HUTT CITY
TE AWA KAIRANGI

13 April 2026

Chris Hetherington
s7(2)(a) [redacted]

Tēnā koe Chris,

Request for Information – Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act (LGOIMA) 1987

We refer to your official information request dated 12 March 2026, seeking information on building consent volumes, processing times, internal guidance, internal reviews and management correspondence. Specifically, you requested:

1. *The total number of building consent applications received by Hutt City Council in each of the last five calendar years.*
2. *The number of building consents approved, declined and withdrawn in each of those years.*
3. *The average processing time for building consents in each of those years.*
4. *Copies of any internal guidance documents, policies or procedures used by staff when assessing building consent applications.*
5. *Copies of any internal reports, audits or reviews relating to building consent processing or compliance in the last five years.*
6. *Copies of any correspondence, including emails, between Building Services management and senior council management discussing delays or resourcing issues within the building consent team in the last three years.*

Answer:

In response to parts 1 to 3 of your request, Council holds the following information relating to the number of building consent applications received, the number granted, declined or withdrawn, and average processing times. While you requested information for the last five calendar years, year-to-date figures for 2026 have been included for completeness.

Year	Applications accepted	Consent Granted	Declined or withdrawn	Average Live days
2020	1649	1623	7	Not captured at the time
2021	1508	1479	34	
2022	1477	1480	64	
2023	1303	1176	89	21.75
2024	1054	1058	51	20.48
2025	1074	1052	34	13.43
2026 *(to date)*	198	209	4	13.32

When considering the table provided in the above table, it is important to note that Average processing times were not consistently measured in a way that can now be reliably reported prior to 2023. From 2023 onwards, Council has captured this information using a standardised approach.

Regarding part 4 of your request, copies of the internal guidance documents, policies and procedures used by staff when assessing building consent applications are provided in **Appendix 1**, attached. These documents form part of Council's quality management system and guide the processing and assessment of building consent applications.

Turning to part 5 of your request, Council holds individual technical audits, competency assessments and related assessment material. However, this information relates directly to identifiable individuals and their performance and professional development. Council has therefore withheld this information under section 7(2)(a) of the LGOIMA, as its release would involve the unreasonable disclosure of personal information.

In relation to part 6 of your request, Council is extending the time limit for making a decision under section 14(1)(b) of the LGOIMA, as consultations necessary to make a decision on this part of your request are such that a proper response cannot reasonably be made within the original time limit. Council will provide its response to part 6 of your request no later than **5 May 2026**.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this response. Information about how to make a complaint is available at: **Office of the Ombudsman - Complaints**, or freephone 0800 802 602.

Please note that this response to your information request may be published on Hutt City Council's website: **Proactive releases - Hutt City Council**.

Ngā mihi nui

Rebekah van der Splinter
Senior Advisor, Official Information and Privacy

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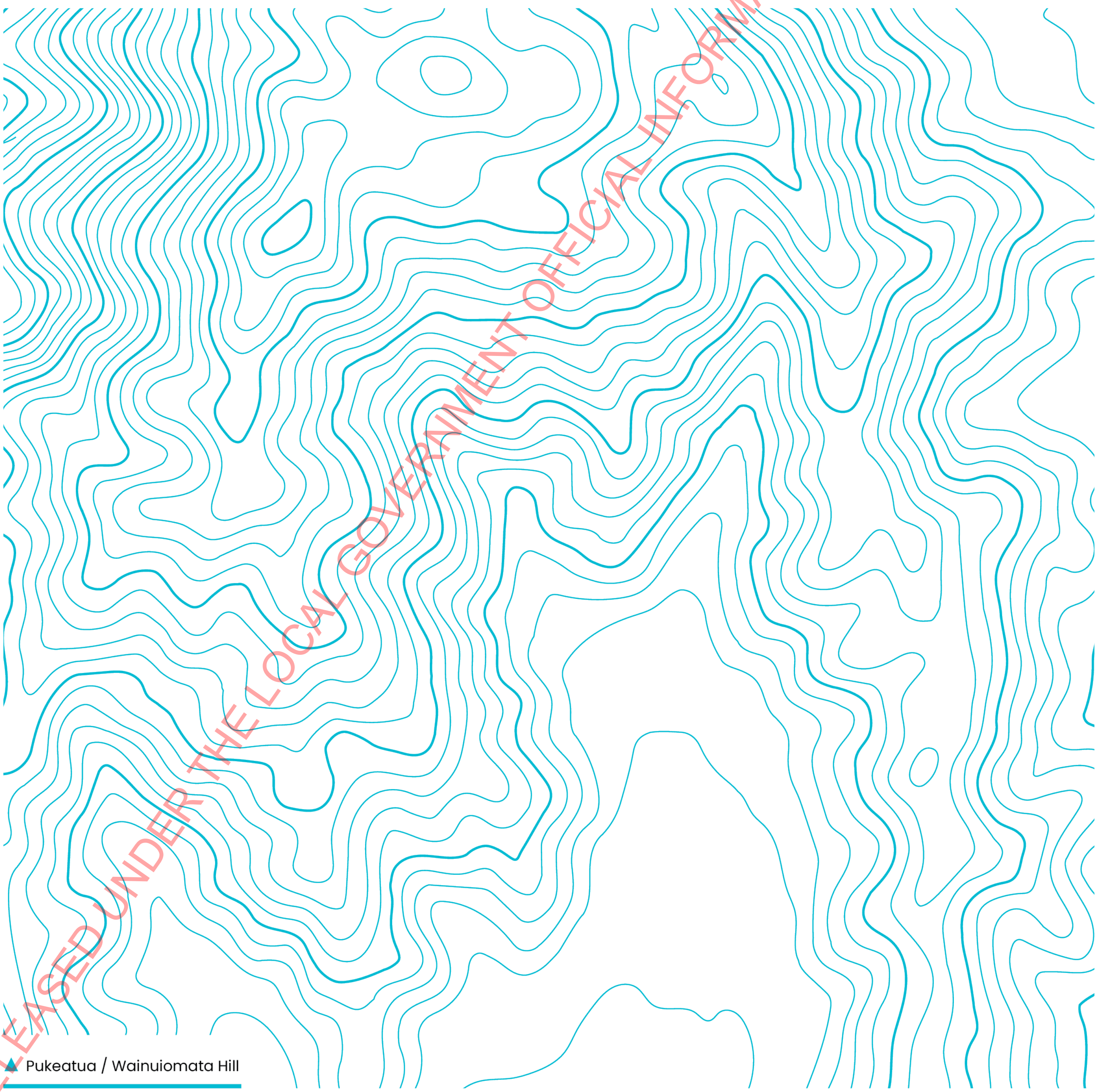
Processing Building Consents

Building Control & Consents Quality Management System



Pukeatua / Wainuiomata Hill

Introduction

This chapter outlines how we process applications for building consents.

This chapter is made up of separate documents referred to as sections – and these are listed below. Each section details our policy and procedures for that area – click on any hyperlink below to navigate.

Our policy and procedures for each of these sections make up this chapter of the quality management system.

List of Sections	
1. Vetting building consent applications	This is how we receive applications for building consent, decide whether they are complete and whether we will accept or reject them.
	Regulation: 7(2)(b), (c) & (d)(i) & 9 **Owner**: Building Consents Manager **Responsibility**: Building Officers, Building Administrators
2. Processing building consents	This is a high-level view of the things we need to consider as we check the application.
	Regulation: 7(2)(d)(iv) **Owner**: Building Consents Manager **Responsibility**: Building Officers
3. Restricted building work	We want to check the relevant details when restricted building work applies to make sure the designers and contractors have the necessary qualifications and experience.
	Regulation: 7(2)(d)(iv) **Owner**: Building Consents Manager **Responsibility**: Building Officers

4. Natural hazards	This expands on what we need to do when a natural hazard is identified. **Building Act 2004**: sections 71-74 **Regulation**: 7(2)(d)(iv) **Owner**: Building Consents Manager **Responsibility**: Building Officers
5. Building Over Two or More Allotments	This expands on what we need to do when building is proposed across multiple properties. **Building Act 2004**: sections 75-83 **Regulation**: 7(2)(d)(iv) **Owner**: Building Consents Manager **Responsibility**: Building Officers
6. Fire and Emergency New Zealand (FENZ)	This digs a little further into the criteria and process for sending an application to FENZ. **Building Act 2004**: section 46 **Regulation**: 7(2)(d)(ii), (iii), (iv) **Owner**: Building Consents Manager **Responsibility**: Building Officers
7. Alterations to buildings	When a building is being altered, we want to check that compliance can be achieved where practicable. **Building Act 2004**: sections:112, 115, 133AT **Regulation**: 7(2)(d)(iv) **Owner**: Building Consents Manager **Responsibility**: Building Officers
8. Alternative Solutions	When an alternative solution is proposed we need to check this for compliance with the Building Code. **Regulation**: 7(2)(d)(iv) **Owner**: Building Consents Manager **Responsibility**: Building Officers

9. Compliance Schedules	If there are specified systems in a building, we need to make sure that these are listed on the compliance schedule and that the correct performance standards are identified.
	Regulation: 7(2)(d)(v) & 7(2)(f) **Owner**: Building Consents Manager **Responsibility**: Building Officers, Building Administrators
10. Issuing a building consent	When it's time to issue the building consent we want to make sure we have everything the customer needs to move their project forward.
	Regulation: 7(2)(d)(v) **Owner**: Building Consents Manager **Responsibility**: Building Administrators
11. Lapsing a building consent	If work hasn't started within a certain timeframe, we must lapse the building consent. We want to check if building work has started before we do this.
	Regulation: 7(2)(d)(v) **Owner**: Building Consents Manager **Responsibility**: Building Administrators
12. Extension of Time	The customer can apply for an extension of time to start their building work if they haven't made a start prior to the lapsing date.
	Regulation: 7(2)(d)(v) **Owner**: Building Consents Manager **Responsibility**: Building Administrators

Compliance Schedules

Regulation	Regulation 7(2)(d)(v) Regulation 7(2)(f)	**Date**	6 December 2024
Owner	Building Consents Manager	**Responsibility**	Building Officer Building Administrator

Intent

A compliance schedule outlines the specified systems in a building, including their performance standards and the required inspection, maintenance, and reporting procedures. It identifies the location of the systems and ensures the building owner has accurate information for ongoing checks and maintenance.

Policy

The building owner must identify the specified systems within the building on the building consent application form (Form 2). They are also required to include the performance standards and provide the proposed inspections, maintenance, and reporting procedures.

The Officer must check the listed specified systems and determine the performance standards that are required by the New Zealand Building Code (Building Code).

Compliance Schedule

A compliance schedule lists the specified systems in a building and describes the performance standards and the inspection, maintenance, and reporting procedures for each of those systems.

A compliance schedule statement is issued where a compliance schedule didn't exist previously, as a temporary notification that the building contains specified systems. The statement must be displayed in a public place.

After 12 months, the compliance schedule statement is replaced by a Building Warrant of Fitness (BWoF). BWoF is a Territorial Authority (TA) function.

Requirement for compliance schedule for household units

A building not used wholly as a single household unit requires a compliance schedule if:

- it has a specified system; or
- it has a cable car attached to it or servicing it.

A building used wholly as a single household unit requires a compliance schedule only if:

- it has a cable car attached to it or servicing it; and
- requires the schedule only for the cable car.

High Level Process

Application received (Form 2) → Assessment → Consent issued (Form 5) → Verify installation (inspections) → Compliance Schedule issued

Procedure

A compliance schedule is required where specified systems are proposed to be installed in a building.

An amendment to a compliance schedule is triggered if the work affects a specified system in an existing building, e.g., systems are being added, removed, or altered. The amendment process is a TA function.

Details of the specified system(s) must be checked during processing, confirmed during construction, and verified before the Code Compliance Certificate (CCC) is issued.

The Officer should clearly identify each system and confirm that the performance standards are appropriate. Details of location, make and model should also be recorded where known.

The description and performance standards must align between the application (Form 2), the building consent (Form 5) and the issued compliance schedule.

The building consent must identify one of the following conditions (as applicable):

- A compliance schedule is required for this building.
- A compliance schedule exists and specified systems are affected by this consent.
- A compliance schedule exists but specified systems are not affected by this consent.

When there are amendments to a compliance schedule, all specified systems in the building must recorded on the Form 5. This includes existing, added, removed, and altered system(s).

Verification that the specified systems have been installed correctly is managed through the normal inspection and certification procedures.

The Compliance Schedule Process Flowchart provides an overview of the above procedure and the Compliance Schedule Work Instruction sets out detailed instructions for Officers to follow this procedure.

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Vetting Building Consent Applications

Regulation	Regulation 7(2)(b), (c) & (d)(i) Regulation 7(2)(d) (ii) & (iii) Regulation 9	**Date**	14 November 2025
Owner	Building Consents Manager	**Responsibility**	Building Officers Building Administrators

Intent

The intention of this regulation is to ensure that building consent applications are completed properly and include all necessary information required by the Building Act 2024, associated regulations, the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE), and other relevant agencies. This enables efficient processing and decision-making. It is the responsibility of applicants to submit complete applications, as incomplete submissions require additional follow-up and can delay the process. While we strive to provide excellent service, ensuring the completeness of applications is crucial for timely processing. All accepted applications will be entered into the Building Consent Authority's (BCA's) consenting system for further action.

Policy

Building consent applications are checked for completeness and either accepted or rejected. If an application is incomplete, and the missing information could be reasonably requested, a Vetting Request for Information (VRFI) may be sent. The application must be made using the prescribed form (Form 2) and be accompanied by the required documents.

Certificate(s) of Work (Form 2a) must also be provided with the application when restricted building work applies.

If the application is accepted, the 20-working day statutory clock starts the following day from when the complete application was received.

The MBIE guidance recommends vetting is completed within 2 working days.

Vetting

Under the regulations, checking an application for completeness is not considered a technical function and can be undertaken by Building Administrators (as well as Building Officers).

