

# DGSM

## Architecture and timber frame design

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At DGSM Architecture we aim to make projects as smooth flowing as possible. It is as important to us, as much as it is to you as the client, to allow projects to progress forward not backwards. This guide is step by step of how our design process progresses in a project from start to finish, so that you are able to gain a general idea of how projects will unfold.

To begin with it is important to note that projects can take different routes as to what stages they include, according to the legal frameworks that have to be adhered to before construction, in order to make them happen/ have the intention of making them happen, here are some overarching industry terms that you might have heard of previously, that form the stages of the architectural design process:

1. Brief
2. Survey
3. Design
4. Planning Permission
5. Building Regulations
6. Specification

In essence the terms above are the six main aims on a project that allow it to progress from start to finish (conception through to construction).

Next we will unpack what each of these terms mean and how each one assists with the project. On the following pages we have included examples of work from each stage from different projects...

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## 1. Brief:

The requirements for the project: this can be specified by a number of interested parties on a project:

The Client (meaning the individual, group of people or organisation responsible for appointing the designer and the ones who will be utilising the finished project).

The Shareholder is by contrast or the same as the client, when they are; the individual(s), organisation(s) or business or businesses bank rolling the project.

3<sup>rd</sup> Party, such as a property maintenance or property surveying firm or a builder/ contractor who is requiring architectural services based on their knowledge or requests from others.

Having typically been appointed by one of the above, then allows for us to establish a point of contact, as a means of communication and confirmation with a project.

A Brief can take either a written form in a list or visual forms as diagrams to confirm design requirements, here are some examples of both of these, written (top right) and visual (bottom right):

Your Brief (for reference) I have noted as the below (and if you could also confirm with me):

- Wants to open up the space to avoid being penned in within enclosed existing galley kitchen
- Would like a shower and toilet with sink located downstairs
- New kitchen is to accommodate existing white goods
- Lots of natural light and to be environmentally conscious (if feasible).

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I am also being conscious of your 50k budget and what work would be feasible under regulations and structurally etc.



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#### 1a. Brief:

Within a Brief there is usually a hierarchy of what can be achieved, this sometimes responds to budget or just general desires of the client, who may or may not have been the one to appoint us. Additionally, we advise our clients of feasibility, either during our consultation service, where we have visited the site prior to engaging in a design project, or verbally over the phone prior to our appointment. As a result, of our professional knowledge and training, we are able to advise on the feasibility of building design decisions, to give a more informed view.

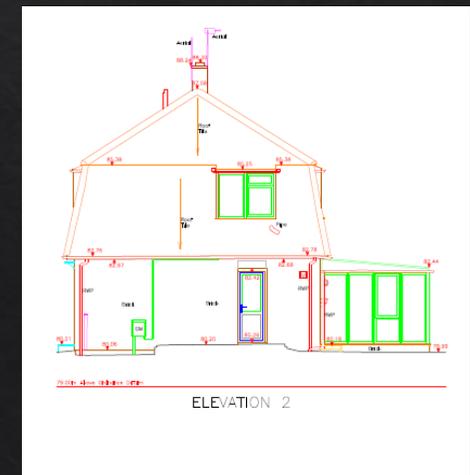
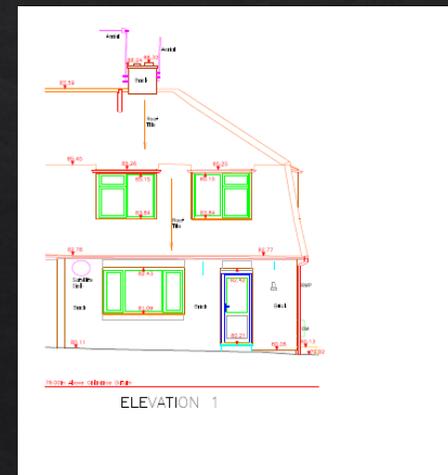
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## 2. Survey:

The measuring of an existing building or plot of land, to allow the designer to know what space is available for undertaking the relevant work; in order to meet the requirements set out in the Brief.

