



DUNEDIN CITY COUNCIL

A GUIDE TO BUILDING YOUR OWN HOME



DUNEDIN | kaunihera
CITY COUNCIL | a-rohe o
Ōtepoti

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This is a guide to the Government processes for building a new home. These processes are administered by the Dunedin City Council.

We recommend you also refer to the online version of this guide as it contains links with further information – www.dunedin.govt.nz/guide-to-building-your-home.

Introduction

The DCC is responsible for ensuring that homes built within the city are fit for purpose now and for future generations. Our role is to ensure that any building work complies with the New Zealand Building Code (NZBC).

Currently all building projects whether they are homes or commercial buildings, must comply with the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) and the Building Act 2004. These Acts are law and define the situations in which you need a resource consent and/or a building consent and what you need to do to get them.

We recommend you meet with the DCC planning and building teams to discuss the early stages of your plan as this can save you time and money.

Resource consent fees and building consent fees are calculated on the time it takes to process your application. The more accurate the information you provide, the less time it will take for your application to be processed.

For other than simple applications we recommend you get professional help when preparing a resource consent and/or building consent application. You are welcome to discuss this with our staff.

Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA)

The RMA is the main piece of legislation that sets out how the DCC should be managing the environment. It is based on the principle of sustainable management. This involves considering effects of activities on the environment now and in the future.

Under the RMA, regional councils prepare regional plans that focus on the management of our air, water, land and soil. District or local councils (such as the DCC) prepare district plans, which control what people can do on their land and how it can be developed. Regional and district plans include objectives, policies and rules.

Second generation Dunedin city district plan (2GP)

The 2GP includes rules outlining which activities you can undertake on your site as a permitted activity, and which require resource consent. These rules vary depending upon your location. Some activities are permitted only if you meet certain performance standards, such as the height of the building, or how far it must be set back from neighbouring boundaries.

What is a resource consent?

A resource consent is a formal approval for the use or subdivision of land where that use is not already permitted within the district plan.

Resource consent is not always required. To determine if your proposal requires resource consent, follow the diagram below, or visit www.2gp.dunedin.govt.nz. You can speak directly with the DCC planning team who can provide assistance in navigating the 2GP.

STEP 1 Check planning map to identify the zone that applies to your proposed activity. Check whether any overlay zones, mapped areas, or scheduled items apply.

STEP 2 Check nested tables and definitions to determine the activity types and categories of the various parts of your proposal.

STEP 3 Check the activity status tables in the relevant zone and/or city-wide activities sections of the 2GP to determine the activity status of your proposed activity. If the activity is not specifically listed, check the activity status of "all other activities" in the relevant category or sub-category it sits within in the nested tables.

Check whether any performance standards can be complied with, and what the activity status of this part of your proposal is if they can't.

Permitted
activity (P)

Controlled
activity (C)

Restricted
Discretionary
activity (RD)

Discretionary
activity (D)

Non-complying
activity (NC)

Prohibited
activity (Pr)

Is each aspect of your proposed activity (e.g. land use/development) a permitted activity? (Note that subdivision activity always requires a resource consent)

Resource consent is not required – proposed activity may be carried out

Resource consent is required

No resource consent application can be made for a prohibited activity. The proposal may not proceed without a request to change the District Plan (refer RMA Schedule 1).

Understanding if you need a resource consent is a complex process. The DCC recommends you get assistance from a designer or an architect who will be able to help you through a consenting process. A land surveyor should be engaged for subdivision applications.

More significant projects will require the services of a planning consultant.

Resource consent processing time

Once an application is received the DCC must assess the application to determine the significance and extent of adverse effects. The DCC will decide within 20 working days of receiving your complete application whether it will be notified. This is necessary to decide on whether other parties need to be involved and whether a submission and hearing process is needed (notification). In most cases applications will be processed on a non-notified basis if written approvals from any parties identified as affected are provided.

If written approvals are required and cannot be provided, the application will be notified only to those parties (limited notification). In a small number of cases the DCC will determine that public notification is required and a public submission and hearings process will be necessary.

If notification is not required, then you can expect the final decision within 20 working days. If we require further information within this timeframe, the 20-working day period is suspended until you provide the required information.

The DCC may need to double the processing time under special circumstances.

Publicly notified applications must be processed within 130 working days (approximately six months). There is a 15-day appeal period following the release of a notified decision. You can begin your proposal when that period has ended, provided that there are no appeals lodged against the decision.

Building Act 2004

The Building Act covers the construction, alteration, demolition and maintenance of new and existing buildings throughout New Zealand. It sets standards and procedures for people involved in building work (including licensing of building practitioners) to ensure buildings are safe and healthy.

