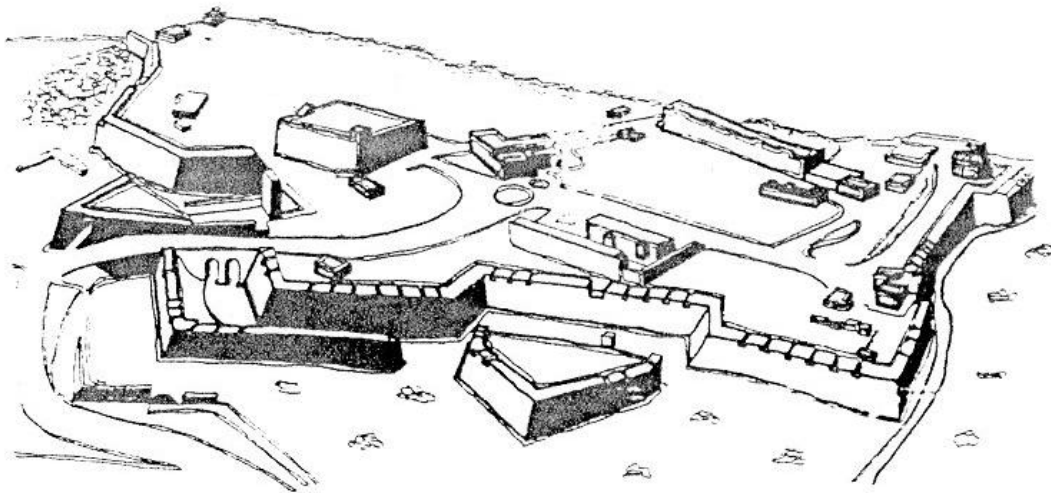


FORT CHAMBRAY DEVELOPMENT BRIEF



January 1992

Planning Services Division
Ministry for Development of Infrastructure
Government of Malta

CONTENTS

	Paragraph
Introduction	1
Policy Context - Key Elements	2
Development Objectives	6
Site Description	7
Existing Buildings Retention Policy	9
Land Use Framework	12
Design Considerations	22
Landscaping	40
Circulation, Car Parking and Servicing	43
Utilities	54
Offsite Considerations	57
Construction and Phasing	65
Submission Requirements	67

FORT CHAMBRAY DEVELOPMENT BRIEF

Introduction

1. Fort Chambray has been disused since the 1970's. It represents one of the prime development opportunities in Malta and re-use of the historic buildings is a priority to prevent further deterioration in their condition. Various proposals have been made for the Fort which were unacceptable because they either proposed over development of the site or were unsympathetic to its historic importance. This Brief has been prepared to guide future proposals towards all acceptable solution.

Policy Context - Key Elements

2 A key objective for tourism in both the Structure Plan and the Tourism Development Plan is to upgrade facilities to encourage higher quality tourism rather than all increase in tourist numbers. The Tourism Development Plan recognizes that one of the greatest attractions of Gozo to this sector of the tourism industry is its relative remoteness and unspoilt environment. The important and central role of heritage in tourism marketing is also recognised. It therefore recommends that future tourism developments in Gozo should be highly selective and in smaller up-market products. In relation to Fort Chambray the Plan recommends that the site include a day visitor attraction based on a heritage theme.

3 Policy TOU 6 of the Structure Plan recognises Fort Chambray's potential for tourism uses and provides that a Development Brief be prepared, having particular regard to conservation policies and guidelines. TOU 11 seeks to make Malta's many heritage sites more accessible and interesting to tourists and TOU 15 indicates that developments in the coastal zone may require an Environmental Assessment.

4 Fort Chambray contains buildings and fortifications of considerable architectural and historic interest, located within a Rural Conservation Area (RCO) in the coastal zone, in which urban conservation policies must be applied. Structure Plan policies dealing with rural and urban conservation, coastal zone management and the built environment are therefore relevant and these are as follows :

- Policies UCO 6 and 12 express a commitment to the enhancement of buildings and structures of outstanding architectural or historic interest by promoting restoration, landscaping and the establishment of new uses for vacant or underused buildings.
- Policies UCO 10 and RCO 4 provide for the control of development which adversely affect important views or traditional skylines. Policy UCO 11 provides that the conversion of historic buildings in the countryside may be permitted where this would preserve a building and new uses which provide public access are preferred. Within RCO's urban development is not allowed.
- Policy RCO 2 indicates that the rehabilitation and reuse of existing buildings may be acceptable, in conjunction with the removal of other buildings which adversely affect the rural environment.
- CZM 3 states that public access adjacent to the sea or at the top of cliffs will be secured.

