



Great Britain

Alexander Fleming House
Elephant & Castle, London
Headquarters of the Ministry of Health

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Assistants in charge:
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Town planning

The project forms part of the County of London Plan, as laid down in this plan and developed throughout the years. It is part of the comprehensive development of the Elephant & Castle. This consists of the reorganisation of the traffic junction and the development of the adjoining sites.

The traffic junction has been made into two roundabouts connected by a Mall. The Southern one has three junctions and the Northern one has five. It is doubtful if this arrangement will be able to deal with the ever increasing traffic. It would have been more reasonable to consider roads at several levels—under and over-passes. This road reorganisation resulted in the creation of a number of sites, which the L.C.C. developed either itself or by letting them to different developing interests. The site of the Alexander Fleming House is one of these sites—site No. II.

General conception:

Alexander Fleming House consists of five office blocks of which four are connected with each other and one is free-standing. They consist of a permanent frame providing open decks which can be divided at will, and altered if conditions change. These decks are connected vertically and horizontally—vertically with staircases, lifts and conveyors as well as with shafts carrying services, such as heating, electrical, telephone, plumbing. Horizontally they are connected with each other by bridges up to all corresponding floors, that is to say on 7 decks. Interconnected buildings are Blocks 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D'. Block 'B' has 18 storeys; Blocks 'A' and 'C' have 7 floors each (Block 'A' has shops and showrooms on the ground floor and Block 'C' has upper and lower ground floors); Block 'D' has 12 floors (upper and lower ground floors and 10 upper floors); Block 'E', which is free-standing, has three floors of offices above a public house on the ground floor and a flat on the first floor.

Aesthetic:

The general design of the buildings reflects its structure as well as its function. It is planned on a rigorous grid of 22'9" (84 cm.) and its multiples. The columns are spaced at 16'6" (5.04 m.) intervals, which is sub-divided into four; this results in a window the mullions of these windows take the end of partitions. Two window widths form the smallest room, while the whole floor can form one large room.

All structure is apparent and of brush-hammered concrete. The façades are modulated by recessed and projecting bays—the 5th, 10th and 15th floors of each building is recessed on the East and West and project on the North and South. This gives a sensation of scale. There are also projecting bays on the West facade, which house special rooms for which more space was needed than the normal room depth provided such as libraries, conference rooms, Minister's and other important offices where conferences take place.

Blocks 'A' and 'B' and 'C' as well as part of the garage have been in occupation since 1963. Blocks 'D' and 'E' are under construction and will be handed over for occupation in October and November 1966.

Cinema:

Adjacent to the Alexander Fleming House and forming part of the same development, is a Cinema with 1100 seats: the Odeon cinema, Elephant & Castle.

The Auditorium consists of a single tier hall into which the spectators penetrate through a centrally-placed vomitorium. The external walls are built of 12" (31 cm.) mass concrete for support and also to exclude noise. A main beam 105 ft. long (30 m. post-stressed spans the auditorium and supports two secondary beams, the projection room and the superstructure housing the air conditioning plant at the other end. These secondary beams rest on the perimeter wall, while the main beam is supported by two large free-standing columns.

Communication

The interconnected buildings have two nodal points each: these nodal points contain each a staircase and lavatories. Thus, on each floor, there is a male and a female lavatory block. At one of the nodal points of each block, there are lifts:

