

In brief

PROJECT Extension, garage conversion and remodel

LOCATION

Buckinghamshire

COST £850,000

SPENT £300,000

WORTH Unknown



Designed for **family living**

Jonny and Sarah Boddington drew up their own plans for the major extension and transformation of a previously unremarkable 1960s house.

Story: **Debbie Jeffery** Photography: **Bovingdons**

“We loved the road but not the house,” is how Jonny Boddington sums up the dilemma of taking on a dated, detached property in Buckinghamshire three years ago. Standing on a peaceful no-through road, close to countryside walks and a popular village pub, the four-bedroom house was crying out to be modernised and remodelled to make the most of its setting.

Jonny and his wife, Sarah, are familiar with renovating and extending their homes, and have tackled several projects over recent years. They first met through their work as teachers and enjoyed watching TV programmes about home renovation, which inspired them to secure their first mortgage on a derelict listed cottage. Despite their lack of building experience, the project was a resounding success, and since then they have tackled several more renovations on tight budgets.

In 2017, Jonny and Sarah were expecting their first child, and the need for more space led them to start house-hunting once again. “Our previous home was in the centre of town, with a small garden, but we wanted somewhere



EXTERIOR

Standing in a peaceful location, the 1960s house has been transformed with a new porch, a rear extension, and a garage conversion with a master bedroom built above.

Left: Jonny and Sarah with their builder Ady.

in the countryside with outdoor space,” says Sarah. “After unsuccessfully trying to buy a barn for conversion we went into a panic and started looking at everything.”

The couple had repeatedly overlooked the house they eventually bought, due to poor quality estate agent

REMODEL & EXTENSION



GARDEN
The property enjoys sun all day, with landscaped gardens and seating areas to the east, south and west.



REMODEL & EXTENSION



OLD AND NEW

The house as it was (above left). The relocation of the drive to the other side of the property was the starting point for the design of the extension which features a floating corner and £45,000 of glazing.

pictures. Eventually they decided to view in person and found it standing in a beautiful setting on a third-of-an-acre plot. Located in a peaceful hamlet on the edge of the Chilterns AONB, the property looks out across trees and fields, with country walks on the doorstep.

"The previous owner had been born there, and about 60 years ago she and her husband knocked down the original property and built a rectangular brick house and attached garage," says Sarah. "We instantly

thought we could do something with the house and loved the potential of the overgrown garden."

Following a protracted conveyancing process, the couple moved into their new home on the day their son Freddie, now three, was born. "Our completion date was two weeks before Sarah's due date, and everyone told us that first babies are always late," says Jonny. "In fact, the night before the move, Sarah told me she was in labour. We left the hospital from our old house and came back to this one!"

After a few months, the couple instructed a creative young architect who had been recommended to them. His designs were amazing, but builders' quotes for the work came in at more than double the budget.

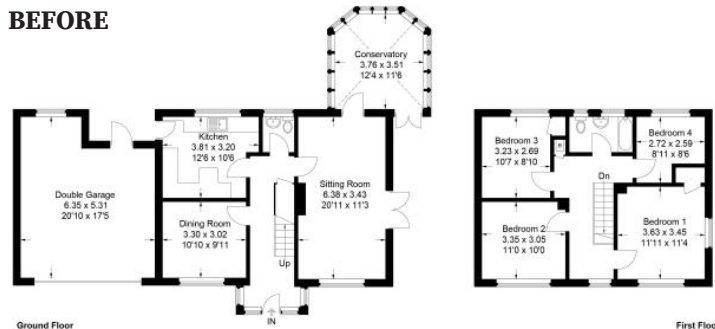
"It felt like we were questioning his artistic integrity, and there was no room for manoeuvre, so after a year of frustration we parted company and decided to draw up the plans ourselves," says Jonny.

"We visited trade shows and read design and architecture magazines, before setting out some simple guiding principles. As well as space, we wanted to increase light and views by adding as much glass as possible."