Typically, surveys of the nature described above, and that we require to design effectively; include the measurements of the size/ dimensions/ outline of the existing building, possibly indicating the location of visible services (boilers etc.), and any openings such as windows and doors with the relevant measurements. These surveys will always be to scale unless specified otherwise, as well as shown with marked site boundaries. Sometimes if the site has uneven terrain, we would get a topographical survey in 3D to help us design, for instance if the site was located on a hillside.

Here are some examples of survey drawings to the right:



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### 3. Design:

By combining what we have learnt from the Brief, overlaying it onto the survey drawings, we will be able to gauge feasibility spatially; designing with the intention of building what is required and scaling it appropriately to the size of the existing space and site we have to work with, whilst considering many factors.

Before making a design finalised, we always confirm drawings with the client first.

The projects that we deal with can take the form of new builds, extensions and conversions in various shapes, sizes and areas geographically. By designing in 3D, it allows us to imbed a certain level of accuracy for any drawings that are taken from the 3D digital model.

Here is an example to the right, which is shown as a visualisation taken directly from a 3D digital model:



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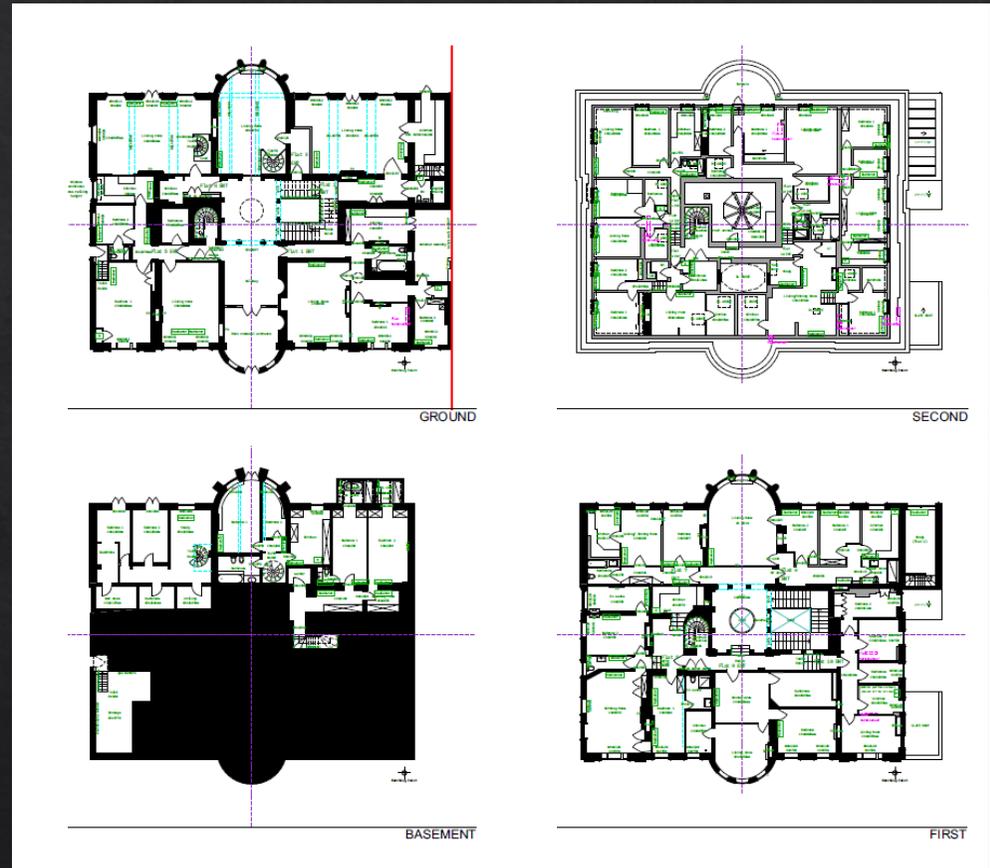
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## 4. Planning Permission:

Depending on your project, planning permission will most likely be required, however there are certain exemptions which allow for certain works to be undertaken to private housing without the need for it, these are called 'permitted development rights', which vary throughout the different nations of the UK. If you are eligible for these (which depend on a number of different factors), we would advise accordingly and/or seek the assistance of your local authority or a planning consultant to confirm a project's eligibility.

