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29 March 2016

The Chief Executive
Heritage Western Cape
Cape Town
8001

Dear Sir

MOTIVATION FOR FENCING AROUND THE CASTLE OF GOOD HOPE: HERITAGE WESTERN CAPE APPLICATION

I hereby wish to submit a motivation from the Castle Control Board to have the Castle precinct fenced in.

Purpose

The purpose of this motivation is to seek HWC and SAHRA approval/endorsement for the erection of a visually aesthetic, security fence around the crime-prone area of the Castle of Good Hope, Cape Town.

Background

In its October 2013 strategic planning session, the Castle Control Board (CCB) - a Schedule 3A Public Entity of the Ministry of Defence and Military Veterans - identified security as one of the most serious strategic matters that undermines the Board's ability to execute its public mandate articulated hereafter:

- Build an internationally known and recognised cultural and heritage brand for Ubuntu, dialogue, nation-building and human rights recognition;
- Guarantee the development of a smooth functioning, self-sustaining, "must-see" iconic visitor and learner destination;
- Optimise its tourism potential and accessibility to the public; and

- Preserve and protect its cultural and military heritage by elevating it to UNESCO World Heritage status.

During the past three years alone, the following serious (known) instances of criminality played itself out in the area identified for fencing:

- Two murders in the vicinity of the areas to be encamped;
- Two moat-drownings;
- Two cases of muggings and theft against CCB staff;
- Numerous cases of theft and robbery against visitors;
- Damaging of the 350-old walls of the Castle by cooking fires;
- Theft of metal objects and external lights;
- Day-light prostitution and drug-trafficking;
- Ablution in broad daylight against the Castle walls;
- Removal of valuables from the site; and
- Many other crimes classified by the security forces as “petty”.

The Chief Executive Officer, as the accounting officer of the CCB, has done the following to “manage” the issue of crime and criminality over the past three years:

- List it as a key risk in the organizational Risk Register;
- Regularly report to the Board, Standing Committee of Defence and other structures what the impact of this is on the day to day operations of the Castle;
- Engaged the security structure i.e. SANDF security, Military Police, SAPS and CID;
- Engaged the major homeless community under the bridge;
- Later, with the help of role-players above relocated and cordoned off the bridge area where the homeless were eking out a living;
- Purchased razor wire to enclose and secure at least the Strand Street entrance to the Castle; and
- Managed the negative media fall-out after the above incidents.

All of these diplomatic, humane interventions have done very little to alleviate the situation. But for us it is much more than as security concern: it is about the image of our Defence Force, the city, province and country.

The message is loud and clear: If the state (in this case in the conspicuous presence of the SANDF) cannot secure one of its most eminent heritage and cultural treasures, what about the rest?

Motivation

Without dwelling on the details, the following points are the key motivators for this application. The fence will act as:

- Deterrent mechanism for serious crimes;
- Prohibitive measure for serious accidents;

- Allow for the external non-obtrusive archaeological investigation of a couple of critical areas around the Castle;
- Secure the external lights and other external fixtures; some of which was sponsored;
- Enhance the ability of the CCB and other partners to discharge their core mandate after the current R108 million upgrade of the Castle.

Implications

We have considered the following implications that need to be managed and mitigated:

- Social impact – the idea of the Castle as a heritage-tourist bubble that needs to be “camped-off” ala military or jail style. This will particularly be advanced by a vocal group that still views the Castle as a vestige of our brutal colonial-apartheid past.
- Accessibility – the Castle is part of a broader transport-education-heritage precinct of the city.
- Political – some political and social pressure groups would view this negatively.

Conclusion

The question might be asked why my Board and I have been dilly-dallying with this for so long. The answer is simple: we have tried our hands at all the humane, inclusive, consultative processes: to no avail.

What is now finally starting to count is that the permeable boundaries of the site have become a matter of life and death. We can no longer guarantee the safety of our staff and visitors. It is as simple and as complex as this.

Recommendation

It is resolved that the BELCOM of HWC approve this application as a matter of principle and urgency.

Submitted:



CT Gilfellan

Executive Director/CEO

Approved/Not Approved

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JT Nkonyane', written over a faint horizontal line.

Lt General JT Nkonyane (Ret.)

Board Chairperson (On behalf of the Castle Control Board)

Warm regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'CT Gilfellan', written over a faint horizontal line.

CT Gilfellan
Chief Executive Officer
Castle Control Board
Cape Town