

## 5. Current Condition & Threats

#### **Design: Lost or Degraded Features**

The overall design, structure and fabric have survived largely intact, including the central lawn, avenue, central fountain area (albeit re-tiled and with a new Dolphin centrepiece) and loggia. But while many original features remain, much of the finer details have been lost or degraded over time as a result of varying levels of maintenance and investment, and cheap replacement materials.

To compound this, the proposed and much overdue building refurbishment works will have some negative impact on the gardens. Complete loss of the original Spanish garden and significant alterations to some of the recess gardens have diminished the historic character. Furthermore, a lack of understanding of the original design intent and the detailed aspects of the design has resulted in a gradual erosion of the quality and character of the garden. This is not irreversible, although with no original plans or details of the original gardens a slavish re-creation is neither feasible or appropriate.

#### **Structures**

Water penetration is the main structural/fabric issue affecting both the Moroccan garden and the central Fountain gardens area above the garage, the likely cause once again being failing asphalt waterproofing. It is unlikely to have been damage from root growth. Drainage is poorly executed with random lengths of plastic pipework blocked and overlaid on top of the existing system. Remedial works will require removal of all existing finishes, allowing a redesign more sympathetic to the original.

#### Other issues are:

- Levels in the north section of the garden have been adjusted to remove steps in the main circulation. But instead of wholesale re-grading of levels, this has been done piecemeal and not well resolved. There are random steep (non compliant) sections of paths and trip hazards.
- \* Paving on some paths has been damaged (presumably by vehicles) and replaced with cheap, 600 x 900mm non-matching slabs resulting in patchiness detracting from the original simplicity but considered design.
- \* The narrow crazy paving edge to the avenue, the main axis of the garden, has been lost except around the fountain.
- \* Some brick and tile paving work is deteriorating and needs careful preservation / replacement
- \* Sculptural ornamental urns and pots have been allowed to break or their condition deteriorate, in some instances plants have outgrown the pots and caused damage. A number of these pots have already been lost. These are a most distinctive and unique element of the garden and need to be conserved as a priority. Some varied cast concrete replacements of lesser quality and style have been introduced: these diminish the original impact.
- \* Lutyens style seats have been replaced by similar but significantly lesser quality 'off the shelf' benches.
- \* White paint on stonework is hideous and distracting, so an alternative approach should be adopted and only where necessary eg steps where more tasteful nosing studs or suchlike could be introduced.

#### Plants

There is a tendency to a piecemeal reactive approach to maintenance particularly in the recess gardens. Some plants have become dominant to the detriment of others. New plants have been introduced that are out of character. This has resulted in incoherent or tired plantings. While no records exist about which plants were chosen for the garden, Sudell's books, including Landscape Gardening include copious lists of plants for different purposes and these would be useful to refer to in any future replanting works.

#### The main planting issues are

Loss of original or different plant groups and loss of variety which once distinguished the individual character of the different recess gardens General dominance of evergreen or large shrubs resulting in loss of range of plants including bulbs which were an original feature of garden Plants have not been appropriately pruned or trained and smaller paths and sitting areas in recess gardens have become inaccessible or in deep shade

#### Threats

The biggest potential threats now are:

- Integration of the new building elements into the garden, such as the introduction of Air Source Heat Pumps to provide sustainable energy; see below.
- Refurbishment work to the building, scaffolding, materials, etc with significant risk of damage

- to paving, raised walls, sculptural pots, also by on-site contractors and other personnel who may not be aware of the importance of the area where they are working.
- Planted roof structures failing again.
- Neglect. Each change of ownership has historically been accompanied by a period of neglect in management and maintenance followed by new works which are not always designed or executed sympathetically to the original design.
- Previous lack of sufficient gardening standards and use of unskilled gardening staff
- Lack of management and maintenance plan and associated reduction of standards
- \* Further erosion of the character of the individual gardens through lack of understanding of the original intention eg the Japanese Garden, where features have been let to be overgrown, and poor quality fixtures (lights/railings) introduced.
- \* Poor quality paving repairs done in cement rich mortar, detracting from appearance.

#### Spanish/Moroccan Garden - Existing

The Spanish/Mexican Garden was removed, probably in its entirety, at some point between 1964 and November 1966 in order to remediate the waterproofing layer, either laying or relaying asphalt. In place of the original dense arrangement of planting beds and raised pots, the central area had just four simple planting beds and retained the four rooflights which illuminated the squash court gallery beneath. This bleak, typically mid-60s arrangement persisted until the Levitt Bernstein scheme of 1994-2004.







 Moroccan Garden with rebuilt Lion font
 Tired planting outside the Garden Loggia





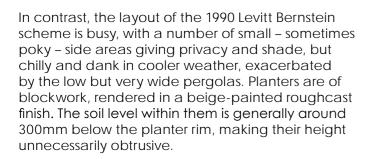
1. Bespoke designs of the various Dolphin Square urns in need of recasting and/or restoration.

Specialist study by Martec has been undertaken. Urns are proposed to be restored, and new from casts of originals made.









Paving is rustic pale terracotta tile with some small but slippery slate infills. It is of similar hue and lightness to the planters, but darkened by moss and mould growth.

The focus remains the Lion Pool: behind it, partially screened by a timber trellis is an unattractive 'back-of-house' area: the swimming pool rooflights, plant housings, and, incongruously, a small greenhouse slotted between two of the curved rooflights.

Moveable furniture is of two types: standard-pattern shabby timber benches, some of them memorial benches, including one to the 'Bird Lady' which was in very poor condition and has recently been crudely repaired in softwood, and small circular mosaic-topped tables and lightweight chairs in a 'Moroccan' style. Similarly styled lights sit amongst the planters, and pendant versions hang in the loggia.







