

# 7 questions to ask **before** selecting your building designer or architect



- #1 **How do you feel about working with our ideas?** Some architects will prefer to create their own design and not consider your design ideas, whereas other designers are more likely to try to work with your ideas. It is important that you understand their preferred approach.
- #2 **Are your fees fixed or will they fluctuate with the final cost of construction?** It is important that you get a clear understanding of how fees are charged and ideally you should be looking for a fee arrangement that is fixed.
- #3 **Do you use 3D software?** The benefits of using 3D software packages are significant. It will make it easier for you to understand the design as it can be presented to you in realistic colour 3D images. It will also increase the level of accuracy of the documentation, meaning less likelihood of there being costly errors in the drawings that are not discovered until construction begins.
- #4 **Will you lodge the Development Application for us?** Lodging a Development Application (DA) can be a tiresome and frustrating exercise if you do not have experience at it. Where once upon a time you could simply hand your drawings over the counter to the assessing authority, you now need to complete numerous forms and an increasing amount of supporting reports and documentation to even have an application accepted for assessment. Increasingly, this can now only be done online.
- #5 **Will you also prepare a specification or inclusions schedule, and what does that cost?** These are important documents to ensure that you are getting reliable and accurate building quotes that are thorough and transparent. The method in which these documents are prepared can vary dramatically, as can the costs. So make sure you take the time to understand what you are going to receive.
- #6 **Can you help us find builders?** One of the important roles your designer/architect should help you with is finding the right builder for your project. Be sure to ask their involvement in that process.
- #7 **What level of ongoing support do you provide once construction has commenced?** Having somebody you trust to bounce ideas and questions off during the construction of the building is an important consideration for a lot of people. Check what level of involvement and assistance your designer/architect will have during that process (and if there are additional fees involved).

