

TORRENS

Building & Construction



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About Us

TORRENS Building & Construction offers clients a unique custom design experience. Specialising in raised homes and granny flats. We take care of every aspect of the build stage, from design to completion, ensuring efficiency and quality assurance.

Our focus is not only on offering custom design and high quality inclusions, but also engaging the best contractors to ensure the highest quality build.



Our History

Damien Torrens began his career working part-time in real estate while studying at University.

Beginning in residential sales, he moved into project marketing, working for property development companies. Soon after, Damien was working in sales and design for custom-design and project builders. It was there that Damien began drafting, estimating, frame engineering and project managing both the administration and build procurement side of the building process.

Damien then obtained his site supervisor license, and was in charge of supervising the building stages and liaising with trades and engineers.

15 years later, Damien now holds residential design license and Nominee Builder-Open Class license. With qualifications in project management, building design, business and site supervision, Damien's experience encompasses all aspects of the build process. This combination of skills allows TORRENS Building & Construction to offer owners a professional service with faster turn-around times, cost effective designs, and a full range of build options.



Our Commitment

Quality

We know the importance of building with quality materials. A custom-designed home is a dream home and should be built to the highest standards. All our materials are renowned for quality and reliability and we only purchase from local suppliers. This ensures quality and that Australian consumer laws and warranties are adhered to.

Professional Advice

The building industry is rife with empty promises and sneaky sales tactics. 'Selling low and adding on' is common throughout the industry. Often, salespeople do not know the complexities of building, and make assurances that are not correct. Many sales pipelines are based on pushing clients to contract as quickly as possible, and issuing 'variations' when problems arise later. TORRENS Building & Construction offers professional advice while following the correct process including site investigations, design and engineering, before going to contract. We ensure a smooth build process, satisfied clients, and delivering what we signed up to deliver.

Custom Design

No-one wants to live in a shoe box. And one design does not suit every block. Likewise, no-one wants to pay huge amounts for unnecessary engineering requirements, trying to make a standard home work with their block. We custom design every home, yet ensure that the design is cost-effective, and we will advise you along the way of issues that may result in unnecessary costs.

Supporting Local Trades and Suppliers

Our trades are selected not only for their clean license history, but their 'Can-Do' attitude toward building, and their pride in their workmanship. Likewise, we only source from renowned suppliers who back their products.

Savings for Our Clients

Our priority is to build high quality, yet cost-effective homes. Our overheads are kept to a minimum to ensure our pricing remains cost-effective, while offering high quality inclusions. Yet, our consultants and contractors are engaged based on their qualifications and experience, which exceed the industry standard. While many building companies try to engage the cheapest trades possible to maximise their profits, we strive to engage the best contractors.

Build Options

TORRENS Building & Construction is one of the few companies that offers the entire range of build options.

We start with your initial design. Then we organise your engineering, and finally, your inclusions and specifications as part of your builder Proposal. From there, you can assess all your options.

Granny Flats

Granny flats are a great investment, and many of our clients are even downsizing into luxury granny flats and renting out the main home. We are specialists in granny flats and can design any home from simple to luxury.

