

A black and white photograph of a modern house with large glass windows and doors. A large, semi-transparent red rectangle is overlaid on the center of the image, containing white text. The house's interior is visible through the glass, showing a dining area with people and a living area with a person on stairs. The background includes trees and a fence.

WORKING WITH AN ARCHITECT

An RIAI Registered Architect will help you
unleash the hidden potential of your home

RIAI



2016 RIAI Irish Architecture Awards - House Extension – Highly Commended
Piano Nobile' by Plus Architecture

WHAT ARCHITECTS DO

Whether you are planning to build your dream home or are extending and renovating your existing house, a registered architect has the qualifications, vision and experience to take you expertly through your building project.

An architect does a lot more than just provide you with a design, they will help you set a viable brief and budget, guide you through the planning process, obtain quotes for the work, manage consultants like surveyors and engineers, monitor the budget and administer the construction contract.

An architect can also save you money on a project, as they will research viable alternatives and solutions to suit your budget.

Architects

design | guide | manage | advise

A modern interior space featuring a brick wall on the left with built-in white shelves. The shelves hold various decorative items, including glassware, a patterned basket, and framed photographs. The floor is made of dark wood. In the background, a white wall and a dark ceiling are visible. The overall atmosphere is clean and contemporary.

MAKE SURE YOU WORK WITH A REGISTERED ARCHITECT

In Ireland, the title 'architect' is registered and a person cannot use the title 'architect' unless they are on the Register of Architects. Being placed on the Register reflects the standard and competence of an architect.

About the RIAI

The RIAI is the Regulatory and Support Body for Architects in Ireland. The online Register lists over 2700 architects. You can search the Register on the RIAI Website to see if your architect is registered.

www.riai.ie/register/the_register_of_architects

The RIAI also promotes the value that architecture brings to society for everyone's benefit and engages with government, the professions, industry, clients and the public. riai.ie

HOW DO I FIND AN ARCHITECT?

The RIAI provides on its website a search tool – **the RIAI Practice Directory** – that enables you to find a registered architect in your area. You can search the directory by practice name, by skill or simply by location.

www.riai.ie/practice_directory/

If you cannot find a suitable RIAI architectural practice, please contact the RIAI by giving details of the project, address, location and the RIAI can provide a list of architects in your area.

Please see our contact details on the back page.

HOW MUCH WILL IT COST?

Architects' Fees

An architect's fee depends on the requirements and complexity of each project and the scope of services required. Some architects will charge you on the basis of a percentage of the total project cost (excluding VAT on construction costs), others on a fixed price lump sum or on a time charge basis. Fees need to be agreed before a project begins.

Building Costs

The cost of your build will depend on a wide range of factors including house size, construction methods, materials, finishes and site context. The RIAI have compiled some typical building costs – from new single and two story houses to house extensions and renovations to an existing house.

Cautionary Note: The domestic housing construction market is suffering from inflationary costs, and may continue to do so for the foreseeable future. The guidance issued on construction costs must be viewed and assessed on current market conditions and are offered as guidance only from an early date in 2019.



New Houses

For new single and two-storey houses to a one-off design

€2,000 - €2,500 per m².

This covers traditional materials and construction methods with a reasonable level of finishes and fittings.

For non-traditional materials and construction methods, and a high level of finishes / fittings

€2,800 - €3,500 per m².

High quality kitchens, bathroom fittings and tiling can increase these guideline figures significantly.



Extensions

For a basic single or two-storey extension

€1,900 - €2,300 per m².

For a standard/traditional single or two-storey extension to house with renovations to existing house

€2,000 - €2,500 per m².

Renovations to existing house only

€1,800- € 2,000 per m².

Where the new work is to a specific design and/or with high quality finishes use a figure of ca.

€2,600 - €3,400 per m².

N.B: Costs are subject to economic conditions, i.e. a shortage of contractors and trades which will reflect in higher costs, please see Cautionary Note under Building Costs on the opposite page.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

THE PROJECT STAGES

1 Step 1 - Brief Development

- Meet with your architect to discuss your requirements and aspirations. The information you provide for your architect is called 'The Brief'.
- A good starting point developing your brief is by going through your existing home and making a list of what works for you and what does not work for you.
- Advise your architect of your budget, time frame and any other parameters, as these will impact on the design.

Time spent at this initial stage is invaluable as a design is only as good as the brief.



2 Step 2 - Initial Design

- When you have finalised the brief, your architect will carry out a survey of your site (new builds) or your home (extensions, renovations).
- Your architect will develop an Initial Design in form of sketch designs.
- Agree a time plan, budget, roles, communications and the services you require with your architect.
- Your architect will advise you on the need for specialist consultants or services and on planning requirements, building regulations, and health & safety regulations.

