

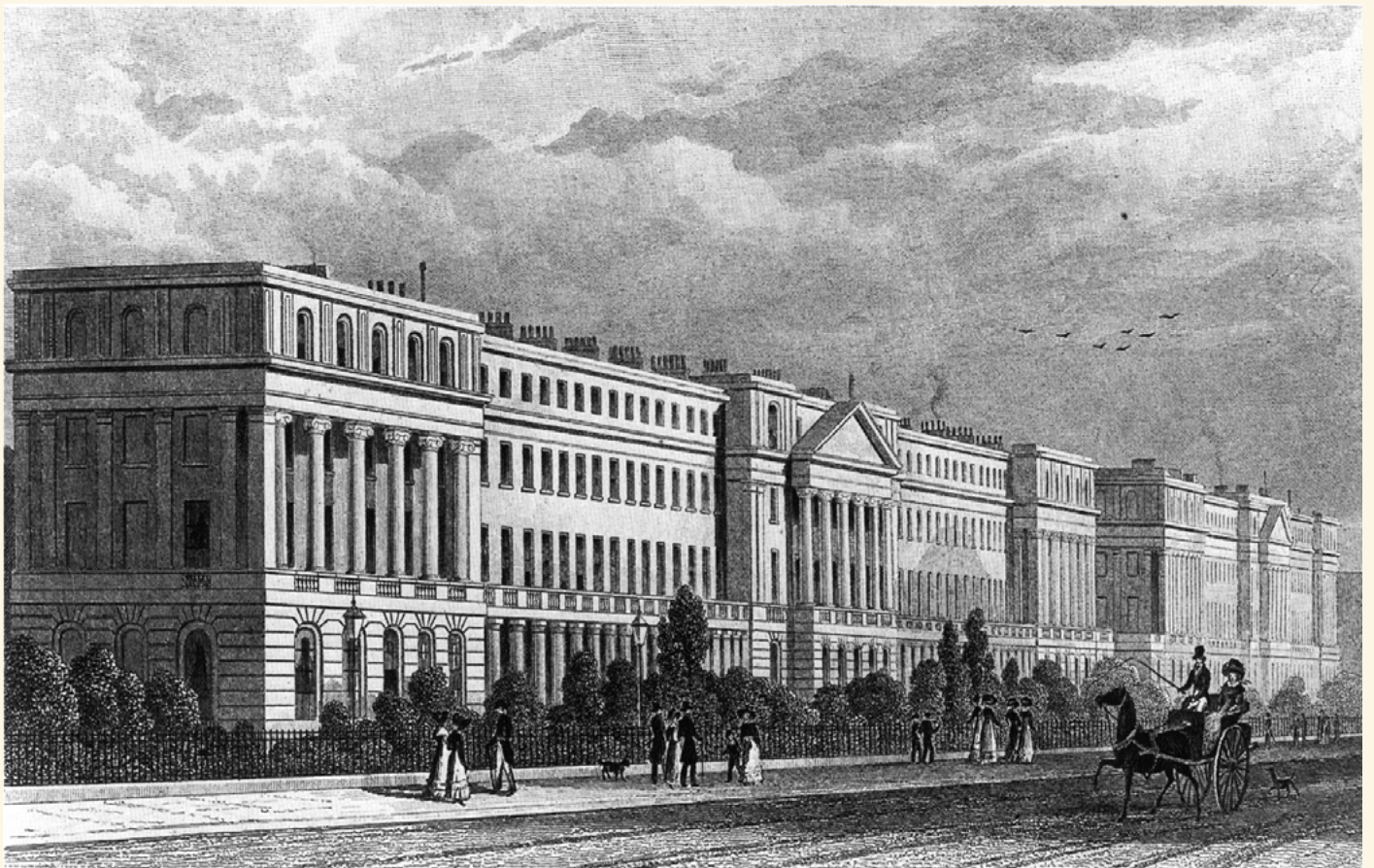


CROWN ESTATE PAVING COMMISSION

York Terrace East and West Management Vision

June 2021

Todd Longstaffe-Gowan
Landscape Design



Aim of this garden management document

This is one of a set of garden management documents produced for the CEPC by Todd Longstaffe-Gowan Landscape Design Ltd to inform the strategic management of its estate. These documents are designed to promote a greater understanding of what makes Regent’s Park such a special place, to make clear the importance of John Nash’s original, unified scheme, and aim to put forward recommendations for each garden that will ensure the park as a whole retains its unique role as part of the metropolitan landscape.

Complete set of documents:

- ‘A Total Work of Architectural and Landscape Art’ A Vision for Regent’s Park
- Chester Terrace Management Vision
- Cumberland Terrace Management Vision
- Hanover Terrace Management Vision
- Park Square and Park Crescent Garden Management Vision
- Planting Principles and Design
- Sussex Place Management Vision
- Tree Management Strategy
- York Terrace East and West Management Vision

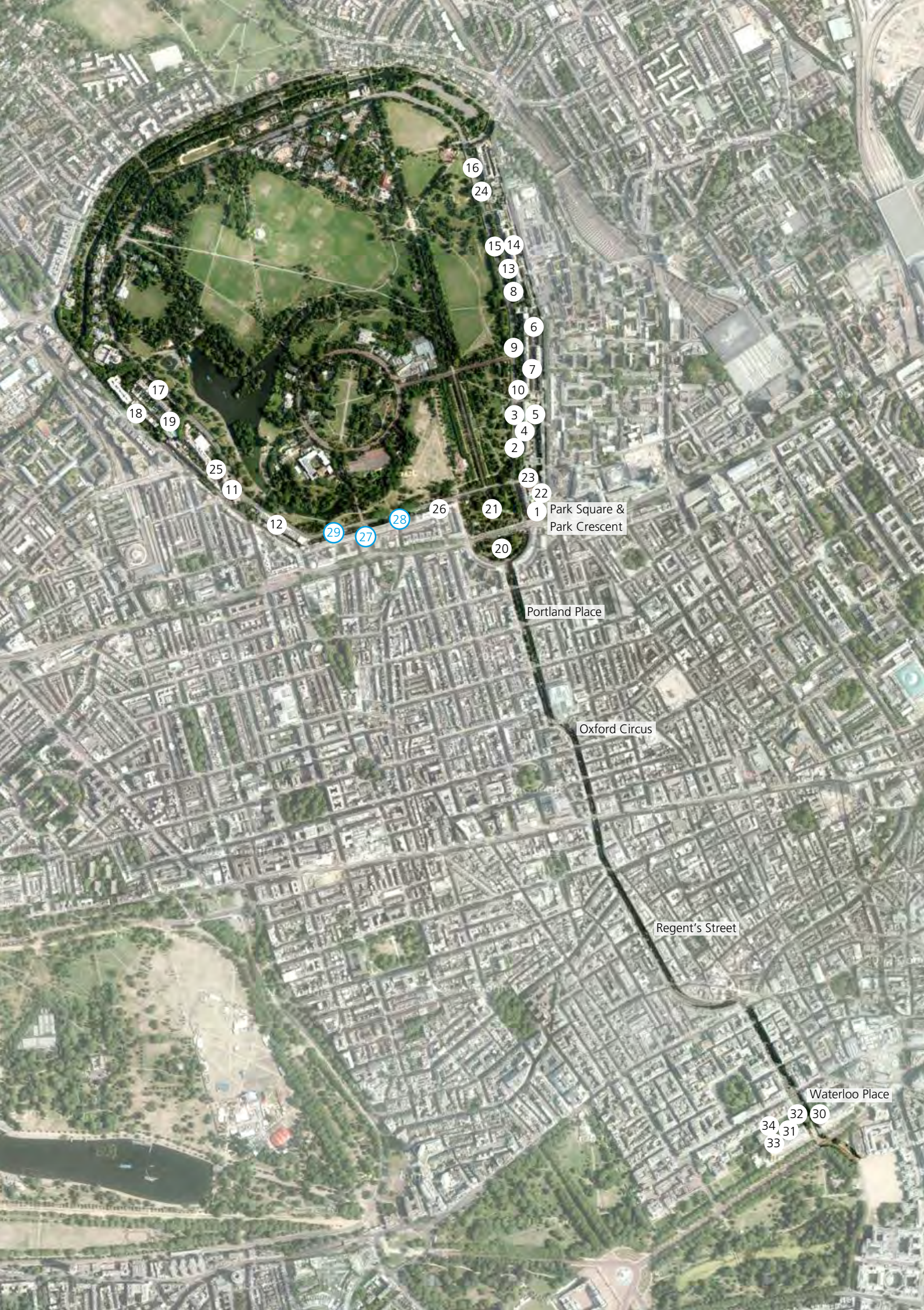
Cover image: York Terrace, Regent’s Park, engraving from drawing by T H Shepherd, published 21 July 1827.

Contents

1. Context	
1.1. Regent’s Park Vision	4
1.2. York Terrace East and West	8
1.3. York Gate	12
2. Summary of Proposals	
2.1. Historic Plan	14
2.2. Existing Conditions	16
2.3. Proposed Plan	18
3. Garden Features	
3.1. Views	20
3.2. Planting	
Trees	24
Shrubs, Perennials and Lawns	34
3.3. Paths	
Materials and Layout	40
Edging	44
3.4. Gates and Railings	46

Context

1.1 Regent's Park Vision



Regent's Park is a special place, a planned urban enclave where buildings and landscape were conceived as a single entity, neither one before or without the other. The buildings were designed to benefit from their landscape setting, while the park was designed to benefit from the palace-like buildings around it. The park is, as the architectural historian Sir John Summerson remarks, 'a total work of architectural and landscape art'.

John Nash's plans for Regent's Park embodied some simple design principles. Whereas in the early nineteenth century upmarket urban development generally focused on the tested formula of terraces and garden squares, Nash's approach was pioneering in terms of town planning: his new metropolitan aesthetic was informed by the principles of 'modern Decorative Landscape Gardening' and, very unusually for the time, assimilated domesticity and individual idiosyncrasy within a framework of public magnificence. As applied to this new urban estate, those principles can be summarised as follows: that, like a country house and its park, the interior parkland and the residential development were fundamentally related and connected; that the Outer Circle, a carriage drive, far from being a dividing line, served to link the interior parkland and the surrounding terraces and articulate their relationship; and that planting should frame a series of deliberately composed views from the road, from the buildings and from the parkland.

Opposite page:

Aerial view showing location of CEPC Gardens and illustrating the route of the Prince Regent's New Road, starting in the south (bottom right) at Waterloo Place and terminating in the north at Regent's Park.

1. Albany Terrace
2. Cambridge Gate
3. Cambridge Terrace
4. 'Secret Garden' south of Cambridge Terrace
5. Cambridge Terrace Mews
6. Chester Close North 'Courtyards'
7. Chester Close South 'Courtyards'
8. Chester Place
9. Chester Terrace
10. Chester Gate
11. Clarence Terrace
12. Cornwall Terrace Mews
13. Cumberland Place
14. Cumberland Terrace Mews
15. Cumberland Terrace
16. Gloucester Gate
17. Hanover Terrace
18. Kent Terrace
19. Kent Passage
20. Park Crescent
21. Park Square
22. Peto Place
23. St Andrew's Place
24. St Katherine's Precinct
25. Sussex Place
26. Ulster Place
27. York Gate
28. York Terrace East
29. York Terrace West
30. Waterloo East Gardens
31. Waterloo West Gardens
32. Podium
33. Border - Foreign Secretaries' Residence
34. Woolhouse Garden

1.1 Regent’s Park Vision



Nash’s Design Principles for Regent’s Park:

Left: Charles Mayhew’s plan for Regent’s Park, 1834.

1. Regent’s Park is a designed landscape where all its aspects must be treated as a whole

What is important to Nash’s master plan at Regent’s Park is the visual relationship between the architecture and the landscape. All the elements within the park are equally significant: the central open space, the Outer Circle, and the terraces. Nash never referred to them as anything other than a single entity. The road and the terraces are part of the park, and the combined whole is a designed urban landscape on an unprecedented scale. His achievement remains unique in London.

