

Building Information BROCHURE





10 ESSENTIAL THINGS

YOU MUST KNOW BEFORE BUILDING YOUR DREAM HOME...

Thank you for your building enquiry.

*Cunningham Constructions
Gold Coasts Architecturally Designed Building Specialist*

Building your dream home can be an overwhelming experience, so Cunningham Constructions can guide you through the whole process to ensure your experience is as stress free as possible.





1. CHECK THE REPUTATION OF YOUR BUILDER

It is important to research your builder and to find the right building company to work with your land. You need to take into consideration whether or not the builder has a good reputation, and if they are respected for their quality of work.

The best referrals are those from previous clients, so you should ask to see testimonials and houses that they have completed.

Make sure that the builder has all of the necessary licenses and insurances in place.

- Google builders and check for online reviews.
- Building Awards are always a good measure if the builder is proud of their work.
- Do a licence check.

2. DON'T BE AFRAID TO ASK QUESTIONS

Make sure you trust your builder and understand what is involved in your building process.
No question is ever too silly to ask.

The biggest mistake made by home owners is that they assume so much as they have no knowledge of the building process and many builders use this to their advantage with variations at exorbitant rates for things thought to be included and often the owner can feel misled and trapped and this is a major contributor to breakdowns between the builder and the client.

*Open communication is the key to success in building your dream home!
The more open and honest we are with one another, the better the result will be.*





3. DESIGN

If you're building a custom home and you want to make it special, this is where it starts. Design and planning are a critical part of any home.

Spending the time and effort at the planning and design stage will ensure that you achieve the 'look' and 'feel' that you are after in your dream home.

It is a great idea to run your plans and ideas past a specialist builder before finalising your working drawings, as they have a wealth of knowledge and experience and will be able to work with you to help with your design. The builder may suggest small changes to your design that may improve the building process and save you money in the long run.

4. DESIGN - YOUR HOME TO SUIT YOUR BLOCK

It is important that your home is designed to work with your block, e.g. split level rather than a big site cut surround by retaining walls. Most clients aren't aware if your home is not designed to suit your block, they are going to end up with large expensive retaining walls, steep driveways, drainage issues and an asset that is difficult to sell.

What was a fairly quick exercise for the builder can become a lost opportunity for a family that lasts a life-time.

Benefits of building with a sloping block building specialist include:

- Maximise the value of your home on any block
- More choice of affordable land at better locations
- Better designs; unique inside and out
- Abundant natural light and airflow
- Separate living areas on different levels
- Natural drainage preserved
- Better outlooks and views
- Ample under house storage
- Less excavations and flatter driveway
- Designed to follow slope of land





5. DESIGN - THINKING OF KNOCKING YOUR OLD HOUSE DOWN AND BUILDING A NEW ONE?

Knock-down rebuilds require more attention to detail, due to the impact your home may have on neighbouring properties.

It is important to use a specialist builder for your rebuild, as extreme planning is required. Quite often you have to start from the back of the block and build your way out, due to tight access. The builder must have exceptional project management skills in order to make your building process an enjoyable experience.

Benefits of knock down rebuild over renovation or building in a new area are:

- Stay in your current location where you are familiar with your area and neighbours.
- Your kids can stay at the same school close to their friends.
- Knock down rebuild generally costs half the amount per square metre than renovation does.
- No real estate or stamp duty fees.
- The opportunity to build the home you have always wanted with all new finishes and fresh modern interiors.
- Increase the value of your land.





6. QUALITY OVER PRICE

Determining a budget for your project is essential. It is in your best interest to let the builder know what budget you are hoping to achieve on your dream home. When builders are pricing your home, they should give you a detailed quote listing all of the inclusions and exclusions. The fixtures and fittings should all be listed or a prime cost allowed for. It is important when comparing prices between builders that you are comparing apples with apples.

Be wary when shopping for price and not for product, a large percent of all home owners chasing the lowest price end up spending more than what they would have spent elsewhere.

Building your new home is one of the most important and emotional investments you will do in your lifetime. You need to make sure that the quality and finish of your new home exceeds your expectations.

7. ENGINEERING

This is not often thought of, but nearly every home that is built needs engineering plans. If you're looking at this you're probably not interested in building a project home with a repeated design. You most likely want to build a custom home and possibly on a difficult site.

