



# border oak



## Biodiversity

Border Oak outline their approach to ecological protection & enhancement - and how new builds can play their part.

p11

## Inspiration

Feel inspired by the detail of recent Border Oak projects - inside and out.

p10

## Plots

Read our recent case study on a planning application that took over a year to achieve despite full support from the community

p06

## 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.

“CRAFTSMANSHIP, SIMPLE HONEST MATERIALS, MODERN COMFORTS AND A CERTAIN MODESTY, ALL EXEMPLARY QUALITIES FOR A 21ST CENTURY COTTAGE.”

*Kevin McCloud, Grand Designs - Series 3 Border Oak Cottage, Herefordshire*

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 – always preferring to lead the industry whilst endeavouring to avoid gimmicks and passing phases.



These two beautiful properties feature in the case studies on our website.





Home Farmhouse was short-listed by Build It Magazine for the Best Oak Framed Home Award 2019



## A Lasting Legacy

Helen and Dan had always shared an interest in property, design and construction. ‘We used to cycle around our favourite areas looking for projects,’ says Helen.

One cold January we stumbled upon this three acre field for sale in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest. Luckily it already had planning approval, and although we weren’t keen on the approved design, we knew we could design something that made the most of our incredible plot.’ Says Helen

Ed Brechtmann, Project Development Manager at Border Oak worked closely alongside Dan and Helen and the Border Oak architectural team to produce a bespoke design that eventually sailed through planning. ‘This is an exceptional plot, so we all wanted to do something special and with a sense of architectural longevity,’ says Ed. The brief was to capture the incredible views of the meadows, maximise the south elevation light throughout the main living areas and deliver a design that was family orientated, warm, and full of architectural character. ‘We’ve used a classical manor house form of two cross wings with organic side additions, as this enabled us to produce a traditional frontage but with a graduating profile to soften into the site. The cross wings – joined by the spectacular double height central hall – contain all the rooms the family needed and in the right place to flow and adapt. But we all decided to break with convention and add a lot of glass into the rear elevation,’ explains Ed.

**‘WE REALLY HOPE OUR HOME REMAINS PART OF THE LANDSCAPE FOR CENTURIES TO COME – IN MANY WAYS IT IS OUR FAMILIES LEGACY. IT’S NO EXAGGERATION TO SAY THAT BUILDING YOUR OWN HOME CAN BE LIFE CHANGING – EVERY DAY WE VALUE BEING SOMEWHERE SO INSPIRING.’**

in natural light and can see the dramatic and beautiful surroundings.

It was also important to focus upon the overall budget from the design stage – Helen and Dan wanted to design a house they could afford to build, and gave Border Oak the responsibility to make this happen. The couple were prepared to compromise in some areas so that budget could be spent on other ‘must have’ features – for example, the cross wing with the sitting room, office and guest rooms have no oak framing. The consequent saving enabled them to produce the incredible vaulted ceilings in the garden room and generous entrance hall with wrap around landing. Helen and Dan were also prepared to roll up their sleeves to meet their budget. They chose a ‘water tight shell’ contract with Project Management from Border Oak but sourced and arranged the remaining work using local contractors. Whilst this is time consuming (especially having two babies during the process!) it was ultimately deeply rewarding for the young family. ‘We never thought we would have the chance to live in a house like this – you can certainly build more than you

can buy,’ says Helen.

Now the home is completed and is softly weathering it feels as if it belongs in its location a strong focal point in the landscape and yet a gentle reflection of the rural scene.

Discover more in the case study section of our website [www.borderoak.com](http://www.borderoak.com)

As soon as you enter the house you are bathed



## Construction - The Border Oak Way

Unlike other oak framing manufacturers Border Oak offer a wide variety of construction packages too - from the supply & erection of just the oak frame and partner panel system, to a full 'turnkey' contract. And every stage inbetween.

