

Jinja leaders on the spot over blocked access roads

BY GODFREY MASIKO

JINJA. Jinja City authorities are under scrutiny for failing to implement directives from the National Planning Authority (NPA) to reopen illegally blocked access roads and service lanes, nearly a year after the orders were issued.

A March 17 status report addressed to the town clerk shows that the NPA investigated complaints lodged in March last year regarding the closure of at least 14 access routes across the city.

The complaints prompted a joint inspection by officials from the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development, Ministry of Local Government, and the National Building Review Board.

Following the inspection, the NPA directed city authorities to reopen all blocked access roads within three months and submit a compliance report.

However, nearly a year later, the directives remain largely unimplemented.

Sources within the city say the delay has sparked concern among residents,

with some accusing officials of deliberately failing to act.

Mr Eric Kakaire, a resident of Spire Road, alleged that authorities are shielding individuals responsible for the illegal closures.

"On many occasions, the NPA has asked Jinja City authorities to open blocked access roads and service lanes, but they have remained silent," he said. "This is because they are protecting those responsible," he added.

He cited areas such as Oboja Road, Kisiki, and Kikumbo, where access routes near private developments remain blocked.

"There is a lot of impunity in this city, and some of these problems are being coordinated from within City Hall itself," he added.

Planned city under threat

Jinja has long been regarded as one of Uganda's best-planned urban centres, with an interconnected road network designed to ensure smooth traffic flow.

However, residents say this order is steadily being eroded, with the city gradually losing its planned outlook due to what they describe as the sale of

public project (DRDIP).

"The late Banura enabled the district

According to the tentative



Kisiki, one of the roads in Jinja that was closed after an investor constructed a factory in the middle of it. PHOTO: TAUO NAKATO

public access roads to private developers.

Some of the affected routes that previously connected homes to main roads have since been blocked, with permanent structures—including factories—constructed within former road reserves. Urban planners warn that such

developments risk distorting the city's physical plan and could accelerate its transformation into an unplanned settlement if left unchecked.

Fresh directive issued

The NPA has since issued a fresh directive requiring the town clerk to submit

a status report within five working days and immediately implement the outstanding orders.

The Authority also indicated that an inspection team will visit Jinja in early April to assess compliance. Failure to act is likely to attract further scrutiny on the leaders.