London’s best new home extensions and interiors

DON’T MOVE, IMPROVE 2014
Providing more usable space is a key concern for London’s homeowners, especially while house prices continue to spiral. Instead of moving on or upsizing, the projects detailed in the following pages sought to enliven and expand the clients’ existing homes, creating spaces that better meet their needs.

Now in their fifth year, NLA’s Don’t Move, Improve! awards aim to discover and celebrate London’s best new home extensions and interiors, and, in doing so, raise the profile of smaller architectural practices in the capital.

The forthcoming projects demonstrate a range of possibilities at a variety of budgets, completed within London’s distinct typologies – from Georgian to Victorian, through to 1950s stock and industrial buildings. Selected by an eminent jury, they display innovation and creativity in the creation of new space, sustainable and cost-effective approaches to project delivery, and overall, contribute high quality design that adds to London’s rich mix of architectural styles.

Debbie Whitfield, Director, NLA

JURY

Carmel Allen
Creative director, Heal’s

Philippa Stockley
Journalist, editor and critic specialising in architecture and design

Daniel Hopwood
President, British Institute of Interior Design

Chris Hampson
Chair of RIBA London and co-founder Hampson Williams Architecture

Luke Tozer
Director, Pitman Tozer

Debbie Whitfield
Director, NLA (Chair)
A timber-framed extension to a 1960s end-of-terrace house, designed with careful consideration of streetscape, materials and proportions

Sited within a modernist estate, this project aims to be a sensitive adaption and expansion of a modest family house. The side extension is on the corner of the estate, at the transition point with the street, and so sought to mediate between the two different typologies, without compromising the integrity of the estate as an ensemble. The extension is treated as a light corner infill, designed to be recognisably different, with a simple timber structure. Glazed on two sides, framed and fenestrated in douglas fir and clad in pre-weathered larch, its subtly adjusted proportions to windows and spandrels identify it as a later addition.

COMPLETED: JANUARY 2014
PROJECT COST: £232,000
BOROUGH: CAMDEN
ARCHITECT: MACCREANOR LAVINGTON WITH KAY HUGHES
CLIENT: KAY HUGHES
CONTRACTOR: EAST LONDON BUILDING
STRUCTURAL ENGINEER: GREG LING
SERVICES ENGINEER: PECKHAM BEELEY LTD
PARTY WALL SURVEYOR: MARKING LEWY
PHOTOGRAPHY: TIM CROCKER
Second Prize

CECILIA ROAD

A small but refined rear extension providing a home office and shower with strong connection to the garden, using a rich palette of materials to enhance the sensory experience.

The existing home office was extended into the garden, giving more space and a stronger connection to the outside. A walk-in shower, which projects discreetly from the original space, has a three-sided full-height frameless glass corner and roof, providing a sense of being outside. A secret ventilation door, which disappears into the external cladding when shut, allows fresh garden air into the shower, further simulating the outdoor experience. Externally, the building is clad in black-stained timber in reference to the vernacular shed and garden buildings.

COMPLETED: AUGUST 2013
PROJECT COST: £35,000
BOROUGH: HACKNEY
ARCHITECT: MW ARCHITECTS
CONTRACTOR: WRIGHT CONSTRUCTION
ENGINEER: BWP
PHOTOGRAPHY: FRENCH & TYE

Third Prize

RAW HOUSE

Transforming a tired period property into a light-filled and sustainable family home; expressed materials and low-profile glazing aim to create an industrial elegance.

Through a series of structural alterations, the layout of this disconnected and dark Victorian property was altered to form a light-filled space, enhanced by exposing and expressing construction materials usually hidden or covered. Although open plan, changes to floor levels, materials, ceiling heights and framed structural openings ensure that each space maintained a sense of containment and boundary. A concrete floor with under-floor heating acts as a thermal mass for the house and – combined with high levels of insulation in the floor and walls, and triple glazing to the roof light with a layer of solar control glazing – help maintain a cool space in summer and warmth in winter.

COMPLETED: DECEMBER 2013
PROJECT COST: £110,000
BOROUGH: SOUTHWARK
ARCHITECT: MUSTARD ARCHITECTS
CONTRACTOR: GBOWU DESIGN & BUILD LTD
ENGINEER: HARDMAN STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS
PHOTOGRAPHY: TIM CROCKER
**BLOCK HOUSE**

Transformation of a dilapidated and damp flat into a minimal, light-filled, sustainable family home with large areas of glazing, exposed block work walls and an industrial aesthetic

——— The existing flat included a windowless living room and cramped kitchen, far from the clients’ wish for a light, spacious family home with a connection to the garden. Extending and reconfiguring the internal plan created an open plan kitchen, along with dining and living areas which open directly to the garden with a large sliding door. Floor levels were adjusted throughout to unify entrance level areas, while a black-painted core houses services, storage, a bathroom and study. The flat has been fitted with full insulation, triple glazing, underfloor heating and Passive Input Ventilation. Externally, black paint conceals and unifies the use of low cost bricks with existing brickwork.

**CANONBURY HOUSE**

Single-storey glass extension with walk-on roof, spanning the rear of a Georgian townhouse

——— Providing a large, bright room to bring the outside in, this extension provides much needed space and flow between house and garden. The existing steps from the first floor to the garden were replaced with walk-on glass, creating a terrace with new glass balustrade and timber stairs leading down to the garden. The whole space is usable, including the roof, allowing the client to be surrounded by the elements.

