



A new dormer window on the top floor is clad in Anthra-Zinc in Anthracite to blend with the original roof slates

# A place for everything

This entire house was remodelled and extended for one homeschooling and homeworking family

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PHOTOGRAPHY EDMUND SUMNER



**M**eghan and James Ellis liked everything about their new home, except the dark ground-floor rooms at the back of the house and the small outrigger kitchen. 'We'd been living in a bright and modern property, and were used to lots of light,' says Meghan.

Needing a house with more space, they bought the six-bedroom Victorian semi with a view to extending it. The couple have four children – Tristan, nine, Elliot, six, Cordelia, four, and six-month-old Astrid. Meghan, 37, who worked in marketing, and homeschools the three eldest children, wanted somewhere to serve as a classroom. James, 42, a software developer, also needed a home office.

The couple collaborated with architect Neil Dusheiko to create an extension and make changes that would provide them with the spaces they wanted. 'The real challenge was how to indulge our love of minimalist design without losing the character of the house,' says Meghan.

During the planning stage, Neil showed the couple a series of computer-generated models of the proposed »

#### IN BRIEF

**LOCATION** Near Cambridge  
**TYPE OF PROPERTY** Victorian semi-detached house  
**BEDROOMS** 4  
**PROJECT STARTED** September 2018  
**PROJECT FINISHED** September 2019  
**SIZE** 266sqm, plus a 60sqm garden studio  
**BUILD COST** £3,030 per sqm

At the side of the house a doorway in the new extension leads into a boot room. The original brickwork was rejuvenated with a deep clean



Above the brickwork, the kitchen walls are painted crisp white. The room has views to the garden and the timber-clad studio



extension along with studies calculating where the sun would fall throughout the day and at various times of the year. The results demonstrated that having two separate strips of overhead glazing would bring the most light into the north-east-facing extension.

A line of non-structural glazing at the ceiling's highest point draws shafts of light into different parts of the extension as the sun tracks overhead. 'The top skylights allow diffused light to bounce back into the kitchen as the sun moves behind the building,' explains Neil. 'There's another row of overhead glazing where the extension joins the house. This brings in even more light and provides a view of the upper part of the property's rear wall.'

After lots of discussion with the couple, Neil drew up a design for a steel-framed extension that wraps around the back and side of the family's home. It includes a new kitchen and dining room with study pods for the children along one wall. Honey-coloured handmade bricks on the outside pick up on the original yellow stock brickwork.

The work was extensive, and the family were able to remain in their previous home while the build continued. The team renovated the entire house, making it more energy-efficient by lining the walls with insulated plasterboard and fitting rigid foam insulation beneath the floorboards and in the roof. They upgraded the »



**LEFT** The interior features a simple materials palette of wood and yellow brick

**RIGHT** At one end of the kitchen-diner these study pods were made by the main contractor. A run of pocket doors hides them away at the end of the day







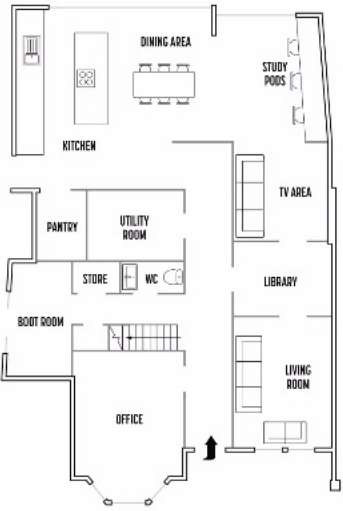
An oak floor runs throughout the ground level. Original period features such as the fireplace, ceiling rose and cornices have been restored

RIGHT A reception room was divided to create the library, which contains two walls of bespoke shelving and doubles as a music room

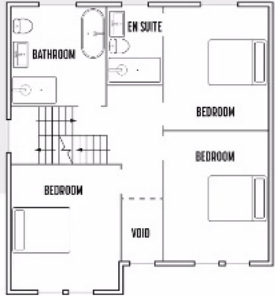


In the hallway a timber-clad block conceals the cloakroom, utility room and storage

FLOOR PLANS



GROUND FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR



TOP FLOOR



The contractor custom-made the furniture in the top-floor sewing room, which the family use for a variety of creative projects



**The work was extensive, and the family were able to remain in their previous home while the build continued**



**ABOVE** There's space for a walk-in wardrobe behind a wall in the couple's bedroom

original sash windows by removing the single panes and replacing them with bespoke double-glazed panels. Underfloor heating was installed in every room and is zoned so that the temperature of different areas can be controlled separately. A mechanical extract ventilation (MEV) system removes damp, stale air from the bathrooms and kitchen.

One of the four reception rooms was turned into the couple's home office. While on the opposite side of the hallway is a cosy living room, which leads into a windowless library. Upstairs on the first floor a small back bedroom was turned into the new family bathroom, and the top floor gained a wide dormer that stretches almost the entire width of the house.

The final change took place at the bottom of the garden, where a new outbuilding includes a sauna and gym. 'It's clad in charred timber to act as a light-and-shade contrast to the house's pale brick,' explains Neil.

Open the front door of the house and an element of surprise awaits. 'There's a brick wall at the end of the hallway with light coming in from above – it creates a curiosity to find out what's around the corner,' says Meghan. 'And then, walking on, the bright extension comes into sight with its views of the garden.'

'We watch shafts of daylight moving across the walls during the morning,' she adds. 'By lunchtime, the whole space is bright and in the evening, concealed strip lights create the illusion it's daytime. It's all very clever.' **GD**





The timber on the outbuilding – which contains a gym and sauna – was charred to colour and preserve the wood

## SUPPLIERS

### PROJECT TEAM

#### Architecture and interiors

Neil Dusheiko ([neil@dusheiko.com](mailto:neil@dusheiko.com))

#### Building contractor and

bespoke joinery (including kitchen)

Sygnel Style ([sygnelstyle.co.uk](http://sygnelstyle.co.uk))

#### Engineer Momentum

([momentumengineering.com](http://momentumengineering.com))

Quantity surveyor Measur ([measur.com](http://measur.com))

### Landscape designer

Jane Brockbank

([janebrockbank.com](http://janebrockbank.com))

### Garden contractor

W Wright Landscapes

([www.wrightlandscapes.com](http://www.wrightlandscapes.com))

### STRUCTURE

Petersen Tegl Kolumba bricks

EBM Supplies ([ebmsupplies.com](http://ebmsupplies.com))

### Glazing/sliding doors

IQ Glass ([iqglassuk.com](http://iqglassuk.com))

### Staircase Bespoke Handrails & Staircases

([bespokehandrails.com](http://bespokehandrails.com))

### Shou sugi ban charred wood cladding

Exterior Solutions ([exterior.supplies](http://exterior.supplies))

### MEV system Nuair ([nuaire.co.uk](http://nuaire.co.uk))

### Underfloor heating

Omnie ([omnie.co.uk](http://omnie.co.uk))

### FIXTURES AND FITTINGS

#### Dekton Zenith worksurface

Cosentino ([cosentino.com](http://cosentino.com))

Oak flooring Bilo Flooring ([biloflooring.co.uk](http://biloflooring.co.uk))

### FURNITURE AND ACCESSORIES

#### Globus dining chairs and

Onda bar stools Stua ([stua.com](http://stua.com))

Halo Groucho sofa John Lewis ([johnlewis.com](http://johnlewis.com))