



Forest Garden

Garden S., Berlin-Frohnau
since 2021

in collaboration with
Imke Woelk & Partner, Architecture

The small plot of land is set back from the road, directly adjacent to the Tegeler Forest. The view, the spatial and material reference to the forest are determining for the garden.

The architectural concept foresees using the basement of the existing residential building, which is unfit for preservation, as the base of a new residential building. The ground floor, as a high parterre, is thus about eighty centimetres above the terrain. In essence, the building will be visually open on all sides with a variety of physical connections between the inside and the outside. The family will live in a woodland garden.

Conceptually, the compact ensemble of building and garden will be assembled from individual elements that create finely structured as well as overarching spaces in free order to each other. Two garden sections are generated, the enclosed "living garden" and the open "forest space".

Horizontals — wooden decks form transitions from the garden to the inner living spaces and create accents of stay in the garden. There is a large living terrace and a small garden deck, which, thanks to the same, framed construction method, formally unites and at the same time spans the garden space as a spatial element and narrative. The wooden decks are each in close contact with the adjacent vegetation.

Trees and shrubs — Two English oaks, a sessile oak and a smaller bird cherry create a direct connection between the garden and the neighbouring forest. With these plantings – requirements of the urban development plan – the house and garden will be even more strongly characterised by tree canopies than before. Individual larger shrubs will supplement this spatial framework at certain points. Planting areas will be planted with perennials, grasses, ferns (with attention to leaf architecture, habit and a wintergreen presence).

Spacescapers — The “framing” of a garden space is typically a central design issue. It is fundamental to the habitability of both garden and home. We propose to keep the existing wire mesh fence as a simple, banal basic element and to create visual protection as well as “garden space formation” with individual, free-standing elements. In addition to the shrubs mentioned above, these include a two-metre high mixed hedge to the north of the house, supplemented with a series of wooden storage elements (for litter, bicycles and sundries) and a brushwood wall to the south-west of the garden.

Ground and modulation — The existing topography of a small terrace mound will support the spatial structure of the garden. The earth fill is “landscaped” to create a view corridor from the living space to Tegeler Forest on the one hand, and a slight separation from the residential garden on the other. The gravel strewn hardscapes are given a structural edging of simple wooden boards. With the growth of the plants and the “growing in” of the pavings, these clear lines will be replaced by soft transitions after five to ten years.

This slow decomposition and transformation (including the initial bark mulch cover of the plantings and the woodchip coverings that may need to be supplemented periodically) is at the same time a defining component of the forest floor character of the garden.





