

Let's Get it Right

Building Consents

Your guide to the building consent process



This is intended as a guide only to help you through the building consent process

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What’s in this guide?

STEPS FOR PLANNING TO BUILD

- Steps you must take
- Steps for you to consider
- Steps the Council must take



What is a building consent?

A building consent is a legal document certifying approval of your proposed building work issued by your Council, and means that the Council is satisfied on reasonable grounds that the proposed work complies with the requirements of the New Zealand Building Act 2004, Building Regulations and Building Code.

Application for a Building Consent can be carried out for you by a builder or designer who acts as your designated agent. All correspondence and enquiries will be directed to your agent. You, as owner, will be responsible for ensuring that the application complies with all Council and Building Act 2004 requirements. You will also be responsible for all fees and levies associated with the application.

Restricted building work

Restricted Building Work applies to most residential building or renovation work and only a Licensed Building Practitioner (LBP) can undertake or supervise the work.

If you apply for a building consent, you must make sure the practitioners you use are correctly licensed to carry out the work. Licensed Building Practitioners include:

- Designers
- Carpenters
- Foundation specialists
- Roofers
- Bricklayers and blocklayers
- External plasterers.

Professional engineers, architects, plumbers and gasfitters are treated as Licensed Building Practitioners and can carry out some Restricted Building Work. Visit lbp.govt.nz for more information on who can carry out restricted building work.

Not all work that requires a building consent is Restricted Building Work. You will find information on the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) website on [Restricted Building Work](#).

Owner-builder exemption

Owner-builders are able to carry out Restricted Building Work on their own home. Before you can use the owner-builder exemption you need to complete a [Statutory declaration as to owner-builder status form](#) showing that you meet the owner-builder criteria.

The [statutory declaration form](#) has to be witnessed and signed by a Justice of the Peace or someone else authorised by law to do so. This form needs to be given to your local council with your application for a building consent, or before the construction of Restricted Building Work on your home starts.

The paperwork – before the project can begin

Step 1 - Do you need a building consent?

Who does it?	When?
You or your agent (designer/builder)	Before you start building
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You can't start any physical work until a Building Consent has been issued. Fines apply if you do.• You may also need a Resource Consent if your project lies outside the requirements of the District or Regional Plan. Check with the Council.• A comprehensive list of building work that does not require a building consent (Schedule 1, Building Act 2004) can be obtained from building.govt.nz	

Step 2 - Apply for a PIM (Project Information Memorandum)

Who does it?	When?
You or your agent (designer/builder)	Before or concurrently with applying for a Building Consent
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A PIM report includes information relevant to your proposed building work such as wind and snow zones, flooding and non-compliance with the District Plan. While a PIM is not mandatory, if you don't get a PIM beforehand, the Council will carry out a compliance and service check to ensure District Plan compliance.• If the Council considers that Regional or District Plan compliance is materially affected by the work involved in the Building Consent, they are obliged to issue a notice (section 37 of the Building Act 2004) that the work requires a Resource Consent. This may halt all building work, or only allow it to proceed to a certain stage prior to a Resource Consent being issued.	

Step 3 - Complete the appropriate consent application form

Who does it?	When?
You or your agent (designer/builder)	Before lodging a Building Consent
<ul style="list-style-type: none">You can get the appropriate application forms from a Council Service Centre or download from waimakariri.govt.nzApplication forms with incomplete information or that are incorrectly filled in will cause your application to be rejected and you will then have to re-apply with complete/correct information.Check with your Council whether you will need a Compliance Schedule (relating to safety features in the project). Typically, but not always, this will be relevant to a commercial building project. You will also need to provide performance standards for the inspection, maintenance and reporting procedures for the safety feature.	

Step 4 - Lodge the Consent Application Form

Who does it?	When?
You or your agent	Only when you are certain the application is correctly filled in and all necessary supporting information has been provided. If the application is incomplete or incorrect, this will cause your application to be rejected and you will have to re-apply with complete/correct information
<ul style="list-style-type: none">For a comprehensive schedule of fees visit waimakariri.govt.nzWhether a deposit or the full fee is required to be paid at the time of lodgement will be determined by the Schedule of Fees.Applications can be lodged at the Council’s Rangiora Service Centre or online via the Council portal (Please note: You must be registered to use the online service). Applications will be vetted by Council staff to ensure completeness.Note that you will need to show how compliance with the Building Code will be achieved.A Producer Statement may be required for certain work within the project (e.g. in the design or after construction). A Producer Statement may be used as supporting evidence from the contractor that work completed is in accordance with the approved building consent. The Producer Statement is signed by a registered engineer, design professional or builder.In the case of a standardised building design, which is intended to be replicated several times (e.g. identical units within a block) a multi proof approval may be used in the consent process. This precludes the need for the same or similar building designs to be assessed repeatedly for Building Code compliance.	

