

## Response to information request from [REDACTED]

19 September 2023

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for our email dated Sunday 20 August, in which you requested the following information about building and resources consent applications:

1. the average time for a consent to be processed and approved at your council
2. how many consents have been sitting with the council for more than 6 months since it was first submitted, with a decision yet to be made
3. what is the main cause of delays to processing consents
4. how many staff work to process consents at the council
5. how much was spent in the last FY on processing consents (total cost including staffing)
6. what work, if any, is underway to streamline the consenting process at your council

Your questions were forwarded to the Council's Planning and Building Services teams. Their responses are listed below:

### Question 1

- **Building Services:** The average time to process building consents in the last financial year was 15.4 working days.
- **Planning:** The average time to process a resource consent in the last financial year was 15 working days. This average relates to a combination of notified and non-notified resource consent applications.

### Question 2

- **Building Services:** There are four applications for building that have been sitting with the Council for more than six months.
- **Planning:** There are 10 applications submitted over six months ago that have no formal decisions. These are on hold pending further information or on hold at applicant's request. In one instance the agent for the applicant has confirmed they are pausing the process instead of providing information at this stage.

### Question 3

- **Building Services:** The main cause of process delays is that poor information has been submitted, which is generally only discovered when in-depth technical processing checks are made. In addition, applicants not responding to information requests in a timely manner stretches out the processing timeframe to either grant or refuse the consent.

- **Planning:** The main cause of delay is applicants not responding to information requests in a timely manner.

**Question 4:**

- **Building Services:** There are five technical staff who can process building consents.
- **Planning:** There is one planner at the Council who processes resource consents. The Council also contracts planning consultants from one firm to process resource consents.

**Question 5:**

- **Building Services:** We do not hold information pertaining to the cost of processing building consents. The total cost of the Council's building control department, which includes administration functions and other costs that do not directly relate to processing building consents was \$1,066,733 in 2022/23.
- **Planning:** In the same period, the cost of processing resource consent fees using our Planning contractor was \$236,237.

**IMPORTANT:** Please note that building and resource consent application processing are user pays activities of the Council. This means the majority of costs are recovered from the applicant. You can find our fees on our website - <https://www.goredc.govt.nz/council/fees-charges>

**Question 6:**

- **Building services:** We are following our quality procedures manual as an accredited Building Control Authority. Our timeframes have improved over the last year and are approaching 100% compliance within 20 working days. Further enhancement to the electronic lodgement and processing systems are in the pipeline, which may streamline the consenting experience even more.
- **Planning:** The Council is satisfied resource consent applications are being processed in a timely manner and in accordance with legislative requirements. Legislative timeframes have been met for 100% of resource consent applications over the last financial year.

If you are unsatisfied with the response, you are entitled to lodge a complaint with the Office of the Ombudsmen. You can find more information on its website <http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz>

Kind regards



Sonia Gerken  
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