

# BUILDING TODAY



The official magazine of the Registered Master Builders Association

[www.buildingtoday.co.nz](http://www.buildingtoday.co.nz)

**December 2023**

Volume 33 Number 11

## WIN!

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Swedish G-Man  
handsaws worth



### \$460

Details, page 28

# Inside:

## KELLY STEPS DOWN AFTER NINE YEARS

Chief executive David Kelly  
reflects on his time at  
the helm of the RMBA

## RMB 2023 HOUSE OF THE YEAR

All the results, judges'  
comments and images from  
this year's prestigious event

## GREEN BUILDING DESIGNED FOR CLIMATE CHANGE

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# BUILDING TODAY

December 2023

Volume 33 Number 11

## From the editor

In his final Chief's Chat column for *Building Today*, outgoing Registered Master Builders Association chief executive David Kelly reflects on his nine years in charge — although he'll still be around in an advisory role for the next year.

Restructuring the RMBA from a regional entity into a strong national body, and the growth of the RMBA's annual Constructive Forum, stand out as highlights during his time.

He's also pleased that the Association has a good working relationship with incoming government officials with which to engage constructively on sector issues.

Elsewhere, we feature all the national winners in the RMB House of the Year event, the finals for which were held in Christchurch this year.

We at *Building Today* hope you get to enjoy a well-earned break from the pressures of the industry, and come back refreshed to take on the challenges of a new year.

We wish the RMBA, our advertisers and readers a very Merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year.

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ISSN 1171-0225 (Print) ISSN 1171-1264 (Online)

6-13

RMB 2023 House of the Year



16-23

BT News



4, 5, 14

RMBA News

4, 5, 14 RMBA News

In his final column for *Building Today*, outgoing RMBA chief executive David Kelly says policy reversals by the incoming government could open up opportunities in the sector.

6-13 RMB 2023 House of the Year

All the results, judges' comments and images from the Registered Master Builders 2023 House of the Year competition.

16-23 BT News

Green Building designed for extreme climate change; Myth or Reality: The practical and psychological reasons why most excavators are yellow; Hire company continues North Island expansion; Civil contractors welcome incoming government.

24-27 Industry Training

Whitireia and WelTec celebrate scholarship graduates entering the workforce; Building success with the launch of a new cutting-edge construction qualification; A gateway to the construction industry for second chance learners.

28 Product Review/Competition

Riveting efficiency and fewer interruptions; Win a range of Swedish G-Man handsaws worth \$460!

29-30 Columnists

Determination upon building works encroaching onto neighbouring property; Want no sauce with that? Why down-selling should be an important weapon in your sales and marketing arsenal.

1-year subscription (11 issues): **\$57.50**

# New government's policy backtracking leaves myriad of questions

In his final column for Building Today, outgoing RMBA chief executive David Kelly says policy reversals by the incoming government could create uncertainty in the construction sector — but could also open up opportunities.

As Bob Dylan once proclaimed, the times, they are a-changin'. It's an idiom that's likely as true now as it would have been in 1964 when the song was first released.

Whenever there is a change of government, the list of policies and approaches that are reversed or unwound feels extensive.

The new government has been very explicit about reigning in spending, cutting bureaucratic red tape, and getting the economy back on track.

## Challenging environment

Given the significant economic headwinds of late, many of which have been driven by global inflationary pressures, a softening of the Chinese economy, and war, it will be a challenging environment with less stimulus for sector change — at least in the short term.

From a regulatory perspective, we currently have several questions:

- What happens once the Natural and Built Environment Act and Spatial Planning Act are repealed?



- What happens to the RMA when it comes back? Will it happen this side of Christmas as has previously been promised?

- What impact will the Ministry of Regulation have on construction?

- What will become of the Construction Accord or Kainga Ora?

All of these things could create uncertainty, but could also be opportunities for the sector.

Then there are things we know will continue, such as the consenting review, which is well underway with the MBIE.

I am pleased that Chris Bishop has been recently appointed the Minister of Housing, the Minister for Infrastructure and the Minister responsible for RMA reform.

Chris attended the Constructive Forum this year and knows the sector's issues well.

## Good working relationship

I believe we have a good working relationship with him, and will be able to engage constructively on issues that can improve productivity in the construction sector.

Similarly, we look forward to building a relationship with the new Minister for Building and Construction Chris Penk.

The Registered Master Builders Association will continue to advocate on behalf of our members and the wider construction sector.

We are in touch with the new government and its officials, and we look forward to their engagement.

## Final column as RMBA chief Kelly steps down

As you may know, I have recently announced my decision to step down as Registered Master Builders Association chief executive. I'll still be around in an advisory role for the next year — but this will be my last Chief's Chat.

The decision to hand over the mantle of a job I have enjoyed so thoroughly for the past nine years has not been easy.

In that time, I have been incredibly proud to see the way the RMBA has gone from a regional structure to a strong national body that has the capacity and capability to effect real change in our sector and New Zealand.

## Construction Forum growth

A particular pleasure for me has been the initiation and growth of the Constructive Forum. In reflection, this was a brave move from the Board back in 2016 — but one that has paid dividends time and time again ever since.

It has allowed us to move above discussions about individual issues, and to advocate for sector-wide system change.

There is indisputable power in our collective voice, which we've proved.

We've also seen other industry associations embrace the kaupapa and turn up each and every year, and I'd like to extend my gratitude to them.

A connected sector is more effective in bringing in change. We are seeing this already, with positive steps now underway in key areas such as health and safety, consenting, procurement, and waste management.

## True privilege

It is a true privilege to be part of a community where we can put all our expertise in a room to discuss vital issues, network, and brainstorm how we build a better New Zealand for the future.

Aside from the professional connections, I have also made some personal friendships at these fora that will endure long into the future.

Before I sign off, I want to acknowledge the wonderful, hard-working team at the RMBA.

The success of this organisation is down to you. You have been such an incredible support to me in this role throughout my tenure, and I'm so grateful.

I also want to thank the Master Builders Board for the trust you placed in me, and the support and encouragement over the past nine years.

To that end, I'm chuffed that I'll still be able to work with you, albeit in a different capacity over the next year. Therefore, it's not truly a goodbye, because I'll see you soon.



# SAWING TO NEW HEIGHTS

## JACK NEVINES

2023 NATIONAL REGISTERED  
MASTER BUILDERS CARTERS  
APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR WINNER

Jack Nevines is employed by  
Faulkner Construction and his  
training provider was BCITO, a  
business division of Te Pūkenga.



### SUCCESSES

When Jack was announced as the Master Builders CARTERS 2023 Apprentice of the Year winner, he felt proud and humbled to have won in front of his family, employer, and work mates.

"It took a while for the win to sink in. I was in disbelief as I was up against seven other talented apprentices from across the country. Everyone was deserving and they're all great people. The competition itself was a blast. In the regional competition I loved showcasing my work to the judges during the site visit. I am proud of the work that we do, and it was great to showcase it to industry professionals," Jack says.

"During both competitions but especially at the Nationals, meeting the other apprentices was the best part. To hear how their apprenticeships were going and the differences in our industry was incredible."



### CHALLENGES

The National competition was a test of Jack's abilities, but he powered through to come out on top.

"The National practical challenge was a lot tougher than the regional build. The physical and mental pressure that you experience takes a toll on you over those six and a half hours. At the end of the day, all the apprentices were in the same boat, trying to beat the clock. Having immense time pressure is not something we're used to, but at the end of the day it was so rewarding."



### EMPLOYER COMMENT

Jack's employer Ross Faulkner of Faulkner Construction was one of Jack's biggest supporters.

"We encouraged Jack to re-enter the competition as he had placed third the previous year in Auckland. He had another year's experience under his belt and was getting close to finishing his apprenticeship. He had learnt a lot more about the industry and gaining the skills needed to be a leading craftsman," Ross said.

