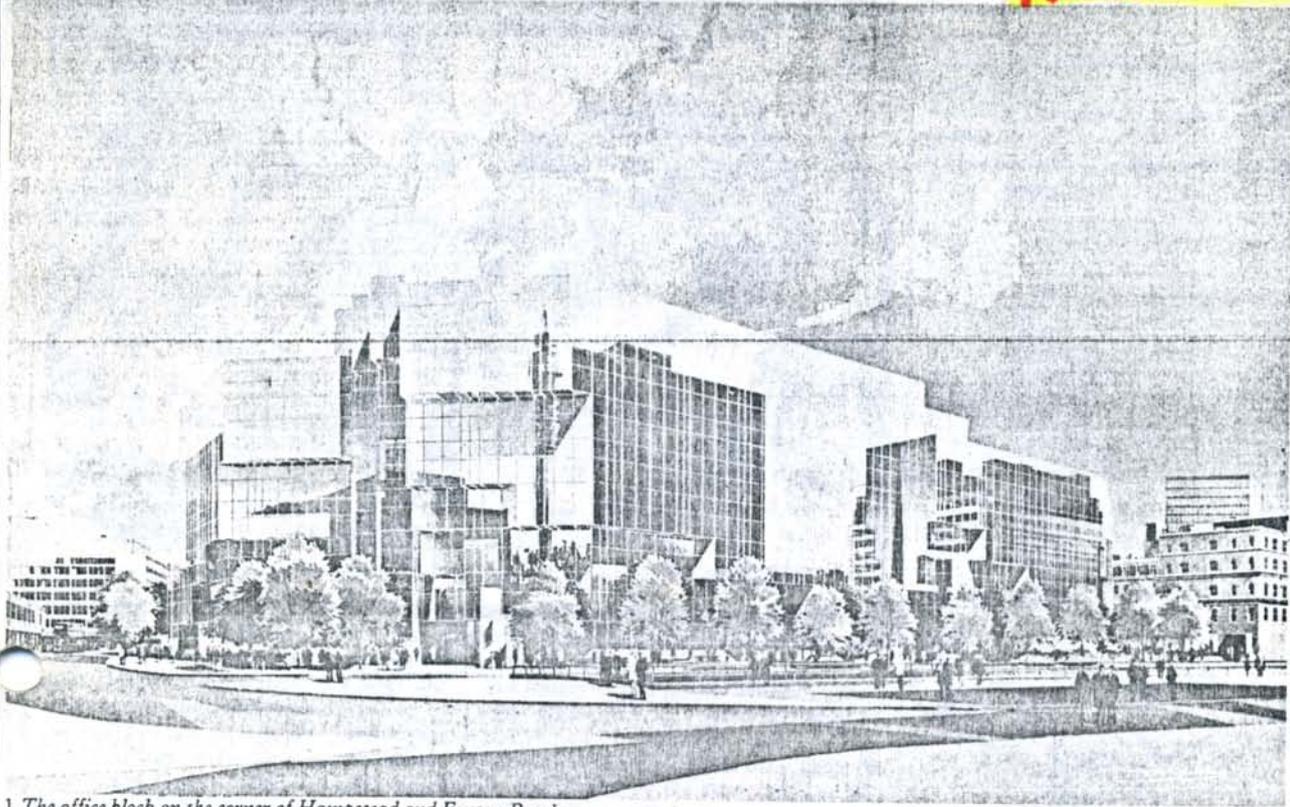
