



PRESS RELEASE

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Government defends public servants from Together Gibraltar criticism

Together Gibraltar seems not to be aware that even though they might not like it, their unreasonable criticism of Government is heard by hard working public servants and can upset and even anger them. Specifically on green issues there is a dedicated team that avidly works on assessing trees, finding locations for new ones, protecting and enhancing them, and they can well feel that their hard work is not appreciated.

On the site in question, this went through a thorough planning process, lasting over a decade, and has been fully and publicly discussed in the Development and Planning Commission (DPC) on many occasions, including all the environmental aspects. The project has changed as a result of this which has led to an increase in overall green area on the podium, roof and facade, and a net increase in the number of trees on the site, including native species. And it must be remembered of course that the DPC makes its decisions in granting planning permission independent of Government.

Together Gibraltar made no comment during the planning process nor indeed when planning permission was given. If it was so concerned it should have tackled the matter long ago.

The Department of the Environment will ensure that all the many planning conditions relating to the environment are adhered to. These are in fact the strictest 'green' conditions ever imposed on any development in Gibraltar.

Minister for Environment John Cortes said, "I know for a fact how hard my team works protecting and enhancing green areas. One thing is to hit at the political Government on specific issues and another is to aim criticism at the delivery of the green policy as a whole, which public servants help frame and which they deliver. I am sorry if Together Gibraltar feel uncomfortable at the loyalty that I have to my staff. But I do, and I will stand up for them. I have a great team driving the green agenda and they deserve respect. COVID-19 has taken its toll on our rolling out our work, but a great deal has been happening behind the scenes. And on trees, well in the various parts of my career I have been personally involved in the planting of hundreds of trees around Gibraltar. And I will continue to do so. Just wait and see."

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