We have our own construction labour - as well as additional specialist trades, suppliers and preferred partners - to help take your project from concept to completion as smoothly as possible. We also have our own team of project managers and quantity surveyors together with a procurement team, finance department and support staff to help deliver your project, on time and to budget. It takes many people and thousands of hours to deliver successful projects - this is what we are known for and where our unrivalled experience and knowledge come to the fore.

Border Oak have an incredible track record of completing oak framed

projects across the UK and abroad - offering self builders and custom builders an unbeatable service and unmatched variety of contract packages alongside our exceptionally high standard of service, design and workmanship. Bespoke homes for a fixed price and built to a schedule.

Border Oak are also able to provide full Building Regulation service and Construction drawings with industry warranty compliance criteria as standard. We work closely with Building Control Departments and your chosen warranty provider throughout too - we are here to help your home get built and are very proud of the service we provide.

As the most highly regarded green oak specialist, with all construction services under one roof, we are able to offer continuous added value - from the design stages and throughout the project.



# Q&A

STEVE ROBINSON

HEAD OF PURCHASING AND SUSTAINABILITY

**Q. Which Border Oak project sticks in your mind and why?**

A. Our Japanese projects (including a university complex, entire village, restaurant & bar, mile long ornamental oak facade to a chocolate factory and bonsai tree museum amongst others) are a real career highlight. Although it was a challenge for everyone, it was also a massive learning experience and thrilling too. We were sourcing huge sections of oak devising shipping and importing processes (these were the first oak frames to ever be shipped across the oceans). It was refreshing, educational and a huge honour.

**Q. How do you tackle the task of improving sustainability within the construction industry?**

A. We have felt passionately about this for decades. Border Oak are very conscious of the materials we use and constantly strive to improve and incorporate sustainability from design to construction. We favour an “active house” approach - scrutinising fabric first principles rather than relying on ‘after thought’ compensation. As our houses last for centuries we always bear long term performance in mind.

**Q. What do you think sets Border Oak apart?**

A. We have an unrivalled wealth of talent and experience, from Architectural Designers to Interior Designers, Carpenters to Cabinet Makers. We are genuinely passionate about the houses we build and listen carefully to our clients wishes so we can help achieve their dream. We’ve often been told that we have created a lifestyle rather than just a house and this is what we strive for.

**Q. Describe a typical day for you at Border Oak**

A. We start early so tackle the usual phone calls and e-mails and then check the Oak arrivals. Mid morning I meet with one of our Joiners, as I need to discuss a particularly unusual staircase design and its much better face to face and we can chat through other items too. On my way back to the office I drop into the local forge to catch up with our blacksmith, he is currently designing bespoke copper gutter brackets for our new Arts & Crafts Showhouse. He’s made the first prototype so I’m really keen to see it.

In the afternoon I’ve organised a Product Development Workshop for our Design teams. We are looking into various roof light options and what can be achieved with a little collaborative thinking outside the box. We have a brilliant Danish Architect joining us and it promises to be an interesting afternoon. A final check on emails and phone calls and then I am off home in my electric car.

LEARN MORE ABOUT US AT [BORDEROAK.COM/TEAM](https://borderoak.com/team)



# Planning Case Study

## 8 SELF & CUSTOM BUILD PLOTS- LUSTON, HEREFORDSHIRE



### BACKGROUND:

Luston is a pretty village sitting between Leominster and Ludlow. Herefordshire Council assessed Luston as being suitable for 'proportional housing growth'. The village had an adopted Neighbourhood Development Plan outlining where houses should be located.

Border Oak purchased The White House, a Georgian farmhouse with several acres of land and a traditional barn, in 2018. The land to the side of the house was allocated for development within the Luston NDP.

### PLANNING CONTEXT:

A bespoke scheme of 6 plots and a pair of semi detached cottages was prepared, using the NDP policies as a remit. Border Oak approached the Parish Council to ensure the proposal was inline with all of their NDP objectives. It was fully supported by the PC as an example of 'good practice'.

