



Residential Projects

Building a new house or altering or extending an existing property can be a creative and rewarding experience.

There is the opportunity to design living spaces individually tailored to your needs and expressing your character and values.

It is bespoke, personal.

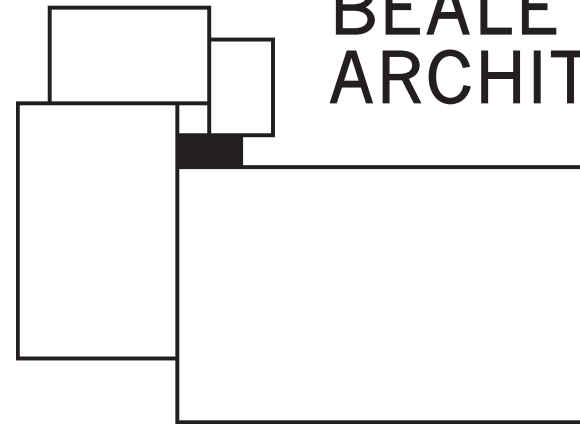
Architecture integrates with joinery, furniture, lighting, landscape and garden design, colours, fabric, artworks.

Architects can manage the whole process from concept to completion, giving one point of contact, minimising risk, selecting builders and other professionals with the necessary skills for the project, leading to efficient, well executed designs.

MBA have a track record of providing successful residential projects since 1991, which are humane, energy-efficient, imaginative, exciting and fun to live in.

In this brochure we explore the issues that go towards making a successful project, the processes, the stages of the project, and give examples of our work which will hopefully inspire and delight.

**MARCUS
BEALE
ARCHITECTS**





What are houses for?

It seems too obvious to ask, but architecture is not sculpture, it clothes human activity: the activity comes first.

A home is **a centre** for personal and family life, a place of **calmness, inspiration, safety and comfort**, a centre for **sleeping, eating, play, leisure, managing the household and being-without-thinking**, an expression of our **values: formal, informal, traditional, contemporary**, a place where **furniture, artworks, clothes, gifts, books, objects** of significance and importance in our personal history and life journey reside, a place for **entertaining** friends, a place to **recover**, a place to **create** new plans, a place where we make **relationships** to each other, the city and to nature, a place to talk and listen to **music**, a place of **memory**.