Using an expert engineer to design engineering is not only imperative to longevity and quality; it can also save you lots of money.

Your builder must have a complete understanding of intricate plans and be able to communicate freely to the engineer in his terms. The architect supplies plans on the look and dimensions but the engineer supplies plans you need in order to build it.





8. CONTRACTS

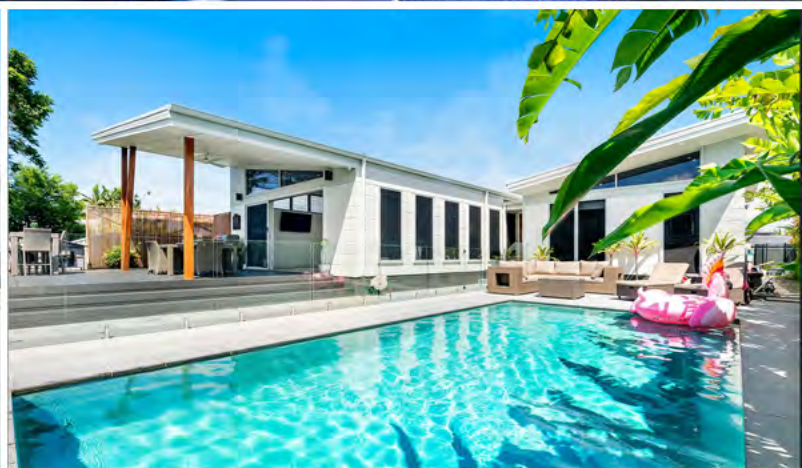
Once you have finalised your plans, are happy with your budget and have decided on a builder, the land owner will need to sign a residential building contract. **Beware if a builder uses their own 'custom made' contract.**

Housing industry bodies such as the MBA and HIA all have standard contracts for their members to use that protect both the builder and the home owner. *Their documents have been drafted by lawyers and updated over many years as legislation has changed.*

The two common contract types are a Fixed Price Contract and a Cost Plus Contract.

A **Fixed Price Contract** is where you have a quote from the builder and this amount is the total value of the contract.

A **Cost Plus Contract** has a set margin on all expenses. Here you will receive an invoice from the builder once a fortnight for all expenses plus the builder's margin (which could be around 10 - 20% depending on the size of the build).





9. KNOWING WHAT YOUR BUILDER IS NOT INCLUDING

You must check to see what you are responsible for and know exactly what the impacts will be as this can be quite costly to the home owner and quickly eat away any budget contingency funds.

Some things you should look out for are:

- Removal of left over soil from excavations may be excluded from the contract which can be very costly to remove.
- Retaining walls are often left out of the builder's responsibilities and leave you stranded, underfunded and very little access to build the retaining wall.
- Inclusions like floor coverings, light fittings, bathroom accessories, paths, driveways etc. which you would consider mandatory are often excluded.
- Fencing and gates are generally a necessity for a new home with children and pets etc. but often left out of contracts but needs consideration.
- Site cleaning is a must for most diligent builders but can catch out the unwary which can leave you with a sizeable wastage and truck hire bill.
- Landscaping is sometimes assumed that it comes with a new home and you need to either make sure what is included or have a contingency sum for this.





10. PLAN WELL AND THINK

OF EVERYTHING TO INCLUDE NOW FOR THE FUTURE

Sometimes your budget doesn't afford you the luxury of including everything you want first up, so your builder should encourage you to think of everything you may want or plan to have in the future, so when you are ready to include the next part of your dream home it looks like it was always a part of your home and not a poor add on.

It is better to run services and allowances for future inclusions so you don't get ugly pipes or conduits up walls or concrete cut out and replaced for some simple forward thinking, good examples of things to plan for are:

- **Home Automation** - TV points, data points, speaker wires, electricity
- **Swimming Pools** - sewer, stormwater, water, electricity, gas
- **Sheds** - sewer, stormwater, water, electricity
- **Water Features** - electricity, water
- **Sprinkler System** - water, electricity, conduits

The custom design home building process should never be rushed or minimized as there are many things to consider and you don't want a new home with regrets.





E. michael@cunninghamconstructions.com

M. 0425 173 422

www.cunninghamconstructions.com