

Social housing at Wingfield?

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Thank you, Tabletalk, for again focusing on the disgraceful living conditions suffered by Dunoon residents and the equally disgraceful inaction by the national government's Department of Human Settlements and the City of Cape Town ("Dunoon's Covid-19 housing plan still

on drawing board," Tabletalk, March 10).

The repeated, threadbare excuse by both the ANC and DA is the contrived shortage of land available for social housing.

The redundant apartheid-era Wingfield military base is perfectly located for workers employed in Montague Gardens and the Milnerton area.

The Department of Public Works (now headed by Minister Patricia de Lille) holds title to all state-owned property.

Why was that land

not transferred to Cape Town more than 20 years ago for social housing – except the ANC does not want to make the DA "look good", and the DA does not want more "refugees" from the Eastern Cape?

Wingfield was apparently made available by the Graaf Trust more than 100 years ago on condition that it was only to be used for military purposes, failing which it would revert to the Trust.

Is it totally beyond the negotiating capabilities of the

ANC and the DA to convince the Graaf Trust to donate that land for, say, R1 against specified commitments, for instance, that Wingfield will be used for properly designed, financed and constructed social housing for the poor and not blighted by so-called "housing opportunities" and

still more shacks?

Countries around the globe have been building social housing for the poor for decades.

Even the apartheid government built "matchboxes".

Is it beyond post-apartheid South Africa to do better than RDP houses otherwise notorious as "TB houses",

or shacks that are miles from any job possibilities?

Wingfield could be an opportunity for Cape Town, in conjunction with architects and town planners, to lead the world in creating imaginative, liveable and socially functional housing that is fit-for-purpose in the 21st century.