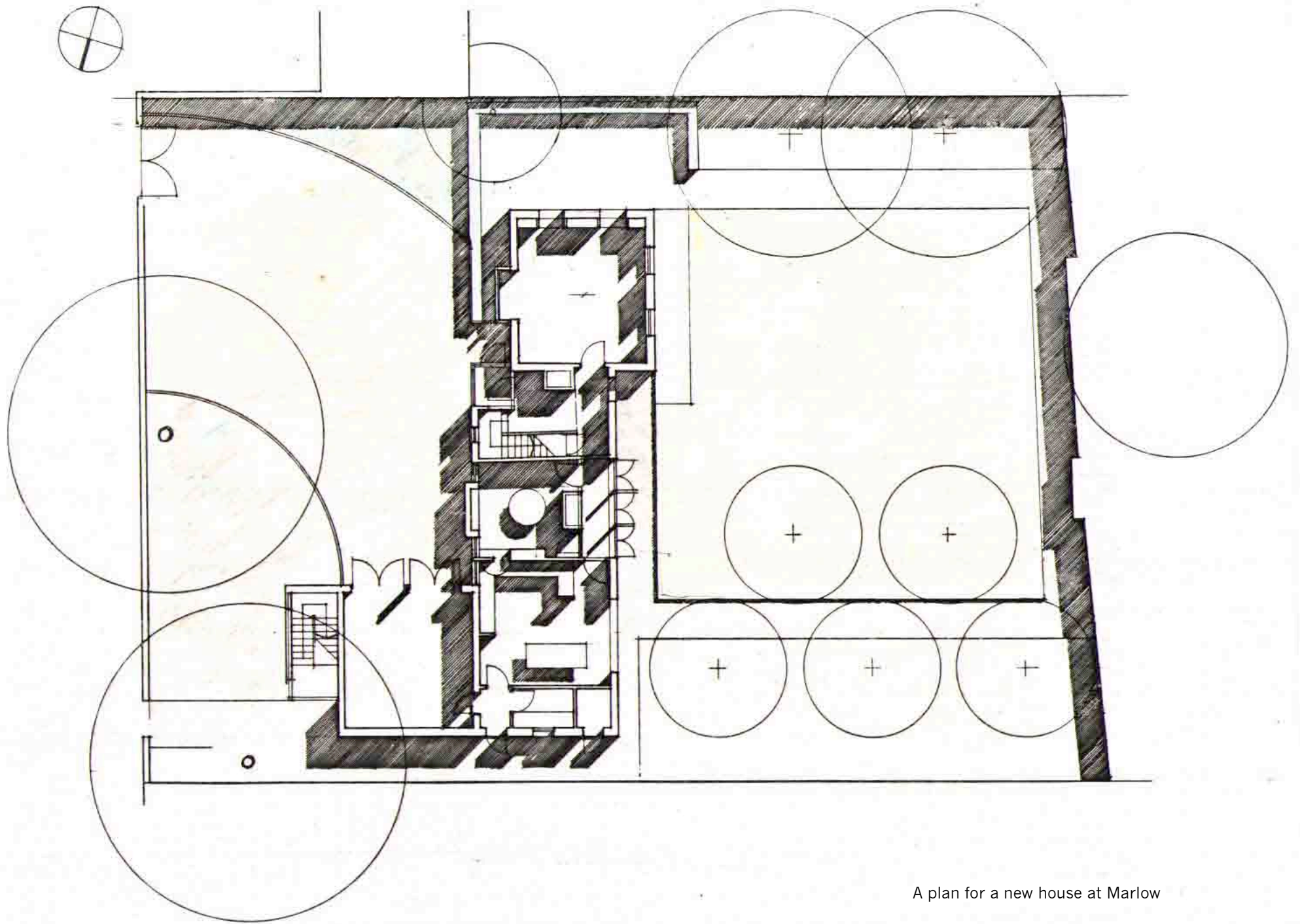
Today's homes are **technology-enabled, energy efficient, adaptable and sustainable**

They are also **valuable** - habitable space is valuable territory, even though we can only occupy it for a while. The global economy rests on households.

A home is all of these things and more. Even so: "wherever I lay my hat - that's my home..."

A private office: media room with walnut panelling.
Left: 'Privalite' screens which change from opaque to clear at the flick of a switch separate the study from the media room.





