

# THE COWSHED

THE  
ROOFLIGHT CO.  
COTSWOLDS

Located in a quiet courtyard in the Cotswolds, The Cowshed stood for centuries as part of a Grade II-listed cluster of former farm buildings, including the original farmhouse. Once a working barn, now unused and underlit, it was ready for its next chapter to begin.

The homeowner's brief was ambitious but thoughtful: convert the 17th-century barn into a small, independent dwelling, filled with character and natural light, while celebrating the unique qualities of the existing agricultural architecture.

Initially, structural and construction challenges needed addressing, as the barn's listed status meant new openings were tightly restricted, especially on the rear elevation. The existing fabric offered few opportunities for daylight, particularly in the two-storey section that had once housed a bull pen and hayloft.

The vision was to create a space that complied with modern regulations for egress and ventilation, functioned as a contemporary home, and still felt light, airy, and rooted in its historic context.

Destined to go beyond a standard conversion, this project was a balancing act between old and new, dark and light, past and future. The homeowners approached architects Design Storey to bring their vision to life.

With previous consent from planners already in place, Design Storey made it their mission to refine and elevate the proposed design. Working within the constraints of planning, budget, and heritage protection, they identified light as the key to unlocking the barn's potential.

Rather than forcing modern interventions onto the building, the team carefully considered the placement of rooflights to draw light inward. The two-storey element was the most challenging. The rear wall offered virtually no existing openings, and adding new ones risked compromising the building's character. The solution came from above.

Design Storey engaged with conservation rooflight specialists, The Rooflight Co, early in the process at RIBA Stage 2, ensuring the right specification and integration from the outset.



The Rooflight Co's premium Conservation Rooflights, chosen for their traditional detailing, slim frames, ability to sit flush within the roof, and suitability for heritage properties, were the perfect fit. Above the new timber stair pod, one rooflight allows daylight to reach deep into the centre of the home. In the upstairs bathroom, a second heritage roof window brings in abundant natural light while maintaining privacy and respecting the roofline.

In the single-storey section, two more conservation rooflights were installed on the rear roofslope. Carefully positioned and subtly angled, they provide daylight and ventilation into the living space without disturbing the barn's agricultural roof rhythm. Their slim frames and minimal profiles were key to satisfying conservation requirements while allowing the space to function as a modern home.

The rooflights were transformative for the barn. Strategically positioned, the natural light from above gives the home a sense of openness and warmth throughout the interior, while also delivering ventilation, thermal performance, and aesthetically complementing the barn's character. The result is a seamless blend of historic architecture and modern innovation.

Working alongside Matford Construction and structural engineers Mann Williams, the team approached every detail with sensitivity - retaining as much of the original timber and stone as possible, while threading new interventions through in a way that felt respectful and timeless.

Now, The Cowshed is a unique residential dwelling, blending contemporary and historic features, perfect for the next chapter in the building's life and legacy.

From the outside, it remains authentically rural, true to its agricultural beginnings. But step inside, and the building is transformed into a light-filled, connected space, exactly as the owner envisaged.

The Conservation Rooflights, handcrafted with traditional detailing and designed specifically for sensitive restoration projects, have ensured a modern living space that seamlessly integrates within a preserved architectural context.



# THE COWSHED

'We have always been impressed with both the quality and design of The Conservation Rooflights and how they seamlessly fit into historic building fabric while still having a contemporary feel. Furthermore, the service and support from The Rooflight Co has always been invaluable when preparing detailed drawings and resolving design issues.'

**Lydia Robinson, Creative Director.**

Unsurprisingly, the project has received recognition, winning the **British Homes Award** for 'Home Transformation of the Year 2024' and a prestigious **RIBA Special Conservation Award 2025** - a testament to the success of this considered and sustainable design that celebrates the power of working with, rather than against, a building's historic character.

Architect:  
[Design-Storey](#)

Awards:  
**RIBA South West & Wessex Award 2025 - Winner**  
**RIBA Special Conservation Award 2025 - Winner**  
**British Homes Award 2024 'Home Transformation of the Year' - Winner**  
**Listed & Modern Architectural Awards 2025 - High Commendation**  
**Wood Awards 2025 - Shortlisted**

Rooflights:  
[The Conservation Rooflight from The Rooflight Co.](#)

Contact us for more information:  
**Telephone:** 01993 833155  
**Alternatively, visit our website:** [www.therooflightco.com](http://www.therooflightco.com)

THE  
**ROOFLIGHT CO.**  
COTSWOLDS