- BEN 2 provides that development will normally only be permitted if it is compatible with the good urban design, natural heritage and environmental characteristics of existing and planned uses and if it maintains the visual integrity of the area in which it is located.

5 Policies RCO 21-23 deal with coastal protection. The policies carry a general presumption against development in areas prone to coastal erosion and state that positive action will be taken to prevent further loss, inter alia, of coastal clay slopes. Coastal defence works will need to be designed following scientific study, and justified by a clearly demonstrated need.

Development Objectives

6 The development of this site must satisfy the following objectives:

- The restoration and re-use of the historic buildings and fortifications to fully reflect their architectural importance and to conserve and enhance the setting of the site in the surrounding countryside
- The establishment of a high quality tourism development in accordance with the Structure Plan and Tourism Development Plan
- The provision of public access to the site to encourage appreciation of its heritage aspects
- The siting, design and scale of new buildings and uses in a way which maintains and enhances the architectural, historical and landscape qualities of the site
- The achievement of tangible benefits for the public and Malta's heritage

Site Description

7 Fort Chambray is located on a headland topping the Tafal Cliffs, overlooking Imgarr Harbour. Historically, this prominent site has played a significant role in the defence of the Harbour, the North Comino Channel in the Island generally. Today, the site commands a dominant visual position that is seen by all visitors to the island using the Imgarr/Cirkewwa ferry.

8 The site is surrounded by Bastion walls on three sides. The Bastion walls on the North landward side include two Ravelins, one of which is used to control the access to the Fort through two gateways. On the East side the Bastions overlooked planted slopes of ecological importance leading to Mgarr Harbour. On the West side the site adjoins semi-irrigated agricultural land which leads down to Xatt l-Ahmar. On the South side overlooking the sea there are no Bastion walls but very rugged cliffs on top of clay slopes which are farmed in a series of small terraces.

Existing Buildings Retention Policy

9 The following buildings are to be retained, restored and conserve for other uses as part of the development of the Fort. These are indicated on the attached plan, as follows

- The Barracks of the Knights and the Knight's Bakery
- The British Barracks and the British Bakery

- Dar it-Tabib (Doctor's House) "complex" (including Church of St. Maria delle Grazie and the adjacent British Chapel)

10 Buildings which detract from the overall integrity of the Fort and require removal, subject to an approved scheme to ensure the protection of retained buildings, are indicated on attached plan and are as follows:

- The recent (1970's) addition to the British Barracks
- The Harbour Control Room and the adjacent building

11 The Garrison Cemetery has already been exhumed, and the tombstones and grave monuments are stored on site, These tombstones and grave monuments are to be used imaginatively as part of a detailed landscaping scheme for the site.

Land Use Framework

THE ZONES

12 The site is indicated on the attached plan, but only zones 1 and 6 can be used for development. As specified below. It is required that certain works (specified below) are carried out in Zones 2, 3, 4, and 5 to maintain and improve the present setting and surrounding area of Fort Chambray.

- Zone 1 is the primary area for development as specified in paragraphs 13 - 21 below.
- Zone 2 is to be left undisturbed because of its ecological value. Only clearing (under the direction of the Parliamentary Secretariat for the Environment) of identified material from the site will be allowed.
- Within Zone 3 only pedestrian pathways can be constructed. Existing routes and marginal agricultural activity should be retained as much as possible. All unsympathetic structures (identified in conjunction with the Planning Services Division), which adversely affect the homogeneity of the area are to be removed or replaced with appropriate structures to the benefit of public enjoyment.
- Zone 4 (Xatt l-Ahmar and Tafal hills) should have improved accessibility for pedestrians and bathers but retaining all the natural features (land forms, rock surfaces, vegetation, etc) which give the area its beauty, amenity and appeal. Any removal of boathouses in this zone must be resolved between the Planning Services Division, the Lands Department and the Developer. A marina in this location has not been addressed in this Brief. The need for any such facility must be clearly demonstrated to the satisfaction of Government (Planning Services Division, Lands Department and Tourism Department) and the environmental implications fully assessed in a formal Environmental Assessment (EA) in accordance with Structure Plan policy TOU 13. The terms of reference for this EA will be prepared by the Parliamentary Secretariat for the Environment and the Planning Services Division.
- Zone 5 is to be kept under active agricultural cultivation. Minimum intervention will be allowed including the maintenance of rubble walls, the establishment of

necessary footpaths and small scale structures for agricultural purposes, subject to planning approval.

