

rra
architects

Practice Profile

Hereford • Cheltenham • London

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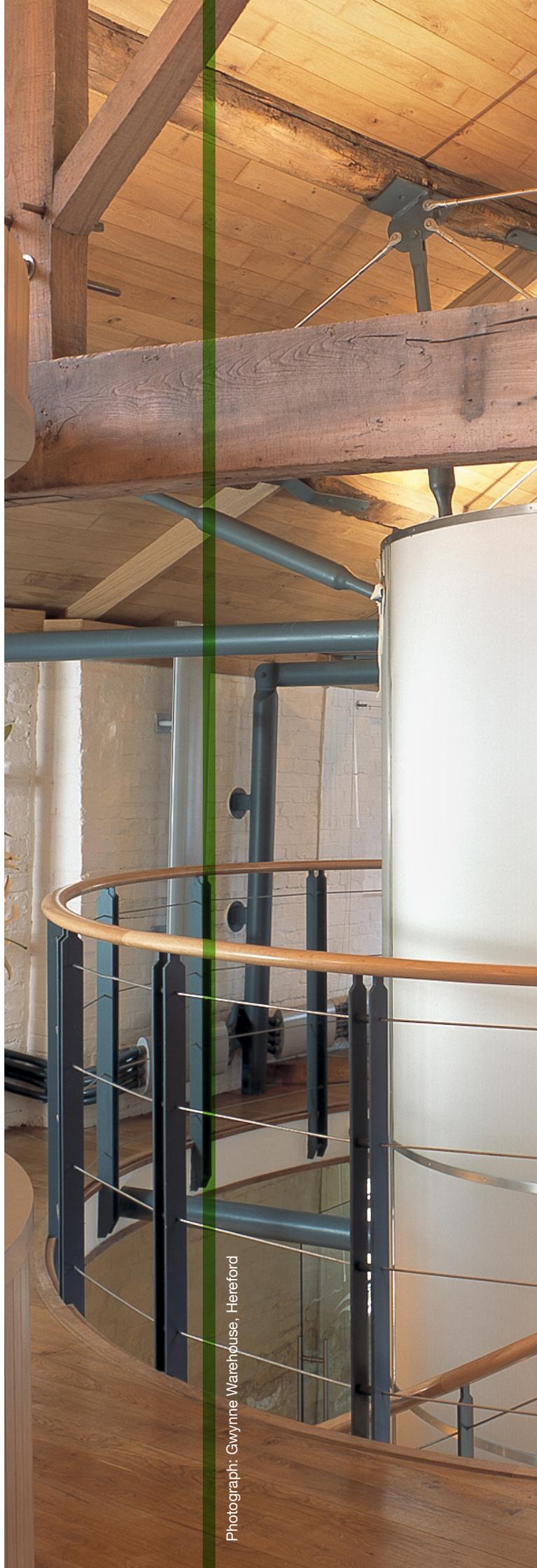
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Photograph: Gwynne Warehouse, Hereford



“Vision and large scale coordination are essential to successful planning.”

Lord Richard Rogers



**“It is now valiant to be simple,
a courageous thing to even
want to be simple. It is a
spiritual thing to comprehend
what simplicity means.”**

Frank Lloyd Wright

Practice Overview

We focus on achieving a balance between commercial insight and design excellence, recognising the positive benefits this combination has within all the sectors we work in.

Today, RRA Architects embraces a range of specialists working as an integrated design team with planners, urban designers, master-planners, architects and interior designers. Consequently we can offer specific specialist services or a fully integrated design service as appropriate to the requirements of our clients.

The integrated approach of our specialist services and sector groups is sustained through nurturing our in-house talent and maintaining a proactive attitude to collaborative working, both internally and externally.

Our portfolio includes simple sheds, complex mixed-use buildings, sensitive conservation projects and multi-level developments.

Our capabilities include satisfying the detailed requirements of owner occupiers, creating maximum flexibility for unknown tenants, sensitivity to a particular site including knowing what is appropriate and what is not, and speedy and competent delivery on every project.

We welcome the challenges and thrive on the experience of project delivery which we use to benefit the next undertaking. Experience of a wide variety of building types has taught us that knowledge built up in one sector is often useful within another.

We have the confidence to innovate, the know-how to consistently deliver and a positive attitude that ensures we deliver original solutions to real problems not a re-appropriation of fixed ideas.

Our mission is to combine vision with action to make a positive difference - creatively, commercially, consistently.

Positioning Statement

Guiding Principles

As a profession, architecture embraces a wide spectrum of interests. As such it must constantly evolve to respond to ever-changing economic, social and environmental pressures.

These factors demand not only the highest level of design awareness with a constant consideration of new materials, building methods and changes in modern lifestyle, but also prompt the creation of the most stimulating and user-friendly environments for the public realm and built accommodation of the highest standard that focuses on the needs of the occupant.

