

F R E E H A U S

Residential
Client Guide



Featured in Don't Move Improve

Working Hand in Hand with Home Owners

We believe the best results are borne through collaboration. We put our clients needs at the core of our practice and our ways of working to design functional spaces that can be enjoyed by all.

We are an RIBA chartered practice working at all scales, from sensitive design-led interventions within historic contexts and across residential, commercial and civic sectors.

Through our work, we strive to communicate the impact good design can have on the way we live and interact with one another.

As part of our holistic approach to design and architecture, we collaborate with a talented network of craftspeople that share our commitment to quality. Our passion for materials and our attention to detail allows us to achieve meaningful solutions and tailored spaces.



Our Specialties

Each Studio Director has specialist skills that could elevate your project goals. Tom is a qualified Passivhaus Designer and is an expert in sustainable low energy design. Jon is an RIBA Conservation Registrant and has a passion for building heritage.

Providing Reassurance

We appreciate that designing a new home may look like a complex and overwhelming process so we are happy to guide you throughout the entire journey, from inception to completion.

We will help you define and materialise your aspirations and we will tailor our services to meet your specific needs.

“Freehaus have a diligent approach. We trusted them wholeheartedly at every stage of the build and valued their knowledge and contacts to deliver the project that we had always hoped for.”

Client Testimonial

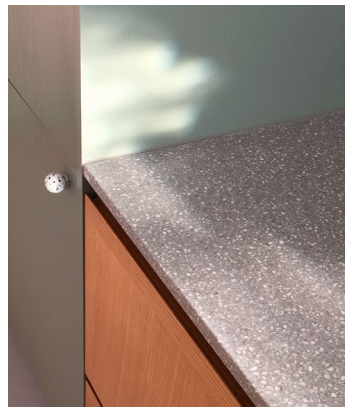


Your Brief, Your Vision

Understanding your goals is what allows us to deliver outstanding, award-winning work. Together, we will establish a brief that reflects your goals, your needs, your budget and how you intend to use your home now and in the future. We will then document, illustrate and iterate to envision the spaces you aspire to call home.

Working to Budgets

We enjoy designing to both large and small budgets, as creativity and joy can be found in everything. Nothing however gives us more pleasure than delivering results, which exceed expectations whilst also being budget sensitive.



Navigating Statutory Submissions

Navigating statutory submissions can be a daunting prospect but this is our forte. Let us guide you through pre-planning, planning, party wall and building control matters.

Our vast experience gives us the confidence to achieve planning successfully. We are proud of our 100% planning permission record that includes homes built within the open countryside and greenbelt, conservation areas, areas of outstanding natural beauty, extensions and adaptations to listed buildings and difficult urban infill plots.



“The work of Freehaus is meticulous. Every detail is considered, from a practical, cost effective and compliance angle to ensuring the overall design is not compromised and that above all, the space remains highly functional, providing a deep sense of well-being for those who use it.”

Client Testimonial



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Our Involvement

We love to work with our clients from inception to completion. We relish site delivery and we strive to build out our design work. We believe this process not only achieves better results for our clients but it also enhances our design skills and it propels us to the forefront of construction innovation.

However, we are flexible and you as the client are empowered to choose the right fit for your project. You decide on how much work you want to commission us to do, from a standalone feasibility study to obtaining a planning permission, through to overseeing construction to completion. You pick the right fit for your needs. Please refer to the Glossary for details.

“The design appears modest, but packs a real punch in spatial quality, while ticking all the boxes when it comes to the clients’ expectations.”

Wilton Way (above) *in* Wallpaper*

“I was looking for a designer who could not only give me ideas but also take me through the whole process, from design and permissions to tender and site supervision.”

Client Testimonial

“Freehaus’ commitment to ensuring this project was a success, continuously exceeded our expectations.”

Client Testimonial



RIBA 

Conservation Registrant

RIBA 

Chartered Practice

Registration Number 20013331

Appointments

You can choose to appoint Freehaus for a number of roles depending on the needs of your project. We can be appointed as Architect, Lead Consultant, CDM Principal Designer, Contract Administrator, Project Manager, and Interior Designer. Ultimately we are here to support you and provide specialist professional services that are tailored to your needs. Please refer to the Glossary for details.

