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The official magazine of the Master Builders

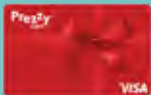
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May 2026

Volume 36 Number 4

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Details, page 23



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You trade in your car – now do the same when you want a new house!

Housing company launches new trade-in solution for homeowners

NZICC design excellence set to redefine events landscape

Venue promises flexibility, operational efficiency, and an exemplary visitor experience

Keeping your cool before you jet off overseas

Heat pumps the size of a shipping container installed at Auckland Airport

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THURSDAY,
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SECURE YOUR SPOT



BUILDING TODAY

May 2026
Volume 36 Number 4

From the editor

"The green shoots may have been shaken, but they have not disappeared. And neither has the resilience of this industry."

Those are the words that Master Builders president Kieren Mallon signs his column off with this month.

And it's a reminder that this country's construction sector, via its countless boom and bust cycles over the years, is well experienced in handling industry downturns, whether it's specific to the sector or, as in this case, a more general overseas-generated global economic trough.

He makes the point that while it is important to stay informed, we also need to be careful not to allow negative sentiment alone to dictate decision making.

And that this may also be a good opportunity to think differently about how our businesses operate.

A genuine hope for a quick end to the Middle East hostilities is the ideal outcome everyone is wishing for — and that we can once again prosper thanks to what was looking like an upturn in workloads for most businesses in the sector.

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1-year subscription (11 issues): **\$83.60**

When green shoots meet headwinds

Master Builders president Kieren Mallon says while it's important to stay informed about global issues affecting us locally, we should be careful not to allow negative sentiment alone to dictate our decisions.

For a moment, it felt like the clouds were beginning to lift. After a prolonged period of economic uncertainty, many in the construction sector had started to cautiously talk about the “green shoots” of recovery beginning to emerge across the economy.

Enquiry levels were improving in some areas, conversations were becoming more optimistic, and projects that had been sitting dormant were beginning to move again.

It was not a boom by any stretch, but confidence — fragile as it may have been — appeared to be slowly returning.

Then came another reminder of how interconnected and vulnerable our world has become.

Escalating tensions in the Middle East, particularly surrounding Iran and the broader instability across the region, have once again unsettled global markets and shaken business confidence.

Concerns around fuel prices, supply chains, inflation pressures, and rising costs are creating fresh hesitation across many sectors, including construction.

And construction often feels uncertainty early and deeply.

One thing that has stood out to me recently as I have travelled around the country speaking with members through our Constructive mini-summits is just how differently regions are experiencing the current economy.

In some parts of New Zealand, workloads remain strong. Businesses are busy, confidence is still relatively high, and opportunities continue to emerge.

In other regions, the picture is very different. Projects have slowed significantly, margins are tight, and uncertainty is weighing heavily on business owners and their teams. That contrast is important.

Too often, we absorb national headlines as though they represent every business and every region equally. But construction has never been a one-size-fits-all industry. Regional economies behave differently, local demand differs, and market sectors move at different speeds.

While it is important to stay informed, we also need to be careful not to allow negative sentiment alone to dictate our decisions.

Confidence matters

If businesses become paralysed by uncertainty, stop investing in people, or retreat entirely into survival mode, the damage can sometimes become self-fulfilling.



That does not mean ignoring risk or pretending challenges do not exist. It means responding with clarity rather than fear.

One of the biggest pressures currently facing the industry is the rising cost of fuel.

For construction businesses, fuel is not optional. Ours is an industry built around movement — utes on the road, machinery operating daily, materials transported across regions, and subcontractors constantly travelling between sites.

But rising fuel prices affect far more than what it costs to fill the tank — fuel flows through almost every part of the construction supply chain.

It impacts freight costs, manufacturing costs, transport logistics, supplier pricing and, ultimately, the cost of many of the materials and products we rely on every day.

As global instability continues to place pressure on energy markets, we are already beginning to see these increases ripple through the sector once again. That means businesses need to remain disciplined.

Clients need transparency. Conversations around pricing and cost escalation cannot be avoided or left until problems emerge. Businesses need to actively communicate changing costs, review margins carefully, and recover legitimate increases where necessary.

Too often in this industry, businesses absorb rising costs quietly in an attempt to preserve relationships or keep projects moving. But continually carrying escalating costs internally can place enormous pressure on already stretched businesses.

At the same time, this may also be an opportunity to think differently about how we operate.

If fuel costs are rising and you have a fleet of vehicles on the road every day, are there ways to encourage more efficient driving behaviour rather than simply accepting higher costs as unavoidable?

Could businesses incentivise better driving habits amongst their teams? Could fuel savings be shared back with staff? Could there even be some friendly competition around who can achieve the best fuel efficiency each month?

Small behavioural changes across a business can create meaningful savings over time. The same thinking applies to building materials.

As material costs continue to rise, every sheet, every length, and every delivery becomes more valuable.

Yet how often do we still see skip bins filled with half sheets of GIB board, usable lengths of timber, or unnecessary waste that could have been avoided with better planning and greater care on site?

These losses may seem small individually, but across multiple projects they add up quickly.

Could material ordering be improved? Could offcuts be reused more effectively? Could site teams take greater ownership over protecting materials from damage, and reducing waste?

None of these changes on their own will transform a business overnight. But incremental improvements across fuel efficiency, waste reduction, planning, communication, and productivity can collectively make a significant difference to the bottom line.

More importantly, they help build stronger and more resilient businesses.

Periods of uncertainty can also become periods of transformation. Some of the strongest businesses in our sector were shaped during difficult times.

They used quieter periods to refine systems, strengthen teams, improve efficiency, invest in training, and rethink how they delivered value to clients.

In challenging markets, standing still can become the greatest risk of all. None of us can predict exactly what the next six or twelve months will bring globally.

There will continue to be uncertainty and challenges beyond our control.

But we can decide how we respond within our own businesses, teams, and communities.

Hope is not built through optimism alone. It is built through action, adaptability, leadership, and the willingness to keep moving forward, even when conditions are uncertain.

The green shoots may have been shaken, but they have not disappeared. And neither has the resilience of this industry.



STEPPING UP TO THE CHALLENGE

MASAKI MCKELVEY

First place at the 2025 Master Builders CARTERS Apprenticeship of the Year Cook Strait competition

Masaki McKelvey is employed by Scotty's Construction and was trained through BCITO



SUCCESSSES

Participating in the national final was an exciting and memorable experience for Masaki McKelvey, giving him the chance to test his skills against the best apprentices in the country at the 2025 Master Builders CARTERS Apprenticeship of the Year competition

"I felt very nervous and anxious to compete against the best talent in the country. But in the same breath, I was confident about my technical skills and was very excited for the challenge," Masaki says.

"My favourite part of the national competition was the dinner event post the cut-throat competition. Having the pressure off and being able to have a proper meet and greet with all the amazing people from around the country was a real highlight."

CHALLENGES

One of the biggest challenges for Masaki throughout the competition was managing the pressure and staying calm under tight time frames. The fast-paced environment pushed him outside his comfort zone, making the practical challenge even tougher.

"My biggest challenge was trying to remain calm and composed. Performing under such a time crunch, and trying not to overwhelm myself, was definitely the hardest part."

"I felt a tremendous amount of pressure to perform to the best of my ability. That added to the challenge, as it is so easy to make a mistake when you are stressed. But the adrenaline and the drive to win made it all worth it."



“

I WAS CONFIDENT ABOUT MY TECHNICAL SKILLS AND WAS VERY EXCITED FOR THE CHALLENGE.

JUDGES' COMMENTS

Masaki's submission highlighted his strong technical knowledge and contribution to the project. His use of drawings, specifications, and thorough explanations of materials and installation methods demonstrated an excellent understanding of the timber framing code of building NZS 3604, construction methods, and manufacturers' guidelines. His commitment to safety and attention to detail were equally impressive during the site visit and interview.

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Built to rise

Duncan Hare Builders

National Category Award
Renovation \$1 million - \$2 million



Successes

For Duncan Hare Builders, winning the national Renovation \$1 million - \$2 million award was a proud moment and a fitting recognition of the care and hard work behind the project. It was made even more special by the team's success in preserving the character of this 1930s home.

Reflecting on the win, Duncan Hare, Director of Duncan Hare Builders, said, "The team felt very proud of their achievement. We were successful in maintaining the look and feel of a 1930s home, and the hard work and dedication definitely paid off."

"The win gave the team a real boost. The awards night was the best way to celebrate as for many team members, it was because of them to be part of the awards night, and everyone was excited to celebrate together."

Judges' comments

This renovation breathes new life into a much-loved 1930s family home, honouring its past while bringing it into the present. The original character has been carefully preserved, with thoughtful updates adding comfort, practicality, and a fresh sense of energy. Materials have been chosen to complement the home's history while creating a warm, timeless feel. It's a beautifully balanced result — a place that respects its past and is ready for future generations to enjoy.