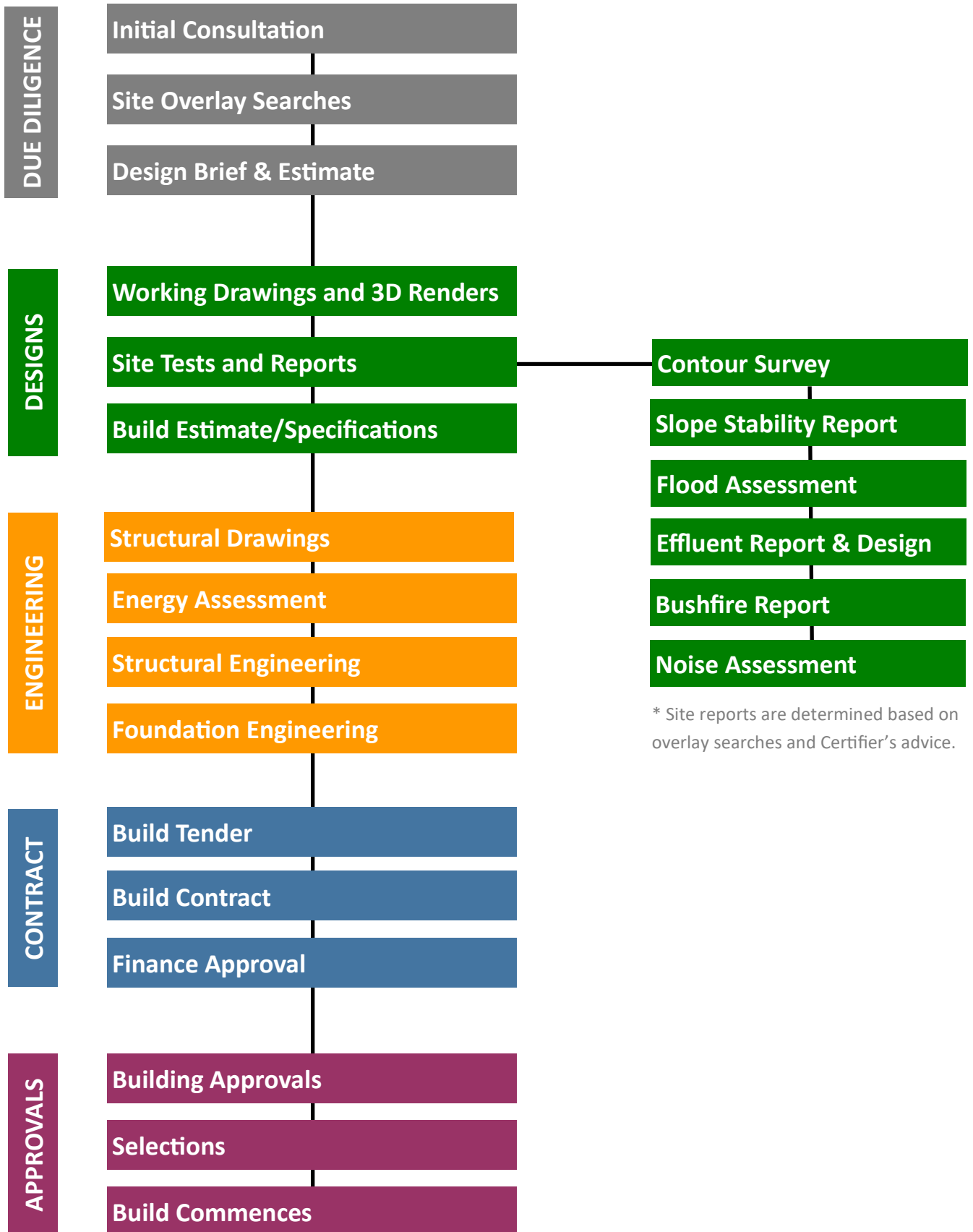
Raised or Slab

There are not many builders around who will build raised homes, and those that do charge exorbitant rates. Raised homes have always been our speciality and our prices are very similar to slab home costs.

Kit Homes

We also have a separate kit home business and will assist owner-builders through the process. We can even build the kit home to lock-up/enclosed stage, with the client completing the home themselves.

Design & Approvals Process



Stage Details

Due Diligence

We first discuss your requirements and advise on design options, costs and what site reports you will need. We will also produce a site overlay report to determine all site tests and reports that are required. The cost of these reports are separate to the design costs, and can vary depending on each block.

Designs

Once all site requirements have been established, we start your Preliminary Drawings, which detail your floorplan, elevations, site plan, schedules and more. For clarity, we also include 3D renders. Once you are satisfied with the design, we will produce your Working Drawings with all the details needed for each trade, including electrical, cabinetry, plumbing, floor coverings, roof layout, frame and brace details and more.

