

Official list entry

Heritage Category: **Listed Building**

Grade: **I**

List Entry Number: **1379280**

Date first listed: **14-May-1974**

Date of most recent amendment: **11-Jan-1999**

Statutory Address 1: **NUMBERS I, 1A, 1B, 1C AND 1D AND 2-32 ISOKON FLATS, LAWN ROAD**

This List entry helps identify the building designated at this address for its special architectural or historic interest.

Unless the List entry states otherwise, it includes both the structure itself and any object or structure fixed to it (whether inside or outside) as well as any object or structure within the curtilage of the building.

For these purposes, to be included within the curtilage of the building, the object or structure must have formed part of the land since before 1st July 1948.

[Understanding list entries](https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/understanding-list-entries/) (<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/understanding-list-entries/>)

[Corrections and minor amendments](https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/minor-amendments/) (<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/minor-amendments/>)

Location

Statutory Address: **NUMBERS I, 1A, 1B, 1C AND 1D AND 2-32 ISOKON FLATS, LAWN ROAD**

The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

County: **Greater London Authority**

District: **Camden (London Borough)**

Parish: **Non Civil Parish**

National Grid Reference: **TQ 27519 85275**

Details

CAMDEN

TQ2785SE LAWN ROAD 798-1/40/1015 (West side) 14/05/74 Nos.1, 1A, 1B, 1C and 1D, and 2-32 (consec) Isokon Flats (Formerly Listed as: LAWN ROAD Isokon Flats)

I

Block of 36 flats. Designed 1929-32, built 1933-34. By Wells Coates, for Jack & Molly Pritchard and incorporating many of the latter's Venesta plywood manufactures. Monolithic structure in reinforced concrete with cement wash finish applied direct to concrete. Flat roof. Metal windows. PLAN: each floor has six one-room 'minimum' flats, two with balconies; one studio with balcony and one one-bedroom flat on each of the main floors, with penthouse for the Pritchards and separate penthouse for their children on the roof. Ground floor originally with kitchens and staff flat at entrance in place of studio, converted in 1937 by Marcel Breuer and F R S Yorke into the Isobar, and in the late 1960s into four small flats not of special interest. EXTERIOR: 4 storeys and penthouse. Main elevation with continuous solid cantilevered access/circulation balconies linked by diagonal external stairs to left. Levels gained to the right by a stair tower with double door entrance approached by steps under a projecting canopy; stairwell lit by vertically set windows, originally one single window, having horizontal lights. Attached garage to right. Left hand return with 3-light casement and fixed windows to each floor. Rear elevation has similar grouped windows and projecting balconies to 3 bays. INTERIORS: the flats were originally conceived as 'minimum flats', designed to offer a cheap but more independent alternative to 'digs'. They originally had space-saving fitted furniture and closets. Most flats retain original fitted kitchens, dressing rooms and bathrooms by Coates. Studio flats retain semi-open screens or bookcases separating the living and sleeping areas. The larger Penthouse flat retains plywood floors and skirtings, and full range of fitted bedroom furniture probably designed by as well as for Jack Pritchard. HISTORICAL NOTE: the Pritchards intended that the flats be a collective of units for single professionals, the "minimum flat", with a few larger flats and studios. The Pritchards originally intended to build a house for themselves on the

site, and instead had separate penthouses on the roof for themselves and their children. Their dynamic lifestyle set the tone of the block, which attracted not only young architects and writers but also the refugee architects from Germany and eastern Europe whom Pritchard was instrumental in bringing to Britain from 1933 onwards. The design was conceived as service flats with a main kitchen and staff quarters on the ground floor north end; this was converted 1936-7 by Marcel Breuer and FRS Yorke into a residents' club known as the Isobar; now converted to four extra flats. During the early years it was the home of many avant-garde designers, artists, writers and poets.

Marcel Breuer, whose furniture designs were produced by Pritchard's Isokon Laminated Furniture company, lived there when he became a refugee from Germany as did Walter Gropius and his wife and others fleeing Fascist Europe. Isokon Flats are of both architectural and social significance. They were the first major architectural work of Wells Coates, one of the leading activists in the creation of the Modern Movement in Britain in the 1930s, and were the first block of flats to be built in Britain in the fully modern style. It was also the first modern movement building of any kind in an easily accessible location in Britain, and attracted considerable attention. The Lawn Road flats are of great importance as an expression of 1930s' minimal living, at the only time when living in flats was fashionable. They are not only the first modern movement flats in Britain, but the only ones to retain important interiors. (Cantacuzino S: Wells Coates: London: -1978: 51-63).

