

WE REVIEW THE CROWN

Public-interest newspaper: evidence, questions, accountability - and a little Aunt Bettie

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GIFTED LAND, ELDERLY TENANTS, AND A GOVERNMENT THAT JUST “NOTED” IT

Lucas Place, Rotorua: Public Review asks who authorised the land dealings, what records exist, and what protection has been given to pensioner residents.

The Lucas Place pensioner-housing issue is not a small tenancy disagreement. It raises four public questions at once: the condition of elderly residents' homes, the way relocation or demolition information has reportedly been communicated, the authority of Rotorua Lakes Council and Emerge Aotearoa, and the unresolved status of land understood from the record to have originated as gifted or purpose-specific land.

A Ministerial office has now replied that Tracy Lynch's concerns have been noted and referred to the Minister of Local Government. Public Review says that is not enough. A referral is not an answer. A note is not an investigation. Where elderly residents report harm, mould, rent pressure, insecurity, and possible displacement, somebody in public authority must take responsibility for the record.

The public position is deliberately disciplined: do not assume the Council is wrong before the original instruments are produced; but do not let the Council rely on modern registration alone as if the original gift, trust, reserve, endowment, purpose restriction, or public-housing obligation could never matter.

Before homes are demolished or land is transferred, the public is entitled to see the authority chain: original gift, title history, Council resolutions, statutory powers, redevelopment decisions, relocation protections, right of return, replacement rents, purchasers, developers, financiers, conflicts, and proceeds.

PUBLIC REVIEW DEMAND

- Show the gift.
- Show the title history.
- Show the authority.
- Show the decision.
- Show the protections.
- Show where the money goes.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Lucas Place: gifted land and elderly tenants
- Andrew Hollis: media, evidence and the ex-councillor question
- Rangitikei: DMC, rates and who the creditor actually is
- Firearms/Crown cases: disclosure, warrants and s 147
- Property & appraisal watch: Michael and Karen file
- Aunt Bettie, local ads and the Crown Review noticeboard
- Right of reply and source safeguards

Lucas Place, Rotorua: The Evidence Trail

WHAT THE RECORD ALREADY SHOWS

Neil Evans' communications about Lucas Place have been reviewed and summarised. The working synopsis records rent increases affecting pensioner tenants, a stated financial shortfall after rent and Accommodation Supplement changes, Council assurances about tenants not being left out of pocket, relocation pressure, Emerge Aotearoa involvement, Healthy Homes, mould, water ingress and maintenance concerns, Tenancy Tribunal application 5511150, and an unresolved LINZ/title-document angle. The next step remains extraction and reading of Neil's 7 August JPEG attachments.

CONFIRMED / DOCUMENTED SO FAR

- Correspondence has been sent to Ministers about Rotorua Lakes Council pensioner housing.
- The Treasury OIA request specifically asked about public funding, redevelopment, demolition, disposal, transfer, Crown financial exposure and which agency is responsible where elderly tenants may be displaced.
- Treasury transferred parts concerning displacement, affordability and oversight to the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development as more closely connected to HUD functions.
- Treasury then refused its remaining parts under OIA s 18(e), saying no information was found within scope.
- Prior public-review material demands the original gift/acquisition instrument, historical titles, Council authority, variation or release of any conditions, redevelopment/sale authority, and destination of proceeds.

REPORTED / REQUIRING ATTRIBUTION

- Residents report mould, black mould, dampness and water ingress.
- Residents report relocation, demolition and rent concerns, including uncertainty about where they will go and whether they can return.
- Tenants report emotional distress and fear of displacement.
- The land is understood by affected parties and current review material to have originated as gifted or purpose-specific land. The primary instrument still needs to be produced and checked.
- Concerns are raised about elder welfare and potential elder abuse. That is a trigger for inquiry, not a substitute for proof.

What should happen next

- Rotorua Lakes Council should disclose the complete title and authority chain before irreversible action occurs.
- Relevant records should be preserved under public-records obligations, including contracted-out communications involving Emerge Aotearoa.
- No tenant should be pressured into informal or unrecorded discussions about Tribunal applications, complaints, evidence, relocation or future housing.
- Ministers should identify who is responsible for coordinating a substantive response across local government, housing, welfare and public-records issues.

ACCOUNTABILITY

OIA Tracker: What Was Asked, What Came Back

Official-information work matters because it forces public bodies to answer precise questions: what records exist, who holds them, what authority was relied on, what has been transferred, and what has been refused.

