



AXA IM

Dolphin Square: Landscape Proposals

Design and Access Statement
November 2021



View from the Loggia to Central Fountain

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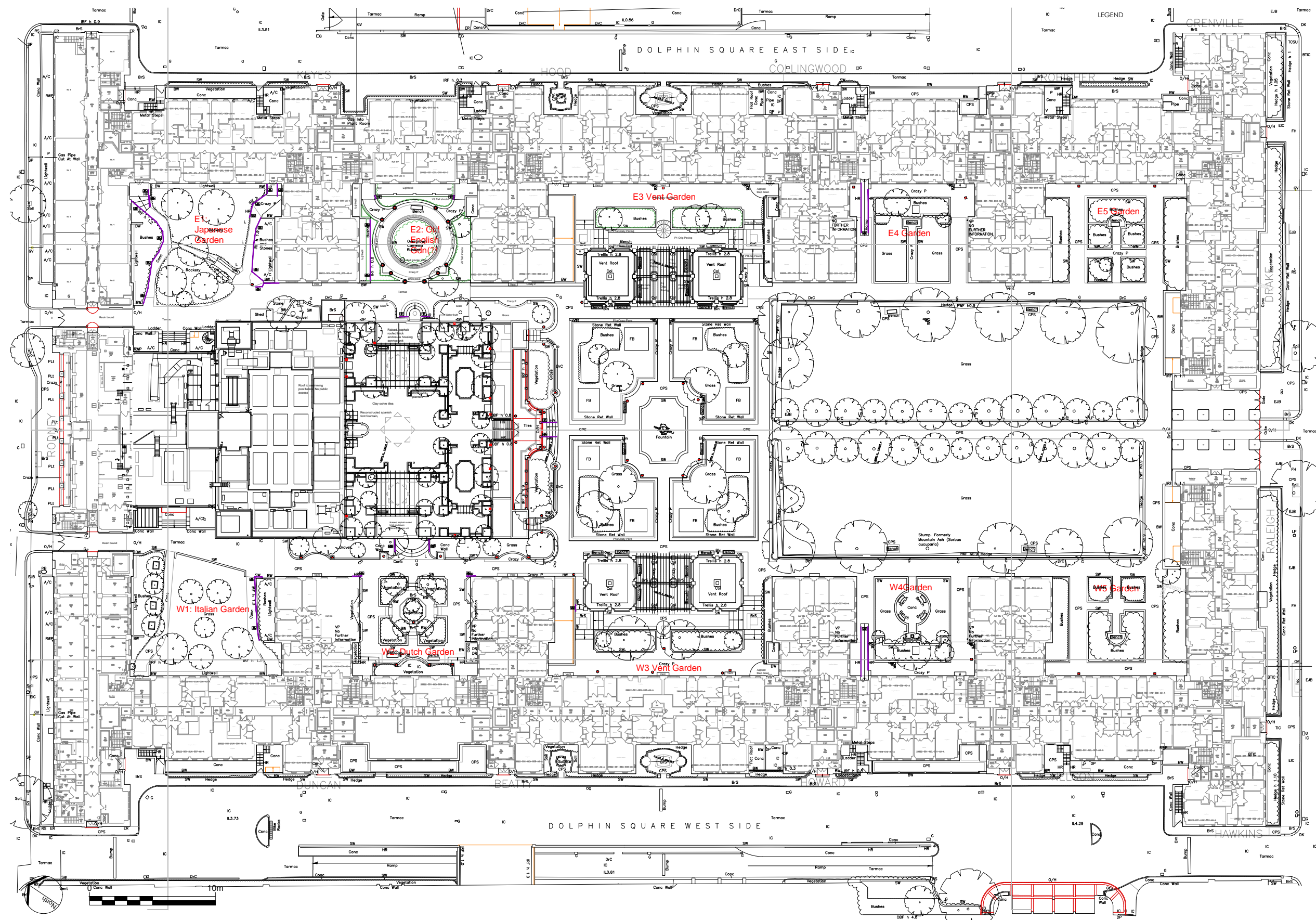
Appendix

Richard Sudell: Landscape Architect

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This document has been prepared and checked
in accordance with ISO 9001:2000.

Dolphin Square Landscape



Existing Plan with Gardens numbered

1. Introduction

Introduction to the Project

This report has been commissioned by AXA Investment Managers – Real Assets, and partner following their acquisition in September 2020 of the freehold of Dolphin Square. It has been drafted by Sally Prothero Landscape Architecture with research by Annabel Downs.

This Report

The purpose of the report is to provide an assessment of the significance of the designed landscape at Dolphin Square, to assess the extent of its surviving fabric and significance in heritage terms. It describes its major components including planting; and provides a summary of issues affecting the significance of the garden.

It describes the proposals for the gardens in context of the wider building refurbishments and will provide a heritage impact assessment.

Long Term Approach

The Landscape DAS is intended to provide a overall strategy and design principles for the restoration of Dolphin Square's landscape. It sets out key aims and priorities for a comprehensive and cohesive landscape capital works and management strategy.

This document is designed to be the reference for both the implementation and long term the management and restoration of Dolphin Square over the 6 year construction period.

Strategic Objectives & Aims

This DAS sets out AXA IM's strategic objectives for

Dolphin Square, and how the restoration of the gardens can make it a flagship site for both the restoration of the 1930's garden design of Richard Sudell, as well as a garden which promotes decorative as well as ecologically beneficial planting. Its restoration will champion the synergies between heritage, sustainability, ecology and horticulture. Changes must be made to the building in order to make them more energy efficient, and this will have some effect on the gardens, but this document describes how that change will be managed carefully to reduce any harm.

The current architectural proposals for Dolphin Square have little impact on the main central garden areas and the ten smaller 'recess' gardens; they do impact beneficially on the Moroccan roof garden, once the Spanish Garden. The new lobby creates an opportunity for reconsideration of this focal area which will be addressed in detail in Section 7. The new energy efficiency measures proposed for the building also impact the Vent Gardens and this is covered in Section 6.

Introduction to the Dolphin Square Gardens

As the garden's original designer Richard Sudell created an Arts & Crafts garden. It brought together a scale and variety of spaces that provided somewhere for everyone to either find peace and an element of seclusion, or a space large enough for large communal activities or socialising.

Approach

The history of Dolphin Square has been extensively researched by Terry Gourvish and published in *Dolphin Square, the history of a unique building*. Digitally available maps from Layers of London <https://www.layersoflondon.org/>, National Library of Scotland <https://maps.nls.uk/os/>, the British Library <https://www.bl.uk/subjects/maps> English Heritage <https://historicengland.org.uk/> and other sources have provided useful information and context to understanding the site. Photos and especially aerial photos from the 1930s have provided information on the growth of the planting and alterations made to the landscape within the courtyard garden, and material from these archives: National Aerial Photographic Collections <https://ncap.org.uk/> and Britain from Above <https://www.britainfromabove.org.uk/> have been accessed. There is limited primary information available about the landscape at Dolphin Square, and we have not had access to any Dolphin Square owners/managers archive of records or minutes, except for a few photos, (and Covid restrictions on accessing libraries and archives) so this report is largely based on material in the public domain, site visits and visual assessments.

Introduction to the significance of the gardens - Designations & Listed Status

DSQ's Grade II status reflects its national significance. There are a total of 1669 registered parks & gardens on the National Heritage List for England (NHLE) – 1069 (64%) of which are Grade II.

The site is a large enclosed garden c1936-38

to complement an innovatively designed high rise neo-Georgian residential building. Equally important was the need to provide the residents of c 1200 flats with an attractive and useful outdoor space. The building and associated garden areas were constructed in two phases, and two large areas included in the second phase of works are roof gardens.

Its landscape significance arises from its excellence as a unique example of its type, retaining much of its fabric and layout as well as the complexity and variety of styles of the original design, providing a high quality and historically important garden of the interwar period. It is included on the Historic England Register of Parks and Gardens of special historic interest at Grade II (2018). In the listing it is also noted that it is representative of Richard Sudell's design philosophy, it illustrates the fashion for themed gardens, and that it is a rare surviving example of work by Sudell who is recognised as being important and influential in the development of mid 20c landscape design.

Dolphin Square is located in its own designated Conservation Area (1990, SPD 2008) and is contiguous with Pimlico and Churchill Gardens Conservation Areas which surround the site except to the north. The whole of the Dolphin Square development is identified as an unlisted building of merit.

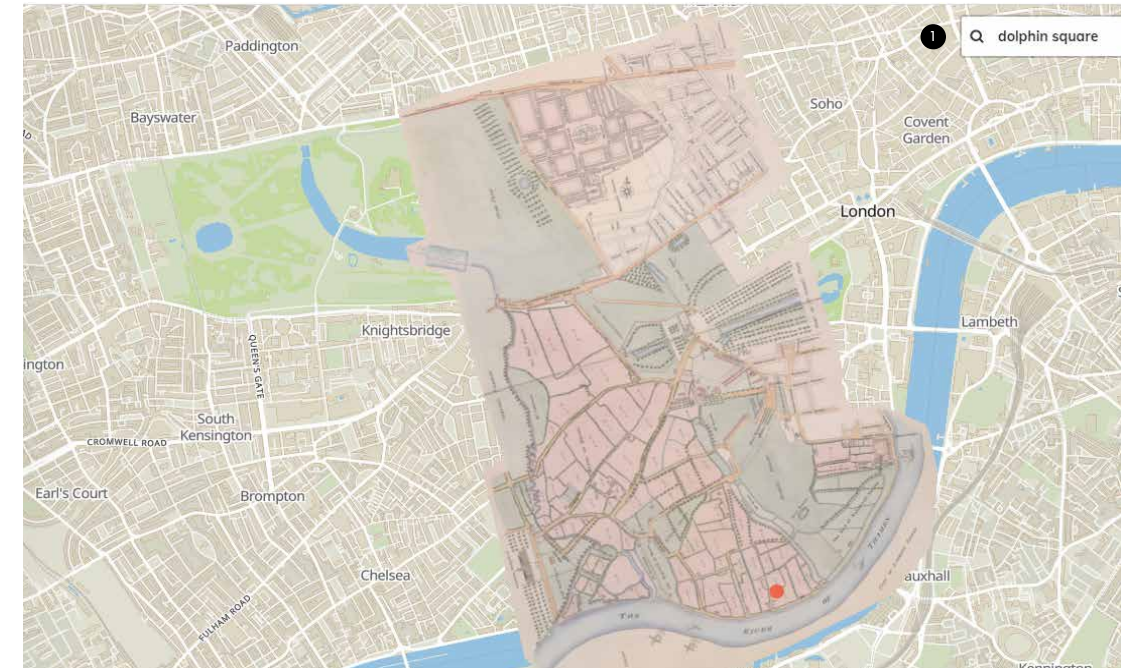


Fig 2 1746 John Rocque London 10 miles around London Westminster

2. History

2.1 The development of Pimlico

Since 1677 the Grosvenor family have owned extensive tracts of land in Westminster including the Dolphin Square site at Pimlico (Fig 1). Previously this was part of the old manor of Neyte and belonged to the Abbey of Westminster up till 1536 when it was confiscated by Henry VIII.

The Dolphin Square site is shown in (Fig 2) John Rocque's map 1746 as part of 'Neat House Gardens.' This land is shown under a patchwork of small cultivated fields, possibly operating as a market garden for London. The area is bordered to the west by the Chelsea Waterworks Company and its extensive network of canals and sand infiltration system (1829) to purify Thames water. The canals fed reservoirs in Green Park and Hyde Park. To the east is Kings Scholars Pond Sewer an open sewer issuing into the River Thames. The Thames was also used to transport goods, and from c 1830s wharves and processing works were established along the river bank including this section of the river.

Cubitt workshop

From c 1824 the builder - developer brothers Thomas, William and Lewis Cubitt began developing land leased from the Duke of Grosvenor's estate in Belgravia, having already successfully developed parts of the Duke of Bedford's estate in Bloomsbury. Although the partnership was dissolved amicably in 1827, Thomas continued with this work in Pimlico. Part of his success was the direct employment of an effective multi trade workforce, at its peak of over 1,000 men, plus extensive offsite workshop space

which he established in Grays Inn Road. From 1839-42, Cubitt set up a new yard and steam powered workshop on 11 acres leased from Duke of Grosvenor. The site was bounded by Claverton Street, St Georges Square and from Lupus Street south to the River Thames with access for deliveries of materials by boat. Much of this is now the site of Dolphin Square.

