

Residential Projects

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Residential architecture and development is rewarding, but it also has particular challenges and risks.

In the last couple of years we've been working on more residential projects. This is partly due to an increase in interesting enquiries as regeneration and growth in North Kent gathers pace.

In this brochure, we highlight some of the key considerations for residential developments and show how we can add value. We've also included some examples of recent and current residential projects.

Our clients include homeowners, self-builders and residential developers. And our work includes extensions, refurbishments, new-build single homes, multi-home developments and apartment buildings. Many of our projects are in conservation areas, are listed buildings or involve difficult sites and challenging briefs.

The starting point for all our residential projects is to ensure the project is deliverable, on time and on budget. Our focus is on our residential clients' needs. We then combine our practical architectural flair with our passion for sustainable architecture, contemporary design and heritage.

Contact us to find out how we can help you to achieve a successful residential development.

Feasibility

Feasibility looks at whether something can be done.

We work with our developer clients on the feasibility of a site they have purchased or may be about to purchase.

This work is crucial, as it covers all the technical challenges you may face when developing a site and the likelihood of gaining planning permission, if it's not already in place.

Feasibility at its simplest starts with a preliminary site visit and desktop study to assess the site, local conditions and identify potential risks.

This includes the number, size and quality of the houses or apartment to be built.

Additional studies, surveys or investigations may be suggested to check the level of risk, the feasibility and the cost of mitigating them. (See First steps for more details).

It's all about minimising risk at the earliest stages of property development project. Carrying out proper site feasibility studies can reduce cost and delays once your development is underway or even point out that a potential site is not worth purchasing.

Viability

Viability looks at whether it is worth doing.

When we work with our developer clients on viability, we look at the price paid for the site, the cost of mitigating site risks, the design and build costs and therefore the potential profitability of the development.

We can help improve the viability of a property development by maximising the saleable square footage from a site.

Our viability work also covers value engineering. This is where we look for cost saving in materials and trades through efficient and innovative building design.

It's about maximising value from your site. (See First steps)

Specific challenges

Competition for sites can be high, in order to secure a site, our developer clients often consider sites with particular technical challenges, including:

- Flood risk
- Difficult terrain and access
- Noise or air quality challenges
- Conservation areas or listed buildings
- Parking or transport challenges
- Rights of light or built-up areas where there is a risk of impacting the amenity of neighbouring properties
- Protected landscapes or habitats

We've built up considerable experience working successfully on difficult sites and challenging briefs. Our clients trust in our ability to deliver.

Gaining planning permission

Understanding the planning system and how to navigate it is crucial to success.

Taking into account the feasibility and viability of a residential development opportunity and any specific challenges that it may face are the first steps toward a successful planning application. Ensuring you are planning a sustainable development is another step.

We have many years experience in gaining planning permissions for residential projects in Kent and elsewhere.

The pre-application process is particularly important, as is our ability to responding to queries, requests for additional information, and objections on behalf of our developer clients.

Our experience in heritage regeneration projects, as well as close working links with specialist planning consultants add to our in-house skills. (See First steps).

Sustainable development

Planners now actively assess the sustainability of a residential property development project, especially residential. But, what does this mean?

It means that planners want to see that your development will add value to the local economy. They want to see good quality homes that promote healthy communities and don't put too much additional pressure on local services.

Climate change, flooding and coastal change, and conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environments are also key factors that planners are looking for.

We have a set of sustainable design principles that we apply as much as possible to all our work. You can find out more by [following this link](#).

Contract administration and project management

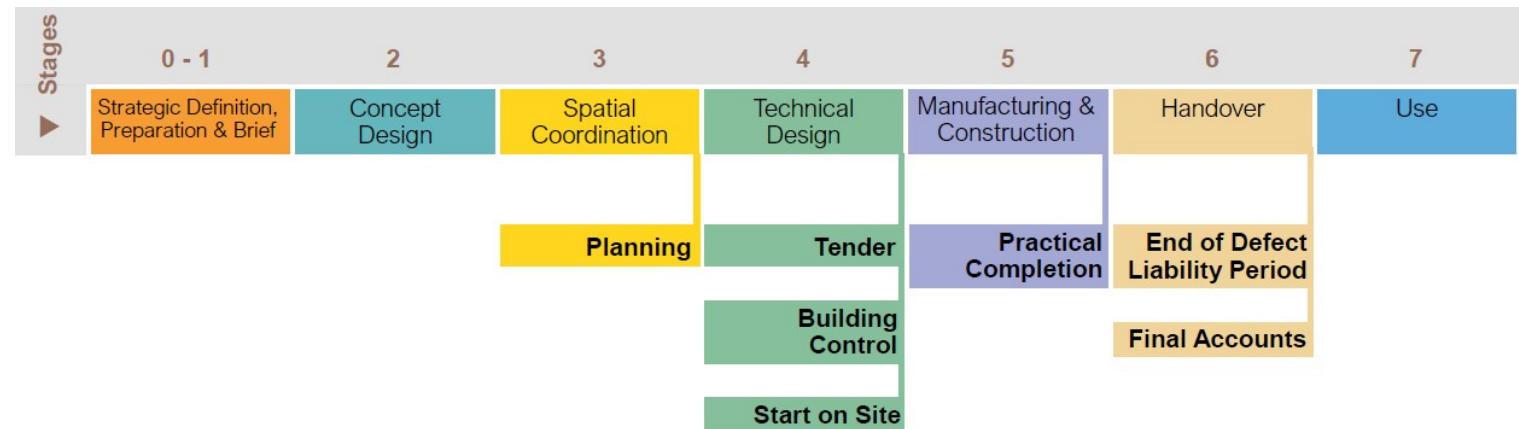
A Contract Administrator is the interface between you and the contractor or contractors working on your site. We can provide this service to our developer clients because we're the principal consultant and we have intimate knowledge of your project.

Construction project management can include contract administration and a whole range of other tasks and responsibilities including monitoring progress on site and dealing with any problems.

Some clients choose to take on one of both roles themselves.

Others prefer us to take on these roles, freeing up their time to look at other opportunities and business matters.

First steps



We can provide architectural services from the start to completion of a project but the key to the success of any project is the quality of the work done at the front end.

If we are looking at a new site from scratch, for example one without planning permission, we recommend the following steps:

- Introductory online / phone meeting followed by a site visit to discuss the project and your aspirations
- Carry out preliminary desktop study of the site. Depending on the circumstances, this could involve a check on the planning history, reports to planning committee, existing planning decisions, planning conditions
- Check the Local Plan to identify key planning policies or guidance which may affect your site
- If necessary, check other online resources such as aerial maps, historic maps, flood maps, etc
- Put together a preliminary sketch concept design to explore options for development
- If appropriate, work with the design team to carry out a preliminary feasibility study which may include a utilities search to identify below ground services, underlying geology and potential ground conditions, and preliminary investigations into any other key factors which may have an impact on your development

First steps continued

- Working with a QS, check the viability of the project by preparing a preliminary development appraisal based on the potential cost of the build and any identified risks, against potential property values advised by you or your property consultant
- After the appraisal, if necessary, workshop and refine the concept design to improve the viability of the project
- Submit a pre-planning application to the Local Authority to consult with the planning department, check planning feasibility, and identify what will be required to obtain planning approval
- If necessary, tweak the scheme and continue to consult with the Local Authority towards a scheme that the Local Authority can agree to in principle
- Manage and coordinate any specialist input required for the planning application, this may include acoustics, air quality, desktop ground contamination studies, tree surveys, drainage surveys etc.
- Prepare, submit and manage the planning application process, working towards a recommendation for approval by the planning department

Beacon Court, Gillingham

Landmark apartment building on the site of a demolished pub

clay architecture



This new apartment building will sit on a prominent corner site in Gillingham.