Vetting is a completeness check and not a compliance check. As such, any VRFIs should be limited to:

- Ensuring all relevant information on the prescribed form (Form 2) is completed by the applicant.
- Requesting any information that was not supplied by the applicant that is required under section 45 of the Building Act 2004.

If a significant amount of information was not supplied, the incomplete application should be rejected.

High Level Process

Application received → Check for completeness → Apply building consent number → Notify applicant → Allocate work

Procedure

Receiving an application

Applications are received electronically through Objective Build.

Hard copies can be accepted via the Front Counter or post. Hard copy applications should be scanned and then treated in the same way as an electronic application. The cost of scanning will be passed on to the customer. Once scanning has been completed the hard copy application can be disposed of or returned to the applicant at their request.

Checking the application

Electronic applications are checked for completeness using the GoGet vetting checklist. Hard copy applications are checked for completeness using the TechOne (Ci) vetting checklist. An application is considered complete when all the relevant information has been provided and complies with section 45 of the Building Act 2004.

Generate a Vetting Request for Information (VRFI) for any reasonable missing information to be provided. This is done within GoGet for electronic applications, or TechOne (Ci) for hard copy applications. Phone the applicant to discuss the VRFI if required.

If the application is incomplete, it can be rejected, and the applicant notified via Objective Build for electronic applications, or via email for hard copy applications.

Entering the application into the system

If complete, the application is accepted. For electronic applications, a notification is sent to Building Administration to create the unique identification number and add the application details in Ci. Once this is done, the application in Objective Build and the building consent number can be linked. For hard copy applications an email is sent to Building Administration to create the application in Objective Build.

The date the complete application is received is recorded in Objective Build and the statutory clock starts the following working day. The start of the statutory clock is based on when the complete application was received, not when it was accepted.

The applicant will receive a notification advising that their application has been accepted. This is via Objective Build for electronic applications, or via email for hard copy applications.

The applicant can request that Hutt City Council (Council) obtain a record of title. These can be ordered and downloaded from Land Information New Zealand (LINZ). The cost will be charged on to the applicant.

An invoice is generated for application fees which is a set fee based on the value of work. The initial invoice includes a set number of hours for administration, processing, and inspection work by the BCA. Where applicable, the invoice will also include MBIE and Building Research Association of New Zealand (BRANZ) levies. The invoice is sent to the applicant via Objective Build for electronic applications, or via email for hard copy applications.

Allocation and Classification

To ensure that building control work is allocated to competent employees or contractors, the BCA classifies work according to the National BCA Competency Assessment System (NCAS) levels and categories. The BCA maintains a system to support accurate allocation based on competence.

Work classification and allocation are documented in GoGet. Initially, classification is determined by the vetting officer and then verified by the Officer processing the application.

Each application is assigned to an Officer or contractor with the appropriate competency level. Team Leads or designated Officers are responsible for work allocation, ensuring that all record-keeping meets Regulation 6 requirements, which include providing evidence, decisions, reasoning, and any actions taken.

When work falls outside an Officer's competency, it will be performed under the supervision of a qualified Building Officer. Any supervision required will be documented in GoGet for reference. For more details, please refer to the Supervision section: 05 QMS-001 BCAP - Supervision.docx.

References

- MBIE Guidance - Regulations 7(2)(b), (c) and (d)(i) – Receiving applications for building consents
- MBIE Guidance – Regulations 7(2)(d)(ii) and (iii) – Assessing applications and allocating them for processing
- MBIE Guidance Regulation 9 – Allocating work to competent employees or contractors
- Section 45 - Building Act 2004 - Building Consent Applications

Work instructions

- Building Administration
- Building Consent Processing
- GoGet Work Instructions

Processing Building Consents

Regulation	Regulation 7(2)(d)(iv)	**Date**	14 October 2025-v4
Owner	Building Consents Manager	**Responsibility**	Building Officers Building Administrators

Intent

The intention of this regulation is to ensure that building consent applications are reviewed for compliance with the Building Act 2004 (the Act), the New Zealand Building Code (Building Code), and other relevant legislation. Additionally, it aims to ensure that the reasons for decisions are thoroughly documented. This documentation should be clear enough for a technical expert to review and understand the basis for compliance.

Policy

A competent Building Officer reviews the application against the requirements and decides to:

- Request further information to allow them to continue considering the application.
- Grant a consent.
- Refuse the consent if compliance with the requirements is not demonstrated after reasonable attempts are made.

Processing Building Consents

A building project needs to be checked for compliance with the Building Act and the Building Code. Once satisfied that the application is compliant, a decision can be made to grant the building consent.

Range Of Building Work Being Processed

Processors must ensure the correct processing of the following types of building consent work and the relevant actions relating to:

- National Multi-use approvals
- Modular components manufactured, or designed and manufactured, by registered Modular Component Manufacturers
- Current registered product certificates
- Amendments and minor variations
- Changes to plans or specifications
- New buildings

- Alterations to existing buildings
- Allotments and subdivisions
- Specified systems
- Cable cars
- Swimming pools
- Staged building work.

Amendments and minor variations

An application for amendment can be made after the building consent has been issued but prior to the code compliance certificate being issued. Applications for amendments are received and processed in the same way as a standard building consent. The amendments must be clearly identified on the plans.

Where building work has been completed five or more years ago and a Code Compliance Certificate (CCC) has not been issued a Building Code clause B2 Durability modification amendment is required. As supporting documentation, the applicant must provide a completed BCON-FORM-E-001 - Application for Durability Modification. These applications are received and processed in the same way as a standard amendment. The modification is processed as per *Territorial Authority Waivers and Modifications*.

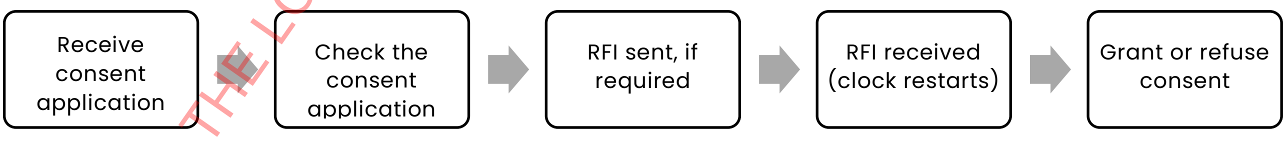
Minor variations are documented on-site by an Inspector or may be processed by an Officer in the processing team. Minor variations should be low risk and take minimal time to process.

Examples of minor variations are:

- Substitution of comparable building products in the same or similar position and manner.
- An alteration that does not change the footprint of the building, the location of internal load bearing walls or the fire design.

Additional information may be required to support the minor variation approval.

High Level Process



Procedure

In general

Officers review the application for compliance with the Building Code, recording decisions and reasons on the relevant checklist in GoGet.

The Officer processes all building work elements within their competency level as indicated in the skills and qualifications matrix.

If any part of the proposed work is outside the Officer's competency, another Officer with the required competency will view or process that section. Refer to the section on Supervision, 05 QMS-001 BCAP – supervision.

Building consent applications must be processed within 20-working days with the exception of multi-proof applications (refer to the Multi-proof section below).

Overview of the project

Processing begins with a preliminary review of the project description and relevant documents to identify any additional information required for a comprehensive compliance assessment, which may only be apparent to a technical expert.

While the vetting process should address most preliminary checks, some details may have been overlooked and may need to be addressed by the Officer.

Other technical considerations, such as reviews by Fire and Emergency New Zealand (FENZ) or the management of compliance schedules, should be handled and actioned at an early stage.

Development contributions

The Officer is responsible for checking if development contribution fees are applicable.

This may have already been assessed by the Planning team. The Development Contribution checklist should be completed in GoGet. The Officer will advise the applicant of the fees.

The applicant can request an invoice for the development contribution fees at any time during the project and these will be invoiced by the Building Administration team. Development contribution fees must be paid before the code compliance certificate can be issued.

Levies

Council must collect levies on all building work which has a value equal or greater than:

- $20,000 for the Building Research Association of New Zealand (BRANZ).
- $65,000 for the Ministry of Building, Innovation and Employment (MBIE).

The levies are automatically charged on the application invoice based on the value of work. The Building Administration team checks for any changes to the value of work, including increases on amendment applications, when the consent is ready to issue.

Natural Hazards

The Officer must check if there is a natural hazard on the land of the proposed building work. A hazard might be noted on the PIM, in the GIS system, or advised with the supporting documentation of the consent, such as soil conditions in a Geotechnical report.

Natural hazards must be considered under the requirements of section 72 of the Building Act.

If a hazard is present, refer to the section on Natural Hazards.

Staged building work

Applicants may wish to complete a project with a staged approached. This is generally more common with larger commercial projects. This can allow a project to get started on-site with foundations, drainage, etc., while some of the finer details for a tenant fit out are still being worked out.

Each stage should be a separate consent.

Where a project is staged, the Officer must check the project description gives adequate detail around what is covered by the consent. This should include the number of stages such as "Stage 1: Foundation, drainage and civil works" etc.

Having accurate stage descriptions will make it easier to track the work at each stage and for Officers to follow when applications for further stages are received.

Where possible and practicable, staged consents should be assigned to the same Officer.

Multi-proof applications

A multi-proof consent contains designs or elements of designs that are deemed to comply by the Ministry of Building, Innovation and Employment (MBIE). The Officer will review and check for any elements that are not covered by the multi-proof statement and ensure the proposed site meets all approval conditions.

The multi-proof statement should be verified and can be checked on the public register.

Multi-proof consent applications must be processed within 10-working days.

Means of compliance

The building consent application (Form 2) submitted by the applicant will outline the compliance pathways nominated by the designer. The Officer should confirm these pathways as they process the consent and record any changes between what is stated and what is presented.

Note: The building consent application (Form 2) cannot be altered once submitted.

If the means of compliance is an acceptable solution or verification method, assess it against these documents.

If the means of compliance is not an acceptable solution or verification method, it is an alternative solution. It must be supported with relevant information showing how it meets the Building Code. Refer to Alternative Solutions.

Record on the checklist in GoGet the reasons for acceptance of any alternative solution.

Where a producer statement is provided, check it in accordance with the producer statement checklist in GoGet. Refer to BCON-GDL-I-001 - Producer Statements Guideline.docx and BCON-POL-E-001 - BC Producer Statements policy and procedure.PDF.

Consider all other legislation that may be applicable to the proposed building work, e.g., Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA).

Warnings or bans

The Officer must consider whether the proposed products or methods are on the MBIE public register for warning or bans.

If they are, then the consent should not be issued until the applicant has adjusted the application to not include the product or method.

If an Officer would like to make a complaint about a certain product or method, they must discuss with the Team Lead or Technical Lead. If necessary, it will get escalated to the Building Consents Manager who may agree that a complaint should be lodged. The process described on MBIE website for Complaints should be followed when applicable.

Territorial Authority considerations

The Building Act requires certain things to be considered by the Territorial Authority (TA) rather than the Building Consent Authority (BCA). Each of these items has its own section within the Quality Management System (QMS) giving more detail.

Topic	QMS Section
Building work undertaken without a consent	Certificate of Acceptance

Topic	QMS Section
Waiver or modification is required	Waivers and modifications
As near as reasonably practicable	Alterations to buildings
Change of use	Alterations to buildings
Specific intended life	Specified intended life of a building
Subdivision of a building	Subdividing a building or part
Building over two or more lots	Building across lots

Decisions made by the TA are documented in the GoGet processing checklist and included in the consent documentation if required.

Fire and Emergency New Zealand (FENZ)

The Officer checks if the application meets the criteria for a FENZ review. If so, it is arranged to be forwarded to FENZ by the Building Control Administrators for their input. FENZ will provide advice or elect not to. If advice is provided, the Officer must consider this when reviewing the consent. Refer to the Fire and Emergency NZ (FENZ) section.

Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga

Applications that involve buildings registered as historic places or on historic land should be notified to Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga within five working days of receiving the application.

Specialist input

Sometimes the assistance of a specialist is required to help assess compliance. This is typically to review specific engineering designs, alternative solutions, trade waste, complex facades, and similar items outside of an Officer's expertise.

The Officer should liaise with Building Administration to forward the application to the appropriate specialist. Refer to the Skill & Qualifications Matrix for technical leaders and specialist.

Competency Skills Matrix (restricted access).

Specified systems

The Officer will consider whether there are any specified systems either present or required within the proposed work and the building.

Any new, altered or removed systems will need information on their relevant performance standards, including whether those standards are referenced by the code or are alternative solutions. Each system will require detail on the inspection, maintenance, and reporting requirements. The Officer will ensure any supporting documentation including plans and producer statements have the same standards and procedures noted.

Consistency of this information is important as it forms part of the CCC assessment and Compliance Schedule issuing process at the end of the project.

The Compliance Schedule Process Flowchart provides an overview of the compliance schedule procedure and the Compliance Schedule Work Instruction sets out detailed instructions for Officers to follow this procedure.

Requesting further information (RFIs)

Initial Review:

- As the consent is reviewed, the Officer will note any queries or non-compliant items within the GoGet processing checklist.

RFI Notification:

- Once the initial review is complete, the Officer issues an RFI notification to the applicant or their agent.
- A telephone call may be made prior to a formal RFI notification to resolve some items quickly.
- The aim is to send an RFI notification that clearly outlines any issues or further information needed.
- While further RFI notifications may be unavoidable, items that can be resolved via a phone call, such as locating a document, should be handled and recorded accordingly.

Review of RFI Response:

- The applicant must provide the requested information to support the decision-making process.
- Upon receiving a response, the Officer will prioritize the review and aim to complete it promptly, typically within two working days. However, this timeframe may vary depending on workload and unforeseen circumstances.

Statutory Clock Management:

- When an RFI notification is issued, the system will automatically stop the statutory clock the day after the RFI is sent.
- When a complete RFI response is received, where all RFI items have been completed the Officer should restart the statutory clock. The system will automatically restart the statutory clock from the next working day.

