



# Hal-Ferh Development Brief



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## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Development Briefs are normally issued by MEPA and approved by Government. Briefs are issued where potential exists to fulfil or contribute towards planning objectives identified in the development plan (the Structure Plan, Local Plans and/or other Subsidiary Plans). Briefs outline the scale, range and quality of development proposed for a site together with known constraints (physical, policy, access etc.) for the guidance of prospective developers and other interested parties.
- 1.2 MEPA has been entrusted by Government to prepare a Development Brief for the 8.5ha site shown on **Map 1** which includes the redundant Hal-Ferh tourist complex and its immediate surrounding areas in Ghajn Tuffieha, I/o Mellieha. This Brief is required by policy NWGT 1 of the North West Local Plan (approved in August 2006).
- 1.3 The scope of the Development Brief is to provide planning guidance on the future use and redevelopment of the site. The Brief therefore includes detailed guidance on the areas available for development and their broad layouts, uses and building design, areas to be protected from development and buildings to be conserved.
- 1.4 This Development Brief contains:
  - a. Relevant background information on the site;
  - b. Planning objectives for development and conservation;
  - c. Site constraints;
  - d. Detailed policy guidance for the development;
  - e. Requirements on the format and content of submission requirements; and
  - f. Planning obligations required to be fulfilled by the developer.
- 1.5 This Development Brief describes MEPA's position on development matters relating to this site. It provides information intended to be utilised by parties having a potential interest in the development of land enabling them to assess its full value.

## 2.0 Site Location, Tenure and Description

### Location

2.1 The site covered by this Development Brief is located in a coastal rural area in the south-western part of the Mellieha Local Council area. (**Map 1** shows the boundary of the site and its regional context.) It is near the popular sandy beaches of Golden Bay and Ghajn Tuffieha Bay. A cultivated agricultural area, the Golden Bay car park, Golden Sands Hotel and an unfinished camp site leased to and managed by the Scouts Association are close to the western perimeter of the site. A section of partly disturbed, partly abandoned agricultural land, abandoned military barracks from the British pre-war period, as well as stretches of garrigue lie to the north. To the east and south the area is bounded by cultivated agricultural land.

### Tenure

2.2 The land is government owned and administered by Air Malta. The entire site should be developed in a comprehensive manner but the future of current leases on the site is a matter for the land owner to determine.

### General Description of Location

2.3 The Development Brief site covers a total area of around 85,000m<sup>2</sup>. **Table 1** below lists the current land uses and the areas taken up by them (see also **Map 2**).

Land Use	Footprint (m <sup>2</sup> )	Percentage
Buildings	14,100	17
Carriageways/ Parking Areas/ Tarmacked Areas	11,800	14
Leisure & Sports Facilities (pools, tennis courts, etc.)	5,200	6
Landscaped Areas	39,900	47
Disturbed/ Degraded Land	13,900	16
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>84,900</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 1: Land Uses and Footprint**



### *Landscape and Ecology*

- 2.4 The Development Brief site and its surroundings are essentially rural in character, even though some tourist facilities exist, due to the wider area being dominated by a patchwork of cultivated agricultural land as well as some garrigue. The area is generally open and permits extensive views. Most of the site falls within Pwales Valley, which is a U-shaped valley terminated by Il-Bajja ta' San Pawl il-Bahar (St. Paul's Bay) to the north-east and Il-Bajja tal-Mixquqa (Golden Bay) to the south-west.
- 2.5 The buildings within the site (see **Map 3**) are small in footprint as well as in height, detached and alternating with mature trees and other vegetation. The site contains landscaped areas with dense vegetation cover as well as derelict areas with little greenery.
- 2.6 A significant proportion of these mature trees on site are native species and may be worthy of retention as well as being protected by law. A small watercourse used to traverse the site from the southeast to the northwest, where it drains into the sea at Golden Bay (see **Map 4**), but it has been interrupted by the developments on site. In its place there is now a tarmacked internal road.

### *Historical Background*

- 2.7 Due to the proximity of the two sheltered bays of Ghajn Tuffieha and Golden Bay offering convenient landing places for ships, this area was always one of the vulnerable spots within the defence system of Malta. Therefore, a number of defence-related structures ranging from Bronze Age traces of a wall (on Il-Qarraba) through coastal watchtowers from the Knights' period to British military structures constructed in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, are found in this area. The British reinforced the defences of the area and used it as training grounds and camp for wounded soldiers during the First World War, who were initially housed in tents. Later the still existing barracks were built.
- 2.8 The military building complexes consist mainly of these former military barracks and ancillary buildings (refer to **Appendix B**). These buildings are the only example of this type of architecture in this part of Malta.

### *Access and Transport*

- 2.9 The principal access to the site is via two local roads flanking the Hal-Ferh Tourist Complex to the East and West. They connect through sharp turns with Ghajn Tuffieha Road, which is the road connecting Ghajn Tuffieha Bay with St. Paul's Bay. The western road leads into the Golden Bay car park, then turns and joins the eastern road, which continues further north towards the settlement of Manikata while flanking the other barracks complex.
- 2.10 Vehicular traffic in the Development Brief area and surroundings increases in the summer months, however it is generally light, owing to the fact that visitor arrivals are distributed throughout the whole day and there is no through traffic. There is, on the other hand, a problem related to parking in the area, particularly during the summer months when more people spend time at the beach, along with an increased occupancy rate at the Golden Sands Hotel. This shortage of parking spaces also causes some congestion along the approach road and in the parking area itself. An additional problem is that many of the parking spaces created by the developer of the new hotel are filled up from the morning by hotel staff and some guests.