3 Step 3 - Detailed Design

- Your feedback on the Initial Design will become part of the Detailed Design for your approval.
- Your architect will provide you with drawings – including floor plans, elevations (views) and sections (cut-through). Other presenting tools your architects might choose include models and 3-D walk through.
- This is an important two-way process which will require your feedback and discussion.



4 Step 4 - Planning Permission Application

- If planning permission is required, your architect will prepare the drawings and make the application on your behalf. (You cannot build from these drawings)

5 Step 5 - Construction Drawings & Specification

- Following planning permission, and once you have instructed your architect to proceed, they will produce full Construction Drawings, including site works and specification finishes.
- A technical and quality specification will be prepared to ensure that the project requirements are clearly stated for the contractor.
- The detailed design will incorporate any changes as required under a Grant of Planning Permission.
- Your architect will also liaise closely with specialist consultants as required.
- As the design is now developed, a check on Building Regulation compliance should be carried out at this stage and any necessary modifications incorporated.

6 Step 6 - The Tender Process

- Your architect will prepare tender documentation for main and specialist contractors.
- It is advisable to have at least three contractors submit costings (tenders) for a project. You and your architect should be satisfied that each of the contractors is competent to carry out the work. For example, you should ask a contractor to see examples of previous work and speak to previous clients.
- The successful tender may not necessarily be the lowest one. In fact, if a tender is very low, the contractor may have missed something.
- In some cases, an architect and client may agree to negotiate a tender price with just one contractor.
- Your architect will also advise on the most appropriate RIAI Form of Building Contract for your project as well as on insurance requirements during construction.

7 Step 7 - Building Works & Building Regulations

During construction, your architect will act on your behalf as an independent advisor, inspecting the building work at intervals to ensure that it is being carried out generally in accordance with the contract documents.

Building Control (Amendment) Regulations - BC(A)R

On 1 March 2014, the Irish Government introduced new regulations, S.I. 9, which set out new procedures for the control of the building activity. Under the new regulations, the Building Owner is responsible to ensure compliance with Building Regulations and must appoint a competent Architect, Design Certifier, Builder and Assigned Certifier. If your project is carried out under BC(A)R, your architect may act as the Assigned Certifier.

In August 2015, the Government introduced an 'opt out' from BC(A)R for one-off houses and domestic extensions (S.I.365). There are implications for 'opt-out' and we advise that you read the **RIAI Client Guidance Note on BC(A)R** and the **DHPCLG Guidance** on our website: www.riai.ie/about/architecture/

The background image shows a modern farmhouse extension. It features a dark, corrugated metal roof that extends over a large glass-enclosed porch. Inside the porch, a tall, slender, metallic hanging heater is visible. The ground in front of the building is paved with dark stones and scattered with fallen autumn leaves. The overall scene is bright and clear, suggesting a sunny day.

8 Step 8 - Project Completion – The Snag List

- Prior to the final completion of a building and before you take ownership, you will be asked to contribute to a Snag List to identify any building defects.
- Typical building defects may include poor workmanship and finishes; faulty plumbing such as leaking cisterns and WCs or poorly connected pipes.
- Under the Building Contract, the Architect is the arbitrator of the standard and quality of the building work.
- It is advisable to engage an RIAI Registered Architect to compile a detailed snag list as defects can be easily missed and architects are professionally trained to look at building details.

WHAT DO I DO IF ISSUES ARISE?

- If issues arise during your building project you should raise them, if possible in writing, with your architect as soon as possible.
- Architects are obliged by the Architects' Code of Conduct to have a written procedure for prompt and courteous handling of complaints.
- If you are unable to resolve your dispute directly with your architect you may wish to consider the RIAI non-statutory dispute avoidance and mediation service.
- Alternatively, if you believe that your architect has acted unprofessionally or has not met the standards of competence that may be reasonably expected of an architect, you may wish to make a fitness to practise complaint to the statutory Professional Conduct Committee.
- The Committee is independent of the RIAI and was established under the Building Control Act 2007.

If you would like more information on either the RIAI dispute avoidance and mediation service or the Professional Conduct Committee and fitness to practise complaints please contact the RIAI at info@riai.ie or on **01-676-1703**.



2014 RIAI Irish Architecture Awards - Best House
The Cow House, Blessington, Co. Wicklow by Architects Michael Kelly & Dan Costelloe

CONTACT US

Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland

8 Merrion Square, Dublin 2

01 676 1703

info@riai.ie

riai.ie

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