SWIMMING POOLS

Swimming Pool Renovation: Refurbish or Start Again?

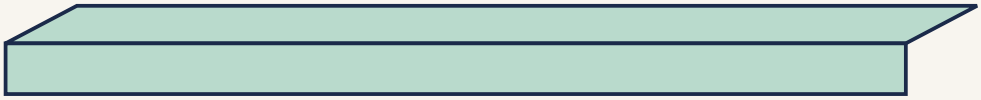
By DirectHome Team Updated 16 September 2026 5 min read Explore our swimming pools service ↗

A pool with tired finishes may be suitable for refurbishment, while leaks, structural concerns or a major layout change can require wider work. Inspect the existing pool before deciding how much to replace. Compare finishes, equipment upgrades and rebuilding as separate scopes so the budget follows its condition and the result you want.

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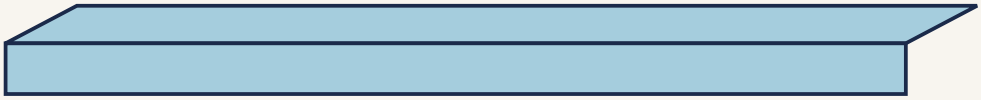


Renewing a pool can mean different work



Interior finish

Tile, grout or other surface.



Water-retaining shell

Underlying structural condition.

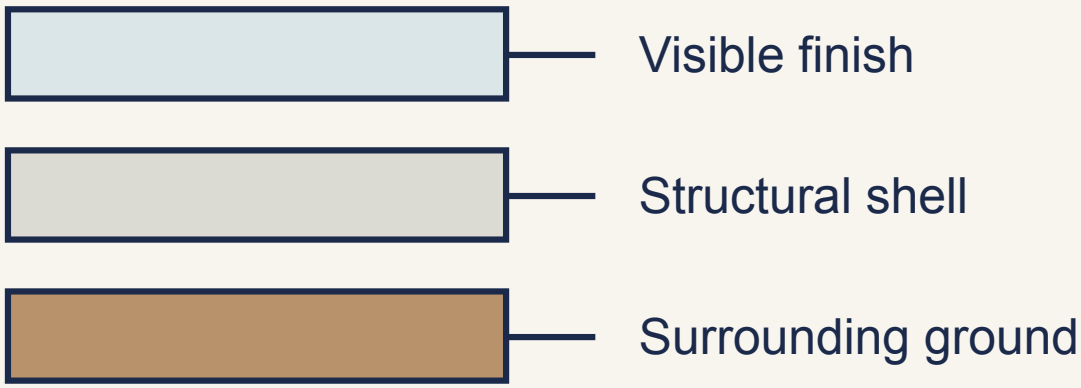


Equipment and surroundings

Pipes, plant, coping and deck.

Interior finish: Tile, grout or other surface. Water-retaining shell: Underlying structural condition. Equipment and surroundings: Pipes, plant, coping and deck.

