



andysturgeon
landscape and garden design

Harefield Place
Planning Report
Landscape Masterplan
September 2015

498-AL-RP-001

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Company Introduction & Design Brief

Andy Sturgeon Landscape and Garden Design is a landscape architecture and garden design consultancy offering a comprehensive service throughout the UK and overseas. Established in 1988 the practice encompasses a wide ranging set of skills and expertise to produce innovative and practical solutions for high value and high profile projects ranging from private gardens to public parks.

Founded on a passion for design excellence and meticulous attention to detail, our work ranges from the classical to the contemporary. We pride ourselves on working closely with our clients to produce unique schemes within the constraints of the brief and the site.

Andy is one of the UK's leading garden designers. His modern designs are a fusion of traditional materials and contemporary styling which have become known for their timeless architectural qualities and innovative planting. Horticulture is paramount. Commissions include unique roof gardens, large country gardens and commercial schemes around the UK with international projects in Hong Kong, Rwanda, Europe, Russia and the Middle East. His work is frequently featured on television and in books, magazines and newspapers worldwide.

Andy has won Best in Show and 6 RHS Gold medals at Chelsea Flower Show in 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2010 and 2012. Both The Sunday Times and House and Garden Magazine placed Andy in the Top Ten list of designers in Britain.

Recent accolades include winning the Gardening World Cup in Japan, a Gold Award at the Singapore Garden Festival 2012 and the Governor's Trophy at the Philadelphia Flower show

Andy lectures around the world with recent dates in Sweden, Canada, Singapore, Russia and Italy.

He has presented gardening programmes for all the major terrestrial channels including Chelsea Flower Show for the BBC since 2005. Andy is a freelance journalist and has been a columnist for the Guardian, Daily Mail, Daily Express and Sunday Times.

His first book *Planted* shook up the world of garden publishing with its ground-breaking approach and fresh outlook and was widely acclaimed both in the UK and abroad. His second book *Potted* achieved the seemingly impossible by revitalising the tarnished image of indoor plants making them both stylish and desirable. A third book on garden design, *Big Plans, Small Spaces* was published in Spring 2010 to further acclaim.

Andy Sturgeon is a Fellow of the Society of Garden Designers, a BALI registered designer and a Member of the Landscape Institute.



Harefield Landscape Brief

Andy Sturgeon Garden and Landscape Design have been commissioned by Manorgrove Homes (UK) LTD to develop the landscape and garden design for Harefield Place to include;

Demolition of existing modern U shaped extension. Conversion of existing Grade II listed building and erection of a replacement extension building to provide 25 self-contained apartments (Class C3), with associated basement car, cycle and motorcycle parking, private and communal amenity spaces and landscape enhancement, retaining existing entrance piers and main vehicular entrance on The Drive and existing secondary servicing access (planning and listed building consent application).

The aim of the scheme is to create new gardens and grounds which will respect and respond to the history of the site and its layout whilst aiming to enhance the setting of the building. Our approach is to restore the original ethos of the Landscape and take into consideration the importance of the surrounding setting, including strategic views and important heritage assets.







3.0 Proposals

Design Approach

Landscape Strategy.

