

NEW Homes

YOUR COMPREHENSIVE WEEKEND GUIDE



**GREY
AREAS**

4 NEW Homes | EXPERT ADVICE

Grow up or move out

HOLLY COOMEY

What you need or want from a new home, or the size of block you are working with, may automatically determine whether you build up or build out. But if you have the opportunity to choose either, what factors should you take into consideration?

Atrium Homes Sales and Marketing Director Daniel Marcolina said there were pros and cons to both.

"The decision of whether to build up or build out ultimately depends on the stage of life you are at, the accommodation required and what your budget permits," he said.

There are a number of pros to building a multi-storey home and one main con – cost.

"Building up makes it easier to create different zones under the same roof and maximise the size of the home," Mr Marcolina said.

"It enables the ability to capture views from an elevated standing point and allows more build area to incorporate additional features on the front and side facades.

"Unfortunately, building up comes with a cost – the cost to build is higher per square metre due to



building requirements such as scaffolding, stairs, balustrading and more."

When it comes to building a wider property, rather than a higher property, there are also a number of advantages and disadvantages, according to Mr Marcolina.

"Keeping the property as one storey means keeping all accommodation at one level, not needing to navigate stairs, which can be an issue for some, reducing the size of the yard if you don't have the time or inclination to tend to the garden,

and a lower cost to build due to negating the need for the extra building requirements," he said.

On the other hand, if you are a green thumb, building out means you reduce the yard space and the capacity to create your dream garden, and you may be facing a higher cost of land.

"A larger block may be required to fit in everything you need," Mr Marcolina said.

"The block cost may be higher due to the additional land area required to build the desired home."

In some cases, the luxury of having the opportunity to build out is stripped away due to the land options available to buyers.

"We have seen a trend in people building up, but this is mainly due to lot sizes becoming smaller because of affordability, and supply and demand," Mr Marcolina said.

The chosen block can determine whether you are going to have increased expenses when it comes to the building stage.

"Blocks are becoming smaller and reduced in width, which unfortunately increases the cost to build," Mr Marcolina said.

"Narrow-lot home construction costs considerably more than a squarish home due to the extra perimeter in a rectangular-shaped home.

"So if you're wanting to keep the cost down, whether it be building up or building out, then seek a block that is squarish and adequate in size for your requirements, and consult your builder or designer before committing to a block."

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Does your cover offer peace of mind?

ANTHONY MATTEO

While we would all prefer our experience of building a new home to be seamless and trouble free, such a large and multifaceted project is bound to invite the odd hiccup, and this is where warranties may come to the rescue.

It is very important to have a clear and concise understanding of the warranties available from the builder, according to Summit Homes Group Building Manager Jeff Edgar.

"There should be several warranties available, covering structural, workmanship, materials and maintenance/service," he said.

"Warranties give you peace of mind that your new home is built to a

high standard and that, if anything is to happen, the builder is there if you need."

Mr Edgar said people regularly misinterpreted warranties, which often caused confusion between builders and homeowners.

"Just as items wear out on a new vehicle and you have to get it serviced, it is the homeowner, rather than the builder or manufacturer, who replaces them," he said.

"So is the case with new homes.

"Replacement of items due to wear and tear is not the builder's responsibility."

According to Mr Edgar, damage caused by storms, floods or earthquakes is regularly mistaken as being covered under a structural

guarantee, however this isn't the case.

"Usually when there's a night of heavy rainfall or a storm, our service department gets a lot of calls," he said.

"As a minimum, Western Australian builders have a six-year statutory warranty period, during which they are required to remediate confirmed construction defects."

When asked about what was actually covered, Mr Edgar said the following were quite common warranties given throughout the building industry in WA.

STRUCTURAL GUARANTEES

Structural guarantees reflect the warranties and protections given against negligence or faulty workmanship by the builder. Structural failure of concrete foundations, structural brickwork and structural steel and timbers are examples of this and will be rectified by the builder at their cost.

"Damage caused by storm, tempest, floods or earthquakes are not covered by this guarantee," Mr Edgar said.

"This warranty also only applies to the original purchaser of the home."

WORKMANSHIP OR MATERIALS WARRANTIES

According to Mr Edgar, these warranties refer to the

workmanship or materials aspects such as easing and adjusting doors, window sashes, cupboard doors and catches, as well as stopping up and touching up plaster cracks.

As the duration of these warranties vary from builder to builder, it is important for customers to check and be fully aware of what you are entitled to.

"Under this warranty, we will rectify at our cost any faulty workmanship or materials installed by the builder," Mr Edgar said.

APPLIANCE WARRANTIES

Referring to warranties given to items such as cookers, hot water units and heaters, appliance warranties are not issued by the builder, but instead by the individual manufacturer of the appliances.

"These warranties are covered by manufacturers guarantee not by the builder," Mr Edgar said.

"Free service within the manufacturer's guarantee period can be obtained by contacting the manufacturer's service department."

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