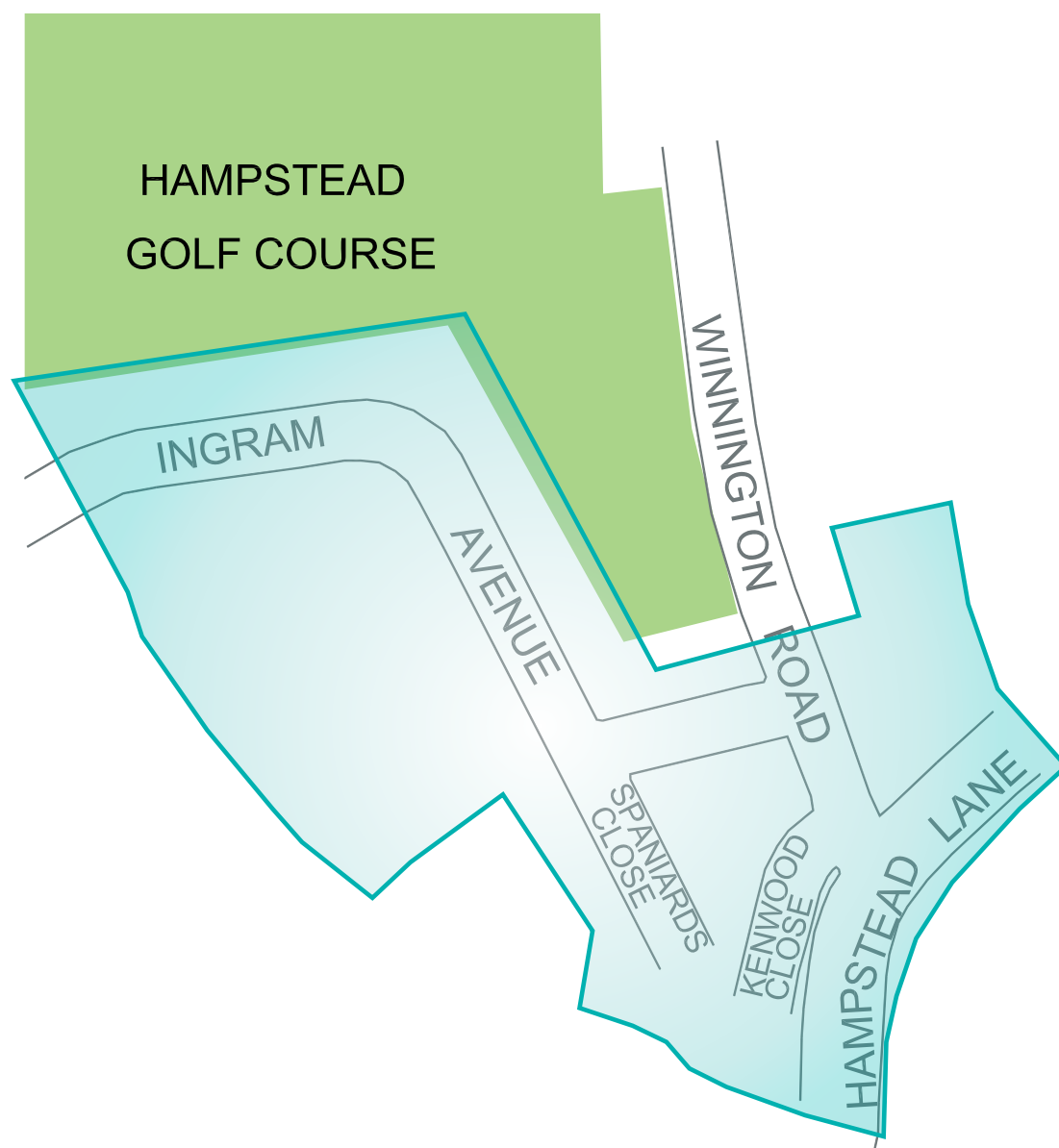


Hampstead Garden Suburb

Ingram Avenue – Area 14

Character Appraisal



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Character appraisal

Background historical and architectural information

1.1 Location and topography

The Ingram Avenue area lies in the southeast part of the Suburb. The land rises from the north west corner, where Ingram Avenue joins the Heath Extension, to the south east at the top of Spaniards Close and Kenwood Close. Ingram Avenue was cut through the woodland of Turners Wood, which explains the presence of mature oaks amongst the houses, and follows the gentle slope of the hill in a rough 'S' shape. The top and bottom sections of the road are on a sharper incline, with the houses stepping up the hill.