2. Each terrace is an individual architectural composition

Nash insisted that the land between the terraces and the Outer Circle should be earmarked for planting. The planting in these communal gardens was intended to supply privacy to the residents and to give the impression that the terraces are single buildings. His aim was that they should resemble spacious palaces set in gardens and parkland, rather than conventional rows of London houses sitting next to the street.

3. The landscape should create framed views of the terraces from the park

Nash wanted the park’s plantings to provide views of the terraces in such a way that no two masses of building can be seen from any one point at the same time. From within the park the visitor should see a succession of views that are distinct from each other, accentuating the illusion of a sequence of individual palaces, each within its own landscape setting.

4. The Outer Circle as a promenade

Nash designed the Outer Circle as a viewing circuit within the park - not as a roadway around its perimeter. Trees in the park were planted to frame the views from the road. The communal gardens were created to form a setting for each palatial terrace when viewed from the Outer Circle. As a circuit, the Outer Circle should take the visitor around a sequence of carefully constructed landscape pictures on both sides of its promenade.

1.2 York Terrace East & West

York Terrace from S.H. Hughes, after Richard Morris, *Panoramic View Round Regent's Park*, London, 1831.



A key part of Nash's original conception for Regent's Park, York Terraces East and West were constructed between 1821 and 1826 and were designed to appear like two palaces. They were named in honour of Frederick, Duke of York, the Prince Regent's younger brother. Each terrace was designed to accommodate twenty separate dwellings, with their main entrances in the mews to the south, allowing the grand north fronts of each to appear as a single unit. Nash was emphatic too that the gardens should also contribute to this appearance: 'There should be no divisions in the gardens of the Houses to denote individuality, but the whole should appear as one entire building and the proprietors of the Houses should be compelled to re-colour the fronts every five years.'¹

The Picturesque Guide to the Regent's Park (1829) corroborates the success of this intention: 'All the doors and windows in the lawn or principal front...are uniform and make the terrace appear like suites of princely apartments, somewhat in the style of a little Versailles. This idea is likewise assisted by the pleasing and judicious arrangement of the gardens, which have no divisions, but are laid out in a style truly palatial.'

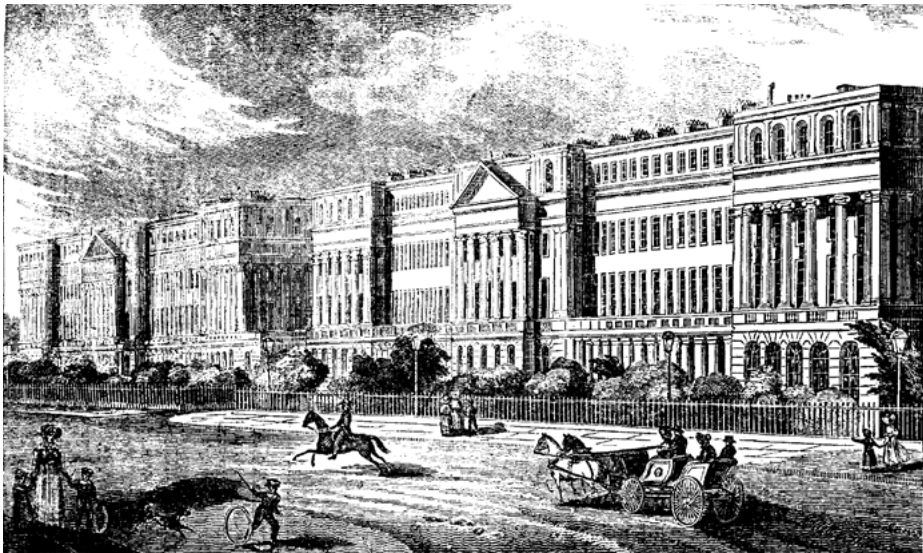
York Terrace West was built by William Mountford Nurse, while James Burton was responsible for York Terrace East. It was on the subject of the York Terraces that Nash spelt out the importance of planting to frame the buildings and the difficulties he had working with separate contractors:

'It is to be regretted that Mr Burton has attached two Houses at the East end of the handsome line of Houses which he has built; if he had planted the ground at the East end as he has done at the West end, the grandeur arising from the Unity of the Elevations would have been preserved. I mention this circumstance because I hope that the magnificent range of buildings...may not be allowed to join others at either end; for this purpose Mr Nurse has consented to plant 230 feet of the west extremity of his ground next to Mr Burton's Houses, placing the villas in the middle of the Plantation...Magnificent as these buildings are in themselves that impression would be greatly diminished if the individuality of design is not preserved by intermediate plantations – if they join they become a street surrounding a large plot of ground instead of spacious Palace-like buildings embellishing a park.'²

In the end, Nurse did not retain an area for planting to frame the west end of York Terrace West, but instead attached a villa repeating the form of Ulster Terrace while another a four-bay villa with Ionic portico was attached to the south-east end of Cornwall Terrace. Arguably, the eastern end of York Terrace East affords a better frame of planting around the two detached villas set back from the road.

1.2 York Terrace East & West

York Terrace as depicted in an illustration from *The Mirror of Literature*, 1829.

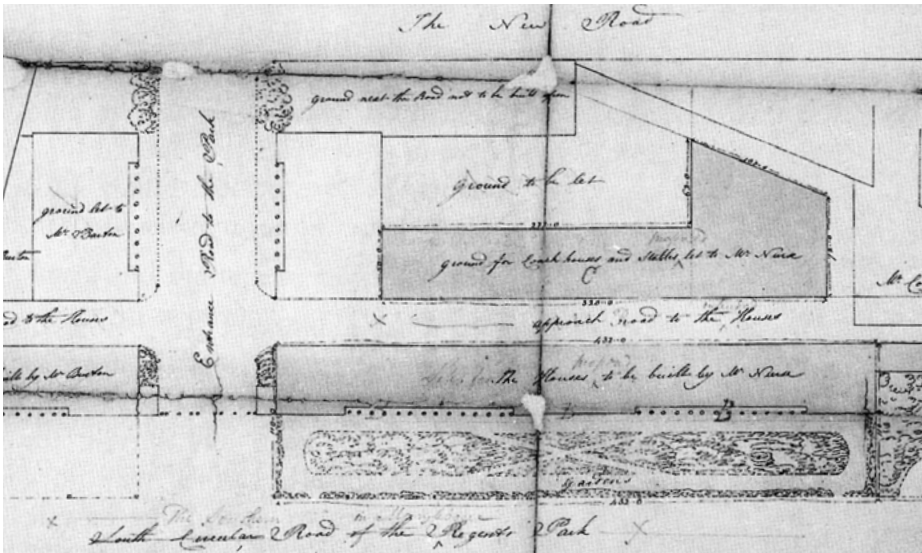


Early views show the York Terraces planted with shrubs to little more than the height of the iron railings on the park road, with occasional, irregularly-spaced trees, half a dozen to each terrace. These would have served to screen much of the terrace as they were approached along the Outer Circle, and also to frame views outwards from the ground floor. *The Mayhew Survey* of 1834-35 shows in both terrace gardens a continuous row of shrubs between the perimeter path and the railings, with asymmetrical shrubbery beds inside the path on the lawn. In front of the two central bays they both had a D-shaped diversion of the path around the rear of the shrubbery bed. The gardens today are characterised by an incongruous privet hedge clipped just above the height of the railings, but also by a number of overgrown shrubs, and small and medium trees, the canopies of which significantly reduce the intervisibility between buildings and parkland which was so critical to Nash's vision.



Top: York Terrace West, from York Bridge.

Bottom: York Terrace West, detail from John Nash's sketch plan of York Terraces, 1822.



1.3 York Gate

York Gate, in Shepherd's illustration to Elmes' *Metropolitan Improvements*, 1827.



Nash took advantage of the much-admired new parish church on Marylebone Road, St Mary's, which had been built between 1813 and 1817 to designs by Thomas Hardwick. He designed York Gate on an axis with the porticoed front, and aligned it with his new bridge over the water in the park. In 1822 he wrote that York Gate was 'the great central Entrance to the Park & on that account every available circumstance ought to be seized to make it grand and imposing'.³ In guiding the visitor round Regent's Park, James Elmes advised in *Metropolitan Improvements* (1827) that the best approach is to go up Portland Place, turn left around Park Crescent, and follow the New Road to the church and then enter by York Gate.⁴ Elmes highlighted the importance of the end porches of the two terraces in the York Gate composition, observing that they 'give the effect of lodges to the gates which cross the avenue'.

For this grand entrance route, Nash designed two matching palazzos on either side, each designed to accommodate five separate dwellings, a nine-bay Ionic colonnade echoing the design of the York terraces. Until the early twentieth century, York Gate was secured with iron gates and lamp standards similar to those in Park Square East, although these had been removed by 1958.



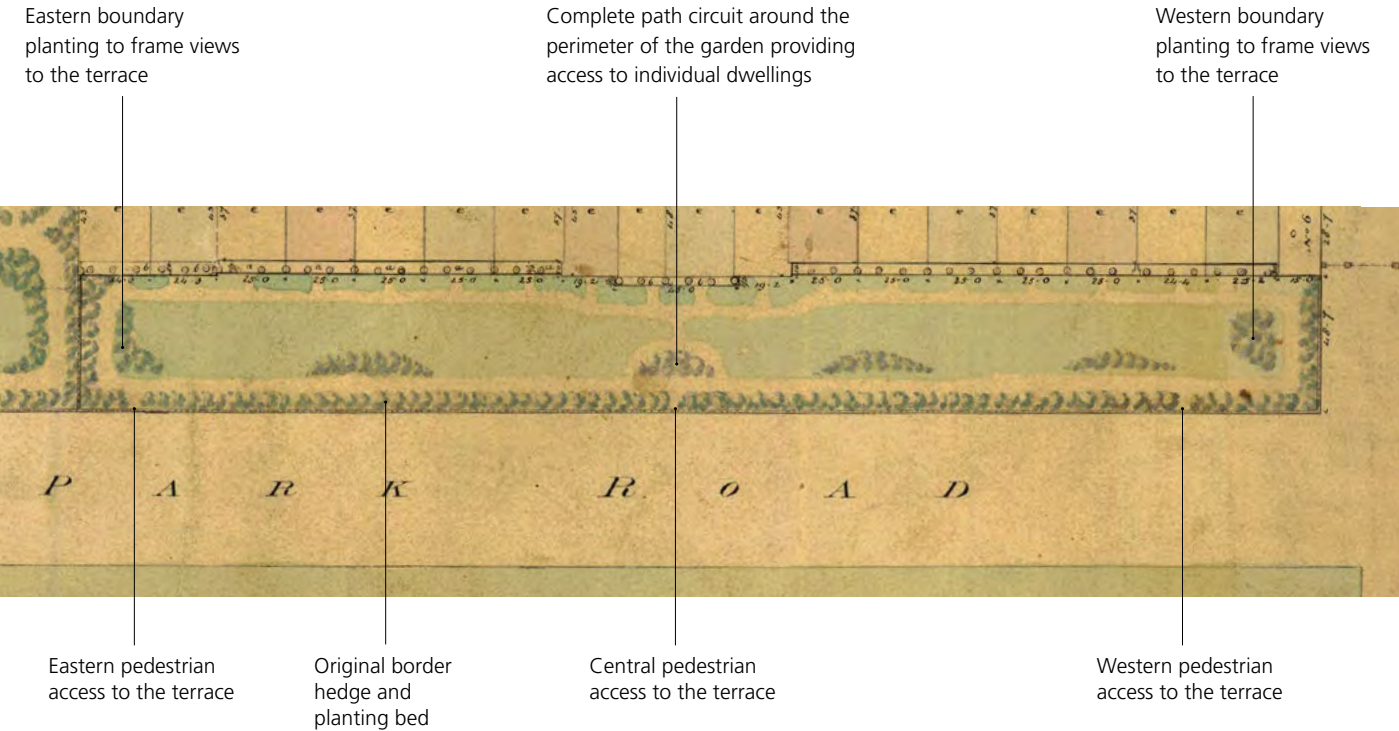
Detail from the 1876 *Ordnance Survey*, showing key planting to frame the view towards Marylebone Church.

