



TERMS OF REFERENCE

FOR THE PREPARATION OF AN

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

FOR

EA 00100/26 (PA/05888/25)

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Proposed structural modifications and partial demolition, swimming pool re-erection and addition of two floors to the existing West Wing of the Paradise Bay Hotel, including demolition of the existing East Wing, excavation, and the construction of a new underground parking area, reservoirs, indoor and outdoor swimming pools, back-of-house facilities, LPG Tank, Solar and PV panels, relocation of the existing substation and an additional new substation, hotel ancillary amenities, extensive soft landscaping, restaurants, a multipurpose hall, an auditorium, and guest suites — all designed to complement and serve the existing Class 3B hotel use.

Paradise Bay Resort, Triq il-Marfa, Ċirkewwa, Mellieħa.

September 2026

- Note 1:** The Environment and Resources Authority (ERA) reserves the right to modify these Terms of Reference according to any relevant environmental and planning considerations that may emerge at any relevant stage of the EIA or the permit application process, as well as in the event of any changes or updates to the proposed development. ERA also reserves the right to request additional or amended studies should the findings of the EIA be insufficient to adequately inform the decision-making process or if the EIA identifies matters which should be subject to further investigation.
- Note 2:** Unless otherwise agreed with ERA, all requirements set out in these Terms of Reference are to be complied with. If there are any aspects that the consultants deem irrelevant to this study, or if at any stage the consultants discover any environmentally relevant aspect (not included in these TORs) that needs to be studied, the consultants shall inform ERA immediately, justifying their reasoning.
- Note 3:** Difficulties, including technical difficulties and lack of information, encountered by the consultants in compiling the required information shall be made clear in the EIA. All references to published works and sources of information shall be duly acknowledged in a manner that enables tracing of the information source and verification. No material may be incorporated by reference unless it is reasonably available for inspection by potentially interested persons within the consultation period and thereafter, and for record-keeping and unhindered perusal by ERA. Any material which is based on unavailable proprietary data shall not be incorporated by reference.
- Note 4:** Any requirement for confidentiality of any section or detail of the EIA must be strongly justified and a formal request in this regard must be submitted to ERA. Should ERA grant confidentiality, alternative material that is still adequate for proper assessment, public consultation and decision-making must be provided.
- Note 5:** Agreement on method statements, and ancillary liaison with ERA, is not mandatory but is recommended. Nevertheless, ERA reserves the right to disagree with the methodology proposed, including proposed areas of influence, and with the EIA submissions in general, and to factor such disagreement in its critique of the EIA.
- Note 6:** During review of the EIA, ERA will submit comments for the consultants' consideration, as relevant. Following the consultants' response to ERA satisfaction, a revised second draft of the EIA, addressing the comments, will normally be required. This may take the form of a complete resubmission or of an Addendum detailing the revisions to the previous submissions, as deemed most expedient by ERA, taking into account continuity and traceability of the information, and overall user-friendliness vis-à-vis subsequent review, presentation, public consultation, record-keeping and decision-making. A complete resubmission will generally be required if changes are numerous or complex, whereas an Addendum may be preferred if changes are more limited.
- Note 7:** The consultants are not exonerated from obtaining any formal authorisation from ERA, and from other relevant entities, vis-à-vis any activity ancillary to the EIA (e.g. collection, sampling, capture, or waiver of access restrictions) wherever such authorisation is legally required.
- Note 8:** These Terms of Reference, and all ancillary correspondence, are issued without prejudice to ERA's position on the project. Accordingly, their issuing (even when customised to address specific project details) should not be construed as evidence in favour or against the project or any component thereof, unless the contrary is clearly stated.
- Note 9:** Wherever relevant, references to land also include the sea, and ancillary terms such as land-take, ground cover, landscape, vehicles, access roads, etc. should be interpreted accordingly.
- Note 10:** Wherever any baseline studies required by these Terms of Reference is covered by already-existing data, such data should be used in preference to unnecessary duplication of baseline studies, unless the consultants or ERA or both are of the opinion that the existing data is unavailable, incorrect, outdated, unreliable, insufficient, or otherwise inadequate for the purpose of the EIA.

An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report is to be prepared as required by the Schedule I, Category II, Section 7.1.1.1 (Construction or extension of hotels, holiday complexes, holiday villages, hostels, accommodation facilities, homes for the elderly, hospitals, or associated development, if located wholly or partly outside development zones and having a gross floor area of 10,000 m² or more) of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations (S.L. 549.46). The required components of the EIA are:

- i. A **Coordinated Assessment Report**, in conformity with the following Sections of these Terms of Reference. This report should assess the project in its totality;
[Note: The coordinated assessment should seek to analyse and integrate the main considerations emerging from the technical reports, rather than just reproducing excerpts from the reports.]
- ii. A separate **Appendix (or Appendices)** containing all technical studies and original survey reports as prepared by the individual specialist consultants for specific topics;
[Note: Experts contributing to the EIA should be specifically asked to consider impact interactions and cross-cutting issues, and to communicate information between each other accordingly].
- iii. A separate **Non-Technical Summary** of the EIA, in both the Maltese and English languages. This should have enough details for the public to understand the project and the related environmental considerations, and should be written in reader-friendly language (e.g. avoiding unnecessary technical jargon);
- iv. A **declaration of conformity** with regards to conflict of interest, in accordance with sub-regulations 17(3) of the EIA Regulations (refer to **Appendix 1** to these Terms of Reference); and
- v. An addendum detailing the **feedback received from stakeholders, from the public, and from ERA** during the relevant consultation stages of the EIA, and how they were addressed.