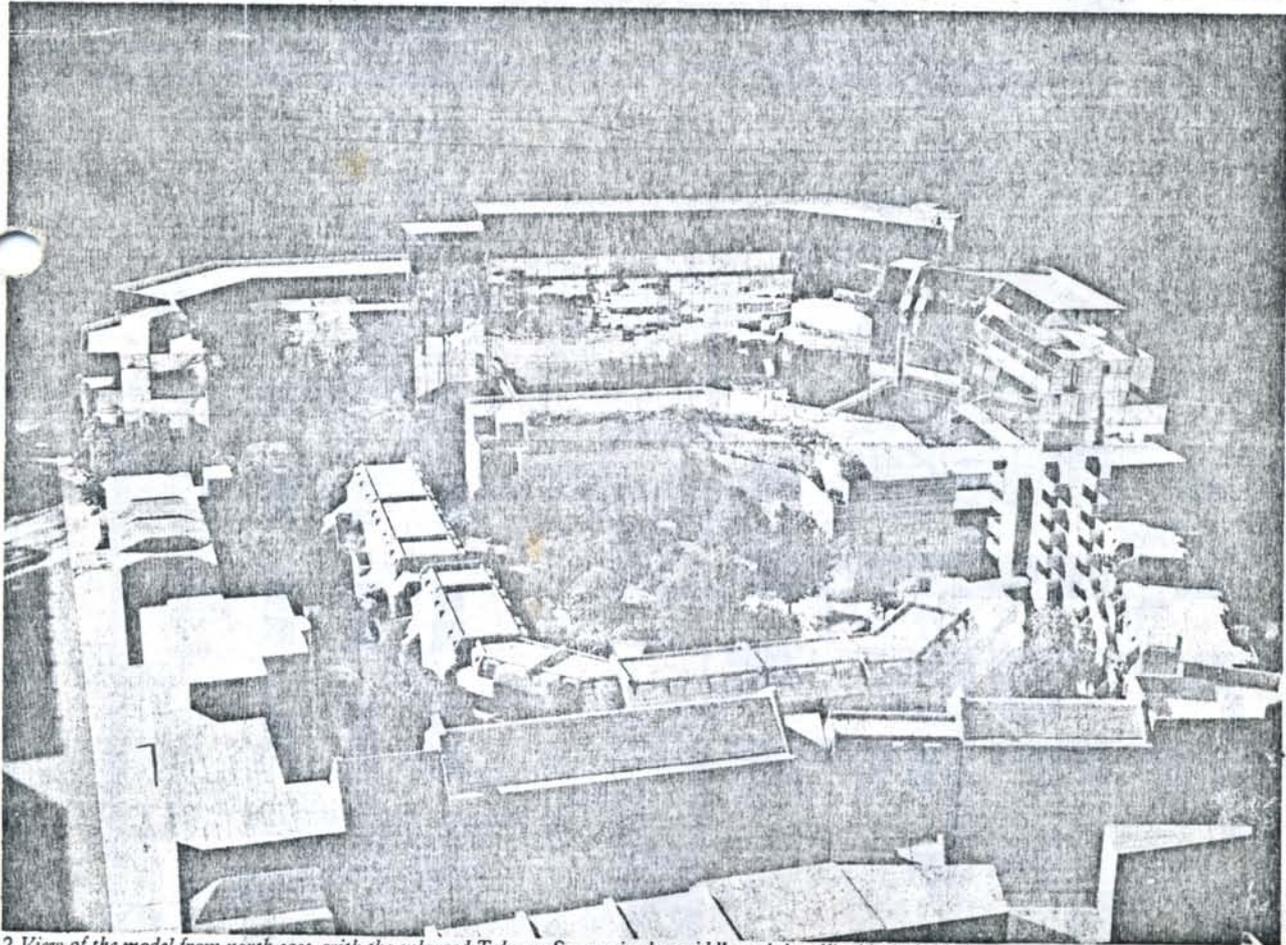


