

Advice to growers re Building Act Requirements for building repairs and replacement of RSE accommodation

Building Repairs

- Repairs to RSE accommodation can be undertaken without a building consent. Exemptions in the Act allow repairs to be undertaken without a consent where they are needed to protect human health and to prevent serious damage to property.
- Repairs must be like for like, this means:
 - If the building complied with the Building Code prior to work being done, it must continue to comply with the Code after work is completed; or
 - If the original structure did not comply with the Code, it must at least continue to comply to the extent it did prior to the work being done.
 - If the same building products are not available, a comparable product must be used
- A Licensed Building Practitioner should be used to do the work. You can check here whether your builder is licensed: [Practitioner Search | Kete \(mbie.govt.nz\)](#)
- Work should be in accordance with any relevant designs/specifications, such as fire safety work that was designed by a chartered professional engineer.
- If you want to make any modifications as part of the repair work (such as moving a wall to make a bedroom bigger to comply with the new RSE Accommodation Standards) get in touch with the Council to discuss it first, as you may require a building consent. The RSE Worker Accommodation Standards are administered by Immigration New Zealand and do not fall within the ambit of the Building Act and its associated regulations - therefore the exemptions from needing a building consent may not apply.

Building Replacement

If a building needs to be replaced in its entirety (i.e. it is written off by insurance), there are a series of steps that need to be followed, as Building Consent will probably be needed. We suggest that you start the process as soon as possible, as you will need some technical input, and you want to get onto someone's job list asap.

The steps are as follows:

1. The structural integrity of the foundations needs to be checked. A structural engineer needs to do this. If you have an existing relationship with a structural engineer, get in touch with them in the first instance, but if you don't have a relationship with a structural engineer, you could try the following locally based engineering companies:

Company	Contact details
Kotahi	(06) 600 0308 Get in Touch (kotahistudio.co.nz)
LDE	(06) 929 0720 About LDE - LDE (Engineering Consultants)
Strata Group	(06) 876 7646 CONTACT — Strata Group
Structural Concepts	(06) 8420111 Contact — Structural Concepts

2. If any of the foundations are damaged and need to be replaced, or the building you are putting on is a different shape/weight, you will need to engage a geotechnical engineer to provide technical advice about the requirements for any new foundations. Again, if you have an existing relationship with a geotechnical engineer please contact them, otherwise you could try the following geotechnical engineers who do a lot of work in Hawke's Bay:

Company	Contact details
Initia	027 245 6017 CONTACT US – INITIA
LDE	(06) 929 0720 About LDE - LDE (Engineering Consultants)
RDCL	(06) 877 1652 Home - RDCL

3. As long as they are not damaged, existing systems such as the wastewater treatment plant can be reconnected to, as long as they have been serviced since the cyclone. Any bore water supplies will need to be purged to clear them, and the water also needs to be tested (full suite of analytes), to show that a safe drinking water supply can be provided to the building. Water analysis can be undertaken by:
- Water Testing Hawke's Bay www.watertestinghb.nz (06) 870 6449
 - Hill Laboratories (Hamilton) www.hill-laboratories.com 0508 44 555 22
4. The building consent process will generally be more straight forward if you purchase a purpose-built building. If you are able to do this, make sure you advise them that the building will be used for RSE accommodation – this means that the necessary fire walls and alarm/sprinklers etc can be incorporated into the building design and build, rather than having to retrofit them once you get the building to site.

If you are using an existing building built for another purpose, consult a fire designer/engineer as soon as you can to get the building design checked, so that you understand what work will be required to comply with the Building Code. Again, if you have an existing relationship with a fire designer/engineer please contact them, otherwise you could try locally based fire designer Bryce Harkness of the Fire Collective: [Bryce Harkness HAWKES BAY - Fire Collective Limited](#)

If you have any questions, please get in touch with the following people at your relevant council:

Council	Contacts
Hastings District Council	Sam Hayes - Building Recovery Manager - 0273118089 William Nell - Building Recovery Inspector - 0272172835 There is also information available here: Building recovery Hastings District Council (hastingsdc.govt.nz)
Napier City Council	Ring the mainline on (06) 835 7579 and ask to speak to the Duty Building Officer
Central Hawke's Bay District Council	Ring (06) 857 7731 and ask to speak with a Building Consent Officer