



building today

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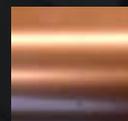
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Win a 180 sq m roll of U-Shrink film to form a tough weathertight containment system. See page 31

building today

In this issue, RMBF chief executive Warwick Quinn expresses his concern regarding the lack of available earthquake insurance cover in Christchurch which he says is crippling local construction companies.

The upshot of this lack of cover for new policies is that work is effectively grinding to a halt, with the probability of the industry losing capability at the very time it needs to retain it.

We'll keep you updated on this story in future issues.

Meanwhile, go to www.buildingtoday.co.nz where, in light of the ongoing aftershocks in Canterbury, we ask the question in our latest poll: Do you think the Christchurch CBD should be rebuilt to the west of the current city boundaries?

Let us know your views on this one.

Andrew Darlington
Editor



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Publisher:

Taurean Publications Ltd
P O Box 35 343,
Browns Bay, Auckland 0753

Editor/Advertising Manager:

Andrew Darlington
Ph: 09 478 4888 Mob: 021 90 11 56 Fax: 09 478 4588

E-mail: andrew@buildingtoday.co.nz

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chief's chat

by ceo warwick quinn

Lack of cover is crippling Canterbury

The lack of available earthquake insurance in the Canterbury region at present is having a crippling affect on building companies in the area.

There is presently a blanket policy by all insurance companies (that we are aware of) of not providing earthquake cover when it comes to new policies.

That means home owners looking to settle on the purchase of a new home cannot do so as they cannot get earthquake cover or bank funding and, therefore, no settlement.

There are many building companies with virtually finished houses on their books that they cannot hand over, and many frustrated would-be home owners as a result. You would probably have seen this sort of thing quite frequently on the news recently.

This is something of a bizarre set of conditions when you think about it. It is safe to assume that there is already contract works cover on the properties that the builder took out at the start, so the insurance company is already exposed to earthquake risk, and will continue to be so until the property is sold.

So it is not going to be exposed any more than it is at present. So why not let things carry on, allow the home owner access to funding so they can settle, allow the builder to get the final payment and stop putting pressure on construction resources in the Canterbury region.

Contract works insurance has all but dried up too. Those with annual policies that include earthquake cover are ok for the moment — well, temporarily



anyway.

But we understand that on renewal of the policies, the earthquake portion is being removed. Those that apply for contract works insurance on a job-by-job basis are, frankly, out of luck altogether.

The upshot of all this is that work has effectively ground to a halt. Builders in the Canterbury area are under severe pressure as it has now been the best part of 12 months with little new work available.

The upshot of all this is that work has effectively ground to a halt. Builders in the Canterbury area are under severe pressure as it has now been the best part of 12 months with little new work available.

We are losing capability at the very time we need to retain it, as it will be the locals who form the backbone of the recovery and rebuild — assuming they survive.

Now to be fair we can understand the plight of the insurance industry and the uncertainty they have to deal with. With the magnitude and frequency of the

aftershocks it is rightly causing them to wait until the situation is clearer and things have "settled down".

However, there is no need to have such a harsh policy — ie, a blanket "no new earthquake cover policy". This is too severe.

They can take a more risk-based approach by identifying regions that are not prone to liquefaction and the like.

The building code has been recently strengthened, and there are many properties that are able to be fully insured whose risk profile has not altered so significantly that providing earthquake cover at this time is commercial suicide.

Furthermore, we have no idea how long it will be before they re-enter the market and provide the catalyst that Canterbury so badly needs. Even if we knew some time parameters (all things being equal of course) then builders would be able to plan and structure themselves with more certainty.

If circumstances change with a new major aftershock then so be it, and we would expect that. But they must have some parameters in mind for their return, so why can't we know what they are?

We are also aware that the issue is not just a local one — and by local we mean New Zealand insurers. The matter is very much in the hands of the offshore re-insurers who have undoubtedly been hit recently with not just the Canterbury problem but those disasters in Japan, Queensland and, now, the United States.

The decisions are not made locally at all, so the ones who pull the strings are in Europe, Britain or the United States. No doubt they are watching and waiting, so can we really point the finger at our local companies?

Maybe not — well, not entirely. The local insurers must be providing updates and advising the re-insurers so they do have the ability to influence their decisions.

We hope they are passing on the options for re-entering the market, even on a piecemeal basis.

We hope they are aware of the financial stress the Canterbury construction sector is under, and that they are doing all they can to avoid this situation.

I only hope that by the time this goes to print my comments are out of date and redundant. Wouldn't that be nice?

Can your business survive and thrive without you?

By RMBF president
Blair Cranston

Can Apple survive without Steve Jobs? A number of events recently have reminded me of this question.

Getting around the various regional House of the Year events has reiterated to me just how important we, as individuals, are to our respective businesses.

In many cases, we are not only integral to running the operation — we are, in fact, the brand. Many of us have our name over the door, and our businesses would (sometimes in reality, other times in perception) be worth significantly less without us.

It can be difficult comparing a construction company with other operations in other industries. Our product is highly emotive and is delivered over a significant time period. In most cases our customers are purchasing a product from us that does not exist at the time of purchase.

Unlike other products, the customer does not walk in the door, pick it off the shelf, pay over the counter and walk out the door, with little or no interaction with the business owner or management.

In our case, we actively work with, and alongside, our customers for a significant length of time. This time can either harm or enhance the purchaser's enjoyment. We have the opportunity to build and solidify a great relationship and provide them with a truly memorable and satisfying experience.

Or, conversely, we can do the opposite. And, as we are



all aware, both parties impact greatly on the success of the relationship. We see this so often with winning House of the Year entries.

In many ways, it is my view that the very nature of our industry places even more importance on us individuals as business leaders. In so doing, our business and we are often regarded as one and the same.

We have all heard of Steve Jobs, a co-founder and recently resigned chief executive of Apple, one of the two largest companies in the United States.

With Jobs standing down, amazingly, international analysts and commentators are asking the question of a company valued at about US\$400 billion. Will it survive and thrive without him?

Apple investors have been concerned for some time because they see Jobs as irreplaceable. They see him

as an industry guru who seems to know what consumers want long before they themselves do!

One analyst has said: "Apple is Steve Jobs, Steve Jobs is Apple, and Steve Jobs is innovation. You can teach people how to be operationally efficient, you can hire consultants to tell you how to do that, but God creates innovation ... Apple without Steve Jobs is nothing."

The consensus among commentators is that Apple will continue to perform well for a number of important reasons:

- Jobs is remaining involved as chairman and in that role will continue to set standards and keep an eye on things.
- Because his health has been questionable for a number of years, the company has had time to plan and groom a successor. That successor has also had some time filling in during those illnesses.
- The standards set by Jobs have filtered throughout the work force. With or without him, it is believed that staff will continue to ask themselves questions such as "what would Steve do?"
- The company put in place a strong management team of people who have worked together and alongside Jobs for some time. It is thought that as long as that team stays together, the company will be in good hands.

I think there are some valuable lessons in this. Let's not hesitate to become very important to the success of our business, but (and we all need to heed this), let's ensure we build a business that can, and will, survive without us.

Easier said than done — I know that from personal experience.

RMBF Head Office: PO Box 1796, Wellington

Ph: 04 385 8999 or 0800 762 328 Fax: 04 385 8995

www.masterbuilder.org.nz

Registered Master Builders Association Managers:

Ashburton: Kimberley Sexton 027 299 8086
Auckland: Sally Mehrrens 09 302 2894
Canterbury: Katrina Prattley 03 343 9804
Gisborne: Katrina Duncan 06 863 3675
Gore: Jacque Lloyd 03 208 9240
Hawke's Bay: Hellen Overend 06 844 7339

Manawatu: Donna Dowse 06 353 1992
Marlborough: Richard Morris 03 574 1152
Nelson: Karen Lane 021 749 091
Otago: Rowan Howie 03 455 5165
Rotorua: Jacki Parr 07 332 3625
South Canterbury: Trish Harris 03 684 5005

Southland: Jenny Pascoe 027 432 8065
Taranaki: Gary Lord 027 448 2332
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Tauranga: Lani Christensen 07 577 0628
Waikato: Colleen Walker 07 850 6037
Wairarapa: Angeline Colquhoun 06 378 8008

Wanganui: TBA
Wellington: Gerald Rixon 04 381 2850
West Coast: Jo Donaldson 021 259 6973
Whakatane: Stacey Burns 027 330 7601

RMBF Regional Service Team:

Wally Walters: Auckland South, Coromandel, Gisborne
027 480 4055
Grant Hayes: Auckland, Northland 027 285 9516
Bob Bringans: Tauranga, Waikato, Rotorua, Whakatane, Taupo
027 496 1050

Peter Philipson (NZ Regional Service Manager): Wellington
(South, Central), North Kapiti, Waikanae, Otaki, Manawatu,
Taranaki, Wanganui 027 484 6207
Darryl Fawcett: Wellington (North), Wairarapa, Hawke's Bay,
Nelson, Marlborough 027 457 4146

Ian Gould (South Island Manager): Ashburton, South
Canterbury, Otago, Gore 027 435 7397
Glen Campbell: Canterbury, West Coast, Southland
027 472 2226

BJ Carter Ltd builds on 50 years of history

Having been in business for 50 years and a member of Registered Master Builders for 44, it is safe to say that Invercargill-based BJ Carter Ltd is well seasoned within the construction industry.