Each project that RRA Architects undertakes produces buildings and urban environments that explore scale, and intimate detailing, as a unified symbiotic concept. Changes in scale and their interplay add distinction and definition to create unique spaces with no two projects ever being quite alike.

Our talented design teams always pursue fresh and innovative design solutions, which are supported by a deep understanding of each development's context and reference along with awareness of practical issues.



Our focus is distinct. Imagination, vision, creativity and a sense of realism are all qualities we nurture. This is a culture that RRA Architects has encouraged and built upon and has proven to be successful; allowing our architects to take ownership of their design whilst fully realising their aspirations and the potential of any project opportunity.

From developer to tenant, fit-out contractor to customer, the world of the retail industry is in constant flux. Single, 'one off' bespoke designs, as well as the understanding of future proofing, sustainability and flexibility all combine within the fundamental sector in which we all as 'customer' interact.

We at RRA Architects seek to capture this evolving market through our understanding of these various socio-economic factors, together with recognising and sometimes suggesting future trends. If the customer returns to the scheme, the battle is half won. If they come back understanding what the branding or project is trying to present, then true sustainability is achieved.

Our Approach

Mutually respectful and understanding client relationships are vital to the success of any project. RRA Architects is renowned as a young dynamic approachable company as we strive to fully empathise with and realistically respond to a client's brief.

Good design is essential in these long-term relationships but a positive approach and practical design are equally important. As a result our clients come back to us time again

... bringing new projects and new clients with them.

Our track record demonstrates we can deliver the requirements of our clients brief to bring about a viable and lasting architectural solution within the build environment. Projects within our capabilities are diverse and have spanned all construction industry sectors, from commercial retail to historic conservation and healthcare to cultural public realm.

Our project team has UK representation centred at our Hereford office and we also have an international reach in terms of the level of expertise and delivery of similar project types both in the UK and abroad.

Strategy

Striving For Sustainability

'Mixed-use development' is a contemporary phrase for the vibrant town, city and urban environment in which we live and work.

The art in designing 'new' mixed-use schemes is understanding that these places only exist and grow because the people living and working in and visiting them not only like doing so, but want to continue to do so, thereby ensuring that those who have a financial interest in these areas receive an acceptable benefit and more importantly a sustainable lasting community.

We at RRA Architects enjoy working with clients to realise the full potential of a site to ensure that 'art' becomes reality, vision becomes sustainability and cost remains within budget.

We believe that sustainability over the longer term is more than simply recycling materials, at the scale of the urban it is finding innovative new uses for old sites & buildings, ensuring longevity and an implicit understanding of the clients brief.



The background image shows a modern cafe interior. A prominent feature is a bright red wall on the right side, which has a red fire alarm bell mounted on it. In the foreground, a glass display case is open, revealing several orange juice boxes on a shelf. Behind the counter, there are stacks of white coffee cups and a large silver thermal carafe with the 'illy' logo. The ceiling is white with recessed lighting and a circular light fixture. The overall atmosphere is clean and contemporary.

Vision

At RRA Architects we do more than design award-winning buildings. People are central to everything we do – as our clients, as users of our buildings, as our colleagues and as the local and global community; they all matter to us and have an impact on the buildings we design.

We're proud to have won numerous architectural awards for our work, demonstrating that we're in touch not only with good design but also the needs of the community.

Through listening and understanding, we seek to achieve excellence in buildings for everyday use.

Team CV

RRA Architects

RRA Architects in partnership has a consultant team that is a formidable force both in terms of commercial reality, and historic buildings expertise. Clients choosing RRA Architects benefit from in house skills covering not only architectural practice skills but also project management and procurement, environmental and sustainable design, planning knowledge and services, interior specification and fit out, graphic and brand management and urban design knowledge.

RRA Architects team has built its reputation on producing first class design solutions across a spectrum of building sectors including retail, ecclesiastical, conservation, residential, hospitality, corporate, educational, urban design, public realm and health care projects. RRA Architects embrace a multi-disciplinary team, working seamlessly with Planning Consultants, Engineers, Interior Designers and Graphic Designers in order to obtain the very best results for both their clients and the cities in which they work.



Garry Thomas
Design Director
Ba (Hons) AADipl, ARB, RIBA

has considerable experience within the built environment having trained and worked in Birmingham and London. Garry has experience of large scale mixed use regeneration projects and community consultation within the UK and abroad in Groningen in the Netherlands and Denver in Colorado. Previous works have included the Journey Zone, Dome 2000 celebrations as part of the regeneration of Greenwich peninsula and master planning work for a former gas works in Groningen and the South Bank London. These skills are combined with RRA architects knowledge of historic building conservation and regeneration having won numerous awards for conservation excellence and architectural design.

