

Court order for stadium demolition

Drakenstein Municipality has filed for a court order to have the dilapidated, unsafe and unhealthy Sanddrift Stadium in Paarl demolished. This follows many complaints from residents about the dreadful, vandalised state of the stadium, and the dangerous conditions it encourages, attracting criminal elements and unsavoury characters to the neighbourhood.

In addition, Sanddrift is situated close to a school, endangering the lives of local learners. Although the municipality's By-law Enforcement Unit has patrolled the area in an effort to secure it, the problem has worsened.

Lauren Waring, Director of Planning and Development, said the municipality has been in discussion with the National Department of Public Works since 2014 about the rundown stadium, in Sanddrift Street. It also approached the Western Cape Department of Public Works to play a facilitating role in this.

"The municipality has continuously requested that the national department clean up the stadium and secure the area, or demolish the dilapidated



Sanddrift Stadium in the heart of Paarl is considered a blot on the landscape. Photo: Devidean Moses

structure," Waring said. "Or, allow the municipality to take over the facility so that it can be restored and operated as a safe, fully functional sports facility for the Drakenstein community."

Waring said an inspection by the municipality's Chief Building Inspector of the stadium in October 2017 showed that it was indeed unsound and derelict, posing a danger to people entering the

structure, including homeless people who often find refuge here. The area is not barricaded or fenced in.

The municipality then wrote to the government, and specifically the Minister of Public Works, informing it of these concerns, stating that the Sanddrift Stadium was unhealthy, unsanitary, unsightly and structurally unsound.

The municipality also made clear its intention to declare the structure a problem building, should it not be repaired within 21 days, or should the municipality not receive any notice of why it should not be declared as such. Neither was received, and on 20 April this year the municipality indeed declared the stadium a problem building.

"The Sanddrift Stadium is an eyesore for Drakenstein and its residents," said Waring.

The municipality then filed a court order in August against the national government, and the Minister of Public Works, ordering the respondents to demolish the structure, and remove all rubble and waste caused by the demolition within 30 days of this order.