### **Site Description**

- 2.11 The Development Brief area is located within Pwales Valley. Consequently the terrain is predominantly flat. It is mostly taken up by a disused holiday complex (see **Images 8-17 and 19**) and contains a number of barracks dating from 1939 (**Images 15, 16**), some other military buildings and a church/cinema built in 1916 in the neoclassical style (**Image 10**). Several modern buildings were added to the complex in the 1970s/1980s, which occupy the north-eastern part of the site (**Images 11-13**). When it was still operational, the holiday complex used to have a capacity of up to 750 beds.
- 2.12 Furthermore, there are ancillary facilities within this complex, such as tennis courts, swimming pools, internal roads and landscaped areas (including a large number of mature trees). The complex is currently surrounded by a boundary wall; i.e. it is only accessible to visitors, both by car and on foot through a few access points within this wall. Inside the tourist complex there are several roads and roadside parking spaces.
- 2.13 Just outside the boundary wall of the tourist complex but still within the Development Brief site, there are a horse-riding facility

(Image 9) and a degraded open space (Image 8) which is used as an informal parking and recreational area.

2.14 For the purposes of this Brief, the site has been divided into four zones with distinctive characteristics. The boundaries of the zones are shown on **Map 6**. Details on the individual buildings can be found in **Appendix B**; photos showing features and panoramic views of the Brief area are included in **Appendix F**. **Table 2** below lists land areas and footprints and floor spaces of existing buildings by zones.

<b>Development Zones</b>	<b>Land Area (m<sup>2</sup>)</b>	<b>Existing Built Footprint (m<sup>2</sup>)</b>	<b>Developed Floor Space (m<sup>2</sup>)</b>
Zone 1	18,900	5,500	5,500
Zone 2	48,600	7,850	13,250
Zone 3	4,300	750	750
Zone 4	13,100	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>84,900</b>	<b>14,100</b>	<b>19,500</b>

**Table 2: Footprint and Floor Space of Existing Buildings**

### 3.0 Planning Policy Background

- 3.1 The Structure Plan does not provide specific guidance for this area. However, there are a number of policies which the Brief needs to take into account, mainly related to tourism and rural conservation. **Appendix 1** provides an overview of relevant policies and how they have been addressed by the Brief.
- 3.2 The approved North West Local Plan site specific policy NWGT 1 (refer to **Appendix 1**) provides the most relevant policy context for the site of the Development Brief. This policy identifies the site as part of a larger 120 ha site for a concept proposal of a golf course, as guided by the conclusions of the assessment of its potential for such development in April 2005. In conjunction with the golf course, Government was also exploring the potential for establishing a National Park on a wider area stretching from Il-Bajja tal-Mixquqa (Golden Bay) to il-Prajjiġet (Anchor Bay). Further assessments highlighted that negative environmental impacts would arise from the golf course scheme and the project was not pursued further. Therefore, the policy provisions for an alternative proposal on a smaller site came into effect. These provisions set out broad guidelines on land use, building conservation and design, site layout, access and landscaping. Most of the land allocated for the golf course was subsequently leased back to farmers and integrated within the national country park boundary now known as "Il-Majjistral Nature and History Park" with a management board responsible for the drafting and implementation of a management plan.
- 3.3 The NWLP also indicates Areas of Agricultural Value around most of the site which are shown on **Map 4**.
- 3.4 According to the Landscape Model developed by the Landscape Assessment Study for the Maltese Islands (Public Consultation Draft 2004), the location of the Development Brief site is classified as an Area of Significant Landscape Sensitivity (ASLS), i.e. interventions would have a medium impact on the appearance of the landscape. However, some of the areas abutting the Development Brief site are Areas of High and Very High Landscape Sensitivity (AHLS and AVHLS).
- 3.5 Within the Brief area itself, there are presently no statutorily protected sites. However, the adjacent coastal area is part of a larger strip of scheduled land stretching along most of the western coastline of Malta, with the following designations: Area of Ecological Importance (AEI; Level 2 for the coastal cliffs and Level 3 for the adjacent strip to act as a buffer for the coast),

Area of High Landscape Value (AHLV) and the EU designation Special Area of Conservation (SAC; International Importance). These coincide with the above-mentioned AHLS and AVHLS. For locations of these scheduled areas refer to **Map 4**.

- 3.6 Therefore, any future use needs to be examined in the light of the Structure Plan, the North West Local Plan and its strategy and plans for the Golden Bay/ Ghajn Tuffieha area in general, as well as taking into account constraints due to scheduling and Landscape Sensitivity levels of the site and its surroundings.

## 4.0 General Strategy and Objectives

- 4.1 The overall strategy is ***to promote redevelopment and reuse of the land for tourism, whilst improving the area's general environment and its heritage, as well as adding amenity and leisure facilities for visitors and the general public, within an overarching goal of sustainable development.***
- 4.2 Stemming from the requirements of policy NWGT 1 in the North West Local Plan, the Brief's objectives are:
- a. To seek the redevelopment of the site with quality tourism and recreation uses;
  - b. To seek to ensure that the redevelopment of this site safeguards and complements the sensitive surrounding landscape and countryside, and that existing views are as much as possible safeguarded;
  - c. To encourage a conservation programme for the rehabilitation, promotion and suitable reuse of the former military complex;
  - d. To encourage new low-lying and low density development which respects the heritage assets on the site through proper layout, massing and design;
  - e. To seek the retention - wherever possible - of existing mature vegetation;
  - f. To seek the provision of car-parking, efficient vehicular access and circulation to the site and the minimisation of traffic impact on the surrounding road network.

## 5.0 Development Brief Policy Framework

### Acceptable Land Uses

- 5.1 The primary land use which will be favourably considered by MEPA is a high quality, family oriented tourism development which includes accommodation and supporting facilities. Projects will be encouraged to introduce concepts based on agro and eco tourism principles.
- 5.2 The acceptable secondary supporting ancillary uses to this main use include:
- a. A small component of specialist, small, retail outlets. This may include small crafts workshops selling their products on site, e.g. lace maker, silversmith etc;
  - b. Ancillary food and drink facilities (restaurant and cafeteria);
  - c. Meeting rooms/ multi-purpose halls as ancillary to the main use of a tourism development;
  - d. Facilities for sports, (including horse riding facilities), recreation and health;
  - e. Entertainment and cultural facilities

provided that the above facilities are aimed primarily for the use of residents of the tourism development, do not include activities which are incompatible with the tourism accommodation aspect of the tourist complex, do not, on a frequent basis, attract large numbers of visitors from outside the complex and mitigation measures against any unacceptable noise disturbance to the surrounding community are integrated in the project.

