

Terms of property hand-over not favourable

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Mr Reed said police had arrested a vandal in July, but Diep River police spokesman Constable Zak Marais said they had no record of anyone having been arrested at the building.

Residents could report suspicious activity there to 10111 or directly to the Diep River police at 021 710 7300, said Constable Marais.

Mr Reed raised a red flag about the deterioration of the building in January last year. He said it had been vacant for many years. A security guard had once patrolled there but not since the end of 2016.

Mr Reed has written to the regional security manager of the national Department of Public Works asking them to post a security guard, but that hasn't happened.

Edgeware Road's Shelley Becker said neighbours were often patching holes in the fence to stop thieves from stripping the building.

In 2015, South Peninsula High School pupils marched to Central Primary, saying they wanted to occupy and repair the abandoned school ("SP says they will cut locks to occupy building," Bulletin June 4, 2015).

In May 2016, the provincial government told then SP principal Brian Isaacs the school governing body, having occupied the school, would be responsible for its upkeep.

South Peninsula's acting principal, Zeid Baker, says the governing body is willing to do this, and the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) knows of the school's plans for the building.

"They've indicated their support for the school once they had acquired the facility from the national Department of Public Works. We applied in 2006 and again in 2011 for the facility. We've received many complaints from the residents in Mile End Road. We appreciate their concern and support for the school," said Mr Baker.



■ Forgotten and forlorn – Central Primary School in Diep River.

Glenbridge principal Denville Dawson is also in negotiations with the WCED about Central Primary.

Provincial Public Works spokesman Byron La Hoe said the national department still owned the property. It had been prepared to let province take it off its hands, but negotiations for that had failed, he said, when national had insisted on back-dating the start of that deal by a year, to February 1 2017.

That had been an "unacceptable condition" for two reasons, Mr La Hoe said.

"Firstly, the condition of the building has deteriorated significantly, and taking on caretakership with effect from 1 February 2017 would oblige the Western Cape government to restore the building to a usable state at its own expense. Secondly, taking on caretakership with effect from 1 February 2017 would make the Western Cape government liable for a year's rates and taxes from that date, even though the provincial government has not had, and still does not have, the use of the facility."

The Bulletin sent questions to Mr

Mchunu on Saturday August 12 and again on Tuesday September 4 which he acknowledged, writing, "We are currently sourcing information and when we have information, we shall revert to you."

But Mr Mchunu's subsequent response, sent on Tuesday September 18, did not answer questions we asked about who would fix the derelict building and pay outstanding rates and taxes. These specific questions were re-sent to Mr Mchunu, but he did not respond by the time this edition went to print.