

[Above] JML's garden rooms are usually clad in Siberian larch or western red cedar but these are not the only options: "We recently completed a beautiful one in stone to reflect the client's own home and surroundings," says Kate. The Highlander has a pitched roof of either heavy-duty slates or cedar shingles



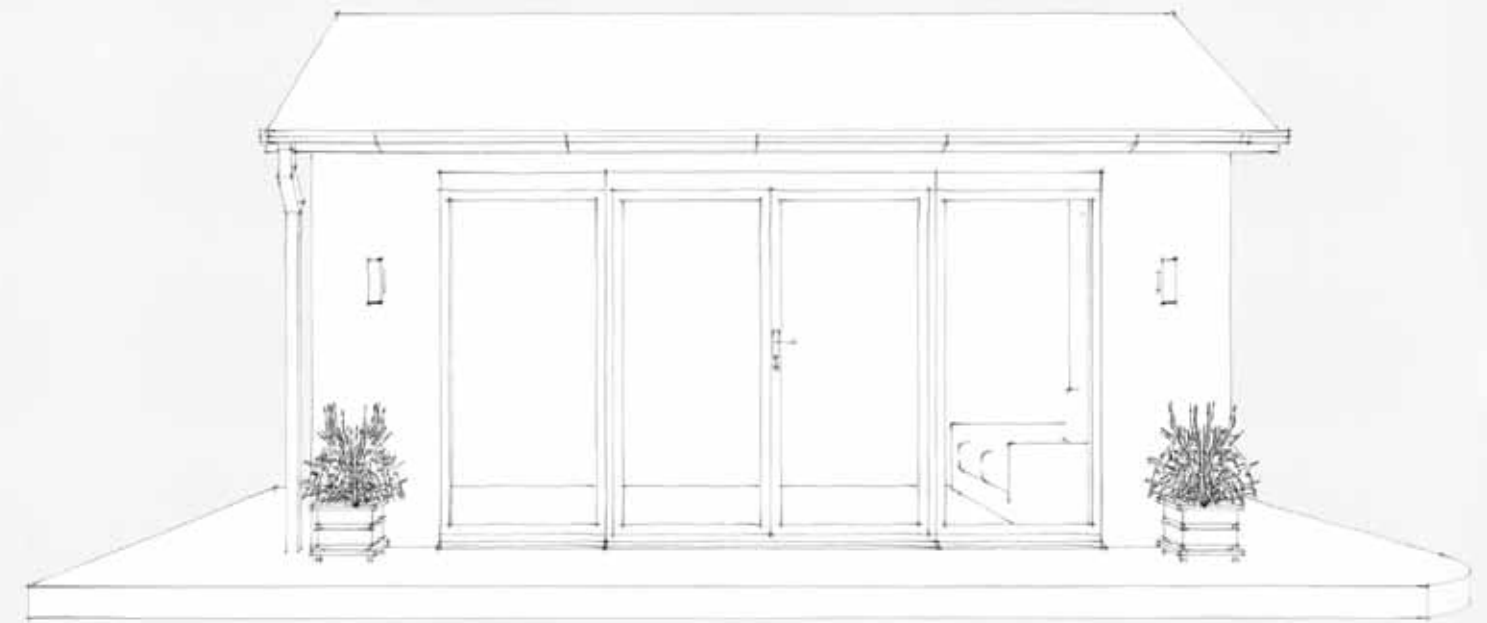
THE BRIEF To create a room that could be enjoyed by the whole family, either together or as individuals, all year round.

WORKS REQUIRED Surprisingly little: the garden room is made from SIPs (structural insulated panels), which were constructed on top of lightweight Swift foundation pads. This means there was no disruptive and expensive groundworks or concrete slabs.

MAINTENANCE The cladding is specifically designed to be maintenance-free, even in the harsh Scottish climate.

