

BUILDING TODAY

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE REGISTERED MASTER BUILDERS ASSOCIATION



VOLUME 30 NUMBER 6

JULY 2020

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INSIDE:

BUILDING A MORE
SUSTAINABLE
INDUSTRY

INFRASTRUCTURE
INVESTMENT TO KICK-
START COVID REBUILD



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— what
comes next?**

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Post-Covid stories dominate this issue — from RMBA chief executive David Kelly acknowledging the Government's shovel-ready infrastructure project funding but wanting to see further support for the residential sector, to significant apprenticeship funding and a new climate change programme designed to make the industry more sustainable.

Columnist Don Bunting suggests different and more beneficial ways that the industry might do things before society settles back into the new (same as the old?) "normal".

And Mike Fox questions the real difference that building consent exemptions that come into force in August might actually make.

The challenges are coming thick and fast — keep up with it all in *Building Today*.

Andrew Darlington, Editor

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Post-Covid's been a busy time — the big question is, what comes next?

Chief's Chat

By CEO David Kelly

It has been a busy time for many of us as we get back up and running in a post-Covid-19 lockdown environment.

The big question is, what comes next? Maintaining a strong pipeline of work is critical to our industry and to New Zealand's economic recovery.

Residential construction is the largest part of our sector, with total value in 2019 sitting at around \$24 billion.

It employs roughly 150,000 New Zealanders, and last year built 38,000 homes.

While it is often the large commercial projects that gain a lot of attention, the residential sector will have a substantial impact on our economic recovery.

We support the Government's focus and funding of shovel-ready infrastructure projects.

Now we want to see further support for the residential sector — especially regarding how we can avoid the boom and bust cycles that have long plagued our sector.

Stimulating demand in the residential construction sector

The Government's Wellbeing Budget this year is allocating a substantial amount of funding for our sector by enabling:

- Kainga Ora to deliver an extra 8000 new public and transitional homes,
- learners to undertake vocational education and training without fees for the next two years, and
- businesses to keep apprentices on with the Apprenticeship Boost.

Through the Budget, the Government has set aside \$20 billion for further financial investment to mitigate the economic effects of Covid-19.

It's great to see the Government's recent announcements about the shovel-ready projects.

With more than \$460 million allocated, there's the real potential to start unlocking the vertical



and horizontal infrastructure that's critical for increasing the supply of housing.

Too often a lack of infrastructure can delay building or increase the costs of housing.

Despite these initiatives, there is only so much upfront investment the Government can undertake right now. Our sector will continue to rely heavily on consumers for work.

There's no doubt that stimulating demand in new house construction would support businesses across the sector and reduce the risk of further unemployment.

We are looking across the ditch to what Australia is doing to stimulate their residential building.

Master Builders Australia estimates that nearly 100,000 new builds will not go ahead this year after lockdown.

Such a drastic drop will devastate the sector. It will also put a handbrake on the ability of the sector to rebuild in the coming years.

In response to this, the Australian Federal Government is allocating \$688 million to give \$25,000 grants to eligible owner-occupiers

(including first-home buyers) to build a new home or substantially renovate an existing home.

HomeBuilder will assist the residential construction market by encouraging the commencement of new home builds and renovations.

State governments in Western Australia and Tasmania are also offering their own incentives that build on those that Home Builder offers.

Reports from the Australian Treasury show that these types of incentives do work.

During the Global Financial Crisis, the Rudd Government spent more than \$1.5 billion to support housing construction through similar time-limited grants to first-home buyers.

The Howard Government, during an economic slowdown in the early 2000s, also propped up the housing sector.

We're working with members and stakeholders to investigate whether similar measures can work here.

There's no doubt that stimulating demand in new house construction would support businesses across the sector and reduce the risk of further unemployment.

It would also assist in providing sector and public confidence in residential construction.

Consumer confidence

We strongly believe this is a good time to build for anyone in a position to do so.

We have a skilled and available workforce, and the financial drivers are good, including low interest rates and relaxed LVRs.

We are actively communicating these messages across our channels to promote consumer confidence and to support the sector.

With uncertainty around other investments, and interest rates low, property remains a safe venture for the future.

Kiwis continue to invest in bricks and mortar for a reason — we can see it, we understand it, and its value holds up over time.

Construction will be a key player in New Zealand's economic recovery. I am looking forward to the discussions with Government on how industry and government can work together for a positive outcome.

MOUNT MAUNGANUI APPRENTICE WINS 2019 REGIONAL TITLE IN TOUGH BOP COMP



CAMERON DIACK

BAY OF PLENTY/CENTRAL PLATEAU
REGISTERED MASTER BUILDERS
CARTERS 2019 APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR

After completing his building apprenticeship, Cameron now owns and operates Diack Homes and is also a Cadet Master Builders member. He was trained at the Toi Ohomai Institute of Technology.



SUCCESSSES

Cameron loved every second of the national competition, but the relationships he built with his peers were his biggest takeaway from the experience.

“A big part of the experience was meeting and spending time with the talented builders from the other regions. I gained a great deal from just talking to the other participants, and I still keep in touch with a lot of them today. For anyone thinking of entering, it is an experience that you'll never forget or regret!”



CHALLENGES

Cameron enjoyed the practical challenge but took his time before starting his build, being extra cautious of any potential pitfalls in the plans.

“I spent a lot of time deciphering both the plans and instructions together to fully understand what the judges wanted, and to see where one might contradict the other. Like with any build, if you find an issue deep into the project then there will be some very tough problems coming your way, and I was determined for that not to happen to me!”



TRAINER COMMENTS

Programme Tutor Paul King values the tough challenge that the Apprentice of the Year competition offers, believing it is an opportunity for those early in their building career to gain some confidence.

“We place these apprentices in the competition because it is a good experience for them to test themselves in a tight deadline situation. I think a lot of young builders can gain a lot of confidence from partaking in the event and getting the opportunity to apply the diverse range of skills they have developed.”

“Cameron performed exceptionally well. He started off nervous like many apprentices do once the clock starts, taking his time before starting the build. Once he had his strategy in place he was locked into the project. The final build truly demonstrated his knowledge and diverse skillset.”

PRINCIPAL PARTNER



EVENT PARTNER



Clever design creates well-rounded Oamaru gem



David Reid Homes

National Winner 2019

• New Home up to \$450K



Successes

David Reid Homes director Aaron McKay said the win was a humbling experience for himself and the team.

“We were confident in the quality of our design and build, but still delighted to see our hard work take out the National category. We worked hard, and are just thrilled with the final product, particularly the open design of the kitchen. How it flows seamlessly into the dining and living room which, combined with the raked ceiling, gives the room a great sense of space.”

Challenges

Aaron and the team had to get creative in creating a free-flowing home on the small section.

“The section itself posed some challenges to begin with. But we made the most of the space, with the design taking advantage of the location and position of the site by utilising the sun and westerly views.”

Judges' comments

Competition judges praised the builder's achievement in making a superbly designed home.

“Built on a small section as part of an ongoing development, this home makes the most of the space available while facing the westerly rural outlook.”

“Its simplicity of design and choice of material has provided the home owner great value for money. Without a doubt, a good all-round effort has been achieved by the builder.”

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Schist house in Wanaka ticks all the boxes



Dunlop Builders

National Winner 2019

• New Home \$1.5 million - \$2 million



Successes

Dunlop Builders director Bryce Dunlop felt reaffirmed by the win for himself and his crew's hard work.

"Our team puts in so much effort and energy into our builds, and when you win at a national level it just shows that hard work pays off and the effort you put in is all worth it."

"For me, what made the build stand out was the use of different materials, and how we integrated them within the build on the outside and inside. It created a real flow to the building."

Challenges

While the result looks incredible, creating the build from so many different materials imposed a heavy challenge on the team.

"There are over 200 tonnes of Glenorchy schist rock veneer on the outside of the building, grounding it into the landscape. This, combined with the amount of engineered steel beams, lintels and portals to support the structure, made creating the house a tough task. Yet with all these challenges we delivered the build to schedule!"

Judges' comments

Judges applauded the builders for successfully achieving a great result in all aspects of the build.

"This is a well-designed and functional home that maximises an absolutely stunning view across Lake Wanaka and the mountains beyond. It has been superbly presented, with an inventive mixture of material and detailing. It offers its owners multiple living options."

"The result is a great outcome for all those involved."

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Take a look at our spectacular Education, and Heritage and Restoration category entrants for the 2020 NZ Commercial Project Awards. See all our entrants at www.commercialprojectawards.co.nz.