- No above ground structures will be permitted in Zone 6, which is allocated for access purposes (possibly including a helipad) and well-screened sports facilities.

USE DETAILS

13 Fort Chambray (Zone 1) will be developed for mixed tourism use and the existing heritage aspects should be accessible to the public, particularly the bastions and defence system. The potential for organised guided tours allowing for the historical appreciation of Chambray exists.

14 The following uses are preferred within Zone 1:

- Hotel
- Casino
- Retail/Craft. Centre
- Multi-ownership Tourist Accommodation
- Cultural/Heritage Facilities & Interpretive Centre
- Health and Fitness Centre
- Language School
- Open Air Theatre

15 *Hotel* - the hotel should be 4/5 star with 100 - 150 rooms. A possible location would be the British Barracks. No vertical extension will be allowed, but another block may be added, as necessary. Ancillary sports facilities may be provided in Zone 6, subject to the requirements of paragraph 12 above.

16 *Casino/Retail/Crafts Centre* - This may be located within the Barracks of the Knights and if so, all Ancillary facilities must be contained within the present structure.

17 *Tourist Accommodation* - this should provide for a maximum of 200 beds in multi-ownership accommodation, complimenting the hotel. It is required that this facility is administered professionally.

18 *Cultural/Heritage facilities and Interpretive Centre* - (the facilities should include. a walk along the top of the bastions and may provide for small cafes. The Centre can be incorporated within the existing rooms and spaces in the entrance area of the Fort or possibly using the Polverista Compound. It should provide adequate accommodation for the full range of uses, including allocation of space for -environmental/historical groups. It should provide all the necessary details on the history of the site, the facilities it offers and any additional heritage information.

19 *Health and Fitness Centre* - this should be located within Zone 1 and may include fitness room, small swimming pool, 1 or 2 squash courts, changing facilities, sauna and other directly related facilities.

20 *Language School* - this may include accommodation, subject to detailed design considerations.

21 *Open Air Theatre* - this may be located in the vicinity of the west ravelin, but only minimal structural alterations are permitted, subject to approval. The restoration of the ravelin in its original form should be achieved in any proposals.

Design Considerations

VISUAL SETTING AND SKYLINE

22 The relationship between the Knights and British barracks buildings set in a commanding position with uninterrupted views over the sea must be retained. In particular, the view of the Fort and these two main buildings from the seaward approach situated in an imposing position on top of the cliffs must be retained. No new development will be allowed to intrude into the foreground of views of the two barracks buildings from this direction.

23 It is considered that skylines evoke a sense of place and provide, an identifiable image which is as important as other design requirements. Any proposals for buildings around the site perimeter (within permissible building areas) must be supported by four long sections/elevations to demonstrate both the effect on the skyline and the compatibility of the design with existing building elements.

24 The height of retained buildings is the maximum height permissible for new development, but the majority of new buildings should be lower. Consideration may be given to excavation to permit additional storeys, subject to supporting engineering feasibility studies and other design requirements.

DESIGN CONCEPT

25 The existing Fort layout provides four main visual/organisational axes (as shown on attached plan)

- a) Through the original main gate and the centre line of the east ravelin.
- b) Joining the Knight's barracks with Dar it-Tabib.
- c) Through the centre line of the west ravelin.
- d) Through the centre line of the central ravelin in the bastions to the north.

These axes and the intersections should be retained, re-enforced and used to provide a framework for the new layout, which should be clearly demonstrated within the proposals. In particular, the creation of a public space at the intersection of a and b is considered an important element within the layout proposals.

26 A number of views and vistas, both within the Fort and looking towards it (panoramas and vistas) are fundamental to the character of Fort Chambray. New developments should enhance these views and vistas and, where possible introduce additional ones to create interest such as framed or glimpse views.