#### **Restoration & New Design Strategy**

#### Legend



Restoration, using original materials where they exist as aspects of the layout is largely intact. Planting to be newly designed (no details exist)



New materials to restore ad-hoc paving within now degraded landscape, within existing/original layout. New planting



New design, with reference to original design intention with new layout & materials



New access from Lobby / 1st floor to Moroccan (former Spanish) Garden



# 6. Proposed Restoration Strategy& Masterplan

### Principles for Conservation, Restoration and New Design

The overriding principle is to conserve the historic fabric where it exists, and restore it where we have enough detail about its original layout and design. Where the existing heritage has been lost, or layout eroded and does not serve the residents well, new design has been proposed.

These areas are shown on the facing page, and described in brief as follows:

#### 1. Areas for New Design (shown orange)

The identity of the Italian, Dutch and Old English recess gardens has been lost and should be restored based on historic precedent as far as possible, noting that no detailed drawings or images are known to exist. For the Italian Garden therefore, a new layout is proposed. The paving layout for the English and the Dutch Gardens appears to be early, but is probably not original (see aerial photo section 2 showing a 'quarry type garden in the location of the 'Italian' Garden, W1.

#### Moroccan Garden (Roof Terrace)

The removal of the original Spanish Garden in the 1960s represents the largest and most significant loss of heritage interest in the whole garden. It should be noted that the Grade II Registration of the gardens covers this roof garden. For this reason the redesign of the Spanish Garden will be sympathetic to Sudell's design, not least because this area will be viewed from above by most people and will be seen in relation to the rest of the gardens. Reinstating the original design is an

option, but without detailed information or the presence of the rooflights, the centrepiece would no longer have the same design rationale. Detailed Proposals for this garden are covered in Section 9

#### Italian Garden (W1)

The Italian Garden has no remaining features of any discernable Italian nature. Statuary and pots are absent, paving layouts lost, cherry trees have been planted in cheap, raised timber sleeper containers and it is overshadowed by large holly trees. The layout has been redesigned, and it is proposed to use a different (white /buff) stone to recreate crazy paving in two different scales, as is often used in Italian Gardens. Planting will be a mix of hedging and simple gravel and flowering shade tolerant ground cover. Simple ornament can be sought, to complement an original Dolphin Square pot to add interest and reinforce the theme.

#### 2. Areas for Restoration & New Planting

#### Japanese Garden (E1)

The Japanese garden is of singular historic interest and rarity and will be reinstated and based on historic precedent for design and materials. We have proposed:

- \* Rounded crazy paving slab paths
- \* Tree removal to reveal the rockwork
- \* Conservation of the stone bridge
- \* Revealing the original island and dry river
- Gravel with simple Japanese planting understory, and Camellias relocated from E2 Garden

- New small trees
- \* New compliant handrails (similar to original)
- \* New guard railings at lightwells (steep drop) to replace the utilitarian mix of mesh, hoop top and other rails

#### **English Garden (E2)**

This garden now has little reference to a particular 'English' features, except the crazy paving, commonly used in 'Old English Gardens' in the Arts and crafts period.

Its theme is further compromised by planting being dominated by Camellias, not present in their native 'Japanese' Garden next door. The strategy is to:

- relocate the perimeter Camellia to the Japanese Garden and
- replant the English Garden with plants more associated with typical English style.
- \* lifting and relaying the crazy paving and brick edging.
- \* Repointing walls where needed
- \* Restoring and replanting pots

However the E3&W3 Vent Gardens with their trellis and panels of different paving and tile features exhibit more Arts and Crafts design signatures.

### 3. Areas for hard and soft landscape renewal

#### **Dutch Garden (W2)**

This has lost any Dutch references and the aim is to replace these, and restore some Dutch garden theme, but bearing in mind it receives limited direct sun. This will include:

- rebuilt the gable end wall without the broken (Moroccan/Spanish) pots,
- \* replant with dwarf hedges,
- plant simple topiary and
- a mix of modern style naturalistic planting, interplanted with species and annual tulips,
- \* lift and relay central brick paving
- \* New paving to the block entrances