Mark Powles
Finance Director
Ba (Hons), DipArch, ARB, RIBA

Mark studied architecture at The Birmingham School of Architecture, qualifying as an architect in 1998. He has a broad knowledge of the profession and construction within the West Midlands region. Mark has been instrumental in the growth of RRA and has an in depth knowledge of its history and client base. Mark takes a collaborative approach to his work by creating and maintaining a close working relationship with the professional team, developers and the authorities. This approach enables him to be pro-active in negotiation in seeking early successful outcomes.





Jon Bentley-Leek **Associate Architect**

Jon has responsibility for the growth of RRA's practice management. Project experience has been in all sectors throughout the UK including many difficult project procurement routes involving protracted funding agreements and client liaison. Prior to working with RRA, Jon was in private practice working on a number of high profile projects throughout the country incorporating retail, hotels, bars, cafes and domestic spaces. Jon has an in depth knowledge of project management and client needs in terms of service and delivery of all types of projects. Jon's contract management skills in conjunction with client liaison and delivery ensures that the client and project team are guided through the specification and brief to maintain to a high standard and a successful project delivery.

RRA Architects / The Team

Garry Thomas: Director.

Mark Powles: Director.

Jon Bentley-Leek: Associate Architect.

Lucy Timmer: Associate Environmental Architect.

Josh Thomas: Interior Architect.

Terry Quirke: Project Architect.

Andrew Jennings: Project Architect.

Jovan Manic-Smetanjuk: Architectural Assistant.

Jay Parker: Marketing and Brand Management.

Tim Welch: Architectural Assistant.

Shelley Bagnall: Administration.

Karen Amos: Practice Manager.

Mary Timmer: Administration.

Caroline Jones: Brand Management Administration.

Marrion Wallace: Accounts.



Photograph: Ford Abbey Hotel, Herefordshire - Awards: AA 5 star Awards

Portfolio

Ford Abbey Hotel, Herefordshire

Location: Puddleston, Leominster
Client: Heijn Enterprises
Period: 2003
Value: £20m
Status: Complete

RRA Architects principle intention throughout this project was to ensure the proper conservation of the Grade II Listed farmhouse and the barns within its curtilage, and accommodation of a boutique hotel to the very highest standards for our clients.

The basic principle of the design approach was to explore the concept of the need to repair.

No need to repair no repairs took place, where there is a clear need for repair, repairs were designed on a like for like basis. New content in the project, has been designed to be of its time and as far as possible has been designed to be non-intrusive into the historic fabric of the building. The end result is sublime in terms of the ability to combine the existing ancient farmhouse and abbey with contemporary hotel accommodation and services.

Wherever possible, the design of the individual spaces has taken into account the natural “grain” of the buildings. The farmhouse has been divided into its constituent parts. Each building has been so identified to its individual chronology within the total structure so that repairs are carried out on an individual building and on a ‘like for like’ basis.

The addition of the swimming pool element into the barn accommodation is intended to be sympathetic, while at the same time introducing twenty first century elements into the building structure.

The success of the project is clear and it has achieved for our client the prestigious 5 star AA award.

Evesham Micros Headquarters

Location: Evesham
Client: Evesham Micros
Period: 1998
Value: £4m
Status: Complete

Britain's leading independent computer peripheral manufacturing company. The brief centred around the need to tailor a factory and showroom retail operation around a headquarters office facility. The office workers enjoy a contemporary environment that is passively ventilated and largely day lit to facilitate low energy consumption and running costs. The adaptability and flexibility on plan ensured that the factory operation was able to expand with ease aligned to the corporate growth strategy.



Greyfriars City Centre Living

Location: Hereford
Client: Tobin Enterprises
Period: 2006
Value: £10m
Status: Scheme Design



Greyfriars is a city centre site that explores the sustainable communities agenda. The project is raising the profile of dense urban living as well as promoting green urban living and energy usage. The site is complex in terms of planning requirements for ecology, flooding, highway access and affordable housing yet the entire project delivers for the client a project that satisfies each aspect without compromise. Much of the project has been about public relations and management of the idea within the local community and a wider level to ensure that the project has the green light prior to submission and approvals.

Crystal Room Housing

Location: Hereford
Client: Clive Davies
Period: 2003
Value: £4m
Status: Planing



The project consists of a collection of old structures ranging from a polychromatic brick warehouse to a 1930's art deco industrial building. The brief was to consider a mixed use project for the site to integrate new and existing structures within the site. The street scape and surrounding wider city plan was incorporated so that a new retail street was introduced as an extension of the public realm.

The quality of the existing buildings was carefully integrated so that the end result was a celebration of the historic and important fabric within the city adjacent to the Cathedral and palace gardens.

