

ANC will lobby for Tafelberg site to be expropriated in the public interest if DA proceeds to sell the land to the Phyllis Jowell Day School

The ANC condemns the decision of the DA Western Cape Government to proceed with the sale of the Tafelberg site.

The DA, faced with a choice, has once again chosen to protect the interests of the wealthy and privileged over the interests of the working class and poor .

There is clearly mounting evidence that the sale itself was unlawful with the province failing to come clean about allegations of conflict of interest and the process followed in terms of the Provincial Property Management Act and the Government Immoveable Asset Management Act.

Last week the Premier refused to provide the standing committee with a report into allegations of conflict of interest regarding the sale.

The Department of Transport and Public Works has also not provided the committee with the minutes of the Provincial Property Management Committee where the decision to dispose of the property was allegedly made. Officials could not confirm whether this committee was informed that the Provincial Department of Human Settlements had requested to use the site for Social Housing.

(1) We will be writing to the chairperson of the Standing Committee on Transport and Public Works tomorrow and requesting that our committee launches a full scale enquiry into the attempt by the DA government to dispose of this site to private buyers.

(2) We will also be laying a complaint with the Public Protector and requesting her office to launch a full investigation into this matter.

(3) We will also be seeking a meeting with the Phyllis Jowell Day School, to request them, in the public interest and in support of social housing for the domestic workers of Sea Point and others, to withdraw from the sale.

(4) We will also engage with the National Minister of Public Works and request him to investigate the possible expropriation of this land, should the sale be concluded with a private buyer

We want to make it very clear that the ANC believes that it is in the public interest that this site is used to begin to reverse apartheid spatial planning in Cape Town and build affordable housing in Sea Point. The provisions of the Expropriation Bill currently before Parliament make it clear that land can be expropriated in the public interest and that such expropriation can happen without compensation if the land was acquired by unlawful means. This Bill is likely to become law before the end of 2017.

The DA's argument that Sea Point does not fall within a "Restructuring Zone" as designated by the National Minister of Human Settlements does not hold water. It is an excuse not to make Tafelberg available for social housing. The current zone refers to the "CBD and surrounds". Surely that includes Sea Point ? If the DA were serious , they could approach Minister Sisulu to clarify this matter.

The other argument about fiscal austerity and revenue raising measures does not hold water. The Provincial Treasury have confirmed that over R750 million has been invested in the Provincial Revenue Fund from profits generated by Government Garage. The province has other reserves as well.

The DA has made a choice against the poor.

The DA have made a choice for the privileged .

The DA, led by Premier Zille, has in reality taken a stand against those who have suffered under Colonialism and Apartheid.

These domestic workers who seek to benefit from social housing have been saving for years for this opportunity. Many spend inordinate amounts of their salaries on public transport to get to and from work. Making social housing available to them is the most practical and moral form of redress.

We will provide a full report on this matter to our provincial and national leadership and discuss further strategies to ensure that Tafelberg is used for social housing in an integrated and sustainable development along the lines proposed by Ndifuna Ukwazi.

The ANC will not rest until our City and Province ensure that affordable and integrated human settlements , close to the CBD's, become a reality in Cape Town and all towns across our province “

**By Cameron Dugmore ANC member of the Western Cape
Legislature , Wednesday 22/3/2017**