



Project Description Statement for the
development of an Elderly Care Home
in Buskett I/o Dingli, Malta

As per ERA requirements for PA/O2467/16


Report



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DISCLAIMER

AIS Environment has prepared this report with all reasonable skill, care and diligence, and taking account of the manpower and resources devoted to it by agreement with the client. AIS has based the report on collected data, which it accepts in good faith as accurate and valid.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Mr Peter Borg (henceforth referred to as the “Applicant”) filed a development permit application (PA/02467/16) *“To demolish existing building, excavation of site and construct...old people’s home (class 2a)”*.

The applicant has commissioned AIS Environment Ltd to prepare a Project Description Statement (PDS) to assess the impacts expected from the proposed demolition of the existing building, excavation of the site, and construction of a Class 2A elderly care home. The proposed elderly home will consist of two basement levels and three above ground levels, accommodating 54 resident rooms (10 rooms for dementia patients) with a total of 100 beds, parking spaces, gardens, soft landscaping, a reservoir, a pool, a multipurpose hall, breakout and dining areas, doctor’s offices, ancillary facilities, therapeutic facilities, and consultation rooms (henceforth referred to as the “Scheme”).

The PDS report has been requested by the Environment and Resources Authority (ERA) to provide the necessary information in terms of a justification for the project, and an outline of the potential impacts and/or benefits of the project. This PDS has been prepared and structured in accordance with Schedule II of S.L. 549.46 (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REGULATIONS, 2017).

1.1 SCHEME LOCATION

The site is located in the Category 2 rural settlement of Ta’ Sabbat in Buskett, limits of Dingli (Figure 1, Figure 2). It lies in the South Western periphery of Rabat local council boundary. The surrounding area predominantly consists of agricultural land and some residential buildings (Figure 3). To the East of the proposed Scheme is the Buskett Woodland.

The existing aparthotel at the site has been subject to various planning applications and permits particularly between the late 1970s and early 1980s (PB 581/1974, PB 398/78, and PB 2891/80). In 2010, Planning Application PA/5998/05 was approved, permitting the demolition of the existing building and the construction of a multi-ownership tourist complex.



FIGURE 1: THE SCHEME SITE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE MALTESE ISLANDS (SOURCE: GOOGLE EARTH, [2025])



FIGURE 2: SCHEME SITE LOCATED IN BUSKETT L/O DINGLI (SOURCE: GOOGLE EARTH, [2025])



FIGURE 3: PROPOSED SCHEME SITE AND IMMEDIATE SURROUNDINGS

1.2 SCHEME JUSTIFICATION

1.2.1 Aim

The project is proposing to replace an approved development permit for a tourist development approved by MEPA in 2010 (PA/5998/05). The Applicant intends to construct a residential home for the elderly to alleviate the high demand for such facilities in an increasingly aging population. The proposed development seeks to construct a Class 2A elderly care home to accommodate 54 resident rooms with a total of 100 beds, parking spaces, gardens, a reservoir, a pool, a multipurpose hall, breakout and dining areas, doctor's offices, ancillary facilities, therapeutic facilities, and consultation rooms (henceforth referred to as the "Scheme"). Once operational, the elderly home would offer respite accommodation, nursing and care services for its elderly residents, as well as support to their families.

The existing and neglected building covers a footprint that is larger than the proposed elderly care home. It should also be noted that a significant portion of the agricultural land within the site boundary will remain undeveloped.

All practical measures have been taken by the Applicant, including design revisions to ensure that the proposal minimises negative visual impacts on the surrounding rural landscape character. The design and architecture of the proposed development draw on the rural aspects of the area so that the site blends better with its surroundings. An extensive landscaping scheme will be implemented across the roof, walls, and surrounding area of the building to soften the built form and enhance its visual appeal, while also providing shade and creating a pleasant environment for its elderly residents.

1.2.2 Relevant policies

1.2.2.1 North West Local Plan (2006)

The project site falls within the region covered by the NORTH WEST LOCAL PLAN (NWLP, 2006). The scheme site is situated in a Category 2 Rural Settlement at Ta' Sabbat, in the limits of Buskett. The policy map of the NWLP highlights numerous factors which need to be considered when planning development and landscaping within the area. Policies of the NWLP which are most relevant to the proposed development are summarised in Table 1.

TABLE 1: POLICIES OF THE NORTH WEST LOCAL PLAN (2006) WHICH ARE RELEVANT TO THE PROPOSED WORKS

POLICY CODE	POLICY NAME	DESCRIPTION AND RELEVANCE	FIGURE REFERENCE
NWRS 3	Large Rural Settlements (Category 2)	In the areas classified as Category 2 Large Rural Settlements by Policy NWRS 1,	Figure 4, Figure 5,

POLICY CODE	POLICY NAME	DESCRIPTION AND RELEVANCE	FIGURE REFERENCE
	Settlements (ODZ)	<p><i>development and re-development for the following land-uses will be permitted:</i></p> <p><i>A. Dwelling units (new units on uncommitted land, redevelopment of existing buildings, rehabilitation of existing buildings, and extensions to existing buildings used for residential purposes) provided the units:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>i. do not create a building with more than 150m² footprint measured externally at ground floor including any internal courtyards;</i> <i>ii. have not less than 120m² and not more than 200m² total floorspace measured externally;</i> <i>iii. have an independent access from any other residential unit;</i> <i>iv. do not create a building which is higher than two floors without basement above road level at any point along the street frontage, provided that it would not have a detrimental effect on the character of the settlement and the surrounding rural landscape;</i> <i>v. structures at roof level do not have a floorspace of more than 20m² measured externally, do not exceed 12 courses overall height measured externally from the lowest roof level, and are located to minimise their visual impact;</i> <i>vi. have a high quality design aimed at retaining and enhancing the existing character of the settlement and which demonstrates that due attention has been given to the impact of the new building on the character of the settlement and its surrounding rural environment, and which complies with any eventual</i> 	Figure 6, Figure 10

POLICY CODE	POLICY NAME	DESCRIPTION AND RELEVANCE	FIGURE REFERENCE
		<p><i>Settlement Design Statement (SDS) prepared by MEPA; and</i></p> <p><i>vii. provide on site parking for not more than two car spaces.</i></p> <p><i>In addition, when the new dwelling unit is being proposed as complete redevelopment of an existing building:</i></p> <p><i>a) the existing building is not worthy of retention due to its historical and/or architectural merit and/or the contribution it makes to the character of the settlement;</i></p> <p><i>b) the new building, if allowable under (a) above, occupies the same position on the land in relation to the street as the existing building.</i></p> <p><i>For the purposes of this policy an existing building includes only any building with an external footprint of not less than 50sqm which is covered by a valid development permission or else has been existing prior to 1968 and can be identified in the MEPA 1967 aerial photographs. An existing building does not include greenhouses, agricultural buildings which are essential for the operation of an agricultural holding, abandoned and dilapidated structures which are isolated from the main settlement.</i></p> <p><i>For the purposes of this policy uncommitted land includes only:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. infill sites with a street frontage of not more than 14.0m which abut blank party walls one storey high, or more, on both sides;</i> <i>2. corner sites defined by two public roads with a site area of not more than 300sqm which abut blank</i> 	

POLICY CODE	POLICY NAME	DESCRIPTION AND RELEVANCE	FIGURE REFERENCE
		<p><i>party walls one storey high, or more, on both sides;</i></p> <p><i>3. sites which have a road frontage of not more than 10.0m which abut blank party walls one storey high, or more, on one side and which form the end of a terrace of at least 3 dwellings with frontage on the same street, provided a strip of land of at least 3.0m in width adjacent to the side elevation of the new dwelling is landscaped. No structures will be permitted below this 3.0m strip.</i></p> <p><i>Boundary walls of gardens, yards, swimming pool areas and any other open space surrounding an adjacent land-use cannot be considered as a party wall in relation to this policy. Sites, which contain mature trees, which contribute to the character of the settlement, do not constitute uncommitted land even if they fall within the definition stated above.</i></p> <p>In line with the above policy, the proposal aims to utilise an infill opening in the area and redevelop the existing aparthotel within the Ta' Sabbat settlement to construct a Class 2A elderly care home. The proposed elderly care home will have a lower footprint than the existing building. The design will ensure that the above stipulated conditions are respected such that the development does not lead to loss of rural character. This will be ensured by appropriate building volume and massing, employing soft landscaping on the roof, walls, and surroundings, and using Earth-toned colours for materials amongst other efforts.</p>	
NWUS 2	Development in the Absence of	When there is no specific policy for a particular use or scenario within the rural	Figure 10

POLICY CODE	POLICY NAME	DESCRIPTION AND RELEVANCE	FIGURE REFERENCE
	Specific Local Plan Policies	<p>settlement, this policy indicates applications will be assessed against:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The existing Temporary Provisions or prior schemes; • Development Control and Design Guidance documents (e.g., DCPG and Rural Policy & Design Guidance); • Relevant Structure Plan and related material considerations. <p>i.e. permitted development in rural settings must always be defensible against general planning criteria on design, environmental impact, and compatibility with the rural character even if not specifically listed in NWRS 3.</p> <p>According to the Local Plan and Rural Policy & Design Guidance, 2014, rural settlements like Ta' Sabbat do not form part of the urban development zone, nor are they considered an Outside Development Zone (ODZ).</p>	
NWLA 2, NWRE 1	Areas of High Landscape Value, Major Recreation Areas	<p>Development must not adversely affect Areas of High Landscape Value. Unsympathetic structures or activities with negative visual or environmental impact will not be permitted.</p> <p>The proposed development is situated between the large stretch of cliffs (<i>rdum</i>) designated as an Area of Ecological Importance and High Landscape Value, and Buskett which is also an Area of Ecological Importance and a Major Recreation Area.</p> <p>Design features will ensure that the development respects the landscape character and ecological importance of these sites by minimising negative visual impacts through a reduced built-up</p>	Figure 6, Figure 7, Figure 8, Figure 10

POLICY CODE	POLICY NAME	DESCRIPTION AND RELEVANCE	FIGURE REFERENCE
		<p>footprint within the site boundary, soft landscaping on the roof, walls, and surroundings, Earth-toned colours, appropriate building massing and volume.</p>	
<p>NWCO 10, NWCO 15, NWBU 1</p>	<p>Woodland Conservation Areas, Countryside Management, Il-Buskett Action Plan</p>	<p>These policies promote protecting natural and cultural heritage features, and conserving landscape, ecology, farmland patterns, heritage structures, rural walls, and visual corridors. They guide siting, screening, landscaping, and measures to protect the rural character.</p> <p>The proposal is situated just west of the Buskett Woods, surrounded by agricultural land, and is in proximity to several SACs and SPA. Buskett itself is an Action Plan Area (NWBU 1) and major impact developments inconsistent with the character of Buskett are prohibited. Therefore, the necessary protocols and measures must be implemented throughout the planning, construction and operations, to minimise negative environmental impacts so that the surrounding areas of important natural and cultural heritage are preserved.</p>	<p>Figure 6, Figure 8, Figure 9, Figure 10</p>

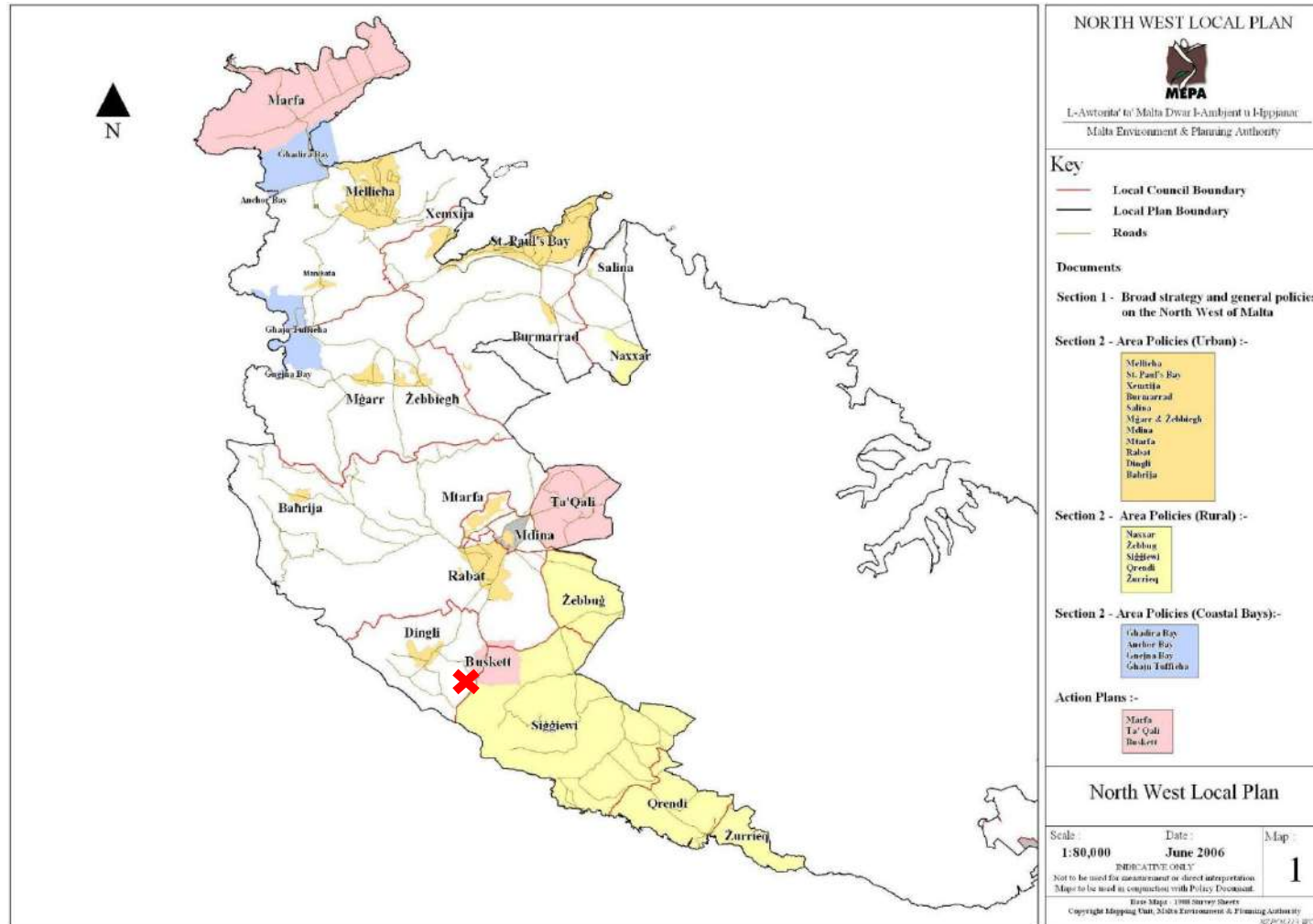


FIGURE 4: NORTH WEST LOCAL PLAN (2006). RED CROSS INDICATES THE APPROXIMATE SCHEME SITE LOCATION.

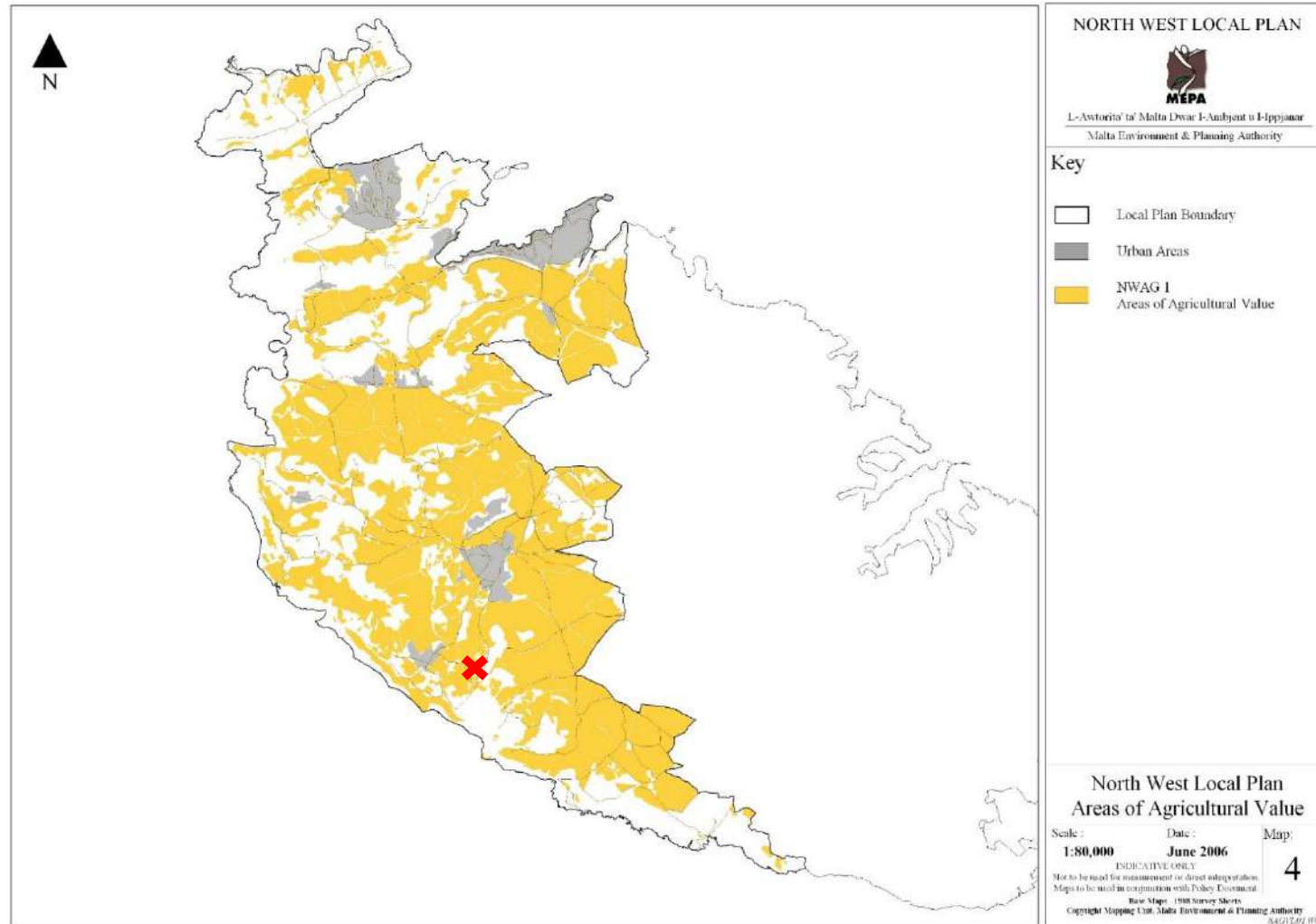


FIGURE 5: AREAS OF AGRICULTURAL VALUE (NWLP, 2006). RED CROSS INDICATES THE APPROXIMATE SCHEME SITE LOCATION.

