

PROJECT PLANNING PACK

Our Guide to the Planning
and Building Process



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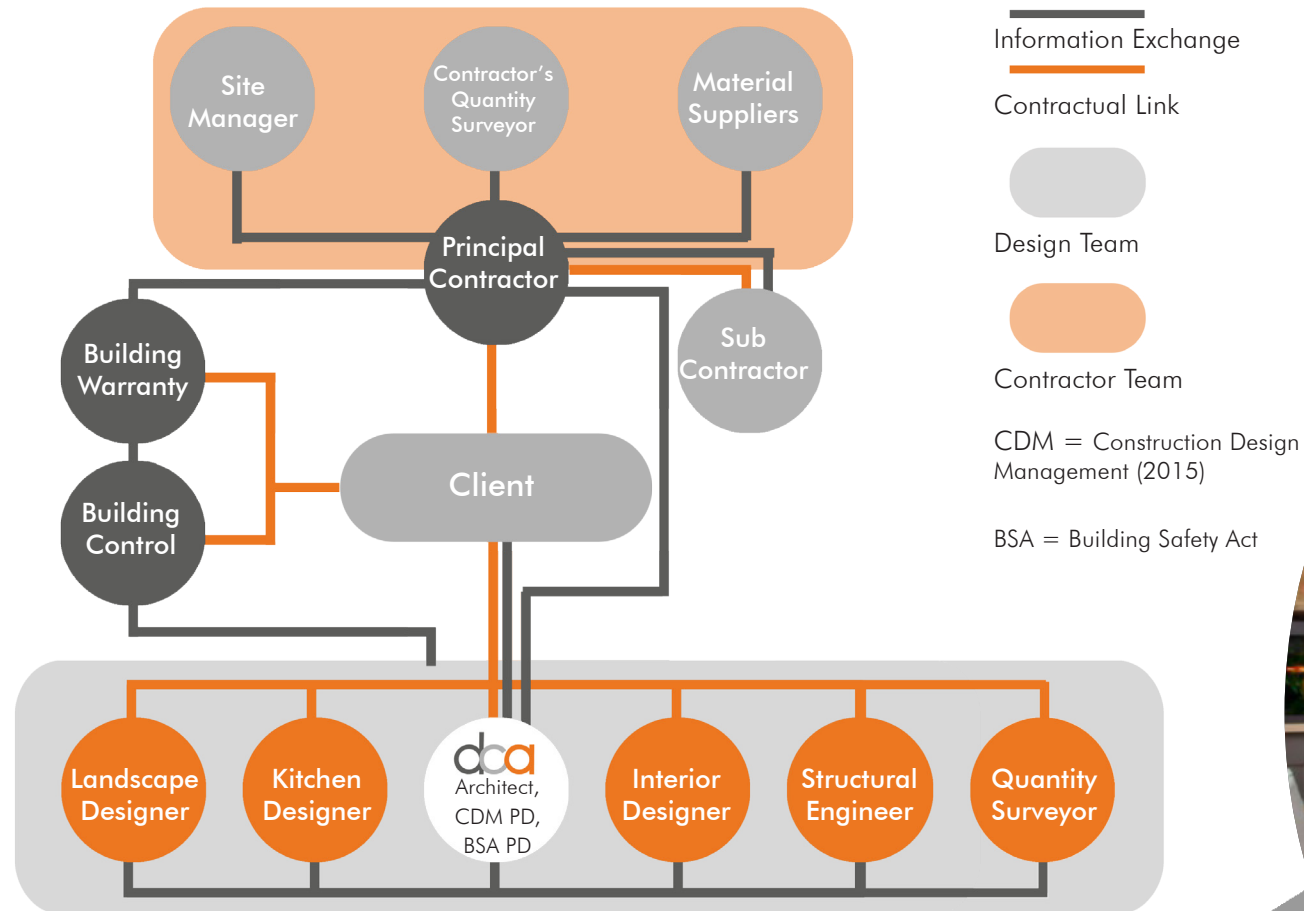
The No.1 problem when embarking on a building project is a lack of planning in the early phases, resulting in an under-designed project that goes over time and over budget.

