

# James Spiteri

Your architect for life



**Your Project in Progress**

# James Spiteri

Chartered architect since 2004

Deciding to renovate, extend, or rebuild your home is a significant challenge, and I am committed to making the process as stress-free as possible.

While I cannot ensure the perfect project and that challenges are always to be expected, I guarantee that I will:

- Respond promptly to calls and emails during the working day and in emergency.
- Act with honesty and integrity, prioritising the project's best interests above all else.
- Collaborate with the design team (that starts and ends with you) and remain open to queries throughout the process.
- Maintain an impartial perspective throughout the project lifecycle.
- Uphold the standards set by the ARB and RIBA.

**Good building design creates joy but true lasting happiness comes from a full, honest and transparent collaboration.**

**This goes beyond the day the builder hands you back the keys and it is a commitment that I am passionate about.**



### Where do I start?

First of all think why you want to do this because this whole process could be the most stressful undertaking you will do. The next step is to speak with a true architectural professional and the best service you will get, is from a Chartered Architect.

Below are some great questions to get you started.

### What exactly will you be doing for me?

Make sure they are clear about what services are included in the fee and what aren't. Which stages of the project they cover, and what drawings, reports, or submissions will you actually receive at each stage?

### How will this project be structured from start to finish?

Ask them to explain how you normally run a project like this, from the first sketches through to completion on site? Do they broadly follow the *RIBA Plan of Work* or something similar, and how does that translate into real decisions and sign-offs for you as the client?

*There is a clear infographic on the next page that will help explain the process*

### What are the planning risks and how will they manage them?

Based on their experience and the site, do they expect this to need planning permission or fall under permitted development? What are the main risks with planning, and how confident are they about the likely outcome? Will they prepare and submit the application and deal with the council on my behalf?

*Never let anyone say that "no planning is needed!!" Even a project that is undertaken through Permitted Development should be secured with a Certificate of Lawful Development.*

### How will you help keep the design within my budget?

You want to understand how budget will be managed as the design develops. At what stages should cost advice become more reliable and how do they manage that? How do they typically work with cost consultants or builders to sense-check the design? **If tenders come back over budget, what happens next?**

*This should not be your responsibility. Your adviser should help you from day one.*

### Who else needs to be involved and who appoints them?

What other consultants are likely to be needed on a project like this (for example, structural engineers or party wall surveyors)? Will they recommend and coordinate them, and will they be appointing them directly or through you?

### What does my role as a domestic client mean in practice?

As a domestic client, you should be advised from day one what responsibilities you have under health and safety regulations? Will they be acting as Principal Designer under CDM 2015 and Building Regulations, and if so, what does that actually mean for you day to day?

### What will your involvement be during construction?

Once work starts on site, what will they actually be doing? Will they carry out site visits, respond to contractor queries, and check progress against the drawings? Will they administer the building contract, or is that a separate service?

### How are changes handled once the design is underway?

If you want to change something after the design has progressed, how is that dealt with? How do changes affect fees, programme, and cost, and how will they make sure you understand the implications before anything is agreed?

### What contract and insurance arrangements will be in place?

What form of appointment will you use for their services? What level of professional indemnity insurance do they carry, and is it appropriate for a project of this size and complexity?

### What are the biggest risks you see right now?

Where do they think you should be cautious, and where do clients most often get caught out? **THIS IS THE NUMBER ONE QUERY, YOU SHOULD BE ASKING!!**



# What should I expect and what should I ask?

**“James is a highly competent and trustworthy architect. I’ve worked with him for many years and have only positive things to say.”**

**Stephen**

**“He is very good at listening to what the client really wants and making adjustments and tweaks where necessary”**

**Jess & Colin**

**“We were impressed with his turnaround time with his drawings and all communications with James were fast, friendly and efficient.”**

**Karen & Joe**

\*a client testimonial will always tell the story better than a written word so please go to <https://www.james-spiteri.co.uk/j-c-video> and see what Colin and Jess thought about working with me.

# Domestic Project in England (2026): Architect-led design, approvals and on-site construction

A practical flow for extensions, refurbishments, loft conversions and small new-builds (timings vary by site and local authority).

Architect leads

Regulatory checkpoint

On-site milestone

## 1) Design + feasibility (RIBA Stages 0-2)

### 1 Project brief + budget

- Agree goals, scope, priorities and budget range.
- Check constraints: conservation area, listed status, flood zone,...

Architect service

### 2 Measured survey + site info

- Measured drawings, photos, levels; utilities + drains.
- Early advice from structural engineer if needed.

Architect service

### 3 Concept options

- Layouts/massing, daylight, neighbours, access, energy...
- Rough cost plan; select a preferred option.

Architect service

### 4 Planning strategy

- Decide: permitted development, Lawful Development Certificate, ...
- Pre-app advice if sensitive site or higher risk of refusal.

Architect service

## 2) Planning + technical approvals (RIBA Stages 3-4)

### 5 Planning submission

- Drawings + supporting statements (as needed).
- Householder decisions are typically within 8 weeks after...

Architect service

### 6 Technical design

- Detailed drawings, specification, structural calcs.
- Coordinate energy, ventilation, drainage, sound, fire and...

Architect service

### 7 Building Regulations approval

- Choose route: Full Plans or Building Notice; some work via...
- Check which Approved Document editions apply (e.g., A...

Architect service

### 8 Procurement + contract

- Tender/quotes, check insurances, programme and...
- Use a written contract (e.g., JCT) and define change control.

Architect service

## 3) On-site construction + sign-off (RIBA Stages 5-7)

### 9 Site setup + enabling works

- CDM 2015 roles + site safety plan; welfare, access and...
- Surveys (asbestos, drains) if relevant.

Architect service

### 10 Structure + envelope

- Foundations, steels, roof; insulation and airtightness;...
- Building Control inspections at key stages.

Architect service

### 11 First fix to finishes

- Plumbing, electrics, ventilation; plastering and joinery.
- Test/commission services; collect certificates.

Architect service

### 12 Completion + handover

- Final inspection + completion certificate.
- Snagging, warranties, manuals and post-occupancy tweaks.

Architect service

## Who does what?

### Architect (your lead consultant)

- Brief + budget, measured survey, concept options.
- Planning strategy (permitted development vs application).
- Coordinates engineers, party wall inputs and specs.
- Technical design for Building Regulations compliance.
- Tender support, site inspections, snagging + handover.

### Others you may need

- Structural engineer (steel beams, foundations, stability).
- Party Wall Surveyor (Party Wall etc. Act 1996, if relevant).
- Building Control (local authority or private registered building control approver).
- Contractor (and Principal Contractor role under CDM).
- Specialist installers (electric, gas, glazing, etc.).

## Outputs you keep

- Drawings (planning + technical)
- Specification + schedules
- Building Control approval/record
- Certificates (electrical, gas, glazing, insulation, etc.)
- Completion certificate (and warranty, if used)
- O&M info (manuals) + as-builts

## Key regulatory checkpoints

- Planning (PD / LDC / application)
- Building Regulations approval + inspections
- Dutyholders/competence (Building Regs + CDM 2015)

James Spiteri - Your Architect For Life  
is a trading name of JGJS Architecture

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RIBA Chartered Practice  
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