

CITY OF JOONDALUP, RELEASE OF INFORMATION

978. Hon BARRY HOUSE to the Minister for Local Government and Regional Development:

- (1) Is the minister aware of accusations by Mr Mark Armstrong of Craigie that the City of Joondalup publicly released private information contained in his builders application permit without his consent?
- (2) What authority do local governments have to release information in this way?
- (3) Does the minister condone the actions of the City of Joondalup in this case?
- (4) What action does the minister intend to take to address this matter?

Hon TOM STEPHENS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Under the Local Government Act 1995, local governments have a general power to do things for the good government of their district. That includes the provision of services. They are also authorised by the Act to impose a fee or charge for provision of information from their records.
- (3) The decision to provide this information is one for each local government to make. I am advised that the City of Joondalup provides the option on its building application form for name and address details not to be made available to bodies other than statutory authorities. I understand that due to an oversight by his builder, Mr Armstrong's details were released against his wishes.
- (4) An article on the selling of local government information appeared in the September-October 2001 edition of the Department of Local Government and Regional Development's *Local Government Update* publication. This publication is circulated to all local governments. This article urges local governments to carefully consider the views of their ratepayers and likely objections to the provision of information on privacy grounds before providing information that is not freely available. Mr Armstrong has been advised of the above points.