

As of 1 July 2009, a deposit fee is required to accompany all building consent applications.

Please refer to the Buller District Council's Fees and Charges, or contact our Customer First Team on 03-788-9111

Buller District Council
Building Inspectors



Inspections and Appointments
by
Arrangement

Westport office: 788-9111

Reefton office: 732-8821

Please quote your building consent number when requesting an inspection.

*Buller District Council
P O Box 21, Westport
Phone: 03-788-9111
Fax: 03-788-8041
www.bullerdc.govt.nz*



Building Control Customer Guide to Frequently Asked Questions



Buller District Council
P O Box 21, Westport 7866
Phone: 03-788-9111
Fax: 03-788-8041
www.bullerdc.govt.nz

A Member of the Mainland Building Consent Authorities Group

Can I view a property file?

Yes, you can. Information held on property files includes building consents and permits issued, resource consent information, plans and correspondence.

Previous Land Information Memorandums issued cannot be viewed as this information is confidential.

How do I get a copy of a Certificate of Title?

Certificates of title are available from Land Information NZ – phone 0800 665 463 or via their website www.linz.govt.nz. Copies can also be obtained from most surveyors, solicitors and Councils.

There will be a small fee charged to cover the cost of this service.

How close to the boundary can I build?

This depends on which zone applies. The Buller District Plan sets out the boundary requirements for all zones. The Plan can be viewed at the Council office in Westport or Reefton, the library in Westport or on our website www.bullerdc.govt.nz. If you are unsure which zone applies or you wish to build within these boundary setbacks please contact a Council planner for further information.

Do I need a building consent?

A building consent is required for all building work unless it is exempt under Schedule 1 of the Building Act 2004 – copies of Schedule 1 are available from Council or can be viewed on the Department of Building & Housing website www.dbh.govt.nz.

If you would like Council to confirm whether your project is exempt under Schedule 1 you will need to supply scale plans of the project (including a site plan where applicable). An inspector will assess your plans and give you written confirmation as to whether a consent is required.

loaded or unloaded. In some cases a resource consent may also be required.

What is a Certificate of Acceptance?

A certificate of acceptance is a document issued at the discretion of Council for work that required a building consent but which has been carried out without a consent first being obtained. It also allows for work which has to be carried out urgently because of safety issues where there is not time to obtain a building consent.

Council will not issue a certificate of acceptance in all circumstances and unauthorised work may well result in a Notice to Fix being issued. Applications for a certificate of acceptance will only be accepted in following a meeting with a building inspector and the provision of adequate plans and specifications. Fees for the processing of a Certificate of Acceptance are considerably higher than if a consent had been obtained.

Building consents cannot be issued retrospectively.

What is a Sea Spray Zone?

The West Coast of the South Island is within a high corrosion zone called the “Sea Spray Zone”. This is mapped out in the New Zealand Standard NZS 3604. What this means is that products for buildings must be durable enough to last the life spans required by the New Zealand Building Code. The products concerned include cladding, roofing materials, metal brackets and nails exposed to the elements or moisture. For further information, refer to Section 4 of NZS 3604.

What does Minimum Ground Levels & Finished Floor Levels mean?

The New Zealand Building Code sets out minimum ground levels in relation to finished floor levels for different claddings to ensure surface water will not enter the building. Section 7 in NZS 3604 shows the minimum heights. Gardens/permanent paving areas must not be constructed above these heights.

- Contain no sanitary facilities, cooking facilities or facilities for storage of potable water
- Contain no sleeping accommodation unless being used in connection with a dwelling
- Are single storey
- Are sited at least the height of the building away from the boundary or from a residential building

If you have any queries contact a building inspector and discuss your project. Bring in a sketch plan with construction details, site plan etc. If the project is approved without the need for a consent Council will note this on your plan and keep a copy in the property file so any future owners are also aware that the buildings have been approved without consent.

How much does a building consent cost?

This varies on the type of work being carried out and is calculated on administration and processing costs, the number of inspections required & any other fees applicable such as levies Council has to pay to the Government. The costs are listed in Council's Fees and Charges booklet. As of 1/07/09 a deposit fee is required to accompany all building consent applications, with any further charges to be paid before the consent is issued.

How do I apply for a building consent?

