



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **A Complete Transformation for all Sports in Gibraltar**

Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar is delighted to announce that agreement has now finally been reached with the Gibraltar Football Association ("GFA") on the construction of a UEFA Category 4 National Football Stadium in Gibraltar.

The agreement with the GFA unlocks the potential to develop infrastructure for football and all other sports in Gibraltar to an unprecedented level and represents the largest investment in sport in the history of Gibraltar.

The investment required from both the GFA and the Gibraltar Government will start immediately and is programmed to be completed in time of the Island Games in 2019.

#### **A NATIONAL FOOTBALL STADIUM: AT NO COST TO THE TAXPAYER**

Ever since UEFA's initial objection to the Victoria Stadium as the venue for the new stadium, the Government has been assisting the GFA with a view to identifying an alternative site for the construction of such a stadium in Gibraltar.

On 20 March 2017, the GFA wrote to Government informing that all sites it had considered, in particular Europa Point and Lathbury Parade, had turned out to be unviable for a number of reasons.

The GFA informed the Government that it had explained its predicament to UEFA who, in the circumstances, accepted the lifting of standing objection to the Victoria Stadium on condition that the GFA acquired exclusive ownership of the Victoria Stadium.

Government has been happy to accede to this request.

Given the current importance of that site to all other sports in Gibraltar, the Government has agreed to sell the site of the Victoria Stadium to the GFA for £16.5 million which represents fair value for the site and the cost of relocation of the sports that presently use that site.

The sale includes the old Victoria Sports Hall and the right to redevelop the area of Winston Churchill Avenue and the adjacent petrol station upon the relocation of the latter after the opening of the tunnel under the runway.

The sale does NOT include the Tercentenary Hall or the rest of the Bayside Sports Complex.



The sum of £16.5m is the amount which the Government will invest in re-providing the sports facilities presently provided for at the Victoria Stadium for other sports and for the community more generally.

In addition, the GFA will continue to allow the use of the Victoria Stadium for a number of community events and school use where this can be de-conflicted from the GFA's own football requirements, which will then have priority on that site.

The GFA will pay for the purchase in three instalments with funds it will receive exclusively from UEFA and FIFA.

Two instalments of £5m each will be paid in the current 2017/18 financial year. A third payment of £6.5m will be paid in the financial year 2018/19.

In addition, the GFA will invest in the region of £15m in the redevelopment of the Victoria Stadium and the old Sports Hall.

As a result, Gibraltar will enjoy a National Football Stadium which will be developed at no cost at all to the taxpayer.

Substantial works will be required to the Victoria Stadium making the playing of UEFA Champions and/or Europa League matches in Gibraltar this year unviable. The Government understands from the GFA that all UEFA Champions and Europa League matches next year will be playable in Gibraltar. The GFA also informs the Government that the Gibraltar National Football Squad will be able to play all its UEFA and FIFA internationals in Gibraltar as from 2018.

## BENEFITS FOR ALL OTHER SPORTS

The Government is also able to announce today that, after detailed discussion with the GFA and with other sports, it will invest the entirety of the sum of £16.5m paid for the Victoria Stadium in the redevelopment of the entirety of the sporting infrastructure of Gibraltar.

It will do so for the purpose of leading a total revolution and transformation of the sporting facilities available in Gibraltar and will do so in time for the 2019 Island Games. All of these facilities will be developed by the Government, as Government projects, but will nonetheless be submitted to the Developing & Planning Commission in line with current practice and will be developed with the new rules on accessibility of buildings forming part of the planning process. In addition, the Ministry for Sport will continue to work with the GFA and all the relevant sporting organisations and representative bodies in order to get the results rights in this unprecedented investment in sport in Gibraltar.

The Minister for Sport, the Hon Steven Linares MP, said: "This is one of the happiest political moments of my life. I am delighted to see the GFA able to progress the dream of a Gibraltar National Football Stadium as well as the development of great new facilities for the many other sports in Gibraltar. I believe that this investment will also allow us to create a real legacy for the hosting of the Island Games in 2019."

