

## **CHANGE OF USE (Information Sheet)**

Many building alterations involve construction that changes the use of all or parts of the existing buildings. A good example of this in the residential area is adding bedrooms, bathrooms and kitchens in garages and basements. Council needs to make sure that the new building work complies with the New Zealand Building Code and the existing building is upgraded to comply with the Building Code as far as can reasonably be achieved in the areas that are being altered.

Where new households units are being created, the building must be upgraded to comply as nearly as is reasonably practicable with the New Zealand Building Code in all respects.

Some of the more common areas that are frequently overlooked by applicants are insulation in walls, ensuring enough difference in heights between outside ground levels and any new floor levels (this ensures stormwater will not flow into these areas) structural, and fire protection upgrading.

Where buildings are constructed on existing deck areas or conservatories are being re-developed the foundations and bracing will also need to be checked.

Often the change of use may be from a residential dwelling to a café or public place. These may require the provision of accessible toilets and ramps. It is important that a fire report be attached to your Building Consent.

If you are thinking about building works that will change the use of the existing area you should talk to Council building staff or a professional designer to ensure you have looked at all of the necessary areas.

### **Planning Requirements**

Your Building Consent will also be checked for planning compliance. Some common issues that occur are daylight controls, site coverage, front yards and for sleep outs, parking spaces. Please talk to Council's Duty Planner if you have any queries about these areas.

### **Standard of Documentation**

All documentation submitted with your application must be accurately drawn to an appropriate scale for the job, be fully dimensioned and detail all materials to be used.

Specifications for the building work are also required; the specification should further define the building work including details of all materials to be used, finishes and equipment to be installed. The specification must be specific to the project; it is not acceptable to simply state "installed to manufacturer's instructions", as in many cases product manufacturers have several installation options. Likewise it is not acceptable to make statements such as "fixed in accordance with NZS3604:1999" as fixing types vary depending on wind loads and often more than one fixing option is provided in the standard. Also if you intend to use an alternative proprietary fixing which is an alternative solution, the Council must know exactly what they are approving so it can assess your project appropriately.

The publication *Customer Guide to the Building Consent Process* outlines in detail the information required by Council to process a Building Consent Application.

**Glossary of Terms:**

- DBH – Department of Building and Housing
- LIM – Land Information Memorandum
- PIM – Project Information Memorandum
- Ecan – Environment Canterbury
- NZBC – New Zealand Building Code
- LBP – Licensed Building Practitioner
- OSH – Occupational Safety and Health
- BRANZ – Building Research Association of New Zealand

Useful step-by-step guides can be found at [www.consumerbuild.org.nz](http://www.consumerbuild.org.nz) which can help you to understand the processes required.

**More User Guides in this series are:**

- Customer Guide to the Building Consent Process – IS-000
- Accessory Buildings – IS-103
- Demolition – IS-106
- New Dwelling / Residential Buildings – IS-108
- Transportable Buildings – IS-110
- Fire Code Requirements for SH Purpose Group – IS-112
- Building Code Clauses – IS-114
- Amusement Device – IS-116
- Fencing your Swimming Pool – IS-119
- Fees & Charges – IS-101
- Change of Use – IS-105
- Effluent Disposal – IS-107
- Relocating a Dwelling / Building – IS-109
- Domestic Smoke Alarm Systems for Dwellings – IS-111
- Wet Area Showers – IS-113
- Accessible Facilities – IS-115
- Extension of Time – IS-118
- Solid Fuel / Liquid Fuel Heating Appliance – IS-120

Otherwise visit your friendly Customer Services Officer at Timaru District Council.