Following bomb damage in the Second World War, restoration of York Gate entailed conversion from separate dwellings into a single occupancy; the work carried out by the architects, Elsom Pack & Roberts, was led by Cecil Elsom, known as 'The Replica Man'. York Terrace, too, was partially rebuilt after the Gorrell Committee recommendations of 1947, although, again, behind the facades much of the internal arrangement was replaced for use by offices and institutions.

Nash's 1822 plan of York Gate shows planting at key points in York Gate to frame the view, on the corners of the mews and on either side of the Marylebone entrance. The Shepherd view seems to omit the latter, clearly shown on the 1876 *Ordnance Survey*, but does show the significance of the planting on the corner of each of the mews, enclosed not by railings but by close-board fencing. The planted area on the east side of York Gate was demised by The Crown Estate to the long leaseholder in the post-war period of the twentieth century.

2.1 Historic Plan

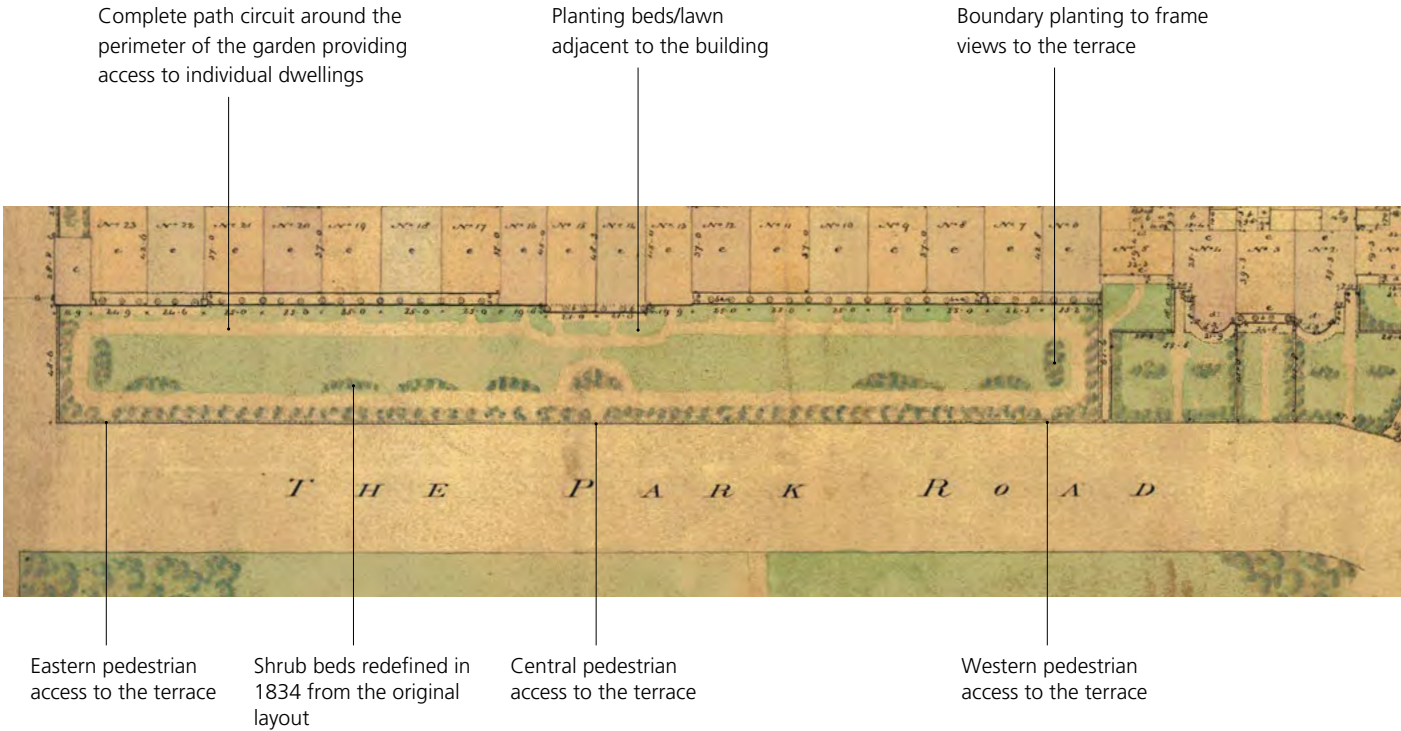
York Terrace East



1834 Mayhew Plan (NTS)

2.1 Historic Plan

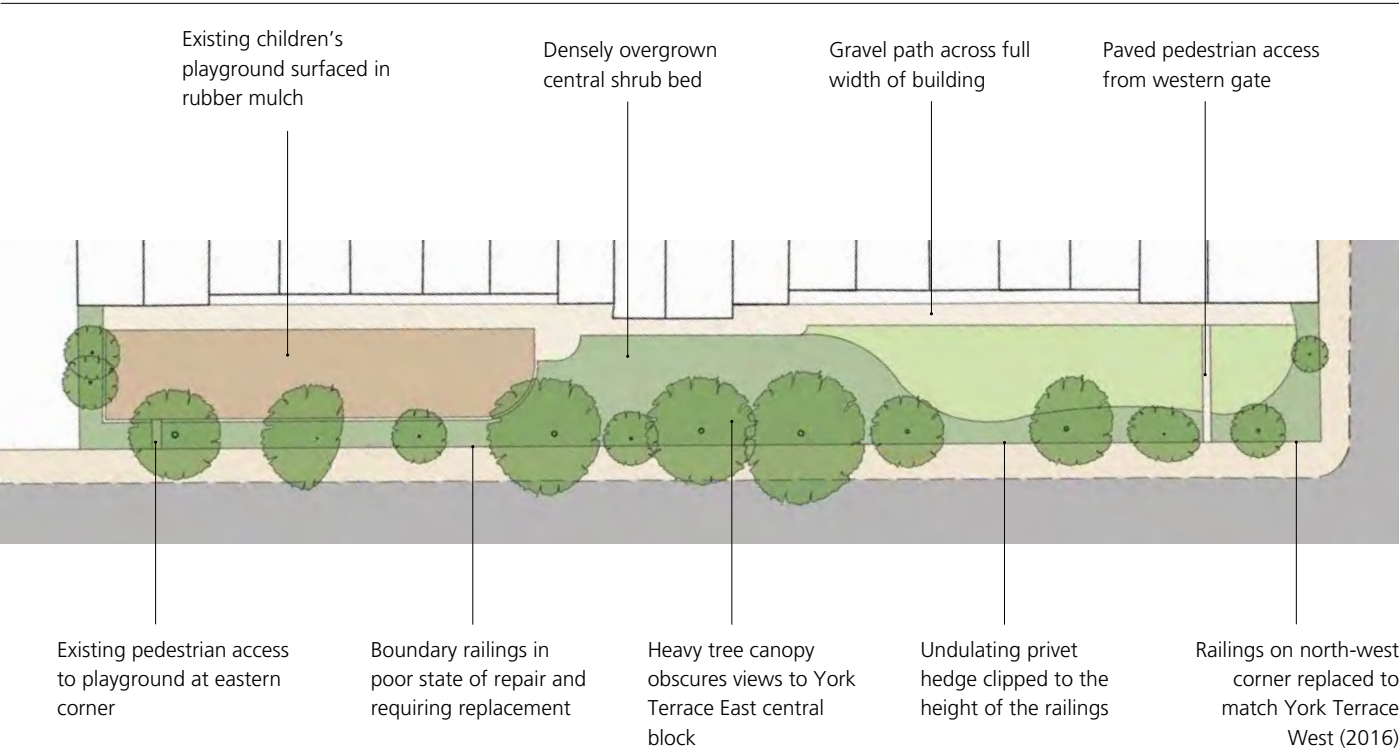
York Terrace West



1834 Mayhew Plan (NTS)

2.2 Existing Conditions

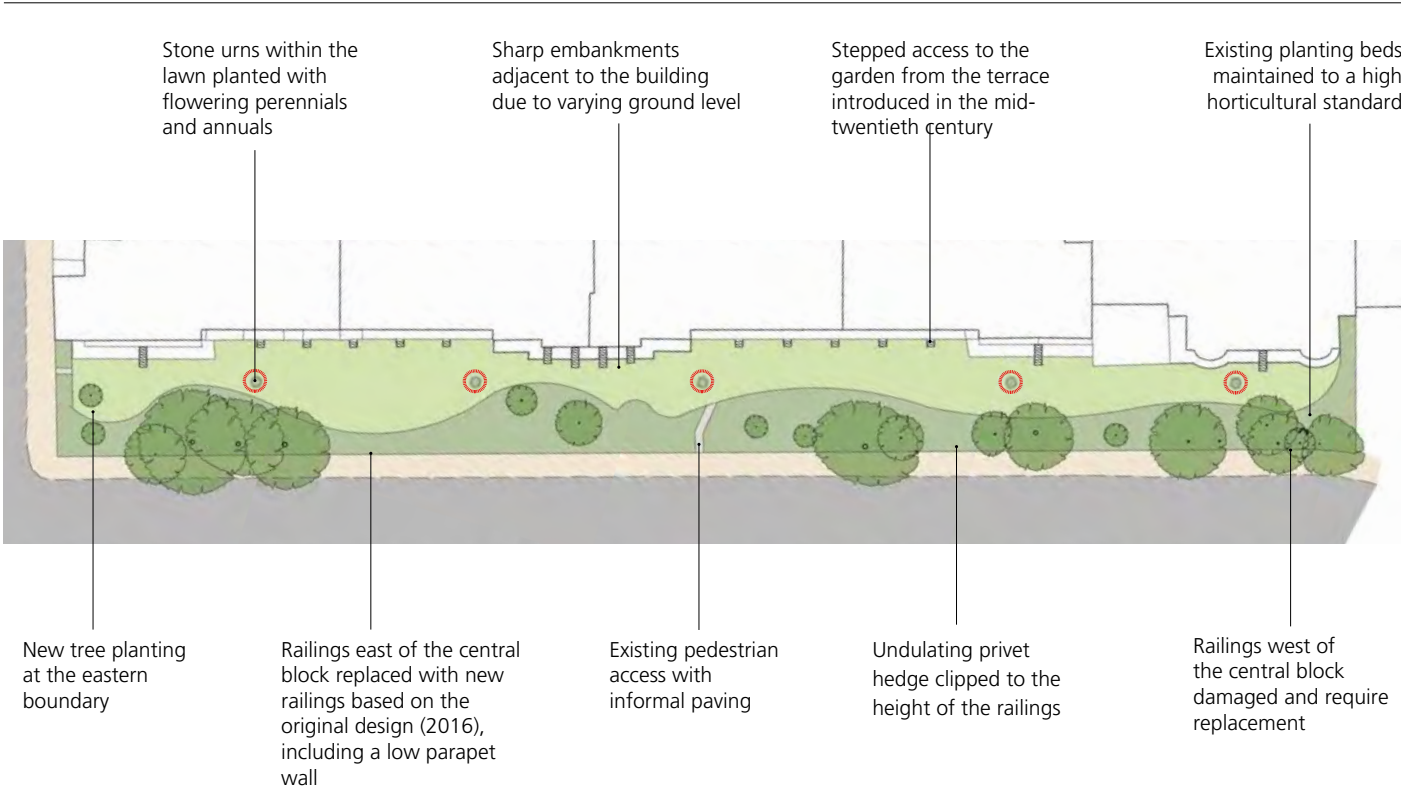
York Terrace East



Existing Conditions' Plan (NTS)

