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Work Stages Guide

RIBA Plan of Work 2020

October 2025

Your Personal Architect

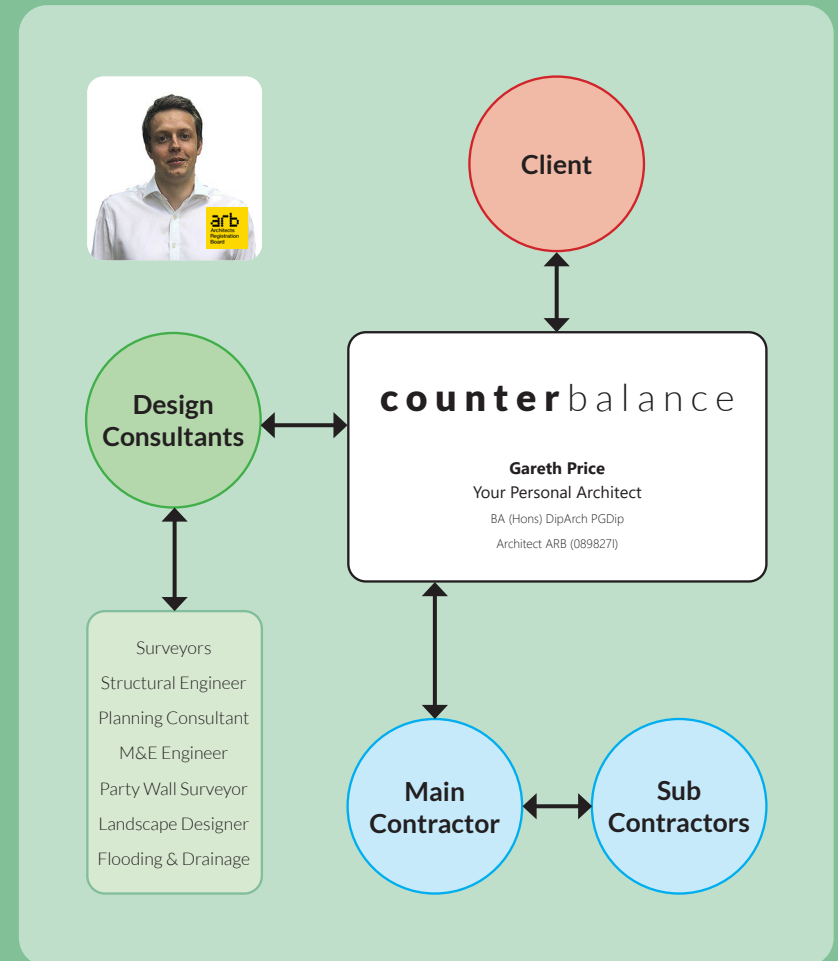
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Counterbalance

Counterbalance is an architectural studio based in Greenwich, founded by architect Gareth Price in 2021 focusing on residential architecture. The name of the studio represents the belief that successful projects are achieved when all parties involved equally benefit from the process: balancing all interests to an optimal point of equilibrium, where homes are built sustainable, quickly, to a high quality and tailored to the lifestyles of our clients.

Our Process

The cost of architectural services can vary based on a range of factors, and while it may be tempting to go with the cheapest option, it is important to consider the long-term value of your property and the importance of investing in quality design and construction. A poorly designed and executed project can be a source of frustration, disappointment and a lost opportunity to maximise the full value of your property. Our process, experience and knowledge will far outweigh our cost as we are able to identify issues and find solutions, saving time and money. Your construction project will become complex with many stakeholders and decisions. We minimise what could be a stressful and overwhelming experience by acting as your personal architect, guiding you through the process and ensuring the end product reflects your needs and personality, while meeting your financial and time frame goals.



RIBA Work Stage Summary

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RIBA Work Stage & Appointment

We typically divide our fees into three packages of work. Our clients find this is the most helpful way to pay and procure our services.

These are based on our industry standard appointment, Royal Institute of British Architects Domestic or Standard Professional Services Contract 2020, specifically designed for architectural services on domestic or commercial projects. This comprehensive digital contract ensures clarity and protection for both parties, detailing costs, duties, and responsibilities.

