

## 11. LANDSCAPE

### 1. ENTRANCE COURTYARD

This entrance courtyard retains the essence of the original Georgie Wolton plan whilst capturing the journey she went on as a garden designer and gardener. The original brick paved courtyard design is expressed with a palimpsest of the original layout with brick paving strips echoing that geometry. As time went on this paved space became overtaken by plants and the ratio between hard and soft surfaces was completely reversed. The proposed layout allows for a heavily planted space, removing the non-permeable paving and creating a canvas for a highly biodiverse planting scheme. The brick strips and gravel allow movement through the garden and places to sit and allow the impression of a hard surface being overtaken by the garden plants. The planting itself is relatively low, creating something of a 'green' plinth allowing the building to sit in the landscape and to be clearly seen as you arrive from the street as it was in the original design. Small multistem shrubs punctuate this planting.

### 2. THE NEW COURTYARD

The existing poor quality apple tree is removed and replaced with a specimen tree which sits as a sculptural object in this space to provide a focal point from various windows and the proposed north/south corridor. The paved spaces appear to run through the building here and out into the enclosed garden to the west. This geometry is inspired by the original layout.

### 3. THE GARDEN

The west facing rear garden has all the components of the original design: simple paving layouts, a lawn, pool and the retained pool. A diseased bay tree is to be removed which in some way will open up the garden to reintroduce the feeling of space. The overgrown climbers are stripped from the building allowing it to sit in a generous garden as it did originally. A new sunken terrace sits next to the southern wing and is self-contained, relating directly to the building but not obviously connecting to the garden beyond. As such it remains hidden from the garden and being hunkered

down it does not intrude on the simplicity of the space. A couple of small steps allow for a discreet connection to the garden above. A pleached hedge and a new tree sits to the south to provide enhanced privacy for this property and the neighbouring properties.



