

## DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES:

Below is a general guide to the process. Depending on the nature and size of the individual project, additional site visits, meetings, discussions and drawing stages may be required to arrive at the finished plans.

## DESIGNERS DELIVERABLES:

### **Predesign phase: Project Inception & Initiation**

Initial Consultation - Before we provide any Design services, we find it beneficial to have an initial telephone call with The Client to discuss the scope of the project. We will then initiate a first visit to your garden to carry out a preliminary survey where we can discuss your thoughts, ideas, and the garden's potential in more detail. Depending on the site's location and length of time needed to get a full understanding of the scope, usually, there will be a fee, based on a standard rate of £37.50 + VAT per hour charged for the initial site visit.

After the initial site visit, we will prepare an Outline Brief with a supporting mood board for the garden together with a rough Proposal/Quotation for our fees, for The Client to formally accept via email before work can progress on the conceptual and design stages.

Concept consultation - Before commencing the design phase, we ask that we meet all the decision-makers for the project (where possible). It is important for us to understand our client's tastes and the different demands of the site. We will discuss the aspirations for your space and the needs and challenges it provides. This meeting often takes approximately 2 hours and will form the basis of our Design Brief.

After the meeting, we will prepare the Design Brief. The brief describes both the functional needs and the scope of the work to be carried out and must be approved by The Client (after any necessary amendments) before any further work is carried out. This is the foundation upon which all subsequent design work will rest and must clearly meet all The Client's requirements. The design fees reflect the necessary stages, along with a payment schedule to be sent to The Client/s for review. The Proposal/Quotation will be based on the condition of your garden at the time of our Initial Consultation(s) and valid for 30 days.

### **Design development phase:**

Site Survey and Appraisal: A professional survey of the existing garden is highly recommended to produce detailed, accurate plans. We will use this survey to produce drawings detailing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities for improvement, shade and sun, drainage issues and slopes, possible problems etc.

Following the survey, we re-visit the site to do further analysis. This includes taking photographs, soil samples, assessing views, how the sun reaches the garden, and spending time getting a good feel for the site and its surroundings (including local flora, adjacent area uses, streets, etc.). As part of this visit, we have a follow up meeting with you to finalise the brief and clarify anything arising from the survey or site analysis.

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## Stage 1:

The initial design step will be supported with a first stage draft drawing in pencil, to be produced for discussion and development of The Client brief. Any required additions or amendments will be noted. The Client Brief, Site Survey and Site Appraisal form the platform for a schematic drawing (or drawings) to communicate to The Client. It does not go into granular details but helps form areas to be laid out in the garden and helps clarify and refine the design at an early stage. This stage will be supported by mood boards of example imagery to support our creative thinking.

These will be sent to The Client via email (occasionally a face-to-face meeting at this stage is necessary) for feedback.

## Stage 2:

Once the concept has been refined through client feedback, we will draft the layout drawing in 2D CAD and begin the process of drafting the Master Plan to give The Client an understanding of the overall aesthetic. The drawings will be produced for discussion, with any previous amendments having been actioned. Mood board imagery will further develop during this stage.

As the draft master plan develops, 2 rounds of reiterations will be sent to The Client for review and feedback via email. On the final round, we will present the Master Plan / 2D Plan of your space and discuss the design providing colour plans, sections, and material palettes with a notation about materials, colours, heights and more. This will often come with samples of hard landscaping materials and mood boards for planting if we are providing a planting design. It may be necessary at this point to engage specialists for certain elements of the design to ensure best implementation and we will discuss this at this meeting.

Concept Drawings. Where the budget and time allows concept drawings, often computer rendered 3D views of the space, can be provided at this stage to understand better what a top-down 2D plan drawing may not.

## Stage 3:

CAD drawing of the overall masterplan detailing the general design, including hard and soft landscaping materials, trees, positions of borders, patio areas, paths, decking, and garden features such as steps, sculpture and water features.

This will be presented in a face-to-face meeting, either in-person or via Zoom, ideally with all stakeholders (including the Landscape contractor). All materials and construction methods will be discussed, and any final amendments noted, to avoid significant revisions during the detailing phase. We will seek your written approval at this stage before proceeding to finalise visuals in 2D & 3D (if scoped).

## Stage 4:

Final layout drawings – including working drawings and technical details for each section of the garden to be signed off by The Client before going into the pre-construction phase.

On certain projects, a higher level of Construction Drawings may be necessary. This may include...

- Setting-out plan: a master plan of all construction detailing showing positions of construction features on site: widths of paths, radius of curves, heights of walls and steps, triangulated points, levels etc.



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- **Construction Drawings:** detailed construction methods and materials for each component of the garden. These drawings help control the quality, suitability for purpose and compliance with regulations of the finished product and ensure consistency if/when contractor tendering takes place
- **Specification Document:** The written specification accompanies the construction drawings and details in written form all aspects of the construction to be undertaken, specifying such things as mortar mixes, subbases, bricklaying patterns, soil, and compost mixes etc.