Challenges

One of the key challenges for the team was delivering a complex build that required specialist materials and a seamless connection between old and new. Working on a retro family home, it was important to preserve its character while ensuring the new additions were built to last for generations to come.

"The type of build itself was a challenge, along with finding the amount of rimu we needed and seamlessly integrating the new additions into an existing home", says Duncan.

"This property has been in the family for generations, so it was very important to them that it was built well to last many more generations, while making sure any changes to the house felt seamless."



A show home built on high standards

Eden Homes

National Category Winner
- GIB Show Home



Successes

For the Eden Homes team, taking out the GIB Show Home category at the House of the Year 2025 national awards was a proud milestone — one that reflects the high standards they consistently deliver.

When asked about how they felt on winning the award, Andrea Dines, Director at Eden Homes, proudly expressed, “We were delighted, given the nationwide competition and number of extraordinary homes entered, and it was we who won! The judges were impressed with the level of detail we put in the interiors, but the outside patio was the show stopper.”

“To be recognised for the right set of awards and compliments validates the high standards we set and pride ourselves on keeping. In turn, this gives people confidence in choosing us to create their new home.”

Judges' comments

This two-storey masonry home sets out a timeless, well-balanced composition, and is built with real care. The plan responds to the site, drawing the lush gardens into daily life with a secluded patio and a covered loggia that extends living outdoors in all seasons. Openings are positioned for light and outlook, and the weight and texture of the masonry give the house permanence and calm.

Inside, bespoke furniture and finely detailed joinery express a considered material palette, with each room sharing the same measured language. High-quality fixtures and appliances are integrated neatly, reinforcing function and finish. Proportions are disciplined, circulation is clear, and every junction is tidy. The result is a quietly confident home of lasting elegance, where design, construction and setting work together with ease.

Challenges

While this build did not come with any major or unusual obstacles, delivering a show home to an award-winning standard still required a high level of consistency and attention to detail from start to finish.

Every element needed to be executed to a high standard, with the finished home reflecting the quality Eden Homes is known for.

“We did not face major challenges with this build, which meant the team could focus on delivering every detail to the standard we expect,” says Andrea.

“It was a fairly seamless project from start to finish, things went as planned, and that smooth process helped us achieve the remarkable outcome we were aiming for.”



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CATEGORY

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ENTRANT

LT McGuinness Wellington

PROJECT PARTNERS

335 (Engineer), Dunning Thornton (Structural Engineer), Rider Levett Bucknall (Quantity Surveyor), Tennant Brown (Architect/Designer), The Building Intelligence Group (Project Manager)



SUCCESSES

Winning the Supreme over \$10 Million Award for Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington’s Ngā Mokopuna (formerly The Living Pā) at the 2025 NZ Commercial Project Awards was a proud moment for the LT McGuinness team. The recognition came as a surprise, and reflected the care, commitment, and hard work behind bringing the project to life.

Reflecting on the win, James McLean, Project Manager at LT McGuinness, said, “Honestly, we did not expect to win at all, so when our name was announced, we were blown away. It was an incredibly humbling moment to be recognised at the 2025 Master Builders Commercial Project Awards.

“As a company, winning the Supreme Award was validation of the effort the whole team put into the project, and it motivates us to take on challenging builds like Ngā Mokopuna again.”

JUDGES’ COMMENTS

This project confronted some of the most pressing challenges facing contemporary buildings as the sector transitions towards a more sustainable future. Built to meet the demanding criteria of the Living Building Challenge, the project pushed boundaries across mass timber construction, on-site energy generation, and water management systems. The judges noted that this project wasn’t for the faint-hearted, with its success hinging on collaboration between the client, designers, contractors, and suppliers. Congratulations to LT McGuinness Wellington and all project partners — this truly is an outstanding commercial project.

CHALLENGES

Ngā Mokopuna was a project that tested the LT McGuinness Wellington team at every turn. From challenging ground conditions and a tight site beside a busy university, to ambitious sustainability goals, it was a build that demanded smart thinking, adaptability, and teamwork from start to finish.

“Working on a steep site beside a busy university, while also meeting ambitious sustainability goals such as generating energy on site, meant the team had to think smartly and adapt from the very beginning”, says James.

“One of the biggest parts of the job was meeting the project’s high sustainability standards. That included careful planning around materials, wastewater, and making sure as little construction waste as possible ended up in the landfill.”





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NZICC embodies design excellence with landmark opening

The New Zealand International Convention Centre (NZICC) officially opened on February 11, 2026, representing a new chapter for New Zealand's design excellence on a global scale. Managing director John Coop of Warren and Mahoney, one of the architectural partners for the project, looks back on what made the opening of the long-anticipated project so special, and highlights some of the features that gives the building its functional flexibility.

Occupying half a city block in the heart of Auckland, the NZICC is set to redefine New Zealand's business events landscape, offering world-class facilities and the capacity to host more than 4000 delegates across its flexible, purpose-built spaces.

Leading architecture and design practices Warren and Mahoney, Moller Architects and Woods Bagot were architectural partners for the project.

Warren and Mahoney managing director John Coop says the tireless work and commitment from many talented individuals to get the project over the line made the NZICC's opening day very special.

"The building's design is the product of collaboration and ambition from fellow architects, specifiers, builders, engineers, and artists — at a scale never before seen in Tamaki Makaurau," Coop says.

"We're proud to have led the design of a project that demonstrates the power of social infrastructure to transform cities, and create meaningful experiences for those within them."

Designing a world-leading venue with functional flexibility

Given the constrained site and planning envelope, flexibility was central to the brief.

The building is uniquely vertically stacked with a 2850-seat plenary hall located above 8000sq m of exhibition space that can be subdivided or combined — maximising the use of the available footprint while maintaining clear functional separation.

A generous linear, multi-level atrium connects these primary spaces with six



additional programme levels, allowing large numbers of people to move efficiently while enhancing the spatial experience.

Material selection and construction methods respond to the scale, durability, and performance demands of a major public building while carefully reducing the embodied carbon of the project.

In addition to flexibility, operational efficiency, and an exemplary visitor experience, the project was also required to revitalise a vehicle-dominated precinct, improve pedestrian connectivity, and create welcoming public spaces for the wider community.

An architectural canvas for New Zealand's cultural identity

As a gateway building for international visitors, the NZICC represents New

Zealand through a strong sense of place grounded in culture and landscape.

The works of four prominent New Zealand artists — Shane Cotton, Lyonel Grant, Sarah Hughes, and Peata Larkin — are embedded within the architecture, expressing Maori and contemporary narratives that offer visitors an authentic introduction to New Zealand's cultural identity.

The name Te Tumu — meaning foundation or tree stump — was gifted by Ngati Whatua Orakei for the building, reflecting a shared commitment to a destination of international significance grounded in local heritage.

Already, Six60 has marked the official opening of Te Paepae Theatre with an exclusive concert, while renowned speakers, industry awards and conferences are locked into the calendar.



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New house trade-in solution launched for homeowners

Leading national home builder Generation Homes is launching a new product allowing homeowners to trade in their existing property for a brand-new, purpose-built home — without the stress, risk or complexity of selling first.

Generation Trade-In - Your Next Home Made Easy, is designed to solve one of New Zealand's most common and least talked about housing problems — property owners who want to move but feel trapped by the process of getting there.

The concept borrows from something New Zealanders already understand. You trade in your car when you want a new one. Now you can trade in your house.

Customers select a new Generation home to be built in a chosen location, while continuing to live in their existing property.

Once construction is complete they move directly into their new home and receive the balance of the agreed sale price for their old one. Generation Homes then takes responsibility for selling the existing property.

Chief executive Craig Hopkins says the product was born out of a gap in the market he experienced when he helped a relative move from the family home where she had lived for more than 25 years to a smaller

residence with appropriate accessibility.

Once settled in her new home, she told him her biggest wish was that someone had made the getting there easier — a clearer path with less risk. That conversation, he says, crystallised what Generation Trade-In is designed to do.

"There are thousands of New Zealanders living in homes that simply no longer suit them — homes that are too big, too hard to maintain, or just not designed for the next stage of their lives," Hopkins says.

You trade in your car when you want a new one. Now you can trade in your house.

"They want to move, but the traditional process of selling and building simultaneously is overwhelming. Generation Trade-In removes that barrier entirely for property owners and their loved ones who are helping with the transition."

The product is aimed primarily at homeowners aged 60 to 80 who are mortgage-free or equity-rich, though Hopkins says the appeal is broader than many might expect.

"This isn't just for retirees. Anyone who wants to move from an older property into a warm, dry, low-maintenance modern home — without the open homes, the

negotiations, the timing risk and the stress — is a potential customer. The key ingredient is equity, not age."

Hopkins says the most powerful aspect of the product is the certainty it delivers to customers, aligned with how Generation Homes already promises customers a fixed price and guaranteed delivery date for their new home.