Wherever relevant and appropriate, all components of the EIA should include tables and figures (e.g. maps, plans, photographs, photomontages, charts, graphs, diagrams, cross-sections) and quantifications.

The complete EIA Report (including all the above components) should be submitted as a printable digital copy (in .pdf format, with copying fully enabled throughout) and as a printed copy. Likewise, in case further revisions are to be made to the EIA Report, both a printable digital copy (in .pdf format, with copying enabled throughout) and a printed copy of the revised EIA Report, or an Addendum, is to be submitted to ERA.

Any other assessments, including Appropriate Assessment [as required by the Flora, Fauna and Natural Habitats Regulations (S.L. 549.44)] are to be submitted separately from the EIA. Cross-referencing between the EIA and any such assessment should be clear and reasonably limited, such that both of the following considerations are duly satisfied:

1. Alerting the reader to the fact that the aspect in question is also being addressed in another parallel assessment; and
2. Enabling the reader to easily follow both the EIA and the other assessments as stand-alone documents.

Any other technical studies/ reports which are of direct environmental relevance to the project or are cross-referred to in the EIA report, should be submitted together with the EIA, and made available to the public. Should these documents not be made available upon submission of the EIA report, ERA reserves the right to re-open the public consultation for an additional 30-days, over and above the timeframe stipulated in Regulation 19(1), as deemed fit.

More detailed specifications are identified in the following pages.

1.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND ITS CONTEXT

The description of the proposal is to include the aspects outlined below and should take into account the entire proposal and any ancillary facilities and infrastructure connected with, or arising due to, the project.

1.1 Justification for the Proposal

1.1.1 Objectives

The purpose and objectives of the development and whether these are related to current legal obligations, policies or plans.

1.1.2 Demand

The current and expected requirement or demand for the proposed land uses, also explaining how the proposal will address the requirement/demand.

1.2 Description of the Physical Characteristics of the Whole Project and the Land Use Requirements during the Construction and Operational Phases

The following aspects should be addressed for all phases of the project, clearly distinguishing between aspects relating to construction phase, operational phase, decommissioning (as relevant), or more than one phase. References to the construction phase also include ancillary site preparation, clearing, excavation, demolition/dismantling, and site reinstatement works, as relevant.

1.2.1 General characteristics

Description of the proposed development including size, area, height, volume, configuration/layout, general design, location and proposed elevations of buildings/structures/installations, hard and soft landscaping, access arrangements, boundary demarcation arrangements, land use requirements, and land take of ancillary facilities (including infrastructure, storage, servicing, security etc.). The description is to be consistent with the details submitted in the relevant permit applications, throughout both the EIA process and the development permission application process.

1.2.2 Construction and operational processes

The relevant construction and operational processes and their main characteristics, including:

- The nature and quantity of materials used or generated;
- The source, type, quantity, composition and concentration of residues and emissions including water, air, soil pollution, noise, vibration, light, heat, radiation etc. resulting from the proposed project; the parameters to be reported should be in line with relevant EU policy; and
- The expected annual and total emissions, including Greenhouse Gases (GHG), and the contribution to total national GHG emission on an annual basis.

1.2.3 Project management

An indicative framework outlining the key parameters and site management arrangements during construction and operational phases, including:

- Works methodology, including any mineral processing plants such as batching plants within the construction site;
- Expected duration of all phases, as well as season, frequency and duration of interventions;
- Depths and volumes of excavation, and type of material to be excavated; and
- Types and quantities of raw materials and primary resources to be consumed, including water, energy, stone and other resources, and measures to reduce such consumption.

1.2.4 Access, transportation and related infrastructure

1. A forecast of the type, quantity and size of vehicles (and/or vessels) envisaged during each phase and their respective frequency of use, as well as an identification of the routes that vehicles will use to/from and within the site. The required arrangements should also be compared with the relevant existing situation (in terms of structural considerations, stability and state of roads, road width and gradient, turning circles and

junctions, type of surfacing, and other physical or environmental constraints, etc). Interventions that would need to be carried out to accommodate the required vehicles, and sites/buildings/structures/features likely to be affected as a result, should be identified accordingly.

