

BUILDINGTODAY



THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE REGISTERED MASTER BUILDERS ASSOCIATION

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FROM THE EDITOR

We're a month and a half into 2018 and what's leading the news? Yes, more concerns about managing pricing and risk in the construction sector, and the ongoing desperate need for skilled workers.

It is obvious that even the biggest, high-profile companies and projects are not immune in a booming sector.

In his column, RMBA chief executive David Kelly asks how situations such as this can occur, and what can be done to ensure they are not repeated in 2018.

Meanwhile, columnist Mike Fox has serious doubts as to whether current building consent approval systems are fit for purpose to be able to handle the Government's planned additional 10,000 Kiwibuilds each year.

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Demise of high-profile projects demands answers

Chief's Chat

By CEO David Kelly

The demise of certain high-profile large construction projects was one of the talking points in the media in the second half of 2017.

Why did they occur and how can we ensure 2018 is not marred with the same issues?

This is not something the industry can solve alone. We need to work with the Government to improve the way we manage pricing and risk in our sector.

Government procurement should not be an exercise in one party minimising all their risk. At the end of the day, all parties need to commit to working collaboratively and equitably to deliver on a project.

Anyone building or renovating a home, let alone a multi-million dollar construction project, appreciates that there needs to be some flexibility in adjusting for costs.

I am not across all the detail, but the Christchurch Justice and Emergency Services Precinct, the Metro Sports Centre and the New Zealand International Convention Centre (NZICC) show that some aspects of the current contracting model may not be fit for purpose.

There needs to be more collaboration between Government and industry to understand risk and how to balance it.

It is not just an issue for New Zealand. Carrillion's collapse in the UK has highlighted shortcomings in how procurement is managed there too.

We need to move away from focusing on cheapest initial price — this never gets the best result, limits innovation and stifles research and development.

Technology and innovation are central to addressing problems that have become inherent in the construction sector, which means the Government needs to be more realistic in pricing contracts.

Greater Christchurch Regeneration Minister Megan Woods spoke positively about the need for change, saying we cannot stick to the same old approaches and expect different outcomes.



The industry agrees that things need to change. Early contractor involvement is one way to identify potential issues and be realistic with costings.

However, it is not the silver bullet, and cannot substitute for people with experience in the industry who know how to get value for their clients without passing on all the risk.

We also have some good examples that show how things can go well. I am aware that the New Zealand Transport Authority's approach to procurement is cited as an exemplar by some major contractors. Many District Health Boards and university projects have also been successful.

Much of this stems from them having people that understand the process, and there is a mutual understanding about the realities of contracting.

In the current construction boom, there is a plethora of projects to bid for. And with the recent damage to some high-profile companies, the sector is getting smarter. Construction companies will walk away from a project if they are not fairly procured.

This conversation is not limited to commercial building either. It also translates into residential, with a need to educate home owners, as well as the industry, about pricing and taking a "whole of life" approach to everything we build.

New Zealand needs to get this right. We will keep talking to the Government, and we welcome your input.



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School's construction not child's play

Cathedral Grammar Junior School might look simple, but it's not. The school, described by judges as "a showpiece of timber architecture and craftsmanship" took out the Value Award \$2 million to \$5 million category at the 2017 New Zealand Commercial Project Awards.

"The structure looks really simple and elegant, but in terms of construction elements, it's actually quite complex," says Peter van Eekelen, a director of Contract Holdings Ltd whose company built the project.

"It's the opposite of what most things are — it's a complex structure that looks simple."

These unique design features presented some challenges for the team.

"We are experienced in timber construction work, so we had a good idea about the right approach. But sometimes it's easy to draw a detail, and it's not so easy to deliver that detail in terms of a construction element," Mr van Eekelen says.

"We modelled a number of elements to show that while it can be drawn, it can not necessarily be built with ease, and we ended up resolving a number of construction processes without compromising the design."

Mr van Eekelen says the project was delivered in a very tight time frame, and its success came down to teamwork and collaboration.

"Between our team and the consulting team, there was a genuine partnership working on the delivery. We all have different skill sets and everybody worked together.

"It was a special project, and it's one that we put a fair amount of heart into," he says.

The result is a phenomenal achievement. The building's structural elements are also the finished linings and ceilings. 3D modelling ensured the interlocking timber components all fitted when assembled on site, after being manufactured in Auckland and transported to Christchurch.

The school is characterised by the extensive use of timber, giving the spaces warmth and character.

Mr van Eekelen says it does its job perfectly as



Cathedral Grammar Junior School in Christchurch was awarded the Value Award \$2 million to \$5 million category at the 2017 New Zealand Commercial Project Awards.



a school, but the design really shines at night.

"When it's got the lights on at night you get the warmth of the timber. When I drive past it at night, I smile. It's really cool."

Mr van Eekelen gives his team full credit for completing the project to the highest standard under a tight deadline.

"In November we were two months behind, but it didn't make any difference as we were committed to meeting the deadline of February 22.

"The kids were walking into school on that day, and I made the commitment that it would be operational," he says.

The team hit the deadline — just. "As they were doing the traditional Maori opening at the

front end of the building, our cleaners were walking out the back."

Mr van Eekelen is a former president of the Canterbury Registered Master Builders Association, and says Contract Holdings, which is now entering its 25th year, has been with the Registered Master Builders since the day they started out.

He values the Registered Master Builders Association for the strong lobbying voice it provides for the industry.

The New Zealand Commercial Project Awards are owned by the Registered Master Builders Association, and sponsored by PlaceMakers, Altus, GIB, Allied Concrete, Construction Marketing Services and CARTERS.

Winning Wellington renovation braves the elements

No stranger to success at the House of the Year awards, Planit Construction has another notch to add to their belt. At the 2017 National awards, they walked away with the Supreme Renovation of the Year title.

The Mt Victoria property also won the National Category Award for the Renovation over \$1 Million category.

Having won a whopping 44 awards in total at regional and national competitions over the past six years, Rowan Hannah of Planit Construction says the team was absolutely elated with its first national Supreme win.

“This is our ninth property that has made it to the national final and our first Supreme win. It was what we really wanted to achieve, so we were over the moon but also very humbled by the result,” Mr Hannah says.

He says the scale, complexity and the craftsmanship of the renovation made it stand out from the competition.

“It was a beautiful property, and the quality of the build was second to none. The scale and complexity of the project was impressive — however, the location and access to the site created challenges.”

Exposed on the side of a steep hill, the large villa had to withstand earthquakes and Wellington’s notorious winds throughout the renovation.

“Access in and out of the site was very restrictive for us when we were excavating the front and back of the property. A project of this magnitude definitely comes with some challenges, but the result was stunning.”

Judges were impressed by the scale of the project, and praised the collaboration between the builder and the architect who was also the owner of the property.

“The magnitude of this renovation should not be underestimated. It combined skilful use of new and traditional detailing, and ensured the house was transitioned into a home for the 21st Century.

“A project with significant construction challenges, the builders are to be congratulated for their professional and common sense approach which has achieved a top result for the home owner.



This Mt Victoria renovation was awarded the 2017 Supreme Renovation of the Year, along with a Gold Award and Category win for the Renovation over \$1 Million Award.



“It was extremely well crafted. Judging this renovation was a rewarding experience for both judges.”

Mr Hannah says entering the Registered Master Builders House of the Year competition is a rewarding process, and a chance to see how Planit Construction’s work compares to the rest of the country.

“There were so many amazing properties up for the awards. That’s the beauty of this competition — you are up against the best in

the industry,” he says.

“It really makes it all the more rewarding when you come away with the win.”

Entries for the 2018 Registered Master Builders House of the Year are currently open, and will close on Monday, February 26.

House of the Year is made possible through the support of PlaceMakers, Master Build Services, GIB, Nulook, CARTERS, Plumbing World, Resene and Bunnings Trade.



