



Architects

St Katherine's House  
Forge Lane, Shorne  
Gravesend. DA12 3DP  
Shorne - 5424

## DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

Demolition of existing conservatory, new single storey extension and terrace in the approximate same location with associated internal works



*P001 – aerial view of site looking westerly*

**12 June 2024**

DAC Architects  
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This statement is prepared by Architect Leslie D May BA(Hons) Dip Arch RIBA ARB ACArch  
This statement should be read in conjunction with the heritage statement.

## Introduction

This application has been submitted in response to the advice and guidance issued by the Local Planning Authority Pre-Application Advice Reference PRE20230234 dated 21 November 2023 and the site meeting held on the same date.

## A Brief history and description of St Katherine's House setting

St Katherines Chapel is a historic grade II detached building, to the rear of the site. The chapel is not visible from roadside elevations of the site and shielded by St Katherine House; a grade II listed and existing vegetation.

St Katherines House, the subject of this application, is a much later house built very close to the eastern end of the chapel.



*P002 – entrance area looking into site*

The site is located within the Green Belt, Shorne Village Conservation Area and Higham Arable Farmland Landscape Character Area.

The space in front of the house from the road defines the visual impact upon the conservation area. The boundary wall and mature trees are all positive features for this building and its setting.

The house has garaging for one vehicle with ample off street parking areas available within the site.



*P003 – side east elevation*

The garden area to the north of the house is laid to lawn with levels dropping several metres from south to north and mature ornamental tree and shrub planting to all boundaries. The garden leads down to a tennis court.



*P004 – aerial view looking north*



*P005 – east elevation indicating terraced gardens*

**Views to St Katherines House and chapel**  
Indicating its setting in the conservation area



*P006 – view from Rochestr Road looking south*



*P007 – forge lane approach road to site*



*P008 – forge lane approaching properties*



*P009 – forge lane approaching site little st katherines on right*

As the site is approached from Forge Lane there are very limited views of St Katherine's House and the chapel due to hedgerows and houses built towards the centre.



*P010 – forge lane view to east elevation from road*



*P011 – view taken from junction of crown gardens malthouse lane junction back to site*

## Planning History

Planning Applications (19)

- [Continued use of convent hall for play school.](#)

Ref. No: 19740487 | Status: Application Permitted

- [Erection of new building for use as classroom](#)

Ref. No: 19580623 | Status: Application Permitted

- [Reducing the lateral growth of one large multi stem Sycamore Tree \(T1\) by about 20% and removing up to 3 metres of growth from the lower and higher tiers of the tree.](#)

Ref. No: 20131145 | Status: Not Make a Tree Preservation Order

- [Application for Listed Building Consent for the conversion of a bedroom to an ensuite bathroom/wc.](#)

Ref. No: 20140090 | Status: Application Permitted

- [Application for the approval of conditions 3, 4, 5 and 6 attached to Listed Building Consent Ref No 20140090 relating to the external soil pipe extending above the eaves line to act as a combined soil and vent pipe, the external soil and vent pipe to be constructed of cast iron. details of the design, colour and pattern of the proposed tiling of the bathroom and details of the service runs for the hot and cold water pipes.](#)

Ref. No: 20140421 | Status: Approval of details

- [Application for Listed Building Consent for the installation of extractor fan with ventilation grille.](#)

Ref. No: 20140581 | Status: Application Permitted

- [Open outdoor swimming pool with small detached building for plant & services for the pool.](#)

Ref. No: 20200013 | Status: Application Refused

- [Application for Listed Building Consent for the construction of an outdoor swimming pool with small detached building for plant & services for the pool.](#)

Ref. No: 20200014 | Status: Application Refused

- [The 5m crown lifting of one Sycamore Tree \(T1\) and one Cherry Tree \(T2\) to provide adequate clearance to the highway, as requested by Kent County Council.](#)

Ref. No: 20201201 | Status: Not Make a Tree Preservation Order

- [Application for the approval of the facing brick, Butterly Kingsfold Multi-stock brick; Ibstock Warnham \(door infill\) - stretcher bond & mortar mix; Ibstock Staffordshire Blue \(brick on edge\); Yorkstone for the terrace steps; flintstone; English Oak Stain for the exterior and the method of the bricking-up of the external kitchen doorway as required by condition \(iii\) \(a\), \(d\) & \(e\) of Listed Building consent ref. no. GR/96/715X.](#)

Ref. No: 19960858 | Status: Application Permitted

- [Application for the approval of the joinery details as required by condition \(iii\)\(c\) of Listed Building Consent ref no GR/96/715 & \(iii\)\(c\) of planning permission ref no GR/96/714.](#)

