



JADE KEMP

BAS | MNZIBS
Licensed Building Practitioner-
Design IP402

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Registered Building Surveyor

- Core building surveying work:
- Architectural design
- Remediation design
- Construction Monitoring
- Defect Investigation and Reporting
- Timber Decay Assessment
- Weathertightness Investigations

Building surveying more than just fixing leaky buildings

“You’re a Building Surveyor? That’s cool... and what is that, exactly?”

I get asked this a lot and it is never a simple answer, and it kind of depends what you’re working on at the time – building surveying is a lot of things. For me, having the dual profession of building surveying and architectural design means I look at every building holistically; from how it was constructed, how it currently performs, and how it’s likely to perform in the future. It’s more than just fixing leaky buildings; it’s also about how people use a space, and what future-proofing the client could gain from the project. ▶



After completing a Bachelor of Architectural Studies at the end of 2012, I worked for a small North Canterbury design firm designing mainly new build houses and a few renovations. The business owner was himself a Registered Building Surveyor and, eventually, he encouraged me to help out with a few weathertightness remediation projects he was overseeing. After a few years of this mixture of design work and becoming a Licensed Building Practitioner (design LBP), I began my journey through the NZIBS completing the core modules, gaining a Diploma in Building Surveying and, later in 2018, the title of Registered Building Surveyor. Since then, I have gained experience in other building consultancy firms working on a variety of projects across the building surveying and design disciplines; from building defect reports, weathertightness surveying, weathertightness design, weathertightness remediation design review, fire and chemical remediation design, quality site monitoring control, asbestos management surveys – to name a few.

The majority of the building surveying I undertake generally has some aspect of design to it, and I still design a lot of new residential buildings, keeping the principles I have learnt over the years in the front of my mind. There are many advantages of having a building surveying background while assisting with design projects, the biggest one being I am able to see the construction process first-hand. Over the past few years of regularly being on a building site to undertake inspections or meet with builders and clients, I've learnt what works on a design project and what doesn't. For example, when a remedial design is documented using the original construction plans as a base, quite often you find that, once the cladding has been stripped off the building, the original plans were not followed and consequently the remedial design needs to change. During construction works, I am able to accompany the project manager on site and discuss details and flashings that may require a



new solution. I have found that this makes the construction process more streamlined, as typically communication between designers and builders can be somewhat disjointed.

In the future I would love to look more towards sustainable and green building design. To get the ball rolling, I have recently become a Homestar Assessor with the New Zealand Green Building Council. I often listen in on their lunchtime online information sessions to keep up to date with the fast-moving advancements in building construction sustainability, the benefits to the building users and the ways of reducing the impact on the environment for a better future.

I would like to see our wider industry being more involved in the collaborative design process, meaning that all professions get involved at the beginning of a project so we all have a combined end goal, which I believe would benefit everyone – especially the client. Every project is unique with its own special considerations to be made, but however big or small the project is each one has a preliminary design phase. For small projects, this may just be a short/simple phase, perhaps only hand-scribbled notes, or this may be as part of a larger feasibility study for large scale projects. Either way, this is the time for your team to start talking – before any key decisions are made. ■