Design & Build E-book



Family Run Architectural and Construction Firm

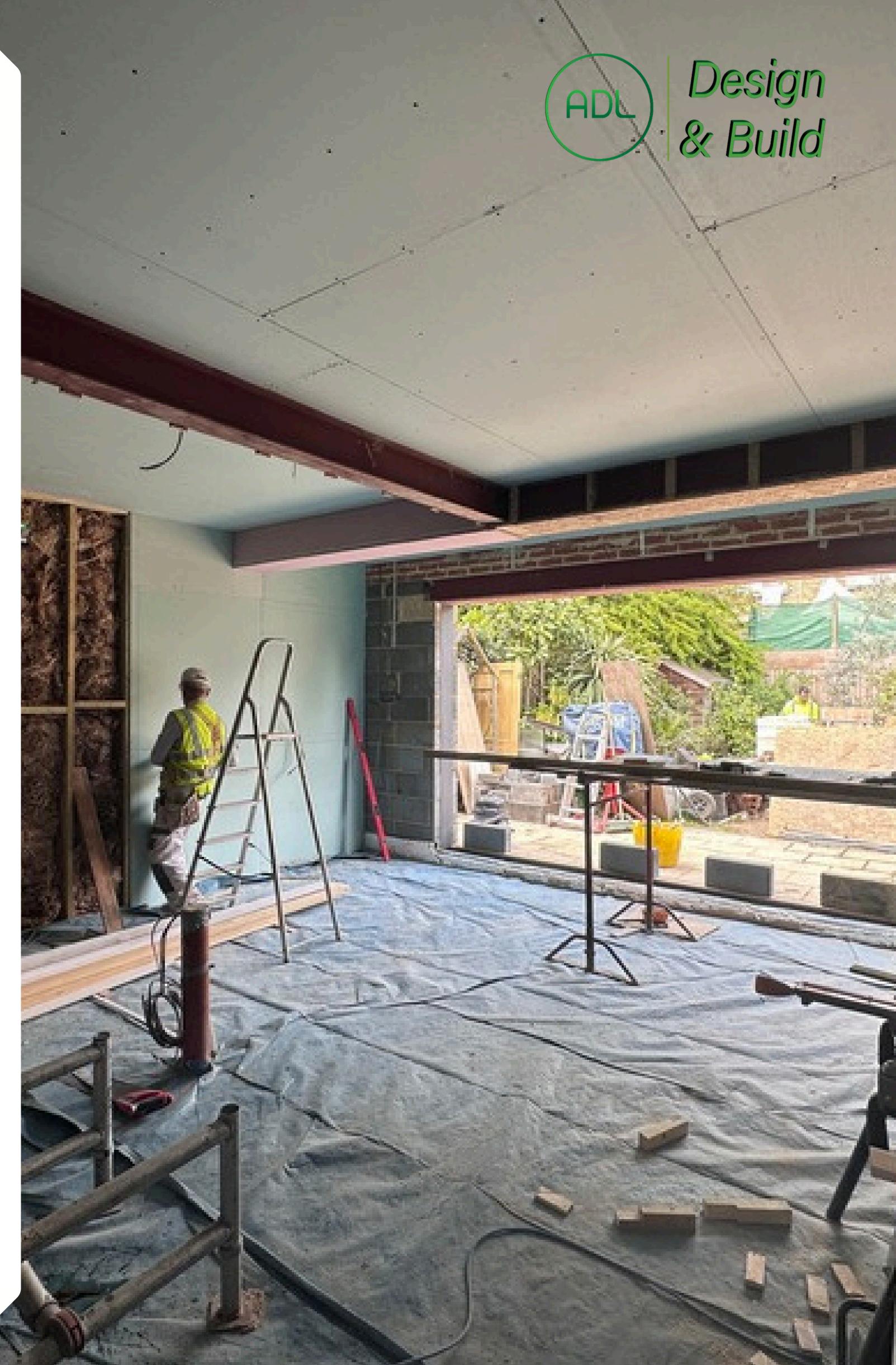






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Design & Build E-Book

About us

ADL Design & Build is a family-run firm in West Dulwich, specialising in bespoke home extensions, loft conversions, full refurbishments and commercial developments. We offer a complete design-and-build service — from drawings and 3D visuals to construction and completion.

Every project we undertake is tailored to its unique site, surroundings, and client needs. With in-house architects, structural engineers, and skilled construction teams, we combine design excellence and craftsmanship under one roof.

Our focus on clear communication, transparency, and integrity has earned us a 100% client satisfaction rate and many happy returning customers.



Design & Build E-book

Our Mission

At ADL Design & Build, our mission is to lead the evolution of the construction industry through a fully integrated Design & Build approach.

By uniting design, engineering, and construction under one roof, we ensure seamless coordination, clear accountability, and complete peace of mind for our clients.

From small-scale home improvements to larger developments, our goal is to deliver every project efficiently, responsibly, and to the highest standard.



Meet the Team



Emiljano Kola
Founder & Managing Director

Managing director of ADL Design & Build. Coming from an Architectural background, after having worked on 95+ different houses and 15+ new dwellings, he set-up ADL Design & Build with the objective of creating a leading firm in the property renovations and extensions sector.



Vate Kola
Site Manager

Site manager in our construction projects. Vate has a wealth of knowledge within the construction sector and a life-time of experience of construction methods. Mainly focused on the project delivery side, Vate has integrity and ensures our construction team delivers an ouststanding service.



Agostin Kola
Gas Engineer & Plumber

Head of building services,
plumbing, heating and electrics
in our in-house development
projects. He is a qualified gas
engineer and plumber,
passionate about eco heating
systems, sustainability and
traditional gas systems.



Site Team

Skilled Tradesmen

Our construction team is the true group of superstars and the core focus of ADL Design & Build.

Hard working, skilled, tidy and knowledgeable men working in the field. We truly value our tradesmen, ensuring all the right conditions are met for a safe work environment.



Katherin Ayala

Operations Manager

Katherine is the office operations manager at ADL Design & Build. Her background and studies in engineering developed her in a very organised professional, assisting both the design and construction team, while being a point of contact for our clients.



Alireza Datoo

Project Designer

Alireza is a very experienced profile, with over 10 years working in the residential sector. Alireza is a qualified architectural designer, and involved in our projects from concept to completion.



Giovanni Leone

Chartered Architect

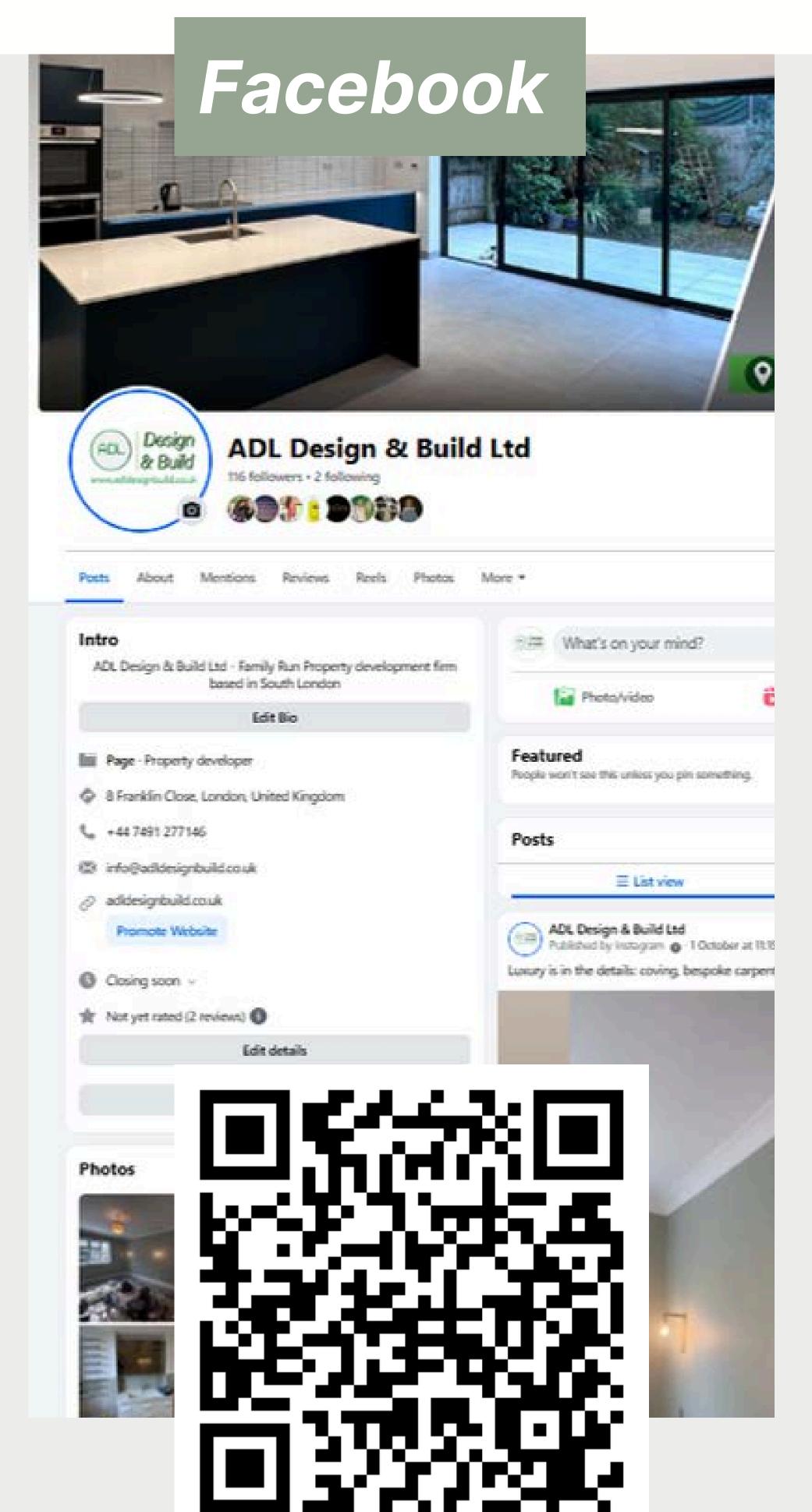
Giovanni is an experienced chartered architect and ARB registered. Bringing wealth of experience and attention to detail to both the technical design phase as well as interior design. We works alongside Emilio in most of the ADL Design & Build Projects.

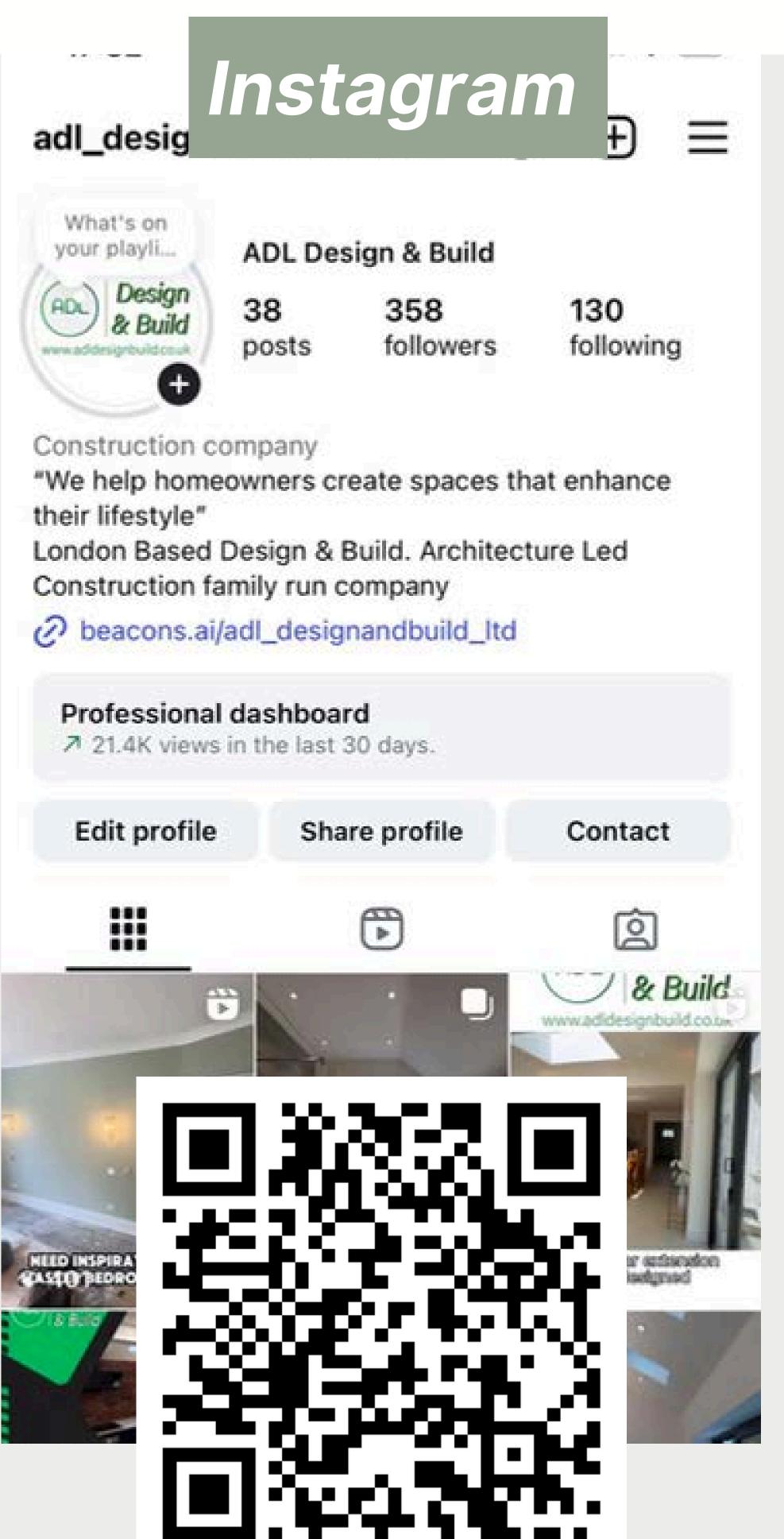


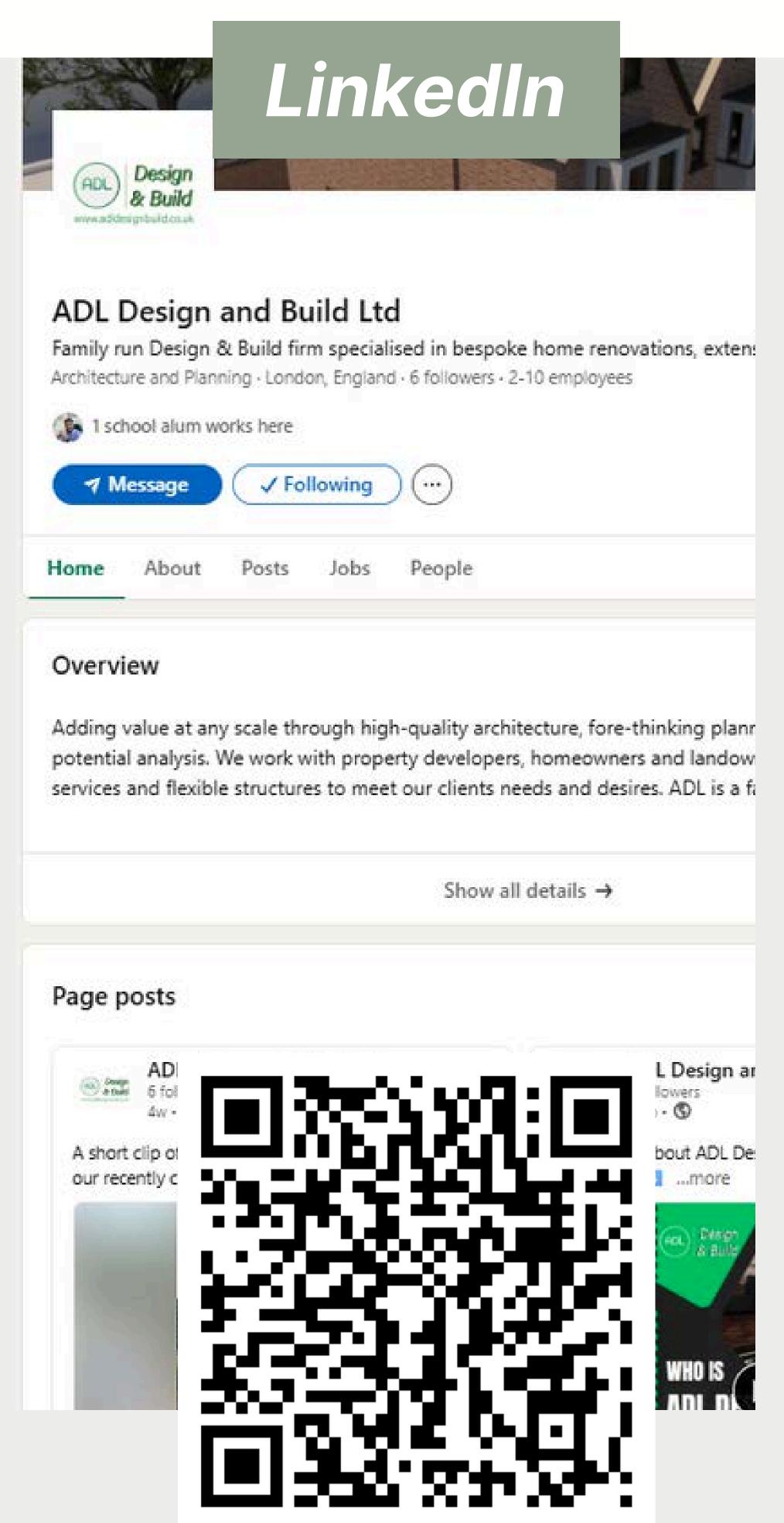
Firoz Ganj Chartered Structural Engineer

Chartered Structural Engineer. Has also a wealth of experience in the construction industry. Mainly focused in technical details, steels and timber frame design, Firoz is a superstar engineer assisting and advising the on-site team with any clarifications on the construction drawings.

Find us Online







And see why clients choose us



★★★★ 11 months ago

ADL Design & Build has recently completed a rear extension and loft conversion at our family house in Wimbledon. From planning permsission, to clear estimate and smooth construction process we couldn't be more pleased with the end result. Never felt let down and always looked after by the project manager and owner Emilio, during the whole process with regular updates and site meetings. We love the end result. Thank you ADL team!



Tom X

Local Guide · 12 reviews · 2 photos

★★★★ Edited a year ago

ADL Design & Build has delivered a great service for our house extension, very professional throughout. We are happy with the finished build, inc. receipt of the final building control certificate without any issues. The ADL team and Emilio have shown experience, knowledge and flexibility during the usual challenges during construction, being prompt on changes and updates. Would comfortably recommend ADL Design & Build to anyone looking for a house extension.



★★★★★ 3 years ago

Working with Emilio and ADL team has been a pleasure from the start. They have provided valuable advice and helped us prepare for construction, from very thorough technical drawings, to structural engineering and liaison with party-wall. The builders were impressed with the details and allowed them to provide accurate quotations. We would recommend the ADL team to anyone looking to undertake a project. Great level of communication, dedication and knowledge.



