

GUIDELINE

Free monthly update on building issues prepared by BRANZ Ltd and funded by the Building Research Levy



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Carpet and H1

Question – can carpet and underlay applied to a floor surface be used to satisfy the floor insulation requirements of Clause H1 of the New Zealand Building Code (NZBC)?

Answer – no. Carpet is considered a chattel and may be readily removed so it cannot be used to satisfy the mandatory insulation requirements for floors. However carpet laid over a floor surface will increase the R-value of the floor and help reduce heat loss, but it is an additional benefit.

Roof underlays – horizontal or vertical installation

Under E2/AS1 roof underlay on roofs with a slope of less than 8° **must** be laid horizontally across the slope – no debate. For steeper slopes, E2/AS1 allows the underlay to be laid vertically up the slope. Other factors to consider are the roofing manufacturers recommendations for underlay installation and for roofers and builders, their contractual obligations – e.g. ensuring that the underlay is installed as described in the specification or on the drawings.

BRANZ's recommendation is to lay the underlay horizontally if possible. The reason for this is that horizontal laying with the correct laps will shed any water that might get onto the underlay better than vertical installations where water present may track through the sheet laps.

Free information

All Building Code compliance documents, e.g. the Acceptable Solutions to the NZBC are available as free downloads from the DBH website. So there is no excuse for building practitioners not to have a current copy – www.dbh.govt.nz.

Designers and documentation

Too often recently the BRANZ Helpline is receiving calls from builders asking for design advice because the documentation they are working from does not have sufficient detail to show how the building is to be constructed. Often these detail questions relate directly to issues of Building Code compliance. This raises two questions:

- what is the designer's responsibility?
- on what basis was the project consented if there is not enough information to allow the builder to build it?

It is the designer's responsibility to provide sufficient detail to allow a building project to be consented and built.

For consent purposes, designers must provide sufficient information on the consent documentation to show that the relevant performance requirements of the Building Code have been satisfactorily addressed. The Building Consent Authority can confidently approve it on the basis that, if built as detailed, the Code requirements will be met.

The contract documentation must also fully describe for the builder all the aspects of building work for which Code compliance is not a specific issue but which forms part of the contractual obligations of the builder. It is not the role of the builder to make unilateral changes to what has been shown or specified in the drawings and specification.

It is also not BRANZ's role to answer the builder's questions on design and detailing issues – that is the role of the designer.

For designers, you must convince your client of the value of retaining your services throughout the construction process to answer and resolve design and construction queries and to ensure that the client gets what they are paying for.

For builders pricing work (where the owner has not retained the services of the designer to advise during the pricing and construction phases of the work), BRANZ suggests that a tag to your quote or tender is included identifying to the owner that:

- you are not the designer and as such are not responsible for design decisions where work has not been sufficiently detailed
- you require the owner to arrange (and pay for) for access to the designer during construction
- any delays incurred and time taken dealing with omissions by the designer will be charged as an extra cost.

Bottom plates

Under E2/AS1 a 6 mm capillary gap is required between the back of the cladding and a foundation wall. For direct-fixed claddings this is achieved by projecting bottom plates past the edge of the slab or foundation wall to create that gap.

Where a drained and vented cavity is installed behind the cladding, the cavity effectively spaces the cladding off the foundation wall. The bottom plate therefore does not need to be projected past the edge of the slab or foundation wall.

BRANZ SEMINARS 2007

Design series – Life Cycle Assessment (LCA)

In this three hour seminar you will hear about LCA and the LCA design tools being developed and used internationally. You will also apply a LCA design tool to a simple building design. Registered architects will receive 15 CPD points for attending. Presenters are Tom Davies and Nigel Howard, who are internationally recognised experts in this fields and key members of the BRANZ Sustainable Built Environment team.

Dates are:

March 26: Christchurch (Hotel Grand Chancellor),
March 27: Dunedin (The Dunedin Centre),
March 28: Auckland (Floating Pavilion, am and pm),
March 29: Hamilton (Sky City), and
March 30: Wellington (Westpac Stadium).

Register online at www.branz.co.nz

BRANZ CITE 2007

Currently available courses are listed on www.branz.co.nz click on CITE