BUILDING TODAY

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August 2026

Volume 36 Number 7



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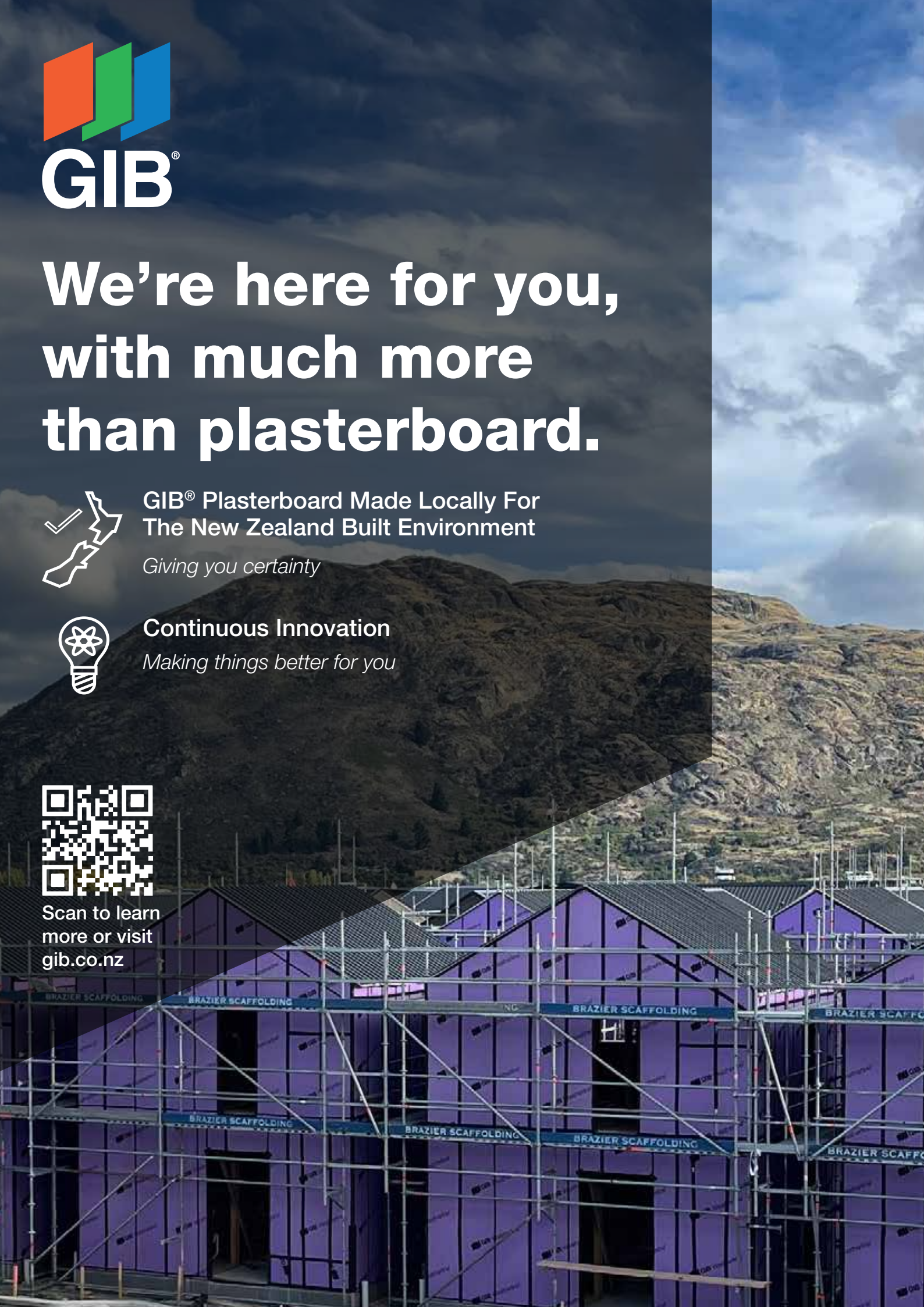
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August 2026
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From the editor

Constructive 2026 is just around the corner, and once again it promises to be packed full of informative commentary on the current state of the industry.

A highlight of the event is the presentation of the annual State of the Sector research by Master Builders chief executive Ankit Sharma.

This flagship research serves as a critical benchmark for the construction industry, capturing direct insights into what builders, commercial partners, and homeowners are experiencing across New Zealand.

By evaluating real-time market conditions, emerging trends, and operational hurdles, the report cuts through the noise of economic fluctuations, providing attendees with data-driven clarity on the future pipeline of work, housing demand, and commercial viability.

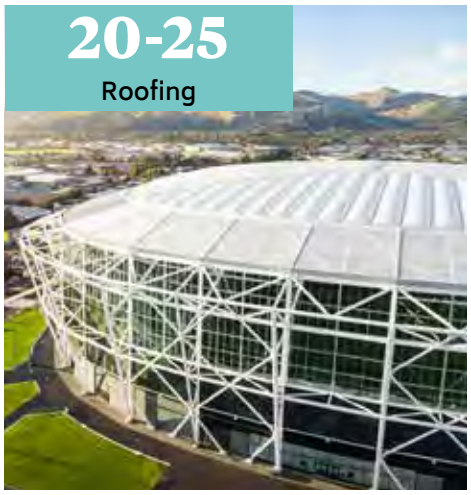
Unpacking these comprehensive findings allows industry professionals to move beyond guesswork, equipping them with the empirical evidence needed to navigate market recovery, refine business strategies, and make informed decisions for the year ahead.

With a general election also looming, it'll be an event not to be missed.

Andrew Darlington
Editor



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Constructive 2026: Get ahead of what comes next

The Master Builders-led Constructive 2026 taking place in early September will delve into understanding the forces shaping the market, identifying what they could mean for your business, and taking practical steps now to position yourself for what comes next. Chief executive Ankit Sharma implores you to "be in the room".

Over the coming months, there will be plenty of debate about what the election could mean for housing, infrastructure and construction.

Those choices matter, and we will continue advocating strongly for the settings our sector needs.

But businesses cannot wait for an election result before deciding what to do next.

Constructive 2026 is just a couple of weeks ahead, and is focused on helping you get ahead, including:

- understanding the forces shaping the market,
- identifying what they could mean for your business, and
- taking practical steps now to position yourself for what comes next.

Making sense of a changing environment

Planning is difficult when the signals are mixed. There are signs the economy is beginning to improve, but the recovery remains uneven.

Customer confidence and access to finance and pipelines are shifting, while major questions remain about infrastructure investment and how quickly committed projects will translate into work on the ground.

Constructive 2026 will bring together the different parts of that picture. ANZ chief economist Sharon Zollner, our latest State of the Sector research, Infrastructure Commission chief executive Geoff Cooper, and Government and Opposition leaders will provide a joined-up view of what is happening across the New Zealand economy, construction market, infrastructure pipeline and political environment.

Former Trade Minister and New Zealand Ambassador to the United States Tim Groser will add the global perspective.

Groser was based in Washington during President Trump's first term, giving him rare first-hand insight into the forces now reshaping trade, investment and international relationships.

He will explore what geopolitical uncertainty could mean for New Zealand's economy, supply chains and construction sector.



Together, these sessions will help you connect the dots — to understand the environment your business is operating in, to recognise the signals that matter, and to make better decisions about how to respond.

Innovation starts with the problem in front of you

One of the most popular speakers at Constructive last year was Nigel Collin. He challenged us to stop waiting for the next big idea.

Innovation is usually not one dramatic breakthrough. It comes from identifying the gaps in your business and making small, deliberate improvements that solve real problems.

We have worked hard to ensure these sessions work for your teams, whether you own the business, manage projects, work on the tools, or provide the administration and support that keeps everything moving.

That message resonated because it made innovation feel achievable. Since then, Nigel and I have travelled around New Zealand meeting Master Builders members. We have visited businesses, listened to the challenges they are facing, and heard what they believe needs to change.

Across those conversations, we noticed recurring trends that all businesses can learn from. At Constructive 2026, we will talk through what we heard and what it means for the sector.

Nigel will also provide practical models and tools to help you identify opportunities, test ideas, and turn innovation into action within your own business.

These are practical innovation tools, grounded in what is happening inside New Zealand construction businesses right now.

Helping you get started

As I travel around the country, I regularly hear variations of the same questions: "I know I need to do something with AI, but I don't know where to start."

"I know consenting is changing, but I don't understand what it will mean for my business."

"I know we need to improve how we manage risk, communicate with customers or market the business, but what should we actually do?"

Constructive 2026 is designed to help answer those questions.

Across the two days, the break-out programme will provide practical guidance on AI and consenting, digital project delivery, contract risk, financial warning signs, customer communication, marketing and so much more.

We have worked hard to ensure these sessions work for your teams, whether you own the business, manage projects, work on the tools, or provide the administration and support that keeps everything moving.

