PA 07154/25

PROPOSAL FOR THE REDEVELOPMENT OF THE CALYPSO HOTEL SITE IN MARSALFORN, GOZO: DEMOLITION OF EXISTING STRUCTURES, CONSTRUCTION OF A 4-STAR HOTEL, RESIDENTIAL UNITS AND ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION WORKS

PROJECT DESCRIPTION STATEMENT



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1. INTRODUCTION

This Project Description Statement has been prepared to describe the project presented in application PA/07154/25 for the redevelopment of the Hotel Calypso site and adjoining properties forming part of the same complex in Marsalforn, Gozo.

The document is being submitted in accordance with Schedule II of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations and is intended to provide a clear and factual description of:

1. The nature and characteristics of the proposed development
2. The location and extent of the project site,
3. The physical, environmental and cultural context of the area,
4. The current use of the site,
5. The rationale for the proposal and consideration of alternatives.

The application was submitted to the Planning Authority by La Mer Ltd (C111733) on the 18 July 2025. The relative screening letter was issued on the 18 December 2025. The project is proposed to be located in the area known with the toponym 'Il-Menqa' on the shoreline of Marsalforn Bay, on the site currently occupied by the Hotel Calypso and other adjoining properties at its rear.

This statement provides the necessary baseline information to allow the Planning Authority and relevant consultees to evaluate the proposal within the applicable statutory and policy framework.

In the following Sections, the proposed development together with the rationale, design concepts and mix intended to be achieved will be described in the appropriate detail, the wider context of the proposal and the site in question will be reviewed. These will also be assessed in the light of public policy and Government strategy for the sector.

2. APPLICANT DETAILS

Name of Applicant

La Mer Limited

C111733

Att: Mr Oliver Brownrigg

Applicants' ID

230769M

Address of Applicants

The Watercourse Zone 2
Central Business District
Birkirkara
Malta CBD 2010

3. THE PROJECT

PA 07154/25 seeks to “Demolish the existing hotel and ancillary facilities, to clear existing tennis courts and abandoned sports facilities and carry out ecological restoration works to create an open air formal recreational area. To amend apartments approved in PA6893/24. To construct a 4-Star Class 3B hotel including indoor and outdoor pools, spa facilities and sports and conference facilities, 5 restaurants Class 4D, a cafeteria Class 4C, a convenience shop (out of class) and 135 apartments. The proposal also includes the excavation and construction of underground garages and parking spaces”.

The application seeks to reconfigure the uses and activities on site to achieve a higher-end development that offers an improved experience in one of Gozo’s more iconic tourism focal points, through:

a. The creation of a new 4-Star Hotel with a reduced number of rooms and with greater emphasis on facilities and experience,
b. The engagement of an internationally reputable Architectural Firm to give the project design identity and create a landmark, and,
c. The creation of a vibrant, mixed-use hub to attract quality over quantity.

A copy of the Planning Application Form and consultations undertaken are included at Appendices 1 and 2.

3.1 Project Rationale

The present proposal concerns a site of 8,900m^2 in one of Gozo’s foremost strategic locations with respect to the tourism services industry.

By itself, the size of the site is significantly large by Gozo standards. Adding the location to the size of the size continues to underscore the importance the development assumes for the

local economy and for the improvement of the urban environment within the Marsalforn land-water nexus interface.

The project site lies within the Development Zone of Marsalforn, a coastal settlement identified as a tourism hub in the Gozo and Comino Local Plan. It is also fast becoming an all-year round residential locality already exceeding the smaller villages in the size of the permanent population. However, somewhat more importantly, Marsalforn functions as one of Gozo's principal seaside nodes; combining tourism accommodation and services, catering establishments, residential uses and recreational activities associated with the Bay and the surrounding amenities.

Given the site's substantial scale and its prominent, strategic position along the Marsalforn shoreline - a location visible from across the entire bay's seafront - the addition of yet another conventional and architecturally generic design would be a missed opportunity for this locality. Such a development would fail to contribute to the distinct character or truth be told, the aesthetic improvement that this maritime centre critically requires.

The site, and indeed the area, requires a landmark intervention that serves as an inspiring focal point, demonstrating unconventional architectural treatment, and a sensitive presence that complements the last extant fishing village traits of the old harbour, while enhancing the coastal landscape during both daylight and the evening hours.

The redevelopment seeks to:

- Replace ageing and inefficient hotel infrastructure dating from the 1960s;
- Rationalise land use within a designated development area;
- Introduce modern accommodation standards;
- Provide structured parking facilities in an area characterised by seasonal parking pressure;
- Improve the architectural coherence and internal layout of the site.

The proposal aligns with the objectives of the Strategic Plan for the Environment and Development in that it promotes urban regeneration within the development boundary and avoids the take-up of undeveloped land outside the designated zone.

3.2 The proposed Site

The site of this proposal lies on the northern coast of the island of Gozo, perhaps in a stretch of coastline extending for about 1.5km that is the most urbanised coastline on Gozo, perhaps at par with Xlendi Bay. The coastline on this northern stretch of Gozo represents one of the most geologically and topographically diverse stretches of the Gozitan shore. It transitions from soft, sandy lowlands to rugged limestone shelves and eventually into high, commanding plateaus. (Fig 1)

Moving west from the protected sandy beach and dune systems of Ramla, the terrain shifts into the rugged, landslide-prone clay slopes of Għajn Barrani. Marsalforn Bay emerges as the central urbanized hub, framed by rocky headlands. Beyond this, the coast levels into the iconic globigerina limestone shelves of Qbajjar and Xwejni, home to historic, hand-carved salt pans and intricate honeycomb erosion patterns. The topography then rises dramatically toward the narrow, serpentine sea-gorge of Wied il-Għasri, where deep limestone cliffs form the coastline. The sequence culminates at the Ta' Ġurdan plateau; here, the historic lighthouse overlooks a series of sheer, vertical cliffs, providing a commanding 360-degree vantage point over the Gozitan maritime landscape.



Figure 1: The site (marked in yellow) within the wider Marsalforn area. (source: Google maps)

The project site is located within the urban conglomerate of the Marsalforn resort, within the administrative boundaries of Żebbuġ locality, Gozo. It occupies a seafront position along Triq il-Port within the limits of the original fishermen's port known as Il-Menqa, with lateral and rear access from Triq is-Sajjied and Triq Għar Qawqla. The site's centroid lies approximately at 36.0720° N, 14.2596° E (WGS84).

3.2.1 General Context

PA 07154/25 covers a site with an area of about 8,900m^2, at Triq il-Port, Marsalforn, Gozo (Fig 2).

Marsalforn has, over the post-War period and in modern times, been transformed from a typical Mediterranean fishing and summer holiday village, into Gozo's foremost tourism and seaside recreational hub. This evolution has seen the traditional skyline of low-lying boathouses and limestone dwellings gradually give way to a more dense, multi-functional urban fabric, characterized by a vibrant promenade which has switched use to predominantly hospitality and catering. Today, the bay serves as a critical economic engine for the island, balancing its dual identity as a sought-after residential enclave and a premier destination for hospitality and catering, diving and maritime leisure.



Figure 2: The project site marked in yellow and its immediate context. (source: Google maps)

The settlement is characterised by:

- A coastal promenade and seafront development,
- Mixed tourism and residential uses,
- Medium-scale hotel establishments,
- Apartment blocks,
- Catering and commercial establishments,
- A few service providers,
- Seasonal fluctuations in population and activity,
- A growing, all-year resident population.

The rapid growth that Marsalforn has experienced, especially in the last few decades has brought about a shift toward more intense architectural interventions that have not always brought with them any aesthetic improvement to the urban fabric of Marsalforn or the amelioration of the living conditions of those living permanently or holidaying in the area. Marsalforn, it can safely be said, has in recent decades moved from authenticity and quality to higher turnovers, concentration, congestion, and a general lowering in the services provided. (Fig 3)



Figure 3: The busy lungomare at Marsalforn. (source: Google Earth)

The contemporary challenge lies in regenerating the existing footprint to ensure that new developments do not merely add volume but contribute meaningfully to the aesthetic and quality-driven value of the bay. By integrating modern amenities with a reorganisation and repurposing of public spaces, sensitive restoration of the surrounding landscapes, Marsalforn can start to outgrow the form it has been moulded into, and be transformed into a refined, sustainable coastal destination that respects its historical roots while preparing itself to cater for a more discerning and quality-driven tourism sector and local population.

3.2.2 The Site in detail

The project site (Fig.4) is composed of two consolidated portions of land, with two narrower strips practically linking the two major portions at two points, separated only by Triq Għar Qawqla that runs across. A third strip of land extends from the back boundary of the site on its southern tip and takes the full site depth from the seafront frontage from circa 160m to 350m. The project site enjoys a frontage of about 90m overlooking the seafront on Triq il-Port.

The topography of the whole site is quite heterogenous, as it starts off from sea level and extends up nearly the edge of the Upper Coralline layer of il-Qortin ta' Għajn Damma. (Fig.5) The site at the seafront is generally level, standing at approximately 1m from sea level. At the back of this same portion, Triq Għar Qawqla rises sharply to at least 10m above Triq il-Port. At the southern edge of the site, a narrow flight of steps joins the two streets.

From Triq Ghar Qawqla, the adjoining strips of land rise to approximately 15m, whereupon the second major portion of the site extends from this level up to about 30m. Most of this area is excavated to the lower front level. The strip of land furthest back extends from this level to an elevation of about 80m above sea level, nearly reaching the small upper coralline cliff face underlying Il-Qortin ta' Għajn Damma.

Existing structures on site include:

- A multi-story hotel building
- Ancillary structures
- Abandoned hard-surfaced recreational and sporting areas
- Disturbed, undeveloped land within scheme
- Relatively disturbed land outside development zone

The built footprint occupies a substantial portion of the application site.



Figure 4: The application site at present (source: Pininfarina).

A full set of photographic surveys submitted with the application as part of the planning process is included at Appendix 3.

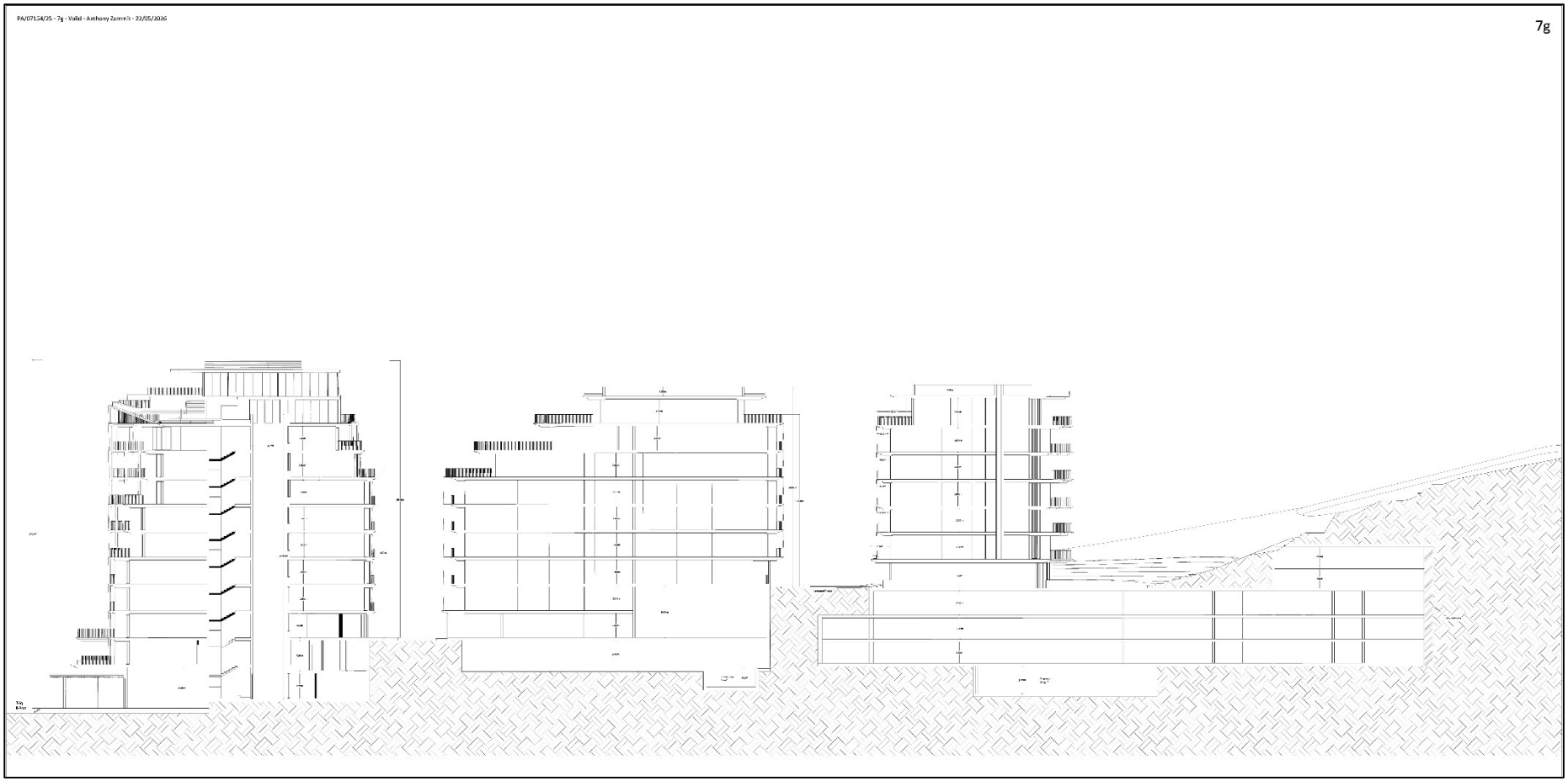


Figure 5: Section through the project showing the rising natural topography (source: Architect's Studio).

3.2.3 The Immediate surroundings

The site of the proposed redevelopment, centres around (even if not physically) the aging Calypso Hotel, occupying an important and iconic position within the varied urban and coastal mosaic that makes up Marsalforn. This area, particularly Il-Menqa, constitutes the main focal point of the whole bay and brings together the complex, often paradoxical, character of Gozo's most prominent seaside resort. The immediate surroundings are defined by a dense, mixed-use urban fabric where contemporary tourism requirements frequently clash with the remnants of a traditional Mediterranean fishing village which like many other similar contexts throughout the Mediterranean, has been elbowed out of the area in preference of the more pressing tourism economy and a need for a 'more organised and cleaner' ambience for the same scope. Historically, perhaps until the first decade after the Second World War, Marsalforn was a quiet fishing and summer retreat, but the post-War era has seen it transform into a high-intensity hub where apartment blocks, catering establishments, and retail outlets vie for space along a constrained shoreline. This evolution has resulted in a landscape that is sometimes perceived as overdeveloped, where the sheer volume of building and vertical growth threatens to suffocate the very natural systems and maritime ambience that originally drew visitors to the area. The existing Calypso Hotel itself, once a landmark of modern hospitality, although refurbished in the 1990's, now stands as a testament to an earlier style of development, with its associated derelict sporting facilities at the rear highlighting a tourism demand that has changed significantly and the pressing need for regeneration that respects the site's strategic value while mitigating the sense of urban sprawl that detracts from the locality's inherent charm.

At the heart of the area's social and economic life is the seafront promenade, an expansive public space that acts as the community's 'lounge area' and meeting space. This interface is characterized by a vibrant culture of cafes and restaurants that spill out onto the pavement, creating a bustling atmosphere. In the local culture, these establishments are meeting spaces where locals and tourists converge, especially during the peak summer months and on Sunday afternoons, maintaining a tradition of seaside socializing that is central to the Maltese and Mediterranean identity. The seafront's value is further enhanced by its proximity to several key bathing areas, most notably the main pebbly beach situated directly opposite the Calypso Hotel. This stretch of shore, though modest, is a critical tourism amenity, providing immediate sea access for hotel guests and residents alike. Further along the coastline, the bathing experience diversifies at Għar Qawqla, where limestone platforms offer a more rugged bathing environment and deeper seas, and the sheltered area behind the breakwater, which provides calmer waters favoured by families.

Woven into this modern tourism tapestry are significant cultural and religious threads, most notably the Church of St. Paul. Situated just a short distance from the development site, the church serves as both a spiritual anchor and a landmark of heritage, its presence a reminder of the village's historical roots amidst the rapid modernization of its surroundings. The present church was built in 1730. Yet, it is the last of a series of older churches that have predated it on the same site, from at least the 1300s when a reference to a church dedicated to St Paul in the area is recorded in a Venetian portolano. This cultural depth is mirrored in the Il-Menqa area, where the traditional fishing character of the area somehow resists. (Fig. 6) Here, the breakwater protects a fleet of traditional boats, including the brightly coloured *luzzu*, which remain symbols of Gozo's maritime heritage. The sight of fishermen mending nets against the backdrop of limestone houses in the adjoining streets provides a necessary counterpoint to the more commercialized segments of the bay, though this authentic charm is increasingly under pressure from the pressures of high-density economic activity.

Beyond the immediate built-up zone, the site's rear boundary marks a sharp transition into the rural landscape. This area, currently occupied by abandoned tennis courts and sports facilities, represents the "landward" extent of the development and serves as the threshold to the expansive countryside. This hinterland is designated as an Outside Development Zone (ODZ) and offers a stark visual contrast to the dense urban core of Marsalforn. To the south lies the Marsalforn Valley, a significant green artery that stretches inland toward Victoria.



Figure 6: The traditional character of Marsalforn still extant at Il-Menqa (source: Hotel Calypso).

This valley is a highly sought-after passage for exercise and walking, valued by the community for its scenic beauty and tranquil atmosphere. It remains a productive agricultural landscape, characterized by terraced fields, rubble walls, and water harvesting systems that have been maintained for generations. The valley's role as a natural drainage system and a recreational green lung is vital, providing a sense of openness and environmental relief that is often missing from the congested seafront.

Further afield, the broader context of the site reveals a diverse range of land uses that frame the Marsalforn experience. To the east, the urban edge eventually gives way to open, rugged countryside and high cliffs that lead toward the scenic heights of Xagħra and Ramla Bay. To the west, development extends along the coast toward Qbajjar, where further tourism infrastructure is balanced by the presence of a public park and the renowned salt pans at Xwejni. When viewed as a whole, the site of the present proposal sits at the intersection of these diverse environments - maritime, urban, cultural, and agricultural.

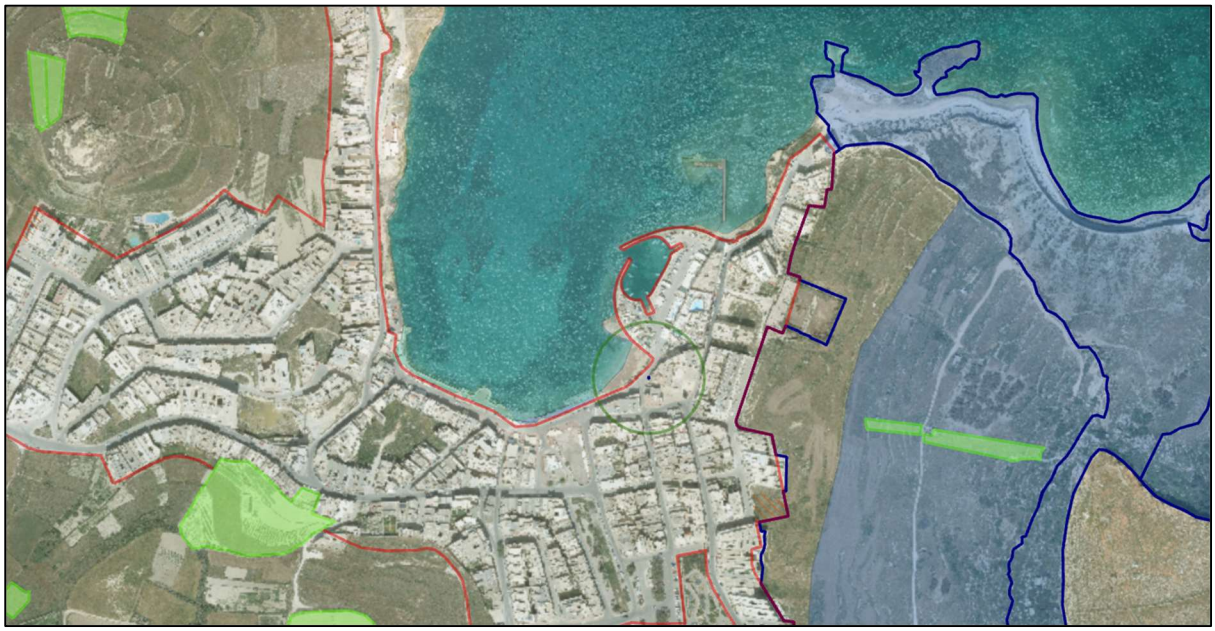


Figure 7: Cultural and natural heritage protection in the general area of the site (source: PA geoportal)

3.2.3.1 Ecology and Natural Heritage

The part of the site within the development zone is mostly developed. Part of it is undeveloped and significantly damaged. In the part of the site Outside development zone, around half of

the area is taken by two disused tennis courts the facilities of which fall within scheme. The other half is mostly abandoned agricultural land. The environs are mostly taken up by development within the development zone, and abandoned agriculture outside of it. (Fig 8)



Figure 8: The relation between the site shown in yellow and the development boundary (source: PA Geoportal)

There are no elements of interest from an ecological and natural heritage or groundwater safeguarding points of view in the site. It is not affected by any form of scheduling either.

Outside of the site itself, the wider context is affected by various levels of protection and scheduling mostly on account of the clay slopes leading to the Qortin ta' Għajn Damma above, the Qortin itself, and the maritime environment.

At an international level, a considerable area is held as Special Area of Conservation with components both on land and at sea, namely 'L-Inħawi t'Għajn Barrani (MT0000001 - Terrestrial)' and the 'Żona fil-Baħar bejn Il-Ponta ta' San Dimitri (Għawdex) u Il-Qaliet (MT0000105 - Marine)'. (Fig 9) The coastal waters around the island are also held as Special Protected Area, described as 'Żona fil-Baħar madwar Għawdex (MT0000112 - Marine)' (Fig. 10)



Figure 9: Special Area of Conservation – L-Inhawi t'Għajn Barrani (MT0000001 – Terrestrial) and the Żona fil-Baħar bejn Il-Ponta ta' San Dimitri (Għawdex) u Il-Qaliet (MT0000105 - Marine) (source: PA Geoportal)



Figure 10: Special Protected Area – 'Żona fil-Baħar madwar Għawdex (MT0000112 - Marine)' (source: PA Geoportal)

On a national level, the clay slopes behind the project site are a Tree Protection Area (Fig. 11) and an Area of High Landscape Value (Fig. 12). Għajn Barrani and l-Qortin ta' Għajn Damma area also an Area of Ecological Importance and Site of Scientific Importance (Fig 13)



Figure 11: Tree Protection Area around Il-Qortin ta' Isopu (source: Planning Authority Geoportal)

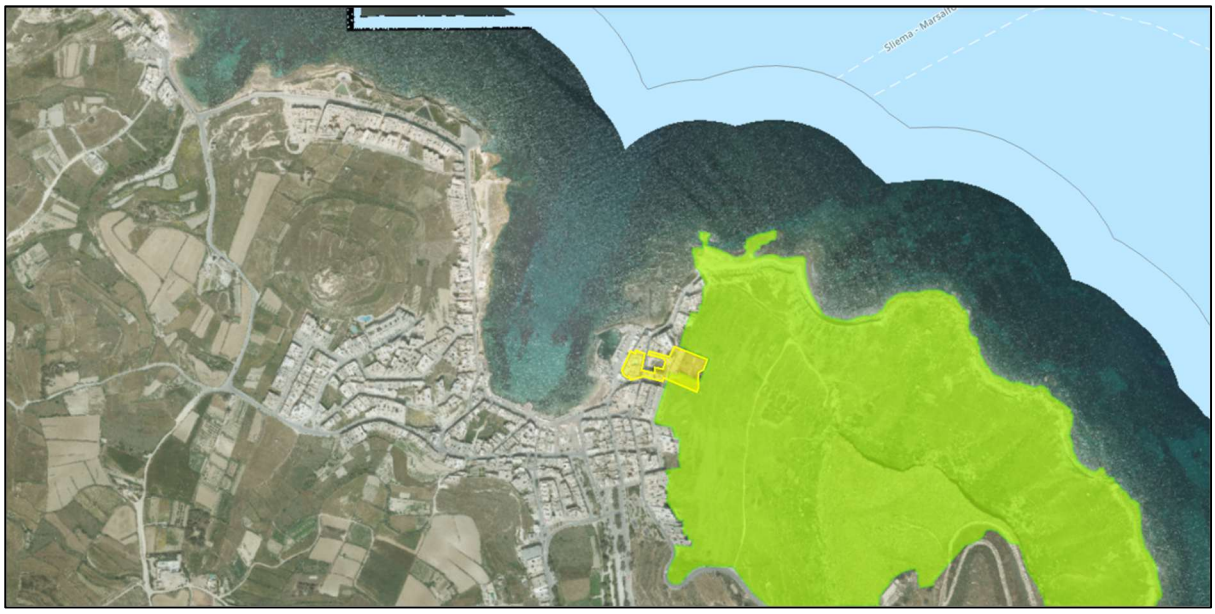


Figure 12: Area of High Landscape Value (source: Planning Authority Geoportal)

3.2.3.2 Geology and Geomorphology

The Hotel Calypso complex occupies a low-lying coastal terrain directly adjacent to the shoreline starting from sea level and rising to around 31m on a slope that extends eastward up to a height of 85m, where it is capped by an Upper Coralline Limestone cover that reaches about 95m. From the valley bed at the centre of the bay to this topmost level, the geology of the site reveals a succession of six different geological layers in succession (Fig. 14)



Figure 13: Area of Ecological Importance and Site of Scientific Importance (source: Planning Authority Geoportal)

Marsalforn Bay forms a natural embayment along the northern coastline of Gozo where the Marsalforn Valley meets the sea. The bay is bounded by limestone headlands and coastal slopes that reflect the structural characteristics of the Upper Coralline Limestone plateau.

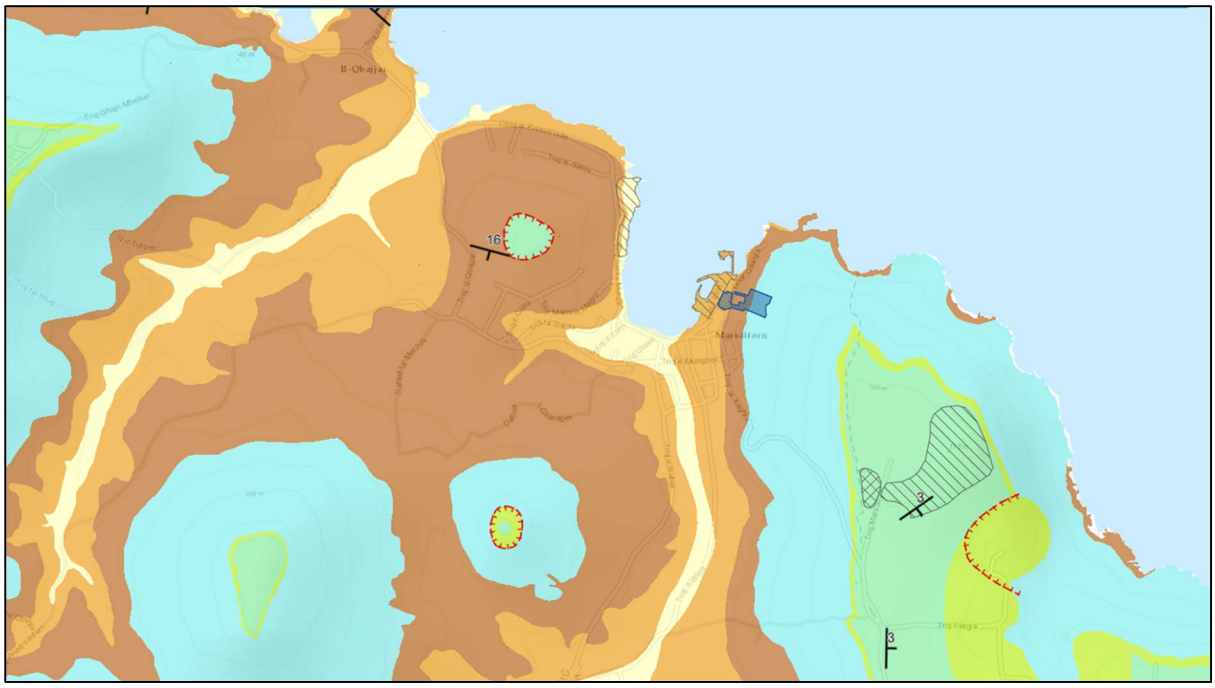


Figure 14: The geology of the wider Marsalforn area (source: Geological Map of Malta)

The coastal morphology around Marsalforn is influenced primarily by marine erosion acting on the limestone bedrock. Wave action has historically shaped the shoreline and contributed to the formation of relatively shallow coastal platforms and irregular rocky margins along sections of the bay. Over time, natural coastal processes combined with human intervention have modified parts of the shoreline, particularly within the urban waterfront where promenades, quays and small harbour facilities have been developed.

