

HOMES CONTEMPORARY SELF-BUILD



PROJECT NOTES

Project:
Contemporary
self-build

Location:
Cornwall

Build time: Mar
2013 – Feb 2014

Size: 350m²

Plot cost:
£1.75million

Build cost:
£1million
(£2,857/m²)

Value: £3million+

The Lookout

Colin Price and Sharon Towe's new Cornish cliff-top home was inspired by the site's dramatic coastal views

Words: Debbie Jeffery Photography: Ambience Images

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THE QUICK READ

➡ Colin Price purchased the seaside house in Cornwall as a surprise birthday present for his wife Sharon Toye

➡ The couple considered extending and renovating the existing house but soon concluded that it made more sense to demolish the property and replace it with a new house

➡ Their architect designed a striking contemporary home with large expanses of glazing and, despite the tight and rocky ground conditions, the project was finished on time and within budget

In the village of Porthcothan Bay in North Cornwall, on the UK's southernmost tip, stands an innovative new house that was designed around the site's remarkable position on the coastline, overlooking Will's Rock and the sea. Situated between Newquay and Padstow, in a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the contemporary two storey house replaces a smaller, more traditional property.

"We were determined to find a house on a particular road we had fallen in love with, and waited for a full two years until one became available," explains Colin Price. "It was actually a surprise present for my wife, so intrigue was high, and we were delighted to bag it."

Building a Replacement

At first Colin and Sharon considered extending and renovating the existing 1960s property, but soon realised it would be more practical to demolish the house and build a replacement, which would take full advantage of the spectacular views. ➡

Right: Rear Elevation

Inspired by two sets of binoculars, the north-facing rear of the rendered blockwork house has been almost entirely glazed, and is angled to make the most of the sun and sea views