2.2 Existing Conditions

York Terrace West



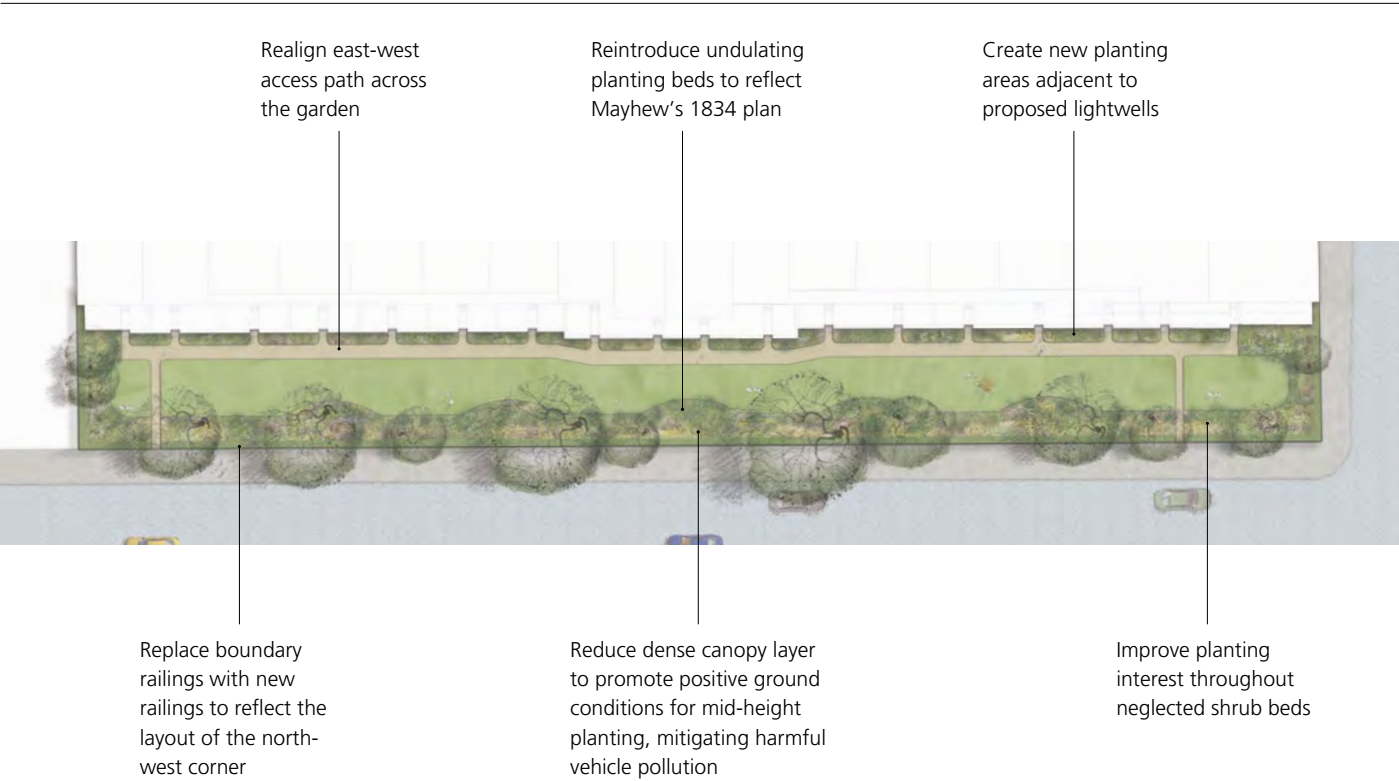
Legend

Stoneware urn

Existing Conditions' Plan (NTS)

2.3 Proposed Plan

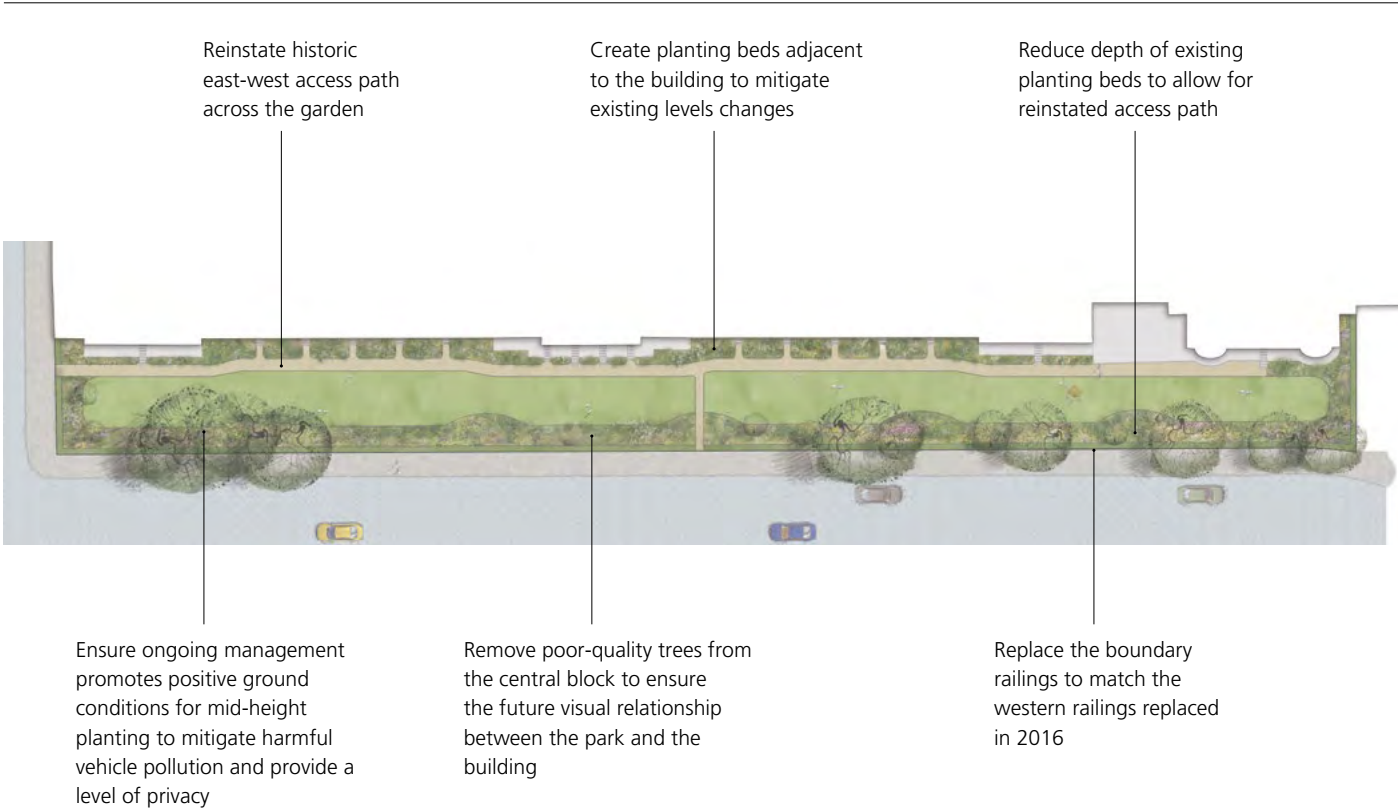
York Terrace East



Proposed Plan (NTS)

2.3 Proposed Plan

York Terrace West



Proposed Plan (NTS)

3.1 Views

Existing Conditions + Historic Precedent



Left: Historic street views from the Outer Circle (superimposed on Mayhew's Plan of 1834-35). Note the view south-west across the facade of York Terrace.



Far left: The central block of York Terrace East is completely obscured by plane trees growing on the boundary of Regent's Park. Existing mature trees growing within the garden serve to further mask the building.

Left: The pediment of York Terrace West is still clearly visible above the trees within the terrace, even during the spring and summer months.

The Outer Circle was originally flanked on either side by a broad footway lit with gas-lamps, and planted with trees, which complemented and distinguished the palatial terraces and framed views to and from the interior of the park. As Nash remarked in 1832, his aim was to create 'so many distinct pictures' so that perambulators 'will see a succession of views distinct from each other'.⁵

The layout of the Outer Circle was calculated to satisfy the residents' wish for privacy and the public's desire for public amenity: resident leaseholders enjoyed the benefits of private communal gardens and aerial views from the upper windows of their houses; the visiting public were restricted to street-level views from the public rights of way, but these were nevertheless carefully designed so that a walk or drive took visitors through a series of framed views or living pictures.

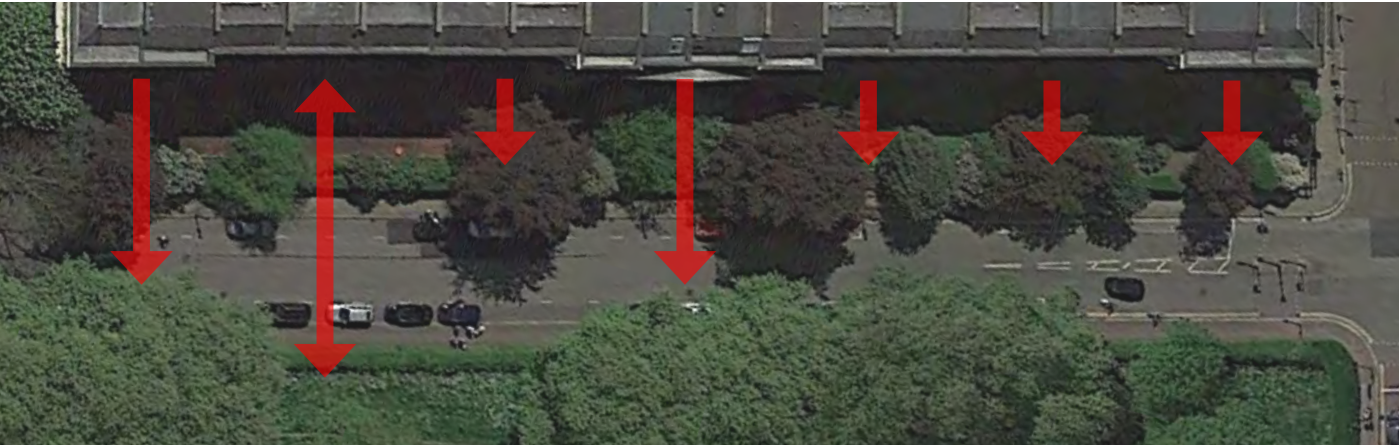
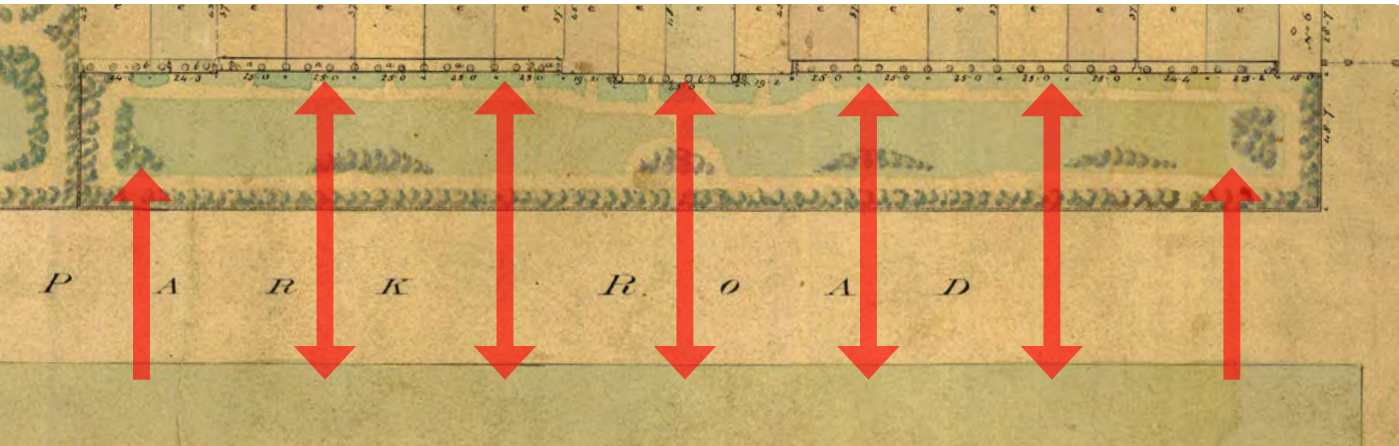


Left: Steel engraving, Thomas Hosmer Shepherd (After), 1827, London.