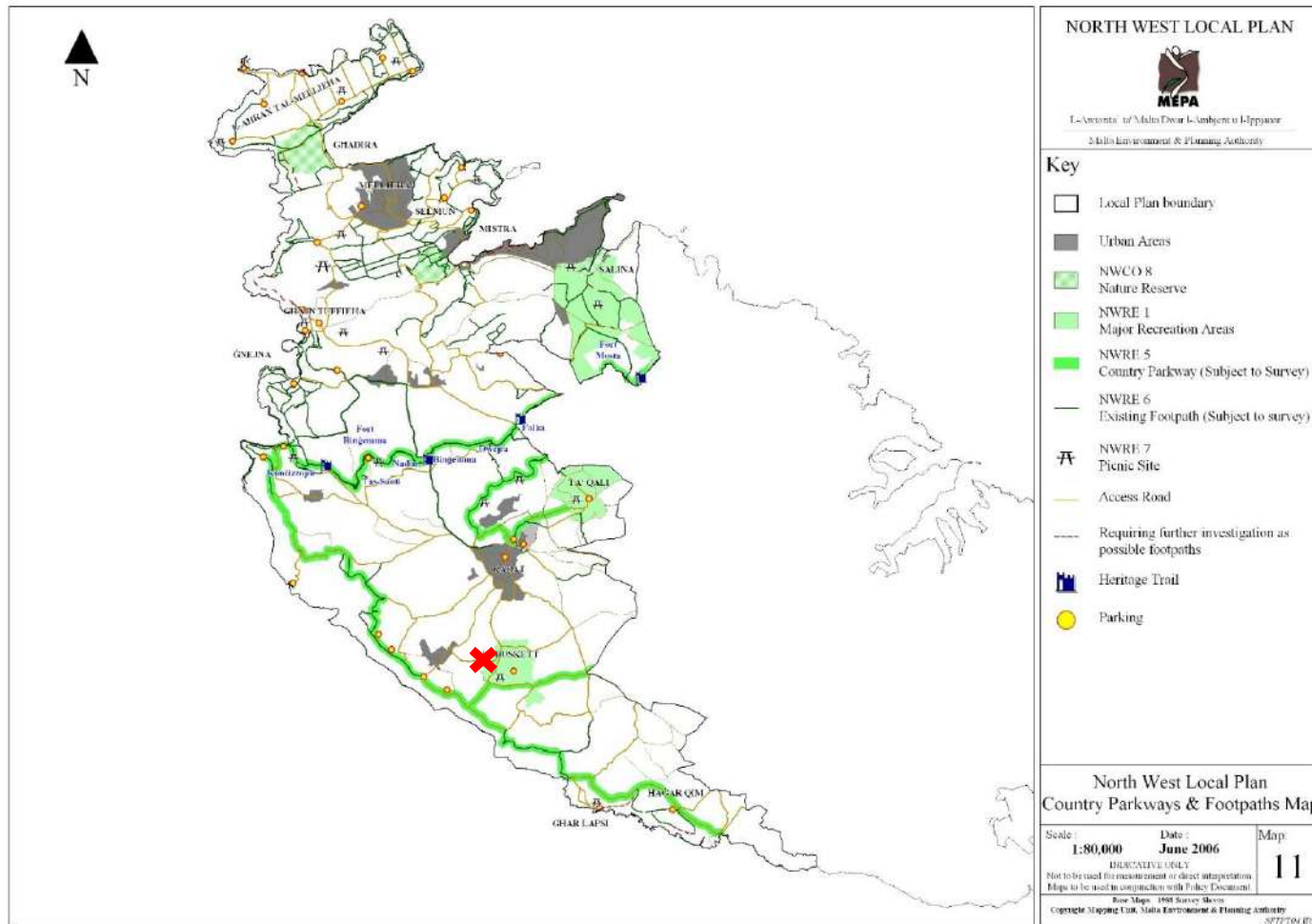


FIGURE 6: COUNTRY PARKWAYS & FOOTPATHS (NWLP, 2006). RED CROSS INDICATES THE APPROXIMATE SCHEME SITE LOCATION.

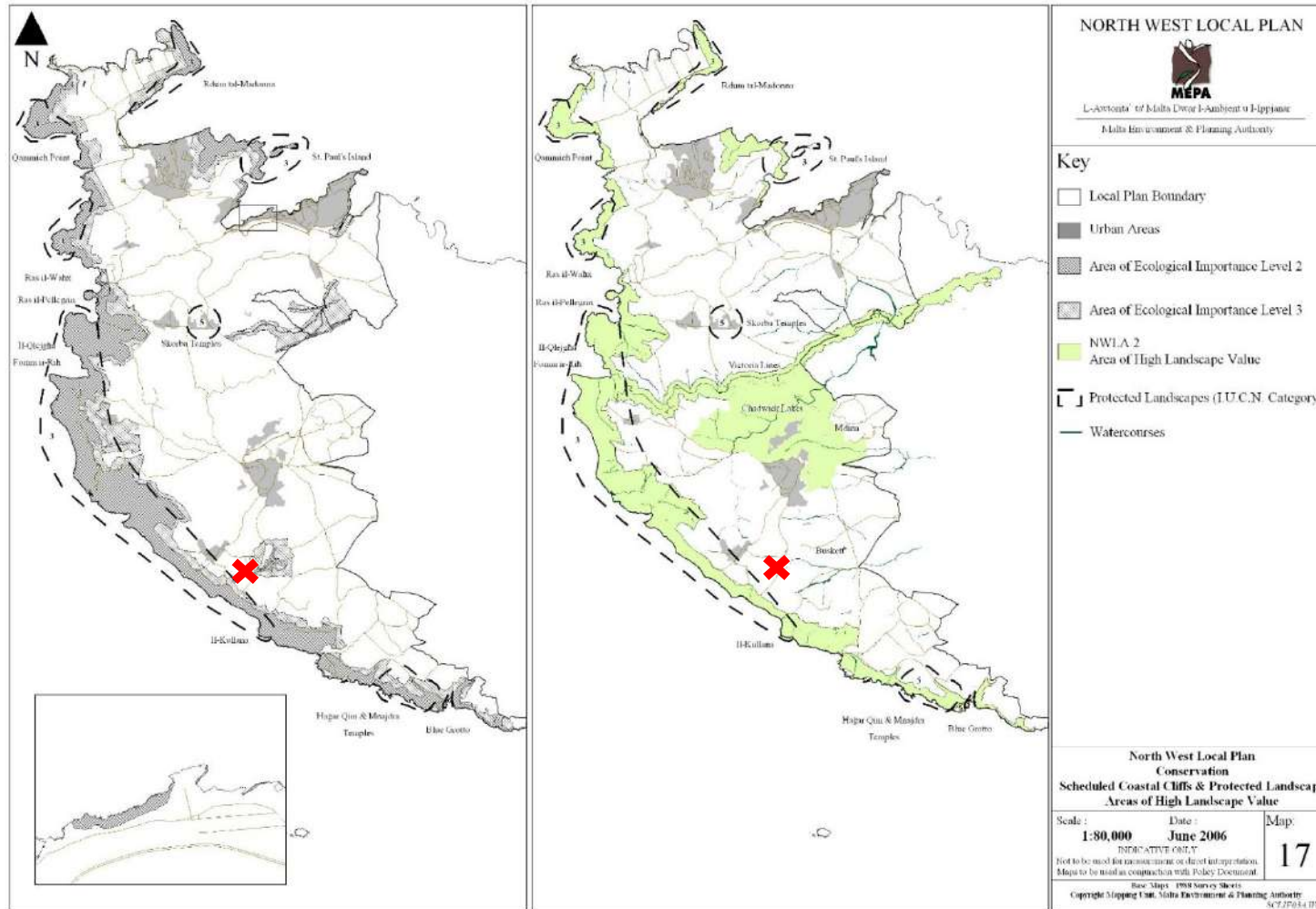


FIGURE 7: SCHEDULE COASTAL CLIFFS & PROTECTED LANDSCAPE, AREAS OF HIGH LANDSCAPE VALUE (NWLP, 2006). RED CROSS INDICATES THE APPROXIMATE SCHEME SITE LOCATION.

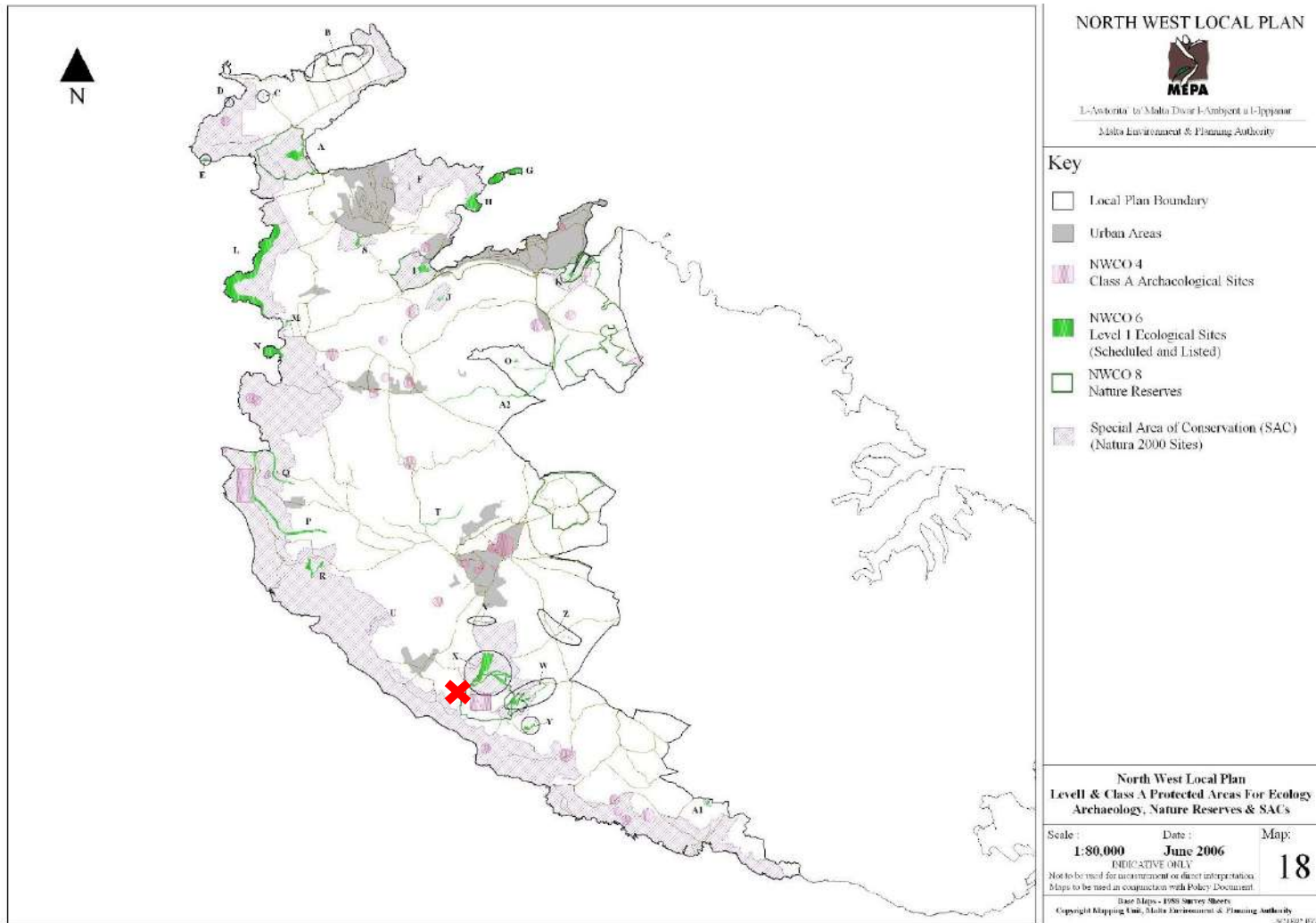


FIGURE 8: LEVEL 1 & CLASS A PROTECTED AREAS FOR ECOLOGY, ARCHAEOLOGY, NATURE RESERVES & SACs (NWLP, 2006). RED CROSS INDICATES THE APPROXIMATE SCHEME SITE LOCATION.

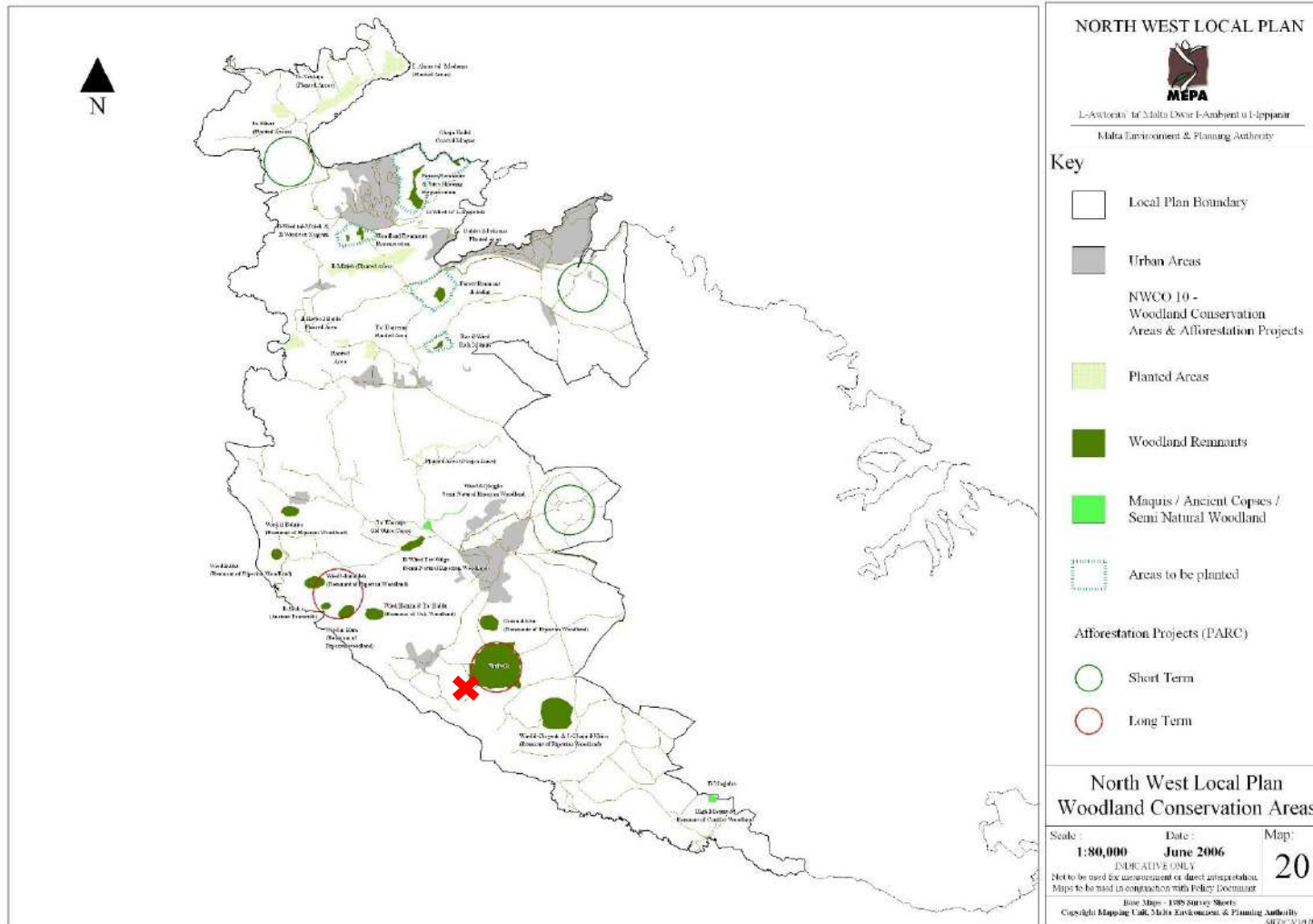


FIGURE 9: WOODLAND CONSERVATION AREAS (NWLPA, 2006). RED CROSS INDICATES THE APPROXIMATE SCHEME SITE LOCATION.

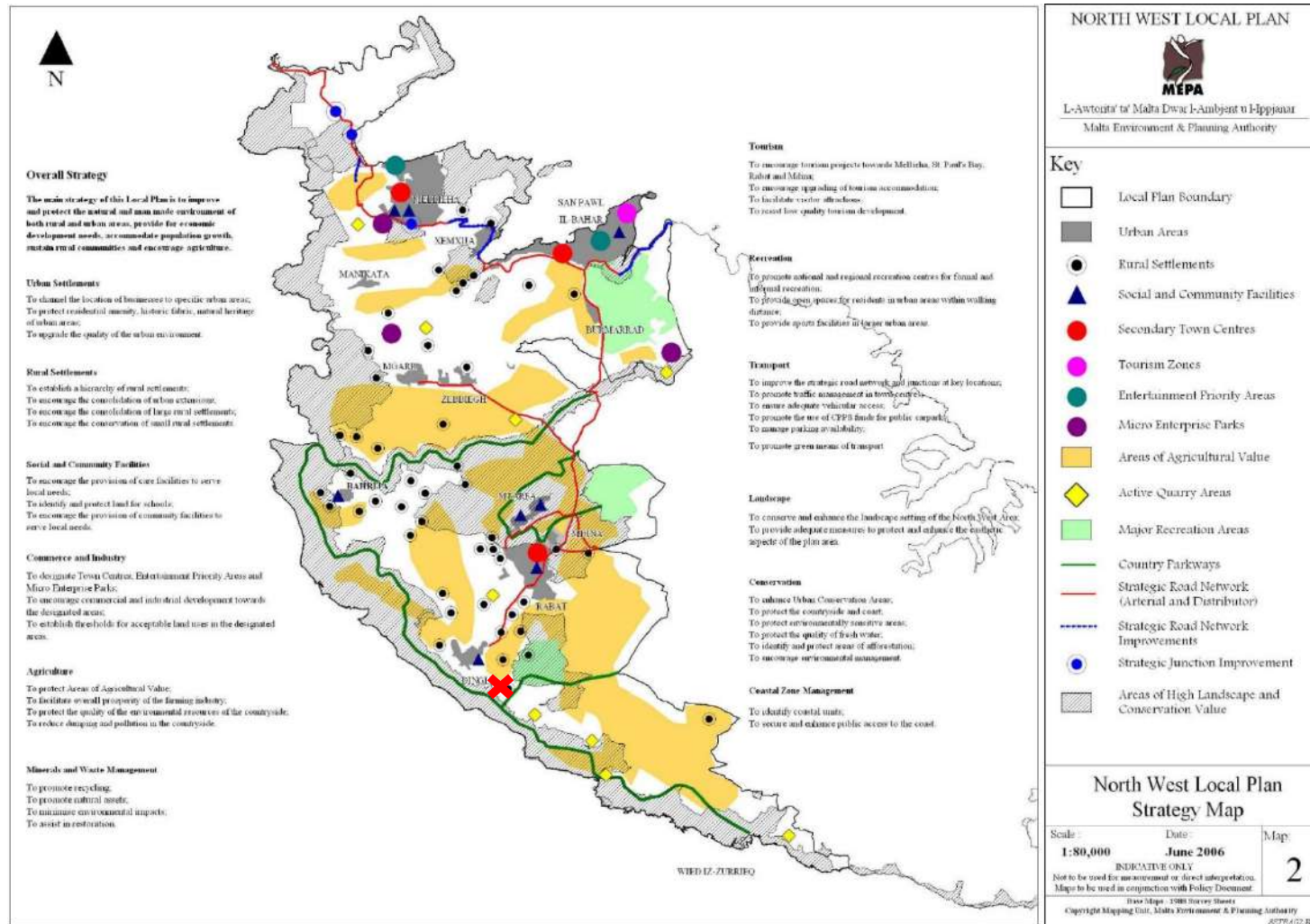


FIGURE 10: STRATEGY MAP (NWLP, 2006). RED CROSS INDICATES THE APPROXIMATE SCHEME SITE LOCATION.

