

6 April 2011

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Guidance Document on House Repairs and Reconstruction following the Canterbury Earthquake (December 2010)

With regard to the Guidelines on House Repairs and also the Engineering Resins Product, our position is as follows:

The Christchurch City Council has recognised and contributed to the document "Department of Building and Housing - Guidance on House Repairs and Reconstruction Following the Canterbury Earthquake (20.12.2010)". This document includes engineered methodologies for the repair or reconstruction of buildings which are considered by the Council to be alternative solutions which meet the performance standards contained in the New Zealand Building Code.

In making this decision we have recognised that the methodologies are proven and is the case of the engineering resins used in levelling houses, within set parameters, BRANZ appraised. We are intending to review the technical decision to accept the guidance document in three months time, once the methodologies have been applied in the Christchurch City Council area. All of the methodologies for levelling or rebuilding houses on liquefaction affected land need to be applied using engineering advice for specific properties. Information on the geotechnical aspects of specific properties would be included in the engineering design submitted with any consent application to support the proposed building work.

To quote the document - The guidance aims to encourage consistency of approach and to avoid unnecessary and costly investigations and design for each property. It takes a prudent approach that is mindful of costs and risks. It provides solutions and construction methods that will meet the requirements of the Building Act and Building Code while avoiding 'over-design' and 'over investigation' where this is not warranted. Independent costing advice estimates a strong positive benefit to cost in following the proposals in this document. Following the methods or solutions proposed in the document is not mandatory. Different and improved details and methods may well be developed as the recovery proceeds. The earthquake and its effects are complex. Investigations into the full picture on how residential structures responded to liquefaction effects are ongoing. It may well be that some aspects of the recommendations in the document are added to or changed over time.

In summary our position is one that currently accepts the Engineering Resins/Uretek product where used within the scope of the DBH Guidance Document and the BRANZ appraisal for the product where applied by a recognised CPEng Engineer without rigorous process when applying for a building consent. As a consent applicant it will be your responsibility to demonstrate that projects fit within these aspects and how this is done can be the subject of further discussion where you are unclear on the requirements (this need not be complex). Where you have projects that fall outside of the scope of the abovementioned parameters we may accept a proposal but you would need to demonstrate how these deviations will still achieve code compliance.

Please do not hesitate to contact Aaron or myself for further clarification. We will be operating from the Upper Riccarton Library and working closely together on PMO work over the next month at least.

Yours faithfully



Steve McCarthy
Environmental Policy & Approvals Manager
Christchurch City Council



Aaron Haymes
EQ Building Services Manager