



FAIRBAIRN
BUILDERS

RENOVATION GUIDE |
CONCEPT & DESIGN PHASE









FAIRBAIRN BUILDERS

AWARD WINNING
ARCHITECTURAL BUILDERS



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DESIGNING YOUR RENOVATION: FROM CONCEPT TO DESIGN



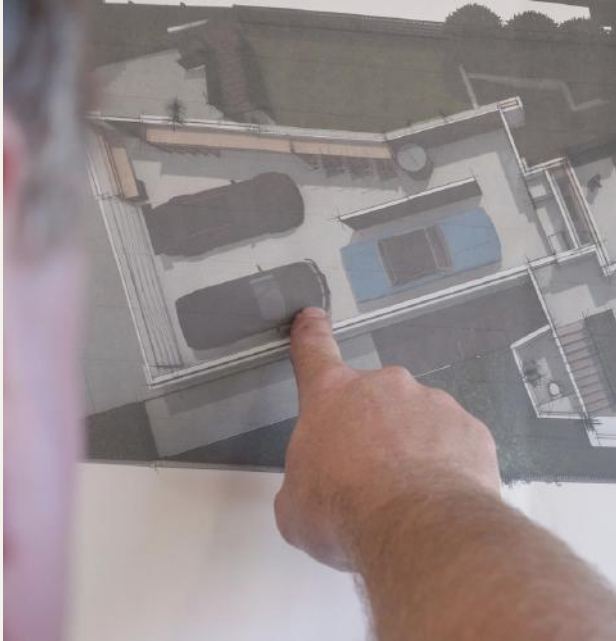
Top: Jamie Fairbairn meeting with a client at our office, discussing their home build.

Renovating your home is an exciting opportunity to reimagine your space, whether you have detailed plans or just a few ideas to start with. We're here to support you at every step, making the process as seamless and stress-free as possible. If design plans are required, we can connect you with a trusted architect or designer who will bring your vision to life, ensuring the renovation suits your lifestyle, budget, and long-term needs.

As builders, we collaborate closely with you and your design team from the outset, offering practical insights to help refine ideas, manage costs, and maximise the potential of your existing home. Our early involvement ensures a smoother transition from design to construction, helping you avoid unexpected delays or costly changes later on.

This guide will walk you through the concept and design phase of your renovation, helping you make confident, informed decisions. Our aim is to make this stage a positive and enjoyable experience, setting a strong foundation for a successful renovation journey.

OUR CONCEPT & DESIGN PROCESS



Defining your Vision and Goals

Before starting your renovation, it's important to define your vision and goals to ensure the end result enhances both the functionality and feel of your existing home. A great way to begin is by creating a Pinterest board or saving images that inspire you. This helps you visualise styles, layouts, and finishes that resonate with your personal taste and the character of your current home. Put together a wish list of must-have features. Thinking through these details early on, including layout changes, materials, and finishes, provides clarity and direction. It also helps your architect/designer and builder develop a plan that's aligned with your goals, streamlining the renovation process from concept through to completion.



Choosing the Right Architect/Designer

Choosing the right architect/designer is crucial to creating a home that reflects your vision, suits your lifestyle, and stays within budget.

A skilled architect/designer will not only bring your ideas to life but also ensure the plans are practical, functional, and aligned with building regulations. They play a key role in optimizing space, natural light, and materials while considering long-term durability and energy efficiency.

The right partnership between you, your architect/designer, and your builder will set the foundation for a smooth design and construction process, helping to avoid costly changes down the line.



MAXINE HOME



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RENOVATION CONCEPT & DESIGN

Understanding Your Lifestyle and Future Needs:

When planning a renovation, it's essential to consider both your current lifestyle and your future needs. A well-thought-out renovation should not only solve today's challenges but also adapt to the changes that life may bring.

Think about how you use your home day-to-day, do you need better flow for entertaining, a more functional kitchen, or additional space to work from home? Consider your family's evolving needs. Will you eventually require extra bedrooms, improved storage, or more space for growing children or hobbies? Looking ahead to things like aging in place or creating a low-maintenance house can help ensure your home stays practical and comfortable long-term.

