

## 603 Colombo Street

Hearing: Wednesday 1 February 2012 and Thursday 2 February 2012, 9.30am

### Summary

603 Colombo St was a two-storied row unreinforced masonry (URM) building situated at the end of the row on the north-west corner of Colombo and Mollett Sts.

It was classified as a heritage building.

Following the September earthquake the building was severely damaged. It was yellow placarded on 5/9/10 and then red placarded on 26/12/10 following the Boxing Day aftershock.

Building Act notices were served on the owners requiring a CPEng report to be provided to the Council and make-safe work to be completed on the building by 31/1/11.

Protection fencing was in place from shortly after the September earthquake and was subsequently extended. It was further recommended to be re-assessed following the Boxing Day aftershock.

The owners engaged Marton Sinclair, a structural engineer. He inspected the building on 16 and 19 September 2010 and concluded that it was unsafe to occupy. He also liaised with the Council in early 2011.

No make-safe work was completed on the building and instead a decision was made to demolish.

Given the building's heritage status, this involved a notified consent process.

At the time of the 22 February 2011 earthquake, Graham and Joan Weild appear to have been walking on the west side of Colombo St near the intersection with Mollett St.

They were killed after the facades of 603 (and 605-613) Colombo St collapsed out onto the street.

Their bodies were found under the rubble in front of 603 Colombo St.

Gabi Ingel and Ofer Levy were also pedestrians in that vicinity. Their bodies were also found close-by in that rubble.

### **Proposed Witnesses**

1. Peter Smith, Spencer Holmes Ltd, structural engineer
2. Christchurch City Council
3. Mark Ryburn, Opus Consultants Limited, structural engineer
4. Paul Campbell, Opus Consultants Limited, structural engineer
5. Marton Sinclair, Eliot Sinclair, structural engineer
6. John Dallison, Solicitor for the owners (Yee Brothers Syndicate)
7. Documentary evidence from Christchurch Police confirming location of the bodies of Mr and Mrs Weild and Messrs Ingel and Levy.

### **Likely issues**

1. Application of the Council's earthquake-prone policy to the building.
2. Assessment of the building following the September earthquake, in particular the Colombo St façade.
3. Follow up of Building Act notices.
4. Adequacy of protection fencing at Colombo St frontage.
5. Process required to have the building demolished.