2. Facilities for the storage, parking, on-site servicing, loading/unloading of equipment, vehicles and other machinery.

1.2.5 Water, sewerage, runoff management, energy, telecommunications, and ancillary infrastructure

1. Estimates of water management specifications of the development and the identification of the sources of water to be used, including the following:
 - The features and processes of the proposed development and its ancillary facilities which consume water, including estimates of water consumption and runoff/effluent generation during operation;
 - The sources of water (e.g. second-class water, public potable water mains, on-site production) envisaged to meet the projected demand;
 - The water-saving measures, where applicable, that are envisaged (e.g. use of low-flow fittings, reuse of harvested storm water runoff and rainwater, treatment and reuse of grey water/sewage), and details as to how such water will be used/managed; and
 - The facilities and structures to be installed in connection with the above (e.g. water production, purification, collection, storage, distribution and saving) including estimates of the sizing of pipelines, reservoirs and equipment.
2. Estimates of the energy-related specifications, including:
 - The features and processes of the proposed development and its ancillary facilities which consume energy, including estimates of consumption during operation. The analysis should consider, as relevant, the connected load (in MW or MVA), the overall power factor, the annual MWh split in terms of end-use (lighting, climate cooling/heating/ventilation, plant etc.) which reflects the expected use of the facilities;
 - The energy sources envisaged to meet the projected demand;
 - The facilities and structures to be installed in connection with the above (e.g. energy production, storage, distribution and saving) including estimates of the sizing of cables, buildings and equipment; and
 - The expected energy performance of the proposal, including building orientation, natural ventilation, construction materials, integration of low/zero-carbon technologies to meet energy needs; avoidance of features which increase energy consumption; and energy efficiency measures in the finishing and operation of the development.
3. Infrastructural services and utilities related to water and power supplies, sewerage, telecommunications and runoff management, and ancillary works (e.g. trenches, tunnels, culverts, switching/transformer stations, pump houses, inspection chambers).
4. The extent to which the project can realistically be self-sufficient with regard to its energy and water needs, through appropriate measures such as the efficient use of energy and water, collection of rain and storm water for reuse, reuse of treated wastewater/sewage, technologies that reduce energy consumption, and the integration of alternative energy sources. Alternatives in terms of design, fabric and orientation of the buildings should also be explored and assessed.

1.2.6 Waste management

1. A sufficiently detailed indication of the waste management implications likely to arise from the project, including wastes generated by ancillary facilities and wastes which may arise from accidental spillages and leakages and from repair works. Wastes should be subdivided according to the relevant project phases.
2. The following information is to be provided for each waste stream, as relevant to each phase:
 - Identification of processes or activities that would result in waste generation;
 - European Waste Catalogue Codes for each waste stream, as per relevant legislation;
 - The projected quantities and rate of generation for each type of waste;
 - Information on waste handling and storage, on site as well as off site;
 - The method of transportation and frequency; and
 - The method of characterizing the chemical composition of dredged waste; where applicable.

This information should be presented in table format as follows, and should also include cross-references to the relevant regulations, particularly The Waste Regulations (S.L. 549.63):

Phase	Type of waste	EW Code	H-Code	Activity (e.g. sanding, scraping, power washing etc.)	Estimated quantities	Final permitted disposal location

3. The envisaged waste management arrangements using the Best Practicable Environmental Options (BPEO) available, and the envisaged efforts to minimise waste generation and to divert waste to reuse or recycling rather than disposal.
4. Layout plans (to scale) clearly showing all relevant waste management infrastructure and related facilities (e.g. bunded areas for storage of waste fuels, wheel-wash facilities, etc.), clearly distinguishing between temporary and permanent structures for each phase.

1.2.7 Longer-term developments

Additional future developments, land uses and other commitments that are ancillary or consequent to the project or are likely to arise in relation to the same project or its expansion, as well as longer-term needs of the proposal, including: ancillary infrastructure not accounted for in the previous sections; any consequent interventions/arrangements required to accommodate the development; any foreseeable further extensions or updates to the proposal; any displacement of existing uses; and decommissioning.

2.0 ASSESSMENT OF ALTERNATIVES

An outline of the main alternatives studied and an indication of the main reasons for this choice, taking into account the relevant environmental effects and their prevention (or optimisation) at source. The following alternatives need to be duly considered, as relevant to the development itself (or to one or more phases thereof) and its requirements and constraints:

- Alternative sites;
 - Alternative technologies;
 - Alternative layouts (including building heights, where relevant);
 - Downscaling of the project, or elimination of project components;
 - Zero option (do-nothing scenario, the way the site would develop without the proposed project); and
- [Note: The zero option should be considered in sufficient detail as a plausible scenario in the EIA, wherever relevant, and not discarded upfront without proper discussion of its implications.]*
- Hybrids/combinations of the above.

The findings of the assessment of alternatives should be summarised in a table format for ease of comparison.

3.0 A DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS (I.E. ENVIRONMENTAL BASELINE)

The existing environmental features, characteristics and conditions, in and around the proposed development site as well as in all locations likely to be affected by the development or by ancillary interventions and operations, are to be identified and described in sufficient detail, with particular attention to the aspects elaborated further in the next sections.

The consultants should also identify (and justify) wherever relevant:

- The geographic area (e.g. viewshed or other area of influence) that needs to be covered by each study;
- The relevant sensitive receptors vis-à-vis the environmental parameter under consideration (e.g. residential communities, other users, natural ecosystems, specific populations of particular species, or individual physical features);
- The location of the reference points or stations (e.g. viewpoints, monitoring stations, or sampling points (including depth of multiple sampling points at a single sampling point in the case of water media and sediment, where applicable) to be used in the study; and
- Other methodological parameters of relevance, also noting that the assessment will normally require both desk-top studies and on-site investigations (including visual observations and sampling, as relevant).

Note: It is recommended that these details are discussed in advance with the ERA prior to commencement of the relevant parts of the studies, in order to pre-empt (as much as possible) later-stage issues.

Wherever relevant to the environmental aspects under discussion, reference to legislation, policies, plans (including programmes and strategies) standards and targets, should also be made, such that the compatibility (or otherwise) of the proposal therewith is also factored into the assessment required by **Section 4** below. The discussion should cover the following aspects, in the appropriate level of detail:

- Supra-national (e.g. European Union; United Nations; or other international or regional) legislation, directives, policies, conventions, protocols, treaties, charters, plans and obligations;
- National legislation, policies and plans (e.g. Structure Plan; National Environment Policy); and
- Sub-national legislation, policies and plans (e.g. local plans, site-specific regulations, action plans, management plans, and protective designations such as scheduling or Natura 2000).