At the valley mouth, sediment transported by episodic surface runoff may historically have contributed minor deposits of alluvial material before reaching the marine environment. However, in the present urbanised setting, much of the natural sediment transport regime has been altered through drainage infrastructure and coastal development.

The geomorphology of Marsalforn Bay therefore reflects the interaction between the structural limestone framework of the terrain, the erosive action of marine processes and the influence of the valley system that drains into the bay.

The geological context of the project site is primarily associated with the Globigerina Limestone Formation, which forms the dominant bedrock unit across the valley system, extending further into higher ground on the opposite side of the valley towards Il-Merżuq (Is-Salvatur) and Il-Qolla s-Safra. Higher up, Globigerina gives way to a thick Blue Clay layer. This formation consists of relatively weak bluish-grey clayey sediments which weather readily and tend to form gently inclined slopes below the limestone escarpments. Blue Clay is then capped by a band of Upper Coralline Limestone forming the headland at Il-Qortin ta' Isopu west of the project site and showing also on the other side of the valley on top of Il-Merżuq and il-Qolla s-Safra outcrops. The rock is generally strong and relatively resistant to erosion, forming plateaux and coastal headlands across northern Gozo.

Within the immediate built-up area of Marsalforn, including the project site, the natural bedrock surface has mostly been modified by urban development and infrastructure works. As a result, the limestone substrate may be overlain by shallow layers of weathered rock, reworked material, or anthropogenic fill associated with past construction activities and coastal modifications. Nevertheless, the underlying geological structure remains consistent with the broader limestone terrain that characterises the area.

Given the proximity of the site to the coastline and its position at the mouth of a valley system, geomorphological processes associated with coastal dynamics and valley drainage have

historically influenced the local terrain. Although the present urban context has largely stabilised the immediate shoreline, the broader geological and geomorphological setting remains an important consideration in understanding the environmental context of the project. The project site lies at the seaward interface of Marsalforn Valley, one of the most prominent valley systems in Gozo, at a point where the valley is already submerged and extends beyond the shoreline. In the opposite direction, the valley extends southwards inland towards the central uplands near Victoria and beyond towards Xewkija and Għarb. The valley is a major natural drainage system that conveys stormwater runoff from a significant part of the island towards Marsalforn Bay.

The presence of Blue Clay in the wider Marsalforn Valley catchment is an important geomorphological factor. Due to its relatively low permeability, the clay often acts as an aquiclude beneath the overlying upper coralline limestone. Rainwater infiltrating through the limestone accumulates above this clay layer, resulting in the formation of spring lines along the limestone–clay interface. Such conditions have historically influenced both slope stability and agricultural land use within the valley, resulting also in the perception of Gozo being more fertile due to the presence of these springs.

In areas where clay slopes are exposed, gradual downslope movement or localised landslips occur. These features are characteristic of many clay-slope environments in Gozo and have contributed to the stepped or terraced landscape observed along the valley sides. Agricultural terracing has historically been employed to stabilise these slopes and create cultivable land. Most of the built-up component of the project site lies within the lower coastal zone where Globigerina limestone bedrock predominates, the rear section of the proposed constructions and landscaped area extend into the Blue Clay layer.

Further afield, the northern coastline of Gozo exhibits a diverse geomorphological character dictated by the structural properties of the geology and its interaction with marine processes. To the west of Marsalforn, in the areas of Qbajjar and Xwejni, the limestone forms extensive, low-lying wave-cut platforms and tidal pools, where gradual erosion along bedding planes has produced a gently sloping rocky profile. Conversely, the eastern coastal context toward Daħlet Qorrot becomes progressively more rugged; here, the limestone plateau descends steeply, with fractured beds and marine undercutting facilitating rockfalls and irregular cliff formations. This rocky dominance is interrupted at Ramla Bay, which functions as a sedimentary basin at the opening of another extensive valley system.

The geological and geomorphological setting of the Hotel Calypso project site is defined by its location within the limestone coastal terrain at the mouth of Marsalforn Valley.

In the wider area, the relationship between this limestone formation and the underlying Blue Clay plays an important role in shaping the morphology of Marsalforn Valley and its slopes. The presence of clay layers contributes to the development of terraced landscapes and influences local slope processes within the valley catchment. At a broader scale, the northern coastline of Gozo exhibits a heterogenous range of geomorphological features. Marsalforn Bay occupies a central position within this landscape, where the valley system converges with the marine environment and where the geological structure of the limestone plateau continues to influence both coastal morphology and land use.

3.2.3.3 Archaeology and Cultural Heritage

There are no known elements of Archaeological or Cultural interest on the site. St Paul's Church, built in 1730, stands around 35m away from the perimeter of the proposed development. (Fig 15)

The southernmost extent of the site at the level of Il-Menqa is affected by the buffer zone of a protected, wall-mounted George V letter box affixed to the Marsalforn Police Station.



Figure 15: St Paul's Church as visible from St Mary Street on the seafront across the bay (source: Google Earth)

3.2.4 Planning Policy and Regulatory Framework

The redevelopment of the Hotel Calypso site in Marsalforn is directed by the statutory and planning policy framework currently in force in Malta, chief among which the SPED, the Gozo and Comino Local Plan, action plans and development briefs.

This framework is supplemented by subject policies such as DC15, the 2014 Hotels policy, the Rural Policy and Design Guidance for the portion of the site that lies outside development zone, and environmental legislation led by the Environment and Resources Authority. One also notes that although superseded by the SPED, the Structure Plan remains a valid historical policy tool that is quoted to provide context and to understand the original strategic philosophies behind the major decisions in the development of Planning in Malta, such as in this case, the tourism direction given to Marsalforn.

In the case of the present proposal, the more apt planning issues are:

a. The scheme must demonstrate consistency with the SPED's urban regeneration, coastal management and Gozo-specific objectives, including the recognition of Gozo as a distinct spatial area.
b. The proposal must demonstrate that it follows policy with respect to zoning, height and coastal policy layers in the Gozo and Comino Local Plan,
c. Design quality, skyline effects, seafront materiality, servicing, parking and townscape integration will come under scrutiny in line with DC15, the hotels height policy and Circular 3/24.
d. The environmental dimension will need to be described in sufficient detail to render possible the screening and assessment under the Environment Protection Act and the EIA Regulations.

3.2.4.1 Structure Plan for the Maltese Islands, 1990

The Structure Plan, essentially Malta's first comprehensive planning tool, has given a strategic direction to planning in Malta that has gone beyond the Plan's lifetime, and indeed its legal validity upon its replacement with the SPED. Also, through the policy instruments it brought into being – such as the Local Plans – the Structure Plan continues to influence planning policy in Malta in no small measure.

With respect to the Marsalforn area, always held as a major tourism asset for Malta, the plan states:

"3.27 …. any further development of tourist accommodation should be confined to the conversion of property in favoured positions in existing built-up areas, mainly for the self-catering market, and the expansion of tourist facilities accommodation at Marsalforn, Xlendi and Mgarr and, in the latter part of the Plan period, at other sites. …."

Policy TOU 4 in the same plan also gave the direction

"The Planning Authority will give favourable consideration to the development of further tourist accommodation within the built-up areas and Temporary Provisions areas as amended by the relevant Local Plans at Mellieha, St. Paul's Bay/Buġibba, St. Julian's/Paceville, Sliema, Marsascala, and Marsalforn, Xlendi and Mgarr in Gozo. "

To date, Marsalforn still retains the primary Touristic mission that the Structure Plan assigned to it in the early 1990s.

Moreover, the Structure Plan also provides inspiration and context for the current proposal, in that through BEN 2, there is blanket direction towards a type of development that is compatible with the urban design and the environmental and architectural characteristics of existing or planned adjacent uses.

3.2.4.2 Strategic Plan for Environment and Development (SPED), 2015

The Strategic Plan for Environment and Development (SPED) of 2015 is the fundamental document that forms the primary basis for decisions on all development applications. It sets a spatial vision for the different areas constituting the Maltese Islands; urban, rural, coastal, marine.

The SPED recognises a distinct vision for Gozo as an island that is particular and sensitive, thus focusing more closely at protecting Gozitan lifestyle, identity, resources and cultural heritage while supporting employment, accessibility and investment. The SPED identifies Marsalforn and Xlendi as business hubs for retail, offices, tourism, culture and leisure. It therefore provides a positive context for the present proposal in terms of urban regeneration and tourism within the urban area, but is strongly conditional in terms of design quality, impact on the coastal quality, public realm, environmental capacity and Gozo-specific distinctiveness.

3.2.4.3 Gozo and Comino Local Plan (GCLP), 2006

The overall strategy of the Gozo and Comino Local Plan for the area of Marsalforn and its surroundings focuses on tourism development (GZ-TRSM-3). It states that one of the local plan's main goals is to improve public access and rehabilitate despoiled areas. In effect, policy GZ-TRSM-5 states that:

> *"MEPA shall give favourable consideration to proposals for development permission in Marsalforn, Xlendi and the Mgarr Harbour area which are earmarked for the longer term upgrading of these urban spaces. The envisaged interventions would include:*
> *a) creation of active public spaces which impart a sense of identity to each respective area;*
> *b) upgrading of existing and creation of new key visual links within the urban fabric;*
> *c) improvement of building elements and fenestration in order to create a richness in detail whilst at the same time ensuring an element of continuity along the facades;*
> *d) enhancement of linkages with identified activity spines and nodes;*
> *e) traffic calming measures and pedestrianisation of certain areas;*
> *f) improvement of access to public transport;*
> *g) rationalization of traffic circulation and parking;*
> *h) proper use of street furniture, public information, public art, lighting and user-friendly signage to create attractive public spaces;*
> *i) the rehabilitation of dilapidated buildings;*
> *j) removal of clutter from streets, facades and roofscapes;*
> *k) the upgrading of green areas especially through the use of significant proportions of indigenous and archaeophytic species (refer to Guidance on Planting);*
> *l) resolution of conflicts between maritime and land-based activities; and*
> *m) Securing public access along the coast."*

For Marsalforn Bay specifically, the coastline is described as falling under coastal policy provisions that safeguard public coastal access, heritage value and scenic quality, while it also includes policies related to residential areas, building height restrictions, marina-related upgrading and, on the western side of the bay, an Area of High Landscape Sensitivity.

In terms of the present development, the Local Plan, through its strong orientation for tourism activity in Marsalforn, supports the continued tourism function on this long-standing, prime hotel site. With reference to its focus on coastal access and the protection of the scenic value of the coastline, seafront massing and the planning of land use on the ground floor, particularly on the facades overlooking the shoreline at Il-Menqa become very important issue to treat in adequate detail.

The interlinkage and complementarity of uses and activities within the project site in relation to uses and activities in its surroundings are also matters of strategic importance for the Local Plan, and indeed to ensure the long-term success of the project within its context.

3.2.4.4 Development Control Design Policy - Guidance and Standards, 2015

This policy instrument is held to be Malta's design policy framework and as a "collective commitment towards good design" in the built environment. For the present application, DC15 is likely to be a principal design-management tool used by the PA to assess massing, façade composition, the handling of receded floors, streetscape fit, servicing, parking interfaces, back and side elevations, and the relationship of the development to topography and views. On a prominent seafront site in Marsalforn, the proposal is expected to present a coherent contextual design argument rather than a reliance on numerical compliance alone.

DC15 emphasizes 'context' as the guiding principle and allows innovative designs that respect local character. It also makes the case for good urban design, such as for example, active frontages (frontages at street level that provide a pleasant, interesting, and positive contribution to the street context within which it is located and, consequently, enriching the pedestrian experience). DC15 also sets some technical standards, such as, for example, the requirement for all parking layouts/ spaces to satisfy the minimum dimensions for the proposed development to function properly and safely.

The scheme must respond to surrounding streetscape, providing active ground-floor frontages and a contextual form. Such a significant development is expected to contribute significantly to the wider urban and maritime contexts of the Marsalforn seafronts.

3.2.4.5 Height Limitation Policy adjustment for hotels, 2014

This policy, adopted in 2014, was part of a broader effort to assist hotels in increasing their profitability and competitive edge in the volatile international tourism market. It allowed the vertical extension of existing hotels by up to two floors (or more for large sites) *provided* the design is "high quality… in keeping with the urban context" and on condition that it created no blank walls. This policy applies to 3+ star hotels in urban zones and requires design/urban analysis and EIA/TA as needed.

This policy is relevant to the present proposal since it includes hotel development. In particular, its emphasis on quality and context is very pertinent to this proposal. The policy underscores that any hotel must be of high architectural standard, with no unarticulated façades, and contributing quality to Malta's tourism product. It also suggests that the impact of design on the environment – the skyline and overshadowing, the architectural quality, the microclimate, and relationship to the infrastructure, must be studied.

The policy presents three points of direct relevance to the present proposal:

a. first, the policy may allow hotel buildings to exceed the ordinary local plan height limit;
b. secondly, compliance is still required with the policy sections dealing with relationship to context, the historic environment, built form and skyline, architectural detailed design, information to accompany applications and legal agreement; and
c. thirdly, development rights acquired under the policy are applicable only to hotel development.

For Calypso, the PA will therefore expect a robust skyline and a positive contribution towards the townscape through the additional hotel height being claimed. The seafront prominence of the project site increases the visibility and therefore the expected scrutiny for a meaningful design that improves the status quo.

3.2.4.6 Circular 3/24 – Designing for Gozo's Distinctiveness, 2024

This policy, which is intended to promote even further than national policies, the protection of the Gozitan ethos, mandates that the Gozitan character in design is protected and promoted.

The policy allows for the use of alternative natural stone (coralline, travertine) in exceptional seafront or corrosive locations. The current project site is a few meters away from the seafront

in an area significantly exposed to rough seas and to the prevailing winds. In this particular context, the conventional globigerina material, especially if unrendered, does not provide a durable solution.

Thus, for this site, its location may justify alternative natural materials, where the submitted palette demonstrably retains the visual character sought by the circular. And indeed, alternative materials are being recommended for use.

3.2.5 Present use of the site

Currently Hotel Calypso is an operating hotel. Outside of the hotel precincts, all other buildings are not in use and have reached a state where any potential future use requires complete redevelopment.

3.3 Project History

The site of the Calypso Hotel in Marsalforn has an extensive development history spanning several decades. It has been subject to numerous applications for extensions, internal alterations, and major redevelopments.

The following planning history provides a chronological overview of the development applications that have interested the site of the Calypso Hotel in Marsalforn (PA 07154/25), as listed in the current application records. This history details the evolution of the site from an existing hospitality establishment into the current major mixed-use proposal.

- In May 1996, PA 00415/96 sought permission for an extension to the existing hotel. This application initiated the modern phase of expansion for the facility, aimed to increase the room capacity of the original hotel footprint.
- In November 1998, PA 06865/98 was submitted to carry out internal and external alterations to the hotel. This case focused on modernizing the guest areas and updating the facade to better align with the evolving tourism standards of the time.
- In September 2000, PA 05955/00 proposed further internal alterations along with the construction of an additional floor to the existing hotel. This application aimed to increase the room capacity within the established footprint.

- In January 2002, PA 00086/02 sought permission for internal alterations and the construction of roof structures. The works were intended to upgrade the hotel's operational and guest facilities.
- In October 2004, PA 07096/04 sought to sanction variations from the previously approved PA 00086/02 and proposed additional internal alterations. This application addressed discrepancies between the built structure and approved plans.
- In February 2006, PA 00786/06 proposed further alterations and extensions to the existing hotel. This proposal continued the incremental growth of the tourism asset.
- In April 2008, PA 03043/08 sought permission for alterations, relocation and extensions to the hotel and its ancillary facilities. This application further refined the commercial and hospitality offerings of the site.
- In August 2018, PA 06549/18 proposed significant internal and external alterations alongside the addition of floors to the hotel building. This marked a substantial increase in the site's vertical development.
- In February 2019, PA 01033/19 sought to sanction variations from PA 06549/18 and proposed additional construction works.
- In May 2019, PA 03691/19 was submitted for internal and external alterations and a general refurbishment of the hotel premises.
- In July 2020, PA 04791/20 sought permission for minor alterations to the previously approved plans and the installation of plant equipment on the roof.
- In October 2024, PA 06893/24 and PA 06933/24 were filed as preliminary applications in preparation for the transition toward a more comprehensive redevelopment of the site. These cases established the groundwork for the current large-scale proposal.
- PA 6893/24 for the construction of 38 residential units, a substation and a shop (Class 4D) with underlying ground floor and basement garages was also approved. The proposal seeks to integrate the development approved on this site, with a unified design language. The basement levels were approved to be used for facilities pertaining to the hotel whereas the parking areas were shifted and consolidated beneath another block.
- This application PA 07154/25 submitted in 2025 seeks to demolish the existing hotel and its ancillary facilities, abandoned tennis courts and sports facilities, and carry out ecological restoration to create a formal recreational area. The proposal includes the construction of a 4-star Class 3B hotel with indoor and outdoor pools, spa, and sports facilities, six Class 4D restaurants, a convenience shop, 135 apartments, and extensive underground garages.

3.4 Alternative sites or uses

In the context of the present analysis, an alternative site assessment serves as an important exercise in justifying the suitability of the current proposal within its specific geographical and environmental context. Unlike a new development on an undisturbed site, this project is inherently an intervention on a committed site, characterized by the replacement of an existing, aged hospitality structure and the rehabilitation of associated derelict facilities.

Choosing the "Zero Option" - doing nothing - would be counter-productive. It would leave a dated hotel that cannot match modern 4-star standards and result in the abandoned sports facilities area to remain derelict. Without this project, the site misses out on the investment needed for modernization, and the proposed natural restoration component at the rear will not happen.

In this particular case, the scope for assessing alternative sites is somewhat pointless since the developer already owns this property. Moreover, the redevelopment of the hotel is intrinsically bound with the present location of this historic hotel, and the remaining components of the project are ancillary to it. Furthermore, the major appeal of the hotel and adjoining facilities stems from being on the seafront; moving them inland would reduce their validity as a top tourism product, while taking up new land and leaving optimal real estate in sub-standard conditions. The restoration of the old tennis courts is the most sensible plan for the part of the property Outside Development Zone at the rear of the site. Their current state has no added value for either the owners' or the public's benefit. The restoration of the area into an open space has the potential of softening the interphase between the urban zone and the countryside, providing a "green buffer".

The mixed-use approach being advocated will generate the capital for the redevelopment of the new hotel infrastructure. The new hotel will ensure that the site remains an important amenity in Gozo's tourism product, restaurants and cafes overlooking Il-Menqa would contribute to the lively atmosphere this area has always been synonymous with, a rethink of the public spaces has the potential of improving the openness of the site, the provision of parking amenity is an important contributor for the abatement of a very serious parking problem in this area, particularly in summer.

The proposal ensures that the more strategic portion of this property on the seafront remains committed for tourism services, introduces new services and amenities within a tightly congested area and brings about high-quality urban renewal.

3.5 Project Vision and Objectives

3.5.1 Project Vision

The vision underpinning this proposed redevelopment is to transform a long-established but dated tourism site into a contemporary mixed-use coastal development that remains materially and conceptually tied to its setting and history. The project is not being advanced as a new development on an uncommitted site, but as the replacement and reconfiguration of an existing hotel complex and ancillary land within Marsalforn, a locality that has long functioned as one of Gozo's principal seaside destinations. (Fig 16)



Figure 16: The project site. (source: the Architect's Studio)

The design statement prepared by Perit Alex Bigeni describes the proposal as a development whose architectural rationale is grounded in the specific conditions of Marsalforn, rather than in a generic architectural response. It explains the "architectural rationale, conceptual framework and planning considerations" for a proposed mixed-use development in Marsalforn,

with the architectural concept developed by international firm Pininfarina, whose approach is described as placing emphasis on “form, proportion and experiential quality” and drawing from “natural processes, movement and cultural context”. The purpose of this exercise is to translate the design vision into “a structured architectural response” showing how the project integrates with its context while contributing to Marsalforn’s evolution as one of Gozo’s principal coastal destinations.

This aspect is important because the locality itself is not static. Marsalforn has, over its history, evolved from a fishing village into one of Gozo’s main waterfront destinations, characterised by a layering of traditional maritime identity and seasonal tourism pressures. This condition is also reflected in the built environment, where older buildings, post-war interventions, tourism infrastructure and more recent apartment development coexist. Within this context, the project site is highly visible, both from the promenade and from longer-distance views from the sea. (Fig 17) The design statement therefore identifies the need for the building to operate not only “at the scale of the street” but also within the broader visual field of the bay, acting as an integrated component of the coastal system rather than as an isolated object.

The project vision may therefore be understood as one of contextual transformation. The design statement states that the project is “conceived as an intervention that is embedded within its context rather than imposed upon it”. It clarifies that the intention is neither to replicate existing architectural language nor to create a singular iconic object detached from its surroundings, but rather to develop a contemporary architectural expression emerging from the “underlying logic of place”. This is an important distinction. The proposal is not being framed as pastiche or as a nostalgic reconstruction of an earlier Marsalforn, but as a contemporary redevelopment that takes its cues from the site’s coastal setting, its relationship with the sea, the morphology of the bay, and Gozo’s cultural and geological identity.

At the same time, the vision is clearly one of regeneration. The existing Calypso Hotel complex represents an earlier, fundamental phase in the development of Marsalforn as a tourism destination. The new proposal seeks to replace this infrastructure with a more contemporary mix of hotel, residential, commercial and recreational uses, supported by underground parking and landscaped open areas. The design statement describes the project as an “urban catalyst” that reinforces the identity of Marsalforn while introducing “a new level of architectural clarity and coherence” and contributing to the transformation of the locality into “a more refined and resilient coastal environment”.



Figure 17: The prominent location of the project site from across the bay (source: Pininfarina)

This vision is also informed by the scale and visibility of the site. In planning and environmental terms, any redevelopment of this site will inevitably have an urban and visual presence. The project therefore seeks to manage this presence through massing, articulation, materiality, landscaping and functional organisation. The intention is not simply to increase accommodation capacity or built volume, but to reframe the site as a more ordered and coherent coastal block, where hospitality, residential and commercial functions are organised in a way that supports year-round activity and improves the urban interface.

The broader vision can therefore be summarised as follows: to redevelop an ageing hotel and ancillary site into a contemporary, context-led, mixed-use coastal development; to reinforce Marsalforn's tourism role while introducing a higher level of design quality; to relate the building to the bay, shoreline, salt pans, terraced landscapes and wider Gozitan identity; and to do so through an architectural response that is distinct but integrated, modern but not detached from place.

In this respect, the proposal is conceived as more than a replacement building. It is intended to act as a structured regeneration of a prominent coastal site, with the hotel component, residential units, commercial activity, public-facing uses, parking and landscaping forming parts of a single organised intervention. The vision is therefore consistent with the type of contemporary mixed-use redevelopment, namely the renewal of committed urban land

through a scheme that seeks to improve functionality, design quality, economic resilience and contextual fit.

3.5.2 Project Objectives

The objectives of the proposed development arise directly from the condition of the existing site, the importance of Marsalforn as a coastal settlement, and the design approach set out by the project architect.



Figure 18a: Artist impression of the new Calypso Hotel development (source: Pininfarina)

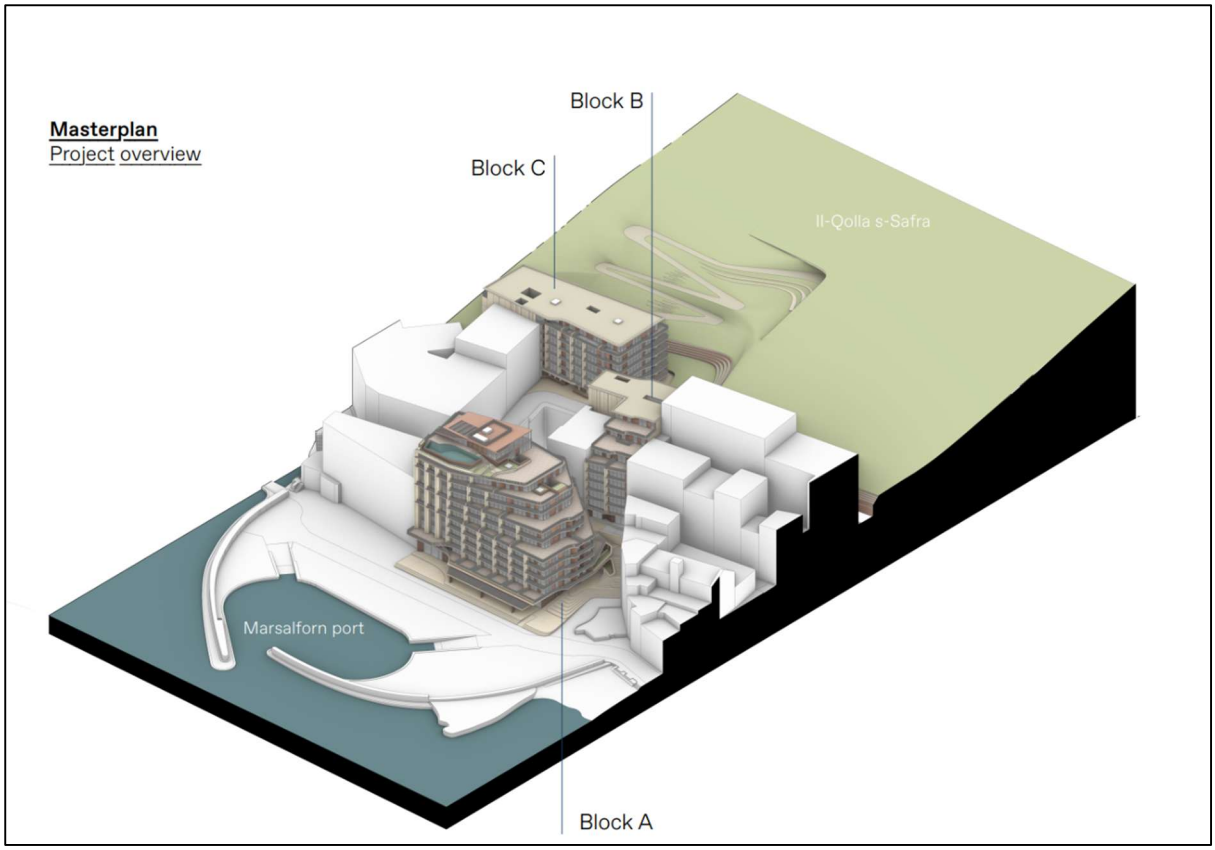


Figure 18b: Masterplan scheme of the new Calypso Hotel development (source: Pininfarina)

The proposal seeks to replace a hotel and ancillary complex dating from an earlier phase of tourism development with a more efficient and contemporary development comprising hospitality, residential, commercial, recreational, parking and landscaped components.

