

Matthew Dempsey  
London Borough of Camden  
5 Pancras Square  
London  
N1C 4AG

12<sup>th</sup> February 2024

**Planning Portal Reference: PP-12799932**

Dear Matthew,

# Maple House, 149 Tottenham Court Road, London, W1T 7NF

## Background

On behalf of our client, Lazari Properties 7 Limited, please find enclosed an application request for the following development:

*Removal of the ancillary caretaker's flat, plant room, and transformation of the adjacent roof space at Level 08 within Block A (Tottenham Court Road facing building) to provide useable office space with a terrace, and relocation and rationalisation of the plant equipment to the Level 07 roof space within Block B (Beaumont Place facing building).*

In support of this application, please find enclosed the following documentation:

- Existing and Proposed Drawings, by Gibson Thornley Architects;
- Design and Access Statement, by Gibson Thornley Architects;
- Landscaping Drawings, by Studio ONB;
- Lighting Drawings and Assessment, by Pritchard Themis;
- Visual Assessment Note, by Citydesigner
- Noise Survey and Plant Noise Assessment, by Sandy Brown

## Site and Surroundings

Maple House is an island site surrounded by Tottenham Court Road to the west, Beaumont Place to the north and east and Grafton Way to the south. The Site is arranged over four principal buildings around the perimeter of the block with a large central courtyard at first floor level.

Block A (the western block fronting onto Tottenham Court Road) and Block B (the northern block fronting Beaumont Place) are in office use at upper levels with retail and active uses fronting Tottenham Court Road at ground floor level. The southern block along Grafton Way is in residential use, whilst the eastern block contains a mixture of residential use and UCLH functions.

Fitzroy Square Conservation Area is located to the west of the Site on the opposite side of Tottenham Court Road and Bloomsbury Conservation Area is located to the south of Grafton Way. The Site is not located within a Conservation Area and is not listed or locally listed.

The building was designed by Sir Richard Seifert & Partners, and completed in 1976. The building is one of Seifert's lesser known works and was built for furniture empire Maple's. It is understood that the Council

consider Maple House to make a positive contribution to the area. However, the building is not a designated or non-designated heritage asset.

## Planning History

The building was completed in 1976 although the original planning application details are not available on Camden's online planning register. Since this time there have been numerous applications for minor works, including a change of use of the upper floors from the building's previous showroom/retail use to office, in addition to signage applications, and other works of a minor nature.

CBRE have recently secured planning permission on behalf of Lazari for the following works:

LPA REFERENCE	DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	DETERMINATION DATE
2021/4823/P	Alterations to office entrance with associated external alterations at ground floor.	Approved: 24/06/2022
2021/6225/P	Replacement of glazing to lift lobby, external courtyard landscaping with two pavilions, and PV panels on roof	Approved: 07/06/2023
2022/1362/P	Alterations to the rear vehicular entrance comprising a separate pedestrian and cycle entrance from Beaumont Place.	Approved: 12/10/2022
2023/1468/P	Alteration to office frontage and installation of mosaic tile icons to curved walls along Beaumont Place East.  <i>Associated Advertisement Consent secured under LPA Ref: 2023/1931/A</i>	Approved: 25/09/2023

Furthermore, CBRE have recently submitted planning applications, on behalf of Lazari for the following works:

LPA REFERENCE	DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	REGISTERED DATE
2024/0179/A	Display of non-illuminated building name fascia sign above rear basement car park entrance.	18/01/2024
2023/5313/P	Enhancements to Beaumont Place ground floor elevation, basement car park entrance, including new signage, and the conversion of flat roof areas at Levels 1 and 3 to landscaped terraces.	18/01/2024
2023/5312/P	Installation of a generator flue, on the internal flank elevation of Block B terminating at roof level.	12/01/2024
2023/5050/P	Installation of replacement windows and doors at levels 1, 2 and 3 of the Beaumont Place (North) and Tottenham Court Road (West) facades.	12/01/2024

## Site Designations

The Site is subject to the following planning designations:

- Central Activities Zone;
- Central London Area;
- Tottenham Court Road Central London Frontage (Primary);
- Fitzrovia Action Plan Area;
- Crossrail 2 Safeguarding Area; and
- London View Management Framework (LVMF) strategic viewing corridor from Parliament Hill Oak Tree to the Palace of Westminster (View 2B.1).

## Proposals

The applicant is proposing the following works to the building:

- Improvements to the servicing of the building;
- Renovation of the former plant room on Level 08 to provide ancillary space;
- Transforming the Level 08 roof space into a useable terrace.

## Pre-application Engagement

The applicant team have engaged in pre-application discussions with LB Camden officers prior to submitting this application. A site visit was conducted on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2023 and written feedback was issued on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2023.

At the time of the pre-application, the applicant was proposing a transformed Level 08 space, which would have altered the building massing.

Officers expressed concern with the pre-application proposals, that it would encroach on the LVMF view corridor from Parliament Hill to the Palace of Westminster, and therefore the Council would not support development in such a form. Following this, the proposals have been re-designed, so that the building massing will not change, and the impact on the LVMF view remains unaltered.

Positive feedback was received in relation to using Levels 01 and 03 as terraced areas. The Level 08 terrace would be introduced on the same Tottenham Court Road elevation.

## Land Use

### Caretaker's Flat

Within Level 08, there is one 41 sqm flat, which has historically provided accommodation for the building caretaker. The flat was last occupied by the building manager, who is also employed by the applicant.

We understand that the flat has been part of the building since its original construction in the 1970's, and has previously been used by other building managers/staff who work within the building.