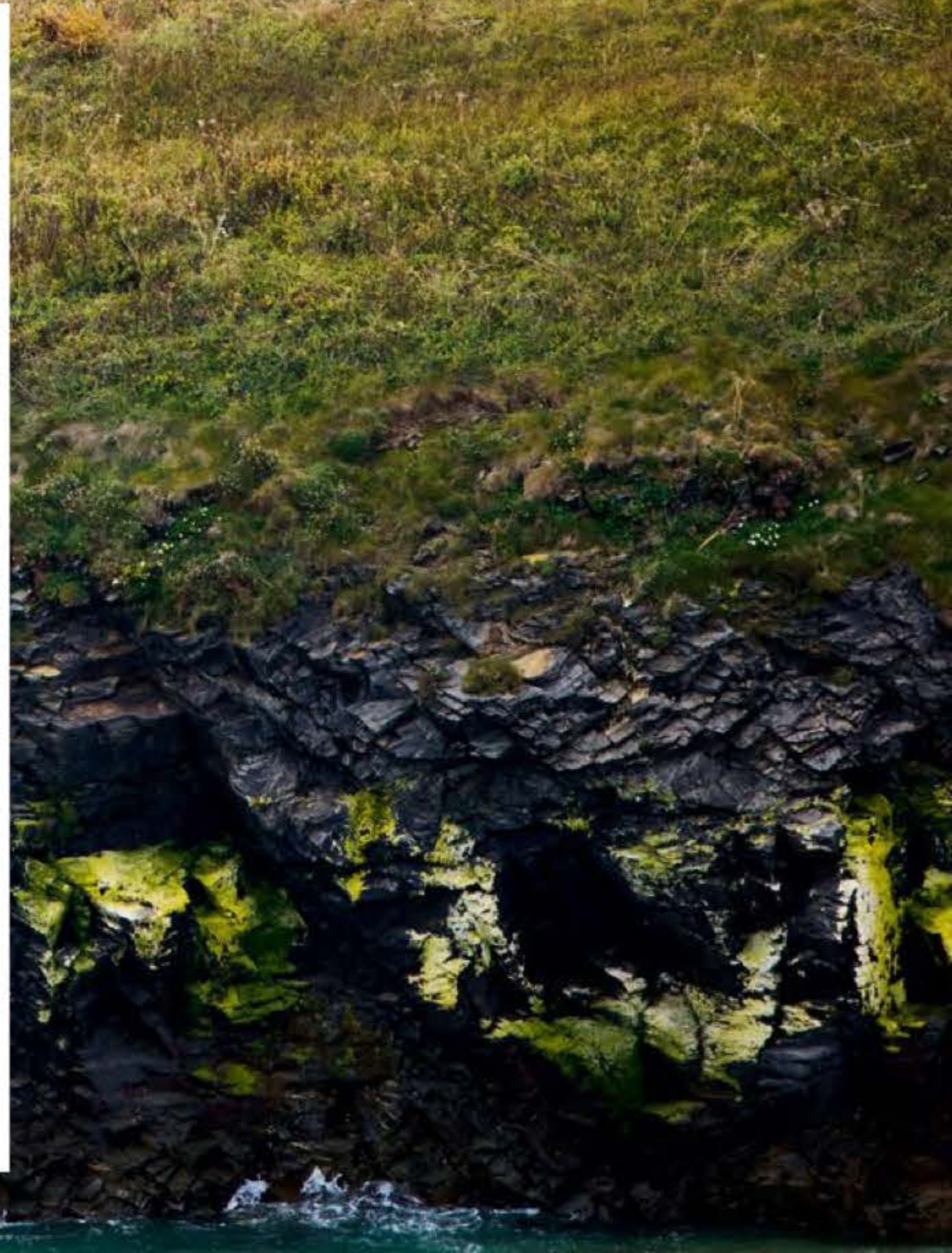
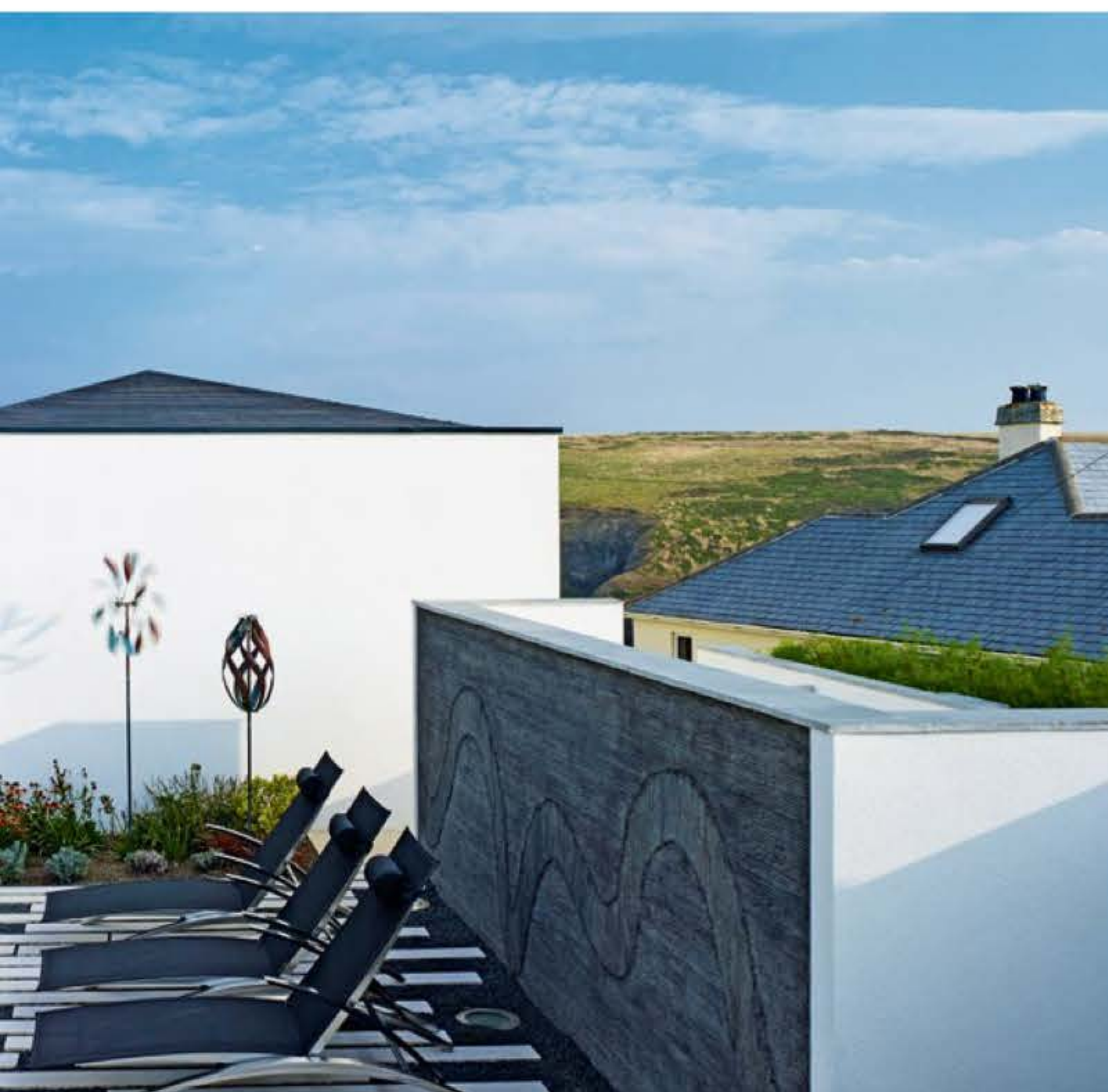