The company has been a valuable member of the organisation, entering and succeeding in the Registered Master Builders PlaceMakers House of the Year for a number of years, and taking on a range of apprentices who have gone on to enter the Registered Master Builders Carters Apprentice of the Year competition.

BJ Carter Ltd first entered the House of the Year competition in 2002, winning regional awards up until 2010.

It was in 2010 that the company won its first National Award, the PlaceMakers Heart of the Home Kitchen Award for a stunning home in Queenstown.

The home was designed as a relaxing getaway for family and friends, and the winning kitchen was placed and finished to serve as an important social hub within the home.

The five metre-long bench underscores the kitchen's spaciousness, providing an extensive workspace, and the joinery is styled on large Victorian Ash panels with not-so-much as a handle to break the clean lines.

Competition judges were blown away by the joiner's crafting of the exquisite kitchen.

"The joinery integrates beautifully and consistently with quality joinery throughout the home, with high levels of craftsmanship in the timber and faultless invisible work," judges said.

"Not only beautifully designed and crafted, this is a functional kitchen that is very much the heart of the home."

BJ Carter Ltd managing director James Carter believes the workmanship, uniqueness and complexity of the kitchen is what made it a winner.

"It was quite a complex kitchen to fit, and had a lot of negative detailing where it had to be fitted up against concrete walls and into the glass windows. I have to give praise to the guys who made it all work out," Mr Carter says.



BJ Carter Ltd's 2010 entry for a property in Queenstown won the PlaceMakers Heart of the Home Kitchen Award.

This year BJ Carter Ltd has entered the House of the Year competition again, submitting a property in Waikiwi, Invercargill, in the New Homes \$600,000 - \$1million category. The property has already won its category and taken out a Gold Award in the Southern region.

If the home is one of the top 125 Gold Awards across the country, it will become a Gold Reserve finalist and will then be re-judged by a new national judging panel, which will determine the National winners.

"This house has a unique design, and we've played around with a lot of old and new materials. But at the end of the day, it is the workmanship that helped us win the regional award," Mr Carter says.

"We've done a lot of hand scribing and a lot of timber finishing, so you can't hide anything with a coat of paint," he says.

Mr Carter says the awards have definitely helped his company to win business, and advises other builders to put their best foot forward and enter.

"It is a big ask. You're putting yourself on the line, but even if you get a bronze, remember



BJ Carter managing director James Carter.

you're still 50% above industry standard," Mr Carter says.

"I think your clients feel proud that you feel proud of the project, and that you've taken accountability for what you've done. No matter whether you build a mailbox or a palace, it's got to be 100% right, because you're only as good as your last job," he says.

Mr Carter describes BJ Carter Ltd as a traditionalist building company. The builders pour concrete floors, cut their own framing, and fit their own roofs and Gib board.

"We don't subcontract anything out. We have always been into employing apprentices, and we succeed because our guys are all-rounders and take pride in what they do."

Oskam humbled by inaugural Platinum Award

It was a proud moment for John Oskam when JJ Oskam Builders Ltd was presented with an inaugural Platinum Award at the 2010 national gala dinner after years of success in the Registered Master Builders PlaceMakers House of the Year.

The Platinum Award signifies outstanding success, presented to those companies which have achieved five or more National Awards over the course of the competition.

"I was pretty humbled by it too. I'm a great believer that building is in the blood. My father taught me the trade and he would have been pretty proud if he was around," Mr Oskam says.

JJ Oskam Builders entered its first home in the competition in 1993, and was awarded a National Award in the New Homes \$150,000 - \$250,000 category for a Dunedin property.

It was after winning this award that Mr Oskam realised the potential the competition had for his business.

"I saw the benefits of entering the competition straight away, and I could see it as a good way of promoting the business," Mr Oskam says.

"The Platinum Award shows that we've consistently been delivering award-winning homes. Clients old and new seem happy and comfortable that their biggest asset is being built by an award-winning builder," he says.

Mr Oskam says other builders considering entering the competition should "just do it".

"Don't muck about. It's the best form of publicity you're ever going to get. You'll never know how well you can do if you don't try," he says.

JJ Oskam has entered the competition many times since 1993, winning numerous awards for homes in the Southern region. But Mr Oskam is most proud of the home which won the Supreme House of the Year in 2007, for a property in Maori Hill, Dunedin.

"Houses like that are few and far between in New Zealand," he says.

"It was great having the opportunity to build a house which had a great design and used materials that were absolutely mind blowing.



The 2007 PlaceMakers Supreme House of the Year was won by JJ Oskam Builders Ltd for this property in Maori Hill, Dunedin.

Everyone involved in the build felt the same way, because we were using the best of the best, and it just came through at the end of the day," he says.

The family home, set on a commanding site with views over Dunedin, features an underground wine cellar, a chef's kitchen, home theatre and an indoor swimming pool connected to the living spaces by a glazed sun room.

"This elegant, beautiful home has it all, and was a clear Supreme winner. Not a detail has been overlooked," judges said.

"It is obvious those involved in the project forged very close, compatible relationships — the owners, architects, and the builder and his team have produced a remarkable result," they said.

The team at JJ Oskam Builders is currently working on two homes in Dunedin.

"Hopefully we will enter one of the projects in the 2012 competition — watch this space," Mr Oskam says.

The Awards are made possible through the



From left: Blair Cranston (RMBF), John Oskam and Minister for Building and Construction Maurice Williamson.

support of principal sponsor PlaceMakers, and supporting sponsors James Hardie, Gib Living®, Pink® Batts® Ultra® (Tasman Insulation), Nulook and the Department of Building and Housing.

For more information about the competition, go to www.masterbuilder.org.nz.

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Award-winning Taranaki bridge acknowledged internationally

By Jenny Baker

The Te Rewa Rewa bridge across the Waiwhakaiho River in New Plymouth, built by Registered Master Builders Federation member Chris Whitaker's company Whitaker Civil Engineering, received its fifth award recently.

The awards are good, but what really matters, Mr Whitaker says, is that the design team has a strong attachment to Taranaki and its community, and was pleased it could give something back to the city.

"It is a huge honour to do so well in the company of world class bridge builders," Mr Whitaker says. "And a small local company designing and constructing this structure in itself was a challenge, with a very satisfying end result."

The 70m, single-span, tied arch pedestrian and cycleway bridge opened in June 2010. In early September, it won Rounding New Zealand's Supreme Award in the 2011 Rounding Excellence Awards in

Auckland. At the same ceremony, the team behind the bridge also received the Winstone Aggregates Excellence Award for a Minor Road Project.

In August, the bridge was the category winner for the Industrial and Infrastructure Project, and Supreme Award winner in the Taranaki 2011 RMB Commercial Project Awards.

In June, it won the 2011 International Footbridge Award in Poland in the Medium Span Aesthetics category, competing with six bridges from Europe.

In May it won the 2011 Arthur G Hayden Medal at the International Bridge Conference in Pittsburgh, for a single recent outstanding achievement in bridge engineering demonstrating innovation in special use bridges.

In July it won the award category for Projects \$2 million to \$10 million Bridges in the 2011 Ingenium Excellence Awards — Ingenium being the brand name for the Association of Local Government Engineering NZ Inc.

The New Plymouth District Council commissioned the bridge to allow the existing New Plymouth Coastal

Walkway to be extended to the suburb of Bell Block by crossing the Waiwhakaiho River and Rewa Rewa Reserve.

A consortium of Whitaker Civil Engineering, Novare Design, Apex Consultants-CPG and Fitzroy Engineering designed and constructed it, with Peter Mulqueen as principal architect. The council, the New Zealand Transport Agency, and the Whitaker Family Trust funded it.

Mr Whitaker says the bridge's iconic appearance and characteristics reflect the unique challenges the team faced when designing and building it. The challenges were to honour the Ngati Tawhirikura tribe's relationship with the Rewa Rewa Reserve as sacred land, and work in an environmentally-sensitive area.

On the east side of the river is a historic pa and on the west side, a burial ground. Designer Peter Mulqueen shaped the bridge to "touch lightly" on the burial ground side, which precluded heavy designs such as cable stays and angular truss structures.

