

WOODSTOCK

Distress over empty site

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Woodstock residents are at their wits' end regarding an open portion of land on the corner of Greatmore and York Streets.

Shamiel Abbas, chairperson for the Woodstock Community Outreach Forum, says one of the main issues is the anti-social behaviour taking place.

"The drinking that takes place – we don't have an issue with the actual vagrants staying here – but it is the partying which goes right through the night. We are getting complaints from the neighbours. There is also prostitution taking place here. This is all happening at night," he says.

He adds that the incidents witnessed have been reported to the Woodstock Improvement District's Law Enforcement office. The site is also home to what seems like abandoned cars, as vagrants on the premises were found sleeping in them.

"They break the cars up and dump the seats and the unused parts on the corner. I come past here on a regular basis, so this car has been here at least for three or four months," says Abbas.

Another resident and neighbourhood watch member, Tyger Geldenhuys, is concerned at the impact and danger the open area poses for the girls' home nearby.

"The site is opposite a girls' home and they happen to see what is happening in front of them across the road. There have been actual sexual acts taking place in front of these girls. It is a really bad element, caused by drinking and whatever is going on here," says

Geldenhuys.

Abbas says the forum has been engaging with councillor for the area, Dave Bryant, but says they have not yet received any further correspondence.

"I know from our side we have had some of our people look into the erf number of this property so that we can link it up with public works, that is the latest information that we have. We need to get hold of them because the option we got is that we want them to fence this off, but also keep an opening, because some of the children use this place to play soccer, because there are no recreational spaces for them to do those things."

Besides the problem being posed on the corner of Greatmore and York Streets, Abbas says taxis are veering off their approved routes by detouring down Greatmore Street during peak traffic hours.

"It is not as if they are driving down slowly, but they speed down here. We have children crossing the road. These are the major issues I have raised with councillor Dave Bryant in a meeting a few months ago," says Abbas.

The group has since taken it upon themselves to erect a camera to identify taxis, while also hoping to identify would-be perpetrators of dumping, which Abbas says has also been reported.

"What happens is that most of us have numbers for the City where we report various civic issues, but we also report it in our monthly meetings when we sit and meet on a bigger platform."

Bryant and the City of Cape Town had not yet responded to requests sent by *People's Post* by the time of going to print.



Shamiel Abbas stands on the corner in Woodstock which has been the site of many a social ill in the last few months.

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