1.2.2.2 Strategic Plan for the Environment and Development (2015)

All new developments must complement the goals and objectives outlined in the STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT (SPED, 2015). SPED aims to guide development to ensure that land and sea resources of the Maltese Islands are utilised effectively, whilst ensuring that the environment is protected and enhanced. lists the SPED objectives which are most relevant to the proposed Scheme.

TABLE 2: OBJECTIVES OF THE SPED (2015) RELEVANT TO THE PROPOSED SCHEME

OBJECTIVE	DESCRIPTION
<p>Socio-Economic Thematic Objective 2</p>	<p><i>To ensure that provision is made for new social and community facilities and to cater for extensions to such existing facilities for education, child care, family care, health, the elderly, the disabled, rehabilitation, places of worship and animal welfare which are accessible for all whilst minimising environmental impacts by:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Guiding the location of new social and community facilities within the Urban Area and where no other feasible alternatives exist allowing consideration within appropriate locations in the Rural Area for education, health, elderly, disabled and rehabilitation facilities</i> • <i>Maximising the efficient use and reuse of existing facilities</i> • <i>Facilitating the provision of health centres and homes for the elderly at a regional level.</i> • <i>Considering the redevelopment of only redundant existing social and community facilities for alternative uses.</i> <p>The proposed development will demolish and redevelop the existing neglected aparthotel to construct an elderly care home and thus provide a health care service for the community within the rural settlement of Ta' Sabbat, l/o Buskett.</p>
<p>Socio-Economic Thematic Objective 5</p>	<p><i>To ensure that existing recreational resources are protected, enhanced and accessible, and to facilitate the provision of new recreational facilities to improve social cohesion, human health, air quality and biodiversity by:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ensuring that proposed recreational facilities respect the water scarce characteristics of the islands</i>

OBJECTIVE	DESCRIPTION
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Ensuring that the scale and design of supporting infrastructure improves the intrinsic quality of the experience of informal recreation</i> <p>The proposed development will provide therapeutic, health, and recreational facilities within the elderly care home, with gardens and soft landscaping to blend with the rural surroundings. The home will include a rainwater reservoir within its basement Level -2 for water harvesting and reuse.</p>
Socio-Economic Thematic Objective 7	<p><i>To promote the efficient use of resources including stone, water and soil, and manage waste in a manner that safeguards natural processes, and minimises impacts on cultural heritage landscape and human health by:</i></p> <p><i>Promoting rain water harvesting provided that there is no unacceptable adverse impact on protected areas and species</i></p> <p>The proposed development will include a reservoir at basement Level -2 to harvest rainwater and greywater on site for reuse.</p>
Rural Areas Thematic Objective 4	<p><i>To protect and enhance the positive qualities of the landscape and the traditional components of the rural landscape by:</i></p> <p><i>Encouraging the reuse of existing structures worthy of conservation, in a manner which is compatible with the rural character and prevent formalisation of the countryside</i></p> <p>The proposed development will redevelop the existing aparthotel which is currently neglected and unused, to give the building a new purpose as an elderly care home. The proposed design includes measures to reduce visual impact through careful consideration of colour, landscaping, massing, proportions, and architectural detailing. The rest of the non-built-up land within the site will conserve the agricultural land already present, and otherwise be landscaped with vegetation to blend in with the surrounding rural fields.</p>

1.2.2.3 Rural Policy and Design Guidance (2020)

The aim of this document is to assist and further the implementation of the vision and objectives laid down in SPED, particularly in relation to those areas officially designated as 'rural' (RPDG, 2020). Allowance is made for development, which is justifiably located in rural areas, in approved government policies, plans or programmes; and development which is genuinely and strictly incompatible with urban uses and where alternatives are not possible.

TABLE 3: OBJECTIVES OF THE RPDG (2020) RELEVANT TO THE PROPOSED SCHEME

OBJECTIVE	DESCRIPTION
<p>Policy 6</p> <p>6.2C Redevelopment and change of use of existing buildings ODZ</p>	<p><i>Permission may be granted for the total redevelopment of an existing building, or the consolidation of buildings, located outside development zone, provided that all of the following criteria are satisfied:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>(1) the applicant can sufficiently prove that the building/s is covered by development permission (other than those specifically permitted for agricultural use after the coming into force of this policy document), or that it is/are/was a pre-1978 building/s;</i> <i>(2) the building/s does not merit inclusion in the list of scheduled property and/or is not of historical, architectural, vernacular or other significance;</i> <i>(3) the replacement building does not exceed the total floor area of the previous building/s;</i> <i>(4) the replacement building is of a high-quality rural design and shall fully respect the wider context in which it is located;</i> <i>(5) the replacement building shall be limited to:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>a) a use already legally established and/or covered by a development permission; or</i> <i>b) new uses permitted by this policy document subject to the respective criteria. Except for dwellings referred to in Policy 2.2B, this policy excludes dwellings which dwellings can only be permitted in terms of policies 6.2A and 6.2B;</i> <i>c) disused livestock farms which have ceased operation for at least 10 years (prior to the coming into force of this policy document) and which are creating a negative environmental impact on the site and its surroundings. These may be redeveloped into</i>

OBJECTIVE	DESCRIPTION
	<p><i>1 single dwelling unit which is not to exceed 200m² floor space;</i></p> <p><i>(6) any other use that would result in a wider environmental benefit,</i></p> <p><i>(7) provided the site is already serviced by a road network that would adequately cater for the proposed new use;</i></p> <p><i>(8) the use of the building shall be subject to prior consultation with the Departments/Authorities responsible for regulating such use; and</i></p> <p><i>(9) any existing trees and shrubs within and around the site shall be fully cared for and retained, and if no such vegetation exists, soft landscaping around the redeveloped building shall contain a number of trees and shrubs of at least three different indigenous species, planted in clusters.</i></p> <p><i>A full basement may be permitted and is limited to the footprint of the existing building (the basement will not count as part of the total floor area).</i></p> <p>The proposed development seeks to demolish a currently unused aparthotel to construct a care home for the elderly with a reduced built-up footprint. A significant portion of the existing agricultural land within the site boundary will remain undeveloped, and the building will be surrounded by an extensive landscaping plan of trees and shrubs. The site is already serviced by a road network that would adequately cater for the proposed new use.</p>
<p>Policy 8.1.C: Abandoned Buildings</p>	<p><i>The Planning Authority shall seek to limit environmental degradation, abandonment and dereliction in the Rural Area by:</i></p> <p><i>(i) Making full use of the legal powers provided by the Development Planning Act to address any injury to the amenity of the Rural Area which it deems is being created by an abandoned building;</i></p> <p><i>(ii) In case of legally established buildings, the Authority may apply the provisions of (i) above or grant permissions for a limited period of time for those development which it deems to have a defined utility</i></p>

OBJECTIVE	DESCRIPTION
	<p><i>period and require cessation of operations, dismantling of buildings and structures and re-instatement of the site to an improved condition.</i></p> <p><i>This excludes abandoned scheduled buildings and buildings of historical and cultural value in ruins.</i></p> <p>The proposed development seeks to demolish a currently unused aparthotel and construct a care home for the elderly with a reduced built-up footprint.</p>
<p>Policy 8.1.E: Utility Services</p>	<p><i>Proposed works for the provision of utility services, including those for electricity and water supply, drainage and sewage disposal, shall be subject to consultation with the respective government bodies and must, wherever possible, be located underground within trenches under existing legitimate roads or tracks. Where required, and underground leak-proof cesspit shall be incorporated beneath the proposed building or immediately next to an existing building which the cesspit is intended to serve.</i></p> <p>The Scheme site may be easily connected to the existing power grid, water supply, and telephone networks, which are already available in the area. If the development permit is granted, the Applicant would communicate with the various utility service providers and the Local Council to ensure that the rest of the development will be seamlessly incorporated with the existing infrastructural networks. Moreover, the on-site infrastructure constructed by the Applicant will be run underground.</p>
<p>Policy 9 1.G: Water reservoirs and pump chambers</p>	<p><i>Permission may be granted for the construction of water reservoirs, provided that all of the following criteria are satisfied:</i></p> <p><i>(i) The applicant is a farmer who is registered with the competent authorities;</i></p> <p><i>(ii) The proposed reservoir shall support arable agricultural land registered in the name of the applicant and shall itself be located on arable terrain within that land;</i></p>

OBJECTIVE	DESCRIPTION
	<p><i>(iii) The Agriculture Advisory Committee must include amongst its considerations (apart from applicable legislation and policies):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>the dimensions and volume of the proposed reservoir</i> • <i>the surface area of the land which the proposed reservoir is required to support</i> • <i>the water source from which the reservoir will be filled</i> • <i>the whereabouts of the land which the proposed reservoir is required to support, on the understanding that a reservoir cannot support land which is not situated in the immediate vicinity of the proposed reservoir</i> <p>A water reservoir of 1,300 cu.m (at minimum) will be located in the lowest basement level (Level -2) of the proposed building to harvest rainwater and greywater for reuse.</p>
<p>Policy 13</p> <p>1.A: Restoration and change of use of existing buildings of architectural, historical (not scheduled), vernacular or of other significance</p>	<p><i>Permission may be granted for the restoration and change of use and without extensions of an existing building, subject to the satisfaction of the criteria.</i></p> <p>The proposed development seeks to repurpose the current area taken up by the neglected aparthotel by demolishing the existing building and constructing a care home for the elderly with a reduced built-up footprint.</p>
<p>Policy 13</p> <p>1.C: Redevelopment, and Change of Use of Existing Buildings in Rural Areas not falling under 13.1.A or 13.1.B</p>	<p><i>Permission may be granted by the Planning Authority, for the redevelopment or consolidation, and/or change of use of existing legally established buildings, subject to the following criteria:</i></p> <p><i>1. The proposed use must be:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>a legally established use; or</i> • <i>a use already permitted by this policy subject to the satisfaction of the respective criteria; or</i> • <i>an employment generating use which is compatible with the Rural Area such as niche tourism, research and innovation, nature appreciation; provided that: in the case of a pre-1978 residential building which on the submission</i>

OBJECTIVE	DESCRIPTION
	<p><i>of the application is visible on the 1978 aerial photos, is not a ruin and it is manifestly evident that the building can accommodate the existing use, redevelopment for the same use may be favourably considered;</i></p> <p><i>2. The general design principles established by policy 8.1.B provided that the proposed building should not exceed the floor space and footprint of the existing legally established buildings, and the provisions of policy 8.1.F shall apply as relevant.</i></p> <p>The proposed development seeks to repurpose the current area taken up by the neglected aparthotel by demolishing the existing building and constructing a care home for the elderly with a reduced built-up footprint.</p>

1.2.2.4 National Strategic Policy for Active Ageing (2023-2030)

The NATIONAL STRATEGIC POLICY FOR ACTIVE AGEING: MALTA 2023–2030 is a comprehensive framework aimed at improving the quality of life for older persons in Malta through active participation, independent living, and age-friendly environments. The policy supports infrastructure, like elderly care homes, that foster autonomy, safety, and inclusion.

The proposed development aims to construct an elderly care home in Ta' Sabbat, l/o Buskett Dingli, with various facilities related to health, wellness, and recreation, supporting the objectives outlined in Table 4 below.

TABLE 4: OBJECTIVES OF THE NSPAA (2014-2020) RELEVANT TO THE PROPOSED SCHEME

OBJECTIVE	DESCRIPTION
<p>Objective 1: Social Inclusion</p> <p>Theme 1.1: Solitude, loneliness and social isolation</p>	<p><i>Put into service a community network that provides befriending services and support via one-to-one visits, an online learning platform, and group support meetings.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Broadening of community-based services.</i>
<p>Objective 2: Healthy Ageing</p> <p>Theme 2.7: Community care</p>	<p><i>Implement a set of minimum standards for community-based care services to improve the quality of life of care recipients and carers, and to contribute to more resilience in society</i></p>

OBJECTIVE	DESCRIPTION
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Increase palliative care services.</i>
Objective 2: Healthy Ageing Theme 2.8: Residential long-term care	<i>Improving the quality of process in long-term care by ensuring mechanisms to protect resident rights, the safety of buildings, and establishing a quality assurance committee.</i>

1.2.2.5 Social Regulatory Standards Guidelines: Residential Services for Senior Citizens

Established by law in 2016, the Older Persons Standards Authority (OPSA) is responsible for setting and enforcing licensing standards, conducting inspections, and ensuring quality across all residential and community-based eldercare services. The OPSA has issued Social Regulatory Standards covering residents' rights, personalised care plans, medical care, safeguarding, environment, service delivery, and quality management.

The proposed Class 2A elderly care home, including its ancillary facilities, medical care spaces, recreational areas and community spaces, supports these OPSA standards by providing a safe, well-equipped, and dignified environment for senior residents. The development would help to meet the national demand for high-quality eldercare while ensuring compliance with regulatory, operational, and accessibility requirements.

1.2.2.6 Malta's Sustainable Development Strategy to 2050

MALTA'S SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR 2050 is a long-term framework guiding Malta toward sustainable growth by balancing economic, social, and environmental goals. It focuses on five strategic goals addressing climate neutrality, resource use, natural capital protection, sustainable food systems, and sustainable finance. The Strategy aims to integrate policies cross-sectorally, empower society, and translate goals into concrete actions by 2030 to ensure a resilient and prosperous future for Malta.

TABLE 5: OBJECTIVES OF MALTA'S SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR 2050 RELEVANT TO THE PROPOSED SCHEME

OBJECTIVE	DESCRIPTION
STRATEGIC GOAL 2: Towards the Preservation of Sustainable Urban Development and Cultural Heritage	<p><i>Strategic Objective 3 - Sustainable Demographic Development for the Creation of Resilient Communities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Reinforcing residential and community-based care services for vulnerable persons and the elderly, including the possibility of providing personal care services at home.</i>

OBJECTIVE	DESCRIPTION
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="644 315 1378 465">• <i>Creating the necessary support structures to further enhance social services for older persons in the community, including the provision of day centres and night shelters.</i> <p data-bbox="644 506 1390 898">The proposed development aims to construct an elderly care home and provide accommodation, health care, and recreational services to the elderly community. Rabat serves as an important regional centre, strengthened by the presence of the area's sole health facility, which acts as a primary care hub for residents of Rabat, Mdina, Mtarfa, Dingli, Baħrija, and Kuncizzjoni. The proposed construction of an elderly care home would help address the growing demand for elderly healthcare services in the region.</p>

2 SCHEME SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

2.1 LAND USE

The site of the proposed development is within a Category 2 Rural Settlement at Ta' Sabbat. Although rural settlements are not part of the urban development zone, they are classified as Outside Development Zone (ODZ). The area is largely made up of agricultural land such as cultivated fields, farms, and greenhouses (Figure 11), along with some residential buildings (Figure 12). The proposed Scheme site is bordered by Sqaq Ta' Sabbat and two merging roads; Triq il-Buskett and Triq Ta' Sabbat. A small parking area is located in the corner just across from the Scheme site, where the two roads merge. The Buskett Woodland is situated to the East of the Scheme site, and between them, along Triq il-Buskett, one finds the one finds the National Viticulture and Oenology Centre.

Since the proposal only seeks to build-up the area currently occupied by the permitted aparthotel, the development will not occupy any existing agricultural land. The existing agricultural land within the site boundary will remain undeveloped, while areas previously occupied by the aparthotel that will not be built up will instead be landscaped with trees and shrubs.

The land uses present within the Scheme site and Area of Influence (100m buffer zone) have been mapped in Figure 13.



FIGURE 11: NEARBY AGRICULTURAL LAND ALONG TRIQ INŻUL IX-XEMX, WITH EXISTING APARTHOTEL ON SCHEME SITE VISIBLE AT THE CENTRE OF THE PHOTO (GOOGLE MAPS STREET VIEW)



FIGURE 12: NEARBY RESIDENTIAL AREA ALONG TRIQ TA' SABBAT, SOUTH OF SCHEME SITE (GOOGLE MAPS STREET VIEW)

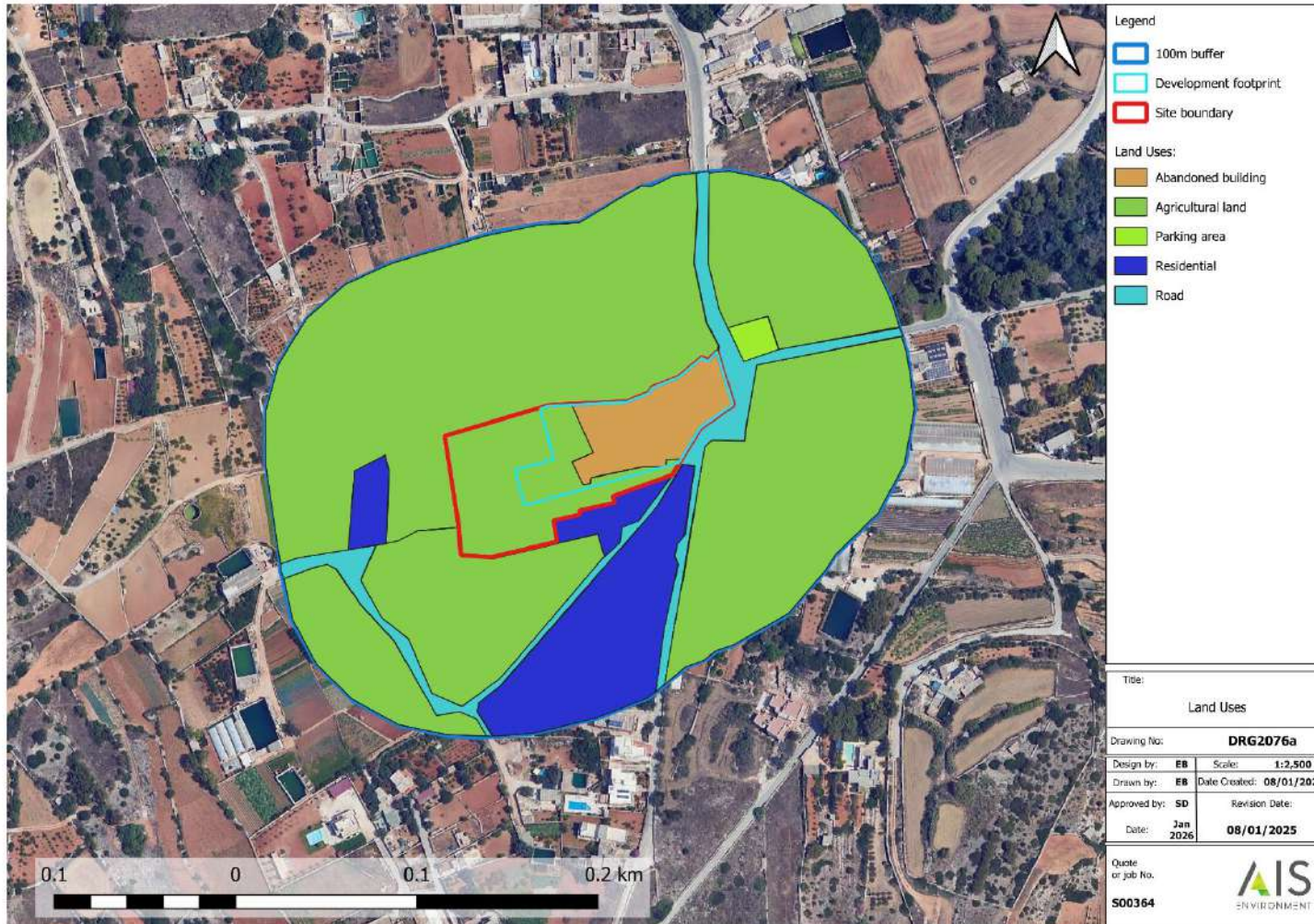


FIGURE 13: LAND USES WITHIN AOI AND SCHEME SITE



FIGURE 15: SOIL MAP OF THE PROPOSED SCHEME SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

2.3 HYDROLOGY

The proposed Scheme site is located on top of the groundwater body named the Upper Coralline Limestone Aquifer (MT002), and is the lesser widespread of the two main Aquifer bodies along the Maltese Islands (Figure 16). MT002 forms part of the Mean Sea Level Aquifer, MT001, which is the largest aquifer of the Maltese Islands with an area of 216.6km².

