

CONSTRUCTION CONSULTANCY — STAGE 1 INITIAL REVIEW

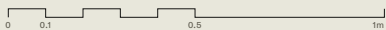
Independent construction-led review & value engineering

Sample project — a London extension & refurbishment (anonymised)

An independent, construction-led review of a proposed extension and refurbishment — the design detail, the contractor's quotation and the value-engineering opportunities — offered alongside the appointed design team. The aim is to support the project, not to question it: to help the works reach the standard of detail and finish expected, and to make the commercial position clear before committing.

PREPARED FOR	CONSULTANT	BASIS	REFERENCE
Private client	Elliot Lipley — E.L_B	Stage 1 design & quotation review	E.L_B — sample / extract

Illustrative extract. These three pages are an anonymised sample of how E.L_B works on a Stage 1 construction consultancy — the cover, the priority action register, and a selection of observations. A live report is longer (typically around twenty items) and specific to the building. The project, parties and figures shown are indicative only and do not describe any real project or advice.



01 PRIORITY ACTION REGISTER

The most urgent matters, each expanded in the observations that follow. Risk summarises the exposure to the client if the point is left unresolved.

#	ISSUE	RISK	REQUIRED ACTION	BY WHOM	TIMING
1	Fitting parameters and the VAT position not yet firmed up	High	Agree a detailed client-supply schedule; confirm VAT treatment and which items should be zero-rated	Client / Contractor	Before acceptance
2	Ground floor priced as a slab — confirm design and add heave protection	Med / High	Structural engineer to confirm the slab for these ground conditions; contractor to re-price to include heave protection	Engineer / Contractor	Before groundwork
3	Foundation depth in shrinkable clay close to trees	Med / High	Confirm the excavation depth the price assumes and carry a provisional allowance for a building-control-instructed depth	Contractor / Engineer	Before start
4	Feature wall has no resolved sub-frame, movement or waterproofing detail	High	Agree a proper support, movement and weathering detail before the front works proceed	Architect / Consultant	Before front works
5	No formal building contract, retention or insurance framework	Med / High	Put a suitable building contract, retention and insurance evidence in place before commencement	Client	Before start

02 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The design intent is strong and, in most respects, well resolved. The opportunities at this stage are not in redesigning the scheme but in tightening the detail at a handful of critical junctions, and in making sure the commercial position is clear before committing.

On cost, the contractor's figure is competitive and the client is well organised — the big-ticket supply items are already understood as client-supplied. Two commercial points matter most: the quotation is silent on VAT (with some elements that should in fact be zero-rated), and the boundary between client-supplied materials and the builder's ancillaries needs firming up through a single client-supply schedule. On the technical side, the ground floor is the point to settle first, and a handful of façade and rooflight junctions are far cheaper to resolve on paper now than to remedy later.

Overall the project is in good shape to proceed once the commercial position is clarified, the ground-floor structure is confirmed with the engineer, and building control is appointed and engaged early.

03 OBSERVATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS — EXTRACT

Each item states the observation, the risk or impact, a risk level, and a recommended action. A live report groups around twenty items across commercial review, construction and detailing; three are shown here.

VAT is not stated — and some elements should be zero-rated HIGH

OBSERVATION. The quotation gives a single total with no reference to VAT, although the contractor is VAT-registered.

RISK & IMPACT. If VAT is additional, the figure rises materially — too large to leave ambiguous, and it directly affects whether the quotation is genuinely affordable. Separately, under current HMRC rules a number of elements — including qualifying energy-saving materials and certain heating measures — should be zero-rated rather than charged at the standard rate; if billed at 20% the client would overpay.

RECOMMENDATION. Confirm in writing whether the total is inclusive or exclusive of VAT and the rate applied to each element, and identify the items that should be zero-rated, with reference to the relevant HMRC guidance and the client's accountant.

Ground floor priced as a ground-bearing slab — confirm and add heave protection MED / HIGH

OBSERVATION. The breakdown prices a ground-bearing slab in place of the suspended floor shown on the structural drawings. Substituting a slab is a legitimate saving, and the contractor has effectively already applied it.

RISK & IMPACT. The saving is real, but two things follow. The change must be confirmed by the structural engineer for these ground conditions — shrinkable clay with a mature tree close by — and it brings heave protection with it, which is not in the priced figure and will add some cost back. So although a slab is cheaper than beam-and-block, the ground-floor price will rise once the necessary protection is included.

RECOMMENDATION. Obtain the engineer's confirmation of the ground-floor design before any groundwork, including the heave-protection requirement, and have the contractor re-price the line to include it. Treat the current figure as excluding heave protection.

Feature wall — support, movement and waterproofing HIGH

OBSERVATION. A feature wall is shown on the principal elevation, but the build-up is described only in outline — there is no sub-frame, movement provision or waterproofing detail at the plinth that supports it.

RISK & IMPACT. Feature panels of this kind are not self-supporting in the way masonry is: they need a rigid perimeter frame, expansion provision, and a drained, waterproofed base. Without a resolved detail there is a real risk of cracking, movement and water tracking into the wall and the space behind — an expensive and visible defect on the main elevation.

RECOMMENDATION. Develop a proper detail before the front works proceed: perimeter sub-frame and fixing, expansion provision, any panel reinforcement, and a drained, waterproofed base with a DPC over the plinth. An indicative sketch detail would accompany the live report as a basis for discussion with the architect and specialist supplier.

