

Have your say...

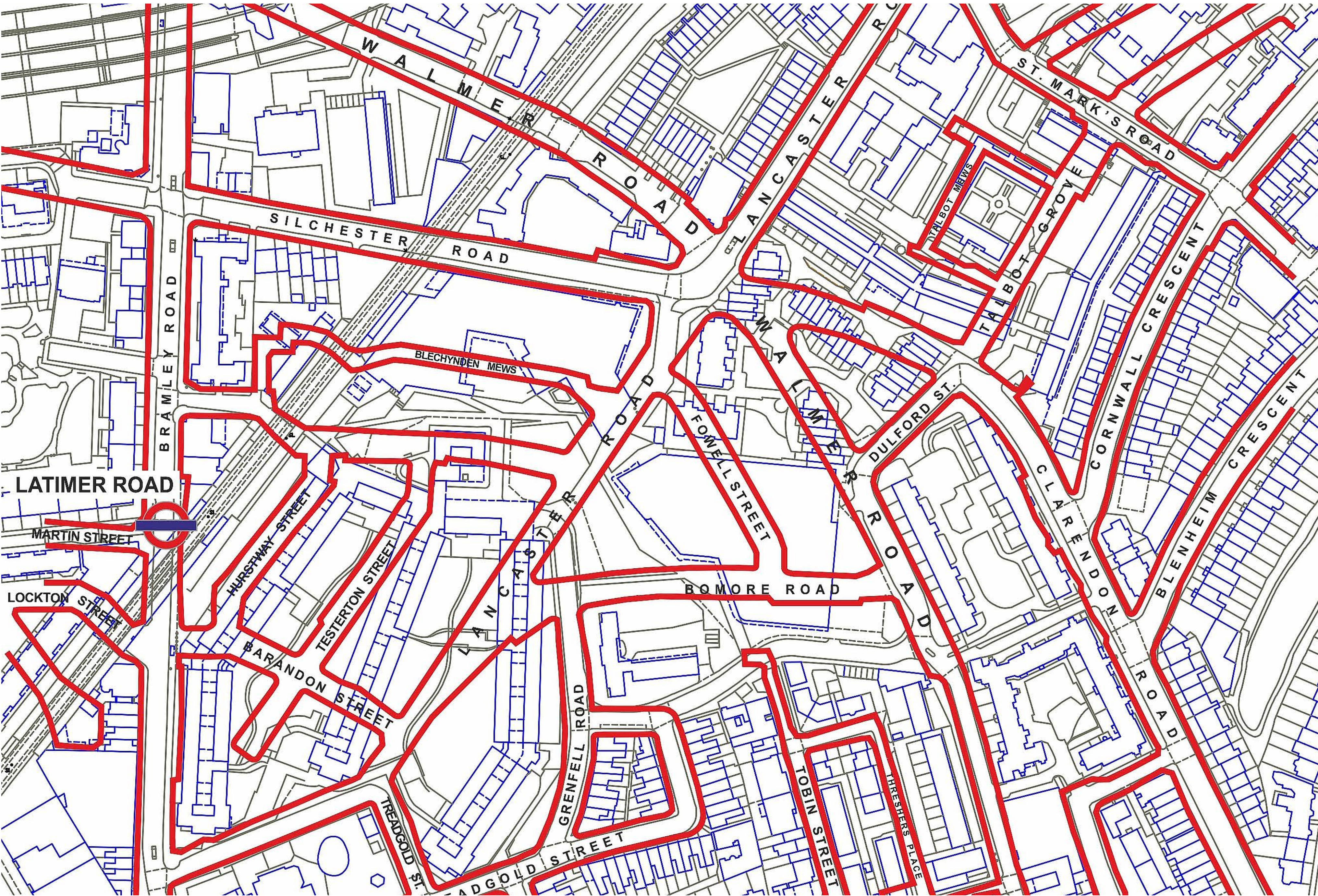
Mansion Blocks - do you like living in them?
What would you like to see changed or improved?

