



What Happens After You Buy?

What Abuja Investors Should Know About Land Banking

There is a particular kind of fear that comes with buying land in Nigeria.

You see an attractive property in Abuja. The location looks promising. The price appears reasonable. The developer presents documents and explains the payment plan. Then another thought comes to mind.

“What if the government changes something?”

“What if the land is revoked?”

“What if another person has a claim to it?”

“What if this is another land scam?”

For many prospective property buyers, these questions are enough to delay a decision for months or even years.

The fear is understandable because Nigeria’s land market has experienced genuine problems. But there is also a danger in allowing fear to make every property opportunity look like a scam.

The better approach is to understand why land banking works, where the risks are and what investors should verify before committing their money.

Why Land Banking Attracts Abuja Investors

Land banking is based on a simple idea. Instead of purchasing property primarily for immediate use, an investor acquires land and holds it for a longer period while the surrounding area develops. As roads, commercial activity, housing estates, businesses and other infrastructure expand, demand for land in the area can change.

This is particularly relevant to Abuja because the capital continues to expand beyond its older, established districts. Locations that once appeared far from major activity can become more connected as development moves outward.

BusinessDay identified land banking as one of the real estate investment areas attracting attention in Nigeria, describing it as a long term strategy based on holding undeveloped land while urbanisation, population growth and infrastructure potentially increase its value.

But there is something investors must understand.



Land banking does not remove risk. It changes the type of risk.

Instead of worrying mainly about immediate rental income, the investor must pay attention to the future potential of the location, the legal status of the property and the ability to hold the asset over time.

The Fear About Government Changes

This is probably one of the biggest concerns among Abuja buyers.

Nigeria's land system is regulated, and land rights come with conditions. In the FCT, AGIS states that the Land Use Act provides the legal framework for land administration and that a Right of Occupancy can be affected by circumstances including breaches of its conditions or the government's need for land for an overriding public purpose, subject to applicable law. That reality should not be hidden from buyers.

At the same time, it does not mean that government can simply wake up one morning and randomly take every person's property without a legal framework.

The important lesson is that property ownership comes with responsibilities. Ground rent, title registration, permitted land use and other requirements matter.

AGIS also provides official procedures for title registration, deeds, powers of attorney and other land related transactions in the FCT.

So the question an investor should ask is not, "Can government laws ever change?" They can.

The more useful question is, "Am I buying an asset that has been properly documented and can be properly traced within the existing legal and administrative system?"

The Real Problem Is Often Due Diligence

Many land scams do not begin with something that looks obviously fraudulent.

They may begin with an attractive location, a convincing salesperson and professional looking documents.

That is why buyers need to look beyond appearances.

A 2026 Abuja land fraud case illustrates the importance of this. According to evidence reported from an ongoing Federal High Court case, investigators alleged that certain parties sold portions of disputed Katampe and Guzape properties without producing documents showing that they were the lawful owners or had authority to sell the land. The defendants have denied the allegations. There is another important development. In 2026, the FCTA cancelled 485 area council allocations after a verification process found the documents connected to the applications were fake or not genuine.

These cases demonstrate something important for anyone considering land banking.

The risk is not simply buying land. The risk is buying land without properly understanding what you are buying.



What Should an Investor Check?

Start with the title and ownership history.

Ask who owns the land and what gives that person or company the authority to sell it. Where appropriate, carry out a search through the relevant land administration authorities and have qualified professionals examine the documentation.

Next, examine the location.

A cheap plot is not automatically a good investment. An investor needs to understand the area's development pattern, accessibility, infrastructure plans, surrounding developments and potential demand.

Then examine the investment structure.

If you are buying through a structured land banking arrangement, understand exactly what your money represents. Know the size of your interest, the documentation you will receive, the payment structure, the holding period and the process for transferring or exiting the investment. Most importantly, do not allow urgency to replace due diligence.

A property that requires you to pay immediately because "the price will change tonight" deserves more questions, not fewer.

Abuja's Land Market Requires Calm Investors

The answer to Abuja's land concerns is not to stop investing.

It is to invest with your eyes open.

There are real risks in Nigerian real estate. There are also legitimate opportunities. The difference often comes down to the quality of the transaction, the documentation behind the property and the level of due diligence carried out before money changes hands.

Land banking should therefore not be sold as a guaranteed path to wealth. It should be understood for what it is: a long term real estate strategy that depends on the quality of the underlying asset and the growth of the location.

The investor's job is to ask questions before buying.

The developer's job is to provide clear information.

And the professionals involved should help ensure that the transaction is properly structured.

What De Velli Can Help With

De Velli helps investors explore structured real estate opportunities in Abuja with attention to location, documentation and long term ownership. Before you buy land, let us help you understand what you are buying.