

## **The Woodstock Hub press statement**

In response to recent misinformation and factual incorrections regarding The Woodstock Hub and Bromwell Street properties, we would like to rectify certain misconceptions and our plan for moving ahead.

“Firstly, the media has incorrectly reported that no previous notices and communications had been issued to the tenants of 120 – 128 Bromwell Street, Woodstock, when in fact a number of notices had been served and received, starting with the first notice that was issued and receipt acknowledged by the occupants as early as 2013. From here onwards a number of notices and extensions were granted, as well as one of the vacant homes being secured by our staff, who interacted with the neighbours. Contrary to allegations, we did interact with the occupants, including a proposal for free rental and utilities for 3 months in 2014 when the matter was taken by the occupants to the rental housing tribunal.

We recognise that the urban housing crisis is an extremely serious issue that affects the whole nation and not just Cape Town. Inspired by housing forums hosted in Cape Town in March and forums on Urban Development held recently in Gauteng, we would like to become a part of the solution. As such we are working towards engaging with the City of Cape Town, other developers, relevant NGOs and various stakeholders in setting up a forum to determine how best these stakeholders can collaborate in making a positive and effective contribution on urban housing development.

With regards to the occupants at Bromwell Street, we unfortunately cannot grant another extension on the eviction deadline of 9<sup>th</sup> September 2016. The property was purchased over two years ago with the intent to add much-needed density to the Woodstock area and the end result will be 50 - 75 high-density middle-income rental homes that will not only become additional urban homes, but also create jobs in the process.

Therefore the proposal we are going to table when we meet with the occupants is to assist them, through partner NGOs, in finding permanent employment within the area. Finally we are going to kick start a crowd-funding initiative for the Bromwell Street occupants, one that we will seed with R50, 000. We are hopeful that we will be able to garner support from concerned citizens and civil action groups to create a solution to assisting these families in finding residences.

We pride ourselves on being a socially responsible company that is focused on positive contributions to our environments where we operate. Locally this is done through membership to the Woodstock Improvement District, education initiatives that involve financial and staff time contributions to schools in under-privileged communities and important work with NPO partners like Straatwerk which allow us to contribute to cleanliness as well as working to contribute positively to bringing homeless citizens back into society.”

Jacques van Embden

Director, The Hub