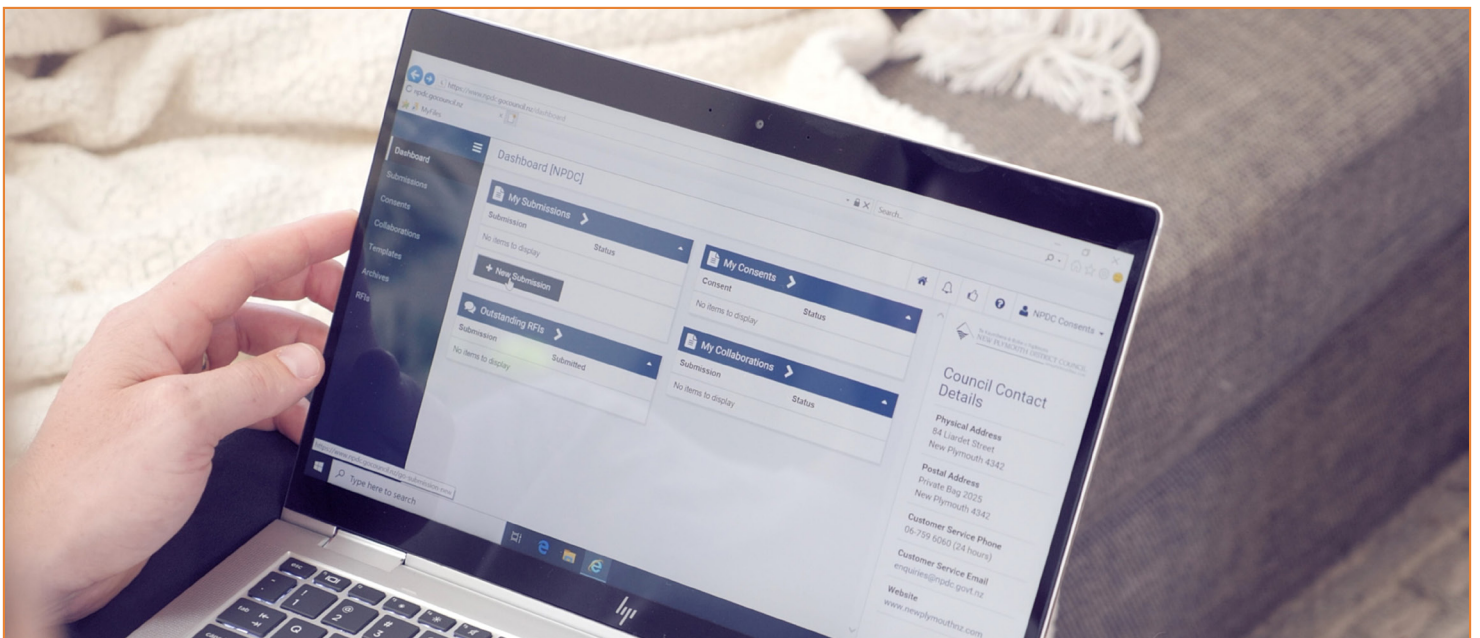


Information about the building consent process



Te Kaunihera-ā-Rohe o Ngāmotu

**New Plymouth
District Council**



What is a building consent?

A building consent is a formal approval that we grant as a Council under the Building Act 2004 that allows you to carry out building work. Building work includes work in connection with the construction, alteration, demolition or removal of a building. New Plymouth District Council (NPDC) will issue a building consent only when it is satisfied that the proposed building work will meet the requirements of the Building Code.

You cannot carry out any building work unless you have a building consent. There are a few minor exceptions to this, as set out in the Building Act 2004 (Schedule 1), e.g. decks less than 1.5m in height and retaining walls less than 1.5m high that do not support any additional load such as vehicles on a road.

All building work must meet the minimum requirements of the Building Code even if no building consent is required.

All building work must comply with the New Plymouth District Plan and Resource Management Act (RMA) 1991. A building consent for food premises (e.g. cafés, takeaways, restaurants, bars, etc.), hairdressing salons, and other types of businesses that require registration, also require approval from the Environmental Health team under various pieces of legislation, and can be assessed concurrently while your building consent is being processed.

