

Over the hills and FAR AWAY

DESIGN: ACRES WILD
PHOTOGRAPHY: MARIANNE MAJERUS



PROJECT DETAILS

Total value: £150,000
(excluding carport, shed
and sculptural pieces)
Size of project: 1,700m²
Build time: 2 phases of
3 months over 2 years
Designer: Acres Wild,
acreswild.co.uk
Contractor: (for soft
landscaping)
Arun Landscapes



‘Planting had to be bold, yet simple to complement the scale, colours and patterns of the countryside’

With the stunning backdrop of the South Downs National Park, Debbie Roberts and Ian Smith, of specialist country garden design practice Acres Wild, set about creating a timeless garden to match and blend in with the surroundings

This remote house and garden are located on the edge of the Norfolk estate in the heart of the South Downs National Park, near Arundel. The garden is around half an acre in size and the house is located against the flint wall of the estate on the higher, west side of the garden.

The brick and flint style cottage that sits in the private land had

been recently extended and refurbished, and the clients’ requirements were for a simple, relaxed and timeless garden

Previous page: *Pennisetum ‘Fairy Tails’*, *Perovskia ‘Blue Spire’*, *Stipa gigantea*, sculpture by David Watkinson

Clockwise: Wooden raised beds, dahlias in cutting garden, *Rosa ‘Iceberg’*; wavy wooden bench, flint stone wall, clipped box balls; Wooden Adirondack chairs on patio by square brick fire pit



MATERIALS USED

Plants from specialist trade nurseries:

Provender Nurseries, provendernurseries.co.uk

Palmstead Nurseries, palmstead.co.uk

Knoll Gardens, knollgardens.co.uk

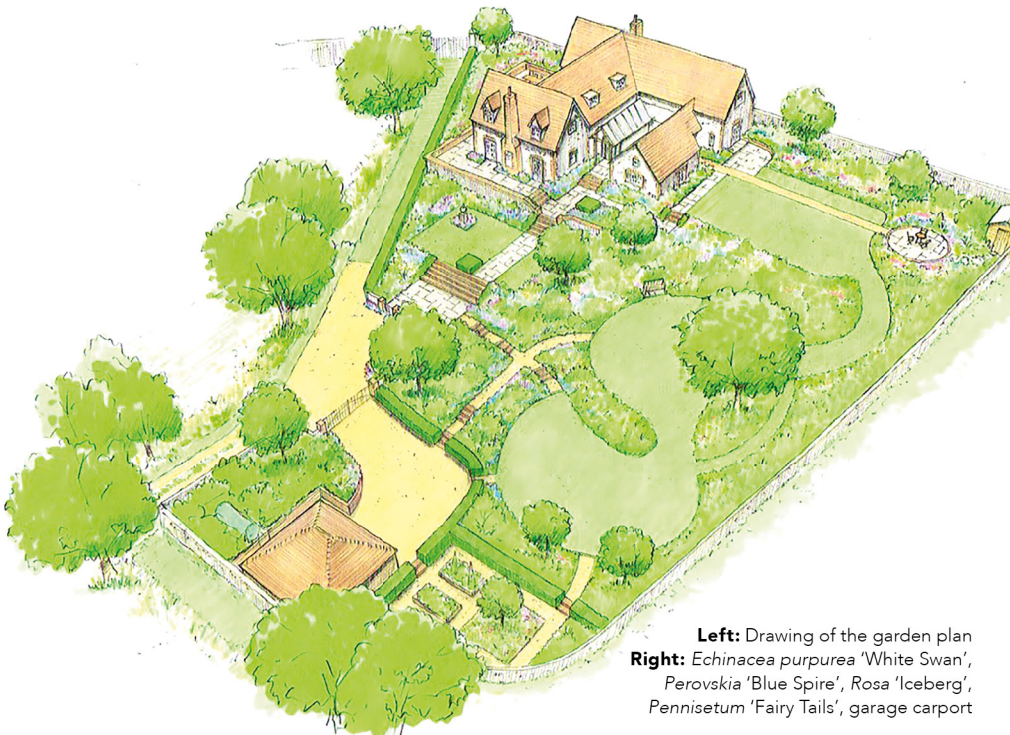
Morisca limestone Rock Unique, rock-unique.com

Carport The Classic Barn Company, oakgarages.com

Shed The Posh Shed Company, theposhshedcompany.co.uk

Kinetic sculpture David Watkinson, davidwatkinsonsculpture.co.uk

Bench Tom Nicholson-Smith, tomnicholsonsmith.com



Left: Drawing of the garden plan
Right: *Echinacea purpurea* 'White Swan',
Perovskia 'Blue Spire', *Rosa* 'Iceberg',
Pennisetum 'Fairy Tails', garage carport

to enhance the house and sit comfortably within the downland setting. The garden slopes downwards to the north, east and south, with stunning views across the Arun Valley.

Planting was to form a key part of the design and had to be bold yet simple to complement the scale, colours and patterns of the countryside, as well as having year-round appeal and be relatively easy to maintain.

The hard landscaping is strong and modernist in character, with wide brick steps and a neat square lawn on the east side enhancing the sense of arrival and providing a formal setting for the house, whilst the largest garden area to the north is softer and more natural, creating a visual link to the undulating countryside beyond the flint boundary walls.

An outdoor dining terrace outside the kitchen on the south side connects to a seating area with a central brick fire pit, and a further smaller terrace is located on the north side of the house to catch the early morning sun and enjoy the views across the valley.

The chosen colour palette for plants was soft blues, mauve, lime and white, harmonising with the colours of the landscape and sky. Ornamental grasses and mound forming evergreens reflect the textures in the surrounding fields and mimic the clumps of trees seen in the distant views.

Key plants featured in the scheme include *Hebe rakaiensis*, used to hug the side of the steps, *Lavandula angustifolia* 'Hidcote', edging the formal lawn and *Buxus sempervirens*,



which contains the small vegetable garden. *Cistus x hybrida*, *Choisya ternata*, *Viburnum tinus* and white flowered hydrangeas provide structure to the large sweeping borders with *Rosa* 'Iceberg' and *Rosa*

'Penelope' used to line paths and mark corners. *Helleborus argutifolius* and *Euphorbia* 'Humpty Dumpty' provide additional evergreen foliage – their lime green spring flowers complementing the thousands of

spring bulbs planted in bold swathes throughout the massed grasses and summer flowering perennials.

Hard landscape construction was carried out by house builders during phase one, which required more than

usual input from Debbie and Ian. But specialist landscape contractors Arun Landscapes stepped in to complete the soft landscape in phase one and take on the hard and soft landscape in phase two. **DG**