In addition, the team had to avoid river contamination





The bridge allows the existing New Plymouth Coastal Walkway to be extended to the suburb of Bell Block by crossing the Waiwhakaiho River and Rewa Rewa Reserve.

and disturbance, precluding the use of even temporary piers.

To accomplish this, Fitzroy Engineering manufactured the superstructure at its workshop 1.5km from the bridge site. The superstructure was then moved to the site as a single 85m long, 85 tonne unit and erected without the use of temporary staging in the waterway.

This was done by putting the unit on two 12 wheeler truck bases at the engineering yard, welding it to the bases, then using two trucks to simultaneously push and pull it along the road, across farmland and a golf course, all incident and damage-free.

Once at the river, the front end was towed across on two motorless tractor units — that did not contain oil that could pollute the river — by a crane on the far side.

This crane, and a similar crane on the near side, lifted the bridge onto its already built supports. The deck was then built in situ and finishing work done.

The bridge consists of three steel tubes — the heel and toe tubes beneath the deck and the arch tube connected to 19 ribs.

It contains 85t fabrication steel, 62t reinforcing steel, and 550 cubic meters of concrete. The bridge deck is 4.5m above the river's normal flow level.

The long free-span 3.25m-wide structure tested the team's technical expertise. The inherent torsional stiffness of the three tubes and the ribs form what is known as Vierdele trusses, which stiffen the edges of the deck.



The torsional stiffness of the most critical side of the deck, the one that anchors the ribs, comes from the combined horizontal and vertical stiffness of the deck and arch structure respectively.

With the ribs, which resemble a whale skeleton, yielding to the prevailing wind, the unique and highly asymmetrical bridge is aligned to Mount Taranaki, with the skewed arch framing the mountain from the west side.

The bridge was also designed to evoke a sense of wind as a metaphor for the enduring spirit of the dead buried at the adjacent site.

"It's so unexpected, a beautiful piece of art in this breathtaking solitary landscape — it fits beautifully," Mr Whitaker says.

In July 2010, its first full month of operation, the bridge was used by 55,756 cyclists and pedestrians. In the past year, close on half a million people have visited the site.

"It is iconic, it is special, people come from all over the world to see it, and our community is very proud of it."

• **Watch the bridge being moved to its site on youtube. Search for Te Rewa Rewa Bridge.mov.**

Strong carpentry apprenticeship inflow shows promising future for competition



From left: Northern region winner Jonathan Spurdle, BCITO chief executive Ruma Karaitiana and Auckland region winner Joshua Woodcock.

An increase in new carpentry training agreements hints at a bright future for the Registered Master Builders Carters Apprentice of the Year competition, according to Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation chief executive Ruma Karaitiana.

"This increase means there will be a strong inflow of younger apprentices who will be eligible for the Apprentice of the Year in the next two or three years," Mr Karaitiana says.

"Employers are starting to pay attention to all the data around how busy the industry is going to be over the next two to three years, and are starting to put together a plan for their business of managing that period," he says.

Mr Karaitiana believes the Apprentice of the Year competition is a valuable experience for apprentices. But, he believes the most valuable experience from the competition is the boost in confidence it gives apprentices.

"They tend to be much more confident about where they fit in the industry, and with their own abilities, so

they stretch themselves to achieve more," he says.

"Apprentices and people in the construction industry also generally work in relatively isolated and small work environments, so one of the things Apprentice of the Year brings to them is the opportunity to benchmark themselves against other people in the industry. So that is incredibly valuable," he says.

"It also gives them a nice component to add to their CVs when people are looking at them as potential future employees or business partners."

The BCITO is the organisation appointed by the Government to develop and implement industry qualifications for the construction sector, and is the largest provider of building apprentices in New Zealand.

So there is nothing the organisation enjoys more than seeing talented young people becoming qualified tradespeople.

"It's what we live and die on really, that's the whole nature of our business. The whole mission of the BCITO is to deliver as many trained and qualified people as we possibly can into the industry," Mr Karaitiana says.

The 2011 Apprentice of the Year competition is well under way, with the last regional event to take place in the Bay of Plenty at the end of September.

Winners in the Auckland and Northern region have already been announced, with Josh Woodcock from Pukekohe named as Auckland's winner and Jonathan Spurdle from Devonport named as the Northern region's winner.

The Apprentice of the Year competition is owned and managed by the Registered Master Builders Federation (RMBF), sponsored by Carters, partnered by the Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation (BCITO) and supported by the Department of Building and Housing.

The competition is open to all carpentry apprentices in New Zealand that meet the entry criteria, regardless of who they work or train with.

Apprentices, employers and those young people aspiring to be a part of the construction industry are encouraged to join up to the Apprentice of the Year Facebook page by searching RMB Carters Apprentice of the Year.

Gold Reserves revealed in premier building awards

National Gold Reserve finalists have been announced in the Registered Master Builders PlaceMakers 2011 House of the Year and RMB Commercial Project Awards.

The Gold Reserve medal winners represent the top

entrants in this year's competition, with finalists selected from 14 regional competitions held throughout New Zealand during June, July and August.

The finalists will now vie for New Zealand's top three building honours — PlaceMakers Supreme Awards for the House of the Year and Renovation of the Year, and

the RMB Commercial Project of the Year.

The finalists' projects will now be re-judged over the next few months, before the National Category Winners and Supreme Award winners are announced at a gala dinner in Auckland on Saturday 19 November.

Gold Reserve National Finalists, by region, are:

ASHBURTON

Retail and Business Project
 • Bradford Building Ltd for the Bradford Group New Office in Ashburton

AUCKLAND

PlaceMakers Renovation Award over \$500,000
 • T P Builders Ltd for a property in Birkenhead, Auckland

New Homes \$350,000 - \$450,000

• Sentinel Homes Ltd for a property in Maraetia
 • Jalcon Homes, JAL Construction for a property in Glendowie, Auckland

New Homes \$450,000 - \$600,000

• Ascension Homes Ltd for a property in Matarangi

New Homes \$600,000 - \$1 million

• Maddren Homes Ltd for a property in Orewa, Auckland
 • T P Builders Ltd for a property in Caster Bay, Auckland
 • Golder Residential Ltd for a property in Gulf Harbour, Auckland
 • Steve Haycock Construction Ltd for a property in Omaha, Auckland

New Homes \$1 million - \$2 million

• Mitchell Builders Ltd for a property in Tutukaka
 • Island 2000 Ltd for a property in Park Point, Waiheke Island
 • Mark Wilson Construction Ltd for a property in Warkworth
 • Total Building Solutions Ltd for a property in Pokeno
 • Priority One Construction Ltd for a property in Pt Chevalier, Auckland

New Homes over \$2 million

• Lindesay Construction Ltd for a property in Russell Peninsula
 • Glenbuild Ltd for a property in Pt Chevalier, Auckland
 • Allwood Manning Ltd for a property in Remuera, Auckland
 • Kalmar Construction Ltd for a property in Cheltenham, Devonport, Auckland

Education Project

• Mainzeal Property and Construction Ltd for the Auckland University Thomas Building Extension in Auckland

Industrial and Infrastructure Project

• Kalmar Construction Ltd for the Furnace, Lehr and Cold End Stage 2 Building in Penrose, Auckland
 • Mainzeal Property and Construction Ltd for Project Century (Lion Nathan) in East Tamaki, Auckland

Tourism and Leisure Project

• Watts and Hughes Construction Co Ltd for the Mangere Arts Centre in Mangere, Manukau City

BAY OF PLENTY

Department of Building and Housing New Homes under \$250,000

• Urbo Homes Ltd for a property in Rotorua

New Homes \$350,000 - \$450,000

• Harwood Homes NZ Ltd for a property in Endeavour Cove, Papamoa
 • Kuriger Builders Tauranga Ltd for a property in Bethlehem, Tauranga

New Homes \$450,000 - \$600,000

• Harwood Homes NZ Ltd for a property in Omokoroa, Tauranga
 • Asset Homes NZ Ltd for a property in St Michaels, Tauranga
 • Asset Homes NZ Ltd for a property in St Michaels, Tauranga

New Homes \$600,000 - \$1 million

• Harwood Homes NZ Ltd for a property in Te Puke
 • Shaw Builders Ltd for a property in Mt Maunganui
 • Landmark Homes BOP Ltd for a property in Avenues, Tauranga

New Homes \$1 million - \$2 million

• Shaw Builders Ltd for a property in Matua, Tauranga
 • Shaw Builders Ltd for a property in Mt Maunganui

