



BUILDING CONSENT

You will need to make an application for building consent, and have that consent granted and issued before starting work. Building regulations are there to keep you safe and ensure buildings are durable.

If you need a resource consent, you will need that granted before the building work can begin. Your design professionals will need to put together the necessary documentation to show how the proposed building work will comply with the New Zealand Building Code. This is a complex process, and it's best to ask an expert to do this.

EARTHQUAKE PRONE BUILDING

Some buildings, depending on their construction, may have been labelled as an Earthquake Prone Building. If this is the case, the Building Act 2004 imposes set time limits in which the building must be upgraded in terms of its structural performance.

It is important that if you intend to change the building into apartments, the structural requirements are significantly more stringent than the earthquake prone building requirements since people will be living there.

CHANGE OF USE

Under the Building Act, Change of Use means changing the use of a building from one approved use to another use, e.g. turning an office into an apartment and it will trigger certain requirements. The Act puts in place a very onerous upgrade requirement that you need to carefully consider. In terms of the building structure, the Act requires the building to be upgraded, as close as possible, to a level as if it were a new building. It must also consider, among various things the prevention of fire spread to adjoining properties.

Find out more online at the Ministry for Business Innovation and Employment (MBIE) website. Simply head online to www.building.govt.nz and click on 'Managing Buildings' then 'Change of Use, Alterations and Extension of Life'.

PRE APPLICATION MEETINGS WITH COUNCIL

In some cases, it may be in your best interest to have a pre-application meeting with the Council staff with necessary expertise. This would allow you to discuss and find out any concerns or issues prior to starting the consenting processes.

COUNCIL TIMEFRAMES

Council have 20 working days to assess your application and either grant or refuse consent. If Council requires more information, this timeframe will be suspended. The better the application and more time taken by a competent designer, the less likely you are to face ongoing questions, holdups, and the resulting frustrations and costs. You will need to ensure your application includes information on the safety features of the building that are included on a compliance schedule. These include fire alarms, emergency lighting, final exits, etc.

QUESTIONS?

As an initial point of communication, contact the Duty Planner and/or Building Officer on **06 871 5000**.

USEFUL RESOURCES

View the Hastings District Plan online at www.hastingsdc.govt.nz and click on the 'District Plan' tile.

View the Residential Intensification Design Guide online at www.hastingsdc.govt.nz/design

View the Building Consent page online at www.hastingsdc.govt.nz and go to the Menu then click on 'Our Services' then 'Building Consents and Information'

HASTINGS CITY CENTRE Residential Conversion Guide

For builders, property developers and housing providers changing commercial buildings into inner city homes.



Inner city living is gaining popularity in Hastings and Hastings District Council supports this change. This guide will provide a brief insight into what is involved from a consenting perspective to change a commercial building into a residential building.

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HOW CAN I MAKE THE BUILDING AND RESOURCE CONSENTING PROCESS EASIER?

- **Time:** Allow yourself plenty of time for each step in the process. Some steps can run concurrently and some are best run by themselves. Don't underestimate the pre-planning and setup time and costs that are needed before construction starts. This often takes as long at the build phase!
- **Budget:** Ensure that you have allowed for the financial costs associated with the pre-planning as part of your project.
- **Accurate and Comprehensive:** Ensure all documents you provide for both building and resource consent are clear, specific to the job, concise and typically prepared by suitable consultants (see above).

WHICH EXPERTS DO YOU NEED FOR YOUR BUILDING AND RESOURCE CONSENTS PROCESS?

It is important for anyone planning this type of work to understand that getting the necessary consents can be complex, and is often best suited to people who have extensive experience.

Here are some of the experts you may need help from and the area they can help with:

- **Planning consultants:** resource consent
- **Fire engineers:** assessing the building for fire and escape route matters
- **Structural engineer:** to look at the structural design and any upgrade requirements
- **Architect or architectural designers:** to complete drawings, prepare specifications and project-manage
- **Surveyor:** planning matters, seeking titles, easements, etc
- **Services engineers:** drainage, water and ventilation requirements
- **Geotechnical engineer:** to assess ground conditions that the structural engineer would require for the design of any new foundations, etc.
- **Acoustic engineer:** sound rating requirements
- **Valuers, quantity surveyors and heritage advisors:** understanding the costs associated with your project

In addition, local land agents can often provide you with information around any similar projects in the same area they have sold recently.

Note: It is important that you have a clear understanding of the scope of work, time required, approximate costs and returns you expect before you invest too much effort and money.

ACTIVE RETAIL FRONTAGE

If your building is located in the Central Commercial Zone and has a 'Designated Retail Frontage' (Hastings District Plan Appendix 30) it needs to retain the retail frontage appearance in accordance with Standard 7.3.5D of the District Plan.

SELECTING CONSULTANTS

Here are some key questions you should ask consultants before you choose one:

- Have they done this type of work before?
- Do they have recognised qualifications in their field?
- Are they part of a recognised professional body, e.g. Engineering New Zealand, New Zealand Institute of Architects, Architectural Designers New Zealand?
- Can they provide references?

Given the complexity of this process, having the right consultants can minimise the possible frustrations, and uncertainties that arise as a result of poor advice or design.

THE DISTRICT PLAN AND RESOURCE CONSENT

Residential activity (above-ground floor level) is a 'permitted activity' in Hastings Central Commercial Zone. This is to signal that inner city living is desirable from a District Plan perspective.

However, to ensure that it is done well, resource consent may be required in some circumstances.

Factors that trigger a requirement for resource consent in Hastings Central Commercial Zone are:

- If the conversion requires alterations to the exterior of the building, or a new building is to be constructed;
- Buildings with heritage value and that are listed in the District Plan as a Heritage Item or within a Historic Area; or
- If you want all, or part of your building for residential use at ground floor level.

Before you go too far down the track, you should contact the Council's Duty Planner and check the Hastings District Plan, particularly Sections 7.3 and 18.1. Should you wish to pursue a conversion project, a planning consultant is best placed to provide you with detailed advice on planning matters and prepare a resource consent application on your behalf.

There are some other criteria in the District Plan you need to know about, as follows. We also have a Design Guide to demonstrate ideas and tips (referenced below).



PROTECTION FROM NOISE AND VENTILATION

Residential activity within a commercial environment is considered 'noise sensitive' and you will need to provide an Acoustic Design Report to Council with your application. (You may wish to discuss your Building Code requirements at the same time to avoid delays.) The Acoustic Design Report must show compliance with the acoustic design requirements specified in Standard 25.1.7C of the District Plan.

Where it is necessary to have windows closed to achieve acoustic design requirements, an alternative ventilation system will need to be provided. Any such system will also need to satisfy the requirements of the Building Code, and be included as part of your building consent application.

RESIDENTIAL ACTIVITIES ABOVE GROUND FLOOR

Please check the requirements in the District Plan 7.3.6C for all commercial zones:

- Minimum floor areas
- Outdoor living space

PARKING

In most parts of Hastings city centre (Central Character Precinct and Historic Areas), Council no longer requires car parking spaces onsite. It is your decision to make; though you may wish to provide parking for the convenience of the residents.

If you would like space for parking but don't have some, consider a private parking arrangement on another nearby site.

If you choose to provide parking, it must comply with minimum parking standards (e.g. dimensions and manoeuvring) outlined in Section 26.1 of the District Plan.