#### Garden Reference Images

Italian Garden







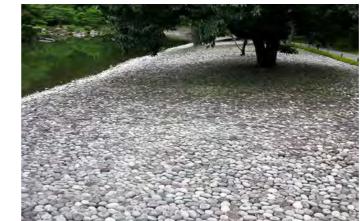




#### Japanese Garden























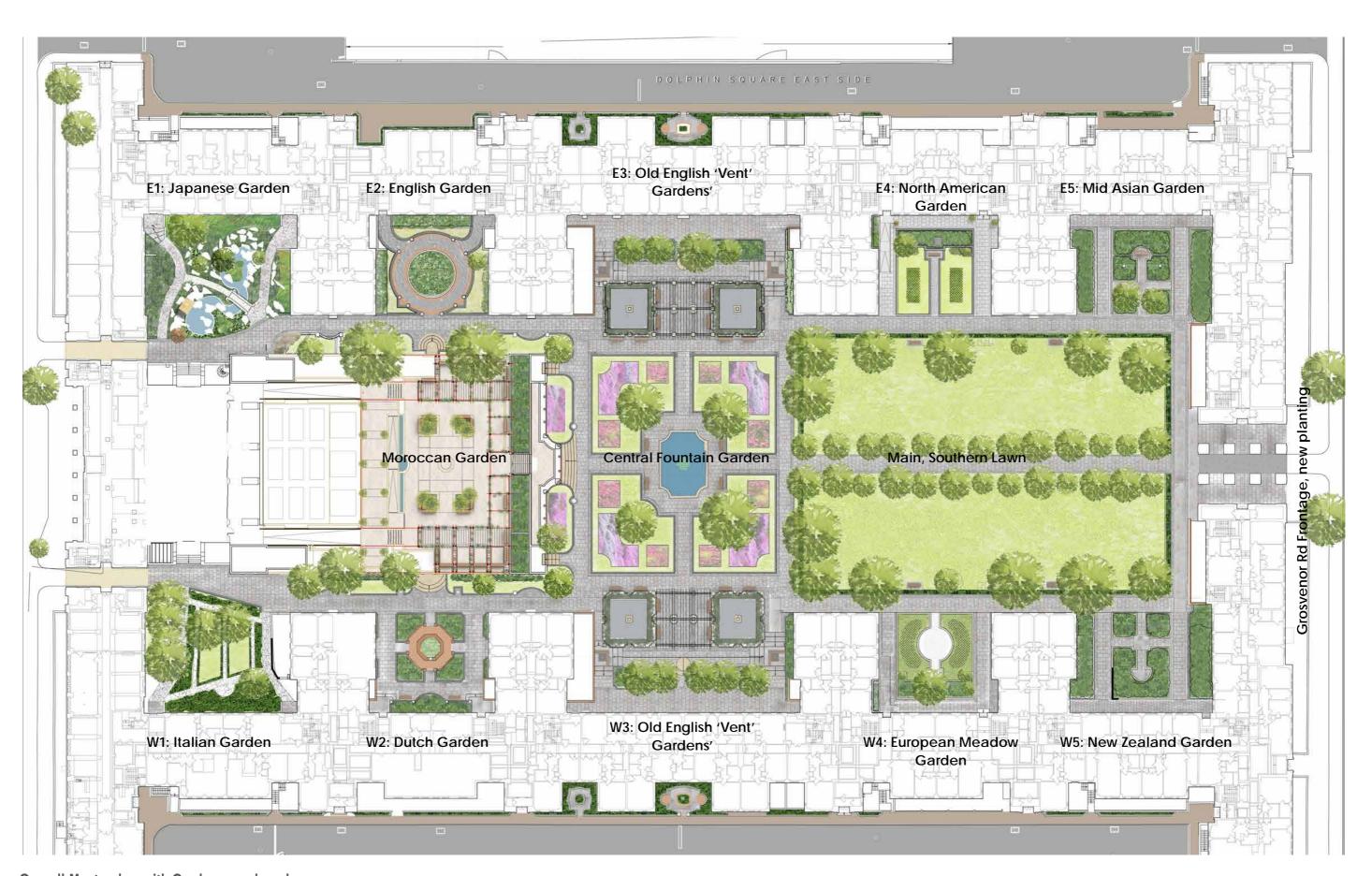
#### Dutch Garden











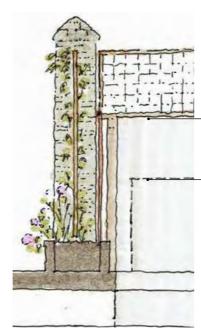


Existing vents from carpark in E3 W3 Vent Gardens

Original features in E3/W3 are currently largely intact. However, new Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHP) are a crucial element of the sustainable energy proposals: these will provide heating for the whole scheme and eliminate the need for gas, which will be phased out as part of the refurbishment. These ASHP units can only be realistically accommodated in the basement carpark, reusing the original vent locations in the gardens to draw air through the new pumps. These units will be larger than the original carpark vents, but are designed to fit within the original pergola pier enclosures. The housings will be directly screened by steel panels photographically etched with a subtle abstract pattern of birch trees, and foliage giving a light and shade effect, & screening the ASHP housing behind. In front of these, on the line of the existing trellis, will sit new trellis in sustainable hardwood, with climbing plants, providing a second layer of screening and interplay of layers and patterns. The new structures will be around 2.4m tall rather than the present 1.4m. While acknowledging there will be some harm to the heritage, it will also have public benefit in the resultant green energy source, effectively futureproofing the scheme's heating demands, that will outweigh the harm.

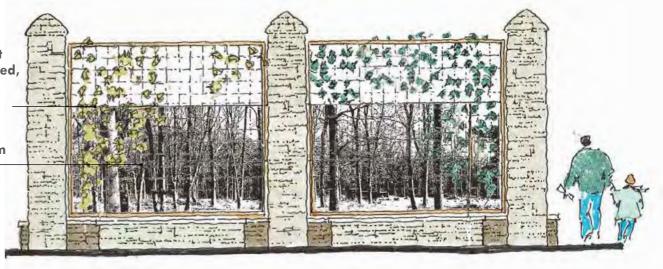
#### South recess gardens E4&5, W4&5

These gardens currently have no specific geographic themed association. However,



New height of ASHP Vent Enclosure, , with perforated, decorative screen, with trellis / planting in front.

Existing line of vents from underground carpark



E3/W3 'Vent' Gardens restoration of planting to south recess gardens will include replacing the overmature congested tree and shrub planting with shade tolerant and more flowering species ta suit the conditions. Planting will be designed on a geographic theme to continue the original design intent, as follows E4: New Flowering 'American Prairie Garden' Main features consist: Access will be made compliant with a new ramp.