- If the applicant has not responded to all RFI items, the response is considered incomplete, and the statutory clock should not be restarted until a complete response is received.

Refer work instructions: Work Instructions - GoGet BC Statutory Clock Maintenance

Follow-up RFI:

- If the RFI response does not demonstrate compliance or requires further clarification, a follow-up RFI can be issued.
- The statutory clock will be stopped from the next working day, similar to the initial RFI process.

Granting the consent

Once the Officer is satisfied on reasonable grounds that the consent can be granted, they will undertake the following steps:

- Complete the processing checklist in GoGet.
- Stamp plans and documents to be issued to the applicant with the grant stamp and BC number.
- Ensure digital files have clear and appropriate names to allow specific items to be found easily.
- Add all relevant conditions to the building consent (Form 5).
- Ensure all relevant inspections are added.
- Add any relevant advice notes.
- Ensure all required documents are listed including when they are required, e.g., ground bearing certificate required to be presented at pre-pour inspection.
- Attach any other relevant documents such as section 37 notice.
- If a compliance schedule is required, review and validate all specified systems and performance standards, have been captured on the Form 5.
- Ensure all billable time is recorded.
- If supervision is required, advise the relevant supervisor to complete the peer review checklist.

Once this is complete, the consent is handed over to the Building Administration team who will generate an invoice if applicable and issue the consent. Refer to Issuing a Building Consent.

The statutory clock stops when the technical decision is made to either grant or refund the application.

Refusal to grant

Sometimes a consent cannot be granted. This is usually due to a lack of communication, a significant time without receiving requested information or an inability to demonstrate or determine compliance.

When this occurs, the applicant must be notified of the decision and the reasons behind the decision. This is done via the building consent (BC) refusal letter in GoGet.

The reasons for refusal must also be recorded in GoGet.

Billable time

GoGet will automatically record any time spent in the GoGet system working within the checklist and tabs. However, this does not capture all time spent processing a consent. The Officer must ensure that their time spent outside of GoGet on a consent is also recorded and charged for.

Phone calls, meetings, emails, etc., are all reasonable to charge for if they relate to the application.

Other charges will be added by other team members as they undertake their roles.

Non-standard inspections

Occasionally, a building consent will require the BCA to consider doing tasks differently when inspecting. A building may have complex or unique elements that require specific attention. A building may also be of a size or scope that means the typical inspection timeframes or process would not be appropriate.

If the applicant requests a specific approach, or if the Officer considers that an alternative approach is needed or justified, they should liaise with the Inspection Team Lead to determine appropriate options. This discussion is then expanded to the applicant and once an agreement is reached, this is documented in the consent documentation.

An example could be a development of a large apartment building where it may not be realistic to inspect every single fire door, and where the applicant or constructor wishes to provide quality assurance documentation in lieu of a full suite of inspections.

These inspections should be placed in section 90 conditions on the Form 5 and clearly outlined including any associated documentation required.

References

- Building Act 2004 No 72 (as at 26 November 2024), Public Act 48 Processing application for building consent – New Zealand Legislation
- Regulation 7(2)(d)(iv) – Processing applications | Building Performance

Work instructions:

- Building Consent Processing
- GoGet Work Instructions
- Work Instructions - GoGet BC Statutory Clock Maintenance.pdf

Restricted Building Work

Regulation	Regulation 7(2)(d)(iv)	**Date**	22 November 2024
Owner	Building Consents Manager	**Responsibility**	Building Officers

Intent

Certain types of work are defined as restricted building work and need to be undertaken or supervised by a Licensed Building Practitioner (LBP). We want to have confidence that restricted building work is designed and constructed by people with the requisite qualifications and experience.

Policy

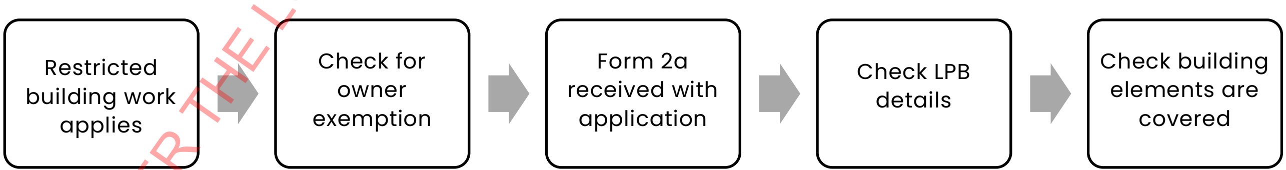
Restricted building work must be designed and constructed or supervised by an LBP.

Details of the LBP must be checked when the application is received and is accompanied by a Certificate of Design Work (Form 2a). This Certificate of Design Work must be relevant to the license type(s) of the LBP.

Restricted Building Work

Restricted building work is work that is critical to making a home structurally sound and weathertight. It covers certain types of work in design and construction. More information on restricted building work can be found here on Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's (MBIE's) website. Restricted building work applies to residential projects.

High Level Process



Procedure

Consenting

When restricted building work applies, the application for building consent must include a Certificate(s) of Work (Form 2a). The staff member vetting the application should check the form has been completed in full.

During vetting and / or processing, the details of the LBP should be checked to ensure the LBP's credentials are current and they have the relevant licence class. During processing the Officer will also check each record to ensure all the relevant building elements are covered. When there is more than one designer the elements may be split across different Certificates of Work.

Owner exemption

Homeowners can do restricted building work on their own homes without being an LBP but must apply for an owner builder exemption. More information about owner builder exemptions and the Owner-builder statutory declaration form can be found here on the MBIE website.

Inspections and certification

Information on how restricted building work applies to inspections and certification can be found in 02 QMS-004 BISP - Inspections.docx.

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Natural Hazards

Regulation	Building Act 2004: sections 71–74 Regulation 7(2)(d)(iv)	**Date**	22 November 2024
Owner	Building Consents Manager	**Responsibility**	Building Officers

Intent

A building consent can't be issued for work on land that is subject to, or likely to be subject to, a natural hazard, unless the hazard is not going to affect the work or land, including other property, or is adequately managed. If we issue a building consent subject to a natural hazard, we must ensure the hazard is noted on the property title. We want to make sure that current and future owners are aware of potential natural hazards and can make decisions about how to address them.

Policy

Officers should be consistent, fair, and reasonable when consenting building work on land that may be subject to natural hazards. This includes ensuring the issue does not transfer to a neighbouring parcel of land.

With the increasing availability of hazard information and ongoing development for more buildings, situations where this may apply are becoming more common.

Natural Hazards

Section 71(3) of the Building Act 2004 (the Act) defines a natural hazard as land subject to:

- Erosion (including coastal, bank and sheet erosion)
- Falling debris (including soil, rock, snow, and ice)
- Subsidence
- Inundation (including flooding, overland flow, storm surge, tidal effects, and ponding)
- Slippage.

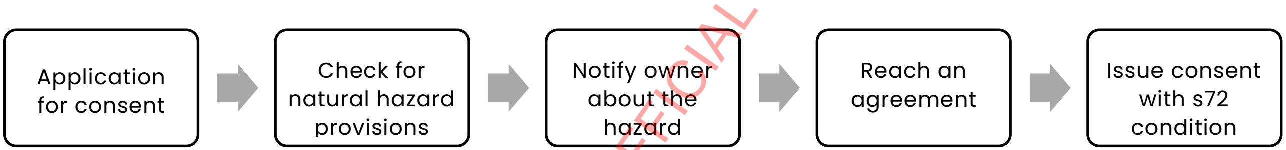
Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) guidance advises that a natural Hazard **is not**:

- Earthquakes
- Tsunami
- Climate Hazards (other than flooding)

It is also important to note that section 71 only applies to Natural Hazards as defined within the Building Act 2004, and not to any other 'natural hazards' defined by other Acts. (E.g. the Resource Management Act defines Natural Hazards differently)

The New Zealand Building Code (Building Code) does not limit the definition of a natural hazard. The accepted practice is to use 1% chance of a natural hazard occurrence (i.e. 1 in 100 years) as an appropriate method to determine if the land is subjected to a natural hazard.

High Level Process



Procedure

The Building Act hazard provisions

The Building Act 2004, section 71–74, covers the natural hazards provisions within the legislation.

Hazard provisions of the Building Act

Hazard information needs to be considered for all new buildings irrespective of the size and use of the building.

Additionally, all major alterations to buildings are impacted by these provisions. The nature of the alterations is assessed on a case-by-case basis. The following factors will guide Officers and are considered major alterations.

- An increase in floor area that exceeds 20m^2 or 25% to the current floor area is considered a major alteration.
- An addition or alteration that increases the impact of a natural hazard on the existing building is classified as a major alteration.

Generally, internal fitouts, suspended decks and minor building consents will not be considered a major alteration.

Conversions to dwellings such as garages and basements will require consideration.

Additional indicators that might lead Officers to consider a major alteration could include evaluating the value of the proposed work in relation to the existing building or determining if the work will significantly extend the expected life of the building.

Property likely to be subject to a hazard

The most common hazards in our city are:

- Inundation
    - Information on the 1 in 100 flood hazard from Greater Wellington Regional Council is available on Council's website: https://mapping.gw.govt.nz/GW/Floods/
- Slippage
    - Development on sites with slopes greater than 1:4 or on land known to have instability issues should be carefully evaluated.
    - A geotechnical assessment by a qualified person is important in the building consent process to determine the appropriate actions under sections 71 and 72 of the Building Act 2004.

Hazard on land and building work

If there is a hazard on land of the proposed building work, consideration needs to be given to ensure the:

- building work does not make the hazard worse or create a natural hazard on that land or any property.
- land or buildings on other properties are protected from the natural hazard.

A building consent cannot be issued for the building work if the above considerations are not met.

A building consent may be issued with a section 73 condition if the hazard is present on the land associated with the building work if we consider that:

- the proposed building work will not make the natural hazard worse, or result in a new natural hazard, both in relation to the land on which the building work will occur and any other property.
- the land is subject to a natural hazard.
- that any waiver of modification of the building code relating to the natural hazard is reasonable.

The applicant must be contacted and informed of this requirement before issuing the consent as they may not wish to proceed or may alter their design to avoid the issue.

The applicant may provide information to demonstrate the hazard is adequately managed. Evidence should be provided from a qualified expert and show the property is unlikely to be affected by the identified hazard associated with the land or the proposed building work.

If an agreement cannot be reached, an application for a determination with the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) can be made. This review will assess the decision to issue a building consent with a section 73 condition.

Implications of having section 73

There can be implications of having section 73 notation on the Record of Title for the owner's insurance company or bank.

If a hazard has been identified during processing, it is recommended the owner should contact their solicitor and insurance company.

Hazard-related notation on the property title

Hazards are identified on the Record of Title and can be obtained from Land Information New Zealand - www.linz.govt.nz.

Removal of a section 73

When a hazard is no longer present or the owner believes they have mitigated the risk, under section 74 of the Building Act they may request the section 73 entry to be removed from the record of title.

The assessment should be made by a suitably competent Officer and reviewed by a Team Lead to determine if the request should be granted or refused.

Building Over Two or More Allotments

Regulation	Building Act 2004: sections 75-83 Regulation 7(2)(d)(iv)	**Date**	22 November 2024
Owner	Building Consents Manager	**Responsibility**	Building Officers

Intent

A building consent can't be issued when building is proposed across two or more allotments unless those lots are tied together. We must ensure that a noticed is issued to this affect which means the allotments can only be sold or leased together. We want to make sure that current and future owners or leaseholders are aware and can make necessary decisions.

Policy

Officers should ensure that the applicant is aware the proposed building is over two or more allotments and advise them of alternative options. When the applicant wants to build over two or more allotments a legal instrument will be added to the record of title on the related properties under section 75 of the Building Act 2004 (the Act).

Procedure

To enable a building to be constructed over a legal boundary, it is required that each of the affected allotments (whether on the same record of title or not) are tied so that one cannot be sold or leased without the other.

There are two legal ways of addressing this issue:

- either by tying each of the allotments by means of complying with section 77 of the Act,
- or by legally amalgamating the allotments by way of survey plan which places all the affected land under the same certificate of title.

In either case the affected properties must be under the same ownership.

These matters should be addressed or understood before making a building consent application to avoid delays and misunderstandings during processing.

Section 77

Section 77 of the Act requires that when a building consent application is made to construct a building over an existing legal boundary(s), the consent cannot be granted until the Territorial Authority (TA) issues a certificate under this section that the affected land cannot be sold or leased except in conjunction with the other land subject to the building work.

This condition is set out in a certificate and signed by the owner and lodged with the Registrar General who makes an entry on each record of title of each affected allotment to which the condition applies.

Section 77 of the Act allows us to accept the building consent for processing, but the consent must not be issued until the certificate has been signed.

Alternatives prior to application:

- to have the title(s) of the allotments amalgamated by way of survey plan, as per section 82 which removes the internal boundaries of the affected land, or
- restructure the affected boundaries so that the whole building is on one allotment.

These options require redefinition of the boundary by way of the survey plan to create a single allotment.

Sections 78-82 further detail the requirements and effect of the entry on the title.

Section 83 allows for the TA to consider an application for the entry on the title to be removed, if certain criteria are met:

- the building is removed, demolished, or destroyed; or
- the boundaries of the allotments are adjusted in a manner that results in the building being contained entirely within the boundaries of 1 allotment; or
- circumstances have otherwise changed.

If this is deemed appropriate, the TA must issue a certificate stating such, and again lodge it with the Registrar General of Land.

Fire and Emergency New Zealand (FENZ)

Regulation	Section 46 of the Building Act 2004 Regulation 7(2)(d)(ii) &(iii) Regulation 7(2)(d)(iv)	**Date**	22 November 2024
Owner	Building Consents Manager	**Responsibility**	Building Officers

Intent

Certain building consents are sent to the Fire and Emergency New Zealand (FENZ) for review prior to consent issue. These are generally alternative solutions, high risk buildings and alterations involving fire safety systems. We want the fire service to assess and give feedback about any concerns or compliance queries.