27 The simple block form of the two barrack buildings should be strongly reflected in the plan and elevations of all new development.

28 The density of any tourist accommodation development, within the permissible building areas, may be high (this should be the range 40-60 units per hectare ; or 150-200 habitable rooms per hectare, excluding kitchens and bathrooms); provided it can be demonstrated that such density does not conflict with other requirements concerning building height, scale and massing; the introduction of views and the visual relationship between buildings.

NEW BUILDING FORM, SCALE AND RELATIONSHIPS

29 The design must resolve the problem of incorporating new development within a well defined historical context. Consequently, all new buildings should be of an appropriate scale, proportion and bulk, especially, paying careful attention to the scale, proportion and design of any existing adjoining or nearby buildings so as to enhance this historical context. The mass and scale of new development will not be permitted to visually dominate the retained buildings. Compatibility of design of new development with retained buildings and elements must be clearly demonstrated by, elevations, sections and plans.

30 Historic building styles or vernacular architectural should not be copied slavishly and stylised pastiche will not be permitted. Strong encouragement will be given to good original architecture which is sensitive to the historic context.

31 The elevation of new buildings should not be overly indented, although the use of recessed openings or shading devices may be considered; and should reflect the wall/openings proportions of the relevant barrack building, if there is a visual relationship due to proximity. New development will not be permitted to join existing buildings or to be in close proximity, unless it can be demonstrated that the design and layout are worthy of such a relationship.

32 The appearance and treatment of the spaces between and around buildings is considered to be of great importance. It is required that careful attention is given to the creation of such spaces, which should be sized and configured to maximise the visual qualities of the adjacent existing and new buildings, especially utilising the. visual axes. Formal spaces of different sizes can be utilised to present a regular layout and a strong sense of enclosure.

33 New development should acknowledge the importance of creating frontages (within permissible building areas) which properly define private and public space by the creation of building lines to streets.

34 All tanks and plant (especially water tanks, air conditioning units and motor rooms) must be contained within the shell of the buildings, be screened by appropriate features, or be located underground and should be shown on all drawings. This requirement is considered very important in relation to the servicing of the site with power, water, drainage and telecoms.

TREATMENT OF RETAINED STRUCTURES/BUILDINGS

35 All bastions, bastion defence outworks (including the Polverista) and original access points must be retained and restored in their entirety subject to a financial appraisal. The main gate and inner/advanced gate must be restored in their entirety as part of the main access proposals (refer to paragraphs 44 and 51 below). A detailed scheme for their restoration must be submitted for approval by the Museums Department. Any underground tunnels which may form part of the

defence system should be identified and proposals submitted for their restoration and re-use.

36 All retained buildings (refer to Existing Buildings Retensi0on Policy above) must be supported by a detailed scheme for their restoration (exterior and interior), related to their use, which will require approval by the Museums Department. It will not be permissible to remove any existing architectural features. No alterations will be permitted to the facades of the Knights and British barracks and any alterations to other elevations must be supported by “before and after” drawings and reasoned justification.

MATERIALS

37 The exterior of all buildings shall be constructed of *tal-franka* or *tal-qawwi* stone. Restoration materials for retained buildings should match the he original in type, quality and colour as closely as possible.

38 A high level of design quality, detailing and especially construction finish should be achieved in all buildings. Project management is required to ensure construction quality is of a high standard, finished according to approved designs; and this aspect will be monitored carefully during construction.

39 It is required that materials used in retained and new buildings, for roofing, windows, doors and paving are traditional in nature. The use of materials such as concrete (as an external cladding material for facades or for paving/road surfacing), aluminium, PVC, etc, will be considered very carefully in relation to their impact on the character of the site and will be strongly resisted without substantial justification.

Landscaping

40 The existing olive grove area should be upgraded and retained as a landscaped area providing a balance to the rest of the Fort which may be more intensely developed. The olive grove area can be made to form part of the hotel grounds, but must allow for public access within and through it and can contain open air cafes or similar tourist/public facilities.

41 Landscaping, in the form of trees, shrubs and soft ground cover, should be provided in parking areas. Particular attention must be given to shade parked vehicles and to minimise the visual impact on adjacent buildings, uses and areas of open space.