"I felt incredibly proud of Jack's success, and trying to convey this in words is difficult. It is a huge testament to Jack's talents, and is a reflection of all our staff who have been involved in his training over the last three years. Jack would be the first to admit that his success this year has been built on the experience, support and encouragement he has received from our tradesmen who've entered the competition in previous years," Ross said.



### JUDGE'S COMMENT

Jack performed exceptionally well across all three categories of the competition, impressing the judges at every stage.

Jack showed a natural ability to lead, and the management of his project was faultless. Jack's extensive knowledge of the building code, methodology, and building products stood out, and showed his great interest and understanding of the industry.

In the final stages of the competition, his skills all came together to demonstrate his top-class craftsmanship. Jack should be extremely proud of this result, and the impressive apprentice that he has proved to be.

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## Celebrating building excellence with **THE BEST KIWI HOMES & RENOVATIONS OF 2023**

**Registered Master Builders House of the Year Awards celebrates the best homes, craftsmanship, renovations, and builders across Aotearoa New Zealand. With close to 300 entries in the 2023 competition, the calibre of the award winners continues to showcase the talent and skill of our residential builders.**

**For more information about the competition, visit [houseoftheyear.co.nz](https://houseoftheyear.co.nz).**

### **SUPREME WINNER**

**REGISTERED MASTER BUILDERS SUPREME  
HOUSE OF THE YEAR OVER \$1 MILLION**

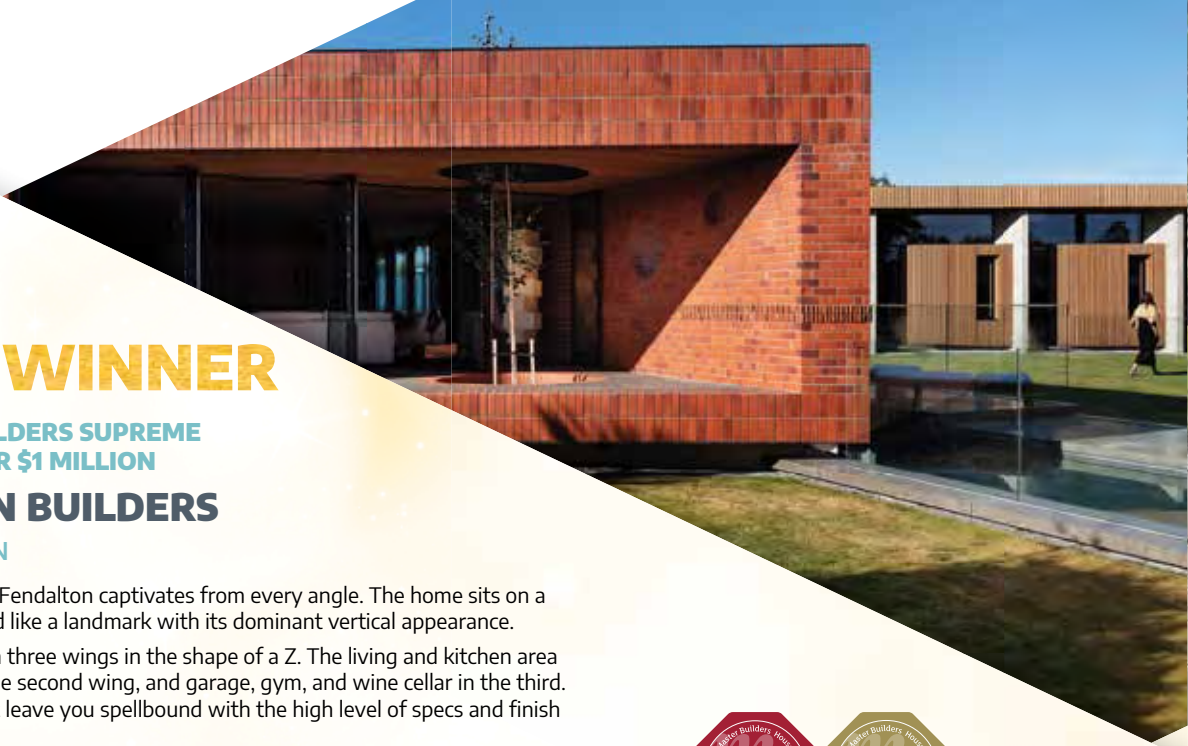
**JOHN CREIGHTON BUILDERS**

**FOR A HOME IN FENDALTON**

This unique single-storey home in Fendalton captivates from every angle. The home sits on a flat site and rises out of the ground like a landmark with its dominant vertical appearance.

The structure is cutting-edge, with three wings in the shape of a Z. The living and kitchen area make up one wing, bedrooms in the second wing, and garage, gym, and wine cellar in the third. The high-end materials and fit-out leave you spellbound with the high level of specs and finish throughout.

Extensive in-built oak joinery has been meticulously installed with zero tolerances, and the craftsmanship throughout this home is of the highest quality. Creighton Builders have well and truly claimed this National Supreme House of the Year over \$1 million Award.





# SUPREME WINNER

REGISTERED MASTER BUILDERS SUPREME  
HOUSE OF THE YEAR UNDER \$1 MILLION

## FV DESIGN AND BUILD

FOR A HOME IN RAGLAN

Nestled between two large pohutukawa trees, this elegant holiday home is a true gem. Located on the edge of the Raglan harbour, it offers a north-west facing position to soak up the sun from all areas. Despite its modest floor area, the home spans over three gently stepped levels, creating a sense of spaciousness. The expert craftsmanship is evident throughout, with concrete heated floors and plywood walls. The attention to detail in this build is truly remarkable.



# SUPREME WINNER

REGISTERED MASTER BUILDERS  
SUPREME RENOVATION OF THE YEAR

## GLENBUILD

FOR A HOME IN KOHIMARAMA, AUCKLAND

This remarkable renovation showcased an unwavering commitment to architectural integrity and seamless transitions. The complex structural changes, including the expansion of the middle floor and the addition of a new gym, were executed with precision, blending seamlessly with the existing architectural details and landscaping.

Despite the challenges posed by the existing masonry structure, the renovation achieved a remarkable flow throughout the house. The refurbishments of various areas were completed to an exceptional standard. Glenbuild did an outstanding job and are very deserving of this award.





## PINK BATTS CRAFTSMANSHIP AWARD



### FORM CONSTRUCTION (LAKE HAYES) FOR A HOME IN QUEENSTOWN

This home is a masterpiece of design, detail and craftsmanship, and is testament to what a highly skilled builder can achieve. The home is cut deeply into the Lake Hayes site, with schist pushed back over the roof, offering spectacular uninterrupted views across the lake to Coronet Peak.

The home was built on what was deemed an “unbuildable site”, and features details that take things to a new level — from a suspended, folded steel stair to a second concrete and timber stair welcoming guests at the entrance. The judges were blown away by the level of care and skill displayed, which was second to none, making this home a very worthy winner of the Pink Batts Craftmanship Award.

## SPECIAL AWARD



### W. HAMILTON BUILDING FOR A HOME IN DUNEDIN

This striking home celebrates the fusion of art and architecture, honouring the home owner’s dedication to supporting contemporary New Zealand art. The home is a sculptural masterpiece, and a canvas for an ever-growing art collection.

The three-level home reflects the owner’s personality, with vibrant colours, unique textures, and a bold, artistic vision. This cliff-top architectural marvel embodies the owner’s profound love for art and contemporary design, making it a deserving recipient of a Special Award.

## SPECIAL AWARD



### SJR BUILDERS FOR A HOME IN FERRY LANDING, COOKS BEACH

Defying convention and embracing innovation, this remarkable home showcases the impeccable execution of the owner’s unconventional request to his architect nephew for an underground tunnel. Designed to link the main house with the lower bunker annex – the request was not only met but exceeded.

It has been ingeniously engineered to seamlessly connect the two spaces, fulfilling the owner’s desire to retire to their suite without having to go outside. Not merely an access tunnel, it also features an underground wine cellar, creating a truly unique underground atmosphere. SJR Builders did a great job of handling the complexities of constructing and waterproofing the tunnel, making this home a stand-out project. Congratulations SJR Builders.

