December 2006

More talk with builders, and wind - lots of...

Friday 1st December

Walked up to the local builder to drop off some extra copies of the drawings, and spent an hour or so sat in his kitchen looking at them and discussing various points. He promises to get an labour estimate to us before Christmas. Sunday 3rd December

The morning after a night of terror! The most sleepless night in the caravan so far, kept awake all night by strong gales that felt like they'd blow the caravan away.

We met up with our second prospective builder today. He is booked up until August, but we felt it worthwhile to get a comparison with the first builder. Very friendly and helpful, he spent some time looking at the plans, asking questions and generally giving us handy advice, before taking a copy away to provide an estimate for the labour involved.

More work on the caravan extension, it now has a roof !

The afternoon was spent restacking all the pavers that were lifted from the driveway when the service trench was dug - we are getting the drive properly reinstated later this week, being able to use the driveway properly will be a real bonus and no doubt welcomed by the neighbours we share it with. Friday 9th December

Today saw the start of the driveway reinstatement, with me taking a day off work to help out.

Following a week of crap weather, we were lucky to have a clear dry day. I spent most of the day shifting spoil and hardcore with tracked barrows. Work today mainly involved digging out half the existing backfill, replacing with 20 tons of hardcore, compacting down with a trench rammer, and getting to a level ready for the final sand layer.Saturday 10th December

Work resumed today, aided also by Emma. While the 3 guys were busy laying and levelling the sand layer, we shifted probably around 1000-odd driveway blocks by wheelbarrow - hard work. Then, as well as making plentiful cups of tea, we set to cleaning up every single driveway block to remove all the old sand/cement/clay etc, so they could be relaid flat. That's a lot of blocks to move and clean, and by the end of the day - we ached. But about 3/4 of the driveway was relaid and looking perfect again. The rest would be finished off on Monday.Monday 12th December

We were back at work today, but the guys came round and finished the driveway off. What can I say, it looks fantastic - so much better than driving over muddy backfill, and it looks twice as wide.

Top marks to: Rob Hool (+ brothers Steve & Gary) of Park Lane Landscapes, nr Nottingham. We can't recommend them enough - very hard working perfectionists, who are also good fun to work with. Rob has also recently done some major landscaping & patio work in Emma's Mums garden, which was also perfectly done. Tuesday 19th December

Not a lot to report at the moment ! Phoned up one of the builders to see if the estimate is ready, which we hope to have by end of this week (along with some sample gritstone quoins) - but that's about it.

We have put up some Christmas lights inside the caravan; along with the cards it's looking quite festive, even without a tree - for which we have no room!