


Statement of Karl Okorn
In the matter of Auburn Public Inquiry

9. All development applications are "peer reviewed" such that no individual planning officer is solely responsible for the determination of any development application.
 10. The assessment of development applications is heavily regulated both in terms of the EPA Act as well as Councils internal procedures (including the "peer review" process).
 11. A number of Councillors are developers and have lodged Development Applications with Council. These applications are assessed by external independent town planning consultants and are determined either by the JRPP or by Council (depending on the Capital Investment Value of the project).
- 40-46 Station Road Auburn.**
12. Around February 2016 the Council's Communications Coordinator Mr Shane Wells came and saw me and told me that there had been a media inquiry from the Sydney Morning Herald regarding this property.
 13. Until that point in time, I was not aware of any issue regarding that property.
 14. I initially referred the matter to Glenn Francis as any media inquiries go through the senior management team.
 15. I informed Glenn Francis of the issue and his reaction was in words to the effect of, "That's fine I'll look into it."
 16. I understand that in response to the media inquiry, Glenn Francis sought to obtain information from TRIM, and when incomplete information was available through TRIM, I understand that Mr Francis went to Council's Corporate Information (records) unit to seek further information.
 17. I understand that after discussing the issue with Records staff, a file with restricted access was identified.
 18. Following this, Mr Francis said to me words to the following effect: "I've been down to records. There is a restricted TRIM file for Station Road that contains further information."
 19. I understand that restricted TRIM files are able to be created via the records department for a range of matters such as Human Resources files, procurement, legal advice and the like.
 20. I am unaware of when, why or by whom the restricted TRIM file was created for Station Road.
 21. A review of the file was then conducted. I recall noting a piece of legal advice which was from the law firm Deacons. I discussed the matter with Glenn Francis and I recall him suggesting obtaining further and current legal advice in the matter.

Witness:


/ GLENN DAWES
14/6/16

Signature: 