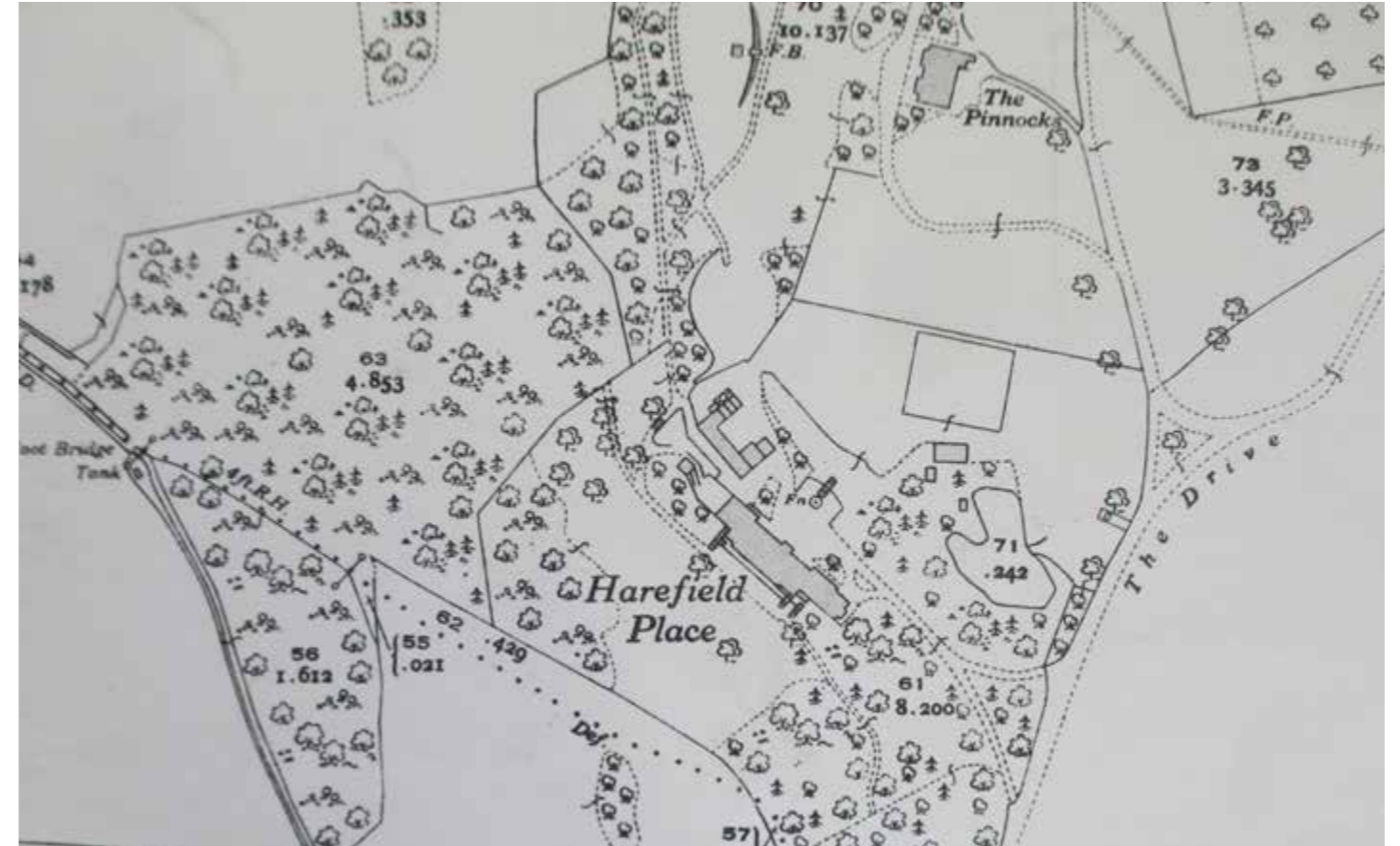
The original designed landscape, which accompanied the laying out of Harefield Place, was extensive and could be broadly characterised as a parkland setting featuring; pleasure and formal gardens, as well as a walled garden to the north with extensive woodland paths running through the landscape on the boundaries.

Elements of this structured landscape still exist on site, in the mature broadleaf trees, mainly Oak and Lime, which run through the site, along with more engineered interventions such as the pond and Ice house.

In the intervening years this wider landscape has been developed to suit a number of causes and much of the original character has been lost, be it either through change of use, removal or neglect.

In the past few years since it has ceased to be the Blockbuster Video Headquarters the landscape has been thoroughly neglected to the extent that the planting introduced over the last few decades along with weed shrub and tree species have thoroughly colonised the understory and shrub layers and are now challenging the tree canopies, overwhelming the landscape structure of paths, buildings and water bodies which remained from the earliest layout.