It offers flexibility to pause or cancel services, as well as expand or reduce the scope of work as needed. Our packages are aligned with the work stages outlined in this document, ensuring a seamless and efficient project experience.



Digital contract (Included in our fee)



RIBA Work Stage Packages

RIBA STAGES 1-3 - PLANNING PACKAGE

Stage 1 - Preparation & Brief (Measured Building Survey)

Stage 2 - Concept Design (Pre-Application)

Stage 3 - Spatial Co-ordination (Planning Submission)



RIBA STAGE 4 - TECHNICAL PACKAGE

Stages 4A - Technical Design Package (Building Control)

Stages 4B - Tender Package (Select Builder)



RIBA STAGES 5&6 - CONSTRUCTION PACKAGE

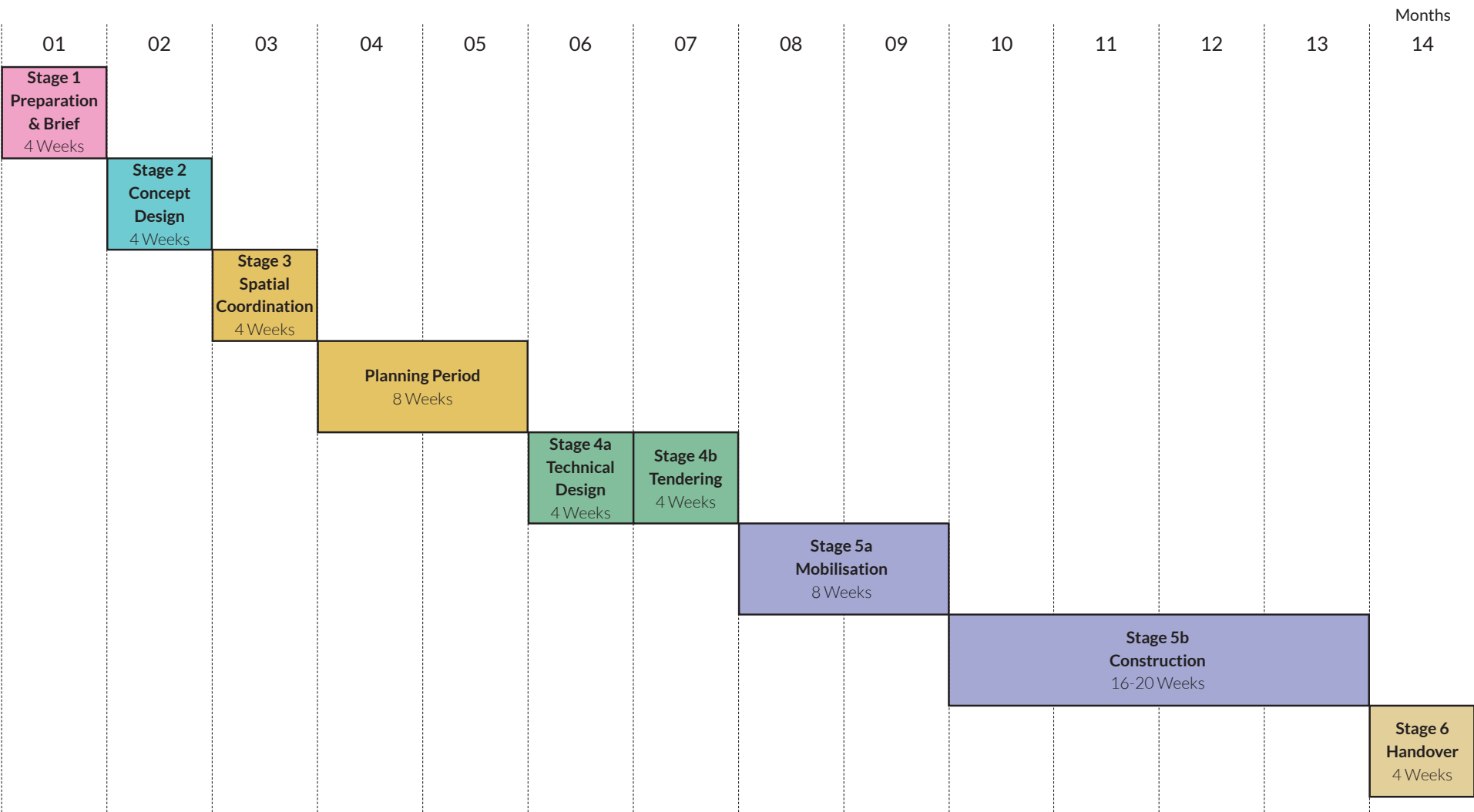
Stage 5A - Mobilisation Period

Stage 5B - Construction Period

Stage 6 - Handover

House Extension Typical Programme

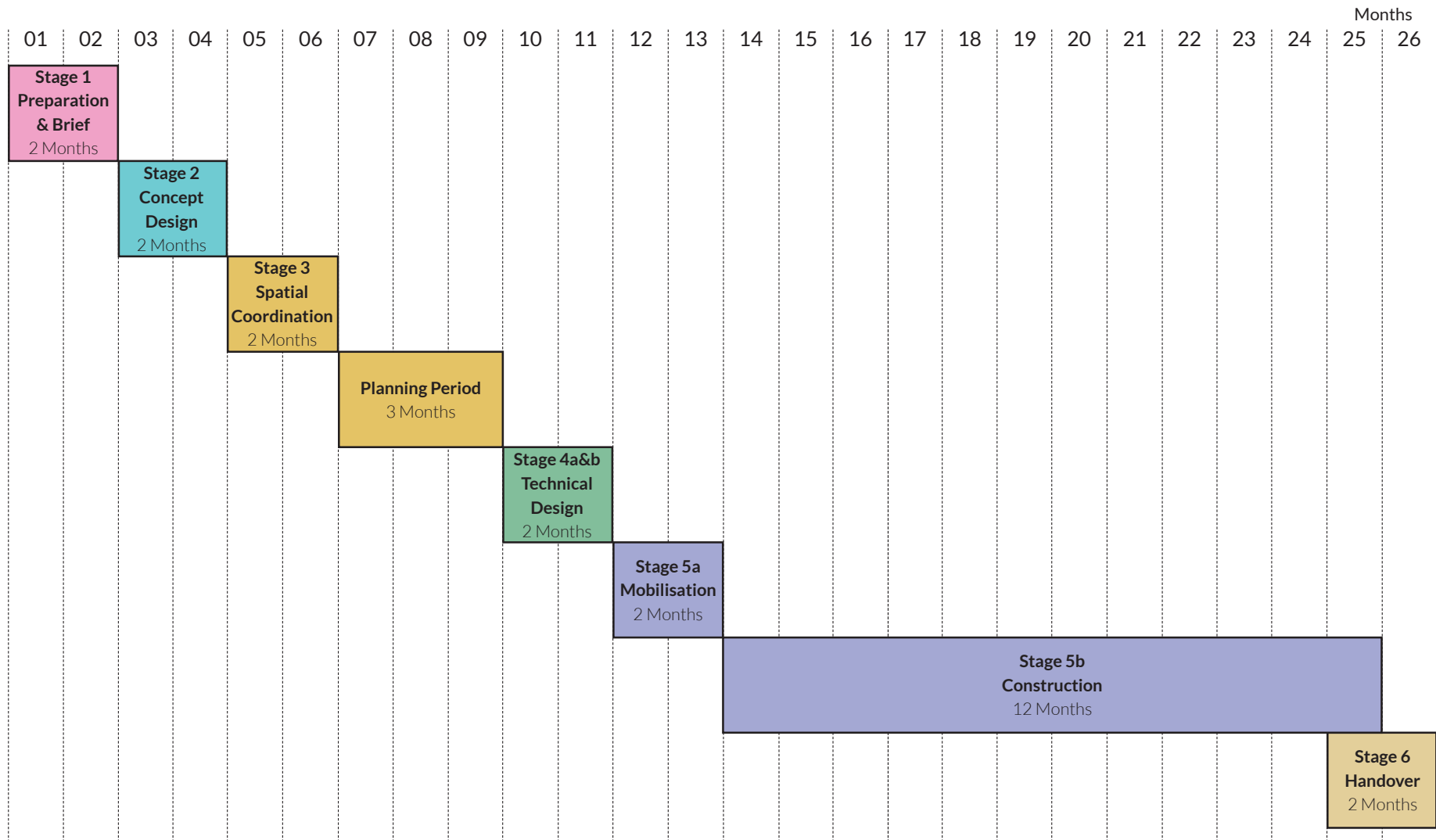
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Note: Counterbalance will endeavour to meet our typical programme; however, we cannot guarantee the time frame can be achieved due to external/third party factors impacting the project.

