*Press Release*

*For immediate release*

**Devonbosch GOAT to expand on tourism offering in Stellenbosch region**

There’s a reason that Stellenbosch was ranked #23 in a 2022 global study of the Top Most Loved Destinations Around The World. Consider the stunning mountain scenery, the picturesque vineyards, historic buildings and roadways, deliciously good food, seriously fine wine, hiking trails, nature reserves and a spoilt-for-choice selection of activities for young and old. Mountain biking takes a top place in the SA sports landscape - with more than 400 mountain biking trails, some of which are hailed as among the best in the world. However, within the Western Cape – the more serious mountain bikers don’t seem to rate the Stellenbosch region in even the top 10 for best mountain biking trails in the province. Fortunately, that’s about to change thanks to the exciting transformation happening within the new Devonbosch development.

Encompassing the essence of the Western Cape’s vibrant outdoor lifestyle, Devonbosch is perfectly poised as a central destination, which has a host of new and exciting projects on the horizon – including The GOAT.

**The brains behind The GOAT**

The GOAT is a planned world-class mountain bike park with trails within Devonbosch being developed by a trail guru designer and builder, Duran van Eeden, along with full time trail builder Wynand Basson and coordinated by recognised and respected local rider, Eldorette Carinus. “Between Duran, Wynand and Eldorette they have decades of experience in the cycling space and not just locally, but on the international circuit as well. We are really excited about what they are planning to unleash in Devonbosch that will undoubtedly make this area THE destination for mountain biking and a host of other amazing activities that exudes Life Unlimited,” explains Reghard Goussard, Marketing & Sales Executive at SquareTurn Developments, which as an organisation is responsible for the development of Devonbosch.

Duran’s impressive trail building CV extends as far afield as China with tracks closer to home being laid down in the likes of Pretoria, the North West, Port Elizabeth and within the Western Cape. His Western Cape triumphs include trails within Plaisir der Merle, Zevenwacht, Tokai, Avondale and Langebaan – to name a few. Having competed in multiple national championships over the years and international competitions in France, Germany and Switzerland – Duran is certainly no stranger to riding on world-class trails.

Wynand became a full time trail builder in 2018 and quickly attracted a following of fellow mountain bike enthusiasts for his amazing wooden features on Old Bethlehem farm in the Banhoek valley. In 2022 he built the wooden features for the technical section of some of the Cape Epic stages, having previously worked on numerous trails in the Western Cape including Hoogekraal, Bloemendal, Tokai and Jonkershoek, collaborating with some of the country’s top trail builders.

Eldorette has been named as Duran’s partner in crime on this exciting build and poised tourist attraction within Stellenbosch that will make Devonbosch synonymous with the best mountain biking trails in South Africa and even globally. She too brings mountains of international riding experience and her passion for mountain biking has seen her compete in the BCBR in Canada, while also having ridden in various high profile South African races that includes the Wines2Whales, Attakwas, Tankwa trek stage race and she is currently training to ride in the 2023 Cape Epic.

According to these seasoned cyclists that are the brains behind turning The GOAT into a reality, their vision is to create an elevated maze and trail that will offer a unique riding and visitor experience - with dedicated pause areas along the way. Some of the proposed features within The GOAT will include jumps, drop-offs, elevated trails and switchbacks, rock gardens, clay switchbacks, rollers, a treehouse, roller coaster and bespoke pause feature. “We see the trails at Devonbosch being like nothing else in SA! Apart from the exciting and varied technical tracks that would cater for different skill sets of riders, the setting itself is just breathtaking with the view of the surrounding mountains and winelands. The plan is to also incorporate a Skills Academy to the offering at Devonbosch where people can learn from the best in the business on how to improve their riding and even running skills”, explains Duran.

Eldorette, who is project managing the planned activities within The GOAT, says that Devonbosch will play host to a multitude of activities, facilities, and family-centric features available to all visitors, of all ages, and all skill levels. “Mountain biking trails, trail run routes, an obstacle course, dedicated training areas, and in the long-term future an indoor skills and skateboarding parks are just a few of the exciting activities planned to form part of the Devonbosch offering. Visitors will be able to hone their skills, have fun with friends or just come and be entertained. But that’s not all. You can also get your bike washed or serviced after a gruelling session, browse the rails of an adventure retail store and a specialised bike showroom and factory, or work on your kickflips, up your cadence or better your running splits at one of the many Skills Training Clinics that we plan to offer in the future,” enthuses Eldorette who is also the Chairperson for Franschhoek Trails development and maintenance.

**Leaving a Trail for Change**

Goussard, also the Founder of Trails SA Network NPC, believes that mountain biking – as one of the top sporting disciplines within the SA sporting landscape - is a catalyst for change in the area.

