



Hill House Feneley Studio, Tunbridge Wells

Architect: Feneley Studio
Client: Private Client

Pivotal to opening up the views towards the sky and maximising the natural daylight entering this 5 bedroom private residence were Glazing Vision's fixed Flushglaze rooflights.

Completed in 2016 by Feneley Studio, this project has earned numerous accolades from the architectural fraternity. The elegant combination of angles and straight lines lend this narrow property a captivating quality, and despite the constraints of the small plot size, it exudes space and light.

Challenging design brief for residential property

Prior to the client acquiring the site, there were 12 lock-up garages located there. Over the years a number of planning applications for re-development had been

submitted but these had all failed on the grounds of over-development and loss of privacy to neighbours.

Given the complex nature of the site context the client turned to St Albans based Feneley Studio, a practice with an established reputation for their creative response to developing site specific, energy conscious architecture, and one with which he had worked on previous projects. The architect was tasked by the client to design a large, modern family home that would maximise the opportunities of this narrow plot of land, whilst simultaneously respecting the height restrictions imposed by the planners and minimising the impact on the neighbouring period properties.

Innovative split-house concept and sensitive choice of materials

Feneley's clever solution was a split-house concept, which would reduce the building mass and would align with

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the scale of the Coach House next door. The linear house plan runs from north to south, the garden faces eastwards towards the street, framed by a wall and a close-boarded fence to guarantee privacy. The house is uniquely configured into 3 component parts: an elongated single-storey family room linking two outer wings, each 2-storeys high, which house the bedrooms and bathrooms as well as a spacious lounge area on the ground floor. All 3 elements to the house share a garden aspect. By separating the 2 wings with this low-rise central "link" Feneley Studio ensured that the house did not dominate the street landscape, and an added bonus was that the mature trees in the gardens to the rear of the house could still be seen from Upper Dunstan Road. Crucially, given the restrictions imposed by the planners to avoid overlooking, each wing acts as a visual buffer to the direction of certain windows.



Underpinning the selection of the actual building materials was the need to respect the architectural narrative of the neighbourhood – the white clay brickwork, enhanced by the matching white mortar, is a nod to similar exterior finishes on the street but it also plays a key role in reflecting the light back into the house. The long format bricks emphasise the "split or stretched" form of the house. The blue/black slate roof and the slender trim detail around the junctions add to the minimalist, contemporary aesthetic that both the architect and client sought for the property. Windows and sliding exterior doors have slim frames in anodized silver, a material chosen for its ability to offer up nuances of colour depending on the prevailing light conditions.



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Spacious, family-oriented layout

As a practice renowned for crafting light-filled spaces, Feneley Studio set about designing the most efficient and free-flowing layout for this linear house. Narrow places for storage and circulation, such as the hallway and staircases, lead and open out to wider family spaces on the ground floor, and to bedrooms and sleek, modern bathrooms on the first floor, where the vaulted ceilings follow the asymmetrical form of the roof above to enhance the feeling of loft and airiness. Large windows to the east-facing side of the house ensure that all the principal living spaces receive sunlight during the day. An inverted bay window was added to act as a lightwell where the hallway steps down to the kitchen. The impressive double height entrance is also bright and welcoming, benefiting from the extensive glazing positioned between the door and the pitched roof.



