

New build house on a site with limited access in North London

NOW FIRST LIMITED



'Hidden House', London

Size: 122m²
Value: £300,000 estimated
Status: Completed
Type: New build house for private client

A two storey new build formed from timber and steel framework with a masonry outer leaf as its cladding on the ground floor.

The new house sits at the end of the 60m garden of a Grade II-listed house, owned by an author and her husband, on a site where previously an old caravan acted as a writing studio.

Known as 'Hidden House', the new building is laid out with living space at ground floor level and a bedroom plus additional guest room-cum-study on the first floor.

Its tight, highly constrained south-facing site measures roughly 30m x 7m and is bounded by walls to the north, east and west. No lights or openings were permitted on the new structure's western elevation.

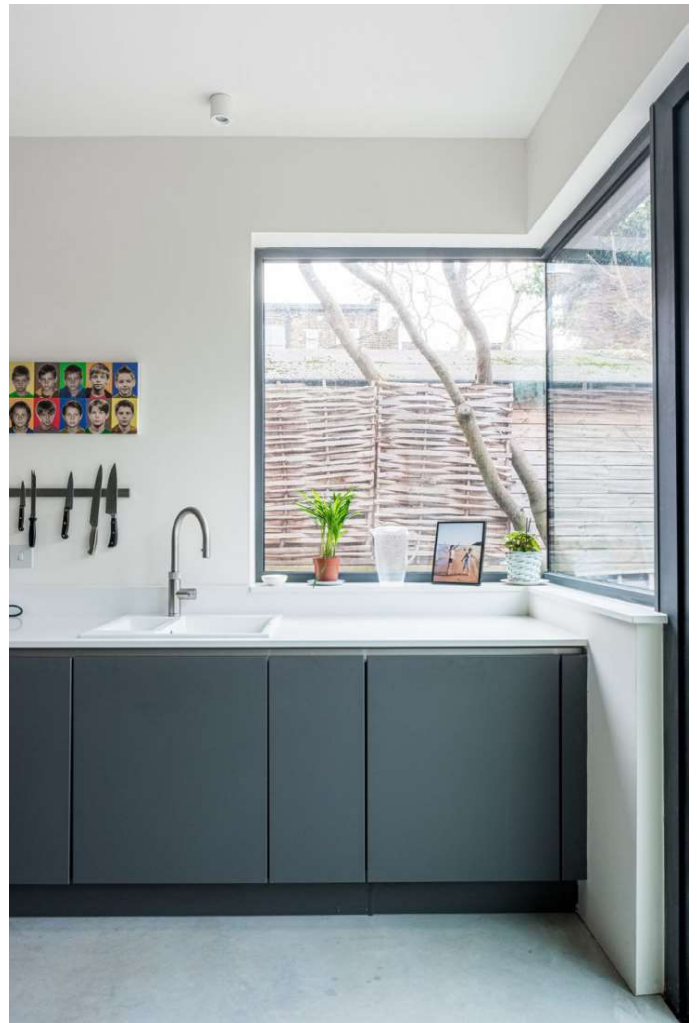
The timber-framed structure consists of three elements, with a single-storey kitchen and living room flanking a two-storey central volume.



The site was accessed via an opening in a historic solid masonry wall. This limited the amount of plant and machinery that could be brought into the plot. To respond to this constraint we designed the foundations to be formed from stainless steel piles which could be installed by a rig capable of being brought through the opening.

A suspended reinforced concrete slab was then cast to form the ground floor structure. A timber framed superstructure was then erected.

The superstructure included the provision of a 'columnless' corner to the building with end-to-end connection of glass panels.



Architect specified items:

'The house was designed to have the highest possible green credentials. The timber superstructure is constructed using high-quality Swedish softwood and is insulated to provide a wall U-value of 0.15, reducing heat loss and achieving an 'A' energy rating well in excess of building regulations. A 2kW Ochsner fully internal heat pump provides underfloor heating, and solar PV panels on the upper flat roof and 5kW of battery storage help to reduce grid consumption. Two green wildflower meadow roofs have been planted front and rear – on top of the kitchen and sitting room. Two drainage systems for 'dirty' and 'clean' water allow the use of a 1500ltr Graff Platin shallow tank that reduces mains water consumption by feeding 'clean' rainwater back to the WCs, washing machine and irrigation of green roofs. The ground-level polished concrete floor (pigmented white) has a high thermal mass to optimise the underfloor heating system.'

Alan Morris, principal, Alan Morris Architects

