

REAL PROJECT
TERRACE EXTENSION



BEFORE

Thinking outside the
BOX

What began as a potential investment opportunity soon turned into a renovation project for Tim and Aisling Cooney. With the help of their architect, the couple transformed a run-down terrace into a contemporary family home

REAL PROJECT TERRACE EXTENSION

GOING BOLD
To complement the shades within the original Victorian brickwork, Tim and Aisling opted to wrap the new additions in corten steel

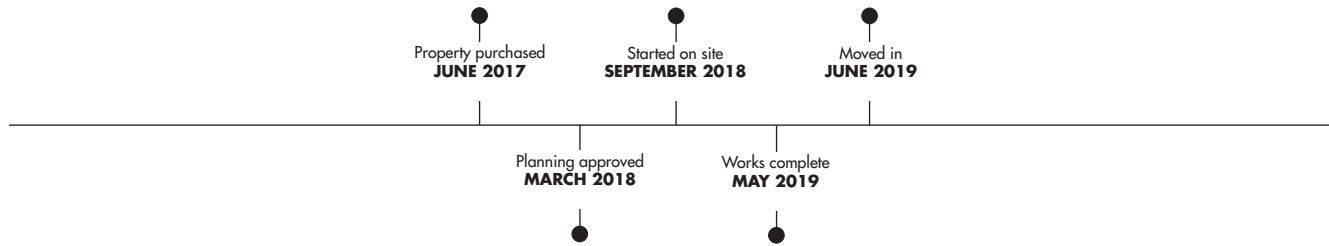
from Stark & Greensmith. As well as weathering beautifully over time, the material adds some serious wow factor to this historic home.







TIMELINE



HOMEOWNERS

Tim and Aisling Cooney

LOCATION East Dulwich, London

PROJECT Contemporary extension and loft conversion of Victorian terrace

SIZE 180m²

BUILD TIME

Eight months (Sep 2018 - May 2019)

HOUSE COST £875,000

BUILD COST £405,800

VALUE £1.6million

WORDS Jennifer Grimble

PHOTOGRAPHY Simon Maxwell
and Joe Traylen Photography

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im and Aisling Cooney had been East Dulwich residents for over a decade and were living in a compact apartment block when Aisling fell pregnant. The couple knew it was time to find a suitable family home and decided to keep an eye out for any 'For Sale' signs that cropped up in the area.

"After living in cramped flats with low ceilings, we wanted light and height," Aisling says. "With a child on the way, we were keen to have our own garden and a practical interior layout that connected well with the outdoor space."

The pair eventually settled on a double-fronted Victorian house with lots of potential. The couple had travelled past the house for years, and its location, scale and garden were perfect for their needs, but it needed modernising.

The neighbouring residence had been converted into flats and initially, Tim and Aisling liked the idea of a home that doubled as an investment opportunity. "We thought we could live in one of the apartments and rent them out later, if we moved," Tim says. "Whatever we did, we wanted to be respectful of the house and its history."

CHANGING PLANS

The property came with confused deeds and a gentlemen's agreement concerning the boundary line. A party wall surveyor was appointed to address the issues and an Award was agreed.

Once this issue had been resolved, the couple considered several architects, before hiring Stephen Butt of Lendel Stephens. Stephen designed two schemes simultaneously: a

"I've always seen the kitchen as the heart of a family home. It's the perfect space for us"



GARDEN VIEWS
Sliding pocket doors from Maxlight provide views of the garden, while a large custom roof window also brings natural light deep into the floorplan. (The kitchen units are from deVOL.)





SAVVY STORAGE
Clever space-saving ideas, including a slide-out cupboard under the stairs, provide Tim and Aisling with plenty of room for storage, while retaining a sleek, modern finish.

ZONING ROOMS
A light-filled living room leads into a dining room, separated by steel-framed doors, which allow the two spaces to feel connected yet distinct from one another.



flat conversion and plans for a single home. “The conversion into flats was a long shot because the council’s planning policy promotes the retention of family homes in the borough,” Stephen says. Sure enough, the idea was rejected, so Tim and Aisling ran with the family home design.

The Cooneys knew they wanted the kitchen to be the heart of the home. “The basis of the design was ensuring that the interior worked for our busy lives. It needed to flow and we wanted to be able to close off spaces when needed,” says Aisling.

