

5 July 2018

Brian Denny
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Dear Brian

Thank you for your letter of 26 June, and for your interest in the Museum. You have asked a number of questions which I have responded to using the same paragraph numbering.

1. Delegations for authority of a council officer to manage the Earthquake Prone Buildings on behalf of the Invercargill City Council as a territorial authority were recommended to Council by the Regulatory Services Committee at a meeting on 3 July, and will be considered by full Council at its meeting on 24 July.
3. Simon Tonkin was appointed Development Liaison Manager for Council in February 2016.
5. Council identified priority areas. Anderson House, the Water Tower and Southland Museum and Art Gallery have not been deemed to be earthquake prone by the process set out in this letter. However, this is effectively a technicality when buildings have been inspected by registered engineers. It is appropriate that the scarce resources of Council are applied to make progress on other potentially earthquake prone buildings in the city.
6. There are two distinctive reasons which explain why other territorial authorities have already begun issuing earthquake prone notices, whereas Invercargill City Council's process has only just begun:
 - a. Under the Building Act 2004, all territorial authorities were required to introduce a policy on earthquake issues. Invercargill City Council's policy was 'passive', in that the policy did not require staff to actively seek out buildings that may be earthquake prone. The policy only required a building to be structurally upgraded when there was a change of use with that particular building. However, other territorial authorities, such as Wellington City Council, introduced more proactive policies, therefore their staff actively sought out buildings which may be earthquake prone and issued notices to owners of buildings which were found to be as such. Wellington is built on a known fault line.
 - b. Following the Christchurch earthquakes, Central Government signalled there would be a change in legislation and also the way that engineers assessed buildings to ensure more 'at risk' buildings would be required to be assessed and either strengthened or demolished within a certain time frame, dependant on the seismic risk of the area the building was in.

Government has provided templates and letters for territorial authorities for part of the work in assessing earthquake prone buildings. Invercargill City Council's position was that it wanted to ensure it was following the most up-to-date Government advice prior to implementing the new legislation.

This advice was slightly delayed due to the Kaikoura earthquakes, with a recent training session for Council staff and engineers only taking place in June 2018, as an example.

7. Invercargill City Council began the process of identifying buildings which may be earthquake prone in June 2018; however to date no buildings in Invercargill have been officially designated as earthquake prone by Council.

The process of identifying potentially earthquake prone buildings was set out by the Government following changes to legislation in July 2017.

The first step was to decide priority areas and strategic routes (roads), which has been completed following public consultation.

The priority areas were identified as the Invercargill CBD and Bluff's main street.

Next, we wrote to all building owners in those areas and advised we were going to assess their buildings to establish if they may be earthquake prone. The number of letters sent out to building owners in those areas is 268.

The priority areas are broken up into blocks, numbered from 1-23, and it is Council's intention to inspect each block in order, with each block expected to take about one month to complete those inspections, (for example, we are likely to inspect block number 23 in 23 months' time.) Inspections are beginning this month.

Council will inspect the exterior of a building and assess it against a checklist as prescribed by Government. If the building meets certain criteria on that checklist, we will ask the owner to obtain an engineer's assessment on the building. The building owner then must obtain that assessment within one year. The assessment must be provided to Council, we will then review the assessment against another checklist to establish if the building is earthquake prone.

If it is, we issue an earthquake prone notice to the building owner. The owner will then have either 12.5 years or 25 years to bring the building up to more than 34 per cent of the New Building Standard or demolish it.

I trust this answers all your queries. If not, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Regards,
Yours faithfully



Clare Hadley
CHIEF EXECUTIVE