New Homes over \$2 million

• Edinbridge Resources Ltd for a property in Mt Maunganui

James Hardie Show Home Award

• Landmark Homes BOP Ltd for a property in Bethlehem, Tauranga

Education Project

• Hawkins Construction Ltd for the Papamoa College in Papamoa

CHRISTCHURCH

New Homes \$450,000 - \$600,000

• Carl Taylor Homes for a property in Papanui, Christchurch
 • M Bainbridge Homes Ltd for a property in Riverside Reserve, Christchurch
 • JD Homes Ltd for a property in Parklands, Christchurch
 • Benchmark Homes for a property in Hampton Grange, Christchurch

New Homes \$600,000 - \$1 million

• Paul Reed Homes for a property in Rolleston, Canterbury
 • Wayne Murray Builders Ltd for a property in Tai Tapu, Canterbury
 • Mike Greer Homes for a property in Riccarton, Christchurch

New Homes over \$2 million

• Mark Prosser Builders Ltd for a property in Fendalton, Christchurch

James Hardie Show Home Award

• Today Homes Ltd for a property in Pegasus Town, North Canterbury

HAWKES BAY

New Homes \$250,000 - \$350,000

• Homeworx Design and Build Ltd for a property in Poraiti, Napier

New Homes \$350,000 - \$450,000

• Waipukurau Construction 2002 Ltd for a property in Waipukurau

New Homes \$600,000 - \$1 million

• Landmark Homes Hawkes Bay for a property in Haumoana, Hawkes Bay
 • Mercy Renovators Ltd for a property in Havelock North

James Hardie Show Home Award

• Homeworx Design and Build Ltd for a property in Frimley, Hastings

MANAWATU

Department of Building and Housing New Homes under \$250,000

• B W Hughes Building Company Ltd for a property in Feilding

New Homes \$250,000 - \$350,000

• Benlee Homes Ltd for a property in Palmerston North

New Homes \$600,000 - \$1 million

• Humphries Construction for a property in Palmerston North
 • Wolcan Construction Co Ltd for a property in Feilding

MARLBOROUGH

PlaceMakers Renovation Award over \$500,000

• Clarke Construction for a property in Blenheim

New Homes \$350,000 - \$450,000

• Rymac Homes Ltd for a property in Springlands, Blenheim
 • Glenroy Housing Ltd for a property in Mahau Sounds

New Homes \$600,000 - \$1 million

• Clarke Construction for a property in Blenheim

Health Project

• Haack Construction Ltd for the Picton Emergency Operations Centre in Picton

NELSON

PlaceMakers Renovation Award \$250,000 - \$500,000

• W Rothwell Builder for a property in Patons Rock, Golden Bay

PlaceMakers Renovation Award over \$500,000

• Foothold Developments Building Projects Ltd for a property in Moana, Nelson

New Homes \$350,000 - \$450,000

• Jennian Homes Nelson Bays Ltd for a property in Annesbrook, Nelson
 • InHaus Developments Ltd for a property in Richmond, Nelson

Continued page 12

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Gold Reserves

From page 11

New Homes \$600,000 - \$1 million

- Golden Bay Builders Ltd for a property in Ligar Bay, Golden Bay
- Harris Builders for a property in Hope, Nelson

New Homes \$1 million - \$2 million

- Foothold Developments Building Projects Ltd for a property in Mapua, Nelson

Nulook Builder's Own Home Award

- InHaus Developments Ltd for a property in Boundary Bay, Abel Tasman National Park

Sustainable Homes under \$500,000

- InHaus Developments Ltd for a property in Boundary Bay, Abel Tasman National Park

Industrial and Infrastructure Project

- Mainzeal Property and Construction Ltd for the Nelson High/District Court Redevelopment in Nelson
- Mainzeal Property and Construction Ltd for the Air New Zealand Nelson Hangar in Nelson

SOUTH CANTERBURY

Department of Building and Housing New Homes under \$250,000

- G J Gardner Homes for a property in Twizel

New Homes \$350,000 - \$450,000

- Baird Building and Joinery Ltd for a property in Temuka

New Homes \$600,000 - \$1 million

- Wilson Building Timaru Ltd for a property in Gleniti, Timaru

New Homes \$1 million - \$2 million

- Wilson Building Timaru Ltd for a property in Scarborough, Timaru

SOUTHERN

New Homes \$250,000 - \$350,000

- A1 Homes Otago/Southland for a property in West Meadows, Wanaka

New Homes \$350,000 - \$450,000

- Stonewood Homes Dunedin Ltd for a property in Waverley, Dunedin

New Homes \$450,000 - \$600,000

- T M Brumby - Builder for a property in Tapanui, Gore
- Cavalier Homes Southland for a property in Invercargill

New Homes \$600,000 - \$1 million

- BJ Carter - Builder for a property in Waikiwi, Invercargill

New Homes \$1 million - \$2 million

- John Creighton Builder Ltd for a property in Beacon Point, Wanaka
- Trevor Ward Builders Ltd for a property in Lake Hayes, Queenstown

New Homes over \$2 million

- A J Saville Builder Ltd for a property in Queenstown
- Cliff Erskine Builders Ltd for a property in Millbrook West, Arrowtown

Education Project

- Naylor Love Ltd (Central Otago Division) for the Remarkables Primary School in Frankton, Queenstown
- Naylor Love Construction Ltd (Dunedin Division) for the William James Building in Dunedin

TARANAKI

New Homes \$350,000 - \$450,000

- Stanley Gray Ltd for a property in New Plymouth
- G J Gardner Taranaki for a property in Hawera
- Hassall Homes Ltd for a property in New Plymouth

New Homes \$450,000 - \$600,000

- Abode Design and Build Ltd for a property in Stratford

New Homes \$600,000 - \$1 million

- G J Gardner Taranaki for a property in New Plymouth

Industrial and Infrastructure Project

- Whitaker Civil Engineering Ltd for the Te Rewa Rewa Pedestrian and Cycle Bridge in Fitzroy, New Plymouth

WAIKATO

PlaceMakers Renovation Award \$250,000 - \$500,000

- Urban Residential Developments Ltd for a property in Claudelands, Hamilton

New Homes \$250,000 - \$350,000

- RPS Quality Homes for a property in Flagstaff, Hamilton
- D K Builders 2007 Ltd for a property in Te Awamutu

New Homes \$350,000 - \$450,000

- David Reid Homes Waikato 2009 Ltd for a property in Hamilton
- Downey Designer Homes for a property in Woodridge, Hamilton

New Homes \$450,000 - \$600,000

- Innovative Homes Ltd for a property in Tamahere, Hamilton

New Homes \$600,000 - \$1 million

- Downey Designer Homes for a property in Chartwell, Hamilton
- Gudsell Designer Homes Ltd for a property in Te Poi, Matamata
- Murray Pennell Builders for a property in Paeroa
- Roger Elliott Builder Ltd for a property in Flagstaff, Hamilton

New Homes \$1 million - \$2 million

- Peter Vossen Builders Ltd for a property in Matamata

James Hardie Show Home Award

- David Reid Homes Waikato 2009 Ltd for a property in Rotorua, Hamilton

Education Project

- Mainzeal Construction for the Wintec House in Hamilton

Tourism and Leisure Project

- Stanley Construction for the Knoll Ridge Café in Mt Ruapehu, Central Plateau

- Hawkins Construction Ltd for the Waitomo Caves Visitors Centre in Waitomo

WELLINGTON

PlaceMakers Renovation Award over \$500,000

- Tony Van Den Kerhof Ltd for a property in Woburn, Lower Hutt

New Homes \$350,000 - \$450,000

- David Reid Homes (Kapiti) Ltd for a property in Woburn, Lower Hutt
- Progressive Homes Ltd for a property in Silverwood, Porirua

New Homes \$600,000 - \$1 million

- C J Ryan Ltd for a property in Brooklyn, Wellington
- Lindsay Residential Ltd for a property in Upper Hutt

Nulook Builder's Own Home Award

- Barber Construction for a property in Pukerua Bay

James Hardie Show Home Award

- Landmark Homes Wellington for a property in Aotea, Porirua

Retail and Business Project

- Mainzeal Property and Construction Ltd for the Buddle Findlay Fitout in Wellington
- Naylor Love Construction Ltd for the Pipitea House in Thorndon, Wellington

Industrial and Infrastructure Project

- Mainzeal Property and Construction Ltd for the The Rock, Wellington Airport in Rongotai, Wellington

Tourism and Leisure Project

- L T McGuinness - Builder for the Wharewaka Building in Wellington

WEST COAST

New Homes \$350,000 - \$450,000

- Mike Greer Homes for a property in Greymouth

New Homes \$600,000 - \$1 million

- Tony Wilkins Builder Ltd for a property in Marsden, Greymouth

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Product assurance gathers steam

Building Today continues its series of articles looking at the Licensed Building Practitioners scheme which comes into effect fully in March 2012.