Royal Army Clothing Depot

In 1854 a serious fire destroyed part of the Cubitt workshops, and although Thomas Cubitt died the following year, the development of Pimlico continued. Managed by Cubitt's general foreman George Dines, only part of the workshop remained in use until 1876, and most of this site was taken over in 1858 by the War Office for the Royal Army Clothing Depot. A new factory and stores was built by Dines and completed in stages between 1859 and 1863. This was one of the largest institutions that had ever been established for the organisation and utilisation of women's work with 1000 women and 200 men employed here. The east block was the Government store and the west block the factory, the centre of which was occupied by a glass-roofed hall, three stories high, surrounded by spacious galleries. The expiry date for various new leases on the site, signed between the War Office, Grosvenor Estate and Cubitt trustees, was September 1937.

Fred French's proposals

The National Government of 1931, formed to deal with the serious financial emergency arising from the Wall Street crash, closed the factory in September 1933. The site was cleared following an unsuccessful auction and the following year Fred French, an American real estate specialist, agreed to pay the Duke of Westminster £350,000 for the property with a right to purchase the freehold from the Grosvenor Estate. French had developed Tudor City (1926-1931) and Knickerbocker Village (1933-4), the first federally funded apartment development in the US. These were located in inner city slum neighbourhoods in New York as high-rise 'dense urban suburbia' in which French had supplied architectural design services, and acted as investor, contractor and property manager.

Many aspects of his American developments and his revised plans for this site are recognisable in the building today: the huge scale and density of the building; the rectangular layout of the block with spurs enclosing a central garden area; the Chichester Street elevation being three floors lower than the remaining ten storey high buildings; the proposed steel frame construction (modified later) with fire resistant floors and walls; central heating and a continuous supply of hot water; the whole building being accessible at basement (and subsequently at ground floor level 1970/80s) via a continuous corridor; a restaurant and underground garaging.

Building a high enclosure, and more than twice as high as Cubitt's houses, would create a sheltered microclimate in the garden, and shut out some of the effects of pollution, and smells, noise and sights of some of the industrial works and coal fired steam

trains that were operating on both sides of the river.

Costain's Dolphin Square

Even though French's revised plans for his 'Ormonde Square' were approved by the London County Council's (LCC) architects' department and town planning committee, French failed to raise sufficient capital in the UK and the contract was taken over by house builders Richard Costain & Sons Ltd in April 1935. French died in 1936. To reduce the financial risk, the freehold of the site including the Thames side wharf was sold by Costain to life insurer UK Temperance and General Provident Institution, and leased back for a period of 99 years expiring in June 2034. The Grosvenor Estate retained covenants for the frontages to Grosvenor Road and Chichester Street, and the light to adjacent properties in St George's Square and Claverton Street. Gordon Jeeves (1888-1964), assisted by Cecil Eves, was appointed by Costain as architect for the project, and Oscar Faber (1886-1956), with whom Costain was currently working on an industrial building in Newcastle, as structural engineer. As well as following French's model of investor, developer and property manager (until 1959), many of his design proposals were retained, adapted and refined, including the use of reinforced concrete instead of the steel frame and reducing the number and regularising the building spurs projecting into the central garden. While detailed approvals were being sought from the LCC, Costain decided on the advice of their bank to complete and let the southern part of the square first, and the new tenants moved in by November 1936.

An extension of time was granted by the LCC for the northern section and all the outstanding elements of the building - including an underground garage, petrol station, swimming pool, squash courts and gymnasium, restaurant, and a new shopping arcade - and its immediate environment including the garden and other landscaped areas - to be completed by December 1938. Other centrally organised services were provided on site including a nursery and children's centre, room and window cleaning, laundry, dry cleaning and shoe cleaning, parcel delivery, radio and internal telephone, and of course maintenance. While Selfridges department store on Oxford Street had been using water from boreholes since 1909, it was unusual for a residential development to have its own water supply. Water was abstracted from four boreholes located in the two carriageways, and pumped to reservoirs under the gardens with tanks on the roof.

Fig 9b Borehole record, British Geological Survey. 'Boreholes were sunk between Nov 1935 - Dec 1936; Report 25 Nov 1935 confirmed there was no evidence of pollution with sewage or animal excreta and tests made on water quality indicated 'this supply will be satisfactory for drinking and domestic purposes when the turbidity has been removed'. In 1946 consumption from the four wells was on average 5 million gallons per month.'

Plans for the Thames-side wharf were scaled down to a tennis court. The development had been renamed Dolphin Square and each house named after well-known admirals and others with maritime connections.



Fig 3 part of the Grosvenor estate at Pimlico

Fig 4 Whitbread's new plan of London (1853); shows Cubitt's workshop buildings. Image Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division

Fig 5 a + 5b Cubitt's plan of Belgravia c 1864 shows St George's Square and with the industrial sites left blank; Image Layers of London

Fig 6 Stanford's School Board of London - Westminster (1877), showing the Military Store Depot and Cubitt's Works side by side. Image copyright David Hale, MAPCO

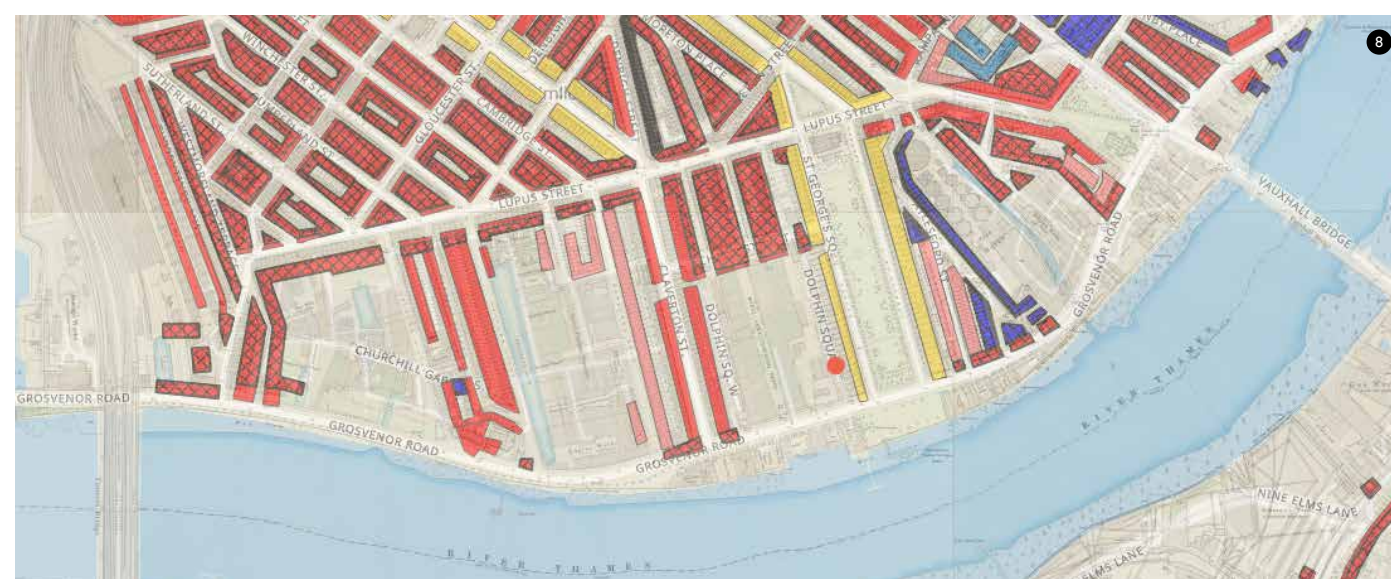
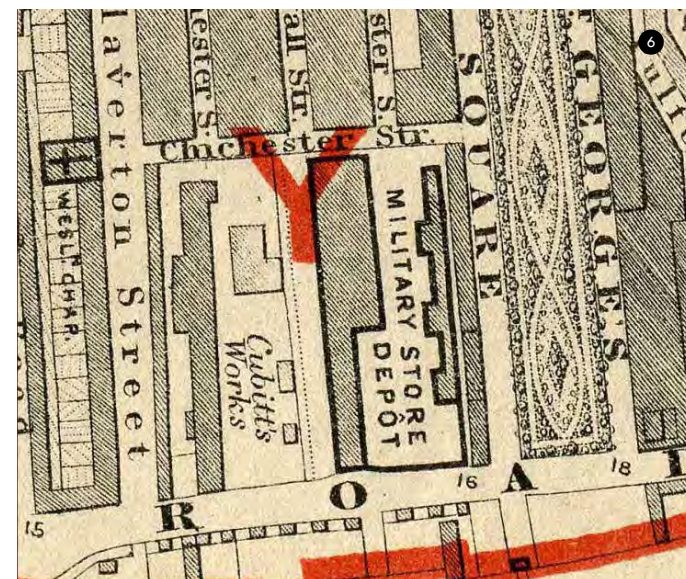


Fig 7a OS 1875 and 7b OS 1879 industrial manufacturing processing works in existence on both sides of the river and on either side of the Army depot. Image National Library of Scotland

Fig 8 Charles Booth Poverty Maps (1886-1903) yellow wealthy; red fairly comfortable or middle class; pink mixed comfortable to poor; dark blue vicious semi criminal and poor or very poor Image Layers of London

Fig 9 OS 1916 (rev 1913) workshops and wharves along Thames in use. Image National Library of Scotland



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10. Oblique aerial photo (12 March 1937), shows hoarding across the garden at the north edge of the lawn in line with the north side of the spur of Collingwood and Howard. Image Britain From Above EPW052684



11

11. View from W5 to E4 across lawn; large clipped evergreen cones centrally planted in each bed, with low box(?) edging, bulbs and other plants. May 1938. (Image supplied by Neil Millar-Chalk – General Manager at Dolphin Square March 2021)



11b

Fig 12 Dolphin Square by Sydney Newberry, 1937 (RIBA pix date) shows the speed of building progress. Image A+BN

Fig 12 Dolphin Square by Sydney Newberry, 1937 (RIBA pix date) shows the speed of building progress. Image A+BN



12

13 Loggia & planting The Dolphin Oct 1937

THE DOLPHIN, OCTOBER 1937

9

The pictures on these two pages give some idea of the gardens at Dolphin Square

corner of the pavilion, in the new building recesses, will be laid out an Italian, a Japanese, a Dutch and an Old English sunken garden.

THE Japanese garden will have its typical Oriental bridge, stone lanterns, sculptures and, of course, its chrysanthemums. Rembrandt tulips, an armillary sundial and box shrubs clipped in bird and animal shapes will characterise the Dutch section, while the Italian garden will have its clipped cypresses, bay trees and myrtle shrubs, with ivy-covered columns, classical sculptures and vases set round in formal design.

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3. The Landscape Design For Dolphin Square

Background

From Jeeves' drawings in the RIBA collection and his articles in the architectural press it seems that he had limited involvement with the landscape design for Dolphin Square. No landscape contractors are named in the list provided in his article in *Architect and Building News*, and no records about Dolphin Square have been found in Costain's archives, and no specific papers or records relating to the landscape contract appear to exist or have been made available from the Dolphin Square owners/managers archive.

Richard Sudell (1892-1968) designed the landscape for the square. No surviving drawings, lists of plants, papers about the garden design have been found, and in answer to a query about Sudell's appointment, Gourvish responded ...in his memoirs Sir Albert Costain implies that Costain engaged Richard Sudell directly - 'we engaged specialists to design the gardens' - but I found no further information on how he came to be chosen . Much of the following information is extracted from maps, photos, published descriptions and contemporary accounts.

Design and creation of the gardens

Neither the brief nor the budget for the garden is known. It is reasonable to assume that the 3.5 acre garden was designed to accommodate many of the physical and aesthetic requirements of a potentially large resident population of all ages. A variety of areas of different character was provided to this end with large areas of open lawn, a rose garden with pool and fountain; an elevated garden to benefit from maximum sunlight, at a

time when the health-giving benefits of sun were in vogue, and a series of smaller garden spaces through which residents walked through entering or exiting each of the houses. All of these parts were accessed by a network of paths.

The garden was designed in a geometric and symmetrical style along a central north south axial path. This axis connected the triple arched entrance way from Grosvenor Road with the central pool and fountain and with the loggia as the culminating feature. The loggia was located at the south end of the single storey sports/leisure building with the roof garden above. Three paths crossed the axis perpendicularly, and these edged the principal central sections of the garden. Smaller scale, more detailed and intimate gardens were designed for each of the recesses along the east and west sides of the building. A continuous perimeter path connected these gardens and continued on each side of the sports building via the tall-arched stone-detailed passages exiting onto Chichester Street.

