

Land Banking - Planning Committee at last wises up to Developers?

Written by PAG

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It appears that the Planning Committee has at last rumbled one way property developers play the planning system.

At the August P C Meeting Dandara and Heritage Homes submitted a total of three Douglas planning applications requesting a variation to earlier successful approvals. They wanted to extend the duration of each one by a further 4 years. It's usual for the Committee, in granting approval, to impose a condition that work must be started within 4 years of the date

of the decision.

According to the Minutes (18.08.14) at one point "The Committee discussed the question of land banking and whether by extending the duration of the consent the land was being sterilised for development by an alternative developer". In each case a variation was granted for 2 years only.

Within the Department of Infrastructure, Chris Thomas MHK has been allocated the task of reviewing the operation of Planning and Building Control functions.

There has been criticism of the way the Planning Committee operates and it is encouraging that it appears to be responding to changes. Keen observers may have realised from the Minutes that as well as the decision being noted a reason is also given.

A welcome introduction this year has been for interested parties to address the Planning Committee about an application.

It is important that the planning process is transparent and there are definite indications that change is being embraced.

[\[Minutes of Planning Committee Meeting 18.08.14\]](#)