

MAKE IT **WOOD**

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PLANET ARK

CASE STUDY



Marcus Lee Glenn Howells Architects

The Framehouse
Hackney, NE London, England

OVERVIEW

Heathrow Terminal 5 architect Marcus Lee designed his own two-storey eco-family home in a deprived area of Hackney. His house truly shows off the beauty of open post and beam frame. With five girls to look after, he wanted to build quickly. That's why he chose wood. The build was astonishingly fast. Work began in March 2005, when drainage was dug and foundations installed. The entire flat pack wood home was delivered on one lorry in May 2005 and it was completed by the end of August the same year!

Marcus and his wife, Rachel's home is built from Siberian Larch. The house also uses Red Cedar for frames and cladding, and Douglas Fir for the balconies, all of which add subtle variations of tone. The house has no load-bearing walls so it provides a flexible space. The layout is influenced by Japanese design, with storage arranged along the



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sidewalls hiding everything from the washing machine to a narrow shower room.

A wooden staircase runs through the centre of the house and the rooms radiate off it. 'There are no cul-de-sacs in the house. There is also no dead space. I hate corridors.' said architect and owner Marcus Lee.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE WOOD?

'Wood has a wealth of benefits. My previous home was built very successfully using wood. You can cut wood and shape it. It is warm. To me, it feels like a holiday home. It is an excellent insulator. We always feel warm and cosy in here. Wood has a low embodied energy. I wanted to express the frame externally. I'd like to build another home from cross laminated timber' said Marcus.

WHAT WAS YOUR BIGGEST CHALLENGE?

'Pleasing the client – my wife! Seriously, getting the structure right to budget. And the open plan approach means that the services (electrical, gas) are on display which sometimes isn't so attractive.'

DOES YOUR HOME HAVE ANY OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES?

In addition to using natural building materials, the Framehouse is a Royal Institute of British Architects award winning home with environmentally friendly features including a timber pellet boiler, flax and latex integrated wood fibre board, rainwater harvesting and solar thermal energy.

WHAT TYPES OF WOOD ARE USED IN THE CONSTRUCTION?

The building uses Siberian Larch, Western Red Cedar and Douglas Fir.

DID YOU THINK IT WAS IMPORTANT TO USE CERTIFIED WOOD?

Yes of course, I used Forest Stewardship Council certified wood.