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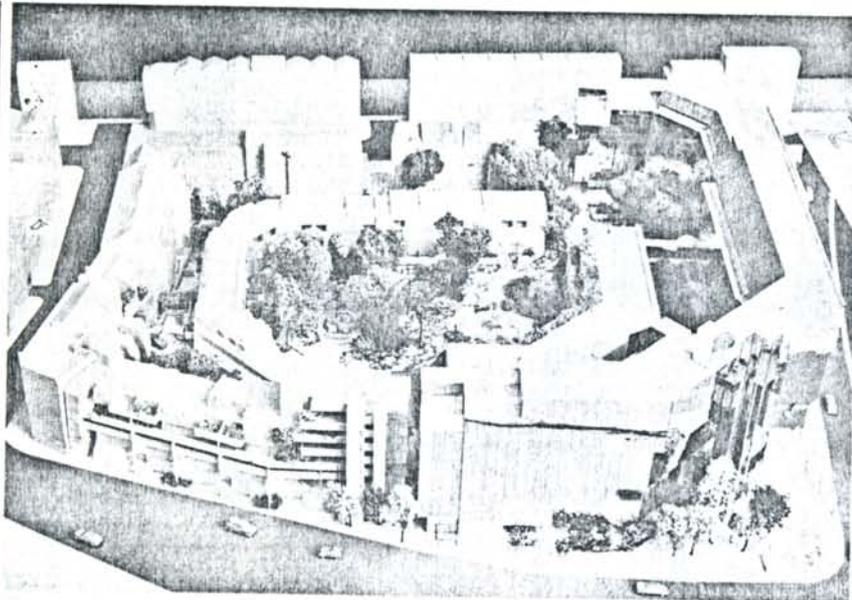


