



Architecture and Design

Every architect today needs to know about environmental sustainability and that often includes remodelling and altering existing buildings. There is a lot of interest at present in the adaptive reuse of historic structures, and there are plenty of examples of imaginative and stylish projects that do this.

Architect or Designer?

Our Architecture and Design courses have a great deal in common: both are an introduction to designing buildings and structures. By and large, if you are a future Architect you'll be more interested in style and telling a story through a building, and if you are a future Designer, you'll enjoy more solving its technical and detailing problems. Use this task as way of finding out for yourself which is closest to your own interests.

The task

Your task is to choose an existing old building and convert it into a house for yourself, with a space inside for you to work on your own hobbies. Set yourself the challenge of finding a structure that hasn't been a house in the past. It could for example be:

- An industrial building, or part of it
- An agricultural building, such as a barn or windmill
- An old town or village centre commercial or public building, like a former bank branch

What to do first

- Start by drawing up the existing elevations of the building. If you can work out what the plan is inside, draw that up as well.
- You can usually work out the height of an old building by measuring one brick or stone course, and then counting the number of courses up to the windowsills and heads, and then upwards to the eaves.
- Your drawing should be as accurate as you can make it. You could use free software such as Sketch-Up or alternatively draw it with a sharpened pencil and a ruler.

Then draw a plan of enough of the interior to show what you are going to do there. Include a scale bar so that we can see how big it is.

You are now ready to start designing your own home. You can extend the old building in any direction – into the street or garden, upwards or downwards.

Questions your design should answer

- How will you heat your house?
- How will your design help you save energy?
- How can you make the most of natural resources, such as earth or clay, timber, or hemp?
- What interiors fittings will you need so that you can work on your hobby?

How to present your project

At the end of you will need a set of five A3 drawings that explain your design. You can make a model and include some photographs of it. You should include some before-and-after sketches and present at least one view of the interior. You should also include some images of historic buildings that inspire you.

Places to find inspiration

Here are some examples of buildings from different periods and of different types which have recently been adapted for new uses. Have a look around these websites also to get a sense of what it is like to be an architect.

David Kohn:

<https://davidkohn.co.uk/projects/cow-shed>

Richard Griffiths Architects:

<https://www.rgarchitects.com/projects#/drift-barn>

<https://www.rgarchitects.com/projects#/copy-of-st-albans-cathedral>

Acanthus Clews Architects:

<https://www.architecture.com/awards-and-competitions-landing-page/awards/riba-regional-awards/riba-south-award-winners/2017/warwick-hall-community-centre>

Witherford Watson Mann:

<https://www.wwmarchitects.co.uk/projects/astley>

Richard Parr Associates:

<https://richardparr.com/work/the-farmyard-at-the-newt/>

Redhead Architects:

<https://www.redheadarchitects.com/terrace-retrofit>

Stiff and Trevillion:

<https://www.stiffandtrevillion.com/projects/arding-and-hobbs-london>