

Design Explanation,

The garden is for a luxury new build property, built of brick with ceramic black roof tiles. The building has many top of the range innovative features and has a contemporary feel, using stainless steel and glass balconies, although being of a traditional overall design.

The design seeks to break the large rear garden into defined areas, to incorporate a wildlife area, a working area and a formal lawn. The design provides for colour and interest throughout the year. The front garden was required to be attractive and low maintenance.

The design development options presented three themes: naturalistic, circular and linear, which all incorporated the following: a formal "lawn" area in front of the house; a barbeque area; a screened working area; wild flower and wild area by the stream and various complementary styles for the front garden.

The clients chose the linear option for the rear garden, but opted for the naturalistic style front garden. They also liked the espaliered fruit tree concept, but to be used in the front garden.

The final design incorporates a timber deck extending from the terrace around the house. This serves a twofold purpose: provides seating close to the house, but within the sun (the house faces north) and provides a "bridge" between the house and the lawn, allowing a gradual progression across the metre difference in level. The deck incorporates an infinity pool – which will be a shallow pool with water sitting over cobbles, and will appear to have no far edge. This will provide a contemporary feature which will reflect the sky and surrounding acers (in pots), and which will provide a visual link between the built environment and the naturalistic part of the garden, through the repeated water reference in both settings (infinity pool and stream). The way in which the garden falls away towards the stream should enhance and complement the effect.

Immediately in front of the timber deck is a level formal lawn area, which incorporates three square beds, one planted for winter interest, one for summer and the third for autumn. The beds are positioned opposite the windows of the three main parts of the house: kitchen, sitting room and lounge on the bottom floor and guest suite, master suite and balcony on the second floor. The dominant feature of the beds will be a *Cornus controversia* in the middle bed, but the winter and autumn beds will each have their moment of glory in the appropriate season, with central shrubs/trees and complementary underplanting. The formal lawn is demarcated from the surrounding

garden by the use of paving (to match the drive) set below the level of the lawn. This will provide a subtle visual boundary.

The stream area has been planted with large and dramatic bogside planting, such as *Gunnera manicata*. These plants will be slightly visible through the mature walnut trees from the house and will encourage visitors to stroll down to the stream for a better look.

The working area has been defined using three vertical screens, of a contemporary design. These are offset and overlap slightly so that when viewed from the terrace will effectively screen the shed, greenhouse and vegetable patch, but if working in the productive area of the garden, one will have views down to the stream. Each screen also acts as a backdrop for planting in front: two are autumn orientated grass beds, the one nearest the house has been planted for fragrance throughout the year.

The front garden has been planted with birches, dwarf conifers and heathers surrounding a very large boulder. This will provide an interesting, balanced and low maintenance scheme for the front of the property. The neighbouring fence will be screened by espaliered fruit trees.

Design costs: £710
(including planting plan)