



Our Reference: F2007/02304
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THE OWNER / RESIDENT / TENANT

15 September 2017

Dear Sir/Madam

Results of Asbestos Investigation at Barton Park and PH Jeffery Reserve

I refer to Council's previous letter in June 2017 advising you that asbestos investigative works were to be undertaken at Barton Park and PH Jeffery Reserve.

The appointed specialist asbestos consultants have completed their detailed report which has now been reviewed and assessed. The results and recommendations have also been referred to the Environment Protection Authority (EPA), Safework NSW and the NSW Government's Heads of Asbestos Coordination Authorities (HACA) group which is coordinating the reassessment of a number of James Hardie legacy sites in the City of Parramatta Council Local Government Area following recommendations from the NSW Ombudsman.

Barton Park and PH Jeffery Reserve are recorded former landfill sites and were identified for reassessment by the EPA as sites that were at one time used for the disposal of James Hardie asbestos products. Some time ago these areas were converted into public parkland. Council has continued to monitor these and other park and reserve sites known to contain contaminated material in accordance with Council's Asbestos Management Policy and related NSW Government Legislation.

The asbestos investigation has revealed evidence of asbestos material within the soil at these sites. However, no airborne asbestos particles were detected during the air monitoring undertaken for the duration of the soil testing process.

The consultants' recommendations are now being implemented by Council in close consultation with the EPA, Safework and HACA group.

Council has made arrangements to complete a number of landscape treatments to both parks by December 2017.

Council apologises for the inconvenience caused by restricting the use of some sections of the parks while these works are completed.

For further details regarding the proposed works or timeframe please contact Council's Project Officer Contaminated Lands Mr Andrew Scholz on 9806 8276 or email openspace@cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au.

For information about the James Hardie legacy sites reassessment program being coordinated by the HACA group contact the EPA Environment line on 131 555.

For information regarding park bookings and usage please contact Gregory Radford in Council's recreation team on 9806 5133 or email GRadford@cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au

Additional information is provided in the enclosed factsheet. For information about asbestos generally, please also phone 1800 ASBESTOS (1800 272 378) or email contact@safework.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

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

Craig Becroft
Acting Chief Executive Officer

Heads of Asbestos Coordination Authorities*

James Hardie Testing Reference Group

Asbestos detected in parks and recreation areas - Information for recreational park users and neighbouring residents

City of Parramatta Council recently tested for asbestos at a number of parks and recreation areas within the local government area. These tests confirmed asbestos was detected at Barton Park (North Parramatta), PH Jeffrey Reserve (North Parramatta), Hambledon Cottage Reserve (Parramatta), Swann Reserve (Parramatta), Dalley Street Reserve (Pendle Hill), a section of footpath at Arthur Street, Granville and an unnamed reserve at Ruse Street, Harris Park. However current information indicates that the risk to people at these sites is likely to have been minimal. As a precaution, Council has closed off Barton Park and PH Jeffrey Reserve as an interim while long term remediation is planned.

What is asbestos?

Asbestos is a term used to describe a group of mineral fibres that were historically used for a wide range of applications, including building materials.

Asbestos contamination can be categorised into friable and non-friable (bonded) forms. Non-friable asbestos is where asbestos is mixed with other materials like cement and is most commonly found in the built environment. If asbestos is bound within a material such as cement it is less likely to become air-borne and therefore become hazardous. Friable asbestos is where asbestos is in fibre form and is not bound within any other material. Friable asbestos is more likely to be disturbed and become airborne and is therefore more hazardous as once airborne it can be more easily inhaled.

What kind of asbestos was found at these sites?

Both friable and non-friable forms of asbestos were detected in varying quantities, within the soil at each of the sites tested. However these surfaces are generally covered with grass and unlikely to generate air borne dust that people would inhale.

What does this mean for me?

What is the health risk from recreational use of these sites?

The majority of parks and recreational spaces tested had well maintained grass cover which provides a barrier to any contamination present in the soil. With some areas of Barton Park/PH Jeffrey Reserve where normally active sports like soccer are played and grass cover may be disturbed given the prolonged dry conditions this winter, as a precaution these areas have been fenced to restrict access to avoid any further soil disturbance and allow recovery. Asbestos is not a risk if it is covered and undisturbed as only asbestos fibres that become airborne and are breathed in pose a risk to health.

No airborne asbestos was identified during air monitoring for asbestos fibres at all of the tested parks and reserves.

Asbestos related diseases most commonly occur in those who have been exposed to very high levels of asbestos, particularly in occupational settings.

How is City of Parramatta Council addressing these risks in the short term?

To ensure the community's safety, Council is taking every precaution to address the affected sites.

*The Heads of Asbestos Coordination Authorities (HAC) (HACA) as the coordinating body for the site management of asbestos across NSW government departments and agencies.

While there is only a minimal health risk, Parramatta Council is undertaking a number of additional interim measures to manage the contamination, including restricting access to parts of an affected reserve, and applying a binding solution to the surface.

What is the plan for longer term remediation?

Plans for the longer term treatment of the affected sites are well advanced. These include the capping of affected areas with asbestos suppressing textiles and coverage with a sufficient layer of clean soil and new turf, concrete and asphalt based caps, and other landscape based treatments. Unique remediation plans are being developed for each of the affected sites to ensure treatment is appropriate for the contamination present, and the intended community use of the land.

Why is this testing and assessment happening now?

The NSW Government takes the issue of asbestos safety very seriously and established a specialist Testing Reference Group under the

Heads of Asbestos Coordination Authorities (HACA) to coordinate work to address potential asbestos contamination from James Hardie Industries legacy sites. The EPA, SafeWork, City of Parramatta Council and NSW Health are working to manage potential contamination in the Parramatta area.

The trigger for this assessment was the identification of friable asbestos in the backyards of residential properties within an area in Parramatta that had been a former James Hardie Industries disposal site. Friable asbestos had not previously been identified at these sites.

Those sites with evidence of friable asbestos will require an appropriate management plan. Management includes assessment to determine the nature and extent of asbestos contamination, assessment of exposure risks, interim measures to control risk and remediation.

I live near these parks. Will my property need to be tested?

If your home is recognised as being at risk, you should have already been contacted by the EPA. As the EPA and Council continue their site assessments, they may need to contact you to gain further information about your property.

If you want to check the status of your property you can call the EPA's Environment Line on 131 555.

Who is working on this?

City of Parramatta Council is working to determine the extent of contamination, to install any precautionary interim measures and to manage the longer term remediation.

The NSW Government takes the issue of asbestos safety very seriously and established the Heads of Asbestos Coordination Authorities (HACA) to coordinate work to address potential asbestos contamination from James Hardie Industries legacy sites. The EPA, SafeWork, City of Parramatta Council and NSW Health are working to manage potential contamination in the Parramatta area.

This collaborative approach will help to ensure an appropriate, scientific and risk-based resolution is adopted throughout the assessments, and to prioritise the protection of the environment and community.

Who can I contact if I have questions?

For information about the work being undertaken to manage asbestos legacy contamination at Parramatta parks and recreation areas, call council on 9806 5050.

To find out more about asbestos generally call 1800 ASBESTOS (1800 272 378) or email contact@safework.nsw.gov.au; also www.safework.nsw.gov.au or www.asbestosawareness.com.au.

For information about this assessment program and about your own property, you can call the EPA's Environment Line on 131 555.