



**How to Design A Life Enhancing Home – with Allan Corfield**



## Todays Talk –

- The concept of a Life Enhancing Home
- Step 1: Understanding your needs & aspirations
- Step 2: Budgeting & planning
- Step 3: Choosing the right location & environment
- Step 4: Choosing the right team
- Step 5: Designing for health & comfort
- Step 6: Functional & flexible spaces
- Step 7: Personal touches & emotional connections







**The concept of a Life Enhancing Home**



*“A "Life Enhancing Home" is a dwelling that goes beyond basic shelter and comfort, to prioritise occupants physical, emotional, and psychological wellness.*

*Incorporating functional design with personalised features that accommodate both current and future needs, promoting overall health and harmony.”*











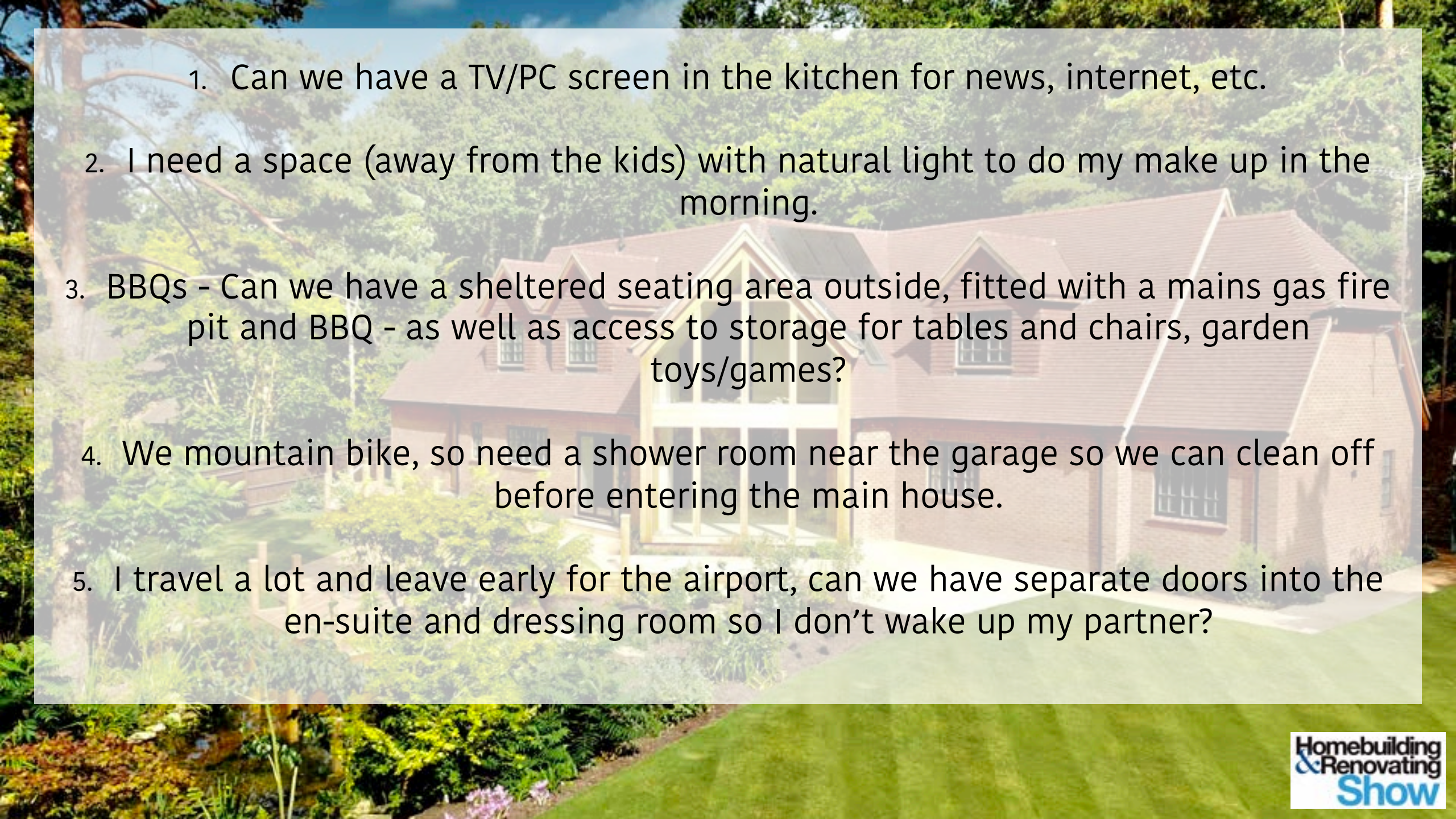
## Step 1: Understanding your needs & aspirations



## Start with you and your family

1. You are creating or improving a current space to respond to your specific requirements
2. Think about how you live now, 5 years, 10 years and even into old age
3. What is good or bad about your previous homes
4. What are the top 5 activities you do in and around your home



- 
1. Can we have a TV/PC screen in the kitchen for news, internet, etc.
  2. I need a space (away from the kids) with natural light to do my make up in the morning.
  3. BBQs - Can we have a sheltered seating area outside, fitted with a mains gas fire pit and BBQ - as well as access to storage for tables and chairs, garden toys/games?
  4. We mountain bike, so need a shower room near the garage so we can clean off before entering the main house.
  5. I travel a lot and leave early for the airport, can we have separate doors into the en-suite and dressing room so I don't wake up my partner?