Left: York Terrace West, from York Bridge. York Terrace West is still mostly visible from this historic location, although the central block and pediment are partially obscured by tree planting.

3.1 Views
Existing Conditions
York Terrace East

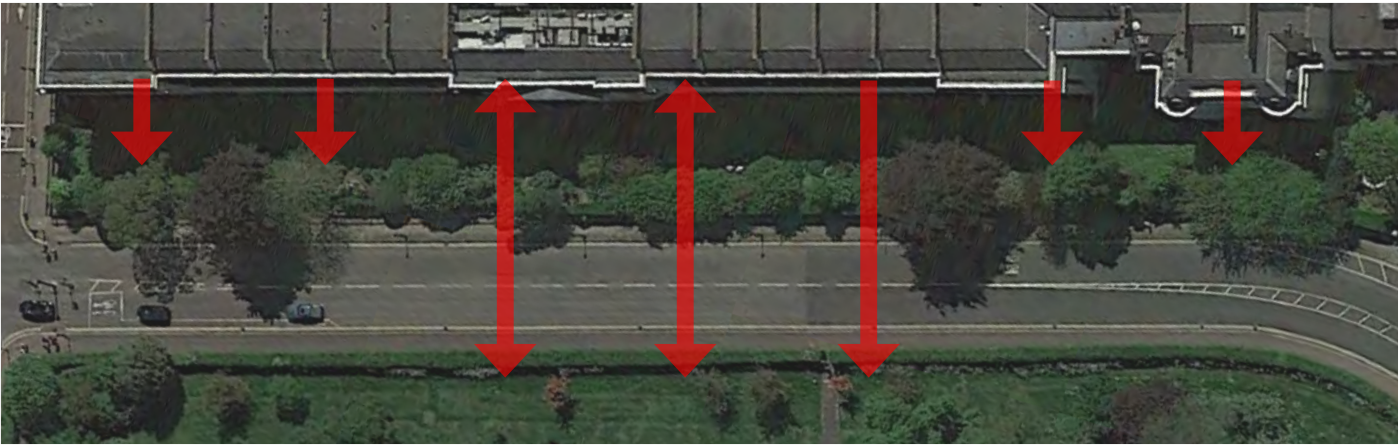


Legend

 Long views into and out of the gardens at upper levels

Historic views to and from York Terrace East and West were examined by Todd Longstaffe-Gowan Ltd Landscape Design in 2013, and these results were incorporated into the Royal Parks’ report *The Regent’s Park and Primrose Hill Tree and View Management Strategy* (July 2013) prepared by Burns + Nice, Sarah Couch Landscape and Land Management Services. These views are described in this report as ‘largely screened by boundary trees, except at park entrances’, and the consultants recommend ‘co-ordinated management of boundary trees with the CEPC to identify opportunities to maintain or re-create historic views and vistas to and from the western terraces’ as a high priority.

3.1 Views
Existing Conditions
York Terrace West



Legend

 Long views into and out of the gardens at upper levels

 (NTS)

Opposite top and top: Mayhew’s plans of York East and West showing long views across the length of the garden framed by planting in both Regent’s Park and the terrace gardens.

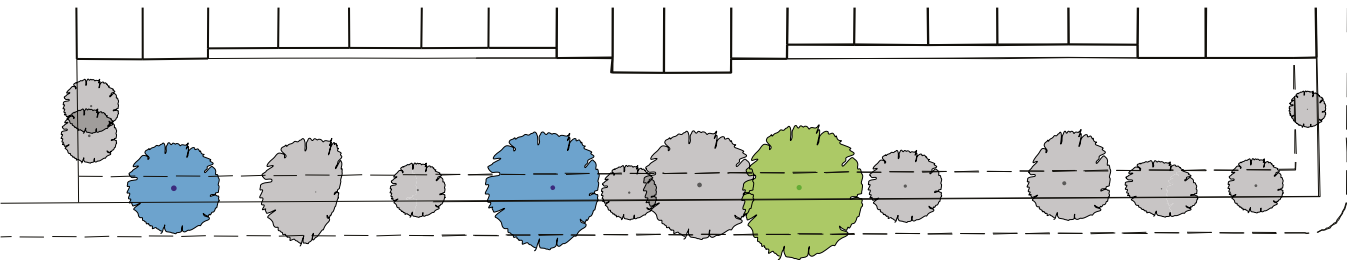
Opposite bottom: Mature trees in York Terrace East block views to the majority of the building facade, whilst boundary tree planting in Regent’s Park obscures views to the pediment and central block.

Bottom: Long views into the park and towards the building are preserved in the central third of York Terrace West.

3.2 Planting: Trees

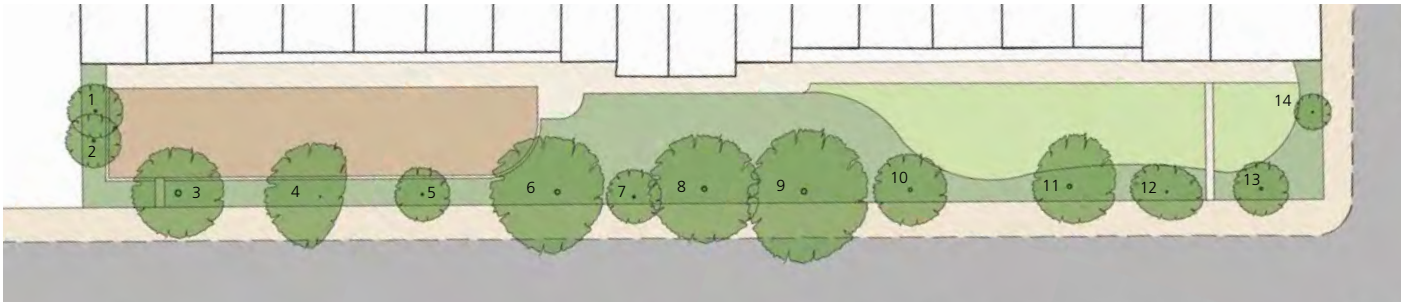
Existing Conditions + Historic Precedent

York Terrace East



Legend

-  **A Grade Trees** – of high quality, with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 40 years. Such trees are particularly good examples of their species, especially if rare or unusual; or those that are essential components of groups, or of formal or semi-formal arboricultural features (e.g. the dominant and/or principal trees within an avenue).
-  **B Grade Trees** – of moderate quality, with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 20 years. Such trees might be included in category A, but are downgraded because of an impaired condition (e.g. presence of significant though remediable defects, including unsympathetic past management and storm damage), such that they are unlikely to be suitable for retention beyond 40 years; or trees lacking the special quality necessary to merit the category A designation.
-  **C Grade Trees** – of low quality, with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 10 years, or young trees with a stem diameter below 150mm. Such trees are unremarkable and of very limited merit or of such an impaired condition that they do not qualify in higher categories.



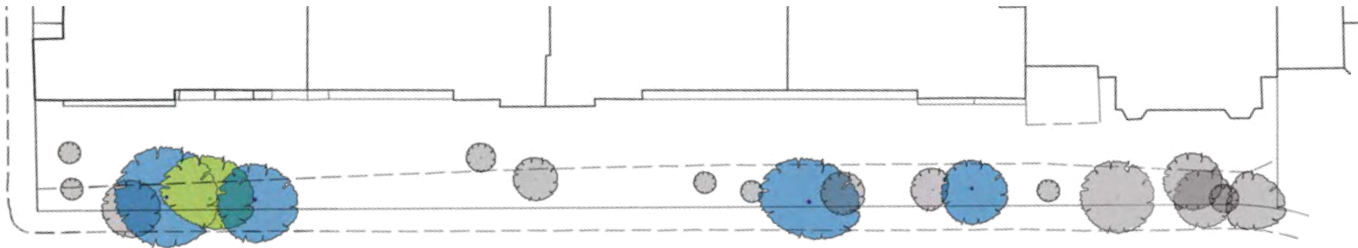
- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. <i>Ilex aquifolium</i> , common holly | 13. <i>Prunus cerasifera</i> 'Pissardii', cherry plum |
| 2. <i>Ilex aquifolium</i> , common holly | 14. <i>Pyrus calleryana</i> 'Chanticleer', Callery pear 'Chanticleer' |
| 3. <i>Fagus sylvatica</i> 'Purpurea', copper beech | |
| 4. <i>Cotoneaster</i> 'Cornubia', cotoneaster 'Cornubia' | |
| 5. <i>Ilex x altaclerensis</i> , Highclere holly | |
| 6. <i>Fagus sylvatica</i> 'Purpurea', copper beech | |
| 7. <i>Ilex aquifolium</i> , common holly | |
| 8. <i>Cotoneaster</i> 'Cornubia', cotoneaster 'Cornubia' | |
| 9. <i>Fagus sylvatica</i> 'Purpurea', copper beech | |
| 10. <i>Ilex aquifolium</i> , common holly | |
| 11. <i>Prunus cerasifera</i> 'Pissardii', cherry plum | |
| 12. <i>Ilex aquifolium</i> , common holly | |

In July 2018, The Mayhew Consultancy Ltd performed a comprehensive assessment of the conditions of the trees in York Terrace East: 11 of the trees in the terrace were found to be grade C trees – unremarkable or impaired; two were considered grade B, while only a single tree was considered of the highest quality.

3.2 Planting: Trees

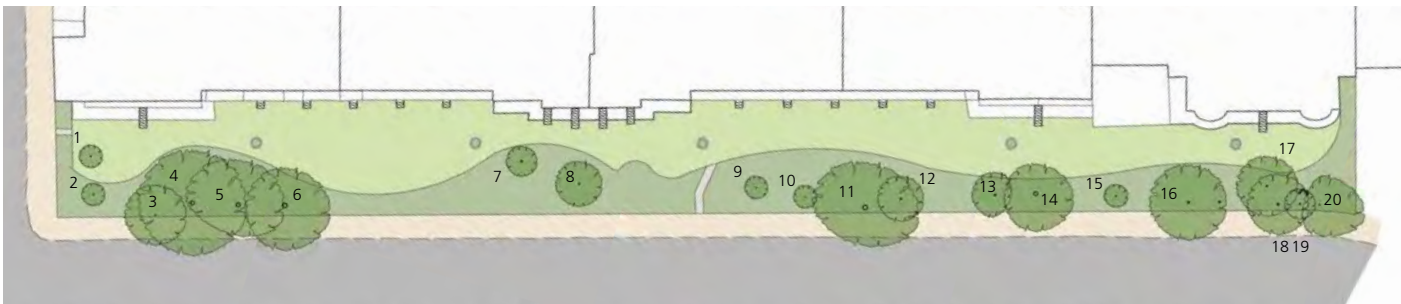
Existing Conditions + Historic Precedent

York Terrace West



Legend

-  **A Grade Trees** - of high quality, with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 40 years. Such trees are particularly good examples of their species, especially if rare or unusual; or those that are essential components of groups, or of formal or semi-formal arboricultural features (e.g. the dominant and/or principal trees within an avenue).
-  **B Grade Trees** - of moderate quality, with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 20 years. Such trees might be included in category A, but are downgraded because of impaired condition (e.g. presence of significant though remediable defects, including unsympathetic past management and storm damage), such that they are unlikely to be suitable for retention for beyond 40 years; or trees lacking the special quality necessary to merit the category A designation.
-  **C Grade Trees** - of low quality, with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 10 years, or young trees with a stem diameter below 150mm. Such trees are unremarkable and of very limited merit or such impaired condition that they do not qualify in higher categories.



- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. <i>Pyrus calleryana</i> 'Chanticleer',
Callery pear 'Chanticleer' | 12. <i>Ilex x altaclerensis</i> 'Golden King',
Holly 'Golden King' |
| 2. <i>Liriodendron tulipifera</i> ,
tulip tree | 13. <i>Prunus cerasifera</i> 'Pissardii',
cherry plum |
| 3. <i>Laurus nobilis</i> ,
bay tree | 14. <i>Pyrus calleryana</i> ,
Callery pear |
| 4. <i>Ligustrum japonicum</i> ,
Japanese privet | 15. <i>Laburnum anagyroides</i> ,
common laburnum |
| 5. <i>Fagus sylvatica</i> 'Purpurea',
copper beech | 16. <i>Malus</i> spp., apple |
| 6. <i>Catalpa bignonioides</i> ,
Indian bean tree | 17. <i>Malus</i> spp., apple |
| 7. <i>Malus</i> spp., apple | 18. <i>Cotoneaster</i> 'Cornubia',
cotoneaster 'Cornubia' |
| 8. <i>Malus</i> spp., apple | 19. <i>Cotoneaster</i> 'Cornubia',
cotoneaster 'Cornubia' |
| 9. <i>Betula pendula</i> , silver birch | 20. <i>Cotoneaster</i> 'Cornubia',
cotoneaster 'Cornubia' |
| 10. <i>Malus</i> 'Donald Wymann',
crab apple 'Donald Wyman' | |
| 11. <i>Fagus sylvatica</i> 'Purpurea',
copper beech | |

In July 2018, The Mayhew Consultancy Ltd performed a comprehensive assessment of the conditions of the trees in York Terrace West. 15 of the trees in the terrace were found to be Class C trees – unremarkable or impaired; four were considered B grade, while only a single tree was considered of the highest quality.

3.2 Planting: Trees

Existing Conditions + Historic Precedent

Right (York Terrace East): Neglected shrubs such as this *Ilex x altaclerensis* would benefit from coppicing.

Far right (York Terrace East): The overgrown *Cotoneaster ‘Cornubia’* in the centre of the garden should be removed to improve planting conditions beneath it. In addition, by eliminating the broad canopy in this area, views to the building pediment will be improved.



Right (York Terrace West): The garden benefits from a number of established ornamental trees such as this ‘B’ grade *Ligustrum japonicum*.

Far right (York Terrace West): Overcrowding at canopy level means that trees such as this *Prunus cerasifera ‘Pissardii’* have become misshapen and should be removed to provide more room for the surrounding trees.



There is a clear difference between the quality and layout of trees in York Terrace East and York Terace West.

In York Terrace East, a cluster of trees and shrubs have established in the centre of the garden, resulting in a dense canopy that obscures sightlines between the building and the park. Crowding within the terrace has inhibited the growth of several of the trees, causing them to grow with poor form.

In contrast, York Terrace West has several ornamental trees that successfully frame the building without obscuring views to the central block and pediment. Shrubs are maintained at a medium height, which helps mitigate pollution and provide privacy from the Outer Circle without diminishing the presence of the building.



Left: The grade ‘A’ beech in the centre of York Terrace East is a high-quality tree that unfortunately obscures much of the building’s facade.



Left: In York Terrace West the *Catalpa bignonioides* and *Fagus sylvatica ‘Purpurea’* are well placed away from the central block of the building.

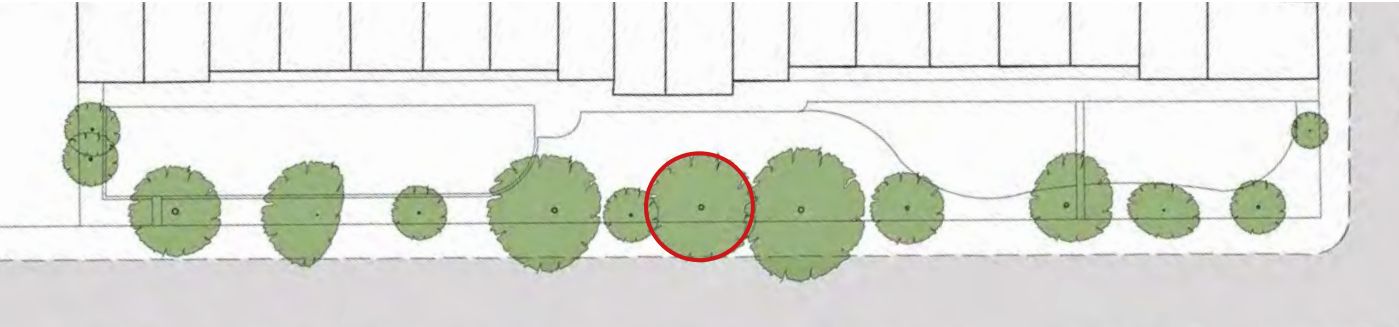
3.2 Planting: Trees

York Terrace East

Initial Tree Management

As part of the wider management strategy to evoke some of John Nash’s original design principles across Regent’s Park and the surrounding terraces, the proposal for both York Terrace East and York Terrace West could see some existing trees removed.

In the eastern terrace, a single grade ‘C’ *Cotoneaster ‘Cornubia’* should be removed to open up views to the central block of the building. This large shrub is extremely overgrown and currently suffering from die back.



Legend

Proposed tree removals

Initial Tree Management Plan
(NTS)

Future Tree Management

In order to enhance the future visual connection between the building and Regent’s Park, three principles of replacement should be used to regulate the height of the terrace planting.

On their demise, the three large trees obstructing the central block of the building may not be replaced, which will ensure future permeability to the facade.

Trees at the east and west ends of the terrace should be replanted to reflect Nash’s original vision for the site. The height of replacement tree species should be made with consideration for mature scale to ensure that larger trees frame the terrace at both ends, with a gradual decrease in height towards the centre.



Legend

Retained tree – may not be replaced on demise, particularly if impeding the growth of another tree in the locality

Retained tree – to be replaced by small/medium-sized specimens on demise

Retained tree – to be replaced with similar species on demise

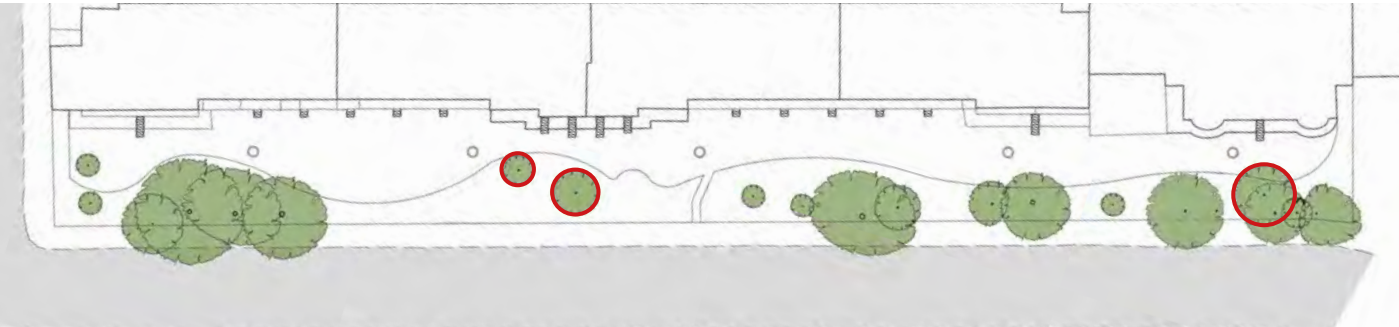
Future Tree Management Plan
(NTS)

3.2 Planting: Trees

York Terrace West

Initial Tree Management

York Terrace West could see three existing grade ‘C’ trees removed. These three apple trees could be removed from across the terrace: two in the central block, to improve views towards the building, and one to ease overcrowding at canopy level on the western edge of the garden in order to improve pollution control by allowing lower level shrubs to flourish.



Legend

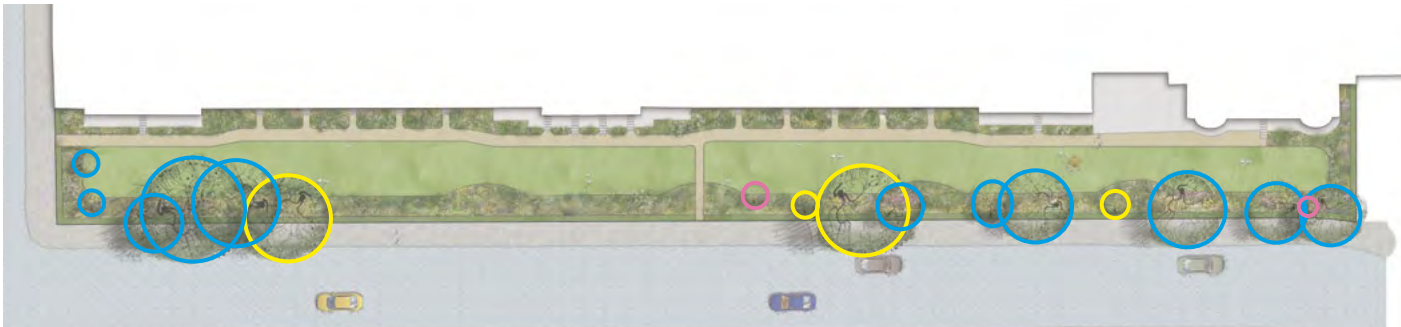
Proposed tree removals

Initial Tree Management Plan (NTS)

Future Tree Management

Long-term tree replacement in York Terrace West should echo the strategy being utilised in the eastern terrace. Replacement trees should focus on maintaining a higher canopy at the ends of the original building facade, whilst keeping the central block clear of tall trees, again allowing lower level shrubs to flourish and play their part in controlling pollution and providing privacy.

Small and medium-sized ornamental specimens should be utilised for future replanting, to ensure a level of privacy to the gardens, without impeding views to the architecture. In contrast to the garden at York Terrace East, the western terrace will retain more of the existing style of tree planting.



Legend

Retained tree – may not be replaced on demise, particularly if impeding the growth of another tree in the locality

Retained tree – to be replaced by small/medium-sized specimens on demise

Retained tree – to be replaced with similar species on demise

Future Tree Management Plan (NTS)

3.2 Planting: Shrubs, Perennials and Lawns

Existing Conditions + Historic Precedent

Right (York Terrace East): A dense canopy layer means mostly hardy and shade-tolerant shrubs can thrive in some sections of the garden.

Far right (York Terrace East): Overgrown shrubs cover a large proportion of the existing planting area. The dry and heavily-shaded ground conditions mean there is little to no herbaceous interest in the deepest beds.



Right (York Terrace West): The plant beds are generally maintained to a high horticultural standard, with shrubs neatly pruned and a variety of herbaceous interest.

Far right (York Terrace West): A steep embankment runs adjacent to the building and presents a hazard and maintenance issue. Extended walkways appear to have been introduced to the building in the mid-twentieth century and soil subsidence has resulted in unsightly exposure of their foundations.



York Terrace East and York Terrace West contain broad undulating planting beds that provide a visual focal point to north-facing views from the building. Dense shrubs create privacy for residents by screening eye-level views into the terraces from the Outer Circle.

Changes to the original garden layout were recorded in Mayhew's 1834 plan, which depicts well-defined beds running along the northern boundary. As trees and shrubs matured, the planting beds expanded southwards, encroaching on the lawn. The paths that are clearly visible in the 1876 Ordnance Survey map were lost some time ago; likely removed to create more planting space and unite the small island beds with the border planting.



Well-defined shrub beds with perimeter circuit path visible in the 1876 Ordnance Survey.