The aim is to give you a clear place to start, and practical ideas you can take back and use.

We do not need to wait

Government has an important role in creating greater certainty, improving regulation, and supporting a credible pipeline of work. We will keep pushing for progress in each of those areas.

But we also need to focus on what is within our control.

Constructive 2026 is an opportunity to step away from the day-to-day, understand what is changing, and decide what action you can take within your own business.

We do not need to wait for the election, the next Budget, or perfect market conditions before we begin. I encourage you to be in the room.



MASTER BUILDERS APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR 2026 IN PARTNERSHIP WITH CARTERS

WOMEN IN TRADES

GRACE WATSON

2025 Canterbury & Southern Apprentice of the Year regional competitor

As a competitor in the 2025 Master Builders CARTERS Canterbury & Southern Apprentice of the Year regional competition, Grace Watson is cementing her place in the building industry. We caught up with her to talk about her journey in the trades, the key moments of her career so far, and her advice for women in the field.



WHAT SPARKED YOUR INTEREST IN THE TRADES?

Grace's path into building was not a straight line. After leaving school, she completed a Level 5 Diploma in Early Childhood Education but soon realised it was not the career for her. She then tried several hands-on roles, including fitting tyres at Bridgestone, working as a mechanic's assistant, and completing a short stint as an irrigation cadet.

"Through doing all of this, I realised I liked the busy aspects of those roles and preferred being outside. I knew I wanted a more practical career that would give me long-term options and open doors in the future, so building felt like a natural fit."

WHAT DO YOU LOVE ABOUT YOUR JOB?

For Grace, the variety involved in building is one of the most rewarding parts of the job.

"I really enjoy building because of the variety you get, and the fact that there is always something new to learn. No two projects are the same, and each stage of a build brings new challenges, skills and opportunities to develop."

That constant learning has helped Grace build confidence in her abilities, and encouraged her to think about where she wants her career to take her.

"In the future, I'd like to work on architecturally designed homes, continue expanding my technical knowledge and, eventually, take on more responsibility. I'd also like to potentially be running a team."



WHAT IS IT LIKE BEING A WOMAN IN A MALE-DOMINATED INDUSTRY?

Working in construction has meant learning her trade while also finding her place in an industry where women are still underrepresented on site.

"It's hard. You still have to work twice as hard to be taken seriously by some people in the industry. "But rather than letting that define my experience, I use it as motivation to keep building my skills and confidence. I spend a lot of my time proving I belong on site."

Through each project, Grace continues to show what women in construction are capable of, while establishing her path in the industry.

WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR WOMEN CONSIDERING A CAREER IN CONSTRUCTION?

Grace encourages women entering the industry to back themselves, speak up, and get involved in every aspect of the work.

"Don't be afraid to stand up for yourself when it matters and get involved in all aspects. I also believe stronger connections between female tradies would make a real difference."

As more women enter the construction industry, Grace sees a growing opportunity to build stronger connections, and a greater sense of community among women in the trades.

"There are more of us out there than we realise. Creating better ways to connect helps us support one another, share our experiences, and make the industry feel more welcoming for the women coming through."

MASTER BUILDERS HOUSE OF THE YEAR

houseoftheyear.co.nz

Perfection under pressure

Smith Construction NZ

2025 National Category Award – New Home over $4 million



Successes

For Smith Construction owner Nick Smith, the team's category win at the 2025 national House of the Year Awards was a proud and surreal moment, with the home excelling across not one, but multiple areas.

"We didn't go in with the expectation of winning anything, so to win multiple awards reflected the high calibre and standards of our work," Nick says.

"Everybody involved had input into the development, and the project is a credit to the strong collaboration between the owners, architects, engineers and subcontractors. The home is beautifully nestled into its landscape and simply put — it's understated elegance."

Challenges

One of the biggest challenges for Nick and his team was delivering the home to a hard deadline of just over two years so the clients had time to settle in and prepare for their daughter's wedding.

"Meeting the tight deadline came down to clear communication and careful planning. Monthly planning meetings were held with everyone involved, with the team often looking six months ahead to keep the programme on track," Nick says.

"The site itself also required a thoughtful approach. With around 75% of the property made up of established landscape, the home had to be built carefully within its environmental setting. An arboriculturist worked alongside the team during civil and foundation works to protect existing trees, including the pohutukawa, while spring water on the property also had to be redirected before construction could progress."







Judges' comments

Tucked beneath 150-year-old pohutukawa in the dunes, this 750 sq m coastal home pairs understatement with a deep connection to place. Timber-clad and carefully sited, it offers a network of indoor and outdoor living areas that open to the landscape. A generous grand room anchors the plan, with a designer kitchen and bar for easy entertaining.

The main suite is secluded and calm, while a two-level guest "boat shed" gives family and friends their own retreat. A heated pool, spa and sauna add year-round comfort, with a putting green for play. Behind the scenes, sustainable systems support efficient, largely self-sufficient living. The result is a coastal sanctuary that balances style, comfort and resilience.

Check out the 2026 House of the Year entrants at houseoftheyear.co.nz

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MASTER BUILDERS HOUSE OF THE YEAR

houseoftheyear.co.nz



Renovating done right

Howe Construction

2025 National Supreme Renovation of the Year

Successes

Winning Supreme Renovation of the Year at the 2025 national House of the Year Awards was an unforgettable moment for the Howe Construction team, recognising more than two years of collaboration, craftsmanship and commitment.

"We were extremely grateful and surprised when we took out the national Supreme award. The owners were also ecstatic, and it was a great reflection on the hard work that went into the project," Howe Construction director Jamie Howe says.

"The award is a significant milestone for our company, and provides us valuable recognition within the industry. We hope to draw in new leads for similar projects that are just as appealing so we can continue to enter the competition."

Challenges

Delivering the award-winning home required careful coordination across a complex two-year build. With the homeowners based in Brisbane and the project located in a penthouse, organising trades, materials and logistics demanded detailed planning and constant communication.

"The co-ordination of everyone involved over the two-year project was one of the biggest challenges. The owners were based overseas, and the location of the penthouse made the delivery of materials particularly challenging.

"Despite these complexities, the home was delivered to an exceptional standard, highlighting our team's ability to manage difficult logistics while maintaining quality throughout the build," Jamie says.







Judges' comments

A complex brief handled with real finesse. This significant apartment renovation resolved the challenges of altering the external fabric within a body corporate and re-levelling uneven floors, all without fuss. The design is minimalist and meticulously detailed, delivering clarity, calm and a refined simplicity.

The plan now comfortably accommodates multiple generations, balancing precision with warmth, and providing generous, highly functional spaces that feel restrained yet welcoming. Highlights include a beautifully crafted bespoke kitchen and living areas that open easily to expansive decks with spa and BBQ, creating a seamless setting for everyday life and effortless entertaining. A confident and deserving Supreme Renovation.

Check out the 2026 House of the Year entrants at houseoftheyear.co.nz

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NEW ZEALAND COMMERCIAL PROJECT AWARDS

EXCELLENCE FROM THE GROUND UP

224 NEILSON STREET

CATEGORY
Industrial Project

ENTRANT
Haydn & Rollett Construction

PROJECT PARTNERS
BBD - Barnes Beagley Doherr (Quantity Surveyor), Haydn & Rollett (Construction Company), Jonathan Walker Architects (Architect/Designer), Stephen Mitchell Engineers Ltd (Structural Engineer) (Structural Engineer)



NATIONAL CATEGORY WINNER 2026 · ENVIRONMENTAL AND SUSTAINABLE AWARD 2026 · GOLD AWARD 2026

SUCCESSES

Winning the Mitre 10 Environmental and Sustainable Award and Industrial Project category at the 2026 Commercial Project Awards was a proud moment for the Hadyn & Rollett Construction team, acknowledging the ambition and care behind one of New Zealand's few warehouses to achieve a six-star Green Star rating.

"We were really pleased to receive the recognition, particularly given that it's a challenging market currently. Achieving the six-star Green Star Rating was a huge win for us and is something we had done before so we knew how challenging it would prove, especially for a warehouse," says Mike Stevenson, Project Manager at Haydn & Rollett Construction.

"It is fantastic to see the project gain such strong recognition, and we're proud to have been a big part of the journey alongside many key project partners."

CHALLENGES

Transforming an ageing brownfield site into a high-performing industrial development presented significant ground and environmental challenges, but the team had the right experience to tackle them.

"Before we demolished the existing building, there were several ground challenges that we had to deal with, and that can really turn the dial between a project being feasible and not feasible."

"Working under strict consent conditions and alongside council and an ecologist, we had to temporarily isolate the waterway and relocate eels and smaller fish to remove an old weir restricting fish passage. Despite these challenges, we were really proud with the end result," Mike concludes.