"The financial outcome is locked in before you commit. You know what your current home is worth, what your new home will cost, and exactly when you'll be moving in. That kind of clarity is genuinely rare in the property market."

The Generation Trade-In process involves four steps — an initial consultation to assess suitability and agree an indicative offer; formalisation through an independent valuation and contract; the build phase, during which customers remain in their current home; and finally, move-in day, when customers transfer directly to their new place and receive the balance of the agreed sale price.

To give an authentic market appraisal, Generation Homes has partnered with mortgage and property finance specialists Squirrel to provide independent market analysis on each property.

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R1.8 Wall	75	600	1200	20	8	14.40	14.40
R2.2 Wall	90	580	1140	16	8	10.58	12.47
R2.4 Wall	90	560	1140	13	8	8.30	9.85
R2.6 Wall	90	560	1140	11	8	7.02	8.26
R2.8 Wall	90	560	1140	7	8	4.47	5.24
R3.2 Wall	140	560	1140	13	8	8.30	9.77
R3.6 Wall	140	560	1140	9	8	5.75	6.82
R4.1 Wall	140	560	1140	6	8	3.83	4.51
R4.3 Wall	140	560	1140	4	8	2.55	3.01

Ceiling and Skillion Insulation Product Specifications¹

R-Value (m2 K/W)	Thickness (mm)	Width (mm)	Length (mm)	Piece per Pack	Bales per MasterBag	Area Per Bale (m2)	Approx. Cover. per Bale (m ²)
R3.6 Ceiling ²	165	432	1220	14	8	7.38	7.68
R4.2 Ceiling	195	432	1220	12	8	6.32	6.62
R5.3 Ceiling	230	432	1220	8	8	4.22	4.39
R6.3 Ceiling	278	432	1220	7	8	3.69	3.84
R7.3 Ceiling	285	460	1220	5	8	2.81	2.73
R3.2 Skillion	115	560	1220	9	8	6.15	6.64
R5.0 Skillion	165	560	1220	4	8	2.73	2.95
R6.0 Skillion	215	560	1220	5	8	3.42	3.69
R7.4 Skillion	265	560	1220	4	8	2.73	2.95

R2.6 Wall, R2.8 Wall, R3.6 Ceiling or R4.2 Ceiling can be used in mid-floors for a dual thermal and acoustic solution

¹ Approx. coverage per bale relates to standard structures (i.e. with framing allowance) therefore actual coverage may vary

² 2 layers of R3.6 Ceiling = R7.0 Ceiling (refer to CodeMark Certificate)

One visit — real value for builders and the wider industry

Keeping skills current while running a viable business remains a constant challenge for construction professionals.

Regulatory change, product innovation and shifting market conditions all require ongoing learning.

In this context, BuildNZ, taking place at the Auckland Showgrounds on Wednesday, July 15 and Thursday July 16, continues to provide a practical forum for education, connection and industry engagement.

A key feature of the 2026 event is the LBP Education Day, held alongside BuildNZ and structured to support professional development and compliance.

Licensed Building Practitioners have the opportunity to earn up to six elective LBP points in a single day, while accessing material directly relevant to current site and business realities.

The NZ Certified Builders Auckland Education Day on Wednesday, July 15, offers a structured programme of short, focused sessions delivered by industry specialists.



A mix of classroom-based learning and on-floor presentations allows attendees to move through practical topics efficiently, covering technical updates, compliance requirements, product knowledge and best-practice construction approaches.

While hosted by NZCB Auckland, the Education Day is open to all builders and construction professionals, ensuring the entire industry can access these updates.

Running concurrently, the BuildNZ trade exhibition brings together suppliers

from across the construction sector, offering builders the chance to assess products and systems, speak directly with manufacturers and service providers, and better understand emerging solutions.

For many, this side-by-side access helps inform purchasing decisions and supports productivity improvements.

BuildNZ extends beyond licensed builders though. Apprentices, project managers, subcontractors, designers, specifiers, architects and

company owners can all benefit from the education programme, networking opportunities, and exposure to new tools and technologies.

By combining high-level learning with a comprehensive trade exhibition, BuildNZ offers a streamlined way to tackle a year's worth of networking and education in 48 hours.

Tickets for the NZCB Auckland Education Day will be released soon.

BuildNZ is free to attend. Register online at www.buildnz.com.



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Steel sector roadmap charts path to cut emissions by more

The Sustainable Steel Council has launched a new roadmap showing how New Zealand's steel sector can reduce direct and electricity-related greenhouse gas emissions from steel used in buildings and infrastructure by more than 90% by 2050 — without relying on offsets.

The roadmap, *Forging ahead: A roadmap to net-zero greenhouse gas emissions for Aotearoa New Zealand's steel industry*, was launched at Parliament by Minister of Climate Change Simon Watts recently, marking the culmination of more than two years of industry collaboration.

Commissioned by the Sustainable Steel Council and developed in partnership with industry, the roadmap sets out a practical pathway for decarbonising one of New Zealand's essential sectors.

The technical analysis and emissions modelling underpinning the work were carried out by independent sustainability firm thinkstep-anz.

The report sets a target of reducing emissions by more than 30% by 2030 compared with 2020 levels, with the sector already on track to meet this milestone.

It identifies five key strategies to achieve this, including:

- extending the life of existing assets through adaptive reuse,
- using steel more efficiently in design and construction,
- expanding renewable electricity,
- increasing scrap-based electric arc



Sustainable Steel Council executive officer Jeremy Sole

furnace (EAF) steelmaking, and

- reducing emissions from ironmaking.

Sustainable Steel Council executive officer Jeremy Sole says the roadmap reflects a coordinated, sector-wide effort to reduce emissions across the full steel value chain.

"Steel is fundamental to the buildings and infrastructure New Zealand depends on every day. This roadmap shows that deep emissions reductions are achievable, but they will require coordinated action across the entire value chain," Sole says.

"This is not about doing less. It is about making and using steel differently — through smarter design, greater reuse, more recycled steel, and cleaner energy."

Sole says decisions made at the design stage will be critical to achieving early emissions reductions.

"The fastest gains this decade will come from using steel more efficiently and avoiding unnecessary material use. Designers, builders and clients all have a role to play in delivering lower-emissions outcomes."

Industry-led solutions

Minister Watts congratulated the sector on its leadership, noting the importance of industry-led solutions in driving New Zealand's transition to a low-emissions economy.

He highlighted the broader economic benefits of decarbonisation and the critical role of the construction sector, emphasising the need for the right policy settings, tools and incentives to support continued progress.

The roadmap also reflects strong alignment between government and industry investment. A significant step already underway is the approximately \$300 million investment in a new electric arc furnace at New Zealand Steel's Glenbrook plant, which is expected to substantially reduce emissions from domestic steel production.

thinkstep-anz technical director Dr Jeff Vickers says the modelling shows the scale of change required and where the biggest opportunities lie.

"A reduction of more than 90% in direct and electricity-related emissions is technically achievable by 2050. The

Concrete NZ welcomes cross-industry momentum on de

Concrete New Zealand (NZ) has welcomed the Sustainable Steel Council's newly released roadmap which outlines the steel industry's pathway to net-zero emissions by 2050, as another positive step for the construction and infrastructure ecosystem.

Concrete NZ chief executive Rob Gaimster says the steel industry roadmap reflects growing alignment across the built environment on the importance of co-ordinated, long-term emissions reduction strategies, and commended the Sustainable Steel Council on taking this strong, positive step.

"It's encouraging to see another key construction material industry articulate a clear pathway to net-zero. Achieving New Zealand's climate goals will require contributions from across the entire value chain," Gaimster says.

Concrete NZ published its own cement and concrete industry roadmap in 2023 — *A Net-Zero Carbon Concrete Industry for Aotearoa New Zealand: Roadmap*

to 2050 — setting out a comprehensive and measurable pathway aligned with domestic and international commitments.

Gaimster pointed to how Concrete NZ's Reinforcing Processors Group contributed to the steel industry roadmap through the Sustainable Steel Council's stakeholder engagement process.

This involvement reflects the interconnected nature of concrete and steel supply chains, particularly in reinforced concrete construction.

The steel and concrete industries play critical and complementary roles in delivering resilient, low-carbon infrastructure, from transport networks and water systems to energy and housing.

For instance, the increasing availability of low-carbon, recycled steel reinforcing for use in structural concrete is a positive example of how cross-material innovation is helping to reduce construction emissions.

"This is not about one material versus another. It's about ensuring the right material is used in the right application,



Concrete NZ chief executive Rob Gaimster

supported by robust data, whole-of-life thinking and performance-based design," Gaimster says.

"The cement and concrete roadmap outlines a practical transition, including reducing clinker content, increasing the use of supplementary cementitious materials, improving production efficiency, and advancing carbon capture technologies."