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2017 Supreme House of the Year ticks all the boxes

An exciting and elegant family home won the Supreme award at the 2017 Registered Master Builders House of the Year competition.

John Creighton Builders was awarded the 2017 House of the Year award, a Gold Award and national category win for the New Home over \$2 million award. The company also won the prestigious Craftsmanship Award.

John Creighton says winning the national Supreme Award was an exciting moment for his team.

"We were absolutely elated. It definitely came as a surprise for us, but it was great to see the hard work we put into it pay off," he says.

Mr Creighton says the craftsmanship and detail of the home made it stand out from the competition.

"Workmanship-wise, the judges couldn't fault it. It is a house that ticked every box. The owners wanted a family home and that is exactly what it is," he says.

"It's a beautiful, lovely warm family home, and whenever you go up there you just melt. The stunning views were perfectly utilised, and the upstairs outdoor area off the kitchen flows perfectly."

An enormous amount of work went in behind the walls to fit in all the componentry of the house, Mr Creighton explains.

"From the reticulated underfloor hot water heated system, the air conditioning under the floors and through the walls, the lighting, the home automation and the sound system — everything had to fit in seamlessly."

Judges praised the impeccable workmanship displayed throughout this challenging build.

"This build had a high degree of difficulty and challenging detailing throughout," they said.

"The demands placed on the builder and his subtrades to complete the construction of this home to such a high standard required a considerable amount of expertise and passion.

We congratulate the builder on his achievements. This was a home the judges didn't want to leave."

This is the first national Supreme Award John Creighton Builders has won at House of the Year. However, they are no stranger to the



This Mt Pleasant, Christchurch, home was awarded the 2017 Supreme House of the Year, along with a Gold Award, category win for the New Home over \$2 Million Award, and the Craftsmanship Award.



awards, having achieved five national category wins in previous years across new builds and renovations.

"House of the Year raises our profile amongst our peers and it gives our clients a lot of confidence in our abilities."

A Registered Master Builder since 1993, Mr Creighton praises the Registered Master Builders Association for their reputation of

quality, and the confidence and security they provide for clients.

Entries for the 2018 Registered Master Builders House of the Year are currently open, and will close on Monday, February 26.

The Awards are made possible through the support of PlaceMakers, Master Build Services, GIB, Nulook, CARTERS, Plumbing World, Resene and Bunnings Trade.



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Apprentice of the Year runner-up gets head start on competition

Registered Master Builders CARTERS 2017 Apprentice of the Year competition runner-up Jack Clifford's early love of carpentry may have given him a jump on the competition.

The 23-year-old's father used to let him loose on the tools in his at-home workshop when he was a small boy.

"I'd always tinkered around building things in my old man's workshop. I started when I was about five years old, but I wasn't very productive back then. I was just cutting bits of wood in half. I was quite destructive actually," Jack says.

He's come a long way since then, taking out the top award at the Hawke's Bay and East Coast Registered Master Builders CARTERS 2017 Apprentice of the Year awards before reaching

the final in Auckland.

Jack, who is employed by Christie Builders and Joiners, says he was "pretty stoked and surprised" to secure second place.

"All the finalists were really skilled, it was a tough competition — everyone was definitely in the running."

As part of the national competition, the 10 finalists were tasked with a six-hour practical challenge where they built "puppy palaces" for the SPCA. Television cameras, judges, friends, family and employers watched on from the sidelines.

The practical test was the most challenging part of the competition, Jack says.

"It was hard to prepare for as it was all a big

secret. I tried not to let the pressure get to me, but it's always a bit funny having a whole lot of people staring at you."

Jack says his employer Christie Builders and Joiners stood by him through the whole competition.

"They were very supportive. My boss did a couple of practice interviews and we studied together. He really helped me prepare."

The judges were impressed with his work, commenting that "he was in control throughout the puppy palace build, and demonstrated a passion for the trade".

"Jack excelled in the interview stage, speaking well about his project and demonstrating great knowledge of the industry. He was very engaging throughout, and has a bright future ahead of him," they said.

Jack entered the competition because he wanted to see how he compared with New Zealand's other apprentices. He says the competition was also a great networking opportunity.

"They're all really good people, and I made some new connections."

He encourages other apprentices thinking of entering the competition to give it a go.

"It's been great for me. If you're considering entering then don't have any doubts — go for it, give it 110% and you can't lose — you'll always get something out of it."

Apprentices, employers and young people aspiring to be part of the construction industry are encouraged to join the Registered Master Builders Facebook page at www.facebook.com/registeredmasterbuilders.

The Registered Master Builders Apprentice of the Year competition is made possible thanks to principal sponsor CARTERS, the Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation (BCITO), and supporting sponsors the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) and APL through their Altherm, First and Vantage brands.



Registered Master Builders CARTERS 2017 Apprentice of the Year runner-up Jack Clifford.

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PM encourages construction apprentices to take advantage of Fees Free



From left: Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern with BCITO chief executive Warwick Quinn, Richard Johnston and Casey Bosscher.

Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern met with a Dunedin apprentice and his employer recently to highlight the Government's new Fees Free policy at the opening of the refurbished Dunedin Law Courts.

Casey Bosscher is doing his carpentry apprenticeship through the Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation (BCITO).

He is encouraging apprentices to take advantage of the Government's new policy which, from January 1, has made industry training fees free for the first two years of an apprenticeship for eligible first-time learners enrolling in eligible programmes.

Casey has been working for Amalgamated Builders, which worked on the seismic

strengthening and refurbishment of the Dunedin Law Courts, since July 2016 when he was offered employment.

After working in a number of other professions, Casey chose to upskill in carpentry because he believes it is a great, hands-on career that will enable him to get out and about instead of working in one place, and offers excellent career opportunities.

It also fits into his future aspiration of building his own home and being able to help family and friends.

Casey says the new fees free policy will appeal to those considering an apprenticeship, as well as to employers considering taking on further apprentices through the BCITO.

BCITO chief executive Warwick Quinn says the

demand for skilled workers in the construction industry is very high across all trades and regions.

More than 65,000 construction workers are needed over the next five years, and a little under half of those need to be trade qualified.

"We need to be training more apprentices to meet this demand. We hope that by having the first two years of eligible programmes free of fees this will encourage employers to take on more apprentices, and encourage more New Zealanders to choose an apprenticeship," Mr Quinn says.

"With the demand for skilled workers in the industry and the incentive of two years fees free, there has never been a better time to consider a career in the trades."



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'Build to rent' could be the missing piece of the affordable housing puzzle

A UK build-to-rent housing model that treats residential tenancy similar to commercial tenancy could be one answer to New Zealand's inadequate rental stock.

A recent BRANZ study called *Building to Rent*, published as part of the Exceeding the Minimum research programme, cites the UK model as a way to help provide more affordable rental housing of better quality.

BRANZ general manager industry research Dr Chris Litten says the study looked to answer the research question: Why don't landlords choose features that exceed the minimum requirements of the Building Code, and what are the enablers for changing this?

The study aim was to identify the barriers to an improved rental stock in this country and the potential solutions, he says.

Other suggested solutions include Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs), which provide capital for development and long-term ownership of real estate assets, and Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) to encourage landlords to undertake energy-efficient improvements.

Problems and barriers

- House values are rising at a faster rate than household incomes, meaning mortgage holders have less left over for maintenance, including to rental properties they own.
- The pressure on the rental housing market means that previously untenable housing may be becoming part of the rental stock. This is particularly concerning for desperate or vulnerable tenants who may find themselves with no option but to occupy sub-par housing.
- More than half of the current rental stock requires less than \$5000 worth of minor repairs to bring it up to the same standard as its owner-occupied counterpart, but a main barrier is that improvements are unlikely to be recouped through increased rents.
- About half of the tenants surveyed said they could not afford to pay any more in rent. In addition, many tenants did not consider other costs, such as electricity and transport, in choosing their current residence. This led to a lack of incentives for landlords to invest in their properties.

