

A MODERN MASTERCLASS

SEA VIEW SCARBOROUGH IS HOME TO A STUNNING PIECE OF 21ST CENTURY ARCHITECTURE. **SHARON DALE** REPORTS. PICTURES BY **GERARD BINKS**.



OUT OF THE RUBBLE: Frank and Amanda Robinson in their modern home in Scarborough.

AFTER an exhaustive search for the perfect property, Frank and Amanda Robinson thought they'd found it on a secluded hill top in Scarborough.

But months after buying it, they reduced the red brick 1950s house in the Weaponess Conservation area to a pile of rubble. "It had been empty for three years and the idea was to renovate and extend it," says Frank.

Architect Ric Blenkhams, of Bramhall Blenkhams in Malton, had a far better idea. "The house was surrounded by mature trees and felt quite hemmed in, but most significantly, it completely ignored the panoramic views of the sea to the east."

"Whilst it was capable of alteration and

extension, the sitting would never create a dramatic relationship with the sea. When I first saw the place, it seemed obvious that a new house should be built into the slope and maximise the magnificent view."

Bowled over with his grand design, Frank, Amanda and their two daughters Lily, 17, and Alice, 12, agreed.

"Our builders got the glass down on a JCB with an inch to spare. It took six men to lift it into place."

"Ric asked us to keep a diary of the way we lived and to draw up a wish list of what we wanted from the new house and using that he created a model. That was it. We were blown away."

"I wasn't sure about having the kitchen on the upper level, but it works. He got it just right from the design, orientation and light to how we would use the space," says Frank, a sales director.

The end result is a stunning piece of 21st architecture that caters for the family's every need.

It is built into the slope with a steel frame and concrete raft foundation and viewed from the road, the two tiered house is discrete. All you can see is part of the Welsh slate wall that forms the rear of the upper level.

The roughly-hewn slate is clad



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WIDE OPEN SPACE: The sitting room boasts eight metre high windows and a stunning concrete fireplace (left). Bottom left, the glazing, which held up the build. Right, the original 1950s house which was demolished and a new house built into the slope, orientated to enjoy the panoramic sea views





MATERIAL BENEFITS: Top and bottom, The lozenge-shaped rear of the house is clad in beautiful Welsh slate. The Kaboom light from Plum in Malton has "wow factor". Main picture, The kitchen was a bargain from Arlington Interiors, Leeds. Bottom, the 1950's house has been replaced by a magnificent 21st century home.



→ onto a curved lozenge shape that contains a cinema room, boot room, cloakroom, store room, pantry and laundry room.

The window-less lozenge acts as a buffer to the principal living spaces in front and below it, which are built from brick and render with huge areas of glazing and iroko wood cladding. These are topped with a sloping zinc roof and feature "fins" at either end.

The two en-suite bedrooms, large kitchen dining area and office space on the upper level all enjoy a sea view and access to a 14m by 3m balcony.

The kitchen looks down onto a double height living room with six metre high windows and a feature concrete fireplace. The lower level includes the living room, a playroom, guest room and master bedroom suite.

Ric brought natural light into the rear of the house with a long strip roof light and a portal in the ceiling of the cinema room.

Planning wasn't a problem, as Scarborough Council embraced the idea of

a well-designed reflection of contemporary architecture on a road that has individual properties from different eras.

Construction took a year but was relatively stress-free thanks to a dream team of flexible and enthusiastic clients, an architect who also project managed and a brilliant set of builders.

"I called Ric and the builders Mike and Neil from Dane Developments the Holy Trinity. They were incredible and we were so lucky to have them," says Amanda.

The only hiccup was when the window manufacturer failed to deliver on time.

"We're still working on the interiors and then there's the garden to do, I don't care how long it takes."

"That held us up for 10 weeks and even then it was a nightmare to get the windows on site. No-one was willing to drive them down the narrow, muddy slope.

"Luckily our builders got the glass down on a JCB with an inch to spare. It then took six men to lift them into place," says Amanda.

The family, who were renting a house nearby, moved in just before Christmas and are thrilled with their new home.

The house cost £400,000 to build, excluding the price of the plot. It was far more than a renovation and extension they originally intended, but worth every penny.

"It's just an incredible place, but we haven't got a limitless budget and so we have had to compromise in some areas, like not having a wall of slate inside the house.

"I fancied buying furniture from designer shops and having original Fames chairs, but it could be years down the line before we get them and it's not a bad thing. It will give us a chance to live here and really plan and save for what we want," says Frank.



They have bought a wow factor Kaboom light from Plum in Malton and a Mirror Ball lamp by Tom Dixon, but they have also used existing furniture, including a dining table from Bo Concept and dining chairs that belonged to Amanda's father.

A tight budget resulted in some bargain buys including a former display kitchen from Arlington Interiors via the website www.kitchensync.co.uk, which sells ex-display and recycled kitchens.

"We're still working on the interiors and then there's the garden to do, but I don't care how long it takes as long as it's right," says Amanda.

As former serial movers and renovators, they feel they have finally found somewhere they can settle.

"Our Christmas cards this year included our new address and the message 'The Robinsons have moved...again!' says Frank.

"But that really is it now. This will be our address for a long time to come. We've got our dream house."