Commenting on these developments, the Chief Minister, the Hon Fabian Picardo QC MP, said: "I want to start by commending Minister Steven Linares for the hard work and diligence he has been



putting in behind the scenes with the GFA and with all the relevant sporting associations. I also want to thank the GFA for the work they have done with UEFA and FIFA. We have been fully vindicated in our support for the GFA. They have worked hard to demonstrate to UEFA what the reality of the options available in Gibraltar are. These arrangements represent a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to invest approximately £31m in the sporting infrastructure of Gibraltar and we are in control of over half of that, without one penny coming from taxpayers' money. We have got a great deal for sport and for Gibraltarian sports men, women and children. This project, together with the new upgraded Victoria Stadium, will solve the infrastructure problems for so many sports in Gibraltar for generations to come. Football will acquire a new Category 4 National Football Stadium, two alternative pitches for domestic games at all levels, sufficient training facilities and pitches to meet all demand within Gibraltar and at least two indoor futsal pitches. As a result Gibraltar clubs will no longer need to train in Spain. They will be able to base all their training needs in Gibraltar. Rugby and Cricket will be able to enjoy their own state-of-the-art facilities at Europa Point. Athletics will obtain an enhanced track at Lathbury Parade. Swimming will gain the benefit of a new, much needed, outdoor pool. All indoor sports will enjoy new and more modern halls at Europa Point in addition to the continued use of the Tercentenary Hall and the rest of the Bayside Sports area. We will also have funds available to invest in Hockey and other sports like Paddle Tennis. This will assist Basketball, Netball, Volleyball, Badminton and Squash amongst others. Darts will finally have the area they need and deserve, given their international achievements. Premises for associations and clubs, offices, lecture theatres and boardrooms will all be included in the new facilities being developed. A specific new facility will be made for our Special Olympians who have done us proud so many times. And all facilities will be made available to our schools. The educational value alone will be huge and this is even before the announcements to come in respect of the new schools which will also provide additional sporting facilities for the community. Given the problems of space we always face in Gibraltar, this is an incredibly exciting project which resolves so many issues at once and will mean that we will see huge economic activity and investment in the next twenty four months or so and that investment will be related to sport without one penny coming from taxpayers. This is therefore an excellent result all round and it is the biggest investment ever done in sporting facilities in Gibraltar. It will solve sports infrastructure problems in Gibraltar for generations to come. It is a win-win for everyone. I am delighted to see the start of the process that will finally bring international football home and to be involved in the major development that we are now embarked upon that will benefit virtually all of our sports and community and which will lead to the transformation of the sporting landscape in Gibraltar. This will be a magnificent legacy for many generations and is progress on a scale never seen before in Gibraltar's sporting history."

Notes to Editors:

Details of the various sports facilities are attached.



## NOTE TO EDITORS - DETAILS OF ADDITIONAL SPORTS FACILITIES

### 1. Construction of Lathbury Football, Athletics, Pool & Stadium Facility

This new 800 (approx) seater stadium facility will be owned by the Gibraltar Government.

It will have a running track and general purpose sports field and will be made available to football and other sports in Gibraltar.

The running track will have eight, 400 metre lanes and will therefore be larger than the current track at the Victoria Stadium.

A new, open air pool will be provided. It will be a 52 metre, eight lane pool with seating around for 400 spectators. The Gibraltar Amateur Swimming Association is assisting the Government to ensure that this new pool facility complies with its requirements.

A full size football ground which can double up as training pitches, especially for children, will be provided. This will be available to the GFA, to all the GFA league clubs as well as to Rugby.

This facility will include a communications centre, a boardroom and press area, lecture rooms, an infirmary, coaching and anti-doping rooms.

In addition, a gym and indoor warm up area will be provided.

New offices for the Gibraltar Amateur Athletics Association for the Gibraltar Amateur Swimming Association are also being developed as part of this new and exciting facility.

The whole area will also benefit from a huge underground parking/storage area. Facilities for a cafeteria will also be provided.

The initial technical data in respect of the new Lathbury Football, Athletics, Pool & Stadium facility is as follows:

- 8 lane 400m running track
- 800 seat stadium
- General purpose field (football, athletics, rugby,)
- Swimming pool, 8 lane 52m long, with 400 spectator seats
- Male and female changing rooms
- Reception, café and kitchen
- Communication centre
- Boardroom and press area
- Offices (Athletics and Swimming)



- Lecture rooms
- Gym/indoor warm up
- Call room
- Coaching and Anti-doping room
- Infirmary

The Athletics and playing field facility is anticipated to be ready by Spring 2018.