Ref. No: 19960849 | Status: Application Permitted

- [Application for Listed Building consent for the erection of a conservatory on the north elevation, involving relocation of door by bricking up existing external kitchen door and formation of new door from existing window; internal alterations and construction of external steps and patio area.](#)

Ref. No: 19960715 | Status: Application Permitted

- [Erection of a conservatory on the north elevation.](#)

Ref. No: 19960714 | Status: Application Permitted

- [Application for Listed Building Consent for the erection of a conservatory on the north elevation.](#)

Ref. No: 19960586 | Status: Application Withdrawn

- [Erection of a conservatory on the north elevation.](#)

Ref. No: 19960585 | Status: Application Withdrawn

- [Erection of a 10ft high chain link fence to enclose proposed tennis court](#)

Ref. No: 19860414 | Status: Application Permitted

- [Erection of a front porch](#)

Ref. No: 19850036 | Status: Application Refused

- [Incorporating Listed Building Consent Demolition of an existing porch and one existing chimney stack and for the erection of a private garage together with internal alterations](#)

Ref. No: 19781090 | Status: Application Permitted

- [Change of use from a residential home for nuns to a private dwelling house](#)

Ref. No: 19780284 | Status: Application Permitted

Planning Appeals (2)

- [Application for Listed Building Consent for the construction of an outdoor swimming pool with small detached building for plant & services for the pool.](#)

Ref. No: 2020/00029/REF | Status: Appeal Withdrawn

- [Open outdoor swimming pool with small detached building for plant & services for the pool.](#)

Ref. No: 2020/00030/REF | Status: Appeal Withdrawn

Pre Application Response PRE20220281 Dated 25 November 2022

Pre Application Response PRE20230234 Dated 21 November 2023

### **Archaeology**

The site is in an Area of Archaeological Potential; however, KCC Heritage has historically advised that as the site appears to have been terraced it is considered unlikely that the proposal will have a significant impact at this location. As such, it is considered the proposal raises no implications regarding archaeology and would be compliant with Policy CS20 and saved Policy TC7 of the Core Strategy.

### **Landscape character**

The site is well screened by mature trees and shrubs and the proposal would not be visually intrusive in the wider landscape and would not adversely affect the local landscape character of the Higham Arable Farmlands Landscape Character Area and would therefore be in keeping with Policy CS12

of the Core Strategy.

### **Key Policies**

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires the Borough Council to determine planning applications in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Where there are other material considerations, the development plan should be the starting point, and other material considerations should be taken into account in reaching a decision.

One such consideration will be whether the plan policies are relevant and up to date.

The Development Plan for Gravesham currently comprises:

- Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy and Policies Map, September 2014;
- Saved policies in the Gravesham Local Plan First Review, November 1994; and
- The Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2013 - 2030 (July 2016, revised 2020).

#### *Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy 2014:*

- CS01 – Sustainable Development
- CS02 – Scale and Distribution of Development
- CS12 – Green Infrastructure
- CS18 – Climate Change
- CS19 – Design and Development Principle
- CS20 – Heritage and the Historic Environment

#### *Saved Policies in the Gravesham Local Plan First Review 1994:*

- P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards
- C13 – Extensions to Dwellinghouses in the Countryside
- TC2 – Listed Buildings
- TC3 – Development Affecting Conservation Areas

#### *National Planning Policy Framework 2023:*

- Section 2 – Achieving sustainable development
- Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places
- Section 13 – Protecting Green Belt land
- Section 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
- Section 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

### **Other Material Considerations**

Section 16 (2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires special regard to be had to the desirability of preserving the listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses when considering whether to grant listed building consent

Section 66 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires special regard to be had to the desirability of preserving the listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses when considering whether to grant planning permission.

Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires special attention to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area.

*Supplementary Planning Guidance and other Documents:*

The Council has adopted a number of Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) documents, Development Briefs and Conservation Area Appraisals. These elaborate on saved policies in the Gravesham Local Plan First Review and policies in the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy and are material considerations in determining planning applications.

In addition, the Council has adopted a number of documents that have been produced by Kent County Council also as Supplementary Guidance.

<https://www.gravesham.gov.uk/local-plan-policy/supplementary-planning-guidance>

The following documents are relevant to this application:

- SPG2 – Residential Layout Guidelines (2020).
- SPG4 – KCC Parking Standards (2006).
- Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021)
- Technical Housing Standards – nationally described space standard (2015);
- Landscape Character Assessment (2009);
- Shorne Rural Conservation Area Appraisal Supplementary Planning Document (2017)
- Management Plan Rural Conservation Area Appraisals Supplementary Planning Document (2016)
- Listed Building A Guide for owners and occupiers Informal Guidance (2020)

**Design Proposal Introduction**

The existing house is fairly substantial, but the internal layout to the ground floor does not flow well and this creates a disconnect from the house to the rear garden. It is our intention to improve this for the occupants while protecting and enhancing this important heritage asset.

