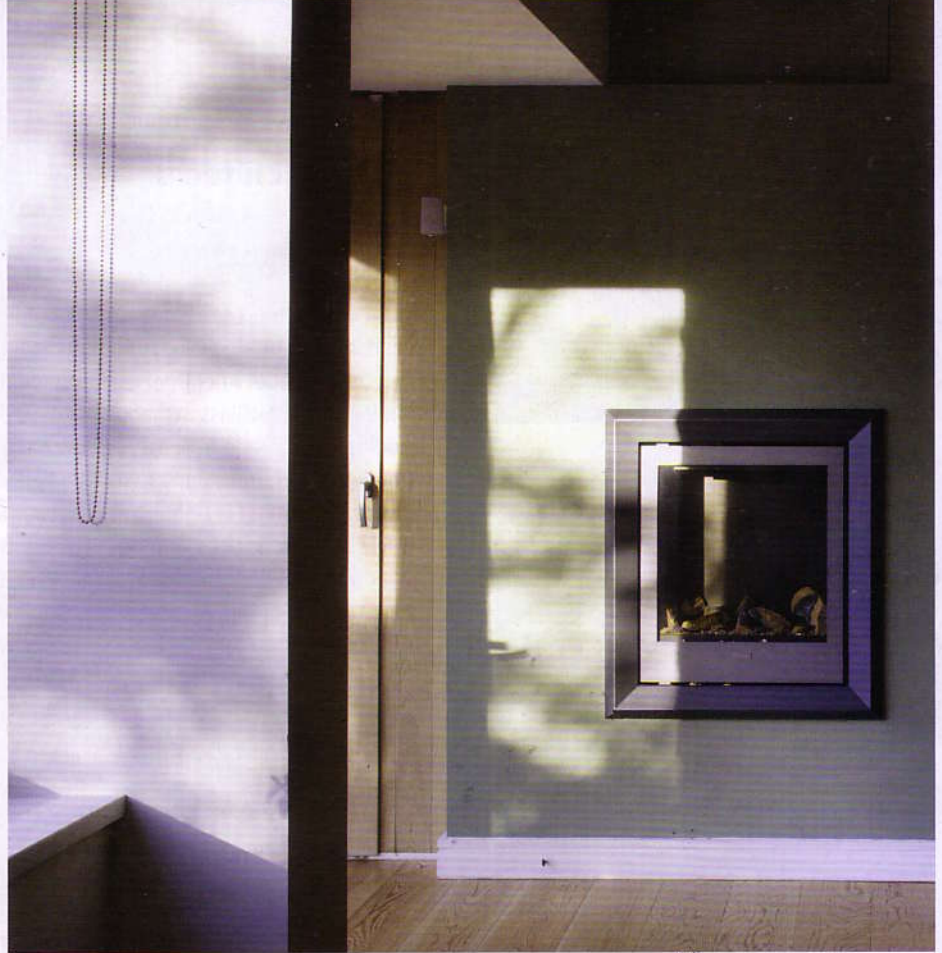


Northern exposure





This house in south Dublin had a grim, north-facing back wall with a poor link to the garden so when the owners decided to extend, the architects took the opportunity to improve the original design as well

Left The tiled sloped roof of the extension complements the forms of the existing return and main house
Top The en-suite glass sliding door preserves the lovely view of the leafy street from the landing
Top right A fire is the focus of the informal sitting area in the multi-functional family room

This house, which is over 100 years old, has a very fine and ornate façade facing the street but the north-facing rear elevation had hardly any openings and little architectural quality.

When the owners asked Eden Architects to extend the rear ground-floor kitchen, they took the opportunity to redesign the garden side of the house to make it just as impressive as the front in scale and importance. "A building should look good from every side not just the front," says John-Barry Lowe of Eden Architects.

The architects also sought to create a better link between the house and the large 10m x 35m garden, "which felt strangely long, narrow and disconnected from the house," says Lowe.

In the early stages of design the architects looked at many ways in which to reconfigure the large ground floor and unify the front and back of the house without necessarily extending it. The idea of adapting the original dining room seemed attractive because it faced south onto the front street and also had the possibility of opening straight into the garden.

But in the end they took the decision to add an extension, because the clients wished to keep their traditional dining room and wanted a new playroom.

The resulting extension runs almost the full width of the garden and has concealed supports for the first floor of the return. A long, wide window and a door screen frames and alters the view of the garden on one side. High up on the other side is a clerestory window that floods the room with south light.

The space is divided by a non-structural wall and two full-height sliding doors, one along each window edge. It is designed so that when the owners' children have grown up and left home, the doors and wall can be removed.

The new room is separated from the house by a utility room. The garden wall of the new room steps in to make a bench-seat on the inside and outside of the house for perching on.



Top The fine brick elevation to the street with large south facing openings inspired the qualities of the new garden room Above The windows along the edge wash the room with light

The brick of the window wall, the raised flower beds, external steps and the wall which hides the neighbours' return, combine to make the garden into an outdoor room.

The new pitched roof on the extension is designed to complete a composition of three matching roofs, one at each level. The architects achieved the low pitch of the clay roof with a concealed roof-sheeting panelling system underneath it. The brick pattern (known as Flemish bond) and sizes match those on the existing house. A mixture of red bricks with different finishes was chosen to create a varied appearance.

A basement with external access was put under the extension and the attic was also converted and has new stairs to it. A small bedroom beside the main bedroom was made into an en-suite wet room and walk-through storage separated by a full height glass sliding door.

Now that the back of the house is just as imposing as the front, the way this house is used has turned around.

ARCHITECT

Eden Architects

61 Dame Street, Dublin 2

PROJECT FACTS

Main contractor: Coynestone Developments, 69 Belmayne Park North, Dublin 13

Landscape: Amazing Gardens, Churchtown, Dublin 14

Full-height slide: Ariel Door Gears, Clontarf, Dublin 3

Sliding glass: ArtGlass, Ashbourne, Co Meath

Audio/visual: Bang & Olufsen, www.bang-olufsen.com

Rooflight: D&R Daylight, 13 Western Parkway Business Centre, Dublin 12

Kitchen lighting: ECI Lighting, Glasnevin, Dublin 11

Bricks: Ibstock Bricks, Dartmouth Square, Dublin 6

Windows: Produkt, Sandyford Office Park, Dublin 18

Structural engineer: RB Consulting Engineers, Upper Grand Canal Street, Dublin 4

Kitchen: Rhatigan and Hick, Aughrim, Co Wicklow

Flooring: Trunk Flooring, Kesh, Co Fermanagh

Sanitaryware: Waterloo Bathrooms, Dun Laoghaire

