



**BRANZ Appraised**

Appraisal No. 1311 [2026]

## HYDRA CLASSIC WALL UNDERLAY



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### BRANZ Appraisals

Technical Assessments of products for building and construction.



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## Product

- 1.1 Hydra Classic Wall Underlay is a synthetic wall underlay for use as a flexible wall underlay under wall claddings on timber and steel-framed buildings. The product consists of a micro-porous polypropylene film laminated between two layers of non-woven polypropylene and is coloured white.

## Scope

### Flexible Wall Underlay

- 2.1 Hydra Classic Wall Underlay has been appraised for use as a flexible wall underlay for buildings within the following scope:
  - the scope limitations of NZBC Acceptable Solution E2/AS1 for timber-framed buildings; or,
  - the scope limitations of NASH Building Envelope Solutions for steel-framed buildings; and,
  - with direct-fixed absorbent and non-absorbent wall claddings; or,
  - with absorbent and non-absorbent wall claddings installed over an 18 mm minimum drained cavity; or,
  - with masonry veneer in accordance with NZBC Acceptable Solution E2/AS1 for timber-framed buildings or to NASH Building Envelope Solutions for steel-framed buildings; and,
  - situated in NZS 3604 and NASH Standard Part Two Wind Zones up to, and including, Very High.

### Use over Rigid Wall Underlay

- 2.2 Hydra Classic Wall Underlay has been appraised for use as a flexible wall underlay over rigid wall underlays on buildings within the following scope:
  - the scope limitations of NZBC Acceptable Solution E2/AS1 for timber-framed buildings; or,
  - the scope limitations of NASH Building Envelope Solutions for steel-framed buildings; and,
  - with absorbent and non-absorbent wall claddings installed over an 18 mm minimum drained cavity; and,
  - with masonry veneer in accordance with NZBC Acceptable Solution E2/AS1 for timber-framed buildings or NASH Building Envelope Solutions for steel-framed buildings; and,
  - situated in NZS 3604 and NASH Standard Part Two Wind Zones up to, and including, Extra High.

### Specific Design

- 2.3 Hydra Classic Wall Underlay has also been appraised for use on buildings subject to specific weathertightness design. Building designers are responsible for the building design and for the incorporation of Hydra Classic Wall Underlay into their design, in accordance with the declared properties and the instructions of Marshall Innovations Ltd.

## Building Regulations

### New Zealand Building Code (NZBC)

3.1 In the opinion of BRANZ, Hydra Classic Wall Underlay, if designed, used, installed and maintained in accordance with the statements and conditions of this Appraisal, will meet or contribute to meeting the following provisions of the NZBC:

**Clause B2 DURABILITY:** Performance B2.3.1 (a) not less than 50 years, B2.3.1 (b) 15 years and B2.3.2. Hydra Classic Wall Underlay meets these requirements. See Paragraphs 9.1 and 9.2.

**Clause C3 FIRE AFFECTING AREAS BEYOND THE FIRE SOURCE:** Performance C3.4 (c). Hydra Classic Wall Underlay meets this requirement. See Paragraph 10.1.

**Clause E2 EXTERNAL MOISTURE:** Performance E2.3.2. When used as part of the cladding system, Hydra Classic Wall Underlay will contribute to meeting this requirement. See Paragraphs 12.1 and 12.2.

**Clause F2 HAZARDOUS BUILDING MATERIALS:** Performance F2.3.1. Hydra Classic Wall Underlay meets this requirement.

## Technical Specification

4.1 Hydra Classic Wall Underlay is a synthetic building underlay for use under wall claddings. The product consists of a micro-porous polypropylene film laminated between two layers of non-woven polypropylene. Hydra Classic Wall Underlay is coloured white.

4.2 Hydra Classic Wall Underlay is supplied in two roll sizes: 1.37 m wide by 37 m long (50 m<sup>2</sup>) and 2.74 m wide x 37 m long (100 m<sup>2</sup>). The product is printed with the Hydra Classic Wall Underlay logo repeated along the length of the roll. The rolls are wrapped in clear polythene film.

### Accessories

4.3 Accessories used with Hydra Classic Wall Underlay which are supplied by the installer are:

- **Fixings** - stainless steel staples, clouts, screws or proprietary underlay fixings, or other temporary fixings to attach the wall underlay to the framing.
- **Wall underlay restraint [timber frame]** - polypropylene strap, 75 mm galvanised mesh or galvanised wire, or vertical cavity battens where required to support the wall underlay in accordance with NZBC Acceptable Solution E2/AS1.
- **Wall underlay restraint [steel frame]** - polypropylene strap, 75 mm galvanised mesh or galvanised wire, vertical cavity battens or thermal break sheets where required to restrain the wall underlay in accordance with NASH Building Envelope Solutions.

