

## Before the Building Practitioners Board

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|---------------------------------|---|
|                                 | BPB Complaint No. 26979                                     |
| Licensed Building Practitioner: | Wei Gao (the Respondent)                                    |
| Licence Number:                 | BP 121439   |
| Licence(s) Held:                | Bricklaying and Blocklaying – Veneer and Structural Masonry |

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### Decision of the Board in Respect of the Conduct of a Licensed Building Practitioner Under section 315 of the Building Act 2004

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| Complaint or Board Inquiry: | Board Inquiry |
| Hearing Type:               | On the Papers |
| Draft Decision Date:        | 16 March 2026 |
| Final Decision Date:        | 6 May 2026    |

#### Board Members Present:

Mr M Orange, Chair, Barrister (Presiding)  
Mr G Pearson, Barrister and Solicitor – Legal Member  
Mr G Anderson, LBP, Carpentry and Site AoP 2  
Ms S Chetwin CNZM, Barrister and Solicitor, Professional Director

#### Procedure:

The matter was considered by the Building Practitioners Board (the Board) under the provisions of Part 4 of the Building Act 2004 (the Act), the Building Practitioners (Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures) Regulations 2008 (the Complaints Regulations) and the Board's Complaints and Inquiry Procedures.

#### Draft Disciplinary Finding:

The Respondent **has** committed a disciplinary offence under section 317(1)(da)(ii) of the Act.

The Respondent is fined \$1,500 and ordered to pay costs of \$700. A record of the disciplinary offending will be recorded on the Public Register for a period of three years.

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## Summary of the Board’s Decision

[1] The Respondent failed to provide a record of work on completion of restricted building work. He is fined \$1,500 and ordered to pay costs of \$700. The disciplinary finding will be recorded on the Public Register for a period of three years.

## The Charges

- [2] The prescribed investigation and hearing procedure is inquisitorial, not adversarial. The Board sets the charges and decides what evidence is required.<sup>1</sup>
- [3] In this matter, the disciplinary charge the Board resolved to further investigate<sup>2</sup> were that the Respondent may, in relation to building work at [OMITTED] have failed, without good reason, in respect of a building consent that relates to restricted building work that he or she is to carry out or supervise, or has carried out or supervised, (as the case may be), to provide the persons specified in section 88(2)

<sup>1</sup> Under section 322 of the Act, the Board has relaxed rules of evidence which allow it to receive evidence that may not be admissible in a court of law. The evidentiary standard is the balance of probabilities, *Z v Dental Complaints Assessment Committee* [2009] 1 NZLR 1.

<sup>2</sup> The resolution was made following the Board’s consideration of a report prepared by the Registrar in accordance with regulation 10 of the Complaints Regulations.

with a record of work, on completion of the restricted building work, in accordance with section 88(1) of the Act contrary to section 317(1)(da)(ii) of the Act.

### **Draft Decision Process**

- [4] The Board's jurisdiction is that of an inquiry. Ordinarily, the Board makes a decision after holding a hearing.<sup>3</sup> The Board may, however, depart from its normal procedures if it considers that doing so would achieve the purposes of the Act, and it is not contrary to the interests of natural justice.<sup>4</sup>
- [5] In this instance, the Board decided that a formal hearing was not necessary. The Board considered that there was sufficient evidence before it to allow it to make a decision on the papers. It noted, however, that there may have been further evidence in relation to the matter that the Board was not aware of. To that end, it issued a Draft Decision. The Respondent was provided with an opportunity to comment on the draft findings and to present further evidence prior to the Board making a final decision. The Board further noted that if the Respondent requested an in-person hearing, then the Draft Decision would be set aside, and a hearing would be scheduled.

### **Evidence**

- [6] The Board must be satisfied on the balance of probabilities that the alleged disciplinary offences have been committed<sup>5</sup>. Under section 322 of the Act, the Board has relaxed rules of evidence, which allow it to receive evidence that may not be admissible in a court of law.

