

KEW

Developer pulls Kew appeal

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FIVE-STOREY APARTMENT BLOCK NO LONGER ON THE CARDS

A STUNNING about-face has seen Kew Development Corporation, a subsidiary of Walker Corporation, withdraw its appeal to the Heritage Council of Victoria over the rejection of plans for a five-storey apartment complex in Princess St.

The developer's withdrawal from the appeal means it has until October, when its other, current per-

mit expires, to begin demolition and restoration work at the Kew Cottages site.

In March, the developer lost a bid to have the Heritage Council "reconstituted" claiming council members hearing its case "lacked planning law expertise".

In a letter to the Heritage Council, Planning and Prop-

erty Partners, acting for the developer, said in light of the refusal to reconstitute "our client has decided the appropriate way forward ... is to withdraw the appeal".

The final stages of a Heritage Council appeal into the apartment complex were due to be held last week, but the eleventh hour withdrawal sent to relevant par-

ties on April 29 meant the case would not proceed.

Kew Cottages Coalition president Brian Walsh, who has been calling for State Government intervention, said restoration work should now begin at the site.

However, he feared the developer may "walk away altogether" from the site.

"I understand Walker

have made a sensible decision, and withdrawn their appeal to the Heritage Council," Mr Walsh said. "I hope this is because the premier has finally intervened and told both Walker and Major Projects Victoria to stop wasting time and get on with the job of properly restoring the heritage buildings and parkland before the Kew

Cottages contract runs out this October.

"Our fear is that Walker may now look for an extension between now and October, but at this stage it looks like there is some light at the end of the tunnel."

Kew state Liberal MP Tim Smith said he was thrilled with the withdrawal as it was a "totally inappropriate development" for the site.

Walker Corporation was contacted for comment.