

BUILDINGTODAY

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE REGISTERED MASTER BUILDERS ASSOCIATION



VOLUME 30 NUMBER 2

MARCH 2020

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INSIDE:

RUAKURA INLAND PORT
A STEP CLOSER

CORONAVIRUS, AND ITS
EFFECTS ON THE INDUSTRY

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ALSO INSIDE:

NZICC WORK TO START MID-YEAR > FLOORING — HOW SUSTAINABLE IS YOURS?



Weatherline Fire Test



LEFT: Fire test in progress. MIDDLE: Completed fire test with cladding still in place. RIGHT: Completed fire test with cladding removed and GIB Weatherline® visible.

In proprietary tests undertaken by two reputable international cladding manufacturers and their respective New Zealand Distributors, GIB Weatherline® was included in combination with claddings to pass two separate NFPA285 full scale Façade fire tests.

MBIE have recently announced the “Building Performance Guide: Fire Performance of External Wall Cladding Systems” which summarises available pathways for NZ Building Code Clause C3 External spread of fire and includes a risk matrix for fire testing protocols.

In buildings deemed Low Risk applications, GIB Weatherline® Rigid Air Barrier Systems meet or exceed the requirements of NZBC Performance Clause C3.5.

For Medium Risk applications, to comply with MBIE Protocol P1, GIB Weatherline® has been tested in accordance with ISO 5660-1, meets the requirements of C/AS2 to C/AS7 paragraph 5.8 and can be used as a component in medium risk applications provided other cladding components also comply with MBIE Protocol P1 guidelines.

However, to meet High Risk Applications MBIE protocol P3, 13mm GIB Weatherline® Rigid Air Barrier was tested



ABOVE: Preparation for the fire test with GIB Weatherline® lining (left) and with cladding (right).

on timber framing with internal insulation in two separate NFPA 285 full scale façade tests in combination with both Alucabond and Reynodual claddings systems..

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FROM THE EDITOR

Last month's editorial mentioned the promising start to the year for the New Zealand construction industry. Now a couple of curveballs threaten to derail that optimism.

The New Zealand Institute of Economic Research (NZIER) says a combination of the COVID-19 virus — aka Coronavirus — and drought conditions in New Zealand will deliver a short sharp shock to the economy.

They're predicting the effects will linger over the remainder of 2020 but, hopefully, lessen during that time.

The unknown quantity that is COVID-19 could have further negative effects on the global economy and growth, but the NZIER says the country's economic fundamentals are still strong. So, fingers crossed, the building industry will be able to continue its strong start and ride out any negative impact.

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1-year subscription (11 issues): \$57.50
ISSN 1171-0225 (Print)

ISSN 1171-1264 (Online)

The Master Build 10-Year Guarantee — the leading product in the market

Chief's Chat

By CEO David Kelly

Building guarantees continue to be a topic of discussion in the market, with a Government report likely later in the year.

We strongly support more discussion on this important issue.

Recapping on 2019 and looking ahead

In April 2019, the Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) issued a discussion paper on compulsory guarantee and insurance products (GIPs) in New Zealand.

We were pleased to see strong support for GIPs, but understand this is a complex issue.

We expect the MBIE to issue a report later this year investigating the different options for improving consumer protection — including the role of compulsory GIPs.

We look forward to seeing their recommendations.

Whatever the outcome of this review, we are pleased the topic is getting more attention.

We firmly believe everyone building a new home or undertaking a major renovation should have the protection of a building guarantee.

At typically less than 1% of the build costs, it just makes sense.

How it works

The Master Build 10-Year Guarantee is the leading product in the market. It is well established, and is often asked for by name by home owners and the leading banks.

The Master Build 10-year Guarantee is only offered through Master Builders.

That is because we know them, have approved them to be Master Builders, and we trust them.

To become a Master Builder, our builders must comply with stringent criteria that focuses on business capability and build quality.



This is a robust process — we accept only around half of the applicants we receive each year.

This gives customers confidence in choosing a Master Builder, knowing they are a quality builder, backed by New Zealand's leading building association.

Our Guarantee is different to a standard insurance product. The relationship of an insurer is directly with the home owner and does not involve the builder.

In the case of our Guarantee, the relationship is with both the home owner and the builder.

Under our Guarantee, we provide and manage protection for the home owner if something goes wrong — including service deficiencies, relationship breakdown, or where their builder is no longer in business. The Guarantee protects them for 10 years.

The Guarantee has been developed in New Zealand for New Zealand homes.

It is managed by the Master Build Services

Board, a subsidiary company of Registered Master Builders.

We are committed to good governance practice with a five-person Board, two of whom are independent.

While we are not required to, we voluntarily meet the requirements of the Reserve Bank's financial liquidity requirements for insurance companies.

We are independently audited, and our actuary is Melville Jessup Weaver, ensuring we meet best practice requirements.

Misinformation about guarantees and warranties

One of the key issues we see is there is often a lack of understanding or misinformation about building guarantees.

There is also little understanding about the limited protection covered by the Building Act and Consumer Guarantees Act.

Building guarantees and warranties provide much greater protection than both these Acts, and provide cover not included by general house insurance.

Under the Building Act and the Consumer Guarantees Act, consumers are not protected for Loss of Deposit and Non-Completion.

The other key benefit for consumers is that our Guarantee lasts for 10 years, regardless of whether the builder is still in business or not.

This is a real strength of our product and one that differentiates us — we know of other products in the market that can no longer offer this.

We recommend home owners look carefully at these products.

Tried and tested

Our builders can be proud of a guarantee that is proven and has stood the test of time. We have been protecting Kiwis for more than 25 years.

During those 25 years, we have protected New Zealand home owners in good times and in bad, including in a major building company collapse.

“STRONG ALL-ROUNDER” DELIVERS STRONG PERFORMANCE AT APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR



JAY POPE

UPPER SOUTH ISLAND WINNER AND
3RD PLACE NATIONAL RUNNER UP
REGISTERED MASTER BUILDERS
CARTERS 2019 APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR

Jay is employed by Mudgway Construction, and was trained through the Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation (BCITO).



SUCCESSSES

The Nelson based apprentice took out his local region competition, and then went on to score a strong third place at the National competition. The experience was incredibly rewarding for him.

“The best part of the competition was the relief that came with the tools down call. At that point I knew I had put in my best effort, and it was all in the judges’ hands from there. As someone who is super competitive, it was a little disappointing not to come first. Regardless, I was super chuffed to score third place.”



CHALLENGES

The practical challenge put the apprentice to the test, tasking him with building a pirate ship playground within a short time frame.

“The tight time pressure was the biggest challenge for me. It was rather nerve-wracking, but once the timer had started and I was in the zone it was fine.”



JUDGES’ COMMENTS

“Jay was a strong all-rounder. He was the most confident getting into the build and demonstrated his ability from the start. As one of the older competitors, Jay’s confidence was evident throughout.”

EMPLOYER COMMENTS

Mudgway Construction’s Jason Mudgway described Jay’s success as absolutely brilliant. It has given the company director motivation to enter more of his apprentices in Apprentice of the Year.

“The competition pushes apprentices outside of their comfort zone and gives them not only a sense of achievement, but also recognition from the wider building industry.”

“We congratulate all of the apprentices who took part and worked incredibly hard to get where they got to.”

PRINCIPAL PARTNER



EVENT PARTNER



Builder's Own Home a "Labour of Love"

Third Little Pig Homes

• Builder's Own Home Award



Successes

Third Little Pig Homes' Zac Williams said he was incredibly proud of the win. He knew the high calibre of the competition he was up against. But in the end, his commitment to the project paid off.

"When you're building your own home, you are highly motivated to put in a huge amount of effort and time to make it as good as it possibly can be. You can be a lot harder on yourself. There also comes the freedom to pursue your vision without having to satisfy a client's demands."

Challenges

The build process faced several hurdles. The home itself was built on sand dunes which offered a unique challenge. Zac also had to manage the build around his awkward schedule.

"I was building my home only in my own time in the evenings and weekends. It really was a labour of love. But it did mean things that usually took two weeks could take as long as a month or even two."

Judges' comments

Judges described the build as striking and beautifully crafted. They saw it as a reflection of the incredible skill of a young builder who spent months working after hours to create a home for himself and his partner.

"Challenged with a very tight budget, the builder completed most of the work himself, which allowed him to achieve a fantastic level of finish. This featured high-quality materials, fixtures and fittings which were evident throughout the home."

House of the Year is made possible through the support of the following sponsors:



“DOC Hut” home wins big at House of the Year

Urban Homes

- Special Award
- Altus Window Systems New Home \$750,000 - \$1 Million Award



Successes

Urban Homes’ Daniel Klinkenberg puts his company’s win down to the unique design of the build, which captured the unique aesthetic of a DOC hut.

“This build seamlessly fits into the landscape. When you visit the home, it doesn’t feel like you’re in the Waikato anymore, but instead the middle of nowhere. I put this down to our excellent use of timber which really made it stand out from the competition.”

Challenges

Creating a home that was in perfect harmony with the surrounding environment and wildlife was a tough task. The considerable timber work also brought challenges.

“Despite the tough brief, our success can be attributed to the incredible team involved. Our designers did a fantastic job understanding the client’s needs and bringing this project to life. They really balanced not overcomplicating the project while preserving its exceptional design.”

Judges’ comments

The judges were impressed with the builder’s execution in building a home reminiscent of a DOC hut. They also commended how it had little impact on the existing ecological environment.

“Both the consideration given to this project and the owners’ dedication to preserving the natural beauty of this site are absolutely commendable, and makes this home strongly deserving of this year’s Special Award.”

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Tight schedule no issue for skilled building team

Visy

CATEGORY

Winner of Industrial Project Category

ENTRANT

Foster Construction Limited

PROJECT PARTNERS

Foster Construction Limited (Construction Company),
Kingston Partners Limited (Project QS), Stiles &
Hooker Limited (Architect/Designer)

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Visy



Successes

Foster Construction's Leonard Gardner and his team were delighted to get an award. He stated it was a great acknowledgement of what they delivered.

"As builders, we rarely take time to look back to reflect on the success of projects we have completed. Winning at the commercial project awards recognised the success of the project team in delivering one of New Zealand's best commercial construction projects."



Challenges

Foster Construction had to overcome the challenge of an incredibly tight time frame.

"We were handed the site two months later than we had planned, yet we still had to achieve the same completion date to ensure the client could start production on time. On top of this, the winter period had constant rain. Despite this, we finished on time, and this was achieved due to our great trusting relationship with the client."



Judges' comments

Visy Board Hamilton is a new cardboard factory that contains some of the world's most modern technology. This project involved building a 36,000m² shed, with a 2,000m² mezzanine and 900m² of office and staff facilities. Construction began in the middle of winter, which is the most difficult time to start excavation.

The judges were impressed with the excellent decision making and collaboration with client, consultant and construction team.