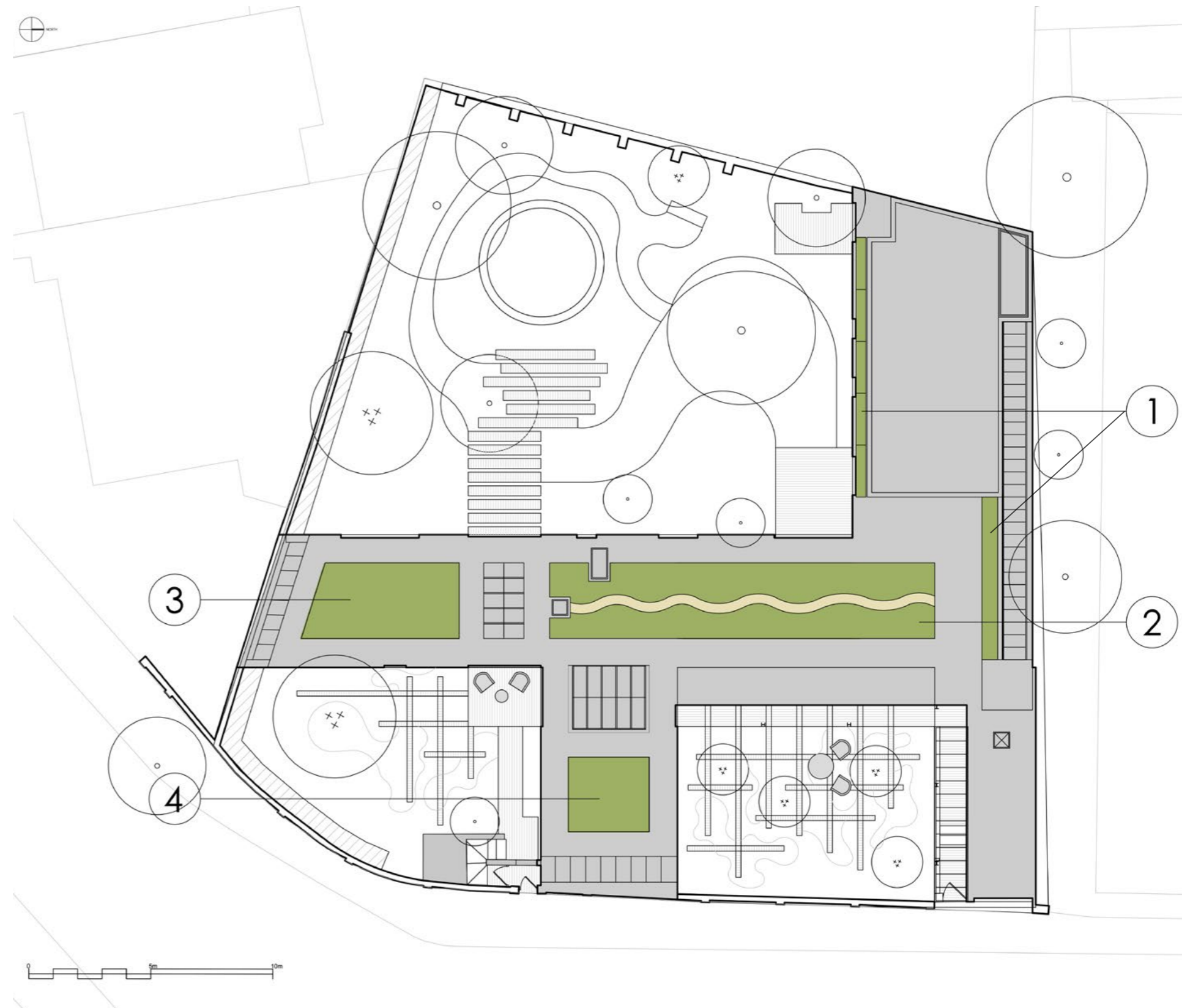


1. Low planters, 300mm tall.

2. Biodiverse extensive green roof with gravel maintenance strip.

3 & 4. Biodiverse extensive green roof, offset from roof edge to reduce visibility from ground level.

Proposed improvements to roof area - low planters to new extension and biodiverse extensive green roof with gravel maintenance strip. Green roof to be offset from roof edge to reduce visibility from ground level.



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- 1**  
 Agastache 'Black adder'  
 Aruncus 'Horatio'  
 Euphorbia palustris  
 Geranium wlassovianum  
 Gillenia trifoliata  
 Liatris spicata 'Alba'  
 Selinum wallichianum  
 Scabiosa 'Vivid Violet'  
 Symphyotrichum 'Prairie Sky'  
 Thalictrum rochebrunianum




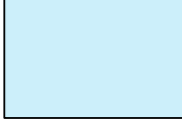

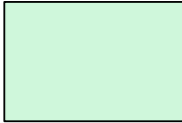
- 2**  
 Amsonia hubrichtii  
 Aster tataricus 'Jindai'  
 Baptisia australis 'Alba'  
 Echinops ritro  
 Knautia macedonica  
 Phlomis tuberosa  
 Persicaria amplexicaulis  
 Rudbeckia subtomentosa  
 Salvia 'Purple Rain'  
 Sanguisorba 'Cangshan Cranberry'