### Special Conditions for Existing Buildings

- 5.3 Even though the former military buildings are currently not scheduled, they are deemed to have historical merit and their retention and rehabilitation is strongly encouraged. It is highly desirable to conserve and integrate through suitable re-use, the identified military structures with any future development in this area. The military structures were used for tourism accommodation when the Hal-Ferh Complex was still operational and therefore these types of buildings could imaginatively be successfully integrated with the rest of the project.

5.4 As indicated on **Map 5** and in **Appendix B**, all buildings on site have been divided into two categories, according to their degree of conservation value. The following conditions apply:

Level 1 These buildings are deemed to be historically significant and their rehabilitation is strongly encouraged. The historical value is mainly directed at the group value of the structures and therefore rehabilitation efforts would mainly address their external juxtaposition, height, massing and external texture, leaving greater flexibility on internal alterations. Ideally, the more recent accretions should be removed. External additions are not normally allowed for these buildings.

Level 2 These buildings are of little historical value and/ or of more recent origin. They may either be retained and rehabilitated or demolished. If they are retained, alterations and additions are allowed provided the design of the extended or completely new structures respects the characteristics of the surrounding buildings (refer also to para 5.9 – 5.11). Individual, smaller blocks are preferable to one large massive block, to allow for soft landscaping in between blocks.

### **Height Limitation for New Buildings**

5.5 The height limitation for new buildings shall be either 1 floor (4.75m) or 2 floors (8.5m) as indicated on **Map 6** to be measured from previously surveyed site levels. Structures at roof level on new buildings may only be permitted where they do not exceed 10% of the underlying built footprint. These roof-level structures shall be sensitively designed and should only be used for access and to accommodate service facilities, but not for accommodation or commercial purposes. Their presence will be taken into account as far as the total built floor space of the project is concerned.

5.6 Building height limitations have been determined in a manner as to respect surrounding countryside and historical context but at the same time consolidating the development potential of this site. They also take into account and to some extent compensate for development restrictions that are being imposed on related to the former military barracks. In this respect, all building blocks are to be limited to the maximum



building height as indicated below and on the map for the following reasons:

- a. The building height is planned on the principle of achieving a stepping down effect of building heights towards the periphery of the site;
- b. Buildings higher than indicated would adversely affect the historic and the essentially rural character of the area and lead to further urbanisation which is not in line with Structure Plan policies; and
- c. Higher buildings would have negative impacts on the ecologically sensitive areas in the vicinity of the site and on the landscape character, mainly through overdevelopment effects.

### **Site Layout, Plot Ratio and Design**

5.7 Currently the Development Brief area is characterised by clusters of buildings surrounded by mature trees, which are alternating with large open areas (consisting mainly of disturbed land). This layout of the area should not be significantly altered in order to retain the landscape character. This means that new buildings should also be predominantly low lying, detached, clustered and in some areas within the site preferably arranged in rows to emulate the pattern of distribution of the existing buildings, wherever the site conditions permit this. In general, the layout on site should provide for an attractive and safe environment whilst creating a distinctive sense of place.

5.8 The site layout should be broadly organised in the following manner:

Area covered by buildings: 16,700sqm (20%)

Area covered by soft landscaping: 27,000sqm (32%) Area for open space: 41,200sqm (48%)

Areas for open space can accommodate open air sports, leisure, recreation and entertainment facilities (ie. these should not include roofed over buildings and structures), as well as carriageways, pedestrian areas and car parks.

5.9 All new buildings should be of an appropriate scale, proportion and bulk so as not to create a uniform and monolithic building design, especially paying careful attention to the scale, massing and design of nearby buildings and the historical context.

Therefore the design is to ensure that:

- a. The development will be attractive; and
- b. The various parts of the project are visually compatible with each other and with the historical heritage covered by this Brief and the surrounding countryside.

- 5.10 Designs for these new buildings should strive to achieve a balance between achieving a quality development whilst addressing the challenge of integrating the new development within an existing historical context. Therefore, an intelligent and imaginative architectural design incorporating traditional motifs and textures is required by MEPA for all new buildings. Strong encouragement will be given to high quality architecture which is sensitive and sympathetic to the historical features within the site boundary. It is particularly important to integrate building styles of the newer interventions with the historical context of the site. Furthermore, in those sections of the site where new buildings are placed in gaps between existing ones, textures of existing façades should ideally be emulated by the new ones. The widespread use of unrendered local franka stone and the emulation of traditional aperture proportions and aperture to void ratios on facades are strongly recommended. Apart from imparting a local flavour to the design, the widespread use of unrendered franka stone should also enable the project to integrate better in the surrounding milieu especially in the longer run.
- 5.11 A high level of design quality, detailing and construction finish must be achieved in all buildings and open areas. Project management should ensure that construction quality is of a high standard and finished according to approved designs.
- 5.12 More details regarding the site layout within the individual zones can be found in the next sub-section.

### **Height Limitation and Design by Zones**

- 5.13 The building height limitations for existing as well as new buildings and other design parameters are indicated on **Map 6**. The paragraphs below describe in more detail the height limitations and other conditions within Zones 1 to 4.

**Zone 1:** The indicated Level 1 buildings should ideally be retained and rehabilitated. New buildings may be constructed within the open spaces and these should be of the same height as the existing (i.e. 1 floor) and preferably of a design and orientation which reflects the existing built structures.

**Zone 2:** In this zone there is considerable potential for the creation of new development that is functional yet also blends in with the surrounding area. The new buildings shall be low lying, clustered and interspersed with soft landscaped areas that should include trees – where possible existing mature indigenous and archaeophytic trees should be retained. The height limitation is 1 floor for area shaded in yellow at the periphery of the site (refer to **Map 6**) and 2 floors for the remainder of this sub-zone. The four Level 1 buildings should ideally be retained.

**Zone 3:** The façades of the two buildings in the western part of this sub-zone are to be retained as existing and restored, and only internal alterations are permitted. The buildings in the eastern part may be demolished. The height limitation for this zone is 1 floor.

