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# Officials demolish illegal house near affluent Mthatha suburb

Sikho Ntshobane

Any dwelling built illegally on municipal land will be demolished, as one Mthatha resident has learnt to his bitter cost.

This was the clear warning given to land-grabbers by King Sabata Dalindyebo (KSD) municipal bosses yesterday after they sent a backhoe to tear down a posh nine-roomed house built near the affluent suburb of Southridge in Mthatha.

The almost-completed house is one of many that have sprung up on vacant land alongside Nelson Mandela Drive on the busy N2.

The house was demolished after the sheriff of the Mthatha high court, Ntuso Majokweni, backed by armed police and KSD municipal law enforcement officers, gave the go-ahead yesterday morning.

KSD acting mayor Nkosi Mkhanyiseli Dudumayo, who oversaw the demolition, said the local municipality had recently been granted a court order to forge ahead with the demolition.

The owner had been given 10 days after the court order to comply and demolish the



**DOWN IT GOES:** This house near one of Mthatha's affluent suburbs was demolished yesterday by the King Sabata Dalindyebo Municipality  
Pictures: LULAMILE FENI

house, but had failed to do so. "We had to follow proper processes," Dudumayo said. "The land is part of our assets as the municipality. "Any land in KSD must be protected for the benefit of the people of this area."

According to a statement from the municipality, the owner of the house was served with a contravention notice on July 13 2021. He then visited the municipal building control inspectorate, where the process was

outlined and proof of ownership was requested. However, he failed to provide this, as well as municipal-approved building plans. The matter was then referred to the municipality's legal services for action, and a

court order for the demolition of the house was sought. The homeowner could not be reached for comment. Dudumayo said the land in question formed part of 430 vacant sites donated by public works to KSD in 2017 for the



**ILLEGAL STRUCTURE:** Armed police keep watch as the Southridge Park house is demolished yesterday by the King Sabata Dalindyebo Municipality after it was illegally built on prime land

construction of the Southridge Park extension 10 township. Over the years, the municipality has battled land grabs in and around Mthatha.

In 2014, it was reported that at least 100ha of vacant municipal land in different parts of the city — some earmarked for housing development — had been invaded by the so-called land-grabbers.

Mthatha Ratepayers and Residents' Association spokesperson Madyibi Ngxekana gave the municipality the thumbs-up for its action, saying most land-grabbers did not pay for municipal services after building houses, even if they were next to a ratepaying area.

He said it was not the first time land-grabbers had tried to build houses on prime land next to Southridge Park. — *Daily Dispatch*