

A simple New Zealand contextual explanation

Why inspections are required Council inspections are progress checks at key stages of construction. They allow the Building Consent Authority (BCA) to check that work is being completed in accordance with the approved building consent, particularly before important work is covered up.

Inspection types

Inspection type	Plain-English explanation
Siting / excavation	Checks that the building is correctly positioned on the site and that excavations for the foundations are in the right location, are the required size and depth, and have suitable ground conditions before foundation work proceeds.
Foundation - in ground / concrete	Checks the footing excavations, reinforcing, dimensions, ground conditions and other consented foundation details before concrete is poured.
Foundation - timber	Checks timber piles, bearers, subfloor framing, treatment levels and structural connections before the work is covered or access becomes restricted.
Block / in-situ foundation wall	Checks reinforcing, dimensions and construction details for concrete block or poured concrete foundation walls before concrete or grout is placed.
Tanking - external below ground - new	Checks the external below-ground waterproofing or tanking system before it is covered or backfilled, particularly around basement and retaining walls.
Pre-flooring sub-floor	Checks the subfloor structure, fixings, bracing, ground clearance and other consented work while it remains visible and before flooring is installed.
Concrete slab	Checks the slab preparation before concrete is poured, including the damp-proof membrane, reinforcing, dimensions, thickenings, services and other details shown in the approved documents.
Foundation and concrete slab	A combined inspection of the foundations and floor slab where both stages are ready at the same time and before concrete is poured.
Specific design slab - new	Checks a specifically engineered slab against the approved structural design, plans and supporting engineering documentation before concrete is poured.
Sanitary drains - under slab	Checks sanitary drainage installed beneath a concrete slab while the pipework remains visible and before it is covered by fill or concrete.
Sanitary drains - under timber floor	Checks sanitary waste pipework installed beneath a suspended timber floor while it remains visible and accessible.
Drainage - including on-site disposal	Checks external foul-water and stormwater drainage and, where applicable, an on-site wastewater disposal system before trenches, pipes or disposal components are covered. Pipework may need to be under test.
Pre-wrap - framing / fixings	Checks the framing, bracing and structural fixings while they are fully visible, before building wrap begins to conceal the work.
Pre-cladding - wrap / cavity / batten / flashings	Checks the wall underlay, cavity system, battens, openings, penetrations and relevant flashing arrangements before exterior cladding conceals them.
Preline - plumbing, framing and insulation	Checks internal work that will soon be hidden behind wall and ceiling linings, including framing, fixings, plumbing and insulation as applicable. Plumbing may need to be under pressure test.
Post-line - brace elements	Checks specified wall-bracing elements after the relevant linings have been installed, including the correct lining, fastener pattern and other details needed for the wall to perform as a bracing element.
Specialist inspection	An inspection for specialised, unusual or complex work that does not fit a standard stage. It may involve a suitably competent building officer or supporting information from an engineer or other specialist.
Final inspection	The overall inspection once all consented building, plumbing and drainage work is complete. It identifies any outstanding matters before the BCA decides whether it can issue the Code Compliance Certificate.
Pre-installation / chimney cavity check	Checks the construction, dimensions and required clearances of a chimney or appliance cavity before installation makes the area difficult to inspect.

Important: The inspections required for a particular project are listed in the building consent inspection schedule. Work should be ready and remain visible at the time of inspection. The approved plans and supporting documents should be available for the inspector.

References: NPDC, Information about the building consent process (INF090, February 2026, v11); Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, Building Performance guidance on typical council inspections and BCA inspections.