Are the perimeter walls a problem?
Do they make you feel safe or provide places for people to hide behind?

Do you own a car?
Would you want a parking space or prefer to use existing parking areas for other uses: gardens or community spaces perhaps?

Would you like more or less shared garden spaces?
Would more shared gardens improve the sense of community?

The 1910 map overlaid onto a map of the current area.What did your home used to be like?



How the area has developed over time

1900 Victorian Streets



Fig 01: 1910 Map showing Barandon Street

Around a hundred years ago the whole area comprised densely packed streets. Speculative developers built on green fields. Houses faced each other across the street. Everyone could observe and oversee the public realm and interact with neighbours. People were more likely to work close to their homes. However, the houses fell into multi-occupancy were branded slums. Reformers wanted to do something about it.

Many C19th streets were lost after the war. They are easy to navigate – neighbours can easily keep a friendly eye, to help improve security. There is good community identification – the concept of a street having it's own defined personality. Against this, they are not "lifetime homes" – difficult to adapt if a wheelchair user or someone with special requirements needs their home to be altered. They have poor energy efficiency and the spaces are not compatible with our expectations of modern living. They need to be extended or modified with enlarged kitchens and living spaces.



Fig 02: Lancaster Circus

1931 to 1960 Mansion Blocks
Morland House 1931; Talbot Grove House 1932; Bramley House 1935

The Housing Act of 1930 encouraged mass slum clearance and councils set to work to demolish poor quality housing to replace with new build.

The first of the new types of homes were tenements or mansion blocks, featuring shared entrances and balcony access at each level. With a degree of public management, these were and still are a great success. The likes of Octavia Hill and local councils guaranteed that there was no overcrowding. Rent collectors kept an eye on conditions in the properties. A flat was compact and warm. However, such blocks duplicated the pavement on many levels

