



Selection of Private Residential Homes

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About Us

Zuber Dobson Architects (ZDA) are a London based practice first established in 2008. Directors, Luke and Simon have over 45 combined years experience. They were both previously senior associate directors at Reid Architecture, a leading top 10 commercial practice, and responsible for the inception and delivery of several large complex award winning projects.

With their many years of acquired knowledge working on a variety of different procurement methods they have gained a well rounded understanding of the qualities which both hinder and benefit a project.

“We have previously found that our best projects attract a more enthusiastic and talented team of individuals who collectively take those ventures much further. Our goal has since been to surround ourselves with good people. We figure if we can do that we must be doing something right.

Working with a like-minded team of people that includes you, the client, has many rewards. Together with the same goal we create buildings of greater value that help to further enrich people's lives.

We care and invest a lot of time over an extended period on a single project. It is then no surprise, on a somewhat more selfish note, that a key goal is also to simply enjoy the process and people we work with.”

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“the new house replicates the original sleek lines and courtyard form of the 60s house, but with the advantage of modern building systems...”

Seasons House

Tucked away at the end of a quiet cul-de-sac behind Highgate's Southwood Lane is 13 Kingsley Place, a 2 bedroom bungalow originally built as part of a larger award-winning 60s development. The Sanders family, with their keen appreciation of design, loved the modernist lines of the 60s courtyard house, but were frustrated by the limitations of the aged building fabric, size and a layout that had ignored and obscured the stunning London views to the rear.

In 2007, having seen ZDA's Bluestone House on the Open House London Weekend, the Sanders appointed us to remodel their home to suit their growing family needs.

Since the house is in Highgate's Conservation Area, the design needed to be sympathetic to the surrounding estate, yet provide the Sanders all their aspirations for a contemporary family home; a new house that allows for a

modern family's needs; exploits the advantages offered by the elevated site whilst respecting all the attributes of the 60s era.

To meet Conservation requirements the original street frontage was retained, and behind this a new house was created by carving into the sloping site a new, lower-ground level area thereby providing the Sanders with a family home they could live in long-term. Keeping within the same footprint, the new house contains three bedrooms, three bathrooms, a media room, living spaces and a flexible guest/activity suite.

The new house replicates the original sleek lines and courtyard form of the original 60s house, and with the advantage of modern building systems achieves a fully glazed, column free division between inside and out, opening up completely so that the courtyard becomes an extension of the living room and





floods the house with light. This blurring of boundaries is also replicated to the rear where a protected deck extends the outside dining area taking full advantage of the views across London, and in the private, en-suite area

where the shower extends outside to offer stunning plein-air bathing.

Just as the original design incorporated contemporary 'mod-cons' making the house up to the minute in the 60s,



“The open central courtyard also has a great connection with the rear elevated (partly sheltered) deck and view across London. When the sliding screens are all fully open - the floating roof over the kitchen and dining is the only form of enclosure between the two spaces. The house in this condition feels more like an outdoor environment.”

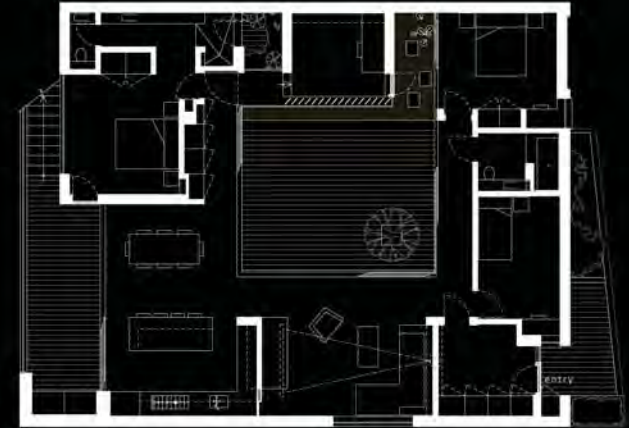
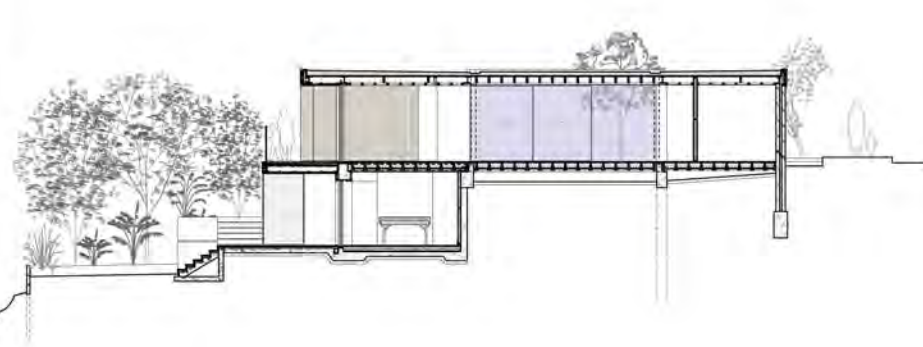
the new Sanders' house incorporates ultra-modern, 'secret' design devices and high-tech fittings maximizing the whole family's pleasure in their home, from stepping stones to secret doors, rainbow showers to a boiling tap.

The house is executed in a restrained palate of natural materials synonymous with ZDA's work. The

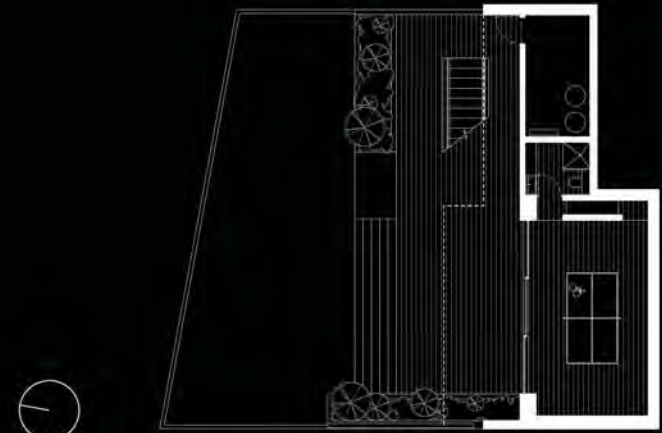
result is that natural light has become the fifth member of the Sanders household, changing the way the house feels at different times of the day, with the weather and the seasons.

The effect of the courtyard and the reduced barrier between inside and outside allow the occupants to enjoy a far greater appreciation of the

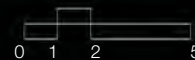
seasons. During the summer evenings the clients often move their mattresses into the courtyard and sleep under the stars. Whilst I recall, one December visit, sitting in a warm room in front of the log fire whilst a blanket of fresh white snow covered the entire courtyard – separated only by a large expanse of glass.



upper ground



lower ground



A notable aspect of the design is the modest appearance and scale of the house from the street – visitors enter through an ordinary, enclosed-entrance lobby, and are always surprised upon entering the house itself filled with an expanse of sky and divisions without walls (similar to the Japanese – Sukiya Zukuri style). Contrast technique - warm/cold, textured/smooth, heavy/light - is used to maximum effect throughout the house, both with materials and spaces.



