

EST. **BORDER OAK** 1980

---

**COSTINGS**

A range of example homes -  
to help plan your project

**PLANNING**

A successful planning application  
by Border Oak in Powys

**AWARD WINNING**

A self build celebration wins  
national recognition



ISSUE #005

# Border Oak was established in 1980

We've been lovingly handcrafting oak framed buildings ever since. Based in rural Herefordshire, we are a family run business specialising in bespoke self build projects – constructed across the UK and abroad.

All of our buildings are constructed from the finest natural materials, using traditional British skills - we often reinterpret vernacular detail to embrace the best of modern technologies and contemporary design.

Our wealth of experience has enabled us to assemble an unrivalled range of skills including an 'in house' design team, specialist carpenters, traditional construction skills, and project managers. We pride ourselves on our flexibility, sustainability, and our innovative approach.





## WHISTELLE BARN

*Border Oak radically repurposed a redundant industrial site in rural Herefordshire to create a contemporary and sustainable home.*

The site was originally occupied by an old metal industrial barn and covered with concrete hardstanding, yet was surrounded by other domestic properties. Border Oak had owned and used the site for more than 20 years, but it was no longer needed.

Using a new national planning directive, Border Oak put forward a repurposing scheme; transforming the brownfield site into a plot for a single dwelling for an oak framed home.

This particular planning policy had various restrictions and criteria to address, but as all Border Oak designs are bespoke and unique, we were able to prepare a one off design that met the requirements of the policy and also overcame the nutrient restrictions in place in the Wye catchment.

Border Oak rarely build homes to sell as we specialise in the self and custom build sector where we are commissioned to build individual homes, but this site was more difficult than most with potential hurdles to overcome because of its brownfield nature and planning criteria, so we decided it was best to take on the build ourselves.

The planning policy dictated that the entire footprint of the new home had to be located within the area occupied by the industrial barn itself and couldn't be any taller than the top of the original barrel roof. Our solution to this was to design two linked barn forms attached to one another with a glazed oak link, which provided an entrance hall and boot room.

We wanted to use as many local materials and suppliers as possible – the frame and encapsulation panels were made in our





workshops just a few miles away and we were also able to source Herefordshire stone and locally grown and milled larch to sit on our handmade bricks. To echo the industrial building and create a contemporary profile, we specified a standing seam metal roof which is also fully recyclable. Although the house is encapsulated (for thermal performance and airtightness) there is a beautiful hand made green oak structural frame internally – with external green oak detail such as the large feature solar shade overhang at the front.

*‘It was fun to work with the team to fathom out the smaller details - which actually play a huge part in the design. For example, the shadow gap boarding looks streamlined and simple, but needed careful thought as it meets various other materials and it could have looked clumsy if not thought through’*



The house has been conceived to be super low energy with low impact natural materials designed to last and be reused and supplemented by renewable tech including PV panels and an Air Source Heat Pump to run the underfloor heating.

The larger barn houses a locally made bespoke kitchen together with a dining space, doors onto a hidden courtyard and a large pantry. The kitchen opens onto a generous sitting room, with triple folding doors leading onto a terrace under the solar shade overlooking the newly formed garden. There is an oak staircase, vaulted ensuite bedrooms and two ensuites on the first floor with views towards Hay Bluff. The larger barn is linked to the smaller barn by a spacious entrance hall, which has a large ceiling lantern and glazed sides to capture daylight through all seasons, plus a boot room, shower room and second staircase. There is a large office (or 4th bedroom) on the ground floor next to a utility room and plant room. The second floor of the smaller barn houses another vaulted bedroom and impressive bathroom.

The two barns work well as a combined space, but have also been design for multi generation living, home working or even letting out, if desired.

The whole premise was to make it sustainable, adaptable, beautiful, and convert planning restrictions into opportunities and advantages.

[READ MORE ON OUR WEBSITE](#)





*'The barn has been built with function and beauty mind - transforming a redundant brownfield site into a super sustainable, craftsman made, family home has been a joy'*



# Custom Build Developments

*We are always looking for land for developments of up to 10 houses*

Border Oak are keen to make custom and self build as accessible to as many people as possible. For decades, we have worked alongside landowners and clients across the UK to create serviced plots with infrastructure and planning approval in place. Using our extensive experience, knowledge and imagination to transform land into beautiful and sustainable schemes for single plots and collective home projects.

