

Section 3.0

Concept & Design Development

3.0 Concept and Design Development

3.1 Inspiration

Design Statement

The design brief for 18a Froggnal Gardens is to replace the existing unremarkable 1960's split-level house with a joyful, accessible, landscape-focussed home that responds inventively to the verdant character and architectural diversity of Hampstead. In response, ABA's design is based on the concept of a 'Terraced Garden House' whose tiered balconies and patterned faïence façade harmonises with, and merges into, the greenery of its context. The form and language of the house are inspired by the neighbouring Queen Anne Revival style villas found in Froggnal Gardens itself and elsewhere throughout the Conservation Area. We have attempted to merge this exuberant 19th century architectural lineage with the more grounded form, single material palette and horizontal emphasis of number 18b Froggnal Gardens. In a spirit of complementary contrast, each adjoining building has a clear and autonomous identity typical of Hampstead's terraced streets where houses of different periods make up a characterful assemblage.

The height of this proposal for 18a Froggnal Gardens is a product of generous floor to ceiling heights suitable for contemporary liveability and well-being. In urban terms, an additional storey introduces a gradual scale transition from the modest 1960s scale and proportions of 18b Froggnal Gardens to the lofty proportions of its 5 storey Queen Anne Revival neighbours. To achieve the integration of its two contexts we have developed a language of intertwining bay windows and balconies – drawing on two of the most distinctive features of Queen Anne Revival domestic buildings. Each storey of our proposal offers a bay window to the street. This projection creates a small ornamental balcony for the storey above. The resulting alternating bay windows and balconies – point and counterpoint - creates a rhythmic sequence of linked forms; a lyrical movement reminiscent of the clefs and hooks found in musical notation. The design concept is thus an interpretation of Queen Anne Revival – itself a spirited mix of periods and styles, modelled to integrate garden planting with the building itself.

Mature Trees along the lane to Froggnal House that form the backdrop to the site



Green Character of the Conservation Area



'English Green' Majolica Plate, C19th

The junction between alternating bay windows and balconies is softened by a transitional doubly curved parapet; like the baroque use of scrolls, they soften the transition between vertical gable and horizontal parapet. The building plan echoes the elevation's curvilinear continuity with gently radiused geometries. The curved plan form embraces its gardens, allowing the interior to become part of a continuous landscape. The green ceramic façade evokes the Victorian spirit of craft and roots the building in its verdant setting.

Internally a carefully choreographed sequence of stair hall, kitchen and open, accessible, multi-purpose living spaces weave through the plan form. In the Victorian tradition, a winding staircase and double height dining area draws movement upward through the house, with glimpses of planted terraces visible from every room.



Queen Anne Revival Character of the Conservation Area

The following section provides details of the design development and considers the following:

- The the inspiration for the scheme.
- A discussion on proportion and scale and how this responds to the context of the street and site topography.
- An explanation of how the detailed design interprets the vertical and horizontal compositional elements of the existing buildings nearby.
- An explanation of the choice of materials, their qualities.
- Details of landscaping and how a series of planting areas create a garden house rooted in it's landscape.
- Details of sustainable and energy efficient design.



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3.2 Proportion and Scale

The proposal mediates between the massing of its immediate neighbours on the north and east side of Frognaal Gardens.

The two 2-3 storey houses along the north side of the street gradually step up as the topography rises uphill by 5.2m from west to east. As the road turns towards the south the scale of the houses on the east side of the street increases to 5-6 storeys. These Victorian buildings have much higher floor to ceiling heights than the 2-3 storey houses (No. 20 and 18b) to the north, accentuating their overall height. The proposed massing transitions between the lower buildings to the north and taller buildings to the east.



