

# Council backs insulation review

Far North District councillors are applauding a government decision to review new home insulation standards that they say make no sense for Northland's sub-tropical climate.

Building and Housing Minister Chris Penk has asked Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) officials to review 2023 changes made to home insulation standards. The 'H1' changes boosted insulation and glazing requirements for new homes but Mr Penk says this has added up to \$50,000 to a new build.

Kahika Moko Tepania told TVNZ's Breakfast news show on Monday 22 July that he supported the review of H1 rules. He said that Far North housing is already unaffordable with hundreds of people on waiting lists for public housing. This was not helped by new H1 rules requiring the same level of insulation for Far North homes as required for new homes at the top of the South Island. He pointed out that weather conditions in Northland are very different to other parts of the country.

"We want to ensure that any housing built up here is safe, warm and comfortable and contributes to the wellbeing of whānau living in these homes, but we don't want [standards] to be inappropriate or cost prohibitive."



Far North councillors say new 'H1' home insulation standards are needlessly increasing the cost of building a home in Northland.

Councillor Felicity Foy says homeowners have told her that as well as increasing the cost of new builds, H1 standards are making Northland homes too hot, with some using air conditioning in winter to cool their homes.

"Many have been saving up to build a home and have had to put off their plans in order to save more funds to meet this extremely high level of glazing and insulation. Northland has a subtropical climate. We are not a cold part of the country."

Kahika Tepania told the Breakfast show that Northland's population is projected to continue growing well into the 2050s. The Northland building industry needs certainty and sensible standards, he said, so "we can build, build, build and meet that demand and house our people."

A spokesperson for the minister said MBIE would formally investigate how H1 is working in the real world, which is what the minister had requested.

## Council puts best foot forward



Senior Transport Planner Keith Kent with the golden foot award.

Far North District Council has stepped up to win a Golden Foot Walking Award for its drive to improve active transport options in the Far North.

The awards, presented by Living Streets Aotearoa, recognise innovative facilities, national best practice, and ongoing commitment to walking and pedestrians.

The council's award is for its Urban Active Modes Plan (UAMP), which was developed in collaboration with consultants ViaStrada. It aims to enhance walking, biking, and scooting infrastructure across the district's main urban areas.

The idea for the UAMP was devised during the development of the Far North Trails Plan, a rural recreational walking and cycling project. Engagement with the community revealed a desire for improved walking and cycling infrastructure in urban areas.

"With our district facing rapid population growth and the impacts of climate change, our Urban Active Modes Plan supports sustainable transport options and improving public health," says Keith Kent, Senior

Transport Planner at FNDC. "It's vital for our rangatahi, kaumātua, and all residents to have safe and convenient transport options."

## Wharves set for upgrades

Three popular wharves at Whangaroa are to undergo upgrades as part of a \$1.2 million project. Work will start on Marlin Jetty, Clansman Wharf and Tōtara North Wharf, once specialist equipment arrives onsite.

At Tōtara North Wharf the existing hardwood fenders will be replaced with steel piles and fenders, new bollards will be installed, and an access ladder will be placed at the end of the wharf.

At Marlin Jetty, the existing pontoon will be demolished, and its gangway will be removed. It will be replaced with a new 10mx4m concrete pontoon with vertical fenders, an aluminium gangway and timber fender piles.

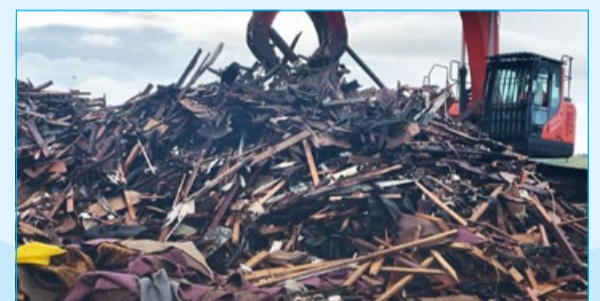


Three wharves in Whangaroa Harbour are set for upgrades.

The gangway and pontoon at the Clansman Wharf will be replaced with a one-piece concrete pontoon with fenders, aluminium gangway, and timber fender piles.

Wharves are important for the Whangaroa community, visitors, commercial fishing and aquaculture. The upgrades provide modern, safe structures for tourists as well as commercial and recreational users.

## Elements of Kaikohe live on



Demolition at the site is due to be completed in early September.

It may be the end of an era for two well-known buildings on the corner of Broadway and Raihara Street in Kaikohe, but high-value material from the site will continue to contribute to the town's economy.

Prior to preparations for Kaikohe's new library and civic hub, an assessment was undertaken of the two buildings to determine which materials could be safely and sustainably repurposed. Potentially hazardous materials, including asbestos, in both buildings limited the recycling options.

However, wherever possible, the council has instructed contractors to recycle or repurpose materials that do not present a hazard. Any concrete that can be recycled is being reused at the old quarry in Kaikohe and all usable structural steel and iron is being recycled by Eddie Court in Kaikohe.

