

DREAM BIG

CONSIDERING EXTENDING? FROM CLASSIC CONSERVATORIES TO CONTEMPORARY ADDITIONS, THESE PROJECTS WILL INSPIRE



FEATURE YVETTE MURRELL PHOTOGRAPH DAVIDE LOVATTI/FUTURECONTENTHUB.COM

GLASS ACT

A garden room extension can not only transform how your home looks from the outside, but how it functions internally, too. Whether you have a traditional or modern property – like this contemporary house in north London designed by architects Finkernagel Ross, with a vast multi-level extension geared for entertaining – it's important to focus on the glazing element of the new design.

'Homeowners are increasingly looking to add light and space to their homes with contemporary glazing structures,' says Ryan Schofield, managing director at Thames Valley Window Company. 'The trend for adding large areas of glass continues with the mix of old and new grabbing the attention.' →



“A GARDEN ROOM CAN BE POSITIONED ON NORTH, SOUTH, EAST AND WEST ELEVATIONS AND WILL WORK EQUALLY ON ALL IF DESIGNED CORRECTLY, INCORPORATING ADEQUATE VENTILATION”

LIZ MORTON, director, Vale Garden Houses

SENSITIVE APPROACH

Period properties all too often feature small windows, resulting in dark rooms. This project by Prime Oak has maximised light with large glazing panels and French doors, while ensuring it sits harmoniously with the existing property by opting for matching roof tiles.

DINE IN

‘Often, the simple geometry of a building can be transformed by adding an architectural feature such as a conservatory,’ says Liz Morton, director at Vale Garden Houses. This structure was designed for a Georgian property and provides a spacious dining room.

JOINED UP

A dynamic connection between your house and garden can be achieved with large bifold doors. Here there is a level change, but where possible look to run the same flooring inside and out for a seamless finish. This garden room is by David Salisbury.



RELAXED LIVING

How you wish to use your garden room can depend on the layout of your existing home, as well as where the extension will be added. This Westbury Garden Rooms design acts as a relaxing living space, with comfortable sofas and a beautifully landscaped vista to look out onto. This type of layout is great for those with large families or visiting guests. Similarly, it is a popular choice to turn a garden room into a sociable dining area off the back of a kitchen, so that there’s no disconnect between those cooking with others who are chatting at the table. To achieve this fluid dynamic, you can opt for French doors connecting the house with the new extension, and mirror this again with wide doors opening out onto the terrace. →



NATURAL CHOICE

This light-filled oak garden room by Julius Bahn maximises natural light and offers near-panoramic views of the garden. Glazing on three elevations, a glazed gable and bifold doors together create a light and spacious entertaining room that truly brings the outdoors in all year round. But it is the use of sustainably-sourced oak that makes this extension a standout design. Oak is both a natural and sympathetic material and is often the go-to choice when extending period properties. Furthermore, these types of garden rooms can be built as almost stand-alone buildings, with well-insulated and simple underfloor electrical heating systems keeping the space warm and inviting. →



“A WELL-DESIGNED CONSERVATORY OR ORANGERY WITH A SYMPATHETIC STRUCTURE CAN COMPLEMENT THE EXISTING ARCHITECTURE OF THE HOUSE WHILE ADDING TO SALEABILITY AND VALUE OF THE PROPERTY”

MARK WILD, designer, Malbrook Conservatories



CLEAR WINNER

Garden rooms can benefit city townhouses, too. In this property in southwest London, sliding doors on the lower ground floor extend the relaxed living area into the garden, designed by landscape designer Luciano Giubbilei.

GREEN VISION

In the home of designer Louise Bradley, the new, light extension with floor-to-ceiling windows was built to make the most of surrounding views of greenery. ‘I wanted an indoor-outdoor space that I could enjoy all year round,’ says Louise.

BLEND IN

Set within the picturesque Cotswolds area, this kitchen-diner extension by Malbrook Conservatories measures around five square metres and is sympathetic to the original property. The heritage paint colour blends with the honeyed Cotswold stone. →



BACK TO BASICS

When embarking on a garden room extension, start by designing from the inside-out. How you want the space to function will largely dictate the structural changes needed. Will it be a dining area, a living space or perhaps a home office? Moving elements such as electrics can be a costly process, so will need to be considered early on. Your architect or build team may also need to apply for planning permission if you are making large changes or live in a conservation area, which can take time. At the end of it though, it's important to allow for the budget of landscaping your garden, too. After all, with the building work and upheaval this type of project entails you'll want to be able to enjoy your garden once it is complete.

PHOTOGRAPH: ALICIA TAYLOR/FUTURECONTENTHUB.COM

INSIDER INSIGHT

WHAT THE EXPERTS WANT YOU TO KNOW BEFORE EXTENDING

PLANNING PERMISSION 'The two main considerations for garden rooms are size and aesthetic, and unless your home is located on "designated land", such as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, or has had them removed, permitted development rights provide huge opportunities to personalise your garden room,' explains James Owen Webster, director at Alexander Owen Architecture. 'In terms of size, up to 50% of the land surrounding the "original" house can be used up and in terms of materiality the world is your oyster. This enables people to personalise their space and tailor how they want it to work, look and feel and so it's worth taking the time to really consider the detail of what you want and need from the garden room.'

BUILDING WORKS 'Most of our garden rooms are supplied as a handmade oak frame kit, so we are able to get around many access limitations and do not need a large working area, but drains and cables can be expensive to move so you really need to bear these in mind from an early stage,' says Merry Albright, creative director at Border Oak. 'As an oak frame garden room can be entirely self supporting it doesn't need to be tied into the host dwelling, which can often make the work a lot simpler, particularly on old and listed buildings, but also looks very good from the inside and out. Ideally we would use an existing opening to connect the garden room, but if this is not possible a structural engineer will be able to provide options to create new openings.'

FINISHING TOUCHES 'Once a site team has erected your frame and any additional structural

elements such as roofing and joinery, we recommend you ensure the necessary trades are waiting in the wings to add the finishes to your extension,' says George Allen, Outbuildings and GreenRooms design consultant at Oakwrights. 'Depending on the purpose of your new space, you may need to set money aside for associated costs, such as plastering, flooring, electrics and heating. All that is then left to budget for is any exterior landscaping and interior design, if required.'

ADDING VALUE 'If designed and planned well, any extension should add value to a property but the additional square footage needs to be functional as well as making an aesthetic enhancement to a home,' says James Ackerley, partner at Knight Frank Guildford. 'The most useful garden rooms are typically added to the kitchen/dining room, extending the living space in warmer weather with easy access to a good-sized terrace and the garden beyond. Its value can be directly correlated to the extra square footage added, but the expanse and quality of the doors and windows and other fixtures and fittings and the type of flooring will provide the 'wow factor' and give an added premium.'

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RYAN SCHOFIELD, managing director, Thames Valley Window Company

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PRIME OAK

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