

Hampstead Garden Suburb

Conservation Area

Character Appraisal Statement Introduction



BARNET
LONDON BOROUGH

HAMPSTEAD - GARDEN - SUBURB - TRUST

For further information on the contents of this document contact:

Urban Design and Heritage Team (Strategy)
Planning, Housing and Regeneration
First Floor, Building 2,
North London Business Park,
Oakleigh Road South,
London N11 1NP

tel: 020 8359 3000

email: planning.enquiries@barnet.gov.uk

(add character appraisals' in the subject line)

Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust
862 Finchley Road
London NW11 6AB

tel: 020 8455 1066

email: planning@hgstrust.org

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Section 1 Introduction

1.1 Hampstead Garden Suburb

Hampstead Garden Suburb is internationally recognised as one of the finest examples of early twentieth century domestic architecture and town planning. It is unique among the Conservation Areas in Barnet in that the Suburb is protected both by the statutory powers which the London Borough of Barnet has, and by the Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust which has separate legal powers to 'maintain and preserve the present character and amenities of Hampstead Garden Suburb'. Some parts of the Conservation Area lie outside the control of the Trust. These include most of The Bishop's Avenue, Marylebone Cemetery, Golders Green Crematorium and the open spaces of Bigwood, the Heath Extension, and Hampstead Golf Course.

Barnet Council and the Trust wish to cooperate in all matters related to the preservation and enhancement of the Conservation Area and the production of the Character Appraisal Statement is the result of such cooperation.

1.2 Conservation areas

Conservation areas were introduced in 1967 through the Civic Amenities Act. They are defined as 'areas of special architectural or historic interest,' the character and appearance of which should be preserved or enhanced. It is the quality and interest of an area, rather than that of individual buildings, which is the prime consideration in identifying a potential conservation area.

It is the duty of local planning authorities to designate conservation areas and to use their legal powers to safeguard and enhance the special qualities of these areas within a framework of agreed policies and proposals. Summaries of the principal legislation and policies applying to Hampstead Garden Suburb are set out in sections 1.4, 1.5 and 1.6.

Hampstead Garden Suburb was designated as a conservation area in 1968 and the older part of the Suburb was recognised as a 'Conservation Area of Outstanding Architectural or Historic Interest' in 1977.

1.3 Purpose of a character appraisal statement

Conservation areas are designated by local planning authorities after careful local assessment. This assessment forms the basis for a Character Appraisal Statement. The format and scope of such statements are guided by English Heritage.

Government legislation on conservation areas, and historic buildings generally, is set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, which states in section 71:

"It shall be the duty of a local planning authority from time to time to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are conservation areas."

The Government, through the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and English Heritage issued Planning Policy Statement 5 (PPS 5) on 23rd March 2010, which has replaced Planning Policy Guidance Notes 15 and 16.

PPS 5 sets out planning policies on the conservation of the historic environment. These policies should be read alongside other relevant statements of national planning policy. Guidance to help practitioners implement this statement, including the legislative requirements that underpin it, is provided in Planning for the Historic Environment Practice Guide.

In accordance with PPS 5, heritage assets, including Locally Listed buildings and buildings which make a positive contribution to the area, have been identified as part of the character appraisal. Though lacking the statutory protection of other designations, the formal identification, by the local authority, of buildings important to the conservation area, is a material consideration in planning decisions.

Since 1994 the Design Guidance agreed by Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust and Barnet Council has formed the framework within which planning decisions have been considered. This Character Appraisal statement will provide an up to date and detailed framework for planning decisions in the Suburb and for future policies to preserve and enhance the area. It also forms the basis of the revised Design Guidance which has been prepared by Barnet Council and the Trust.

The aim of this Character Appraisal is to

- improve the understanding of the development and historical context of Hampstead Garden Suburb
- generate awareness of exactly what it is about Hampstead Garden Suburb Conservation Area that makes it of 'special interest' and uniquely distinctive as a 'historic area'
- provide residents and owners with a clear idea of what should be cared for and preserved and how the area could be enhanced
- update the guidelines agreed by the Trust and Barnet Council for preserving and enhancing Hampstead Garden Suburb
- inform Barnet Council's planning practice and policies for the area
- provide information to guide Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust in its decision making under its separate legal powers.

1.4 The Barnet unitary development plan

The current statutory "development plan" under Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and local policy document covering this area is the Adopted Barnet Unitary Development Plan (2006). On 13th May 2009 the Secretary of State issued a direction formally "saving" a number of Barnet UDP policies pending their replacement by the Local Development Framework in 2010 /11. Of particular relevance in the current UDP are the strategic policies GB Env1 which seeks to protect and enhance the quality and character of the borough's built and natural environment, and GB Env 4 which seeks to protect by preserving or enhancing the borough's buildings, areas, open spaces or features that are of special value in architectural, townscape or landscape, historic, agriculture or nature conservation terms

- policies HC1 and HC2 aim to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of conservation areas by controlling inappropriate development and demolition. Policies HC14 and HC15 seek to protect locally listed buildings and their settings

- as the UDP will be replaced by a new Local Development Framework (LDF), the Conservation Area Appraisal will be used to support the policies contained in emerging LDF documents, particularly the Barnet “Core strategy” which contains strategic level policies. More focussed policies on heritage and conservation will be provided in the Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (DPD).

This Character Appraisal Statement will help deliver the objectives of the council’s spatial development and regeneration vision Three Strands Approach (PEG) – Preservation, Enhancement and Growth which seeks to deliver successful high quality suburbs now and for the future. A third of the borough is made up of green belt land, protected open spaces and parks and will be protected under the umbrella of the first strand. Another third of the borough is made up of high quality, low density Victorian or Edwardian townscape or two-storey family housing and successful suburban neighbourhoods of the 1920’s and 1930’s. This will be enhanced under the umbrella of the second strand.

Conservation areas fall under both the first and second strands as they require preservation or enhancement of their character and appearance. Growth is expected to take place in specific regeneration areas in the third strand. The PEG approach highlights Barnet as an attractive, desirable place to live, which is rich in heritage and therefore there is a need to provide appropriate planning protection for conservation areas and, where appropriate, to investigate additional or extended conservation areas.

1.5 Article 4 directions

In an effort to preserve or enhance the special character and appearance of the area, the council decided to introduce an Article 4 Direction for most of the Conservation Area (shortly after designation in 1968). This led to the removal of a number of “permitted development” rights and this has been updated with successive General Permitted Development Orders. The Article 4 Direction allows the council to control minor works, such as the replacement of external doors, windows and roofing materials, the creation of hardstandings, the erection of porches and external painting, in an effort to retain the area’s special qualities. This ensures that any such changes to the Conservation Area preserve or enhance its special characteristics.

1.6 Area of special advertisement control

An “Area of Special Advertisement Control” covers much of the Hampstead Garden Suburb Conservation Area. This means that additional restrictions apply to the types and sizes of advertisement that can usually be displayed without the council’s consent. Although the designation provides control over large numbers of residential property, its use is seen to be most important for shops and commercial buildings including those at Market Place and Temple Fortune. Particular emphasis will be placed on those signs and advertisements which might detract from the character or the appearance of the Conservation Area, a listed building or its setting. Further details can be found in Barnet Council’s Design Guidance Note No: 1 Advertising and Signs.