# The design process starts with YOU.

## What is a Brief and what is it used for?

1. Your brief sets out all of the important requirements for your project & use
2. It is created by you prior to engaging with your design team
3. You should use it to obtain accurate fee proposals from your design team
4. It is an evolving document, throughout the life of project



### First Floor Accommodation -

Master suite room, with en-suite bathroom, large his & hers walk-in wardrobe (approx. 3-5m storage each all hangers)  
Balcony from master suite  
Second living room from master suite  
2 additional double bedrooms, sharing 1 en-suite  
Family bathroom  
Home Office (could be on GF)  
Views into walled garden are important  
Window seats  
Double height volumes (potential down to GF)

### Landscaping -

Mixture of hard & soft landscaping  
Focused around the existing walled garden  
New formal entrance through trees on private access track  
Courtyard is key

### Systems -

Mains or bottled gas supply  
Heating UFH on all of Ground Floor and wet rooms on First Floor  
MVHR system  
Central Vac system  
Whole house control system (through IOS)  
Aga in kitchen, if required?

### Budget -

Client to confirm?

### Timeframe -

Start immediately on designs, start on site 2016. Approx 12-16 month build schedule

### Wishes -

Sunken wine cellar  
Trash shoot and laundry shoot



## What is included in your Brief?

1. Basic room information & room sizes
2. How the building flows
3. Architectural Style
4. Is a certain view or orientation important?
5. Energy Performance & Heating Strategy
6. What is your role (be the best selfbuilder you can)
7. Budget & Timescales
8. Why





## **Provide additional information**

1. Sketches
2. Sketch-up models
3. Lego or physical models
4. Pinterest Boards





## Step 2: Budgeting & planning



## Finance first

1. You must know how much money you can afford in total (land / build / fees) before you start anything – don't forget VAT
2. Speak with a Self-build specialist rather than a high street bank.
3. Your choice of site (location & type) will massively impact upfront costs. Remember you can borrow against the land purchase costs.
4. Understand your cashflow requirements, if you are buying a bespoke kit or window package, then this will be paid upfront.
5. Do not become a Grand Designs disaster!



**Should I be the PM – someone needs to be!**

**Turnkey (main contractor) / Project Manager / Self managed**

1. How much time and skill to complete the tasks
2. Get the best team around you, work with self build specialists
3. Become the best self builder/client you can – RESEARCH
4. Fix your budget, design and construction method as early as you can
5. Confirm everything in writing and use reputable contractors



## Be efficient & Realistic with your project

### How can you impact the future of your project –

- Not designing efficiently
  - Floor to ceiling heights
  - Structural spans
- Incorrect specification
- Too big or too small
- Cladding choice
- Overestimating the amount of work you can do yourself





## Step 3: Choosing the right location & environment



## The process

1. Work out where you want to live
2. What you can afford
3. What size of site
4. Understand the types of sites available
5. Appraise your selection – does it align with your brief and lifestyle



## Where do you want to live

1. This will be affected by a few considerations –
  1. Family
  2. Work commitments or travel
  3. Plot prices
  4. Desired location, rural or urban
2. Use google earth/maps to pick geographic locations
3. Try and get this down to regions or towns or even villages



## What can you afford

1. Your total project budget is the first thing you consider
2. This needs to include everything, plot, fees, build costs, contingencies, borrowing fees etc
3. What will impact cost – location, size, planning permission, connections
4. Depending on the type of site and its risk level/location, the price could range for a standard site from between £50k to £250k
5. If it is in a high value area or where land is scarce then it would be between £500k to £1M