Gaimster says he's excited by Concrete

than 90% by 2050

strongest progress in the near term will come from proven technologies and smarter demand, including scrap-based EAF production, increasing renewable electricity and more efficient use of steel," Vickers says.

By the end of 2026, direct emissions from steel used in New Zealand are forecast to fall by more than 30% compared with 2020 levels, driven by the new electric arc furnace at Glenbrook, increased use of recycled steel, and greater sourcing from lower-emissions EAF production overseas.

The roadmap takes a consumption-based approach, covering all steel used in New Zealand buildings and infrastructure, whether it is produced domestically or imported.

It highlights that achieving net-zero emissions will require coordinated action across the full value chain, including manufacturers, importers, designers, engineers, builders, recyclers, asset owners and government.

Speakers at the launch reinforced the importance of this whole-of-system approach, noting collaboration across the sector will be essential to unlocking further emissions reductions.

Industry and government representatives also pointed to opportunities to reduce material use through smarter design, increased recycling rates — already as high as 90% for demolition steel — and accelerating the uptake of digital design and manufacturing technologies.

Decarbonisation

NZ's soon to be released Transformation to a Low-Carbon Concrete Industry report, which translates the roadmap into practical action.

It confirms decarbonisation is achievable and already underway, while identifying priorities including improving understanding of low-carbon concrete, strengthening supply data, and providing clear specification guidance to support uptake.

Concrete NZ also noted the importance of consistent policy settings, materials-neutral procurement, and recognition of whole-of-life carbon performance to support informed decision-making across the construction sector.

"As more industry roadmaps emerge, the opportunity is to align efforts, share innovation and accelerate progress collectively."

Concrete NZ looks forward to ongoing engagement with industry partners, including the Sustainable Steel Council, to support practical, scalable solutions that contribute to New Zealand's transition to a low-emissions future.

Two into one does go: Introducing Box Studio and Box Build



In a transition that means a broader range of clients can access their services, Box, the design-and-build company that has been operating within New Zealand's mid-to-high-end residential market for 17 years, is evolving.

The Auckland-based company has reshaped their proposition in response to market demand, splitting into Box Studio (a full-service architectural design offering) and Box Build (the construction arm), a move that will extend their client portfolio and allow them to expand further into the regions.

Original Box concept co-founder Dan Heyworth is quick to reiterate that the business will retain its point of difference as a one-stop-shop proposition, for which it has earned a loyal following.

"Clients can still access our full wraparound design-and-build option. But now, they can choose their own journey. If they just want to use our talented in-house designers, or solely contract our proven build team, they can," Heyworth says.

As part of this recalibration, Box Studio has welcomed Rosanna Anderson as design manager. Anderson will be responsible for driving the business into the next era, and comes with a considerable depth of experience, having previously worked at Architecture Page Henderson and Adam Taylor Architecture.

"Rosanna brings fresh design ideas to our amazing team of creatives, and her problem-solving ability means she can plot a clear pathway for any project," Heyworth says.

Alongside new builds, Box Studio will now also consult on renovations, extensions and additions. The team's extensive background with this type of work and knowledge of interior design feeds into the expanded project base, and will introduce more flexibility into the in-house programme.

"Post the pandemic, homeowners are more interested in reimagining their existing houses. With our building background, we can advise people on the risks involved, and manage consents," Heyworth says.

Co-founder Nat Jakich will assume the role of construction manager for Box Build. With 30 years' experience under his tool belt, his technical ability, understanding of compliance requirements and client-relationship management will allow the team to diversify and embrace an exciting panorama of opportunities.

For the business, which has adapted and grown through the changing seasons of the building industry, this is a case of embracing a fresh direction, but with the same fundamental philosophies.

"We may be exploring new horizons and building on our core strengths but, underneath, we have the same DNA," Heyworth says.

Top global role for AUT construction expert

AUT's leading role in Lean Construction has seen associate professor Mani Poshdar from the School of Future Environments become the co-lead of a prestigious international group.

Dr Poshdar is running the Lean Construction task group within the International Council for Research and Innovation in Building and Construction (CIB).

CIB is a global network that connects leading universities and industry partners working on the future of the built environment, cities, buildings, and infrastructure.

Dr Poshdar's appointment positions Auckland-based AUT at the centre of an international collaboration shaping how construction systems evolve globally.

As well as research opportunities and industry engagement, it connects AUT staff and postgraduate students to a high-calibre international network.

His work focuses on how decisions made in planning are translated into coordinated action on site.

"We see this as part of a broader direction, with AUT playing a more visible role internationally while strengthening our position locally," Poshdar says.



AUT associate professor Mani Poshdar.

AUT is effectively the hub of Lean Construction activity in the Southern Hemisphere.

Dr Poshdar is also the New Zealand chair of LCA NZ (Lean Construction Australia and New Zealand), an industry-facing organisation, and is active in the International Group of Lean Construction (IGLC) which is a global, research-focused community.

In 2024, AUT hosted the IGLC conference for the first time, and the university also has a Lean Construction student chapter to foster the next generation of advocates.

"Now, we have been further recognised within the CIB, sharing the co-lead of the Lean Construction task group with two UK

universities," he says.

The CIB was established in France in 1953 with United Nations assistance, to address rebuilding pressures which arose after World War II.

Dr Poshdar's task group will run for three years to drive knowledge and policy about Lean Construction, a concept which was developed about 25 years ago, following on from the idea of Lean Manufacturing which was led by Toyota in Japan.

This "just in time" concept saw manufacturing aligned with demand, rather than bulk production which companies like Ford were doing in the US.

The four key principles of "lean" production, whether in manufacturing or construction, are:


- deliver value to the end user,
- eliminate waste (anything that does not add value),
- continuous improvement, and
- respect for people.

Importantly, Lean Construction does not necessarily rely on new technologies or costly system changes.


Much of its impact comes from improving how teams coordinate and align their work within existing project environments.

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Low-maintenance bamboo cladding offers alternative to traditional timber

Bamboo X-treme cladding is gaining strong traction with New Zealand builders looking for a durable, low-maintenance alternative to traditional timber.

Manufactured from compressed, thermally-modified bamboo, it's engineered to perform in demanding exterior conditions while still delivering the natural warmth and character clients expect from a timber facade.

The thermal modification process removes sugars and starches from the bamboo, enhancing durability and stability without the need for chemical treatments.

The result is a highly-resistant cladding that won't rot and is far less susceptible to movement than many traditional timbers.

It performs well across New Zealand's varied climate — from high UV exposure to coastal environments — making it a practical, reliable option.

Importantly, Bamboo X-treme cladding has been fully tested and appraised against the New Zealand Building Code, with a BEAL appraisal supporting its use.

It is installed as a drained and ventilated



cavity system, aligning with New Zealand best practice, and helping to manage moisture effectively.

From a buildability perspective, it supports efficient installation, with concealed fixing options delivering a clean, modern finish without visible screw lines. Consistent board profiles and stability also help streamline the process on site.

As a low maintenance cladding, it can be left to naturally weather to a softer tone, or oiled to maintain or achieve a range of colour finishes.

Backed by world-leading MOSO Bamboo (Netherlands) and supported locally by Plantation Bamboo, it offers builders a compelling, future-focused cladding solution.

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From product launch to real-world experience



When specifying door hardware, builders need confidence that a product will perform on site and stand up to everyday use. To understand how Yale Unity® Slim delivers in real-world conditions, Yale spoke with Joe Ravenhall, Sales Manager at Window Makers, a New Zealand joinery manufacturer working with Unity Slim across residential builds.

Developed specifically for New Zealand conditions and narrow aluminium door profiles, Unity Slim has moved quickly from product launch to mainstream specification. Its uptake reflects changing expectations from both homeowners and the building industry.

"It's about having something that's secure, simple, and integrates well into everyday life."

----- Joe Ravenhall, Sales Manager,
Window Makers

Meeting modern expectations

As smart technology becomes standard in homes, clients increasingly expect the front door to deliver the same convenience and control as lighting, alarms, and cameras. For builders, that means specifying solutions that are reliable, easy to use, and won't create issues after handover.

"Convenience is a big driver," Joe explains. "Builders want something that works reliably for clients once they move in."



Security remains the priority

While smart features attract interest, security remains the primary reason homeowners choose a smart lock. Unity Slim combines digital functionality with strong mechanical security, giving homeowners confidence and builders

peace of mind. Features such as remote locking, access codes, and notifications are intuitive for end users, helping reduce call-backs post-handover.

Flexible application across the home

Although most commonly specified on front entry doors, Unity Slim is also well suited to back and secondary external doors. With multiple backset options available, builders can deliver consistent security across all entry points without compromising door design.



Built for joinery performance

Multipoint locking is a key advantage, particularly for larger or architectural doors. By securing the door at multiple points, it improves sealing, compression, and overall door performance — critical for long-term durability.

