

30 answers to *your* most  
frequently asked  
building questions.

Build a *you* home.

Building *your* home is a big deal and you're bound to have many questions.

Here are some of the more common ones we get asked. If you have any others, please give us a call and we will be happy to help you out.





## Commonly asked questions during the Pre-Construction phase of building with Hall & Hart Homes

### 1. How many homes do you build a year?

We are not trying to be the largest builder in Sydney but we are striving to be the best. Therefore, we limit the number of homes we build each year to approximately 100. We believe this gives us the perfect mix of scale and size without losing the personal touch.

### 2. Can I change the design?

Absolutely! In fact, no two houses we have built are the same. We utilise our plans as the starting point and then we work with you to customise the plan to suit your family, your lifestyle and your budget. We want to build you a home that suits your tastes – add a room, move a wall, change the kitchen layout, the choice is yours.

Take a look at our tried and trusted designs to start your design journey. Our consultants will help create the floor plan that best suits your needs and most importantly meets authority guidelines.

### 3. Can you build my own plans?

Yes – we can build to your plans but we need to assess each set of plans to make sure we are the right builder for the home you are looking to create.

### 4. What inclusions do you offer?

Your home is your castle, so we want you to feel confident your new home ends up being everything you want it to be.

We offer two levels of inclusions and then we mix and match to include exactly what you want. We pride ourselves on including many things that would be “extras” with many other builders.

Our homes feature quality brand inclusions at an affordable price and

you will be surprised and delighted with the generous allowances to choose from. We only use trusted, quality brands – so you can be sure that your new home is built to last. We suggest this is the area that you need to really compare offers to decide what is right for you and your needs.

Our goal is to give you the “Genuine” price to build your home with quality inclusions and brands you can trust.



## **5. Free Estimate – what does it include?**

We know you want to know ‘how much is this going to cost? Which is why we offer Free Tender Estimates to give you an accurate assessment of the real cost to build your home.

Our Free Tender Estimate takes a little time to complete as our Design and Sales Consultants will work with you to create the house you want with the changes and inclusions you want. We will then examine your block and do a site visit if required to give you a realistic price to build your home.

## **6. What does the Tender Fee cover?**

Once you decide to progress and pay your tender fee, we will give you a full and detailed costing within 4 - 6 weeks. Our cost includes everything as well as

site costs, so you don't get any nasty surprise costs down the track.

The time and money spent here is well worth it to avoid the things that can delay construction or exceed your budget. This is probably your biggest investment, so it's worth getting right.

Included in your Tender Request Fee are the following 5 pieces of the house building puzzle:

- **A Contour Survey** The contour survey will give us accurate levels, check boundary lines and determine the exact slope of your land. It will help us to accurately determine the site costs and cost to run services to your new home.

- **A 149 Certificate** (Planning Certificates, also known as zoning certificates). A Section 149 Planning Certificate will give us the information around zoning and applicable rules for development on your block. It tells us the restrictions that have been placed on your block by your local council (i.e. bushfire, flood, easements, heritage or other restrictions).

- **Soil Test** A soil test is necessary to understand how reactive the soil is on your block. This will allow us to ensure we design the appropriate foundations for your home.

- **Site & Floor Plan** The site and floor plan shows the building footprint on your block drawn by our draftsman to confirm Service Locations, Easements, Authority Setback Requirements and Cut/Fill Requirements.

- **Site Inspection** Every site is inspected to ensure that we are familiar with any site or access issues. We strongly



believe that this work upfront saves major problems and very nasty surprises after you have signed a building contract.

- **Compliance Check** A compliance check is required to ensure the dwelling complies with your chosen authority building controls (Complying Development) such as FSR (Floor Space Ratio) and building heights etc.

### **7. What other costs can I expect from the estimate provided?**

We provide a Genuine Price so that there are no nasty surprises during the construction process.

We pride ourselves on being the most thorough in the industry in assessing all the possible issues with your site. Once you have locked in your price with us you will know exactly what it will cost – with no surprises!

