

Building Consents for Commercial Work

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.

What is a building consent?

A building consent is the formal approval issued by a building consent authority that certain works meet the requirements of the New Zealand Building Act, Building Regulations, and Building Code.

**IF A BUILDING CONSENT IS REQUIRED
YOU CANNOT START WORK UNTIL
THIS HAS BEEN ISSUED.**

Do I need a consent?

A building consent is required for all building work unless it is exempt under Schedule 1 of the Building Act 2004 – copies of Schedule 1 are available from Council or can be viewed on the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's Building & Housing Information website at www.building.govt.nz.

If you would like Council to confirm whether your project is exempt under Schedule 1 you will need to supply scale plans of the project (including a site plan where applicable). An inspector will assess your plans and give you written confirmation as to whether a consent is required.

It is anticipated that the majority of applications should be able to be assessed in approximately 15 minutes and a small charge would be applicable. The processing of more complex applications would be charged out on an hourly basis or part thereof.

What is a PIM?

A Project Information Memorandum (PIM) is a report provided to a person who is considering carrying out building work that requires a building consent. The report provides information on any special features of the land

and regulatory requirements likely to be relevant to proposed building work. Used appropriately, a PIM can be an extremely useful tool to help inform design requirements, and reduce time and costs during the consent approval process.

Council does not issue PIM's unless one has specifically been requested.

How much does a building consent cost?

This varies on the type of work being carried out and is calculated on administration and processing costs, the number of inspections required and any other fees applicable such as levies Council has to pay to the Government and for building research. A Fees and Charges information sheet is available on our website. A deposit is required to accompany all building consent applications with any additional costs to be paid before the consent is released.

How do I apply for a consent?

Application packs are available from Council offices in Westport and Reefton, or from our website. The application form must be completed fully and the required information should be printed to ensure that it is clearly understood. You may also apply online through our website.

A comprehensive check list with required supporting documentation is also included in these packs for residential or commercial building consents and must be completed. Your application must also include proof of ownership, one copy of the plans (drawn to scale) and specifications, and the required deposit. Hardcopy applications will be scanned in to the electronic system by Council staff.

It is not acceptable to make statements such as 'fixed in accordance with NZS3604' Council must know exactly what they are approving so

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

that they can assess your project appropriately. There may also be a requirement to make application to connect to reticulated water, stormwater or sewer systems or to have an approved vehicle crossing installed to the site.

If you are proposing to build in an area where there is no reticulated sewerage disposal system then consent from the West Coast Regional Council (WCRC) may be required. Buller District Council may approve applications under delegated authority from the WCRC for residential systems only.

Applications forms are available from Council for these approvals and should accompany your building consent application.

Your application may include a Producer Statement which is an established industry practice mechanism for satisfying compliance with all or part of the Building Code. The statements must be in the form of a written certificate or statement, signed by the professional, be accompanied by calculations if applicable and must clearly identify the scope of work.

**IF ALL REQUIRED INFORMATION
HAS NOT BEEN PROVIDED
YOUR APPLICATION WILL NOT
BE PROCESSED.**

What is checked and how long does it take for my application to be processed?

All applications are first reviewed by the Planners to make sure they comply with the rules in the District Plan such as distances from boundaries, recession planes and the intended use of the building.

If the project does not comply the planners will contact you to discuss any issues and advise you if a resource consent is required. The consent may be issued even if a resource consent is required but work may not be able to start until the resource consent has been granted.

The building officers then check the application to make sure that if the work is constructed in accordance with the submitted plans and specifications it will comply with the requirements of the New Zealand Building Act, Building Regulations, and Building Code.

Technical building work outside the area of Council's expertise may require peer review with any associated costs are payable by the applicant.

The inspectors will also identify the inspections

required to verify compliance with the consent documents and these will be listed on the consent. If an engineer or other person is to carry out an inspection this will also be noted on your consent documents.

If compliance has been achieved a building consent will be generated and this will be emailed to the owner and agent (if a contact email address has been provided) together with copies of the approved plans and specifications. A hardcopy of the consent and approved plans and specifications will also be provided.

