



FAMILY AFFAIR

Rachel and John MacElvogue have extended and remodelled their 1950s home to include a self-contained granny annexe and extra space for their growing family

BEFORE



The Extension

The new L-shaped rendered extension has a zinc roof and large rooflights – the space is connected to the newly landscaped garden by full-height sliding aluminium doors with gables over both.

Project Notes

Homeowners John and Rachel MacElvogue
Project Extension and remodel
Location Hertfordshire
Build time Apr 2013 - Sep 2013
Size of extension 40m²
House cost £200,000 in March 1997
Build cost £209,756
Value £1million

SUPPLIERS

Architect Harvey Norman Architects:
harveynormanarchitects.co.uk
Structural engineer
Gawn Associates: gawnassociates.com
Quantity surveyor Trinity Place: trinityplace.co.uk
Builder/main contractor
Castle Builders: castle-builders.co.uk
Electrician
JF Warne & Sons: 01707 322472
Building materials Jewson: jewson.co.uk
Plumbing Karl Kinsell Heating &
Plumbing Services: 07891 566017
Rooflights Glazing Vision: glazingvision.co.uk
Windows Velfac: velfac.co.uk
Sliding doors IDSystems: idsystems.co.uk
Landscaping Julian Tatlock: juliantatlock.com



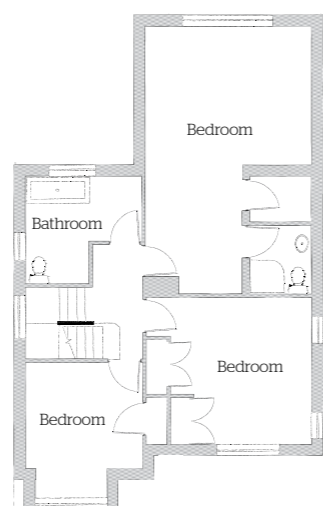
ARCHITECT'S VIEW

Ian Harvey: "Rachel and John MacElvogue wanted to reorder the ground floor, extend to create a new open plan style and incorporate a separate self-contained granny flat. As well as making better use of the existing space, Rachel and John also needed to cater to the needs of a broad age range, including two teenagers and a grandmother.

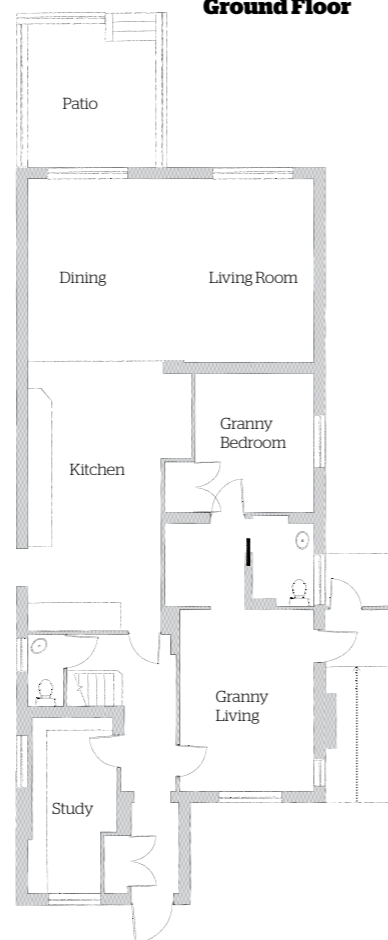
"Bringing light into this dark 1950s property and integrating smart media and computer systems were also key parts of the brief.

"The result is a multi-generational home; highlights include the through views (there is a visual axis from the front door through to the garden), and the new L-shaped extension which has created a zoned open plan family room."

First Floor



Ground Floor



Open Plan Spaces

The L-shaped extension features a sleek new kitchen flowing into a dining space, lit from above by large rooflights. This configuration means that the living area (below) feels separate from the kitchen. The utility is located behind the run of full-height units in the kitchen.





Landscaping

The swathe of sliding doors at the rear of the house called for some pretty impressive landscaping. Internally the new self-contained annexe is located behind the shelving in the living space.

When Rachel and John MacElvogue originally brought their house in St Albans back in 1997 their needs were very different from now, having just got married and with no children. “After we bought the house, we lived here for eight years and both of our daughters were born here. We then moved to South Africa in 2005 to work for five years and by the time we returned we needed a house that could suit the changes in our lives,” explains Rachel. “We also wanted to build a space that could be used as a self-contained home for my mother.”