Track	What was asked	What came back	Publication status
Treasury / Lucas Place	Funding, fiscal oversight, value for money, displacement, affordability, agency responsibility, Crown financial exposure.	Parts 4, 5 and 7 transferred to HUD; remaining Treasury search found no information and was refused under OIA s 18(e).	Ready for publication with source note.
Rotorua / land authority	Gift or acquisition instrument, historical titles, Council authority, release or variation of conditions, subdivision, sale, proceeds.	Still unresolved in the available review material; primary title/instrument chain required.	Lead investigation.
Waitaki public review	Council structure, staffing, transformation, AI/software, contractors, public services, consenting and accountability.	Weekly summary records contractor information totalling \$19,427,947.82 across 125 activity areas and 184 non-zero line items.	Inside page / future issue.
Road-funding OIA	Road User Charges, Fuel Excise Duty, registration/licensing, tolls, fairness, duplication and NLTF accountability.	Separate analysis lane exists; source bundle should be checked before publication.	Future feature unless source bundle attached.
Council/court accountability	Does the public body show the power, delegation, evidence, notices/service, court filing, time limits and procedure?	General public-review checklist developed and being applied to IRD and council matters.	Explainer box.

OIA LESSON

A refusal is still evidence. A transfer is still evidence. A missing-record response is still evidence. Public review records not only what the agency says, but what it cannot produce.

EXPLAINER

Gifted Land: Follow the Instrument

A modern title may say “registered proprietor” or “registered owner”. That matters, but it is not the whole historical inquiry. Public Review asks what paper created the original right and what later paper changed it.

THE PUBLIC SHOULD ASK

- Who gave the land?
- Who received it?
- For what purpose?
- Was the recipient an owner, trustee, manager, holder, administrator or public-purpose body?
- Was there a trust, reserve, endowment, reversion, covenant, undertaking, condition, lease or statutory restriction?
- Who later authorised subdivision, transfer, sale, demolition or redevelopment?
- Who bought it, who benefits, and where did the money go?

PUBLIC REVIEW POSITION

Selling gifted land may be lawful in some situations, but only if the authority is proven. If land was gifted for a purpose, held on trust, held as an endowment, held as a reserve, or held for a public use, no council, lawyer, developer, trustee, agency or registered proprietor should be allowed to treat it as private commercial stock unless the lawful authority is produced.

THE SIMPLE AUDIT

Show the original gift. Show the trust. Show the return letter. Show the title history. Show the Council resolution. Show the legal advice. Show the sale agreement. Show the purchaser. Show the conflict declarations. Show where the proceeds went.

Publication safeguard: This issue should not publish as a settled fact that Lucas Place cannot lawfully be redeveloped or sold until the original instruments are obtained. The defensible position is that the status remains unresolved and the Council must produce the authority chain.

Other Public Review Matters Now in the Queue

RANGITIKEI / DAVID MILLS / BRIGITTA MAAS

Rates, court, Police, dog-control, warrants, public records and procedural fairness. Current DMC material raises a specific accounting and authority question: who is the creditor, who appointed the collector, why payment is directed to a Manawatu-Whanganui LASS Limited account, and what records reconcile the claimed balance? Full feature follows in this issue.

FIREARMS / CROWN REVIEW

Simon Stott and connected Crown-review work raises evidence-sufficiency, disclosure, warrant-foundation, incidental-firearms evidence, ownership/registration inquiries and s 147 questions. The issue is not accusation by headline; it is whether admissible evidence and lawful authority can be identified charge by charge. Full feature follows.

ANDREW HOLLIS / IRD AND MEDIA

Andrew Hollis is an ex-Tauranga councillor facing an IRD prosecution. The public-review question now includes what material the media received before publication, what was omitted or emphasised, and whether any alleged council or official hostility can actually be proved rather than assumed. Full feature follows.

Michelle Walker / MPI, NAIT, OSPRI and Tuscan

Animal-welfare, NAIT/OSPRI records, warrants, court authority, disclosure and record-integrity issues. Must separate farm recollection from documents.

Publication status: Future issue unless court sensitivity cleared.

Mark Mackay / Wanaka Airport / QLDC / QAC

Trespass authority and airport-management records; QAC response reportedly identifies the decision-maker and says no further process was considered necessary.