Note: In addition to already in-force legislation, policies and plans, the discussion should also cover any foreseeable future updates (or new legislation, policies and plans) likely to be fulfilled, affected or compromised by the proposed project. Furthermore, it should be noted that some cross-cutting legal/policy instruments (e.g. Water Framework Directive and Marine Strategy Framework Directive) may need to be factored into more than one aspect of the discussion.

3.1 Land Cover and Land/Sea Uses

A description of the land cover and land uses (and/or sea uses, as relevant) within the area of influence of the project, including roads, footpaths and public access routes. Details including nature, magnitude, proximity to site, etc. should be included.

3.2 Landscape Character and Visual Amenity

3.2.1 Landscape Character

The study should describe the landscape-related area of influence and landscape setting of the proposed site, identifying the component character areas and local landscape tracts, and the landscape elements, characteristics and degree of sensitivity thereof, so as to enable the prediction and assessment of:

- The changes to the landscape attributable (in full or in part) to the proposed development;
- The implications of such changes on the quality and perception of the landscape and its elements, in each of the identified landscape character areas and local landscape tracts; and
- The effects of such changes on relevant receptors (the receptors should also be duly identified and their degree of sensitivity should also be indicated and justified).

Reference should also be made to the 'Draft Landscape Assessment Study, 2004,' and to the *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (The Landscape Institute & IEMA)*, as relevant.

3.2.2 Visual Amenity

The following need to be identified and submitted for prior ERA approval:

- The Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV; also known as Zone of Visual Influence) of the site and the development under consideration; and
- Assessment viewpoints representative of short-, medium- and long-distance views towards the site. A baseline photograph taken from each proposed viewpoint is also required. The submission should cover all the important views of the site, whilst avoiding the inclusion of superfluous or inappropriate viewpoints (e.g. positions from which the site is not visible, or where the view is obstructed or dominated by physical obstacles in the foreground).

Thereafter, for each approved viewpoint, the projected situation and appearance of the site (*i.e.* as it would look with the proposed development in place) should be compared to the current baseline situation (*i.e.* without the proposed development). Any other permitted development, not part of the existing scenario but falling within the respective view, shall be duly visualised as a cumulative scenario. The following should be predicted and assessed accordingly:

- The expected changes to visual amenity as a result of the proposed development;
- The effects of such changes on the quality of the visual amenity of the site; and
- The effects of such changes on relevant receptors. (The receptors should also be duly identified and their degree of sensitivity should also be indicated and justified).

Note: The baseline photographs and the photomontages should, unless otherwise directed by ERA, satisfy the following:

- (a) The location of each viewpoint should be shown on a map that also depicts the viewshed for the proposed site as described above. The visual angle of the photograph should also be indicated and should not be greater than 50°. Stitched photos

that illustrate the field of vision towards the site from each viewpoint are acceptable as long as they are additional to the 50-degree photograph.

(b) The photographs and photomontages submitted should:

- Be at least A3 in size. Strips which are A3 in width but not in length are not appropriate except as supplementary illustrative material;
- Include the date and time at which the photo was taken;
- Be of good quality, with faithful reproduction approximating as much as reasonably possible what would normally be visible to the naked eye. The photos should be taken in good weather, and should be taken at least 2 hours after sunrise and 2 hours before sunset. Colours should not be digitally or otherwise manipulated. As a guideline, the image should have a printing density of 200 dots per inch or better. In some instances, digital images having a resolution of 1024 x 728 or better may be required for multimedia presentation purposes;
- Be taken in such a manner that near-field objects do not overpower or dominate features near the image plane passing through the project area;
- Be taken from a height above ground level that is representative of the eye level of the viewer, and such height should be duly documented; and
- Ensure that all additional/replacement structures and features depicted in the photomontages have a scale which proportionately tallies with the existing nearby features.

(c) Wherever relevant, the photomontage(s) should cover the following scenarios:

- The development without the proposed landscaping scheme, representing the worst-case scenario;
- The development complete with the proposed landscaping scheme as it is expected to look when the trees reach maturity, also providing an indicative timeframe as to when such maturity is expected to be attained; and
- The development and its ancillary lighting as it would appear during night-time.

3.3 Geology, Geomorphology, Hydrogeology, and Soils

A comprehensive investigation of:

1. The geology and geomorphology of the site and its surroundings, including:

- (i) existing geology, stratigraphy, structure, lithology, physiography and geomorphology features;
- (ii) palaeontological features;
- (iii) hydrogeological features; and
- (iv) soil types.

Each feature shall be listed in a table, together with a short description and if any of the features are absent, this shall be stated. A scaled map, clearly depicting the feature occurrence within the area of influence, shall also be provided.

2. The geo-technical properties and considerations relevant to the site and its area of influence, including:

- (i) land stability;
- (ii) mechanical, erosional and structural properties of the terrain and land mass;
- (iii) any relevant fissures, faults, hollows, or weak points;
- (iv) the vulnerability of the site to natural forces such as wave action, erosive elements, landslides and mass movements; and
- (v) any other considerations affecting the implications and risks posed by the proposed development or by any of its ancillary interventions such as site clearance, earth-moving, and excavations.

Each of the above shall be listed in a table along with a short description and if any of the features are absent, this shall be stated. A scaled map, clearly depicting the feature occurrence within the area of influence, shall also be provided.

