

NEW BUILD PROJECTS IN FRANCE



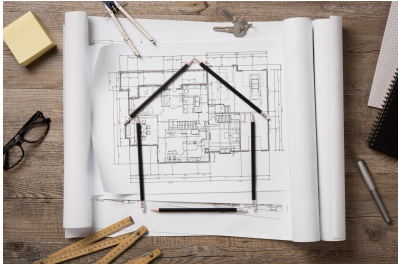
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Things to consider if you're planning a New Build in France

So, you have found some land that you feel would be perfect for your new French home, and have lots of ideas of how you would like things to look and feel...
but what comes next?

Here are a few things we would suggest that you need to think about before starting on your journey to building your new French home.

1. If the land doesn't currently have any kind of planning permission associated with it, and it hasn't previously been used for residential purposes, the first thing we would recommend is that you check whether a change of use for the land would likely be permitted. You don't want to end up owning a piece of land (however idyllic the spot) that all you can do is visit and put a deckchair on. This is something we can do for you by reviewing the local planning policies ("PLU" if one exists). Even if things look as though they would be favourable from a planning point of view we would always advise that you look to obtain a Certificate d'Urbanisme opérationnel ("CUB") as part of the purchase negotiation process. This is essentially a certificate confirming that should a full planning application be submitted, it would likely be accepted. You can have a suspensive clause added to your provisional sales contract known as the "Compromis de Vente" making your purchase of the land subject to a favourable CUB.



Design, Services & Thermal regulations

2. Next you will need to investigate whether there are any services already available to the site or whether these would have to be installed (water, electricity etc). You also need to consider what sort of drainage system you would need - could the site be connected into the local mains drains system or would you need to have a private septic tank system installed? The local Mairie (town hall) should be able to advise if there is a public sewers system adjacent to the site that you could connect into, and if there isn't one, a suitable septic tank system would need to be designed and installed.

3. Another thing to consider is how you will access the site. Is there easy access from a local highway or would new access routes need to be added?

4. Whilst you might already have in mind how you want your new home to look, you also need to investigate if there are any specific local design considerations that need to be taken into account - is there a local style (vernacular) that you would need to keep within? Local planners often have a specific vernacular that is historically referenced, and needs to be adhered to. If you're not keen on the local style and want to do something radically different you need to bear in mind that this may not be permitted.

5. All new build properties have to be built inline with specific thermal regulations, which are detailed within the RE2020 regulations. This is just something to be aware of, and that we assist with as part of the design process.

Architectural considerations & French planning requirements

6. If the land you are looking at is near a church or any other historic building of interest, the "architectes des bâtiments de France" (ABF) will need to be consulted in addition to the standard planning process. We handle this process for our clients, but you should bear in mind that this additional step will likely mean that your application will take longer to get to the point of approval. There are also likely to be more stipulations about what you can and can't do.

Planning applications for any dwelling or building over 150 m² (either footprint or habitable space whichever is the greater), must be prepared and submitted by a French-registered architect such as ourselves.

Whilst planning applications for dwellings smaller than 150 m² can theoretically be submitted by an individual (with the exception of commercial properties), if the dossier is not in accordance with norms, or if anything is missing, the application will be rejected, so the use of an expert planning consultant/architect such as ourselves is always to be recommended. There are many peculiarities which need to be considered, and unless you are familiar with these, your application is likely to fail.

If you already have a set of blueprints for the house you want, we can base the planning dossier on these, but we will still need to create a new set which conform to French planning requirements (many people choose blueprints from online sites or timber-frame manufacturers which are unsuitable).

Contact information

If you have any questions about the possibility of a new build property, we'd be happy to speak to you, so please do get [in touch](#).

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