Massing at pre-application

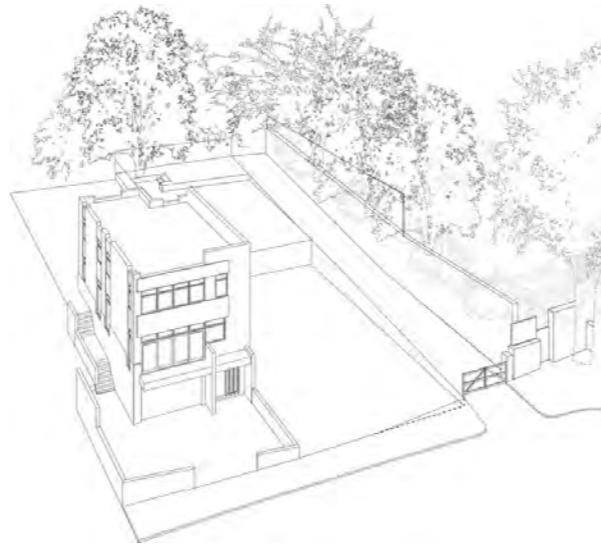
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3.2 Proportion and Scale



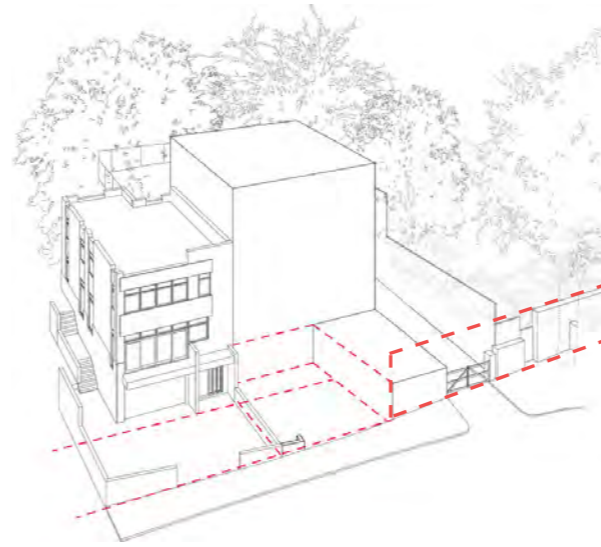
Site

A hedge screens 10 steps and terraced planting beds that lead up to the concealed front entrance.



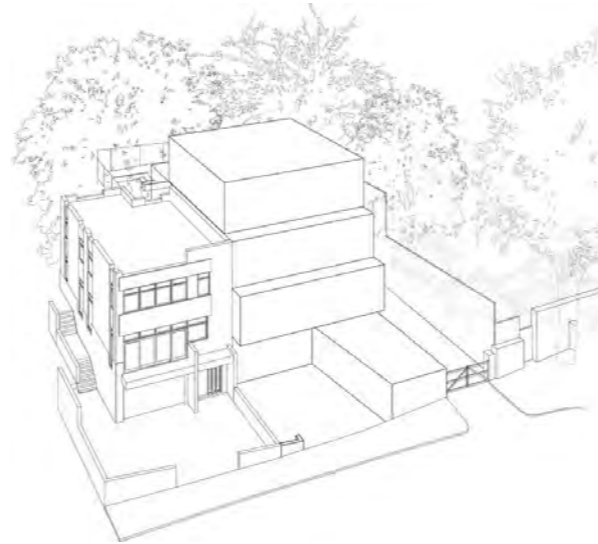
Stepped Site Topography

The existing buildings are embedded into the stepped topography of the hillside. The rear gardens of Nos 18a&18b are a storey higher than the street.



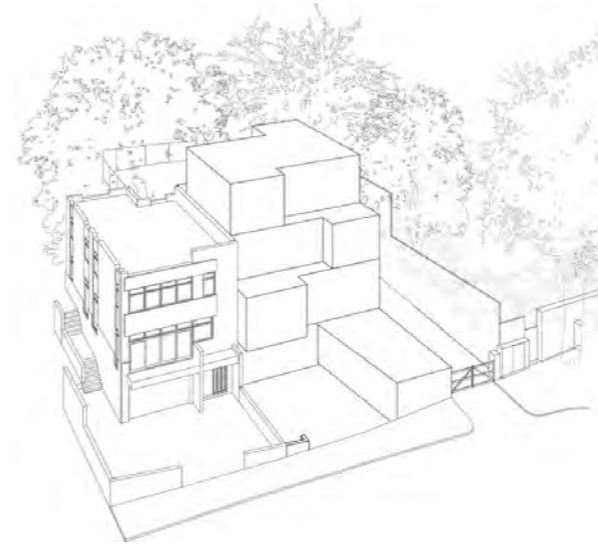
Building Line

A single storey extension projects forward to act as a retaining wall to the lane, replacing existing structures here. The front projection aligns horizontally with a 2.1m high neighbouring garden wall.