Above and left: Front Elevation

The windowless front elevation of the house appears single storey and gives little clue as to what lies beyond the entrance door — including those stunning views



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Kitchen-Diner

The open plan kitchen features high-gloss base cabinets and burr walnut wall cupboards, white Corian worktops and painted glass splashbacks. A walk-in fridge was also requested by the family. The dining space opens out on to a patio with breathtaking views

“The plot is in such a beautiful location it was critical that the design was sensitive to the environment, but we also wanted a contemporary statement,” Colin explains. “This is where the architects worked their magic.”

London-based practice Lacey & Saltykov Architects was appointed, and worked with Colin and Sharon to design a house that would suit the couple and their children, Cameron and Jodie. “My dad is a retired architect, who had also worked with the family on previous homes,” says Tom Lacey.

A Site-Specific Design

The shape of the plot dictated a long, tapered structure, which broadens out towards the sea. Responding to the site’s topography, the new house accommodates the slope of the land and is arranged in two distinct zones. All bedrooms are located in a rectangular block, which captures the morning sun from the east, and living spaces are situated in a triangular block arranged over two floors, with the sitting room above the dining area.

The main entrance is reached through a gap between these living and bedroom blocks, where a glimpse of sea and Will’s Rock to one side of an angled wall gives a hint of what can be seen from inside. The rear of the house is largely given over to glass doors and windows, which provide spectacular panoramic views of the surrounding scenery.

The new house is more than double the size of the original three-bed property which stood on the plot, and the first planning application was rejected following objections to a circular roof over the living room. This was changed to a more conventional pitched design, which was felt to be in keeping with other buildings along the coastline, and following meetings with neighbours, consent was finally given for the second scheme. ➡



