

CHAPLIN CROOKS

architects



YOUR HOME FOR LIFE

a guide to writing a brief for your new home



Your Perfect Home

Your perfect home is somewhere that allows your family to thrive in comfortable spaces designed to suit your lifestyle and location. Tell us about how you live, what you like and how we can help you plan for your future so we can design the best home for you and your family.

Feel free to supply as much or as little information as you're able to – nothing's set in stone just yet, but your answers help us to understand what we need to do to create a home that will feel like a perfect fit from the moment you first step through the door.

"Chaplin Crooks ensured best opportunities were made of the views, translating our requirements into a functional yet strikingly attractive building designed to fit in with the tussock flora and volcanic landforms of our hill location."

W & C Bracegirdle, Sumner



Who?

Who will be living in your new home? Don't forget about your pets!

What sort of project are you planning?

☐ New build ☐ Renovation ☐ Addition

Have you undertaken a building project before?

☐ Yes ☐ No

How may your needs change in the next 5-10 years, e.g. growing children, elderly parents moving in, planning for future additions?

Where?

Where have you chosen to create your new home?

What is important to you about this location, e.g. great views, character of neighbourhood, access to facilities, close to friends and family?



Living Spaces

Living areas are the heart of your home – places to relax with family and friends and to fulfil the wide range of functions required for daily family life.

Think about what you could include in your living areas to create enjoyable spaces that can make your daily routine run smoothly.

Built-in furniture can be a great way to get the most out of small spaces. A window seat can take up less space than a typical sofa, but will soon become a favourite quiet spot to read a book in the sun, with the added bonus of hidden storage below.



Living Room and Lounge

How many living areas would you like?

How would your ideal living space feel?

- ☐ Cosy and eclectic ☐ Sleek and minimalist ☐ Traditional character
☐ Other:

Which of these features would you like in your living space(s)?

- ☐ Home theatre ☐ Separate quiet lounge ☐ Study nook
☐ Feature fireplace ☐ Window seat ☐ Play area for children
☐ Other:

What is important to you about the style and layout of your living areas?

What would you change about the living areas in your current home to create a space that better suits your lifestyle?

Is there any special furniture you need room for?

Kitchen and Dining

Which of these describe your ideal kitchen/dining area?

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Open plan | <input type="checkbox"/> Island bench | <input type="checkbox"/> Sleek and minimalist |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Walk-in pantry | <input type="checkbox"/> Stone benchtop | <input type="checkbox"/> Separate dining room |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Breakfast bar | <input type="checkbox"/> Separate scullery | <input type="checkbox"/> Traditional character |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Natural timber | <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainer's kitchen | <input type="checkbox"/> Opens to outdoors |

Appliances and fittings (tick any that apply)

- | | | | |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| Hob: | <input type="checkbox"/> Gas | <input type="checkbox"/> Electric | <input type="checkbox"/> Induction |
| Fridge: | <input type="checkbox"/> Standard | <input type="checkbox"/> Extra large | <input type="checkbox"/> Water chiller and ice |
| Oven type: | <input type="checkbox"/> Wall | <input type="checkbox"/> Under bench | <input type="checkbox"/> Freestanding |
| Oven size: | <input type="checkbox"/> Standard | <input type="checkbox"/> Extra wide | <input type="checkbox"/> Double |

What else is important to you about the design of your living, kitchen and dining areas?



A compact kitchen can work well if it's carefully designed – ensure there's room for several people, plenty of space around appliances, and avoid corner cabinetry which can be difficult to access.

Home automation

Full home automation can allow you to control lighting, blinds and heating even when you're away from home. Or on a smaller scale you can use basic Bluetooth-enabled circuits to give you advanced control of light switches, timers and dimmers from your smartphone.



Design Tip #1

Lighting determines how we perceive spaces. Downlights only illuminate the floor, leaving walls and ceilings poorly lit. Use a combination of ceiling, wall and feature lights to achieve balanced light levels you can adjust to change the mood.

Did you know?

A large walk-in pantry or scullery can be a practical companion to an open plan kitchen – it provides an area to store appliances and to undertake food preparation, leaving the rest of the kitchen clutter-free and ready for entertaining



Bedrooms & Bathrooms

They're the most private spaces in your home, but just because they're not on show it doesn't mean their design is unimportant.

Think about how you could create a perfect master bedroom sanctuary where it feels like you're waking up in a 5 star hotel each morning, or how you could configure the bathrooms to ease the early morning rush hour in your home.

Think carefully about where you put your bedrooms – if they're facing east you will be able to enjoy morning sun. West-facing rooms can heat up in the late afternoon sun, so will require some shading from trees or the roof if you prefer to sleep in a cooler room.



Bedrooms

How many bedrooms do you require?

Which of these features would you like in your master bedroom?

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ensuite | <input type="checkbox"/> Walk-in wardrobe | <input type="checkbox"/> Access to outdoors |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sitting area | <input type="checkbox"/> TV | <input type="checkbox"/> ~ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: | | |

How large is your bed?