★★★★★ a year ago

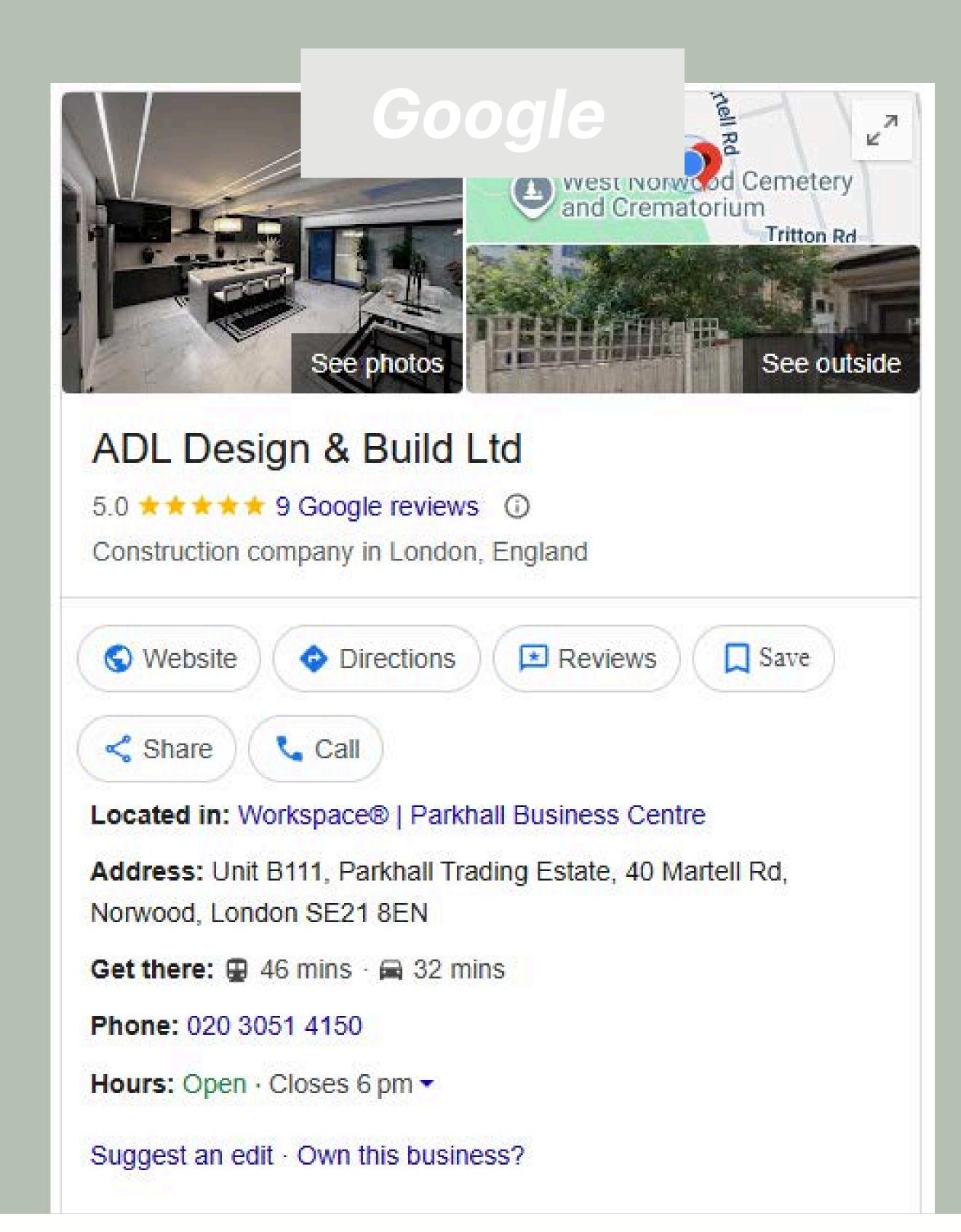
We have worked with ADL Design & Build on multiple occasions and found their service to the highest standard. Very knowledgeable team in all aspects of planning, building works and construction. Further to assisting in our project, we have already recommended ADL Design & Build to other people comfortably, as they are a reliable and experienced local company.



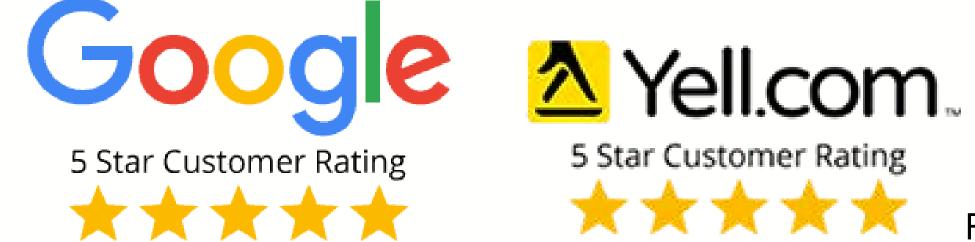
★★★★★ 4 years ago

We worked with the ADL team in numerous projects. I run a construction firm and always wanted to enter the property development market. ADL helped us from finding sites, to appraising, make offers and move forward. I definitely can recommend them as the best partners for anyone in the property development environment!

Anton Bitri - Director of "Naila Renovations Ltd"

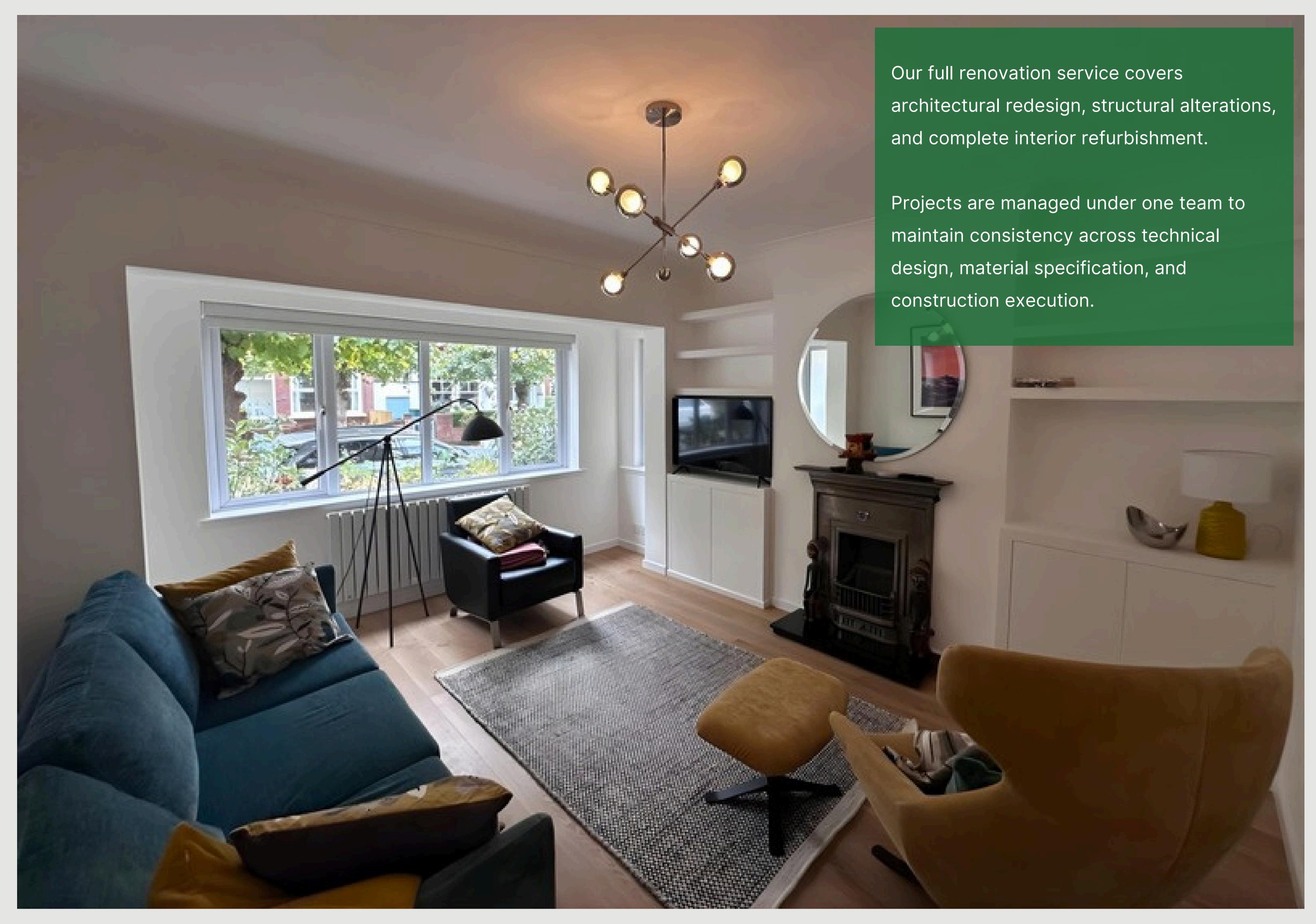




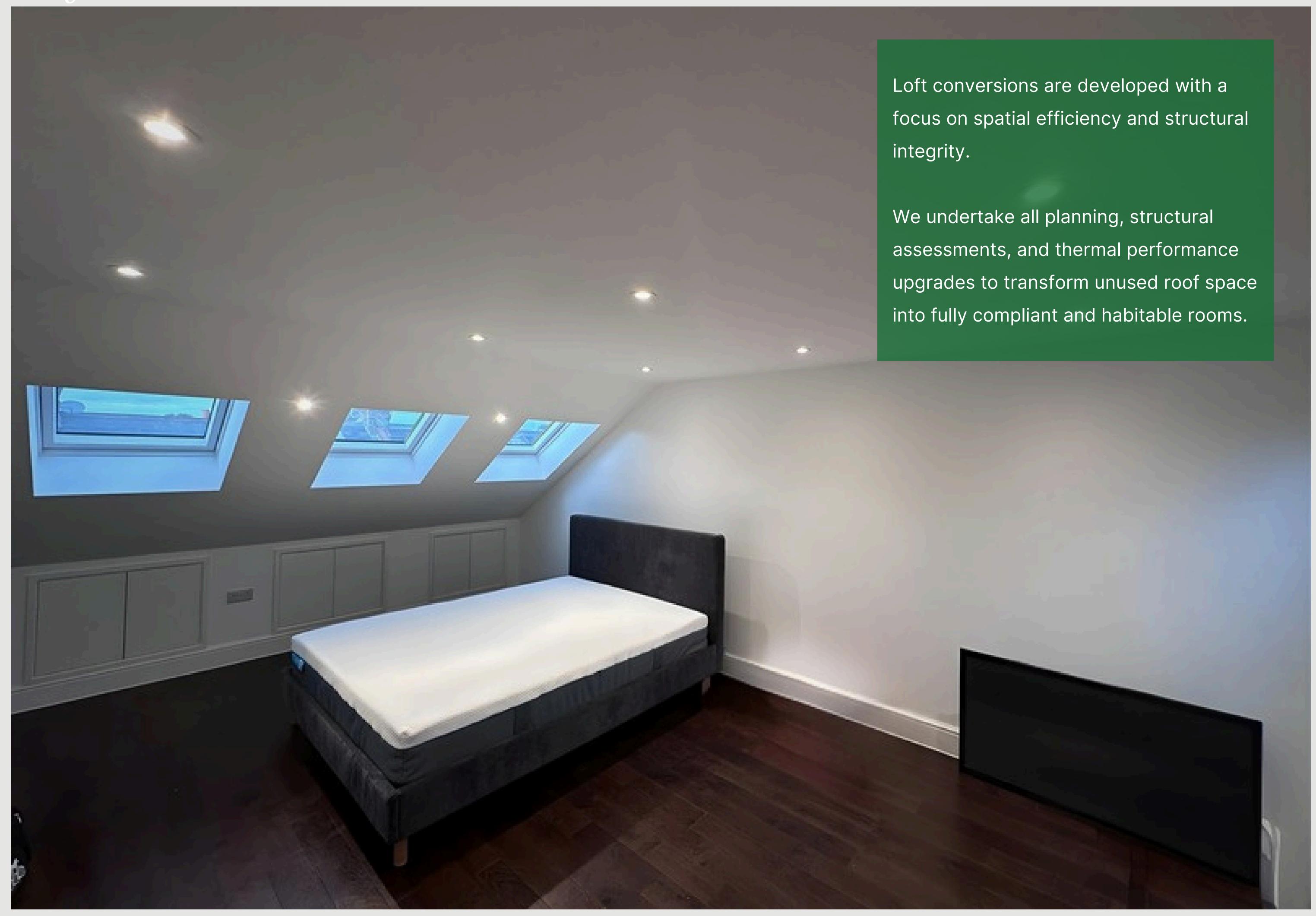


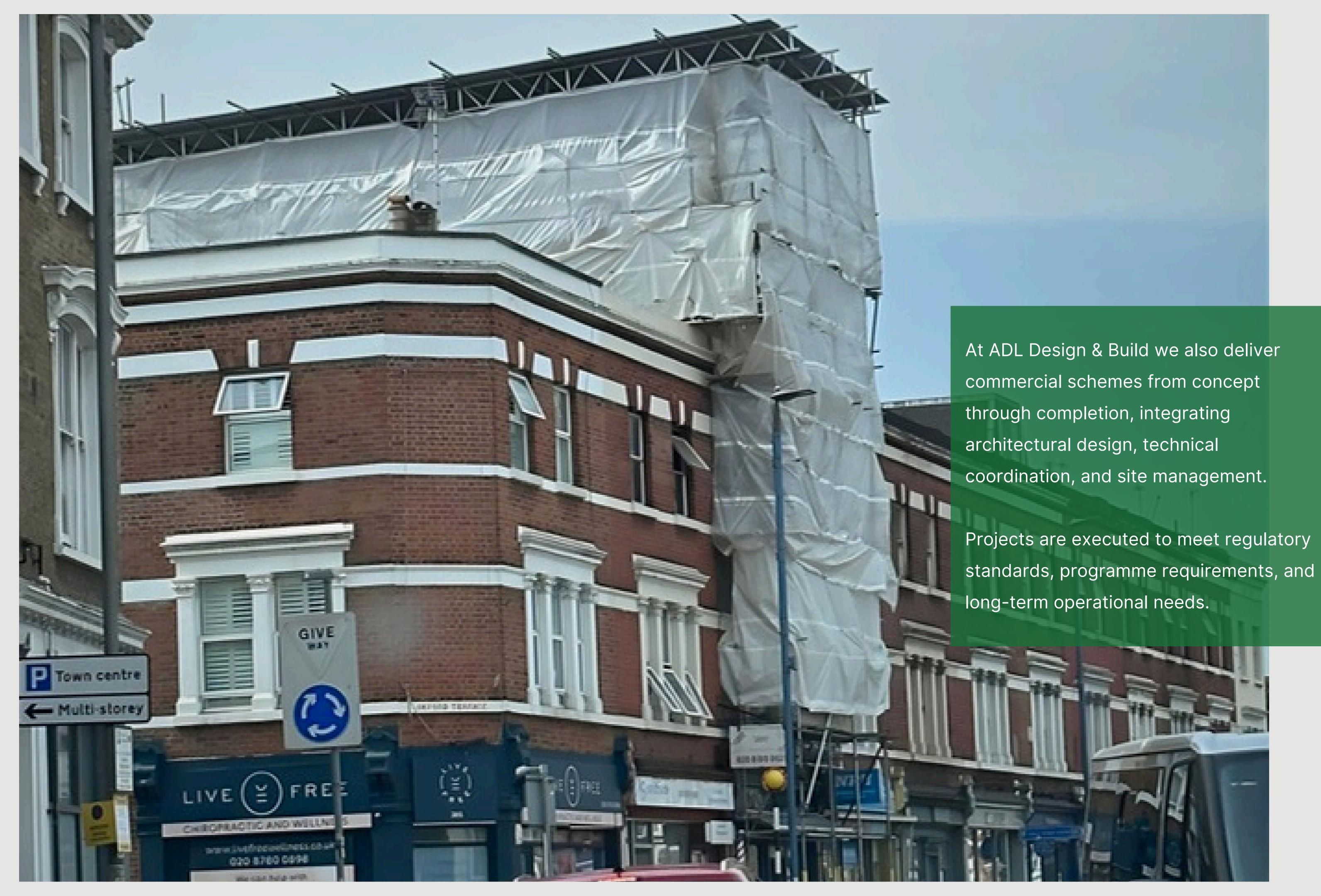
Home EXTENSIONS





Loft CONVERSIONS







The Design & Build Process - Start to End

1 CONSULTING SERVICE

The consulting phase
begins with an initial
briefing call to clarify
project details and
objectives, followed by a
technical consultation with
our Managing Director to
discuss feasibility,
regulations, and the most
appropriate route forward.

A detailed site visit is then arranged, where our team assesses the property, reviews existing conditions, and gathers the information needed to inform the design.

These discussions allow us to define the project's scope, feasibility, and direction, resulting in a clear roadmap that guides the design and build process that follows.



2 ARCHITECTURAL SERVICE

Our Architectural Service develops initial ideas into accurate, practical, and visually refined designs.

After the consulting phase, we carry out a detailed measured survey to record the property's dimensions and existing conditions, forming the basis for precise drawings.

Throughout the design process, our architects refine layout options, prepare multiple design iterations, and provide the technical guidance needed to progress the scheme.

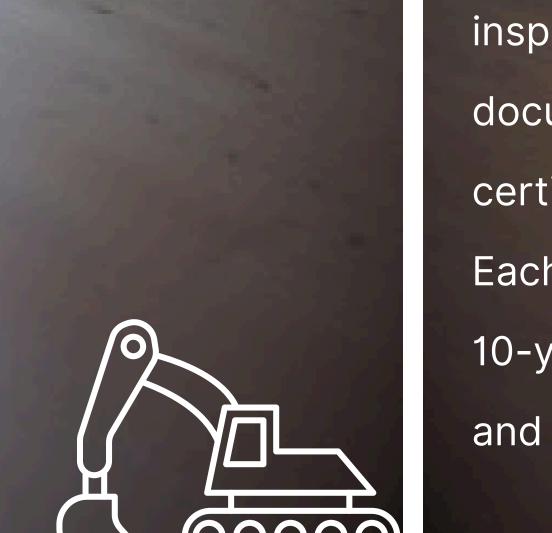
We produce planning submissions, 3D visualisations, and building regulation drawings that meet all required standards.

By coordinating with structural engineers, party wall surveyors, and building control, we deliver a complete architectural package that connects design intent with construction requirements.



The construction phase is where design is translated into a built reality. Once planning and preparation are complete, our inhouse team delivers the project on site, managing everything from setup and scheduling to procurement and workmanship with precision.

Through structured project management, transparent valuations, and consistent communication, we maintain programme, uphold quality standards, and keep clients fully informed. The outcome is a coordinated, high-quality build that reflects the vision established in the design stages.



4 HANDOVER & WARRANTY (POST CONSTRUCTION)

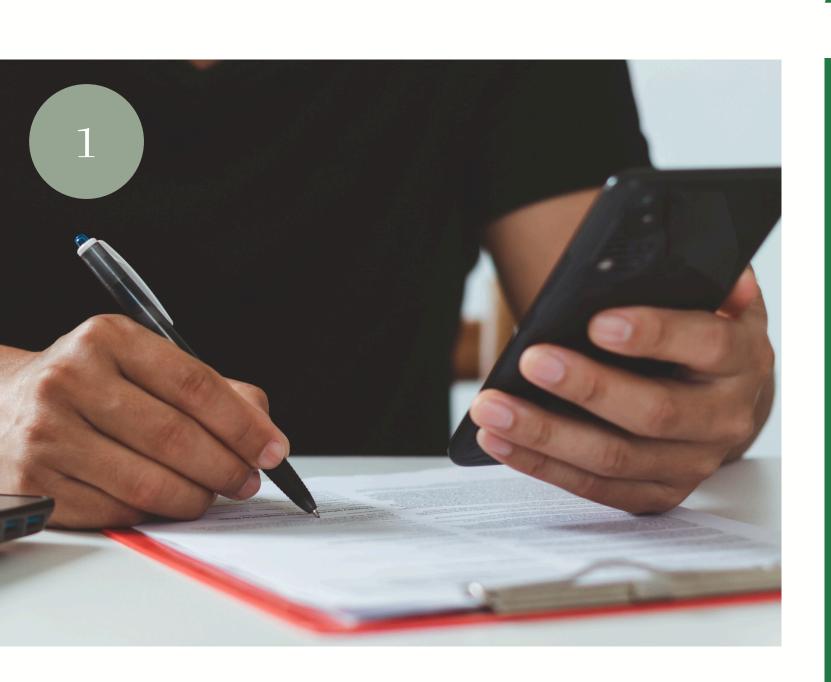
The final phase ensures
your project is delivered to
the highest standard. Once
construction is complete,
our team conducts a full
inspection and prepares all
documentation, including
certificates and warranties.
Each project is backed by a
10-year structural warranty
and full insurance coverage,

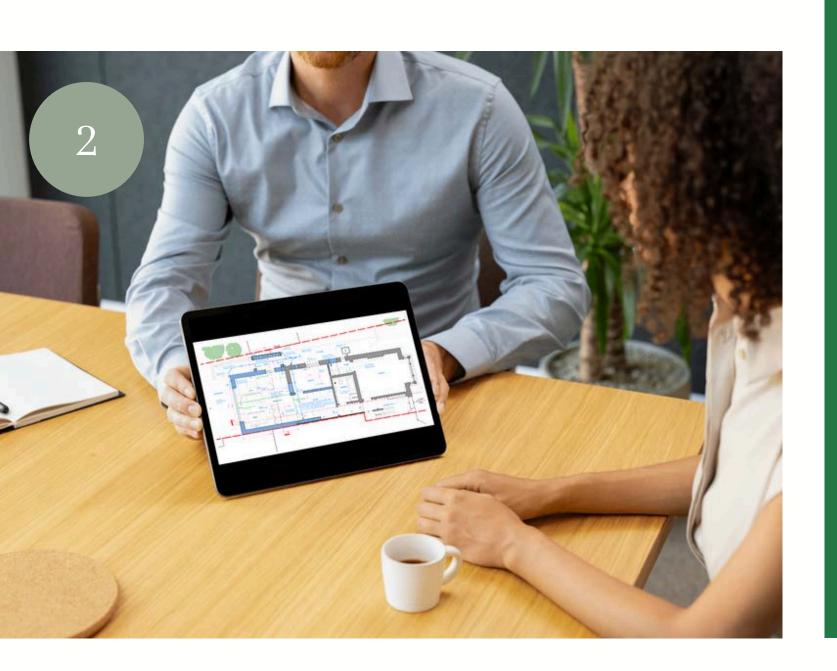
giving lasting confidence in the quality, safety, and craftsmanship of your new space.

