

KITCHEN BATHROOM BEDROOM

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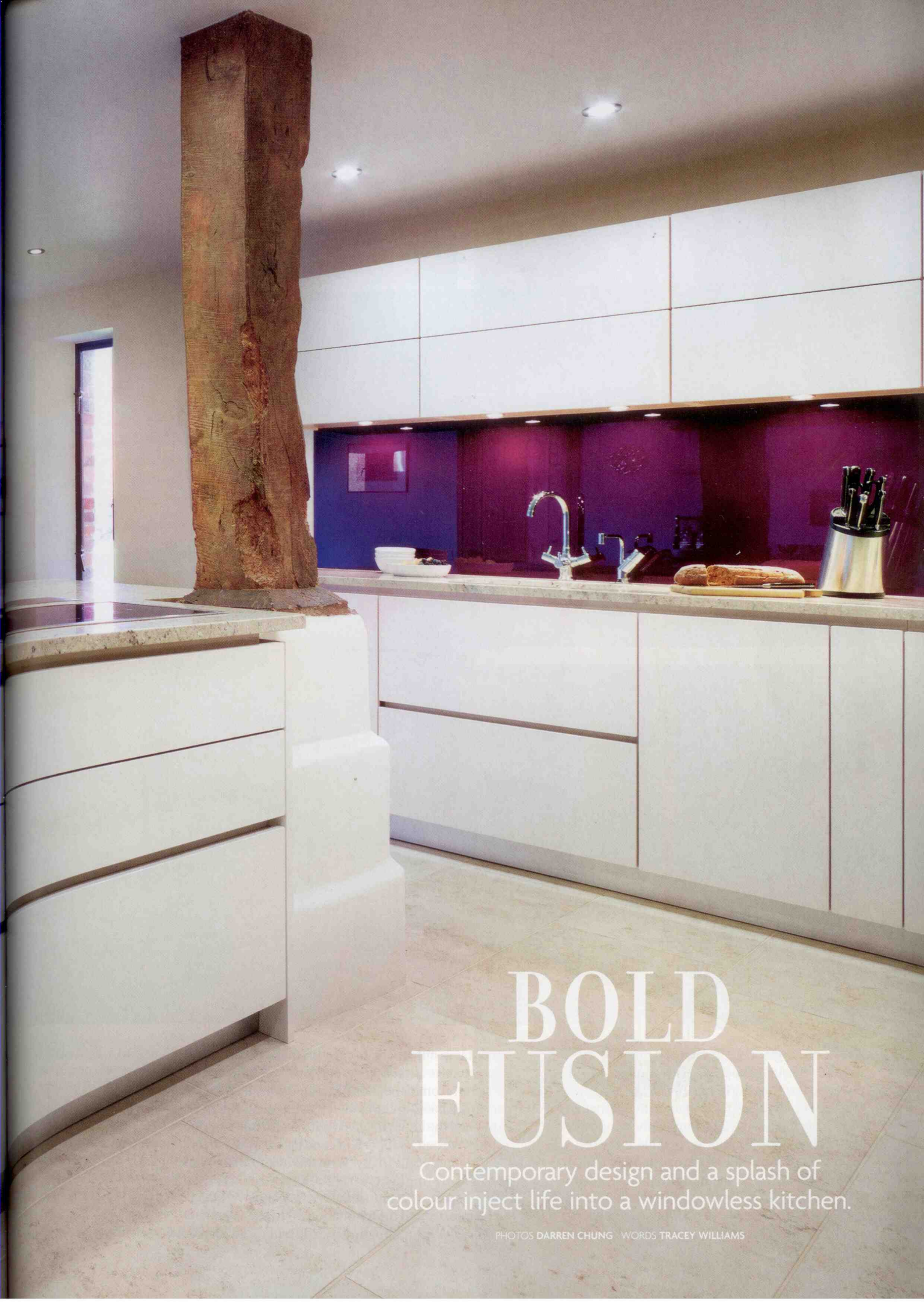


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The warming mix of new and old flows between the open-plan rooms, each area successfully works independently.



BOLD FUSION

Contemporary design and a splash of colour inject life into a windowless kitchen.

PHOTOS DARREN CHUNG WORDS TRACEY WILLIAMS



Said to be the largest barn in southern England, this Grade II listed property had a lot going for it. Converted into housing in 1990, the development of 12 homes became a desirable place to live, although, unfortunately for Digby and Diana Harper, the windowless kitchen of their home wasn't quite as enviable as the rest. 'It was a dark room made worse by the oak units, panelled ceiling and terracotta floor,' remembers Digby. 'We put up with it for over ten years until it got the better of us and we considered moving. It was then we realised we could use the money that would otherwise be frittered on removal

costs and stamp duty to create exactly what we wanted, in a house that we already knew and loved very much.'

