



A contemporary countryside home combining energy-efficient design, expressive structural detailing, generous glazing, and carefully engineered open-plan living spaces

**Location:** Winterbourne Earls, Salisbury

**Architect:** Birch Architects

Residential / Modern / Steelwork / Sustainable



### Contemporary Rural Design

Located near Salisbury, Lower Orchard is a contemporary new-build family home combining clean architectural lines with brickwork, vertical cedar cladding, exposed steel and expansive glazing. Positioned to maximise countryside views, the house was conceived as a highly sustainable and energy-efficient home, incorporating solar PVs, an air source heat pump, mechanical ventilation with heat recovery and high-performance insulation.

### Structural Engineering Challenges

The architectural concept featured extensive openings, minimal masonry returns and areas of exposed external steelwork, leading to the adoption of a steel-framed structural solution. Particular attention was required to engineer the relationship between the internal structural frame and externally expressed steel elements, ensuring both visual quality and structural performance, while addressing thermal bridging and stabilising independent frames supporting masonry façades.

### Delivering Open, Light-Filled Spaces

Internally, the structural strategy enabled generous open-plan kitchen, dining and snug areas alongside large glazed sliding doors opening to the landscape beyond. A striking steel and timber staircase and gallery landing create visual connectivity between floors while maximising natural light and rearward views. Through close collaboration with the architect, AWA helped deliver a contemporary home balancing structural efficiency, sustainability and refined architectural expression.

