

## **Appraisal no 5 Hanger Hill Garden Estate Conservation area**

### **Location**

The conservation area is situated in West Acton between the Piccadilly and Central line tube railways, to the east of Hanger Lane (North Circular Road).

### **Designation details**

The conservation area was designated in 1969 and an Article 4 direction was made in 1976. The *Hanger Hill Garden Estate Design Guide* was published in 1997.

### **History**

The development of Hanger Hill and the surrounding rural land only started in the early part of the twentieth century. North Ealing and Park Royal stations (now on the Piccadilly line) opened in 1903 as part of the Metropolitan District Railway, and West Acton station opened in 1923 on the Central London Railway (now Central line). The A40 Western Avenue was constructed in the early 1930s. The land on which the Hanger Hill Garden Estate was to be built was used for flying (Acton Aerodrome) and aircraft manufacture (Alliance Aeroplane Company) between 1909 to 1920. Development land was acquired in 1925, and development of the estate started in 1928.

### **Special interest**

‘The Hanger Hill Garden Estate, the beau ideal of romantic rural Metroland. Immaculate half-timbered houses and flats. . . unusually well landscaped...the large blocks of flats stand in spacious lawns the houses are set off by attractive planting.’ Nikolaus Pevsner (*The Buildings of England: London 3 North West*).

The Hanger Hill Garden Estate was designed by the architects Douglas Smith and Barley between 1928 and 1936. The special quality of the estate derives from the quality of its half-timbered ‘mock Tudor’ style and its formal landscaped setting.

The estate consists of 258 flats in three storey blocks along Queens Drive, Links Road and Monks Drive, and 361 houses in Links Road, Queens Drive, Monks Drive, Vale Lane Princes Gardens and Tudor Gardens.

The houses are generally grouped into terraces of either four or six properties, forming street frontages of pleasing visual consistency but with subtle variations in roofline and detail. The street layout includes common garden areas which contribute greatly to the character of the area. Each of the 18 blocks of flats takes the form of a three storey ‘Tudor manor house’ standing in its own lawned gardens.

Taken together with the open spaces and street trees, the whole effect creates a residential environment of high quality.

The design guide describes five main house types on the estate, all with black painted or stained half timbered gables and white painted rendering. The ground floors and flank walls are built in a red/brown brick. The roofs and areas of vertical tile hanging were originally clad in red plain clay sand faced handmade tiles which have now weathered to a dark red/brown colour. Some houses have overhanging eaves and either a tiled porch roof or inset porches.

Windows are side and top hung timber casements and most houses have leaded lights on the principal elevations. Many end of terrace houses have pictorial leaded light windows on the flank elevations.

The front doors are an important feature of the houses and contribute to the character and appearance of the estate. There are two types of front door on the estate. The majority of the houses have timber framed doors with three fielded panels below a central letter box, with nine glazed lights to the upper part. The other type is a solid varnished timber door, with a small rectangular leaded light window. The door surrounds and canopies are equally distinctive, consisting of a timber canopy with moulded cornice, supported on moulded timber brackets. The original method of enclosing front gardens on the estate consists of a brick 'soldier course' and a privet hedge, with a distinctive style of timber gate on wooden posts. The estate was laid out so that most houses have a garage at the rear of each group of properties.

The three storey blocks of flats have the same architectural treatment as the houses, with a red/brown brick base, brick entrance porches and white painted half-timbered front elevations with large paired gables. The flank walls of each block feature a tall chimney stack in red brick. The roofs and porches are distinguished by large areas of hand made tiles. The windows on the front and side elevations consist of metal window frames with leaded lights set in hardwood surrounds. The blocks of flats are set in formally landscaped lawns. The original estate development included the Hanger Hill Country Club, also in the Tudor style, which was built as a club house for residents and opened in 1932.