Before We Start

Yes — **floor plans, inclusions, and facades matter**.
They influence how your home looks, feels, and functions.

But they do **not** determine whether your build will:

- Stay on budget
- Finish on time
- Avoid costly variations
- Be a positive experience

In our experience, homeowners who choose the *right builder* focus less on finishes upfront and more on whether the builder can actually **deliver what they promise**.

A builder who genuinely ticks the boxes below is far more likely to give you the home you're looking for — without stress, surprises, or financial blowouts.

Section 1: Design Capability & Flexibility

☐ Builder offers designs suitable for your home type (custom, acreage, duplex, knockdown rebuild)
☐ Genuine flexibility to modify plans before contract

☐ Selections finalised before contract signing
☐ Comfortable pricing non-standard designs
☐ Clear explanation of what can and cannot be changed
☐ Design changes reflected accurately in the tender

Why this matters:
Builders who operate outside their comfort zone often underquote early and recover costs later through variations.

Section 2: Capacity & Resourcing

☐ Builder can clearly explain how many homes they build per year
☐ Dedicated consultant, estimator, and construction supervisor
☐ Clear handover from sales, pre-construction to construction
☐ No pressure to rush contract signing to "secure a spot"
☐ Realistic discussion about workload and scheduling

☐ How many builds does each supervisor look after at a time

Why this matters:
High volume without the right resourcing leads to delays, poor communication, and quality issues.

Section 3: Timeframes & Process Transparency

☐ Clear approval timeframe explained
☐ Clear selections timeframe explained
☐ Realistic construction timeframe provided
☐ Builder explains what can cause delays
☐ CDC vs DA pathway discussed honestly

Why this matters:
Vague or overly optimistic timelines are a red flag, not a benefit.

Section 4: Tender Detail & Pricing Structure

☐ Tender is detailed and easy to follow
☐ Inclusions and exclusions clearly listed
☐ Minimal reliance on Provisional Sums or Prime Cost items
☐ Site costs explained clearly, not bundled
☐ Engineering, BASIX, and council assumptions disclosed
☐ Upgrade pricing is transparent

Why this matters:
A cheap tender is often just an incomplete tender.

Section 5: Site & Compliance Assumptions

☐ Builder has discussed site conditions early
☐ Cut, fill, retaining, piering, or drop-edge beams addressed
☐ Council controls acknowledged (height, setbacks, flood, bushfire, etc.)
☐ No “we’ll sort that later” responses

Why this matters:
Site and compliance surprises are the biggest cause of budget blowouts.

Section 6: Contract & Risk Allocation

☐ Fixed price contract where reasonably possible
☐ Clear explanation of what is not fixed
☐ Liquidated damages included and explained
☐ Fair progress payment structure
☐ No pressure to sign before documentation is complete

Why this matters:
Contracts that shift risk to the owner rarely feel like a problem — until construction starts.

Section 7: Reputation & Industry Signals

☐ iCIRT rating (where applicable)
☐ Product Review feedback shows consistent patterns
☐ Google reviews are recent and credible
☐ Builder willing to provide recent client references
☐ Open discussion about past issues or challenges

Why this matters:
Patterns matter more than perfection.

Section 8: People & Communication

☐ Consultant demonstrates confidence and knowledge
☐ Answers questions clearly without deflection
☐ Willingness to explain rather than "sell"
☐ Communication style feels transparent and consistent
☐ No reliance on "trust us" responses

Why this matters:
Most build stress comes from communication breakdowns, not construction.

Quick Self-Assessment

- Mostly ticks: You're likely dealing with a capable builder
- Some gaps: You should understand the risks clearly
- Many gaps: Independent advice is strongly recommended

Final Thought

If you are comparing two or more builders, it is almost impossible to assess risk, pricing accuracy, and contract exposure without professional help.

This checklist is designed to give you clarity —
but **it is not a substitute for a proper tender comparison**.

Need Help Comparing Your Tenders?

Compare New Home Builders provides independent tender comparisons, builder assessments, and risk reviews — so you can move forward with confidence.

Compare Your Tenders Now
Website: comparenewhomebuilders.com.au
Email: hello@comparenewhomebuilders.com.au