The Design & Build Process - Start to End



Consulting Service





Preliminary Phone Call

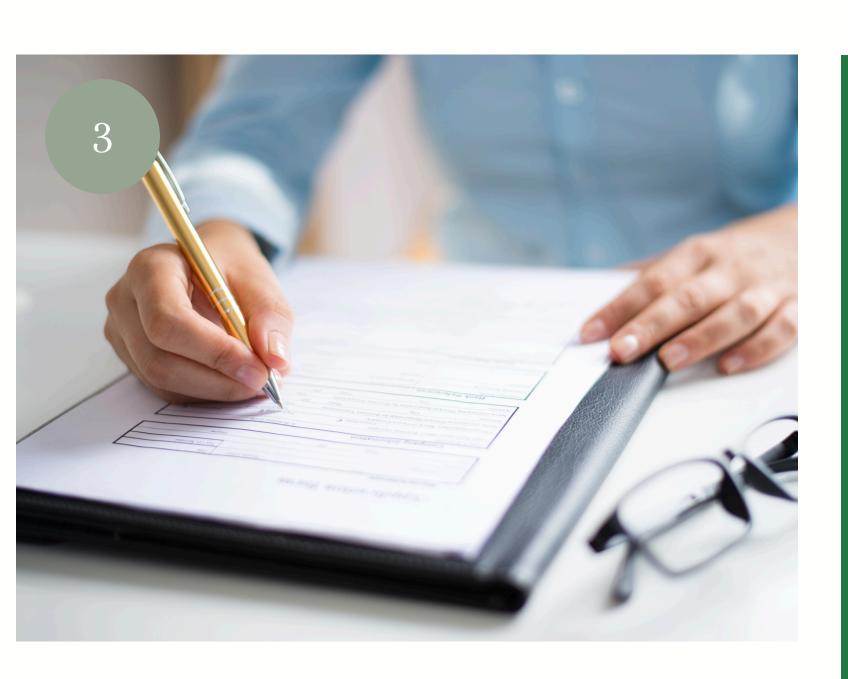
The consulting phase begins with an initial briefing call to clarify your project objectives, scope, and desired outcomes. This is followed by a technical consultation with our Managing Director, who provides guidance on feasibility, planning considerations, and next steps.

These discussions ensure that all essential information is gathered before proceeding to the on-site assessment.

Site Visit and Design Session

Our team conducts a brief site visit to review the existing property, access conditions, and structural layout. During the on-site design session, we discuss what is feasible under current planning and building regulations and explore design options suited to your lifestyle, budget, and long-term needs. The session also outlines the full roadmap from concept design through planning, technical stages, and construction delivery.





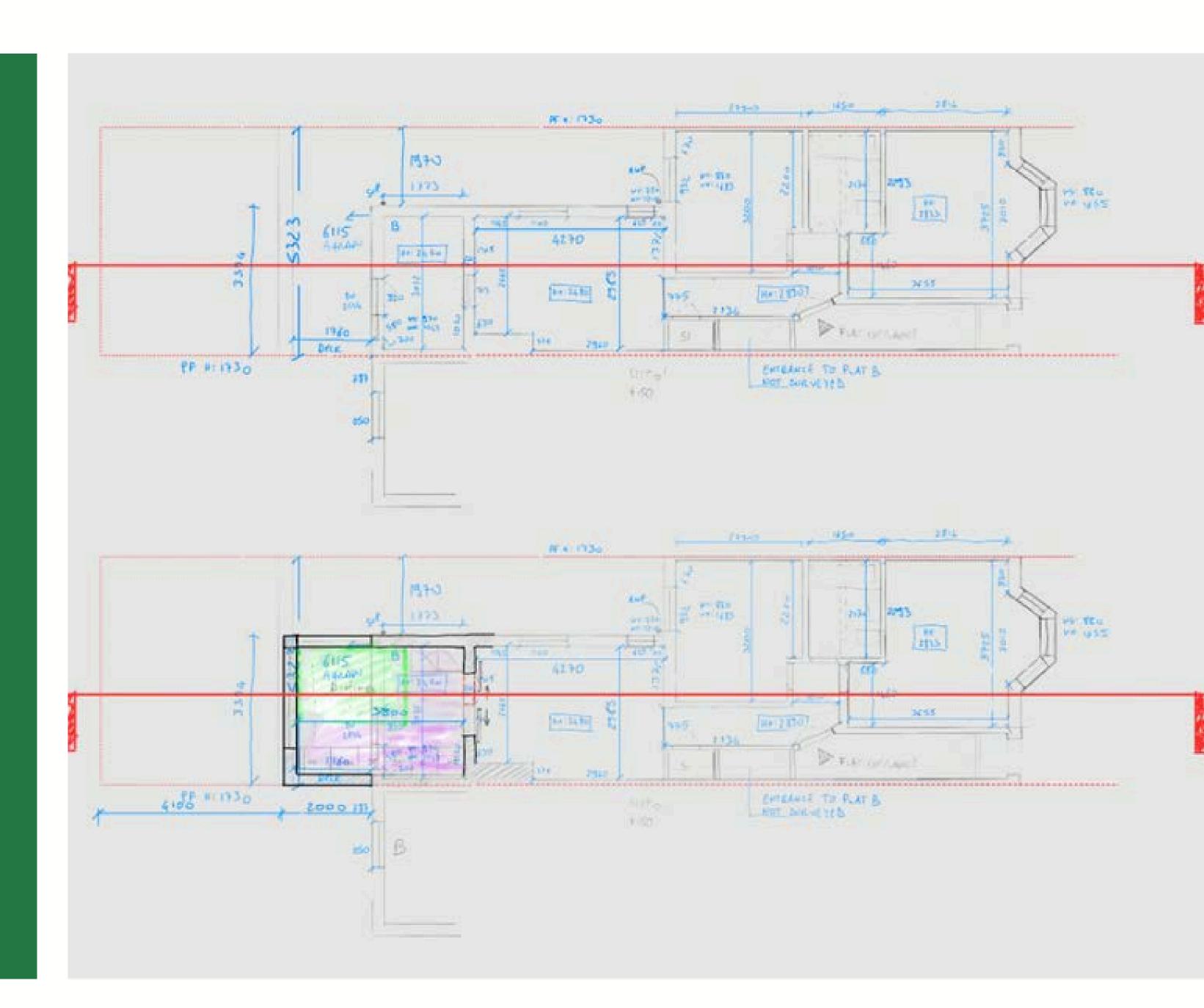


Follow up Architectural Reports

Following the visit, we prepare a summary report outlining the key design ideas discussed, including sketches or concept visuals where applicable. The report provides tailored planning and design advice specific to your property, along with indicative budget guidance and a step-by-step outline of the next stages.

Follow up Construction Ballpark Reports

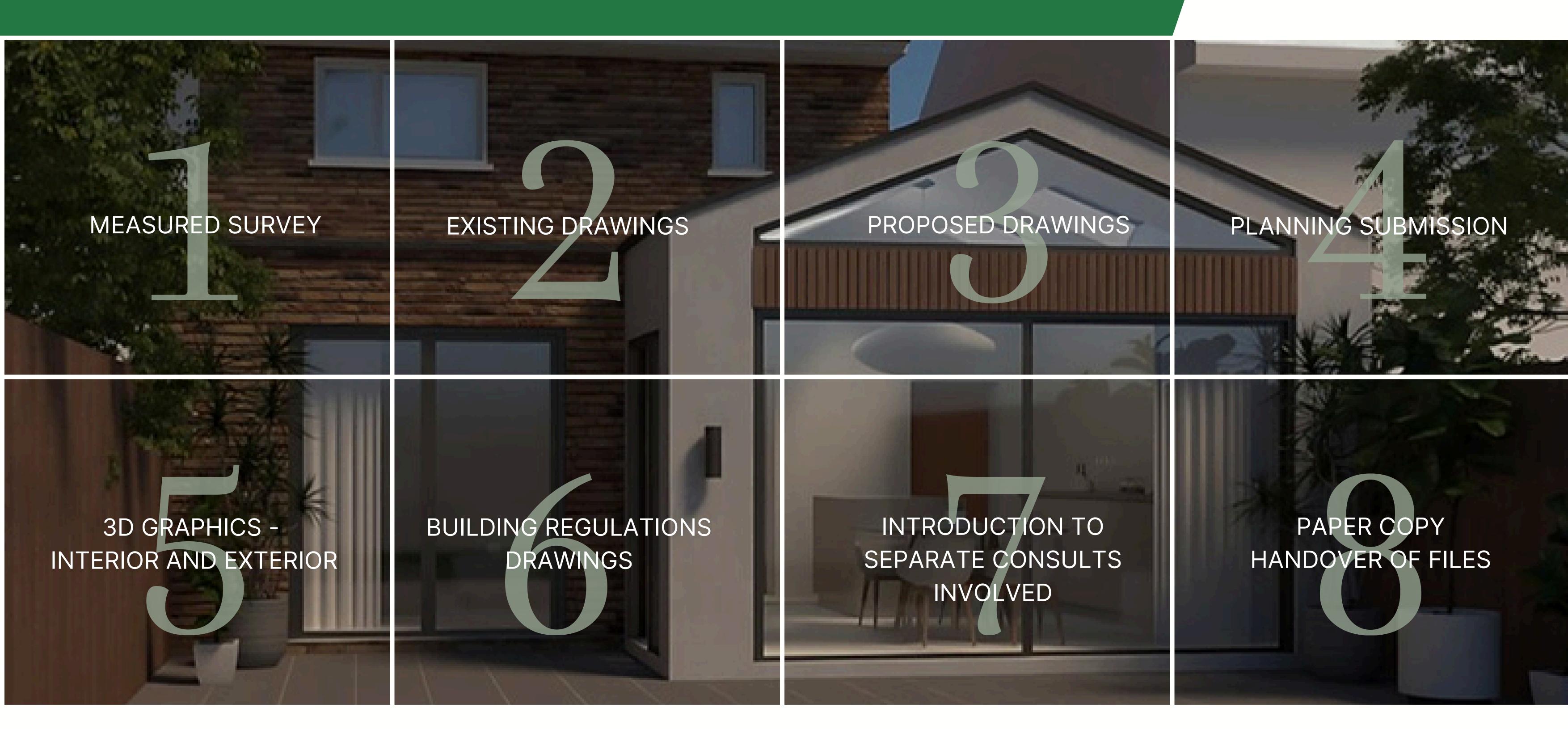
For clients seeking early-stage cost clarity, a construction ballpark report is provided. This includes feasibility feedback aligned with planning and building regulations, design direction in line with project objectives, and an initial cost estimate covering the full process from concept to completion.





Architectural Service







Measured Survey

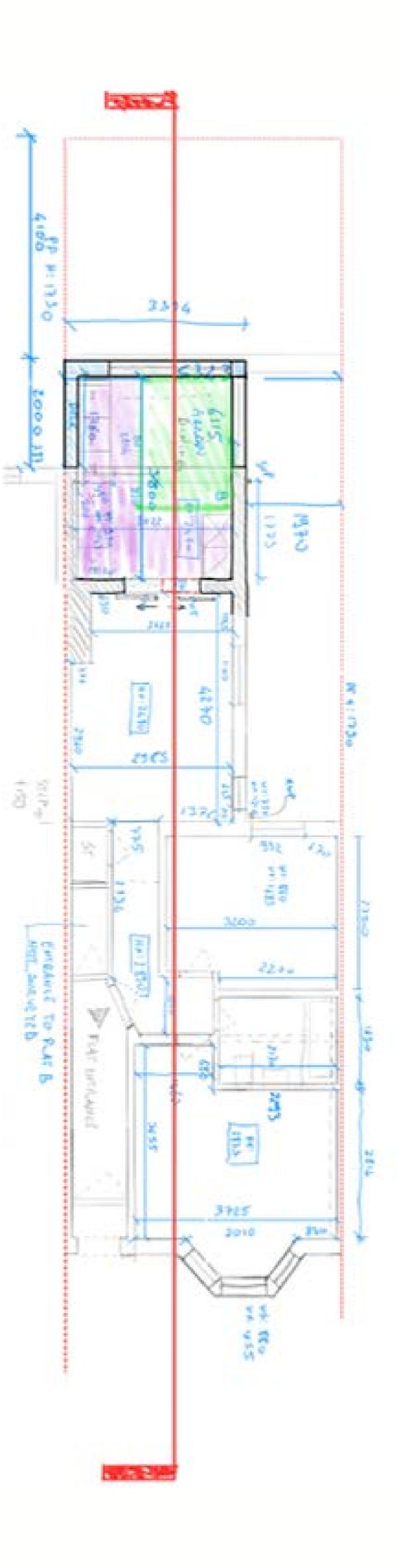
The process begins with a comprehensive measured survey, during which our team records precise dimensions, photographs, and key details of the property for detailed architectural quote.

This stage allows us to:

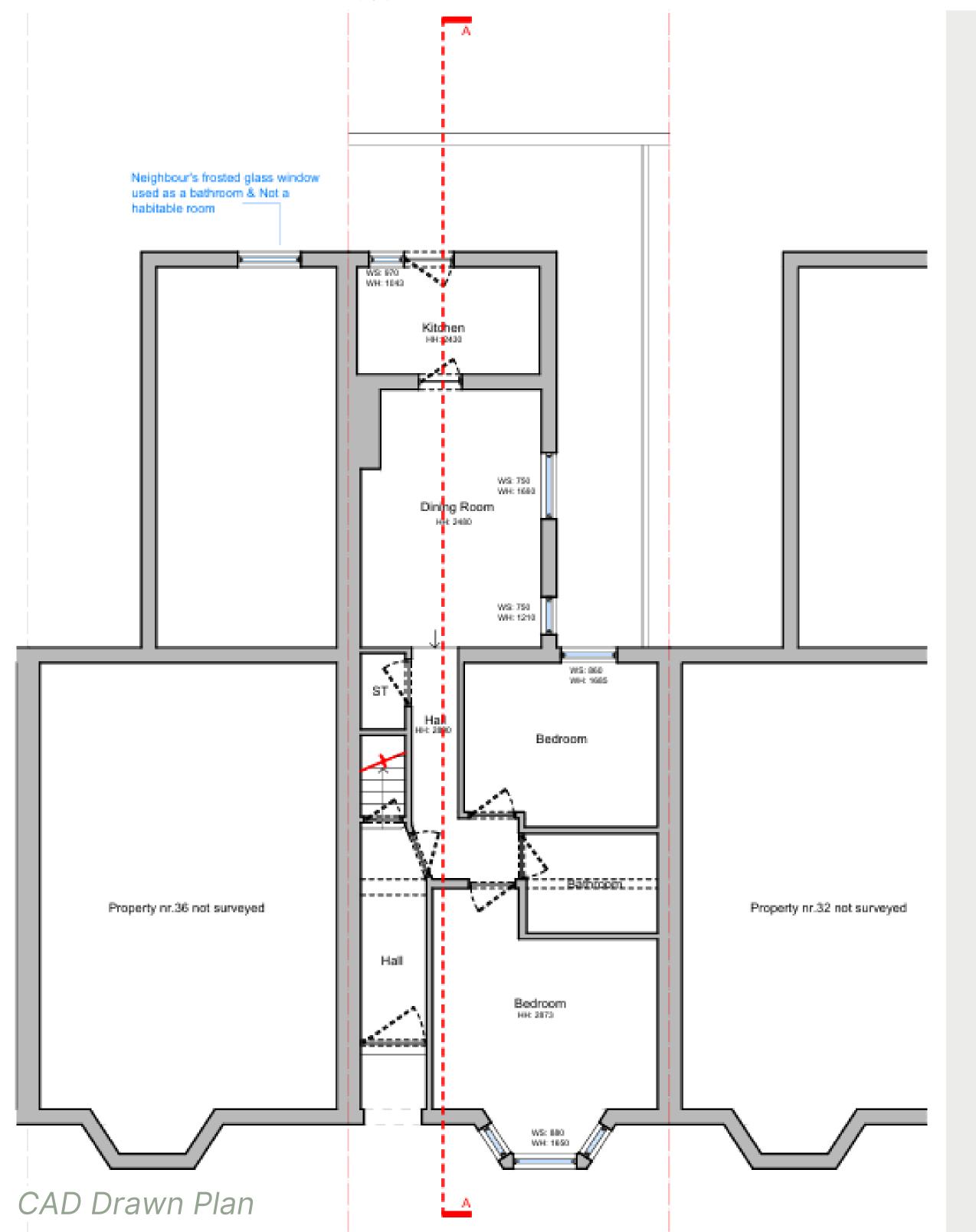
- Review access, structure, and layout options on site.
- Understand the existing layout of the property, the existing services connections, electricals and the structural load bearing walls.
- Discuss your goals, budget, and timescale in detail.

During the meeting, there will be an opportunity to also refine the brief and the designers can start giving creative and practical inputs to the client.

Timeline: Surveys can typically be scheduled within 24-48 hours of appointment confirmation and can last up to 45minutes to an hour.







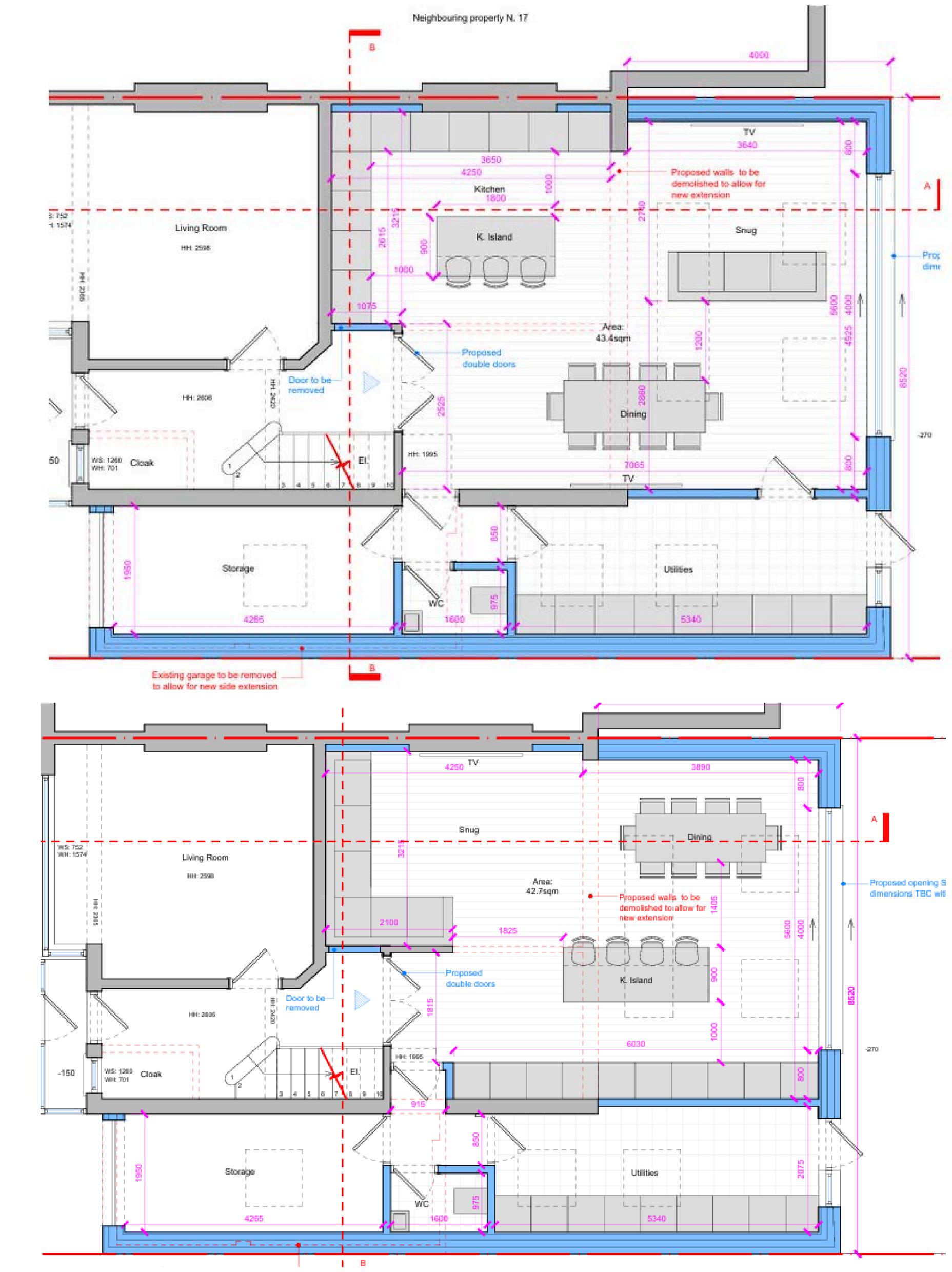
Existing Drawings

Once the measured survey is complete, we prepare detailed existing drawings that accurately represent the property's current condition.