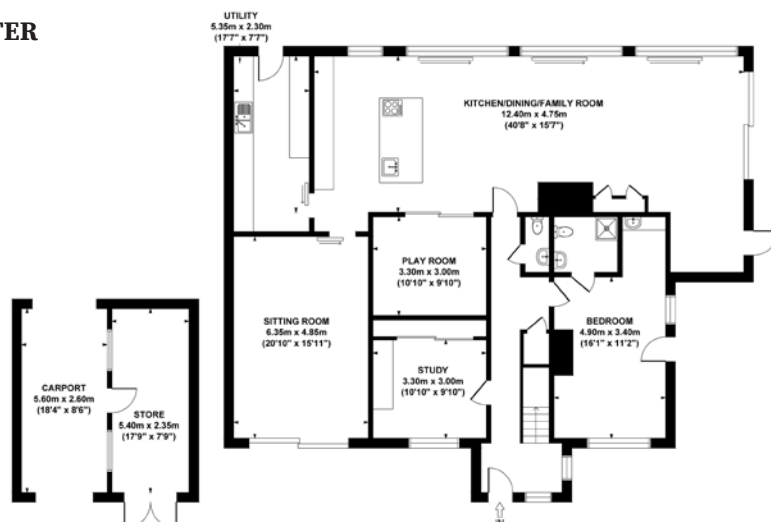
Jonny and Sarah were keen to keep and repurpose what they could of the original structure. "So many houses in our part of the world are knocked down and replaced, which seems like a waste, so we wanted to salvage what was already there," explains Sarah. "Sustainability was also important, which was another reason to recycle as much as possible."

Embracing these principles of space, light, sustainability and utility, the couple began working on the house design, getting input from their builder and a garden designer. "I then produced the plans rather painstakingly on Microsoft PowerPoint, moving around a whole bunch of boxes," says Jonny, who works for a financial services consultancy.

BEFORE



AFTER



The floorplan

The 288-sqm five-bedroom house has been extended to the rear with a large kitchen/dining/family room, and to the side with a sitting room in the former garage and a new master bedroom above.

There's a self-contained ground floor annexe, a playroom and study, with two children's bedrooms, a guest room, and two bathrooms on the first floor.



JONNY'S TOP TIP...

"Get references from your builder, because having one you can trust makes all the difference, and check references on big ticket items such as the glazing."



"We moved the drive from the left-hand side of the plot to the right, so that we could have a front and back garden, which would allow us to enjoy outdoor living, and this was the starting point for the whole design. We had a wonderfully talented garden designer called Bed Edwards who helped us think through this whole scheme, including the use of board-formed concrete and angular decking, which we love. Also, my grandfather is a structural engineer, and he helped with the design of the extension and the floating corner, which was our one big luxury."

Designing a simple single-storey box extension to the rear of the house created a spacious kitchen/dining/

family room, with a wood-burner, a utility room to one side, and glazed doors overlooking the garden.

The old kitchen became a playroom, and the former garage was converted into a sitting room, with a new master bedroom built above. A self-contained ground-floor annexe was designed for renting out, and upstairs are two children's rooms, a guest room and two bathrooms. Additionally, a new carport and store have been built in the garden.

"There were some slight complications because of the amount of glazing in the extension, which meant making additional SAP calculations," says Jonny. "After a few false starts we got planning permission, though, and off we went!"

Jonny and Sarah put the project out to tender and received wildly different quotes from the builders they approached. Ultimately, their preferred contractor, a local builder called Ady Boaca, proved to be an excellent choice. "He really cared about the project and undertook

In detail

PROJECT

Builder Ady Projects
Ltd: adyprojects.co.uk

Garden designer

Ben Edwards
benedwarddesign.com
Structural engineer Brian
Jones, Jones Kingswell
Partnership: 01943 468486

Project manager

Jonathan Boddington,
jonnysoob@hotmail.com

STRUCTURE

Thrutone tiles
(master bedroom
extension roof and
wall cladding) Marley
Eternit: marley.co.uk

Insulation Kingspan:
Kingspan.com

Brick slips Brick Slips:
brickslips.co.uk

Glass doors, windows
Rhino Aluminium:
rhinoaluminium.co.uk

Fireplaces, flues

The Fire Place:
thefireplacechesham.co.uk

FIXTURES AND FITTINGS

Kitchen, light fittings

Ikea: ikea.com

Taps, showers,

sanitaryware Grohe:
grohe.co.uk

Music system Sonos:
sonos.com

Lighting system

Lightwave RF:
lightwaveref.com

Heating system

Honeywell Livewell: livewell.honeywellhome.com

Bamboo flooring: Bamboo
Flooring Company:
bambooflooringcompany.com

Tiles Acorn Tiles:
acorntiles.com

Decking Cladco:
cladco.co.uk

CCTV Swann: swann.com



EXTENSION

The new rear kitchen/diner/family room has full-height sliding glass doors and a floating corner, opening up to views of the garden.