Easy to manufacture, easy to support

From a manufacturing and installation perspective, Unity Slim integrates seamlessly into industry-standard locking systems. Local powder coating, assembly, and supply support accurate finish matching, shorter lead times, and straightforward after-sales support.

Smart security as the standard

Today, around 70 percent of Window Makers' entry door hardware includes digital locks, highlighting how smart security has become the new standard. For builders, Yale Unity Slim offers a proven solution that's easy to specify, reliable on site, and designed for long-term performance.



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Recognised for its outstanding design and innovation, the Unity Slim Smart Lock earned Silver at the 2025 Best Design Awards and won the Innovation category at the 2025 Window & Glass Association NZ Design Awards.



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Designed for New Zealand conditions



Total control via the app



Yale Home



Heat pumps take off — one of New Zealand's

Auckland Airport has switched on a fleet of 11 industrial scale heat pumps in its international terminal — one of the largest installations of its kind in New Zealand — marking a major milestone in the airport's plan to phase out natural gas and cut carbon emissions from its operations.

The new electric system replaces one of the country's largest gas-fired air conditioning plants, which has heated the 141,000sq m international terminal for more than 50 years.

Now that the system is operational, it is expected to cut natural gas use by around 40%, while supporting comfortable journeys for the 30,000 travellers who pass through the terminal each day.

Each unit — roughly the size of a shipping container — delivers up to 600kW of heating or cooling, around 100 times the output of a typical home unit.

Together, the heat pumps provide efficient, low emissions climate control across the terminal, from check-in and departures through to airside dwell and biosecurity areas.

Auckland Airport chief strategic planning officer Mary-Liz Tuck says the project involved retiring a 1970s power centre, and craning the 12-tonne heat pumps up to 30 metres into position on the terminal roof.

"This project marks an important step in how we're modernising the airport's core infrastructure while materially reducing the emissions within our control," Tuck says.

"Electric heat pumps allow us to move away from natural gas and make meaningful progress towards our goal of cutting Scope 1 and 2 emissions by 90% by 2030, compared to a 2019 baseline.

"It's a practical transition that improves the efficiency and resilience of the terminal today, while supporting the airport we're building for the decades to come."

Transitioning in a live operational environment

In FY25, natural gas made up 29% of Auckland Airport's direct emissions, largely due to the energy required to heat the international terminal.

Upgrading the system in a live terminal required the work to be carefully staged so flights continued as normal and passengers were not disrupted.

The project involved replacing 50-year-old plant with new, energy-efficient Trane units imported from Asia.

The installation also aligned with wider terminal integration works, including construction of the multi-storey building connecting the international terminal with the future domestic jet



Each of the industrial heat pumps is roughly the size of a shipping container, and delivers up to 600kW of heating or cooling, around 100 times the output of a typical home unit.

Quick facts

- Approximately \$15 million has been invested in the project — a major upgrade to one of New Zealand's largest commercial air conditioning systems.
- Eleven 600kW heat pumps installed — each with around 100 times the output of a typical home heat pump.
- Will reduce natural gas use for heating and cooling by an estimated 40%.

terminal — which the heat pumps sit atop.

Martin Butcher, lead engineer on the project, says the heat pump technology was trialled over an 18-month period in 2023 in an adjacent section of the terminal before the full system was rolled out.

Proven technology and future stages

"That testing gave us a clear picture of how the technology performs in a working airport environment," Butcher says.

The trial demonstrated how the system responds to Auckland's fast-changing weather and fluctuating passenger volumes.

"For the main system replacement we transitioned the changeover in carefully planned stages, which allowed us to confirm how the system performed while keeping the terminal operating normally for travellers.

"This transition was undertaken over a five-week period," Butcher says.

"The building effectively acts like a

thermal buffer. Temperatures shift slowly, which gives the system time to respond without creating noticeable temperature swings for people in the terminal."

Auckland's mild climate supports efficiency. For much of the year, the outside air can be used for cooling rather than relying solely on mechanical systems, reducing overall energy demand while maintaining comfort.

The heat pumps can run in mixed-mode — heating one area while cooling another — and reuse waste heat instead of discarding it, further improving efficiency during busy travel periods.

The system began operating in September 2025, with fine-tuning over the next 6 to 12 months to balance comfort across fluctuating passenger volumes.

Commissioning will continue through to next winter to validate year-round performance.

largest air-con systems goes electric

Supporting the wider energy transition

The heat pump upgrade is part of a broader programme to modernise Auckland Airport's energy systems and support the wider transition to decarbonise New Zealand.

Emissions from Auckland Airport's direct operations are a very small portion of those required to operate an international airport.

The operation of aircraft contributes around 90% of Auckland Airport's total emissions inventory, but are a necessary part of connecting people and places.

Addressing this emission source will take long-term coordination across the entire industry.

"The decarbonisation pathway for the aviation sector is not straightforward with no single solution, but actions such as switching our terminal heating and cooling from gas to electric are steps we can take today," Tuck says.

Auckland Airport is also investing in renewable energy generation to offset its energy usage and reduce its draw from the national grid.

Rooftop solar arrays have been installed on the Transport Hub and Manawa Bay, capable of generating 3.5MW of clean energy.

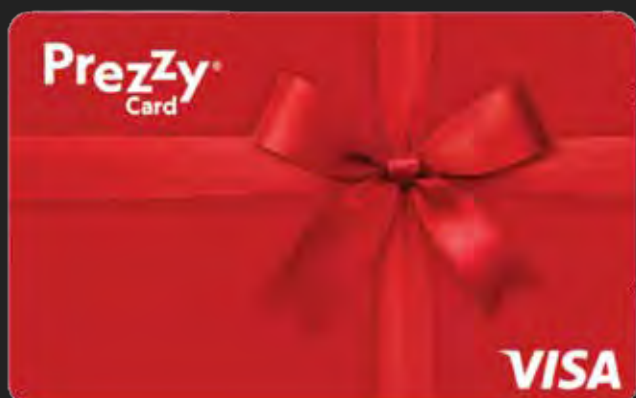
These efforts contributed to Auckland Airport achieving Level 4 Airport Carbon Accreditation, placing it among the top airports globally for carbon management.



"We take our carbon reduction target seriously, and will continue to seek to use low-emissions solutions as we invest in our infrastructure," Tuck says.

"These initiatives are part of building a stronger, cleaner, and more climate-resilient airport for generations to come."

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Congratulations go to Robin Williams who won last month's \$100 Prezzy Card.

Growing admin support company opens new office

Mrs Tradie Office Lady continues to grow and, after many months of planning, it has established an office in Belfast, Christchurch.

"I am very excited to say that we now have a nice new office in Christchurch — what a fantastic city, it sure has some momentum," Mrs Tradie founder Max Collins says.

"You can't miss us — we are on Main North Road, Belfast, and are likely the only business on that road with a bright pink metallic door," Collins says.

"The new office has a warm, inviting, and professional feel about it, aligning with our company values.

"We currently have offices in Winton, Whitianga, Whangamata, and now in Christchurch," Collins says.

"From these offices we look after/take care of businesses throughout the country, providing part-time administration support, compliance support, project management/software platform support, payroll and bookkeeping services."

Collins says their client base is growing, and that the clients



they support are busy and growing as well.

"As part of our growth, we have aligned ourselves with most of the project management/software platforms like Fergus, Tadify, Simpro, BuildXact and Xero Projects.

"We are specialists in this area, managing all the admin side of these platforms for our clients, allowing them to see the results they need to be profitable, without having to do all the inputting of data — they just leave that part up to us now.

Game changer

"Specialising in this area has been a game changer for us and the growth of Mrs Tradie Office Lady.

"It has allowed us to tap into a whole new market — making more business owners happy and giving them back precious time.

"I believe it is near impossible to have a successful and sustainable business without solid administration support.

"That support does not have to be us — it just needs to be reliable and relatable for the business itself," Collins says.

"With solid administration support, a business can focus on their own key tasks and their people, and have piece of mind.

"Increasingly, I am seeing businesses reach out to us when the admin burden/load has become too heavy.

"This burden takes its toll on business owners and their mental well-being.

"Our job is to step in seamlessly, without opinion, and simply take admin and compliance tasks off their plate.

"Every day I am proud of my team. Each staff member manages their own portfolio of clients, building relationships and removing that admin burden.

"This allows our clients and business owners the freedom to be great again!"

• For more information visit www.mrstradie.co.nz.

Goulden's legacy — training more than 40 tradies and counting



Martin Goulden (second from left), with three of his employees.

Martin Goulden, owner of Wellington-based Martin Goulden Building, will celebrate 50 years in the building industry in 2027.

Over that time, his business has weathered many storms — the Global Financial Crisis, the Covid 19 pandemic, major industry changes, and significant government reforms.

Yet, through it all, one thing has remained constant — the industry's need for skilled, well-trained tradespeople.