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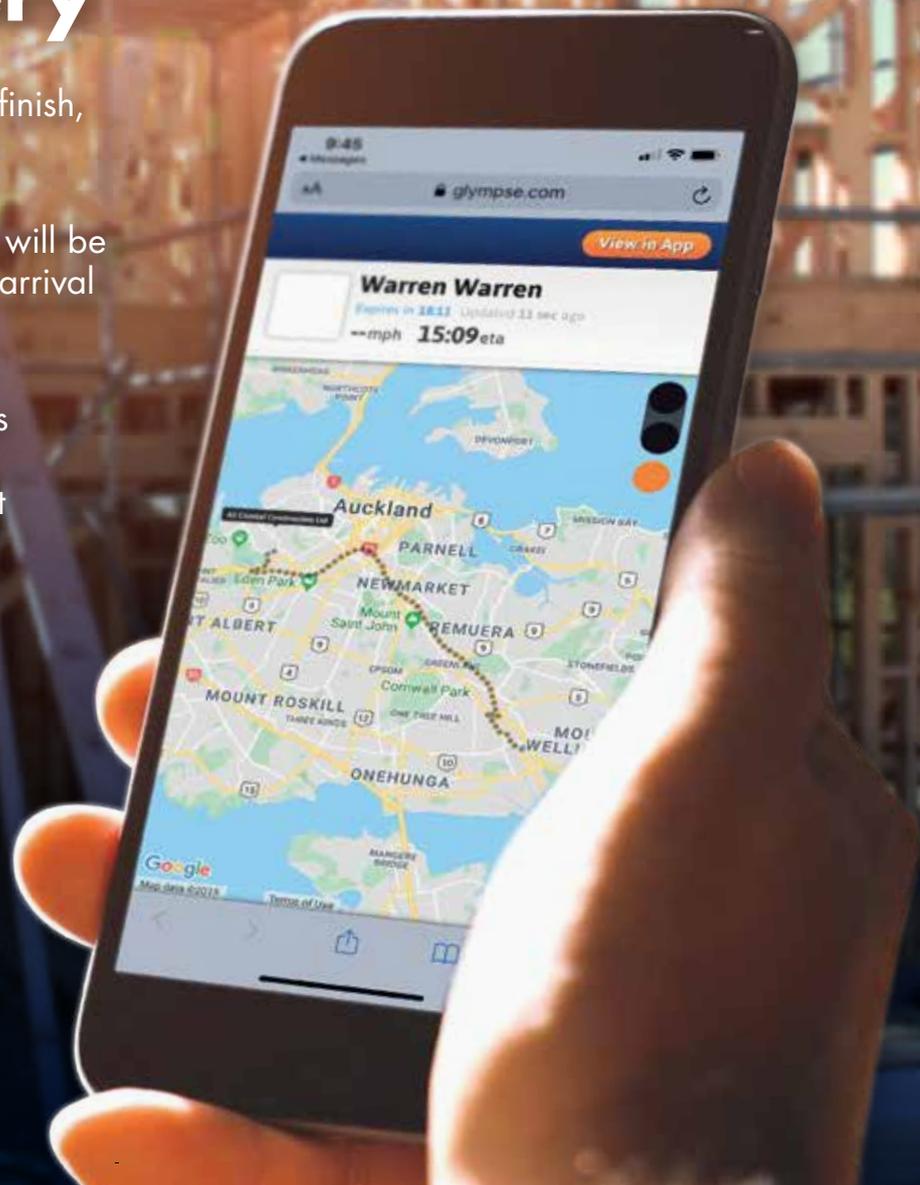


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New Smart Home award announced

Builders can now provide endless quality-of-life upgrades

Dimming lights, motorised blinds, thermostats and timers were becoming the minimum expectations in new builds over a decade ago.

Automating a home and tailoring controls to the unique lifestyle and requirements of customers is now at the forefront of modern living — with architects, builders and electricians leading the charge.

The Auckland Registered Master Builders Association has recognised this with the launch of a new category which will debut in 2020 in the region's House of the Year Awards.

The Smart Home award is sponsored by global leaders in energy management, PDL by Schneider Electric.

This exciting category provides the opportunity to showcase and celebrate some of the innovative smart home installations emerging in new home builds across New Zealand.



What if your clients could simply have the front door unlocked to let them inside using facial recognition?

Imagine if their security system disarmed, the lights came on and the kettle started to boil to prepare a cup of tea as they walk inside.

This and more is now a reality thanks to advances in home automation, and this can be turned into reality for every customer.

Basically, if they can plug it in, then it can be automated to suit them, their home, and their lifestyle.

Garage doors can open as your clients pull into their driveways. Lounges can be vacuumed with a touch on their smart phone.

Electronic blinds can open and music can start playing on wireless speakers.

Builders can now provide endless quality-of-life upgrades — adding value to projects and enhancing the comfort, convenience, security and energy efficiency that customers can derive from their home.

Home automation has never been more affordable or accessible.

As clients and customers become more aware of the capabilities and demand increases, there's no better time to get one step ahead and start leading the way.

ClearVue



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ClearVue's high quality flat panel design does not have the weight or cost associated with glass panels. The glazing panels offer durable, fade resistant performance to ensure year in year out natural lighting and reduces the harsh UV impact of summer sun. The glazing panels are easily installed, require less structural support than heavy glass alternatives, are highly cost competitive and capable of lasting for many years with minimal maintenance.

Typical applications:

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- Architectural Glazing
- Outdoor Canopies
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- Pergolas

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Tainui Group Holdings and Port of Tauranga team up to deliver Ruakura Inland Port

Tainui Group Holdings and Port of Tauranga have announced they plan to develop a 50:50 joint venture to bring the Ruakura Inland Port at Hamilton to fruition within two years.

The new joint venture will take an initial 50-year ground lease to establish the inland port, and plans to start port operations at Ruakura following the opening of the nearby Hamilton section of the Waikato Expressway, currently scheduled for the end of 2021.

Parekawhia McLean, Chair of Te Whakakitenga o Waikato, the Waikato-Tainui parliament (and parent organisation of Tainui Group Holdings) said the iwi is pleased to team up with New Zealand's largest international hub port to bring Ruakura Inland Port to life.

"It's exciting to confirm a concrete path forward for this project of national significance which will unlock economic, social and environmental benefits for New Zealand, our region and our iwi," McLean says.

Port of Tauranga chief executive Mark Cairns says there is a strong logic to team up with Tainui Group Holdings to unlock efficiencies for importers and exporters by utilising Ruakura Inland Port.

"This new partnership adds to our strong and growing capacity to serve the Auckland, Waikato and Bay of Plenty region," Cairns says.

"It combines our own expertise in developing and operating ports, the deep regional connections of Tainui Group Holdings, and the scale and efficiencies offered by Ruakura and its road and rail connections.

"By enhancing the MetroPort Auckland to Tauranga rail service with calls at Ruakura, we can unlock significant environmental and economic benefits for freight customers," he says.

Local communities will also benefit, with TGH modelling showing a potential 60,000 truck movements per year removed from the region's roads when Ruakura is fully developed.



An artist's impression of the fully developed Ruakura Inland Port near Hamilton. By enhancing the MetroPort Auckland to Tauranga rail service with calls at the Port, TGH modelling shows a potential 60,000 trucks per year could be removed from the region's roads when Ruakura is fully developed.

Tainui Group Holdings chief executive Chris Joblin says the shared strategic interest with Port of Tauranga had become increasingly obvious as the market landscape evolved.

Agreement brings clarity to project

"This agreement brings clarity and certainty to the development of Ruakura Inland Port, and signals we are open for business," Joblin says.

"As the largest port in New Zealand, Port of Tauranga will bring world-class expertise in developing and running ports.

"We are excited to enter this partnership based on strongly aligned values and interests. And for our iwi, it means we can make the inland port a reality in a way that retains the underlying whenua, which will never be sold.

"With 192 hectares earmarked for logistics and industrial uses, we expect a number of other customer conversations in progress to bear

fruit in the coming months as distribution and logistics companies and manufacturers seek out a preferential location at Ruakura."

Port of Tauranga and Tainui Group Holdings have been in talks since initially signing a rail services agreement in mid-August last year to enable Port of Tauranga's cargo trains running between MetroPort Auckland and Tauranga to service Ruakura Inland Port.

The "golden triangle" of Auckland, Hamilton and Tauranga already accounts for around half of all freight volumes in New Zealand, and container volumes are forecast to grow 60% in container volumes by 2042.

KiwiRail operates up to 86 trains per week for Port of Tauranga between MetroPort Auckland and Tauranga, carrying up to 9000 TEUs (twenty-foot equivalent units).

The route currently has unused capacity, and the additional service stop will improve use and reduce the number of trucks on roads.

• Ruakura is a visionary logistics hub designed to help importers and exporters unlock the "golden triangle" of Auckland, Hamilton and Tauranga.

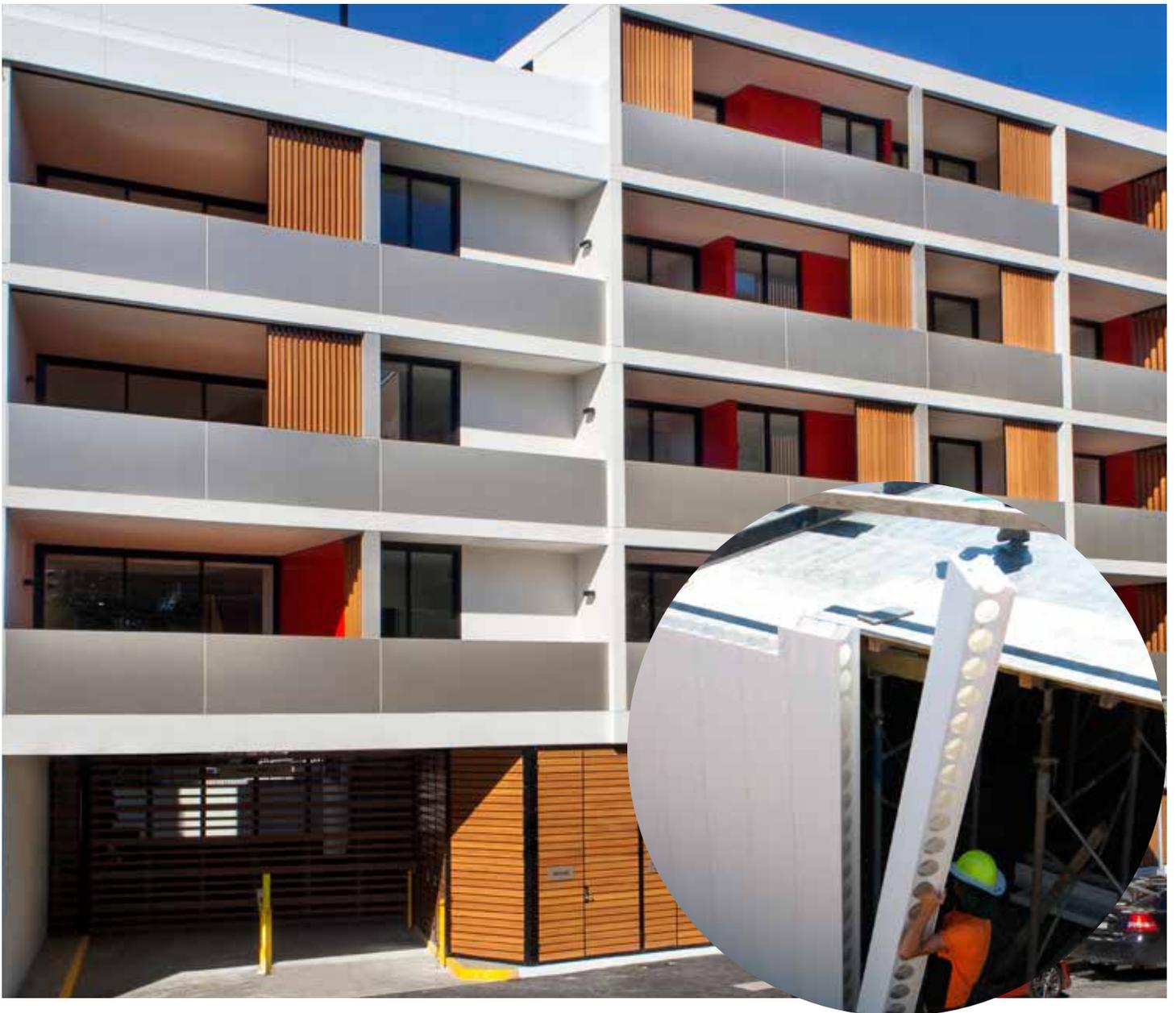
Offering genuine scale, the core of the development is a 30ha inland port which will offer direct access to major seaports via main trunk rail services and the Waikato Expressway.

