AL-KO CONSTRUCTION LTD

Planning your home renovation

A practical guide for London homeowners

PLAN THE SCOPE

COMPARE ESTIMATES

CONTROL CHANGES



Includes printable project worksheets and checklists

FIRST EDITION / OCTOBER 2026

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START HERE

A better plan starts with clear decisions

Use this guide before requesting prices, then keep the worksheets beside you throughout the project.

A renovation involves hundreds of connected decisions. A kitchen layout affects sockets and plumbing; floor finishes affect levels; late product deliveries can interrupt the programme. Clear information at the start helps everyone price, plan and build the same project.

How to use the guide

Stage	Read and use
Before requesting prices	Define your scope (page 3), assemble your information (page 4) and review permissions (page 5).
Before appointing a builder	Compare the full scope and ask practical questions (page 6). Complete the budget worksheet (page 7).
Before and during work	Track orders (page 8), record changes (page 9) and prepare the property (page 10).
At completion	Use the handover checklist (page 11) and retain your project records.

Three habits that help

Give every builder the same information. Record decisions in writing. Check the effect of each change on both cost and time.

About this guide

Prepared for AL-KO Construction Ltd for homeowners planning refurbishments, extensions and loft conversions in London. The worksheets are designed to print on A4 and complete by hand.

This is general planning information for England, not a project-specific specification, contract, valuation or legal or technical advice. Ask the appropriate designer, engineer, surveyor or adviser to confirm requirements for your property. Guidance and official links were checked on 9 October 2026.

01 / DEFINE THE PROJECT

Write the brief before you buy

A clear brief describes what you want to achieve and what the price must cover.

Separate essentials from optional improvements

Start with how you need the home to function: another bedroom, a better kitchen layout, more storage or improved access to the garden. Mark each item as essential, desirable or suitable for a later phase. Agree priorities with everyone making decisions.

Describe each room and each trade

For every space, list removals, structural work, plumbing, heating, electrical work, plastering, joinery, decoration and finishes. Record what is staying. Specify whether making good nearby walls, ceilings and floors is included.

Example: make the scope measurable

Instead of “renovate the kitchen”, identify the agreed layout, units, appliances, worktop, plumbing changes, electrical points, flooring, decoration, waste removal and who supplies each item. Use drawings and a product schedule to support the description.

PROJECT ADDRESS / AREAS INCLUDED

MY THREE ESSENTIAL OUTCOMES

OPTIONAL ITEMS OR LATER PHASES

02 / REQUEST USEFUL PRICES

Give builders the same information

A complete pricing pack makes differences between offers easier to explain.

- [ ] Current architectural drawings, with drawing numbers and revision dates.
- [ ] Structural engineer drawings and calculations where the proposed work needs them.
- [ ] A room-by-room schedule of works, including finishes and making good.
- [ ] Kitchen, bathroom and joinery layouts with dimensions and product details.
- [ ] A list of client-supplied products and the work required to fit them.
- [ ] Access information: floor level, stairs, parking, loading and storage space.
- [ ] Your preferred timing, occupancy plans and decisions that remain open.

Ask for assumptions to be written down

If information is missing, ask how it has been priced. An allowance can be useful, but it should identify the work or product covered, its value and what happens when the final choice is made. Ask whether labour, delivery, waste removal and VAT are included.

Use the site visit to resolve practical details

Walk through access, protection, existing services and areas affected by the work. Confirm the information required before a more accurate price can be issued. A visit does not reveal every concealed condition behind floors, walls or ceilings.

Keep a single current pack

When a drawing or specification changes, issue the new revision to every builder still pricing the job. Keep a dated list of the files sent and ask each builder to identify the revisions used in their offer.

03 / CONFIRM REQUIREMENTS

Check permissions early

Identify what applies to your property before committing to the start date.

