

Pre-Build Structural Checklist

For extensions, knock-throughs, attic and garage conversions in Ireland. Tick each item before the builder starts. Rules current to October 2026. Confirm specifics with your council and engineer.

1. Planning

- ☐ Rear extension? Total of all extensions since 1 Oct 1964 is 45 m² or less (from 27 July 2026), and at least 25 m² of private open space remains
- ☐ Side or front extension, or front dormer? Planning permission applied for
- ☐ Estate's original planning grant checked for conditions removing exempted development rights
- ☐ Protected structure or Architectural Conservation Area? Section 57 declaration or permission in place
- ☐ Unsure? Section 5 declaration requested from the council

2. Building Control (BCAR)

- ☐ Extension over 40 m²? Commencement Notice with compliance documentation, OR opt-out declaration, decided
- ☐ Designer and assigned certifier appointed (registered architect, registered building surveyor or Chartered Engineer)
- ☐ Commencement Notice lodged 14–28 days before work starts (if required)
- ☐ Inspection plan agreed with the assigned certifier

3. Structural design

- ☐ Engineer has visited and confirmed which walls are load-bearing
- ☐ Calcs and drawings issued for beams, padstones and foundations
- ☐ Steel schedule sent to the fabricator
- ☐ Propping and temporary works sequence given to the builder
- ☐ Fire protection to the steel specified (typically 30 minutes in a two-storey house)
- ☐ Foundations designed for the ground: trees, drains and soft ground checked
- ☐ Attic: new floor joists, truss alterations and stair trimming designed

4. Neighbours and party walls

- ☐ Any beam bearing into a party wall identified
- ☐ Neighbour notified in writing with the engineer's design and programme

- ☐ Condition of the neighbour's side photographed before work starts
- ☐ Making good and reasonable professional fees agreed (LCLRA 2009, s.44)

5. Builder and quotes

- ☐ Two or three builders quoted on the same engineer's design
- ☐ Builder's insurance confirmed
- ☐ Payment stages tied to completed work, not dates
- ☐ Engineer's inspection points written into the programme

6. Inspections and sign-off

- ☐ Foundation excavations inspected before concrete
- ☐ Steel and padstones inspected before boxing in
- ☐ Roof and floor structure inspected before closing up
- ☐ Opinion of compliance, or BCAR Certificate of Compliance on Completion, received and filed for when you sell

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