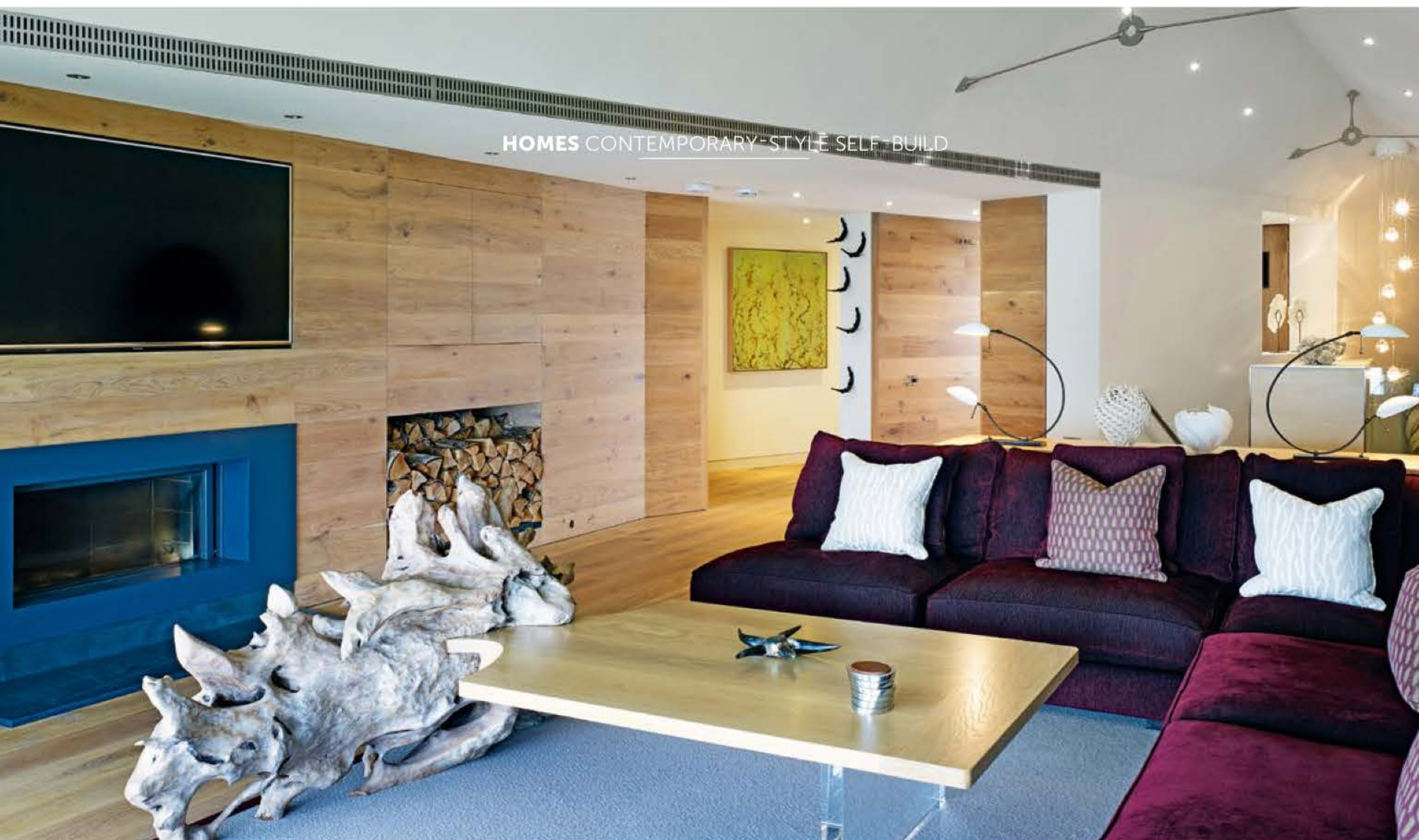


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Outdoor Space

The massive amount of glazing to the rear of the property ensures the stunning views are fully visible from the main living areas





HOMES CONTEMPORARY-STYLE SELF-BUILD

The Living Room

Large wall-to-wall full-height glazing overlooks sea views in the first floor sitting room (accessed via a centrally placed stairwell, right), where engineered oak flooring has been laid over underfloor heating and clads the fireplace wall

Doubling the Size

Colin had seen a house in Cornwall that had been built by Gordon Derry & Sons, who – following a tender process – was employed as main contractor for his own project. Building such a large property on the narrow, sloping site proved challenging, especially as access was along a lane and there was little space for storing materials on site.

