

Ask the designer

If you plan to update your kitchen why not consult kitchen expert Carol Cameron first for some design advice?

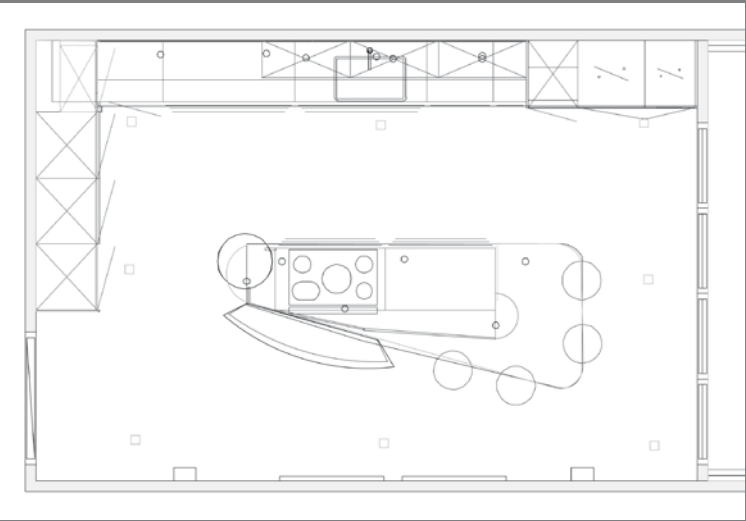


Carol Cameron is senior designer at Kitchens International, Edinburgh, 0131 523 0477 www.kitchensinternational.co.uk

Send your room layout and question to dearutopia@propub.co.uk

I have recently moved in to my five-bed, five-bathroom property and although it is only three years old the kitchen is not to my taste. The current kitchen is white, glossy and plain and although it's a new build – I would really like some warmth and texture. I would love to see some wood grains, or granite adding that bit extra to the large space. Some colour would also be nice, but nothing that will date. Any ideas you can provide for styles would be really helpful as I really don't know what to go for!

Christina De Villeres, St Albans



Carol decided the first step was to help Christina define her preferred taste, so Christina complete a full 'design brief', which addresses key questions on likes, dislikes, lifestyle, expectations, and so on. The subsequent findings of this provided the main objective, namely a new kitchen that can accommodate a busy household of family and friends, make provision to remove congestion to and from garden – which is a current issue with the existing design – and ultimately create a room that reflects Christina's taste.

Key requirements were:

- Define zones – kitchen, informal dining, entertaining
- Make it flow – inside/outside
- Give it style – texture and warmth

The existing room size was ample, although unfortunately no consideration had been given to the practicalities of zoning a modern multi-functional social space. Subsequently two structural changes were agreed.

1. Replace existing French doors with new folding or sliding exterior doors.
2. Reposition the existing doors to the formal dining room.

These alterations provided a room that could be 'zoned'. The Island, that was once an obstacle, could now become a practical and zone-defining centrepiece. The positioning of ovens and preparation fridge have been carefully planned to contain the cooking and food preparation

within one zone, whilst the drinks fridge, wine storage and ice dispenser are easily accessible to all.

Now that the key functions of the room were defined, it was critical that each area should integrate to create a positive flow. The position, and more importantly the shape of the new island creates a softer more fluid design. The new 'B' bar shape is orientated to create a more sociable informal dining experience. The repositioning of the dining room doors now provides greater activity space and helps solve the issue of congestion. With the garden doors extended, the new kitchen now flows seamlessly to the outside, adding a further dimension to the new kitchen being the 'hub of the home'. Lighting is the key to bringing harmony to each area. In this case a Lutron



graphic eye controls six pre-set scenes, totally changing the 'feel' of the room, at the push of a button.

The in-depth design brief concluded that Christina's taste favoured a kitchen that was stylish, warm and welcoming. To this end horizontal book matched timber was used to bring a furniture feel to the room. This has been complimented with matt micro lacquered units – adding further subtle texture to the design. The dramatic contrast of the reflective black units helps disguise the cooking appliances and creates a bold horizontal line. A black glass splashback was used to further support this concept.

Engineered stone was used to provide both an aesthetic as well as a practical benefit to the design, with ease of

maintenance being a major factor. Further surface contrast was achieved by using a beech end grain preparation worktop, with 18mm float glass used to cap the raised bar section.

A minimal amount of colour was introduced to the lacquered top box wall units, allowing further colour to be added when accessorising. The 'free wall' provided the perfect canvas to add additional texture to the kitchen, in this case with wallpaper, this also allowed Christina to personalise the room to her taste.

The finished kitchen, now provides a room that is the hub of the home, that caters for all the practical requirements, and most importantly reflects the personality of its owner. ●

TIPS FOR INTRODUCING TEXTURE

• Floor tiles such as concrete effect or sandstone create a rough and rugged feel. These textures work well within both modern and traditional kitchens.

• The introduction of a textured or patterned wallpaper to a free wall, will create warmth, depth, and a focal point.