Potential solutions

Build-to-Rent

Build-to-rent (or build-to-let) is a term used to describe the purchase of a property off the plans, and then rented out after completion. In the UK, build-to-rent models have provided improved housing quality, greater security and length of tenure, and the freedom for tenants to customise their housing.

A new "shell and fit-out" model was developed, which resembles a commercial lease. The tenant commits to a basic shell structure in a multi-year lease, and is responsible for completing the interior fit-out in a way that suits them.

Real Estate Investment Trusts

Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs) can increase housing supply by providing capital for development and long-term ownership of real estate assets.

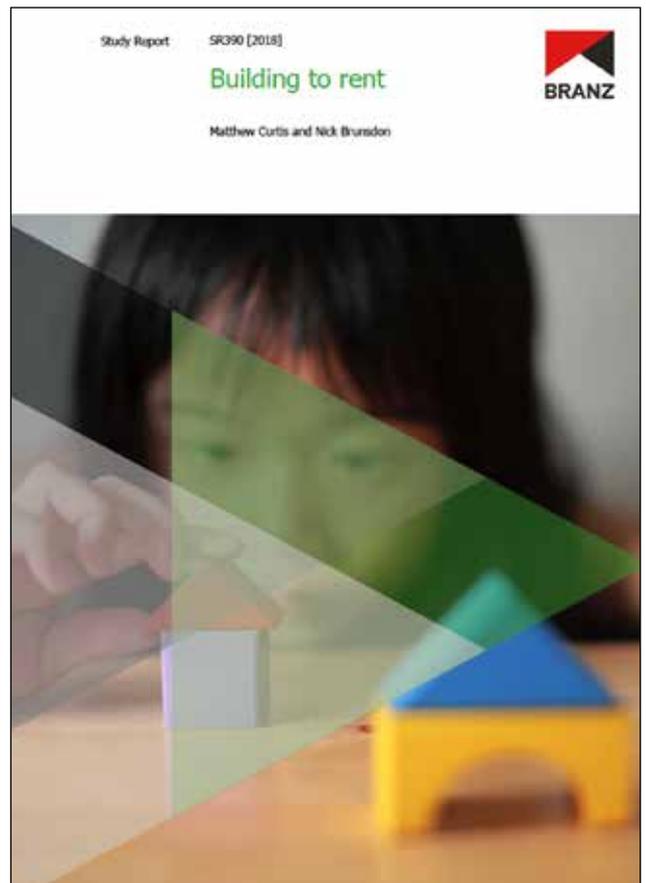
In the USA, residential REIT typically own and operate large apartment complexes. In the UK to date, residential REIT have provided capital to housing associations, which provide affordable rental dwellings.

As long-term investors, REITs would be well placed to offer the long-term tenancies required for the "shell and fit-out" building-to-rent model.

Energy Performance Certificates

Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs), common across the EU, are certificates similar to common rating schemes on many consumer products such as tumble dryers and washing machines.

They aim to address the issue of imperfect information in the housing market, and increase landlord investment in energy efficiency.



Dr Litten says about 35% of New Zealand households live in rental accommodation, with this statistic being much higher in our major cities, tourist centres and amongst younger New Zealanders.

In addition, the number of people aged 65 years or over in rental housing is likely to more than double between 2013 and 2038, so some rental stock will need to accommodate those with disabilities.

"Meeting future rental housing demand and requirements is going to be a challenging task," he says.

"However, it also provides an opportunity for landlords and the Government to look into solutions for the rental industry. Looking at replicating EPCs, promoting REITs, or investing in different models to deliver rental housing could lead to an improved rental stock."

The Building to Rent research report was funded by the Building Research Levy. The full report can be downloaded at www.branz.co.nz/etm.



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Luxury interior features in new Mission Bay apartments

Auckland's Mission Bay will be home to a one-of-a-kind luxury residential building designed by acclaimed global architectural firm, The Buchan Group.

"Horizon Mission Bay" is Location Group's newest venture, featuring 41 apartments in a building overlooking the Hauraki Gulf.

Architecturally designed by The Buchan Group, the complex will feature one, two and three bedroom apartments, as well as three penthouse options.

The Buchan Group Auckland principal Rob Guild says apartments feature open-plan living areas and large courtyard balconies to take advantage of natural light, ventilation and views.

"The design approach of Horizon Mission Bay is to offer the best of both worlds, connecting the city and beach with Mission Beach's relaxed, leafy urban environment," Mr Guild says.

"To achieve connectivity, Horizon has been designed to nestle into the hillside to maximise the expansive views of ocean, islands and greenery to the north.

"Heavy concrete blades on the exterior will respond to weather conditions, and change colour as the building matures and blends with the site.

"A natural colour palette and timber flooring further emphasises Horizon's relationship with the surrounding landscape."

Mr Guild says the interior design of each apartment offers premium, elegant living.

"We wanted to maximise the site's qualities, while also keeping in mind that empty-nesters looking to move from the family home may desire to live in this premium location.

"Therefore, interiors are functional, and designed for entertaining with open spaces, clean lines and contemporary decor.

"Natural light-filled rooms with floor-to-floor, double-glazed windows open onto terraces



and courtyards to seamlessly integrate indoor and outdoor living.

"They are arranged in a way to draw light deep into the living spaces, and catch indirect light.

"Sunrooms have been introduced to the southern apartment balconies to extend living areas to the building's edge. This increases the impact of daylight and inland views so residents can enjoy the space in comfort at all times."

Penthouses feature Gaggenau appliances,

bespoke Italian porcelain benchtops, natural veneer and finger-printless cabinetry, wide-panel smoked oak flooring, three-car garaging and a storage unit.

A special emphasis had been given to the entrance design of Horizon, with a sunken floor and vertical bamboo gardens to feature, as well as three lift cores providing private access to all apartments.

Construction is expected to begin this year.

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NZ company launches new iPod tiny house

EcoTiny has launched its first iPod quick build tiny house, taking advantage of the worldwide trend for prefab and tiny houses.

EcoTiny founder and chief executive Graham Bloxham has developed the iPod tiny house as a fresh take on ready-to-go, portable and stackable housing.

"So many New Zealanders are in need of affordable houses but don't have access to finance, land or insurance.

"I started EcoTiny to make housing affordable — and I don't mean \$500K affordable, I mean 100K. For under a hundred grand you can be in an off-the-grid, stylish Scandinavian-styled tiny pod in 10 weeks, including consent."

EcoTiny will build homes nationwide in particular for:

- Iwi wanting to get whanau out of cars and sheds.
- A farmer on the edge of a tourism hot spot looking to add value and make extra cash.
- Infill housing in the suburbs.
- Stackable pods around buildings in Central Business Districts.

The company's houses are self-contained small homes, including 34sq m one-bedroom units, often built on wheels — perfect for first home buyers, anyone looking to get on the property ladder or those hoping to reduce their carbon footprint.

At 3.1m wide by 7.2m long plus a deck, the



iPods require only 35sq m of land to get started.

Houses can be off-the-grid or connected to services. The EcoTiny Warrior can be either plumbed in and consented or totally self-sustainable, powered by wind, sun, gas and rain.

Built from New Zealand steel eco panels, the iPods are flexible, strong, healthy and super warm/exceptionally cool.

Mr Bloxham says EcoTiny can currently manufacture 10 iPods a month, and hopes to raise that to 50 a month. The company's goal is to sell 3000 tiny homes by working within the changing regulatory environment.

EcoTiny's design process allows consumers to mod their pod and add off-the-grid elements, such as wind generation.

Off-the-grid doesn't mean off-the-radar either.

The homes come equipped with a security system that syncs with the EcoTiny dashboard smartphone app.