The first objective is the regeneration of a committed and partly underutilised urban coastal site. The existing Calypso Hotel, originally developed during the 1960s and subsequently extended, is part of Marsalforn's established tourism infrastructure. The present proposal seeks to replace dated built fabric and ancillary areas, including abandoned sports facilities and vacant land, with a new development that reorganises the site in a more coherent manner. The proposal submitted under PA/07154/25 includes a four-star hotel, restaurants, a convenience shop, apartments and underground garages.

A second objective is to retain and enhance the tourism function of the site while adjusting the offer to contemporary expectations. The project reduces the hotel room count when compared to the existing 100-room hotel but replaces it with a 52-room hotel supported by spa, indoor and outdoor pool, conference, gym/yoga and restaurant facilities. This shift indicates an objective to move away from a quantity-led accommodation model towards a more

experience-led hospitality product. In this sense, the hotel component is not considered in isolation, but as part of a broader mixed-use coastal destination that includes complementary commercial, leisure and residential activity.



Figure 18c: Artist impression of the new Calypso Hotel development from the centre of the seafront (source: Pininfarina)

A third objective is to organise the development as a coherent mixed-use scheme. The architect's Design Statement states that the development incorporates "a mix of residential, hospitality and commercial uses arranged in a coherent vertical structure". This arrangement is intended to provide clarity of circulation and operational efficiency while maintaining distinction between different functions. Public and commercial uses are located at the lower levels, creating an active interface with the surrounding urban environment, while the hotel and residential components are positioned above to benefit from views and increased privacy. Parking and services are integrated at the back of the development.



Figure 18d: Artist impression of the new Calypso Hotel development from Il-Menqa (source: Pininfarina)

A further objective is visual integration. Given the site's prominence in Marsalforn Bay, the building cannot be assessed only in terms of its footprint or internal use. Its massing, elevations and skyline relationship are central to the project. The design statement notes that "particular attention has been given to the visual impact of the development" and identifies stepping of volumes, façade articulation and careful selection of materials as strategies aimed

at reducing perceived scale and enhancing integration with the surrounding environment. This objective is especially relevant in Marsalforn, where the seafront, harbour views, rising rear topography and views from the sea make the site visually exposed.

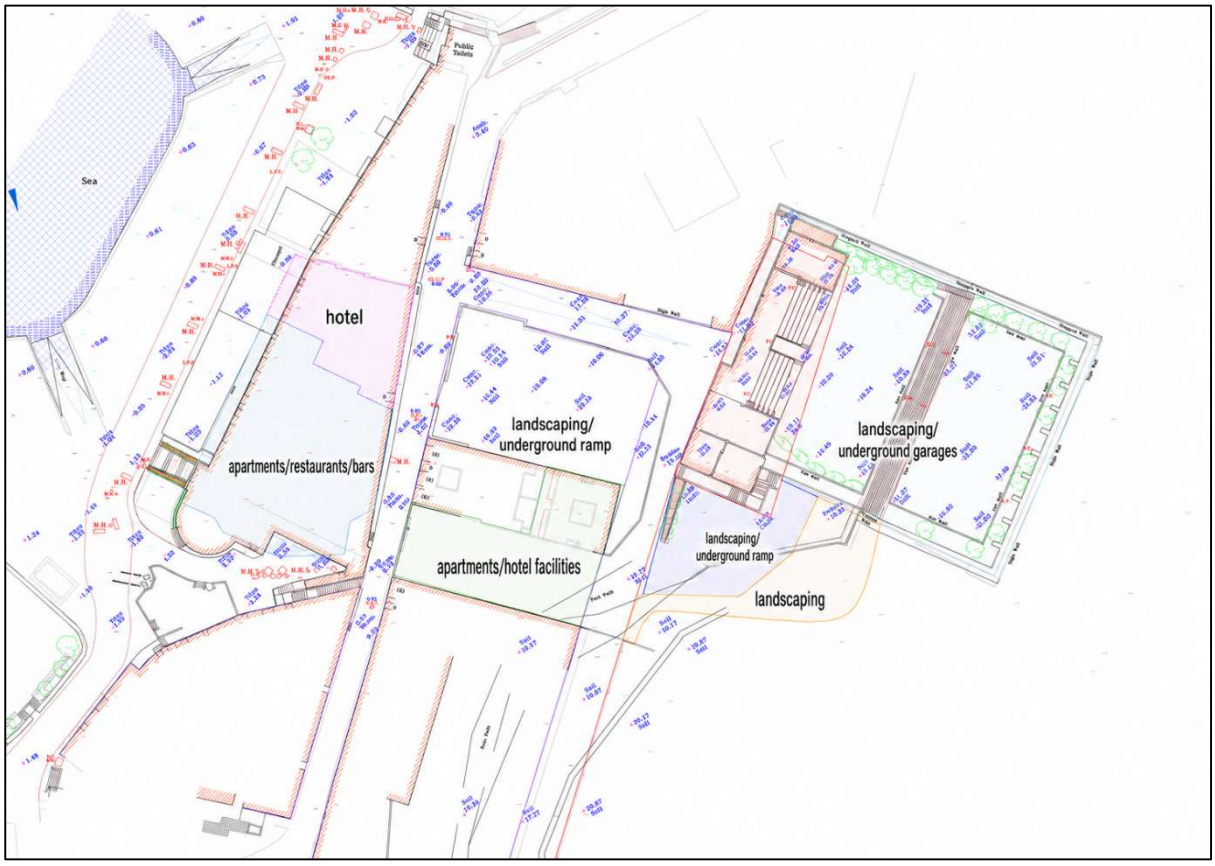


Figure 18e: Overlay of the proposed development superimposed on the existing structures

Another core objective is to avoid a monolithic building form. The design statement explains that the massing results from a refinement process driven by contextual and visual considerations. The initial volume is progressively “broken down, stepped and articulated” in response to topography, view corridors and surrounding urban scale.

Upper levels are recessed and modulated so that the development reads not as a single large mass, but as a composition of interrelated elements. This objective is essential to the acceptability of the proposal in a coastal settlement whose existing built fabric has developed incrementally and unevenly.

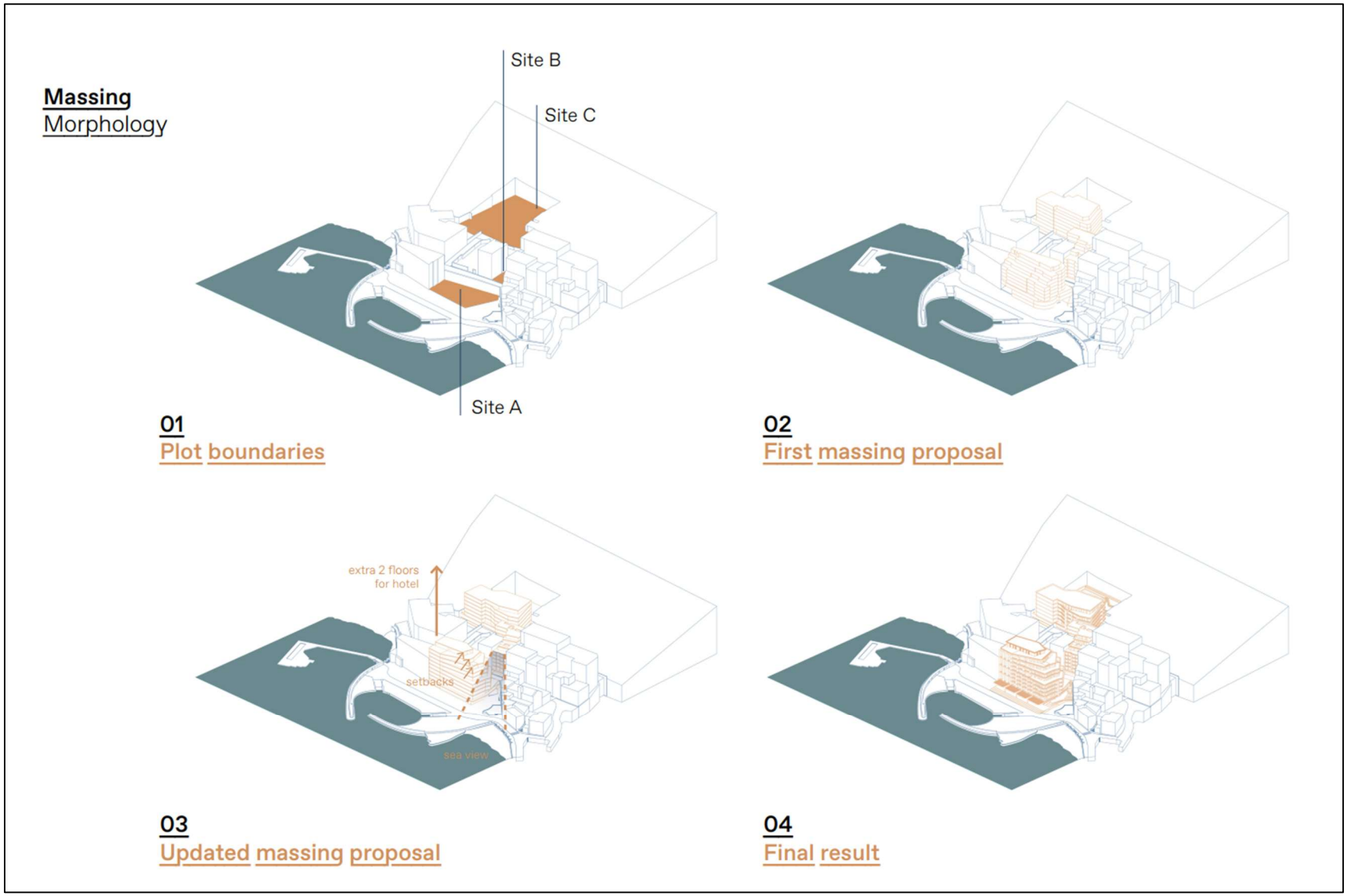


Figure 19: The maturation of the present proposal (source: Pininfarina)

The proposal also seeks to provide structured parking and servicing as part of the redevelopment. This is an important objective because Marsalforn experiences seasonal parking pressure and has a constrained local road network. The Traffic Scoping Statement identifies the road network as destination-oriented, with narrow carriageways, constrained junction geometry, limited formal parking provision, and pronounced seasonal pressure. The provision of internal parking and organised servicing is therefore not merely ancillary to the project, but part of the way in which the proposal seeks to manage its operational relationship with the locality.

Finally, the project seeks to provide a development that strengthens Marsalforn's role as a year-round destination. The Design Statement states that the resulting configuration supports "a continuous level of activity throughout the year", contributing to the economic and social sustainability of the area. It further notes that the project contributes to broader strategic objectives relating to the regeneration of Marsalforn and the strengthening of Gozo's tourism offering.

In summary, the project objectives are to regenerate an ageing committed site; modernise the tourism offer; create a coherent mixed-use development; manage visibility and massing; provide structured parking and servicing; strengthen Marsalforn's coastal identity; and support the locality's economic role beyond the peak tourism season.

3.5.3 Project Aims

The aims of the proposed development translate the above objectives into more specific design and operational intentions. The proposal aims to create a development that is not only commercially viable and functionally efficient, but also legible, context-sensitive and capable of contributing positively to the evolving character and visual integrity of Marsalforn.

The first aim is to create a contemporary architectural response that is rooted in the identity of the place. The design statement does not present the project as a conventional hotel redevelopment, but as a response to Gozo's physical, cultural and maritime context and needs. It states that the proposal seeks to "translate the essence of Gozo into built form", referring specifically to the island's geological character, cultural layering and innate relationship with the sea. The building is therefore understood not simply as a development, but as a continuation of processes that have historically shaped the island's landscape and settlements.

The second aim is to organise the development around the conceptual framework of “weaving” that is pervasive in Gozitan trade and tradition. The design statement explains that this idea emerges from several observations of the site and its surroundings, including traditional fishing practices, the geometry of the salt pans and the terraced agricultural landscape characteristic of Gozo. These systems share processes of interconnection, layering and repetition. The architectural response draws from this condition through a spatial system composed of layered volumes and interrelated elements. In this way, the design aims to avoid a singular object-building and instead create an architectural composition of connected parts.

Another aim is to respond to the Mediterranean lifestyle associated with Gozo in general and Marsalforn in particular. The design statement identifies outdoor living, permeability and interaction between public and private spaces as central social and spatial patterns. The development responds through terraces, transitional spaces and a layered interface with the public realm. This aim is especially relevant in Marsalforn, where the public promenade, catering establishments, seafront activity and seasonal outdoor life are defining characteristics of the locality and the way of life it offers.

A fourth aim is to establish a suitable functional organisation for a complex mixed-use project. The development brings together hotel, residential, commercial, parking and servicing functions. These uses have different access, privacy, servicing and operational requirements so as to minimise potential conflict among uses. The design statement indicates that the scheme addresses this through a “coherent vertical structure”, with public and commercial uses at lower levels, hotel and residential components above, and parking and services integrated at the back of the development. The aim here is not simply to place different uses within the same site, but to arrange them so that they operate efficiently and with limited conflict.

The project also intends to reduce the perceived bulk of the development through massing strategy. The design statement records that the building volume has been progressively broken down, stepped and articulated in response to topography, view corridors and surrounding urban scale. Upper levels are recessed and modulated, producing a hierarchy of volumes that responds to near and distant viewpoints. This aim is central to the project because the site is highly visible from Marsalforn Bay, the promenade and views from the sea.

The proposal aims to achieve a façade treatment that balances clarity, identity and environmental responsiveness. The architectural language is described as deriving from a

synthesis of natural and constructed references, with the form influenced by erosion patterns of the coastline and the fluid geometry of the shoreline. A defining feature is the use of frames of varying depth, creating rhythm, depth and shadow. Larger frames are associated with public and hotel functions, while more compact frames define residential areas. Subtle colour insertions, inspired by the salt pans of Gozo, are intended to reinforce context without direct imitation.

Material durability is also clearly identified as a matter of concern. The site's coastal exposure makes material performance and durability a practical issue. The design statement explains that the material strategy seeks to maintain visual continuity with the traditional Maltese built environment while ensuring durability within a harsh coastal setting. It proposes high-quality pigmented concrete for the primary framing elements, intended to retain the warm tonal palette of local limestone while providing improved performance in a marine environment exposed to sea spray, wind and salt-laden air.

The landscaping objective is similarly practical and contextual. The selected planting mix is to be tailored to the coastal environment, favouring hardy, halophytic and drought-resistant local species capable of withstanding wind exposure and saline conditions. Landscaping is therefore intended to operate as an extension of the architectural language that allows the project to blend into the adjoining rural area, while remaining practical and low maintenance. A landscaping statement has been prepared, and a full landscaping plan is currently being produced.

Overall, the project aims to deliver a mixed-use coastal development that is functional, visually articulated, materially robust, contextually grounded and capable of supporting Marsalforn's role as a tourism, entertainment and residential destination.

3.5.4 Project Key Themes

The new Calypso development being proposed is underpinned by a number of cross-cutting themes which feed into its design, organisation and assessment. These themes are not separate from one another but overlap in the way the project responds to site, context, use and policy. The most important themes are regeneration, contextual integration, mixed-use organisation, coastal identity, visual mitigation, durability, landscaping and year-round economic contribution.



Figure 20: A selection of materials proposed by the concept developers (source: Pininfarina)

Urban regeneration and renewal are primary themes. The project involves the replacement of an older hotel and ancillary complex with a contemporary development that seeks to make more effective use of a committed site within an established development zone. The regeneration theme is not limited to demolition and rebuilding. It concerns the reconfiguration of land use, the improvement of design quality, the introduction of structured parking and servicing, and the creation of a development that is better adapted to present economic and environmental conditions. The Design Statement describes the project as contributing to wider objectives relating to the regeneration of Marsalforn and the strengthening of Gozo's tourism offering.

Contextual integration is another core theme. The design statement repeatedly frames the project as an intervention embedded within its setting rather than imposing upon it. It identifies the need for a building that responds to both the immediate urban context and the wider visual amenity of the bay. This theme is fundamental because the site is prominent and strategically located; visible not only from adjacent streets, but also from the promenade, the harbour area and seaward approaches. The project therefore has to function well at multiple scales: street, urban block, bay and coastal landscape.

Weaving and interconnection form the conceptual theme of the design. The design statement identifies "weaving" as the central idea informing the proposal, derived from traditional fishing practices, salt pan geometry and terraced agricultural landscapes. These references are not applied decoratively. Rather, they inspire the arrangement of volumes, the connection of spaces and the relationship between the building and its surroundings. This provides a clear design rationale for the proposal's layered massing and interrelated components.

Mixed-use synergy is also a central motif. The development combines hospitality, residential, commercial and supporting infrastructure. The architect's statement indicates that these uses are arranged in a coherent vertical structure, with public and commercial uses at lower levels, hotel and residential uses above, and parking and services integrated at the back. This theme supports both operational clarity and urban vitality. It also reflects the reality of Marsalforn as a settlement where tourism, residential use, catering and public coastal activity can coexist.

Visual integration and massing control are central because the site is very prominent. The design response includes stepped volumes, articulated façades and a careful material palette intended to reduce perceived scale. The building is intended to engage the skyline in a controlled manner, reading from distance as part of the coastal landscape while maintaining

human scale at street level. This theme is important in the assessment of landscape, visual amenity and townscape effects.

Material identity and durability are another useful theme. The development seeks to maintain continuity with the warm tonal character of Maltese limestone while using materials suited to a marine environment. The design statement explains the use of pigmented concrete as the principal material for the façade frames, intended to provide solidity and depth while improving performance under conditions of sea spray, wind and salt-laden air. This reflects a design approach that recognises coastal exposure as both an aesthetic and technical constraint.

Landscape and environmental adaptation are also present in the project. The project will include the restoration of the tennis court area and its re-integration in the landscape. (Fig 21) Planting is to be tailored to coastal conditions, with hardy, halophytic and drought-resistant species - preferably local - suited to saline exposure and wind-swept landscapes. The landscape component is therefore not only ornamental, but part of the wider strategy of contextual integration and long-term manageability.

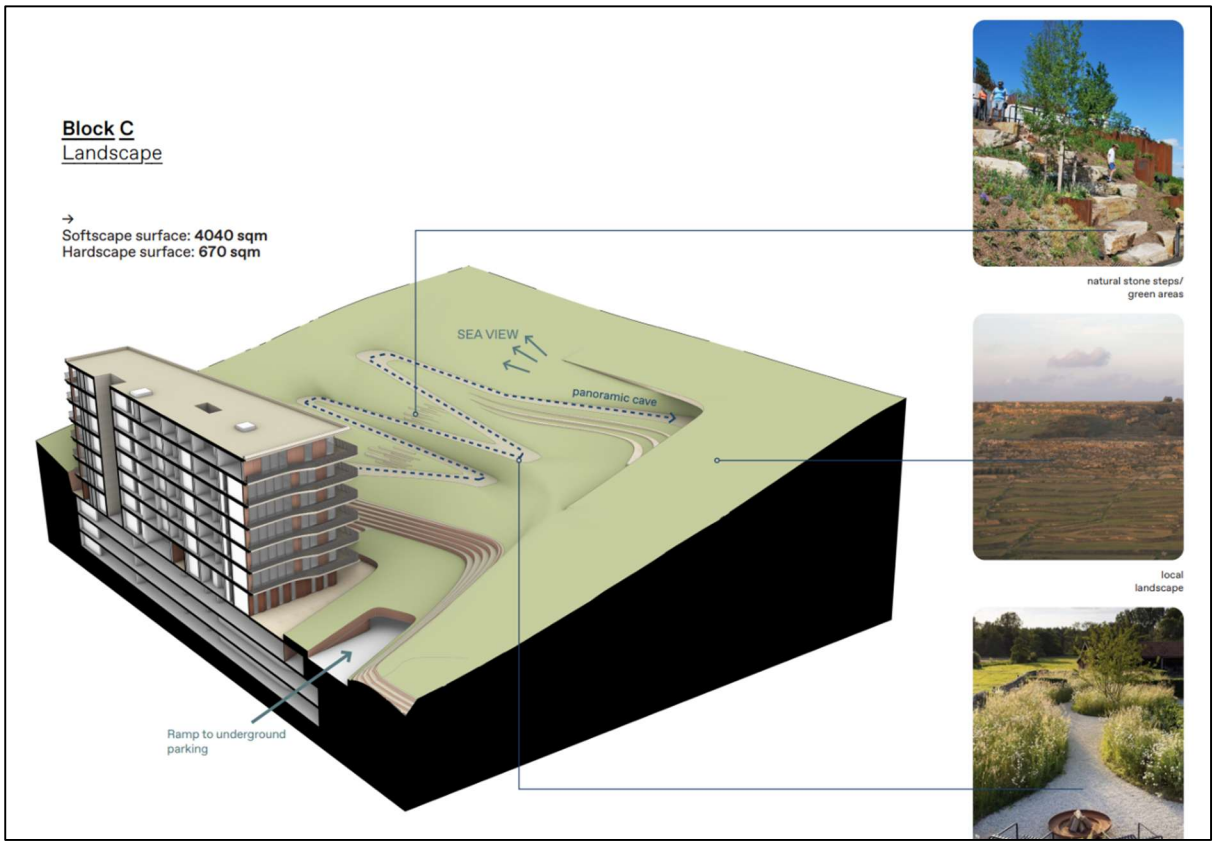


Figure 21a: Artist impression of the new landscaped area (source: Pininfarina)

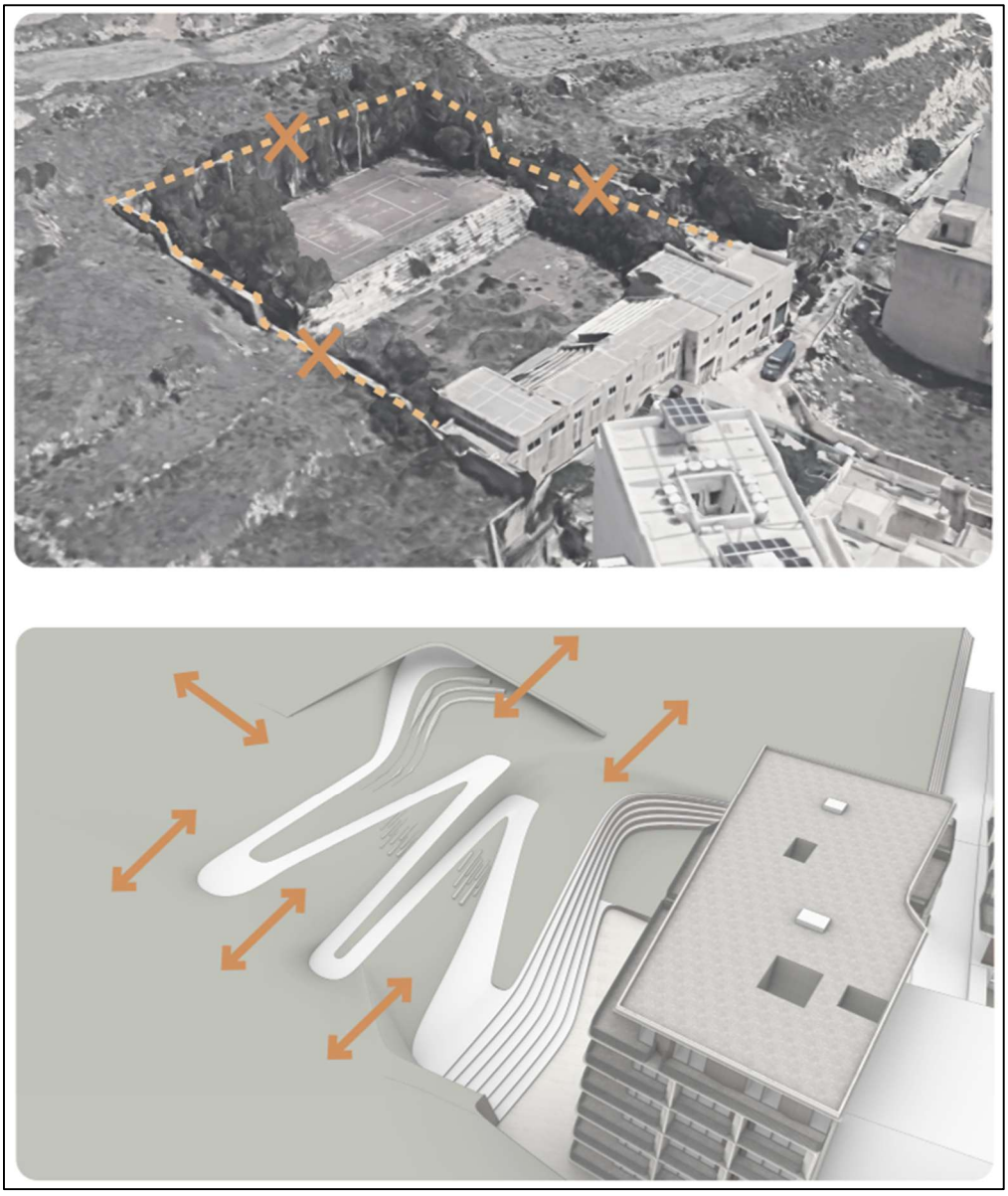


Figure 21b: The proposed restoration of the tennis court area (source: Pininfarina)

Tourism resilience and year-round activity form the final key theme. The proposal seeks to diversify and strengthen Marsalforn's tourism offer through a reduced but higher-quality hotel component, residential accommodation, commercial uses and supporting facilities. The Design Statement states that the configuration supports continuous activity throughout the year and contributes to the economic and social sustainability of the area.

Taken together, these themes provide the framework through which the project should be understood and assessed. The proposal is not merely a hotel replacement exercise, but a layered mixed-use redevelopment of a prominent coastal site. Its key themes are therefore regeneration, contextual design, controlled massing, operational clarity, material resilience,

landscape adaptation and support for Marsalforn's continued role as a principal coastal destination in Gozo.

3.6 Development of Concept and design

The current proposal for the redevelopment of the Calypso Hotel site emerged through a design process that sought to respond directly to the physical, cultural and environmental characteristics of Marsalforn and the wider Gozitan landscape. This proposal was not conceived as an isolated architectural object, but rather as a contextualised intervention within one of Gozo's most prominent coastal settlements. The conceptual framework underpinning the project therefore evolved from a reading of the site and activity around it, the morphology of Marsalforn Bay, the surrounding topography, and the spatial and cultural patterns that characterise the locality.

The project occupies a highly prominent coastal site at the interface between Marsalforn seafront and the urban fabric of the settlement. As a result, the design process extended beyond considerations of land use and built volume, and also addressed issues relating to skyline, visual exposure, public realm, coastal identity and the relationship between the development and the wider landscape. The conceptual framework developed for the project sought to establish an architectural language that is contemporary in expression while remaining grounded in the physical and cultural conditions of the site.

The following sections outline the principal influences, methodologies and design approaches that informed the development of the proposal.

3.6.1 The Design and Architectural Team

The architectural concept for the redevelopment was developed through the collaboration of the project architect, Perit Alexander Bigeni, with Pininfarina, the internationally recognised Italian design house. Pininfarina is a firm founded in Italy in the 1930s and recognised globally for its legacy in automotive design, industrial innovation and, more recently, architecture and master planning. Over the years, the firm has expanded its design expertise into the built environment, including hospitality, residential and mixed-use projects. Its work is described as placing emphasis on "form, proportion and experiential quality", often drawing inspiration from "natural processes, movement and cultural context". (ref. Design Brief)

The engagement of such a specialised design firm is itself part of the project rationale. The redevelopment presentation states that one of the intended transformations from the status quo is the “engagement of an internationally reputable architectural firm to give the project design identity and create a landmark”. This should not be understood in the narrow sense of seeking to produce a visually dominant or showy statement, but rather as an attempt to give a prominent and long-established site a clearer architectural identity than the existing development presently provides.