- Access easier to rear of garden alongside ramp
- Paving relaid, using existing crazy paving to sides of pathways
- Grass retained to sides for amenity use

#### E5: Asian Shade Garden

- Species to provide flower and ground cover
- open to encourage use,
- paving lifted and restored to original
- Trees retained and freed of overgrown shrubs

#### W4: Flowering 'Alps' Meadow

- Existing grass landforms to be supplemented with more wildflower spp,
- Removal (with residents approval) of bay tree to increase light to buildings and enable flowering woodland edge plants

open canopy tree planting

#### W5: 'New Zealand' Fern Garden

This is possibly the most shady of all, facing north east. Proposals include:

- removal of overgrown shrubs
- replanting with ferns and other shade plants
- paving replacement, lighter colour will brighten a currently dank space
- refurbished seating and pots

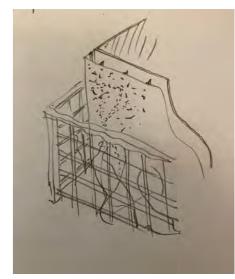
#### Pots

Ornamental pots need urgent attention, to conserve all damaged ones, and to prevent further damage by removing unsuitably vigorous or large plants (eg cordylines). Only seasonal annual plants, bulbs or other plants with non-vigorous roots should be grown in the pots (where plants are needed in pots.)

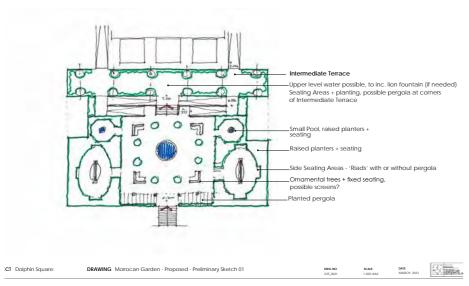
#### Other Proposals are as follows:

- Reinstate seats where lost and to Main Lawn
- Reinstatement of 'window boxes' (green roofs) to top of Vents
- White paint to be removed and replaced on steps with sympathetic nosing.
- Adoption of a clear and detailed management and maintenance plan
- New planting will provide food /nectar sources

- for pollinators, in place of the dominance of shrubs currently present. This will include herbs.
- Any community / resident involvement in gardening can be incorporated into the plans, to foster interest and participation in the gardens.
- All planting will be done to improve biodiversity in the gardens. Similarly, inclusion of insect hotels and log piles will be included.
- An ecological survey of the garden has been done. Bats are known to be present in Dolphin Square as day roosters and commuters. Such a survey provides a baseline report against which the effects of future change can be monitored.

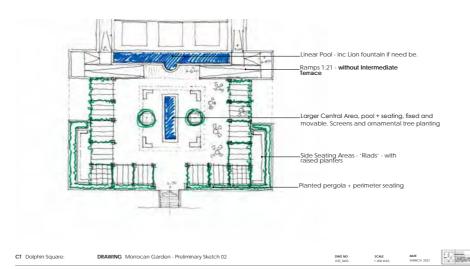


Sketch showing vent enclosure behind trellis. Refer Drawings 035\_265 & 266.



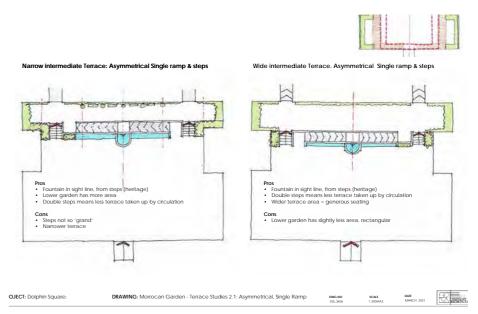


- \* intermediate terrace at the end of the sloping walkways
- \* table seating with views out across the garden
- \* central steps plus symmetrical ramps
- most people will use the steps creates obstructive circulation route along the terrace
- \* Lion fountain can't be accommodated on axis



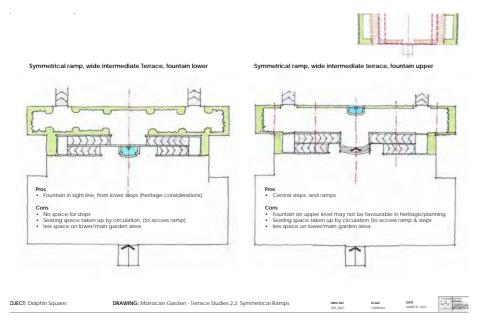
Sk02: Without intermediate terrace

- \* no steps have to use one of a pair of symmetrical ramps which follow on from the sloping walkways excessive travel distances
- \* Lion fountain and pool remain in current location



Sk06 explores two options for an intermediate terrace combined with a single ramp:-

- \* symmetrical steps give a direct route from the walkways to the lower level
- \* an asymmetrical ramp minimizes the circulation footprint

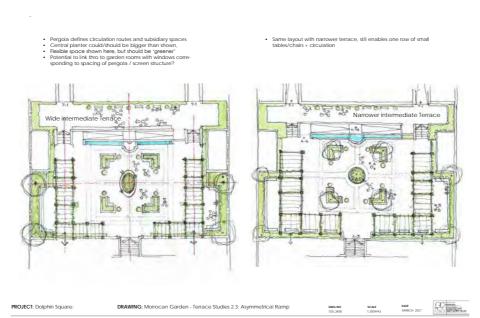


Sk07 Attempts unsuccessfully to justify symmetrical ramps:-

- \* symmetrical ramps with or without central steps
- \* obstructive circulation route along the terrace

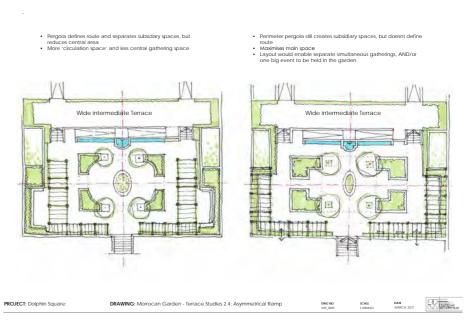
Lion fountain and pool remain on axis, on lower terrace or upper terrace but the latter creates a real constriction

Moroccan Garden: Design Development Sketch Options



Sk08 Shows an intermediate terrace, symmetrical steps and a single ramp:-

- \* a wider terrace option allows for two lines of tables and seating
- narrower option reduces capacity, making circulation more difficult



Sk09 concentrates on the lower garden and its pergola:-

- \* pergola in line with steps creates a three-sided cloister with small semi-private shaded 'rooms' to the side
- \* pergola pulled back to perimeter of garden creates semi-private areas but does not operate as a shaded walking route. It also leaves the central area too wide

# 7. Moroccan Garden Proposals

The refurbishment works provide the opportunity to make the Moroccan Garden once again a show piece for the gardens. It will be newly accessible and usable for all residents and their visitors.

