

Although this story more directly centres on Bergvliet, we have linked up with other communities in Cape Town and further afield that have faced/are facing similar battles, with a view to combining forces. We are sure that if our story is covered, they would be very keen to contribute their views:

1) Coniston Park –

<https://southernmail.co.za/news/2025-04-02-coniston-park-residents-oppose-plans-for-new-high-school/>

<https://iol.co.za/weekend-argus/news/2025-08-22-senior-citizens-protest-against-new-school-construction-in-coniston-park/>

2) Tygerhof –

<https://tabletalk.co.za/news/2025-06-27-concerns-raised-by-tijgerhof-residents-association-over-wced-officials-conduct/>

3) Fisherhaven –

<https://iol.co.za/news/2026-01-30-fisherhaven-residents-voice-concerns-as-mayor-klaas-investigates-school-building-objections/>

<https://capeargus.co.za/news/2026-01-27-residents-challenge-fisherhaven-academy-construction-amid-environmental-worries/>

Summary of Case Study — Tokai High School Proposal

Background

The Western Cape Education Department (WCED) has proposed a large-scale, limited-subject, mega secondary school (>1000 students) on Erf 1061 (Ruskin Road / Erf 1026 area) as part of the Province's Rapid School Build programme. The proposal envisages a regional intake and enrolment levels substantially higher than the neighbourhood can feasibly sustain.

Key Concern 1 — Traffic (Immediate, Tangible Risk)

- **Community view:** The proposed school would generate large commuter peak-hour flows that local roads were not designed to carry, risking severe congestion, pedestrian safety issues, and collapse of the road network through traffic backup and spillover into residential streets.
- **Evidence gaps:** Requests under PAIA for the project's Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) were initially refused and only released after an Ombudsman ruling. The version provided was labelled as a draft and contained no supporting data, raising questions about whether decisions are being made on incomplete traffic modelling.
- **Practical consequences:** Residents warn of predictable peak-period gridlock, safety risks for children and pedestrians, and pressure on neighbouring corridors (South Peninsula / Southern Suburbs). The community is calling for full disclosure of the TIA assumptions, raw data, final verified documentation, and an independent peer review.

Key Concern 2 — Governmental Process and Legitimacy (Governance, Transparency, Public Participation)

- Access to information: The process has been marked by denied PAIA requests and delayed or partial disclosure of technical studies; key documents were only released after appeal.
- Sequencing and evidence base: Residents question whether approvals are proceeding before finalised, verified technical inputs (traffic and environmental assessments) are available and properly interrogated.
- Public participation: The community describes repeated attempts to engage WCED and City officials, including the formation of a Steering Committee at which to discuss and attempt to resolve the outstanding issues. However, these received little or no substantive response, warning that participation risks being procedural rather than substantive without timely access to complete information.

Key Concern 3 — Environment (Long-Term, Potentially Irreversible Risk)

- Site constraints: Independent reviewers and residents have identified soil, groundwater, and ecologically sensitive area concerns that may affect site suitability for a development of this scale.
- Irreversibility: Environmental experts warn that impacts such as habitat loss, altered runoff, and ecosystem degradation could be difficult or impossible to reverse once construction proceeds.
- Cumulative risk: Environmental questions are linked to scale and traffic concerns, challenging whether the site is appropriate for a high-capacity regional school.

Latest Findings — Escalation After 21 May 2026 Meeting

Following an online meeting with Cllr Eddie Andrews, residents learned that:

- The City has approved the project, with all statutory approvals in place.
- Construction can now proceed, reducing the steering committee's role largely to enrolment and ongoing engagement rather than influencing the development itself.
- This revelation contradicts earlier impressions that the project was still in planning and engagement phases, raising serious questions about procedural fairness and transparency.

Residents remain deeply concerned about:

- The Draft TIA being treated as final and the lack of disclosure of raw traffic data.
- The timing and transparency of the overall process.
- Environmental duty-of-care obligations, including wetland and river corridor sensitivity.

The community is now obtaining further legal advice regarding procedural fairness, adequacy of public participation, and the apparent progression of the project prior to meaningful community engagement.

What the Community Proposes

- Scaled alternatives: The Bergvliet Voluntary Association (BVA) has proposed smaller, locally focused options (e.g., an Early Childhood/Foundation Phase centre or a smaller “eco” high school) to meet local demand while avoiding regional commuter traffic and reducing environmental footprint.
- Immediate demands for transparency and scrutiny:
 - Release final versions of the TIA and all environmental studies.
 - Commission independent peer reviews of traffic and environmental assessments.
 - Pause irreversible approvals until independent review and meaningful public engagement have occurred.