In Block 'B'—a group of 6 lifts

In Block 'D'—a group of 3 lifts

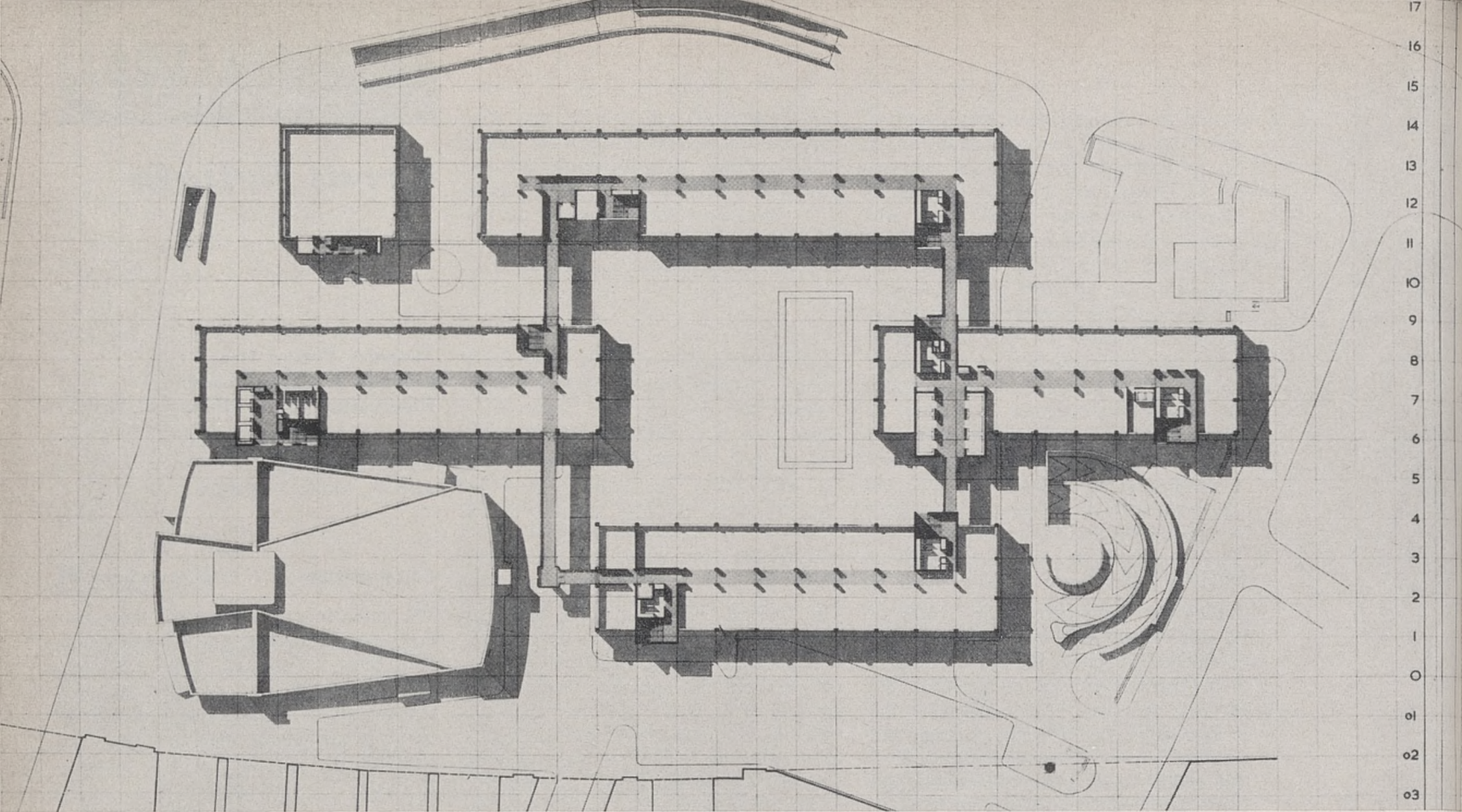
Blocks 'A' and 'C'—one single lift each.

Four of these lifts (one in each group) are for fire fighting but can be used as normal lifts in the general run of the building. The six lifts in Block 'B' serve for general distribution, as do the three lifts in Block 'D'. The single lift in Block 'A' serves as a lift for the Minister and upper grade civil servants, while the lift in Block 'C' serves as the service lift for the canteen and other goods.

The North side of Block 'B' has a conveyor serving 18 floors, for the distribution of the post throughout the buildings. The post arrives at ground level and is taken down by conveyor to the lower ground floor for sorting and, from there, on the general conveyor to the 16 upper floors. The outgoing post is dealt with in the reverse way, i.e. taken to the upper ground floor and by conveyor to the postal loading deck on ground level.

