

"The use of original features and materials carefully stored for decades was amazing - and the contribution this project made to the vitality of the village is admirable. The perfect balance between preserving the past and embracing the future..."

- PAM LYNN, CONSERVATION OFFICER
BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN & WEST NORFOLK



NO. TWENTY 9
CRAFTSMANSHIP &
LISTED BUILDINGS



MAYOR'S
DESIGN AWARDS
SHORTLISTED

FROM GEORGIAN HOUSE TO CUTTING-EDGE RESTAURANT

Conversion, renovation and restoration in one build, No. Twenty 9 in Burnham Market is a shining example of the creative skills and sensitive approach of **ACS Architectural**

It's a rare thing for a homeowner to task an architect with turning a locally well-loved Georgian property into a unique restaurant featuring an ultra-modern kitchen and open fire-pit cooking range. It's equally rare when that person also wants the 'imposter' Victorian frontage restored to its original Georgian symmetry – with as many original features as possible enhanced and protected.

But Tim Roberts – the new owner of 29 Market Place, Burnham Market – had more than just a demanding brief for architect Chris Borrmann of ACS Architectural Ltd to consider. He had a clear vision of how this much-loved former family home could be brought back to its Georgian splendour but also

become a vibrant part of village life.

Restoring and rejuvenating No.29 was an exciting challenge which immediately appealed to the creative architectural talents of ACS and their years of experience working on historic properties, especially when a surprise discovery hidden away in a barn took the project to a completely new level – one that's resulted in a truly outstanding conversion that's perfectly restored the past and given No.29 a fresh new place in the modern world.

The No.29 Restaurant now welcomes customers into amazing surroundings, enabling them to relish both the menu and ambience but also the sheer style of the newly-restored building which had been home to

several generations of the same family until Tim bought it in April 2016.

The story of the building's restoration and reinvention must be one of the most unusual any architects' practice could tell.

It began with a meeting with new owner Tim Roberts, who had an ambitious vision to create a stunning new restaurant whilst protecting the heritage of a house which had stood the test of time.

Tim already had experience of owning a great restaurant – the Gin Trap on the island of Nevis in the West Indies – and the link between his love of Norfolk and his plans for No.29 was none other than Norfolk's most famous son Lord Nelson, who married his wife



in 1787 at the Caribbean property that is now the Gin Trap.

Having discussed the clear brief, Tim then revealed something ACS could never have anticipated. Previous generations of owners had carefully stored every item removed from No.29 over the decades, including the original Georgian frontage, original sash windows, antique glass and more – everything, in fact, that Tim’s vision for a Georgian house rejuvenation would need.

“It’s very unusual to work with a client who insists everything with historical value should be kept,” says Chris Borrmann. “Even more so when they provide a wealth of original items from the property’s history – it was as though they’d been sitting in a barn waiting for someone to put the pieces back together and make No.29 something Burnham Market and Norfolk could be proud of.”

Chris and his team at ACS spent considerable time taking into account local views and concerns about the project, paying close attention to light pollution and potential noise issues.

“There were some initial worries over extraction levels as the building has domestic homes close by,” says Chris. “Our solution was to use the existing chimney and install new ducting to make sure this was properly addressed. Basically, we had to work within the physical structures that were unchangeable and ensure the property complemented its immediate surroundings.”

From April 2016, the project moved apace, with plans being drawn and

discussed with Pam Lynn of the local Planning Department’s Listed Building and Conservation Team. By the end of the year, essential work to tackle the poor state of the roof was underway.

“From the very start, protecting the fabric of the building from any further deterioration was an important element,” says Chris. “This was an essential focus of the project – even before the work began in earnest.”

Within a building that couldn’t be altered structurally, the work involved the installation of modern equipment

It was a considerable challenge, requiring lateral thinking, careful planning and a very sensitive approach to the existing building. The fact that it’s virtually impossible to tell where the old ends and the new begins goes a long way to explaining why the project has been shortlisted for the Mayor’s Design Awards in the Craftsmanship category.

“Happily, we had a brilliant team on the project,” says Chris, “and everyone involved, especially contractors Daco Ltd’s Steve Dawes and Ben Connolly, worked together to find the answers which have ultimately benefitted the house – and the restaurant’s guests.”

By February 2017, reconstruction and restoration work began, with ACS working closely with Daco Ltd and the local conservation team to ensure the revitalised No.29 was the best it could be.

One aspect important to rectify was reconfiguring a flat which had been created on the first floor. Its central kitchen had to be moved and the overall use of the space redefined. The solution, following a carefully-managed clearance was to create a light-rich wine fridge in the centre of the floor – something that was only possible after new solid oak beams were added to the deteriorated ones that had fallen victim to deathwatch beetles.

It was a build full of surprises. “We discovered that a central fireplace that appeared to have a single walkthrough to one side actually had walkthroughs on both sides,” says Chris. “We also found a huge number of Victorian glass bottles. We uncovered some odd little holes recessed into the

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for the restaurant’s kitchens (including the first open fire cooking pit outside London), the creation of toilet suites, and the maximising of space for dining tables.



ABOVE: Before and after shots of one of the first floor dining rooms



ABOVE & RIGHT: Before and after of the wine cellar



walls we assumed were for candles in the past – and we even found a well!”

The result more than lives up to owner Tim Roberts’ original ideas and is a fine example of how ACS approach projects with equal measures of creativity and sensitivity.

“Tim wanted to make the restaurant as open plan as possible so guests could see the chefs cooking for them, as well as providing a venue that was both warm and welcoming,” says Chris. “The artwork is amazing too, and we’re really pleased that Tim gave us the flexibility to achieve his plans. It’s a truly fabulous space.”

So what’s next for No.29?

Planning permission has been granted for six bed and breakfast rooms, so guests visiting Burnham Market can enjoy more than just an excellent meal.

With Tim’s passion, the design prowess of ACS and exceptional building skills, a very special building has been restored, given a modern purpose, and now has a lease of life that will see it well into the future.



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