

RUSSWOOD

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FLOORING • CLADDING • DECKING

Issue 15

Profile

LINKING THE PAST TO THE PRESENT

Designing a welcoming retreat in rural Inverness-shire

**BUILDING
ARCADIA**

*Award winning design
for an Edinburgh nursery*

**CREATIVE
INTERIORS**

*clever use of flooring
to unify space at Cawdor*



CHILDHOOD RE-VISITED

Situated in the majestic rural landscape of Inverness-shire, Ken Grant's childhood home has undergone a spectacular transformation; dating back to 1866, this traditional farmhouse now presents as a progressive self-build, epitomising contemporary architecture yet demonstrating clear links to the rural context.



Mhairi Grant (co-founder of Paper Igloo Architecture and Design and daughter of Ken) designed a space that was commodious without being cavernous, capable of accommodating visiting family yet not overwhelming for her retired parents. Paring back any modifications to the original house, the roof was raised imperceptibly to create a double-height dining kitchen; coupled by glazed, frameless links to two new timber clad 'barns' that provide both permanent and guest living space in turn. A Cor-ten clad circulation tower abuts the rear of one, evoking the agricultural origins of the area.

HAVING USED RUSSWOOD PRODUCTS PREVIOUSLY, WE WERE CONFIDENT THAT THE QUALITY OF THEIR PRODUCT WOULD PROVIDE US WITH THE LOOK AND PERFORMANCE WE DEMANDED.

The choice of exterior materials furthers the integration into the landscape: the crisp detailing of the barns is both enabled and enhanced by the silvering of the Siberian Larch cladding, which continues onto the roof and combines with the red steel on the tower to address the palette offered by the surrounding farm buildings.



Mhairi explained: "We chose SILA A/B for the exterior to form a tactile, homogeneous skin that evokes the familiar silhouette of a home. The natural density of the larch not only permitted the crisp detailing required for the vertical corners, eaves and ridge, but also allowed the timber to continue into the interior of the build. We machined the SILA for external/internal window and door liners, creating cill and rectangular sections that were biscuit jointed on site. Having used Russwood products previously, we were confident that the quality of their product would provide us with the look and performance we demanded."

FAR LEFT: OLD AND NEW COMBINE
LEFT: SHARP LINES AND CRISP DETAILING
WITH SIBERIAN LARCH (SILA A/B)
BELOW: NATURAL WEATHERING WITH
CONTRASTING RED STEEL DETAILS
PHOTOGRAPHY: DAVID BARBOUR





BUILDING ARCADIA

When the ancient Greeks visualised their utopia, they imagined a space that was tranquil and soothing, that existed in complete harmony with nature. They called the space arcadia. Tasked with creating just such a space for the Arcadia Nursery at the University of Edinburgh's King's Buildings, Malcolm Fraser Architects also turned to nature.

The modest 1.5-storey building hunkers down amongst neighbouring meadows and woodlands. The build offers the best of modern design standards – a contemporary, open plan layout combined with solid Breeam credentials – yet there is no cold modernity here. The building is warm and inviting, with internal playrooms flowing out into a covered play area, enclosed garden and woodland.

TOP: WARM NATURAL MATERIALS LINKING SPACES

MIDDLE: SCOTLARCH FIN FENCE

BOTTOM: THIS AWARD WINNING DESIGN INCORPORATES SIBERIAN LARCH (SILA A/B) CLADDING

PHOTOGRAPHY: ANGUS BREMNER

Externally, the building is clad in Russwood Siberian Larch (Sila A/B grade), and treated with Osmo UV oil to add warmth to the natural grain. Siberian Larch is also used on the decking and on the whimsical 'bubble bridge', which features peepholes for playtime adventures. The space is defined and enclosed by a timber fin fence made from Russwood's Scotlarch.

Architect Emma Fairhurst says: "We often specify Russwood because as well as offering great technical support, we trust them to deliver a great range of excellent quality timbers. At Arcadia Nursery the warm, tactile quality of the larch helped us to realise our vision of a natural haven for the children."

THE BUILD OFFERS THE BEST OF MODERN DESIGN STANDARDS – A CONTEMPORARY, OPEN PLAN LAYOUT COMBINED WITH SOLID BREEAM CREDENTIALS – YET THERE IS NO COLD MODERNITY HERE.



