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SETTLERS DIG IN

'Happy Valley' tied up in reams of red tape

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THE national Department of Public Works and Infrastructure says it has completed the pre-feasibility study which was discussed with the City on Erf 1117, known as the Happy Valley camp in Table View.

The department is now in the process of conducting a bankability feasibility study on the land.

The piece of land opposite the Netcare Blaauwberg Hospital has been a subject of discussion on social media with residents raising concerns over its expansion, saying more shacks were going up. The residents are concerned that if further invasions were not stopped it would grow into a mini-Dunoon.

Earlier this year, the national Department of Public Works said it was in the process of releasing the land for human settlement after the residents threatened legal action. However, to date, the department has failed to fence off the piece of land.

Zara Nicholson, media liaison



HAPPY Valley informal settlement opposite Netcare Blaauwberg Hospital is expanding. | AYANDA NDAMANE African News Agency (ANA)

officer to Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure Patricia de Lille, said security had been placed on site to prevent further invasion while the department was finalising the process of bankability with the City.

Ward councillor Paul Swart said the camp wasn't expanding, but there had been a couple of shacks "some distance away" from the initial group where in recent times they built structures.

Swart said the City was in negotiations with the department to secure the site.

However, camp leader Franscena

Bodkin said private security was only deployed yesterday after questions sent by the *Cape Argus* to the department on Wednesday.

Bodkin confirmed that there were new tents erected next to their structures by youngsters whom she said were mostly from Atlantis.

Bodkin said the original 18 woodcutters had been in the camp for the past 18 years and were sharing one tap and a single toilet.

"Initially we were 18 individuals and later grew to 38, excluding the people that recently erected their tents.

We have seen more people erecting tents, but we do not have the power to stop them.

"This is the Department of Public Works and the Infrastructure work and the municipality to ensure that there is no further invasion of the land.

"These people usually arrive here at night and when we wake up in the morning are greeted by more structures, and there is nothing we can do," she said.

Bodkin said they would not vacate the land until the City commits to building them houses in the area.