

# Consultation on amending Acceptable Solutions and Verification Methods June 2019 Update

Posted: 11 March 2019

## Building Controls Update 246

Consultation is now open on proposed updates to Acceptable Solutions and Verification Methods, and the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) would like to hear your views.

The June 2019 update is the second public consultation under the new biannual Building Code update programme. The changes proposed are overall larger and more significant than the November 2018 update.

MBIE is actively making changes to support more densified housing solutions and the Healthy Homes requirements, while continuing to keep our Building Code documents up to date.

Your feedback and advice is important as it will help us shape the Building Code to support safe and durable housing. Consultation runs from 11 March until 5 April 2019.



## June 2019 update highlights

We are proposing updates to 12 Verification Methods and Acceptable Solutions. The most significant changes are in four areas:

### A new Verification Method that supports building higher density housing

We propose introducing a new Verification Method (E2/VM2), which references a test method that will enable cladding solutions for buildings up to six storeys. This creates a new compliance pathway, as the current Verification Method is limited to buildings up to 10 metres in height. The proposal will support densified housing by streamlining the building consent process for assessing taller building types, as a façade engineer will not always be necessary to confirm a design solution is compliant.

### A new light steel frame solution for low-rise buildings

We propose introducing a non-specific design standard for light steel framing in low-rise buildings. This is a significant step forward for this type of construction as it provides a compliance pathway for housing and small commercial buildings using light steel framing. This will mean that developers/designers, including for KiwiBuild, will have more construction options and the certainty of light steel framing compliance pathways.

### Align Acceptable Solution G4/AS1 with Healthy Homes changes

The Acceptable Solution G4/AS1 for ventilation introduces a requirement for the mechanical ventilation of showers, baths and cooktops in housing. This new requirement, which aligns with proposed Healthy Homes changes, recognises that new homes are typically more airtight than older homes, and removes the reliance on occupants physically opening windows. In practical terms it means that new house builds following the Acceptable Solution must have dedicated extract fans to remove moisture in those areas. The impact will likely be minor for new builds as extracts are already common. G4/AS1 will also provide a solution for homeowners to refer to when renovating existing houses.

### Foundations on Expansive Soils

In the November 2018 update we proposed to revoke Simple House Acceptable Solution SH/AS1. MBIE agreed with feedback received during that consultation that the information in SH/AS1 for foundation design on expansive soils should be retained. MBIE is proposing to move this information into Acceptable Solution B1/AS1, making it a mainstream solution, and revoke SH/AS1.

The other proposed changes for June 2019 include updating references and cited Standards, and correcting editorial errors. Changes are proposed for the following Building Code documents:

- B1 Structure: B1/VM1 and B1/AS1
- B2 Durability: B2/AS1
- E2 External Moisture: E2/VM2 (new Verification Method)
- G4 Ventilation: G4/AS1
- G12 Water Supplies: G12/VM1, G12/AS1, G12/AS2
- G13 Foul Water: G13/AS1, G13/VM2, G13/AS2, G13/AS3

View the full proposals and information on how to provide feedback on the [MBIE Corporate website \(https://www.mbie.govt.nz/have-your-say/statement-of-proposals-for-amending-acceptable-solutions-and-verification-methods-june-2019-update\)](https://www.mbie.govt.nz/have-your-say/statement-of-proposals-for-amending-acceptable-solutions-and-verification-methods-june-2019-update)

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