



Pre-construction Guide

Introduction - about the guide

Once you have gained building control approval, our responsibilities end unless you have chosen for us to project manage the construction progress, and we will hand you over to your appointed builder.

We will uphold our commitment to support you through the process and still advise you or the builder throughout the project if necessary.

Our guide aims to set out everything you should have in place for building work to commence and what you should expect during the build of your project.

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1. Precommencement checklist

A comprehensive list of what you should aim to have in order to begin the most efficient project

2. Builder checklist

A useful guide from the CK team on selecting the ideal builder for the job



1: Precommencement Checklist

Stage 1

Approval

Make sure you are in receipt of planning approval (or Prior Notice/ Permitted Development confirmation) in line with the building regulations drawings and all conditions on the planning approval have been adhered to. Also, check you have full plans building control approval or a building notice including structural engineer works, water board approval etc.

Stage 2

Consult the neighbours

Have your builder provide their contact details to your neighbours and let them know the size, impact, and duration of the project. It is good to let your neighbours know what is happening, and you must serve notice under the Party Wall Act 1996 (if applicable).

Stage 3

Tender the build

Standard building regulations drawings are detailed, but there will be several items outside of building control to be confirmed, such as heating, plumbing, electrics, kitchens, bathrooms, wall/floor finishes that need to be quoted for.

The more you can itemise what you require, the closer the quotation can be and lessen the need for surprise extras or awkward conversations.



Stage 4

Builder quotation validation

The detail on the builder's quotation should be accurate and itemised to ensure you know exactly what you are getting for your money. Vague quotations leave a lot of unknown items out and will always end up costing you more.

Make sure there is some agreement on any potential hidden items, such as deeper footing or drainage alteration. If you can agree approximate sums of any unknown items if they crop up, you will not be at the mercy of guessed estimation.

When builders' quotations are limited you can use our drawings to tie in the quotation but agree on anything missing from the drawing/quotation before starting. It is advisable that communication with builders should be on email as much as possible.

Stage 5

Builder experience and references

Generally, builders usually come from a specific trade background and this can affect their experience in other areas. We have a separate checklist about this to follow.

It is advised that you check they are competent for the type and scale of project and have built similar projects previously. It is always worth a brief background check as this can be very informative on the service that builder provides.

Google Reviews, Companies House and Facebook are a good place to verify information. It is also important that the company have the appropriate accreditations such as CHAS, FMB, Gas Safe, NICEIC.

Stage 6

Builder accepts responsibility

Once work commences on site, your builder is responsible for all final designs subject to site measurements, excavations, and inspection as contractor/ principle contractor/ designer.

Changes and variations need to be agreed prior to commencement. We can advise when is appropriate to do this. See full details of the CDM 2015 below.

Stage 7

Approval

The builder should check the drains, foundations, underground services, utilities, existing structure, and measurements before commencing.

Stage 8

Approval

Once all the above is in place agree the start date and talk through the project key stages.

Before works go too far there will be some items to confirm.

It is imperative you have a time set with your builder to decide these elements, such as floor finishes, switches etc prior to first fix before it becomes costly to change.

Stage 9

Tender the build

Inform your home insurance company when the project starts and finishes as this may affect your home and building content insurance.

Your builder's insurance will take on responsibility/liability for any damage/ personal injuries to you or your property during the work.

Stage 10

Consult the neighbours

Once work starts you and your family should avoid the area being worked on unless you are instructed it is safe to access them.

Once completed you should at least retain the final payment until you have the building certificate and any warranties for expensive apparatus/ appliances.

Questions? Call us on 01482 441948

Building Regulations Disclaimer

The drawings are the copyright of CK Architectural Ltd. The drawings must not be scaled from. The contractor should take and verify all dimensions on site before proceeding with any works.

All dimensions shown on the drawings are for planning purposes only. All dimensions must be checked onsite prior to works commencing, variations in squareness, depth of plaster etc., must be checked for. Where new walls are shown aligned with existing walls, this must be checked by the physical removal of brickwork and/or plaster to establish the actual position of the wall being attached to.

Attention is drawn to the client regarding the CDM 2015 regulations. These drawings and specifications are intended for Planning & Building Regulation purposes only; the scope of this does not go any further. It is the duty of the client under the regulations to appoint a 'Principal Contractor'. There is no obligation for the client to appoint a 'Principal Designer'. The 'Principal Contractor' will then take on the role of 'Principal Designer' for purposes of the 'pre construction' and 'construction' phases of the project under the CDM 2015 regulations once the project gets under way. The principal; contractor must provide a phase construction plan; in order to reduce risks through the construction process.



2: Builder Checklist

Stage 1

References

A reliable, professional builder will always be more than willing to show off their best work and give references.

Make sure to obtain builder references and verify the information using Companies House, Google Reviews and Facebook. Bear in mind very few builders will be successful in all projects due to variables on both sides

Stage 2

Too Cheap or Too Quick?

If something sounds too good to be true, it generally is. Quotes will vary from firm to firm, but always get at least 3 quotes so you can verify the price.

Sometimes a very cheap quote could mean they are not experienced enough to give accurate

figures and could leave you either with a poor-quality job or a larger additional payment to pay at the end.

Stage 3

Payment?

Alongside your quotation and/or drawings, we strongly advise that you need a formal contract in place.

This can be a JCT, FMB or other form of contract. A contract should be a 4/5-page document detailing working hours, defect variations, non attendance advice, dispute procedures and payment schedule.



Stage 4

Company Details

A typical payment schedule would be detailed in the contract before works commence. The usual structure would be a 10% deposit, 4 equal interim payments and % retention payment for completion and snagging issues.

Stage 5

Contract

Check the official company details listed on the quotation are registered on Companies House. If there are no details of the company online, then does the company exist?.



Help & Support

If I fall victim to a rogue builder, what should I do?

If you suspect you have hired a builder who isn't meeting the agreed terms and conditions, who's work isn't of high enough standard, or if they fail to show up on site then the first thing to do is to try and speak to the builder.

Keeping communication going is key to ensuring any queries or concerns are addressed. If the builder is not communicating or if you are still not satisfied the next step to take will be getting into contact with a third party, such as a regulatory body, Trading Standards, or the Consumer Ombudsman.

Reporting a problem to Trading Standards

Trading Standards deal with complex consumer problems and potential criminal activities. Firstly, call Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline and tell them you want to report a trader to Trading Standards. The consumer helpline will assess your problem and pass it on to Trading Standards.

We are here to support you throughout the complete process so for any queries you may have or advice you may need, our fully trained team are on hand to help you however necessary.

We hope your building works run as smoothly as possible and your project is even better than you imagined.

We love seeing our designs come to life, and if you'd like to speak to us after your building is completed, please don't hesitate to get in touch as we'd love to see it in person.

