

Editorial

Reversal a win for good governance

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THE Shoalhaven has many beautiful towns and villages that offer idyllic lifestyles for residents.

Their natural beauty, combined with the high number of old beach shacks located in premium positions, means the Shoalhaven attracts a large number of developers keen to make money by providing facilities for the plethora of people wanting their piece of paradise by the sea.

But development has to be controlled, and particularly in unspoilt areas such as exist in the Shoalhaven, has to work in harmony with the existing natural and built environment.

That is why Tuesday night's decision by Shoalhaven City Council, to overturn a decision made only two weeks earlier to allow a development in breach of its own planning regulations, was a victory for good governance.

Too often councils are in the position of having to put off what is important to try and accomplish what is urgent, and that was nearly the case with the development proposed for Fegen Street, Huskisson.

In its haste to approve what was obviously a high quality and appropriate development, the council was almost in the difficult position of ignoring its own rules and regulations.

This raises a whole range of questions about how seriously council could be taken in its discussions with other developers, about dangerous precedents, and about where lines would be drawn in the future.

But more importantly, it raises questions about proper planning, and members of the community having a say in determining the future directions of their towns.

While investment in our area, and the jobs and growth it brings, is of course vitally important, proper planning will facilitate this investment and growth by letting everyone know exactly where they stand, and what the possibilities are.