

SHERIDAN

— B U I L D I N G —

Award Winning Custom Homes



The **ABC** Of Building

What You Need To Know



The *ABC* Of Building

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About Your Build

Building your dream home and selecting your builder is a huge decision, and not one to be taken lightly.

However, taking the time to understand the construction process, and the stages involved, will make a world of difference.





There are a number of different processes we can follow to bring your dream home to life.

From concept plans to completion, we can be with you the whole way.

Design and Build service for new homes and renovations

Our Design and Build service allows clients to go from concept to completion, whilst having the convenience of dealing with their preferred builder the whole way through.

This streamlines the building process as we are more thoroughly involved and oversee the entire project. It ensures a more cohesive and cost-effective build process and results in a higher-quality end product. It also means you'll have far more control, transparency, and open communication throughout your build. You will also have a single point of contact.

The Design and Build process begins with a questionnaire and an on-site meeting. We can then establish what you hope to achieve from the project, your budget, and how we can bring your new home to life. Based on this, we will then create a preliminary agreement, which outlines what we have discussed and the costs involved. We will then start the design process, working with our team to bring your ideas to life with concept plans.



We welcome the opportunity to work with new Architects and designers.

Collaboration with your designer

Should your plans already be completed, we can engage with your chosen architect to bring your vision to life. At Sheridan Building, we offer a personalised service that involves a detailed cost analysis of your proposed build, as well as tailoring your project in order to meet your budget and time constraints. Our goal is to create a luxury, high-quality home that fulfils your needs and wants. We do this by investing in quality materials, and working with the most skilled and trustworthy tradespeople and experts.

Our collaboration process begins by comparing your project to our previously completed homes. We then use data from these similar projects to establish a preliminary cost analysis. If our figures are within your budget, we will begin the Detailed Cost Analysis.



Once you're happy with your plans, we will then provide a detailed cost analysis. This will empower you to make informed decisions about your home.

Instead of offering a free, single page quote, based simply on square-metre rates like most builders provide. We offer a customised and Detailed Cost Analysis (DCA). This will include a breakdown of all the unique elements that will go into building your custom home. This is more than just an estimate of costs, it is a map of where your budget will be spent.

This process involves us contacting the relevant trades and material suppliers for their pricing and reviewing the proposed construction methods to ensure they are the most cost-effective and efficient form of construction. Our estimator will then compile a fully itemised and detailed cost analysis of your proposed home.

Once your DCA is refined and your budget is met, we'll present you with a fixed price contract. Then we handle all relevant documentation needed to get started on your new home. Once everything is lodged and signed, it's time to get building!



We will arrange an appointment at a purpose-built selection studio, which is hosted by qualified interior designers.

Our interior designer will share their expertise and industry knowledge so you can personalise your home. Once you've finished your selections, all items are documented into a detailed specification for you to easily interpret. We also provide samples, photos and product brochures for reference.

The studio boasts state of the art design, smart home concepts, energy efficiency solutions and a vast array of internal and external finishes. We provide you with an opportunity to personalise your home through the selection of all fittings, fixtures and finishes.

Virtual design centre

We also offer a virtual design centre service, which allows you to walk through your proposed dwelling in a 1:1 scale. We can incorporate real furniture and household items, as well as partition walls and other decorations. You can experience firsthand how the design of your home will look and feel once complete. This virtual tour will allow you to see any sizing or layout issues, which can be corrected well before a brick is laid.



Building Jargon Explained

The building industry is full of terms that you will be familiar with. Some you may have heard before, but not fully understood what they meant. The following list will help you understand the terms we use, and help you better communicate with us and others in the industry.



**Design brief - *what you need from the project***

Here's where you let us know what you want from your project, and perhaps what you don't want. It is helpful to prepare a list of what you would like, and sort these into sections, such as "must haves" and "dream inclusions". This can help us know what level of priority to place on your requests.

Existing site plans sketch - *a rough plan of the site*

This involves a site visit to record the existing conditions at the property. This work is just for the initial concept plans – a full survey of the site will be needed for the detailed plans.

Concept plans - *brainstorming*

The concept plans are a rough representation of what you hope to achieve from your project. It may not include details such as elevations but will give you an idea of the layout of your new home. From this stage we will work through the various options to fine tune a solution to your needs. The designer will then refine and formalise these for your review.

