

EXTERIOR

The Grade II-listed cottage, which now houses the couple's bedroom and bathroom, had to be underpinned and extensively rebuilt.

ENTRANCE HALL

'We chose a neutral palette (right) because we did not want to compete with the views of the garden and beyond,' says homeowner Sophie Stevenson. Belgian Blue limestone, £138sq m, Indigenous, indigenousltd.com. Beni Ouarain Moroccan rug, from £750, Blue Gigi, bluegigi.com.



COTSWOLDS RESTORATION

JOINED-UP

THINKING

The use of sleek glass passages and green oak beams to connect a series of former farm buildings has resulted in a home that effortlessly blends old and new

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EXTERIOR

A new long barn was built to link two of the converted farm buildings, creating a sheltered three-sided courtyard garden (top).

FRONT DOOR

The large, weathered-wood front door (above left) is entirely in keeping with the original building.

HALLWAY

This leads to the kitchen where Sophie has created a desk area (above). 'It's rare to find end-to-end sight lines in rural builds so we wanted to capitalise on that,' says architect Luke Chandresinghe. 'Long,

thin spaces always look better than those that are short and wide.'

Architect, Luke Chandresinghe, Undercover, undercoverarchitecture.com. **Bespoke oak parquet flooring,** FPS Flooring, fpsflooring.com.

KITCHEN

To keep this newly built space as open and light as possible, Luke used A-frames of solid green oak (above) to support the roof. **CH24 Wishbone dining chairs,** £589 each, Skandium, skandium.com. **Vintage Holophane pendant lights,** Alex MacArthur Interiors, alexmacarthur.co.uk. **Artwork,** Chris Levine, chrislevine.com.

When Sophie and Jules Stevenson decided to leave London for the Cotswolds with their young family, they did not anticipate the many twists and turns of the long road that lay ahead. They began by finding a home to rent in the area, so they could search more easily for the perfect property. Houses with the large, open-plan living spaces that had suited them so well in the city, however, proved nigh on impossible to find. 'Most traditional Cotswold stone houses, beautiful as they are, don't yield that kind of volume,' says Sophie.

Then, after two years of fruitless searching, the Stevensons decided to take a different approach. The breakthrough came when they spotted a plot for sale on The Great Tew Estate. It featured a Grade II-listed cottage and several derelict farm buildings, with planning permission to conjoin the dwellings and create a horseshoe-shaped family home. 'Renovating on a large scale had not been part of our plan,' says Sophie, 'but we realised that to achieve our vision, we had to be brave and rethink our strategy.'

Under the terms of the planning permission, there was not much that could be done to alter the



agreed footprint but thanks to the Stevensons' architect, Luke Chandresinghe, they were able to make some adjustments that meant they could have the modern country home they had spent so long searching for. Luke simplified the property's planned layout, removing a number of internal walls and incorporating a solid green oak A-frame to open up the space. 'His vision was inspired,' says Sophie. 'He also introduced glass passageways to link the formerly disparate farm buildings.'

THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX

The greatest challenge, however, was incorporating the listed two-storey cottage, which now houses the couple's bedroom and bathroom. 'We had to persuade the planning department to allow us to make the cottage part of the main house, instead of leaving it as an ancillary structure,' Sophie recalls. 'Fortunately, they were won over by the minimalist idea of incorporating a single sheet of glass into the passageway that links the two properties.' The long build took shape over the course of the next two years, during which time

KITCHEN

This neat desk space (above left) benefits from full-length glass windows, which frame a view that acts as a natural, ever-changing artwork. **Glass Pumpkin table lamp**, £99, Graham and Green, grahamandgreen.co.uk. **Eames EA 217 Soft Pad chairs**, £2,630 each, The Conran Shop, conranshop.co.uk.