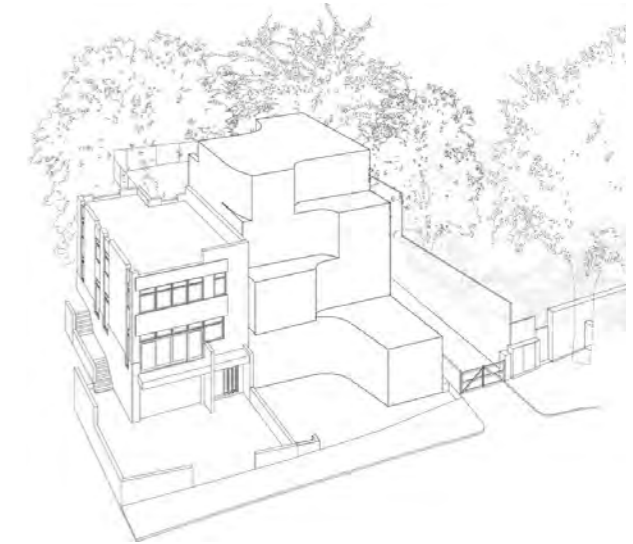
Stepped Massing

The massing is divided horizontally in alignment with 18b.



Interplay of Horizontal and Vertical

Vertical proportions are introduced to further mediate the volume. These forms are adjusted to set up a picturesque composition of bay window-like forms, reminiscent of the Victorian buildings in the surrounding context.



Fluid Transitions

Curved geometries weave the interlocking horizontal and vertical planes together to make fluid transition between surfaces, harmonising the form. Front extension is pushed back to create a planted boundary.

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3.2 Proportion and Scale

Final Massing

Ornamental features inspired by Victorian craft such as curved corners, cornices, balconies and chimneys are added to reflect the playful manner and detail of the context. They unify the façade into one continuous movement.

The existing street frontage is transformed from the existing condition of hidden front door behind hedges and via inaccessible steps to a sheltered but visible front door facing the street with level access.

The existing barren driveway and boundary conditions have been transformed with planting to create front gardens.

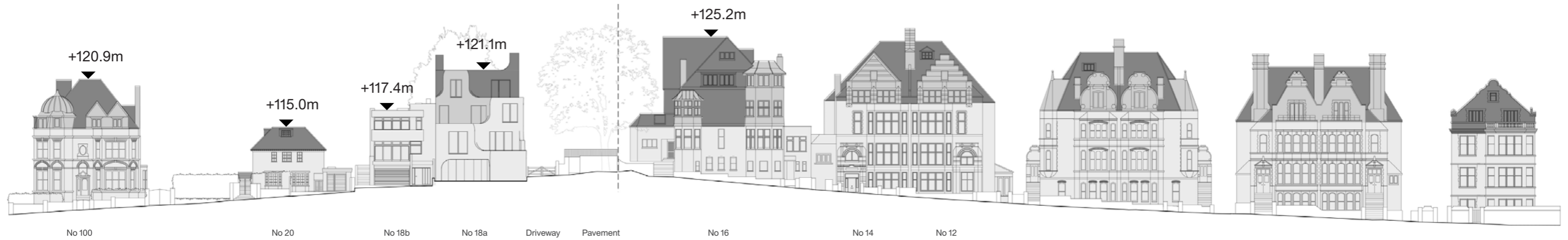
The existing flat façade has been replaced with a stepping façade in an evolution of the Edwardian bay window and balcony : a terraced form supporting greenery to shade windows and enrich the street scene.