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Education

- 1** St Bede's College Chapel and Performing Arts Centre
Naylor Love Canterbury, Christchurch
- 2** Whanganui Collegiate School - New Administration Building
DML Construction, Whanganui
- 3** Medbury School
Higgs Construction, Christchurch
- 4** University of Waikato Tauranga Campus
Hawkins, Tauranga
- 5** Baradene College Hockey Field & Music Suite
Savory Construction, Auckland
- 6** Rabbit Patch Preschool
Avon Dickie Construction, Christchurch
- 7** Beatrice Tinsley Building
Dominion Constructors, Christchurch



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Heritage and Restoration

- 8** Highfield Woolshed
DPA Architects, Waiau
- 9** Christchurch Town Hall Conservation Project
Hawkins, Christchurch
- 10** Whanganui Collegiate School HG Carver Memorial Library
W&W Construction, Whanganui
- 11** Whanganui War Memorial Centre
W&W Construction, Whanganui
- 12** Catalina Bay
LT McGuinness, Auckland



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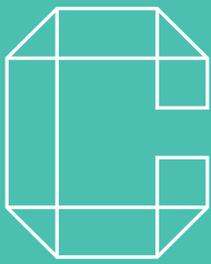


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Construction sector to benefit from Apprenticeship Boost

The construction sector is potentially one of the big winners from the Government announcing the institution of a Targeted Training and Apprenticeships Fund (TTAF).

First mooted as part of the 2020 Budget, the fund aims to pay the costs of learners of any age who undertake vocational education and training.

Education Minister Chris Hipkins says as well as funding all apprenticeships, the fund will target areas of study and training that will give learners better employment prospects as New Zealand recovers from Covid-19.

The TTAF will support vocational programmes from July 1 throughout the rest of 2020 across a wide range of vocations, including a number of construction-related areas such as building, plumbing and civil engineering.

Apprentices and learners whose courses started earlier in the year but continue beyond July 1 will be eligible for a partial refund.

The \$380.6 million initiative will support up to 36,000 apprentices per year, including new apprentices, by providing a subsidy to around 18,000 employers.

This initiative is part of a wider Apprenticeship

Support Programme designed to keep first and second year apprentices connected to work, connected to training and connected to their communities while New Zealand recovers from the impact of Covid-19.

The Apprenticeship Support Programme covers the Apprenticeship Boost — a broad-based wage subsidy for employers to help them keep existing apprentices and employ new ones; also Mana in Mahi, expanding the existing programme which helps employers provide on-the-job support for employees.

It also covers Group Training Scheme support — funding that ensures the existing seven schemes remain viable by enabling them to continue to employ apprentices and trainees, and provide related services to host businesses.

The Regional Apprenticeships Initiative also gets cover. This supports displaced regional apprentices who have lost their jobs, initially focusing on Maori and Pacific Peoples (funded through the Provincial Growth Fund).

Employers would be able to access support from the Apprenticeship Boost, Mana in Mahi, or the Regional Apprenticeships Initiative depending on the type of apprentice or pre-apprentice trainee they employ.

All employers who have an eligible apprentice will be able to receive a base subsidy rate up to \$12,000 per annum for first-year apprentices, and \$6000 per annum for second-year apprentices.

Mana in Mahi and some Regional Apprenticeships participants will get a higher subsidy to reflect the different level of need of the individual apprentices or pre-apprentice trainees involved.

The Group Training Scheme Fund is different in design to other initiatives within the Programme as it is geared to maintaining the viability of seven schemes.

The apprentices involved in a Group Training Scheme may also be eligible to attract support from other initiatives, such as the Apprenticeship Boost or Mana in Mahi to contribute to their wage costs.

Other initiatives underway to help people stay in and find employment and training include the Wage Subsidy and the Wage Subsidy Extension, which has been providing employers and sole traders whose revenues have been significantly impacted by Covid-19 with financial support so they can keep their staff employed.

Government input puts future squarely in hands of industry

The Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation (BCITO) says it is delighted at the Government's latest announcement as part of the \$1.6 billion Trades and Apprenticeships Training Package.

The \$520 million package provides employers with a maximum of \$16,000 for each apprentice they employ; to be paid out over their first two years.

The main challenge for the construction sector is gaining and retaining apprentices in the system, and BCITO chief executive Warwick Quinn is thrilled with the announcement.

"For years, the building and construction sector has been calling for support from government for those firms that train apprentices. And this is the answer we have been waiting for.

"The Government understands that during recessionary times we need to continue to



BCITO chief executive Warwick Quinn

develop and grow our pipeline of skilled tradespeople. We don't want to lose our talent."

Quinn stresses that now it is in the industry's hands to make the most of what the Government is offering.

"We have been asking for this, so now we must use it to our advantage. It is our job as a sector to step up and make this work.

"Not only do we need to increase capacity, but we also have a responsibility to train and develop good quality tradespeople.

"This financial support will mean employers don't have to wear the full cost of upskilling them, and can invest more into their training," he says.

"This announcement will also reassure incoming apprentices and people considering careers in the trades that building and construction remains a good sector to work in."

Currently, the BCITO has just over 13,000 active trainees and apprentices. Last year, building and construction was New Zealand's third largest sector, directly contributing \$19 billion to the country's Gross Domestic Product.

Residential building forms the backbone of the sector, accounting for 60% of its revenue, and employing 80% of apprentices.



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Infrastructure investment to create jobs, kick-start Covid rebuild

New package to create 20,000 jobs and unlock \$5 billion of projects NZ-wide

A new package of infrastructure investments will help kick-start the post-Covid rebuild by creating more than 20,000 jobs and unlocking more than \$5 billion of projects up and down New Zealand.

Finance Minister Grant Robertson and Infrastructure Minister Shane Jones recently outlined how the \$3 billion infrastructure fund in the Covid Response and Recovery Fund (CRRF) will be allocated across regions, following extensive engagement with local councils and businesses.

The Ministers also announced a range of projects that are receiving funding to highlight the broad range of infrastructure being invested in across various communities.

The investment package includes about \$210 million for climate resilience and flood protection projects, \$155 million for transformative energy projects, about \$180 million for large-scale construction projects, and \$50 million for enhanced regional digital connectivity.

“This is about creating jobs as we recover and rebuild from the recession caused by the global Covid-19 pandemic,” Finance Minister Grant Robertson says.

“Because we went hard and early with our health response, we’ve been able to open up the economy quicker than other countries and get a head start on our recovery.

Key component

“The overall package is expected to deliver more than 20,000 jobs across New Zealand and unlock investment with a project value of more than \$5 billion.

“Building infrastructure is a key component of our economic recovery plan. It creates jobs and provides much-needed economic stimulus.”

Earlier this year, Ministers established the Infrastructure Reference Group (IRG) to work with local councils and businesses to identify a pipeline of projects to support the economy during the Covid-19 rebuild.

The IRG received 1924 submissions across approximately 40 sectors of the economy. Those submissions were scrutinised under criteria set by the Government, and a shortlist



Finance Minister Grant Robertson

of 802 projects presented to Ministers.

Cabinet has now made initial decisions about key sectors it would like to support and general regional distribution of funds, with more than 150 projects worth \$2.6 billion being approved in principal.

Officials are now undertaking final due diligence to ensure projects are viable and offer the benefits stated by applicants.

“We have focused on key sectors that are central to the Government’s economic plan — housing and urban development, climate resilience, and energy and community development,” Robertson says.

“This package will provide Kiwis with confidence that the Government is backing them in this challenging economic environment by creating new jobs and opportunities in communities around the country.”

The CRRF set out in Budget 2020 earmarked \$3 billion for infrastructure projects. Cabinet’s initial decisions on this allocation include:

- Housing and urban development: \$464m
- Environmental: \$460m
- Community and social development: \$670m
- Transport (cycleways, walkways, ports and roads): \$708m

The projects are in addition to the \$12 billion New Zealand Upgrade Programme and existing Provincial Growth Fund investments.

Infrastructure Minister Shane Jones says the pipeline of projects would create immediate economic activity in the metropolitan centres

as well as in the regions.

“Both are critical to our economic and social recovery from the Covid-19 crisis,” Jones says.

“Not only has this massive undertaking provided us with the largest stocktake of infrastructure projects we’ve ever had, but it’s enabled us to partner with central and local government, the private sector, and community groups to deliver projects for all Kiwis.

“The specific projects we’re announcing are examples of the sort of projects we’re supporting — from nationwide investments in flood protection and better digital connectivity to civic facilities that we know form the bedrock of our communities.

“I am extremely proud of the depth and breadth of this unprecedented piece of work,” Jones says.

Approximate regional funding is:

- Auckland Region: \$500 million
- Bay of Plenty Region: \$170 million
- Canterbury: \$300 million
- East Coast: \$106 million
- Hawke’s Bay: \$130 million
- Manawatu/Whanganui: \$140 million
- Northland: \$150 million
- Otago: \$260 million
- Southland: \$90 million
- Taranaki: \$85 million
- Top of the South: \$85 million
- Waikato: \$150 million
- Wellington region: \$185 million
- West Coast: \$90 million

About \$400 million has been set aside as a contingency as the Government takes a responsible approach to managing spending on behalf of taxpayers.