1.7 The role of Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust

Before local authorities became responsible for town planning, the original ground landlords and their consultant architects controlled the development of the Garden Suburb. The New Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust took over from the original Trust in 1968 ("New" was dropped from the title in 2006). It is a non-profit making company limited by guarantee; all residents who have lived in the Suburb for more than three years are eligible for company membership. The Trust's Memorandum and Articles require it to do all things possible to maintain and preserve the present character and amenities of Hampstead Garden Suburb.

The 1967 Leasehold Reform Act, which gave leaseholders the right to buy their freeholds, also allows for the establishment of Schemes of Management. These ensure that the architectural standards previously controlled under the terms of leases are maintained when a property becomes freehold. The Scheme of Management for the Suburb, operated by the Trust under the aegis of the High Court, came into force in January 1974. Thus the Trust is able to control architectural standards through:

- covenants in the leases of leasehold properties
- the Scheme of Management and stipulations in the freehold transfers for freeholders.

The dual controls exercised by the Trust and by the London Borough of Barnet have resulted in exceptional success in the conservation of the Suburb.

1.8 Distinctive features of this character appraisal

Three elements make this character appraisal statement distinctive.

The work of residents

First, much of the initial groundwork was prepared by residents. The initial character appraisal of the area covered by the Trust was produced by volunteers from Hampstead Garden Suburb working under the guidance of a Co-ordinator and the Trust's Architectural Advisor. The work was overseen by a Steering Group on which English Heritage, Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust and the London Borough of Barnet were represented. Cllr. Andrew Harper, chaired the steering group. That part of the Conservation Area outside that managed by the Trust, was covered by Officers of L.B. of Barnet. The initial work was exhibited for comment. Subsequently, the document went through the normal processes of scrutiny, amendment and consultation used by Barnet Planning Services before an amended document was presented for adoption.

Scale of the task

Secondly, the scale of the undertaking. Hampstead Garden Suburb Conservation Area covers 1009 acres including Hampstead Heath Extension. It comprises some 5,000 properties which range from studio flats to some of the largest mansion houses in London. There are examples of the most influential town planning developments and architectural styles of the early twentieth century. It has the greatest concentration of statutory listed buildings in the Borough (two Grade I, forty one Grade II*, and seven hundred and forty Grade II listed buildings). Statutory listed buildings include Golders Green

Crematorium and the listed buildings within its grounds and, in Central Square, major public buildings by Sir Edwin Lutyens.

To reflect this scale and the variety within the Conservation Area, 17 distinct areas were identified on the basis of character, architectural style, and chronology. Five separate open spaces were also identified on the basis of character and function. The fieldwork was undertaken in each area and brought together to form the character appraisal for the Conservation Area as a whole.

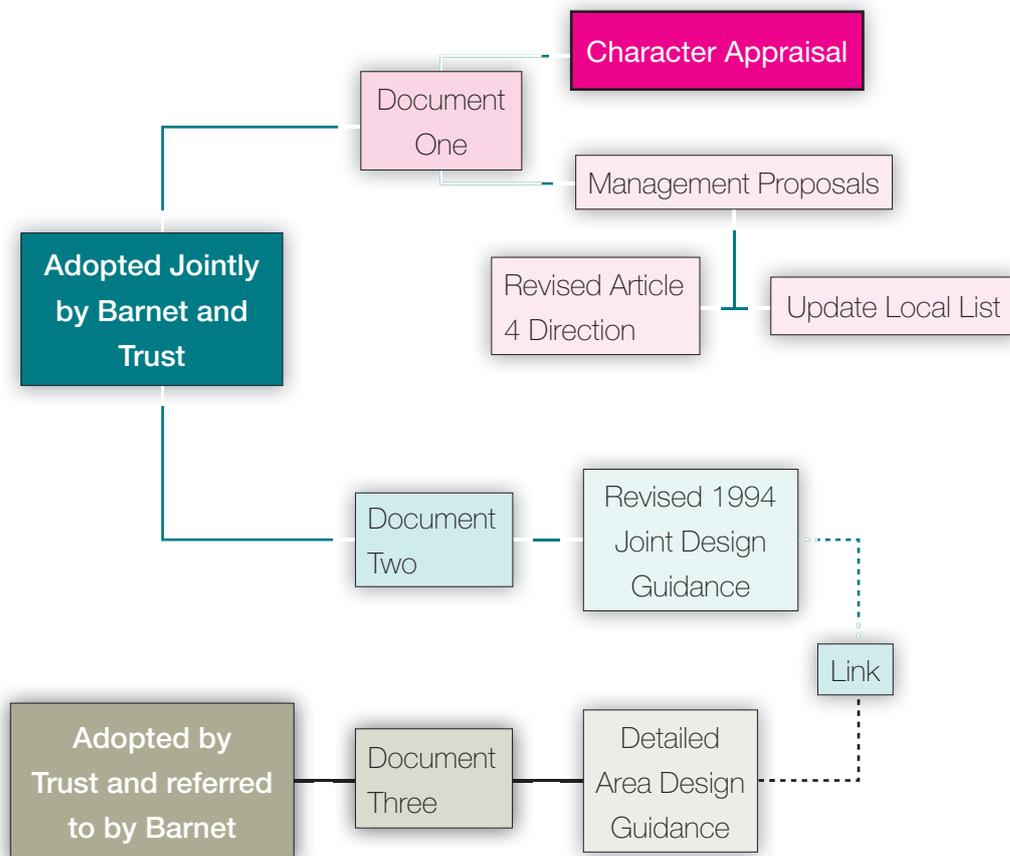
Structure

This scale leads to the third distinctive aspect of the character appraisal statement, its structure. The appraisal document follows the format of other Barnet Council conservation area character appraisal statements, but because the 17 sub-areas are so distinctive, most of the detailed information is contained in the area character appraisals, listed in section 6. These are designed to be used as individual documents which residents can download from the Trust and Barnet Council websites ie. www.hgs.org.uk and www.barnet.gov.uk. They should be read in the context of the Conservation Area Character Appraisal as a whole, including the Issues and Management Proposals.

