



A HOUSE FOR A COMFORTABLE FUTURE

A retired couple built an easy-to-manage sun-filled home that will comfortably take them into their golden years

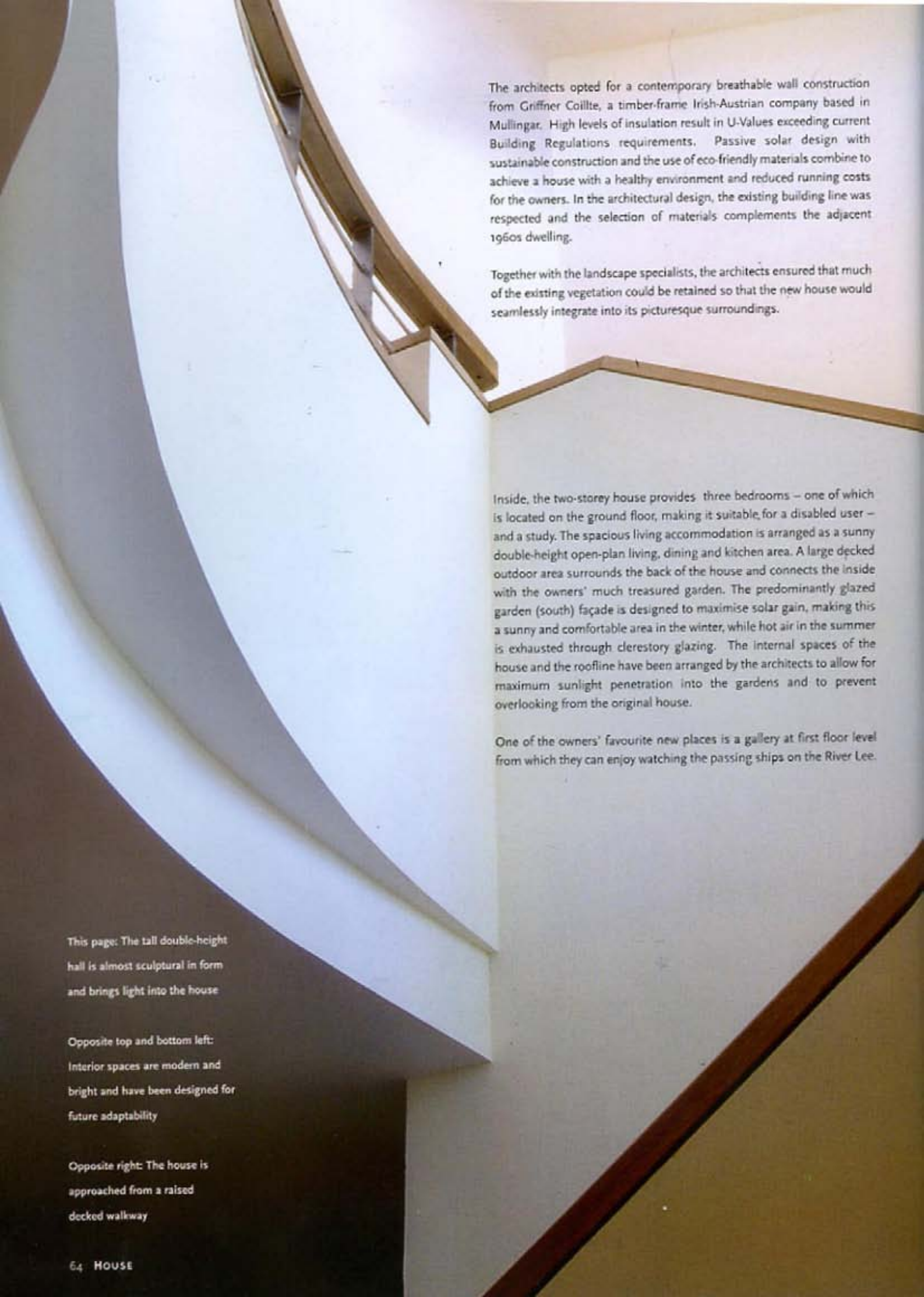


PHOTOGRAPHY: GABRIELLE MOREHEAD

A house for all future eventualities, with spaces that are easy to maintain and can be adapted for disabled use was the brief given to architects Wain Morehead by a retired couple in Blackrock, County Cork. As their 1960s architect-designed house and large gardens had become too large for them to manage, they opted to start again with a house that would address all their future needs.

The couple were fortunate to own a beautiful south-facing site on land adjoining their home. The area – close to the Marina Road in Blackrock, Cork – affords scenic views over Cork Harbour and is used by many people for walking and cycling. The owners are keen gardeners and a connection with the garden and views to the adjacent River Lee was fundamental to any design option. A particular challenge for the architects was the narrowness of the site and the steep rise of the riverbank at the rear of the property.





