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# Style Counsel

## Perfectly formed

A refurbishment and desire for an extra surgery within a small space, all while complying with CQC regulations, meant an innovative design was needed for **Monica Rojas'** practice at 25 Devonshire Place





'IT TOOK ME ONE-AND-A-HALF YEARS TO PERFECT THE DESIGN FOR THE NEW SPACE BEFORE THE PROJECT COULD START'

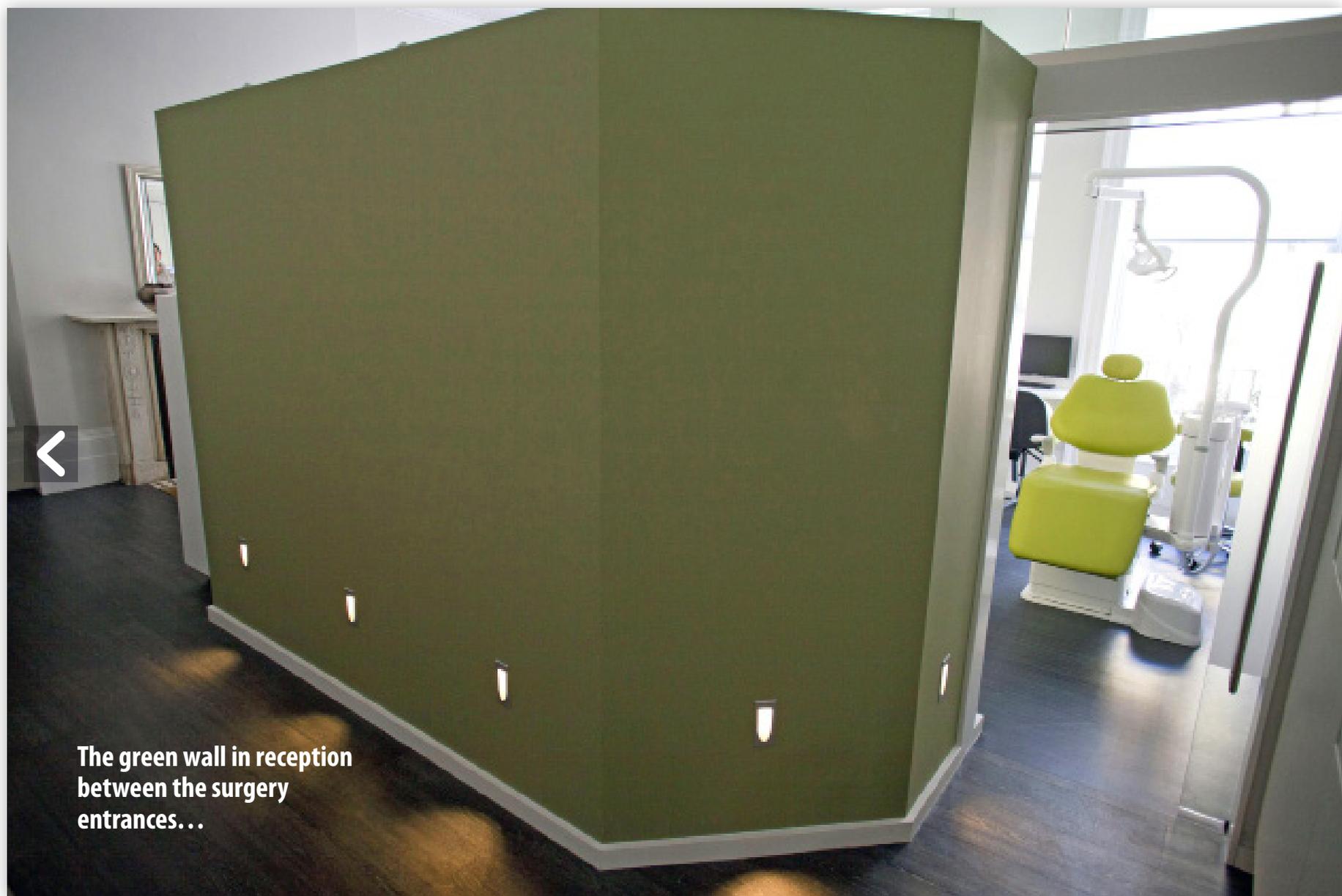
**D**r Monica Rojas wasn't going to let anything hinder the renovation of her new practice, 25 Devonshire Place in the heart of London's medical district, not even a life-changing event, like having a baby. 'Although I bought the practice in September 2011, it took me one-and-a-half years to perfect the design for the new space before the project could start,' she says. 'Oh, and then I fell pregnant in the middle of it all, which delayed things just slightly!' she laughs.