The old Beacon Court Tavern, from where our building takes its name, occupied the site and fell into disrepair. It was demolished in 2019.

The old tavern had a curved facade at the apex of the two roads it faced. A replica of this much-loved feature will be included on this new building, recreating a local landmark.



We consulted closely with the Local Authority and obtained the planners recommendation for approval, which the planning committee chose to refuse.

Working with our planning consultant we successfully gained planning permission on appeal.

The project will successfully reuse a piece of disused brownfield land and provide much needed new homes.

Beacon Court, Gillingham

Landmark apartment building on the site of a demolished pub

clay architecture

Summer Solstice - 6:30pm—5 Copenhagen Road
June 21st/22nd

Existing building massing



Proposed building massing



Sunlight analysis in response to planning objections to demonstrate that the development does not have a negative impact, but instead improves no. of hours of sunlight to neighbouring properties.

Beacon Court, Gillingham

Landmark apartment building on the site of a demolished pub

clay architecture

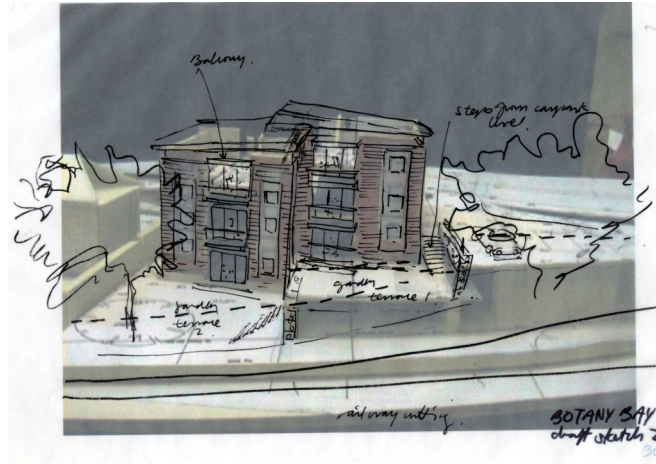
Proposed ground floor plan



Botany Bay, Sevenoaks

New apartment building

clay architecture



Botany Bay is a development of 5 1- and 2-bedroom apartments with stunning views of Sevenoaks Wildfowl Reserve.

This is a steeply sloping site and is wedged between the A25 road and a mainline railway.

The apartments are arranged in pairs around a stair core, with each flat on a split floor level accessed via alternate landings on the dogleg stair.

They are accessed via a footbridge over a four-metre drop. Our design maximises natural light and views of the local nature reserve.



A pre-fabricated panellised timber-frame superstructure sits on a continuous rubber mat, isolating the building from the vibrations of goods trains from the railway cutting at the bottom of the site.

Proposed first floor plan



The Lion Pub, Milton Regis

New apartment building to replace a disused pub

clay architecture



This project is a great example of how an apparently simple planning application can suddenly present unforeseen challenges and how the working relationship between client, architect and others is critical to success.

Following a pre-application consultation process, we supplemented a 21-page design and access statement with a flood risk assessment; groundwater protection strategy; CCTV drainage survey; sustainable drainage strategy; desktop contamination survey; air quality assessment and traffic noise assessment.

We also drafted a detailed heritage statement in response to an 11th hour recommendation for refusal from the conservation officer, which was successful in getting the refusal withdrawn.

Our scheme for a 15-apartment building was approved and will provide much-needed housing in an area of rapid regeneration.

The Lion Pub, Milton Regis

New apartment building to replace a disused pub

clay architecture

Existing ground floor plan



Proposed ground floor plan



Proposed first floor plan



Finding the right balance of parking provision is often key to a successful planning application and maximising the number of units on a site.

Flitch House, Rochester

Extensions to an historic, listed house close to Rochester Cathedral

clay architecture



Built in the 18th Century, this house is Grade II Listed and located in the Rochester Castle and Cathedral Precinct of the Historic Rochester Conservation Area.

Planning approval and listed building consent were secured in close consultation with Historic England, with only minor conditions, which is extraordinary given the significance of the house and the protected views.

The front façade will be extended up a storey, reproducing the historic first-floor windows and cornice and looking as if it has always been there.

Behind this new brick façade will be a contemporary, open plan second floor extension with an M-shaped roof, bi-fold doors opening on to a rooftop sun deck, and a large floor-to-ceiling picture window facing the river.