#### **Proposed works**

The waterproofing is failing once again: to resolve this, the current proposals envisage removal of all existing finishes, down to the 1960s asphalt. This will permit a redesign more sympathetic to the original, achieving new compliant access from the new foyer areas, and permit insulation of squash courts below to current standards.

#### Design strategy

The original Main building entrance on Chichester Street opened into a lounge area which led via a cocktail bar and dance floor to the pool and squash courts. There was no route through to the main gardens and no view of it, nor was there access to the Spanish / Moroccan garden at first floor. Views out were onto the utilitarian roofscape of services, now much added to. Access to the Spanish Garden was solely between the pair of garden loggias via the steep flight of steps from the main garden axis. The 1990s Levitt's (Design and Build) scheme meant one step is much higher than the others, provoking the warning formed in glazed tiles across the full width of the top riser, and the lowest riser is reciprocally too low.

Current architectural proposals for the rear of Rodney House include the construction of new lobby areas at first floor level which open onto an upper terrace, for the first time providing transparency and views out to the garden.

Crucially, this terrace provides an opportunity to create a fully accessible progression to the Moroccan Garden. A pair of wide gently sloping walkways, too shallow to be formally ramps, flanked by sloping planters will lead from the upper terrace to the Moroccan Garden. To keep these walkways shallow, levels at this end of the Moroccan Garden will be about 750mm higher than the top of the uneven steps from the loggia. So the key to a redesign of the Garden is the treatment and accessible resolution of this level change. Sketches Sk01-09 illustrate the development of our design. All start from the assumption that the loggia steps should not be increased by more than a single riser.

#### Conclusion

The design exercise illustrated in these sketches has led to an agreed scheme based on the first sketch in Sk09, the 'cloister' option with a wider intermediate terrace set with small tables, with parasols to provide summer shading alternated with planters containing olive trees transplanted from the current garden, or citrus trees.

The main area will be at a similar level as the

existing, and will be reached either by a ramp or one of two flights of steps. The steps lead into a pergola strung with stainless steel tension cables, which forms three sides of a cloister around the garden.

The pergola frames the central space, but also creates smaller side 'rooms' for more private use, reflecting the original layout of these areas. Its arrangement and proportions ae similar to those of the original Spanish/Mexican Garden, lighter and airier than the existing version, and it will be extensively planted with climbers to provide overhead shading in summer. Paving will reinforce the spatial variation.

Each corner of the rectangular central space is enclosed by a large planter containing some of the many existing olive trees, and larger tree species, surrounded by benches and stone seating, and a lower planter with scented Mediterranean herbs.

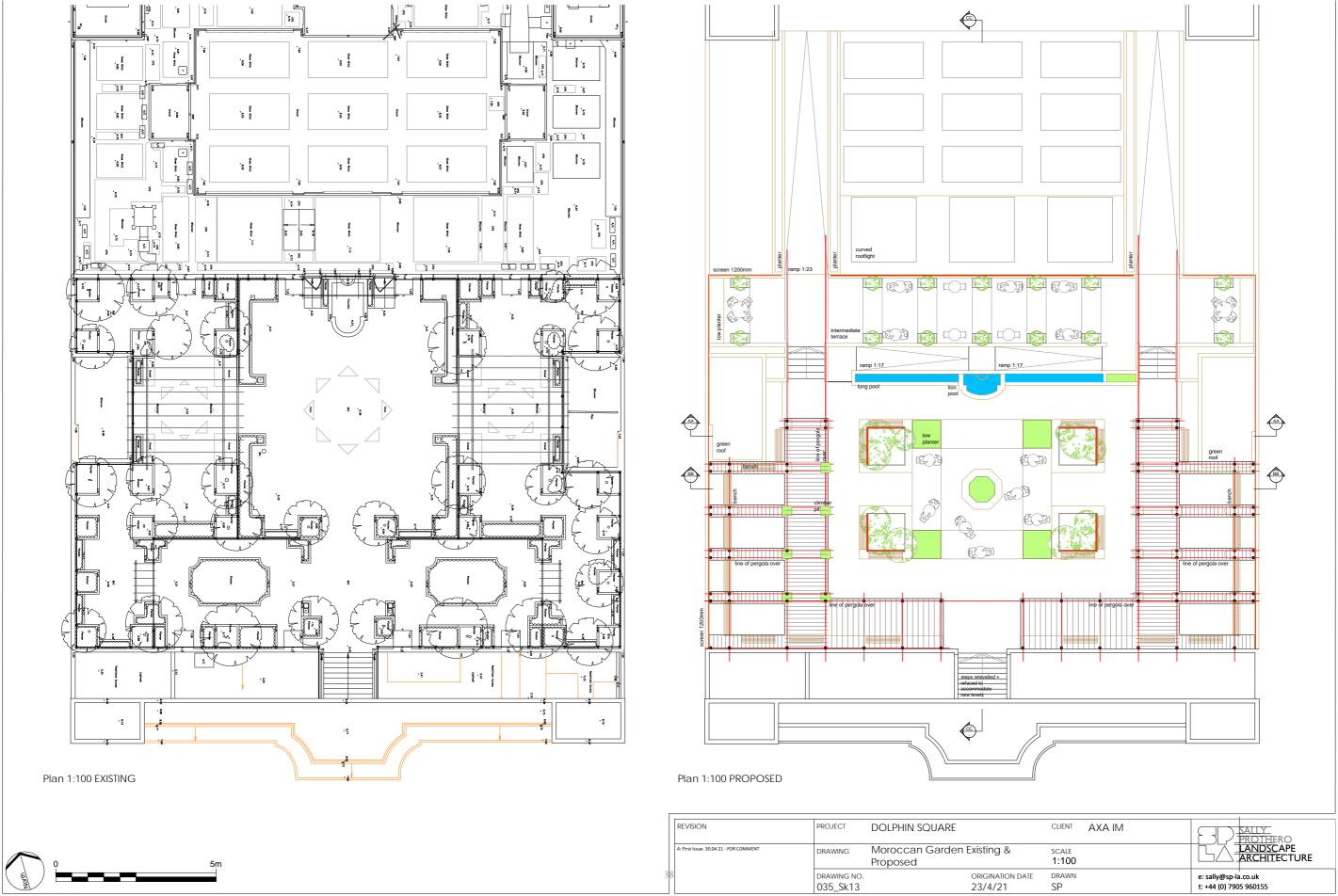
Small tables and seating will be set within these corner features. In the centre will be an octagonal planting bed with a 'sitting edge'. In the centre, will be planted with prickly pears in homage to the original scheme.