New Build House Typical Programme

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Note: Counterbalance will endeavour to meet our typical programme; however, we cannot guarantee the time frame can be achieved due to external/third party factors impacting the project.

Stages 1-3 - Planning Package

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Stage 1 - Preparation & Brief

TYPICAL DURATION 4 WEEKS

STAGE TASKS:

- Visit your Property or Site and Carry out an Initial Appraisal
- Make our Clients Aware of their CDM Health & Safety duties
- Organise Building Measurement Survey by Third Party
Costs Vary between £900+VAT (Extensions) / £2,500+VAT (New Build)
- Set-up Existing Drawings (Plans, Elevations & Sections)
- Organise Building CCTV Inspection & Survey by Third Party (If Required)
Costs Vary between £300-£600+VAT
- Title Deed/Plan Search & Check for any Constraints (£13)
- Local Water Authority Asset Search & Check for any Constraints (£150)
- Check Local Flooding Information of Area & Property
- Check Planning History, Site History & Planning Restrictions
- Establish Project Programme & Budget
- Initial Project Brief - Client Aspirations, Requirements & Precedents
- Stage 1 Report Summary of all the information above

Stage 2 - Concept Design

TYPICAL DURATION 4-8 WEEKS

STAGE TASKS:

- Produce 2D Plan Layout Options for Client Review
- Establish Wall, Floor & Roof Build-ups
- Present Precedent Images for your Project
- Meeting with Client/Family to fix Plan/Layout and Approach
- Model Plan into 3D Model - External/Internal Design and Materials
- Meeting with Client/Family to fix Plan and External Design
- Pre-application Meetings with Local Authority (If Required)
(£350-£1,500+VAT - Depends on local council and number of meetings)
- Undertake CDM Health & Safety Designer Risk Assessment
- Update Project Programme & Budget where required
- Finalise Project Brief - Client Aspirations & Requirements
- Stage 2 Report Confirmation of Preferred Design

Stages 1-3 - Planning Package

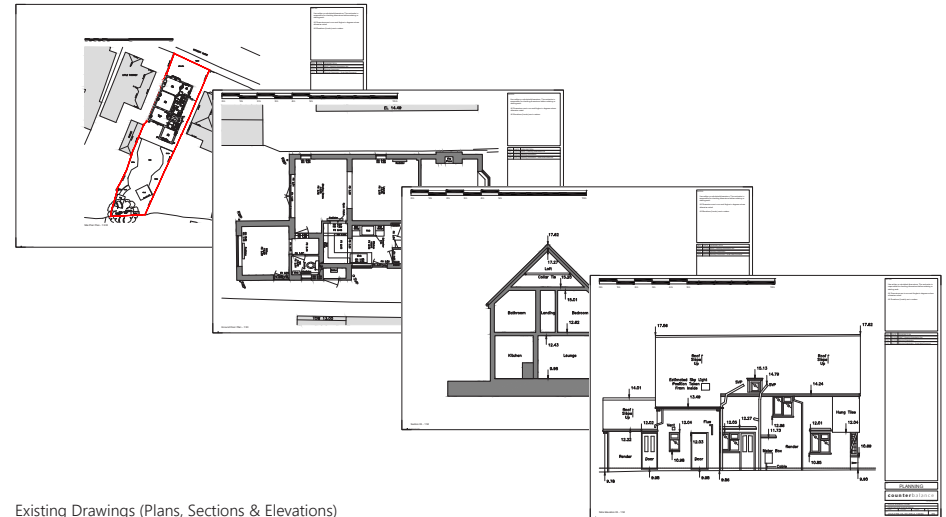
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Stage 3 - Spatial Co-ordination