BUDGET The Highlander range starts at £19,039 (+ VAT)

DESIGNER JML Garden Rooms, Auchterarder, Perthshire, www.jmlgardenrooms.co.uk, 01764 663 668



GIVE YOURSELF SOME BREATHING SPACE

A garden room can be a fast, easy and inexpensive way to expand your home

Sketches Kerry Smith Architects

There can't be many people who wouldn't welcome an extra room in their home. Whether it's just a quiet space to get away from the hubbub of family life, or a room designed specifically to be a home office, an art studio or a mini gym, having such a space can be a quick route to harmony and happiness. But the only way to get such a space is usually by either extending or selling up and buying a bigger house – both expensive and time-consuming options. A cheaper, faster but just as effective way is to have a garden room built.

JML Garden Rooms, a family firm based in Auchterarder, has been building these spaces for the past decade. "We offer a range of standard and bespoke garden buildings," says Katie Langley. "We can manage every step of the project for you, from planning (if required) to lighting, flooring, decking and other extras such as phonelines and high-speed cabling. And for those wanting something super-snazzy, we have partnerships with brilliant media, lighting, interior design

and paint-finishing individuals who are all leading experts in their fields."

This is what appealed to the family who own this example of JML's Highlander range. "We wanted to create a family room we could all enjoy," says the owner. "The kids use it as a cinema room for their 'movie nights', my husband John works out on his rowing machine (watching reruns of the Olympics on the flatscreen TV for encouragement!), I use it for my yoga, and we all enjoy it for family barbecues. It is fully kitted out with broadband, audiovisual connections and a Sonos music system."

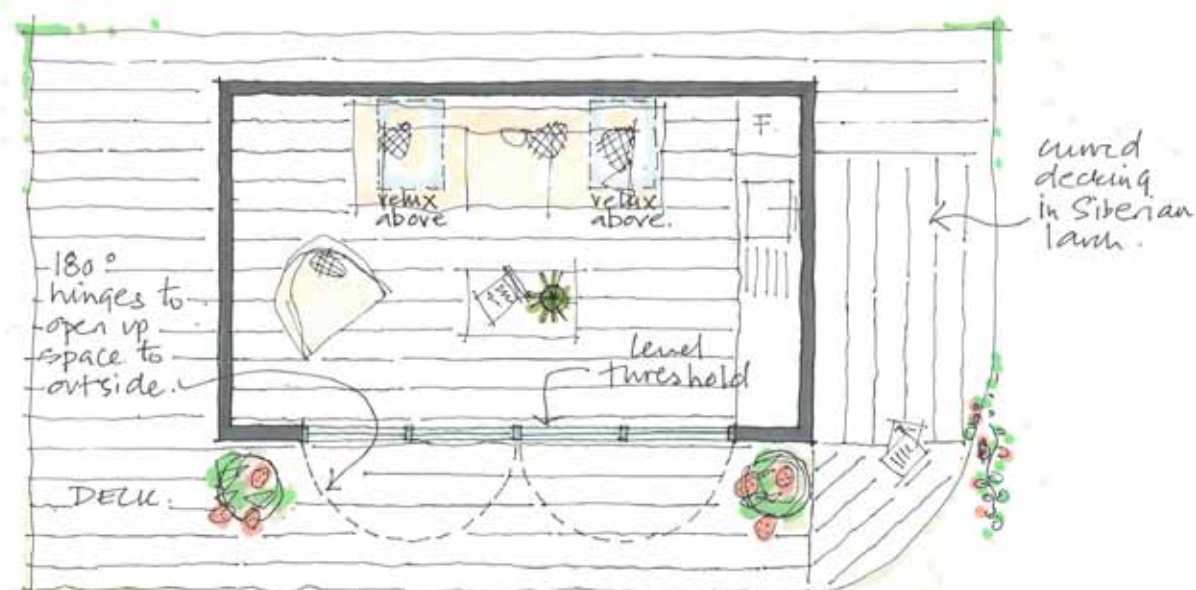
Measuring 5m by 2.8m, the room makes a sizable addition to the house – so did it require planning approval? The answer is no. So long as the structure is to the rear of the house, is a single storey, won't be used as a separate dwelling and doesn't take up more than 50 per cent of the garden area, there is generally no need to seek planning permission, at least in Scotland. It means that the process of designing and building such a structure is remarkably rapid.