Other than the front and side street elevations which were retained for conservation requirements the house was completely demolished. This qualified the construction as new build and a zero VAT rating.

We have stripped away the structure and concealed it in the ceiling and perimeter walls - freeing the division between the interior and courtyard - creating one space. There is an enormous amount of details throughout the house which are hidden but serve to heighten experiences (and make everything look simple) - for example to aid the connection between courtyard and interior we have detailed the floors/drainage so that it is flush and at one continuous level - we have used stone planks in the courtyard which are the same width than the timber floors that align with each other - the windows themselves have their tracks concealed in the ceiling and floor revealing only the 20mm wide mullions as a barrier between the two spaces.



“During the summer evenings the clients often drag their mattress in the courtyard and sleep under the stars...”





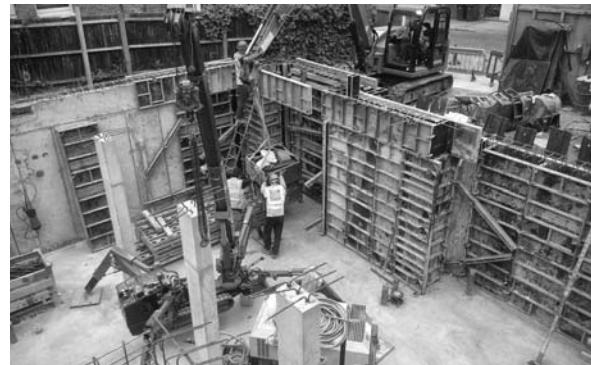
A complimentary material palette of granite, stained oak, paginated zinc and textured imported bricks have been carefully selected.



Maximising the potential of the site (which sloped steeply from rear to front) involved a great deal of earthworks and reduction in levels.

A full 3.0m ceiling height basement has been created, whilst the rear of the site has been split into two levels - a higher terrace level on the rear boundary, responding to the existing higher ground level, and a lower terrace enclosure serving as an extension to the kitchen/dining area. The lower terrace area also accommodates two buried large attenuation tanks and tree pits for the mature fruit trees craned onto site.

The photographs on the left show the construction of the contiguous piles running along the boundary allowing the basement walls and slab to be formed.





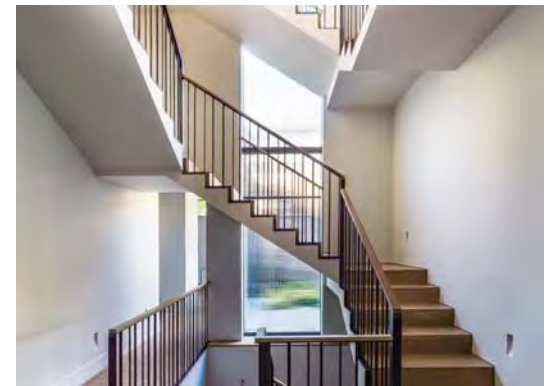
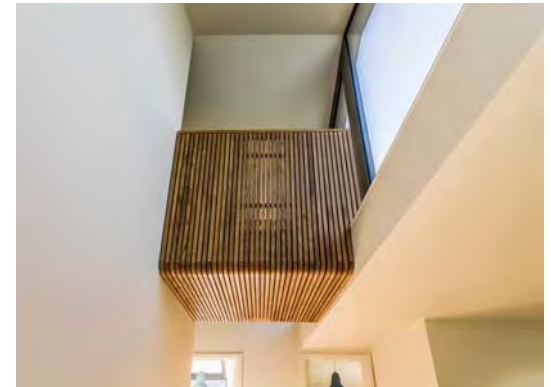
The objective has been to create a new home of architectural merit that is cohesive and contextual, without resorting to pastiche. A cohesive design has been achieved through the sensitive selection of materials and integrating these across the proposed design. The adjacent terrace house comprise predominately dark tile slate for the roof and London stock brick for the majority of the external walls.

The material palette of the textured imported brick (a more interesting variation to the London stock brick) and zinc provides a conceptual clarity and hierarchy to the design. To the front, brick is the dominant material with zinc acting as an accent device where brick is omitted. For example the front bay window has the appearance of being pulled out of the building revealing its darker zinc lining to the sides. Similarly the windows and reveals are pushing through with the dark zinc lining from inside. As you move to the back of the building the zinc becomes more dominant and the relationship reverses.



Conceptually the method of employing the roof material to parts of the wall elevation can be found in local examples within the Conservation Area. Employing the zinc allows the material palette to be further reduced as it can also be employed for flashings and trimmings.

Interfaces and returns are detailed so that they appear seamless, sharp and crisp, providing the appearance of a cohesive, quality-crafted design. The interior follows a similar language to ensure a continuity and clarity in design and experience.





City Loft

The client for this city loft refurbishment is a designer with a strong appreciation for the qualities and honesty of natural materials.

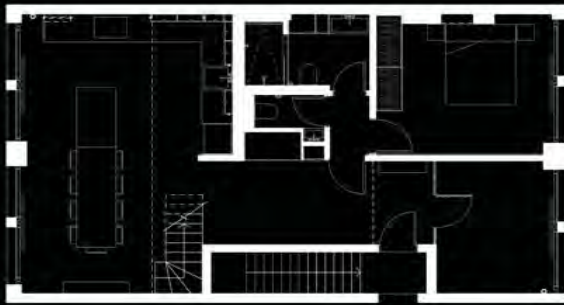
The ensuing design led to an interior that is both warm and refreshingly unpretentious.

The client had a modest budget and consequently required

a design approach which allowed for inexpensive off-the-shelf materials together with the omission of all specialized contractors. All the design elements had to suit for a general contractor to construct.

This included the bespoke cementitious screed, cast sinks, kitchen and bathroom furniture.

This bespoke approach certainly saves a great deal of costs but also comes with increased design time and risk of product defects, and this project was no exception. Quite often the result of creating bespoke design will lead to greater costs. The concept of then creating bespoke design to lower costs is counter-intuitive.



ground floor



mezzanine



section



However, with careful consideration how a piece of design is created can in fact lead to cost saving. It is important however, that the client remains aware of the increased risk should the end product not work out as desired.

architect and client, in determining how to remedy the situation.

In this case, the end result was considered a triumph in value for money.