## Handling and Storage

5.1 Handling and storage of the product, whether on-site or off-site, is under the control of the installer. The rolls must be protected from damage and weather. They must be stored on end, under cover, in clean, dry conditions and must not be crushed.

## Technical Literature

6.1 This Appraisal must be read in conjunction with:

- Hydra Classic Wall Underlay Install Guide, dated January 2026.

6.2 All aspects of design, use, installation and maintenance contained in the Technical Literature and within the scope of this Appraisal must be followed.

## Design Information

### General

- 7.1 Hydra Classic Wall Underlay is intended for use as an alternative to conventional building papers which are fixed over timber or steel-framed walls in order to limit the entry of wind into building cavities, and to act as a secondary barrier to wind-driven rain. Refer to Table 1 for material properties.
- 7.2 The material also provides a degree of temporary weather protection during early construction. However, the product will not make the building weathertight and some wetting of the underlying structure is always possible before the building is closed in. Hence, the building must be closed-in and made weatherproof before moisture sensitive materials such as wall or ceiling linings and insulation materials are installed.
- 7.3 Hydra Classic Wall Underlay must not be exposed to weather or ultraviolet (UV) light for a total of more than 60 days before being covered by the wall cladding.
- 7.4 Hydra Classic Wall Underlay is suitable for use as an air barrier where walls are not lined, such as attic spaces at gable ends, in accordance with NZBC Acceptable Solution E2/AS1 or NASH Building Envelope Solutions.
- 7.5 In cavity installations where the cavity battens are installed at greater than 450 mm centres, the wall underlay must be supported between the battens to prevent the underlay bulging into the cavity space when bulk insulation is installed in the wall frame cavity in accordance with the requirements of NZBC Acceptable Solution E2/AS1 for timber frame or NASH Building Envelope Solutions for steel frame. Wall underlay support options include polypropylene straps, 75 mm galvanised mesh or galvanised wire, or vertical cavity battens or thermal break sheathing (steel frame only).

**Table 1: NZBC Acceptable Solution E2/AS1 (NZS 2295) Requirements**

NZBC E2/AS1 (NZS 2295) Wall Underlay Properties	Property Performance Requirement	Actual Property Performance
Absorbency	≥ 100 g/m <sup>2</sup>	Pass
Vapour Resistance	≤ 7 MN s/g	Pass
Water Resistance	≥ 20 mm	Pass
pH of Extract	≥ 5.5 and ≤ 8	Pass
Shrinkage	≤ 0.5%	Pass
Mechanical	Edge tear and tensile strength	<b>Edge tear [Average]</b> Machine direction = 192 N Cross direction = 114 N <b>Tensile strength [Average]</b> Machine direction = 3.87 kN/m Cross direction = 2.27 kN/m
Air Barrier	Air resistance: ≥ 0.1 MN s/m <sup>3</sup>	Pass

### Cladding

- 7.6 Hydra Classic Wall Underlay is suitable for use under wall claddings as a wall underlay in accordance with NZBC Acceptable Solution E2/AS1 for timber-framed buildings and NASH Building Envelope Solutions for steel-framed buildings, including non-absorbent wall claddings such as vinyl and metal-based weatherboards in direct-fixed situations. Hydra Classic Wall Underlay is suitable for use under cavity-based wall claddings as an absorbent synthetic wall underlay in accordance with NZS 2295 for steel-framed buildings.



### Stucco Plaster

- 7.7 Hydra Classic Wall Underlay is suitable for use as a non-rigid backing material for stucco plaster in accordance with the requirements of NZBC Acceptable Solution E2/AS1 for timber framing or NASH Building Envelope Solutions for steel framing. The underlay must be supported by 75 mm galvanised mash or plastic tape or wire at 150 mm centres run across the cavity battens to limit deflection to a maximum of 5 mm.
- 7.8 Hydra Classic Wall Underlay may also be used as a slip layer over rigid backings for stucco plaster in accordance with the requirements of NZBC Acceptable Solution E2/AS1 for timber framing or NASH Building Envelope Solutions for steel framing.