The local architectural role remains equally important. The proposal is not merely an imported design language applied to a Gozitan site. The Design Statement translates the wider design concept into a structured architectural and planning response for Marsalforn. This factor is important because the project must be assessed not only as a design exercise, but as a proposal that needs to integrate itself within the Maltese planning context, within a specific local policy, environmental and urban context.

The design team therefore had to address two linked challenges. The first was to develop an architectural concept capable of providing the project with a recognisable and coherent identity. The second was to ensure that this identity is not disconnected from the site, from Marsalforn Bay, or from the physical and cultural characteristics of Gozo. The Design Statement is explicit on this point. It states that the architectural response should demonstrate how the development integrates with its context while contributing to the ongoing evolution of Marsalforn as one of Gozo’s principal coastal destinations.

This collaborative process is relevant since it outlines how the proposal has adopted its present architectural direction. The project presents the design as the outcome of a contextual reading of the site, with attention to form, massing, materiality, public interface, coastal exposure and long-distance visibility. These matters are directly relevant to the environmental and townscape assessment of the proposal.

3.6.2 Design Methodology and Conceptual Development

The conceptual development of the proposal is based on a reading of the site at different scales. The project site forms part of the built-up waterfront of Marsalforn, but it is also visible from the sea, the promenade and surrounding parts of the bay. It therefore had to be considered both as a street-level intervention and as part of the wider coastal landscape.

The Design Statement describes Marsalforn as a locality with a “dual condition”: on one hand, a place connected to the rhythms of the sea and traditional livelihoods, and on the other, a seasonal tourism hub shaped by contemporary development pressures. This duality is reflected in the built environment, where traditional structures, post-war buildings, tourism infrastructure and more recent apartment development coexist. The resulting urban fabric is described as neither uniform nor static, but dynamic and continuously evolving.

This reading of Marsalforn is central to the design methodology. The project does not attempt to recreate an earlier version of the village, nor does it seek to ignore the present-day tourism and residential character of the locality. Instead, it accepts Marsalforn as a layered settlement and proposes a development that responds to this condition through a contemporary but contextually informed architectural language.

The existing development and its current use also fed into the design process. The redevelopment presentation describes the present hotel as a 100-room hotel built in the 1960s and 1970s and extended in the 1990s, with room sizes of approximately 18–20m². It also notes that some ancillary facilities, including sports facilities, have been abandoned. The proposal, by contrast, is presented as reducing the number of rooms and placing greater emphasis on facilities and experience. This move is important because it signals a transition away from a dated accommodation model towards a more contemporary quality hospitality and mixed-use offer.

The design methodology therefore combines regeneration, reorganisation and reinterpretation. The site is already committed to hotel and ancillary uses, but the existing arrangement no longer reflects the operational, spatial or experiential standards expected of a contemporary tourism project. The new concept seeks to reorganise the site into a more coherent mixed-use development, incorporating hotel, residential, commercial, recreational, parking and landscaped components.

The design process also appears to have been iterative. The Design Statement explains that the massing was progressively broken down, stepped and articulated in response to topography, view corridors and surrounding urban scale. The massing is not presented as a single predetermined volume, but as the outcome of refinement intended to maintain development capacity while reducing perceived bulk.

The result is a scheme that seeks to operate at several levels at once: it is a redevelopment of an ageing hotel site, a mixed-use urban block, a seafront building visible within the bay, and a design exercise intended to give the site a new architectural identity.

3.6.3 The Territorial Context as Design Generator

A central element of the design concept is the attempt to reflect Gozo itself. The Design Statement states that the proposal seeks to “translate the essence of Gozo into built form”, including the island’s geological character, cultural layering and relationship with the sea. It is not presented as a literal imitation of traditional architecture, but as a process of abstraction through which territorial characteristics inform the building’s organisation and expression.



Figure 22: Elements of Maltese and Gozitan attributes feeding into the project concept (source: Pininfarina)

The principal conceptual idea identified in the Design Statement is that of “weaving”. This concept emerges from several readings of the site and its wider surroundings, including traditional fishing practices, the geometry of the salt pans and the terraced agricultural landscape that characterises much of Gozo. Each of these systems is based on interconnection, layering and repetition. The design response draws from this condition through the creation of a spatial system composed of layered volumes and interrelated elements.

The value of this concept lies in the way it connects different aspects of place. Fishing relates directly to Marsalforn’s maritime history. The salt pans refer to one of the most recognisable coastal landscapes in northern Gozo. Terraced agriculture reflects the island’s adaptation to geology, slope and land/resource scarcity. These references are not used as surface decoration, but as organising ideas that influence how the development is composed.

The concept of weaving is also appropriate to Marsalforn itself. The locality is not the product of a single period or use. It is formed through the interlacing of fishing, tourism, residential activity, catering, seasonal recreation and everyday local use. In this sense, the project site sits within a place already formed by layers and overlaps. The architectural concept therefore uses weaving not only as a visual metaphor, but as a way of understanding the locality’s social, cultural and physical ethos.

This territorial reading is relevant because it explains the basis of the design language. It plans for a development that attempts to respond to patterns already present in the surrounding territory: stepping, layering, repetition, transition, movement and visual connection.

This is also consistent with the wider architectural approach described for Pininfarina, where form is often linked to natural processes, movement and cultural context. In the Calypso proposal, these influences are directed towards the interpretation of Gozo’s landscape and the specific conditions of Marsalforn Bay.

3.6.4 Relationship with Marsalforn Bay and the Coastal Landscape

The project site occupies a prominent position overlooking Marsalforn Bay. This has important consequences for the design. The Design Statement notes that the site is highly visible from both the coastal promenade and longer-distance views from the sea. It therefore requires an architectural response that operates not only at the scale of the street, but also within the

broader landscape. The building is required to act as an integrated component of the coastal system rather than as an isolated object.

Marsalforn's setting is also particular. The lighting concept presentation describes the village as a small fishing village on the northern coast of Gozo which has become one of the island's best-known tourist resorts, partly because of its natural beauty, atmosphere and cultural features. It also notes that the most built-up part of the settlement is the area overlooking the sea, while the southern area towards Rabat is a fertile cultivated valley surrounded by low hills.

This relationship between bay, waterfront development and inland valley is important. The project is not located in a neutral urban grid, but in a settlement where the coast, promenade, harbour activity, rising topography and rural hinterland are closely related. The seafront is the public face of Marsalforn, while the valley behind the settlement remains an important part of its broader setting. The building therefore has to respond both to the active urban frontage and to the wider landform.

The Design Statement identifies the morphology of the bay as one of the factors informing the project. The first design driver is the interpretation of context, where the geology of the coastline, the morphology of the bay and the existing urban fabric are studied and abstracted to inform form and massing. This is important because the proposal's design response is not limited to style or façade treatment. It extends to the overall organisation of the building.

The project also has to be understood in relation to movement around the bay. The promenade functions as a key public space, while the site is perceived from multiple positions: along the seafront, from the port, from nearby streets, from higher ground and from the sea. The lighting concept refers specifically to views along the sea, from the street, from the port and from the air as privileged points of view.

The design response therefore seeks to manage visibility rather than ignore it. The project will necessarily be visible. The issue is whether this visibility is controlled, articulated and integrated. The submitted design material addresses this through stepped massing, articulated façades, material selection and a clear relationship between the public lower levels and the more private hotel and residential levels above.

3.6.5 Translation of Concept into Built Form

‘The conceptual framework is translated into built form primarily through the organisation of volumes, the treatment of massing and the arrangement of uses. The development is conceived as a mixed-use project rather than a single-function hotel building. Proposed facilities include a rooftop pool, indoor pool, multipurpose/conference hall, spa facilities, rehabilitated garden, gym/yoga facilities, restaurants, breakfast area overlooking views and a sky bar.

This shift is relevant to the design concept. The proposal is not simply replacing an existing hotel with another hotel. It reorganises the site into a mixed-use coastal block, where hotel functions, residential units, commercial spaces, leisure amenities, parking and landscaped areas are combined within one integrated scheme. This is aligned with the Design Statement’s description of the development as an architectural response made of layered and interrelated elements rather than a singular monolithic form.

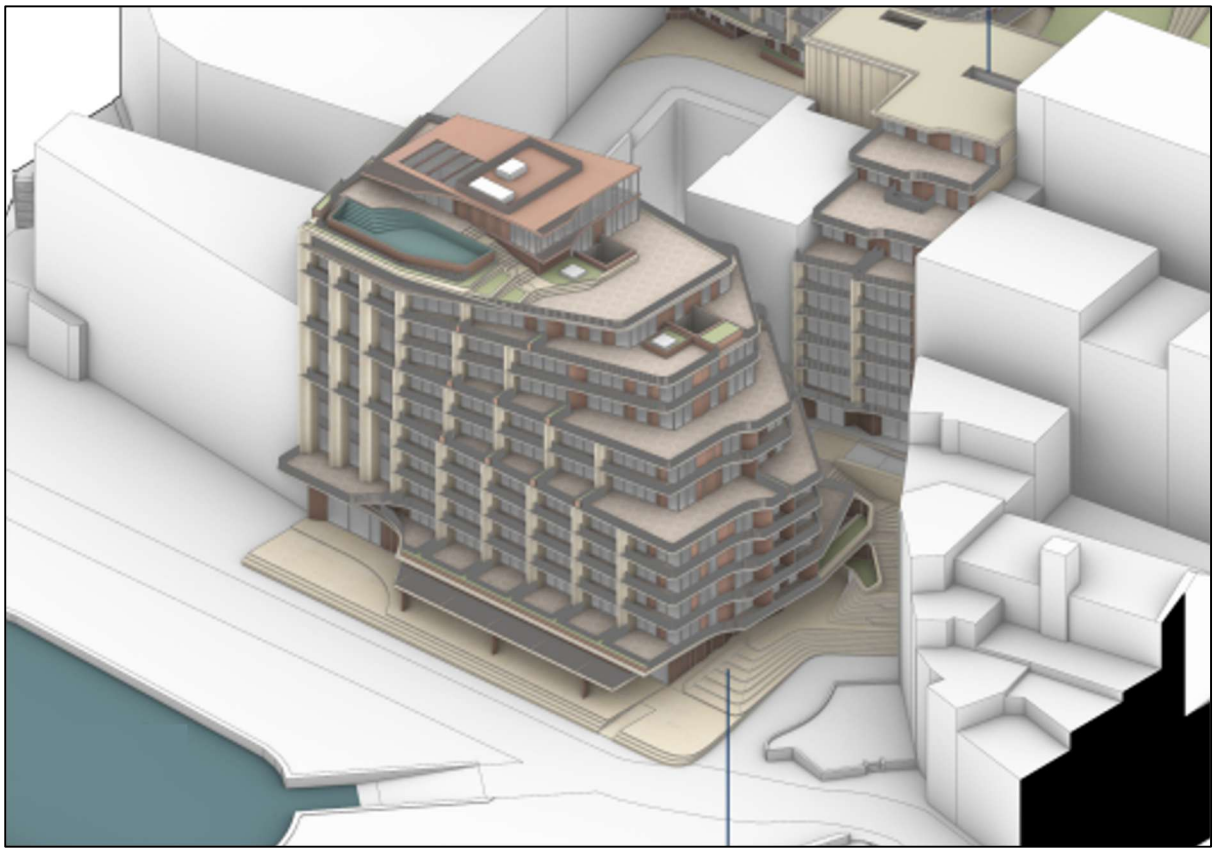


Figure 23: Avoidance of monolithic forms in the proposal to reduce bulkiness (source: Pininfarina)

The massing strategy is the main design tool used to achieve this. The Design Statement explains that the initial volume was progressively broken down, stepped and articulated in response to the site's topography, view corridors and surrounding urban scale. Upper levels are recessed and modulated, creating a hierarchy of volumes that respond to near and distant viewpoints. The building is therefore intended to read as a composition of interrelated elements rather than as one large mass.

This is particularly important given the scale and position of the site. A continuous or undifferentiated volume on this frontage would be difficult to reconcile with the heterogenous character of Marsalforn. The design therefore seeks to reduce perceived bulk through articulation, setbacks and changes in depth. These measures also allow terraces and outdoor spaces to be integrated into the building, supporting the Mediterranean lifestyle theme identified in the Design Statement.

The organisation of uses also contributes to the design. Public and commercial uses are placed at lower levels, where they can be reached by the public on the seafront and street interface. Hotel and residential components occupy upper levels, where views, privacy and separation become more important. Parking and servicing are placed underground or at the rear, reducing their visual presence and helping to organise the operational requirements of the development. This layered arrangement gives physical form to the "weaving" concept by connecting different uses, levels and experiences within one coherent development.

3.6.6 Materiality, Architectural Language and Night-time Expression

The architectural language of the proposal is based on a combination of natural and constructed references. The Design Statement states that the form is influenced by erosion patterns of the coastline and the fluid geometry of the shoreline, resulting in a composition that is both structured and dynamic. A defining element of the façade is a system of frames of varying depth. These frames establish rhythm, create depth and respond to the internal organisation of the building. Larger frames are associated with public and hotel functions, while more compact frames define residential areas.

This approach is useful in a project of this type since it avoids treating the façade as a flat external skin. Instead, depth, shadow and repetition become part of the architectural response. The interplay between frames, apertures and recessed elements allows the building to respond to changing light conditions throughout the day. The Design Statement also notes

that subtle insertions of colour, inspired by the salt pans of Gozo, reinforce the connection with context without relying on direct imitation.

Material selection is also a key part of the concept. The Design Statement explains that the material strategy is driven by the dual objective of maintaining visual continuity with the traditional Maltese built environment while ensuring long-term durability in a harsh coastal setting. The primary façade frames are conceived as solid, monolithic elements drawing from the depth and permanence associated with Maltese limestone construction. However, rather than relying exclusively on natural stone, the proposal adopts high-quality pigmented concrete as the principal material for these elements.

This choice is explained in practical terms. The site is directly exposed to sea spray, wind and salt-laden air. Pigmented concrete is proposed because it can retain the warm tonal palette associated with local globigerina limestone while offering improved performance in a marine environment. Through the selection of aggregates, pigmentation and finishes, the material is intended to achieve texture and depth that resonate with the local context without superficial imitation.

The secondary palette is deliberately restrained. Railings are proposed in metal, likely powder-coated aluminium or treated steel, in darker muted tones. Apertures are conceived as precise recessed elements within the façade composition, using high-performance aluminium systems in dark finishes. The recessing of apertures contributes to the architectural expression but also provides passive shading and improves environmental performance.

The lighting strategy adds another layer to the architectural language. The lighting concept states that its purpose is to enhance the architecture in coordination with the main concept, follow a low light level / well-being strategy, and respect the local context. It also recognises that night-time Marsalforn is shaped by the contrast between darker surrounding hills, the lit seafront road, catering activity and reflections on the sea. In this sense, the night-time expression of the project is not treated separately from the design concept, but forms part of the same concern with atmosphere, shadow, rhythm and contextual sensitivity.

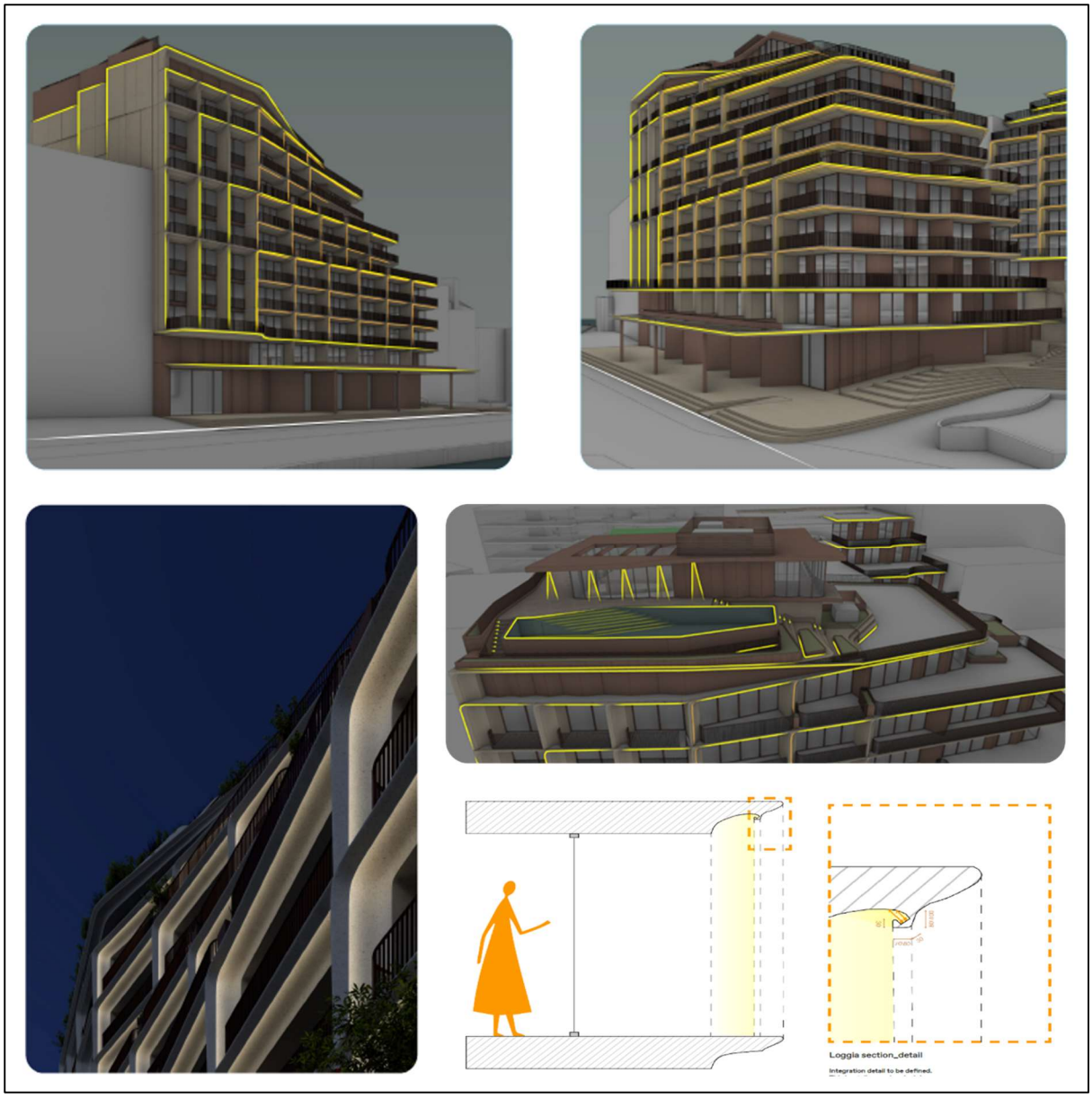


Figure 24: A sample of the lighting strategy being proposed (source: Pininfarina)

3.6.7 Landscape, Open Space and Public Realm Integration

The landscape component of the project forms part of the overall design strategy. The proposal includes a rehabilitated garden and landscaped areas, while the Design Statement explains that planting using local trees and shrubs is to be incorporated in specific designed locations as an integral part of the architectural composition. This approach is deliberately controlled and selective, avoiding extensive decorative planting that may become inconsistent over time due to maintenance demands.

The landscape strategy is also shaped by the site's coastal exposure. The planting scheme is intended to respond to wind, salinity and drought conditions typical of Marsalforn. The selected planting mix is to favour hardy, halophytic and drought-resistant local species capable of withstanding wind exposure and saline conditions, with landscaping operating as an extension of the architectural language while remaining practical and low-maintenance.



Figure 25: Artist impression of the restored landscaped area. (source: Pininfarina)

This is relevant because the site sits between a highly urbanised seafront and a wider Gozitan landscape of coastal slopes, agricultural land and exposed shore. The project therefore has

to manage not only building form, but also the transition between built mass, outdoor amenity and the surrounding public realm. Terraces, planted zones and transitional spaces are used to soften this relationship and support the Mediterranean lifestyle theme identified in the Design Statement.

The public realm relationship is particularly important along the seafront and at the lower levels of the development. Marsalforn is a locality where social life is strongly tied to outdoor movement, coffee culture, eating, walking, views and seasonal activity. The Design Statement identifies outdoor living, permeability and interaction between public and private realms as central to social and spatial patterns across Gozo. The building responds through terraces, transitional spaces and a layered interface with the public realm, reinforcing the social dimension of architecture.

The landscape and public realm strategy therefore supports several functions: it provides visual relief, contributes to the experience of the development, helps the building relate to the promenade and terraces, and introduces planting adapted to the coastal environment. Together with the architectural and lighting strategies, it helps translate the wider concept of layering and interconnection into the external spaces of the project.

The conceptual framework developed for the project seeks to establish an architectural response that is contemporary in expression while remaining closely connected to the territory from which it emerged. The proposal draws from the morphology of the bay, the coastal landscape, the terraced terrain and the layered cultural identity of Gozo, translating these influences into a built form characterised by articulation, layering and contextual integration.

The resulting development seeks to reorganise and regenerate a long-established coastal site through a coherent mixed-use scheme that responds to the visual, urban and environmental conditions of Marsalforn while contributing to the continuing evolution of the locality as one of Gozo's principal coastal destinations.

3.7 Project details

3.7.1 High-level output

The high-level outcome resulting from the project proposed in PA 07154/25 is:

- A new 4-Star Class 3B hotel with 52 rooms, incorporating Spa, Gym and Yoga facilities, Conference/Multi-purpose facilities, one restaurant, and an indoor and an outdoor pool,
- Five Class 4D units
- One Class 4C unit
- One Class 4B unit
- 135 apartments
- 255 parking spaces intended to service the hotel, the residential units and third parties in the vicinity
- landscaped garden areas at the back of the development

The different uses within the development occupy the following indicative gross floor areas:

- The hotel and sky bar occupy about 4,750 m^2
- Commercial shops account for about 944 m^2
- Garages and common areas take up about 10,920 m^2
- Residential units account for about 16,110 m^2
- The landscaped garden area extends for about 2,950 m^2

3.7.2 Detailed Project drawings

Given the scale of the project, it is not feasible, or functional to attempt to include a full set of drawings of the project in this report. Moreover, given the complexity of the proposal, it is possible that plans might change during the processing of the application. Therefore, plans should always be consulted on the Planning authority Eapps portal to ensure that the final valid versions are being consulted. Nevertheless, for the sake of completeness, below are a selection from the detailed drawings of the project being proposed in PA 07154/25:

Figure 26: Revised site plan of project site as submitted to the Planning Authority
Figure 27: Block plan of project site as submitted to the Planning Authority
Figure 28: Proposed Block A, Section A-A
Figure 29: Proposed Block A, Sections B-B and C-C
Figure 30: Proposed Block C
Figure 31: Proposed Block A
Figure 32: Proposed Block A
Figure 33: Proposed Block C, Section A-A and through landscaping
Figure 34: Proposed Block B

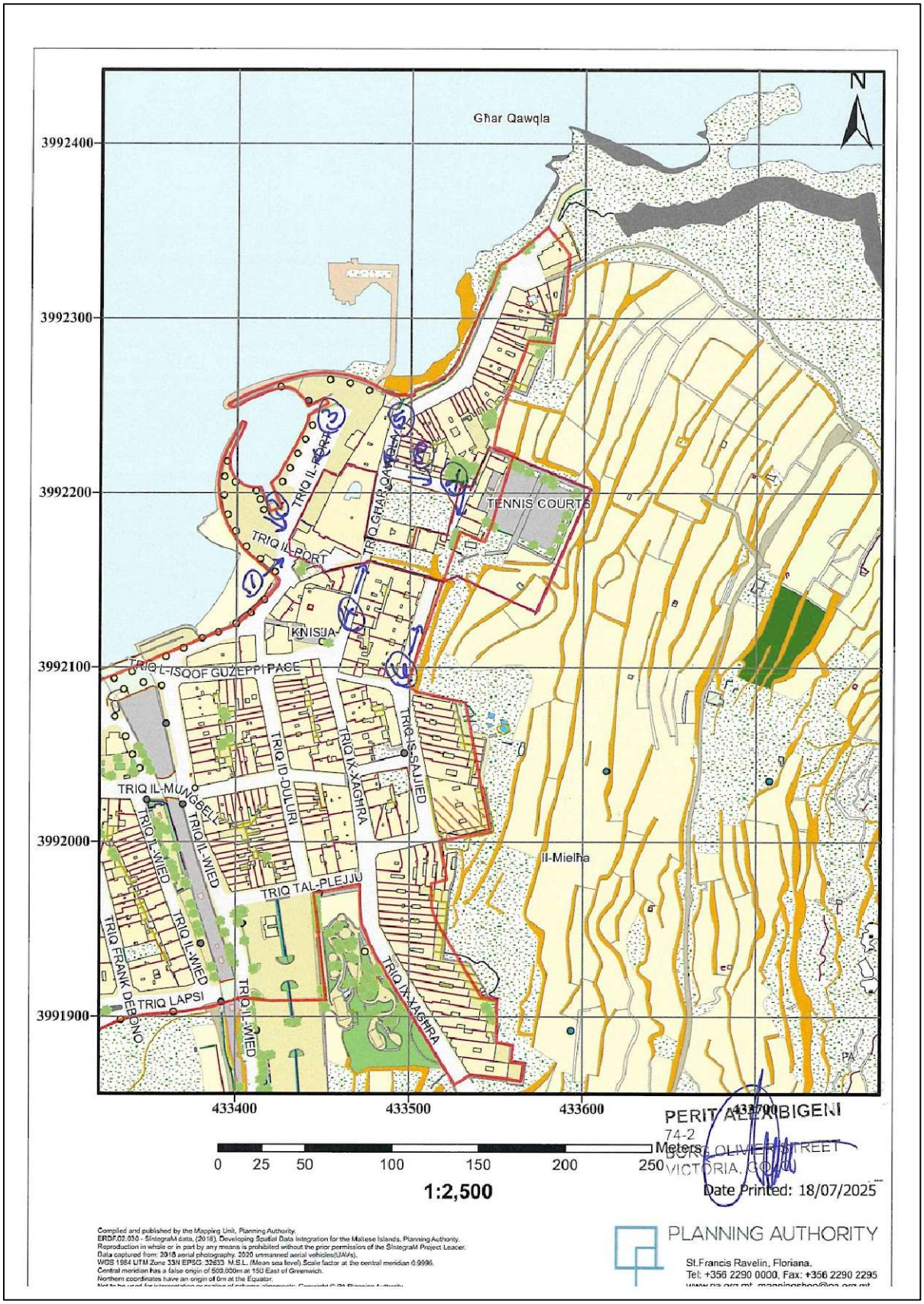


Figure 26: Revised site plan of project site as submitted to the Planning Authority

