



MILLION-RAND VIEW: An artist's impression of the proposed Muizenberg police station, to be built at a cost of R100m. Inset is a view of the site today.

'Police palace' set for mountain-side

Muizenberg police station extension carries R100m price tag

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AN ELABORATE extension of the Muizenberg police station will require large-scale excavation of the mountain, with the cost estimated at about R20 000 a square metre, the Cape Argus has reliably learnt.

The R100 million project, when completed, would include two new buildings, one of them two floors higher than the existing heritage building which houses the current police station, would be built where a large part of the mountain once would have been.

While the police refused to take responsibility for what would be a multimillion-rand price tag, saying the Muizenberg police station would be fully funded by the

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national Department of Public Works, it has since emerged that the planning and design of the station was contained in the police's 2013/14 annual report.

Senior researcher at the Social Justice Coalition (SJC) Dalli Weyers said: "That makes it clear that even where Public Works takes the lead, the SAPS has a hand."

The police – which initially failed to respond to the Cape Argus's questions about the mega-upgrade to the Muizenberg police station as well as plans for others in Cape Town – revealed that there were three new stations being planned. These would be in Tafelsig,

Makhaza and Nyanga.

However, the SJC, which has been at the forefront of the battle for additional policing resources in crime-ridden areas, poked holes in the police's story.

Weyers said the police's annual reports for the 2013/14 to 2015/16 financial years indicate that each year police undertook "site clearance" for a police station in Weltevreden in Nyanga and each year the target was reported as "not completed".

He said the police report for 2015/16 also revealed a "not completed" status for the Tafelsig police station.

"According to the SAPS's Strategic Plan for 2014 to 2019, the SAPS committed to the construction of the Makhaza Police Station by 2019," Weyers said.

Public Works spokesperson Thami Mchunu had previously said that accord-

ing to the department's records, there were no requests from the police for additional police stations in Cape Town.

National police spokesperson Sally de Beer was, however, adamant that the projects were under way, at "different stages in the building process". "One cannot supply an exact date of completion as there are many different factors which go into this planning," she said.

The SJC insisted that both the SAPS and Public Works "were to be held responsible for the R100m price tag" of the Muizenberg police station, which the organisation said would be a "police palace".

Muizenberg councillor Aimee Kuhl said she was against the extension of the police station, but wanted the upgrade to continue as it was "much-needed". – siyabonga.sesant@inl.co.za