# 4 Must Know Required Steps to Starting your Renovation

Including: Ready to Start FlowChart

The why, when and Who


Prepared by: AJM Building Plans
Ph: 0417 669 317
Email: ben@ajmplans.com.au
www.ajmplans.com.au

AJM
BUILDING PLANS

## Contents:



## 1. Introduction

One of the most confusing decisions in planning a renovation or addition is to find the right place to START. We see the TV littered with renovation shows and friends building perfect new additions to their homes, but no one really shows us where to start.

This article will walk you through the process to get you going.

The article travels through the process and starts from the very initial idea conception right through to when the actual building begins. I have formatted it that way so that you can skip through to the part that is relevant to the stage you are at with your development.

Good Luck and remember if anything is not totally clear you can contact me at AJM Building Plans to discuss anytime ben@ajmplans.com.au , so let's get started.

## 2. Initial Concept Creation

There are many reasons why a homeowner might want to investigate the possibilities of renovating their home. Some of the top reasons people renovate include:

A. To increase your comfort or enjoyment of the home.
B. To fix a safety issue.
C. To improve the home's value.
D. To upgrade the home's function.
E. To increase the efficiency of the home.
F. To update the home's style.
G. To prepare the house for sale.

For whatever reason, if you have a need or desire to renovate there are key elements to always consider.

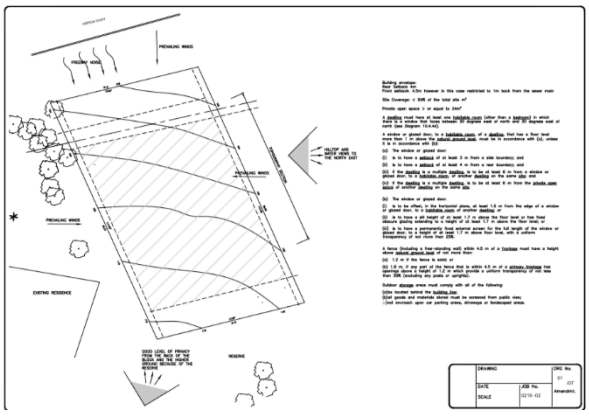
A. The Long Term

B. The location

C. The home you want and lifestyle you want

To tie all these elements together it is important to conduct a site Analysis. A site analysis is to research the key climatic, geographical, historical, legal and infrastructural context of your property and determine how it will impact your renovation.

Key features that you can consider when analysing your site include:



Council Zoning and Local Planning requirements

Site Boundaries

Existing Buildings

Natural physical features

Man Made features

Available Utilities

Noise concerns

Climate

## 3. Preliminary Research

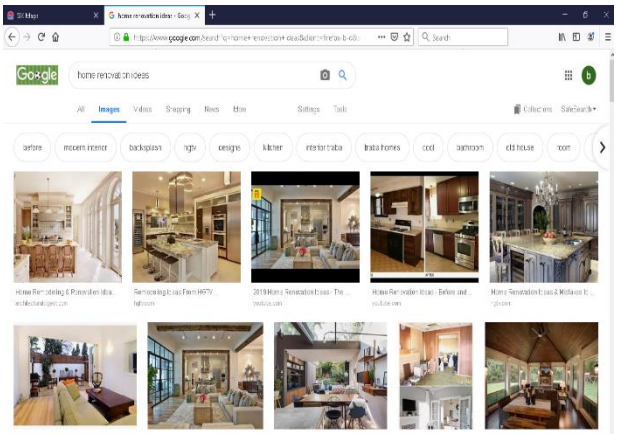
Once you have decided that a renovation is the way to go the next step is to establish what potential constraints effect your property and what controls apply to your proposed development.

Before you go to the council you will need an idea of the concept, size, shape and orientation of your renovation. Draw a quick sketch to help the duty officer in the Planning and Development department. The more detail and information you can provide about your objectives for your renovation, will establish a better understanding as to whether your proposal meets the objectives of relevant planning controls.

A good idea and the next step is to start researching for materials, structures, costs and designs that you believe will suit your home and objectives.

A most valuable source of information is Google Images.

Enter the rooms or areas you want to renovate into google and press search. Once your search is complete press the images tab under the search panel.




Keep a scrap book for ideas and digital folders to store images. As you discover more and more information a concept of the look and design you would like will develop. Again, take notes and consider how each element will integrate into your existing home.