The existing flat boxy roofline has been articulated into a more domestic form: a more transitional configuration with dormer window shapes and chimneys, mediating between the modernist language of 18b to a more expressive language of residential architecture.



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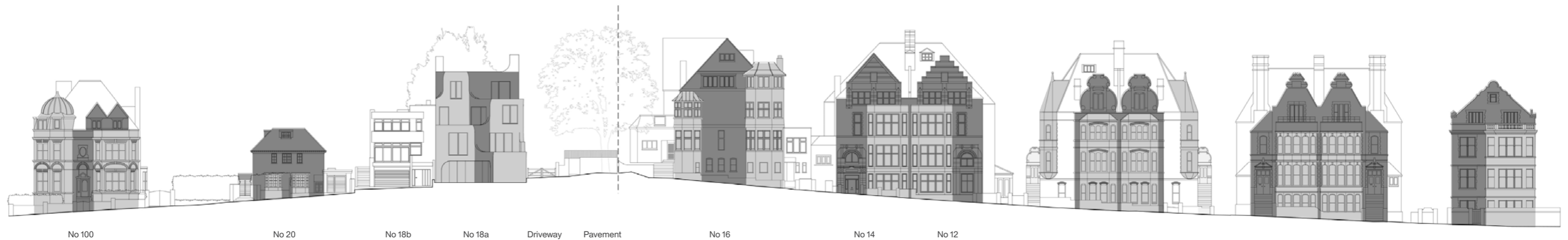
3.2 Proportion and Scale



Roofscape

The new building mediates between the consistent 5-6 storeys of the eastern side of the road and its lower 3 storey neighbour at 18b.

The flat roof rhymes with the orthogonal lines of 18b whilst the chimney introduces a roofline silhouette which connects with the sculptural roofscape forms along the street.



Bay Windows and Vertical Rhythm

The façades of the Victorian houses have an underlying symmetrical composition. Pairs of projecting bay windows repeat rhythmically down the street in a strong vertical pattern.

The elevation treatment of the buildings are layered. Bays, porches and roof forms project forward as entrances and roofs step back.

The building line of the Victorian residences shift forwards and backwards. This undulating frontage creates a rich streetscape. Entrance porches and double height bay windows project outward into the small front gardens.

The proposal is conceived as a layered series of repeating bay windows composed in an overall symmetry and is a contemporary interpretation of these compositional elements.



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3.3 A Garden House



Street Elevation



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3.3 A Garden House



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3.4 Weaving the Vertical and Horizontal



Horizontal Alignments

Ribbon windows, a long balcony, parapets and articulated banding of the brickwork give 18b a strong horizontal composition.

The proposal for 18a ties into the horizontal arrangement of its neighbour 18b. Flat roof, parapet and cornice lines set up the primary underlying horizontal structure of the façade. A covered entrance is created by continuing the strong line established by 18b's long first floor balcony. Window heads and cills are positioned to align with other horizontal components.

A series of brick garden walls with evergreen hedges up to 3m above the pavement line step up the street, terminating in a 2.1m high brick wall that encloses the corner of Frogna Gardens. The single storey front extension replaces the existing 4m screening hedge to restore the stepping boundary line in this location, re-establishing the walled definition of the street.



Verticality

18b is a typical example of orthogonal modernism. The horizontality is overlaid with vertical alignments, giving the building an overall boxy and static expression.

The proposal for 18a seeks to establish a more sophisticated and nuanced relationship between horizontal and vertical. Vertical alignments are introduced in bays. Window openings are punched and vertical in proportion. The windows diminish as they rise up the floors to introduce a subtle hierarchical order, accentuating the vertical proportions of the building by increasing the sense of perspective.



Weaving

The proposal steadily steps back to activate the south façade by creating a composition of layers, adding depth and shadow. This three-dimensionally fluid transition between the stepping horizontal and vertical surfaces, further animates the façade. A single playful sweeping gesture can be traced up through the building.