This Project Planning Pack has been created as a simple tool to help you reduce project risk and improve project design.

01. Why work with an Architect?

Understanding the structure of a successful project

Taking on the processes and coordination of a project, where you are looking to spend a significant sum of money is not for the inexperienced and unqualified. Your Architect is your guide, the coordinator of the many threads of your project and your advisor. Even if this means you need a reality check.



As well as an Architect, you will need other consultants and specialists to deliver your project. The right Architect knows the right people, the right time to get them involved and knows how to manage and coordinate them. Use your Architect's expertise.

Your Architect is the key player in the design and construction process.

They are formally recognised as being the best person to complete Principal Designer duties associated with Health & Safety and Building Regulations.

This should be integrated into your Architects processes. Don't let these duties get overlooked and become your problem to sort out later. This will cost you at least 3 time more and delay your project.



02. Understanding the Project Roadmap

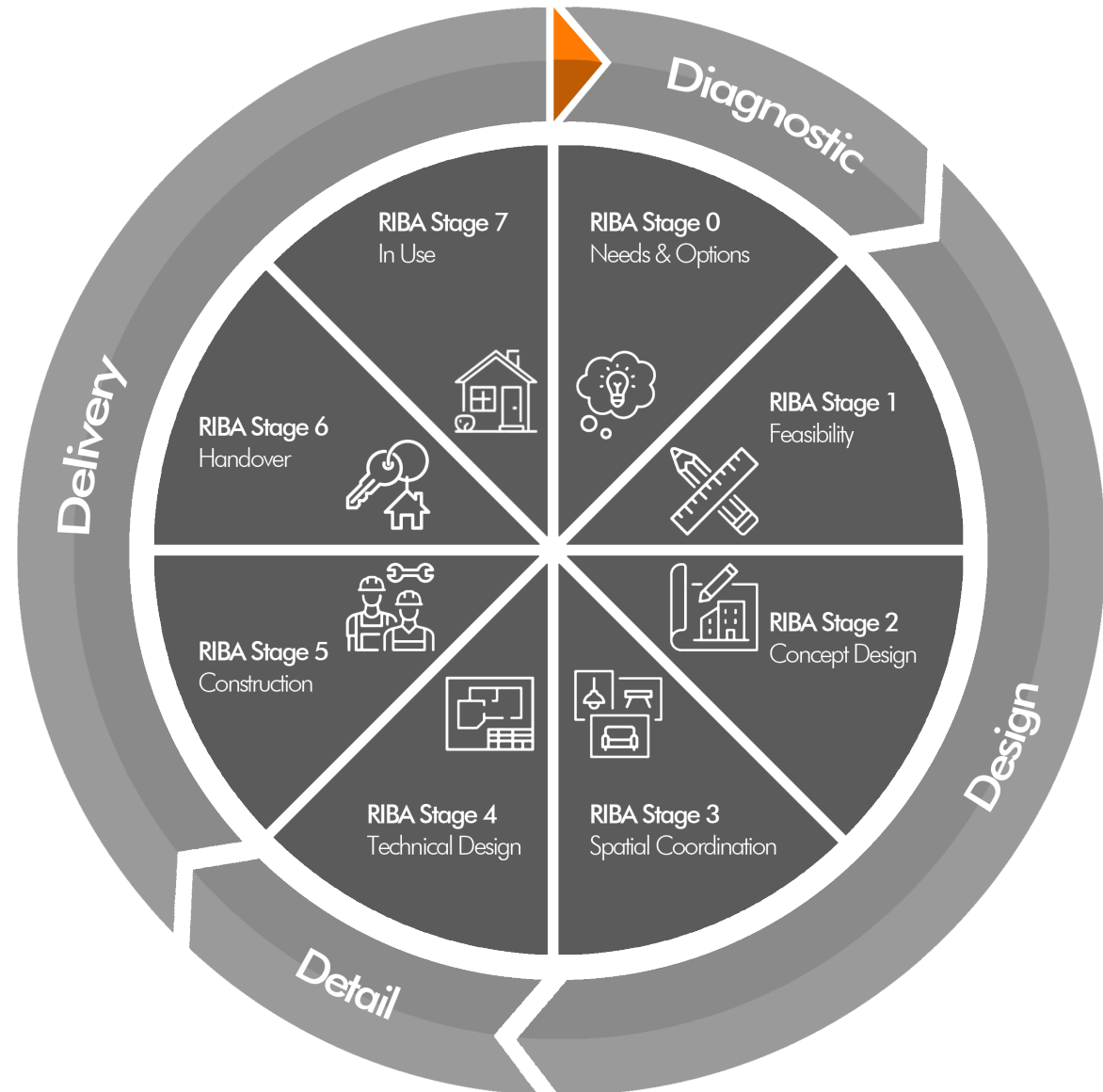
Major Steps Required For Designing and Building Your New Home