## APL ENVIRONMENTAL AND SUSTAINABLE EXCELLENCE AWARD



### MARIDALE CONSTRUCTION FOR A HOME IN FEATHERSTON, WAIRARAPA

With a strong commitment to sustainability and environmental stewardship, this exemplary 75 metre squared off-the-grid home showcases the home owner’s dedication to sustainable living. This was evident in the design and construction approach, which included unique transportation for roofing, windows, and gib board.

Window positioning and airflow were carefully considered, creating a home that constantly maintains around a 20 degree temperature. If additional heating is required, the 500kg Homewood, wood-fired oven, can warm the home, heat the hot water, all while cooking dinner. A 30,000-litre rainwater collection and treatment system, 14 solar panels and a Biorock non-electric wastewater treatment system all demonstrate a comprehensive off-the-grid approach.



## NEW HOME OVER \$4 MILLION



## JOHN CREIGHTON BUILDERS

### FOR A HOME IN FENDALTON, CHRISTCHURCH

The beautiful form of this home instantly captures your attention. The home has been well built with in-situ concrete panels, full-height steel windows and doors which have been fitted meticulously into the concrete walls.

The home is a credit to the builders who are at the top of their game, and have constructed such a complex and inspirational home. Congratulations to John Creighton Builders for this magnificent build and for winning the National New Home over \$4 million category.

## RESENE NEW HOME \$2 MILLION - \$4 MILLION



## MOORE CONSTRUCTION COMPANY

### FOR A HOME IN WEITI BAY, AUCKLAND

Built on a gently sloping hill overlooking the Hauraki Gulf, this gorgeous beach house situated within a secure gated subdivision is made up of a series of six pods joined by glass and cedar linkways. A stand-out feature is the sheltered central courtyard, which includes a swimming pool. Despite the unique layout, from every position the home maintains vistas out to the sea and beyond.

The thoughtfully-built home is simple in form but complex in detail. Congratulations to Moore Construction Company for their outstanding achievement in this category.

## NEW HOME \$1.5 MILLION - \$2 MILLION



## LAKES BUILDING CO

### FOR A HOME IN QUEENSTOWN

This breathtaking property located in Jack's Point stood out as a refreshing and skilfully crafted South Island holiday home. The judges were impressed by the exceptional carpentry work, which allowed Lakes Building Co to showcase their high level of workmanship.

Internally, this home is highly impressive — negative detailed meranti plywood linings feature throughout the house with Abodo door jambs. The expressed battens show clear additional detail to the ceilings, all of which have been finished with extreme care and attention.

Stand-out hand-crafted details included the bunkroom fit-out which was made on site, bespoke joinery, and thought-out finishing details that required precise construction and execution. The property showcased the builder's exceptional carpentry skills and passion for their craft, making it a deserving winner of the National New Home \$1.5 million - \$2 million category award.

## CARTERS NEW HOME \$1 MILLION - \$1.5 MILLION



## THE HOUSE COMPANY

### FOR A HOME IN WHANGATEAU, LEIGH

This enchanting waterfront home captivates with its elegant dark, moody exterior, featuring metal tray cladding and dark-stained vertical cedar. The large spacious rear deck is protected by louvres that give the home owners the ability to cook and comfortably entertain outdoors all year round.

Internally, the home comes to life with a soothing olive-green palette and expertly crafted minimalistic detailing. The builder's impeccable planning and attention to detail is evident in every feature of this home, making it a well-deserved winner in its category. Congratulations to The Housing Company for their outstanding work in creating this dream home.

## ALTUS WINDOW SYSTEMS NEW HOME \$750,000 - \$1 MILLION



### FV DESIGN AND BUILD FOR A HOME IN RAGLAN

This compact three-bedroom holiday home impressed the judges with its detail and stunning location. The indoor-outdoor flow, multiple decks and proximity to the sea make this incredible weekend retreat hard to leave.

Plywood, cedar walls and ceilings, bespoke window facing details and concrete heated floors are just a few of the exquisite details that make this home stand out. This fantastic escape is a true testament to the skill and hard work by FV Design and Build.

## NEW HOME \$500,000 - \$750,000



### CAPITAL HOMES FOR A HOME IN PAERATA RISE, AUCKLAND

This welcoming home has major street appeal, a great floor plan, and sits nicely on a large corner site in a brand-new neighbourhood. A stand-out feature is the luxurious bathrooms which have been tiled beautifully with a combination of small and large tiles, along with some lovely interior choices.

The eye-catching centre kitchen and scullery space, with three metre-high ceilings and over-height doors and windows, gives you a sense of this home's volume, which floods with all-day sun. The home has been finished to a very high standard in every detail, from tiling and joinery to floor coverings.

## NEW HOME UP TO \$500,000



### WILLIE DAVIS FOR A HOME IN EASTBOURNE, LOWER HUTT

This stylish and compact new build, designed to be lived in while the home owner builds their forever home, showcases remarkable attention to detail and architectural finesse. Despite its modest footprint, the design incorporates innovative features such as raking walls, over-height spaces, and carefully selected materials.

The builder's passion for the project is evident in the well-fitted timber screen detailing and the thoughtful orientation on the site, providing private outdoor spaces. The compact dwelling stands out for its construction and design, making Willie Davis a deserving winner of this category award.

## MASTER BUILD 10 YEAR GUARANTEE MULTI UNIT (APARTMENTS/DUPLEXES/TERRACE HOUSING)



### HAY CONSTRUCTION FOR A HOME IN RAGLAN

This development, made up of six contemporary architectural units, showcases a meticulous approach to privacy with breathtaking vistas. The incorporation of landscaped common green spaces, courtyards, and paths seamlessly connects the units in the development. The complex structural and architectural details, contemporary design and thorough construction methodology reflect an unwavering commitment to precision and quality.

The development has successfully met the demands of multi-unit living while staying in harmony with the surrounding environment. The project is a demonstration of a thoughtful and considerate approach to architectural excellence. Well done to Hay Construction — this is the pinnacle of multi-unit construction and design, setting a new standard for excellence in the industry.



### VOLUME/GROUP HOUSING NEW HOME \$500,000 - \$750,000



## LEGENDARY HOMES

### FOR A HOME IN HUAPAI, AUCKLAND

This volume-built home captivates with its exceptional qualities, including an eye-catching and distinctive street appeal, which sets it apart from its neighbours.

Alongside standard modern home requirements, the inclusion of solar panels, an EV charger, and central air-conditioning demonstrates a forward-thinking approach, ensuring the home is equipped for changes in the future. The attention to detail on the external cladding and the consistent high-quality workmanship throughout the interior showcases Legendary Homes' pride in their craft.

### VOLUME/GROUP HOUSING NEW HOME UP TO \$500,000



## GREENLAND HOMES

### FOR A HOME IN PREBBLETON, CANTERBURY

The attention to detail and workmanship displayed in this three-bedroom family home is excellent. Based on a pavilion style, the layout provides everything a modern family needs. Scissor trusses create additional height and sense of space to the family area, while the adjacent living room provides a more formal area, both of which open out to a space for sunny outdoor entertainment.

The master bedroom has a well-appointed, fully tiled ensuite with a double shower, while the other bedrooms feature walk-in wardrobes. Greenland Homes have maintained attention to workmanship while completing an economical build. This is a great home with everything that you need and a little more. Well done!

### GIB SHOW HOME



## GUDSELL DESIGNER HOMES

### FOR A HOME IN MATUA, TAURANGA

A work of art, this two-storey show home showcases outstanding workmanship and attention to detail. This impressive build has a warm and inviting atmosphere, while also achieving a modern and sophisticated feel.

The exterior of the home is also deeply impressive, with cedar claddings that beautifully complement the timber theme. Upstairs living offers fantastic waterway views to Tauranga Harbour.