Understanding these factors from the outset allows your renovation to be tailored to support your lifestyle, now and into the future.

Setting Priorities for Functionality, Aesthetics, and Budget:

Setting priorities for functionality, aesthetics, and budget is a crucial step in the renovation design process. It helps guide decisions and ensures your new home reflects your needs and vision while staying within financial constraints.

Start by determining what features are most important to you in terms of functionality, whether it's ample storage, an open-plan layout, or energy-efficient systems. Next, think about the aesthetics, what style, materials, and finishes appeal to you? While it's easy to get carried away with design ideas, it's important to balance your dream home with a realistic budget.

Establishing a clear budget early on ensures that your priorities align with what's financially achievable and helps avoid unexpected costs down the line. By setting these priorities, you'll create a home that is both beautiful and functional, without compromising on your financial goals.

RENOVATION CONCEPT & DESIGN



Making a Wish List

Creating a wish list of must-have features is a key step in the renovation design process. It helps clarify your goals and ensures the changes you make truly enhance the way you live in your home. Start by considering both practical needs and personal preferences. Do you need an extra bathroom, improved kitchen functionality, or more open-plan living? Are you looking to increase storage, create a home office, or improve indoor-outdoor flow? Think about the small but meaningful details too—like maximising natural light, updating finishes, or carving out a dedicated space for hobbies.

Once your list is complete, prioritise each item based on your daily routines and long-term plans. Some features might be essential, while others could be adjusted to suit your budget. A clear and well-considered wish list helps your architect/designer and builder tailor the renovation to suit your lifestyle—ensuring the final result is both practical and personal.



Gathering Inspiration

Creating a Pinterest board and gathering inspiration is a great way to visually organise your ideas and preferences for your renovation project. Pinterest allows you to collect images, colour palettes, design details, and features that appeal to you—helping you define your style and clarify your vision for the updated space. You can create separate boards for different areas of your home, such as kitchen upgrades, bathroom layouts, or outdoor improvements. This makes it easier to compare and combine elements that reflect your taste.

As you explore, you may discover new ideas or design trends you hadn't considered, which can inspire creative solutions for your renovation. Once you've compiled your images, you'll have a clear visual reference to share with your designer or builder. This helps communicate your ideas more effectively and ensures the renovation aligns with the look and feel you're aiming for. It's a fun, practical step that brings your renovation goals to life—one image at a time.

