



# Wes-Kaapse Provinsiale Parlement Western Cape Provincial Parliament IPalamente yePhondo leNtshona Koloni

Ref Number: WCPP 11/4/6

Report of the Standing Committee on Infrastructure on its oversight visit to the Garden Route to observe the infrastructure in the area, as follows:

## **Delegation**

The delegation consisted of the following members:

De Villiers, P  
Kama, M  
Klaas, T  
Maseko, LM (Chairperson)  
Murray, C  
Sileku, I

The following staff attended the oversight visit:

Cloete, L; Senior Procedural Officer  
Jones, S; Procedural Officer  
Naidoo, W; Security and Facilities  
Barends, A; Driver

## **1. Introduction**

The 2023/24 Strategic Objectives of the WCPP linked to the Speakers' Priorities which impact on committees are as follows:

Priority 1: Building a credible WCPP; and

Priority 3: strengthening the core business.

The Standing Committee on Infrastructure, as part of its oversight mandate, conducted an oversight visit to the Garden Route from 18-19 September 2023. The Committee's visit commenced with a visit to the Maalgate Bridge Widening in George, followed by a visit to the Gwaaing Road and Metro Grounds BNG and FIISP Housing Project. The visit concluded with a briefing at the George Council Chambers with a briefing on the upgrading of the infrastructure. The visit continued the following day with a briefing by the Department and a visit to the Bartolomeu Diaz Museum and the Louie Fourie Road infrastructure in Mossel Bay.

## **2. George oversight visit**

### **2.1 Overview and background**

The Committee was received by the following persons from the George Municipality: Ald. L van Wyk, Executive Mayor; Dr M Gratz, George Municipal Manager; Mr J Koegelenberg, Director:

Civil Engineering; Ms L Waring, Director: Human Settlements and Planning; Mr B Petrus, Mayoral Committee Member; and Mr B Johnson, Civil Engineer. Persons in attendance from the Garden Route District Municipality are Mr C Roelf, Construction Manager, and Mr S Zambezi, Occupational Health, and Safety Officer.

From the Department of Infrastructure was Mr R Arendse, Chief Engineer; Mr X Smuts, District Roads Engineer; Mr W Moolman, Production Engineer: Roads Infrastructure; Ms M van Wyngaardt, Acting Chief Director: Roads Departmental Operations; Mr N Adriaanse, Director: Public Information and Stakeholder Relations; Mr G Conradie, Construction Project Manager Production; Ms C Nieuwoudt, Project leader for the Diaz Museum project Mr J Bakker, Head of Communications and Mr R Ryklief, Departmental Communications.

This report highlights the findings, key issues discussed and recommendations stemming from the oversight visit.

## **2.2 Maalgate Bridge Widening in George**

The Department of Infrastructure (the Department) is reconstructing and widening the Maalgate Bridge (the bridge) to a three-span arch bridge. The existing road structure and pavement layers would be widened to include a shoulder on each lane. Once completed, the bridge would have a dual carriageway with a 3.2m lane width and 2.0m shoulder on each side. Upgrading the bridge, according to the Department, would reduce the high accident risk experienced in the area.

The Maalgate Bridge was constructed in 1938 on the R102 near George. It was built and designed with concrete arches and spandrel walls and spans the Maalgate River. The Maalgate River is also known as the Whirlpool River. The bridge serves as an alternative route between Mossel Bay and George.

The bridge, because of its arches and geographical location, has become a tourist attraction site for the locals and visitors to the region. The Department, for this reason, decided to keep the original structure of the bridge intact. Any construction work on the bridge would not detract from the look and feel of the original structure.

Mamlambo Construction (Pty) Ltd, was appointed by the Department of Transport and Public Works: Roads Branch on 8 February 2021 to undertake the upgrading of the bridge. The contract with Mamlambo Construction (Pty) Ltd, was terminated on 2 June 2022 due to abandonment of the contract. The contract was later awarded to Leek Construction CC, the second-ranked highest bidder to complete the work at the original tendered rates. Leek Construction CC was appointed on 9 September 2022 following a limited Bid process. The replacement contractor commenced construction on 16 September 2022. Approximately 60 work opportunities were provided throughout the project. The construction work of the bridge was slower than anticipated. The slow construction work was attributed to the supplier's reluctance to provide resources without upfront payment. Assurances were provided to the suppliers by the Department, and the necessary supplies were provided. The completion of the bridge was scheduled for November 2023. The Department advised that the construction of the bridge would not hinder the traffic from passing through the area during the festive period. Stop-and-go traffic controls would also be implemented to regulate the traffic.

