

Hammersmith Society : Environment Awards 2015

Our judging Committee looked at a record number of schemes this year.

To remind you we have three principle Award headings :

- Main Award
- Nancye Goulden Award – Smaller schemes
- Conservation Award
- Wooden Spoons

The main criteria for consideration are that the project must be finished and that it must be visible from the public domain.

This year we have decided to introduce a Special Award : This is to cover a project which does not fall within these categories : For example an exceptional interior. I will come back to that.

So these are the schemes which the Committee looked at : In the order which we visited :

St Peter's Place - 405 – 409 King Street



This is a residential development of some 41 units – 33 flats and 8 houses. The site is a peninsula bounded by St Peter's Square, King Street and British Grove. It replaced the former VW garage and effectively acts as a sort of gateway into the square. We together with St Peter's Residents Association were much involved with the various proposals with different developers. This scheme was originally designed for NHHT who sold the site on to Crest Nicholson. We were relatively happy with approved scheme but it has rather lost its way during the development and although they have used good materials, much of the final detailing is rather clumpy. Overall the committee were quite disappointed.

The original architects were Acanthus Lawrence Wrightson

21 Banim Street



Banim Street is a narrow road running north-south from the heart of Brackenbury Village to coming into Glenthorne Road by Secrets Club. On the west side of the street is an unbroken terrace of handsome two storey terrace houses. This scheme finishes this terrace by both repeating the pattern of houses but also introducing a three storey stop end. The development consists of 3 houses, 3 flats, and some office space. There is some access from the little cul-de-sac and pedestrian passageway which has been retained. Overall the Committee thought this was a charming and sensitive scheme.

The architects were Haines Phillips.

23 Keith Grove, off Uxbridge Road



This is a rather intriguing new house built on an end of terrace derelict site – Not many of them around to provide a Grand Designs type experience. I understand that the house has featured on C4's George Clarke's Amazing Spaces and it won a NLA Award. Obviously the major feature is the huge picture window which reflects the street, the sky and the trees : We are not quite sure what the effect is inside – Is it like a big two way mirror? The other rather charming feature is the front door where you actually enter through the number 23. Overall the Committee had mixed views on this scheme – and interestingly it was some of the architect members who most disliked it.

The architects of the scheme were MATT Architecture.

Queensmill School, Uxbridge Road



As the name implies, this is a school that was relocated from Queensmill Road in Fulham. It is a purpose built special needs school for autistic children. It is modernistic in a style slightly reminiscent of the American architect Richard Meier but it doesn't quite live up to the comparison. In fact it is quite disappointing. In particular the perimeter fencing is very institutional : Ok the unit has to be secure but this is school not a prison. One way and another a opportunity lost for something which could have been quite special.

The architects were 3BM.

1, 5, 9 Waldo Road, College Park



This was quite an exciting find – even though I say this myself as the finder. People in College Park complain that they are cut off from the rest of the Borough and few of us probably go there except up and down Scrubs Lane – at the moment! It consists of three pretty substantial and very modern houses. The site was formerly industrial and backs onto a whole range of railway lines including the main West Coast line from Euston and the Bakerloo Line, and has views beyond over St Mary’s Cemetery. The houses have been built to a very high and green specification and have south facing balconies.

Interesting to note that the scheme had a difficult birth through planning. The client/architect was told by the planning officer – who I won’t name – that the Council could not countenance a modern design in the street. He decided to appeal and by luck the Planning Inspector was Swedish – and she absolutely loved it – and so did we!

The developer/architect was Alfred Munkenbeck

The Bloom, Bloemfontein Road



You may remember that we looked at this last year. It is a remarkable scheme in many ways although not to everyone’s taste. Another scheme in which we were quite involved in its various iterations. But the problem is – as last year – that the crucial interface to Wormholt Park at the rear is not resolved and as a result the rather forbidding access gates remain firmly closed.

The architects for the scheme were Rogers Stirk Harbour

The Nook, St Stephen's Avenue



This is a rather intriguing infill scheme at the Uxbridge Road end of St Stephen's Avenue. What you see on the street is rather deceptive as it is part of quite a large backland scheme at the rear of this building.

The block is an interesting and polite design solution to the street and not trying to emulate the Victoriana on either side by providing a simple brick box elevation. We actually thought it could have been a storey higher!

Architects (and owners?) for scheme were Henning Stummel Architects

Dorsett Hotel, Shepherd's Bush Green



This scheme does not need much introduction. We looked at the original proposals in about 2001 when Roger de Freitas was Chairman and we quite liked it. He thought it was ridiculous to try and convert an inward looking Listed cinema building into an outward looking 4 star hotel, rather than start again. It was opened in 1923 as the Pavilion Cinema designed by Thomas Verity, then changed to the Gaumont, then Odeon and finally Rank Bingo! Anyway they stuck with it and personally I think it is rather a triumph and the Committee agreed that Shepherd's Bush would be the poorer without it. A distinctive element of the original was its amazing barrel like roof which has been replaced in glass and louvres : Looks pretty spectacular from the tube.

