

How to support your building consent application

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When you apply for building consent you need evidence that your work can meet the performance-based requirements of the Building Code.

There are a number of ways you can show compliance.

Acceptable Solutions and Verification Methods

We issue Acceptable Solutions and Verification Methods, which are design solutions that show one way of complying with the Building Code. They are not mandatory, but are legally recognised as a means of establishing compliance and councils must accept designs based on them.

Buildings built in accordance with an Acceptable Solution or a Verification Method are 'deemed to comply' with the related clause or clauses of the Building Code.

Acceptable Solutions (AS) are step-by-step building methods (for example, the method for installing insulation in the wall of a house to comply with Building Code energy efficiency requirements).

Verification Methods (VM) are calculations or test methods (for example, the calculations necessary to show how a building design complies with the structural requirements of Building Code Clause B1 Structure).

Each clause might have one or more Acceptable Solution and might also have a Verification Method. They are usually referred to by their Building Code clauses and unique identification numbers.

For example, the Acceptable Solution for Clause E2 External Moisture is known as E2/AS1 and the Verification Method for Clause G4 Ventilation is known as G4/VM1.

Alternative solutions

Alternative ways of building, known as alternative solutions, can be used so long as you can show the council how they meet the required Building Code performance standards.

You may have a site that needs an innovative design, be working with an existing building, or want to do something differently. If your proposal is outside the building methods detailed in the Acceptable Solutions and Verification Methods, you will need other evidence that your project complies with the Building Code. You need to include this in your building consent application.

To establish compliance, you might provide:

- a calculation or test result
- comparison with an Acceptable Solutions or Verification Method
- an MBIE determination on a similar product or design solution [link to AR301]
- technical data from the manufacturer's literature
- expert testimony.

[Building code compliance \(https://www.building.govt.nz/building-code-compliance/\)](https://www.building.govt.nz/building-code-compliance/) includes more information on Alternative Solutions.

Standards

Standards can be another method of compliance, on their own or cited within an Acceptable Solution or Verification Method.

Created by Standards New Zealand committees, Standards are agreed specifications for products, processes, services, and performance.

We review Standards before citing them for use, and can cite the whole document, parts of it or a modified version, depending on what is appropriate.

Find out more about Standards and how they comply with the Building Code on [Standards New Zealand's website](https://www.standards.govt.nz/).

(<https://www.standards.govt.nz/>)

Memorandum (Certificate of Work)

If you are an architectural designer, architect or engineer carrying out or supervising the design of restricted building work, you must complete a certificate of work (CoW). This must be included with a building consent application.

For a certified professional engineer, this will most commonly involve providing a CoW for specific structural design work (foundation and superstructure). It may also include moisture management system design (for example, where this forms part of the primary structure).

[Restricted building work \(https://www.building.govt.nz/projects-and-consents/planning-a-successful-build/scope-and-design/choosing-the-right-people-for-your-type-of-building-work/use-licensed-people-for-restricted-building-work/restricted-building-work/\)](https://www.building.govt.nz/projects-and-consents/planning-a-successful-build/scope-and-design/choosing-the-right-people-for-your-type-of-building-work/use-licensed-people-for-restricted-building-work/restricted-building-work/) explained further.

Producer statements

A producer statement is a professional opinion based on sound judgment, not a product warranty or guarantee of compliance. Producer statements may give council reasonable grounds to accept Building Code compliance, but they cannot insist on them and don't have to accept them.

[Producer statements \(https://www.building.govt.nz/projects-and-consents/apply-for-building-consent/support-your-consent-application/producer-statements/\)](https://www.building.govt.nz/projects-and-consents/apply-for-building-consent/support-your-consent-application/producer-statements/) explained further.

Design features reports

Design features reports are reports prepared by chartered professional engineers that summarise the key considerations and design methodology to achieve Building Code compliance.

Although traditionally used in a commercial context, chartered professional engineers have been encouraged to use them in relation to repairing and rebuilding houses affected by the Canterbury earthquakes.

Like producer statements, design features reports can be very useful for councils and others assessing Building Code compliance. However, they currently have no formal status under the Building Act.

They provide design reviewers with an explanation of geotechnical conditions and requirements, structural systems and load paths, design standards used and key design parameters and assumptions.

We encourage people to use design features reports at the design stage to clarify design methodology and critical inspection requirements.

Product certification

Another way to demonstrate Building Code compliance is through product certification.

Product certification (brand name CodeMark) is designed to lift the level of building quality and performance. It is a voluntary scheme operating in New Zealand and Australia, developed jointly by MBIE and the Australian Building Codes Board (ABCB).

CodeMark certified products, systems or building methods have been assessed by accredited product certification bodies and meet nominated requirements of the Building Code.

Product certification has legal status, which means that councils must accept a product certificate as evidence of compliance with the Building Code, provided the intended use of the product is within the scope of the certificate.

Product certification includes more information. (<https://www.building.govt.nz/building-code-compliance/product-assurance-and-multiproof/>)

Off-site construction

Off-site construction is where buildings, or parts of a building (for example, roof trusses, windows and floor framing systems) are constructed off-site and purchased complete.

If your building work includes any components constructed offsite, you need the manufacturer or supplier to supply clear evidence of how their product meets Building Code requirements, as well as providing assembly and installation instructions for your building consent application.

Off-site construction (<https://www.building.govt.nz/projects-and-consents/apply-for-building-consent/support-your-consent-application/off-site-construction/>) explains in more detail.

Appraisals

You can also use appraisals certificates to support your building consent application.

An appraisal is an independent assessment and investigation of building products, materials, systems or methods of design or construction, in order to verify compliance with the New Zealand Building Code.

Both BRANZ (Building Research Association of New Zealand) and BEAL (Building Element Assessment Laboratory Limited) provide independent assessments, investigations and evaluations.

The BRANZ website (<http://www.branz.co.nz/>) has more information about their appraisal process.

The BEAL website (<https://www.beal.co.nz>) has more about their services.

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