Due to the large amount of agricultural land surrounding the Scheme site, a number of reservoirs are also present within a 100-metre buffer from the site boundary.

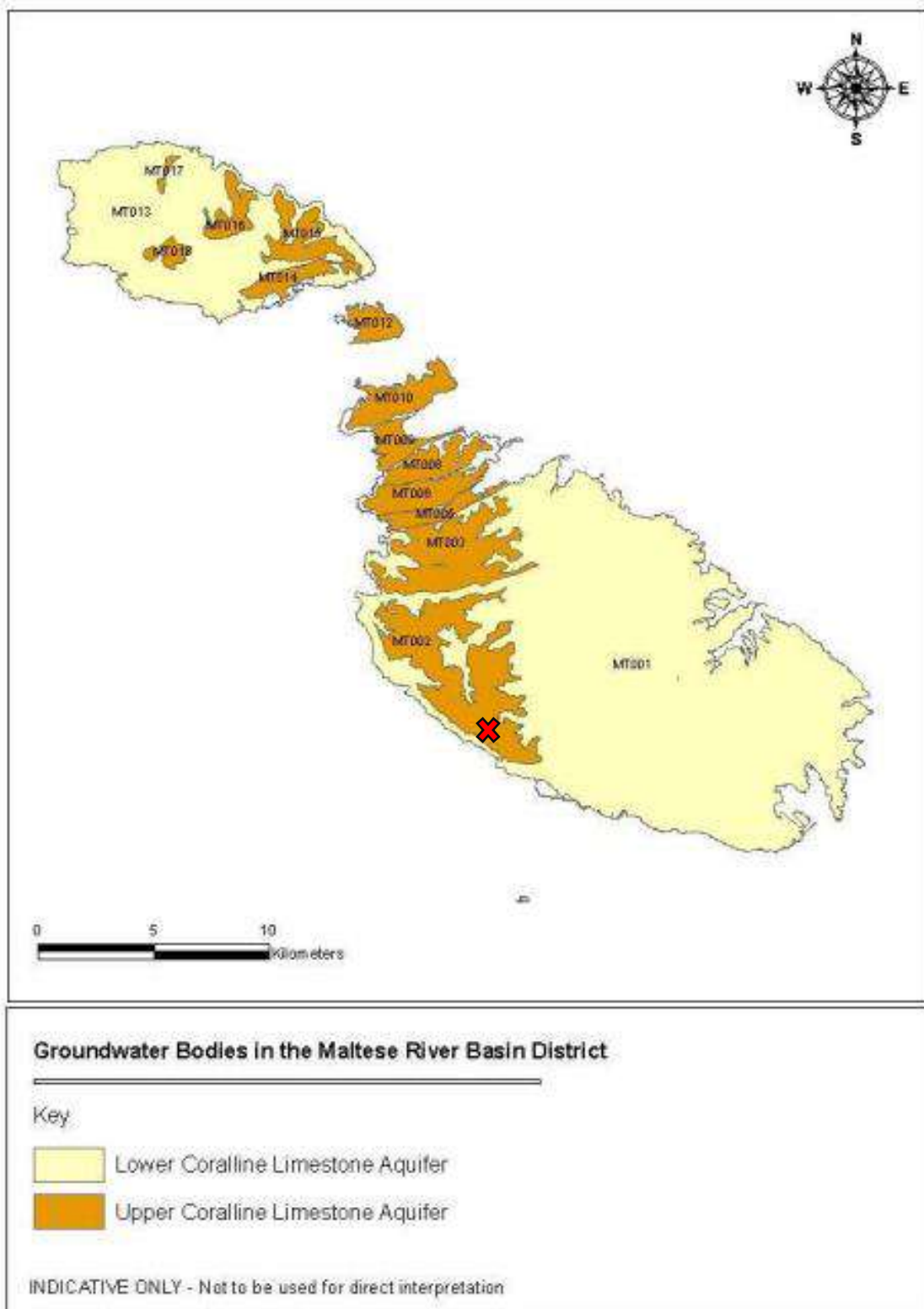


FIGURE 16: GROUNDWATER BODIES IN MALTA, RED CROSS INDICATES APPROXIMATE LOCATION OF THE SCHEME

2.4 ECOLOGY

The proposal will replace an existing building that is already covered by permits for redevelopment into a larger holiday complex. Comparably, the proposed elderly care home has a reduced built-up footprint and floor area. The area to be redeveloped is considered previously disturbed, with most areas already paved.

On disturbed land, several colonies of ruderal vegetation are often present, such as Boar Thistle (*Galactites tomentosa*), Smooth Sow-Thistle (*Sonchus oleraceus*), Animated Oat (*Avena sterilis*), Crown Daisy (*Chrysanthemum coronarium*), Castor Oil Tree (*Ricinus communis*), Hare's-tail Barley (*Hordeum leporinum*), Common Awn-Grass (*Stipa capensis*), Fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*), Perennial Wall Rocket (*Diplotaxis tenuifolia*), Pellitory-of-the-wall (*Parietaria judaica*), Spiny Asparagus (*Asparagus aphyllus*), Wild Carrot (*Daucus carota*), Shrub Tobacco (*Nicotiana glauca*), Cape Sorrel (*Oxalis pes-caprae*), Rice Grass (*Piptatherum miliaceum*), Wild Artichoke (*Cynara cardunculus*), Squirting Cucumber (*Ecballium elaterium*). The removal of some ruderal or opportunistic species may occur due to the proposed development. However, these species typically have short life cycles, reproduce quickly, and are among the first to colonise disturbed or vacant land, often displacing local, indigenous plants.

As indicated in Figure 18, the following trees are currently present within the proposed development footprint:

- 1 Fig tree (*Ficus carica*) – **to be shifted**
- 1 Pine tree (*Pinus*) – **to be shifted** (protected by SL. 549.123, FIRST SCHEDULE PART A TABLE 2)
- 12 Lemon trees (*Citrus*) – **to be shifted**
- 4 Century Plants (*Agave*)
- 1 African Tamarisk (*Tamarix africana*) (protected by SL. 549.123, FIRST SCHEDULE PART A TABLE 2)
- 1 Aleppo Pine tree (*Pinus halepensis*) (protected by SL. 549.123, FIRST SCHEDULE PART A TABLE 2)
- 1 Judas tree (*Cercis siliquastrum*) (protected by SL. 549.123 FIRST, SCHEDULE PART A TABLE 2)

A total of 14 trees will be shifted due to the proposed development, one of which (*Pinus* sp.) is protected by the TREES AND WOODLANDS PROTECTION REGULATIONS (S.L. 549.123), as indicated above. The above list excludes the trees present in the existing agricultural land within the site boundary ('back of site') that will remain there since this area will not be developed. While efforts will be made to preserve any existing rubble walls on-site, these will be carefully dismantled and reused elsewhere if necessary.

An extensive landscaping scheme has been planned for the development footprint, composed of the following approximate numbers listed in Table 6. Figure 19 to Figure 23 visualise the layout of the landscaping plan on the relevant floor levels.

TABLE 6: LANDSCAPING PLAN FOR THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

TREE/SHRUB SPECIES	LEVEL -1	LEVEL 0	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	ROOF	TOTAL
<i>Quercus ilex</i> (Holm Oak)	18	2	/	/	/	20
<i>Populus alba</i> (White Poplar)	12	/	/	/	/	12
<i>Olea europaea</i> (Olive Tree)	10	4	/	/	/	14
<i>Nerium oleander</i> (Oleander)	15	/	/	/	/	15
<i>Rosmarinus officinalis</i> (Rosemary) or <i>Lavandula angustifolia</i> (Lavender)	19	36	/	/	31	86
<i>Jasminum</i> (Jasmine)	/	18	14	4	/	36
<i>Euphorbia melitensis</i> (Maltese Spurge)	/	80	/	/	/	80
					Total	263

There are no direct environmental constraints on the site, but nearby protected areas (Figure 17) include:

- SAC/SPA MT0000018 - *L-Inħawi tal-Buskett u tal-Girgenti* - Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Area (SPA) (Government Notice 112 of 2007; Flora, Fauna and Habitats Directive Regulations 2006, LN 311 of 2006, as amended).
- SAC MT0000024 - *Rdumijiet ta' Malta: Ir-Ramla tac-Cirkewwa sa Il-Ponta ta' Bengħisa* - Natura 2000 Site under the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) (Government Notice 112 of 2007 and 812 of 2008).
- SPA MT0000032 - *Rdumijiet ta' Malta: Ras il-Pellegrin sax-Xaqqa* - EU Wild Birds Directive (79/409/EEC)

To safeguard the rural landscape and preserve dark skies, the Applicant will ensure minimal light pollution. Only essential security lighting will operate at night, and careful selection of luminaires will prevent unnecessary energy waste while also minimising glare, considering the context of the site and proximal protected areas that potentially host fauna sensitive to light pollution, like avifauna.

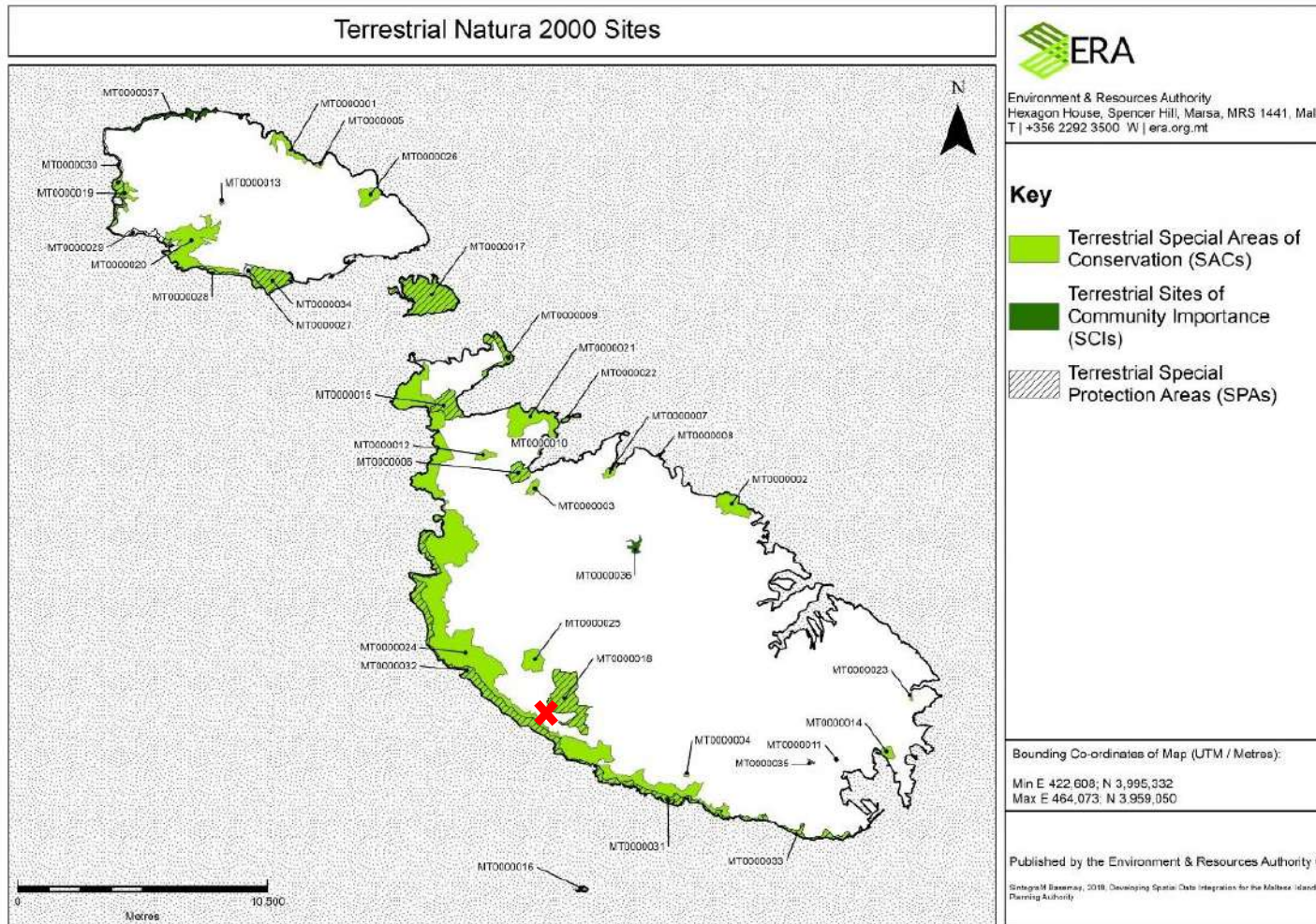
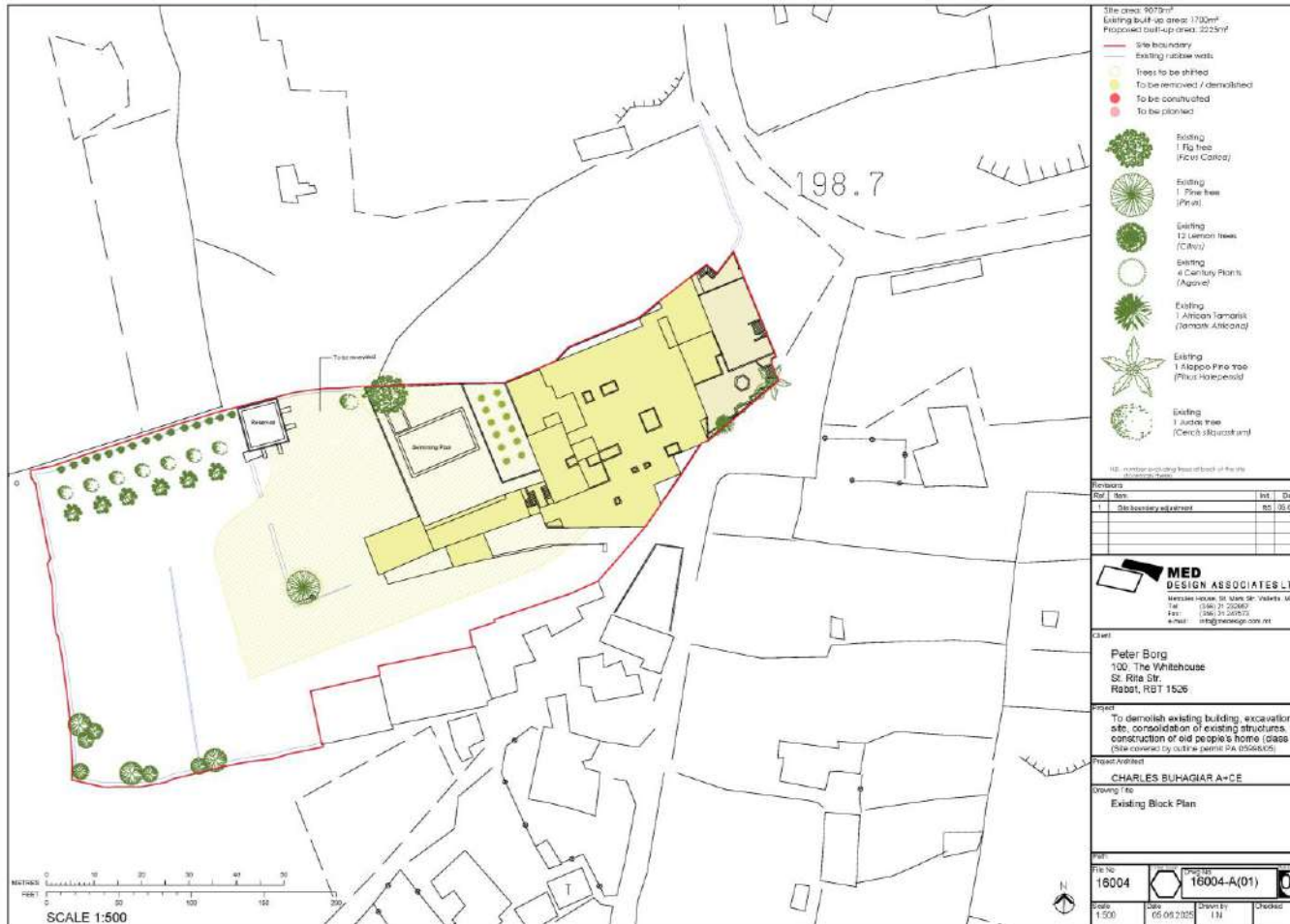


FIGURE 17: TERRESTRIAL PROTECTED AREAS (ERA). RED CROSS INDICATES THE APPROXIMATE SCHEME SITE LOCATION.