JUDGES' COMMENTS

At 224 Neilson Street, Haydn & Rollett Construction delivered an industrial project that had a challenge built into every stage. On a site bordered by wetlands and Captain Springs, the team had to work through contaminated ground, a high water table, and the need to protect native species, all while aiming for the rare standard of a 6-Star Green Star rating. Backed by a brave board and a committed client, the project pushed well beyond the norm for industrial development. The judges appreciated the way the team balanced ambition with practicality, using early planning and close collaboration to keep costs under control. The result is a bold and carefully delivered project that sets a new benchmark for sustainable industrial construction.

Strategic approach aims to stop sediment at its source

Auckland Council is stepping up its work to protect Auckland's harbours and coastal environments by tackling one of the biggest causes of water pollution — sediment — and focusing on innovative technologies to detect sediment risks as they happen.

Sediment enters waterways from activities such as construction, earthworks and erosion across rural and urban landscapes, clouding water, harming marine life and degrading ecosystems.

Auckland Council's Strategic Approach to Sediment programme is focused on stopping sediment at its source and improving water quality across the region, while making smart use of ratepayer funding.

Policy, planning and development committee chair Cr Richard Hills says the programme is not only making a real difference, but is also delivering value for money.

"All Aucklanders care and want our waterways to be clean and healthy. This programme is about protecting them now and for future generations. We're focusing on stopping sediment before it reaches our streams and harbours — and we're seeing real improvement as a result," Hills says.

"We're using smarter tools to target the highest-risk sites, which means we can act earlier and get better results without wasting time or resources. That's good for the environment and ensures we're making the best use of ratepayer funding."

Smarter tools, better outcomes

At the core of the sediment programme are cutting-edge technologies such as machine learning, satellite imagery and smart cameras to detect sediment risks in real time.

New tools such as EnviroEyes smart cameras being used to monitor sediment ponds on construction sites, and satellite-based modelling to detect bare earth across the entire region is enabling faster, smarter and more proactive responses.

This approach means staff can focus on the sites that matter most, and can act quickly to prevent sediment entering waterways.

Auckland Council senior analyst Dr Jacquie Reed says the programme is already delivering practical results on the ground all across the region.

"Real-time monitoring is helping identify where sediment is coming from, and staff can proactively guide activities on-site to improve construction work and minimise sediment loss," Reed says.

"We are building a network of new technology to support proactive compliance staff so they can respond to pollution events and sediment issue alerts. Their investigations are looking to get ahead of any sediment issue.

"Additionally, across rural areas, initiatives such as planting on hill slopes and gullies, wetland restoration and farm planning are reducing erosion and keeping sediment out of waterways.

"Larger programmes, including Kaipara Moana Remediation and catchment restoration work, are also helping restore key environments over time."

Taking a proactive approach

The "Closing the GAP" programme focuses on proactive compliance to prevent sediment from construction sites entering Auckland's waterways.

From July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026, a team of four officers conducted more than 1400 site inspections per month across small-to-medium construction sites, with total monthly visits ranging from approximately 1080 to 1980.

Overall compliance rates are now approximately 90%, a marked improvement from an estimated 95% non-compliance rate in 2019. Enforcement action continues where required, with abatements and infringements issued to address non-compliance.

Dr Reed says working with communities and companies is key to the success of the programme.

"The programme is a collaborative effort, involving council teams, the construction and earthworks sector, iwi, and community groups," Reed says.

"Initiatives such as industry partnerships and knowledge-sharing, like the earthworks industry's *Mud Matters* newsletter, are helping lift standards across the sector."

Between July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026, 1110 abatement notices and 330 infringements were issued, demonstrating a balanced approach of education and enforcement, while supporting better environmental practices on the ground.

Looking ahead

A long-term Sediment Roadmap to the year 2100 sets out how Auckland will continue to reduce sediment, and improve soil and water health over the coming decades. It focuses on:

- acting now to reduce exposed soil,
- improving land management over time, and
- restoring healthy ecosystems for the future.

Building Amendment Bill submissions now open

Public submissions are now open on the Government's Building Amendment Bill, giving the sector an opportunity to have its say on one of the most significant packages of building reform in recent decades.

The Bill would amend the Building Act 2004 and other legislation with the intention of removing inefficiencies in the building system that increase costs and delay delivery.

Proposed amendments include:

- establishing a proportionate liability system for defective building work,
- introducing mandatory professional indemnity insurance for design professionals (such as architects, designers, engineers, and surveyors) that contribute to the compliance of building work,
- introducing mandatory warranties for residential building work with a total value of $100,000 or more requiring building consent,
- encouraging uptake of solar energy by creating a fast-track building consent pathway for qualifying residential buildings,
- repealing the Building Research Levy Act 1969 and introducing a new system for allocating research funding for building sector research funding,
- enabling voluntary consolidation and collaboration across the Building Consent Authority system, and
- further changes to support the off-site construction of small stand-alone buildings (granny flats).

What do you need to know?

- Submissions are publicly released and published to the Parliament website. Only your name or organisation's name is required on a submission.
- If you wish to speak to your submission, please select this option in the submission form.

For further guidance on making a submission, visit www3.parliament.nz/en/pb/sc/how-to-make-a-submission.

The closing date for submissions is 11.59pm, Sunday, November 15, 2026.

UCOL introducing new building sector programmes



From left: UCOL Executive Director Partnerships and Engagement Rachel O'Connor, Minister for Tertiary Education and Minister of Science, Innovation & Technology Penny Simmonds, and President Wang of Weifang University.

UCOL's construction programmes are creating further opportunities for international students to move to New Zealand and study at UCOL in Palmerston North and Whanganui.

UCOL senior leaders hosted two showcases recently — one for international agents, and the other for industry representatives and key stakeholders in the construction sector.

Pending NZQA approval, it is introducing new programme offerings, including Quantity Surveying and Architectural Technology.

Chief executive Jasmine Groves says these events were a wonderful opportunity to showcase the Manawatu campus, and the practical, industry-connected learning experiences that UCOL specialises in.

"The new programme offerings are in direct response to the conversations we've been having over the last few months with our agents about what international students are interested in moving to New Zealand to study," Groves says.

"It's wonderful to be able to bring these options to life, and I look forward to welcoming our 2027 international akonga here to UCOL."

• UCOL is an educational institution with a history dating back to 1892, and has campuses in Manawatu, Whanganui, Wairarapa, and Horowhenua.

How The Waste Project is diverting nearly 300 tonnes from landfill

Three years after launching The Waste Project to tackle construction waste, Sentinel Homes Waikato has diverted an estimated 290 tonnes of building materials from landfill, proving practical changes on building sites can significantly reduce waste.

The Waste Project, which began in 2023, now achieves an average 78% waste diversion rate across Sentinel Homes' Waikato building sites.

Materials that would once have been discarded are now recycled, repurposed or transformed into new products, including 12 commercially sold cabins built almost entirely from surplus building materials.

The cabins demonstrate how construction waste can be transformed into practical, high-quality buildings instead of ending up in landfill.

Operations manager Jono Kraenzlin says the project began with a simple question — why were so many valuable resources ending up in landfill?

"Construction and demolition waste is one of New Zealand's biggest waste streams. We knew we couldn't solve the problem overnight, but we also knew we had a responsibility to do something about the resources we were responsible for," Kraenzlin says.

The initiative has grown significantly since it launched, with 14 active building sites currently participating, and around 60 expected by the end of the year as Sentinel's construction programme expands.

Since launching, The Waste Project has demonstrated that practical on-site systems can dramatically reduce construction waste without compromising productivity, providing a model that could be adopted across the wider construction industry.

While the project has demonstrated what is possible, Kraenzlin believes the wider construction industry must now work together to tackle waste at a national level.

"What surprised me most is the appetite tradies have for better solutions. People often say separating waste on-site is too difficult or that builders won't get on board.

"We've proven that's simply not true. When practical systems are put in place, our trade partners are proud to be part of improving waste outcomes."

He said seeing the sheer volume of construction waste first-hand had also reinforced the need for change.

"When you see the numbers on paper it's one thing. When you stand at a landfill and see truck after truck tipping perfectly usable resources into the ground, it's another.

"I think it's morally absurd that while many New Zealanders struggle to put a roof over their heads or access building materials, we're burying valuable resources every day. It's unfair on the planet and it's unfair on people."



Materials that would once have been discarded are now recycled, repurposed or transformed into new products, including 12 commercially sold cabins built almost entirely from surplus building materials.

Despite the project's success, some building materials remain difficult to recycle.

"Treated timber and fibre cement products are two of the biggest contributors. While recycling options do exist, there's still significant scope to improve what recyclers can offer.

"Smarter, more local recycling solutions would reduce costs and encourage more builders to separate these materials rather than send them to landfill."

Kraenzlin believes meaningful change will require action across the entire construction sector.

"I'd like to see manufacturers, importers and suppliers demonstrate an end-of-life solution for their products before they're sold in New Zealand.

