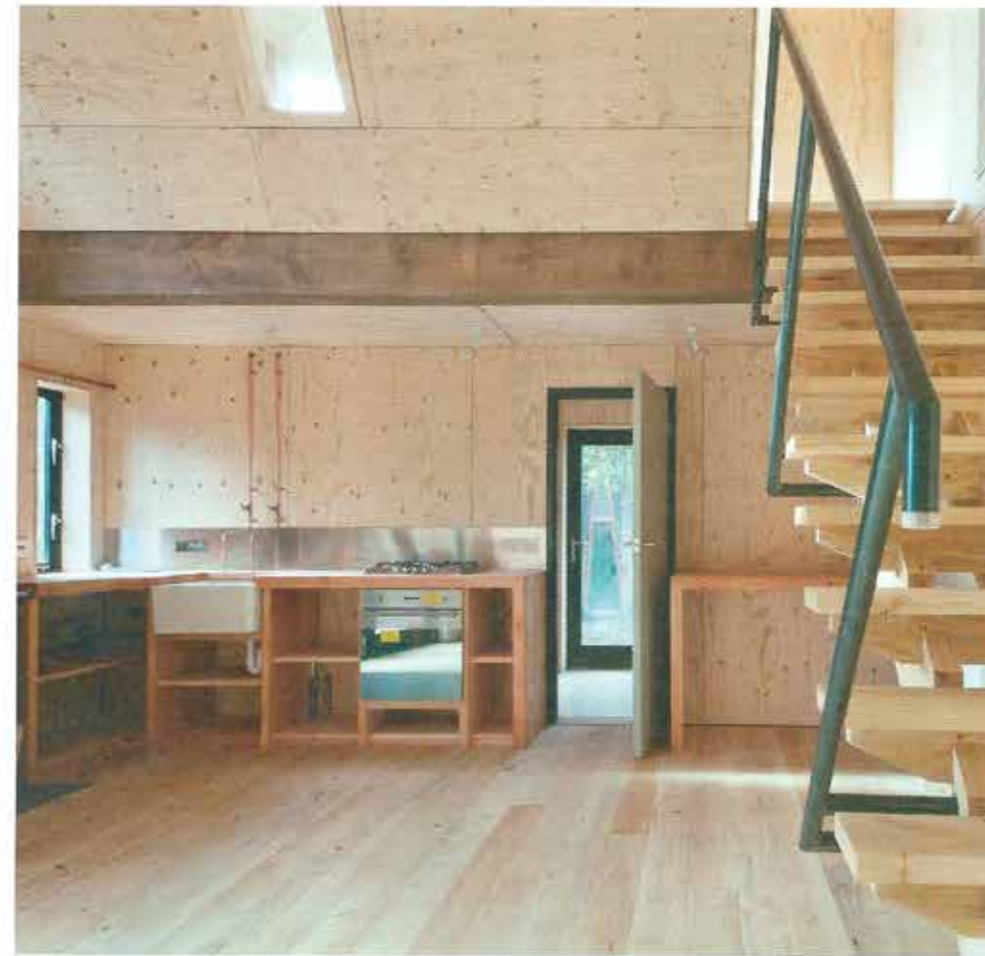


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Rural houses: John Pardey | Hall McKnight | Invisible Studio
Birds Portchmouth Russum | Ben Adams | Knox Bhavan
Charles Barclay | Hudson Architects | ZMMA | Guy Stansfeld



This is the first issue of Inhabit, an Architecture Today publication on the design of houses. Each edition will show a selection of exceptional recent projects which share a common theme – type, style, place or purpose.

The houses collected here are all broadly 'rural', but the variety of sites points to the difficulty of defining a rural house, save to say that it is not urban. Some, such as Knox Bhavan's Rigg Beck, sit alone within spectacular landscapes, but planning constraints mean that such opportunities are rare. Obtaining consent can be difficult even for replacement dwellings, as in the cases of coastal houses in Jersey and Wales by Hudson Architects and John Pardey.

Elsewhere, therefore, there are attempts to invest houses with 'rural' qualities – in materials or connection to landscape – even where the context is perhaps more suburban than archetypally arcadian: Hall McKnight's house at Gleneagles is designed as much in relation to distant mountains as to immediate neighbours.

A verdant view from the window is, after all, among the main reasons to build a country house today. But although most of the projects here reflect the changed status of the countryside, from workplace to amenity space, the Caretaker's House in Dorset demonstrates a continuing need for another kind of rural house.