If you have a piece of land you think we may be interested in then please contact Julie Lawrence – 01568 708752







We are always seeking village and other rural opportunities, and are very happy to work in collaboration with landowners and estate managers to meet their specific needs. We can undertake every part of the process - from the initial 'moodboard' concepts through to securing planning approval, installing services and selling the plots to our clients. Often landowners wish to keep a site for themselves and Border Oak offer a 'master planning' service to ensure every detail is considered and every purchaser is protected.

We can design and deliver mixed use (including 'live work' and small commercial or community buildings) and combined tenure sites and we offer self build, custom build or custom finish options.

# PLANNING CASE STUDY

## *Gladestry, Herefordshire*



## INTRODUCTION

Border Oak were approached by the farmer and landowner a few years ago to see if we would be interested in buying a small part of their farm.

## HISTORY

We had already built several homes in the village and the landowner felt we would be a good partner for his project too – especially as he lived nearby and wanted to ensure the development was of a very high design standard.

The landowner had already secured detailed planning approval with his land agent, but for a generic housing estate which was not quite right for the type of self and custom build we specialise in.

## PLANNING

The benefit of having planning approval already was the top level decisions had already been agreed – the principle of development, the access drive and other infrastructure and the number of dwellings had all been determined. This meant that we were able to base our redesign on set parameters, and we also knew the constraints and conditions we were working within – not least nutrient neutrality which had to be resolved through the use of two high performance treatment plants and extensive filtration networks.





Plot 1

Plot 2

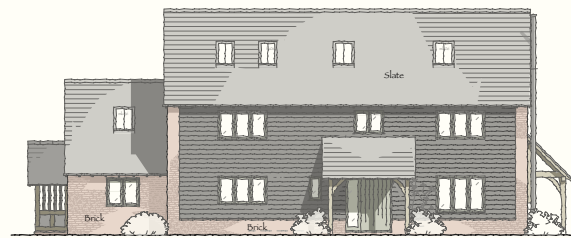
Plot 3

Border Oak amended the individual plot designs to reflect our work and complement one another and to best capture the incredible setting but also to incorporate renewable technologies and our preferred landscaping detail. The amendments we proposed were able to run through the planning system as a Section 73 submission rather than a completely new application, thanks to the collaborative and positive approach of the planning officer and because the primary planning issues had already been resolved. This meant our proposals were approved quickly.