Funds not required in the contingency will be put towards further infrastructure projects, providing an incentive for local councils to deliver the approved projects on time and on budget, as this would unlock a further potential \$400 million of investment.

Note: All approvals are in principle and subject to contract negotiations. Investment values are also subject to change.

Further announcements on project details will be made over coming weeks.

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Construction sector challenge — building a more sustainable industry

Tackling the climate change challenge will require vision, commitment and perseverance

Minister for Building and Construction Jenny Salesa has announced a Building for Climate Change programme to get New Zealand builders working in “a completely different way”.

Salesa says the construction sector is a large contributor to greenhouse gas emissions from producing materials, constructing buildings, and the energy used in buildings.

If New Zealand is to reach its climate change goals, including net zero carbon by 2050, the construction sector must play a major part in this, she says.



Buildings will be built to use as little water and energy as practical, meaning more money in New Zealanders’ pockets as well as fewer emissions.

Once the programme is in place, energy efficiency and carbon emissions will become core considerations when building — just as important as cost and design.

Reusing buildings and recycling materials will be an important part of the building process, and local suppliers will be encouraged to

Tackling the climate change challenge will require vision, commitment and perseverance, as well as significant change. It won’t be done overnight and it won’t be easy.

The MBIE will be setting targets around energy use and carbon emissions that it says will focus on getting New Zealand where it needs to be.

“At the start, we should be able to reach the goals through good current practice but, over time, the goals will be increased to make greater carbon savings and emissions reductions,” according to the MBIE web site.

“To meet the goals, some changes will need to be made to current building laws — in the Building Act and the Building Code.

“The focus will be on starting to change people’s behaviour, and the way they think about building through information incentives,

and innovation.

“At first, the focus will be on how to build new buildings better. In the future, changes that need to be made to existing buildings will be looked at.

“Any changes will be thought through carefully, and there will be discussions with the people who will be affected by the changes first.

“The MBIE will be working closely with the construction sector, other government agencies, iwi, key stakeholders, local government and communities across New Zealand.”

What this means for New Zealand

The MBIE says the changes will make homes warmer, drier and better ventilated, and provide a healthier place to work and live.

gear up and support these product streams.

Building owners will understand their options, and what to ask for to get an efficient building with a low climate impact.

Construction workers will have the right skills to design and build for energy efficiency, low embodied carbon and climate resilience.

Next steps

The first Building for Climate Change initiatives, which expand insulation and glazing requirements in new homes — making them warmer, drier and better ventilated — are expected to be consulted on in early 2021.

For more information visit www.mbie.govt.nz/building-and-energy/building/building-for-climate-change.

Covid-19 contributes to 1.6% fall in March quarter GDP

Gross domestic product (GDP) fell 1.6% in the March 2020 quarter, the largest drop in 29 years, as the initial effects of Covid-19 restrictions impacted on economic activity, Stats NZ reports.

This quarter’s GDP results showed a widespread drop in economic activity as travel restrictions took hold and the country moved towards lockdown.

Covid-19 effects came on top of the smaller impact from drought in some parts of the country. It is the largest quarterly fall since the

2.4% decline in the March 1991 quarter.

The construction industry fell 4.1% and the transport, postal, and warehousing industry fell 5.2%.

These falls reflected the impact of lockdown measures as building sites shut down, and non-essential workers were told to stay home.

Parts of the transport industry, such as air transport, were also affected by the restrictions on travel. In the March 2020 quarter, the Alert Level 4 lockdown saw non-essential businesses

close, affecting six days (four weekdays) or about 7% of the quarter. Household consumption expenditure fell 0.3%.

Annual GDP growth for the year ended March 2020 dropped to 1.5%, compared with a 3.1% growth in the year ended March 2019. Annual growth in GDP has been generally slowing since December 2016 when it was 3.9%.

For more information, visit www.stats.govt.nz/methods/covid-19-lockdown-and-gross-domestic-product-for-march-and-june-2020-quarters.



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Small businesses make big contribution to construction industry profit

New figures from Statistics NZ show small construction businesses contributed more to construction industry operating profit in recent years than medium or large businesses.

The operating profit of small construction businesses (those with 1 to 19 employees) increased by \$1.25 billion between 2011 and 2019 to \$1.97 billion.

In the same period, the operating profit of large businesses (100-plus employees) increased by \$273 million to \$728 million.

"Before Covid-19, small businesses contributed 37% of the construction industry's operating profit, and accounted for around 40% of all construction businesses," annual enterprise survey manager Melissa McKenzie says.

"In comparison, large businesses contributed 14% of the industry's operating profit, and

accounted for less than 1% of construction businesses.

"Construction businesses experienced rising operating profits as earthquake rebuild activities in Canterbury and new work in Auckland boosted construction activity over the last decade," McKenzie says.

"Initially, small businesses experienced the largest growth in profitability, but in the last few years bigger construction businesses have led profitability growth."

The number of small construction businesses has also grown, along with activity and profits, to more than 26,000 businesses that employed around 90,000 people in 2019.

In contrast, there were more than 100 construction businesses with more than 100 employees that employed around 40,000 people in 2019.

'Work in place' stats will give clearer picture

A clearer picture of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the construction industry will be provided by "Value of building work put in place" results from Statistics NZ in the coming quarters.

This series measures work actually completed, rather than consents, which indicate an intention to build.

The data may include insights into delays, cancellations, and the total value of work put in place.

The value of non-residential building consents dropped to around \$364 million in April 2020, which is the lowest value since January 2017. The average monthly value of non-residential building consents in 2019 was around \$622 million.

There is a lot of volatility in the month-on-month figures for non-residential building consents. However the value of consents has been decreasing since November 2019.

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Parks and amenities benefit residents and builders at Hobsonville Point

Giving communities early access to amenities like parks, walkways and public artwork as part of new developments helps enhance well-being and land value overall, a new report on the Hobsonville Point development in Auckland has found.

The report by Fresh Info, *Understanding the relationship between social amenity, well-being and land values*, was commissioned by Kainga Ora – Homes and Communities to help inform future investment decisions across its portfolio of large-scale developments, with the goal of creating thriving communities.

It surveyed more than 500 Hobsonville Point residents, builder and developer partners, and analysed residential land values at Hobsonville Point compared with other greenfields developments.

The report found residents place a high value on social amenities such as parks, schools, walkways and public artwork.

And by providing these at an early stage, builders and developers find it easier to market and sell homes.

It also noted investment in social amenities at Hobsonville Point was linked to a rise in residential land values that was shared amongst home owners, builders and Kainga Ora.

Katja Lietz, Kainga Ora Deputy Chief Executive of Urban Development Planning, welcomed the findings of the report.

“Kainga Ora understands, and has demonstrated, that the provision of social amenities is a pathway to creating thriving communities.

Furthermore, by providing social amenities in our developments at an early stage, Kainga Ora has created confidence with builders and developers,” Lietz says.

Classic Builders director Peter Cooney agrees. “Kainga Ora’s early investment in social amenities like cafes, open spaces, parks, schools and ferry services gave us, as developers, confidence and certainty around the future of this development.

“The Hobsonville Point development provided an exciting avenue for developing strong public-private collaborations, which can be replicated across other areas too,” Cooney says.

Dr Lee Beattie, Deputy Head of the School of



A survey of more than 500 Hobsonville Point, Auckland, residents, builders and developers found residents place a high value on social amenities such as parks, schools, walkways and public artwork, and that by providing these at an early stage, builders and developers found it easier to market and sell homes.



Architecture and Planning at the University of Auckland, notes that the three most valued features were all parks and green spaces, highlighting the importance of thoughtful masterplanning of green space in medium-density housing developments.

“The report also indicates that even if they are not currently using the amenity, people value the option of using these features in the future, or simply knowing that they exist in the neighbourhood,” Dr Beattie says.

Lietz says the results achieved at Hobsonville Point will inform how Kainga Ora approaches the masterplanning process and provision of amenities in other large-scale developments.

“We understand that each neighbourhood we are working in has its own character, constraints and opportunities, and we’ll take all the relevant learnings from Hobsonville Point to set bespoke targets and measures on the benefits of social amenities across our developments,” she says.



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Building activity falls in March

The volume of building work carried out nationwide fell sharply in the March 2020 quarter, following a smaller fall in the December 2019 quarter, Statistics NZ says.

Overall building activity fell 5.7% in the March 2020 quarter, partly due to the Covid-19 Alert Level 4 lockdown. This followed a 0.9% fall in the December 2019 quarter.