## Types of potential plots-

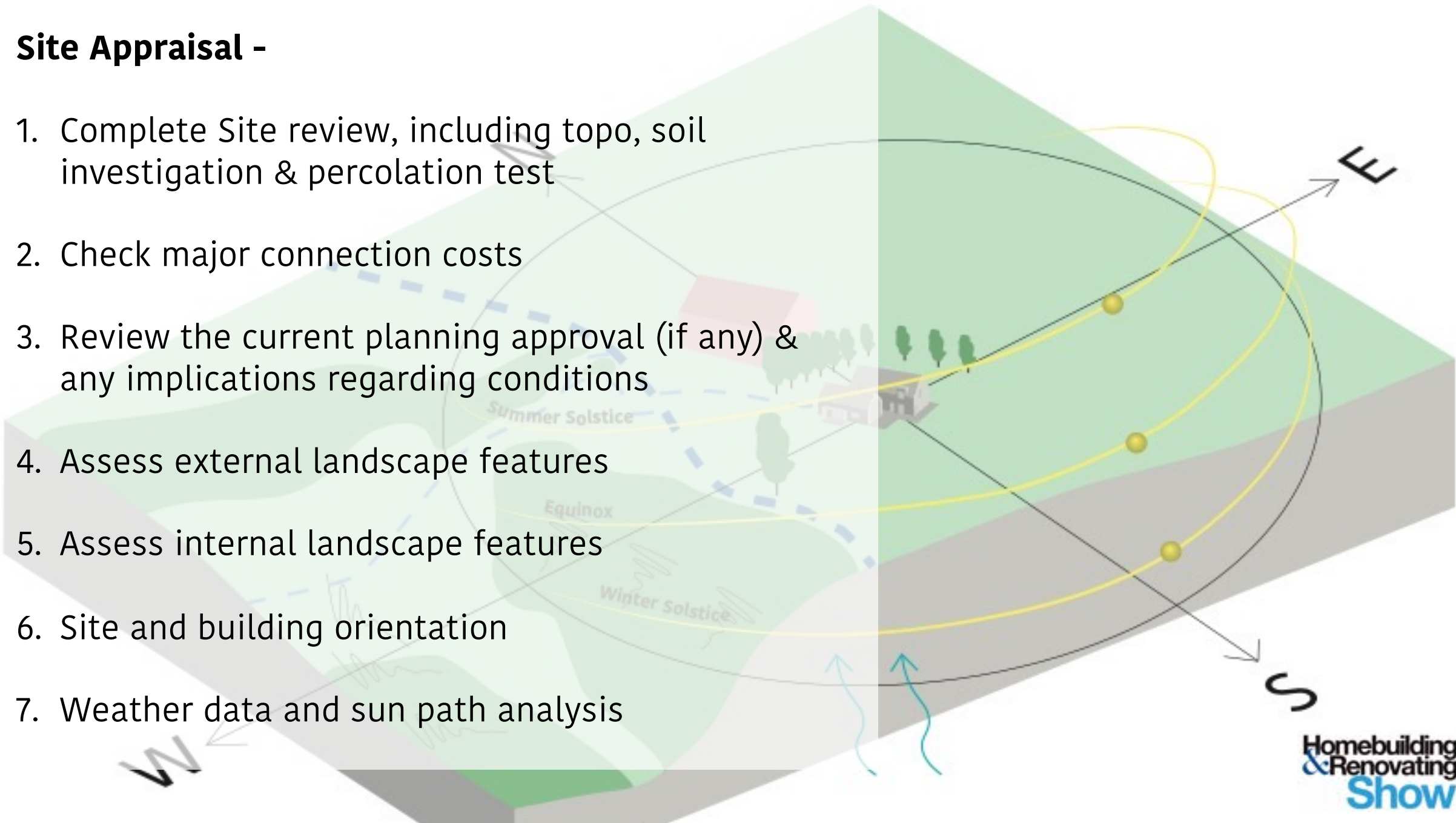
1. Virgin land or agricultural land
2. Serviced plots – with outline planning permission
3. Serviced plots – with detailed planning permission
4. Brownfield or gap/infill sites
5. Custom build sites
6. Existing buildings to demolish and replace
7. Existing buildings for conversion and major extension
8. Conversion of agricultural buildings
9. New dwelling attached to tourism or industry





## Site Appraisal -

1. Complete Site review, including topo, soil investigation & percolation test
2. Check major connection costs
3. Review the current planning approval (if any) & any implications regarding conditions
4. Assess external landscape features
5. Assess internal landscape features
6. Site and building orientation
7. Weather data and sun path analysis







