

Home-based Hairdresser

Janette is a qualified hairdresser who decided to convert the sleep-out at the back of her property to a one-chair salon. The sleep-out was a basic lined building on piles with no plumbing or drainage.



As a professional hairdresser, Janette knew she had to register her premises with the Council and meet health and hygiene standards so she phoned NPDC to get a copy of the requirements. Debbie, an Environmental Health Officer, told Janette about the registration requirements of the Health (Hairdressers) Regulations. She also told her and that a building consent would probably be needed for the work and that she should also check the District Plan.

Debbie also recommended that she use the Council's free case management service but Janette was confident she could manage the sleep-out conversion herself. A friend with drawing skills prepared a floor plan of the salon and Janette looked at the District Plan on the Council website. She could not see anything that referred to setting up a salon. Armed with her floor plan she went back to the Council to apply for a building consent. Things were looking good but Josh, a Customer Services Officer, saw that Janette's plan was not detailed enough to be processed and he arranged for Janette to speak with David, a Building Officer.

David agreed the plans were unacceptable and recommended that Janette get plans prepared by a professional familiar with the Building Act, the Building Code and other Council requirements. David asked whether she had taken the District Plan rules into account. Janette confirmed she had.

David asked her to get her design professional to contact him to discuss a change of use under the Building Act.

Janette employed Steve, an architectural designer, to prepare a building consent application. Steve visited Janette's place, measured up the sleep-out and confirmed where all the buildings and the driveway were. Steve went to the Council's Civic Centre and researched where the sewer and water services were. He met with David, the Building Officer, and they agreed that the salon conversion triggered a change of use under the Building Act. Because of this, the access to the sleep-out would need to be upgraded, a ramp provided and entry widened to provide disability access.

Steve also talked to Nicola, the Duty Planner, about District Plan compliance while he was at the Civic Centre. Nicola told him that the salon needed an extra car park but Steve explained there was no practical way to provide one on-site. Nicola advised they would have to seek a resource consent to have a car park on the street and gave Steve an application form. Nicola also said that three nearby properties were potentially affected by the application. She gave Steve forms for these owners to sign if they were happy with the proposed parking arrangement.

Steve drew up preliminary plans and specifications. He helped Janette put together the resource consent application and Janette went to see the affected property owners to explain her plans. They thought it would be great to have a local hairdresser and all signed off. The resource consent application was lodged with the Council.

Steve met with Debbie, the Environmental Health Officer, who confirmed his plans and specifications appeared to meet health registration requirements. Steve then got Janette to lodge her health registration application. Meanwhile Steve lodged the building consent application. The building consent went smoothly through the process.

Because it was a hair salon it was referred to Environmental Health staff who also checked that it met registration requirements. By this time the resource consent had been issued so building work could start.

Janette's builder, Gary, got all tradespeople on-site when needed and the work passed all building inspections. Finally the code compliance certificate, which confirmed everything was in order, was issued. Debbie, from Environmental Health, visited the salon and issued the certificate of registration which Janette proudly displayed just inside the door. After celebrating with a glass of bubbly, Janette declared her salon open for business.

Lessons

- > The health and hygiene provisions under the Health (Hairdressers) Regulations require sinks, hot water and other sanitisation equipment be provided. These need to be connected to the Council's water supply, drainage system and electrical supply.
- > The drainage work required a building consent. The building consent process triggered the change of use considerations of the Building Act which required an access ramp and the door to be widened to provide disability access.
- > Plans need to meet reasonable standards of information and clarity before they will be accepted for processing. Plans and specifications need to be prepared by an architectural designer or similar professional.
- > District Plan rules and environmental standards meant an additional car park was needed for the salon. Janette did not expect this and she missed the requirement as she was not familiar with the District Plan. The car park could not fit on-site as normally required so a resource consent was needed for kerbside parking. Fortunately the street was wide enough and the neighbours did not mind but this consent process added to costs.

This case study shows the importance of getting professional advice early in the project so you can assess its feasibility and its likely timeframe. Steve, the architectural designer, had the knowledge to put Janette back on track.

While the Council cannot give you everything you need to succeed, it offers a case management service that gives you a single point of Council contact for your project. The service can help coordinate between the Council's Environmental Health, Building and Planning teams to minimise the chances of nasty surprises or delays.