Hampstead Garden Suburb Conservation Area

Character Appraisal and Management Proposals

Structure Diagram



Section 2 Location and uses

2.1 Location

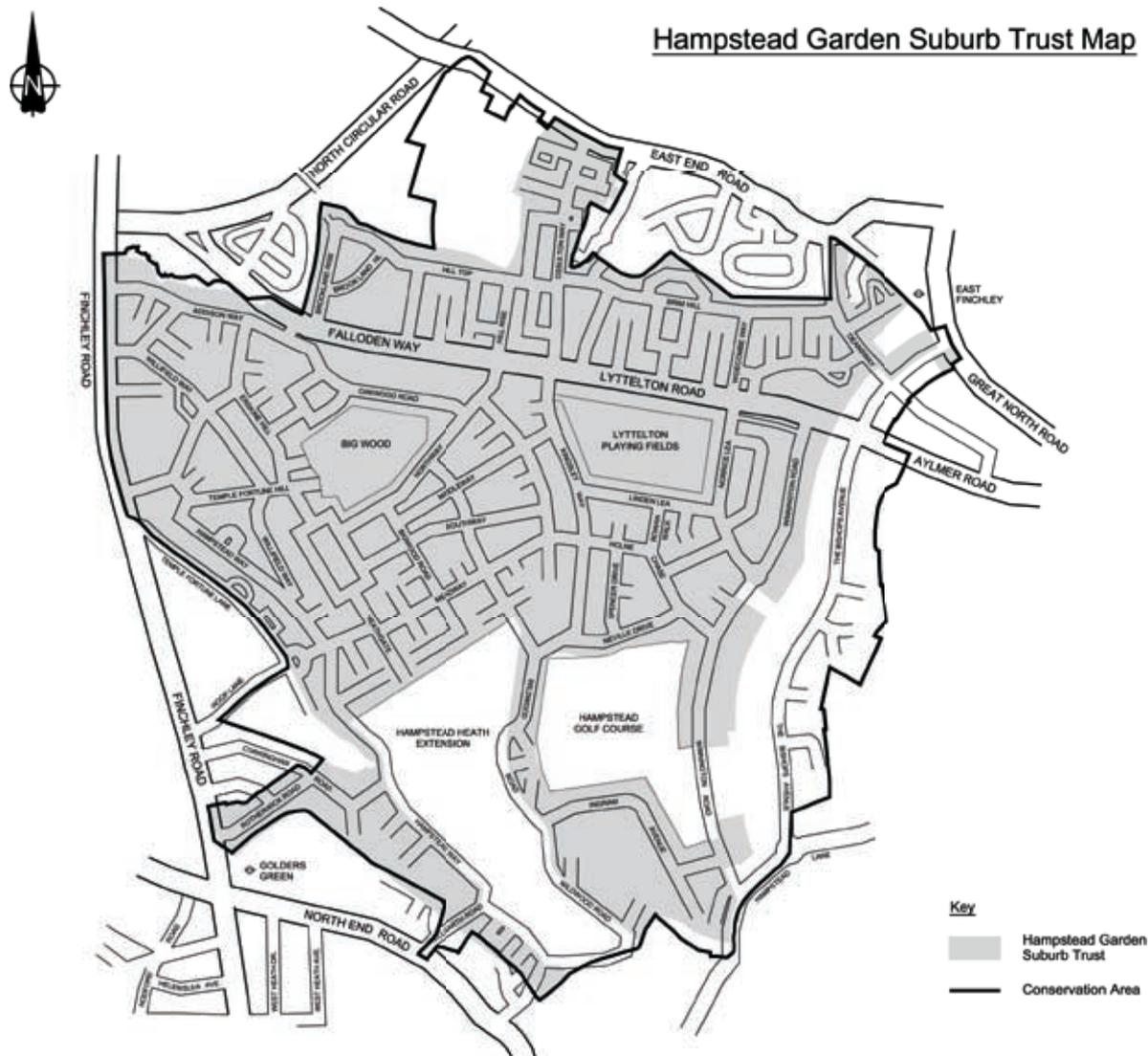
Hampstead Garden Suburb is located in the south of the borough. It comprises the land around the Heath Extension and runs northwards as far as East End Road. The eastern boundary is The Bishops Avenue. To the west it extends to the east side of Finchley Road.

Map showing Hampstead Garden Suburb area within the borough



The Conservation Area was designated in 1968 and subsequently extended to include Golders Green Crematorium. The boundaries of the Conservation Area and the area covered by the Scheme of Management operated by Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust are not the entirely same. For example, the Trust's Scheme of Management covers neither the Crematorium nor most of The Bishops Avenue.

Map showing the respective boundaries of the Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust and the Conservation Area



The total Hampstead Garden Suburb area covers 1009 acres, which includes roughly 136 acres (13%) of open space. The 2001 census indicated that approximately 12,500 people live in the Conservation Area and that there are just over 5000 households.

2.2 Uses and activities

Hampstead Garden Suburb is predominantly a residential area with significant open spaces devoted to recreational or community use and two local shopping areas. The Suburb was developed between 1907 and 1938 on a greenfield site and built to a formal plan in which the character of the original woodland and agricultural land influenced the land usage and activities in the area.

The highest point is roughly in the centre of the original site and here, Central Square was developed as the formal heart of the new community with churches, public buildings and landscaped open space

making a coherent and dramatic architectural statement. It remains the occasional focus for community activities such as the Suburb Centenary celebrations in 2008 (Photograph 1). Areas of woodland, Turners Wood, Big and Little Wood, were retained as open spaces and generous provision was made for small greens, communal gardens, allotment areas and tennis courts. The flood land alongside Mutton Brook was integrated into the Suburb as a park, recreational area and playing fields.



South of Central Square, the most desirable sites surrounding the Heath extension were developed with large houses and mansions set in very spacious plots. Here, on the East side of the Heath extension, part of the remaining Turners Wood still stands between Wildwood Road and Ingram Avenue. Also on the eastern edge of the Suburb, Hampstead Golf Club was established in 1894 on 38 acres leased from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners and has remained on this site within the Conservation Area but not within the remit of the Trust Scheme of Management. On the slopes of the hill to the north of Central Square, areas of more modest middle class housing lead to the Artisans' Quarter where terraced cottages and flats provided cheaper housing. Social housing was concentrated in this part of the Suburb and some still remains.

The Artisans' Quarter is bounded by Finchley Road, an old turnpike road linking Central London to its northern hinterland. This became the main shopping centre for the Suburb. A second shopping area is located at Market Place on the east-west route through the Suburb. This area grew as the Suburb expanded to the north of Market Place between the wars.

The overall housing density is roughly 10 to the acre but it ranges from 22 to the acre in the areas of flats and maisonettes, to 12 to the acre in the Artisans' Quarter, and as little as 3 to the acre in Ingram Avenue. These are low densities by modern standards and are indicative of the large gardens and generous designation of public open space which characterise the Conservation Area. Most of the houses are now owner occupied but the housing is very varied with every type of dwelling represented from one bedroom

flats to large mansions (30% of the housing stock is flats and roughly 6% of dwellings are social housing). There is also sheltered housing for the elderly in The Orchard and a residential home, Abbeyfield House, in Holmsfield. This range of housing is fundamental to the character of the Suburb; it provides for a mixed community in age, household composition, and income.

Religious buildings include the Free Church, St Jude-on-the-Hill, the Quaker Meeting House and the Synagogue and Kerem School in Norrice Lea. Three other synagogues on the borders of the Conservation Area also serve the large Jewish community in the Suburb. Public buildings include the Primary and Infants School, Henrietta Barnett School, The Free Church Hall and Fellowship House which provide venues for a range of clubs, classes, lectures and meetings.



The Heath Extension (74 acres) is by far the largest public open space but additionally, there are nearly three acres of allotments, 18 acres of public woodland in Big Wood and Little Wood, and a major recreational area in the 23 acres of Lyttelton Playing Fields. Tennis is particularly well provided for with three tennis clubs and public courts in Central Square and Northway Gardens. All of the open spaces are well used by residents and others outside the Conservation Area. At weekends, the Heath Extension is the venue for North London local league fixtures in football, rugby and cricket ([Photograph 2](#)). Golders Green Crematorium and Gardens and Marylebone Cemetery are important public facilities which also provide extensive areas of green, open space at the boundaries of the Conservation Area.

The quality of the architecture, the landscape environment and community facilities make the Suburb a very desirable place to live. These features also generate a strong sense of place among residents and a very high level of community activity. The Residents Association (RA) is the largest in the UK with 2,200 households in membership; it publishes an annual directory and a newspaper, Suburb News, which are distributed to every household. The RA is very active in activities to safeguard and enhance the character and amenities of the area. It is organised on a ward system and its Council and Standing Committees cover matters such as trees and open spaces, conservation and amenities, litter, roads and traffic.