## Step 4: Choosing the right team



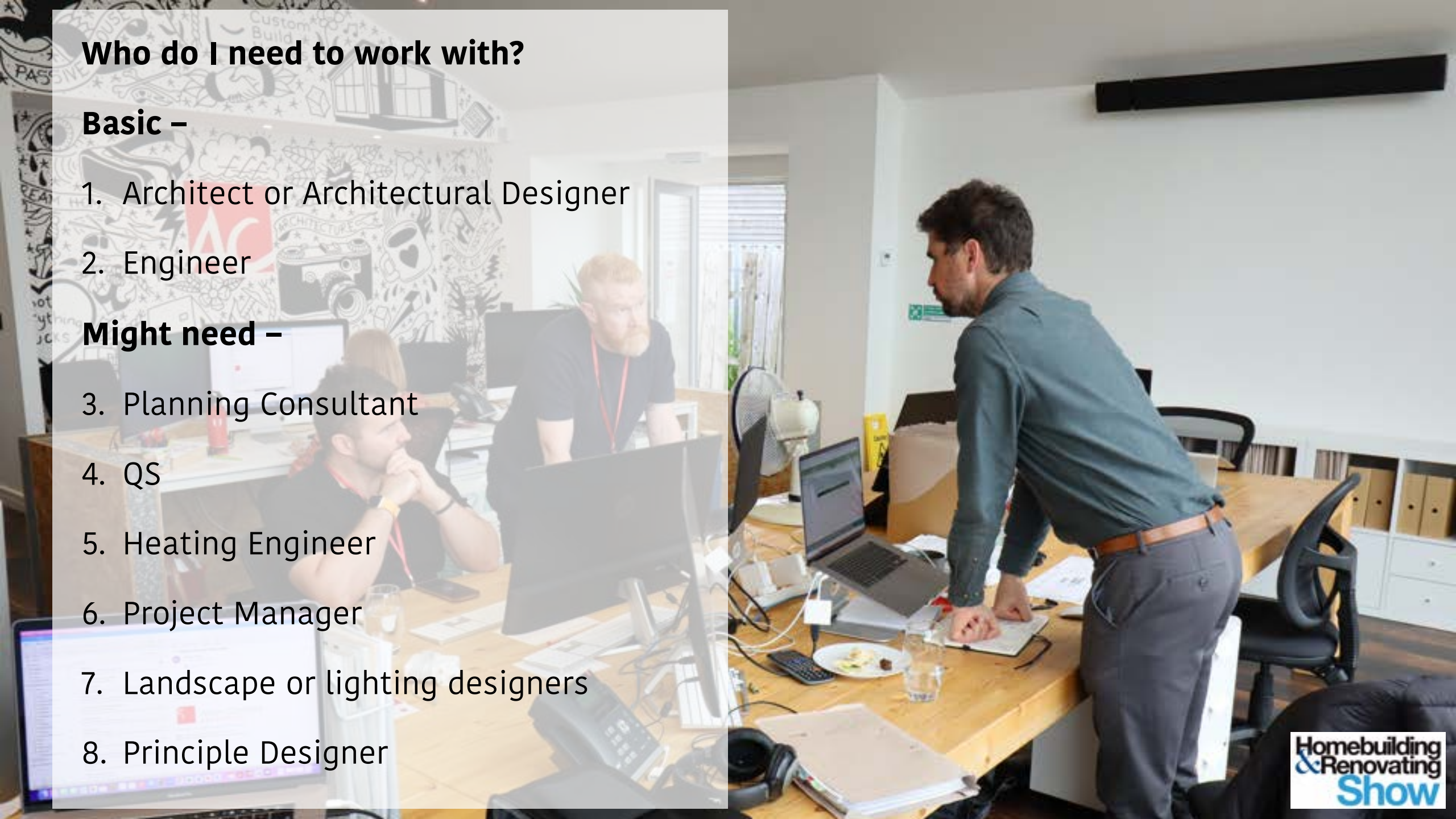
# Who do I need to work with?

## Basic –

1. Architect or Architectural Designer
2. Engineer

## Might need –

3. Planning Consultant
4. QS
5. Heating Engineer
6. Project Manager
7. Landscape or lighting designers
8. Principle Designer





## Top tips on appointing your design team?

1. Interview at least 3 of each profession required, **ask for references** and look into their previous work.
2. Provide your **detailed brief & Pinterest board** to anyone you require a quote from.
3. Obtain **written quotes** & ensure they are **fixed fees** – don't go for % of construction cost quotes!
4. Speak to professionals who regularly handle your type of project – **low energy or self-build specialists** can give you the best advice!