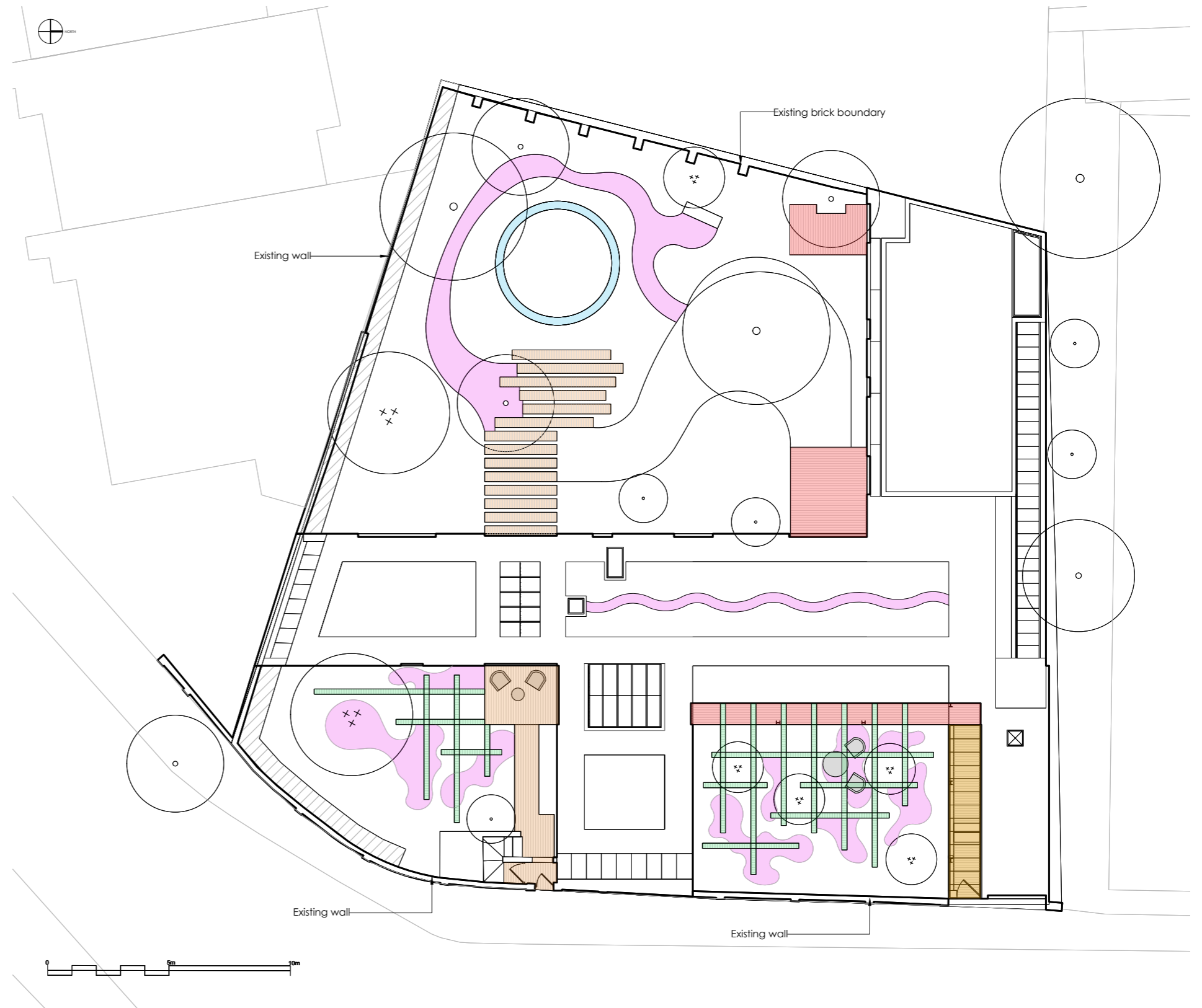
- 3**  
 Hakonechloa macra  
 Asarum europaeum  
 Anemone x hybrida 'Honorine Jobert'  
 Polystichum setiferum  
 Aruncus 'Horatio'  
 Sarcococca digyna  
 Cotinus 'Grace'  
 Eupatorium maculatum Atropurpureum  
 Echinacea palida  
 Rudbeckia fulgida

- 4**  
 Achillea 'Moonshine'  
 Amsonia hubrichtii  
 Eragrostis spectabilis  
 Petrorhagia saxifraga  
 Lavandula 'Grosso'  
 Origanum 'Hopleys'  
 Sedum 'Matrona'  
 Stachys 'Big Ears'  
 Geum triflorum  
 Teucrium hyrsanicum