In this eventuality there needs to be an equally creative brainstorming exercise, between



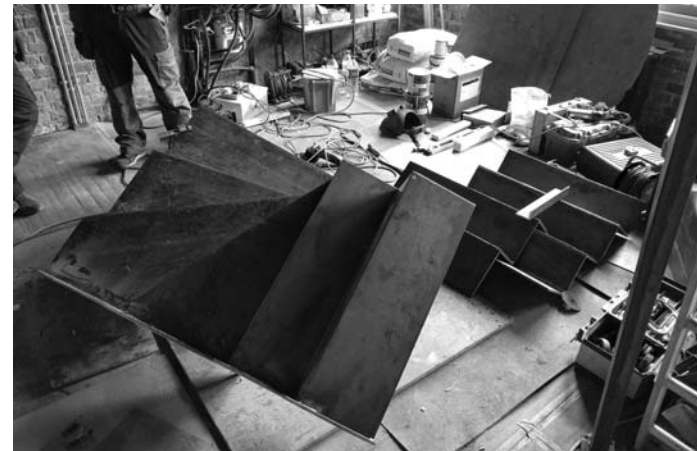


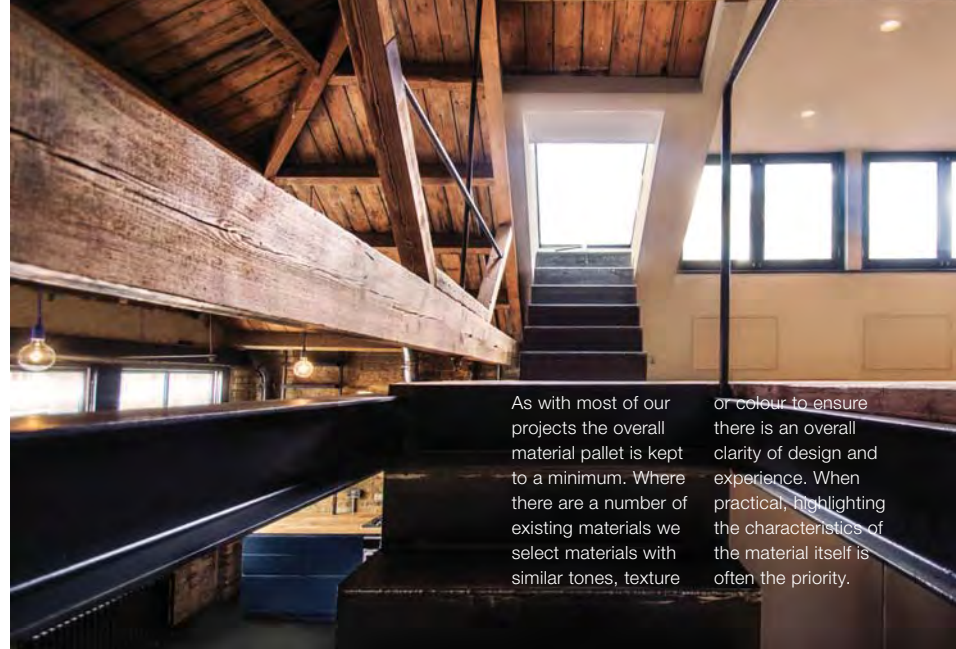
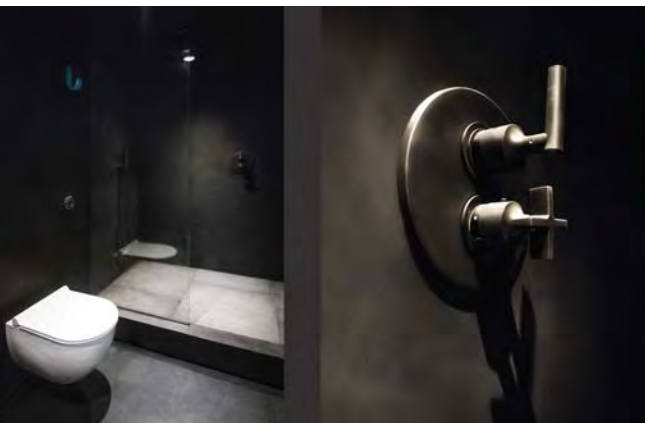
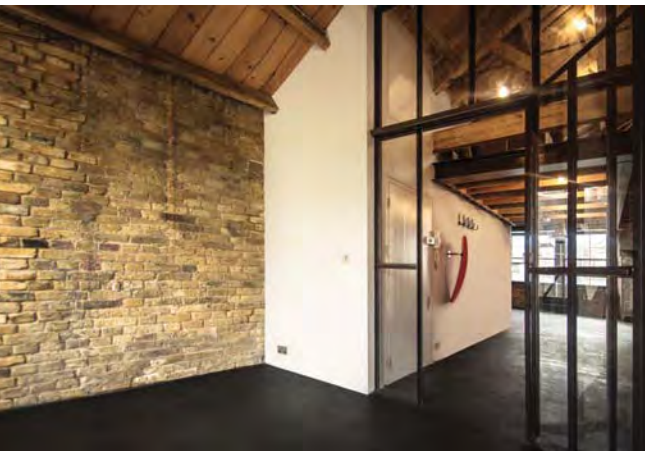
The photos above show the construction of the bespoke kitchen and one of the cast concrete sinks.

The kitchen comprised a lightweight steel box frame, MDF carcass and off-the-shelf textured ply finishing panels.

The adjacent photos show the on-site fabrication of the mezzanine staircase.

All steel work was left in its natural mill finish with a clear lacquer finish.





As with most of our projects the overall material pallet is kept to a minimum. Where there are a number of existing materials we select materials with similar tones, texture or colour to ensure there is an overall clarity of design and experience. When practical, highlighting the characteristics of the material itself is often the priority.





Matchbox House

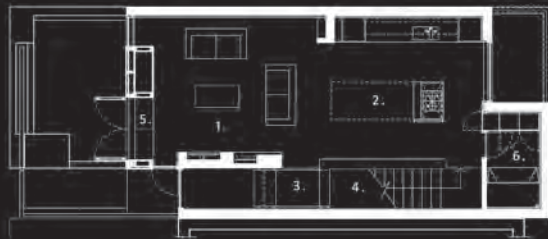
This new residence stands on a tight 75sqm end-of-terrace plot, formally a pair of derelict, lock-up garages. A restrictive covenant limited the building height to 5m.

An upside-down arrangement and internal light slot makes the best use of natural lighting to the upstairs living, whilst the two downstairs rooms are lit by their own landscaped sunken courtyards. Insulated shutter doors can be opened from a walnut clad storage wall and window seat, allowing the surrounding glass to be fixed and frameless.



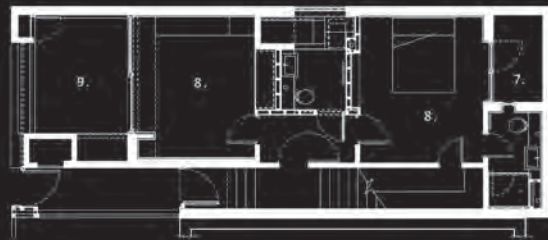
To maximise the sense of space, storage is incorporated into walls and built-in furniture both inside and out. Additional floor space is provided by a solid walnut study desk suspended in the double height entrance hall.

A palette of natural materials is used, blue Irish limestone planks line feature internal and external walls, floors, and bathrooms. The remaining walls are finished in a natural lime plaster and black walnut panels.