"Designers can reduce waste through smarter design, suppliers can minimise offcuts through better packaging and sizing, and training organisations such as the BCITO can include recycling and reuse as part of apprentice education.

"Everyone has a role to play. Designers, suppliers, builders and local governing bodies all have an opportunity to improve how we manage construction waste. You can't sit around waiting for someone else to create the perfect solution.

"We all have a responsibility to do the right thing with the resources we're using."

Alongside diverting waste, surplus materials from The Waste Project have been donated to local food-sharing initiatives, community organisations, overseas disaster relief rebuilding efforts, and local people in need.

Agriculture/construction boosts small business sales growth

Xero has released its Small Business Insights which reveals sales among Kiwi small businesses rose 8.6% year-on-year in the June quarter.

This is the strongest result in almost four years, and the first quarter since December 2022 where sales growth has outpaced the historical average of 6.2% year on year (y/y).

The result builds on a 5.1% y/y rise in the March quarter, but the headline number masks a sales recovery that has been far less even across industries.

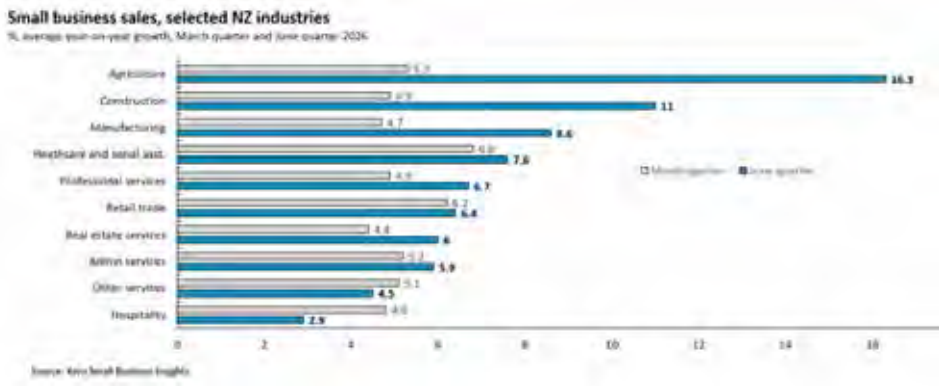
Agriculture sales rose 16.3% y/y, consistent with recent government reporting on strong agricultural exports, and was the single biggest driver of the national sales result.

Construction (+11% y/y) and manufacturing (+8.6% y/y) also performed strongly, though both results were flattered by weak comparisons in the June quarter of 2025.

Bridget Snelling, Country Manager — Aotearoa New Zealand at Xero, says the numbers point to a two-speed economy.

"On the surface this looks like an outstanding quarter for small business sales, and in agriculture it genuinely was," Snelling says.

"But once you look industry by industry, it's clear the recovery isn't being felt evenly. Agriculture is doing the heavy lifting, while sectors exposed to discretionary spending like retail and hospitality are still finding conditions tough."



The regional data tells a similar story. Canterbury (+12.3% y/y), Manawatu-Whanganui (+11.9% y/y), Waikato (+10.0% y/y) and Southland (+9.6% y/y), all regions with a strong agricultural base, recorded exceptional sales growth.

Auckland (+7.2% y/y) and Wellington (+7.1% y/y) grew more modestly, while Marlborough, Nelson and Tasman, a new combined region added this quarter, rose just 4.4% y/y.

Despite the strength in sales, small business jobs rose just 0.7% y/y, dragged down by a 0.3% decline in the month of June alone.

Wage growth was similarly subdued, rising just 1.5% y/y, which is the smallest quarterly rise in the history of the Insights series (back to March quarter 2017), and well below the historical average (+3.6% y/y).

"When sales growth is this concentrated in one part of the economy, it's not surprising that jobs and wages haven't followed," Snelling says.

"Add in the uncertainty small business owners are facing around fuel costs and global events, it makes sense that many are holding off on hiring for now."



Contract signed for Scott Base redevelopment

The Scott Base redevelopment has entered its delivery phase following the signing of the main construction contract with Wellington-headquartered Master Builders construction firm LT McGuinness.

The milestone follows a comprehensive reset of the programme after the previous redevelopment proposal was paused because it could not be delivered within the Government's approved funding.

Cabinet approved the reset redevelopment programme Detailed Business Case in May 2026, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of Finance authorised the project to proceed into delivery early in July.

Antarctica New Zealand chair Leon Grice says the announcement represents far more than the execution of a construction contract.

"Our continuous presence and scientific programme in Antarctica are fundamental to New Zealand's interests," Grice says.

"Approval to Deliver and the construction contract marks the successful completion of the reset of a major public infrastructure project. And it begins the next generation in the Scott Base legacy."



The Scott Base redevelopment masterplan Stage 1 with new buildings shown in greyscale. The Base Services Building (left) provides 100-bed accommodation and communal facilities, while refurbishment of the Hillary Field Centre (left) provides enhanced science facilities, programme support offices, cargo handling and field operations. An enclosed elevated link connects new and existing facilities. *Image: Antarctica New Zealand.*

Fit for purpose research station

The Scott Base redevelopment will deliver a modern, fit-for-purpose Antarctic research station, including new accommodation and communal facilities, upgraded science and operational spaces, and critical infrastructure improvements.

Capacity will increase from the current 5000sq m to approx. 6500sq m, including a new Base Services Building (over 3000sq m), refurbishment of the Hillary Field Centre (an additional 400sq m), replacement of ageing infrastructure (water, wastewater and power), and an enclosed elevated link connecting new and existing facilities.

The redevelopment also includes a major wind farm upgrade and battery storage system, significantly increasing renewable energy generation, resilience and grid stability for Scott Base and neighbouring McMurdo Station.

Grice says the Board deliberately chose to pause the previous redevelopment when it became clear it could not be delivered within the approved budget.

"We took difficult decisions to pause the project, commission an independent review, and fundamentally rethink the redevelopment. Those decisions have delivered a project that is affordable, deliverable and still achieves the objectives Government originally set for the redevelopment.

"We haven't compromised the original scope of requirements or functionality to get this project back under budget. The capacity and size of the new Base remain consistent with what was originally proposed.

"We have confidence we can deliver this programme because we have significant contingency allowances and we have done extensive quantity surveying work at every step — and we have a close working partnership with LT McGuinness.

"We have not assumed that everything will go perfectly. Antarctica is one of the world's most challenging construction environments. Weather, shipping, logistics and operating in a remote polar environment inevitably create uncertainty.

"Our programme accepts this reality, and we have prudential and tested project governance. We have confidence the project can absorb unforeseen events without compromising our ability to deliver.

"Scientists, operational staff and support personnel will receive the modern facilities they need to live and work safely and effectively in Antarctica. What has changed is the way those facilities have been designed and how they will now be delivered."

Long-term masterplan

Grice says one of the most enduring outcomes from the redesign was the development of a long-term masterplan for Scott Base.

Antarctica New Zealand chief executive Jordy Hendrikx says the past 18 months of planning and design had significantly strengthened the redevelopment programme.

"We have now completed planning, design and procurement. We have confidence in the design, confidence in the commercial arrangements, and confidence that the project is ready to move into delivery, while remaining within the Government's approved funding envelope."

Professor Hendrikx says the redevelopment remains one of New Zealand's most strategically important investments in science and infrastructure.

"Scott Base underpins New Zealand's permanent presence in Antarctica, enables world-class science, and supports our obligations under the Antarctic Treaty System," he says.

"This redevelopment ensures New Zealand can continue to undertake internationally significant science from Scott Base while providing modern, resilient facilities capable of supporting Antarctic operations for decades to come."

Collaboration central to success

LT McGuinness company director Dan McGuinness says the collaborative delivery model established for the project a year ago had been central to achieving contractual success.

Early Contractor Engagement

"The Early Contractor Engagement process enabled our team to work alongside Antarctica New Zealand on construction, logistics and engineering issues," McGuinness says.

"Together we have developed a simpler, more buildable project with greater certainty around design, programme, logistics and cost. We are looking forward to successfully delivering Scott Base over the coming Antarctic seasons."

Construction will proceed over successive Antarctic summer seasons, reflecting the unique logistics and approximately 100-day annual construction window available on Ross Island.

The coming season will see drilling and completion of piles undertaken, along with shipment of materials needed for the 2027/28 season. Practical completion remains scheduled for 2030.

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Taranaki hospital sets benchmark for healthcare facilities electrification

A new acute services building has opened at one of the country's largest fully-electric hospital buildings in New Plymouth, signalling a further shift towards lower-carbon, more energy-efficient healthcare infrastructure in New Zealand.

Taranaki is now home to one of New Zealand's largest and most advanced fully electric hospitals, with Health New Zealand opening its new acute services building — a significant investment in sustainable, future-ready healthcare.