Spaniards Close is a cul-de-sac extension of the middle leg of Ingram Avenue, rising steeply to the south. Winnington Road links to the eastern end of Ingram Avenue and climbs to Hampstead Lane. The cul-de-sac of Kenwood Close lies below and parallel to Hampstead Lane.

The houses are set amongst green undeveloped spaces which include Turners Wood, the Heath Extension, Kenwood and Hampstead Golf Course. Turners Wood is, by restrictive covenant, a nature reserve, maintained by the residents of the surrounding houses which have access.

1.2 Development dates

The lease for the land, entitled the Finchley Leasehold Extension, was purchased by the Trust from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners in 1930-31 (the Trust bought the freehold in 1958). The roads and building plots were laid out by the Consultant Architect to the Trust, J.C.S. Soutar, and his new road connected the Suburb with Hampstead Lane and Highgate village.

Numbered plots were leased for development, with clients using either Soutar as designer or their own architect, who would submit plans for Soutar's approval. In this way Soutar maintained control of the layout and architectural appearance of the new development, on behalf of the Trust. The houses were mainly built between 1931 and 1938.

1.3 Originating architects and planners

The majority of the houses were produced in Soutar's office. Others were designed by architects such as Harold Dicksee (No. 5 Ingram Avenue), Guy Church (No. 19 Ingram Avenue), Minoprio and Spencely (No. 27 Ingram Avenue - now demolished), Brian Sutcliffe (No. 12 Ingram Avenue), Evelyn Simmons (No. 37 Ingram Avenue) and the émigré German architect Rudolf Frankel.

The nature of the development was controlled by stipulations in the 999 year leases granted by the Trust. These prohibited any building or additions or alterations to be made and insisted that a garden be laid out and maintained. The front boundary was to be planted up with a "close clipped holly hedge" behind a low york stone wall. The plots were to be developed with "a private dwelling-house in one occupation only" and this has ensured that no houses have been subdivided into flats, thus retaining the feeling of exclusivity.

1.4 Intended purpose of original development

This area was planned for wealthy owner-occupiers who sought space and individuality in their houses. Most properties were designed for a specific client and incorporate the internal layouts and design details that such clients required. Within the parameters of the “house style” as dictated by the Trust, there is much variety. A comparison of two of Soutar’s Neo-Georgian houses illustrates this: No. 85 Winnington Road was built for a young family with live-in maid and nanny, day and night nurseries and huge playroom in the attic. By contrast, No. 24 Ingram Avenue was built for Sir Arthur Elvin, an elderly self-made businessman whose wife enjoyed a first floor boudoir and who had no need of all the available space in his attic. So within the development, a number of lifestyles could be accommodated easily.

1.5 Density and nature of the buildings

This is an area of very low density development, less than 3 houses per acre, whereas the Suburb average is 8. The large, detached houses are of two storeys, many with rooms in the roof space but no basements. All have garages and generous front and rear gardens and the houses are set behind carriage drives. Accommodation for live-in servants was the norm. A number of double plots were purchased by clients who wanted extra garden space or room for a tennis court. Estate agents brochures at the time describe the houses as “small country mansions” and “desirable residences”.

Section 1 Overall character of the area

The serpentine roads of Ingram Avenue and its associated closes are lined with trees and hedges, with large houses standing behind carriage drives. The private Turners Wood lies at the heart of the area, and the green spaces of Hampstead Golf Club, Kenwood and the Heath Extension form the boundaries. The overall impression is of a leafy, contained, residential community where large houses sit comfortably in generous plots. The impression of space is enhanced by the generous front gardens and the wide carriage way of Ingram Avenue itself.



Many of the mature trees in Ingram Avenue are oaks from Turners Wood that were retained in Soutar's layout. There are often views of woodland between houses and trees are visible above the roof lines in almost every part of this area. Turners Wood and the golf course offer attractive outlooks from the rear of many houses and, in general, the original holly hedges remain. Hedges and trees frame views at both entrances of Ingram Avenue (Photograph 1). From the western end of Ingram Avenue there is an attractive view over the Heath Extension.