### **Failure to Provide a Record of Work**

- [7] A licensed building practitioner must provide a record of work for any restricted building work that they have carried out or supervised to the owner and the Territorial Authority (TA) on completion of their restricted building work.<sup>6</sup>
- [8] There is a statutory requirement under section 88(1) of the Building Act 2004 for a licensed building practitioner to provide a record of work to the owner and the TA on completion of restricted building work<sup>7</sup> unless there is a good reason for it not to be provided.<sup>8</sup>

### **Did the Respondent carry out or supervise restricted building work**

- [9] The Respondent was engaged to carry out and/or supervise building work on a new residential dwelling under a building consent. His work included work on the

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<sup>3</sup> Regulation 10 of the Complaints Regulations.

<sup>4</sup> Under Clause 27 of Schedule 3 the Board may regulate its own procedure and it has summary jurisdiction, which allows for a degree of flexibility in how it deals with matters: *Castles v Standards Committee No.* [2013] NZHC 2289, *Orlov v National Standards Committee 1* [2013] NZHC 1955

<sup>5</sup> *Z v Dental Complaints Assessment Committee* [2009] 1 NZLR 1

<sup>6</sup> Section 88(1) of the Act.

<sup>7</sup> Restricted Building Work is defined by the Building (Definition of Restricted Building Work) Order 2011

<sup>8</sup> Section 317(1)(da)(ii) of the Act

foundations of two new duplexes, which is restricted building work because they form part of the primary structure of a residential dwelling.<sup>9</sup>

Was the restricted building work complete

[10] The Respondent's building work took place in March 2024. He had no further involvement in the building work. As such, March 2024 was the completion date.

Has the Respondent provided a record of work

[11] The Respondent did not provide a record of work on completion or soon thereafter to the owner or the TA. He claimed he did provide one to the main contractor on 17 March 2024. He provided a copy of that record of work.

Was there a good reason

[12] As noted, the Respondent provided a record of work to the main contractor on completion. Providing it to the main contractor does not meet the requirements of section 88(1) of the Act and whilst it may be common practice in some quarters of the building industry for records of work to be provided to main contractors, it is a practice that carries with it the risk that the record of work will not be passed on to the required recipients, the owner and the TA, as has happened in this instance. If the main contractor does not pass a record of work on to the final recipients, it is the author of the record of work that will be held accountable by the Board, not the person or entity that they entrusted to fulfil their statutory obligation. It is also to be noted that, whilst a Respondent may not immediately know who the owner is, there are ways of ascertaining such details<sup>10</sup> and that there should be no impediments to a record of work being provided to a TA. For those reasons, the provision of the record of work to the main contractor is not a good reason, but it will be taken into account as a mitigating factor.

**Further Evidence and Submissions Received**

[13] Following the Board's issuance of a Draft Decision, the Board received a submission from the Respondent. The Respondent did not seek a hearing.

[14] The Respondent stated that he had provided his work record to the main contractor in a timely manner and that he believed he was only providing his services to the main contractor. He also stated that he relied on the main contractor to pass his record of work on to the owner and the TA. His view was that the circumstances regarding the record of work not being passed on were out of his control. He asked for leniency.

Consideration of further evidence and submissions

[15] The Respondent's submission that he thought he only had an obligation to provide his record of work to the main contract shows an ignorance of what his obligations

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<sup>9</sup> Clause 5 of the Building (Definition of Restricted Building Work) Order 2011

<sup>10</sup> Ownership details of land are available on public registers.

as an LBP are. There have been multiple compulsory LBP learning articles that have clearly stated what an LBP must do regarding records of work, and as a licensed person, the Respondent should know what they are.

- [16] The Board also notes that the submission regarding the provision of a record of work to the main contractor was made when the Respondent first responded to the complaint, and the Draft Decision set out why that was not a good reason.
- [17] Finally, as set out in the Draft Decision, the Board has taken into account the late provision of a record of work following a complaint as a mitigating factor, but as this is the second time that the Respondent has offended, further leniency is not warranted.

