



**PENDING:** The fate of the Kingfisher Road Park and Norscot Koppies, which were allegedly bought illegally in a shady land sale, will be heard in court on 10 August.

## City council in land victory

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Public parks and open spaces that were allegedly bought illegally could soon return to the hands of the City of Joburg.

This follows a court interdict for four properties valued at R30 million that were illegally transferred, to be returned to the municipality. The properties are located in Sandton, and include Mushroom Farm and the open space at the intersection of Main Road and William Nicol Drive.

Ashton Bodrick of the Joburg Property Company (JPC) told the *Review* that the fate of the two properties in Fourways - Kingfisher Road park and the Norscot Koppies - would be heard in court on 10 August.

In this case, the four properties were part of 33 alleged to have been illegally transferred to two purchasers in just one day via forged applications for lost title deeds. No monies were received by the JPC.

Subsequent investigation confirmed the signature of JPC managing director Helen Botes had been forged.

The respondents have since entered a notice of intention to oppose the re-transfer and were given 15 court days from 19 July to file their

answering affidavits.

Municipal spokesman Nthatsi Modingoane and Bodrick said the administrative process to re-register the four properties in the name of the municipality was already underway.

"During this time, the original title deeds of all 33 properties will remain in possession and control of the JPC at an undisclosed location.

"In addition, further steps will be taken to prevent incidents of this nature happening in future," said Bodrick.

Meanwhile, the municipality and JPC were finalising an internal forensic investigation of all officials to ensure that any form of corruption was rooted out.

Attorneys alleged to be affiliated to the Law Society of the Northern Province, who were involved in the transaction, are being investigated and could be barred from practising.

The municipality further stated that the National Prosecuting Authority and the Hawks had been informed of the alleged fraud and were investigating.

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