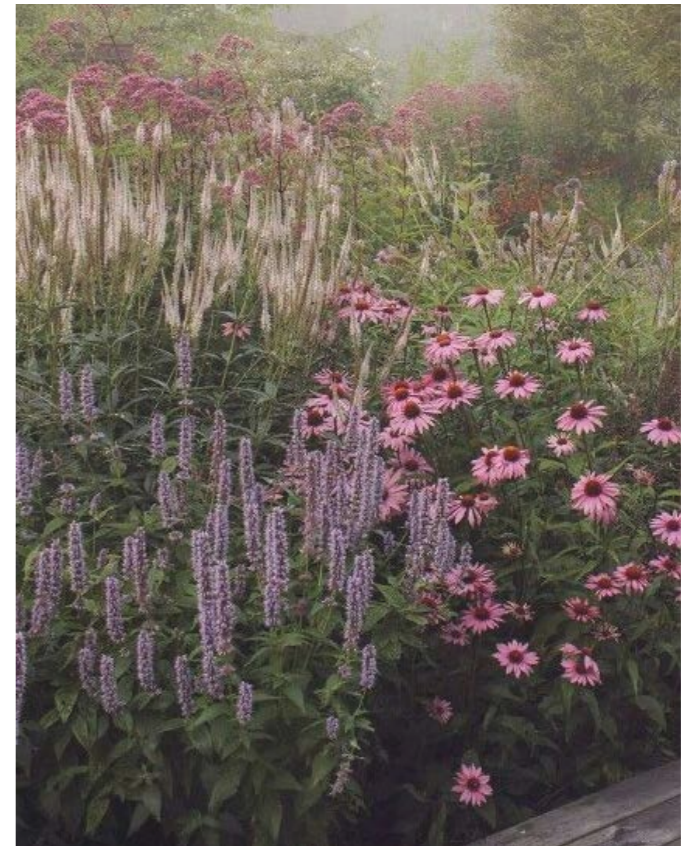
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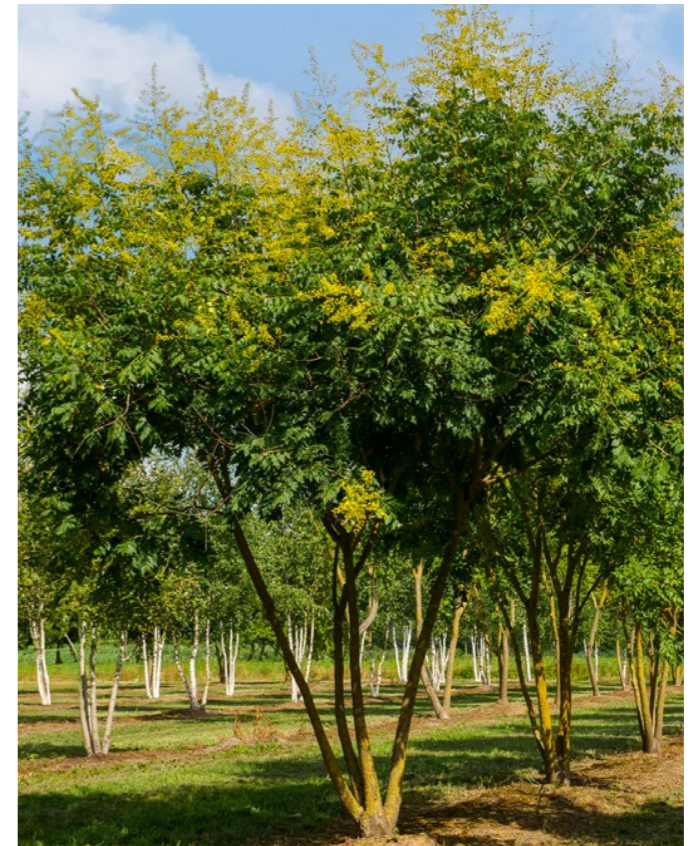
-  Brick pavers reclaimed from site and relaid in original bond
-  Existing brick paving retained
-  10mm pea gravel
-  Existing stone coping to pond
-  Square pavers reclaimed from site or new to match existing if insufficient
-  Strips of brick paving reclaimed from site reclaimed brick pavers or new to match existing













Tamla Trees Ltd has been appointed by 34 Belsize Lane Limited to provide advice on the arboricultural issues relating to proposed development which can be described as: "Application for planning permission for the erection of a new ground floor link structure, erection of a new single storey first floor extension, plus landscaping works and all other associated and ancillary works". We surveyed the site in July 2023. The survey accorded with BS5837:2012 "Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations". Direct access to a number of the trees (due to location/ 3rd party ownership) was not possible and estimated condition/ dimensions are used as a result.