Check	What to ask
Planning position	Ask your designer or local planning authority whether permission is needed and whether any permitted development route applies to your proposal. [1]
Building regulations	These are separate from planning permission; a project may need both. Confirm the approval route, inspections and completion evidence. [2]
Neighbouring property	Ask whether party wall procedures apply to shared structures, boundary work or excavation near neighbours. Obtain project-specific advice where needed. [3]
Property restrictions	Check with the relevant adviser whether leaseholder/freeholder consent, listed building consent or conservation-area restrictions affect your plans.
Site logistics	Confirm with your borough or relevant authority whether skips, scaffolding, pavement use or parking arrangements need permission.

Assign responsibility

For each application, appointment or inspection, record who will arrange it, who will pay and when it must be completed. Do not assume that every professional fee or application charge is in the builder’s price.

CHECK / RESPONSIBLE PERSON / TARGET DATE

Official references [1]-[3] and live links are on page 12. This page is a prompt for your project team; it does not determine which approvals your property needs.

04 / CHOOSE YOUR BUILDER

Compare the whole offer

A lower headline price can cover a smaller scope. Resolve differences before deciding.

Compare	Builder A	Builder B
Same drawings and scope?		
Included work and exclusions		
Allowances / unresolved items		
Client supply and installation scope		
Total including applicable VAT		
Programme and availability		
Payment stages and change process		
Protection, waste and making good		

Questions worth asking

Who will manage the site day to day? Who answers questions and approves decisions? Can you see examples of comparable work and speak to recent clients? What insurance is held for the proposed work? How will specialist trades and required inspections be coordinated?

Put the agreement in writing

Agree the scope, drawings, exclusions, price basis, payment stages, expected programme, variation procedure and approach to defects. Ask for clarification of terms you do not understand before signing; seek independent advice where needed.

A useful comparison question

“Please confirm whether your price includes this item. If it does not, please give a separate price or explain what information you need to price it.”

05 / BUDGET WORKSHEET

Plan the total spend

Enter all amounts on the same basis, including applicable VAT. Record each cost once.

Cost category	Planned £	Latest £
Builder’s agreed scope		
Client-supplied kitchen / appliances*		
Client-supplied bathroom items*		
Other client-supplied finishes*		
Design, engineering and surveys		
Approvals and other project fees		
Access, parking and licences*		
Accommodation, storage and moving		
Approved changes not included above		
Subtotal: project costs		
Homeowner-held reserve for uncertainty		
TOTAL FUNDING REQUIRED		

*Only enter separately when these costs are outside the builder’s price. Avoid counting the same supply, licence or fitting cost twice. This worksheet contains no market price estimates.

Use the reserve deliberately

Set a separate homeowner reserve suited to the uncertainty of your project. Agree its size with your advisers; concealed conditions and incomplete design can change the exposure. As a cost becomes known, transfer the approved amount into project costs and update the remaining reserve.

Available funding £_____ minus total required £_____
Remaining headroom / funding gap £_____

06 / MATERIALS AND DELIVERIES

Order to the programme

Before you buy, confirm specifications, dimensions, delivery access and the date the item is needed on site.

Client supply needs a clear handover

Record who measures, orders, receives, checks and stores each item. Confirm who deals with damage, missing components and returns. Ask the installer to review technical requirements before ordering products that affect the build.

Check the complete assembly

A tap may need a separate concealed body; a shower may need a compatible valve; a door needs suitable ironmongery. Appliance clearances, cupboard depths and service positions should be checked together. Small missing parts can stop a larger task.

Item / exact model	Ordered / due	Needed on site	Owner
Kitchen / worktop			
Appliances			
Bathroom fittings			
Tiles / trims			
Flooring / underlay			
Doors / ironmongery			
Windows / rooflights			

Avoid these common sources of delay

Changing layouts after services are installed; receiving only part of a tile order; selecting joinery too late; booking delivery before safe storage is available; or assuming stock availability is a confirmed delivery date.

07 / CHANGES AND COMMUNICATION

Record the decision before the work

A shared written record helps prevent disagreements about what was requested and priced.