Stephen proposed opening up the front of the house, removing the cramped hallway and re-orientating the staircase. “The design removed a reception room, but created a spacious entrance with a WC, utility room and bespoke staircase,” Stephen explains.

He also suggested that the home’s new additions be clad with corten steel and material lover Tim was immediately taken with the idea. “We chose a lot of the materials simply because Tim wanted to have a play,” Aisling laughs. “I needed some persuading because I thought it might look harsh, but Stephen had a vision and it made sense.” The finished design incorporated an extensive internal reconfiguration and makeover, and a kitchen extension and a loft conversion, formed from three corten steel boxes.

GETTING UNDERWAY

Stephen took on project management duties [see page 69 for more] and the couple, who rented locally, visited frequently to check on progress. Regular site meetings were held and Stephen developed drawings with the contractor for the home’s bespoke joinery and corten cladding, which proved to be the most challenging aspect of the build.

The steel was custom-made in the West Country and transported to London. Since there are only a few specialists that work with corten, this part of the project was handed to another contractor. “Errors were made along the way, but there was a refreshing willingness from the contractors to correct

mistakes and real pride was taken in the finished product,” Stephen explains. “It was great working with quality materials and craftsmen.”

A fabric-first approach was also taken, with high performance glazing specified and the existing building fabric insulated. A green roof was added to the ground floor extension; this can be seen and enjoyed from the rear bedrooms.

FAMILY-FRIENDLY FINISH

Eight months later, the couple moved into their new home. While the front retains its period charm, the rear of the house is beautifully contemporary, thanks to the corten steel. The material steps down the façade, binding the new spaces together and providing a striking contrast between old and new.

Inside, the kitchen is the focal point and opens up onto the landscaped garden, thanks to sliding pocket doors. “I love cooking and I’ve always seen the kitchen as the heart of a family home. It’s the perfect space for us,” Aisling says.

The top floor has been transformed into a stunning master suite with enviable views, an en suite and a dressing area cleverly partitioned off. The room’s full-height sliding glass doors are shaded by a perforated privacy screen. The rest of the house blends period styles – cast iron radiators, sash windows and traditional ceiling roses – with modern, family-friendly materials, such as oak, terrazzo and polished plaster.

“The plaster looks great and is extremely low maintenance,” Tim says. “The house isn’t ostentatious. Every detail was chosen for its quality, durability and value for money.”

For Aisling, the best part was moving in. “The house is perfect for our needs and surpasses anything we could have envisioned,” she says. For Tim, it’s the little things. “It seems mundane, but being able to see through the house to the garden is the most satisfying thing for me, especially after years of living in small flats,” he says. “Creating a bespoke space is very rewarding. We’ve achieved what we wanted and now have a home that works for us.” **H**







THE MASTER SUITE
A partition wall has been added behind the bed to maximise space and act as a private dressing area. The corten screen in the ensuite also allows for privacy and brings natural light into the space. The polished plaster and terrazzo are low-maintenance material choices.