## **The Planting Phase:**

This is a separate design phase, priced separately in the Proposal/Quotation and is undertaken after the Hard Landscape Design has been approved by The Client.

Planting Plan: We can provide detailed planting plans, whether as part of a design and landscaping project or rejuvenation of an existing site. The CAD layout drawings show species, numbers and spacing of all plants. On larger sites often broken down into separate beds/areas.

Plant schedule: A spreadsheet detailing species, numbers, pot sizes, and possible substitutes for all plants in the design to facilitate easy cost calculation and plant sourcing. Separate sheets are usual for perennials, shrubs, and trees as these are usually sourced from separate specialist nurseries.

Planting can be a phased operation and is predominantly done in the autumn, winter, and spring months in the United Kingdom. When planting is complete, regular site visits can be arranged to ensure all plants have taken correctly and are progressing as expected.

Planting aftercare: A detailed maintenance schedule and seasonal site visits are not included in the Design Services, but if requested a bespoke maintenance schedule can be drawn up for your garden at an additional cost.

We can provide maintenance schedules for you to follow project completion. Depending on the scale of the project, we usually advise you to have professional help. We can recommend expert maintenance teams and advise and assist in the ongoing maintenance of your garden.

Regular site visits can be arranged to ensure all plants are progressing as expected as well as review how the garden might evolve with you.



## THE CONSTRUCTION STAGE:

Although The Client will have to negotiate and agree on the terms of a separate contract between The Client and the Contractor/s you wish to appoint to construct the garden, we can assist The Client where requested. We can recommend Contractors with whom we have had direct experience, but this may not always be possible and whilst recommendations are made in good faith, we shall have no liability for any defects in the Contractor's work or goods supplied or be in any way liable in the event of a dispute between Client and Contractor.

Tender Documentation: as an additional service, we can send out an Invitation to Tender, meet contractors on site, assess the merits of the tenders received, produce a Tender Report if required, and send out letters of Acceptance of Tender and letters declining tender to the appropriate landscapers. We will also provide you with a standard letter to sign and send out to your chosen landscaper, confirming your intention to engage them.

After The Client has appointed a Landscaping Contractor, any changes to the design requested by The Client during the construction stage may well affect your contract with the Landscaping Contractor and all resulting cost implications and extensions of time (if any) will need to be agreed upon between The Client and the Landscaping Contractor before The Client requests a change in the design by us.

### Construction Budget

Some Clients are happy to instruct a design which incorporates all the features they would like without the constraints of a fixed construction budget. Other Clients may have a specific budget, in which case every effort is made to design a garden that reflects this figure. However, it is not always possible to accurately estimate the final cost of a design until it is presented to a Contractor for pricing, but once costed, if savings need to be made there are usually ways of doing this, for example with a change of materials, by removing an element of the design, or phasing part of the project.

This stage is when the contractor is on-site building the landscape design. Construction often includes the following phases:

- Demolition and Site Clearing
- Excavation and Trenching
- Services Installation (drainage, irrigation, electrical, etc)
- Fine Grading
- Hardscape Structure Construction (backfilling, compaction, base, footings, walls, buildings, edges, etc.)
- Hardscape Finishes Construction (paving, cladding, inorganic mulches)
- Planting (trees, plants, organic mulch)
- Final Fixtures (furniture, pavilions, lighting, etc.)
- Defects (identify and fix problems)
- Completion (Initial and Final)

## **Oxalis Studio's role during construction:**

Depending on the level of service required, The Client may request we manage the project which can include full site supervision or can be several inspections and approval of construction, approvals of payments, and approvals of variations.

Whilst certain projects we may not need to supervise or manage The Clients contractor's works, we will make agreed site visits during the construction works, liaise between The Client and the Contractor, and help ensure the construction is progressing in accordance with the design. We will notify you of discrepancies between the design and the actual works being delivered so that you may take steps to rectify such changes as you see fit.

An estimation of the number of anticipated visits will have been given and will be charged as per the agreed cost per site visit. Liaising with the Contractor and The Client also presents opportunities as the project takes shape, to see if, subject to The Clients approval, there may be small adjustments or variations that could be made to enhance the result and is a valuable fine-tuning element of the construction.

## **GENERAL MATTERS**

### The Garden Survey:

An accurate, scale survey of your garden may be required to produce the design. With larger or more complex projects, including factors such as topography and the size and scale of the project or the complexity of the site, including existing or proposed structures and ground conditions, it may be necessary to engage a specialist land surveyor to carry out the survey, or a building surveyor to advise upon some aspects of the site and the proposed design. If you do not know a surveyor whom you wish to appoint, we can recommend a surveyor to whom we refer clients. The contract between The Client and the surveyor, including fees and payment terms will be an entirely separate contract between The Client and the surveyor. It is usually beneficial if we meet the surveyor on-site on the day of the survey, to discuss the site and any requirements The Client may have.