3. The quality of the material that will be excavated (including soil, rock/mineral resource, and any existing fill material) and its potential for reuse.

4. Sampling and testing should comply with the relevant standards (unless otherwise agreed, BS standards or other recognised equivalents should be used), and should extend to a sufficient depth below the deepest level of the proposed development (taking into consideration all proposed excavations and underground structures). Wherever the study involves the drilling of core samples, the number, depth and location thereof should also be submitted for ERA approval prior to carrying out of any *in situ* tests.

3.4 Water bodies (including Terrestrial and Underground, as relevant)

The study should identify the hydrological, hydromorphological and physicochemical characteristics of the water bodies and water resources in the area under investigation, including (as relevant):

1. The hydrology of the site and its surroundings, including all relevant features and dynamics, such as underground water bodies; the sea; etc, including a description of any potential linkages between different

water bodies (i.e. groundwater linkages to coastal water), also cross-referring to hydrogeological factors (see **Section 3.3** above) as relevant;

2. Natural and anthropogenic dynamics including groundwater recharge patterns; pumping and abstraction patterns; on-site and off-site drainage patterns; pipe/culvert connectivity between water bodies, run-off patterns; and flood risks; and
3. Water quality (salinity, pollutant load, sediment load and characteristics, microbiological load, BOD & COD, transparency, temperature, etc.), with particular reference to any established quality parameters (e.g. effluent discharge parameters).

3.5 Ecology (including Terrestrial Ecology and Avifauna, as relevant)

The assessment should include:

1. An investigation of the ecology of the site and its surroundings (including, as relevant: flora, fauna, avifauna, and their habitats and ecosystems), duly covering the relevant seasons (e.g. wet and dry seasons, in the case of terrestrial ecology) to ensure adequate coverage of all relevant species and ecosystem components;
2. A reporting of the conservation status and ecological condition of the area and the state of health of its habitats, species and ecological features;
3. A reporting of all protected, endangered, rare, unique, endemic, high-quality, keystone, invasive/deleterious, or otherwise important species, habitats, ecological assemblages, and ecological conditions found in the area under study; and
4. A prediction of the potential impacts of the proposed project on the ecology of the site and its surroundings, including loss, damage or alteration of habitats and species populations including alteration in the habitats and species' condition/state of health.

In particular, the study should identify all relevant species and assemblages (e.g. protected species or habitats, key species relevant to habitat characterisation, and monitoring indicators), and assess their abundance and distribution patterns as well as the species' ecological niches. The findings should be supported by adequate maps and photographs. Classification of habitat types and species should be conducted in accordance with recognised classification systems (e.g. EUNIS and Palaearctic), to ERA's satisfaction.

Note 1: *In view that the proposal may potentially have significant impact on protected sites within the area of influence of the project, a stand-alone Appropriate Assessment in terms of the Flora, Fauna and Natural Habitats Protection Regulations is required, for which separate Terms of Reference are issued.*

3.6 Architectural, Archaeological, Historical & Cultural Heritage and related Material Assets

Refer to **Appendix 2 (Terms of Reference provided by the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage)**.

3.7 Exterior Lighting

This study should provide sufficiently detailed information and a summary on the current situation with respect the natural night sky, as a baseline for assessing the levels and effects expected to result from the development, including any short- and long-term changes.

Note 1: existing light pollution, emanating from sources within the site due to inadequate lighting and non-compliance with the 2024 work plan of the Environmental Permit of the existing hotel shall not constitute as justification for existing baseline conditions.

The study should also take into account other relevant factors such as:

- Cumulation with other existing sources (including road lighting) and with other predicted sources such as new developments;
- Sensitive receptors (e.g. fauna and avifauna, natural ecosystems); and
- The potential of mitigation measures and intelligent lighting design, such as luminaire specifications, additional shielding, dimming/switching off lighting after certain hours, correlated colour temperature, etc.

The study needs to consider, among others, glare (e.g. the blinding light which is a danger to motorists/pedestrians and to fauna), light trespass (light straying into an area where it is not desired or required) and sky glow ('wasted' light directed upwards), together with any other relevant variables which are relevant to the determination of impact on the surrounding receptors.

The study results should include measurable parameters (e.g. intensity, timing and frequency of lighting) as relevant. The reference points and timings of measurement locations (if applicable) or nighttime photographs used should be approved by ERA prior to commencement of studies. The methodology to be used should be submitted for ERA's evaluation prior to commencement of the studies.

3.8 Infrastructure and Utilities

The assessment should investigate the currently available infrastructural services (including water supply, energy supply, sewerage, telecommunications infrastructure, access roads, parking, *etc.*), including details about their carrying capacity, physical condition and other relevant practical considerations. It should also compare this information to the infrastructural demands of the project as identified in **Section 1** above, so as to clearly indicate:

- whether the current utilities are adequate to meet the demand arising from the proposed development;
- whether any significant loading, congestion or damaging of the infrastructural or transport network is envisaged; and
- whether any new or upgraded services/arrangements will be rendered necessary, both in the short-term and in the longer-term. If any requirement for new infrastructure (or upgrading, alteration or extension of the existing infrastructure) is envisaged, the relevant details including associated works and their environmental implications should also be indicated.

The assessment should also identify any existing or projected infrastructural services located within the area of influence of the development (even if not related to the demands of the development) that might be affected by the development or which may need to be displaced or diverted as a consequence of the development or its ancillary operations and interventions.