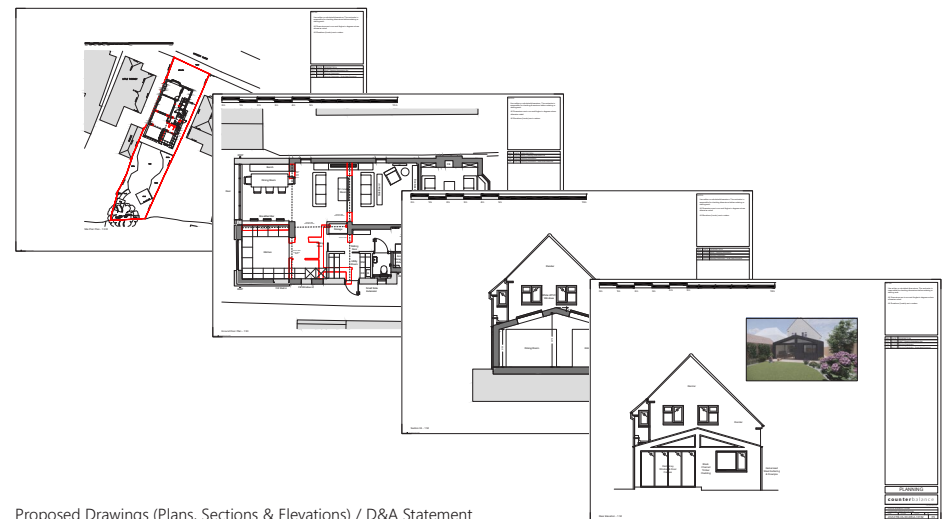
TYPICAL DURATION 20 WEEKS

STAGE TASKS:

- Commission Specialist consultants such as Ecology & Transport
(Allow for a Provisional Amount of £5,000+VAT (New Build House Only))
- Submit Drawings to Freeholder for in-principle approval (If required)
- Prepare Planning Drawings (Plans, Elevations, Sections)
- Prepare Design & Access Statement (Full Planning Applications)
- Prepare 3D Visuals for Planning Applications
- Submit Drawings and other Documentation to Local Authority
(Householder Application £350+VAT / Full Planning Application £650+VAT)
- Manage Planning Process with Local Authority
- Gain Planning Permission
- Update CDM Health & Safety Designer Risk Assessment
- Agree CDM Health & Safety file contents
- Update Project Programme & Budget where required
- Stage 3 Report (Once Planning Permission has been Granted)



Existing Drawings (Plans, Sections & Elevations)



Proposed Drawings (Plans, Sections & Elevations) / D&A Statement

Stages 4A&B - Technical Design Package

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Stage 4 - Technical Design

TYPICAL DURATION - 8 WEEKS

STAGE TASKS:

- Appoint Structural Engineer (£1,000-£3,500+VAT)
- Appoint Quantity Surveyor (For New Build House/High Value Project)
- Appoint Mechanical Engineer (For New Build House/High Value Project)
- Trial Pit to Confirm Ground Conditions & Foundations (By others £500)
- Prepare Architectural Technical Tender Pack - See scope to right >
- Invite Builders to Tender for Project
- Appraise & Report on Tenders
- Submit Pre-commencement Planning Conditions
- Update CDM Health & Safety Designer Risk Assessment
- Maintain & Update Project Programme & Budget

RIBA STAGES 4A - TECHNICAL PACKAGE

Stages 4A - Technical Design Package (Building Control)

- General Assembly (Plans, Sections & Elevations)
- 1:5 Construction Details (Plans & Sections)
- Kitchen, Furniture & Bathroom Design & Drawings
- Lighting & Electrical Design & Drawings
- Drainage, Ventilation & Heating Drawings
- Finishes - Floors, Skirting & Painting Drawings
- Plastering Drawings (Ceiling & Walls)
- Window & Door Schedule
- Schedule of Works
- Specification
- CDM - Principal Designer - H&S File