This speed is aided by JML's use of SIPs as the principal construction method. These insulated panels have several ▶

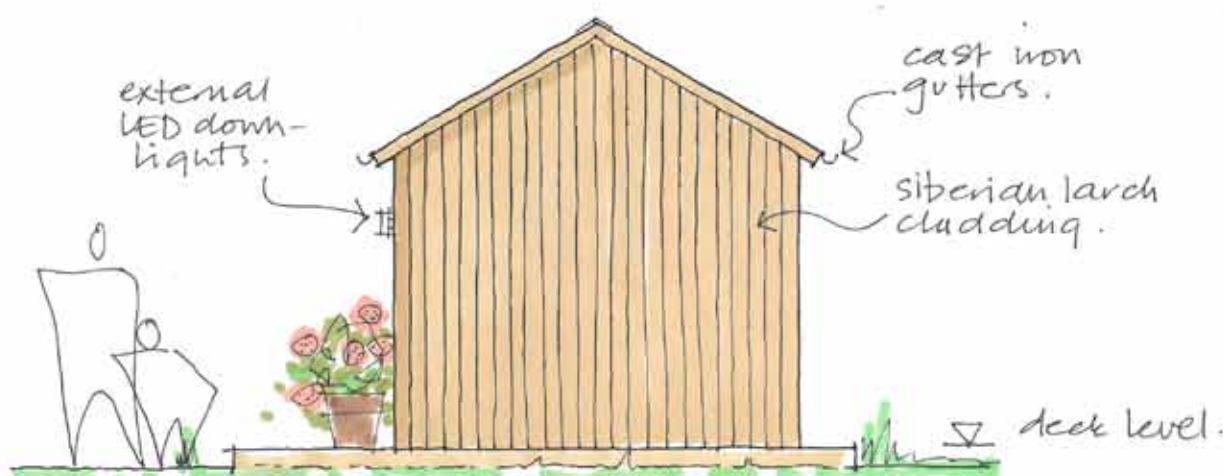
“OUR BUILD TIME FROM ARRIVING ON SITE TO HANDING OVER YOUR KEYS IS ABOUT TWO TO THREE WEEKS”



Image credit: Gill Murray Photography



PROPOSED GROUND FLOOR PLAN.



PROPOSED SIDE ELEVATION.

[Above] Positioned in a secluded spot among trees at the very end of the garden, the building of this room did not require planning permission as it met the crucial criteria of being a single storey and occupying less than 50 per cent of the garden footprint. The room's eco credentials are impressive: the SIPs were made in Scotland and reclaimed slate was used on the roof



other benefits: they have exceptional thermal efficiency, resulting in very low heating and energy bills; they can be built on top of foundation pads, so there's no need to dig up your whole garden to lay foundations; and they are slim and light enough to be carried through your house if it is difficult to access the back garden from the street.

“In order to ensure the highest levels of quality control and to minimise disruption and stress for you on site, our rooms are basically manufactured and cut in our local factory,” explains Katie. “This means our build time from arrival on site to handing over your keys is round about two to three weeks.”

So where should you begin if you want a garden room of your own? “We'd discuss with you the size, use, position and budget of your potential room,” says Katie. “Then, following a site visit (to assess ground levels, tree roots and access for services and to check it's within permitted development guidelines), we'd help you choose the best design for your needs, discuss any extras you might want, approve costings and then we get to work.

“We know that any building process can be daunting,” she adds, “but we'll do everything possible to make sure you're delighted with your new room.” ■