

Expansion project

Inventively reworking its internal layout has enabled the architect-owner of this Victorian terraced home to double the space for his young family

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PHOTOGRAPHY TIM CROCKER, AGNESE SANVITO, NEIL DUSHEIKO

A palette of durable materials - FSC-approved woods and stone - runs throughout the house and garden, emphasising the connection between the two. Western Red Cedar fencing contrasts with tactile oak panelling and travertine flooring

IN BRIEF

NAMES Neil Dusheiko and Lucy Maggs
LOCATION North-east London
TYPE OF HOUSE Victorian terraced family home
BEDROOMS 4
BATHROOMS 2 plus cloakroom
PROJECT STARTED August 2017
PROJECT FINISHED August 2018
SIZE 170sqm
COST OF BUILD £600,000
ESTIMATED CURRENT VALUE £1.8m

At the flick of a switch, the skylight in Neil Dusheiko and Lucy Maggs' new loft bathroom slides back, leaving the shower open to the air. 'I've wanted to build a shower like this for ages. But none of my clients have ever said yes so I decided to design one for my own family home instead,' says Neil, who is an architect.

'We've used it almost every day since we moved in,' Lucy adds, 'even on the milder winter days.'

The feature is one of several design statements that the couple used in the extensive remodelling of their Victorian terraced home in north-east London. 'The existing layout didn't work for us, and a 1980s flat-roofed, two-storey extension at the back was in a bad way,' Neil recalls. 'Windows were leaking and mortar was crumbling.'

Although the property had three bedrooms, Neil and Lucy wanted a fourth as they had a second child on the way. They also needed more storage space, a study, and scope for a playroom-guest room that could evolve, in time, into a teenagers' den. 'The house was set over three floors but very narrow; there were lots of internal walls that blocked the flow of light and there was no sense of a connection with the garden,' Neil explains, adding that the east-facing terrace of houses stands on a slope. As a result, the front door, stairs, living room and a bedroom (now Neil's study) are above garden level, >>

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ABOVE With a young family, Neil Dusheiko and Lucy Maggs needed more room in their Victorian terrace, plus the existing layout and 1980s two-storey extension needed upgrading



The area beneath the new staircase has been made into cupboards and a cloakroom, leading the eye to the small below-street-level playroom at the front of the house

Lucy and Neil chose a material palette of stone and wood to create a connection throughout the house and garden



Bronze ironmongery was chosen for its antimicrobial qualities as well as its tactile good looks. A strip of recessed downlights across the ceiling provides task lighting above the worksurfaces

and the original kitchen, windowless dining room and a small storage room below were all reached via a staircase that faced a solid wall.

Neil's vision for this lower level – moving the narrow stair to the opposite wall, turning it to face the garden and knocking the dining room and kitchen into one – was critical in persuading Lucy that they should buy the house. As was applying for planning permission to add a mansard extension to the house. 'Although we could have reworked the layout of the kitchen and the floor above without the mansard, we'd have had a house with two decent-sized living spaces but not enough bedrooms,' explains Lucy.

The sale was sealed within three hours and Neil set to work on his design for the house almost immediately. The planning application for the mansard, however, reduced progress to a snail's pace. 'It took more than six months for our application to be approved. It was the first loft application to be made on our side of the street and the council was initially resistant.'

The couple appealed and permission was eventually passed, clearing the way for their neighbours to make similar applications. 'The project ran seamlessly thereafter but it was important to make the appeal,' Neil explains. 'The community is close, but people were having to move because they thought they couldn't extend their homes.'

