



Stage 6. Detailing the design

If planning approval was required and received, the architect and homeowner should reward themselves by having a small celebration. An important milestone has been reached — design approval in principle — and now the project, after a period of stasis, gathers momentum, moving from developed design (Stage 4) to detailed design. Now the architect details the plans to suit the client’s specific requirements.

The architect begins this stage by looking at different construction systems and preparing fully dimensioned drawings suitable for an application for building approval. The drawings include construction details, minimum standards of workmanship and finishes for all trades, including brickwork, plastering, painting and many others. At this stage, the documents don’t indicate brick colour, or tile style, nor do they specify quality (i.e. high or low-end product). They simply state the basic information required to build the building.

It’s also important at this stage for the architect to begin informal discussions with suppliers of specific products (e.g. spas, air conditioning systems, water collection tanks etc) to ensure that adequate provisions are made for these items in the design, particularly with regard to services and fixing

requirements. The architect may also begin discussion with a structural engineer to help ascertain the best method of construction to suit site soil conditions and design. In some states, if the building is a new home, it will also be necessary to involve an energy rater to advise on the most effective methods to meet the state's sustainability guidelines. Structural and sustainability issues can affect the planning and details of the design, as will the materials chosen.

Upon completion, the drawings will be ready to lodge with council in application for a building approval, but they do not tell the complete story. Plans passed onto a builder at this point will not necessarily result in a finished building of the desired or anticipated standard and quality. This part of the story is continued in Stage 8.