HA/2047/14-406-1948 - Mary Theresa Borg - on behalf of Charles Buhagiar - 21/11/2023

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FIGURE 18: EXISTING TREES WITHIN THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT FOOTPRINT

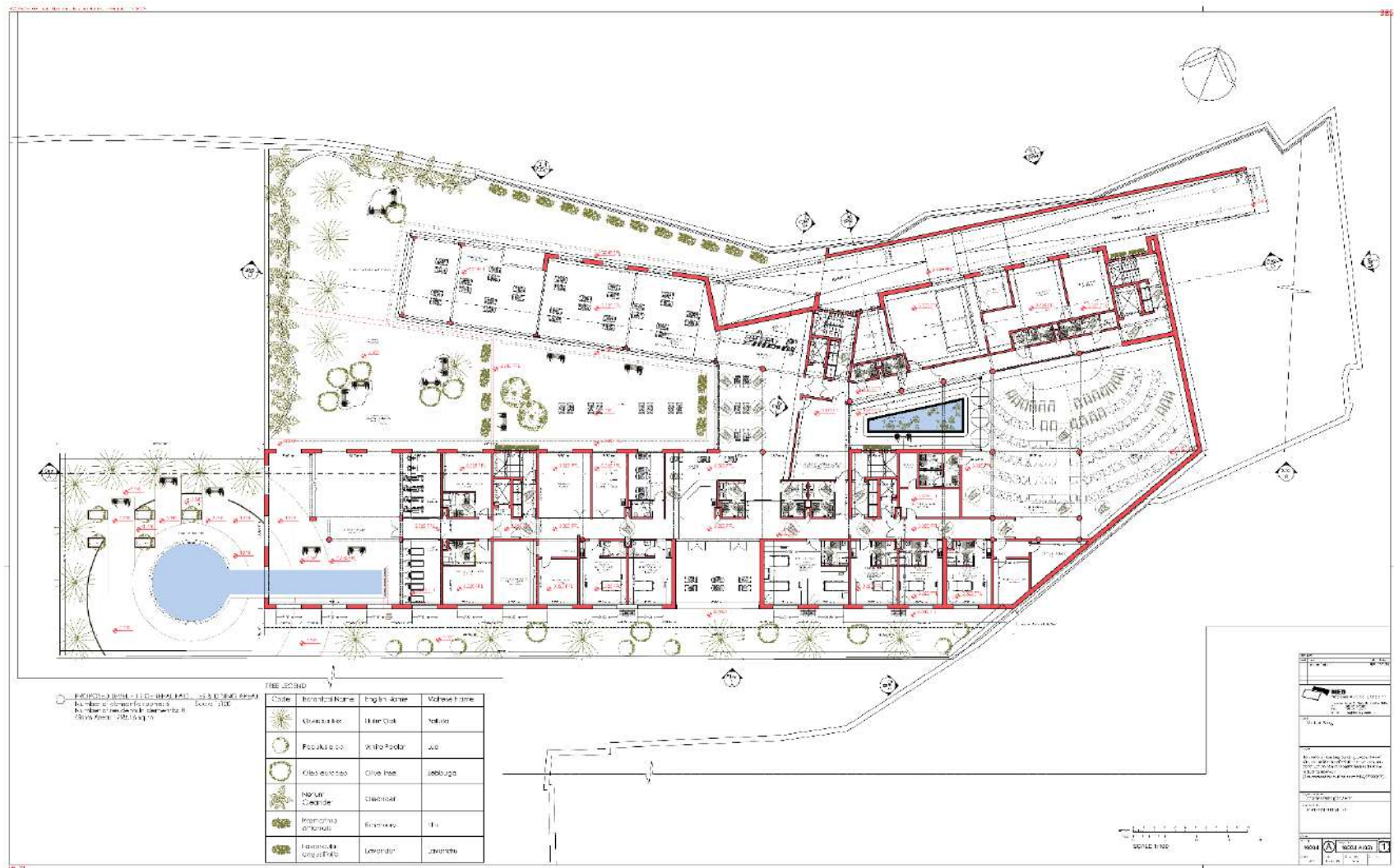


FIGURE 19: LANDSCAPING PLAN FOR LEVEL -1 WITHIN THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT FOOTPRINT

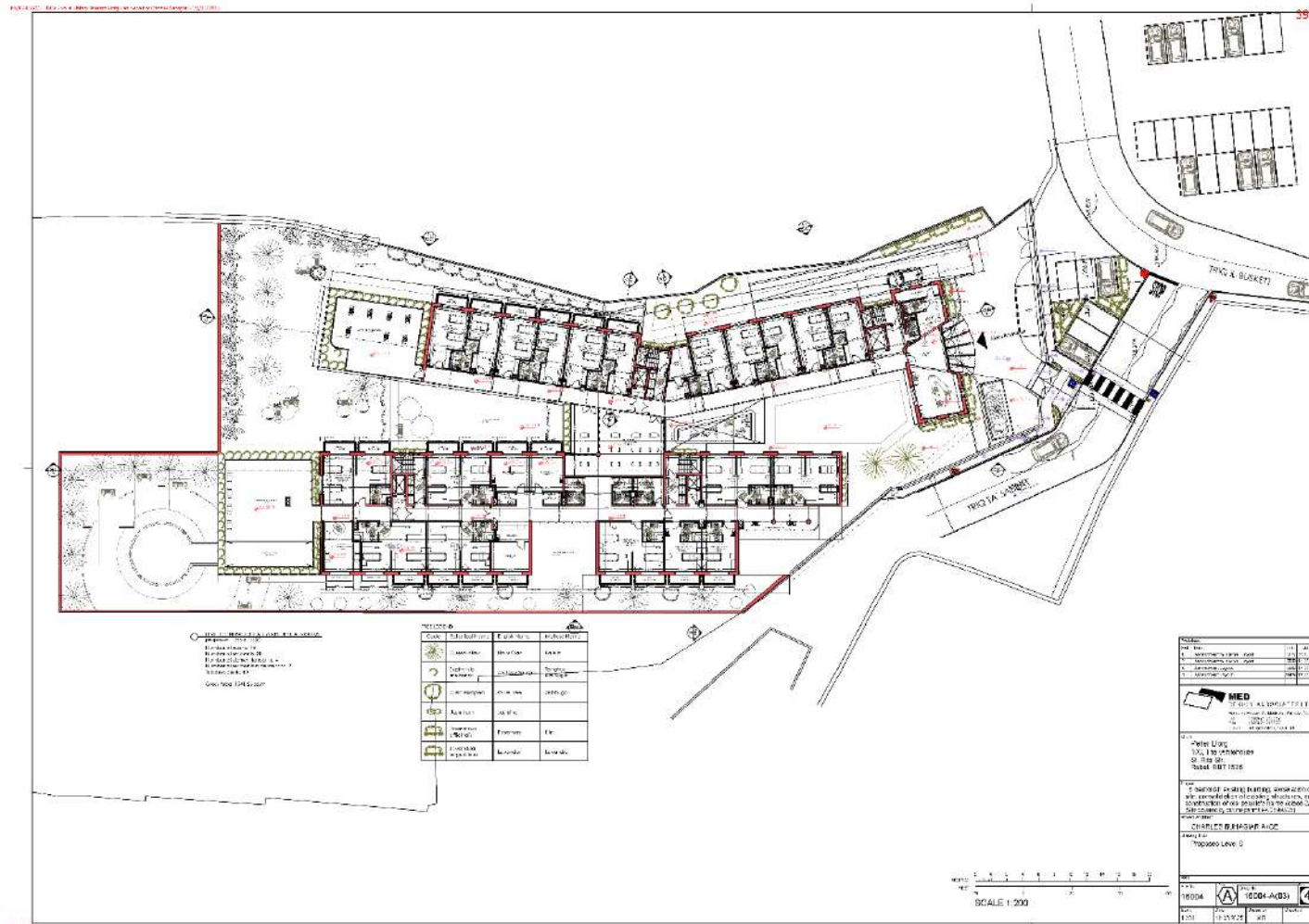


FIGURE 20: LANDSCAPING PLAN FOR LEVEL 0 WITHIN THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT FOOTPRINT



FIGURE 21: LANDSCAPING PLAN FOR LEVEL 1 WITHIN THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT FOOTPRINT

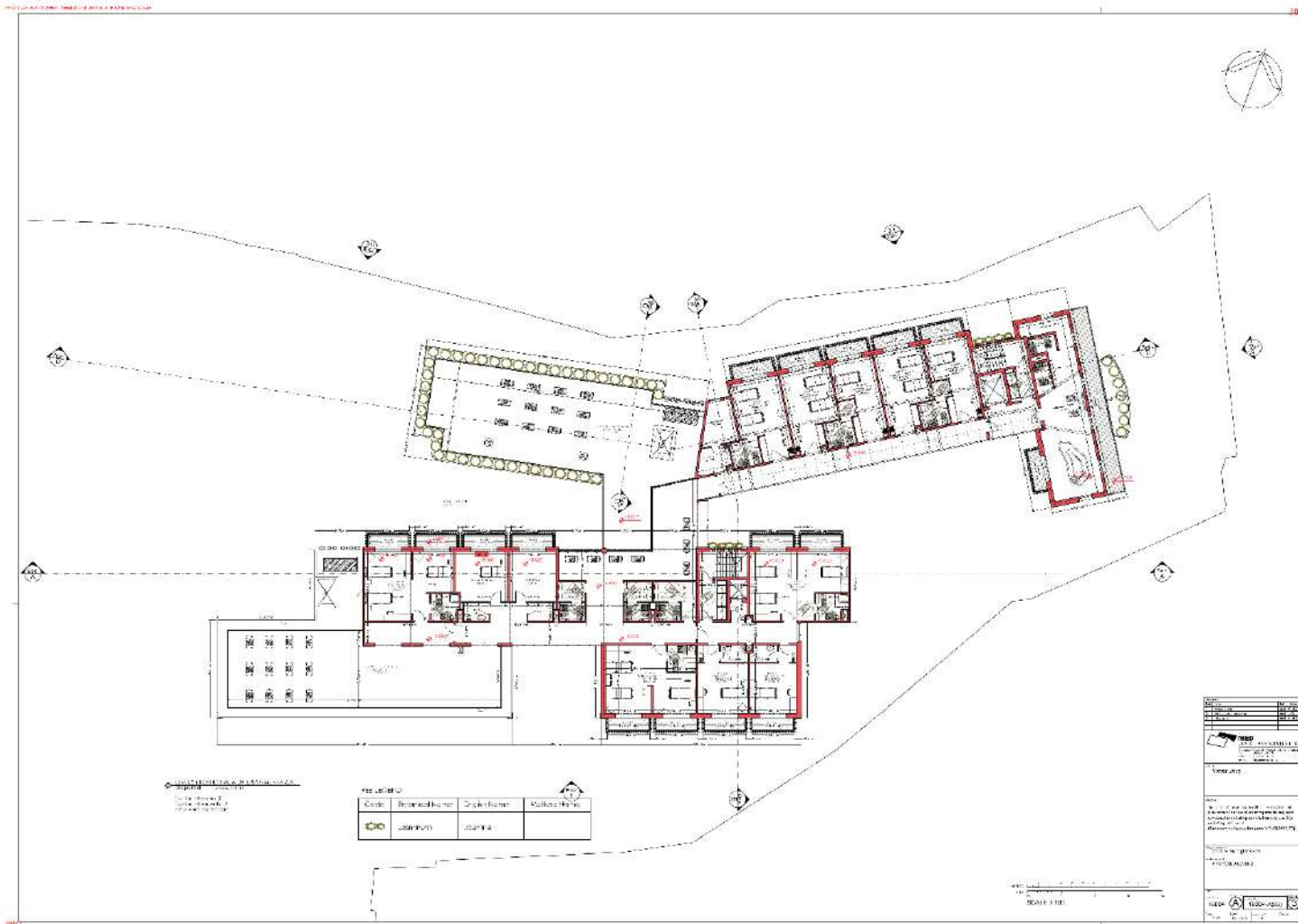


FIGURE 22: LANDSCAPING PLAN FOR LEVEL 2 WITHIN THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT FOOTPRINT

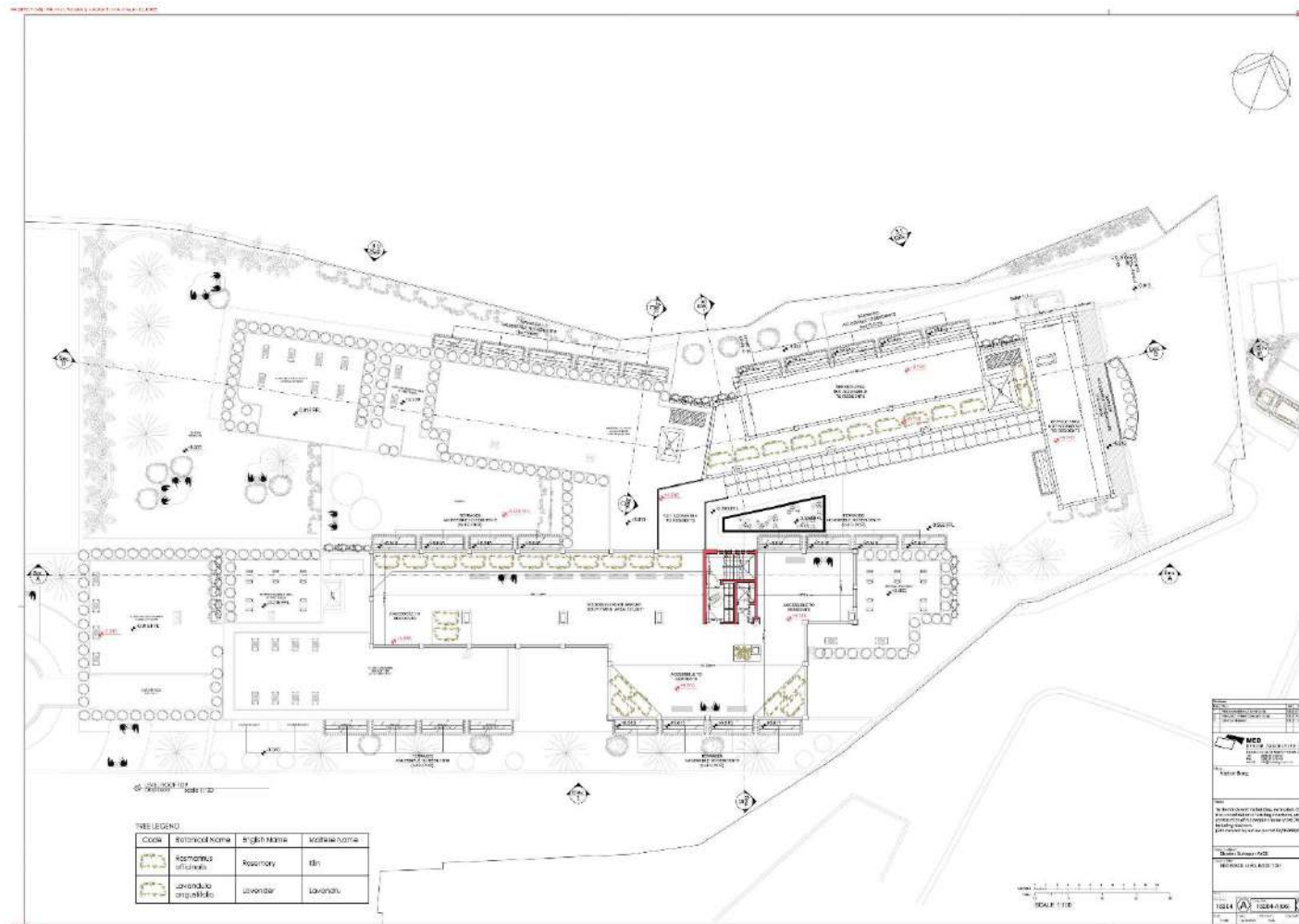


FIGURE 23: LANDSCAPING PLAN FOR THE ROOF WITHIN THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT FOOTPRINT

2.6 SERVICES

2.6.1 Energy, Water and Sewage

The site may be easily connected to the existing power grid, water supply, and telephone networks, which are already available in the area. The Applicant would communicate with the various utility service providers and the Local Council to ensure that the rest of the development will be seamlessly incorporated with the existing infrastructural networks. Moreover, the on-site infrastructure constructed by the Applicant will be run underground.

No sewage mains are present in the area at the moment. However, due to the number of residential units in this hamlet, there are plans by the Water Services Corporation for the sewage mains to be extended.

2.6.2 Surface Water Run-Off and Storm Water Drainage

Storm water and greywater will be harvested on site via a minimum 1,300 cu.m reservoir at Level -2. This water shall be used for irrigation and second class uses. The provision of separate storage for fire-fighting will also be considered.

3 THE SCHEME

3.1 SIZE, SCALE AND DESIGN

The total footprint of the developed area within the scheme site is 1,541.26 sqm, while the total footprint of the site is approximately 8,500 sqm. The proposal seeks to construct a Class 2A elderly care home with 100 beds, including excavation and development of two basement levels (Level -1, Level -2), as well as three above-ground levels (Level 0, Level 1, Level 2) and a roof.

The construction of the proposed elderly care home would reduce the built footprint at the site boundary since the existing aparthotel has a larger building footprint. Moreover, the proposed building was carefully designed in terms of massing, volume, and appearance. The design also took into consideration safety measures for the elderly residents, such as the use of non-slip tiles in breakout areas and terraces. Earth-toned materials and traditional Maltese balconies have been incorporated into the design, along with an extensive landscaping scheme comprising of indigenous trees and shrubs planted at almost every level, including on the roof and walls. The design ensures that the development respects the rural character of the area and blends harmoniously with its surroundings. The existing agricultural land within the site boundary will not be developed, and all indigenous trees and shrubs present within this non-built-up area will be retained.

The lowest basement level (Level -2) consists of the parking lot and mortuary, and also includes a 524 sqm reservoir with a capacity of at least 1,300 cu.m (Figure 25). Level -1 would host the general facilities and dining area, as well as 6 rooms for 8 dementia residents. This level would include a large multipurpose hall as well as a large pool and garden area (Figure 26).

The ground floor (Level 0) would consist of an entrance hall, 16 residential rooms (for 28 residents) and an additional 4 dementia rooms (12 dementia residents), accommodating a total of 40 residents (Figure 27). Level 1 would host 18 residential rooms for 33 residents (Figure 28). Level 2 would have 10 rooms for 19 residents (Figure 29). Level 3 is largely composed of the roof garden, as well as a service area that is not accessible to residents (Figure 30).

The below table provides details on the facilities at each level of the home.

