



6 May 2016

Press Release: Tafelberg 21 day comments period a test for government

Premier Helen Zille has agreed to stop the sale of Tafelberg and committed her government to a 21 day period for public objections to be heard on the proposed disposal of the site to the Phyllis Jowell School (PJS). This victory extends well beyond the campaign for the development of affordable housing on Tafelberg in particular. The Premier's commitment and the upcoming objections period has the potential to set a precedent for genuine public participation in decisions about the disposal and use of state land. This process must be closely monitored to ensure that the Provincial Cabinet and the Premier gives due weight to the voices of ordinary people, especially the poor and working class black residents of Cape Town, before deciding on whether or not to sell Tafelberg.

There are three other state owned properties in the pipeline for disposal by Provincial Government - the Helen Bowden Nurses Home, Top Yard, and the Alfred Street Complex. Reclaim the City has argued persistently that such sites are key to government fulfilling its obligation to reverse apartheid city planning. The Province cannot sell these sites to generate cash flow. State land is a finite resource with immense social value that cannot be measured in monetary terms. The Province must use the sites to develop affordable housing and to bring working class black and coloured people back into the inner city - from where they were excluded during apartheid and from where they are currently being priced out. What happens with Tafelberg, and during the public comment phase which will soon be open, will be a test for government and for all of us to prove that public participation can influence decisions about the future and use of public land.

For comment:

Kopano Maroga Reclaim the City spokesperson (073 229 6055)

ENDS

The following excerpt is from Premier Helen Zille's [Inside Government News Letter](#) (5 May 2016) for context:

"We are committed to ensuring that anyone who seeks an opportunity for comment should be able to have it taken into account, before the provincial government makes a rational decision about how best to utilise its assets to the best advantage of citizens.

Last week, our government presented Ndifuna Ukwazi Law Centre and other applicants, with a draft order in the interdict they have launched against the proposed sale of the site.

The order proposes that we reopen the public consultation process over the sale of the land.

This effectively means we will publish fresh notices calling for comment on the proposed sale, as required in terms of the Western Cape Land Administration Act, and its regulations.

The Provincial Cabinet will then consider all submissions received following the fresh notices, and determine whether to proceed or withdraw from the sale agreement."