1. living room
2. kitchen/dining
3. study
4. void
5. window seat
6. utilities
7. rear court yard
8. bedroom
9. front court yard

first floor



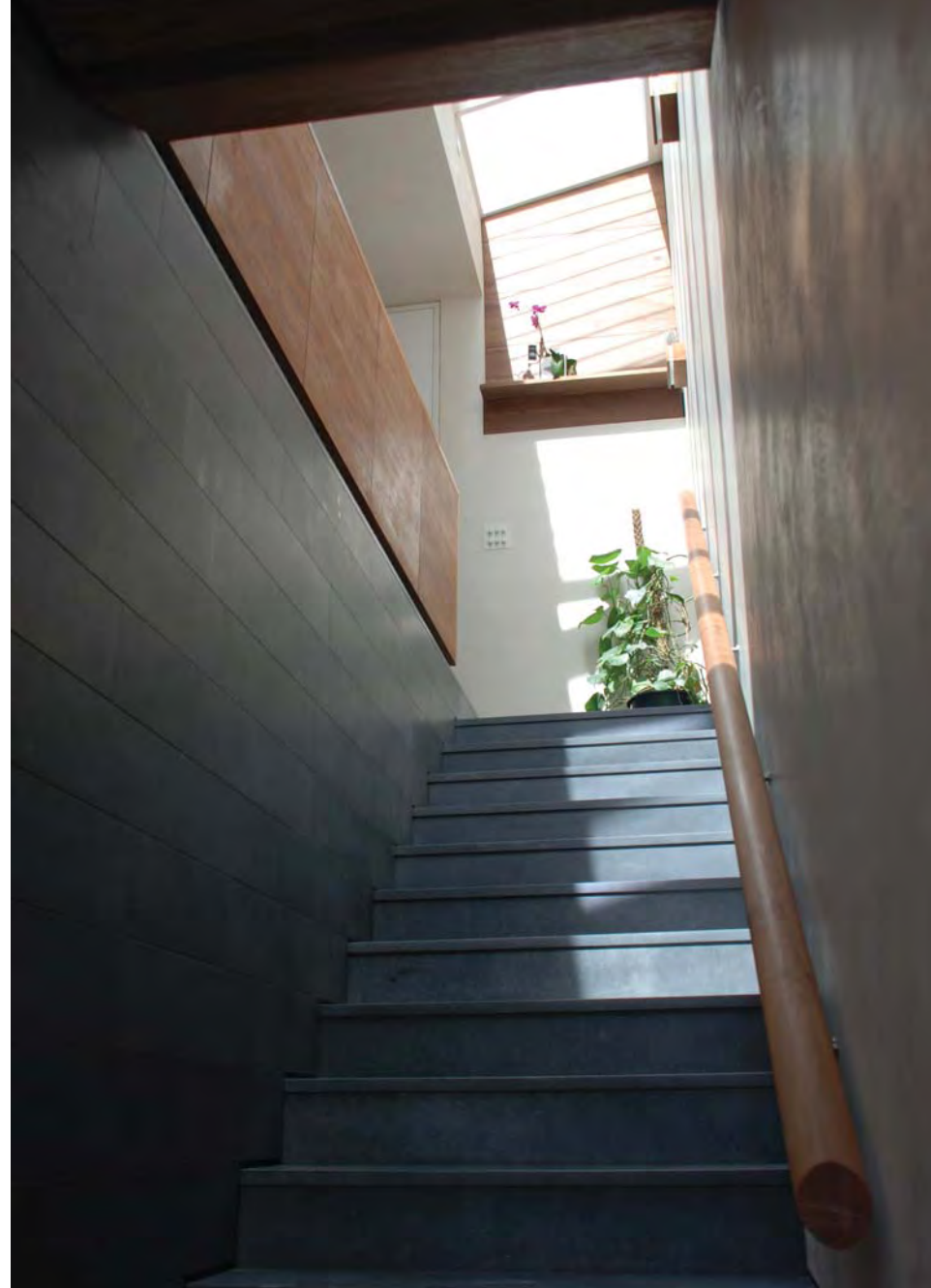
ground floor





As with much of features within the house the adjoining staircase is also clad in the volcanic blue Irish limestone. The floor to the kitchen and living room above continue to fold down to form one wall of the staircase. The standard 200mm wide planks, which form the upper floor, have been reduced to 180mm down the wall to ensure they integrate with the riser height of the staircase.

The balustrade, cabinet above and bespoke light fittings (designed by ZDA) are all black American walnut.

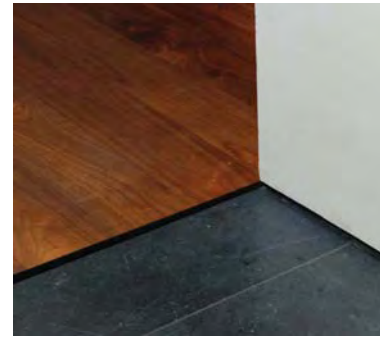




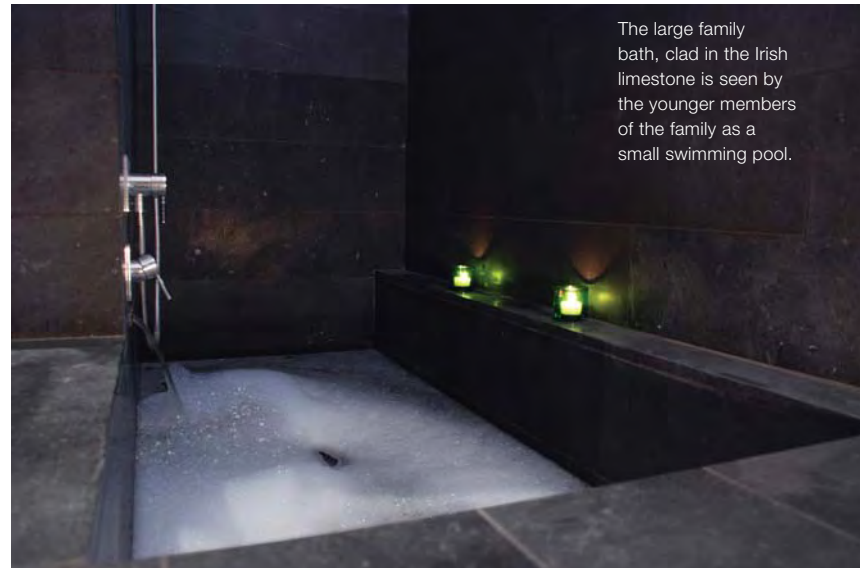
The Iroko external timber cladding was chosen for its stability and robustness. Joiners are reluctant to use it as it is hard to work with, however, the advantages it offers in terms of durability, whilst being very competitively priced for a hardwood, make it a favourite for many specifiers.



The external render is a standard cementitious render with a white masonry paint. One of the goals for the project was to have no paint finishes. However, budgetary constraints ruled out the more expensive self-coloured polymer render.