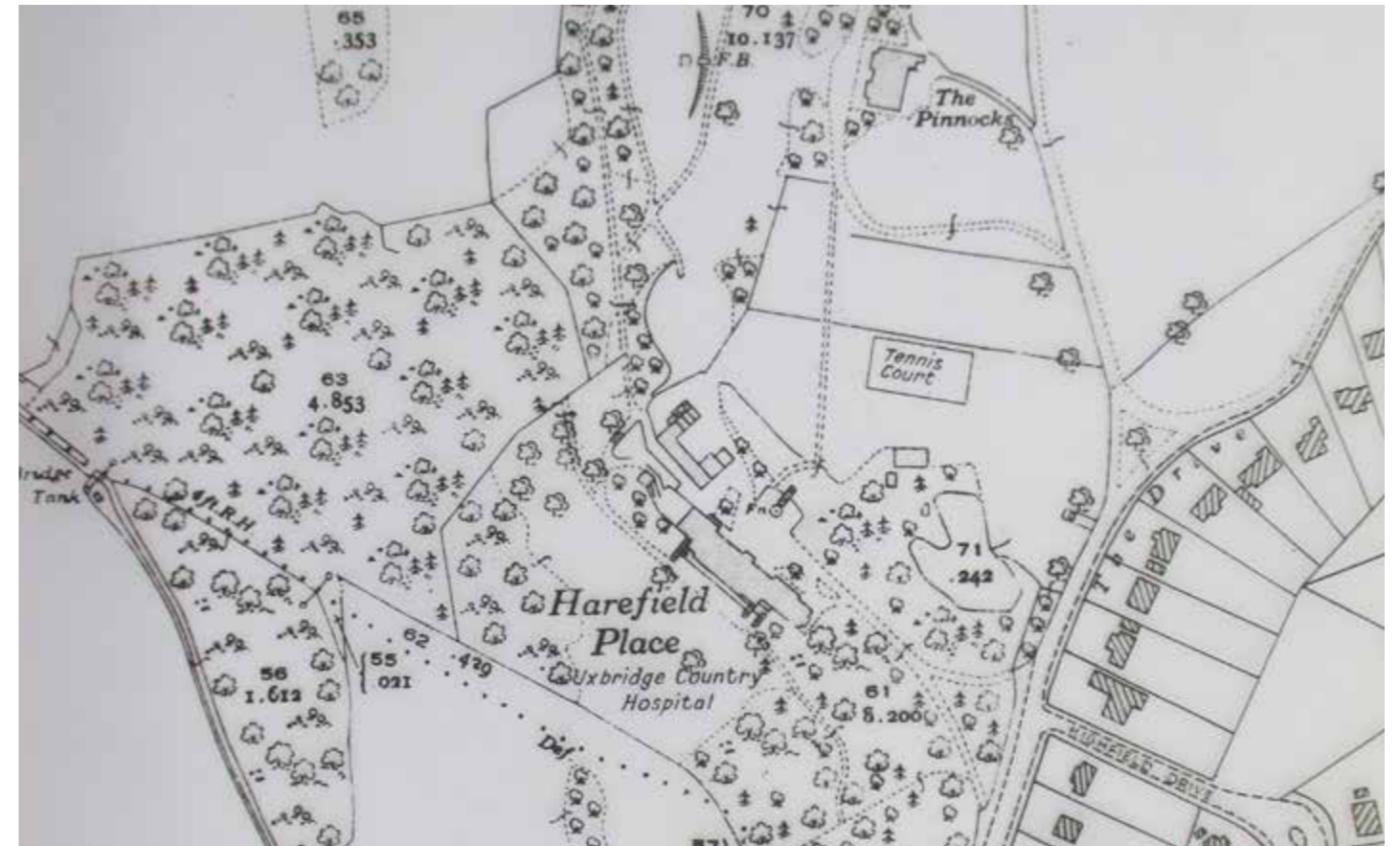
Further detail on the history of the house and landscape can be found in the Heritage Statement produced by the Heritage Collective accompanying the application.