Step 5 - Application Assessment

Who does it?	When?
Your Council	After the application is lodged
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Your Council has up to 20 working days to process the application unless it is a multi proof consent which must be processed within 10 working days.• The Council may employ other specialists (e.g. engineers) to carry out peer reviews of elements of the application.• A Building Consent Officer will ensure that your plans and specifications show sufficient detail and that they comply with the Building Code in the form of:<ul style="list-style-type: none">» An acceptable solution and/or verification method» A determination» A current national multi use approval» A current product certificate» Alternative solution.• If your plans are not compliant with the Building Code or further detail is required, you will be sent a Request for Further Information (RFI). The 20 day processing period is then suspended until the requested information is received.• The number and type of inspections required for your building work will be determined at this time. You will be advised of these when your Consent is granted by way of a Schedule of Inspections.• If a third party is required to carry out some inspections, these will be included in the Schedule of Inspections. Please note it is the applicant/agents responsibility to arrange these.• The amount of time taken for your consent to be processed is reliant on the quality and completeness of the documentation/information.• You can amend your application at any time during processing prior to granting by supplying documentation as applicable to the consenting officer, this will be treated as further information.• The need for a Compliance Schedule will be determined in the assessment of the application.	

Step 6 - Application Validation

Who does it?	When?
Your Council (Senior Building Officer)	When the Building Officer is satisfied your application is fully compliant with the Building Code
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This is a quality assurance check used to certify that the relevant documentation accurately represents how compliance will be achieved.• Please note: Not all jobs require validation, this will be determined at the time the consent is allocated to a Building Consent Officer.	

Step 7 - Advice of Granted Consent

Who does it?	When?
Your Council	As soon as the consent is granted
<ul style="list-style-type: none">A Building Consent Authority must grant a building consent if it is satisfied on reasonable grounds that the provisions of the building code would be met if the building work were properly completed in accordance with the plans and specifications that accompanied the application.The Council will write to you to advise that your Building Consent is to be granted and of any outstanding balance to be paid – you will be sent an invoice for that amount.On granting the consent the Council will also advise you of what inspections are necessary throughout the construction. It will be your responsibility to arrange these inspections. See Steps 10 and 11.	

Step 8 - Pay the Balance of Fees

Who does it?	When?
You or your agent	When you receive advice from the Council that the Building Consent is to be granted
<ul style="list-style-type: none">The fees must be paid in full before any Building Consent is issued.If building work has not started within 12 months of the date of issue of the Consent, the Consent lapses and you will need to re-apply. See Step 14.If you need to change your plans after the Consent is granted, the changes will need written approval from the Owner and the Designer. You will also need approval from Council. See Step 9.	

Step 9 - Plan Changes after Building Consent is issued (Minor Variation/Amendment)

Who does it?	When?
You or your agent	After Building Consent is issued
<ul style="list-style-type: none">You can apply for a minor variation or an amendment to the building consent after it has been granted. All amendments must comply with all requirements of the Building Code and Building Act 2004. See building.govt.nz for details.To apply for an in-office minor variation, you will need to complete the Application for a Minor Variation to a Building Consent form and provide the updated plans/documents to the Building Unit to be assessed. Inspectors can approve some minor variations onsite. To be accepted onsite, you will need to provide the inspector with enough information to show how the variation complies with the Building Code.	

- If a major change (e.g. a change of exterior cladding), you will need to apply for an Amendment by completing an Application for a Building Consent (Form 2) and providing the associated plans and specifications.
- Some changes (e.g. change to bulk or location) may require assessment for compliance with the District Plan and/or Regional Plan.
- Council has 20 working days to process an Amendment. If your plans are not compliant with the Building Code or further detail is required, you will be sent a Request for Further Information (RFI). The 20 day processing period is then suspended until the requested information is received.