The property and grounds have become overgrown in recent years with minimal 'normal' garden management. It is proposed to remove T4 (Apple) T5 (Bay Laurel) & T9 (Eucalyptus). These trees are small BS5837 Cat C trees of minimal local and wider amenity. It is proposed to prune T12 (Magnolia) to shape as a result of its proximity to the existing building and developed asymmetrical canopy form. Provision is made for some pruning to T2 (Acer) but this may not be required depending on the suitable work clearance to deliver the proposal. T11 (Bay Laurel) has established white rot within the basal area of the stem (*Ganoderma* spp) and is identified for removal on health and safety grounds.

No excavation or foundation works within retained tree Root Protection Areas (RPA) are proposed. A system of tree protection (Full spec scaffold Herras fencing) and temporary ground protection seeks to ensure all retained trees are adequately protected through the re-development process (see Appendix 6 – Tree Protection Plan). All protection measures will be installed prior to any site activity and retained for the duration of works. All site welfare/ storage etc will be located in areas outside of the designated protection/ internally to the existing building.

The tree issues can be summarised as: Effective Tree Protection (demolition & construction) > No Dig Patio Surface Installation > Hand digging / installation of Service routes (if required) > Site operative knowledge of tree protection issues > Soft landscaping to make good.

The property is within the London Borough of Camden administration area. The property is within a Conservation Area but we have not been advised of any Tree Preservation Order (TPO). This report is based on client plan ref: 245-S3-101-Proposed Ground Floor Plan (and associated plans). The working methodology and tree protection measures detailed will only be effective if implemented as detailed.

Please see report by Tamla Trees LTD for full Assessment.

## 12. CONCLUSION

Georgie Wolton, born in 1934, was a key figure in modernist architecture. Her most notable work, 34 Belsize Lane (1975-84), marked a shift in her career from traditional architecture to landscape design. The building, with its courtyard gardens and eclectic rear garden, is largely hidden from the street due to a large curving garden wall.

The house was designed to maximise natural light and connectivity to the landscape. The layout forms a central living space with three wings extending from it, creating three distinct courtyards.

However, the building is suffering from disrepair and dilapidation, with issues of poor construction quality and lack of insulation. To address these performance issues, some reconstruction of the walls will be required while preserving the original outer leaf of the brick walls. The proposed restoration aims to sustainably resolve the building to suit modern ways of living and achieve an excellent internal environmental condition.

Internal alterations aim to improve the circulation and organization while preserving the character of the Grade II listed building. The restoration will also maintain the importance of natural light and connectivity to gardens.

A sensitivity towards the existing house resonates into the courtyards, in striking a balance between the original landscaping, where planting was restrained and paving was clearly demarcated, and the current wild, overgrown gardens.

The project includes two additional architectural interventions that sit outside the existing footprint allowing the ground floor to remain largely as existing: a lightweight linking structure on the east façade and an additional bedroom and en-suite on the first floor above the existing north wing.

The proposed lightweight linking structure will form an extension from the east façade. The design of the link has been refined to closely resemble the existing covered area leading from the gate to the front door, replicating the column and i-beam detail. This design allows for an improved circulation, benefiting the existing dining and living space as it will no longer form a through route.

The proposed first-floor addition is a contemporary interpretation of Wolton's design principles that are exemplified in Fieldhouse. The design is a lightweight structure in the same architectural language to the proposed entrance link, creating a distinction between the existing and proposed. Additionally, the proposal is subordinate to the existing ground floor elevation and set back from it. On the north side, the extension has been pushed away from the boundary and partially concealed to reduce visual impact from the school.

