

# DOMESTIC PROJECTS UNDERTAKEN

## HOUSE SOLOT

Somerset West

### SITE

This site was originally a protea farm and sloped from the house towards the street. In addition to the mountains forming an attractive backdrop, the view across False Bay is breathtaking and influenced the design and choice of plant material.

Certain plants existed on site. A few relatively large specimens of *Platanus acerifolius*, *Liquidambar styraciflua*, *Bambusa* sp., *Prunus nigra* and *Araucaria* sp., amongst others, were to be relocated.

### BRIEF FROM CLIENT

The specific needs of the client were to create a feeling of privacy, contact with nature, year-

round colour and a low maintenance garde. Due to the fact that the client does not entertain on a large scale, intimate useable areas were to be created. Two items that were definitely to be included were large expanses of lawn and a rose garden. (The contract was awarded to Elainscape in September 1992.)

### DESIGN PARTICULARS

Basic principles of design were used to create a feeling of harmony. The choice of plant material in a planned arrangement of form, texture, colour and seasonal variety was chosen in such a way to create an overall pleasing effect. Various smaller gardens within the greater garden were created as part of the client brief and to create an overall feeling of unity, for example: the use of indigenous plants, succulents, roses and tropical waterside planting,

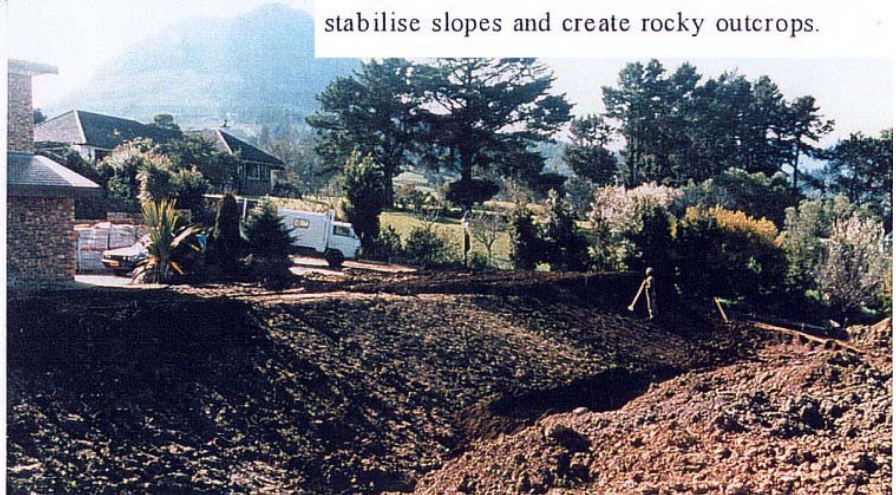


in separate areas. The use of mow edge throughout the design, was to create a low maintenance integrated feel to the whole garden. Circles were used on the second level to create an impact from a distance and spaces within greater space. A feeling of depth was achieved by the planned spacing of focal points eg. the use of a *Dracaena marginata* feature, *Liquidambar styraciflua* feature & *Pandanus utilis* feature, amongst others.

## CONSTRUCTION & BULK EARTHWORKS

The extreme clay soil conditions necessitated the stripping of all topsoil from the site and the importation of approximately 2500m<sup>3</sup> of topsoil.

A softer feel to the earthworks was created by cutting and filling areas to create a more gradual gradient in the indigenous area and filling above the water feature to create a natural-looking drop for the flow of water. Railway sleeper steps were cut into the slope and meander with the contours to create circulation and visual linkage with the three levels. Level platform areas were introduced to take maximum advantage of views. At least 200m<sup>3</sup> of hand-selected sandstone rocks were imported and used to stabilise slopes and create rocky outcrops.



Division was used in the overall space to create an element of surprise and varied interest. This was created both on a vertical and two dimensional level, e.g. the paving design at the entrance was created to break the monotony of brick paving by using pebbles and aggregate in low traffic areas. Similar hard landscaping materials were used throughout the design to create an integrated feel e.g. use of railway sleepers, aggregate, brick paving and tanalith treated poles.

In order to create a feeling of unity in such an expanse garden scale relationship of elements was to be used to its maximum to create a feeling of enclosure, but not claustrophobia, e.g. the use of the *Robinia* sp. And *Jacaranda mimosaeifolia* at the top level, *Bambusa* sp., *Strelitzia nicolai* and tropical planting around

the deck area.



Various planting focal points were utilised to link the garden successfully. One focal point consisted of a grouping of *Juniperus Sky Rocket* under-planted with *Juniperus Gold Coast* and a front grouping of *Dassylarion wheeleri*. Groundcovers used included *Lysimachia nummularia Aurea*, *Vinca minor* and *Acorus gramineus Variegata*. A tall grouping of plants was achieved by the combination of *Schefflera actinophylla*, *Phormium williamsii* and *Phoenix roebelinii* with the underplantings of *Ophiopogon japonicus*. *Ophiopogon Kyoto Dwarf* was used between the individual paving blocks.