This month: Product assurance the key to providing more certainty for LBPs

Ongoing work by the Department of Building and Housing on product assurance is paying off, with increasing numbers of building product manufacturers and suppliers seeking a better understanding of how to achieve Building Code compliance.

The Department launched its product assurance guide last April and then teamed up with BRANZ to run nationwide seminars for Building Consent Authorities (BCAs), manufacturers, suppliers and residential designers.

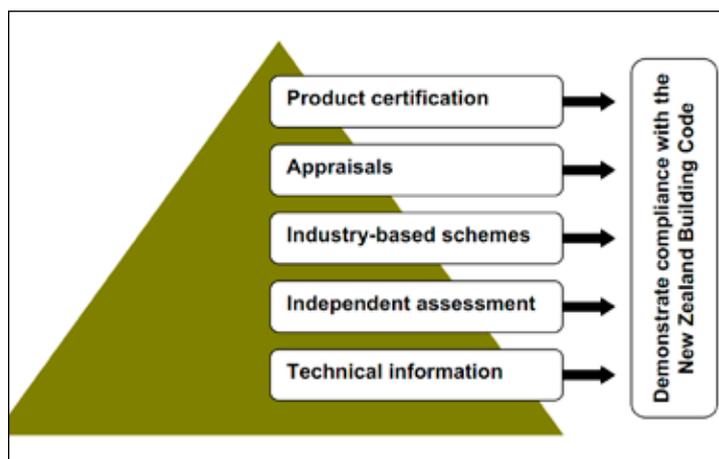
The key to product assurance is providing more certainty around the use of building products and construction methods.

It starts by helping manufacturers and suppliers make the best, most cost-effective business decisions about getting their products code-compliant for use in the New

Zealand market.

It also helps BCAs, designers, building practitioners and consumers make better informed decisions on building products — whether that is to issue a building consent or more confidently specify or use a product on the basis of better technical information.

The overall goal is to lower compliance costs without compromising building quality or discouraging innovation.



How product assurance works for manufacturers and suppliers

If the building product you make or supply needs to comply with the Building Code, the product assurance framework helps you decide how far to go in getting it tested, appraised or even certified to gain Building Code compliance.

The main options are shown above. Which ones you choose and how far you move up the triangle is a business decision.

The options at the base of the triangle will apply to most building products and methods — they may have been used here for some time, have already achieved code compliance and have proven performance.

The options near the apex of triangle generally take more money and time, but should provide more certainty for those specifying, using or approving a product.

These options will be more applicable if you want greater market acceptance, a marketing advantage or have new or innovative products.

The ultimate product assurance option is CodeMark certification, a voluntary scheme set up under the Building Act 2004 and administered by the Department.

A CodeMark-certified product or construction method must be accepted by any building consent authority as complying with the Building Code (when used as specified).

The first CodeMark product certificate was issued late last year to James Hardie's Linea Weatherboards. About a dozen more manufacturers and suppliers are now considering CodeMark for their products.

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Hamilton partnership responds to post-quake office shortage

Single level modular workspaces designed for quick assembly

Hamilton companies Apollo Projects and Spantech Buildings have developed a building system to provide temporary premises for quake-displaced Christchurch businesses.

The single level modular workspaces are designed for rapid assembly, and can be configured in any size and format to suit the specific requirements of the prospective tenant.

Construction has been well under way on units at Christchurch International Airport.

The partnership also involves Christchurch-based Kingspan Panels to supply wall and roof cladding, while Spantech is providing the steel framing.

Apollo is the project and construction manager for the entire project, including infrastructure works.

Apollo Projects director Craig Waghorn says the rapid assembly/flexible format design seems an obvious solution to Christchurch's office space shortage.

"We are really pleased to be able to do something to help Christchurch businesses get back on their feet," Mr Waghorn says.

Extremely fast to build

"We have the combination of specialist skills and products needed to respond quickly and to provide cost-effective temporary buildings that are extremely fast to build with a modern architectural look."

Apollo discussed the idea with a number of commercial land owners, including Christchurch International Airport.

The first modular workspaces at the airport's temporary office precinct in Orchard Road have been completed, with the 860 sq m single-level building accommodating 120 employees from House of Travel.

Another 4500 sq m of modular workspace buildings is proposed for the precinct, with a further 4000 sq m planned for other sites in Christchurch.

Of this, a 3000 sq m facility in Johns Road for the Stronger Christchurch Infrastructure Rebuild Team is already under construction.

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news

ITM voted best for 'customer experience'

ITM Building Centres have been voted number one for "customer experience" in a national survey conducted by Colmar Brunton.

The survey, which featured on TV One's *Fair Go* programme last month, had ITM as the leading hardware and home improvement brand with a net score of 49%.

The survey was conducted amongst more than 1700 people shopping at ITM, Mitre 10 Mega, Bunnings, Hammer Hardware, Mitre 10 and Placemakers outlets.

Colmar Brunton's Dick Brunton said, "we've all heard about those companies that have treated customers badly, but *Fair Go* and Colmar Brunton have decided to take a more constructive approach and identify those organisations that are doing the right thing by Kiwis".

ITM chief executive Gordon Buswell says ITM was obviously delighted to be named number one for customer experience in this category.

"Being independents, the person behind the counter at many of our stores is most likely also the owner of the business. That one-on-one contact with customers is very powerful," Mr Buswell says.

"At ITM we believe our dedicated focus on trade with quality product, advice and competitive pricing has had a positive spin-off on the quality of service that we can offer our serious DIY customer."

ITM is a team of 90-plus independently owned and operated hardware and building supply stores. It has come to national prominence as the naming rights sponsor of the ITM Cup, formerly the Air New Zealand NPC.

It is also the premier sponsor of the ITM 400 V8 race in Hamilton and the popular *ITM Fishing Show* on TV3.

The sample size of the survey was 1785, with a margin of error of plus or minus 2.3%.

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Britomart design challenges experienced

Designing any commercial building has its challenges, but when it's sited directly above a working underground rail station the technical and design challenges are multiplied.

So it was for Auckland-based Peddle Thorp Architects with the Britomart East 1, 2 and 3 buildings which sit Pi-like, framing the former Auckland Chief Post Office and above the city's central rail station.

Peddle Thorp has been actively involved in developer Cooper and Company's Britomart East building for six years, working closely with lead precinct designers JPW of Sydney.

The assignment includes three main built projects so far — Charter House, fronting Customs Street and Roukai Lane, Takutai Square, and the trio of East buildings that resembles the ancient and famed mathematical constant.

Pi has its origins in Egyptian ancient history and, as with that epoch's ancient pyramids, Britomart's most-recently completed East building has been designed and built based on dedicated teamwork.

Peddle Thorp director Richard Goldie says the building includes a number of design and technical challenges.

"Not the least of these was the fact it was built directly above the operational Britomart Rail Station," Mr Goldie says. "This demanded a lightweight structural system that minimises load on existing station columns and piling.

"At the same time it needed to provide a high level of

isolation from the noise and track vibrations associated with a rail station."

The structure is effectively three buildings in one, and each has achieved a 5 Star Green Star Certified Rating from the New Zealand Green Building Council (NZGBC) representing New Zealand excellence in green building.

Innovations include large planted vertical green-walls at each end of the atrium, an inflated cushion ETFE atrium roof, and three sky-bridges across Galway Street connecting through to the earlier Charter House project.

ETFE is a transparent polymer material developed for the space industry, so it presents its own challenges Mr Goldie says.

Peddle Thorp worked closely with Cooper and Company, JPW and Hawkins throughout the project. Working appropriately within the Britomart heritage precinct was one of the key design drivers.

Hawkins construction manager Terry Buchan says the early involvement of a local architect has been critical in achieving a first class build in the heritage zone.



The Ernst & Young Building situated in Britomart's Eastern Precinct.

"We got together very early in the piece, and it was clear from the start we needed to understand what was important to each other. We talked with the team at Peddle Thorp regularly, and as issues came up it was great to be able to pick up the phone and discuss them with their team.

"It was an excellent working relationship, and I believe that's reflected in the results."

Mr Goldie congratulated Hawkins for a highly demanding project superbly completed. He says Peddle Thorp brought critical local knowledge to the team, providing overall design development from the earliest JPW design intent.