The design disguises the complexity of establishing a garden above an underground garage, planting in shady conditions created by the height and spurs of the building, and the need to provide the impact of an established high quality garden at the end of phase one while the remainder of the land was the building site for phase two. The scale of all four sides of the building on the garden and the quantity of windows looking down onto the garden space remain dominating factors in the garden today. Although anticipated by the London Building Act of 1930, such a tall residential building was a rare sight in 1930s London, and it was also an equally rare experience to work on such a project. Access to the garden was principally for the

residents, but unlike many London squares it was not gated, and was therefore accessible to anyone using the facilities available at Dolphin Square. From the outset the garden was used as one of the marketing tools to attract tenants, and it became a greatly valued amenity for its residents - including the well-known and some infamous - to use and to look out on. The roof garden on the sports block has provided a venue for parties, social gatherings and visits from royalty and celebrities ever since 1938.

Phase One - South Block 1935 – 1936

The construction of the building was executed in two phases. The south block - Howard, Nelson, Hawkins, Raleigh, Drake, Grenville, Frobisher and Collingwood - was completed first. Site clearance and foundation work began in summer 1935, and the first tenants moved in from November 1936. Dolphin Square was formally opened on 25 Nov 1936 by Lord Amulree. The design and the first phase of the garden was also completed by the time the first tenants moved in.

Fig 10 Oblique aerial photo (12 March 1937), shows hoarding across the garden at the north edge of the lawn in line with the north side of the spur of Collingwood and Howard. Image Britain From Above EPW052684

Lawns

This first phase included a pair of large lawns on each side of the central pathway, and the first four recess gardens. An avenue of horse chestnut

trees was planted to line the central path. Three or more groups of closely spaced trees were planted down the outer east and west edges of the lawn with smaller groups near each of the outer corners of the lawn. An evergreen hedge was planted in a low raised bed along the northern edge of both lawns. Each hedge ended and began with a circular planter/planting bed with taller plants. During construction of the north section, this hedge would have provided a more pleasant prospect than just the hoarding. And perhaps a hedge down the outer sides of the lawn was discounted at this stage as it would block out the view, from the Grosvenor Rd entrance, of the more detailed planting in the side gardens. By October 1937 these lawns were not in a good state and they were to be reconditioned.

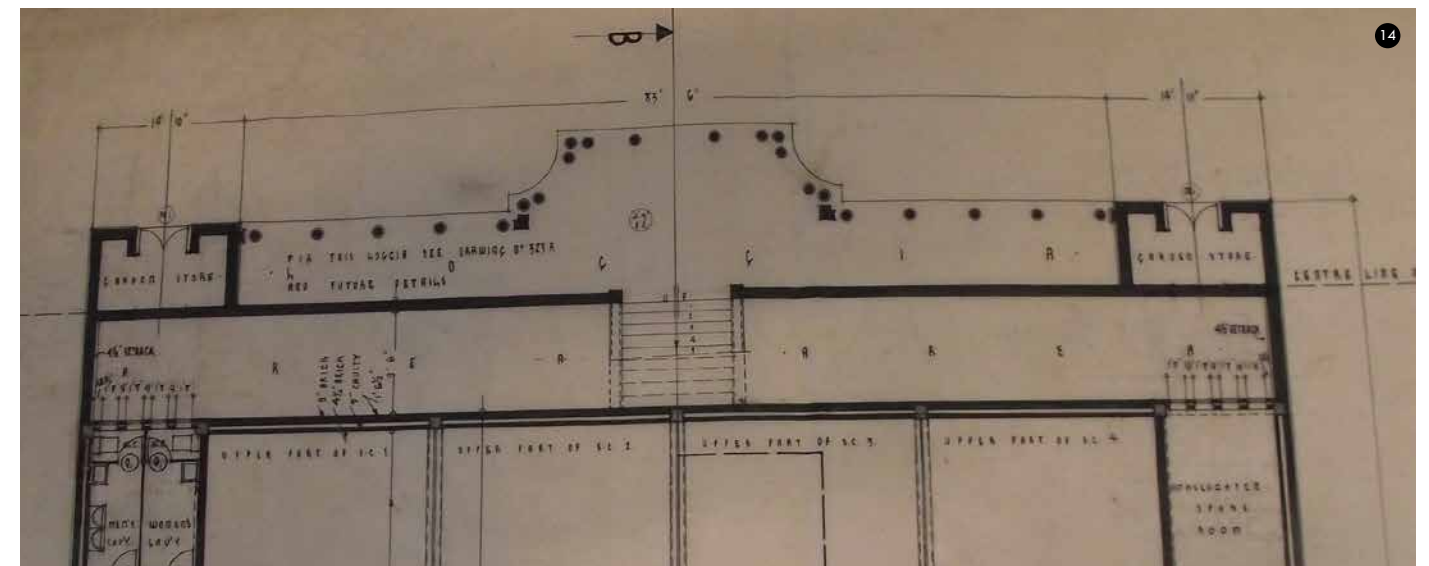
Climbers and or shrubs were planted at regular intervals against the building on the edges of paths. Both sides within the garden matched. The plants were not in raised beds in the first phase as the garden here was not above the garage. Each building spur had a centrally located raised brick plinth projecting narrowly from the building which provided window box space for seasonal bedding. Some of the plinths provided ventilation to the basement area.

Recess gardens E4-5 W4-5

The recess gardens were laid out with planting in a simple geometric arrangement of raised beds with main paths for access to the building and narrower strolling paths between the raised beds with seating areas. Each of these gardens had its own distinctive design north to south but they are clearly paired more closely east to west.

Fig 13a View from the Loggia, showing paving detail, pergola and planting. The Dolphin 1937

Fig 14 Jeeves plan for Loggia From RIBA drawings collection



Planting

These gardens were not fully planted up a year following the opening of the south section, and in the October 1937 edition of The Dolphin magazine it was noted that 'With the arrival of autumn, the whole appearance of the already completed gardens is to be changed, and new bulbs and flowers planted.' In addition to bulb planting, was the change and new planting referring to seasonal (annual) bedding, or something more permanent, or some of both? Refer Fig 12 & 13.

raised rectangular stone-edged pool with curved corners. In the centre of the pool and on the axis of the main path, was a tall columnar fountain above a scallop-edged bowl. Water plants including lilies and irises were introduced here. Within the lawns and towards the outer edges, geometrical beds were cut into the grass, echoing the shape of the pond. In October 1937 The Dolphin stated that 'Rose gardens will be laid out in front of the sports pavilion, round the fountain and pool.'

Phase Two – North Block 1936 – 1938

The construction of Hood, Keyes, Rodney, Duncan and Beatty and the sports block in addition to the landscape along the east and west carriageways, and the river frontage, comprised the second phase of construction (Nov 1936 – Dec 1938) (LCC date) but possibly finished earlier.

The loggia

Fig 13 b & c The Dolphin 1937
The copper-roofed open-fronted loggia with Doric columns was designed and labelled as such on the construction drawings by Jeeves (Fig 14). It formed the garden elevation to the south end of the sports/amenity building, and was framed at each end with brick and ashlar garden stores. The loggia was elevated partly to provide an improved view looking out across the garden. Four long and two shorter Lutyens styled seats were placed here in this warm south-facing and sheltered location. It is possible also that it was elevated so the loggia roof would screen some of the view of the sports building roof area when viewed from the Grosvenor Road entrance.

Pool and beds

The central area north of the lawns was located above the underground garage. To create sufficient/additional growing space, all the planted and grassed areas were raised.

In contrast to the scale and simplicity of the lawns, this central area of the garden comprised a formal arrangement of four raised lawns located around a

Steps into the loggia were flanked by lawns set in a raised bed. A low evergreen hedge was planted immediately in front of the columns, and against



the columns climbers (wisteria (?) and roses) were planted. A pair of topiary balls were planted in the grass by the hedge. In the pairs of large decorative pots at the top and bottom of the steps, cordylines and trailing plants including annuals were grown.

The Spanish roof garden

A longer flight of steps at the rear of the loggia led up to the Spanish roof garden on the roof of the amenity block squash courts. Four rectangular shaped, flush, glass-block roof lights ran east to west across the roof garden area, lighting the squash courts gallery below. These were incorporated into the garden layout. The roof lights are evident on the architects' drawing, and on aerial photos up to 1960s.

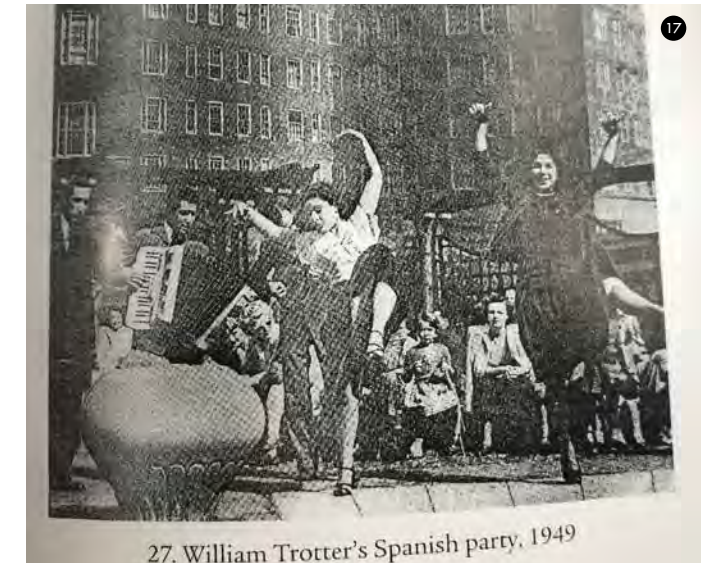
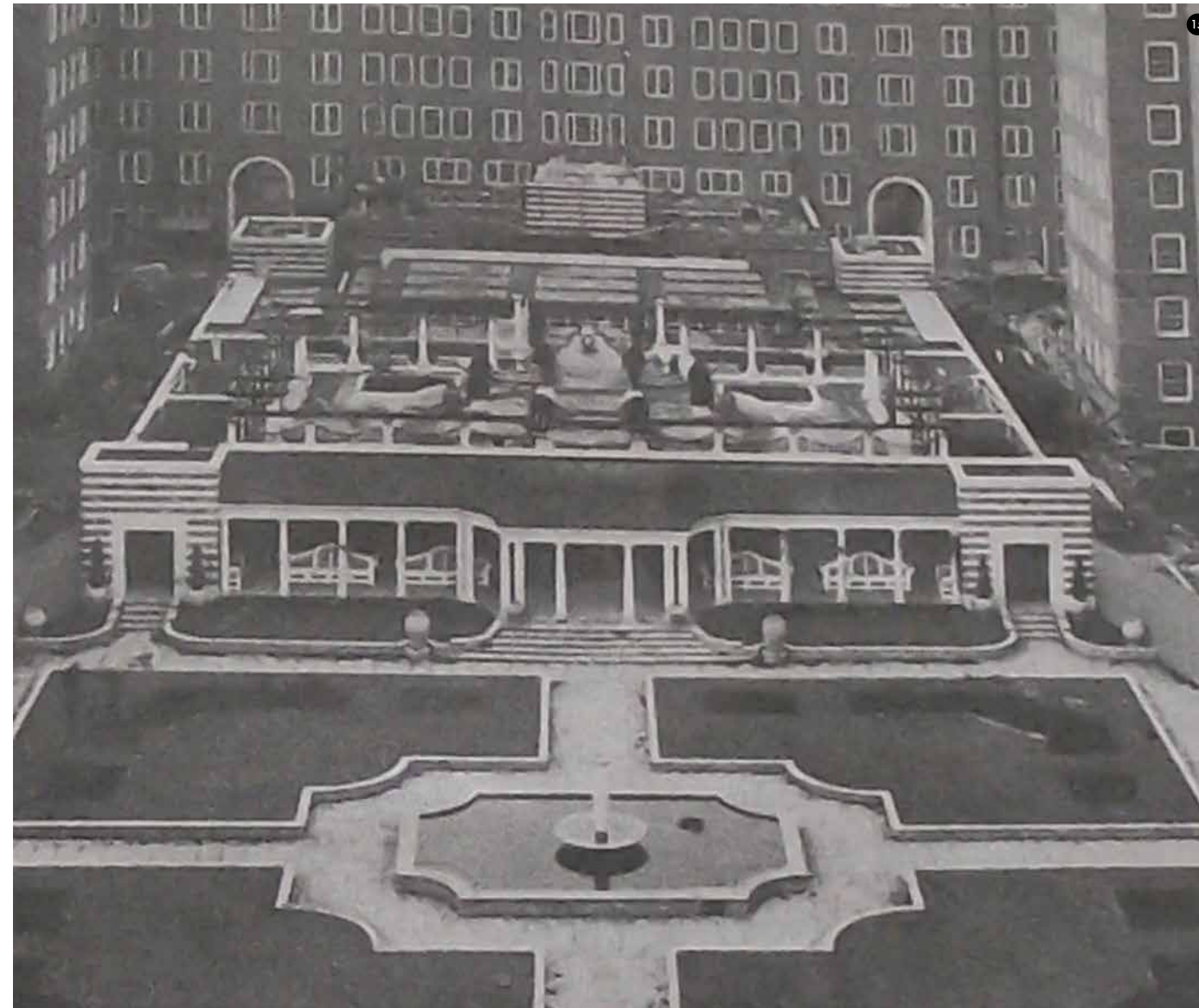
(Fig 15 - Roof Garden)

A narrow pergola framed all four sides of this garden. This was supported along the front edge on columns (similar to if not the same as the Doric columns of the loggia) with a flared base. A raised pair of these columns, possibly set on a wall, framed a lion fountain. This was the focal point in this garden. The lion mask was set close to the top of a shaped, rendered and painted, free standing wall and spouted water into a raised bowl in front.