What is a project information memorandum (PIM)?

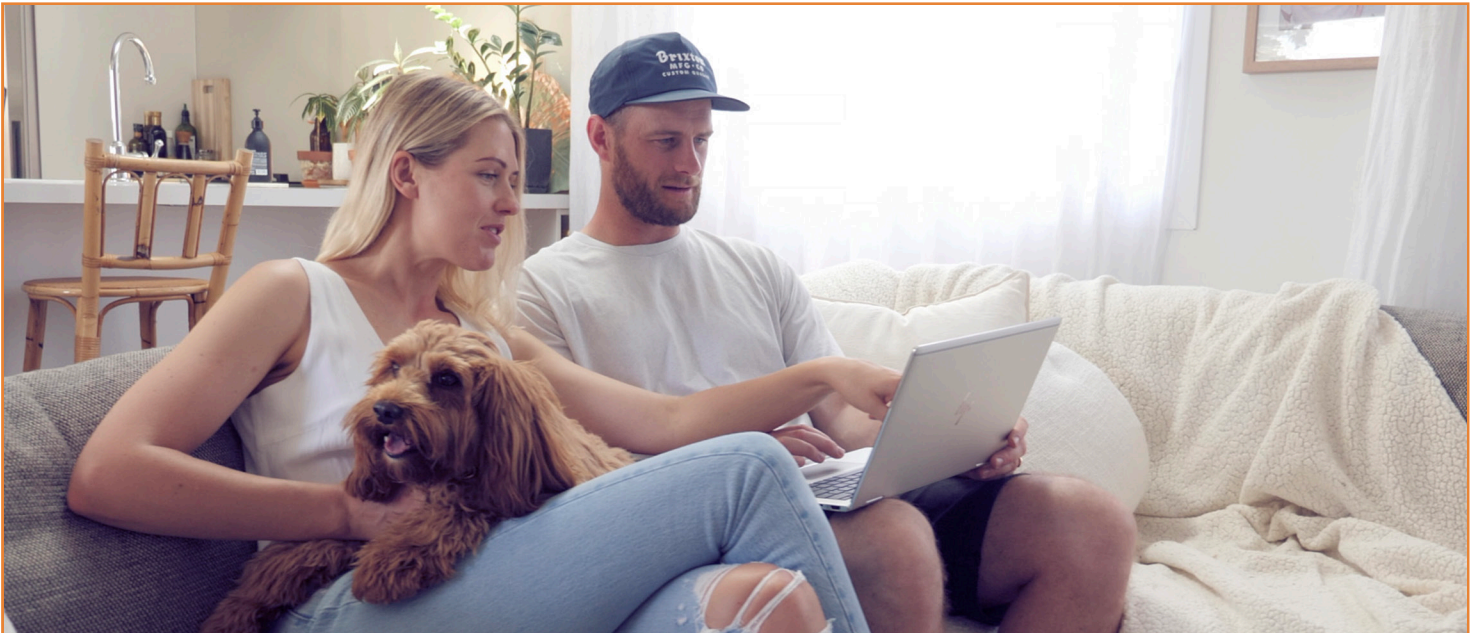
A PIM is an NPDC report that provides information about the land and the requirements of other Acts that might be relevant to your proposed building work.

A PIM provides:

- Heritage status and identifies special features such as natural hazards.
- Details of water, stormwater or wastewater utility systems which relate to your proposed building work or to your building site.
- Network utility information such as vehicle access.
- Applications/approvals that you may need before you can start the construction process, occupy the building or start commercial operations.
- A certificate detailing Resource Management Act requirements.
- A notice indicating whether a development contribution is payable by the owner.

The PIM will either confirm that you may carry out the building work (subject to the requirements of the building consent and subject to all other necessary authorisations being obtained) or notify you that building work may not be undertaken.

It is optional to apply for a PIM. For larger projects however, such as new houses, large alterations and new commercial or industrial buildings, you will find a PIM very useful in establishing the feasibility and design of the project. Therefore, it's a good idea to obtain a PIM during the planning stage.



How to apply for a building consent

Applications can be complex. We recommend that you engage professionals to help with the design work, drawings, specifications and documentation. You can nominate an agent such as a builder or an architect to act on your behalf.