Built by Master Builders company Leighs Construction, and pened in June 2026, the six-storey, 22,000 sq m facility brings together many of the hospital's core clinical services under one roof, including Emergency, Radiology, Intensive Care, Maternity and Neonatal care, alongside a laboratory and rooftop helipad.

Co-locating these services will improve patient flow, enable more integrated models of care, and deliver better health outcomes for the people of Taranaki.

The development represents a significant step-change in healthcare infrastructure in New Zealand.

The building operates primarily on electricity, using advanced heat pump technology for heating and hot water rather than the gas systems traditionally used in hospitals.

Like other critical facilities, it retains diesel-backed emergency power for resilience.

This approach significantly reduces reliance on fossil fuels while maintaining the reliability required in a hospital environment.

Importantly, this facility is one of the largest fully-electric hospital buildings in the country, and signals a shift towards lower-carbon, more energy-efficient healthcare infrastructure at scale.

Group director of operations for Taranaki Wendy Langlands says the new facility reflects clinical and environmental leadership.



"This facility shows how we can deliver modern, high-quality healthcare while also reducing our environmental footprint," Langlands says.

"Moving to an all-electric model supports our sustainability goals, strengthens resilience, and creates a healthier environment for our patients, whanau and staff."

Sustainability has been embedded throughout the design of the building.

Key features include a high-performance building envelope, energy-efficient heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems, and a design that maximises natural light and connection to the outdoors.

Patient and staff well-being has been prioritised through access to daylight, views, and thoughtfully designed clinical spaces, supporting healing and productivity.

The building also incorporates smart water management, including rainwater harvesting to support flushing and irrigation, contributing to significant reductions in potable water use.

Digital building management systems optimise performance in real time, improving energy efficiency and operational outcomes.

Beyond sustainability, the facility has been designed for long-term resilience. It is an importance level 4 building, with high levels of seismic and natural disaster.

The facility is part of a broader transformation of the Taranaki Base Hospital campus, including a new Energy Centre, and infrastructure upgrades that support the transition towards lower-emissions operations across the site.

These investments are expected to substantially reduce carbon emissions compared with traditional hospital models, while improving efficiency and reducing long-term operating costs.

Project director Brad Marais says the result is a facility the region can be proud of.

"This is a building that brings together clinical excellence, sustainability, and smart design. It shows what's possible when we think differently about how we build essential infrastructure — not just for today, but for future generations," Marais says.

As patients begin to be cared for in the new building, the New East Wing stands as a landmark project for Taranaki and the wider health system — demonstrating how innovation, sustainability and local collaboration can come together to deliver infrastructure that is better for people and better for the environment.

Project snapshot

- *Owner: Te Whatu Ora – Health New Zealand*
- *Sustainability and GSAP: Beca*
- *Architect: Warren and Mahoney*
- *Building Services Engineering: Beca*
- *Structural Engineering: Holmes*
- *Cost Consultant: RLB*
- *Main contractor: Leighs Construction*
- *Project status: Business case commenced 2018; enabling works commenced March 2021, main works commenced July 2022*
- *Project certification: 5 Green Star Design and As-Built NZ v1.0 certified Design Review (December 2022)*

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Survey: Building smarter — how industry leaders are navigating uncertainty

The road to growth has become more complex for New Zealand's construction industry, but confidence remains firmly intact with 84% of industry leaders.

New data from Kennards Hire's second annual New Zealand Construction Confidence Check survey points to a remarkably resilient, yet pragmatic sector, looking into more efficient ways of working around operational realities and market pressures.

Confidence strong, but the path to growth is more complex

The Construction Confidence Check surveyed more than 600 business leaders and decision-makers across Australia and New Zealand, with more than 200 from New Zealand.

While the data revealed a 9% drop in confidence year-on-year as businesses continue to navigate persisting cost pressures and economic uncertainty, a resounding majority of New Zealand industry leaders (84%) remain confident in the industry's growth and performance over the next five years.

"Confidence has not disappeared, but it is being tested," Kennards Hire New Zealand general manager Richard White says.

Smarter project delivery emerging

"There is a shift — not an unexpected one — from cautious optimism to practical realism, especially in the wake of issues like the global fuel crisis and an upcoming General Election," he says.

"Businesses are having to make tougher, more deliberate decisions about where they invest, where they save, and how they build enough flexibility into their operations to withstand uncertainty.



Kennards Hire New Zealand general manager Richard White

"The businesses that remain resilient will be those that can adapt quickly, spend wisely, and keep projects moving despite the pressures around them."

Some of the most commonly cited measures at cutting costs and staying competitive include training and upskilling workers to improve productivity (40%), improving project management and delivery (34%), leasing or hiring equipment (32%), adopting more energy-efficient or sustainable equipment and practices (31%), and outsourcing or subcontracting specialised work (28%).

"For construction businesses, managing cost is no longer just about cutting spend. It's about finding smarter, more efficient ways to deliver projects without compromising quality or momentum.

"Businesses are looking for ways (and partners) to help remove friction, not add to it," White says.

ESG and workforce priorities remain central to long-term growth

Alongside immediate cost and delivery pressures, the report shows sustainability and workforce development are becoming increasingly important to the long-term outlook of the construction industry.

Notably, businesses surveyed identified Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) initiatives and long-term career support as key areas of focus.

Nearly all businesses surveyed, 99%, are prioritising ESG initiatives in some form — reducing emissions or net zero, energy efficiency, implementing supplier ESG performance and more.

Career support is also a major focus, with New Zealand decision-makers prioritising clearer career pathways and long-term employment opportunities, and diversity and new workforce initiatives, as well as investment in training, apprenticeships and upskilling programmes.

"Despite the challenges, the message from the 2026 Construction Confidence Check is clear — the future is promising, but we need to be more pragmatic about what it will take to get there," White says.

For more information about the Construction Confidence Check, visit www.kennardshire.co.nz/commercial to download the full report.

Diesel drop keeps construction costs stable — for now

Construction costs have remained broadly stable for the second month in a row, with the latest QV CostBuilder update showing minimal movement across key rates in July.

Diesel prices fell sharply month-on-month, down 20.7% in the latest update, helping to reduce costs in fuel-intensive areas of construction work — especially excavation (-4.5%), which recorded the largest average reduction this month and last.

QV CostBuilder spokesperson and experienced quantity surveyor Martin Bisset says the latest figures showed fuel pressure had continued to ease, helping to keep overall trade-rate movement in check.

"Diesel has fallen from June to July, and that saving has flowed through to some of the trades most exposed to fuel costs," he says.

"Excavation is the clearest example of that. It relies heavily on machinery and transport, so when diesel falls, that tends to show up in the numbers pretty much straight away."

However, not all rates moved lower. Among the 9600 price changes captured in the latest update, some trades increased — including concrete blockwork, up 0.8%, and concrete, up 0.9%.

Other notable price rises included expanded polystyrene sheet (9.3%), Aquatherm pipework (7.5%), copper pipework (4.0%), ready mixed concrete (3.7%) and wool insulation (3.0%).

Despite this movement, Bisset says overall costs remained broadly stable.

"The headline result is very stable, but that doesn't mean nothing is moving. We're still seeing movement below the surface.

"The recent drop in diesel has helped keep construction cost growth in check, but fuel prices remain highly volatile. Recent oil market movements are a reminder that things can change quickly, especially while the situation in the Middle East remains so fluid.

"We'll continue to monitor the situation closely. For now, the latest CostBuilder data shows a much steadier picture overall, but it remains to be seen whether that stability will last."

For more information visit costbuilder.qv.co.nz.

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NZ's best roofing projects and emerging talent recognised

New Zealand's best roofing projects and emerging talent have been recognised at the 2026 Roofing Association of New Zealand (RANZ) Roof of the Year Awards, with winners showcasing the craftsmanship, technical expertise and professionalism that continue to raise standards across the country's roofing industry.

The awards, presented at the RANZ Awards Gala Dinner, sponsored by Colorsteel, were held during the RANZ Conference in Auckland in June.

They celebrated excellence across residential and commercial roofing, while also recognising the next generation of roofing professionals.

This year's entries were of an exceptionally high standard, highlighting the skill, experience and professionalism being demonstrated by RANZ members throughout the country.

From architecturally complex homes to large-scale commercial developments, the awards showcased the diversity and quality of roofing work being delivered across New Zealand.

To better reflect the breadth of commercial roofing projects being undertaken throughout the industry, the Commercial Roof of the Year Award was divided into two categories for the first time in 2026 — Light Commercial and Large Commercial.

RANZ Awards

RANZ 2026 Residential Roof of the Year



Accredited Roofing & Coatings Ltd: Oban

Project description

This technically demanding project featured multiple pitches, intersections and complex junctions, requiring meticulous preparation and precision installation of wide-tray, European-style cladding.

Judges described it as a stand-out result delivered with exceptional attention to detail.

Accredited Roofing & Coatings sales manager Vanessa Huntingford said the award reflected the collaborative effort behind the project.