TABLE 7: FACILITIES PROVIDED BY THE PROPOSED SCHEME AND THEIR FOOTPRINT IN M²

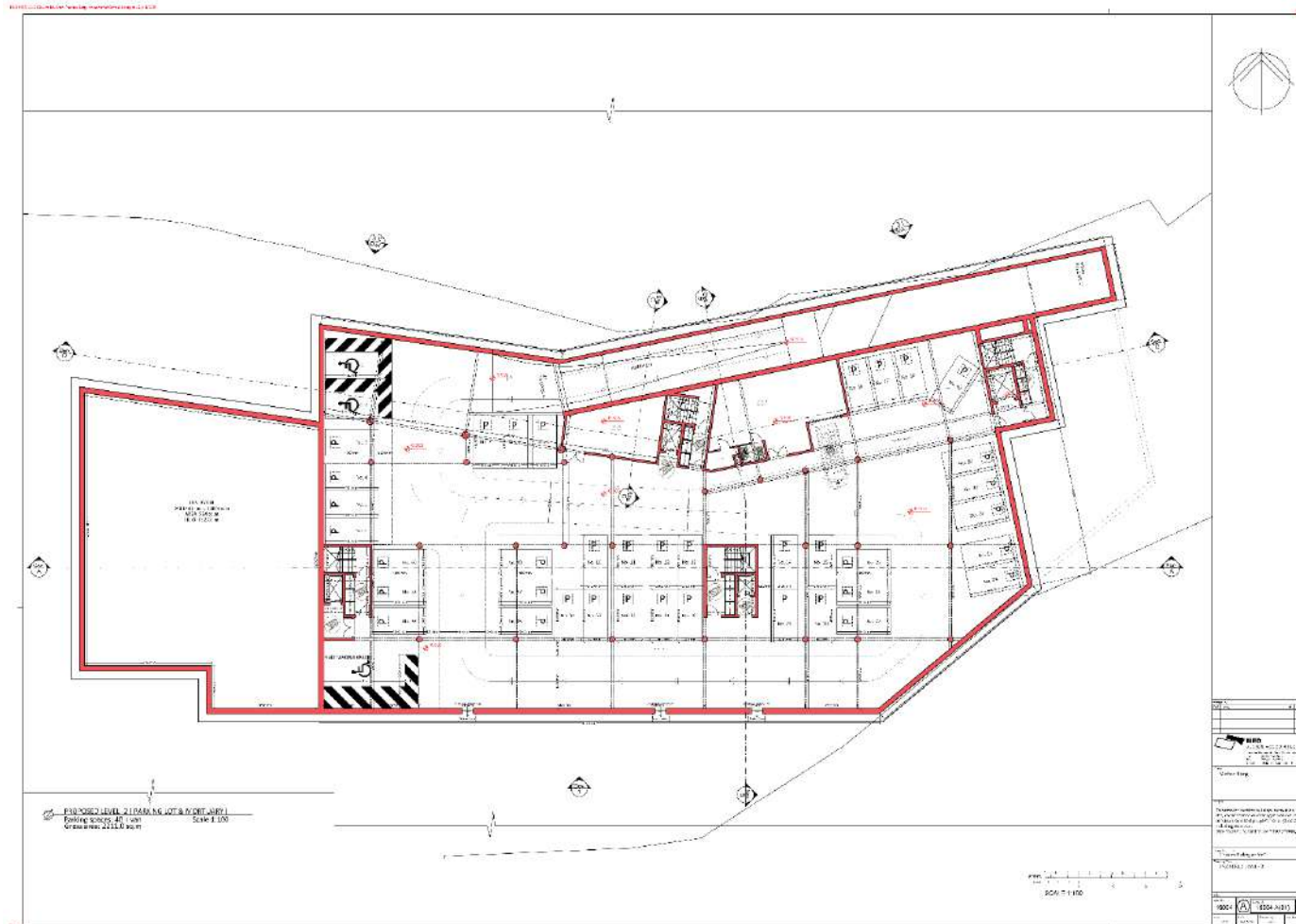
FLOOR/AREA	FACILITY	AREA (M ² UNLESS SPECIFIED)
Level -2	Reservoir	524 (1300 cu.m)
	40 parking spaces	~11.52 each
	Van parking space	21.17
	Deposit	38.87

FLOOR/AREA	FACILITY	AREA (M ² UNLESS SPECIFIED)
	Ramp	88.15
	Morgue	72.80
	Passenger lifts	-
	Stairwells	-
	Gross area Level -2	2,211.0
	Pool & garden area	303.77
	Outdoor veranda	184.54
	Gym	24.02
	Gym	24.02
	Male changing room	21.09
	Female changing room	21.09
	Office, manager office & board room	25.91
	Equipment room	17.06
	Pharmacy	20.80
	Beauty salon	20.80
	Staff canteen	15.30
	Staff toilets	-
	Male toilets	-
	Female toilets	-
	Cafeteria	31.43
	Kitchen, un/packing area, warming area, cold room and food storage	39.60
	Storage	5.59
Level -1	Staff changing area	15.53
	Multipurpose hall (92 seats + 22 wheelchair spaces)	321.18
	Internal yard	67.45
	Dirty linen storage	12.68
	Clean linen storage	14.04
	Electrical room	24.32
	Plant room	40.80
	Security	11.00
	Un/loading area	64.41
	Refuse area	14.57
	Buffet server	21.80
	Dining area	123.38
	Outdoor veranda	109.00
	Garden	698.86
	Dementia room 1	15.80
	Dementia room 2	14.29
	Dementia room 3	30.04
	Dementia room 4	13.64

FLOOR/AREA	FACILITY	AREA (M ² UNLESS SPECIFIED)
	Dementia Rooms 5 & 6	12.13 each
	Passenger lifts	-
	Stairwells	-
	Ramp	-
	Gross area Level -1	1,798.16
	Outdoor breakout area	113.07
	Outdoor breakout area	92.80
	Room 1, 3, 5, 7, 8, 10	16.02 each
	Room 2, 4, 6, 9, 11	14.06 each
	Room 12	31.58
	Room 13	31.71
	Room 14	30.04
	Room 15	13.58
	Room 16	12.07
	Filing room	17.39
	Filing room	10.56
	Nursing stations	-
	Meter room	7
	Reception counter	-
Level 0	Security	-
	Staff toilet	-
	Lobby area	51.57
	Breakout veranda	99.11
	Common area	30.15
	Sluice room	17.39
	Treatment room	20.75
	Dementia room 1	30.04
	Dementia room 2, 4	19.85 each
	Dementia room 3	29.85
	Dementia dining & breakout area	26.64
	Passenger lifts	-
	Stairwells	-
	Ramp	-
	Gross Area Level 0	1,541.26
	Outdoor breakout area	43.03
	Outdoor breakout area	28.65
	Room 1	12.88
	Room 2, 4, 6, 7, 9	16.02 each
	Room 3, 5, 8, 10	14.06 each
	Filing room	10.56
	Nursing stations	-
	Storage	-
Level 1		

FLOOR/AREA	FACILITY	AREA (M ² UNLESS SPECIFIED)
	Passenger lifts	-
	Stairwells	-
	Hygiene store	-
	Staff toilets	-
	Resident's toiler	-
	Common area	-
	Store	-
	Waiting area	-
	Doctor's office	19.33
	Breakout area	59.50
	Breakout veranda	79.52
	Room 11, 13, 14	29.85 each
	Treatment room	20.75
	Sluice room	18.90
	Filing room	17.39
	Room 12	12.87
	Room 15	34.03
	Room 16	30.04
	Room 17	15.80
	Room 18	14.29
	Gross Area Level 1	1,340.61
Level 2	Outdoor breakout area	150.95
	Outdoor breakout area	213.72
	Filing room	10.56
	Nursing station	-
	Room 1, 2, 4	16.02 each
	Room 3, 5	14.06 each
	Breakout area	51.82
	Room 6	29.85
	Treatment room	20.75
	Sluice room	18.90
	Room 7	34.03
	Room 8	30.04
	Room 9	15.80
	Room 10	14.29
	Male resident toilets	-
	Female resident toilets	-
	Visitor's toilers	-
	Staff toilet	-
	Stairwell	-
	Lift	-
	Gross Area Level 2	907.93

FLOOR/AREA	FACILITY	AREA (M ² UNLESS SPECIFIED)
Roof	Accessible roof garden (south wing)	331.29
	Lifts	-
	Stairwell	-
	Service area (not accessible to residents)	-
	Gross Area Roof	55.18