Raised planting beds were located along the edges of the garden area. At the back of the beds were swag topped wooden trellis panels to support climbers. In front of these beds was a low decorative/ornamental edging, set between the columns and profiled to focus attention to these columns. Four large geometrical shaped raked (?) beds were arranged around the central area. This central area included an inner and outer circular arrangement of cut stone paving to incorporate the middle two roof lights.

(Fig 16a+b Aerial view) & Fig 17, Spanish party June 1947

The outer ring of the paved circle was divided into eight shaped paved wedges, punctuated in between with large unplanted ornamental pots set on panels of a smaller paving unit (tiles?) Eight columnar plants in pots were arranged at the corners of the outer pair of roof lights. In October 1937 The Dolphin describes 'a central surface of blue green and yellow tiles set in a



27. William Trotter's Spanish party, 1949

Fig 15 Close up of Sydney Newberry photo Image A+BN

Fig 16a+b Aerial view of roof garden May 1947 Image: Historic England

Fig 17 William Trotter's Spanish party June 1947 Image Daily Mirror (reproduced in Gourvish Dolphin Square)

geometrical design round a picturesque wellhead which will be finished in brick and tile scrollwork.

On one side there will be a Spanish font adorned with a lion's head in white granite, and round the garden will be set stone columns and trellis screening, which, with their flowering creepers, will give a sense of seclusion to the whole.' It is unclear where the coloured tiles, wellhead and brickwork were located or if they were all used. The same issue of *The Dolphin* described the four geometrical raised beds as lined with clipped box. The article stated that 'weeping willows and bay trees set in large Spanish pots at each corner of the garden, will round off the design.' More of the long Lutyens-style seats were arranged around the edges of the roof garden; presumably these were also painted white.

The North recess gardens

The vent gardens E3 and W3

Adjacent to the pool garden in the pair of opposite recess gardens were air vents from the basement garage, with two vents in each garden area. (Fig 18) To accommodate the vents the building spurs were more widely spaced than the other recess gardens. As the location of the vents extended beyond the front edge of the building line, the alignment of the outer path steps out, giving articulation for the length of these two gardens.

Eight stone & tile creasing columns with stone cappings were built to surround each vents. The columns were twice the height of the vents.

Between the columns were low raised beds in Cotswold stone for climbers and other plants. Level topped timber trellis panels were fixed between the columns to the height of the cappings. Wires for climbers were fixed between a bespoke metal multi hook fixed to a ninth column, located in the centre of the vent, with wire connecting to a single hook at each of the columns surrounding the vents.

In the central area between the vent columns there were six stone columns banded with red tiles. These supported a timber pergola which spanned across these columns and connected with the adjacent vent columns. Low planters around the base of the two centre columns provided growing space for climbers.

A pair of long raised planting beds with shrubs (?) were located between the building and the columns. Shallow circular steps provided access between these beds and this led to a path running between the building and the raised bed. At each end of this path was a decorative square platform of brick and tile-on-edge with clay flowerpot(s) at the centre. The columns, steps and platforms were in the arts and crafts style.

Recess gardens E+W 1+2

As with the recess gardens in the southern section of Dolphin Square, the northern four gardens were designed as approximately matching pairs. The centre line of each garden here corresponded with stepped entrances to the sports building. The recess gardens E1 and W1 are both slightly wider than the others and also deeper as the main paths leading out to Chichester Road shifts at this point closer to the sports building.

Recess garden E1 Japanese Garden

Many substantial and characterful boulders of Westmoreland stone (?) populated the main area of this garden and along the steep basement banks. A bridge with a low stone edging crossed over a dry (?) river bed with island. At the west (only?) end of the bridge, ornamental circular bollards(?) were constructed out of stone matching the dry stone wall. The outline of the river was marked in concrete and survives today, as do the substantial rockwork and bridge.

Recess garden W1

The aerial photo of 1947 indicates a circuitous path winding around irregularly shaped, mounded (?) beds and planting, possibly rockery stone. Could this be the Old English sunken garden, rather than E2? 'Crocuses and snowdrops will be set in the rock gardens round the northern half of 'the Square' (*The Dolphin*, Oct 37) Fig 19a & b)

Recess garden E2

A central circular raised planting bed with circular path and raised shrub beds against the building. This appears to be as the current layout.

Recess garden W2

May 1947 aerial photo indicates a circular path round a raised circular central bed. This is now an octagonal bed.

Names of the gardens

The earliest descriptions of Dolphin Square garden appear in the residents' magazine *The Dolphin*, Oct 1937. This was written while the northern section was under construction. The roof garden above the sports block was referred to as 'a Spanish and Mexican garden', with the majority being the Spanish garden.

'The Spanish section will have a central surface of blue green and yellow tiles, set in geometrical design round a picturesque wellhead which will be finished in brick and tile scrollwork ...'

'The Mexican roof garden will, of course, specialise in cacti and other exotic plants which, with care, should flourish in the sunny sheltered Square.' This description suggests a separate area with Mexican native plants, and it was possibly more the plants rather than a design element that gave rise to the use of this name. It is not clear where this area of planting was, or what the other exotics were.

Of the four remaining recess gardens in the north section these were to be laid out as an Italian, a Japanese, a Dutch and an old English sunken garden. It is not evident from the text where these individual gardens were.

'The Japanese garden will have its typical Oriental bridge, stone lanterns, sculptures and of course its chrysanthemums.' This is E1.

'Rembrandt tulips, an armillary sundial and box shrubs clipped in bird and animal shapes will characterise the Dutch section.'

'While the Italian garden will have its clipped cypresses, bay tree and myrtle shrubs, with ivy covered columns, classical sculptures, and vases set round in formal design.'

'There will be nothing in London to equal the Square when it is completed' says Mr Richard Sudell, the well-known landscape architect, who has designed the gardens. 'A stroll around the Square will, as it were, enable you to make a tour of the whole horticultural world. London's eighteenth

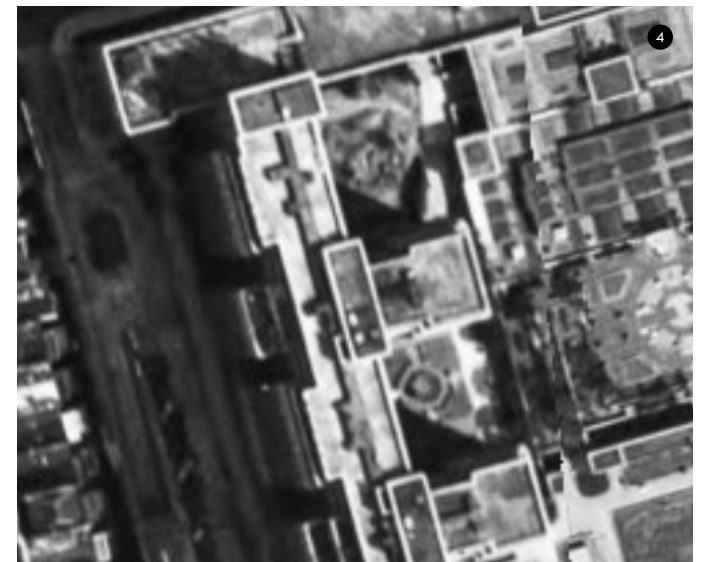


Fig 19 a showing W1+2 May 1947 Image Historic England

fig 19b May 1947 layers of london W1+2

century squares are beautiful indeed, but Dolphin Square will surpass them all in brightness, variety and originality...'

It is unclear what source of information Historic England used to determine the location of the four gardens, information repeated in the submission to the planning appeal by Todd Longstaffe-Gowan: E1 - Japanese Garden; E2 - Old English Garden; W1 - Italian Garden; and W2 - Dutch garden . (Refer to Fig 20) The two more geometrical and formal designed gardens were E2 + W2 which suggests these could be either the Italian and Dutch gardens.

With the exception of the Japanese garden, was it mainly the selection of plants - and their management - topiary, that made these gardens 'Italian' or 'Dutch' and even 'Old English?'

The Dolphin magazine was designed to keep new residents informed and supportive of living in a partly built site, and also to attract potential residents, and the language used is more than purely descriptive.

How close were the descriptions in The Dolphin to what was constructed? How close was this to Richard Sudell's vision for the garden?

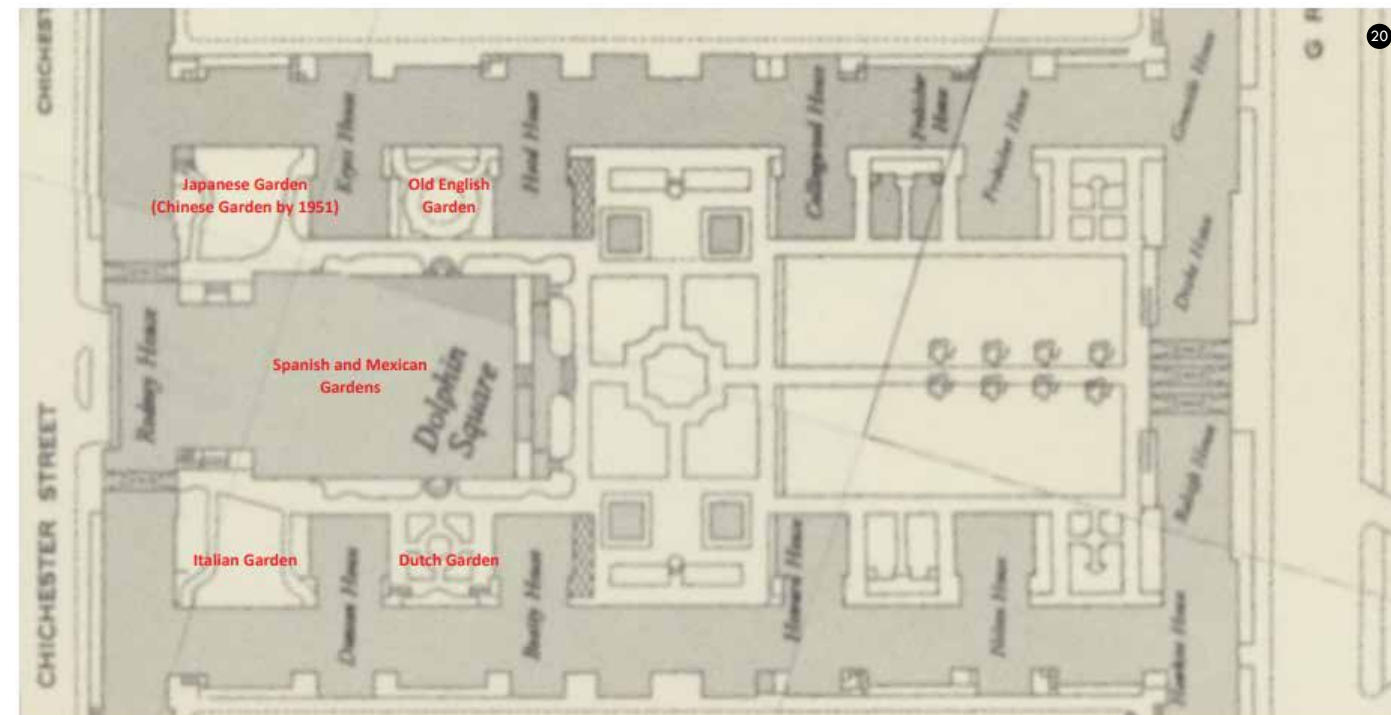
Sudell in Landscape Gardening defines a Dutch Garden where 'every detail is trim and formal'⁸ In an Old English Garden, he writes, although 'also somewhat formal, ... more twists and turns are permissible in the secondary walks. Planting is 'less severe' than the Dutch Garden, topiary can be used in both but in the Dutch garden the topiary can be more dominant than other planting. 'The distinction between the two if there is one should be in the formality of the planting.'