“The build was tricky and it would have been something of a disaster if we’d damaged the cliff while digging down, but our builders managed it with great skill, and the project was finished on time even considering we experienced one of the worst winters on record,” says Colin.

Once the existing property had been demolished, the site was cleared and the rock excavated by specialist groundworkers for foundations. Blockwork walls were then built up on the concrete slab, with a beam and block first floor and a timber roof structure.

The external walls have been finished in insulated render, and the windows are made from thermally efficient aluminium — ensuring that the structure is highly insulated and energy efficient. Underfloor heating and a mechanical ventilation and heat recovery system were installed, with energy usage further reduced by the use of high-performance heat pumps to provide heating and hot water. ➡





Above: Master Bedroom

The bed in the master bedroom has been placed facing the wall of glass, which overlooks Will's Rock and the sea. A sunken bath (shown centre) is positioned directly in front of a window looking out to sea

The Finished Home

Living in Bath during the project meant that site visits were infrequent for Colin and Sharon, who relied on their builder's weekly emails and photographs for updates. The couple, who are both management consultants, have renovated and extended a number of properties, and this experience proved invaluable.

They chose to employ the same interior designer they had worked with on previous homes, who suggested a simple scheme using natural materials such as timber and stone. This ensures that the focus remains firmly on the view, with major pieces of furniture positioned facing out to sea.

The result is a tranquil retreat with stunning views, which offers the family everything they need. "We love the house and every time we arrive stress melts away," concludes Colin. "It was definitely worth the wait to find this site." **H**





Above and Far Left: Bathrooms

In keeping with the rest of the home, the bathrooms are contemporary and feature a subtle combination of dark slate and natural stone. The sanitaryware is from CP Hart

Left: Study

A study area on the first floor takes full advantage of the magnificent sea views