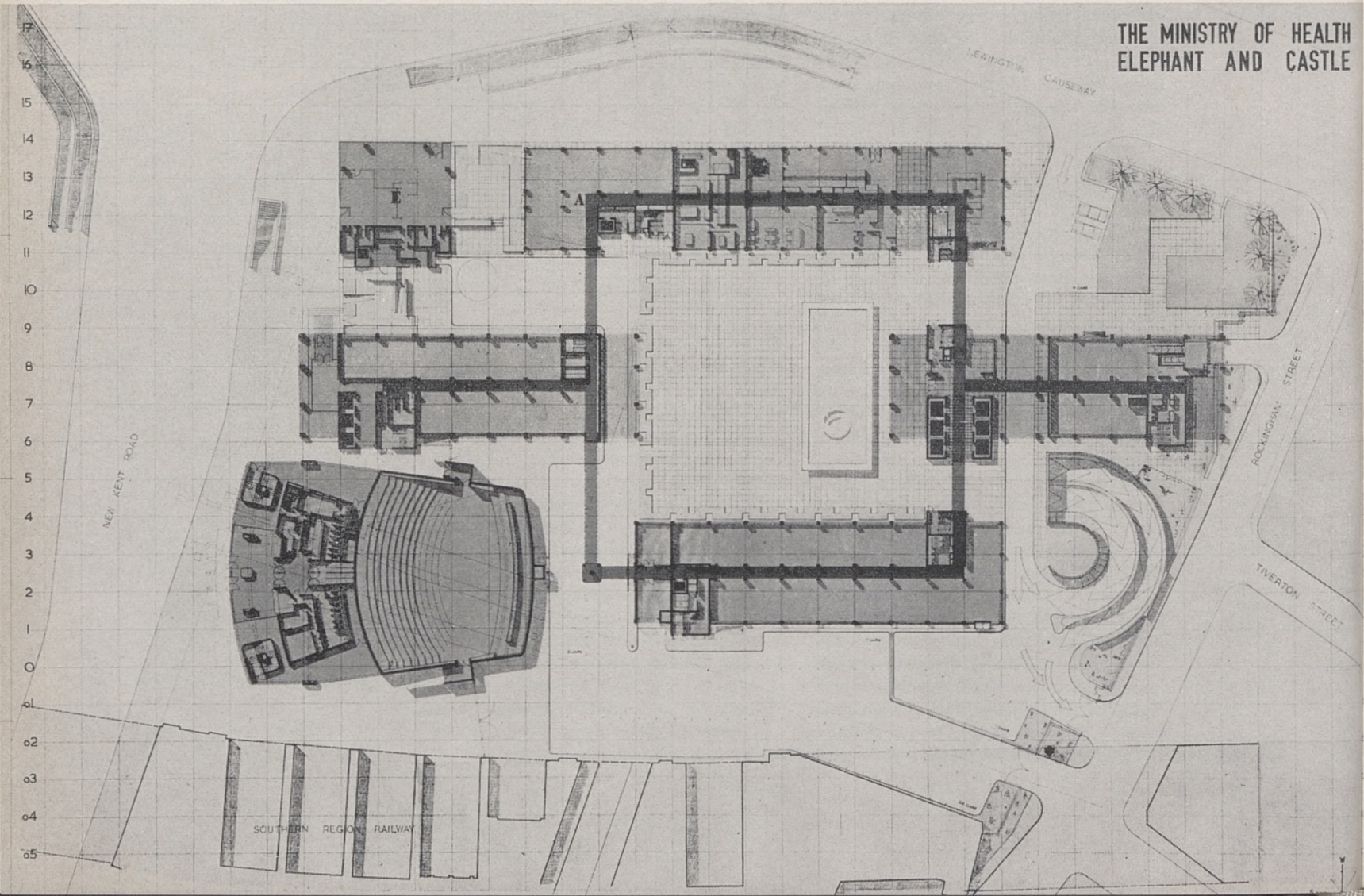
Motor cars arrive at Block 'B' nodal point, where visitors can be deposited and take one of the six lifts. Those cars which are not chauffeur-driven continue down a spiral ramp into the garage where there is a place for some 180 cars. This garage extends under the whole complex of buildings. There is further parking at the front and at the rear, for casual visitors. The garage is served by two lifts at Block 'B' main entrance hall (two of the six lifts go down to garage level).

