

No to Plan Larios – Bulletin No 2

This is the second in a series of updates on the campaign to stop the Larios and Ayuntamiento de Nerja's plans to build a golf course and luxury development in Maro. The views are personal and do not reflect the opinions of other individuals or groups unless where stated and permission has been given

Thousands sign up against the Golf Course plans!

At 20th April the official campaign website registered over 5500 signatures. This is good but we need even more to let the Larios know we mean business. Meanwhile, a second petition has started up on the Change.org website and has already attracted nearly 10,000 signatures!

<https://www.change.org/p/ayuntamiento-de-nerja-evitar-la-construcci%C3%B3n-de-campo-de-golf-en-maro>

It's likely that there's some duplication between the petitions and this may pose a problem for the campaign organizers. But it's worth continuing on all fronts so please keep telling your friends what's going on and encourage them to sign.

Who's running the Campaign?

The Nerja-based group 'Otra Maro y Nerja es Posible' is coordinating the opposition to the plans under the title 'No al Plan Larios'. Graphic designer Jorge Alaminos, whose main tasks include updating the website and communicating with the press, explained to me that the group (then known as the 'Plataforma anti Golf') had its first assembly Dec 2016 in objection to the Larios plans to build in Maro. As the plan couldn't proceed under the previous left-wing Nerja council, the group went quiet until the scheme was reactivated in 2020 (under a new right-wing coalition) when they relaunched the petition.

The organization has no formal structure but works through the model of the *asamblea* – or democratic public meeting. Jorge explains the platform is "the instrument that links the different groups and people, and includes all the proposals that are approved in the assemblies." There are different working groups around communication, contacts, translation, multimedia, legal advice and the petition.

Jorge admits the website makes no mention of any kind of action plan, but explains as soon as the State of Emergency is lifted the group will call an assembly. Then, during the '20 day period' (and after a media campaign) they will deliver the petition to the Ayuntamiento and make a *deposición* -

including *alegaciones* (official arguments against the proposals), which they are now preparing. Members of the public can also get involved and I'll be covering in the following bulletin how things might then develop. Jorge also sees the possibility of public demonstrations, festivals of culture and other expressions of creative opposition.

Jorge encourages newcomers to inform themselves of the issues and get involved in the campaign. The best way to do this is to form interest groups and make a distinct contribution, in coordination with the main thrust of the campaign. Communication with the Plataforma should be through the Facebook page (Otro Maro y Nerja es Posible), website and Google email group.

Platform website: <https://noalplanlarios.wixsite.com/plataforma>

Golf Course Video

It's likely that most of you will have seen the promotional video put out by SALSL (Larios' estate agency) promoting Maro Golf. If not, here's the link:

<https://youtu.be/ZtUklhmRKbQ>

The film presents a glowing vision of the new development but fails to mention the dire environmental impact of the project and the threat to a community of farmers and land-dwellers. There's now another, ironic video doing the rounds showing how the project's claims in terms of local employment and other benefits are probably exaggerated.

The Bigger Picture

It's no secret that the Larios plans are being advanced in the wake of the Junta de Andalucia's proposal for legal reforms to make it easier to build and develop - even where there are environmental concerns. Now the national government wants to take the issue to the Constitutional Tribunal where they will file an appeal of unconstitutionality over the so-called 'Decree-Law 2/2020'.

According to press sources the Government will question the Junta's competence to legislate on certain matters and argue against the urgency with which the decree-law has been advanced. If you want to lend your voice to a wider campaign against the Junta's plans, there's a petition with more than 35,000 signatures at <http://chng.it/kDDTSGhP2V>

Response from the Ayuntamiento

On 16th April Nerja town councillor Nieves Atencia, from the department of urban development and housing made a statement via Facebook reassuring the public that the proposed plans are for their benefit.

In response, the Plataforma commented that there exist alternative plans for the area that 'respect its environment, its culture and history, and would generate more employment ... and sustainable tourism.' Local PSOE councillor, José Maria Rivas, also released a statement on Facebook saying the Ayuntamiento should be focusing on helping local people during these difficult times, and have the courage to ask *them* what they want.

Cartoon Corner



(translating the caption is good practice for your Spanish!)

In the next issue

We take a closer look at the local political process, focus on other groups who are lending their voices to the campaign, as well as considering some of the positive alternatives to the Larios Plan.

Thanks to Ana and Judy who helped with gathering material, writing and translation. Please forward this bulletin to others, and if you have comments or suggestions please get in touch. Let's make this a community effort!

"Truth never damages a cause that is just."

Mahatma Gandhi