3.2 Planting: Shrubs, Perennials and Lawns

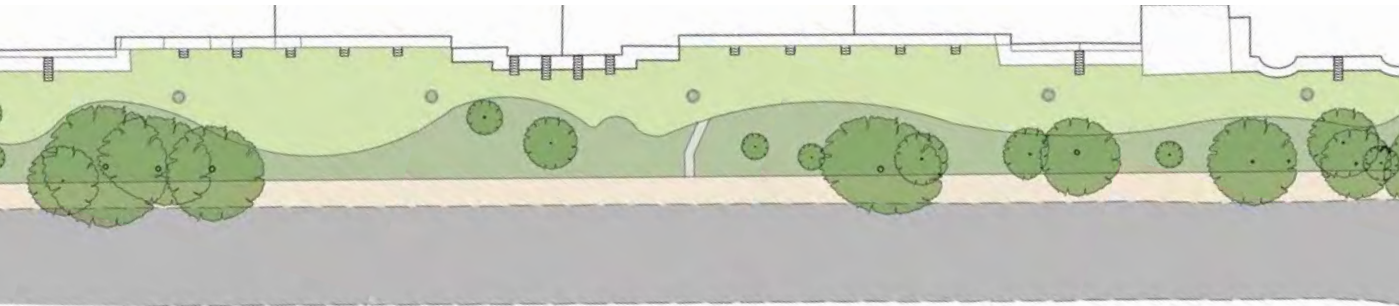
Existing Conditions + Historic Precedent

York Terrace East

Crowded planting at the centre of York Terrace East has produced a highly competitive environment for shrubs that has caused them to grow very tall. The resultant ground-level conditions in this area are currently not conducive to the success of herbaceous planting, so large sections of the understorey remain bare.

A small amount of herbaceous planting is restricted to the western half of the site where light levels are improved; however, flowering plants are limited to just a few species.

A children’s playground is located to the east of the garden, where only a narrow band of screening shrubs remains from the previous layout.



Legend

Lawn

Shrub/perennial bed

Existing Shrubs, Perennials and Lawn (NTS)

3.2 Planting: Shrubs, Perennials and Lawns

Proposals

York Terrace East

The proposed scheme draws on the 1834 garden layout, reintroducing the gently undulating border planting. By decreasing the depth of the beds, residents should benefit from greater light levels, which should also improve the success of the garden. Tree canopies should be lifted where necessary to improve the health of the trees and reduce overcrowding. These measures should enhance conditions for medium-height shrubs, which can provide screening and mitigate vehicle pollution.

The existing east-west path could be realigned around the extended lightwell in the redeveloped building, while creating additional planting areas. These new shrub and perennial beds should afford privacy to the individual lower terraces by preventing overlooking from the path.



Legend

Shrub/flower bed

Lawn

Proposed Bed Plan (NTS)

3.2 Planting: Shrubs, Perennials and Lawns

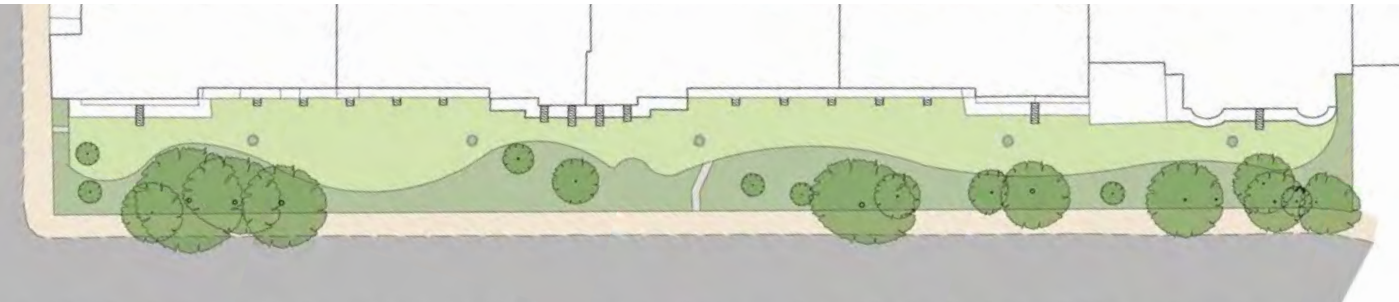
Existing Conditions + Historic Precedent

York Terrace West

York Terrace West has been well tended by the gardening team, and retains a wide variety of plants. Individual specimens are in good condition, although the overall composition of the beds is somewhat poor in places.

Along the length of the terrace, the lawn slopes down sharply towards the building. The resulting grass banks are very steep in areas and present a maintenance hazard, while also suffering from mild subsidence.

The layout of the garden has deviated from the early plans as the edge of the planting has crept towards the building. This encroachment makes sections of the garden feel uncomfortably narrow and confined.



Legend

Lawn

Shrub/perennial bed

Existing Shrubs, Perennials and Lawn (NTS)

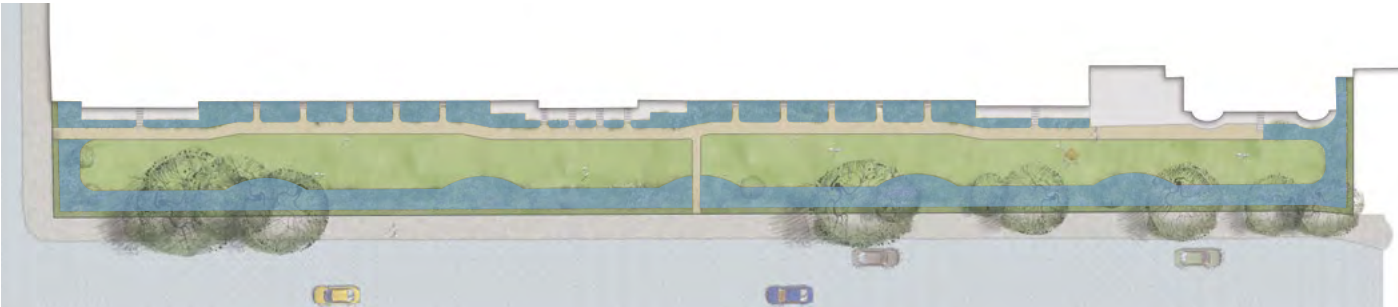
3.2 Planting: Shrubs, Perennials and Lawns

Proposals

York Terrace West

The proposed scheme would reintroduce the east-west path from the 1834 layout to provide formal access to the individual dwellings. By pulling the path away from the building as well as reducing the width of the border planting, users would be directed away from the unsafe slopes adjacent to the facade. The existing grass embankments would be planted in order to stabilise the soil and reduce the maintenance hazard presented when mowing.

Maintenance to north border planting should continue to promote an open canopy layer, which should ensure beneficial ground conditions for shrub and herbaceous planting. Medium-height planting should be preserved and enhanced to help to mitigate pollution from the Outer Circle and maintain privacy.



Legend

Shrub/flower bed

Lawn

Proposed Bed Plan (NTS)

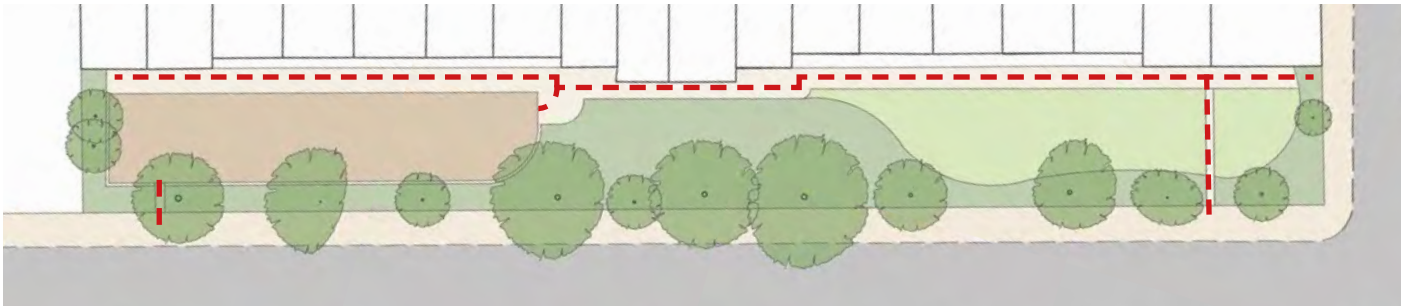
3.3 Paths: Materials and Layout

Existing Conditions + Historic Precedent



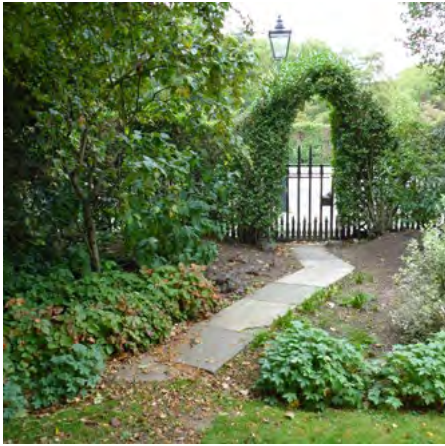
Left: An existing gravel path runs the length of York Terrace East. The path appears to be suffering subsidence, evidenced by the exposed concrete.

Right: Layout of existing paths in York Terrace East (NTS).

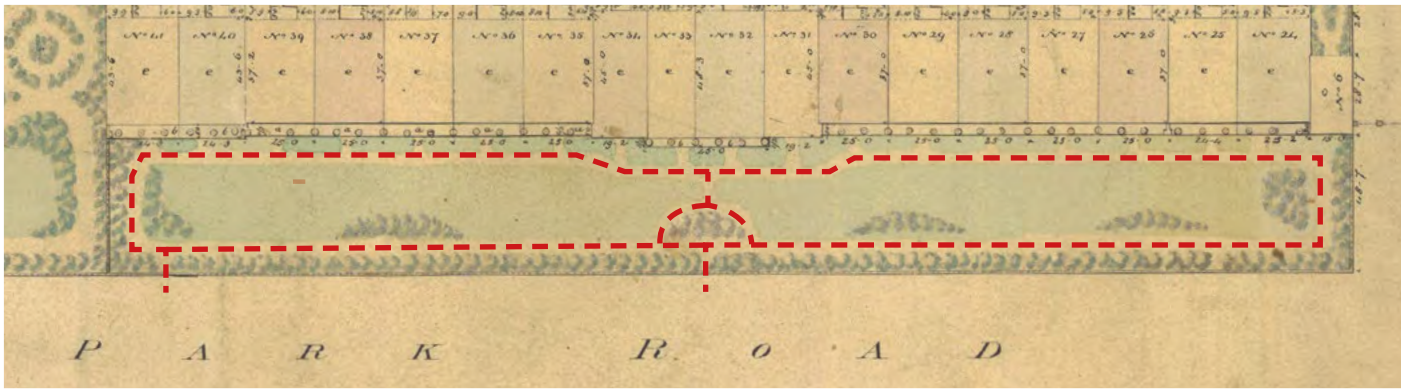


Far left: The crazy-paved path at the western gate in York Terrace East is out of character with the paths of the other terraces in the park.

Left: The informal path in York Terrace West is formed of concrete pavers. These should be removed and the path replaced with a more appropriate, unbound surface.



Right: Mayhew's 1834 plan.



Only York Terrace East retains an access path across the length of the terrace. The western terrace has lost all internal paths except for the informal pavers from the central pedestrian gate.

Mayhew's 1834 plan for both gardens is almost symmetrical, depicting a perimeter pathway around the entirety of the gardens. The historic circuit would have been well suited to the original planting beds, which lacked large trees.