The RIBA outlines a plan of work which all Architects should work towards to ensure a project's success. On this page, the diagram outlines how our process aligns with the RIBA work stages with the orange arrow indicating where you are currently at.

Right now, you should be in your own Research Phase. This is where you are gathering information and playing around with ideas. At the point you want to get serious, you will want to talk to an Architect to understand what the project constraints are and if your ideas are possible.

If you work with me, we will begin with the Diagnostic Phase. We will determine your needs and options to eliminate assumptions, identify constraints and find your best options.

You will then receive a Diagnostic Review document that can be used by me or any other architect that will ensure you reduce project risk and get the best options for your site and budget.



03. Top Tips for a Successful Project

The 7 tips for project success and happy clients

We understand that your home is more than just a place; it's an extension of your personality, your sanctuary, and a reflection of your unique style. Thorough planning and careful consideration of these tips will contribute to a successful new home or home extension project that enhances your living space and adds value to your property.

1. Check out your Architect

Your relationship with an Architect is based on mutual trust and respect. Are they Architects, can you trust them, are they what you thought they were? "Architect" is a protected title. Architects have to meet and maintain strict eligibility criteria to be admitted to the Architects Register. You can check your Architect [here](#).

2. Get to know your Architect

Not all Architects are the same; they differ in their approach, character and the type of work they specialize in.

3. Communicate your ideas

A great way for you to communicate your ideas and inspiration is to compile a Pinterest board or similar. Share this with your Architect to start an exciting discussion.

4. Your Architect will have a process they follow

They know that the best projects are those where you understand what is to be done, why and how. Make sure you ask them to outline their process, services they provide and explain why you need them.

5. Don't rush into design

There is more than 1 obvious option. The best option takes time to develop. Also building more is not generally the right answer. Build wise and, where applicable, make the existing building work harder. You will benefit with a more integrated design and lower costs.

6. Tackle the thorny issue of costs head on

It is vital that costs are monitored and checked at key stages in the process to ensure the decisions are informed. We are approached by so many potential clients where their projects failed on costs. We hate to see clients lose their hope and excitement of changing their lives after wasting so much of their time and money on design, approvals, resources and effort to end up with an undeliverable project.

7. Appreciate and consider the property value ceilings in your area

Balance this against what you are looking to achieve, how much you are going to spend and potential future value of the completed project.



04. Building Cost Estimator

The Simple, Do-It-Yourself Way To Estimate Your Number

What is the secret to project cost?

There is more to it than a simple construction cost.

		NEW BUILD / EXTENSION		
		Level of Finish		
		★ Standard £2,000/m2	★★ Mid £2,500/m2	★★★ High £3,000/m2
A1	External Area (sqm)			
A2	External Area x Level of Finish			
		CONVERSION		
		Level of Finish		
		★ Standard £1,200/m2	★★ Mid £1,400/m2	★★★ High £1,600/m2
B1	Internal Area (sqm)			
B2	Internal Area x Level of Finish			
		ALTERATIONS / REFURBISHMENTS		
		Level of Finish		
		★ Standard £800/m2	★★ Mid £900/m2	★★★ High £1000/m2
C1	Internal Area (sqm)			
C2	Internal Area x Level of Finish			
		KITCHENS		
		Kitchen Size		
		★ Small £10,000	★★ Medium £15,000	★★★ Large £20,000
D	Does the project involve the installation of a new kitchen? If so, select the appropriate kitchen size or add your own kitchen budget.			