These serve as the foundation for all future design work and give clients a clear, to-scale reference when exploring design ideas — particularly useful when previous plans or estate agent drawings are incomplete or inaccurate

Using the data collected from the survey, our design team develops proposed layout options that align with the client's goals, planning requirements, and budget. This stage is collaborative, with meetings conducted via Zoom, screen share, or in person to review and refine each proposal.

We typically present multiple design alternatives to identify the most practical and visually appealing solution.





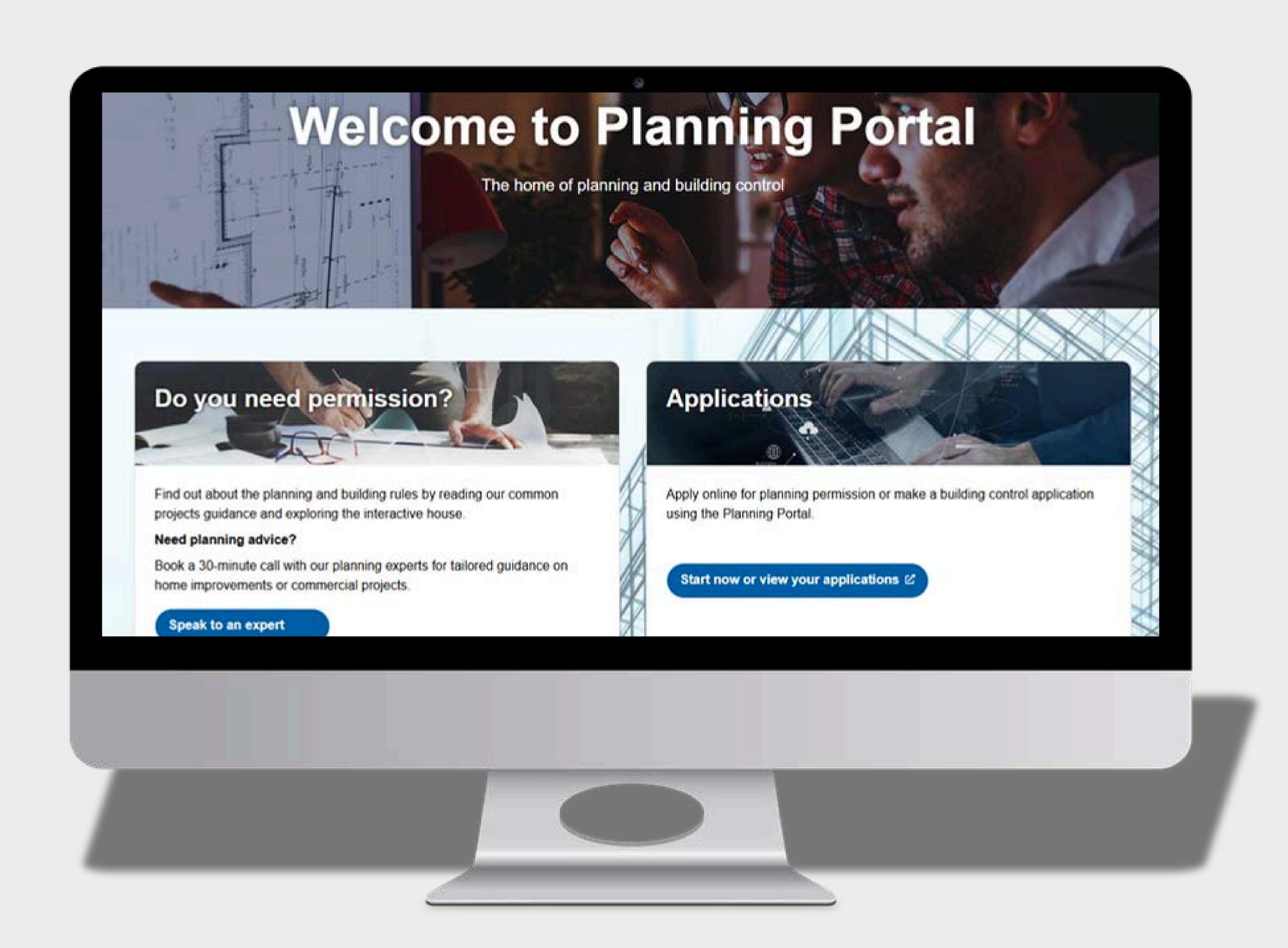
Planning Submission



Once all the documentation for planning is completed, including drawings and additional documents (should they be required), we will fill all the forms required and prepare the application in our client's behalf.

Throughout the review period, we maintain regular communication with planning officers and provide clients with updates at each stage.

Timeline: Planning decisions typically take approximately 8-10 weeks







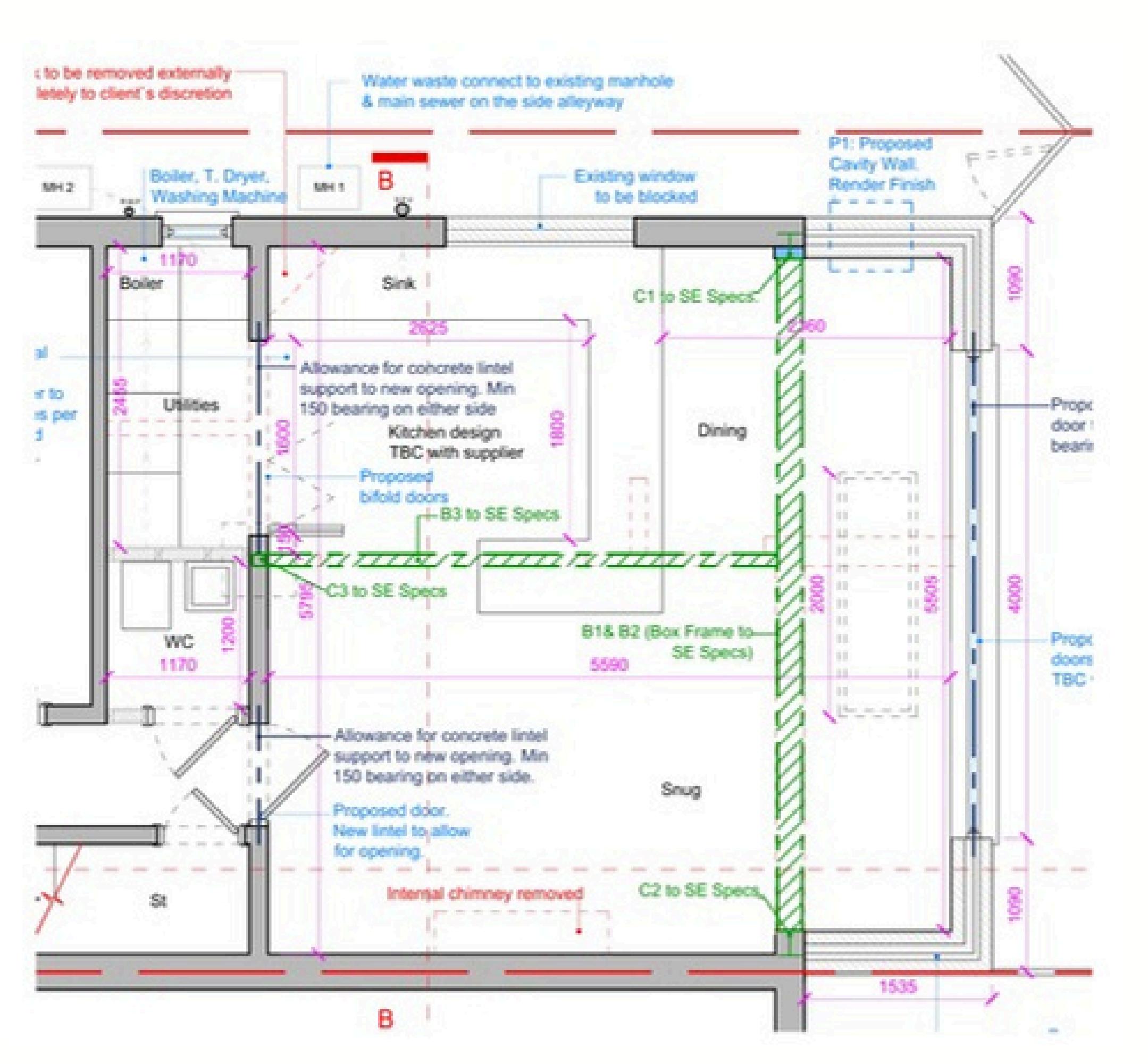


To help clients visualise the project, we create high-quality 3D graphics that illustrate both exterior and interior spaces.

Our interior packages can also include:

- Electrical and plumbing layout,
- Finishes materials (flooring etc.),
- Feature bespoke cabinetry & wardrobes,
- Kitchen design in conjunction with the manufacturers,
- Glazing design in conjunction with the manufacturers.
- Construction details and drawings

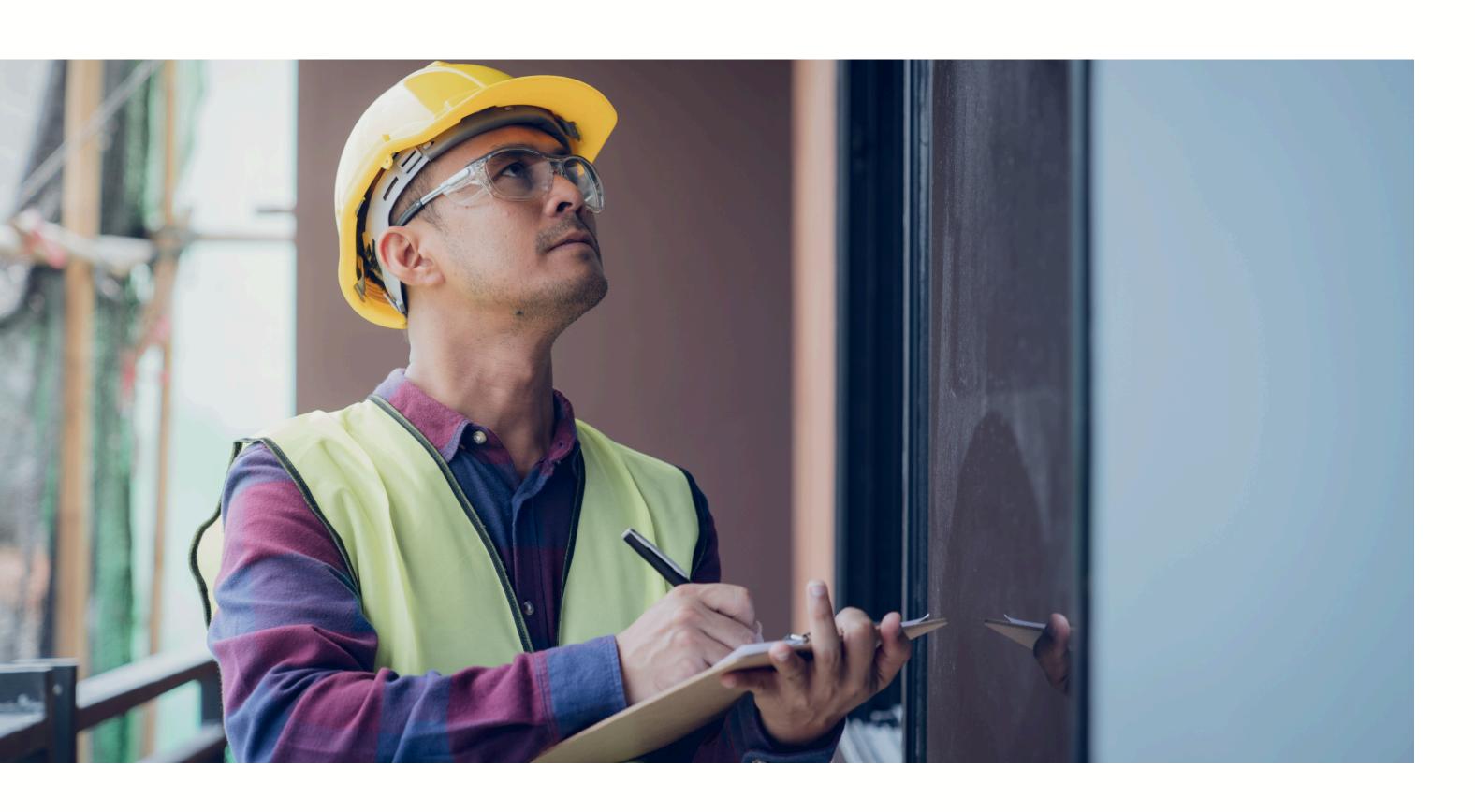
Ensuring every design element is cohesive and build-ready.



Following planning approval, we produce a comprehensive set of building regulation drawings that detail insulation, floor build-ups, and structural information. Matters not relevant to building control will not be illustrated in the set.

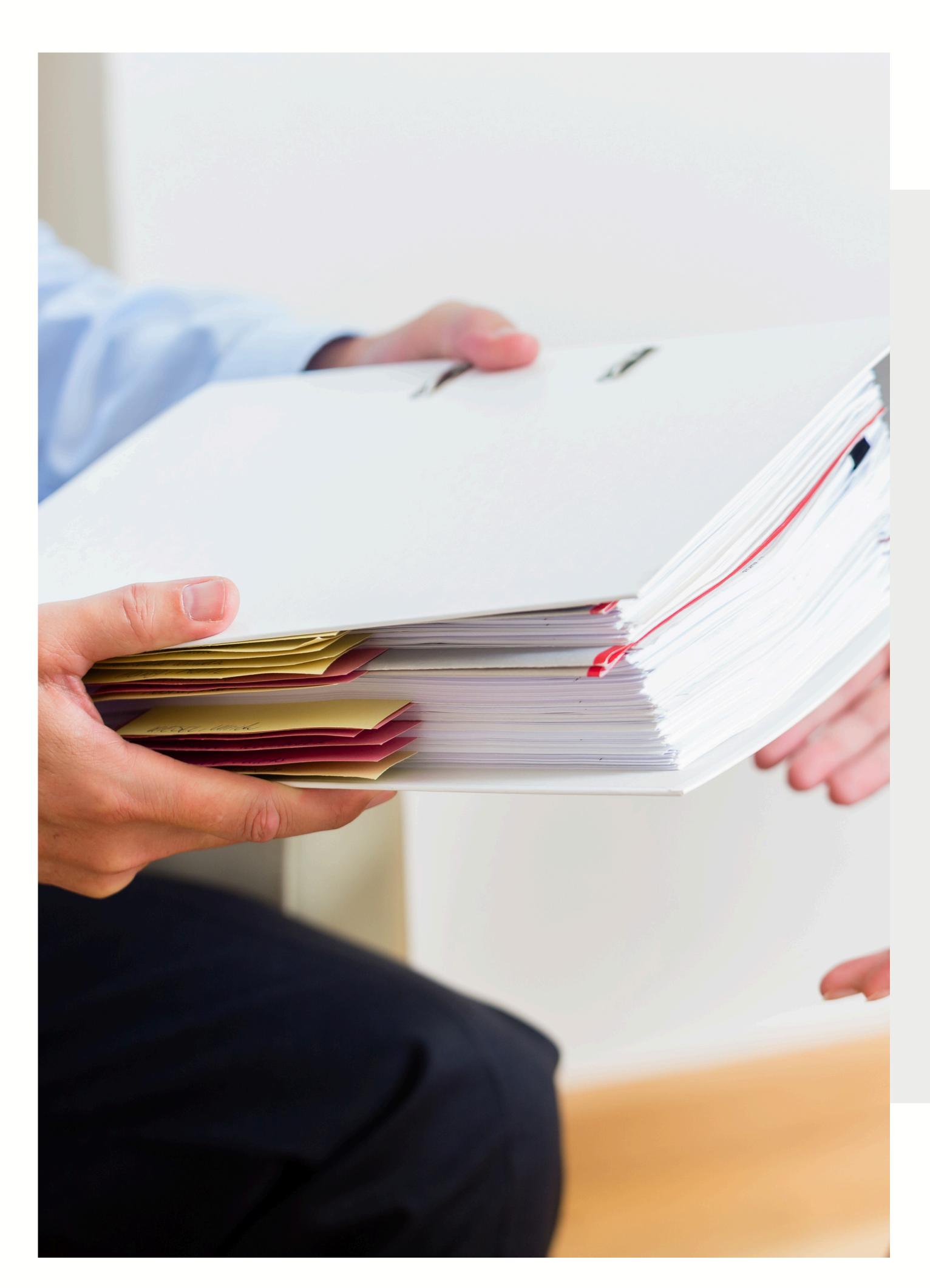
These technical drawings ensure compliance with building control standards and facilitate smooth approval from building control inspectors before construction begins.

Introduction to separate consultants involved



To streamline the process, we connect clients with the key consultants involved in the architectural stage, ensuring seamless coordination across all disciplines and offering the flexibility to select their preferred contractor for the works.

- Structural Engineers Prepare the technical details and specifications of the beams and drainage to allow other comparable construction companies as well as ADL Design & Build Ltd to finalise the tenders.
- Party wall surveyors Assess whether a party wall award is required based on proposed drawings.
- Building Control Surveyors Oversee compliance inspections; we can recommend trusted inspectors or work with the client's preferred choice.



Paper copy handover of files

At this phase, the client would have clarity on which contractor is selected to carry out the works. In this case should the client wish to proceed with ADL Design & Build, the stage 2 drawings are free of charge and transition directly into the build package, as well as project management and site visits, ensuring a smooth continuation from design through to delivery.

However, if the client wishes to proceed with another contractor, ADL Design & Build would organise for a handover of the drawings composed of two site visits minimum: x1 Pre-start of the build, x1 at a key stage of the build (usually at the structural alterations phase).

