

Latest building consent news from Selwyn

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Changes to when customers can apply for a building consent

From 6 June the process for customers who can apply for a building consent will change if the land that they are building on is still going through the subdivision consent process.

What's changed?

- Homeowners building on a newly subdivided land will be able to apply for a building consent only after the developer has received Council's section 224(c) certificate (ie, compliance with all conditions of their subdivision resource consent).
- There will be some exceptions on a case-by-case basis (eg comprehensive multi-unit developments) conditional on early engagement between the developers and the Council's building, planning and infrastructure teams reaching agreement on specific conditions.

Why the change to the process?

- Processing a subdivision consent is a complex matter that requires the Council to make a number of significant decisions:
 - in regard to natural hazards, such as flooding, that may affect the land,
 - how the subdivision may impact surrounding land and infrastructure, and
 - how all of this should be mitigated.
- Where an application is submitted before a s224 is issued, not all subdivision information is available to enable complete design and processing (eg; finished site and floor level requirements,

service locations, etc), which means:

- that we are making assumptions during design and processing, and
 - it can lead to the need for amendments down the track, adding both time and cost for all parties concerned.
- The council has made this decision due to:
 - the heightened concern about building on flood-prone land following Cyclone Gabrielle and the general increased frequency of severe weather and flooding events due to climate change,
 - seeing an increase in the number of subdivisions in areas affected by natural hazards,
 - providing certainty to landowners of any conditions and requirements on building on the land that may be imposed as part of the subdivision process, and
 - ensuring all the subdivision consent requirements, particularly those mitigating any natural hazards, are met before building consent is issued.
 - A number of other councils are already doing this, so it's not new.

You can find more information on what to consider when [planning your build](#) on our website.

Update on our workload

Inspection timeframes

Our inspections remain busy as the bubble of work consented in 2022 goes into construction phase. Our inspection workload has been impacted by availability of contractors supporting our team which has pushed inspection bookings out to a week. We are working on bring this back to the 48 timeframe as soon as we can.

You can continue to help us by:

- ensuring you have completed the work required for each inspection to eliminate the need for reinspection's,
- submitting required documentation early – you know the drill; you don't have to wait for the inspector to request it, and
- being organised – so if things change on site, let us know so we can cancel your inspection and rebook it for a suitable day.

And thank you for your ongoing patience.

Processing timeframes

At the end of April:

- The average working days for building consents being issued is 12 days (note this is an average)
- 89% of applications were processed within 20 working days

Note:

- Consents that were already over the 20 working days last year and have an outstanding RFI are still having an impact on our current compliance with the 20 day statutory timeframe
- We received a new bubble of incoming applications at the end of April, which is due to the new H1 insulation requirements that became mandatory from 1 May – this is likely to impact our timeframes, so please plan for slightly longer timeframes than those mentioned above for a period of time
- The good news is:
 - New residential consents are being processed within the 20 day statutory timeframe
 - New commercial consents are being processed generally within 24 working days

Note that timeframes depend on the quality of your application.

Reminder about inspection onsite requirements

- Ensure that there is suitable signage in place to help our inspectors find your site, particularly in rural or remote areas.
- The building inspector must have full and safe access to inspect all the required elements of the building work (eg scaffolding, fall restraint, scissor lift, etc) such as flat roofs, chimney back flashings, internal gutters, etc.
- You must have the approved building consent documents available on site that are clearly legible for the inspector to reference (ie hard copy in good condition or on a device minimum A4 paper size).
- Someone must be onsite if your building is occupied, or where a site induction is required by the contactor.

Amendments to plans after 1 May – changes to H1

Please be aware that any **significant change** to a consented building after 1 May will now need to meet the new H1 requirements.

This means you will need [an amendment](#) to your building consent. These changes could include but are not limited to:

- an R-value reduction
- building footprint
- openings and wall construction/timber framing ratio.

If the change is comparable, such as a like for like product substitution of insulation, then this could be assessed as a [minor variation](#).

If you're unsure, please contact us to discuss.

Professional partner programme consent checklist reminder

In March we introduced a new consent checklist for LBPs to complete for applications submitted under our professional partnership programme. This new form is to check that the application meets the build and application criteria of the programme.

Partners were advised of this new requirement in PPP newsletter emailed to them in March.

This is a reminder that the leniency period for our partners to include this new form with their applications will end at the end of this month. From 1 June 2023 PPP applications submitted without the consent checklist will be rejected and need to be resubmitted with the checklist included.

This new checklist has been introduced to:

- help ensure that applications continue through the programme efficiently because the LBP designer carries out a pre-submission check to ensure the application meets all required criteria, and
- save precious time for your application, hopefully minimising the need for us to question or reject an application through the programme.

The [professional partnership consent checklist](#) template is available on our website.

Latest MBIE updates

- [NZ claims resolution services launches](#)
- [Consultation open on the proposed changes to the building levy – closing date 29 May 2023](#)
- [Inspection and maintenance of specified systems](#)
- [H1 energy efficiency updates reach implementation milestone](#)
 - You may also find the [Repairs and replacements - H1 Compliance](#) information around building work repairs and replacements useful
- [Building product information requirements guidance document](#)
- [BuiltReady scheme guidance](#)