



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

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Report of the Standing Committee on Human Settlements on its oversight visit to the Blue Downs/Eerste River Military Veterans Housing Project and the Belhar Gardens Social Housing Project, as follows:

Delegation

The delegation consisted of the following members:

Davids, SW (ANC)
Dijana, TM (ANC)
Hinana, NE (DA)
Joseph, BD (EFF)
Mackenzie, R (DA)
Maseko, LM (DA) (Chairperson and leader of the delegation)

The following staff attended the oversight visit:

Jones, S (Committee Co-ordinator)

1. Introduction

The Standing Committee on Human Settlements embarked on an oversight visit to the Blue Downs/Eerste River Military Veterans Housing Project and the Belhar Social Housing Project.

This report discusses the findings and recommendations stemming from the oversight visit.

2. Overview

The Committee departed from the Legislature building at 07:00 am on 9 June 2017. The visit commenced with a walk-about of the Blue Downs/Eerste River Military Veterans Housing Project followed by a visit and walk-about of the Belhar Social Housing Project. Representatives of the Department of Human Settlements accompanied the Committee on the walk-about of the housing projects.

A Committee meeting was held at the Western Cape Provincial Legislature in Committee Room 1, after the oversight visit at 10:00. Representatives of the Department of Human Settlements were in attendance.

3. Blue Downs/Eerste River Military Veterans Housing Project

The Department of Human Settlements embarked on a housing project for Military Veterans in March 2016, to provide housing units to eligible military veterans.

The Project was initiated with a Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of Military Veterans and the National Department of Human Settlements in February 2012. The Implementation Plan was adopted between the Department of Military Veterans and the Western Cape Department of Human Settlements in November 2014. This outlined the specifications and the basis upon which the parties would co-operate in the provision of housing units for military veterans.

The Housing Project would consist of 259 units in Blue Downs and Eerste River. The Project would accommodate 75 residential units; of which 73 would be 50m² military veteran housing units and two would be 43m² double storey Breaking New Ground (BNG) housing units.

The construction design was conducted by the Department of Human Settlements internal architects. The military veterans units were built according to specification. Eg. Each unit should have two bedrooms, one bathroom, an open plan kitchen and a carport. A total of 34 families have already taken occupation of the units.

3.1 Findings and observations

- 3.1.1 Some of the Military Housing units were free standing and others were semi-detached. The units were all built according to conventional methods and complied with the agreed upon standards and specifications as set out above.
- 3.1.2 The Unit accessed by the Committee contained ceilings and tiles throughout. It was fitted with kitchen cupboards, a two plate stove hob, sink, and solar water heater with hot and cold taps.
- 3.1.3 The units were fully plastered and painted. Each unit received a fence and a carport.
- 3.1.4 A basic prepaid electrical meter was installed in the unit.
- 3.1.5 One contractor was employed with approximately ± 6 sub-contractors.
- 3.1.6 Construction of the units progressed at a much slower pace than anticipated due to the contractor's inadequate technical, administrative and managerial capabilities to implement the project in the allocated time frames.
- 3.1.7 Other contributing factors which caused delays in the project was the community unrest, due to labour related issues and the adverse weather and ground conditions.
- 3.1.8 A total of 475 military veteran beneficiaries were identified by the Department of Military Veterans for a housing opportunity.
- 3.1.9 The Department has already approved 127 military veterans for housing opportunities.
- 3.1.10 The Housing Demand Database must still be updated with the details of military veterans.
- 3.1.11 The only other current project which specifically caters for Military veterans is the Highbury Housing Project.
- 3.1.12 The Highbury Housing Project will accommodate 100 military veterans.
- 3.1.13 The only other current housing project which would incorporate military veterans are the Witzenberg, Ceres, Bella Vista Housing Project. Only a total of 15 housing units will be made available to military veterans from the 309 units that will be constructed.

4. Belhar Gardens Social Housing Project

Construction on the Belhar Gardens Social Housing project commenced on 15 January 2015 and was finalised on 31 March 2017. It has a total of 629 units and forms part of the larger Integrated Belhar development. A budget of R207 526 773 was approved for the Project. An amount of R131 545 000 was spent on the entire Project.

Madulammoho Housing Association is a Section 21 company (none profit organisation). It oversees the 629 units at Belhar Gardens, which comprises of bachelor flats, single bedroom flats and two bedroom flats. The company sees to the day to day operations of the complex and conducts monthly inspections of the units. Madulammoho is not planning to construct more housing opportunities in Belhar for the next two years. Madulammoho is a Sesotho word for communities living together despite diversity.

4.1 Findings and observations

- 4.1.1 Belhar Gardens Social Housing units are mainly aimed for persons earning a salary between R2 800 and R3 500 per month.
- 4.1.2 The secondary targets are persons with a monthly income of R5 200 and R7 500. Preference is given to people who are registered on the City of Cape Town's Housing Demand Database. All beneficiaries on the City of Cape Town's Housing Demand Database are South African citizens.
- 4.1.3 Persons who own a property or have previously owned property, land or an IRDP house are not allowed to rent at Belhar Gardens.
- 4.1.4 Hot water is provided through a centralised heat pump system and not a geyser. The tenants are all charged a basic fee of R60 for the service.
- 4.1.5 The heat pump provides the housing units with a 60 percent saving on electricity.
- 4.1.6 All units are fitted with a standard pre-paid meter and each tenant is afforded 50 units of electricity upon receipt of the unit.
- 4.1.7 The complex has 24 hour security and fingerprint access.
- 4.1.8 Madulammoho provides all new tenants with three workshops. The first workshop provides information on the social housing Rental Estate. The second workshop provides information on how to complete a rental application. The third and final workshop provides information on the lease terms and conditions. The agreement is signed within a two weeks of being accepted.
- 4.1.9 Provision has been made for people with disability with some units designed to be wheel chair friendly. Ground floor units are reserved for the elderly and families with small children.
- 4.1.10 Units are fitted with a standard pre-paid meter and each tenant is afforded 50 units of electricity upon receipt of the unit.
- 4.1.11 The complex has 24-hour security on site, the property is fenced with clear view fencing. Access is controlled with a turnstile, which is equipped with biometric fingerprint technology. Each unit also comes standard with a maxidor security gate and DSTV connectivity.


MS LM MASEKO (MPP)

CHAIRPERSON: STANDING COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

DATE: 28/06/2017