

A change of heart

A waterfront new-build conceived as a business venture has become a family home

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PHOTOGRAPHY JAMES FRENCH



A discreet wall of cupboards sits under the floating oak staircase that leads up from the first-floor living space

Buying a house backing on to a lagoon by Shoreham Beach in West Sussex was the ideal opportunity for builder and property developer Andy Lock, 36, to maximise the plot's potential and sell on. He couldn't have foreseen he would soon get together with his partner Laura Turner, 34, and that they would make it their home. 'I met Laura in February 2017, shortly after buying the property. She paid little attention to the house because it was just one of my jobs,' says Andy. 'But later, as the project began to take shape, we realised we'd become emotionally invested in it.'

The late-1990s house that Andy bought made poor use of the stepped site, which runs right up to the old sea wall that surrounds the lagoon. The ground floor was taken up with a garage and office, while all the living spaces were on the first floor, which was level with the waterside garden at the back.

Andy toyed with a few different ideas to make better use of the plot, including adding another storey to the building, knocking it down and constructing a pair of semi-detached homes, or designing a new house using the original foundations. 'I couldn't reclaim the VAT if I renovated the house. So I drew up one design for a contemporary home, and another for the semi-detached >>



ABOVE The ground floor is finished in brick slips, with Siberian larch cladding above. The dining area and guest bedroom sit in a white silicone-rendered box

IN BRIEF

LOCATION Lancing, West Sussex

TYPE OF PROPERTY

Three-storey self-build

BEDROOMS 3

PROJECT STARTED January 2018

PROJECT FINISHED October 2020

SIZE 193sqm

LAND COST £330,000

BUILD COST £240,000



Tiled with elegant Egyptian limestone and featuring a bioethanol fire, the fireplace provides a focal point for the open-plan living space

houses as a back-up plan,' says Andy. 'At a pre-planning meeting I was pleased the authority preferred the house.'

Andy took inspiration from homes that had sold well in the area, particularly the materials that had been used on some stylish new-builds along the beach. 'I settled on a stacked box design with a flat roof,' he says. 'Arranged over three floors, it captures the views, while a mix of double-storey glazing, wood cladding and render give it a contemporary look.'

He based the layout around the original floor levels so the elevated living room is in line with the back garden. A new second storey contains the bedrooms and bathrooms, with the ground level set aside for a garage, study and shower room. A solar array on the roof generates electricity.

In summer 2017 he asked an architect to prepare the drawings for his planning application and, by October, he had gained consent. Andy runs a construction company with his father, but decided to take on the project himself, demolishing the old house in January 2018. By March he'd moved to nearby Hove with Laura, who is a sales director for a ski company, and started building the ground floor. Mostly he worked alone, only bringing in experts when they were required. 'I'm glad I had the steelwork erected by a contractor as there was a mistake and it was their responsibility to come back and sort it out,' he says.

Andy based the layout on the original floor levels, so the living room is in line with the back garden

Andy took the build in his stride until autumn when he felt the pressure to finish the roof before winter set in. With narrow access on both sides, and without wanting the expense of hiring a crane to lift materials over the house, he made a winch platform to lift the heavy rolls of rubber roofing and a 120kg rooflight into place.

Over the Christmas period the exterior walls were rendered by specialists, but an unexpected burst of bad weather washed off the silicone topcoat. 'It was no one's fault, so I paid for the materials and they redid the work free of charge,' Andy explains.

March 2019 brought good news and bad news: the couple got engaged, but Laura slipped a disc and Andy took a month off to care for her. It was at this point that she began to see the house in a different light. 'I came to the site one day and it suddenly occurred to me. We wanted to start a family and I began to picture what life would be like living on the lagoon,' she says. »



Inspired by a kitchen that they spotted on Pinterest, Andy and Laura designed a waterfall island with a quartz surface that has been carefully mitred for a sleek finish.