"We're honoured to receive the Residential Roof of the Year award for this project. It reflects not only the hard work of our team, but also the strong collaboration with our suppliers and the homeowner who helped bring the vision to life.

"We're grateful to the judging panel for recognising the high standard of excellence our team strives for on every project."



Runners-up

Edwards & Hardy Roofing: Top Tier Construction
The Architectural Roofing Company: Mansfield House
HomeSmart Roofing: Stables Lane

Roofing Trainee of the Year Award

Payton Wilson — Edwards & Hardy Roofing



The RANZ 2026 Trainee of the Year Award was presented to Payton Wilson of Edwards & Hardy Roofing.

Judges described both finalists as being of an exceptionally high standard, with Wilson ultimately recognised for her leadership potential, commitment to learning and passion for the industry.

Wilson was nominated by her manager, Zachary Waszczak, who praised her dedication, professionalism and willingness to continually develop her skills.

"As a woman in a traditionally male-dominated trade, she represents the future of our industry. She leads by example, showing that skill, determination and professionalism are what truly matter."

Accepting the award, Wilson reflected on her journey into the trade.

"Coming straight from school, I didn't have everything figured out. Leaving something familiar and stepping into the unknown was a little intimidating," she said.

"There were plenty of days where I questioned myself and felt out of my depth, but taking that leap of faith taught me the value of backing yourself."

RANZ 2026 Commercial Roof of the Year — Light Commercial



The Architectural Roofing Company: Wakatu Quay

Project description

The project challenged the team with a highly complex roof and cladding installation incorporating multiple facets, tight rake cuts, and traditional standing-seam detailing in prominent architectural areas.

Judges described the finished project as a stunning example of roofing craftsmanship.

General manager Nina McLaughlin said projects of this calibre require a significant commitment from everyone involved.

"These projects can take years to come to life, and it's a full team effort right from day one. It is months of work on site to achieve the level of quality that we expect.

"Kevin and his team spent months working to bring this upside-down dinghy to life exactly as envisioned by the architect."

Runners-up

HomeSmart Roofing: Medieval Gardens
CS Roofing Canterbury: Christchurch Eye Surgery Clinic
Graham Hill Roofing: Christchurch Yacht Club



RANZ 2026 Commercial Roof of the Year — Large Commercial



Graham Hill Roofing: Te Kaha Stadium

Project description

One of New Zealand's most significant construction projects, the stadium roof combined immense scale with intricate detailing, requiring close coordination between multiple trades and specialised roofing systems.

Judges recognised the project as a striking and fitting landmark for the city of Christchurch.

Accepting the award on behalf of the company, Graham Hill Roofing managing director Zach McKay acknowledged the many contributors involved in delivering the project.

"This project has been a massive team effort, and we're incredibly grateful to our business partners and everyone involved in bringing Te Kaha to life. It's a truly magnificent building, and a space everyone should experience for themselves."

Runners-up

Topline Roofing: Summerset St Johns Village
Excel Roofing: Marino Gardens
Topline Roofing: St Patricks, Dilworth Senior Campus



Three core principles underscore high-performance roofing system

Calibre is a sleek, high-performance roofing system from Gerard — what the company calls an uncompromising cutting-edge design that is the ultimate blend of form and function.

Gerard's design philosophy is grounded in a balance between three core principles

- Design aesthetic
- Whole system performance
- Installation efficiency.

This balance drives attention to all aspects of a new product's purpose, resulting in high performing, beautiful products without compromise.

Design aesthetic

The first consideration when designing Calibre was design aesthetic. Looking to current and future trends, the panel was shaped to be minimalist with a sleek, flat surface.

Utilising negative space to accentuate where the laps join, Calibre features an elegant, panelled appearance. Matching understated accessories, including barge and valley covers, coordinate the appearance of the entire roof.

Gerard's Concealed Fastening (CF) technology has been incorporated into the design, adding to the discreet appearance of the panel. Each panel interlocks with the panel from the row underneath, hiding the fasteners between the two panels.

CF protects fasteners from exposure to the elements, and provides a clear optical line across the plane of the roof.

System performance

The second pillar of Gerard's design philosophy is system performance. This encompasses all of the aspects of the panel system working in synergy to ensure efficiencies and best performance.

Each panel is constructed of a core of 0.55mm steel, coated in a zinc-aluminium alloy and finished with proprietary protective coatings.

This construction gives Calibre a high level of durability, as proven by Gerard's 30-year perforation warranty.*

The confidence in Calibre's strength is underpinned by rigorous laboratory testing, completed to the highest standard.

Installation efficiency

Gerard has been a mainstay in New Zealand's roofing industry for more than 60 years, with a wide network of experienced installers.

Utilising learnings from this experience and consulting with our network, Calibre was designed to maximise installation efficiency and minimise cost.

Calibre roofs can be ordered in full off-building plans, a departure from other metal roofing forms which require a site measure before sheets, and then a later measure before flashings can be ordered.

With the Calibre system, everything is onsite, and the roofers have all the tools they need to complete the job, saving time and improving productivity.

Gerard's three-pronged approach lies at the foundation of the Calibre panel, and each element of the design has been scrutinised to ensure the product performs from start to finish.

With patents currently pending on the design, Gerard is proud to launch Calibre into the market.

Get in touch to find out more about Calibre, or to discuss your next project.

* Zones apply.



Introducing Calibre, the sleek, high-performance roofing system from Gerard. This innovative panel system combines an uncompromising cutting-edge design with a modern, new aesthetic. Award-winning and BRANZ appraised, Calibre is a stunning yet practical roofing solution.

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Rainwater systems don't always get the attention they deserve during the build process. Yet when performance issues arise, they're a visible and costly problem to fix.

That's why more builders are looking beyond upfront material costs and considering the whole-of-life value a rainwater system can deliver.

The Marley Stratus Design Series combines contemporary aesthetics with the durability and practicality required for variable New Zealand conditions.

With seven modern colour options, Stratus is a natural fit for today's residential design — while its performance-focused engineering keeps delivering lasting value long after handover.

Installation efficiency, maintenance requirements, repairability and long-term durability all contribute to the total cost of ownership.

Stratus has been designed with these considerations firmly in mind. Its lightweight, modular construction supports efficient installation, and is particularly practical on sites where access and manoeuvrability can be challenging.

Once installed, Stratus continues to work hard. Unlike metal systems, it will not rust or corrode, making it particularly well suited to New Zealand's diverse environments, including coastal locations exposed to salt-laden air and harsh weather.

The system's co-extruded, UV-resistant surface is engineered to maintain its appearance over time — and built-in colour means there's no paint layer to peel or chip.

The modular design also delivers practical benefits if damage occurs during the life of the home. Individual sections and fittings can typically be replaced without removing entire runs, helping reduce repair costs and minimise disruption.

Downpipes are designed to resist dents and everyday knocks, particularly at ground level where accidental impacts are more common.

For builders, reliability matters. Products that perform consistently help reduce maintenance concerns, minimise callbacks, and support better outcomes for homeowners.

Manufactured in New Zealand, Stratus is also fully recyclable at the end of its life, and supported by Marley's ongoing commitment to environmental responsibility.

When timelines are tight and expectations are high, the right rainwater system (including spouting, downpipes, leaf diversion, and fittings) helps make life easier on site and reduces headaches later.

Stratus combines a sharp finish, practical installation and long-term durability for Kiwi homes — and the builders behind them.

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Congratulations go to Sarah Anderson of Christchurch who won a $100 Prezzy Card in July's prize draw.

Monthly reports reveal where the dollars are being spent



Pacifecon research manager Philip Dawes takes a look at the latest Market Watch reports that focus on private, central government, and council sectors.

Pacifecon's latest two Market Watch reports are part of a trio looking at New Zealand's private, central government and council sectors.

Each month sheds some interesting light on where the dollars are being spent, and on what kind of projects.

In addition to the featured sectors, the report also provides general information on projects around the country and how the market is trending, letting you know what activity is happening and when.

I lead the 30-strong local research and edit team, and we've been looking at projects around the country.

A 6% increase saw 2153 new projects in May and 1985 new projects in June — and it will be interesting to see if this trend continues for July.

Auckland has 45% of the country's private sector pipeline and 30% of the value, while it also holds 30% of the central government sector and 53% of the value.

At the end of May 2026, Pacifecon had 10,398 private sector pipeline projects listed at a value of $227 billion, and 1682 central government projects at a value of $112 billion in June.

An example of some of the projects we're reporting on that are in the planning stages include:

• Otago ($8.5 billion), featuring the Lake Onslow/Lake Roxburgh hydro storage scheme,

• Waikato ($5 billion), including an offshore wind farm north of Raglan, and

• Auckland ($1.3 billion), including a sustainable mixed-use neighbourhood encouraging car-less living.

The team has favourite projects that they follow. There are always questions surrounding projects, such as who will be working on them and how, costings, what they're going to look like, timelines, and so on.