**Zone 4:** The car-park layout shall meet required standards for internal circulation and access, maximize capacity and include a landscaped buffer of at least 3m around the perimeter, as shown on **Map 6**, to screen the parked cars from view. Additional internal soft landscaping within the car park is also encouraged. Only small buildings related to the efficient operation and management of the car park such as gate/guard rooms shall be allowed. The design of these buildings should also reflect the design theme for the project. The surface of the car park should be permeable to allow proper water drainage and large areas of tarmac should be avoided as much as possible.

### **Developable Footprint and Floor Areas**

- 5.14 For the purposes of this Development Brief, floor space is defined as the total area of all floors, including floor space at basement and/or semi basement level, except for storage and car parking, of the built development as measured externally. **Table 3** below indicates the permitted development footprint and gross floor space for the site according to this Development Brief, along with the existing totals. Maximum allowable building footprint and gross floor spaces have not been allocated between zones 1, 2 and 3 to introduce flexibility regarding the distribution of the

buildings and floor space. The allowable areas have been deduced by taking into account a built site coverage of 20% and an equal subdivision of the resulting footprint into one storey and two storey buildings. Considering that there are 5,800sqm of Level 1 buildings in the Brief area which are to remain on one floor, there would be an additional 2,550sqm of new buildings on one floor and 8,350sqm of new buildings on two floors, giving a total floor space of 25,000sqm. These thresholds have been introduced to avoid overdevelopment, safeguard the openness of the site while ensuring viability of the scheme.

	<b>Developed (Existing)</b>	<b>Maximum Developable (Including Existing)</b>
<b>Footprint in m<sup>2</sup></b>	14,100	16,700
<b>Gross Floor Space in m<sup>2</sup></b>	19,500	25,000

**Table 3: Existing and Developable Footprint and Floor Space**

### **Cultural Heritage Conservation Requirements**

- 5.15 Efforts should be made to rehabilitate the indicated heritage assets in the area. As part of the measures required to achieving this goal, it is essential that inappropriate constructions and accretions are removed at the expense of the developer. Any structural intervention on identified heritage assets is to be carried out following a method statement to be prepared by MEPA approved competent persons to ensure the highest standards of any restoration measures undertaken. Considering that many alterations have been undertaken on the existing buildings, emphasis is placed on the application of a cautionary approach. Further damage to retained historical fabric should be avoided whilst undergoing renovation and restoration works appertaining to the removal of accretions and inappropriate structures.
- 5.16 Mepa strongly encourages the retention and rehabilitation of façades of the Level 1 buildings shown on **Map 5**. In view of various alterations made to the ex-military barracks over the years, internal alterations are permitted provided that the design is of high quality and adds to the overall architectural value of the buildings.

## Transport Improvements, Access and Parking

- 5.17 Since traffic in the area is not heavy and existing roads are adequate, at this point in time no new road development is required within and around the site.
- 5.18 Since the western road constitutes the main approach to the beach and the Golden Sands Hotel, traffic leading to the Hal-Ferh area should be directed through the eastern road (refer to **Map 7**). This would necessitate a study and subsequent redesign of the junctions encircled on the map, since at the moment the two intersections are too close together to allow for safe access, especially since traffic volumes are likely to increase to a certain degree. A design solution which minimises any take-up of agricultural land will be preferred. This is a requirement that the developer of this area will need to fulfil, in accordance with Structure Plan policy TRA 3. The NWLP indicates that the junction between the Ghajn Tuffieha Road and the western road needs to be improved, too. However, with the eastern road to be the main approach route for the Hal-Ferh site, the developer will not be required to redesign this junction. No vehicular access to the development will be permitted along the perimeter flanking the western road linking Triq Ghajn Tuffieha with the Golden Sands Bay parking area (Triq in-Nahhalija).
- 5.19 Any redevelopment of this site would require a Traffic Impact Statement (TIS) that would need to cover in detail all the transport implications of this development onto the area's overall transport scenario including interaction with existing plans and schemes and entry and exit into the site as well as the planning of parking requirements. The assessment would also need to assess the suitability of current and envisaged public transport facilities and if found lacking; propose a suitable location for such facilities either within the site boundary or in the immediate vicinity. The TIS would be limited to the immediate surroundings of the site up to the junction between Mgarr Road and Ghajn Tuffieha Road, in order to incorporate the junction improvement at this intersection.
- 5.20 In any proposals for internal circulation, adequate provision must be made for pedestrian movements, and in particular for the needs of the less physically mobile. The proposals must be in conformity with the Access for All Design Guidelines (2001).
- 5.21 Parking spaces for the development should be provided within the site, according to the parking requirements listed in **Appendix C**. Parking spaces for residents of the complex and employees

should be dispersed in small clusters in zones 1, 2 and 3. The car park in zone 4 should be primarily allocated for visitors and the general public. It is recommended that the developer restricts vehicular access to zones 1, 2 and 3, so that there would be no overspill of parked cars from visitors to the existing hotel and the beach. Road level car parking facilities should be appropriately landscaped especially for car parks that are located near the periphery of the site, in order to screen these parking areas from the surrounding countryside. Underground parking facilities may also be considered in order to retain more open space for pedestrian access, recreation and landscaping at ground level.

### **Landscaping Requirements**

- 5.22 The developer will be required to undertake an exhaustive survey of existing trees, shrubs and other vegetation on site, to MEPA's satisfaction.
- 5.23 Subject to the findings of the survey on existing vegetation, the developer shall seek to retain as many of the existing native trees and vegetation as is reasonably possible. Existing trees which need to be removed from their existing siting shall be transplanted or replaced in kind in another location within the site according to MEPA's Guidelines on Trees, Shrubs and Plants for Planting and Landscaping in the Maltese Islands (2002). Alien/invasive species (including *Eucalyptus spp.*, *Acacia spp.*, *Casuarina spp.* and *Pittosporum tobira*) existing on site should ideally be replaced with appropriate indigenous species.
- 5.24 A detailed landscaping scheme will be required, which shall follow the said Landscaping Guidelines and include the following components:
- a. A landscaping belt of at least 3.0m around the perimeter of the site where appropriate;
  - b. Screening of structures and buildings from external viewpoints, except where this would compromise the setting of historic buildings or buildings of cultural heritage value; and
  - c. Replacement of unsightly boundary walls and fences with features such as planting and rubble walling that would blend in better with the rural surroundings.
- 5.25 It is essential to achieve a satisfactory solution to the channelling of surface water through the site to prevent localised flooding. At the two points where the previously existing watercourse crosses the roads abutting the site, water would need to be channelled

through underground ducts. Moreover, it would be desirable to channel the water through the site above ground, using the former watercourse route as indicated on **Map 4**. The parts of the site separated by the new channel may need to be connected by small bridges. The watercourse could be integrated as a special feature into the overall site layout and landscaping scheme. One desirable option would be the creation of a channel with a permeable bed and permeable but stabilised banks, lined with trees (using species that grow further downstream).