### **Board's Decision**

- [18] The Respondent **has** failed to provide a record of work on completion of restricted building work.

### **Penalty, Costs and Publication**

- [19] Having found that one or more of the grounds in section 317 applies, the Board must, under section 318 of the Act,<sup>i</sup> consider the appropriate disciplinary penalty, whether the Respondent should be ordered to pay any costs and whether the decision should be published.
- [20] The matter was dealt with on the papers. The Board made an indicative order in its Draft Decision. It has since received submissions and made a final decision on its penalties, costs, and publication orders.

### Penalty

- [21] The Board has the discretion to impose a range of penalties.<sup>ii</sup> Exercising that discretion and determining the appropriate penalty requires that the Board balance various factors, including the seriousness of the conduct and any mitigating or aggravating factors present.<sup>11</sup> It is not a formulaic exercise, but there are established underlying principles that the Board should take into consideration. They include:<sup>12</sup>
- (a) protection of the public and consideration of the purposes of the Act;<sup>13</sup>
  - (b) deterring the Respondent and other Licensed Building Practitioners from similar offending;<sup>14</sup>
  - (c) setting and enforcing a high standard of conduct for the industry;<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> *Ellis v Auckland Standards Committee* 5 [2019] NZHC 1384 at [21]; cited with approval in *National Standards Committee (No1) of the New Zealand Law Society v Gardiner-Hopkins* [2022] NZHC 1709 at [48]

<sup>12</sup> Cited with approval in *Robinson v Complaints Assessment Committee of Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand* [2022] NZCA 350 at [28] and [29]

<sup>13</sup> Section 3 Building Act

<sup>14</sup> *Roberts v A Professional Conduct Committee of the Nursing Council of New Zealand* [2012] NZHC 3354

<sup>15</sup> *Dentice v Valuers Registration Board* [1992] 1 NZLR 720 (HC) at 724

- (d) penalising wrongdoing;<sup>16</sup> and
- (e) rehabilitation (where appropriate).<sup>17</sup>

- [22] Overall, the Board should assess the conduct against the range of penalty options available in section 318 of the Act, reserving the maximum penalty for the worst cases<sup>18</sup> and applying the least restrictive penalty available for the particular offending.<sup>19</sup> In all, the Board should be looking to impose a fair, reasonable, and proportionate penalty<sup>20</sup> that is consistent with other penalties imposed by the Board for comparable offending.<sup>21</sup>
- [23] In general, when determining the appropriate penalty, the Board adopts a starting point based on the principles outlined above prior to considering any aggravating and/or mitigating factors present.<sup>22</sup>
- [24] Record of work matters are at the lower end of the disciplinary scale. The Board's normal starting point for a failure to provide a record of work is a fine of \$1,500, an amount which it considers will deter others from such behaviour.
- [25] The Respondent was disciplined in 2016 for a failure to provide a record of work and was fined \$1,000. This is a second offence. The Board considers the previous offending to be an aggravating factor that warrants an uplift of the fine to \$2,000.
- [26] The Respondent has provided a record of work as a result of the Board's investigations. The late provision has been taken into account as a mitigating factor, and the fine has been reduced by \$500. The fine is set at \$1,500.

