



human settlements

MPUMALANGA PROVINCE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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DEPARTMENT DISMISSES AN ALLEGED LAND LEASE IN HILLSVIEW

The Department of Human Settlements strongly dismisses recent reports of an alleged lease agreement between government and a private firm for land earmarked for integrated human settlements development in Hillsvie, City of Mbombela in Mpumalanga. This follows a community protest that took place last week in area where the community was up in arms objecting the private firm owners from occupying the land which he wanted to use for farming purposes.

Government would like to put it on record that that aforementioned earmarked land is projected for the development of sustainable integrated human settlements in the area which includes government's low cost houses, social housing and business infrastructure. It is for this reason that the Department wishes to comprehensively dismiss the existence of any lease to the land in question as it still belongs to government.

On Monday 13 May 2019, the proposal was received by the Mpumalanga Economic Growth Agency (MEGA) as the custodian of the land to lease it to the private firm for farming purposes. However, MEGA did not sign any agreement with the company. It is therefore necessary to say that in the absence of the lease agreement which MEGA did not authorise, the land in question will still be deemed as government's property.

Head of Human Settlements, Mr Kebone Masange reiterated that, "the site remains an area to be used for human settlements development as originally planned. The planning for the implementation of the integrated human settlements in the area is at an advanced stage". To this end, the Department has appointed a consultant to deal with issues relating to water supply for the intended development in the area which is part of many integrated human settlements planned to be developed throughout the province.

The affected community is therefore assured that there will be no leasing or selling of land which is intended for the benefit of the community as far as this area is concerned. The Department remains committed in its mandate to deliver sustainable integrated human settlements for the people of Mpumalanga. Masange continued that, "The Department is only focused at ensuring that people have access to services they require and deserve, thus the human settlement development in the area has always been commitment". The Department together with MEGA, City of Mbombela and other relevant stakeholders will be in constant contact with the community to bring about certainty and developments on the matter.

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