The large, well-protected outdoor decking allows for seamless indoor-outdoor flow, while the well-appointed kitchen joinery and in-built shelves in the living room showcase the high level of finish throughout the home. This show home is a great representation of the amazing work Gudsell Designer Homes can offer.

### BUILDER'S OWN HOME



## FORM CONSTRUCTION (LAKE HAYES)

### FOR A HOME IN QUEENSTOWN

This is a truly next-level home that pushes all the limits on a build. From drawing out the architectural plans, to building the house and designing the interiors, the builder has displayed exceptional skill. With the natural blend of materials from concrete, glass, stone and timber, this home is the definition of a true masterpiece. The sheltered outdoor living area with a sunken pool and spa designed and crafted by the builder tops off this already faultless home. Exceptional work!

## RENOVATION OVER \$1.5 MILLION



### GLENBUILD

#### FOR A HOME IN KOHIMARAMA, AUCKLAND

The attention to detail shone throughout this renovation project. Despite the many complex details and challenges, the Glenbuild team overcame many obstacles to achieve an excellent finished product. The existing details were reformed and enhanced, and new complementary details were created to an outstanding level of finish.

The polished concrete sills poured onto timber joinery replicated the existing features, and was one of the impressive aspects of this home. The craftsmanship was exceptional in all aspects of the renovation, and the home owners and everyone involved should be proud of this remarkable home. Congratulations to Glenbuild for this much-deserved recognition.

## BUNNINGS RENOVATION \$750,000 - \$1.5 MILLION



### FROST ARCHITECTURAL BUILDERS

#### FOR A HOME IN MERIVALE, CHRISTCHURCH

This 1950s brick house has been totally transformed into a stylish modern, open plan home to suit the current and future needs of the home owners. A lot of consideration has been given to ensure all aspects of the home are brought into the 21st Century, including solar panels and the specific materials chosen.

Hidden structural elements enabled the house to be extended, adding on 25 square metres, and changing the layout. The sloping ceilings in the living area have added a great sense of space and volume, while full-height windows flood the space with light. Not only has the home been externally transformed, a new roof and most of its sub-structure has been altered and the interior has been totally re-fitted throughout. Great job, Frost Architectural Builders.

## RENOVATION UP TO \$750,000



### HODSON CONSTRUCTION

#### FOR A HOME IN MOUNT COOK, WELLINGTON

Amidst the challenges of a tight site and limited access, the transformation of this cottage into a modern, stylish home stands as a testament to exceptional workmanship. The 9% internal alteration, including the addition of a large skylight and the creation of a wonderfully proportioned open plan living space, showcases great attention to detail.

The use of portal frames and ridge beams to lift the ceiling to a new height demonstrates forward planning and skill. This internally focused alteration has not only revitalised a century-old cottage, but has also set a new standard for modern renovations, earning Hodson Construction this much-deserved win.

## PLUMBING WORLD BATHROOM EXCELLENCE AWARD



### CONTEMPORARY HOMES

#### FOR A HOME IN KAITERITERI, TASMAN

This Kaiteriteri home features a fabulous ensuite bathroom, with a stunning free-standing bath surrounded by full-height glass that allows you to soak and relax while taking in the view. The twin vanity and mirrors provide function in the bathroom, with lighting options that have been carefully considered to accommodate all moods.

The spacious ensuite completes the secluded master bedroom suite, and is linked by a generous 1.8-metre sliding door. This is an expertly detailed and executed bathroom by Contemporary Homes. Congratulations to the hard-working team on this award win.



## KITCHEN EXCELLENCE AWARD



## KANE BUILD GROUP

## FOR A HOME IN TAKAPUNA, AUCKLAND

This Palm Springs-style home is complemented by a beautifully designed kitchen that blends seamlessly from indoor to outdoor dining, making it an entertainer's dream. The stone island bench is a stunning central form within the kitchen. The extension of the dining space sideboard stone through to the outdoor cooking area ensures the spaces flow and link together harmoniously.

The full-height wall joinery houses the appliances and flows into the open pantry located behind the kitchen. The pantry houses everything a well-appointed kitchen needs, but a home owner wishes to keep out of view. Overall, this is an expertly designed kitchen that blends through three living spaces and seamlessly connects them together through colour, form and function. Congratulations to Kane Build Group.

## OUTDOOR LIVING EXCELLENCE AWARD



## DAVCON

## FOR A HOME IN NAPIER

Located on a hillside, this gorgeous property has breathtakingly expansive views of the ocean, which can be enjoyed from the newly added cabana, which is the true heart of the home. Cleverly designed for entertaining, it features a fully appointed kitchen with a barbeque, indoor dining, and a relaxing fireside lounge area that opens up with pivot doors and flows to the multiple adjacent outdoor spaces.

The outdoor areas were carefully planned to complement and effortlessly flow into one another, with feature lighting completing the evening mood. Davcon's passion for the project was clear, and all aspects of the design, from the cabana to the landscaping, were selected to blend, enhance and showcase their outstanding workmanship.



# A win for BLACK to enjoy

## BLACK

### CATEGORY

Resene Commercial Fit-Out Project Award

### ENTRANT

BLACK

### PROJECT PARTNERS

BLACK (Construction Company), Cheshire Architects (Architect/Designer), Norman Disney & Young (Engineer)



## Successes

BLACK managing director Dylan Hutt was delighted when it was announced they had won the Resene Commercial Fit-Out Project Award at the 2023 NZ Commercial Project Awards.

"Winning the award was an incredibly proud moment for the entire BLACK team. It was extremely meaningful to receive this award, given the project serves as our own workplace in Tamaki Makaurau," Hutt says.

"From the very start of the project, we knew we wanted to prioritise our commitment to sustainability, and the well-being and safety of our employees. WELL sets the global standard for healthy workplace environment, and these standards were integrated into the project's early design and delivery. The project was awarded with a WELL Health-Safety Rating — making it one of the first spaces to receive this certification in New Zealand. Wherever possible, we used sustainable, locally-sourced natural and raw materials, and showcased artworks from local talent," Hutt says.



## Challenges

The building did not come without challenges, but the team worked hard to get the project across the line.

"The key challenges included meeting the strict requirements of the WELL Health-Safety Rating, which involved the complex task of replacing the existing windows to improve the thermal efficiency of the space. We also had to strategically remove internal structures to reduce weight profiles to allow us to accommodate the architectural stone sculpted tables, weighing 600kg," Hutt says.




## Judges' comments

This commercial fit-out saw BLACK upgrade and relocate its head office in Auckland. The transformation of the space saw two residential apartments evolve into a single commercial area, creating a seamless connection between the inside and outside.

The new fit-out features clean and open spaces situated on either side of the exquisitely detailed and centrally located dark cedar core that houses all back-of-house functions and meeting rooms. To the north, an open boardroom and social space with deck overlook extraordinary harbour and Gulf views, while to the south, the open workspace enjoys wide city views. The replacement of existing windows on level 16 was the most complex aspect of the build. Cantilevered scaffold systems were carefully engineered to enable the glazing to be upgraded without disrupting the occupants below.





# PLACEMAKERS FRAMOLOGY

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# Green Building designed for extreme climate change

Saatyesh Bhana: 'By reusing the existing building structure, we have saved over 4,500,000kg of CO<sub>2</sub>e — roughly the equivalent of 15,500 flights from Auckland to Wellington, or taking 3000 cars off the road.'

A low-carbon building designed to withstand extreme climate change — that diverted more than 300 tonnes of waste from landfill during its construction — is set to be one of the largest retrofit office projects to achieve a world-leading sustainability standard.

The \$54 million five-storey building at 105 Carlton Gore Road, in Auckland's Newmarket, is one of the first developed for the post-pandemic working environment to open.

Experts say a global trend towards greener buildings is driving interest from multinational corporations and environmentally-conscious millennial workers in moving into this segment of New Zealand's commercial real estate sector.