Applications must include:

A completed and signed application form.

- Two full sets of plans and specifications.
- Proof of ownership.
- Checklist and supporting documents as applicable to the project being applied for.
- Appropriate fees.

More information on plans and supporting material required with a building consent application can be found as part of the applicable checklist to be provided with your application, as well as on the Building Performance website at www.building.govt.nz/projects-and-consents/apply-for-building-consent.

National multi-use approval applications also require:

- A copy of the MultiProof Certificate.
- A complete copy of the plans and specifications to which the approval relates (these must bear MBIE's approval mark and must include any relevant approved customisations).
- Statement declaration that the design for which the consent is sought complies with the approval issued by MBIE and meets all the conditions of the MultiProof Certificate for the proposed site.

Building work that includes specified systems such as fire alarms and lifts must provide performance standards for the specified systems, and the inspection, maintenance and reporting procedures to be followed by independent qualified persons in respect to each specified system.

For complex projects, email us at enquiries@npdc.govt.nz or call us on 06-759 6060 to book a pre-lodgement meeting. At this meeting we will ensure that your building consent application is complete before you lodge it with us, which will help the whole consent process run more smoothly.

Lodging an application

You will need to complete an application form and acceptance checklist, and provide information that is relevant to your building project. NPDC would encourage you to use the lodgement portal as it is a more efficient way to do business with the Building Consents team.

You can lodge your building consent with NPDC in one of two ways:

- Submit your application using the lodgement portal <https://bc.npdc.govt.nz/>
- Alternatively, download and complete the application forms on the website and deliver (together with all required paperwork) to the Civic Centre or to a Service Centre at Bell Block, Waitara or Inglewood.

When will your application be processed?

The time taken to get a building consent issued depends on the complexity of your project and whether or not you have provided us with sufficient information.

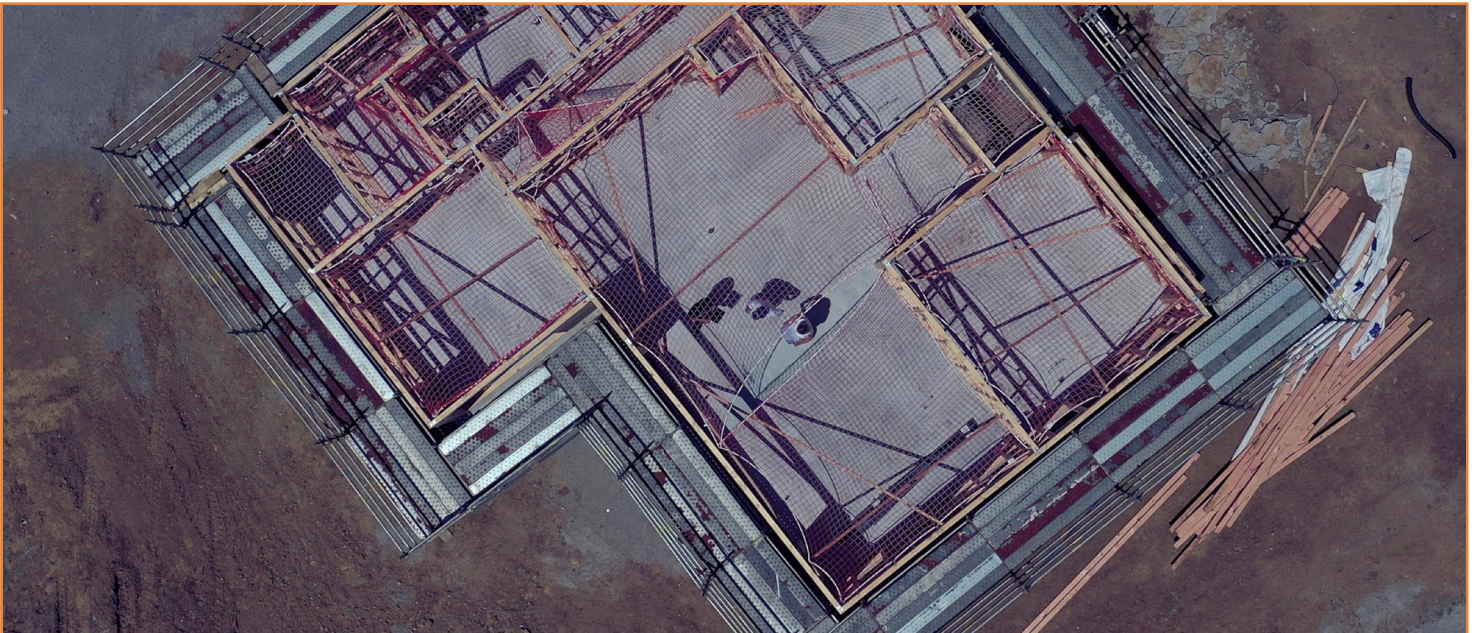
All building consents are required to be processed within 20 working days, except for MultiProof consents where 10 working days apply. Applications supplied with insufficient information will incur additional processing time and you will receive a formal request for further information (RFI). Processing of the application is not continued until all the requested information is received.

