



HIGH AND MIGHTY



In the second of a three-part mini series, **Paul Newman** discusses the design of a roof terrace

Most roof terraces are not as big as ground level gardens so they can be tricky to design when the client has a lot of requirements. In general, we keep our designs simple but functional. No matter how small the space, seating should always play a big part in the design. Everyone likes to sit out on their new terrace, and seating creates a great social area where friends can gather, chat and dine.

Space is precious, so use minimal materials to make a big impact. This will create an uncluttered look and enhance the overall effect. As discussed previously, weight is an important factor, so material choice plays a big part in this and should be considered in the overall proposed



scheme. For hard surfaces decks are the obvious choice, with plenty of material options available in softwood, hardwood or composite, along with a choice of fixing systems. All flat roofs will slope to aid water run off, so the substructure can be suspended on adjustable pedestals to give a level area. This creates space beneath, perfect

for concealing lighting cables or irrigation feed pipes, while also allowing water to drain away naturally beneath the deck into existing gullies. If weight distribution has been checked out properly by a structural engineer then paving options can also be used. Again, set these on pedestals with small spacing gaps between to aid drainage.

Soil can be a dead weight, especially when wet, so it is worthwhile specifying glass reinforced

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plastic (GRP) planters. These are lightweight yet strong and available in a huge range of shapes, styles and colours to suit every scheme, and of course bespoke options. If you want large planters to add impact and structure, but only intend to fill with smaller plants, then get your supplier to fit a false base half way up the planter.

Existing boundary heights to the perimeter should be no lower than 1,100mm for obvious safety reasons. You may be fortunate enough to have attractive glass balustrade to enjoy the view, but if these are unsightly then use rows of planters for attractive screening. Alternatively, the walls can be clad in timber which then gives the opportunity to use different lighting schemes by creating plinths, ledges or overhangs. Tricoya panels also offer excellent design options with a long service life and can be cut, sanded and painted.

Many roof terraces have air con units fitted to them. These can be disguised with slatted panels, either in natural timber or painted to fit with your scheme. As long as they can be accessed for maintenance, box them in to fit in with the garden.



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ABOUT PAUL NEWMAN

Paul Newman Landscapes provides a complete landscaping service from concept to completion for clients throughout London and Hertfordshire, offering high quality individual design and build projects to suit any client's style and budget. www.paulnewmanlandscapes.co.uk