Goulden's own journey began with uncertainty.

"I didn't have a clue what I wanted to do when I left school. I was thinking about going to university and studying a Bachelor of Arts but I had no understanding of what that might involve," he says.

"I went down to enrol and then went straight back home and realised that wasn't going to be for me. My mother suggested that I might want to get into building.

"That day we started ringing around different sites in Wellington. I ended up working on the construction of St Patrick's College in Evans Bay for two years.

"I had to keep that quiet for a little while though, as I was a Wellington College student," Goulden says.

Back then, the industry looked very different. An apprentice could spend four years on a single site — something almost

unheard of today.

"Construction has become faster and more complex, driven by offsite fabrication, prebuilt components, specialised subcontracting, and advanced project management systems that streamline the entire process.

Overcoming challenges

Reflecting on his career, Goulden acknowledges that he has faced his share of challenges, but he knows what it takes to overcome them and build a resilient business.

"Maintain open and honest communication with your employees and clients. Have integrity and values that align with your clients. Keep your business financially stable. Stay up to date with changes in the industry and be aware of failures so you don't follow someone else's pathway to the bottom."

Integral part of the business

Training has always been an integral part of his business. His entire workforce is BCITO-trained, and he's proud of the legacy he's built.

"We have been very lucky to enjoy a culture of training in our business where the guys pass on their knowledge to the apprentices.

"To date, we have trained 31 apprentices through BCITO, and an additional 11 have completed their supervisor qualification.

"A lot of our guys have gone on to set up their own businesses, and three have become building inspectors for the council, which is pretty cool."

Goulden believes the biggest issue facing the industry is that not enough employers are training.

"People say they can't find anyone with the right skills for the job. The answer is to train. Bring people through and pass on what you know.

"We have to keep employing apprentices so we have a workforce.

"Look to hire good people, pay them well, look after them, and make sure you are getting the best people for your business.

"It's a no-brainer. It shows when people lead from the front."

Testament to what's possible

After nearly five decades in the industry, Goulden's commitment to training continues to shape not only his own business but the wider Wellington construction community.

His story is a testament to what's possible when you invest in people, and why the future of the industry depends on it.

If you are an employer and are interested in training an apprentice through the BCITO, visit the BCITO website to sign up an employee today at <https://bcito.org.nz/sign-up-an-employee>.

When disaster strikes, what's your plan?

Andy Burrows — The Trades Coach — presents a comprehensive plan for construction businesses to follow in the event of a major disaster.



Picture this. It's Monday morning and you open your computer ready for the week ahead. What greets you is a screen saying you have been hacked, and all your files are locked and will be deleted unless you pay a Bitcoin to some lowlife in eastern Europe.

How would you handle this? Is your business effectively on pause until you either pay up, or rebuild your entire database of digital information from scratch?

It may sound far-fetched and unlikely to happen, but here's the reality. Catastrophic events do happen, and most construction businesses only think about risk after they've been hit.

By then, you're reacting under pressure, bleeding cash, and making poor decisions. The operators who come out stronger are the ones who plan before things go wrong.

Below is a practical, no-nonsense framework you can use to prepare your business for a disaster and then recover faster.

Planning for construction business disasters

New Zealand businesses are operating in an increasingly volatile environment. Severe weather events, supply chain disruption, fuel price spikes, cyber threats, and rising bad debts are no longer rare — they're recurring.

If you're running a business without a clear plan for these events, you're exposed.

There are two parts to getting this right:

- An Emergency Response Plan (what you do immediately).
- A Business Continuity Plan (how you stabilise and rebuild).

Emergency Response Plan (first 0 to 72 hours)

This is about control. When something hits — flooding, supply shutdown, cyber-attack — you need fast, clear decisions.

Thinking about these scenarios ahead of time and having an immediate response mapped out, even in broad terms, will minimise damage and set you up for a quicker recovery.

Define your critical risks

Start by identifying the events most likely to hurt your business:

- Weather damage to sites or assets.
- Supply chain disruption (materials unavailable or delayed).
- Fuel price spikes affecting job margins.
- Cyber-attacks (ransomware, data breaches).
- Client insolvency or major bad debts.

Don't overcomplicate this. Pick the top five risks and plan for those.

Assign clear roles

In a crisis, confusion kills time and money. Assign responsibility:

- Who leads the response?
- Who communicates with clients?
- Who manages suppliers?
- Who handles financial decisions?

If the owner is unavailable, someone else must step in immediately. Communicate early and clearly, internally and externally. Bad news delivered early builds trust. Delayed communication destroys it.

Protect people first

For physical events your number one priority is safety:

- Account for all staff.
- Shut down unsafe sites.
- Secure hazardous areas.

If people aren't safe, nothing else matters.

Data and systems protection

If you're hit by a cyber-attack:

- Disconnect affected systems immediately.
- Activate back-ups.
- Contact your IT provider.

Don't have back-ups? You're gambling with your entire business.

with your entire business.

Business Continuity Plan (next 30 to 180 days)

Once the dust settles, this is where businesses either recover — or slide backwards.

Your Business Continuity Plan

(BCP) should kick in at this point. For a construction business, it's a practical playbook to keep jobs moving and cash flowing when things go wrong.

These are the core elements that matter:

1 Critical operations

Identify what must keep running:

- Active building sites.
 - Payroll and supplier payments.
 - Client communication and invoicing.
- If these stop, your business stops.

2 Key people and roles

Define who does what in a disruption:

- Site supervision.
- Client liaison.
- Financial control.
- Supplier coordination.

You need back-up people for each role. If one person goes down, the business must still function.

3 Supplier and material continuity

This is a big one for builders:

- Secondary suppliers for key materials.
- Awareness of long-lead items.
- Ability to re-sequence work if materials are delayed.

If materials stop, your sites stall — and your cash flow follows.

4 Financial resilience

You need a buffer and visibility:

- Minimum cash reserve target (eg two to three months' overhead).
- Up-to-date cash flow forecast.
- Access to funding (overdraft, credit lines).

Most construction business failures happen here — not because they're unprofitable, but because they run out of cash.

5 Systems and data protection

If your systems go down, you're blind:

- Cloud-based systems where possible.
- Daily back-ups.
- Cyber security basics (passwords, access control, staff awareness).

A cyber-attack can shut you down as effectively as a natural disaster.

6 Client and contract management

Your contracts can either protect you — or sink you:

- Clear variation processes.
- Clauses for delays and cost escalation.
- Regular client communication.



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Continued page 27

What's happening in the New Zealand residential building sector?



Pacifecon research manager Philip Dawes takes a look at the company's latest Market Watch report which puts the spotlight on the residential sector.

Pacifecon's latest Market Watch report explores New Zealand's subdivisions, as well as general information on projects around the country.

We're now well into the second quarter of the year, and it's promising to hear economists telling us that they're seeing the green shoots appearing.

It's important to note that while there is debate over how long it will take for the economy to thrive, especially given recent developments in the Middle East, New Zealand's construction industry is rethinking how it operates.

Some businesses are pivoting to make the most of the change in the air, while others are looking at ongoing strategies for the second half of the year.

The latest monthly Market Watch report provides analysis focusing on newly-reported projects, progression of existing projects, construction starting and

From page 26

Don't rely on goodwill. Lock this into your agreements.

7 Communication plan

When things go wrong, people want answers:

- Staff updates.
- Client updates.
- Supplier coordination.

Clear, early communication reduces conflict and keeps trust intact.

Bottom line

A Business Continuity Plan for a building company isn't about paperwork — it's about keeping:

- Sites moving.
- Cash flowing.
- Clients informed.

If your plan doesn't help you do those three things under pressure, it's not a plan — it's a document. If you don't have a plan, you're relying on luck, and in this market, that's a poor strategy.

The business.govt.nz website has a good guide on this: www.business.govt.nz/operations/prepare-for-unexpected-events/continuity-and-contingency-planning.

cancellations across key sectors, including commercial, residential and infrastructure for New Zealand and the Pacific Islands.

I'm responsible for managing and leading the nationwide research and edit team to ensure information is of the highest quality and accuracy.

I analyse what's happening in the residential sector, and oversee each report with a keen interest in the Market Watch.

Of the 18,727 projects in the planning and tendering stages in New Zealand, 6918, or 37%, fall into the Subdivisions/Site Preparation/Earthmoving category. As of March 2026, these projects have a combined value of \$122 billion.

Of the 6918 projects, 1338 are categorised as civil works for subdivisions, with both these numbers having increased compared to the same time in 2025.

Auckland hosts most of the civil subdivision projects at 367, with Waikato/Bay of Plenty and the Lower North Island following.

One of the high-value subdivision projects we're reporting on is the Milldale development on the Hibiscus Coast, just north of Auckland.

Coming in at \$3 billion, this 300-hectare development will have 4500 homes, a town centre with a retail and service hub, parks, and a retirement village when it's complete.