There are many flourishing Societies which utilise the environment and facilities so carefully planned by the founders of the Suburb. Annual community events include the annual Proms at St Jude's each June, Theatre Productions in the Little Wood Open Air Theatre and in Henrietta Barnet School Hall; and Spring and Summer Shows run by the Horticultural Society -evidence of the continuing enthusiasm of residents for the concept of the Garden Suburb. To mark its own Centenary in 2009, the Horticultural Society created a bed on Willifield Green to celebrate the plants and produce of Suburb gardens and allotments (Photograph 3).

Section 3 The historical development of Hampstead Garden Suburb

3.1 Early history

Prior to the 14th century, there is little evidence of anything other than sporadic, nomadic settlement in the area now covered by Hampstead Garden Suburb. The poorly drained London clay was hard to clear and cultivate, and the land was largely covered in forest. The Domesday Survey shows that the ownership of the land was dominated by the church, with smaller holdings by King William I. Custody of the land covering roughly half of the present conservation area was assigned by Henry VI to Eton College in 1449 and the title transferred to Eton College in 1531 at which time it was named The Wyldes.

By the 16th century, the growing metropolis provided a ready market for hay and other agricultural produce; this stimulated forest clearance creating arable land, pasture and coppiced woodland. Wyldes Farmhouse was built at this time. The land north of Mutton Brook remained in the ownership of the church with a similar pattern of land use. There were small settlements on the roads at the boundaries of the Wyldes estate. The Finchley Turnpike had been built in 1826 and a hamlet prospered at Temple Fortune where the turnpike crossed the old track linking Hendon to Hampstead. Another hamlet at North End grew when the North End Way was cut through the Heath in the 1730s and there were scattered houses along East End Lane on the northern boundary of the current Suburb. But, until 1900, the agricultural and woodland character of the Wyldes estate and the Ecclesiastical Commission land to the north remained substantially unchanged.



*LOOKING
SOUTH
over the extended
Heath. Round this
land the larger
houses on the Es-
tate are being
built.*

of the railway. Henrietta Barnett began to raise money and to campaign for the preservation of 80 acres to form an extension of Hampstead Heath as a public open space. Influenced by the ideas of Ebenezer Howard's Garden City movement, she broadened her objective to include a new community where all classes would live together in an open healthy environment.

Her first attempt to buy the land was refused on the grounds that she was 'only a woman' but she gathered together seven distinguished Trustees to lend credibility to her ideas and appointed an architect, Raymond Unwin, to translate her social ideals into a layout plan. Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust was born and the sale of the land progressed. The acquisition of the land now comprising Hampstead Garden Suburb was achieved between 1907 and 1911 from a jigsaw of seven separate lots. Building began in 1907 on the 243 acres of the Wyldes estate purchased from Eton College which form the major part of the 'Old Suburb'.

Map showing land acquisition and dates



A MAP FOR REFERENCE

- 1 The 80 Acres. The Heath Extension.
- 2 The Freehold Estate. The original Suburb. The boundary between Big Wood and Emmott Close was changed by land exchanges in 1915 to make the plots easier. The borough boundaries were also changed so that no house was in both boroughs. The result was different, however.
- 3 The Hendon Leasehold Estate. Originally 99-year lease; freehold bought 1958.
- 4 The 112 Acres. Shown with 1915 boundaries between Big Wood and Emmott Close. Developed under Trust control until 1919, but thereafter under Copartnership control. Originally 999-year leases; freehold bought 1958.
- 5 plus 6 The 300 Acres. Developed under Copartnership control. The Copartners paid the Trust a fee for calling it Hampstead Garden Suburb. Originally 999-year leases; freehold bought 1958. 6 sold to Trust 1933.
- 7 plus 6 The Finchley Leasehold Extension. Originally 999-year leases; freehold bought 1958.
- 7 plus Golf Course and other land in Winton Road had been The 110 Acres.
- 7 south of Golf Course was The 34 Acres.

Pragmatic Idealism

Henrietta Barnett believed that good architecture and careful town planning would make a better quality of life available to the 'industrial classes'. Her idealism was, however, tempered by pragmatic economic arrangements and the social attitudes of the time. The Trust did not develop the land itself. Instead, it set up the Garden Suburb Development Company to develop the land within Unwin's master plan and to ensure that the lessees maintained high design standards, whether in the construction of cottages or in the mansions of the rich around the Heath Extension. The co-partners in the development of housing in the Artisans' Quarter, Hampstead Tenants Ltd were part of a wider philanthropic housing movement. The scheme guaranteed investors a 5 % return on capital invested, and encouraged tenants to buy a share in the company and receive a dividend. Building began in 1908 and the speed of development was very fast. This archive photograph from 1909 shows the builder's yard in what is now Queens Court and new housing in Hampstead Way and Farm Walk ([Photograph 4](#)).



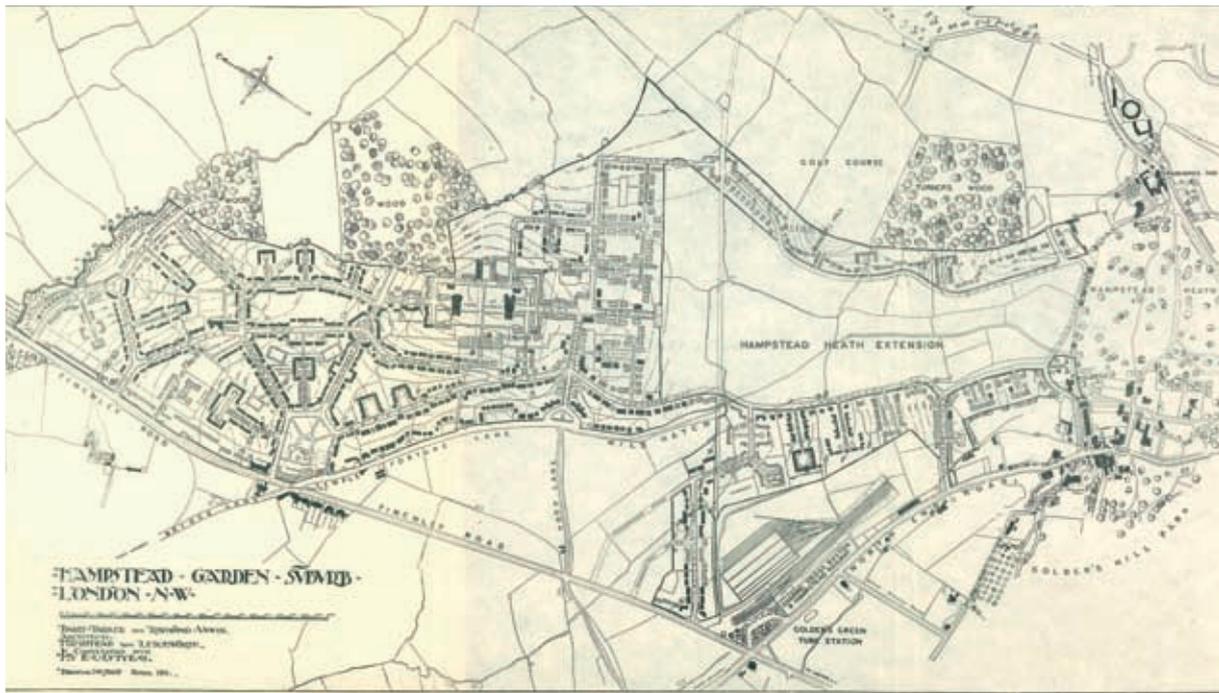
Builders' yard, Farm Walk and Hampstead Way, about 1909. William Moss and Sons were a Loughborough firm which successfully tendered for constructing much of the early housing in Hampstead Garden Suburb. Their yard occupies outbuildings of the old Temple Fortune farm, where purpose-designed casement windows, are stacked ready for use. In the distance a lady crosses the road pushing a perambulator, and there are horse-drawn delivery carts beyond.