In the more likely case that your project requires planning permission, whether that be householder planning permission, full planning permission or prior approval (which are all different forms of planning consent from your local authority generally), we would draw, prepare and format, submit and coordinate a planning application on your behalf. This also applies to pre-applications and outline planning permissions.

Planning drawing example styles are shown to the right...



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#### 4a. Planning Permission:

There are typically three outcomes to planning applications: Approved, Approved with conditions or Refused. The decision on a planning application's outcome is up to your local authority, we will do our best to advise based on our experience, but ultimately what you wish to submit is your decision. We would advise keeping an open mind, as sometimes local authority planning departments can ask clients to make design changes for an application to be approved. Planning applications generally aim to be decided within 8 weeks throughout the different nations of the UK. However, this can take longer in the case of larger projects as standard, and significantly longer in the case of certain local authorities having a backlog. Unfortunately, the decision and time scale is out of our hands at this stage.

Before making a planning application, we will always confirm drawings with the client first.

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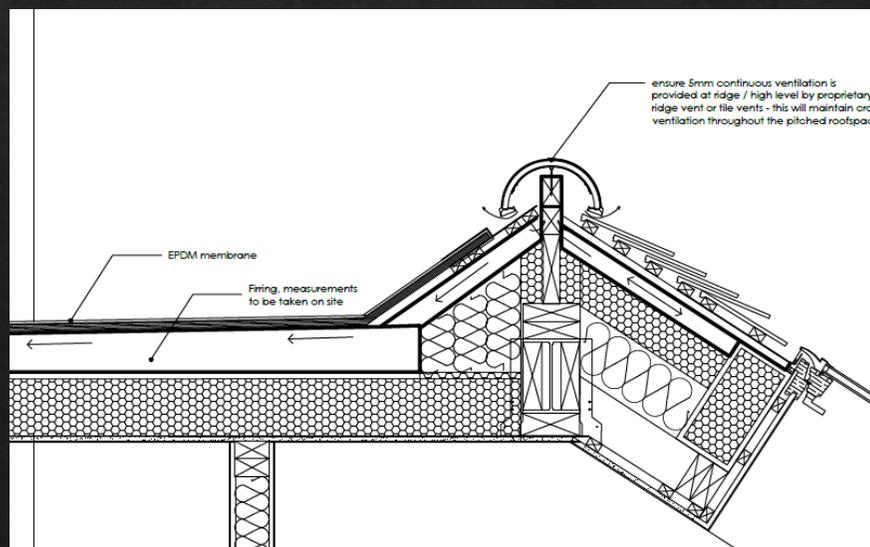
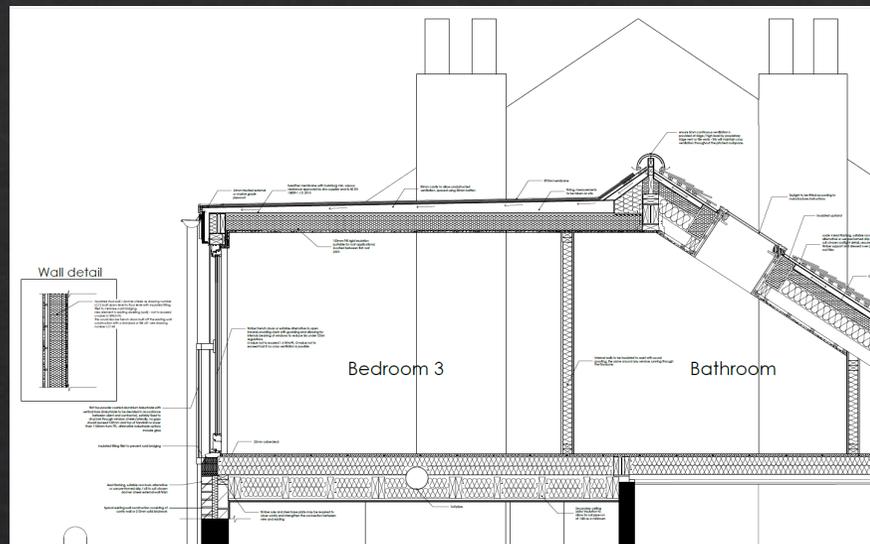
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## 5. Building Regulations:

This is where projects start to get technical! As we already have the survey and the design, as exhibited within the planning application, we will then start detailing the project to a standard, ready for a building control submission.