1 The office block on the corner of Hampstead and Euston Roads.

Tolmers transformed



2 View of the model from north east, with the enlarged Tolmers Square in the middle and the office blocks behind.



3 View of the model from west with Hampstead Road in foreground.

4 Elevation of barrier block housing on Hampstead Road.

5 Detail of Drummond Street elevation of infill housing.

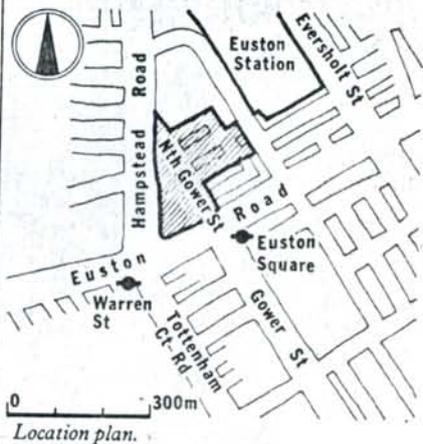
6 The same block of housing showing the side facing Cobourg Street.

3 The concrete frame appearing on one of London's more conspicuous corners, that of Euston and Hampstead Roads, is only the most obvious manifestation of a large and complex redevelopment project, centred on the old Tolmers Square. For, besides the new buildings under construction around this corner, there is rehab and infill deeper into the site, which has been proceeding steadily for some years now. The project is worth a look at this intermediate stage because it includes so many of the problems that architects working in the inner city are now encountering. These include: complexities of joint ventures between public and private sectors; community opposition and participation; redevelopment of the physical fabric without displacing the community; and the resolution of conflicting townscape