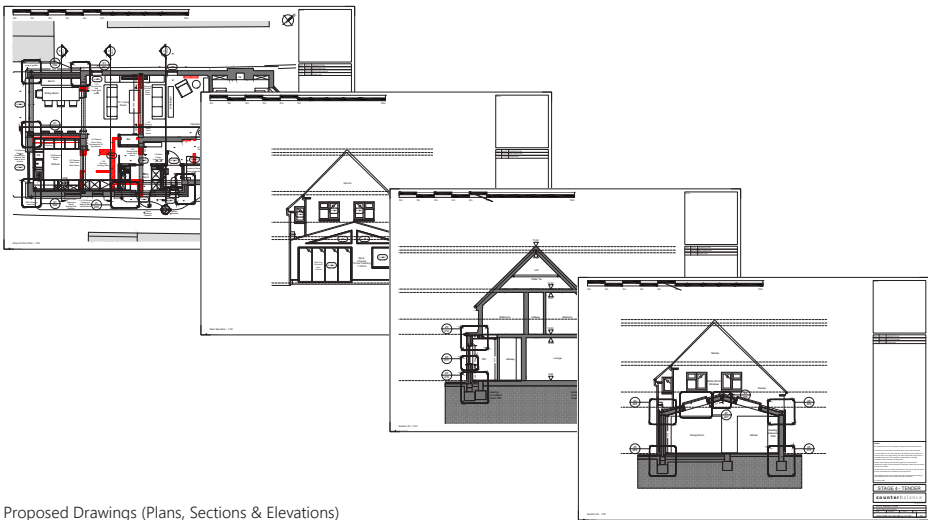
RIBA STAGES 4B - TENDERING PACKAGE

Stages 4B - Tender Package

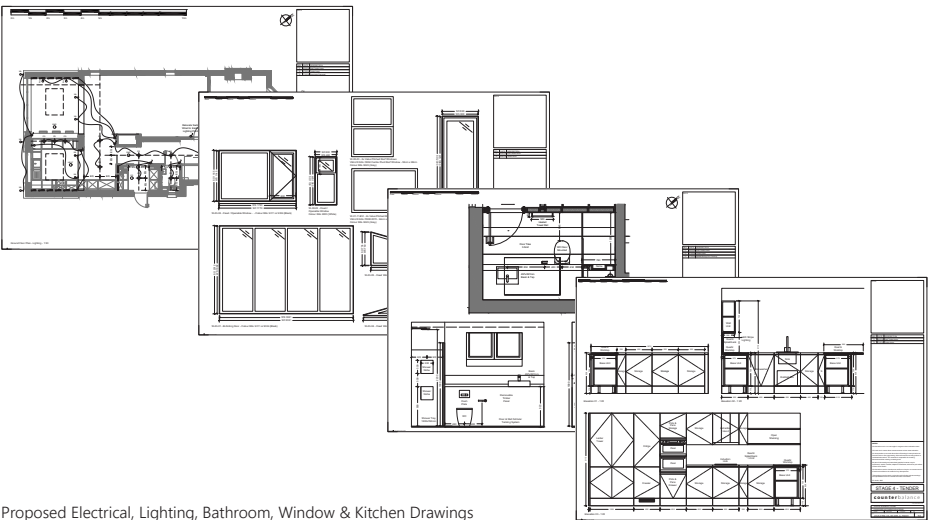
Tendering/Negotiating with builders/contractors on your behalf, managing the process and advising on the quotes.

