

## **Letter to the communities of Knoppieslaagte, Timsrand, Monavoni, Mnandi and surrounding areas regarding the new land invasion in this area.**

### **History of the Invasion, the Interdict and Intervention.**

1. The invaded properties are situated west of Olievenhoutsbosch, immediately north of the border between the City of Tshwane and the City of Johannesburg.
2. Since the last week of August 2022, a massive, orchestrated land invasion has taken place on properties situated between London lane and the N14. Ample evidence exists, in the form of social media and otherwise, that the invasion was promulgated by the EFF, most certainly through an EFF Ward Councilor by the name of Godwin Ratikwane. It was futile to approach the SAPS at the beginning of these invasions as a national circular has de-criminalised the invasion of private property.
3. Instead, the landowners approached the High Court and an interdict was duly granted. Shortly thereafter, Eskom which enjoys a vital servitude over certain of the properties approached the same Court to be joined to the order and to add certain other properties over which they enjoy a servitude.
4. It appears that the SAPS authorities and the City of Tshwane were well aware of this invasion, extracts of Tshwane's newsletters dated 29 and 30 August 2022 are attached hereto marked "A".
5. Within a day of the grant of the interdict, on Thursday, 1 September 2022, a planning meeting was held in the relevant SAPS offices, attended by numerous high ranking SAPS officers, members of the City of Tshwane Municipal Police Department etc. The meeting pertained to the rapid expansion of the informal settlement and requested that an operation to demolish the shacks take place as a matter of great urgency as soon as the SAPS can provide the required safety backup.
6. Regretfully, this operation took place only the following Wednesday, 7 September 2022, when a substantial number of shacks were demolished, but by which time the scale of the invasion had substantially exceeded what was anticipated. Attached marked "B" are aerial photographs showing the commencement and the most recent aerial photographs of the problem area. This operation had cost the private landowners around R 270 000.00
7. At this stage, given the increased size of the invasion, additional resources will have to be called upon to restore control of the properties. A quotation from the Red Ants in this regard is attached marked "C". The cost of employing the Red Ants alone is some R4,562,021.30. Two additional quotes will be available for consideration shortly.
8. Although Eskom have joined the matter, they are willing to carry costs in the matter pro-rata to the size of their servitudes on the affected properties. The

private owners are ordinary citizens without the massive resources needed to set up and execute the required demolition operation.

## **The Way Forward**

1. Several avenues are being exploited by the landowners including but not limited to approaching the Office of the President, various Ministerial offices, MEC's and the City of Tshwane.
2. However, the land invasion continuous unrestricted to increase both in extent of the land occupied as well as the number of shacks being erected on land already affected, and it is common cause that everyone in the immediate surrounding are negatively affected by the land invasion in various ways some of which are but not limited to; safety and security, property valuations, health and safety issues caused by the lack of services.
3. Resolving the matter through the state or organs thereof will take a significant period, the existing court order allows for the removal of the illegal occupants, but the cost involved therein is beyond the capability of the landowners.
4. Consequently, a few community members from the various community forums in the areas of Knoppieslaagte, Timsrand, Monavoni and Mnandi decided to approach their respective communities as well as businesses operating within the community with a view to raise the funds required to affect the eviction order.
5. This decision was not taken lightly as we are aware of the many and varied economic pressures faced by the members of our community, further delay in dealing with the land invasion will in our opinion increase these pressures, and it is best dealt with by the community standing together and dealing with the matter in a unified manner.
6. Due to the extreme urgency of the matter we intend to raise the entire amount required via this effort. As explained further below the funds will be kept in an Attorney Trust account which is audited and protected by fidelity guarantees. The funds will only be utilised in settling costs required to affect the eviction as well as to pay for an audit when winding up and closing the fund as contemplated below.
7. In order to raise the required funds each household in the areas listed above will be required to contribute a minimum amount of R2000.00. If this cannot be done in one payment, we request a pledge followed by payments of what can be afforded in monthly payments until the amount has been covered.
8. In order to compensate for persons who may not be able to pay the entire amount in one payment, businesses in the area will be approached requesting additional financial support. Any additional financial support will also be welcomed.