Complementing the inland port is a 192ha logistics and industrial precinct offering room to grow for businesses seeking a

substantial footprint, and adjoining precincts for commercial, residential and retail use.

Ruakura is long-term project by Tainui Group Holdings (TGH) and its business partners.

TGH's track record includes quality developments at The Base, one of New Zealand's largest shopping centres, and hotels at Auckland Airport and Hamilton as part of the \$950m diversified portfolio it manages on behalf of 76,000 Waikato-Tainui iwi members.



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Expertise from the floor up

Major construction work on NZICC to begin mid-year

Fletcher Construction says recovery from the fire at the SkyCity New Zealand International Convention Centre in Auckland will continue for the next few months before major construction work can begin mid-year.

Fletcher Construction chief executive Peter Reidy says damage caused by the fire in the near-complete convention centre has been extremely complex to deal with, and simply preparing for the rebuild has taken months of work.

"The damage we found inside the building was significant. The fire has affected secondary steel that supports the roof and holds up key elements of equipment, and areas of the facade adjacent to the roof may need to be replaced," Reidy says.

Extensive water damage

"If this is the case, it will require a 12-14 month work programme by the specialist glass manufacturer who is in the United States.

"There has been extensive water damage throughout the building which, combined with the summer heat, has created conditions for mould.

"That requires the replacement of many of the services and fittings that were installed, and has restricted normal access to the site.

"We also need to clean residues from the fire from large parts of the building.

"Our goal from the outset was to look at what can be achieved in time for APEC; how could the convention centre support the Government over this period?

"We threw everything at this challenge and brought in ideas from across the industry.

"We have met with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and it is clear that the APEC venue must be completed for the highest level of security reviews and clearances by mid-2021.

"The fire and water damage that we have found, and the long-lead product we need to source from overseas makes completion by that date highly unlikely.

"However, we are going to commit significant resources to the project, and will keep all of our stakeholders updated on our progress throughout 2020.

"We, like our client SkyCity, are disappointed that the damage the fire caused has made this challenge so difficult, but we are working closely together and with insurers to deliver a world-class venue for New Zealand," Reidy says.



Recovery from the fire at the SkyCity New Zealand International Convention Centre in Auckland will continue for the next few months before major construction work can begin mid-year.

Fletcher commits to carbon emissions reductions

After the big fire at the SkyCity NZICC in November, Fletcher Building has moved quickly to become the first building materials and construction company in New Zealand or Australia to set a "science-based" target for carbon reduction.

It has committed to reduce direct and indirect emissions by 30% by 2030 from its 2018 baseline year, which is in line with limiting global warming to well below 2°C. The target was verified by the Science Based Targets initiative last month.

Chief executive Ross Taylor says the company's carbon emissions come primarily

from the manufacture of cement and the electricity it uses in Australia.

"To meet our target we need more than simple reduction strategies, given the inherently carbon-intensive nature of some of our operations," Taylor says.

"But where there is a will there's a way, and we are not working from a standing start. In fact, the cement we produce locally in New Zealand already contains 20% less embodied carbon than our offshore competitors.

"We're now looking at cement alternatives to reduce carbon further."

Are your contractors competent?

WorkSafe is reminding companies to ensure the contractors they employ are competent for the job at hand after an inexperienced forestry worker was hit by a falling tree.

Central Siteworks Ltd (in liquidation) was sentenced at the Waitakere District Court for failing to ensure a worker was safe while felling trees.

Central Siteworks engaged a crew to undertake forestry work at its Waitakere site. In April 2017 one of the crew was cutting down a tree when it fell on him, causing significant chest injuries.

Central Siteworks was voluntarily placed into liquidation prior to being sentenced. WorkSafe sought and was granted by the High Court

permission to continue proceedings against the company.

In considering WorkSafe's application to continue proceedings, Judge Smith noted a previous comment by Justice Venning in an unrelated case in which he said: "... companies facing prosecution by regulatory authorities should not consider that they can avoid prosecution or penalty by voluntary liquidation.

"Liquidation should not be seen as a means of escaping or avoiding the consequences of criminal activity."

At sentencing, Judge Jelas considered that Central Siteworks' offending was serious, and noted that a fine of \$405,000 for this type of offending would have been appropriate.



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NZIER expects virus and drought to put handbrake on

The combination of the COVID-19 outbreak and drought is expected to deliver a short sharp shock to the New Zealand economy, as detailed in the New Zealand Institute of Economic Research's quarterly predictions.

"Exporters are expected to bear the brunt of the effects, and we expect activity will be flat in the March quarter," principal economist Christina Leung says.

"Although we expect the effects to linger over the remainder of 2020, as they lessen over time

growth should pick up from the March low."

Leung notes that it is early days and there is a large degree of uncertainty over the magnitude and duration of the effects from the outbreak.

In the short-term, the uncertainty revolves around the ability of exporters to redirect their exports to other markets.

Over the longer-term, the uncertainty is whether COVID-19 has any persistent negative effects on global growth.

The NZIER says the fundamentals for the New Zealand economy are still strong.

Prior to the COVID-19 outbreak, households had been feeling more optimistic in light of the pick-up in housing market activity.

Business confidence was recovering as businesses felt more positive about the Government's plans, with the announcement of \$12 billion in future infrastructure spending.

Coronavirus — information for businesses all in one place

Business.govt.nz, part of the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, has sourced information from 15 government departments so businesses can access all they need to know about the COVID-19 coronavirus outbreak in one place.

Business.govt.nz director Matt Kennedy-Good says the outbreak and the global efforts to contain it affect New Zealand businesses in many ways.

"It's vital that businesses stay up to date, but with so many things to consider and changing regularly, it can be overwhelming, particularly for small businesses," Kennedy-Good says.

"We want to make it a little bit easier for them, so they don't have to blind trawl through numerous web sites to find what is relevant to them.

"Whether you're an employer with concerns about your staff and workplace, an exporter with overseas customers, or you're planning to

travel abroad, this page is your single source for government information on what to do and what assistance is available."

As well as information for employers, exporters and importers, topics such as tax assistance, health and safety are covered, as well as information for landlords, tenants and the education sector.

The content is presented in an easily digestible format with links for more in-depth reading, and is kept up to date as new information becomes available.

The page has already been visited more than 45,000 times since it was published on the business.govt.nz web site earlier this month, with many repeat visitors using it regularly.

Business.govt.nz makes business easier by packaging information and advice from across government and the private sector all in one place, designed for small businesses.

Action man Jones — Wellington/Wairarapa's new excavator champion!

Upper Hutt's Ben Jones was named the Wellington and Wairarapa region's champion excavator operator following a battle of earth, steel and wits at the recent Civil Contractors New Zealand CablePrice Regional Excavator Operator Competition.

The competition was held at the Upper Hutt Summer Carnival in Trentham, with talented excavator operators navigating an hour-long course of challenges.

These included crowd-pleasers like the teacup pour and electric wire, as well as more conventional tasks like a manhole cover transfer and loading a pile of earth onto a truck with speed and efficiency.

With four years' experience in previous regional excavator operator competitions, Jones was first on the course in the drizzling rain.

His familiarity with the course and challenges saw him slam-dunk a basketball into a two-storey concrete pipe with pinpoint accuracy.

But to take the title, Jones says he had to lift his game by about 10% across the competition



Upper Hutt's Ben Jones won the Wellington and Wairarapa region champion excavator operator competition following a battle of earth, steel and wits.

course compared to previous years.

He says his recent work planning projects was a big advantage in a competition that required careful thought, complementing his precision skills developed through nine years' experience working as a heavy equipment operator.

"I spend a lot of my time on a digger, but the

biggest thing for me about operating an excavator is planning — knowing what to do before doing it."

An event highlight was a third consecutive victory in the Tudor Distributors Barrel Filling Competition for Daniel Renshaw and his team from Daniel Renshaw Drainage.

The event saw seven teams of three competitors compete to fill 40-gallon drums with earth, using shovels in the fastest time.

Hosted by the Wellington Wairarapa Branch of national association Civil Contractors New Zealand, the competition is one of 11 regional championships.

Jones will go on to represent the Wellington Wairarapa region at the 26th CCNZ CablePrice National Excavator Operator Competition this month.

Third-placed Alex Boon from Ultra Contracting was the only contestant to achieve the egg challenge for a second year running, picking up and placing an egg on a hole the diameter of a two-dollar coin without breaking it.

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Infracom to focus on infrastructure outcomes

The Infrastructure Commission, Te Waihanga (Infracom), is kicking off work to improve New Zealand's infrastructure and lift the country's long-term planning and capability.

Infracom chair Dr Alan Bollard says there's a big job to be done to establish the performance of infrastructure in sectors throughout the country — assessing their current state, resilience to emerging trends such as climate change, and the need for replacement.

"We really want to focus on outcomes and understand why some sectors perform better than others. We will gather information from territorial local authorities, government departments, Crown entities, state-owned enterprises and other infrastructure providers," Bollard says.

