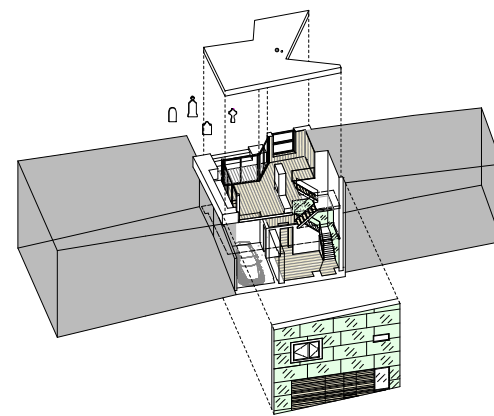




## DOMINIC MCKENZIE ARCHITECTS EIDOLON HOUSE



Climbing a steep hill next to Highgate Cemetery in north London, Swains Lane has a tradition of innovative contemporary architecture, not least in the form of the late John Winter's own Corten-steel-clad house (1967) at number 81.

Dominic McKenzie Architects' Eidolon House is intended to build on this tradition, but in contrast to Winter's use of Corten steel, the house, which reworks an existing structure, is clad in mirror-polished stainless steel reflecting the trees opposite and highlighting the changing seasons. Its name refers both to the reflective cladding and the neighbouring cemetery: in Ancient Greek, Eidolon means phantom, apparition or double image.

The desire to connect with the leafy context was a key driver for the project. After experimenting with a range of cladding types, including timber and living walls, the architect chose the polished steel facade as it not only makes a feature of the house's unusual position directly opposite large mature trees, but also provides a connection to the wider modernist tradition of Swains Lane.

The local authority's initial reaction to the proposed facade was negative and the original planning application was withdrawn. However, following the production of a sample panel which was tested on site, the application was approved by both the planning and conservation departments. Further challenges from the highways department regarding glare and reflections from headlights were also answered in the resubmitted application.





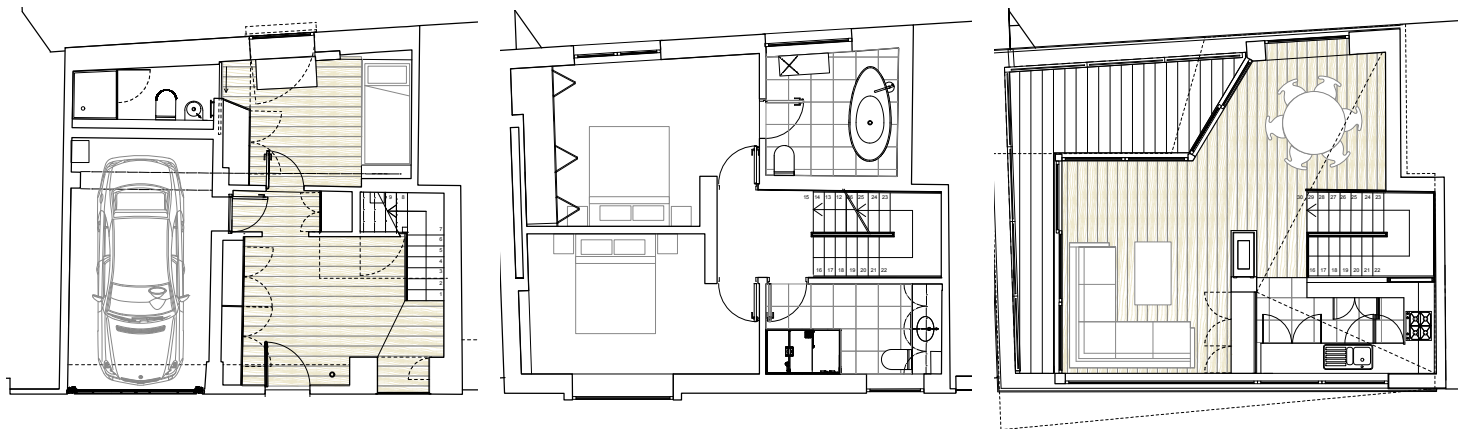
Internally, the house features a light-filled entrance hall with a carefully composed view from Swains Lane straight through to the overgrown Victorian cemetery beyond. A large picture window in the rear bedroom provides an intimate desk-level view of the mossy grave-stones. On the south side, a single-car garage is concealed behind tongue-and-groove oak

cladding which finishes flush with the steel cladding on the facade.

Built-in floor-to-ceiling joinery in white-stained Douglas fir and oak encloses the ground floor spaces, concealing storage spaces. Likewise, the mirror of a large wardrobe in the rear bedroom slides back to reveal a concealed en-suite bathroom behind.

Games with reflections continue as the stair rises through the house. In the entrance hall two adjacent walls are lined with mirror to give the illusion of greater width. The frosted glass

△ Organised around a central three-sided fireplace, the second floor living space opens on to a roof terrace which provides views over Highgate Cemetery.  
▽ Ground, first- and second-floor plans.



landing on the upper part of the stair fills the entrance hall with natural daylight.

The middle floor contains the master bedroom and en-suite to the rear, as well as another bathroom and a bedroom on the street side. The top floor accommodates a large open-plan kitchen, living and dining room, with windows on all sides. Soap-washed Douglas fir boards line the floor and walls, giving the space a warm feel and connecting it to the trees beyond. A three-sided central fireplace provides the main focus.

To the rear, a west-facing roof terrace provides views over London and of the setting sun through the trees of Highgate Cemetery.

△ Douglas fir boards line the floor and walls of the living area.  
▷ Bathroom with mirrored wall.

○ Architect Dominic McKenzie Architects structure Akera Engineers lighting John Cullen contractor Harris Calnan Construction steel cladding John Booth Engineering garage door Hörmann glazing Culmax oak cladding, joinery Village Cabinets steel staircase, glass balustrades Formosa Douglas fir boards Dinesen underfloor heating Polypipe fireplace Bellfire insulated render Sto tiles Worlds End Tiles stone Marmi security shutters Security Direct sanitaryware Duravit, Not only White, Victoria & Albert, Bristan photographs VWill Pryce.  
○ Floor area 150sqm form of contract Minorworks contract duration 32 weeks.