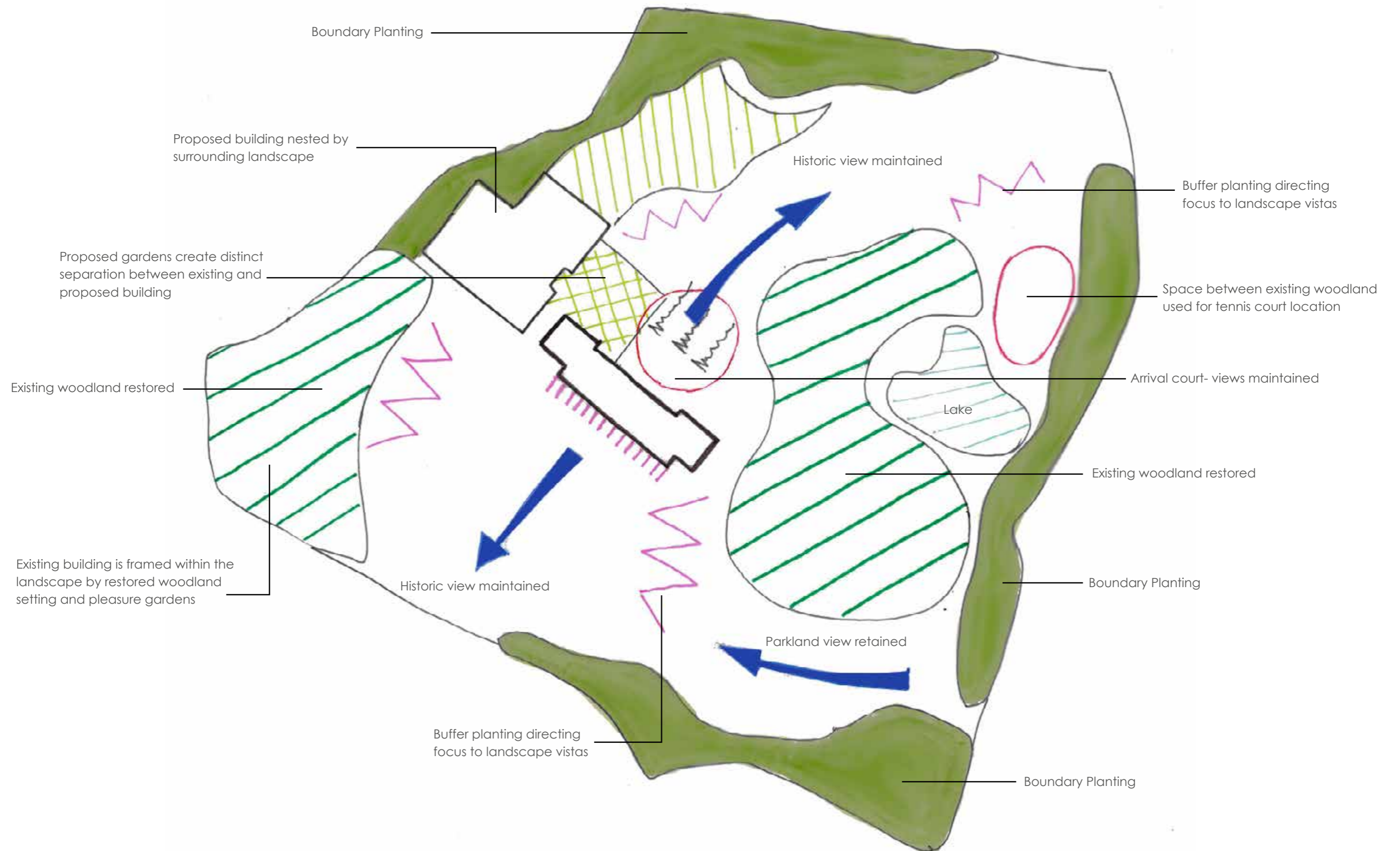
O.S. 1934 Revision - 25 Inch.



O.S. 1866 - 25 Inch, first edition.



O.S. 1959 Revision - 25 Inch.



3.0 Proposals

Masterplan

Design Strategy

Our approach is to re discover what is left of the original landscape within the site boundary and reimagine this back into life through the principles of the historic landscape, whilst also taking into account the contemporary development in both design and society.

Of the original design we have identified several key principle of retention and restoration, which we believe underlay the ethos of the historic landscape. Alongside this we have also reviewed the architectural proposals and proposed development brief and have reached several design conclusions to include these goals into the master plan to bring the two together in a structured, coherent, imaginative master plan sympathetic to the historic landscape but also charting this next level of the story in a suitably contemporary manner.

Key Principles of the design

Reconnect the landscape prospect to the historic building to the south by sympathetically reducing the vegetation on the boundary and re-introducing the front lawn.

Manage the structural tree planting to restore the historic landscape form, focusing the open landscape around the listed building in scale and detail.

Create an arrival focused on the listing building

Bed the Proposed extension to the landscape structure to absorb the building mass and to function as an active landscape to the building use without interrupting the historic character of the existing site.

Re-introduce the pleasure gardens concept within the landscape structure to provide interest and depth.