### 2.3 Gwaiing Road upgrade

The upgrading of the Gwaiing Road (DR1618), was authorised by the Western Cape Department of Transport and Public Works. The Cost to upgrade the road amounted to R67 million. The upgrade included the construction of the roadbed of 6,8m cement and bitumen mixes that are flexible to provide structural strength and ideal for commercial agricultural transport. Stormwater network on the road, would be upgraded with 27 pipe crossings, that would contain concrete headwalls to ensure effective stormwater management. Stormwater drainage channels in the area, would also be upgraded. The Garden Route District Municipality advised that approximately 44 job opportunities for Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) workers, were created during the construction phase, of the project. The Gwaiing Road, once completed, would be an important link that would connect businesses from the airport to businesses in the Blanco region. This would be essential for farmers who want to transport their products to the market or the airport for export.

### 2.4 Metro Grounds BNG and FLISP Housing Project in George

The Metro Grounds Breaking New Ground (BNG) and Finance Linked Subsidy Programme (FLISP) Housing Project in George forms part of the Ministerial Priority Projects. A budget of approximately R166 644 404,00 was allocated for the project. Ruwac Construction was appointed in February 2022 to construct 236 BNG units and 200 FLISP units for the Metro Grounds Housing Project as follows:

The Breaking New Ground units were split into three different categories as follows:

- 93 Double storey housing units;
- 130 Single storey housing units; and
- 13 Disabled housing units.

The Finance Linked Subsidy Programme units were split into two different categories as follows:

- 145 Single storey units; and
- 55 Double storey units.

Approximately 195 serviced sites, were set aside for non-qualifiers and future affordable housing. The 200 FLISP units, were converted into BNG units as part of the Department's strategy to prevent vandalism. A decision was taken by the Department, to move beneficiaries into the units as soon as they were completed. This was to ensure that the rightful beneficiary takes ownership. Bond approval, according to the Department, would be a lengthy process whereby affordability for a bond still had to be determined. This process would ensure that no security was necessary to ensure that the property was not vandalised or illegally occupied.

Fencing was placed around the construction area to ensure the safety of residents who might wander onto the construction site. Drainage facilities were implemented to channel stormwater away from the houses. The Committee raised concern regarding the drainage facilities that might not be adequate to prevent flooding in some of the lower lying units.

The Department confirmed the employment of 16 local enterprises and that 172 work opportunities were created for Expanded Public Work Programme employment on the project. Mentorship and training opportunities were provided to persons employed on the project.

### **3. Mossel Bay Oversight Visit**

#### **3.1 Overview and background**

The Standing Committee on Infrastructure conducted an oversight visit to the Bartolomeu Diaz Museum and the Louie Fourie Road infrastructure. After the oversight visits the Committee received a briefing by the Mossel Bay Municipality on the upgrading of the respective infrastructures.

The Committee was received by the following persons, Ald. C Bayman, the Executive Mayor of Mossel Bay; Mr C Puren the Municipal Manager, Mr D Naidoo, Director: Infrastructure Services; Mr J Cox, Senior Manager: Roads, Transport and Stormwater; Mrs E Nel, Director: Community Services; Ald. N Booisen, Mayoral Committee Member: Community Services; and Cllr. A Dellelijn. Persons in attendance from the Department of Infrastructure was Mr W Moolman, Production Engineer: Roads Infrastructure; Ms M van Wyngaardt, Acting Chief Director: Roads Departmental Operations; Mr N Adriaanse, Director: Public Information and Stakeholder Relations; Mr G Conradie, Construction Project Manager Production; Ms C Nieuwoudt, Project leader for the Diaz Museum project, Mr J Bakker, Head of Communications and Mr R Ryklief, Departmental Communications. The SMME's who attended the meeting were Mr M Mabatho, Ms Z Ciliba, Chairperson of All Women in Business; and Ms N August-Nogqala, All Women in Business.

This report highlights the findings, key issues discussed and recommendations stemming from the oversight visit.

#### **3.2 Diaz Museum Fire Compliance Upgrades**

The Diaz Museum consists of three buildings and a cluster of houses that were grouped around the original water source that was utilised by early Portuguese and Dutch sailors. The precinct also consists of open gardens and a lawn amphitheater.

In 1979, Mr Gawie Fanagan was appointed to convert the museum precinct and stone buildings to be compliant with the relevant building and fire regulations at the time. Compliance with the building and fire regulations of the existing precinct was once again required to ensure public and visitor safety. The refurbishment and maintenance of the museum complex had to comply with the latest standards and regulations. The original tender amount budgeted for the upgrading project amounted to R24 073 335,93. The projected amount includes Value Added Tax and excludes professional fees. The revised construction cost amounted to R36 305 545, 60. The revised cost included Value Added Taxes and fees. Concern was raised regarding the revised cost for the fire upgrades. The Committee also questioned the lack of alternate energy source upgrades.

