

STATEMENT OF GRAEME DREAVER

GRAEME DREAVER states:

I reside in Christchurch and own Classique Furniture at 90 Coleridge St, Sydenham.

I purchased the property at 90 Coleridge Street some 10-12 years ago. At that time there was a free standing wall adjacent to the eastern boundary of the property. It had some years before then (according to the previous owner) been part of a lean-to ie: connected to the factory by a roof. That roof collapsed in heavy snows (maybe in 1992) leaving the wall standing. It had remained like that ever since.

The wall was some 6-7 metres high and approximately 3 metres wide.

The wall was made of concrete block (probably 100ml blocks). I think that the top two rows of blocks were filled with concrete.

When the earthquake struck I understand that Stephen Cochrane was working inside the factory. He ran out of a side door on the eastern side of the factory building. As he went past the block wall it toppled over crushing him underneath.

From the fact that blocks were found on the roof of the building to the east of 90 Coleridge Street it seems that when the earthquake struck and the wall shook, the top two rows of blocks (which were filled with concrete) broke off and fell on to the neighbour's roof. The rest of the wall – in more or less one lump then fell in a westerly direction towards the factory building. The rest of the wall had just enough clearance to clear the building. If the top two rows of blocks had not come off prior to that then the wall may well have hit the side of the factory wall instead of falling clear of it.

After the February earthquake when we looked at the foundation of the wall we discovered that it only had two, approximately 20ml, rods of reinforcement – one on each end coming out of the foundations and before that having gone into the blocks at the end (see photos)

After the September earthquake there were no structural problems with the building or any noticeable damage to the wall. The same applied following the Boxing Day earthquake.

After the September earthquake I had a builder who was a friend of a friend, look at the building to check it out.

Following the February earthquake, engineers from Opus went through the building but they were only looking at the building and not what was left of the wall.

Prior to the February earthquake there did not appear to be any cracks in the wall. No one had really given it any thought in terms of whether or not it was structurally sound or dangerous. I did think that perhaps we should take it down, but not because it was a hazard but because it might give slightly more clearance in the driveway on the east side of the building.



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GRAEME DREAVAR

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