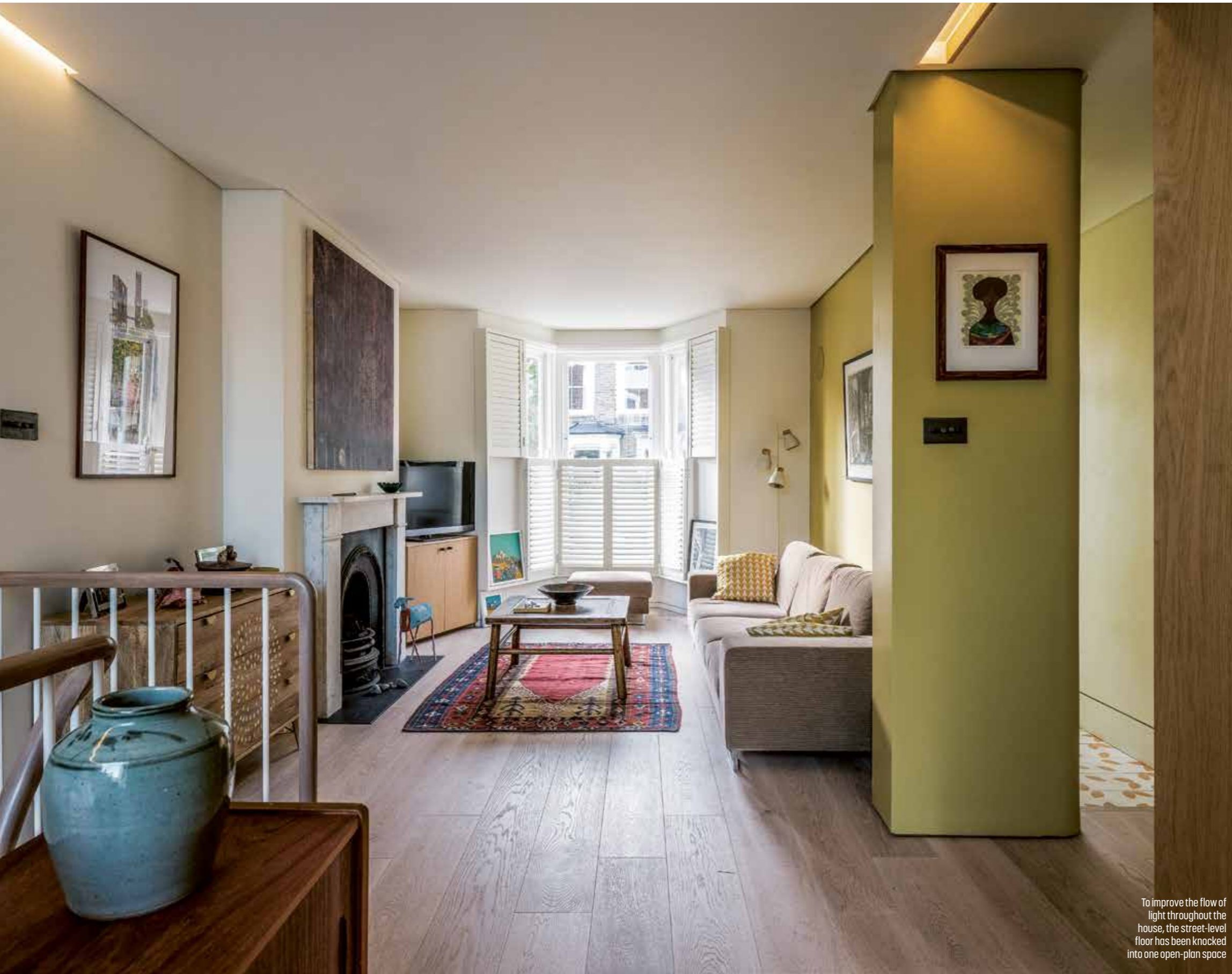
Viewed from the garden, the slate-clad structure nestles neatly into the top of the reworked rear exterior. The extension now has a new third floor where there had previously been an unused roof terrace – 'the wall overlooking the neighbours is simply clad with the same external insulated render we've used for the back walls' – and steels were put in to support the unstable brickwork around the Victorian bedroom window.

To retain the butterfly roofline that is a feature of the houses in the area, Neil added a glass sloping roofline above that window and a pitched roof on the new extension. 'I didn't want the back of the house to be all-white render, though, so we clad the extension with Cumaru timber, which also relates the facade to the landscaped garden,' Neil explains. 'The windows are all based on the original Victorian proportions but in the extension, I used a frameless design which feature airtight detailing to eliminate heat loss. We can easily open them to ventilate the rooms.'