Checking and receiving your application

A customer support officer at NPDC will check the completeness of the documents included in your application. This is not a technical check. If the application is incomplete, it will not be accepted and you will need to re-lodge the application with the correct and complete documentation.

A unique building consent number is assigned to a complete application once it is accepted. Please make a note of this number as a reference for future communications related to your application.

Use the checklists and guides available from the Civic Centre, Service Centres and online at www.npdc.govt.nz to pre-check your application before submitting it to us.



Processing your application

Consent processing

A building officer will perform a technical review of your application to ensure that your project complies with the Building Act, associated Building Regulations and the Building Code. If the application is lodged with insufficient or incorrect information, the building officer will request further information. A letter requesting the information will be posted or emailed to the applicant.

The statutory timeframe recording is paused at this point – it will restart when all the additional information is received.

Some consent processing involves specialist disciplines such as civil or structural engineering, or mechanical or fire protection engineering. These applications are normally outsourced to an external consultant for review.

The Building Act requires that certain building consent applications be sent to Fire and Emergency New Zealand (FENZ). For the most part, a FENZ review will be identified within the application form for a building consent. Applications required to be reviewed by FENZ are:

- Alternative solution fire designs
- Applications that involve modifications or waiver of clauses C1-6, D1, F6 or F8 of the Building Code
- Applications that involve an alteration, change of use, or subdivision and affects the fire safety systems, including any building work on a specified system relating to fire safety, unless the fire safety system is minor.

FENZ require electronic copies of all fire related construction documents and will retain these for their records. NPDC will act as the intermediary and facilitate the lodgement with FENZ.

When all documentation and plans are approved and NPDC is satisfied on reasonable grounds that the building works meet the requirements of the Building Code, your application will be granted and ready for issue. A list of the inspections required for your project is prepared and attached to your building consent. Please note that the granting of a building consent is conditional on enabling the building work to be inspected onsite, or offsite if building work is being undertaken elsewhere, during normal working hours.

Typical inspections are listed below (but are not limited to these):

- Siting/excavation
- Foundation (in ground/concrete)
- Foundation (timber)
- Foundation wall (in-situ/concrete block/timber)
- Pre-flooring sub-floor
- Concrete slab
- Slab/foundation single pour
- Sanitary drains (under slab)
- Sanitary drains (under timber floor)
- Drainage (including on-site disposal)
- Pre-wrap (framing/fixings)
- Cavity battens/flashings
- Sheet fixing
- Mesh/control joints
- Scratch coat
- Cladding (sheet fixing/pre-coating)
- Half high brick (ties, flashings, etc)
- Pre-line (plumbing)
- Pre-line (framing)
- Pre-line (insulation)
- Post-line (brace elements)
- Specialist inspection
- Final inspection
- Pre-installation/chimney cavity check.

Please ensure you read the inspection requirements before starting the building work.

Acceptance of producer statements

A producer statement from a suitably qualified person may be accepted as a supporting document for your application. For example, an engineer may provide a producer statement certifying the overall structure or a portion of it (such as a beam or door lintel).

Usually with more complex designs, a peer review (a check by a qualified independent person not associated with the provider of the producer statement) will be required in support of the statement.