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The Project



**Tom Lacey and
Andrei Saltykov**
Architects

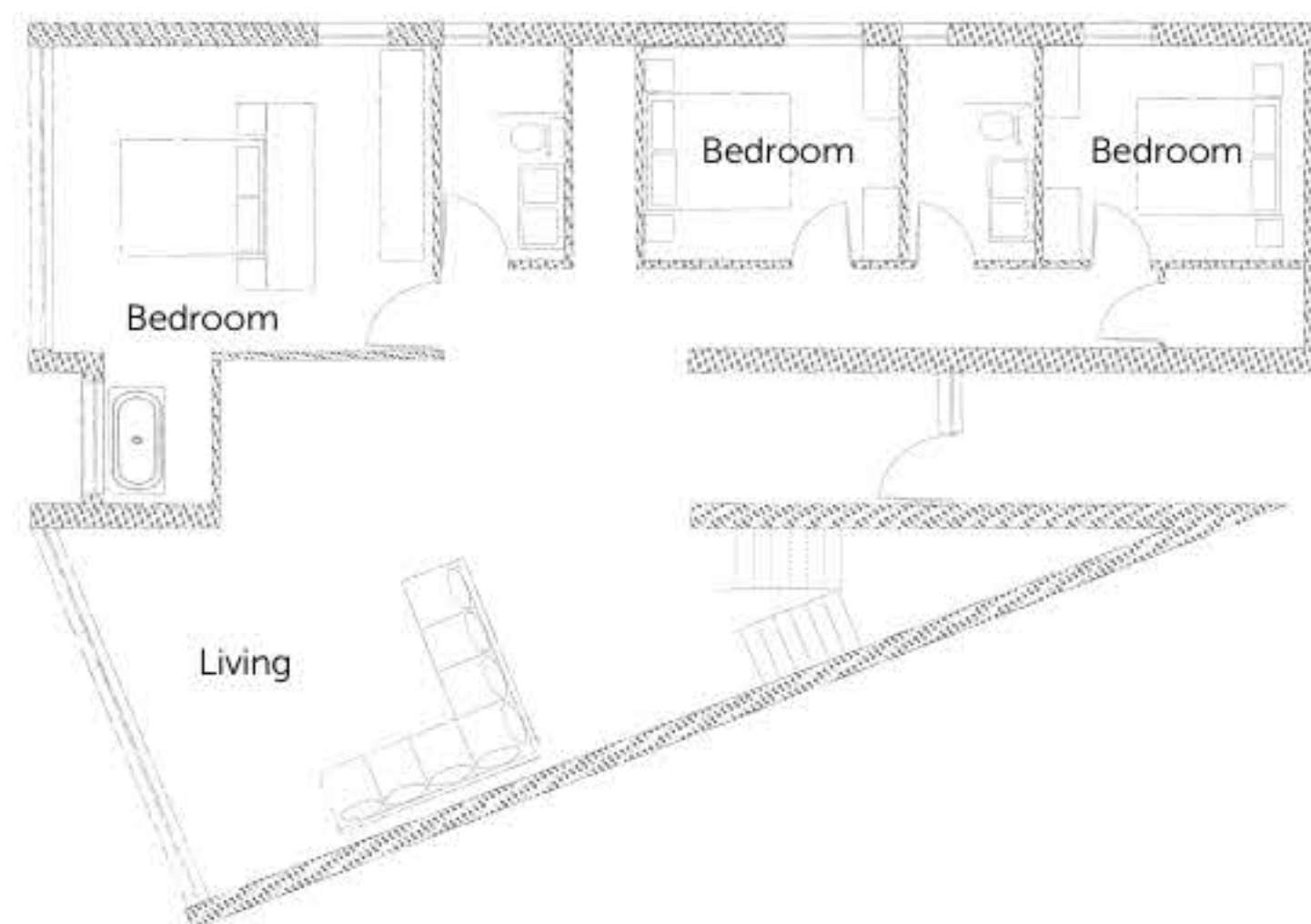
ARCHITECTS' VIEW

Creating a house that was both striking and worthy of the stunning setting was a real challenge, but the site gave us all the inspiration we needed on this project, and it was this that we kept coming back to as the design evolved.

