Koteng informal settlement.

Shacks outside Marble Hall.

Koteng informal settlement woes: 'We are not going anywhere!'

Dan Mdluli

It is still not known what the future holds for the Koteng informal settlement just outside Marble Hall.

Despite the uncertainty surrounding the settlement on the land, which was abandoned by the Department of Public Works, Roads and Infrastructure, the mushrooming of shacks continues daily.

Residents of Marble Hall have complained that since the illegal occupation of the land, there has been an increase in crime.

Some residents cited that the shacks' existence depreciates the value of their houses and harms economic spinoffs because it scares away investors from the town.

The settlement does not have water, electricity, or basic services, and unemployment is rife.

Ephraim Mogale Local Municipality is being lambasted for not stamping its authority on the illegal occupation of the land, only metres away from the police station.

The *Daller Express* visited the settlement on Monday. Many living there said they were not prepared to vacate the land and want the local municipality to formalise the area, "We are not going anywhere. This is our home and our children will have a place to call their home when we as parents pass on. We have heard about plans to remove us but we don't believe that will ever happen because we are prepared to fight. There is no way that people cannot have a place to stay when there is land available here. We love it here and it is closer to town.

We want the municipality to formalise the settlement so that we live in peace with the assurance for our children's future," said one resident who wished to remain anonymous.

The paper sent an enquiry to the Ephraim Mogale Local Municipality about the settlement on Monday, which was not received before the time of print.

Mr Percy Moagi, Ephraim Mogale Local Municipality's Communications Manager, promised to respond to the query.