



New House Construction: The 5 Key Stages

With any new house construction, there are key milestone stages, which coincide with your progress payment schedule. These stages are ideal opportunities for an independent property inspector to assess the progress and workmanship of the construction, on your behalf.

In the early stages, it is crucial to inspect the building structure, so you can make sure that no discrepancies have arisen between the original design documentation and what is actually being built on site. It is also a time to check that the workmanship meets the Building Commission's Standards & Tolerances, current Building Regulations and the Building Code.

As building gets closer to completion, it is in your best interests to have all the finishes and visible aspects of the home assessed so you have a realistic understanding of what to expect, and what is and isn't acceptable. Disagreements with your builder are very often to do with expectations that have not been met.

At Urban Property Inspections, we have a team of experienced inspectors, who are all qualified builders and have themselves carried out residential and commercial building work in the past. They know how houses go together and how they can fall apart!

Our inspectors can examine your new house build at each of the critical milestone stages so you can feel confident that things are progressing well, before you hand over your money. And if issues have arisen, then you will have been alerted early and can work with your builder to get problems resolved, before it's too late.

The key stages where we can assist are:

Base Stage (or Pre-Slab)

This is an important time of inspection, before the concrete footings are poured. Our Inspectors can check that workmanship is to an acceptable standard and that good quality control measures are in place, before items are covered with concrete. Items checked include:

- > the site conditions such as gradient, surface drainage, retaining walls, access etc.
- > orientation of the building, and positioning of reinforcement starter bars
- > damp-proofing membrane
- > services, including drainage, plumbing, stormwater, electrical, phone/data
- > termite protection.

Frame Stage

At this stage, the frame of the house has already been completed and approved by the building surveyor. Our inspector would then check:

- > the quality of finish on the slab surface, as this will affect the installation of floor coverings later
- > the frame, to see it has been erected correctly and that the trusses are in their proper position and supported by load-bearing walls
- > the layout, to ensure it is as per plan
- > the rooms, to confirm they are the correct sizes.

Lock-up/Pre-Plaster

By now, the external wall cladding and roof covering are fixed, the flooring is laid and external doors and windows are fixed, even if only temporarily. Our inspector would ensure that:

- > the roof tiles are installed correctly and that the fascia and guttering meet an acceptable standard
- > the frame ties are fitted to brickwork and there is bracing to all timber walls as required
- > walls are straightened and plumbed
- > the brickwork is installed as per plan, with quality workmanship
- > plumbing and electrical services are fitted in correct locations and are ready for final connections
- > the insulation is fitted to external walls.

Fixing Stage

The major structural work of the house is now complete and all internal cladding, architraves, skirting, doors, built-in shelves, baths, basins, troughs, sinks, cabinets and cupboards of the home are now fixed into position. Our inspector would assess:

- > all of the interior work, to check it is complete and ready for painting. Plaster surfaces are inspected for workmanship.
- > the waterproofing, particularly in the bathroom areas, where so many problems can develop. The waterproofing should be complete so that the tiling of walls and/or floors can begin.

Final Handover (or PCI)

This is the last inspection before handover and generally takes place prior to your builder's final To Do list. At this stage, it is important to check that:

- > the fixtures and fittings are installed correctly
- > the appropriate sealing has been made to all wet areas
- > external treatments have been completed and the workmanship is acceptable
- > the paint finishes are of a quality standard
- > all hardware is fitted, including doors
- > all plumbing and electrical services have been completed and are functioning correctly
- > the building works are complete in accordance with the contract documents.

Having Urban Property Inspections to help you, can take the stress out of building. You can get us to check every stage of construction and ask us any questions as we go.

You can hire us for just one inspection or all five, and we have a range of prices to suit.

Call us today on 1300 071 283 or send us an email to info@urbanpropertyinspections.com.au for a free quote.

