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Cover Story:

Summer Living

EXTENDING TO CREATE THE PERFECT OUTDOOR SPACE, INDOORS



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The Extension

The 75m² single storey timber frame extension, housing the new kitchen and living spaces, is clad in western redcedar with a clay tile roof.

SENSITIVELY
extended

Architect Jeremy King has created a contemporary kitchen extension for his mother at his childhood home in rural Hertfordshire ▶

EXTENSION | HERTFORDSHIRE | DURATION: SEVEN MONTHS | EXTENSION SIZE: 75M²
HOUSE COST: ALREADY OWNED | BUILD COST: £135,000 (£1,800/M²) | VALUE: UNKNOWN

WORDS: NATALIE FLAUM | PHOTOGRAPHY: CHARLOTTE WOOD/ANDY SPAIN



Sliding Doors

Elegant engineered sliding iroko-framed French windows (Jeremy designed them and had them made up by a local joiner) open onto the terrace. The same flooring is used inside and out to make the transition seamless

In 1987, Ann King and her late husband Russell rescued a Grade II listed 16th century timber frame cottage, transforming it into a welcoming family home for them and their four children. Situated at the centre of a picturesque village green in the heart of a Hertfordshire Conservation Area, the house was originally two workers' cottages. "The house was very fragmented with no flow between the rooms, which was largely due to the badly planned layout," Ann recalls.

Over time, the Elizabethan cottage, with its low ceilings and dark, long, narrow rooms that led directly off each other, became increasingly impractical as a space for Ann to entertain family and friends in.

"It lacked a spacious kitchen and living area — so I commissioned my son, architect Jeremy King, to tackle the problem and build an extension to create a new kitchen and family room in place of an existing garage building," she explains.

"I knew the house intimately as I grew up here," Jeremy reflects. "The cottage follows what the French call an *enfilade* layout, which means there are no hallways as such and the rooms open up sequentially. Reconfiguring the space was a major consideration — the main door now leads into a lobby, while previously visitors came straight into a poky kitchen and had to go through that, and the dining room, to get to the living area."

The Kings originally received planning permission in 1989 but it wasn't until well over a decade later that the project was revived. Although the planning was renewed



It has corrected the circulation... the spaces feel properly balanced



Exterior

Old meets new with the contemporary-style extension, which is clad in untreated western redcedar, contrasting cleverly with the original Grade II listed cottage. Slatted horizontal windows ensure privacy in the new kitchen and living space

Flooring

Concrete tiles – designed primarily for garden use – give the look of flagstones without the expense (sealed with StainStop from Lithothin)

Ann's Suppliers

- Architect and project management** Jeremy King Architects 01304 373736
- Builder** Copland & Burrows Developments... 07734 473054
- Structural engineers** Greig-Ling Consulting Engineers greigling.com
- Double oven, hob and extractor** Stoves 0870 444 9929
- Hotplate** Belling 0844 248 4149
- Dishwasher and fridge freezer** Bosch 0870 727 0446
- Double-bowl ceramic sink** Villeroy & Boch. 020 8871 4028
- Flooring** 'Calder brown concrete tiles' from Marshall's domestic garden range 0870 120 7474



Kitchen Units & Worktops

Custom-made hand-painted MDF carcasses are routed with V-grooves every 100mm, which subtly reproduces traditional tongue-and-groove. Wear and tear of the 40mm blocked oak worktops will add character to the kitchen; Ann simply needs to re-oil them every six months

