



UNDERSTANDING AND SIGNING OFF YOUR KITCHEN PLANS

The plans and renders that your kitchen designer present to you and that you will be asked to sign off are not just pretty pictures to assist you in visualising your kitchen. They are legal documents that depict what you have engaged and authorised the company to make for you. In the eyes of the Consumer Protection Act a kitchen is a bespoke item. In other words it is not an off the shelf item, it is something made specifically for you to your specifications and requirements.

When you sign off your kitchen plan you are confirming that the details on the plan are correct and you are authorising the company to produce the goods as per those drawings. So, if there are mistakes, design errors, omission on these plans/drawings and you sign them off it will be very difficult to hold the company responsible for those errors.



It is thus vital that you and your designer go through both the plans and renders very carefully, that all measurements are checked and that any specifications listed on the plans are correct according to what you want and have requested.

You will be asked to sign off three types of documents. One the plans – a to-scale plan of the proposed kitchen showing measurements, appliances, electrical and water points. Two - the perspective drawings and render. These are pictures of the kitchen from various vantage points, an interpretation of what the completed kitchen will look like. These colour renders are an artist's impression of the design and will not depict the kitchen as an exact replica. Together these documents should show you the placement and size of all the cabinetry and decorative details such as pelmets, light shields, ceiling fillers. It should also show the placement of bin units, sinks, appliances and various specialised storage solutions like spice racks or pull out pantries. Any fillers needed to assist the spacing of the kitchen units to the walls should also be indicated where possible.

As the client you are not expected to check every measurement and ensure it is a hundred percent correct. You can anticipate that the kitchen company has taken accurate measurements. These should preferably be done once all plastering, tiling and flooring has been completed. However, you will be asked to supply the measurements of the appliances, sink and other items you are providing and if these are not correct the company can't be held accountable. You do, however, have a responsibility to look for any obvious errors and make sure the electrical and water points are in the right place. You will also be required to check that any special hardware, drawer inserts and storage solutions you have requested are indicated and in the right position.

The plan cannot reflect if walls and floors are out of square. Your kitchen company is not a builder and is not responsible for ensuring that your walls and floors are square and correctly plastered and level. The design programme your kitchen company uses, will always depict the walls, floors and ceiling as 100% square and level. While a certain amount of leeway exists at installation due to adjustable legs on the carcasses, the company may have to insert unforeseen fillers or silicone to bring the units to correctly meet the walls. This cannot be shown on the plans or the render.

When it comes to the render and perspective drawings it is important to remember that these are lifestyle images to show you how your new kitchen may look. It is not an identical indicator of how your kitchen will look. Designers add decorative features to these images to help you imagine your new kitchen these often include seating, lights, small appliances, plant, accessories and soft furnishings. It is vital that you remember these are not included in the price of the kitchen. Some designers may show you drawer inserts and other storage solutions as part of the render. These items are only included in the price if you can see them itemised on the quotation.

The other important thing to remember is that the render can never be an accurate depiction of the colour and texture of the materials you have chosen. Due to the varying resolutions of computer screens, the quality of printers and ink the image will emulate the colour and or texture but never be



a replica there of. It is vital that you see proper samples of the material and if possible a kitchen actually finished in the product.

While you have employed a professional company to manufacture and install your new kitchen, mistakes in communication can occur. Checking the plans carefully on your own then again with the designer is your opportunity to ensure that there have been no communication errors as to what exactly you want. Once the drawings and plans have been signed you are confirming that this is in fact the design, products and layout you are instructing and authorising the company to make for you.

Thanks to the following KSA members for their help with this article:

Articad, Compusoft