The cut back top floor references a dormer window which brings further resonance with many Arts & Crafts villas in the area with similar features. The curved transition of the south-western corner of the top floor relates to the stepping roofline of 18b and brings the 'weaving' language of architecture to make its way to the roofline.

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3.5 Inspiration from the Local Context

Care has been taken to be sympathetic to the Conservation Area and convey the quality of the design by adding interest at all scales. The project's architectural details - cornices, bay windows, chimney, entrance porch - have developed as a response to the distinctiveness of the prevailing character of the area in a transformation of the Victorian vernacular.

The Victorian houses that line Frognaal Gardens have been a formative reference for the project. These large urban villas of Frognaal Gardens are expressive in their form, fenestration and roofscape, they are imbued with a Victorian confidence in form making.

The Victorian houses employ a variety of strategies to provide a human scale to their façade. Undulating frontages, contrasting façade and fenestration colours, cornicing which delineates floors and fine material detailing all break up the homogeneity and scale of the whole.

Strong architectural features including Dutch gables, balconies, domes roofs, turrets, dormer windows, and covered porches all combine to form a richness of expression and ornamentation. Further decorative details occur around the windows, doors and the roofline.

The dominant red and brown brick material pallet of the locality is accented with stone, scalloped terracotta hung tiles, and rendered panels with metal and clay tile roofs. The colour green is one such accent, appearing in the form of a copper detailing, a ceramic roof on 20 Frognaal Way and the church spire of St John-at-Hampstead.

The fine detailing, high quality materials and sculptural roof forms are integral to the character of the Conservation Area and appeal of the street.