The research team answers these questions and reveals what activity is happening and when.

How the market is trending is really important to us too.

Market Watch highlights the increases in the latest building consent numbers from Statistics New Zealand. In the year ended April 2026, the actual number of new dwellings consented was 39,087, up 16% from the previous 12 months.

In April this year there were 3692 new dwellings consented. The non-residential building types with the highest values were office, administration and public transport buildings at $1.6 billion, education buildings at $1.3 billion, and storage buildings at $1.2 billion.

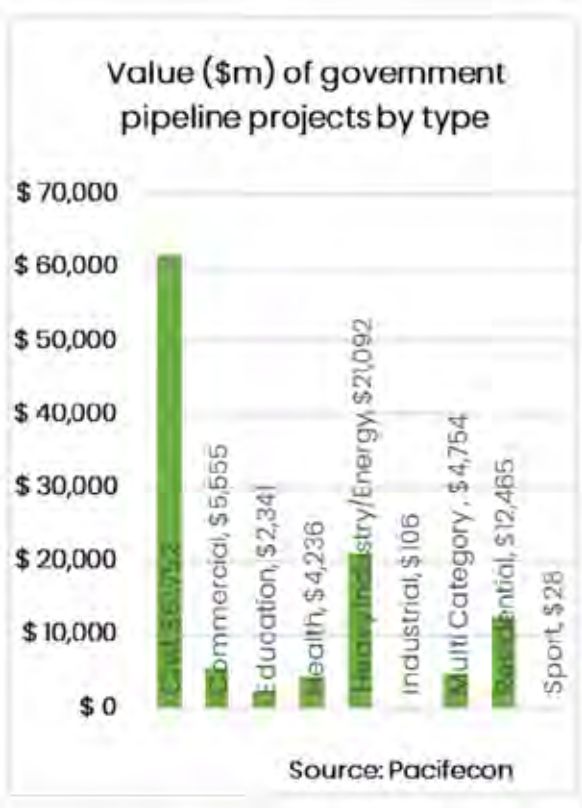
In addition to a breakdown by project sector, each Market Watch includes commentary and graphs for the regions.

It provides a comprehensive picture of planned construction across the country to help businesses with forecasting and strategic decision-making.

It's reassuring to see that projects starting construction remain relatively steady, and the team at Pacifecon is confident that as we move into 2027, there will be an increase in activity.

Next up will be a deep dive into the local council sector — a timely focus after our recent free Local Government Reform Report, which looked at some of recent new legislation.

A few of the system improvements that have been announced focus on core services, including networks infrastructure, public transport, waste, civil defence, and community facilities.



Mention BT for a free Market Watch report!

• 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/resources/market-watch/ to download sample reports, or contact us today to order your copy of Market Watch at projects@pacifecon.nz.

Mention that you saw us in *Building Today* to receive a complimentary Market Watch.

There'll be much to report on and discuss, so keep your eyes peeled for its release at the end of August, and a breakdown in next month's issue of *Building Today*.

Built different — 100 builders, two days in Queenstown, and $446 million of pipeline



Last month around 100 residential building company owners spent two days locked in on solving their biggest constraints at the 2026 TPB Queenstown Summit. The Professional Builder founder Martin Amos explains what the room worked through — and how you can get in on the next one.

Halfway through the Summit's second day, 100 building company owners were on their feet calling out the dollar value of the leads they had just generated, while a running total climbed on a leaderboard at the front of the ballroom.

When the 30 minute time limit was up, it read $446 million. That was one session out of a two-day programme, and it gives you a fair sense of the pace.

Most of the owners in the room had left live sites — and a stack of quotes — to be in attendance. The programme was built around one idea — a building company is usually held back by a small number of constraints, and dealing with the biggest one first makes everything after it easier. The room worked through the following five.



Our boardroom programme members up the mountain for a bit of post-summit motorskiing.

Profit

I opened up the event with the Constraint Game. I put a real builder's numbers in front of the room, split everyone into teams of three or four, and had them work out the single constraint costing that builder the most, then argue for the fix before the best answer was voted on and read out.

The exercise caught a lot of people out for the same reason. Winning more jobs does nothing for a company whose real problem is a 15% margin, or framing and interior linings running well over the forecast hours.

Positioning

Specialty coach Richard Phiskie, who runs Dimension Building in Timaru, was interviewed on how he positioned his own company so clients chose him without lining up two or three other builders to price against.

A lot of it came down to what a prospect reads and sees before the first site visit, so by the time price comes up, the decision is already half made.

Process

The "8 Hour Heist" exercise had owners calculate their Professional Builder's Rate — salary plus company profit, divided by fifty weeks, divided again by the hours they work, so they could see what an hour of their time is actually worth.

From there they built a Stop Doing List, taking every task that pays below that rate and deciding whether to eliminate it, delegate it, outsource it or automate it.

A coach sat at each table running the numbers so nobody guessed. The merchant runs, the timesheet chasing and the after-hours quoting tended to be first on the list.

People

Speciality coach Lloyd Godfrey's On-Site Profit session broke the job into four plays — site set-up, daily start-ups, trade coordination, and material handling, each followed by questions from the floor.

These are the points where a fixed-price job quietly bleeds hours — for example, a team standing around waiting on materials that did not turn up, or a chippie redoing work because the trades were sequenced in the wrong order.

Pipeline

The "$446 million of pipeline" session was Owen Chambers' "Winning Work in a Slow Market: Three steps to generate 10 leads in thirty minutes."

Alongside the contract value, each table tracked how many referral texts they sent — builders messaging past clients and subbies — to surface who is planning to build in the next 12 months. The $446 million came out of that half hour.

Off the tools, together

The sessions were only half of it. Each morning opened with a walk and coffee along the lakefront, and a run club for anyone up for it.

On the first evening the room boarded the 1912 steamship TSS Earnslaw at Steamer Wharf and crossed the lake to Walter Peak for a BBQ dinner and a farm show, and were back at the wharf by nine.

We also organised a day of motorskiing with our boardroom members which was an unreal experience. Getting a helicopter up the mountain to go motor biking in the snow — 10 out of 10 would recommend this to any of you reading this right now.

The awards part of the Summit recognised members who had put the work in over the quarter.

The Women in Construction Leadership Award went to Karen Iversen of Smith & Sons Manawatu.

Member of the Quarter went to Tia Owen of TAK Construction, who became the event's most sought-after man after sharing with the room how he is using AI in his building business to generate leads on autopilot, and to operate 80% of his sales system for him.

Coming to a town near you

If reading this makes you wish you had been there, the next round of events is already scheduled. We run them across New Zealand, Australia and the US through the year, not only in Queenstown.

Our next big one is on the Gold Coast in October. Others are shorter regional sessions closer to home.

You can see what is on and where on the Events page at www.theprofessionalbuilder.com, and by scanning the QR code below.

What contractors need to know about claims limitation periods

Despite signs of recovery in the industry, construction disputes remain a persistent challenge across projects. Rob Georgiou and Jessie Musgrove of law firm Greenwood Roche discuss the key limitation periods that contractors should be aware of when it comes to construction disputes, along with the administrative practices that support efficient dispute management.

The construction industry is particularly prone to disputes due to the complex and lengthy nature of building projects.

Issues relating to defective work arise frequently, and defects are not always obvious at the time of completion, with some defects emerging many years, or even decades, later.

For this reason, it is important that contractors, consultants, and other construction professionals understand the limitation periods applicable to building owners when bringing monetary claims for defective building work, and consider how best to protect themselves before any dispute arises.



Rob Georgiou



Jessica Musgrove

Key limitation periods for building work claims

In New Zealand, the primary limitation periods are set out in the Limitation Act 2010 and the Building Act 2004.

These do not prevent claims from being made against contractors, but they may provide contractors and other parties with a defence to claims.

Primary Period (section 11 of the Limitation Act):

A claimant is barred from bringing a monetary claim (such as a claim for damages arising from defective building work) if it has been more than six years after the act or omission that caused the defect. This six-year time frame is known as the "Primary Period".

Late Knowledge Period (section 14 of the Limitation Act):

Even after the Primary Period has expired, a claimant may still bring a claim if they can show they had late knowledge of the act or omission that caused the defect.

The claimant must file proceedings within three years from the date they acquired that knowledge.

For example, if a defect is discovered in year four of the Primary Period, the claimant has a further three years from that discovery date to bring a claim.

The Late Knowledge Period is defined as the earlier of either:

- the date on which the claimant gained knowledge (actual knowledge), or
- the date on which the claimant ought to have gained knowledge in relation to the act or omission in which the claim is based (constructive knowledge).

Constructive knowledge is the point at which the claimant had knowledge of the requisite facts and information that would lead a reasonable person to investigate whether a right to claim for damages exists.

This means that a party wishing to bring a claim in relation to building work cannot ignore signs of an issue and rely on the late knowledge period to bring a claim.