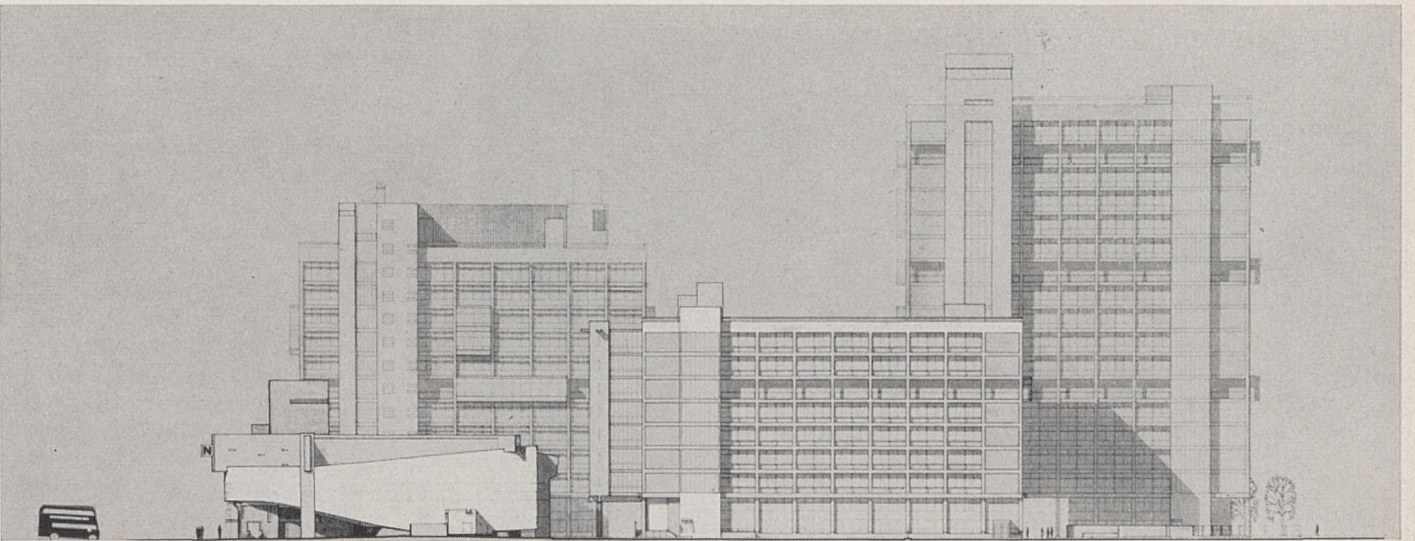
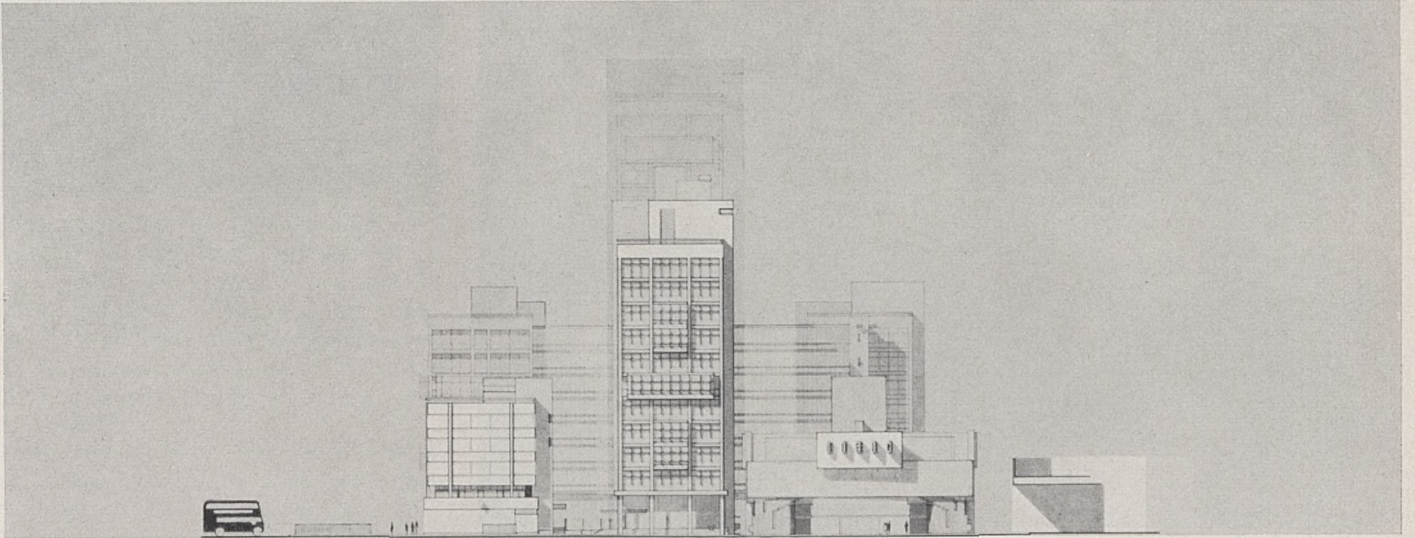
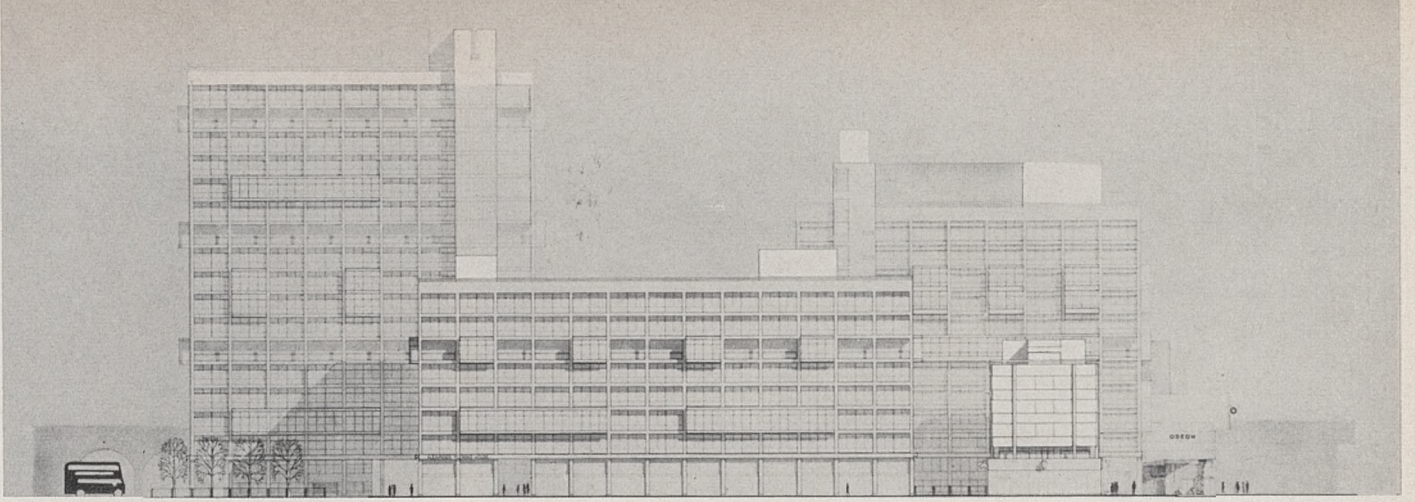
At Block 'D', special provision has been made for invalids who penetrate the buildings on easy ramps up to lift level.