The iPod's vital stats can be monitored, including water and solar collected, income tracking if plugged into air bnb which links to Xero and does tax calculations on the fly, battery levels and warmth.

The company has negotiated a rent-to-own model with wrap-around services and insurance. The pods are flexible in terms of income and use — pod owners can plug their tiny home into Airbnb and pay their investment off in as little as a year, or turn off the income if friends are coming to stay.

Mr Bloxham says he wants to make buying a tiny house akin to buying a new car — fast, friendly, and with exceptional after sales service.

Silverdale and Dairy Flat region holds promise of local jobs

Up to 10,000 jobs could be created by 2041 on land in the proposed Silverdale West Dairy Flat Business Area just north of Auckland.

The area has been brought forward for development to between 2018 and 2022 in the refreshed Future Urban Land Supply Strategy, with a draft structure plan being prepared this year.

A structure plan is a high level plan which shows how an area of land can be urbanised, taking into account various land use constraints and opportunities.

With thousands of homes planned for the north over the next 10 to 20 years, the council believes local jobs are important and will help to ease pressure on the main transport network.

The land has been selected as it is close to a motorway interchange, provides large, relatively flat sites that can accommodate businesses not able to locate in centres, and is affected by aircraft noise from the

North Shore Airport which best suits light industry.

Prior to the super city amalgamation, Rodney District Council identified the area for business development and prepared a structure plan that did not progress due to transport constraints. The new draft structure plan will build on that work.

"Business development does not demand the same scale of infrastructure as housing, so we can progress development more quickly," planning committee chair Chris Darby says.

"Local jobs have to be a priority to meet rapid population growth, and with housing development already started at Milldale, west of Millwater, we want land to be available for employment as soon as possible.

"Silverdale West and Dairy Flat are prime areas for business development."

BT's Back in Time

20 years ago:

- Dr Bill Porteous was appointed chief executive of the Building Industry Authority, a move welcomed by the New Zealand Master Builders Federation.

A senior lecturer in construction at Victoria University in Wellington, Dr Porteous was heavily involved in the Federation's education and training committee that preceded the establishment of the Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation (BCITO).

He represented the New Zealand Institute of Building on the Standards NZ review committee for the light timber framing standard.

His academic qualifications culminated in a PhD in 1993 which concentrated on building failures in New Zealand. He was especially qualified in the subject of building failures and building pathology.

15 years ago:

- Major South Island construction company Naylor Love and Auckland's Akita Group reached an agreement which saw the establishment of a Naylor Love Auckland division and the winding down of Akita Group operations.

Naylor Love has a long history as a prominent contractor in the south. It was established in Dunedin in 1910, and has operations in Dunedin, Queenstown and Christchurch. Akita Group had operated in the Auckland region during the past 30 years.

Naylor Love managing director Trevor Kempton said the move was in line with the company's strategy of steady sustainable growth.

10 years ago:

- Increasing section prices had been the major factor in reducing housing affordability over the past decade, according to a BRANZ Group report.

The *Changing Housing Need* study undertaken by Ian Page, economics manager with BRANZ Ltd, and funded by Building Research, included an analysis of the impact of the key drivers of housing affordability.

The report concluded that the major factor impacting housing affordability had been section prices, which were ahead of interest rates and the cost of new house construction.

"Housing affordability has fallen markedly since 2001 due to a number of factors," Mr Page said. "The fact that average wages have only increased by an average of 2.2% per year over the past decade has exacerbated this trend. The rising cost of land, with sections increasing by an average of over 14% per year over the past five years, has been the major contributor to the decline in housing affordability."

5 years ago:

- The Specialist Trade Contractors' Federation (STCF), an umbrella group representing the interests of specialist trade contractors in New Zealand, warned that the 400 Mainzeal staff affected by the firm's collapse was just "the tip of the iceberg".

The company's director Richard Yan said Mainzeal, New Zealand's third largest construction company, could no longer continue trading due to a "series of events that had adversely affected the company's financial position", combined with a general decline in commercial construction activity and lack of shareholder support.

STCF president Graham Burke called for receivers PwC to provide assurances that subcontractors would be treated equitably, and that retentions which had been held by Mainzeal would be paid out.

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Leaky homes: Has New Zealand learnt its lesson?

A new 240-page publication, *Rotten to the Core: The Inside Story of New Zealand's Looming Leaky Home Catastrophe*, concludes that New Zealand has not learnt its lesson from what it calls the "leaky home catastrophe".

This review is the result of several months of research and interviews in 2017 by DANA Publishing director Dennis Neilson, and DANA associates, and included amassing and analysing more than 3000 pages of documentation, and interviewing more than 100 sources familiar with the saga.

DANA has identified that this is by far the most shameful episode in New Zealand political history.

The review says the "leaky homes", or more accurately called the "rotting timber homes", catastrophe may well end up costing New Zealand home owners more than \$50 billion, and even up to \$100 billion.

It says most of these costs were avoidable, if only a few decision makers had bothered to do some basic research, or had even used their common sense in the mid-1990s and after.

More than 90 years ago, the New Zealand Forest Service (NZFS) stated that houses built of timber cut from the then new plantation wood species radiata pine would have to be treated to prevent it rotting if it got wet.

The State Advances Corporation — the only lender for house construction in the 1940s — restated this requirement in the late 1940s, and just so no one could ever be confused, the NZFS forcefully reiterated this requirement in 1950.

A major national inquiry into wood treatment in 1952 concluded that treatment of radiata pine framing timber with boron should be mandatory, and it was for an unbroken spell of more than 40 years until 1995.

During that period there were no measurable house timber failures caused by decay.

But then the wheels fell off, the review says, as from 1991 to 1995 a four-year propaganda campaign was waged by some wood processing/treatment companies to reverse more than 40 years of providing safe housing timber.

New timber treatment standards were introduced in 1995 which allowed the use of untreated radiata pine timber in houses.

This was in spite of several meetings and seminars from 1991 to 1995, at

What do you think?

Is the leaky homes saga under control or have we still only dealt with the tip of the iceberg so far? Email andrew@buildingtoday.co.nz and we'll publish the best replies next month.

• *Win a copy of Rotten to the Core: The Inside Story of New Zealand's Looming Leaky Home Catastrophe. Just answer this question to go into the prize draw: According to DANA Publishing's new publication, has New Zealand learnt its lesson from the leaky home catastrophe? Email andrew@buildingtoday.co.nz and answer YES or NO in the subject line. Competition closes 5pm, Friday, March 30.*

which internationally-renowned timber scientists and timber treatment specialists pleaded with the industry and government not to take this step.

Mr Neilson says that, inexplicably, the government either fell for this propaganda — or was part of the conspiracy — in spite of the by then 70 years of overwhelming written and obvious practical evidence that treatment of radiata pine timber for houses was essential to prevent decay.

He says all their pleas were ignored or, worse, totally discredited. The move all but guaranteed that tens and probably hundreds of thousands of people would suffer terribly as a result of their houses rotting around them, as this new-fangled untreated radiata pine timber and water mingled in their houses to cause havoc and destruction.

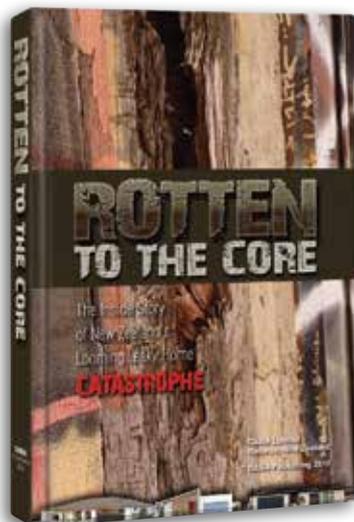
Then it got even worse, as successive politicians added their weight to the then minor crisis, to ensure it became a major crisis — and then on to the catastrophe that it is rapidly becoming.