The architecture is mainly Neo-Georgian, with some houses showing elements of Arts and Crafts influence and there are a few buildings of more eclectic design. Notwithstanding the variety of architectural styles, there is an overall consistency in the massing and setting of the houses and in the building materials. The completion of the development within a relatively short period of time enabled the Trust to enforce its controls in such a way as to achieve a harmonious streetscape, where no house strives to assert itself over its neighbours, and the whole is not let down by its parts. The influence of Soutar in this was very great.

The houses are very large with extensive gardens to the rear and carriage drives to the front. Many of the frontages are symmetrical elevations with Georgian Revival styling. Most of the houses have high quality details and decorative features such as doorcases, and porches. The majority are built in red/brown brick, sometimes with contrasting brick quoins and dressings or a sparing use of stone. Crisp white woodwork for windows, doorcases and cornices contrasts with the brickwork. Dormers are common on the big roofs. Visual emphasis is given to front doors by doorcases and porticos but, in general, the houses are restrained in style and decoration: they are confident buildings which do not strain for effect.

Some houses stand out as landmarks, either because of style or particular quality. In particular the grey brick No. 16 Ingram Avenue by Soutar after a sketch by Lutyens and the Elizabethan style No. 41 Ingram Avenue by Forbes and Tate are highlights. A few later additions detract from the character of the area, there are some overlarge porticos and poor detailing on added dormers. The use of unsympathetic

paving materials in drives and forecourts is of particular concern because these are a prominent feature of the properties.

In general, however, the quality of Soutar's streetscape has endured and has been re-evaluated by architects in recent years. It is now recognised for its coherence and the skilled detailing which distinguishes the houses ([Photograph 2](#)).

In Hampstead Lane there are a few houses of differing character. These were not part of the land developed by the Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust and do not fit the pattern of the rest of the area.

1.1 Principal positive features

Layout and public realm

- detached houses set in large plots, all built with garages
- curve of streets and planning of cul-de-sacs relate sympathetically to the topography
- carriage drives, paved forecourts and garages; moderate on-street parking
- no obtrusive street furniture. Traditional street signage.



Landscape and trees

- views between houses to woods/green space beyond ([Photograph 3 - see overleaf](#)); in particular, the view of Turners Wood between Nos. 24 and 30 Ingram Avenue adds a sense of space and reinforces the wooded atmosphere of the road
- number and scale of trees; at several points large trees frame or enhance a view and trees are visible over rooflines; on the western side of Ingram Avenue, major oaks near the front of plot boundaries are an important feature - these are remnants from the original area of Turner's Wood and were retained in Soutar's layout
- holly hedges predominate with some yew and other evergreen species ([Photograph 4 - see overleaf](#)); the original leases specified that "the front fence to Ingram Avenue should be of york stone edging not exceeding twelve inches in height...with close clipped green holly hedge behind." and in addition, "the side fences shall be of oak trellis fencing four feet high."
- mature planting in front gardens complements and enhances the buildings.



Building type and design

- architectural style is mainly Neo-Georgian, some houses display Arts and Crafts and Art Deco influences
- there are core architectural affinities between houses; there is consistency in proportions, rooflines and fenestration styles - although there some differences in size these consistencies result in an overall impression of harmony
- Garages are mostly set well back to leave visual gaps between houses
- Interesting and high quality detailing in brickwork, windows, and doors on many houses; on the Soutar houses this is often very restrained giving elegance to an otherwise plain house ([Photograph 5](#))
- the controlling influence of Soutar, the Trust Architect, is evident throughout the road
- a small number of houses stand out as highlights, enlivening the character of the area.



Materials and detailing

- traditional building styles and materials
- uniformity of building materials, brick with plaster, wood or stone decoration
- Neo-Georgian houses characterised by sash windows, prominent chimney stacks, dormer windows, cornices and steep roofs, sometimes with parapets ([Photograph 6 -see overleaf](#))
- houses influenced by the Arts and Crafts tradition have restrained decorative brick detailing

- dormers are common and in most cases sit happily on the large roofs.