On the whole, the proposed restoration works and new additions aim to preserve Wolton's architectural legacy while updating the building fit for the future.

Please see annexed documents submitted separately for further information: Planning Statement from DP9, Heritage Statement from Jon Lowe Heritage, Structural Report from Elliott Wood, Energy & Sustainability Report from EEP, Noise Assessment and Arboricultural Assessment from Tamla Trees Ltd



APPENDIX

Please see annexed documents submitted separately for further information:

- Planning Statement from DP9
- Heritage Statement from Jon Lowe Heritage
- Structural Report from Elliott Wood
- Energy & Sustainability Report from EEP
- Noise Assessment from Quantum Acoustics
- Arboricultural Assessment from Tamla Trees LTD.



Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1487795

Date first listed: 25-Oct-2023

List Entry Name: 34 Belsize Lane, including boundary wall to Belsize Lane

Statutory Address 1: 34 Belsize Lane, London, NW35AE

#### Summary

House and studio, 1975-6 with 1983 addition. Designed by Georgie Wolton for herself and her family.

#### Reasons for Designation

34 Belsize Lane, 1975-6, designed by Georgie Wolton, is listed at Grade II for the following principal reasons:

##### Architectural interest:

- as a meticulously conceived studio house, which creatively integrates into its sensitive urban setting;
- for its ranging, axial plan, articulating the garden spaces around the volume of building as well as the living and working spaces within it;
- for its interior, characterised by a subtle handling of spatial proportion and natural light, with fullheight sliding doors and window shutters controlling the flow of space and views through the site;
- for its bespoke joinery, and straightforward palette of materials and fittings which contribute to the elegant, understated quality of the building.

##### Historic interest:

- as the work of Georgie Wolton, a little-known but talented woman architect working in independent practice in the post-war period; the building, designed for herself, captures many of the ideas which influenced her practice as well as her skill as a designer.

#### History

34 Belsize Lane was built in 1975-6 to designs by the architect and landscape designer Georgie Wolton for herself and her family.

Wolton and her husband David bought the empty plot on Belsize Lane in 1975. It had been part of the garden of 16 Lyndhurst Gardens behind and already had outline permission for a development of three houses. For the Woltons, however, it was to be the site of just one. Wolton described the house as the 'last of the English follies' because of its very low site density given its proximity to central London. Wolton's self-imposed brief was for a three bedroom, two bathroom house with a studio from which she could work. As well as wanting to bring natural light into the principal spaces and to create a strong relationship between inside and outside, Wolton needed plenty of wall space to display her collection of Turkish kelim rugs. Part of the solution was the use of rooflights, employed to most dramatic effect in the contiguous entrance hall and bedroom wing. This top-lit space was inspired by the gallery at Creek Vein, Feock, Cornwall, (1964-67, listed at Grade II\*). Creek Vein was an early work of the practice Team 4, of which Wolton had been a founding partner.

Wolton's design for 34 Belsize Lane is structurally simple, employing single-storey cavity brick walls, all below 2.4m high and the house is planned on a 5m wide bay with the roof spanning between the external walls. The plan is expansive and largely sequential, with rooms arranged in three main ranges in a Z-like plan and circulation space is kept to a minimum. Large, sliding timber shutters enclose the rooms and provide added insulation at night. The joinery was built to Wolton's designs by two Architectural Association students. Georgina Wolton (née Cheesman), 1934-2021, attended Epsom School of Art before studying architecture at the Architectural Association (AA), London between 1955 and 1960. She married publisher David Wolton in 1962 and had her daughter, Suke, that same year.

In 1963, after a brief stint working for Middlesex County Council, she joined with Richard Rogers, a former boyfriend whom she had met whilst studying at Epsom, Su Rogers, Norman Foster and Wendy Cheesman (later Foster), Wolton's younger sister, to form Team 4. It was Wolton who allowed the practice to function, being the only member of the group who was at that time a fully qualified architect. She moved on very swiftly however, partnering for a short time with Adrian Gale, formerly of Mies van der Rohe's studio, before spending the rest of her career as a sole practitioner. Her architectural oeuvre is small, spread across the 1960s, 1970s and into the early 1980s and includes only three entirely new buildings. Her focus moved increasingly to landscape design and she committed most of her working life to this field.