Trees and the landscape were of particular importance to the design and philosophy of the Hampstead Garden Suburb. In many of their writings, Parker and Unwin referred to the importance of trees, green spaces and landscape, together with the critical relationship between site and design. Henrietta Barnett's

determination to preserve the Hampstead Heath Extension as the nucleus for her innovative concept of a 'garden suburb for all classes' was based, in large part, on landscape considerations.

The Unwin map of 1911 shows the overall plan for the Suburb with completed houses in black. By 1914 most of the land to the south and west of Central Square was developed, both the cottages and the larger houses proving very popular with the type of residents at which they were aimed.

Unwin map 1911



5.

The new community progressed very much as Henrietta Barnett had envisaged. There was a strong emphasis on community activities with the churches playing a leading role; recreational and social life flourished in the village-like environment. Archive photographs testify to the enthusiasm for gardening amongst residents ([Photograph 5 - see previous page](#)), encouraged by the formation of the H. G. S. Horticultural Society, founded by Henrietta Barnett in 1909. She wrote:

“The chief aim of the Society is to inculcate a pride in the cultivation of plants, trees and flowers, both beautiful and useful; and by inciting the members to a spirit of friendly rivalry to raise the standard of horticulture to a higher point as can be attained in suburban gardens.”

3.3 Development after 1918

By 1914 work had begun on extending the Suburb into the 112 acres which led to Falloden Way, and into the 300 acres linking the Suburb to East Finchley Underground Station. Denman Drive, Oakwood Road, Falloden Way, and the Holms were developed to provide housing for rent at low to modest rates and architecturally, they continued the artisan cottage tradition. However, the First World War marked a big change in the history of the Suburb. Construction costs rose hugely during and after the war and, at the same time, government housing finance shifted to favour building by local authorities. These two factors ended the ability of the private sector to build cottage housing for moderate rentals. Whilst retaining coherence in design and comprehensive control over subsequent change, the Co-partners began to aim at a more affluent market. Thereafter, in the ‘New Suburb’ designs largely favoured detached and semi-detached houses of more varied and sometimes modernistic design ([Photograph 6](#)).



The final extension to the Suburb came in 1930 with the co-partners' development of the Finchley leasehold extension which added Winnington Road and Ingram Avenue to the Suburb. Houses in these roads were aimed at the very upper end of the housing market, large houses in extensive plots. Uniquely in the Suburb, Winnington Road was developed over a long period, with houses built throughout the 1930s, 50s, 60s and 70s ([Photograph 7](#)).

3.4 1945 to the present day

Control of the appearance and character of the Suburb was in the hands of the Trust as the freeholder of the early development land, and for later phases, under leases from or building agreements with the Ecclesiastical Commissioners and licences to Co-Partnership Tenants Ltd. Between the wars the terms of leases were strongly enforced but the bleak economic conditions after World War II delayed many much needed repairs and standards began to be relaxed. In 1958, the Trust bought the freeholds for the 'New Suburb' but, by this time, the Trust faced serious financial problems and there followed a turbulent period in its history. It was during this period that many of the out of character developments still seen today were made.

The situation eventually was stabilised with the reconstitution of the Trust in 1968 as The New Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust Ltd. The 1967 Leasehold Reform Act gave leaseholders the right to purchase their freeholds and the Trust now exercises control over changes to the character and appearance of the Suburb through the Scheme of Management which came into force in 1974 under section 19 of the 1967 Act. Controls were further strengthened by the designation of the Suburb as a conservation area in 1968.

The purchase of freeholds progressed rapidly and currently 3573 properties are freehold, 1518 leasehold. Property prices have risen significantly reflecting the quality of the area and the way in which it is managed and protected. In recent years, this has resulted in pressure from developers, as well as encouraging owners to apply for planning permission for large extensions, basements, and even, in some cases, to demolish and rebuild.

The history of the Suburb is of 100 years of a managed environment where the character and appearance of the architecture and landscape have been successfully protected. In recent years the combination of local authority control and the guidance, influence and close control of the Trust has proved exceptionally effective. The need for this cooperation and care continues.



Section 4 Spatial analysis

4.1 Topography

Geologically, the area is part of the London Basin, a chalk depression filled by Tertiary and Pleistocene strata, mainly London clay and greatly modified by four successive ice ages. The topography of the area is gently undulating. The land slopes down to the north from the high ridge running between Hampstead and Highgate, rises to the small hill on which Central Square is built and then falls again to the shallow valley through which Mutton Brook runs westwards. On the other side of Mutton Brook, the land rises in a broad south facing slope (a glacial terminal moraine) to East End Road which runs along the top.

4.2 Views and vistas

This landscape was skilfully exploited by Unwin and his successors to provide long range views, focal points and glimpsed views.



Long range views

The long range views towards the spire and domes of the Central Square buildings were consciously planned as a feature of the original layout and remain a dominant characteristic of the Conservation Area. From almost every road in the Suburb there are framed views, distant views or glimpsed views through roofs and trees of these buildings. The Heath Extension, the 'gateways' into the Suburb and the woods and green areas all provide key views, some examples of which are described in the relevant character areas documents. The most notable buildings and long range views include:

- Central Square, and St Jude's Church, the Free Church and the Free Church Hall, The Institute (now Henrietta Barnet School) and the Quaker Meeting House
- view from Central Square, down Heathgate to the Heath Extension and from Heathgate to Central Square ([Photograph 8 - see previous page](#))
- the Temple Fortune Gateway buildings
- view up Erskine Hill to Central Square
- view from Sunshine Corner at the end of Heathgate, across the Heath Extension
- views from Hill Top towards St Jude's and distant trees
- views from the Heath Extension towards Central Square ([Photograph 9](#)).



Focal points

Focal points at the head of closes or on corners provide more intimate views which are important to the character of the Conservation Area. Some examples of these are shown on the character area maps. Typically there will be distinctive architectural features on the house(s) at the head of a close which draw the eye, for example, the studwork on the houses at the head of Wordsworth Walk and Coleridge Walk. In the case of corners, focal points are created in numerous ways, for example by setting houses across the junction as a terminal feature, as found at the Willifield Way/Temple Fortune Hill junction ([Photograph 10 - see overleaf](#)). Trees can also be used as focal points, such as the paired trees at the head of Reynolds Close.

