

The Project Brief

Why we have produced this guide?

Regardless of the size of project, we recommend that you always produce a Brief of what you require from any consultant or contractor you wish to employ.

This can be done solely by you the client or in collaboration with your architect or project manager if you have one, or better still, in conjunction with your Engineer, which will hopefully be us!

Why is this important you may ask?

- It provides clarity for the level of service and details you require.
- It allows you to know what to expect and if you're being short changed.
- It provides the Engineer you're commissioning to accurately assess your needs, to price their fee accordingly and to ensure they meet your expectations.
- Should the worst come to the worst, it provides you with a good baseline for proving non-performance on the contract should the level of service you receive not be in line with that agreed.

The brief can be as simple as "provide structural calculations for beam to form new opening between room A and room B" or it might extend to several pages and include for site supervision, inspection of works, and production of construction drawings.

After discussing your requirements, and before we commence work on any project we will always confirm in writing what services we are to provide you with, and many clients choose to use this as their Brief. We nearly always ask that a copy of our acceptance of fee proposal is signed and returned to us before we start.

We always try to be competitive and economic with our design solutions. We like the quote below, and think John Ruskin must have had a bit of experience of construction. The fact remains, as relevant now as it was then; The more time and consideration that can be give to upfront design, the less likely your unexpected costs will be on site.

'It's unwise to pay too much. But it's worse to pay too little.

When you pay too much, you lose a little money, that is all.

When you pay too little you sometimes lose everything, because the thing you bought was incapable of doing the thing it was bought to do.

The common law of business balances prohibits paying a little and getting a lot. It can't be done.

If you deal with the lowest bidder it is well to add something for the risk you run.

And if you do that, you will have enough to pay for something better.

There is hardly anything in the world that someone can't make a little worse and sell a little cheaper—and people who consider price alone are this man's lawful prey

John Ruskin (1819-1900)

We look forward to hearing from you.....