"Having people 'on the ground' is critical to properly engage with the contractor during the pre-contract

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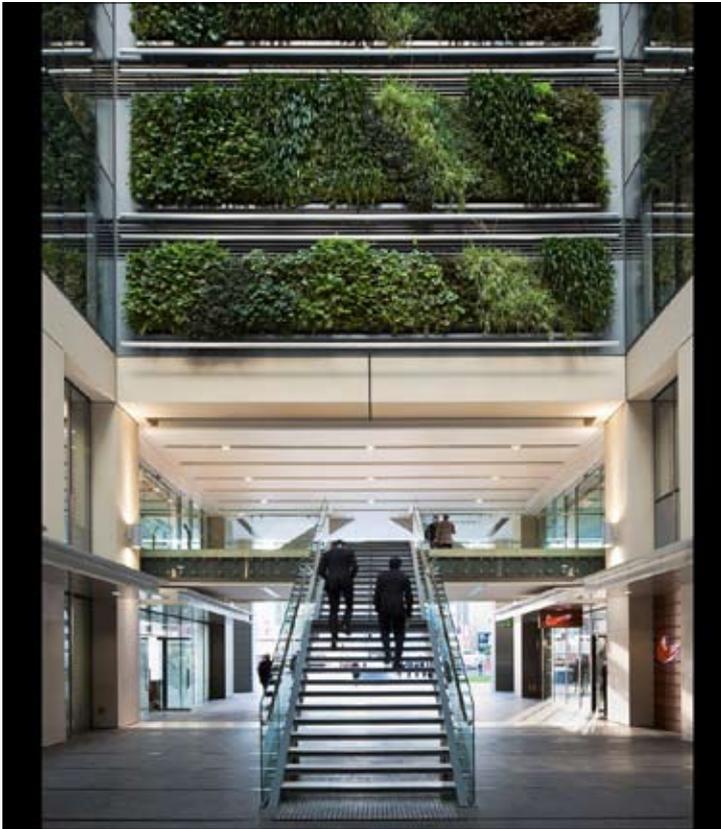
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The atrium in Britomart's Eastern Precinct.

period. You also need to determine early the critical details that reflect the way you are going to build, and there's also a lot of basic work to be done — from technical design through to documentation and site observation."

As a key member of the overall project team, Peddle Thorp oversaw the project "architecture" from inception through to completion.

"Our working relationship with JPW over all three projects is exemplary in Peddle Thorp's history, and is now a benchmark we are determined to repeat. It's a credit to Cooper and Company that they had the foresight to enable a successful partnership to occur," Mr Goldie says.

Cooper and Company Britomart development manager Sarah Ballantyne says the collaboration between JPW and Peddle Thorp was an important factor in the success of the project.

"There's no doubt Peddle Thorp did a fantastic job of interpreting the JPW vision and giving it detail, and the working relationship the architects developed was excellent," Ms Ballantyne says.

Peddle Thorp lead architect Andrew Kissell says the Britomart East project has been very satisfying for him and his team.

"Technically it has been very engaging, and if I was to highlight anything from the experience it has been that of a great team of people working together to achieve an excellent result."

Mr Kissell says Cooper and Co has done a superb job of transforming the Britomart precinct. "Less than 10 years back it was a place to be avoided. Now it's arguably the Auckland CBD address or place to be," he says.

Peddle Thorp's other Britomart projects have involved design work on the earlier Charter House and on the open space that forms the new Takutai Square.

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Grand Designs presenter to visit NZ

Through its sponsorship of the popular television series *Grand Designs* programme on TV3, New Zealand Steel has arranged for presenter Kevin McCloud to come to New Zealand with a show of design, anecdotes and a Q&A session on Wednesday, October 26 at Auckland's Civic Theatre.

Mr McCloud will share ideas and commentary, with visuals of the work he has been doing in Britain via his company Hab (Happiness Architecture Beauty) which builds highly sustainable and contextual housing schemes.

Drawing on his experience of making *Grand Designs* for 12 years, he'll also touch on the problems of rebuilding Christchurch and how places can be repaired after a natural event.

He has been involved in the award-winning television series *Grand Designs* since 1998. His 2009 four-part series, *The Grand Tour of Europe*, won a Prix Italia, and his two one-hour documentaries about the slums of Mumbai, *Slumming It*, have also been critically



Kevin McCloud

acclaimed.

His other television work includes a series about urban blight, urban regeneration and sheds.

Trained at Cambridge as an architectural historian and

later as a designer, Mr McCloud now runs a development business, building affordable but beautiful housing schemes to One Planet Living Principles.

He is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts and an Honorary Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects — although he's most proud of his fellowship of the Institute of Chartered Foresters, with trees being his greatest passion.

His two ambitions remain to entertain and to make the built environment better — and, consequently, to “make people feel better”.

“An evening with Kevin McCloud” is presented by Colorsteel, and in association with TV3, Air NZ, Resene and Axis Steel.

Tickets can be bought at www.buytickets.co.nz or call 0800 BUY TICKETS (0800 289 842).

• **Win a double pass to see Kevin McCloud's show on October 28 in Auckland.**

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Design v Functionality — game on!

By Lifetime Design Ltd general manager Andrew Olsen

When it comes to the code, it takes a clever player to make a breakthrough play and score an award-winning design that is also super functional for the home owner — who happens to be in a wheelchair. That's exactly the clever play that architect Davor Mikulcic has used to impress the design world with an award-winning home in Upper Hutt.

Owners Phillip and Helen Blundell's brief was simple: "We don't want just functional — we want exciting, something that makes a statement!"

The Blundell home is a breakthrough design for the New Zealand design industry, because it clearly demonstrates that a Lifemark-approved home can serve the functions of accessibility, usability and inclusiveness, as well as take your breath away when it comes to design.

Their exciting new home has been built to accommodate the needs of Mr Blundell, who has been a wheelchair user since being involved in a military helicopter accident 28 years ago.

Everything is accessible, from the gently-sloping entry from the street via a full-height, extra-width front door, through to a spacious open plan living area which opens up straight through to 150 sq m of kwila decks surrounding the house.

Sliding doors throughout have handles consistently at

a metre from the floor. Steel-braced soaring roof lines have allowed the removal of major internal walls, giving more room for Mr Blundell to move around.

In the kitchen, the microwave opens downward and the oven sideways. Benches are low, and there is even a purpose-built area which houses a coffee machine where Mr Blundell can be a personal barista for his guests.

There's a spacious office and a state-of-the-art entertainment centre with an in-ceiling mounted, six-zoned speaker system and a huge projector screen which can come down for those big games.

There is even a room with a home exercise machine and equipment provided through ACC.

Two of the three wheelchair-accessible bathrooms have wet-area showers, which makes personal hygiene easy, and visits a breeze for their elderly parents.

An innovative and sustainable garden has also been added to the property, which includes raised planter boxes for Mr Blundell's vegetable garden.

The Blundells closely monitored the project, which they say would not have been so successful without award-winning Registered Master Builder Brian



The Blundell home is a breakthrough design for the New Zealand design industry.

Marriner of Maridale Construction, and his talented team.

The Lifetime Design standards are basically common sense — simple design adaptations (from what you would normally do) that enable accessible, adaptable and inclusive design features into a home that works for everybody at whatever stage of life.

The special features in a Lifemarked home can go unnoticed to most — the Blundell home proves this — and shows that design has tackled functionality head on and nailed it!

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Building cost-effective, handsome, durable car parks

By Roy Kane

Following a preliminary design by Opus, the Auckland City Hospital car park was put out to design/build tender. Mainzeal, as one of New Zealand's largest and most experienced commercial construction companies, combined its role as lead contractor with the skills of D&H Steel, DHC Consulting and Ignite Architects to come up with several winning, cost-effective solutions.

The first of these involved meeting the developer's requirement of full corrosion protection. The Auckland District Health Board (ADHB) wanted the car park to have longevity, with the cost of maintenance kept low.

The initial choice of decking would have involved propping double multiple spans and leaving an unpainted strip for the welding of through-deck studs.

To avoid the extra cost and to achieve complete corrosion protection, it was decided that ComFlor 60 x 0.75, supplied by Tata Steel International, would be the decking system of choice.

ComFlor 60 x 0.75 could be installed in unpropped single spans but, in addition, Composite Floor Decks Ltd delivered the decking with profiled end-caps that would allow concrete infill to take place on each side of the flange during the pour.

Meanwhile, the studs were welded to the beams and given a full protective coating, including the flanges, in the course of D&H Steel's factory fabrication.

It's worth noting that this approach is generally regarded as not essential for all steel-framed car parks. Leaving the top flange unpainted is accepted as good practice since the flange will be covered by the concrete.

Designers who specify that the top flange should be pre-studded and pre-painted will need to factor in the additional stud detailing and workshop costs.



With Auckland City Hospital in the background, a D&H Steel flatback makes a delivery to the new structural steel car park going up on Park Road, Grafton.

With propping of the ComFlor 60 x 0.75 unnecessary, Composite Floor Decks was able to establish repetitive decking throughout the seven-storey structure. The columns were Circular Hollow Sections filled with concrete for fire rating. The primary beams on the perimeter were mostly 310UBs with a few 410 and 460UBs.