Lynne Warehouse

Location: Hereford
Client: Heijn Enterprise
Year: 2001
Budget: £1.2m
Status: Complete

The house and warehouse is a collection of historic buildings within close proximity to the Bishops Palace within Hereford. The project consisted of assessing the condition of the building fabric and decay before careful renovation and inclusion of a contemporary business conference centre and offices could be integrated. The complete project is the result of good contemporary structural solution in conjunction with celebration with historic building detailing. The project now facilitates a convention centre and conference centre for all sorts of events from trade fairs, to meetings and seminars. The site also included an extension of the public realm to the river front through the addition of a new square for pedestrians.



ASDA Gateway



Location: Hereford
Client: ASDA
Period: 2004
Value: £3m
Status: Planning

The site adjacent to the A49 within the city is controversial and the whole application for a new Asda store within Hereford hinged upon the nature of the gateway site. The project brief was to re-design a contemporary landmark building as a gateway arrival building into the south of the city given that the Asda own proposal was not achieving the desired effect through planning. The building contains 18 apartments and also accommodates a flood defence strategy for the site. Given the location and prominence of the building the site was designed as a landmark object, incorporating passive solar shading and ventilation devices as a sustainable project. The building will be constructed once the flood defence system is complete.



Hereford Hightown Regeneration

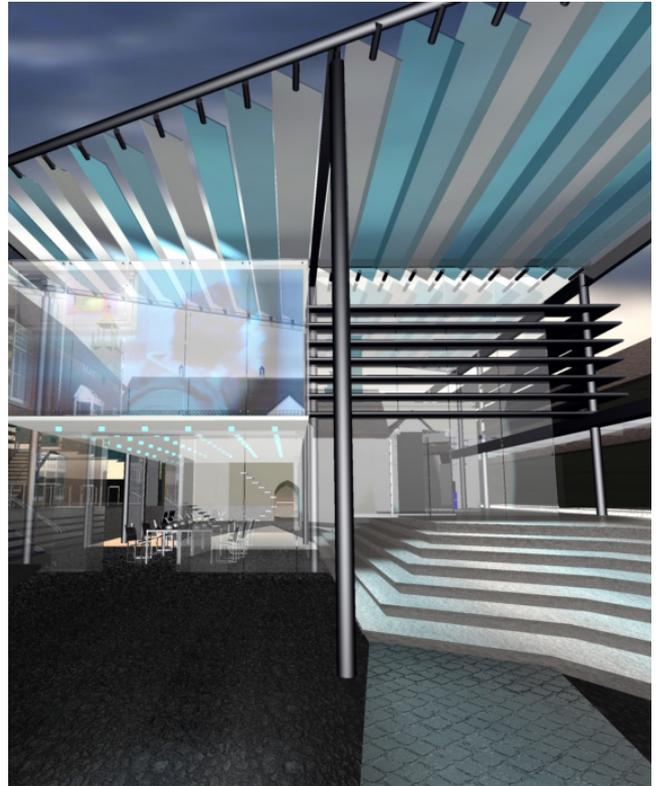
Location: Hightown
Client: Owen Williams
Period: 2005
Value: £2m
Status: Planning

RRA were appointed as design consultant to assist in the regeneration of the historic retail area within Hightown. The existing paving system was in need of overhaul and there was pressing need to improve the central spaces to accommodate a more market heritage feel to the centre. The project involved the celebration of the historic elements of the city by introducing way signage to all the historic doorway and entry points into the square. With a sensitive lighting solution in partnership with adjoining owners the aim was to celebrate the heritage of the space and lead to a unique centre that supported the retail cover in partnership.

Ludlow Graphic and Photography Centre

Location: Ludlow
Client: Ludlow College
Period: 2003
Value: £1.1m
Status: Planning

Ludlow college located right within the town centre required a new graphic and photography facility. The proposal building needed to satisfy a difficult authority within which to gain a contemporary building. The setting comprises of a medieval hall, a 18th century school house and an arts and crafts art building. The new centre was to bring all these structures together as an integrated landscape and surface. The disabled access regs dominated the brief given the steeply sloping site. The end result was a glass envelope and elevated lecture pod hanging over the courtyard. The medieval court was excavated to medieval levels so that an old well and cobbles were revealed within the design. The end result is a project that can assist in the celebration of arts, graphics and photography on the site without detriment to the high quality historic fabric.





Waterworks Museum

Location: Broomy Hill
Client: Waterworks Museum Hereford
Period: 2004
Value: £700k
Status: Design and Build



The existing museum building consists of a pump station which is a scheduled ancient monument. The desire was to expand the museum collection and sort out pedestrian flow around the site and facilities for the retail shop and toilets. The project received lottery funding under the heritage Lottery scheme and RRA were instrumental in driving the process through a hurdle of planning issues to meet grant criteria. The resultant project is an industrial building built under design and build in order to ensure a fixed price for a client body that had zero funds and was entirely self-aided.



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