Use one agreed decision route

Choose a main homeowner contact and a main contractor contact. Keep a short weekly record of progress, upcoming decisions, outstanding information and any effect on the programme. Confirm important verbal discussions in writing.

For every proposed change

Describe the work, the reason for the change and the affected drawing or specification. Ask for the extra cost or credit, VAT treatment and time effect. Record acceptance through the agreed contract process before the changed work proceeds wherever practicable.

Change record	Complete for each change
Reference / date	
Description / location	
Requested by / reason	
Drawing or specification revision	
Additional cost or credit, including VAT	
Effect on completion / dependencies	
Approved by / approval date	

Keep payment records clear

File invoices, receipts, agreed payment stages and approved changes together. If an invoice is unclear, raise a specific written query promptly and use the agreed process for resolving it. This worksheet does not replace your contract.

08 / BEFORE WORK STARTS

Prepare the home and the site

Complete this checklist with your builder before the first working day.

- ☐ Confirm the agreed scope, drawing revisions and current programme.
- ☐ Confirm required permissions, appointments and planned inspection stages.
- ☐ Agree access, keys, working hours and the named day-to-day contacts.
- ☐ Set up valid parking and loading arrangements; identify who manages them.
- ☐ Agree protection for floors, stairs, furniture and areas remaining occupied.
- ☐ Identify waste arrangements, storage space, welfare and delivery access.
- ☐ Confirm planned water, power or heating interruptions and temporary needs.
- ☐ Agree how occupied rooms, children and pets will be separated from work.
- ☐ Photograph existing conditions and record any pre-existing damage.
- ☐ Confirm upcoming product deadlines and the homeowner’s decision dates.

Make living arrangements realistic

Discuss whether you can safely remain at home during each stage. Noise, dust, restricted access and service interruptions can make ordinary routines difficult. Do not rely on a kitchen, bathroom or access route being usable unless this has been agreed.

FIRST THREE DECISIONS / ACTIONS DUE

09 / COMPLETION AND HANDOVER

Close the project properly

Arrange a joint walk-through and keep one agreed record of outstanding items.

- ☐ Walk through each room against the agreed scope and approved changes.
- ☐ List each snag by location, with a photograph and clear description.
- ☐ Agree responsibility and a target date for each outstanding item.
- ☐ Request demonstrations of heating, controls and installed equipment.
- ☐ Collect applicable completion, commissioning and installation documents.
- ☐ Collect warranties, manuals, product details and care instructions.
- ☐ Record useful concealed-service photographs or as-built information.
- ☐ Reconcile the final account with approved changes and previous payments.

Confirm with your project team which documents apply, such as building control completion evidence, electrical certification or gas installation/commissioning records. Identify the responsible issuer and expected issue date early.

Room / outstanding item	Owner	Target date	Closed

Keep one project folder

Retain the contract, drawings, approvals, inspection records, invoices, change log, certificates and warranties. Keep a backed-up digital copy that you can find when maintaining, insuring or selling the property.

REFERENCE / NEXT STEPS

Your project starts with a clear brief

Use the worksheets to turn your ideas into information your project team can act on.

Official guidance

The links below support the permissions prompts on page 5. Check the current guidance and your local authority’s requirements before proceeding.

1. Planning Portal - Common projects

https://www.planningportal.co.uk/permission/common-projects/

2. GOV.UK - Building regulations approval

https://www.gov.uk/building-regulations-approval

3. GOV.UK - Party walls and building work

https://www.gov.uk/party-walls-building-works

Planning a project in London?

AL-KO Construction Ltd welcomes enquiries for home refurbishments, extensions and loft conversions. Send your project address, a brief description of the work and your architectural and structural drawings, where applicable, so the scope can be reviewed.

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First edition, October 2026. This publication provides general planning guidance and blank working templates. It does not promise a particular cost, completion date or project outcome.