

# The Design Process Explained



**Modal**  
ARCHITECTURE

# The Design Process Explained

## Design



**Step 01**  
Project Establishment



**Step 02**  
Preliminary Design



**Step 03**  
Resource Consent



**Step 04**  
Concept Design

## Documentation



**Step 05**  
Developed Design



**Step 06**  
Detailed Design



**Step 07**  
Building Consent

## Construction



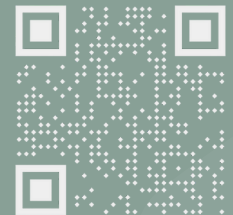
**Step 08**  
Tender & Procurement



**Step 09**  
Contract Administration



**Step 10**  
Site Observations



Learn more about  
our processes here

# Design Stages Explained

---

## **Step 01 - Project Establishment**

Your architectural process begins by setting project goals together, considering budget and scope. For renovations, we use technology to create a 3D model of your existing home. We establish agreements, gather site-specific information, and outline project details. This stage enables us to begin the design process.

## **Step 02 - Preliminary Design**

During your preliminary design phase, our architectural designers ensure compliance with local regulations and safety standards for your new home construction. A preliminary design considers your home's aesthetics and size, aiming for beauty and functionality. Your preliminary design will typically include architectural drawings highlighting the scale of proposed rooms, design sections, building elevations, and outline specifications from various disciplines.

## **Step 03 - Resource Consent**

After you are happy with the preliminary design, we will initiate any resource consents that the design requires. A resource consent necessitates a comprehensive architectural plan with detailed elevations and visual representations, accompanied by a thorough report demonstrating compliance with regulations. This process might involve revisions and may be time-intensive. Upon approval, the consent letter outlines specific conditions for your construction, including material selection and any boundary non-compliance requirements.

## **Step 04 - Concept Design**

Our architectural team transforms your preliminary design by personalising the design to elevate your lifestyle. We focus on optimising living spaces and flesh out key elements such as construction materials and colour schemes. We aim to deliver a functional, tailored design that suits your unique requirements and integrates with your lifestyle.

This phase involves exploring diverse design concepts and is often completed in tandem with the resource consent phase. To ensure financial feasibility, you can have the design assessed by a quantity surveyor to ensure that the design aligns with your budget.

# Documentation Stages Explained

---

## **Step 05 - Developed Design**

After you are happy with the concept design, we dive deeper. In this stage, we expand concept design, developing all major elements such as structure, materials, and services. We work with other disciplines in this stage, each profession refines their part in your design. We coordinate with the other professionals to refine the plans and specifications.

## **Step 06 - Detailed Design**

This stage marks the transition to a complete set of construction drawings. Building upon the developed design, we meticulously outline how the building aligns with the Building Act. We provide intricate construction information that becomes the builders' on-site guide to your project. The focus is on crafting extensive documentation, minimising the uncertainty and guesswork for your building team. This stage ensures a smooth construction process.

## **Step 07 - Building Consent**

Once we've completed the detailed design, we package your design and other necessary documents for building consent. This process involves getting official approval from the authorities to start building. The submitted plans, specifications, application and any supporting documents should meet all the required standards and regulations. This step is mandatory for most projects, and - once complete - enables construction to begin.

# Construction Stages Explained

---

## **Step 08 - Tender & Procurement**

At this stage, we're in the business of finding the right team to bring your project to life. We assist in selecting the ideal contractor, this includes collecting building estimates for your review. This phase involves guiding you through the selection process, ensuring a successful outcome for your project. Our goal is to turn your vision into reality by facilitating the procurement of the right talent and expertise needed for the construction.

## **Step 09 - Contract Administration**

The contract administrator will ensure everything runs smoothly and according to plan. Their role includes overseeing timelines, budget adherence, and handling any contractual issues that arise. They will provide impartial oversight, ensuring professional management throughout your project.

## **Step 10 - Site Observations**

Once construction begins, your architectural designer conducts ongoing site inspections. These thorough observations serve as a bridge, effectively conveying the subtle design intricacies to the builders. With vigilant oversight of the construction, the architectural designer meticulously ensures precise execution, facilitating the builders' adherence to your envisioned design with ease.

