

'Little Dubai' planned for Plett

Plettenberg Bay residents are furious about a proposed multi-billion-rand small-boat harbour the claim will destroy the character of the village.



The estuary at Plettenberg Bay as it is today. Image: [Show Me](#)

The Garden Route town boasts expensive holiday homes and is known for its natural beauty. Now, Western Cape Marina Investments has proposed a R4bn development on Central Beach and the Piesang River Estuary.

It would comprise a yacht club, retail stores, offices, 482 residential units, 17 bungalows along the beach and a five-star hotel.

But property owners are having none of it and have formed the Save Plett Alliance to fight the developer. Interested parties have until 5 February to comment on the plans.

The alliance has asked an independent architect to develop an artistic image of the project based on the developer's plans.

Basil van Rooyen, spokesman for the alliance, said residents had vowed to go to court should the development be given the go-ahead.

"The immediate concern for any property owner is that this will be a high-rise development that will spoil the natural beauty of the river mouth. It looks like a little Dubai," said Van Rooyen.

"This is such a massive project, the construction period will be a minimum of four years. Most of the tourism operators, hotels, bed and breakfasts, restaurants and so on will simply go bust," he said.

Mike Cohen, the director of the CEN integrated environmental management unit appointed by the developers, said the proposal had received overwhelming support from disadvantaged communities. The harbour would benefit poor local fishermen and create jobs.

Cohen said he had received 3,800 votes in support of the development, while only 100 were against it.

"There is a lot of resistance from the alliance and there is also a lot of support from the disadvantaged communities," said Cohen.

"I think we've got a good balance of people for and against it, which is always good for impact assessment

because one makes a better decision."

Cohen said it would take up to 18 months before the developers knew if they could go ahead.

Van Rooyen said the alliance had hired a top law firm to launch legal action should the proposal be approved.

Source: The Times via I-Net Bridge

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>