3.0 Proposals

Trees

The story of the landscapes evolution at Harefield can be seen no more clearer than in the trees on site. Large broadleaf trees such as Oak, Ash and Lime dominate the landscape, both on and off site, surrounded by an over grown understory, being protected by these trees and neglected over the years. From an elevated position on top of the building it is clear to see these broadleaf tree belts stretching into the distance whilst at ground level one is overwhelmed by the unchecked growth of the understory and re-colonisation of pioneer species. Coniferous screens and amenity species surround the modern extension to the building, these have now lost character and are at odds with the rest of the landscape. Around the site are several historic evergreen species of Taxodium, Cedar etc which lend to the character of landscape evolution and are sited in prominent positions

The site is subject to a tree preservation order No. 236, coming into effect as of 17th December 1980 and covering 99 Individual trees, 9 Groups of trees, 1 Area of trees and 1 Woodland. In the intervening 35 Years some of these original trees have been lost, some remain but in poor condition and others have matured and remain prominent in the landscape. Tim Moya Associates have surveyed the site in March 2015 and their report 150115-PD-21A accompanies this submission and should be read in conjunction with the landscape proposals

Our proposal is to retain as much of this landscape as possible, removing the trees associated with the most recent extension and replacing them with more appropriate native species in keeping with those currently on site. We intend to manage the undergrowth to maintain character and ecological richness whilst retaining order and appropriateness of use.

Whilst we would like to retain all of the local species it is apparent that the condition of certain trees Identified in the above report means their removal and replacement is necessary to keep the character of the landscape now and for the future. As part of our proposals we are also advocating the addition of trees to the landscape in keeping with the historic approach, setting all garden species within the landscape frame work so as not to alter the historic character whilst providing interest and biodiversity.



3.0 Proposals

Ecology & Water

The naturalistic style of the landscape at Harefields offers a rich native ecology, which we intend to reinforce through development and management.

Tim Moya Associates have surveyed the site in March 2015 and their report Ecological report. Extended Phase 1 habitat Assessment, Bat scoping survey, Great crested Newt HIS Survey 150115-ED-01 will be used to inform our proposals

The landscape at Harefield contains various habitats two of which are listed as priority habitats on the Hillingdon Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) - Woodland and Grassland.

It is these two habitats that we are seeking to restore through the landscape proposals enriching the habitats in character and diversity. We intend to instigate a thoroughly co-ordinated management plan promoting ecology in all areas through sensitive management as well as replacement planting in an appropriate manner.

Our design proposals call for enriching the environment with appropriate species whilst also creating diversity within the landscape to increase the biodiversity on site without weakening the ecologies already represented. Our horticultural approach to design is consistent with rich ecologies both suited and fitting to the scheme.

The trees on site have been surveyed for Bats and the findings in summary are;

The majority of trees assessed were classified as Category 3 trees, deemed to have no potential to support bats,

A number of trees were classified as Category 2 trees (low potential). These trees are considered unlikely to offer considerable features suitable for roosting bats.

One tree (T38) classified as Category 1 trees (moderate potential) due to possessing features of bat roost potential. One tree (T39) was classified as Category 1* (high potential) due to the presence of multiple suitable roosting features.

Our proposals retain both of the category 1 trees and all but two of the category 2 trees.

Our proposals will also reduce lighting within the wider landscape to benefit foraging and commuting bats.

Further to the above our restoration of the lake should provide an aquatic habitat where currently exists a dead water body with limited ecological appeal.

Water and the risk of flooding is covered under a separate report produced by EAS limited, titled Proposed Indicative Surface Water Drainage Strategy Dwg. NO. 711-SK12

The removal of much of the carparking to the north of the house should assist with site drainage and infiltration, along with our soft approach to the arrangement of the landscape

Our approach will be to retain and infiltrate as much water on site through SUDs strategies outlined in the above report.



3.0 Proposals

Entrance and Drive

The drive seems to have deviated little over time and in this spirit we intend to retain the course of the original arrival route.

The existing gates and piers will be retained and restored as necessary. A pedestrian gate is included to the left hand side of the main vehicular gates so as not to interrupt views on arrival.

On entering the site it is our proposal to retain the significant trees on the boundary supplementing the understory where necessary to provide a rich vegetative threshold.

Beyond this we intend to thin out the encroachment of the tree belt to the south offering open views over rolling lawns, retaining the significant trees in a similar manner to the south lawn, and indeed linking these elements to convey the open historic landscape structure on arrival.

Beyond this we propose to once again restrict views using the existing vegetation with further management to define the route of the drive restoring the remnants of the existing character until the view opens up once more on arrival at the fore court immediately north of the house.