Building: what it means and includes

Work relating to the construction, alteration, demolition or removal of a building.

In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires, the definition of building:

- (a) means a temporary or permanent movable or immovable structure (including a structure included for occupation by people, animals, machinery, or chattels).

For more information please refer to section 8 of the Building Act.

What is a building consent?

A building consent is formal approval granted by the DCC under the Building Act that allows a person to carry out building work.

If you have any questions, please check with the DCC building services team. The team is available to meet with you at the DCC in the Octagon.

Processing time

The building services team check applications to ensure all relevant information is provided and that applications comply with section 45 of the Building Act.

The DCC has 20 working days to process your application. If we require further information within this timeframe, the 20-working day period is suspended until you provide the required information.

Restricted building work

Legislation covers residential construction, alterations and design of houses and small-to-medium sized apartment buildings to ensure any structural or weathertight work on a property is carried out by competent professionals.

- This is known as restricted building work (RBW) and must be carried out by a licensed building practitioner (LBP).
- There are different licenses that cover different aspects of the project.
- RBW covers structural and weathertight work.
- In order to get building consent for RBW the design will need to be carried out or supervised by a design LBP, a chartered professional engineer or a registered architect.
- They will need to provide the owner with a certificate of work memorandum that states who did the design, identifies the restricted work, and certifies that the design complies with the Building Code. The homeowner (or LBP) must provide this to the DCC as part of the building consent application.

You should not start any building work until a building consent has been issued and other permissions, such as resource consent have been granted.

Get your ideas together

- Be clear about what you want to build and how much it might cost.
- Speak with the DCC planning team to find out about resource consent, subdivision and land use consent. Contact them on 03 477 4000.
- Speak with the DCC building services team to find out about building consent requirements. Contact them on 03 477 4000.
- If your project is complex, you might need to employ a planner, designer, architect, engineer, surveyor or other specialist. Our planning team can provide you with guidance on the specialist you would be best to contact.

Things to consider

- You might need to pay a development contribution fee.
- Find out if the site is provided with water supply and sewage disposal (wastewater) services by the DCC – if not, you will need to consider how you will service the site.
- For more information: Further discussion can take place at a pre-application consultation.
- Think about the site's drainage – what are the surface water natural flow patterns? Where are the local watercourses (creeks or open drains) and how might they be impacted by your development?

Stormwater management

You need to move stormwater safely from your building or property to an appropriate outfall – either the DCC stormwater system or to a watercourse (e.g. an open creek or open drainage channel).

If stormwater is not well managed it can cause or contribute to downstream problems such as flooding or property damage. To address these potential issues a stormwater management plan (SWMP) may be required for large multi-lot subdivisions, in areas with flood hazards, where impermeable site coverage exceeds the 2GP rules, or where stormwater run-off from the site may cause flooding of other properties.

The purpose of a SWMP is to ensure stormwater is managed in such a way that it doesn't have (or increase) adverse effects on the environment and properties downstream from the site. You may be required to reduce or detain stormwater run-off.

You also need to consider stormwater quality. It is important to ensure contaminants are not entering the stormwater system in run-off from your site. Some treatment to remove contaminants may be necessary.

Water sensitive urban design (also known as low impact design, sustainable drainage systems or green infrastructure) is an approach that is increasingly implemented as it can address both quantity and quality issues. This approach uses natural systems such as stormwater retention ponds, wetlands and rain gardens to minimise the impact on the surrounding environment by managing the rate of run-off or removing contaminants.

Watercourses

You may have a watercourse on your site. Most watercourses in Dunedin are privately owned. This means that, even though there may be other properties discharging to the watercourse (upstream from your property), you must maintain the watercourse through your land and make sure stormwater can flow through it.

Your stormwater may need to be discharged into someone else's watercourse. You are responsible for getting the easements required to do this. If you have problems getting approval, the DCC may be able to assist.

Watercourses through your property may place restrictions on where you can build or what activities you can carry out on your site. If you want to alter the watercourse in any way e.g. divert or pipe the watercourse, you will need to follow Otago Regional Council (ORC) rules.

Water supply

Most of the city receives water through the DCC network. Some areas have restricted schemes where water is delivered into a water tank provided by the customer.

While water supply will be considered during the resource consent and/or building consent process, to ensure you get the right type of connection for your water needs, you will need to make an application for water supply. Properties without access to a DCC water supply must arrange their own water, e.g. from rainwater collection or from another water source such as a bore or spring.