Some custom-welded beams were required where the span was too long and headroom was required below. The secondary beams were made up mainly of 200 and 310UBs with a few 360UBs thrown in.

Eccentrically Braced Frames (EBFs) were designed for four perimeter bays. These are supported on 600mm diameter concrete piles sunk 15m to 20m and founded in basalt. Lateral bracing is also provided by two concrete block stairwells and two shear concrete elevator shafts.

The second feature that helped win the tender for the D&H team was the future-proofing of the car park. When completed, it will have 403 parking spaces, but it's been designed so that two more floors for car parking can be added

at a future date.

The steel structure means that this can be done quickly and easily, with no disruption to the operation of the building. The car park's concrete roof will become a floor when the time comes.

In addition to providing parking spaces for the general public and some hospital staff, the building will have ground floor retail outlets on Grafton's Park Road, with commercial offices above these.

Future-proofing includes adding on an extra four floors of offices, as the need arises. Again, the roof is concrete but has a sacrificial long-run roof on steel trusses on top of it, pending the addition of the extra floors with steel framing and composite decks.

Historically, car park buildings have won few medals for aesthetics, but there are some exceptions — and this one at 2 Park Road is set to become the next.

The ADHB challenged those tendering for this job to design a cladding system that would address the issues of screening, ventilation and

aesthetics in a comprehensive solution, cost effectively.

Mainzeal, D&H Steel and Ignite Architects agreed on aluminium as the material, with Ignite developing the detail of the folded panels perforated in tree-like patterns.

Fabrication by King Facade was to comply with the aesthetic requirements of the resource consent. The folds prevent visual monotony and the punched holes allow for natural ventilation, thus saving on power consumption. The cost of maintenance will amount to an occasional wash.

It might all seem like plain sailing, but that's because of the navigational expertise in the D&H drawing office. Senior detailer Guy Jamison described the challenge presented by the secondary steel for the aluminium cladding.

"All the connections of the secondary steel to the primary steelwork had to be modelled and detailed early in the project, and because of the complex geometry this could not be done from the architectural and engineering drawings alone," Mr Jamison says.

"We managed to integrate the architect's 3-D model into our structural 3-D model, and only then were we able to detail the secondary steel and integrate the connections to the primary steelwork.

"We use ProSteel (an add-on to AutoCAD) and it immediately highlighted connection clashes, which I was then able to avoid. It was also apparent that not all of the vertical supports were in the correct locations. However, the accuracy and flexibility of our model enabled us to accommodate the changes prior to



The Eccentrically Braced Frames were designed for four perimeter bays. The columns are Circular Hollow Sections filled with concrete.

producing the shop drawings.

"D&H's investment in time and attention to detail added value and saved the client money."

Asked if the design of the car park would be suitable for Christchurch, the engineer, Gordan Brkic, director of DHC Consulting, said the design, in principle, would be the same in Christchurch.

"The only thing that would need to be addressed is the building's bracing, as the earthquake loads in Christchurch are significantly higher than would be expected in Auckland. However, this would affect only

four EBFs, a relatively small part of the whole structure."

Mainzeal project manager Stewart Lovelock says despite the traffic congestion associated with a hospital environment, and the limited amount of setting down space, good progress was made on the car park throughout its construction programme, and will be completed and handed over before the end of December 2011.

"Mainzeal has more than 40 years' construction experience under its belt," Mr Lovelock says.

"This enables us to tackle a wide array of

Continued page 24

D&H Steel in hugely successful operation at Auckland Hospital

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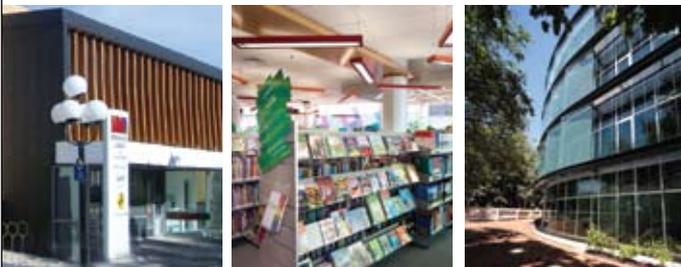
A pair of K-braces are hoisted for erection.

From page 23

projects of every shape and size. We do so with skill, focus and enthusiasm, qualities that D&H general manager Wayne Carson also brought to our weekly project meetings.

"These underlined the importance of excellent communications, by means of which Wayne enabled us to steer this project steadily towards its scheduled completion."

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On its way to seven levels, the car park has been future-proofed by the inclusion of additional floors in the design.



ComFlor 60 x 0.75 decking laid on steel beams with pre-welded studs and full corrosion protection.



This close-up shows one of the end-plates fitted to stop the concrete infill during the pour.

Report names BCITO best performing tertiary educator

The Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation (BCITO) has claimed the top spot for educational performance in 2010, as scored by the Tertiary Education Commission's (TEC) recently-released report on tertiary educators.

This is the second year running that the BCITO has outperformed other tertiary providers, with an impeccable score of 100% for the completion of programmes offered.

This compares to the national average completion score of 55% for ITOs, and 52% for level 3 and 4 polytechnic qualifications.

Universities struggled to effectively deliver level 3 and 4 graduates in 2010, with a score of only 41%.

BCITO chief executive Ruma Karaitiana says the BCITO team is absolutely delighted with the news.

"Our consistently high performance really highlights our dedication to hands-on training and mentoring within the building industry. We actively encourage our construction apprentices to strive to be the best, so it is great to practice what we preach," Mr Karaitiana says.

The BCITO currently has around 5500 students enrolled in construction-related courses, including carpentry, concrete, tiling and plastering to name a few.

Carpentry accounts for more than 90% of all BCITO apprentices, thereby delivering more qualified builders into the industry than any other avenue. The BCITO is the largest construction-related ITO.

"The secret to our success is pretty simple — training occurs onsite, on the tools, where trainees can be directly shown the principles of construction in the real world," Mr Karaitiana says.

"This sort of engagement empowers the learner and motivates them to learn more. Additional support comes from the BCITO case management process, including individual learning plans, risk profiling and coaching of the learner and their workplace trainer.

"Plus, they have professional builders mentoring them along the way, so they get a really good grasp of where they are heading and the sort of career they can look forward to. Once they get a taste of success, they are hooked, so completing their qualification is just a matter of course," Mr Karaitiana says.

"But we can't take full credit for our performance. This success is largely due to the building industry itself, and the dedicated employers who are willing to share their knowledge and pass on their skills to the next generation.

"Industry training is a team effort, and we are incredibly lucky to be working with such a skilled and professional industry. It makes our job much easier."

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Built to match that strong Kiwi drive

Designed specifically for Kiwi workshops, Bahco has brought out a new 10-piece screwdriver set.

The new set was made using the expertise of an international company with more than 125 years' experience in delivering top-quality tools to the market.

Though Bahco tools are all European-made, its newest screwdriver set was developed and customised especially for the New Zealand market.

With the resourceful, practical and hard-working Kiwi DIYer and tradesperson in mind, each screwdriver in this tough set has been built to last, with fine polished vanadium blades, chrome plating and ergonomically designed handles (because Kiwis also like to be comfy!).

The set includes two sizes of Robertsons Square Drives, and eight other popular sizes, which come in a tough-mold polyprop carry case.

The set contains:

- Phillips — #1, #2 and #3
- Slotted — 3mm, 5.5mm, 6.5mm and 8mm
- Posidriv — 2
- Robertson — 1 and 2

The recommended retail price for this handy 10-piece set is \$50, and is available at all good hardware stores nationwide. For more information on Bahco products, visit www.bahco.com.



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Christchurch green rebuild tool draws on local expertise

The New Zealand Green Building Council (NZGBC) has announced the members of an advisory group of local industry specialists helping to shape a new green rebuild assessment tool for Christchurch that meets the needs of central city property owners, tenants and residents.

Developed by the NZGBC in partnership with Christchurch City Council (CCC) and with the support of Beca as primary sponsor (technical), Warren & Mahoney and the Sustainable Steel Council, the tool is a critical first step in fulfilling the city's aspiration to be among the world's most sustainable cities.

NZGBC chief executive Alex Cutler says Christchurch has lead the way in New Zealand with the country's first 6 Green Star designed and built office — Te Hononga, the Christchurch Civic Building — representing world leadership in environmentally sustainable design.

"With the rebuild assessment tool, Christchurch will be an inspiration to the world with sustainably designed, high-performing buildings at the heart of the new city centre," Ms Cutler says.

"New Zealand has some great examples of green office buildings that not only cost less to run, they are also healthier and more comfortable to work in.

"We're delighted to work with the Christchurch property industry to develop an introductory-level building assessment tool that meets their needs, and responds to the wishes of the people of Christchurch."

