

Action promised on stalled school buildings

Guy Rogers

The provincial department of education says it is moving to resolve the crippling construction impasse at David Livingstone Comprehensive School in Schauderville.

A major upgrade project at the school came to a standstill 18 months ago, amid a welter of similar stoppages at other schools across Nelson Mandela Bay as contractors pulled out due to non-payment.

The issue came to the fore again this week, with a petition drawn up by the Schauderville community voicing their anger and concern about the matter.

Education department spokesperson Malibongwe Mtima said yesterday afternoon the department was determined to resolve the matter.



NO PROGRESS: The abandoned construction site at David Livingstone Comprehensive School in Schauderville Picture: FREDLIN ADRIAAN

“Our district manager is due to respond tonight to questions and he will be explaining the challenges and the proposed way forward.

“In the meantime, we will be organising a delegation to go to David Livingstone to en-

gage the school and the community about the matter.”

Earlier, Eastern Cape public works and infrastructure spokesperson Vuyokazi Mbanjwa said public works was keen to finish the job but was awaiting the budget allo-

cation from the education department for the incoming financial year to do so.

In mid-2019, a Herald investigation found that building materials and infrastructure had been stolen, vandalised and left to rot.

Principals and contracted construction companies said the reason for the stoppages was that the provincial government had not made the necessary payments.

The department said in response at the time that the payment issues were being resolved.

Mbanjwa said yesterday the David Livingstone project had not recommenced since then because it had been underfunded by the education department.

“The department of public

works and infrastructure has the ability to institute a completion contractor to carry out the outstanding works.

“However, sufficient budget has to be allocated by the client, the department of education, for the project.”

She said the same funding problems applied to the other school infrastructure projects around the metro that had come to a standstill.

“The department of education infrastructure portfolio is over-committed and the effects are felt provincially.

“The provincial government led by the departments of education and public works and infrastructure are engaging various initiatives in a bid to resolve the issues.”

Schauderville Dinsmore

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