Feature survey - *a detailed plan of your property*

A licenced land surveyor will be engaged for this work. This includes the accurate location and dimensions of all structures, trees, fences, neighbouring structures and slope of the land itself. This is necessary so your plans are accurate and compliant with council requirements.



Town planning drawings - *telling council what you would like to do with your property*

Some projects will require an application to council for a planning permit. This may be necessary for several reasons – a heritage overlay on the property, lot size restrictions, flood levels etc. These plans are used to show the council what you want to do on the property. The level of detail is higher than a concept plan, but not as detailed as working drawings, which are prepared after a town planning permit is issued. This is so money is not wasted on working drawings that may require amendments after the town planning conditions are provided by council. Time frames for this stage are largely controlled by the local council and vary between projects.

Working drawings - *to communicate with others and us what you want to build*

The working drawings are detailed plans that include dimensioning, and reference the site conditions from the survey. They will include site plans, existing floor plans, proposed floor plans, elevations, and various special details. These plans are used to ensure that the design “works” on the site, and aligns with the existing structures, floor and ground levels. It is at this stage we can start working towards a detailed quote for the project.

Engineering plans - *the structural parts*

This involves designing and specifying the structural elements of the building. Engineering starts with analysis of the soil report and designing the footing system to support the structure. This also includes specifying the main load-bearing components of the frame. Engineering is necessary for a detailed quote to be prepared. The work involved in engineering varies depending on the final design, soil test, existing structure and site conditions. For this reason, we provide an estimate only, with a fixed figure available during the working drawings stage.

**Soil test report - *how stable is your site?***

A geological technician will extract a sample of your site profile for analysis. The samples are extracted using either a hand auger, or drill unit mounted to a vehicle, depending on site access and depth of test. A 100mm diameter hole is drilled at 2-3 points on the site, with depth dependant on project requirements. It is then backfilled so will not interfere with your use of the property. The report is then used to design the footing system.

Energy report - *insulation requirements*

The building materials and design are analysed to find the energy performance of the proposed structure. This information is then used to determine the rating of insulation required in the ceiling, walls and floor. The minimum performance requirements for the window frames and glass are also provided in the energy report. This report is not related to your chosen appliances.

Electrical plan - *lights, cameras, alarms...*

The electrical plan will show the proposed location of lights, switches, power points, TV points, data points, CCTV, alarms and appliances. The specific products used will generally not be noted here. This plan is to ensure an accurate quote to be provided by the electrician, and to show compliance with current regulations.

Cabinetry plan - *kitchen, vanities, laundry etc*

The cabinetry plans focus specifically on the finer details of your cabinetry. This includes exact dimensions, locations of drawers, doors and other specific features. It may also include details of cabinetry finishes. It will also include elevations and possibly section views to best communicate all aspects of your cabinets. Depending on the complexity and style of your project, you may or may not need detailed all aspects of your cabinets. Depending on the complexity and style of your project, you may or may not need detailed cabinetry plans.



Lighting calculator - *energy consumption*

The lighting calculations are required to show compliance with the maximum watts per square metre under current regulations. This information will usually be shown in table format on your plans.

Title re-establishment - *checking the boundaries*

Most boundary fence locations are not accurate enough to rely on for new structures. It is important that new structures do not encroach on neighbouring properties. A licenced land surveyor must be engaged to establish the correct boundary line as per the title documents. If you are aware of any structures that are currently crossing boundaries, please let us know, as there may be adverse possession issues to consider.

Fire BAL report - *bushfire risk assessment*

Although your home is likely located in a built up suburban area, we may be required to do a Bushfire Attack Level assessment (BAL). This will determine if any extra precautions need to be taken in the selection of materials, or products used.

Title and associated documents - *property details*

We need to download a current extract of title, title plan, and associated documents. This will confirm the location and orientation of the title boundaries, marked easements or restrictions, and other critical information.



Council property certificates – *council requirements or restrictions*

We will apply to council for property-specific details that may affect your project. These could include requirements for termite protection, flood risk, previously issued permits, etc.

Specifications and selections – *making the house your home*

Project specifications, and/or a schedule of finishes, provide the finer details that are usually not found on the plans. This can include references to industry standards, general guidelines, and a list of items specific to your project. Your main concern would be the schedule of finishes. This will include items ranging from paint colour, through to roof tile selection and everything in between. For a project to be quoted accurately, completed on time, and delivered to a high quality, it is essential to have as many selections made as possible, prior to works commencing.

