



Developments to proceed

The ACT Planning and Land Authority has reviewed three recent development approvals and concluded they may be inconsistent with the Territory Plan.

The development approvals are for blocks along Wentworth Avenue in Kingston.

ACTPLA Chief Planning Executive Neil Savery said the decision to grant the development applications was a mistake.

“The leases for each of the sites allow 4,000 square metres of gross floor space. To achieve these limits, the developers submitted plans for buildings with five floors. Only four floors are allowed under the Territory Plan. There are other design remedies that would have allowed the developers to reach their allowable gross floor area.

“We should have encouraged them to look at those options and not approved a building with five floors.”

Mr Savery said ACTPLA was unable to revoke the approvals.

“The developers submitted their plans in good faith. They comply with the floor space requirements allowed by their lease. The buildings are also inside the allowable height limits. It was our mistake to approve a building with a fifth floor”.

Mr Savery said ACTPLA was taking another look at the way the Authority manages development applications.

“Nobody likes to make mistakes and it’s clear in this instance that we have made a mistake. We should not have approved a building with five floors.

“In 2004, the Auditor-General made a number of recommendations about the way ACTPLA manages development applications. We have implemented each of those recommendations. In light of what’s happened here, we think it’s reasonable to take another look at how we manage this part of our business.

“You can’t eradicate human error, but we can further strengthen our processes to ensure our decisions are reliable and sound.”

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MEDIA RELEASE



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