



A New Dimension

THE OWNERS OF THIS SENSITIVELY REFURBISHED GEORGIAN TERRACED HOUSE IN CORK WORKED CLOSED WITH THEIR ARCHITECT TO CREATE CONTEMPORARY, FAMILY-FRIENDLY INTERIORS WHILE RETAINING ALL THE CHARM AND CHARACTER OF THE ORIGINAL BUILDING

WORDS BY **CAROLINE ALLEN.**
PHOTOGRAPHY BY **MIKI BARLOK.**

When Claire O'Donoghue and her husband Vincent bought this mid-terraced Georgian house in Blackrock, they found it in a "sad state, in need of complete refurbishment." There was, Claire remarks, never any question that it was remotely habitable. "Nobody had lived here for quite a number of years so it had deteriorated significantly. However, we knew we had something special with the location and we saw the potential that this house had and went from there," she says. "Kieran McCarthy and his team from KMC Homes were literally with us from the first viewing to the end and they brought us seamlessly on the journey from start to finish. We decided to add an extension to the back and have this as our open plan kitchen, dining and

sitting area, which is a space that works really well and opens out to a nice south-facing garden."

With three young children – Harry, Lily and Paddy – the couple wanted a house that was first and foremost practical for family living, with the character of an old property. Part of a school in a bygone era, the house contained two magnificent reception rooms, a laundry room, WC and an old dark kitchen annex," explains Kieran. "Upstairs there were four bedrooms but no bathroom. We needed four or five bedrooms, an en suite, linen closet, WC, ample utility space, larder space, and a modern open plan living space making best use of the southerly facing



THE KITCHEN INCORPORATES WOODEN UNITS BY O'DRISCOLL KITCHENS, HAND PAINTED IN LITTLE GREENE'S PALE WEDGEWOOD WITH STATUARIO SILESTONE COUNTERTOPS FOR SURFACE GOOD LOOKS.

"WE LOVE THE MIX OF OLD AND NEW THROUGHOUT THE HOUSE. THE RETENTION OF THE OLD HOUSE AND ITS QUIRKS GIVES US THE CHARACTER THAT WE HANKERED AFTER."



rear garden. This meant adding a two-storey extension to complete the space," he says.

The project began on site in late April 2018 and was completed by the end of November. "By and large, it took seven months for the bulk of the works. It was a difficult project to build as the house is mid-terraced so access was tight behind all the existing neighbouring houses, with little or no construction traffic parking available for personnel or deliveries. Building good rapport with neighbours and daily communication was key," Kieran recalls.

Adding new space to the existing building involved a lot of consideration. "The aim was always to complement and enhance, not to compete. We wanted to avoid a glass box addition or indeed mimicking the original. This was an ongoing challenge and its success can only be judged by the beholder," remarks Kieran. "We had to demolish an existing extension to the rear and porch to the front before any new build works

could commence. There were many internal demolitions too involving propping and steel work. Beyond this phase, the rebuild involved a detailed joinery package including timber sliding sash with counterweights and shutters."

The brief was to renovate the existing Georgian house and add sufficient accommodation for the young family. "Claire and Vincent wanted to maintain the charm and historical context of the original building while adding a contemporary open plan living space to pour out onto the south facing private gardens to the rear," says Kieran. "The greatest design challenge with the extension was to use a contemporary styling that would relate to the existing theme of the Georgian building and indeed Blackrock. Internally we chose to carry through the joinery, flooring and colour scheme but simplify the detailing to convey a more casual living space style. A flow from new to old was important. It was more about how the spaces would be used than what era they came from."



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The existing building was in an area of conservational interest so during the design and planning permission phase KMC employed a conservational architectural specialist to advise the design team and liaise on the features of historical context that needed protection. "We commissioned an historical study of the building and the environs to align our design intent with best restoration practice. We got planning permission at our first attempt which was a great achievement," says Kieran.

When it came to the interior design, Claire took to Instagram and Pinterest, involving many nights seeking inspiration on the sofa. "I was also very lucky to have my sister-in-law, Vanessa Gavin, an interior designer and stylist – 'The Ernest Valentine' on Instagram who works at True Output in Waterford – help me with colour schemes and lighting. She deserves a lot of



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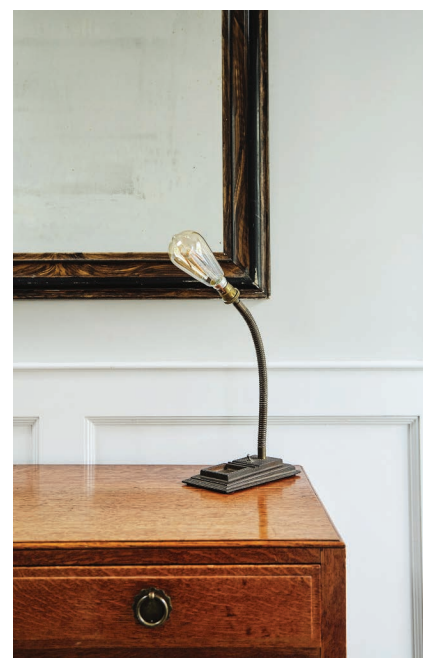




THE HALL, STAIRS AND LANDING WERE PAINTED IN SNOW GLORY BY COLOURTREND WITH PANELLING IN BRILLIANT WHITE BY DULUX.



