

Reflecting natural beauty

Emerging from the dunes of Old Hunstanton, The Chalet is an incredible transformation delivered by ACS Architectural and MW McGinn Construction that embraces its stunning location

The sensitive architecture of ACS Architectural's design nestles comfortably into the coastal surroundings; a striking improvement on the large, unattractive 20th Century dwelling of concrete and asbestos that was there before.

The property's owners wanted to create a spacious beach house for all generations to enjoy. Providing a practical open-plan living space for this coast-loving family was a priority, as was taking full advantage of the breathtaking sea views.

"It was important to deliver a design that fully met the client's needs without dominating the natural setting," explains Architectural Designer Nick Borrmann. "The Chalet takes advantage of a challenging level change created by the sloping beach,

so that the ground floor is sunken into the dunes and not visible at all from the sea elevation."

"The complexity of the site is one of the reasons ACS Architectural came to us," says Matt McGinn. "It was quite a challenge to dig into the embankment for the ground floor, almost like a basement, and the works included specialist installation of a tanking system which was undertaken by our skilled team."

An important part of the MW McGinn ethos is providing a complete construction package to projects across the North Norfolk region where Matt was born and bred. "We are proud local builders offering the specialist skills and equipment you might expect from a larger firm, meaning we're perfectly placed to deliver on unique briefs such as The Chalet," he says.

Both Nick and Matt agree that communication and collaboration were key to achieving a high quality finish for The Chalet. "We spent time at the research stage working out the best approach to construction, considering very specific aspects such as damp-proofing, which was a challenge we enjoyed," Nick says. "Listening to what the architect and client visualised and applying our knowledge of construction and materials was essential to delivering this complex build," adds Matt.

From the roadside, ACS Architectural have designed a traditional building that sensitively reflects the style of neighbouring properties and the character of the local area. The ground floor is constructed in pebble flint with decorative red brickwork and topped with a timber clad second storey and red pantile roof.





PICTURES: The Chalet combines a traditional brick and flint frontage with a modern, glazed sea-front aspect.

as upside-down living, with the large open-plan kitchen-dining-living area positioned on the first floor to take full advantage of the incredible coastal outlook.

Due to the complex nature of the site, ACS Architectural also designed the

landscaping that surrounds this unique build. "The site has various levels as it steps up from the beach," Nick describes. "A principal patio steps down to a sheltered seating area, then further to a BBQ terrace and hardstanding wash deck adjacent to the beach." Each level is framed by railway sleepers, softened by raised beds of grasses and lavender.

The coastal location of The Chalet influenced the materials used. High winds, extreme weather exposure and salt air were all taken into account when selecting and installing robust materials that could withstand these conditions. "Much of the detailing is formed in powder-

“Every element of the design on this beach-facing aspect is intended to draw your eye out towards the sea”

coated aluminium and the cladding is a high-quality synthetic called Millboard," explains Nick. "Both these products are highly durable and don't require any maintenance."

"One of the things I really love on the property is the flintwork," Matt says. "We have accumulated a very skilled team over the years and our stonemasons have achieved a finish that is really second to none."

This close attention to detail is a hallmark of MW McGinn's work. Few will realise that the steps rising up to the property from the beach match the exact profile of those internally, or that the vented grills have been sprayed to match the colour of the guttering. "These are details that people tend not to notice," Matt says, "but this perfectionism creates the exceptional luxury finish."

From the beach, The Chalet rises out of the dunes, with landscaping at various levels softening the overall mass of the building. "Every element of the design on this beach-facing aspect is intended to draw your eye out towards the sea," Nick says.

With a contemporary twist, two fully glazed, pitched gables are joined by a boarded middle section and a sweep of sliding doors. The interior is arranged



PICTURES: Opening directly onto the dunes at Old Hunstanton, this incredible property makes the most of its enviable views.

The location also made construction challenging. "Throughout the project we were working under everything from extreme heat to high north easterly winds," Matt explains. "This meant we had to carefully plan many elements of the build

- from getting concrete to set to making the building fully watertight to withstand the coastal elements."

Nick admits that this was a project that really utilised all of ACS Architectural's

skillsets, from planning expertise, creative design, technical drawings and 3D imaging to tendering, landscaping and project management.

"It is a project that pushed us to go that little bit further. Every element of the design and build was influenced by the incredible North Norfolk coastal location," he says. "But we like a challenge and our clients know that we are a safe set of hands. We will go that extra mile to fully understand their needs and effectively deliver their brief."

"We've been working in the area for over 20 years and always strive to continuously improve the careful workmanship and strong customer relations we are known for," Matt adds. "This is a project that really demonstrates that we are setting the standard for Norfolk builds."

The Chalet at Old Hunstanton is a striking design backed by skilled practical delivery. This highly desirable family home will nestle comfortably in the dunes for many generations to come.



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