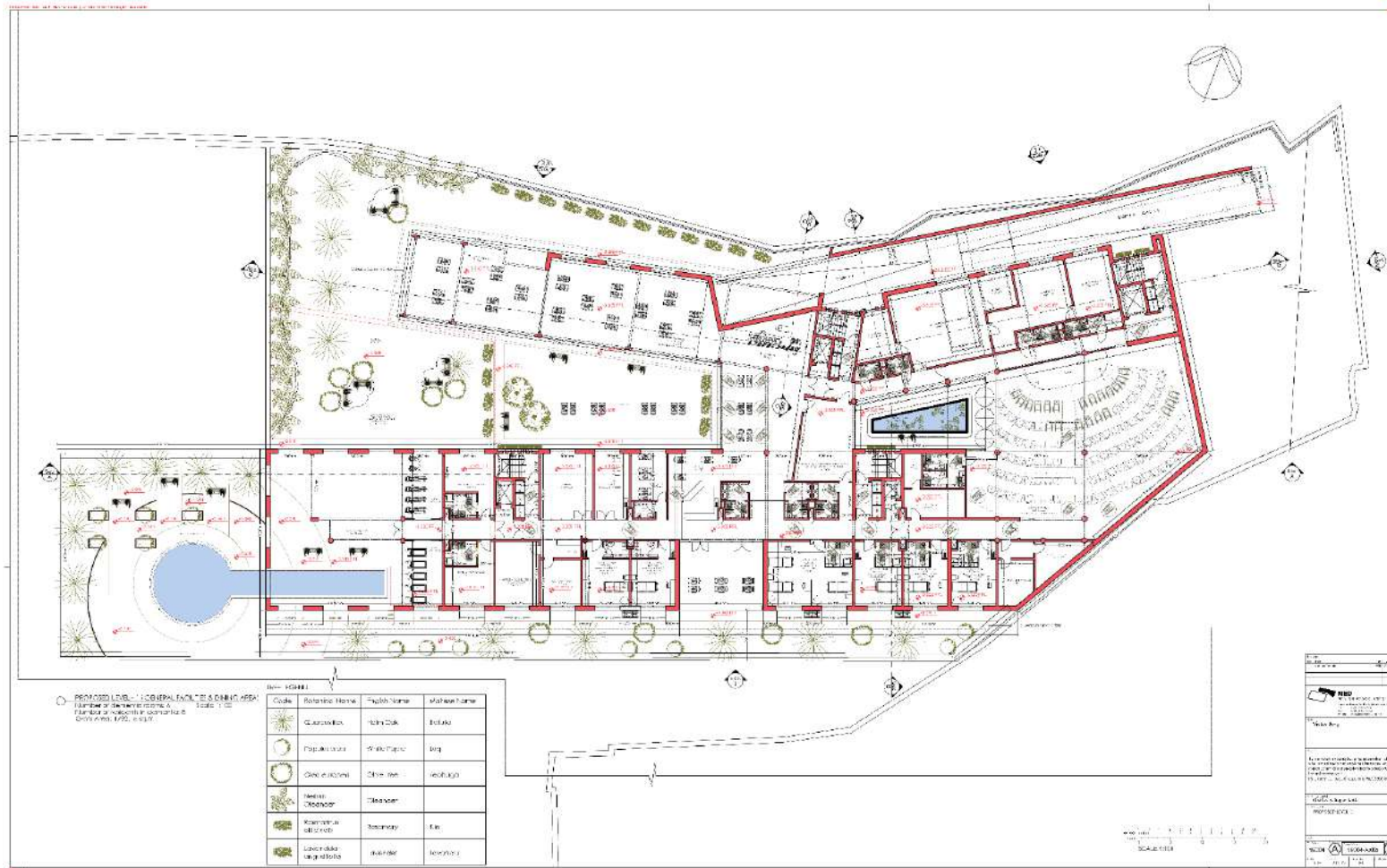


FIGURE 26: PROPOSED LEVEL -1 PLAN



FIGURE 27: PROPOSED GROUND FLOOR/LEVEL 0 PLAN



FIGURE 28: PROPOSED LEVEL 1 PLAN

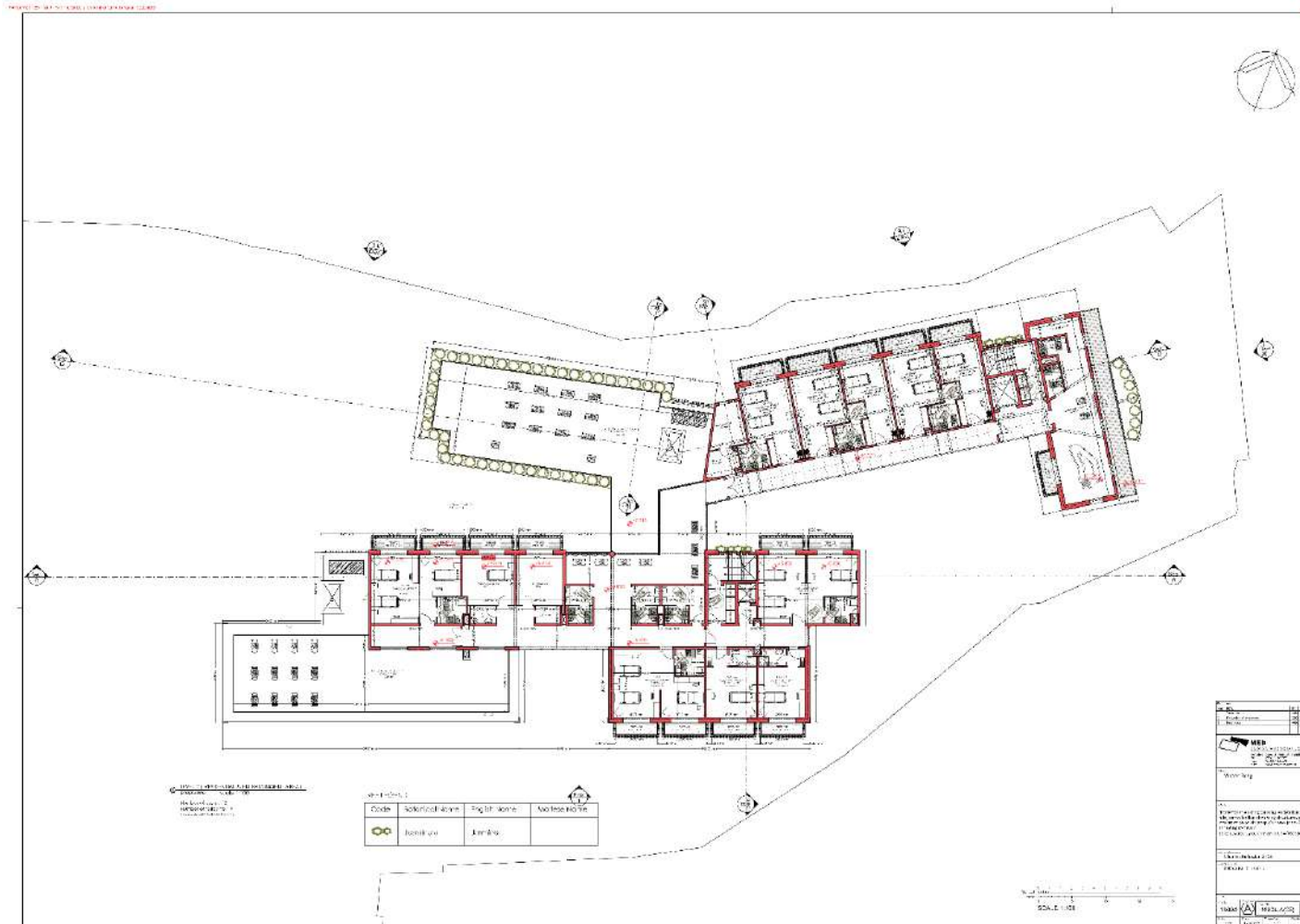


FIGURE 29: PROPOSED LEVEL 2 PLAN

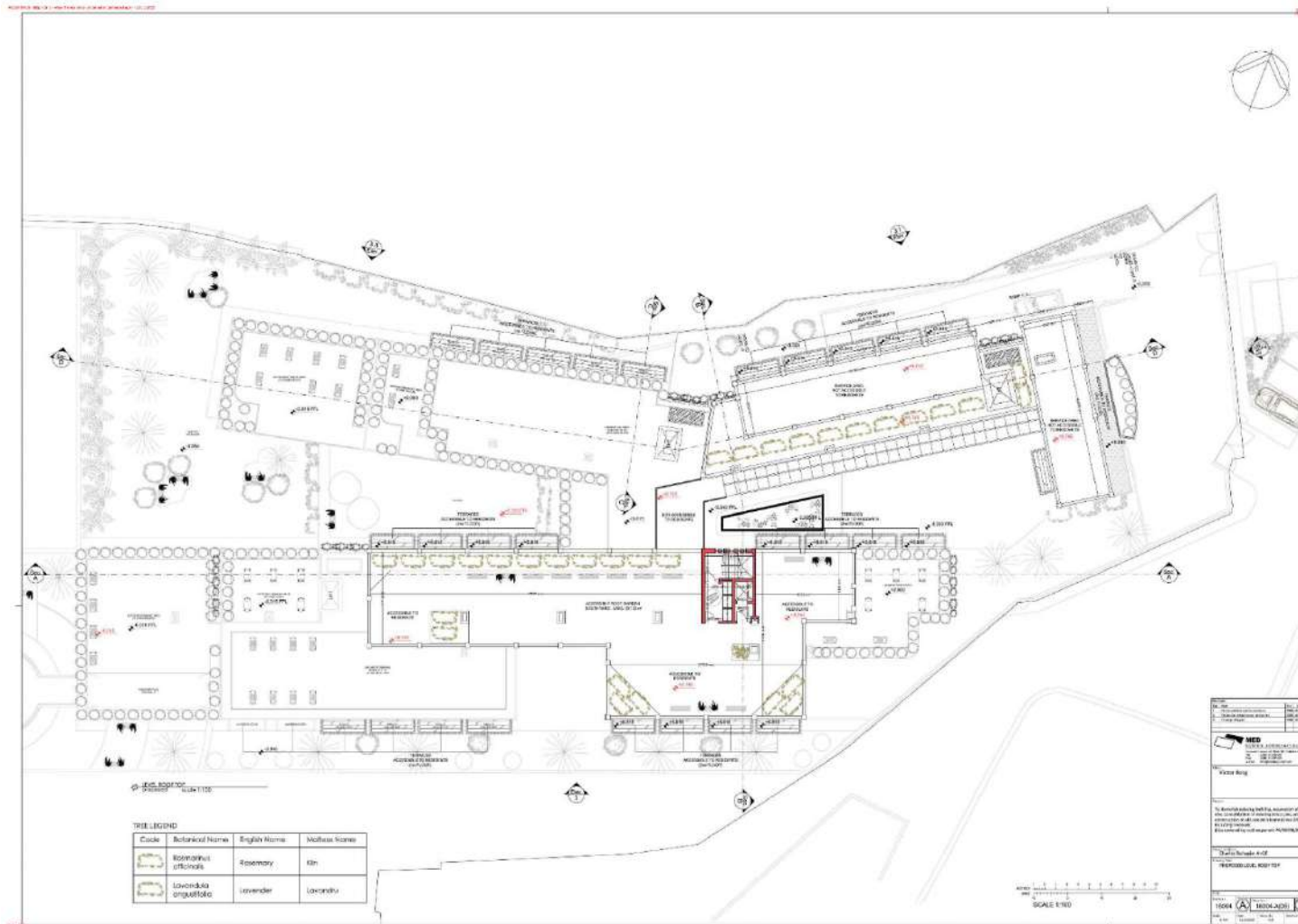


FIGURE 30: PROPOSED ROOF LEVEL PLAN

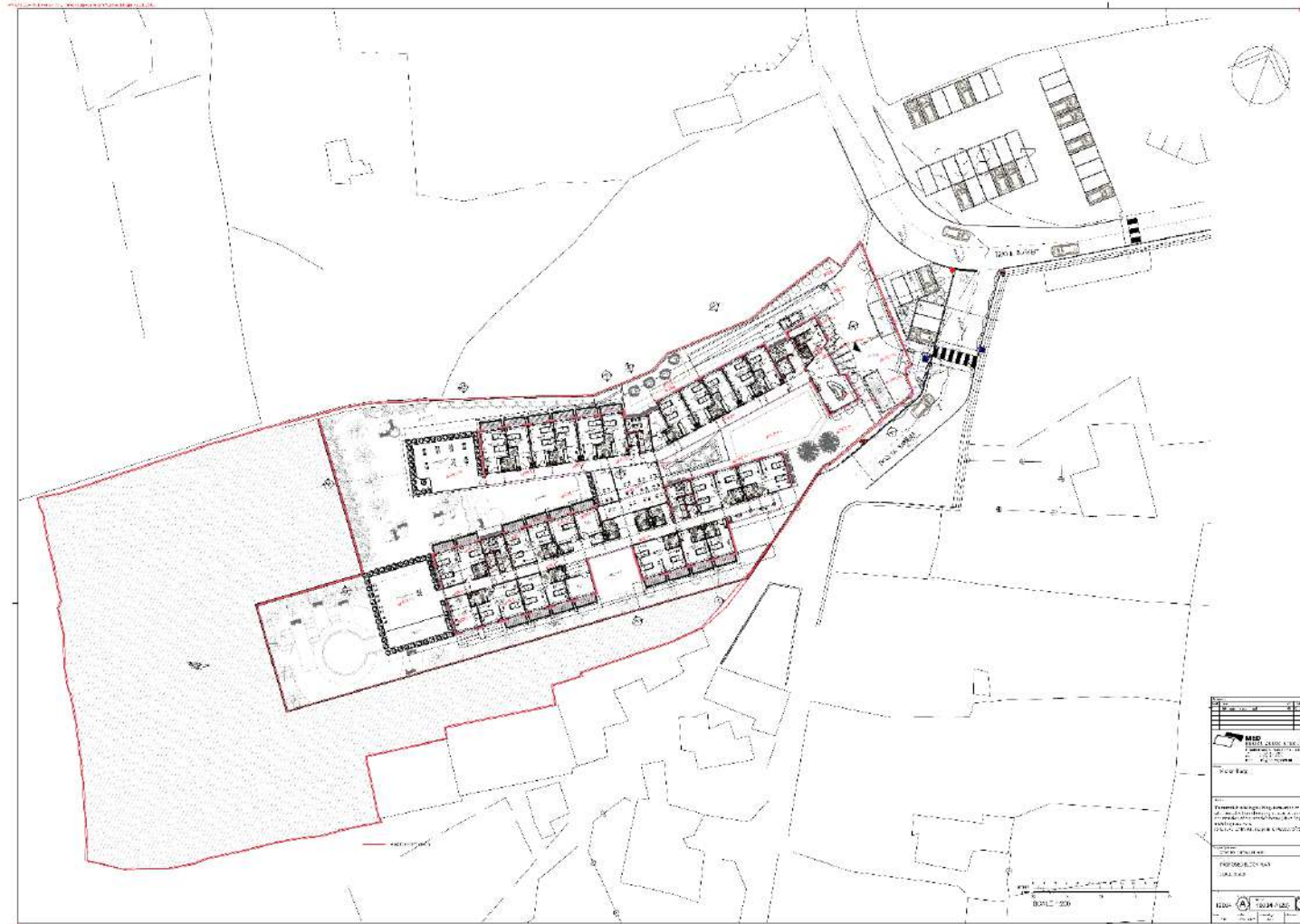


FIGURE 31: PROPOSED BLOCK PLAN

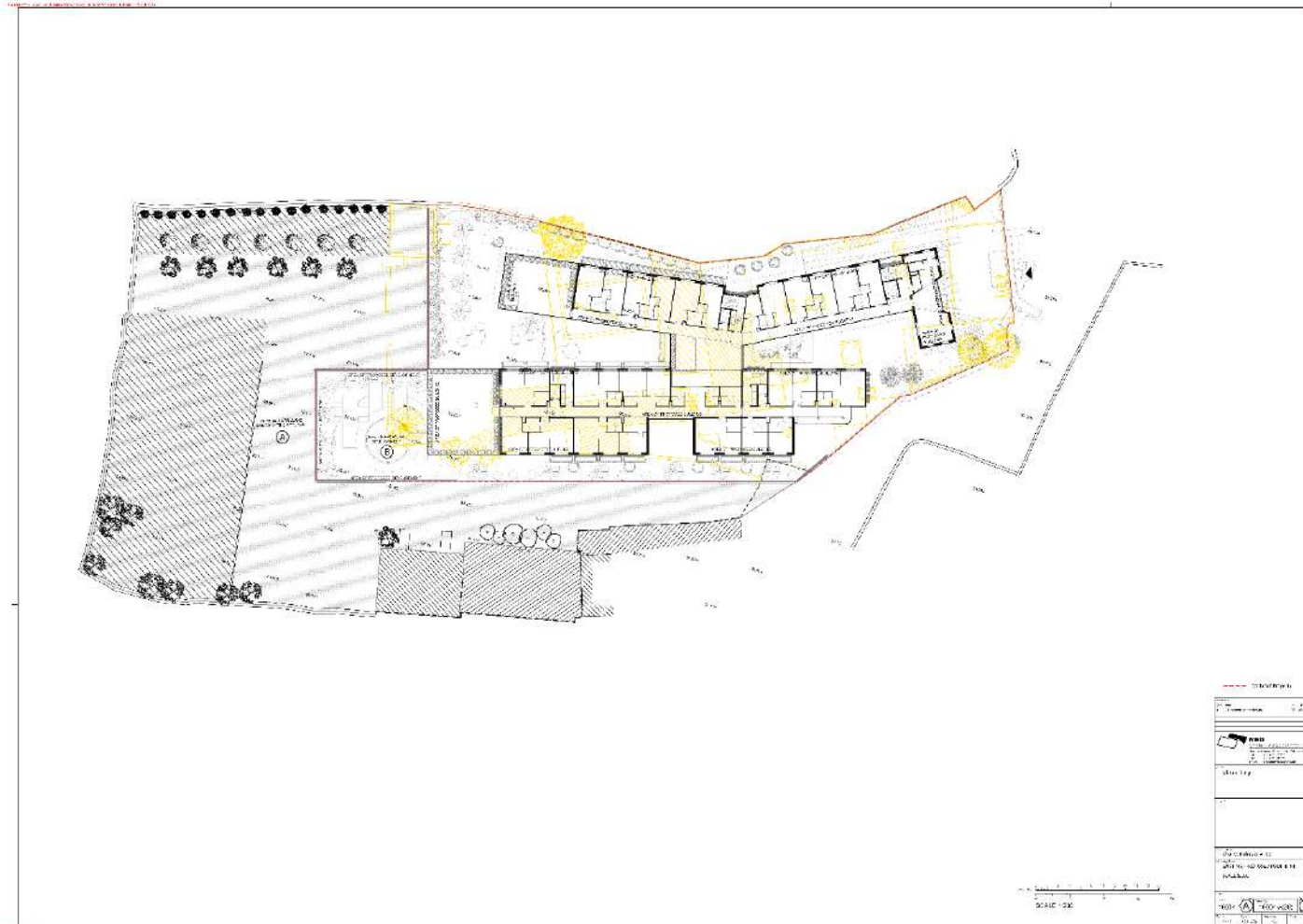
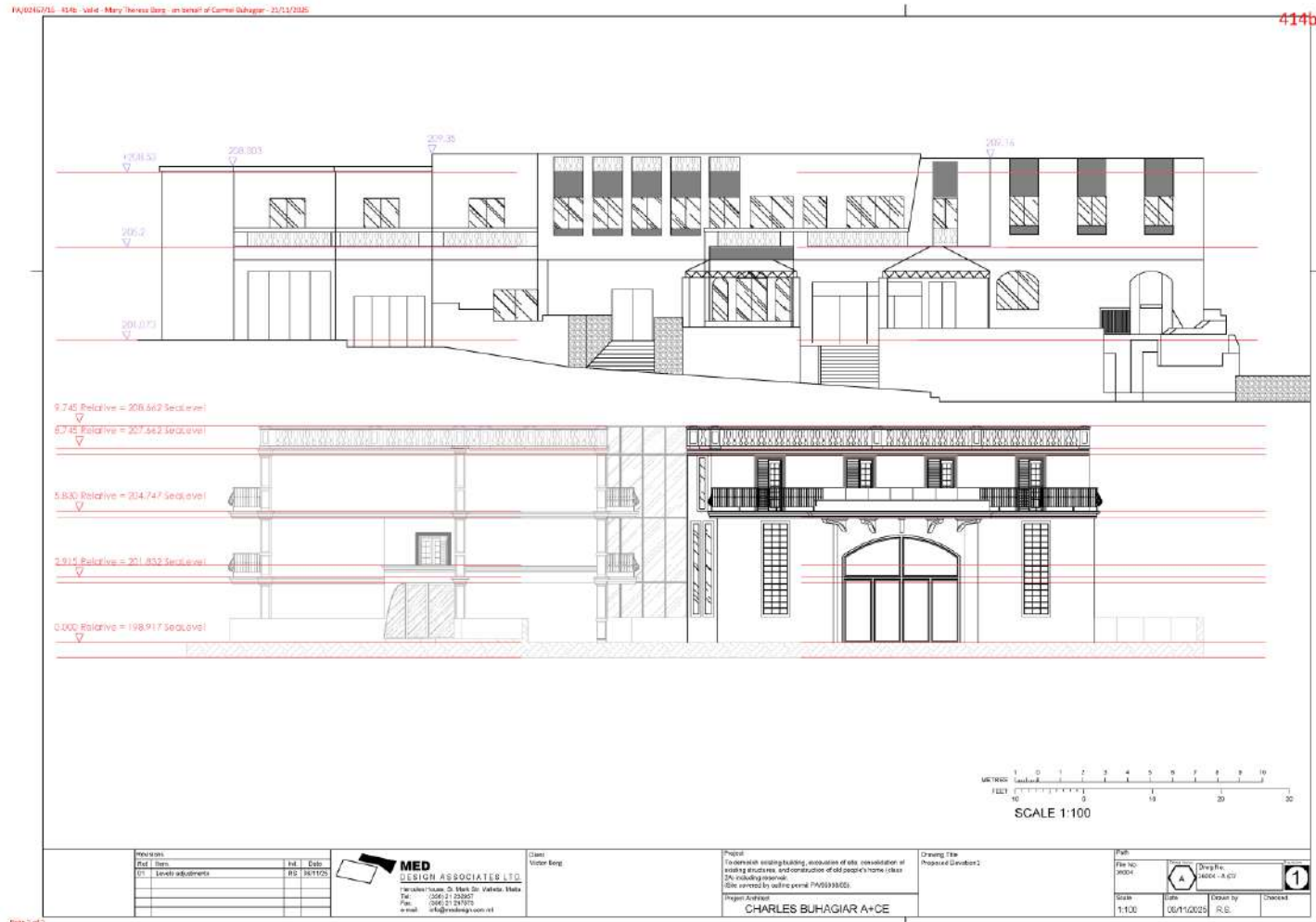


FIGURE 33: EXISTING VS PROPOSED FOOTPRINT



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FIGURE 34: PROPOSED ELEVATION I

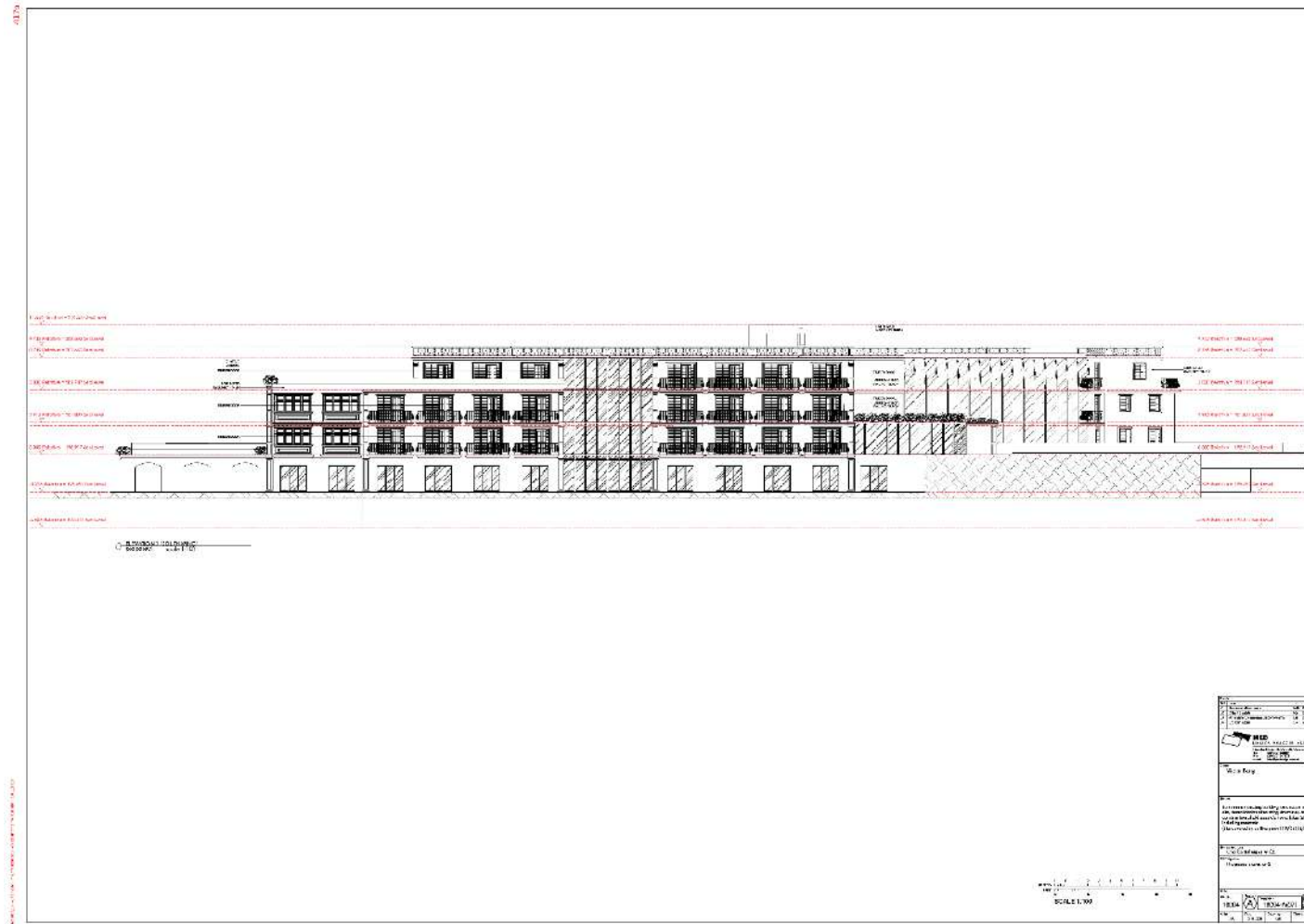


FIGURE 35: PROPOSED ELEVATION I SOUTH WING

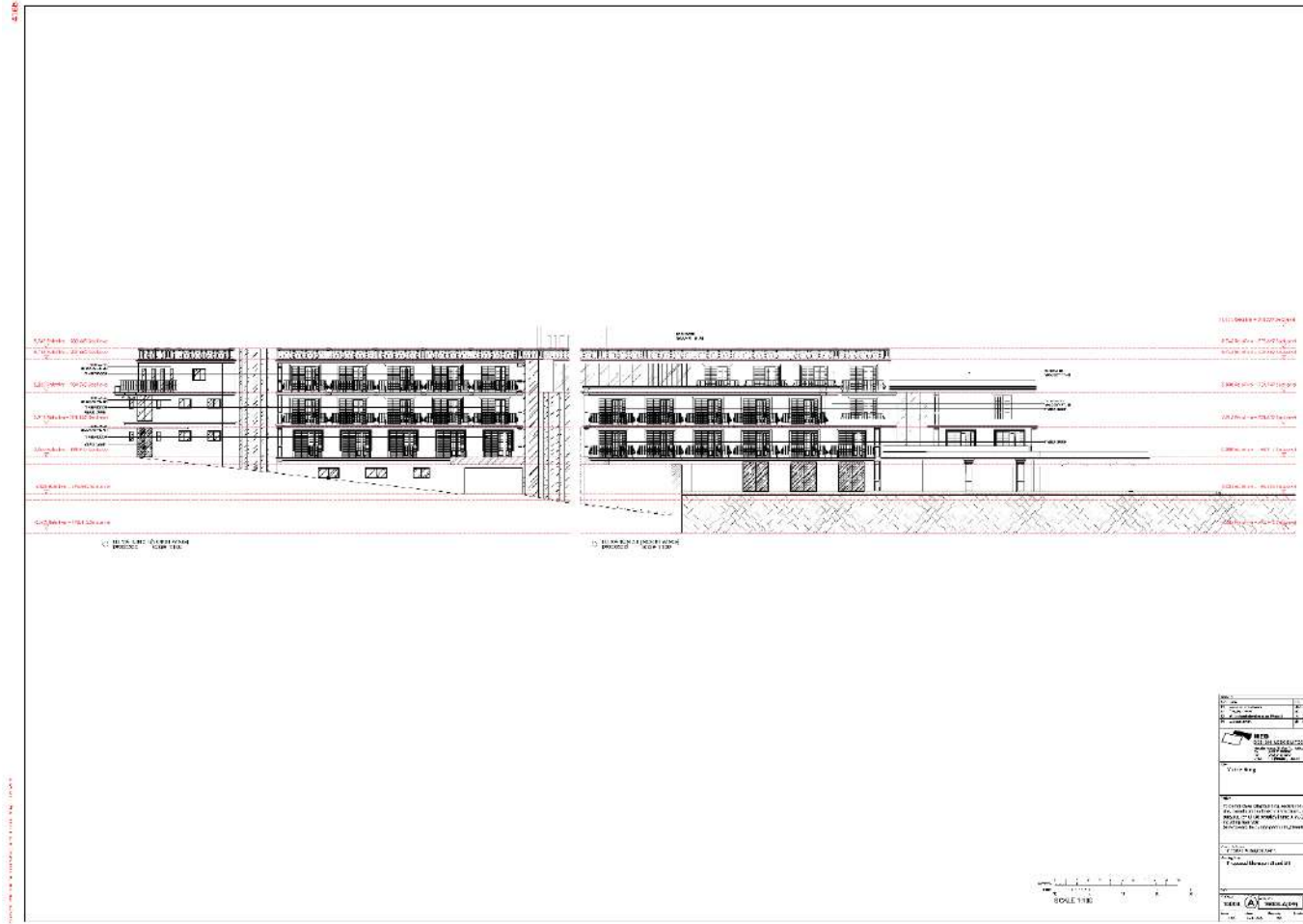


FIGURE 37: PROPOSED ELEVATION 3I AND 3II NORTH WING

3.2 PHOTOMONTAGES

The below photomontages (Figure 39, Figure 41) display a 3D render of the proposed elderly care home from two different viewpoints (VP1 and VP2), compared to the existing site and surroundings pictured in the baseline photos (Figure 38, Figure 40).

Viewpoint 1 comprises of agricultural land (Figure 38). Viewpoint 2 shows a partial view of the National Viticulture and Oenology Centre on the left-hand side and an undeveloped area with various trees on the right-hand side (Figure 40).

When comparing the photomontages with the baseline, it is evident that, unlike the existing building, the proposed development uses earth-toned colours that blend more effectively with the rural surroundings. From Viewpoint 2, the footprint, massing, and overall volume of the proposed elderly care home are noticeably reduced compared to the existing building. Therefore, it is inferred that the proposed development will have less of a negative visual impact on the surrounding rural landscape character than the existing neglected aparthotel.