The Construction

Inspections throughout the construction process verify that the project is being constructed in accordance with your consent plans and specifications.

Step 10 - Inspection of Work

Who does it?	When?
You or your agent	At least 2-3 full working days before you need the inspection - please note: it may not always be possible to carry out the inspection within the time frame you require.

- The schedule of inspections can be found in your approved Consent documents.
- A standard inspection schedule may include inspections of foundations/siting, slab, drainage, pre-roof structure, roof membrane, half height brick and others. For a comprehensive list of possible inspections see waimakariri.govt.nz
- To arrange an inspection contact the building unit either by phone on 03 311 8906, or by email at bcbooking@wmk.govt.nz
- The Council will ask for your Building Consent number (this acts as a reference number throughout your project).
- Inspection bookings cannot be made for specific times due to the variable durations of previous inspections.
- Inspections cannot be made until the Building Consent is paid for.
- A third party (e.g. engineer) inspection included in the Inspection Schedule needs to be arranged by you.
- A building inspector may refuse to enter your site if he/she considers it unsafe to do so.

Step 11 - Have Plans and Documents Available for Inspector

Who does it?	When?
You or your agent	At the time of inspection

- Wherever possible you should have someone on site to meet the inspector.
- It may also be necessary for you to provide access to some parts of the building for inspection purposes.
- Complete approved consent documentation to be on-site, including plans and specifications and any approved amendments. All documentation to be kept in clean and tidy condition and in order.

Step 12 - Verify Compliance with Consent Documents

Who does it?	When?
The Council's Building Inspector	At the time of the inspection

- If the work does not comply with the Consent documents, you may amend the documents accordingly subject to the approval of the inspector.
- Some minor variations can be addressed by the inspector but more significant changes (e.g. a change of exterior cladding) must be lodged with the Council for approval (amendment).
- All building work must comply with the approved building consent.
- Any deviations from the consent documents will require Council approval. If the change is considered 'minor', then a minor variation may be appropriate and may be addressed on-site by the inspector.

Step 13a - Read the Inspection Notice Before Continuing Work (PASS)

Who does it?	When?
You or your agent	At the completion of the inspection

- The inspection notice will tell you what was inspected and whether the building work has passed or failed the inspection.
- The building work may be passed subject to minor work being completed.
- If the building work has passed the inspection, you may continue work on the project.

Step 13b - Read the Inspection Notice Before Continuing Work (FAIL)

Who does it?	When?
You or your agent	At the completion of the inspection
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The inspection notice will tell you what was inspected and whether the building work has passed or failed the inspection.• If the building work has failed the inspection, you will need to complete the work in accordance with the Consent documents and inspection notice before booking another inspection.• If the inspection determines that the building work has serious deficiencies, a Notice To Fix (NTF) may be issued. This means that you must cease work immediately and attend to the issue(s) raised in the NTF. Not to do so is an offence under the Building Act 2004.	

Step 14 - Extend the Consent if work not started prior to 12 months from date of issue

Who does it?	When?
You or your agent	Prior to the expiry of 12 months from the date of issue
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If you intend to continue with the project and building work won't start within 12 months of the date of issue, you will need to apply for a work start extension. A fee applies for this service.• If building work has not started within 12 months of the date of issue of the Consent, and we have not received a request for a work start extension, then the Consent lapses and you will need to apply for a new Building Consent.	

The work is complete, what now?

Step 15 - Book and Pass a Final Inspection

Who does it?	When?
You or your agent	The inspection should be carried out on completion of the project. As with previous inspections you will need to book at least two days in advance
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contact Council to book a final inspection.• After your final inspection has been passed your file is sent to the Council's Code Compliance Auditor.	

- Final inspection is intended to ensure all work completed under the Building Consent complies with the Consent documents.