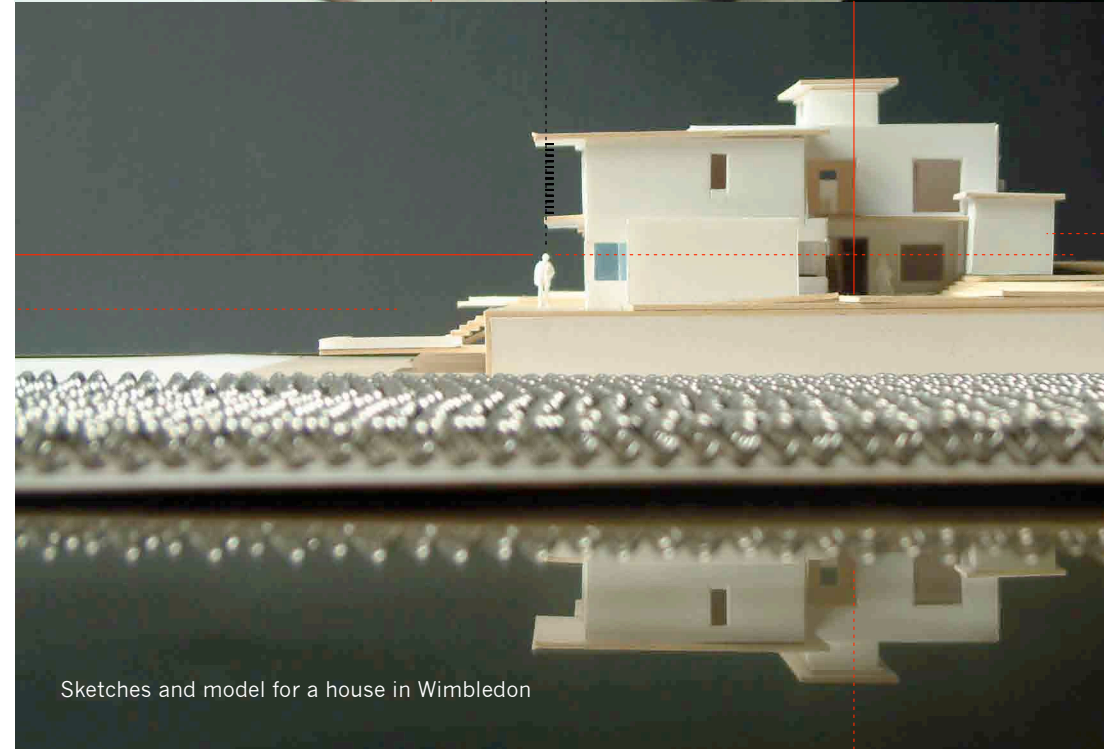
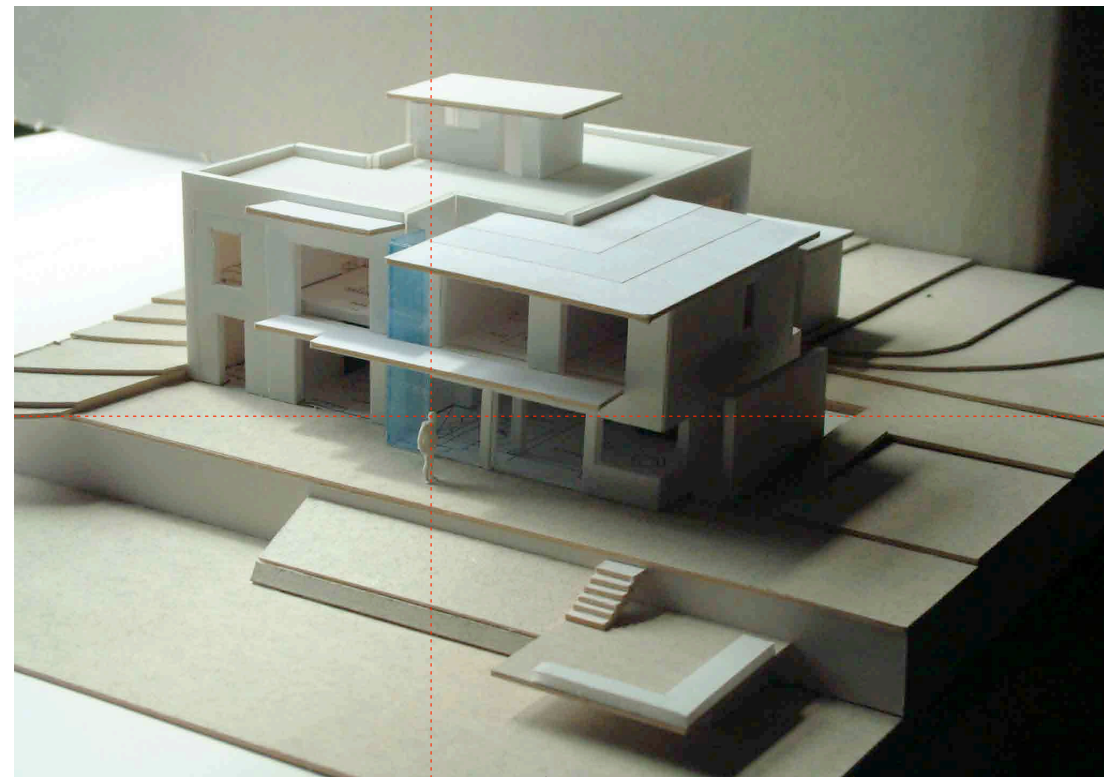
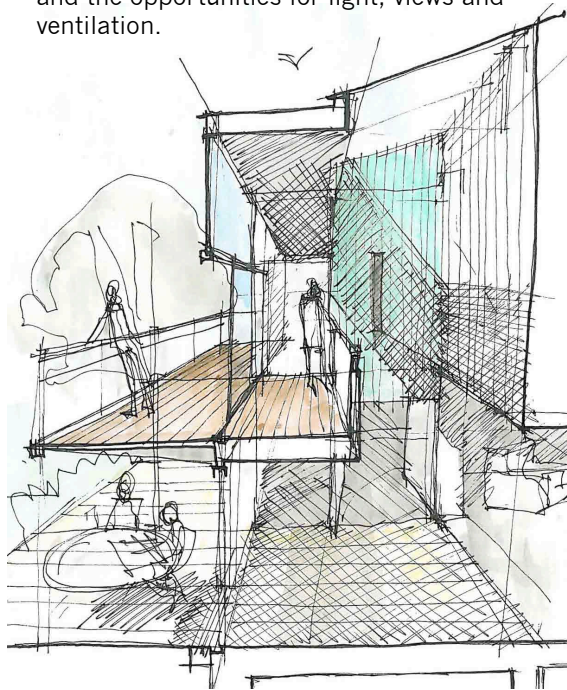
A plan for a new house at Marlow