He says while there's been interest in improving the country's physical infrastructure, Infracom's role will also be to ensure New Zealanders make the most of what is already in place.

"That means we will be reviewing access and pricing regimes, and regulatory settings, as

well as infrastructure governance planning and delivery.

"New Zealand is unique in having wide rights around consenting, with big roles for tiny local authorities, let alone facing the global challenge of densification over urban spread, and support for regional economies."

Infracom will be commenting on reform of the Resource Management Act, infrastructure funding and financing, reform of three waters, the Auckland Light Rail proposal and the Urban Development Bill.

It has been requested by the Government to look at the port sector and provide an independent perspective on the UNISC proposal, identifying any system-wide issues.



Infracom chair Dr Alan Bollard.

It is also managing a wholesale review of the Public Private Partnership model.

Infracom will develop an infrastructure needs assessment using research and advice from subject matter experts, while identifying desired outcomes, to be agreed by late 2020.

A discussion paper will be issued for wide consultation before developing a draft strategy by early-mid 2021, and a subsequent discussion paper on the final strategy in the second half of 2021.

- The Infrastructure Commission, Te Waihanga (Infracom), was created to improve New Zealand's infrastructure procurement and strategic planning.

It was formed in late September 2019, and incorporates the former Treasury Infrastructure Transactions Unit.

Together with stakeholders, Infracom will develop a 30-year infrastructure strategy and a quarterly pipeline of credible projects, committed to over the next 10 years.

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New investment to fast-track pod-hotel's international expansion



Above: The Balcony Queen pod.

Below: Budget pods.



A popular Kiwi pod-hotel chain is set for a period of rapid expansion following its partial sale to one of Australasia's largest hospitality and experiences brands.

Under the new joint venture agreement, 50% of Jucy Snooze has been sold to Event Hospitality & Entertainment Limited (EVENT), an ASX-listed company with more than 9000 employees across Australia, New Zealand and Germany.

Jucy Snooze, a micro-accommodation provider that has hotels in Auckland, Queenstown and Christchurch, is New Zealand's first hotel chain to offer pod-style rooms for budget-conscious travellers.

According to data from one of the world's largest online travel agencies, Jucy Snooze is the most frequently booked accommodation offering in Christchurch and Queenstown; with a new property under development in Auckland's CBD.

Expansion acceleration

Jucy chief executive Tim Alpe says the deal is significant as it will allow the company to accelerate the expansion of the chain throughout New Zealand, Australia and into other international markets.

"We were approached by the EVENT team as they had seen our unique accommodation offering and were wanting to move into the growing 'flash-packer' market.

"Without this investment, we would have been able to open a new site every few years, but we now hope to significantly expand the Jucy Snooze offering over the next five years to cater for the growing demand for this product offering," Alpe says.

He says in addition to planned sites in Australia, the deal will mean more accommodation in sites around New Zealand, as well as increased employment and regional spending in those areas.

Fletcher's new plasterboard facility to be located in Tauranga

Fletcher Building has confirmed its state-of-the-art new plasterboard facility will be situated in Tauranga.

The \$400 million plant will ensure continuity of supply in New Zealand and enable Winstone Wallboards to meet demand for the long term — the company is New Zealand's only local manufacturer of plasterboard.

Fletcher Building chief executive Ross Taylor says the company is firmly committed to local manufacturing and delivering the highest quality product for New Zealand homes.

"This larger, more efficient facility will help to future-proof plasterboard manufacturing in New Zealand.

"Our current site in Onehunga, central Auckland, is land-locked, which has prevented us from expanding our operations and improving efficiencies by consolidating manufacturing and distribution on the same site.

"The site located in the Tauriko industrial park is more than double the size of the current facility, and will allow for even further capacity growth in the future.

Winstone Wallboards is working with its Auckland employees through the plant build and transition, and will offer transfer opportunities.

The new facility is planned to be opened in 2023. Winstone Wallboard's Wellington and Christchurch operations will remain unchanged.

Improvements proposed for Building Code

Consultation has opened on proposed amendments to the Building Code, which focus on fire safety requirements, surface water drainage and waterproofing in bathrooms, kitchens and laundries.

The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) consults on the Building Code biannually, with these amendments to be published in June 2020.

"MBIE is committed to updating the Building Code so that it keeps pace with innovation, current construction methods and the needs of modern society," Dave Robson, manager building performance and engineering at MBIE says.

"The current focus of the Building Code update programme is to support densified housing.

"These consultation periods are the sector's opportunity to have their say and help shape the future of New Zealand's building safety."

The proposed amendments for the June 2020 update focus on three areas:

- increasing clarity and consistency around fire safety requirements;
- a new acceptable solution for waterproofing in bathrooms, kitchens and laundries; and
- proposed amendments supporting high density housing, making consenting easier, and ensuring buildings are safe, healthy and durable.

Consultation on the proposed amendments to the Building Code runs to March 27, 2020.

Submissions can be made on the MBIE web site: www.mbie.govt.nz/have-your-say/building-code-update-consultation-june-2020.

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A guide to helping your mates

Got a mate who's looking down, isn't themselves, maybe gone a bit quiet? Want to help but aren't sure how?

A new pocket guide about how to have conversations about mental health has great advice on looking after friends and colleagues.

And it's easy to lend an ear, listen, and have a conversation with someone, according to Paul Lynch, a guy who knows what it's like to do it tough.

The Christchurch carpet and vinyl installer lost his brother Brett to suicide in 2013. It took him a while to shake off resulting anger and darkness that he felt, but he did, and he wrote the book *Suicide; Aftermath & Beyond* about it.

He has made it his mission to help people in the trades talk about things that are getting them down, and he says the new guide is a top tool to do this.

Lynch says people don't have to be a counsellor or a therapist to help — they just have to take time to listen.

Listen, speak, validate

"In my experience in about 99 times out of 100, all that's required is a conversation. It's that simple act of letting people talk or share something they might be going through.

"Just listen, let them speak, and validate what they're saying. It doesn't have to be a crisis intervention." (Though there are emergency numbers provided in the pocket guide if the situation requires higher intervention.)

"I know myself, once you've unburdened yourself of something that's been troubling you, a lot of the pressure goes away with the words."

The free pocket guide has been created by Dr Kate Bryson of Axon Consulting, one of the key researchers who worked on Site Safe's study into suicide in the construction sector last year, in consultation with industry people.

Site Safe is pleased to be able to offer the guide in conjunction with Construction Health and Safety NZ (CHASNZ), the Mental Health Foundation and Mates in Construction.

The key messages in it are:

- Be Approachable: don't judge and don't try to have all the answers.
- Be Empathetic: try and put yourself in their



The pocket guide has ideas for dealing with people who may be having a rough time.

shoes. Or boots.

- Be willing to listen: give them your full attention and let them know it is confidential between you and them.

Auckland electrical contractor Dave Burt uses a question to break the ice with people that is one of the suggested phrases in the guide: "What's happening in your world?"

Dark topic

It's an open-ended question he came up with after dealing with depression himself. It's detailed in his book *Lengthening the Shadows*.

It can be a dark topic, but the book is a moving, funny account about a guy who carried on too long struggling on by himself.

One of the three winners of the Kalmar Mental Health and Wellbeing Award last year, along with Paul Lynch and the team from The Switched On Group, Burt put money from his

book towards the pocket guide, and he says it is full of good advice.

Kristal McGill from The Switched On Group also says the pocket guide is a top resource, and they will use it as the firm rolls out its own initiatives this year.

Currently it is focusing on how alcohol can affect people at work and home, and how to reach out to services if they, or someone close, may be struggling with addiction issues.

Powerful gift

Burt says helping someone is actually pretty easy.

"You may not be aware, but every one of us possesses a very powerful gift. You may not know that you have this gift, but trust me on this, you do — it is the power to give and provide hope.

"Having experienced depression, I can tell you hope is something I will never take for granted again.

"For those dealing with a mental health issue, hope is all powerful.

"Think of someone in your life who means a lot to you, be it a family member, colleague or maybe a mate," Burt says.

"Take the time to connect and ask them what is going on in their world. You might just be surprised by what you hear, and what a difference you can make in someone else's life."

The guide is free for download at www.sitesafe.org.nz/guides--resources/tools-for-wellbeing/mental-health-pocket-guide.

Homes too cold in winter, too warm in summer

Data from the 2018 General Social Survey (GSS) shows a third of New Zealand homes are too cold in winter, and over a third too warm in summer, Statistics NZ says.

As part of the year-long survey, Statistics NZ took temperature measurements in approximately 6700 homes.

It is the largest-scale temperature measurement carried out in New Zealand to date, and represents a snapshot at the time of each GSS interview.

The average (mean) temperature recorded inside homes was 21.4°C. Temperatures in

winter, however, were colder, at 19°C. In contrast, the average temperature recorded in summer was 23.9°C.

Indoor temperatures recorded during the survey ranged from near freezing in a small number of homes to over 30°C in others.

The Household Energy End-Use Project, a study by the Building Research Association of New Zealand, rated 20°C to 25°C as a comfortable indoor temperature.

Of all summer temperatures recorded by the GSS, 36% were 25°C or more.



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New community to promote LGBTQI+ inclusion in engineering



A new community for LGBTQI+ engineers and their allies has been launched in Sydney by Aurecon, Pride in Diversity and Engineers Australia.

InterEngineer will be an independent industry group designed to promote LGBTQI+ inclusion through networking and advocacy activities.

Aurecon chief executive, Australia and New Zealand, Louise Adams, commended the launch of InterEngineer, given the additional support and resources it would offer the engineering community.

"We have seen first-hand at Aurecon the benefits of encouraging an inclusive, supportive work environment where employees can be themselves and have their unique contribution heard and valued," Adams says.

"We know that the LGBTQI+ community is under-represented in engineering, and value

this collaboration between Aurecon, other industry organisations and Engineers Australia.

"It demonstrates the passion for LGBTQI+ inclusion across the industry, and I am excited to see the benefits this partnership will deliver for individuals and organisations."

Engineers Australia chief executive officer Dr Bronwyn Evans says to achieve a culture of inclusivity, organisations need to support and inspire those who are under-represented.

"We want young people choosing a career to see engineering as a profession that will allow them to bring their true selves to work, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity," Evans says.

"That won't happen unless organisations take meaningful and tangible steps to foster and celebrate diversity."

New homes around 20% smaller

The average floor area of new homes consented in 2019 was about 21% (42sq m) smaller than the peak of 200sq m in the December 2010 year, Statistics NZ reports.

The drop is primarily due to stand-alone houses getting smaller. While stand-alone houses still account for the majority of new homes in New Zealand, an increasing proportion of townhouses, apartments, retirement village units, and other multi-unit homes consented in recent years has also contributed to smaller overall home sizes.

