

MSJ offers a full range of structural services and in relation to building projects we generally follow the RIBA Plan of Work which we have adapted into the 5-step guide set out here. We can tailor our services to suit the specific needs of your project and whilst our preferred approach is to see projects through from inception to completion, we're happy to be flexible and clients can choose to take some or all our services.

For example, you may have already appointed an architect and other consultants. As a general rule, we can step in or out of your project at any point of its process.

Process - Structural Engineering

RIBA Work Stages 0, 1, 2 and 3

As a general rule, structural engineering is not heavily involved in early planning stages, for obvious reasons. This means that before you get in touch with us, you will have already developed a detailed design brief. This is a key part of the process where with your architects, you assess your project goals, your aspirations and the budget.

In these initial stages you will also procure an initial measured survey of the property which will become a base for our design output. Generally at this stage we will also see whether we have to arrange any other surveys on your behalf, such as environmental or noise or ecology surveys.

In these early stages, you may ask us to undertake a feasibility study about the site including physical and geological constraints.

Sometimes, as a part of the planning strategy, a desktop study has to be provided. For example, presently almost all planning applications for basements in Greater London have to include a detailed structural engineering assessment of the planned basement, to include considerations of flooding, geology, buildability and effects on adjoining properties.

RIBA Work Stage 4

Once the initial architectural design is completed, with or without planning involvement, the next stage of work includes the preparation of a pack of technical drawings and information for tender and construction purposes. The Architect will normally act as the Lead Consultant through this part of the process but at this stage we would develop the structural engineering strategy, as well as the detailed technical design.

Your architect will usually guide us through the technical process and we would have no, or very little involvement with your other consultants, such as interior and landscape designer and mechanical and electrical consultant (unless there are for example heavy architectural or mechanical features or retaining walls being proposed).

The basic level of our output would be a Building Regulations Pack.

Building Regulations Pack includes a lot of detail. This essentially shows sufficient information to demonstrate the compliance of proposed works with the current Building Regulations. This could be a suitable cut-off point of our involvement if you are a hands-on client who can take a project forward from here.

However, if you desired for a more detailed set of full technical details for tender and construction purposes we would have to prepare additional information within a Construction Pack which typically includes the preparation of additional construction details, specification notes, schedules, and further liaison and coordination with the Consultant Team.

This stage concludes with our providing either a Building Regulations Pack or Construction Pack, in accordance with your instructions.

RIBA Work Stages 5, 6 and 7

Your architect will discuss the different procurement options with you. Briefly, this can be a competitive tender process or a negotiated tender.

Whichever route you chose, once a builder is selected and works are ready to start on site, we could offer two options for our further involvement:

One: Dynamic Involvement: We can act as an employed Consultant, with a role of carrying out the periodic site visits, dealing with site queries, addressing site conditions and variations to

suit, checking compliance with our specifications etc. This would include monitoring of the construction of structures.

Two: Call Out: This option is ideal if you or a Project Manager will oversee the work. We would attend the site as requested, typically to suit the dynamics of structural engineering works.