

Planning Authority,
St Francis Ravelin,
Floriana FRN 1230,
Malta.

18th February 2026

Application No: PA/07972/25
Location: Site at Wied Incita, Triq L-Imdina, Attard
Proposal: Regeneration of Wied Incita. To include restoration and construction of rubble walls and fences. To create paving areas in decking, gravel, Geo grids and beaten earth. Planting of new afforestation areas to improve biodiversity. Restoration of reservoirs and improved water management. Construction of sanitary facilities, pedestrian crossing and lightweight shading structures. To also include Physical activity areas, play areas and dog park. This application also seeks to sanction alterations to existing structures.

Subject: **Project Description Statement**

1. Introduction

The proposed project aims to regenerate *Wied Incita* through a holistic approach that balances ecological restoration with recreational and community use. The intervention seeks to preserve and enhance the valley's natural assets while providing accessible facilities that encourage outdoor activity, social interaction, and sustainable environmental management.

2. General Cleaning

The removal of the extensive weed-mat covering will be undertaken using a compact bobcat, with all material collected, transported, and disposed of through licensed waste management operators. During this process, redundant pipework and metal wiring remnants of a former irrigation system will be extracted and discarded in accordance with waste disposal regulations.

Efforts will be made to limit soil compaction and surface disturbance; however, a certain degree of ground impact will be unavoidable due to the nature of the works. Any rubble, abandoned planting pots, or other debris encountered on site will also be cleared as part of this operation.

In addition, the removal of accumulated construction waste, derelict agricultural structures, and illegally dumped white goods will be carried out to restore the site to a safe and orderly condition.



Figure 1 Pre-67 Store



Figure 2 Removal of structures



Figure 3 Tilling of land to open new afforestation zones

3. Ecological conservation, pruning and felling

The majority of trees shown on the accompanying map require some degree of corrective pruning to re-establish proper form and eliminate unwanted basal growth ("suckers"). This measure is also intended to prevent any low-hanging branches from creating potential hazards for site visitors.

During inspection, certain specimen such as the Eucalyptus trees were identified as unstable and at risk of falling. In these instances, targeted hard pruning will be undertaken to mitigate immediate safety risks and to alleviate excess crown weight, thereby improving the chances of tree recovery.

All pruning and felling operations will be undertaken exclusively by certified tree specialists, following the Guidelines on Works Involving Trees (ERA, 2019).

Removal of dead tree will only be done if the tree poses a danger to users or is preventing further growth from surrounding vegetation. In certain instances, snag trees will be left as they too offer a home to roosting birds and other wildlife.

Furthermore, selective removal of alien species will be carried out where such species threaten user safety or compete with indigenous vegetation. Nevertheless, non-invasive alien species that complement and enhance the area's ecological diversity will be preserved to support a balanced and sustainable landscape.



Figure 4 Heavy pruning of snag tree to render safe



Figure 5 Removal of dead and invasive undergrowth



Figure 6 Removal of Alien Species (*Ricinus communis*)

4. Afforestation and Ecological Planting

Justification:

Increasing tree cover and introducing native plant species will contribute to biodiversity conservation and ecological resilience. The project seeks to rehabilitate degraded areas and strengthen the valley's natural habitat.

As compensation for the removal of dead trees, new specimens will be planted to restore canopy cover and maintain ecological balance within the site. In addition to these replacements, a comprehensive supplementary planting programme will be undertaken to enhance biodiversity, landscape character, and long-term environmental resilience.

This initiative will focus on the introduction of native and compatible fruit-bearing and evergreen species suited to the local context. Areas currently lacking vegetation will be selectively replanted, with species chosen according to factors such as soil depth, sunlight exposure, and proximity to existing mature trees.

A diverse mix of trees and flowering shrubs will be established to promote habitat variety, improve soil stability, and strengthen the site's ecological network. This approach ensures that the replanting effort contributes not only to compensating for losses but also to enriching the natural environment and reinforcing the site's visual and ecological integrity.

Benefits:

- Provides shaded areas, improving user comfort.
- Enhances biodiversity by attracting birds, insects, and small fauna.
- Improves air quality and reduces heat island effects.
- Promotes environmental awareness and education for visitors.