Step 16 - Apply for a Code Compliance Certificate (Form 6)

Who does it?	When?
You or your agent	An owner must apply for a Code of Compliance (CCC) after all building work to be carried out under a building consent to that owner is completed

- A Code Compliance Certificate confirms that the Council considers that the work complies with the Building Consent.
- The application must be made to the Council as soon as practicable after the building work is completed and in the prescribed form. If applicable, the owner must include any records of work provided by an LBP and where applicable any energy work certificates.
- The Application for Code Compliance Certificate (Form 6) is available from the Council and downloadable from waimakariri.govt.nz. A copy is provided with the consent documentation. Your building inspector also normally carries a supply of the forms.
- Any fees for Development Contributions, additional inspections or amendment processing time due will need to be paid prior to the issue of the Code Compliance Certificate.
- If a specified system is included in the project, verification of compliance with this is needed prior to the issue of a Code Compliance Certificate (e.g. in the case of a fire alarm).

Step 17 - Verify Compliance with Consent Documents

Who does it?	When?
Your Council	At the time of the inspection

- All inspections, related documentation and on-site photos are checked for completeness and compliance with the Consent.
- If outstanding items are found, you may be requested by the Council’s Code Compliance Auditor to supply additional information or carry out additional works.
- A Code Compliance Certificate cannot be issued until all of the outstanding issues are resolved.
- The Council has 20 working days to issue a Code Compliance Certificate. This does not include any outstanding issues to be addressed e.g. clock suspended.
- Your Code Compliance Certificate is placed on your Council property file for inclusion in any future Land Information Memorandum (LIM).

Glossary

These are some of the terms that you are likely to encounter in the process of applying for and being granted a Building Consent. This is not an exhaustive list of building terms – for a more comprehensive selection of building terms you should refer to the ‘Glossary of Building Terms’ (NZMP 4212:1998) available for purchase from Standards New Zealand.

A

Acceptable Solutions and Verification Methods

Documents published by the Ministry of Building, Innovation and Employment (MBIE). They comprise Acceptable Solutions and Verification Methods which provide methods of compliance with the Building Code. Although optional, these documents are commonly followed in domestic building projects because they provide a straight forward ‘recipe’ for building. (Previously known as Compliance Documents).

Appraisal

An independent assessment of building products, materials, systems or methods of design or construction. Products are assessed for Building Code compliance and fitness for purpose.

B

Building

Any temporary or permanent, movable or immovable structure, including a structure intended for occupation by people, animals, machinery or chattels.

Building Act 2004

An Act which aims to improve control of, and encourage better practices in, building design and construction, so that buildings are designed and built right first time. This will give greater assurance to building owners and users, particularly homeowners, that their building meets standards set out in the Building Code.

Building Code

A set of national, mandatory standards for building work, forming part of the Building Regulations 1992. The New Zealand Building Code is performance based – i.e. it specifies the performance required of a building rather than the particular materials, methods etc. to be used in construction.

Building Consent

Consent issued by a Building Consent Authority (BCA) for building work to begin in accordance with the approved plans and specifications.

Building Consent Authority (BCA)

Building Consent Authorities play a key role in the building control process. Most city and district councils are BCAs. BCAs issue building consents, undertake inspections during construction and issue code compliance certificates, certifying that the finished work complies with the Building Code. They also issue Notices To Fix (NTFs)

and Compliance Schedules. BCAs charge a fee for these services. The amount of that fee depends on the BCA and the amount of work involved, but is generally set for the recovery of reasonable costs. It will be as a proportion of the whole building project to provide assurance that the job has been done properly.

Building Controls Process

The system of consents, inspection and certification of building work, aimed at safeguarding the health and safety of people using any building.

Building Work

The construction, alteration, demolition or removal of a building. Building work also includes sitework or work on an allotment that is likely to affect the extent to which an existing building on the land complies with the Building Code.

C

Certificate of Acceptance

A certificate issued by a Council in special circumstances when a Code Compliance Certificate cannot be issued, which confirms that, to the extent to which an inspection was able to be carried out, the work complies with the Building Code.

Code Compliance Certificate (CCC)

A certificate issued by a Building Consent Authority at the completion of building work, confirming that the building work under the Building Consent complies with the approved plans and specifications at the date of issue of CCC.

Compliance Schedule

A document that lists the inspection, maintenance and reporting procedures for systems in a building (e.g. lifts, fire alarms) to ensure their continued safety of operation. For single residential buildings, compliance schedules are only required if there is a cable car.

Consent Notice

A notice issued under the Resource Management Act 1991 and recorded on the Certificate of Title in respect of the ongoing matters affecting the property (e.g. geotechnical or stormwater disposal).

D

Deposited Plan

Survey plan giving legal definition to property boundaries.