SITTING ROOM

A palette of blues, greens and greys helps to define this living area (above). 'We used architectural whites because they work beautifully as a backdrop to our artwork,' says Sophie, who has introduced splashes of colour, in the form of furniture and soft furnishings, to add depth to the scheme. **Harry Large ottoman**, from £1,674.50, B&B Italia, bebitalia.com. **Flaunt rug**, from £1,867, The Rug Company, therugcompany.com.



DINING AREA

A bespoke oak bookcase (above) not only acts as a room divider, but is used to display a carefully edited collection of favourite pieces. The oiled herringbone floor lends a warm, textural look. **Bespoke bookcase.** Touch Design Group, touchdesigngroup.com. **Pathos table** in gloss finish, from £2,599, B&B Italia, beitalia.com. **Eames DSR dining chairs,** £250 each, Heal's, heals.com. **Interior design,** Hum Designs, humdesigns.co.uk.

STAIRCASE

To limit the sense of separation between the main sitting room and the sunken snug (just seen, above right), the part wall that supports the stairs has been made as narrow as building regulations allow. It also provides the perfect spot for the Stevensons to show off one of their favourite artworks by Damian Elwes. **Wall in Dove Tale Modern Emulsion,** £45 for 2.5L, Farrow & Ball, farrow-ball.com.



the family lived in a static home on the site. The new long barn accommodates the main living spaces, including the kitchen, dining area, sitting room and a sunken snug. It links to two converted farm buildings, one at either end, to form a horseshoe-shaped plot. One houses guest bedrooms and bathrooms; the other houses the children's bedrooms and a games room. Meanwhile, another glass link, accessed via the kitchen, leads to a third wing, where the family playroom is tucked away.

A PERFECT BLEND

The conversion had the happy effect of creating a three-sided courtyard, with the open end providing beautiful views across the valley towards the village of Great Tew. 'The original position of the buildings allowed us to unite them in a very natural, sympathetic way, using local materials such as Cotswold stone and Welsh slate,' says Sophie. Crucially for the couple, their new home has given them the chance to decorate with the traditional and contemporary aesthetics that they love: a palette of greys, neutrals



and architectural whites, punctuated by colour accents courtesy of carefully selected soft furnishings and the couple's choice of vibrant artworks.

OUTSIDE IN

Interior designer and family friend Cate Williams, who came on board before the building work began, helped Sophie to create this understated look. 'We wanted the interiors to complement nature,' explains Cate, so the two of them worked with a muted palette, choosing aged parquet or simple limestone flooring, and rustic textures such as unfinished wood and stone. They added hints of glamour through linear furniture, contemporary artwork and classic mid-century-modern pieces by the likes of Eames and Hans J Wegner. 'We wanted to be respectful of our surroundings while adding a modern twist,' says Sophie. The result is an artful blend of old and new that sits naturally within its environment; a painstaking endeavour that happily proved well worth the wait.

MAIN BEDROOM

To make this space (above) feel larger and to allow for the inclusion of a freestanding bath, the ceiling was opened up to the roof. Original mullion windows create a pleasing sense of symmetry, while the large canvas emphasises the room's height. **Celestial Pebble pendant lights**, £1,620 each, Ochre, ochre.net.

GUEST BATHROOM

Inspired by their travels, the couple created a subtle Eastern feel in this room (opposite page, bottom right). Preferring an unstructured look, they opted for a lava stone basin plumbed into

a bespoke stained and lacquered oak console. **Riverstone basin**, £360, Indigenous, indigenousltd.com.

GUEST BEDROOM

By placing the bath (opposite page, bottom left) in the bedroom and the other bathroom utilities behind a part wall (opposite page, top), Sophie was able to make the most of the space without compromising on privacy. **French Grey painted rattan bed**, from £1,345, The French Bedroom Company, frenchbedroomcompany.co.uk. **Omina natural stone bath**, £3,200, Home Etc, homeetcbathroom.com. **Curtain in Lin Leger in Gris**, £90m, Dominique Kieffer at Rubelli, rubelli.com.