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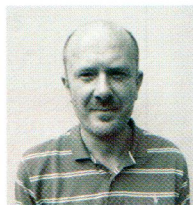
Smart Daylighting

Architect John Nortcliffe shares one of his practice's favourite design tricks

One of the challenges of converting agricultural buildings, such as barns, for contemporary residential use is daylighting. These buildings were initially built with few, if any, windows as their primary function was for storage or sheltering livestock. But modern domestic living demands plentiful natural light to create well-lit internal spaces, to reduce the need for artificial lighting and keep energy costs down.

Our preferred way of introducing daylight while preserving the agricultural character of an original building, is through concealed rooflights — an innovative solution to this tricky design challenge.

In certain circumstances, the planners may not want any new roof glazing to be visible from the ground, and so you have to be creative in your approach — as was the case with one of our projects, Feering Bury Farm Barn (above), where we removed the existing roof and placed a series of large polycarbonate rooflights beneath a new roof surface of expanded steel mesh. The openings within the mesh are orientated towards the sky and allow light from above to flood the interior with daylight. From the ground, however, these openings are completely invisible and the roof reads as a solid, uninterrupted surface, keeping the industrial character — which the planners were keen to retain — intact. **H**



Architect John Nortcliffe is an associate of award-winning practice Hudson Architects (hudsonarchitects.co.uk)