### Structure

- 8.1 Hydra Classic Wall Underlay is suitable for use in all Wind Zones of NZS 3604 and NASH Standard Part Two up to, and including, Very High when used as a stand-alone flexible wall underlay, and all Wind Zones of NZS 3604 and NASH Standard Part Two up to, and including, Extra High when used as an overlay for rigid wall underlays.

### Durability

- 9.1 Hydra Classic Wall Underlay meets code compliance with NZBC Clause B2.3.1 [a] not less than 50 years for wall underlays used when the cladding durability requirement or expected serviceable life is not less than 50 years, e.g. behind masonry veneer, and code compliance with NZBC Clause B2.3.1 [b] 15 years for wall underlays used where the cladding durability requirement is 15 years.

### Serviceable Life

- 9.2 Provided it is not exposed to the weather or UV light for a total of more than 60 days, and provided the exterior cladding is maintained in accordance with the cladding manufacturer's instructions and the cladding remains weather-resistant, Hydra Classic Wall Underlay is expected to have a serviceable life equal to that of the cladding.

### Control of Internal Fire and Smoke Spread

- 10.1 Hydra Classic Wall Underlay has an AS 1530 Part 2 flammability index of not greater than 5, and therefore meets the requirements of NZBC Acceptable Solution C/AS2 for the surface finish requirements of suspended flexible fabric used as an underlay to exterior cladding that is exposed to view in occupied spaces.

### Prevention of Fire Occurring

- 11.1 Separation or protection must be provided to Hydra Classic Wall Underlay from heat sources such as fireplaces, heating appliances and chimneys. NZBC Acceptable Solutions C/AS1 and C/AS2 provide methods for separation and protection of combustible materials from heat sources.

### External Moisture

- 12.1 Hydra Classic Wall Underlay must be used behind claddings that meet the requirements of the NZBC, such as those covered by NZBC Acceptable Solution E2/AS1 or NASH Building Envelope Solutions, or claddings covered by a valid BRANZ Appraisal or NZ CodeMark certificate.
- 12.2 Hydra Classic Wall Underlay, when installed in accordance with the Technical Literature and this Appraisal, will assist in the total cladding systems compliance with NZBC Clause E2.

## Installation Information

### Installation Skill Level Requirement

- 13.1 All design and building work must be carried out in accordance with the Hydra Classic Wall Underlay Technical Literature and this Appraisal by competent and experienced tradespeople conversant with wall underlays. Where the work involves Restricted Building Work (RBW), this must be completed by, or under the supervision of, a Licensed Building Practitioner (LBP) with the relevant Licence Class.



## Underlay Installation

- 14.1 Hydra Classic Wall Underlay must be fixed to all framing members at maximum 300 mm centres with large-head clouts 20 mm long, 6-8 mm staples, self-drilling screws or proprietary underlay fixings. The underlay must be pulled taut over the framing or rigid wall underlay before fixing.
- 14.2 Hydra Classic Wall Underlay must be run horizontally and must extend from the upper-side of the top plate to the under-side of the bearers or wall plates supporting ground floor joists, or below bottom plates on concrete slabs. Horizontal laps must be no less than 150 mm wide, with the direction of the lap ensuring that water is shed to the outer face of the underlay. End laps must be made over framing and be no less than 150 mm wide.
- 14.3 The wall underlay should be run over openings and these left covered until windows and doors are ready to be installed. Openings are formed in the underlay by cutting on a 45° diagonal from each corner of the penetration. The flaps of the cut underlay must be folded inside the opening and stapled to the penetration framing. Excess underlay may be cut off flush with the internal face of the wall frame.
- 14.4 Hydra Classic Wall Underlay can be added as a second layer over head flashings in accordance with the requirements of NZBC Acceptable Solution E2/AS1 for timber framing or NASH Building Envelope Solutions for steel framing.
- 14.5 When fixing the product in windy conditions, care must be taken due to the large sail area created by wide roll widths.
- 14.6 Any damaged areas of Hydra Classic Wall Underlay, such as tears, holes or gaps around service penetrations, must be repaired. Damaged areas can be repaired by covering with new material lapping the damaged area by at least 150 mm and taping, or by taping small tears.

## Inspection

- 14.7 The Technical Literature must be referred to during the inspection of Hydra Classic Wall Underlay installations.

