

FREE PROJECT PLANNING RESOURCE

Make the first site survey count.

A practical, printable checklist for groundworks, drainage, extensions, driveways and external works across Surrey. Gather what you know, mark what needs checking and arrive at the first conversation with a clearer brief.

01	Describe the outcome
02	Capture the site evidence
03	Identify risks and approvals

This is an early-planning aid, not a structural design, drainage design, statutory approval, survey or quotation. Never excavate or alter services from online information alone.

Start with what must change.

A precise brief describes the result you need. It does not need to prescribe a solution before the site, ground, structure, drainage and access are understood.

Property address / postcode

Best contact details

Project type

What is wrong or missing now?

What should the finished result achieve?

Ideal start window

Known budget range

Evidence to gather

Photographs and drawings reduce guesswork before the visit. They do not replace inspection.

- ☐ Wide photos showing the full work area and its relationship to the house or road.
 - ☐ Close photos of cracks, standing water, damaged surfaces, chambers, boundaries or level changes.
 - ☐ Measurements of the approximate work area and the narrowest access point.
 - ☐ Architectural, structural, drainage or utility drawings already available.
 - ☐ Photos taken during heavy rain if drainage or flooding is part of the problem.
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Find the constraints before pricing the finish.

The same finished area can require a very different method when access, levels, soil, services, spoil or drainage change. Tick what is known and circle anything that needs checking.

Access and logistics

Record the practical route from the road to the work area.

- ☐ Vehicle parking and loading space is available near the work area.
- ☐ The narrowest access width and any height restriction are measured.
- ☐ Steps, slopes, soft lawns, shared access or neighbour rights are identified.
- ☐ A safe location for materials, equipment and temporary spoil is possible.
- ☐ Working-hour, school-route, parking or traffic restrictions are known.

Ground, water and levels

These details influence excavation, foundation, drainage and reinstatement decisions.

- ☐ Existing falls and the direction surface water currently travels are understood.
- ☐ Any standing water, soft ground, made ground, clay or previous infill is recorded.
- ☐ Drain covers, gullies, downpipes, ditches and watercourses are photographed.
- ☐ Required finished levels are considered against doors, damp-proof course and boundaries.
- ☐ Trees, roots, retaining walls and nearby structures are identified.

Do not let hidden dependencies become site surprises.

Not every project needs every approval, but the right questions should be asked early. A competent designer, Building Control, the local authority, utility owner or water company may need to be involved.

Before excavation or structural work

Confirm who owns each decision and what evidence is required.

- ☐ Planning permission or permitted-development position has been checked where relevant.
- ☐ Building Regulations and inspection stages have been discussed where relevant.
- ☐ Structural design and foundation details are available where required.
- ☐ Underground utility records and on-site service locating will be arranged before digging.
- ☐ Party wall, boundary, neighbour-access or shared-drain responsibilities have been considered.
- ☐ Public sewer proximity and any water-company build-over requirements have been checked.
- ☐ Surface-water destination and permeability have been considered as a complete system.
- ☐ Potential contamination, asbestos-containing material or hazardous spoil has been identified.

A realistic quotation depends on a defined scope. If key design or investigation is missing, the next useful step may be a survey, test, drawing or approval - not an instant fixed price.

Turn observations into decisions.

Use these prompts during the first site conversation. Record what is confirmed, what remains unknown and who owns the next action.

Likely scope and exclusions

Required surveys / tests / drawings

Approvals or third parties

Access and logistics plan

Drainage / water strategy

Materials and finish decisions

Next action, owner and date

What a useful quotation should make clear

- ☐ The defined work area, construction method and included stages.
 - ☐ What is provisional, assumed, excluded or supplied by others.
 - ☐ Waste and spoil handling, access assumptions and reinstatement.
 - ☐ Payment stages, programme assumptions and quotation validity.
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Use the right source for the property.

General website articles are a starting point. Statutory requirements and site safety should be checked with the responsible authority or competent professional.

- 01 Planning Portal - planning and building guidance
- 02 GOV.UK - Building Regulations approval
- 03 HSE - excavation safety guidance
- 04 Thames Water - building over or near a sewer
- 05 Surrey County Council - flooding and drainage

READY FOR A MORE USEFUL SITE CONVERSATION?

Send the postcode, photos, approximate measurements and any drawings. A Jones Contractors will help identify the most useful next survey or construction step.

**ajonescontractors.co.uk/contact-us/
07414 577346**

A Jones Contractors Ltd. Company 11346900. This checklist is general information and does not replace site-specific professional advice, design, approvals, safe-dig procedures or a written quotation.