A claimant must act punctually once they become aware of significant issues, or they risk their claim being time barred by the limitation period.

10 Year Longstop:

The Building Act 2004 imposes an absolute 10 year Longstop for claims relating to building work. This period runs from the date of the act or omission on which the claim is based. After 10 years, no claim can be brought, regardless of when the defect was discovered.

Contribution Claims:

The Supreme Court decision in Beca v Wellington City Council [2024] NZSC 117 confirmed that the 10 Year Longstop does not apply to Contribution Claims under section 17 of the Law Reform Act 1936.

Contribution Claims allow a party who has been held liable for a loss to seek reimbursement from another party who is partly responsible.

These claims can be brought up to two years after the original claim is quantified and a finding of liability has been made.

The two-year period begins on the date which the person claiming the contribution has been found liable to the original plaintiff (ie when the judgment in relation to the proceeding is given) or has otherwise settled with that plaintiff.

This means contractors and other parties may still face contribution claims many years after their involvement in the project, particularly given the time it can take for the initial claim to progress through the courts.

What counts as an act or omission?

Determining when an act or omission occurs is fact-specific. For contractors, the relevant date is generally when the particular scope of work was clearly completed.

Importantly, there is a distinction between continuing work and separate work. If a contractor completes one scope and later returns to perform unrelated work, the limitation period for the first scope of work does not restart.

Practical considerations for contractors

Given that defects may take many years to surface, contractors should take proactive steps to protect themselves. Some key considerations are:

- Maintain detailed project records: Include scope, variations, completion dates and site instructions. Personnel may move on, and clear documentation is essential for defending claims. In addition, those involved in the building work need to retain records until the resolution of any project claims, as these may result in contribution claims.
- Retain key project correspondence: Emails, meeting minutes, RFIs, and site instructions often become central evidence in defect disputes. Contractors should retain these documents and ensure that important communications are stored in an accessible, centralised system.
- Insurance: Ensure insurance (such as professional indemnity insurance and public liability insurance) is kept in place after the project has been completed.

Professional indemnity insurance operates on a "claims made" basis and, therefore, must be in place when the claim is made against a party.

It is also important to ensure that any designers or architects have adequate insurance in place, should you need to make a claim against them.

- Have a clear understanding of the scope of work: Consider what works falls within the scope of work under the contract, and whether any additional work you undertake is separate or continuing work as this will impact when the limitation periods begin.

Circular Path: Turning waste into resources in a tough economic environment

The Environmental Innovation Centre (EIC) says reducing waste and material loss is no longer simply an environmental objective — it is also becoming a business necessity.

Over the past year, New Zealand's construction industry has faced some of its toughest trading conditions in recent memory.

Rising material costs, reduced building activity, tighter margins and ongoing global supply chain uncertainty have placed increasing pressure on builders to do more with less.

Every skip leaving a construction site represents more than waste — it represents valuable materials that have already been purchased, transported and paid for literally going to waste.

Reducing waste and material loss is no longer simply an environmental objective — it is also becoming a business necessity.

For many businesses, improving material efficiency is one of the few ways to reduce costs.

Better management of construction materials not only reduces waste and helps the environment, but also improves productivity, site organisation and overall project performance.

Following a successful pilot programme, the Environmental Innovation Centre (EIC) will be launching the Circular Path website and certification programme towards the end of 2026.

This online platform and certification process gives builders across New Zealand practical tools to recover valuable materials, reduce disposal costs, and demonstrate measurable improvements in resource and waste management.

Resource recovery: Seeing materials differently

Circular Path encourages builders to rethink how waste and construction materials are valued on site.

Instead of asking, "How do we dispose of this?", the programme encourages builders to ask, "How can we keep this material in use?"

Rather than viewing waste such as offcuts, packaging and surplus materials as destined for landfill, Circular Path promotes a different approach, recognising waste as a valuable resource that can often be reduced, reused or recovered.

Initially, the programme focuses on challenging plastic waste streams, including soft plastics, shrink wrap, pipe offcuts and polystyrene.

Over time, the certification will expand to include timber, plasterboard, metals and other significant construction materials, supporting a broader transition towards a resource-efficient circular economy.

A practical pathway for all builders

Circular Path has been designed to fit alongside existing site practices rather than create additional paperwork.

The online platform provides practical resources to help companies develop waste management plans, educate staff, identify resource recovery opportunities, and measure progress over time.

Circular Path is aligned with the existing Waste Hub website, which provides a series of resources for waste reduction, including more information on plastic types, regional recycling information, how to set up your site, and training videos.

Circular Path is designed to be accessible for small builders and larger construction companies.

An annual tiered pricing structure ensures certification remains affordable, with fees based on company size and number of employees.

Independent certification recognises practical actions that reduce, reuse and recover materials, giving clients, developers and stakeholders greater confidence that resources are being managed responsibly.

The programme is also scalable, allowing businesses to start with simple improvements, and to build on their achievements over time.

Whether you're a small residential builder or a larger construction company, Circular Path provides a practical pathway for continuous improvement.

Looking ahead

The Circular Path pilot programme has demonstrated that meaningful reductions in construction waste are achievable through practical improvements to everyday site management.

At its core, Circular Path represents a shift in thinking, and seeing materials as valuable resources that should remain in use for as long as possible, rather than as disposable waste products.

Creating a more resource-efficient construction industry will not happen overnight, but every project presents an opportunity to reduce unnecessary waste, recover more valuable materials, and build new habits.

Collectively, these small improvements can significantly reduce the industry's environmental footprint while strengthening business performance.

For generations, New Zealand has been known for its ingenuity, adaptability and "number eight wire" mentality and making the most of what we have.

Today, that same resourcefulness can help shape a more circular construction industry, where valuable materials are kept in use for longer, and less ends up in landfill.

Circular Path is a practical pathway towards a construction industry that wastes less, treasures resources more, and recognises that nothing of value should be thrown away.

To find out more about Circular Path Waste Certification, or to register your interest, please contact penny@environmental-innovation.nz.

Building Consents Information

For all authorisations, June 2026

Dwellings	$1,750,796,327	Total All Buildings	$2,477,267,167
Domestic Outbuildings	$25,394,697	Non-building Construction	$41,405,947
Total Residential	$1,776,191,024		
Non-residential	$701,076,143	**Total Authorisations**	**$2,521,366,903**

Number of new dwellings consented

	Jun 2026	May 2026	Jun 2025		Jun 2026	May 2026	Jun 2025
Far North District	35	52	19	Palmerston North City	17	25	29
Whangarei District	40	39	30	Tararua District	2	4	0
Kaipara District	7	33	7	Horowhenua District	11	18	10
Rodney District	76	104	51	Kapiti Coast District	21	14	13
North Shore/AlbanyWards	219	293	223	Porirua City	44	45	42
Waitakere Ward	169	104	212	Upper Hutt City	16	17	23
Auckland Wards	269	409	256	Lower Hutt City	24	21	22
Manukau/Howick Wards	273	236	206	Wellington City	53	60	12
Manurewa-Papakura Ward	271	204	115	Masterton District	16	30	13
Franklin Ward	133	217	112	Carterton District	2	1	7
Thames-Coromandel District	11	10	12	South Wairarapa District	8	4	3
Hauraki District	1	5	3	Tasman District	31	35	21
Waikato District	58	54	58	Nelson City	13	54	23
Matamata-Piako District	31	30	22	Marlborough District	11	23	22
Hamilton City	100	94	57	Kaikoura District	1	17	3
Waipa District	56	56	29	Buller District	4	6	5
Otorohanga District	0	2	3	Grey District	6	6	6
South Waikato District	9	4	2	Westland District	7	9	5
Waitomo District	0	2	0	Hurunui District	11	11	5
Taupo District	30	35	28	Waimakariri District	61	83	53
Western Bay of Plenty District	53	48	32	Christchurch City	403	365	232
Tauranga City	76	75	47	Selwyn District	188	233	187
Rotorua District	15	90	17	Ashburton District	19	31	18
Whakatane District	9	8	4	Timaru District	10	8	15
Opotiki District	8	2	5	Mackenzie District	8	10	9
Gisborne District	16	34	5	Waimate District	0	2	0
Hastings District	58	40	42	Waitaki District	1	8	8
Napier City	11	31	14	Central Otago District	34	44	21
Central Hawke's Bay District	0	3	2	Queenstown-Lakes District	233	177	75
New Plymouth District	27	26	16	Dunedin City	27	31	27
Stratford District	6	2	2	Clutha District	3	1	6
South Taranaki District	4	5	3	Southland District	15	12	17
Ruapehu District	1	0	2	Gore	2	1	0
Whanganui District	33	21	22	Invercargill City	30	14	19
Rangitikei District	2	2	3	Area Outside TA	0	0	0
Manawatu District	22	11	12	**Total**	**3471**	**3801**	**2627**

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