Principal negative features

Landscape and trees

- the high proportion of land in front of some houses paved for hardstanding results in a stark, harsh effect at odds with ambience of the area
- block paving on driveways looks alien to the area
- neglected trees in front of some houses obscure views
- a few large boundary walls, piers and fences break the general hedge line.

Building type and design

- some houses have had over-large porticos in inappropriate stonework added; Soutar preferred modest, finely carved doorcases or painted timber porches and canopies
- added shutters often add clutter to the elevations and can spoil the proportions of some houses.

Materials and detailing

- unsympathetic paving materials in drives and forecourts can detract from the character of the street because these are a prominent feature of the properties
- some inappropriate replacement windows (rare)
- modern, off-the-peg garage doors are out of character; white paint draws attention to these
- some dormers are too large and poorly detailed
- lighting and security cameras are badly placed and intrusive in some cases
- some large, elaborate, steel gates in Winnington Road detract from the appearance of houses.

Section 2 The different parts of the area in greater detail

Whereas the above elements are found throughout the area, certain features are more characteristic of particular parts. To illustrate some of these features, the area can be divided into three sections.

3.1 Hampstead Lane, Kenwood Close and the top part of Winnington Road

3.2 Ingram Avenue

3.3 Spaniards Close

2.1 Hampstead Lane, Kenwood Close and the top part of Winnington Road

Character and landscape

Hampstead Lane is a busy road linking Hampstead and Highgate. To the South are the grounds of Kenwood. Four houses close to the junction of Winnington Road and Hampstead Lane are within the Conservation Area, although they lie outside the Suburb Trust boundary. Winnington Road is a wide road lined with trees and hedges. There are street trees of varied species planted in grass verges and the hedges are largely holly. The houses are large and set well back behind carriage drives.



Kenwood Close is set below the busy Hampstead Lane which links Hampstead and Highgate. Traffic noise is a problem here and in Winnington Road. Sparse planting on the bank between Kenwood Close and the main road does little to reduce noise. In Kenwood Close, planting of front gardens complements the style of the houses (Photograph 7). Plot boundaries are fenced at the top of the close and low walls with planting for the remaining houses (this openness is comparatively unusual in this area). A large willow tree in the garden of Kenwood House is a landmark (Photograph 8).

Architecture

The houses on Hampstead Lane are similar in style to others in the area, however on the corner is a white Cape Dutch style building which would be something of a landmark were it not so well screened. It has

handsome shaped gables and a soft green pantiled roof but has been subdivided and is much altered. A new house of little interest has been built in the rear garden, fronting Winnington Road.



Kenwood Close contains three houses designed by Soutar in 1936. The uniform scale of the houses and the use of same building materials, red/brown brickwork with orange dressings give this group of Neo-Georgian houses a harmonious appearance (Photograph 9). High quality details make an important contribution, e.g. arched dormers, white timber sash windows, and moulded doorcases. There are shutters on all houses, those on No. 1 are original; on No. 2 they are a recent addition and add to the character of this particular group of houses.

The four houses at the top west side of Winnington Road were the first to be built in this area. A group of four linked villas, in red brick with corner pilasters, white sash windows and intricately carved Baroque doorcases, they have linked garages which draw them together into a composition in the Unwin tradition. The group was built in this prominent location to advertise the new development to potential customers travelling along Hampstead Lane and set the tone for the new development. These houses have carriage drives in different paving material which detracts from the group. Stone paving is the most in keeping with the ambience of the area. Alfred House on the corner of Winnington Road and Ingram Avenue has less successful proportions and makes a neutral rather than positive contribution to the character of the area. The portico is overscaled. No. 84, on the opposite corner, is a Neo-Vernacular house with timber framed elements and leaded windows by Soutar. It relates stylistically to the golf clubhouse next door. The boundary fence is not consistent with the prevailing character.

Houses on the east side of Winnington Road are set further back behind wrought iron gates. The impact of these houses on the 'feel' of the road is minimised by the large grounds and the general impression is of openness, greenery and strongly marked boundaries to the private spaces. Renovations and additions

are evident on many houses and proportions and materials do not always match the original design. No. 85 is a well mannered Soutar design with subtle stepped brickwork on the pedimented front elevation.

