**Final press release (August 15, 2016)**

With photos

**YORK HANDMADE PLAY THE LONG GAME TO CREATE STUNNING 21st CENTURY HOME**

The award-winning York Handmade Brick Company has played a pivotal role in the construction of one of the striking and distinctive modern houses in Hertfordshire.

York Handmade, based at Alne, near Easingwold, supplied 20,000 long Maxima bricks to build Moses Dell, a luxurious and sophisticated 21st century family home in woodland near Radlett.

David Armitage, chairman of York Handmade, one of the leading brick-makers in the UK, explained: “This was an absolutely fascinating commission, not least because the stunning Moses Dell was built on the site of an old brickworks and has been designed to reflect its interesting history.

“This commission has given us the chance to showcase our increasingly popular long Maxima bricks, which are rapidly becoming our USP. Maxima bricks are much-liked by architects because they lend themselves to innovative and bold designs.

“The unique flexibility of the production facility which York Handmade has in our factory at Alne enables us to manufacture bricks from 230mm up to 440mm in length and down to 40mm in thickness,” said Mr Armitage. “This puts us ahead of the game”.

Tom Mitchell, Associate Director of London-based architects Metropolitan Workshop, commented: “In 2012 we approached York Handmade Brick (YHB) with an unusual brief for a bespoke long brick format to be laid in a 'basket-weave' bond for the house at Moses Dell.

“This presented various technical challenges, but YHB bought their experience and ingenuity to help us deliver the distinctive brickwork detailing exactly as intended. Collaborating with York Handmade has been a pleasure, and we hope to work with them again soon,” said Mr Mitchell.

Moses Dell has already been short-listed for a prize in the Brick Awards, the Oscars of the brick industry, this autumn.

David Armitage said: “Despite the fact that these bespoke bricks are more expensive than the traditional, it is important to remind ourselves that the bricks still represent a very small percentage of the total cost of a given project; four per cent being the likely maximum for any project in which brick is used.

“More than anything else, the choice of an original brick with a personality and character of its own makes a statement which may mean that historians will look back on the early 21st century as a time of exciting brickwork comparable to the classic brickwork used in former years. Moses Dell is a perfect example of this exciting new era,” he said.

The remains of a 19th century brick kiln in the woods behind was the inspiration for the kiln-shaped drawing room and master bedroom element and for the use of large format bricks at Moses Dell.

Tom Mitchell added: “Moses Dell is a distinctive and sophisticated contemporary six-bedroom home where the design captures the character and history of the site in a way which relates sensitively to its rural setting in the Metropolitan Green Belt near Radlett. Several previous applications by others had been refused, but the planning committee and local residents unanimously supported this contemporary approach.”

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