Glimpsed views

Throughout the Suburb there are views of trees above rooflines, and glimpsed views between houses of trees and planted areas behind. For example, the views above and between houses to Turners Wood provide continuity between the woodland and the mature trees retained in gardens, as well as a sense of scale. Similarly, the mature oaks in Oakwood Road and Denman Drive unite Big Wood, Little Wood and the woodland of Northway Gardens/Mutton Brook. Whether or not individual specimens pre-date the development, they help to provide a link with the pre-development landscape and remaining woodland as well as reflecting the philosophy that informed the design of the Garden Suburb. The many footpaths frame views between hedges and lead onto attractive small greens or allotments. These glimpsed views are an important characteristic of the Suburb which need to be preserved ([Photograph 11](#)).



10.



11.

4.3 Streets and open spaces

The roads within the Conservation Area are public open spaces of great quality. Wherever possible, in laying out the design for the “Garden Suburb”, particular care was taken to align roads, paths and dwellings to retain existing trees and views. Extensive tree planting and landscaping was considered important when designing road layouts in Hampstead Garden Suburb, such that Maxwell Fry, one of the pioneer modernists in British architecture, held that *“Unwin, more than any other single man, turned the soulless English byelaw street towards light, air, trees and flowers”*.

Unwin used the natural contours of the land to create a relationship between the imposing buildings in Central Square and the cottages of the Artisans’ Quarter. The axial roads provide through routes but the gradual slope of the hill was accommodated with less formal road layouts suited to smaller scale housing. The layout of roads often follows old tracks, contour lines, or old hedge boundaries curving around remnants of pre-existing woodlands or the boundary oaks of the old field system. Closes and formal squares infill land between the main routes providing more intimate spaces and picturesque streetscapes. Everywhere, great care has been taken to vary the building line so that some houses are set back behind small greens, others step forward creating a sense of enclosed space and providing attractive views.

As Miller notes:

“Beauty was indispensable to the solution of planning problems. Unwin’s approach to highway design exemplified this. Roads were to be more than functional arteries, built to uniform standards and lined with serried ranks of buildings. They were to be designed as generators of composed architectural spaces, locally intimate and enclosed, or broad and purposefully integrating town and country at the city or regional scale. Their size would reflect anticipated traffic levels. The cul-de-sac, often banished on public-health grounds in the nineteenth century, was revived, excluding through-traffic and giving visual and social unity to housing grouped around”

(Raymond Unwin: Garden Cities and Town Planning, p249)

In 1904 Unwin posed the rhetorical question: *“why should it not be allowed to reduce the actual roadway and footway to a width reasonably proportional to the traffic on condition that the remaining space be planted with trees and shrubs and laid down as grass margins?”*, a precept followed at Hampstead Garden Suburb, aided by the local Act of Parliament.



12.

The subtle gradations in scale are evident throughout the Suburb. Around the Heath Extension, Wildwood Road and Hampstead Way are open to the woods and grass of the Heath on one side and have a semi-rural feel. Elsewhere, wider roads are created for larger houses scaling down to narrower roads and closes joined by footpaths (twittens) for more modest houses. In the northern part of the Suburb, developed between the wars, the roads have a more spacious character and were designed to accommodate car ownership (albeit on a limited scale) but the variety in streetscapes was maintained (Photograph 12). Everywhere the effect is leafy and visually attractive. The particular character of individual roads is fully described in the character area documents.

Open spaces

There is a great variety of open spaces within the Conservation Area, the Heath Extension being the



13.

largest of the five major areas which are separately described as distinct areas of open space. In Central Square, the churches and the Institute are set in a formally designed area of lawns and trees which is both a recreational area and an integral part of this major architectural composition. The formality of this open space is echoed in the greens in Turner Close and Linnell Close which are surrounded by large, elegant houses (Photograph 13). There are many other, smaller scale examples



14.

of open spaces which similarly form part of an architectural composition, such as Lucas and Litchfield Squares on Hampstead Way. (Photograph 14). The extent of formality and scale is often reflected in choice of planting, with Central Square originally having formally clipped lime avenues, whereas Lucas Square is largely lawned. Throughout the Suburb there are numerous small greens around which houses cluster in a less formal manner enhancing the village feel. Some are public open spaces like Willifield Green, the green opposite Emmott Close. and the green in Edmunds Walk. Others are semi-private in that they are shared by the surrounding houses, for example, 34-72 Hill Top, Lucas Crescent in Willifield Way, Palsler Square on Temple Fortune Lane (see landscape maps). The sense of peaceful seclusion of some of these semi-private spaces is greatly enhanced by trees providing screening from surrounding properties as well as a haven for wildlife.

In the older parts of the Suburb, Unwin placed a communal space at the centre of each block of houses. This was set out as allotments for the smaller houses (Photograph 15) and tennis courts for wealthier residents. In some areas such land forms an enclosed open space where access is limited to residents



15.

in the surrounding houses. The largest example of this is in Ingram Avenue where Turners Wood is a private nature reserve, maintained and accessed by the residents of the surrounding houses.

These 'backlands' are an important feature of the Suburb adding to the open and green character of the area and ensuring that the outlooks from the rear of houses are attractive as those from the front. These green spaces are also of importance for biodiversity.

4.4 Trees and hedges

Trees

Trees and hedges are defining elements of Hampstead Garden Suburb. The quantity, layout and design of landscape, trees and green space in all its forms, are inseparable from the vision, planning and execution of the Suburb. Trees and landscaping provide a complimentary setting to the built form. It was the intention that dwellings and nature should be in such close relationship. Henrietta Barnett was clearly influenced by Ebenezer Howard's views that *"Human society and the beauty of nature are meant to be enjoyed together... Town and country must be married and out of this joyous union will spring a new hope, a new life, a new civilisation."* and *".. Parks and gardens, orchards and woods, are being planted in the midst of the busy life of the people, so that they may be enjoyed in the fullest measure"*.

Unwin's expressed intention, which he achieved, was:

'to lay out the ground that every tree may be kept, hedgerows duly considered, and the foreground of the distant view preserved, if not as open fields, yet as a gardened district, the buildings kept in harmony with the surroundings.'



In addition to preserving many of the existing trees, all the new roads were planted with trees. Unwin wanted species selected to complement the architecture. Larger houses and wider roads were emphasised by more dramatic street trees, for example, the Trees of Heaven in Meadway. The intimate closes and curving lanes of the cottage areas were often softened with smaller, ornamental trees. Many of the planting schemes survive in whole or in part. For example, the silver birches in Thornton Way, the rowan trees in Hill Rise, the purple leaved plums in Hill Top, the limes in Asmunds Place and the flowering cherries in Heathgate and chestnut trees in Northway (Photograph 16).

Many very old boundary oaks survive in roads, gardens and open spaces and have great impact, both visually and environmentally, as individual trees. For example, the ancient boundary oaks in the allotments behind Asmunds Place tower above the houses and gardens (Photograph 17). Other specimen trees provide focal points complementing the road layout, for example the horse chestnut tree at the head of Carlyle Close. The maturity of planting in the Suburb results in many fine, specimen trees in gardens enhancing the general streetscapes. Where roadways are too narrow to incorporate street trees, trees in gardens are crucial to the verdant appearance of the streetscape.

