



**Publication:** People's Post Constantia-Wynberg - Main  
**Title:** PROPERTY WOES DRAG ON  
**Publish date:** 23 May 2023  
**Page:** 1

**Reach:** 30069  
**AVE:** R 47584.27  
**Author:** NETTALIE VILJOEN

# Property woes drag on



NETTALIE VILJOEN  
NETTALIE.VILJOEN@MEDIA24.COM

**W**ith conditions continuing to deteriorate at three derelict properties located on Waterloo Green Road in Wynberg, residents have been asked to get behind a petition aimed at getting the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure (DPW) to take responsibility for its properties.

On Friday 19 May, the newly appointed DA shadow minister for this portfolio, Sello Seithlolo, visited the crumbling heritage buildings. It was his first stop on a tour of four sites located in Ward 62 that are owned by DPW. At his side was Emile Langenhoven, councillor for Ward 62, who had organised the site visits.

Addressing the group of desperate residents who had gathered in Waterloo Green Road, Seithlolo urged them to draw up and sign a petition.

"So if we decide to go to court, we have something in hand. This petition I will be able to push in the portfolio committee because that is where I serve."

Seithlolo said that once it was on the agenda, he could push for it to be considered as quickly as possible within the portfolio committee.

"The portfolio committee is incredible with dealing with petitions and we are able to summon the departments and any other stakeholder that must come to give account to the portfolio committee."

He said once that happened, only a few of the residents would be able to speak "for obvious reasons".

"And that is where we would then need to get a commitment from the department as to why has it been so many years that they have allowed this particular situation to happen."

For the past eight years, the three houses located on Waterloo Green Road – owned by DPW – have been left to go to ruin with street people living and systematically stripping the two properties located furthest down the road ("Small step forward", *People's Post*, 1 March 2022).

In February last year, DPW, shared that the funding for the demolition of two of the three homes had been approved. However, since then communication lines seem to have gone silent.

When *People's Post* previously

**"... go to court, ... something in hand ... petition I will be able to push."**

- Sello Seithlolo



DA Shadow Minister for Public Works and Infrastructure Sello Seithlolo addresses Wynberg residents on Friday 19 May.

PHOTO: NETTALIE VILJOEN

spoke to residents living in proximity to these dilapidated properties, they shared their concerns included the general degradation of the area, the illegal activities (prostitution and drugs) that took place in and around the derelict houses and the bad element it attracted ("There is no dignity", *People's Post*, 17 May 2022).

Listening to residents tell Seithlolo of the absolute misery that had become their reality – one resident told of how a gun had been placed to her head during a

home invasion – it was clear that they were at their wits end.

Cedric Poleman, principal at Wynberg Boys' Junior School, was one of the stakeholders who attended the site visit.

Speaking to *People's Post*, he shared that, representing the four Wynberg Campus schools (Wynberg Girls' Junior School, Wynberg Boys' Junior School, Wynberg Girls' High School and Wynberg Boys' High School), they had been in negotiation with DPW since 2020 in an effort to lease the derelict

properties as well as the 8 500 square metres of open field that lies behind them.

When a tender process went out in July that year, the school made a submission only to be told a few months later in December that the tender had been withdrawn. Poleman said no reason had been given for the withdrawal.

Then in July 2021, he said they were contacted by the DPW and requested to make a direct application to the department. ►►CONTINUED ON PAGE 3



**Publication:** People s Post Constantia-Wynberg - Main

**Title:** PROPERTY WOES DRAG ON

**Publish date:** 23 May 2023

**Page:** 3

**Reach:** 30069

**AVE:R** 12745.11

**Author:** NETTALIE VILJOEN

►►CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

“Which we then did in 2021, but this wasn’t a tender process, they then said they were waiting for a valuation from National Treasury as well as an environmental impact assessment, on how to proceed in this matter and if the schools could get it,” explained Poleman.

But, he said, it again all came to naught when they were told that another governance entity had expressed interest in the property.

“Then we made another application in 2021. The last engagement with DPW was in February 2023. Now it has gone silent. My last email to them was never opened.”

Together the four schools serve

about 3 500 learners. Poleman said that they do have the infrastructure and support and grounds staff to take care of the Waterloo Green properties effectively.

He said the unmonitored grounds pose a threat to both their learners and the community.

“There has been more than one incident where kids have been robbed and accosted, and smash-and-grab break-ins in the road when people park there. It is a huge property, people just vault the fence and disappear. There is a lot of drug-taking and things that happen during the school day, so it is very risky.”

Poleman said, from the schools’ perspective, being granted a lease for the properties would tick many boxes.

“For one, it would eliminate parking issues, everybody complains about parking because 3 000 kids get picked up at any given time.”

Poleman said while they remain hopeful that the DPW will come to the table, the to-and-fro process has taken its toll.

“We know things involving government departments do take time. At one stage we thought we were heading in the right direction and now it seems to have come to a dead stop again.

“If you have committed two, three years to something and there is an end in sight, you know, that is okay. We are happy to manage that but now it feels like we are starting from scratch and as I say my mail has gone unanswered,” said Poleman.