- 5.26 New landscaping shall follow an informal, natural-looking, clustered layout, particularly in the open areas and on the peripheries of the site in general, in order to form a smoother transition between the site and the surrounding countryside.
- 5.27 There should furthermore be an appropriate mix of soft and hard landscaping within open spaces. Innovative use of local materials for hard landscaping and the use of high quality street furniture are highly desirable. Energy efficient luminaires which have an Upward Light ratio of 0% should be used in external areas.

### **Services and Infrastructure Requirements**

- 5.28 Within the historical as well as the new buildings that are constructed on site, all water tanks, mechanical plant and lifts must either be contained within the envelope of the building or be localised in centralised facilities. Such facilities should preferably be located underground or in internal spaces within built structures. Where facilities must be located at roof level, these must be screened in such a manner that the screen is read as part of the architecture of the building. Telecommunications antennae should be centralised on the newer buildings. Pipes shall not in general be permitted on external facades. All public utility services shall be laid underground, i.e. no installation of overhead wires or pipes is permitted and the removal of existing ones from the site is required.

### **Sustainable Design and Energy Efficiency in New Buildings**

- 5.29 All new buildings should incorporate energy conservation features such as efficient heating and cooling systems, secondary water use through the incorporation of water collection and storage facilities as well as solid waste management and disposal installations. As much as possible and without causing adverse impacts to the retained historic building

fabric, energy conservation features should also be installed in existing buildings. Furthermore, the design of new buildings and their positioning on the site is to follow sustainable energy conservation principles, and the developer will be required to provide MEPA with an Environmental Management Plan highlighting the measures, especially bioclimatic measures, to be taken in the development to ensure the attainment of the above requirements. LN 238/06 – Minimum Requirements on the energy performance of buildings regulations is relevant in this context.

- 5.30 On site generation of energy from renewable sources, particularly from photovoltaics and solar water heating, will be a requirement. MEPA will actively strive to maximise the amount of renewable energy generated on site as a proportion of total energy consumption.
- 5.31 Appendix F with this document identifies a number of measures which MEPA recommends to achieve the sustainability objectives of the brief.



## **6.0 Submission Requirements**

### **General Requirements**

6.1 The assessment of proposals will be carried out in three stages, as follows:

- Stage 1 is the selection of the preferred developer by Government. This will be subject to a competitive process. This process falls outside the remit of the Malta Environment and Planning Authority and therefore this Brief provides no guidance in this respect. The planning objectives, framework and guidelines set out in this Development Brief establish the basis on which all planning decisions will be made. No material variation from the Brief's parameters will be permitted at a later stage.
- Stage 2 requirements are compulsory and should be achieved to the satisfaction of the Malta Environment and Planning Authority, prior to the granting of any outline planning permission.
- Stage 3 requirements are obligatory for the evaluation of the full development application.

### **Stage Two – Requirements for Outline Development Application**

6.2 It is envisaged that an outline development permit will be issued for the entire site for which the tender has been issued, after which full development permits for different parts of the site may be issued. The following requirements set the framework for the determination of the outline planning application, and the more detailed work and discussions within Stage 3. Therefore Stage 2 requirements shall include the following aspects:

- A concise written general statement giving a clear description of the development concept, including a comprehensive schedule of land use/space provisions, the mix of uses, construction and operation employment levels by category, and how it complies with the requirements in the Development Brief as per Chapter 5 above and other relevant planning policies, together with a description of each facility of the project and a schedule of all space allocations (in square metres).

- Overall scheme plans (Scale 1:200) showing broad site levels, range of land-uses, buildings, parking facilities (with capacities), landscaping and the allocated construction space requirements.
- Design proposals for the vehicle car park/s, servicing requirements together with landscaping.
- Elevations of the whole development (Scale 1:200) demonstrating broad design concepts, showing the relationship of the proposed development to the surrounding area and to recognisable site features including the two building complexes.
- At least four different sections through the site, in agreement with MEPA.
- At least five photomontages to be taken from different points on higher ground in the vicinity of the site, such as the Ghajn Tuffieha car park and Manikata. The exact points are to be determined in consultation with MEPA. The photos are to be taken through a normal lens subtending a field of view of around 45 degrees. Moreover, they should be presented on A3 sized prints.
- The developer will be required to prepare a detailed Project Description Statement (for Guidelines refer to **Appendix D**). This would enable the screening of the project in accordance with the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations of 2007 (LN 114/07).
- A Traffic Impact Statement (TIS) will be required in accordance with the relevant terms of reference provided by MEPA.
- A full method statement indicating all heritage conservation interventions.
- The preparation of an Environmental Management Plan (EMP) detailing proposals for energy saving and efficiency. The EMP is to include efficient use of resources including energy and water, environmentally sensitive construction methods and waste management.
- Furthermore, the developer will need to acquire a tourism policy compliance certificate by MTA in order to proceed with the development application with MEPA.

- The development which is the subject of this development brief shall be used for tourist accommodation and for no other use notwithstanding the provision of the Use Classes Order, 1994, or any amendment or addition to these Orders.

The development which is subject to this brief shall be used solely for tourist accommodation and shall not be used for permanent residential occupation or any other use. No unit within development brief boundary may be issued with an individual compliance certificate by the Authority, nor may any such unit be individually serviced by a water or electricity meter by a national service provider.