BEDROOMS

Upstairs are three large bedrooms and a new master suite, with vaulted ceiling, above the old garage. OSB and oak were used for wardrobe doors and a low-level storage wall behind the bed.

“

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the entire build,” says Jonny who describes him as a craftsman rather than a builder, and says he has never met anyone who takes so much pride in their work.

“One of the references Ady gave us was for several houses in the same road, where clients had referred him to other neighbours, which told us everything we needed to know,” says Jonny, who acted as project manager and sourced materials.

The original roof and brick walls of the existing house remained, and all windows have been replaced with aluminium units. A triangular flat-roofed porch supported on steel posts was also added to the south-facing aspect.

A new slab raised the original garage floor, and the structure was sound enough for conversion. “We packed it with insulation and laid underfloor heating,” says Jonny. “The whole house has been insulated to far greater levels of thermal efficiency than Building Regulations.”

Above the converted garage is a timber-framed bedroom, which was originally designed to have a standing seam metal cladding but this was amended because of the costs. Instead, Marley Eternit Thrutone grey fibre cement tiles were chosen for both the roof and wall cladding, which Ady was able to fix.

To the rear, the new kitchen/dining/family room is a hybrid of a steel and timber frame, built on concrete strip foundations. “We spent an extra £3,000 on the digging out, as we’re on clay soil and the Building Control

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EVERYTHING LOOKS AS FRESH AS THE DAY WE MOVED IN WHICH IS TESTAMENT TO OUR BUILDER'S APPROACH.



officer asked us to go down a bit deeper,” says Jonny. An overhanging roof provides shelter to the glass from sun and rain, and a combination of reclaimed bricks and brick slips were used to clad the structure.

All the chipboard and joists in the kitchen extension have been left exposed to save money on plastering, but the big indulgence was a corner sliding door system, which opens up the whole space to the garden.

To offset the cost of the floating glass corner, inexpensive and sustainable bamboo flooring has been laid over an underfloor heating system, while other money-saving bargains were sourced on eBay.

Ikea kitchen cabinets, made from recycled bottles, were customised with new handles and OSB kickboards, and the island worktop was formed from two giant Italian tiles. These were sourced from a salvage yard and create the appearance of a solid marble slab.

The property makes excellent use of technology, with independent heating in each room, wired CCTV, Google Nest, Sonos, AV distribution, and automated lighting, controllable via an iPhone or Android app. “We can ask Google to play Sonos in the kitchen or turn the lights off,” says Jonny.

The couple lived in the house with their young son during part of the build, before moving out for the final stages. “Sarah was pregnant again, at which point Ady intervened and explained that things were about to get very dusty, so it would probably be best if we weren't living on site,” says Jonny.

“We moved in with my mum in 2019 for the final three months of the eight-month project, and Ady raced to finish the house for us before Matilda was born. We've lived here for a year now with two young children and a dog, and everything still looks as fresh as the day we moved in, which is testament to our builder's approach.”



SITTING ROOM

The old garage has been converted into a more formal sitting room.

EN SUITE

The spacious master en suite has a walk-in shower and free-standing bath.

Final word

What were the high points of the project?

Discovering that our builder had an exceptional eye for detail and really cared about the project. He also managed to finish the house in time for our daughter's birth, which made life far easier!

...and the low point?

A two-month delay with the sliding doors, which involved three different companies and a successful court case. Fortunately, the third company (Rhino Aluminium) was able to rush through our order in two weeks, as long as we went with grey!

Your best buy?

The £100 cast stone bath, which we found on eBay, and the OSB we used for things like wardrobes,



which adds warmth and character.

Biggest extravagance?

Our glass sliding doors cost £45,000 and are a huge feature.