3.3 Paths: Materials and Layout

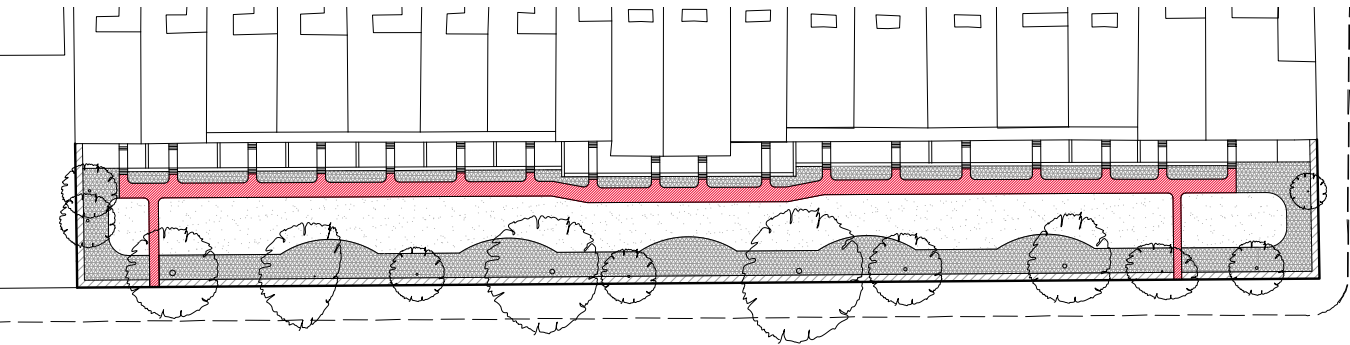
Proposals

York Terrace East

The proposed plan evokes the integrity of the original early nineteenth century landscape plan by reinstating the southernmost path adjacent to the building and realigning the east and west access paths more closely with the historic designs.

The scale of the existing trees and retained shrubs means a complete circuit is not practical, so the northern path from the Mayhew plan has been omitted.

By bringing the path adjacent from the building south, new planting beds are created, which can screen overlooking views into the basement lightwells, while preserving natural light.



Legend

 Proposed path

 Proposed Path Plan (NTS)

3.3 Paths: Materials and Layout

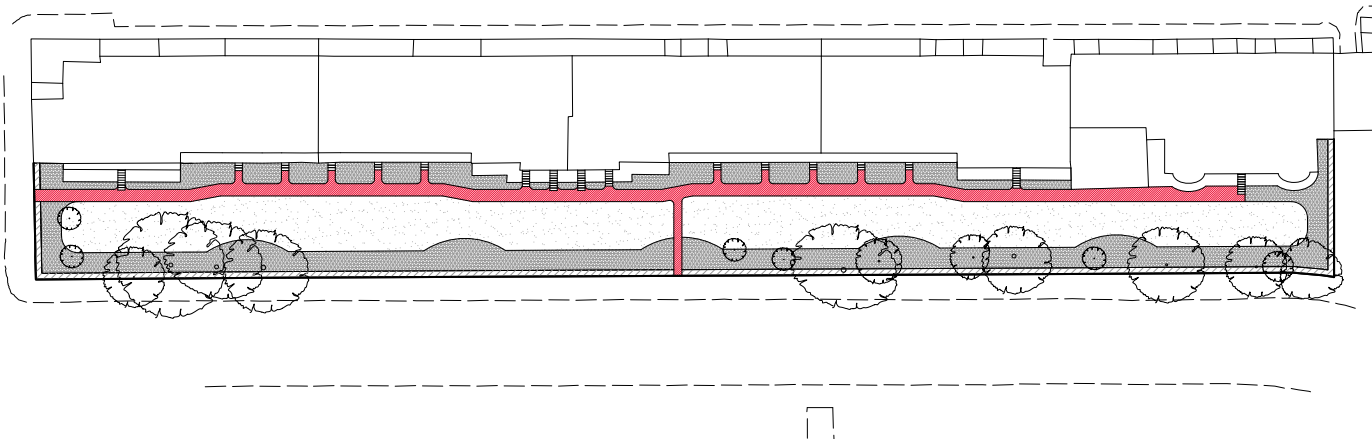
Proposals

York Terrace West

The proposed path network for York Terrace West retains the central access path from the existing garden, albeit with a new surface that is universal across both east and west terraces.

The new layout proposes the reinstatement of the southern path adjacent to the building as depicted in the nineteenth century plan. This new path will help to position users away from the severe grade changes and basement lightwells along the terrace. In addition, space between the path and building can be given over to planting, which will better incorporate the erratic level changes.

An informal path on the eastern boundary will be resurfaced to provide discrete access to the garden.



Legend

 Proposed path

 Proposed Path Plan (NTS)

3.3 Paths: Edging

Existing Condition



A small section of the path in York Terrace East is edged with a flush kerb. This type of edging contains the planting, but is not very attractive.



The lawn in York Terrace West does not have a finished edge and must therefore be regularly cut with a spade. Moisture loss from the edge of the turf has caused some minor dry patches.

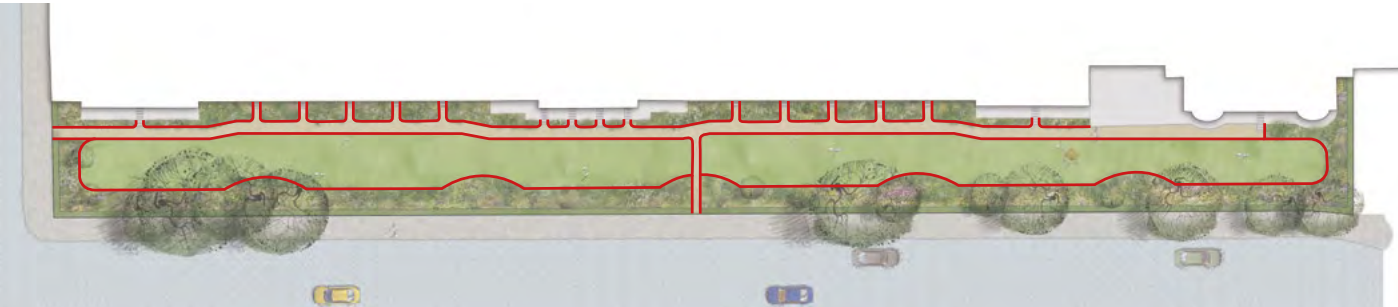
The majority of the lawn and planting areas within York Terrace East and York Terrace West do not contain edge restraint. With no physical barrier to lawns, grass will migrate into the beds over time and present an ongoing maintenance requirement.

It is recommended that all paths and planting beds in the proposed scheme use some form of edge restraint in order to make the gardens neater and reduce future maintenance.

Steel edging would provide a durable finish to the paths, whilst a material such as timber could be used to create a softer, more organic edge for planted areas.

3.3 Paths: Edging

Proposals



Top: York Terrace East Proposed

Bottom: York Terrace West Proposed

Legend

 Proposed edge restraint

 Proposed Edges Plan
(NTS)

3.4 Gates and Railings

Existing Condition



Left (York Terrace East): Piecemeal repairs to damaged railings are present along the length of the terrace.

Right (York Terrace East): The section of refurbished railings at the western end of the terrace. Note the low parapet wall on which the railings sit. In addition to the parapet wall, a low retaining wall has been constructed behind the railings, likely to protect them from encroaching shrubs and tree roots, whilst providing maintenance access.



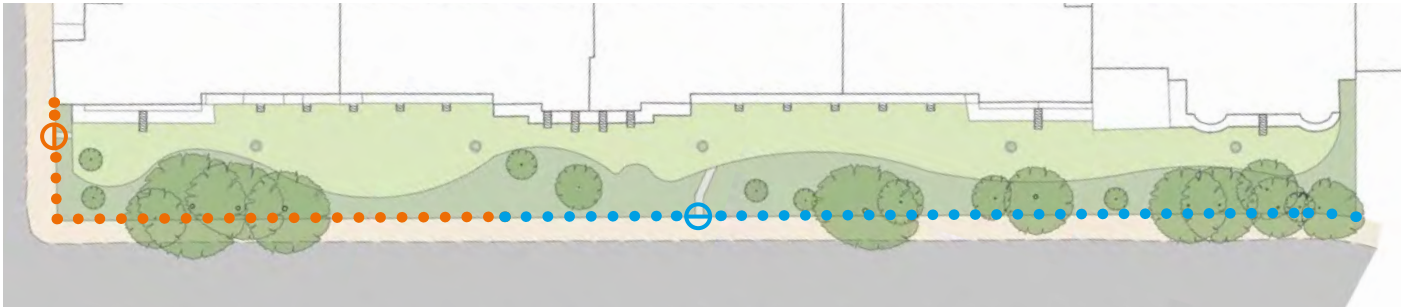
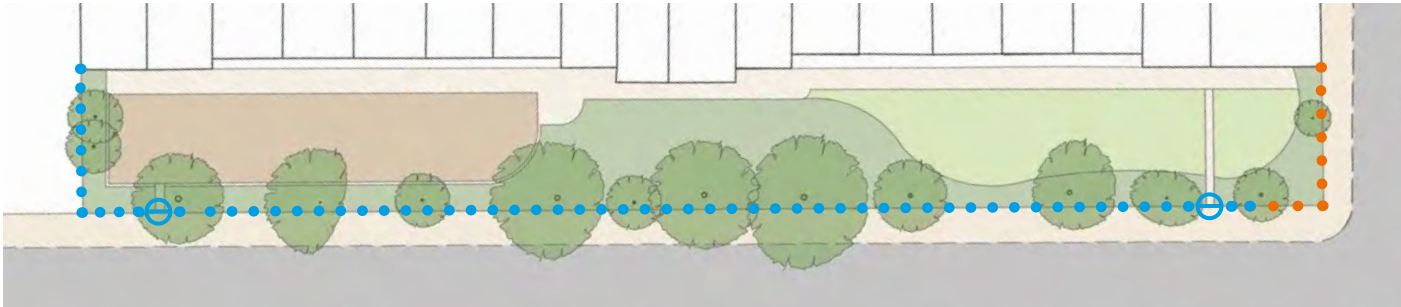
Left (York Terrace West): A third of the railings have been replaced to the east of the site. The repaired railings sit on a low parapet wall that matches the small section of replaced railings on the corner of York Terrace East.

Right (York Terrace West): A new retaining wall has been installed during construction of the refurbished railings. The foundations of the wall have likely impacted on the root structures of existing trees.

The majority of railings in York Terrace East and York Terrace West are in poor condition. Piecemeal repairs are evident across both terraces, and these detract from the views to the terrace from the Outer Circle.

Approximately one third of the railings in York Terrace West were replaced in 2016. Those at the corner of York Terrace East were also refurbished to match. The replacement railings sit on a low parapet wall that differs from their original design. In addition, the planting adjacent to refurbished sections has been retained by a low wall that sits approximately 400mm behind the boundary.

The low retaining walls appear to cut through the root zones of existing planting and therefore may have impacted on the health of some of the trees.



Top: York Terrace East Existing

Bottom: York Terrace West Existing

Legend

- Existing railings
- Refurbished railings with parapet wall
- Existing gate
- Refurbished/replacement gate

Existing Railings Plan (NTS)

3.4 Gates and Railings

Proposals

York Terrace East

Proposed improvements to York Terrace East will require the existing damaged railings to be removed and replaced with new railings to match those installed in 2016.

Where low retaining walls are required to permit the refurbishment of the perimeter railings, these shall be carefully designed and built to minimise potential damage to existing tree roots. This detail should be agreed by a qualified arboriculturalist.

Both pedestrian access gates should be replaced to match the new style of railings.



Legend

- Refurbished railings with parapet wall
- ⊖ Refurbished/replacement gate

⌒ Proposed Railings' Plan (NTS)

3.4 Gates and Railings

Proposals

York Terrace West

The proposed scheme will see the new railings constructed in 2016 continued along the rest of York Terrace West, with a new pedestrian gate built to match.

As in the case of the eastern terrace, where low retaining walls are required to permit the refurbishment of the perimeter railings, these shall be carefully designed and built to minimise potential damage to existing tree roots. This detail should be agreed by a qualified arboriculturalist.



Legend

- Refurbished railings with parapet wall
- ⊖ Refurbished/replacement gate

⌒ Proposed Railings' Plan (NTS)

References

- 1. CRES 2/771 Nash to Milne 17 April 1822 (The National Archive)
- 2. CRES 2/771 Nash to Milne 17 April 1822 (The National Archive)
- 3. CRES 2/771 Nash to Milne 17 April 1822 (The National Archive)
- 4. James Elmes, Metropolitan Improvements, London, 1827, p.19.
- 5. CRES 2/742 Undated letter from John Nash (The National Archive)

