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# What is Quality Building?

Would you buy a car that had been cobbled together by a friend in a garage? Of course not! We love design and quality when it comes to our cars. We shop around for the best most modern design or the most fuel efficient car. We put our faith in certain brands because they have built a reputation of quality over the years

This quality is based on an integrated approach to design, materials, build quality, reliability and fuel efficiency. Yet a car only has a design life of 10 to 15 years.

Why do we have a different attitude to quality when it comes to building or renovating our homes?

Our homes are structures that are supposed to last a hundred years and that we intend to pass on to our children. It is even more important that we demand quality from our designers and builders.

Quality results when everyone in the complicated process of building loves what they do, when they all share a common vision and have the skills and training to deliver it. However, it starts with you, the customer! Before you hire your architect and builder, ask them some questions.

Does the architect understand beautiful quality energy-efficient design? Are they prepared to slave over the design, through 10 different stages, crafting a beautiful and energy-efficient house, specifically for your needs, ensuring the perfect fit for your family, positioning the building on the site to capture the sun, creating a form that can minimise heat loss, sizing windows that will enhance your mood and feeling of wellbeing, considering views, daylight and visual delight while minimising impact on nature and the environment?

Can they test their design in simple excel-based software to prove to you that it will be energy efficient even before it is built? Will they lavish attention on the details, tweaking an eaves detail, honing a cill detail? Will they work on the tiny details that are needed to cut energy use to almost zero, ensuring there are

no pathways for heat to leak out of your home? Have they upskilled to be able to deliver a near-zero-energy home required under new building regulations?

Does the contractor share this vision to take this honed and crafted design and turn it into the perfect realisation of quality? Does he understand why the designer slaved over that detail to eliminate heat loss? Does he work with his subcontractors as a team, or argue and recriminate?

Are the contractor and his operatives trained to deliver the build quality that matches the design? Will they take the same pride in crafting a beautiful and well-made building?

Will everyone on site work to deliver the same attention to detail? Will the plumber use the right drill bit to bore a perfectly sized hole for the pipe through the block work, lovingly sealing it again with a perfectly sized airtightness gasket? Or will he just bang a hole through with a lump hammer and squeeze a glob of TEK 7 in the gap?

Does the electrician understand why he must be careful not to damage the air tightness membrane? Do the insulation installers understand why they need to measure and measure again ensuring that the insulation is cut to the millimetre and fits perfectly between the joists with no gap? Will they work with the contractor to deliver this design? Is everyone on site aware of the latest building regulations?



Airtightness gasket

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*Quality building is a team effort. The brick layer, the roofer, the plasterer, the electrician, the plumber, the architect, the foreman, all need to be united and trained in one common goal - Quality!*

*Only then can you get what you paid for - a comfortable, healthy and energy-efficient home.*

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We hope this book gives you some of the vocabulary and knowledge you need to start a conversation with your architect, builder and tradesmen about quality. It will also give you the tools you need to ensure that they have the training, experience and skills to deliver you the home that you deserve.