Typical Floor Plan

Ground Floor Plan

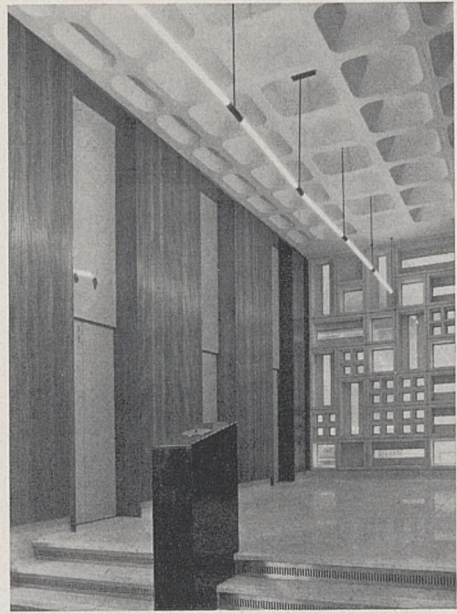




West Elevation
South Elevation
East Elevation



1



3



2

Photos: de Burgh Galwey, Sam Lambert

1
View of Blocks B and A, from North

2
Block B, Top-South

3
Lift lobby

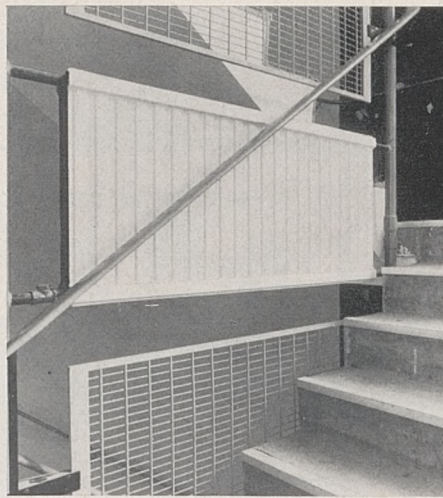
4
Link passage between blocks C and B

5
*Staircase. Heating combined with handrail
(The two upright tubes are heating pipes)*

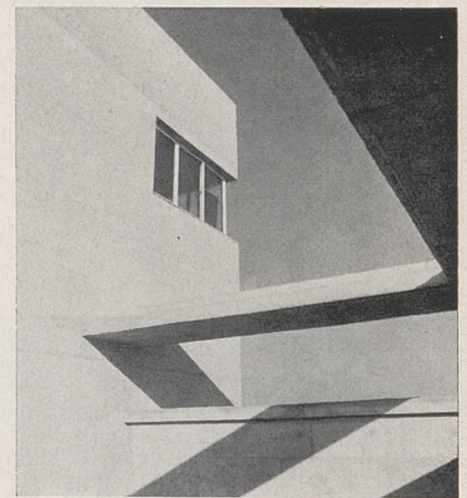
6
Cornice detail on Block B



4



5



6

Dans le développement de l'Elephant & Castle en fonction du County of London Plan sont compris la réorganisation de la jonction du trafic et l'aménagement des sites avoisinants, imposé par la nouvelle (sinon judicieuse) disposition des routes qu'il eût été plus raisonnable de concevoir à des niveaux différents. L'Alexander Fleming House constitue l'un de ces sites, le site N° II.

L'Alexander Fleming House consiste en cinq blocs de bureaux dont quatre sont reliés entre eux et le cinquième indépendant. Un garage où les voitures parviennent par une rampe spiralée (sans conducteur) s'étend sous tout le complexe des bâtiments désignés par les lettres A, B, C, D, E. Il est desservi par deux ascenseurs. Le bloc D comprend une entrée spécialement conçue pour les invalides.

Du point de vue esthétique le dessin général du bâtiment reflète sa structure aussi bien que sa fonction.

La structure est tout apparente, en béton martelé. Les façades aux baies en retrait et en saillie donnent une impression d'échelle. Les blocs A, B et C, tout comme le garage dans l'une de ses parties sont occupés depuis 1963. Les blocs D et E, présentement en construction, seront prêts à être utilisés dès octobre et novembre 1966. A côté de l'Alexander Fleming House où se tiendront des conférences se dresse, appartenant au même développement, un cinéma avec 1100 places: l'Odeon Cinema, Elephant & Castle. Ses murs extérieurs sont en béton épais de 31 cm. Une maîtresse poutre de 30 mètres enjambe l'auditorium et supporte deux poutres secondaires sur le pourtour tandis qu'elle-même est soutenue par deux grosses colonnes.