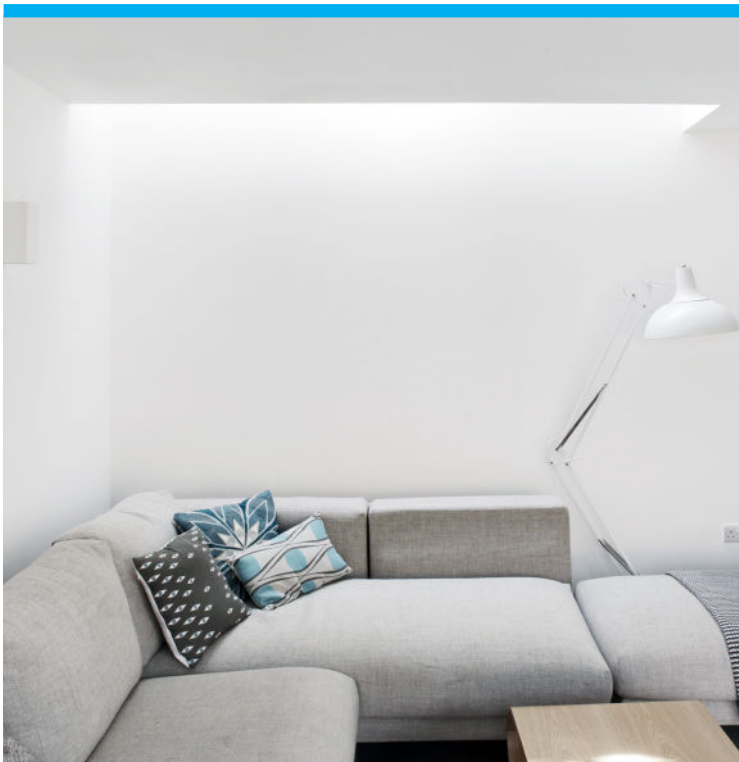
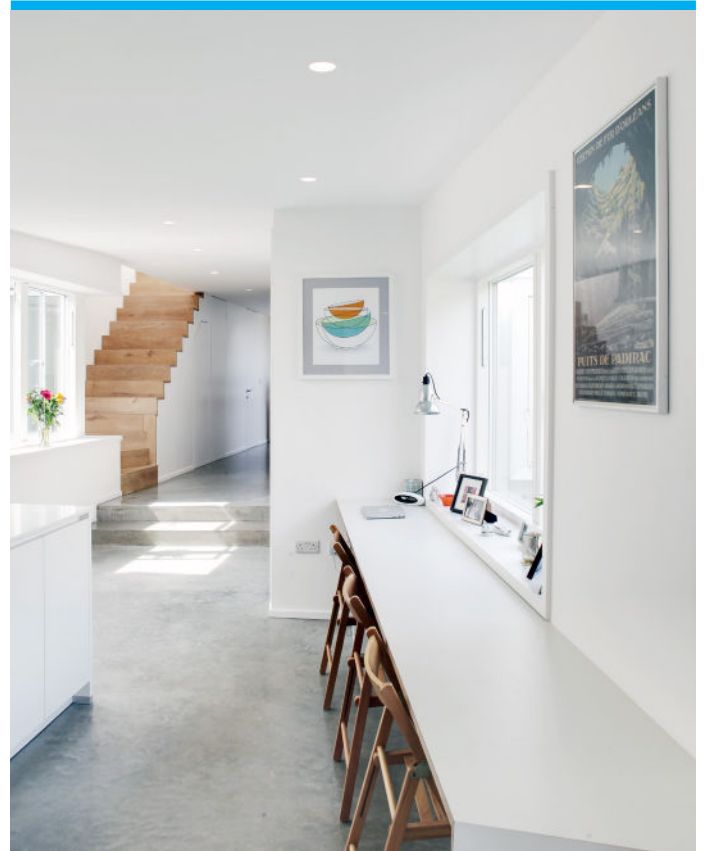
For the parts of the house to the west, where no windows were permitted, and for the narrow staircases, lined with oiled-oak, the architect was challenged with finding an innovative way to unlock the daylight, which would also not detract from the contemporary interior. Having already had positive experience of using Glazing Vision's rooflights on other projects, Feneley Studio specified their fixed Flushglaze rooflights for Hill House as they were deemed to offer a number of benefits. A key consideration had been that each one of the rooflights needed to be made not just to a bespoke size, but also with special proportions, in order to provide for the maximum amount of light possible. The studio felt that Glazing Vision uniquely offered the precision engineering required for these units. At their factory in Norfolk, Glazing Vision manufactured 3 individual fixed Flushglaze rooflights for installation at this property: a 2.8m x 0.8m unit for the living room, which has 2 kerb and 2 wall abutment details, a 2.4m x 0.8m unit for the kitchen, and finally a 1.8m x 1.8m unit for the master bathroom.

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Maximising the light and sky-only views

In specifying Glazing Vision's fixed Flushglaze rooflights, Feneley Studio ensured that the product would compliment the clean, modern aesthetics of the house's interior. The minimalist internal frame ensures that the rooflights remain inobtrusive, and the white finish is in perfect harmony with the white décor, and the sleek, contemporary furnishings.

But it is the abundance of natural daylight that these generously sized, fixed Flushglaze rooflights have made possible in these otherwise compromised parts of the house that most satisfies and delights the architect and the client. From the living room and the kitchen on the ground floor, which are surrounded by a high wall and outer fence, there are uninhibited views to



The extra-large fixed Flushglaze rooflight in the master bathroom, the most private room in the house, allows the light to absolutely flood in, and offers the most amazing day and nighttime vistas.

In overcoming the challenges of this particular plot of land Feneley Studio has succeeded in building an exquisite, contemporary residence, comprising 180 sq.metres of living space and an attractive garden for the family to relax and entertain. Hill House is most definitely a handsome addition to the neighbourhood.

For more information on Glazing Vision's fixed Flushglaze rooflights, contact us on 01379 658 300.