DIAMOND CUT PRECISION



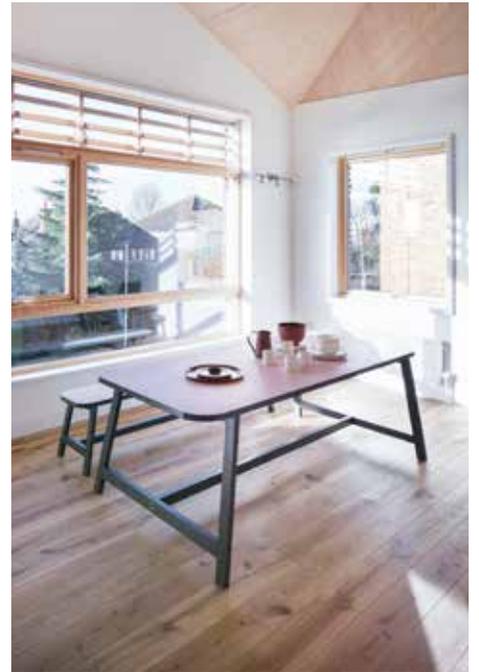
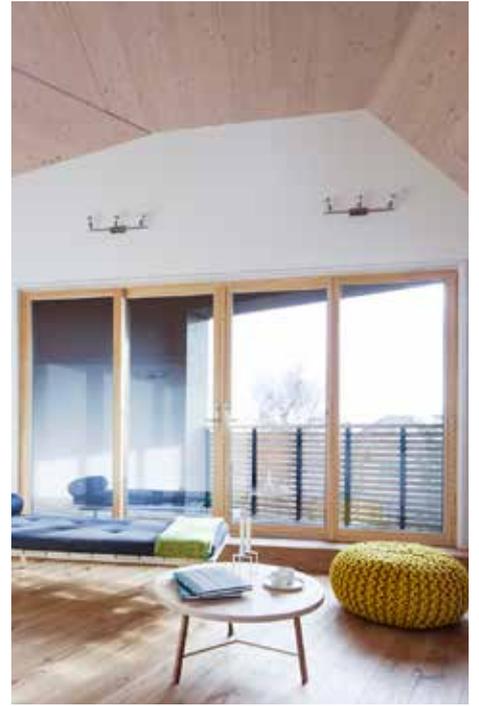
Situated in the aptly named London suburb of Woodford Green, Mazarin House offers a beautifully unique solution to a design challenge created by the diversity of the surrounding properties. Flanked by Edwardian housing and '70s blocks of flats, Mazarin's transitional design perfectly unites these opposing architectural styles – with a little help from non-orthogonal geometry.

A study in sophisticated angles, Arboreal Architecture designed Mazarin to offer four floors of living within a three storey silhouette and provide six apartments enclosed within the mass and proportions of the neighbouring detached properties. By removing the restriction of right angles, each apartment is able to offer double-height, south facing living spaces accompanied by generous glazing and balconies.