WORKING WITH VANESSA GAVIN, AN INTERIOR DESIGNER AND STYLIST, CLAIRE AIMED FOR A TIMELESS LOOK WITH SUBTLE COLOUR SCHEMES AND NATURAL TONES.



credit for her patience and time. Together we decided to aim for a timeless look with subtle colour schemes and natural tones." Dulux Brilliant White was used in the kitchen while Silver Moonlight by Colourtrend adds to the ambience of the main sitting room. The hall, stairs and landing were painted in Snow Glory by Colourtrend with panelling in Brilliant White by Dulux. The downstairs WC is in Livid by Little Greene and Brilliant White by Dulux, which is also used in the main bathroom, along with Grey Wolf by Colourtrend on the panelling. Snow Glory again features in the boys' bedroom with its yellow bunk beds, along with wallpaper by Andrew Martin. In Lily's bedroom,

Delicate Blue by Little Greene provides a soothing backdrop while the master bedroom is restful in Purbeck Stone by Farrow and Ball. Sean O'Neill from Sean O'Neill Flooring painstakingly brought original floorboards in two downstairs rooms back to life and also fitted all the new floorboards. Original shutters were retained where possible and copied where replacements were required. They feature in every room except the main bedroom.

The family loves congregating in the kitchen, which incorporates handmade wooden units by O'Driscoll Kitchens, hand



SNOW GLORY BY
COLOURTREND FEATURES IN
THE BOYS' BEDROOM WITH
ITS YELLOW BUNK BEDS,
ALONG WITH WALLPAPER BY
ANDREW MARTIN



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painted in Little Greene's Pale Wedgewood with Statuario Silestone countertops for surface good looks. Both Claire and Vincent being from Waterford, they count the Waterford crystal chandeliers in the main sitting room as among their favourite features. The main bathroom contains the freestanding bath original to the house. "We salvaged it, sanded and painted it ourselves and then had it enamelled," says Claire. "In the downstairs WC, they have incorporated the original sink. "We

love this little WC as it has lots of quirkiness and a dark colour which is just a bit different to rest of house," she says. "We love the mix of old and new throughout the house. The retention of the old house and its quirks gives us the character that we hankered after. That, coupled with the practicality of the new extension, with its large open plan kitchen area leading to the south-facing garden, ensures the house is perfect for how we live. It gives us loads of space for the whole family."



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Source Directory

Design & Build Company: Kieran McCarthy, KMC Homes, Fota Retail Park, Carrigtwohill, Co. Cork, T: 021 4882450, KmcHomes.ie

Old school lights in the landing and plafonnier in hall: AshbyInteriors.co.uk

Chandelier in main sitting room: Rody Keighery's Auction Rooms, Waterford, T: 051 873 692, AntiquesIreland.ie

Light over kitchen table: Old Parisienne Street light, HuntersofLondon.com

Lights over island: MullanLighting.com

Sitting room table lamps: The Store Yard, Portlaoise, T: 057 868 0088, TheStoreYard.ie

Caislean oak flooring in new extension, and hall and main bathroom tiles: Select Floors & Tiles, Cork, T: 021 4324444, SelectFloors.ie

Floorboard restoration and fitting: Sean O'Neill Flooring, Cork, T: 087 2925114

Carpets on stairs: Elephant, Ulster Velvet, and upstairs rooms: Christy's Floor Coverings, Douglas, Cork, T: 021 4892240, ChristysFloorCoverings.com

Rug in sitting room from Uzbekistan: eBay.com

Rug in kitchen/dining/living room: Rody Keighery's Antiques, Waterford, AntiquesIreland.ie

New shutters and sash windows: Waterloo Joinery, Blarney, T: 087 9629636

Curtains in master bedroom: Ken Jackson Interiors, Cork, T: 021 4314963, Kji.ie

Kitchen: O'Driscoll Kitchens, Middleton, Cork, T: 021 4633960, OdriscollKitchens.ie

Handles: ArmacMartin.co.uk

Worktop: Hickey's Stoneworks, Ballincollig, T: 021 4860170, HickeysStoneworks.com

En suite: Cork International Traders, Tramore Road, Cork, T: 021 4705800

Fireplace in main sitting room: Noble Antique Fireplaces, Cork, T: 021 4323477

Mirror over mantle and multiple pieces of furniture and art: McGonigle Walsh, Blackrock, Cork, T: 087 2862484

Sofas in sitting room: Love-Your-Home.co.uk

Sofas in new extension: Caseys Cork, Caseys.ie

19th century French kitchen table: MollyandMaudsPlace.co.uk

19th century chapel chairs: Ukaa.com

Bank of drawers in new extension and kitchen old lab stools: OttoAntiques.co.uk