Design for living

It's about shaping space to suit the activity
understanding the place, locality,
the lie of the land,
the passage of the sun,
the existing landscape and gardens,
the way the house adapts to the occasional large
event as well as the everyday rhythm of living.

We explore these ideas through
meetings,
sketches,
models,
drawings,
involving our clients all through the process.

Design is about opportunity rather than 'style',
weighing up the possibilities, one against
another about how the site and building are
organised, how the spaces relate to each other,
and the opportunities for light, views and
ventilation.



Sketches and model for a house in Wimbledon



Traditional and modern

Pitched roofs or flat roofs, plain white walls or purpose designed wallpaper. Style is a secondary issue - behind method, approach, consistency, authenticity. We organise space, texture, colour, light, acoustics, to suit your needs. We work with you, to make the building suit you and your needs.



HEDGES AND PATH CREATE 'FORMAL' APPROACH ROUTE SEPARATED FROM PRIVATE AREAS. THE HOUSE NO LONGER GIVES EVERYTHING AWAY - BEGINS TO COMMAND THE SITE BETTER. INAPPROPRIATE ADDITIONS ARE STRIPPED OFF AND NEW DOORS + WINDOWS INSTALLED, IN KEEPING WITH ORIGINAL BUILDING.



Various MBA residential projects, a new hunting lodge in the north of Scotland, residences in Surrey, Oxford, and Tipperary. Left: an interior in Wapping with views over the Thames and Tower Bridge.



Climate-adaptive and climate-excluding buildings

A home is not cut off from the outside world. There are many layers of privacy, from the main road, to the street, to the front garden, to the hallway and so on, and another private world behind if you have a garden: a country retreat, albeit in miniature.