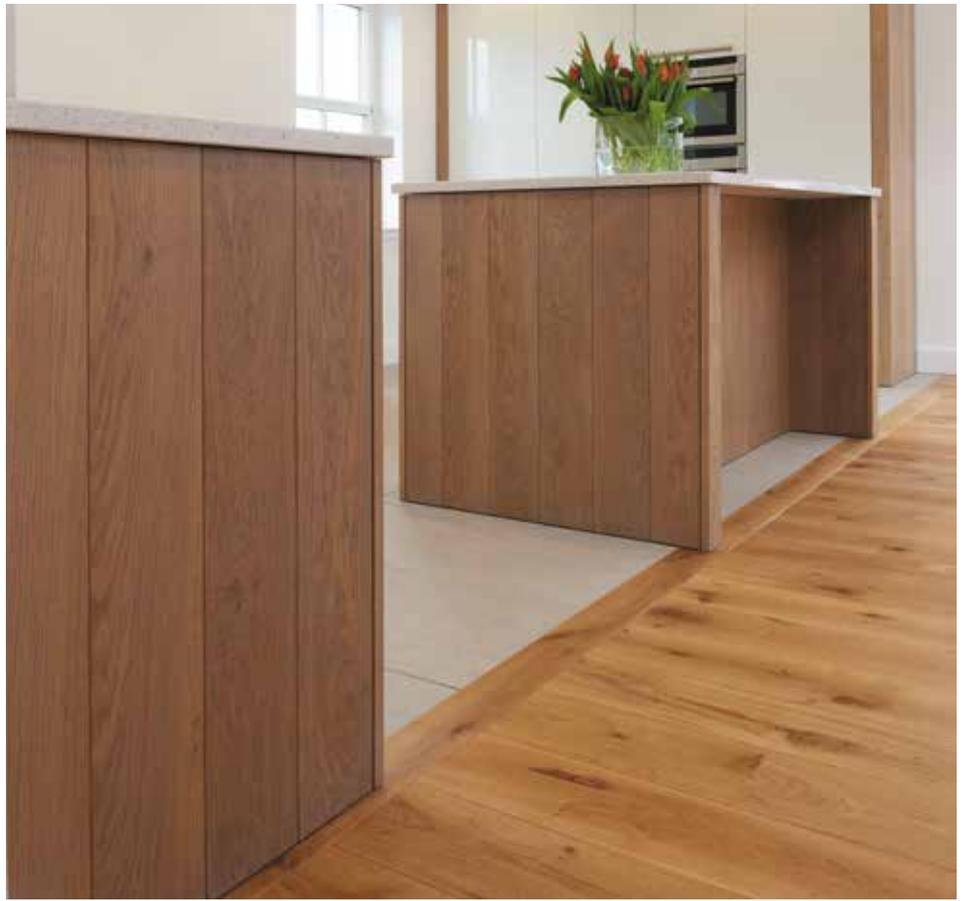
The realisation of the rigorous design was made possible with Cross Laminated Timber. Computer controlled precision cutting of the CLT panels enabled the construction to achieve a high degree of airtightness and a continuous 200mm layer of insulation to attain a high standard of thermal performance. The use of timber as both a construction and finishing material further contributed to sustainability - not only reducing emissions associated with traditional construction, but also sequestering CO₂.

Tom Raymont from Arboreal Architecture explained: "The exterior of Mazarin House is clad with a SILA A/B rainscreen in a custom narrow profile spaced to align with the brick coursing of adjacent buildings. We selectively extended the rainscreen across south-facing windows to reduce summertime solar gain and across the balconies to provide a balustrade. We also specified Russwood timber internally, using their Engineered Chateau Natural Character/ Prime Oak floorboards."

THE USE OF TIMBER AS BOTH A CONSTRUCTION AND FINISHING MATERIAL FURTHER CONTRIBUTED TO SUSTAINABILITY - NOT ONLY REDUCING EMISSIONS ASSOCIATED WITH TRADITIONAL CONSTRUCTION, BUT ALSO SEQUESTERING CO₂.



TOP LEFT: SHARP LINES DEFINED BY SIBERIAN LARCH (SILA A/B) RAINSCREEN
TOP RIGHT: DOUBLE HEIGHT AND A SOUTHERN ASPECT ACCENTUATE SPACE
BOTTOM: ENGINEERED OAK FLOORING ADDS WARMTH AND COMFORT FOR MODERN LIVING
PHOTOGRAPHY: COURTESY OF KTN



THE COTTAGE AT CAWDOR



How can a contemporary home nestle comfortably in a site rich with history? Such was the challenge for Ness Architecture Ltd when they began work on Bowling Green Cottage. The cottage boasts an enviable location in the shadow of the fairy tale Cawdor Castle, tucked in beside the rambling estate and village bowling green.

With a contemporary open plan layout to the ground floor, four spacious bedrooms and a detached garage, the cottage offers all the comforts of modern living, including airtightness, low energy input and efficient under floor heating. Yet a traditional palette of materials such as stone, slate and oak help the building to

blend seamlessly into its environment, preserving the outstanding natural beauty of the village.

Russwood oak acts as the unifying material throughout the property, softening and warming the spaces. The ground floor features engineered oak over under floor heating, with boards placed perpendicular at room thresholds to delineate the space while keeping the floor surface level. Solid oak floorboards are used throughout the upper floor rooms and staircase. In the kitchen, untreated solid oak floorboards have been adapted as facings for cabinets, and hand finished on site, providing a contrast to the stark gloss units and stone worktop. Unusually, the oak was also used to create a striking standing unit in the centre of the room.