Once we have carried out our technical design, we then pass our design to structural engineering (who operate externally), they may undertake their own site survey or use the existing measured survey with our technical design (more in depth information on the next page).

Examples of the type of drawings that would typically be submitted to satisfy building regulations are shown to the right...



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## 5a. Building Regulations:

Additionally, with projects that contain load bearing walls and structural members, which is most of our projects; we would be required to submit structural engineering to building control.

Typically, they would produce their own set of drawings; in the form of what are known as mark-ups, along with calculations, structural details and a structural specification.

Once we have received the structural engineering, this will give us more clarity on sizing for all structural members of the project, with our construction detailing working around that, according to the relevant criteria, which the technical design of the project will be assessed against.

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## 5b. Building Regulations:

Please note: that with building control there are two routes, both of which require structural engineering, regardless. The two routes are: Building notice and Full plans. Typically, a building notice is advised to be used on smaller projects and full plans on larger.

To explain what each one is; in more detail is as follows:

Building notice:

Where the builder/ contractor takes full responsibility for the construction and technical design on-site, any building control drawings are used as an outline guide, the builder/ contractor typically submits the building notice as an aim to gain approval before starting.

With a building notice it is the obligation of the builder/ contractor to book on-site building control inspections at relevant stages, including completion for sign off. The stages at which building control inspect are in accordance with building control's predetermined agenda.

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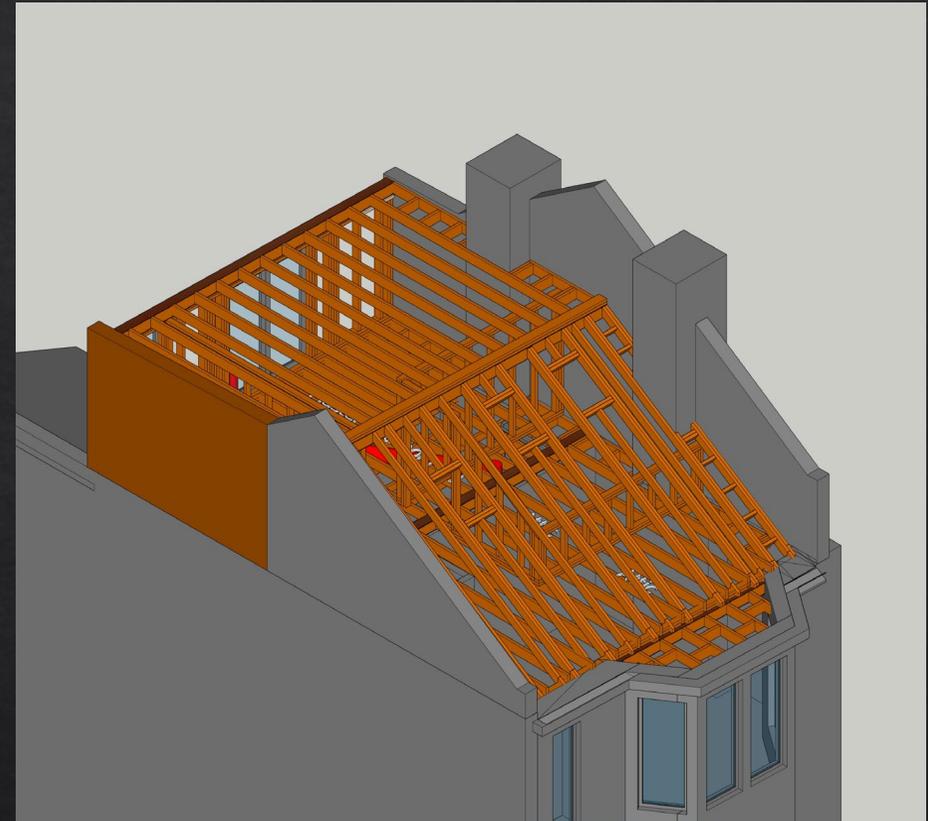
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## 5c. Building Regulations:

