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# Homes in limbo list soars to 50,000

**EXCLUSIVE**

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FIFTY thousand proposed new homes in Sydney are stuck in the planning approvals process, driving up prices and fuelling the housing affordability crisis, the Urban Taskforce developer lobby group says.

A slow approvals process, particularly involving authorities such as the Roads and Maritime Service, was causing developers to look elsewhere, Urban Taskforce chief executive Chris Johnson argued.

Another reason for a slow-down in development had been local government amalgamations, meaning developments were going through councils much more slowly, said Mr Johnson, who called for the government to fast-track approval of developments.

Mr Johnson said Auckland realised there was a housing supply crisis recently and worked to fast-track approvals.

Of the 50,000 homes, Mr Johnson said "most of its apartments, some of its houses out on the fringes".



Developer Kerry Keogh from Austino said yesterday he had been waiting for approval to build 654 apartments near Epping station for three years.

Annoyed by the delay, Mr Keogh moved ahead with a development in Auckland where the approval process took just six months.

Mr Johnson said Sydney was the second most unaffordable city in the world for housing after Hong Kong.

"When Premier Gladys Berejiklian said that housing affordability was her main priority and supply was critical to this, the Urban Taskforce asked our members if there were new homes that were held up in the planning system," Mr Johnson said.

"We were amazed at the response we got.

"Over a few days we had a list of around 50,000 new homes that were in the planning system but were being frustrated by council or state government requirements."

Planning Minister Anthony Roberts confirmed a problem but said: "The leading cause of delays relates to infrastructure planning and contributions, assessment issues, and design. We are getting on with the job of delivering more housing."