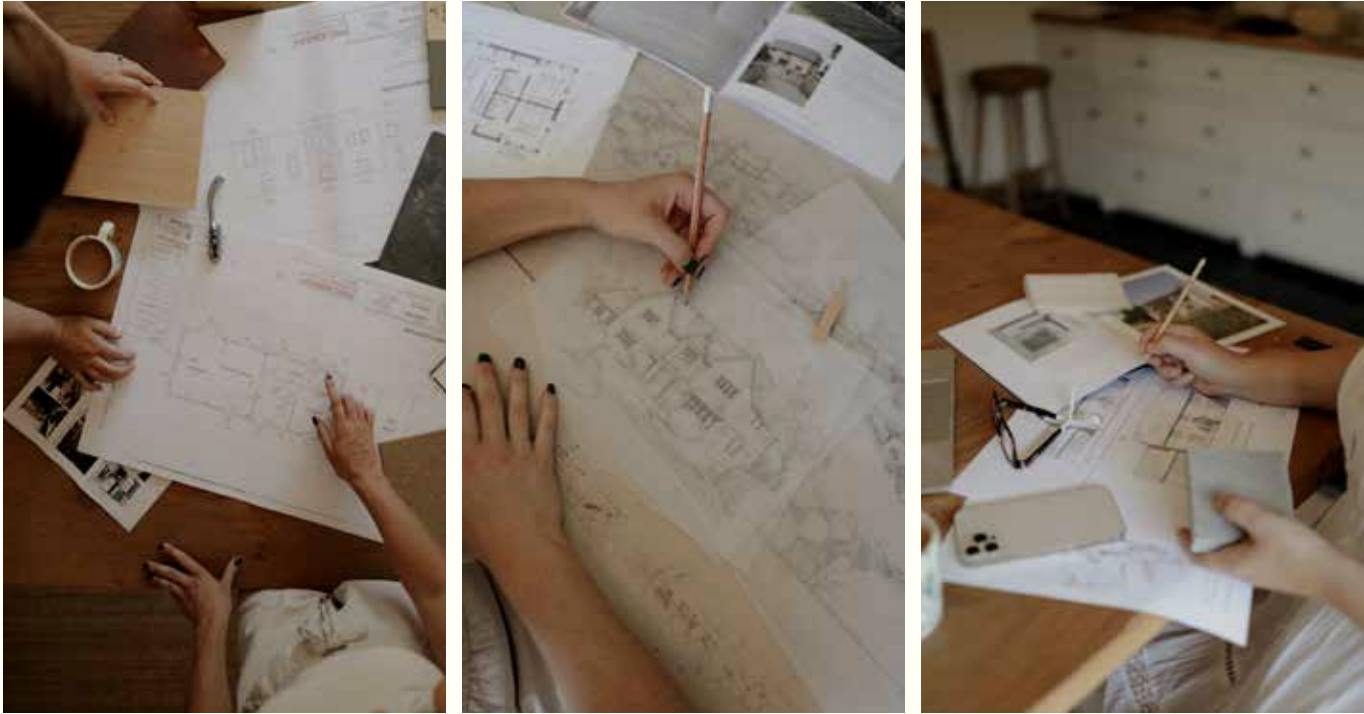
Plot 4

THE PLOTS ARE NOW AVAILABLE TO BUY  
 MORE DETAIL CAN BE FOUND ON  
[WWW.BORDEROAK.COM/PLOTS](http://WWW.BORDEROAK.COM/PLOTS)  
 OR CALL JULIE ON 01568 708 752 TO DISCUSS.



Plot 5





# The Drawing Office

## *A day in the life of our Architect*

TUESDAY - JUST A NORMAL DAY

### ALMOST 8AM.

I arrive at the office on my bike. It has rained all 6 miles from my home, but luckily I brought a change of clothes. Time to start drawing...

### 8AM ISH.

My first job today is to reconfigure a design originally drawn by an architect for a plot in Wiltshire. In order to align with an oak framed structure a few elements need to be shuffled to accommodate the structural bays. Oak frames are traditionally built to a 'grid' of bays, which needs careful handling so we don't end up with random posts in awkward places.

### 8.30AM.

Nik, our Head of Design, sits right behind me so has a good view of my screens and politely suggests that I may still have a post in a funny location. Back to the actual drawing board - a bit more shuffling and head scratching needed.

### 9AM.

The whole architectural team have our weekly catch up with Ed

and Paul, who directly liaise with customers and then instruct us on what to draw - often with the aid of sketches, budgets, wish lists, mood boards etc.

Everything we design and build is bespoke. Sometimes we interpret the brief perfectly first time (with maybe a few minor changes) so these can then be sent to our clients and a planning application prepared and submitted. Typically the process is more organic and there will be several tweaks and redraws to make sure everyone is happy.

We identify all revisions with letters from the alphabet. We've never got as far as revision 'Z' - but have come close!

I'm not sure what happens if a drawing needs to be revised more than 26 times?

### 10.15AM.

Our Estimator, Dan, pops up to talk through a house I designed last week. His team take my architectural drawings and work out how best they might be built (and how much this will cost), so his feedback is always welcome.

Because we offer a full service we have a lot of inter department collaboration which is really useful and means we learn from one another all the time.



11AM.

Grant from the Technical Design Team (we all sit in one large room in a Border Oak barn) asks to chat through one of the designs he is converting into working drawings now that the project is a confirmed order. He is worried a rooflight is in the wrong place but wants to check if the client needed it there if or if it was my idea. It was my idea, so he moves it.

12AM.

I realise that I need to hang up my damp biking clothes! I do this and then get back to a bit more drawing before lunch.

1PM.

Lunchtime, so I ride to the village shop for a bag of crisps to supplement my packed lunch, and also buy a packet of biscuits for the office: I think it is my turn to make an offering.

2PM.

I start working on a hand drawn 'artist's impression' for a house in Gloucestershire – we often use these to help people visualise the end result. I used to work them out on paper using two-point perspective and horizon lines etc. (I started my career in the days of drawing boards and clutch pencils) but now find that I'm quicker if I draw a very basic representation of the house digitally, then pencil over onto tracing paper. I might then scan it back into the computer and overlay colours using our software. Every now and then I hand watercolour them. Combining technology and tradition seems to work well.