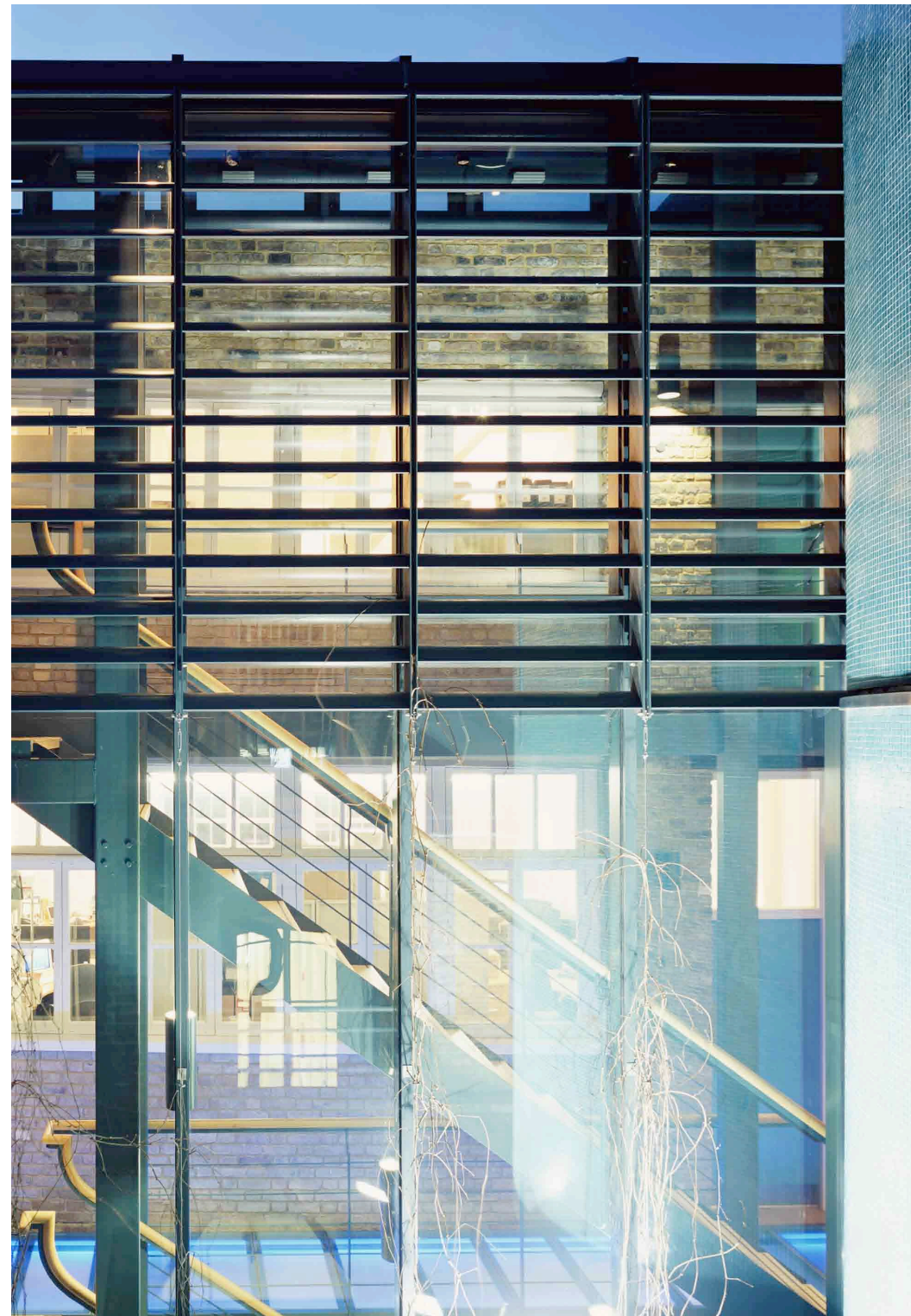
Climate adaptive buildings have natural ventilation, use the sun's warmth for natural heating, controlling the amount of light and heat gain by careful orientation of windows and, if necessary: external louvres, screens, blinds, and so on. A natural airflow is maintained throughout the house with appropriate siting of doors and openable skylights.

Climate excluding buildings on the other hand attempt to block out the outside world to achieve a 'fully controlled' environment. Often this results in large energy use. Always it results in a sense of isolation from the outside world.

Both modes may exist in the same building: the wine cellar needs quite a different environment from humans, for example.

Intelligently positioned openings, use of planting and screening, external overhangs, screens, blinds; an awareness of the thermal mass of the building: brick walls, solid floors and dark colours promote the storage of radiant heat, soaking up solar energy to be released slowly. Glass walls and floors allow light to penetrate deep into the building.

Right: Layers of privacy in Covent Garden, London.
Left: the chestnut tree at Wimbledon College of Art provides deciduous solar shading to the entrance.