The monochrome exterior of the cottage features a traditional slate roof, with white rendered walls complemented by Scotlarch boards, painted black in the vacuum coating facility at Russwood; all set against a backdrop of green provide by the landscape and mature woodland setting.

UNTREATED SOLID OAK FLOORBOARDS HAVE BEEN ADAPTED AS FACINGS FOR CABINETS, AND HAND FINISHED ON SITE, PROVIDING A CONTRAST TO THE STARK GLOSS UNITS AND STONE WORKTOP.

"I met with Russwood at the outset of the project, to discuss material choices and specification. I was assured that on both fronts they had a superior product, which would deliver what I looked for throughout the house development. For certainty, both in terms of cost and specification, I investigated alternatives, with other manufacturers and merchants, but nothing came close. It was like comparing apples with oranges, and you clearly get what you pay for"
Julie MacRae - Ness Architecture.

TOP LEFT: WARM, ENGINEERED OAK FLOORING ACTS AS THE UNIFY MATERIAL THROUGHOUT
TOP RIGHT: RUSSWOOD UNFINISHED SOLID OAK BOARDS (HAND FINISHED ON SITE) ADAPTED AS FACINGS FOR KITCHEN CABINETS

BOTTOM LEFT: SCOTLARCH CLADDING, VACUUM COATED WITH TEKNOS PAINT AT OUR IN- HOUSE PAINTING FACILITY, HAND FINISHED ON SITE

PHOTOGRAPHY: EWEN WEATHERSPOON

THE FARMHOUSE: REIMAGINED



Torispardon – inspired by the Gaelic *tor*, meaning a pile of rocks on a hill – represents a homecoming to the Highlands after a 30-year separation. While living in England, the client purchased a derelict cottage and steading atop a rocky Highland hill with panoramic views of the Cairngorm Mountains and the Spey Valley. Her architect (also her son) had the sensitivity to imagine a dwelling that respected the surrounding context.

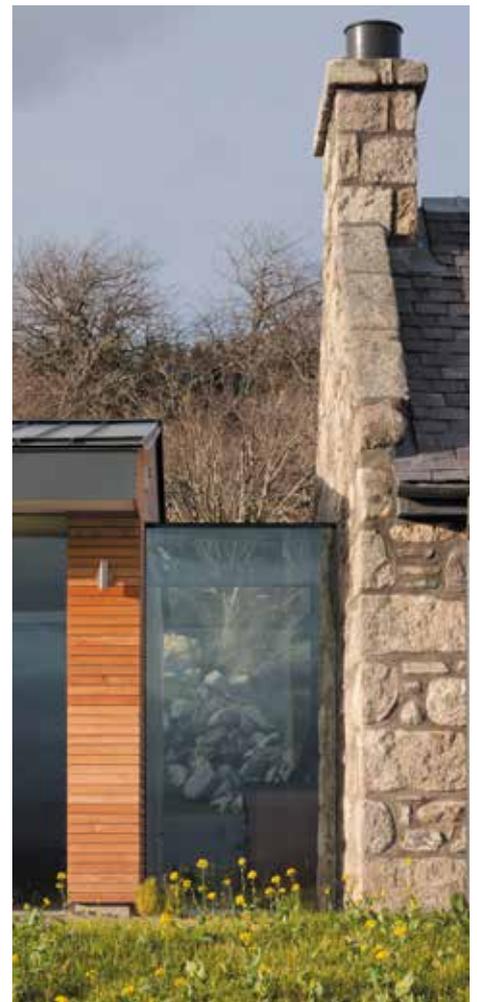
The footprint, massing and materials of the original cottage and steading were preserved and recreated in two new stone-walled structures, while a link building is more contemporary but deliberately subservient to the structures it connects.



WE WORKED CLOSELY WITH THE TECHNICAL DIVISION OF RUSSWOOD TO ENSURE THAT WE SPECIFIED APPROPRIATE TIMBER THAT WORKED BOTH FUNCTIONALLY AND AESTHETICALLY.