Publication status: Inside page when source text verified.

Waitaki District Council

Council contractors, AI/software, staffing, transformation, public services, consenting and accountability.

Publication status: Numbers box now; deeper feature later.

Andrew Hollis: When the Headline Arrives Before the Evidence Is Finished

An ex-Tauranga councillor, an IRD prosecution, advance material supplied to the media, and a question that must be asked carefully: was the story fairly tested, or was the public handed only one side of a live case?

Andrew Hollis is being dealt with in *Commissioner of Inland Revenue v Andrew Graham Hollis*, CRI-2026-070-561. The working case record shows a live section 147 process and continuing disputes about disclosure, source records, financial attribution and the evidential foundation for the prosecution calculations.

The media question is separate from guilt or innocence. The review record shows that material was sent on 25 July 2026 to NZME journalist Sandra Conchie and the NZME Newsdesk before a later Herald article. That does not prove unfair reporting. It does mean the supplied material, the published story, and any response sought from Andrew should be compared line by line before anyone claims the media had no notice of the defence position.

There is also a political-background question because Andrew is a former Tauranga councillor. People around the matter suspect that his earlier council role and willingness to challenge decisions may have made him unpopular. But suspicion is not evidence. The present record does not prove a council vendetta, coordinated targeting, or improper motive. The responsible question is narrower: what communications, decisions, referrals or records exist that would either support or disprove that theory?

WHAT THE RECORD SUPPORTS

Advance written material was supplied to NZME before the later article; a live s 147 process exists; disclosure and calculation-source questions remain material; Andrew's former council role is part of the public background.

WHAT IS NOT YET PROVED

That the media deliberately favoured the prosecution; that a council or agency has a vendetta; that any official acted corruptly; or that Andrew is either guilty or innocent. Those conclusions require evidence.

The newspaper's position is simple: if a person is prosecuted in public and reported on in public, the public should be able to see what the prosecution relies on, what the defence says is missing, what the court has actually ruled, and what remains undecided. Media reporting should not become a substitute for the evidential record.

SOURCE / PUBLICATION NOTE: Primary working sources include the Andrew Hollis background evidence record dated 28 July 2026, the s 147 affidavit/application material and associated disclosure/accountability correspondence. The 25 July "I'm assuming" wording is speculation and must remain labelled as such.

Rangitikei: DMC Is Collecting - But Who Exactly Is the Creditor?

A rates demand is one thing. A payment direction, an external collection entity and a different account name create a paper trail the public is entitled to understand.

The current David Mills / Brigitta Maas court and records work concerns Rangitikei District Council, Manawatu-Whanganui Regional Council, Debt Management Central (DMC), and related enforcement and public-record issues. A DMC final demand dated 5 August 2026 identifies valuation number 1360019003 and demands \$8,395.71.

The present defence material does not say that the rates debt was necessarily sold or assigned. Instead it asks for the legal and accounting chain. DMC correspondence refers to payment on “your account” and directs payment to a bank account in the name of Manawatu-Whanganui LASS Limited. That makes a straightforward set of questions unavoidable.

- Is the creditor Rangitikei District Council, DMC, Manawatu-Whanganui LASS Limited, or another entity?
- If DMC is only an agent or collector, where is the appointment, delegation, service agreement, Council resolution or instruction?
- If any assignment or transfer is asserted, where is the deed or instrument and the statutory authority relied on?
- What balance was referred to collection, on what date, and how are rates, penalties, costs, interest, credits and collection charges reconciled?
- Why is payment directed to the identified bank account, and how is money received there treated in the Council accounts?
- Who instructed the solicitors and approved the court steps, affidavits, substituted service and enforcement decisions?

This is not an argument that a lawful rates liability disappears because a collector is involved. It is an accountability question. Public debt collection carried out through councils, shared-service entities, contractors or agents still requires a traceable source of power, a clear creditor identity, accurate accounting and lawful court process.

SOURCE / PUBLICATION NOTE: The current record includes CIV-2025-083-055 material, the DMC substituted-service notice and the David Mills defence/counterclaim material. The legal status of any alleged debt, assignment, agency or enforcement step remains for the evidence and court process to determine.

The Arms Question: If a Fisheries Warrant Finds Firearms, What Must the Crown Prove?

The Simon Stott work is becoming a test case in the Crown Review: warrant foundation, incidental evidence, ownership inquiries, disclosure and whether the remaining admissible evidence can satisfy the s 147 threshold.