Pools Don't Last Forever Without Help

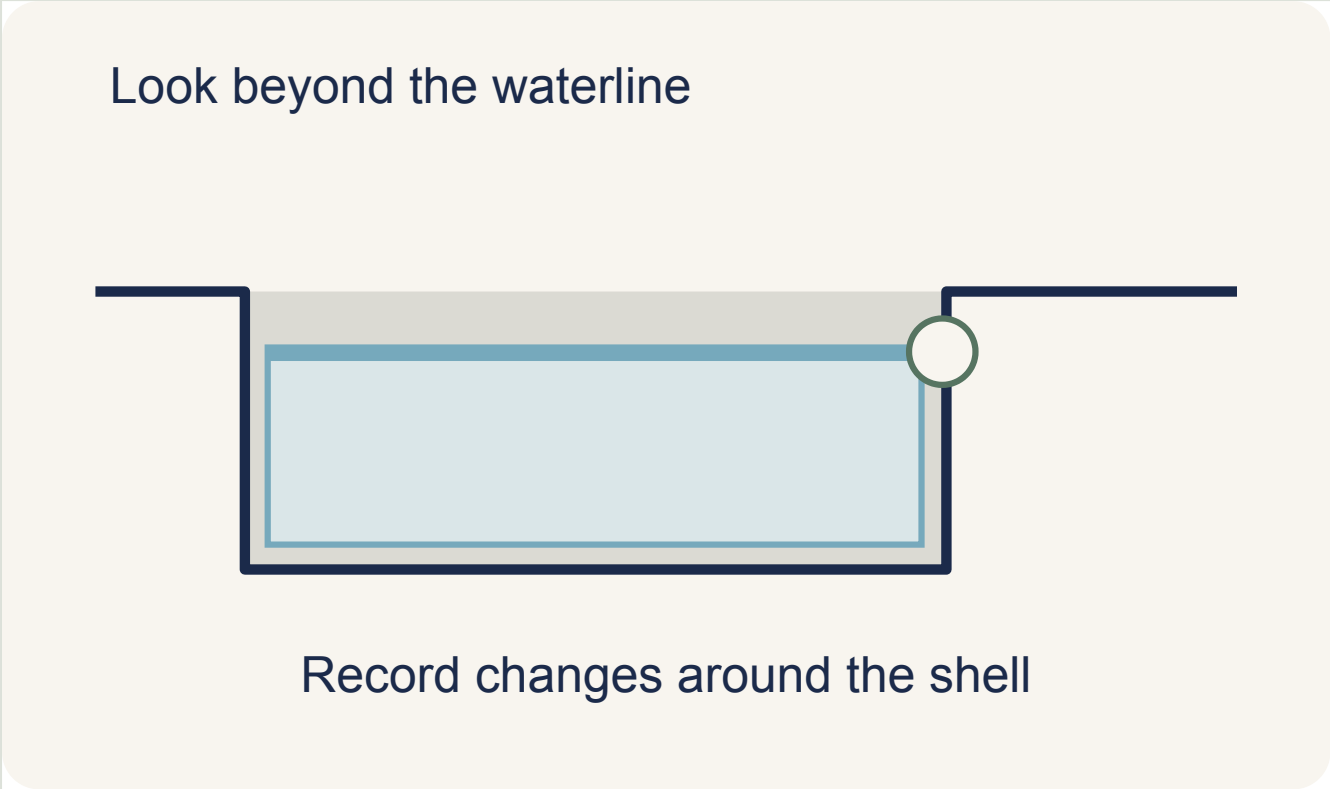


The finish and structural shell need separate condition decisions.

Pool finishes, pipework, structure and equipment age differently. Worn grout does not necessarily mean the shell needs replacing, while a persistent leak may need more than new tiles. Start by identifying the cause of the problem rather than deciding from the pool's age alone.

The first decision isn't what to replace. It's whether to renovate at all, or to demolish and start fresh. The right answer depends on the structural condition of the existing pool, how much you want to change about its shape and layout, and how the numbers stack up.

Signs Your Pool Needs Renovation



Record changes at the waterline and surrounding pool before defining the repair.

Visual signs are usually obvious: discoloured grout, missing or cracked tiles, pitted or stained plaster, persistent algae despite chemistry being correct, water-line staining that doesn't come off. Equipment signs include rising electricity bills, pumps that have been repaired multiple times, filters that clog faster than they used to, and lights that have stopped working altogether.

Cracks, unexplained water loss, movement around the deck or exposed reinforcement need competent assessment. Keep people away from unstable or electrically unsafe areas. Those signs can call for structural investigation, but the findings should decide repair versus rebuilding.