Argosy Property head of sustainability Saatyesh Bhana says the development has diverted more than 300 tonnes of construction waste from landfill, the equivalent volume of waste generated from 60 new house builds.

He says the property sector is a significant contributor to greenhouse gases, with buildings and their construction accounting for as much as 20% of New Zealand's emissions.

"Internationally, businesses are motivated to lease buildings with a low carbon footprint, and which are designed to incorporate climate resilience," Bhana says.

"When they enter the New Zealand market there is an expectation that their local presence here will align with that of their other global offices.

"To accommodate this demand, we are looking to expand our stock of properties that are sustainably constructed and energy efficient throughout their lifetime.

"In this latest project, around 92% (307 tonnes) of construction waste was either recycled or repurposed — including more than 5000sq m of carpet tiles which were donated to the local community.

"Life cycle assessment (LCA) modelling shows the building has a carbon footprint which is 31% lower, and an operating carbon reduction of approximately 30% less, than a reference building.

"By reusing the existing building structure, we have saved over 4,500,000kg of CO<sub>2</sub>e — roughly the equivalent of 15,500 flights from Auckland to Wellington, or taking 3000 cars off the road."

Bhana says the building has been designed to withstand an extreme climate



*Experts say a global trend towards greener buildings is driving interest from multinational corporations and environmentally-conscious millennial workers in moving into this segment of New Zealand's commercial real estate sector.*

change scenario where New Zealand's average annual temperatures rise by up to 3°C over the next six decades.

He says under this scenario, elevated risks of intense summertime heating and flood risk from deluge have been mitigated.

"Local sourcing of the double-glazed extrusion system has resulted in a carbon footprint of the building's facade that is 93% lower than a standard imported extrusion system, and a reduction in the greenhouse emissions of 560 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e."

Other features include:

- a biophilic living wall made from organically grown Scandinavian moss that doesn't require watering but can filter airborne toxins and dust out of the air,
- solar power generation,
- a building management system that responds dynamically to the presence of people at the time of day and the prevailing climatic conditions, and
- new hot water heating technology that uses CO<sub>2</sub> and eliminates the need for traditional gas boilers.

Argosy Property head of development Marilyn Storey says the market has softened in recent months. However, enquiry for sustainable buildings is steady, particularly in the city fringe.

She says multinational tenants increasingly favour green buildings as they help attract staff to the office and lift productivity.

According to new industry data, only 1.7% (1184sq m) of Grade A office space is vacant in Newmarket, compared to a vacancy level

of 16.1% of Grade B, 9.6% of Grade C, and 10.7% of Grade D commercial stock.

In comparison, the average vacancy for Auckland is 7.7% — up from 7.1% at the end of 2022.

"Against a backdrop of a flat commercial real estate sector, around 60% of the building was leased well before construction was completed," Storey says.

"What we are seeing in the post-Covid market is an awareness from corporate employers that staff are often reluctant to return to the office. In many industries, productivity and office culture are casualties of this, and we are now developing properties to counter this reticence.

"We know that the selection of office location and quality of the building is driven by millennial staff who want visibility over the sustainability credentials of their working environment.

"In response, these offices have been designed to be reactive to the individual. So, a staff member can adjust the lighting above them through their phone if they want to.

"The facade is also able to reduce the amount of glare, and allows more natural daylight into the building.

"We have also built in a range of features which are designed to attract workers out of their home and into the office — with a green 'oasis' around the building that connects office and landscaping, and with 5% of our car parks dedicated to EV charging."





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# Myth or reality: The practical and psychological reasons why most excavators are yellow

Most manufacturers worldwide colour their construction equipment yellow. Over three-quarters of all excavators wear this colour. But why?

The reasons range from safety concerns to historical developments, all the way to deeply ingrained cultural and psychological associations.

Imagine you have a pack of crayons, and someone asks you to draw an excavator. What colour would it wear? Most likely, it would be yellow.

Even as children, many of us played with yellow toy excavators. And at the construction site at the end of our street, we often see yellow machines. But why does this colour so strongly dominate the world of construction equipment? Here are the reasons.

## Reason 1: Safety through visibility

A construction site poses inherent risks and, unfortunately, accidents there are all too common. Yellow is one of the most visible colours.

During the day and at night, the colour provides sufficient contrast — even under dusty conditions on a construction site. As such, it serves excellently as a warning colour that signifies hazards.

Workers and bystanders are more likely to recognise the machinery on the site, helping to avoid accidents.

## Reason 2: Who started it?

Caterpillar was the pioneer in adopting yellow as the colour for construction machinery. In the early 20th Century, their equipment was grey, influenced by military usage.

However, it was recognised that for increased safety on roads and at construction sites, these vehicles needed to sport a high-visibility colour. Thus, in 1931, the company opted for a yellow hue.



An unintended consequence was branding — the yellow machines drew attention, stood out, and helped people remember the manufacturer. So, it was not long before other companies followed suit.

Caterpillar used their Hi-Way Yellow until 1979. Since then, their construction machines have been driving around in a more subdued, yet visually appealing, Caterpillar Yellow. And, of course, this colour is legally protected as a trademark.

Since 1989, the colours black and Caterpillar Yellow have also been integrated into the modern Cat logo.

## Reason 3: Culture and psychology

For decades, yellow has been the standard colour for construction machinery, and people often associate the colour with the construction industry.

This is why there are also cultural reasons for painting excavators yellow. Even children are conditioned to this colour scheme. Or have you ever seen a non-yellow toy excavator?

Additionally, psychology plays a trick on us so that we hardly notice non-yellow excavators. The psychological phenomenon responsible for this is called “selective perception”, in which we only notice certain aspects of our environment while ignoring others.

This is a result of our cognitive capacity limits, as we simply cannot process all information simultaneously.

This can be further reinforced by our past experiences and psychological effects such as confirmation bias or self-fulfilling prophecies. Humans tend to perceive things in a way that confirms their existing beliefs while, at the same time, ignoring contradictory information.

This combination of cultural influences, early childhood experiences, and our psychological wiring makes us firmly believe — an excavator must be yellow.

## Reason 4: More than three-quarters of all excavators are yellow.

The colour of the construction machine depends mainly on the manufacturer.

For the sake of selective perception, we will ignore the fact that some construction companies have their machines specially made in their corporate design of their company.

Those familiar with the construction industry know about the Yellow Table by KHL Group. Every year in the May/June issue of *International Construction*, the 50 largest construction machinery manufacturers — defined by their turnover from the previous year — are listed. And, yes, this data collection is called the Yellow Table — again, the colour yellow!

If we focus solely on the manufacturers of excavators and filter the Yellow Table by companies making mini and midi excavators up to 13 tons, as well as large excavators over 13 tons, then 28 out of the 50 companies fall into this category.

If we combine the individual market shares with the corporate colour of the construction machinery company, it turns out that more than three-quarters of all excavators sold in 2022 were yellow. To be exact: 76.1%.

The second most common colour by a wide margin was orange or red (11.9%), followed by white or grey (6.3%) and green or blue tones (5.8%). These trends are also reflected in the used machinery market.

At Surplex, an online European machinery auction site, in the year 2022, 71% of the sold used excavators were also yellow, coming from top manufacturers.

## Conclusion

So, it is both myth and reality. Not all excavators are yellow, but the majority are, and for good reasons.

This ensures safety on construction sites, and from a young age and for generations, we have been conditioned to associate yellow with excavators.





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# Hire company continues NI expansion

Family-owned equipment hire company Kennards Hire has continued its expansion in New Zealand with the acquisition of Taupo Hire, growing its national footprint to 29 stores.

It comes after a period of sustained growth for the company, and will enable the business to offer an even larger range of high-quality rental equipment and expert solutions for a range of industries and customers throughout the regional North Island.

The new Taupo branch will service the local tourism, forestry, renewable energy, and dairy industries, and increase convenience for its diverse range of customers, including DIY enthusiasts and tradies.