Indigenous Species

Ref.	Maltese Name	English Name	Latin Name	ERA Status
T01	Rhamnu	Mediterranean Buckthorn	Rhamnus alaternus	Indigenous
T02	Palma Nana	Dwarf Fan Palm	Chamaerops humilis	Indigenous
T04	Tamarisk	Tamarisk	Tamarix africana	Indigenous
T06	Rand	Bay Laurel	Laurus nobilis	Indigenous
T10	Haruba	Carob Tree	Ceratonia siliqua	Indigenous
T11	Lentisk	Mastic Tree	Pistacia lentiscus	Indigenous
T12	Ballut	Holm Oak	Quercus ilex	Indigenous
T21	Tin	Fig Tree	Ficus carica	Indigenous
T35	Żebbuġ	Olive Tree	Olea europaea	Indigenous

Compatible / Naturalised Species

Ref.	Maltese Name	English Name	Latin Name	ERA Interpretation
T07	Siġra ta' Ġuda	Judas Tree	Cercis siliquastrum	Archaeophyte
T08	Oleandru	Oleander	Nerium oleander	Naturalised
T16	Kurraġġon	Kurrajong	Brachychiton populneus	Compatible
T17	Ċipressu	Italian Cypress	Cupressus sempervirens	Archaeophyte
T23	Lewż	Almond Tree	Prunus dulcis	Archaeophyte
T24	Rummien	Pomegranate	Punica granatum	Archaeophyte
T28	Bougainvillea	Paper Flower	Bougainvillea spp.	Ornamental

Alien Species (Non-invasive)

Ref.	Maltese Name	English Name	Latin Name	ERA Status
T03	Palma tad-Dati	Date Palm	Phoenix dactylifera	Alien
T05	Palma Washington	Washington Palm	Washingtonia robusta	Alien
T14	Siġra tal-Gomma	Rubber Tree	Ficus elastica	Alien
T18	Schinus	Pepper Tree	Schinus molle	Alien
T19	Ombu	Ombu	Phytolacca dioica	Alien
T21	Banyan	Banyan Tree	Ficus microcarpa	Alien
T26	Weeping Fig	Weeping Fig	Ficus benjamina	Alien
T29	Jacaranda	Jacaranda	Jacaranda mimosifolia	Alien
T30	Araucaria	Norfolk Pine	Araucaria heterophylla	Alien

Alien – Invasive Species

Ref.	Maltese Name	English Name	Latin Name	Legal Status
T13	Siġra tal-Bżar	Pepper Tree	Schinus terebinthifolius	Alien
T15	Akaċja	Golden Wattle	Acacia pycnantha	IAS – LN 311/2006
T25	Riċinu	Castor Oil Plant	(Ricinus communis)	IAS
T31	Leucaena	Lead Tree	Leucaena leucocephala	IAS
T33	Yucca	Spanish Dagger	Yucca gloriosa	IAS
T34	Eucalyptus	Red Gum	Eucalyptus spp.	IAS
T13	Siġra tal-Bżar	Pepper Tree	Schinus terebinthifolius	Alien
T22	Qasab	Great Reed	Arundo donax	Non-native (managed)

5. Restoration and Construction of Rubble Walls and Fences

Methodology

Rubble walls across the site will be restored to improve the visual quality of the landscape and to prevent further soil erosion from the adjoining upper fields. Wherever possible, the original stones will be carefully recovered and reused to maintain authenticity. Any additional stones required will match the existing ones in texture, colour, and size to ensure a cohesive and harmonious appearance throughout the area.

Where new rubble walls are necessary to retain soil, these will be constructed in keeping with traditional techniques and in the same style as the existing structures. Locally sourced stones will be used whenever possible. The restoration and construction methodology will follow established best practices, as outlined below:

- In sections where breaches are identified, the affected portions will be dismantled with care, and all reusable stones will be set aside for reintegration.
- When rebuilding from foundation level, larger stones will be placed at the base, while franka stones (ktajjen) will be strategically incorporated to enhance stability.
- The internal voids between the outer layers will be packed with smaller infill stones (mazkan).
- Each wall will be slightly inclined inwards from bottom to top to improve structural integrity.
- New rubble walls will typically measure about 1 metre in width and approximately 1.2 metres in height, or otherwise match the height of adjoining walls to ensure visual uniformity.