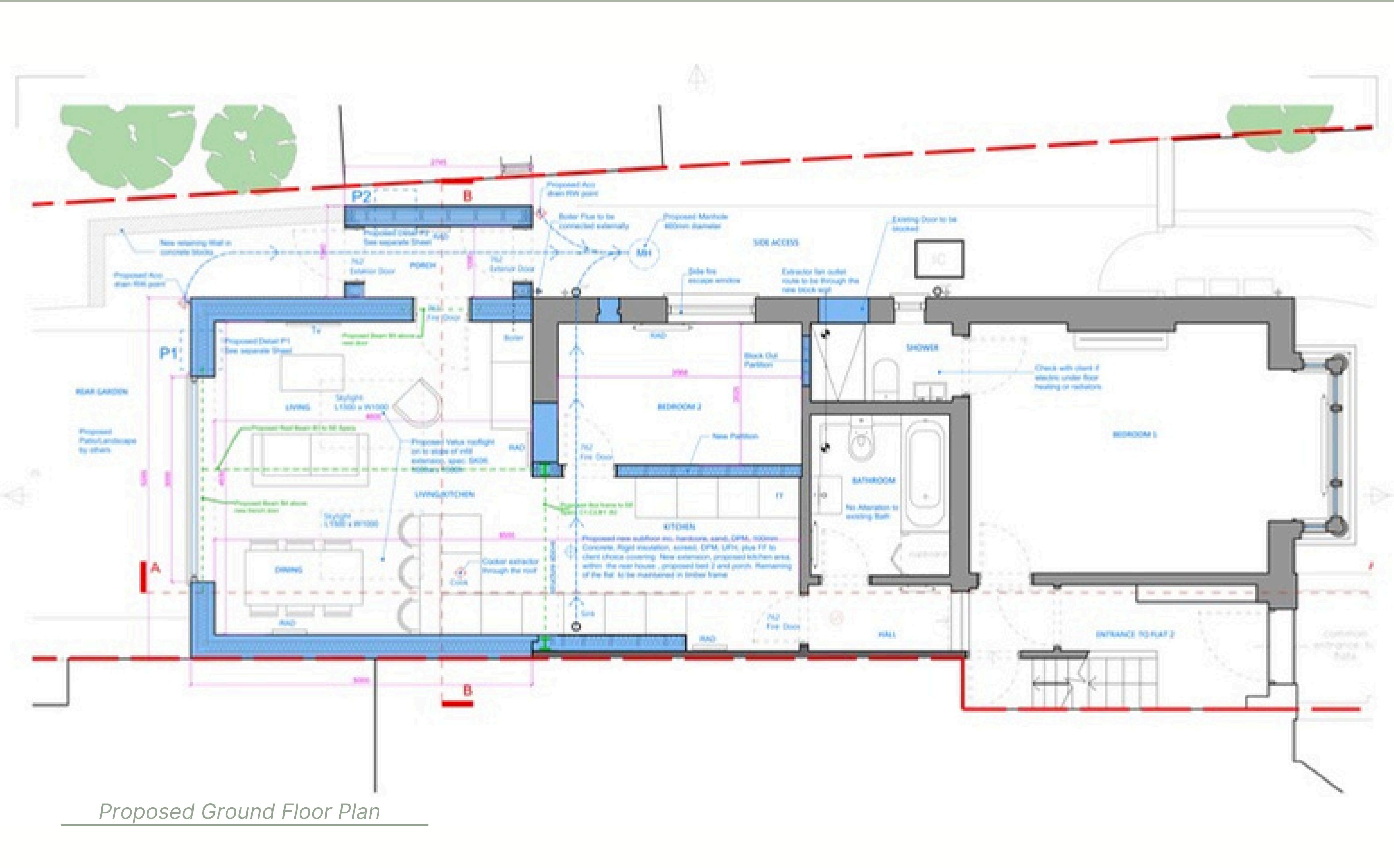
Examples of Architectural Drawings



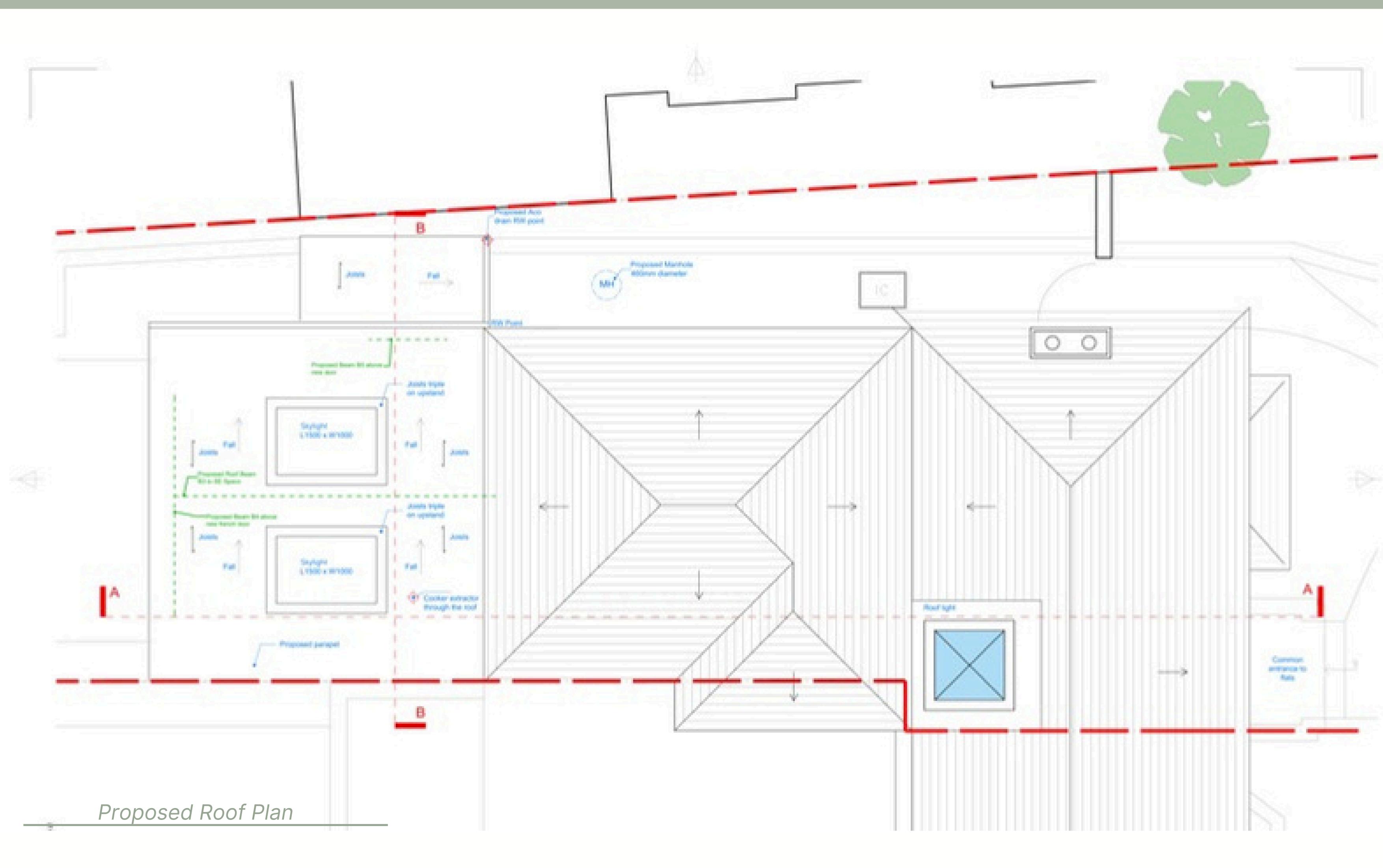




41, Flat 2, Overhill Road



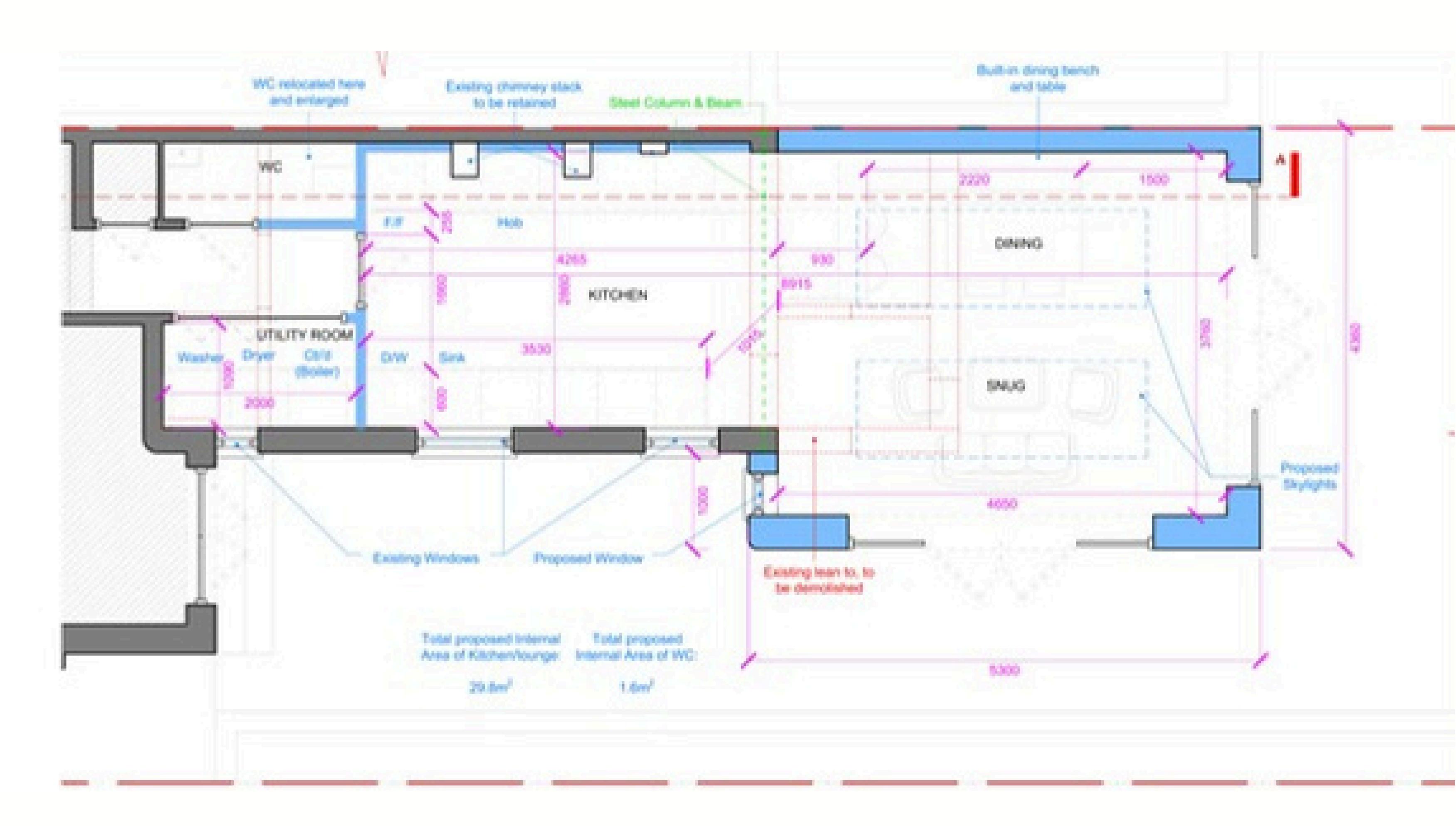
41, Flat 2, Overhill Road



41, Flat 2, Overhill Road



117 Leigham Vale



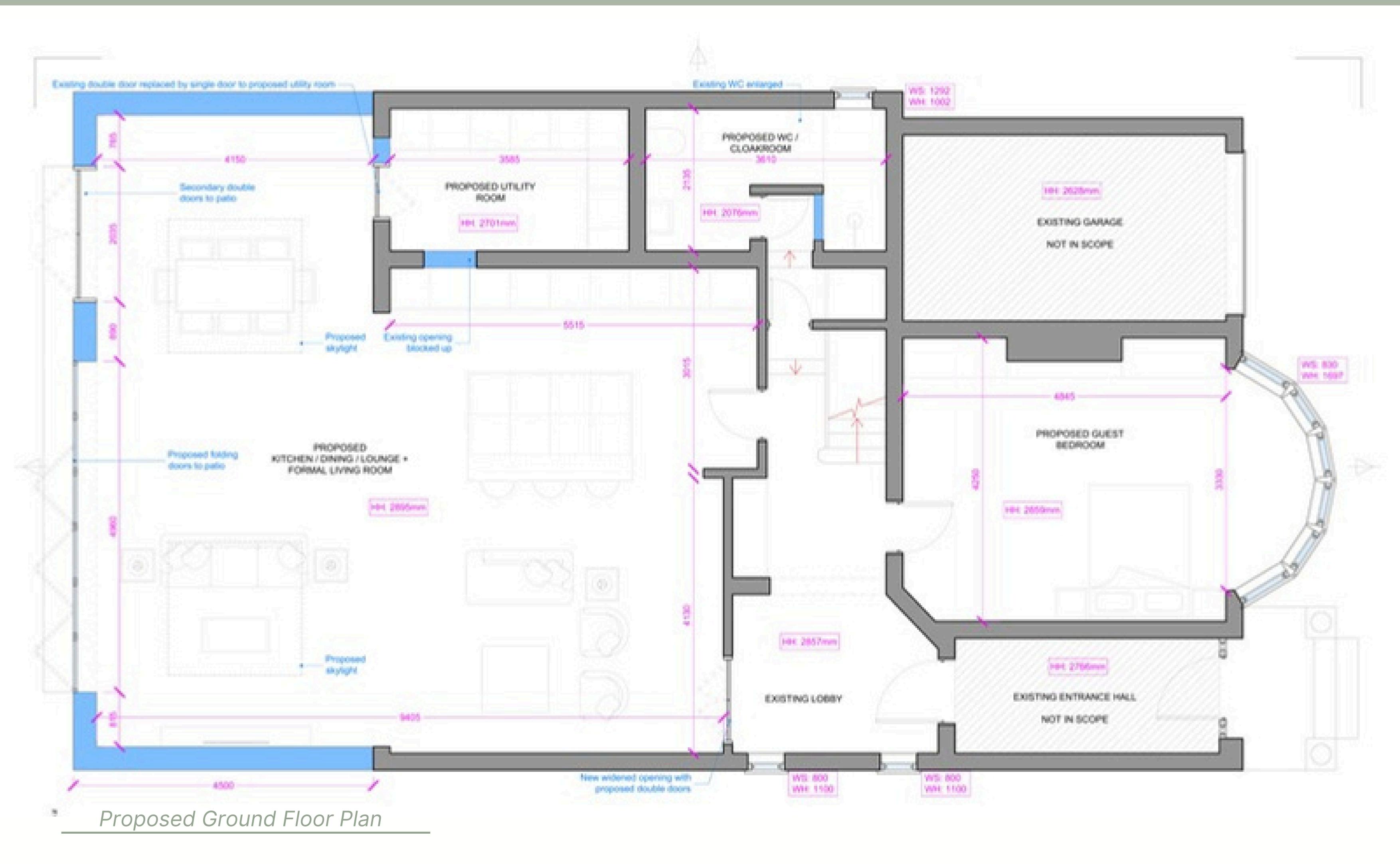
Proposed Ground Floor Plan

117 Leigham Vale

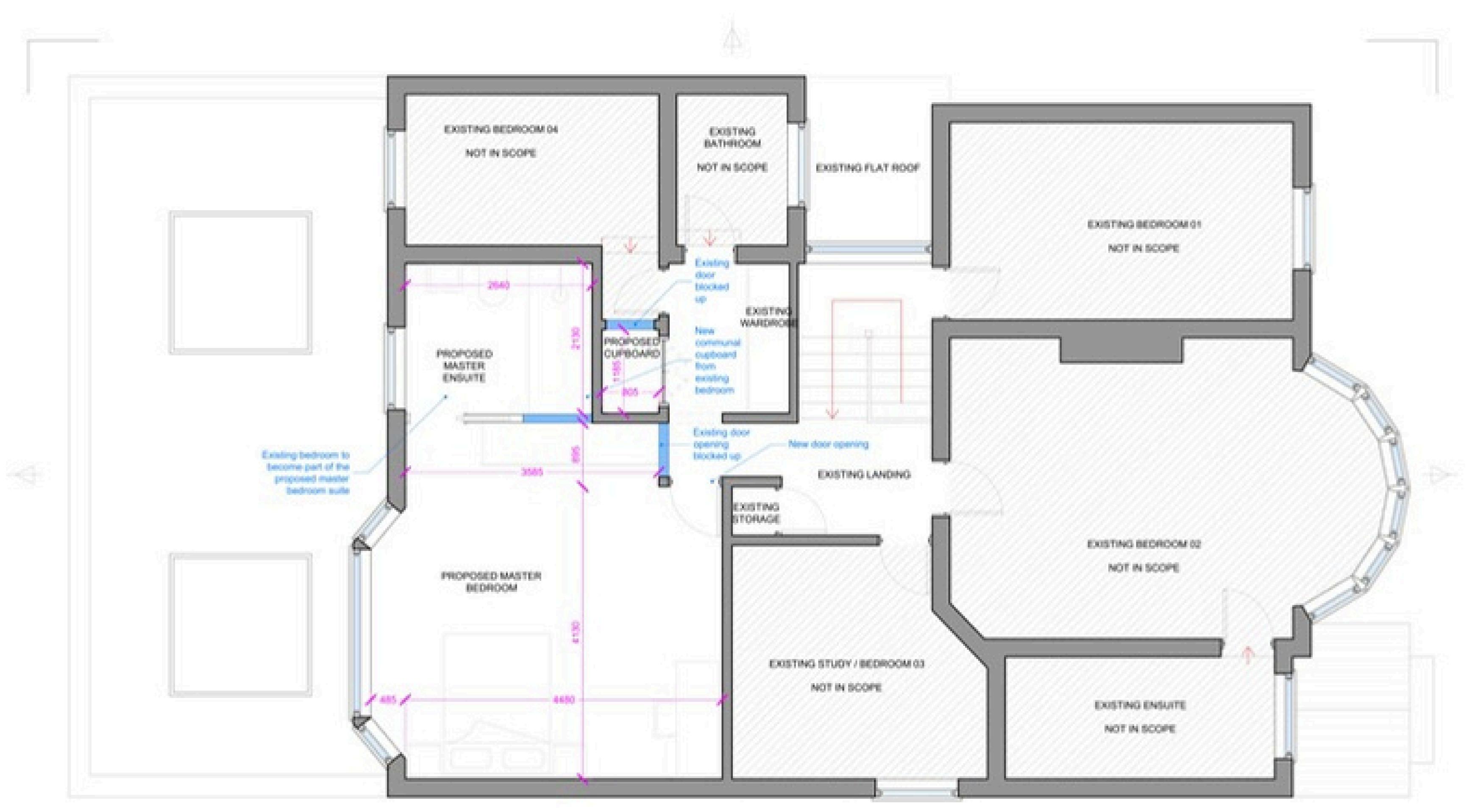


Proposed Elevation Plan

107 Queens Road

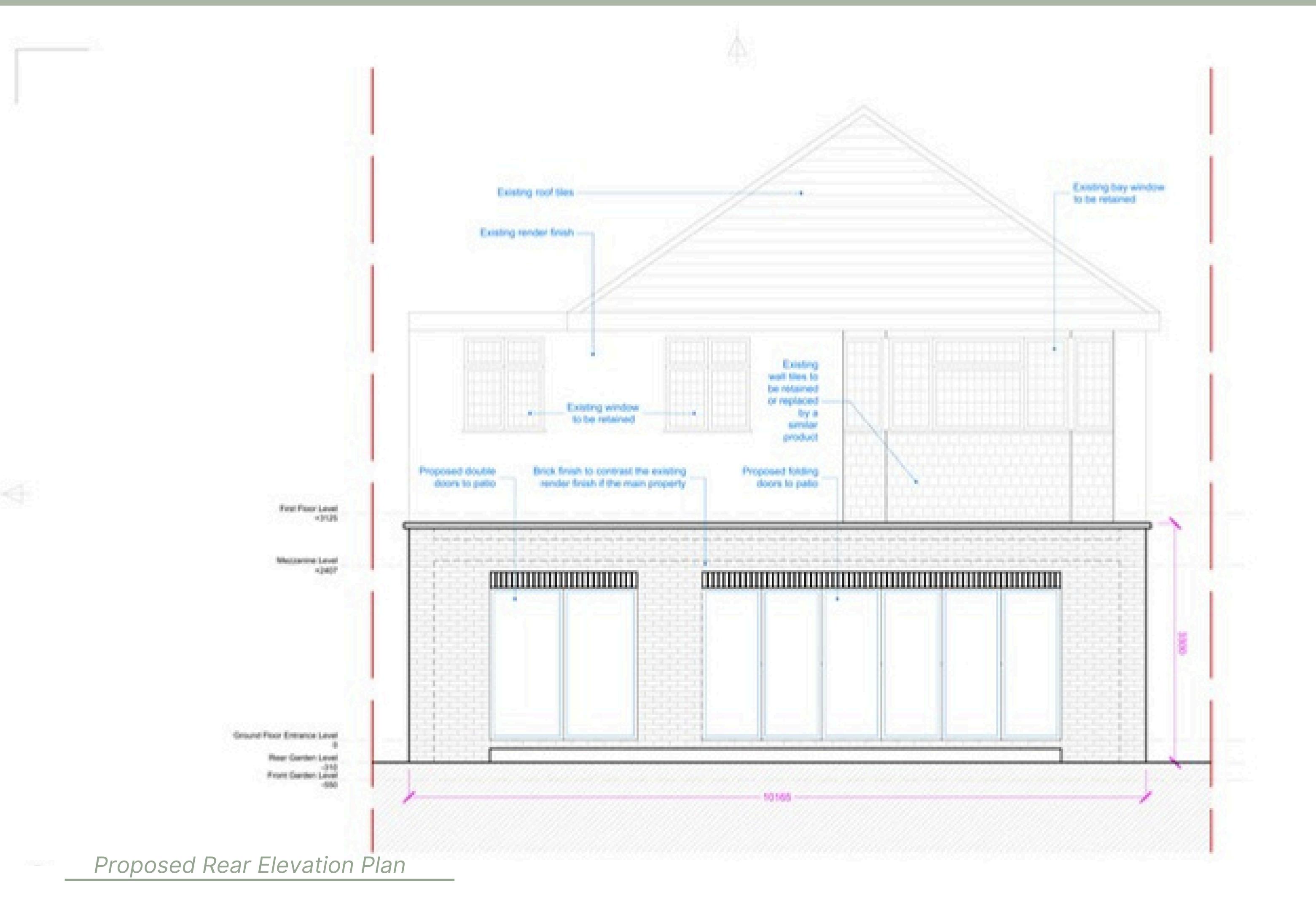


107 Queens Road



Proposed First Floor Plan

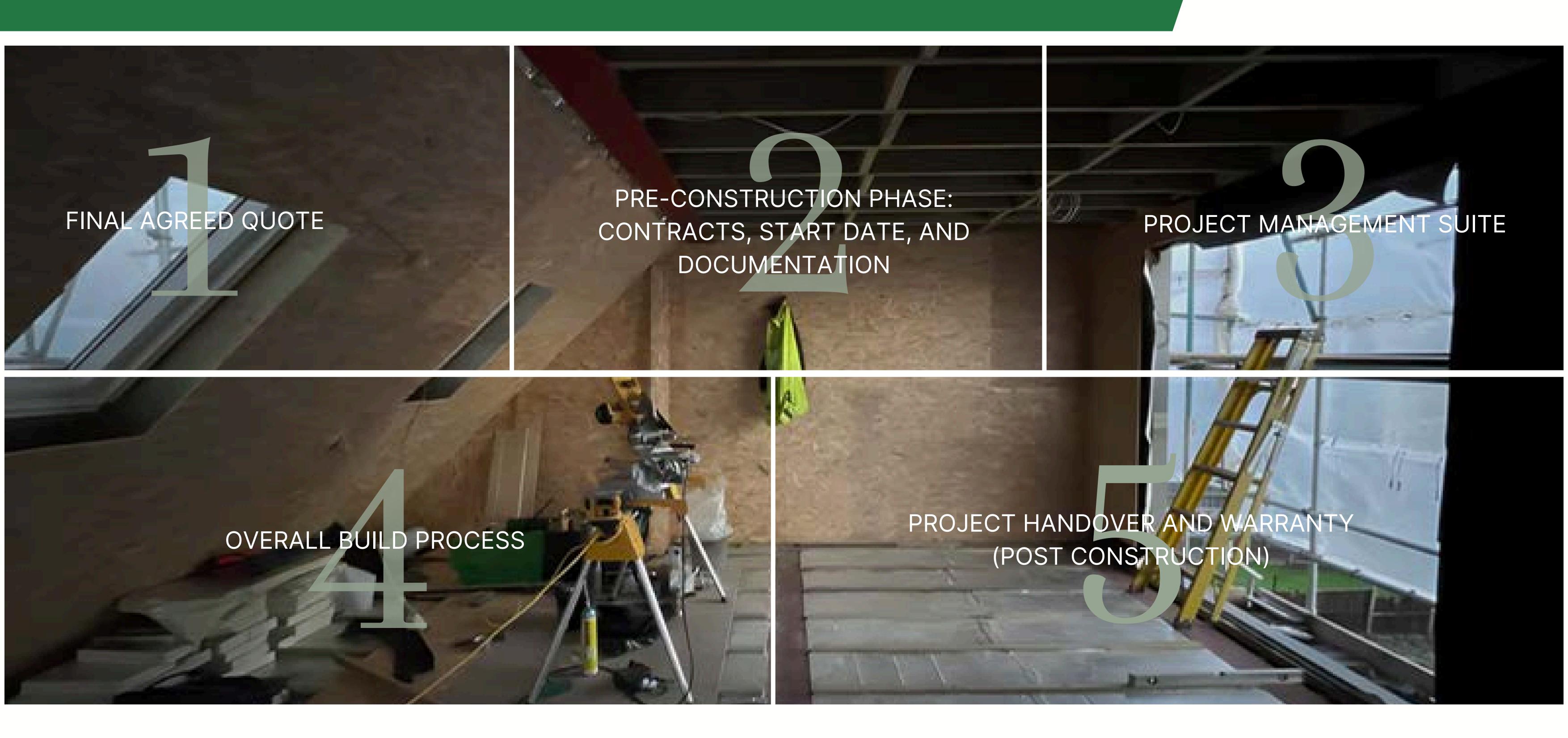
107 Queens Road





Construction Service







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Second Draft Quotation

Ground Soor rear extension, full refurbishment and Loft Conversion

		description of works	met fam	907 1000	Ŀ
		Semised scope of works			Ė
		Pre-Construction			H
	0.1	Building control technical drawings (client to pay for inspector fee directly to requeste recommended company)	Drawings		
		Note: Documentation above included within the main contract as per design \$ dust Outland, after appointing the company and heaving cleared the deposit (see notes at the and of the lender doc).			İ
,	2010	Profiles			Ħ
	1.1	Site set-up and preparation, including relevant hourding, rental of relevant tools, overall preparation to construction	Laterar		
	12	Wultible back OW alternatives	Material	11	H
	13	Plantial of Chemical tolled (1 exchange, 6 more resolted to be proved aspeciated).	Weens	weeks	Ħ
		Rembel of tell boys / bendetends	Motorial	-	Ħ
		Site former (included in costs)	Librar		I
7		Demolitions & Enabling Works	1000000000		Н
7	21	brolists existing water, electric and gas supply to the areas affected by the works.	Labour	15	
	2.2	Complete strip out of existing property to include removal of existing kilchen, stripping out existing RPC, removal of finish flooring and skirting, removal of existing existing doors and architecture, caltimets to bedrooms and strip out of existing between at first floor, strip out of existing plastertosard throughout.	Lation	-2	
	23	Compelition of existing internal and external walls to alice for new layout	Littor	100	H