The connected MPI/fisheries and firearms proceedings are being kept analytically separate. The firearms issue arose from items found during execution of a fisheries search warrant. That creates more than one question: was the underlying search lawful, was the incidental evidence lawfully obtained and admissible, who actually possessed or owned the firearms, and what inquiries were made before charges were pursued?

The court has already had to deal with disclosure questions and the relationship between the fisheries warrant and the later firearms case. The defence position is that the Crown should identify the evidence charge by charge rather than rely on broad assertions, summaries or the mere fact that an item was found on premises.

- Produce the warrant application, grounds, exhibits, issuing record, execution notes, search report and seizure inventory.
- Identify the person who applied, the issuing officer or lawful designation, and the audit trail for issue and execution.
- Produce Police/MPI communications and any operational briefing relevant to the search and later firearms action.
- Produce firearms ownership/registration inquiries, forensic material, armourer evidence, continuity and chain-of-custody records.
- Separate evidence of possession from assumption based only on location.
- For s 147, identify the admissible prosecution evidence capable of proving each essential element if taken at its highest.

This is why the Crown Review is covering court cases. A prosecution is not proved by the size of the file, the seriousness of the charge, or the confidence of an advocate. The question is whether lawful, admissible evidence can support every essential element and whether the defendant has received the disclosure needed to test it.

SOURCE / PUBLICATION NOTE: This feature is a public-interest summary of the live Simon Stott disclosure/s 147 issues. It is not a finding on admissibility, guilt, ownership or warrant validity. Court rulings and the sealed record take priority over commentary.

Michael and Karen: Keep the House File Together

Appraisal, agents, authority, valuations and every instruction should travel as one evidence file - especially when a home is already inside a Crown Review or enforcement story.

The Michael and Karen property matter belongs in the Crown Review under the broader mortgage/property/enforcement lane, rather than being left as a loose note. The practical job is to preserve a single house file that shows who is acting, on whose instructions, what the property has been appraised or valued at, what authority exists for any listing or sale step, and what has changed over time.

The current editorial update is that Bob and Jenni are now identified as the agents. That status should be supported by the current agency or appointment paperwork before the newspaper treats the role as formally verified. The file should keep every appraisal, valuation, agency agreement, listing instruction, marketing proposal, offer, email, text, title document and lender/receiver communication in date order.

KEEP

Current appraisal/valuation; signed agency authority; scope of appointment; listing instructions; title; mortgage documents; sale/marketing instructions.

CHECK

Who authorised the agents? Is the authority current? Who receives offers? Who can alter price or terms? Who must be copied?

RECORD

Date, sender, recipient, purpose and what changed. Save the native email/message as well as screenshots.

PUBLISH CAREFULLY

Use the newspaper only for facts supported by documents or attributed statements. Keep private contact and financial details out of the public edition.

This is also the right place to connect the earlier “mortgage is the power document” work: if a home is being valued, marketed, enforced against or sold, the Crown Review follows the whole chain - title, mortgage, default, authority, valuation, agent instructions, sale process, proceeds and accounting.

SOURCE / PUBLICATION NOTE: The agent-status sentence reflects the editor’s current instruction. Primary agency/appointment documents should be retained with the property file and used to verify names, roles and authority before any stronger public statement is made.

The Smaller Stories Are Not Small When the Same Paper Trail Keeps Appearing

Across the country, the recurring questions are remarkably similar: who had authority, what record exists, what was disclosed, what was withheld, and who is accountable for the decision?

LUCAS PLACE, ROTORUA

Gifted/purpose-specific land, pensioner housing, mould and relocation concerns remain a lead investigation. Follow the original instrument, title history, redevelopment authority, resident protections and proceeds.

GERRY / AUCKLAND COUNCIL

Rates enforcement and the Pukekohe chicken-farm matter remain in the public-interest queue. Preserve the rates-sale record, notice/service trail, estate/title material and the separate drainage/regulatory history.

MICHELLE WALKER / MPI / NAIT / OSPRI

Court and record-reliability questions continue. Separate first-hand farm recollection from NAIT/OSPRI records, ownership/possession evidence, warrants and actual court orders.

WIM ROSLOOT / RBNZ

The Bill of Exchange and regulatory-response matter remains active. The key task is to compare the substantive RBNZ response against the exact questions asked and record what was answered, transferred, refused or left unresolved.