A building consent must be granted and issued within 20 working days unless it is a multi proof consent in which case this is reduced to 10 working days. However, if further information is required your application will be put on hold until the information is received. The consent will not be released until all fees have been paid.



Is a Compliance Schedule required?

The Building Act recognises that there are many safety features in buildings that need to operate effectively to ensure a building is safe and healthy for the public to enter, occupy or work within. If your building will have any of these specified systems a Compliance Schedule will be required and these systems must be identified in the building consent application including their type, location, and inspection and monitoring regimes. The Compliance Schedule will be issued at the same time the Code Compliance Certificate is issued and will list the specified systems and also include performance, monitoring and reporting requirements for each system.

Inspections

Periodic inspections are required to verify compliance with the approved consent and plans. Please allow a minimum of 24 hours notice (preferably longer for rural areas) to ensure the inspection can be carried out at a time that is suitable for you.

To book an inspection contact the customer services staff at Council in either Westport phone 788-9111 or Reefton phone 732-8821. When booking the inspection you need to know the consent number, site location, type of inspection, contact person and phone number and who the LBP is if the work involves restricted building work.

The inspector will check that the work complies and record these details.

THE APPROVED PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS MUST BE AVAILABLE ON SITE OR THE INSPECTION MAY NOT BE CARRIED OUT AND A FURTHER INSPECTION REQUIRED WITH AN ADDITIONAL FEE.

What if the work does not comply?

Extremely minor work may be able to be remedied and approved at the time of inspection. However any other non-compliance will be recorded in an Inspection Notice which will detail the actions that need to be taken. This could include what work needs to be remedied, whether a further inspection will be required, whether an amendment is needed if a change has been made or in serious cases whether work must stop immediately and if a Notice to Fix is likely to be issued.

What if I want to change my plans after the consent has been issued?

You need to notify Council of any changes to the approved plans. If the change is minor and doesn't affect compliance with the Building Code it may be possible for the inspector to note this on the on-site plans and amend Council's records. However, if the change is more significant an application for an amendment is required which may require amended plans.

There is an application form available from Council offices in Westport and Reefton and from the Council website to do this. The amendment is treated like a new consent application with input from the Planners, and processed to ensure the changes will still comply with the New Zealand Building Act, Building Regulations, and Building Code. Once the processing has been completed the fee will be calculated before the amendment documents will be issued.

How long does a building consent last?

Work must start within 12 months of the consent issue date or the consent will automatically lapse. If you are unable to start work within this time you must contact Council to apply for an extension of time.



Two years after the consent issue date Council must decide whether to issue a Code Compliance Certificate (CCC), which is a document confirming that work has been completed in accordance with the approved documents. If work has not been completed within this time you must contact Council and apply for an extension of time or the CCC will be refused. You should note that a CCC may be issued at a later date once work has been completed at the discretion of Council.

Can the building be used before a Code Compliance Certificate is issued?

It is an offence to permit public use of a building for which a CCC or Certificate for Public Use has not been issued. A Certificate for Public Use certifies that Council is satisfied on reasonable grounds that members of the public can use the premises or specified parts of the premises safely. There is an application form to apply for this certificate and it is likely that an inspection will be required. The cost of this certificate is based on the time taken to process the application plus an administration fee.

What do I do when the work is completed?

Once work is completed you need to contact Council to arrange for a final inspection to confirm that all the work complies with the approved consent documents. You must then apply for a CCC. You can apply for a CCC through your electronic consent on line or Council is able to provide you with an application form.

You must also ensure that any other required documents are included with this application eg Producer Statements, Records of Work from LBP's, electrical and/or gas certificates etc. If there is anything outstanding the application will be put on hold.

COUNCIL IS UNABLE TO ISSUE A CCC WITHOUT A FORMAL APPLICATION AND ALL REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

If all the work complies and all required documentation has been received Council then has 20 working days to issue the CCC.

**Appointments Only by Arrangement
Westport office: 788-9111
Reefton office: 732-8821**

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