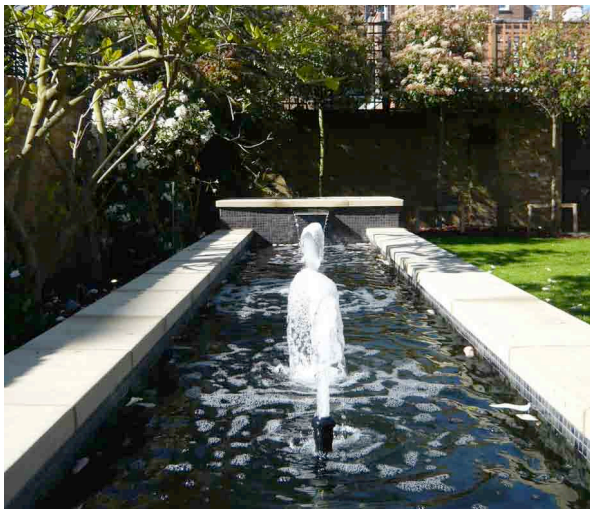


Water

Water is a theme running through our buildings, mostly piped and invisible, it emerges in bathrooms showers, ponds, waterfalls, internal and external.

It can be a source of delight, performing not only a functional requirement but recalling rivers, ponds, caves and the sea, with water running over pebbles and stone.

Water can also be a source of pleasant sound, masking traffic noise and creating an ambience of peace and quiet.



Above, an external acoustic pond designed to mask noise from a house in Wimbledon Village

Right: A purpose designed interior waterfall provides background ambient sound. Far right: a contemporary steam room and shower.





No 25

No. 23

No. 21

ERNLE ROAD

Extensions and alterations

There's an art to extending an existing property. It involves understanding the existing house and adjusting it to suit your way of life, but also adjusting the way of life to suit the grain of the house. Sometimes a few small moves, removing a wall here or there, can make a huge difference, leading to efficiencies and economies in building.

New build elements can incorporate new technologies such as underfloor heating, supplemented by quick response heating, integrating services unobtrusively.



Above: A rear extension allows light into the centre of the house.

Right: A garden room extension in Wimbledon Village.

Left: Extensions to an Arts and Crafts house brings an instant history and a much more subtle and complex relationship between inside and outside spaces.





Cost and budget

Building is expensive. Cost, time and quality will always conflict at some stage in a project. If the cost plan is realistic you are in control of the project - if not it can get control of you.

To manage this we recommend:

- preparing a good cost estimate early in the design process and reviewing this as the design proceeds
- facing up to project risks and carrying out investigations well before work starts on site
- allowing enough time for the design development so that everything can be chosen and finalized before tendering
- avoiding late design changes - these can cost more in disruption than the cost of the work itself.

In these ways and others we will help throughout the project to manage cost so that the project comes in on budget.





Builders

The people who actually build your home: craftsmen and tradesmen often with many years practical experience and track record. If competent people, properly managed, build happily and willingly you will get better craftsmanship. It's as simple as that.

We have excellent working relationships with a range of builders, from someone to change a bathroom around or fix the roof, to those who can manage complex inner city projects with a double basement.

Some of the things that lead to a successful project are:

- selecting suitable contractors who have the skills to match the individual project
- allowing time to finish the design so that everything is chosen and specified well before the builder gets on site
- managing and supporting the construction team properly and ensuring timely, concise and clear communication throughout the construction process.

Right: constructing a basement next to a listed building.

Left: a new purpose-designed doorcase sits over an existing door, in selected timber stained to match the original.





Conservation

In 2007 Marcus Beale and Barry Stow formed a specialist conservation architecture practice focusing on the repair and conservation of important historic buildings, monuments, gardens and heritage structures including Scheduled Ancient Monuments, World Heritage sites, Grade I and Grade II* Listed buildings and landscapes. Current projects include works at Westminster Abbey, Dover Castle and New College Oxford.

**STOW &
BEALE**

Conservation
Architects

Right: Housing for St Peter's College Oxford next to Oxford Castle.

Left: Balconies and downpipes discharging into the Castle Mill Stream





We don't just do houses...

We work on commercial, institutional and residential projects. Working across these sectors gives a breadth of experience and allows best practice in one field to transfer to the others. We may be designing a theatre one day and a living room the next - the same care and attention applies to both.