The March 2020 quarter fall accounts for typical seasonal patterns and higher construction costs, and is a provisional estimate that may be revised when the June 2020 quarter is published on September 4, 2020.

Within total building volume, residential building volume fell 5.8% this quarter, and non-residential fell 5.6%.

All March 2020 quarter building activity survey respondents to Statistics NZ were asked to note any factors that might influence their building projects, including Covid-19 and the lockdown.

Although collecting data on March quarter

construction, some respondents told Statistics NZ how they felt about their projects at the time of responding to the survey.

They also gave an insight into their experiences to date and some expectations for the June quarter and beyond.

They expect the lockdown will have a more significant impact on the June 2020 quarter as virtually all construction work stopped until at least April 28 with the move to Alert Level 3 restrictions.

Almost all survey respondents that included a comment said a delay was the most likely factor to influence their projects.

Other factors of concern to respondents included:

- Financial problems (20%),
- Limited availability of supplies (5%),



- Reduced productivity (less than 5%),
 - Limited availability of workers (less than 5%), and
 - Reduced market confidence (less than 5%).
- Visit www.stats.govt.nz/methods/covid-19-lockdown-and-value-of-building-work-put-in-place-for-march-2020-quarter for more information.

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Mega trade show is all go!

The only large-scale event of its kind this year, Mega combines three shows into one, bringing together the 30-year strong BuildNZ, with Facilities Integrate and the National Safety Show at the ASB Showgrounds in Auckland on August 12 and 13.

Facilitated by the Government’s announcement to move to Covid Alert Level 1 on June 8, XPO Exhibitions announced the Mega exhibition for the construction, facilities management, architecture and safety industries.

XPO managing director Brent Spillane says trade shows play a huge part in rebuilding an economy.

“At no other time has an event like this been so important to the recovery of the sector,” Spillane says.

“Running a large-scale exhibition like this is expected to drive confidence for trade attendees and suppliers who can once again congregate, share ideas and see the latest innovations on display.

Spillane urges those in the industry to get along to the event to support local businesses, get essential education, and help industry move again.

For the past five years, Facilities Integrate has serviced an important niche group of the sector, showcasing the latest integrated building technology and build/facilities servicing solutions — which presents a wonderful synergy to co-locate with BuildNZ.

The events all target builders, property developers, architects, specifiers, designers, and facilities managers.

BuildNZ offers the largest display of building supplies and services across New Zealand.

Meanwhile, the National Safety Show caters for all aspects of wider industry safety solutions — a topic dear to the hearts of every business owner, operation manager and health and safety professional — to help reduce risk and increase safety.

“By combining all three shows into this Mega Event, we’re delivering everything our delegates and exhibitors look forward to every year, while taking up less of their time,” Spillane says.

“We hit three birds with one stone by delivering all the content, all the exhibitors and all the educational and networking benefits of related industries, giving an opportunity for the time-poor to expand their horizons,” he adds.



XPO Exhibitions says running a large-scale industry exhibition is expected to drive confidence for trade attendees and suppliers who can once again congregate, share ideas and see the latest innovations on display.



Expectations are that the Mega Event will attract more than 5000 decision-makers and qualified buyers, representing buying power of some \$375 million, along with more than 150 exhibitors.

With internal research showing that 80% of visitors are likely to contact an exhibitor after a show, and with 74% of visitors responsible for or influencing buying decisions, Spillane says the value for suppliers to exhibit is clear.

He encourages professionals in these industries to register their interest and save the date.

“Entry to all three shows is still free for all trade professionals who pre-register. It remains trade-only, keeping the focus on businesspeople.

“And with so much now under one roof, the Mega Event is not to be missed.”

The combined shows will be co-located in halls 1 to 4 of the ASB Showgrounds in Greenlane, Auckland.

Attendees only need to register for one of the shows to obtain access to all three. For more information or to register, visit www.megaevent.co.nz.

3

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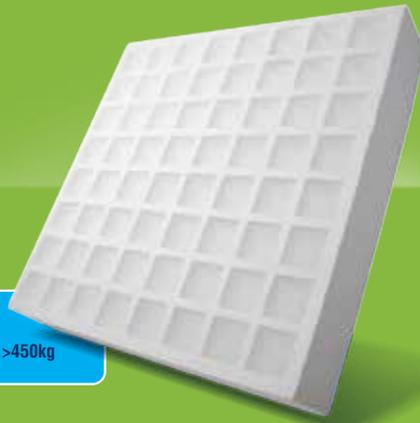
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1 x Blundstone 992 and 1 x John Bull EAGLE 4285



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Polystyrene out-performs plastic



The Material used to create an average size foundation (approx. 160m²):
Polystyrene Pod 244kg (including recycled content) VS **Plastic Pod >450kg**

The truth about Polystyrene Pods. Polystyrene has been used in construction for decades. It is lightweight, 98% air, versatile, uses up to 50% recycled material and is 100% recyclable. All polystyrene manufacturers in NZ offer to collect polystyrene construction waste which they recycle into new products.

Material

Polystyrene is 98% air so provides the same volume of product using much less material. Moreover, polystyrene designed floors use considerably less concrete which is a very high resource intensive material.



Thermal performance

Polystyrene is an insulation material that is tested and proven. Thermal performance has a huge effect on the lifetime energy consumption of a building. Great insulation equals great for the environment.



Versatility

Polystyrene can be cut, shaped and formed to fit any requirement. This leads to increased thermal performance and reduced concrete requirements.



Polystyrene requires less steps to recycle than plastic



POLYSTYRENE



PLASTIC

Polystyrene is 100% recyclable and has a lighter environmental footprint with less steps than plastic recycling.

Polystyrene pods are made with up to 50% recycled material sourced locally which in turn diverts waste away from landfill.

Production

Polystyrene pods use comparably less material, energy and water to produce, compared with plastic pods.



Distribution

Polystyrene manufacturers have a vast network throughout NZ which means no long-distance cartage is required. The closer you can manufacture to the destination, the better!



98% AIR

Expanded Polystyrene has had many names in New Zealand: Polystyrene, Styrofoam, EPS to name just a few.

We now put an end to this variety: the global EPS industry proudly introduces a common name for EPS worldwide: **airpop®** engineered air.

FACT: New Zealand recycled 637 tonnes of airtop® locally in 2019.



airpop®
 engineered air

airpop.co.nz

Glazing skywards . . .

Window and Glass Association NZ technical manager Robert Campion says the importance of safety issues and ensuring the method of glazing and its installation is suitable for the building and its specific circumstances cannot be emphasised enough.

As a nation, we love the great outdoors and, for probably the same reasons, we also love glass.

It lets light into our lives and lets us enjoy the views beyond the constraints of our building's boundaries, whilst at the same time holding the weather at bay. It connects us with our environment in a safe and secure way.

We also recognise the lesser desired properties of this wonderful product — that, of course, it can be broken and, unless treated and cared for appropriately, the consequences of failure can be disastrous.

There is no question that overhead glazing provides an openness to any space, but are we being diligent in the design of our canopies and overhead glazing?

We all know the Building Code includes measures to reduce the risk of glazing failure for windows and doors, but what about when we lift the glass overhead for canopies and skylights?

Yes, there is provision for these too. However, recent failures act as a reminder of the responsibilities around well considered design, product selection, and construction in this important area of building design.

What the regulations say

Glass and glazing in New Zealand is covered by the group of Standards NZS4223, which is directly cited throughout the Building Code and is available free to all through Standards NZ.

“Sloped Overhead Glazing” is defined in NZS4223 as “Glazing that is inclined at up to 75° to the horizontal and located, wholly or partially, directly above an area that may be occupied by people.”

And, paraphrasing, the design criteria from the Standard says:

- Monolithic (single) overhead glazing below 5m above the ground or floor level must be Grade A safety glass, either toughened or laminated,
- Monolithic overhead glazing above 5m from the ground or floor level shall be laminated safety glass, or



The Window & Glass Association NZ says both the glass and the system restraining it must be designed to work together, and include allowances for all the external conditions they might encounter throughout the life of the canopy.

- IGUs (double glazing) used in sloped overhead glazing are made up of two panes of safety glass, and where it is above 5m, the lower pane shall be laminated safety glass.

- Annealed glass is not permitted.

For the uninitiated, “Toughened glass” is glass that is heat treated and rapidly cooled to increase its strength by approximately four times.

“Laminated glass” is where two (or more) sheets of glass are permanently bonded together by a “plastic” interlayer.

Be aware, there are different interlayer materials available, and some will be more specific to some situations than others.

For canopy and overhead glazing situations, the Window & Glass Association NZ reminds builders and installers to consider the “consequence of failure” as stated in the Building Code.

The Window & Glass Association NZ recommends you make due consideration or seek professional advice on glass and interlayer types to ensure they are suitable for the application.

