



ELEGANT MODERNISM

Architect Sterrin O'Shea cleverly reinvents a home in Glasnevin in collaboration with Hugh Maguire of The Hunt Museum.

LEFT Architect Sterrin O'Shea designed this space as an addition to Hugh Maguire's Edwardian house. The kitchen, made by Langrell Kitchens to O'Shea's specifications, has a fixed "peep hole" window to the garden and a roof light to maximise light to the island area. High units are carried over a seating area with lighting concealed beneath, with walls painted in Down Pipe by Farrow & Ball.

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here is a certain moment that can later be recognised as a turning point. For Dr Hugh Maguire, director of The Hunt Museum in Limerick, it was deciding to renovate his parents' home into a Dublin base. For architect Sterrin O'Shea, it was the start of a project that perfectly summarises her reputation for creating homes that whisper rather than shout.

At first sight, the house seems quite straightforward: one of those classic Edwardian Dublin red brick houses on a quiet side street in Glasnevin. The front bay window juts into a compact garden with a path of red and black tiles leading to a glass-panelled front door. But all preconceived notions dissolve when you enter the house and take in an uninterrupted view to a very modern space beyond the hallway.



OPPOSITE PAGE, BELOW LEFT From the original house, the garden can still be seen through the new glass bay. ABOVE The bespoke bay has iroko-framed windows made by McNally Joinery. It has glass-to-glass corners, with glazing carried past the floating ceiling and a low windowsill, which makes a natural bench. The mesh light fitting, from The Conran Shop, was chosen to reinforce the transparency of the bay.



The level and smoked oak flooring by The Hardwood Flooring Company in the hallway is carried through to the rear extension. The floor there changes to marmoleum, chosen because it is practical and warm underfoot. The elevated patio has sliding doors for access to the garden and also allows east light to enter in the mornings.

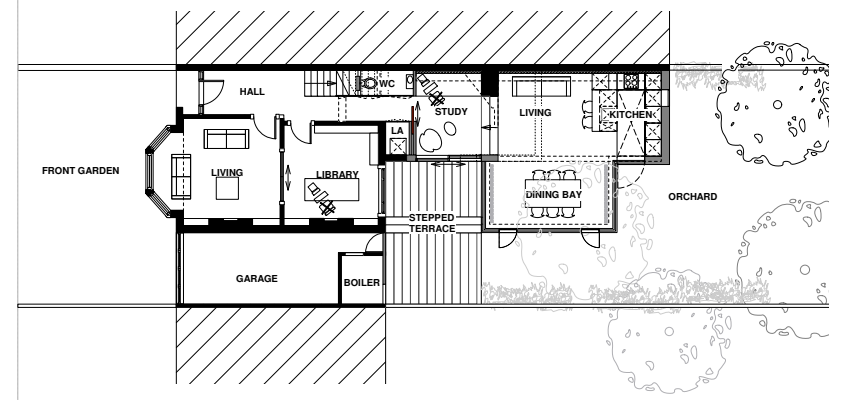
Maguire had specific ideas about how the house could be transformed with the help of O'Shea. "I lived in New Zealand for a time during the 1990s and loved the way 1950s architecture there is very fluid and open and relates directly to how people live. I always thought if I ever had the opportunity, I'd try to do something similar. I liked the clarity of Sterrin's work and knew she was the right person for the job."

For her part, O'Shea says, "The house was very much designed in collaboration with Hugh. He did not want an extension to eat into limited garden space and we had the usual dilemma of not wanting the new extension to block light from existing rooms." Therefore, she decided a linear solution, following the existing footprint, was the best way to go and conceived a projecting glass bay at the side of the house. This provides a much needed "break out" space to the already narrow width of the house but was designed to be transparent enough not to block light to or views from the existing rear reception room.

O'Shea began by demolishing a dilapidated 1960s rear extension to allow for this new structure to be built amongst the apple trees that dot the garden. The external view from the end of the garden looking back towards the house is now of the glazed bay projecting to the side with a timber clad kitchen niche to the rear. This light, modern space is mostly used for dining. "The garden used to be very much separate to the house, but now there's a sense of being in the garden when sitting in the bay," O'Shea says.

Maguire did not want a second living area in the extension, as the existing living room in the front of the house faces south and has a lovely bay window. "Often kitchen/living extensions mean the old reception rooms become redundant," says O'Shea, "so the brief was

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OPPOSITE PAGE, FAR LEFT The study niche has overhead units matching that of the kitchen beyond with lighting concealed beneath. The hardwood desk has drawers concealed within its thickness. NEAR LEFT A view at night from the side garden: the glass bay takes on the effect of a glowing lantern. Inside, you can see the back wall illuminated by hidden lights under the cabinets. BELOW The kitchen is purposefully small in size in proportion to the size of the extension to suit the owner's needs and so as not to dominate the space. Langrell Kitchens made the handle-less units and the island countertop is a manmade material by Miller Brothers. A roof light maximises light to this island area. Wall sockets are concealed under the high level units. The mosaic splashback is by Mosaic Assemblers to match the Farrow & Ball painted units.



for a modest kitchen with an island that would allow for interaction with guests and a large dining area with a strong relationship to the garden.”

The biggest issue facing O’Shea for the rear extension was the north-facing aspect. The design of the glass bay allows east and south light into what could otherwise have been a dark space. The structure is designed to be as lightweight and transparent as possible. The ceiling height was carried from the existing house into the bay window, which with glass-to-glass corners, has glazing carried higher than ceiling level to maximise light into the space. “The main intention of this ‘corner-less’ space is to let the side extension merge into the garden. The view of the garden from the library in the rear reception room of the original house is maintained as one can see through the new glazed bay.”

A large frameless glass roof-light was positioned over the kitchen, which is at the end of the room because Maguire did not want to have to walk through the kitchen to get to the main space. Maguire works a lot from home so O’Shea suggested a study niche in the area from the hallway to the rear extension. The hallway can be closed off from the rear extension via a sliding door.

In the rest of the house, O’Shea retained all existing original features, carried out restoration on those that were in poor repair, and generally made the rooms more useable. She designed custom-made storage and kept colours neutral but not dull. Like all of O’Shea’s work, the client’s needs haven’t been sacrificed for design and Maguire’s turning point has resulted in a truly elegant and modern home.

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OPPOSITE PAGE The extension is clad with vertical iroko boards to match the frames of the bay window. The cladding stops short to reveal a rendered plinth that reinforces the notion that the extension is perched among the apple trees. The owner added the pond and the garage beyond is clad with the same timber. The library window in the original house is visible through the dining bay. BELOW The corning and picture rails in the library were retained and the original window restored by Kells Windows. A new wood-burning stove by Heating Distributors was installed as the original fireplace had already been removed. Sterrin O’Shea designed the shelving and shallow cabinets in the alcoves.

