



WORKING WITH  
US ON YOUR  
NEW HOUSE

## THE PROCESS

Here's an outline of the stages we'll go through to realise your new home. First up, you'll meet one of our directors who will discuss your project and explain our process, timing and fees.

The director will be the lead architect and remain involved throughout the design and delivery of your home. During the initial design stages, we will also introduce you to one of our senior architects who will eventually become the first point of contact for all communications—questions, feedback and concerns.

### 1. PRE-DESIGN, CONCEPT DESIGN

Working together, we'll gain a strong sense of what you are after for your new home; your wish-list, must-haves, what you don't like, and how you like to live. We'll meet with you, often more than once, to develop a brief, as well as assembling information about the site including relevant planning rules. We will visit the site to confirm things like site conditions, sun paths, position of views, neighbouring buildings and landforms. Your site will need to be surveyed before we can start the design. We can help facilitate this.



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### **What to discuss with us when developing the brief:**

- budget
- expectations of floor area
- number of bedrooms
- aspect/outlook—priorities for sun and views
- accessibility, e.g. future-proofing for later in life or accommodating family with accessibility issues
- potential for additions at a later stage or flexibility of spaces
- outdoor living and landscaping
- target completion date
- garaging and out-buildings
- ventilation/air-conditioning, heating
- materials—is sustainability a key issue for you? How eco-friendly do you want to be?

Once the brief is finalised and everyone is happy, we'll prepare **concept sketch plans** and a computer model.

### **What we present to you:**

- a site plan, showing the position of the house in relationship to the site, views, and contours
- proposed floor plans (1:100 scale)
- computer model, rendered views (and cardboard model if required)

Concept plans may be reworked as necessary until we have a scheme you are happy with. At this stage, analysis is done or contact is made with the local Council Planner to establish whether a Resource Consent is required. A rough estimate of costs will be discussed, but only based on square metre rates.

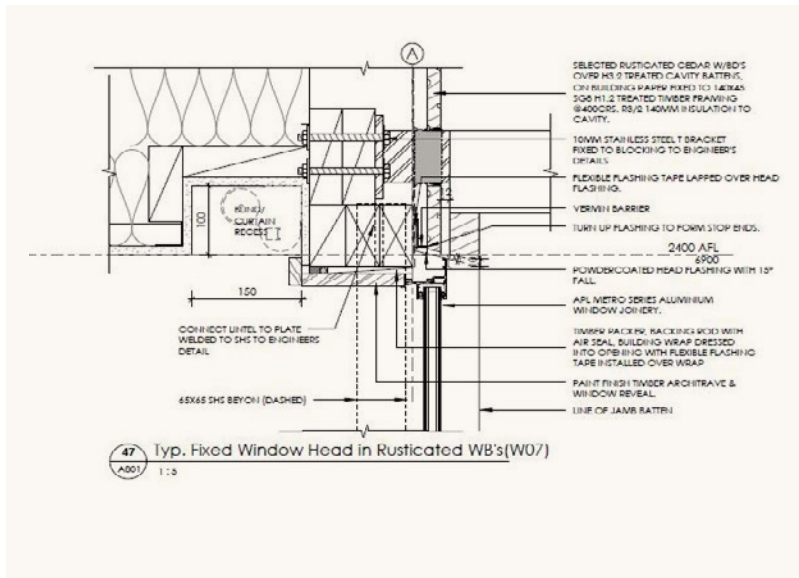
## **2. DEVELOPING THE DESIGN**

Once concept plans are approved, the design is developed in more detail in consultation with external consultants including a structural engineer. At the conclusion of this phase, before proceeding with the full detailed design drawings and specifications, we strongly recommend that our residential clients engage the services of a quantity surveyor to estimate a full breakdown of costs.

Our architects coordinate these consultants and gather fee proposals for you.

When this stage of the design has been confirmed, and if a Resource Consent is required, we put together the necessary documentation and write an Assessment of Environmental Effects for neighbours to sign-off on. We then lodge the consent with the Council. If neighbours are happy to sign-off, and the project is not publicly notified, it will take a minimum of four weeks for the Council to process this documentation (though it can often take longer).