Die Entwicklung von Elephant und Castle, die im Rahmen des County of London Plans geschieht, sieht auch eine Reorganisation der Verkehrsverbindungen und die Neugestaltung der benachbarten Stadtteile vor. Sie wird durch die wenn schon nicht

vernünftige so zumindest neue Strassenführung, die man sinnreicher auf mehrere Ebenen verlegt hätte, notwendig gemacht. Einen dieser Stadtteile, den Teil Nr. II, bildet das Alexander Fleming House.

Das Alexander Fleming House besteht aus fünf Büroblocks, von denen vier untereinander verbunden und der fünfte allein stehend ist.

Eine Tiefgarage, zu der die Wagen (führerlos) über eine Spiralrampe gelangen, dehnt sich unter dem gesamten Komplex, dessen Gebäude mit Buchstaben von A bis E bezeichnet sind, aus. Sie wird von zwei Aufzügen bedient. Im D-Block befindet sich ein speziell für Invaliden gedachter Eingang.

Vom ästhetischen Standpunkt aus spiegelt der Gesamtentwurf des Bauwerkes ebenso seine Struktur wie seine Funktion wieder. Die Struktur, aus gehämmertem Beton, ist vollkommen sichtbar. Mit ihren zurückgesetzten und hervorspringenden Fensteröffnungen vermitteln die Fassaden den Eindruck einer Leiter.

Die Blöcke A, B und C sind, genau wie die Garage in einem ihrer Teile, seit 1963 in Benutzung. Die gegenwärtig im Bau befindlichen Blöcke D und E werden von Oktober und November 1966 an bezugsfertig sein.

Neben dem Alexander Fleming House, das als Konferenzgebäude dienen wird, und zum selben Entwicklungsprojekt gehörend erhebt sich ein Lichtspieltheater mit 1100 Plätzen: das Odeon-Kino, Elephant und Castle. Seine Aussenmauern sind aus 31 cm dickem Beton. Ein dreissig Meter langer, von zwei mächtigen Pfeilern gestützter Hauptträger überquert den Zuschauersaal. Auf seinen Enden liegen zwei Nebenträger.

En la exposición detallada del «Elephant & Castle», según el County of London Plan, están comprendidas la reorganización de la unión del tráfico y la urbanización de los sitios contiguos, impuesto por la nueva

disposición de las carreteras que hubiera sido más razonable de construir a diferentes niveles. La Alexander Fleming House constituye uno de estos sitios, el sitio N° II. La Alexander Fleming House consiste de cinco bloques de oficinas de los cuales cuatro están unidos entre sí y el quinto independiente.

Bajo los edificios designados por las letras A, B, C, D, E se encuentra un garage adonde entran los autos por una rampa en espiral (sin conductor). Éste posee dos ascensores. El bloque D comprende una entrada especialmente concebida para los inválidos.

Desde el punto de vista estético el dibujo general del edificio refleja su estructura así como también su función.

La estructura es enteramente visible, de hormigón martillado. Las fachadas con entradas y salidas dan una impresión de escala.

Los bloques A, B, y C, así como el garage en una de sus partes, están ocupados desde 1963. Los bloques D y E, actualmente en construcción, estarán listos para ser utilizados desde octubre y noviembre de 1966. Al lado de la Alexander Fleming House donde tendrán lugar las conferencias se alza, perteneciente al mismo grupo, un cine con 1100 asientos: el Cine Odeón, Elephant & Castle. Sus muros exteriores son de hormigón de un espesor de 31 cm. Una viga principal de 30 metros sobresale del auditorio y sostiene dos vigas accesorias sobre el contorno mientras que la viga principal misma es sostenida por dos columnas gruesas.