



Yeoville Police Station: what's happening?

Rumours are flying around about the Yeoville Police Station. There have been articles in newspapers like The Citizen and the North Eastern Tribune. There is confusion about the future of the police station. YEOVUE NEWS looks at the issues and calls for comment from the community of Yeoville Bellevue.

In 1985, Yeoville got a new police station, a converted three-bedroomed house on the corner of Kenmere Rd and Yeo St. The police station was established because there was an increase in the levels of crime in the area.

This was probably because Rockey St had become a well-known nightspot in the 80s and hundreds of people came into the area from other parts of Johannesburg every night to enjoy themselves. This caused a rise in anti-social behaviour, muggings, car break-ins and drug dealing.

This was not the first time Yeoville had had a police station. Old maps of Yeoville show that there was a police station on the corner of Kenmere and Hunter St at some point.

But the area fell under Hillbrow for many years, probably from the 1960s when the current Hillbrow police station was built.

The new Yeoville station still fell under the control of Hillbrow until sometime in the 1990s. It was then realised that Yeoville and the surrounding areas of Bellevue, Bellevue East and Observatory needed its own fully-fledged police station and so Yeoville was upgraded in status.

But not the police station itself. As the police officers grew in number, additional temporary buildings were erected and shipping containers were brought in for storing files and other documents.

Meanwhile, the detectives were housed 2km away in a house that used to belong to the Transkei government back in the days of apartheid.

Late in the 1990s and the early 2000s, the SAPS and the Community Policing Forum realised the police could not carry on working under such conditions. The main police was too small and it was not



The current Yeoville Police Station is in the house on the right, the new police station was supposed to be built in the open area in the middle of the picture.

good to have the detectives so far away.

They looked for other possible buildings in the area. They also looked for land where a new station could be built. Eventually, they decided on some land on Becker St, at the top of the Yeoville Park (see the picture above).

A tender was awarded for the building of a new station, but, as we have reported before in Yeovue News, there were many delays. A new tender was published in 2010, but it seems that the SAPS have now decided not to build a new station.

But the problems remain. So there have been many discussions at senior level on what to do.

Many rumours are going around about what is going to happen. There has been an article in the Citizen and one in the North Eastern Tribune. In both articles, the question is asked: is the Yeoville Police Station going to close down? Is

Yeoville Bellevue going to fall under Hillbrow in future?

The answer from the police is: No, this is not what they are planning. They are once again looking for somewhere in the Yeoville Bellevue area that the police station can move to. They would like to find a place that is big enough for the uniformed branch and the detective, and which also has space for parking.

If they cannot find such a place, they will continue to try and find other possible solutions to the current problems.

What do you think? Where do you think the SAPS could move to? Should we be asking why they have decided not to build a new station? Do we still need a police station in our area?

Let Yeovue News know your thoughts. Whatever happens will affect all of us, so we should not just let it happen, but also think and contribute ideas. **YN**

Open letter from a resident

Dear City Parks and Pikitup,
Whoever is responsible for cleaning the Yeoville Park - it is looking too terrible.

The stairs which I spent months decorating with mosaic are always covered in litter and leaves.

The park is generally always littered - all the time.

I constantly see council workers lying in the park waiting for the truck to pick them up, with litter lying all around them.

It's really not impressive.

Please come back to me on the action you will be taking to adjust your cleaning schedules so that the park doesn't look like the mess it does now.

And please let me know when you will be fixing the leaning trees in Raleigh St. Some of them are leaning so far into the road that they are a threat to the traffic.

Thank you

Regards

Gaby

Editor's note: *We agree with Gaby 100%. This is a problem not just of the Yeoville Park, but all the parks in the area. The problem is that there are not permanent park-keepers keeping the parks clean and monitoring and preventing anti-social behavior taking place there. The last we heard, they have a team of Park Rangers which travel between all the parks of the city - but this will never resolve the challenges we face in our parks. You cannot apply the same management principles to a park in Yeoville Bellevue and a park in, for example, Parkview. The socio-economic conditions in the two types of areas are too different.*

PS There were two responses to Gaby's letter. The one said City Parks would send someone to clean the park. The other said the rangers had been there and chased away youngsters who were gambling there. Today the park is dirty again and it is almost certain that as soon as the park rangers left, the gamblers, fraudsters, drinkers and drug users moved straight back in again. YN

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Editorial

Lights out!

What kind of community do we live in? Last week, my blue microbus was parked in Raymond St, near Rocky, as it is almost every day.

I went out to use it at midday last Wednesday and discovered that someone had stolen the lights from the back of the car. In the middle of the day, with people walking up and down!

Why did nobody stop him? Why did nobody ask what he was doing?

Through the help of the Street Patrollers and the my fellow CPF members, I managed to find someone who was involved in the theft. He said someone else stole the lights and he was the 'middleman' who helped the thief to find a buyer. He said the buyer was a taxi driver who brings children to one of our Yeoville Bellevue schools.

Now I have been told I can get the lights back if I pay back the money that the buyer paid to the thief. The thief meantime has disappeared.

The 'middleman' said sorry. He said if he had known it was my car, he would not have been involved in the stealing and selling of the lights. In other words, it would have been okay if they had stolen the lights from someone else!

So we have a community that watches a theft taking place and says nothing, we have a thief who is not scared to steal in broad daylight, we have someone who is happy to help him by finding a buyer, and we have someone - a person who is trusted to transport our children to and from school - happy to buy stolen goods.

I ask again: what kind of community are we living in?

So - I am reporting it to the police and we'll see what happens. **YN**

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Thought for the day (as we prepare for elections): 'Politics' comes from the Greek word for people. So politics and political parties are there to serve the people. Funny how political parties often behave as though they are there to serve their own interests.