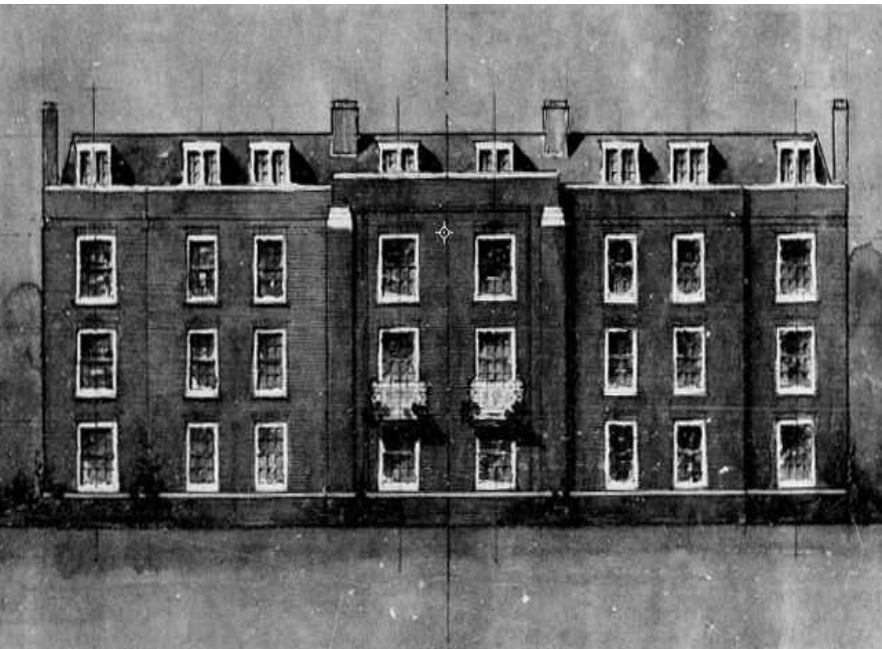


Fig 03: Morland House

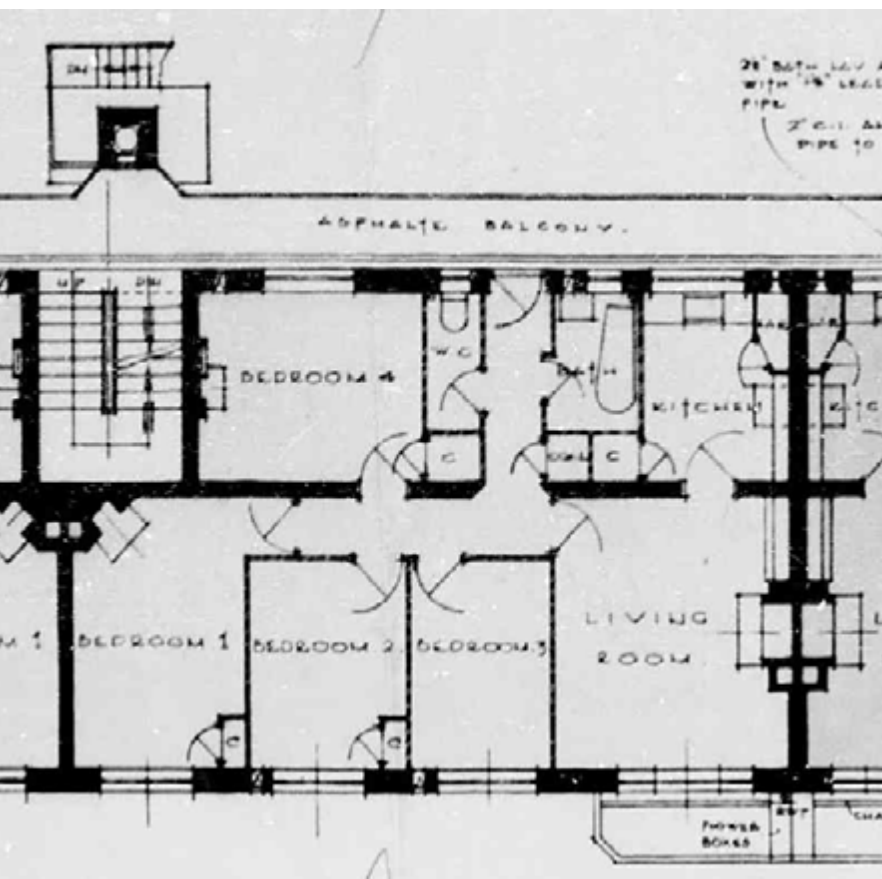
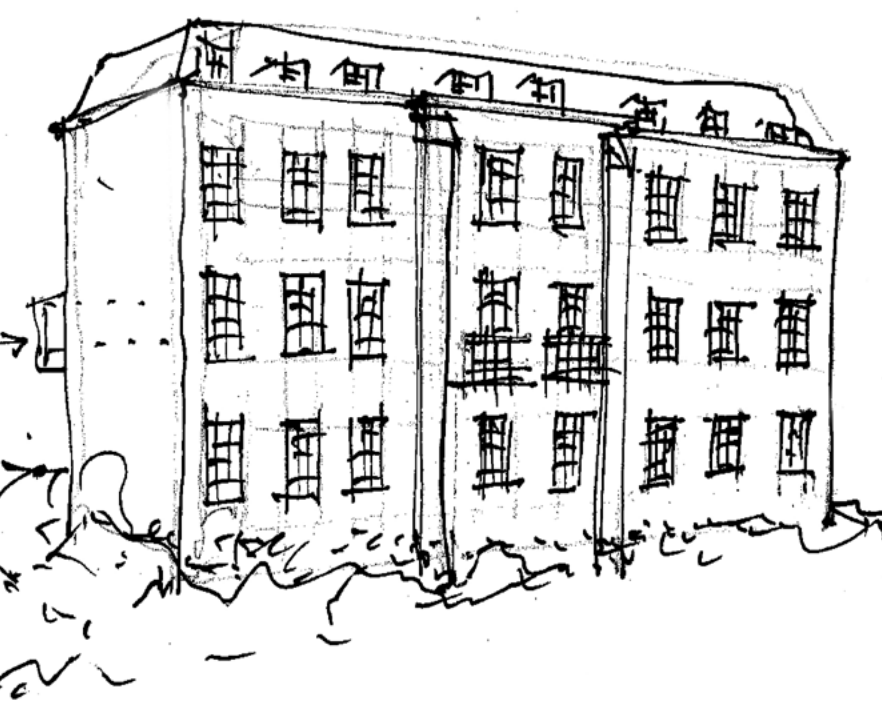