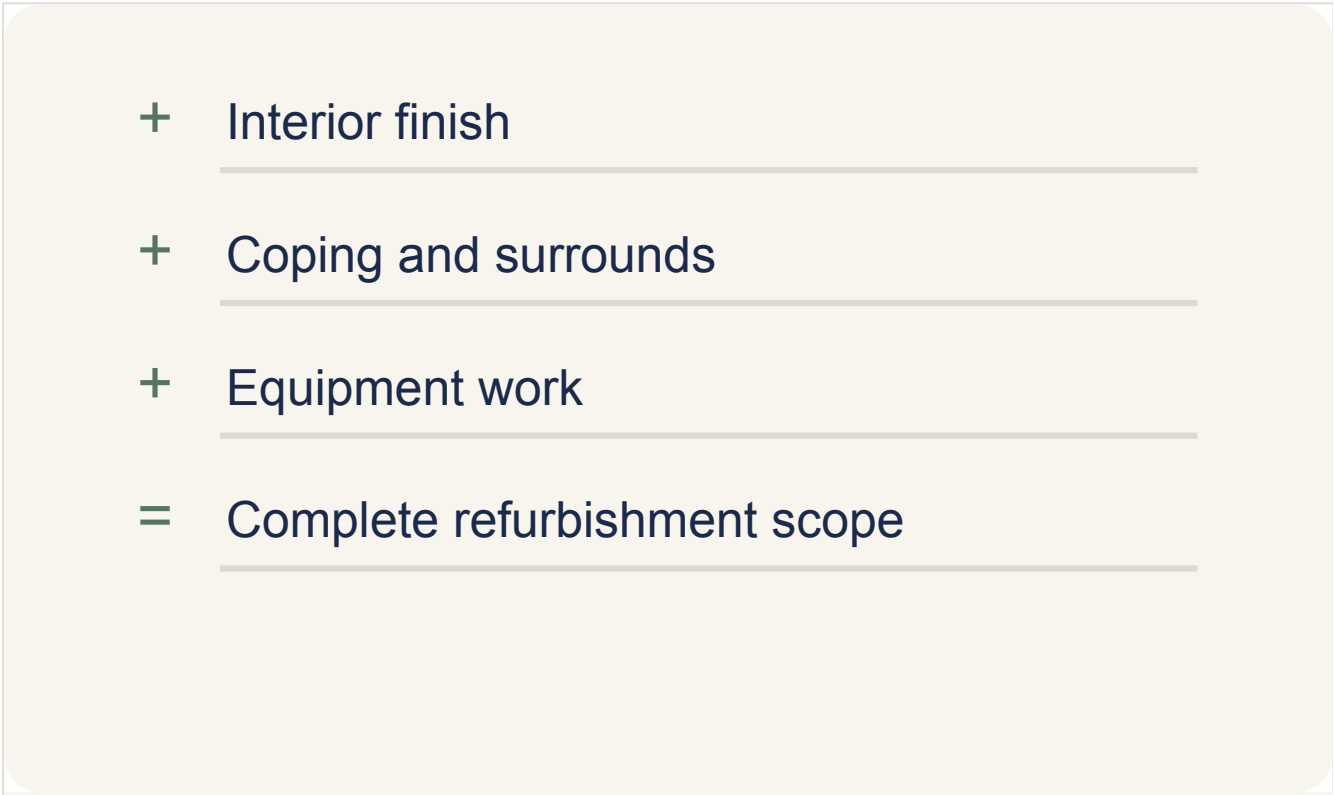
A falling water level can be associated with evaporation, pipework, fittings or the shell. Changing the interior finish without finding the route may leave the loss unchanged. Conversely, a worn finish on a sound, watertight structure can call for local renewal rather than a full rebuild. The assessment should separate those possibilities and explain what any controlled test or opening-up work is intended to establish before construction begins.

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Refurbishment Scope and Cost



A refurbishment price should include the finish, surrounds and equipment being renewed.

Refurbishment and rebuilding are separate scopes. Compare complete proposals after the condition assessment.

Work being considered	Scope to establish	Basis for the quotation
Refurbishment	Finish renewal, waterproofing and grout on a retained shell	Inspection findings and the repair work required
Rebuilding	Removal of the existing pool and construction of the replacement	Designed shell, demolition, disposal, access and professional work

A retained-shell refurbishment quotation should identify retiling, waterproofing and grout renewal separately from structural repairs, pipework, equipment and surrounding reinstatement. Confirm the condition of the shell before treating a finish-renewal quote as the complete repair budget.

A rebuild proposal must identify demolition, disposal, access, design and required submissions as well as construction of the replacement pool. Compare that complete proposal with the inspected refurbishment scope. A new-pool construction figure alone leaves out work needed to remove and replace what is already there.