2.2 Ingram Avenue

Character and landscape

Ingram Avenue rises steeply from the junction with Wildwood Road. The road has an enclosed feeling; large trees, mostly major oaks from Turners Wood, dominate the streetscape, and these, together with other trees frame the view up the hill and back down to the Heath Extension. The road turns sharply to the southwest into the long central section. Here, the building line is closer to the road on the eastern side and the houses are generally closer together, giving a more built up appearance. This is balanced on the western side by the large plots of Nos. 24 and 30, which contain major trees and open up the road. This land was part of the original Turner's Wood and now provides views into the remaining part of the wood. Trees are visible above the rooflines on both sides of the road. This greenery lightens the built up feel and sustains the character of the area. There are no street trees in this section of the road. Garden planting complements the houses.

Turning east the road rises to meet Winnington Road and the ambience changes. It is a return to the green, enclosed character of the entrance to Ingram Avenue from the Heath Extension end. A variety of very large trees (sycamore, willow, birch and conifer) in the gardens of properties and in the pavements provide a green framework defining the entrance to the avenue at its eastern end. Brick verges have replaced the original grass verges. This is the only part of Ingram Avenue planted with street trees. The rest of the street is served with trees from the original Turners Wood which survive in gardens as well as in the remaining part of the Wood itself.

Boundaries are formed by low walls with hedges behind. The original leases specified low stone walls and holly hedging. Today holly and yew are the predominating hedge species and many of the original low walls survive. There are relatively few gate piers, which adds to the rural ambience. The boundary wall (brick and wrought iron) of No. 37 on the corner opposite Spaniards Close breaks up this effect and makes a negative contribution to the character of the area.

Architecture

Ingram Avenue consists of a series of generous Georgian Revival or late Arts and Crafts houses. Some examples or features of particular note are described below, starting at the Heath Extension end. The road starts with a sequence of Soutar's well mannered Georgian villas, using contrasting brick and white sash or casement windows. No. 5 stands out as an interesting Arts and Crafts design by Dicksee with asymmetrical frontage and front door recessed under a brick vault.

No. 6 is let down by poor grey concrete block paving, black marble piers at back of pavement and a particularly unsightly bin store ([Photograph 10 - see overleaf](#)). However it has a fine carved timber doorcase. No. 8 has had an assertive stone portico added in front of Soutar's modest doorcase which detracts from the house, poor shutters which obscure the architectural detail and a block paved drive ([Photograph 11 - see overleaf](#)).



Soutar produces a picturesque frontage with canted stair tower and off-central door at No. 11. No. 12, by Brian Sutcliffe, has an Art Deco influenced canopy, the gravel and stone forecourt with its formal garden design provides a complementary setting for the house ([Photograph 12](#)). No. 15, which appears to have been designed as the home of the builder Robert Hart, (who built many of the houses in this part of the Suburb) is particularly elegant, with recessed panels of brickwork to enliven the façade and a modest doorcase.



No. 16 Ingram Avenue was added to the statutory list of buildings of architectural and historic interest in 2003 when it was confirmed that the initial design had been done by Lutyens for Reginald McKenna, Chairman of the Midland Bank and a very important client of Lutyens. Grey and red brick, like the buildings of Central Square, with projecting wings enclosing a forecourt. It has a five bay front, two brick

niches at ground floor level and a swan-necked pediment over the front door. The chimney stacks are curiously positioned on the front elevation of the house ([Photograph 13](#)).

No. 17 has a fine stepped brickwork elevation and pleasing segmental bay windows on the ground floor but has been overextended so that it now spreads across the plot. Opposite, No. 18 is a big, plain, symmetrical house centred on a strongly arched front door. No. 21 is let down by shutters and unfortunate marble front steps. No. 22 has a handsome frontage which breaks forward in the centre under a pediment, like a mini country house. No. 24 occupies a double plot with formal garden to the side and a circular corner bay from which to enjoy the view.

No. 27 is a rebuild of a house demolished due to structural failure. Some of the details are poor, such as a mean eaves cornice. Nos. 31 and 33 are a handsome pair in grey brick with red corner pilasters by William Willets. Both have been marred by ostentatious front doors and porches. The Venetian windows of No. 33 are a bold touch.



Nos. 34 and 36 are rather peculiar houses built in the 1950s and occupy two plots which would have offered views of Turner's Wood from Ingram Avenue. Their architectural treatment is not of the quality of their neighbours. Opposite, the eclectic No. 37 (Simmons 1934) is an interesting mix; Arts and Crafts elements, a Neo-Georgian façade and Art Deco touches to the front door surround ([Photograph 14](#)).