Producer statements may be offered as part of the design process and can also be used for specialist construction purposes such as pile driving, and structural and mechanical engineering.

Notification of approval/refusal

The approved documentation is posted to the applicant or the agent as nominated on the application form.

The approved documentation consists of approved plans, a list of inspections, a building consent and a code compliance certificate (CCC) application form. Consent conditions, such as a waiver or modification of the Building Code, natural hazards, building over two or more allotments, the ability of NPDC to inspect building work, or the specified intended life of a building, for example, may be imposed on your building consent, which are necessary to ensure compliance. It is important that you and your agent read and understand all the conditions before commencing work. Please note building work cannot start until the building consent has been issued. Furthermore, your building consent (or PIM, if you applied for one) may also be accompanied by a Section 37 Certificate if it is deemed applicable, which will include restrictions on commencing building work under the RMA. This may mean that no building work can proceed, or may only proceed to the extent stated in the Certificate, until a resource consent has been obtained.

If you disagree with any aspect of the approval or refusal of the granting of the building consent, please submit this in writing to NPDC's Building Lead. More information on NPDC's Feedback and Complaints Policy can be found in the Contact Us section of our website at www.newplymouthnz.com. If resolution cannot be achieved, a formal determination to the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) can be applied for. This process can be found at <https://www.building.govt.nz/resolving-problems/resolution-options/determinations/>.

Amendment to a building consent

An amendment means a change made to the original building plans or specifications after your consent is granted. For very minor variations the amendment can be either a handwritten note on the consented plans signed by the applicant/builder/designer (informal), or through a formal amendment (as described below).

A minor variation is a change that clearly has little impact on compliance with the Building Code and may be approved by a building officer in the field. It simply achieves the same outcome in a different way – for example, the type of taps used, or the positioning of kitchen joinery or non-structural walls or a door.

For any other change where the work is outside the scope of the original consent such as additional footprint or increase in floor area, construction method, or significant changes to the layout, a formal amendment will be required for the new work to be undertaken. Revised plans and specifications are required to be submitted to us for approval prior to the work being carried out.

You must notify us about any proposed change so we can confirm whether it is a minor variation or a formal amendment. All minor variations and formal amendments must be approved and recorded by us.

How much will it cost?

Building consent charges are set to recover all the costs that NPDC incurs when processing and inspecting consented works. The base fee reflects the anticipated costs for both the administration and inspection activities. The base fee and levies applicable are required to be paid in full before your building consent is issued. A development contribution is required to be paid in full before the CCC is issued or within 180 days of granting the consent, whichever happens first.

The latest copy of the fees and charges is available at the Civic Centre and Service Centres, or in the forms and fees

section of our website at www.npdc.govt.nz.

Payments for a building consent, inspections and CCC can be made at the Civic Centre or at one of our Service Centres. You can also pay online. More information can be found in the Paying Us section of our website.

The life of a building consent

Work must start within 12 months of the date that the building consent is issued. If no inspections are recorded within 11 months, we will send you a reminder letter.

If work has already started, we suggest that you notify us. You may also apply for an extension of timeframe, which we will review.

If we do not receive any response, we will send you a 12-month letter confirming that your building consent has lapsed. You will need to submit a new application if you intend to continue with the project. All building work should be completed within two years from the date the building consent was granted. If the project has been delayed, you may apply for an extension of timeframe, which we will review.

Alterations

When making alterations to a building, whether a change of use or not, there are still upgrade requirements to consider to comply with section 112 of the Building Act.

The issues are:

- Access and facilities for the disabled
- Escape from fire.

Change of use

Sections 114 and 115 of the Building Act require the owner of a building to notify NPDC in writing if they propose to change the use of the building. NPDC will consider the need for upgrading works to achieve compliance with the Building Code.

Upgrading works for the change of use will then require a building consent application.

Extending the life of a building

Some buildings have a specified intended life, either due to compliance complexities or because they were constructed to be temporary buildings. When a building consent is issued on a building like this, it is subject to the condition that it be altered, demolished or removed before the end of its specified intended life. However, we can approve an 'extension of life' if we are satisfied that the building can continue to perform for a longer period. If you would like to extend the life of a building you'll need to provide us with written notice, in accordance with section 116 of the Building Act.

