

CASE STUDIES

East Farm, Kirknewton, Wooler

Architects/Owner

Stephen Marriott

Project

Conversion of a group of redundant early 19th century farm buildings to form a house with ancillary holiday letting unit. Some of the buildings form pavilions and shelters to an enclosed garden to the South of the house.

Issues

- Conversion: retaining the character of the original agricultural building
- Access for all
- Sustainability
- External Works

Context

A typical situation where traditional farm buildings have been separated from the land they served and stood empty for many years. Eventually sold to the present owner who has completed the conversion of the main two-storey barn and a gin-gang behind and is in the process of converting the implement shed to a family annexe. There is plenty of space round the buildings and a number of further calf shed and shelters (narrow open-fronted monopitch structures with cast iron columns supporting the front beam lintol).



Design Approach

The main barn walls are random rubble with a colourful mix of sandstone and Andesite (the local igneous rock of Cheviot); heavy harling some in 20th century cement based mortars, but for the most part an attractive lime mortar with quite coarse sand. Roof was old pantiles with stone ridge and hip covers, no chimneys, cast iron gutters. The gin-gang against the South side of the barn roofed in Welsh slate as are all the other structures. Cast iron columns on stone pads support the roofs of the implements shed and the various shelters.



Condition of buildings before conversion

CASE STUDIES

The general aim of the conversions has been to retain the distinct identity and character of each building and to exploit all existing openings to light the interior including re-opening windows hitherto blocked up. The barn had a number of glass tiles to light the upper hay floor and in renewing the pantile roof permission was secured to include a minimum number of conservation rooflights instead of the glass tiles.

In the walls of the barn former ventilation loops have been filled with glass bricks to admit light but not for ventilation. The general theme of painting all external joinery a recessive dark blue does respect the character of the original stained/creosoted boards and becomes the theme throughout the development.

A new doorway in the barn: reused brick defines the alteration



The free standing implements shed to the East of the group had an open front of five bays with cast iron columns supporting the roof plate. This building is slate covered with only one rooflight introduced on the back elevation. The screen that fills the front passes behind the columns so that they still read against the dark paint of the screen. Unfortunately ground level has had to be raised to cover shallow drains and the moulded base of the cast iron columns is lost as well as the padstone.



The Gin-Gang with recessed screens



Glazed screen filled hemmel arches

Sustainability

Conversion is by its very nature a way of recycling or reusing existing built space and materials. This project happily demonstrates that a change of use can be achieved without loss of character.

Access for all

For wheelchair access the coarse gravel surface to the drive might present a problem since wheelchair and pram or push chair wheels tend to sink into the loose gravel. Also the pre-

CASE STUDIES

occupation with muted colours in the holiday cottage screen could reduce a partially sighted person's confidence about what was door and what window.



Holiday letting unit



The North wall of the barn/house