

VOXELL

WORKING WITH AN ARCHITECT

What we actually do, and how to get the most from us.



Who this guide is for

You're planning a building project and wondering what an architect actually does all day, whether you need one, and what you're paying for. Fair questions. This guide answers them plainly, so you can decide with clear expectations instead of assumptions.

What an architect actually does

The drawings are the visible part. The job is bigger: an architect turns what you're trying to achieve into a design that can be consented, priced, and built, and then protects that design all the way through construction.

In practice that means four things:

Design

Taking your brief, your site, and your budget, and resolving them into a building that works. Not just how it looks; how it functions, how it's heated and ventilated, how it meets the rules, and how it gets built for the money.

Documentation

Turning the design into drawings and specifications precise enough that the council can consent it and a builder can price it accurately. Vague documents get priced with fat margins and built with guesswork. Precise ones don't.

Coordination

Most projects need other consultants: a surveyor, a structural engineer, sometimes geotech, fire, or services specialists. We tell you early which apply, arrange and coordinate their input, and integrate it into one coherent set.

Observation

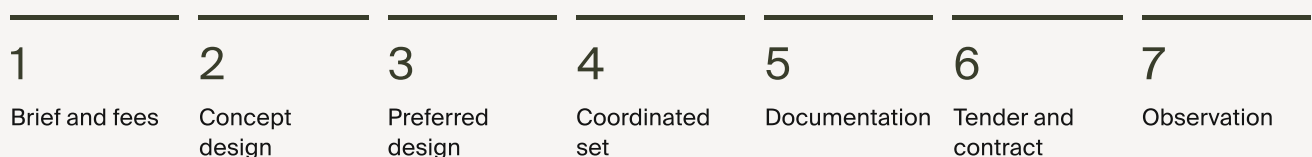
Through the build we monitor the works against the design and support the contract administrator, so what gets built is what was designed and you have someone in your corner on site.

Architect, designer, draughtsperson: who's who

In New Zealand, "Registered Architect" is a legally protected title held by professionals registered with the New Zealand Registered Architects Board. Architectural designers and draughtspeople also design buildings, and restricted building work requires design by a Licensed Building Practitioner. Plenty of good buildings come from each. What matters is the capability behind the title: design skill, technical documentation, code knowledge, and the experience to run a project. Voxell's team includes Registered Architects, architectural designers, and technicians, and we assess every project's needs against capability, not titles.

The stages, briefly

Every project moves through the same broad arc: establishing the brief and fees, concept design, refining the preferred design with consultant input, developing it into a coordinated set, detailed documentation for building consent and pricing, tender and contract preparation, then observation through the build. Each stage ends with something you can see and decide on, and you commit stage by stage, not all at once. Our project-type guides walk through the stages in detail for houses, multi-residential, and commercial work.



How fees work

Our fees are set out stage by stage in your proposal, so you know what each phase costs before you commit to it, and you decide at each stage whether to continue. Wherever the project allows, we offer fixed-price certainty for each stage. Where something about a project means we can't, we tell you up front and explain how that part of the work will be charged.

One distinction worth being clear on: our fee proposal prices our work, not your build. Build cost estimates come from the market, through pricing and tender, and we design and document to give you the most accurate pricing possible.

When to bring an architect in

Earlier than most people do. The highest-value decisions on any project, what the site can carry, which way the building faces, how big it really needs to be, are made at the very start, when changing them costs nothing. Bring us in before the design exists, and ideally before you're locked into a site: a feasibility conversation is cheap, and it has saved our clients from expensive mistakes more than once.

What to have ready

You don't need drawings. You need:

- The address and any documents you hold for the site or building
- A sense of what you're trying to achieve
- A budget range you'd be comfortable with
- A rough timeframe

That's enough for a first conversation.

How Voxell works

You'll deal with the same people from start to finish. No disappearing directors, no handoffs to staff you've never met. We build a 3D model early so you can see decisions before you make them, we run energy modelling and H1 compliance in-house, and we design with the budget in the room, because a beautiful design that can't be built for the money isn't a design, it's a picture.

The next step

Start with a free consultation. Tell us what you're thinking about, and we'll help you shape the scope and give you a proposal with clear stages, fees, and timings. You'll deal with the same people from start to finish, from the first conversation through to site.

**LET'S START WITH A
CONVERSATION**

TALK TO US

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