The tool will apply to multiple building types (office, retail and residential, and combinations of these), and feature a streamlined, affordable submission and assessment process.

Complementary to the Green Star rating tool, the Christchurch rebuild tool will also have a number of conditional requirements in areas such as energy, thermal comfort, ventilation and water efficiency, and project teams will be able to select from a broad range of additional credits to achieve a pass mark.

Property Council of New Zealand (South Island branch) president Graeme McDonald welcomes the flexibility of the planned tool.

"This new tool makes green building accessible and affordable to a wider audience with a range of options available to owners and developers," he says. "It will promote awareness of environmental and sustainable building solutions, and encourage the development of an appealing, world-class inner Christchurch — The Garden City."

The Christchurch Green Rebuild Tool Advisory Group includes: Alan Barbour, Beca; Carena Parish, Hawkins; David MacDonald, MacDonald Consultancy; Gordon Craig, Ngai Tahu Property Ltd; Graeme Finlay, Warren & Mahoney; Michael Doig, Ganellen; Philip Neale, Davis Langdon; Ross Davidson, Davis Langdon; and Susan McLaughlin and Tony Moore, CCC.

Discussion of the rebuild tool with a panel of property industry specialists took place in a Green City Dialogues session in Christchurch recently.

The series is sponsored by local businesses Wynn Williams, Warren & Mahoney, Colliers International and Westpac. For more information, visit www.nzgbc.org.nz.

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Dwelling with Gaia

Dr Kerry Rodgers has been checking out Switzerland's Earth Homes



Getting it up

The Hobbits of Middle Earth regarded living in a hole in the ground as the bee's knees, if not the cat's pyjamas. On Planet Earth we have been emulating them for thousands of years.

Formally constructed souterrains dating from Neolithic times are known from across Europe and Asia. In many ways they are a logical extension of a cave — without its disadvantages.

And they have never really gone away. Today the emphasis on the environment has seen them enjoy a renaissance. Architects around the globe have been promoting the hole in the ground as the way to live. Among the forefront of the current movement is Switzerland's Peter Vetsch.

The primary concern here is with so-called earth houses, aka earth berms, as opposed to rammed-earth or earth-sheltered homes.

Earth homes are set at least partially into the ground. The natural contours of the ground form part of the walls, with much of the house buried in soil. The earth



Earth Home estate



provides insulation and protection from rain, low temperatures and wind.

Rather than being built under the ground, the homes are inserted into the landscape. The aim of an earth house is not to live under or in the ground but, rather, with it. The emphasis is on minimising the structure's environmental footprint.

Earth homes are promoted as flexible in their construction, readily able to accommodate the wishes of their owners as to individuality, spatial requirements, energy conservation and, of course, being friends with the environment.

Their structural engineering allows for an organic sculptured design, with the house shaped to preserve the land's natural contours.

Typically, modern earth houses are built with concrete walls and insulation. Peter Vetsch's homes are constructed on a conventional foundation pad using sprayed concrete applied to a fine-meshed metal net which is curved to the shape of the planned rooms and welded over a supporting core.

A 200mm thick polyurethane foam is then sprayed onto the outside of the curved walls and arches to provide primary insulation. A fleece filter mat is laid over this and the building entombed in a layer of soil some 800mm to 3m thick. Loam rendering is applied to the interior walls to aid climate control, and they are then finished with white cement paint.

Early earth houses had few if any windows. Modern versions have wide glass facades at their fronts, with windows and/or solar tubes in the roof to provide natural light to internal rooms and to alleviate any cave effect. And, by the way, the entrances are often found in the roof.

And modern earth homes don't stint on the latest interior finishing. While the curved walls can cause problems with interior decoration as, for example, in placing furniture, these issues are either anticipated during the design phase or fittings are customised.

Advantages touted for earth homes are primarily environmental. Their insulation keeps them cool in summer and warm in winter.

In winter, they possess a higher air humidity than conventional houses. They are impermeable and ideal for air conditioning and/or heat pumps. However, they must be properly ventilated to avoid mould or mildew growth.

They fit well into their natural surroundings and occupy far less land area than a conventional house. There is little reason they cannot be built right up to a boundary, and they are an ideal solution for steep and hilly properties.

Their structures are fireproof. They are more or less immune to wind and storm damage. And they offer significant protection from blast damage and fallout in the case of a nuclear war!

Peter Vetsch has built more than 47 earth homes in Switzerland and around the world. Check out <http://www.erdhaus.ch/main.php?fla=y&lang=en&cont=start>.

And he is far from the only one at it. Google "The Burrow, Faulkners Lane, Harbledown" to check out a mere £2,000,000 earth home in Britain.



Images courtesy vetsch architektur, Archi0780, Roland zh, Wikimedia Commons. Text © K.A. Rodgers 2011

Mediation — promoted as ‘diametrically opposite’ to the court process?

Tim Bates of Auckland law firm Legal Vision debates mediation versus the courts of New Zealand — and asks whether they should be viewed as opposing processes or two processes working together to form lasting results for litigants.



In the past month there has been an address by the Chief High Court Judge on her view of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) processes such as mediation.

She was critical of the following aspects of the pro-ADR argument:

- Mediation is promoted as a much better alternative to court on the basis that litigation is always expensive, unpleasant and unnecessary.
- It is also promoted as being a process that is diametrically opposite to the court process.
- She was critical of mediators promoting themselves

on the basis of their settlement percentage rates, which infer they have an interest in reaching some form of settlement.

- She believed that mediation had a place, but within the court litigation process, with the law standing in the shadow of it as it was needed in any event to facilitate settlement.
- She was critical of parties being kept in a room for as long as it took to get a settlement achieved, which often happened in the early hours of the morning when parties were too exhausted to make good decisions.
- She did not think it was too bold to say that the outcome of mediation is often shaped by the particular power balance at mediation.

She was quoted as saying: “Fundamentally, I suggest that mediators should step back from committing to achieve settlement, and focus on creating an environment in which good and lasting settlements can be reached. Encouragement to settle should never become pressure (however applied), nor should technique be allowed to become manipulation.”

The writer has been attending mediations, primarily in the leaky building context, since 2003. Certainly, at the first mediations I attended, there seemed to be a higher frequency of settlement than perhaps there is today.

Looking back over the past 10 years, it seems that participants that had counsel well versed in the usual mechanisms/techniques applied at mediation often came out of the process a lot better off than how they might have fared in court.

Sometimes those mediations have gone on very late into the night, and perhaps fatigue, hunger and emotion have factored into some of the settlement decisions made by parties to the litigation.

In more recent times, most participants in mediation are well versed in the arts and techniques of mediation. I suspect that the settlement rates of mediations have come back somewhat from those earlier halcyon days. Certainly, over the past 24 months, I have felt there is a need for a hybrid to follow on from pure mediation.

Just as the law should stand in the shadow of any good settlement, I believe clear findings of fact would also assist the mediation process.

In a typical leaky building mediation the participants arrive at a day-long mediation with the following facts unresolved:

- The cost of repair,
- The need for a total reclad versus a targeted repair,
- The causes of water ingress, and the repairs that flow from each defect, and
- The construction trades that have contributed to those defects.

There are a number of other facts that are unresolved, but it is conceded that those not mentioned are not practicable to be resolved prior to mediation.

It seems to me that if the participants were able to arrive at mediation armed with this information then, from there, settlement may well be more easily reached.

Grappling with issues

A significant amount of time is used at mediation grappling with these issues, and less time is actually spent on addressing issues of liability and, instead, on negotiation.

Whilst expert conferences in the Weathertight Homes Tribunal, or expert panels in the High Court, purport to decide some or all of these factual issues, too often they occur after the ADR process of mediation/judicial settlement conference has been completed — thus their factual decisions do not assist the reaching of a settlement.

It is this firm’s view that some form of mini-hearing upon key issues prior to mediation/judicial settlement conference taking place is the future for ADR processes in the context of construction disputes.

Note: This article is not intended to be legal advice (nor a substitute for legal advice). No responsibility or liability is accepted by Legal Vision to anyone who relies on the information contained in this article.

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Warriors winners

The following *Building Today* readers won double passes to the Vodafone Warriors' final home game v North Queensland Cowboys recently — a match won 18-6 by the Warriors.

Greg Douglas (Pukekohe)

Dale Lopesi (Auckland)

Steve Haycock (Warkworth)

Phil McCarthy (Te Aroha)

Carmen Field (Matamata)

They correctly submitted the score of the Vodafone Warriors v Newcastle Knights match played on August 13, 2011, at Mt Smart Stadium — 20-12 to the Warriors.

Asking the question

Go to www.buildingtoday.co.nz to vote on our latest poll question:

Do you think the Christchurch CBD should be rebuilt to the west of the current city boundaries?

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