## **The basics -**

### **Stages**

1. Initial Design
2. Planning Application
3. Building Warrant or Regulations
4. Production Drawings

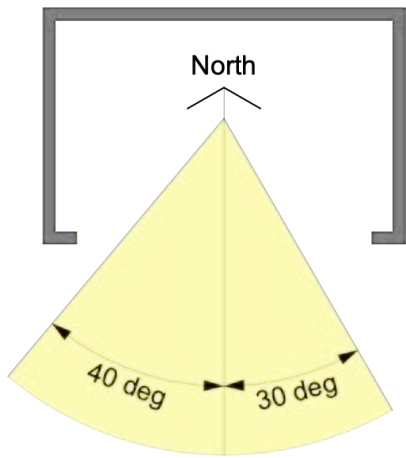




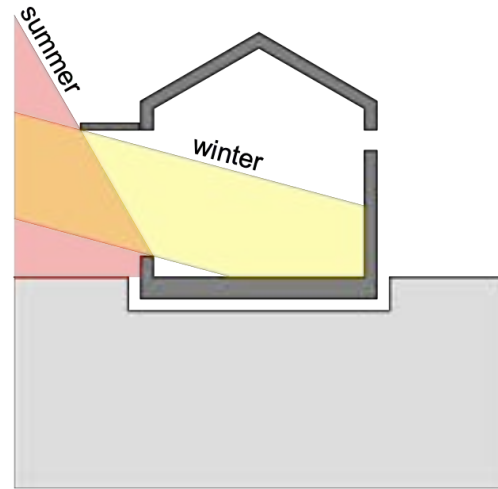


## Step 5: Designing for health & comfort

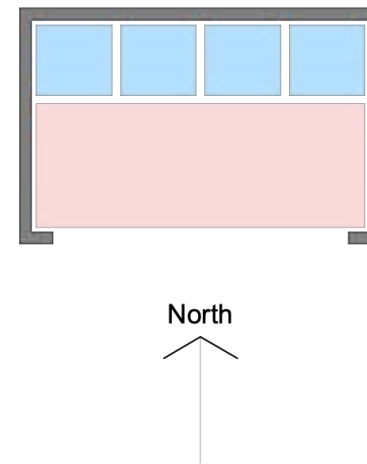




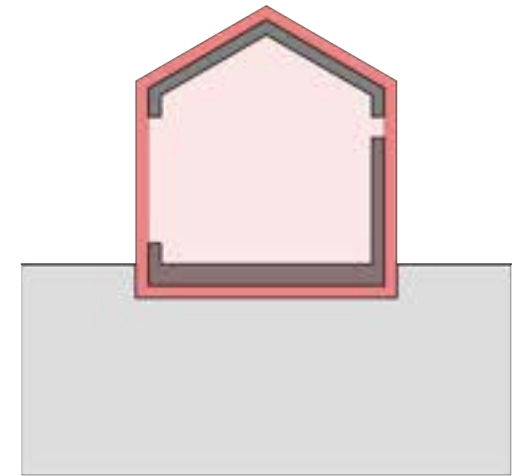
