

STATEMENT BY THE GSLP/LIBERAL OPPOSITION 123/2005
8 December 2005

The Opposition notes the statement by the Government that it has decided to proceed with the work required to re-open Dudley Ward tunnel which has been closed for many years.

At the October meeting of the House of Assembly, the Government replied to a question on the subject from Shadow Minister for Government Services Lucio Randall. The answer was that no decision had been taken about when to reopen Dudley Ward tunnel or indeed whether to reopen it at all.

The Government also said that whilst they did not know what it would cost, they estimated that the work would be in the region of £4.6 million. It seems quite extraordinary that only a few weeks after the Government's position was that it did not know whether it would reopen the tunnel at all, it has suddenly decided to proceed with the work for the reopening.

Even stranger is that this announcement should be made as part of a press release announcing that planning permission had been given for a tower block in the area of Rosia Tanks. The impression one gets is that this announcement is designed simply to pacify the home owners in the neighbourhood who are protesting about the traffic congestion that will be created by these high density buildings. The Government announcement that Dudley Ward tunnel will reopen creates the perception that there will be increased traffic flow through Europa point and so decongest the Rosia Tanks area.

Of course the question that has never been answered in respect of the additional building in the Rosia Tanks area is how it is that this site, which was not placed on the market, came to be bundled in with the project which resulted from the successful tender for North Gorge and Buena Vista.

For this Friday's meeting of the House of Assembly, the Opposition has given notice of a question to elicit information on this point.

ENDS