THE OYSTERS WILL ADD 69 UNITS TO THE MARKET

Apartments a welcome addition to Knysna

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AN UNUSUALLY low entry-level price for a luxury residential development is one of several attractions belonging to a new, R50-million apartment complex, The Oysters, to be built in Knysna.

The development is the first of its kind to be developed in the area in the past five years.

Historic land cost, optimum land use and careful planning to create the most usable living space have brought The Oysters in at development costs – and subsequently sales prices – per square metre that are well below those of similar older properties on the market in the booming Garden Route town, says the developer/property financier Neels Bornman.

"That's if there were any existing properties on the market," he says.

Knysna is experiencing an unprecedented sales rush, and local estate agents say demand is exceeding supply, says Bornman. The Oysters will add 69 units to the market, ranging in price from R450 000 to R1.5m.

Land cost had not been a major issue in the budget as the development team held the site since well before the price escalation which attributed to the current serious shortage of suitable land around Knysna.

The buildings and surrounds have been designed by Cape Town architects Bam Zollner, who, says Bornman, have become well-known for their practical, innovative and attractive design solutions – commercial and residential.

Standing on a large, open space bounded by Bokmakierie Street and the N2, The Oysters will have a maritime "Cape Cod" feel, with faux clapboard exterior wall finishes in some places and aluminium-and-wood windows and doors.

CAPE COD FEEL: An artist's impression of The Oysters, a new R50-million maritime-style development in Knysna.

The designs at The Oysters have a similar theme to the Knysna Waterfront, so it's linked in that way to Knysna's emerging architectural culture, says architect Chris Bam.

There are simplex and duplex options, parking bays and communal recreation areas. The top floor apartments will be lofts or studios, with exposed roof trusses and dormer windows, with views of Knysna's Heads and the lagoon, while ground floor units have gardens.