Wolton had a long-standing interest in what she termed 'the working house', houses designed to function as domestic and work spaces; her AA thesis was on the late C19 studio houses of the group of artists known as the Holland Park Circle. Two of her three key buildings were designed as working houses: Cliff Road studios, Camden, phases I (1969) and II (1971-2) and 34 Belsize Lane. She was also interested in the idea of ambiguous spaces, those with an abstract rather than functional purpose, and those which were neither inside nor outside. This is explored in the Belsize Lane house through its use of conservatory-like antechambers, illustrating the concept of what Wolton termed 'pause' spaces separating the living and working parts of the house.

Wolton commented that her interest in English designed landscapes of the C17 and C18 informed her approach to both architecture and landscape (Lorenz, p138). She spoke of the transition from axial layouts and geometric parterres to episodic, serpentine layouts. 34 Belsize Lane appears to reference these ideas. The ranging plan is formed of articulated wings which traverse the site, breaking it down into a series of outdoor spaces, framed by low,

rectilinear elevations. The plan defines the quality of the spaces around the volume of the house as much as those contained within it. The play between interior and exterior, positive and negative space, is further explored by the use of glazing to create axial vistas directly through the building from one garden space to another.

Wolton's architectural work was firmly rooted in modernism but each of her buildings takes a distinct approach to materials. Fieldhouse, East Horsley, 1968 (demolished), was built as a weekend house for herself and her family. A Cor-ten steel frame and glass pavilion, it was one of several of houses designed by British architects in the 1960s and 70s which were heavily influenced by Mies van der Rohe's Farnsworth House, Illinois, USA (1945-51). Fieldhouse appears to have remained unpublished until the early 1970s so despite it being a contemporary of John Winter's Cor-Ten-clad 81 Swain's Lane, London, 1967-69 (listed Grade II\*), it is the latter which has often been credited as the first domestic use of Cor-Ten in the UK. The precise geometries and white-rendered elevations of Wolton's Cliff Road studios, her best-known work, drew admiration in architectural circles for its reference to early European modernism and Parisian studio houses of the 1920s. 34 Belsize Lane was her last completely new building, and this has a discrete contextual presence, showcasing traditional, reclaimed, materials alongside industrialised components.

As a landscape designer Wolton worked for private, public and commercial clients. Projects included a scheme at Dartington Hall, Devon (registered on the National Heritage List for England at Grade II\*) and gardens for Lord Hoffman in London and Gloucestershire. She designed a private garden for the property developer Stuart Lipton and collaborated with the architect Rick Mather for Keble College, Oxford and the University of East Anglia. One her most significant and long-standing collaborations was with Richard Rogers. She designed a scheme for 22 Parkside, Wimbledon (1968-70, listed Grade II\*), a house

designed by Rogers for his parents. She also undertook the landscaping for three phases of development at Thames Wharf, Hammersmith by Richard Rogers Partnership, including a planting scheme for The River Café (1988).

#### Details

House 1975-6 with 1983 addition. Designed by Georgie Wolton for herself and her family.

**MATERIALS:** reclaimed mixed yellow and red brick; glazing held in aluminium frames; felted roof.

**PLAN:** the house has no street frontage but stands behind a high wall on an irregular trapezoid plot on an obtuse corner opposite where Belsize Lane meets Ornan Road.

It has a single storey with a flat roof. The original accommodation is housed within a Z-plan comprising a north/south range with entrance hall, kitchen, and living area; a bedroom wing to the north running westward; and a studio room, reached via a conservatory-like antechamber to the south running eastward. A covered entrance path and garage to the north of the plot connect the east side of the house with the boundary wall, opening onto Belsize Lane. In the early 1980s the north/south range was extended southwards by Wolton to add a second studio/office, reached through a second conservatory antechamber. The footprint of the house in relation to the boundary wall divides the site into three discrete courtyard gardens.