NIGEL GRAY / HOSPITAL NUTRITION

A focused information issue asks whether hospital care explains and addresses nutrition, vitamins, nutrients and dietary needs alongside medication and recovery.

CORRECTIONS / IMMIGRATION INFORMATION

A separate OIA line asks what aggregate/de-identified information is held about prisoners' immigration status, deportation liability and inter-agency information sharing, and what is withheld or not recorded.

The editorial rule remains unchanged: distinguish verified record, attributed allegation, inference, opinion and missing evidence. That is how a newspaper can be forceful without pretending uncertainty is certainty.

SOURCE / PUBLICATION NOTE: These briefs are status summaries, not findings. Each matter should be refreshed from its primary record before a later issue turns it into a full feature.

AUNT BETTIE SAYS

“Funny How the Paperwork Gets Shy When You Ask It to Introduce Itself.”

Aunt Bettie's rule for Issue 1: if the Crown, council, bank, receiver, prosecutor, agent or contractor says “we have authority”, do not throw the teapot. Ask them to put the authority on the table. Then make tea while they find it.

Humour / Satire / Opinion

This page is commentary and satire. It is not an evidential finding. The investigations elsewhere in this paper distinguish documents, allegations, inference and missing records.

AUNT BETTIE SAYS...

"They've noted the pensioners, have they? Lovely. Now perhaps they could note the mould, note the rent, note the land documents, note who authorised what, and note where the money went."

"If the Council says it owns the land fair and square, Aunt Bettie has a revolutionary suggestion: show us the paperwork."

"Your comments have been noted. Translation: we are hoping the problem walks itself to another inbox."

PUBLIC SERVANT TRANSLATION SERVICE

"Referred for consideration."

Translation: Nobody has answered the question yet.

"Outside our portfolio."

Translation: Please try the next desk.

"No information found."

Translation: Either it does not exist, or no one can find it, or the filing system needs review.

"Registered proprietor."

Translation: Important, but still not the original gift instrument.



Caption: Gifted land is not a cash cow. Satire image for public-interest commentary.

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Right of Reply, Source Notes & Publication Safeguards

Right of reply

Public Review invites Rotorua Lakes Council, Emerge Aotearoa, relevant Ministers, agencies and any named public authority to provide the source documents, decisions, corrections or clarifications that answer the questions raised. Where a public body says it acted lawfully, the public review asks for the record proving that authority.

Source notes used for this first edition

- Weekly Notice Summary, week ending 8 August 2026: records Lucas Place working synopsis, including rent increases, financial shortfall, Council assurances, Emerge involvement, Healthy Homes/mould/water ingress concerns, Tenancy Tribunal application 5511150 and unresolved LINZ/title-document angle.
- Treasury OIA reply 20260374 dated 8 June 2026: records the OIA request concerning pensioner housing, public funding, redevelopment, demolition, disposal, transfer, displacement, affordability, Crown fiscal exposure, oversight responsibility, transfer of parts 4, 5 and 7 to HUD, and refusal under OIA s 18(e) for remaining Treasury-held material.
- Lucas Place Gifted Land Public Notice: records the demand for the original gift/acquisition instrument, historical title records, Council authority, any variation or release of conditions, redevelopment/sale authority, proposed recipients, developers, contractors, financiers and destination of proceeds.
- Lucas Place Tenant Response and Media Statement: records the publication safeguard that the available records do not yet prove RLC is merely a trustee or that redevelopment/sale is unlawful; the defensible position is that the historical and legal status remains unresolved until the original documentary chain is produced.
- Public Review gifted-land explainer materials: state the review principle that modern registration is not the end of the inquiry and that gifted land must be followed back to the original paper.

Publication safeguards

- Do not state that money laundering, criminal conduct, corruption, elder abuse or unlawful sale is proved unless the source record proves it.
- Use “reported”, “alleged”, “concern”, “potential” or “requiring investigation” where the record is not yet conclusive.
- Separate satire from evidence. Label humour as humour.
- Keep the OIA schedule, source files, correspondence and title material together so readers can check the basis for the questions.
- Preserve the Ministerial response saying the concerns were noted and referred, because that response is central to the public-accountability issue.

CLOSING LINE

The Crown and councils do not earn public trust by saying “noted”. They earn it by showing the record: the instrument, the authority, the decision, the money, the protection, and the answer.