Policy

Designs for building consent must be submitted to the Fire Engineering Unit at Fire and Emergency New Zealand (FENZ) when both Criteria 1 *and* Criteria 2 below are met.

When a memorandum is provided the Officer must take this into consideration in relation to the New Zealand Building Code (Building Code) items when making the decision to grant or refuse the building consent.

High Level Process

Identify requirement for FENZ → Forward to FENZ for review → Receive memorandum from FENZ → Consider comments → Make decision

Procedure

Requirement for review

Designs for building consent must be submitted to FENZ when both Criteria 1 *and* Criteria 2 below are met.

Criteria 1 – Building type

The application must be sent to FENZ if the building or part of the building is being used for 1 or more of the following purposes:

- the gathering together for any purpose of 100 persons or more
- providing employment facilities for 10 or more persons
- providing accommodation for more than 6 persons (other than in 3 or fewer household units)
- storing or processing hazardous substances (check that quantities exceed prescribed minimum amounts)
- providing early childhood facilities (other than in a household unit)
- providing nursing, medical, or geriatric care (other than in a household unit)
- providing specialist care for persons with disabilities (other than in a household unit)
- providing accommodation for persons under lawful detention (not being persons subject to home detention)

This process does not apply to:

- Where means of compliance for clauses C1-C6, D1, F6 and F8 is fully complying with the relevant Building Code compliance documents
- Crown buildings that are specified by the Minister in the Gazette
- Premises of diplomatic missions (embassies)
- Single household units
- Buildings in which every fire-cell is a household unit separated vertically from the other fire-cells, and each fire-cell has independent and direct egress to a safe place outside the building, e.g., townhouses with private entry
- An internal fit-out, unless the fit-out relates to a change of use (consider scope and value of proposed building work)
- Out-buildings or ancillary buildings

Criteria 2 – Designs/ Building work type

Consent applications need to be sent to FENZ in any of the following circumstances:

- Designs for new buildings using alternative solutions (not using an acceptable solution or verification method) to comply with any of the following Building Code clauses:
  - C1-C6 Protection from Fire (or C1-C4 Fire Safety, until 9 April 2013)
  - D1 Access routes
  - F6 Visibility in escape routes
  - F8 Signs

- When waivers or modifications to any of the above Building Code clauses are required
- Alterations, change of use or subdivisions that have a more than minor effect on fire safety systems
- Involves an alteration, change in use or subdivision, and affects the fire safety systems, including any building work on a specified system relating to fire safety (except where the effect on the fire safety system is minor).

On occasion FENZ will return an application due to workload or perceived low risk. In these instances, continue processing the application and contact FENZ if there are any specific concerns.

Forwarding the application for review

The Building Administration team send the documents through to FENZ via Kiteworks and update the status in GoGet. The Kiteworks notification is emailed to: DRReviews@fireandemergency.nz

FENZ may provide a memorandum to the Building Consent Authority (BCA) setting out advice on provisions for means of escape from fire, and the needs for fire-fighter access. They have 10-working days to respond. The application cannot be put on hold while it is under review with FENZ.

The response will be loaded into the consent record in GoGet. The Officer will receive an email notification that a response has been received and status updated in GoGet.

If no response is received within 10 working days, the Officer may continue processing the application without the memorandum and decide to grant or refuse the application. The Officer should consider the risk of the project and the value of input from FENZ. For example, if a new stadium is to be built, FENZ advice would carry significant value but for a small alteration to an existing warehouse, it may be less so.

Consider FENZ comments

When a memorandum is provided, the Officer must consider the comments when making the decision to grant or refuse an application for a building consent.

FENZ will provide comment on both Building Code and non-Building Code related items. The Officer should focus on the Building Code related items.

If further design work is required because of the memorandum being considered, a request for further information is generated.

The decision and reasons for the decision should be noted against the consent as a memo in GoGet.

References

- MBIE Guidance – Regulations 7(2)(d)(ii) and (iii) – Assessing applications and allocating them for processing
- MBIE Guidance Regulation 7(2)(d) (iv) – Processing applications
- Section 45 - Building Act 2004 - Building Consent Applications

Work instructions

- Building Consent Processing
- GoGet Work Instructions

Alterations to Buildings

Regulation	Building Act 2004 section 112, 115, and 133AT Regulation 7(2)(d)(iv)	**Date**	22 November 2024
Owner	Building Consents Manager	**Responsibility**	Building Officer

Intent

The intention of this regulation is to ensure when an existing building is altered that improvements are made, if possible, in relation to accessibility, means of escape and seismic upgrades for Earthquake-prone buildings (EPBs). It's not always possible but the applicant should make efforts to improve the building or provide analysis of why it isn't practical.

Policy

Any proposed alterations must improve the building. The alteration cannot make the building "worse than before". This only applies to the existing portion of the building and any new building work and must comply with the New Zealand Building Code (Building Code).

When a building is converted to housing, where there was no housing before, Hutt City Council (Council) must consider compliance with all Building Code clauses.

Alterations to existing buildings (section 112)

Council cannot grant a building consent for alteration unless it is satisfied that after the alteration, the building will comply with the Building Code:

- As near as reasonably practicable, or
- Less than as near as reasonably practicable, if three criteria are met:
  - The building will be no worse than before after the alterations, and
  - An improvement to either means of escape from fire or accessibility is achieved, and
  - It is demonstrated that any additional improvement would be prohibitive to the project.

Note all three criteria must be met.

Change of use (section 115)

A change of use occurs when the *classified use* of a building changes *and* the Building Code requirements of the new use are more onerous. It is essential to check against the classified uses and Building Code requirements to determine if it is a change of use under the Building Act 2004 (the Act). For Example, changing a bookstore to a hair salon may have different customers, but may not be a change of use under the Act.

Changing a warehouse to a church on the other hand is likely to be a change in classified use and require further fire and accessibility features, so would typically be a change of use.

Earthquake-prone building (section 133AT)

Requirements for altering an existing building that is earthquake prone, issued with an EPB notice.

Procedure

Consenting

The Officer will consider whether an existing building is being altered and whether an EPB notice has been issued.

Officers must ensure that the alterations will not make an existing stand-alone house worse than it was before. Accessibility would typically not apply, however means of escape from fire should be considered. Generally, there is not much, if any, improvement except potentially smoke alarms.

Public or Government buildings, commercial and industrial buildings, and similar structures are more likely to offer opportunities for improvements.

Alterations to existing buildings (section 112)

Officers must assess the current level of compliance of the building with accessibility and means of escape from fire. The Officer cannot determine what an 'as near as reasonably practicable' upgrade entails without knowing what the current level of compliance is.

This information is typically provided in the form of a fire report and an accessibility report.

Change of Use (section 115)

When a change of use occurs, it is essential to assess the building's current level of compliance for accessibility and means of escape from fire.

As with section 112, without knowing the current level of compliance, it is unlikely to determine what is an 'as near as reasonably practicable' upgrade. This information is typically provided in the form of a fire report and an accessibility report.

The one exception is creating housing where there was no housing before. An example of this is converting an office building into apartments. When housing is created with a change of use, Officers must consider 'as near as reasonably practicable' compliance with all relevant Building Code clauses.

In addition to fire and accessibility the Officer also needs to be sure that the building is compliant with all other aspects, i.e., energy efficiency, sanitary facilities, internal moisture, ventilation, etc. It may be necessary to obtain third party reports to determine this.

Earthquake-prone buildings (section 133AT)

If a building subject to an EPB notice undergoes alterations, section 112 is replaced with section 133AT.

This section is like section 112 but includes an additional rule. If an alteration to an earthquake prone building is substantial, the application must include the necessary seismic work.

Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) advises that a substantial alteration is work that:

- Needs a building consent.
- Together with other work consented in the past two years, has an estimated value of at least 25% of the buildings value, and is more than $150,000.

Council cannot issue a building consent for a substantial alteration to an EPB unless the applicant intends to remedy the earthquake prone items as part of that alteration.

It also allows the Territorial Authority (TA) to consider that the seismic work can be done without the required upgrades to fire and / or accessibility if those upgrades would be unduly onerous in the circumstances. For example, a building undergoing earthquake strengthening works in 2023 may also require a lift. Retrofitting a lift would be expensive and time consuming, potentially impeding the process of making the building safer. In this instance, the TA could reasonably issue the consent without requiring the lift upgrade.

Application of judgement

Each of the above sections require us to use our judgement. Judgements should be informed and based off reasonable information provided within the application.

When determining whether to issue a consent under these sections 'as near as reasonably practicable' there are two typical scenarios:

A. The building is being upgraded and will comply fully, or very close to fully, with the Building Code, including if required, seismic upgrades.

B. The building is being upgraded in part, and the applicant is not proposing to upgrade certain systems, or features.

Scenario A is simple. The applicant needs to provide information that demonstrates the buildings current compliance and verifying the proposed fixes of the existing non-compliances. If satisfied the non-compliances will be resolved, the consent can be issued.

Scenario B is trickier. Consideration should be given to the following.

- What are the gaps, i.e., what currently does not comply and is important?
- What is reasonably practicable to do, in our opinion? It may be the applicant does not share this opinion.
- Is the building no worse than before at completion of the project?
- Would any further upgrades be prohibitive, and prevent the project taking place?

The approach the Act takes is that as much as reasonably possible should be done to improve the building.

If an applicant believes certain gaps are impracticable to resolve, they must provide evidence or supporting information. There are many situations where this is perfectly reasonable. For example, cast in concrete stairs may not be the exact perfect pitch for an accessible stair, but they are also very difficult to fix.

The Officer will then use their discretion and section 112(2)(c) of the Act to consider that some of the gaps may not be reasonably fixed within the context of the project. It is essential to know what the gaps are.

For example, a consent to install a coffee kiosk in a stadium. It might be reasonable to expect an upgrade to the accessible entry signage, but probably unreasonable to expect sprinklers to be installed if today's Building Code required them. This is because the time and cost of this work would greatly outweigh the time and cost of the entire kiosk project.

Regardless of what is determined, reasons for decisions must be recorded thoroughly explaining how the outcome was decided.

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Alternative Solutions

Regulation	Regulation 7(2)(d)(iv)	Date	22 November 2024
Owner	Building Consents Manager	Responsibility	Building Officers

Intent

The intention of this regulation is for Hutt City Council (Council) to be sure that any proposed alternative solution is assessed and compiles with the New Zealand Building Code (Building Code).

Policy

The Officer will assess the proposed alternative solution to ensure it meets the performance requirements of the Building Code. The application must provide sufficient information to demonstrate the proposed building work meets the purpose and principles of the Building Act 2004 (the Act).

Alternative Solution

Any construction, design or use of any product or system that is outside the scope of the relevant acceptable solutions yet complies with the Building Code. Alternative solutions can be a minor variation from an acceptable solution or verification method to a radically different design and construction approach.

There are two types of alternative solution:

- Common alternative solutions that are seen routinely
- Uncommon alternative solutions that are unique

High Level Process

Alternative solution is proposed → Assess the alternative solution → Meets the requirements of the Building Code and Act → Make decision → Consent issued

Procedure

How to assess alternative solution

The alternative solution proposal must identify the Building Code clauses and specific performances of each clauses the solution claims to meet.

The documentation must contain sufficient evidence for the Building Consent Authority (BCA) to be satisfied on reasonable grounds that the performance criteria of all relevant clauses will be met. There are many ways alternative solutions can be supported.

The following tools may be used to provide evidence of compliance:

Calculation or test method

These are validated calculations, test results, models and simulations that are not contained in the compliance documents, Specific Engineering Design, etc.

Further certainty may be gained by having site-based testing of various solutions as part of the compliance documentation. Commissioning and verification may be appropriate. For example, rainscreen claddings often incorporate in-situ window testing to prove the system is working.

Comparison with a compliance document

Compliance documents provide one means to show how the proposed building work will comply. The applicant must show how any deviations or changes are compensated for or justified.

In many cases the compliance documents provide an excellent guidance mechanism for assessing the robustness of an alternative solution.

Comparison with a product previously accepted

Some building methods not covered by compliance documents may have been previously accepted by a BCA on a comparable building.

Comparison with a determination

Determinations are usually case-specific which means the applications are very limited. However, they do provide helpful guidance on how to interpret the Building Act and Building Code at a particular point in time.

Trade literature

Is it a proprietary product? The manufacturer's literature may contain technical data that supports the proposal.

Appraisal

A current appraisal certificate that describes how compliance with the Building Code is achieved.

In-service history

Evidence of details of the proposed solution that has been used in a similar situation. Overseas evidence can be used but must take into account New Zealand conditions, e.g., seismic activity, ultra-violet light, exposure to salt-laden winds and wind driven rain.

Assessment of actual conditions on site

There may be features on site that are appropriate for an alternative design such as a very sheltered site that is supported by meteorological or horticultural evidence.

Risk

Is the alternative solution being applied to a large building or to one part of a small building?

The level of information supporting an alternative solution should scale with the scope of the project. For example, some stone cladding around a chimney is a low-risk scenario on a single house. However, on a four storey building it is much higher and would need more evidence such as a façade engineers report.

Expert evidence

Peer-review may be required to review the proposed solution or to receive opinions from credible organisations. Peer-reviewers should be independent of the applicant and/or supplier or manufacturer. This could be a report from a façade engineer, fire engineer etc.

Expert opinions are provided to support alternative solutions and should come from suitably qualified people. Sometimes this is a manufacturer’s technical representative or a Chartered Professional Engineer (CPEng). The expert should have relevant experience with the system or product in question.

Issuing a Building Consent

Regulation	Regulation 7(2)(d)(v)	**Date**	22 November 2024
Owner	Building Consents Manager	**Responsibility**	Building Administrator

Intent

The intention of this regulation is to ensure that the customer has all the required information when they receive their building consent. We want to make sure the customer knows what's required going forward.

