

CARING WOOD



Winner of the RIBA House of the Year Award 2017, Caring Wood is a contemporary residential home that has clear links the rural vernacular of its location.

The design pays homage to the traditional Kent oast houses, agricultural buildings for kilning hops. The project was praised for its reimagining of a traditional English country house and the way it successfully revived local building crafts and traditions including locally sourced handmade peg clay tiles, quarried ragstone and coppiced chestnut cladding.

The brief to the two contributing architect practices, [Rural Office for Architecture](#) and [MacDonald Wright Architects](#), was to create a multi-generational family home, that allows spaces for intimacy and privacy, as well as places for congregation. This clear practical requirement to the building needed to be teamed with aesthetic intrigue, comfort and enjoyment for all.

Set on 83 acres of private grounds with a nearby lake and endless greenery, the natural slope of the site influenced the building's formation. The building's most prominent features: the four sculptural towers, were designed to emulate the kilning hops in the region. The angular lines of these towers continue throughout the building's profile, and when teamed with the careful material selection throughout the property, create a beautiful balance against the sloping terrain.

Internally, these towers create ascending channels in need of natural light. The inclusion of rooflights onto these towers were essential to the design to deliver shafts of light into the spaces below.

With shallow roof pitches and a modern aesthetic, the most suitable solution was a set of tailored Plateau Rooflights.

The collaborating architect practices approached The Rooflight Co having created a prototype 3D model of the desired design. Meeting on site with our design team, we supported the architects as we collaborated on the integration of the rooflights into the roof structure. It was in these early stages, the technical expectations were set, including critical thermal performance requirements to be in line with the carbon neutrality targets.

Over several months, as the project progressed through the RIBA plan of work stages, the dedicated design team at The Rooflight Co, were on hand to develop the design of the five Plateau Rooflights, with their hybrid design, combining the traditional baseplate of The Conservation Plateau, with the sleek, edge to edge glazing of The Neo Rooflight. These five Plateau rooflights, combined with one Neo Rooflight created the complete top lighting requirements for the site, which included a solution for the Estate Cottage separate to the main residence.

Achieving whole unit u-values of $1.1\text{W/m}^2\text{K}$, the resulting configurations included laminated inner glazing panes, as standard for any flat roof product provided by The Rooflight Co, within triple glazed insulating units, along with a unique Anodized Brown frame; colour matched to a sample provided by the architects. It is these finer details along with the site specific installation drawings that ensured the vision was delivered to exacting standards all parties expected.

The culmination of the building's form, materials and rooflights is a striking high-end, residential home with both grandeur and sympathetic integration in equal balance. Each element skilfully crafted, and expertly installed by contractors Cardy Construction Limited.



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Owing to the varying angles of the rooflights, the final affect of the internal aesthetic is dramatic, with light-filled spaces that create their own moving works of art, changing each day depending on the weather, sky above and position of the sun.

With such a uniquely pitched roof, the rooflights capture the sunlight in a unique fashion, causing light to bounce downward against the crisp white rendered walls and into the internal space, where the residents of all ages gather, and generations merge.

Architect:

[Rural Office for Architecture, MacDonald Wright Architects](#)

Architects Contractor:

Cardy Construction Limited

Awards:

RIBA South East Award 2017

RIBA South East Sustainability Award 2017 - sponsored by Geberit

RIBA National Award 2017

Long-listed for Stirling Prize 'House of the Year' 2017

Contact us for more information:

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