Any permission shall be granted subject to the satisfactory completion, within six months of the issue of the development permission, of a public deed under the terms of Section 40 of the Development Planning Act to ensure the compliance with the any conditions, and also that the development remains as a single business operation under one ownership, prohibiting the owner of the development from transferring or disposing under any title, onerous or gratuitous, other than lease for a period of not more than one year, or time-share for a period of not more than two months, any unit within the development.

An additional obligation towards any appropriate MEPA fund aimed at financing environmental projects in the community will also be required.

### **Stage Three – Requirements for Full Development Application**

6.3 Stage 3 requirements are as follows:

- Existing site survey with indicated levels. Scale 1:500.
- Proposed site layout, including any new site levels and all proposed land uses. Scale 1:500.
- Composite overall scheme plans showing levels, building, landscaping, vehicle parking facilities, utilities, servicing arrangements and the proposed phasing and construction space requirements. Scale 1:1000.
- Plans, elevations and sections of the proposed new buildings and those structures to be rehabilitated. Scale 1:200.

- Axonometrics at a scale of 1:500 or good quality computer model printouts of proposals shown from at least three important viewpoints as agreed with MEPA.
- Block model of proposals. Scale 1:500.
- Detailed proposals for landscaping and maintenance, including incorporation of existing trees (which should be distinguishable from proposed planting), new planting (with species and number), earth mounding, hard landscaping, street furniture and lighting. Scale 1:200.
- Schedule of materials, colours and textures of all external finishes and hard landscaping works, and how these will be employed.
- Schedule of floor space by type of land use.

6.4 The following details are required as regards the operational and management aspects of the proposed project:

- An Environmental Management Plan (EMP) detailing proposals for the treatment of sewage, waste, water and for energy saving proposals. The EMP is to demonstrate how the actual design of the buildings shall follow sustainable energy conservation principles, and shall highlight the measures to be taken in the development to ensure the attainment of the above requirements.
- The predicted requirements of water, electricity, communications and sewerage systems and the likely impact on the existing networks. The location of proposed site utilities layout including connection to the existing public networks (Scale 1:1000), and proof of negotiations with the relevant utilities organizations.
- Details on emergency arrangements for all land uses covered by the Brief.
- Proposed construction management plan including details of:
  1. Information on site excavations and the sites for construction, recycling and waste disposal,
  2. The siting and works required for utility provisions,
  3. Temporary access roads, all construction access points and proposals for maintaining pedestrian and vehicular access,

4. Underground structures, storage areas for plant and materials, location of any cranes used in construction.
  5. Phasing of all of the above with consideration being given to the tourism peak months.
- The developer will also need to be in possession of a design criteria compliance certificate from MTA, before a permit is issued by MEPA.
- 6.5 A statement explaining proposals and demonstrating compliance with the requirements of this Brief should also be presented. Furthermore, the developer may be required to provide additional information by the competent authorities, concerning any other aspects covered by this Brief.

# APPENDICES

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## **APPENDIX A: Relevant Structure Plan and Local Plan Policies**

### **Structure Plan (SP) Policies**

The Development Brief adheres to MEPA's '**Structure Plan for the Maltese Islands' (1990)** document. Since the Development Brief site is located in rural area and near ecologically important sites, the Brief follows the direction set out by the Structure Plan in its Rural Conservation policies. At the same time, the area contains historical buildings that are worthy of preservation, hence the Brief promotes their restoration and reuse. In other words the Brief's strategy is effectively geared towards redevelopment and rehabilitation, thus economic development and environmental improvement.

The following is a list of **Structure Plan Policies** relevant to the Brief:

#### **TOURISM**

**SP Policies TOU 3, TOU 4 & TOU 5:** These policies relate to tourism objectives and preferred locations in which further tourism facilities should be developed. The Development Brief Area is not located in one of the zones specified in policies TOU3 and TOU4. However, the Brief proposes the upgrading and improvement of existing facilities containing tourism accommodation, including the careful blending of these developments into their surroundings, which is in line with Structure Plan provisions.

**SP Policy TOU 11:** This policy is relevant because it encourages Malta's heritage items to be made more accessible and interesting to tourists. There are historical buildings on site which are proposed to be rehabilitated by the Brief, thus being made more accessible. The Brief also requests the installation of interpretative signage about these buildings near public pathways.

#### **TRANSPORT**

**SP Policy TRA 2:** The policy requires promoters of major developments to prepare Traffic Impact Statements (TIS). The Brief therefore includes the request for the preparation of a TIS for this site.

**SP Policy TRA 3:** According to this policy, developers will be required to fund the necessary remedial highway works needed to accommodate their proposals. The redesign of a junction along the approach road to

the site is required by the Brief in order to improve the safety at this point and cater for increased traffic.

**SP Policy TRA 4:** This policy sets out parking principles for new development. The Brief notes that development is to follow MEPA's vehicle parking requirements as defined in **Appendix C** (Parking Standards Requirements).

**SP Policy RDS 9:** New public footpaths through the site are being recommended, which is in line with this policy, as it requires that footways and their maintenance will be improved.

## **CONSERVATION**

**SP Policy UCO 11:** This policy encourages the conversion of buildings of architectural or historical interest where this would preserve a building, in areas that are not zoned for development. The Development Brief site contains a number of these buildings, which by being rehabilitated sensitively and reused would be saved from further degradation. The Brief also promotes increased public access to the area.

**SP Policy RCO 2:** This policy restricts urban development in rural areas but permits the rehabilitation and suitable change of use of existing buildings, in conjunction with the removal of other buildings and structures which adversely affect the rural environment. Along with the rehabilitation and reuse of the existing buildings, the Brief encourages the removal of modern accretions to these buildings as well as the removal of unsightly modern structures through the replacement by higher quality and sympathetic development. It furthermore stresses that design of any development in the area is to be compatible with the surrounding countryside.

**SP Policy RCO 4:** According to this policy, developments which would adversely affect scenic value will not be permitted by MEPA. The Brief emphasizes that design of any development in the area is to be compatible with the surrounding countryside. Where possible, mature trees are to be retained and incorporated into an overall landscaping scheme, which should achieve a blending of the development into the surrounding countryside.

