



WILD THING

ACRES WILD

Acres Wild used local and imported stone to blend this exposed, multi-level site on Guernsey into its landscape and provide shelter from the elements

A cres Wild has designed a number of gardens on Guernsey but none perhaps quite as successfully or as atmospherically as the garden at Le Haut. The company was called in at an early stage as this traditional granite farmhouse, located among an intimate network of high banked lanes, was being extended and refurbished. This enabled them to address level issues relating to the house and garaging early on, making efficient use of machinery on site and informing the design of the exterior spaces and how they related to the interior.

The brief, largely dictated by the exposure and steep level changes across the site, was to

create a garden of sheltered spaces for outdoor family living and nestle the garden into its surrounding agricultural landscape. The garden is therefore inward looking to preserve shelter, creating internal vistas but with glimpsed external views where the opportunity existed to provide links with the surroundings.

The client requested that the garden be clean and contemporary to reflect the interior of the house, but feel relaxed and comfortable to reflect the natural qualities of the site. A new



swimming pool and summerhouse needed to be incorporated, along with a kinetic sculpture created by a family member.

The design evolved from the offset arrangement of the house and its extension, which inspired a similar response in the plan →



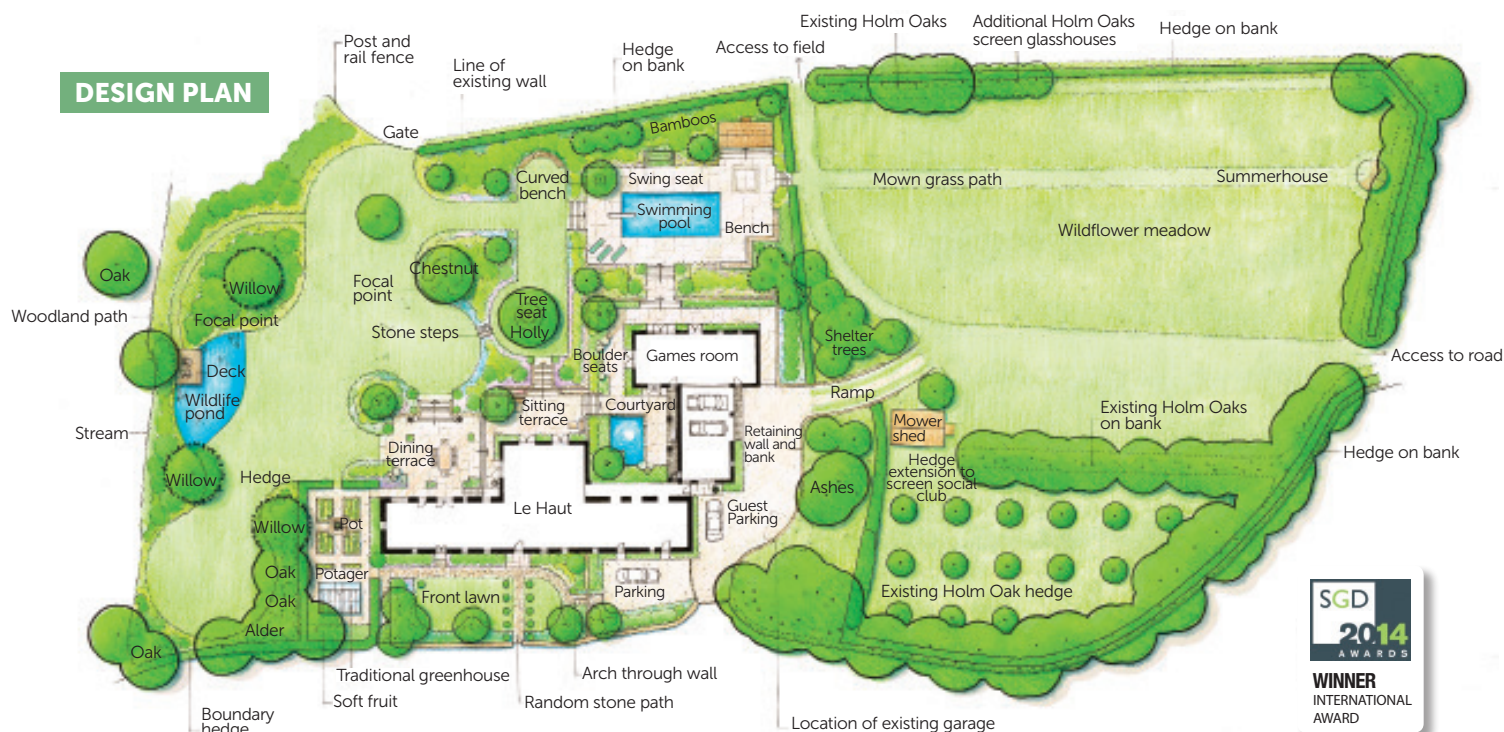
and elevations for the garden. The staggered ground pattern responds to the scale and proportions of the house and is reflected in the level changes. The carefully detailed granite retaining walls unite the house and garden into a cohesive whole and nestle the garden into its setting. These walls, together with banks of lush, textured planting provide shelter and contain a series of linked spaces for a variety of activities – generous dining and entertaining, cosy sitting and reading and intimate swimming and sunbathing. All the spaces are linked by weathered stone paths and broad, elegant steps to create an air of permanence and generosity.

The hard landscape materials, consisting mainly of reclaimed Yorkstone surfacing and

granite stone walling (salvaged from the site), are robust and simple to reflect the rugged nature of the island. Worn and riven Yorkstone is laid in a traditional pattern nearer to the house, with plants allowed to self-seed in some open joints (Erigeron, the little Mexican Daisy is seen self-seeded in walls all over Guernsey). This is contrasted with sawn Yorkstone laid in a regular pattern around the swimming pool, to impart a comfortable, practical and subtly contemporary flavour to this area of the garden. Island-sourced self-binding gravel is used to surface a sheltered courtyard, which furnished with a single plane tree and a simple bistro table evokes a strong sense of place and brings to mind the island's proximity to France.

The planting, while English in character, has a windswept and coastal flavour with a touch of French elegance. Staples such as lavender, astrantia, nepeta, roses, salvia, erigeron and geraniums were mixed with ornamental grasses and more exotic plants such as Agapanthus, Zantedeschia and Echiums to offer a hint of Brittany (where the client holidays each summer) creating a lush and heady, holiday atmosphere.

The garden evolved directly from the natural qualities of the site and the personality of the client. Acres Wild met with the client and construction team regularly during the project, the installation went smoothly and three years on the garden continues to delight. It has just picked up the SGD 2014 International Award.





PROJECT DETAILS

Project value
**Undisclosed,
in excess of £250K**

Build time
**2009 masterplan –
2012 completion of
planting on site**

Size of project
8100m² (two acres)



- 1 The sitting terrace nestles into the architecture of the garden
- 2 The arch through an existing boundary wall defines the front garden
- 3 Sawn Yorkstone paving around the pool
- 4 Sketch of the swimming pool garden
- 5 The farmhouse before refurbishment
- 6 The existing holly tree during construction
- 7 Split granite paths in the front garden
- 8 The cedar bench reflects the staggered lines of the buildings

REFERENCES

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Reclaimed Yorkstone
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Granite for walls
**Recycled from various demolished
outbuildings on site**

Light fittings
Hunza
Web www.hunza.co.nz

Plants
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