Subdivision of buildings

If you intend to subdivide land in a way that affects a building, such as if you are dividing a large house into multiple units, a subdivision consent application is required. Section 116A of the Building Act states that NPDC cannot issue a certificate under the Resource Management Act for a subdivision affecting a building or part of a building unless it is satisfied, on reasonable grounds, that the building will comply, as nearly as is reasonably practicable, with every provision of the Building Code that relates to the following:

- Means of escape from fire
- Access and facilities for people with disabilities (if this is a requirement for the building)
- Protection of other property.

The building must also continue to comply with the other provisions of the Building Code to at least the same extent as before the subdivision application was made.

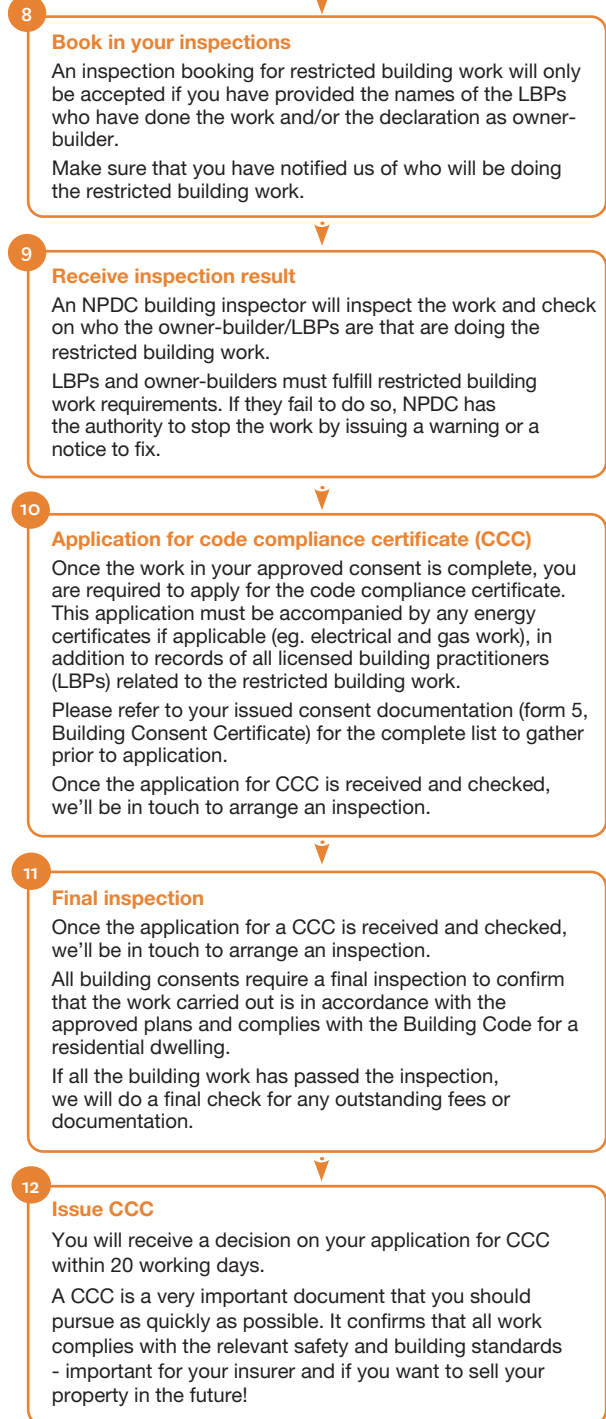
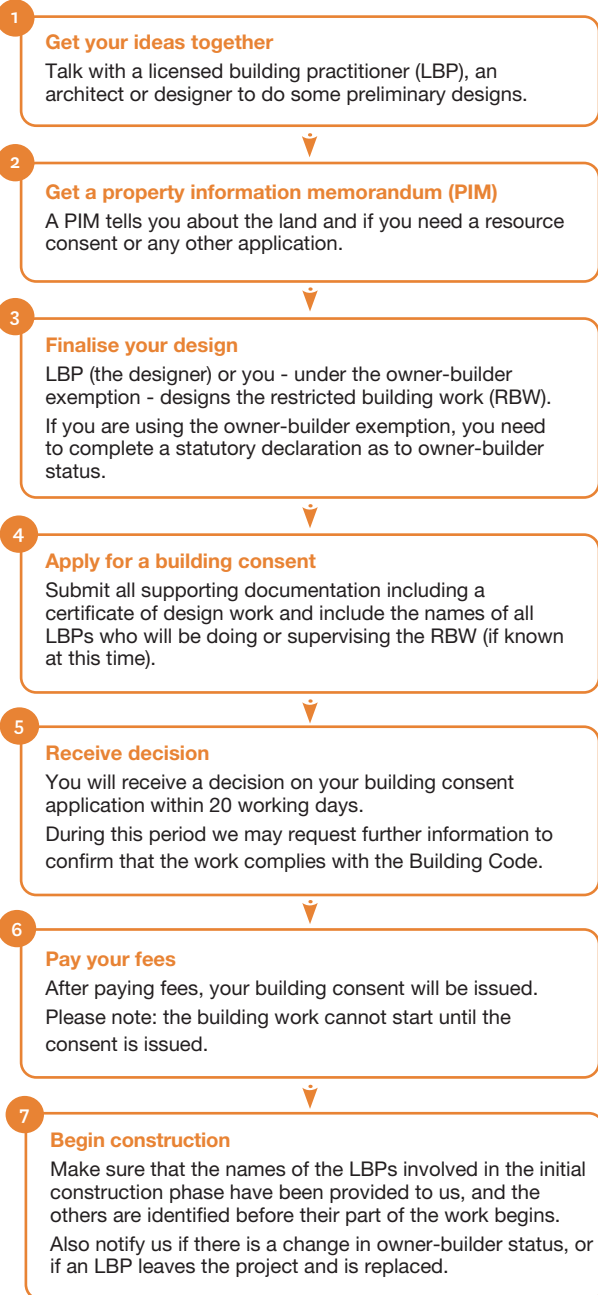


