

Eyes to the sky

This narrow Cambridge home has been transformed with an extension that uses roof glazing and clerestory windows to bring in light and allow upward views Photography Hufton + Crow Photography



This picture The owners didn't want to lose garden space, so the house hasn't been extended back. Instead, it has been filled in at the side return to take up the full width of the plot

this picture The kitchen-living area is a long space (10x4.8 metres), so it was important to bring light into the heart of the building with roof lights and clerestory windows

below Lighting is concealed in the stacked ceiling and beneath the built-in bench to create a softer feel at night



We've not added a huge amount of space to this house, but we have significantly transformed it,' says architect Delphine Dryer from Chadwick Dryer Clarke Studio in Cambridge. The owners, a couple with one child, really liked the property's location in one of Cambridge's more appealing areas – but the house itself had its limitations.

Chief among these was a narrow galley kitchen to the rear, with a slither of unused outdoor space to the side. The previous owners had also tacked a small study on to the back of the kitchen, further cutting it off from the garden and making it dark. 'The back was dingy, with views of the adjacent houses, so it needed a lot of light,' says Dryer. To help, she →





widened the house to the boundary wall, giving the owners another 11 square metres of space, and topped it with roof lights that capture views of the sky. There are two along the side of the kitchen, where the side return used to be, and a large, fully retractable roof light above the living space, where the ceiling also steps up to increase the sense of height. Clerestory windows at the back of the building bring in more light from the south and west, too.

‘The sliding roof light was the price of a small car,’ says Dryer. ‘But the ones in the kitchen were more cost-effective. We could have used one long piece of glazing instead, but two separate roof lights achieve a similar effect.’

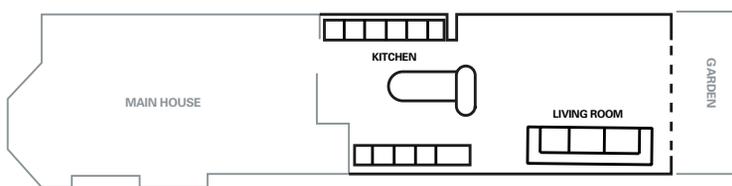
To pack as much function as possible into the modest footprint, the space needed to be flexible. So, the living area also doubles as a dining room when a table is pulled up to the built-in bench, while the kitchen island’s worktop has a pivoting section, which provides an extra area for either food preparation or a breakfast bar.

Construction took five months, delayed slightly after the builder discovered rubble beneath the ground. This meant piled foundations were required, which added about £2,500 to the spend. Party wall agreements were needed on both sides, though neighbours were amenable, and planning permission was granted without trouble. ‘It’s in a conservation area, but we met with the planner on-site and she was happy with the scheme,’ says Dryer. ‘You never know how it’s going to go, but nowadays we’re finding that planners are more receptive to modern design.’ **GD**

‘The back was dingy, with views of adjacent houses – it needed light’

Project plan

GROUND FLOOR



Suppliers

Architect Chadwick Dryer Clarke Studio (01223 262 413; chadwickdryerclarke.co.uk) **Structural engineer** Gawn Associates (01223 233 888; gawnassociates.com) **Contractor** KH Construction (01223 411 828; khconstruction.co.uk) **Party wall surveyor** Nick Dennis, The Roger Driver Partnership (01223 295 303; driver-surveyors.co.uk) **Retractable roof light** Skyglide by Glazing Vision (01379 658 309; glazing-vision.co.uk) **Fixed roof lights** Anglian Architectural (0845 270 6464; angarch.com) **Kitchen & bench design** Mark Collett Design & Build (0800 193 1923; markcollett.co.uk)

above The kitchen island required a statement light and an extractor fan; the Celestial Island Hood by Elica (01252 351 111; elica.co.uk) provides both. With a less bulky look than traditional extractor fans, it’s perfect for smaller spaces