



**HM GOVERNMENT OF GIBRALTAR  
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF MINISTER  
No 6 Convent Place  
Gibraltar**

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **Government and Ocean Village agree a way forward: massive investment to follow**

The Government and the Ocean Village Group of companies have agreed to move to resolve the impasse that had been created by the "Composite Agreement" that was reached with the previous administration shortly before the last general election was called.

This has followed many months of negotiations in good faith between the Government and the developer in order to arrive at solutions in line with the policy of the Government and the requirements of the developer.

The new agreement recognises that the Development and Planning Commission is independent of the Government and planning permission will be required in all instances as appropriate. It does not purport to bind Government Ministers and employees on the Commission to support any application by Ocean Village.

There is also provision for premiums to be paid on specific projects where no such premiums were accounted for previously.

The new agreement means that the Ocean Village Group is now free to continue with a number of investment projects in Gibraltar. This includes a substantial investment, costing the developer many tens of millions of pounds, in constructing the World Trade Center next to the Victoria Stadium. A World Trade Center in Gibraltar will provide an entry point into Gibraltar for companies and will help foster local and international partnerships through the World Trade Center Association network which includes companies with global brands, such as Apple, MasterCard and JP Morgan. These companies favour locating in, and are already located in, other World Trade Centers around the world. A World Trade Center will raise the international profile of Gibraltar as a place to do business. The project will bring much needed superlative Category A office space of over 15,000 sq metres to Gibraltar. It will be accompanied by the purchase of spaces in a new multi-storey car park for over 500 cars which will be built on the vacant plot next to St Anne's School. This will include

provision for car parking for motorists who live in the local area and who do not have a car parking space or a garage already.

The project for the construction of villas on the sea in front of Marina Bay will be replaced by short-stay / rental residential accommodation in the same area. This will substantially reduce the previous requirement for significant vehicular access and car parking in relation to the villas project and lays the ground, subject to DPC approval, for a much more restricted scheme and will help alleviate the shortage of short stay / rental apartments. In the medium term, a residential building will be constructed in between the two existing Ocean Village towers of Grand and Majestic Ocean Plaza, once the site has been vacated.

The first visible result of the new agreement between the Government and Ocean Village is the construction of Trinity House, outside the southern entrance to Ocean Village. This development went through the planning process in the usual way, followed by the payment of a premium, and is now at an advanced stage of construction. It is the first nearly carbon neutral building in Gibraltar, utilising an advanced solid laminated timber process developed in Austria delivering an environmentally friendly building, solely from managed sustainably-grown forests. Benefiting from being produced in a northern European factory allows the achievement of a higher quality standard and its panelised delivery should lead to far less disruption during construction on site and a finished sustainably produced and completed building, within 16 weeks. The building has already been pre-let to an international bank.

Commenting on the matter, the Deputy Chief Minister Dr Joseph Garcia, who has led the detailed discussions being responsible for both planning and lands, said:

"The Government welcomes the proposed multi-million investment by Ocean Village into Gibraltar. It has taken many months of detailed negotiations to arrive at this agreement and it is one that meets the policies of the Government and the requirements of the developer. With such substantial sums of investment to be made, the developer requested a confidentiality clause in the agreement, however, in the interests of openness and transparency, both sides agreed that a statement should nonetheless be issued. The Government also welcomes the construction of Trinity House, using materials which are substantially sustainably sourced and achieving close to a carbon neutral building structure."

A spokesman for the Ocean Village Group of Companies said:

"We are delighted to have resolved a whole range of issues together with the Government. We can now focus delivering progress through our proposed investments in Gibraltar. The much needed World Trade Centre, is ready to go. The public and business community will see this development move very quickly after proposed improvements which include huge reception area and an atrium full of trees, hopefully gain planning consent. The World Trade Center Gibraltar will deliver the highest quality office space and be the largest single office building in Gibraltar, to help enable the next phase of Gibraltar's economic growth. The construction of Trinity House has already commenced and is at an advanced stage. We have worked very well in partnership with the Government on this new way forward."