



EP EQP
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31 October 2011

Sara Jamieson
Canterbury Earthquakes Royal Commission

Dear Sara

RE: YOUR LETTER DATED 27 OCTOBER 2011 REQUESTING INFORMATION TO ASSIST THE COMMISSION

In response to your letter we have provided the following information:

Tasman District Council was in the process of reviewing its Earthquake Prone Buildings Policy at the time of the 22nd February earthquake in Christchurch. The review should have been completed by May 2011 in order to comply with the Building Act requirements.

In view of the fact that a Royal Commission was being set up to examine the Canterbury earthquakes a letter was sent to the Department of Building and Housing requesting guidance on delaying the review. This was intended to allow inclusion into the new proposed Policy any pertinent information from the Royal Commission report. The DBH simply responded that we should carry out a review in accordance with the Act.

As there seemed to be little point in reviewing a Policy which was very likely to be changed by the Commission's findings, Council decided to delay the full review until after the Royal commission report in April 2012. The existing policy also remains in force as indicated in s132(5) of the Building Act so the delay was not deemed critical.

The main points of the existing Policy are:

1. The policy does not apply to all buildings. It is limited to buildings that are likely to be damaged in an earthquake that is one-third of the intensity for which modern buildings are designed.
2. Buildings are categorised for action dependent on their importance level as defined in NZS 1170:2004. Level 4 Buildings must have any strengthening work completed

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within 15 years, Level 3 - 20 years, Heritage Buildings (less residential buildings with 3 or more households and two or more storeys) 25 years and Buildings classed less than Level 3 - 30 years.

3. Council requires buildings identified as being earthquake prone to be strengthened to 67% of the New Building Standard.
4. Heritage buildings will be assessed in the same way as other buildings but consideration will be given to protect intrinsic heritage values.

The main points identified so far in the review in our existing Policy which need attention were issues unrelated to the Canterbury earthquakes. They related primarily to putting into the Policy a timetable of actions requiring building owners to show that they were working towards identifying potential earthquake prone issues and dealing with any identified problems. The current Policy identifies a time for strengthening work to be completed of between 15 & 30 years dependent on the Importance level of the building and it is felt that some form of progressive measurement of this requirement is required e.g. Initial Evaluation Procedure (IEP) to be completed within 3 years of notification, engineering specifications indicating strengthening to the required level to be produced within 5 years etc.

The potential to indicate on a Building Warrant of Fitness the earthquake proneness of a public building by including the % of the New Building Standard was also a suggestion.

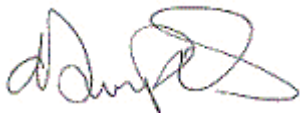
In relation to the Canterbury earthquakes we have carried out a desktop appraisal to assess liquefaction potential in the District, this was done independently of the Policy review. Although there is limited information available the preliminary assessment of the liquefaction potential within the District concluded that the liquefaction hazard is relatively modest, particularly compared to the Canterbury experience. This is largely due to the gravely nature of the recent geological deposits. Nevertheless, there is the potential for pockets of liquefiable soils to be present in places, however, specific locations are unknown. It is unlikely that liquefaction will be widespread across the developed areas of the District. In areas where liquefaction is considered more likely, building development will be addressed on a case by case basis relative to the scale and purpose of the buildings involved. This approach will be reviewed as the anticipated increase in understanding of the liquefaction hazard resulting from the Canterbury experience comes to hand.

The Policy review must be carried out in accordance with the special consultative procedure under s83 of the Local Government Act 2002. In short this would require us to have general consultation on the proposed Policy so all of the groups mentioned in your letter would be consulted.

Since the Canterbury earthquakes we have had a number of approaches from insurers asking what information we hold in relation to earthquake prone buildings.

Should you need additional information please contact the undersigned.

Yours sincerely



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