### **8. Why do I need a soil test and site levels?**

Soils vary in type, composition and strength. The differences can be

significant. Some soils are very strong and can support significant weight, while other soils are weak and compress under light loads. It is necessary to understand your site's soil so we can accurately design the foundations for your home.

Similarly, site levels must be thoroughly assessed to determine the fall of your block. This will identify additional needs regarding foundations and if additional retaining walls, step downs or drop edge beams are required.

### **9. Where are the largest cost overruns likely to occur?**

We have all heard the horror stories about major cost overruns during construction, these generally occur because the builder has failed to do the level of investigation that we know is required to ensure everything is accurately costed.

This level of investigation is why we can offer our Genuine Price to give you peace of mind. To achieve this, we undertake the following extensive analysis of your block. (Refer back to question 6 for detailed description):

- A Contour Survey
- A 149 Certificate
- Soil Test
- Site & Floor Plan
- Site Inspection

### **10. What is the difference between lodging with CDC and Council?**

Complying Development Certificate (CDC) is a State Government regulated State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP) which outlines the generic housing code for the state of NSW. The 149 Certificate for your block states that you are eligible and your proposed dwelling complies with the SEPP, then



you can seek planning approval outside of your local council approval process through CDC.

CDC applications are lodged to an accredited building certifier who independently approves the construction of your home. Benefits include bypassing neighbour notifications and rapid response time frames for approvals.

If your home doesn't meet the requirements of the CDC housing code, or the 149 Certificate for your block doesn't allow you, then lodgement to council is an alternative method for approval. Although the approval process may take longer, the benefit of council is that generally their planning policies can be more flexible with setbacks, floor space ratios and are often assessed on merit as opposed to strict guidelines.

### **11. What size house can I build?**

The size of the house is determined by the Floor Space Ratio (FSR) that applies in your council area. This is the ratio between the size of your block of land and the square metres of liveable area in the house. This generally excludes the garage, alfresco and front porch. Each council has different requirements so it will vary, however we will work with you and explain what are the options to ensure you get the right house for your block.

### **12. How long will it take to build my house?**

Generally it will take 12 months from the time you sign your tender acceptance to moving in, however council conditions and weather can always be a factor in the exact timing. We allow 6 – 9 months for Pre Construction and 6 – 7 months to build your home.

### **13. When do we sign building contracts?**

We sign contracts after plans have been approved, after your selections have been made and after we issue your Home Owners Warranty. This way the contract price is truly the final price you will pay for the home you have designed.

### **14. What's your deposit and progress claim schedule?**

Once construction has commenced you only pay after each stage is



complete and you have had a chance to review the progress stage with your supervisor – you never have to pay upfront during this period.

### **Pre-Construction Fees (Single Dwelling)**

Tender Acceptance Fee \$5,000  
Plans Acceptance Fee \$10,000  
Contract Signing Fee – 5% of the Contract Price

### **Construction Fees**

- Concrete Slab Completed 25% less all monies paid to date
- Frame Completed 18%
- Brickwork Completed 18%
- Internal Linings Completed 17%
- Fixout Completed 12%
- Practical Completion – Handover 10%

**15. Are you a certified builder and affiliated with recognised industry associations?**

It is imperative that your builder be appropriately licensed – Yes, Hall & Hart Homes Builders Licence Number in NSW is 275897C. To check the licence details of your builder please refer to The NSW Office of Fair Trading at [www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au](http://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au) or The ACT Planning and Land Authority at [www.actpla.act.gov.au](http://www.actpla.act.gov.au). Hall & Hart Homes are proud members of the Housing Industry Association (HIA) and Master Builders Association (MBA).

**16. Do you offer 6 star energy houses?**

Yes, we comply with the NSW Government BASIX rating system which was introduced in 2004 to ensure that sustainability and energy efficiency targets were met in new residential housing.

Some customers want to go further than this minimum and we are happy to work with you to provide the additional energy efficiency you desire. These can include additional insulation, double glazed windows, solar energy installations and many other ways to reduce the environmental impact of your home.