The material palette was limited to the black American walnut, volcanic blue Irish limestone and a natural lime plaster. The materials were chosen as they complemented one another and had individual, attractive characteristics. The relatively local limestone was very cost competitive and hosts thousands of fossil specimens.



The large family bath, clad in the Irish limestone is seen by the younger members of the family as a small swimming pool.



Matchbox House -
Roof Extension

With two growing children, extending the family home became a priority.

Having an existing flat roof made adding a new floor relatively easy. The original roof light provided a natural location for a simple straight stair rising above the existing staircase and created a useful access hatch throughout construction.

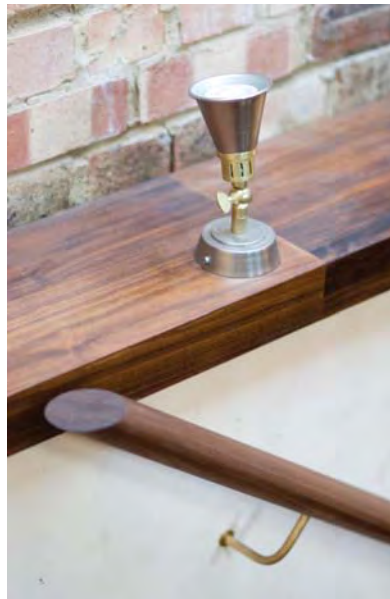


To keep within a tight budget, we decided to build the extension ourselves. Steelwork was designed out in favour of a timber stressed skin solution - partly for cost and partly to facilitate the self-build approach.

Prior to the project beginning on site, many of the timber sections, birch couplings and timber canopy were prefabricated in a friend's workshop. This facilitated a quick erection of the frame itself which was completed on site in 5 weeks. The remaining fit-out took 9 months of weekends, early mornings and late evenings around the day job.

Special thanks go to: friend, Jeremy Norton, whose expertise and workshop provided an invaluable learning experience; good friend Eddie Malatesta, who kindly flew all the way from Australia only to spend his 2 week vacation confined to our roof; Antonio Martins, fellow architect and friend who had the misfortune of living close enough to





becoming a much needed extra pair of hands throughout the entire project.

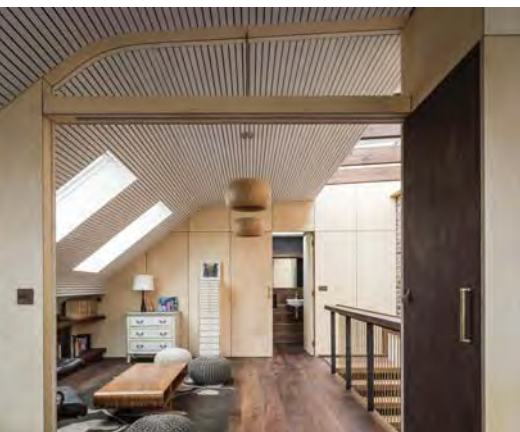
The design intent was more than just to maximise the amount of floor space in the house; the new design acknowledges the form and materials of the existing neighbouring houses, providing a strong modern end to the Victorian terrace.

The new window screen and shutters are made of Iroko in keeping with the Iroko

used in the façade below, and to reflect the colour and tone of the surrounding brick work. Similarly, a dark grey pre-patinated zinc was chosen for its similarity in tone and colour to the surrounding slate tiles.

The front canopy structure was incorporated to provide additional floor area by responding to the diminishing roof line of the house next door.





Internally, Black American Walnut was used to tie in with cabinetry of the existing house. Solid walnut stair treads and brass rods link the two floors, the open treads allowing light to cascade down the lime-render wall to the entry level.

To reduce costs, a high-quality walnut engineering board with minimum sap

wood and a birch-ply subbase was selected for the dual purpose of serving as the main material for the majority of built-in furniture as well as the floor itself. A strip of birch ply was removed from the rear allowing a walnut to walnut face to be glued together creating the appearance of a thick, solid piece of walnut furniture at a fraction of the price.

The white-painted batted ceiling was selected for its acoustic performance and in an effort to avoid wet trades such as plastering. This decision again had much to do with selecting a construction technique which lent itself to self-build, although at times the 1.2km of painted and nailed battens seemed endless!

The resulting new upper floor can be used as a single, open-plan space, or divided by a dark stained-ply partition wall that folds and slides across to create a private bedroom. A shower room has also been created, seemingly carved into the plywood wall at the top of the stairs, lit by a single roof light.



“Each full width glazed panel is slightly canted under its own weight to form a subtle arch and prevent ponding.”





Glass Houses

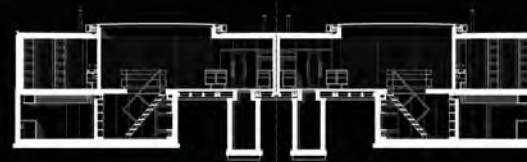
These two glass bungalow houses were originally built in the late 70s as an architectural office and residence for architects Spence & Webster. The two original houses shared a central courtyard enveloped by full-height glazed walls. They were a great success in their day and became well regarded. The more recent occupants enjoyed the light-filled and generously proportioned homes that sat discreetly behind a rendered wall.

However, the lack of privacy between the two houses which shared the same courtyard was less successful for

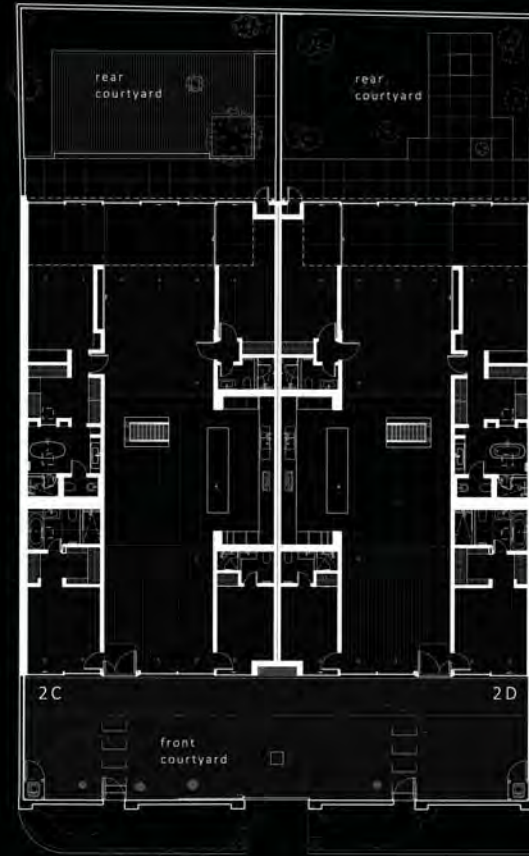
contemporary use. ZDA were approached to develop a design which provided privacy whilst respecting the original architecture. The solution was to retain the original light steel framed structure, infill the courtyard and provide two new flexible courtyards owned by each residence.

This was achieved by creating a large, 38m² fully retractable, glazed roof light in each house. The glass roof lights have been designed to cantilever on their own support structure when opened. Each full-width glazed panel is slightly canted under its own weight to form a subtle arch and prevent ponding.

