

Building Alterations and Additions Garages / Sheds / Sleepouts

Building consent applications can now be lodged online at <https://consents-westcoast.abcs.co.nz>. You still need to pay a deposit and this can be done by internet banking referencing the applicant name and site address to which the building work relates.

Hard copy applications will still be accepted and these must be made on the prescribed form.

Applications and other required forms including a schedule of fees are available from Council offices or on our website www.bullerdc.govt.nz.

Building Alterations and Additions

Under the Building Act 2004, **building work** (relevant to alterations and renovations) which requires consent includes:

- Alterations, additions and many structural repairs to existing buildings, for example, removing or changing structural load-bearing walls. In some cases you will need a building consent to replace all wall linings at once as they may serve a structural purpose.
- Alterations to inter-tenancy walls, ie those separating units in multi-unit developments will need building consent.
- Demolition of existing buildings and structures or the removal or relocation of existing buildings.
- Sitework, for example, earthworks for a new extension.
- The construction of decks one metre or more in height above ground level.
- Retaining walls that are above 1.5 metres in height above ground level (if they will retain driveways or structures the 1.5m height limit does not apply).
- Changing building use, for example, converting your garage into a bedroom.
- Plumbing or drainage work (other than routine maintenance).
- Installing/replacing an inbuilt, free-standing solid fuel burner, heater or open fire place.
- Putting in a swimming or spa pool.
- Installing communications aerials for television repeaters, mobile phones or radio (but not standard home television antennae).
- Construction of a fence over 2 metres high or substantial fences such as a fence made out of concrete requiring heavy foundations.

- The Fencing Act 1978 applies to all new/altered fences regardless of height.

Garages, Sheds, Sleepouts

Accessory Buildings such as garages, sheds and sleepouts larger than 10 square metres or closer than their height to a boundary require a Building Consent before work begins.

It is also important to contact Council when you may be looking at **changing the use of a building**, such as a shed into a sleepout for example. Most of these changes will require building works and a building consent.

If you intend to line the interior wall to your garage or shed you will need to include details of the proposed lining materials in the plans and specifications provided for Building Consent.

Typically most unlined garages consist of metal cladding fixed to timber framing. Moisture which penetrates through the cladding joints or around window frames has the ability to dry and any deterioration in the framing can be visually detected before structural failure occurs.

If you line the internal walls of your garage this is no longer possible and you may need to install the exterior cladding over a drained and ventilated cavity.

Plumbing and drainage

Details of storm water disposal including down-pipe size and location(s) should be shown on the site plan with an indication of where it discharges to (ie. into an existing storm water system or to a soak hole).

Where a project requires existing sewer or storm water drains to be rerouted then full details in the form of a specification and drainage plan are required stating to which standard the work will be installed to and indicating the extent of the work.

Fines for building without consent can be up to \$200,000

Fire walls

Where your building is close to a boundary you may need to install fire rating to the walls to prevent fire from spreading to adjacent properties.

Converting a shed to accommodation?

Most sheds are specifically designed for use as a shed, not for accommodation purposes and require a building consent application for change of use. This means that a registered engineer would need to review and approve any changes to the shed.

Many sheds do not have sufficient bracing to be able to support ceiling battens and internal walls and you wouldn't be able to insulate and line them. The shed would need to comply with the NZ Building Code and current standards such as ventilation and light requirements.

Council suggests that you contact a designer to discuss your plans before lodging a building consent for the alterations. If plans are lodged without all the required information they will be put on Hold until this is received. If this information is not received within three months, your application will be cancelled.

District Plan requirements

Creating extra accommodation on site may also not be a permitted activity under the Buller District Plan which limits habitable building (or part buildings) in the Residential and Commercial zones to a maximum of two per site, even if they are not self-contained, and you may also not comply with the maximum site coverage.

Other 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 aspects.

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's 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 manufacturer's 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' 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 Building Consent Authority must know exactly what they are approving so that they can assess your project appropriately.

Key Requirements

- Completed application form and deposit.
- A current copy of the Certificate of Title, Lease, Agreement for Sale and Purchase, or other document showing full name of legal owner(s) of the building.
- A complete Site Plan showing the position of the Building Alterations and Additions in relation to legal boundaries and other buildings on the site.
- A Pile layout and Sub-floor Bracing Calculations detailing anchor/braced/cantilevered piles for timber floors.
- A complete Floor Plan showing all partitions and intended use of spaces for the building and all proposed internal or external alterations.
- Elevations clearly identifying new work, window and door openings, materials to be used, and showing floor heights from original and proposed ground lines.
- A Cross Section through any areas of the building to be altered including: foundation details; framing to walls / rafters / trusses; and lintel and beam sizes.
- Construction Details showing fixings and flashings.
- Wall Bracing Plan and Calculations.
- Roof Truss Design.
- Provisions for disposal of storm water and foul water. If your site is in a rural area and you increase the number of bedrooms on the site, confirmation of the septic tank capacity will be required (A stick inserted down the mushroom vent will determine the liquid depth and this multiplied by the internal length and width in metres will give the liquid capacity in cubic metres (at least 4.5 cubic metres/or 4500 litres).
- Written Specifications.
- A written schedule confirming the Building Work will comply with the Building Code.
- If the work is Restricted Building Work, a design certificate from a registered architect or LBP designer is required unless the work being done is by an owner/builder.

Appointments Only by Arrangement

Westport office: 788-9111

Reefton office: 732-8821