"Almost 400,000 houses ended up with all or partially untreated timber house framing in them, until the standards were finally changed back in 2011. All are at heightened risk of their timber rotting at some stage — if it has not already," Mr Neilson says.

"Even as rotten homes were a feature of the landscape by 2004, major companies and associations, government departments and politicians, all fought tooth and nail against a move back to treated timber, and/or shamed anyone who suggested rotting homes were, by then, a serious problem.

"Fast forward to 2018, when a new 'national flower' has been identified — the white plastic shrink-wrapped 'tents' which have 'bloomed' all over the country covering rotting timber houses being rebuilt — or, increasingly, demolished.

"No. It appears that New Zealand has not learnt its lesson," Mr Neilson says.



ROTTEN TO THE CORE

The Inside Story of New Zealand's Looming LEAKY HOME CATASTROPHE

DANA's startling new Book/Review: What caused most of the carnage? Was it preventable? Who tried to stop the Rot? Who ignored their pleas? Who covered it up? Who is accountable? Why is New Zealand still in denial and at what cost? \$30 Billion or \$100 Billion? You decide.

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Trust in your team gets the job done

Russell Clark (Russ) has been in the trade since he was 15. For almost as long as he's been in the industry, he's also been an employer.

At age 25, Russ was qualified and employing his first apprentice. Since then he's employed and trained many apprentices, supporting them with the same opportunities he's been offered in the construction industry.

"I've always been a great advocate for training. Having a company is not about hiring cheap labour, it's about committing to somebody else's future," he says.

"Many young people are really excited to be trained and to gain experience in the industry. There is so much room for progression in the industry that everyone has a chance to prove their self."

True to his beliefs, Russ recently took on a deaf apprentice. "He is no different to anyone else on the team — in fact, he follows instructions well and is a true asset to the company."

Russ owns Licensed Renovations in Auckland, and the business is involved in a wide range of residential renovations ranging from \$50,000 to close to \$1m.

"There isn't much I haven't seen in my 35-plus years in the building industry. If any of my apprentices don't know something, I need to be able to send them to the right job so that they have the chance to learn what they need, and to sign those units off. It's a hands-on industry, and people learn by doing and practising.

"My first boss, Peter Jones, formerly of Argon Construction, was a legend who gave me the foundation on which I've built my career.

"When I'm working with young apprentices, I think back to the knowledge that Peter passed on to me. You never stop learning or turn down opportunities, or think you know it all. Everyone is different, and you are learning from everyone all the time.

"Peter gave me an opportunity, and now I'm passing that same opportunity on to the next

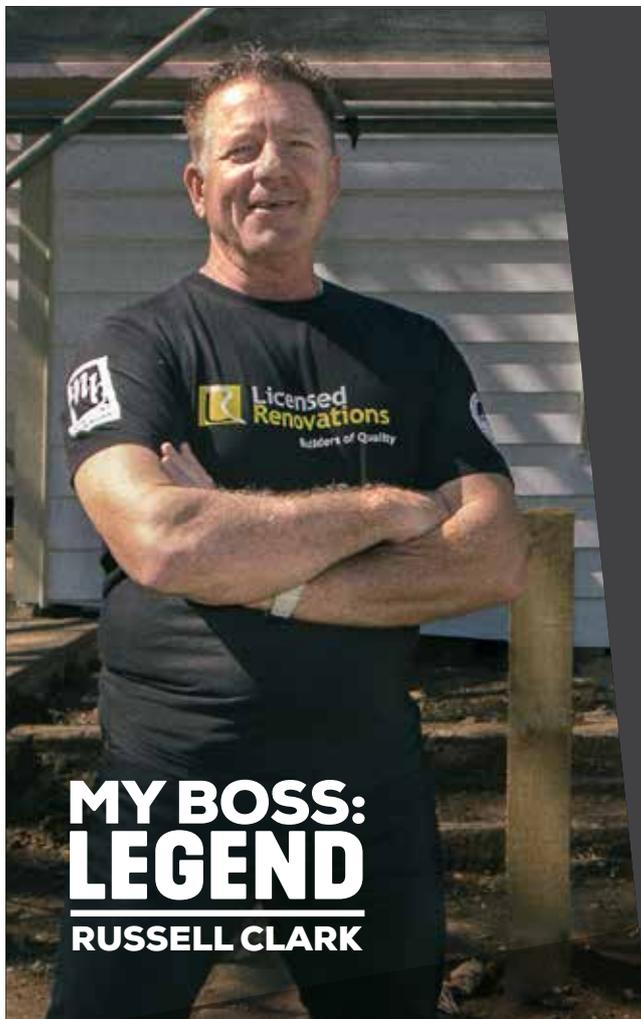
generation. My apprentices have good people beside them, so they know that they have highly trained people to support them.

"When one of my apprentices qualifies, I know they can go to any workplace in the country and match anyone else. In fact, a number of my BCITO apprentices have already progressed to run their own businesses successfully.

"For me, my employees are my business — they do the work, and without them I wouldn't have a business. I put my trust in my team, trusting that they will get the job done, and they always deliver.

"Outside of work I hold social events for the team, offer bonuses, and often share connections so they can build their own businesses. I also help them out in their personal lives with loans and financing. We have each other's backs and support each other."

For more stories about legendary bosses like Russell Clark, visit mybosslegend.nz.



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'Wise words' from a legendary employer . . .

- *An effective leader needs to compromise.*
- *A commitment to industry training means a commitment not just to hire cheap labour, but to growing someone else's future.*
- *Best business decision: taking on apprentices.*
- *Lifelong learning means you never stop learning or turning down opportunities. Don't think you know it all, and be adaptable.*
- *At the end of a tough week I go fishing.*
- *In five years I hope to be doing exactly what I'm doing now.*

Russell Clark, Licensed Renovations



Licensed Renovations owner Russell Clark.



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Can our building consent system cope with an additional

Building Today columnist Mike Fox has serious doubts as to whether current building consent approval and administration systems are fit for purpose for an added 10,000 planned Kiwibuilds.

We currently have a housing sector under extreme pressure to deliver more houses, especially more affordable ones. We also have a new government with aspirational plans to deliver another 10,000 affordable new homes per annum on top of the current volumes.

I would pose the question that unless there are significant changes to the way building consents are approved and then administered, we will just continue to slide increasingly behind the supply and demand curve.

This article is not about bagging the performance of local authorities — it raises genuine questions about whether our current system and the way it is administered is fit for purpose, and how it will cope with the additional demand of the Government's Kiwibuild plans.

Bureaucratic wringer

Some local authorities are very efficient and helpful, but others are just downright difficult. Many local authorities see every project, no matter how simple, as a problem that must be put through the bureaucratic wringer many times over.

Whilst this risk-cleansing process is carried out, it appears little thought or care is given to what the financial or social implications might be to the applicant.

So why is this happening? I'm sure the architects of the 2004 Building Act didn't envisage the unintended consequences that have arisen through local authorities doing everything they can to absolve themselves of risk.

I do have some sympathy for the local authorities in that they have been hit financially as the last man standing under our current joint and several rules.

The joint and several rules desperately need revamping to reflect the proportion of fault of those involved in a claim.

The construction industry is unique. Other countries such as Australia have managed to deal with this, and so should we if we want productivity and co-operation to return to the industry.

Much has changed since the advent of the leaky building saga. We now have licensed building practitioners working on the critical



Mike Fox

elements of residential buildings, treated timber is used, we use more engineered solutions than you can poke a stick at, many homes are built with rigid air barriers, drained cavities are the norm, and council inspections have at least doubled.

Given that claims from leaky buildings are now pretty much behind local authorities, along with all these extra safeguards, one would expect that the risk pendulum would have pulled back from maximum alert to common sense.

Current behaviours do not appear to reflect the lower level of risk local authorities have over simple residential construction. Every project appears to be dealt with in the same bureaucratic way, no matter how simple or complex it is.