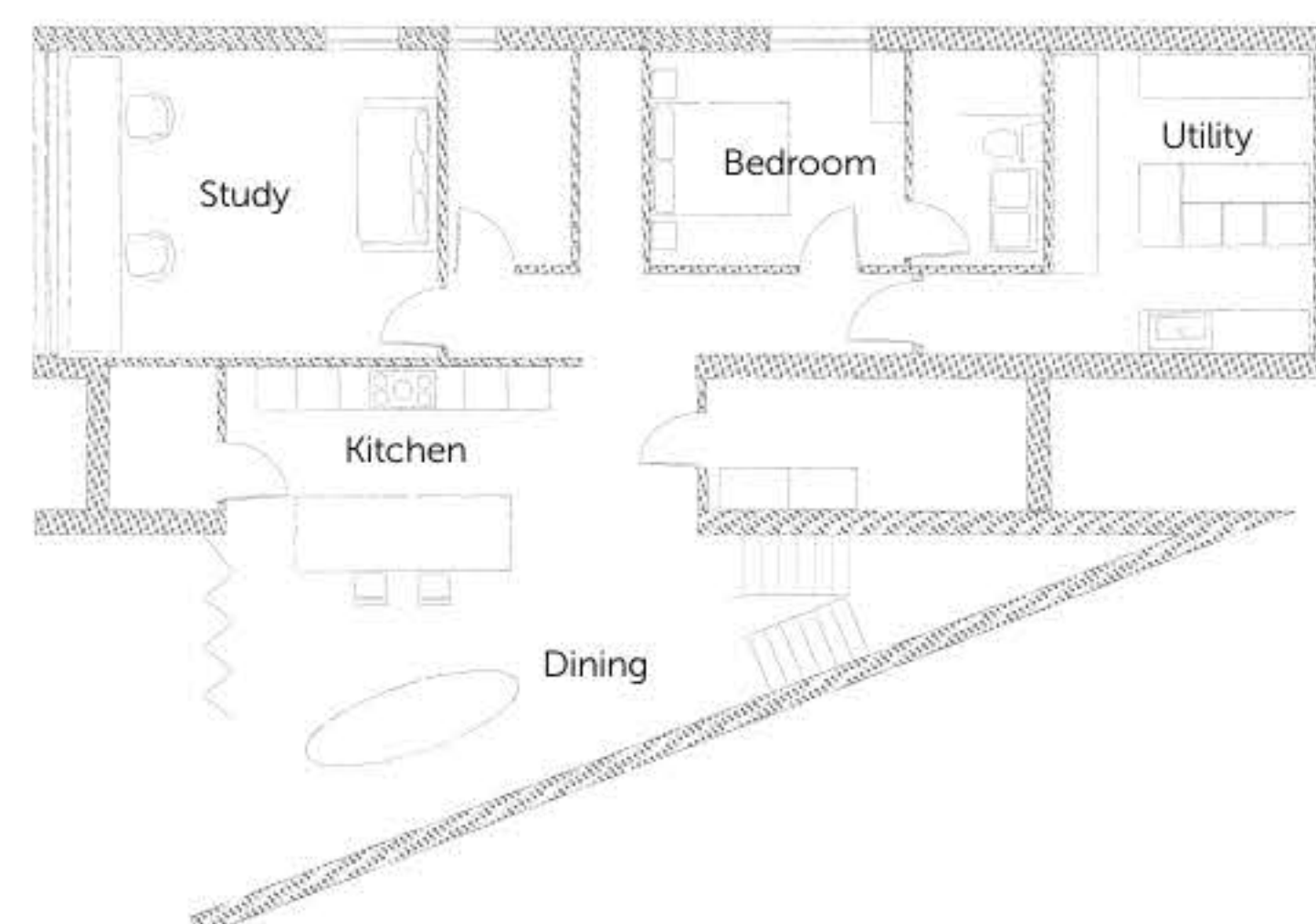
The starting point was the idea of two pairs of binoculars, placed one on top of the other, so that the four lenses of the binoculars were angled individually to capture uninterrupted views towards Will's Rock and out to sea.

We were limited to a traditional palette of materials, which we reinterpreted for a crisp, clean finish. The house has rendered walls and frameless double-glazed glass units. Built from engineered slate, the low-pitched roof adds extra volume to the living space.

Ground Floor



Lower Ground Floor



SUPPLIERS

Architect Lacey & Saltykov
Architects.....laceysaltykov.com
Structural engineer Expedition
Engineering.....expedition.uk.com
Services engineer Arup.....arup.com
Main contractor Gordon Derry & Sons
.....01208 812 975
Interior designer Amanda Burgess-Webb
.....abw-design.com
Landscape architect Jano Williams Garden
Design.....janowilliams.com
Architectural glass Trombe.....trombe.co.uk
Bi-folding doors Camel Group
.....camelglass.co.uk
Render system Knauf Marmorit UK
.....marmorit.co.uk
Roof tiles Nu-Lok Roofing Systems
.....nu-lokusa.com
Engineered oak floors and wall cladding
JFJ Joinery.....jfjwoodflooring.co.uk
Architectural lighting
Occhio.....occhio.de
Lighting Artemideartemide.com
Fireplace Kernow Fires
.....kernowfires.co.uk
Kitchen Roundhouse Design
.....roundhousedesign.co.uk
Quatreau boiling/chiller tap Pure H2O
.....pureh2o.co.uk
Walk-in fridge Foster Coldstores
.....fostercoldstores.com
Sanitaryware CP Hartcphart.co.uk
Showers Hansgrohe.....hansgrohe.co.uk
Ocean low-line bath Bette.....bette.de

PROJECT TIMELINE

Jul 11 Plot purchased
Jan 12 First planning application submitted
Jan 13 Planning approval granted
Mar 13 Start on site
May 13 Foundations completed
Aug 13 Glazing installed
Feb 14 House occupied
May 14 Garden and garage completed