Who is Who?

Along the way you may need to contact Building industry consultants to complete reports or certificates for your renovation. Below is a list of Building industry professionals and their roles

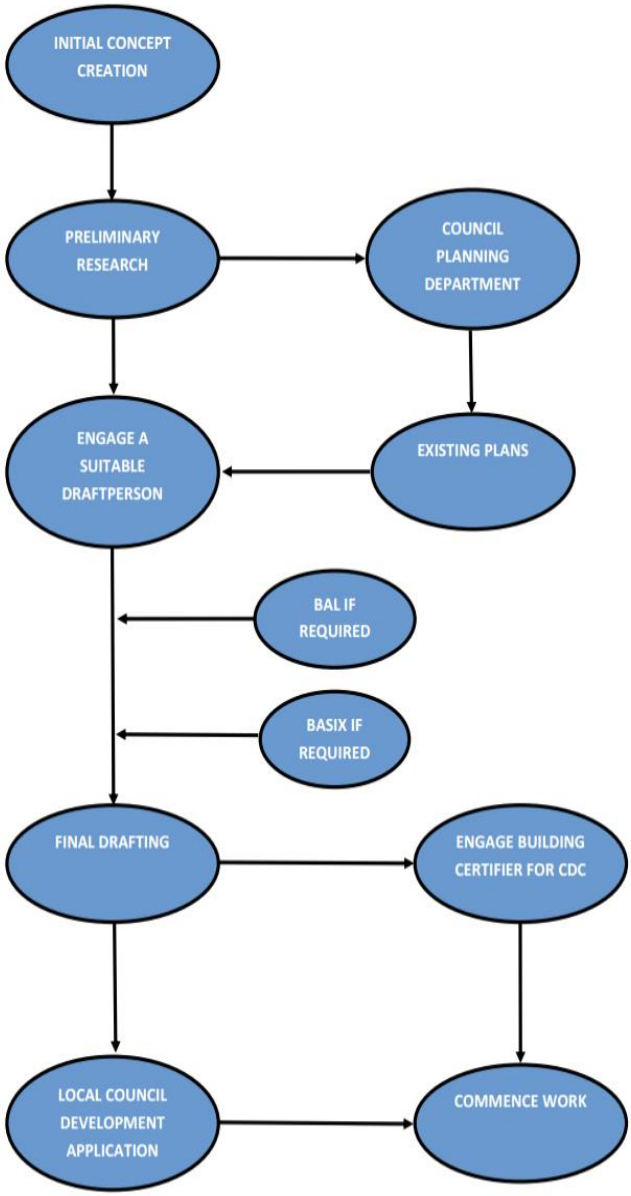
Architect/Designer

In Australia, there is a difference between what is an Architect and a Building Designer.

To work as an architect in Australia the person needs to be board registered. (Domain)

To work as a Building designer, it depends on which state that the work will be completed.

A building designer has many and diverse roles that can be performed that assist the owner of the building to complete their project. The role of the designer includes: site analysis, coordinating a team of specialist consultants when needed on behalf of the owner, a good working relationship with local building authorities, designing house and renovation plans according to the complex planning controls applicable to the site, concept designs including sustainable designs, final designs for use by the builders as well as a thorough understanding on the council approval process which includes planning approval and construction approval.




Land Surveyor

A land surveyor is the expert in determining the specifications of the building site. A Land surveyor measures and documents the boundaries of a site, the contours of a site, determines the exact position of the proposed dwelling and the documentation of the site plan.

Land surveyors work closely with designers and engineers to provide the best outcome for the site.

The designers use the land surveyor's information to design the best building in relation to the environment and the engineer uses the information to plan structures that are accurate and safe for the site's attributes.

The land surveyor's information is critical to ensure the proposed building compliments the landscape of the black and that the building can be built on the block. (A life without limits).

Building Surveyor/Certifier

The role of Building Surveyors has evolved into many professional disciplines within the building industry, as professionals who assess, certify and inspect building works; as consultants working in design, fire safety, energy efficiency and access solutions; as educators and expert witnesses in support of the legal process. The profession will continue to evolve and grow as the skills and abilities are incorporated into new and developing construction and building management roles within the community.