**EXTERIOR:** the building is approached through a perforated steel gate in the boundary wall which screens it from Belsize Lane. The path is laid in brown brick paviours and forms the northern edge of a brickpaved courtyard garden. The path is sheltered by a glazed canopy which projects from the blind side wall of the garage and is supported on steel I beams. The building is entered through a wide, full-height flush-panel timber door.

The elevations principally comprise panels of brick laid in stretcher bond with raked joints, interspersed with fullheight glazed openings of various width, opening onto paved terraces through hinged or sliding doors with louvred transom lights. The wall plate is an exposed steel I beam. Triangular prism roof lights held in aluminium frames emerge above the roof line, lighting the two conservatory spaces.

**INTERIOR:** the interior is characterised by a limited palette of natural materials set against the flat white planes of plastered walls and ceilings. Fitted joinery is principally of thick, maple veneered plywood; doors are a mixture of side-hung, folding and sliding, set in fullheight openings. Circulation spaces are floored in Spanish pink-buff clay tiles. The front door opens into a generous entrance hall which extends into the bedroom wing. This continuous hallway space is enclosed to one side by the long north end wall of the house and is top-lit to architectural effect: the ceiling is cut back from the wall face to accommodate a full-length angled roof light. At the far end of the space the master bedroom is reached through folding doors which open to the full proportions of the hallway. The bedrooms have original fitted ply storage units in various configurations.

To the south of the entrance hall the kitchen and openplan living area is reached through sliding doors. The galley kitchen is fitted with plywood units, mainly in the form of drawers, Wolton's preference over hinged cupboards. The living area is divided into a dining and sitting area by a free-standing fireplace, the raised hearth facing south towards the sitting area. Large, fullheight sliding shutters screen French windows which overlook the courtyard gardens to either side of the room.

The conservatories act as glazed links, or antechambers, between the main house and the studio and office spaces to the east and south. Within these conservatories the walls enclosing the main house are of exposed brick, matching the exterior elevations, and

the adjacent walls are entirely glazed with sliding doors opening out onto the courtyard gardens to either side. Both spaces are top-lit by triangular prism skylights. The conservatory to the east is original to the house. It has a larger skylight, carried on exposed steel I beams and directly overlooks the lower level studio room; the original tubular balustrade between the two spaces has been replaced with plywood planters. The stair down to the studio was replaced when the floor level was raised slightly. The studio is lit by a canted clerestory window at the far end.

The conservatory to the south is part of the 1980s extension but is very similar in character. It gives access to a small, top-lit utility room in the footprint of the original house, and to the later office from which it is partitioned by a glazed timber screen.

Door handles are U-shaped, in brushed stainless steel and may be from the range designed by Knud Holscher for the Danish brand 'd line'; taps and spouts have various finishes and appear to be from the range designed by Arne Jacobsen for VOLA.

SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: the site is entered through a high wall bounding Belsize Lane. It is of red and yellow stock bricks over a plinth of brick burr (fused and misshapen kiln waste).

#### Sources

##### Books and journals

Cherry, B, Pevsner, N, The Buildings of England. London 4: North, (2002), p.239

Harwood, Elaine, Space, Hope and Brutalism, (2015), pp. 149, 154-155

Lorenz, C, Women in Architecture: a contemporary perspective, (1990), pp. 138-139

Newton, M H, Architects' London Houses: the homes of thirty architects since the 1930s, (1992), pp. 88-93

'House at Belsize Park, London' in Architectural Review, , Vol. 162, (1 August 1977), pp. 90-93

Franklin, G, 'White Wall Guys': the return of heroic modernism' in Twentieth Century Architecture, , Vol. 10, (2012), pp. 88-101

##### Other

E Clayton, Stitching into the Canon: The Life and Work of Georgie Wolton (unpublished), undergraduate dissertation for MA(Hons) in Architecture, University of Edinburgh, December 2021

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