


22 NOV 2018



Thank you for your Official Information Act (the Act) request to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, transferred to Housing New Zealand for response on the 26 October 2018.

You asked for the following:

“The villa that was formerly located on the property was demolished as part of the proposed redevelopment of the property. Given that it was a large character villa I believe it could have been sold to a building removals company for a few thousand dollars to realise some funds for the taxpayer. Did Housing New Zealand consider this option and if not, why not?”

Did Housing New Zealand test the interior of the house for methamphetamine contamination? If they did undertake a test were the readings too high to enable the house to be sold for removal?”

Decisions about the sale or recycling of materials from homes that need to be either removed or demolished to make way for redevelopment are made on an individual house level, guided by a set of overall policies.

Environmental, health and safety, economic and social factors are considered before a decision is made to demolish, remove or recycle materials.

Health and safety of staff, contractors, customers and the public is important to Housing New Zealand, and issues such as lead paint and asbestos may result in a house being demolished and materials disposed of safely, with safe recycling or relocation expensive, difficult or not possible.

Economic factors include the cost to remedy issues such as asbestos before a house is moved or recycled, compared to the expected price gained for the house for removal. Often the houses are in poor condition, and we get no interest in relocating them or recycling materials.

The safe removal of asbestos or lead paint may also devalue the house, making it unattractive to relocate or even to recycle.

That said, older Housing New Zealand houses have been sold for removal, and have been successfully relocated and renovated to current building standards for ongoing use as private or social housing.

HLC, Housing New Zealand's development subsidiary, aims to recycle about 70 per cent of materials from demolished houses. In the Northcote and Mt Roskill redevelopments, if possible and safe to do so, HLC is aiming for 85 per cent of demolished material being diverted from landfill.

Regarding 6-8 Banff Avenue, Housing New Zealand did consider options for removal of the villa.

The villa was in poor condition, and contained asbestos.

In order to return the villa to use as single residential home would have required significant internal reconfiguration. The aged and unusual internal reconfiguration of the house would have made a sale for removal challenging.

All of these factors impact on the final price achieved for a dwelling if it is tendered for relocation. These also affect the potential value of recycling materials.

Housing New Zealand opted not to refurbish, offer for recycling or remove the buildings at 6-8 Banff Ave due to, among other factors, the generally run down and dated condition of the older villa.

This would have required remediation by any buyer of the home, and would have made any sale price likely too low to cover the cost of the marketing, and tendering process. Housing New Zealand decided the most expedient use of funds was to demolish the building.

The safety precautions for asbestos undertaken during demolition would have ensured the safe disposal of any methamphetamine material. Therefore, it was not tested for methamphetamine contamination before demolition.

Yours sincerely



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