

Changes of Use

Many building alterations involve construction that changes the use of all or parts of the existing buildings. A good example of this in the residential area is adding bedrooms, bathrooms and kitchens in garages and basements. Council needs to make sure that the new building work complies with the New Zealand Building Code and the existing building is upgraded to comply with the Building Code as far as can reasonable be achieved in the areas that are being altered.

Where new household units are being created the building must be upgraded to comply as nearly as is reasonably practicable with the New Zealand Building Code in all respects.

Some of the more common areas that are frequently overlooked by applicants are insulation in walls, ensuring enough difference in heights between outside ground levels and any new floor levels (this ensures stormwater will not flow into these areas) structural and fire protection upgrading.

Where buildings are constructed on existing deck areas or conservatories are being re-developed the foundations and bracing will also need to be checked.

Often the change of use may be from a residential dwelling to a café or public place. These may require the provision of accessible toilets and ramps. It is important that a fire report be attached to your Building Consent.

If you are thinking about building works that will change the use of the existing area you should talk to Council building staff or a professional designer to ensure you have looked at all of the necessary areas.

Planning requirements

Your building consent will also be checked for planning compliance. Some common issues that occur are daylight controls, site coverage, front yards and for sleepouts, parking spaces. Please talk to Council's Duty Planner if you have any queries about these areas.

Standard of documentation

All documentation submitted with your application must be accurately drawn to an appropriate scale for the job, be fully dimensioned and detail all materials to be used.

Specifications for the building work are also required, the specification should further define the building work including details of all materials to be used, finishes, and equipment to be installed. The specification must be specific to the project, it is not acceptable to simply state 'installed to manufacturers instructions', as in many cases product manufacturers have several installation options. Likewise it is not acceptable to make statements such as 'fixed in

accordance with NZS3604:1999' as fixing types vary depending on wind loads and often more than one fixing option is provided in the standard. Also if you intend to use an alternative proprietary fixing which is an alternative solution the Council must know exactly what they are approving and can assess your project appropriately.

Checklist of the type of information required for your Building Consent Application

- Application form COMPLETED & signed**
- All information identified on the cover sheet**
- Certificate of Title:** Recent search copy less than 6 months old, plus a sale & purchase agreement if not in the applicant's name. A subdivision scheme plan is required for a new site where Title is not yet available.
- Copies of drawings as specified in the cover sheet**
- Site Plan** showing buildings, levels and dimensions.
- Outline Floor plans (for all floors)**
- Outline Elevations**
- Outline Cross Sections**
- Project Information Memorandum** (if already issued)
- Foundation Plans (timber or concrete slab)**
- Drainage Plans**
- Detailed Floor Plans**
- Detailed Elevations**
- Cross Sections**
- Timber Treatment**
- Framing Details**
- Construction Details**
- Weathertightness Details**
- Internal Waterproofing Details**
- Plumbing Details**
- Specifications**
- Bracing Design**
- Roof Truss Design**
- Ground Conditions report**
- Engineers Details & Producer Statement**
- Sediment Control Management Plan**

The publication *Checklist for Lodging a Building Consent* outlines in detail the information required by Council to process a Building Consent Application.

Glossary of Terms

DBH - Department of Building and Housing

LIM - Land Information Memorandum

PIM - Project Information Memorandum

Useful step-by-step guides can be found at www.consumerbuild.org.nz which can help you to understand the processes required.

More User Guides in this series are

- Accessory Buildings
- Change of Use
- Demolition
- Effluent Disposal
- New Dwellings
- Relocating a Dwelling
- Transportable Buildings
- Wet Area Showers

Otherwise visit your friendly customer services officer at Nelson City Council