Property Week

NEWS

Small-site housing applications take 60 weeks for approval

By Leonore Schick | Wed 23 September 2020

Housing applications on small sites are taking on average 60 weeks for approval, research shows.

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The study, conducted by Lichfields, says these applications take almost five times longer than the statutory 13-week period, with an average of 23 weeks spent negotiating Section 106 agreements.

"Delays of this magnitude often mean the difference between make or break for small developers – with the SME sector struggling over recent decades as a result," the report said.

Marc Vlessing, the founder and chief executive of Pocket Living, which launched the research, said: "Inflexible planning policies inevitably lead to protracted negotiations, which are having a huge impact on the SME sector where margins are tighter and delays can have catastrophic consequences."

"This is the first time a study of this kind has been undertaken and the findings are clear – smaller developments on urban sites are inhibited by a complex and cumbersome planning system that fails to differentiate between small and large schemes," said James Fennell, chief executive of Lichfield.