If your site is currently serviced for water and you are subdividing your property or adding additional houses, you can apply for a service separation. This provides each house with their own supply from the DCC main.

Wastewater management

Many sites will be able to connect to the DCC wastewater network. Approval will be given through the building consent process.

If your property is being used for more than residential activities, e.g. you have a business that creates trade waste, you will need to meet the requirements of the Trade Waste Bylaw.

Some properties (especially rural or rural residential properties) do not have access to the DCC wastewater system. These properties may be required to provide an on-site wastewater system. These systems need building consent and the discharge of effluent to the environment must meet ORC rules.

DCC pipes within your property

Sometimes there are DCC assets such as pipes and manholes within private property. Some of these assets are covered by easements registered on the title of the property. These typically provide a 3m horizontal wide zone over the asset, which means no structures can be built over or within 1.5m (either side) of it.

This 3m wide zone extends vertically without limit – even the eaves of the house cannot encroach on it. Easements also apply above the ground to ensure access and operation of the likes of a digger or crane when doing works on the pipe.

You will need to talk to the DCC 3 Waters team if you are considering any construction work over or within 2.5m of DCC assets.

Often there may be no registered easement over the DCC assets. However, legislation provides for councils to enter private land to build and maintain these assets.

Roading

Consider vehicle access to the property – DCC transport staff can advise on types of crossings and locations.

The district plan contains standards relating to the location and design of new vehicle accesses. These primarily relate to ensuring new vehicle accesses integrate safely and efficiently with the transport network.

2GP standards/rules include:

- separation of vehicle accesses from intersections/level crossings
- minimum sight distance requirements
- minimum/maximum width requirements
- number of vehicle access permitted on a site frontage
- vehicle access surfacing requirements
- vehicle access gradient requirements.

Please refer to section 6.6 of the 2GP.

If these standards aren't met, then a resource consent is required.

You will need DCC approval to change an existing vehicle access/crossing or put in a new one. This approval is separate to the building consent/resource consent process. You can submit an application for vehicle access/crossing with the building consent, or separately via the application form found on the vehicle crossing webpage.

If you're doing work that affects DCC roads or footpaths, a traffic management plan (TMP) may be needed. Alterations that are carried out in the road corridor require a corridor access request and an approved contractor needs to carry out the work.

Roading plans should show the property boundary. All private work should be within the boundary unless already discussed and approved by the DCC. Keep in mind that it's unlikely you will be able to alter the level of public roads. It's the property owner's responsibility to repair any damage to DCC roads or footpaths.

Other utility providers

Liaise with power and telecommunications providers well before work starts.

Key steps

1. Preliminary design (concept draft plan for new build)

This information is needed to help you discuss with the DCC, your neighbours and other affected people what you propose to do. You may need to refine your ideas after these discussions.

2. Apply for a project information memorandum (PIM) and land information memorandum (LIM).

A PIM is a report issued by the DCC under the Building Act to help you decide whether your proposed project is possible. A PIM is the first step in the process to gain legal approval for building work. A LIM tells you the information held by the DCC about your property.

Apply for a PIM/LIM at an early stage; before applying for a resource consent, or (if you don't need a resource consent) before applying for a building consent.

3. Confirm resource consent requirements (also known as planning consent)

Arrange a pre-application meeting. This is a risk-reducing first step to preparing your application and is a free service.

A pre-consent meeting is an informal process, where you meet DCC staff who may be involved in processing your application. We try to give you an understanding of the planning issues that may need to be addressed and some insight into solutions.

If you don't need a resource consent go to Step 7 – Final design.

4. Prepare assessment of environmental effects

All applicants for resource consent must be accompanied by an assessment of environmental effects (AEE).

5. Seek written approval from affected parties if necessary (DCC planning will be able to advise if this is necessary)

You need to get every affected party to fill out an approval and initial all documents related to your proposal.

6. Apply for resource consent

Once you have completed your AEE and obtained any written approvals you are in a good position to apply for resource consent.

7. Final design

At this stage you'll need a licensed designer to produce detailed plans and specifications for what you intend to build.

The DCC offers a free two-hour session with an eco design advisor either on-site or at the DCC. Eco design advisors offer independent expert advice on new home design and renovation including; solar design, insulation, water use, energy efficiency, heater types, and waste reduction. An appointment can be made online via www.dunedin.govt.nz/eda or by ringing the DCC on 03 477 4000.

8. Apply for building consent

Seek advice and assistance in your plan from a representative such as your builder or licensed designer. Provide certificate of title, plans, specifications and PIM.

