

Waterport Terraces Service Charges – Government should Delay and Reduce Charges

The Opposition has received numerous complaints from purchasers at Waterport Terraces who have received "demand notes" for service charges for the months of November and December in respect of homes of which they have not yet taken possession. The payments have to be made to Waterport Terraces Management Limited, a company limited by guarantee with its headquarters at No.6 Convent Place and with Government Officers as its members. This company like similar companies in other home ownership estates is supposed to be owned and controlled by the home owners, and it will be eventually pass in the control of the purchasers.

It is unacceptable that the Government, as Waterport Terraces Management, should now charge purchasers service charges even before the estate has been finished and whilst it is still a building site.

Moreover, the Opposition believes that these service charges are comparatively high especially as they are being levied on families that already have had to suffer the burden of paying for unforeseen bridging loans which have been required as a direct result of the Government's failure to deliver this housing project on time.

Commenting on this latest increase in the costs being levied by the Government on purchasers of Waterport Terraces, Shadow Minister for Housing Charles Bruzon said:

"The Government really is not thinking about these purchasers who have been desperate for new homes. It is failing to understand that the cost of moving to Waterport Terraces has been raised so astronomically by its actions and failings in respect of this project that it should be compassionate in its approach to setting of service charges in the first year and whilst the estate is still a building site and not punitive as it appears to be. In fact many purchasers are wondering

whether this is Mr Caruana's latest spiteful punishment for their having dared to demonstrate against his Government's failure outside the Parliament. Although it is not possible to do a direct comparison with the service charges at other estates (as service charged fluctuate based on the services provided, the number of flats in each estate etc), the Government should act immediately to reduce the burden of the effect of service charges on purchasers – especially as people have to now furnish their homes whilst paying the bridging loans that the GSD administration has landed them with in the run-up to the Christmas season."

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