### Costs

- [27] Under section 318(4) of the Act, the Board may require the Respondent to pay the costs and expenses of, and incidental to, the inquiry by the Board. The rationale is that other Licensed Building Practitioners should not be left to carry the financial burden of an investigation and hearing.<sup>23</sup>
- [28] The courts have indicated that 50% of the total reasonable costs should be taken as a starting point in disciplinary proceedings.<sup>24</sup> The starting point can then be adjusted up or down, depending on the particular circumstances of each case.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> *Patel v Complaints Assessment Committee* HC Auckland CIV-2007-404-1818, 13 August 2007 at p 27

<sup>17</sup> *Roberts v A Professional Conduct Committee of the Nursing Council of New Zealand* [2012] NZHC 3354; *Shousha v A Professional Conduct Committee* [2022] NZHC 1457

<sup>18</sup> *Roberts v A Professional Conduct Committee of the Nursing Council of New Zealand* [2012] NZHC 3354

<sup>19</sup> *Patel v Complaints Assessment Committee* HC Auckland CIV-2007-404-1818

<sup>20</sup> *Roberts v A Professional Conduct Committee of the Nursing Council of New Zealand* [2012] NZHC 3354

<sup>21</sup> *Roberts v A Professional Conduct Committee of the Nursing Council of New Zealand* [2012] NZHC 3354

<sup>22</sup> In *Lochhead v Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment* 3 November [2016] NZDC 21288 the District Court recommended that the Board adopt the approach set out in the Sentencing Act 2002.

<sup>23</sup> *Collie v Nursing Council of New Zealand* [2001] NZAR 74

<sup>24</sup> *Kenneth Michael Daniels v Complaints Committee 2 of the Wellington District Law Society* CIV-2011-485-000227 8 August 2011

<sup>25</sup> *Cooray v The Preliminary Proceedings Committee* HC, Wellington, AP23/94, 14 September 1995, *Macdonald v Professional Conduct Committee*, HC, Auckland, CIV 2009-404-1516, 10 July 2009, *Owen v Wynyard* HC, Auckland, CIV-2009-404-005245, 25 February 2010.

- [29] The Board has adopted an approach to costs that uses a scale based on 50% of the average costs of different categories of hearings: simple, moderate and complex. The current matter was simple. Adjustments are then made.
- [30] Based on the above, the Board's costs order is that the Respondent is to pay the sum of \$700 toward the costs of and incidental to the Board's inquiry. This is the Board's scale amount for a simple matter that has been dealt with by way of a Draft Decision. It is significantly less than 50% of the actual costs.

#### Publication

- [31] As a consequence of its decision, the Respondent's name and the disciplinary outcomes will be recorded in the public Register maintained as part of the Licensed Building Practitioners' scheme as is required by the Act,<sup>26</sup> and he will be named in this decision, which will be available on the Board's website. The Board is also able, under section 318(5) of the Act, to order further publication.
- [32] Within New Zealand, there is a principle of open justice and open reporting, which is enshrined in the Bill of Rights Act 1990.<sup>27</sup> Further, as a general principle, publication may be required where the Board perceives a need for the public and/or the profession to know of the findings of a disciplinary hearing, and the courts have stated that an adverse finding in a disciplinary case usually requires that the name of the practitioner be published.<sup>28</sup>
- [33] Based on the above, the Board will not order any publication over and above the record on the Register, the Respondent being named in this decision, and the publication of the decision on the Board's website. The Respondent should note, however, that as the Board has not made any form of suppression order, other entities, such as the media or the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, may publish under the principles of open justice reporting.

#### **Section 318 Order**

- [34] For the reasons set out above, the Board directs that:
- Penalty:** Pursuant to section 318(1)(f) of the Building Act 2004, the Respondent is ordered to pay a fine of \$1,500.
- Costs:** Pursuant to section 318(4) of the Act, the Respondent is ordered to pay costs of \$700 (GST included) towards the costs of, and incidental to, the inquiry of the Board.
- Publication:** The Registrar shall record the Board's action in the Register of Licensed Building Practitioners in accordance with section 301(1)(l)(iii) of the Act.

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<sup>26</sup> Refer sections 298, 299 and 301 of the Act

<sup>27</sup> Section 14 of the Act

<sup>28</sup> *Kewene v Professional Conduct Committee of the Dental Council* [2013] NZAR 1055

**In terms of section 318(5) of the Act, the Respondent will be named in this decision, which will be published on the Board's website.**

- [35] The Respondent should note that the Board may, under section 319 of the Act, suspend or cancel a licensed building practitioner's licence if fines or costs imposed as a result of disciplinary action are not paid.