Access to the flat can only be gained through the office lobby at ground floor and can be accessed in one of the following ways:

- Entering the main office reception and taking the office lift from ground floor to Level 7 and then taking the escape stair to Level 8; or
- Entering the main office reception and taking the escape stair to Level 8.
- Entering the escape stair entrance from Beaumont Place and taking the escape stair to Level 8.

The unit is single aspect next door to existing plant and has no amenity space. As a result of this, it is only reasonable to conclude that the flat is intrinsically linked to the office floorspace below and could not be realistically occupied by anyone other than someone associated with the operation of the building. Clearly, a new-build residential scheme would not rely on the common parts of an office building for access, or its associated escape stairs, which causes security and health and safety risks.

As such, it is considered that the residential unit is ancillary to the office, and any internal alterations to this space, which would see it amalgamated with the wider office space, are not considered to constitute 'development' as per Section 55 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. This aligns with Camden's approach to an application with very similar circumstances at 21 Bloomsbury Way (application ref: 2017/2059/P).

Equally, this matter was discussed with the LB Camden case officer during the site visit on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2023, and no concerns were raised at that time.

## Increase in Useable Office Space

At Level 8, the proposals seek to remove enclosed existing plant space for the office and replace this with usable office space. As the existing and proposed space is both fully enclosed by the current building, there is no uplift in GIA of non-residential space as a result of this element of the scheme and therefore would not trigger a mixed-use requirement under Policy H2.

The increase in useable office space would be in accordance with policy objectives for the CAZ and Policy E2 of the Camden Local Plan, which seeks to ensure the ongoing use and expansion of employment generating sites within the borough.

## Design

Policy D1 of the Camden Local Plan seeks to secure high quality design in development. This includes a requirement to ensure that development respects local context, preserves the historic environment, and positively contributes to street frontages. Furthermore, high quality landscape design, including greening, is encouraged.

Level 08 is the highest internal level of Maple House. It faces Tottenham Court Road, the principal west elevation of the building. The space currently hosts a substantial, and largely defunct, plantroom, which occupies a vast amount of space compared to contemporary equivalents.

Level 08 is accessed via the two main stair cores that serve Block A of Maple House. As set out above, a caretaker's apartment sits to the northern end of the floor, and a small mezzanine sits above the lift cores to house the lift motor plant. The floor includes a set back on its western elevation, creating a mansard-type roofscape and providing a large terrace, which is currently unused.

The proposals will see the renewal and renovation of the space, whilst removing the existing plant and caretaker's flat and providing new office accommodation to the floor. The works include the replacement of existing louvres with fixed glazed screens, glazed doors or new louvres, cleaning of the existing granite cladding, the removal of existing plant and relocation the level 07 roof, the removal of existing roof coverings and replacement with new tapered insulation scheme and new coverings, and the removal of the existing access ladder and replacement with a new access internal access hatch.

The adjacent flat roof area will be transformed into a useable terrace, providing new areas for tenants to enjoy the outdoors, whilst also introducing urban greening.

At Level 07 of Block B, a new condenser plant will be installed with a new plant screen. Given the tight adjacent streetscape of Beaumont Place (north) it is considered that the visual impact posed by this will be negligible.

Atop the roof space on Block A (i.e. the roof space above Level 08), the proposals would see the removal of a ladder and the inclusion of a new access hatch to the southern stair. Generally, works are limited to the removal of rooftop plant, new roof coverings and insulation, and infilling of historic vent openings. No additional mass is proposed, maintaining the existing condition of the building within the London View Management Framework view 2B.1.

Overall, the proposed works are considered to represent the highest quality of design, improving the overall appearance of the building which, in tandem with the other works that have taken place to date, will ensure the longevity of the building.

## Amenity

Policy A1 of the Camden Local Plan states that the Council will seek to protect the quality of life of occupiers and neighbours, through granting permission for development unless it causes unacceptable harm to amenity.

## Overlooking

It is not considered that any amenity issues arise from the proposals. The use of the flat roof areas at Level 08 as a terrace are located on the Tottenham Court Road frontage of the building. Tottenham Court Road is a busy thoroughfare and the building is set a considerable distance away from the buildings opposite by way of the road's width.

## Noise

A Noise Survey and Plant Noise Assessment has been undertaken by Sandy Brown. Based on Local Plan requirements, and on the results of the noise survey, all plant must be designed such that the cumulative noise level at 1 m from the worst affected windows of the nearby noise sensitive premises does not exceed LAeq,15min 45 dB during the day, and LAeq,15min 43 dB during the night. These have been corrected relative to the measured freefield background sound levels by the addition of 3 dB (as per the guidance provided in BS 8233:2014 Section G.2.1).

These limits are cumulative, and apply with all plant operating under normal conditions. If plant items contain tonal or attention catching features, a penalty based on the type and impact of those features will be applied, and the limits will be more stringent than those set. An assessment of the noise emissions from the proposed roof top building services plant indicates full compliance with the noise limits.


## Conclusion

The proposals will deliver further useable office space, including associated amenity space for occupants, within the CAZ, whilst seeing the removal of dated plant equipment, replacing this with new and efficient apparatus. The proposals are therefore considered to be compliant with the Development Plan and should be approved accordingly.

Please note that a payment of £578 (in addition to the £64.00 service charge) to cover the application fee has been made. We trust that you have all the necessary information to validate and duly determine the

planning application. Should you wish to discuss any aspect of the submission then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A Garcia', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Adam Garcia MRTPI | Associate Director  
CBRE Ltd | UK Development – Planning

For and on behalf of Lazari Investments