It was the recommendation of a friend which led the Harpers to Michael Taplin, Designer at Elements Kitchens. 'We explained the issues involved with such a building and the fact that we had a supporting – and listed – pillar in the middle of room,' recalls Digby. 'With this in mind, our main criterion was to bring light in. This influenced our choice of reflective surfaces on the cabinetry, floor and worktops.'

The couple resisted the temptation to choose a kitchen that would suit the building and instead embraced a more ➤

Above Although still windowless room, clever planning and reflective surfaces help to create the illusion of airiness.

Top right A triflow tap with a built-in Brita filter and a Quooker hot water tap update the wet area.

Right Juperana Torron granite is just perfect for adding interest to the understated design.



KITCHEN PROFILE

The supporting beam of this listed barn building takes centre stage in a surprisingly contemporary kitchen, its rustic finish offers a pleasing paradox against the Ivory high gloss vinyl cabinetry. Created by Michael Taplin at Elements Kitchens, the handleless scheme is teamed with worktops in delicately patterned Juperana Torrone granite and sleek appliances: The overall understated feel has been given a dramatic punch with the rich Merlot coloured glass splashback.

Elements Kitchens, 8b Portman Road, Reading, RG30 1EA.

Tel: 01189 599919. elementskitchens.co.uk

Kitchen start from around £15,000.





‘The old oak beam illustrates the building’s history – it’s wonderful to incorporate this in a modern design.’

Above Although sleek and streamlined, the handleless cabinetry mixes different storage options for interest.

Left Without facilities for external extraction, the island had to be deep enough to incorporate a downdraft model behind the linear induction hob.

Right A glass splashback was a necessity for its reflective properties as much as for the colour contrast to the units.

contemporary theme, opting for sleek handleless cabinetry. ‘Although we wanted modern and light, we didn’t want bland. So, from the outset, we decided on using a splashback to inject colour,’ adds Digby. Their choice of granite was also intended to add a distinctive edge but, on advice from Michael, they visited the granite yard itself rather than relying on a swatch. ‘And we were so glad we did!’ Exclaims Digby. ‘Once we saw it on a large scale, it was just awful.’ Fortunately, however, their plans were salvaged as a search of the yard led them to find the softly patterned Juperana Torrone, its purple veining adding vibrant inspiration.

Despite all the careful choices of colour and finish, it is the layout which has transformed the space. Replacing the erstwhile peninsula with a generously sized island was a key change, designed to create a natural boundary between the practical workings of the kitchen and the more restful lounge area. It also makes the space more accessible and functional, allowing the pillar to be accommodated a





a feature. 'I love to mix old and new while showing respect for the past,' explains Michael. 'The oak beam illustrates the history of the building and its past use as a barn, so it was wonderful to be able to incorporate it into modern design.'

Water and power requirements dictated much of the layout but the lack of windows became a bonus as it gave freedom for the arrangement of the cabinetry.

The colours, contemporary luxury and sense of light and space continue into the living area, allowing the two zones to work as one. Yet, despite this seamless flow, each retains its individuality – something not always easy to accomplish. Whether it was the team effort or an inspiring canvas, this once oppressive room has been given a new lease of life and function as a stylish and contemporary living space. ■

STOCKISTS INFORMATION

APPLIANCES

Adagio downdraft extractor, £1,549, at Elica. B45E54N Series 4 single oven, around £999; C57W40N Series 3 microwave oven, £624; N22H40N warming drawer, £419; N21H40N warming drawer, £370; T43P90N Series 3 extra wide induction hob, £760, all at Neff.

FIXTURES AND FITTINGS

Juperana Torrone granite, £650 per linear m; Merlot glass splashback, £500 per sq. m, at Elements Kitchens. Jura Beige Natural porcelain floor tiles, around £35 per sq. m,

Above Soft creams are teamed with a flourish of rich Merlot for a harmonious flow from kitchen to living area.

Right Neville Johnson storage in the living area echoes the angular shapes and style of the kitchen cabinetry.

at Reed Harris. KBG160 undermount white ceramic sink, £328, at Franke. Spa Filter traditional tap, £226, at Rangemaster. Pro3 modern polished hot water tap, £847, at Quooker. Club occasional table and side table, £POA; Grace bar stools, £99 each, all at Beadle & Chrome. Similar Zelig and Domino sofas, £POA, at Natuzzi. Fleur cushion in Natural/Cassis, around £30, at John Lewis. Bespoke lounge cabinetry, £POA, at Neville Johnson.
*Prices are approximate.
For stockists, see page 162.