How building work is certified

Anyone wishing to design and/or build residential work may need to be a licensed building practitioner (LBP).

This restriction applies to what is termed restricted building work (RBW), and that means the design and construction of primary structure and external moisture management systems, and the design of fire safety systems for homes and small to medium apartments (two or more residential units with a maximum height of 10m).

Here's how it works



Owner-builder exemption

If you are the homeowner and wish to be the designer and builder also, you are still able to carry out RBW if you satisfy certain conditions.

You must complete a statutory declaration as to your owner-builder status, which must be signed by a Justice of the Peace.

For further information on this, refer to the owner-builder obligations information within the Building Performance website: www.building.govt.nz.

You are an owner-builder if you:

- Live in or are going to live in the home (includes a bach or holiday home).
- Carry out the RBW to your own home yourself, or with the help of your unpaid friends and family members, and
- Have not, under the owner-builder exemption, carried out RBW to any other home within the previous three years.



How building work is inspected

Booking an inspection

When an inspection is required (as listed on the inspection schedule), call us on 06-759 6060. Please make sure you have the following information available:

- Site address.
- Building consent number.
- Name and phone number of the contact person on site.
- Name and LBP number of the licensed building practitioner, if applicable.
- Date and time the inspection is required.
- Type of inspection – such as plumbing, drainage, foundation.

Important notes

- Please make your booking at least two working days in advance of your requested inspection. Inspections are scheduled for either a morning or afternoon attendance.
- You or your agent are responsible for notifying NPDC that you require an inspection.
- Make sure you have the approved plans and documentation on site. If these are not available when the inspector arrives, the inspection may not take place and you may be charged extra for a re-inspection.
- The owner, builder or agent should be on site for all inspections.
- The building inspection process verifies that construction is performed according to the consented documents.
- Please ensure the building officer conducting the inspection has safe, unobstructed access to the site when required. If the officer perceives the building site to be dangerous they can refuse to carry out the inspection until the risk has been removed or mitigated.

Inspections by external specialists

In addition to NPDC's inspection, external specialists

may be required to conduct inspections that fall outside the normal building inspection process, such as having a geotechnical engineer confirm ground stability, or having an aspect of specific structural design checked by a chartered professional engineer.