Primarily, Building Surveyors have a statutory responsibility for ensuring buildings are safe to occupy, energy efficient, accessible and meet all legal requirements. They review, analyse and assess plans for compliance to current standards, conduct inspections and issue relevant legislative permits, certification and approvals. They are required to be competent in local council, State and Territory legislation, guidelines, codes, policies and ministerial directions, as well as the National Construction Code and associated Australian Standards. They also need to keep abreast of technical and innovative changes in the building industry.

Building Surveyors may be employed within local government or may work in a commercial environment as single operators, or in a corporate environment or high volume building surveying businesses.

The responsibilities of building surveying professionals extend well beyond review of and ordering compliance with legislation, regulation or codes. It is a hands-on role where onsite inspections are carried out at specified intervals during the building process to ensure buildings are structurally sound, fit for purpose and able to be occupied. Therefore, the competency of the individual building surveyor is central to safeguarding all sections of the community."
(Australian Institute of Building Surveyors)

Geotechnical Engineer

Geotechnical engineering determines the engineering behaviour of the earth's materials. The reports that Geotechnical engineers will provide an insight to the engineers of how a sites soil and soil structure will move and react to the construction and disruption by excavation.

The reports that geotechnical engineers provide is varied and depends on the site and project. Examples of reports conducted by geotechnical engineers include:

- Geotechnical investigations
- Site Classification
- Wastewater Assessment
- Roadworks
- Landslide Risk Assessment
- Environmental Assessment
- Foundation Assessment

(Wikipedia, Geotechnical Engineer)

On-site Waste Disposal Officer

On-site wastewater disposal officers provide reports of how domestic wastewater systems are to be implemented so that the treatment is effective and sustainable.

The aim of the report is to ensure that new buildings wastewater is also treated in the best interest of public safety, maintain and enhance the quality of the environment surrounding the building and protect resources.

The report also is designed to maintain and enhance community amenity and list the required treatment units to be employed in constructing the building.

Draftsperson

Because a draftsperson primarily role is to draw the plans of a building, they will have a good understanding of how buildings are constructed.

Environmental Management Consultant

Environmental management consultants are employed to assess and report any environmental considerations may be applicable to a building site before building has commenced. The report is to ensure possible environmental effects of a new building are managed or eliminated.

Also, their role is to ensure that all environmental regulations in the building of new buildings complies.

Structural Engineer

Structural engineers consult with many different building professionals to ensure the building will maintain its integrity during and after completion. The structural engineer is trained to understand, predict and calculate the stability, strength and rigidity of the built structures. The role also incorporates designs and technical details of what engineering principles are to be employed in the construction of the building.

The Council.

You generally want to approach the council very early in your designing process to discover if there are any planning control issues at your property.

When contacting the local council ask to speak to the person in the Planning and Development Department regarding planning controls on your property.

Your Local Council Planning and Development Department addresses the following types of issues;

· Does it comply with planning scheme requirements?
· Is it located an appropriate distance from boundaries?
· Is the scale and size appropriate for the area?
· Is there adequate car parking?
· Does it create any access or traffic safety issues?
· Are there any environmental constraints that need to be considered?

Now that you have the right person, simply show them what you plan to do with your renovation. They are there to help and I have found that every council I have dealt with they have always been pleasant no matter what level of experience you are at.

Take notes and references as quite often you will leave the offices or phone conversation and forget everything that was discussed, sometimes there can be a lot to take in.

If you find it all too much and to confusing all at once, most council have Pre-application meetings that you can schedule to discuss the details of your renovation and the documents needed for the application.

While at the council, a good idea that will save you time and money later down the track, is to investigate what Building Plans the council has of your property on their files. It is a common request; however, an application may need to be submitted and it could take 10 days, but it is certainly worth it.

Once you establish what you can and can't do it is time to get creative. Look everywhere for inspiration. As mentioned above, a valuable source of inspiration is found on google images, almost any material and design element can find here to view.

Other Sources of valuable planning information include:

Six Maps - The **SIX Maps** viewer provides access to a range of NSW primary spatial data through an intuitive public interface. Product for viewing on this site include: - Cadastral, Topographic, Imagery, Place Names and Addressing data.