**SP Policy RCO 5:** The policy states that in Rural Conservation Areas, permission for new or extended infrastructure will only be given if MEPA is satisfied that all possible measures have been taken to mitigate its visual impact. The new development site will require a certain extension of infrastructure such as public utility services. In order to minimise impacts, the Brief requires services to be laid underground only, as well



as landscaping to be provided around most of the perimeter of the site.

**SP Policy RCO 6:** This policy promotes the enhancement and management of Rural Conservation Areas, stating a number of initiatives that should be taken. The Brief contains provisions fulfilling some of the points contained in this policy, namely the requirement for a landscaping scheme and the reuse and conversion of rural buildings which are compatible with their scenic setting.

**SP Policy RCO 28:** This policy requires the protection of valleys as important water catchment areas. A valley bed used to traverse the site and continues on both sides of the Development Brief boundary. The Brief recommends the reinstatement of the connection between the two parts of this watercourse.

**SP Policy RCO 32:** The policy encourages the planting of appropriate species of trees for the enhancement of the landscape, screening of unsightly structures, etc. Provisions for planting of suitable tree species (i.e. following the provisions of the 'Guidelines for Trees, Shrubs and Plants for Planting and Landscaping in the Maltese Islands' of 2002) are included in the Brief.

## **PUBLIC UTILITIES**

**SP Policy PUT 3:** The policy requires, as a major strategy of public utilities planning, the efficient management and conservation of resources, the recycling and reuse of waste water and waste materials, as well as the minimisation of waste. The Brief contains a provision to ensure that the development will include these requirements.

## **North West Local Plan (NWLP) Policies**

The Development Brief also adheres to the NWLP policies as the Development Brief site is situated within the limits of Mellieha, one of the localities addressed by this Plan.

## **NWLP GENERAL POLICIES**

**Policy NWTO 1:** The Brief promotes the extension to existing as well as new tourist accommodation in a rural area by upgrading existing accommodation within buildings of historical value (including the upgrading of the historical buildings themselves), along with the rehabilitation of existing vacant buildings of architectural or historic

merit. These requirements need to be observed according to this policy, for tourism development to be allowed within a rural area.

**Policy NWTO 2:** This policy promotes the rehabilitation or redevelopment of existing tourism accommodation in rural areas hence the objectives of the Brief are in line with this policy. The policy also lists several requirements that have to be satisfied these are included in the provisions of the Brief. It furthermore states that an increase in bed numbers is not normally allowed.

**Policy NWTO 3:** The policy includes provisions regarding visitor attractions. Through conversion and reuse, the historical buildings on site could be made more accessible and attractive for visitors. The Brief also requests the installation of interpretative signage about these buildings near public pathways.

**Policy NWRE 3:** The policy provides for extensions to existing horse riding facilities. The Brief area includes a horse riding facility; therefore this type of land use is included in the list of uses permitted by the Brief. There may also be scope for the establishment of an additional facility in an existing building on the other side of the Brief area.

**Policy NWRE 6:** The policy aims to safeguard existing footpaths and access to them, as well as the establishment of a Country Parkway System. The existing footpaths in the surrounding area are not being negatively affected by the type of development promoted by this Brief.

**Policy NWTR 1:** This policy encourages proposals which will provide better facilities for pedestrians, cyclists and those with special mobility needs. The Brief therefore promotes the creation of new footpaths which are in line with 'Access for All' provisions.

**Policy NWLA 2:** According to this policy, developments that would adversely affect Areas of High Landscape Value (AHLV) will not be permitted. The Brief contains provisions stating that any development in the area should integrate well into the surrounding countryside and not adversely affect the adjacent AHLV.

**Policy NWCO 12:** The policy contains provisions regarding the change of use and conversion of buildings of architectural or historic merit in rural areas. The Brief is in line with these provisions (see also comments on policy NWGT 1 below).

## **NWLP AREA SPECIFIC POLICIES FOR GHAJN TUFFIEHA**

**Policy NWGT 1:** This policy is particularly relevant as it requires the preparation of a Development Brief for this area and provisions which should be followed, namely:

- Primary land uses fall within tourism accommodation, camping and horse riding facilities with supporting amenities to the main use;
- Features or structures of historical or architectural merit are conserved and integrated in the development;
- New buildings are designed to respect and integrate well with the rural context and the contours of the site;
- Site layout provides appropriate open spaces between buildings to break the bulk of the built development;
- Adequate access and on site parking is provided;
- Landscaping scheme, planting schedule and maintenance programme are submitted and approved.

These requirements have been included in the provisions of the Development Brief.

## APPENDIX B: Existing Buildings – Details and Constraints

**Note:**

- The building IDs referred to in the table below are indicated on **Map 3**. The last column refers to the special conditions applied to the buildings (1 – preferably to be retained, 2 – may be demolished). For further details regarding these conditions refer to **Section 5** of this Brief.

Bldg. ID	Footprint	Bldg. Height	Dev. Floor Space	Building Details/ Former Use	Proposed Restriction Level
C01	152	1	152	Barrack Block	1
C02	233	1	233	Barrack Block	1
C03	73	1	73	Small rectangular building	2
C04	621	2	1,242	Modern Building of 1980s	2
C05	109	1	109	Small Building	2
C06	2,115	2	4,230	Two-storey block from 1980s	2
C07	443	1	443	Barrack Block	2
C08	182	1	182	Barrack Block	2
C09	299	1	299	Barrack block	2
C10	264	1	264	Barrack block	2
C11	1,233	2	2,466	Two-storey block from 1980s	2
C12	98	1	98	Small building	1
C13	36	1	36	Small rectangular building	2
C14	324	1	324	Small rectangular building	1
C15	863	2	1,726	Reception building	2
C16	41	1	41	Small modern building	2
C17	96	1	96	Small modern building	2
C18	539	1	539	Amphitheatre	2
C19	159	1	159	Small rectangular building	2
C20a	281	2	562	Church/ Camp Hall	1
C20b	94	1	94	Annex to Camp Hall	1
C21a	243	1	243	Horse Stable	2
C21b	55	1	55	Horse Stable	2
C22	704	1	704	Large Building	1
C22a	416	1	416	Modern Annex to C22	2
C22b	392	1	392	Modern Canopy added to C22	2
C23	51	1	51	Guard Room	1
C24a	114	1	114	Barrack Block	1
C24aa	126	1	126	Barrack Block	1
C24b	136	1	136	Barrack Block	1
C24bb	141	1	141	Barrack Block	1
C24c	114	1	114	Barrack Block	1
C24cc	114	1	114	Barrack Block	1
C24d	136	1	136	Barrack Block	1
C24dd	66	1	66	Barrack Block	1
C24e	120	1	120	Barrack Block	1
C24ee	61	1	61	Barrack Block	1
C24f	114	1	114	Barrack Block	1
C24g	135	1	135	Barrack Block	1

