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A contemporary approach to working from home

CASE STUDY

Tasked with modernising a London Victorian-style terrace home, Zminkowska De Boise Architects set out to deliver a sleek and functional property with the addition of a new garden studio. However, the architectural team made the decision to sink the new studio several steps into the ground, using in-situ cast concrete. This meant a minimal, yet effective water management system was needed to prevent damage and flooding to the latest addition of the property.



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THE PROJECT

New garden studio

THE BRIEF

To create a garden studio with spaces filled with natural light and using materials in a contemporary design.

THE SOLUTION

ACO RainDrain®

Based in North London, Zminkowska De Boise Architects have worked on a wide range of stylish projects, primarily focusing on private residences. Owned by Hanna Zminkowska and Richard De Boise, the firm aims to create spaces filled with natural light and materials that come together to result in a dignified and contemporary design.

Working from home

As part of a recent project, Zminkowska De Boise Architects worked with a couple who required a new home office at their property in Walthamstow, London. The Victorian-style terrace home was running out of space for their growing family – something that they were desperate to change. The homeowners wanted to improve the connection between the house and the garden, as well as create a usable office space.

Having met through a New London Architecture (NLA) Don't Move, Improve! design surgery, the Zminkowska De Boise team were drawn in by the homeowners' plans. Richard De Boise, explains: "The clients wanted to create a space to work from home, settling on the addition of a garden studio because it offered the chance for a better work-life balance, something that has become invaluable during lockdown for many."

Finding a solution

To ensure that the homeowners' rear views weren't hindered by the new studio and that it blended seamlessly with the garden's design, Richard and Hanna decided to sink the structure several steps into the ground. With the steps, patio, and built-in flower bed all being constructed out of in-situ cast concrete, causing a reduction in surface area that had offered natural water infiltration.

This meant that alongside high-quality damp proofing, a sleek but efficient drainage system was required to ensure that the building didn't suffer from any water-related issues. In addition to practical considerations, the clients wanted a colourful, minimalist aesthetic for their home and garden, which needed to be reflected in the final design.

To handle the rainwater, Zminkowska De Boise Architects selected ACO's RainDrain®, specifically designed for domestic applications. Richard De Boise continues: "We often use ACO drainage products for quality assurance, and specify RainDrain® for its wide choice of grating materials and styles. In this case, the galvanised steel finish complemented the in-situ concrete base and dark green profiled steel sheet cladding of the outside office."



Made from Vienite® - ACO's polymer concrete material with recycled content – ACO RainDrain® is the ideal system to complete a sleek and modern garden. Each individual channel fits with a simple interlocking system, which allows for a quick and easy installation. Its enhanced V-shaped profile also ensures a faster flow of water to minimise silt build-up.

The Outcome

The result has been a practical and modern garden structure that blended with the Victorian suburban aesthetics of the surrounding area. Crucially, the incorporation of a simple water management solution allowed the outside office to be sunk without risk, ultimately supporting the overall design.

Richard concludes: "The completed project works well, and we are actually seeing a lot more people wanting to make the most of their homes and gardens. We're very busy with a variety of upcoming projects over the next few months, including more sustainably-driven private house refurbishments and extensions, as well garden studios for a musician and for a cook."

For more information, please visit:

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