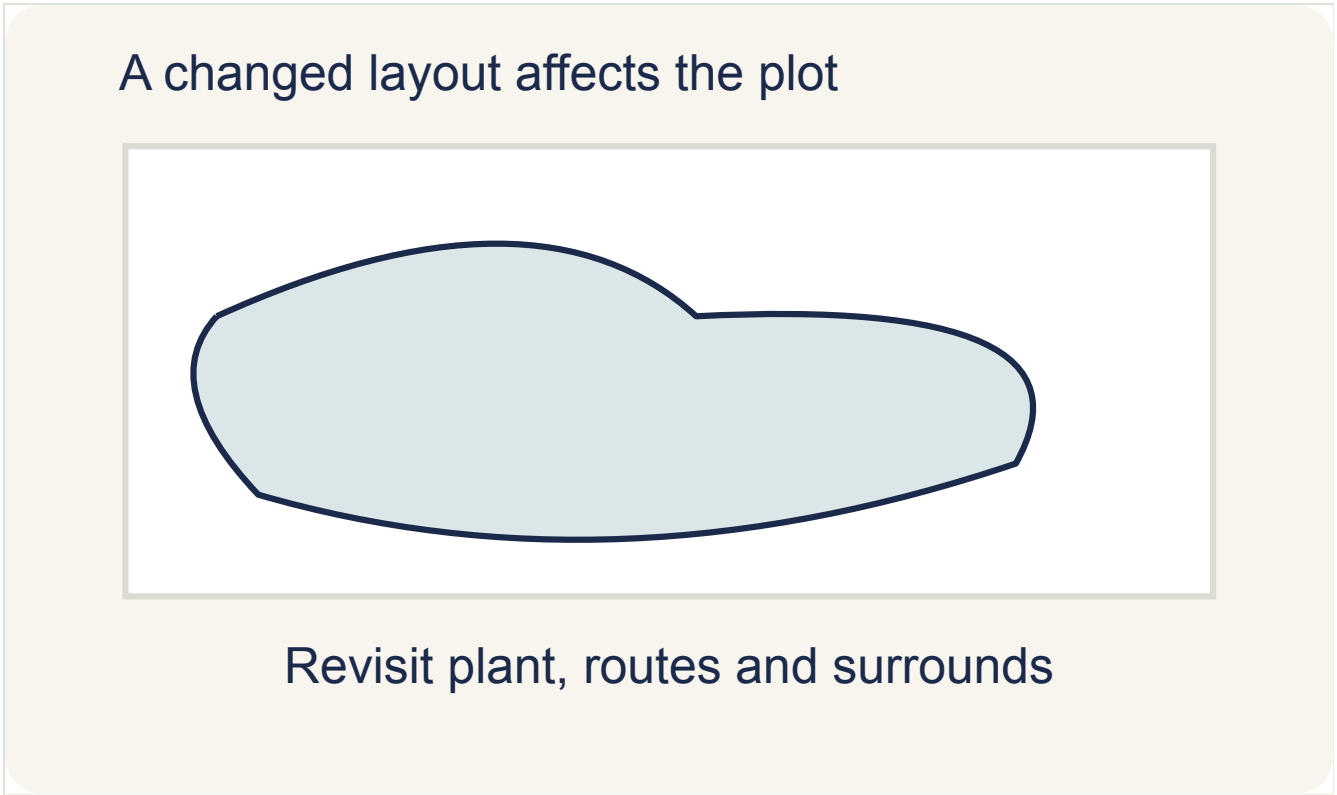
To work out the full cost of a refurbishment that keeps your existing shell, get a price for each task your finish-renewal quote leaves out, such as pipe repair or coping and deck reinstatement, and add it to that quote. Check that the total covers draining, preparation, testing, refilling, disposal and any professional fees, and count any bundled tasks only once. Compare that complete retained-shell scope with the complete rebuild proposal and the problems each will resolve; a cheaper finish renewal is poor value if the shell or pipes still leak.

Refurbishment can retain a sound shell while addressing the specific finish, plumbing or equipment defects. Ask for an itemised scope identifying what is retained, removed and reinstated, including safe draining where needed. Draining a pool can create structural or groundwater risks and should be professionally planned.

The programme depends on investigation, access, product curing and commissioning. Do not assume the pool can be refilled as soon as the finish looks dry. The contractor should identify the required testing and readiness conditions before handover.

