Prepare to Build

Getting ready to start your construction project

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QUICK SUMMARY

- Planning permission does not mean you can start immediately
- Building regulations approval may still be required
- Shop around for contractors; verify qualifications and references
- Deposits are standard but require trust on both sides
- Consider hiring a surveyor to oversee work and budget

From Permission to Construction

Being granted planning permission does not mean that you can start working on your project right away. You will need to consider other issues such as building regulations approval, which may require technical plans, as well as which contractor you will trust to carry out the work.

Building an extension to your home may seem like the perfect alternative to uprooting and moving to a new house entirely, particularly when you take into account the possible costs of estate agents and furniture removal. However, building work brings its own set of expenses and risks.

Working with Contractors

It is common for contractors to ask for a deposit before they begin work. This is to provide them with some security of payment before the work is finished. Deposits are often a matter of trust between the two parties – the contractor must trust that you will eventually settle your debt, while you must trust that the contractor will not spend your deposit to fund other work.

Finding a Trustworthy Contractor

The best way to find a contractor you can trust is to shop around and get more than one quote on the work so you can compare prices. Make sure to ask them for proof of professional qualifications and

references of their recent work. Follow these up to make sure that they are the real deal. Any respectable tradesperson will also be fully insured in case any claims arise from the work they are carrying out.

Hiring a Surveyor

It might be worthwhile to hire a surveyor to make sure that your work is completed on time, on budget and according to your individual requirements. They will also ensure that the work complies with the local area's planning and building regulations. If you want to manage your project alone, setting up separate payments for each stage of the work will help you keep track of your budget.

Protecting Your Investment

Another good way to ensure that your money is protected is by registering with a company with secure transaction and payment facilities that specialises in building and improvement projects. This will have the added benefit of reassuring the contractor that you will be able to pay once the work has concluded.