

Application of the Lifemark™ assessment to existing second dwellings between 50-60m²

TO	Audit Committee
FROM	Steve Baker - Chief Financial Officer
DATE	6 August 2015
SUBJECT	Application of the Lifemark™ assessment to existing second dwellings between 50-60m²

1 Purpose of Report

To seek guidance from the Committee on a proposed solution of applying the Lifemark™ or similar certification to existing second dwellings in the District:

2 Background

As part of the 2015 Long-term Plan process Council initiated a new automatic remission of 50% of the fixed charges applicable to owners with one additional unit where that second habitable unit's gross floor area excluding garage is less than or equal to 50m², or 60m² if it is Lifemark™ design certified or has another certification that it is functional for elderly and disabled residents, but do not qualify for the full remission above as they rent it out for financial reward.(as these are permitted to be built on a property as of right in our District Plan).

Based on the information contained in Councils Rating Information Database as at 1 July each year Council officials will , for each qualifying rating unit, automatically remit 50% of the second targeted rates for water, wastewater, stormwater, solid waste, any uniform annual general charge, and 50% of the targeted rates set on a uniform basis for works and services. In no circumstances will loan charges be remitted.

Decisions for remission of rates for rating units consisting of two separately habitable units will be delegated to Chief Financial Officer, Revenue Manager and Senior Rates Officer.

The following definition is used to calculate the number of rates factors applicable.

Separately Used or Inhabited Part of a Rating Unit means:

A Separately used or inhabited part of a rating unit includes any part inhabited or used by a person other than the owner, and who has the right to inhabit or use that part by virtue of a tenancy lease, license, or other agreement. For the purpose of this policy, vacant land and vacant premises offered or intended for use or habitation by a person other than the owner and usually used as such are defined as "used".

3 Issue

Under this new remission policy a second dwelling being 50 - 60m² does not automatically receive 50% remission on the second set of charges. They require Lifemark™ design certified or another certification that it is functional for elderly and disabled residents to do so.

There will exist a number of older dwellings in the district that are between 50 - 60m². Many of these older dwellings will not have either a Lifemark™ design certification or any other certification to certify that they are indeed functional for elderly and disabled residents.

Without documented certification there is no current policy guidance on how either the ratepayer or council can get the certification or what the appropriate certification would actually take the form of.

4 Discussion

It is envisaged that there is approximately 40 second dwelling's in the District that are between 50 - 60m² and only a portion of these would meet either a Lifemark™ design certification or any other certification requirement to qualify for this remission.

It is proposed that:

- An approved checklist, based upon the Lifemark™ is developed by staff.
- Approval of the proposed checklist will be sought from Councils Judicial Committee as this is a building related matter.
- The approved checklist will be used to determine the eligibility for remission of second dwellings between 50-60m²
- Delegation will be given to Council's Building Inspectors to undertake a physical inspection of the property and then make an informed determination, based on the approved checklist their experience and qualifications, as to whether the second dwelling would for qualify for remission
- The cost of the inspection would be at Council's expense.
- Any second dwellings with a construction date after 1 July 2015 will be required to produce either a Lifemark™ design certification or any other certification, to qualify for the remission.

5 Suggested Resolution(s)

That the Audit Committee:

1. Receives the report.
2. Instructs staff to develop an approved checklist, based upon the Lifemark™.
3. Requires approval to be obtained from Councils Judicial Committee of the proposed checklist.
4. Instructs that the approved checklist will be used to determine the eligibility for remission of second dwellings between 50-60m²
5. Instructs staff to acquire the formal delegation for Council's Building Inspectors so that they may undertake a physical inspection of the property and then make an informed determination, based on the approved checklist their experience and qualifications, as to whether the second dwelling would for qualify for remission
6. Confirms that the cost of the inspection would be at Council's expense.
7. Determines that any second dwellings with a construction date after 1 July 2015 will be required to produce either a Lifemark™ design certification or any other certification, to qualify for the remission.

References-Tabled/Agenda Attachments

Attachment A *Lifemark design standards overview.*

[Attachment A - Lifemark Design Standards Overview](#)