The architects opted for a contemporary breathable wall construction from Griffner Coillte, a timber-frame Irish-Austrian company based in Mullingar. High levels of insulation result in U-Values exceeding current Building Regulations requirements. Passive solar design with sustainable construction and the use of eco-friendly materials combine to achieve a house with a healthy environment and reduced running costs for the owners. In the architectural design, the existing building line was respected and the selection of materials complements the adjacent 1960s dwelling.

Together with the landscape specialists, the architects ensured that much of the existing vegetation could be retained so that the new house would seamlessly integrate into its picturesque surroundings.

Inside, the two-storey house provides three bedrooms – one of which is located on the ground floor, making it suitable for a disabled user – and a study. The spacious living accommodation is arranged as a sunny double-height open-plan living, dining and kitchen area. A large decked outdoor area surrounds the back of the house and connects the inside with the owners' much treasured garden. The predominantly glazed garden (south) façade is designed to maximise solar gain, making this a sunny and comfortable area in the winter, while hot air in the summer is exhausted through clerestory glazing. The internal spaces of the house and the roofline have been arranged by the architects to allow for maximum sunlight penetration into the gardens and to prevent overlooking from the original house.

One of the owners' favourite new places is a gallery at first floor level from which they can enjoy watching the passing ships on the River Lee.

This page: The tall double-height hall is almost sculptural in form and brings light into the house

Opposite top and bottom left: Interior spaces are modern and bright and have been designed for future adaptability

Opposite right: The house is approached from a raised decked walkway

Left: The new home is located in a scenic area with stunning views over Cork harbour

Left bottom: The garden side of the timber frame house, designed with eco-friendly materials in mind

This page: A first floor gallery overlooks the living room and makes this a tall and bright space





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John Morehead was born in Cork and graduated from Bolton Street Dublin in 1981. Having gained experience in practices in Europe, Wain Morehead Architects was formed in 1995.

Wain Morehead Architects is a dynamic practice with a diverse and contemporary approach to sustainable design and alternative forms of construction and has gained an enviable reputation for top quality design backed by sound project management techniques, using sustainable solutions. The practice provides expertise in the architectural, interior design, urban planning and project management areas.

Their master plan for Knocknaheeny, Cork was nominated for the Grand-Prix de l'Urbanisme 2002, a major international Urban Design Award, held in Paris.

PROJECT FACTS

Project duration: 6 months

House size: 160m²

Main contractor: Griffner Coillte, Mullingar

Quantity surveyors: Richard Leonard & Associates, Cork

Structural engineers: Horganlynch, Cork

Ground works contractor: John F. Supple Limited, Cork

Kitchen suppliers: House of Coolmore, Cork

Landscaping: Richard Sullivan, Samara Landscapes, Cork

Timber decking: Decks by Design, Cork

Furniture: Michael Haberbosch, MIMO, Cork

Photography: Gabrielle Morehead, Cork
www.gm-photo.com



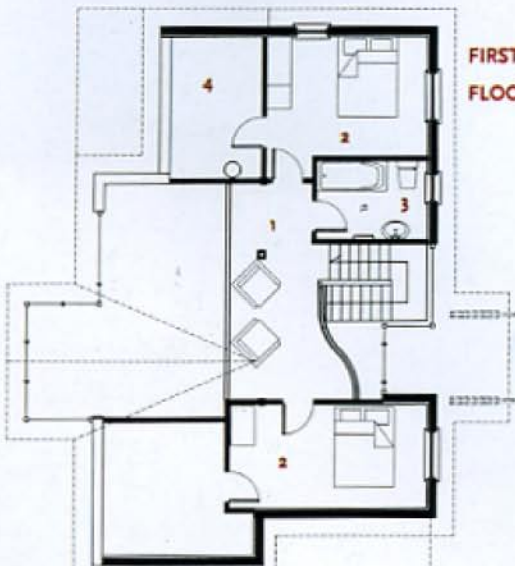
The first floor gallery has been designed to gain picturesque views over the marina



GROUND FLOOR PLAN

Ground floor plan

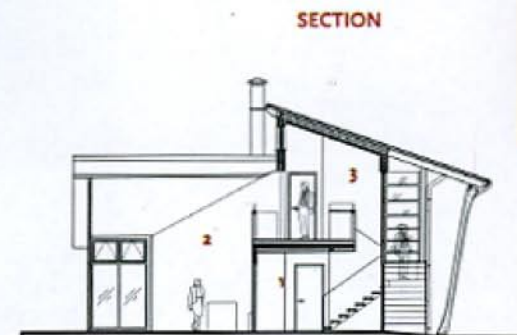
- 1 raised decked walkway entrance
- 2 entrance hall
- 3 study room
- 4 utility room
- 5 kitchen area
- 6 dining / breakfast area
- 7 living room
- 8 under stairs storage room
- 9 shower room
- 10 master bedroom and dressing room
- 11 decking areas



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

First floor plan

- 1 gallery overlooking living room
- 2 bedroom
- 3 bathroom
- 4 study



SECTION

Section

- 1 hall
- 2 living space
- 3 first floor gallery