

A period drama

Building an extension and landscaping the garden has enabled one family to fall in love with their Edwardian home all over again

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PHOTOGRAPHY ALISTAIR NICHOLLS

The extension replaces a conservatory and reaches across the full width of the house, with no supporting pillars to disrupt the view. Grey window frames tie in with the aluminium-framed doors.

IN BRIEF

LOCATION North London
TYPE OF PROPERTY
Edwardian terraced house
BEDROOMS 4/5
PROJECT STARTED
February 2017
PROJECT FINISHED
December 2017
SIZE OF HOUSE 217sqm
TOTAL BUILD COST
£2,300 per sqm



Talent manager Sara Hughes, 58, and husband Steve, 60, who is a company director, spent five years searching for a new home before they realised that the house they were living in was where they wanted to stay.

The couple have lived in the Edwardian property, with their children Molly, 23, and Joe, 15, for nearly 20 years.

Sara and Steve always appreciated their home's period features and high ceilings, but found the back rooms awkward to use. 'The galley kitchen was too small and we had allowed the room next to it to become a storage area, using it as a corridor through to the conservatory,' Steve explains. 'But we never found the right time to start a big building project, and we hoped to find a property where the work had already been done.'

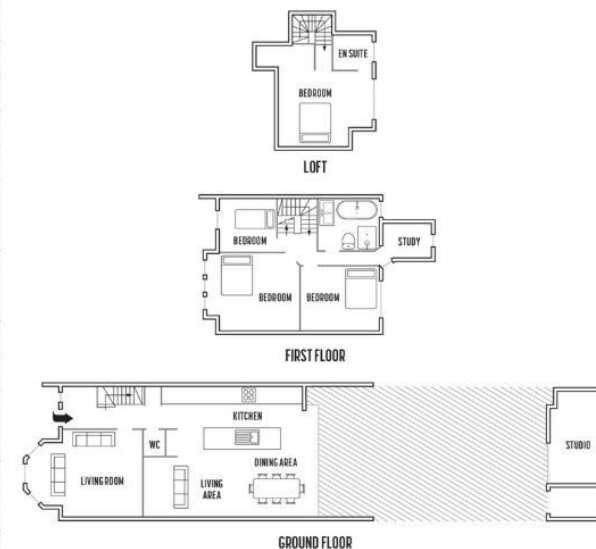
The turning point came in 2013, when the couple saw an extension created by Paul Archer Design for the house

of a friend of a friend. 'We liked the way it blended with the period property, and it prompted us to have a conversation with architect Richard Gill,' recalls Sara. But they were still not ready to commit to a big project and, with the discussion with Richard at the back of their minds, another year of house-hunting went by.

In 2015, they went back to Richard to discuss opening up the back of the house with a full-width extension and re-doing the garden. Planning permission was obtained in 2016, but Sara and Steve got cold feet once more and put the project on hold. 'We came very close to buying a house nearby but it was taken off the market,' says Sara. 'That's when we finally committed to our own project.'

The result is a stunning open-plan kitchen, dining and seating area that opens up to a stylish terraced garden with a cabin office at the far end. The level of the garden nearest the house was raised to match the floor inside the »

FLOOR PLANS



ABOVE Mosa quartz large-format tiles in Basalt Grey from Domus run throughout the extension and onto the terrace for a seamless connection with the garden. The roof light is positioned to brighten the darkest part of the room

RIGHT Kitchen units are painted in Night Jewels by Dulux to contrast with the white Corian island. Above it, the EQQ Design Joseph pendant lights are from Innermost, and a Tatu pendant from Flos hangs above the dining table



Sara's love of lighting is at the heart of all the new spaces and Tom Dixon's copper Melt lights play a key part in making a feature of the living area



extension and the glazing also contributes to the sense of seamless transition from inside to out. 'We chose slim-frame sliding doors to maximise the light,' says Steve.

A supporting beam is boxed within a suspended ceiling, which sits lower than the original one above the seating area. 'The way in which the two ceilings interlock is visually simple, almost sculptural,' says Richard.

