



Natural History Museum – View of the proposed western grounds



Sight survey and analysis by drone is now a key offering



Bermuda Hospital – Night view of the Main Entrance



Leyton Central – Courtyard Centre



Leyton Central – Aerial view



Innovation Park Gui'an – Training centre with bio-filtration terraces

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT'S JOURNAL



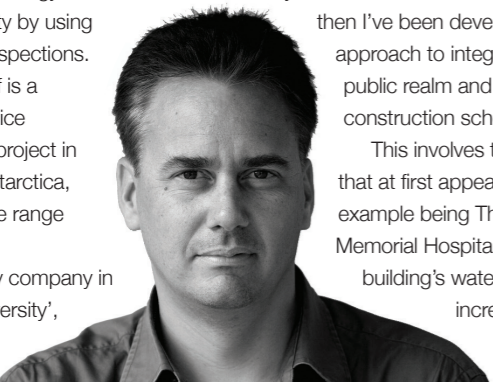
Wilder Associates is involved in some of the most innovative and forward-thinking projects around the world, but doesn't limit itself to large-scale only

Landscape contractor, arborist, garden designer and nurseryman are just needles in the haystack of jobs Peter Wilder has undertaken within the horticulture industry. This experience gives him a greater understanding of his designs as a landscape architect, knowing how the project will be brought to life.

Even now, alongside running Wilder Associates, Peter acts as a consultant on environmental design for Building Research Establishment (BRE), and manages an aerial filming and photography company, Survey Drone, which recently won a technology award for improving health and safety by using drones to carry out roof inspections.

Wilder Associates itself is a multi-award-winning practice founded in 2012; it has a project in every continent except Antarctica, and has worked on a huge range of schemes.

"If I had to describe my company in one word, I would say 'diversity', sometimes with a 'bio' in front of it," says Peter.



"We tend to gravitate towards large scale masterplans, where hydrology and ecology are very important aspects, and roof deck construction – looking at how to build an entire landscape on top of a building."

Hydrology plays a huge role in each of the practice's projects. "I've always been interested not just in the aesthetics of water, but how water governs all life on the planet. Water is present in every environment; if you understand water, you'll understand the landscape. I started researching sustainable drainage in 1994, and read an article by Herbert Dreiseitl on how water needs to be given proper consideration and respect in the environment.

"I met him in Germany and ended up working with him on advanced roof deck water systems at Potsdamer Platz in Berlin. Since then I've been developing my own approach to integrating water into the public realm and roof deck construction schemes."

This involves taking on challenges that at first appear impossible, one example being The King Edward Memorial Hospital in Bermuda. The building's water usage was incredibly inefficient, consuming around 60% of the island's

available water. Wilder was drawn in as a sustainability consultant, looking at how the building could be more water-friendly and self-sufficient.

“WATER IS PRESENT IN EVERY ENVIRONMENT; IF YOU UNDERSTAND WATER, YOU'LL UNDERSTAND THE LANDSCAPE”

"We got the building to almost 100% efficiency by recycling all the water – greywater, rainwater, and even the sewage, which is treated on-site, and the water used to irrigate the plants. It was what we call a water responsive design."

The green roof had to withstand hurricanes and protect the roof's waterproofing membranes, which could be punctured by flying debris. Wilder worked with green roof expert Kevin Songer to design a system with an outer layer of tough protective species such as agave and aloe, with softer plants and succulents on the inner layers.

Wilder Associates also undertakes projects on a smaller scale; it is currently working on a garden of around 6m x 6m for Birkbeck University as part of a £2.5m Europe-wide study launched by the university's Babylab. "They're looking into how children respond to their environment, and whether they can detect early warning signs for autism and

ADHD. We have designed a garden which is tactile and where everything is playable. There are boulders with water running over, and there is no formal seating – instead there are large stones that the children can sit and climb on. All of the planting is safe to touch and scented. It's an incredibly rewarding project, and takes us in an entirely different direction."

The practice has designed a small courtyard for property developer Tudorvale, as part of East London development Leyton Central. It worked in partnership with Survey Drone to capture the scheme, using its own Inspire 1 UAV, with the landscape design responding to the angular building: "It's about dynamic shapes and dynamic movement, responding to the geometry of the building, and creating a landscape that was just as exciting as that building. It's not a big project, but it shows the other end of the spectrum we cover."

In terms of large strategic projects, Wilder Associates collaborated with BRE and Tsingua University to create the Gui'an Innovation Park in China, one of several innovation parks Peter has been involved in. "It was built on the idea of future cities being porous and actually changing the way that they deal with water. We developed the innovation park as a model for new cities on how they could treat water in the streets and the landscape, and essentially

decontaminate water, allowing water to go back into the ground."

While that could influence the future of landscape architecture, Wilder Associates is also looking to the past, with a project at the Natural History Museum. It joined forces with Niall McLaughlin Architects, fellow landscape architect Kim Wilkie and Expedition Engineering, winning a competition to redesign the museum's entrance grounds."

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"We're expressing 4.5bn years of the Earth's history, with the landscape's narrative also exploring what man's relationship is with nature going forward – including urban problems such as soil, water quality, food production, air quality, and techniques for preserving nature in our cities."

Wilder Associates is also designing a new cultural quarter at Deptford Creekside, which will be an extension of the Laban Dance Centre. "Phase two is currently on the drawing board, and for the first time the Laban Dance Centre

will share facilities with the Trinity School of Music. Our landscape responds to this; it's all about the flow and patterns, responding to the rhythm of dance and the movement of the creek.

"We're proposing clay pavers to mimic the mud, and looking to use materials from the industrial heritage of the area. It's an exciting mix of culture and place, ecology and nature, heritage and performance space. It feeds back into our work with water and is all built on a podium deck landscape."

This cultural quarter, though, dwarfs in comparison to the 35-storey sky garden Wilder Associates is designing as part of Vauxhall's regeneration, dubbed the 'Sky Lounge'. "It's a contemporary roof deck landscape with amazing views and will be one of the highest outdoor gardens in London. We've just received planning permission and construction starts next year."

Impressive, innovative and inspirational, Wilder Associates is shaping the future of our green spaces, on a small and city-wide scale.

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