

Police housed in neglected building

Fanie Mthupha

Faniem@caxton.co.za

Members of the Boksburg SAPS feel that they are being forced to work in what they call a “dangerous and unhealthy building” because the government lacks the money to maintain its property.

The state-owned building located between Commissioner and South streets is structurally unsound and puts the public and its occupiers, the Boksburg SAPS detectives, at risk.

The property has become one of the city’s many crumbling and

derelict properties left at the mercy of vandals and thieves.

The Advertiser recently reported on a number of buildings that had been left to ruin and degradation, but part of the once-beautiful giant police building currently being used by the Boksburg SAPS detectives appears to be the worst eyesore in the city.

Neighbours and police officers, who asked to remain anonymous, said they are fed up with the building’s current state of decay and have called for action to restore or demolish the ruin apparently belonging to public works.

Part of the building, on South Street, has fallen into ruins after suffering years of total neglect. It now looks as though it will come crashing down at any moment.

Police detectives are using part of the building located along Commissioner Street.

Residents said the grotty, decaying building has also become a headache for them because it attracts rodents and criminals, who target scrap metals and even the police officers’ belongings.

A portion of the roof has already caved in. The weeds sprout up all over the yard and inside some of the rooms. Most of the windows have been smashed, the walls have deep cracks, the paint is peeling from the rotting wall and the open space in the yard is engulfed by rubbish and rubble. When officers complain, they are told that the department



Crumbling away: The door-less building appears to be in danger of caving in any time.

does not have enough money to maintain or carry out the necessary extensive repair work.

Residents have, however, proposed that the state sell the house or convert it into a youth community centre. “Why is such a huge building worth millions of rand being left empty to rot in a city where thousands of people are desperate for places to live or do business?” asked a neighbour.

The rot is gradually encroaching on the space used by the detectives as their offices. The section in question is also not properly maintained,

with the structure also beginning to fall apart due to poor maintenance.

The detectives’ offices look like they are reasonably inhabitable from outside, but the interior is in an appalling state, with damp walls, peeling paint and leaking sewer and water pipes. There is poor lighting, and officers share one toilet with the public.

The officers are also complaining that there are not enough resources for them to carry out their duties.

This journalist was shown the shocking condition of the detectives’ offices, with officers high-

Print Exclusive

lighting the building’s most unsanitary areas, which make the property look unfit for human occupancy.

The Advertiser is still waiting for answers from the public works department and council.

-@MthuphaFanie



Despite all the years of neglect, the toilet bowl in one of the toilets is still standing proud.