If the requirement for a specialist inspection is known during the consent processing stage, you will be advised before the consent is issued. This will be included in the list of inspections attached to your building consent.

Result of the site inspection

The building officer will advise the person on site whether the work has passed or failed the inspection. The approved work along with any failed items will be recorded on the site inspection sheet. A notice to fix or site instruction will be issued for failed item/s. A subsequent inspection will be required for this remedial work.

All failed inspections must be resolved before further building work relating to the failed result can continue. An agreement for conditional continuation of work can be established for building work that is not related to, or impacted by the failed result. No further inspections relevant to the failed area can be booked until the identified problems are resolved.

Notice to fix

This is a formal notice that we issue advising you that certain works have not been carried out in accordance with the building consent or the Building Code.

If a notice to fix is issued, you are required to address the issues identified within a prescribed timeframe to prevent further action being taken, including enforcement.

Final inspection

All building consents require a final inspection to confirm that the work carried out is in accordance with the approved plans.

The building work approved in the building consent should be completed within two years of the date on which the building consent was granted.

If the work is not going to be completed within two years, it is recommended that you advise NPDC and request an extension of time.



How building work is certified

Code compliance certificate (CCC)

When all the building work has passed the final inspection and all development contributions and/or building consent fees are paid, a CCC can be issued. This is a proof of verification from us once we are satisfied on reasonable grounds that all works undertaken comply with the building consent and the Building Code. It is an important document and should be retained for future reference. All applications for CCC are required to be processed within 20 working days. The statutory timeframe recording is paused should we need to request further information to process your CCC application.

The owner must apply to us for a CCC after all building work to be carried out under a building consent granted to that owner is completed. The application must be made as soon as practicable after the building work is completed and in the prescribed form (included in the building consent issue pack).

Applications supplied with insufficient information will incur additional processing time and you will receive a formal RFI. Processing of the application is not continued until all the requested information is received.

If all documentation is in the hands of NPDC and any issues that were identified at the final inspection have been addressed, the inspector will recommend issue of CCC. You will receive the certificate on completion of NPDC administrative requirements.

If we refuse to issue a CCC and you consider this is not justified, please submit this in writing to NPDC's Building Lead. More information on NPDC's Feedback and Complaints Policy can be found in the Contact Us section of our website at www.npdc.govt.nz.

If resolution cannot be achieved, a formal determination to the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) can be applied for. This process can be found at www.building.govt.nz/resolving-problems/resolution-options/determinations.

If no application for a CCC is received within two years from the date the building consent was granted, we will follow this up with the owner (unless the owner has agreed to an extension with us).

Compliance schedules and building warrant of fitness (BWOFF)

Buildings that contain specified systems such as fire alarms and lifts require a compliance schedule. This applies to all buildings other than a single household unit (unless the building contains a cable car). Building owners must keep safety systems in good working condition.

A compliance schedule is required by the Act to ensure that building owners take responsibility for ensuring the safety of occupants and the buildings themselves. A compliance schedule lists the building's safety systems and the inspection, maintenance and reporting procedures needed to maintain them in good condition. A compliance schedule will be issued with a CCC if the compliance schedule, or an amended compliance schedule, is required as a result of the building work.

A copy of the BWOFF must be provided annually to NPDC and must be publicly displayed at the building it pertains to.

For more guidance, refer to MBIE's publication 'Owners' responsibilities to ensure their buildings are safe to use' on the Building Performance website: www.building.govt.nz.

For further helpful information about building projects, please refer to the following websites:
Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (Building and Construction): www.mbie.govt.nz.
Building Performance: www.building.govt.nz.
BRANZ: www.branz.co.nz.
Consumer: www.consumer.org.nz.
Smarter Homes: www.smarterhomes.org.nz.

📍 84 Liardet Street, New Plymouth 4310 📞 06-759 6060 ✉ enquiries@npdc.govt.nz

📱 NP in Your Pocket app 🌐 NewPlymouthDistrictCouncil 🐦 [@NPDCouncil](https://twitter.com/NPDCouncil)

NPDC, Private Bag 2025, New Plymouth 4340, New Zealand 🌐 www.npdc.govt.nz