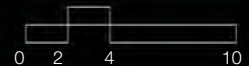
The houses were stripped back to the steel frame and roof structure only before being extended and re-built.



section



ground floor



The glass roof light, possibly the largest residential retractable roof light in UK, was prefabricated and tested in a factory in Belgium before being shipped to the UK. It was a completely bespoke design that required constant testing, refinement and frequent visits to Belgium. The weight of each of the four glass panes was considerable, making it all the more remarkable that the entire roof light - also fully cantilevering when in the open position - is supported by four existing slender 60mm x 60mm square steel columns.

Movement joints had to be added to the plasterboard bulkhead to cater for deflection when the roof light changed from its closed position to its open cantilevering position. One of the largest mobile cranes available, and a road closure, was required to install glass and steel members.







Large format (1m x 1m) porcelain tiles were used in the kitchen, bathrooms and areas under direct sunlight such as the dining and rear extension.

The kitchen was bespoke designed by ZDA and incorporated the same porcelain 1m x1m tile into the island work top as the floor.

The rear of the house has the option of being open along its full length or closed off via two sliding walls as shown in the picture in the top and bottom left. A walnut shelving unit and TV are hidden behind.





Anson Road

The clients had a strong desire to extend their existing 4-bedroom property without compromising the size of their garden. The challenge was to add a relatively small extension that could transform, not be dominated by, the existing house. The solution was to provide a light structure extending the full width of the property that defined both internal and external space.

The enclosed part of the extension is surrounded by glass and a moat which feeds to the partially covered trellis courtyard. The two areas, united by the zinc structure, serve as an intermediate space between the main house and garden. The garden therefore remains perceptually similar to its original size.



Calshot Street

The complete refurbishment and revised layout of this small family home was focused on creating a sense of spaciousness.

The emphasis was placed on opening the ground floor into

a single volume, the delineation between the various functions achieved through a variation in ceiling treatment and application of materials.

A restrained material palette was employed, to create a cohesive design yet with enough variety to express the different

functions through the home: the kitchen bench top, back splash and island are clad in the same porcelain tile that is used on the floor; the dark grey of the tile echoes the black grain of the American Walnut.



CURRENT WORK

Quarry House

This 2.2acre site for Quarry House is carved out of the cliff-face of an old clay quarry to the rear, opening up to valley views to the north.

The brief has called for a house and facilities that heighten the drama of the site and an environment akin to a holiday resort. The house sits high up to the rear of the property overlooking a swimming pool and pool house, outdoor dining and entertainment area, tennis court, cricket net and valley views beyond. Behind the house is a tiered outdoor amphitheatre at the base of the up-lit cliff face.

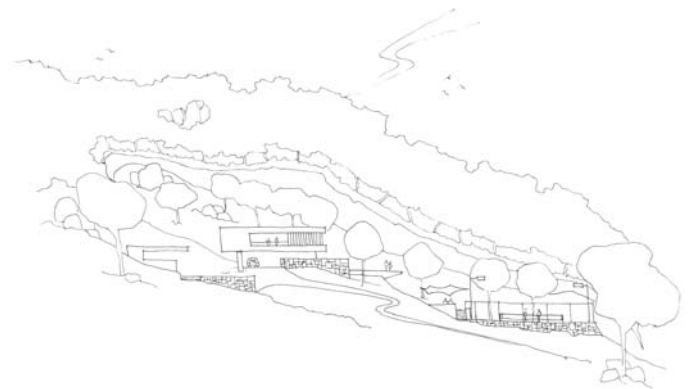
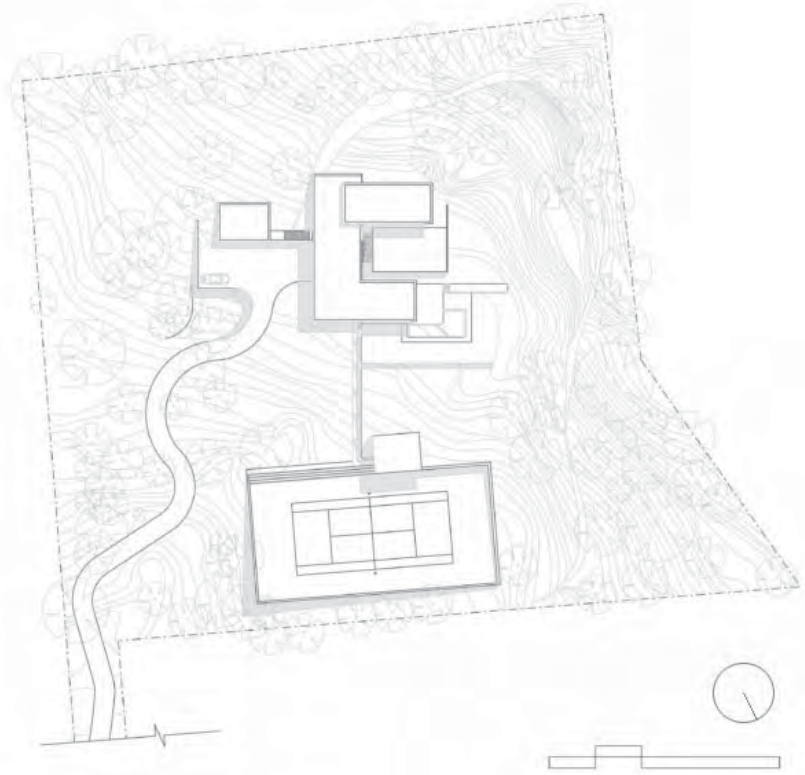