**orientation**



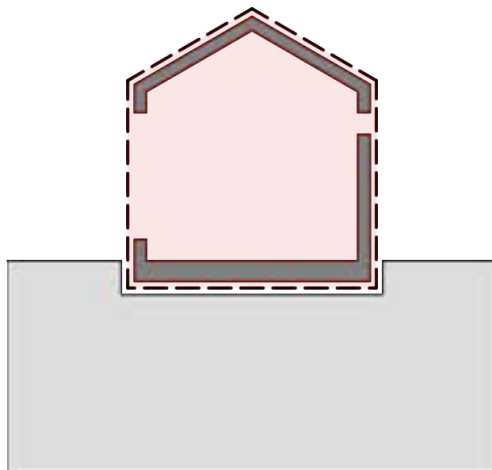
**passive solar gain**



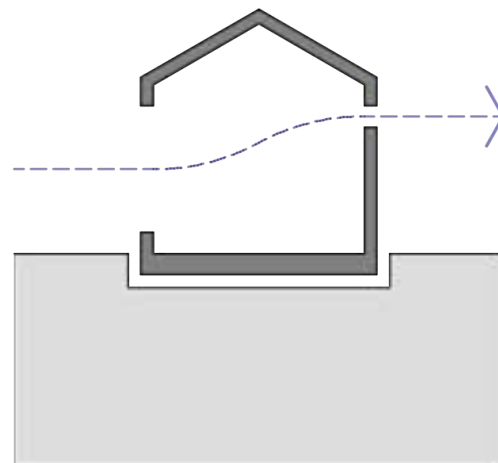
**organisation**



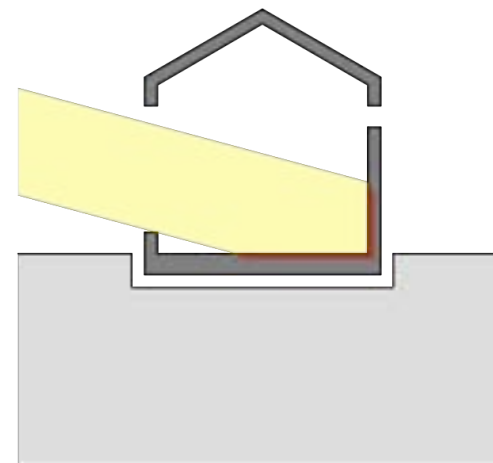
**super insulation**



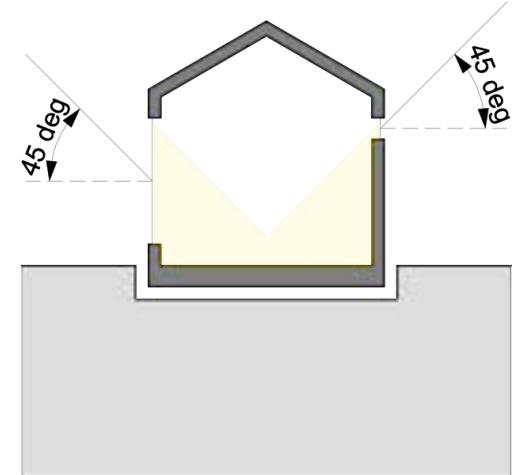
**air-tightness**



**natural ventilation**



**thermal mass**



**daylight**

Fabric First with MVHR