Trees contribute fundamentally to the distinctive character and appearance of the Conservation Area in a number of different ways, including:

- Creating a rural or semi-rural atmosphere
- informing the layout of roads and houses with mature field boundary trees
- providing links with pre-development landscape and remaining woodland
- creating glades, providing screening and shade, and marking boundaries

- framing views, forming focal points, defining spaces and providing a sense of scale
- providing a productive, seasonal interest and creating wildlife habitats



Some of the most notable groups of trees are found on the small greens. For example, Edmunds Walk has willow trees of great beauty (Photograph 18), the turn into Rowan Walk is marked by two small greens with a variety of trees, namely hornbeam, silver birch, mountain ash and acer that form an attractive focus from all points of approach. Some of these are detailed in the area character appraisals. Both the quality and quantity of trees in the public and private realm are essential components of the balance between the built and natural environment that is integral to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. A significant number of trees within the Suburb are considered to be of special or outstanding amenity value because of their context within the Suburb and/or they are particularly good examples of their kind.

There are more than 60 Tree Preservation Orders of varying sizes in the Conservation Area - including many hundreds of trees. The orders range from single individual trees to groups and areas of trees. In addition, many of the trees in woodland areas and open spaces are the responsibility of the Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust, The City of London Corporation and Barnet Council.

Although of undoubtedly important amenity value, many privately owned trees have not been detailed in this appraisal statement. Such omission is not to be interpreted as indicating their lack of significance and, as noted in the Issues and Management Proposals, is to be addressed in the future.

Hedges



The use of hedges to mark plot boundaries was one of the basic tenets of Unwin's master plan and they remain an essential feature of the character and appearance of the Suburb. Grass verges and street trees define the spaces between roadway and footway, typically edged in turn by hedged boundaries. Where these elements are missing or eroded, the local character is degraded. Hedging is the main form of enclosure for both public and private space (Photograph 19). All but a handful of roads are lined with mature hedges which frame groups of houses and set off the brickwork and roughcast which are the predominant building materials. Species vary, reflecting the orientation and character of the area, and some of the typical species are identified in the relevant character areas. Privet, beech, and yew are the most frequently found species overall; yew

and holly are more common in hedges surrounding properties near the Heath Extension where they relate to the holly and yew bushes in the woodlands.

4.5 Public realm

The public realm includes street paving and lighting, signage, litter bins, and other street furniture such as bus shelters. Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust has no remit over these matters which are the responsibility of the Local Authority or, in the case of road signage on main roads, Central Government. For many years, the Residents Association has been very active in discussions with the London Borough of Barnet, culminating in a set of Design Guidelines for the Public Realm being accepted by the London Borough of Barnet Highways Department and its Planning Services. Further, a schedule of works to improve the public realm in the Suburb was agreed which is jointly funded by the Residents Association and Barnet Council.

Pedestrian paths

Narrow hedge-lined footpaths (twittens) are common throughout the Suburb. They link closes and provide direct pedestrian routes through to shopping areas, open spaces and rear access to houses (Photograph 20). They are currently surfaced in tarmac but when they are resurfaced, bound light pea shingle should be laid in hot bitumen.



The original street paving in the Suburb is concrete slab paving (3ft x 2ft) with a textured surface in subtle grey, pink tones. Paving is usually flanked by grass verges or hand-made red clay brick pavements and granite kerbs (Photograph 21). This provides an attractive, neutral foil for the architecture. However, there is some damage from tree roots and from kerb parking, and repairs have been made with tarmac and modern white concrete slabs. Such repairs create an ugly, patchwork effect and there are a number of examples of this, which should be addressed.

Areas of york stone paving survive around Temple Fortune House and Arcade House and on footpaths leading from Heathgate to the Heath Extension and from Central Square to Hill Close.

Street lighting

Street lighting is provided by modern lamps except in two roads, Morland Close and Wildwood Rise, where residents have funded the extra costs of installing traditional style street lamps. Normally 6 metre columns are used except in wide roads where 8 metre or higher columns are used.

Street furniture

The majority of street furniture is of an appropriate traditional style but there are some examples of furniture which do not fit with the character of the Conservation Area. The most notable of these is the use of concrete bollards, but as a result of the programme of work, jointly funded by the Residents Association and Barnet Council, the majority of these have been replaced with oak posts. The few surviving cast iron benches are in often in poor repair. Replacement benches are normally of teak in a traditional design. Many existing litter bins are dark green but the difficulty of matching the colour of replacements has led to agreement that black is a more suitable colour for replacements.



22. The existing red K6 telephone boxes, such as the one at Meadway Gate, are all listed and all new facilities in the Conservation Area are to be housed in reused K6 boxes in accordance with the London wide strategy agreed between English Heritage and British Telecom. Traditional red post boxes are all retained.

Signs and Posts

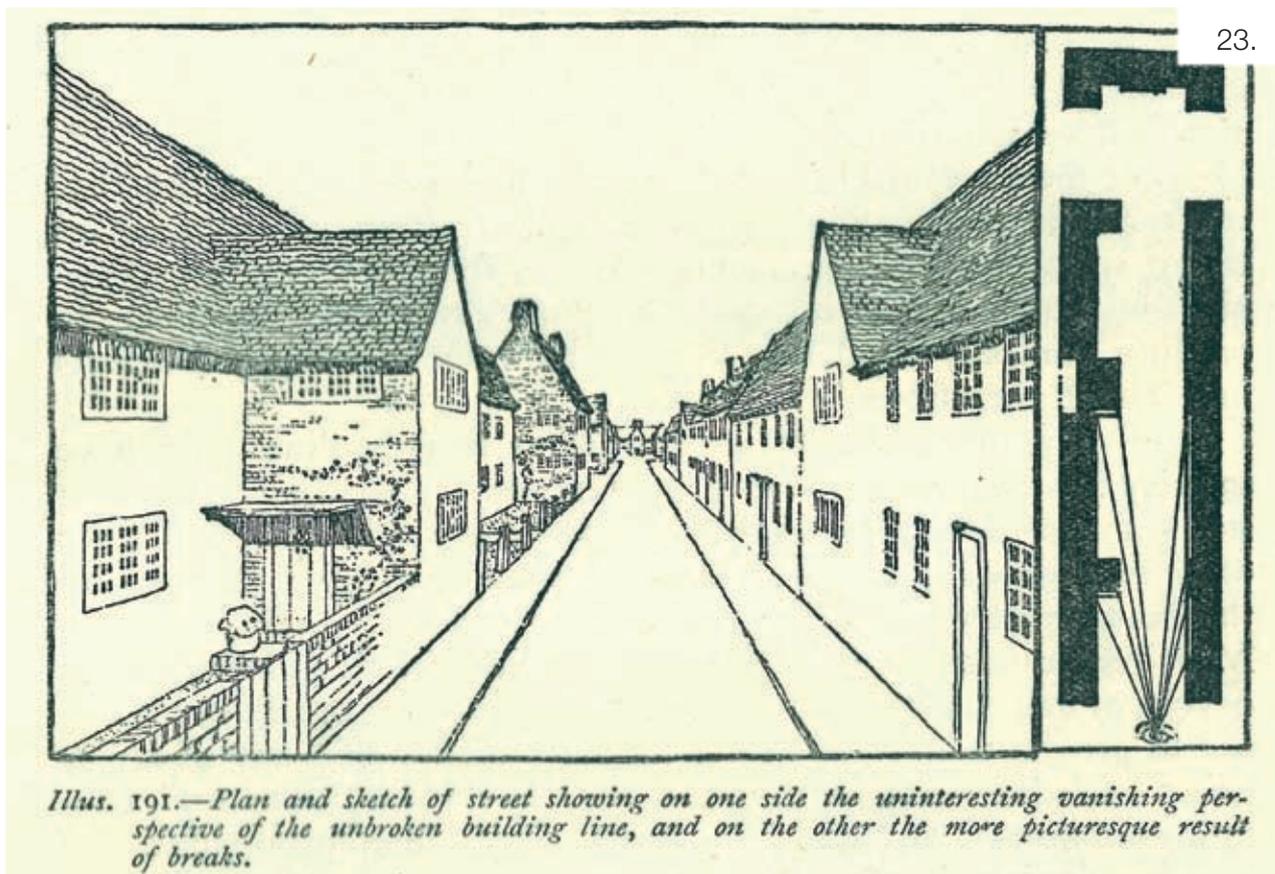
Traditional street name signs are used throughout the Suburb ([Photograph 22](#)) but there has been a proliferation of traffic and parking signs, many of which duplicate each other, adding greatly to street clutter. Signs on tall posts at the edge of pavements can be intrusive. The Design Guidelines for the Public Realm deal with this in detail and a schedule of signs to be removed has been agreed with Barnet Council.