Kennards Hire currently has a pop-up branch at the Tauhara Geothermal Power Plant Project, which will be consolidated into the new branch in December 2023.

Kennards Hire New Zealand general manager Tom Kimber says he is delighted to be setting up a permanent branch in the region, having been in the Taupo area for the past two years via the pop-up branch.

"The acquisition of Taupo Hire represents two family-run businesses coming together



*The Kennards Hire Taupo team.*

to support the local community with our product offering and expert service," Kimber says.

The acquisition will see Kennards Hire tap into the 30 years of experience and advice Taupo Hire has provided to people working and living in and around the area, with two existing staff members choosing to join the Kennards Hire family in their new chapter.

Taupo Hire owner Dave Nicol says after many years of being an integral part of the Taupo community, he is taking comfort in

knowing that the transition to Kennards Hire will see the legacy Taupo Hire has built continue long into the future.

Kennards Hire Taupo branch manager Stuart Smithson says his team in Taupo has years of equipment hire experience and local knowledge.

"We're excited to provide our customers with specialist advice and product solutions for their projects — big or small," he says.

Selected pieces of Taupo Hire equipment and memorabilia will be sent to Sydney and housed in the Kennards Hire Museum.

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# Working in summer — train your staff

With December marking the start of summer in New Zealand, here are some tips to help keep you and your staff healthy and safe while working outside.

## Sun safety

It's important to protect yourself from over exposure to sun and UV-rays which can cause painful sunburn and, potentially, lead to skin cancer.

Around 90,000 non-melanoma skin cancers are diagnosed each year in New Zealand, according to the Cancer Society.

- Cover up with UV-rated, breathable

clothing that complies with your PPE requirements.

- Wear broad-spectrum, water-resistant, SPF30+ sunscreen, and reapply regularly.

- Wear a hard hat that has a front brim and neck flap.

- Wear wrap-around style safety sunglasses.

- If you notice any unusual skin changes or see a spot or mole that is different from others, get it checked by your doctor.

## Keeping cool and hydrated

Hard work on a hot day can cause the body to become dehydrated or at risk of heatstroke, where it is unable to cool itself down. Heatstroke is an emergency and needs to be treated immediately.

- Keep hydrated by regularly drinking water and avoiding drinks with caffeine

or alcohol, which can dehydrate you more.

- Try to limit or avoid prolonged exposure to extreme heat, and during the hottest part of the day, plan to work in the shade.

## Fatigue

Good weather can mean longer working days to get a job done, but ignoring the signs of fatigue and tiredness can lead to real risk.

- Schedule and take regular breaks, and extra ones when the job feels harder than usual due to the weather.

• Always use the right tools for the job. Handling vibrating tools can increase fatigue, so consider switching to low-vibration tools or machinery if possible.

- Look out for your own safety, and the safety of other workers. Don't be afraid to speak up if you think someone needs to take a break.

- For more health and safety tips for working in summer, visit [www.sitesafe.org.nz](http://www.sitesafe.org.nz).



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# Civil contractors welcome incoming government

New Zealand's civil contractors have welcomed the formation of New Zealand's new government.

Civil Contractors New Zealand chief executive Alan Pollard says businesses responsible for the physical construction and maintenance of the country's transport, water, resilience and other infrastructure networks were eagerly awaiting detail on how the new government's vision for the country would be put into action.

"We had opportunities to engage with the people who will take on the portfolios that affect us on the campaign trail, mostly while they were in opposition," Pollard says.

He says contractors had heard a lot about the incoming government's plans during the election campaign, particularly in the portfolios relating to infrastructure, transport, water, resource management, workforce and resilience to severe weather events.



*A road maintenance crew in action on a local road resurfacing project.*

"We are confident they have the motivation, capability and experience to support our critical civil construction sector."

New Zealand's civil contractors were looking forward to working closely with the respective Ministers across these portfolios to achieve the best outcomes, not just for the civil construction industry, but for communities.

Despite this, more detail and

engagement with the industry was needed on critical reform programmes in action, particularly around the direction the country's water reforms would take under the new government.

Most contractors were positive about the work ahead, but needed more detail on where and when future projects would begin construction so they could prepare their businesses, and ensure they had the right equipment and capability

on hand, Pollard says.

"Having a well-defined, committed and funded programme of work is what gives the civil construction industry the confidence to invest in people and in new technologies.

"Taking a long-term view of infrastructure investment, and being more innovative with funding solutions for infrastructure works needs to be a priority for this government."

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# Whitireia and WelTec celebrate scholarship graduates entering the workforce

Female graduate Ailani Gatu advises: 'Find comfort in the uncomfortable'

A group of 127 students recently gathered at the Te Aroha Hutt Valley Association building in Lower Hutt to celebrate the completion of their trades courses.

The students are part of the Maori and Pasifika Trades Training Scholarship programme, and are supported by the Wellington Maori and Pasifika Consortium, and the WelTec Tamaiti Whangai team who provide pastoral, cultural and employment support.

At the celebration, each student received a Certificate of Participation, as well as a set of tools, sponsored by AEG, to assist with their transition into employment.

"When one succeeds, the whole whanau succeed," Kura Moeahu, chairman of Te Runanganui o Te Ati Awa, said at the event.

"Education contributes to people's lives and makes change. It is my hope that our Maori and Pasifika youth continue on from graduating at this level to achieve a Bachelors, a Masters, and even a Doctorate," Moeahu said.

## Bigger numbers needed

"We have a big percentage of Maori and Pasifika achieving diplomas, but we need bigger numbers proceeding onwards to higher education.

"The more of us that are represented in the system, the more it will change to better respond to our needs.

"We need to increase Te Reo and Pacific language speakers in the education system, and particularly at the top. This will be the game changer."

Olivia Hall and Mark Oldershaw, executive directors of tumu whenua a-rohe 3 (region three) at Te Pukenga, attended and congratulated the students.



*Ailani Gatu enrolled in the Electrical Level 3 pre-trades certificate, and has just graduated with an apprenticeship at an electrical company in Lower Hutt.*

"This is a great day of celebration," Oldershaw said. "For you as students it is recognising all of the hard work you have done to achieve this, and I know many of you have already started work.

"For us it is a wonderful reminder of why we do what we do. We could not do this without our partners at Te Ati Awa, Ngati Toa, Mafutaga our Pacific community leaders, and employers.

"Thank you for your ongoing support as together we continue to educate,

upskill and guide learners as they take up employment or further study in the region."

Ailani Gatu is one of the students graduating as part of this cohort.

She decided at the end of year 12 at St Mary's College that she wanted to get hands-on training to enter the trades workforce.

She enrolled in the Electrical Level 3 pre-trades certificate, and has just graduated with an apprenticeship at an electrical company in Lower Hutt.

"At first my parents were not that happy about me leaving school, but when we went on campus to WelTec, met some of the tutors and heard I could get a scholarship, they were much more reassured, so I enrolled!

## 'Very satisfying'

"My Dad has a floor sanding company, so I have always been around the trades. I love that you can see the result of your hard work and perfection almost straight away. It is very satisfying.

"There is so much opportunity in the electrical sector, and I would like to do more study, possibly in engineering.

"The tutors have been so supportive through my study at WelTec. This has made a huge difference to me. They helped me get my driver's licence, my Site Safe accreditations, and an apprenticeship.

"My advice to any woman who wants to go into the trades would be this — no one is gonna build a better lifestyle for you than yourself. No one can do it for you.

"If you feel uncomfortable in situations because there are not many women in the trades, you just have to be resilient, and eventually you will find comfort in the uncomfortable."

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# Building success with the launch of a new cutting-edge construction qualification

With anticipated sector growth, Massey University is committed to strengthening contributions to the New Zealand construction industry.

A new Bachelor of Construction (Honours) qualification from Te Kunenga ki Purehuroa Massey University will see students elevate their career with an internationally-recognised post-degree qualification.

