

How to check if everything on a property is council-approved prior to going unconditional and, if something *isn't* approved, how to negotiate the approvals

Inserting a due diligence clause into the sales contract can save some big dollars and put the power of negotiation into the buyer's hands, according to buyers agent Liz Wilcox of Hot Property Specialists Buyers Agency.



Wilcox remembers an experience when she found her client a property in East Brisbane. As per protocol, Wilcox inserted into the sales contract, among many other clauses, a 12-day (12 business days) due diligence clause so her client had time to obtain all council approvals through a conveyancer.

The search surfaced some issues with the council approvals, issues that turned the negotiation in her client's favour, she says. "We found out the final council approvals hadn't been carried out on the extensions, including the pool."

So Wilcox returned to the selling agent "to see if the seller would, at their own expense, have these approvals carried out".

"The sellers believed that when they purchased the property their solicitor had done all of these checks, but they clearly didn't as the finals had never been done. This was a costly mistake for the sellers," she says.

"After a few weeks and heaps of phone calls, time and effort from us, the sellers were able to get everything approved and we settled on the property."