### Party Walls/Structural Work:

Where detailed structural work is involved, such as retaining walls, foundations and buildings including matters covered by the Party Walls Act it is recommended that The Client seek professional advice from a building surveyor and/or structural engineer in addition to your appointed Contractor. We accept no responsibility and cannot be held liable if The Client does not seek appropriate advice before and during the construction works.

### Garden Lighting:

If outdoor lighting is required, we can produce an outline lighting plan for a qualified electrician to then design and cost a full electrical specification for you. All electrical works must be carried out and signed off by a qualified electrician. If you do not know a qualified electrician whom you wish to appoint then, if requested, we can recommend a qualified electrician with whom we regularly work. The contract between The Client and your appointed electrician including the cost and payment terms will be an entirely separate contract between The Client and the electrician.

## Irrigation specialists, Ponds and Water Features:

Depending on the size and complexity of irrigation, or a pond/water feature, this may need to be referred to a water specialist for full design, technical specification and installation and may not necessarily be included in the Contractor's remit. If this is the case then, if requested, we can recommend a suitable specialist The Client can appoint directly for this aspect of the project.

## Plant sourcing:

Good quality plants can be supplied in accordance with the Planting Plan as per the agreed plant list (subject to availability) and in the quantities required for the design. Once the hard landscaping works have been carried out by your contractor, should The Client wish - we can order and take delivery of the plants on-site and set them out in their positions, ready for planting by the team. Payment for the plants is required in advance of delivery to your garden. All plant delivery charges are charged at cost to The Client as charged to us by the nursery.

## Plant care:

We hope that you will be delighted with the results of our work, however, please bear in mind that gardens are living. Gardens are greatly affected by external factors beyond our control including weather conditions, which can be both extreme and unexpected and they need time and patience to establish and develop. All plants and in particular, grass seed and/or wildflower mixes take a substantial amount of time to mature and evolve.

## Insurance:

We have Public & Products Liability, and Employers Liability up to £5,000,000. Professional Indemnity up to £1,000,000. Covered by Hiscox Insurance Company Limited. Certificates are available on request.

## Health & Safety

Under the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 (CDM 2015) a construction phase plan is required for every construction project.

The health and safety of operatives during the implementation of a project is critically important and, as such, the designer and client need to be aware of this, not just during the construction phase, but also for the ongoing work that might be carried out by others.

Designers have always had an obligation and duty of care regarding health and safety – producing risk assessments and documenting immediately identifiable problems and potential hazards to contractors, their operatives, and sub-contractors.

The 2015 regulations require that this information is prepared during the design process and compiled as a Health & Safety File to then be passed to the contractor to be developed into their construction phase plan.

After the initial client consultation phase, Oxalis Studio, upon instruction, is to proceed with the design, and must request from The Client any information which might affect or impact on the design and resultant potential risks; then commence with the design and with the Health and Safety Folder.

Once the design process is complete, Oxalis Studio will pass the Health and Safety Folder to the appointed contractor. The Health & Safety File should then be developed into the contractor's Construction Phase Plan, which needs to be reviewed and updated as required – for example, changes to the design, materials and previously unknown items and elements which may arise. During this phase, the designer is not responsible for the upkeep of the file but is likely to be consulted by the contractor and be required to contribute to it.

Upon the completion of the work, the contractor is to hand the file to you, The Client, as a comprehensive Operating and Maintenance Manual. This can be used by future designers and contractors on any later works. Additionally, to the preparation of the Health and Safety Folder, the project may become notifiable to the HSE. The Client has the initial responsibility for this, but the (principal) designer is more than likely to assist and take on this task.

The project becomes notifiable when the construction work lasts longer than 30 days and has more than 20 operatives working simultaneously at any point in the project; or if the construction phase exceeds more than 500 person days. The Client is required to notify the HSE as soon as practically possible.

### Completion and Handover

On completion of our involvement in the project, The Client will be given a 'Garden Hand-Over', acknowledging that the future care of the garden is now The Client's responsibility; it also includes some broad, general advice on how to look after it. Depending on the size of the garden, the extent of The Clients horticultural knowledge and their available time, we may recommend considering the engagement of a qualified gardener to assist with the future care of the new planting.

### **CLIENT'S RESPONSIBILITIES**

- The Client will retain legal ownership or equivalent authority for work to be carried out at the property.
- The Client agrees to obtain any Planning Permission or licences, or other consents required for the garden project and provide details of any Tree Preservation Orders and any/all other restrictions.
- The Client agrees to cover any fines or damages and indemnify Oxalis Studio from and against any costs, claims, damages liabilities and expenses arising from any breach of planning permission, tree work or licences in respect of the project, if these consents are not obtained.
- The Client agrees to carry out correct and regular horticultural maintenance to facilitate the ongoing establishment of the garden after completion.

Additionally, The Client agrees to make all necessary arrangements to enable us by arrangement, to visit and view the garden, and to ensure it is safe and that we have unimpeded access to the garden during working hours for the duration of our involvement in the project. To provide any necessary facilities to perform the Design Services including during the construction phase, water, electricity, use of the lavatory.