I'm sure that one day soon I will be drawing the houses in 3D from the outset, but hopefully there will always be room for a bit of pencilling.

5PM ISH.

Hometime. Lights off, back on the bike.

BORDER OAK HAVE A DEDICATED IN HOUSE ARCHITECTURAL DEPARTMENT AS EVERYTHING WE CREATE IS BESPOKE. WE CAN UNDERTAKE DESIGN CONCEPTS, PLANNING DRAWINGS, WORKING DRAWING, BUILDING REGULATION DRAWINGS AND CONSTRUCTION DETAILING. WE ARE RENOWNED FOR OUR DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION SKILLS – FOUNDED ON OUR UNRIVALLED KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE.

*A recent hand drawn 'artists impression' by our architect of a rural brownfield redevelopment scheme – used to illustrate and support our proposal as part of the successful planning approval*



# COSTINGS

*All Border Oak houses are bespoke - this guide is to provide example costings for a small selection of our portfolio.*

*Costs from March 2023. This guide does not include kitchens, bathrooms, flooring, decoration, electrics, plumbings or site costs which are all client specific. Border Oak can provide costs for these items once your specification is known and you have a plot. Border Oak offer fixed price contracts, including project management, and very flexible packages from 'frame only' to 'completed build'.*



## WHITE GOOSE BARN

120m<sup>2</sup> weatherboarded 3 bedroom barn with open plan interior, glazed gable end and oak porch.

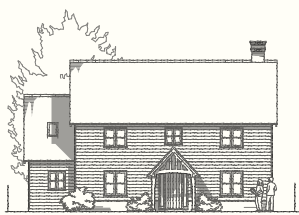
Baseworks	£36,420	Inglenook Fireplace/Chimney	N/A
Oak frame/SIPs/floor joists	£61,605	External Claddings	£15,345
Roof Carpentry	£17,646	Internal Plastering/Dry-lining	£21,050
Roof Coverings	£29,652	First and second fix carpentry	£47,376
External Joinery	£39,667	Porch	£7,792
		<b>Total</b>	<b>£276,553</b>



## ST. MICHAELS

193m<sup>2</sup> generous 3 bedroom cottage finished in render over a brick plinth with hand made clay tiles.

Baseworks	£39,618	Inglenook Fireplace/Chimney	£15,326
Oak frame/SIPs/floor joists	£100,373	External Claddings	£37,809
Roof Carpentry	£24,004	Internal Plastering/Dry-lining	£24,002
Roof Coverings	£37,180	First and second fix carpentry	£52,086
External Joinery	£43,624	Porch	£6,497
		<b>Total</b>	<b>£380,519</b>



## GRAVEN HILL BARN

216m<sup>2</sup> two storey, 4 bedroom weatherboarded house with vaulted family room on the rear.

Baseworks	£50,423	Inglenook Fireplace/Chimney	N/A
Oak frame/SIPs/floor joists	£114,771	External Claddings	£26,757
Roof Carpentry	£21,811	Internal Plastering/Dry-lining	£25,998
Roof Coverings	£35,934	First and second fix carpentry	£63,800
External Joinery	£47,446	Porch	£6,497
		<b>Total</b>	<b>£393,437</b>





### CHESHIRE FARMHOUSE

271m<sup>2</sup> spacious 4 bedroom home with internal oak frame, with brick external finish.

Baseworks	£55,870	Inglenook Fireplace/Chimney	£27,989
Oak frame/SIPs/floor joists	£137,028	External Claddings	£55,288
Roof Carpentry	£28,887	Internal Plastering/Dry-lining	£33,760
Roof Coverings	£46,195	First and second fix carpentry	£76,367
External Joinery	£82,469	Porch	£6,497
		<b>Total</b>	<b>£550,350</b>



### FOREST VIEW

320m<sup>2</sup> 4 bedroom farmhouse with a mix of external materials and organic layout.