The enclosed vegetation allows us to provide maintenance buildings for refuse collection etc. without interrupting the landscape.





3.0 Proposals

Restore Views

Due to the topography of the site and the unchecked growth of the landscape the house is entirely enclosed, to the north by banks, walls, steps and trees, to the south neglected overgrown vegetation. In the wider landscape this quality has charm, mystery and virtue to the environment. Around the house it creates a feeling of neglect and abandonment. The building is entirely hemmed in with little opportunity to breath, views of the house are very limited and views out are even further restricted. Historic plans and records showed extensive views south from the house over a parkland, much of which still exists outside of the site.

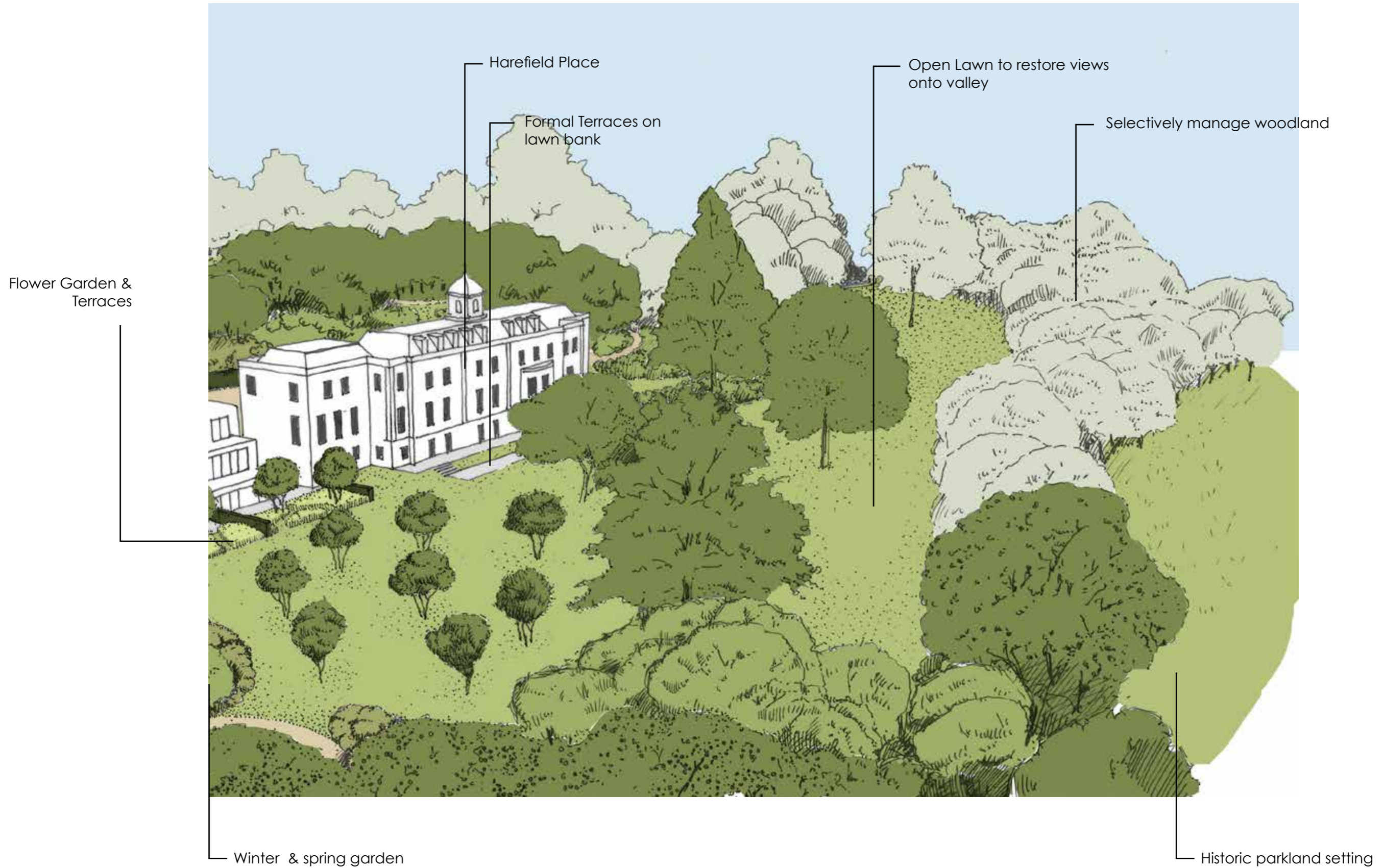
Our first response was to restore this connection, through the removal of the low quality boundary trees and shrubs on the south boundary opening up not only the views out from the house but restoring historic views back of the building. We would retain the historic mature trees within the over grown lawns and any significant broadleaf trees on the boundary, predominantly Oak and Lime creating an opening in the vegetation immediately opposite the historic building.