Go to this link and enter your address. The tools located on the top right will give you relevant information regarding your property.

https://maps.six.nsw.gov.au/

Google Earth - Again google earth provides you an enormous amount of information when planning. From here you can determine setbacks, dimensions and even calculate the trees and shrubs that you might have to consider when planning.

https://www.google.com/earth/

Google Instant Street view - can also be a hand y tool when planning
https://www.instantstreetview.com/

Most Councils website now have interactive mapping tools for you to use. From these maps you can source:

- Cadastral searches which include all survey plans and filed notes
- Title search for the block of land
- Registry of Deeds
- Central plan searches

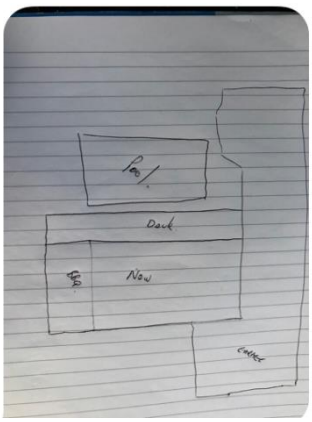
Your local council website will be a great resource and help you find:

- Planning fees
- Application forms
- Latrobe township and environ strategic plan 2009
- Port sorrel and environ strategic plan 2008

Dial before you dig – https://www.1100.com.au/
Dial Before You Dig is a FREE national referral service designed to assist in preventing damage and disruption to Australia's vast infrastructure networks which provide essential services, we use every day.

As part of your research begin to sketch the size, structure and shape of your renovation.

***A picture is worth a thousand words. Sketches can be as simple as you like but makes a world of difference. Take these for example, these 2 examples are from a Builder client! So do not worry about the quality.***

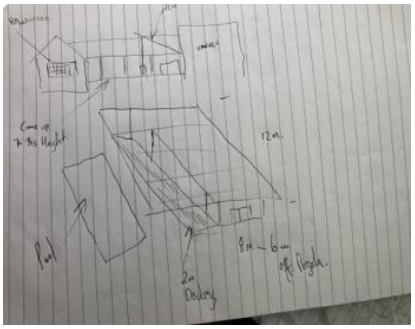



No matter how bad you may think your drawings are making these drawings with give you 2 massive advantages:

A. You will begin to feel the scale of the renovation. A good idea is to photocopy the existing floor plan (You will have a copy of this in the existing plans you received from the council as explained above) and use this existing floor plan as a template to

achieve the renovation you want.

B. It will save you a lot of money and time. If you have a clear and detailed example of what you want from your renovation it saves the draftsperson miles of time. The most time in any building plans is taken up in the design stage between the homeowner and the interpretation of the draftsperson to capture that on a working drawing.



**If you know what you want, you are miles in front.**

## 4. Engage a suitable Draftsperson

I say this because the draftsperson you choose will be part of your team. The job of the draftsperson is to deliver your working drawings and draw the goals and objectives you have for your renovation. The person you choose will need to work closely with you to ensure the details are correct and provide feedback that you may or may not decide to consider.

In my opinion a good Draftsperson will demonstrate several key Traits:

1. Have relevant building industry experience - on the tools experience will translate into a great understanding of how your renovation will combine with existing elements.
2. Good listener - A good draftsmen will need to draw what you want, in many cases, the only way is to discuss.
3. Keep an Open Mind - At the end of the day it is your house.
4. Be passionate about people's projects, it is an exciting time for homeowners

Once you have selected the best draftsperson to work with, provide all the details and drawings you have completed to your draftsperson to conduct their own analysis of the property and the proposed extension.

Good "Drafties" have a range of tools that they can now readily access and save you the expense of site visits particularly when it comes to renovations. Most councils have interactive mapping facilities that save time and money.

For interest check these sites out:

- Google Earth
- Google Instant Street View
- SixMaps

There is also several other certificates and reports that you may have heard and on occasions need to acquire to complete your application and building plans. You can discuss these with your draftspersons including:

A. Basix certificate - A BASIX certificate is an NSW incentive to reduce the energy you use through specific design strategies for lighting, cooling, heating and list of energy design principles. If your renovation exceeds the $50,000 construction costs your application will require a BASIX certificate. Discuss with your Draftsperson how to achieve this certificate as the information listed on the certificate will need to be documented on the final drafting plan.

B. BAL Report - if you are planning to build renovations and your property is located within a Bush Fire Prone Zone you may require a BAL report. The BAL report will establish a BAL rating that will determine the materials and design strategies you can incorporate into your renovation. A good tool to determine if your property is in a zone visit the NSW Rural Fire Service webpage @ www.rfs.nse.gov.au

C. Wastewater Report – Wastewater Report is document created by an accredited consultant to design wastewater particularly at properties that are not connected to council infrastructure. The report will include such information as septic tanks capacities and locations of drains.

