

## **STATEMENT BY THE GSLP/LIBERAL OPPOSITION**

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The news that nearly 100 new berths are being provided in Gibraltar for luxury boats and yachts will serve as scant consolation to those small boat owners who have been waiting for years for the Government to provide berths for their boats.

It was reported last week in the international media that Ocean Village is to extend its berth offering from 225 to 323 and that this half a million pounds expansion programme is expected to be completed for the winter of 2009/2010. The company has said that the project includes “premium” berths of up to 90 metres, that over 20 of the 98 new berths will be over 20 metres long and tagged as “premium” with a range of facilities on offer.

The berths are expected to accommodate the “mega-yacht elite” and will be accompanied by “a select number of Waterside Villas and Mansions which will have their own private mooring on the doorstep”.

The Opposition consider that while it is all very well for Ocean Village to proceed with their expansion plans, the project exposes the glaring demand that exists for berths at the lower end of the market and the failure of the Government to provide them. The Opposition understand that there is already demand for about 200 berths when taking into account those small boats that have been hauled up on land and those that are on the Port Department waiting list.

Shadow Minister for the Port, Dr Joseph Garcia, commenting on the matter said:

“It is totally unacceptable that the small boat owners will now face yet another winter without berths for their boats. The boats that have been hauled up on land are exposed to damage from the elements and to vandalism given their location. This is visible for everyone to see.

We cannot understand how the Government can allow more and more of our seafront to be taken over by developers for luxury berths and projects of this kind. Adequate provision should be made for local boat owners before we seek to accommodate luxury super-yachts and before we even consider mansions with private moorings. The Government have got their priorities wrong. Local boat owners must come before wealthy outsiders.”

ENDS