The focus of the Morrocan Garden will remain the Lion's head 'fountain' and its associated stoup, which is probably much older than the Lion itself, which we do not think is original (tooling on the stone is modern). The lion and stoup will be moved forward in the main garden area, still on the central

axis, set above a new Lion Pool lined with blue tiles and surrounded by a wide stone edging where residents can sit. It will be flanked by the Long Pools, set in front of the long low wall of the ramp, which will reflect the rippling of the water.

Once again, the existing finishes and screeds will be removed in order that a long-term solution to water ingress can be addressed, and insulation can be fitted to comply with current Building Regulations.

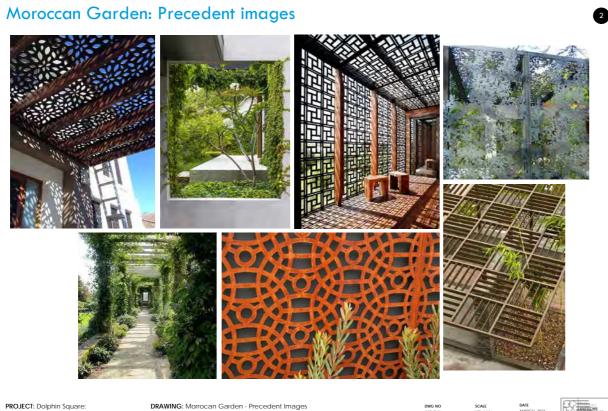
The 1960s asphalt will be levelled using a proprietary screed prior to laying a new bituminous felt waterproofing layer. Insulation will be laid above this, giving an inverted or 'cold' roof construction. Paving will be laid above this on a pedestal system. Existing drainage outlets and connections will be checked and reused. Levelling works will enable the steps leading to the main garden to be re-levelled and re-clad. The Dolphin mosaic will be retained in situ.

