



**HM GOVERNMENT OF GIBRALTAR  
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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **Parliament lift is essential in this day and age**

As part of HMGoGs commitment in upgrading access for those with disabilities to public buildings, the Development and Planning Commission was presented with a proposal for an external lift to serve the gallery of the Parliament.

It is understandable that such alterations to historical buildings will always bring controversy but we cannot shy away from our responsibility as a mature society to address the needs of those persons who have mobility problems. It is with this in mind that a proposal of a lift for those with mobility issues was presented to the Planning Commission, where the views of all its members in the presence of the public have been considered.

The DPC noted the Heritage Trust's objections based on the fact that the building was listed under the Heritage Trust Act, and any addition would impact on its character. The overall view of the Commission was that by minimising the structural steel frame and displacing the glass enclosure away from the building, its impact would be acceptable. This is similar to the action taken by the previous Government to provide lifts in the redevelopment of King's Bastion and of the existing Government to provide lift access from Line Wall Road to Commonwealth Park.

The use of a stair lift was raised and discarded since this would compromise the width of the public staircase which serves as an evacuation route. Suggestions of having the lift indoors where the current restaurant is situated was an option that the DPC would be willing to consider should such a facility ever be relocated in the future.

It is important to bear in mind that the building was designed as a library and not as a Parliament in an age when the rights of disabled persons with reduced mobility did not matter. This is 2014 and these basic human rights matter to the Government. In this sense it is essential to move with the times.

HMGoG welcomed the views of all the members of the Commission and is willing to incorporate its recommendations.