Engineering

An energy assessment is then obtained and certified. The design must meet a 7 Star rating. There are many factors that contribute to the energy assessment, which are covered in the Working Drawings.

Once the energy assessment is confirmed as Passed, the plans are sent to the engineer to issue certifications.

Contract

The final contract is presented, with your completed set of plans and specifications. All these documents are presented to the lender for final approvals. Until now, only a pre-approval will have been issued, based on your personal income and circumstances. Now the construction loan will be approved. It is important to confirm whether the lender is paying all stages including the deposit.

Approvals

Once finance has been approved and the deposit paid, we pay all building fees and insurances and submit the documents for building approval. This can take up to 4-6 weeks. During this time you will make your final selections and choose colours etc.

During the build, the certifier will perform inspections of:

- the site set-out and piers/trenching;
- final concrete pour;
- frame installation;
- final walk-through inspection.

Standard Inclusions

Our estimates start with our typical standard inclusions (specifications). These items have been selected for their quality and cost-effectiveness. Once we have established your budget for your design, we then look at your inclusions in more detail and make any changes you would like to make. This allows us to control your budget better, and avoid blow-outs in costs.

Item

Design and Engineering

Working drawings

Engineering and structural certification, energy assessment

Council Documents

Council fees and insurances

Earthworks and Foundation

Earthworks as required (rock allowance TBC)

Slab (raft) or concrete piers

Frame and Sub-Floor

Steel frame and joists, RHS steel posts

19mm Termiflor, 19mm Secura floor sheets

External

Windows and SGDs, locks, tinted glass and aluminium screens

Colorbond roofing, gutter, fascia, capping

Anticon roof blanket insulation

Wall wrap and thermal break

FC cladding, window trims

4.5mm FC sheeting to external ceilings and eaves

Entry door and frame, handle and lock

Hardwood timber decking (140mm Merbau)

Hardwood timber posts

Internal

Architraves and skirting (Dar, Splade, Bevel or 3 Step)

Insulation batts to external walls

Insulation batts to internal ceilings

Internal doors - flush panel, colonial or Accent range

Privacy door handles and magnetic door stops

10mm plasterboard ceiling and walls. 6mm villaboard

75mm 'Cove' cornice or 3 step (square set to raked ceilings)

Plumbing

All required plumbing connections

Site connections to sewer/treatment system, stormwater etc

External taps, gas connections

Painting/Rendering

3 coat system to interior/exterior - sealer/undercoat and 2 top coats.

Tiling and Waterproofing

Tiling: Including floor-to-ceiling tiling to bathrooms

Drains: Drains to showers, wet areas and laundry

Waterproofing to all wet areas

Electrical

General connections and smoke alarms

Instant gas hot water system (heat pump optional)

TV points, antenna, GPOs

Ceiling fans to bedrooms, living areas and outdoor area

Connection to mains via meter box (or sub-board)

Decks and Balustrade

Balustrade (timber, wire or glass)

Stairs with steel stringers and hardwood timber treads

PC Items/Inclusions

Allowances made for:

- Cabinetry
- Appliances;
- Floor coverings;
- Tiles;
- Electrical fixtures
- Plumbing fixtures
- Internal stairs and balustrade
- Sliding robe and linen doors
- Robe and linen shelving

Additional/Extras

Concrete (plain or stamped) or aggregate driveway

Water tanks (poly) on slab with pump

Treatment system

Ducted or split system air conditioning

PV solar system

Concrete walkways and paths

Retaining walls

Landscaping

Certifications

Inspections by certifier/engineer and certifications including Occupancy Certificate

Trade certifications

Final builder's certification

Plumbing certification

Prime Cost (PC) Allowances

Where the owner has not chosen a specific item, a PC amount is usually specified. This is an allowance that has been made in the Contract for an item e.g. \$150 for a sink mixer, or \$40/sqm for tiling. Where the owner chooses an item outside this amount, the builder will invoice or refund the difference.

