing gate to the Stormont Road estate car park) and that the construction should be quite feasible, but it will need the contractors to carefully phase the building process.

With regards,

David Curran
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On behalf of Lavender Hill for Me