District Plan

A document, generally consisting of maps, policies and rules which sets out the activities permitted on any land governed by a District or City Council. It provides the conditions under which activities are permitted and lists which activities require resource or planning consent.

E

Energy Work Certificate

A certificate given by a licensed plumber, electrician or gas fitter when they have finished, to verify the work has been done in accordance with the relevant codes.

G

Geotechnical Report

A report prepared by a soils engineer, setting out the geotechnical limitations of a site in terms of soil stability, and making recommendations to overcome any limitations.

L

Licensed Building Practitioner (LBP)

Certain types of work will need to be undertaken or supervised by licensed building practitioners.

M

Ministry of Building, Innovation and Employment (MBIE)

The Ministry manages the system that regulates building work and monitors its effectiveness. This includes reviewing the Building Code and producing documents to show how to comply with it. The Ministry also monitors the performance of Building Consent Authorities (BCAs) and District and City Councils, and can investigate complaints.

MultiProof

A MultiProof is a statement by the Ministry of Building, Innovation and Employment that a specific set of building plans and specifications complies with the New Zealand Building Code. Under the Building Act 2004 (as amended in 2009), BCAs must accept a MultiProof as evidence of Building Code compliance. MultiProofs aim to deliver greater certainty of consenting where standardised designs are being

replicated several times. They should also lead to faster processing times at the local level, reduced duplication for volume builders, and lower consenting costs. A MultiProof is not, and does not replace, a building consent.

N

New Zealand Building Code

The New Zealand Building Code sets minimum performance standards that buildings must comply with.

New Zealand Standards

Standards New Zealand provides a variety of standards for the building industry, covering issues such as construction, testing, advice and manufacturing.

Notice to Fix (NTF)

A notice issued by a BCA, Council or Regional Authority for breaches of the Building Act or regulations (e.g. where building work does not comply with the Building Code). It specifies what remedial work must be done and by when. It is an offence to fail to comply with a Notice to Fix, and a building owner can be fined up to \$200,000 plus a further \$20,000 per day as long as the offence continues.

P

Performance Requirement

A term in the Building Code used to describe, either qualitatively or quantitatively, how far the building work must go in meeting a particular Building Code clause's objectives and functional requirements.

Plans and Specifications

The documents according to which building work is proposed to be constructed, altered, demolished or removed. They include proposed procedures for inspection during construction alteration, demolition or removal.

Producer Statement

A statement confirming that plans, specifications or completed works comply with the technical requirements to satisfy the Building Code. A Producer Statement will usually be issued by a recognised specialist (e.g. engineer, architect, appraisal organisation or competent contractor). It is up to the Building Consent Authority to decide whether to rely on such a statement.

Project Information Memorandum (PIM)

A report, issued by the local Council prior to issuing a Building Consent, confirming that building work may proceed, subject to any requirements under legislation other than the Building Act. It may also notify that building work may not be done. It includes information that the Council considers to be relevant to the proposed building work such as potential erosion, subsidence, slippage and flooding.

R

Regional Plans

Prepared by Regional Councils to help manage the resources for which they are responsible.

Request for Information (RFI)

A notice asking for more information.

Resource Consent

A land use consent, issued under the Resource Management Act 1991, by the local Council, for land use not designated a permitted activity in the District Plan.

S

Sitework

Work on a building site, including earthworks, preparatory to or associated with the construction, alteration, demolition or removal of a building.

Specific Design

Calculations and detailed drawings, usually of an engineering nature, by persons with appropriate technical expertise, relating to a design solution specific to a particular project. Specific designs may be supported by a Producer Statement.

Specification

Detailed written instructions containing details of work to be done and materials to be used in the construction of a building. See also Plans and Specifications.

V

Verification Method

A method by which building work may be verified for compliance with the Building Code. Verification Methods can include calculations, laboratory tests or tests in situ. Verification Methods are published in the Ministry of Building, Innovation and Employment's Compliance Documents.

Waimakariri District Council

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Service Centres:

Rangiora Service Centre

215 High Street, Rangiora - 0800 965 468

Kaiapoi Service Centre

176 Williams Street, Kaiapoi - 03 375 5009

Oxford Service Centre

34 Main Street, Oxford - 03 311 9005

Find out more at waimakariri.govt.nz