

NOVEMBER 2015

PROJECT DETAILS

Project value
£100k+

Build time
**September 2011 to
February 2013**

Size of project
1,500m²

SEA CHANGE

FROGHEATH LANDSCAPES

Frogheath Landscapes took a fresh, tropical approach to this stunning beachside getaway near Hastings

The plan for this outstanding project was to create a seaside garden retreat for a client who had recently purchased a cliff-top property near Hastings in an area of outstanding natural beauty – a landscape of geological, historical and special scientific interest. Initially, the brief was only to provide access via steps up the steep cliff from the beach to the house. When the client saw what had been achieved and what the team at Frogheath Landscapes could achieve, under challenging circumstances, he took the plunge and appointed the company to create his dream environment.

This was to be the client's first garden. As an extremely successful and busy man, he was keen to have a ready-made, instant garden that could be maintained by a hired gardener. A hot tub, lounging area, fire pit and a writing room were to be included along with subtle lighting and safe access. The client's lifestyle also dictated that the garden should look as good at night as during the day. In essence, the client wanted to recreate the feel of 'Malibu or Mustique' in Hastings!

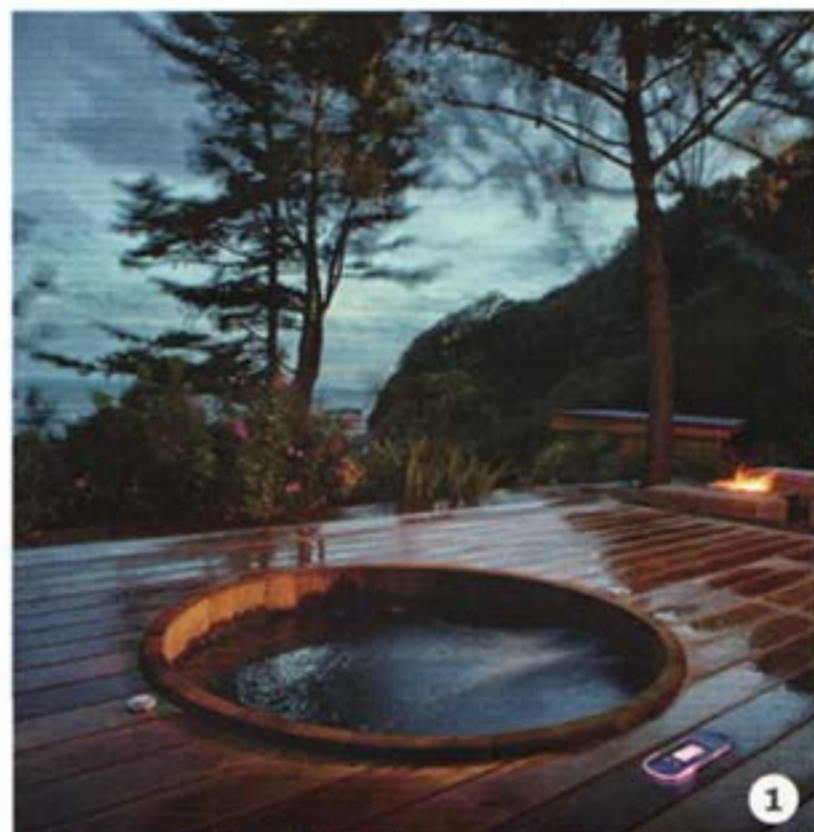
The existing garden

The house had been secured to the cliff on steel stilts drilled into the bedrock and the existing garden was very steep. There were only a couple of areas of flat ground which were right on the cliff edge and constantly exposed to the elements. Access was difficult and only by poorly constructed steps up the cliff. The clay soil was covered with rubbish and sub soil left by the builders of the house. Several large pines needed to be pruned and the existing vegetation was wild and natural.

The brief

- Improve or replace the ramshackle sleepers and slabs forming the access from the beach up to the house
- Improve the view of the sea and the surrounding cliffs from the garden →

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- 1 Hot tub
 - 2 Completed steps and planting
 - 3 Fire pit
 - 4 Steps at night
 - 5 Completed steps from the beach
 - 6 Writing room



The Association of Professional Landscapers Awards 2013
SUPREME WINNER





- Find a suitable position for a hot tub with a great view. Create an area around it for lounging and entertaining
- Improve access around the garden
- Convert an existing shed into a writing room from which the client can easily and safely walk to and from the house without getting his feet dirty – this was subsequently changed to rebuilding the shed to become a writing room with bathroom and sleeping area.
- Install a door entry system and camera on the gate down to the beach
- Install subtle lighting throughout the garden
- Construct a wind-proof fence

The design solution

For logistical and practical reasons timber decking was used to create paths, steps and level areas. Cedar was chosen to blend with the existing cladding on the house and the cedar hot tub. Wide steps were designed to allow easy access down a very steep slope from the house to the main deck and beyond. At night, these were subtly and safely lit and appeared to ‘float’ through the mounds of new planting. A large deck provided a level entertaining space with a hot tub and fire pit. Storage boxes were built to house the gas bottles and provide cover for the sofa cushions. As much as possible of the wild, romantic charm of the site was retained whilst taming some of the existing plants to improve the view of the sea.