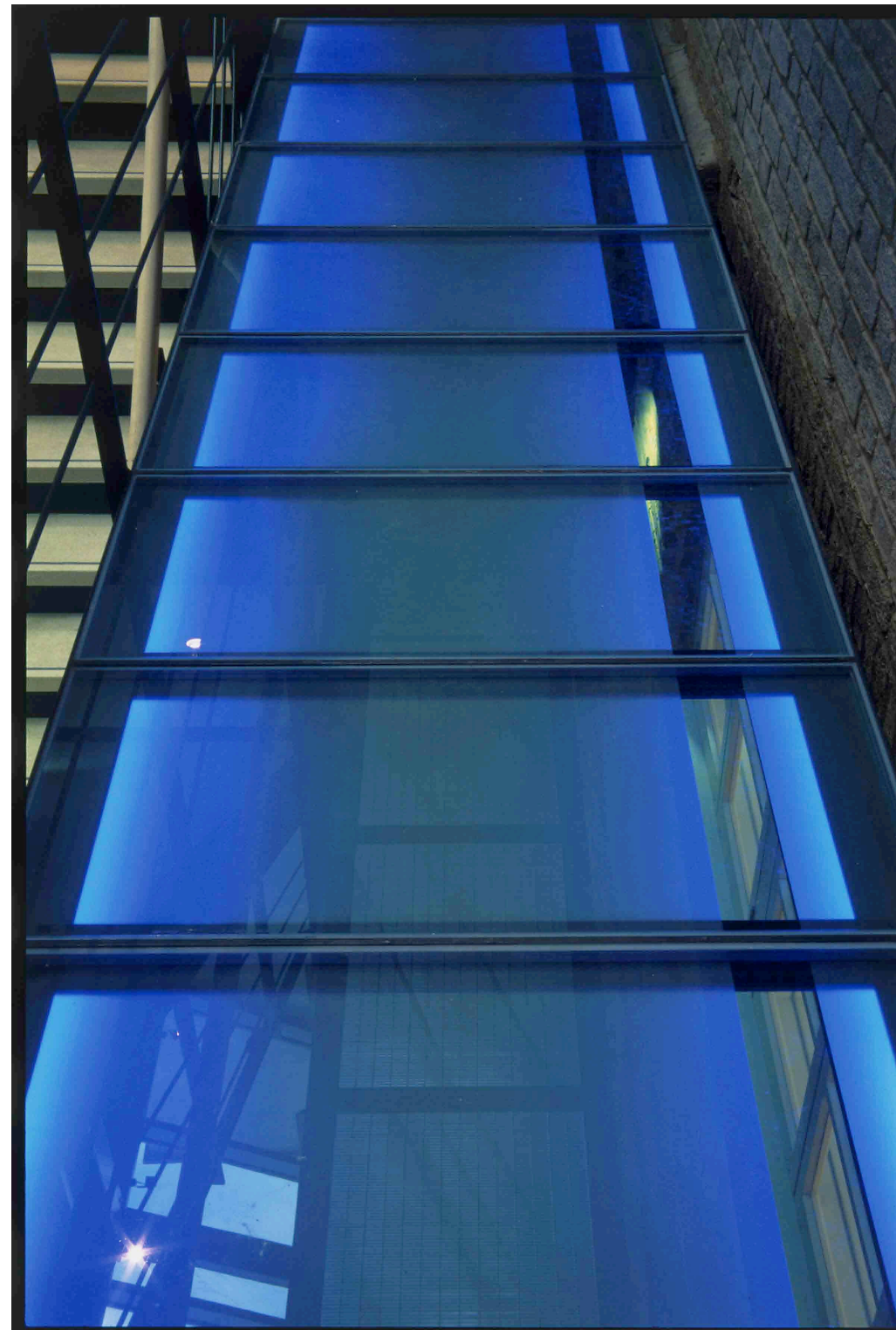
Human responses to space, light, material, texture apply to the whole of life, and our skills as designers come from understanding these whether at work, play or at home.

Skills in team-leading and project management learnt on large complex projects, and the experience of problem-solving across all these sectors maximise the probability of a successful and rewarding project.

This is what building should be: well planned and executed, a way of adding value in its deepest sense and enriching real lives.

Right: A fritted glass floor with cold cathode lighting.

Left: Cumnor House School, new classrooms and design studio in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.





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The illuminated tree and flower pics from Wimbledon School of
Art Foyer opening 2003.
The interior overlooking Tower Bridge by courtesy of the clients.

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