Stages 4A&B - Technical Design Package

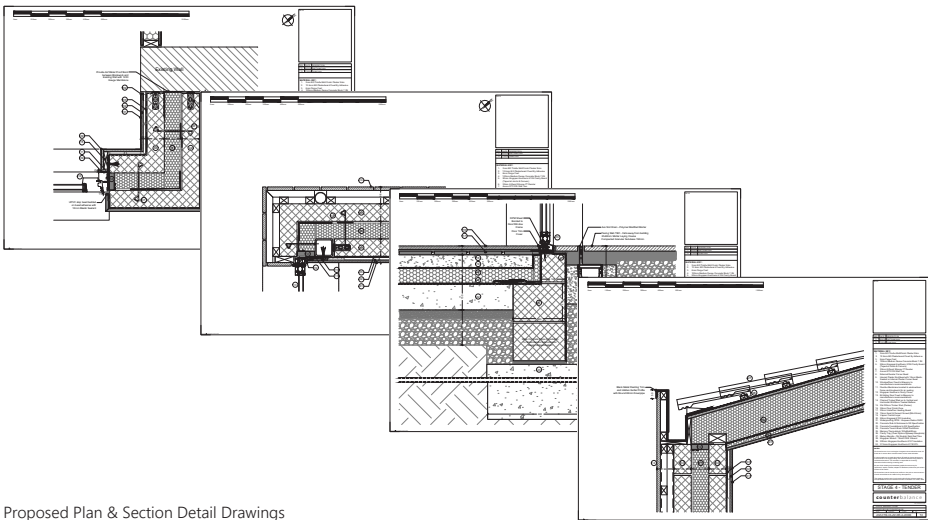
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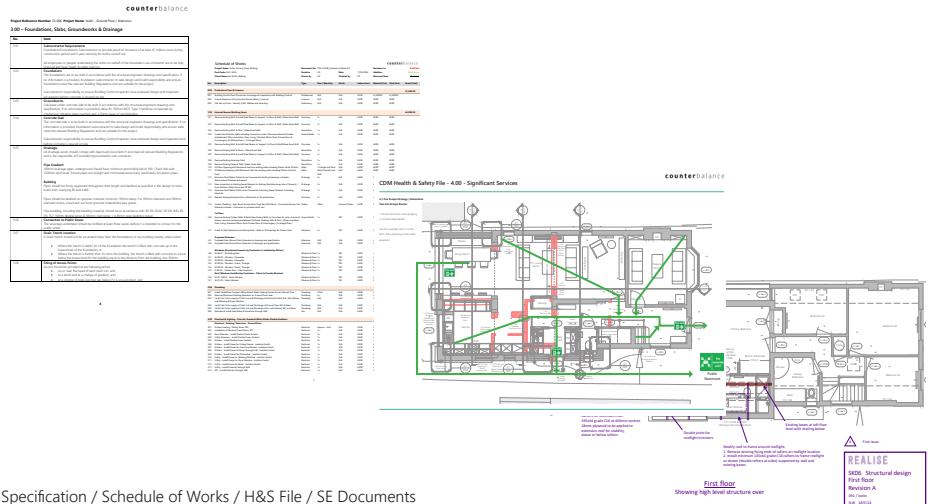
Proposed Drawings (Plans, Sections & Elevations)



Proposed Electrical, Lighting, Bathroom, Window & Kitchen Drawings



Proposed Plan & Section Detail Drawings



Specification / Schedule of Works / H&S File / SE Documents

Stages 5A&B - Construction Package

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Stage 5A - Mobilisation

TYPICAL DURATION - 8 WEEKS

STAGE TASKS:

- Issue Construction Drawings / CDM Information for Review with Builder
- Issue Construction Programme & Cost Information
- Submit Full Plans or Building Notice Building Control Application
(Building Control Fee £1,000-£2,000 - Depending on Scope of Works)
- Arrange Local Water Authority Build-over Agreement (If Required)
(Water Build-Over Agreement £150)
- Issue Party Wall Notice to Neighbours
- If Disputes arises Arrange a Party Wall Award (By others)
(Party Wall Agreements £1,500-£2,500 per neighbour)
- Arrange a Licence to Alter Agreement if required (By others)
Licence to Alter Application: *(£1,500+VAT (Depends on the Freeholder))*
- Submit Pre-commencement Planning Conditions if required
(Planning Condition £250-£350 per condition)
- Agree Construction Programme / Start Date with Builder
- Arrange Building Contract - *(£100)*

Stage 5B - Construction

TYPICAL DURATION - 4-12 MONTHS

STAGE TASKS:

- Contract Administration Procedures - Respond to Site Queries / Manage Variations or Client Changes / Issue instructions to Builders
- Manage/Advise on Procurement of Materials
- Weekly Visual Site Inspections - Review Progress against programme
- Financial Management and Reporting
- Certify Payments to Main Contractors & Sub-contractors
- Certify Practical Completion
- Submit Applications to Discharge any Construction Stage or Pre-occupancy Planning Conditions

Stages 6 - Construction Package

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Stage 6 - Handover

TYPICAL DURATION - 1-12 MONTHS

STAGE TASKS:

- Carry out Visual Site Inspection for Defects / Issue a Schedule of Defective Works
- Liaise with Builder in relation to the Making Good of Defects
- Inspect Remedial Works / Certify when Defective Works have been rectified
- Assist the Client with the Final Account and Issue Final Certificate
- Handover the Finished Project to the Client





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