

Clan chief fears losing home after row with developers

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A clan chief at the centre of a row over a huge tourism development could lose his home after campaigning against it.

Developers in Spain are seeking £14.6m in damages from Alastair Boyd, chief of the Clan Boyd and Lord Kilmarnock, who they accuse, along with his wife and two others, of slander, coercion and intimidation.

Lord Kilmarnock, 80, who is married to Hilary Bardwell, the widow of novelist Kingsley Amis and the mother of Martin Amis, also a novelist, has been an outspoken critic of the proposed development close to his home in Ronda, Andalucia.

Plans for the £66m Los Merinos development include two golf courses, three hotels and 800 houses. The site earmarked for the new buildings is next to the Sierra de las Nieves National Park, near Ronda where Lord and Lady Kilmarnock live.

However, those opposed to the development claim that water supplies in the region, which is prone to droughts, are insufficient to support development on such a large scale and predict that if it goes ahead the local environment will be damaged irrevocably.

Lord Kilmarnock has written a number of books on the region and has regularly spoken against the development in Spanish newspapers and on television and radio.

The developers, JM Legion Espana, are claiming that the negative publicity this has generated has caused some investors to withdraw from the scheme.

Lord Kilmarnock is unable to comment on the case for legal reasons, but if he loses he could be bankrupted and lose his Spanish home where he has lived full-time since Kingsley Amis died in 1995.

Before the death of Kingsley Amis, who is best-known for his comic novel Lucky Jim, Lord Kilmarnock lived at his home with the writer's former wife.

Since Lord and Lady Kilmarnock moved to Andalucia Martin Amis has been a regular visitor and wrote The Rachel Papers there.

A friend of Lord Kilmarnock said: "He has been a different person since receiving this writ and I am very worried about him. He is very anxious and concerned about losing his house.

"If they lose this will completely bankrupt them.

"It is already costing them a lot of money in legal fees."

The Spanish Green Party is supporting Lord Kilmarnock over the development.

The family friend added: "It is particularly scandalous given how much he has done for the area over the past half-century.

"He is a real friend of Ronda and his books have brought an incalculable number of tourists here as a result."