

**Press Release**  
**24<sup>th</sup> September 2008**

## **Concrete Garages: A buyer's guide to concrete sectional garages and workshops**

***A garage is an integral part of your property, it adorns the side of your property and its presence perhaps sets your property apart from your immediate neighbours. If it's an eyesore it may diminish the value of your property whilst an independent survey by a leading Building Society has shown that your investment and more can be recouped with the addition of a new garage.***

You may only purchase a concrete building once or maybe twice in your lifetime and so our advice is to ignore the marketing 'spin' and make your informed choice using the following set of guidelines.

**Testimonials:** Many of us may already have friends and relatives who have recently purchased such a building. Where did they buy it from? What is the brand of the garage? Did the whole transaction run smoothly? After all, a company's reputation is only as good as its last customer interaction.

**Construction:** Not all garage companies offer the same level of installation and guarantee. Ensure that the concrete panels are mastic sealed, that an internal cement fillet is provided. One also imagines that if something as simple as a leak was reported the manufacturer would without quibble rectify the fault? Don't hold your breath, a guarantee rosette maybe brandished but some guarantee statements contain clauses designed to tie the consumer in a noose.

**Brand:** Many of the components found within concrete buildings are household brand names with service and support to match. Enquire as to the brand of the main door for example, if you don't recognise the name then walk away. Remaining on the subject of garage doors, do ensure that your door is supplied with a rigid steel frame.

**Concrete Panels:** Take a tape measure, not all concrete panels are alike. Accept nothing less than 2¾ inches thick reinforced and vibrated concrete panels. Enquire as to the weight of each panel, heaviest is best we suggest (2cwt per panel) furthermore ensure that your panels are securely bolted in at least at three-points.

**Services:** In a good many instances you may require removal of your existing garage. Ensure that the contractors employed are fully trained asbestos workers and demolition operatives, and are fully licensed to remove all types of waste. They wear all of the required RPE/PPE (Respiratory/Personal Protective Equipment).

**Payment:** All manufacturers will request payment prior to delivery. Be wary of those looking for payment at instigation of order. Avoid paying in cash, cheque or debit card. If you have one available use a credit card in order to provide card protection for your purchase.

**Planning Permission:** It is a common misconception that Planning Permission is not necessary for concrete buildings sectional and portable i.e. concrete garages, sheds and greenhouses. This simply isn't true.

In the majority of situations, planning permission is not normally required due to the nature of our product - i.e. "portable sectional building" - providing that the structure is within certain size and height limits which in turn are governed by the type and other aspects of your property. The usual criteria to meet to avoid planning permission are:

- The proposed building is not in front of the building line.
- The proposed building is under 30 sq. metres and under 70 cubic metres in volume (or 50 cubic metres for terrace houses or houses within a conservation area).
- Your property is not in a Conservation area or a listed building.
- The building is less than 4m in height
- The property has few alterations (attached or within 5m distance)

Also recommended is the booklet: "Planning A Guide for Householders" by the Department of the Environment. It may be available in your local library. Often your Local Authority offers a free-of-charge Householders Enquiry Form where they will consider your proposals and formally respond.

Background: The author has almost 20yrs retail experience in the concrete garage trade. As well as advising on the most suitable building per application advice is also tendered on groundwork preparation and all aspects of planning and building control. The writer resides in Chesterfield, Derbyshire, UK and operates from one of the region's largest concrete garage showrooms.

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