Fig 04: Bramley House Plan

Compact properties, flats that were designed for economic use of materials, straightforward layouts and manageability. They have better energy efficiency and tend to hold in heat well, making them cosy. There tends to be good relations between neighbours, as the entrances lead off open communal walkways and individual addresses are relatively easily identified for deliveries.

Against this, they have a poor relationship with the exterior - overlooking the garden from the balcony makes it feel disconnected. Shared bins and access routes, smells and waste building up, and poor acoustic performance become upsetting, if they aren't managed. The communal stairwells are open to unwanted access. Residents would like accessible meeting and seating areas and more landscaped areas outside.



1960s and 70s. The Big Plan
Grenfell, The Walkways, Talbot House, Camelford Court and Walk and The Clarendon Walks and The Talbot Walks



The borough employed Clifford Weardon Architects to make up a master plan (Fig 9). It took some time to get permission partly because Kensington and Chelsea Borough Council was formed in 1965 and compulsorily purchasing the Victorian houses was slow.

What is striking about the plan is that it took radical steps to eliminate cars, leaving large areas of green space. A proposal was published in 1968. The Westway (Fig 07) was opened in 1970 - highlighting the nation's obsession with cars.

Grenfell Tower was the first building to be completed. Many older streets were lost in Notting Dale, and the 1910 plan shows a great deal more green space.

After Grenfell, the 1970s homes were low-rise. The principal differences between these modern and the earlier traditional homes are the flat roofs, access to flats is now via long balconies or interior corridors, outside spaces are more often private balconies rather than direct to gardens, the construction is of concrete slabs on concrete posts with brick walls infilling, and the windows are big. Rooms are generous and bright compared to today's standards. Communal green space – the majority of properties oversee generous communal gardens enjoyed by all. The buildings are exciting,



Fig 05: Talbot Walk

Against this, the acoustics, signage, deliveries and identification is poor, offering a general unwelcome feel – especially as the plan is so complex. Rooms overheat through lack of control. Common areas look dated - "prison atmosphere" – internal barriers and security entrap the communal areas, lighting is poor and decoration tired. The exposed concrete and thin (now cavity filled) walls lead to condensation.

Late 70s and 1980s Pitched roofs return
Verity Close 1979; Cranbourne Mews 1980



Fig 06: Verity Close

These lower density housing schemes were built as a reaction to the concrete schemes of the 60s and 70s. They reflected a more suburban intention, with clusters of terraces built around internal courts, enclaves facing away from the streets. They are popular with 'right to buy' tenants. They represent a return to traditional house forms with parking close by and small gardens and yards (Fig 06). Nostalgic reference to traditional houses, low rise, and less overwhelming as opposed to earlier buildings. They feel secure, accessible and easier to identify. Generous use of space, by comparison with today's needs.



Fig 07: The Westway

Them and us feel? Many are 'right to buy', thus privately rented and has resulted in more loss of social housing (MJA comment). There are condensation issues (cavity walls filled?) and damp in common parts. Wood windows need renewal, escape and security is of concern.