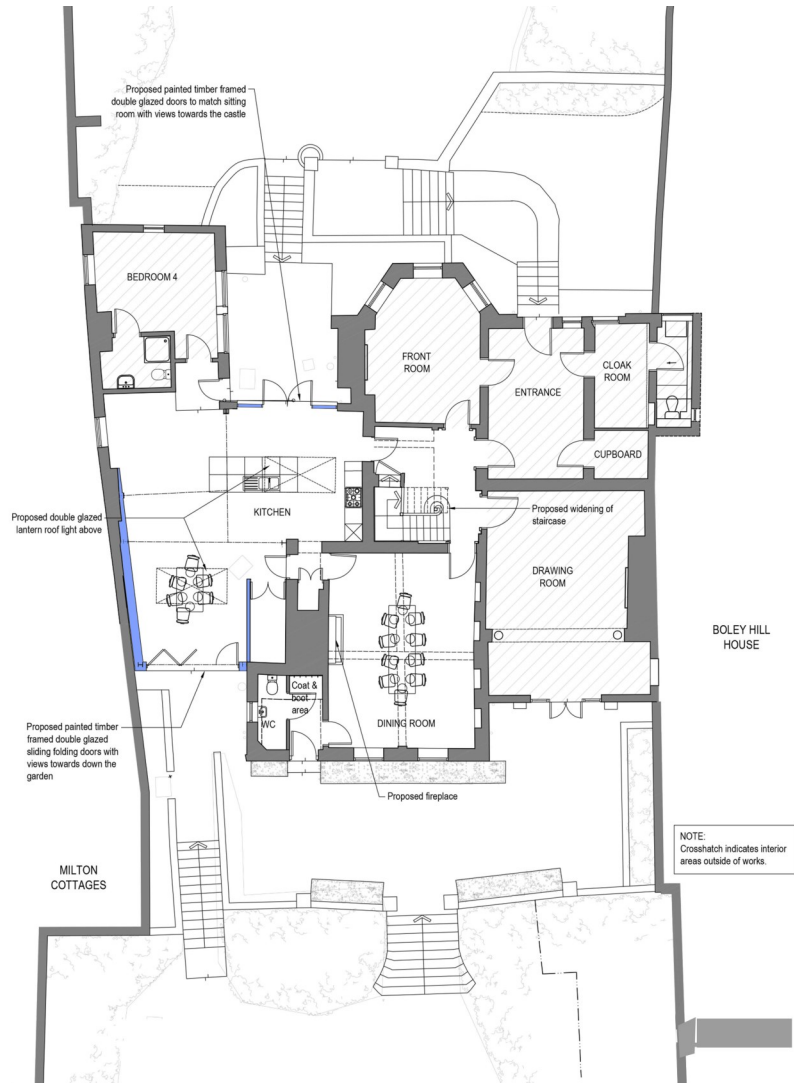


Flitch House, Rochester

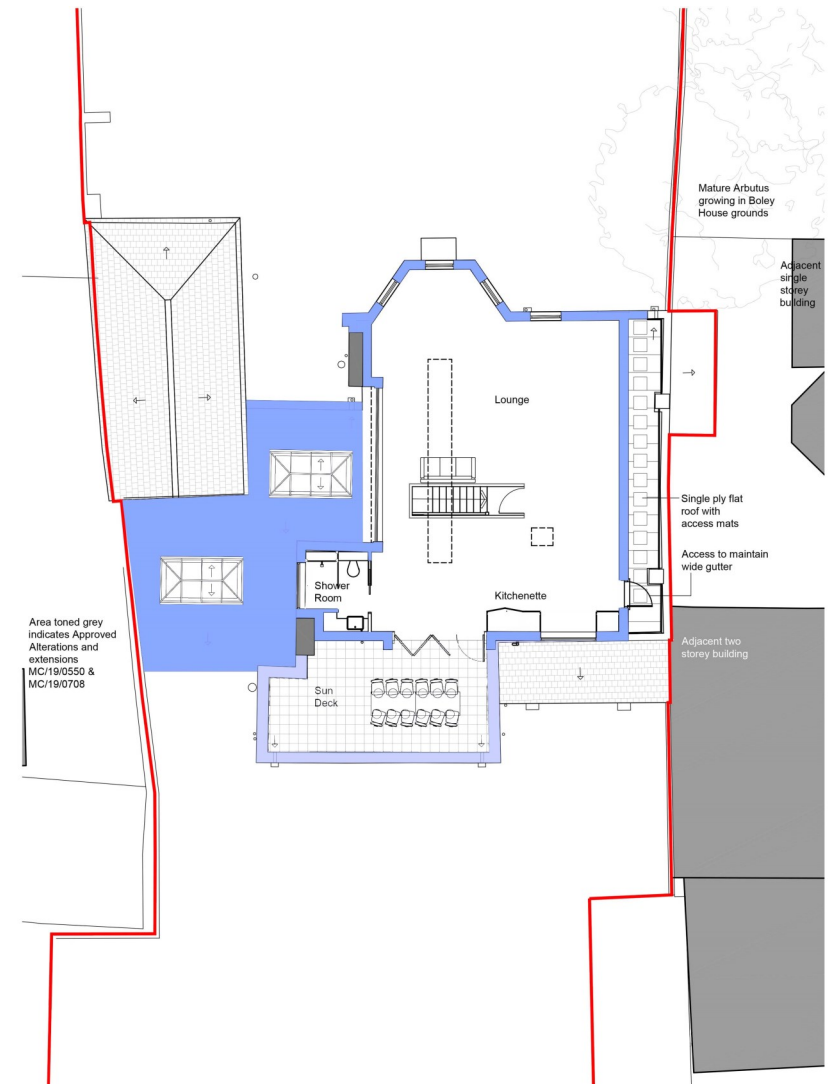
Extensions to an historic, listed house close to Rochester Cathedral

clay architecture

Proposed ground floor plan



Proposed second floor plan



74 High Street, Chatham

Mixed-use development including commercial space and six apartments

clay architecture



This late 19th Century mid-terrace building with late Victorian and Art Deco features has, at various times in its history, been a gas showroom, a theatre and a restaurant.

It is located in the Star Hill to Sun Pier Conservation Area. Medway Council is helping to revitalise this area as a cultural and creative hub via Historic England's High Street Heritage Action Zone programme.

Our plans include internal alterations and a roof top extension to create six apartments. The ground floor will be used for retail. After pre-consultation with Local Authority, planning application has been submitted along with a design that mitigates its impact on a densely built up terrace through 3d modelling and a detailed daylight and sunlight analysis.

We are currently applying for regeneration grant funding on behalf of our client.