Baseworks	£68,365	Inglenook Fireplace/Chimney	£27,306
Oak frame/SIPs/floor joists	£193,212	External Claddings	£49,842
Roof Carpentry	£43,755	Internal Plastering/Dry-lining	£45,306
Roof Coverings	£89,655	First and second fix carpentry	£96,607
External Joinery	£75,668	Porch	N/A
		<b>Total</b>	<b>£689,716</b>



### LEASON GRANGE

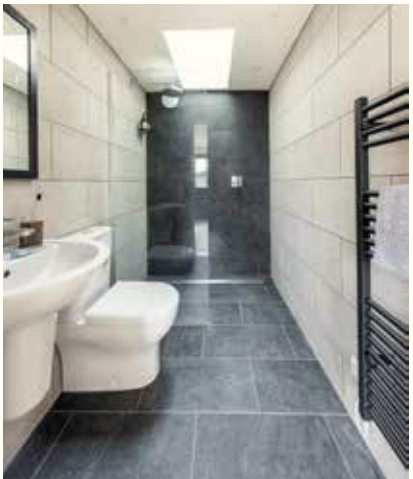
467m<sup>2</sup> generous 5 bedroom home finished in local stone.

Baseworks	£94,806	Inglenook Fireplace/Chimney	£61,673
Oak frame/SIPs/floor joists	£327,773	External Claddings	£216,046
Roof Carpentry	£66,392	Internal Plastering/Dry-lining	£56,781
Roof Coverings	£149,721	First and second fix carpentry	£128,848
External Joinery	£128,667	Porch	N/A
		<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,230,707</b>

## OPEN DAYS

Throughout the year, we open the doors to our beautiful show home and nearby Meadowmead, both in Herefordshire. It's the perfect opportunity to see two examples of our work, experience our craft first-hand and meet with members of our team. Please get in touch with the office for details on our next open day.





## YARPOLE BARN

*Yarpole Barn has been announced as the winner in the 'Sprit of Self Build' category in the 2023 Homebuilding and Renovating Awards.*

This modern oak framed barn is part of a larger custom and self build collective scheme of 9 homes delivered in partnership between Border Oak and the landowner in a rural village on the border between Herefordshire and Shropshire.

You can read more about Roxy's project on our website where you will find many other Case Studies.



# OUR SERVICES

Border Oak specialise in bespoke self and custom build projects across the UK and abroad.  
We also undertake commercial and community projects.

We are able to work in collaboration with your chosen architect and planning consultant or provide full design, planning and engineering services ourselves.

We provide a flexible scope of works to suit your specific requirements and all of our projects are offered with the security of a fixed price contract; specified to reflect your wishes.

Each project is centrally project managed by us using our own construction labour to ensure you benefit from our 4 decades of experience and knowledge. We appreciate that the projects we work on are personal, often a long held dream, and can be life-changing, so we work hard to make the process an enjoyable one.

Our workmanship, specification, service and quality is unrivalled.

## The Border Oak Contract

**THE SUPERSTRUCTURE** - a completed oak frame and SIPS structure, together with floor joists and roof carpentry to provide the specialist structural elements, ready for the client to continue with remaining works.

**THE WATERTIGHT SHELL** - a completed watertight structure ready for the client to organise their own internal works and fitting out.

**THE COMPLETE BUILD** - Border Oak undertake everything to a plastered finish with the client completing certain elements such as kitchens, bathrooms and flooring.

**THE EVERYTHING** - Border Oak undertake absolutely everything including service connections, build warranty and hard landscaping (we will even fit the light bulbs).

OH, AND WE OCCASIONALLY BUILD AND SELL COMPLETED BORDER OAK HOMES SUCH AS WHISTELLE BARN WHICH CAN BE FOUND ON OUR WEBSITE [WWW.BORDEROAK.COM](http://WWW.BORDEROAK.COM)





## OUTBUILDINGS FOR ANY PURPOSE

*Border Oak have a wide range of beautiful oak framed garages and outbuildings.*

Garages, barns, potting sheds, studios, gazebos, outbuildings, home offices, accommodation, summer houses, outdoor kitchens - anything is possible.

Our classic range of outbuildings is inherently flexible and adaptable and endless configurations are achievable - log stores, sheds, staircases, doors and windows can all be added to create your perfect building.



01568 708 752 · [enquiries@borderoak.com](mailto:enquiries@borderoak.com) · [www.borderoak.com](http://www.borderoak.com)  
Kingsland, Leominster, Herefordshire HR6 9SF England