Policy

The building consent is issued using the prescribed Form 5. It advises that inspections can be undertaken under section 90 of the Building Act 2004 (the Act) and includes additional documents when applicable as outlined below.

The building consent is not issued until all fees payable have been received.

Definitions

A building consent is granted when the technical decision is made. This is when the Officer is satisfied on reasonable grounds that the requirements of the New Zealand Building Code (Building Code) will be met if the work is completed in accordance with the plans and specifications provided.

A building consent is issued when the Form 5 and related documents are completed and sent to the applicant. The Form 5 is the building consent.

High Level Process

Check any fees owing → Generate invoice → Receive payment → Prepare documents → Issue consent

Procedure

Building consent has been granted

When the consent is marked as granted in GoGet an email notification will be triggered advising the Building Administrator to complete the final checks.

A Consents Granted Not Issued report can also be generated from GoGet.

The Building Administrator completes the Sign Off Checklist in GoGet.

Fees owing

When there are fees payable, the Building Administrator generates an invoice. The invoice is sent to the applicant with a covering letter advising that the consent will be issued once full payment has been received.

Issuing the building consent

When the fees have been paid, the Building Administrator ensures that all the required documentation for the building consent identified during processing has been moved to the Consent File space in GoGet.

Where there is a compliance schedule as part of the building consent the specified systems and their performance standards are listed on the Form 5 (building consent), these are automatically transferred through from GoGet once the specified system is identified and selected. The procedure for compliance schedules is set out in the Compliance Schedule Process Flowchart and Compliance Schedule Work Instruction.

Where there are required attachments to the building consent, these are listed on the Form 5 (building consent) as attachments. The attachments may be (where applicable):

- Project information memorandum (PIM)
- Development Contribution notice (section 36 of the Act) (Form 3)
- Certificates issued under section 37 of the Act (Form 4)
- Notifications under section 73 of the Act
- Notification made to Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga under section 39 of the Act
- Documents or information from the Territorial Authority (TA) (or provision for)
- Requirements under any other Act.

When required document(s) haven't been received from the TA, the consent can still be issued. The documents can be sent to the applicant via Objective Build when received.

Once the documents are prepared, update the status in GoGet to Issued. Generate the Form 5 (building consent) and send with all the relevant documentation to the applicant via Objective Build.

Lapsing a Building Consent

Regulation	Regulation 7(2)(d)(v)	**Date**	27 November 2024
Owner	Building Consents Manager	**Responsibility**	Building Administrators

Intent

The purpose of this regulation is to ensure that building projects commence within a reasonable period after the consent is issued. If work has not started, the consent may be lapsed, or an extension of time may be granted. Prolonged delays may require reassessment due to potential changes in legislation or the New Zealand Building Code (Building Code).

Policy

A building consent automatically lapses 12 months after being issued if work has not commenced. The Building Administration team will follow-up on building consents prior to the lapse date. The response from the customer will determine the action.

Lapsing

A building consent can be granted, issued, refused, or lapsed. It cannot be withdrawn or cancelled by the Building Consent Authority (BCA).

Before a decision to grant or refuse a building consent is made, the building owner(s) may submit a written request to the BCA to withdraw or cancel their building consent. While the Building Act 2004 does not provide specific provisions for this process, the BCA manages such requests as follows:

1. The consolidated spreadsheet Building Consent reminders, Lapsing & EoT is updated to reflect the customer's request, changing the building consent's status to "Withdrawn" or "Cancelled".
2. The building owner(s) are notified that their request has been received and informed that, under section 52 of the Building Act, the building consent will still lapse at the 12-month lapse date unless an extension of time is granted.
3. On the lapse expiry date, the consent status is updated in GoGet, and the building owner(s) are informed that the consent has officially lapsed.

A building consent lapses 12 months after the date of issue and is of no effect when the building work has not commenced. In the case of a lapsed consent, the owner can make a new application for the same project if they wish.

High Level Process

11-month reminder → Project has commenced → Extension of time application → No response from customer → Lapse consent

Procedure

Link to detailed work instructions:
Work Instructions - Processing - Lapsed Consents and Extensions of Time.pdf

Generate report

The Consents 11 Month Lapsing Reminder report is generated weekly from GoGet and TechOne CI (Ci). This report will list building consents that was issued 11 months prior where no building inspections have been generated in GoGet or Ci.

The weekly 11-Month Lapsing Reminder report generated from Ci is accompanied by two additional reports. One report lists building consents that need to be lapsed, where no extension of time applications have been submitted. The other report lists building consents with granted extensions of time that still need to be lapsed. These reports are sent by email from DoNotReply@huttcity.govt.nz and are addressed to the Building Consents Manager, Consents Team Leads, and relevant staff.

Once all Ci reports regarding lapsing have been received, the reports are saved to the relevant folder within this main folder Weekly reporting. These reports are consolidated into the spreadsheet Building Consent reminders, Lapsing & EoT.

After the reports are generated, building consents must be checked to verify whether any inspections have taken place or if building work has commenced before the lapse date.

- Are there any inspection records in the building consent folder?
- What is the status of inspections in GoGet and Ci?

If any inspection has taken place before the lapsed date, update the Ci event status for the 'Work Commenced' event to yes and enter the date of the first inspection in the date start and date finalised boxes in Ci. This will remove the building consent from the reports generated in Ci.

All remaining building consents are sent a 11-month reminder letter.

Notification

The letter should be sent to the property owner and agent (when applicable). A copy of the communication is saved to the relevant building consent folder in Te Pātaka.

Work commenced

If the owner or agent advises that work has commenced, then they must provide evidence and the date that work commenced. This can be a photo, preferably with GPS coordinates and date and time stamp or a Licensed Building Practitioner (LBP) statement.

Depending on the evidence provided, the customer may need to book an inspection. If unsure, forward the evidence to the Inspections Team Lead.

Once accepted, save the evidence in GoGet under Correspondence and within the building consent folder of Te Pātaka. Update the Ci event status 'Work Commenced' to yes and include the date that the work commenced.

Work not commenced and not proceeding

If the owner or agent confirms that the work has not started and they do not intend to proceed with the project, the consent will automatically lapse 12 months after the issue date. The lapsed status and notification letter must still be processed. The Building Administration team will then reconcile the fees and determine if a refund is due.

Work not started but still proceeding

If the owner or agent confirms that the project will proceed and construction will begin within the next 12 months, they must apply for an extension of time. The extension application must be submitted before the lapse date and must be reviewed and approved by Hutt City Council (Council). Refer to the section on Extensions of Time for further details.

Work started but no inspections

If an inspection is not booked before the lapse date, the customer will be asked to provide the building work start date and evidence that construction has begun. Once this information is received, it will be reviewed to confirm whether building work commenced before the lapse date. If confirmed, update the 'Work Commenced' event in Ci to "Yes", and enter the start and finalised dates. This will automatically remove the building consent from future Ci reports.

No response received

If no response is received from the owner or agent, then the consent will automatically lapse 12 months from the issue date and be of no effect.

Lapsing consents

The building consent is lapsed on the lapse date and a Building Consent Lapsed letter is sent to the owner and/or agent within five working days of the lapse date when one of the following occurs:

1. Verified that no building work has commenced before the lapse date, there has been no response to the 11-month reminder letter and no extension of time application received.
2. The timeframe granted in the extension of time application has expired and no further extension of time has been applied for.
3. The timeframe granted in the extension of time application has expired and the maximum limit for the number of extension of time applications has been reached.

A copy of the lapse letter is generated in GoGet and automatically saved in the relevant building consent folder in Te Pātaka.

For information on the lapsing process see Work Instructions - Processing - Lapsed Consents and Extensions of Time.pdf.

In the event a lapsed building consent decision is disputed, the consent will be reviewed. Any changes to the lapsed decision must be approved by a Team Lead or the Building Consents Manager to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements.

Extension of Time

Regulation	Regulation 7(2)(d)(v)	**Date**	23 February 2026
Owner	Building Consents Manager	**Responsibility**	Building Administrators

Intent

The purpose of this regulation is to ensure that building projects commence within a reasonable timeframe after a building consent is issued. Delays in starting a project may result in changes to legislation or the New Zealand Building Code (Building Code) that need to be addressed.

Customers may apply for an extension of time to begin building work, and the Building Consent Authority (BCA) has discretion to grant this under section 52(b) of the Building Act 2004, allowing for "any further period that the building consent authority may allow."

Hutt City Council's policy permits one 12-month time extension for building consents.

Policy

If building work has not commenced within 12 months of the consent being issued, a customer may apply for an extension of time to begin the work. Hutt City Council (Council) will review the application and, if approved, grant a 12-month extension within which the work must commence.

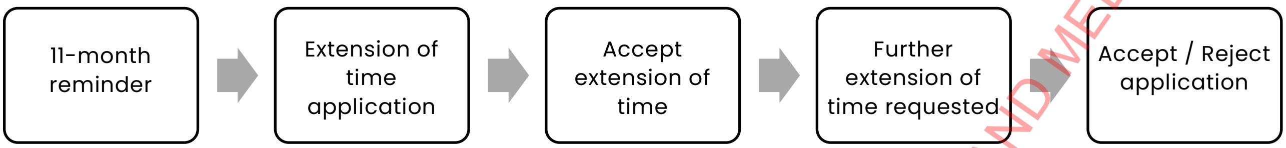
Customers may apply for one additional extension of time, which the Council will assess based on the specifics of the project. A second extension request must be reviewed and approved by a Team Leader or Manager. The Council will then decide whether to grant the second extension or decline the request.

Extension of time

Section 52 of the Building Act 2004 states:
"A building consent lapses and is of no effect if the building work to which it relates does not commence within:
(a) 12 months after the date of issue of the building consent; or
(b) any further period that the building consent authority may allow."

If the building work has not commenced within 12 months, the customer must apply for an extension of time before the lapsed date. The Council will review the application and determine whether to grant an additional 12-month extension, providing the customer extra time to commence the building project.

High Level Process



Procedure

Application for extension of time

An application for an extension of time must be received prior to the lapsing date (12-month anniversary of the consent being issued). The application can be made via Objective Build.

The application is vetted by an Officer and once accepted a notification is sent to the Building Administration team who will link the application to the consent in GoGet. The status is updated in GoGet to Extension Request.

Reviewing the application

The Officer will review the documentation and decide if the extension of time should be granted. The decision is recorded in GoGet.

This should include checking:

- That there is no valid reason that would prevent the work from starting in its current status, e.g., changes in legislation
- Whether there have been any changes to the Building Code that impacts on the means of compliance

Consideration should be given to the timeframe requested by the applicant and whether this is realistic. The standard extension of time is for one year. Any additional requests or request for extension of time beyond one year should be referred to the processing Team Leads who will make the decision using BCON-FORM-I-001 - Extension of Time Checksheet.docx.

Notification to applicant

Update the status in GoGet and generate Extension of Time Approved letter. This can be sent to the applicant via Objective Build and is automatically saved in Te Pātaka in the relevant consent folder.

The status is updated in GoGet to Extension Approved.

The Building Administrator emails yousendproperty@huttcity.govt.nz advising the Building Administration team that an extension of time has been granted. They will generate an invoice and send to the applicant via Objective Build.

Application declined

When the application for an extension of time is declined, the applicant will be notified and advised of the reasons for the decision.

The consent will automatically lapse on the expiry date. Refer to Lapsing a Building Consent.

References

Work Instructions - Start Date Extension of Time.pdf

5 May 2026

Chris Hetherington
s7(2)(a) [redacted]

Tēnā koe Chris,

Request for Information – Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act (LGOIMA) 1987

We refer to your official information request dated 12 March 2026, seeking information on building consent volumes, processing times, internal guidance, internal reviews and management correspondence.

On 13 April 2026, Council provided you with a partial response to your request which addressed the following parts of your request:

1. *The total number of building consent applications received by Hutt City Council in each of the last five calendar years.*
2. *The number of building consents approved, declined and withdrawn in each of those years.*
3. *The average processing time for building consents in each of those years.*
4. *Copies of any internal guidance documents, policies or procedures used by staff when assessing building consent applications.*
5. *Copies of any internal reports, audits or reviews relating to building consent processing or compliance in the last five years.*

As part of the response released to you on 13 April 2026, Council advised that it was extending the time limit for making a decision in relation to part 6 of your request only, under section 14(1)(b) of the LGOIMA, as consultations necessary to make a decision on that part of the request were such that a proper response could not reasonably be made within the original time limit.

30 Laings Road, Lower Hutt
Private Bag 31912, Lower Hutt 5040
/huttcitycouncil 0800 488 824
contact@huttcity.govt.nz
www.huttcity.govt.nz

This further letter is in response to part 6 of your request, which asked for:

6. *Copies of any correspondence, including emails, between Building Services management and senior council management discussing delays or resourcing issues within the building consent team in the last three years.*

Answer:

In response to part 6 of your request, please refer to **Appendix 1** below which details the documents in scope of your request and Councils decision on its release. Please note, some information has been withheld under the following provisions of the LGOIMA:

- Section 7(2)(a), to protect the privacy of natural persons,
- Section 7(2)(b)(ii), where the release of information would be likely to unreasonably prejudice the commercial position of a person who supplied or who is the subject of the information,
- Section 7(2)(c)(i), to protect information subject to an obligation of confidence, where release would be likely to prejudice the future supply of similar information necessary for Council to effectively carry out its functions, and
- Section 7(2)(f)(i), to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinions by or between officers and employees of the Council.

Some information has also been removed as it is out of scope of your request.

Council has considered whether the public interest in the release of the withheld information outweighed the need to withhold it and has concluded that it does not.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this response. Information about how to make a complaint is available at: **Office of the Ombudsman - Complaints**, or freephone 0800 802 602.

Please note that this response to your information request may be published on Hutt City Council's website: **Proactive releases - Hutt City Council**.