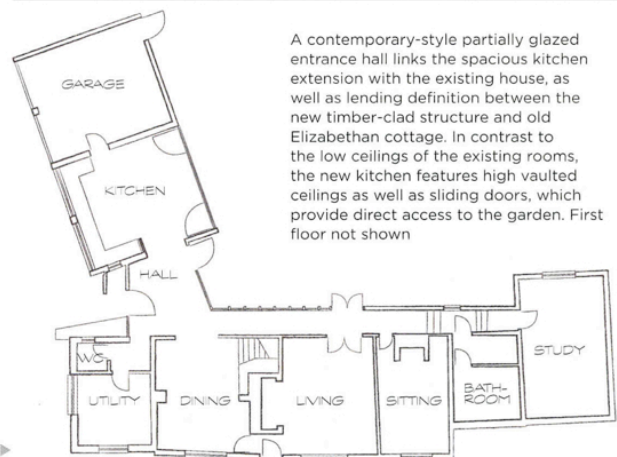
every five years, the listed building status meant that Jeremy had to repeatedly consult both the planning and conservation officers.

“The concern was that the extension should reflect the earlier building,” Jeremy says. “I wanted to echo the elegance of the barn-style garage and stables, its use of few materials and its beautiful simplicity.”

So, Jeremy designed a timber-clad, barn-like structure using a combination of western redcedar and iroko timber. A clay tile roof extends at the rear to form a covered veranda, accessed through doors made up almost entirely of glass. They’re separated by in-keeping timber louvres, supported by ball-bearing casters set into the bottom of the heavy doors that run along a stainless steel track.

“Access to the existing garage and stable block was through a glass corridor spanning the length of the house at the rear,” Jeremy explains. “We retained the glass passageway, attaching it to the lobby to create a central corridor, but demolished the garage, repositioning the kitchen to have access to the garden’s east-facing terrace.” ▶

Floorplan



A contemporary-style partially glazed entrance hall links the spacious kitchen extension with the existing house, as well as lending definition between the new timber-clad structure and old Elizabethan cottage. In contrast to the low ceilings of the existing rooms, the new kitchen features high vaulted ceilings as well as sliding doors, which provide direct access to the garden. First floor not shown



The new space marries a modern interior with an exterior that has been sensitively designed to sit well with the original house. “It reflects the heritage of the area’s agricultural buildings,” Jeremy explains. “Yet it has been given a modern twist to reflect its function — that of a contemporary living space.”

The kitchen windows, like the outer walls, are latticed with iroko strips. “It’s a way of disguising the glass, rather than having big shouting apertures,” Jeremy explains. “I wanted to incorporate larger areas of glass into the elevation in a disguised way, and somehow be true to the use of timber cladding.” On the opposite side of the kitchen, looking out to the street, slit observation windows enable Ann to maintain a private view.

“The seven months of builders caravanning in the paddock were definitely worth it,” Jeremy admits. “The extension has breathed new life into the place and has altered our relationship with the house and the way it is used. It has corrected the circulation of the house so all the internal spaces feel properly balanced. The new kitchen has become the heart of the house and, most importantly, Mum loves it.” ■



The Link

An existing glass link – the new extension is on the site of an old garage – has been refurbished and, in design terms, provides clarification between the original and new parts of the house

What We’ve Learned

What did you find surprisingly hard about the extension project?

“Finding a builder for the right price was difficult — all the local firms we approached were quoting twice what we had to spend. We ended up hiring builders from Lincolnshire who camped in the garden throughout the seven-month build!”

What challenges did you experience?

“Our challenge was to relocate the former gloomy kitchen, which was in the wrong place, to the side of the property and out on a limb from the rest of the house. My task was to design a new kitchen extension with access to the garden. The previous owners had tacked on a glass passageway at the back of the house to link one room to another. We retained the glass passageway by attaching it to the lobby to create a central corridor, to make the space work as an integral part of the new design.”

What are you particularly pleased with?

“The fact that we managed to incorporate all of Mum’s favourite appliances, including the Belling hotplate that she’s very fond of. We also managed to include her treasured furniture pieces, such as an antique Welsh dresser that had been consigned to the garage for years due to a lack of ceiling height, which has now been given a new lease of life below the vaulted ceiling of the new kitchen. The kitchen really is ‘pzazz’ on a budget!”