

City promises social housing in Woodstock

By [Christine Hogg](#)

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The new District Six Community Health Centre is expected to be completed in April 2017. It is intended to replace and improve two long-standing Cape Town public clinics: the Robbie Nurock Community Day Centre as well as the Woodstock Community Health Centre.



The City of Cape Town has committed to turning the Woodstock clinic into social housing. The clinic will be relocated to District Six. Photo: Christine Hogg

Asked what would happen to the grounds in Woodstock after the centre relocates, Byron la Hoe, a spokesperson for the provincial Department of Public Works, which currently owns the site, said: “An application has been received from the City of Cape Town, with the support of the Western Cape Department of Human Settlements, for the utilisation of the site for social housing, with the former Nurse Home section of the site earmarked for the accommodation of the Head Office of Cape Nature.”

He also said that the City of Cape Town was doing a feasibility study, and the proposed development – which includes parts of the site that were left vacant when staff relocated to Khayelitsha in 2014 – still needed to be subjected to a public participation process.

Social housing is rental units typically aimed at households with incomes of between R1,500 to R7,500 a month. Social housing projects are normally owned by independent social housing institutions (SHIs), that receive state-subsidies to build the units.

Brett Herron, mayoral committee member of transport and urban development, said social housing developments were planned for Salt River and Woodstock at six different locations. “The city will make announcements about the specific sites and projects as the project planning matures.”

He couldn’t say when construction might start or exactly how many units would be provided, but estimated around 3,000 units for all six locations in total. He said potential residents could apply once the planning process had been completed.

Jared Rossouw, co-director of Ndifuna Ukwazi, said Herron should tell residents exactly where the social housing sites will be and “when we can expect delivery”. He said: “The Woodstock Hospital site is perfect for social housing and everyone should welcome a feasibility study which moves this forward.”

Ndifuna Ukwazi and the Reclaim The City campaign have called for social housing in the inner city, where long-term residents are being evicted to make way for new housing developments. A [News24 article by Sarita Pillay](#) stated that it’s hard to say exactly how many people have been evicted in Woodstock, but the number of high-profile evictions runs into the hundreds. GroundUp has reported on the [Bromwell Street case](#), and [another case in Salt River](#).

Evicted Woodstock residents usually have to relocate to the Cape Flats, or developments far from work opportunities, schools and medical care, such as Blikkiesdorp and Wolwerivier. The former is called a temporary relocation area and the latter an incremental development area. Recently, court papers in the Bromwell Street case revealed that the city has plans for ten more temporary relocation areas on the outskirts of Cape Town.

Rossouw said that commitments by the city to social housing at several inner sites over the past decade had not moved beyond the planning stages. “What we need right now is for the city to break ground on any project ... Until then Herron is serving residents mutton dressed as lamb.”

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