Directly to the south of the building we are proposing two terraces, One at a level consistent with the building internal floor levels for use as entertainment, the second at a lower level drawing further into the lawn subtly breaking the connection with the built form to encourage wider exploration of the grounds.

Beyond these terraces to the boundary we are proposing to re-establish the lawns retaining the field trees and adding several additional trees to maintain the landscape character as these mature trees start to remove from the landscape. We hope this will encourage the retention of the meadow and field trees in the parkland beyond completing this view.

All these interventions will aid us to re establish the listed buildings connection to the landscape, making the linear scale of the building sit more comfortably within the vertical nature of the mature trees in landscape.





3.0 Proposals

Front Lawn

The open character of the lawns and views will respond solely to the historic building to the south, putting this back at the centre of what was an hour glass shaped layout originally implemented.

With the proposed building extension it is our intention to bed this into the landscape rather than open it up, whilst the main house will be presented with prospect, the extension will be a landscape of refuge, with a finer grain and detail expected of a modern development.

The building will be set within the existing mature trees and we propose further trees added on the fringes of the south lawn to focus the open parkland landscape towards the main house.

Whilst we are not encumbering the historic building with great detail to the south keeping the open terraces consistent with the period and scale of the building we propose creating individual gardens presented as a long boarder to the south of the extension making it very much sit within the framework of the landscape visually subservient to the main house, absorbing the building mass into the vegetation in a purposeful manner.

Beyond this and into the restored boundary planting we propose the creating paths through the shrubs and trees to create areas of seasonal interest such as winter and spring gardens, re-imagining the idea of pleasure gardens within the site boundaries but with an appropriate light touch through sympathetic planting choice.