E	Combined Construction Costs (A2+B2+C2+D)		
F	Soft Costs (E x 30%) Refer to infographic on Page 7 for soft costs		
G	Project Costs excluding VAT (E+F)		
H	Project Costs including VAT (G+20%)		
J	Cost Range (+/-10%) Use G for New Build, Use H for Extensions & Alterations to Existing Homes.		

Regardless of your target budget, there are 3 answers to the question of total project cost:

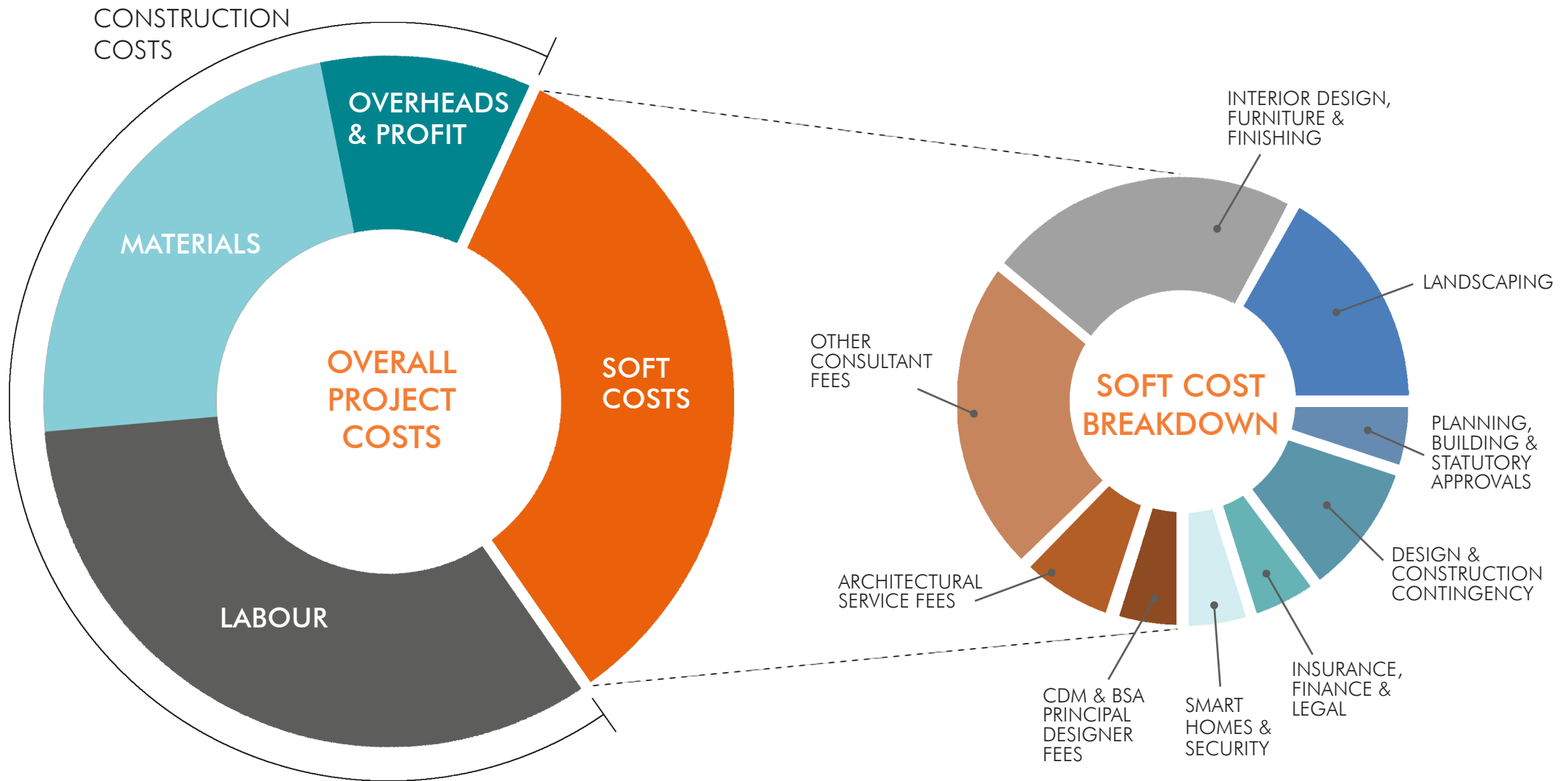
1. It depends on so many factors that a definitive answer is literally impossible.
2. Your entire wish list likely exceeds the amount you will be comfortable spending.
3. The project cost will go up if we discover more options and constraints that cause changes, unless we plan for them in advance.