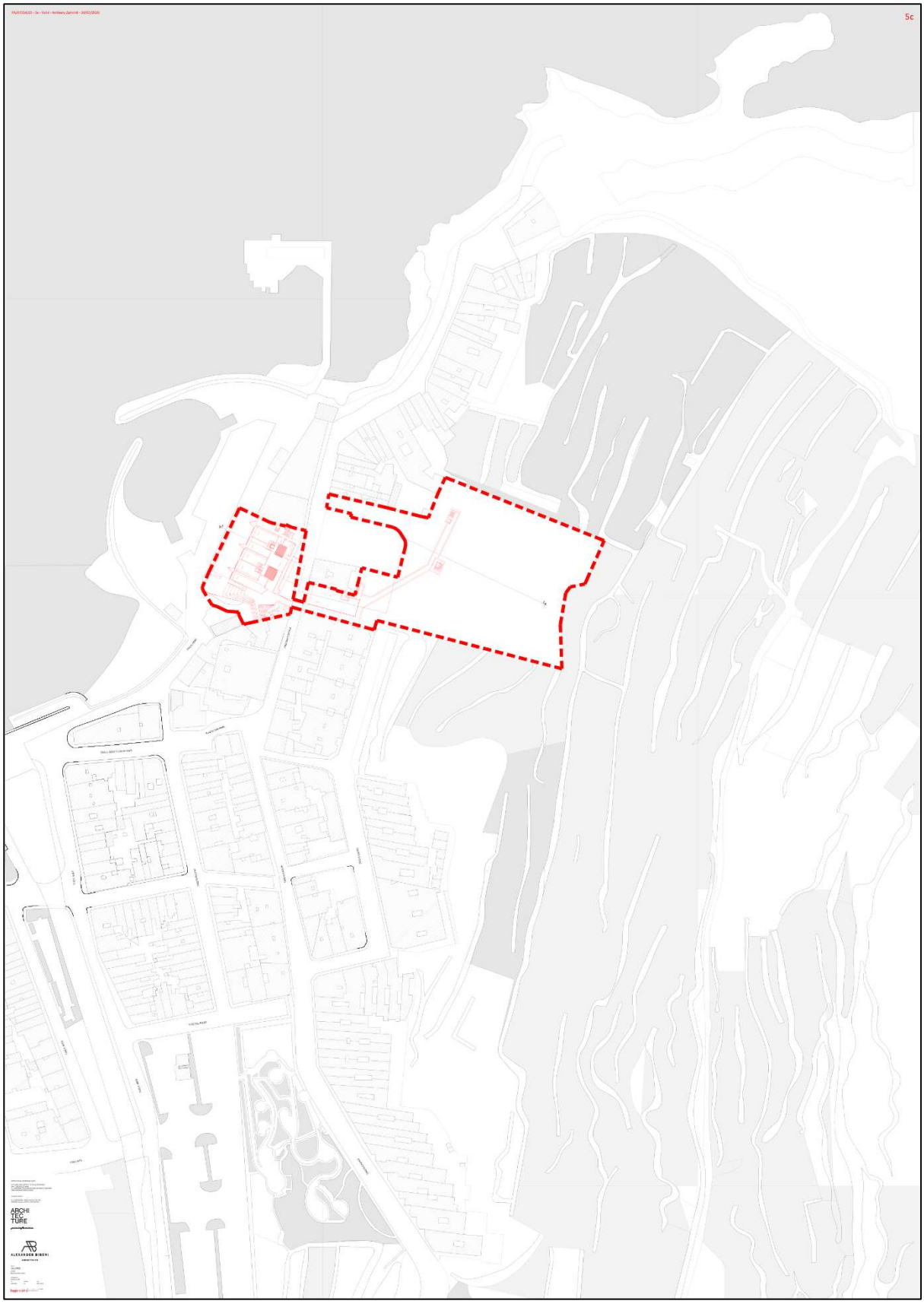


Figure 27: Block plan of project site as submitted to the Planning Authority

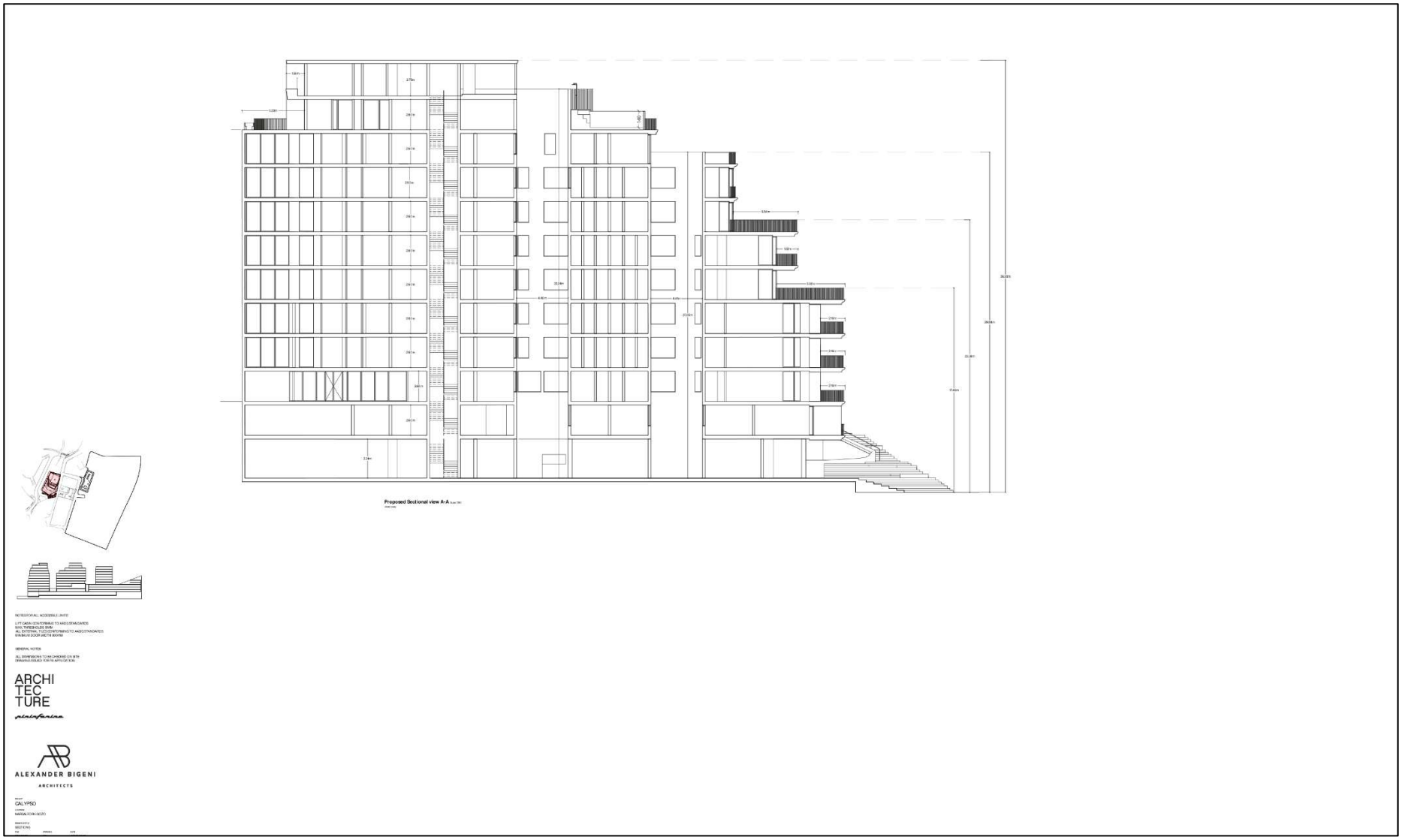


Figure 28: Proposed Block A, Section A-A

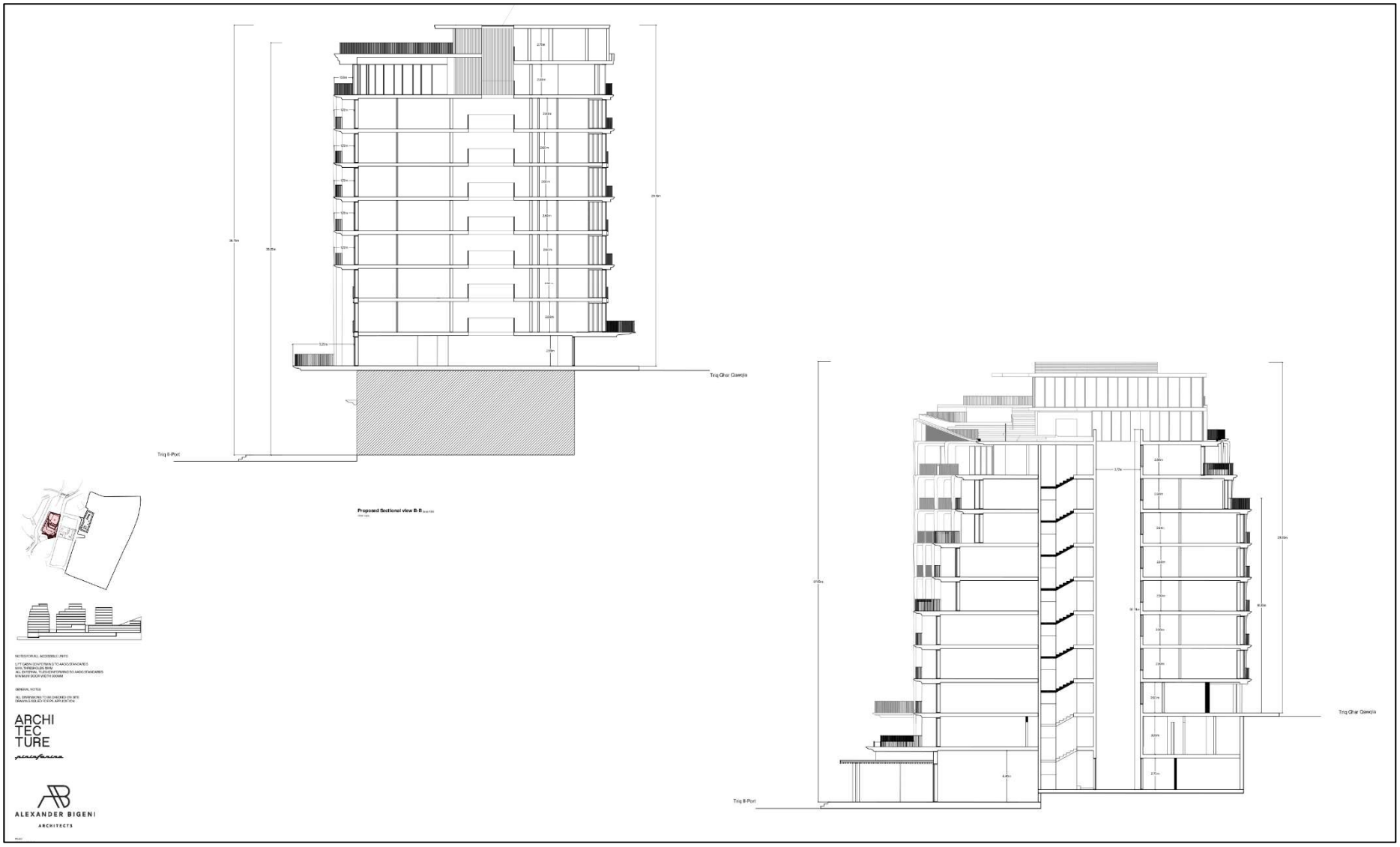


Figure 29: Proposed Block A, Sections B-B and C-C

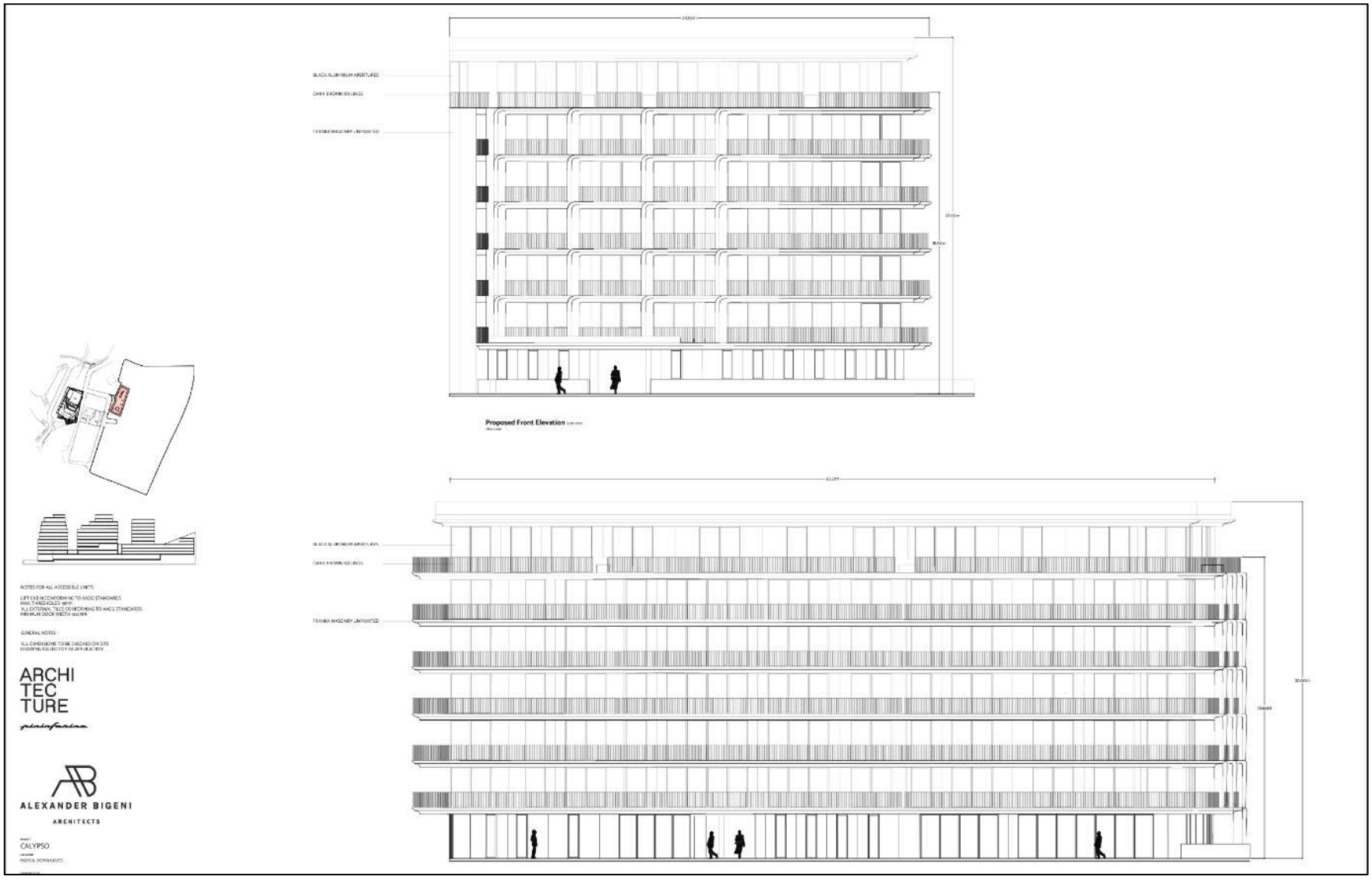


Figure 30: Proposed Block C

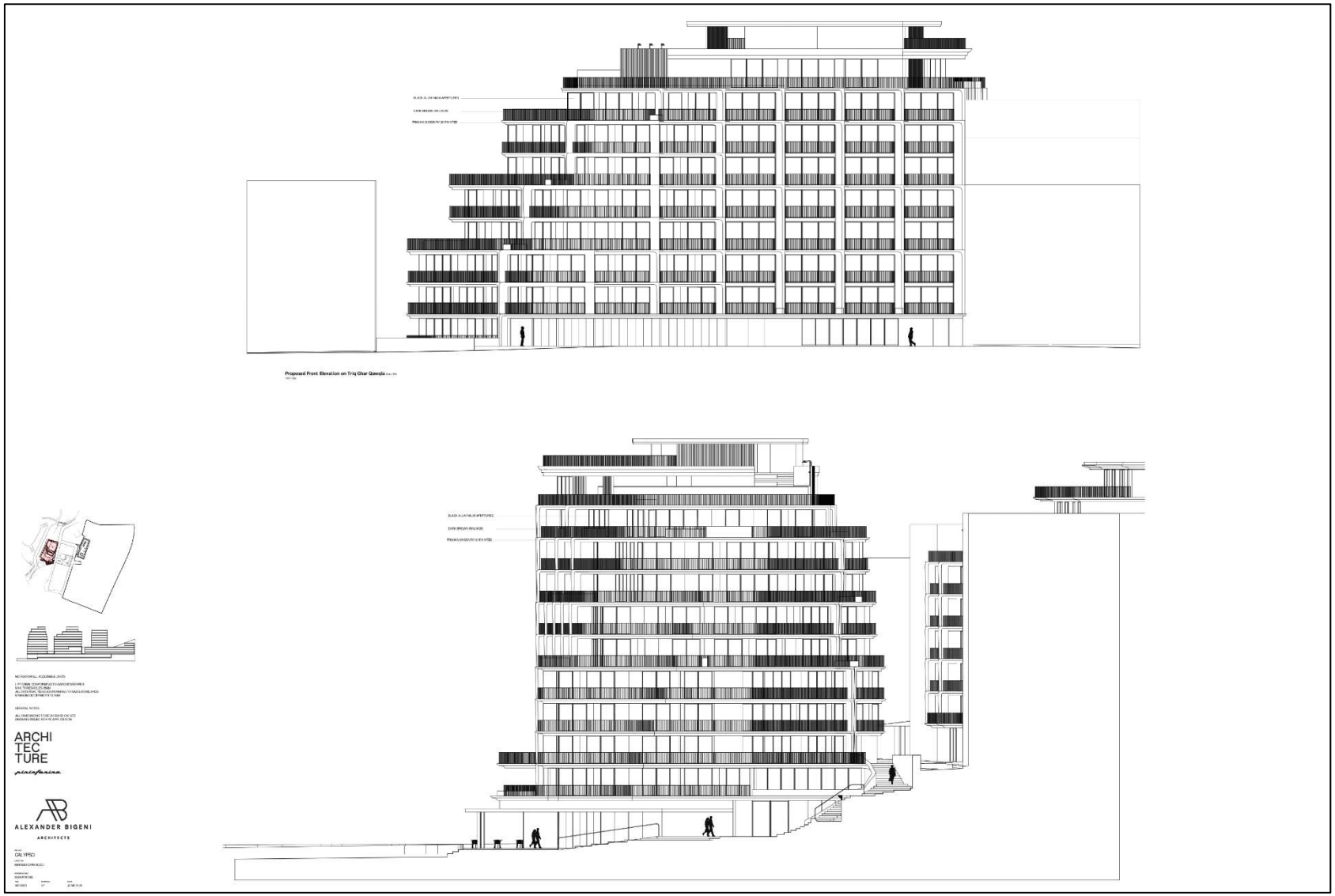


Figure 31: Proposed Block A

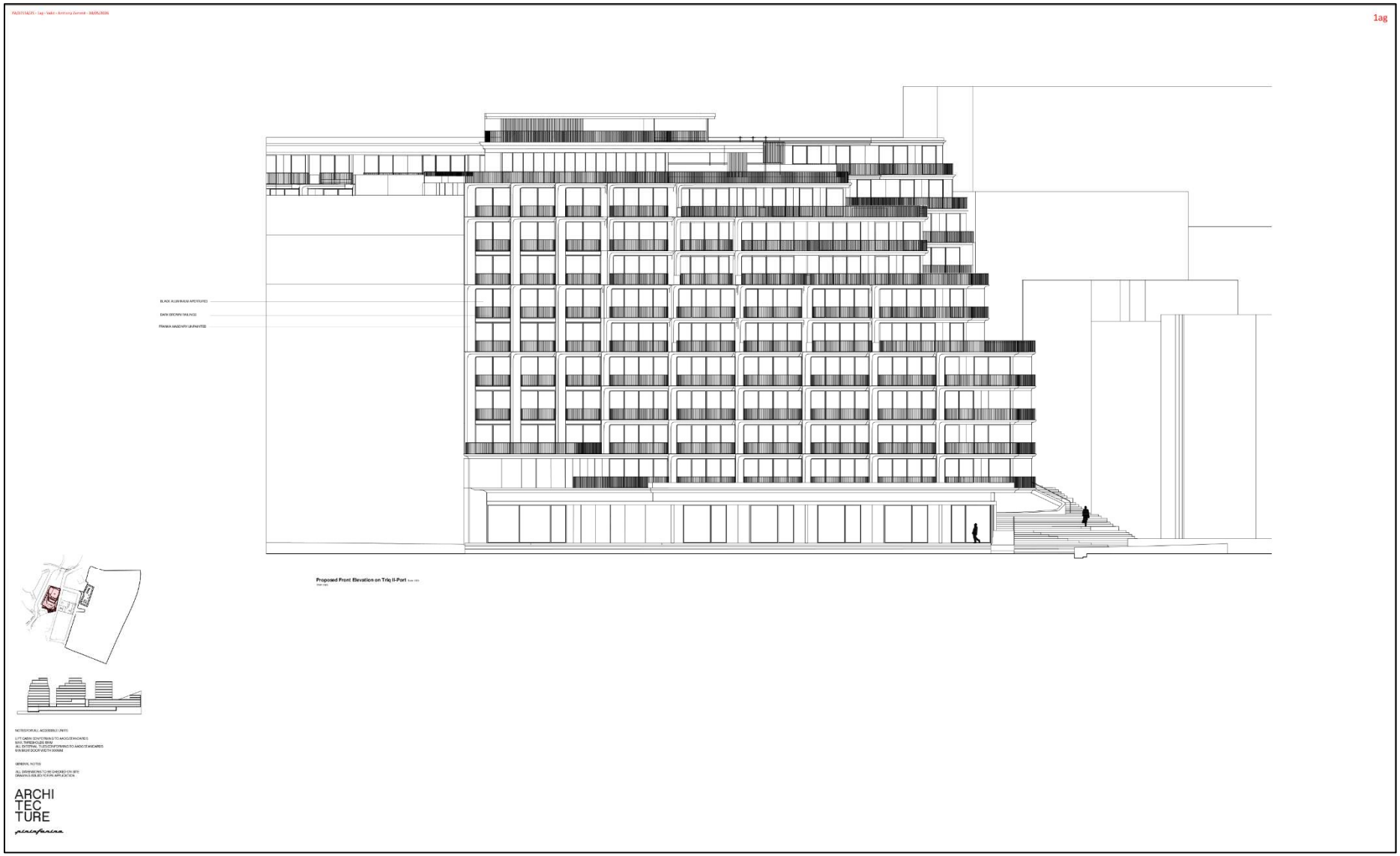


Figure 32: Proposed Block A

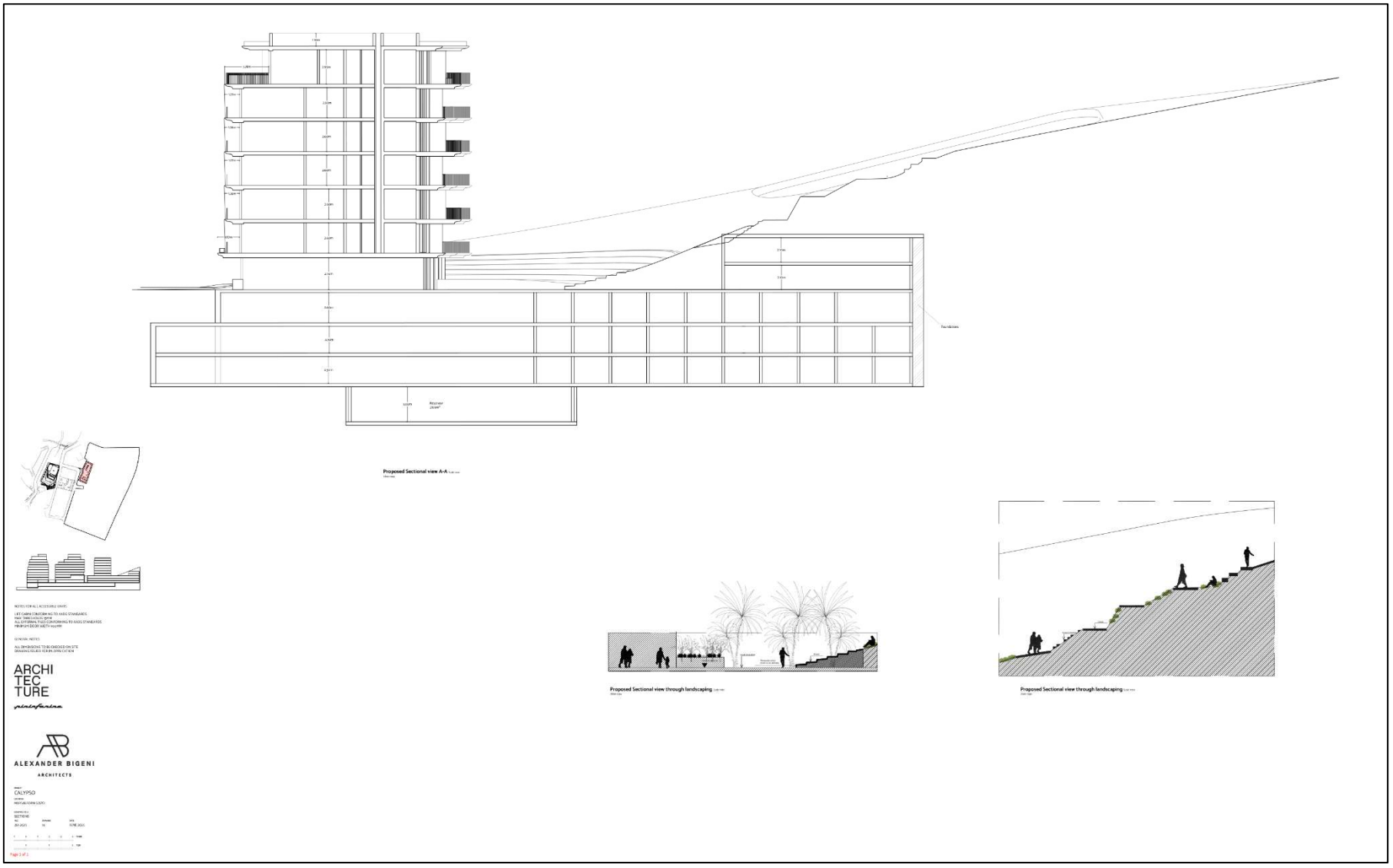


Figure 33: Proposed Block C, Section A-A and through landscaping

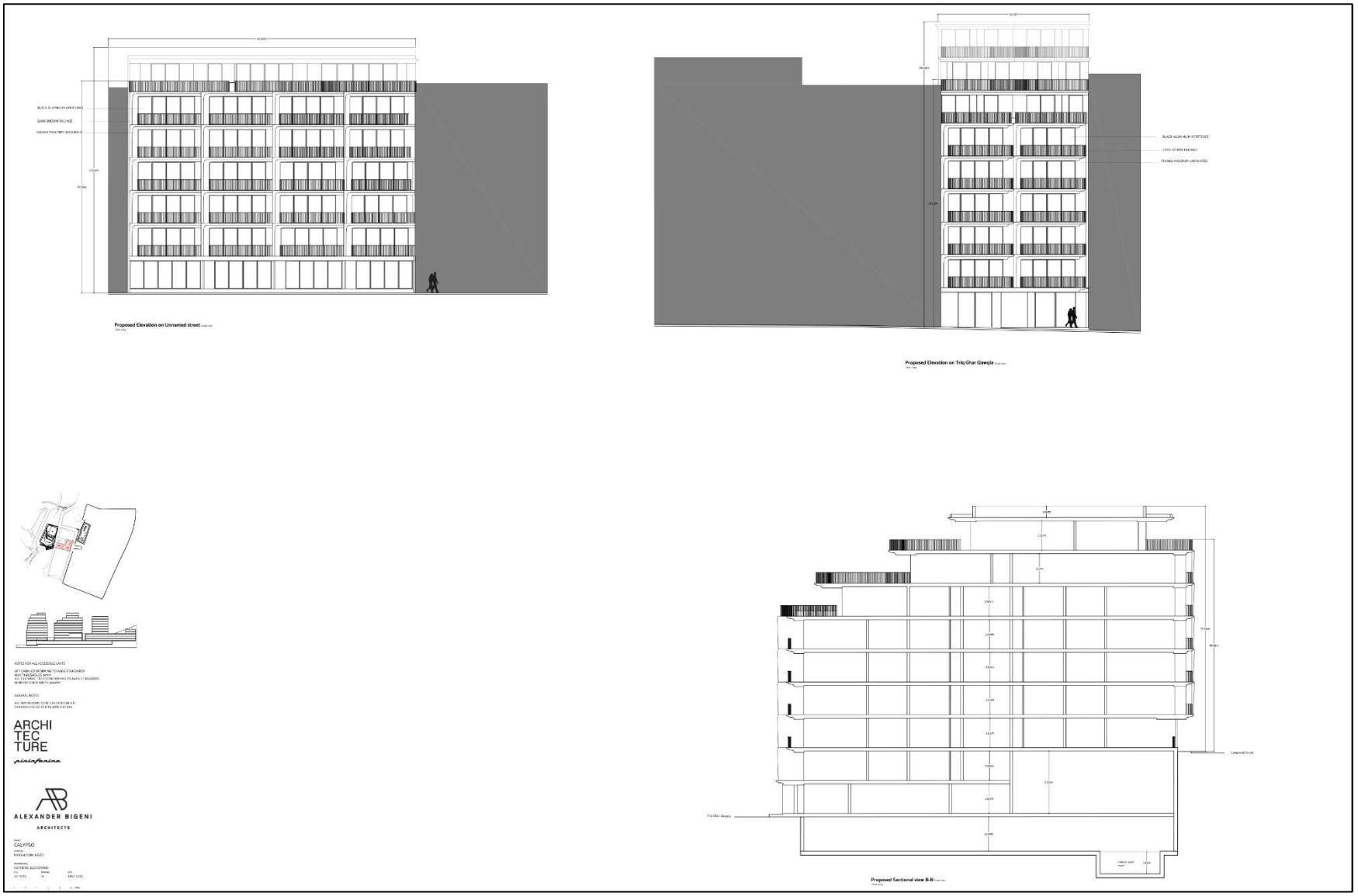


Figure 34: Proposed Block B

3.7.3 Access, Parking and Traffic flow

The proposed development has been assessed from a transport perspective through the Traffic Scoping Statement prepared by AIS Environment for PA/07154/25. The report considers the existing and proposed use of the site, the surrounding road network, the proposed access arrangements, internal manoeuvring, parking provision, loading and unloading arrangements, and the expected traffic generation arising from the completed development.