**CLONBROCK ROAD**

Full reconfiguration of a semi-detached house, including two-storey front-cantilevered extension, producing generous, light-filled living areas and accentuating the building’s unique shape

——— Occupying a wedge-shaped site, this 1950s semi-detached house has been fully reconfigured with a two-storey front-cantilevered extension. The large glass sliding front door opens to diagonal flooring that immediately orientates the visitor in the hall towards the full-height timber doors and on to the rear living area. This kitchen/living area is punctuated by a full-width expanse of glass in thin yellow frames, opening up access to the patio and allowing light to permeate. A unit to the side of this room incorporates the white goods, allowing the kitchen to be ‘closed off’ from the entertaining space. Original flooring has been sanded and varnished throughout the house.

**CHETWYND ROAD**

A ‘pitch perfect’ frameless glazed side extension creates an open plan family area, transforming the rear of a narrow Victorian terraced house into a light-filled contemporary home

——— This rundown Victorian house, the architect’s family home, has been updated to modern living standards, bringing light to the interior and aiming to reduce its environmental footprint. The new extension utilises a structurally glazed frameless glass roof that mimics the pitch of the existing roofline. A bonded glass triangle hangs flush with the rear elevation, closing-off the glass roof against the existing building and flooding the centre of the house with light – a space that usually suffers from lack of light in most conversions. Where possible, reclaimed materials were used from the site, adding to its sustainable credentials.
COTESBACH ROAD

Complete renovation of a Victorian terrace to suit the contemporary lifestyle of a young family, with clearly defined spaces and greater integration of lighting throughout.

When analysed, the traditional layout did not well serve the young professional family’s lifestyle. The resulting scheme sought to connect the disjointed ground floor space, bring in more light to previously dark living spaces, and create a relaxing lounge space that could adapt into guests accommodation when required. Part of the reception room was lowered by 320mm, creating a gentle staggered effect to the ground floor spaces, while also allowing for light from new skylights to travel further into the house. Upstairs, the first floor bedrooms were reconfigured to gain an en-suite, and attic space was lowered to give new habitable space.

ARCHITECT: MORPH STRUCTURES
ENGINEER: MICHAEL CLAYTON

COURTHOUSE

Extension of a Georgian terraced house on a tight urban site, increasing the living space and supplying a full garden to the existing family property.

Sited within a conservation area in Islington, this three-storey home did not have a garden, only a small, sunless courtyard at basement level. The design removed an existing garage and excavated a lower ground living and office space, creating a new full-size garden at ground floor. A central courtyard and glazed floor created a light-filled room below. Slim frame windows, structural glazing and power floated concrete offer a delicate modernity to this sunken space. A fireplace, ‘stretched’ from the existing lower ground floor, connects the extension interior and settles into its surroundings. The extensions’ raised ceilings express the exposed structure and carefully negotiate original features, with roof lights bringing light deep into the plan.

ARCHITECT: COFFEY ARCHITECTS
CONTRACTOR: BULL McGREATH
CONSTRUCTION LTD
ENGINEER: ELLIOTT WOOD
PHOTOGRAPHY: TIM CROCKER

EAST LONDON HOUSE

Transformation of a Grade II listed house from a jumble of disconnected rooms with two granny flats into a single family home, as was originally intended.

Over time, what was once a grand London home had been severely compromised, with poor access to the garden. This design sought to restore its grandeur whilst making the garden an integral part of the house. The basement has been given additional headroom, and the rear extended with a part one-storey, part two-storey structure, providing a double-height entry gallery overlooking the dining room and the landscaped garden. The garden walls are in the same brick as the extension interior, and at the same height, helping to dematerialise inside and out, and to give the basement family rooms a sense of space beyond the line of its glass enclosure.

ARCHITECT: MIKHAIL RICHES
CONTRACTOR: EUROBUILD
CONSTRUCTORS: STRUCTURAL ENGINEER: HEWIE TILLET STEEL
M&E ENGINEER: THE TOPP PARTNERSHIP
PLANNING CONSULTANT: HOWARD SHARP AND PARTNERS
PLANTING: JANE BROCKBANK GARDENS
PHOTOGRAPHY: TIM CROCKER

FLO-RO

Victorian house refurbished and remodelled for musician clients’ needs, with a freestanding music room, new kitchen/dining extensions and guest accommodation.

Consolidating an end-of-terrace plot for home and musical life, this project added kitchen/dining/living space and created a freestanding studio for chamber music teaching and practice. The existing house had a warren of dilapidated small rooms at the rear, all at different levels, with low headroom. Enclosing the garden, the extensions’ and studio’s angular forms emerged when considering spatial/Acoustic requirements, sun paths and viewing lines. The new buildings contrast with the Victorian house with materials of larch and natural zinc, both of which will weather and settle into their surroundings. The extensions’ raised ceilings express the exposed structure and carefully reconfigure original features, with roof lights bringing light deep into the plan.

ARCHITECT: CRANIAL DE SILVA
CONTRACTOR: RICHARD IRELAND & PENNY DRIVER
MAIN CONTRACTOR: ROBERT KARACKA
STRUCTURAL ENGINEER: ELLIS & MOORE
PARTY WALL SURVEYOR: WATERMAN & GROVE
INSPECTOR: ASSENT BUILDING CONTROL
PHOTOGRAPHY: TIM CROCKER