At one stage, she couldn't see how it would work out. 'I did wonder how I was going to be able to do everything, but things actually turned out really well. I now have the stunning and practical surgery I wanted and a beautiful 11-month-old boy.'

When the opportunity arose for Dr Monica Rojas to buy her practice, it was not a difficult decision to make. 'Having worked in the Harley Street area for the past 11 years I knew as soon as the premises went up for sale that it was the right thing to do, and the right direction to move in,' she says.

### THE BUILDING

Located in a beautiful Grade II listed building that dates from between 1790 and 1800, the property had been used for medical purposes for a very long time and was already set up as a single-surgery practice, with a large office and reception area, when she got the keys. But, despite



The green wall in reception between the surgery entrances...



being workable, Dr Rojas wanted to make her own mark on the practice. 'I couldn't help but think it felt like someone else's, and I also had strong ideas about the kind of environment I wanted to work in. In short, I had to make it my own.'

There were also other reasons for the renovation. 'It was essential that we comply with Care Quality Commission regulations which meant incorporating a decontamination room into the design,' she says.

'I needed to modernise it to make better use of the space to accommodate a hygienist and other specialists, which would allow me to provide a comprehensive service for my patients.'

Today, 25 Devonshire Place is open for business and contains two dental surgeries, a decontamination room, and reception area.

## THE DESIGN

Once Dr Rojas had decided what her needs were, she focused on the look of her new practice that she wanted to be contemporary while preserving outstanding original features. 'I wanted to make sure that it did justice to the features already in the building and also to reflect professionalism, to create a warm and relaxing feel to put patients at ease.'

These values are evident in her choice of accent colours - green, grey and white. 'I chose green as the main colour as it's fresh and soothing. I really think it helps people to calm down,' she says. 'Grey suggests to the patient that we are a professional practice which takes our work seriously, while white accentuates the cleanliness of our environment.'

Dr Rojas emphasises that as well as maximising on use of space, finding the right design team was crucial to the success of this project. 'I mainly designed the surgery with the help of my brother who is an architect, but unfortunately he lives abroad, so I needed someone with local knowledge and who understood how Listed Building regulations work,' she says, so she chose to work with Alan Tate of Grey Associates. 'Alan understood what I wanted to achieve and worked very hard to make it work,' she says. 'His ideas were the ones that gave the surgery the spacious, contemporary air that it has. He made radical design decisions, such as the use of beautiful glass panels, which give the sense of space,' she says. 'and made sure to focus on the little details - the lighting was totally his idea - which I love.'





'GREY SUGGESTS TO THE PATIENT THAT WE ARE A PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE WHICH TAKES OUR WORK SERIOUSLY, WHILE WHITE ACCENTUATES THE CLEANLINESS OF OUR ENVIRONMENT'

The main surgery is Monica's, with glass panels surrounding the smaller, second treatment room





## Contacts

**Anglian Dental**

[www.angliandental.co.uk](http://www.angliandental.co.uk)

**Aspects Building  
Contractors Limited**

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**Belmont**

[www.belmontdental.co.uk](http://www.belmontdental.co.uk)

**Grey Associates**

[www.greyassociates.co.uk](http://www.greyassociates.co.uk)

## THE BUILD

The project was relatively trouble free. 'Most hiccups were to do with the limitations that come with an old building. We had to be very creative when it came to incorporating ventilation, wiring, and all the services without spoiling the original features of the building.'

Despite these issues, the project only overran by a week. 'After the fifth week, we still had a lot of things to finish, but at least the decontamination room, one surgery and reception were fully working which meant we could see patients,' says Dr Rojas.

Dr Rojas is still yet to focus more on personalising the interior, due to limited budget. 'We don't have any artwork on the walls, but we have had a lovely donation from Sandra Tate - a beautiful ceramic which is on display on the mantelpiece.'

Dr Rojas also hasn't bought a lot of new equipment. 'We only added the chair to the new surgery, lights, x-ray machine and a few items, which are all Belmont. The cabinetry was made by Anglian Dental, who also supplied and installed all the equipment.'

The verdict? 'I'm delighted with my new surgery,' says Dr Monica Rojas. 'I love the simplicity and clean lines of the place. It is spacious and modern, yet preserves the building's original features, a great combination of old and new elements, and I can really see myself working happily here for many years to come.' ■

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**The cabinetry was made by Anglian Dental, who also supplied and installed all the equipment**

The decontamination room is accessible from both surgeries





**Storage and a small kitchen area are tucked away behind the main entrance**