Listing NGR: TQ2751985275

Legacy

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

Legacy System number: **478648**

Legacy System: LBS

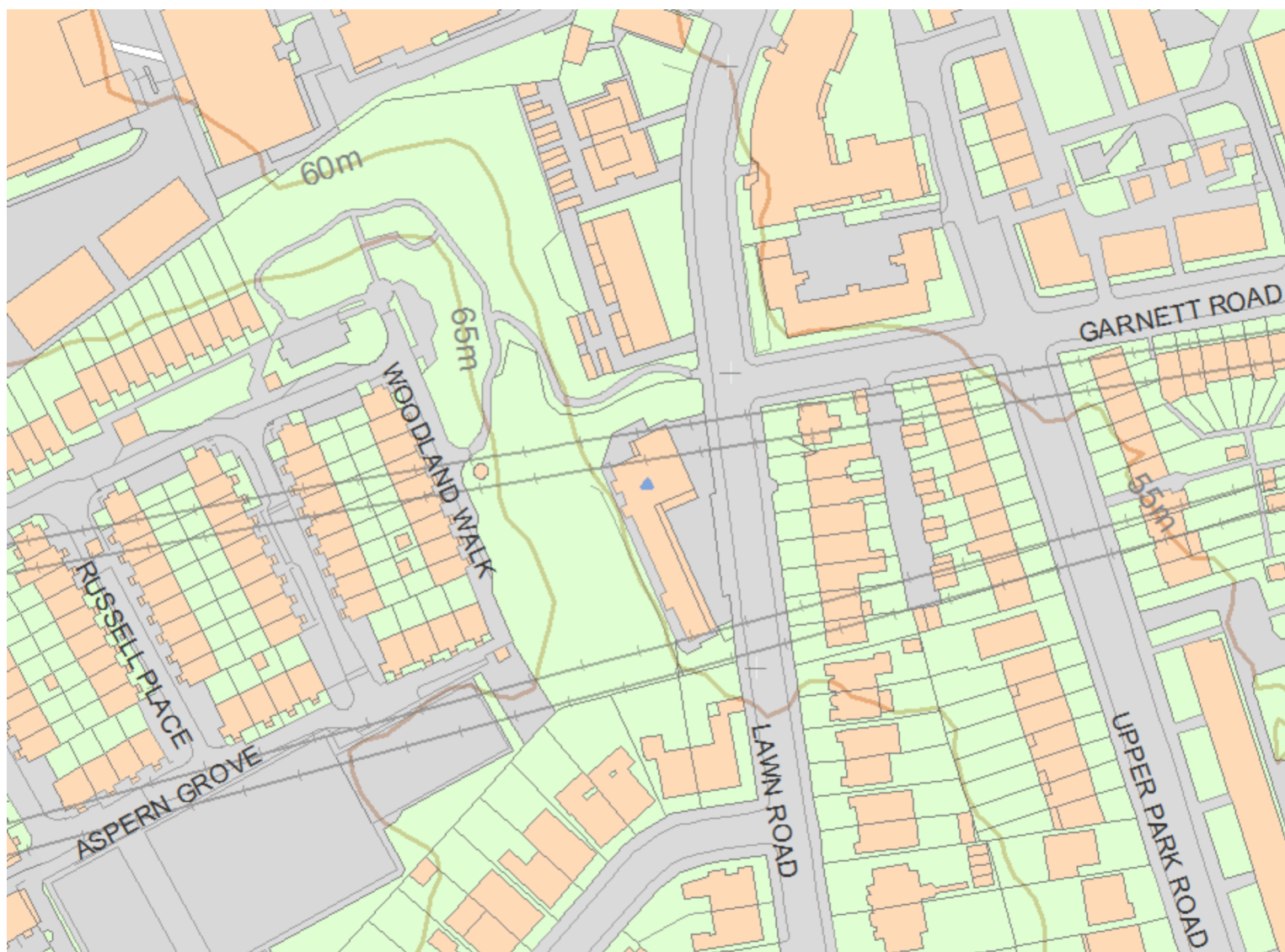
Sources

Books and journals

Cantacuzino, S, Wells Coates a Monograph, (1978), 51-63

Legal

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.



Map

This map is for quick reference purposes only and may not be to scale. This copy shows the entry on 26-Apr-2022 at 16:05:55.

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End of official list entry



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