The right combination of glass and glazing system will provide the integrity the Code seeks to protect those below.

There are many reasons why overhead glazing might fail, most commonly through impact.

The term “spontaneous breakage” is often thrown around when the cause is uncertain. But there are other reasons too — thermal stress, building movement, edge contact, and inappropriate or inadequate installation and/or design details.

Beyond the glazing regulations

Whilst appropriate glass selection is crucial, we cannot emphasise enough the importance of ensuring the method of glazing and the system into which it is to be installed is suitable for the building and its specific circumstances.

Even as a safety product, glass remains brittle and must be protected if failure is to be avoided.

Simply, both the glass and the system restraining it must be designed to work together, and include allowances for all the external conditions they might encounter throughout the life of the canopy.

The overall design of the canopy element must be well considered. If you have any questions, doubts, or uncertainties of any kind, it is important you contact your friendly glazing expert — the risk is just too great.

Temporary flooring system eliminates falls from height

Designed to improve worksite safety standards by eliminating a fall zone from upper level floors and floor pits, Voideck is a modular suspended temporary flooring system for use in the construction industry.

It fills void openings in floors where a penetration is required to permit stair, lift and other openings including atrium spaces.

It also provides a safe working platform to undertake construction operations in, around and above the void area.

Traditionally, these void openings have been protected by one of three options:

- Temporary handrails around the void opening,
- Scaffolding built from the ground floor filling the void opening, and
- Planks suspended across the opening.

The primary focus of the Voideck modular suspended working platform is to provide a safe and efficient working environment in the construction industry.

It is available for hire only and is installed by trained Voideck personnel, thus freeing up valuable labour resources on-site to focus on their core tasks.

Benefits to the industry include the protection of construction workers from falls from heights and, as the platform is installed as soon as the upper flooring is completed, there are savings of time on site and greater labour efficiencies.

A Voideck modular suspended working platform fixed to the building structure provides a temporary floor to the void opening, with a closable access hatch complete with a fixed ladder to allow workers access between the floors.

Because it is fixed to the building structure, the platform provides unimpeded access for construction activities below and above the void being protected.

This idea appears simple in principle, but requires a solution to many significant challenges depending upon the size and shape of the opening and the type of structure it is to be fixed to — whether it be timber, steel, concrete or masonry.

Square or rectangular void openings require a relatively simple solution in that the support members span the opening, and the decks are



fixed to these members to close the opening.

Irregular-shaped void openings and those with walls and other protrusions within the void opening require more adaptable solutions which the Voideck modular system has been developed to provide.

The system has been developed over a five-year period. It was introduced to the

Australian market in 2015, and a second-generation version manufactured in New Zealand was introduced to the Wellington market in 2019.

Voideck has been accepted widely by the industry in Wellington, and plans are now in progress to expand the business throughout New Zealand using Licenced Voideck Agents in the respective regional areas.

VOIDECK

TEMPORARY VOID PLATFORMS



‘TAKING VOID PROTECTION TO THE NEXT LEVEL’

- A more cost-effective solution to traditional scaffolding in stairwells, lift wells, atriums and other voids
- Provides instant fall protection for tradespeople, clients, consultants and other visitors to site
- Installed within the void, leaving unobstructed access above and below the void
- Provides easy access to upper levels through an integral ladder and hatch system while maintaining a safe working platform
- Fast and efficient installation, minimising disruption and delays on site
- Modular system allows installation into voids of any shape and size
- The aluminium panels can be easily removed and reinstalled to enable loading in
- Can be installed into timber, steel and concrete structures
- Eliminates damage to surrounding surfaces on removal
- Designed, engineered and manufactured in NZ.

VOIDECK® temporary void platforms are currently available in the greater Wellington region on an installation and hire basis, and will soon be available nationwide.

To register your interest in becoming involved in the growth of this innovative void protection system, please forward your contact details to agent@voideck.co.nz.

Incredibly strong, instant-grab adhesive launched

Bostik NZ has announced the launch of Bostik Hi Tack H785, the original, high quality, professional, ultra-strong MS instant grab adhesive, with an extremely high initial tack and strength.

Unlike other adhesives, it will adhere to heavy materials without mechanical fixing or bracing while curing, and provides a long last hold.

Bostik Hi Tack withstands an incredible 450kg/sq m, based on initial adhesion and immediate strength.

This immediate hold and strength of Bostik Hi Tack makes it ideal for items such as mirrors or splash backs. You can just glue them and “walk away”.

And because it’s MS-based, it won’t damage solvent-sensitive substrates such as mirrors, glass or polystyrene.

Being moisture and weather-resistant, the product is ideal for outdoor and indoor use, and can be used for a wide range of building materials such as concrete, mirrors, glass, PU, uPVC, hard plastics, enamel, ceramics, metals, stainless steel, wood and more.

This all-round power construction adhesive is not only extremely strong and powerful, but due to its unique properties it will adhere directly without the need to support the bond.

Bostik Hi Tack can be used to bond porous and non-porous materials, and is also permanently elastic.

It is ideal for low-VOC applications, and does not contain any isocyanates, solvents and silicones. It is available in a 290ml cartridge in white.

Find out more at www.bostik.co.nz, and watch the video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2ONXBMRJZDU>.



New sealant features hybrid polyurethane technology

A weather-resistant expansion sealant for building facade construction joints is the newest addition to the Bostik Seal N’ Flex family.

Bostik Seal n Flex Façade is based on the latest hybrid polyurethane technology.

This universal, low-modulus formulation is permanently elastic, with +/- 25% joint

movement, does not form any bubbles during its curing process, and provides excellent adhesion without primer on most, even damp, surfaces.

Seal n Flex Façade is easy to use with superior tooling capabilities, and can be painted over with most water-based and two-pack paints.

Ideal for low VOC applications, Seal n Flex

Facade has very low odour, and contains no isocyanates, solvents or silicones.

The product has been BRANZ-appraised and has passedASUREQuality assessment.

The range is available in a 600ml sausage and 300ml cartridge in grey, black and white.

Find out more at www.bostik.co.nz.



NEW PRODUCT LAUNCH



SEALN' FLEX[®] FACADE

PREMIUM LOW MODULUS FLEXIBLE HYBRID CONSTRUCTION SEALANT

New to the Seal N' Flex family, **Seal N' Flex Facade** is a BRANZ appraised, professional quality, high performance, low VOC, weather resistant expansion sealant for construction joints.

This universal, low modulus, bubble-free formula with +/- 25% joint movement is based on the latest hybrid polyurethane technology, and provides excellent adhesion without primer (see TDS) on most, even damp, surfaces.

Low VOC with very low odour, and contains no isocyanates, solvents or silicones. Available in 600 mL sausage and 300 mL cartridge in Grey, Black and White.



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Before use refer to current Technical Data Sheets and Safety Data Sheets



Quality adhesive foam products — delivered quickly

Acme Supplies Ltd has been the exclusive New Zealand importer and distributor of major international brands of quality hardware products and hand tools for 50 years.

The core business of Acme, as a branded wholesaler, is sourcing and supplying a compelling range, and providing fast nationwide delivery.

Below are two of its main adhesive foam tape products.

Inseal Medium Density PVC Closed Cell Foam

- Available in 1.5mm, 3mm, 4.5mm, 6mm, 10.5mm, and 12mm thicknesses.
- A black, medium-density, closed-cell, UV-stable PVC foam tape.
- Air, dust and water seal.
- Coated with an acrylic adhesive on one side.
- Economical and easy to use.
- Suitable for medium-to-heavy duty applications.

Typical applications include:

- Building — moisture barrier on external building joints.
- Glazing — used on aluminium, wood and uPVC window systems



Inseal Medium Density PVC Closed Cell Foam Tape.

between glass and frame beading, and as an internal and external seal.

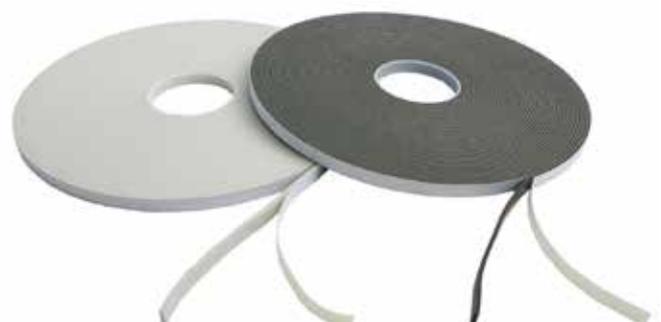
- Cladding — Suitable for use in very large cladding systems.
- Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning — Used to seal panelling on heating and ventilation units to prevent air leakage.
- Sound transmission — used to help prevent vibrations.
- Custom slit to requested widths.

