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THE WINNERS



BEST CONVERSION

Paul Baker (left) wasn't planning to buy the windmill that sits atop Wray's Common in Surrey. He didn't think he could afford it. But, having seen it was to be auctioned, he toddled along to the sale and - guess what - the hammer came down on his £300,000 bid. As a chef, he thought it might work as a restaurant venue. But when he was told that the planners would reject the change of use, his only option was to carve a home from the decrepit and inhospitable structure.

Worse, it was Grade II* listed, so every job had to be done to conservation specifications. But, where the rest of us might curse the day, Paul developed a passion for the building and set about renovating it, helped by design consultant David Tate, to an exceptionally high standard.

A Polish labourer mentioned that his brothers back home were a carpenter

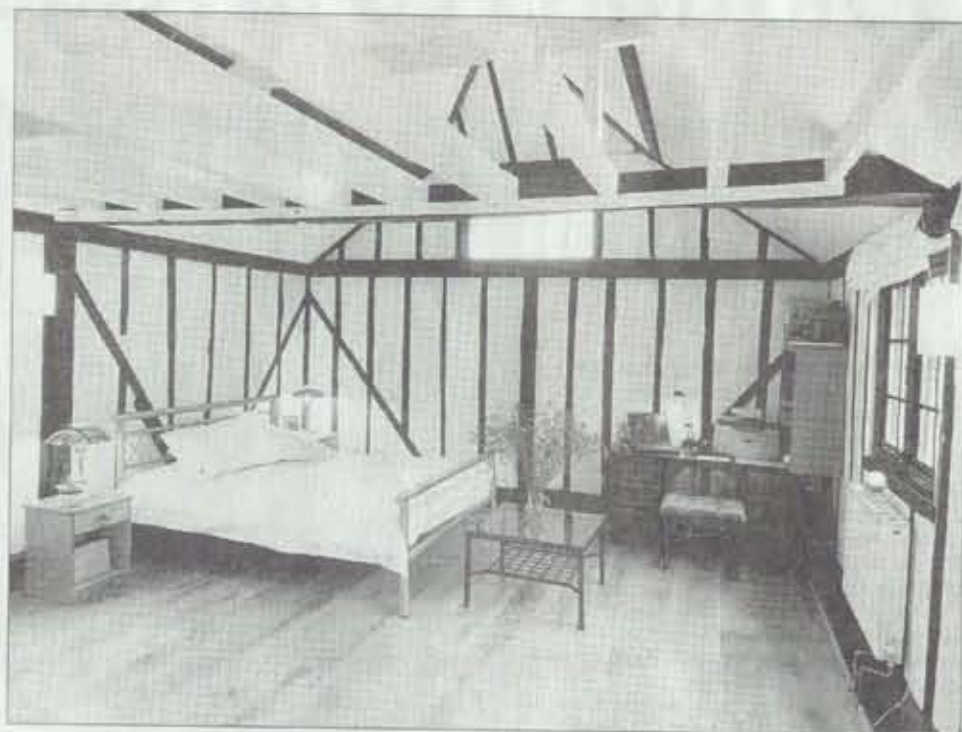
and master builder and so Paul flew them over; installed in a caravan on site, they did much of the work.

As well as the windmill itself, which now boasts a circular living room, two bedrooms and a fabulous top-floor study, the ground floor structure contains a large kitchen/dining room and another bedroom. At the very top of the windmill is a circular balcony with one of the best views in the area.

Sadly, such a thorough restoration came at a price - double the original budget, meaning Paul has had to put it on the market.

Paul Baker

Location: Surrey
Build cost: £495,000
Land cost: £340,000
Value: £1.4 million
Designer: David Tate Design
Assoc: (01237 789335)



BEST SMALL HOUSE

Richard Dudzicki (pictured left, with his wife and daughter) provides us with the door number of his house but, really, there is no need. In a street of Victorian terraces, there is no missing his iroko-clad, three-storey, contemporary box. Standing at the end of the road, it is, he admits, "visual punctuation".

Building on a small footprint - a space formerly occupied by a pair of garages, hemmed in at the back by a substation - can be frustrating. But, by using a simple palette of materials

Richard Dudzicki

Location: East Dulwich, London
Build cost: £150,000
Land cost: n/a
Value: £400,000
Architect: Richard Dudzicki
Assoc: (020 8299 2222)

and colours, Richard, an architect, has built a house that in no way feels compromised. Large windows, high ceilings and immaculate finishes detract attention from the fact that, well, it just ain't that big.

The ground floor is largely

devoted to an elegant living/dining room with a vivid, scarlet kitchen taking up one end. Upstairs are two bedrooms; on the top floor, a thrilling, private living room with a balcony on two sides gives wonderful views. They are a progressive bunch in Dulwich: only one local homeowner caused any difficulties.

Richard has recently bought a former gallery next door, an equally cramped site, on which to develop his next project - a twin house which will be linked to his current home via a bridge.



ECO HOUSE

A few years ago you knew where you were with eco houses: they were odd-looking structures built of strange materials, usually perched, awkwardly, on a



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