- | | | |
|--|---|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Queen or King | <input type="checkbox"/> Larger than King | <input type="checkbox"/> Twin beds |
|--|---|------------------------------------|

What is important to you about how your master bedroom is positioned in relation to other bedrooms and living areas?

And what about the other bedrooms?

Bedroom 2 ☐ Small ☐ Standard ☐ Large

☐ Ensuite ☐ Walk-in WR ☐ Other:

Bedroom 3 ☐ Small ☐ Standard ☐ Large

☐ Ensuite ☐ Walk-in WR ☐ Other:

Bedroom 4 ☐ Small ☐ Standard ☐ Large

☐ Ensuite ☐ Walk-in WR ☐ Other:

Bedroom 5 ☐ Small ☐ Standard ☐ Large

☐ Ensuite ☐ Walk-in WR ☐ Other:

Bathrooms

Ensuite or main bathroom:

☐ Shower ☐ Bath ☐ WC ☐ Other:

Bathroom 2:

☐ Shower ☐ Bath ☐ WC ☐ Shower over bath

Bathroom 3:

☐ Shower ☐ Bath ☐ WC ☐ Shower over bath

Separate guest WC?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Do you have any preferences when it comes to bathroom fittings and finishes:

Showers: ☐ Tiled ☐ Cabinet ☐ Level entry

Bath: ☐ Free-standing ☐ Built-in ☐ Spa

WC: ☐ Standard ☐ In-wall cistern ☐ Bidet

Heating: ☐ Underfloor ☐ Fan heater ☐ Mirror demister

Flooring: ☐ Tiles ☐ Vinyl ☐ Timber

What else is important to you about the design of your ensuite and bathrooms?



Don't sell yourself short when it comes to your ensuite –it will be the most important bathroom in the house for you, so treat yourself to a large shower so you can enjoy a little luxury each morning



Design Tip #2

Level-entry tiled showers look great and are a sensible option if you're planning for long-term accessibility, but it's important they are designed to last. Start by using quality waterproofing and detailing to contain water, and epoxy grout to keep joints looking fresh. [Read more in our blog article at this link.](#)

Interior Design

The team at Chaplin Crooks Architects can assist with the selection of joinery, fittings, colours and finishes throughout your bathrooms and kitchens. Or you may prefer to make these decisions yourself or with the assistance of an interior designer

Did you know?

For an uninterrupted night's sleep you can reduce sound transfer between rooms by using wardrobes as a buffer, eliminating plumbing fittings on bedroom and living room walls, and using acoustic wall systems to isolate sources of noise



Exterior and Landscaping

The exterior of your home is all about standing up to the elements – both in terms of how your house performs and lasts, and how it can help create comfortable outdoor spaces that protect you from too much wind, sun and rain.

Think about what has drawn you to this location, how the house could be designed to suit its surroundings, and what sort of spaces could help you and your family to spend more time relaxing outdoors (and less time maintaining your home!)

“On the Port Hills, being exposed to the winds is a major factor to consider and Stephen and Greg’s design took this into account. We were particularly delighted with the entranceway and roof designs which we still get many comments on.”

A & J Marshall, Christchurch



Exterior Materials and Form

Do you have any favourite materials?

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Plaster | <input type="checkbox"/> Bricks/blockwork | <input type="checkbox"/> Painted weatherboards |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stone | <input type="checkbox"/> Metal | <input type="checkbox"/> Oiled weatherboards |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: | | |

And are there any that you really don’t like?

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Plaster | <input type="checkbox"/> Bricks/blockwork | <input type="checkbox"/> Painted weatherboards |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stone | <input type="checkbox"/> Metal | <input type="checkbox"/> Oiled weatherboards |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: | | |

Which of these best describes your attitude to maintenance?

- ☐ We prefer natural finishes such as oiled timber that can require ongoing recoating to keep them looking their best.
- ☐ We don’t mind undertaking occasional maintenance, e.g. repainting
- ☐ We would prefer to use materials that require very little maintenance.

Do you have any preferences for the exterior style of your home?

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contemporary | <input type="checkbox"/> Traditional character | <input type="checkbox"/> Classic/timeless |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Flat roof | <input type="checkbox"/> Dark colours | <input type="checkbox"/> Natural materials |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: | | |

What else is important to you about your home’s external appearance?

Outdoor Living

How do you like to spend your time outdoors?

- ☐ Entertaining ☐ Relaxing ☐ Gardening ☐ Sports or leisure
☐ Other:

What types of landscaping and outdoor spaces appeal to you?

- ☐ Formal ☐ Natural ☐ Contemporary
☐ Large spaces ☐ Small spaces ☐ Covered areas
☐ Decking ☐ Paving ☐ Lawns
☐ Other:

Do you require any of these features?

- ☐ Outdoor kitchen ☐ Swimming/spa pool ☐ Kitchen garden
☐ Large spaces ☐ Small spaces ☐ Covered areas

What else is important to you about the external appearance of your home, e.g.



