

PUSH-PULL HOUSE - AMERSHAM

A playfully creative, light-filled new-build family home

Project Name: Push-Pull House

Company: Stora Enso (system supplier), Eurban (design, supply and installation company), Cullinan Studio (architect)

Sector: Residential

Technology: CLT

Overview:

Push-Pull House is a playfully creative, light-filled new-build family home, built of Cross Laminated Timber exposed throughout the interior, and clad externally in dark stained accoya boards over a locally-sourced brick base.

In a fiercely defended ERASC neighbourhood, this new two-storey detached house responds to the local Arts and Crafts aesthetic in its well-proportioned solid forms, in the use of roof spaces and in its crafted details, while the use of modern methods of construction contrasts with the philosophies of the Arts and Crafts Movement. The design ruptures the volume of a traditional pitched house, pulling it into three parts and cracking open the roof to pour light into the heart of the home.

The footprint of the original house has been pushed and pulled to follow the sun and make the garden a natural extension of the home. Walls too are pushed and pulled apart to maintain privacy from neighbours while creating sidelight, streams of high level clerestory light, and CLT-framed bay windows that punch out to create free corners and framed views of the garden.

In a large house like this the long-span potential of CLT panels are used to maximum effect creating uninterrupted roof and wall planes that 'carry' daylight deep inside across whitened surfaces, with recessed slots at panel joints for light fittings. All rooms have at least two directions of daylight and many have three or four so that diurnal and seasonal changes are emphasised. The teenagers have CLT study platforms in the higher areas of their rooms and can say hello across the facing clerestories. Overlapping voids and double-height walls allow living spaces to flow together, making for a fun and sociable home.

Externally the house is expressed in three zones; first a robust, grounded brick base; second roof planes that appears to float; and third glazed clerestories and dark stained larch boards that together to form a separate, recessed middle. Joinery and shelving is built in throughout so that there are no spaces just for circulation – stair is display, hall is library.