The authors invited to write about Italian Dutch and Spanish Gardens in his book⁹ all end their entries referring to the influence of the 'English style' on their countries' tradition of garden making and the recent early 20th century reaction against this, in pursuit of a more authentic design.

Why were these north section gardens identified as themed gardens from around the world while the already completed south section recess gardens were not described or apparently designed as such? Perhaps simply because there was more time to think about and plan the phase two themed gardens.



The central court gardens at Dolphin Square, *The Dolphin: News Magazine from Europe's Largest Block of Flats*, October 1937, cover image



Ordnance Survey, 1951 (© OS); Labels in red by Todd Longstaffe-Gowan Ltd

Fig 18 E&W3 Vent Gardens Phase 2 The Dolphin Oct 1937

Fig 20 naming of gardens by Todd Longstaffe-Gowan Ltd in Proof of Evidence Heritage Matters Appendix 2

7. Proof of Evidence Heritage Matters Appendix 2; image caption: 'Ordnance Survey, 1951 (© OS); Labels in red by Todd Longstaffe-Gowan Ltd 19. Apart from the Japanese garden, none of the long term Dolphin Square residents were able to identify the identity of these northern gardens when asked, when compiling information for submission to Historic England for registration of Dolphin Square (2017)

8. R Sudell, Landscape Gardening (1933) Examples of Garden Design - A Dutch Garden 69

9. R Sudell, Landscape Gardening (1933) Gardens of other Nations, 419-476

Grosvenor Road frontage

The Grosvenor Road frontage was designed with raised planting beds on the pavement against building and well-spaced shrubs.

Both east and west carriageways, outside the main square, included raised planting beds with shrub planting.

Quantities of material used in the garden¹⁰

- 2000 tons paving and wall stone
- 3000 tons of soil, 6000 turves
- 16 tons fertiliser 10cwt grass seed
- 10,000 bulbs
- 5,000 plants
- July 1937 Sudell estimated the following would be required to complete the works
- 30,000 bulbs
- 3,000 plants

Paths, walls and sculptural elements

Paths

All the main paths were laid with concrete flags bordered on each side with a narrow width of crazy paving. Within the crazy paving, planting pockets were left open for rock/alpine plants. In the early photos these plants can be seen dotted along all these path edges. The crazy paving appears to have been made with pieces of concrete and some stone. The smaller gardens and vent gardens included paths that were made entirely with crazy paving, sometimes laid with brick edgings, and some of the larger paved areas included decorative panels of patterned brickwork also laid in different styles herringbone and basket weave. All the paths were designed to enhance the character and quality of each different space. Transitions between one type of paving and another were also subtly and skilfully handled. Fig 23 Walls and paths no date, see also fig 18 Image supplied by Neil Millar-Chalk

Walls

The raised walls to the planting beds are made with Cotswold stone some randomly (horizontally and vertically) laid with pre-cast concrete cappings.

Sculptural elements

In addition to the Lutyens style seats, (a 1930s adapted copy of Lutyens 1906 'Thakeham Bench'), many large decorative concrete pots of different styles were deployed as sculptural features around the gardens to great effect. Sometimes they were placed on specially designed low plinths near steps or by entrances, or as free standing elements in the gardens – eg in the Spanish roof garden. Four pots with clipped evergreen shrubs were used to mark the front entrance along the Grosvenor Road. Inside the garden three similar pots and clipped evergreens were positioned against the brickwork in between the entrance arches.

There was reference to an armillary sundial in the Dutch garden, columns and classical sculptures in the Italian gardens; none of these have survived.

Later alterations

War damage 1939-1945

Within a year of completion, World War II had started. The garage was requisitioned as a major casualty depot in Westminster and a mobile first aid unit was attached; a local authority shelter was constructed in the Hawkins basement. Air Raid Precaution staff, later together with the Free French Forces and UK Government departments, amongst others, had bases at Dolphin Square.

By 1941 approximately 20 bombs had fallen on or around the building and gardens. 30 people were killed and 80 injured.

The most seriously damaged parts of the building were Hawkins and Frobisher. WCC Bomb map indicates a bomb, incident 703, fell in the rose / fountain garden.

See Fig 29 over page, from May 1947 aerial photo, W3 vent gardens covers to the vents appear renewed, and the central columns and pergola are missing. The fountain survived intact. Image Historic England

Costain was relatively quick to effect repairs, particularly the damage caused by bombing.¹¹

White paint

It is possible that the white paint still now in use to mark the corners of raised beds, steps and even urns, was introduced during the war and the blackouts to avoid personal injury. This continuing prolific use of white paint on every corner, even rounded ones seems overly cautious today.

¹⁰ T Gourvish Dolphin Square (2014) 52
¹¹ T Gourvish Dolphin Square (2014) 105

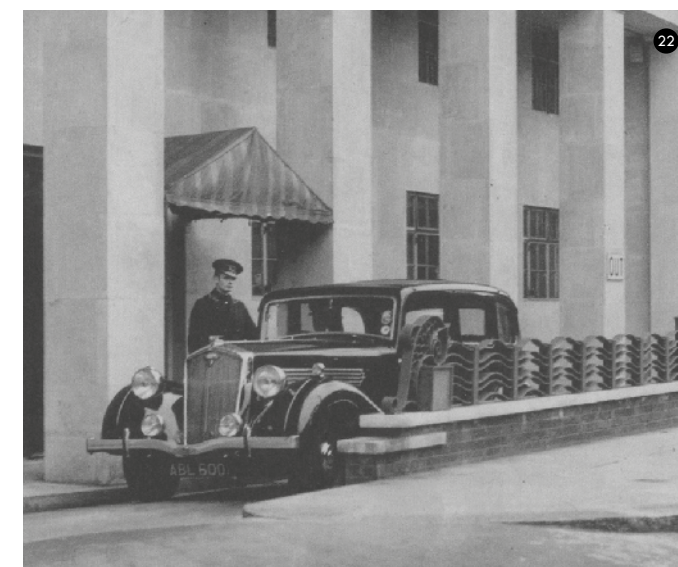


Fig 21 Dolphin Square Grosvenor Road elevation 1936; Image Westminster City Archives reproduced in Dolphin Square Conservation Area Audit

and 21b Planting along Grosvenor Road, note also advertising on corner of Dolphin Square Image supplied by Neil Millar-Chalk

Fig 22 Chichester Road drop off; note wave railing on dwarf wall (since demolished) Image supplied by Neil Millar-Chalk

Fig 23 Walls and paths no date see also fig 18
Image supplied by Neil Millar-Chalk



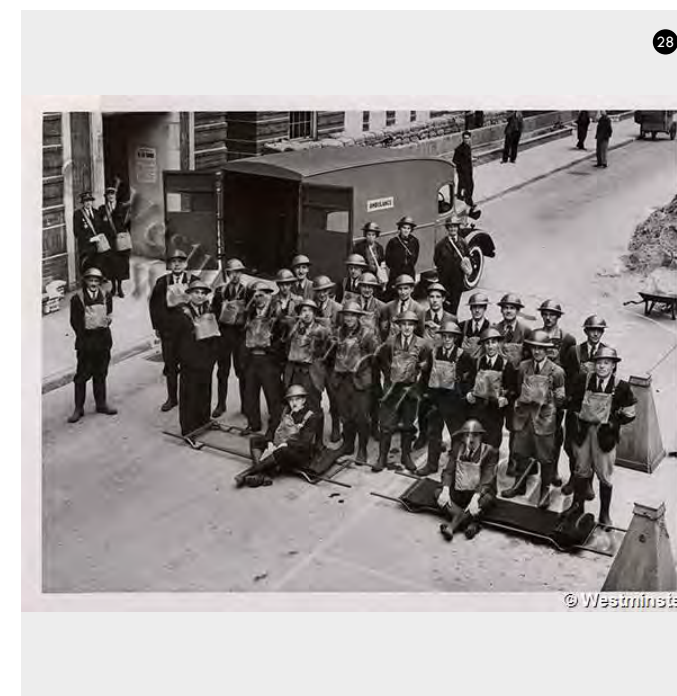
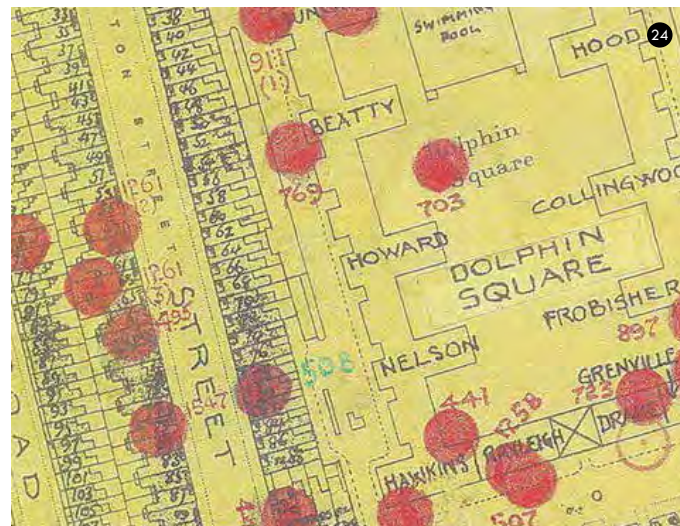
Fig 24 Bomb map City of Westminster incidents
1940-45 Image Layers of London

Fig 25 +26 Frobisher House (November 1940)
Image Westminster City Archives

Fig 27 Grosvenor Road (11 May 1941) Image
Westminster City Archives

Fig 28 Stretcher party and behind, sand bag
making and use for building. Image Westminster
City Archives

Fig 29 OS map surveyed 1949 pub 1951 - Image
National Library of Scotland



The post-war period

In 1958 Costain sold Dolphin Square. The Costain Group had been diversifying and extending its activities overseas, and in the UK commercial property contracts were proving more lucrative than the private housing market, particularly the increasingly competitive market in rented accommodation.

The ensuing changes of owners during the next four years resulted in years of neglect of maintenance, building management, and which undoubtedly also impacted the garden. Significantly, the new general manager's report of November 1964 highlighted the 'condition of the exterior brickwork, woodwork and joinery, subsidence, the internal plumbing system, the roofs of sports centre/ restaurant and garage...' ¹²

Spanish garden - sports pavilion roof garden

Of all the different areas in the garden this part has been most altered. Refer Fig 30, oblique aerial photo of garden looking north, before 1966, Fig 31 Spanish Garden redesigned by July 1966 and Fig 32 Spanish Garden redesigned c 1994-2000.

By 1966 the roof garden to the sports pavilion had been removed. The work was presumably required as a result of water penetration to the squash court area, either due to failure of the original waterproofing layer, which one would assume was, as now, asphalt, or more radically because there was originally no waterproofing layer.

Waterproofing additives such as Pudlo for structural concrete roofs were constantly advertised in architectural magazines and promised complete reliability. Was Pudlo all that kept, or failed to keep, rain out of the squash courts? Either way, the only solution was to remove all the constructional build-up and finishes of the Spanish Garden.

Following application of an asphalt waterproofing layer, the majority of the roof was resurfaced with a lighter coloured material. The four rooflights were still in use and visible but four new raised planting beds were created on either side of the central two roof lights. These beds were surrounded by a different type of paving that aligned with the outer edges of the roof lights. Five ornamental pots and plants(?) were arranged in between this group. The surface material around the perimeter

of this garden was different / darker coloured. Two pergolas, possibly reusing the original columns, were designed on either side at the south end of the roof. The lion fountain was set lower and in a circular recess in the wall. Possibly this head was replaced at this time if the original was made from 'white granite'. It has also been suggested ¹³ that the original lion's head in white granite was unsatisfactory and never used here.

