

## CLIENT CHECK LIST PRIOR TO ENGAGING BUILDER

**Scheduled below are some check items that you are advised to complete before you engage your builder & start the works on site. These points may not be conclusive for your particular project but are possibly the most relevant. It is also assumed that you have informed your mortgage company (if applicable) & have the finances to pay for the works at the stages due already arranged.**

1. Inform your Buildings/Contents insurers of the intended extension works to ensure that you are still covered for the period of the buildings work to avoid a 'technicality trap' for non payment should a claim be Forthcoming (potential increased risk).
2. Ensure that you have complied with any restrictive covenants within the sites deeds & obtained all necessary approvals if required before you start on site.
3. If you are not using one of the standard forms or building Contracts & using the 'exchange of letters' method then please ensure that your have included for the following areas for finalising of the outstanding contract conditions:-
  - a). Start & finish dates with the contract period stated in weeks.
  - b). Method & timing of interim payments & any retention monies withheld & when to be released (usually 5% with 2.5% released upon practical completion with the remaining 2.5% released 6 months later after making good of any building defects outside normal shrinkage.
  - c). The tender fixed price plus VAT inclusive of all PC sums, clients contingency & any warranty schemes offered by the builder.
  - d). Any liquidated damages for late completion due to the builder. (something like £200.00 per week could be deemed reasonable). Remember that delays can also be caused by forces outside the builders control so be reasonable at the end.
  - e). View of builders current insurance certificate(s).
  - f). Reference made to all the contract documents (drawings, spec, calcs, tender return form etc.) forming part what the builder has priced against. Both parties signing & dating 2 sets of all documents relevant to the work would be useful for retention by each party.

Most other relevant contract conditions for small building works such as yours should be included within the specification manual. Please ensure that you are familiar with the documents for correct monitoring of your builders procedures. Using a standard form of building contract may afford you more protection but only if you understand the terms & conditions & as most small builders do not understand them either, you may risk losing a previously interested builder in times of high workloads where they can be very selective upon which projects they choose to complete.

4. When you are about to start on site could you or your builder please telephone my offices to arrange for the installation of my small site sign board. This serves three useful functions:-
  - i. Any neighbour or Local Authority complaints, cold calling by reps etc. have a contact number for resolving things early.
  - ii. Your property looks more professional & encourages your builders sub-contractors to achieve a good standard of workmanship.
  - iii. It has the potential for me to obtain more work locally.
5. At the start & during the works, please ensure & satisfy yourself that the construction is being inspected & approved by the site visiting Building Inspector.
6. Should your works be close to the boundary line with your neighbour please ensure that you have agreed with your neighbour the exact line of the boundary to avoid encroachment over before you start on site. Make sure your builder is aware of this actual agreed boundary line & that he is to inform you immediately should any part of the approved design appear to overhang this boundary line irrespective of what is indicated on the drawings & contact CHP for further advise.

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7. During or directly after the works please inform your insurers of the increased property value &/contents to maintain adequate cover.
8. At the end of the project, ensure that you or your builder submits a statement of 'final account' that should list & itemise ALL add & omit priced items for variations, adjustment of PC & contingency sums etc. set against the original Contract tender price for an accurate final balance figure to be released including for any retentions & liquidated damages etc.
9. Prior to releasing the final payment to your builder please ensure that you have been provided with the Councils 'Completion Certificate'. This confirms that the works have been installed in accordance with the Building Regulations & you will need this when the property is eventually sold if you are to avoid costly delays.
10. Please remember that there may be elements within your building project that increases the loads onto the existing foundations, beams or lintels that will need to be checked for adequacy by exposing by your builder & then visually checked by the Building Inspector. Please make sure that this is completed if required & allow a contingency sum within your contract price to cover any items that may need replacing or underpinning just in case.

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