74 High Street, Chatham

Mixed-use development including commercial space and six apartments

clay architecture

Existing rear view



Proposed rear view

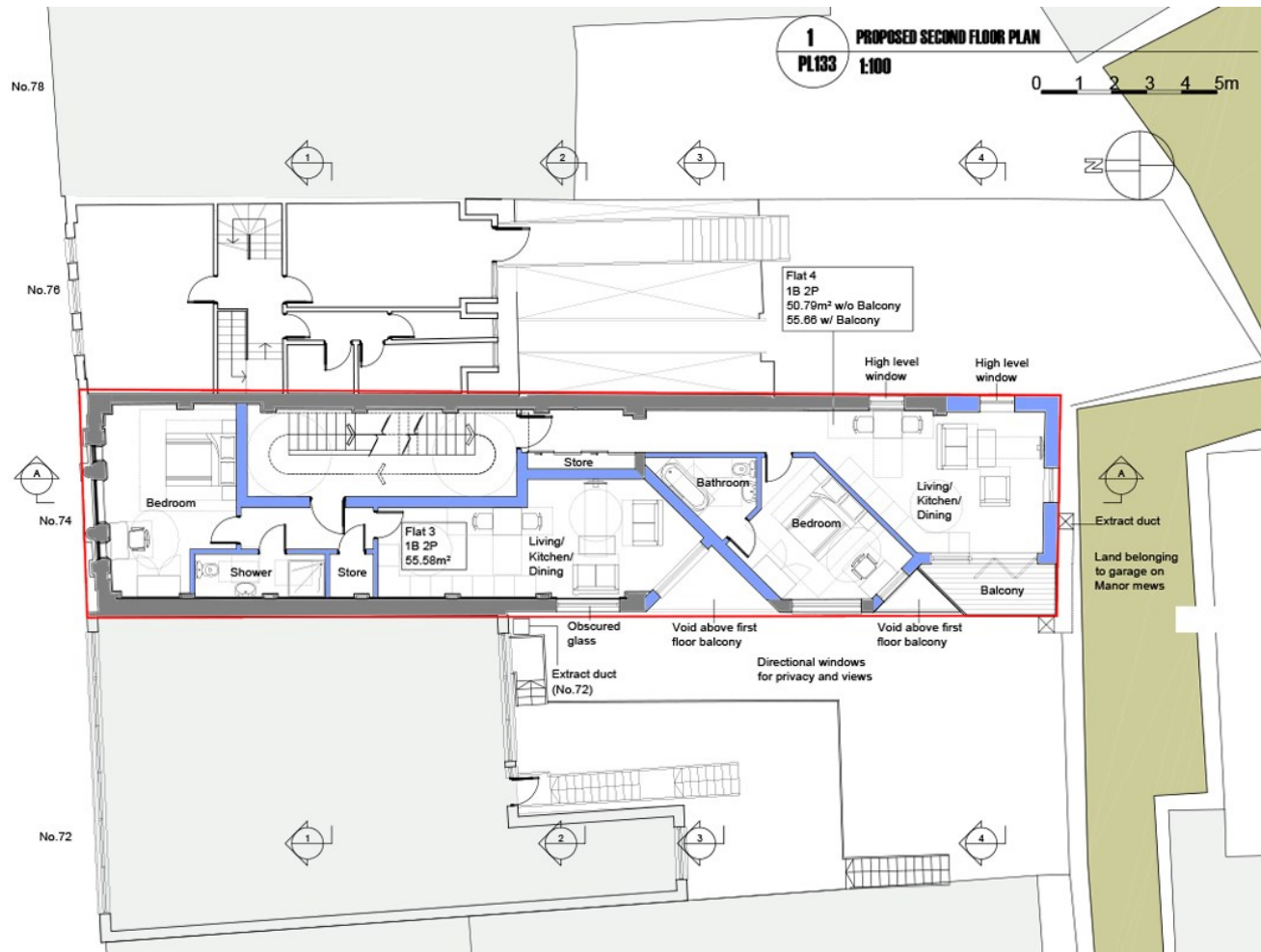


74 High Street, Chatham

Mixed-use development including commercial space and six apartments

clay architecture

Proposed second floor plan

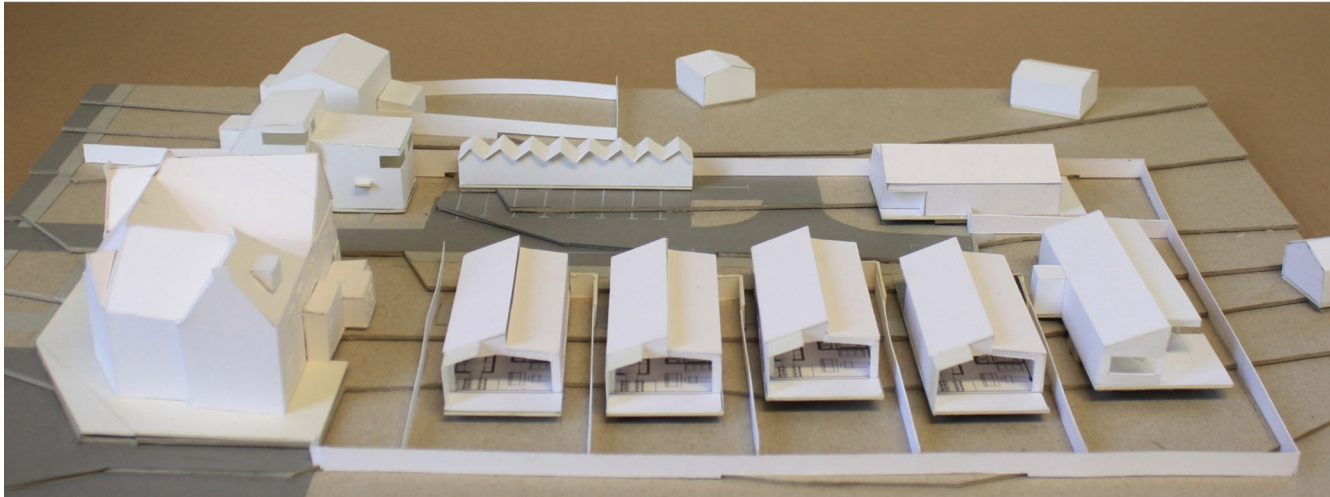


Directional windows improve amenity, daylight and aspect / views from the proposed apartments.

Chalets, Allhallows

Eight sustainable homes on the Hoo peninsular overlooking the Thames

clay architecture



This development is close to the Thames estuary on land zoned as Flood Zone 3.

It's also close to a number of national and international environmental designations including the South Thames Estuary and Marshes Site of Special Scientific Interest.

We demonstrated low flood risk and low impact to the landscape, ecology and natural environmental.

We made the case with planners for new homes on sustainable development grounds. There are five 3-bedroom chalets, one 4-bedroom chalet, and 2 maisonettes.

The small maritime sheds and beach huts found across Kent inspired the design of the chalets.



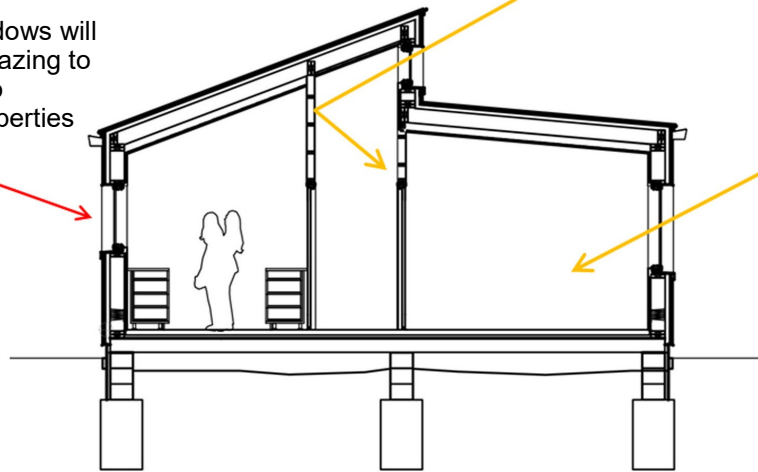
Chalets, Allhallows

Eight sustainable homes on the Hoo peninsular overlooking the Thames

clay architecture

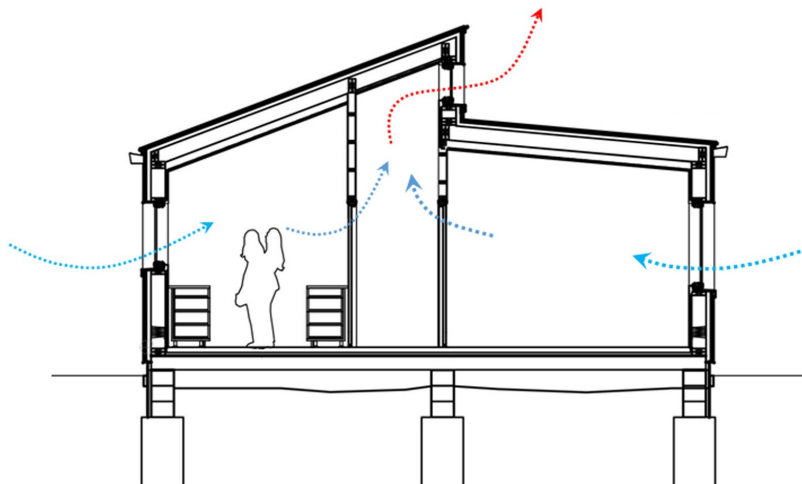
Typical sections

South facing windows will have obscured glazing to provide privacy to neighbouring properties