> Compare the pool structure, equipment and surrounding works in the budget. swimming pool construction costs →

When Rebuilding Makes More Sense

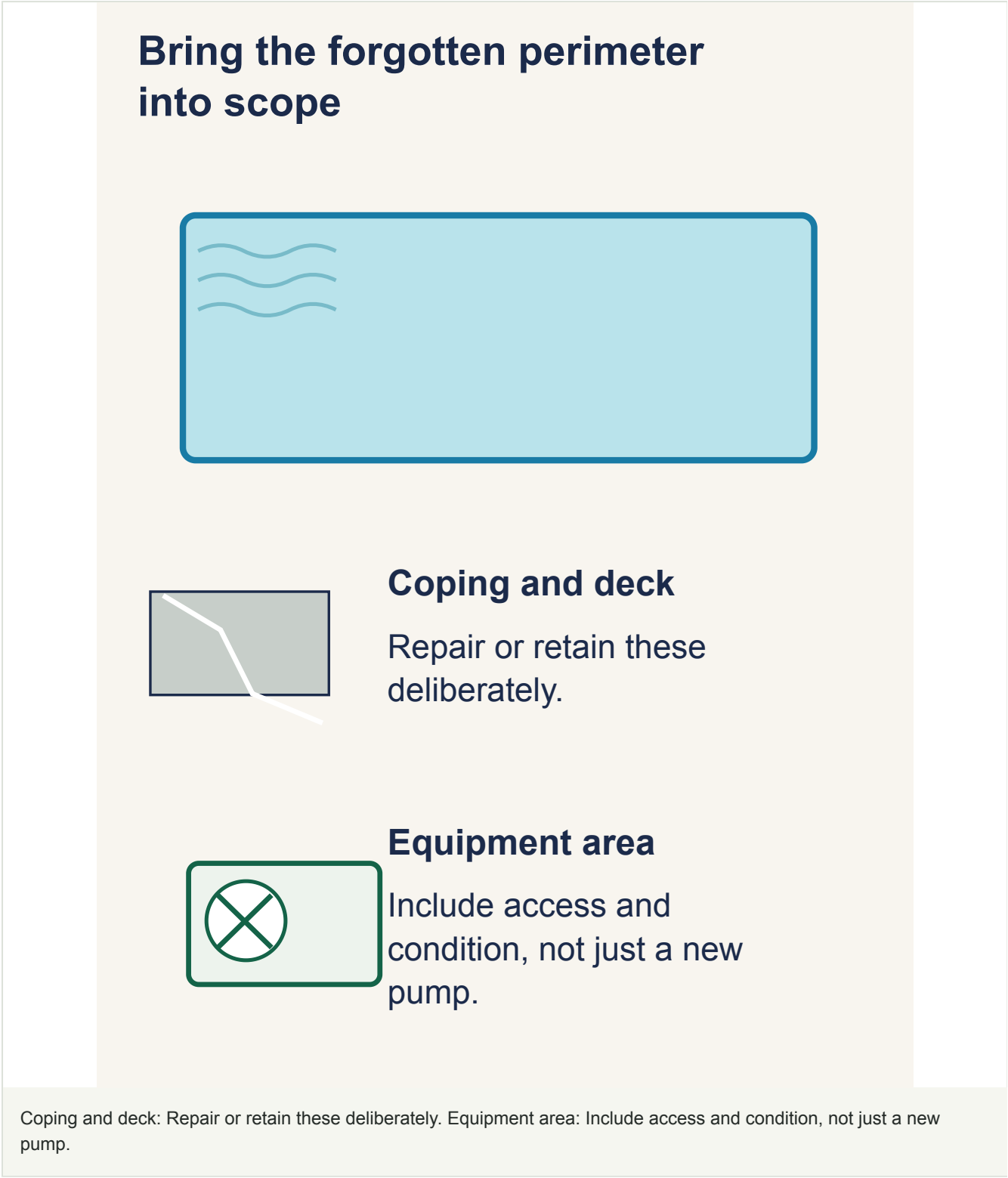


Changing the pool layout also reopens the plant, access and surrounding-space decisions.

Rebuilding may be appropriate where the structure cannot reasonably be repaired or the household needs a fundamentally different layout. Obtain the engineer's findings and compare complete repair and rebuild scopes, including demolition and reinstatement. A visible crack alone is not a universal instruction to demolish.

A rebuild also requires the design and approval route to be assessed for the new work, including drainage and equipment placement. Use that opportunity to address layout problems that matter to the household. Confirm that the proposed changes are feasible before demolition.