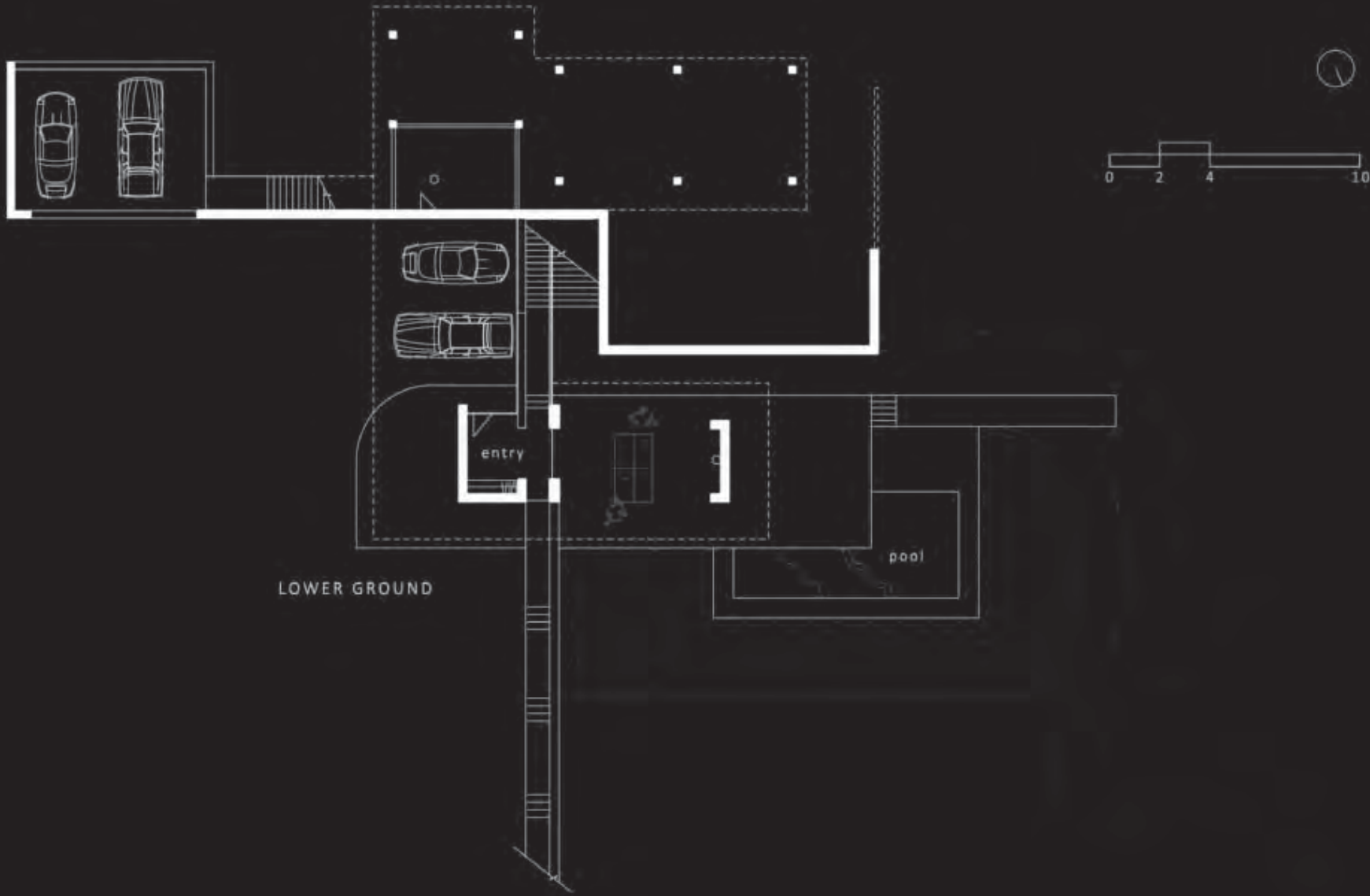


The design is in its relatively early stages. Although the location on site is now fixed, how it relates to the landscape, topography and surrounding context is yet to be explored

in detail. A series of building forms have been explored but the final solution will likely grow from the design of the external spaces themselves. An emphasis on external entertainment coupled

with creating cool and shaded areas that respond to a hot climate on a multi-tiered sloping site will be at the crux of the design.

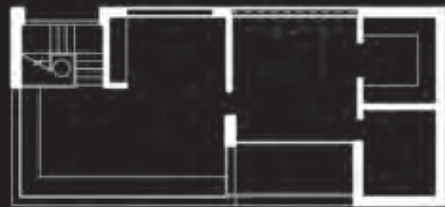




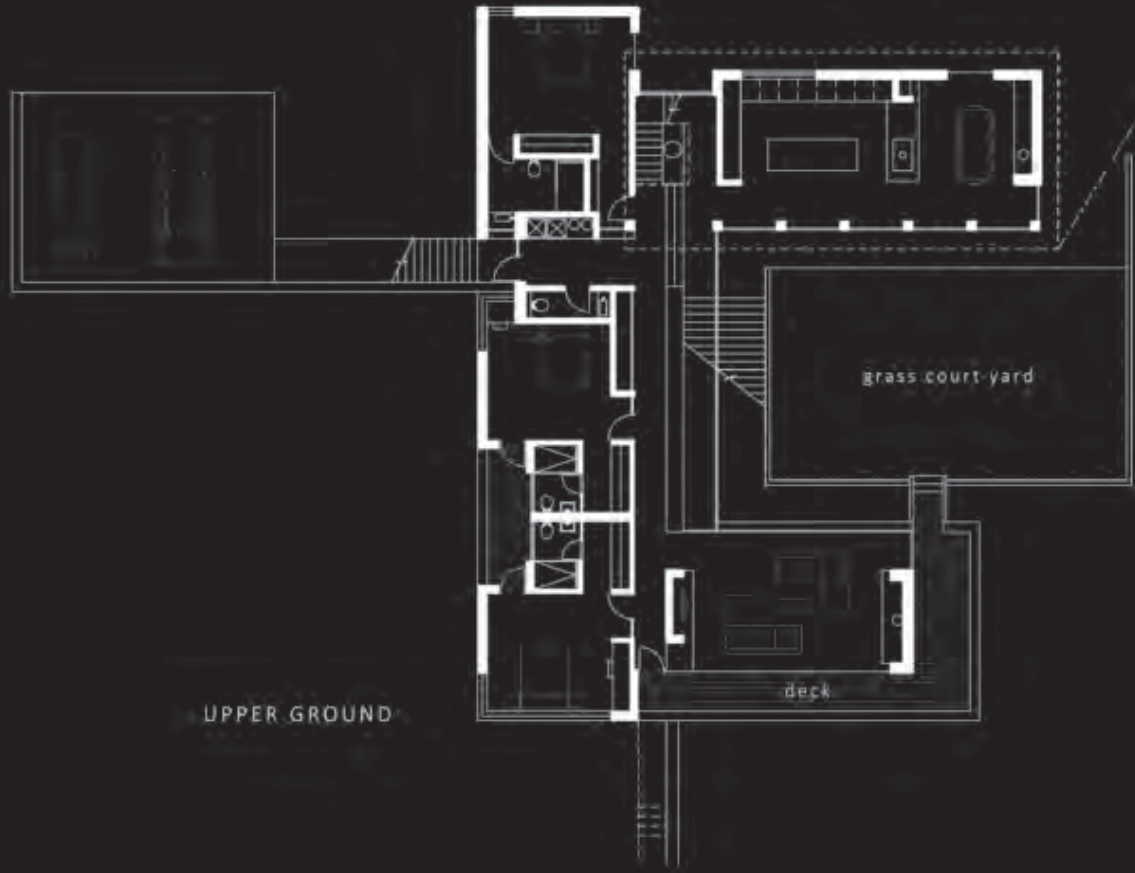
LOWER GROUND

entry

pool



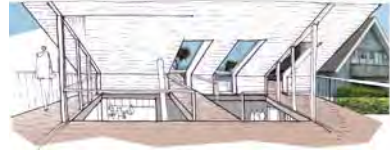
FIRST FLOOR



UPPER GROUND



“The revised open-plan, double-volume space with its side-view aspect to the ocean, aims to create a relaxed, cosy, yet uplifting experience.”