## 2. Construction of pitches for Rugby, Cricket & Football at Europa

Rugby, a cricket pitch and football training pitches will be constructed at Europa Point in a facility which will also be owned by the Government.

It will be made available to football and all other sports.

The new main pitch will be provide principally for Rugby and will have minimal visual impact on the area. The Government is working closely with the Gibraltar Rugby Football Union on the development of the Rugby pitch in order to ensure that it complies with the necessary international standards. In addition to the Rugby pitch, the facilities at Europa will provide for a National Rugby Clubhouse.

The provision of facilities for cricket is also catered for in this redevelopment. Three indoor and three outdoor cricket nets will also be provided. The Government will work closely with the Gibraltar Cricket Association to ensure that the development complies with the relevant international criteria. In addition, a new, modern and fit for purpose Clubhouse and Pavilion will be provided for the Gibraltar Cricket Association.

The main pitch will also be a full size football pitch and there will be three additional football training pitches.

Importantly, the Europa sports redevelopment will provide a 42 bed dormitory for visiting sporting associations and teams. This will be available to teams and associations of all sports and will assist in the development of Gibraltar as a centre for sports training.

None of the developments at Europa impinge on the existing playing facilities for children or the heritage assets in the area.

The initial technical data in respect of the new field is as follows:

- Rugby field (100x68m + 10m dead ball) which will also accommodate football games
- Cricket field (oval 120x110m)
- Three indoor and three outdoor cricket nets (11x28m)



- Three Futsal football training pitches (18x38m)
- Stadium (1800 seating) and associated WCs, etc
- Four team and coach changing rooms
- Rooms for anti-doping, physio, officials etc.
- Terrace bar and restaurant (Pavilion / Clubhouse)

### 3. Construction of new Indoor Sports Hall & Events Space at Europa

The development at Europa will include a new Sports Hall and Events Space. This facility will be multi-functional and state of the art. It will provide a 49m x 33m sports and events space. Also included will be six new squash courts with provision for 80 audience seats. Darts will have 8 practice lanes provided (4m x 10m). Additionally boardrooms, offices, lecture rooms, a gym, treatment rooms etc will be provided, together with a rehabilitation centre. This sports hall will replace the Old Victoria Sports Hall which will, nonetheless, still be made available to the whole community by the GFA in a manner that deconflicts from their own need for it. The Europa Sports Hall will provide for Futsal, Basketball, Netball, Volleyball and Badminton, as well as for all other indoor sports.

The initial technical data in respect of the new Europa Sports Hall & Event Space is as follows:

- Sports hall (49x33m 9m height) multi-functional – sports and performance/theatre
- Six Squash courts and 80 audience seats
- Darts practice 5 lanes (4x 10m)
- Gym (120sqm)
- Treatment rooms (30sqm)
- Rehab centre
- Male and female changing rooms (100sqm each)
- Bar and restaurant (300sqm)
- Kitchen, servery etc. (100sqm)
- Lobby/reception, admin and WC (350sqm)
- Boardroom and offices
- Lecture room



- Dormitories with showers and WCs

#### 4. Facilities for Special Olympics Gibraltar & Additional Sports Hall/Gym

The Government's plans also provide for the construction of a much needed new facility for Special Olympics Gibraltar. The development will also be in the Europa area, adjacent to Tangier View. The facility will be attached to a further, new, community sports hall and gymnasium with treatment and changing facilities as well as a bar, restaurant and kitchen.

The initial technical data in respect of the new Special Olympics facilities and the additional sports hall and gym in the area of Tangier Views is as follows:

- Sports hall
- Gym
- Male and female changing
- Treatment room
- Office
- Bar, restaurant and kitchen

#### 5. Facilities for the University of Gibraltar

The construction of outdoor and indoor sporting facilities in the area of Europa Point for all sports will also be helpful in the development of the University of Gibraltar and its ability to offer sporting-related courses as well as making sporting facilities available to students of the University as it grows and expands.

#### 6. Construction of New Range for Gibraltar Target Shooting Association

The construction of the new Europa Sports Hall and Events Space at Europa will require the relocation of the existing facilities of the Gibraltar Target Shooting Association. The Government is presently engaged in discussions with the committee of the GTSA on the development of a new shooting range. The Government is also already in contact with the International Sports Shooting Federation in order to ensure compliance of any new facility with the international requirements for sports shooting.