The building work, which began in February 2017, progressed smoothly although the arrival of the steel beam, which weighs half a tonne, caused a brief break in progress

when Richard and the builders were advised to put in a steel column to support it. 'Richard thought creatively and concealed the column with panels that open up to reveal a writing bureau,' says Steve. The use of mirror tiles to clad the top of the column that rises up through the glazing strip is another clever idea. 'From certain angles, it makes the ceiling in that corner of the room look as though it's floating,' he continues.

With the project underway, Sara and Steve were open to Richard's ideas for alterations elsewhere in the house. »

GD HOMES NORTH LONDON



'We came very close to buying a house nearby but it was taken off the market. That's when we finally committed to our own project'



TOP Underfloor heating has been installed beneath the new engineered wood flooring to keep the walls free of radiators

RIGHT The encaustic floor tiles, inner porch screen and staircase are all original features of the Edwardian house

‘We were so excited and would sneak back to the house in the evenings to check on the progress’



A small first-floor bathroom was converted into a study and the spare room into a new family bathroom, while the water tank in Molly's bedroom, in the attic, was moved to allow space for a shower room and a lookout spot, built in under the eaves.

The family moved out to live in a flat nearby while the building work was underway. ‘We were so excited and would sneak back to the house in the evenings to check on the progress,’ says Sara.

The interior design was led by Sara. Inspired by the effect of the white Corian island against the olive green-coloured units in the kitchen, she chose a colour palette of dark hues to pull everything together.

By December 2017, the work was complete and the family moved back in. It was a memorable experience. ‘It’s as though we’re living in a new house, and the open space means we spend more time together as a family,’ says Sara. ‘We’re so glad we didn’t move.’ GD

LEFT The new family bathroom, in what was a small bedroom, has a Lusso Stone resin bath and a Gregg IP65 poly outdoor pendant by Foscari. Brass fittings add character here and in the adjacent tiled shower area

RIGHT To create a cocooning atmosphere in the main bedroom, Dark Lead by Little Greene has been used on the woodwork and ceiling as well as the walls

BELOW In the attic bedroom, Sara has used Avalon Marsh wallpaper in Mustard Yellow by Arte to offset the dark Night Jewels 2 paint by Dulux on the sloping ceiling



SUPPLIERS

PROJECT TEAM

Architect Richard Gill, Paul Archer Design
(paularcherdesign.co.uk)

Builder BEA Woodworking
(bandalondon.co.uk)

Structural engineer TZG Partnership
(tzgpartnership.com)

STRUCTURE

Glazing and sky-frame doors

Clear Living (clear-living.co.uk)

Underfloor heating Terra Thermo
(terra thermo.co.uk)

Garden landscape design

Paul Archer Design (as before)

Garden construction

BEA Woodworking (as before)

FIXTURES & FITTINGS

Bespoke joinery and kitchen design

Paul Archer Design (as before)

Kitchen construction

BEA Woodworking (as before)

Bathroom fittings Lusso Stone

(lussostone.com); Aston Matthews
(astonmatthews.co.uk)

Bedroom wardrobes Kestrel Kitchens

(kestrelkitchens.co.uk)

Tiles Domus (domusgroup.com)

Lighting Tom Dixon (tomdixon.net);

Foscarini (foscarini.com); Innermost

(innermost.net); Flos (flos.com)

Garden office Green Studios

(green-studios.com)

Paint Dulux (dulux.co.uk);

Little Greene (littlegreene.com)

FURNITURE & ACCESSORIES

Bar stools Hay (hay.dk)

Wallpaper Arte (arte-international.com),

from the Design Centre (dclh.co.uk)

Cushions Habitat (habitat.co.uk);

TK Maxx (tkmaxx.com)

Faux peonies Oka (okadirect.com)

The modular-built cedar-clad garden office by Green Studios has structural-insulated panels so that Joe can use it as a music studio when Steve is not using it for painting.

