

6.2.2 Housing Plus George Street site - an explanation

LISTED BY CR PERCY THOMPSON TO 5 FEBRUARY 2014 COUNCIL MEETING

140205 Council1

GOV400022, GOV400038

MOTION

That an explanation of the demolition of the two fibro asbestos houses that were previously on the George Street site purchased by Housing Plus be given.

Why is it that the General Manager put in writing, and said verbally on a number of occasions that they were demolished illegally and that he was going to have it investigated, and now it is stated in the Guardian and on 2MG that permission was given.

BACKGROUND

As this has cost the Council \$103,680 in Tipping Fees and Housing Plus a considerable amount of money, an acceptable explanation is needed to be given to the ratepayers and residents.

Comments by General Manager

I think it is important that I clarify some facts in regard to this matter. I acknowledge that Council staff stated that the cost of removing the asbestos could have exceeded \$100,000. But at that time we were being informed that some 700 cubic metres of asbestos was proposed to be dumped. In fact the outcome was 700 cubic meters of waste soil with minimal amounts of specs of asbestos – none of which was consider by an Environmental Hygienist to be harmful.

Council's policy allows the General Manager to charge only the actual costs for disposing of commercial quantities of asbestos. In normal circumstances asbestos that is dangerous to human health must be wrapped in black plastic and buried in accordance with strict guidelines. Because this was only waste top soil there was no requirement for wrapping and that simply burying the product was all that was required. Thus Council's actual cost was considerably less, being only \$4,400.

It should again be pointed out that this work was carried out under the direction of the Environmental Hygienists and has been authorised and approved as correct procedure by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Consent for the demolition of these houses was issued by Council in June 2007.

RECOMMENDATION

That no further explanation is required on the removal of waste material from the Housing Plus property in George Street.