The median floor area of new stand-alone houses consented in 2019 was around 180 sq m, down from just over 200 sq m in 2010. The median floor area of multi-unit homes has hovered around 100 sq m (which includes a

portion of any shared spaces).

Half of all new homes consented in 2019 had a floor area smaller than the median of 148 sq m, and the other half were larger.

The size of new homes decreased in all regions except Northland and Marlborough between the December 2010 and 2019 years.

The biggest homes were located in Marlborough, with a median floor area of 187 sq m in 2019.

The median floor area of new homes in Auckland decreased around 60 sq m between 2010 and 2019. This affected the 2019 national results significantly, as Auckland accounted for more than 40% of all new homes consented in New Zealand in 2019.

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Forestry up in arms over mill closures

New Zealand's forestry sector is bemoaning the intent to close another wood processing mill in New Zealand, with the attendant loss of yet more jobs in the regions.

The Wood Processors & Manufacturers Association (WPMA) says it believes the Government is fully aware that the demise of wood processing firms is being caused by a highly distorted domestic market for logs: driven up to unprecedented levels over recent years by foreign buyers operating on subsidies provided by their own countries.

These subsidies enable foreign buyers to artificially inflate prices here, effectively capturing the domestic log market by creating some of the highest softwood log prices in the world.

The WPMA is pressuring the Government to take immediate action to halt these unfair trading conditions and prevent the loss of jobs and community to what it says is "thoroughly unethical trade". Northpine Ltd general manager Bruce Larsen offers his views on the situation.

Northland radiata pine is stronger and denser than pine grown in any other part of New Zealand because the cell walls are thicker, making it particularly suitable for use as structural members in construction. However, the industry is facing some headwinds in the region.

CHH Woodproducts' recent decision in principle to close its Whangarei operation follows Claymark Group being placed in receivership late last year, and Pacific Pine Industries' mill in Putaruru closing down early in January.

The Wood Processors & Manufacturers Association (WPMA) blames high prices for logs caused by trade distortions overseas.

Its chair Brian Stanley is on record as saying that for years, people overseas have been buying New Zealand logs for high prices, secure in the knowledge that subsidies from their own Government would allow them to sell the logs at a loss to timber yards in their own country.

"These subsidies enable foreign buyers to artificially inflate prices here, effectively capturing the domestic log market by creating some of the highest softwood log prices in the world," Stanley says.

He suggests that New Zealand timber processors are paying somewhere between 80% and 100% more for logs than offshore competitors do. As logs are generally the biggest cost to a sawmill, this is a desperately difficult situation.

However, CHH Timber chief executive Clayton Harris blames log shortages in Northland for their problem, and they believe the situation will only get worse.

Many commentators are also blaming exporters for this situation, as there is significant evidence



Northpine Ltd general manager Bruce Larsen.

that forests and woodlots are being harvested at ages which make the immature timber unusable for domestic purposes.

This practice — supported by some New Zealand forestry companies through the careful use of discount rates, selective use of economic information and forecasts, and relationships with off-shore buyers — has undoubtedly had an effect.

However, the exporting of logs is not the root cause of the impending log shortage in Northland.

The fact is that the forest resource never existed. For more than 20 years, New Zealand government information suggested that Northland had a "Wall of Wood", with an average harvest of 4.1 million cubic metres per year in perpetuity.

Then in 2014 this figure was unexpectedly revised down to 2.8 – 3.0 million cubic metres per annum. The reason — inaccurate data!

Various governments and government departments have encouraged the development of harvesting, transport, processing and export industries over the past

20 years based on incorrect information that has seen businesses invest many millions of dollars.

The villains in this piece are not exporters. Approximately 40% of the average forest is not suitable for New Zealand structural or visual timber processors, and so export is a great option which allows forest owners to maximise their return.

Yes, the harvest of young immature forest exacerbates the problem, but it isn't what caused it.

Northland forestry businesses have every right to question the role of successive governments in creating this fiasco. Over the next five to ten years there will undoubtedly be business closures, the loss of hundreds of jobs, and significant "trickle-down" effects through the regional economy.

If you develop a business in rural New Zealand based on government information, surely when they discover they have made a huge error there should be some targeted support for those affected?

This difficult situation is now being exacerbated by the COVID-19 threat originating in China, with demand for export logs reducing dramatically, and prices plummeting. Local processors now face the very real threat of immediate log shortages.

Forest owners have suddenly been faced with a scenario where they have demand for domestic sawlogs, but no market for small and low grade logs. This can make the entire harvest economically unviable.

The natural reaction is to stop logging, and this is now seriously disrupting the entire regional supply chain and all those who earn a living from it.

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How sustainable is your floor?

The Australasian Timber Flooring Association (ATFA) provides some guidelines to keep in mind when considering sustainability in flooring. Through comparing multiple flooring products, the Association outlines the factors and details to consider before making the final decision.

When we talk about sustainability, what comes to mind? For most of us, it is about meeting our own needs whilst ensuring our choices don't negatively impact future generations.

With sustainability in flooring, each product has its own benefits and factors to consider before making a final decision. How does the range of timber flooring products measure up when considering the life cycle of the product and its environmental credentials?

ATFA chief executive Randy Flierman says if considering which flooring choice will be the most long-lasting, timeless and sustainable, then look no further than timber.

Timber needs to have been harvested responsibly in order to be considered sustainable. There are Australian and international standards around harvesting timber, with major production forests ensuring that timber is harvested in a rotation which means there are always new trees being grown.

When considering sustainability and benefit to the environment, traditional solid timber flooring (including solid parquetry) is king.

This is because all solid timber flooring stores carbon, which contributes to offsetting the carbon dioxide emissions. And this, in turn, helps reduce the effects of climate change. Other flooring products do not provide the same benefit.

Also, as indicated, these products are made from sustainably managed forests, and with some floors known to have had a lifespan exceeding 100 years.

Solid timber floors are also made to be refurbished many times during their life, whereas most other flooring products will need to be replaced when they age and become worn.

When you sand solid timber flooring back to bare timber and recoat it, the floor comes back to near new condition.

Alternatively, engineered flooring is generally made up of layers of timber that are glued together. These products can be either fixed to the subfloor or floated on an underlay.

They are generally pre-finished, so no site sanding and coating is needed, making it a more convenient and time-effective option. Only the decorative layer is of high value timber, which



Image: Profile Timber Floors

enables high-value, slower-growing timbers to cover a greater area on the floor.

Laminate flooring resembles timber boards, and often has a textured surface to replicate the appearance of solid timber boards.

Underneath the surface, wood fibre provides the structure of the product and makes up most of the volume.

Laminate flooring shares some of the advantages of engineered flooring in that it is a finished product after laying, and it also provides a very durable floor surface.

This flooring is only laid as a floating floor over

an underlay, and would usually be replaced within 20 years.

Cork flooring is also a highly sustainable option, as only the bark is used, so the tree does not need to be harvested at all. It is often sought after for its softer and more forgiving feel. It is a stable product which can last around 30 years.

Like timber and some engineered flooring, it can usually be re-sanded and coated when needing to be refurbished.

Regarding hybrid flooring, many people question whether it is or isn't timber flooring. Hybrid flooring is a general term covering products that are known as LVT, WPC or SPC flooring.

Although some SPC flooring can have a sliver of timber on the surface, these products are generally timber lookalike products, and differ to laminate flooring in that the core layer is a form of plastic.

Hybrid flooring products are moisture resistant, durable and easy to care for which is beneficial. Due to these generally being lower cost options, owners see less value in keeping them for long periods and, therefore, may be more inclined to replace them after five to ten years.

When choosing your next flooring, ensure you consider all of these environmental attributes, and make sustainable choices for future generations.

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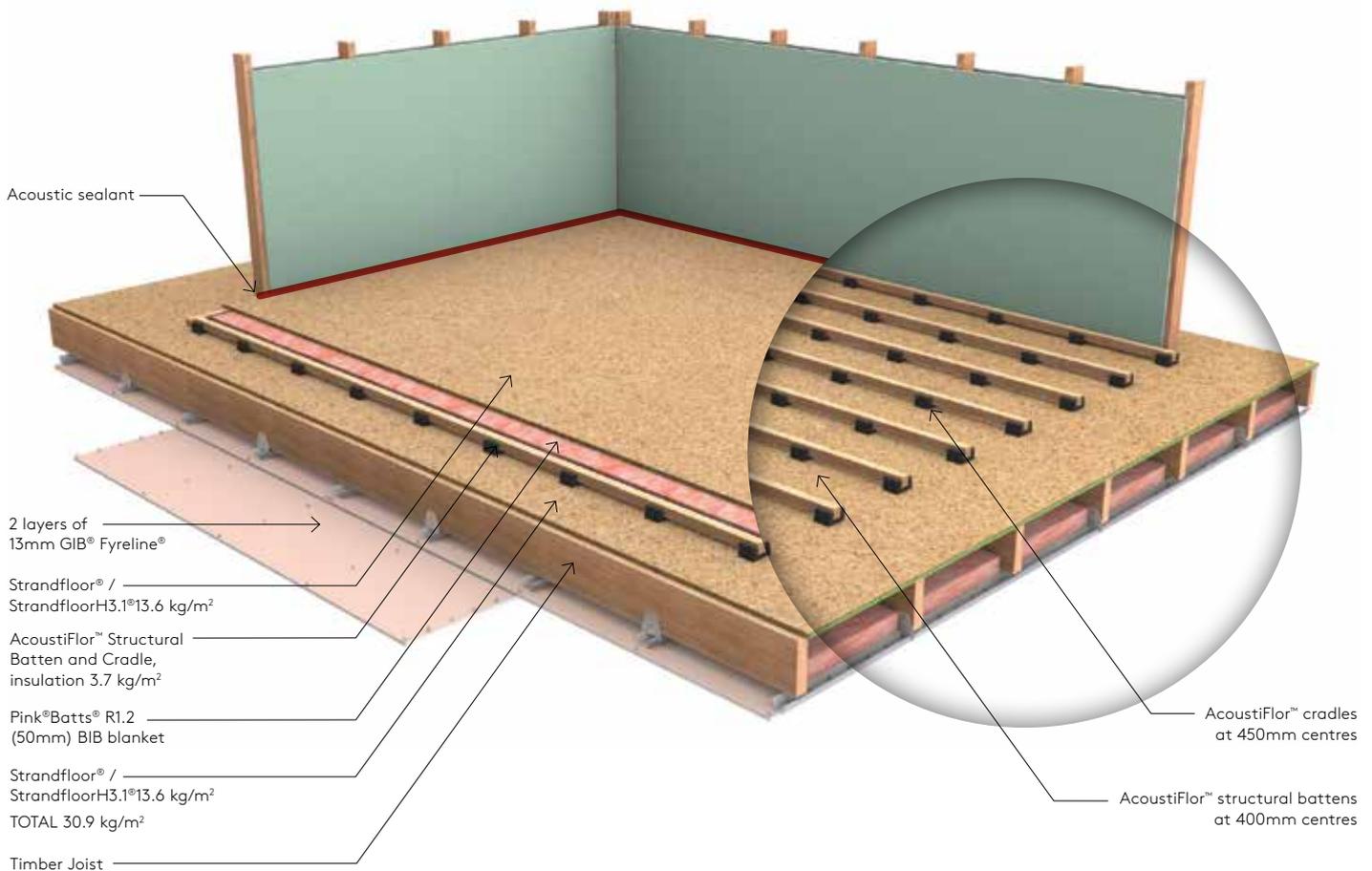
The kit comes with the SG2510 screwgun, industrial grade DS320 attachment, extension pole with secondary handle, spare drive bits (Phillips and square drive), and a storage bag.



