Exterior and weatherproofing checks for a new-build home

Safe observations around walls, openings, roofs, levels and drainage

PART OF THE CHECKSURE HOMEOWNER KNOWLEDGE BASE

Buying a new home | Handover | Snagging | Warranties | Home maintenance | Heating and ventilation
Electrical safety | Gardens | Building standards | Connectivity | Energy efficiency | General advice

The short answer: inspect external areas only from safe, normally accessible positions. Look for incomplete work, damage, open joints, failed seals, poor connections between drainage features and evidence of water entry. Do not climb roofs, enter unsafe construction areas or diagnose a concealed weatherproofing failure from appearance alone.

CheckSure’s Homeowner Knowledge Base draws on practical experience of building, inspecting and resolving defects in new homes. Our aim is to explain what homeowners should reasonably expect, what may require further investigation and what steps they can take next.

Figure 1. Weatherproofing depends on junctions and drainage relationships, not surface appearance alone.

Start with access and conditions

Record weather, visibility and anything obscured by scaffolding, stored materials, parked vehicles or unfinished landscaping. Ground-level observation cannot confirm every roof detail, concealed cavity component or underground drain.

External walls and interfaces

- Conspicuous cracking, damage, staining or unfinished areas.
- Open or poorly finished mortar joints and obvious damage to bricks or blocks.
- Cracked, loose or incomplete render or cladding on the outside wall.
- Incomplete seals around windows, doors, vents and service penetrations.
- Weep holes, air bricks and vents that appear blocked, buried or incomplete.

Openings and thresholds

Operate accessible windows and doors and observe latching, locking, seals, drainage paths and thresholds. Daylight, draughts or water entry may justify investigation, but an airtightness conclusion cannot be made from a simple hand test.

Roof-level observations

From the ground, note visibly slipped or damaged coverings, incomplete verges, loose rainwater goods and conspicuous defects around penetrations. Binoculars or photographs may assist. Walking on the roof, leaning ladders against finishes or entering restricted areas is outside ordinary homeowner checking.

Rainwater and ground drainage

- Gutters and downpipes appear complete and securely connected.
- Discharge points are not obviously blocked or directing water against the building.
- Paths and ground do not visibly bridge damp-proof or ventilation features.
- Standing water, back-up, odour or erosion is recorded with weather context.
- Private plot issues are distinguished from unfinished estate or communal work.

Use weather evidence carefully

Heavy rain can reveal overflowing gutters or poor falls; dry conditions may prevent assessment. Keep dated evidence of intermittent performance. Do not reproduce the event by flooding thresholds, drains or ground with excessive water.

When specialist investigation may be needed

Continuing water entry, unstable cladding, substantial movement, suspected drainage failure or inaccessible high-level concerns may require an appropriately qualified specialist. Report urgent falling-object or electrical hazards immediately.

Key takeaways

- Stay on safe, normally accessible ground.
- Check interfaces and drainage relationships, not just surface appearance.
- Record weather and access limitations.
- Escalate continuing water entry or unstable elements for specialist assessment.

EXPLORE FURTHER Explore the CheckSure Homeowner Knowledge Base for related guidance on buying, inspecting and looking after a new home. Please visit checksure.co.uk/knowledge-base/

Sources & References

UK Government — Approved Documents for Building Regulations: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/approved-documents

Need help with your new home?

Contact CheckSure for an independent assessment of your new home.

CheckSure
INDEPENDENT NEW-HOME INSPECTIONS

Email admin@checksure.co.uk
WhatsApp 07533 917477
Website checksure.co.uk

ABOUT THIS PRINT EDITION. This edition reformats CheckSure website content for comfortable A4 reading and printing. Website navigation and related-article links are not reproduced. The article text, headings, figure captions, sources and copyright notice follow the approved hardcopy order.