At present, the existing hotel comprises 100 rooms and operates without any on-site parking provision.

Vehicular access to the proposed development is to be organised from the rear/local road network rather than from the seafront promenade. The Traffic Scoping Statement states that vehicular access would be possible through Triq Għar Qawqla, while pedestrian access would be facilitated from Triq il-Port. It also notes that the surrounding road network operates as a two-way system and that the proposed development will generally use the same access routes presently available to vehicles accessing the site.

The Traffic Scoping Statement further explains that traffic volumes in the immediate area are generally low, mainly because Triq Għar Qawqla functions as a cul-de-sac primarily serving residential properties rather than through traffic. The report also records the seasonal nature of traffic patterns in Marsalforn, with higher activity during summer months due to visitors, seasonal residents and tourism-related movement. This is an important consideration in the assessment of the project, given that Marsalforn's traffic and parking pressure is not evenly distributed throughout the year.

The main vehicular access and exit point is proposed from Triq is-Sajjied, giving access to the underground parking facility. The Traffic Scoping Statement states that this access will serve a four-basement-level parking area. Pedestrian access points serving the restaurants, hotel and part of the residential component are identified from Triq il-Port, Triq Għar Qawqla and Triq is-Sajjied, according to the architectural plans.

The proposed internal parking layout was reviewed through swept-path analysis for passenger vehicles. The Traffic Scoping Statement states that the internal layout allows safe manoeuvring, that the vehicular entrance and exit point is designed to accommodate two vehicles at one time, and that the ramp and corridor widths allow adequate vehicular

movement. It records garage dimensions of approximately 3m by 5.1m, a ramp width of 6.5m, and a corridor width of 6m between parking spaces and garages. The report further states that these dimensions conform with the relevant Development Control Policy and Design Guidance 2015 parameters for ramp gradients and widths.

The development will introduce substantial off-street parking where no such provision exists at present. The Traffic Scoping Statement assesses the proposal on the basis of 105 parking spaces and 169 garages, giving a total provision of 274 parking spaces/garages over four basement levels. The same report calculates the parking requirement for the assessed uses at 240 spaces, resulting in a surplus provision of 34 spaces. This parking provision is intended to serve residents, hotel users, employees and visitors. It is a significant element of the proposal, particularly in a locality where parking availability is seasonally constrained.

The proposal also includes loading and unloading arrangements at ground level, accessible from Triq Għar Qawqla, and that deliveries would be undertaken by small to medium-sized delivery trucks. It also records the operational framework resulting from the approved Marsalforn Promenade Masterplan, under which vehicular entry into pedestrianised areas is restricted to servicing purposes and regulated time windows.

An indicative hotel delivery timetable, covering bakery and fresh produce, laundry collection and delivery, cleaning supplies, food and dry goods, and beverage restocking is set between 06:00 and 10:30. This approach concentrates servicing in the morning period and is intended to reduce conflict with the more active pedestrian and tourism-related parts of the day.

The Traffic Scoping Statement includes both existing and projected trip-generation information. A survey carried out between 4 and 11 March 2026 recorded the existing hotel trip generation as 109 inbound and 73 outbound movements over the surveyed period, with 90% of trips reportedly made by taxis and 10% by private vehicles. For the proposed development, the report presents a worst-case total estimated vehicular trip generation of 130 trips during the weekday AM peak, 177 trips during the weekday PM peak, and 218 trips during the weekend peak. It then adjusts this in view of expected occupancy assumptions, namely 75% hotel occupancy and 60% residential occupancy, resulting in a more realistic estimate of 82 trips during the weekday AM peak, 116 during the weekday PM peak and 145 during the weekend peak.

The report concludes that although the proposed development would result in an increase in vehicular traffic in the area, this can be managed so that the traffic impact is kept to a minimum

and that no problems are envisaged for vehicles exiting onto Triq is-Sajjied, given the local-access nature of the road, the low traffic volumes presently supported by it, and the proposed traffic-management measures, including future one-way operation.

3.7.4 Services

The site is located within the established urban fabric of Marsalforn and already benefits from the normal range of services associated with a developed settlement. The existing use of the site as a hotel, restaurant and ancillary facility means that water, electricity, sewerage and communications services are already available in the area. The proposed redevelopment will require these services to be upgraded, reorganised and extended internally to cater for the new hotel, residential, commercial, parking and landscaped components of the scheme.

The following subsections describe the main service considerations on the basis of the submitted application information and supporting technical documentation available at this stage.

3.7.4.1 Water

The development is expected to continue relying on the Government / Water Services Corporation mains supply for potable water.

Water demand during operation will arise from the hotel rooms, residential units, restaurants and commercial uses, indoor and outdoor pools, spa facilities, sanitary facilities, cleaning requirements, and irrigation of landscaped areas. The proposal also includes approximately 2,950m² of landscaped garden area according to the project information supplied by the architect.
The project will therefore require an internal water distribution system designed to serve a range of uses with different demand patterns. Hotel and catering uses are expected to generate more concentrated operational demand, while the residential element will generate more dispersed daily consumption. Pool, spa and landscaping requirements will also need to be managed as part of the overall water strategy.

The application form indicates that surface water runoff is to be collected in a water reservoir. This will provide an opportunity to reduce reliance on potable water for secondary uses such

as irrigation and cleaning, subject to detailed design and any requirements imposed by the relevant authorities.

3.7.4.2 Electricity

The site is already associated with electricity infrastructure, including an existing substation noted in the project information supplied by the architect. The proposal records a maximum electricity demand of 1,050 kVA and an estimated annual electricity consumption of 650,000 kWh. It also records that no renewable energy sources are envisaged in the project, and that the development will not necessitate the installation of an electricity connection through trenching or the erection of poles outside development zone.

The completed development will require electricity for the normal operation of a mixed-use hotel, residential and commercial complex. The main expected energy demands will arise from:

- hotel rooms and back-of-house areas;
- residential units;
- restaurant and commercial units;
- spa, indoor pool and gym/yoga facilities;
- lifts and vertical circulation;
- ventilation and mechanical systems;
- lighting, including external architectural and landscape lighting;
- parking areas, access control and safety systems;
- pumping and water-management systems.

Given the scale and mixed-use nature of the proposal, the electricity infrastructure will need to be designed in coordination with Enemalta and the relevant building services engineers. The stated demand of 1,050 kVA indicates that the electrical requirements of the development are significant and that the final internal distribution, metering, substation arrangements and safety systems will need to be treated as an important component of the detailed design.

The energy performance of the completed development is expected to reach high levels with adequate attention to be given to the detailed specification of lighting, heating/cooling systems, pumps, ventilation, appliances, building envelope performance and operational management.

3.7.4.3 Sewerage

The site is located within the serviced urban area of Marsalforn and presently accommodates significant activity. The development is already within reach of the existing service infrastructure. The proposed development does not include discharges to land, sea or surface waters.

The completed scheme will generate foul water from residential units, hotel rooms, restaurant kitchens, sanitary facilities, spa and gym/yoga facilities, back-of-house hotel operations, cleaning areas and commercial units. These flows will need to be connected to the public sewerage system through the appropriate internal drainage network and in accordance with the requirements of the competent authorities.

Given the coastal location of the site and the nature of the proposed uses, particular attention will be given at detailed design stage to the separation of foul water from surface water runoff, grease-trap provision for catering uses, and the prevention of any accidental discharge towards the sea or public realm.

No independent treatment plant or discharge to the natural environment is proposed in the information available at this stage.

3.7.4.4 Surface water management

Surface water management is an important consideration for this project due to the size of the site, the extent of roofed and hard-surfaced areas, the inclusion of basement levels, and the coastal location of the development.

The proposal states that runoff from the site will be collected or disposed of in a water reservoir. It also states that the development will avoid discharges to land, sea or surface waters. Up to where possible, the surface water runoff from roofs, terraces, hard-surfaced areas and open common areas, will be directed towards underground storage. The availability of landscaped areas within the project also provides scope for reuse of collected water for irrigation, together with cleaning, reducing the need to use potable water for this purpose.

3.7.4.5 IT and Communications

The project is expected to be capable of being served by the normal telecommunications and data infrastructure available in the locality.

The completed development will require IT and communications services for hotel operations, guest connectivity, residential units, commercial and restaurant uses, security and access-control systems, fire alarm and life-safety interfaces, building management systems, parking management, CCTV and general operational monitoring and electronic payment / point-of-sale systems in commercial and catering areas. These services are expected to be extended and upgraded internally as part of the building services package.

No unusual or high-impact communications infrastructure is envisaged from the information presently available. The IT and communications provision is therefore expected to comprise standard urban building-services infrastructure appropriate to a contemporary hotel, residential and commercial complex.

4. THE PROJECT AT THE CONSTRUCTION PHASE

4.1 Employment Generation

During the construction phase the following numbers of employees are expected to be engaged on site during the different phases of the implementation programme:

Construction work:	30 to 40 employees
Finishing works:	20 to 25 employees
Installation of equipment:	10 to 15 employees

4.2 Raw materials

Table 2 below gives an estimate of the raw materials that will be used and generated during the construction phase.

Material	Quantity
Concrete	13,000 m^3
Globigerina (Franka) Limestone blocks / Concrete bricks	500,000
Steel reinforcement	1500 tons
Construction aggregates (including sand, gravel, cement-based products)	25,000 tons
Material generated:	
Debris from demolition	18,000 m^3
Excavation material	30,000 m^3

Table 2: Type and quantities of raw materials estimated to be used and generated in the project.

4.3 Energy use

At the construction phase, energy requirements on site are envisaged to be provided through a temporary electricity meter. Electrical supply will be required mainly for the operation of the tower crane, ancillary brick cutting tools and hand tools throughout the site. There will also be a provision of temporary site lighting throughout the site, especially in the lower reaches of the construction where natural light does not reach. Site offices will also require an energy supply.

4.4 Waste generation, storage and handling

This development involves considerable excavation activity for the creation of parking, hospitality, amenity, storage and ancillary services. It is estimated that the excavated material resulting from the creation of these spaces will amount to approximately 30,000m^3 of material. This will be managed and disposed of in accordance with the relevant regulations in approved sites.

Apart from the excavation material resulting from the formation of basements, 18,000 m^3 of construction waste is expected to be generated during the demolition of the existing structures and also during construction work through the generation of construction-related waste such as concrete, packaging materials, timber and metal. All these waste streams will be managed in accordance with established regulations and best practice, including the segregation of waste streams where feasible, reuse or recycling of materials where practicable and finally disposal through licensed waste carriers and authorised facilities.

4.5 Machinery required

The following machinery is expected to be required on site during the construction phase:

a. Excavation equipment, including excavators and loaders,
b. A tower crane to facilitate vertical construction and material handling,
c. Mobile cranes and lifting equipment for the installation of structural and prefabricated elements,
d. Piling and foundation equipment, possibly required at the farthest reaches of the site, depending on the final geotechnical design,
e. Delivery trucks and trailers for the transport of construction materials to and from the site,

f. Dumpers and tippers for the removal of excavated material and waste construction material generated,
g. Concrete pumps and placing equipment for reinforced concrete works,
h. Compaction and finishing equipment including rollers, compactors and power floats,
i. General construction tools and machinery including compressors, cutting equipment, welding tools and hand tools.

The type and quantity of machinery present on site will vary depending on the construction phase, with peak activity expected during excavation and structural works. All machinery will be operated in accordance with standard construction practices, and appropriate measures will be implemented to ensure safety, efficiency and minimisation of disturbance to the surrounding area.

4.6 Construction phase duration and preferred timing

The excavation phase of the project is expected to last for about 6 months. The construction phase of the project is expected to be completed within 36 months.

The final finishing and installation phase which will include all finishing works, façade installations, mechanical and electrical services are expected to last another 12 months.

In all, the total duration of the project is estimated to be of 50 to 55 months from the commencement of works.

4.7 Parking, traffic and accessibility

The project is expected to last for at least four summer seasons, and therefore due consideration is to be given to the aspect of traffic management and flow in and out of the site in this particularly sensitive location.

It is natural that the project will result in a temporary increase in heavy vehicular traffic during the construction phase, and peak impact will coincide with the periods of active demolition and construction works. Works are expected to follow normal regulations precluding demolition and excavation work in tourist zones between June and September. Nevertheless, it is expected that adequate planning will be put in place to establish an adequate routing strategy

(as far as this is possible since both accesses to the site are effectively cul de sacs), construction access management, traffic mitigation measures and temporary parking and logistics arrangements.

Adequate planning will ensure that the site-specific constraints are addressed.

4.8 Construction and site management

This project will involve a significantly large operation that will require an appropriate level of management and monitoring. Responsibilities and guidance emanating from the Development Planning Act (Cap. 552) and the Building and Construction Authority Act (Cap 623) will be observed at all times.

The applicant and his delegates will also ensure that the project team is conversant with and well prepared to meet the obligations of the Construction Management Site Regulations (S.L. 623.08) which regulate construction site operations to control nuisance and protect public property and amenity, and also the Avoidance to Damage to Third Party Property Regulations (S.L.623.06) which sets a number of requirements for the protection of neighbouring properties such as condition reports, insurance and bank guarantees.

The applicant's appointed Site Supervisor will also ensure that the requirements of legislation related to Occupational Health and Safety on Construction Sites are observed at all times. This in particular to the Health and Safety at Work (Minimum H&S requirements for work at construction sites) Regulations (S.L. 646.27) of 2025.

5. THE PROJECT AT THE OPERATIONAL PHASE

5.1 Employment Generation

Hotel Calypso at present employs 50 persons on a full-time and part-time basis. Staff include, among others, managerial, hospitality, catering, services, cleaning, maintenance and other roles. The reduction in room numbers will certainly result in a reduction in the number of staff members that are directly associated with the hotel accommodation number of guests. However, overall, the level of employment numbers in total is expected to remain roughly the same as the current levels since:

a. The basic roles such an operation entails still need to be filled, irrespective of the size of the facility. This holds for managerial, accounting, financial, marketing, kitchen and hospitality leadership and other key roles.
b. The total floor area of the building and common areas is expected to increase substantially,
c. The hotel is expected to draw patronage throughout the year with its improved offering, thus reducing seasonality and improving occupancy rates,
d. With an increased diversity of services and amenities the facility will require the services of more specialised personnel (such as for the operation of the Spa and gym)
e. The common areas beyond the hotel are large enough to warrant permanent staff and it is probable that they will be managed with permanent staff rather than on contract.

It is estimated that the new development will require the services of around 45 employees.

5.2 Raw materials

During the operational phase, raw material use will be significantly reduced and limited primarily to day-to-day functioning of the development, namely the retail, hospitality, office and

residential activities. Therefore, most of the materials expected to be utilised when the building is in use are:

- Domestic and commercial consumables associated with residential, retail and hotel use;
- Cleaning and maintenance materials required for upkeep of common areas and facilities;
- Replacement materials for routine maintenance of building fabric and services.

No industrial or hazardous material use is envisaged as part of the normal operation of the development.

5.3 Energy use

The energy requirements of the project in its entirety will in due course be thoroughly assessed through a detailed Electrical Load Breakdown Report (ELBR). This evaluation will establish the anticipated demand across the various components of the scheme, ensuring that the site's electrical infrastructure - designed for a complex comprising residential units, commercial areas, and a hotel - is both robust and compliant with national standards.

5.4 Waste generation, storage and handling

The applicant has engaged AIS Environment Ltd. To produce a Waste management Report to ‘identify the most suitable practices that are required to manage all the waste streams that are likely to be generated during the operational phases of the development’. This operational phase will generate waste from the different components of the development, namely residential units, management/administration areas and offices, hotel facilities, restaurants and the gardens. It is expected that hotel guests, employees and visitors, will generate a combination of recyclable waste, organic waste and mixed municipal waste.

Significant waste streams include recyclables (paper, cardboard, plastics and glass), organic waste (particularly from residential, hotel and restaurant use), and mixed municipal waste.

In addition, minor quantities of specialised waste streams such as batteries and electrical equipment may be generated and will be handled separately in accordance with regulatory requirements.

The development incorporates a dedicated refuse room, designed to temporarily store the expected waste volumes originating from all components of the scheme. This refuse room will have an adequate capacity for waste storage using standard Eurobins, making it possible for the segregation of waste streams (recyclables, organic and mixed waste). Both users and collection vehicles shall have direct access to this facility which will be well integrated with service areas and loading/unloading zones.

Waste will be collected through a combination of public collection systems and private waste contractors, and waste will be transported to authorised treatment facilities, including recycling, composting and landfill facilities as appropriate.

Detailed information is available in the report prepared by AIS Environmental.

5.5 Machinery required

No significant or specialised machinery is required during the operational phase of the development. The completed development will function as a mixed-use scheme comprising residential, commercial and hotel use, and will rely only on standard building services and equipment typically associated with such uses, including:

- Lifts and building services installations;
- Heating, ventilation and air-conditioning systems;
- Refrigerating, freezing and cold storage equipment and installations
- General maintenance equipment.

No industrial or heavy machinery will be utilised as part of the normal operation of the development.

5.6 Parking, Traffic and Accessibility

Parking and accessibility form a central element of the proposed redevelopment for it to ensure good neighbourliness and improvement in the amenity in central Marsalforn. The existing hotel and ancillary facilities have no on-site parking provision, while the proposed development introduces structured parking within the site. The project will provide 255 parking spaces, intended to serve the hotel, residential units and other interested buyers in the vicinity.

The introduction of internal parking is particularly relevant in Marsalforn, where seasonal demand for parking is high and the surrounding road network is constrained. The project is therefore not merely providing parking as an ancillary function, but as part of the operational strategy for managing the relationship between the completed development and the locality.

The mixed-use development with hotel, residential and commercial components is expected to distribute demand across different times of the day and week. Residential parking demand is likely to be more regular and overnight in character, while hotel, restaurant and commercial demand will fluctuate according to occupancy, opening hours and seasonality.

Pedestrian accessibility will remain important given the seafront location of the site and the relationship with Triq il-Port and the Marsalforn promenade. The lower-level public and commercial uses should maintain an active and legible interface with the surrounding public interface, while vehicular access and servicing should be managed so as to minimise interference with pedestrian movement and the seafront environment.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

The following is a preliminary assessment of the likely environmental impacts of the project under review and the possible mitigation measures that can be implemented to reduce or neutralise these impacts.

The following receptors and/or potential impacts have been taken into consideration:

a. Impact to landscape and visual amenity
b. Noise
c. Vibration
d. Surface water runoff
e. Construction Dust
f. Traffic
g. Light pollution
h. Waste
i. Land take
j. Agriculture
k. Air quality
l. Cultural heritage
m. Ecosystems and natural heritage
n. Geology, Hydrology and related themes
o. Resources (including Energy and Water)
p. Social aspects

6.1 Possible impacts at Construction stage

During the period that the proposal is being implemented, the following impacts may arise. Their inferred magnitude, duration, and potential mitigation measures that can be implemented to counter them are treated in detail in Table 3 below.

Impact / Receptor	Description	Mitigation	Inferred magnitude after mitigation
Impact to landscape and visual amenity	The site stands on an extensive stretch of sloping terrain, from the shoreline rising up to the limits of development underlying Il-Qortin ta' Isopu. Within the context of Marsalforn, although not standing at exceedingly high ground, it occupies a very central position within the urban fabric of Marsalforn, exactly behind the iconic Menqa breakwater and the core of what remains of the fishing village.	Given the scale of the project, and the location of the site, the impact on the surrounding areas is inevitable. However, with an adequate and consistent site management regime, adequate construction site hoarding, and a sensible works programme that avoids visitor peaks, such as summer, Easter and the mid-term holidays, the impact on the tourism activity in this central area can be adequately contained so that it reduces the nuisance that it will invariably create.	Major negative, temporary for the construction phase.
Noise	Noise from construction vehicles and machinery.	Activity on site will occur during the working hours permitted at law. There are few residential sensitive receptors in the area	Negative. Adherence to construction site protocols shall minimise the negative impact during lunchtime

Impact / Receptor	Description	Mitigation	Inferred magnitude after mitigation
		which will probably be affected by this factor. Commercial activities in the immediate vicinity and footfall are more frequent. The restaurants at il-Menqa are considerably close by.	when business peaks. No effect at night if hoarding is effective.
Vibration	Considerable excavation activity is envisaged.	Activity on site will occur during the working hours permitted at law. This will coincide with the peak in commercial activity at lunchtime and footfall in the area. Site operators, monitors and management will ensure that all standards dictated at law and by good practice are adhered to at all times to minimise nuisance and risk to neighbours, their clients and pedestrians.	negative - temporary

Impact / Receptor	Description	Mitigation	Inferred magnitude after mitigation
Surface water runoff	No significant generation of surface water runoff is expected. As soon as excavation moves below street level, ensuing water from the geology or rainwater runoff will be managed according to good practice.	Attention will be taken to ensure that surface water runoff during the construction phase is managed so as not to create unsightliness or nuisance at il-Menqa or in the surface waters within the old harbour or the bay at large.	Negligible after mitigation.
Construction Dust	Construction activity, excavation works and movement of vehicles will invariably generate an amount of dust.	Masonry construction works are expected to be last for the construction phase. Should dust generated by vehicular movement prove to be a problem, the access to site may be sprayed with water to reduce dust generation. Facades will be adequately covered, and the site will be hoarded so that movement of dust from site to	Moderately negative to negative if precautions maintained throughout works

Impact / Receptor	Description	Mitigation	Inferred magnitude after mitigation
		surroundings is minimised.	
Traffic	Vehicles and machinery present on site will contribute to traffic volume and emissions in the area.	Use of the least number of vehicles and machinery possible. Good distribution of vehicle use in time. Use of Marina Street as thoroughfare for heavy vehicles to be kept at bare minimum.	Negative
Light pollution	Construction activity will necessitate artificial lighting inside the building where natural light does not reach and also in all areas if works – especially in winter – are expected to proceed after dusk.	Attention so that the light installation avoids glare, light trespass, and sky glow. Light that will be kept on round the clock will be kept at the barest minimum.	Minor negative to negligible.
Waste	Waste will be generated through excavation, construction activities and the unpacking of shipped materials and equipment.	Up to where possible, excavation and construction waste generated will be kept to a minimum always handled according to good practice. It will be disposed of in a	Negative with respect to excavation works. Otherwise moderately negative

Impact / Receptor	Description	Mitigation	Inferred magnitude after mitigation
		licensed facility. Packaging material will be disposed of according to regulations.	
Land take	The project is located within a highly commercialised area within the development zone. There are no planning constraints on site. An inherent opportunity cost associated with any development is that once land is committed for one use, it ceases to be available for any other use.	Most of the land in question is already developed and committed to commercial activity. No mitigation measure is possible here.	Negative.
Agriculture	The site has no validity for agriculture.	Not applicable	Not applicable
Air quality	Dust and fuel burning emissions from operations will be generated.	See mitigation measures for Dust and Traffic above	Minor negative - temporary
Cultural heritage	Major excavation works are envisaged	No elements of cultural heritage interest are known on site.	Not applicable

Impact / Receptor	Description	Mitigation	Inferred magnitude after mitigation
Ecosystems and natural heritage	No items or characteristics of natural heritage or ecological value have been observed on site.	Not applicable	Not applicable
Geology, Hydrology and related themes	Potential spillage of fuels and oils from machinery.	Fuel or oil spillage from machinery and equipment will be avoided through proper maintenance. Water flowing into the lower reaches of the building site will be managed and controlled.	Negligible
Resources (including stone, building materials Energy and Water)	Non-renewable globigerina limestone material, concrete bricks, concrete and steel materials and energy-generating equipment will be used up in the construction phase. Electrical energy and water shall be consumed during this phase	Limestone material will be extracted judiciously and in an efficient manner, eliminating all wastes possible. Concrete and steel will be used as directed by the Architects and Civil Engineers. Fuels will be stored appropriately and equipment well serviced. Waste streams will be	Major negative

Impact / Receptor	Description	Mitigation	Inferred magnitude after mitigation
		reduced as much as possible.	
Social aspects	Construction phase activity may result in nuisance to neighbours.	The site manager will ensure that potential nuisance to neighbours is minimised as much as possible. Sensitive receptors are present within the immediate surroundings of the project site. Best practice and regulations shall be adhered to at all times. Vide Section 4.8.	Negative. Temporary.

Table 3: Environmental Impacts, Mitigation and Inferred magnitude during the construction phase

6.2 Possible impacts during the operational phase

During the period that the project is operating, the following impacts may arise. Their inferred magnitude, duration, and potential mitigation measures that can be implemented to counter them are treated in detail in Table 4 below.

Impact / Receptor	Description	Mitigation	Inferred magnitude after mitigation
Impact to landscape and visual amenity	The development will rise to the full potential, plus two additional levels allowable through the Hotels Policy. The design statement states that "The initial volume is progressively broken down, stepped and articulated in response to the site's topography, view corridors and the surrounding urban scale. This approach allows the building to maintain the required development capacity while significantly reducing its perceived bulk."	Adequate continued study of the integration of the proposed building within the existing context.	Negative in that the existing building will increase in height and given its strategic location within the Marsalforn central hub. Adverse impact contained by breaking down of the building mass and aesthetic appeal.
Noise	The development will result in new restaurants, a hotel and residences. These will necessitate significant front-of-	Most servicing and back-end activity will be limited to internal, below-ground spaces or the side streets to limit noise reaching sensitive	Moderately negative to neutral if mitigation measures are effectively implemented and maintained.

Impact / Receptor	Description	Mitigation	Inferred magnitude after mitigation
	house and back-end activity and support. Significant footfall is also envisaged. Transport for both clients and all the support structure around these uses will be necessary. Consequently, traffic noise will be generated. Noise would also be expected to be generated by patronage of the uses mentioned above.	receptors. Supply and service traffic flow and timing shall be managed. Adequate sound insulation shall be installed where required. Noise mitigation and control are essential both to safeguard neighbouring realities and also to ensure that the project's own hotel, residences and amenity spaces are not subject to nuisance.	
Vibration	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
Surface water runoff	The facility will generate a volume of runoff water from roofs and terraces.	A reservoir will receive a proportion of the runoff created, which is to be reused. Any residual water will be discharged in the public domain.	Neutral.
Dust	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
Traffic	Residents', Clients', Customers', Employees vehicles and delivery/produce	The development lies in between two thoroughfares and therefore the area is	Major Negative to negative

Impact / Receptor	Description	Mitigation	Inferred magnitude after mitigation
	trucks will access the site during operations. Most traffic will occur within the day, but some movement is expected at all hours. See the 'Traffic Scoping Statement'	already impacted by traffic. It is recommended to reduce car-based trips and shift mobility to public transport, cycling, and walking.	
Light pollution	The façade of the hotel overlooking Il-Menqa will be adequately lit, particularly the restaurant and hotel lobby levels at the ground floor. The specialist Concept Lighting Design by Pininfarina, advocates Architectural lighting to enhance the architecture in coordination with the main concept, Low light level befitting a Well-Being Strategy, and respect to the local context.	The Concept lighting design suggests a lighting scheme that is subdued and while providing the effects required, does not create nuisance or hindrance. This may lead to an overall positive impact.	Neutral if mitigation measures implemented. Positive if design strategy is successful.