**Right of Appeal**

- [36] The right to appeal Board decisions is provided for in section 330(2) of the Act<sup>iii</sup>.

Signed and dated this 18<sup>th</sup> day of May 2026.



**Mr M Orange**  
Presiding Member

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<sup>i</sup> **Section 318 of the Act**

- (1) *In any case to which section 317 applies, the Board may*
- (a) *do both of the following things:*
    - (i) *cancel the person's licensing, and direct the Registrar to remove the person's name from the register; and*
    - (ii) *order that the person may not apply to be relicensed before the expiry of a specified period:*
  - (b) *suspend the person's licensing for a period of no more than 12 months or until the person meets specified conditions relating to the licensing (but, in any case, not for a period of more than 12 months) and direct the Registrar to record the suspension in the register:*
  - (c) *restrict the type of building work or building inspection work that the person may carry out or supervise under the person's licensing class or classes and direct the Registrar to record the restriction in the register:*
  - (d) *order that the person be censured:*
  - (e) *order that the person undertake training specified in the order:*
  - (f) *order that the person pay a fine not exceeding \$10,000.*
- (2) *The Board may take only one type of action in subsection 1(a) to (d) in relation to a case, except that it may impose a fine under subsection (1)(f) in addition to taking the action under subsection (1)(b) or (d).*
- (3) *No fine may be imposed under subsection (1)(f) in relation to an act or omission that constitutes an offence for which the person has been convicted by a court.*
- (4) *In any case to which section 317 applies, the Board may order that the person must pay the costs and expenses of, and incidental to, the inquiry by the Board.*
- (5) *In addition to requiring the Registrar to notify in the register an action taken by the Board under this section, the Board may publicly notify the action in any other way it thinks fit."*

<sup>ii</sup> **Section 318 Disciplinary Penalties**

- (1) *In any case to which section 317 applies, the Board may—*
- (a) *do both of the following things:*
    - (i) *cancel the person's licensing and direct the Registrar to remove the person's name from the register; and*

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- (ii) *order that the person may not apply to be relicensed before the expiry of a specified period:*
  - (b) *suspend the person's licensing for a period of no more than 12 months or until the person meets specified conditions relating to the licensing (but, in any case, not for a period of more than 12 months) and direct the Registrar to record the suspension in the register:*
  - (c) *restrict the type of building work or building inspection work that the person may carry out or supervise under the person's licensing class or classes and direct the Registrar to record the restriction in the register:*
  - (d) *order that the person be censured:*
  - (e) *order that the person undertake training specified in the order:*
  - (f) *order that the person pay a fine not exceeding \$10,000.*
  - (2) *The Board may take only 1 type of action in subsection (1)(a) to (d) in relation to a case, except that it may impose a fine under subsection (1)(f) in addition to taking the action under subsection (1)(b) or (d).*
  - (3) *No fine may be imposed under subsection (1)(f) in relation to an act or omission that constitutes an offence for which the person has been convicted by a court.*
  - (4) *In any case to which section 317 applies, the Board may order that the person must pay the costs and expenses of, and incidental to, the inquiry by the Board.*
  - (5) *In addition to requiring the Registrar to notify in the register an action taken by the Board under this section, the Board may publicly notify the action in any other way it thinks fit.*

**iii Section 330 Right of appeal**

- (2) *A person may appeal to a District Court against any decision of the Board—*
  - (b) *to take any action referred to in section 318.*

**Section 331 Time in which appeal must be brought**

*An appeal must be lodged—*

- (a) *within 20 working days after notice of the decision or action is communicated to the appellant;*  
*or*
- (b) *within any further time that the appeal authority allows on application made before or after the period expires.*