Ngā mihi nui

Rebekah van der Splinter

Senior Advisor, Official Information and Privacy

Appendix 1: Documents for release

Number	Date	Document Type	Title/Subject Line	Redaction Grounds
1	17 December 2023	Email	Building Team - resourcing issues and a plan of action	Some information has been withheld under s7(2)(a) and s7(2)(f)(i). Some information has also been removed as it is out of scope of your request.
2	3 December 2024	Email	Team performance	Some information has been withheld under s7(2)(a).
3	23 May 2025	Email	Regulatory Resourcing Panel meeting on 28 May	Some information has been withheld under s7(2)(a), s7(2)(b)(ii), s7(2)(c)(i) and s7(2)(f)(i). Some information has also been removed as it is out of scope of your request.

From: Richard Barton
Sent: Monday, 18 December 2023 4:42 pm
To: Alison Geddes ; Richard Daubney
Cc: Jo Broad
Subject: Re: Building Team - resourcing issues and a plan of action

Thanks Alison,

I'll provide an update on this email tomorrow morning as I've been doing some work on the compliance schedule issue and think I have a way forward to offset the cost of contractors by increased revenue.

Also, it would be good to have s7(2)(a) [redacted] take on staff management responsibility for both Quality and TA if possible (latest thinking is s7(2)(a) [redacted] will cover both functions as s7(2)(a) [redacted] has been doing). This makes things cleaner and more efficient - what's the P&C challenge here?

Out of scope [redacted]

Thanks

Get Outlook for iOS

From: Alison Geddes <Alison.Geddes@huttcity.govt.nz>
Sent: Monday, December 18, 2023 3:51:32 PM
To: Richard Barton <Richard.Barton@huttcity.govt.nz>; Richard Daubney <Richard.Daubney@huttcity.govt.nz>
Cc: Jo Broad <Jo.Broad@huttcity.govt.nz>
Subject: RE: Building Team - resourcing issues and a plan of action

Hi Richard,

This looks like an acceptable course of action. Out of scope [redacted]

Given that we have a raft of vacancies we will be able to offset some of the cost of hiring consultants with unspent salaries to do these pieces of work. Out of scope [redacted]

Alison Geddes
Director Environment & Sustainability

Hutt City Council, 30 Laings Road, Hutt Central, Lower Hutt, Lower Hutt 5010
P: M: s7(2)(a) [redacted] **W:** www.huttcity.govt.nz

From: Richard Barton <Richard.Barton@huttcity.govt.nz>
Sent: Sunday, December 17, 2023 10:01 AM
To: Alison Geddes <Alison.Geddes@huttcity.govt.nz>; Richard Daubney <Richard.Daubney@huttcity.govt.nz>
Subject: Building Team - resourcing issues and a plan of action

Alison and Richard,

Further to our chat on Friday, below is a summary of what we discussed.

s7(2)(f)(i) [redacted] Out of scope [redacted] Out of scope [redacted] Out of scope [redacted] The BCA also has several vacancies which we are trying to recruit for, and this is leaving us critically short in both consent processing and inspection resources, resulting in an overreliance on external contractors and a significant forecasted overspend. Combine this with a backlog of consents and inspections, high workload, poor statutory timeframes, and a significant amount of work to complete in readiness for IANZ and it's fair to say we have a few challenges to tackle.

I propose the following course of action which I'd like your agreement on:

- s7(2)(a) [redacted] to act as Interim Operational Policy and Capability Manager until post IANZ visit. There is insufficient time to bring in a new person for this role with the amount of work we have to complete prior to IANZ. We can't afford to lose any time to recruiting and onboarding and s7(2)(a) [redacted] is already across all the issues. This will be a redirecting of s7(2)(a) [redacted] focus to more operational issues and no increase in cost.
- I will take over people management for the TA Team. s7(2)(f)(i) [redacted]
- I will try and agree terms with Richard Hardie to allow s7(2)(a) [redacted] to be made available, as required, to manage any critical earthquake prone building issues between January and April. s7(2)(a) [redacted] has significant experience with EQ buildings having worked at BRANZ and

written the Council guidance for this. Out of scope [redacted] I'm unsure at this stage how feasible it would be for s7(2)(a) [redacted] to be released from some LTP work. However, we do have EQ building resource as s7(2)(a) [redacted] is now back from sick leave, so the role would be an overseeing one and likely take less than a day per week.

- s7(2)(f)(i) [redacted]

- With both the Operational Policy and Capability and the Principal Engineer role now vacant, this provides an opportunity to review how the organisational structure could be better aligned. Richard Daubney will lead another organisational structure review (with s7(2)(a) [redacted] and my input) to consider how the team could be best realigned to achieve maximum efficiencies. This review should draw on intelligence from our new forecasting model and recommend team capability and size required to process current and future demand and reduce reliance on contractors.
- s7(2)(a) [redacted] so we have to manage his workload as he will be out of action for a prolonged time. This in effect leaves us with virtually no capacity to process commercial consents Out of scope [redacted]. We will take the following course of action to address this:
  - s7(2)(f)(i) [redacted]
  - s7(2)(a) [redacted] will be redirected into commercial consent processing (in the short term) to cover the lack of current capability and in preparation for s7(2)(a) [redacted] extended leave.
  - Continue to try and recruit senior commercial processing roles.
- s7(2)(f)(i) [redacted]

I will provide a full financial forecast for all of the above.

Out of scope [redacted]

I'd appreciate if you could both reply to confirm this course of action and Alison, I'd appreciate if you could keep Jenny and Jo Miller in the picture.

Many thanks

Out of scope [redacted]

Richard Barton
Interim Building Control Manager
Hutt City Council, 30 Laings Road, Hutt Central, Lower Hutt, Lower Hutt 5010
P: M: s7(2)(a) [redacted] **W:** www.huttcity.govt.nz

HUTT CITY
TE AWA KAIRANGI

Richard Barton
Building Control Manager

Hutt City Council, 30 Laings Road, Lower Hutt 5040
P: M: W: www.huttcity.govt.nz

HUTT CITY
TE AWA KAIRANGI

From: Alison Geddes
Sent: Tuesday, 3 December 2024 9:46 am
To: Richard Barton
Cc: Josy Bryan
Subject: RE: Team performance

This is brilliant news. I'll share it with the Regulatory Resourcing Panel and Jo Miller.

Alison Geddes
Director Environment & Sustainability

Hutt City Council, 30 Laings Road, Hutt Central, Lower Hutt 5010
P: M: s7(2)(a) [redacted] **W:** www.huttcity.govt.nz

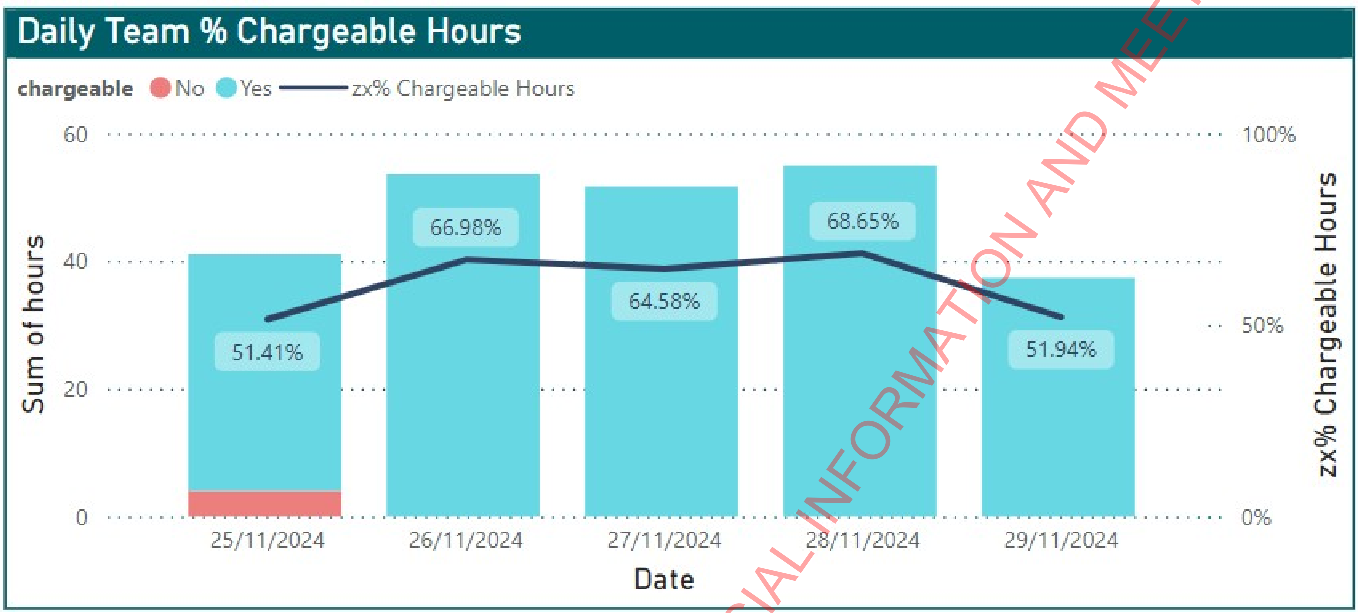
HUTT CITY TE AWA KAIRANGI

From: Richard Barton <Richard.Barton@huttcity.govt.nz>
Sent: Tuesday, 3 December 2024 8:31 am
To: Alison Geddes <Alison.Geddes@huttcity.govt.nz>
Cc: Josy Bryan <Josy.Bryan@huttcity.govt.nz>
Subject: Team performance

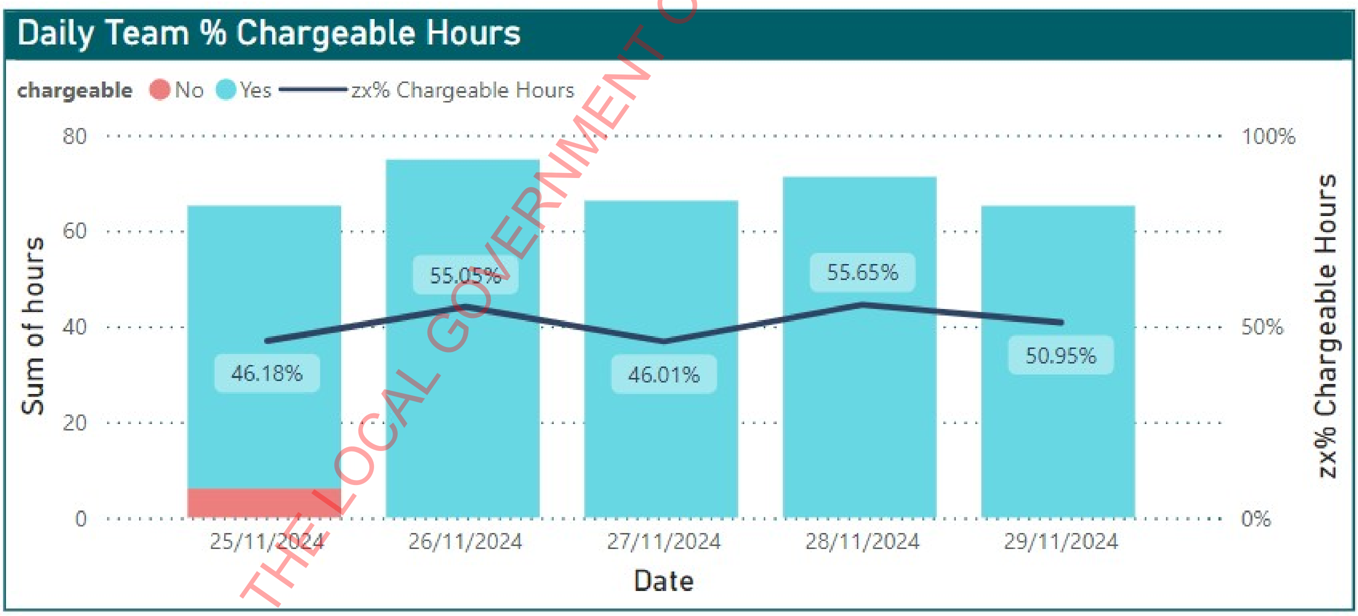
Hi Alison,

I thought I'd share a bit of good news from the Building Team.

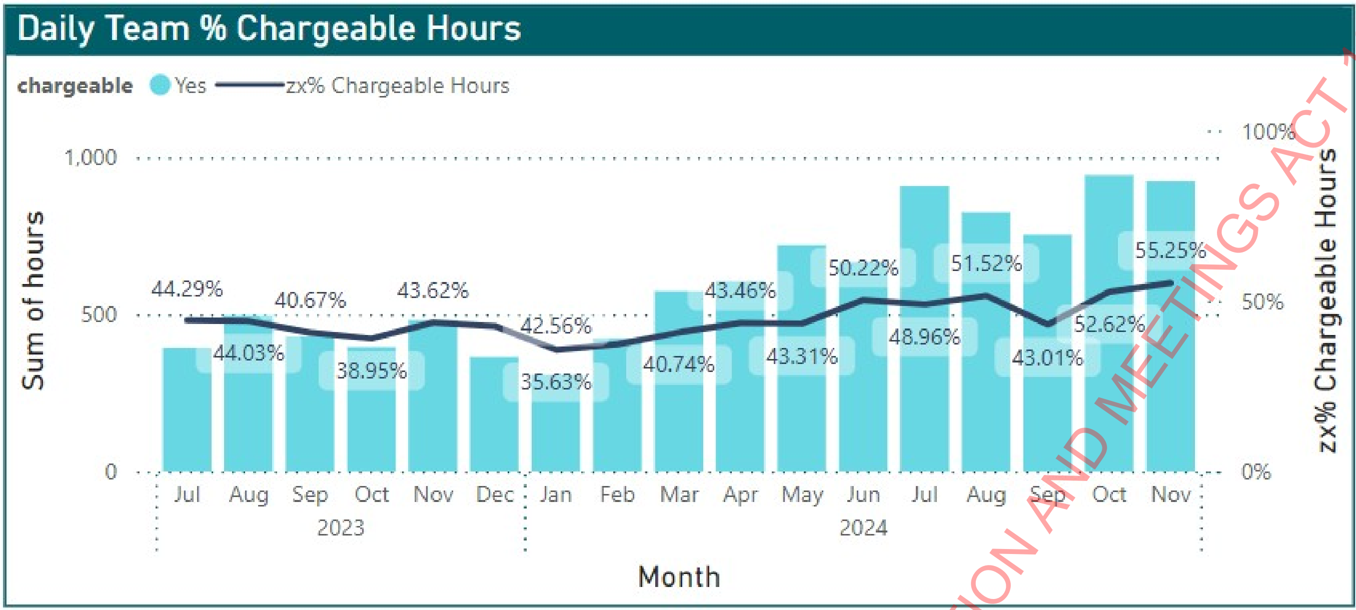
Last week our processing team collectively recorded 61% chargeable time for the week against our team target of 50%. Below is a graph showing both the number of hours (bar graph) and the percentage line. The red in the graph is time that's recorded as chargeable but can't be charged to the customer, usually as someone is learning a new competency and takes additional time. We are trying to keep this to a minimum at the moment.



