

I & J Curry Builders, Windy Ridge, Penruddock, CA11 0RD

Description of Brief given to Builder

Demolition of outbuildings and 1930s lean to extension retaining all stone to use in the new build.

Building of a 2 storey extension providing 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, conservatory and galleried hall/landing together with refurbishment of the original 2 storey cottage to provide a lounge, kitchen diner, utility room, study and the addition of a new porch. Improve look of concrete garage at minimum expense.

Everything to be in keeping with the original cottage which was built in 1843 of 'random rubble'.

Special Issues to be taken into consideration

We are in the heart of the Lake District National Park in a highly visible position on the main tourist route up Helvellyn.

Plans drawn by

Outline design by Margaret Neate

Planning application drawings by John McCall Architects, Hayfield, Cheshire

Building Regulation drawings and layouts by Carrock Architects, Hutton Roof, Cumbria

Project Start

September 2008

Project Completion

February 2010

Special/Unusual Methods

Dry stone wall effect to exterior

Combination of modern structural specifications with traditional looks – e.g. Oak peg effect covers to bolted joints, and glazed oak entrance.

How well were problems/ changes dealt with eg?

With the utmost understanding, cooperation and flexibility.

EG. 1

We agonised over the positioning of a window for a month after it had been installed and built over. We felt it would have looked better 18 inches to the right but thought it was too late and we would have to live with our mistake. However when raised with Ian he said it was important that we were happy with the finished job and we only get one shot at getting it right so he dismantled the wall and moved the window – thus giving internal symmetry to the glazing in the hall and landing areas.

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EG.2

Addition of 'crow's steps' to new gable end

Ian helped me to convince planner to agree to the change for its appearance and structural benefits and come up with a method of fixing that was acceptable to the Building Inspector

EG.3

Amendment to conservatory roof from slate to part glazing/ part slate – again playing a part in discussions with planners

Overall Satisfaction

Which aspect delighted you most?

The overall quality of the finishes –
External and internal stonework,
The oak entrance,
The green oak work
The entrance hall and conservatory

The fact that we managed not to import any of the stone used to face the new build and retaining walls other than lintels and quoins at the rear of the building guaranteeing the tie in of the old and new. The lintels were shaped to match the rough cut lintels of the original house.

What was most difficult aspect?

Maintaining our access to cooking and washing facilities at all times during the build to allow us to live here during the new build and renovation

Extricating many large boulders found in back garden during original excavation

The extreme weather conditions – we are at the foot of Helvellyn and it can get very wet! They worked without complaint in the worst floods and heaviest snowfall seen in the district for many years. They even delivered some materials on a sledge!

Egs of courtesy and consideration by builders

The way in which they were prepared to spend time with us 'mocking up' fireplaces, kitchen layouts etc to enable us to get the best fit and look, not just the easy option.

The attention to detail at all times, even on the meter cupboard was made on site to match the rustic oak doors

No cutting of corners and a belief in getting things right rather than rushing things.

Taking time to understand our requirements and quality standards

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No more than 250 words say why you think your builder should be 'Master Builder of the Year 2010'

Our finished home is a first class piece of workmanship that we are proud to live in. Described by former clients as 'Ian Curry's masterpiece' it adds to their range of quality buildings in the Dale (including churches and schools) enhancing the company's local reputation, and drawing considerable praise from passers by (of which there are many).

Ian's team of skilled, loyal craftsmen and local sub-contractors showed the utmost respect for our property and privacy whilst working around us. At all times polite and considerate, nothing was too much trouble if it meant getting the job right. It came as second nature to them. They made what could have been an ordeal a rewarding experience.

Their attention to detail was exemplary – from advice on the choice of materials, and finishes such as the oak windows, conservatory, stair case and arched entrance, the plucked edges of the new slate ledges/quoins and more. Their willingness to provide mock ups to illustrate options was very helpful in our making informed decisions.

Their understanding of modern building techniques/ regulations, coupled with respect for traditional building methods were key to the projects success providing us with a home which combines Lake District character with contemporary finishes.

The team were a pleasure to deal with. There were challenges but never conflict or confrontation. Ian was always available on the other end of a phone and made regular visits to supervise the contract, explain things to us and give assistance to his team.

Paul + Margaret Neate

Gillside Cottage

Glenridding

Cumbria

CA11 0QQ

16 June 2010