## Basis of Appraisal

The following is a summary of the technical investigations carried out:

### Tests

- 15.1 The following tests have been carried out on Hydra Classic Wall Underlay in accordance with NZBC Acceptable Solution E2/AS1: tensile strength, edge-tear resistance and resistance to water vapour transmission in accordance with AS/NZS 4200.1, shrinkage in accordance with AS/NZS 4201.3 resistance to water penetration in accordance with AS/NZS 4201.4, surface water absorbency in accordance with AS/NZS 4201.6, pH extract in accordance with AS/NZS 1301.421s and air resistance to BS 6538.3. A range of these tests were completed before and after Hydra Classic Wall Underlay was exposed to UV light.
- 15.2 The flammability index of Hydra Classic Wall Underlay has been tested in accordance with AS/NZS 1530.2.

### Other Investigations

- 16.1 An assessment of the durability of Hydra Classic Wall Underlay was made by BRANZ technical experts.
- 16.2 The practicability of installation of Hydra Classic Wall Underlay has been assessed by BRANZ and found to be satisfactory.
- 16.3 The Technical Literature, including installation instructions, has been examined by BRANZ and found to be satisfactory.



## Quality

- 17.1 The manufacture of Hydra Classic Wall Underlay has not been examined by BRANZ, but details of the methods adopted for quality control and the quality of the materials used, have been obtained and found to be satisfactory. BRANZ undertakes an ongoing review of products quality on an inwards goods basis.
- 17.2 The quality of supply to the market is the responsibility of Marshall Innovations Ltd.
- 17.3 Building designers are responsible for the design of the building, and for the incorporation of the wall underlay into their design in accordance with the instructions of Marshall Innovations Ltd.
- 17.4 Quality of installation is the responsibility of the installer in accordance with the instructions of Marshall Innovations Ltd.

## Sources of Information

- AS 1530.2:1993 Test for flammability of materials.
- AS/NZS 1301.421s:1998 Determination of the pH value of aqueous extracts of paper, board and pulp - Cold extraction method.
- AS/NZS 4200.1:1994 Pliable building membranes and underlays - Materials.
- AS/NZS 4201.3:1994 Pliable building membranes and underlays - Methods of test - Shrinkage.
- AS/NZS 4201.4:1994 Pliable building membranes and underlays - Methods of test - Resistance to water penetration.
- AS/NZS 4201.6:1994 Pliable building membranes and underlays - Methods of test - Surface water absorbency.
- BS 6538.3:1978 Method for determination of air permeance using the Garley apparatus.
- NASH Building Envelope Solutions: 2019 Light steel-framed buildings.
- NASH Standard Part Two: 2019 Light steel-framed buildings.
- NZS 2295:2006 Pliable, permeable building underlays.
- NZS 3604:2011 Timber-framed buildings.
- Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment Record of amendments - Acceptable Solutions, Verification Methods and handbooks.
- The Building Regulations 1992.



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31 March 2026

HYDRA CLASSIC  
WALL UNDERLAY



In the opinion of BRANZ, **Hydra Classic Wall Underlay** is fit for purpose and will comply with the Building Code to the extent specified in this Appraisal provided it is used, designed, installed and maintained as set out in this Appraisal.

The Appraisal is issued only to **Marshall Innovations Ltd**, and is valid until further notice, subject to the Conditions of Appraisal.

### Conditions of Appraisal

1. This Appraisal:
  - a) relates only to the product as described herein;
  - b) must be read, considered and used in full together with the Technical Literature;
  - c) does not address any Legislation, Regulations, Codes or Standards, not specifically named herein;
  - d) is copyright of BRANZ.
2. **Marshall Innovations Ltd:**
  - a) continues to have the product reviewed by BRANZ;
  - b) shall notify BRANZ of any changes in product specification or quality assurance measures prior to the product being marketed;
  - c) abides by the BRANZ Appraisals Services Terms and Conditions;
  - d) warrants that the product and the manufacturing process for the product are maintained at or above the standards, levels and quality assessed and found satisfactory by BRANZ pursuant to BRANZ's Appraisal of the product.
3. BRANZ makes no representation or warranty as to:
  - a) the nature of individual examples of, batches of, or individual installations of the product, including methods and quality of work;
  - b) the presence or absence of any patent or similar rights subsisting in the product or any other product;
  - c) any guarantee or warranty offered by **Marshall Innovations Ltd**.
4. Any reference in this Appraisal to any other publication shall be read as a reference to the version of the publication specified in this Appraisal.
5. BRANZ provides no certification, guarantee, indemnity or warranty, to **Marshall Innovations Ltd** or any third party.

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For BRANZ

**Claire Falck**

Chief Executive

Date of Issue:

31 March 2026