Full plans:

Where a project is approved according to building control drawings in advanced of construction, this should typically take 6-8 weeks before approval (this can differ depending on the project, and which nation the site is located within the UK). Once the full plans have been approved, the builder/ contractor is obligated to follow drawings and full specification for the purposes of construction. We draw and submit the building control drawings for the client and coordinate accordingly, although timescales for this are not under our control and are merely at the discretion of the relevant building control department, whether that is LABC (Local authority building control: within different local authorities) or private building control (a business which operates building control approval on behalf of the local authority), which can have a different fee structure and operations. An example, shown to the right; is of the level of detail that is included in building control drawings (what is shown structural, but should also include construction details, as previously shown); designed in 3D initially for accuracy. Full plans are generally more in depth and specific than for a project being undertaken under a building notice, prior to being passed to a builder/ contractor.



## **5d. Building Regulations:**

With full plans the principal designer (us) offers on-site inspections to ensure the work carried out meets the drawings and specification (though, this becomes ever more relevant with larger projects). Additionally, it is the obligation of the builder/ contractor to book on-site building control inspections at relevant stages, including completion for sign off. The stages at which building control inspect are in accordance with a building control's predetermined agenda.

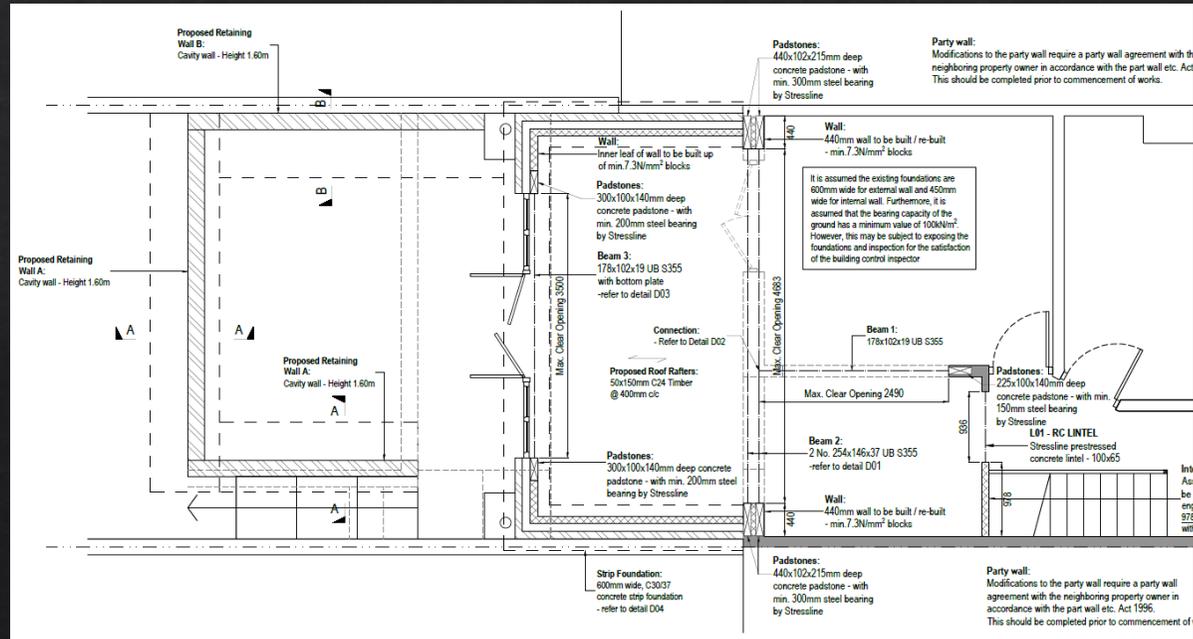
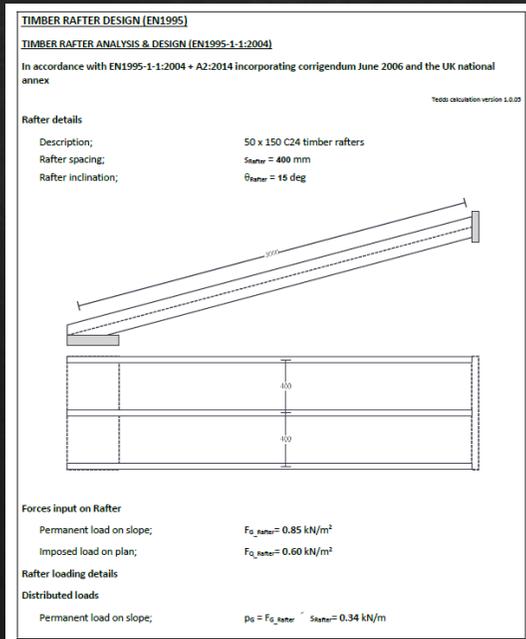
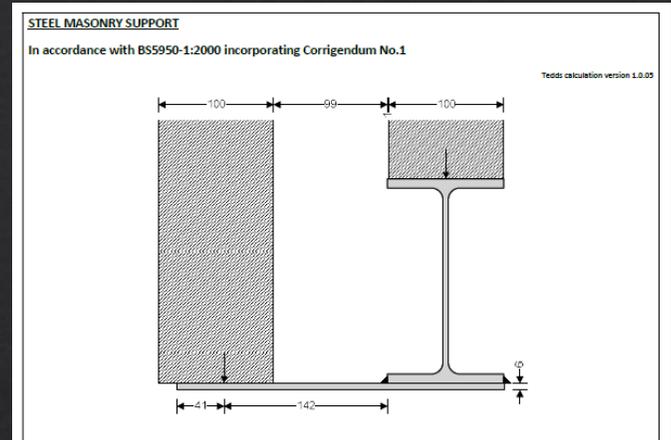
New build projects will require thermal calculations to satisfy Part L1a of the building regulations, these calculations include SAP (Standard Assessment Procedure), which are typically carried out by a building energy consultant; we would arrange the relevant calculations, if your project requires them and inform you of the fees.