	2.4	Compilition and new opening to side wall to allow for new Utility and VIIC wondows at ground level	Lettor	662	
	2.5	Chemistrian of existing chimney timest in dining area, kumps area, Front and reor bedrooms at first Roor	Latitour	W	Π
	2.6	Composition of timber subfloor to allow for new hardcore concrete throughout full existing ground floor level, including front tourige, haltspeck, existing new lounge and existing lotter.	California	127	
	27	Controllion of existing first floor owling to allow for new loft subfloor	Littour	+2	Ħ
		MOTES: Final areas to be confirmed at V2 quote.			

40 | Final Agreed Quote

Final Agreed Quote

Our tendering process is tailored to each project and refined through a series of detailed quotations and can be adjusted based on client specifications, for example if the client is looking to add or remove specific lines of the quote, explore options like pricing of underfloor heating vs tradition al radiators etc.

Once the quotation and specifications are agreed, we proceed to the contract stage, with a detailed breakdown outlined in the next steps.

Pre-Construction Phase: Contracts, Start Date, and Documentation

After the final quote is approved, we issue the formal contract and establish a start date.

During this pre-construction phase, all required documents and compliance checks are completed to ensure the project is ready to progress smoothly into on-site work.



Project Management Suite

All project documentation is securely stored and shared through our project management suite, giving clients easy access to plans, reports, and progress updates at any stage of the build.

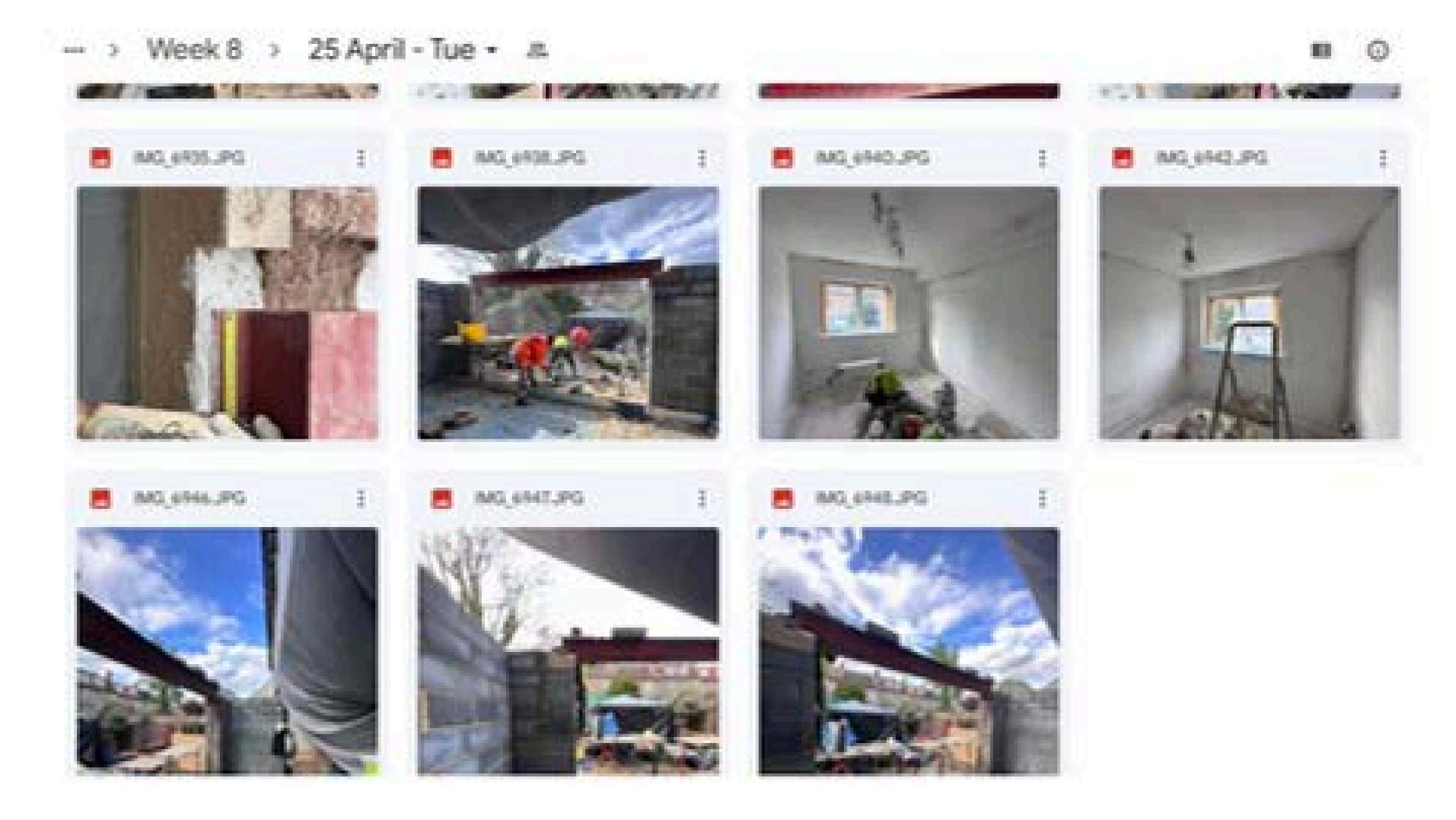
This centralised system ensures transparency, organisation, and accountability throughout the construction process.

Shared Google Folder

To complement our management suite, each client is provided with a shared Google Drive folder containing key documents, drawings, approvals, and correspondence. This shared space keeps all project information organised and readily available for both client and team reference.