Impact / Receptor	Description	Mitigation	Inferred magnitude after mitigation
Waste	Recyclables (paper, cardboard, plastics and glass), organic waste (particularly from residential, hotel and restaurant use), and mixed municipal waste are expected.	We recommend a hierarchy of mitigation and management measures; (1) Waste prevention and separation, (2) Operational and Collection measures, and (3) Provision of Refuse Room and its proper maintenance.	Minor Negative to neutral if all recommendations are implemented.
Land take	The land taken by the development will be committed for this use irreversibly.	No mitigation measure is possible here. Strategically the proper upkeep of the building will ensure its long-term use thus reducing the need for alternative structures if this building becomes obsolete or falls in disuse.	Negative
Agriculture	The site has no agricultural validity.	Not applicable	Not applicable
Air quality	Vehicular access to the uses in place will invariably lead to the generation of vehicular exhaust. Good management	See mitigation measures for Traffic above.	This project, by itself, is not expected to alter the status quo in the area but will continue to

Impact / Receptor	Description	Mitigation	Inferred magnitude after mitigation
	of the facilities and good air ventilation will avoid build-up of pollutants. The context of the building is already very significantly active.		contribute towards the altering of the baseline.
Cultural heritage	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
Ecosystems and natural heritage	No sensitive receptors on or around the site.	Not applicable	Not applicable
Geology, Hydrology and related themes	Potential spillage of fuels and oils from machinery and equipment	Adequate surface sealing, avoiding percolation of liquids into the underlying geology and the surface waters nearby.	Negligible.
Resources (including Energy and Water)	See 'Energy, Utility and Storm Water Management Report' and Section 5.3. A multi-purpose structure of this magnitude and housing the activities described will invariably require a significant provision of water and energy. A Sub-station will be constructed within	There is scope for the recycling and reuse of runoff water and part of the greywater generated within the development in irrigation, cleaning and flushing. Investment in PV panels is also recommended. Yet, it is deemed that appropriate	Negative to minor negative

Impact / Receptor	Description	Mitigation	Inferred magnitude after mitigation
	the development, and the area is well served by a major water supply network.	investment and effort to achieve high energy and water efficiency will be of a much higher benefit to the environment and sustainability in comparison to renewable energy production and water recycling.	
Social aspects	The development will result in the restitution of an important commercial site to active use within the island's economy. It will also bring about a significant investment in the island's commercial, touristic and hospitality activity. This will result in sustained jobs and new opportunities in these sectors, the strengthening of the island's economy and quality services.	No mitigation measures are warranted	Positive

Table 4: Environmental Impacts, Mitigation and Inferred magnitude during the operational phase

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Pininfarina, Marsalforn Gozo Resort, Phase 1.1 Concept Design, March 2025

Pininfarina, Marsalforn Gozo Resort, Phase 1.1 Concept Lighting Design, March 2025

AIS Environment Ltd, Waste Management Report for Calypso Hotel, March 2026

AIS Environment Ltd, Traffic Scoping Statement for the Calypso Hotel redevelopment, April 2026

Statement: Landscaping Philosophy, undated

Perit Alexander Bigeni, Design Statement, undated

APPENDIX 1

PLANNING AUTHORITY -
APPLICATION FORM

PLANNING AUTHORITY

Screening (Schedule 1)

Applicant Details

☑ Tick If Applicant is a company

Company Name	C111733
Company Number	La Mer Limited
Name	Oliver
Surname	Brownrigg
Address	The Watercourse Zone 2
Address Line 2	Central Business District
Address Line 3	Birkirkara
Locality or Country	Malta
Post Code	CBD2010
ID / Passport	00230769M
Tel. No.	
Mobile No.	99434566
E-Mail	coo@bbt.mt
Applicant Type	Private Company

Perit Details

Please complete

Full Name	Perit Alexander Bigeni
Select Address	74/2, Triq Gorg Borg Olivier, Rabat (Gozo)
I.D. No.	0079583M
Mobile No.	99491090
Warrant No. / Partnership No.	0593
Duly Authorised Contact Person for Partnership	
Your Ref. for this Application	261-2023

Site Zoning

Tick as applicable

- ☑ Development Zone
- ☐ Design Priority Area
- ☑ ODZ
- ☐ UCA
- ☐ Scheduled Site

Location of Proposed Development

Please complete

Property Name	Calypso Hotel, Site and Ancillary facilities
Door No.	
Street/Place Name(s)	Triq il-Port, Triq Ghar Qawqla and Triq is-Sajjied
Locality	Marsalforn
Local Council/s	Zebbug

Description of Proposal

List all project components, including development type, no. of units and additional storeys

Description	To demolish existing hotel and ancillary facilities, to clear existing tennis courts and abandoned sports facilities and carry out ecological restoration works to create an open air formal reacreational area. To construct 4 star class 3b hotel including indoor and outdoor pools,spa facilities and sports facilities, 6 restaurants class 4 d, convenience shop (out of class) and 135 apartments. Proposal also includes the excavation and construction of underground garages.
Development Type	Mixed other

Confidential

☐ In terms of the Proviso of Article 33(2) of the Development Planning Act, 2016, the development relates to national security, defence, banks, prisons, the airport and other institutions or premises whose security it is desirable to safeguard.

Previous Applications, Permissions, Clearances, Notifications and Enforcement Notices on this Site

☐ No Previous Case Reference

Include all relevant PB, PA, RG, PC, DN/GD, DS, SE, AL, EC and CTB cases, providing the reference number as used by the Authority

Ref. No.	
Case Type	PA
Case Number	4791
Case Year	20
Case Type	PA
Case Number	3691
Case Year	19
Case Type	PA
Case Number	1033
Case Year	19
Case Type	PA
Case Number	6549
Case Year	18
Case Type	PA
Case Number	3043
Case Year	08
Case Type	PA
Case Number	7096
Case Year	04
Case Type	PA
Case Number	86
Case Year	02
Case Type	PA

Case Number	5955
Case Year	00
Case Type	PA
Case Number	415
Case Year	96
Case Type	PA
Case Number	6893
Case Year	24
Case Type	PA
Case Number	786
Case Year	06
Case Type	PA
Case Number	6865
Case Year	98
Case Type	PA
Case Number	6933
Case Year	24

Trees and Rubble Walls

This development includes Felling of trees	No
This development includes Demolition/alteration of rubble walls	No
This development includes New or altered vehicular access	Yes
If yes, location and species of affected trees/rubble walls and proposed access are shown on drawing(s)	07 - Proposed Floor level 0 (Block A + Block B)

Other Information

Total site area (indicated in red on site plan) in m squared	8900
Main existing use of site	Hotel, sports facilities, restaurants
Maximum electricity demand of development in KVA	1050
Estimated annual electricity consumption in KWh	650000
Use of renewable energy sources envisaged including type (if any)	Nil

Fossil Fuel Energy - Gas Fuel

If any other source of energy, other than the electricity mains, is envisaged, please specify fuel type:

☐ Tick if Bulk LPG Storage Tank is used

Fossil Fuel Energy - Liquid Fuel

Liquid Fuel

- ☐ Diesel
- ☐ Kerosene
- ☐ Petrol
- ☐ Other Fuel Source
- ☑ None

What is the daily average Liquid Fuel energy required for this development (KWh)

Water and Sewage

Discharges: This development includes discharges to land, sea or surface waters	No

RunOff management: How will water runoff from the site be collected or be disposed of?	To water reservoir
Water Source (for development requiring irrigation from a non potable water supply)	From Government Mains supply

For ODZ and Scheduled Areas:

Will the development necessitate trencing of a connection to the potable water distribution network or sewage system?	No
Will the development necessitate the installation of a connection to the electricity distribution network through trenching or erection of poles?	No

For Sanctioning of Change of Use:

This development includes the Sanctioning of a Change of Use	No

Funding

- ☐ EU Funding
- ☐ Project of Common Interest
- ☐ Other Funding

EU Regulations

Required for industrial/non-residential storage development handling dangerous substances

This development is within the scope of the COMAH Regulations (as per Schedule 1 of L.N. 37 of 2003 as amended by L.N. 6 of 2005, and any future amendments thereto).	No

This development is within the scope of EU Regulation 247 of 2003 (Guidelines for Trans-European Energy Infrastructure)	No

Applicant's declaration in terms of articles 71(4) and 71(5) of the Development Planning Act (CAP.552)

Tick ONE box only

I apply for development permission and declare that, to the best of my knowledge, all the details and information contained in this application and on the submitted drawings/documents accompanying this application are correct and complete.

I certify in terms of article 71(4) and 71(5), and as defined in Article 2, of the Development Planning Act (Chapter 552 of the Laws of Malta) that:

- ☑ I am an owner of the entire site;
- ☐ I am not an owner of the entire site, but I have notified the owner/s of my intention to apply by registered letter of which a copy is being herewith attached/uploaded and the owner/s has/have granted consent to submit an application.
- ☐ I am not an owner of the entire site, but I am authorised to carry out such proposed development under any other law;
- ☐ I am not an owner of the entire site, but I am authorised to carry out such proposed development through an agreement with the owner.
- ☐ As the Government of Malta or department, agency, authority or other body corporate wholly owned by the Government, we have notified the owner/s of the intention to apply by registered letter of which a copy is herewith attached/uploaded;
- ☐ I am not an owner of the entire site, but I hold the site under title of agricultural lease and I have notified the owner/s of my intention to apply by registered letter of which a copy is herewith attached/uploaded;
- ☐ I am not an owner of the entire site, but I hold the premises under a title of lease and am carrying out the relative works under a scheme of a Government entity and I have notified the owner/s of my intention to apply by registered letter of which a copy is herewith attached/uploaded.

Government Ownership: (Please indicate, where relevant, irrespective of the choice made above)

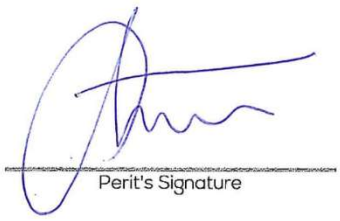
- ☑ This site is partly or wholly owned by Government.



Applicant's Signature	Name (incl. O.B.O)	Date
	oliver brownrigg o.b.o. la mer limited	24.07.25

Perit's Declaration

☑ *I, the undersigned perit, declare that I shall be responsible for assisting the applicant in the course of this application, and I also declare that all information or specifications contained in this application and on the submitted drawings/documents bearing my signature and, or letterhead is correct. I also declare that I have a warrant to exercise the role of a perit in Malta. I also hereby declare that the applicant signed the uploaded physical copy of this application form in my presence and recognise that I am legally obliged to retain the original signed form.



Perit's Signature

25/07/25

Date

PERIT ALEX BIGENI
74-2
BORG OLIVIER STREET
VICTORIA, GOZO

Official Stamp

APPENDIX 2

PLANNING AUTHORITY CONSULTATIONS

41a

Message From Stakeholder

Submitted By	Annmarie Josephine Schembri - on behalf of Superintendence of Cultural Heritage
Submitted On	26th November 2025 12:23:57

PA/07154/25-Calypso Hotel, Site and Ancillary facilities, Triq il-Port, Triq Ghar Qawqla, Triq is-Sajjied, Marsalforn, Zebbug (Gozo)

The site in question is situated partly outside the development zone of Marsalforn and within the Area of High Landscape Value of Għajn Barrani, lying approximately 33 metres to the north of the Church of St Paul.

Without prejudice to its eventual position, the Superintendence notes that the proposal entails demolition works and an increase in the intensity of the proposed development. Prior to providing further comments, this Office requests the submission of photomontages from he following vantage points:

36.068776, 14.263095

36.070833, 14.265198

36.071281, 14.260787

36.071365, 14.260205

36.072073, 14.257937

36.073401, 14.257840

This will help to better assess the visual impact that the proposed development will have on its surroundings.

N.B. The applicant is reminded that:

-photomontages are to be accompanied by photographs showing existing views;

-a map showing the property and the location from where photographs were taken must also be submitted.

-Photomontages are to be in accordance with the Planning Authority's visual simulation guidelines.

In addition, the architect is requested to provide overlays of the existing floor plans and sections, comparing the current and proposed layouts. This will enable a clearer assessment of the differences in footprint and volumetric composition.

The Superintendence will comment further upon receipt of the above.

44b

ERA
Environment & Resources Authority

The Executive Chairperson
Planning Authority
St. Francis Ravelin
Floriana

3 December 2025

Dear Sir/Madam,

Case No.: PA 07154/25
Description: To demolish existing hotel and ancillary facilities, to clear existing tennis courts and abandoned sports facilities and carry out ecological restoration works to create an open air formal recreational area. To construct 4 star class 4B hotel including indoor and outdoor pools, spa facilities and sports facilities, 6 restaurants class 4 d, convenience shop (out of class) and 141 apartments. Proposal also includes the excavation and construction of underground garages.
Location: Calypso Hotel, Site and Ancillary facilities, Triq il-Port, Triq Ghar Qawqla and, Triq is-Sajjied, Marsalforn, Zebbug (Gozo)

Reference is made to the Planning Authority's consultation at Doc. 28a. ERA comments are as follows:

Environmental Assessment

The proposal falls within the scope of Schedule I, Section 7 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, (S.L.549.46), thus the submission of a Project Description Statement (PDS) is required. The PDS, which is to follow the requirements of Schedule II of the same Regulations (https://era.org.mt/en/Pages/EIAreg.aspx), will be made publicly available on the ERA website. A digital copy of the PDS is to be submitted directly to ERA on eia.malta@era.org.mt.

The PDS should also include a copy of the site plan and the latest plans for the proposed development, which are to retain the existing footprint (together with relevant EApps references, as relevant), in clear resolution. Any other supporting/cross-referenced documents are also to be submitted with the said PDS.

Environment & Resources Authority
Hexagon House, Spencer Hill, Marsa MRS 1441 T. (+356) 2292 3500 E. info@era.org.mt W. era.org.mt

44b

The PDS is to also to provide:

- clarification of the area marked in blue on the site plan (doc 1d);
- details of the existing layout covering the entire site;
- a block plan of the entire site with a clear indication of the proposed uses;
- the number of beds of the proposed hotel;
- the gross floor area (gfa), in line with the definition provided in the EIA Regulations, and a breakdown of uses with the respective gfa;
- details of the proposed ecological restoration works; and
- a superimposition of proposed development over the existing.

ERA will assess and provide further comments on receipt of the said PDS.

Yours sincerely,

Josianne Abela Vassallo
Team Manager, Environmental Assessment Unit
f/Director Regulatory Affairs

Disclaimer

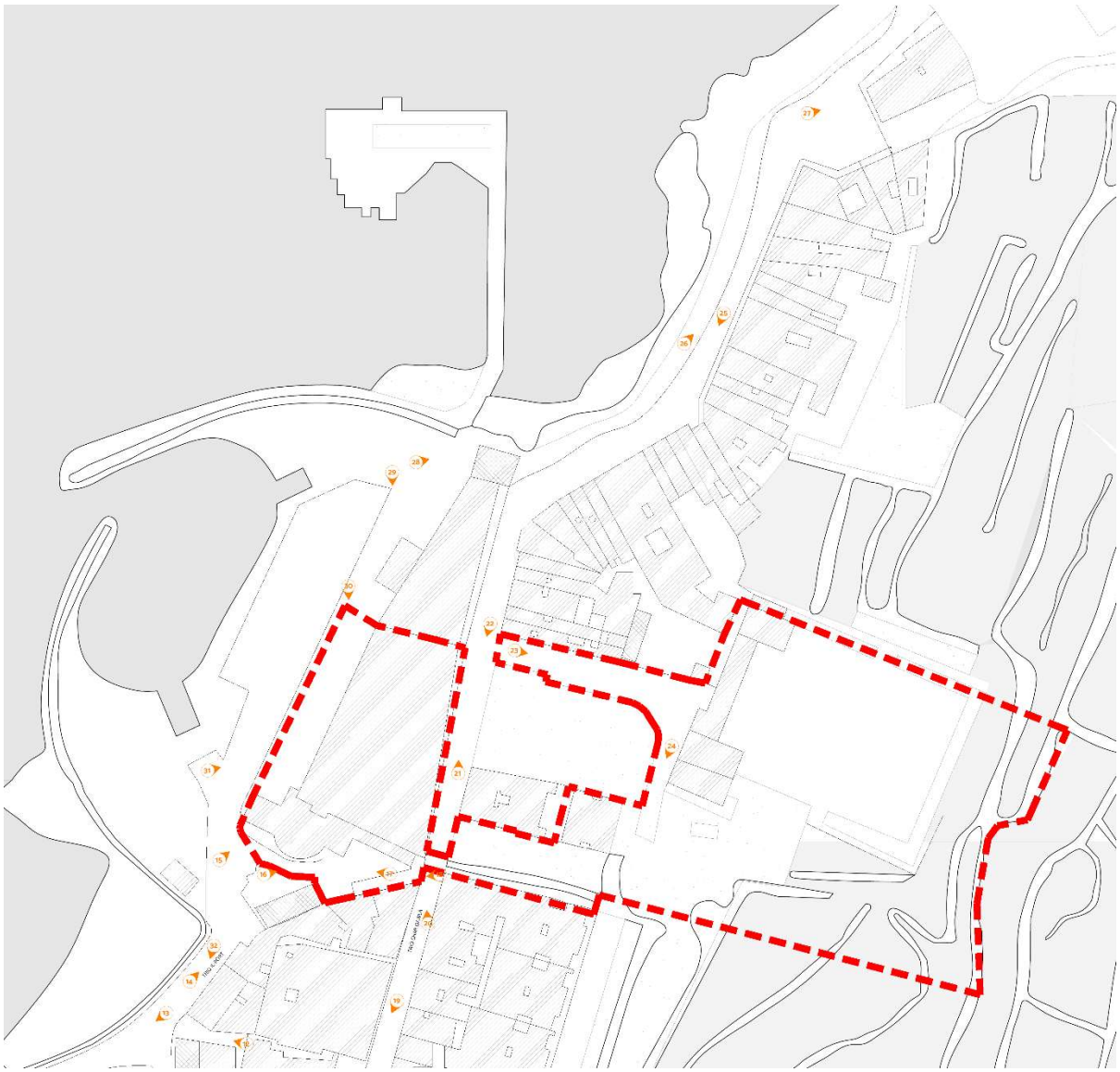
The above comments are being issued without prejudice to any additional issues which are regulated by ERA through any relevant environmental permitting and, or compliance mechanisms, as well as to any environmental considerations that may be beyond the scope of the application under consideration.

The above assessment is based on the information provided to ERA. Should it result that such information is incorrect, incomplete, missing or misleading, or in the event of any omissions or subsequent modifications, to the proposal and/or related submissions, the above assessment (including any favourable consideration, lack of objection, any proposed conditions or lack thereof, etc.) may need to be reopened to ERA's satisfaction.

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APPENDIX 3

PHOTOGRAPHIC SURVEYS





7j



Photo 01

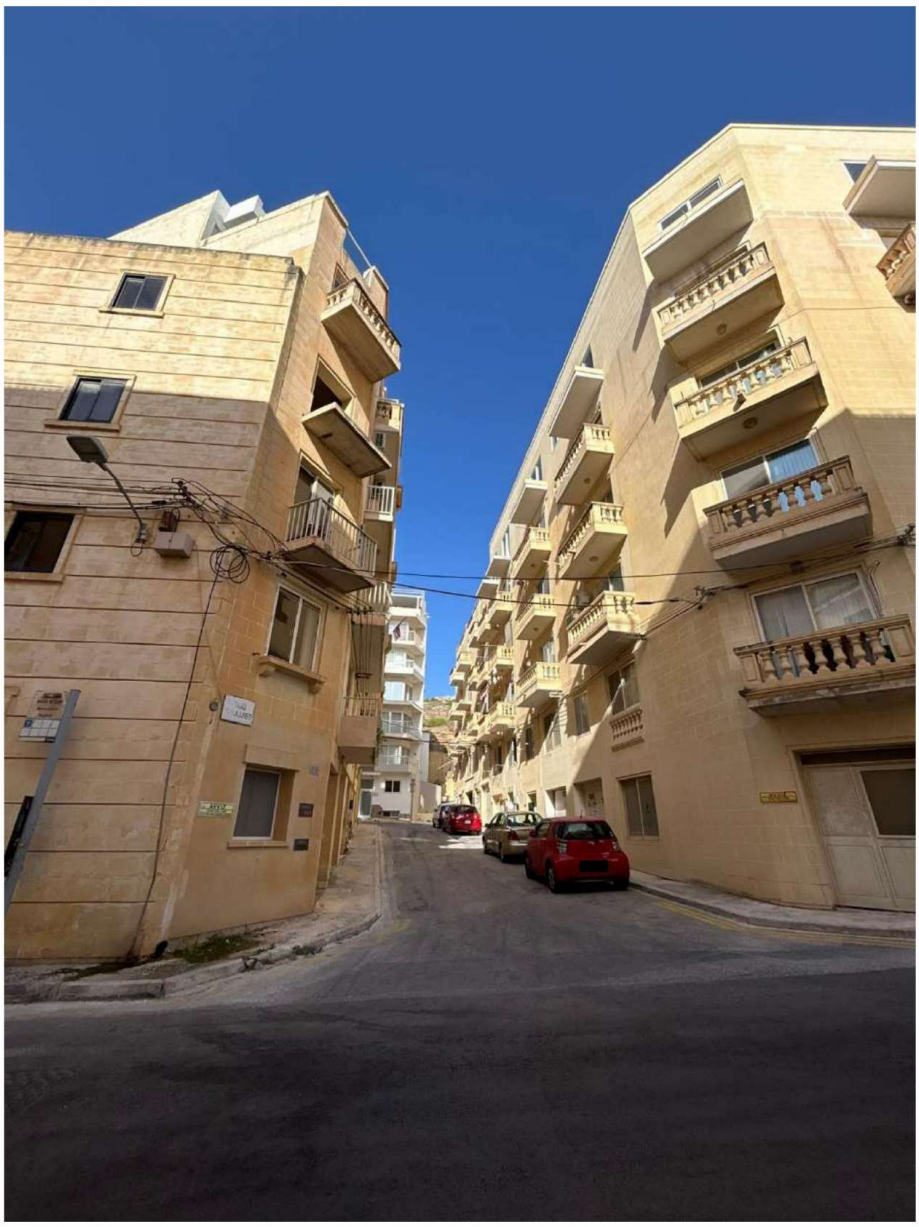


Photo 02

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Photo 03



Photo 04



Photo 05



Photo 07

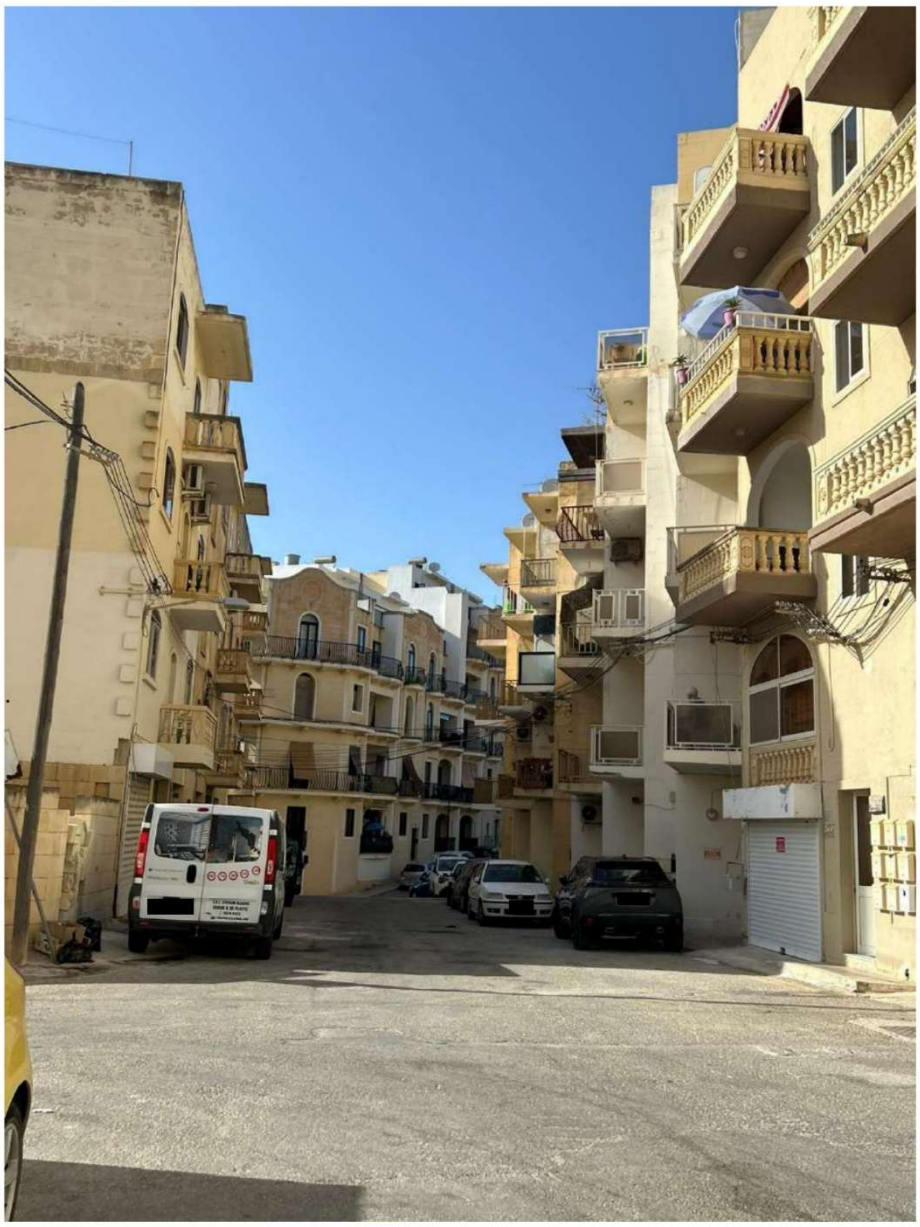


Photo 06



Photo 08

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Photo 09



Photo 10

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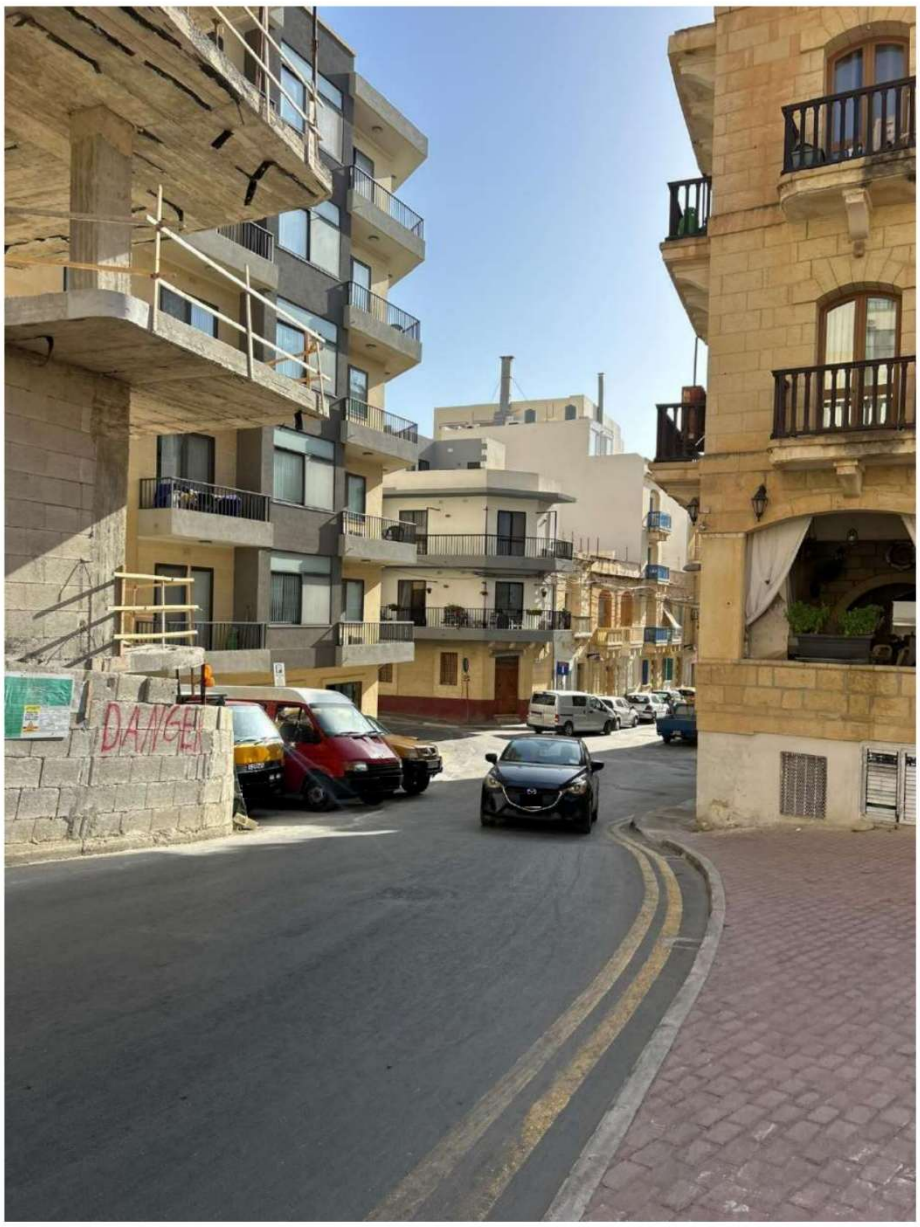


