



## Canterbury Earthquakes Royal Commission Te Komihana Rūwhenua a te Karauna

10 October 2011

Benson Cheng Holding Ltd  
14 Dalefield Drive  
Cashmere  
CHRISTCHURCH 8022

robincheng@paradise.net.nz

Dear Sir

### **605 Colombo Street, Christchurch**

The Royal Commission of Inquiry into building failure caused by the Canterbury earthquakes is currently examining the failure of a number of buildings in the Christchurch CBD, including the building that was situated at 605 Colombo Street (the Building).

The Commission has obtained documents from the Christchurch City Council property file for the building. I note that Benson Chen Holding Ltd is the owner of the Building.

The Commission has also obtained a file from Mainland Claims Management Ltd containing a number of emails and documents in relation to the Building.

Would you please provide the following information, by **21 October 2011**:

1. How long have you owned the Building?
2. Prior to the 4 September 2010 earthquake did you have any structural strengthening work carried out on the Building? If so, please provide details.
3. Following the 4 September 2010 earthquake did you obtain any engineering or builders reports on the Building (please note that we have been provided with copies of various engineer reports obtained by Mainland Claims Management Ltd from Buchanan & Fletcher Ltd and a quotation from Bushnell Builders Ltd). If so, please provide copies of those documents.
4. Did you visit the Building in the period between the 4 September 2010 earthquake and the aftershock on 26 December 2010? If so, please advise whether or not there were any cordon/barricades in front of the Building on Colombo Street. If there were, please describe what you observed.

5. Following the Boxing Day earthquake the building was red placarded and a Building Act notice served on 28 December 2010.
  - (a) Did you carry out or commence any of the work required under that notice? If so, please provide details. If not please explain why not.
6. Did you visit the building between 26 December 2010 and 22 February 2011? If so, were there cordons/barricades positioned in front of the Building on Colombo Street? If so, please describe what you observed.
7. A note from the Council file records that you telephoned the Council on 7 January 2011 asking them to inspect the Building as you were concerned with a gap in the wall.
  - (a) Did you receive any follow up to this call? If so, please provide details.
8. Were you made aware by the Council whether or not there had been a further inspection? If so, please provide details.
9. The Council file shows that there was a telephone conversation and email correspondence between you and a Laura Bornner of the Council on 17 January 2011 in relation to the issue making the Building safe.

There is also a record that on 21 January 2011 you spoke to someone from the Council and advised that you had engaged engineers and were waiting for a report and that the insurance assessor was also looking into this.

  - (a) Did you have any further contact with the Council in relation to this issue or the issue of demolition of the building? If so, please provide details.
  - (b) In your call on 21 January 2011 you referred to having engaged engineers. Please advise the nature of your instruction to those engineers and what was carried out on your instructions. Please forward a copy of any report received by you.
10. As at 22 February 2011 what was the position in relation to any make-safe work or demolition process from your point of view? Please provide details.

The above information is requested pursuant to the Royal Commission's powers of investigation under s 4C Commissions of Inquiry Act 1908.

Yours faithfully



Mark Zarifeh  
Counsel Assisting  
Canterbury Earthquakes Royal Commission