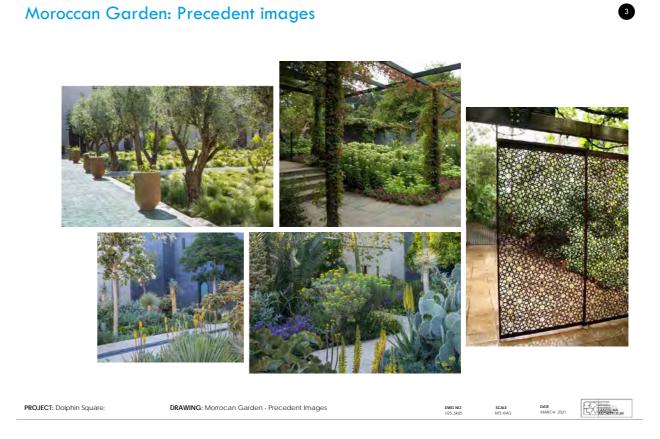


1. Work in Progress 3 D model looking north-east

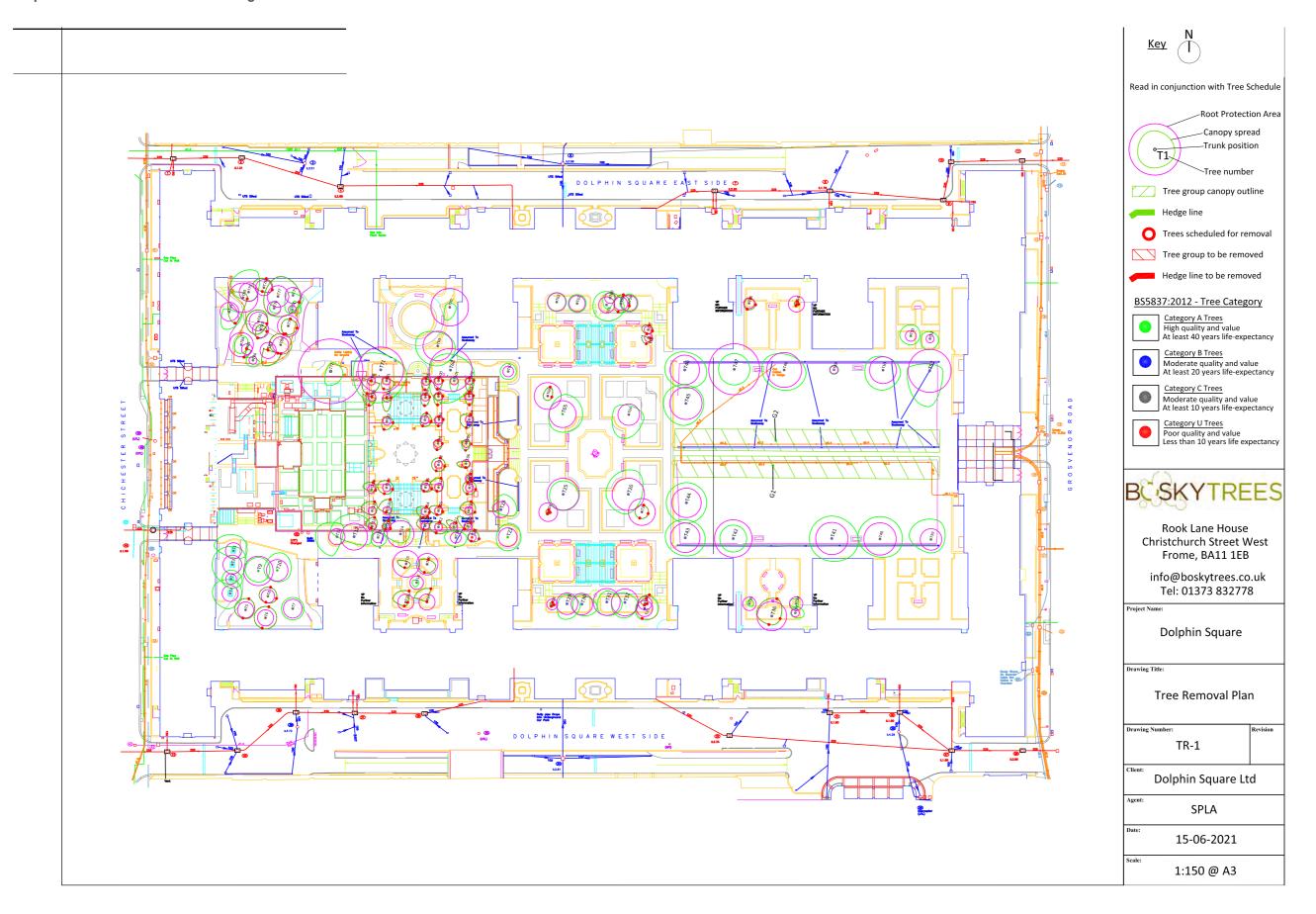
2 & 3. Precident images for screens, planting and pergola styles.







#### **Proposed Tree Removals and Planting**



## 8. Tree Strategy

#### **Existing Trees**

A full Arboricultural survey to BS5837 and accompanying schedule has been produced to inform restoration works. The plan with added proposed removals is shown on the right and will accompany the planning application.

On the tree constraints plan the magenta circles represent the root protection areas required by the individual trees. The root protection areas of the retained trees should be avoided when considering the designs for new hard surfaces, drainage ditches and underground services. But, since there will be some existing underground features that act as root barriers, the separation distances indicated on the tree constraints plan may not represent the actual separation distances that will be required during construction.

The site layout has been designed to retain the A-grade (green), and also the B-grade trees (blue) identified during this survey. In some cases however, there is an overriding reason to remove them, such is the case with the large bay tree in W4 which is removing much of the light and water from any potential understory and blocking light from the windows. However, this will be subject to consultation with residents.

Category C trees (grey) are not worthy of constraining the restoration works; however it is not assumed that all C-grade trees should be removed.

#### Removals

Some trees will need to be removed as part of the restoration works, in particular the Japanese Garden, E1. In general, new tree planting will as far as space allows, be carried out to compensate for the loss of any trees that are removed and, species chosen have a degree of shade tolerance. Removal of few large and vigorous spp close to windows is proposed to enable light into residences, should residents be supportive. (See Proposed Tree Removal Plan TR1 & 2, and opp page)

#### Olive Trees

In the existing Moroccan Garden, there are a large number of Olive trees planted in raised planters. While this are is subject to proposed redesign, the intention is to replant as many of the Olives as possible in the new scheme and on the new Terraces.

#### Cordylines (Palms)

These are numerous, and some are proposed for removal to increase diversity and carry out restoration in gardens which would not have had cordylines intended for them. They are less useful for biodiversity and replanting with small thorns or Sorbus (mountain ash) for example, would be beneficial to restoration of some areas eg Dutch Garden.

#### **New Planting**

Given the relatively dense, existing tree coverage, new plantings are very limited. However proposed new tree planting will occur with selection of species to tolerate shade. These currently are:

#### In the main lawn:

Sorbus aucuparia (mountain ash) to replace the one recently lost and to match the existing one on the other side of the lawn.

Japanese Garden: small tree – Cornus kousa, +/or or small Sorbus, Pinus mugo (or other small pines)

**Either side of Loggia, North of T22 & T67:** large tree – Nyssa sylvatica or Cercis siliquastrum

#### Morrocan Garden

Cercis siliquastrum and replanted Olive trees.

#### E4 Garden

Potential for open canopy tree planting eg mountain ash Var 'Kashmiriana' or Malus (apple) spp.

Further ornamental trees could be planted if some of the existing hollies/bay trees (eg in Photo 1) are removed and replaced with ornamental trees. This can be further discussed with residents.

Once a final site layout plan has been agreed a full and updated BS5837 report (including a tree removal plan and a tree protection plan) will be produced to accompany the planning submission.

This report will detail measures that will need to be put in place in order to protect the trees during construction and list trees that are to be removed in order to carry out the necessary development works.





#### **Proposed Paving Strategy Sketch**

#### Legend



Restoration (Lift and relay) of central paving area / and other areas bounded blue, following cleaning and trial of lift and re-laying existing paving.



