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Landscape Strategy Statement

Heath House & Heath Park,
Hampstead, London

General Overview

Heath House is a fully enclosed site located between Spaniards Road and North End Road, and the gardens occupy a prominent corner position within Hampstead, directly bordering Hampstead Heath. The grounds in total are in the order of 0.9 hectares, and are strongly defined by a tall listed brick boundary wall, enclosing a broadly triangular shaped site which hides the majority of the site from the public realm.

Within the enclosing boundary walls are large areas of visually unsympathetic hard standings, including concrete and asphalt paving, driveways and garden structures, which dominate the existing gardens and are in poor condition. The garden character currently is somewhat open and denuded, being predominately left to undulating grassland and lawns, together with a large amount of "inappropriate non-native" and poor tropical style planting. Although some fine mature trees are present, few historical traces remain within the grounds to evidence their former use or layout. Prior to the present ownership, many previously listed and protected trees (from the 1971 TPO schedule) had been lost or removed, with the gardens generally lacking visual interest and wholly unrepresentative to the setting of the Grade II* listed building.

The two buildings are proposed to be set within a renovated and restored landscape parkland setting. The landscape design enables a subtle "sub-division" of the existing site into two distinct but visually interlinked garden spaces. To retain both a sense of "openness" and clarity of layout within the enclosing boundary wall, the sub division envisages a metal railing inner boundary, to be detailed in a historically resonant manner. A swathe of semi-mature indigenous trees and clipped Yew hedging follows the railing and creates a "soft landscape boundary", avoiding further use of dividing walls. To avoid any "replication" of garden features and styles within the common boundary wall, the two areas are proposed to be of "uneven size" and enabling two distinctly different garden styles and types, which complement each other but which in terms of an overall plan could articulate one another producing formal (Heath House) and informal (Heath Park) elements of a much more planned and ecologically sustainable nature than currently exists.





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Access

To retain the integrity of the historical fabric and listed wall and to maximize proposed planting and soft landscape areas, both properties will continue to share a common vehicular entrance court accessed from the current location to North End Way, with a new inner driveway linking the entrance court to Heath Park. Heath House will continue to have the original formal wrought iron gated entrance prominently located at the junction of Spaniards Road and New End Road

Heath House

The proposed garden layout occupies approximately one third of the overall masterplan area. In keeping with the more urban and prominent setting of Heath House, the gardens are intended to be more formal in character, with emphasis on mature topiary planting and formal lawns. To echo historical tree planting around the street frontage, semi-mature *Lime* trees frame a renovated entrance court, paved with brick and natural stone.

Heath Park

The proposed gardens around Heath Park allow an opportunity to significantly upgrade and enrich the current garden character and restore historically fragmented features such as the existing *Lime* avenue (aligned toward Spaniards Road). With the retention and enhancement of all suitable existing mature trees, and significant native and indigenous tree and shrub planting such as *Hornbeam*, *Sorbus*, *Cherry*, and *Hawthorn*, the overall character, amenity, and ecological value will be greatly enhanced. To enrich bio-diversity, long grass margins are proposed around a large centrally located lawn, together with wild flower and bulb planting. By way of contrast, a more formal garden is proposed around the new dwelling, with semi-mature topiary planting, wide gravel pathways, and herbaceous and lavender borders.

The proposed hard landscape is designed to complement the two architectural styles and visually link the two garden spaces, with repeating details and specification that will be common to both areas. A high emphasis is placed on "water permeability" of paving and driveways, for the collection of rainwater for garden irrigation. It is also intended that composting of site vegetation will be applied to both garden areas.

Mark Anthony Walker
Landscape Architect/Clifton Nurseries Ltd

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