

STATEMENT BY THE GSLP/LIBERAL OPPOSITION

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It is becoming increasingly clear from the attitude that the Government has displayed in relation to the Waterport Terraces controversy that Mr Caruana continues to behave as if nobody is entitled to question anything that he says or to hold a different opinion to him.

It is not very common in a democratic society for the party in Government to issue constant threats to Members of the Opposition for performing their constitutional role which, in our case, is to hold Mr Caruana and his Government to account. The Opposition will not be sidetracked or intimidated by Mr Caruana's threats and insults.

In relation to Waterport Terraces the issue is very simple. The Government have made promises which they have not kept. The Government raised expectations before the general election and afterwards in relation to completion dates and compensation, only for those expectations to be cruelly dashed over and over again. Mr Caruana and his Government have to be held politically accountable for their actions.

Mr Caruana may think that it is normal practice for politicians to behave in this way. The Opposition, on the other hand, are perfectly entitled to be critical of the unethical and insensitive way in which the

Government have handled the issue. They have completely ignored the human dimension to this problem.

The basic point in relation the service charges that the Government has set must surely be that the estate is not finished, that it is still a building site and that asking people to pay in these circumstances is adding insult to injury after all the other problems that they have had to endure.

The Government could easily have had constructive dialogue with the purchasers beforehand and discussed with them the level of service charges and the timing in respect of when these would need to be paid.

Commenting on the matter, Shadow Minister for Housing Charles Bruzon said:

“It makes me very sad to see the Government behave in this way. It would have helped considerably if the Government got off their high horse and simply admitted that they have got it wrong and they apologised to those affected. When I asked Mr Caruana in Parliament to apologise to the purchasers he would hear nothing of it. They go from one mistake to another and this does not help anyone, in the meantime the purchasers at Waterport Terraces continue to suffer as a result of the actions taken by Government.”

ENDS