We also recorded over 50% chargeable for the wider team (including Team Leaders, Admin, technicians) – see graph below.



The graph below shows the monthly number of chargeable hours (blue bars) recorded each month by the processing team (excluding contractors, admin, TL's etc) – almost double the hours being recorded by the processing team than at this time last year.



Also, the team recorded 92% statutory timeframes last week. We continue to work with customers to refuse or issue some of the older consents, so our stat timeframes will continue to fluctuate for a few more months.

Richard Barton
Head of Building Control

Hutt City Council, 30 Laings Road, Hutt Central, Lower Hutt 5010
P: M: s7(2)(a) [redacted] **W:** www.huttcity.govt.nz

From: Alison Geddes
Sent: Friday, 23 May 2025 3:00 pm
To: Kelly Alkema ; Jenny Livschitz
Cc: Richard Barton ; Josy Bryan
Subject: Regulatory Resourcing Panel meeting on 28 May.

IN CONFIDENCE

Kia ora Jenny and Kelly,

Please see attached papers for the Regulatory Resourcing Panel meeting on 28 May.

1. Minutes from the previous meeting - for noting
2. Options to resolve critical BCA capability and capacity risks - for approval
3. Out of scope [redacted]
4. Out of scope [redacted]
5. Out of scope [redacted]
6. Out of scope [redacted]

I am aware that there is a lot of information provided in the attachments to support the three items so Richard Barton, Josy Bryant and Natalie Hardy will be in attendance to clarify and assist with our understanding.

Looking forward to our discussion.

Alison

Alison Geddes
Director Environment & Sustainability

Hutt City Council, 30 Laings Road, Hutt Central, Lower Hutt 5010
P: M: s7(2)(a) [redacted] **W:** www.huttcity.govt.nz

HUTT CITY TE AWA KAIRANGI

Please note that some of the documents listed above are out of scope of your request and have been removed from this response.

Memorandum

Meeting Date :	6 November 2024
Attendance:	Alison Geddes Jenny Livschitz Kelly Alkema
Subject	**Record of Regulatory Resourcing Panel Meeting**

Background

This was the first meeting of the Regulatory Resourcing Panel and a large amount of information had been sent out prior to the meeting. This included: Updated Workforce Plan for the Building Consents team and Dashboards of results for both Building Control and Resource Consents. The Workforce Plan contained insights and recommendations for approval, background and current state, and future considerations. A critical piece of information contained in the workforce plan is the Progression Framework for which the Building Team was seeking approval.

Key Recommendations from the updated Workforce Plan are:

- **Approve** the Workforce Plan
- **Approve** the Progression Framework for Implementation
- **Approve** the C3 Premium payment rollout.
- **Approve** P&C to lead a process to implement adjustment changes.
- **Note** a separate business case for additional senior processing inspection staff will be provided.
- **Note** the above recommendations can be accounted for through existing budgets via a reduction in the use of contractors.

Discussion

Out of scope

[redacted]

Out of scope [redacted]

The BCA still has a critical shortage of C2 and C3 processing staff and is currently sending most of its work in these categories to external contractors. s7(2)(b)(ii) [redacted].

Out of scope [redacted]

Further information requested.

In relation to resourcing, we discussed the following:

- A need to understand what the current reliance on consultants is in the processing and inspections spaces. **Extra information has been provided also included on the Dashboard**

Further questions:
- Kelly would like to understand based on consents being received, what would we be aiming for in terms of maximum % being processed by consultants so we can understand if there's a

trigger to consider additional internal resourcing. C**urrently 1 ½ processing and 1 inspections- needs more work to specify.**

- Kelly recognises there's a need for staff at the C2/3 level, so it would be good to know given the investment in the Operational Policy & Capability space, what improvements have been made to the approach to training. **Will provide further information.**
- It would also be good to understand where staff are sitting at the moment in terms of competency levels and where would we expect them to be in 6 months, as we need to have that forward view. **Can provide further aggregated information.**
- Recognising there will be a few factors to consider, can I please see chargeable staff hours per individual as productivity is one of the key measures Jo will be wanting to see before considering approving any additional resourcing. **Can provide further aggregated information.**

Decisions of the Panel:

- **Workforce Plan** – we agreed this should be a living document and rather than approve, we'll note that we've received the plan.
- **Progression Framework** –Comfortable in principle but Kelly will do a final review.
- **C3 Payment Rollout** – No support for utilising this as a talent attraction and retention tool. Support for applying it as an exception, and with prior approval from the E&S Director and CPO as outlined in the Workforce Plan, noting relevant factors such as the current labour market
- **Admin and Consenting teams' realignment work** – agreement that this will be considered within the broader organisational context, early 2025. In the interim no work should progress as it will require HR input to ensure org design principles are considered.

Next Steps:

- Alison/ Richard to provide further information to clarify questions.
- Do further work on developing a hybrid model and budget for ongoing use of consultants as a component of the operating model.
- Kelly and/or Niki, and Natalie and/or Richard to discuss implementation of the Progression Framework.
- Edit the Workforce Plan so it is purely a factual base document that gets regularly updated.
- Through this editing, identify and extract issues that still need to be progressed, some of which will need to be reported to the resourcing panel for consideration

Memorandum

Regulatory Resourcing Panel

Meeting date:	28 May 2025
To:	Jenny Livschitz, Chief Financial Officer Kelly Alkema, Head of People & Capability Alison Geddes, Director Environment & Sustainability
From:	Richard Barton, Head of Building Control
Subject:	**OPTIONS TO RESOLVE CRITICAL BCA CAPABILITY AND CAPACITY RISKS**

Purpose

This report describes critical BCA capability and capacity risks, especially those related to appointment of Senior Building Officers (SBOs) and outlines options and recommendations to address the risks.

The objective is to ensure appropriate capability and capacity within the BCA to be resilient to changes in the market, financial sustainability, continue to deliver high-quality regulatory services and meet statutory requirements to maintain our IANZ accreditation.

Recommendations

That Regulatory Resourcing Panel:

a) **Note** the BCA must have adequate staffing at all levels of competency to maintain its accreditation.

b) **Note** there are significant capability and capacity risks facing the BCA at present (and in the future) given resources do not match demand.

c) **Note** that if these risks are not addressed urgently, the BCA's statutory compliance could be compromised and commercial development and housing growth in the city could be further stunted.

d) **Note** three options to meet BCA capability and capacity requirements:

- **Option 1:** status quo, relying on contractors when vacancies can't be filled.
- **Option 2:** Appointment of 2x Com 3 SBOs (on increased salary) while keeping an overall balance of staff at different levels of competency.
- **Option 3:** A hybrid model for long term use of contractors/consultant when specialist skills are required.

e) **Note** that the higher the ratio of SBO's and Com 3 staff in the consents team the greater the financial return.

f) **Note** that if option 2 is agreed, the Annual Plan 2025/26 budget for Other Special Services would be reduced by s7(2)(b)(ii) [redacted] which would help manage the BCA's overall financial sustainability.

g) **Approve** implementation of option 2, to create a Com 3 SBO role and transfer two existing SBO roles to new Com 3 SBO roles with a salary up to s7(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]. To compliment this, recruitment will be prioritised and processes streamlined including the timing of offers.

Background

For years, the BCA has faced challenges recruiting and retaining staff with necessary competencies (particularly at the Commercial 2 (Com 2) and Commercial 3 (Com 3) levels) required for processing and issuing building consents.

This challenge has become more acute in recent years, as we witness a shift in demand from simple residential to more complex residential and commercial consents. It is anticipated that this shift will continue, considering the Medium Density Residential Standards, RiverLink development opportunities and proposed Government changes in legislation planned to take effect later in 2025.

BCA's capability and capacity risk

There are long-standing challenges in recruiting and retaining senior technical staff in the BCA, particularly those with Com 2 and Com 3 competency, which can take up to 6-10 years to achieve. There are very limited number of people with these competencies in the Wellington region, even with Consentium and contracting companies nearby. In the near future, as a result of proposed legislative change, we could see reduced access to these competencies as staff are attracted to reputable building companies that can self-certify work and pay more for these roles. These constraints pose significant risks to BCA statutory performance, service delivery and financial sustainability.

Our current challenge is that the BCA has no Processing Officers with Com 3 competency (3 vacancies) and only one with Com 2 (works 4 days a week) competency, with 3 current SBO vacancies. This has led to a reliance on the Team Leader and a Technical Lead) to process C3 consents, taking time away from managing teams and providing technical expertise, training and development. A further risk is if both the Team Leader and Technical Lead roles are unavailable at the same time, affecting our ability to grant and issue C3 consents.

SBO roles also deliver benefits and value outside of just consenting/revenue generation for the wider Building Control Business Unit by undertaking competency assessments, technical audits and supporting improvement work.

During the past year, two Senior Processors left (ie. one moved out of the region and one was promoted to Team Leader at Upper Hutt), and we have been unable to recruit replacement at current salary levels.

Appointing and retaining SBOs

The SBO role has a salary range from s7(2)(b)(ii) [redacted] and any offer over the midpoint (s7(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]) needs approval from the Chief People Officer, however, the market rate for such a role is in the range $115,000 to $135,000.

The number of SBO processing roles is fixed at 6. This can hamper career progression and create challenges for retention, alternatively it can lead to a poor mix of competency in the team as internal promotion is prioritised over external recruitment. For more information about how many SBOs and BOs we have refer to Building Consent Team Position Reconciliation April 2025.xlsx and structure charts in the Consent Team Realignment paper.

Why risks need resolution

- **Core council function** - The BCA is a core Council function that supports housing and economic growth in the city.
- **Progression framework** – the proposed progression framework provides a career pathway and part of that pathway is ensuring sufficient senior staff to mentor/guide/train/develop other members in the BCA.
- **Scarcity in the market for C3** – It takes 6-10 years to be fully qualified C3 and these skills are hard to come by in Wellington and wider New Zealand.
- **IANZ accreditation** - The BCA will not be able to operate without maintaining IANZ accreditation and IANZ need assurance that the BCA is adequately resourced to meet current needs and shifts in demand such as the increased demand for complex residential and commercial consents in recent years.
- **Generating revenue** - The BCA is also a revenue generating function that is 69-80% cost recovered under the Revenue and Financing Policy.
- **Statutory performance** - A recent letter from MBIE (7th April 2025) signals the Government's intention to increase the spotlight on BCA's and their statutory performance. Obviously, the BCAs performance is reliant on its capability and capacity.
- **Consent sector reform** - central reform proposes a new self-certification scheme for trusted building professionals and accredited businesses and a scheme for plumbers and drainlayers carrying out work on a simple residential dwelling. These schemes will be enabled by amendments to the Building Act 2004 and the Plumbers, Gasfitters and Drainlayers Act 2006. The schemes will be designed to streamline the building consent process by alleviating the burden on BCAs and expediting the construction process, by allowing BCAs to focus on high risk, complex builds. This shift in capacity and capability towards more

complex developments needs to be reflected in BCA resourcing if/when the legislation goes through. However, it is predicted that there will be no significant impacts before 1 July 2026. Beyond that we can anticipate some workflow from the Council BCA if liability issues can be addressed.

- **Mandatory inspection targets** - Government is introducing mandatory targets later in 2025 requiring BCAs to complete 80% of building inspections within three working days. The success of BCAs in meeting the target will be shown in quarterly performance data with the objective of providing greater transparency and encouraging improved performance. This is another reason to be well resourced to meet target.

Reluctant use of contractors

Holding 3 vacant positions places a strain on the team and the BCA is having to employ contractors and consultants to process consents, provide technical audits, competency assessments, training and development needs that could otherwise be done in house, if the C3 roles could be filled.

The BCA has spent approximately [redacted] s7(2)(b)(ii) on contracting most of its Com 1, 2 and 3 consents over the last several months (and at times residential consents when applications received outstrip internal capacity), which is equivalent to 3xFTE's of processing work.

If this continues, it will negatively affect the BCA's financial sustainability. Recent Annual Plan discussions have included a proposal to replace [redacted] s7(2)(b)(ii) worth of contractors with internal appointments, however this is reliant on confirming the approach to resourcing BCA requirements, outlined in this paper.

Contractors are an expensive way to maintain regulatory requirements, and creates additional pressures, with consents that have been processed by contractors required to be reviewed by a suitably competent BCA staff before being granted and issued. Only BCA staff can grant and issue consents, as this is a legislative requirement, and this review may take up to 3 hours for a Com 3 consent.

Regular customer feedback and feedback from the Customer Advisory Group (CAG) confirms customers prefer to work with internal staff vs contractors. Internal staff are more familiar with our processes, they are quicker, raise fewer RFI's and therefore cost the customer less.