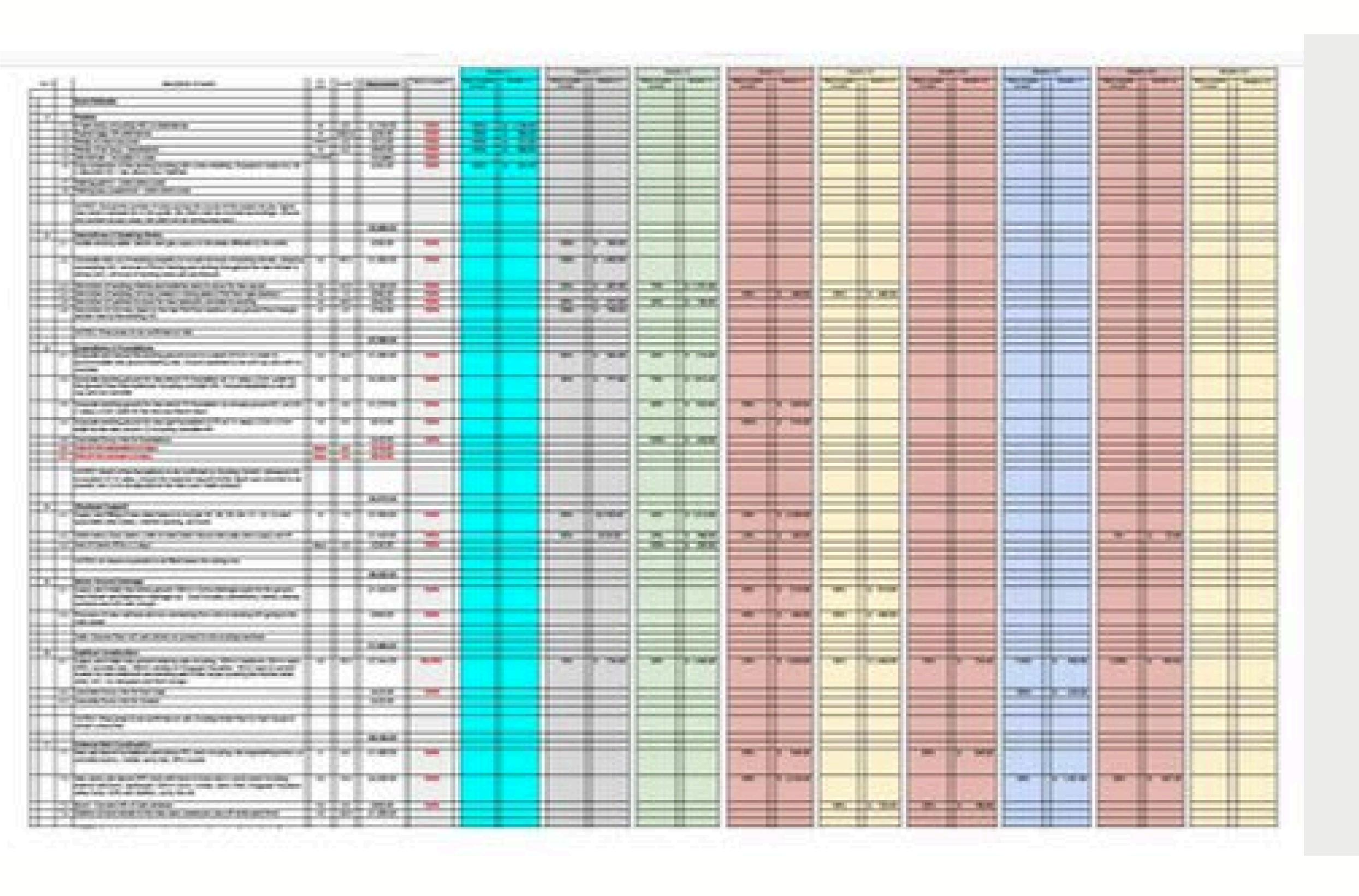
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4. Structural Engineering
1. Site Images
                               2. Planning Pennission L... 1
                                                               3. Building Control Tech...
                                                               T. Kitchen Design
                                                                                               8. Main Contract Scope ...
5. OCTV Drainage Survey
                               6. Porty Wall
                                                                                               12. Client supply items
9. Payments Drawdown ...
                                                               III. Invoices
                               10. Valuations
                               54. Landscaping
13. Additional to Scope o...
                                                               15. Electrics
                                                                                               16. Budgeting Spreadsh...
```

Throughout the construction phase, our team uploads regular site photographs to the shared drive, providing clients with visual progress updates and a clear record of the build as it develops ensuring complete visibility, even when clients cannot visit the site in person.





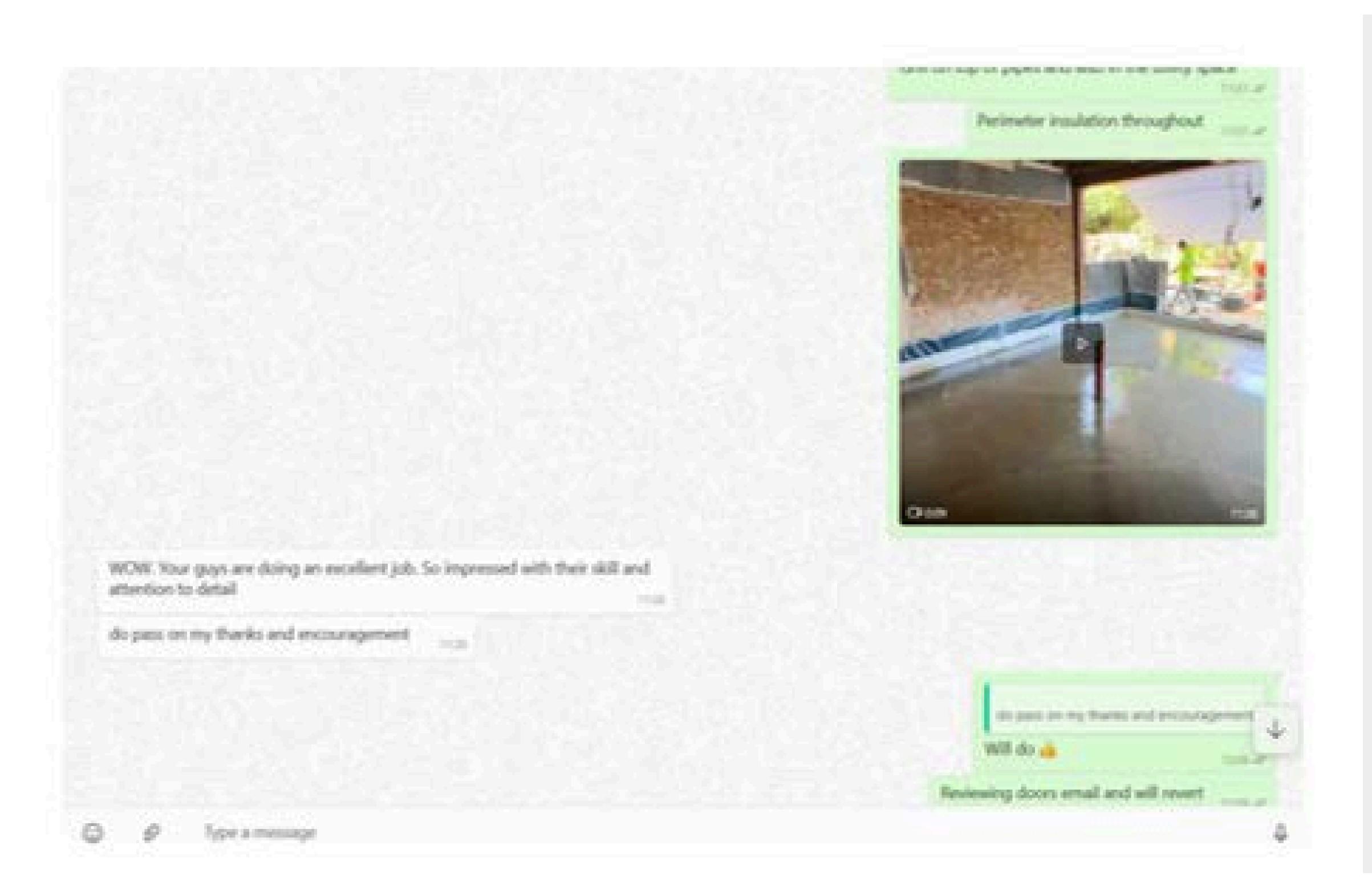
Backward Valuations



Unlike traditional builders ADL Design & Build operates a backward valuation system, which means no upfront deposit is required.

Instead, payments are structured based on the actual percentage of work completed, offering clients full transparency and financial confidence throughout the construction process.

Client Communication



We believe exceptional communication is the foundation of every successful project. In addition to formal email correspondence, we maintain an open line of communication through WhatsApp for day-to-day updates and quick decisions.

This personable, responsive approach allows clients to stay fully involved while fostering a collaborative working relationship.

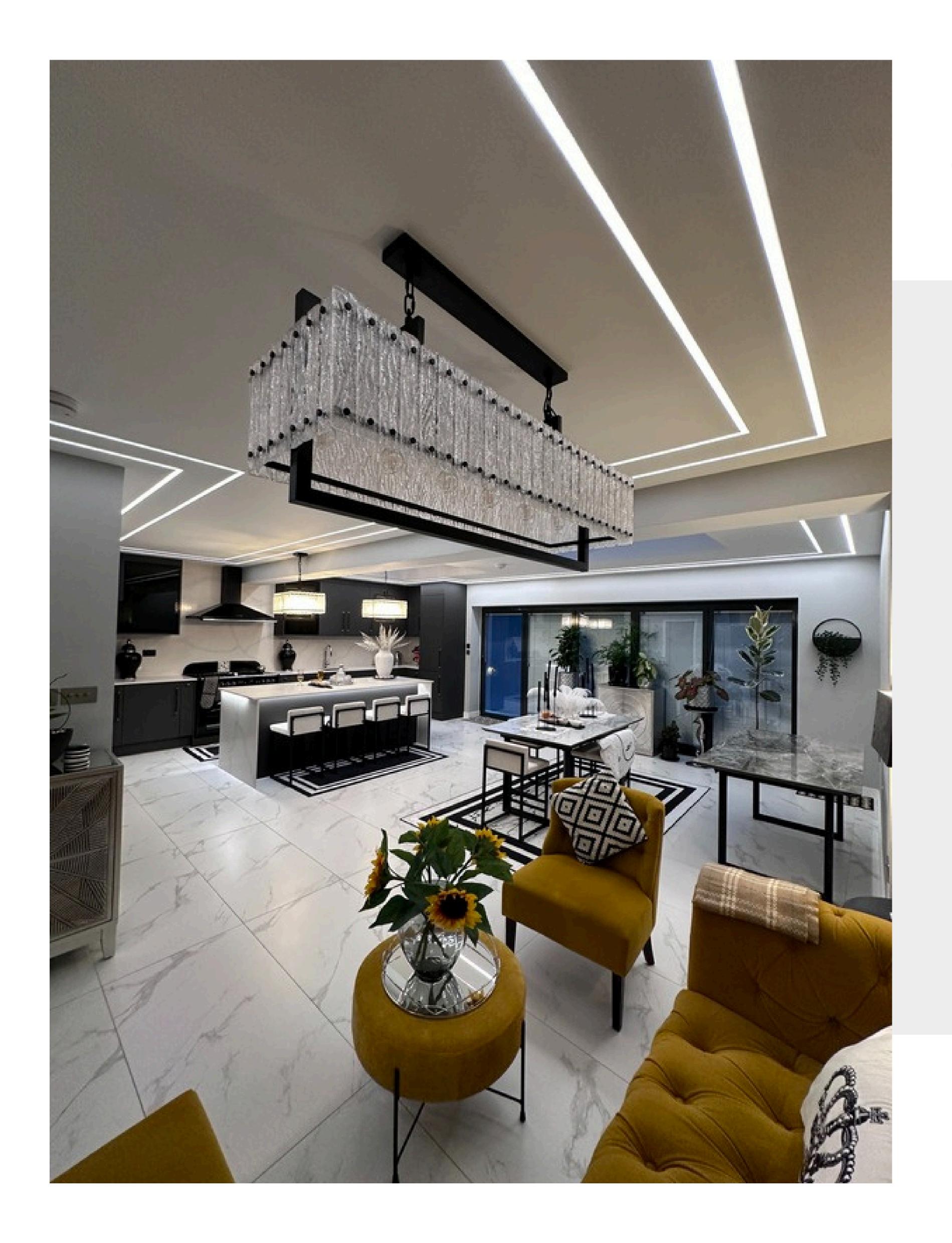


Overall Build Process

As a family-run company, ADL Design & Build provides a complete turnkey design-and-build service. Our in-house team manages every stage of the process — from planning and procurement to construction and finishing — with weekly valuations, updates, and hands-on project management, ensuring the client is involved in the process with transparency.

The lead designer remains actively involved throughout, ensuring design integrity is maintained and any on-site variations are handled efficiently.





Project Handover & Warranty

The handover phase marks the successful completion of your project — where every detail is reviewed, and your newly transformed space is officially delivered. Once construction is finalised, our team conducts a comprehensive inspection to ensure all work meets our exacting standards and aligns with the agreed design and specifications.

During this stage, clients receive a complete documentation package, including compliance certificates, warranties, and maintenance information. This ensures total transparency and provides lasting confidence in the quality of the finished build.

At ADL Design & Build, we take pride in the durability and craftsmanship of our work. Every project is supported by a 10year structural warranty and full insurance coverage for complete peace of mind. Our commitment continues long after completion — reflected in our five-star client reviews and ongoing relationships built on trust, quality, and care.

We are aware that this is a competitive market and the decision on who to go ahead always relies with the client / homeowner.

Our aim is to always remain within the current market rates for building work, while adding extreme value on other elements of the project management.

The average contractor may not have an in-house architectural team, ready to adapt plans and provide with design insights during the projects, provide different recommendations on alternatives and have a flexible approach towards meeting clients needs and bespoke requirements.

When going to tender, the ADL quotations normally come as the most detailed and thorough quote.

We aim to outline works prior to begin the project, to reduce where possible surprises and outruns, that can be foreseen. We always look to be ahead of our game and solve challenges of the project before even becoming a challenge, through strategic planning and skilled labour.

When comparing quotes:

Please aim at comparing quotes on a like for like basis. I.e. if competitors may look cheaper or more expensive based on their quote, always check that they have quoted for the same scope of work and not letting key elements out of the quote.

Next Steps:

Please contact your dedicated project manager to discuss any details about the project and how you would like to proceed moving forward.

The ADL team would be delighted to assist and provide value with your project.

House Extensions, loft conversions an... × Lydia King · 1h · O

We'd appreciate some advice please! Just looked at our extension progress and the insulation isn't as we'd expect. It doesn't go as far down the cavity as specified and there isn't the 10mm gap in some places (and other places the insulation has been cut to fit so the reflective layer has gone). There's also gaps between the blocks which assumedly isn't how it's meant to be? We're a bit worried about thermal inefficiency and damp but not sure whether we're being pedantic or if we should bring it up with our lead builder (I don't think he's seen it yet but he's on site tomorrow). Is there any way of making it better without redoing the bricks?? We're already delayed and expecting a baby in a 9 weeks!





411 comments 1 share

Avoid Costly mistakes: Do it once, do it right

We often come across situations where homeowners appoint the wrong contractors and encounter serious issues during construction — errors that become complex and expensive to rectify. As seen in many online forums and social posts, clients frequently seek advice midproject when workmanship falls short of expectations.

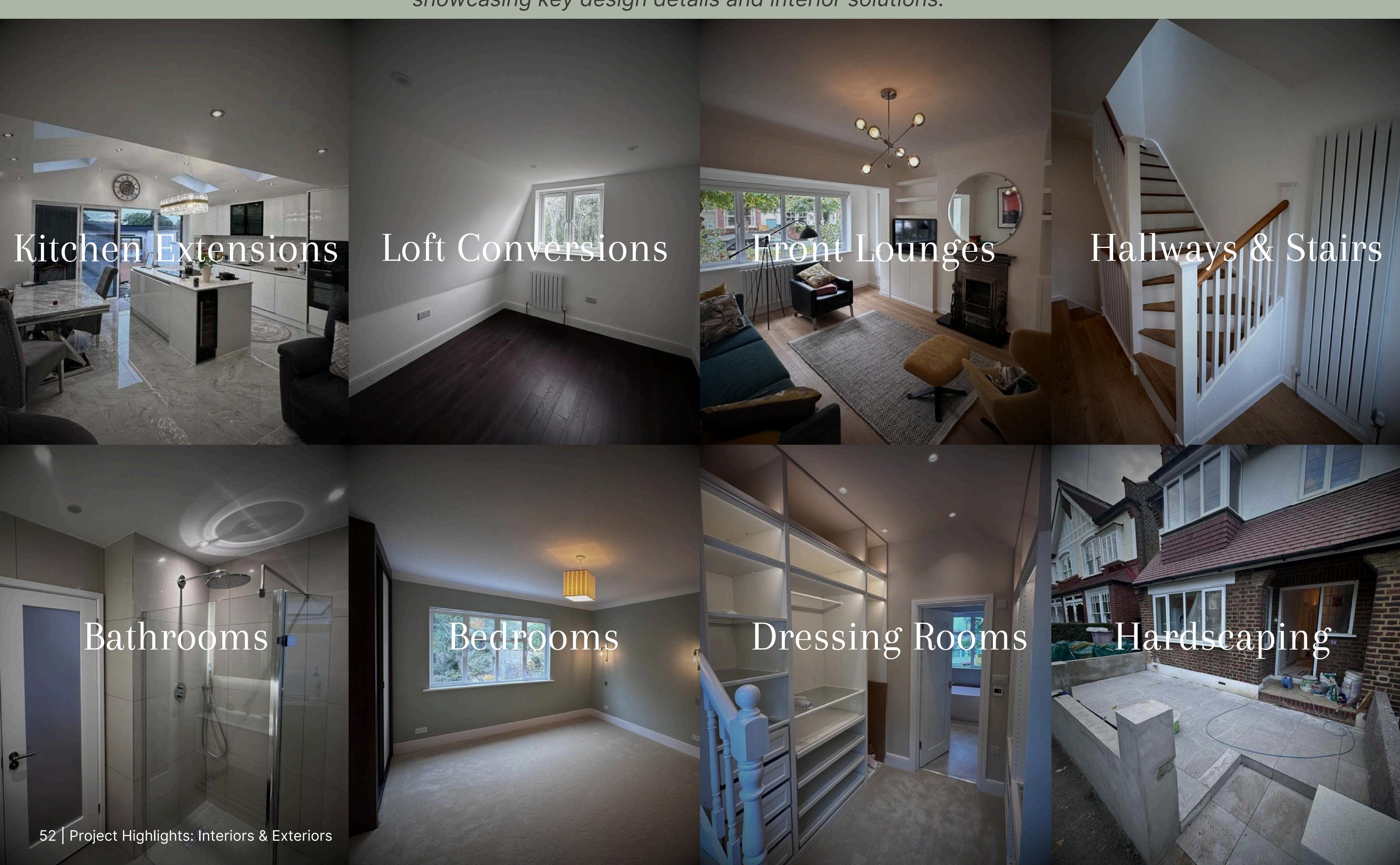
This section highlights the importance of making informed decisions from the outset. Choosing a reputable, experienced contractor ensures technical accuracy, compliance with building regulations, and long-term value — preventing avoidable setbacks and unnecessary costs later.

Poor construction practices often lead to long-term structural and thermal performance issues that become costly to correct later. Insufficient insulation depth, inconsistent cavity gaps, and improper detailing — as seen in many poorly executed projects — can compromise energy efficiency, cause damp, and fail building regulations.

At ADL Design & Build, we ensure every stage is properly specified, supervised, and executed by qualified professionals. Our integrated design-and-build approach eliminates miscommunication between trades, ensuring compliance, precision, and a lasting finish — done right the first time.

Project Highlights: Interiors & Design Insights

A selection of featured spaces from our completed renovation and extension projects—showcasing key design details and interior solutions.













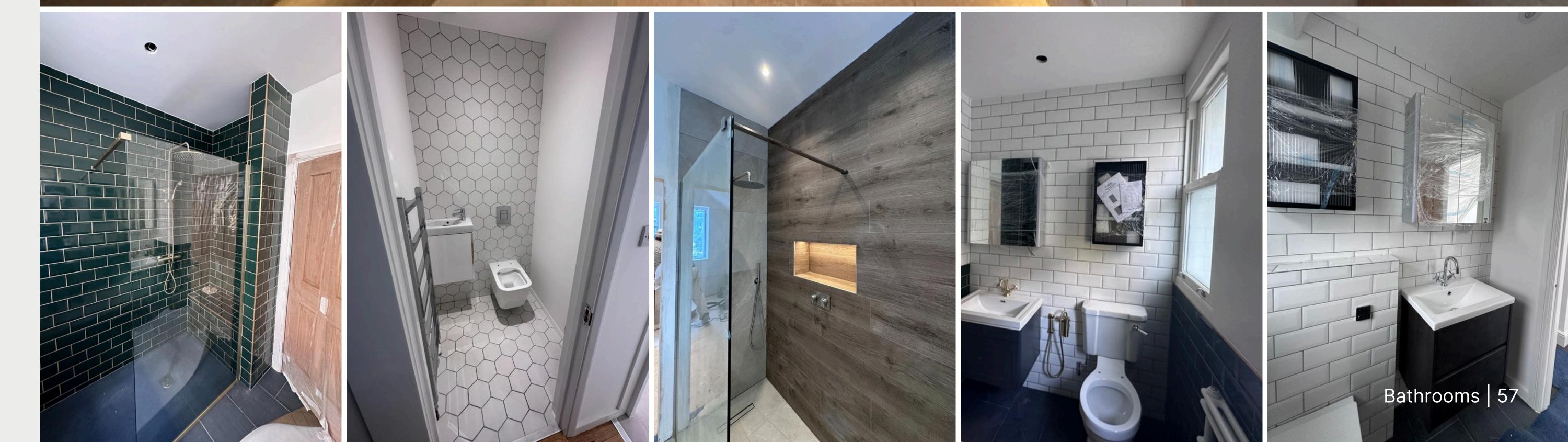


















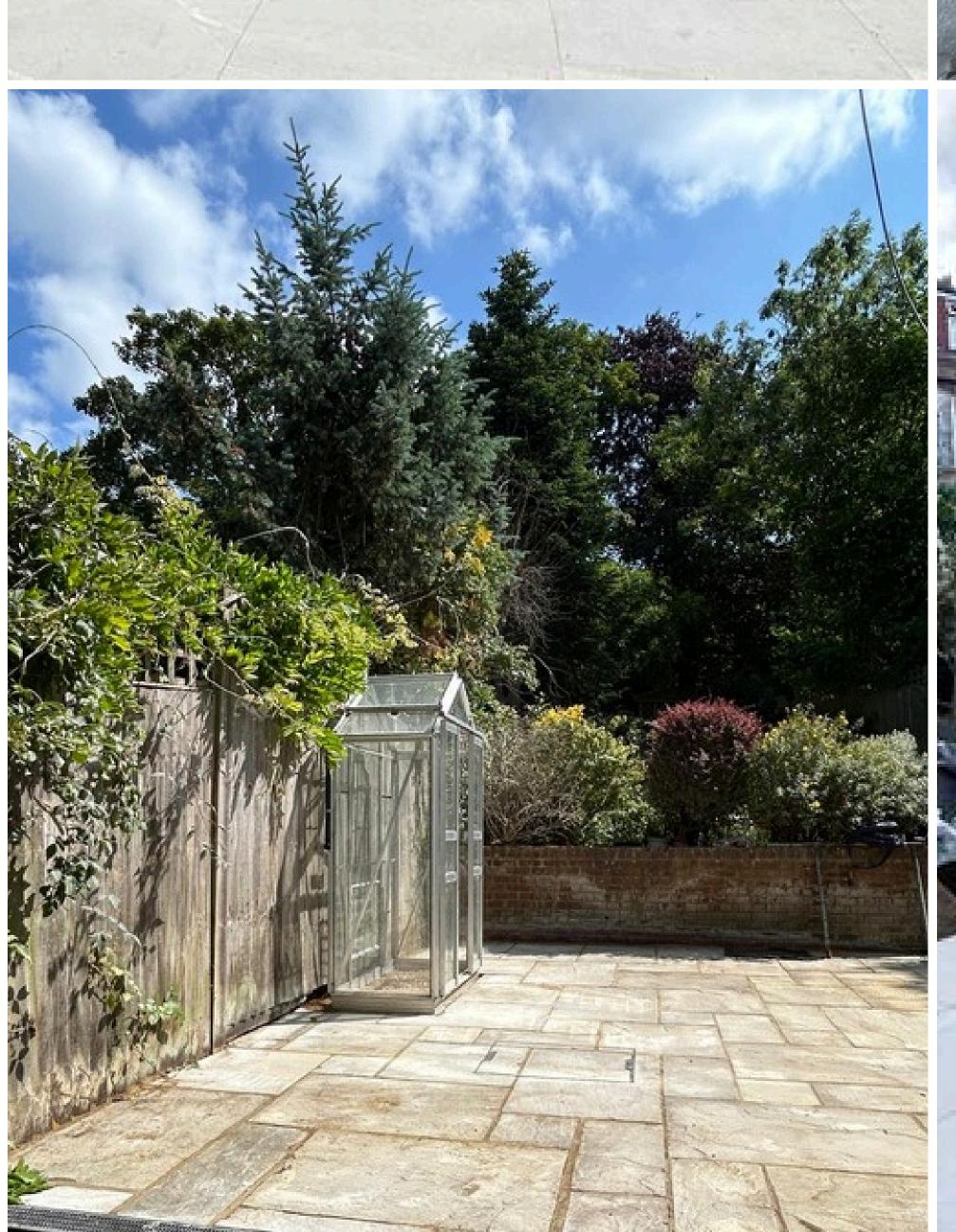
















Frequently Asked Question's Section



Who is Emiljano Kola (Emilio) from ADL Design & Build Ltd and how does he have such extensive knowledge in the sector?

Emiljano Kola is the managing director of ADL Design & Build. His background in the construction industry is deeply rooted in his upbringing. Emilio's father has been running a construction company for over 30 years and since the very beginning Emilio's interest for the industry was visible. From going to sites to proceeding the university path. Upon graduating in the Architecture Field with distinct honours, Emilio has continued his Diploma in Construction Management / Environment and territory. His career path and first job was directly in a renown Design & Build Construction company in South London, where he further developed his knowledge in the field, specifically in the residential sector.

He then parted ways to establish his business, ADL Design & Build Ltd, with the vision of creating a "True Architecture Led Construction firm", providing homeowners peace of mind knowing that their house and project is handled correctly with a full turnkey solution, from concept to completion.

The track record presents over 140 projects completed, fully available to be viewed publicly on planning portals as well as on the website's portfolio page.

Introduction to FAQ's

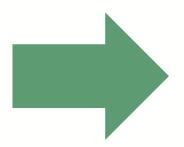
This E-book and especially the FAQ Section has been written by him personally to provide an asset of information coming from an individual that has managed and delivered extremely complex residential projects.

This section aims to provide an answer to the most common questions received over the years, in a format that is easy to read for most homeowners who are not directly in the construction industry. The breakdown of the FAQ's is separated into:

- Architecture, planning, technical design, interior design FAQ's
- Construction FAQ's
- Budgeting and costing FAQ's

KEY NOTE TO THE FAQ'S SECTION:

Always seek specific advice to your home and your project. The FAQ's intent is to provide indications, but each project is unique and it is advisable to consult with a professional. Here at ADL Design & Build Ltd, we would be happy to assist with any specific queries / project you may have.

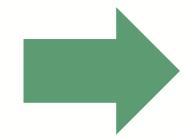


What is permitted development / lawful development and how can it be used?

Permitted development rights are the type of works that can be carried out without planning permission. A full guidance including schemes and graphics can be found in the GOV. website in PDF format by simply googling "Permitted development rights for householders".

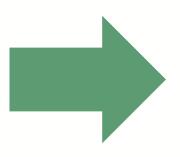
In the residential market, normally, when outside of conservation area, the works that fall under permitted development are:

- Front Ground floor porch (under 3 sqm of footprint)
- Loft dormer conversion without exceeding the existing roofline: for terraced and end of terrace properties the addition to the roof would need to be under 40cubic meters of volume (the appointed architect / designer would assist with the calculations)
- Loft dormer conversion without exceeding the existing roofline for semi-detached or detached houses: addition to the existing roof below 50 cubic meters of volume
- Exterior chimney removal if the full stack is within the roof / boundary of the property.
- Ground floor rear and side extension: up to 3 meters of depth and with an eaves roof height of 3m for terraced houses/semi detached and up to 4m for detached houses.
- Outbuildings / garden houses: up to 2.5 m of roof height and with a footprint that does not exceed 50% of the existing curtilage.



Do I still need to consult the council for a permitted development extension?

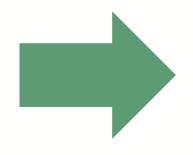
If you are planning to do a 3 meters rear extension, we always recommend to still appoint a designer to prepare the drawings and submit to the council. If the drawings tick all the permitted development guidance rules, the council will provide a "lawful development certificate" to confirm that the proposal complies with all the regulations. This is a document that would be required / handy in case you would consider selling the house, remortgage, but also provides full peace of mind to the homeowner.



What is householder planning permission and when is it required?

Technically, planning permission is required for any development that doesn't fall within the permitted development guidelines. Meaning that any type of extension that is not within the guidelines highlighted within the 50+pages in the GOV. guidance "Permitted development rights for householders" would require planning permission.

This including: wrap around extensions, extensions over 3 meters or more of depth, side infill extensions if the depth is over 3m, two storey side, rear and front extensions, loft conversions exceeding the existing roof or the volumetric allowance, front facing material change (from render to brick, cladding etc), front porches over 3 sqm etc.



What is prior approval notification (Larger single storey extension)?

The prior approval notification type of application, is a new type of application that has been introduced in 2013 and made permanent in the planning portal in 2019.

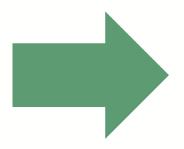
In simple terms, prior approval includes all the same permitted development rules for ground floor extensions, meaning maximum roof eaves height limitations etc, with the only difference that it allows ground floor extensions to project from the existing back wall up to 6 meters for terraced, end of terrace and semi detached houses, and up to 8 meters for detached houses.

This allows a lot more flexibility in terms of size of extension and eases the planning system, allowing larger extensions to be built.

The process to implement this application would be similar to a planning permission application, whereby your appointed architect / designer, would draw the 5 meters extension (for instance) and submit the drawings to the council.

This type of application is known for it's neighbouring consultation process. Meaning that during the filling of the forms on the planning portal, it is required to include addresses of the closest neighbours and the council would then send a letter enquiring whether they have any objection towards a larger extension being built next to their houses.

If the neighbours have any objections, the application would then be considered by a planning officer under full planning procedures. If the neighbours do not have any objections, the application tends to be automatically approved within 42 days from submission.

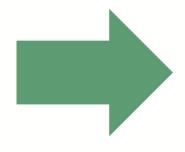


Can I build a larger extension / development that is not within permitted development and apply for planning after it's built?

The prior approval notification application type cannot be submitted retrospectively (after it's already built). If construction has started / completed, the only applications that can be submitted are for a retrospective lawful development certificate (if the development is within the permitted guidelines) or a full planning retrospective application.

We never recommend building without planning permission. In case a development has been carried without permission and the retrospective application gets refused, the council has rights to submit an enforcement notice to demolish the development or revert to the original state of the house.

However, a retrospective application can also be granted and approved, depending on the specifics of the project itself (always seek advice from a professional, specific to the house and development)



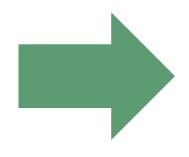
What happens if I apply for planning permission correctly and in advance but still gets refused?

Here at ADL Design & Build Ltd we have a 99% approval rate on all our applications submitted. We tend to advise on all the potential pitfalls well in advance during the design process and recommend if an application is too ambitious, if the extension's ask is too large or if it has a chance of refusal. Eventually, if an application gets rejected, upon receipt of the decision notice, the council would create a document stating the exact reasons for refusal.

As an example, if a rear extension is too deep, a reason for refusal could be over development or blocking of light to neighbouring properties. Or it could have a concern on the design outlook and materials, etc.

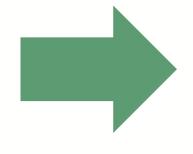
Every case would be identified and review independently, however, as a general FAQ guideline, upon refusal the usual two avenues are:

- Resubmission of a new application that takes in consideration and presents amendments to the drawings based on the feedback of the refusal notice
- Submission of appeal to the planning inspectorate. This option is normally implemented when the homeowner does not want to potentially reduce the size of the development / change the design. In that case, the appeal would be created by a planning consultant, and would be considered by a separate entity to the specific council's (Planning inspectorate). They would then review the files and check if the reason for refusal was fair or not and provide a final decision. This process can take up to 6 months or longer.



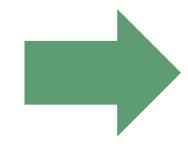
I own a house and I want to do an interior renovation only, without any external extension, do I need planning?

No, if no exterior development is intended, planning is not usually required (unless it is a grade listed building or conservation area). You may still require building regulations certificate is the interior renovation includes alteration to any structural element. If it is only a bathroom makeover, or decorating renovation, floor finish replacement etc you would not require any of the above.



I own a ground floor flat and want to do an interior renovation and open up walls, do I need planning permission?

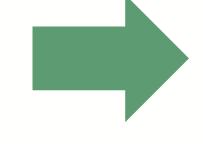
If you own a flat and are considering to carry out an interior renovation, you might not require planning permission, but as per above would require a building regulations certificate if carrying any structural alterations. In most cases, you would also need a full set of drawings illustrating the changes to the freeholder of the block of flats or building. This is called a leaseholder license to alter, and requires the consent from the freeholder only.



I own a flat, and heard that it does not benefit of permitted development rules, meaning that I would have to apply for permission even for an extension smaller than 3 meters, is it true?

Yes, it is true. Permitted development rules apply to C3 single dwelling houses. If you own a flat, you would notentially require planning.

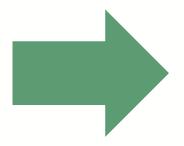
Yes, it is true. Permitted development rules apply to C3 single dwelling houses. If you own a flat, you would potentially require planning permission to carry such works.



I have received planning permission or any of the planning certificates above to proceed with my extension project, what happens next?

Great news! You are now ready to move to the next phase of your journey.

Any type of extension, loft conversion, outbuilding, interior structural alteration, even if it doesn't require full planning permission, it might still require building control certification.

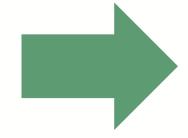


What is Building control?

Building Control (also called Building Regulations control) is the system that ensures building work is safe, healthy, energy efficient, and meets national standards — even if planning permission isn't required.

It's completely separate from planning permission:

- Planning permission controls what you can build and where.
- Building Control checks how you build it ensuring it's structurally sound, fire-safe, insulated, and compliant.

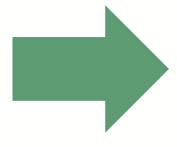


Who carries out building control?

There are two options:

- 1. Local Authority Building Control (LABC) Provided by your local council. They inspect plans and make site visits during construction.
- 2. Approved Inspectors (Private Building Control) Independent professionals or firms licensed by the government to carry out the same checks.

Both have the same legal powers and can issue the same certificates.



What is the process of submitting a building control application?

Here at ADL Design & Build, we handle the building control technical drawings as part of the architectural service phase.

Further to receiving planning permission (or while awaiting for permission) we can advance the design phase to the technical phase.

Meaning that the drawings would now go more in detail on the drainage, foundation specifications, steel beams, wall specification, cavity insulation, roof insulation, and junction details.