Architectural Fees

For residential clients we are always happy to undertake a one-off consultation to provide some initial guidance on fee estimations as we appreciate this may be the first time you engage in such a process.

To estimate this we might first visit the property and take an initial brief to best understand the scope and scale of the project you have in mind.

We then provide every client with a full scope of services and a corresponding cost breakdown before we put pen to paper.

Depending on the complexity of the project and the level of our involvement we calculate our fees as a percentage of the construction cost, as a fixed lump sum or on an hourly-rate basis.

This way our clients are well informed from the beginning and before they commit to their architectural journey.

Get in Touch

If you would like to find out how we can help you realise your project, contact us at:

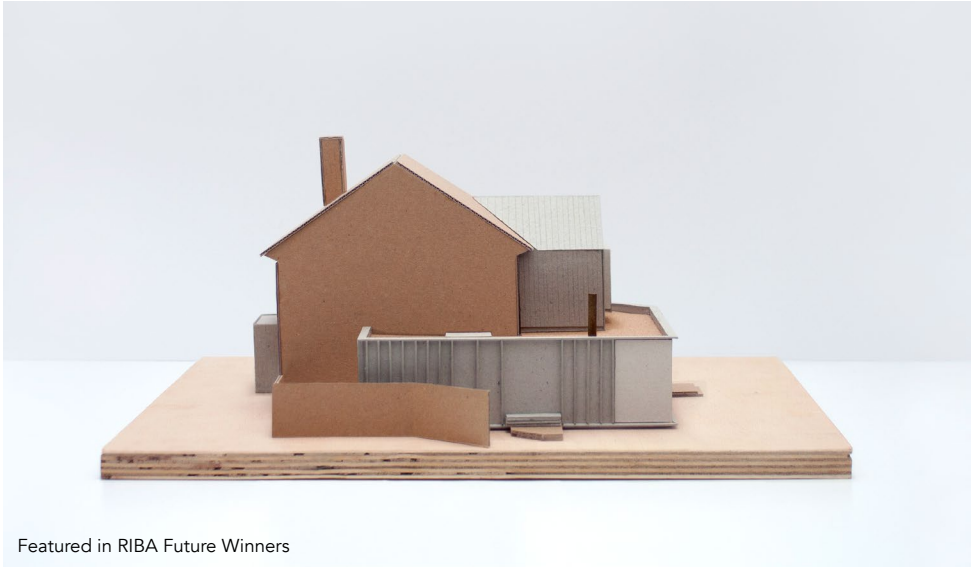
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F R E E H A U S

Residential
Project Stages



Featured in RIBA Future Winners

1 Preparation and Briefing

During this stage the project brief is established and the project objectives are documented. These might include quality benchmarks and outcomes such as sustainable aspirations and budget definition.

We undertake preliminary appraisals to assess the feasibility of the project against the parameters established and within the site and planning context.

The achieved outcome will enable you to understand the best way in which to take your project forward.

2 Concept Design

During this stage a single design is prepared, built upon the outcomes of the feasibility study. Depending upon the complexity and specifics of your brief this may include inputs from specialist consultants such as structural engineers or environmental building services engineers or a cost consultant.

These outcomes will enable us to finalise and document the brief.

If statutory consents are deemed to be necessary, we first test the viability of the proposal through a formal pre-application submission in order to obtain advice from the local planning authority.

* These stages are based upon the RIBA Plan of Work 2020.

www.ribaplanofwork.com



3 Spatial Coordination

During this stage the design is developed in response to the inputs provided by all specialist consultants and the advice received through the formal pre-application consultation.

The design at this stage will provide solutions to your concerns and reflect the aspirations documented in your brief that also accord with planning policy.

The design will also capture the necessary third party inputs in order to validate a planning application.

If planning is necessary, we will prepare and collate the required information and formally submit this to the local authority as a full planning submission on your behalf.

4 Technical Design

During this stage we will start focusing on the detail. This is the point at which we make your building perform and comply with the Building Regulations. We prepare information to be submitted to building control, utilities companies and/or party wall surveyors, as required.

Once conditional building control approval is confirmed, the design is prepared for tendering to contractors for construction.

We will short-list a number of contractors and together we will conduct interviews to select the best fit and assess tender returns.