Options for consideration

There are three possible options to address BCA capability and capacity:

Options	Pro	Con
Option 1: Status quo – reliance on contractors as a result of not being able to recruit Com 3 staff.	• More flexibility to switch contractors off and on to align with workflows.	• Contractor costs [redacted] more than necessary • Cultivates an unstable workforce culture. • Risk of loss of accreditation due to not being able to demonstrate sufficient capacity and capability. • Vacant positions carry corporate overhead costs. • Risk of not meeting statutory requirements as less ownership of delivery from contractors • Reputation Damage - customer dissatisfaction with contractor processing and consent processing delays. • Customers not as satisfied with consistent service • Less ability to train up staff at lower levels of competency • Leadership Burnout - inadequate staffing places pressure on Team Leaders and Management which could lead to burnout due to unsustainable workloads. • Lack of a long-term internal competency pipeline (progression framework) • Talent Drain - inability to recruit and retain experienced staff to work in a professional environment.
Option 2 (preferred option): Creation of a Com 3 SBO job description and transfer of two existing	• Able to meet C2 and C3 demand • Able to attract quality talent in a tight employment market. • 25/26 and onwards savings from contractor budget of [redacted] as a	• Fixed costs and overheads harder to scale up and down with market changes. • Upgrading BCA salary bands may have cross-unit implications but one could argue this is a very technical exception.

SBO vacancies into the new Com 3 SBO roles. 1. Create a new Com 3 SBO salary band circa [redacted] and recruit x2 FTE's and abolish the C3 premium payment. 2. The Director of Environment and Sustainability can approve above midpoint salary offers for BCA recruits.	result of reducing reliance on contractors • More likely to make savings through being able to train staff in house. • More likely to meet statutory timeframes. • Reduce the risk of loss of accreditation through lack of capacity and capability. • More likely to cost effectively deliver as a result of Govt consenting reform that will focus on complex and commercial building – future proofing legislative risk. • More likely to have good customer relationships.	
Option 3: A hybrid model for long term use of contractors/consultant when specialist skills are required. Sign up a long-term contract to provide a minimum of 2 x FTE equivalent Com 3 contractors embed them into the BCA and delegate granting and issuing authority to them.	• Able to meet C3 demand. • Able to engage knowledgeable contractors. • Contractors do generate more revenue than an FTE equivalent as training and development are all included in the per hour price and therefore the percentage of chargeable time is greater. • Remove 2 x FTEs from AP year 3 which reduces overhead costs from year 3 onwards.	• Increased costs of approx. [redacted]. • Cultivates an unstable workforce culture. • Risk of not meeting statutory requirements as less ownership of delivery from contractors • Limited ability to build up institutional knowledge over time invest time into upskilling other staff. • Contractors may be less willing to integrate and work with others. • Managing contractors can present legal challenges, especially concerning compliance with employment laws, tax regulations, and contractor classification. Inadvertent misclassification of a contractor could lead to legal and financial repercussions. • Customers more likely to be satisfied working with Council staff and receiving a consistent service rather than contractors'

		that may be less reluctant to go the extra mile for customers. • Potential for some savings in later years if we can negotiate financial benefits into contracts.

Further information is outlined under Financial Implications in relation to each option based on return on investment.

Other options considered

Other options were also considered, such as reducing the size of the processing team by transitioning to only Com 3 processing staff (possible when combined with option 1) but this was dismissed as this is seen as a significant change at a time when there is so much uncertainly around the impact of future Government changes.

The other option considered was to develop a plan to commence overseas recruitment for SBO roles at current salary ranges. However, at this time, we do not believe this is the most efficient and effective option given the time and cost this could take. It could be considered in the future as an option, but only if the market picks up.

Recommended option

Based on the information outlined in this paper, it is recommended that the Panel adopt option 2, as it provides assurance that we are resourced appropriately with a balance of staff at different levels to meet our statutory requirements in the current/future market. It also avoids high consultant costs and risks.

A balanced team of competencies is important right now. Indications are that while economic conditions may be slow to recover, it's unlikely to get worse, so it makes sense to s7(2)(b)(ii) [redacted] meet growing demand for their skills and experience. Senior staff generate significantly more revenue than junior staff and this more than offsets any increase in salary they may receive.

In the current environment, if the Panel prefer contractors to internal staff, then we would recommend option 3 over option 1, as there is decreased costs and risks with this option.

Financial implications

As outlined above, the BCA is currently engaging contractors to complete the equivalent of 3 FTE's worth of processing work (primarily Res 3 to Com 3) and this costs in the region of s7(2)(b)(ii) [redacted] per year more than it would cost to employ full time employees. Additional costs are incurred through contracted technical audits, training, and development services as there is insufficient internal resource to share these activities across the team.

A senior processor at C3 competency who was not providing supervision would be able to devote more time to chargeable work and would reasonably be expected to achieve at least 70% individual chargeable time.

This increase in chargeable time (at residential rates) would result in approximately s7(2)(b)(ii) [redacted] of increased revenue per person per year over that of a SBO who in turn generates approximately s7(2)(b)(ii) [redacted] more than a BO. In total, a C3 competent processor should generate at least s7(2)(b)(ii) [redacted] (at residential rates) more revenue per year than their counterpart who is under competency development due to the 10-20% productivity loss of learning a new competency.

Role	Salary / cost	Chargeable target	Annual revenue generated
BO	s7(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]		
SBO			
Proposed C3 SBO			

From a purely financial perspective, it is more beneficial for the BCA to have all Com 3 competent processing staff.

The table below details the current salary, chargeable time targets and revenue generated for existing Building Officer and SBO roles. The table also includes financial details to compare against a proposed new SBO Com 3 role. As can be seen from the table below, there is a strong commercial argument to increase salary to attract senior Com 3 processing staff. The table below does not consider, the reduction in revenue that occurs when staff are under competency development. A staff member at Com 3 competency only requires keeping their competency up to date and this can be completed within the 30% of non-chargeable time.

Role	Salary	Total annual costs including overheads	Revenue Generated	Surplus to contribute overheads
FTE SBO	s7(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
Com 3 SBO	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
Contractor	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]

Impact of Staff Development on Revenue

- Staff under competency development generate 10-20% less revenue: s7(2)(b)(ii) [redacted] a year in lost revenue per person moving up one competency level (e.g. Res 3 to Com 1).
- Supervising staff lose 5~10% chargeable hours during supervision, further compounding lost revenue.
- Recent data shows a single staff member in development (Res 3 → Com 1) lost: 231 chargeable hours over 6 months, valued at s7(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]

Return on Investment

The table below provides a summary on indicative Return on Investment (ROI)

Options	Key Features	Advantages	Risks/Challenges	Cost Estimate	Net Financial Impact
1. Status Quo	Maintain current salary settings and internal recruitment focus.	No upfront increase in cost. Maintains current organisational structure.	Continued staff shortages, over-reliance on contractors, poor customer outcomes, risk to accreditation.	s7(2)(b)(ii) [redacted] per year in direct contractor costs and s7(2)(b)(ii) [redacted] in indirect contractor costs.	Negative s7(2)(b)(ii) [redacted]

2. Appoint x2 Com 3 FTEs	Create Com 3 role [redacted] and recruit 2 senior internal processing staff.	High revenue generation; reduces contractor costs; builds in-house capability; strengthens succession.	Stranded cost risk if demand drops; Remuneration relativities with other units; may reduce junior development.	[redacted] first year forecasted [redacted] per year increase for next 5 years	Positive ROI in < 6 months Net gain of [redacted] after first year
3. Hybrid Contractor Model	Embed 2 FTE-equivalent contractors into team under long-term agreements.	Flexible scaling; no overhead or training costs; preserves internal development roles.	Higher hourly rates; less control; not conducive to succession building or internal culture embedding.	[redacted] per year (some savings possible through longer term contracts)	Positive ROI in < 6 months Net gain of [redacted] per year through reduction in staffing levels and associated corporate overhead reductions

Any costs increase from introducing a new Com 3 SBO role can be offset from savings through a reduction in contracting work out. Potential costs of operating the current contractor model are in the region of [redacted] per year. The cost of implementing a new Com 3 SBO role and rolling this out across existing staff would be in the region of [redacted] for the first year.

Consultation

Consultation has occurred with members of the Regulatory Resource Working Group including, E&S P&C Business Partner, E&S Finance Partner and the E&S Business Manager.

Risks

Further to the risks outlined above, the reliance on current staff members with C2 or C3 competency, means that if they are on leave or unwell, then the BCA has the risk of not being able to undertake its core statutory function of granting and issuing consents, without taking on considerable costs of contractors. This would impact statutory timeframes and customer service by delaying commercial development and likely risk ongoing accreditation of the BCA.

There are risks of:

- not meeting budget and not meeting savings targets in a challenging economic market
- reputation risks related to public scrutiny
- risks of spending money that is unbudgeted to satisfy statutory requirements.

People implications

If the current situation continues, we face the following implications, in addition to what has already been mentioned:

- **Recruitment failures:** The persistent inability to fill long-standing vacancies (the team has held vacant positions for over 2 years such as 3 unfilled Senior Processing Officer positions) suggests that the current employment offering (whether in terms of salary, benefits, or career development) is not competitive in the market, particularly when compared against the high technical requirements, length of time to achieve competency and responsibilities of the role.

- **Perceptions of unattractive career pathways:** The lack of progression pathways, overstretched environment and high market demand for Building Officers may deter mid-career professionals seeking sustainable long-term roles at Hutt City Council.

- **Salary band processes:** Chief People Officer approval is required to offer above the midpoint of the current salary band ([redacted] s7(2)(b)(ii)). In order to enable this to happen in a timely manner, both parties need to be clear on what information needs to be provided, so we can respond quickly in a competitive market. Delegating this authority to the Director of E&S would enable a more agile and streamlined approach.

Legal implications

If the BCA is resourced appropriately to match current and future demand, then the risk of legal challenge is reduced. For example, Building Control inherited legal claims from the previous financial year, so if staff have necessary competencies, then the risks of granting and issuing consents will be reduced.

Technology and Privacy implications

N/A

Climate change implications

Council's BCA needs to be appropriately resourced to support implications of climate change such as flooding (ie. higher foundations) and potentially to support adaptation in certain areas of the city in due course.

Health, Safety and Security implications

Health and safety risks relate to pressure on staff in the BCA if it is not resourced appropriately, affecting other staff's normal roles when they have to fill the C3 gap.

Communication and Engagement

N/A.

Attachments

- Attachment 1: Context for Building Consents

Attachment 1: Context for Building Consents

Role of the BCA in a Territorial Authority

A territorial authority issues:

- project information memoranda
- building consents where the consent is subject to a waiver or modification of the Building Code
- certificates of acceptance
- certificates for public use
- compliance schedules (and amends compliance schedules).

A territorial authority also:

- follows up and resolves notices to fix
- administers annual building warrants of fitness
- enforces the provisions relating to annual building warrants of fitness
- enforces provisions relating to residential pools
- decides the extent to which buildings must comply with the Building Code when they are altered, the use is changed, or their specified intended life changes
- performs functions relating to dangerous or insanitary buildings
- performs functions relating to earthquake-prone buildings
- performs building safety evaluations following an earthquake or other emergency
- determines whether building work is exempt under Schedule 1 from requiring a building consent
- carries out any other functions and duties specified in the Building Act 2004.

Building consents make up a large part of the BCAs work.

Types of Building Consents

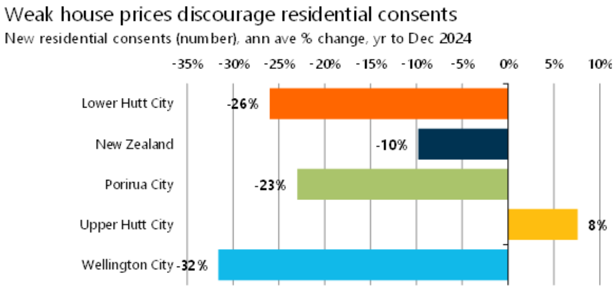
2. Building consents refers to a broad range of different types of applications (BC's, PIM's, COA's, CPU's, Amendments, Exemptions etc..) which are categorised into two main groups (Residential and Commercial) and then further categorised by complexity (Res 1,2,3 and Com 1,2,3).

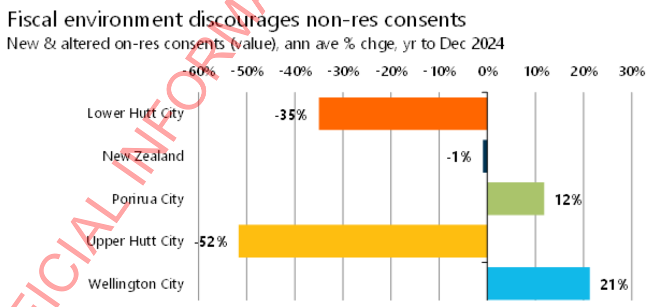
3. The type, group, complexity and number of consents received varies from day to day, week to week, month to month and year to year. There has always been a strong relationship between the strength of the economy and the number of consent applications. In general, the stronger the economic conditions, the greater the number of building consent applications.

Market demand for Building Consents

4. Over the past few years, there has been a steady decline (since a peak in 2022) in the number of consent applications received due to market conditions.

5. Consent data from the past 5 months suggests that this decline is flattening-out, with recovery coming. This decline has affected both residential and non-residential consents:





BERL's Autumn prediction is: "The domestic economy is on the path to recovery. However, there is much uncertainty around the trajectory of this path and where the economy will eventually land, with the only layer of certainty being the downside risk. The RBNZ continues to lower the OCR which now stands at 3.5 percent. The cuts, which began in August 2024, have now started to take effect. GDP increased by 0.7 percent in the December 2024 quarter, reversing some of the declines in the June and September quarters. ***Looking ahead, we expect the economy to continue to grow, albeit slowly****."* Autumn 2025 | BERL

The following pages (27 - 100) have been removed as they are out of scope of your request.