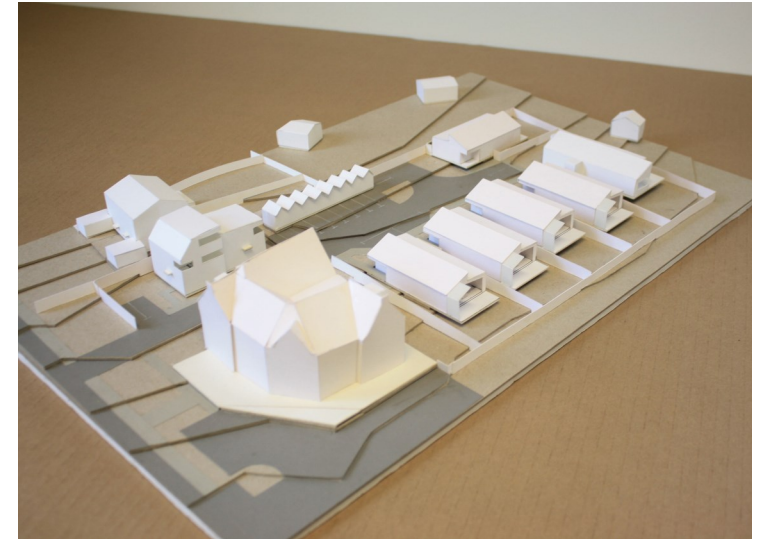
The centre of the chalet is top lit with natural north light

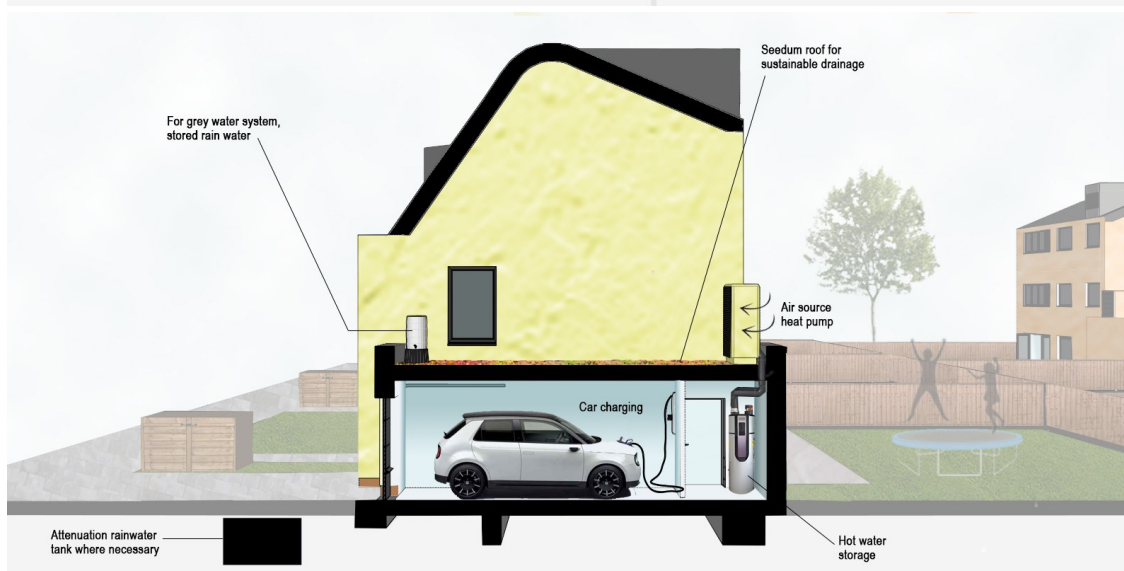
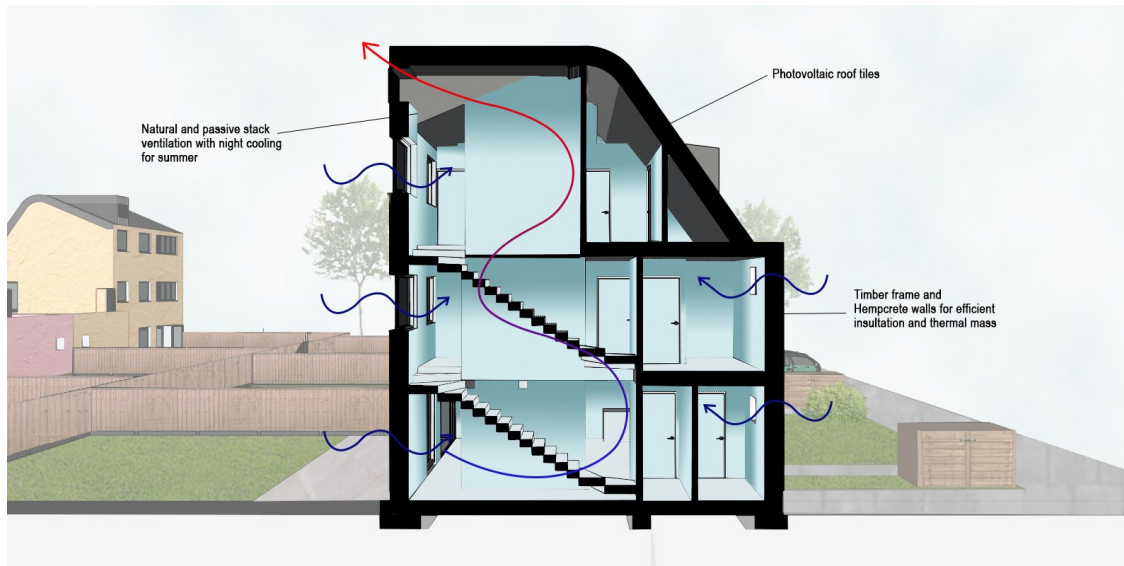
North facing habitable rooms get good quality light without excessive solar heat gain



Passive ventilation: the form of the roof creates a chimney effect which draws fresh air through the house.

Windows and openings will be treated to screen out noise.





Working with developer client, we created a concept for a prototype 'eco-house'.

Although this project did not proceed due to lack of funding, we are confident that features from this 'eco-house' concept will be incorporated into our future residential projects.

The thermal mass of Hempcrete (which is a better than carbon zero building material) along with a natural and passive stack ventilation and night cooling strategy creates an extremely thermally efficient sustainable home to deal with climate change.



Hempcrete blocks waiting to be laid.

Hempcrete blocks are laid on a thin bed of lime mortar.

Photos above extracted from "The Hempcrete Book Designing and Building with Hemp Lime by William Stanwix and Alex Sparrow".



