

Latest building consent news from Selwyn

In this newsletter

- Proposed District Plan and Variation 1 decision released – impact on your applications
- Update on our workload
- Feedback, compliments, and complaints
- Notional boundaries
- MBIE updates

Proposed District Plan and Variation 1 decision released – impact on your applications

Decision on the Proposed District Plan and Variation 1 were approved by Council and became effective or operative on 19 August 2023.

The new Selwyn District Plan contains new rules and processes to ensure that subdivisions, residential units and principal buildings are constructed so that they are unlikely to be affected by inundation in a 200-year annual return interval (ARI) flood event.

What does this mean for my application?

This requires that each new residential unit, principal building and additions to an existing residential unit or principal building within the Plains (including townships) have a finished floor height of at least 300mm above the 200-year annual return interval flood event.

You may wish to review your application against the new District Plan rules and amend your application if necessary.

How does this affect my building consent application?

Please be aware that the following will be required before submitting your building consent:

- A SDC flood assessment certificate (FAC) is included if the dwelling, principal building, or alteration is >25m, or
- An ECan flood assessment report if the application is for a rural property, and it falls within the plains flood management overlay where the application is for a dwelling, principal building, or any other building which contains internal linings.

What is a flood assessment certificate?

The Flood Assessment Certificate issued by Selwyn District Council will certify information provided by the applicant that confirms:

- that the site or activity is not located on land that within a High Hazard Area,
- whether or not the site or activity is likely to be subject to inundation in a 200-year ARI flood event, and
- if the site or activity is likely to be subject to inundation in a 200-year ARI flood event, the minimum finished floor level for the building that is at least 300mm above the 200-year ARI flood event.

For new subdivisions, a Flood Assessment Certificate will be issued for each new lot created through the subdivision consent process.

For existing lots, the Flood Assessment Certificate will be issued at either land use consent stage or building consent stage (whichever comes first).

An application for a Flood Assessment Certificate will need to include some detailed property information and a proposed finished floor level that is 300mm above the 200-year ARI flood event.

Flood Assessment Certificates are valid for 2 years from the date of issue.

For further information go to the [flood assessment certificate](#) page on our website which is being regularly updated as we all navigate the new rules and apply them to a range of situations.

[Update on our workload](#)

Inspection timeframes

Our inspections are currently around 48 hours timeframe from booking. Please note that some days this timeframe may expand out due to winter ills and chills.

Processing timeframes

At the end of July:

- The average working days for building consents being issued is 14 days (note this is an average).
- 75% of applications were processed within 20 working days.
- New commercial consents are being processed generally within 24 working days.

Note that timeframes depend on the quality of your application, and over the next couple of months may be impacted by implementation of the flood assessment certificate requirements.

Feedback, compliments, and complaints

We know that there are times when you are keen to provide feedback on the services our team provide.

This feedback, compliment or complaint is important to us to:

- help us understand the pain points and issues our customers encounter, and
- enable us to continuously improve our systems and processes.

We have a robust process to investigate any concerns raised, which includes providing findings back to our customers.

To do this efficiently and effectively we ask that if you are providing feedback, giving a compliment, or making a complaint, that you do so using our online form. This simple form will ensure your information gets to us as quickly as possible so that we can address them.

You can find more information on the process under [feedback, compliments & complaints](#) on our website.

Notional Boundaries

We have noted an increase in residential multi-unit applications in recent months, with an associated increase in notional boundaries being incorrectly detailed.

A notional boundary is required to be shown where your building consent application includes an attached or detached second building containing sleeping risk groups.

Where the minimum wall and eave clearances to the notional boundary are not able to be achieved, you will need to consider how construction elements are incorporated into the design with the correct fire resistance rating (FRR) applied.

Examples of when notional boundaries will need to be considered include sleepouts, family flats, minor second dwelling, multiunit dwellings, garage conversions.

Some key things to remember are:

- Show the location of the notional boundary on the site and floor plans.
- Where clearances of 1.0m to the cladding or 0.65m to the eave (gutter) from the boundary are not achieved an FRR will be required.
- Where an FRR is required clearly identify the location of all elements on the floor plans (including eaves and cavities).
- Where residential units are attached, an intertenancy wall will need to be considered (Fire, structural and acoustic considerations).

MBIE updates

Some changes coming up later in the year to be aware of:

- From 5 October, the Construction Contracts (Retention Money) Amendment Act 2023 comes into force.

The Amendment Act builds on retention money provisions already in the Construction Contracts Act 2002 by strengthening and clarifying the retentions regime, and in particular, protection for subcontractors' retention money.

- From 11 December, new product information requirements come into force.

The new regulations have been made to provide building product users with information about how building products contribute to compliance with the Building Code. They place obligations on Aotearoa New Zealand-based manufacturers, importers, retailers, and distributors.