Façade Articulation



Chimneys



Dormer Windows



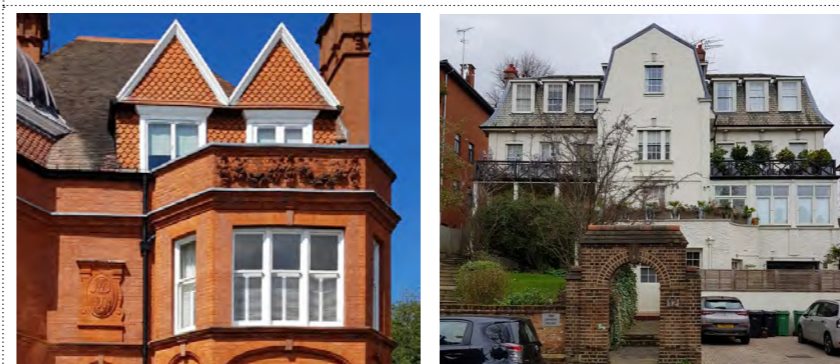
Cornices



Bays



Front Balconies



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3.6 Material Craftsmanship

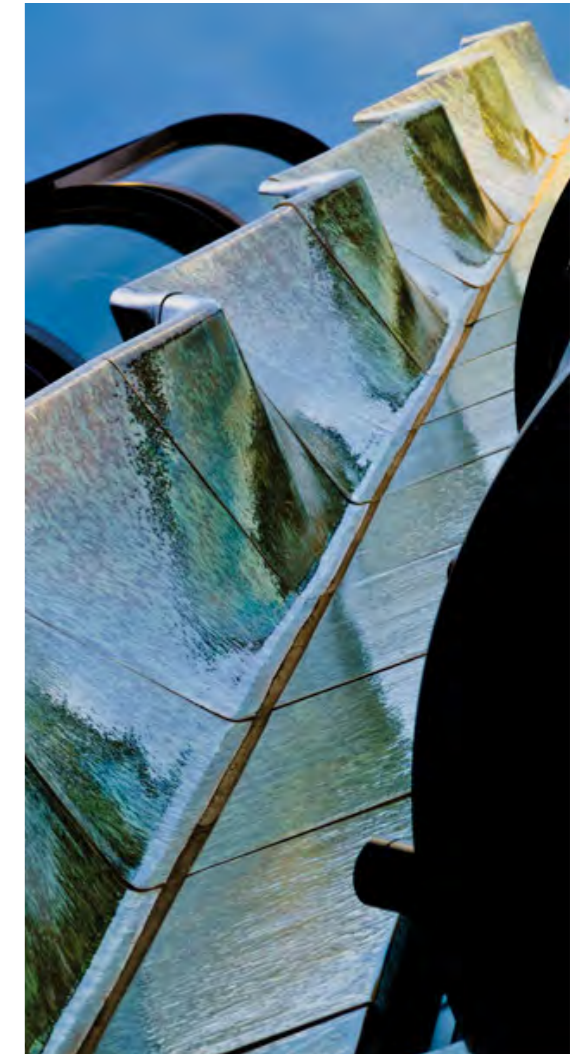


◀ Jar, William H Grueby, 1898-1899

▼ Traditional Dutch Kachelofen



▲ Hand Crafted



Material Qualities

The intention of the façade design is to match the quality and craftsmanship of the neighbouring Victorian properties within a contemporary architectural language, using a material sympathetic to the Conservation Area. A versatile and hard-working material is required to simultaneously reflect many dualities within the design; mass and weightlessness, homogeneous and detailed, functional and ornamental.

The use of terracotta tiles takes cues from the Hampstead context. Ornamental hung tiles are common in Victorian architecture in the Conservation Area and were used to add interest to large areas of roof and vertical cladding.

In the immediate context 'Club Gable' and 'Plain' hung tiles repeat in a subtle pattern cover the gable of No.16 Frognal gardens, wrap around the waist of No.1 Frognal Gardens and roof of

No.100 Frognal. Glazed terracotta appears in ox-blood red on the façade of the Edwardian Hampstead tube station.

Architectural ceramics or 'faïence' are an artisanal material born of handmade processes such as slip casting, ram pressing and hand moulding. They contain subtle irregularities in form and tone in which the hand of

the maker is present. These glazed terracotta tiles are a characterful, high-quality material which evoke the Victorian spirit of craft. Comparable to the prevailing use of brick in the street, the material gives the architecture a textured uniformity and tactile quality. Its subtle reflective quality also lends the material a weightless dynamism, changing as one approaches the building or passes by.

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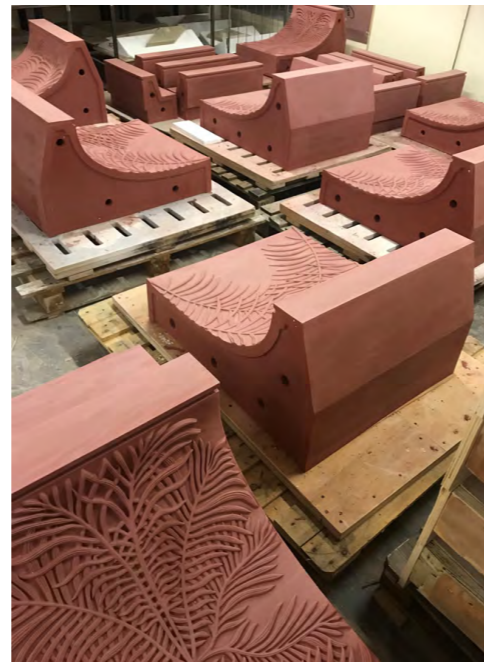
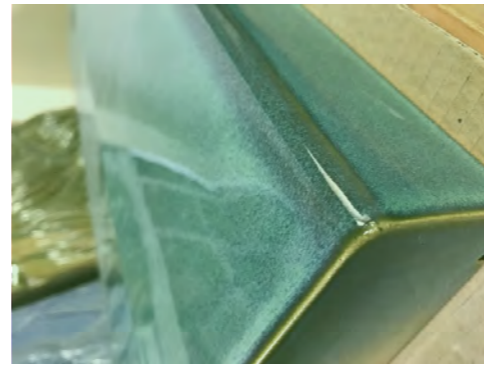
3.7 Material Qualities



▲ The Holburne Museum, Eric Parry, 2011, merges into the garden

Colour

The colour of the faïence tiles represents a multi-hued green that enhances the verdant quality of the streetscape, extending the garden setting and bedding the building into the green corner of Frogmal Gardens. The coloured glaze produces a subtly variegated range of tones. This slight colour variation emphasises the movement in the form of façade. The glazed surface reflects the lush surrounding foliage and the sky, while the unevenness in tone and texture softens the reflective qualities.