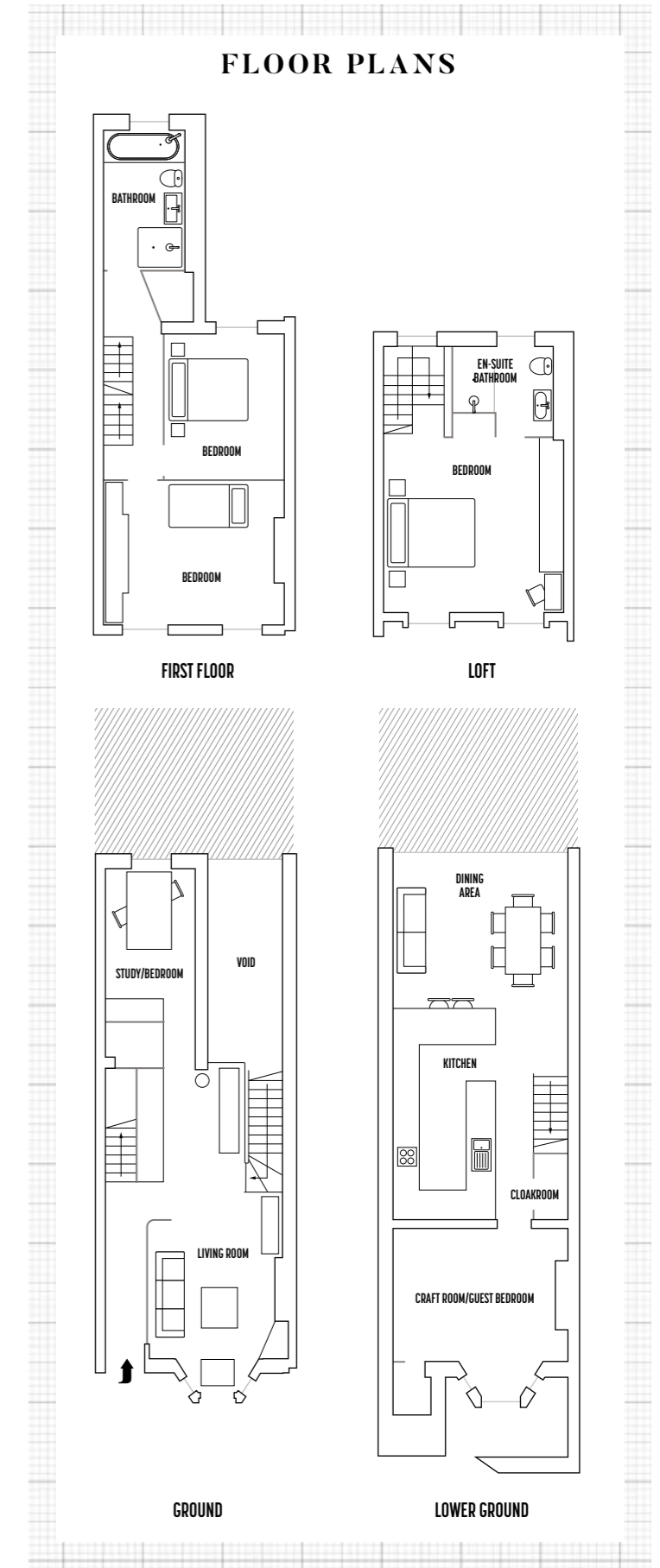
At the start of the project, Neil and Lucy had chosen a material palette of stone and wood to create a connection throughout the house and garden. Western Red Cedar fencing and Cumaru cladding define the latter while, in the house, expanses of oak-clad walls and floors offset the plain yew kitchen units topped with white >>

BELOW LEFT Neil's idea to create an open-plan kitchen and dining room convinced Lucy that this property was the one they should buy
BELOW A bespoke sapele wood handrail runs the full extent of the staircase





To improve the flow of light throughout the house, the street-level floor has been knocked into one open-plan space



The ground floor receives lots of natural light from the sloping glass roofline and includes a bank of built-in storage



The skylight set into the cedar-raftered ceiling is one of four new opening vents that enable the house to cool passively during the summer



Daughter Stella chose what she calls the 'beehive' tiles, from Pentagon Tiles, and Neil sourced the black taps and shower fitting from Faucet Strømmen in Australia



A bespoke Georgian-style handrail in sapele wood is Neil's pride and joy, winding up to the library shelving on the landing

Caesarstone and floors of hard-wearing travertine stone. In the main bathroom, a teak vanity unit contrasts with white sanitaryware.