With design projects the extent of our involvement typically ends when we handover to the builder/ contractor. We still take an interest in our projects when they are built, and are always keen to receive photos or visit completed signed off projects, or indeed advise/ ensure quality control when making on-site inspections during the construction stage (if this has been agreed).

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## 6. Specification:

In addition to satisfying the building regulations, specification (Structural or otherwise) will be required, not just to assist building control when assessing project applications, but also for the builder/ contractor on-site when pricing and knowing what materials to order. This can apply to both building notice and full plans projects. Structural engineering specification (as previously touched upon), is exemplified here...



## 7. Other forms of permission and information:

In addition to the permissions of planning permission (if applicable to the project) and building regulations, projects can also include the need to satisfy or apply for the following:

- a) Party wall agreements (Party wall act 1996), for when undertaking work to a shared wall on a boundary or work within close proximity.
- b) Build-over or diversion permissions (for service pipes, including sewers).
- c) CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy): this is a form of taxation charged by local authorities that apply to New Builds and Developments (there are ways of exemption, but these only apply in certain circumstances).

...amongst other permissions, which we would aim to assist you with/ point you in the right direction. Bearing in mind that some site's can be a niche type of situation/ site set-up. We welcome that our person of contact for the project informs us of any pre-existing knowledge they have regarding the site, and obligatory permissions they have been made aware of concerning the site.

Additionally, other consultants may work on the project, as appropriate/ other than us, as well as the architectural designer (us), the structural engineer and surveyor, there may be a need to involve others, such as: a building energy consultant, staircase designer, fire consultant, planning consultant, party wall surveyor etc. (all of which depend on your specific project and your project size). We would try and advise appropriately. For additional permissions there may be fees, as charged by others.

## 8. Completion:

In summary to this guide, with all of our projects we are always aiming to assist as best we can towards them being built. We appreciate that in some cases this is not possible for various reasons.

Though, when projects are built, and we have seen them through the entire design process as outlined in this guide, it brings with it immense satisfaction.

We hope that you have found this guide useful, and look forward to receiving your project enquiry very soon, or indeed if you are an existing Client please feel free to let us know if you have any more questions.

On behalf of all of us at DGSM Architecture and our external associates thankyou,

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