Inseal High Density PVC Closed Cell Foam

- Available in 0.8mm, 1.5mm, 3mm, 4.5mm, and 6mm thicknesses.
- A grey, high-density, closed-cell, UV-stable PVC foam tape.
- Water, dust and air seal.
- Coated with an acrylic adhesive on one side.
- Ideal for heavy duty, load-bearing applications.
- Fire rated to DIN 4102 part 1, B2 (European standard).

Typical applications include:

- Automotive — Used on commercial vehicle roof sections and side panels to give an effective water seal and prevent vibration.
- Curtain Walling — applied between glazed units and outer frames of single or double-glazed walling systems.
- Marine — Used as a hatch seal.
- Used for computer mouse pads, anti-vibration pads, and is suitable for cushioning in metal cabinet doors.
- Custom slit to requested widths.



Inseal High Density PVC Closed Cell Foam Tape.

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Kitchen wall
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450
KG

Withstands
450kg/m²

(Based on initial adhesion
and immediate strength)
Refer to Technical Data Sheet
for directions before use

HIGH TACK

**SOLVENT FREE, ULTRA STRONG,
INSTANT GRAB MS ADHESIVE**

**Bostik High Tack H785 is the original, high quality,
professional MS adhesive with an extremely high initial
tack and strength.**

This primerless, permanently elastic formula adheres heavy materials
without mechanical fixing or bracing while curing, and provides a long
last hold.

Being moisture and weather resistant, Bostik High Tack is ideal for both
outdoor and indoor use, and is suitable for a wide range of building
materials such as concrete, mirrors, glass, PU, uPVC, hard plastics, enamel,
ceramics, metals, stainless steel, wood and more.

Ideal for low VOC applications, with no isocyanates, solvents and silicones.
Available in 290 mL cartridge in white.



Comparison test see
bostik.co.nz



bostik.co.nz ph. 0508 222 272

Before use refer to current Technical Data Sheet and Safety Data Sheet



Passive fire protection range new on the market

Fire protection is an increasingly important part of today's building industry, largely due to urbanisation.

The more concentrated environments we live in, the higher the risk is for a life-threatening fire to spread quickly, which means that buildings and structures need protection against this imminent threat.

Consistent use of integrated, passive fire protection (PFP) is the most effective way to minimise this risk and protect people's lives, their property and the environment.

Why use PFP?

PFP limits the spread of fire and smoke by containing it in a single compartment for a certain time.

Escape routes are therefore protected, as well as the building's structure.

Sika's passive fire protection solutions are designed to be able to seal all different types of building joints and penetrations.

This helps to keep fire and smoke in those defined compartments for a certain period of time, thereby allowing people to evacuate safely.

The new range includes:

- Sikacryl-621 Fire, a fire-resistant acrylic sealant for interior service penetrations and linear joint seals,
- Sikacryl-625 Fire coating,
- SikaSeal-626 Fire Board, and
- SikaSeal-627 Fire Collar.

The new products complement the already existing Sikaflex-400 Fire (fire-resistant polyurethane sealant for interiors/exterior) and SikaBoom-FR fire-retardant expanding PU foam.



Sika Passive Fire Protection Systems.

Experts in sealants, foams and adhesives

Soudal New Zealand is a relatively new name to many in the New Zealand construction sector.

However, for more than 20 years the company has been a leading supplier of sealants, foams and adhesives to Holdfast NZ under the iconic Gorilla brand.

In November 2018 that relationship changed when Belgium-based Soudal stepped in to become sole owner of the Holdfast business in New Zealand.

That meant the products, brands and service that customers had come to know over 35 years were all retained, but now had the resourcing and support of the global sealants, foams and adhesives giant that is Soudal.

The change has brought many benefits to customers. With a commitment to quality and a real focus on the New Zealand market, Soudal prides itself on creating strong relationships with customers and providing tailored solutions to meet their needs.

Quality and sustainability

Every week more than 4 million cartridges and 2 million canisters of PU Foam are manufactured in state-of-the-art production facilities around the world.

All are manufactured to meet exacting quality standards. To maintain these standards, Soudal became the first company within the industry to achieve the ISO 9001 quality certification.

Product consistency and full traceability are therefore ensured across the huge range of more than 1000 chemical formulations.

Soudal's commitment and focus on sustainability and environmental safety is shown in the recent achievement of the ISO 14001 certificate.

This ensures the company implements all the necessary measures to reduce the impact of its production on the environment, increasing focus on "green products", and continuous efforts to recycle production and reduce packaging surpluses.

Innovation

At its sites across the world, Soudal's teams of highly qualified scientists, engineers and application technicians develop state-of-the-art formulas, packaging and accessories to perfectly suit the demands of the industry and end users.

Driven by the will to continuously improve and to provide better and more environmentally-friendly solutions for its customers, Soudal is leading from the front in product innovation.

STRONGER TOGETHER



For over 30 years Gorilla sealants and adhesives have been the “go to” choice for kiwi tradies through the good times and bad. When a strong, reliable and quality job matters the most, look no further than Gorilla.



New building consent exemptions from August

Building Today columnist and EasyBuild director Mike Fox says overall, the changes allowing more building projects to be completed without a building consent are a step in the right direction. However, he says the exemptions could have been more wide-ranging and made a real difference.

Like me, no doubt you've probably seen recent media coverage that from August this year more building projects can be carried out without a consent.

This has to be good news for the industry and the consumer, as any initiative that reduces council involvement and cost, and improves efficiency, should be well received.

But what's the reality behind all the hype?

In essence, sizes of previously exempted work under Schedule 1 of the Building Act have been increased, and more authority is given to Licensed Building Practitioners and Chartered Professional Engineers.

Using a sleepout as an example, the exemption for building one without consent has increased in size from 10 sq m to 30 sq m.

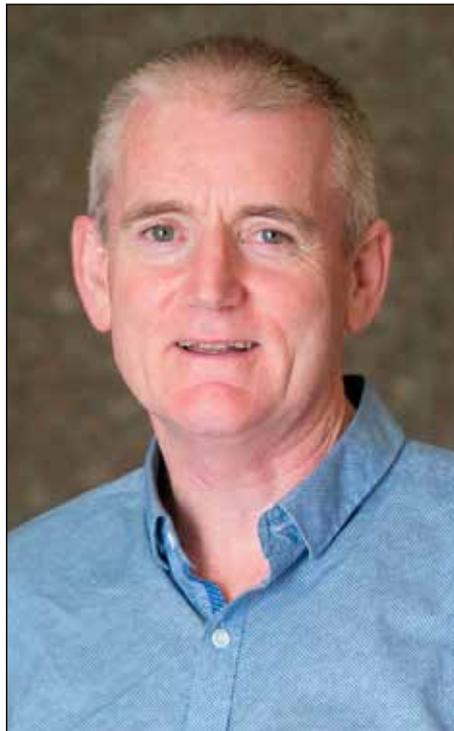
However, a more useful exemption in this instance would have been to increase the exemption to 36 sq m — the size of a double garage, reducing the need for even more consents.

However, when I questioned this I was informed that it was for some vague engineering reasons that they settled on 30 sq m. I would say it's a missed opportunity.

So what requirements must these new projects meet?

Continuing with the example of a single-level sleepout, as long as it meets local planning regulations, is supplementary to an existing dwelling, is the prescribed distance from boundaries and other buildings, then it can be designed and erected without a building consent in one of the following three ways:

- A kitset or prefab sleepout under 30 sq m can be used where the manufacturer has had the design reviewed by a Chartered Professional Engineer. Anyone can put it up, including a Do-It-Yourselfer (DIYer), or
- A Licensed Building Practitioner can design and erect a sleepout under 30 sq m using any code-compliant design, materials and methods, or
- Anyone can erect a sleepout so long as lightweight materials are used, and it's built in



accordance with B1/AS1 when it comes to structural components. In simple terms, this is pretty much a NZS3604-compliant building with an iron roof, timber structure and weatherboard cladding.

With all of the above, no inspections are required — however, all work must be done in accordance with the Building Code and relevant standards.

I'm not sure how that will ever be tested unless a future owner challenges work that might not comply. It will be an interesting space to watch.

What resources are available?

The MBIE has done some great work providing online modules which explain the Building Code and how to comply with it.

They are also in the process of rewriting the current somewhat cumbersome guidance document that will accompany the revised Schedule 1.

I recommend all designers and tradespeople upskill by reading the guidance document and using the modules, all available at www.building.govt.nz.

It's actually somewhat surprising how much work can be completed without a consent but, as with most things, the devil is in the detail, so studying this will be time well spent.

What about DIY? Isn't it risky?

One of the glaring risks I see with the new exemption regime is the ability for a DIYer to complete this work with zero oversight.

This transpires into significantly heightened risk of substandard buildings being completed.

