

'NO BUILDING ON OUR MOUNTAIN'

Hout Bay civics rise up against 'toll office mess'

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Environment Writer

CLIFFORD NOGWAVU, the SA National Civic Organisation (Sanco) chairman in Hout Bay, has spoken out against the proposed office building on Chapman's Peak Drive, saying SANParks has no right to make national park land available for a private toll company.

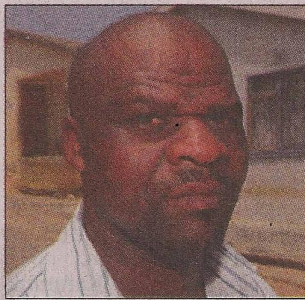
Nogwavu, a resident of Imizamo Yethu in Hout Bay, described the move yesterday as "illegal".

"The whole thing is a mess... we don't want a building on our mountain. The mountain belongs to the people," Nogwavu said.

He criticised SANParks for taking a decision to deproclaim the piece of land without consulting the public. Their failure to do so indicated they were managing national parks as "a dictatorship".

Nogwavu queried why SANParks and the provincial government were allowing Entilini, a private toll company, to build an office on national park land, yet did not allow the people in Hout Bay's poorer areas of Imizamo Yethu and Hangberg to build houses on national parks land.

"The provincial government took a decision to build a toll plaza on this land. Why not let all the people of Imizamo Yethu build on the land, and Hangberg. According to the



OUR MOUNTAIN: Sanco chairman and Hout Bay resident Clifford Nogwavu says the mountain belongs to the people and SANParks has no right to deproclaim a piece of it for private development.

Picture: MICHAEL WALKER

constitution they are not allowed to do so. And the money going to be generated from the toll plaza is for them, the government. The communities are not going to benefit so we're saying we don't want a building on our mountain," Nogwavu said.

He also criticised the move by the provincial government and Entilini to scrap free day-passes. Both parties have signed an amended agreement in which they will discontinue the pass system once the toll plaza has been completed. The pass allowed residents free access to the first section of Chapman's Peak Drive, where there are picnic sites and hik-

ing routes. "Churchgoers went there to pray. Now they will have to pay," said Nogwavu.

The large, two-storey building has been slated by residents who say it is not designed to be a simple toll booth office but a luxury building for Entilini's head office. It has offices for an HR manager, an auditor, general manager, concession manager, several secretaries, a staff room with TV, kitchen areas and sliding doors on to several terraces.

The provincial government, SANParks and Entilini say they have the necessary permission to build the toll plaza, as former environment minister Marthinus van Schalkwyk approved the project in 2008. However residents say they were not told that the bulk of the office would be on national park land, nor were they provided with plans of the proposed luxury building.

● Residents will hold a mass march on Sunday to protest against the toll, the office building and "part of Table Mountain National Park to be given away free". It will begin at 11am at the Hout Bay car park opposite the Chapman's Peak hotel. Protesters will walk 2.5 km to the site of the proposed plaza where they will hand over a memorandum to government officials and a Murray & Roberts representative. For further information contact 082 318 3308.