



Building Services

Commercial Applications



Introduction

This guide is designed to provide information for owners applying for Building Consent to carry out building work on an industrial or commercial site. General information in relation to applying for a Building Consent can be found in our other guides.

Building Work is defined in the Building Act 2004 as “Work for, or in connection with, the construction, alteration, demolition, or removal of a building and includes site work and building design....” The definition also includes plumbing and drainage work.

An application to carry out building work on a commercial site is more complicated than any other.

The general public may use commercial buildings and often large numbers of people may be in a building at any one time. The information required with a Commercial Application therefore includes extra detail that would not normally apply to other applications.

As with all applications that come into Council, a Commercial Application is vetted at the counter by a Building Officer. The vetting checklist sets out the minimum information required with all applications but is only a guide and more information may be requested.

The Application

THE APPLICATION FORM

It is essential that the application is completed in full and contains accurate information in relation to the building and compliance section.

ALTERATIONS TO EXISTING BUILDINGS

When altering an existing building the applicant must demonstrate that the building will comply as is reasonably practicable with the building code relating to means of escape from fire and access and facilities for persons with disabilities.

The applicant must also demonstrate that the building will continue to comply with the other building code clauses to at least the same extent as before the alteration.

Council will not grant a Building Consent for an alteration of an existing building unless they are satisfied that the means of escape from fire and access and facilities for people with disabilities (where applicable) have been considered and, where appropriate, upgrades are proposed.

CHANGE OF USE

This section of the application is important both to the owner and Council. Changing the use of a building under the Building Act may have significant implications in terms of the amount of work that might be required and consequently the cost to the owner. Change of use is defined in the Building Regulations 2005 and is closely aligned with the purpose groups set out in the Fire Safety Clauses (“C” documents) in the Building Code.

SPECIFIED SYSTEMS AND COMPLIANCE SCHEDULES

Specified systems are systems or features that contribute to the proper functioning of a building. Specified systems require ongoing inspection and maintenance to ensure they function as required, because if they fail to operate properly, they have the potential to adversely affect health or life safety and may also affect your insurance cover. Specified systems include sprinkler systems, lifts, mechanical ventilation or air conditioning systems etc. Currently there are 16 different specified systems prescribed under the Building Act.

When you apply for a Building Consent for a new (or existing) building with specified systems, you will need to provide information with your application to enable the council to compile (or amend) a compliance schedule. The council will require details

of the design features of the specified systems and proposed procedures for inspection, maintenance and reporting so they can be included in the compliance schedule. This will also include the performance standard a specified system is intended to meet, and to continue to meet, for the life of the building. For example, a fire alarm system may be required to meet New Zealand Standard 4512:2003. When the council issues a Building Consent they will state whether the building will require a compliance schedule.

A compliance schedule states the specified systems, their performance standards and includes the inspection, maintenance and reporting procedures needed to keep them in good working order. The Building Consent will identify documentation the applicant is required to provide to the council when construction is complete and before a Code Compliance certificate and compliance schedule can be issued. This documentation may include certificates from installers of specified systems, testing and commissioning results, and third party verification from accredited inspection bodies for fire alarms and sprinkler systems as required by New Zealand Standards 4512:2003 and 4541:2007 respectively.

The Council is required to issue a compliance schedule and compliance schedule statement for new buildings or amend a compliance schedule where any specified systems are added or changed in a building. The compliance schedule is issued with the Code Compliance certificate.

The owner of a building for which a compliance schedule has been issued must:

- Display publically (so that it can be seen by users of the building) the compliance schedule statement for the first 12 months from issue of the compliance schedule
- Ensure that each specified system listed in the schedule is performing and will continue to perform to the relevant performance standard
- Provide to the Territorial authority an annual building warrant of fitness on the anniversary date of the issue of the compliance schedule
- Ensure that the compliance schedule is kept in the building or other agreed location and is available for inspection purposes

Supporting Documents

PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

As with all Building Consent Applications, plans and specifications must be drawn to an architectural draughting standard, to scale, show full construction detail and all dimensions. Two sets of plans and specifications are required with all Commercial Applications. This is a requirement for all applications, regardless of the amount or type of work being applied for, without the prior approval of Council. An electronic copy of the plans and specifications including fire report will be required if the application needs to be forwarded to the New Zealand Fire Service Design Review Unit (NZFSDRU) for comment.