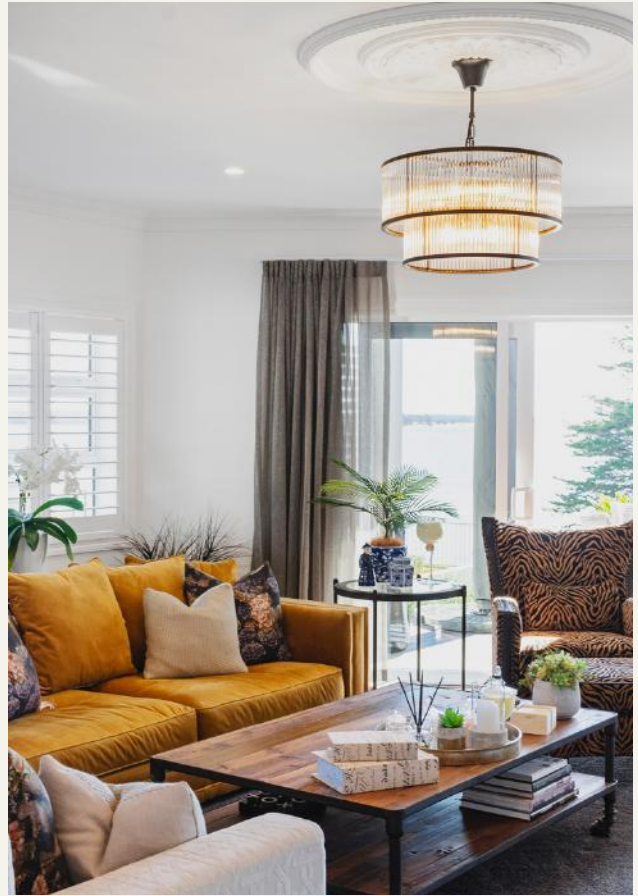
KITCHEN INSPIRATION



BATHROOM INSPIRATION



INTERIOR INSPIRATION



EXTERIOR INSPIRATION



RENOVATION CONCEPT & DESIGN



Finding the Right Architect or Designer

Choosing the right architect or designer is a crucial step in bringing your renovation vision to life. Start by reviewing their portfolio to ensure their style aligns with your goals, and look for experience with renovation projects similar to yours.

Client testimonials can provide valuable insight into their communication style, reliability, and ability to deliver practical solutions. It's important to choose someone who not only listens to your ideas but also understands your day-to-day needs and can balance creativity with functionality.

A great architect or designer will collaborate closely with you and your builder to ensure the renovation design is practical, cost-effective, and achievable within your budget. We're happy to recommend trusted professionals and support you through the selection process, ensuring you find the right fit for your renovation journey.



Key Questions to Ask Before Hiring Your Architect/Designer

Before engaging an architect/designer for your renovation, it's important to ask the right questions to ensure they're the right fit for your home and goals. Start by asking about their experience with renovation projects, especially those involving homes of a similar style, age, or complexity.

Discuss their design process and how they handle working within existing structures, budget limitations, and council requirements. It's also important to understand their fee structure, projected timelines, and how closely they collaborate with builders throughout the project.

Taking the time to ask the right questions early on will help ensure a smooth renovation process and set your project up for success. Below is a helpful checklist to bring to your initial meeting.

CHECKLIST: QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR ARCHITECT/DESIGNER IN THE INITIAL MEETING

1. Experience & Expertise

- Can you show me examples of renovations you've designed that are similar to what I want?
- How long have you been designing homes, and what's your experience with renovation projects like mine?

2. Design Approach & Process

- How do you approach designing a renovation that enhances my lifestyle while staying within budget?
- What is your process from the initial concept through to the final renovation plans?
- How do you take existing site conditions—such as sunlight, wind, layout, and views—into account when planning the renovation?

3. Collaboration & Communication

- How do you work with builders during the design process?
- How involved will I be in decision-making, and how do you handle client input?
- What's the best way to communicate with you, and how often will we meet?

4. Costs & Timeline

- How do you charge for your services?
- What's included in your fee, and are there any additional costs I should expect?
- Do you have an estimate of council costs, and engineering costs? Along with any other costs I should be aware of?
- How long do you estimate the design process will take?

5. Final Steps

- Can you provide references from past clients?
- What happens if we need to make changes after the initial concept?

RENOVATION CONCEPT & DESIGN



The Benefits of Using an Interior Designer

Bringing an interior designer into your renovation project early on can greatly enhance the functionality, style, and overall outcome of your home. Here's how an interior designer can add value to your renovation:

- **Optimised Space Planning** – Interior designers help reimagine your existing layout to improve flow, maximise natural light, and make the most of available space, all while ensuring the design suits your lifestyle.
- **Cohesive Design Aesthetic** – They bring a clear vision to the renovation, helping you choose colours, finishes, and materials that work seamlessly with your home's architecture and new features.
- **Access to Exclusive Resources** – With strong industry connections, designers can source high-quality materials, unique furnishings, and trade-only products—often at preferred pricing.
- **Avoid Costly Mistakes** – Their expertise helps prevent design missteps, reducing the risk of expensive rework and ensuring your renovation stays on track.
- **Increased Home Value** – Thoughtful design not only improves how you live in your home but can also boost its future resale value by making it more appealing to potential buyers.
- **Stress-Free Decision Making** – With so many decisions to make during a renovation, an interior designer helps simplify the process, ensuring every element works together beautifully.

By engaging an interior designer from the outset, you can achieve a renovated space that's both functional and visually cohesive—perfectly tailored to your lifestyle. If you're interested, we'd be happy to recommend an experienced interior designer to collaborate with on your project.



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