

Lucy Timmer B.A. (hons) Dip Arch. RIBA

Lucy's approach seeks to share diverse experiences and brings together seemingly different requirements and ways of working to create a unique perspective.

Lucy's designs are informed by her experiences studying and working on architecture projects in Australia, where entirely different approaches to design and environmental issues have informed her practice. She experienced a way of working that was less bound by the requirements of strict planning regulations or the strict hierarchies of space of European building design. She found buildings that were much more intimately connected with the environment around them and architecture that blended the lines between outside and inside spaces.

Her designs also reflect her work in both the urban and rural built environments in social housing projects in Greater London and Herefordshire. These projects allowed her to demonstrate how urban ways of living can be translated to and enhance rural ways of living and vice versa.

Lucy's approach to project management reflects her work on partnership projects in Greater London where social housing association, architect and contractor are equal stakeholders. She therefore has a rare insight into the value of balancing the requirements of all stakeholders, problem-solving and working to very strict budgets.

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Key Projects

Residential Projects

A Home Extension for a Timber-Framed Family Home in Herefordshire



Lucy's clients live in a traditionally built timber-framed house in a village in Herefordshire. While they loved where they lived, their home was not meeting the needs of family life either in terms of layout or space. In addition, a conservatory, which was reaching the end of its life, made the small kitchen very dark and was under-used as a space.

They wanted to transform their home by replacing the conservatory and creating more space so they could spend more time together as a family, have friends over and work from home.

Lucy's solution was to build an extension by removing both the conservatory and part of the back wall of the house. This makes the kitchen a lot bigger and lighter and creates an open plan living space where the family can spend time together.

Because they were a busy family, they also needed someone to steer the project through the planning process, budget the project, source contractors, project manage the build phase and undertake snagging at the end of the process.

Reflecting on the project after it had been completed, our client said, "From the initial contact, we were asked questions about how do we live and how do we want to change how we live, what do we want to achieve. I think that really made a difference as to how the building looks and feels now and how it's affected us a family and the way we live in the space. The design felt like a very two-way process and a real partnership – if suddenly something occurred to us that

we needed to incorporate into the design as it developed it was never too much trouble and we were never made to feel like it was a problem. We found the whole working relationship between us, Communion and the builders very productive. The result was that the whole process felt very stress free to us, which I think is unusual.”

Commercial Projects

Life-changing Business Premises in Rural Herefordshire



Lucy’s client was a third generation owner of a business that specialises in the supply and manufacture of equipment for the study of the natural sciences. She wanted to move from the busy south east to north Herefordshire to bring her home and work lives together in one place. As part of the move she needed well-planned commercial premises that would provide enough space for her business to run more efficiently than it could in its existing premises. She also required a practice that could manage the building contract to enable her to concentrate on the day-to-day running of her business in the south east.

In the first instance, planning consent was required to enable the barn to be converted and a new building to be constructed. The site’s location in the middle of open countryside meant the project needed to be exceptionally well considered if it was to secure planning permission. Close communication with the planning officers of Herefordshire Planning department using their Pre Application Enquiry service ensured that the carefully considered design, combined with the other significant benefits that the proposed development offered, not least the creation of employment opportunities, could be fully supportable by Herefordshire planning department. These successful pre application discussions enabled a very smooth planning consent to be achieved.

Given the rural location and existing buildings on site there were also significant environmental factors to consider. Meticulous preparation was undertaken to assess the species that could be affected by the project and careful mitigation strategies were developed and then carried through to ensure the protected bats and bird species and the habitat on which they depend were not harmed. As part of the plan, alternative roost sites were identified and installed before works were started.

Working with her client, Lucy's approach was based on an historic understanding of the site, gained from studying a series of old maps. These indicated that the current barn had once been part of a more extensive courtyard development. This historic understanding was pivotal to the design strategy, which sought to carefully conserve and then convert the existing barn and complement it with a freestanding new building which closely followed the scale of the previously identified development.

The new building is a sensitively scaled, single storey development designed to be subservient to the historic barn. The character of the new building matches that of the existing barn but is executed in a manner that is clearly identifiable as a new design.

Lucy's strategy provided the amount of space that the business required in a manner that resonated with the historical development of the site and the scheme was completed in time for the business to move on schedule.

The results are:

- two buildings that sit sensitively in their environment
- initial and ongoing inward investment for the county, and
- a project that enabled the client to continue to develop a thriving business while at the same time enjoy an unrivalled quality of life that balances her aspirations for her business and her family.

Social Housing Projects

- Social housing projects in Greater London, with values of up to £2 million, including one of the first PPC 2000 partnering contracts
- Rural social housing projects in Herefordshire

Educational Projects

- Teaching accommodation and student housing at Cambridge University
- Refurbishment of areas of James Stirling's History Faculty Library at Cambridge University
- Whitehorse Manor School Refurbishment Proposals, Croyden

Environmental Projects

- Specialist eco-resort on Mornington Peninsula, Victoria, Australia

Exhibitions

- Exhibition at Danish Architecture Centre, Copenhagen

Education

June 2007: Post Graduate Diploma in Management Practice & Law in Architecture

June 2001: Diploma in Architecture, University of Brighton

July 1997: BA (Hons) Architecture, University of Nottingham