Private Home, Crow Lane in Rochester

Refurbishment of a house backing on to the city walls

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This house is noted as making a positive contribution to Rochester City centre and lies within the Historic Rochester Conservation Area.

There are a number of listed buildings on the same street, including Grade I and II*.

We have secured conservation area approval to demolish an old two storey at the back of the house and replace it with a much larger full-width extension across two floors.

This will create a large, open plan living, dining and kitchen with a cosy snug at the front. Upstairs will be a new master suite, three large double bedrooms and a generous bathroom.

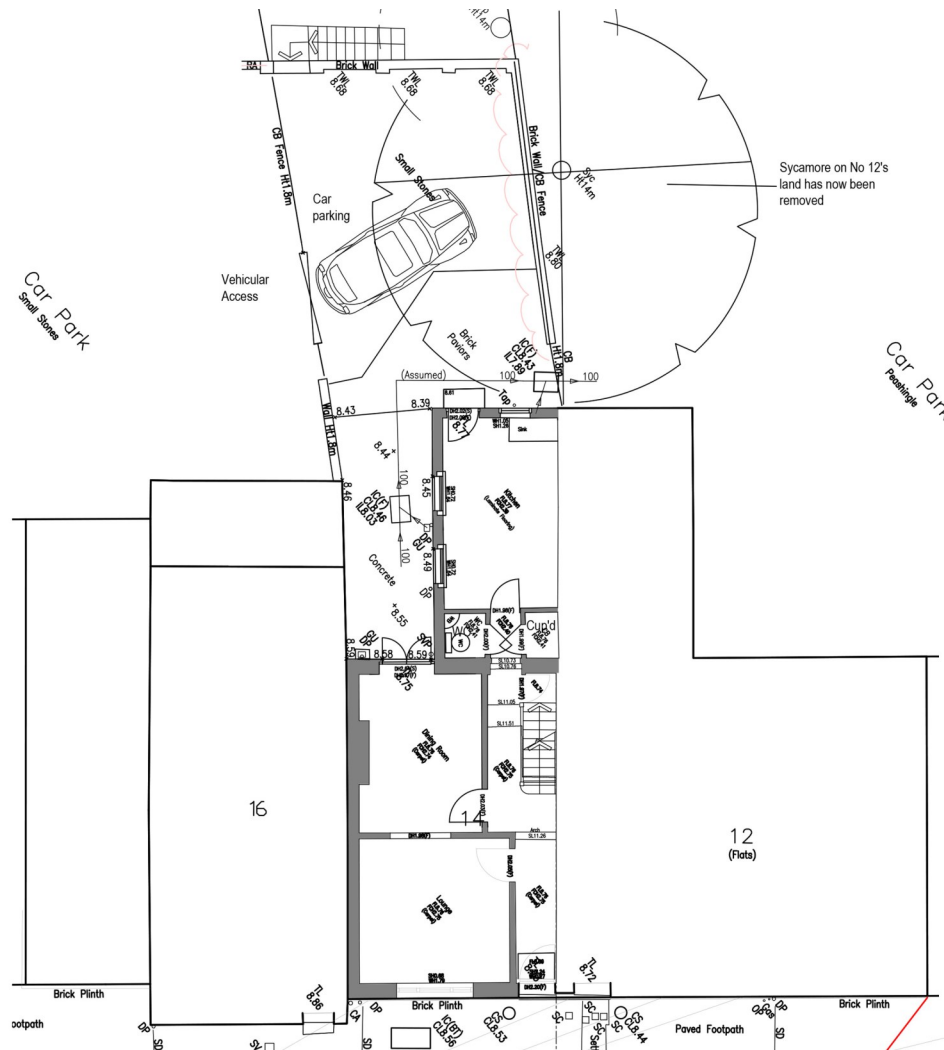
This project will add value by extending and reconfiguring an older house to create a modern family home.

Private Home, Crow Lane in Rochester

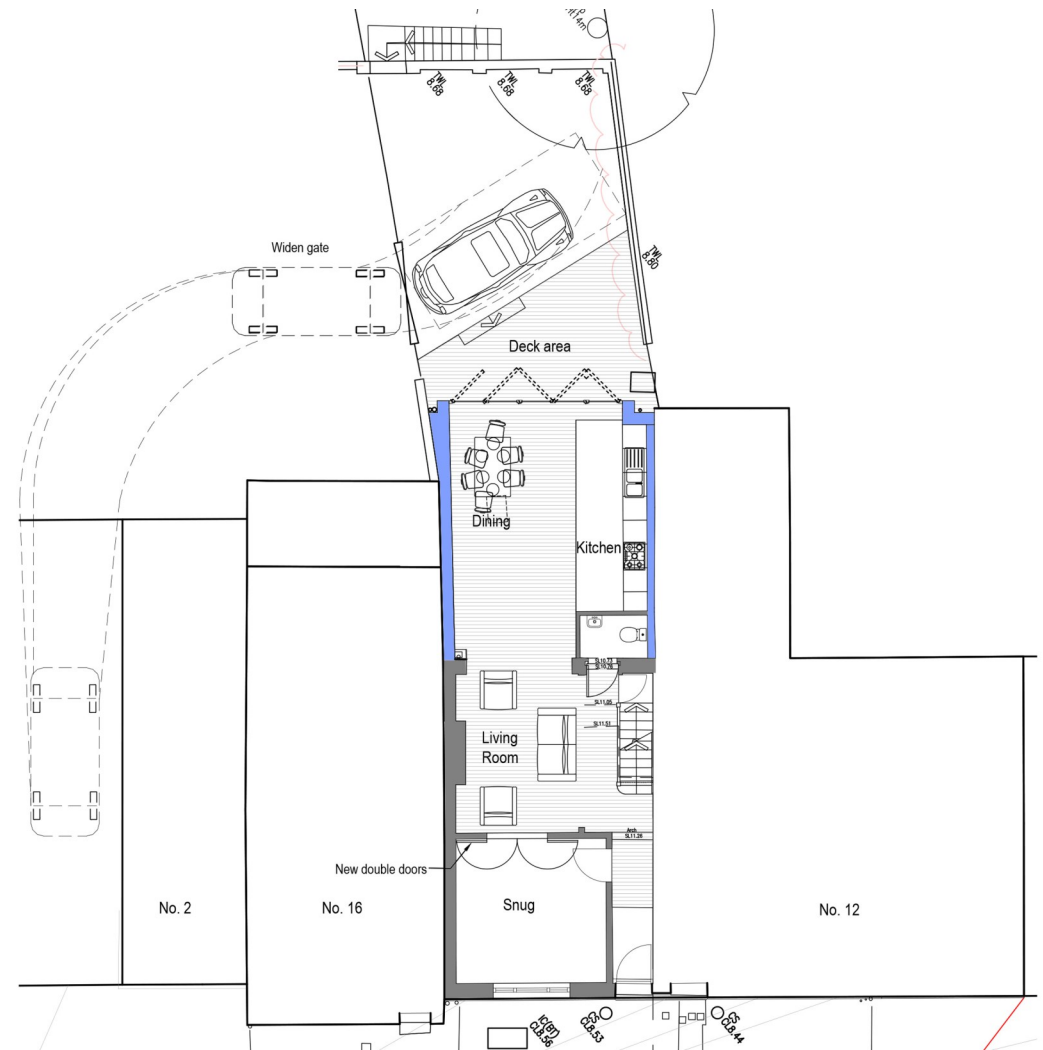
Refurbishment of a house backing on to the city walls