Access to the work areas will be achieved through an existing service road. Vehicles and machinery will be parked and unloaded in designated zones adjacent to the intervention areas, ensuring that operations are carried out efficiently and without obstruction or disturbance to public access.

Justification:

Rubble walls are a key element of Malta's rural heritage and serve multiple purposes including soil retention, erosion prevention, and the creation of habitats for flora and fauna. Over time, many existing walls have deteriorated and require reconstruction or reinforcement.



Figure 7 Conservation of existing rubble walls

Timber fencing will be installed along areas with level changes, such as terrace edges, to ensure user safety. Additionally, chain-link fencing will be erected along the site perimeter to restrict access to protected zones and areas with steep or hazardous terrain.



Figure 8 protective chain-link fence

Benefits:

- Improves landscape integrity and visual character.
- Reduces soil erosion and safeguards terraced areas.
- Provides micro-habitats that support biodiversity.
- Enhances safety by clearly defining pathways and boundaries for users.

6. Paving Areas in Decking, Gravel, Geo-Grids and Beaten Earth**Justification:**

The project promotes sustainable mobility through the creation of pedestrian-friendly surfaces using a range of finishes that blend with the rural character of the site. These materials are chosen for their permeability, durability, and aesthetic integration with the natural setting.

Benefits:

- Facilitates safe and accessible movement throughout the valley.
- Encourages walking and recreational use.
- Maintains natural drainage patterns by using permeable materials.
- Creates an inclusive environment for all users, including children, elderly persons, and those with reduced mobility.



Figure 9 Beaten Earth and Gravel Paths

7. Restoration of Reservoirs and Improvement of Water Management

Justification:

Water management is a crucial element for the sustainability of the valley. Restoring reservoirs will maximize rainwater harvesting, reduce runoff, and ensure availability of water for irrigation and ecological purposes.

Benefits:

- Secures a sustainable water source for afforestation and landscaping.
- Mitigates flooding and soil erosion.
- Improves long-term ecological balance.
- Demonstrates responsible resource management to the community.



Figure 10 Restoration of existing reservoir



Figure 11 Restoration of existing reservoir

8. Construction of Sanitary Facilities, Lightweight Shading Structures and Pedestrian Bridge

Justification:

Basic facilities are essential to ensure the valley is functional and welcoming for users. The inclusion of shading structures and a pedestrian bridge improves accessibility and comfort while encouraging longer stays and more diverse use of the site.

Benefits:

Provides necessary amenities for families and visitors.
Increases accessibility across natural barriers through the pedestrian bridge.
Enhances comfort and usability in summer months through shaded areas.
Promotes inclusivity by making the valley usable for all age groups.

9. Physical Activity Areas, Play Areas and Dog Park

Justification:

Providing spaces for active and social recreation ensures the valley serves the needs of a wide cross-section of the community. Designated areas for exercise, children's play, and dog walking create a multifunctional recreational landscape.

Benefits:

Encourages physical activity, supporting healthier lifestyles.
Provides safe and structured play areas for children.
Offers designated spaces for dog owners, reducing conflict with other users.
Enhances community engagement and social interaction.

10. Sanctioning of Alterations to Existing Built Structures

Justification:

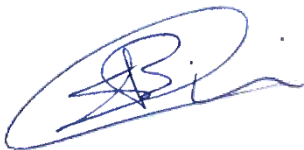
Previous alterations within the site are to be sanctioned as part of this application to ensure full compliance with planning policies. This step is important for transparency and to bring all works under formal approval.

Benefits:

Legalize existing structures, ensuring clarity and compliance.
Allows integration of past interventions into the regeneration plan.
Ensures future management and monitoring of the site can be properly regulated.

10. Conclusion

The regeneration of Wied Incita is designed to protect and enhance the valley's natural environment while providing a wide range of recreational, educational, and social benefits for the community. By integrating ecological restoration with user-friendly facilities, the project will create a sustainable and inclusive public space that respects Malta's rural heritage while addressing modern needs.



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