

Open House London



Archifacts sheet

The Laundry Houses.

Quay 2c Architects; Two New Eco Houses.
April 2013 – September 2014

21-22 Albert Way, Peckham Se15 1DG

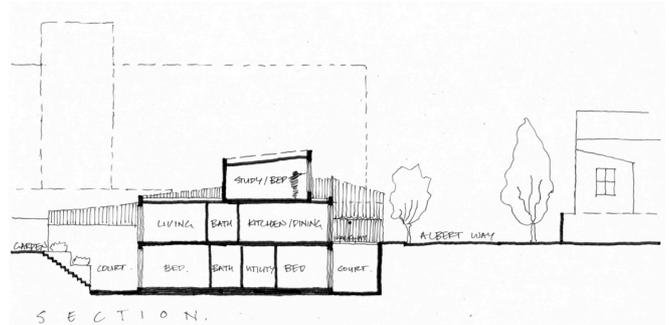
Background and Brief

The scheme has been designed to make best use of an under-utilised brownfield back garden of a five bedroomed, two storey Victorian house in Peckham. Adjacent to the site to the western end of the garden, a housing association developed a two storey terrace to what is now Albert Way 15 years ago, leaving a rather blank 3 meter high wall to address the new entrance to the street. We thus saw an opportunity to invigorate the streetscape and open the new houses towards the public realm.

As a self-developed project, Quay 2c Architects bought the existing house and refurbished it to rent. We secured Planning permission in the summer of 2010 in the back part of the 46m x 10m garden as a scheme to showcase the practice and its ability to procure innovative projects. The planning report saw the scheme as a good precedent for a car-free, double aspect, cross-ventilated development, that would allow a full terrace of eight houses to evolve in the future.

Arrangement

The scheme creates two new build semi-detached 4-bed houses each of 133 m2 area and 5 meters wide.



They each have private back gardens in a typical back-to-back arrangement with the Victorian host house. The sectional arrangement of three quarter basement, ground and first floor, gives a top 'pavilion' room to Albert Way clad in sandblasted glass. These rooms could be used as a bedroom or as a study for home working, in which case daytime occupation would further benefit the active street frontage.

Entry to each house is over a dedicated level access walkway as the building is set back to allow light to the basement, recalling the arrangement of London's Georgian terraces. This leads into the entrance lobby and the Kitchen / Dining room with a mesh-floored balcony for evening sun while also giving access to the bin and recycling store. A more private principal living room occupies the full width of each house at the back with a view and direct access to the garden via their own terrace.

The basement is quieter and more private and is given over to bedrooms that open up onto their own courtyards. Bathrooms and storage areas are plentiful, with a dedicated utility room in the basement.



Laundry Houses

Previously there was an old laundry on the site of what is now Albert Way. This absence suggested a theme to the project as the new buildings by definition defer to the existing houses and gardens, so a certain ethereal like presence was sought to the new proposals. This is echoed in their set back from the street, being sunk into the ground and the general material palette and organization.

Finishing Materials; External Walls + Roof

The building is generally finished in a 'corduroy' pattern of Camaru (a Northern, South American hardwood) timber boards and fins. The fins extend beyond the solid parts of the building to become balustrades where required, but in other areas give an indeterminate appearance. The Camaru hardwood was chosen to reinforce the garden feel of the building and for its strong sustainability and weathering credentials. This hovering Camaru 'band' is separated from the ground by rebuilding of the existing brickwork garden walls.

Toning into the trees surrounding the top floor gives a 'light' crown to each house made of green tinged sand-blasted glass panels. All the roofs including the bike and bin store to the front have a special Swiss developed wildflower green roof that uses a hay substrate. The redevelopment of the site has thus retained its bio-diversity. All the decking is of easy to clean, non-slip recycled plastic.

Finishing Materials; Laundry Theme

Both the internal and external material selection was guided by the thought of what an old laundry house might have been like. This hopefully gives an 'in use' 'lived in' quality to the project. More specifically the micro cladding to the top floor visually separating the houses was chosen to recall traditional washboards. Similarly the glass panel between the front doors announces their name and number in a style similar to name labels sewn into clothing. This is printed on a background of the local launderettes' tumble dryer, digitally imbedded into the glue that bonds together the laminated glass panel. This is then back-painted in the same way mirrors are manufactured.

Structural Materials

The project began with the construction of the 2.75m deep basement, 23m long by 10m wide. This took approximately 7 months, fortunately before the deluge that was January and February of this year. By that time our solid laminated timber (CLT) structure had been erected and installed in 7 days..... dropping down into the middle of the basement to form an acoustic separating wall between the houses. This was then covered with a protective eco rubber roof membrane. CLT structures make walls, floors and roofs out of laminated spruce wood in panels 100-200mm thick and up to 13m long x 3m wide so they can be accommodated on a flat bed truck. They are then simply screwed together with massive screws and clad over on site with insulation and our varying cladding materials. Internally they have been exposed with a white stain to the ceilings and a clear lacquer to give fire protection throughout.

Facts

Architects: www.quay2c.com

Contractor: 1-Off Basements Ltd.

Progress Blog: laundryhouse.blogspot.co.uk

Designed to Lifetime Homes for disabled access & Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4

The houses are **For Sale**ask for details.