At the end of the 8 week planning process there were no objections. The scheme was universally supported. However the planning officer said he was going to refuse the application. He wanted at least 11 houses on the site, preferably nearer 20. Border Oak, alongside the community, then spent the next 9 months trying to persuade the planning department that a modest self and custom scheme was more appropriate than a large speculative housing estate.

### SUPPORT:

Every statutory body supported the application. The Parish Council were extremely supportive, feeling that the scheme was a true reflection of their NDP and exactly what the village needed.

During the long stalemate - (the scheme could not be refused by the

DATE SUBMITTED: 7TH JANUARY 2019  
 DETERMINATION TARGET DATE: 8TH MARCH 2019  
 DETERMINATION: 15TH JANUARY 2020 - APPROVED

officer because the local councillor had called it to committee for determination) - it became apparent that the Nutrient Management Plan set up by Herefordshire Council was failing and that Natural England would remove its 'no objection' until a new nutrient plan could safeguard the protected rivers.

### PLANNING ISSUES AND SOLUTIONS:

- 1 Under delivery of the site**  
 The officer believed the entire land around The White House and the barn could be used for development and that only bringing forward part of the site represented underdelivery. *Border Oak argued that small self build schemes are needed and are appropriate.*
- 2 Connectivity to services**  
 Highways mentioned that they were concerned that the initial footpath did not directly connect to the pavement on the other side of the road. *This was resolved by creating a new path through part of the garden of The White House.*
- 3 Lack of Social Housing**  
 The planning officer thought that a self build scheme had been submitted as a deliberate attempt to avoid social housing. *Planning policy however was clear that social housing was not required on this site. The Parish Council confirmed there was no 'need'.*
- 4 High level of Phosphates in the River Lugg**  
 This refusal reason was added 7 months after the original determination date. It is a complex situation and relates to the

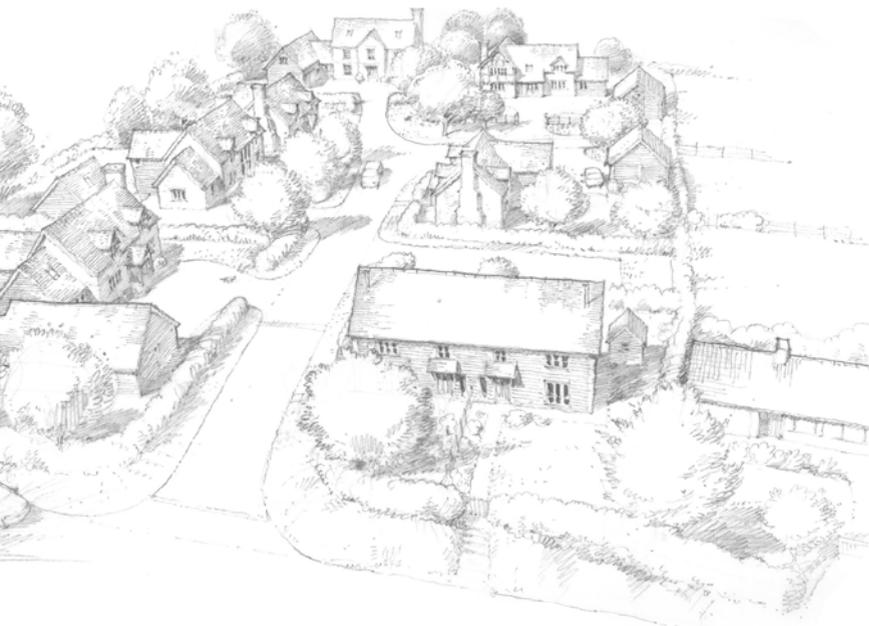
## THE HEREFORDSHIRE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY LOBBY GROUP

HCILG is a broad collective of people representing the interests of businesses, individuals and groups affected by the development moratorium and seeking to support Herefordshire Council deliver meaningful improvement to water quality through the adoption of a revised Nutrient Management Plan. Similar issues are affecting other parts of the UK and The HCILG believe collaborative working towards shared goals can be the only successful way to enable much needed development, including self build and custom build to come forward. The lobby group was formed to ask questions, find solutions and maintain pressure to enable development to continue.

