



Publication: Boksburg Advertiser - Main

Title: Renewed promises to fix crumbling buildings

Publish date: 23 Jun 2023

Page: 2

Reach: 43037

AVE:R 63969.39

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Renewed promises to fix crumbling buildings

Update

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The Department of Public Works and Infrastructure (DPWI) says it has several projects in the pipeline for rescuing the decaying state-owned court and police buildings in Boksburg.

The Boksburg Advertiser recently highlighted the defects and health and safety issues at the Boksburg Magistrate's Court and Boksburg SAPS buildings.

Employees at these institutions expressed concerns about their safety, saying despite repeated calls for interventions, they have, for many years, been forced to work in these unsafe ageing facilities.

We reached out to DPWI for comment and the department concurred with the complainants that the facilities, built in the 1950s, are in a bad state, with major defects that need urgent intervention.

DPWI spokesperson Thamsanqa Mchunu admitted that DPWI is responsible for maintaining and ensuring that the building complies with health and safety standards.

The DPWI's response:

Boksburg Magistrate's Court

When asked what is DPWI doing to improve the state of the court building and to ensure it complies with health and safety standards Mchunu said they are planning a repairs and renovations project.

We also asked DPWI whether it carries out a routine inspection of the property. If yes, what did the latest inspection reveal about the state of the building?

The department said a professional team (project team) did an inspection. Facility management inspects and maintains it whenever there is a breakdown or maintenance is needed.

Some of the items incorporated in the scope of works based on the last inspection done by the professional team include repairing the leaking roof; waterproofing the walls damaged by water; repairing structural defects; maintaining or replacing doors and windows; painting; repairing and upgrading sewerage services; installation of a new generator set; replace the floor finishes; repair and replace air conditioners, and some areas require new



The Boksburg Magistrate's Court is a health and safety hazard, which the DPWI has been aware of for years.

air conditioners.

About plans to replace the run-down building, Mchunu explained the sketch plan has been approved, and the project is awaiting the approval of the procurement strategy.

"The request for approval of the procurement strategy was submitted to the National Bid Adjudicating Committee (NBAC) on March 28, 2023. The project is anticipated to go out on tender on June 16, 2023, and anticipate the site handover on August 18, 2023.

"The construction period for both courts is 36 months. The magistrate's court repair would take 24 months, therefore, we expect the completion date to be June 2025. The family court repairs would take 12 months and the completion date is expected to be around June 2026."

Mchunu said they will do the project in phases as the courts must be functional during the construction period.

"In 2019, DPWI said the project for the complete repair and renovation of the court had been initiated and was in the process of consultants' appointment. We expected the appointment of the contractor to be in February/March 2020."

We asked the department to update us on the progress of the remedial work that DPWI has undertaken

on the court building so far.

In his response, Mchunu said, "The appointment of the consultants was finalised. The architect, mechanical and electrical specialists were appointed in 2019. We appointed the civil, structural and quantity surveyor in September 2020. Currently, the building is being maintained by facility management on day-to-day maintenance while waiting for the project to start.

Boksburg SAPS building

DPWI has, in response to several enquiries since 2018, made several promises to deal with the derelict police buildings. However, to date, no remedial work has been done.

According to DPWI, the procurement instruction for Boksburg Police Station was issued to the Johannesburg Regional Office in August 2022. However, the project was not in the procurement plan and no allocation was confirmed for the project to proceed in the 2022/23 financial year.

"The current status is that procurement strategies for appointing consultants have been developed and awaiting approval, for advertising by May 30, 2023. The Project will be proceeding in the current financial year (2023/24) with the contractor expected on-site around October 2023," said Mchunu.