Bldg. ID	Footprint	Bldg. Height	Dev. Floor Space	Building Details/ Former Use	Proposed Restriction Level
C24h	122	1	122	Barrack Block	1
C24i	136	1	136	Barrack Block	1
C24j	114	1	114	Barrack Block	1
C24k	137	1	137	Barrack Block	1
C24l	121	1	121	Barrack Block	1
C24m	114	1	114	Barrack Block	1
C24n	56	1	56	Barrack Block	1
C24o	58	1	58	Barrack Block	1
C24p	114	1	114	Barrack Block	1
C24q	140	1	140	Barrack Block	1
C24r	114	1	114	Barrack Block	1
C24s	114	1	114	Barrack Block	1
C24t	114	1	114	Barrack Block	1
C24u	140	1	140	Barrack Block	1
C24v	114	1	114	Barrack Block	1
C24w	114	1	114	Barrack Block	1
C24x	114	1	114	Barrack Block	1
C24y	143	1	143	Barrack Block	1
C24z	134	1	134	Barrack Block	1
C25	25	1	25	Small modern Building	2
C26	273	1	273	Building	1
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>14,100</b>		<b>19,500</b>		

## **APPENDIX C: Parking Requirements**

<b>DEVELOPMENT</b>	<b>CAR PARKING STANDARDS</b>
Residential	2 spaces per unit with 3 bedrooms or more; 1 space for smaller units
Hotel	1 per Resident Staff 0.33 per Non-Resident Staff 0.2 per Guest Bedroom
Restaurant/Cafeteria	5.0 customer spaces per 50sqm
Educational Uses	MEPA will give guidance on the requirements based on the scale of this proposed land-use and the outcome of the Traffic Impact Statement (TIS)
Office	Operational parking only
Retail	1 space per 50 sq. m

Any future amendments to the above standard provision will apply in their stead.

## **APPENDIX D: Project Description Statement Guidelines**

In order to set out the terms of reference for the EIA, a detailed project description statement is required. This should take the form of a mini report taking into consideration the following issues:

1. Details of the person wishing to carry out the development;
2. An explanation of the nature of the opportunities and problems being addressed by the development, and of its general economic, social and environmental objectives;
3. A description of the general strategy employed, and of the production processes and operational methods to be used, and any alternative methods considered, in reaching the social, environmental and economic objectives of the development;
4. An indication of the proposed timing of the project and why this timing was preferred;
5. An indication of whether the project is economically viable;
6. The location of the proposed development with site boundaries clearly shown on a map;
7. A brief indication of the alternatives considered, including suitable alternative technologies for the proposed development and alternative designs, layouts and land uses, on the proposed site;
8. A description of the physical characteristics including size, scale, design and phasing of the development using models, photographs, diagrams, plans and maps where appropriate;
9. A description of present land uses and environmental characteristics of the site;
10. A brief description of surrounding land uses, their nature, their extent and their environmental characteristics;
11. A description of the services, water, foul water sewers, surface water drainage, including storm water drainage, and energy sources available on site;
12. Estimates of the number of persons to be employed with estimates for each phase of the development;
13. The nature and quantities of raw materials to be used, and wastes generated during construction and operation; the proposed method of storage or handling of materials and wastes, and machinery needed during both the construction and the operational phases;
14. Access arrangements, parking requirements and parking arrangements on and off the site, during both construction and operation;
15. Proposals for mitigating the negative effects of the development.

If any of the above are deemed not to be relevant to the project in question, you are to state this giving a reasoned justification.

## APPENDIX E: Recommended Sustainability Measures

1. At the detailed planning stage the carbon footprint of the development should be calculated and savings to be made through improved design and construction compared to conventional design and construction.
2. The removal of any structure be so conducted as to facilitate the reuse of materials especially brick, concrete, metal and glass, effectively excluding normal demolition practice.
3. Energy saving building design should include bioclimatic aspects including:
  - a) maximum use of day lighting;
  - b) minimisation of heat exchange between indoor air and ambient air;
  - c) control of ventilation to minimise energy use and guarantee indoor air quality;
  - d) control of solar radiation gain to :
    - maximise gains in winter and minimise them in summer;
    - provide shading of buildings especially apertures and also of pathways through the use of appropriate overhangs, loggias and covered but open pathways. Trees could also be used to provide the necessary shading besides securing a habitat for birds.
  - e) water heating should be mostly by solar radiation;
  - f) electricity generation by photovoltaic systems at an appropriate level;
4. Water management to reduce demand should include:
  - g) the use of water saving taps, flushings etc;
  - h) harvesting rainwater off roofs for sanitary use after treatment or for any other use on site;
  - i) harvesting runoff water and as necessary second class water for irrigation.
5. Waste management could include:
  - j) provision of facilities for users to separate waste;
  - k) provision of composting facilities.
6. Educational Measures:

Provision of materials (leaflets, posters, videos, etc) on

  - l) local environment in all its aspects;
  - m) the facilities on site;
  - n) good practice in use of facilities;
  - o) educational centre, possibly with facilities for environment related activities and an office for NGO's.
7. In drawing up the financial feasibility of the project due consideration has to be given to the resulting running costs and to the savings resulting from reduce environmental impact on a national level.



## **APPENDIX F: Photos of the Site**