clay architecture

Existing ground floor plan



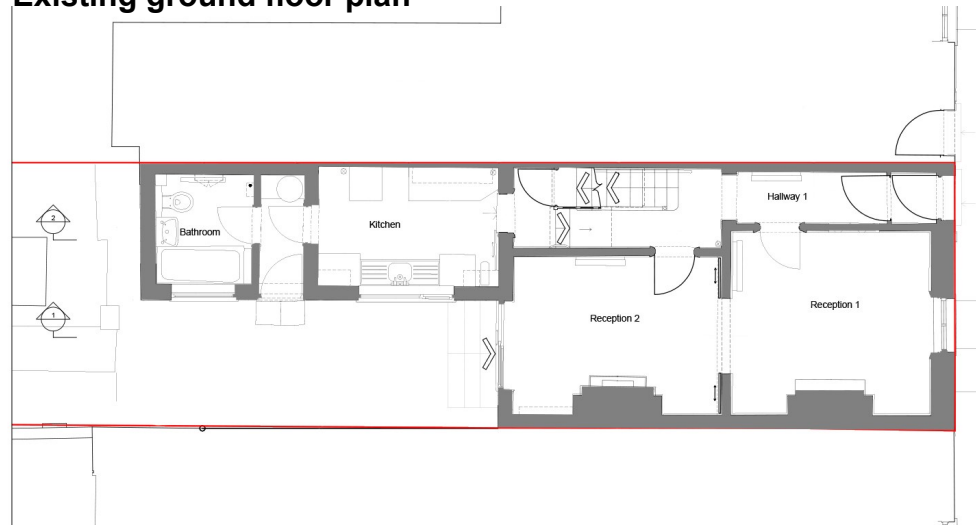
Proposed ground floor plan



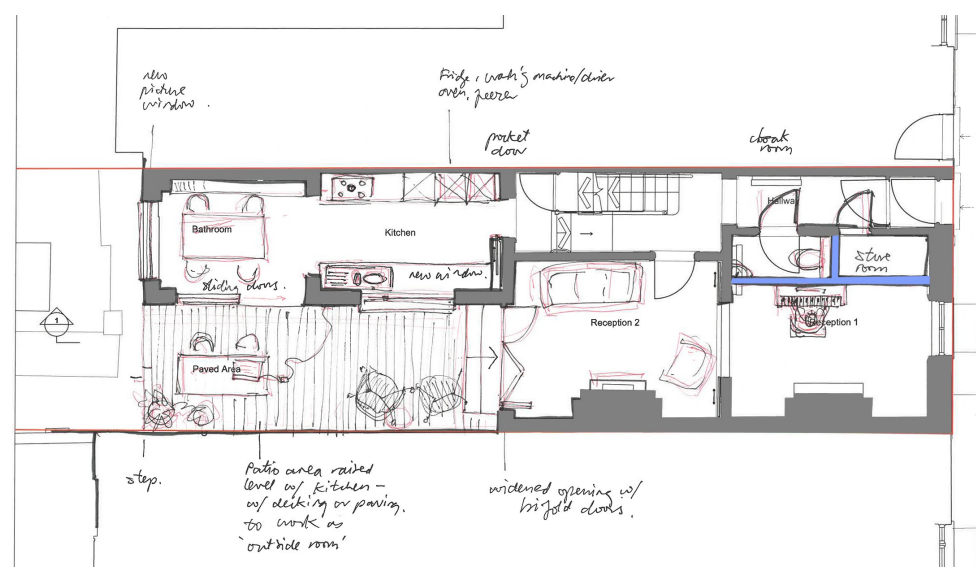
Extension to a classic Victorian terraced house

clay architecture

Existing ground floor plan



Proposed ground floor plan



This late Victorian terraced house had been in the same ownership for decades when our clients bought it.

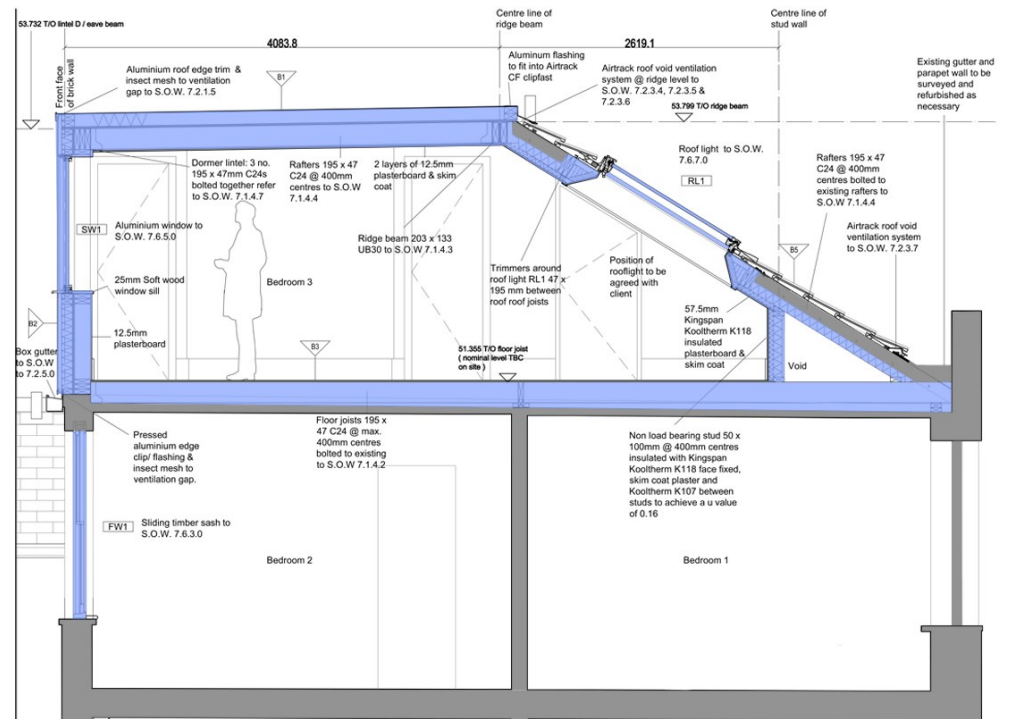
They wanted to keep as much of the original character as possible, while extending the loft and opening up the ground floor to connect better with the garden, all within their budget.

We enjoyed the opportunity to work on a modest domestic scale of a typical 2-up-2-down.

Technical design has been completed and the client is negotiating a tender sum with a builder on a project she will manage with our technical support.

