

1C HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE

04 DESCRIPTION OF THE ESTATE

Extract from the conservation area statement, prepared by Camden and published Dec. 2000. The full version can be found in [Appendix 3E](#)

1C-04.01 GENERAL CHARACTER

The estate has a strong geometric quality; orthogonal arrangements being varied by the use of bold chamfers, in both plan and section, and circular forms, in plan only. Use is made in all the blocks of stepped and overhanging sections. Throughout the estate play is made of changes of levels with associated ramps, stairs and light wells. Much of the estate is constructed of fair-faced, white concrete with chamfered arrases. Careful attention was given to the detail and execution of the board marking and day-work joints. The north face of A Block, the south face of B block and both faces of C Block are of self-coloured render. Typical materials are in-situ, white board-marked concrete; self-coloured render; pre-cast concrete units for external steps; black stained timber joinery except to the lift enclosures and the north elevation of Block A where the fenestration is aluminium; glass bricks are used on the north side of Block A at road level.

The landscape forms an integral part of the scheme. The east/west swathe of public green space, between blocks B and C, is intersected diagonally by wall of in-situ, board-marked, white concrete, forming a highly structured series of outdoor “rooms”. This division, springing from two pedestrian routes between blocks B and C, is reinforced and further subdivided by changes of level, tree and shrub planting and timber fencing, to create spaces of varied size, shape and character. Some are furnished with playground equipment and others are laid to grass. The architects designed the build structure of the landscape scheme and another member of the team, Janet Jack, was responsible for the structure planting and soft landscaping.

1C-04.02 FEATURES OF THE ESTATE

In the new estate, the **A Block** is the tallest (7-storeys plus basement parking) and backs on to the railway presenting a mostly solid elevation, with relatively small double-glazed aluminium windows, to the noise of the tracks. The south facing aspect is more open and steps down to Rowley Way, which is paved with red brick and lined with trees. The sweep of A Block is punctuated by the recessed glazed lift enclosures. The section of **Block B** on the opposite side of Rowley Way is lower (4-storeys) but also stepped. Each flat or maisonette is provided with its own terrace/garden area with integral in-situ concrete planters. Both Blocks A and B sit on a concrete deck. Parking is provided beneath A Block and Rowley Way; the provision of sufficient parking spaces for residents of the new estate and the existing Ainsworth Estate formed part of the brief. The south elevation of B Block is of plain render and is not stepped. A broad band of landscaped lawns, enclosed play areas and integral seating, stretches two-thirds of the length of the site from Abbey Road in the west to the Tenants’ Hall in the east and separates Blocks B and C. **Block C** is a lower, modified form of Block B, and consists of three-storeys plus parking provided in basements accessed by one of the estate roads entered from Boundary Road. The gardens of Block C face south but are rather overshadowed by the neighbouring blocks of the Ainsworth Estate.