No. 41 Ingram Avenue is designed in a totally different style to the prevailing Neo-Georgian. By Forbes and Tate, 1932, it is Elizabethan with stone mullioned leaded windows – bizarrely proportioned and with curiously thin chimneys ([Photograph 15 - see overleaf](#)). It is the only house in the road without a carriage drive. Tall stone piers and a wrought iron gate mark the entrance and there is an attractive heavy oak door. Despite its treatment, it fits into the general ambience and the quality of the house makes it a highlight of the area.

Nearly all houses in the street make a positive contribution to the character of the road and some have strong details. Many houses have shutters, possibly not original, and these often distort the proportions of houses, creating a heavy horizontal line at first floor level. Clay hand-made clay roof tiles with bonnets are essential to the character of the houses because the roofs are very dominant. Quite a few houses have no front dormers (unusual in this area) and this gives a more restful roofline.



15.

Most houses originally had single storey motor houses with flat roofs set well back from the frontage. Some garages have been extended forward or built over. This has visually infilled the spaces between some houses, damaging their setting and obscuring views between them.



16.

There is no uniformity in the paving of forecourts and drives. Those with gravel, york stone or even tarmac look more natural than block paving, which can look hard and mechanical ([Photograph 16](#)). Generally houses do not have gates, although No. 38 has tall and elaborate steel gates, to its detriment.

2.3 Spaniards Close

Character and landscape

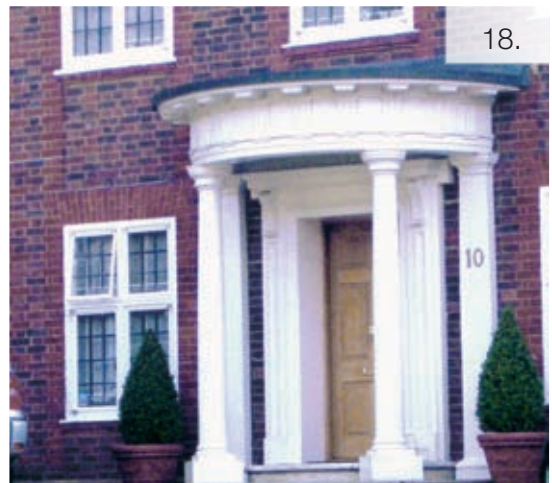
Spaniards Close is a quiet turning, rising up the hill to the south terminating in a small turning circle. The majority of the houses have carriage drives or paved forecourts. Random york stone paving is the most successful in relation to the area character. Front gardens have mature planting giving a green ambience. In some cases the trees in front gardens obscure the architecture. On the west side of the close there are views through to greenery behind and tall trees are visible above the rooflines. Hedges are mainly holly, behind a low stone wall as the original leases specified.

Architecture

All the houses in Spaniards Close were designed in Soutar's office and are good examples of his handling of a variety of styles. In addition to the usual well-mannered Neo-Georgian, Nos. 4 to 10, on the western side of the road, are unusual and inventive Classical houses with leaded windows, distinctive brick detailing and big tiled roofs with central hipped dormers ([Photograph 17](#)). Nos. 8 and 10 are broken forward at the centre for emphasis. Elaborate timber doorcases and porches add interest, although Soutar's original elegant swan-necked pediment at No. 10 has been replaced by a Tuscan porch ([Photograph 18](#)). The Baroque shell hood and giant order of brick pilasters at No. 8 are particularly noteworthy



17.



18.

The development follows the slope of the hill up to a dominant house with symmetrical garage extensions to each side. A large Monkey-Puzzle tree obscures the intended focal view of this central house (No. 14), and the two flanking garages are given undue prominence. Two distinctive houses sit either side of No. 14 on the turning circle.



19.

On the west side is No. 12, an Arts and Crafts house in a consciously picturesque style which contrasts its tall chimney, dramatic staircase gable and low sweeping roof ([Photograph 19](#)). There is no boundary hedge to this property which is unusual in this

area. On the east side, Roman brick detailing and thinly coursed brickwork around a handsome door adds elegance to a restrained Vernacular design at No. 9.