failing Nutrient Management Plan administered by Herefordshire Council. In North Herefordshire a planning moratorium was issued in October 2019 preventing all development from being approved. *A solution to this is still pending.*

## 5 Inadequate housing mix

The planning officer felt our scheme did not represent a wide housing mix. However Border Oak could demonstrate that we had included: semi detached and detached, multi generational options, live/work 2, 3, 4 and 5 bed options together with a mix of custom finish, custom build, self build and completed home packages. House styles varied across cottage, farmhouse and barns, with a combination of traditional vernacular details and contemporary finishes. House sizes ranged from 100m2 to 300m2 and plot sizes varied accordingly. *The Planning Committee agreed that the housing mix was good.*



### CONCLUSION:

The Planning Committee met on 15th January 2020 and after hearing detailed presentations by the officer, Parish Council and Border Oak, together with much discussion they voted to support the application.

The design, layout, density and sustainability credentials of the submitted scheme were all praised and the work undertaken to find positive ways forward commended.

The council will apply a condition stating that any further development taking the combined total over 11 dwellings will be subject to Social Housing provision. This is acceptable to Border Oak.

The final decision states that committee “was minded to grant planning permission, subject to a positive Habitat Regulations Assessment and no other material considerations or changes in policy arising on the grounds that the proposal was compliant with NDP policies.”

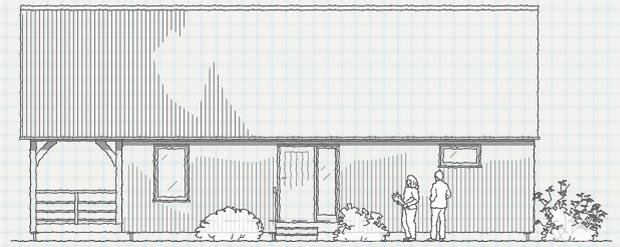
*If you are interested in the Luston plots please visit our website for more information.*

*To discuss our design and planning services please get in touch enquiries@borderoak.com*

### PLANS & SURVEYS REQUIRED:

- Planning Statement
- Ecology survey
- Speed and Traffic Volume Survey
- Tree survey
- Bat and Hedge Assessment
- 8x house designs
- Site plan
- Density plan
- Drainage plan
- Heritage impact assessment
- Landscaping plan
- Visibility assessment
- Artist Impression drawing
- Street Scene drawing

\* Neighbourhood Development Plans are local planning policy documents. The Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 places a legal duty on ALL Local Authorities to create and manage a SELF BUILD and CUSTOM HOME Register. Contact your Local Authority to Register.



## Off the drawing board...

Introducing our revolutionary Carbon Positive Cabin Project. A beautiful contemporary timber cabin with a eco footprint so light it has absorbed and locked in more carbon that it used to make.

Exceptionally sustainable - it has been designed to showcase our unrivalled craftsmanship but also make a positive environmental contribution. Ideal as a hideaway, holiday home, work place, extra accommodation or even a start on the ladder.



Another innovative project from the Border Oak Research and Development Team

Variations and options will be available. More details to follow shortly!

*border oak*

## Open Days

Every 6 weeks or so we open the doors to our beautiful showhome in Kingsland and nearby Meadowmead to help you see our craftsmanship and standard of workmanship in person.