42 A detailed hard and soft landscaping scheme will be required, specifying all planting species, numbers, materials, earth mounding, the use of tombstones and grave monuments and proposals for the maintenance of all planting areas (refer to paragraph 67 below).

Circulation, Car Parking and Servicing

ACCESS

43 Zone 6 is the approach zone to the site and provides its primary access. The provision of a helipad is acceptable within this area.

44 The breach in the bastion and the access bridge are to be demolished and a new access provided through an arched opening in the bastion at ditch level. Controlled small vehicle access through tile advance/main gates may be retained, but its primary function will be to cater for pedestrian movements. A secondary pedestrian access may be achieved through the Sally Port.

45 Vehicular access to Zones 3, 4 and 5 will be allowed only in connection with their maintenance for existing agriculture and fishing activities; and no additional or improved vehicular access will be permitted. No vehicular access is permitted to Zone 2.

46 Access and facilities should be provided throughout the site for the ambulant disabled, especially to all tourist facilities, public areas and major landuses.

CIRCULATION

47 Vehicular circulation within the Fort (Zone 1) should be limited to giving access to the Hotel, the Knights Barracks' area and tourist accommodation area.

48 Day visitors should be discouraged from entering the Fort with vehicles.

49 Within the Fort there should be pedestrian access to many areas of historic interest. A public Heritage Route should be established around the site and along the main north-south axis, as shown on the attached plan.

CAR PARKING

50 A visitor car park must be provided within the ditch to the south of the west ravelin, especially providing landscaping (refer to paragraphs 41 and 42 above and the attached plan). It is estimated that, in peak periods, there will be some 750 visitors per day. The car park must, therefore, accommodate a minimum of 150 cars and 10 coaches with adequate manoeuvring space. Vehicular access to this area should be via the existing road to the west, as shown on the attached plan.

51 Pedestrian access to the Fort from the visitor car park can be achieved either through the Sally Port (via stairs); or possibly a lift from the car park area; or via a walkway outside the bastion walls leading to the main entrance (main and advance gates).

52 Within the Fort, large areas of surface car parking will not be permitted, but favourable consideration will be given to locating car parking underground, subject to engineering studies and all other design considerations. In all cases, suitable provision should be made for safe and convenient pedestrian access through parking areas. The level of parking provision required should be in accordance with the Structure Plan. The following guidelines are an indication of the standards that will be required :

USE	NUMBER OF CAR PARK SPACE'S REQUIRED
Hotel	1 per resident staff and 1 per guest bedroom and 1.5 coach spaces per 50 guests If it includes conference centre, 1 per 5 seats
Tourist Accommodation	2 per unit
Craft Centre/Retail	1 per 50 Sq. Metres (net)
Casino	1 per resident staff and 5 per 50 sq. metres (net)
Restaurants/Cafe	1 per resident staff and 1 per 50 sq. metres (net)
Health and Fitness Centre	1 per 50 sq. metres (net)

SERVICING

53 In relation to all uses, but especially to ally hotel, casino or retail uses proposed for the site, adequate circulation, manoeuvring and load / unloading space will be required for service, refuse and delivery vehicles. Also, unrestricted access is required for fire and emergency vehicles to all parts of the site which are provided with vehicular access; and especially to all sides of any building in which large numbers of the public may be expected to congregate. Service areas should be located as inconspicuously as possible, preferably to the rear of buildings and screened from important views within the site. Proposals for servicing should be clearly identified on plans and must clearly demonstrate how these requirements have been achieved.

Utilities

54 All utility networks on site must be underground and connections to the public networks are the responsibility of the developer.

55 The proposals should seek to provide self-sufficiency in power and water provision, especially providing any necessary reservoir or substation on site and all necessary pumps for water and drainage purposes. The impact on the public utility networks will have to be submitted with the proposal and the respective utilities agencies ability to cater for the increased demand must be supported by written evidence.

56 All utility proposals should be formulated and approved in consultation with each utility agency.

Offsite Considerations

57 Zones 2,3,4 and 5 will be retained in public ownership.

58 The developer may be required to clear specified, unsympathetic structures from Zones 2 and 3.

59 The developer may, subject to approved plans, be required to construct improved pedestrian paths in Zones 3 and 4.

60 Any significant increase in flows to the public sewerage system may require the developer to contribute towards the cost of providing a new sewage treatment plant north of Mgarr ix-Xini.