We've been reporting on this since 2017, and have provided info on developers, builders, designers, subcontractors, architects and engineers.

The majority of New Zealand subdivision civil projects in the pipeline are residential — 91% in number and 88% of the value.

Commercial and industrial subdivisions, such as business parks and industrial parks, sit at 3% of the number and 4% of the value, respectively.

In addition to a highlighted project breakdown, each Market Watch includes commentary and graphs for regions, providing a comprehensive picture of planned construction across the country to help your business.

We're excited to now be receiving Code Compliance Certificate (CCC) data from most councils across New Zealand, covering the past two years.

We have linked this information with Building Consent records and our own planning data, allowing us to generate a range of valuable insights.

One key area of focus is the pace at which residential projects move through the various development stages — planning, approval, tendering, construction, and certification — once project completion is confirmed through the issuing of a CCC.

Our other area of interest focuses on the difference in the number of days individual projects spend in each particular stage.

If we take early planning residential projects and compare Q1 2024 and Q1 2025, initial indicators suggest that projects appear to have moved faster in 2025.

Early analysis also suggests that projects in Canterbury progress through planning phases faster than those in Auckland or Wellington.

We will continue to enhance our tools and analysis to uncover deeper insights over time.

Check out Pacifecon reports

Be informed, make strategic decisions based on projects planned and what has started, drive business growth, understand which regions are right for your future, and identify which sectors are growing in the regions.

Head to pacifecon.co.nz to book a free demo and check out available reports, or contact us today at projects@pacifecon.nz to order your copy of Market Watch.

Why performance reviews alone aren't enough

Tradie HR director Leigh Olsen explains the modernised version of performance reviews — Review and Progress Sessions (RAPS) — and how they can help.



Let's be honest. When you hear the words "performance review", what's your first reaction? For a lot of managers I work with, it sits somewhere between "we should probably be doing those" and "I'd rather be anywhere else".

Some have had bad experiences where the meeting has gone sideways, turned into a pay discussion, or felt like a tick-the-box exercise. Others avoid them altogether because they think it will open a can of worms they're not ready for.

So here's the reality. Performance reviews are not the problem. Doing them in isolation is.

Over the past few months, I've been working with managers on a more practical approach. We still do performance reviews, but we call them Review and Progress Sessions, or RAPS. It is the same concept, just modernised and done properly.

But even more importantly, we pair them with regular one-on-ones, because you cannot have one without the other. More on that soon.

What are RAPS?

At their core, RAPS are planned conversations where you stop, look back, and assess performance.

It is your chance as a manager to step back and take stock, while also giving your employee the opportunity to reflect on how they feel they are going.

A simple way to think about RAPS is that they answer three key questions:

- What's been going well?
- Where are the gaps?
- What needs to improve?

Done well, RAPS give clarity. They help your team understand what is expected, where they stand, and what good looks like.

They also give you the opportunity to recognise strong performers, and to address issues early, before they become bigger problems.

Where RAPS go wrong

Where things tend to fall over is not in the meeting itself, but in how often they take place.

Disappointingly, these game-changing conversations only happen once or twice a year. As a result, RAPS can start to feel forced, reactive, and uncomfortable for everyone involved, because there has been very little conversation leading up to them.

If the only time you talk about performance is in a formal review, everything builds up over time. Small issues sit there too long, good work goes unnoticed, and by the time you finally sit down for the review, it feels like a big deal.

That is when you tend to see awkward conversations emerge — unspoken frustrations or the classic approach of "let's just get this over with aye?"

At that point, it is no longer a performance system, it is damage control. You're missing something.

The missing piece

The missing piece is what happens in between those formal conversations, and this is where one-on-ones come in.

A one-on-one is a regular catch-up with each team member that focuses on their development, support, and day-to-day performance. It is where the real conversations happen and where you keep things on track before they get out of hand.

In practical terms, it's where you:

- pick up issues early,
- coach your people,
- build trust and rapport, and
- keep performance moving in the right direction.

It also requires a shift in approach. If RAPS are about looking back, one-on-ones are about looking forward.

In RAPS, the manager generally leads the conversation. In a one-on-one, the employee should be doing most of the talking. Your role is to listen, ask good questions, and

understand what is really going on for them.

When these conversations are happening regularly, something important changes. By the time you get to a RAPS, there are no surprises.

Keeping one-on-ones simple

One-on-ones are often overcomplicated when, in reality, they work best when they are simple and consistent.

A good starting point is 30 minutes once a fortnight or 60 minutes once a month. Turn up regularly and create a space where your team member feels comfortable talking openly.

That means keeping the conversation private, letting them lead, and focusing on support rather than judgement.

At the beginning, it can feel a bit awkward, and some staff may not immediately see the value. This is normal, but stick with it as it will get easier.

Over time, trust builds, communication improves, and performance becomes more consistent.

A different approach to RAPS

RAPS, on the other hand, are your formal checkpoints, and need a more structured approach. They should be planned, prepared, and based on real examples rather than general comments or gut feel.

Good RAPS should:

- reflect what has already been discussed throughout the year,
- include specific examples of performance,
- be a genuine two-way conversation, and
- clearly set expectations and goals moving forward.

If you find yourself relying on memory or trying to pull everything together at the last minute, that is often a sign that the one-on-ones are not doing their job. When the process is working properly, RAPS should feel like a summary, not a shock.

Using RAPS and one-on-ones together

If you want to grow your team and lift performance, it is not enough to focus on performance reviews alone. The real impact comes from what happens in between.

A good way to think about it is this:

- RAPS are your formal checkpoint.
- One-on-ones are your ongoing conversations, and the fuel that keeps everything moving.

You need both working together. If you only do RAPS, it will feel forced and reactive. If you only do one-on-ones, you lose structure and accountability.

Consistency builds trust, and trust is what ultimately drives performance. It is not about doing these conversations

Continued page 29

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When is consent unreasonably withheld to structural alterations on a cross-leased property?



Tim Bates of Auckland law firm TM Bates & Co reviews new Court of Appeal authority which changes the common law position as to what will be considered unreasonably withholding consent to alterations to a property on a cross-leased title.

As set out by the Court of Appeal, under a cross-lease scheme, the fee simple or other underlying estate in the land is owned by the owners of the flats as tenants in common, and all the tenants in common join in leasing each flat to its owner, normally for 999 years.

This means that each purchaser of a “flat” becomes the registered owner of a proportionate undivided share in the fee simple (or other underlying estate) as a tenant in common with the “owners” of the other flats; and an estate of leasehold in their particular flat.

Facts in the Court of Appeal case of *Liouw v Martelli*

- The respondents bought their Remuera property in 2011. The appellants bought the neighbouring property in 2017. Both properties were on the same cross-leased fee simple title.

- Each cross lease included the standard clause not to make structural alterations without prior consent of their lessor, such consent not to be unreasonably withheld.

- In 2018 the appellants had previously demolished a small existing deck at the northern end of their leased property and replaced it with a much larger deck which was less than one metre from their northern boundary, without the lessors’ consent.

In 2021 the respondents proposed to develop their leased property by:

- increasing the size of the existing 114.5sq m house by 54sq m to 169sq m, bringing it closer to the appellants’ leased property,
- adding an in-ground swimming pool of 27.2m at one metre from the boundary,
- adding new decking of 28.8sq m to connect the house to the swimming pool, and
- removing the separate garage (in order to avoid taking what might be regarded as site coverage of the appellants).

The appellants refused to provide consent to these development works.

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perfectly, it is about showing up regularly and meaning it.

If you would like practical guidance on how to confidently run RAPS and one-on-ones in your business, please get in touch.

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

The cross lease was subject to an arbitration clause, and the arbitrator, applying the prior authority of *Smallfield v Brown*, determined that the consent was reasonably withheld as the detriment to the appellant was “more than trifling”.

That was so even though the benefits to the respondent were more than significant.

This was appealed to the High Court on a question of law, namely whether the test applied from *Smallfield v Brown* remained the correct test.

Justice Gault ruled that the wrong test had been applied, and the proper test for determining whether consent had been reasonably withheld was to consider what the reasonable lessor would do when asked to consent in the particular circumstances, and whether the conclusion was one that could be reached by a reasonable lessor.

The case was remitted back to the arbitrator to reapply this test.

However, the appellant interceded before this could happen, and appealed this legal finding of the High Court.

It came before the Court of Appeal for determination as to what test ought to be applied to assess whether consent had been unreasonably withheld.

Key finding

A key finding by the Court of Appeal was that with cross leases, alterations will be desired and necessary over the terms of its lease, being 999 years.

The test in *Smallfield v Brown* was considered untenable to apply over the course of a cross-lease term.

Further, it commented that it would be untenable if lessees could not take advantage of changes in architectural and building practices so as to optimise residential dwellings.