Prime Cost and Provisional Sum – *allowing for what hasn't been selected or priced*

On your detailed cost analysis, you might come across the following terms Prime Cost PC and Provisional Sum PS. A Prime Cost refers to an item that has not been specified or selected yet. The builder will add in an allowance for this item to ensure it is included in the quote, despite not knowing the exact details at the time of contract signing. A common example could be an oven, that has not been selected before contract signing.

A Provisional Sum on the other hand, refers to works and materials that cannot be specifically determined at the time of analysis. Again, an allowance is put in place for this cost. If the cost is less than estimated, the difference will be returned to you, whereas if the cost is more, you will be required to pay. A common example could be repair of floor joists below a bathroom, they may be rotten or in good condition. But until demolition the true costs cant be fully known.

Choosing a Builder

It is important to research your builder, but it is difficult to know how to do this. Not all builders are suitable for all projects! The following checklist can help you decide who is the most suitable builder for your project.





Reputation

Looking at completed projects is one of the ways to assess a potential builder. But there is more to this than just looking over glossy photos of stunning homes.

Take note of testimonials that describe how past clients found the day-to-day dealings with the builder, and the builder's commitment to the project. Did they feel the builder took a personal interest in their home, or was it passed off to subcontractors? Were they confident in the builder's experience and ability?

There may be many builders who can deliver a great finished product, but ensuring it is done with no stress, no surprises, and on budget is just as important.





Relevant experience

Building custom homes today is more complex than ever. Styles and materials change rapidly, and new technology is constantly evolving. Make sure your builder has experience that is relevant to your project.

No two custom homes are identical, but your builder should be able to show you examples of similar homes which they have completed successfully. These previous projects may also help you with budgeting, don't be afraid to ask what these other projects cost.



Licensing and insurance

Your builder must be registered with the Victorian Building Authority. You can check registrations here: <https://www.vba.vic.gov.au/tools/find-practitioner>.

If the builder is a company, they need a company builders licence, and the company needs a director to have a builders licence as well.

Make sure the builder has public liability insurance for at least \$10 million. Insurance policies can be either on a job-by-job basis or an annual policy. Construction insurance covers risks up until the handover process. From handover onwards, you will need to take out your own insurance coverage, so you are covered in case of fire, theft, vandalism, etc.



Comparing Quotes

Many people fall into the trap of comparing quotes, without understanding that two different quotes could result in two different project outcomes. These omissions can be accidental, intentional, or simply that some builders do not offer certain services. But by the time the client finds this out, it is too late.

For example, a builder may present what appears to be the lowest price. But excludes driveway concrete works, as they assume the client will handle this at a later date. Or, a material may be substituted so the quote is more competitive, but is not what was noted on the plans.

We provide a transparent and detailed cost analysis. This will give you the confidence and certainty that your project will be completed to your specifications, on time and on budget.

We start by contacting the relevant trades and material suppliers for their pricing, negotiating accordingly. We also look at construction methods to ensure they have been designed with the most efficient methods possible.

Our estimator then goes to work, conducting a detailed bill of quantities for the project.

Once all of the information has been compiled, we put together a fully itemised and detailed cost analysis of your proposed home.

When choosing your builder, look for someone who provides a comprehensive breakdown of exactly what's included in a quote. They should be happy to answer any questions you may have. A single page quote with a total figure, is not enough for you to make one of your biggest financial decisions.



Quality control and project management

Building a custom home requires the co-ordination of dozens of trades and personnel. Between each of the hundreds of processes, from set out to handover, quality control and oversight is essential. Regardless of the individual skill of the builder, this is a task that requires a fantastic project management approach. Something that can only be obtained through years of experience.

When choosing your builder, ask them the following questions:

1. How long have you been operating in the building industry?
2. Can you give a brief outline of your work history?
3. Can you provide testimonials?
4. How many projects do you take on at any one time?
5. Can you explain provisional sums/prime cost items?
6. How do you calculate these figures?
7. Do you provide clients with copies of sub-contractor quotes?
8. How do you keep track of variations?
9. Are your quotes itemised in detail?



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