

STATEMENT BY THE GSLP/LIBERAL OPPOSITION 58/2007

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A “spectacular” property in Gibraltar encompassing a 3900m² site in a prime location on Gibraltar’s South West slope is currently offered for sale by an estate agent in the United Kingdom.

The agency says that it enjoys “fabulous” panoramic views across the Straits of Gibraltar towards mainland Spain and the Riff mountains of North Africa. Among the features of this property, the agency lists a “new 150 year lease with special govt provision to protect views”. It also says that the completed value estimate of the property is calculated to be in excess of £15 million.

Described as a “secure gated mini estate with private drive”, the advert is referring to the property that was formerly known as Lind House. Offers in excess of £4 million are invited.

Lind House used to be an MOD property which was transferred to the Gibraltar Government. The Government put it out to tender in September 2004 and the announcement of the tender award was made in December. There were 53 valid tenderers at the time and the property sold for £ 1,050,000.

Commenting on the matter, Shadow Minister for Trade and Industry Dr Joseph Garcia said:

“This means that the property is now on sale for at least just under four times more than what the Government was paid for it. This raises serious questions about the way in which Government is handling the sale of former MOD assets and whether the best deal for Gibraltar is being obtained.”

Indeed, it was said at the time of the tender that the sale of Lind House and other houses “is expected to yield substantial revenues for Government coffers which will later be used to build low cost housing for local families on the Housing Department waiting list.” Clearly, by this criteria, the greater the revenue received, the better it would have been for the Government and for hundreds of people who are waiting for a house.

The benefit will now go to private individuals instead of the people of Gibraltar.

“The case of Lind House has thrown wide open the issue of whether Gibraltar is obtaining the best deal from the sale of Government lands and properties, something that the Opposition has questioned in the past,” said Dr Garcia.

The sale details of former Lind House, which is now described as “Moonraker” can be freely viewed by everyone on-line at www.cluttonsresorts.com

The Opposition cannot understand how there can be a provision in this particular lease to protect the views of this property. "I am sure that in the present climate of uncontrolled construction projects everyone else all over Gibraltar would also like to have their views protected as well," added Dr Garcia.

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