



New world class stadium on the cards for Mahikeng...

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Situations permitting, the curtain may be gradually be falling on the existence of the skew-shaped Mmabatho Stadium with the prospects of smaller, yet world class facility designed to meet a well balanced urban environment that hinges on convenience, attractiveness and safety.

The new envisaged project, has found expression in the policy speech by the Premier of Bokone Bophirima, Supra Mahumapelo, as one of the flagship anchor projects not only to rebrand and reposition the province to make it a business and tourist destination of choice, but also to rebuild the image and capacity of Mahikeng to meet the profile of the administrative capital of the province.

To add weight to a need for a refurbished or a redesigned Mmabatho Stadium, with ticks in all compliance boxes, is a technical report commissioned by Department of Public Works and Roads.

It has issued a red-card to the current state of Mmabatho Stadium and its future sustainability in its current structural form.

These are some of the findings according to the technical report:

- As it stands, the stadium is not in good condition due to lack of maintenance over the years and is already showing signs of decay and ruin.
- A lot of the structural and services elements require replacement and alterations which may be difficult to resolve structurally. A large portion of the facility is unusable and has thus reached the end of its service life.
- The continued water pounding in areas around the stadium will have an impact on the future structural integrity of the stadium which does not in any way meet the requirements of FIFA specifications. For example, the soccer pitch dimension is not within the specification stipulated by FIFA. The pitch watering system has to be redesigned to meet stipulated football standards.
- It was further established, the water reticulation system of the stadium is dysfunctional which has led to the dilapidation of the soccer pitch as well as leading to ablution and change room amenities becoming dysfunctional.

- The existing internal sewer reticulation system at the stadium has reached its design life and needs to be replaced. There are signs that the external sewer mains around the stadium is not operational and the effluent from the stadium is not flowing into the main sewer. That poses a serious health risk and as a result the stadium cannot host major events anymore.
- Other softer issues raised include the existing heating, ventilation and air-conditioning system which has passed its useful life and is not functional. Due to the age of the equipment- which also has not been maintained- sourcing spares to repair is impossible.
- That said, there is a strong case for the new modern stadium with a view that, if properly integrated, will have the highest potential to make both a visual and functional impact on the environment.
- Also, the current structure is large in relation of the local population and this view is supported by a market research which suggests that the optimal size of the stadium should be between 30 000 and 35 000 with 10 to 24 hospitality suites.
- More so, supported with the option of the International Convention Centre and Hotel to enhance Mahikeng as the capital of Bokone Bophirima.

The report recommends that:

- The current Mmabatho Stadium be dismantled and the materials salvaged to be reused to upgrade Montshioa and Taung playing grounds.
- Green Building principles form part of the design of the stadium for the benefit of the surrounding buildings within the precinct.
- The envisaged 40 000 capacity stadium should be developed on existing stadium site in compliance with the required regulations and standards.
- New office space be provided within the fabric of the stadium.
- A commercial gym be incorporated into the fabric of the stadium.

END

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