The conservatory is recognised as being of a poor design and incongruous to the main house. We intend to introduce a sensitive proposal that replaces the conservatory, but still in keeping with the main house.

From the previous pre app submission the design has been revised to substantially reduce its width. The new proposal will only increase very slightly compared to the existing conservatory. The chamfered corners have also been squared; but essentially it is very comparable to the mass and scale of the existing conservatory.

This is indicated by the east elevation below:



*P012 – east elevation as existing*



*P013 – east elevation as proposed not visible from roadside*

The roof design has also been revised to incorporate a lead standing seam with a standard degree of pitch as opposed to the previous design; which was lower but deemed by the LA to be incongruous to the main house.

The proposal is also shielded by vegetation and is not visible from the front car park areas.

**The principle issues for consideration within this application:**

- Principle of Development in the Green Belt
- Impact on Openness and Character and Appearance of Surrounding Area
- Design and Heritage
- Amenity of Occupiers
- Neighbouring Amenity
- Parking and Highway Safety

**Principle of Development in the Green Belt**

*Items c, d and g have been highlighted below to indicate their relevance to this application.*

The site lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt. Paragraph 137 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021) states that the government attaches great importance to Green Belts and that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policies is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open with their essential

characteristics being their openness and permanence. Paragraph 138 of the NPPF (2021) sets out that the Green Belt has five purposes:

- to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

Paragraph 147 of the NPPF (2021) sets out that 'inappropriate development' is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Paragraph 148 of the NPPF

(2021) advises that, when considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

Paragraph 149 of the NPPF (2021) states that the construction of new buildings should be regarded as inappropriate development in the Green Belt, but lists certain exceptions which are: [relevant points specific to this proposal highlighted]

- a) buildings for agriculture and forestry
- b) the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use) for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments, as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it
- c) the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building
- d) the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces
- e) limited infilling in villages
- f) limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the Local Plan  
(including policies for rural exception sites), and
- g) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would:

- not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development

- not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt, where the development would reuse previously developed land and contribute to meeting an identified affordable housing need within an area of the local planning authority

Of relevance to the proposal is (c) the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.

Saved Policy C13 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review (1994) (LPFR) sets out a number of criteria for extensions and outbuildings in the countryside. It is

recognised that this saved policy applies to the countryside in general rather than specifically the Green Belt and it pre-dates current national planning policy in the NPPF (2021) and therefore the weight that can be afforded to it must be carefully considered with greater weight being given where it is consistent with paragraph 149 of the NPPF (2021).

There are certain criteria as set out in saved Policy C13 (LPFR) which are considered to be broadly in line with the NPPF (2021) and should therefore be afforded weight. These are that the overall limit of one third of the gross floor area of the original dwelling (measured externally) prior to any later extension or alteration, unless the increased floorspace has no overall effect on the existing bulk and appearance of the dwelling and that the appearance, massing, scale, form and materials of any extension shall be appropriate to the existing dwelling and the Green Belt setting. These factors are still considered to be important when assessing whether an extension is a disproportionate addition or not.

St Katherine's dates from the mid-19th century and therefore the original building will be as it existed on 1 July 1948.

The proposal being of similar mass and scale to the existing situation complies with the principle of development within the green belt.

### **Impact on Openness and Character and Appearance of Surrounding Area**

Paragraph 137 of the NPPF (2021) states that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. It also states that the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and permanence.

The site is located in the countryside and consists of a large detached dwelling in a spacious plot with a large amount of land particularly to the north. The site is located in the Higham Arable Farmlands Landscape Character Area.

The area that the proposal occupies is not visible and enjoys a secluded area shielded by trees and bushes.

The extension is subservient to the existing architecture.

The sun terrace although increased slightly will have a limited effect on the sense of openness of the garden. There is an existing patio area and this proposal looks to improve the design and configuration; better connecting the main house to the spectacular views to the north and the river beyond and to the lower sun terrace.

Currently the elevated position of the house does not make the most of the views over the open arable land and this proposal will not only be to the benefit of the occupants; but also visitors to the house whom will also be able to enjoy the improved views to the north.

The existing conservatory external gross area is circa 16 sq. m, and is to be removed. The new extension will be circa 19 sq. m. so the proposed additional increase in floor area is minimal and mainly taken up by the squaring of the chamfers of the conservatory.