3.9 Public Access

The assessment should identify the current public access arrangements (particularly the accessibility of the coast, sea, natural areas, and public open spaces), including existing footpaths and other public access routes, and should clearly indicate whether these would be affected and how.

Wherever any new or altered arrangements are proposed, these should be clearly identified and their environmental implications should also be indicated.

3.10 Other relevant environmental aspects and features

Other relevant environmental features or considerations not identified in the preceding sections should also be identified and described, as relevant.

4.0 ASSESSMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND ENVIRONMENTAL RISKS

All likely significant effects and risks posed by the proposed project on the environment during all relevant phases (including construction/excavation/demolition, and operations) should be assessed in detail, taking into account the information emerging from Sections 1, 2 and 3 above. Apart from considering the project on its own merits (*i.e.* if taken in isolation), the assessment should also take into account the wider surrounding context and should consider the limitations and effects that the surrounding environmental constraints, features and dynamics may exert on the proposed development, thereby identifying any incompatibilities, conflicts, interferences or other relevant implications that may arise if the project is implemented.

In this regard, the assessment should address the following aspects, as applicable for any category of effects or for the overall evaluation of environmental impact, addressing the worst-case scenario wherever relevant:

1. An exhaustive identification and description of the envisaged impacts;
2. The magnitude, severity and significance of the impacts;
3. The geographical extent/range and physical distribution of the impacts, in relation to site coverage; the features located in the site surroundings; and whether the impacts are short-, medium- or long-range;
4. The timing and duration of the impacts (whether the impact is temporary or permanent; short-, medium- or long-term; and reasonable quantification of timeframes);
5. Whether the impacts are reversible or irreversible (including the degree of reversibility in practice and a clear identification of any conditions, assumptions and pre-requisites for reversibility);
6. A comprehensive coverage of direct, indirect, secondary and cumulative impacts, including:

- interactions (e.g. summative, synergistic, antagonistic, and vicious-cycle effects) between impacts;
 - interactions or interference with natural or anthropogenic processes and dynamics;
 - cumulation of the project and its effects with other past, present or reasonably foreseeable developments, activities and land uses and with other relevant baseline situations; and
 - wider impacts and environmental implications arising from consequent demands, implications and commitments associated with the project (including: displacement of existing uses; new or increased pressures on the environment in the surroundings of the project, including pressures which may be exacerbated by the proposal but of which effects may go beyond the area of influence; and impacts of any additional interventions likely to be triggered or necessitated by situations created, induced or exacerbated by the project);
7. Whether the impacts are adverse, neutral or beneficial;
 8. The sensitivity and resilience of resources, environmental features and receptors vis-à-vis the impacts;
 9. Implications and conflicts vis-à-vis environmentally-relevant plans, policies and regulations;
 10. The probability of the impacts occurring; and
 11. The techniques, methods, calculations and assumptions used in the analyses and predictions, and the confidence level/limits and uncertainties vis-à-vis impact prediction.

The impacts that need to be addressed are detailed further in the sub-sections below.

4.1 Effects on the environmental aspects identified in Section 3

The assessment should thoroughly identify and evaluate the impacts and implications of the project on all the relevant environmental aspects identified in Section 3 above, also taking into account the various considerations outlined in the respective sections.

With regards to Section 3.4 and 3.5 above, the ecological status of the area in question is to be evaluated taking into consideration the definition of status by relevant EU Policy, and assessing the extent to which the project will cause deterioration in status or compromise the achievement of good status in line with Article 4(7) of the EU Water Framework Directive.

4.2 Impacts related to Climate Change and Climate Change Adaptation

The assessment should address the following aspects, as relevant:

1. The contribution of the project to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and climate change, including:
 - (i) The direct, indirect and off-site GHG emissions and related impacts during all relevant phases of the project, including those arising as a result of the electrical power demand of the project;
 - (ii) Any massive GHG emissions that may occur as a consequence of accidents or malfunctions;
 - (iii) The components of the project that are expected to contribute to renewable energy generation on site or to a reduction in GHG emissions through substitution of current generation facilities, including a quantification and critique of their reliability and actual net contribution to climate change mitigation as well as an identification of the impacts of such components on other aspects of the environment (e.g. landscape, land take, avifauna); and
 - (iv) The implications of the project and its operations and ancillary demands on National GHG emission targets.
2. The implications of climate change on the proposal, including:
 - (i) The aspects/elements of the project that are likely to be affected by changes or variability in climate-related parameters (e.g. temperature, humidity, weather patterns, sea level, etc.);
 - (ii) The potential impacts that such changes may have on the proposal, including any possible impacts resulting from changes to multiple parameters; and
 - (iii) The adaptability of the project and its components and operations vis-à-vis the relevant climate change parameters and trends.

4.3 Environmental risk

The assessment should also address, in sufficient detail, any relevant environmental risk (including major-accident scenarios such as contamination, emissions, explosions, blast, flooding, major spillages, etc.) likely to result in environmental damage or deterioration. The range of accident scenarios considered should exhaustively cover, as relevant:

- (i) one-time risks (e.g. during construction/excavation/demolition works);
- (ii) recurrent risks during project operation; and

- (iii) risks associated with extreme events (e.g. effect of earthquakes or natural disasters on the project).