Risk-based consenting provisions which were included in the Building Act sit there as some sort of unattainable holy grail that very few want or seem capable of implementing.

In fact, why do we have a licensed building practitioner system if it carries no sway or trust with local authorities?

Fortress mentality

The unfortunate outcome of this fortress mentality for a construction industry that needs to be producing more, is that it can only operate at the capacity of the local authority administering the consent.

Ask any architect, designer, engineer or builder about the number of RFIs and peer reviews they get which are more about ticking a box

and gaining additional processing time, than having any material effect or improvement for the project.

Add to this the huge number of inspections requested and time lag required to get them, and it's not a picture of efficiency.

I have heard anecdotally that it is considered in the halls of power that the consent process is working well. That is very worrying, and shows a disconnect from what is happening at the coal face.

For those in the halls of power, the following is what those in the industry can face on a daily basis:

- Long delays and demands for what appears to be trivial information on simple residential building consents, very often on Day 19 of the consent approval time frame.
- Requests for providing the same standard information over and over again as if it has never been seen before.
- Different rules and interpretations between each local authority and, indeed, each inspector. In many cases, rules are "invented" by individual inspectors that are not part of the building code. Builders often find it quicker and easier to pragmatically roll over than it is to push back for what they know is right.
- There is a huge imbalance of power between local authorities and those undertaking a project, leading to monopolistic behaviour, inflated fees and, often, paying for the authority's inefficiency.
- In many cases, if you don't lodge your consent by mid-November it won't likely be worked on until mid-January.
- Inspections in some local authorities need to be booked two to three weeks in advance. A week to 10 days seems all too common.
- Inspections are getting failed on the most minor of technicalities, and then it's another however many days or weeks to get it re-inspected.
- If an inspector takes a holiday, some local authorities just push out waiting times instead of providing cover for that lost resource.
- Increasingly, inspectors with little or no practical on-site experience are being employed. This results in less than optimal text book inspections, time-delaying requests, and a loss of respect for those inspectors who are obviously out of their depth.
- Delays in issuing Code Compliance Certificates whilst the bureaucratic process works its way through. This impacts greatly on contractors'

10,000 Kiwibuilds each year?

cashflow and move-in dates for home owners.

The result of the above is that, unfortunately, projects are delayed, productivity is plummeting, costs are soaring, margins get wiped out, and skilled tradesmen, designers and engineers are becoming disenfranchised and exiting the industry.

All of this is happening at a time when more homes need to be completed than ever before. If the local authorities are struggling to administer the system with current volumes and practices, there seems little chance that they can handle the additional 10,000 homes per annum planned under Kiwibuild.

With all the above said, I'm sure that an equally long list of frustrations can be written by the local authorities who are working within the system they have been delivered to operate within.

They also need to deal with all levels of contractors, from highly proficient entities to Johnny-come-lately operators, so it is a big ask. But put the risk where it lies with risk-based consenting, not on every project.

Perhaps the tipping point has arrived. If we want to produce more affordable houses and an increase in productivity, then it is an opportune time to revisit the rules.

Let's do a reality check on them, and include in the mix how we are going to efficiently supply the homes our growing nation so desperately requires.



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Getting from A to B

Architect Don Bunting backgrounds a common city-dweller problem.



When asked what aspect of modern life most adversely affects them on a day-to-day basis, many people will say “getting from A to B”.

Inner-city and inter-city travel is becoming increasingly difficult, inconvenient, expensive and environmentally concerning. It is also having a negative effect on business, with long delays and increasing dollar and time costs.

During every local and national election cycle, poorly thought out solutions are put forward by candidates, more in hope (of being re-elected) than in expectation of solving the transport problem.

Some are just plain silly — light rail is great, convenient, environmentally friendly, modern and looks good, so let’s use it for getting people to and from our airports, they say.

Electrified light rail is a fine solution for inner-city transport, but doesn’t work for taking heavily laden travellers between the city centre and an airport.

However, this doesn’t deter a clutch of hopeful politicians using it as their battle cry, even if not one medium-sized city in the world, including those having light rail for urban transport, use light rail in this fashion.

Car facts

Most alternate travel solutions tend to ignore the fact that New Zealanders have a love affair with cars. It will require compelling solutions, or a massive increase in car purchase and running costs, to drag people away from the perceived convenience and economy of car use.

And for many people, the shape of our country and our cities and towns make car travel the only practical, affordable answer.

Car ownership in New Zealand (2016 statistics) is just under 780 per 1000 people. That’s more than 3 million cars at any time on the road, parked on the street, or in the garage or car park.

Compare this to Australia, with just 14.1 million cars for a population of 24.2 million people, or 585 per 1000.

Driving this high number in New Zealand is that 50% of these cars are cheap, used imports, giving our car fleet an average age of 14 years. In Australia the average age is 10 years.

This is a concern, both environmentally and in encouraging any significant shift to alternative vehicle types, such as electric powered cars.

Just do the maths. Changing 10% to electric each year — that’s 30,000 cars — wouldn’t even keep pace with the current increase in car numbers.

During the 20 years up to the end of the 20th Century, the total distance travelled by motor vehicles doubled, partly caused by the increase in car numbers.

It also reflected our modern lifestyle — living further from work, travelling to malls and big barn retailing, and for pleasure and holiday trips. And, in many cases, a car was the only practical mode of transport available.

Without a change in attitude, the private car will remain the primary means of daily transport. Any transport solution has to include making car travel cleaner and more convenient, while keeping cars out of areas with good public transport options.

A very short history lesson

In the early days of European settlement there were few if any adequate roads for anything other than bullock or horse-drawn vehicles, so water remained a key transport solution.

The introduction of steam led first to steamships and, progressively, a national rail network. Other than in Wellington, trains were not initially used for urban transport.

Motor vehicles became common mode of transport in the 1920s when the road network had improved.

Urban development in Auckland

Electric trams arrived in Auckland around 1900 to help alleviate overcrowding in the central city. Auckland’s first tram line was from the CBD to Ponsonby via the Karangahape Road ridge. The tram system was progressively expanded to other developing suburban centres.

Trolley buses replaced trams after the Second World War, with diesel buses progressively taking over and now remaining the main form of urban transport.

Ferry services were used extensively prior to the opening of the Harbour Bridge in the mid-1950s, including connections to the

eastern suburbs. Tamaki Drive, connecting the growing eastern suburbs to the central city, was not completed until 1932.

The 1950s and 60s saw a major expansion of regional roads and motorways, including the contentious but, ultimately sensible, decision of a North/South motorway link through the central city.

This encouraged more commuters to use their cars rather than the less convenient public transport system.

The motorway system later expanded to western and south-western corridors, with the new Waterview tunnel improving airport and cross-city links.

The current motorway system now suffers from peak hold-ups due to heavy reliance on cars rather than the less convenient buses and heavy rail.

Early answers

Recent and current solutions for inner-city travel in Auckland include:

- The central, inner and outer link bus routes, offering mostly reliable and frequent access around the city and inner suburbs.
- The North Shore busway to and from Silverdale in the north, together with a number of dedicated bus lanes on inner-city streets.
- Electrification and other improvements to the existing rail system, centred on the Britomart downtown terminal.
- Development of the Inner City Rail Link. Time will tell whether the \$3 million to \$5 million cost is justified for servicing such a small part of Auckland’s suburbs.
- Extensive cycleways throughout Auckland, together with a political push to encourage more cycling (including electric bikes) and walking.
- Slowly improving ferry services, with some early failures due to under-use.

What next

I will look at possible solutions to current and future urban transport needs next month.

Judicial review — not to be used as a means of appeal of an adjudicator's determination under the CCA 2002

Timothy Bates of Auckland law firm Legal Vision looks at the difference between judicial reviews and appeals when applied to the Construction Contracts Act 2002.