The architects were Flanagan Lawrence – Formerly Hamilton Associates

10 Hammersmith Grove

By chances, David Lawrence who designed the Dorsett, was also the architect for this building and its sister going up at No 12. He also designed the squashed strawberry for this site. Anyway we have looked at No 10 twice before and it has always divided

opinions. We looked again this year because there was a suggestion that the landscaping was complete and contributed to the setting of the building, Unfortunately the Committee could not agree and some felt the landscaping was overly intrusive and the space could have been better used.

Hammersmith Station, Hammersmith and City Line



This little station has always been a charming feature of Beadon Road, but the actual station entrance was a bit of a sideshow. With the increasing traffic on the line with the addition of the Circle line trains and Westfield, LU realized they had to improve the entrance and the concourse.

The scheme has involved a simple opening up of the centre arches – sadly losing the barber’s shop and pole – and a general refurbishment. The façade had previously suffered ill treatment including some horrid patching and re-pointing. Through the intervention of our member Richard Owen and others, LU were persuaded to make a proper job of it and redo the pointing. The overall result with the relaid cobbled forecourt is a great success.

However, having said that, we are very disappointed with the street view of Pret Mini onto Beadon Road. Inside the concourse it is delightful, but we are getting a back of house view onto the street with a blanked off window panel and a display of cartons and cleaning equipment. We hope LU can persuade Pret to do something about this.

Lyric Theatre



Then we come to the Lyric extension. Obviously we are delighted to be here this evening, and most of you have probably seen the terrific facilities that have been provided. The Hammersmith Society has always had a special relationship with the Lyric and we were instrumental in saving the theatre back in the 1960s and 70s, We also gave the previous extension and new entrance our Award in 2003. But we have always had a bit of a problem with the external design of the new extension onto King Street, The refurbishment of the main building and the roof garden are all fine and some but not everyone likes the parrot!

This elevation seemed to us a lost opportunity. We described the vertical louvres on the drawing as looking like a bar code and we think that the reality is not much better.

Architects for both the previous extension and this one were Rick Mather Architects.

The last two schemes which we looked at were :

Conversion of workshops on the Peabody Estate, Queen Caroline Street into 4 bungalows

We have some reservation about the loss of the workshop facility but that is a different matter. The conversion has involved quite a bit of alteration but we were particularly disappointed at the use of UPVC windows and also the lack of any soft landscaping around the new houses.

12 and 13 Rutland Grove

The two new build houses are on land that formed part of Kent House – that's the custard yellow Georgian building on the Mall. The two houses infill a gap in the street and are generally extraordinary reproductions of the adjoining Victorian houses in the street – in fact so good that one of our members nominated them for a conservation award. The main give away that they are not original is the shape of the roofs and the lack of chimneys.

Special Award



The Hammersmith Apollo is a familiar local landmark. Designed by Robert Cromie in Art Deco style, it opened in 1932 as the Gaumont Palace, being renamed the Hammersmith Odeon in 1962 and now the Eventim Apollo and is a Grade II* listed building. Over the years the interior had become rather tired and almost ignored. The current owners have invested hugely – I think it is more than £3m restoring the interiors. This has been overseen by Foster Wilson architects and some of us were lucky enough to have a guided tour in January of this year. The results I think you will agree spectacular and we are told there is some more to come.

Wooden Spoons

Poor quality design generally in relation to Student Housing Projects : Many such schemes are winning design awards around the country : Can do better

Lack of enforcement action in relation to siting of Satellite dishes

Poor quality in the provision of Tree Pits (Third year) : Previous Labour Council introduced the StreetSmart Guide but sadly the attention to tree pits has continued to be woefully lacking with no clear policy.

Award Winners : Presented by the Mayor Cllr Mercy Umeh :

Conservation Award

Hammersmith Station, Hammersmith and City Line



Lola Okukenu – LU Area Manager Hammersmith & City Line Stations – (representing Edmund Bird (right) – Heritage Advisor to TfL – (representing Mike Ashworth – Design & Heritage Manager)

David Leboff (left) – LU Senior Sponsor for the project – (representing Sean Cassidy – LU sponsor for the project)

Nancye Goulden Award

21, Banim Street – Small infill housing scheme



Developer - Vincenzo Giordano (right)

Architect - Stanley Haines of Haines Phillips (left)

Main Award : Joint winners :

New modern houses by the railway at Waldo Road, College Park



Developer/Architect – Alex Ottaviano on behalf of Alfred Munkenbeck

Dorsett Hotel, Shepherds Bush Green – Hotel converted from former cinema



Developer - John Connolly - Dorsett International (left)
Architects – Flanagan Lawrence : Jason Flanagan (right)

Special Award

Apollo Theatre – Refurbished Interiors



Client – Eventim Apollo - Heiko Kacimi-Alaoui, General Manager (left)
Architects – Foster Wilson (right)