If you would like to book your appointment, please contact Natalie at enquiries@borderoak.com

For future dates and other events, please keep an eye on www.borderoak.com



# Costings

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



## Halfpenny Cottage

162m<sup>2</sup>, exposed oak, frame cottage, with brick gables

Baseworks	£21,533
Oak frame/SIPs/floor joists	£83,175
Secondary roof structure	£14,973
Roof coverings	£21,323
External joinery	£19,986
Inglenook fireplace	£12,967
External rendering/cladding	£17,372
Internal plastering	£17,967
First and second fix carpentry	£28,732
Utility annex	£36,914

**Total - £274,942**



## Pinsley Barn

111m<sup>2</sup>, weatherboarded barn with an internal oak frame and glazed porch

Baseworks	£21,756
Oak frame/SIPs/floor joists	£39,279
Secondary roof structure	£15,553
Roof coverings	£17,863
External joinery	£24,456
Inglenook fireplace	n/a
External rendering/cladding	£11,204
Internal plastering	£14,681
First and second fix carpentry	£29,272

**Total - £174,064**



## Meadow Lane Farm

208m<sup>2</sup>, two storey traditional farmhouse with a blend of materials

Baseworks	£26,973
Oak frame/SIPs/floor joists	£95,993
Secondary roof structure	£18,437
Roof coverings	£29,024
External joinery	£35,983
Inglenook fireplace	£21,091
External rendering/cladding	£37,478
Internal plastering	£19,341
First and second fix carpentry	£35,773
Utility annex	£36,683

**Total - £356,731**

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'.

## THREE OF A KIND... BRICK HOUSES

All Border Oak houses are bespoke designs - created by our architects to suit your site and meet your needs. We can design to any budget and any style. Here are three recent brick houses designed and built by Border Oak - all with a handmade oak frame internally and oak features externally.



This pretty Arts & Crafts cottage is faced in local brick with discreet brick detailing and additional oak features.



This brick faced Pearmain Cottage variation was designed to reflect the vernacular of the coastal location.



*border oak*

St Michaels Cottage  
193m2 2000sq ft Herefordshire



### Lower Burton

351m2, large manor with a blend of brickwork and oak framing

Baseworks	£39,333
Oak frame/SIPs/floor joists	£184,663
Secondary roof structure	£26,470
Roof coverings	£44,924
External joinery	£40,983
Inglenook fireplace	£26,946
External rendering/cladding	£38,252
Internal plastering	£37,955
First and second fix carpentry	£59,993
Utility annex & garden room	£54,966

**Total - £554,485**



### Tedstone Barn

160m2, contemporary barn with an internal oak frame

Baseworks	£26,416
Oak frame/SIPs/floor joists	£84,494
Secondary roof structure	£17,362
Roof coverings	£27,323
External joinery	£32,741
Inglenook fireplace	£993
External rendering/cladding	£35,412
Internal plastering	£16,998
First and second fix carpentry	£37,257

**Total - £278,998**



An impressive three storey home based upon early Victorian proportions and finished with handmade bricks. The rear of the property is oak framed.

Actual Costs: £

Foundations	£22,773
Spoil removal	£2,193
Main structure - oak frame & SIPs panels	£83,763
1st Floor structure	£10,957
Timber treatment	£397
Roof Carpentry	£17,873
Roof Covering	£27,553
External Joinery	£31,443
Inglenook Chimney & Fireplace	£12,967
Plastering/Drylining	£18,373
External rendering & cladding	£33,933
Internal 1st & 2nd Fix	£39,557
Preliminaries	£19,505
Porch	£4,773
Guttering	£4,253
Screed	£3,967
Stone & Wood Flooring	£8,505
Carpet	£1,885
Kitchen, Utility and Pantry	£17,500 *
Bathrooms	£7,873
Decoration	£13,838 *
Electrics	£8,900
Plumbing (inc. boiler and UFH)	£24,118

**BALANCE DUE £416,899**



SPECIAL OFFER - FIXED PRICE CONTRACT INC MANAGEMENT

OPTIONS:

Fitted wardrobes	£1,993
Woodburner	£2,217
Everhot Oven	£8,925
Warranty	£2,500 @
Landscaping	£12,000

\* Potential to reduce costs @ site specific, each site varies  
\*\*\*\*\* cardholder copy \*\*\*\*\*

THIS IS AN ACTUAL COST BREAKDOWN - ALL BORDER OAK HOUSES ARE DESIGNED TO YOUR BUDGET - ENQUIRE FOR DETAILS

Highly sustainable, 3 or 4 Bedroom - Oak frame with SIPs encapsulation, exceptionally thermal, virtually airtight, minimal thermal bridging handmade brick, high performance render, handmade clay tile, weatherboard, green oak, glass, galvanised guttering, oak porch

SERVICE COSTS EXCLUDED



www.borderoak.com

St Michaels Cottage is available to view at Border Oak open days or by appointment.