ACCESSIBILITY

Section 118 of the Building Act states that “If provision is being made for the construction or alteration of a building reasonable and adequate provision by way of access, parking provisions, and sanitary facilities must be made for persons with disabilities who may be expected to –

- (a) Visit or work in the building; and
- (b) Carry out normal activities and processes in that building”

Access to a building reasonably starts at the car park and follows into and through the building. An accessible car park must provide for level and unimpeded access all the way into the building. Once inside, the use of and movement within the building, including for example, reception and shop counters, stairs, lifts and conveniences must all comply with the requirements of the Building Code.

The Council has a responsibility under the Building Act to ensure that accessibility has been fully addressed as part of the Building Consent process. This information therefore, is just as important as the structural plans and is necessary with all applications.

FIRE

All commercial building applications must be accompanied by a Fire Analysis Report, without the prior approval of the local Council. This includes new buildings, alterations to existing buildings and change of use. A new building must comply fully with the requirements of the Building Code and a full Fire Analysis Report is required. The Fire Report must contain,

at least, the following information:

- The Purpose Group must be defined
- The Occupant load must be calculated
- The Fire Hazard Category (FHC) must be determined
- The Means of Escape locations and lengths must be shown on the plans
- The Fire Exits must be identified and shown on the plans
- The Specified Systems/Fire Safety precautions must be specified (existing and proposed)
- Where applicable the 'S' ratings must be calculated and fire systems provided. This applies where a building is affected by boundaries or by other buildings on the same section, ie. sleeping purpose groups, and is a new building or change of use under the Building Act.

Where the fire design is, or contains an alternative solution, and affects the Fire Safety Systems the Fire Report is required to be forwarded to the NZFSDRU. Alternative designs are any solutions outside the 'C' document acceptable solution including any specific fire engineering design.

VENTILATION

Ventilation detail is often the most neglected of all the requirements for information. Ventilation is crucial to any building just as are the walls that hold the roof up. Statements such as: "...We'll provide producer statements for all that..." or "... there's a part in the specification for contractor to design and build..." is not acceptable.

Details of any ventilation to be installed or altered within a building is required when the application is lodged. The information required relates to ventilation to maintain air purity by flow from the outside of the building and includes extract ventilation to collect and remove products from a space in which they are generated. Examples of this are cooking fumes, moisture from laundering, washing bathing and showering, odour from sanitary or waste storage spaces etc.

The minimum information included for light commercial:

1. Plans showing the location of all ducting, grills, diffusers and fans (where fans are roof mounted, flashing detail for the unit is required).
2. The specification for the fan and the design relating to the required air changes in the area.

For commercial engineer designed mechanical ventilation:

1. Plans and specifications giving full set-out of all work to be installed, including the calculations.

2. Producer statement relating to the system design.

STORMWATER DRAINAGE CALCULATIONS

Designers of commercial stormwater catchment to comply with NZBC E1 Surface Water will be required to provide in their calculations the following:

Surface water run-off, including roof areas

1. Sizing of surface water drainage systems
2. Sizing of downpipes
3. Sizing of roof gutters, including the sizing and locations of overflow outlets.

The rain intensity for the Palmerston North/Manawatu area that is required for these calculations is 80mm/hr. Also please note that stormwater discharge to the PNCC stormwater network requires approval from the network engineer.

PUBLIC USE

Section 363 of the Building Act states that it is an offence to permit public use of a building or part of a building that is affected by building work for which no Building Consent has been granted or no Code Compliance certificate has been issued.

When application for Building Consent is made, the normal daily use or occupation of the building must be considered.

If the work is to be done in an area to which the public has access and it is necessary to keep a shop or premise open while the work is being done, or to open a premise before the Code Compliance certificate has been issued, a Certificate for Public Use must be applied for.

A Project Management Plan is required with the application. The plan must detail the extent of the building work, identify the specified systems affected and the areas to where public have access. Compliance with F5 - Construction and demolition hazards of the New Zealand building Code must also be demonstrated

Application forms for Certificate for Public Use are available at customer services and on line at www.pncc.govt.nz
or www.mdc.govt.nz

Further Information

If you have any questions or require further information please contact:

Palmerston North City Council

Phone 06 356 8199 or visit www.pncc.govt.nz

Manawatu District Council

Phone 06 323 0000 or visit www.mdc.govt.nz

General information can be obtained from
Department of Building and Housing – www.dbh.govt.nz