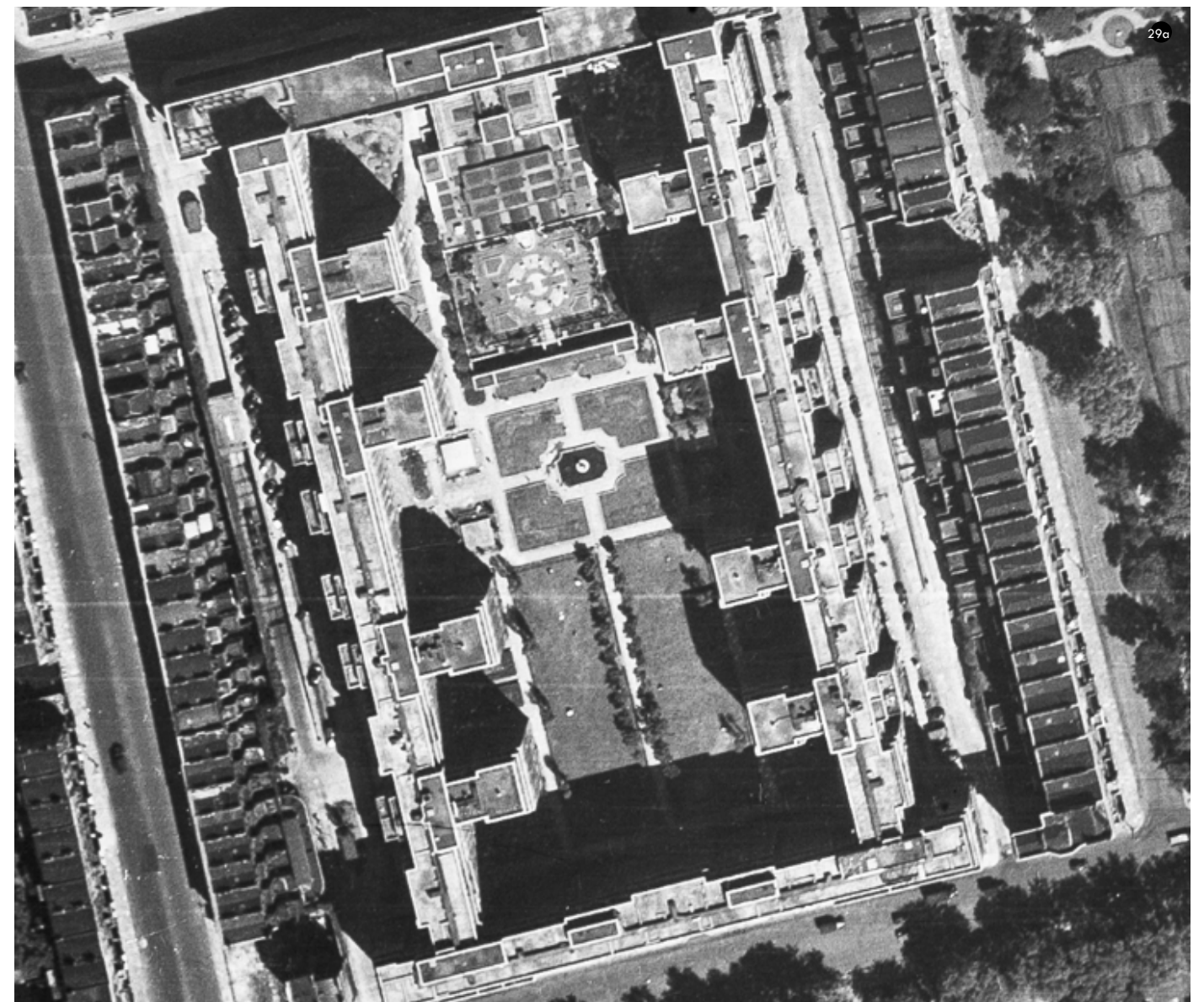
See Fig 31a Spanish roof garden 1981 IMAGE NCAP GLC By 1981 trellis panels had been erected along the south edge of the roof garden; the ornamental pots had been removed. The pergolas remained and there is no evidence of climbing plants.

At some point c 1980s-1990s an anchor was found on the Thames foreshore at Dolphin riverfront, and the Port of London Authority requested its removal. This happened in two stages, first up to the croquet lawn on the river frontage, and subsequently to the Spanish garden. One of the arms of the anchor has been damaged suggesting it might have been used as a mooring anchor. (The anchor should be recorded on the big anchor project. <https://biganchorproject.com/>)

Between 1993-2004 there was a further extensive programme of refurbishment, renewal and maintenance which included the gardens, and the sports pavilion roof garden. ¹⁴ The roof garden was altered a second time by Levitt Bernstein landscape architects with Millhouse Landscapes as contractor ¹⁵ following a four year programme of 're-asphalting the roofs' from 1994.

Presumably the asphalt had failed again: structural movement of a massive concrete structure with limited or no movement joints may have been responsible.

No information has been found about the brief or budget for this commission. The changes have largely survived intact today. The re-asphalting of the roof involved an additional thick construction layer resulting in the covering of the squash court gallery roof lights. The surface of the roof garden is paved in terracotta tiles. No longer constrained by the roof lights, the space is now divided into different areas with the use of large rendered tank-like planters set out in a geometrical and symmetrical arrangement. The central area remains open with a circular paving pattern in stone - perhaps as an echo of the original circle;



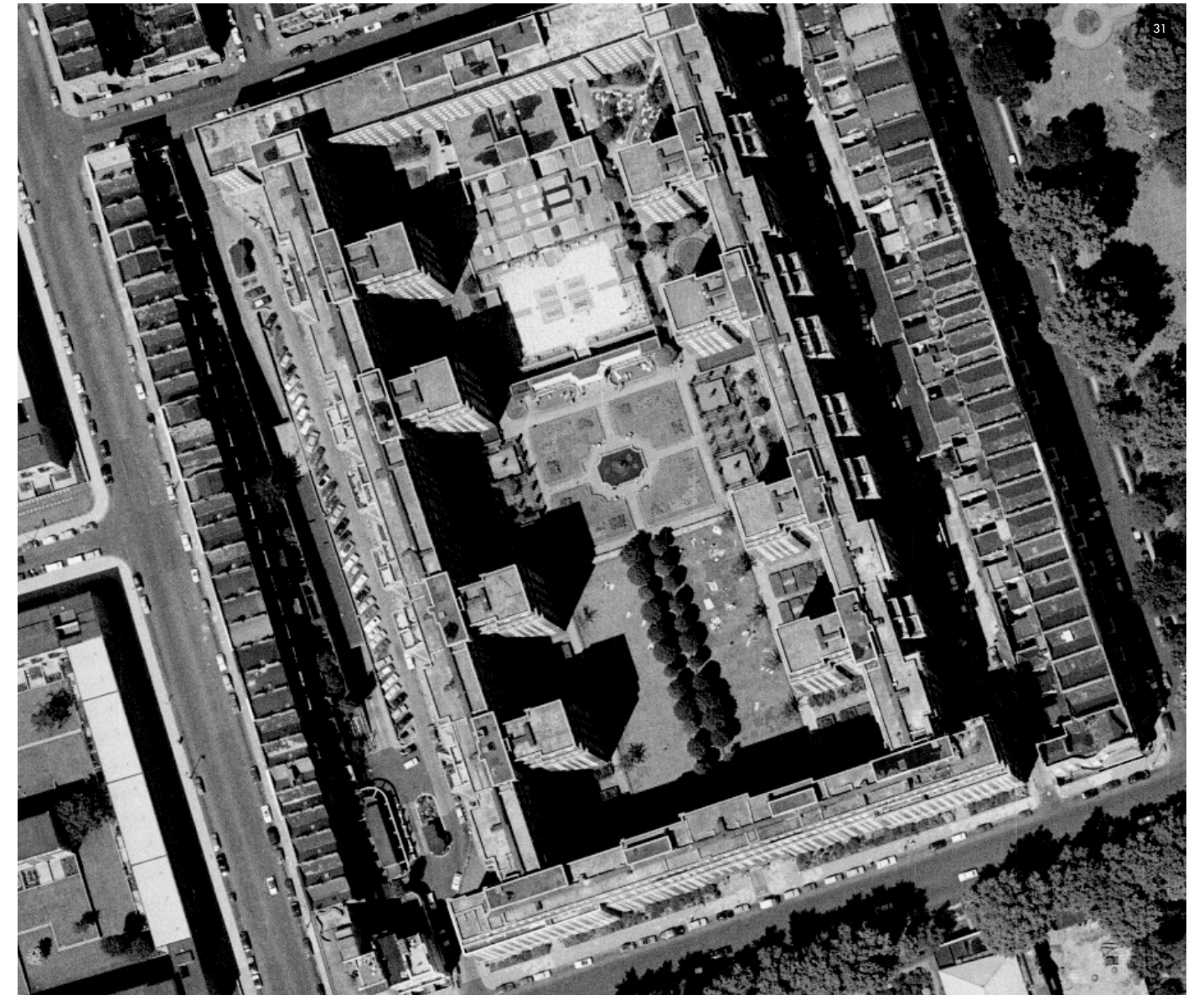
matching wide, rather oppressive, low pergolas are located on either side. The original Lutyens style long seats have been replaced and tables introduced.

The lion fountain spout and the water bowl remain from the 1960s alterations when the lion mask was repositioned lower down the shaped wall, and mounted in a circular recess. Not enough evidence has been found to confirm that the shaped rendered wall, the lion mask and the water bowl are said to be original, but the lion head looks as if it is a recent replacement. It is similarly not clear whether the stepped access on either side of the rendered wall (which has existed since 2000) onto the swimming pool roof area was part of the original design.

Fig 29 over page, from May 1947 aerial photo, W3 vent gardens covers to the vents appear renewed, and the central columns and pergola are missing. The fountain survived intact. Image Historic England

Fig 30 Dolphin Square - oblique aerial photo of garden looking north, before 1966 Image bdonline.co.uk (Eric Parry Dolphin Square plans set for appeal)

Fig 31 Spanish Garden redesigned by July 1966 Image NCAP (not to be reproduced without license)



The position of the wall and the water bowl however, have survived from the original. This is the focus of the most important view point from the Grosvenor Road entrance.

In the 2000 design, the water feature was framed with somewhat flimsy timber posts, a shaped curved section over the pool and trelliswork. The planting is predominantly olive trees and lavender in beds where the soil level has sunk to a foot below the top of the planter walls. New Moroccan style lantern lighting was introduced here. The garden is now usually referred to as 'the Moroccan Garden.'

The **Dolphin mosaic** originally made for the entrance to Rodney House, not sufficiently robust for this location, was relocated to its current position

by the steps in the loggia leading up to the sports pavilion roof garden.¹⁶

A damaged standard park bench type wooden seat is left awaiting repairs in the Spanish Garden bearing the inscription 'In memory of Irene Hicks 'the bird lady of Dolphin Square' resident from 1937-1999.'¹⁷

12. T Gourvish Dolphin Square (2014) Bryan Garrard FCIS was General Manager of DS 1964-1974. 189-190

13. Conversation with Jan Prebble April 2021 about origins of anchor, lions head and dolphin mosaic. AD

14. T Gourvish Dolphin Square (2014) 232; more information may be found in the Dolphin Square Trust Committee of Management Minutes, but these were not made available.

15. Dolphin Square, Draft Heritage Dossier (Feb 2021) by Richard Coleman, item 2.5.3: 'Millhouse Landscapes were commissioned to remodel and produce a heavily landscaped area for the Spanish and Mexican garden, also fitting irrigation and lighting systems. The remodelling was completed in 2000.' Millhouse Landscapes was dissolved in 2020.

16. The name of the designer and date of its original installation was not known; the designer was daughter of a former Dolphin Square chair of the trustees. Conversation with Jan Prebble April 2021.

17. Other memorials to former residents including Bud Flanagan were known to exist but have yet to be located.

Recess gardens

E1: Japanese Garden.

This northeastern recess garden was renamed the Chinese garden following WWII and resultant anti-Japanese feelings. Any original stone lanterns have been lost, and fencing and lighting have been replaced, possibly several times since. Purple slate has been recently introduced as a mulch, and the bridge resurfaced in a stony tarmac. It is worth noting that the 1930s Japanese garden at the Rockefeller Centre in New York USA had all distinguishing elements removed and was also renamed the Chinese garden.

W1 recess garden

Between 1947 and 1966 this appears to have been redesigned in a more formal arrangement.

W4 recess garden

This was altered/grassed over 1980-1990s(?) in memory of resident Rev? Goudie, minister (?) at St Columba's Church, London ¹⁸

Other recess gardens

Many of the recess gardens have become overgrown and shadier resulting in dull shrubberies dominated by the most vigorous of the plants, with a loss of the layered effect of planting originally introduced.

Shrub planting against the building along the paths had been removed after 1947 although self clinging climbers and loggia store buildings were flourishing

Low planting in the crazy paving edges to main paths had all been removed by 1965

Pool

Between 1966 and 1981 the fountain column and splash dish were removed. The Dolphin fountain designed by James Butler RA was commissioned and installed in 1987 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Dolphin Square. (Fig 33) At some time the pool has been relined with terracotta

tiles matching the roof garden. It is not known if the pool was refurbished at the same time as the roof garden, or if more of the garage roof required repair work). The pool planting was possibly removed with the change of fountains.

The lawns

The evergreen hedge on the north side of each lawn possibly failed early on – the original plants appear to be clipped evergreens, for example bay or yew - and this seems to have been replaced with a privet hedge.