“With world-famous mountain biking stage events such as the Cape Epic and Wines2Whales, there’s no doubt that the rolling winelands and surrounding vistas make this area the perfect playground for cyclists,” comments Goussard. “While our aim is to develop Devonbosch as the ultimate sporting and adventure destination of the area, our intentions go beyond the bike and extend to the actual track – both for the rider, and for the local community. The fact that phase one of our trail won an award from the World Economic Forum at the end of 2022 and that we have also received official support from local government to create an alternative means of transport through the trails, has merely reinforced our determination to make this project a reality. Ultimately we want all trails to lead to Devonbosch.”

To date, over 640km of trails have helped connect local communities from Paarl to Franschhoek and Stellenbosch, all of which are already being used regularly by pedestrian commuters, school-goers, runners, hikers, horse riders and cyclists alike. This initiative has officially been adopted by SquareTurn, responsible for the Devonbosch development, who with this award-winning SA Trails Network CSI project are on a mission to provide communities’ families and children safe passage to and from Devonbosch from the surrounding areas.

“The initial phase that kicked off in November 2022 has been instrumental in empowering and uplifting the surrounding communities. Economic growth and job creation are just some of the outcomes we’re excited about, but there also plans in the pipelines to connect these trails to Bottelary Conservancy, which offers cyclists access to trails on private working wine farms. The shareholders of Devonbosch are both avid mountain bikers having competed multiple times in some of South Africa’s most revered mountain biking races. That’s why it was easy for them to see the potential and understand the impact the trails and The GOAT will have on this development and in a broader context. We believe this initiative will ignite a new flame for adventure in the Western Cape, and Devonbosch offers the perfect backdrop,” says Goussard.

**The home for a “Life Unlimited”**

With wide open spaces, green parks, and a number of natural lakes and ponds rich in bird life, the future of Devonbosch will boast a diverse landscape that will play beautiful host to not only mountain biking, music concerts, trail running, water sports like efoiling and even bird watching events – but it will also cater to living and working opportunities for tenants and residents and the local community. According to the BlueHealth2020 project conducted in November 2020, there is considerable evidence that contact with (safe) natural environments such as parks and woodlands (green spaces) and rivers and lakes (blue spaces), can reduce the onset of common mental health disorders such as depression and anxiety. It is in light of this that SquareTurn realised the positive change that could be created through a development that was built around the advancement of mental health by focusing on activity and tranquility utilising blue and green spaces.

“With a vision to blend elements of walkability and sustainability, Devonbosch was internationally inspired to create a village of the future. Think small-town conveniences perfectly blended with big-thinking urban design; where you can walk through eco-designed open spaces to meet friends or get to work, and embrace green living and nature as it is woven effortlessly into everyday life. We believe that Devonbosch is a first of its kind in Africa in the mixed-use space that promotes this kind of lifestyle offering and benefit to employers and employees on their doorstep. We are excited to see the significant interest that the commercial and residential offerings will attract from local and international investors and how this development through its outdoor adventure activities will stimulate key economic growth in the region,” adds Goussard.

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| **WORDS**  **DISTRIBUTED**  **IMAGES**  **DATE** | **:**  **:**  **:**  **:** | **1533**  **On behalf of Devonbosch**  **Devonbosch trails; Duran van Eeden riding bike trails & images of Eldorette Carinus & Wynand Basson**  **Febuary 2023** |

**Notes to Editor:**

***About Devonbosch Development***

At Devonbosch, you will encounter the essence of connected living, with the outdoors as your playground and Stellenbosch lifestyle on your doorstep. Explore a vibrant and dynamic way of living where nature, sustainability and the environment are seamlessly intertwined. Cycle to your local market or amble along the brick-laid pathways surrounded by tree-lined green spaces, mountainous valleys of the Cape Winelands as well as stunning wetlands and a picturesque lake teeming with bird life.

***About SquareTurn***

SquareTurn Developments is a South African property development company established by a prominent Belgian property group Square Group. Through meticulous investment strategies and high quality bespoke developments, both companies have established themselves as leaders in the European property market. SquareTurn Developments have invested in strategically desirable land holdings in the Cape. At SquareTurn, we believe that change is the driving force behind progress. As a progressive land developer and property investment firm, our mission is to create lasting change in communities in South Africa. Whether through innovative architectural designs, sustainable building practices, or groundbreaking urban planning initiatives, we are committed to pushing the boundaries of what is possible and shaping a brighter future for generations to come. With our global reach and diverse team of experts, we don’t just develop; we also create destinations with cutting-edge thinking at the highest level. **SquareTurn. we deliver change.**

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