Professor Monty Sutrisna, Head of School of Built Environment, says the new qualification will help evolve and support the New Zealand construction sector by upskilling professionals in the industry.

With projections indicating that the global construction sector will exceed \$25 trillion by the end of this decade, New Zealand's construction industry is a key economic player.

With anticipated sector growth, Massey is committed to strengthening contributions to this vital sector.

"With the current rate of globalisation, this higher tertiary qualification will

provide an edge to degree holders, enabling access to more opportunities, and to advance their careers," Professor Sutrisna says.

"It will equip them to become future leaders in the construction sector, and directly addresses the needs of the sector by fostering a culture of continuous innovation and contribution to society," he says.

## Fully accredited

The Bachelor of Construction (Honours) programme is fully accredited by the Australian Institute of Building (AIB), and is designed to equip graduates with leadership, teamworking and critical thinking skills, along with the ability to conduct independent research within the industry setting.

The honours study programme allows

maximum flexibility for students to work closely with a construction company to conduct real-world research, and provide solutions to an issue or challenge of their choosing.

## Student support

"Students will be supported by experienced staff to choose a practical challenge facing the construction sector and tackle the identified issue.

"For students who are already employed in the construction industry, this mode of study mutually benefits their employers, as the outcomes of the research study can be directly applied to improve practice within the construction sector," Professor Sutrisna says.

• To find out more, visit [massey.ac.nz/construction](https://massey.ac.nz/construction).

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# A gateway to the construction industry for second chance learners

Collaboration between local community initiatives and BCITO Te Pukenga have been instrumental in providing pathways for second-chance learners to gain meaningful employment in the construction sector.

The Building, Construction and Allied Trades Skills (BCATS) programme is a BCITO Te Pukenga initiative harnessed by community organisations to provide learning resources, materials and assessment opportunities to support learners needing a boost.

To ensure the learning is fit for purpose for the learner's needs, BCITO Te Pukenga has developed programmes that are theory blended with on-the-job practical learning.

Local initiatives approach the BCITO, often through the Ministry of Social Development, for support and resources. The BCITO then equips these initiatives with the resources that best recognise the available learning opportunities to support the learners to be able to move forward with employment.

The BCATS programme was recently harnessed by a community project in Napier called "Building Futures to Aid Second Chance Learners".

This programme was set up with funding from the Ministry of Social Development to provide more support for people looking for work, who had little work experience on their CV.

The BCITO fed into this programme by tailoring NZQA-accredited unit standards for the programme.

Firstly, the learners were evaluated so that the unit standards would meet their specific needs. Time was then spent analysing which learning approaches would be best suited.

Six standards were then developed, which included workshop-based projects to provide the appropriate skills, which would be recognised under a formal qualification.

Paul McDowall is a Kaitohutohu Maori, a Maori learning advisor at BCITO Te Pukenga. He has been directly involved with "Building Futures", and highlighted how these short duration programmes benefit those transitioning into the construction industry or other work.

"The collaboration between the BCITO and 'Building Futures' has been really beneficial for the learners in the community, as it's provided opportunities for people who perhaps weren't suited to the traditional school system," McDowall says.

"We are able to give them the



confidence to apply themselves and learn valuable skills that lead to employment."

BCITO implementation and transition manager Mark Chalmers has been instrumental in many of these initiatives.

"These initiatives combine industry-related learning with community programmes, to provide excellent pastoral and educational support.

These opportunities improve learning outcomes — learners are equipped with



skills and a pathway to gaining meaningful employment," Chalmers says.

New Zealand needs more people to upskill and grow their knowledge to create much-needed quality homes and infrastructure.

The BCITO has the resources and support systems in place to ensure everyone can enhance and refine their skills.

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This translates to fewer disruptions and optimal results for a variety of sheet metal projects.

The RP40 Multi takes precision to the next level with its measuring control system, accurately gauging rivet dimensions and material thickness. This guarantees the right rivet is chosen for the right task.

## Maximum comfort

The tool also boasts a soft grip handle for maximum comfort, hardened metal parts for extended product life, and a sleek matte black finish for a touch of style.

Meanwhile, the RP60 Multi goes a step further with its 360° pivoting head, facilitating improved access to confined or challenging spaces.

Rapid's dedication to user-centric solutions is evident in features such as the smart caliper, allowing users to measure rivet dimensions and material thickness effortlessly.

This control system enables the user to verify rivet diameter and height, or to assess the material grip range, providing the assurance that the perfect rivet is employed in every application.

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Congratulations go to Paul Christini of Auckland, who won a range of Draper Tools products, courtesy of Toolware Sales, worth \$375.



# Determination upon building works encroaching onto neighbouring property

Tim Bates and Fiona Dobroschi of Auckland legal firm TM Bates & Co review a recent MBIE determination that addressed building work that encroached across the boundary of two properties. They focus on Building Code compliance, granting of the building consent, the grant of the third amendment, and the issue of the Code Compliance Certificate.



This determination addressed the issues of:

- compliance with B1 Structure, B2 Durability and C3 Fire (affecting areas beyond the fire source),
  - the Building Code ("the Code"),
  - the territorial authority's decision-making as regards granting the building consent ("the BC"),
  - the third amendment to the BC,
  - the issuing of a Code Compliance Certificate ("the CCC"), and
  - the authority's alleged failure to issue a notice to fix.

## Facts

The building work at issue concerns remediation work that addressed the damage caused by the Canterbury earthquakes. The building work comprised of:

- replacement of part of the driveway, the parking bay, retaining wall under the parking bay, and associated earthworks,
- the repair and reinstatement of the timber vehicle deck due to the installation of new structural steelwork, and
- construction of the barrier along the edge of the parking bay and timber vehicle deck.

## The works

- An application for a building consent was received by the council in March 2015.
- On August 4, 2015, the council granted the BC.
- On March 7, 2016, the applicant advised the council that a report from a registered surveyor indicated that some of the works carried out encroached over the boundary onto the applicant's property.
- After a PS4 was issued for the works, on August 9, 2016, the council advised the owners of the property who commissioned the building works that the consented plans were not compliant with the Code because the works extended over the boundary, and that the boundary was not shown on the plans.

The owners had to provide revised plans with the boundary lines and a compliant solution to remedy the effects of work

over the boundary.

- In March 2017, a third application was submitted to amend the BC in relation to the encroaching timber vehicle deck and the parking bay. This was granted by the council.
- The encroaching elements were only partially removed as the contractors were not allowed to carry out the works on the applicant's property.
- The council conducted final inspections, which passed. Subsequently, a CCC was issued on August 13, 2018.

## Outcome

### Compliance with the Code

The determination ruled that the building work that was the subject of the determination did meet clauses B1 and B2 of the Code. It also ruled as regards C3 (means of escape from the building) the works complied as nearly as is reasonably practicable with the provisions of the Code.

### Granting of the BC

It was determined the council was incorrect to grant the BC. Most important to the analysis was section 14B, which requires an owner to "obtain any necessary consents", and section 7 which defines an owner as "the owner of the fee simple of the land".

The MBIE concluded that the regulatory system requires the applicant of a building consent to be either the owner of the land in which the works will take place, or their authorised agent.

As no application was lodged by the applicant or its authorised agent for the works on the applicant's property, the council could not grant the BC.

### Third Amendment

Similarly, the MBIE ruled that an application to amend a building consent must be made by the owner of the land or its authorised agent.

As the owner, nor its authorised agent, made the amendment application (as regards the encroached property of the applicant), the council was incorrect in granting the amendment to the owners.

## CCC

As the MBIE determined that the council was incorrect to have issued the BC and the third amendment to the BC, it followed that the decision to issue the CCC was also incorrect. The MBIE took the further step of reversing the CCC.

## Remedies for the BC and Third Amendment issue

Despite deciding that the decisions to grant the BC and third amendment were incorrect, the MBIE ruled that it would not reverse those decisions. The MBIE was swayed by these factors:

- the compliance of the works with the Code,
- the works carried out on the applicant's property being discrete, with only a small amount of work covered by the BC,
- the reliance by the owners on the BC with the works having been carried out, and
- the significant implications of reversing the decision to grant the BC and the third amendment in obtaining a CCC.