What Often Gets Forgotten

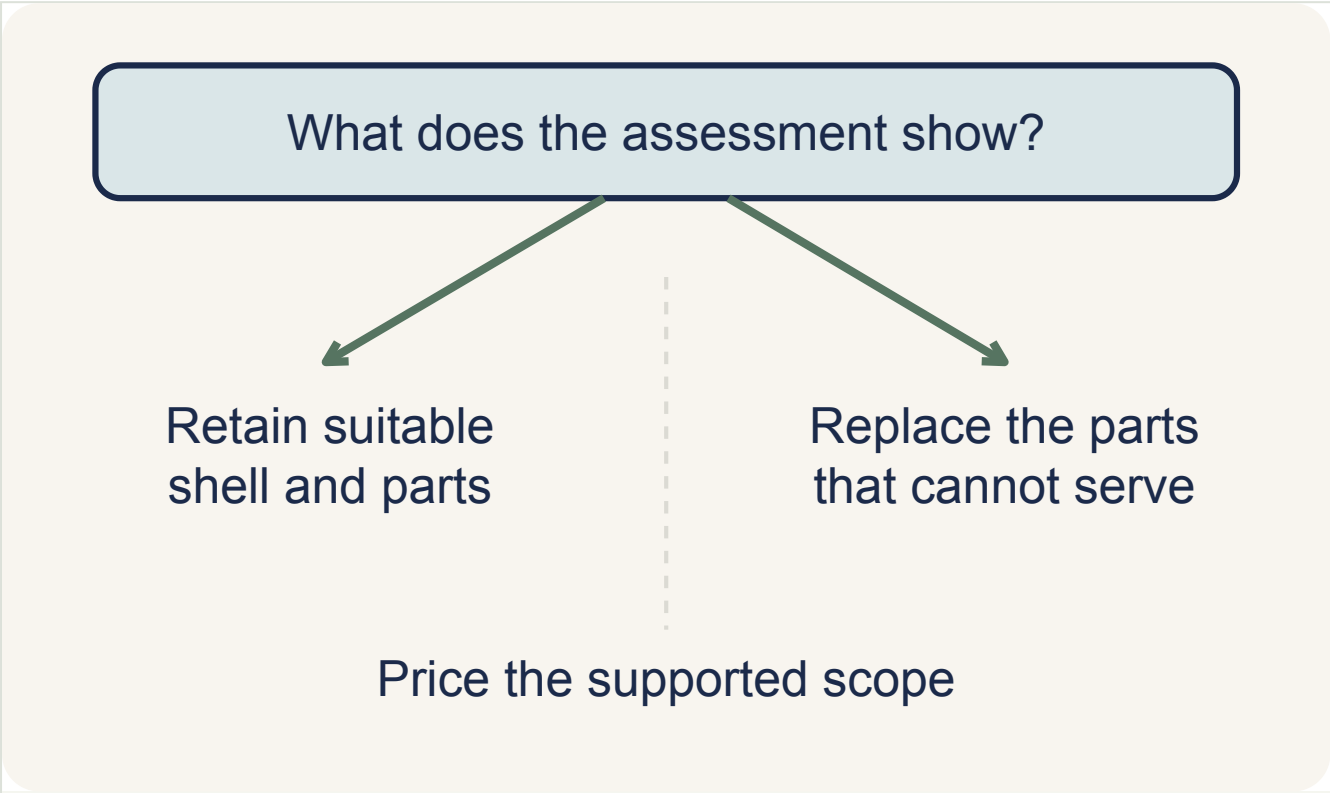


Coping and deck: Repair or retain these deliberately. Equipment area: Include access and condition, not just a new pump.

Pool renovations frequently underestimate the surrounding works. Coping, deck, lighting, drainage gullies, and equipment shed condition are easy to push aside in the planning phase and then become irritating to bring back into scope mid-project. A renovation that doesn't address the deck around the pool can leave the result looking half-done.

If equipment upgrades are proposed, compare their installed cost, compatibility and measured operating benefit. Doing work together may avoid duplicate access, but does not establish a fixed saving. Retain serviceable equipment where it suits the final design and support remains available.

How DirectHome Plans Pool Renovations



The assessment should identify what can remain and what needs replacement.

A useful renovation proposal explains the condition of the shell, plumbing and equipment before recommending replacement. Ask how each proposed task addresses the reported problem. Cosmetic improvements should not conceal an unresolved leak or structural concern.

Send DirectHome the pool's history, safe photographs and description of the problem to discuss an assessment. Confirm whether structural or equipment specialists are needed and what reports the assessment includes before booking.

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