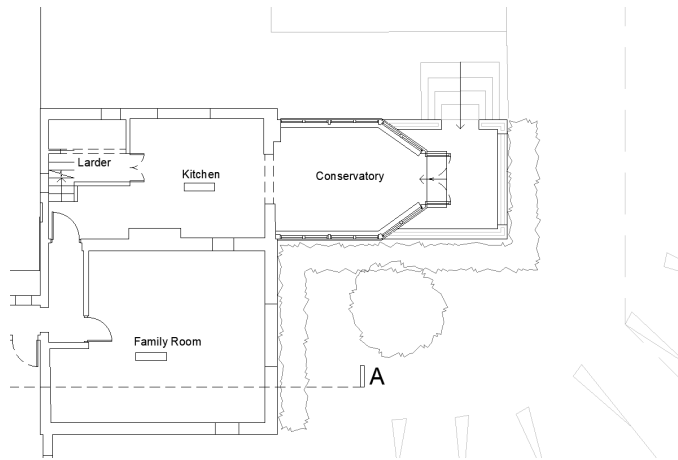
The existing terrace areas to the north elevation are circa 1.2m above ground level; and importantly connect the house to the main garden areas. The terrace revision has been designed to improve the deck area; but still to have minimal impact upon the main house especially the older parts. The terrace area will consist of flint stone walling with brick banding and quoins.

The new terrace area has been designed to have no additional material detrimental effect upon site lines to the chapel.

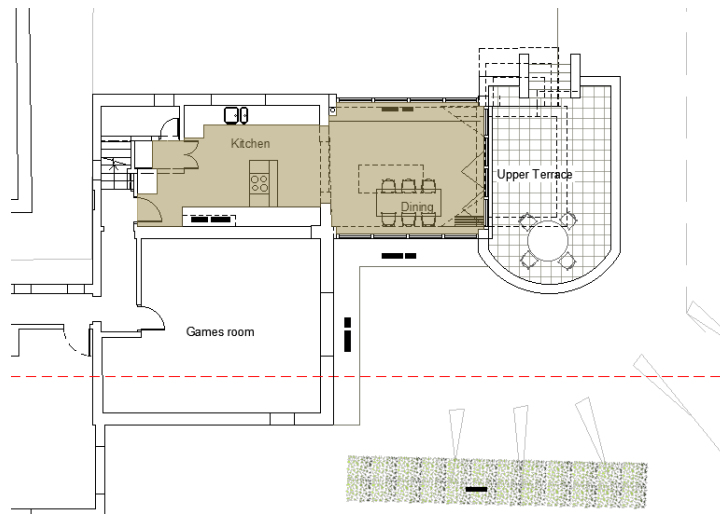
The design philosophy for this proposal is to wholly limit the extension in line with the same mass and scale as the existing conservatory with only slight increase to balance the internal layout. Note vision lines from the north back to the chapel are not compromised.

Floorspace is just one calculation which can be used to assess whether a development is a disproportionate addition. Volume compared to the original building should be considered and whether its scale, massing and height is subservient to the original building.

The proposed addition is similar in volume to the existing conservatory. It is proportionate to the existing building and will be an improvement over the existing conservatory. It is our view that the proposal would **not** be a disproportionate addition to the building and overall on balance an improvement by using sympathetic materials and detailing to be more in keeping with the age and style of the building.



*P014 – existing plan*



*P014 – proposed plan*



*P015 – proposed north elevation*

## **Design and Heritage**

*Please refer to Heritage Statement that should be read in conjunction with the Design and Access Statement.*

St Katherine's is a grade II listed mid-19th century dwelling with later extensions set within a large garden.

The Chapel of St Katherine's to the west originates from the 14th century with parts also dating from the 15<sup>th</sup> century and is grade II listed and Little St Katherine's to the north-east is grade II\* listed. St Katherine's is situated within the Shorne Conservation Area. The Shorne Conservation Area Appraisal states that the grouping of buildings around St Katherine's Chapel comprises a number of relatively large-scale, high quality and high status individual buildings of different dates, to either side of the road and that these stand in landscaped grounds with good boundary walls and numbers of mature and beautiful trees, all this contributing to an atmosphere of understated wellbeing.

The garden of St Katherine's to the north of the dwelling is laid to lawn with levels lowering down and mature trees and shrubs along the western boundary. The NPPF (2021) Glossary confirms that setting is the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced.

Careful consideration has been undertaken to prevent site lines being obstructed back to the chapel. The proposal will not have any detrimental effect in this regard due to the design approach we have employed.

