

Character **BUILDING**



The Duke of Norfolk's former hunting lodge proved the ideal long-term project for a couple keen to give it a deserved renovation

Words: Owen Collins Photography: S J Cavani

Previous page (p159): A view of the new kitchen extension from the property's grand hallway.

Right: The kitchen now features an open-plan layout with the end of the hallway (the old kitchen footprint) leading into its centre.

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hen Chris and Gill Hughes took on the mammoth task of renovating this impressive, five-bedroom property, which dates back to 1810 and was a former residence of the Duke of Norfolk, they knew they had their work cut out. Not only had it become a bit run-down, the internal architecture had also succumbed to questionable late 20th-century 'improvements' as is so often the case.

With an eye for detail and quality, however, the pair gradually restored many of the property's features and internal architectural details such as fireplaces, oak panelling, floors, doors and windows. "We understand that a historic period property evolves with time and that, to a certain extent, changes through the years can add character and interest. That being so, we also believe that additions and improvements should be done to the highest possible standard and in keeping with the architectural fabric of the building," says Chris.

This was certainly the philosophy that Chris and Gill applied to their new kitchen. With the help of both their architect and builder, a new 40 by 17ft extension was added, creating a wonderfully light, open-plan space with a glazed fanlight ceiling and bi-fold doors into the garden. The extension spans the depth of the property and runs horizontally across the small, former kitchen space – now part of the impressive hallway leading into the centre of the new kitchen.

Gill explains, "The old kitchen was very small and dark, with just one window; it wasn't a place you wanted to stay in and it certainly didn't live up to the grandeur, former status or indeed the size of the home. What's more, we both like to cook and entertain and this just wasn't possible with the space as it was.

"The extension has also been cleverly designed to be in keeping with the original architecture," she continues. "It allows us to get more enjoyment and use out of our kitchen as well as our gardens, particularly in the spring and summer months. It's now very much the social hub of the home where Chris, our children and I, not to mention our dogs and cats, spend most of our time."

For the kitchen itself, the Hugheses and their architect worked closely with Jason Collier of Colliers Kitchens in nearby Worthing. Colliers offers bespoke kitchens from Loxley by Sherwood of Nottingham so it was able to produce a design that carefully fuses both contemporary



and traditional in-frame furniture exactly to the couple's specification. "The beauty of a bespoke manufactured kitchen such as this Loxley one is that you can have whatever you want without the restrictions of standard cabinet sizes, shapes and finishes," says designer Jason.

The light painted tones of the furniture offer a pleasing contrast to the beautiful pippy oak finished cabinetry and oak accent details such as the plinths, cornices and pull-out chopping boards. The large central island, meanwhile, provides much needed storage and worktop space as well as being home to the induction hob complete with a downdraft extractor.

"The biggest challenge was probably the island unit. It needed to be practical but at the same time give the kitchen a big wow factor," adds Jason. "With such a large, open space it was also important to create features around the kitchen that would complement it."

Other details on the island include the round integrated oak cabinetry with its substantial end-grain oak chopping block and sink, as well as further slide-out cutting boards for herbs, garlic, game and meat. On the longest wall of the kitchen, meanwhile, large oak floor-to-ceiling tower cabinets give a feeling of grandeur and scale and are perfectly in tune with the room's proportions. These pippy oak

cabinets house a bank of Siemens ovens and an American-style fridge-freezer, which, when combined with the adjacent island-mounted hob, gives the couple all the cooking capacity they require.

Finally, a moulded, natural oak cornice visually links all the wall cabinetry and flows into lighting pelmets above each window. This arrangement is complemented by further ceiling-mounted downlighters and Edison-style pendant lights, positioned either end of the room. The overall result is a bright, welcoming kitchen that complements the period architecture whilst still catering to modern, daily family life. [KBB]



Q&A

Designer Jason Collier says...

What element(s) took up the majority of the budget?

The furniture made up 60% of the kitchen budget, with the feature island the most expensive part.

Any places you managed to save money?

The initial spec called for Gaggenau appliances, but we were able to save money by changing them to Siemens.

What advice do you give clients on finding contractors?

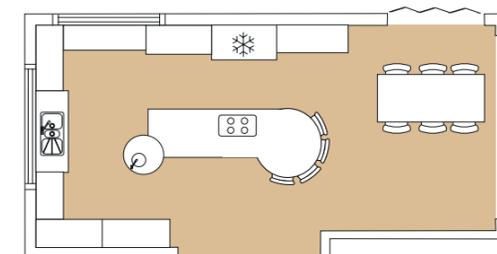
Often the best way to find quality contractors is by personal recommendation. Follow this up by looking at some previous installations to assess the quality of their work.

Any tips for people embarking on a similar project?

I would suggest coming up with a list of items that are important and that you would like to incorporate into the design. Also look at innovations in materials, storage or appliances that have been introduced over the last few years. Then it's a case of working closely with the designer to translate that into your final kitchen design.

Top left: The hallway and kitchen space are visually linked with a light-toned fossil stone floor.

Above: The raised breakfast bar is great for snacks and having a quick coffee break, while a more formal dining table enjoys views over the garden.





Above: For the worktops, a stunning Pegasus granite has been used, its patterned glossy surface contrasting beautifully with the wood finishes.

Above right: This is a truly multifunctional island: raised breakfast bar, storage, induction hob and round, end-grain oak chopping block with integrated sink.

“The extension allows us to get more enjoyment and use out of our kitchen as well as our gardens, particularly in the spring and summer months.”

Top: Classically styled Perrin & Rowe taps were a perfect choice for this charismatic period property.

Above: Additional storage is provided by a worktop-mounted cupboard with practical bi-fold doors.



Left: A generous chopping block and second sink make for a practical prep area at one end of the sink.

SourceBook

DESIGN

Kitchen Jason Collier of Colliers Kitchens (01903 210101 or www.collierskitchens.co.uk)

KITCHEN

Cabinetry Loxley cabinetry in pippy oak and painted finishes, from Sherwood of Nottingham (0115 975 8168 or www.sherwoodofnottingham.co.uk)

Worktops Pegasus granite supplied by Colliers Kitchens, as before

Appliances Extractor, Falmec (01787 224921 or www.falmec.co.uk); Ovens, steam oven, microwave oven, warming drawers, hob and fridge-freezer, all Siemens (0344 892 8999 or www.siemens-home.co.uk)

Sinks Undermounted Claron bowl sinks in stainless steel, Blanco (01923 635200 or www.blanco.co.uk)

Taps Perrin & Rowe (01708 526361 or www.perrinandrowe.co.uk)

Flooring City Ceramics of Chichester (01243 775613 or www.cityceramics.uk.com)

Lighting Edison-style pendant lights from Heal's (020 7896 7451 or www.heals.co.uk)

Barstools Cox & Cox (0844 858 0744 or www.coxandcox.co.uk)

COST

Sherwood of Nottingham kitchens start from around £25,000 (furniture only)