PC allowances are not be used for trade-related items (eg painting, rendering etc), or materials costs (eg framing, windows etc).

Provisional Sums (PS) Allowances

A Provisional Sum (PS) is a reasonable allowance made for works than cannot be determined until the works have been completed eg. earthworks, tree clearing, rock removal etc. Because we engage experience contractors, PS allowances are not common.

Tip

Unfortunately, the building industry is rife with sales tactics. Quite often homes end up costing 50% or more from Contract price due to variations. These variations usually derive from very low or omitted PC and PS allowances. Many larger building companies will lock owners into low allowances or cheap items, and force them into upgrading after contract. We specify PC amounts, so you can purchase any items you want, or have the builder purchase these items. You can even custom-design your own kitchen directly with any cabinet maker you want, with a realistic budget.

Tip

A soil test and report is one of the most important site tests to obtain. The results can affect not only the foundation design, but the entire design and vary the building costs dramatically. Variations due to under-rated foundations are a major cause of variations. It is recommended the owner obtain a soil test report, even before purchasing the block.



Your Questions Answered

How Much Does it Cost to Build a Home?

Based on our website designs, typical indicative costs:

Granny Flats:

- Full build slab \$2900-\$3200 /sqm
- Full build raised \$2900-\$3200 /sqm

Homes

- Full build slab \$2400-\$2600 /sqm
- Full build raised \$2400-\$2600 /sqm

* estimates are based on N4 wind rating, Bal 29 or less and exclude external items eg. water tanks, treatment systems, driveway, fencing, landscaping.

What is the First Step?

The first step is to discuss your design requirements, and produce a site report to confirm which site reports are required. From there, we can produce an estimate.

Can We Build from Sketch Designs?

Yes. If you have a rough sketch of a layout you want, we can produce designs based on those. Designs must be original and not copied from other designers or builders.

Can We Build from Drafted Designs?

Yes. However, the drafted designs must be to our standard of detail. If another builder has produced the designs at their cost, or has retained ownership of the designs, we cannot build from them.

Build to Lockup?

Yes. However, this will depend on whether your lender will finance the build to lockup/enclosed stage only. This stage does not include any trade work except for carpentry and concreting.

Can Owners Supply Materials eg. Windows?

All building materials must be new and most must be certified to meet certain regulatory requirements. Therefore, second hand items generally cannot be used.

“If I pay cash will you take off the GST?”

No. All payments must be made legitimately. Insurances may be voided for ‘cash payments’.

Where owners are not obtaining finance and are paying with savings, a bank guarantee must be issued.

Our Service Rates

Initial:

\$0 **Due Diligence**
We'll discuss your design ideas, produce a free site overlay report and obtain quotes for required site tests and reports on your behalf.

Stage 1:

Preliminary Designs

Preliminary designs include site plan, floorplan, elevations, electrical layout, plumbing/ cabinetry layout, floor covering layout, roofing layout and 3D concept renders/video.

\$2,500 Granny flats — under 90sqm internal.

\$4,500 Homes (single story) — over 90sqm internal.

\$5,500 Homes (2 story) — over 90sqm internal.

Stage 2:

Engineering

Includes energy assessment, structural design, foundation design, engineering certifications.

\$2,500 Granny flats—under 90sqm internal

\$3,500 Homes—over 90sqm internal

\$TBC Retaining walls, cross-overs etc

*plus required site tests and reports.

Stage 3:

Build Stages

5% Deposit

15% Base

20% Frame

25% Enclosed

20% Fixing

15% Practical Completion

Reports:

Typical Site Report Costs

Soil Classification \$500-\$600

Contour Survey \$1,000-\$1,200

Slope Stability \$1,200-\$1,500

Bushfire \$1,000-\$1,200

Acoustic \$1,000-\$1,200

Environmental \$3,000+

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