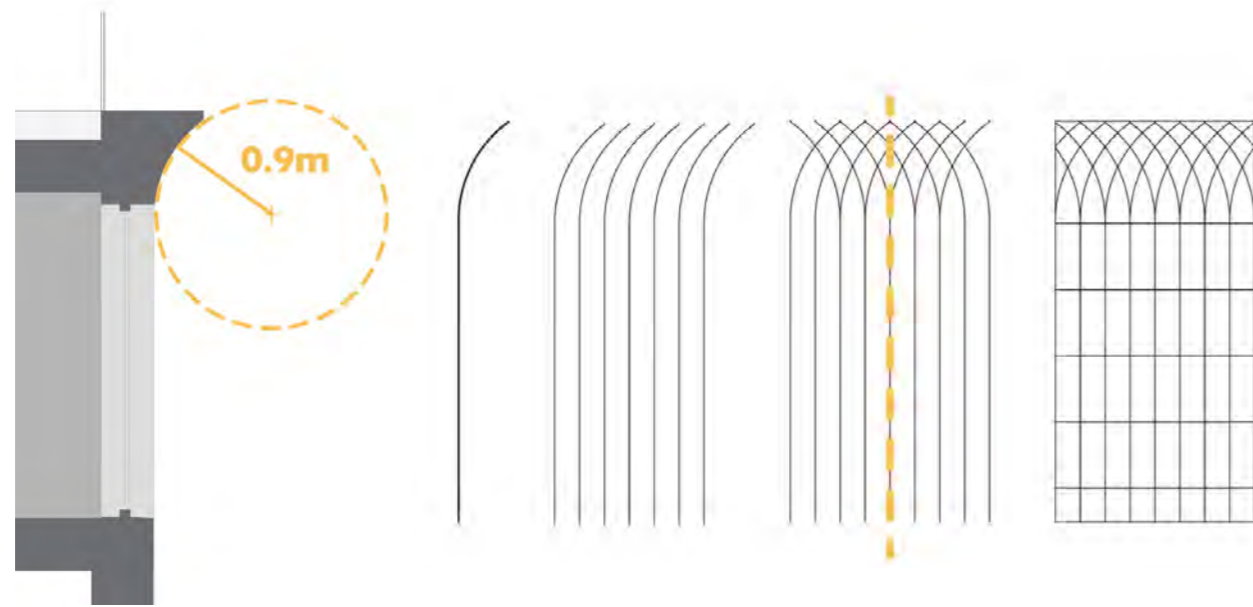
▲ Faïence Tiles Pre & Post Glazing



While green can be found as a minor note in other building in the area, here it is proposed for the primary material. The colour was chosen to contrast and compliment the earthy tones of the neighbouring buildings. A range of colours including darker red, orange and brown tones were extensively tested. These earthy colours made the building appear squat and heavy and obscured any definition of the form. A lightness of colour softens and lifts the building, revealing the delicate detailing of the façade.