9. Once the eviction has been affected continuous engagement will be made with parties such as The State, Eskom and landowners to recover as much as possible of the cost from them. Once completed any remaining funds will be distributed to contributors in accordance with set rules as defined in detail in the proposed fund's public mandate.
10. All Contributions need to be paid into the trust account of Attorneys: Vermaak Marshall Welbeloved Inc. and referenced as detailed in the proposed fund's mandate.
11. Funds paid into the proposed account will be utilised solely for the purposes of effecting the eviction and costs related thereto.
  
12. A meeting of the community to further explain and formalize the effort as proposed by this letter is called for Tuesday 27 September at 18H45 for 19H00 at The Play Date corner Louise Rd and Rabie Rd, Monavoni. This venue provides ample space for this meeting and appropriate security will be in place. This community meeting will be addressed by the lawyers and community members that had been part of the effort against the invasion up to now as well as those involved in preparing this proposal to the community. At or before this meeting the detailed mandate and rules of the proposed fund will be finalized and then presented for formal approval at the community meeting.
  
13. All detail proposed in this letter will be superseded and replaced by the proposed fund's approved mandate.

## Annexure A

The City of Tshwane condemns EFF political opportunism and attempts to drive unrest in Olievenhoutbosch through illegal land grabs



CITY OF  
TSHWANE

•CN.TtNC, FXCEILENCE

Mon, Aug 29, 2022

In my capacity as MMC for Community Safety, I would like to condemn in the strongest of terms the reckless, illegal and dangerous politicking by the EFF in the Olievenhoutbosch area where the party is driving illegal protest action and attempted land grabs.

Over the weekend, the Tshwane Metro Police Department (TMPD), the South African Police Service (SAPS) and the Johannesburg Metro Police Department (JMPD) together with private security providers responded to various calls to halt illegal land grabs in Olievenhoutbosch.

In an obvious attempt to further their own political agenda, earlier this morning the EFF once again abused the community's frustrations by organising a volatile protest action in Olievenhoutbosch by blockading roads with burning tires.

We condemn these actions and the abuse of vulnerable communities for political gain. The City will work with all necessary role players to ensure that the rule of law prevails.

We call on the community of Olievenhoutbosch to constructively engage with the City on service delivery matters. In that way a structured approach can be followed to ensure that the City can provide the necessary services to these communities going forward.

Trusting opportunistic political parties who make empty promises will only lead to further anger, frustration and disappointment.

Despite the City's stretched resources and financial stability challenges, our multiparty coalition government remains committed to driving quality service delivery for all.

The City of Tshwane maintains zero-tolerance approach to illegal land invasions



## CITY OF TSHWANE

IGNITING EXCELLENCEwed,  
Aug 31, 2022

In my capacity as MMC for Human Settlements, I would like to add my voice to condemn in the strongest of terms the illegal land grab attempts led by the EFF in Olievenhoutbosch this past weekend.

The land in question is privately owned while another portion belongs to the Gauteng Provincial Government and is earmarked for low-cost housing development by the province.

The City is aware of the housing backlog and is working diligently with all relevant stakeholders, including the Gauteng MEC of Human Settlements, to release pockets of land to develop and relocate qualifying residents living in informal settlements.

Not only is land invasion illegal, but it also derails efforts to develop available land into a habitable settlement. These illegal land grab actions also further delay development plans that are already in the pipeline, which results in identified beneficiaries waiting longer than necessary to get proper housing.

Our multiparty coalition government condemns the opportunistic abuse of vulnerable communities for political gain. As MMC for Human Settlements, I would like to ask the community of Olievenhoutbosch to constructively engage with the City on housing matters and to not engage in illegal activities.

Land invasions negatively affect all residents and place an additional strain on the City's already stretched budget. Land invasions often result in the City being forced to provide rudimentary services that were not budgeted, thus exhausting the limited budget set aside for planned services.