The assessment should include, as relevant: a quantification of the risk magnitude and probability; and risk analysis vis-à-vis any hazardous materials stored, handled, or generated on site or transported to/from the site.

4.4 Effects on Human Populations resulting from impacts on the environment

This assessment should also identify any impacts of the development on the surrounding and visiting population (e.g. effects on public health), that may result from impacts on the environment. In the case of health-related effects, reference should be made to published epidemiological and other studies, as relevant, and the views of the Environmental Health Directorate should be sought.

4.5 Other Environmental Effects

Any other environmental effects deemed relevant to the project but not fitting within any of the above sections should also be identified and assessed.

5.0 REQUIRED MEASURES, IDENTIFICATION OF RESIDUAL IMPACTS, AND MONITORING PROGRAMME

5.1 Mitigation Measures

A clear identification and explanation of the measures envisaged to prevent, eliminate, reduce or offset (as relevant) the identified significant adverse effects of the project during all relevant phases including construction, and operations [see **Section 1.2.3** above].

As a general rule, mitigation measures for construction-phase impacts should be packaged as a holistic Construction Management Plan (CMP). Whilst the detailed workings of the CMP may need to be devised at a later stage (e.g. after the final design of the project has been approved and/or after a contractor has been appointed), the key parameters that the CMP must adhere to for proper mitigation need to be identified in the EIA. Broadly similar considerations also apply vis-à-vis operational-phase impacts [which may need to be mitigated through an operational permit], where relevant.

Mitigation measures for accident/risk scenarios should be packaged as a holistic plan that includes the integration of failsafe systems into the project design as well as well-defined contingency measures.

The recommended measures should be feasible, realistically implementable to the required standards and in a timely manner, effective and reliable, and reasonably exhaustive. They should not be dependent on factors that are beyond the developer's and ERA's control, or which would be difficult to monitor, implement or enforce. The actual scope for, and feasibility of, effective prevention or mitigation should also be clearly indicated, also identifying all potentially important pre-requisites, conditionalities and side-effects.

5.2 Residual Impacts

Any residual impacts [*i.e.* impacts that cannot be effectively mitigated, or can only be partly mitigated, or which are expected to remain or recur again following exhaustive implementation of mitigation measures] should also be clearly identified.

5.3 Additional Measures

Compensatory measures (*i.e.* measures intended to offset, in whole or in part, the residual impacts) should also be identified, as reasonably relevant. Such measures should be not considered as an acceptable substitute to impact avoidance or mitigation.

If the assessment also identifies beneficial impacts on the environment, measures to maximise the environmental benefit should also be identified.

In both instances, the same practical considerations as indicated vis-à-vis mitigation measures should also apply.

5.4 Monitoring Programme

A realistic and enforceable programme for effective monitoring of those works envisaged to have an adverse or uncertain impact. The monitoring programme should include:

1. Details regarding type and frequency of monitoring and reporting, including spot checks;
2. The parameters that will be monitored, their units of measurement, the monitoring indicators to be used; and standard analytical methods in line with relevant EU policy;
3. An effective indication of the required action to address any exceedances, risks, mitigation failures or non-compliances for each monitoring parameter;
4. An evaluation of forecasts, predictions and measures identified in the EIA; and
5. An indication of the nature and extent of any additional investigations (including EIAs or ad hoc detailed investigations, if relevant) that may be required in the event of any contingencies, unanticipated impacts, or impacts of larger magnitude or extent than predicted.

The programme should address all relevant stages, as follows:

- (a) Where relevant, monitoring of preliminary on-site investigations that may entail significant disturbance or damage to site features (e.g. archaeological excavations, geological sampling, or any works that require prior site clearance or any significant destructive sampling);
[Note: Official written consent from the competent authorities (e.g. Superintendence of Cultural Heritage) may also be required for such interventions.]
- (b) Monitoring of the construction phase, including the situation before initiation of works (including site clearance), during appropriate stages of progress, and after completion of works; and
- (c) Monitoring of the operational phase, except where otherwise directed by ERA (e.g. where monitoring would be more appropriately integrated into an operating permit).

5.5 Identification of required authorisations

The assessment should also identify all environmentally-relevant permits, licences, clearances and authorisations (other than the development permit to which this EIA is ancillary) which must be obtained by the applicant in order to effectively implement the project if development permission is granted. Any uncertainty, as to whether any of these pre-requisites is applicable to the project, should be clearly stated.

Note on Sections 5.1 to 5.5 above:

The expected effects, the proposed measures, the residual impacts, the proposed monitoring etc. should also be summarised in a user-friendly itemised table that enables the reader to easily relate the various aspects to each other. An indicative specimen table is included below.

Impact type and source			Impact receptor		Effect & scale							Probability of impact occurring	Overall impact significance	Proposed mitigation measures	Residual impact significance	Other requirements
Impact type	Specific intervention leading to impact	Project phase (construction/operation)	Receptor type	Sensitivity & resilience toward impact	Direct/ Indirect/ Cumulative	Beneficial/ Adverse	Severity	Physical / geographic extent of impact	Short-/medium-/ long-term	Temporary (indicate duration)/ Permanent	Reversible (indicate ease of reversibility) / Irreversible	(Inevitable, Likely, Unlikely, Remote, Uncertain)				(monitoring, authorisations, etc)

[Insert definition of relevant criteria used to describe the impacts]

Signed Declaration: Conflict of interest

Signed declaration in accordance with sub-regulation 17(3):

This declaration is to be submitted with each environmental survey report forming part of the EIA.