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3.8 Façade Pattern



Formation of the façade pattern

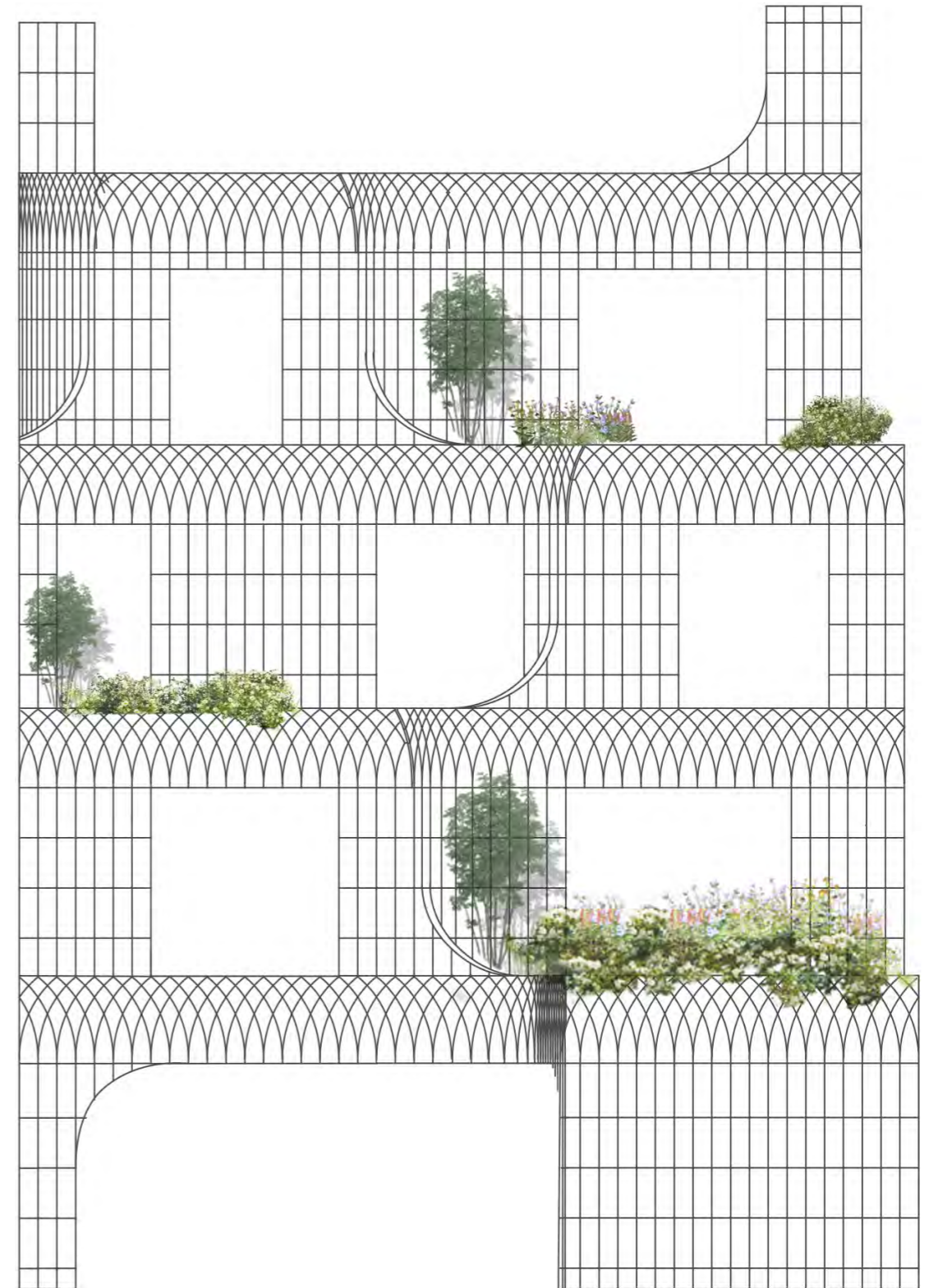
Scale / Form / Pattern

The entire façade is clad in small format vertical tiles that tie it together to form a unified whole. The scale of the tile allows the material to easily follow the curvature of the form.

A subtle diminishing pattern is produced at each level as a product of the cornice radius. The pattern adds a finer level of detail and vertical movement, accentuating moments of architectural emphasis and introducing a subtle banding to delineate floors.

The proposed tiles are individually gently concave. This form adds depth to the façade and allows more opportunity for shade and shadow and texture on a south facing elevation.

The combination of craft, colour, pattern and texture of the facade reinterprets the local Edwardian tradition of ornament as an articulated surface that merges with the lush foliage of its context.



Façade pattern across the south elevation