Volumes

















Natural daylight

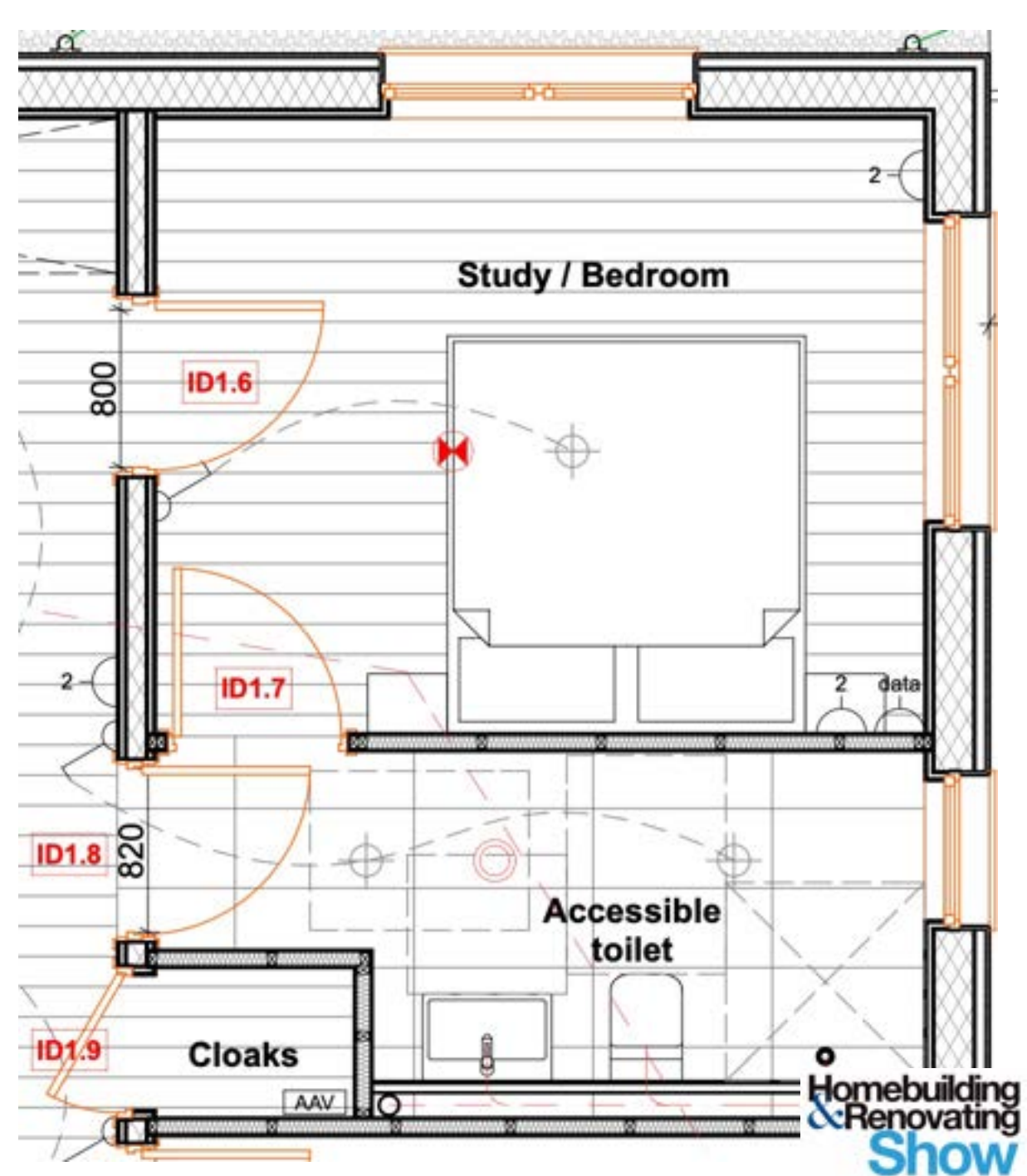






## Step 6: Functional & flexible spaces









Creating spaces







Multi-use spaces









Feature storage







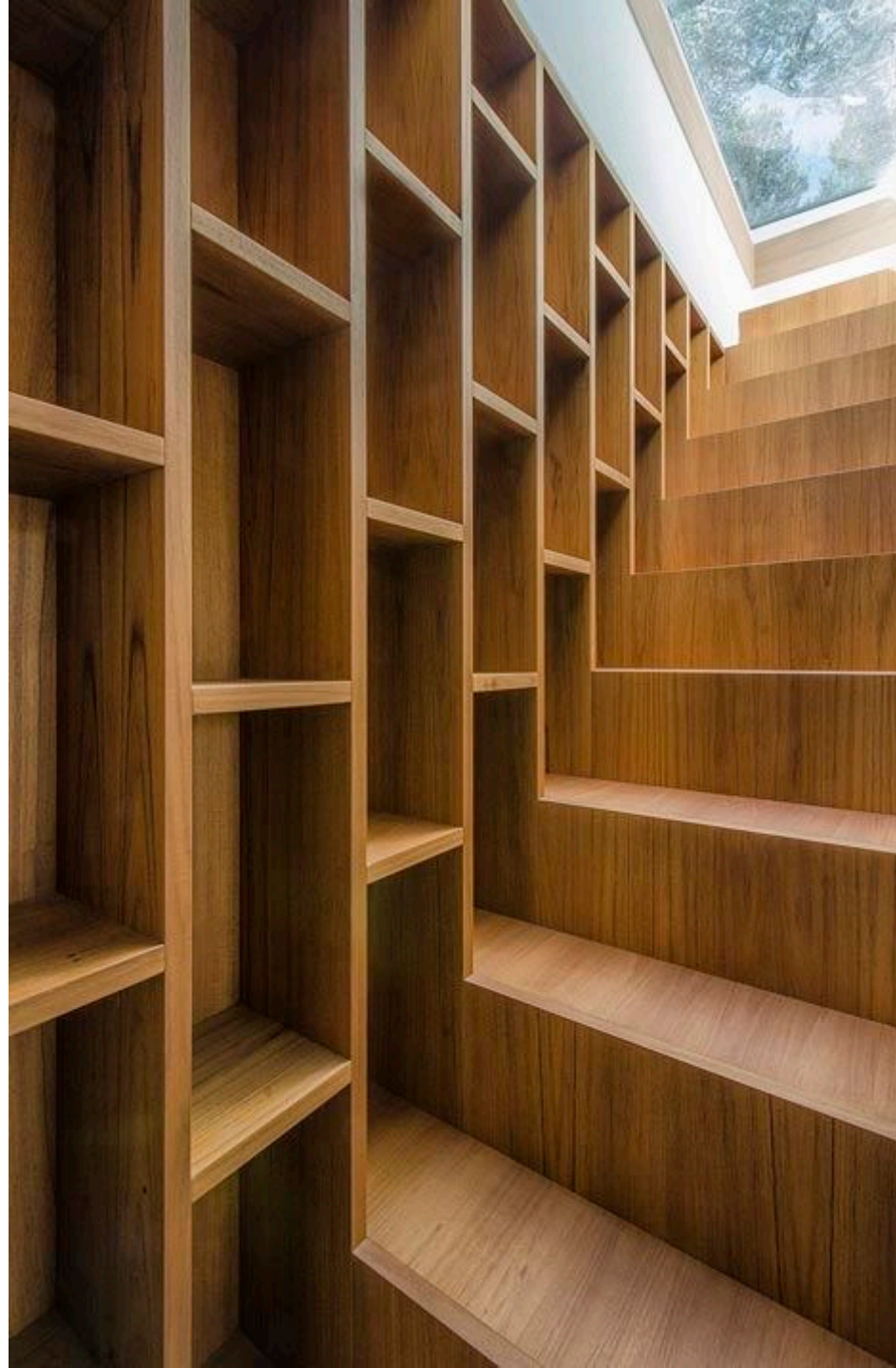
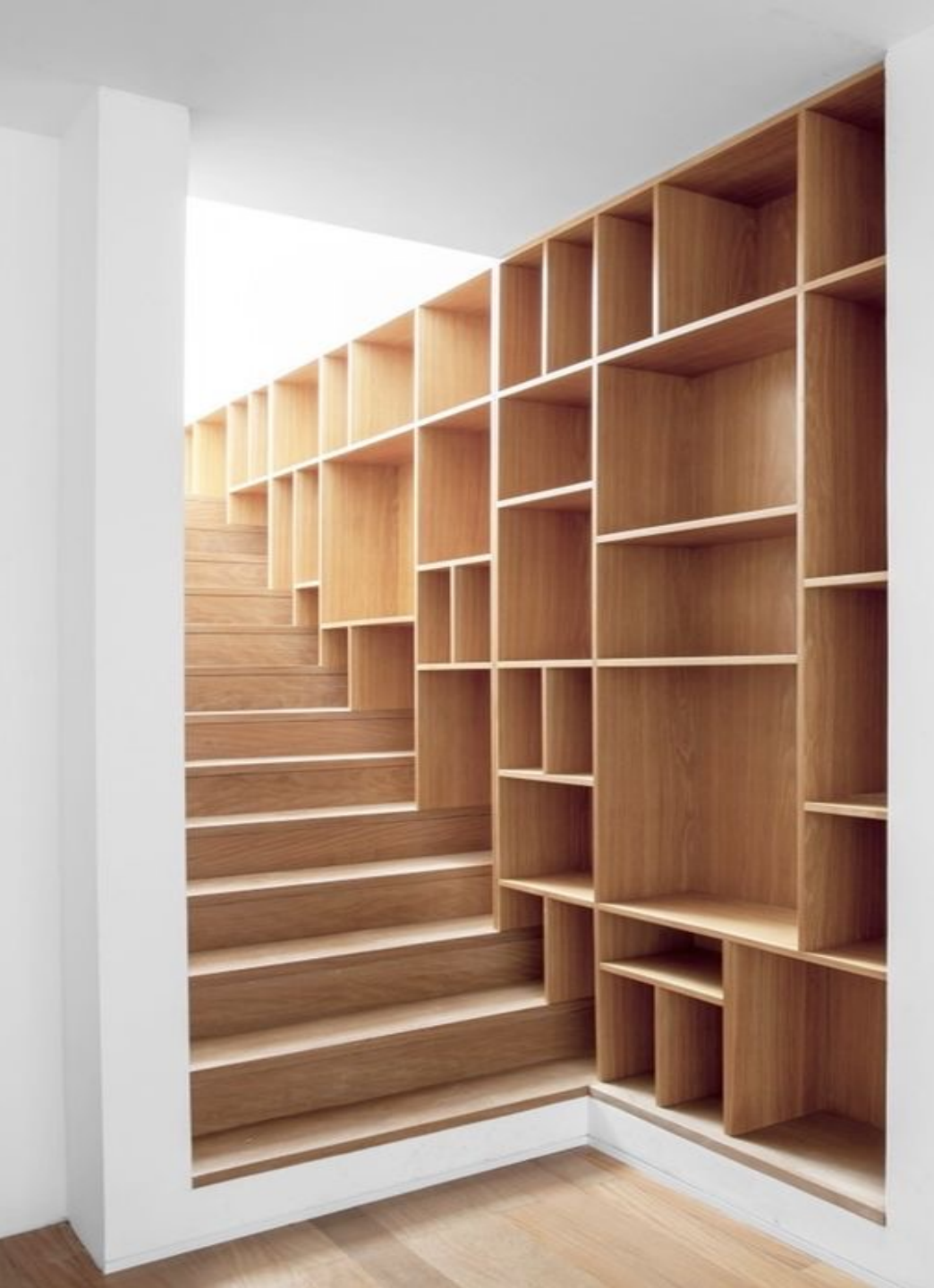