The proposal includes a large percentage of glazing that will reveal the existing architecture; further minimising its impact on the host building.

The setting of the listed building will not be impacted by this proposal as the proposal addresses the previous relayed concerns of the LPA and in our view now complies with CS19 and CS20 (LPCS), saved Policies TC2 and TC3 (LPFR) and sections 12 and 16 of the NPPF (2021).

## **Amenity of Occupiers**

The NPPF (2021) states that planning decisions should aim to secure a high standard of amenity for all existing and future users (paragraph 127f). Policy CS19 (LPCS) states that new development should be located, designed and constructed to safeguard the amenity, including privacy, daylight and sunlight, of its occupants, and those of neighbouring properties and land. The development should accord with SPG2 -

Residential layout guidelines including Housing Standards Policy Statement October 2015 Adopted 1996 – amended June 2020 in respect of privacy distances and private amenity area. This sets out guidance on privacy distances and overshadowing and private garden areas.

The proposal will be designed to meet current building regulation standards which were substantially amended May 2022 improving energy efficiency and shading of the new extension. It is noted that the existing conservatory is too hot in the summer and too cold in the winter. This proposal will greatly improve energy efficiency and prevent solar gain issues that are currently experienced.

### **Neighbouring Amenity**

The proposed development being of similar scale and height as the existing situation will protect the amenity of neighbouring properties with regards daylight and sunlight, outlook and privacy and comply with Policy CS19.

And also comply with SPG2 - Residential layout guidelines including Housing Standards Policy Statement October 2015 Adopted 1996.

### **Parking and Highway Safety**

The proposal does not involve the creation of any bedrooms or alter the existing vehicular access or parking provision; as such there are not considered to be any issues concerning parking or highway safety and in this regard the proposal would be compliant with saved Policy P3 (LPCS).

### **Site Meeting 21<sup>st</sup> November 2023.**

The previously advised concerns regarding the pre application advise application were:

1. the extension encroaches onto the adjacent part of the original building.
2. It has a roof pitch which is out of keeping with the host dwelling.
3. It appears incongruous in design and uncomfortably close to the main window of the games room, resulting in a poorly considered elevation that adversely impacts on the listed building.
4. The copper standing seam roof is also considered out of keeping.
5. The extended terrace would also encroach into the area in front of the original part of the building and for the same reasons as with the extension this would be unacceptable.

This proposal positively addresses all four concerns:

1. The extension does not now encroach upon the original house and has been moved well away from the window and inhabits the same volume as the conservatory.
2. The roof has been designed in response to LPA concern; but also to minimise height, mass and scale and to be of lead standing seam with wholly appropriate and quality of detailing.
3. See point 1
4. The roof material has been revised to a standing seam lead roof that will be designed to Lead Sheet Association standard details; wholly in keeping with the age and heritage of the host building.
5. The terrace has been slightly extended; but will not return to the main house. The terrace will have a gentle curve to the east and will return back to the line of the extension some 4350mm away from the host building.

The principle of squaring the chamfered areas of the existing conservatory, reducing the width of the extension and adjusting the sun terrace area were discussed at the site meeting with the planning officer [meeting 21 November 2023] as potential revisions so that the LPA would hopefully be able to support the application.

We have submitted the revisions to the LPA prior to this application to confirm that the revisions are in line with their aspirations; but it was advised that a response would need to be formalised via a further pre application advice application or a full application. In light of the two previous pre application advice applications; we felt that we had enough information to proceed and trust that the proposed revision of the pre application scheme within this application can now be supported by the LPA.

### Summary

We believe that we have wholly overcome the previous concerns expressed by the LPA within Pre Application Response PRE20230234 Dated 21 November 2023.

- The proposal will improve the connection of the house to the gardens improving the amenity of current and future occupiers and their visitors.
- The new extension will be built in strict compliance with the building regulations providing an new energy efficient space with substantially improved insulation over the existing conservatory.
- The new extension materials will be in keeping and suitable with regard to the host building.
- The conservatory will be demolished; which it considered to be a typical “of the shelf” system design that is incongruous to the host building.
- The rear garden is wholly secluded and screened by hedges to the west and trees / vegetation to the east.
- The proposal will not cause any material or evidential detriment to the building group or setting over and above the existing situation.
- The proposal will not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt as it inhabits the same volume as the existing conservatory and on balance will not cause additional harm to the openness of the Green Belt.

We have carefully responded to the LPA’s previous comments and have fully responded to the advice offered. We therefore respectfully request that the application is now fully supported and approved.

Leslie D May  
Director / Architect

for

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**Established in 1967**

DAC Architects is a trading name for DAC Architectural Services Ltd  
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