



A house near the sea in Wicklow was extended and reorientated to make the most of the views and the sunlight, writes Emma Cullinan. *Photography by Marie-Louise Halpenny*

IT WAS the arrival of twins that prompted the couple who had lived in this small 1930s two-bedroom cottage in Wicklow for five years to both expand the space and put what they had to better use.

While the house had plenty of character and was well placed, near the sea, "it didn't really work as family home," says Joe Lawrence of Lawrence and Long Architects who were taken on to carry out the work. "The house comprised a series of small rooms and there was an inappropriate flat roofed extension and a conservatory on one side. Most of the house had no relation with the garden," yet the south-west-facing garden was a potential

sun-trap and the architects demolished a shed and built a thin long extension along the north edge of the garden – with plenty of glazing, including a clerestory window – so that it could capture sun from the south.

They configured it so that a 30-year-old birch tree could remain in place. While the new extension is essentially one room, housing a kitchen and 'den', it has three different ceiling heights to demark 'rooms', while a long verandah accessed by large sliding doors links all of the areas.

As is often the case when people are given bright new spaces, the family now spends most of its time in this kitchen and the informal living room beside it. In the previous set-up the kitchen cut the living space off from the garden, whereas now the



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internal layout has been changed (with walls removed) so that you can see the floating timber and glass extension from the front door, which helps to link the house from front to rear and on into the garden. "What is now the hall used to be a landlocked living room with no windows and a hall that was so small two people couldn't stand together in it," says Lawrence. They kept a fireplace from that room which now backs onto a living room beside it.

At Christmas the hall fire was lit to welcome guests and children ran around the entrance area to let off steam, giving the space a whole new life. On the other side of the front hall there used to be a tiny galley kitchen stuck onto one side of the house and a small bathroom to

the rear that cut off the house from its garden. Views of the sea to the front were also restricted by an awkward staircase that ran up inside the front wall just to the left of the front door.

Upstairs were two bedrooms one of which just had a window on the gable, which meant that it had no sea views.

The conservatory was demolished and a larger two-storey extension was built. This has added a third bedroom to the house as well as a bathroom that juts out beyond the bedroom, giving sea views from the bath. A 'periscope' shoots into the sky from this room to catch morning sunlight from the east. Such knockrequisite design speaks both of the nearby sea and the creation of new views of the outside world. ■

42 HOUSE

HOMES



44 HOUSE

HOMES

ARCHITECT Lawrence and Long Architects

Lawrence and Long Architects was established by Joe Lawrence and Pierre Long in 2002. The practice aspires to produce work of high quality and significant architectural merit. In approaching all projects, particular attention is in providing elegant design solutions, combining sustainable technologies and quality building materials.

The practice has a range of projects including residential, educational and commercial projects. The practice was recently shortlisted in an international architectural competition for Bord Gáis Networks.

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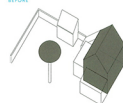
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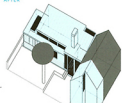
Kitchen Units Splendide Furniture
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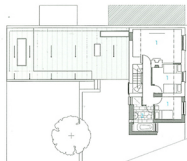
BEFORE



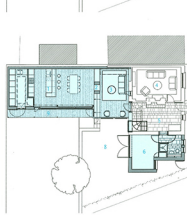
AFTER



FIRST FLOOR
1 BEDROOM
2 BATHROOM



GROUND FLOOR
1 KITCHEN
2 FIRE PLACE
3 DEN
4 LIVING ROOM
5 HALL
6 FRONT GARDEN
7 PATIO
8 VERANDAH



HOUSE 43

HOUSE 45