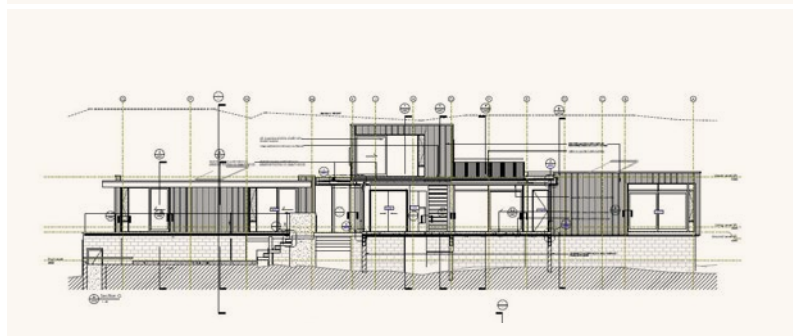
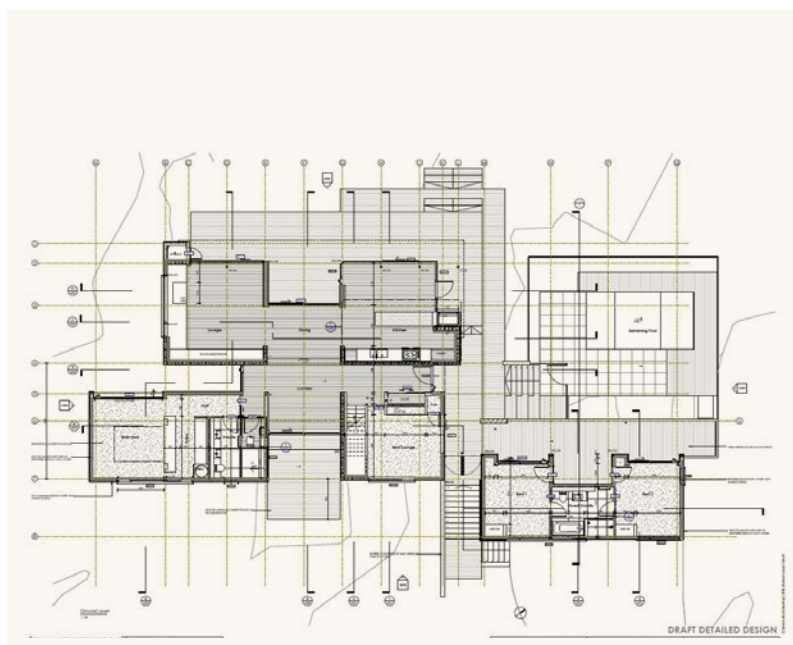




### 3. DETAILED DESIGN AND CONTRACT DOCUMENTATION

This involves the preparation of all the working drawings and specifications required for applying for a Building Consent, tendering the project and for construction. It is our role to lodge the Building Consent. These usually take a minimum of four weeks for the Council to process and approve (this can vary depending on Council workloads and complexity of project).





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## 4. PROCUREMENT / TENDERING AND NEGOTIATION

### **Finding a Builder**

We recommend that at least three builders tender for your project. We can advise and manage this process. Depending on the scale of the job, builders are usually given three to four weeks to price. A further two weeks is often required for negotiation and confirmation of the contract between our client and the successful builder.

With some projects, it is better to negotiate with one suitable builder. This can speed up the process and provide more surety on cost and quality.

### **Contract Management**

We always recommend that the New Zealand Institute of Architects Standard Construction Contract (NZIASCC) or Small Works Contract is used. On projects with difficult time constraints, and/or when builders are very busy, we recommend enlisting a contractor as soon as possible, for a negotiated/partial tender process.

## 5. CONSTRUCTION PHASE: CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION AND SITE OBSERVATION

### **With construction underway, we play a pivotal role by:**

- administering the contract between you and the builder
- responding to the builder's queries
- issuing all instructions to the builder
- certifying all payments to the builder
- processing all contract variations
- carrying out site observation
- coordinating regular site meetings

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## 6. POST-CONSTRUCTION

Once we have issued a *Practical Completion Certificate* and compiled a list of remedial work, this stage involves a further site visit to check on the builder's progress and deal with any issues during the *Defects Liability Period*, which is usually three months. Final accounts are processed and a *Final Certificate of Payment* is issued once the builder has achieved Final Completion.

Our involvement during the construction stage is strongly recommended as it is a critical, though often misunderstood, part of our design, cost management and quality control process. We can offer to reduce our level of involvement if you are happy to take on more responsibility/liability and some of the day to day administration and paperwork.



## OUR PRACTICE

Herriot Melhuish O'Neill Architects is an NZIA award-winning practice with studios in Wellington, Christchurch and Auckland. Established in 1997, we have a breadth of experience in commercial developments including education, recreation, heritage, health and hospitality sectors, multi-unit developments, civil projects and master-planning. We also remain focused on producing high quality houses and have a large portfolio of award-winning residential projects.

One factor is constant throughout of our work, we believe in beautifully-crafted architecture that enhances the lives of those who experience our buildings—both inside and out.

## OUR VALUES

Grounded in the cultural influences of New Zealand, Herriot Melhuish O'Neill Architects believes in contemporary architecture's role to enhance wellbeing and good living. The directors are fueled by New Zealand's natural environment, and are passionate about translating that beauty and integrity into the built environment. An earlier generation of New Zealand architects offer inspiration, namely the wisdom, wit and integrity of the late Sir Ian Athfield.

We recognise the importance of sustainable design and belong to the New Zealand Green Building Council.

Herriot Melhuish O'Neill Architects operates within a community of professionals and fosters a generous, down-to-earth culture of collaboration, both within its own studios and beyond. The practice also sees itself in the context of a global architectural movement; the team keeps up to date with international projects and takes inspiration from those they admire:

*"Reduction and perfection have been the main goal for both craftsmen and inventors – because avoiding the irrelevant meant emphasising the important. All too often people think of design in terms of added grandness. But it is often the plain or the reduced that is the most striking."*

KASPER RØNN & JONAS BJERRE-POULSEN, NORM ARCHITECTS

*"Design is as much by intuition as it is by rules. It's about the senses and the experiential qualities of the building."*

KERRY HILL, AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECT GOLD MEDAL-WINNER 2006



[www.hmoa.net.nz](http://www.hmoa.net.nz)



Wellington

Level 1, 21 Blair Street

PO Box 6570, Wellington 6141

+64 4 385 0038

Christchurch

Level 1, 65 Cambridge Terrace

PO Box 510, Christchurch 8140

+64 3 374 5524

Auckland

Level 1, 279 Parnell Road

PO Box 37051, Parnell, Auckland 1151

+64 9 972 9638