The problems

There were numerous challenges to be overcome mainly around the access and logistics of the garden. Vehicles had to be driven along the promenade onto a shingle beach. This involved contacting multiple landowners to get their permission. Tides and members of the public enjoying the beach also had to be considered.

As materials couldn't be stored on the beach the exact materials needed had to be brought to

Planting list

Plant choice was dictated by the coastal conditions and clay soil. Plants were placed in drifts to blend as seamlessly as possible with the existing natural planting.

Tree and specimen sizes

- Olea europaea
- Phormium tenax
- Trachycarpus fortuneii

Shrubs

- Spiraea japonica 'Anthony Waterer'
- Griselinia littoralis
- Lavatera maritima
- Pittosporum tobira
- Hebe parviflora angustifolia
- Olearia haastii
- Fuchsia magellanica Riccartonii
- Senecio greyii
- Eleagnus ebbingei

Groundcover

- Leucanthemum superbum
- Geranium Claridge Druce
- Crocosmia Lucifer
- Crocosmia Emily Mackenzie
- Stipa arundinacea

site each day. There were huge difficulties getting these from the beach to the top of the cliff. A crane was used to transport decking timbers, 90 tonnes of soil, some of the plants, turf, sleepers and the hot tub (although the crane's arrival was delayed due to the London Olympics and Paralympics). All other materials were carried up the steps by hand and 40 tonnes of concrete taken up in buckets. A generator was required as the distance from the house to the beach was too long to power the cement mixer and other tools.

The weather also played a significant part. Over the course of the year every weather type was experienced – deep snow on the beach, raging storms, blistering heat (only after the turf had been laid) and driving rain. However, the main cause for concern was the very limited communication with the client, who was working away for nearly all of the build. Any questions were relayed via email. As a result the garden was virtually complete before the client had his first sight of it. Happily he loved it and sent champagne to all the crew to show his appreciation of their herculean efforts!

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- 1 Panorama
 - 2 Building the steps
 - 3 Decking under construction
 - 4 Frogheath trucks on the beach

ABOUT FROGHEATH LANDSCAPES

Frogheath Landscapes prides itself on delivering successful projects from concept to completion. Working predominantly within a 35mile radius of its Burwash Weald base it uses environmentally sensitive suppliers where possible. It employs a highly qualified team, under the direction of Steve Moody, and has proved that budget is no barrier to excellence, having recently been nominated for an award for a garden based on a £1,500 budget, alongside awards for gardens with budgets in excess of £100,000.

www.frogheath.co.uk





5 Starting construction in the winter
6 Lifting materials
7 Constructing the hot tub



REFERENCES

Contractor
Frogheath Landscapes
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Burwash Weald,
East Sussex
TN19 7HR
Tel 01435 883516
Email enquiries@frogheath.co.uk
Web www.frogheath.co.uk

Garden design
Tina Vallis Garden Design
The Spinney, Alexandra Road,
Mayfield, East Sussex
TN20 6UD
Tel 01435 872090
Email tina@tinavallis.co.uk
Web www.tinavallis.co.uk

Wooden cladding
Roundwood of Mayfield
Newick Lane,
Mayfield,
East Sussex
TN20 6RG
Tel 01435 86707
Web www.roundwood.com

Hot tub
Riviera Hot Tubs
Danver, 3 Oldway Road,
Paignton, Devon TQ3 2TF
Tel 01803 663709
Email info@riviera-hottubs.co.uk
Web www.riviera-hottubs.co.uk

Cabling and electrics
Little London Electrics
7 Treetops Way,
Heathfield, East Sussex
TN21 8FN
Tel 01435 866809
Email littlelondonelectrical@gmail.com
Web www.littlelondonelectrical.co.uk

Plants
English Woodlands
Herrings Lane, Cross in Hand,
Heathfield, East Sussex TN21 0UG
Tel 01435 862992
Web www.ewburrownursery.co.uk

How Green Nursery
How Green Ln, Hever, Edenbridge,
Kent TN8 7PS
Tel 01732 700382
Web http://howgreennursery.co.uk

Crane rental
Coussens of Bexhill Ltd
Plant Depot, Thorne Cres, Bexhill-on-
Sea, East Sussex TN39 5JH
Tel 01424 892380
Web www.coussenscranes.co.uk

Soil and logistics
Gardenscape Direct Ltd
The Wharf, Rye Road, Newenden,
Cranbrook, Kent TN18 5QG
Tel 0800 854663
Web www.gardenscapedirect.co.uk

Turf
Kwik Lawn Turf
21 Cherwell Road, Heathfield,
East Sussex TN21 8JT
Tel 01435 868833
Web www.kwiklawn.co.uk

Fire pit
Paloform
Web www.paloform.com

Decking
Silva Timba
Unit 4, Albright Road, Widnes,
Cheshire WAB 8FY
Tel 0151 495 3111
Web www.silvatimber.co.uk