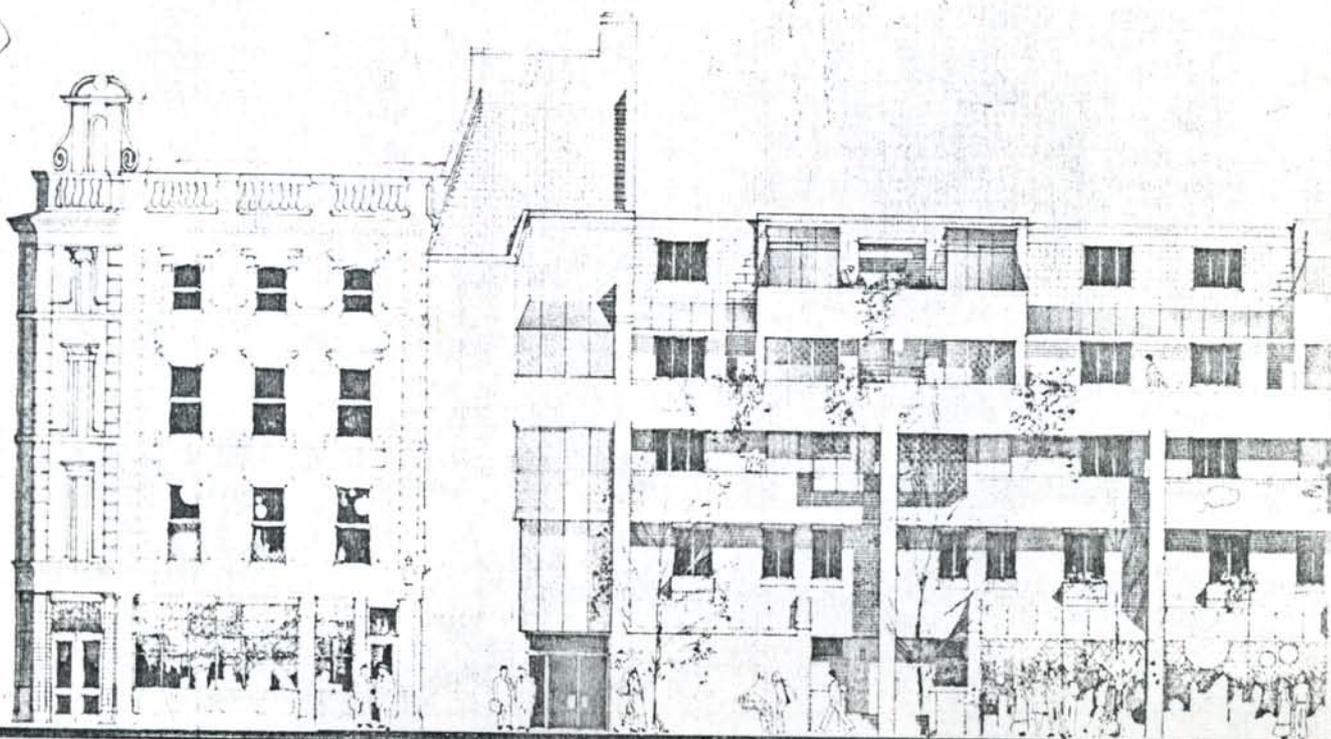
demands for some buildings suited to facing large noisy roads, and others to retire into quiet old streets.

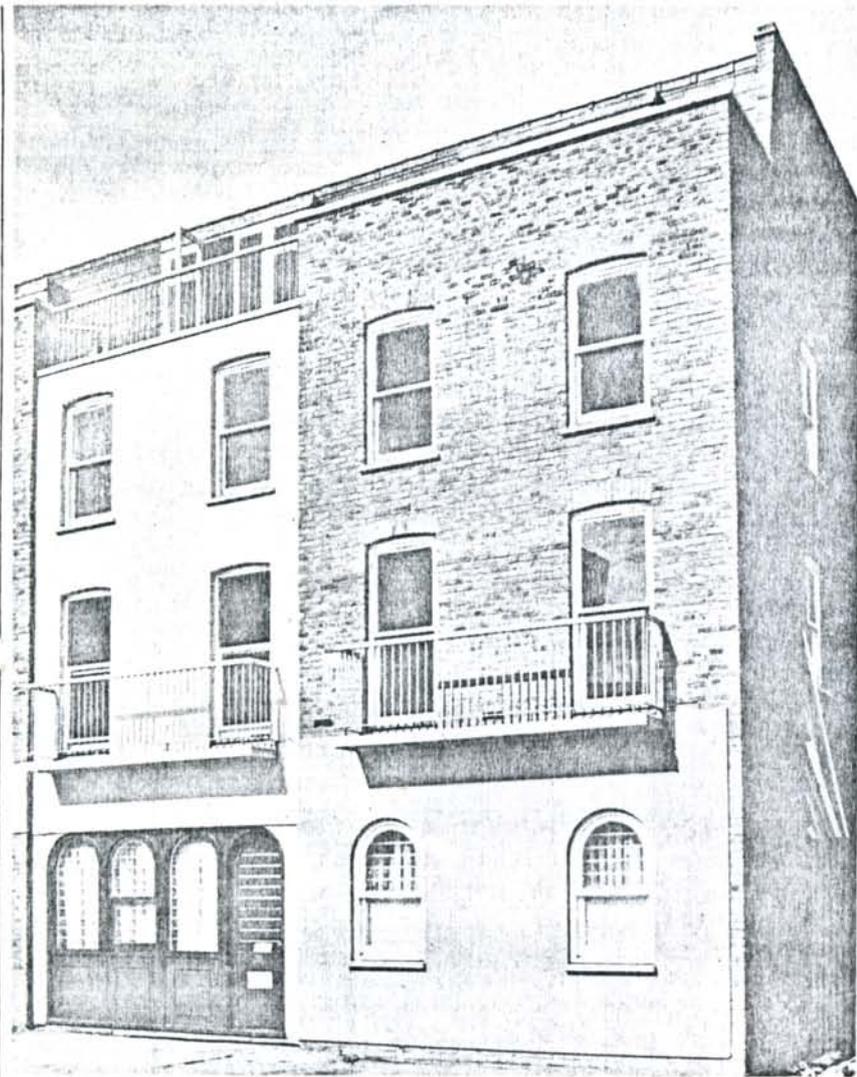
The history of this project has been quite a saga (AJs 26.9.73, 3.10.73, 30.10.74, 31.8.77, 1.2.78, 30.1.80), some of it immortalised in a book*. In the early 1970s the site was owned by the same company that built the Euston Centre across Hampstead Road. They were to develop it as a joint venture with Camden Council, who rejected an alternative proposed by an independent group who were to have returned all profits to Camden. Later it was to have been one of the first applications of the Community Land Act. Now the housing is being built and rehabilitated by the Borough of

