

A review of the New Zealand Building Code*

Peter Thorby

Department of Building and Housing, New Zealand

ABSTRACT

The Building Act 2004 took effect from 30 November 2004. Provisions in the new Act are aimed at having our buildings built right first time. It introduces provisions to review the whole process of building looking at each of the different stages - design, consenting, construction, and inspection. It also requires the Building Code to be reviewed. It is the first substantive review of the Code since it was introduced in 1991. In the intervening 15 years our needs and expectations as building users have changed dramatically. So too have building technology and building systems. We expect a lot more from buildings now and the technologies used in construction have advanced considerably. The review provides the opportunity to take a fundamental look at how we design and build, and how our built environment works for us as people and communities. It will enable technical, environmental, and societal needs to be considered together. This will involve considering a broad range of issues such as what does sustainability and energy efficiency mean in the context of buildings and houses, the impacts of our changing population on the type of buildings we need, and how to balance short-term cost with long-term benefits. There is also a need for performance standards to be set clearly so they can be easily understood and achieved. This paper presents an overview of the issues being addressed in the review of the Building Code.

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