Credits

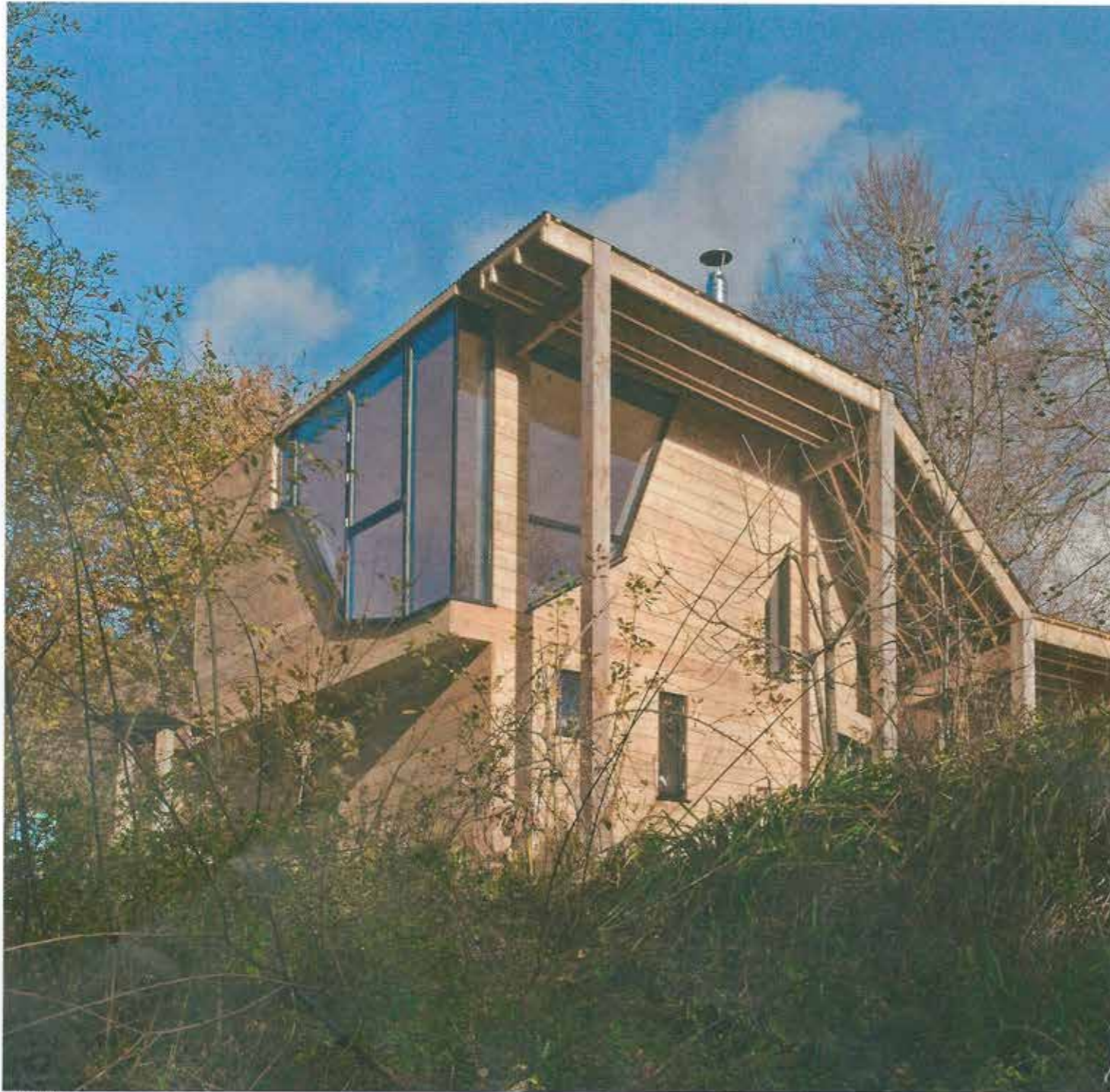
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Photos: Rigg Beck by Charles Hosea (cover); Caretaker's House by Valerie Bennett (p01).

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- 64 In Progress: FAT in Essex; Kirkland Fraser Moor in Gloucestershire; Richard Murphy Architects in South Lanarkshire; Baca Architects in Nottinghamshire.



INVISIBLE STUDIO CARETAKER'S HOUSE



Hooke Park is a 350-acre working forest in Dorset, owned and operated by the Architectural Association. It contains a small educational facility used by AA students to explore rural architectures, the crafts of construction and sustainable timber technologies, and is home to a number of experimental buildings developed by students and practicing architects over many years. Students from the school's Intermediate Unit 2 (2009-10) produced a schematic design for a caretaker's house on the site, which has been developed to construction with architect Piers Taylor of Invisible Studio.