To start the new year, I'll review the very recent decision of *Body Corporate 200012 v BP Keene QC & Others* where a body corporate openly used judicial review proceedings to thwart the "pay now and argue later" philosophy of the Act.

The background factual matrix to this proceeding was a leaky building repair contract on a multi-unit complex that had gone well over budget.

Naylor Love was the contractor, and it had successfully taken the Body Corporate through two adjudication determinations. These two determinations left the Body Corporate owing near on \$4 million.

Ultimately, the adjudication determinations were only interim decisions as the construction contract referred matters in dispute to arbitration for final determination.

In fact, despite the two determinations, the Body Corporate had issued arbitration proceedings as against Naylor Love.

The Body Corporate openly admitted to the court that its purpose in bringing the judicial review proceedings was to avoid paying the determinations whilst arbitration proceedings were pending.

Having been prepared to concede that point, the Body Corporate argued the court ought to intervene by way of judicial review for the following reasons:

- Aspects of the dispute ruled upon by the adjudicator were time barred by the contract such that they were no longer capable of dispute;
- The adjudicator had ruled on disputes that were not referred to him;
- The contract precluded the adjudicator from deciding upon rate escalation; and
- The subsequent adjudicator had wrongly considered issues decided in the earlier adjudication (*res judicata*), and was not prepared to reconsider these issues.

The thrust of this High Court judgment was that it would be reluctant to allow judicial review proceedings to upset the philosophy of the Act.

Its intervention ought to be rarely used. Early



in the decision of Judge Brewer, he quotes this passage as setting out the difference between appeal and judicial review:

"Review is concerned with the legality of the decision, whether it was reached 'in accordance with law, fairly and reasonably'. A reviewing court must address the process and procedures of decision-making and ask whether the decision should be allowed to stand. Appeal, in contrast, entails adjudication on the merits, and may involve the court substituting its own decision for that of the decision-maker."

Whilst the court was willing to entertain judicial review of a determination, it was weary of the fact that the matters in dispute in this instance were to be resolved in another forum.

Accordingly, it ruled that the court would be sparing in the exercise of its discretion.

It then cited the Court of Appeal decision of *Rees v Firth* which said very much the same thing about not allowing the review process to cut across the regime of the Act.

The court quoted this telling segment from the Court of Appeal decision:

"[27] The courts must be vigilant to ensure that judicial review of adjudicators' determinations does not cut across the scheme of the CCA and undermine its objectives. In principle, any ground of judicial review may be raised, but an applicant must demonstrate that the court should intervene in the particular

circumstances, and that will not be easy given the purpose and scheme of the CCA. Indeed, we consider that it will be very difficult to satisfy a court that intervention is necessary."

The court then turned its attention to each of the grounds put forward by the Body Corporate which it argued was reviewable by the court.

On every count, the High Court ruled that the proper process for the final determination of the point was in the concurrent arbitration proceedings. Or, put another way, these were arguments that were properly dealt with on appeal rather than by way of review.

In respect of the argument that the second adjudicator was wrong to consider the prior adjudication as having already decided arguments put (*res judicata* (in latin)), he ruled that it would make no procedural nor statutory sense for the same issue to be repeatedly determined by adjudication.

Accordingly, the judicial review proceedings failed on every ground, and this Body Corporate was left liable not only for the \$4 million worth of adverse determinations, but also High Court costs.

This is an important decision to start the new year because it demonstrates the court's unwillingness to fetter the pay now argue later philosophy of the Construction Contracts Act 2002.

Post note: This article should not be considered or relied upon as legal advice, and at all times specific legal advice ought to be sought. No responsibility or liability is accepted by Legal Vision or *Building Today*.

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Get motivated and have a better year than last year

Terry Sage of Trades Coaching New Zealand says it doesn't matter whether it's necessity, greed or just pure lust that motivates you to have a better year than last year.

Right, so here's all the usual stuff you're told in order to brighten up your new year of business.

- Update your business plan — if you don't have one then start writing it now you "slacker".
- Do a new cashflow forecast — what do you mean, you don't have an old one?
- Make a list of goals — yes, okay last year's one will have to do.

And there are half a dozen other really good things you should do at the start of each year. But why?

Well, it's supposed to make you feel better, get motivated, have a better year than the last one and, generally, improve your lot, blah blah blah.

Suppose you don't want to feel better, have just enough motivation thank you, are happy that last year was mediocre, and that "your lot" is just fine mate?

Then you're in the mass majority of tradespeople, folks. And as the saying goes — "happy as a pig in sh.."

But are you in the majority club because you want to be there or you don't know how to get out of it? Or are you just too damn lazy to do

anything about it?

To be honest with you, if last year was okay then the easy road by a long shot is to just do it all again. It takes effort to change and, for most, change is a scary concept.

I know for certain there will be some doubters to this next point, but I stand by my words and take them from years of talking to business owners and using my degree in "Peopleology" earned from that prestigious university of life, hard knocks and bullshit.

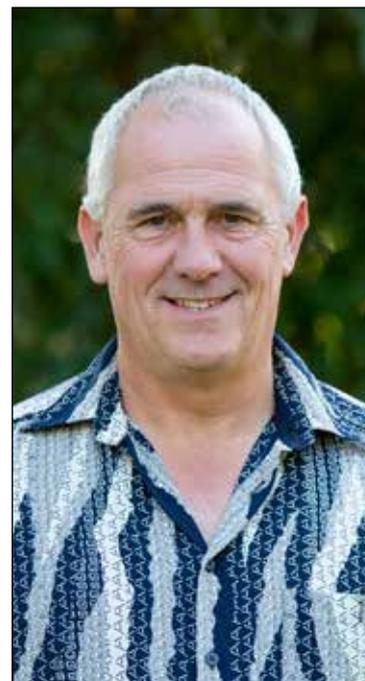
Everybody wants something better, more, and different. A new house, a car that starts every day, a holiday with the family, a boat with an engine and no paddles, a kitchen with cupboard doors.

We want that greener grass, what the Smiths have next door, and the new toy your mate has.

Necessity, greed or just pure lust?

It doesn't matter if these wants are born of necessity, greed or just pure lust. They are real — well, real enough in your head to make you dream of them and for them not to go away. In fact, they multiply on a regular basis.

So, the point is that the start of this year



heralds the same greedy, lustful thoughts, and if you're in the club of "same as last year thanks" then you won't be any happier come February 2019 — and that will just be a total tragedy because you're worth far more than that.

It's time to relinquish your membership of the just another day club, and join the exclusive club of what's around the next corner for me. Yeah, I know very cliché, but you get the point.

If you want to be that person who hands the keys over to your new house so the new kitchen can be installed while you drive away in the new SUV with the seven metre boat on the back and the family packed inside on your way to the new beach house, then make this year different to the same old last one.

If you'd done all the above this time last year, then way to go dudes. But don't stop now — think up bigger and better goals.

If you are sitting there a wee bit bewildered about where to start, all you have to do is pick up the phone or push the send button, and I'll be happy to give you a helping hand.

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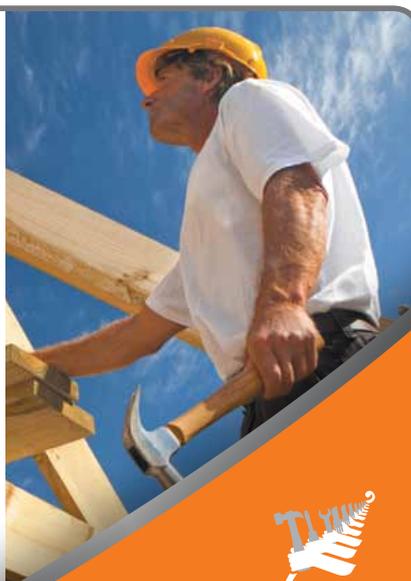
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THE BUSINESS SIDE OF CONSTRUCTION

Radio Sport Breakfast co-host Kent Johns presents his latest thought-provoking column reflecting on the previous month's sporting events and controversies, along with upcoming events. Answer his Sport Today Trivia Question below and go into the draw to win some great prizes!