Retractable roofing and screens allow versatile outdoor rooms to be created, providing shade and ventilation in summer, and a sheltered (and even heated!) outdoor space you can use in the cooler months.

Landscape design

Most projects will include landscaping such as decks and paving. If you're after something more involved than this we can recommend landscape architects to help you with full landscape design including paving, gardens, irrigation and plant selection.



Design Tip #3

Consider the lifecycle cost of your building materials – Christchurch's dry nor'westers and frosty mornings can be hard on cladding, so use permanent materials where walls are most exposed to the elements or will require costly scaffolding for maintenance.

Did you know?

Many materials are now available with high-performance coatings to reduce maintenance, including self-cleaning glass and plaster finishes, and reflective technology that reduces heat build-up from dark colours.



Sustainability & Performance

If you're planning a long term home it's worth incorporating features that will benefit you over a long period.

Thinking about what you can do to minimize energy use and make it easier to keep your home comfortable and warm needn't cost much more, and your future self will thank you for your foresight.

By investing in a well-considered design our home has served us well through changing phases of life. We enjoy a comfortable and dry home that is healthy for our family and economical to run.

N Norton & T Page, Heathcote



Comfort and Sustainability

How would you like to heat your home? (Select all that apply)

- | | | |
|--|------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wood burner | <input type="checkbox"/> Gas fire | <input type="checkbox"/> Heat pumps |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Heated floors | <input type="checkbox"/> Radiators | <input type="checkbox"/> Passive solar design |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: | | |

What best describes your approach to sustainability?

- ☐ We're on a tight budget, but happy to consider some basic upgrades
- ☐ We're happy to spend a bit more on features that have long term benefits
- ☐ Sustainability is very important to us, and we're looking for a home that complies with an established rating system, e.g. Homestar, Passive House.

Would you like to include any of these features in your new home?

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Solar hot water | <input type="checkbox"/> PV (Solar) Panels | <input type="checkbox"/> Water storage tank |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Extra insulation | <input type="checkbox"/> Water-efficient fittings | <input type="checkbox"/> Heat recovery ventilation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wool insulation | <input type="checkbox"/> Energy-efficient lights | <input type="checkbox"/> NZ-made materials |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Timber windows | <input type="checkbox"/> uPVC windows | <input type="checkbox"/> Low-E glass |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: | | |

Is there anything else you wish to plan for so you can live sustainably?

Technology and Performance

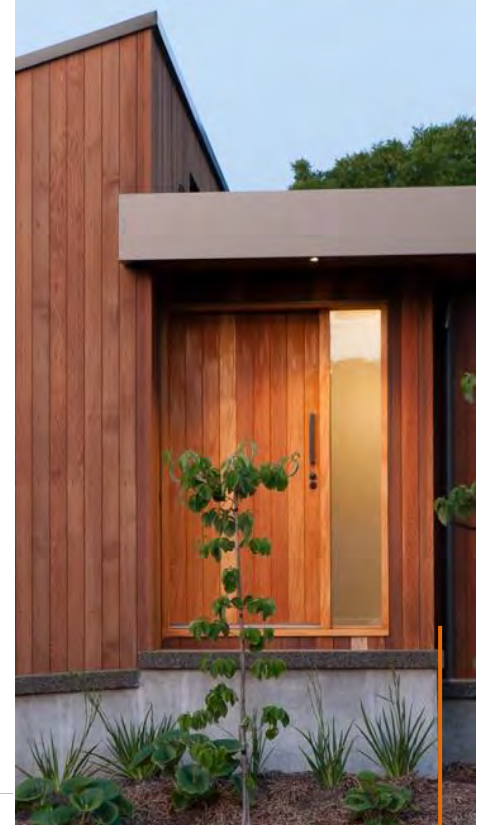
Which of these features describe your approach to technology/automation in your home?

- ☐ Keep it simple ☐ I would like to futureproof ☐ All the bells and whistles please!
☐ I don't know much about this technology, but would like to find out more

Would you like to include any of this technology in your home?

- ☐ Security cameras ☐ Charging point for electric car ☐ Heat pumps
☐ Automated blinds ☐ Wifi heating control ☐ Keypad entry door lock
☐ Built-in vacuum ☐ Lift/elevator ☐ Wireless sound system
☐ Other:

What else is important to you about the performance of your home?



Higher performance window frames (timber, uPVC or thermally-broken aluminium) combined with Low-E double or triple glazing can significantly reduce heat loss and gain



Design Tip #4

Christchurch's climate is ideal for passive solar design – generous roof overhangs can provide shade during the hot summer months, and in winter when the sun is lower in the sky the sun can reach thermal mass such as polished concrete floors, storing heat that can be released in the evening.

Did you know?

Christchurch homeowners can once again enjoy new woodburners in their homes, with new Ultra Low Emission burners being approved for installation in new and existing homes