**Note:** This article is not intended to be legal advice (nor a substitute for legal advice). No responsibility or liability is accepted by TM Bates & Co or *Building Today* to anyone who relies on the information in this article.



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# Want no sauce with that?

Never mind up-selling right now. Andy Burrows — The Trades Coach — says in this period of significant cost inflation the concept of down-selling should be an important weapon in your sales and marketing arsenal.



Back in the 1970s, the savvy marketing people at McDonalds noted that a lot of customers just bought a hamburger and nothing else.

They trialled a script at the counter and asked their staff to say, “Do you want fries with that?”

Surprisingly, more than half the people asked said yes — and that has led to McDonalds selling millions of extra portions of fries. Simply by asking.

The phrase has become synonymous with any form of up-selling, and is a classic way of increasing revenue in a business.

Now, you don't sell hamburgers and often don't have control of the products you build with anyway. But the marketing concepts of demand and value transcend industries.

Right now, the industry has experienced a period of significant cost inflation and, more recently, a period of lower consumer demand, due to higher interest rates.

I believe we have moved from a period where up-selling is a good idea to where down-selling should be an important weapon in your marketing and sales arsenal.

I recommend you take a proactive approach to this situation. Rather than waiting for the client to walk away from a potential contract and you desperately trying to hold on to them, I think it's better to front-foot this from the earliest point of contact — and you actively work with them to focus on reducing the project to fit the budget.

For a few clients the budget is secondary but, for most, it's a vitally important aspect of the project, especially in these times of higher costs.

It was recently reported by the BNZ that the cost to build an average house in NZ is \$200,000 more than the cost to buy an average existing one.

That is the widest gap in value ever, and will put further negative pressure on the residential building industry.

That gap will decrease over time (I hope) but, rather than waiting, you may be able to develop a competitive advantage for your business by focusing on the client's budget, and doing more to proactively adjust your offering to match.

Several builders I have worked with are pretty good at this, but in case you need some ideas, you might like to consider the following:

## Reduce project scope

This is the opposite of the “with fries with that” up-sell.

If you take out the sauce — for example, the expensive imported butler sink — will the savings bring the total cost down significantly?

Often it will and some scope can be added later, so the client just has to delay gratification, and not miss out altogether.

Can the decks be added later? Can the clients do the painting and decorating (as long as your final payment happens first)?

Once the project scope has been trimmed back, ensure there are tight processes agreed with your client to minimise scope creep undoing all your hard work and the client's revised goals.

## Simplify

Compared to when we built our first house, the range and complexity of componentry that goes into a project these days is way more challenging and confusing.

Unique building systems that achieve a certain look or design seem to be popular with architects, but they all come at a cost — financially and in the time to learn how to install them properly.

Do we really need 3D engraved internal wall panels, or will something simpler do?

Complicated (and risky) roof lines with fancy internal gutters may make the house look like a sailing boat on the ocean in the eyes of the architect, but at what cost?

## Tighten up with suppliers

I had a beer with a past client last week, and he was saying that more suppliers are chasing his business and offering incentives than he's ever remembered.

I am not sure what you are seeing, but now is the time to start driving some hard bargains with suppliers and sub-trades.

Loyalty to your trade partners is good, but part of being a good partner is to be willing and able to sharpen the pencil, and play their part in providing a better value project for the end customer.

Now may be a good time to ensure you have more than one provider in all the cost elements to a project.

It's not about shopping your project around to 10 different providers, but there is nothing wrong with having two or three reliable trade partners to work with, and work together to drive more cost out of the project.

## Help with finance

With access and the cost of finance for building projects being a major hurdle, what can you do to help?

Not many builders are able to provide construction finance themselves, but adding a good mortgage advisor to your wider team may give you an edge in the market.

You will be amazed at the number of home owners (and potential home owners) who just stick with their own bank, receive a “no” in their finance application and give up at that stage.

A good mortgage advisor will take their project to multiple banks and often be able to secure a deal, even when the client's bank has declined them.

In these tighter economic times and strained consumer budgets, changing the traditional way we approach the consumer journey through the design and build process is essential.

Prices have become ridiculously high and so the down-sell focused approach may work much better with a lot of people at this time.

It certainly gives you a wider range of sales tools in your toolkit to make the best of the conditions you are faced with as an owner, and may even help you build your business stronger.

• **Contact [andy@tradescoach.co.nz](mailto:andy@tradescoach.co.nz) to discuss how these ideas can be implemented into your business.**



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# Building Consents Information

For all authorisations, October 2023

Dwellings	\$1,556,717,616	Total All Buildings	\$2,312,294,361
Domestic Outbuildings	\$17,771,802	Non-building Construction	\$53,878,799
Total Residential	\$1,574,489,418		
Non-residential	\$737,804,943	<b>Total Authorisations</b>	<b>\$2,366,173,160</b>

## Number of new dwellings consented

	Oct 2023	Sep 2023	Oct 2022		Oct 2023	Sep 2023	Oct 2022
Far North District	20	18	16	Palmerston North City	24	36	24
Whangarei District	56	32	56	Tararua District	2	1	5
Kaipara District	3	6	8	Horowhenua District	9	12	20
Rodney District	58	70	111	Kapiti Coast District	34	62	19
North Shore/Albany Wards	210	251	146	Porirua City	8	14	16
Waitakere Ward	216	249	377	Upper Hutt City	36	11	32
Auckland Wards	318	244	420	Lower Hutt City	80	45	83
Manukau/Howick Wards	185	285	182	Wellington City	16	26	43
Manurewa-Papakura Ward	159	142	246	Masterton District	12	24	26
Franklin Ward	33	48	107	Carterton District	5	1	7
Thames-Coromandel District	16	21	16	South Wairarapa District	37	12	9
Hauraki District	11	9	14	Tasman District	30	21	51
Waikato District	68	51	116	Nelson City	45	7	13
Matamata-Piako District	20	16	13	Marlborough District	35	34	27
Hamilton City	53	70	95	Kaikoura District	0	0	1
Waipa District	32	25	75	Buller District	5	1	5
Otorohanga District	2	4	0	Grey District	6	5	5
South Waikato District	8	5	14	Westland District	7	12	11
Waitomo District	1	1	0	Hurunui District	8	6	15
Taupo District	38	46	42	Waimakariri District	79	79	69
Western Bay of Plenty District	29	24	28	Christchurch City	490	411	434
Tauranga City	28	54	38	Selwyn District	119	46	132
Rotorua District	14	47	28	Ashburton District	21	12	22
Whakatane District	20	7	13	Timaru District	13	7	11
Opotiki District	2	3	4	Mackenzie District	6	6	7
Gisborne District	24	11	3	Waimate District	0	1	2
Hastings District	10	22	10	Waitaki District	8	7	14
Napier City	18	10	10	Central Otago District	28	15	20
Central Hawke's Bay District	2	4	10	Queenstown-Lakes District	77	82	121
New Plymouth District	39	19	27	Dunedin City	39	40	19
Stratford District	0	3	8	Clutha District	3	8	10
South Taranaki District	10	8	3	Southland District	13	11	11
Ruapehu District	1	2	5	Gore	4	5	3
Whanganui District	5	11	9	Invercargill City	12	11	18
Rangitikei District	1	1	4	Area Outside TA	0	0	0
Manawatu District	12	5	9	<b>Total</b>	<b>3060</b>	<b>2898</b>	<b>3568</b>

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## Advertiser's Index

BBI Wood Products	21
BCITO	27
Carters	32
Enveloped	2
Fletcher Steel	23
Massey University	25
Mitre 10	17
PlaceMakers	15
Rockcote Systems	20
Sika	19
Site Safe	22
The Trades Coach	24, 30
TM Bates & Co	29

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