

## **Plymouth Evening Herald (web)**

### *Developers include home for birds in luxury estate*

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<http://www.thisisplymouth.co.uk/regionalnews/Developers-include-home-birds-luxury-estate/article-3161418-detail/article.html>

A DEVELOPER is building new homes for one of the rarest birds in Britain - alongside a multi million pound luxury complex on the site of a famous South Devon cliff top hotel.

The old Gara Rock Hotel near East Prawle was at the heart of a planning row five years ago as protesters – including former TV royals watcher Jenny Bond – fought and lost a battle to halt re-building plans.

The Coast group is currently completing the new complex of flats and cottages where the penthouse suite is already on the market with an asking price of £1,200,000.

Part of the development involves building new Devon hedge banks which it is hoped will become new homes for the endangered circl bunting.

The rare bird can only be found on the South Devon coastal area in the UK after its numbers declined dramatically over the last 50 years – mainly due to changes in farming and the uprooting of hedge bank habitats.

Jim Savage, senior site manager at Gara Rock and a member of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds said: "We are doing everything we can to extend the area that the circl bunting will have to feed and nest in, hopefully securing the survival of this beautiful and colourful bird."

He added: "The Gara Rock area is not just home to circl buntings. From the lookout on the South West Coast Path visitors can watch peregrine falcons and during the recent cold snap red wings and a majestic red kite were spotted. There are also badger sets in the area and a nearby resident recently caught sight of a great spotted woodpecker feeding in her backyard.

"Coast Group is committed to conserving this habitat, including planning the construction of a new group of Devon hedge banks around the resort."

Work began on redeveloping the former Gara Rock Hotel, which included a row of old coastguard cottages overlooking one of the most dramatic sections of the South Devon coast, began in the middle of last year.

It has been developed into an isolated enclave of five cottages and 14 apartments. Work is also continuing on the development of a 'boutique hotel' with 18 bedrooms, a restaurant and an holistic spa.

Part of the complex includes a Rotunda building which includes two homes with panoramic views. The Rotunda penthouse is on the market at £1,200,00 while a three bedroom apartment will cost £585,000 rising to £680,000 for a three bedroom cottage.

Coast Group bought the Gara Rock site in 2004 and ran the hotel for two years before deciding to redevelop.

The cliff top cottages were built to house coastguards in 1847. They were bought in 1909 to convert into a family hotel.