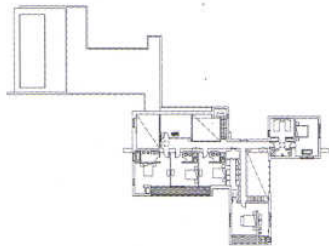




SUFFOLK

A new country house in accordance with PPG7



Situated in 50 acres of Suffolk woodland, the Wilderness is one of the last country houses to be granted planning permission under PPG7 clause 3.21. And while permission has been granted to about 20 houses under the law, the Wilderness is one of the few contemporary designs to be built. As might be expected, writes Paul+O Architects, there was some local opposition to the proposal, but this was countered by support from CABE, the Suffolk Preservation Society, the Suffolk Society of Architects and John Gummer MP, the originator of PPG7.

The challenge was to rethink how a country house might look and function in the twenty-first century. Twentieth century precedents are few and far between and, unlike eighteenth and nineteenth century country houses which dominated the

landscape, the Wilderness sits modestly in a clearing in the wood. But while the design is restrained, there remains a powerful sense of grandeur.

The house is picturesque, a sculptural form whose massing is asymmetrical and broken up. Tradition and modernity are combined in function, materials and style. The design draws on recent European architecture, but the language is tempered by site, historical references, geography and construction – oak, flint and render are among the traditional, local materials used

in a contemporary way; raised on a flint plinth, the external walls are finished with a warm-grey render, pierced by elegant black-framed windows.

The existing grid of the site, formed by rides and hedgerows, is the generator of the cruciform plan, open on all sides to exploit aspect and shelter. The brief called for a light and social space and plenty of room for guests, but the 750 square metre house remains comfortable when the client is on her own.

The ground floor is largely transparent, blurring the edges

between indoors and outdoors. The upper floor, which contains six bedrooms (most with ensuite bathrooms), overhangs the ground floor and makes reference to medieval timber-framed Suffolk houses with their jettied upper storeys. All south-facing bedrooms have external terraces. There are references to medieval manor houses, and to nineteenth century domestic revival dwellings, in the double-height hall with a gallery and grand staircase. This verticality acts as a counterpoint to the long views through the house.

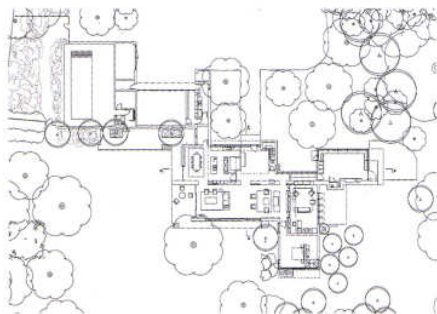
Internally, the colour palette is restrained: dark olive on the spine wall and a paler grey-green and off-white elsewhere. The flooring downstairs is basalt, and upstairs double-fumed oak. Luxurious materials are used sparingly, to add accents.

Landscaping is central to the scheme and reflects the twenty-first century reality in which nature is fragile; in its design and planting the garden seeks to accentuate what is special and unique about this Suffolk wilderness.

Plans Ground and first floor. A double-height entrance hall is screened from the living room by a spine wall (extending an existing hedgerow), which bisects the house. To the east is the studio/office and the library/study. To the west is the double-height kitchen/dining room, service areas and the pool.

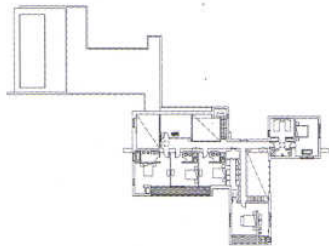
Photographs Above: Edmund Sumner; below: Paulo Marto.

Project team and suppliers: Architect: Paul+O Architects; design team: Paul Acland, Paulo Marto; structural engineer: Whitby Bird; qs: Davis Langdon; landscaping: Paul+O Architects; mechanical installation: Knights Warner; roofing: Samaffi; kitchen: Nick Willis Woodworking; timber flooring: FPS; stone flooring: Stonell Architectural Office; lighting: Iguzzini; sanitaryware: Original Bathrooms; tiles: Architectural Ceramics; windows: MSO Joinery; render: Sto.





SUFFOLK
A new country house in accordance with PPG7



Situated in 50 acres of Suffolk woodland, the Wilderness is one of the last country houses to be granted planning permission under PPG7 clause 3.21. And while permission has been granted to about 20 houses under the law, the Wilderness is one of the few contemporary designs to be built. As might be expected, writes Paul+O Architects, there was some local opposition to the proposal, but this was countered by support from CABE, the Suffolk Preservation Society, the Suffolk Society of Architects and John Gummer MP, the originator of PPG7.

The challenge was to rethink how a country house might look and function in the twenty-first century. Twentieth century precedents are few and far between and, unlike eighteenth and nineteenth century country houses which dominated the

landscape, the Wilderness sits modestly in a clearing in the wood. But while the design is restrained, there remains a powerful sense of grandeur.

The house is picturesque, a sculptural form whose massing is asymmetrical and broken up. Tradition and modernity are combined in function, materials and style. The design draws on recent European architecture, but the language is tempered by site, historical references, geography and construction – oak, flint and render are among the traditional, local materials used

in a contemporary way; raised on a flint plinth, the external walls are finished with a warm-grey render, pierced by elegant black-framed windows.

The existing grid of the site, formed by rides and hedgerows, is the generator of the cruciform plan, open on all sides to exploit aspect and shelter. The brief called for a light and social space and plenty of room for guests, but the 750 square metre house remains comfortable when the client is on her own.

The ground floor is largely transparent, blurring the edges

between indoors and outdoors. The upper floor, which contains six bedrooms (most with ensuite bathrooms), overhangs the ground floor and makes reference to medieval timber-framed Suffolk houses with their jettied upper storeys. All south-facing bedrooms have external terraces. There are references to medieval manor houses, and to nineteenth century domestic revival dwellings, in the double-height hall with a gallery and grand staircase. This verticality acts as a counterpoint to the long views through the house.

Internally, the colour palette is restrained: dark olive on the spine wall and a paler grey-green and off-white elsewhere. The flooring downstairs is basalt, and upstairs double-fumed oak. Luxurious materials are used sparingly, to add accents.

Landscaping is central to the scheme and reflects the twenty-first century reality in which nature is fragile; in its design and planting the garden seeks to accentuate what is special and unique about this Suffolk wilderness.

Plans Ground and first floor. A double-height entrance hall is screened from the living room by a spine wall (extending an existing hedgerow), which bisects the house. To the east is the studio/office and the library/study. To the west is the double-height kitchen/dining room, service areas and the pool.

Photographs Above: Edmund Sumner; below: Paulo Marto.

Project team and suppliers: Architect: Paul+O Architects; design team: Paul Acland, Paulo Marto; structural engineer: Whitby Bird; qs: Davis Langdon; landscaping: Paul+O Architects; mechanical installation: Knights Warner; roofing: Samaffi; kitchen: Nick Willis Woodworking; timber flooring: FPS; stone flooring: Stonell Architectural Office; lighting: Iguzzini; sanitaryware: Original Bathrooms; tiles: Architectural Ceramics; windows: MSO Joinery; render: Sto.

