



Young Business Group of Guernsey

NEWS RELEASE

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YBG gets preview to waterfront proposals

MEMBERS and guests of the Young Business Group (YBG) were given an exclusive insight into how a Long Port development could provide the States of Guernsey with a return of more than £100 million.

An audience of 55 attended the YBG's November lunch club (on Tuesday) to hear Charles Billson's proposals for an integrated waste management facility and the regeneration of Guernsey's waterfront.

Mr Billson stated that the company's unique Public Private Partnership (PPP) approach would provide the States with a return in income tax, rents, capital receipts and associated duty of more than £100m in the first ten years.

It was the first time that the full scale of Long Port's offer to fund 100% of the investment in the project, with a zero contribution, development and construction risk to the public purse, had been presented beyond States members.

His talk was a summary of the response tabled to the Public Services Department's Public Consultation of the Future of Sewage and Waste Water Treatment which he presented to 33 deputies in August.

Mr Billson gave details of Long Port's "a la carte menu" style phased offering, which has been designed to allow the States to pick and choose the "menu" items and their timing.

This included Long Port's "sustainable, long term and future proof" integrated waste management facility, which would be a combined plant and built on the Longue Hougue reclamation site. It would stop the pollution and contamination of Belle Greve Bay, and other bays on the eastern seaboard, by treating the raw sewage which is currently discharged into Belle Greve. Long Port's proposal would cost less than the previous waste to energy plant approved by the States.

Mr Billson also gave the facts on his vision for Guernsey's eastern waterfront, which includes a five star hotel with conference and convention centre, covered pavilion shopping area and 2,200 underground car parking spaces at the North Beach.

Long Port's proposed Vivian 30-acre reclamation would provide a landbank for the States to allocate as they wished between social housing and/or knowledge based industry. If the States decided to use all the land it could create up to 600 residential units. The visionary waterfront residential islands development would also provide up to 500+ quality waterfront residential units over 10 years to help meet the local housing needs and to suit all pockets.

Public consultation and protecting the island's environment and heritage for future generations were key themes of Mr Billson's presentation. He recognises the ease with which the plans can be misinterpreted and how this may have led to a degree of public misunderstanding.

'It is our intention to set the record straight and answer any questions that islanders have raised,' he said.

'I am the first to admit that this scheme is ambitious but I believe it is essential for the Guernsey way of life to continue. The island desperately needs investment or it will be left behind in the wake of our competitors such as Jersey.

'Guernsey needs to invest in its infrastructure, without it the island will inevitably decline. Our finance, tourist and marine industries need to have a world class shop window to maintain and enhance their positions in the future.'

On the "Little Venice" label given to the development by the Guernsey Press, Mr Billson is keen to emphasise that it is not his intention to destroy Guernsey's waterfront but to enhance it with low rise, compatible development.

'It is not our proposal to build Burj Al Arab style hotels or high rise office blocks on our seafront. We want a sympathetic, quality, low-rise development that enhances the waterfront, and does not detract from it but pays homage to the heritage of Castle Cornet, St Julian's Emplacement and other icons in St Peter Port,' he said.

In attendance at the YBG lunch club was the Minister for the Public Services Department, Deputy Bill Bell, who voiced his gratitude to Long Port for its plans which he said were worth "serious consideration".

After the presentation YBG members were given the opportunity to raise any queries they had on the proposals with a question and answer session.

President of YBG, Ned Meinke, said: 'We were delighted that Charles agreed to come and speak at lunch club and give us a preview to the full extent of his ideas. The whole island seems to have an opinion on his ideas for Guernsey's waterfront so it was a fantastic to hear about his vision first hand. It is important for the island to examine its future options and make decisions about the direction it should evolve in and Mr Billson certainly got our audience's attention with his passionate presentation and left us all with food for thought.'

Issued by Rachel Sauvage, YBG Council, Tel. 07781 402 302

Notes to editor

Long Port will be holding two public exhibitions later on this month so islanders can see the presentation in all its detail.