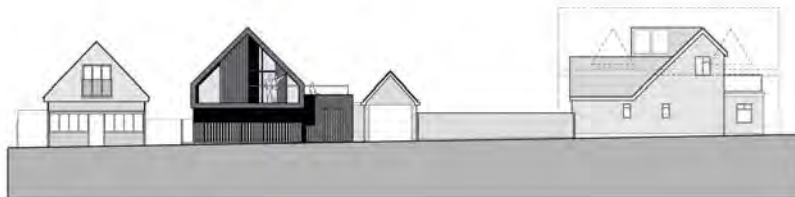


Beach House

Located in Seasalter near Whitstable the site currently houses a small brick bungalow which is to be retained. The design incorporates a new roof with accommodation, a revised ground floor layout and over-cladding of the brick work with thin vertical timber boards.

The revised open-plan, double-volume space with its side-view aspect to the ocean, aims to create a relaxed, cosy, yet uplifting experience. The paired back design will help to create a non-precious but friendly environment more akin to a holiday house than a traditional home.

The scheme is currently at planning stage. Construction is scheduled to commence in the beginning of 2019.



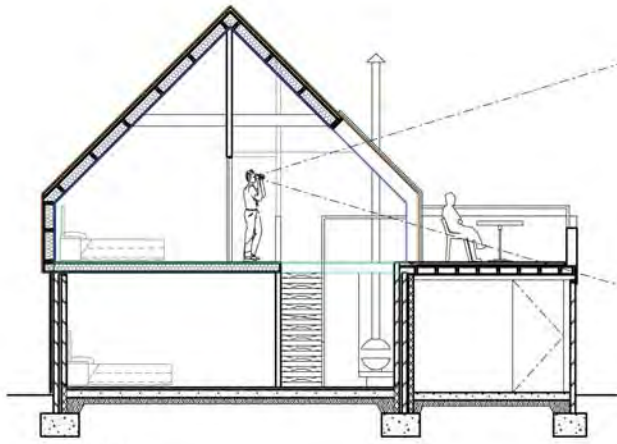
STREET ELEVATION



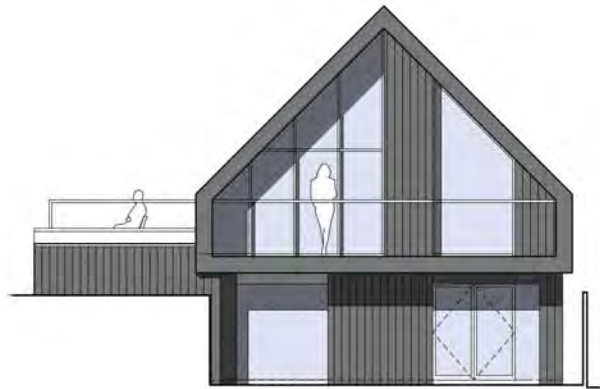
MEZZANINE PLAN

GROUND PLAN

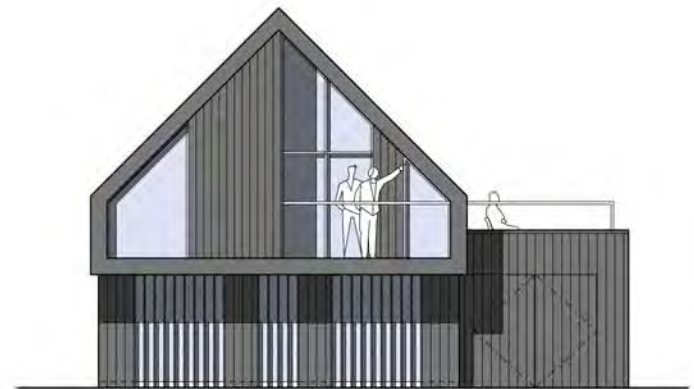




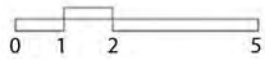
CROSS SECTION



REAR ELEVATION



FRONT ELEVATION



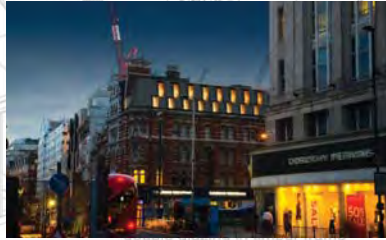
Residential Project List:

Seasons House, Highgate, London	New build 4 bed courtyard house with lower ground ancillary accommodation	North Street, Highgate, London	New basement and garden design.
Glass Houses, Belsize Park, London	Two new build bungalow glass houses with basement	Makepeace Avenue, Highgate, London	New layout, refurbishment, side and rear extension of large family home.
Matchbox House, Hornsey, London	New build 3 bedroom house on brown field site.	Clarence Road, Wood Green, London	New layout, refurbishment, side and rear extension.
Corner House, Crouch End, London	Large 7 bedroom family home with gym, theatre room and workshop.	Medway Street, Victoria, London	Refurbishment an new layout of small house.
Anson Road, Tufnell Park, London	Semi detached house refurbishment and rear extension	Beach House, Seasalter, Whitstable	New 3 bedroom beach house.
Sunbury Avenue, Richmond, London	House refurbishment, side and rear extension.	Old Church Street, Chelsea, London	New layout, refurbishment and basement.
Gt Eastern Street, Shoreditch, London	Revised layout and refurbishment of city loft.	Dornden Drive, Tunbridge Wells	Addition of new floor to existing bungalow.
Coolhurst Road, Crouch End, London	House refurbishment	The Ridgewaye, Tunbridge Wells	New roof accommodation.
Hornsey Lane, Hornsey, London	New build 3 bedroom court yard house.	Wolseley Road, Chiswick, London	Refurbishment plus loft conversion
Upper Park Road, Belsize Park, London	Refurbishment and new rear house extension.	Sandhurst Avenue, Tunbridge Wells	Two storey rear extension
Muswell Hill Rd, Muswell Hill, London	New ground and lower ground flat refurbishment with new extension.	Edward Street, Tunbridge Wells	New three bedroom property on infill site.
Heathville RD, Hornsey, London	New floor to existing house - master bed, office & bathroom.	Yew Tree Hall, Forest Row	large three storey extension to substantial country house
Quarry House, Perth Australia	New 5 bedroom rural house with entertainment grounds.	Sudbourne Road, Brixton	internal reconfiguration and refurbishment to rationalise space.
Granville Square, Kings Cross, London	New upper rear extension.	Little Dickers, Hannington	Garage conversion.
Calshot Street, Kings Cross, London	Refurbishment, new layout and new rear extension.	Ballantyne Drive, Kingswood	Addition of new floor to existing bungalow and internal layout.

A Selection of ZDA Commercial Projects

Please contact us if you would like to receive our latest commercial projects brochure. We would be happy to either e-mail you a PDF document or send out a hard copy if preferred.

3.



12mm inner skin birch faced ply

25 x 125mm birch faced ply - CNC.
Insulated