Fig 08: The Walkways Gardens



Learning from History

Your neighbourhood

The 1960's vision for the estate

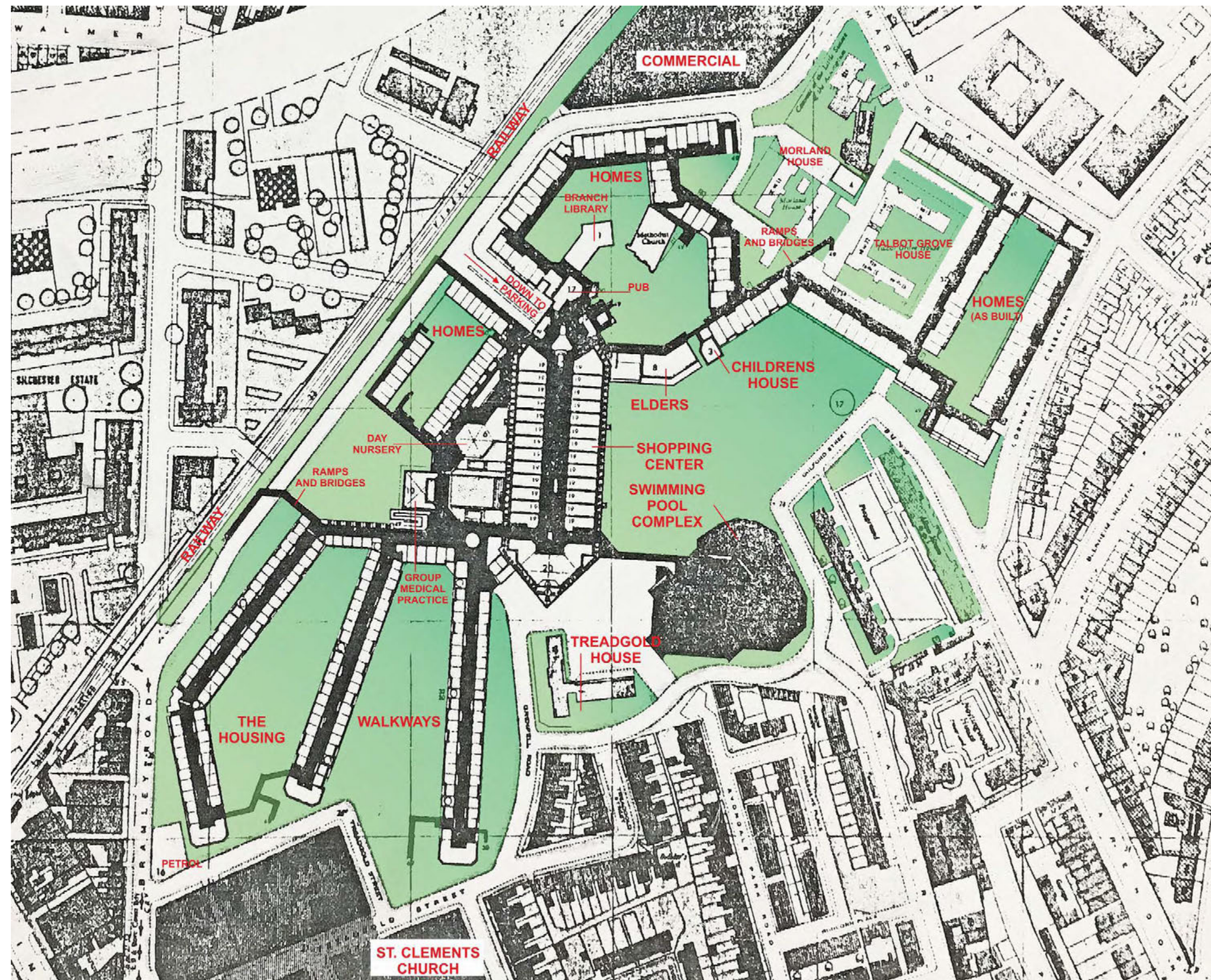
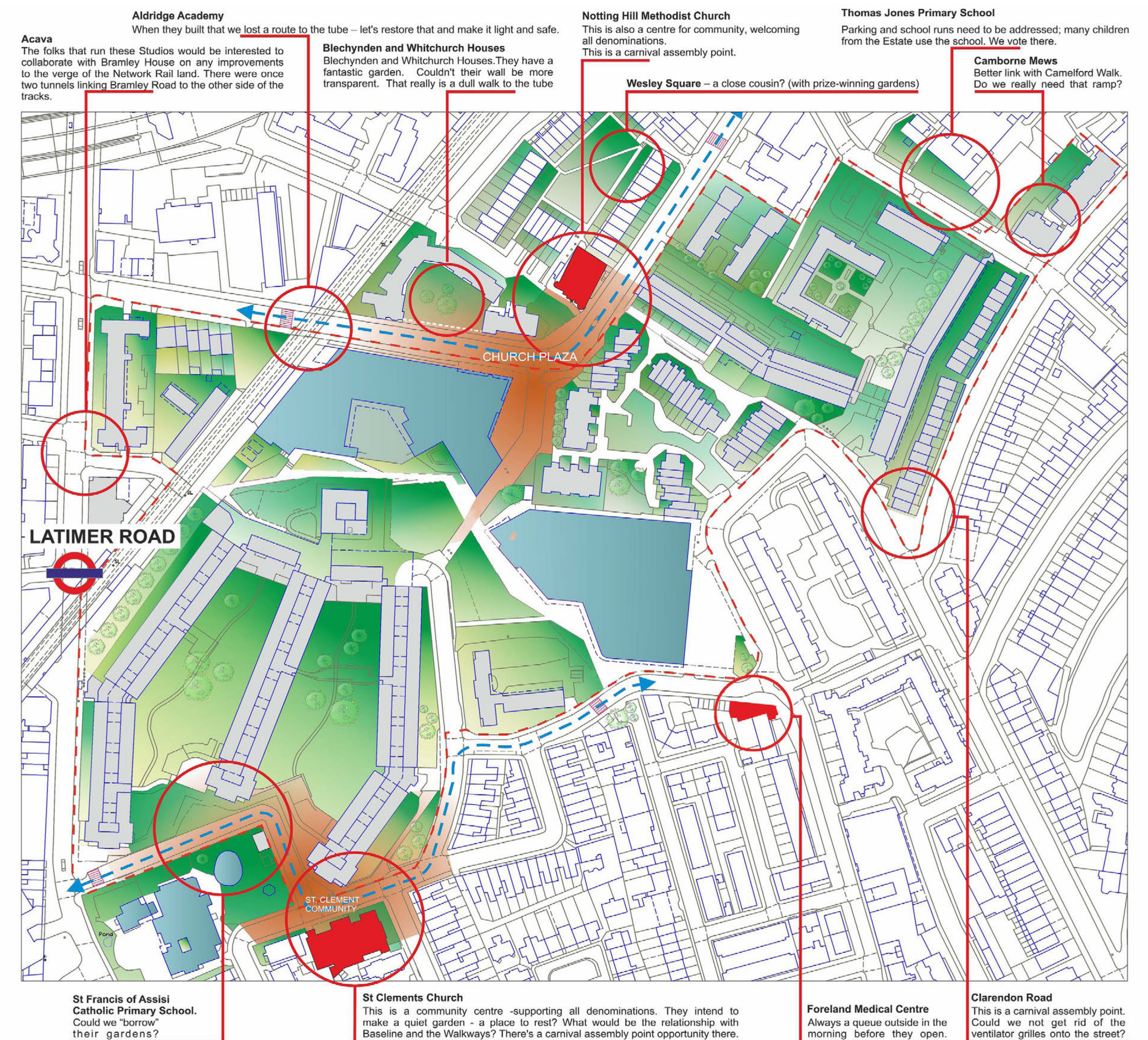


Fig 9: Original Masterplan for the estate 1968

What has changed?



Early ideas




Early ideas - Whole Estate

Taking concepts from the Master Plan of 1968, this drawing overlays our ideas on what has actually been built - much of which was unplanned and random. It reintroduces earlier pathways, routes and connections throughout Notting Dale.

The intention is to better marry the estate with its neighbouring streets, by opening up links with key communities and resources on the perimeter, and dissolving differences.

This may be achieved by means of uniting the gardens visually, creating sensitive landscaping, forming clearer public/private realms, introducing radical traffic calming and maintaining safe sightlines.

 What are your thoughts...