5 Manufacturing and Construction

When a contractor is identified, we will finalise the necessary contract documentation and construction information prior to the works starting on site. During this time the contractor will mobilise their team.

The architect and design team, led typically by the contract administrator will undertake frequent site visits to ensure the works are being executed in line with the drawings and specifications and where applicable and that the payments are verified against works completed.

Towards the end of the construction period, the Contractor will collate a list of minor defects. This will be scheduled and handed to the client and updated to include any further defects in the works, arising over a fixed period of time as dictated by the contract - typically a 6-12 month period.

Glossary

Feasibility Study

A preliminary study focused on identifying constraints and maximising opportunities within a project. It visualises the brief against the project context and sets out avenues for design development.

Pre-Planning Submission

Local planning authorities provide pre-application advice on proposals that may require planning permission or a related consent. Whilst not a guarantee of planning permission, obtaining pre-application advice may increase the chances of a successful planning outcome.

Planning & Listed Building Consent

Planning permission and Listed Building Consent is required for any building work significant enough to not be considered 'permitted development'. This involves a formal application to the local borough or district council. If your building is listed, a further Listed Building Consent will be required.

Building Control

Building Control ensures that buildings are designed and constructed in accordance with the Building Regulations. A conditional approval is obtained against the design information prepared by the architect and specialist consultants. An appointed building control officer then checks the execution of the works by the contractors on site.

Tender

The process of selecting a contractor which involves issuing detailed design information to a short-list of contractors and assessing their returns based on price and previous experience.

Party Wall

A party wall or structure is one that exists on the boundary between two properties. The owner of each property possesses rights over that wall or structure and as such a 'Party Wall Notice/Award' may be drawn up to permit any work that shall affect that wall or structure. Should this be required we would advise a

Party Wall Surveyor is appointed and can assist you with their appointment.

Architect

Architects are highly skilled and professionally trained to turn your aspirations into reality. They will guide you through the design, planning and construction process whether you are constructing a new building or adapting an existing property.

Architects apply impartial and creative thinking to projects large and small. They add value, whether from maximising light and space, adding functionality, or achieving the best return on your investment.

Lead Consultant

The Lead Consultant is the consultant that directs the work of the consultant team and is the main point of contact for communications between the client and the consultant team. This is a role and responsibility that the Architect can assume if required by the client.

The Contract

This is a legally binding document that is entered into by the Client and the Principal Contractor. It not only sets out what the building works are it also sets out how the building works are to be executed, how changes are to be managed and payments are to be made. As professionals, we recommend a contract to be drawn up no matter how small your project.

Contract Administration

The process of administering the Contract undertaken by a qualified individual called a Contract Administrator. This can be the Architect or it could be a Cost Consultant if you have one appointed. Whilst the Contract Administrator is appointed by the client, when certifying or giving an assessment or decision, they are to act impartially and reasonably to ensure the works are being executed in line with the contract.

CDM Regulations

Construction Design and Management Regulations 2015 are applicable to most residential

projects and govern health and safety matters in design and in construction. If more than one contractor is to be involved in your project then as a client it is likely you will need to appoint (in writing) a Principal Designer and a Principal Contractor.

Principal Designer

This is a role often undertaken by the Architect as a separate appointment. The Principal Designer is required to plan, manage and coordinate the planning and design work. Appoint them as early as possible so that they can help you gather information about the project and ensure that the designers have done all they can to check that your project can be built safely.

Principal Contractor

A Principal Contractor is required to plan, manage and coordinate the construction work. Appoint them as early as possible so they are involved in discussions with the principal designer about the work.

Passivhaus

Internationally recognised as the leading benchmark in low energy and sustainable residential design requiring great skill and knowledge to design and execute.

Surveys

Surveys are investigative studies commissioned by the client. They provide valuable insight into a variety of existing conditions that may or may not affect a design response. Although they come at a cost they can significantly reduce project risks and the discovery of costly unknowns when on site. Domestic clients might commission surveys such that include but are not limited to: measured surveys, drainage surveys, structural surveys, asbestos surveys, thermal studies, etc.

Utilities

Your building work may affect public utilities on or around your property. As such permissions may be required from the owners of these utilities such as the Water Authority or the Electricity Board.