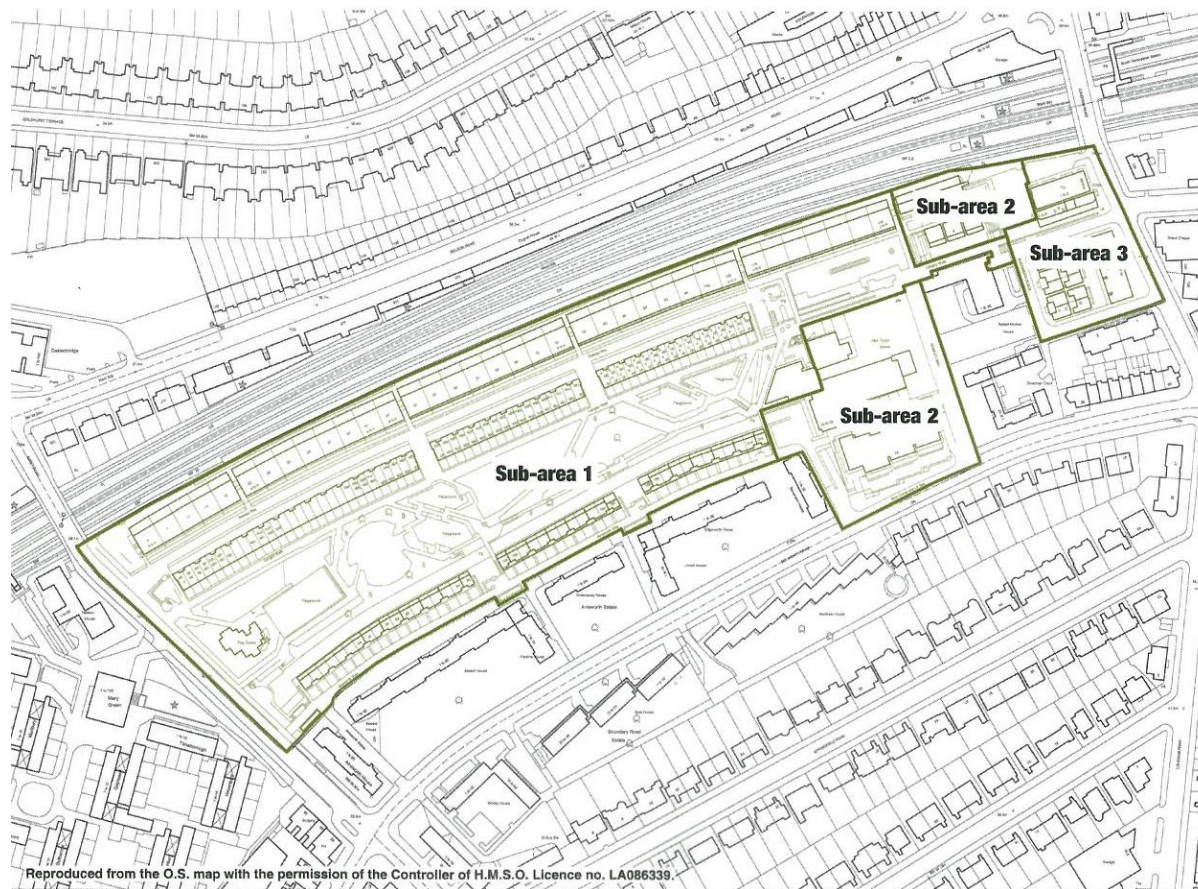
The large sunken courtyard at the eastern end of the listed estate is one of the most dramatic features. To the north, Block A rises above it on pilotis. The western end of the undercroft thus formed below Block A was originally occupied by Camden's Building Department Depot and is not in-filled with the offices of the SHHC, a clad in blue colour-coated panels. Though obviously a later intervention this infill sits happily within the overall design. On the southern side a long, switch-backed ramp gives pedestrian access from Langtry Walk. Luxuriant planting overhangs the board marked concrete of the balustrade.

The **Tenants' Hall** forms part of the Neave Brown scheme and is located at the eastern end of the landscaped areas. Adjacent to it is the prominent triple stack of the stainless steel chimneys which serve the district heating system.

Trees line the approach to the estate at the eastern end of Rowley Way. Another row of trees demarcates the boundary of the estate with Abbey Road adjacent to the Afro-Caribbean Centre building. Elsewhere trees have been incorporated in to the design, an example being to the north of the Tenants' Hall where a well was formed in the structural slab through which trees have grown as they matured. The majority of the planting to the park area between Blocks B and C appears to be contemporaneous with the construction of the estate.

A circular lawn circumscribed by a gravel pathway has recently been introduced into the landscape arrangement in place of the original grass bowl.

1C-04.03 BOUNDARY OF THE ESTATE



Sub-Area 1 The Alexandra Road Estate (listed grade II*) Including the Afro-Caribbean Centre

Sub-Area 2 Jack Taylor School, No. 48 Boundary Road and No.9 Langtry Walk

Sub-Area 3 Nos. 1-8 Langtry Walk, Nos. 49-83 Loudon Road and Nos. 2-68 Alexandra Place.

1C-04.04 Conservation Area Boundary Review

For the sake of consistency some small adjustments to the boundaries on Ainsworth way and Langtry Walk have been made. The extension on Ainsworth Way includes two small concrete blocks of lock up stores. On Langtry Walk the extension involves the inclusion of the steps and entrance decks to Robert Morton House. These Elements all form part of the listed Alexandra Road Estate.