* *Battle for Tolmers Square* by Nick Wates. Routledge and Kegan Paul.



Location plan.

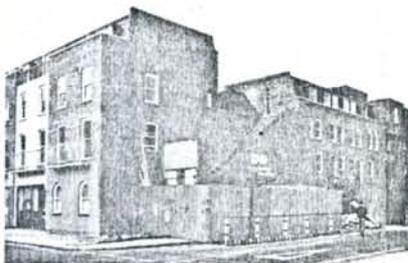




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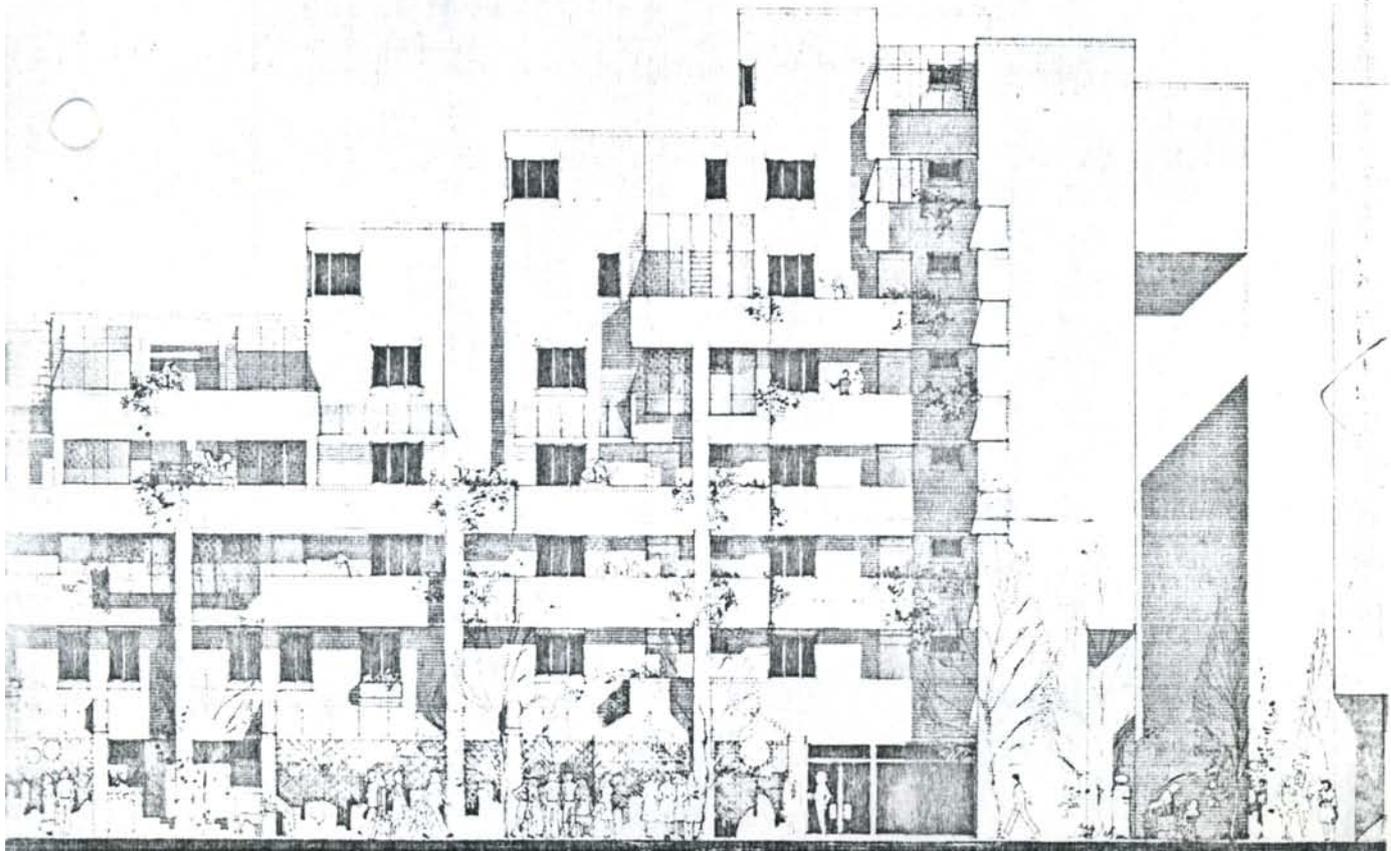
Camden, and the offices built by Greycoats London Estates Investments Ltd who won the option in a developers' competition. Architect to both the borough and Greycoats is Renton Howard Wood Levin Partnership, architect to Camden throughout.