Wood panelling and built-in storage cupboards beneath the stairs also emphasise the extra tall ceilings that Neil has gained by pushing all the floors up by 30 centimetres. 'Drains beneath the house meant we couldn't lower the floors so, to get more height below, we had to raise them, which resulted in a small step up in the entrance hall.'

A bespoke Georgian-style handrail in sapele wood is Neil's particular pride and joy, winding up to the oak

library shelving on the landing outside the couple's new loft bedroom. Another unexpected architectural delight is revealed as the door opens to reveal a ceiling of Douglas fir rafters. 'They remind me of my parents' home where I grew up, in Islington,' says Lucy.

Being the architect for the project made budgeting no less important a task. 'Of course, I didn't have to pay myself professional fees,' says Neil. 'You need to spend the money in places that have a big impact on your enjoyment of the space for years to come,' he continues. 'The shower and the laser-cut steel stairs and swept handrail were expensive but we enjoy using them; we know we're going to live here for at least 20 years so they were worth the expense. The trick is to cut back on other things. We opted for budget-friendly lighting, flooring, and the paint, most of which is standard Dulux Silk. It's easy to clean, which makes it very child-friendly.'

Inspiring and inventive, Neil and Lucy's renovated terraced home is filled with beautiful details designed to last for years to come. GD

ABOVE Douglas fir rafters are left open as a nod to Lucy's childhood home in nearby Islington. Throughout the house, low-energy LEDs are used, including in the shadow gaps at cornice level

GD HOMES LONDON

The functional kitchen islands have been set at the back of the new open-plan living area so the family can make more of the inside-outside space closest to the garden



SUPPLIERS

PROJECT TEAM

Architect Neil Dusheiko Architects
(020 7354 8106; neildusheiko.com)
Contractor Sygnet Style (07964 945 412;
sygnetstyle.co.uk)

STRUCTURE

External timber cladding Woodtrend
(020 7460 5000; woodtrend.co.uk)
Folding doors and skylights
Greenways Contemporary (0121 550 3066;

greenwayscontemporary.co.uk);
Velux (01592 778 225; velux.com)
Glazing Roofmaker (0116 214 7099;
roof-maker.co.uk); Velfac (01536 313
552; velfac.co.uk); Windows4UK
(07393 626 264; windows4uk.eu)
Internal timber cladding Capital Crispin
Veneer (020 7474 3680; capitalcrispin.com);
The Reclaimed Flooring Company (020 7250
1108; reclaimedflooringco.com)
Timber floor Havwoods (havwoods.co.uk)

FIXTURES & FITTING

**Black bathroom taps and
shower fittings** Faucet Strommen
(faucetstrommen.com.au)
Bathroom tiles Grestec (0345 130 2241;
grestec.co.uk); Pentagon Tiles
(020 3668 1555; pentagontiles.com)
Lighting Decode (020 8988 9124;
decode.london); FossLED (020 3198 1908;
fossled.co.uk); Ladies & Gentlemen
Studio (ladiesandgentlemenstudio.com);

Modern Lighting (020 3805 2288;
modernlightingsolutions.co.uk);
Ocean (01642 245 066;
oceanlighting.co.uk); Sparks
(020 7263 8007; sparksdirect.co.uk)
Staircase handrail Bespoke Handrails
(01268 931 881; bespokehandrails.com)
Worksurface Caesarstone
(caesarstone.co.uk), supplied
and installed by Stonery
(020 7101 3395; stonery.co.uk)