Even so, we have to start somewhere. This question is critically important and should not be avoided.

There are many soft costs beyond what the builder quotes, including architecture, engineering, interior design, surveying, landscaping, utilities, furnishings, inevitable unknowns and more. Soft costs vary on a project by project basis, for example a new house may have more than a renovation project. 30% is a placeholder to start with (and contains project contingency).

05. Project Cost Breakdown

Understanding value for money



06. Creating Your Design Brief

Answering these 7 questions will provide you with a good start to your design brief, something that allows us as architects to better understand you and is something we can work off when moving forward to the design phases.

	Your Question	Answer
1	Outline your current situation?	
2	How do you live? Is that changing or about to change?	
3	What will you need to see to know your project has been a dramatic success?	
4	How do you want to FEEL as you move through your new space?	
5	Who are the important people this home needs to be designed for?	
6	What are the budget, timeframes and boundaries we need to work within?	
7	What does your home really mean to you?	







07. How ready are you?

Use these Readiness Sliders to see if you are ready to Move To The Design Phase

Do You Need An Architect?

This exercise allows you to assess how ready you are to move to the Design Phase. If you are not close to 10 on ALL scales, then it's best to seek help from an expert to do this research.

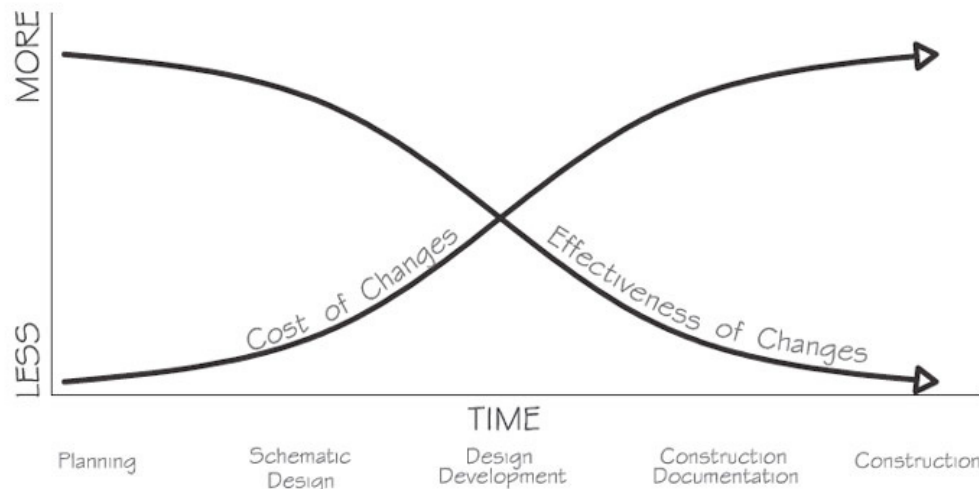
If you rush into the design phase without this information available, you'll run the risk of making too many assumptions, which is the No. 1 reason projects go over budget and over time.

Question	Slider (0-10, zero = low, 10 = high)
How clear are you on exactly what you need?	0  10
How aware are you of all the various options your site will accommodate?	0  10
How confident are you that you are aware of all the legal requirements?	0  10
How aware are you of the process you will need to have in place to get the project completed on time and on budget?	0  10
How confident are you that you that your budget will achieve your needs?	0  10
Give yourself a current overall rating for readiness.	0  10
Don't worry if you are not at 10 on all scales yet. The Diagnostic Review process allows you to fill in the knowledge gaps and gets you ready to move to the Design Phase.	