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It has been tried, tested and proven by professional tradesman and eager DIY renovators alike. Its adhesive solutions make hardwood flooring installations faster, easier and smarter.

From solid and engineered hardwoods to bamboo, Bostik technologies are designed to improve durability, acoustic properties and comfort to enhance living spaces.

As wood becomes ever more popular, the company continues to innovate cutting-edge technologies to meet the demands of flooring projects.

This is all thanks to the high quality formulations made available throughout the range that gives the user confidence when applying hardwood flooring materials to a surface.

The Bostik range of hardwood adhesives is also compatible with the Bostik range of waterproofing and floor levelling products for a total solutions-based system when applying hardwood flooring materials from start to finish.

Available in a wide range of technologies, including high performance MS polymer, polyurethane and latex adhesives, you're sure to find the right adhesive to suit any job at hand.



Smart innovations

Bostik's hardwood flooring adhesives are suitable for all installations where wood flooring can be bonded. Whether working with solid or engineered wood, these adhesives offer a range of benefits to reduce risk and improve performance.

- **Strength:** Engineered for superior adhesion, even on very wide wood planks.
- **Flexibility:** Adhesive systems provide tough, flexible bonds with a variety of subfloor substrates, including concrete, plywood and fibre cement sheets.
- **Elastomeric:** Elastomeric properties allow adhesives to move with the wood as it expands and contracts naturally over the life of the floor.
- **Sound-dampening properties:** Several of Bostik's highest performing adhesives create a noise reduction barrier over the substrate, providing excellent sound-reduction

performance that typically outperforms 1/4in cork underlay.

Eliminating cork saves time and money during the installation process.

- **Thickness Control Spacer Technology:** Patent-pending, recycled crumb rubber spacers help maintain proper adhesive membrane thickness during the installation process, while also providing acoustic control benefits necessary to meet building codes.
- **Moisture resistance:** Moisture vapour protection prevents the cupping or buckling of hardwood planks, and offers a lifetime warranty for unlimited moisture vapour protection.
- **Antimicrobial:** Most products have antimicrobial properties to inhibit the growth of mould and mildew on the surface of the cured adhesive.
- **Bostik's revolutionary hardwood adhesive technology** offers unlimited moisture vapour protection, high bond strength, zero VOCs and ease of cleaning before and after cure.
- **Polyurethane technology:** Bostik polyurethane adhesives are staples of the industry, offering strength and durability.
- **Low VOC adhesive:** Bostik places a strong emphasis on formulating adhesives with benefits such as low VOCs, emissions and odour, without compromising bond strength and long-term durability.

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Tuatara Guard is an innovative floor protection product which is recyclable and reusable.

Specifically designed to protect floors in commercial, industrial and residential applications, the five-layered toughened surface offers spill absorption with built-in cushion technology.

The surface also has a patented slip-resistant GripSpot Technology walking surface. The product lays flat, and features a chemical slip-resistant bottom coating which reduces movement on floors.

The Tuatara Guard is available in rolls of 960mm x 30m.

For more information contact Marshall Innovations on 0800 776 9727.





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| Roll Size | 960mm x 30m - 28.8m ² |
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| Logo | Tuatara Guard & Marshall Innovations |
| Installation | Lay flat on the floor, Open Roll and install. Tape edges for longer applications |
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| Back Surface | Anti-slip back surface |
| Tear Strength | 10 times greater than cardboard products |

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- ✓ Specifically designed to protect your floor within commercial, industrial or residential use
- ✓ Protects your floor from construction damage caused by dust & dirt, tools, machinery, foot traffic & blunt impact
- ✓ Tuatara Guard features a patented slip resistant GripSpot walking surface

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A first impression to last a lifetime

Entrance doors continue to be the showpiece of the modern home, being used to create a visual statement and a first impression that welcomes guests.

While copper is emerging as one of the latest design trends, with its gold hues giving it a sense of elegance and an earthy feel that brings warmth to any home, adding a copper statement piece to an entrance just makes sense.

While copper is aesthetically pleasing, it also has an inherent ability to kill a wide range of harmful microbes relatively rapidly — often within two hours or less — which makes it the perfect metal to use on a door with a lot of use.

This, plus its durability, makes it perfectly suited to New Zealand's



harsh coastal environment.

The natural tendency of the 100% hand-finished pure copper is to show its perfect

imperfections, a realness that will age organically over time. This ageing process can give a sense of life and history to the hardware.

However, if the "as new" look is desired, then maintenance with an approved cleaner will ensure the mirror finish will always be maintained.

Miles Nelson now has two exquisite styles available — a square or round pull handle options, supported by a matching range of copper accessories, all designed to create a high-end, aesthetically-pleasing home entrance.

www.miles-nelson.com

Touchless technology for ultimate hygiene

In a space devoted to personal hygiene it makes perfect sense to limit the transfer of germs from hands to surfaces and back again!

Kohler's introduction of a Touchless Flush toilet suite, the first of its kind on the New Zealand market, takes hygiene in the bathroom to the next level.



The sleek, softly contoured toilet suite is the next generation in hands-free technology where a sensor, positioned beneath the lid of the cistern, is activated by simply passing a hand over the top of it.

Earlier touchless technology relied on a beam-based sensor that could easily be mistakenly activated by general movement in the vicinity of the toilet.

Kohler's HygieneMax rimless pan technology contributes yet another level of hygiene to the ModernLife design, delivering a robust, double wash-down with optimal coverage of the interior bowl.

The ModernLife Touchless Flush toilet suite also offers a choice of two comfortable, quiet-close seat designs — the low profile Slim and the sophisticated Elite model.

The latter features a battery-operated deodoriser, with a choice of fragrance packs, plus an LED night light. And while Touchless technology is the hero of this toilet suite, there is also a side push button for manual flush.

www.kohler.co.nz

HiKOKI launches world's first cordless rebar bender cutter

HiKOKI's multi-volt system is growing from strength to strength, and as part of eight new tool solutions and six new combo kits added to HiKOKI's line-up recently, HiKOKI has launched its much anticipated 36V cordless rebar bender/cutter.

With the power gained through multi-volt batteries, both the 1080W and 1440W high output batteries power the VB3616DA to bend and cut up to 16mm rebar effortlessly, a repetitive and gruelling task that is often performed manually.

This highly portable machine for on-site applications uses a find adjustment dial, providing accurate bending of rebar to the desired angle (diameter of 62mm), but also cuts rebar with ease and without sparks, heat or distortion.

This world-first cordless rebar bender cutter, which is powered by its highly efficient 36V brushless motor, can deliver approximately 270 cuts and 520 bends off a single 1440W multi-volt battery.

With an automatic reverse rotation and manual mode option, the VB3616DA is available in either bare tool or kit options.

www.hikoki.co.nz



BT's Back in Time

20 years ago — March 2000:

• A crackdown on illegal copying landed two house building firms, as well as other individual home owners, in serious legal trouble after they built houses based on plans owned by franchised home building company Jennian Homes.

In separate cases, Jennian Homes claimed that plans were copied in a significant way that amounted to a breach of copyright and ownership of intellectual property.

The cases were settled out of court, but Jennian Homes (Waikato Ltd) general manager Steve Agnew said he understood that illegal copying of house plans was rife in New Zealand. Jennian was also considering legal action in other suspected copying cases.

15 years ago — March 2005:

• The Building Research Association of New Zealand (BRANZ) was transformed into Building Research, with the new name and identity marking the final step in an explicit separation of the two former BRANZ entities.

BRANZ Inc was founded in 1969 as an industry association owned and governed by the New Zealand construction industry, and partnered by Government.

Building Research chief executive Allan Nichols said as a clear symbol of the change in approach that was intended, the Board had adopted

“Building Research” as the new trading name of the Association.

“Feedback from focus groups of industry representatives and other stakeholders led to the Board’s decision to change the trading name of the Building Research Association of New Zealand Inc,” Nicholls said.

10 years ago — March 2010:

• The RMBF was pleased the Government followed through on its promise to streamline the application process for the Licensed Building Practitioners scheme.

Application to the scheme, which had been through a number of machinations over previous years, was to become simpler, faster and cheaper for builders.

Chief executive Warwick Quinn said the RMBF had always supported a licensing regime for construction in New Zealand. “The removal of red tape and any unnecessary compliance and cost is a huge step towards the LBP scheme being more easily adopted by builders,” Quinn said.

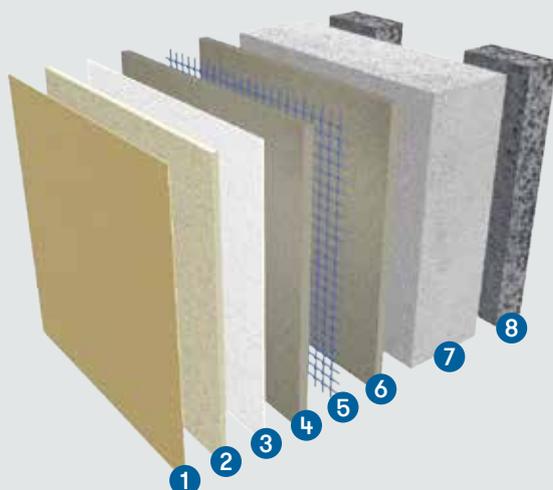
5 years ago — March 2015:

• Construction activity in Auckland continued apace, including the start of construction on the Albany Rose Gardens apartments — the largest residential development in the country.

The first stage of the development, which had been due to be completed in 2016, included 201 residential units, 10 commercial units, three live/work units, communal gardens and a new road with 20 additional on-street car parking spaces.



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Young hairdresser stuns mum with career switch

Danyelle Bogue is a 22-year-old Wellington-based former hairdresser who leapt into a painting and decorating apprenticeship — and she's loving it.

After finishing high school, Bogue was keen to go straight into the workforce.

"I wanted to start earning money straight away and wasn't keen on racking up a large student loan," Bogue says.

"My grandmother and older sister were hairdressers, so I just followed suit — but after two years, I knew it wasn't my passion."

When her friend told her about a painting and decorating role, it sounded like it would be a good fit for her. As an active kid growing up on a farm, Bogue loved hunting, and always enjoyed hands-on work. She thought she had nothing to lose by giving construction a go.

