

# Building Consents and the Process

## What is a Building Consent?

A Building Consent is the formal approval issued by a Building Consent Authority that the proposed building work meets the requirements of the New Zealand Building Act 2004, Building Regulations and Building Code.

## How long does it take to process a Building Consent Application?

The New Zealand Building Act 2004 states that a building consent must be granted or refused within 20 working days from application date. However, if information is found to be lacking, the clock is stopped (suspended) and does not restart until the further information requested is provided to the required standard.

## Lapse of Building Consent

A building consent lapses and is of no effect if the building work has not commenced within 12 months after the date of issue.

## **What do I have to include with my application?**

Building Consent applications can be complex. We recommend that you engage a professional to help with the design work and drawings. Applications must include:

- Application form that has been completed, correctly signed and dated.
- Yellow Checklist that has been completely filled in.
- 2 sets of plans.
- Current Certificate of Title, Less than 3 months old.
- 2 sets of specifications.
- 2 sets of engineering calculations and report (if applicable).
- 2 sets of wall bracing calculations (if applicable).
- 2 sets of other documentation as stated on Application checklists relevant to your project.

## **How will I know when my Building Consent is granted?**

You will receive a letter stating that your Building Consent is ready once the remainder of the fees have been paid and an invoice showing any outstanding monies owing. Once you have paid the fees your consent can then be issued.

## **What Inspections do I need?**

When your Building Consent application is being processed the Building Control Officer will do an assessment to determine what inspections will be necessary. This is so they can be satisfied that your

building work will achieve compliance with the plans that were approved. A list of inspections will be included on your Building Consent plans.

### **When can I book my first Inspection?**

Once your building consent has been issued you may book an inspection by phoning Customer Services on 0800 746 467. At least 24 hours notice is required for an inspection, but if there are no available inspection times left, the inspection will have to be booked for the next available time which could be 2-3 days later.

When booking your inspection please have the following details available to give to Customer Services:

- Building consent number.
- Address of site.
- Contact phone number of person on site.
- Type of Inspection (e.g. foundation, solid fuel heater, preline, postline, final, etc).
- Preferred day/time.

### **Do I have to be there when the inspection takes place?**

Yes, the contact person (e.g. builder, site manager, owner, agent) is required to be on site for all inspections with their copy of the stamped approved plans.

## **Do I need a final inspection (CCC inspection)?**

Yes, all building consents require a final inspection. Your consented building work should be completed within two years of the date that the building consent was issued.

If you cannot complete the work within this timeframe it is essential that you contact us to discuss an extension.

When all work has been completed in accordance with the building consent, and all relevant information provided, a Code Compliance Certificate will be issued.

## **The Consenting Process**

The Building Consent process may seem scary at first, but by knowing the process and what to expect can make it less daunting.

The documentation for even the most simplistic job passes through many hands including designers, builders, plumbers, homeowners, developers and the Building Consents Authority (BCA). Plans and specifications submitted as part of a building consent application must be up to an acceptable standard. If they are inadequate, further information will be requested and this will halt the application processing until the information is provided.

It is important to remember that the BCA is looking for compliance with the Building Code. The clearer the documentation, the less likely problems will occur. Good

planning and documentation provides a solid foundation for everyone involved in the building process. We recommend the use of a professional building consultant, draughts person or architect.

When you have all relevant documentation prepared and the Building Consent Application form and yellow checklist completely filled out, submit your building consent to any Council office. If your project is quite complex a prelodgement meeting with one of the Building Control Officers will be required. These meetings take place in the Matamata office by appointment.

Once the Building Consent Application is accepted it then gets added into the Council's computer system and the clock is started. The Building Consent Authority (Matamata-Piako District Council) has 20 working days to process the application.

Once in the Council's computer system, the application is sent to the Planning department to be checked against the District Plan for the PIM (Project Information Memorandum) to be processed.

If the project will affect Council water, wastewater, or stormwater services the application will be sent to the Engineering department for their comments.

The application is then passed to the Building Control Officer to check that the project meets the requirements of the Building Code by using a processing checklist. If

the Building Consent Officer finds that the information or designs provided with the application are insufficient to ensure that the project meets the requirements of the building code, a request is made for further information. The processing time is suspended until that information has been received by the Council. Time is not suspended if the application requires the input of the New Zealand Fire Service. They have ten working days to provide a memorandum concerning fire escapes and access for firefighting.

Once the Building Control Officer has checked that the proposed building project will meet the requirements of the building code, and once we have received planning and engineering comments back, the building consent can be granted. A letter requesting for fees and an invoice will be sent to the owner/agent requesting payment prior to the Building Consent being issued. No physical work can be started until the Council has issued Building Consent and resource consent. If you start to build before this, you are liable for a fine.

When the Building Consent and Resource Consent (if applicable) have been issued and approved plans sent to the agent, work may commence. The building consent plans will have a list of inspections that are required to be carried out by the Building Control Officer to ensure that the building project is being built according to the approved building consent. You will need to book an inspection time with Customer Services on 0800 746 467 at least 24 hours in advance.

Once all work is complete, a final inspection can be booked. If the Building Control Officer is satisfied that all work is completed and complies with the approved plans and building code, a Code Compliance Certificate (CCC) can be issued. If not, the Building Control Officer will inform the Agent of what needs to be rectified in order to pass the final Inspection.

### **Timelines for Building Consents**

- All building consents and PIM's have a 20 working day statutory time frame for processing.
- A building consent lapses and is of no effect if the building work has not commenced within 12 months after the date of issue. If you wish to extend this period you will need to arrange with Council for an extension.
- Applications for a final inspection and a Code Compliance Certificate must be made as soon as practicable after the building work has been completed. If work has not been completed within 2 years after the date was issued any further period must be agreed with between the owner and Council.
- There is a 20 day timeframe to issue a CCC upon notification of completion of building work.

### **What is the council's role?**

The Council administers the Building Act and building regulations within Matamata-Piako district by:

- Issuing Project Information Memoranda (PIMs).

- Processing Building Consent applications.
- Granting or refusing waivers or modifications of the New Zealand Building Code (NZBC).
- Issuing Code Compliance Certificates (CCCs).
- Issuing compliance schedules and recording building warrants of fitness for buildings other than single residential dwellings.
- Enforcing the provisions of the Building Act, the building regulations and the NZBC.
- Maintaining records of building information and making them available to the public.

### **What's your role?**

If you are the owner of a property where building, site works, demolition, plumbing or drainage works are to be done, the Building Act places many responsibilities on you including legal responsibility if any part of the project does not meet Building Act requirements. This includes responsibility for your contractors.