Application forms are available from Council offices in Westport and Reefton or on our website www.bullerdc.govt.nz. The application form includes a check sheet to help you with the preparation of your application and details the plans and specifications required. This check sheet must be completed and returned with your application together with proof of ownership, two copies of plans and specifications and any other required documentation. A copy of the approved plans and documents will be returned to you when your consent is issued.

How long does it take for a building consent to be processed?

A maximum of 20 working days if all the information has been provided with the application.

Why has my consent application been put on hold?

Consent applications are put on Hold when additional or amended information is required. You will be contacted by the officer responsible for processing the consent. Once the information is received the suspension of time will be lifted.

What is a Peer Review?

A peer review is a check of specific design and/or calculations. Council will contact you first and obtain your consent if your application requires a Peer Review. There is a cost involved in this process which is payable by the applicant.

Can I start work without an approved building consent?

No building work to which the consent relates may start before your consent has been issued. Council is able to issue a Notice to Fix and fine to the owner and/or tradesperson if work starts without consent approval so make sure you sight the approved consent and any conditions attached before work commences.

How do I book an inspection?

Contact the reception staff at Council's Westport or Reefton offices at least 24 hours before the inspection is required to make sure we can carry out the inspection at a time that suits you. Make sure you have all the project details at hand when you ring eg the consent number, project location, type of inspection etc.

How long do I have to finish the work?

Work must start within 12 months of the issue of the consent and be completed within two years of the consent being granted. If you are not able to start or complete the work within these time frames you need to contact Council and apply for an extension of time. Council officers may inspect the work after two years to decide whether a code compliance certificate can be issued.

What is a Code Compliance Certificate?

- A code compliance certificate is a certificate stating the building work carried out under a building consent has been

completed in accordance with the approved documents and all inspections have been carried out to the satisfaction of Council. Copies of code compliance certificates are held on property files.

What is a PIM?

A PIM is a Project Information Memorandum which is a document that may be issued in conjunction with a building consent either before the consent is issued or at the same time as the consent is issued.

The PIM includes information on the heritage status (including any listing with the New Zealand Historic Places Trust) or special features of the land and/or building concerned, details of any water, stormwater or waste water systems that are relevant, details of any other consents relevant, whether the building work is likely to be required to make provision for an evacuation scheme under the Fire Service Act 1975 and confirmation or otherwise that the building work may be carried out subject to any necessary authorisations or consents.

PIM's can be applied for separately or as part of a building consent application.

What is a LIM?

A LIM is a Land Information Memorandum. LIMs detail the information Council has about a property and includes valuation and rating information, details any planning and/or resource consents granted, building permits or consents issued, sewer/water/stormwater information, notifications received from other agencies eg Historic Places, West Coast Regional Council, special land features such as potential flooding, etc.

It is recommended that a LIM is obtained before you buy or sell a property. Application forms and fee information are available from Council offices or our website.

Can I place a shipping container on my property?

A building consent is required to locate a shipping container on your property unless the container is in the process of being

There will be a charge for this service. It is anticipated that the majority of applications should be able to be assessed in approximately 15 minutes and a charge of \$25.00 would be applicable. The processing of more complex applications would be charged out on an hourly basis or part thereof.

Do I need a consent for a spaceheater?

Solid and liquid fuel spaceheaters (wood, coal, pellet, diesel burners) require a building consent before installation. In urban areas, woodburners must comply with the wood burner national environmental standards for clean air burning. Further information can be found at www.mfe.govt.nz. A code compliance certificate must be issued before the burner is used. If you don't obtain consent to install a spaceheater and have it inspected and approved, and your home is damaged by fire, you may not be covered by insurance.



Gas heaters permanently fixed in place do not need a consent but they must be installed by a registered gas fitter who will certify their work.

Fixed electric spaceheaters do not need a consent but must be installed by a registered electrician who will certify their work.

Why do I need a consent?

When a building consent is granted it means that the plans submitted have been checked and the work complies with the NZ Building Code. Inspectors will then carry out the required inspections and if all work has been completed satisfactorily and to the plans a Code Compliance Certificate is issued.

Do I need a consent for a glasshouse, sleepout etc?

Accessory buildings such as sheds, gazebos, glasshouses, sleepouts etc don't need a consent if they comply with the following:

- Floor area under 10 square metres