08. What is a Diagnostic Review?

Understanding your needs and options

“We recommend a Diagnostic Review where our clients have multiple design avenues to proceed down”



The Diagnostic Review will provide you with the following:

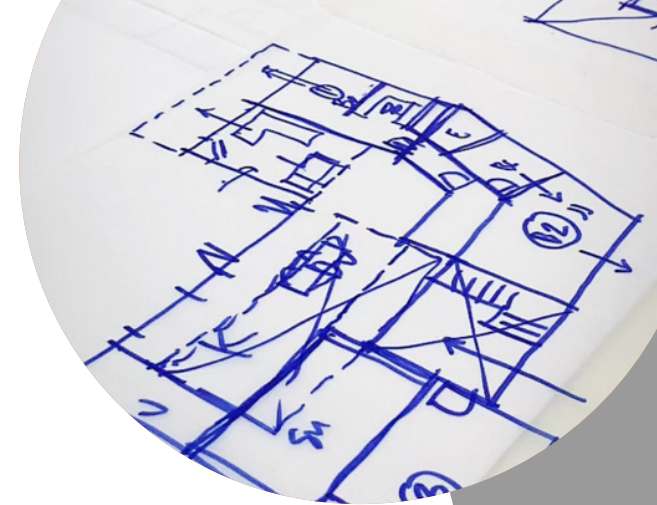
- A comprehensive assessment of your property in terms of planning policy, local context and factors influencing design
- An assessment of any specialist you may require to deliver your project
- Hand-drawn sketch options exploring your options
- Basic cost estimates for each option to allow you to make an informed decision of which option you want to take forward
- A detailed brief of the project you are looking to take forward
- A quote for our services based on this detailed brief

As you can see from the graph, the cost of making design changes increases as the project goes on, whilst the effectiveness of these changes decreases.

Undertaking the Diagnostic Review means our clients know from an early point that they are, both, proceeding with a scheme they can afford as well as reducing the chance of costly design changes as the project goes on. In our process, we make sure any changes to the scheme are made early and have the maximum impact they can have over the whole design.

Where late and costly design changes happen, this is often due to the wrong design avenue being selected early through either a lack of sufficient planning and assessment of local policy and design constraints or through progressed a design scheme that you later find you can't afford.

Our process is specifically designed to make sure the risk of this is minimised and our clients remain fully educated and informed of their decisions and how they can impact the project in the long-term.



09. Design Service Selector

Understanding and comparing Architectural Services

		Essential	Standard	Premium
DESIGN	Feasibility Studies	×	×	✓
	Scheme Design	✓	✓	✓
	Cost Check	Basic budget estimate only	Initial Cost Plan	Initial Cost plan
	Submit Planning Application & act as Agent	✓	✓	✓
DETAIL	Technical Design to Building Regulations plan check approval only	✓	✓	✓
	Technical Design to Construction Drawings	×	✓	✓
	Collate information for Tender including detailed Cost Check	×	Updated Cost Plan	Updated Cost Plan & Bill of Quantities (BoQ)
DELIVERY	Vet Contractors and produce a list of suitable tenderers	×	✓	✓
	Organise and run the tender process	×	✓	✓
	Tender Report & Analysis	×	✓	✓
	Contract Administration & Site Monitoring	×	×	✓
	Completion & Defect Identification	×	×	✓
OTHER ROLES	Employer's Agent	×	×	✓
	Mandatory Legal Duties - Health & Safety - CDM Principal Designer Role	Limited to service above	Limited to service above	✓
	Mandatory Legal Duties - Building Safety Act - BSA Principal Designer Role	Limited to service above	Limited to service above	✓



Looking to start a building project?

We would love to speak more about your project and an 'Ask the Expert' consultation is the perfect opportunity to see how we can work together to design your new home.

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