



'FREE FOR ALL': The GF Jooste Hospital in Manenberg has been at the mercy of vandals since being decommissioned.

Picture: AYANDA NDAMANE

Police-training plans for GF Jooste deserted

Sandiso Phaliso

WHILE the remains of the former GF Jooste Hospital are being stripped by vandals, the city says it has resolved that a planned metro police training centre would not be located on the site.

Mayco member for safety, security and social services JP Smith said the city had instead identified land in Philippi to host the training centre.

Vandals have descended on the old hospital, situated in Manenberg – scavenging its rooftops, paving bricks and corrugated iron, among other things.

Smith said the city did not

have the capacity to guard the buildings.

"I can't justify the resources of law enforcement. It is not our property (and) it is not in our jurisdiction, otherwise everyone else would want us to guard them."

The transfer of the site never materialised. Smith would not disclose the location of the site in Philippi.

There is no urgency in moving to the Philippi site, and the city is consulting. By June, the public should be informed of the finer details and time frames.

GF Jooste Hospital was decommissioned in 2014 with the intention to be rebuilt by

Looters have steadily been ripping the government facility apart

last year. Doctors and nurses were placed at the Mitchells Plain District Hospital and Heideveld Emergency Centre.

While there are 26 security guards on site, working day and night shifts, looters have steadily been ripping the gov-

ernment facility apart. This week, the Cape Times witnessed scores of people removing the building structure, roof, planks, and some were digging trenches, possibly searching for metal wiring.

"It was a free for all," said a resident, who did not want to be named for fear of reprisals.

"People take the material to rebuild their own houses. They claim the hospital belongs to Manenberg and they are entitled to rip it off."

Police spokesperson Andre Traut said a security company had been appointed to secure the premises. He said, "frequent patrols are being conducted at the site" by police,

but a 24-hour deployment "is not possible".

Department of Transport and Public Works spokesperson Byron la Hoe could not be reached for comment.

Health MEC NomaFrench Mbombo's spokesperson, Zimkhitha Mqutheni, said that after the decommissioning of GF Jooste, great care was taken to ensure that essential services were covered adequately for the affected area.

She said there was an extra 56 beds in the Carnation Ward at Lentegur, and the development of the Heideveld facility ensured more than 30 beds in terms of emergency cases.

sandiso.phaliso@inl.co.za