SPOTLIGHT ON: HIRING AN ARCHITECT TO PROJECT MANAGE

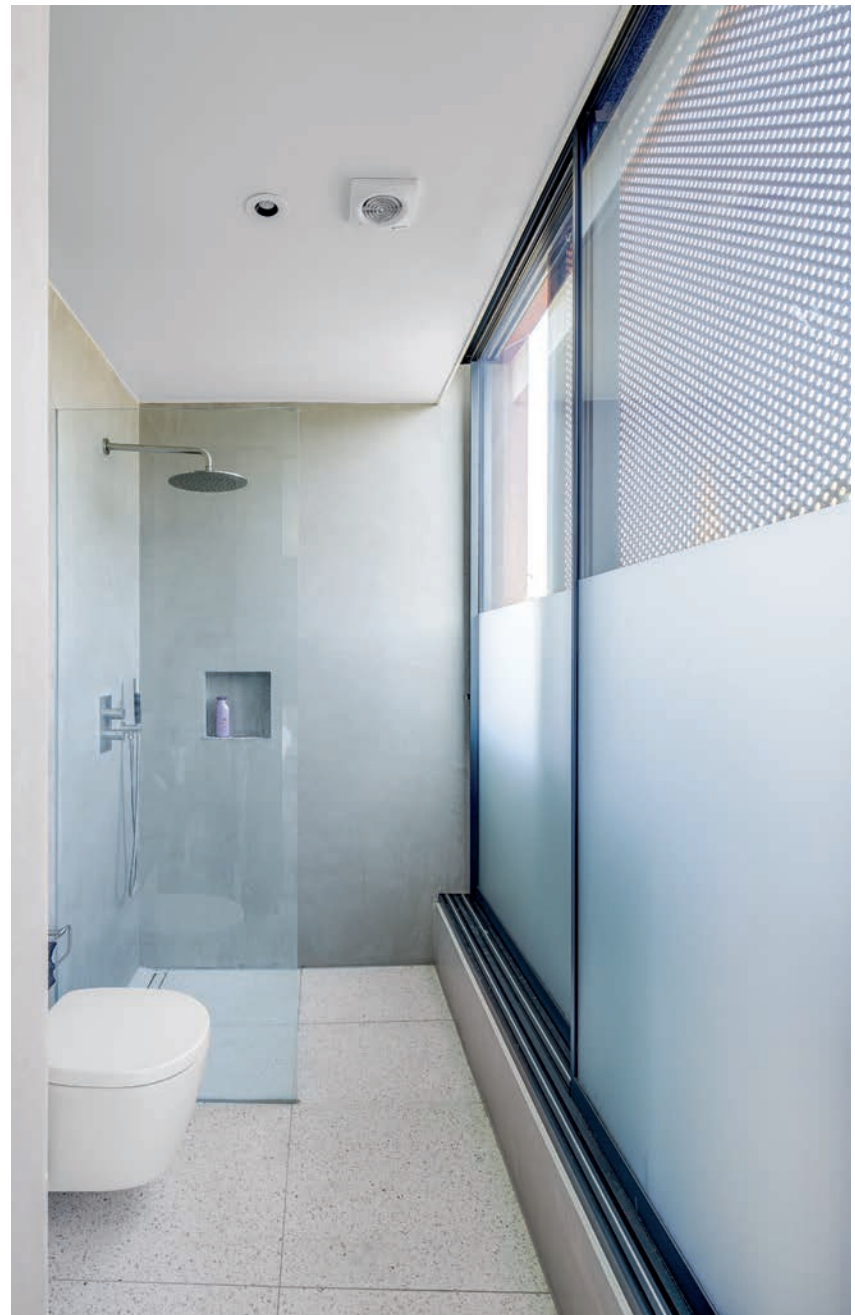
As first-time renovators, Tim and Aisling didn't know what to expect. Initially, Tim was keen to take a hands-on role in the process, but quickly realised that, as he would be working abroad at the time and Aisling would be caring for their new-born, hiring Stephen Butt, their architect, to project manage meant they could continue their busy lives while their project was in safe hands.

"We made a conscious decision early on for Stephen to take on this role," says Aisling. "We had a very transparent relationship and a lot of confidence in him, so it became clear that he could remove a lot of the stress. Putting our trust in an expert was by far the best decision we made."

Thanks to clear lines of communication, the planning stage was easy and even enjoyable. And being experienced in dealing with contractors, Stephen was also able to handle any issues that arose during the build, without having to involve the Cooneys unnecessarily. "Builders can sometimes cut corners, but Stephen ensured everything was completed as planned, to the highest possible standard," says Tim. "Everything was tightly understood. That clarity made the project a success."

Stephen was able to react and make alterations quickly to keep the build moving too, and when it came to budget management, his assistance proved invaluable. "He helped make the project what it is and shielded us from problems," Aisling says. Tim agrees: "On reflection, if we'd have tried to project manage, we'd have made mistakes we couldn't afford. The scheme would have gone in a completely different direction."

As for advice, Tim has one clear message: "If you choose to trust an expert, try not to interfere," he advises. "We agreed to the design and were disciplined enough not to make changes along the way. We trusted Stephen's vision and allowed him to guide the build to a smooth finish."