The house is a prototypical low-cost timber exemplar building, constructed using only

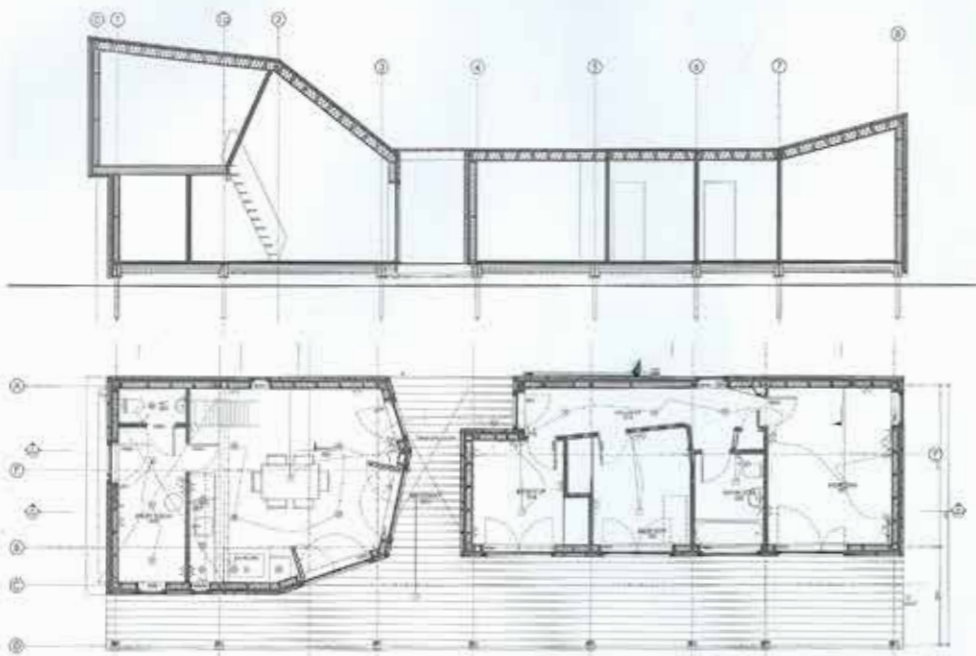
timber grown and felled on site, and in its green state. Unseasoned larch, cedar, poplar, Douglas fir and spruce are used as appropriate, both for structure, insulation and heating. "It is – as far as we are aware – the world's first green timber building insulated to Passivhaus standards, with Passivhaus airtightness," says Taylor.

No wet trades were employed in the construction: the building rests on steel mini-piles – the only non-timber structural element. A 'heavy' >

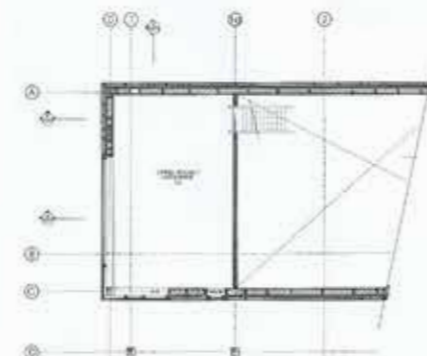
"As far as we know, it's the first green timber building insulated to Passivhaus standards."



» The bedroom and living spaces are separated by an open 'dog-trot', allowing generous views out into the forest.



north wall provides privacy and insulation, while the house remains very open to the south where a large veranda acts as an extension of the living space. The roof form is generated by the need to gain maximum east sunlight penetration into the master bedroom at one end, and to provide a first-floor living space with high natural surveillance over the campus at the other. □



Exposed copper pipe is used for kitchen taps. All kitchen joinery was done on site. The handrail to the timber stair was formed from mild steel pipe, also welded on site. Long section, first-floor and mezzanine plans. The stair uses an innovative dry-joint system, which hardens as it dries.

Architect Invisible Studio with AA Intermediate Unit 2 design team Piers Taylor (Invisible Studio), Harshit Singh Kohari, Rebecca Spencer, Elsie Nabroo, William Stanley, Beom Kwan Kim, Andrea Gilroy Koster, Harpreet Marway, David Hellstrom (AA Intermediate Studio 2) structural and services engineer Buro Happold qs Invisible Studio planning supervisor Clark Associates main contractor Greenheart Sustainable Construction client Architectural Association, London photographs Valerie Bennett. Annual carbon dioxide emissions 3kg CO₂/m²/year contract JCT Intermediate total contract value £170,000 construction duration 6 months gross internal floor area 120 sqm.