However, there has been continual controversy and opposition: to the collusion between council and speculator; to the demolition of the houses around Tolmers

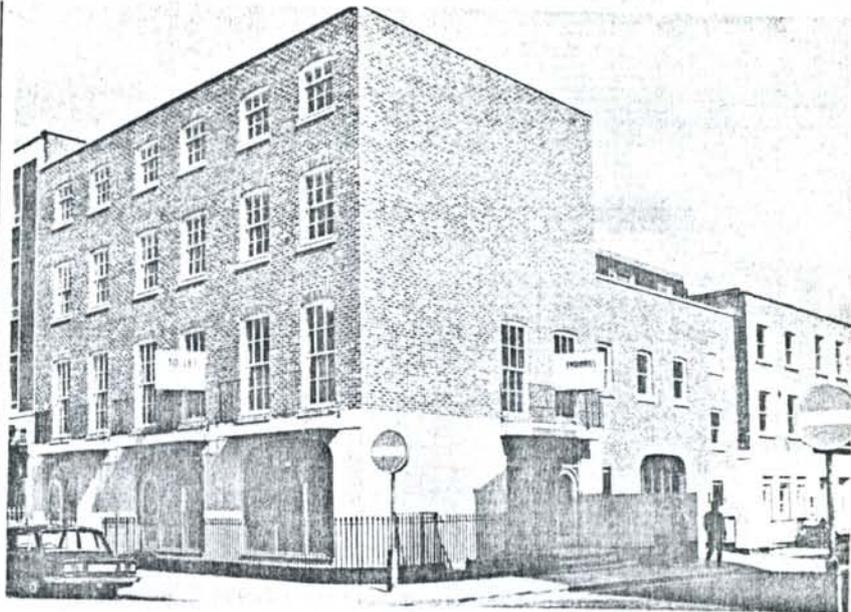


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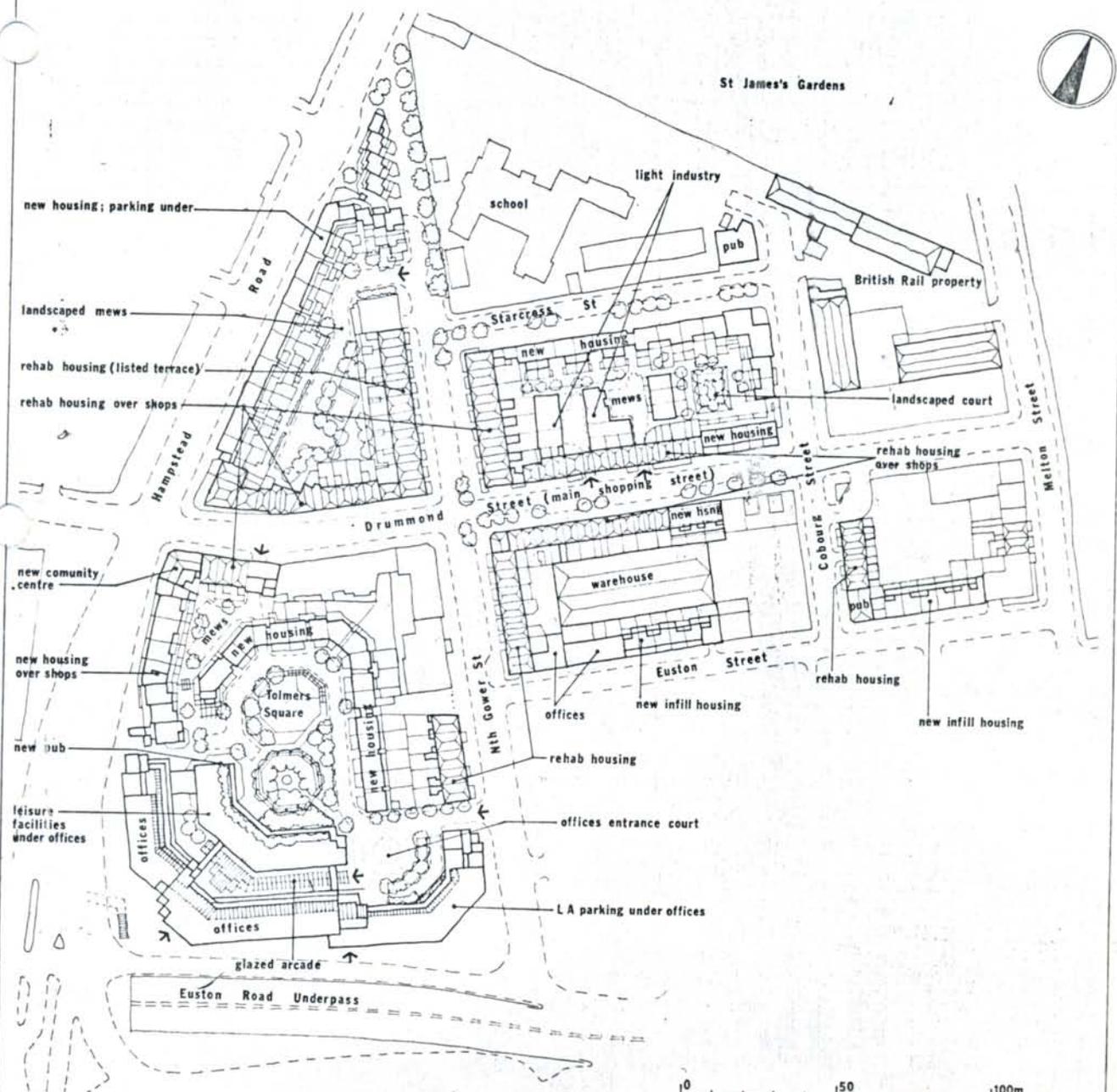
Square; to the disruption and displacement of the local community; and to the volume of offices deemed necessary to finance the development. Much of this was spearheaded by the Tolmers Village Action Group, a combination of long-term residents and newly arrived student and squatter activists. No doubt the present balanced compromise between realising the development potential of the site, and providing for the local community is due in part to their pressures. Euston Road, as an extension of Marylebone Road, defines the northern edge of central London and is large and busy, as is Hampstead Road, a major route in from the north. So in terms of 'city image' the site is important, and being opposite the Euston Centre can be thought of as defining an entrance to central London. As this corner