“We basically had the choice to move, or do this — I’m so happy with the results”

Rachel and John’s first planning application, which they submitted before going abroad, was declined. “It really confused us,” says Rachel. “The road we live on is such a diverse mix of architectural styles and the plans for the house were declined on the grounds of not being in keeping with the neighbourhood — thankfully, we won on appeal.” However, the planning permission lapsed while they were living away and they were required to resubmit on their return. “They declined us again — on the same grounds!” says Rachel. Finally though, after appealing once more, permission was granted.

A Multi-Generational Home

The house needed updating and a rethink regarding the living spaces. Rachel and John were keen to open up the spaces, while taking into account that their children Niamh and Aoife, now 17 and 15 years old, needed their own spaces. They also wanted an annexe for Rachel’s mother: somewhere she could feel part of the house, but maintain her independence. Having found and liked the work of Ian Harvey, of Harvey Norman Architects, they tasked Ian with coming up with a design that would reorganise the ground floor spaces, making them more open, extending out to connect the house to the garden and also incorporate a self-contained annexe.

“Ian project managed the build,” says Rachel, who along with John and their two children, lived in John’s mother’s house nearby while the work was carried out. “We found our

own builder and he worked so well with Ian — any minor issues were easily solved.”

“We were keen on an open plan layout,” she continues. “But although it can be great, we realised that we needed to be able to co-exist with two teenagers, too.”

A 5m extension, with a zinc roof — chosen due to the low pitch provided — was added to the rear of the house, and now contains the new living room and dining area, which are flooded with natural light, both from the sliding doors and the four large rooflights, which mirror those in the kitchen area.

The sleek new kitchen has replaced the tired old one and has been opened up into this new sociable area, while a bank of four large electric rooflights illuminates the entire kitchen space. The newly formed spaces can be opened up to the landscaped garden through aluminium sliding doors.

In keeping with the sleek and fuss-free approach that has been taken, items such as the washing machine have been concealed behind a run of full-height doors at the rear of the kitchen. “The kitchen works really well,” says Rachel. “I did wonder whether we should have had a separate utility room, and we do get some noise from appliances, but we would have lost space.”

The one bedroom annexe is accessed from a door in the hallway and is a very flexible space, while the old integral garage at the front of the house has been converted into a home office. Upstairs, the layout remains the same, with three bedrooms as well as a useful loft conversion (a previous addition).

Underfloor heating works very efficiently with the flooring choice made by Rachel and John of having Italian porcelain tiles throughout. “We have two different types of UFH,” says Rachel. “One design has been built into the concrete of the new extension, while the other is a shallower design that was more suited to the existing sections of the house.”

The final flourish was the newly landscaped garden — complete with artificial grass. “It’s brilliant,” she enthuses. “It never needs mowing and always looks good.”

“The whole thing went really smoothly and so we didn’t find it a stressful process,” she concludes. “We basically had the choice to either move, or to do this — and I’m so happy with the results.”



Living Spaces

The large-format floor tiles, used throughout the newly formed spaces, have been laid over underfloor heating and ensure a sense of unity between the various areas.

The Knowledge: Creating a Self-Contained Annexe

Creating a self-contained 'annexe' within your home is a great way to add space and value and provide for elderly family members or teenagers. However, there are a few things you should be aware of when planning for this type of project. Ideally you need to make sure that the planners and the council do not view your new annexe as a separate dwelling. The planners will have taken into account the use that the extension or new space is to be used for along with the rest of your planning application, but for council tax purposes, the new arrangements may be viewed differently. The council will want to assess whether or not it should charge your annexe for council tax as though it is a separate property and to do this, the council will look at the layout of the annexe, the access and its facilities. If, for example, the annexe has a complete set of facilities for cooking, bathing and so on then the council is likely to treat it as a separate property. In the past, the entrance to the annexe used to play a big role in how it would be viewed by the council, with many keeping an access door into the house from the annexe to prevent it from being treated as a separate property. For many councils this no longer applies, with many council websites stating that an annexe does not have to have its own entrance to be considered self-contained for the purposes of council tax. The stance your council take will, in all likelihood, vary depending on location and your designs and it will be best to talk your options through. **H**