Perhaps a smarter, safer way to do this would have been to set requirements for an LBP to complete or oversee the work of a DIYer for these increased exemptions. Or, failing that, the DIYer would need a consent and be subject to inspections.

Such an approach would provide accountability, and a worthy and clear distinction between a Licensed Building Practitioner and a DIYer, as well as suitable checks and balances on DIYers on larger structures.

Only time will tell how this omission pans out. However, I can see problems on the horizon with the lack of DIY oversight that's currently proposed.

Can exempted structures, like a sleepout, be self-contained?

An often-asked question will be, can a sleepout be self-contained and still be built without a consent? The short answer is no — if you are going to include plumbing, then you need a consent.

It's not yet clear whether the inclusion of plumbing triggers a full building consent for the structure or just the plumbing component.

I see no logical reason why you couldn't erect your sleepout and then do a small consent for the plumbing required, either part-way through or before any internal linings are installed.

2020 — what do they really mean?

In a perfect world, plumbing would be allowed to be installed without consent on the proviso that it must be completed by a Registered Plumber/Drainlayer, with as-built drawings sent to the local authority so they can keep their records straight.

Perhaps this is something for the next round of amendments, as huge efficiency gains would be made by relaxing this.

The reality is that if you are going to build a 30 sq m structure, at some point it will need plumbing.

Plus, with the tiny house revolution gaining momentum, having the ability to put in a small self-contained dwelling without the roadblocks and expense of council involvement would make much needed housing available to many who just can't get a home through traditional channels.

What else can I build without a building consent?

I highlighted a sleepout as an example because it's easy to relate to.

But there are a number of increased exemptions which make sense and are helpful. Key ones include:

- Single-storey detached builds up to 30 sq m.
- Carports up to 40 sq m.

- Ground-mounted solar panel structures.
- Ground floor awnings and verandahs up to 30 sq m.
- Outdoor fireplaces or ovens up to 2.5m high.
- Flexible water storage bladders.
- Small pipe-supporting structures.

Overall, the changes are a step in the right direction, but with a few more tweaks they could have been brilliant and have made a real difference.

- Small short-span bridges on private land.
- Single-storey pole sheds and hay barns up to 110 sq m on rural land.

A full list of exemptions is available at www.building.govt.nz.

Whether each of these exemptions has been fully thought through and considered for its practicality remains to be seen.

And there's the potential that some of the changes in the DIY space in particular increase risk in the longer term, and may come back to haunt them in the future.

Caution is key — do your homework

The increased exemptions present a good opportunity to educate the industry around how to make best use of these changes.

It's imperative that anyone contemplating doing work under the exemptions allowed in Schedule 1 does their homework before forging ahead.

This is especially so if you are an LBP, as it will be rightly difficult to feign ignorance and ask for forgiveness afterwards.

It would be fair to say that most of us in the industry know of Schedule 1, but would struggle to give you definitive answers about it.

The existing guidelines are somewhat overdue for an overhaul, and it's timely that the changes the

MBIE are making will ideally make things clearer for everyone.

Overall, the changes are a step in the right direction, but with a few more tweaks they could have been brilliant and have made a real difference.

Some opportunities have unfortunately been missed with this well-meaning initiative.

• This article contains the author's opinion only, and is not necessarily the opinion of the Registered Master Builders Association, its chief executive or staff.

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Right and wrong

Architect Don Bunting looks at what we might have been doing wrong, and how this might change post-Covid.

Wrong moves

Consider just a few of the wrong moves we have made in the recent past that will need to change to meet the challenge of a new post-Covid normal:

Cars and energy use

We import 100,000 second-hand cars every year. That's 59% of total registrations, creating an economic and environmental time bomb.

Regarding a move away from petrol-driven cars, Bjorn Lomborg, President of Copenhagen Consensus, said recently: "Today, electric cars are simply expensive gadgets heavily subsidised for the wealthy to feel good while doing very little for the planet."

The focus should be on developing clean energy from local sources — including hydro, wind and solar — not reducing one minor reliance on a "dying" energy source.

And where are the new hydro schemes to provide energy, fresh water for a growing population, and for recreation and tourism? Where are new, innovative energy-creation proposals?

There also needs to be research into the real cost of all forms of "clean" energy. Hydrogen and biomass have been shown to have significant downsides, while the real embedded costs of solar and wind have not been examined in any detail.

Private transport

Say yes to electric vehicles but also use cars less. Getting to work should involve switching on your computer rather than your car.

Working from home or working locally has always made sense, and recent events have shown it can work.

You still need to gather together to discuss and debate but not every day or every week. Let's take real advantage of the electronic highway.

Public transport

Stop using proposed improvements in public transport as a political football. Airport access — light rail, heavy rail, or road (say a busway) — has become a "my idea is better than yours" battle between political factions.

Getting to and from our airports is easy —

catch a bus, shuttle or Uber. Problem solved.

As for the rest? Electric buses on dedicated busways — anything else will cost too much and take too long. And our city streets are too narrow for light rail.

Quantity versus quality

The Covid-19 stand-down has highlighted the country's reliance on mass tourism and using educational institutions as centres of profit rather than centres of excellence.

Mass tourism destroys the very thing that attracts people in the first place — a clean and green environment.

And offering bottom level education to anyone willing to pay adds little, and leads to a dumbing down of universities and training institutions.

The recent proliferation of some frankly marginal universities in New Zealand reflects a belief that higher education is best run as a business. Not true.

Industry issues

The recent forced stop in construction industry activity is an opportunity to think about what we do well and what we do really badly:

Getting costs wrong

An *NZ Herald* article by Bernard Orsman highlighted how a range of highway and rail projects' budgets have ballooned by \$1.38 billion.

Final costs are likely to be higher still, based on recent projects such as the Auckland Conference Centre and Commercial Bay.

And we await with trepidation the final cost of the Auckland City Rail Project and Wellington's Transmission Gully.

A more recent article by Orsman included some worrying quotes from the City Rail Link chief executive, who is, incidentally, an engineer with a PhD in construction economics.

He said "the cost of the project will not be known until the end of the year, when CRL gets a red pencil around all the costs".

He also said (believe it or not): "The plan is to try and work within our current cost envelope".

Accepting that the close-down and the new safety protocols will lead to some cost increases, statements like these show that our



industry has developed a cavalier approach to project costs.

Infrastructure projects may be difficult to estimate due to subgrade unknowns, but surely we can do better than being out by 100%?

The Building Act and Code

Have things improved since the introduction of the performance-based Building Code? Have construction standards improved? Is gaining a building consent and/or a final code compliance now easier, quicker and cheaper?

It's time to do something, especially stopping the usurious cost and unacceptable delays in gaining consents.

There are also strong grounds for completely dismantling the current performance-based approach to our Building Code, accepting that what seemed a good idea at the time has led to a bureaucratic nightmare and a technically-tenuous end result.

Why does it take so long?

Construction timelines seem to have increased markedly over recent years and appear to be getting longer. Our levels of efficiency on and off site are heading in the wrong direction.

Health and Safety rules play a part in this, but why is so much construction activity still taking place on site? Prefabricate!

Uber ate the taxi — a cautionary tale

An article by business advisor Bruce Cotterill used the near destruction of the traditional taxi industry by Uber as an example of taking on an existing service or product that is struggling to meet expectations, and offering something better, more convenient and cheaper.

There is a huge gap available for any building organisation that can provide what the country is crying out for — projects that meet market needs and are completed on time and on budget.

What'll happen in the next 12 months — 'who the hell knows?'

Terry Sage of Trades Coaching New Zealand says confusion reigns with all the conflicting post-Covid messages currently doing the rounds.

Not sure about you, but for me it's getting somewhat confusing out there — and there was me thinking I'm semi-educated and seen most things — well, a few things anyway. My confusion starts at the pointy end with the make believe world of worker bees down in the hive.

First they tell us there's a recession on the way and the future is looking bleak. But, hey, there's never been a better time to borrow money because the interest rate is so low — so go forth and spend as much as you can to help the local economy get back on its feet.

Talk about mixed messages.

Then I circulate in the real world, the world where you and I live — and not taking anything away from those that have lost their jobs — but where is this recession?

Life seems as close to normal as it's probably going to get. The majority seem happy or, at least, content, and the general outlook is positive.

Admittedly, there was this one roofer who said in six months all work will dry up and there will be mass redundancies — so he sold his company last week.

Should we follow him or have faith in the chap who bought him out?

You can see my confusion — there's just too many conflicting messages and stories out there.

If we are supposed to be the consummate businessperson — you know, the successful one that is always in the last chapter of every business book — then we should be watching, listening and taking notes, all so we can run our businesses profitably and plan for the future.

If everything we hear or read changes depending on who is speaking or writing, then life just isn't what it's supposed to be.