9. Start construction

Once building consent and/or resource consent has been granted and necessary conditions are complied with, construction can start. Building consent will lapse if you don't start your work within 12 months unless you have made arrangements with the DCC.

Amendment to building consent – if you want to change your plans before or during construction you need to get approval from the DCC.

The Building Act anticipates that building work will be completed and a code compliance certificate (CCC) applied for within two years of the building consent being granted. If you are not able to apply for a CCC within this period, you can request an extension of time.

You will need a licensed building practitioner to carry out certain stages of work if you want to build your own house and you're not a licensed builder. You will have to:

- get an owner-builder exemption
- know how to meet building code requirements
- apply for consents
- inform the DCC.

10. Connect to DCC infrastructure

Make an application for a water supply connection. You will need to arrange an approved water service connection installer (AWSCI) to install the pipework from the DCC main to the service valve (toby or manifold). You apply for a quote from the AWSCI for this work and apply to the DCC for approval to connect to the reticulated water supply (or the AWSCI can apply on your behalf). You will be charged for the AWSCI installation work in addition to the DCC connection fee.

If you intend connecting to the DCC reticulated wastewater or stormwater systems, you must apply for building consent. Your plumber or drainlayer can carry out the work required to connect to these infrastructure systems.

11. Not connecting to DCC infrastructure

If you are not discharging to DCC wastewater or stormwater systems and are instead disposing to land or water, you will need to meet ORC discharge requirements.

Your disposal systems will need to be appropriate for the site and not result in environmental damage. Ongoing regular maintenance is important to ensure effective and efficient operation of the systems.

If construction will alter the normal operating conditions of a road, footpath, carriageway and berms, a traffic management plan and/or a corridor access request will be required.

12. Ensure inspections are carried out

Inspections are required to ensure that building work meets the building consent and to ensure that the DCC will have enough information to issue a CCC.

13. Building is complete

The building work is complete when all the work is finished in accordance with the building consent. Once your project is completed you must arrange for a final inspection and then apply to the DCC for a CCC. This confirms that any building work done on your property complies with the relevant building consent and the building code. The CCC will be recorded in the land information memorandum (LIM) for that property.

If the DCC requests further information, the process goes on hold until the information is received. A CCC is issued once the DCC is satisfied the completed work complies with the building consent.

14. Ensure ongoing compliance

Because any resource consent you have is likely to relate not just to the activity or construction, but the ongoing use of the land or buildings, there are likely to be conditions on your resource consent that require ongoing compliance on your part, as well as potential monitoring obligations.

Process check list

STEP 1 **Getting your ideas together**

- ☐ initial preparations
 - ☐ preliminary design
 - ☐ organise PIM
 - ☐ organise a LIM if required
 - ☐ confirm consent requirements
 - ☐ organise a pre-consent meeting
-

STEP 2 **Resource consent process**

If you don't need a resource consent continue to Step 3:

- ☐ prepare assessment of environmental effects
 - ☐ seek written approval from affected parties
 - ☐ apply for resource consent
-

STEP 3 **Building consent process**

- ☐ get advice from eco design advisor
 - ☐ final design – engage design LBP, a chartered professional engineer or a registered architect
 - ☐ apply for building consent and provide more information if necessary
 - ☐ once building consent is granted, engage a LBP or apply for an owner-builder exemption
 - ☐ start construction
 - ☐ ensure inspections are carried out
 - ☐ once building work is completed arrange for final inspection
 - ☐ apply for a code compliance certificate
-

STEP 4 **Ensure ongoing compliance**

- ☐ check the conditions on your resource consent in case it requires ongoing compliance

Questions?

If you have any questions or would like help navigating the DCC new build processes, please contact our Case Manager Housing Development on 03 477 4000.

Glossary

Building consent Consent issued by a building consent authority for building work to begin in accordance with the approved plans and specifications.

Code compliance certificate (CCC) A certificate issued by a building consent authority at the completion of building work, confirming that the building work complies with the building consent.

Land information memorandum (LIM) A report that includes information about a specific property and any issues that may affect it.

Licensed building practitioner (LBP) A building practitioner who has been assessed as competent to carry out building work essential to the structure or weathertightness of residential buildings.

Project information memorandum (PIM) A report that contains information about special features of the land and existing utility services on your property.

Resource consent A formal approval from the DCC to do something that they haven't clearly identified in their plan as either permitted or prohibited. E.g. using or subdividing land, taking water and/or discharging contaminants in water, soil or air.

Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) The main piece of legislation that sets out how the DCC should be managing the environment. It is based on the principle of sustainable management.

For advice or information

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