10 Steps to a Stress free Build

The ultimate home extension checklist



Your planning and design partners

Fluent
ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN SERVICES

The ultimate home extension checklist



Hi, I'm Tom,

Director at Fluent Architectural Design Services.
I know that starting a home extension or renovation project can feel overwhelming.

There are so many decisions to make, from planning and design to choosing the right builder, and it's natural to feel uncertain at the beginning.

Over the past 11 years at Fluent, I've had the privilege of guiding countless homeowners through this journey. I've seen first hand what makes a project run smoothly — and where things can get complicated if not planned properly. That's why I've put together this resource: to share my knowledge and give you a clear roadmap from the very first idea to the finishing touches of your home.

Included in this guide is a comprehensive checklist designed to help you prepare for every stage of your project. As you work through it, tick off each element to ensure you have everything in place to start your build with confidence. This checklist isn't just about technical steps — it's about giving you peace of mind, so you can enjoy the process as much as the finished home.

At Fluent, we believe that a well-planned project is a successful project. Our goal is to make your experience as seamless as possible, providing expert guidance, support, and advice every step of the way. Whether it's answering questions, reviewing plans, or helping you connect with trusted builders, I'm here to ensure your journey is smooth, enjoyable, and ultimately rewarding.
Good luck with your checklist, and I look forward to helping you create a home you'll love for years to come.

Warm regards,

Tom Millin

Director, Fluent Architectural Design Services

Step 1: Planning and Design

Property Survey Completed
Have a professional surveyor measure your property accurately, capturing dimensions, features, and boundaries. This ensures all future design decisions are based on precise information.

Design Plans Prepared
Create detailed drawings including existing and proposed floor plans, elevations, and site plans. These documents visualise your vision, guide approvals, and inform construction.

Planning Permission Secured
Submit your plans to your local authority and secure planning approval to comply with regulations and avoid legal issues.

Pre-Commencement Conditions Reviewed
Check for any conditions attached to your planning permission, such as environmental or heritage requirements, and ensure they're addressed before construction begins.



Step 2: Technical Plans

Building Regulation Plans
Submit plans to demonstrate compliance with building codes covering safety, energy efficiency, and accessibility.

Structural Calculations
Have an engineer complete and approve structural calculations to ensure your build is safe and structurally sound.

Party Wall Agreement
If your project affects shared walls or boundaries, obtain a legal agreement with neighbours to prevent disputes.

Thames Water Build Over Agreement
For builds near water infrastructure, secure the necessary agreement to avoid damage or disruption.

Building Control Decision
Choose between local authority building control or a private inspector to oversee compliance with regulations.



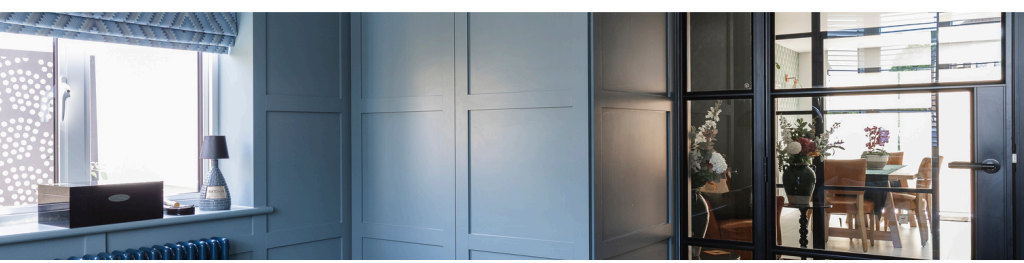
Step 3: Detailed Specifications

Room Specifications
Document every detail for each room, including socket positions, radiators, and light fixtures. Our interior design service can manage this for you.

Kitchen & Built-In Furniture Designs
Finalise detailed plans for kitchens and built-in furniture, balancing style and functionality.

Builder Selection
Obtain quotes from trusted local builders. Remember, the cheapest builder isn't always the best choice!

Builder Contract Reviewed and Signed
Ensure your contract covers scope, timeline, costs, and responsibilities.



Step 4: Budget and Contingency Planning

Regularly review your budget and include a contingency for unexpected expenses.

Step 5: Preparing for Your Build

Discuss logistics with your builder. You may plan to stay on-site, in which case temporary kitchen areas may be needed. Packing away belongings or, in some cases, moving out temporarily can speed up the build and reduce stress.

Step 6: Ensure All Approvals Are in Place

All approvals — including planning, building control, Thames Water agreements, and party wall notices — should be finalised before construction starts.

Step 7: During the Build

Keep in regular communication with your builder regarding payment schedules and timelines. Building control will conduct visits during key milestones, such as foundations, to ensure compliance.

Step 8: Second Fix

This stage involves confirming fixtures, fittings, tiles, and kitchen layouts. Be prepared to make decisions ahead of time to avoid last-minute costs or regrets. Your detailed build specification will help guide these choices.

Step 9: The Interior

This is when your home really starts to take shape. Consider zoning areas with flooring, adding textures, and using mood lighting to create atmosphere. Our interior designer can help bring this together, and you can also access trade discounts through our exclusive client website, ‘The Collective’.

Step 10: Enjoy Your Home

With everything planned, approved, and managed, you can enjoy your beautiful, functional home. At Fluent, we make home projects simple, clear, and enjoyable, guiding you every step of the way.

Get Started

Book your free 30-minute advice call with one of our specialists.

We can provide:

- A preliminary quotation outlining our services
- A free planning assessment completed by one of our in-house planning consultants
- A free 1-hour face-to-face consultation at your property



At Fluent, we make home projects simple, clear, and enjoyable. Whether you're starting from scratch or just need help with specific parts, we have a solution to suit your needs.

All-Inclusive Service – Everything Covered
Our All-Inclusive Service takes care of everything from measured surveys, design, planning, building regulations, and structural calculations to pre-construction support. You'll be guided every step of the way, right through to choosing the right builder. Clients also enjoy a 10% package discount, free build budgeting support, and our pre-construction service—everything managed under one roof.

Modular Service – Pick What You Need
If you prefer a more hands-on approach or already have some elements in place, our Modular Service lets you choose exactly what you need, while still benefiting from our team's guidance.

The Ultimate Home Extension Checklist

This checklist serves as a roadmap for your architectural project, guiding you through each critical step.

Design and Planning

- [ ] Property Survey Completed
- [ ] Design Plans Prepared
- [ ] Planning Permission Secured
- [ ] Pre-Commencement Conditions Reviewed

Tecnicial Plans

- [ ] Structural Calculations
- [ ] Building Regulation Plans
- [ ] Party Wall Agreement in Place
- [ ] Thames Water Build Over Agreement Secured
- [ ] Building Control Application
- [ ] Interior Design and Build Specifications

Plans review and Finalised

- [ ] Detailed Specifications Documented
- [ ] Kitchen and Bathrooms Designs Finalised
- [ ] Builder Contract Reviewed and Signed

Additional Consideration

- [ ] Budget Review and Contingency Plan
- [ ] Insurance and Warranties
- [ ] Communication Plan

Client Testimonial

Everyone we have dealt with, from Nev and Tom, surveyors and planners have been professional, courteous and they delivered without fail.

What really stands out is the quality of communication - for newbies like us it is so reassuring to have Fluent clearly take us through every step of the design and planning process.

Thank you to everyone at Fluent!

★★★★★

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