By 1965 each lawn was surrounded by low chain link fences and concrete posts. Over time more privet hedging was planted and is now growing along most of the outside edges of the lawn, with a few gaps. The chain link fence has been removed but the concrete posts remain. (Fig 34)

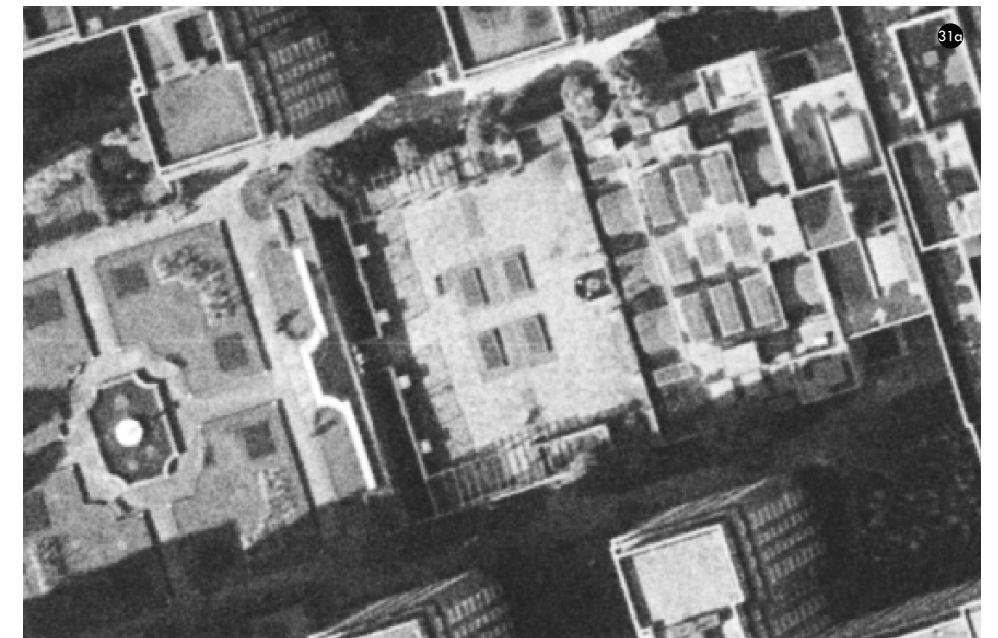
Maintenance

Sudell started his career as a trainee gardener, he was involved with the maintenance of the Selfridges roof garden for three years and it is safe to assume that establishing the future maintenance of the garden at Dolphin Square would have been a priority. Two full time gardeners were employed from the outset (absent 1939-1945) until their retirement (c1980s?) Following this, the work was outsourced and a gardener and labourers came approximately one day a week as necessary. ¹⁹ It is not known how well trained/experienced the gardeners have been, what their scope of work included or what instructions they were given, and how all of these factors have changed over time.

A first impression of the condition of the gardens appears generally favourable. There are several aspects that would benefit from improved management and maintenance and skilled garden staff to undertake restoration work of lawns, rose beds, herbaceous and shrubbery.

¹⁸ Conversation with Jan Prebble April 2021

¹⁹ Conversation with Jan Prebble April 2021



**Fig 31b Spanish roof garden
1981 IMAGE NCAP GLC**

**Fig 32a Spanish Garden
redesigned c 1994-2000 Image
WCC, Conservation area audit
Dolphin Square SPD (2008), p34**

**Fig 33 Dolphin sculpture Image
WCC, Conservation area audit
Dolphin Square SPD (2008), p31**

**Fig 34 Getty image of garden a
bleak winter photo, and shows
the horse chestnut avenue was
regularly clipped to control its
growth**



4. Significance

Despite the current poor conditions of the Gardens fabric, they are of National importance.

The national importance of a landscape is described as its 'Significance' and Historic England defines specific criteria or 'values' against which 'Significance' can be judged. These are: historic, aesthetic, evidential and communal values; Each component of the landscape should then be judged against these criteria.

Design

Aesthetic / Historic value:

The garden that Sudell created was designed within a strictly formal and geometrical framework. While this was a response to the monumental scale of the building, and the large number of residents, it succeeded in providing a pleasing prospect when viewed from above, the way many people would most frequently see the garden. The design also allowed for a number of smaller domestic scale gardens to be included just at the point where people step outside.

Costain no doubt appointed Sudell aware of his experience working with Marjory Allen (Lady Allen of Hurtwood) on the redesign of the Oxford Street department store Selfridges fourth floor roof garden (1929-30), and also of Sudell's evident practical knowledge and skills as represented in his 480-page book *Landscape Gardening* (1933).

Sudell's interest in design is amply demonstrated in this book. It includes the chapter 'Gardens of other nations', and written by a variety of authors

on Japanese, Indian, Canadian, American, Dutch, French, Italian and Spanish gardens, it surely anticipates the opportunities he found at Dolphin Square.

- * This garden is noteworthy for several reasons:
- * Designing a shared communal garden for this density of population would have been a first in the UK
- * Designing roof gardens on this scale was still rare
- * Introducing the concept of themed gardens of the world was an idea that was just beginning to become fashionable
- * Unifying the whole design through subtle variations in the use of a few different materials and features
- * Introducing sequential displays of horticultural excellence and delight
- * Implementing a structural planting scheme that has partly endured and continues to enhance its setting and please its residents

The design is of high quality, it takes advantages of the opportunities and constraints of the site, and maximises its potential to create successful effects. A hierarchy of design styles and the contrast in scale between the larger formal areas and the more intimate garden spaces is skilfully balanced.

The use of different styles with the themed international recess gardens creates interest and horticultural opportunity, and serves as a distinguishing navigational feature for residents and visitors moving around such a large building. The network of footpaths connecting all the different parts provides opportunities for large numbers of residents to enjoy being in the garden and involved in different activities without it being or feeling

overcrowded.

The interest of these features and their relationship is increased because this garden was designed in the mid to late 1930s by the landscape designer, horticulturalist and writer, Richard Sudell. He was also one of the founders of the then Institute of Landscape Architects (ILA) and editor of its magazine *Landscape and Garden* from 1934. Very little academic research had been undertaken on Sudell until recently. Dolphin Square is his largest known surviving work.

Of significance also is the timing of this work coinciding with the construction of the Derry and Toms roof garden (1936-38) by landscape architect Ralph Hancock. His design included Spanish, Tudor and English woodland gardens. Prior to this commission, Hancock designed the 'Gardens of the Nations' as a roof garden at the Rockefeller Center in New York (1933-35), with the idea that these would enhance the beauty of the complex, and also generate income from tourists.

The Gardens of the Nations referenced 13 specific nations amongst other gardens, with plantings native to Holland, France, Spain, Italy, Japan, America and England. An international rock garden was located in the middle of these gardens, and two larger British and French gardens were constructed on the roofs of separate wings of the building. These gardens were published and well photographed in books, but some have been part removed or lost and part replaced with little of the original surviving. Hancock was also a successful show garden designer in the US and the UK. Although Hancock was not a member of the ILA, Sudell would have known about his work and ideas.

These three garden designers Richard Sudell, Marjory Allen and Ralph Hancock collectively formed part of an important group working on cutting edge and prestigious projects associated with roof gardens.

Communal value:

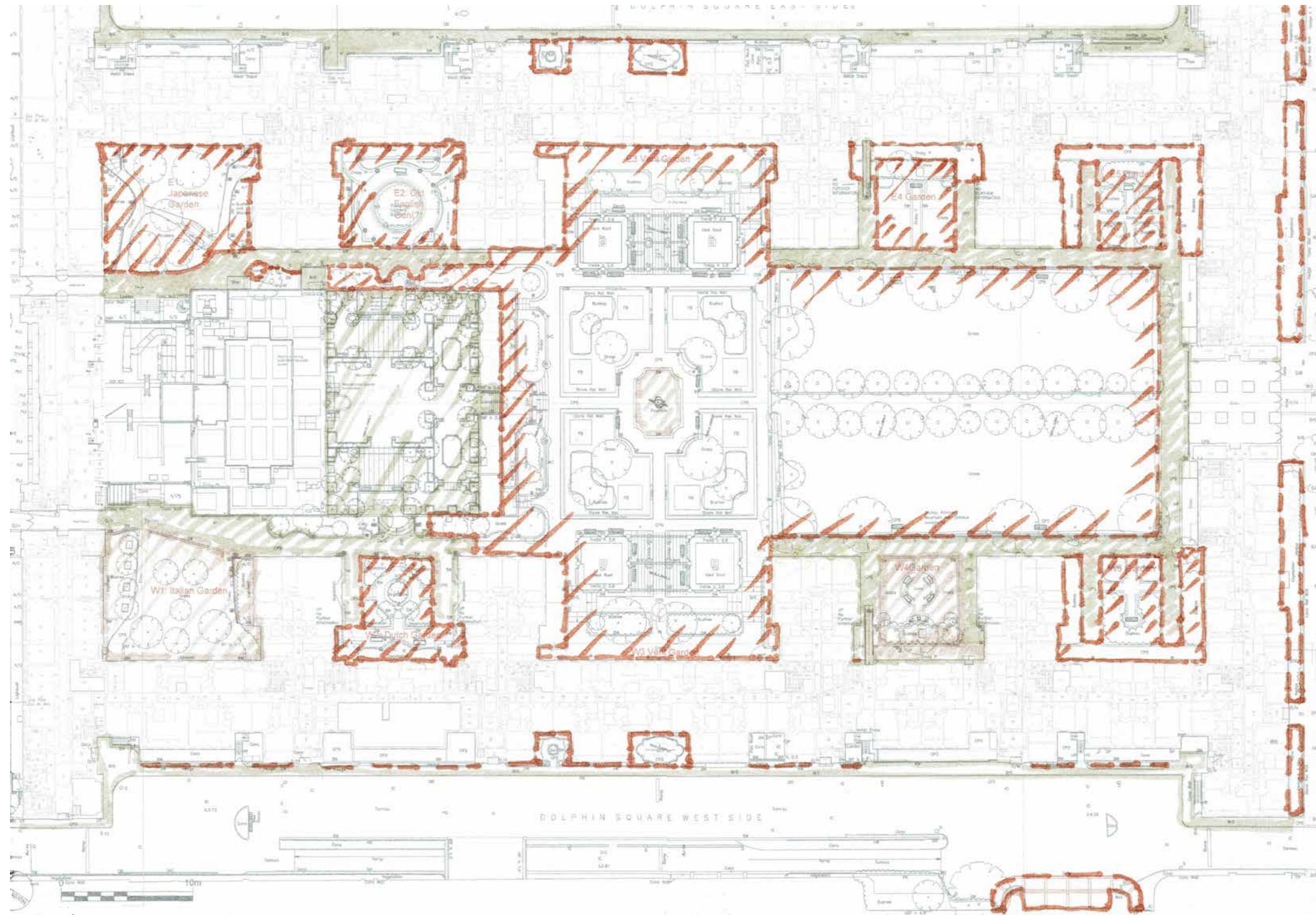
The garden is much used and loved locally by the large resident population and relatively small number of local visitors. It is the back garden for all the 1200 units of DSQ.

Ecological value:

The nature conservation interest is not high at present, but it does have some mature trees which are sheltered and unlike many of the same species in the rest of London, they are remarkably free of pathogens being an enclosed site. An example is *Gleditsia*, that has not succumbed to disease like most others outside DSQ. The bird life in DSQ seems high and the trees will be part of the reason. This gives it local significance.

Evidential (Archaeological) value:

Is low value, due to DSQ being constructed in the 1930s



Garden elements of high significance (even if poor current condition)



Garden areas of less significance, due to erosion of original fabric



Garden areas substantially altered, with few original features

Significance Diagram

1. Largely intact layout and materials to central courtyards, despite pool tiles detracting
2. Framework still exists but erosion and has taken its toll on the 'Italian' garden and eroded its significance
3. Central garden areas relatively intact with carefully detailed piers.



Recess gardens

Despite the changes to some of the layouts of the Recess Gardens, all of them are of equal importance as a group

As individuals the Japanese garden is the most unusual, individual and successful design including retention of the original features, and also the most significant in terms of influence, and timing. Garden features include massive westmoreland stone boulders and the current arrangement; stone bridge and entrance 'bollard', edging to dry water feature.