Russwood timber is key in defining the two aesthetics. The Steading is clad in traditional Scottish Larch timber, in the traditional vertical 'board on board' style consistent with the surrounding agricultural buildings. By contrast, the Siberian Larch cladding in the link features contemporary detailing, with small, sharp edge horizontal profiles, mitred at every corner. Warm, Engineered Unfinished Character A (hand finished on site) flooring used throughout the interior creates a consistent, understated aesthetic that allows the natural beauty of the landscape to take centre stage.

"The materiality of the project is key," said architects Stuart Archer and Liz Marinko. We worked closely with the technical division of Russwood to ensure that we specified appropriate timber that worked both functionally; in terms of weathering and installation, and aesthetically; making sure the correct profiles were used to create the crisp, modern detailing we wanted to achieve."



TOP: SCOTLARCH CLADDING

ABOVE: SHARP DETAILING

LEFT: UNFINISHED CHARACTER A FLOORING, FINISHED ON SITE WITH AN ANTIQUE OIL

ELEGANCE DEFINED



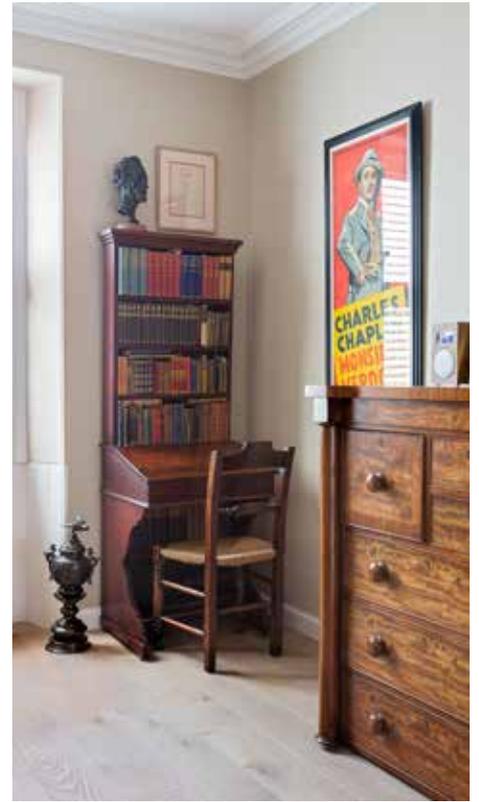
When faced with the beginning of a new chapter in her life, Heather Kiernan had a simple choice: renovation or relocation. Perhaps swayed by the memories invested throughout several decades spent living in the Scottish Border town of Stow, she made the decision to update and redefine her existing living space within her well-loved Victorian villa.

Sally Ruel Architect initially collaborated with Heather in redesigning the interior, removing walls and introducing glass doors in order to maximise the light and space inherent in the building. Heather then set about project managing the intricacies of the transformation, hiring trusted and experienced local craftsmen to work to a high specification in creating her ideal interior.

Heather's love of natural materials is apparent in both the fabric and palette of her home, all chosen with a commonality of purpose; focusing on maximising light and presenting a neutral, understated background to showcase her vintage graphic art collection.

I LOVE THE QUALITY OF YOUR TIMBER, THE GRAIN, HOW TACTILE THE BRUSHED OAK BOARDS ARE.

Imaginatively sourced, hand crafted glass fittings provide sparkle and interest, whilst bespoke items of furniture (created by artisan woodworker Simon Fowler) blend with treasured pieces so perfectly they appear to have co-existed for centuries. A pale timber floor flows through the house on both levels in most rooms, adding to the unity of the spaces.



Heather tells us: "Helen Lucas recommended you, and after the 'WOW!' your products elicited from me when I first saw them, how could I resist? I love the quality of your timber, the grain, how tactile the brushed oak boards are...plus the smoked grey finish perfectly complements the range of recommended hues by my Farrow & Ball colour consultant – simply perfect."

LEFT: 17TH CENTURY SMOKED WASHY GREY ENGINEERED OAK BOARDS ADD A TOUCH OF CLASS WHILST ACCOMMODATING MODERN LIVING

RIGHT: 17TH CENTURY SMOKED WHITE SOLID OAK BOARDS ON THE FIRST FLOOR COMBINE WITH THE DESIGNER'S COLOUR PALETTE TO CREATE A CALM SERENITY

PHOTOGRAPHY: DOUGLASS GIBB

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