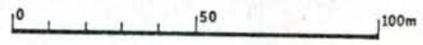
consisted mainly of derelict and nondescript buildings, or vacant sites, it was cleared in order to rebuild on a scale and in a form appropriate to the location, and to shelter the community behind. On the corner itself and along Euston Road the development will consist of an office block rising from six to eight storeys high and clad with a glittering curtain wall of mirror glass and stainless steel faced aluminium mullions. North along Hampstead Road the barrier block theme is continued with two new blocks of housing. The block closest to the offices includes shops on the ground floor, and steps down from eight storeys to five where it meets the Lord Palmerston public house, which is now being converted into a community centre. The housing north of Drummond Street is five storeys high. Both blocks have primary orientation east into the site and over landscaped mews from which they take access. The original housing around Tolmers Square was in poor condition and so demolished. The north and east of an enlarged

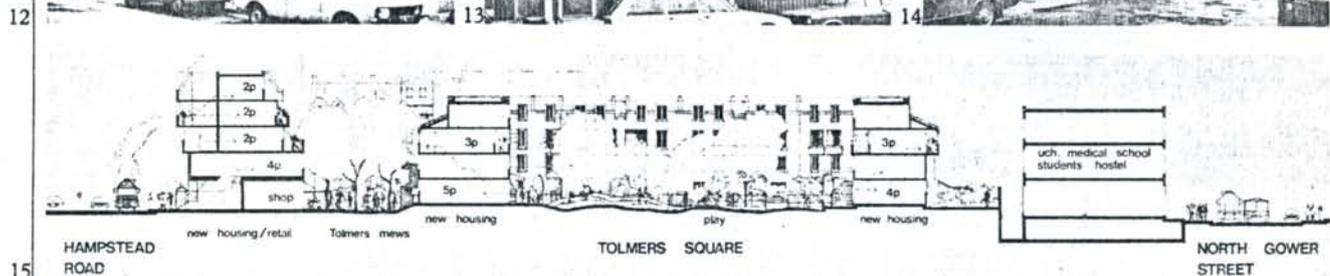


7



Site plan.





12 Infill housing in Starcross Street.
 13, 14 Rehabbed housing.
 5 East-west section through Tolmers Square looking north.
 16 Rehabbed block on west side of North Gower Street.

Conclusion
 Altogether this is a fascinating project where the architects have tried to sense what each part of the site requires and the opportunities it offers, then searched for solutions to make the best of each part, while

still providing an overall coherence. There can be few such varied and complex urban renewal projects proceeding in this country at the moment, and so this is a particularly interesting one to watch as it moves towards completion.



Housing
 Client: London Borough of Camden
 Architects: Renton Howard Wood Levin Partnership
 Partner: Gerald Levin
 Associate: John Tebbutt
 Project architects: Alan Avery, Graham Buckler, Stuart Mackrell, Mike Stratton, Adrian Williams, John Yeudall
 Quantity surveyors: Gleeds
 Structural engineers: Ove Arup and Partners

Mechanical and electrical engineers: Max Fordham and Partners
 Contractors: Burlingway Construction Company Limited; Camden Building Department; Cochrane Designs & Construction Limited; Sir Robert McAlpine & Sons Limited
Offices
 Client: Greycourt London Estates Investment Co Ltd in partnership with London Borough of Camden
 Architects: Renton Howard Wood Levin Partnership

Partners: Gerald Levin, Geoffrey Mann
 Associates: John Tebbutt, Leslie Broer
 Project architects: Leslie Broer, Andrew Dinsdale (interiors)
 Quantity surveyors: Gardiner & Theobald, Gleeds
 Structural engineers: Ove Arup and Partners
 Mechanical and electrical engineers: Rybka Smith & Ginsler, Matthew Hall & Company Limited
 Mechanical and electrical quantity surveyors: Mott Green & Wall
 Contractors: Sir Robert McAlpine & Sons Limited