Flexible spaces - stairs

























## Step 7: Personal touches & emotional connections





Glazing





























Baths









Window & corner seats







Shadow gaps





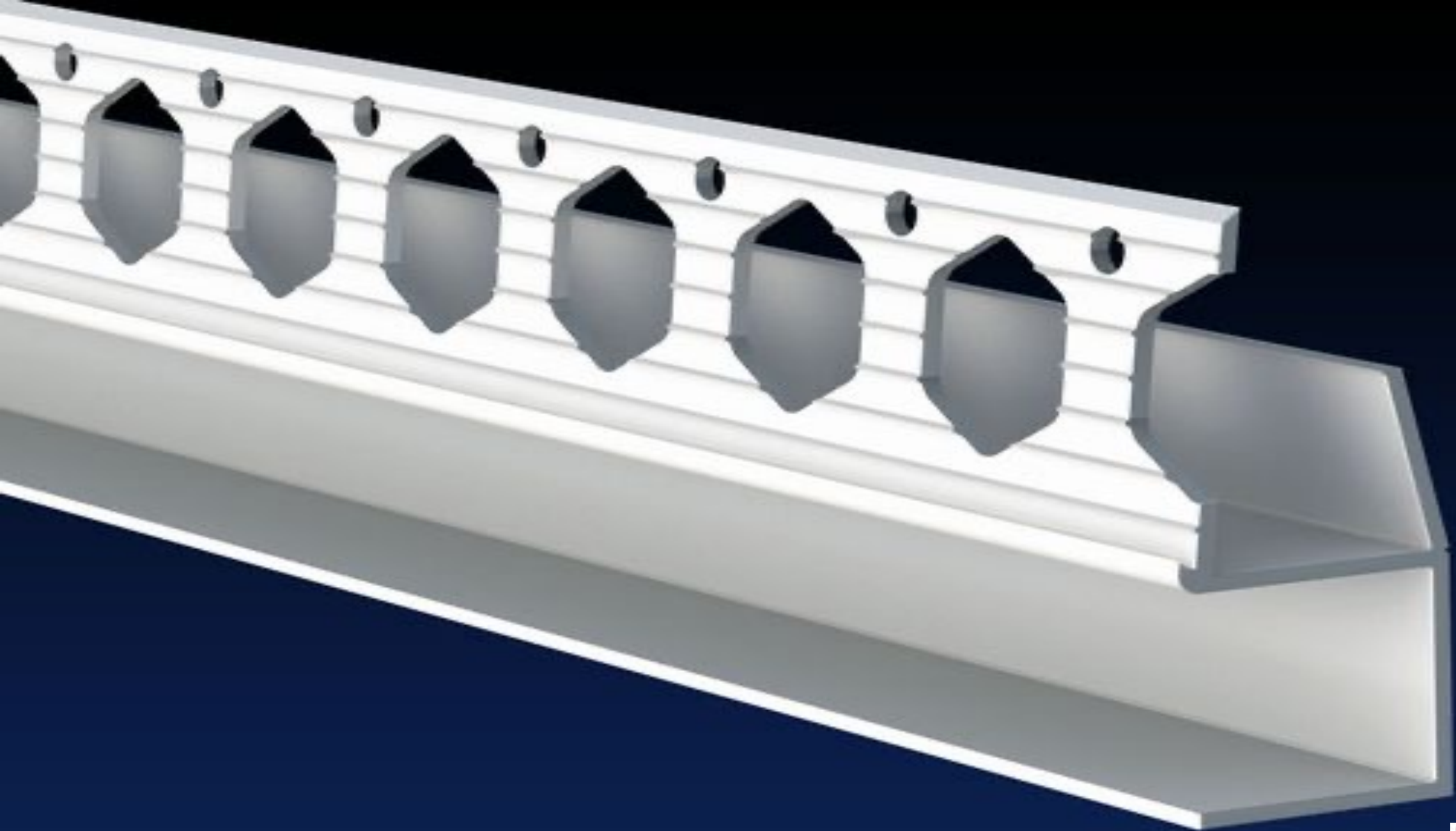














## Summary

1. Understand what your life Enhancing Home includes
2. Work out your budget, cashflow & timeline
3. Where you want to live and only proceed if it meets all the criteria
4. Surround yourself with the best support team you can afford
5. Be the best self-builder you can be
6. Design to maximise health & comfort
7. Create functional & flexible spaces
8. Make it personal & inspiring



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