"I started the job in August 2018, and by November that year I had begun my apprenticeship through the BCITO. Since then, I have never looked back."

When Bogue first told her parents about her



Danyelle Bogue is a 22-year-old Wellington-based former hairdresser who is now loving her painting and decorating apprenticeship.

career change, they were taken by surprise.

"It was completely left field. I had no family members working in the trades and had never expressed an interest before, so it really came out of the blue for them."

Bogue's mum, Pam Munro, had concerns about

her daughter's choice of career. In particular, she was concerned about her being able to make ends meet financially.

"As a mum, you always want what's best for your child. I was concerned that Danyelle would be starting a new career from scratch, meaning she would have to start from the bottom of the pay scale," Munro says.

"But I knew she wasn't happy in her hairdressing job. She'd often come home from work upset, and have to work long hours.

"Now, after seeing her confidence grow in this job, and having seen some of the work she has been able to achieve, I couldn't be prouder. And she has also come out better off financially, with her being rewarded for her skills.

"I would say to any parents who are uncertain or against their kids doing a trades apprenticeship that it's a great career path. Particularly if your child does not want to go down the university route, a trades apprenticeship provides an equally good next step after high school," Munro says.

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Paradise Lost

Architect Don Bunting ponders on successive governments' refusal to do something aspirational.

On a superficial level, John Milton's epic poem *Paradise Lost* describes the battle between good and evil, and the often fatal downside of making the wrong choice.

In more than 10,000 lines of blank verse, Adam and Eve are tempted by the devil. Not an easy read but we all know how it ends up, whether viewed as faith, history or parable.

Our own potential expulsion from this Garden of Eden called Earth seems closer each day, especially as we individually and collectively keep our heads firmly in the sand about over-exploitation and climate change.

The first line of the poem makes worthwhile reading for our politicians and decision-makers:

All is not lost; the unconquerable will, and study of revenge, immortal hate, and courage never to submit or yield: And what is else not to be overcome?

No fluffy catchphrases there, no simplistic solutions to poorly thought out issues. This is about facing up to a decision and getting on with it.

Sadly, Adam and Eve — i.e. our current two political groupings — seem more interested in winning the next election than seriously making a real difference to our present and future survival.

Instead, let's just throw the electorate a few lollies — more roads is always a good one — and get back to preserving the baubles of power.

The proposed spending of some \$8 billion of an available \$11+ billion of surplus cash mainly on infrastructure projects — with the remainder probably allocated to the long awaited, at least by politicians, light rail to Auckland Airport — was a copout.

Nothing aspirational here, nothing showing a glimmer of concern about the overuse of the earth's natural resources, or the effect of industrialisation, consumerism and over-population on our delicate little planet.

Just the same old pre-election spend-up. Not paradise lost, but certainly an opportunity lost.

The lessons of Angkor Wat

In his 2011 documentary series *How the earth*

made us, Professor Iain Stewart uses the building — and ultimate abandonment — of the Angkor Wat temple complex in Cambodia as a compelling, if simplistic, example of how to create the seeds of your own ultimate demise.

The key problem for the rapidly developing Khmer empire was water — too much of it during the monsoon and not enough for the rest of the year.

If they were to advance their empire and their religion they needed some way to move water from where it was to where it was needed, and then store it during the long, dry period following three months of monsoon rains.

A visit to the long abandoned Angkor Wat shows how successful they were by the sheer size of the complex and, for its time, its innovative approach to long-term water storage.

The rise and subsequent failure of the empire happened because it was just too successful; leading to over-population and depletion of natural resources. Ring any bells?

When will we ever learn?

The quote is from Pete Seeger's 1950s protest song — *Where have all the flowers gone?* — in this case, directed at Minister Phil Twyford, whose latest promise is light rail to Auckland Airport by 2030.

So Wuhan in China takes 10 days to construct and open a 2000-bed hospital, and Phil takes 10 years to produce an unwanted light rail connection to the airport.

In the same *New Zealand Herald* interview, Twyford expects there to be "30 million passengers through Auckland Airport by 2030", something seen by him as positive. Really?

Encouraging more and more people to squirt CO₂ into the atmosphere isn't the approach we expect from a government committed to "zero carbon".

This is just another out-of-touch decision like the ill-fated conference centre in Auckland.

I took my grandchildren to a virtual reality show at the museum recently.

This was a 30-minute Antarctic Experience without leaving the ground. And not one



penguin was endangered by the experience.

Virtual conferences are the future. Get with the new and forget the old approach to conferences and unnecessary overseas travel in and out of the country.

Even cutting air travel in half would make a huge difference to emissions. Remember, the best thing you can do for the planet is the thing you don't do.

Why not?

Why not adapt a better approach — establish New Zealand's aspirations as a caring world citizen. And focus on what makes a real difference, not just a few electric vehicles.

The changes needed will be significant and initially unpopular, so will require a non-partisan approach to avoid a cycle of governments failing because they have made a few hard decisions.

This need not adversely affect the economy or the construction industry. Build better, new homes, and renovate existing residential and other buildings to make them fuel efficient and sustainable.

Aim for new buildings and infrastructure that creates wealth, not monster shopping malls and big box stores encouraging people to drive and buy more. Establish a clear path to a fossil fuel-free future.

This will stimulate innovation and the economy if appropriate tax breaks are provided. Improved public transport and safer roads yes, but more roads just create more traffic, not fewer traffic jams.

Angkor Wat revisited

The alternative is for our planet to become another Angkor Wat, destroyed by our inability to face facts.

Groucho Marx once facetiously said, what have future generations done for me? Let's not be the generation who is to blame.

Guilty plea fines appeal allowed in High Court decision

Timothy Bates and Sabina Boyd of Auckland law firm Legal Vision review a recent case where the fine imposed on guilty plea charges was appealed.

In this month's article, we review the recent High Court decision *Banora v The Auckland Council*.

Banora appealed against a sentence following two guilty pleas on charges under the Building Act 2004 and the Resource Management Act 1991 ("RMA"), on the basis that the fine that was imposed on him was excessive.

Background/District Court decision

Mr Banora and his wife own a residential property next to a stream and public walkway. The council received various complaints about activities on the property, so went to investigate. The various charges are summarised as follows:

- Constructing a retaining wall without a building consent.
- Failure to comply with notice to fix unconsented retaining walls or obtain a certificate of acceptance.
- Contravention of the District Plan without resource consent. Banora was required to get a resource consent under the RMA for earthworks and removing vegetation.
- Contravention of an abatement notice, which required Banora to cease all earthworks in breach of the RMA.

The District Court offered a discount of 15% for previous good character and a guilty plea. The fine imposed for these four offences was \$67,050.

Approach on appeal

In order to succeed on appeal, it had to be shown that the sentence was excessive or wrong in principle.

The grounds on which Banora raised his appeal were that the District Court:

- Erred in setting the starting points under

both the Building Act and RMA;

- Failed to adequately take into account general mitigating features;
- Did not adequately consider the principles and purposes of sentencing;
- Did not apply an appropriate discount for the guilty plea; and
- Did not adequately consider totality.

Building Act starting point

It was submitted that the Judge adopted the wrong starting point for the Building Act offending, because of three errors:

- Incorrectly assessing the appellant's culpability;
- Misapplying and not following the case law; and
- Treating the two charges as attracting a separate fine.

Banora genuinely believed that the works were needed to improve the safety of his tenants and neighbours, were safe and secure, and that the council would not process his consent application.

The High Court agreed that while Banora's actions had a reasonable justification, the offending was deliberate and moderately serious.

The High Court referred to previous case law and noted that a penalty should be increased from that of which it was 20 years ago, to take into account inflation.

If the penalty was to be the same as it was 20 years ago, then it would suggest that a person committing an offence today should be less culpable than a person 20 years ago.

The High Court considered that the District Court had not misapplied the case law, and had applied the correct penalty.

The High Court considered that it was appropriate to issue separate fines as the breach of the notice to fix would have little meaning if it was not separately dealt with.

RMA starting point

Similar to above, it was submitted that the District Court erred in setting the starting point for the RMA offending through the District Court:

- Not applying case law;
- Failing to balance the deliberateness of the offending with Banora's genuine reasoning;
- Overstating the potential consequences of the offending; and
- Considering insufficient amount of evidence

that appropriate sediment controls had been put in place.

The High Court accepted that the District Court was appropriately cautious about considering the potential effects of Banora's offending.

Even if actual damage did not eventuate, the potential damage was there and, therefore, the District Court's view of the seriousness of the breach was justified.

As above, the High Court accepted that while Banora was genuine in his reasoning and there was no attempt to conceal the work, he pleaded on the set of facts that were given, and no new evidence could be introduced and considered because of this.

Mitigating features

The District Court offered a discount of 5% for good character. The High Court considered this discount too light as Banora was 70 years old, had no previous convictions, was unlikely to reoffend and did not have the same financial resilience as a younger person.

It was considered that a discount of 10% would have been more appropriate.

The District Court offered a discount of 10% for a guilty plea, based on the fact that it was submitted at a late stage. The High Court considered this too low and stated that the discount should have been at least 15%, or 17.5%.

Result

The High Court considered that the starting point for the fine should have been \$60,000, with a total deduction of 27.5% for good character and guilty plea, coming to a fine of \$44,550.

The High Court considered the difference between \$67,050 and \$44,550 (being a difference of \$22,500) was manifestly excessive and therefore allowed the appeal.

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 or *Building Today* to anyone who relies on the information contained in this article.



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Money — are you actually making enough of it?

Terry Sage of Trades Coaching New Zealand asks if your business is actually making any money — or enough money to make it all worthwhile at least. Here's some tips to help you.

You would probably have heard about networking events and referral groups — there's hundreds of them that are held across the country on a monthly basis.

Do they work? Yes, of course they work, but only if you work them. After all, you can't just turn up and expect dollars to start coming your way.

However, I'm not here to discuss the virtues of any of these groups — what I'm going to talk about is one particular group called the National Referral Group (NRG), and the group of business owners who are its members.

And, yes, I know you all spotted it — it's meant to be a play on the word "energy".

So what about this group of owners? Well, on the agenda of every meeting they have is the "Business Tip".

Over the past month or so, we have been discussing desired salaries, client conversion rates, acceptable profit margins, and correct costings of services or products.

All this relates to the big question about whether you are actually making any money, or enough money to make it all worthwhile at least.

The usual answer is yes but more would be nice. Funny how nobody ever says nah, making

too much, going to reduce my prices!

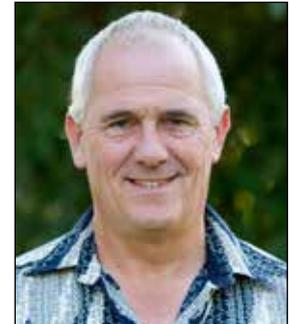
As with any of these conversations there are many many excuses and an awful lot of "yeah buts" when business owners try to justify why they are charging for what they do.

