



STOLEN: A missing manhole cover.



MISSING: There is extensive damage to the Union Buildings including parts of the surrounding fence.



DAMAGED: Brickwork and part of the fence.



STRIPPED: No fittings for lights.

Complaints about state of Union Buildings

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PEOPLE visiting the Union Buildings in Pretoria are in for a nasty surprise.

They will be forced to contend with an unsightly street, with missing parts of a fence and street lights and dangling wires, unbecoming of the seat of national government and one of the most important tourist attractions in the capital.

What used to be a beautiful garden on Government Avenue bordering the Union Buildings on the west can hardly be recognised with all the weeds that have taken over.

And the two large gaping holes in the fence are not contributing to the attractiveness of the area.

As if neglecting that was not bad enough, cyclists, joggers and residents in nearby areas alleged that vagrants have now invaded the spot, and established a permanent settlement among the rubble.

Concerned residents and passers-by have been complaining to

the Department of Public Works regarding the state of the gardens for months. Some of the issues have been attended to, but others have been left in a sorry state.

In e-mails from residents to the department dating back to February, a concerned resident wrote: "The section of Government Avenue up the hill has more than 20 areas where the wall and or fence have been damaged.

"It seems as if this route is also being used as a shortcut and carries

heavy traffic for which it is clearly not designed."

Other issues raised included a missing manhole cover, posing a major safety hazard, and rubbish dumped along the road and just inside the entrance of the park.

The department said the work to clear the area started a while ago.

"The area which has no fence will be guarded at night until it has been fixed," departmental spokesperson Thamsanqa Mchunu said.