

People want to see nature at Chappies, not concrete

Cape Times reports that civic groups and environmentalists have lashed out at plans to build a two-storey luxury office block on Chapman's Peak Drive. Philip Bam, deputy director of the Greater Cape Town Alliance, said Chapman's Peak belonged to all South Africans.

"No one has the right to claim it as their own. The reason we have SANParks is to protect our national parks and there is no way they should have allowed any encroachment on that. Parks should be sacrosanct. People do that route because they want to see nature, not concrete."

The building, part of the multimillion-rand toll plaza development on the world-famous scenic drive, will house the staff of Entilini, the private company that runs the toll road, and will be built on Table Mountain National Park land. Bam said he found it arrogant of Transport MEC Robin Carlisle to say that "nothing will make me believe" that the proposed office building was unlawful because it would be on national park land.

Terry Wyner of the Civil Rights Action Group said: "We don't need a monstrosity on the mountain", while Patrick Dowling of the Wildlife and Environment Society of SA told *Cape Times* he would support an inquiry into the legality of using parks land for the office building. The toll road issue has been highly contentious from the beginning, Dowling said, as the need for the toll road was not satisfactorily dealt with in the view of many citizens of Cape Town. Lawyers acting for the Hout Bay Residents' Association said that a resolution by Parliament is required before any part of a national park can be withdrawn.

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