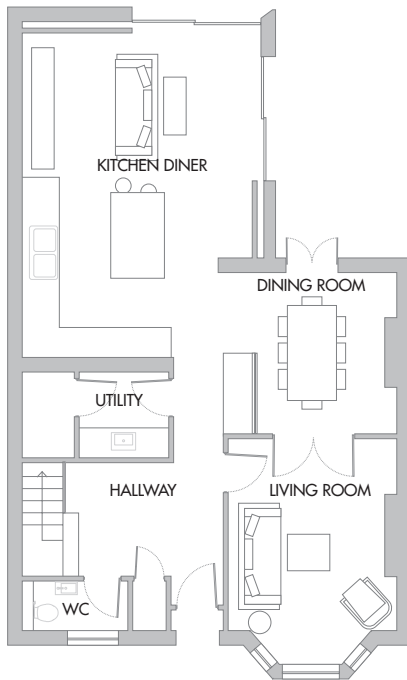


THE PLANS

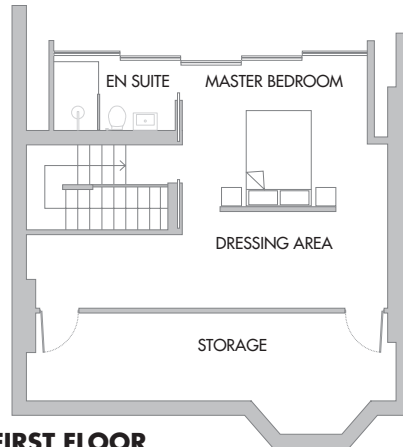
THE FLOORPLAN

Opening up the front of the house means there is now a clear line of sight all the way to the garden, flooding the house with natural light and making the once cramped entrance far more inviting. The first floor now houses three large bedrooms and two bathrooms, while the new loft conversion offers a striking master suite with enviable views.

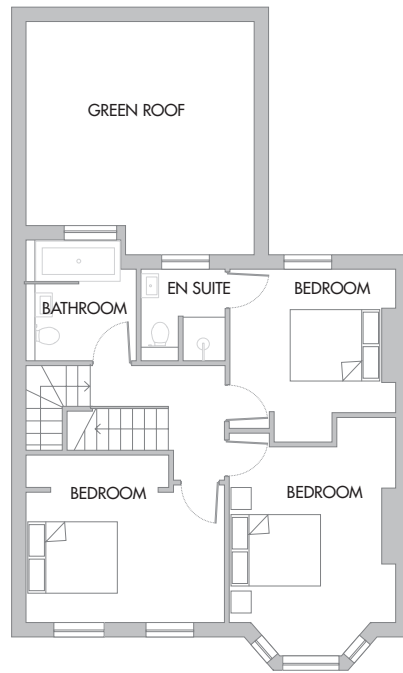
GROUND FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR



PROJECT COSTS

- PRELIMINARIES** £21,000
- DEMOLITION AND ALTERATIONS** £25,500
- SUBSTRUCTURE** (foundation and slab) £10,000
- UPPER FLOORS** £9,000
- ROOF STRUCTURE AND COVERING** £36,000
- STAIRS** £8,000
- EXTERNAL WALLS AND CLADDING** £35,000
- WINDOWS AND EXTERNAL DOORS** £47,000
- INTERNAL DOORS** £7,000
- INTERNAL WALLS** £13,000
- WALL FINISHES** £8,000
- FLOOR FINISHES** £23,000
- CEILING FINISHES** £7,500
- DECORATION** £12,500
- FITTINGS** £30,000
- KITCHEN** £25,000
- MECHANICAL INSTALLATIONS** £30,000
- ELECTRICAL INSTALLATIONS** £20,000
- DRAINAGE** £9,000
- EXTERNAL WORKS** £11,300
- VARIATIONS** £18,000
- TOTAL** £405,800

SUPPLIERS

ARCHITECT Lendel Stephens: www.lendelstephens.com

MAIN CONTRACTOR AND JOINERY
RMC Design and Build: www.rmcdesignbuild.co.uk

PARTY WALL SURVEYOR ASH Chartered Building Surveyors: www.ash-surveyors.co.uk

QUANTITY SURVEYOR
MESH Construction Consultancy: www.meshcc.com

SLIDING GLAZED DOORS Maxlight: www.maxlight.co.uk

TIMBER FLOORING The Natural Wood Floor Company: www.naturalwoodfloor.co.uk

POLISHED PLASTER Decor Tadelakt: www.tadelakt.co.uk

ROOF WINDOWS
The Rooflight Company: www.therooflightcompany.co.uk

SASH WINDOWS
Global Doors & Windows: www.globaldoorsandwindows.com

TERRAZZO BATHROOM FLOORING
Diespeker & Co: www.diespeker.co.uk

KITCHEN deVOL: www.devolkitchens.co.uk

LIGHTING Astro Lighting: www.astrolighting.com

JOINERY AND BESPOKE STAIRCASE DESIGN
Lendel Stephens: www.lendelstephens.com