

**KENNETH W REED**  **ASSOCIATES**  
chartered architects



## Working with an architect on your home

Whether you are planning to build a new house, to alter or extend your present home, to employ a builder or just do it yourself, it makes sense to consult Kenneth W Reed + Associates.

## Why you need an Architect

Kenneth W Reed + Associates will provide you with much more than just the drawings for your new home or alteration. You will be fully involved in creating a totally tailored solution for your living needs. We have the experience to see your project safely through to completion, overseeing the design, the planning and building regulations, the builders and your budget.

You can commission Kenneth W Reed + Associates to manage any or all parts of the design and construction process. All their architects are trained to:

- Help you to define your objectives for the project, identify the risks involved and interpret your ideas imaginatively and expertly.
- Work with you to develop a design that will interpret your ideas imaginatively, maximise your investment, be economic to build and run and, of course, bring you years of comfort and pleasure.
- Help to secure the approvals that will be needed before your project can go ahead, including the preparation of applications to the local authority for planning consent (which certifies that the project meets rules governing the use and form of buildings) and for Building Regulations certification (which covers the functional requirements of buildings to safeguard the health and safety of the people using them).
- Be able to manage the construction phase by helping you to select suitable builders, obtaining competitive prices for construction, monitoring progress, standards and safety on site, arranging the input of other design specialist and overseeing the co-ordination of the construction through to its successful completion.

## Setting Your Brief

Your brief should be clear and unambiguous and it should enshrine a common understanding between you and your architect. Seek Kenneth W Reed + Associates' help in formulating the brief. The process may involve a number of discussions and help to establish the dialogue between you that the project needs. Above all the project brief should describe:

- The functions of the finished project.  
Who will use it and for what? Have you visualised how these activities will be accommodated and provided for in the new space(s)?
- Your motivations and expectations.  
What do you hope to achieve by this project, in the short and long term, for yourself and others?
- A design direction.  
Contrasting or in keeping with existing buildings? Contemporary or traditional? Are there certain materials, fixtures or finishes you favour? Is sustainability an issue for you?
- Authority for decision making.  
Who will sign off decisions about design, about costs and about day to day matters on site?
- Timetables and budgets.  
When should key stages be completed, how much should they cost and how will they be financed?

A good thorough brief will form the basis of the professional agreement you sign with your architect.

## Protecting your Interests

You are likely to be making a large financial and emotional commitment to your project, which makes standards and performance from others all the more important. Using Kenneth W Reed + Associates provides you with extra safeguards to ensure that your designer acts with integrity and gives independent advice in support of your interests.

Only qualified architects registered with the Architects Registration Board (ARB) are entitled to call themselves "architects" in the UK and only registered architects who are members of RIBA and adhere to the RIBA Code of Professional Conduct can be called "Chartered Architects". They will have completed 7 years of training.

Kenneth W Reed + Associates comply with these credentials.

Architects are required by UK law to be registered with the ARB and to comply with the Board's Standards of Conduct and Practice. The ARB also has an obligation to represent consumers interests and in the final resort architects are subject to the disciplinary sanction of the Board in respect of "unacceptable professional conduct or serious professional incompetence". The requirements of the RIBA and ARB codes of Professional Conduce include:

- Maintenance of professional indemnity insurance cover appropriate to the scale and type of work undertaken.
- Provisional of adequate competence and resources.

## The Client/Architect Agreement

Once your have selected the responsibilities of each party and the services to be provided by the architect should be set down in a formal agreement.

When you have work done to your home you are acting in your private capacity, i.e. as a 'consumer', which is where the Unfair Terms of Consumer Contracts Regulations 1994 come into play. Kenneth W Reed + Associates will discuss these issues with you so the terms of your agreement are fully understood and "individually negotiated in good faith". The agreement will record:

- Details of your project and the services to be provided by the architect.
- The calculation of fees and expenses.
- The appointment of any other consultants.
- The amount of the architect's insurance cover and period of liability.
- Dispute resolution procedures.

You may find the conditions and Schedule for a Domestic Project will be suitable for this purpose. This states in plain simple terms the basic responsibilities of the architect which include:

- To perform the services required using reasonable skill and care.
- To act as your representative.
- To advise you on compliance with statutory requirements.
- To keep you updated on progress and on issues affecting time, cost or quality.
- Not to make any material changes to the services or the agree design except in an emergency.
- Not to subject contract any obligation under the agreement.

When you have discussed and agreed all the details Kenneth W Reed + Associates will draft a Letter of Agreement, which you both sign to complete the contract.

## Fees and Expenses

There is no standard or recommended basis for these calculations and the fee is usually a matter for negotiation. The fee will reflect the degree of personal service and bespoke design that your project involves. Other factors will include the location and size of the practice, its reputation and specialist skills.

Independent annual surveys of fees record the general level of architect's fees for providing a full service for mostly new private houses to be between 8% and 12% of the construction cost. On projects to refurbish or extend houses or for repair and conservation work on historic buildings the fee can be a larger percentage of the building cost.

Fees for preparing the design and submitting the planning application are generally between 3% and 5% of the construction costs.

Kenneth W Reed + Associates generally charge at the lower end of these charges.

## Fee Option

Kenneth W Reed + Associates quote their fee as a percentage of the building cost or as a lump sum. In cases where the scope of their work is harder to predict or for services such as surveys or party wall advice, the quote will usually consist of an hourly or daily rate, together with an estimate of the time required.

## Expenses

These will be added to the fee and will be charged for items such as the costs of travel, copying drawings and documents and for making planning or Building Regulations applications.

## Payment

When retained for the entire project Kenneth W Reed + Associates will typically invoice about one third of the fee during the design stage, the same at the construction information stage and the balance during and following construction. Invoices are usually issued monthly but regular payments can be budgeted over a period. Alternatively fees might be paid on completion of each stage. This is generally negotiable.

## Legislation

It is important before you start your project that you are aware of the approvals that will be needed from the local authority for Planning and Building Regulations, as well as legislation that might affect your plans such as party wall regulations.

Kenneth W Reed + Associates can guide you through all of these matters as they develop the design. They will also be able to make the necessary submissions for approvals and handle negotiations with the statutory bodies.

## The Building Contract

This is a vital document – the legally binding commitment between your builder and you as the client to deliver your project. Your architect can administer this contract on your behalf.

As we all know it is not uncommon for building projects to contain hidden surprises – structural quirks or unexpected ground conditions for example – that can impact on the design and possibly on the building cost. The best way of preparing yourself is an adequate written contract, designed to manage such events fairly from each party's point of view.

There is a range of standard forms of contract tailored to different size projects and Kenneth W Reed + Associates will be able to advise you on the one best suited to your needs.