

Beckenham Place Park

Mounded garden – Planning Statement

This document details the layout, setting, dimensions and materials of the proposal which consists in the creation of a circular mounded garden within Beckenham Place Park. This garden will constitute a destination for visitors and add to the experience of the park whilst preserving the heritage value of the site.

The proposed site for the implementation of the feature mound is an existing clearing bordered with semi mature and mature trees, bound at the east by the railway line. The northern and western edges are defined by the existing path linking the western and eastern sides of Beckenham Place Park, whilst the southern edge of the clearing is bound by woodland.

The clearing is remote from the Mansion and Homestead but in adjacency of the compost area/burning yard, making this location currently secluded and under-used.

The creation of the mounded garden in this area will participate to attract visitors to this part of the park and increase the footfall between the eastern and western sides of Beckenham Place Park.

The mounded garden will offers views at 360 degrees onto both sides of Beckenham Place Park, including the lake. The mounded shape of the gardens will reflect the landforms of the flood alleviation scheme conducted by the Environmental Agency on the eastern side.

Two accesses are proposed to the top platform of the mound. Firstly a DDA compliant path (1 in 21 slope) that gently spirals up to the highest point, 10 meters above the existing ground level. Secondly an informal set of timber steps inserted in the grass slope on the side of the mound. The stairs to the top will be formed of flights of 10 steps maximum split by grass landings. These will guarantee the mounded garden is fully accessible for all, whilst offering a varied experience to the visitors.

The location of the mounded garden has been carefully studied to deliver both a significant feature for the park and to preserve and respect the heritage value of the settings: it will sit in a clearing located over 300 meters away from the Southend Lodge, 400 meters from the Homestead and 500 meters from the Mansion. The existing tree belt of mature trees that surrounds the clearing will provide an efficient screening of the views towards the mound. In addition, the existing ground level of the clearing being low (+29.50), the mound will not appear as a dominant feature in the parkland. Furthermore, the existing ground level by the Homestead (+42.00) is higher than the top of the mound (+39.50). This, together with the existing tree belts and the distance, ensures the mound won't be visible from the Homestead and core of the pleasure grounds. The mound will be easily accessible from the existing path looping around the clearing and from the lake. Finally, in the winter months views towards the lake from the top of the mound will be possible, associated with views to the eastern side all year round.

The mounded garden will display simple, robust and natural materials throughout. The slopes will be maintained as long grassland integrating sweeps of native flower meadow. The path leading up to the top will be a simple stripe of mown grass, so will be the top platform.

Some seating will be available at the top of the mound for visitors to enjoy the views. These will be timber benches, in line with the furniture palette submitted in the original planning application.