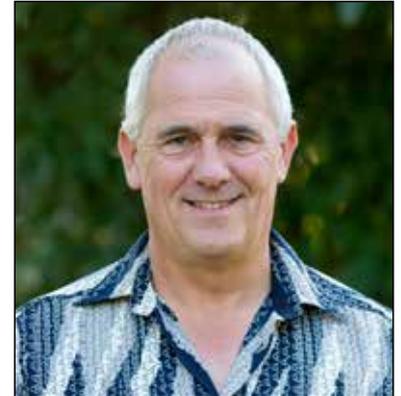
Now I'm going on a bit here because I think I have it worse than you. I get paid to give advice, direct you, point you in the right direction, answer your questions and smooth out the confusion.

So how hard is my job right now, and where do I get all my answers from?

Well, apart from the myth that I make it all up as I go along, I do exactly what you all do — read, listen and watch. The only difference is I probably have more time to do a lot more of it.

I then filter out the sensationalist drama, and whatever is left I put alongside what my clients are actually experiencing. That then gives a very realistic picture of what's "really" happening in the business environment.

So where does that leave all of us as we're



trying to make plans for the next 12 months? Well, I have played with the crystal ball, dealt the tarot cards numerous times, and spoken to the mystics — and they all say the same thing: "who the hell knows?"

Actually, even if they were believable they scare the bejesus out of me, so let's stick with what we can really see.

We don't know if there will be any more changes to lockdown levels so, for this exercise, we will go with no.

There will be more redundancies to come, but for the most part, they will probably be from the bigger players, as this is where the majority of redundancies have occurred so far (except they are calling them "adjustments").

Will there be changes in the interest rates, will banks change their wants, could cashflow tighten? Yes to all three, because they do that on a regular basis anyway.

Technically, we are in a recession because the past two quarters are said to be down — but then there are recessions and recessions.

My learned advice to all my clients is don't change, and keep on doing what you do. If you do want to change then do more of what you do and grow a bit — but build up as much in cash reserves as you can.

Keep capital expenditure to a must-do only for the next 12 months — for example, keep the car for one more year.

Watch, read and listen. But don't panic, as most of it is out there for selling newspapers and growing viewer numbers. Oh, and keep the borders closed!

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THE BUSINESS SIDE OF CONSTRUCTION

Quality candidates flooding the market

Building Recruitment managing director Kevin Everett shares 10 interviewing tips for employers to ensure they can efficiently manage the huge influx of applications.

Following up on my previous article regarding upgrading of staff and why now is the best time, with so much uncertainty in the current market I am finding many pockets of activity, especially in the residential and manufacturing side of the industry.

The number of candidates applying has increased hugely, and the positive from that is the quality of applicant is very high.

From project managers, estimators and quantity surveyors, to senior management and salespeople, I have been very impressed, as have my clients.

Here are some statistics for the construction industry from Seek NZ:

Hard-hit industries showing change

Many industries which were hit hard by lockdown have seen an upturn in job ad volumes as restrictions ease.

Here are the industries with the most job ads on site, and the percentage increase in job ad numbers compared to pre-Covid-19:

- Trades and Services (59%): Roles such as building trades, labourers and automotive trades.
- Information and communication technology (54%): Developers/programmers, business/systems analysts, software engineering, help desk and IT support, project management.
- Health care and medical (82%): Psychology, counselling, social work and nursing (aged care and general medical), physiotherapy, dental and medical administration.
- Manufacturing, transport and logistics (57%): Warehousing, storage and distribution, machine operators and assembly and process work, and road transport.
- Construction (57%): Project management, foreperson/supervisors, plant and machinery operators.

We are seeing a huge increase in clients looking for staff. Our job order rates are now higher than they were before lockdown.

This certainly backs up my view that now is the best time to be looking at hiring. For the past four years or more, we have been in a skills shortage market, and it was the candidates controlling the employment process, usually resulting in higher salaries being offered to attract them.

There is a huge shift back to the employer. There are more skilled people now available



who are looking for longevity and, therefore, salary expectations have softened as job security has become more important.

We have seen a huge increase in clients hiring which shows it's not all doom and gloom out there. So if you are not being proactive at this time then you will certainly miss the boat to ensure you are ready for when the market moves, which it will.

If you are looking to start the employment trail and not using our services, that's OK — I will forgive you.

However, I thought I would share some interviewing ideas for employers to ensure they can manage the huge influx of applications.

Ten tips to ensure a good recruitment process:

- Before advertising make sure you have a detailed Job Description. This will help set expectations and writing the job advert. Ensure your advert is legally worded, otherwise it could be embarrassing to you and your brand.
- Ensure you have the resources to quickly respond to every applicant, even if it is a rejection, as not doing so can damage your employer brand.
- Be prepared for lots of emails/phone calls from either candidates asking questions, applicants still applying from overseas or

recruiters wanting to supply candidates.

- Know exactly the skills you need. List in a priority 1-5 which are non-negotiable, and which would be good to have but not essential.
 - Ensure you allow yourself the time to conduct interviews without disruption (45 to 60 minutes).
 - Study each resume with a fine-tooth comb and list questions you need answered around any gaps you find, such as many short-term contracts or employment.
- Then make a skills matrix to track candidates' performance to ensure you recall vital information, as you may interview a lot more candidates than you think.

• List questions you need answered to ensure they meet your needs and prove they can do what they say they can do. Use open-ended questions and ask for examples of how they would do tasks.

Ensure you get the candidate to do 70% of the talking during the interview. Your job is to ask questions, sit and listen to the answers. Ensure your questions are legally allowed to be asked.

- Ensure you sell your business, despite it being an employer-focused market. Your competitors are looking to enhance their team too. Why would candidates want to work for you?
- Be decisive as delays can be costly.
- Do not contact current or past employers for a reference without permission from the candidate. This could get you into trouble. The Privacy Act comes with serious breach penalties.

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Building Consents Information

For All Authorisations, May 2020

Dwellings	\$1,462,266,000
Domestic Outbuildings	\$14,408,000
Total Residential	\$1,476,675,000
Non-residential	\$552,888,000
Total All Buildings	\$2,029,562,000
Non-building Construction	\$36,162,000
Total Authorisations	\$2,065,725,000

Number of new dwellings consented

	May 2020	Apr 2020	May 2019		May 2020	Apr 2020	May 2019
Far North District	23	19	44	Horowhenua District	46	12	33
Whangarei District	49	27	71	Kapiti Coast District	21	9	23
Kaipara District	18	9	18	Porirua City	30	19	42
Rodney District	90	107	60	Upper Hutt City	27	2	12
North Shore/Albany Wards	196	168	290	Lower Hutt City	40	13	24
Waitakere Ward	154	90	385	Wellington City	167	34	146
Auckland Wards	517	161	417	Masteron District	22	11	19
Manukau/Howick Wards	183	150	178	Carterton District	9	9	9
Manurewa-Papakura Ward	142	148	261	South Wairarapa District	9	4	4
Franklin Ward	85	70	66	Tasman District	33	32	31
Thames-Coromandel District	24	20	30	Nelson City	7	14	26
Hauraki District	11	7	14	Marlborough District	18	12	26
Waikato District	73	69	58	Kaikoura District	6	3	1
Matamata-Piako District	20	13	39	Buller District	3	1	4
Hamilton City	137	75	210	Grey District	4	2	3
Waipa District	39	39	60	Westland District	1	3	3
Otorohanga District	2	1	3	Hurunui District	11	4	8
South Waikato District	6	2	4	Waimakariri District	51	44	45
Waitemoa District	2	2	1	Christchurch City	382	218	250
Taupo District	26	24	30	Selwyn District	172	104	93
Western Bay of Plenty District	40	18	51	Ashburton District	16	10	17
Tauranga City	121	60	115	Timaru District	13	8	13
Rotorua District	12	4	23	Mackenzie District	10	5	12
Whakatane District	6	3	14	Waimate District	2	0	3
Kawerau District	0	0	0	Chatham Islands Territory	3	0	0
Opotiki District	1	0	2	Waitaki District	14	2	17
Gisborne District	11	11	7	Central Otago District	24	19	25
Wairoa District	2	1	2	Queenstown-Lakes District	104	103	94
Hastings District	31	45	47	Dunedin City	40	19	33
Napier City	40	16	27	Clutha District	7	2	14
Central Hawke's Bay District	13	3	6	Southland District	8	6	15
New Plymouth District	62	8	35	Gore District	1	0	2
Stratford District	5	0	4	Invercargill City	4	2	7
South Taranaki District	6	8	9	Area Outside TA	0	0	0
Ruapehu District	3	5	11				
Whanganui District	21	4	8	Total	3554	2168	3724
Rangitikei District	6	0	8				
Manawatu District	17	14	22				
Palmerston North City	51	37	39				
Taranaki District	4	4	1				

- 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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