



PRESS RELEASE

No: 442/2020

Date: 3rd July 2020

Opposition have jumped the gun on Queen's Cinema site

The Opposition statement on the Queen's Cinema and the Queen's Hotel site is both misleading and inaccurate. It jumps to the wrong conclusions and displays complete ignorance as to how the Expressions of Interest process actually works.

The fact is that an Expressions of Interest allows for a process of consultation and negotiation with the successful entity in order to adapt and evolve the submission in line with the requirements of the Government. The Opposition should know this because they invented the process.

This means that the Government is free to make demands of a potential developer, in line with its policy, in areas which may not be spelt out in the advertisement. The invitation to Expressions of Interest says: "A process of consultation and negotiation will follow with parties that submit ideas or concepts that are of interest to HMGoG. Such concepts, ideas or proposals may need to evolve or be adapted as discussions or negotiations move forward."

In their inordinate and undignified haste to attack the Government, the Opposition have missed this most relevant point!

Despite the GSD's claim, the advertisement makes no mention whatsoever of luxury housing. There is a reference to a "mixed use scheme" to "residential/commercial units" and to "sheltered residential accommodation for the elderly" on a sale or rental basis. Indeed, the reference to a "mixed-use scheme" was also present previously and is contained in the 2019 manifesto of the Government. Therefore it is important to make it clear that none of this is in conflict with the commitments or the policy of the Government. The Opposition have jumped the gun.

The people of Gibraltar understand full well that this Government has an impeccable track record of delivering what it promises. The record on affordable homes and homes for the elderly is second to none with over 1000 affordable and elderly homes already in place and with plans for hundreds more at Hassan Centenary Terraces, Chatham Views and Bob Peliza Mews. It is the height of hypocrisy for the GSD in general and Mr Azopardi in particular to criticise the track record of the Government in this respect. When he was in office the GSD hardly laid a brick to house our people and instead they presided precisely over the construction of luxury housing all over Gibraltar and they gave permission for many of the buildings that went up after they left office. This is a case of do as I say and not as I do.



Indeed, the hypocrisy of the criticism is reflected in the fact that the GSD's own manifesto does not even say that they would have used the site for 50/50 or elderly residential accommodation because they would have kept the old Queen's Cinema instead!