FIGURE 38: BASELINE PHOTO OF THE SITE PROPOSED FOR DEVELOPMENT, FROM VIEWPOINT 1 (TRIQ INŻUL IX-XEMX)



FIGURE 39: PHOTOMONTAGE OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT FROM VIEWPOINT 1 (TRIQ INŻUL IX-XEMX)



FIGURE 40: BASELINE PHOTO OF THE SITE PROPOSED FOR DEVELOPMENT, FROM VIEWPOINT 2 (TRIQ IL-BUSKETT)



FIGURE 41: PHOTOMONTAGE OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT FROM VIEWPOINT 2 (TRIQ IL-BUSKETT)

3.3 CONSTRUCTION PHASE

3.3.1 Number of employees

During the construction phase there will be 35 employees on site at any one time.

3.3.2 Phasing

The proposed development will be built in one phase involving demolition and excavation, construction, and finishes. Finishes will overlap with construction works as these will be carried out in tandem. All works will be completed within **24 months**. Works on site are planned to commence within 6 months from the issue of the development permit.

3.3.3 Raw materials

Approximately 43,320 tonnes of materials including steel, concrete, bricks, plastic, membranes, and glass will be required to construct the proposed elderly care home. The list of raw materials required during the construction phase are estimated as follows:

- Concrete
- Wood
- Bituminous Mixtures
- Plastic sheeting
- Iron and Steel
- Cables
- Glass
- Tiles & Ceramics
- Aluminium
- Insulation Materials

3.3.4 Machinery

The type and quantity of machinery required for each phase of the construction is estimated as follows:

TABLE 8: MACHINERY REQUIRED FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE SCHEME

MACHINERY	QUANTITY
Excavator	1
Concrete pump	1
Crane	1
Tipper truck	2

MACHINERY	QUANTITY
Concrete mixer truck	1

A crane will be used for placing concrete slabs. Tipper trucks with high-up attachments will transport screeds and lift hollow bricks. A concrete mixer truck and concrete pump will be used to lay out floors and paved areas.

3.3.5 Energy

No energy sources are envisaged to be required during the construction phase.

3.3.6 Waste

Demolition waste will be generated due to the demolition of the existing aparthotel. Additionally, it is estimated that 14,000 cu.m of excavation waste will be generated.

The amounts and types of the other wastes generated during the construction phase are estimated to be as follows:

- **Concrete (EWC 17 01 01):** <1 t (recovered/reused);
- **Wood (EWC 17 02 01):** <0.2 t (shuttering is reused, negligible quantities generated and sold to third parties);
- **Bituminous Mixtures (EWC 17 03 01)*:** <0.1 t (will be stored in suitable containers and disposed of appropriately);
- **Bituminous Mixtures (EWC 17 03 02):** <0.2 t;
- **Plastic (EWC 17 02 03):** <0.2 t (sheeting will be made to measure, so only negligible lengths of cuts may result);
- **Iron and Steel (EWC 17 04 05):** approx. <0.5 t (sold to waste brokers for export and subsequent recycling);
- **Cables (EWC 17 04 11):** <0.2 t (most of which will be reused);
- **Glass (EWC 17 02 02):** Negligible (only breakages);
- **Tiles & Ceramics (EWC 17 01 03):** <1t (unused/unopened boxes to be returned or kept for future maintenance as deemed fit);
- **Aluminium (EWC 17 04 02):** Negligible (only cut offs, sold to third parties)
- **Insulation Materials (EWC 17 08 02):** Negligible
- **Others (EWC 17 09 04):** Negligible.

All waste shall be separated at source and stored in clearly labelled, closed receptacles according to waste stream within the designated on-site waste management areas. The skips shall be placed on a bunded hard standing area with drainage interception to prevent leachate. Once the waste receptacles are full, an appropriately licensed waste carrier shall transport the waste to an ERA licensed facility in line with the provisions of S.L.549.45.

Spill kits will be kept on site to tackle the unlikely chances of accidental spillages from machinery or trucks on site (EWC 13 02 04* – mineral based chlorinated engine, gear and lubricating oils, 13 02 05* – non-mineral based chlorinated engine, gear and

lubricating oils, 13 02 06* – synthetic engine, gear and lubricating oils, 13 02 07* – readily biodegradable engine, gear and lubricating oils, 13 02 08* – other engine, gear and lubricating oils, 13 07 01* – fuel oil and diesel, 13 07 02* – petrol, 13 07 03 – other fuels including mixtures). The quantities of hazardous liquids involved are negligible so much so that even in the unlikely event of delayed detection, there is no realistic risk of leaching.

The Best Practicable Environmental Options (BPEO) have been carefully considered, and indicative thresholds have been set to minimise the amount of landfilled residual waste. It is estimated that from all of the waste generated on site during the construction phase, 95% of it can be recovered. All waste generated will be either reused or recycled, or sold to authorised third parties (waste brokers) for eventual export for recovery and recycling, to leave only a negligible amount for disposal at authorised facilities.

On-site personnel will be provided with mobile prefabricated sanitary facilities, requiring only one operational water closet. These units, which may be waterless or include an integrated water tank, are suitable for sites without permanent water or sewage connections and incorporate measures to minimise leakage. They will be serviced regularly by licensed contractors using specialised equipment, and positioned in safe locations to avoid potential accidents.

3.3.7 Access

No new roads will be constructed for access during the construction phase. Construction traffic will access and exit the site via Triq l-Imnarja and Triq il-Buskett.

The existing road network is sufficient to accommodate the development, with no anticipated adverse impacts, as traffic associated with the project can be readily navigated to and from the site and onto the arterial road network.

3.3.8 Parking arrangements

Workers and project management personnel shall park all machinery and vehicles associated with the construction phase in the existing site so as not to cause any inconveniences. The site may also house some material storage, equipment and machinery during the construction phase, which shall not encroach onto the adjacent public roads.

3.3.9 Trip generation

It is estimated that 1,880 heavy goods vehicle (HGV) trips will be required over the construction period.

3.4 OPERATIONAL PHASE

3.4.1 Number of employees

The elderly care facility will be operated by a third party and 40 staff members will be employed during the operational phase.

3.4.2 Raw materials

The Applicant can provide information regarding the materials required for the operation and maintenance of the elderly care home at a later stage.

3.4.3 Machinery

The Applicant can provide information regarding the machinery required for the operation and maintenance of the elderly care home at a later stage.

3.4.4 Energy

A plant room and electrical room will be situated at Level -1. Information on the consumption of energy sources envisaged to operate the facility can be provided by the Applicant at a later stage.

3.4.5 Water

All paved areas and roofs will be connected to a reservoir of at least 1300 cu.m located at Level -2. Collected water runoff from precipitation and cleaning activities will be recycled for use as second class water within the development and for irrigation purposes.

3.4.6 Waste

The waste generated during the operation of the proposed elderly care home is anticipated to mainly consist of medical, municipal, and domestic waste including food waste, mixed waste, plastic, wood, paper and cardboard. Furthermore, the principle of the Three Rs (reduce, reuse, and recycle) shall be promoted amongst both the employees, residents, and visitors to keep waste generation as low as possible. Waste containers shall be labelled clearly according to waste stream, banded, and stored within the site precincts in an adequately ventilated area that is protected from climatic elements. Municipal waste will be collected until collection by a licensed waste carrier in the conventional manner and disposed of through a third-party contractor or taken to an authorised facility. Medical waste will be stored in the appropriate containers and disposed of at an authorised facility according to established protocols. The storage and transfer of such waste will follow the provisions of the WASTE REGULATIONS and the WASTE MANAGEMENT REGULATIONS (S.L. 549.63, S.L. 549.65).

No sewage mains are present in the area at present. However, due to the number of residential units in this hamlet, there are plans by the Water Services Corporation for the sewage mains to be extended. Once such plans are complete, sewage would be discharged from the site via the main sewer.

3.4.7 Access

The employees, residents, and visitors will be able to access the site through the existing roads Triq l-Imnarja and Triq il-Buskett.

3.4.8 Parking arrangements

The employees, residents, and visitors will be able to make use of the 40 car parking spaces and 1 van parking space provided at Level -2, which is deemed sufficient for the needs of visitors and employees. Given that the proposed development is an elderly care home, it is unlikely that the residents themselves will require parking spaces.

3.4.9 Trip generation

The existing road network is sufficient to accommodate the proposed development once operational, with no anticipated adverse impacts, as traffic associated with the project can be readily navigated to and from the site and onto the arterial road network. The anticipated traffic to and from the site will be most likely attributed to the employees and visitors, and is not considered to be significant enough to cause any noticeable impact to the neighbouring road network.

4 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

A preliminary indication of the environmental impacts that are likely to be associated with the Scheme are described in this section, and may serve as an initial scoping assessment in the context of the ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REGULATIONS OF 2017 (S.L. 549.46). The potential impacts of the Scheme and their respective mitigation measures are listed in Table 9.

TABLE 9: POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

FEATURE POTENTIALLY IMPACTED	DESCRIPTION OF POTENTIAL IMPACT	MITIGATION MEASURES
Land Use	<p>Moderate Beneficial</p> <p>The land use at the site currently designated as an unused aparthotel will be changed to an elderly care home with ancillary facilities. The neglected building will be demolished and the existing built-up footprint will be reduced due to the smaller proposed footprint of the home. The remaining land use area that consists of an agricultural field and covers the remainder of the Scheme site will not be changed and the trees and shrubs present will be maintained. Therefore, the land use of the existing agricultural land will mostly remain unchanged, and only the area already built up previously will be redeveloped.</p> <p>Minor Adverse</p> <p>The proposed development may exert additional land use pressures in the surrounding areas which mostly consist of agricultural fields and nearby protected areas like the Buskett Woodland and Dingli cliffs.</p>	<p>The reduction of the built-up footprint will reduce the land use pressures on the agricultural land and rural environs. Moreover, the land use of the building will be changed from that of an unused aparthotel to a care home that offers services for the elderly community. The majority of natural features within the site boundary will also be retained.</p>
Visual	<p>Moderate Adverse</p>	<p>The home and its immediate surroundings will be extensively landscaped with indigenous tree and shrub</p>

FEATURE POTENTIALLY IMPACTED	DESCRIPTION OF POTENTIAL IMPACT	MITIGATION MEASURES
	<p>During construction, works will be carried out within the site boundary, but the appearance of construction machinery, tower cranes, and scaffolding will have an adverse visual impact on the landscape character of the rural surroundings.</p> <p>During operation, exterior lighting at night may impact residents and fauna in the vicinity of the development.</p> <p>Minor Beneficial</p> <p>The proposed development uses earth-toned colours that blend more effectively with the rural environment when compared to the existing white and teal building, resulting in an improved visual coherence with the surroundings. The footprint, massing, and overall volume of the proposed elderly care home are noticeably reduced compared to the existing building, as seen in the photomontages. Therefore, it is inferred that the proposed development will have less of a negative visual impact on the surrounding rural landscape character than the existing neglected aparthotel.</p>	<p>species to blend in with the rural surroundings. The applicant will also ensure minimal light pollution by using only essential security lighting at night. Energy-efficient luminaires will be chosen to reduce glare and prevent energy waste, considering the site's context.</p>
Ecology	<p>Moderate Adverse</p> <p>The proposed development is surrounded by rural</p>	<p>Environmental permits will be necessary to transplant trees. Landscaping on site surrounding the elderly care home will</p>

FEATURE POTENTIALLY IMPACTED	DESCRIPTION OF POTENTIAL IMPACT	MITIGATION MEASURES
	<p>countryside and agricultural fields, thus any flora present may be directly affected by the proposed development especially during construction. Given the proximity to important Natura 2000 sites, SACs and SPAs, including Buskett, factors such as construction noise and exterior lighting during operation may negatively impact protected fauna like birds.</p> <p>The interventions will inevitably lead to a total of 14 trees to be shifted due to the proposed development. This along with construction noise and emissions may thus negatively impact these flora and fauna at the site and in the surrounding fields.</p> <p>Moderate Beneficial</p> <p>The majority of the Scheme area that currently consists of agricultural land with trees and shrubs will be maintained. The area immediately surrounding the footprint of the proposed building will be extensively landscaped with native tree species to blend harmoniously and maintain ecological corridors with the rural surroundings.</p>	<p>include planting of new indigenous trees on site. Monitoring of their condition following planting is necessary. To minimise the impact of light pollution on fauna, the applicant will also ensure minimal light pollution by using only essential security lighting at night. Energy-efficient luminaires will be chosen to reduce glare and prevent energy waste, considering the site's context.</p>

FEATURE POTENTIALLY IMPACTED	DESCRIPTION OF POTENTIAL IMPACT	MITIGATION MEASURES
<p>Agriculture</p>	<p>Moderate Adverse</p> <p>During construction, dust generation could impact nearby agricultural fields and protected areas, particularly the Buskett-Girgenti area.</p>	<p>Impacts of construction may be mitigated through implementation of various dust suppression techniques and good working practices. All brick-cutting machines will be fitted with integrated water suppression systems. Chasing tools will be equipped with vacuum extraction systems. Scaffolding with protective netting will be erected on façades to minimize dust dispersion. Anywhere where the boundary wall is less than 2m in height should be complimented with appropriate site hoarding.</p> <p>The external design for the Scheme should blend in with the rural and agricultural surroundings better when compared to the existing building.</p>
<p>Archaeology and Cultural Assets</p>	<p>Moderate Adverse</p> <p>The 100m buffer surrounding the site overlaps with the buffer zone designated to protect the Buskett Woodland. Southeast of the site, an Area of Archaeological importance is found, referred to as Ix-Xagħra ta' Għar il-Kbir AAI.</p> <p>The proposed excavation may lead to unknown cultural findings.</p>	<p>It is strongly recommended that an archaeological monitor is present on-site during excavation.</p>

FEATURE POTENTIALLY IMPACTED	DESCRIPTION OF POTENTIAL IMPACT	MITIGATION MEASURES
Geology & Geomorphology	<p>Minor Adverse</p> <p>Excavation works may alter the geology, geomorphology and palaeontology of the area.</p>	N/A
Hydrology & Hydrogeology	<p>Minor Adverse</p> <p>Construction emissions may negatively impact the quality of water collected by nearby reservoirs in the surrounding agricultural fields.</p>	<p>The ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT CONSTRUCTION SITE REGULATIONS of 2007 (S.L. 435.79) should be enforced and implemented throughout the construction phase to minimise the dispersal of dust into the surrounding environment. For example, all stockpiles (e.g. soil, rock) should be kept covered by a heavy-duty sheet when not in use. All brick-cutting machines will be fitted with integrated water suppression systems. Chasing tools will be equipped with vacuum extraction systems. Scaffolding with protective netting will be erected on façades to minimize dust dispersion.</p>
Air Quality	<p>Minor Adverse</p> <p>During construction, some dust generation may negatively impact air quality and the surrounding agricultural activity.</p> <p>During operation, a slight increase in vehicular trips and local traffic is expected, though the impact will be negligible</p>	<p>The ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT CONSTRUCTION SITE REGULATIONS of 2007 (S.L. 435.79) should be enforced and implemented throughout the construction phase to minimise the dispersal of dust into the surrounding environment. For example, all stockpiles (e.g. soil, rock) should be kept covered by a heavy-duty sheet when not in use. All brick-cutting machines will be fitted with integrated water suppression systems. Chasing tools will be equipped with vacuum extraction systems. Scaffolding with protective</p>

FEATURE POTENTIALLY IMPACTED	DESCRIPTION OF POTENTIAL IMPACT	MITIGATION MEASURES
	<p>due to the low volume of attracted traffic and smooth navigation of traffic envisaged.</p>	<p>netting will be erected on façades to minimize dust dispersion.</p>
<p>Noise</p>	<p>Moderate Adverse</p> <p>During the construction phase, additional noise will be generated which may disturb the nearby residents and the peaceful agro-ecosystems that dominate the surroundings.</p> <p>Minor Adverse</p> <p>During operation, the increase in noise levels is expected to be minimal compared to the existing conditions since the existing neglected aparthotel will be transformed into an elderly care home. The volume of attracted traffic is expected to be low, and such facilities are typically characterised by a calm and quiet environment, low-intensity daily activities, and no industrial or high-volume operations, thus noise disturbances to the surrounding areas are unlikely.</p>	<p>The Environmental Management Construction Site Regulations of 2007 (S.L. 435.79) should be implemented to minimise the disturbance to locals in line with S.L. 435.79. Specific measures include restricting working hours to daylight hours and switching off machinery when not in use.</p> <p>Construction work will be carried out as per permit conditions and regulations on operating hours, which will generally be between 08:00 and 17:00.</p> <p>Noise levels shall be within acceptable levels in accordance with BS 5228: Part 1: 1984: <i>Noise Control on Construction and Open Sites - Code of Practice for Basic Information and Procedure for Noise Control</i>. As prescribed by law, all equipment will be equipped with effective silencers and noise-suppression devices to minimise noise emissions during construction.</p>

FEATURE POTENTIALLY IMPACTED	DESCRIPTION OF POTENTIAL IMPACT	MITIGATION MEASURES
Waste Management	<p>Moderate Adverse</p> <p>During construction, it is expected that the excavation work will generate 14,381 cu.m of excavated material. The waste will be stored within the site, until it is transported to an appropriate, registered waste management facility. Low amounts of other generated construction waste is envisaged, as reuse of materials will be prioritized.</p> <p>Minor Adverse</p> <p>It is estimated that the operation of the elderly care home will generate additional medical and municipal solid waste.</p>	<p>The ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT CONSTRUCTION SITE REGULATIONS of 2007 (S.L. 435.79) should be implemented to ensure that waste is stored and managed on site in an appropriate manner before being transported to a registered waste disposal facility.</p> <p>A Contamination Risk Assessment or Material Characterisation Tests may be necessary to confirm if excavated material could potentially be reused, or else disposed of according to its contamination level or hazardous nature.</p> <p>Where possible any waste material will be reused on site to limit the volume of waste that needs to be disposed of.</p> <p>During construction, waste streams will be segregated at source into skips (timber, steel offcuts, block/concrete rubble, packaging). Skips will be placed on a bunded hardstanding area with drainage interception to prevent leachate.</p> <p>During operation, the 3 Rs (Reduce, Reuse and Recycle) should apply to all recyclable material. Unrecycled waste</p>

FEATURE POTENTIALLY IMPACTED	DESCRIPTION OF POTENTIAL IMPACT	MITIGATION MEASURES
		will be disposed of accordingly in authorised landfills or waste disposal facilities.
Social Impacts	<p>Moderate Adverse</p> <p>The site of the proposed scheme is located amongst rural land and within a Category 2 large rural settlement, thus could impact the natural and cultural heritage of the area.</p> <p>During the construction phase of the Scheme, the use of heavy machinery will generate noise and dust which will cause a nuisance to the neighbouring residences and the peaceful countryside environment.</p> <p>Moderate Beneficial</p> <p>The redevelopment of the existing aparthotel into the elderly care home with landscaping would improve the overall aesthetic appearance of this built-up area. The proposal provides increased opportunities for employment in the private health care sector, and will help alleviate the demand of elderly care given the increasing local aging population.</p>	Barriers, lighting and signs will be provided to aid traffic management within the site and to prevent unauthorised access to the site. It will be ensured that Health and Safety protocols are followed at all times. These provisions will be regularly checked, adequately maintained, and updated as necessary.