Attn: Director of Environment and Resources (ERA).

I, _____, hereby declare that, I have no personal or financial interest in the proposed development. Moreover, I declare that I am not in any way associated with any individual, company, association or grouping that has any direct or indirect, personal, professional or financial interest in the proposed development.

Date

Signature

1.0 Preamble

The current EIA (EA/00100/26) relates to an application proposing structural modifications to the existing Paradise Hotel Complex, including the partial demolition of the hotel buildings. Originally established in the 1960s and designed in a modernist architectural style by the renowned Maltese architect Richard England, the complex is located Outside the Development Zone on the outskirts of Mellieħa, within a prominent and picturesque coastal setting. The site directly abuts an Area of Ecological Importance (GN 400/96; Level 2 Protection) and an Area of High Landscape Value (GN 400/96).

Occupying a strategic foreshore location overlooking the Gozo Channel, the site forms part of a wider cultural landscape characterised by its scenic qualities, agricultural activity, and strong coastal identity. This landscape reflects a longstanding relationship between human activity and the natural environment. Furthermore, Quaternary deposits have been identified to the west of the site, whilst scheduled military shelters are located to the east, indicating archaeological sensitivity within the broader area.

With regard to the existing hotel complex, the Superintendence has undertaken a site inspection and reviewed the relevant documentation and reports. In view of the extensive alterations and extensions carried out over the years, the deteriorated condition of the buildings, and the exposed nature of the site, which is particularly vulnerable to adverse weather conditions, the Superintendence is not averse in principle to the redevelopment of the existing complex.

Notwithstanding the above, the Superintendence underscores the cultural heritage significance of the surrounding landscape, which constitutes an important coastal and visual resource shaped by a longstanding interaction between land and sea. The area contributes substantially to the character and perception of the north-western coastline of the Maltese Islands and forms an integral component of historic and contemporary views experienced from both Malta and Gozo, particularly along the *Il-Fliegu* channel crossing.

In this regard, the Superintendence brings to the attention the potential visual impacts arising from the proposed development and their effect on the integrity, character, and appreciation of the coastal landscape. Particular consideration should be given to the visibility of the proposed development from sensitive and publicly accessible viewpoints, including key vantage points on Comino and across the Gozo Channel.

The above comments are made without prejudice to the concerns and recommendations previously submitted by the Superintendence in response to PA/05888/25, and without prejudice to the position of the Superintendence or any further recommendations that may be made in the context of the ongoing assessment of PA/05888/25.

2.0 Scope and Definitions of the EIA

For the purposes of this document, cultural heritage is defined by Articles 2 and 3 of the Cultural Heritage Act 2002 (as amended) (CAP 445). This includes movable or immovable objects of artistic, architectural, historical, archaeological, ethnographic, palaeontological, and geological importance.

The Cultural Heritage Act (Art. 2) specifically includes the landscape within the definition of cultural heritage.

2.1 The study area will include:

- The immediate environs of the development site, including views from and towards the Ġirkewwa Ferry Terminal, routes along Triq il-Marfa, Paradise Bay, and the surrounding coastal landscape.
- The wider viewshed of the development site as observed from significant longdistance vantage points, including Comino, the Il-Fliegu crossing, and any other key viewpoints from which the proposed development may be visible.

2.2 In the context of this application, cultural heritage considerations may include:

- Potential visual impacts on the cultural heritage significance, character, and appreciation of the surrounding coastal landscape.
- The archaeological potential of the wider area, including consideration of the scheduled military shelters located to the east of the site and any implications arising from the proposed development.

The above cultural heritage definitions and considerations are not to be considered as exhaustive. The EIA must consider all other forms of cultural heritage, both known and unknown.

2.3 The Environmental Impact assessment will:

- Assess whether the proposed interventions and extensions would result in visual impacts on the existing cultural and coastal landscape, taking into account the site's prominence and sensitivity.
- Evaluate the effects of the proposed development on the visual amenity, character, and landscape value of the surrounding environs.
- Assess the extent to which the proposal may affect significant views, vistas, and the perception and appreciation of the wider cultural landscape.
- Recommend appropriate mitigation measures to avoid, minimise, or offset adverse visual impacts on the character and visual value of the surrounding landscape.

3.0 Methodology

In assessing the potential impacts of the proposed development, the EIA will:

- Describe the Cultural Heritage assets within the study area in a comprehensive baseline study. This study is to highlight all potential cultural heritage value and interest of the site including archaeological, historical, scientific, scenic, educational, social/community-based, associative and contextual values. Any new cultural heritage assets and attributes identified during the execution of the EIA will require the compilation of a statement of significance.
- Analyse the cultural heritage features within the context of the cultural landscape.
- Undertake a Visual Impact Assessment (VIA), including photomontages of the proposed development from a range of significant viewpoints at short-, medium-, and long-distance scales. The assessment shall clearly illustrate and compare the visual presence of the existing hotel complex with that of the proposed development, thereby enabling an evaluation of any changes to the character, appearance, and appreciation of the surrounding cultural and coastal heritage assets and landscape.
- Propose corrective measures for the protection of the cultural resources.

4.0 Authorisation by the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage

As per Cultural Heritage Act 2002 (as amended) (CAP 445), any form of investigation or prospection required for the identification of cultural heritage (including excavation, field walking, topographic survey and remote sensing) may only be undertaken by the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage or with its written approval.