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Loft extension section





Clay Architecture is a family-run practice with longstanding clients who trust in the team's ability to deliver viable, innovative architectural solutions, often on difficult sites with complex and challenging briefs. The practice is tenacious, obsessed with detail and rooted in a sense of place and history.

They combine a flair for contemporary design with a passion for historic buildings.

Founded as the George Clay Partnership in 1904, the practice was taken over in 2000 by current directors and husband and wife team, Kasan Goh and Camilla Prizeman.

Supported by a small team, Camilla and Kasan work out of a studio on the edge of the Great Lines Heritage Park in Gillingham, Kent.

Great Lines Studios, a converted British Concrete Federation hut, sits in one of the few historic military landscapes in England remaining intact and was built for the RAF in the 1930s, serving as a military hospital and 1093 (Gillingham) Squadron Air Training Corps HQ.

In partnership with Design South East, Clay Architecture initiated and curated an HLF-funded local history project, which combined oral history interviews and archive material from the George Clay Partnership, to explore the relationship between placemaking and community in the context of a small town practice and Gravesend town from the 1890s into the 21st Century. The resulting archive and videos are available as a free resource on **making places changing people**.

Being foodies at heart, the team can be found rustling up simple meals most lunch times in the studio kitchen.

If you have a project you'd like to discuss, or are a fan of converted BCF huts, please drop in for a coffee, but do call beforehand.

AA Dipl RIBA MSIA
RIBA Cert in Construction Project
Management



Kasan is a Chartered Architect, and is design, technical and procurement director at Clay Architecture, which he co-founded with Camilla Prizeman in 2000.

Over the last 3 decades he has worked on a wide range of public sector projects including mainstream and special educational needs schools, community centres, hospital and libraries. Kasan has also worked on commercial projects, museums and galleries, restaurants; private and public housing and on crematoria, as well as Gypsy and Traveller sites.

He completed national service as a combat engineer officer in Singapore, before studying at the Architectural Association, School of Architecture in London under Alvin Boyarsky in the mid 80's to early 90's.

Kasan is highly skilled in the application of innovative spatial geometry to create efficient and beautiful solutions, often on difficult sites, with complex and challenging briefs. Kasan listens, consults, observes, and analyses client needs, which he then crystallizes into a clear vision and a viable plan.

BA(Hons)Sculpture AADipl
GradDiplCons(AA) FRSA
RIBA



Camilla is a Chartered Architect, a conservation registrant and affiliate member of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation. She is the Managing Director of Clay Architecture, which she co-founded with Kasan Goh in 2000.

She has almost 3 decades experience working in the UK and the Far East on a wide range of projects and sectors including schools, healthcare, sport and leisure, community, museums, libraries and galleries, ecclesiastical, housing, residential, gypsy and traveller sites.

Camilla studied sculpture at Chelsea School of Art. She then worked with her father, the polymath and architect John Prizeman, author of 'Your House the Outside View', on the crypt at St Martin in the Fields, and then with conservation practice Carden and Godfrey, before studying at the Architectural Association in the late 80's.

Camilla combines a tenacity and steely practicality with her love of sculpture, design, English gardens, the natural landscape, traditional forms of construction and decorative façade techniques. An example of which is in her execution of the decorative brise soleil for Medway Crematorium, which is based on Christopher Wren's ferramata structural supports for the stained-glass windows at St Paul's Cathedral.

In-house team

Clay Architecture has a growing in-house team with a 'can do' attitude who share a drive and determination to make a difference regardless of constraints, obstacles and set-backs.

We believe in teamwork, and in training our staff, exposing them to hands-on experience to become well-rounded architects. Our in-house drawing and management systems are set up to enable us to work accurately and collaboratively in real time, and share, update and cross-check information so that potential issues are identified and ironed out in good time.

The wider team

To complement our core service, we often fulfil a number of roles: lead consultant, lead designer, contract administrator, project manager- this includes assembling multidisciplinary teams for each project.

The key to success is a strong and integrated design team, with a track record of working collaboratively and delivering successful projects together.

Over the last two decades, we have built up a network of trusted consultants and collaborators by appraising ability, compatibility, working relationship, promptness and quality of response, experience, local knowledge (where useful), and teamwork.

Collaborators include:

- Town planners
- Cost consultants
- Structural and civil engineers
- Mechanical and electrical service engineers
- Building Control providers
- Landscape architects
- Acoustic consultants
- Conservation specialists
- Ecologists

and other specialist surveyors and consultants.

“Quite simply Clay Architects have been outstanding.

Having never undertaken any form of property development before, our idea was quite bold. The project required the demolition of a large Victorian property (which was in a poor state) and replace it with a building which would strike a good balance between yielding the greatest return whilst respecting the Council’s local plan.

We came across Clay Architecture by chance (we saw they had been the architects of a similar project in another town) and right from our initial phone call we knew we had selected the right company. Kasan, and the team assigned to our project, have been first-class in every detail. Throughout the process we were constantly reassured we were in the best hands by not only their extensive knowledge, enthusiasm and tenacity, but by always being on-hand to answer our questions (however trivial) and dealing with every detail whilst keeping us regularly updated with the project’s progress.

Their initial feasibility study was thorough, and their resulting recommendations (15 apartments) were better than we had hoped. They handled every aspect of the planning process from the initial pre-application meeting through to compiling a last-minute requested Heritage Statement and Impact Assessment and even speaking on our behalf at the Council’s Planning Committee meeting.

Our project was quite large and, due to the age of the property requiring demolition, was quite sensitive to some of the local community. However, every aspect was handled by Clay Architects with the upmost professionalism, respect and care. The application was granted by a unanimous committee decision on the first attempt. Clay Architects struck the perfect balance between respecting the history of the old building but also being realistic as to its future.

I would not consider undertaking a project like this without Clay Architecture’s professional approach and guidance, they really offer an approachable wealth of experience and knowledge.”

Simon Ward, project in Sittingbourne.

Project was to maximise the value of a property for the Executrix of a Will, for which the property forms the only asset in the Estate

Sevenoaks Kaleidoscope Museum	Highly Commended	Kent Design Awards	2007
Walderslade Primary School	Highly Commended, new building	Medway Culture & Design Award	2012
Walderslade Primary School	Winner, Public Building, Education category	Kent Design & Development Award	2012
Medway Crematorium	Winner	RIBA SE Award	2014
Medway Crematorium	Winner, Commercial & Industrial Buildings	Kent Design & Development Award	2014
Brompton Westbrook Primary School	Shortlisted	Kent Design & Development Award	2016
Walderslade Primary School	Winner, Public Buildings, Education category	Medway Design & Regeneration Awards	2017
Medway Park	Winner, Public Buildings, Community category	Medway Design & Regeneration Awards	2017
Gravesend Borough Market	Shortlisted	Kent Design & Development Awards	2018
New Sixth Form Centre, Cranbrook School	Shortlisted	Kent Design & Development Awards	2018

Contact us

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