Each Draftsperson has their own process of completing your working drawings. In my case I like to shoot out drafts of the site plan initially to ensure the shape of the renovation is accurate. Once the feedback has been provided, I like to move to drawing the floor plan and section drawing which will provide the homeowner with a clear understanding of the layout of the renovation and the roof line if there is a roof required. Once feedback is provided to these drawings the remaining required drawings for the set are then completed. Many renovations are a case by case project, but most building plans will also include:

- Elevations
- Roof Framing plan and Roof Plan
- Plumbing Plan
- Sediment Control Plan

Once all the information is obtained the homeowner will receive a final draft. Make sure to get the final draft in pdf format as many councils will only take digital applications and confirm all the information is accurate and details your objectives.

## 5. Now that you have your plans what do you do next?

It is important to note that before any work can commence either a DA or CDC will need to be lodged and approved by your local council or a qualified Building Certifier.

A Complying Development Certificate (CDC) is an alternative to a DA and can be known as a fast track approval process when dealing with a straightforward development. If your renovation lands within the universal set of requirements you can apply for a CDC through a Private Building Certifier or the Council.

A Development Application (DA) is the application made to your local council seeking consent to carry out a development.

Once you have received your completed working drawings my advice would be to contact a Private Certifier and they will determine the best course of action for you to obtain your CDC or DA and then start work.

I hoped this report has helped you out, **your timing could not be better……**

For a short time only, I would like to offer you the opportunity to receive a **Free Site analysis of your property**. A site analysis will help in many design decisions and identify the best features of your site. To take up this offer all you need to do is email me your property address to ben@ajmplans.com.au and a Free site analysis will be conducted for you.

Go for it, my email address is ben@ajmplans.com.au.

Example of a Design Brief.


Property Address: 11 Oberon Court, Dynnyrne, Tasmania

Projects Objective: Small Creative Sustainable house/studio

Projects Requirements:

- Budget $250k, max internal floor area 65m²
- Tiny house movement inspired with unconventional spaces
- Considered design that may result in higher build costs
- Intention for short term rental with high ratings.

Site Information:
Area: 773m²
Property Id: 1532877
Title Ref: 110715/7
Easements: Sewer Easement runs though the lot towards the front end of the block
Topography: The block runs from the back to the NNW corner 10°-15° downslope
Vegetation: The block has scrubby bush and Grass situated on the surface.
Outlook: Hilltop and water views to the North East.
Prevailing winds: The site is exposed to all winds except Southerly.
Notes: Orientation suggests cold in winter and hot in summer.
Site subject to Considerable noise from the freeway to the north.

Specific Requirements:

- Sleeping Areas – Area for couple, Area for up to 2 guests
- Sitting area 2 to 6 people
- Compact kitchen 3m long
- Dining area up to 6 people incl large table
- Max storage possible incl book shelving and storage]
- Max wall areas to hang art
- Compact bathroom and laundry
- Covered outdoor area no more than 5m x 5m
- Separate lockable storage for 2 electric bikes, art, materials, and possessions

Room Data Sheet:

| |
|---|
| Room Name: Sleeping Areas x 2 |
| 1. Function: Couple Sleeping |
| Furniture: Min queens size bed |
| Lighting: Min. |
| Wall finishes: Good private area display area |
| Other comments |
| |
| |
| 2. Function: 2 guests |
| Furniture: 2 sing beds or 1 double and a single |
| Lighting: Min. |
| Wall finishes: Good private area display area |
| Other comments: may provide opportunity to be packed away during the day. |

| |
|---|
| Room Name: Sitting Area |
| Function: Talking |
| Furniture: seat up to 6 people |
| Lighting: high visible lighting as area may double as a working area. |
| Wall finishes: Good display area |
| Other comments |
| |

| |
|---|
| Room Name: Kitchen |
| Function: Preparing and cooking meals |
| Furniture: sink/fridge/cooktop/oven |
| Lighting: high visible lighting |
| Wall finishes: splashback |
| Other comments max 3m long |
| |

| |
|---|
| Room Name: Dining Area |
| Function: Meals |
| Furniture: large table |
| Lighting: high visible lighting as area may double as a working area. |
| Wall finishes: Good display area |
| Other comments |
| |