# On Point

The Design Team at Border Oak have identified ideas that seem to be working their way on to many 'wish lists' - from a mixture of materials externally to creating light and bright interior spaces.



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1. Arts & Crafts - Border Oak are currently working a collection of properties reimagining the principles championed by William Morris and his contemporaries
2. Floating Stairs - contemporary staircases are emerging as a feature of many projects this year
3. Porches - Border Oak have extended our porch collection to include many new self assembly kits - detail can be found on our website
4. Oak framed Garden Rooms - capturing natural light, views and adding a little bit of drama
5. Replacement Dwellings - this incredible oak framed manor house replaced an unassuming bungalow in a heritage setting
6. Back Doors - often overlooked, but we believe the back door can be as beautiful as any other
7. Inglenook Fireplaces - Border Oak have been building inglenooks for 4 decades. A focal point and feature like no other.
8. Modern Country - a simple oak frame is paired with glass and DeVol furniture to create the perfect contemporary country kitchen
9. Bespoke Design - This farmhouse was designed to capitalise on wide open views, with bifold doors and a Juliette balcony



In 2020 Border Oak are going to plant an additional 2,080 trees throughout the year. One for every week we have been trading.

# Landscaping & Biodiversity

Sustainability is fundamental to everything we do - we continuously strive to learn and improve.

Border Oak have always been at the forefront of sustainable construction and design and continue to pioneer the self and custom build sector. When designing our schemes we pay a lot of attention to the potential of the surrounding plot, the wider landscape and how biodiversity can be enhanced and encouraged. Our aim is to create something more beautiful, more ecological and more sustainable than was there before.

## Suggestions that Border Oak employ:

- Bee, bat and bird nesting opportunities, not just around the plot but within the buildings too. Our beautiful shaped rafter feet are the perfect spot for creatures to live alongside you (but it is equally possible to encourage them to reside in the outbuilding if you'd prefer!)
- Orchard planting - there is perhaps nothing more uplifting than living near to fruit trees. Blossom, juice (cider?!) fruit, pickles and jams literally on your doorstep. Border Oak often plant new orchards on our plots and have been known to design entire layouts around older fruit trees. Orchards also create wonderful eco systems for hundreds of creatures.
- Native, traditional hedges - wherever we can we recommend and plant traditional hedgerow boundaries. They grow quickly, and can provide shelter for endless animals and insects. The softness of a hedge works well against a new build too - helping to connect the development to the plot and give structure to the garden.
- Wide grass verges - leaving a broad strip of green can make a huge difference to a new development scheme both visually and in terms of biodiversity. These simple swathes of grass can help creatures adapt to new surroundings by providing green 'corridors' to link open spaces.
- Wildflower meadows - tricky to establish (why do weeds grow so well?) but ultimately rewarding and low maintenance. Possibly not ideal for those who suffer from hay fever, but the bees will be grateful!
- Vegetable gardens - even the smallest of raised beds and just a tiny bit of forward preparation will pay handsome, delicious rewards. If veggies aren't your thing then cut flowers may be an option.
- Tree planting - a corporate mission of Border Oak, planting native trees is nothing but good. Absorbing carbon, providing long term habitats, drinking up water, forming a windbreak, perfect for nests, insects, climbing and hammocks. Singular, copses or woodland, all of our schemes will include tree planting and always have.

# 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, stair cases, doors and windows can all be added to create your perfect building.

New cabin & annex designs coming soon.

Download our brochure at [www.borderoak.com](http://www.borderoak.com)



**border oak**  
design & construction limited

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