

SERVICE DELIVERY



THE dilapidated building at 104 Darling Street.
| ZUKISWA MINYI/African News Agency (ANA)

‘Repair building, don’t evict residents’

MARVIN CHARLES

THE Department of Public Works is under pressure to fix the dilapidated building at 104 Darling Street, close to the Castle of Good Hope.

Residents and housing advocacy group Reclaim the City held a picket outside the derelict building on Friday.

“The intention is for the department to repair the building and not to evict the residents. The intention is also to engage with them to provide these residents with adequate accommodation,” said spokesperson Bevil Lucas.

The department said it would provide the Cape Argus with answers on the status of the building today.

Last year, the department said it planned to evict the residents who had occupied the building.

Many of the tenants who currently occupy the building are elderly or disabled, and there are also a number of children.

The building is in a state of disrepair and has become something of an eyesore.

“There are around 80 to 100 residents who will have nowhere to go if they are evicted. It’s also a very

historical area and we understand there are plans to demolish the building,” Lucas said.

Last year the building’s roof caught fire; the damage has yet to be repaired by the department.

The City has declared it a problem building according to its by-laws.

Ward councillor for the area Dave Bryant said: “The condition of the site is horrific, but what’s important to note is that it’s a nationally owned site – the City’s hands are tied.”

Bryant said the City had struggled to get an answer from the

Department of Public Works.

“We have struggled to engage with them and we understand the department is under severe pressure because they have so many buildings that are in a bad state,” he said.

Advocacy group Ndifuna Ukwazi researcher Jared Rossouw said: “National government talks a big game about land reform and redistribution, but its own departments leave well-located public land underutilised and uncared for.

“If we are to resolve the urban land question we should start with the low-hanging fruit.”