It then attempted to define the circumstances that a reasonable lessor should take into account in considering whether its consent ought to be provided or withheld, those being:

- The degree of physical intrusion into the privacy and other amenities, such as light and view, of other lessees.
- The impact on the possibility of future development of another lessee’s flat (and any appurtenant restricted use areas), for example by reducing the overall site coverage available for such development.
- Whether the proposed alterations or

additions have a material impact on the use or amenities of the other lessees.

- The impact on the market value of the other lessees’ flats.
- The reasonable expectations of the lessee seeking to make alterations in respect of the enjoyment of their flat.
- The current planning laws applicable to the area.
- Changes in societal expectations in respect of the use of residential properties.
- The counterfactual — that is, the use that could, in any event, be made of the lessee’s flat and restricted use area, for example by placing a free-standing swimming pool on the restricted area as opposed to building an in-ground one, or being able to use the restricted area for socialising even without building a deck.
- Whether the alterations or additions will create an additional household unit.

Ultimately, the appellant was unsuccessful, and the High Court’s decision stood such that it was sent back to the arbitrator for effectively redetermination based upon a different test being applied.

It seems likely that if the arbitrator applies the test as formulated by the High Court and Court of Appeal, the withheld consent of the appellants will be determined to be unreasonably withheld.

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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New Zealand Green Building Council chief executive Andrew Eagles covers some timely initiatives that the NZGBC currently has on the go.



Environmental Management Plan gets MB endorsement

I'm really excited about this month's launch of a new Environmental Management Plan template for projects — guidance developed to support clear, practical, and consistent environmental management on New Zealand construction sites.

It's a template that's publicly available on our website, providing builders and project teams with a robust, adaptable framework, including:

- identifying and managing environmental risks during construction,
- meeting regulatory and consent requirements,
- demonstrating sound environmental practice to clients, councils, and communities,
- supporting projects pursuing Green Star Buildings NZ, where applicable, and
- supporting Homestar projects.

It has also been endorsed by Master Builders, which is supporting its release to the construction industry.

It is guidance rather than prescription, so users are encouraged to adapt it to suit their project scale, site conditions, and contractual requirements.

If you don't already have an environmental plan template, or want to review your current plan, it's a great place to start. You

can download it at <https://bit.ly/4mZKfrV>.

On the commercial side of the construction sector, we are excited to launch a new ratings tool — Green Star Fitouts — designed to support sustainable fit-out design and construction.

Fit-outs are done every five to seven years, making them one of the most frequently replaced components of our built environment.

Each refresh has implications for embodied carbon, waste, occupant well-being, and project costs, yet these impacts are often underestimated or treated as short-term choices.

It's been created in response to increasing industry attention on embodied carbon, circularity and healthier indoor environments.

Green Star Fitouts offers a practical, structured approach to making more sustainable fit-out decisions across individual projects and entire portfolios. Read more at <https://nzgbc.org.nz/green-star-fitouts>.

As we head into the colder winter months, we're excited to keep adding to these tools that help make our buildings more efficient and better value for owners and tenants. Stay tuned for more about these great projects throughout 2026.

Workshops proving a big success

The Better by Design: Residential Energy Modelling Workshop series is proving a big success, with great attendances in Auckland, Hamilton and Wellington.

This hands-on, day-long workshop shows builders, designers, and developers how to stay ahead, using modelling to make faster, better design decisions.

We're in Queenstown on May 20, then Christchurch in June and Tauranga in July. See the full schedule and register here: <https://nzgbc.org.nz/better-by-design-residential-energy-modelling>.

Who should come?

- Builders and group home builders wanting easier, clearer compliance.
- Designers and engineers seeking efficient, accurate pathways.
- Developers who want reliable, marketable performance outcomes.
- Community housing providers and councils committed to better-quality homes.

Ask for better. Ask for Homestar

We've seen some alarming storms and weather conditions over the past few months, with heavy rainfall and rising flood water damaging homes and businesses across the country.

It's bringing clearly into focus those buildings and homes that have been built well and that help keep occupants dry and warm.

Building a Homestar-rated home helps to increase the likelihood of a healthier, warmer, drier, and more comfortable home. It also uses less power and water than a similar home built to the building code's minimum standard.

It's widely known that the Building Code is woefully inadequate, meaning hundreds of thousands of New Zealand homes just don't even meet basic standards for warmth, ventilation, and operating efficiency.

Homestar is the certification standard that allows designers, architects, and builders across the residential sector to look ahead to build better futures for families to live, work and play.

So, the NZGBC is launching a campaign this year to share the benefits of building and buying Homestar-rated homes, including options for discounted green finance for eligible buyers.

Look out for more chatter about Homestar over the next few months — we're expecting more home buyers to be asking developers and builders about the benefits. "Ask for better. Ask for Homestar" is just one of the messages we'll be sharing.

Residential building moving away from gas

You would, of course, have noticed the soaring price of fuel this year, which adds even more impetus to our ongoing campaign to electrify as much of New Zealand's economy as possible.

There's so much inefficient use of gas, which is getting more expensive every day. Gas is desperately needed in our big industries, not for heating homes and making hot water in a residential setting.

This move away from gas in homes is now happening worldwide — including across the Tasman in Victoria, where new housing developments aren't permitted to be connected to gas.

Hot water heat pumps are growing rapidly in popularity now too. They're slightly more expensive, but with a 75% cut in the amount of energy used, they're proving a good investment for people coming off gas and old-fashioned hot water cylinders.

Energy is one of the biggest monthly bills faced by New Zealand households, so every reduction is a big issue in our current cost of living crisis.

We spoke recently to plumbing business co-owner Annie Jefferson about hot water heat pumps, and how she's working hard to spread the word:

<https://nzgbc.org.nz/news-and-media/powering-the-hot-water-heat-pump-revolution-annie-jefferson>

Building Consents Information

For all authorisations, March 2026

Dwellings	\$1,849,650,073	Total All Buildings	\$2,731,635,323
Domestic Outbuildings	\$19,736,640	Non-building Construction	\$52,065,511
Total Residential	\$1,869,386,713		
Non-residential	\$862,248,610	Total Authorisations	\$2,783,700,834

Number of new dwellings consented

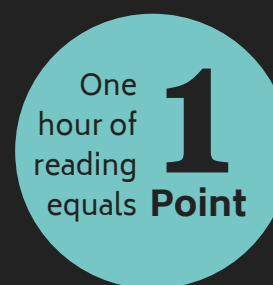
	Mar 2026	Feb 2026	Mar 2025		Mar 2026	Feb 2026	Mar 2025
Far North District	19	17	13	Palmerston North City	35	28	27
Whangarei District	29	21	32	Tararua District	0	6	5
Kaipara District	8	11	8	Horowhenua District	17	9	33
Rodney District	95	85	75	Kapiti Coast District	33	15	25
North Shore/Albany Wards	310	271	305	Porirua City	39	17	72
Waitakere Ward	152	115	112	Upper Hutt City	17	23	31
Auckland Wards	430	348	510	Lower Hutt City	29	27	63
Manukau/Howick Wards	272	263	263	Wellington City	30	20	129
Manurewa-Papakura Ward	154	152	136	Masterton District	18	18	13
Franklin Ward	135	45	134	Carterton District	5	4	2
Thames-Coromandel District	9	16	16	South Wairarapa District	4	5	3
Hauraki District	2	1	2	Tasman District	22	9	9
Waikato District	60	66	56	Nelson City	36	47	13
Matamata-Piako District	35	33	24	Marlborough District	11	25	13
Hamilton City	87	46	107	Kaikoura District	3	3	3
Waipa District	36	34	50	Buller District	5	5	4
Otorohanga District	1	1	1	Grey District	4	9	4
South Waikato District	17	11	5	Westland District	5	5	5
Waitomo District	0	1	0	Hurunui District	15	14	14
Taupo District	30	28	33	Waimakariri District	77	65	55
Western Bay of Plenty District	28	40	34	Christchurch City	417	441	309
Tauranga City	61	132	31	Selwyn District	267	208	104
Rotorua District	60	22	24	Ashburton District	35	25	14
Whakatane District	22	9	17	Timaru District	11	14	21
Opotiki District	8	8	11	Mackenzie District	12	8	9
Gisborne District	20	15	187	Waimate District	1	2	1
Hastings District	27	15	16	Waitaki District	4	11	8
Napier City	16	15	14	Central Otago District	29	17	24
Central Hawke's Bay District	2	4	2	Queenstown-Lakes District	215	124	186
New Plymouth District	21	23	29	Dunedin City	57	43	30
Stratford District	5	4	2	Clutha District	5	4	9
South Taranaki District	5	3	4	Southland District	11	10	15
Ruapehu District	4	3	3	Gore	4	2	3
Whanganui District	15	13	7	Invercargill City	11	13	22
Rangitikei District	4	7	4	Area Outside TA	0	0	0
Manawatu District	9	10	17	Total	3677	3168	3398

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