Section 5 Town planning and architecture

Utopian planning

Hampstead Garden Suburb sits within a lineage of utopian garden settlements ranging from Robert Owen's New Lanark, founded in 1800, to Ebenezer Howard's Welwyn Garden City founded in 1919. All were a reaction to the extreme poverty, overcrowding, ugliness and lack of amenity found in the uncontrolled urban development of their day. The Suburb differs from the classic Garden City promoted by Howard because, recognising the proximity to places of work in London, it contains no industry but is truly a suburb. Persons of all classes and income levels were to be welcomed and provision was made for the elderly, widows, orphans and single women.

Illustration from Unwin's book "Town Planning in Practice", 1909



The Hampstead Garden Suburb act 1906

The ideas of Ebenezer Howard and the ideals of Henrietta Barnett were put into practice on the Suburb by the architectural practice of Raymond Unwin and Barry Parker, working in collaboration with Sir Edwin Lutyens. The Hampstead Garden Suburb Act of 1906, the first modern town planning act, freed the Suburb from the building bye laws of the local authority, Hendon Urban District Council, and enabled Parker and Unwin to prepare their own building byelaws for approval by the Home Secretary. For example, the uniform urban grid of bye law streets could be replaced by the organic hierarchy of road

widths which permitted the charming cul de sacs of the Artisans' Quarter and the Heath borders. Similarly the normal bye law requirement for party walls to be extended above the roof line as visually divisive parapets could be ignored; enabling groups of houses to be treated as a visually cohesive whole, as in Asmunds Place and Reynolds Close ([Photograph 24](#)).



24.

Influences on planning

Parker and Unwin's early Suburb layouts make use of the site contours to create gently curving streets with junctions and entrances marked by architectural features to catch the eye and punctuate views. Gradations in the scale of houses and plots to accommodate the wide social mix were

skilfully woven into overall design. The principles of their planning are described in Unwin's "Town Planning in Practice" (1909) which is illustrated with numerous examples from the Suburb.

The influences of Lutyens include a grander, more formal approach to planning with axial views; for example along Northway and Southway swinging at the bend in each road from the cupola of the Institute to the dome of the Free Church and the spire of St Jude's respectively. Lutyens' work on the Suburb effectively ended in 1912 when he began to concentrate on the government buildings in New Delhi. Other influences on Parker and Unwin include their study of continental towns, particularly hill towns, through Barry Parker's sketching tours and through the published work of Camillo Sitte. This can be seen in the German influences in the gateway buildings at Temple Fortune and in the device of the "Great Wall" which demarcates the "town" of the Suburb from the "country" of the Heath extension. The archive photograph from the 1950s shows the features of the wall which are now hidden by vegetation ([Photograph 25](#)).



25.

Following Unwin's retirement as Trust architect in 1914, from 1915 to 1951 the Trust architect was John Carrick Stuart Soutar, ensuring a consistent approach to the later development of the Suburb, seen for example in Ingram Avenue. Within the overall framework laid down by Parker and Unwin are building groups and individual houses designed by many of the best architects of the day, working in a variety of domestic styles to produce a harmonious whole.

The Arts and Crafts movement



There are extensive and accomplished examples of the Arts and Crafts philosophy applied to buildings in the Suburb by Parker and Unwin themselves but also by many of the best architects of the day. The rediscovery of traditional building crafts is manifest in, for example, the tiled arches of Asmunds Place and the beautifully detailed chimneys of houses in Wildwood Rise. The renewed interest in vernacular building types is reflected in designs for groups such as Lichfield Square, reminiscent of rural cottages (Photograph 26) and is expressed in the steep

tiled roofs, picturesque outlines, large chimneys and prevalence of gables across much of the Suburb. The relatively simple but ingenious detailing is typical of the arts and crafts movement's reaction against elaborate Victorian architectural decoration.



In parts of the Suburb the pure arts and crafts approach develops into neo-vernacular; a more romantic re-invention of Tudor and other early English architecture. Examples include the "Merrie England" of Edmunds Walk, mostly by R.H Williams, using reclaimed materials including timber frames, bricks and tiles from vernacular buildings (Photograph 27).

Georgian Revival



28.

The Georgian Revival (Neo-Georgian) style is used to great effect on the Suburb by Lutyens and later, under Soutar. The inventive and sometimes playful classicism of Lutyens is seen both in the major public buildings on Central Square and in the houses of North Square and Erskine Hill ([Photograph 28](#)). Later, restrained and elegant Neo-Georgian mansions set in generous gardens and leafy streets were designed in Soutar's office for wealthy residents ([Photograph 29](#)). The style usually features sliding sash windows, symmetrical, ordered elevations, sometimes with modest pediments, doorcases and other decorative features.



29.

Modernism



There are fine examples of the stylistic influence of the Modern Movement on Suburb buildings in places such as Lytton Close by C.G. Winbourne and Belvedere Court by Ernst Freud (both of which are grade II listed). This tends to be “Moderne” - restricted to exterior treatment - rather than extending to the open plan forms of true Modern Movement architecture. Nonetheless the clean, horizontal lines and stripped details are an attractive foil to the ubiquitous Suburb hedges (Photograph 30).

Art deco

Similarly the influence of Art Deco in the Suburb is applied rather than inherent. However, there are very attractive elements of in-built and applied decoration in many of the later Suburb flats such as Lytton Court and in individual houses (Photograph 31).



Hampstead Garden Suburb is celebrated today for the combination of planning and architecture which produce its strong sense of place, and for the way in which its built form still supports an unusual level of community activity.

Section 6 Character areas

Area 1	Central Square
Area 2	Artisans' Quarter
Area 3	Temple Fortune Lane and Willifield Way
Area 4	Meadway and the Great Wall
Area 5	Rotherwick Road and Hampstead Way
Area 6	Oakwood, Brookland and the Holms
Area 7	Wildwood Road
Area 8	Northway, Middleway and Southway
Area 9	Market Place and Lyttelton Road
Area 10	Ossulton Way and Hill Top
Area 11	Brim Hill
Area 12	Deansway and Edmunds Walk
Area 13	Holne Chase and Norrice Lea
Area 14	Ingram Avenue
Area 15	Winnington Road
Area 16	Finchley Road
Area 17	Spaniards End
Area A	Marylebone Cemetery
Area B	Bigwood
Area C	Golders Green Crematorium
Area D	Heath Extension
Area E	Hampstead Golf Course