Licensed Cafe

Jack and Sonia are trained chefs who decided to open a licensed café. They found premises in the main street of an established commercial area in Inglewood. They thought it would be perfect for their café, where they would offer coffee and cake by day with casual and street dining in the evening.



Their premises had character, with brick walls and Oregon pine roof timbers. It had been vacant for some time after it was last used as a mechanical workshop. Before Jack and Sonia committed to signing a lease agreement or start their fit-out, they contacted the Council but declined the option to use the Council's free case management service.

Jack and Sonia engaged Sam, an experienced architect, to prepare plans. Sam had worked on several successful restaurant and café projects in converted industrial buildings. After Jack and Sonia briefed him, Sam took his sketch plans to the Council to check things out with the Building and Planning teams.

James, a Building Officer, was Sam's main contact on the construction side. James spotted that the change from a mechanical workshop to a restaurant triggered the change of use provision of the Building Act. Sam knew that a change of use would probably require access for the disabled and improvements to fire escape routes and looking at earthquake risk. Both of them agreed that a structural engineer would need to check out the old brick-walled building.

Sam then headed to the Council's Planning Team. As he thought, the lack of on-site parking meant the café would need a resource consent. At least the workshop

already had good access and a few car parks. Hoani, the Planner, thought that an application to use kerbside parking would not be unreasonable, given the café would be busiest in the evening when most of its neighbours were closed.

Although Jack and Sonia were experienced with food premises registration and understood the liquor licensing requirements, they thought it best to meet with the Council's health and liquor licensing people to make sure they were on track. Eva, the Liquor Licensing Inspector, saw they planned to put dining tables and chairs on the footpath so she referred them onto Bryce in the Property Team to discuss applying for an encroachment licence. Bryce filled them in about all the requirements and Jack and Sonia left armed with all the necessary information and application forms.

Sam met Jack and Sonia to discuss progress. The engineering issue could be pretty expensive to solve, but they agreed to engage a local structural engineer who Sam had worked with previously. The engineer came up with a design for a steel supporting structure to strengthen the weak points in the building and Sam was confident that he could incorporate this structure into his design.

Jack prepared and lodged the resource consent application. Sam prepared the plans that could be used to apply for the

building consent application, food premises registration and liquor licence application.

The building consent application was lodged quickly as they needed to get building work started. The consent took 20 working days to process and their resource consent was issued shortly after this, meaning work could start.

The health, liquor and encroachment licence application processes were also under way. The aim was to have everything approved and ready for issue when the building work finished.

Everything was going to schedule until the supplier of the stainless steel sinks had a fire at his warehouse. He could not deliver on time and Jack and Sonia found that while almost all the work was done they could not open. Both their food premises registration certificate and liquor licence could not be granted until a code compliance certificate proving all the building work was finished could be issued. They scrambled and found an alternative sink supplier, finally opening two weeks later than intended. The earthquake strengthening work had also put them \$13,000 over budget.

Lessons

- > A café prepares and serves food so it needs food preparation registration under the Food Hygiene Regulations. Food preparation and storage areas must meet registration standards. A code compliance certificate for all building work must be issued before the registration certificate can be completed. Because all building work was not completed, the opening date of the café was also delayed. A liquor licence is needed so that on-site consumption of liquor under the Sale of Liquor Act 1989 is allowed. A certificate of compliance for the building work involved must be issued before the liquor licence can be granted.
- > Getting building consent under the Building Act triggered change of use considerations. The change from a mechanical workshop to a café made provision of access and facilities for the disabled, escape from fire and seismic strengthening essential. All this work was expensive and Jack and Sonia had not factored it in during their planning. A resource consent was needed to solve car parking issues.
- > Because Jack and Sonia wanted to have dining tables and chairs on a public footpath they needed an encroachment licence. The licence was only issued after specific controls about the use of the footpath were specified and an annual lease charge was agreed to.

This case study shows how complex projects can become and why it makes sense to take advantage of the Council's case management service. This provides a single point of contact for your project. The service can help coordinate between the Council's Environmental Health, Building and Planning teams to minimise the chances of nasty surprises or delays.