These drawings, alongside the structural engineering calculations, would then be submitted to building control, who would do a plan check of all the specifications prior to works commencing.

Then, during the works, the building control inspector would allow for a number of visits to ensure that the specifications are followed during construction on site.



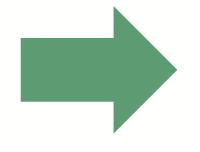
What is a thames water buildover agreement? And can I still build an extension if there is a

shared manhole in my back garden?

We've had clients in the past that were worried about not being able to build an extension as there was a shared sewer. It is very common for houses to have a manhole or a shared sewer in the garden.

Normally, if there is a manhole in the footprint of the planned extension, it would require to be relocated outside the extension. And if there is any shared thames water drainage pipe, it would be required to be bridged across to the Thames water specifications.

In simple terms: yes, you can still build and extension. The required process would be: Survey of the existing drainage lines, design of the proposed drainage lines, details of bridging of any existing sewer, submission to Thames water by a professional in order to gain the Thames buildover agreement certificate.



What is a "Party wall agreement" and when is it required to notify the neighbours of my intention to build an extension or a loft conversion?

If you are planning to do any renovation works or extensions, we recommend to have an early conversation with your neighbours, potentially even during the planning process (earlier on in the process).

However, the actual requirement to notify, would normally be before beginning construction. The party wall process can be explained in simple terms below:

• Submission of building notice / letter of intent

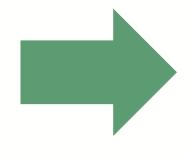
Normally, we recommend a party wall specialist surveyor to handle this aspect, who would then review the drawings and explain everything in detail specific to the project. However, to keep this section easy to read and without extensive technicalities, the building notice is a simple letter that explains that property number 45 (client) intends to do an extension and normally the drawings to illustrate the proposal are attached to the notice.

If the next door neighbours are detached but within 3 meters from the boundary, you may still need to submit an excavation notice.

If the next door neighbour is attached (terraced house or semi-detached house) and intending to use the party wall (shared wall) to support any beams or adjoin the extension to their wall etc, the surveyor will require structural engineering drawings and technical details to be included in the notice pack In the letter itself, there will be a checkbox where the next door neighbor can: Consent (without requiring a party wall award), Consent (but requesting a schedule of conditions report), Dissent (and use their own surveyor or share the same surveyor appointed by the client)

Normally, full party wall fees are due to be covered by the owner of the property intending to do the works.

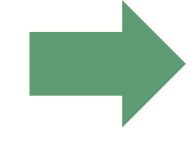
- If they consent unconditionally, the process would end there and construction can start
- If they require a schedule of conditions, the surveyor will organise for a visit at their property and conduct a report with photographic evidence on the existing condition of their house prior to the renovation works planned by the client start
- If they dissent require a full award, the process may be longer and more technical details might be required to illustrate the specific elements affecting the party wall



When is it the right time to begin looking at interior design, such as kitchen design, bathroom finishes, colour paints, finish flooring etc?

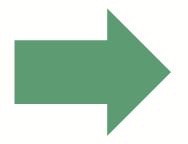
Here at ADL Design & Build, we recommend to begin the interior design process earlier or at least begin engaging and researching the type of finishes / interior design taste (i.e. contemporary, modern, or traditional etc)

As a Design & Build company, we believe that design never ends and can always develop and be refined during the project while on site.



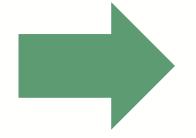
I have planning permission, building regulations drawings, structural engineering reports completed, went through the party wall process, and have an idea of the type of interior design I like, am I in a position to begin construction?

Yes, at this point you are well advanced in the process and in a position to begin construction. If you are at this stage by having done all the steps above with ADL Design & Build, you would already have received a construction quotation by us. If you have completed the above with separate architects, we would provide you with a quote on the drawings and would be in a position to begin the building project.



want to do a full house renovation inc. loft conversion, first floor renovation and ground floor extension, should I move out?

The most efficient way to carry out a full house renovation would be to mobilise the site entirely. On that premise, it would be advised for the homeowner to arrange moving out of the property. However, the project could also be staggered in such way that it is divided in two phases, i.e. loft conversion and first floor (homeowner to live in the ground floor). Then, upon completion of the levels above (subject to specifics of the project), there could be potential to move upstairs, allowing works to carry at ground level.



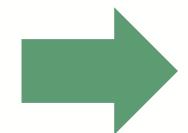
want to do a loft conversion, can I still live in the house?

Yes, it is very common to live in the house during a loft conversion. Usually, if there is enough headheight in the loft, there is relatively low impact on the first floor, apart from the "Knockthrough" phase, whereby the staircase is installed and the first floor is connected to the loft. However, if the headheight in the loft is limited, there may be a requirement to lower the ceiling of the first floor and this would potentially create more disruption. It is still possible to arrange living at ground floor level.



want to do a rear extension, can I still live in the house?

Yes, it is possible. Reservations would be required to be taken towards potentially temporary hot water solutions during the works if the current boiler / heating system is in the area of the works and might need to be disconnected. With the necessary planning in advance, it is feasible to live in the house and allow for a protected access to the area of the works.

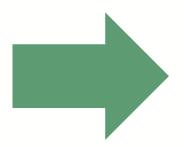


When is the best time of the year to begin a project?

It depends on the spec of the project as well as urgency to potentially start works based on circumstances of the project. For a loft conversion, if the scaffolding is planned with a "Tin Hat" (temporary roof cover above), it is a project that is not necessarily affected by rain. As well as rear extensions, can be managed in winter without an issue.

It also depends on whether the client is planning to remain in the house or not.

In answer to the query, it all depends on circumstances and availability to start from the selected contractor. Eventually, building works can start anytime, even in December.



What are some of Green flags and Red flags to look for in contractors?

GREEN Flag: Established company with years of trading successfully. This is crucial to make sure that the selected contractor will honour their warranties in case required.

RED Flag: Newly established with less than a year trading.

GREEN Flag: Clear estimate for construction costing, highlighting all elements clearly, items that are due to be supplied and installed by the contractor and fixtures to be selected by the client

RED Flag: Although having a set of drawings to estimate on, contractor being vague on estimating and providing a full rounded up figure for the full costs

GREEN Flag: Contractors that have a contract to sign before any works start and allow at least 14 days for the client to review. Contracts are crucial to ensure the client is covered and has enough time to review. (Advised for any project from £30,000+)

RED Flag: Contractors that do not want to sign a contract nor have anything written via email other than words or a few whatsapp messages.

GREEN Flag: Contractors that provide access to references and even availability for customers to visit previous / ongoing projects

RED Flag: Contractors that do not provide any reference or social proof of their service

GREEN Flag: Contractors that will allow a minimum of 14 days to mobilise the site from the time of signature of the contract

RED Flag: Contractors that are ready to start next day, and pressure clients to begin works immediately

GREEN Flag: Contractors with an established payment plan and without any absurd deposit of 20% plus

RED Flag: Contractors that ask for forward payments and large deposits without starting the works

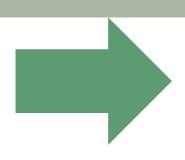
GREEN Flag: Contractors that provide clear warranties in their contract and allowance for snags. Here at ADL Design & Build we provide

10 years warranty on structural elements and 2 years on anything else

RED Flag: Contractors that do not provide clear warranties

GREEN Flag: Contractors that showcase ability to listen to customer's needs and adapt plans / facilitate decisions

RED Flag: Contractors that do not provide any flexibility of variation



I have received 3 quotes but they vary so much in between, how is it possible?

This may come as a surprise. Eventually, if you have a full set of drawings, structural engineering reports etc, all quotes should come within close range? Well, this doesn't always happen and I will explain why below in a narrative format.

Story from experience n. 1: We tendered a project for a full house renovation in Chiswick, and the lowest quote was £120,000 + VAT while the highest was £300,000 + VAT.

Story from experience n. 2: We tendered for a new-built scheme of 3 houses and the lowest quote was £600,000 + VAT and the highest £640,000 + VAT. Both projects had plans provided by the client and we were invited for tender as contractors, as they had already gone through the design process.

The range difference was smaller in the bigger project and bigger on the smaller project. How is this possible?

Well... Let's analyse below:

Project 1: It had a basic set of architectural and technical drawings. It did not have full information on tendering, floor finishes, kitchen specifications etc. It is not mandatory that everything must be specified before gathering quotes, however, some contractors were quoting for a full concrete subfloor, others for a timber frame floor (as an example). And this would have an impact on pricing and final quotation.

Also, in the "residential" scale market (projects below £500,000+VAT of construction value), tends to present contractors that have different rates based on their structure and overheads.

Per instance, an established company with an office, staff, project managers, multiple vans on the road, would potentially have higher rates than a smaller contractor on the tools, building only one project at a time and without many overheads (man with a van with a couple of workers helping).

When an established contractor company tenders for a project, they would also factor from experience allowance for the correct materials and labour to carry out the project to the highest standards.

To summarise, in project 1, the difference was predominantly based on:

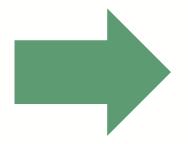
Lack of specification in the drawings

Size of the different companies and their overheads

Quality of service and necessary budget allowance to conduct the project to a high standard and provide peace of mind to the client

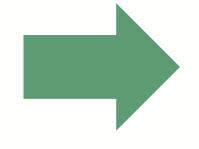
Project 2: This project had everything fully specified up to the colour of the last lick of paint. Type of architraves, doors, worktop of kitchens etc. Also, all the companies invited to tender had similar structure and size (being a larger project and quite inaccessible to smaller builders).

Therefore, the quotes were all in similar ranges.



Should I go with the lowest quote, highest quote, or mid range?

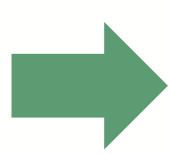
Great question. The answer would depend on the specific circumstances of the project and whether you are at an advanced point within your journey and have a set of drawings for the project. Now, if you have a set of drawings and everything is either specified in the drawings or well clear within the provided quotes, you may base your decision on factors such as: Confidence in the contractor, quality of service provided and other elements highlighted in the E-Book. Here at ADL Design & Build Ltd, we tend to operate within competitive rates to provide value and aim at never being the most expensive, but we are certainly also not the cheapest.



How can I readjust my budget and slightly reduce the quote, without reducing the size of the extension during the tendering process?

There are items that can be reviewed during the tendering process, such as technical design specifications, specs of finishes etc to work through within budgets.

Per instance, we have worked on projects where the kitchen costed £7,000 + VAT. projects where the kitchen was £35,000 + VAT. Projects where the bathroom fittings were supplied on Victorian Plumbing (still very good quality products) at £2,000 + VAT for all the bathroom fittings. Other projects where the bathroom items were £25,000 + VAT, with freestanding baths and fancy fixtures.

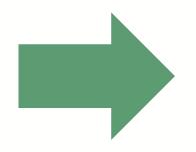


The most important element is to take the time to go through with the contractor pre-start of the project and have open conversations about the budget.

How can I compare estimates on a like for like basis?

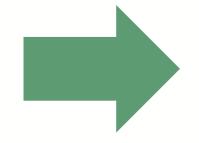
This is, as per points above on difference between quotes, not always very easy. If we are provided a set of drawings, we normally meet with the client on site and go through their requirements and any elements that may not be fully specified in the plans.

If the client has other quotes that do not include the same elements or different specifications, we always recommend our customers to share competitor's quotes (with their logo blacked out) to go through carefully and check if everything is like for like or if there is any difference in the specifications.



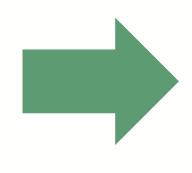
How soon can I start construction with ADL Design & Build after agreeing the quote and scope of works?

After agreeing the quote and signing the contract we have a minimum 14 days period allowance to mobilise the site. If we pre-book project starts, we can schedule them up to 6 months in advance. Depending on the time of the year, location of the project, and type of project, we would highlight the specifics during the tendering process.



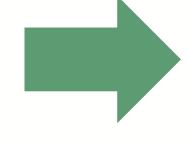
How does the payment schedule work with ADL Design & Build?

As per section on the E-book, we work on a backward valuation system. Meaning that no forward payment is made. As the project advances, we submit valuations on works that have been completed every 10-14 days, with photographic evidence and site visits with the clients to go through and review.



How long does a project normally last until it's ready for completion and having the keys handed over?

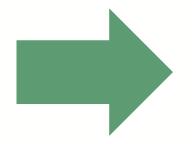
This very much depends on the type of the project. Potentially a standard ground floor extension may be completed in 3 months.



Which type of warranties and certificates will I be provided at the end of the project by ADL Design & Build?

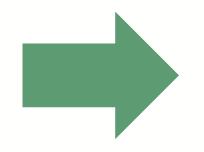
10 years on structural elements and 2 years on everything else (fully highlighted within the contracts).

Budgeting FAQ's



I have a full set of drawings, how can I calculate if it is within my budget?

Please see the previous sections of the E-book and FAQ's on approaching contractors for quotations. If you do have a set of drawings and would like to have accurate quotations, the best next step would be to begin contacting specialist companies.



I am very early in the process and don't have any drawings, I want to do an extension and part interior renovation, how can I calculate a rough cost to know whether it is in my budget?

If you don't have any drawings there are a 2 avenues that you may undertake to begin gathering an idea of costings.

Reach out to any specialist architect or contractor to invite them over or speak about the project over the phone to begin having a preliminary idea of budgets. Potentially review online on rightmove or the planning portal if you can find any neighbouring property that has a similar extension / project completed to what you may have in mind. Maybe gather a few images online.

If you are not in a position to contact any professional and would like to just have an idea of costing without engaging or enquiring to anyone, you could make use of the technology available in 2025. Yes, Chat GPT can provide you with advice on very high level rough costs for your idea of project. This technology tool can help you, if provided with as much information as possible in its "prompt". Ideally, you would like to a question about the budget overall including construction and fixtures.

Here is an example of a prompt that may be suitable to ask the Al technology:

My house is in *full address*. Attached there are the pictures from inside and outside of how it looks now (attach images). I also attached a plan from rightmove of the existing. I would like to have a 4 meters ground floor kitchen extension. The width of the house is 6meters. The new extension area would be 24 sqm. Attached here are some images of type of extensions I've seen online that would fit my taste (attach images or plans).

I would like to also renovate the back of the house adjoining to the extension, which measures 20 sqm. Whereas upstairs I have two bedrooms that I'm planning to only renovate mildly. The rooms are 10 sqm each.

What would be an all-in realistic budget allowance including construction costs and fittings?

Budgeting FAQ's

This type of prompt can work with anything. Loft conversions, extensions, renovation and is handy to provide high level indications. Another example for a bathroom make over:

My house is in*full address*. I am considering to fully renovate my bathroom. Attached there are the pictures from inside of how it looks now (attach images). I would like to fully re-do the tiles, move the vanity unit and bath to make it more usable. Attached here are some images of type of bathrooms I've seen online that would fit my taste (attach images or plans).

The existing bathroom is 5sqm. Length of 2.5m x width of 2m. The height of the ceiling is 2.4m.

What would be an all-in realistic budget allowance including construction costs and fittings?

Key notes:

Be specific about the address and setting of the property, i.e. if its a house or a flat in the 10th storey of a building it is important to mention it. Location is important, as well as area within the UK (construction rates vary in London to Newcastle)

Attach information and pictures of existing, plans if available online,

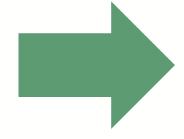
Attach information and pictures of what you would like it to be

Try to measure out any square meterage with a tape measurer to provide some indication of areas.

Try to separate the areas based on: 1) New built extension or loft conversion sqm, 2) Full interior renovation 3) mild interior renovation

To summarise, if you are comfortable with technology and not in a position yet to begin engaging with professionals and just want to get a rough idea of budgets, this could be useful.

At the same time, can always contact specialist companies to receive direct advice on the project.



Which are the usual items that are customisable and tend to be selected by the client?

Kitchen, wood flooring, tiles for bathrooms or floors, doors, potentially radiators and doors (if any specific type of liking), second fix electric pendants and feature lighting, bathroom units, paint colour of walls



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