



Gold Star

for Silver How

CASE STUDY

Developing a house worthy of the prestigious RIBA House of the Year shortlist is no mean feat. It requires every intricate detail to be well thought through, from the choice of tile to the drainage infrastructure. When a team of award-winning architects required a discrete drainage solution that would support the bold, seamless transition from the inside of a home to the outside, it turned to ACO Water Management for support.



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THE PROJECT

Silver How – Family home in Monmouthshire

THE BRIEF

Effortless flow of space with a step-free level threshold between the inside and the outside spaces.

THE SOLUTION

ACO HexDrain® Brickslot.

Letting the light in

Before work started, Silver How was a tired 1960s house, built alongside an Edwardian Arts and Crafts stable. Hall + Bednarczyk took the opportunity to replace the original dwelling and establish a direct connection between the house and the stable.

One of the most daring design aspects of the project was an expanse of floor to ceiling glazing, arranged as an L-shape, which would open onto the courtyard. This aspect of the project focused on creating a spacious feel, as Kelly Bednarczyk, Director, at Hall + Bednarczyk, explains:

“We wanted the large expanse of opening glazing to link seamlessly with the outdoor courtyard. The desire for an effortless flow of space benefited hugely from a step-free level threshold between inside and the outside. Naturally, there are challenges associated with ensuring that rain water cannot enter the interior living space and it was essential to incorporate a robust threshold.”

Hall + Bednarczyk Architects was tasked to design a new 400m² family home in Monmouthshire, which repurposed a historic Arts and Crafts period stable.

As part of the major transformation, expansive glass sliding windows were fitted to eliminate the threshold between the living space and the outside of the property. One of the key challenges of implementing such an ambitious design was to ensure no rain water crept into the building during rainfall, and so the architects turned to ACO for a sleek and yet effective drainage system.

As there was no step between the courtyard and the living space, a drainage system was required to prevent excess water from flowing into the interior space. Also, given the firm's commitment to producing such an innovative but apparently effortless ambition, there was a need to ensure every detail – including drainage – maintained a highly aesthetic finish.





A seamless solution

Having worked on similar projects, the team at Hall + Bednarczyk were familiar with the quality of ACO's range of channel drainage products and the HexDrain® Brickslot channel, they made sure the same materials were used for the Silver How house. Martin explains: "We have worked with ACO products in the past and have found them to be sophisticated, high in quality and reliable."

"A good drainage system is so important for any housing project, and although it carries out its job behind the scenes, if the wrong system is used then the project is at risk of flooding. The HexDrain® Brickslot is not only a high quality system, but it offers a level of discretion that aided our design."

"Many drainage systems have wide, obtrusive designs that are created purely for functionality, and these are perfect for large-scale projects. However, for this project, the HexDrain® Brickslot was sleek, while still fulfilling the requirements you come to expect from any drainage system."

HexDrain® Brickslot is manufactured from recycled polypropylene and is ideal for garage thresholds, patios and paths and block paving applications. The channels clip together, allowing for quick and easy installation, while it comes complete with an offset slotted grating, ideal for block paving.

The slot drainage channel had the desired impact for the architects, as Kelly Bednarczyk explains: "The beauty of the HexDrain® Brickslot is that it doesn't attract attention to itself, despite performing a critical function. Its availability at the local merchants meant we were able to purchase the product for our exact requirements, while we were able to use the CAD specifications available on the ACO website. This was extremely useful for the contractors, as it ensured a smooth installation."

A grand project

Silver How has already been commended by industry professionals, winning the Welsh Architecture Award 2019, as well as the RSAW Project Architect of the Year Award. The project has also provided Hall + Bednarczyk with its first ever listing by RIBA in its prestigious House of the Year award.

Kelly concludes: "The reception we have received from the house, both from industry professionals and the owners themselves, has been incredible. The most important element for a project which has such a high finish is to ensure that every single part is thought through. Drainage plays such an important role for any development, and we are extremely pleased with the ACO system the role it has played in the finish of Silver How."

For more information on ACO HexDrain® Brickslot, please visit **www.aco.co.uk**

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