Proposed New paving (outlined red)
Pre-cast concrete in main path area, and stone
paving in Japanese and Italian. (to replace ad-hoc
/ degraded paving, and to match as far as possible,
original paving layout. Type: Braemar by Tobermore
or similar.

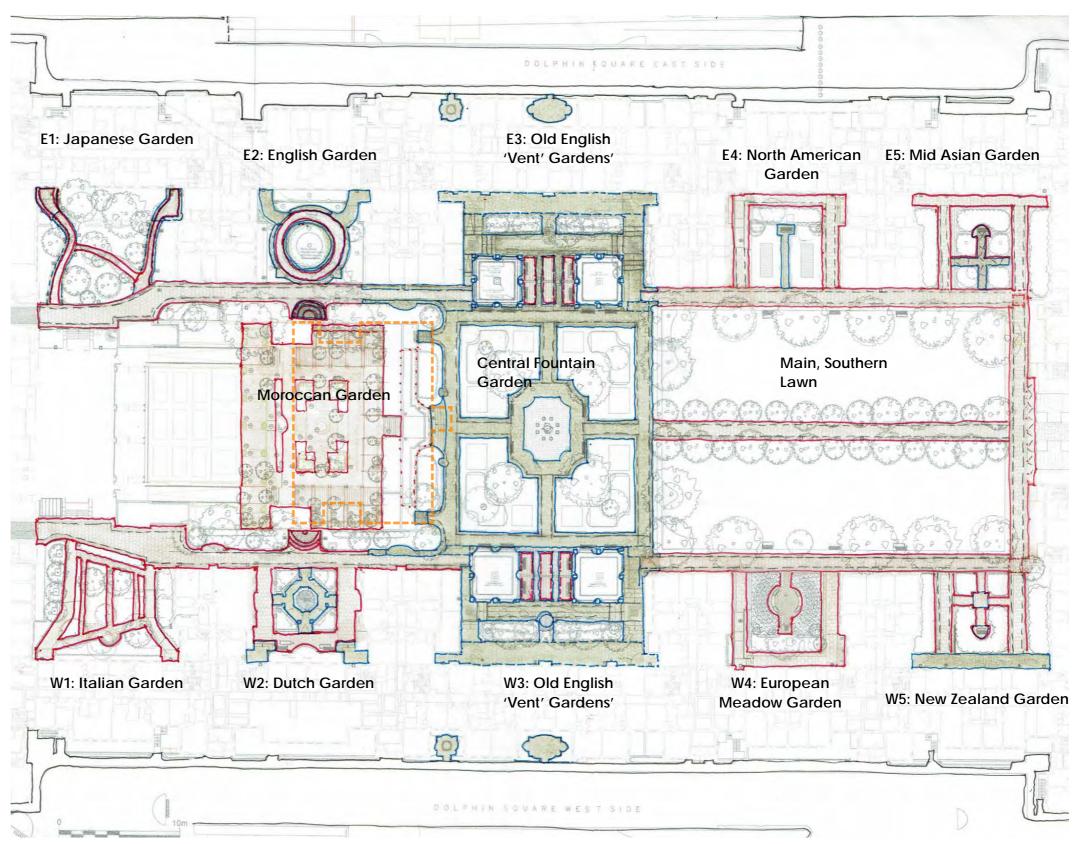


New paving to suit new layout in Moroccan Garden



1. Moroccan Garden Paving

Porcelain external grade, non slip tiles set on pedestal system and insulation.



# 9.Paving Strategy

#### **Existing Paving**

Existing paving is uneven, in places unsafe and the cheap 900 x 600mm slabs are not in keeping with the original. The diagram on the left shows where we propose that the original is lifted and relaid, and also where new slabs and crazy paved edgings are proposed to be installed.

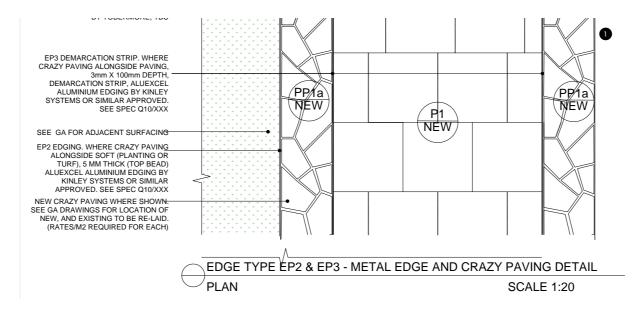
#### **Proposed Strategy**

The main garden paving needs lifting and relaying, reusing, in the central area - the existing PC paving. See diag on left. We will carry out trials on the central paved area, cleaning and re-laying a sample area with the proposed Aluminium edgings separating the crazy paving and main paving. This will give the crazy paving a crisp edge, prevent further movement and enablke easier maintenance.

Replacement slabs will be necessary for other areas (shown lighter grey, edged red in Strategy drawing opp pg) This will be Braemar by Tobermore or similar. Paving will match original paving size and finish as closely as feasible.

Similar attention is required to lift and relay damaged brickwork paving where it exists in gardens E2 an W2, English and Dutch. (Refer Paving Strategy drawing opp pg).

Combination of lift and relay, and new paving; both to match the original layout and materials and as new material and bond in areas of new design, the Italian and Moroccan Gardens.









- 1. Detail for relaid main walkways, with metal edging and separating strip between regular and crazy paving.
- 2. Paving bond to be replaced restored at junctions
- 3. Natural stone, paving for use in Italian (angular crazy paving) and Japanese Gardens. (rounded crazy paving)
- 4. Braemar by Tobermore (or similar) for use in main paths, excluding central area, where existing to be lifted and relaid.