How to wind up a cricket 'purist'

One sure way to wind up a cricket "purist" is to suggest change to test matches. Trust me, it works every time.

Even if your own ideas are well meaning and sensible, the purist will accuse you of not being a "true cricket fan" primarily because they don't like the suggestion for improvement that has been made.

It seems impossible to the purist for there to be positive change to test cricket. It should be left alone to prosper, as it always has.

So when the idea for reducing tests from five days to four gets floated, the purist troops mobilise themselves with impressive speed and defiance. They don't have any time for the idea because, after all, tests are "traditionally" five days in length.

There are two problems with this entrenched stance. One, test cricket hasn't always been five days in length. Since the first match in 1877, tests have been played officially over durations of three, four, five and six days.

There was even a time when tests were timeless – that is, played for an indefinite period until a winner was found. The notion of the traditional five-day test is nothing more than a comfort blanket for opponents of a reduction.

The second problem is without change to the current format, test cricket will wither and die. Test cricket has never been less popular than it is now.

An average crowd of only 1300 people per day turned out for the recent two-test series between New Zealand and the West Indies. And both tests only lasted four days, and were played over weekends.

In contrast, more than 17,000 spectators attended the New Zealand v Pakistan T20 international at Eden Park on a Thursday night.

New Zealand Cricket will certainly be banking on a better turnout for the inaugural day/night test in Auckland against England next month.

Day nighters are a progressive and necessary step to invigorate interest in a flagging product but, alone, are not enough.

A Test Championship starting in 2019 is another good, and long overdue, move, but we will only have a winner every two years.

For test cricket to remain sustainable, it needs to be reduced to four days in length, with the possibility of extra overs to be bowled each day. Thursday-Sunday matches are the way to go, and here's why: The match is almost guaranteed to reach its crescendo on the weekend when most fans can watch, it is more cost effective for administrators and broadcasters when most tests are not going to a fifth day anyway, and a three-test home series for New Zealand will be more achievable because of time saved in a congested calendar.

Did you hear that purists? You'll get more test cricket!

The leading players' opinions count, and many voice their displeasure at the notion of change to test cricket.

Gun Australian opener David Warner recently said he had no interest in four-day cricket.

"It's the longevity, being out there on your legs, it's grit and determination – those things come to mind to actually want to keep playing five-day cricket."

Warner is one of the reasons tests generally only last four days. After all, have you seen him bat? It's not exactly pure test cricket, is it?

HALBERG AWARDS

The Halberg Awards are always good for discussion and debate. They were held in Auckland on Thursday, February 8, and I know



many of the judging panel, and always enjoy trying to guess which way they will lean.

So I had a crack at picking the big winners at the time of writing this column on February 2. We'll check back in on my success rate next month.

Sportswoman of the year: Lisa Carrington is a judges' darling. Black Ferns star Portia Woodman will be a close second.

Sportsman: Shotputter Tom Walsh wins this easily. It would have been a great debate had Peter Burling's name been put forward by Team New Zealand.

Disabled Sports person: Always the hardest to pick because it is very difficult to put achievements into context. I think the panel would have gone with swimmer Sophie Pascoe, who set six national records at the New Zealand Championships.

Team of the Year: History says when Team New Zealand wins the America's Cup it wins the top Halberg awards. Our country has a fixation with the America's Cup and the panel will reflect this.

Supreme Halberg Award: Refer to the above answer for Team of the Year.



Tune in to Kent Johns, Radio Sport Breakfast. 6am – 9am weekdays

SPORTTODAY TRIVIA QUESTION

We've scored a double pass for a Supercar Fast Dash at Hampton Downs!

Just answer the following question: How many consecutive games did the Black Caps win against the

West Indies and Pakistan in all cricketing formats this summer? 9, 13 or 17?

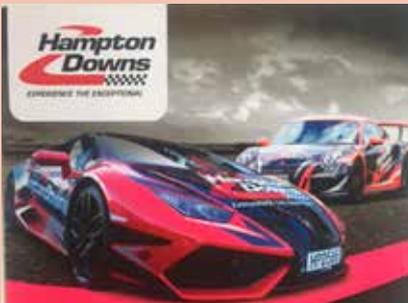
To enter, visit www.buildingtoday.co.nz/competitions.aspx. Good luck!



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Building Today has scored a double pass for a Supercar Fast Dash at Hampton Downs to give away to one lucky reader! Answer Radio Sport Breakfast co-host Kent Johns' Sport Today Trivia Question (see page 29 for details) and go into the draw for this "Super" prize!

Building Consents Information

For All Authorisations, December 2017

Dwellings	\$934,053,000
Domestic Outbuildings	\$18,999,000
Total Residential	\$953,053,000
Non-residential	\$485,336,000
Total All Buildings	\$1,438,389,000
Non-building Construction	\$29,818,000
Total Authorisations	\$1,468,206,000

Number of new dwellings consented

	Dec 2017	Nov 2017	Dec 2016		Dec 2017	Nov 2017	Dec 2016
Far North District	30	37	26	Horowhenua District	13	21	17
Whangarei District	35	51	45	Kapiti Coast District	20	14	23
Kaipara District	18	26	20	Porirua City	44	19	24
Rodney District	58	89	60	Upper Hutt City	28	38	9
North Shore/AlbanyWards	258	280	198	Lower Hutt City	14	18	11
Waitakere Ward	35	66	43	Wellington City	12	100	29
Auckland Wards	126	663	279	Masterton District	18	14	7
Manukau/Howick Wards	267	217	43	Carterton	7	14	2
Manurewa-Papakura Ward	94	88	59	South Wairarapa District	10	7	10
Franklin Ward	38	47	58	Tasman District	35	19	41
Thames-Coromandel District	35	20	28	Nelson City	13	21	22
Hauraki District	11	11	10	Marlborough District	28	30	18
Waikato District	30	38	57	Kaikoura District	4	5	1
Matamata-Piako District	7	28	9	Buller District	1	5	5
Hamilton City	57	114	76	Grey District	2	1	5
Waipa District	34	53	43	Westland District	3	3	2
Otorohanga District	1	1	3	Hurunui District	15	13	8
South Waikato District	1	6	2	Waimakariri District	50	42	53
Waitomo District	4	0	0	Christchurch City	137	221	197
Taupo District	23	24	21	Selwyn District	55	84	94
Western Bay of Plenty District	43	46	40	Ashburton District	14	14	32
Tauranga City	57	184	114	Timaru District	12	24	20
Rotorua District	18	17	10	Mackenzie District	6	9	6
Whakatane District	6	10	12	Waimate District	1	7	1
Kawerau District	1	2	0	Chatham Islands Territory	0	0	0
Opotiki District	2	0	2	Waitaki District	11	7	4
Gisborne District	5	17	5	Central Otago District	20	29	26
Wairoa District	2	0	0	Queenstown-Lakes District	111	98	79
Hastings District	18	22	15	Dunedin City	30	60	50
Napier City	12	22	10	Clutha District	1	7	3
Central Hawke's Bay District	3	5	2	Southland District	18	10	6
New Plymouth District	30	43	36	Gore District	4	2	3
Stratford District	2	3	2	Invercargill City	11	12	10
South Taranaki District	5	4	11	Area Outside TA	0	0	0
Ruapehu District	4	1	9				
Wanganui District	12	9	9	Total	2169	3262	2205
Rangitikei District	2	3	1				
Manawatu District	12	18	11				
Palmerston North City	25	22	16				
Taranua District	0	7	2				

• Based on 2006 census areas

• Each dwelling unit in a housing project is counted separately

• Figures in these tables may differ from published statistics

Source: Statistics New Zealand

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