LEFT Floor-to-ceiling glazing in the dining area draws plenty of natural light through the room

RIGHT A supporting pillar separates the kitchen from the seating area and forms part of the floating staircase

From then on, Laura took an interest in the interiors, opening up the staircase between the first and second floors, making the utility room big enough for a washing machine, and adding more space to the main bedroom's walk-in wardrobe. 'We moved in during March 2020 without a kitchen or hot water and ordered the kitchen just before the shops had to close due to the pandemic,' Laura explains. 'When I became pregnant, Andy had a new deadline – to finish the house in time for baby Rolan's arrival in December 2020.'

Andy succeeded in completing most of the house by the autumn, though the ground floor is unfinished as the couple altered their plans, wanting to create a space for

'When I became pregnant, Andy had a new deadline – to finish the house in time for the baby's arrival'

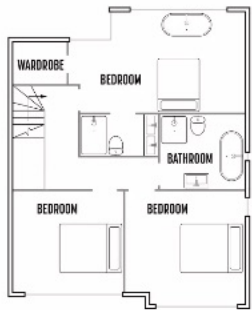
friends and family get-togethers. Andy is cautiously pleased with his efforts, but is mindful that there's still a way to go. 'We've become very attached to the house,' says Laura. 'There's something special about knowing that Andy laid every brick.' **GD**





Laura swapped the planned four-section window in the main bedroom for a seamless piece of glazing for better views of the lagoon

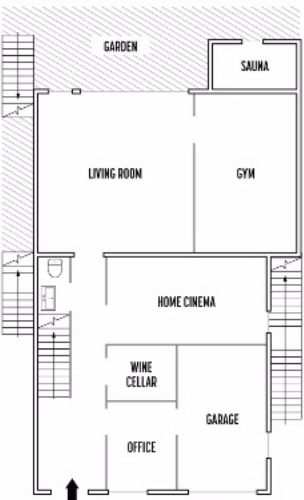
FLOOR PLANS



SECOND FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR



GROUND FLOOR



ABOVE Because it overlooks a neighbouring house, only a narrow window was allowed in the family bathroom. The slim-edge design of the compact 1,500mm-long bath helps to maximise the floor area

LEFT One of the walls in the guest bedroom is painted in Farrow & Ball's Green Smoke, a neutral shade that complements the contemporary interiors throughout the house

SUPPLIERS

PROJECT TEAM
Interior design Laura Turner
(07539 071166)

STRUCTURE
Bi-fold doors and windows
Smart Architectural Aluminium
(smartsystems.co.uk)
Steelwork Prefab Steel Co
(prefabsteelltd.co.uk)
Rendering Howard's Rendering
(07540 150778)

Brunel brick slips Brick Slips
(brickslips.co.uk)
Larch cladding Wenban-Smith
(wenbans.com)

Front door RK Door Systems
(rkdoorsystems.co.uk)

FIXTURES AND FITTINGS
Kitchen Wren Kitchens
(wrenkitchens.com)

Worktop Chandler Stoneworks
(chandlerstoneworks.co.uk)

Bathrooms Custom Wet Rooms
(customwetrooms.co.uk)
Vinyl flooring Karndean
(karndean.com)

Fireplace tiles Authentic Stone
(authenticstone.co.uk)

Kitchen lights Jim Lawrence
(jim-lawrence.co.uk)

Dining room lights Wayfair
(wayfair.co.uk)

Paint Farrow & Ball
(farrow-ball.com)

FURNITURE AND SOFT FURNISHINGS
Dining table Cosywood
(cosywood.co.uk)

Dining chairs and bedroom armchair
Style Our Home (styleourhome.com)

Sofas and bed Swoon
(swooneditions.com)

Bar stools Atlantic Shopping
(atlanticshopping.co.uk)

Dressing table and side tables
Cox & Cox (coxandcox.co.uk)

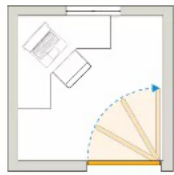


ECLISSE Pocket Doors... transform your space

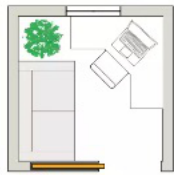
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