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Almost half a billion rand to fix estate

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The Bryntirion Estate will spend about R458-million on repairs and maintenance soon, the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure has announced.

DPWI Minister Sihle Zikalala made the announcement during his budget vote for 2023/24.

The department will spend an estimated 62% of R42.5-billion of its budget over the medium term on goods and services, mainly repairs and maintenance of state-owned buildings and lease agreements.

DPWI spokesperson Thami Mchunu told *Rekord* that it was necessary to upgrade the presidential estate because it had deteriorated over time.

He said the sewer and stormwater management systems as well as new bulk water supply, including a booster pump station to ensure sufficient water pressure to the estate, needed repairs.

The estate incorporates 28 properties, including Mahlamba Ndlopfu, the official Pretoria home of President Cyril Ramaphosa, 15 tennis courts, a 9-hole presidential golf course and a helipad.

Mchunu said the refurbishments on roads, water and sewer reticulation at Bryntirion Estate would ensure facilities within the compound such as Goedehoop House were upgraded, while construction of a new command centre and security gates (gates 1 and 2) were earmarked, including that for the dog unit offices.

The amount for upgrades is split as follows:

- upgrade of roads, water and sewer reticulation at Bryntirion Estate (R220-million)
- upgrade of Goedehoop House (R14-million)
- Construction of the new Command



The sewer system is old and dilapidated, the project will replace the sewer system as well as the stormwater management system.

Public works department spokesperson Thami Mchunu



The estate incorporates 28 properties, including Mahlamba Ndlopfu, the official Pretoria home of President Cyril Ramaphosa, 15 tennis courts, a 9-hole presidential golf course and a helipad. **Photo: Shaun Sproule**

Centre (R120-million)

- Construction of the Security gate 1 & 2, and offices for the dog unit (R104-million).

He said the roads were deteriorating and required repairs to meet the required standard.

"The sewer system is old and dilapidated, the project will replace the sewer system as well as the stormwater management system."

The estate has a low water pressure system, therefore a new bulk water supply connection including a booster pump station, will be constructed to ensure that there is

sufficient water pressure on the estate," said Mchunu.

He said the estate was also a heritage site and hence the project would address its heritage requirements as well as making the houses habitable.

"As for security, the estate does not conform to security standards required by SAPS security assessment, therefore the security projects will be implemented to ensure security compliance."

He said the last security and facility upgrade was in February 2018.

Recently DPWI threatened strong action

to resolve procurement practices for state property or property occupied by public representatives.

Zikalala on Tuesday, June 6 demanded strong action and explanation on some of the questionable procurement-related expenditures for the maintenance of houses occupied by public representatives.

Zikalala had in May announced an appointment of a three-man panel comprising a senior legal practitioner and experts with vast experience in government procurement processes to investigate procurement practices.

These involve a kitchen refurbishment to the tune of R1.4-million, curtains procured at R54 000 and fumigation for R240 000.

Government has property in Cape Town and Pretoria.

Zikalala said his department needed to get to the bottom of what at face value appeared to be hugely inflated prices.

"President Cyril Ramaphosa has directed us to under no circumstances tolerate wasteful or any excessive, unreasonable or potentially corrupt practices," said Zikalala.

"It is time that we get to the bottom of these issues that in the court of public opinion discredit the public representatives and portray them as if they have sanctioned such procurement," he said.

"We have a duty to lead by example and set the right tone in spending public monies as there is a need to ensure that we spend public money prudently."

The panel will look into the pricing practices, procurement related to maintenance and do comparisons.

"The costs on some of these items are not justifiable and smack of mischief by service providers who seem to have identified the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure as a milking cow."