

16 April 2019

Andrew Crow  
fyi-request-9887-3757c110@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Andrew

Thank you for your request made under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (the Act), received on 19 March 2019. You asked a number of questions in relation to the recent closure of the Wellington Central Library.

I have responded to each of your questions in turn below. I hope my initial response on 20 March 2019 provided you with some clarity and comfort as to why the decision was made to close the library now rather than in 2016.

*A full copy of any structural assessment done in the three months after the Kaikoura earthquake. This must include what company did the assessment, dates of the assessment, and findings or recommendations.*

On 15 February 2017, Aurecon New Zealand Limited completed an evaluation of the Wellington City Library; this has been attached for your information. You will note that this assessment determined the building was safe to occupy and no further actions were proposed.

*A full copy of any structural assessment done in last three months. As above, this must include what company did the assessment, dates, and recommendations.*

As I referenced in my response on 20 March, you can find the engineering assessment that was completed by Aurecon New Zealand Limited on the Council Website:

<https://wellington.govt.nz/services/community-and-culture/libraries/central-library-closure>

*Any information related to why a structural assessment was done in question #2. I.E. what changed to make a new assessment required?*

As referenced on the Council website, Aurecon New Zealand Limited was engaged to carry out an engineering assessment following the publication of new guidelines issued by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment in November 2018. The link below provides a good summary of the changes:

<https://www.propertynz.co.nz/news/mbie-announces-revision-engineering-assessment-guidelines>

*Any other documents that can help the public understand why a building was found to be unsafe two years after an earthquake, yet assessed as safe directly after that earthquake.*

The engineering assessment memo on the Council website provides a comprehensive overview of why we have chosen to close the building; you can read this at the link below:

<https://wellington.govt.nz/~media/services/community-and-culture/libraries/files/engineering-assessment-memo.pdf?la=en>

#### *Costs of both assessments*

The first report completed in 2017 was done as part of a wider piece of work. Following the Kaikoura earthquake the Council engaged Aurecon New Zealand Limited to complete checks on a number of buildings across the city. We therefore don't have a cost for that stand-alone report.

Regarding the most recent report, as the review of the building is ongoing (including peer review etc.) we have not received an invoice for this work yet. Unfortunately I am therefore unable to provide a figure at this point in time.

#### *Relevant entry from risk registers.*

There is no entry in the risk register regarding the closure of the Central Library, in accordance with section 17(e) of The Act; this part of your request is refused as the information requested does not exist.

#### *Internal emails related to the decision to close the library.*

Other than the engineering assessment memo there is no further internal correspondence. As you will note the decision to close the library was made almost immediately after we received the final report from Aurecon, while a number of conversations about this did occur these were not captured in emails.

We appreciate the impact that the closure of the library has had on Wellington residents and value everyone's patience while interim arrangements are being made. Public safety has been forefront in making this decision and we are confident that we have made the best decision to ensure the safety of the community.

#### **Right of review**

Where I have refused information, if you disagree with my decision you have the right, under section 27(3) of the Act, to ask the Ombudsman to review and investigate my

decision. Further information is available on the Ombudsman website, [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz).

Thank you again for your request. I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ashley Fry', written in a cursive style.

Ashley Fry  
**Team Leader**  
**Complaints and Information Assurance**