# Common Terminology

---

## **NZ Building Code**

All proposed designs, including works completed under NZ Building Act, Schedule 1, will comply with the NZ Building Code. All design documentation will be in accordance with New Zealand Building Standards, for example NZS3604 for timber-framed buildings. If the design requirements fall outside the allowance of the New Zealand Building Standards, then we may need to engage a registered engineer.

## **Schedule 1 (of the NZ Building Act)**

Schedule 1 describes specific building works that may be undertaken without a building consent. Schedule 1 work must still be conducted by a licensed building practitioner and follow the building code. If the design is outside of the scope of Schedule 1, then a building consent may be required.

## **District Plan**

We will review the requirements of your local District Plan concerning your property. It is our goal to design within the allowed District Plan requirements, however, if the proposed design breaches these requirements, then resource consent will need to be obtained. Modal Architecture can manage this application process for you.

## **Recession Planes & Site Coverage**

We will review assumed boundary locations and existing site coverage. It is our goal to design within the allowed District Plan requirements for site coverage and sunlight boundaries, however, if the proposed design breaches these requirements, then resource consent will need to be obtained. Modal Architecture can manage this application process for you.

## **Site Survey / Boundary Locations**

We may require a surveyor to perform a boundary location survey if the proposed dwelling location approaches the site boundaries. Your local council often request that if the dwelling is located within 1.5m of the boundary then a boundary survey should be undertaken to confirm exact locations of boundaries. The surveyor fees are not included in the architecture brief.

# Common Terminology

---

## Resource Consent Application

A land-use consent relates to a specific property and covers:

- New buildings, additions and alterations to existing buildings,
- A change in activities on a property, and
- Land modifications, such as earthworks.

Subdivision consents apply to activities such as:

- Creating a new freehold title, where the landowner (and any of their beneficiaries) owns the property outright,
- Creating a cross-lease, where multiple people own an undivided share of a piece of land, and the homes they build on the land are leased from the other landowners, and
- Creating a unit-title development, where the owners own a defined part of the building, such as an apartment, and share ownership in common areas such as lifts, lobbies, and driveways.

## Encroachment License

To use Council-owned land for private purposes you will need resource consent and, in many cases, you will also need an encroachment licence. When you apply for resource consent for a structure located within the road corridor, such as a car deck, your proposal's impact is assessed. This assessment will consider how your proposal affects your neighbours (for example, shade their property) or whether you are removing vegetation within the road corridor (the area up to your boundary, for example, a footpath or bank).

## Assessment of Environmental Effects

Every resource consent application must include an assessment of environmental effects (AEE), on the basis that every activity impacts the environment. An AEE describes the environmental effects of your proposed activity should include any mitigations that may reduce negative environmental impacts. Depending on your proposed activity, it can take a lot of time and effort to conduct your assessment and produce a report. Modal Architecture will work with our planners to manage this report and application process for you.



# Common Terminology

---

## **Building Consent Application**

A building consent serves as official Council permission for you to undertake a project that involves constructing, altering, demolishing or removing a building. It certifies that your project complies with:

- The Building Act 2004 and regulations – the main law on building works, and
- The New Zealand Building Code – the performance standards for all building work, covering areas such as structural stability, fire safety, access, moisture control and durability.

## **Request for Information (RFI)**

Councils in New Zealand review building projects for compliance with the Building Code. They might issue a Request for Information (RFI), seeking details or clarifications about submitted plans. This helps them ensure that the proposed work meets the standards and regulations. RFIs are routine in the review process, gathering crucial information for accurate project assessment and approval.

## **NZS-3604 / 3604**

NZS3604 is New Zealand's building standard, specifically designed to offer guidelines for constructing homes and small to medium-sized structures. It enables architectural designers to handle a portion of the work without a structural engineer, outlining construction basics within the country's regulatory framework for safe and compliant buildings.



# Modal

ARCHITECTURE

We are an architectural design firm,  
specialising in high-performance and lifestyle  
homes around New Zealand.

M



Auckland | Bay of Plenty | Canterbury | Otago  
Taranaki | Wellington | Wairarapa

Servicing New Zealand wide

Modal Architecture  
info@modal.archi  
021 063 9997