



5 May 2016

**Press Release: Victory for Reclaim the City - Helen Zille agrees to #StopTheSale of Tafelberg**

A settlement (attached), made an order of the Western Cape High Court today, has stopped the sale of the Tafelberg Remedial School in Sea Point. This is a major victory for Reclaim the City and the broader campaign for affordable housing near the inner city. The settlement paves the way for the public, especially poor and working class people, to have our voices heard in decisions about the future of Tafelberg, and the use of prime state land in general.

Lawyers from the Ndifuna Ukwazi Law Centre, acting for Reclaim the City supporters, accepted an offer from Premier Helen Zille, the Western Cape Department of Transport and Public Works and the Phyllis Jowell School (PJS). In effect, Province has admitted that it failed to comply with legal requirements in the sale of state land.

Province has agreed to rewind the clock back to a moment in time before the sale of Tafelberg to PJS, and reopens a 21 day period for public comment and objection. This time round the Provincial Cabinet, and indeed Premier Helen Zille herself, will review the objections and make a final decision as to whether to go ahead or to cancel the proposed sale.

On 11 April 2016, we launched our case to stop the sale. This settlement is a major victory for the applicants and supporters of Reclaim the City. Poor and working class people now have an opportunity to participate and demand that affordable housing be built on Tafelberg. Province itself has said that affordable housing on the site is feasible.

But, this is not enough. Premier Helen Zille has only responded to the procedural aspects and ignored our central demand – that the Province fulfils its obligation to use well-located state land for affordable housing.

Poor and working class people continue to struggle with the isolation, unemployment and unjust conditions inherited from apartheid city planning. We continue to be harassed by landlords, evicted or priced out of the inner city. We have a right to affordable housing near the inner city.

This means that our campaign must intensify. We must ensure that the objection period is not simply a box-ticking exercise, but a genuine opportunity for meaningful participation.

*Premier Helen Zille and her government must come clean*

These questions remain unanswered:

- Why did the Province declare the land surplus when the Department of Human Settlements objected to the sale? And why did MEC Donald Grant lie about this publicly saying that he had asked Department to “put up their hand?”
- Why did Province ignore a feasibility study showing that an affordable social housing development could be built on the site?
- Why won't the Province release its records on the decision?
- Why is the Province choosing short term cash injection over the long term socio-economic benefits of the land?
- How did the disposal switch from a long term lease to outright sale?

When these questions were asked in the Provincial Parliament, Premier Helen Zille ducked and dived, invoking the sub-judice rule. Now that the matter has been settled - is she prepared to respond publicly and defend the decisions of her government?

We demand:

- The Province must release all records regarding the decision to sell Tafelberg.
- The Province commits to real participation, including a public hearing where people can make direct oral objections to the proposed sale of the Tafelberg site.
- The Province must commit to providing affordable housing on state land in the inner city.

#StoppedTheSale

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