Now let's put a wee bit of reality on this — we can work it all out on paper and we do. But on paper we are looking at an ideal world first and then adjusting it for the real world. And this is where the "yeah buts" come in to play.

We don't have room on this page to outline the whole process, but we can look at the parts that make it up.

We set up five spreadsheets to gather info so that we can then get an overall picture of the present and, from there, work out the ideal. The game then is to see what we need to change in order to achieve the ideal while navigating the "yeah buts". The five spreadsheets are:

- Monthly cashflow to see what comes in, what goes out and, hopefully, what's left at the end. A Profit and Loss will give you most of this info, but make sure it includes everything as, often, items such as loan payments, capital expenditure and shareholder drawings are omitted.
- A personal budget — ie, what you spend each month. This determines if you are actually



paying yourself enough. Don't hold back here, it has to cover every dollar.

- The true cost behind what you charge for your services or products. This has to cover time, materials, administration, margin, profit and replacement.

This is the hardest sheet to put together as, for many, it's the first time they have actually sat and even thought about it.

- Conversion rate between inquiry, quote, acceptance, dollars spent and time taken. There is a cost to earning a dollar, and this is a major part of it from the front end.

- A list of as many of your competitors' prices as you can find — this brings in the real world aspect.

The biggest mistake I see when working with clients is that they don't work out the numbers first.

They see what Bloggs and Co are charging, come in a dollar cheaper to hopefully buy the work, and then keep their fingers crossed there will be a bit left over at the end so they can buy some shark 'n' shavings on the way home to feed the kids.

And here is where one of those "yeah buts" rears its ugly head — "Yeah but Mr Bloggs has been in business for years so he must be doing it right."

Not even close. This Mr Bloggs has lived on minimum wage for a decade or two, his car came from an inheritance from dear old mum, he's never been to Tonga, or Taupo for that matter, and he works 70 hours a week just to survive.

Now if old Bloggs had charged an extra \$5 an hour for the past 20 years he would have earned an extra \$364,000 per worker.

Oh what a car he would then have been driving to the airport for his business class seat to his house in Tonga!

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THE BUSINESS SIDE OF CONSTRUCTION

'Sorry Boss, won't be in today ...'

Tradie HR director Leigh Olsen explains how to handle unauthorised absences in the workplace.



Unauthorised absences are, quite simply, a pain! They put pressure on the team, interrupt the flow to your business and they test the morale of colleagues, not to mention yours!

So many of my clients are frustrated at getting texts from their workers (not even a phone call) that says "Can't come in today"... "won't be in today"... or worse, nothing at all.

Often there are no reasons provided for the unexplained absence which can prove highly disappointing.

What is unauthorised absence?

Let's look at what unauthorised absence means. Simply, it is failing to turn up for work without a good reason.

However, unauthorised absence from work does not include:

- Where an employee is off work for approved annual leave,
- Genuine sickness (and they have followed your leave notification process),
- Absence due to maternity/paternity leave (this includes antenatal care and associated appointments), and
- There are also some statutory rights that allow employees to be absent from work — for example, if employers have had to make them redundant, they might be able to take leave to search for new work.

It is strongly recommended that you have a leave policy that clearly establishes what unauthorised absence means, how your business manages it, and what the possible consequences are for unauthorised absence. Most employees I speak to have no idea.

For example, a client of mine had an employee who started to text his foreman in the evening that he would be there for work the following day.

Then, in the morning he'd text he could not make it, often with no reason for his absence.

This went on for weeks. Unfortunately, the foreman was replying "ok" to those texts, so the employee thought he had the all-clear to be absent — in other words, that this response implied acceptance, therefore making the leave authorised.

My client and I had to meet with the employee, re-establish the process, and start clarifying expectations again.

Obligations for managing absences

Good faith is a provision under Section 4 of the Employment Relations Act 2000 that states there is a duty for both parties — employers and employees — to deal with each other in good faith, and not do anything which will, or is likely to, mislead or deceive.

Employees have obligations as well, and it is not unfair to expect employees to notify their manager as soon as practicable for any absence that may occur.

That is why I recommend addressing any tardiness around these unexplained and/or unauthorised absences as soon as possible.

Where I do recommend caution though is in how you ask for the information. I appreciate it can be quite tempting to react when "Joe" has sent you a text at 7am (the time he should be at work) to say "sorry, not coming in", and to fire off a reply saying, as one of my clients did: "I don't care. Get your lazy ass out of bed now!"

It would be even worse to add "if you don't get in here now don't bother coming in at all".

How to handle unauthorised absences

How you choose to handle this process may depend on the length of time taken off and if and how the employee has tried to justify it.

For example, you might allow more latitude for Joe than, say, for Steve or Will below:

- Joe has rung in on Thursday to say he is not coming in, or Joe just doesn't call and fails to notify of his absence for the day (random unauthorised absence).
- Steve has a repetitive pattern of unauthorised absence (i.e. regular Fridays).
- Will texts in on Tuesday one week, Monday two weeks later — different day (random but regularly occurring absence).

The good news is that the process to manage

this is the same for all three scenarios.

- Make reasonable efforts (call, text, email) to contact the employee to ascertain the reason for the absence. If the employee is usually reliable then this may indicate that there is some sort of problem, and that it may not be a deliberate unauthorised absence.
- If unable to contact through phone calls, email or texts, you might also try an emergency contact if you have those details on file.
- If still no contact, then you may write a letter that details the unauthorised absence, and request an explanation.

Put a time frame on this for your staff member to get back to you, noting that if this does not occur you may have to look at instigating disciplinary action. I often recommend sending this letter by courier to ensure a signature for proof of delivery.

- When they return to work, have a meeting to discuss and hear from them as to their reasons for their non-attendance. There might be a very valid reason for the absence — they could be going through a stressful time in their personal life, maybe they are feeling threatened at work, or completely overwhelmed. You may find in those cases to accept the absence.
- Reiterate the company's process in applying for leave and in how they should notify and follow the correct leave procedure.

Final note

Whatever action you decide to take, ensure it is fair and consistent across the board in managing absences, authorised and unauthorised.

At Tradie HR we are very experienced at handling these and other tricky HR issues, so please don't hesitate to call in confidence.

Note: This article is not intended to be a replacement for legal advice.



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We look forward to talking with you.
Call Leigh Olsen for a free consultation.

Building Consents Information

For All Authorisations, January 2020

| | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| Dwellings | \$1,063,757,000 |
| Domestic Outbuildings | \$12,480,000 |
| Total Residential | \$1,076,236,000 |
| Non-residential | \$499,448,000 |
| Total All Buildings | \$1,575,685,000 |
| Non-building Construction | \$20,644,000 |
| Total Authorisations | \$1,596,329,000 |

Number of new dwellings consented

| | Jan 2020 | Dec 2019 | Jan 2019 | | Jan 2020 | Dec 2019 | Jan 2019 |
|--------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|---------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Far North District | 16 | 22 | 24 | Horowhenua District | 21 | 14 | 21 |
| Whangarei District | 20 | 25 | 49 | Kapiti Coast District | 15 | 17 | 8 |
| Kaipara District | 4 | 5 | 12 | Porirua City | 36 | 3 | 37 |
| Rodney District | 54 | 45 | 100 | Upper Hutt City | 17 | 19 | 22 |
| North Shore/Albany Wards | 188 | 223 | 156 | Lower Hutt City | 36 | 36 | 20 |
| Waitakere Ward | 107 | 155 | 42 | Wellington City | 76 | 199 | 55 |
| Auckland Wards | 148 | 428 | 477 | Masterton District | 7 | 14 | 7 |
| Manukau/Howick Wards | 211 | 209 | 154 | Carterton District | 12 | 5 | 2 |
| Manurewa-Papakura Ward | 123 | 104 | 136 | South Wairarapa District | 1 | 2 | 0 |
| Franklin Ward | 119 | 62 | 63 | Tasman District | 30 | 39 | 33 |
| Thames-Coromandel District | 20 | 19 | 8 | Nelson City | 56 | 17 | 6 |
| Hauraki District | 9 | 8 | 4 | Marlborough District | 21 | 32 | 24 |
| Waikato District | 58 | 77 | 52 | Kaikoura District | 6 | 3 | 2 |
| Matamata-Piako District | 19 | 34 | 15 | Buller District | 10 | 8 | 1 |
| Hamilton City | 58 | 123 | 65 | Grey District | 1 | 4 | 1 |
| Waipa District | 54 | 43 | 56 | Westland District | 1 | 1 | 3 |
| Otorohanga District | 3 | 0 | 3 | Hurunui District | 4 | 8 | 10 |
| South Waikato District | 2 | 3 | 9 | Waimakariri District | 52 | 41 | 52 |
| Waitomo District | 0 | 1 | 1 | Christchurch City | 245 | 214 | 126 |
| Taupo District | 18 | 21 | 19 | Selwyn District | 123 | 90 | 77 |
| Western Bay of Plenty District | 10 | 30 | 50 | Ashburton District | 10 | 6 | 14 |
| Tauranga City | 115 | 93 | 162 | Timaru District | 20 | 14 | 20 |
| Rotorua District | 9 | 9 | 8 | Mackenzie District | 6 | 16 | 12 |
| Whakatane District | 5 | 7 | 8 | Waimate District | 2 | 4 | 1 |
| Kawerau District | 6 | 0 | 1 | Chatham Islands Territory | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Opotiki District | 1 | 4 | 1 | Waitaki District | 5 | 5 | 4 |
| Gisborne District | 6 | 10 | 6 | Central Otago District | 21 | 19 | 24 |
| Wairoa District | 0 | 1 | 1 | Queenstown-Lakes District | 80 | 119 | 58 |
| Hastings District | 55 | 33 | 14 | Dunedin City | 25 | 34 | 31 |
| Napier City | 21 | 15 | 8 | Clutha District | 7 | 2 | 5 |
| Central Hawke's Bay District | 10 | 3 | 5 | Southland District | 8 | 2 | 4 |
| New Plymouth District | 45 | 47 | 22 | Gore District | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| Stratford District | 2 | 5 | 3 | Invercargill City | 16 | 8 | 10 |
| South Taranaki District | 5 | 4 | 5 | Area Outside TA | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Ruapehu District | 3 | 1 | 5 | | | | |
| Whanganui District | 7 | 9 | 6 | Total | 2564 | 2910 | 2496 |
| Rangitikei District | 4 | 7 | 5 | | | | |
| Manawatu District | 18 | 7 | 18 | | | | |
| Palmerston North City | 34 | 16 | 27 | | | | |
| Taranaki District | 5 | 5 | 5 | | | | |

- Based on 2006 census areas
- Each dwelling unit in a housing project is counted separately
- Figures in these tables may differ from published statistics

Source: Statistics New Zealand

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