The contract to upgrade the fire compliance of the Diaz Museum was awarded to GVK Siya Zamaaw on 7 October 2023. A project team consisting of Quantity Surveyors, Architects, Heritage Consultants, Engineers, Mechanical, Civil and Electrical engineers were appointed to work on the Museums. Approximately 40 menial job opportunities were made available per month for local labourers. The expected completion date for the project was scheduled for 5 September 2023 and later extended to 11 September 2023. Certain sections of the Diaz Museum were closed to the public and exhibits were moved temporarily to allow for the completion of the fire upgrades. Visitors were only provided access to designated areas. Safety officers were deployed to ensure that visitors remained within the demarcated areas while visiting the museum.

3.2.1 The following upgrades were implemented at the Museum:

- 3.2.1.1 Lower fire escape routes were constructed at the Shell Museum;
- 3.2.1.2 Installation of new storage areas and new fire detection systems;
- 3.2.1.3 Refurbishment of finishes;
- 3.2.1.4 Repair of the delaminating plaster at the Granary Building;
- 3.2.1.5 Upgrading of fire detection, electrical reticulation and intumescent protection to combustible ceiling elements;
- 3.2.3.6 Installation of fire detection, fire doors; and
- 3.2.3.7 A sprinkler system over the Caravel and Smoke Fans were installed.

### **3.3 Louis Fourie Road Upgrade**

Construction of the Louis Fourie Road in Mossel Bay commenced on 28 July 2022. The expected completion date for the project is 31 October 2025. A budget of R490 million was made available for the project. Entsha-Henra was the local construction company employed to upgrade the Louis Fourie Road infrastructure. The Construction work entailed the construction of a new on- and off-ramp at the N2 at Vyfbrakkefontein Road. The exit off the N2 at the Langeberg Mall would be changed into a circle to facilitate and ease traffic flow. New streetlights and traffic signals would also be implemented on Louis Fourie Road. A pedestrian sidewalk from the Waboom Road intersection to Sonskynvallei, with a distance of 900m, would also be built for pedestrians to cross the road. Underground services, e.g. sewer lines and cables would be relocated and replaced. Bridges would be replaced or widened and double lanes in both directions would be implemented.

During the meeting, the Committee was joined by disgruntled Small, Medium and Micro Enterprise (SMME) business owners and the All Women in Business Owners (AWB). The SMMEs made Oral submissions. They informed the Committee that tender opportunities were only given to big businesses. The Department refuted the claims, stating that tender applications were open, transparent and in terms of the Public Finance Management Act (Act 1 of 1999). They advised that all tender documents have to comply with the relevant requirements for the project or be deemed non-compliant. Training opportunities were made available to local enterprises to assist them with relevant forms to ensure compliance.

#### **3.3.1 The training opportunities included the following:**

- Legislative and compliance requirements;
- Business and finance management;
- Human resources and labour relationship management;
- Site management;
- Tenders and procurement; and
- Construction Industry Development Board registrations and upgrading requirements.

The AWB and the SMMEs requested that the Committee return to Mossel Bay to investigate the tender allocation processes to ensure a fair and transparent tender allocation process.

The Department raised concerns regarding the delay by PRASA who have not granted access approval for the Department to finalise its projects.

#### **4. Resolutions/Actions**

- 4.1 The Committee REQUESTED that the Department provide it with:
- 4.1.1 The Enhanced Service Site Strategy;
  - 4.1.2 The Department's flow diagram that tracks the responsibilities for each unit dealing with a project;
  - 4.1.3 A detailed breakdown on the costs for the Bartolomeu Diaz museums upgrade; and
  - 4.1.4 The reasons for not including alternate energy resources into the specifications for the upgrade of the Bartolomeu Diaz museum.
- 4.2 The Committee RECOMMENDED that the Department investigate and considers the possibility of replicating the model used at the university for housing opportunities to other satellite campuses of the University of the Western Cape, as well as other universities in the province.
- 4.3 The Committee RESOLVED, and just for noting for the Department, that the Committee will conduct a follow-up visit to Mossel Bay to reconvene the discussion with the Mossel Bay SMME's and the Mossel Bay Municipality regarding the allocation of contracts and training programmes on how to apply for contracts.

#### **5. Acknowledgements**

The Chairperson expressed appreciation to the Members, the Mossel Bay Municipality, the George Municipality, the Garden Route District Municipality, ward councillors, officials from the Department of Infrastructure and members of the public for their participation in the meetings and oversight visits.

*M. Maseko*

**HON. M MASEKO (MPP)**  
**CHAIRPERSON: STANDING COMMITTEE ON INFRASTRUCTURE**  
**DATE: 9 February 2024**