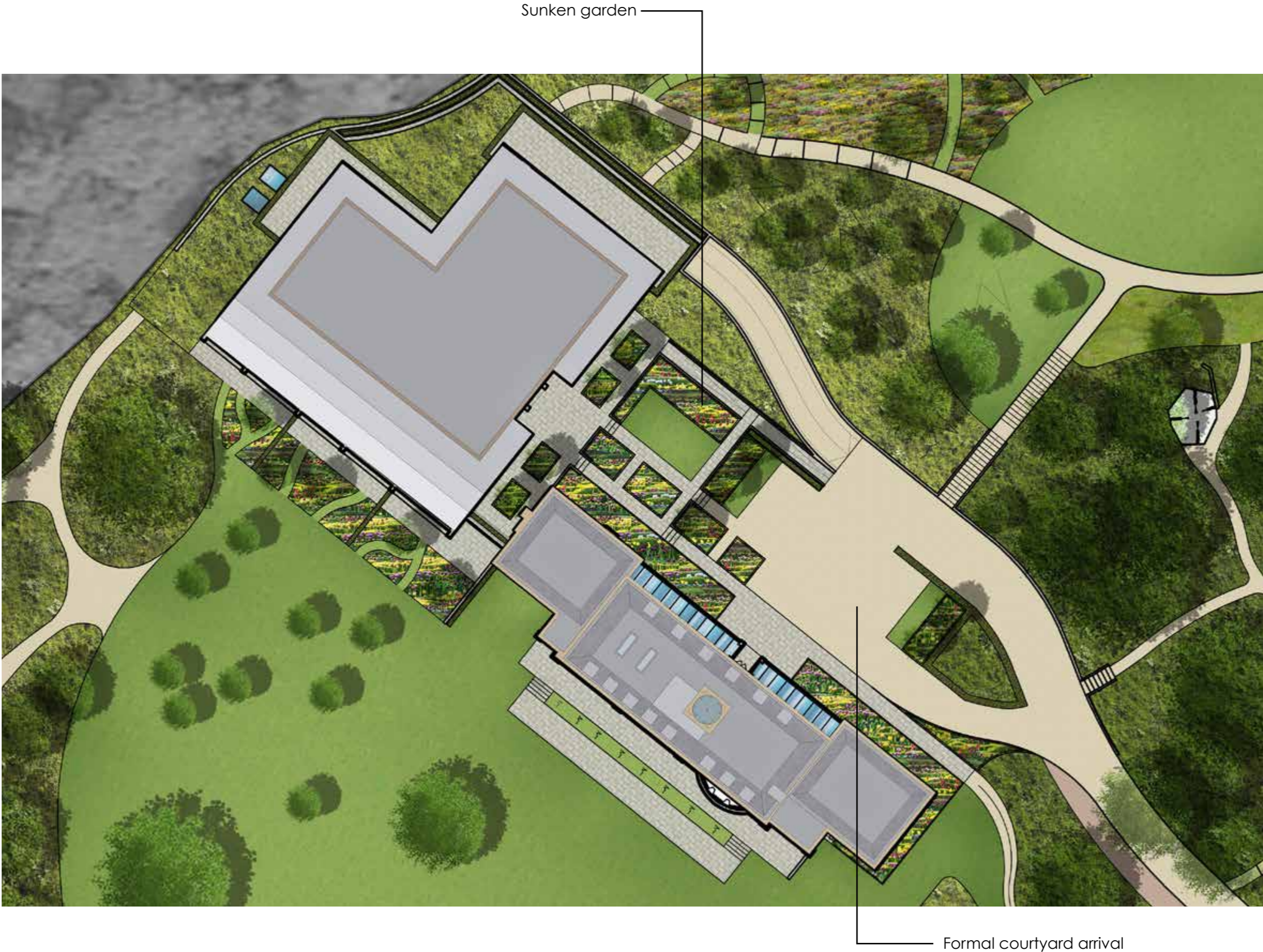












3.0 Proposals

Courtyard

It was not uncommon in the artistic styles of the time to view the house on the askance upon arrival, and this may well have been the spirit behind the original layout although this has now been altered with the addition of the semi circular extension which now encloses the courtyard at the far end with a brutal built form and rather than being submissive as an entrance creates a visual conflict on arrival.

We would like to take this opportunity to re-establish the main house as the focus of your arrival, delivering visitors along the planted drive into a forecourt scaled and laid out in response to the geometry of the main house.

The forecourt to the north is contained by formal tree and hedge planting, screening and containing the area immediately in front of the main house. This arrangement provides views back to the house and access directly to the main front door.

The proposals include the removal of the brutalist extension replacing it with a much more simple and in-articulated style of architecture. To further assist the relationship between the two buildings we propose a rich herbaceous flower garden in a formal style creating a garden setting for the proposed building in an arrangement sympathetic to the existing. Bedding the new building to the landscape whilst retaining depth and separation in the architecture.

To the north the fore court will be contained by retaining walls very much as it is at the moment but we propose to plant these to create a green façade. We also intend to reduce the overgrown vegetation in this area so it no longer looms over ones arrival but presents further opportunity for exploration opening the building up to the north.





Multistem trees frame the building entrance

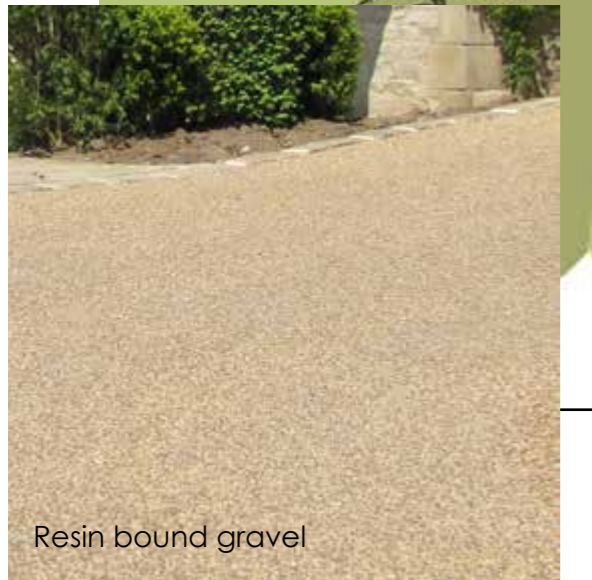
Yew hedging

Resin bound gravel surface

Sunken garden



Yorkstone paving



Resin bound gravel



Courtyard drop off entrance

Multistem trees and yew hedging create an intimate arrival court