The opening up of Japan to the west in 1868, the Japan-British exhibition (1910), and the specialists, eg architect Joseph Conder, who were invited to visit and teach in Japan and who then disseminated to the West aesthetic ideas including those relating to gardens. This all generated great interest in and appreciation of Japanese gardens and their influence was widespread. Some of the best early Japanese gardens designed in England involved Japanese designers such as Seyemon Kusumoto. Kusumoto was involved in the second phase (1923-26) of the Japanese garden at the Gardens House, Cottered, Herts, EH registered PG Grade II* (1987); he regularly exhibited at the Chelsea flower shows (1930-39) where Sudell would have seen his designs, and was involved in 200 gardens in UK in total, including the communal gardens at Du Cane Court Balham (1938). He was based in Edgware, London, practising until the late 1950s.

Sudell invited Seyemon Kusumoto to contribute the Japanese section in his Landscape Gardening book, and some of Kusumoto's illustrations are also used in the rock garden section. Sudell will have used this information to guide his design. As they knew each other by this stage he may have consulted with Kusumoto more closely. This garden has added significance now also because as observed by Dr Jill Raggett, these early Japanese-style gardens (1850-1930) in UK are only just beginning to receive the attention they deserve.

However, they are often considered to lack a resemblance to the refined gardens of Japan as we see them today. A few are well known and cared for such as the Japanese-style garden at Tatton Park, Cheshire, but the majority are lost, hidden under encroaching undergrowth and suffering the effects of neglect, vandalism or the

sale of the more valuable ornaments.

The planting in the other gardens of the world has largely been lost or diluted over time so they are no longer recognisable, but within each garden the original features are significant because of their

- * extent
- * complexity including the variety of materials and features
- * continued design relationship with the building which has remain largely unaltered in its external appearance

Crazy paving

The OED entry for crazy paving indicates the term was first published in the UK, in early to mid 1920s. As a concept, crazy paving has been in regular use for centuries. It is evident also in the work of many eminent early 20 century garden designers including Gertrude Jekyll, Thomas Mawson and Percy Cane. It is sometimes shown planted with alpines or rock plants.

By 1933 Sudell was able to observe in Landscape Gardening that crazy paving was 'the most common type of paving used today.' However it was stone, preferably of local origin that had mostly been used rather than concrete. As the primary object of a pathway is to be walked on, Sudell rejected the use of a material with a slippery surface, and quickly recognised the practical value of concrete.

So the term and the material used for the paths at Dolphin Square were of the time. Its use as a decorative and textured edging is very unusual and of great significance contributing to the distinctive character of the gardens. The plants in the paving didn't survive after the war, and the joints were mortared probably to stop weed growth.

The enthusiasm for crazy paving has waned considerably since the 1930s, although since it is based on reusing apparently waste material it is likely to see a revival. It is pleasing to see so much of it has survived in the garden.

At some point perhaps when arborists drove vehicles along the path to prune the horse chestnuts, the crazy paving edge to the avenue was damaged and has since been lost. The most important historic landscape features

include the arrangement of the lawns, horse chestnut avenue, and planting beds, paths, paving and variety of original paving materials used, including crazy paving and its use as edging to paths dwarf Cotswold stone walls and copings.

Other notable features include:

- * Large sculptural pots
- * Stone columns and pergola in vent gardens.
- * The loggia and Spanish garden lion mask - and pool?
- * Dolphin fountain and pool (but not its terracotta lining)
- * Planting which is original and part of the garden's character

Comparable contemporary designs

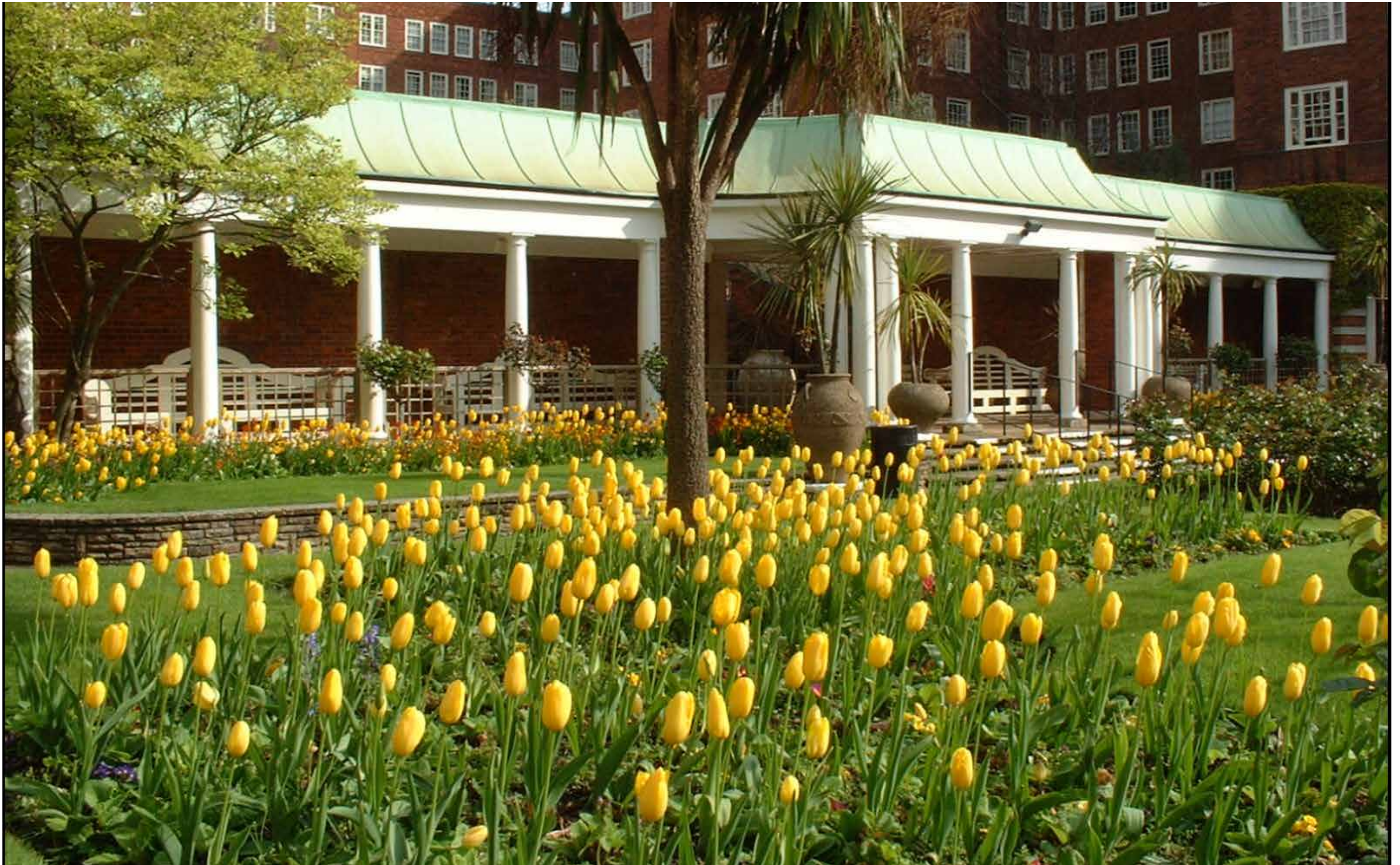
In terms of scale, Du Cane Court in Balham, London, opened 1937 designed by architect George Kay Green was also reputed to be the largest privately owned block of flats under one roof in Europe. However the site is split up by the building layout into four different areas, and there is vehicle access and parking around each of these courtyards and space only for very small gardens. Kusumoto designed a rock garden in the front of this building.

In terms of roof gardens, Selfridges, Derry and Toms (EH Grade II), and the Rockefeller Center are the most similar examples, except that the first two were designed and managed for commercial use to enhance shoppers' experiences and presumably to encourage them to spend more. Selfridges was the pioneer in 1908 with its first roof garden which expanded from a three-sided pergola with space in the open for tables and chairs, to a rock garden, pond, putting space for golfers and later an ice skating rink. In 1929 the roof garden was redesigned. Marjory Allen approached Gordon Selfridge directly with a proposal to provide a roof garden for the use by sales girls and shop staff. The Selfridges garden was 500ft long and 100ft deep, occupying only the Oxford St side of the whole site. It was designed with a sequence of contrasting elements a pair of formal gardens with a central water feature flanked by a vine walk; there was a rose garden and bulb garden in the centre and at the far end a rock garden and an English garden of old fashioned flowers. This is clearly related in design and style to Dolphin Square. Decorative structures included



1. Careful detailing in English Garden

2. Remaining crazy paved edgings to replaced paving.



Loggia in Spring



pergolas, coloured paving, raised stone plinths with vases filled with bright flowers, a dovecote for the fantailed pigeons, and many different types of planting were introduced. Sudell promoted an arrangement for bedding and other plants to be raised, or stored after flowering, in a nursery garden at the retailer's out of town sports ground. Sudell wrote about this project in *Landscape Gardening*, illustrating his chapter on town and roof gardens with plans and photos of this and other gardens.

The Gardens of the Nations comprising 13 individual gardens and the International Rock Garden were designed mostly by Hancock for the Rockefeller Center in New York. They were opened in April 1935 around the time when Sudell would have been commissioned to design Dolphin Square. A full page photo of the Rockefeller Center skyscraper was featured in summer 1935 edition of 'Landscape and Garden' of which Sudell was editor. The photo also featured the two lower international buildings and their extensive roof terraces ...landscaped with hedges, trees, fountains, pools and growing greenery. However there is no mention in the caption of Ralph Hancock, and no subsequent review of his book *When I Make a Garden* published later in 1935, which included many illustrations of the Rockefeller gardens. Although these gardens were partially demolished in 1938, their design clearly influenced Hancock's subsequent design at Derry and Toms. Hancock returned to England and between 1936-1938 won gold medals for his display gardens at Chelsea Flower Show and also designed gardens

for the Ideal Home Exhibition. It was also observed that during this time his style changed from naturalistic rock gardens to more arts and crafts. Sudell was a regular visitors to both shows and had been following the work of many designers through the Royal Horticultural Society since the early 1920s, so he too would have seen Hancock's show gardens.

Derry and Toms roof garden was planned to outshine its rivals at Selfridges and Barker's store in Kensington (1921). Each of the themed garden areas - Spanish, Tudor English and Woodland was designed with artefacts that have survived to define their character and distinctiveness. In the Spanish garden this included a loggia supported on cast iron spiral columns with curved decorative railings, raised beds ornamented with coloured Mediterranean tiles, a narrow canal connecting five fountains, a Moorish style folly; in the English and woodland gardens there is a well, stone arches, sundial, garden shelters, bridges, streams and ponds. These gardens are designed with great flair and skill, and they would have fulfilled their brief to surprise, excite and delight the customers. Space was used differently, and the funds to design and manage the garden would also have been of a different order to Dolphin Square.

Hancock and Sudell's work at this time, witnessing the beginning of the modern movement and art deco, included more than a nod to earlier design styles including arts and crafts and old English. This was not an approach apparently shared by

Marjory Allen. In her article *Roof-garden lungs of the future*, she looked forward to this new architectural style and the opportunities it offered: 'the supreme use of a flat roof is for a garden in which will be found rest and peace, the maximum of air and sun and a place far removed from the noise and dirt of the streets.' Writing after their garden at Selfridges had been designed, she warned that 'some will try to create gardens in the designs of past periods ..and an overwhelming desire to introduce 'ye olde worlde' atmosphere... at the moment it is rare to find a garden associated with a modern building that is designed to harmonise with 20 century ideas. The roof garden is a modern conception and it should be designed as such.' She praises the garden at Selfridges and what they learnt from designing in a new environment, but her main focus in the article is a roof garden for a nursery school at Euston.

As editor, Sudell ensured that the *Landscape and Garden* journal was full of descriptions of historic and modern gardens from across the world as a means of broadening the new profession's awareness. Many large and historic gardens reveal influences from different periods and nations, but to put them together at one time in one place as he and Hancock had done, was this more like creating a living library of gardens? How authentic were they in relation to contemporary understanding of world gardens?

Or was there an underlying reason for creating some gardens of the world at a time when there

was growing discord and hostility throughout the world, including in Spain, Italy, Japan and Germany? Is it fanciful to suggest that the idea for these gardens was as much to do with a desire for peace as it was to capture the essence of a nation?

Conclusions about landscape significance

The extent of the survival of the original layout of the garden is considerable. Many of the important features of the garden survive and retain their designed relationship to each other. Also of significance is that the setting of the garden, the surrounding building of Dolphin Square, has in its external appearance remained largely unaltered. These are some of the key contributing factors why the gardens Dolphin Square are acknowledged to be of national importance by Historic England.

The garden is of national and international importance as an example of a large scale residential garden including roof gardens, for its association with the designer Sudell and his role in the founding of the ILA, his beliefs as a conscientious objector, and his design philosophy embracing different styles and themes to create an attractive characterful and distinctive garden of its time and place. The garden deserves to be more widely known.