**17. Do you have colour consultants that can help with our selections?**

Absolutely! We understand that there are a lot of decisions to make and we ensure that there are experts in their fields who will hold your hand every step of the way. Most of your colour selection appointments will take place at our internal selections centre – Studio You.

**18. What does demolition cost?**

We specialise in knockdown and rebuild and demolishing and building the house you want can actually be a more affordable option than buying another block.

You save on paying a host of fees like stamp duty, taxes and site fees, and forego the expense and hassle of selling your existing home (agent fees, advertising, repairs etc.).

As you can imagine there are many factors that will determine the cost which include the size of the house, access to the site, amount of asbestos etc. As a rough guide, a standard demolition will cost you around \$20,000 – \$25,000. We can put you in contact with a preferred, trusted demolition company that can explain the full process to you.

**19. How do I manage the swimming pool construction?**

We can supply you with guidance on the construction of your pool, especially timings and help with location suggestions, but as every pool is unique we like the experts in this area to manage your needs. We will coordinate with your pool company to ensure it all happens smoothly.





## 20. Can I build a granny flat?

Yes, we offer a granny flat option with a number of our homes, obviously it will depend on your block and council requirements but we are happy to work with you to see if a granny flat will work as an addition to your home.

## 21. How far back from the street does my new home have to be?

This largely depends on the method of approval – whether it is CDC or Council. For CDC it is the average of your two neighbours setbacks, or if you have no neighbours within 40m either side, a distance of 4.5m. Setbacks for Councils vary – some councils apply a similar calculation to CDC, whereas others have their setbacks based on DCP guidelines and Planning Zones.

## 22. Do you build in my area?

We build across most of the greater Sydney area. Refer to map (image 1).

## 23. What size frontage do I need to build my house?

We have plans for houses from 10 to 18 metre frontages.

## 24. Do you build on sloping land?

Yes – we can build on sloping blocks, however we will need to assess in more detail if the block has more than 3m of fall across the block.

## 25. How do we get the process started?

Visit us at HomeWorld in Kellyville and speak to our Design and Sales Consultants or send us an email at [info@hallharthomes.com.au](mailto:info@hallharthomes.com.au) or give us a call on 8662 0037 and we can work with you to select a home that will work within your budget.



We provide continuous  
*communication* and *support*  
throughout the entire process  
from *tender* to finishing  
*construction.*



## Commonly asked questions about the Construction phase and beyond the build

### **26. How many jobs does the supervisor manage at one time?**

We believe that it is only possible to build a quality home if the supervisor has time to spend actually supervising the building of your home. That is why our supervisors have no more than 10-12 houses to supervise at any one time. Many other company's supervisors will be building twice this amount. It is a question worth discussing with any builder.

### **27. How will I know what's happening during construction?**

Your supervisor will provide you with weekly updates about what has happened last week and what will be happening in the weeks ahead.

We will ensure that you feel like you know what is happening every step of the way with continuous communication and support during your building journey.

### **28. Can I walk through the house during construction?**

Work, Health & Safety regulations will prevent you from being able to access the site without being accompanied by a Hall & Hart Homes Supervisor. However, you will be accompanied by your Supervisor at each critical stage of construction on a walk through of your home where he can explain exactly what is happening and what will occur next.

### **29. What happens during the maintenance period?**


We have a 13 week maintenance period if there are any issues after handover, just call and we will sort out your issues quickly and with no fuss.

### **30. Who organises landscaping and driveways?**

Landscaping and driveways are generally contracted separately by the owner except for our house and land packages, which will include generous landscaping.

# Where we build.



 All areas subject to site investigation  
(Image 1 – suburbs of NSW)

## Want to find out more?



Visit our display homes at HomeWorld V Kellyville



Call us on 8662 0037



Email us at [info@hallharthomes.com.au](mailto:info@hallharthomes.com.au)



Learn about us at [www.hallharthomes.com.au](http://www.hallharthomes.com.au)

Build a *you* home.





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