



Wildfowl Cottage

5th Studio

This project began in 2005 with some advice we gave a friend who had bought Wildfowl Cottage, a former inn by the river Cam in Cambridge. It developed into a project to establish a point of principle: that additions to a characterful listed building do not have to be bland and bloodless.

The property was in a serious state of dereliction. Unoccupied, the building had regularly flooded, the footings and ground floor were decayed and needed replacement, and the whole structure required rebuilding. In addition to major restoration, our client wanted to create a new room at ground-floor level high enough to remain above the flood waters. Conversations had opened with the local planning authority, but had become circular and unproductive.

The original building is a single room deep, and extensions over the years had evolved a distinctive long, thin form. The planners had been pressing for a 'traditional' lean-to

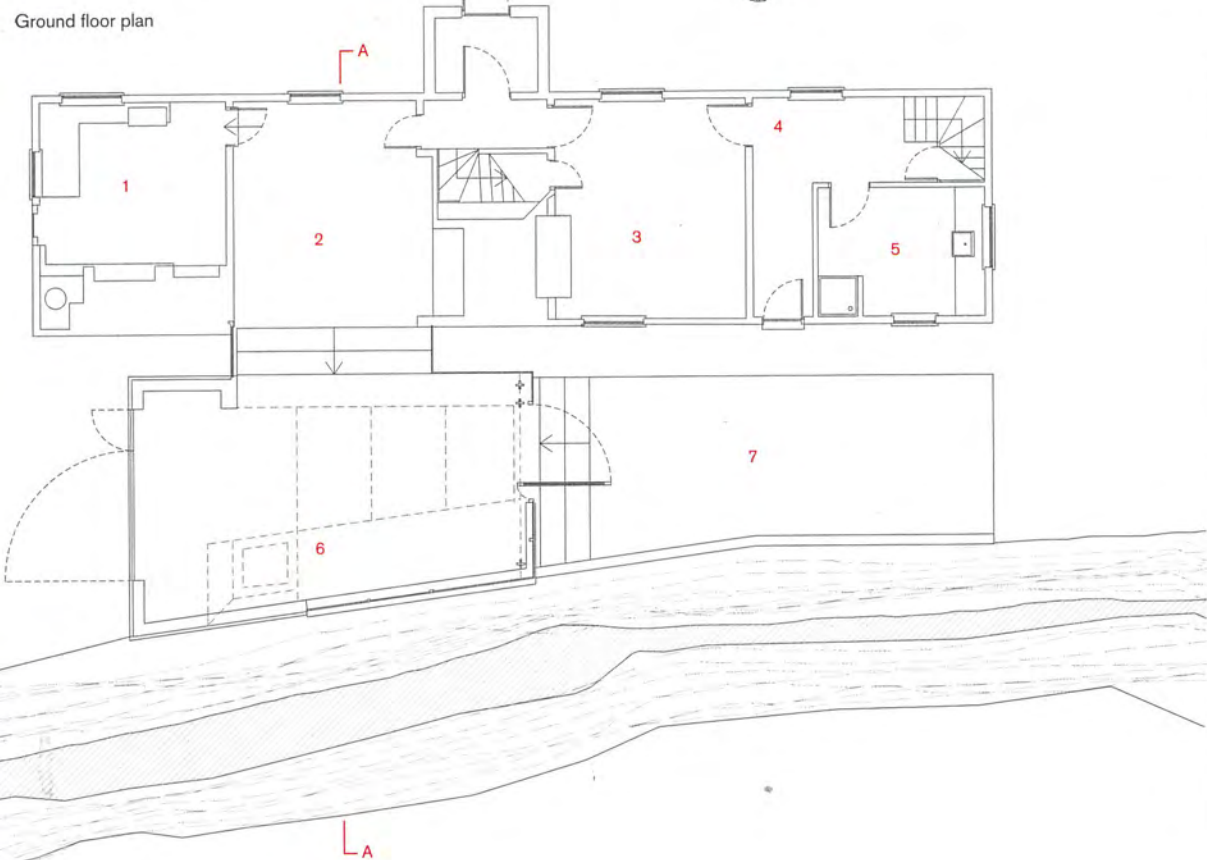
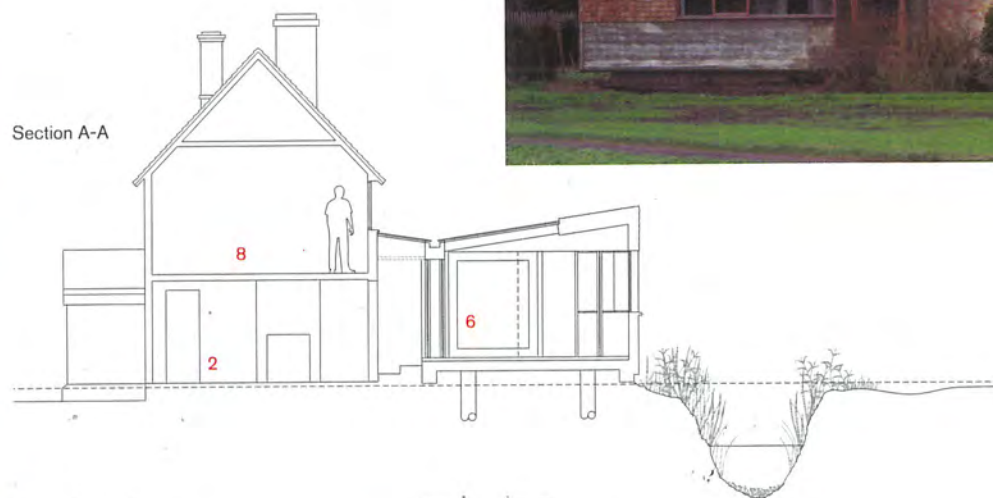
extension, but we felt that this would compromise the form of the building, and the clarity of its historical development.

We set out to model a room which would be formally separate from the original structure but which would complement it, providing a different scale of space to that available in the house, and views across the fenland to the east. This tiny extension required two refused planning applications and two appeals, eventually gaining consent in 2008. By this time rescue work was under way on the main building, with client and builder collaborating on a skilled restoration. We agreed to supply sufficient details, support and advice to enable them to build the new extension, but rather than a traditional architectural role, our involvement continued through conversations on site, and help with less familiar materials.

Tom Holbrook, director, 5th Studio

PHOTOGRAPHY BY RICHARD DAVIES

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- LEGEND
1. Utility room
 2. Dining room
 3. Sitting room
 4. Hall
 5. Bathroom
 6. Kitchen
 7. Terrace
 8. Bedroom

CREDITS

START ON SITE
June 2006
COMPLETION
June 2013
GROSS INTERNAL FLOOR AREA 37m²
COST £100,000
FORM OF CONTRACT Gentleman's agreement
CLIENT Private
ARCHITECT 5th Studio
STRUCTURAL ENGINEER Andrew Firebrace Partnership
MAIN CONTRACTOR Adrian Grey
GARDEN DESIGN AND PLANTING Fran Brown