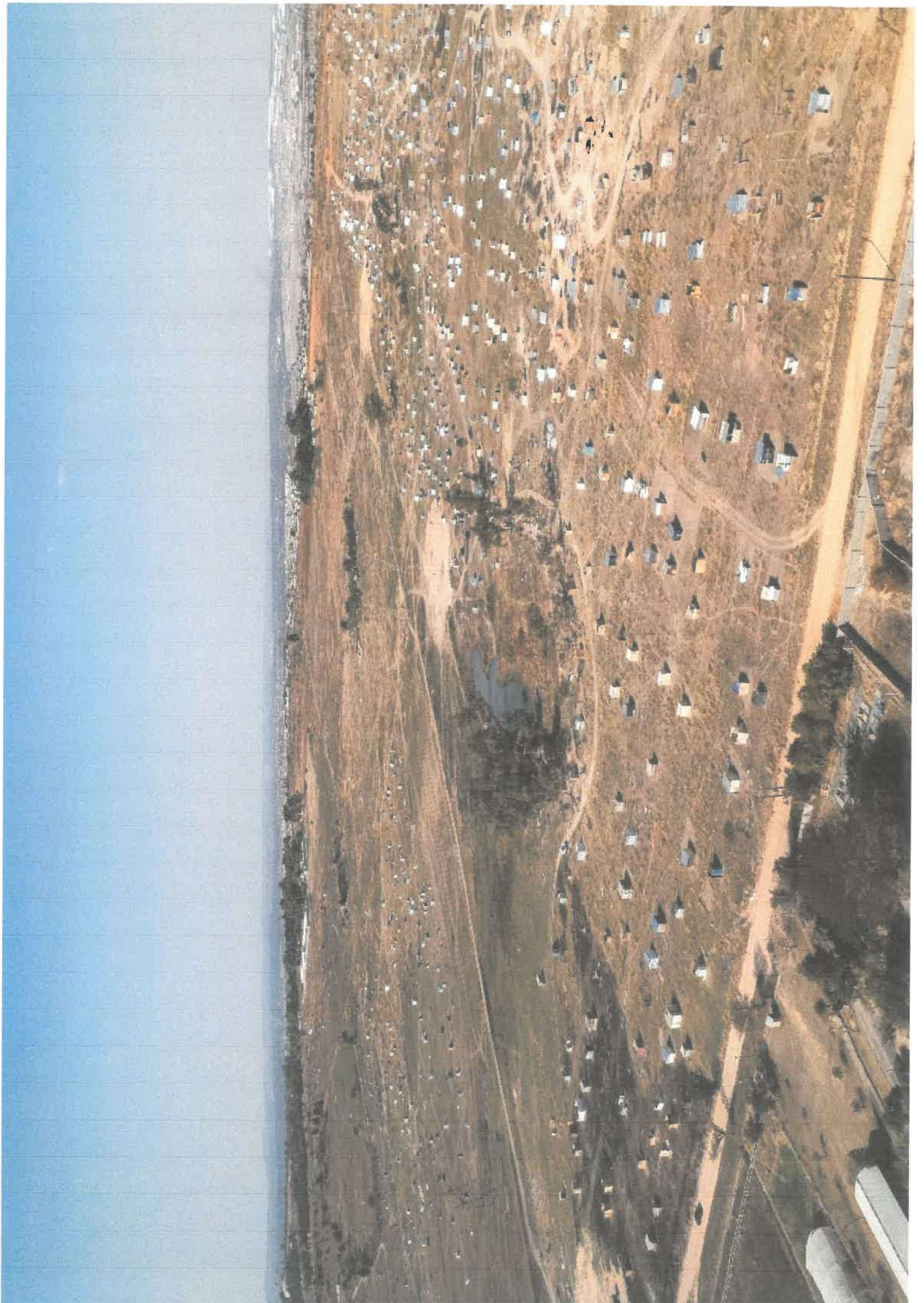
I would like to thank the MMC for Community Safety, Ad Grandi Theunissen, and our law enforcement authorities for speedily responding to various calls to halt illegal land grabs in Olievenhoutbosch. The City of Tshwane has a zero-tolerance approach to illegal land invasions and we will not allow lawlessness to prevail in Tshwane.

"D"

Annexure B









Anexure C

Red Ant Quote in a separate file.