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School build at standstill

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Construction of a multi-million rand high school in Sir Lowry's Pass, which started earlier this year, has been brought to a halt following a labour dispute between the contractor and workers on site.

Work to the R87,6 million school, which is expected to accommodate 1 100 learners, has been at a standstill for just over a week.

The original contractual completion date was set for next year December. "However, sadly this date is no longer achievable given the delays," explained

Bronagh Hammond, spokesperson for the provincial education department.

"The new completion date would need to be confirmed. The department is engaging with the provincial Department of Public Works, which is managing the project on its behalf, on the delays."

According to workers on-site, there are several matters they are demanding be addressed. One of the issues is apparently about money being owed to workers, including back-pay by the contractor, RC Civils.

There are also allegations that there's no water on site, with workers claiming water is being using from a nearby

household, which in turn is affecting the municipal account.

There are also claims of derogatory remarks allegedly being passed by the foreman to the workers, as well as a lack of protective equipment provided to workers.

Last week the South African National Civic Organisation (Sanco) held meetings with the workers, who had requested its assistance in the matter.

Sanco organiser Riaan Hendricks said workers have lodged a complaint with the Human Rights Commission on the foreman's alleged derogatory remarks.

"We are here to assist in mediating a solution to these grievances and ensuring workers' rights are protected," Hendricks pointed out.

A week after its closure there was still no movement at the construction site and no indication of when the issue would be resolved.

The provincial Department of Public



For more than a week now the construction of a new high school in Sir Lowry's Pass has been halted. Photo: Yaseen Gaffar

Works acknowledged receipt of a request to comment on the matter, but no reply was received at the time of going to print.

The appointed contractor, RC Civils, was also asked to comment on the matter last week, but failed to respond by Tuesday morning (29 November).

Cloud Nine