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Passers-by on this Victorian street in Finsbury Park, North London, might wonder how a family house could be slotted into this sliver of land. The ground floor of Focus House opens from a width of just 2.8m at the front through to 7m at the rear. The skill of bere:architects in creating an impressive home on this wedge-shaped site won praise from our judges. 'For this small site the architect has been extremely inventive in form and construction,' they said.

Focus House, built by Vision Build, contrasts with the beige brick buildings surrounding it, but has been designed as a low-cost, low-energy, low-maintenance version of the standard family home.

On the ground floor is the living space and dining area. Large Scandinavian-made sliding windows span the rear looking out over a garden. At first-floor level there is a study, two bedrooms and a bathroom; on the second floor a master bedroom.

An Austrian system of construction uses cross-laminated timber with Foamglas insulation. The zinc skin provides a durable exterior and further insulates the structure.

The form and method of construction means only minimal heating is required. A solar thermal installation allows the house to generate up to 60 per cent of its hot water.