

David and Wendy Hancock bought their home in Farthinghoe, Northamptonshire when plans for the proposed bypass were shelved. The front of the house abuts a busy road but the west side and north facing rear of the property are surrounded by a large garden. The couple loved their 1780 home but wanted to make the most of the garden and gain additional living space.

Wendy is an interior designer and her husband David wanted to be involved in the building process, so the couple had some fairly well thought out ideas of what they wanted. They had first thought about a green oak conservatory and were introduced to David Smith, of The Design Centre, through a local window manufacturer and supplier.



“What we liked about David Smith was that he worked with our ideas and helped us develop them, it was a bit like having an ‘a-la-carte’ menu, allowing us to input as we went along, both during the design and the construction phase. He made us take a step back and really think about how we wanted to use the space and so what we initially thought might just be a garden room has turned into a luxurious kitchen surrounded by wonderful views of the garden. We chose

a complete project management service from The Design Centre and we used a combination of trades recommended by them or supplied by us.

“We toyed for a long time with which green oak supplier to use, but in the end we chose the supplier that provided a more finished look to the oak. David was there every step of the way with us, ensuring we had all the information we needed to make the right decisions and source the best materials and tradesmen.

“One of our major dilemmas was the roof, whether to glaze it or not. We knew that the north facing extension was unlikely to overheat and we were worried that if it was not glazed then we would be devoid of light. David persuaded us to compromise and have partial glazing in a conventionally tiled roof and in the end we have more than enough light and it gives the room a much more permanent feel to it.”





One of the couple's concerns was how to marry the 1780 original house with the new extension and they worked with David to incorporate a hall and downstairs cloakroom, by moving the main entrance door to the house, which improves the flow of the house. And it was Wendy who came up with the idea of a pitched pine larder unit positioned between the doorways to the dining room and hall to form the perfect marriage of old and new.

"Everybody who comes here absolutely loves it. A friend, who is a trained chef, said this is a dream kitchen for preparing food. David has helped us not just with the design and construction but on getting the lighting right; an oak framed building needs clever lighting as does your garden and David's advice on this was invaluable," said Wendy.