61 All improvements to access roads and junctions, both outside and within Zone. 1, which are required to accommodate the proposals, will be carried out at the developer's expense subject to approved plans.

62 The developer must demonstrate with appropriate transport studies, that the existing roads are able to accommodate additional traffic generated by the new development. If necessary, any road/junction improvements should be undertaken by the developer subject to approval of designs.

63 Areas to the south of the Fort and near the Polverista show signs of movements associated with ground instability. The developer must submit engineering studies to demonstrate either, that no remedial works are required to ensure continued stability; or, that remedial works are required. If works are required then full details and drawings of the works and their effect must be submitted with tile. proposal, especially giving details of any fill material or environmental effects.

64 Any new quarry/site which would be required (in particular for the reddish stone needed for the restoration of the bastions) will require approval.

Construction and Phasing

65 Full details of construction access points, storage areas for materials and plant, any workers accommodation, site management offices, protection measures for retained buildings and areas of landscaping and a construction programme must be submitted for approval, prior to construction commencing and within six months of formal approval of the development proposals.

66 Construction phasing must be organised to minimise disturbance to the surrounding area and a phasing programme should be submitted. The initial phase should include no more than 50% of the tourist accommodation, the restoration of the main and advanced gates, the development of either the Knight's or British barracks and the full development of the heritage facilities and Interpretive Centre. The next phase can include the remainder of the tourist accommodation, the development of the remaining barracks building and restoration of some of the bastions. Subsequent phases must include the restoration of the remainder of the bastions and the development of any remaining land uses.

Submission Requirements

66 The detailed requirements for any submission area follows:

- Existing site survey with levels. Scale 1:500.
- Proposed site layout, including site boundaries, any new site levels, broad areas of existing and proposed planting and all land uses. Scale 1:500.

- Proposed circulation layout, including proposed access to public highway, flow directions, car parking, servicing and any road/junctions improvements. Scale 1:500.
(this layout must be accompanied by relevant transport studies, as required by paragraph 62 above).
- Plans, elevations and sections of retained buildings. Scale 1:100.
- Plans, elevations and sections of proposed additions/alterations/new buildings, Scale 1:100.
- Proposed site sections, including two N-S and two E-W. Scale 1:200.
- Long sectional elevations from four specified viewing points. The viewing point for each long section/elevation should be the approach to Mgarr Harbour, the Mgarr Road to the north, off the coast to the south and beyond Zone 5 to the west scale 1:200.
- Detailed proposals for landscaping, including existing planting (retained and/or removed), new planting (with species and numbers), earth mounding, the use of tombstones and grave monuments, hard landscaping (roads, pathways and other areas), street furniture, lighting and soft ground cover. Scale 1:200.
- Schedule of materials for buildings, walls and hard landscaping.
- Statement explaining proposals and demonstrating that they comply with the requirements of this Development Brief.
- Proposed site utilities layout, including connections to public networks, any proposed substation or water tanks/reservoir, surface water run-off disposal proposals and location of all pumping facilities. Scale 1:200.
- Calculations of sewage flows and impact on current network flows.
- Proposed remedial stabilisation works, including details of fill material, structural calculations and environmental effects. Scale: as appropriate.
- Proposed restoration details for all retained buildings, bastions, defence outworks and original access points, including methods to be applied, materials and phasing schedule. Scale: as appropriate.
- Proposed phasing plan, including buildings and areas within each phase, phasing order and timing of each phase. Scale 1:500.
- Proposed construction management plan, including all construction access points, storage areas for materials and plant, any workers accommodation, site management offices, construction programme and protection measures for retained buildings and landscaping. Scale 1:500.
- Photo-montage of proposals from at least three important views.
- Axonometric of proposals from two important views. Scale 1:500.
- Possibly a block model of proposals. Scale 1:500.

68 All Environmental Assessment may not be required for this particular development, provided all the requirements of this Development Brief are accommodated within proposals. Notwithstanding this, an environmental Assessment may be required for any remedial stabilisation works; and also may be required for the proposal, if it is considered by the Planning Services Division and the Parliamentary Secretariat for the Environment, that significant adverse environmental effects may be caused by the development proposals.

Planning Services Division
in consultation with
**Department of the Environment and
Secretariat for Tourism**

January 1992