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EVICITION ORDER

Concern over Castle precinct occupation

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THE Castle of Good Hope management has expressed concern over potential unrest as illegal occupants remain at the precinct despite an eviction order for their removal.

Those living at the castle were mandated by the Western Cape High Court to relocate by October 17, after the court ruled in favour of the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure (DPWI).

However, they have not left.

Castle of Good Hope CEO, Calvyn Gilfellan, said the situation could turn ugly, as he believes some individuals may resist leaving voluntarily.

"There will be some unpleasantness because poverty is a violent method against the poor. Any act, even if they break up one tent, will be seen as an act of aggression," he said.

"It's not like the community did not have an opportunity through the court order to take up the City's offer for Safe Spaces."

The castle is recognised as one of the oldest structures in the city and designated as a Grade I National Monument. Gilfellan said the homeless were not adequately informed about their impending eviction.

"If people don't vacate, then a new process kicks in. The sheriff of the court has now, the necessary permission to relocate the people.

"I don't think they are at that stage yet. We expect that to probably be in the next couple of days, the next 72



ILLEGAL occupants squatting at the Castle of Good Hope have been ordered to vacate the vicinity. | HENK KRUGER Independent Media

hours, that will probably happen."

The City said social development professionals have been working with the DPWI to document the personal situations of each unlawful occupant through on-site interviews.

In collaboration with the DPWI, the City is still in the planning stages, and no specific date has been set for the eviction of those who remain on the site.

"Offers of transitional shelter at City Safe Spaces and NGO-run night shelters have been made, and remain available," the City said.

Due to the transient nature of the individuals occupying the area unlawfully, the City said it is currently unable to estimate how many people will need to be evicted.

"As is routine, when people vacate the site on the day of the eviction, they

will be requested to take all personal belongings.

"Where personal items are not claimed, these will be documented and stored at the City's Ndabeni facility where they can be collected by the owner," the City said.

The DPWI indicated that it will respond to queries in due course.

Earlier this year, homeless persons living at City-owned locations, including Buitengracht Street, FW de Klerk Boulevard, Foregate Square, Helen Suzman Boulevard, Strand Street and Mill Street Bridge were also evicted and moved to Safe Spaces.

Two similar eviction orders were also issued for unlawful occupants at the Green Point Tennis Court, Nelson Mandela Boulevard and Hertzog Boulevard, as well as Old Marine Drive and Christiaan Barnard Bridge.