Photo 11

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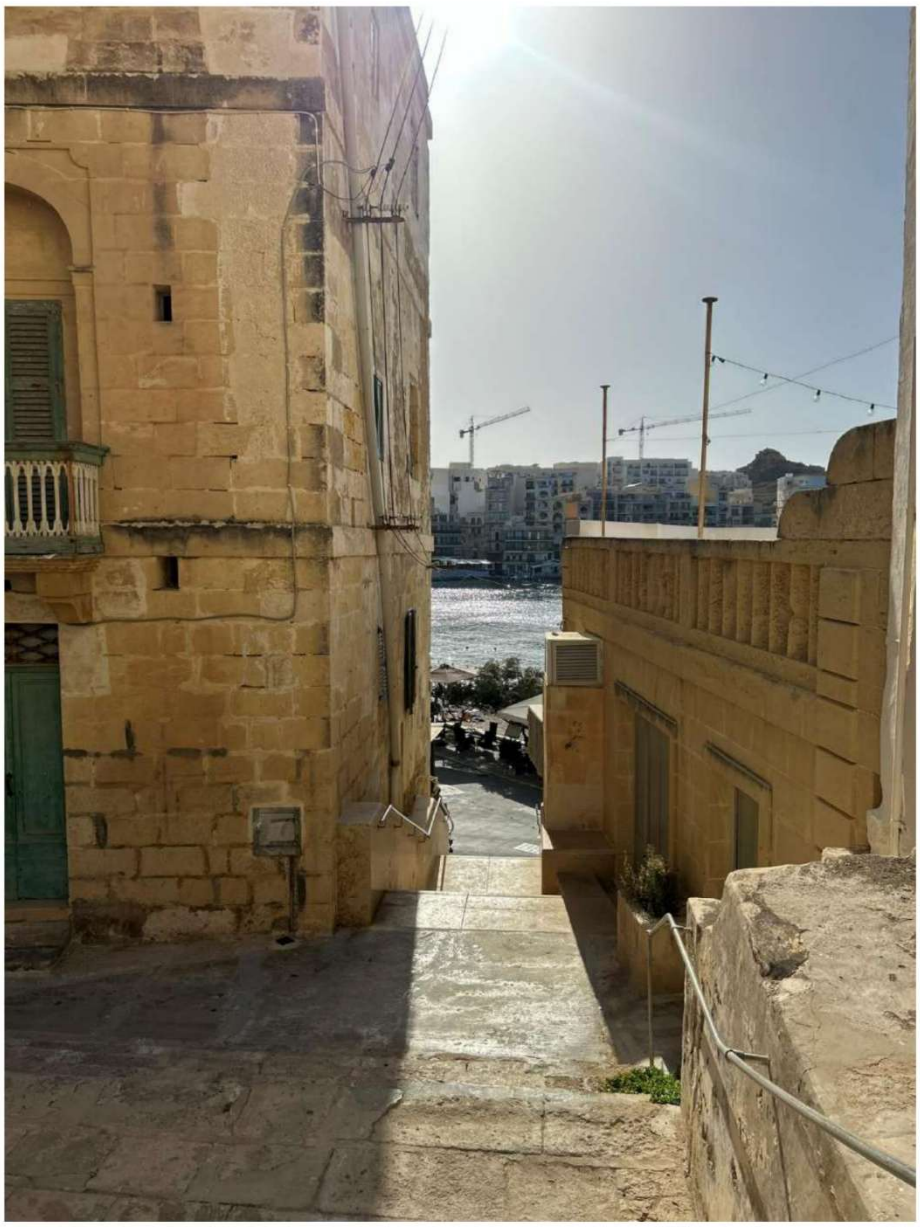


Photo 12

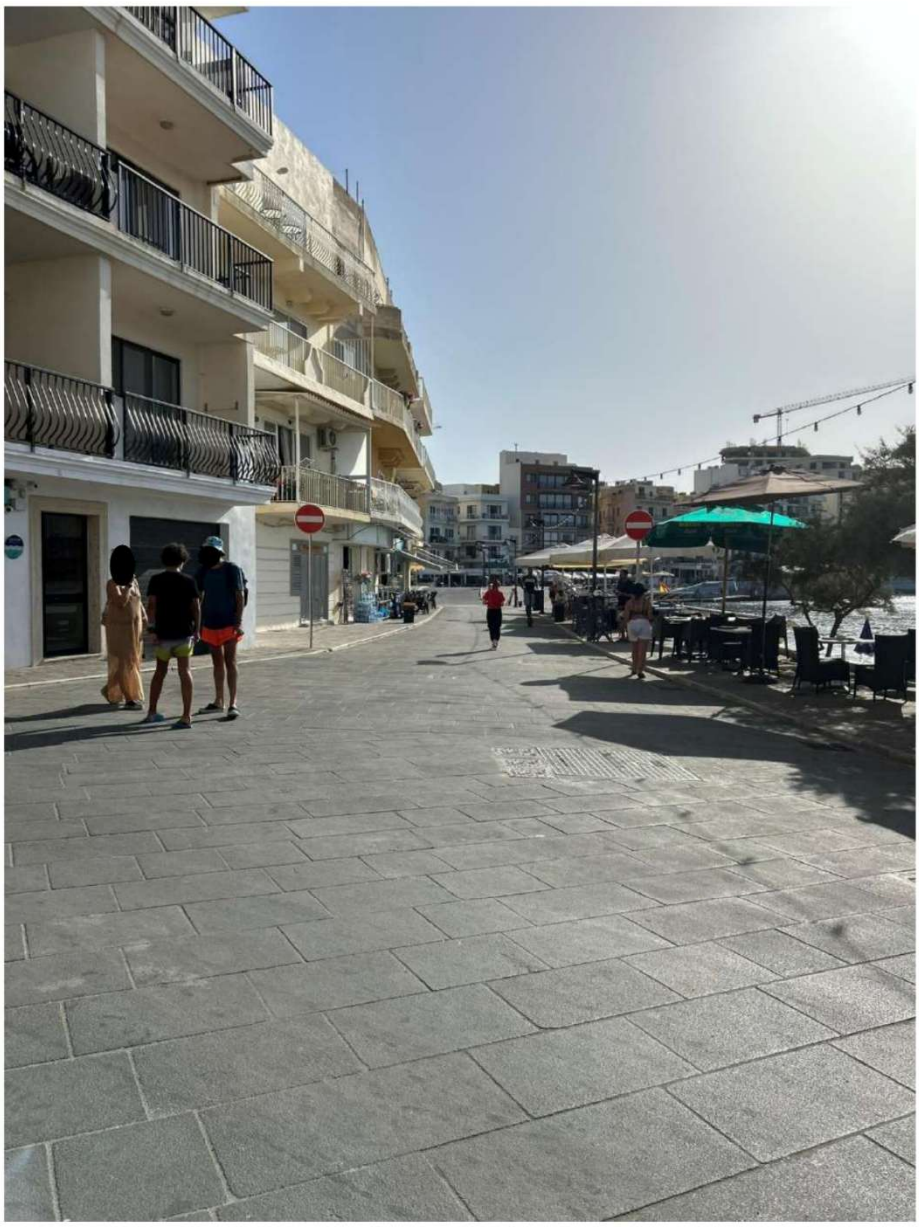


Photo 13



Photo 14



Photo 15



Photo 16



Photo 17

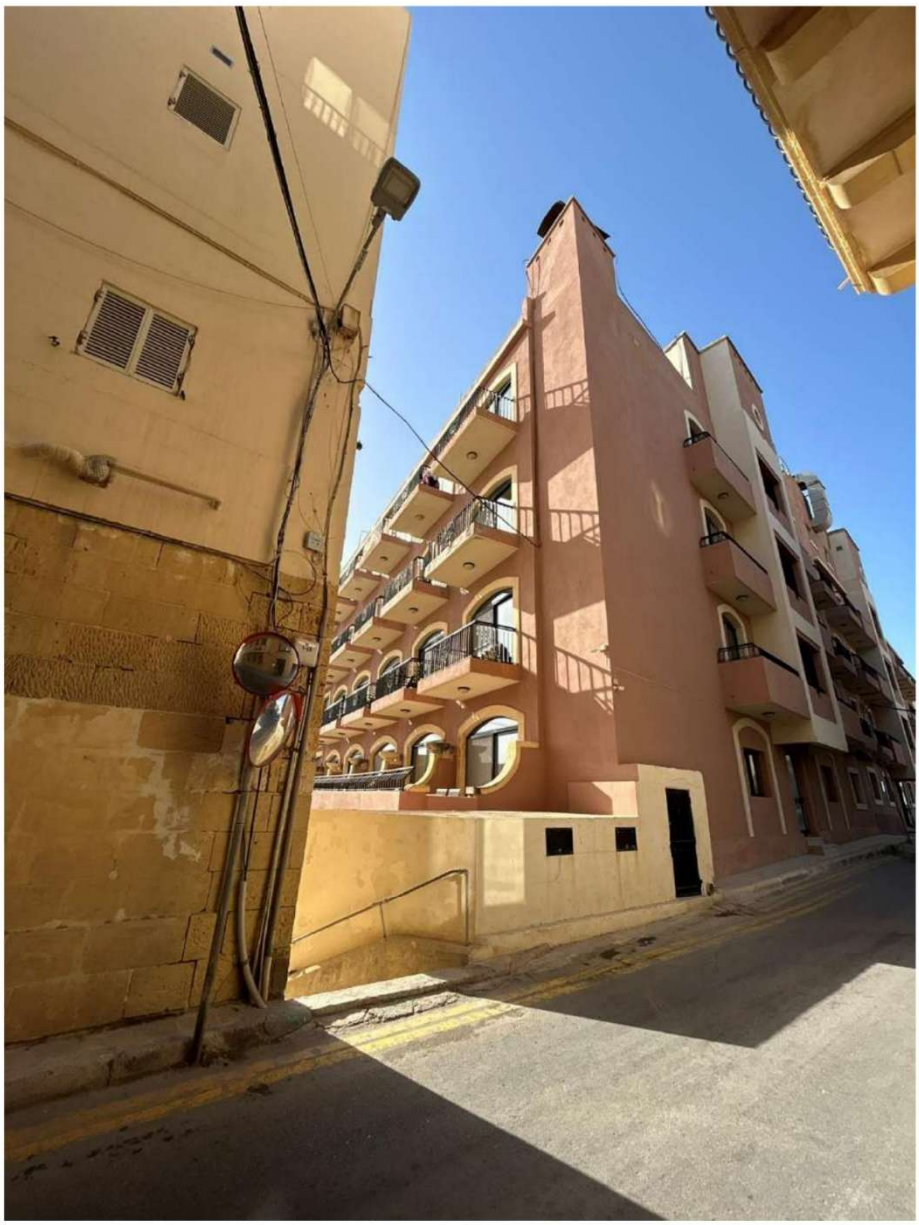


Photo 18



Photo 19

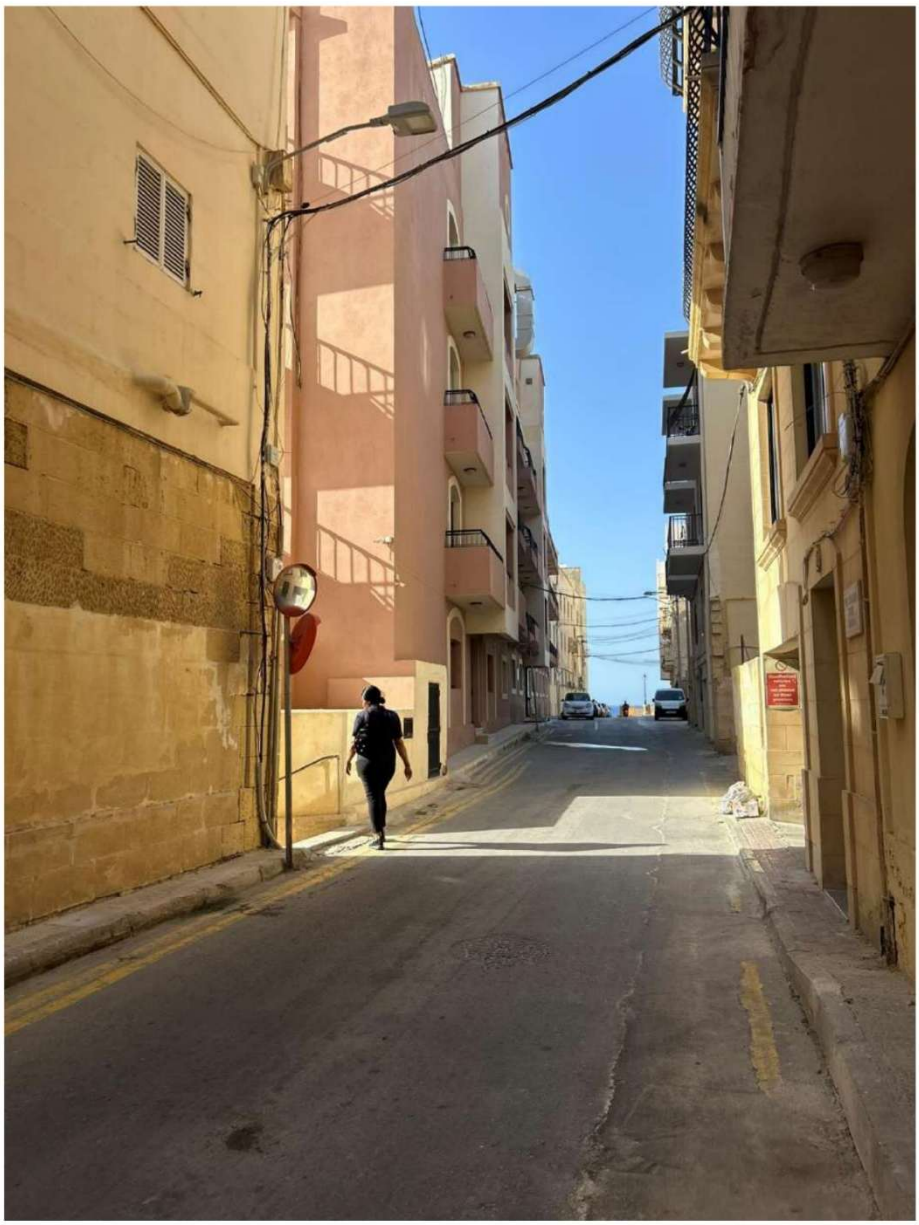


Photo 20

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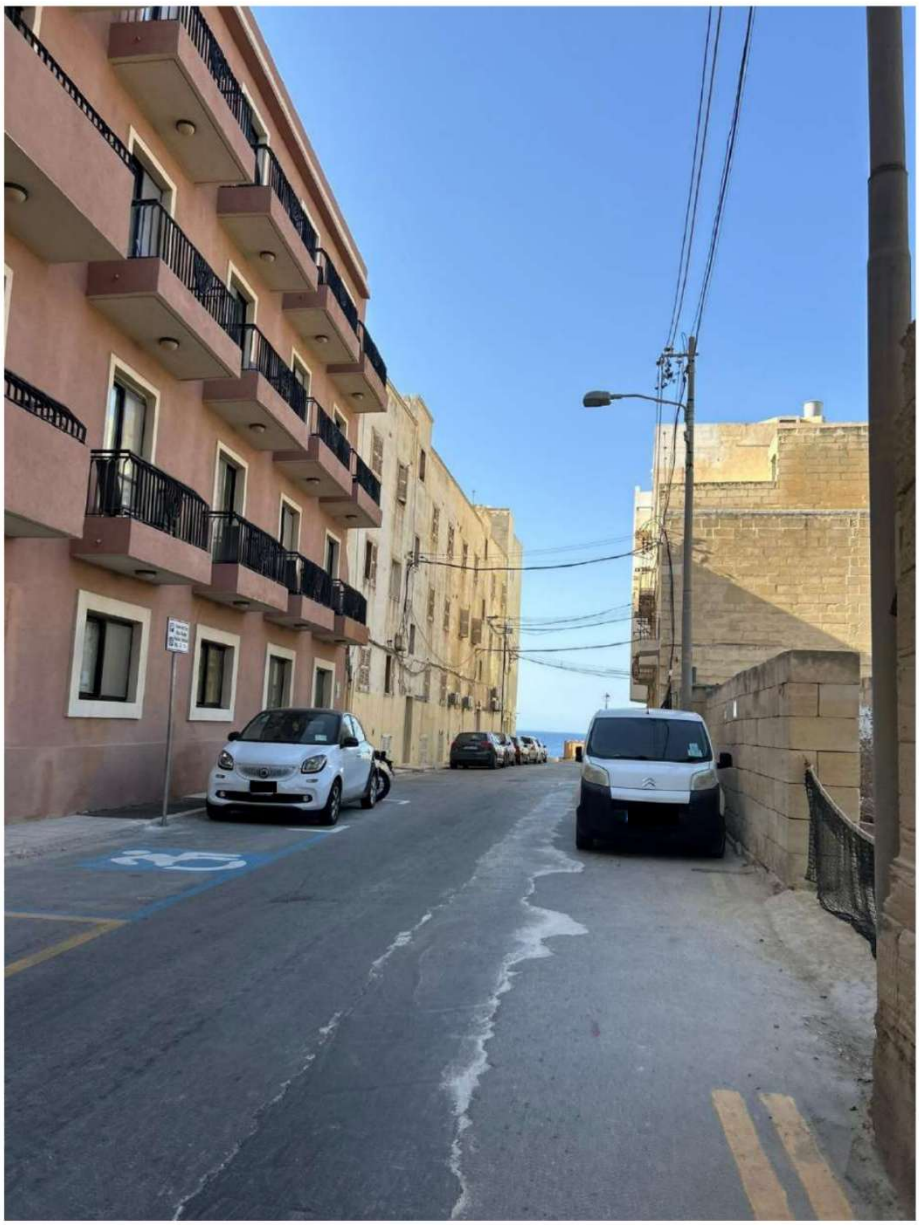


Photo 21

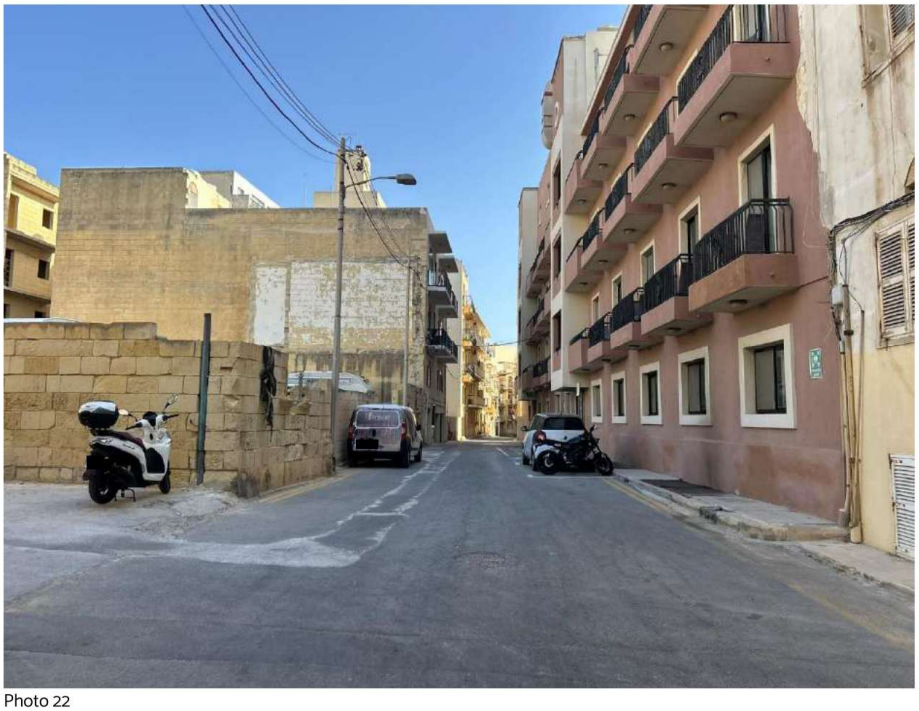


Photo 22



Photo 23

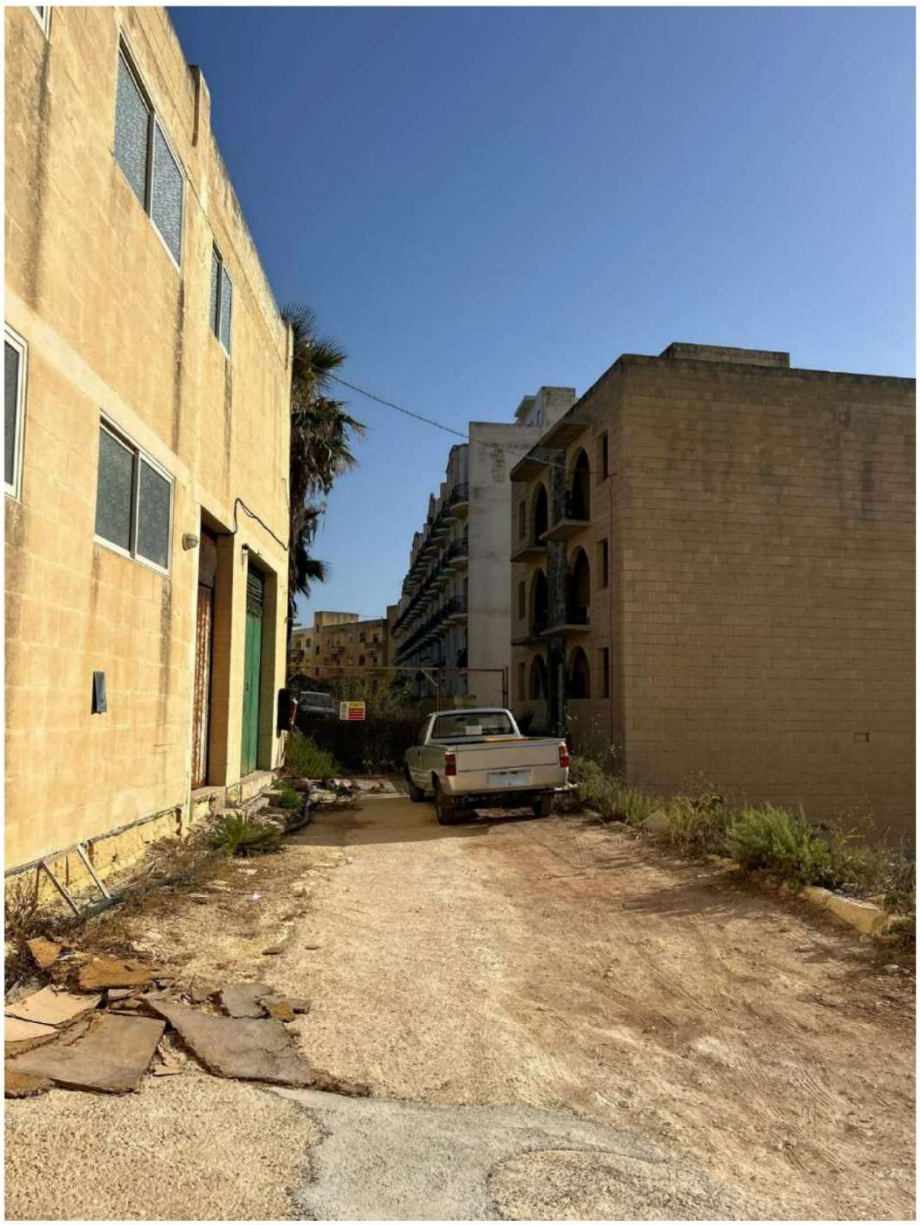


Photo 24

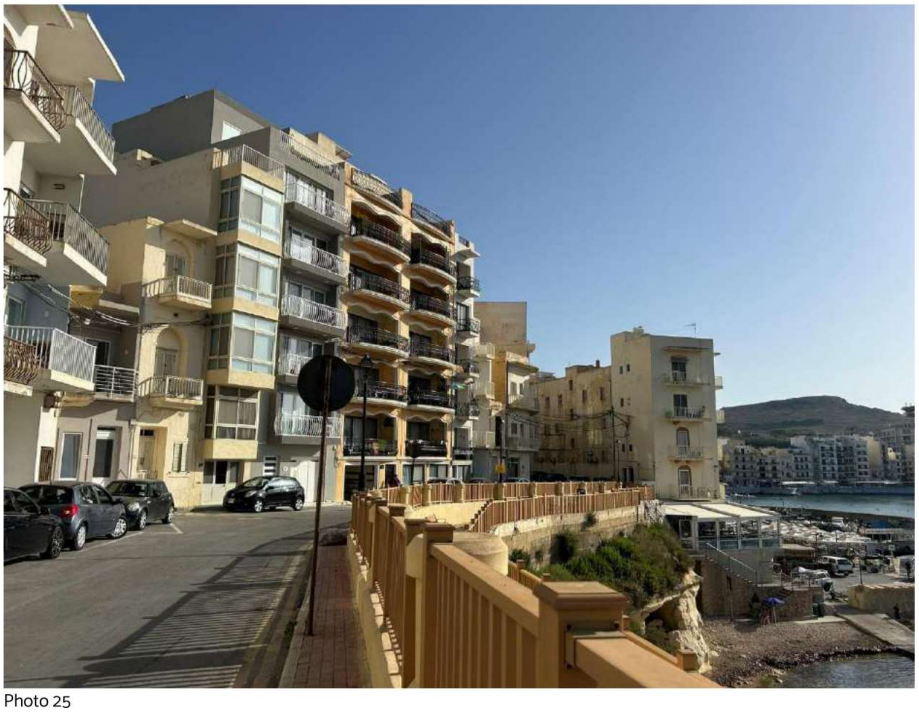


Photo 25

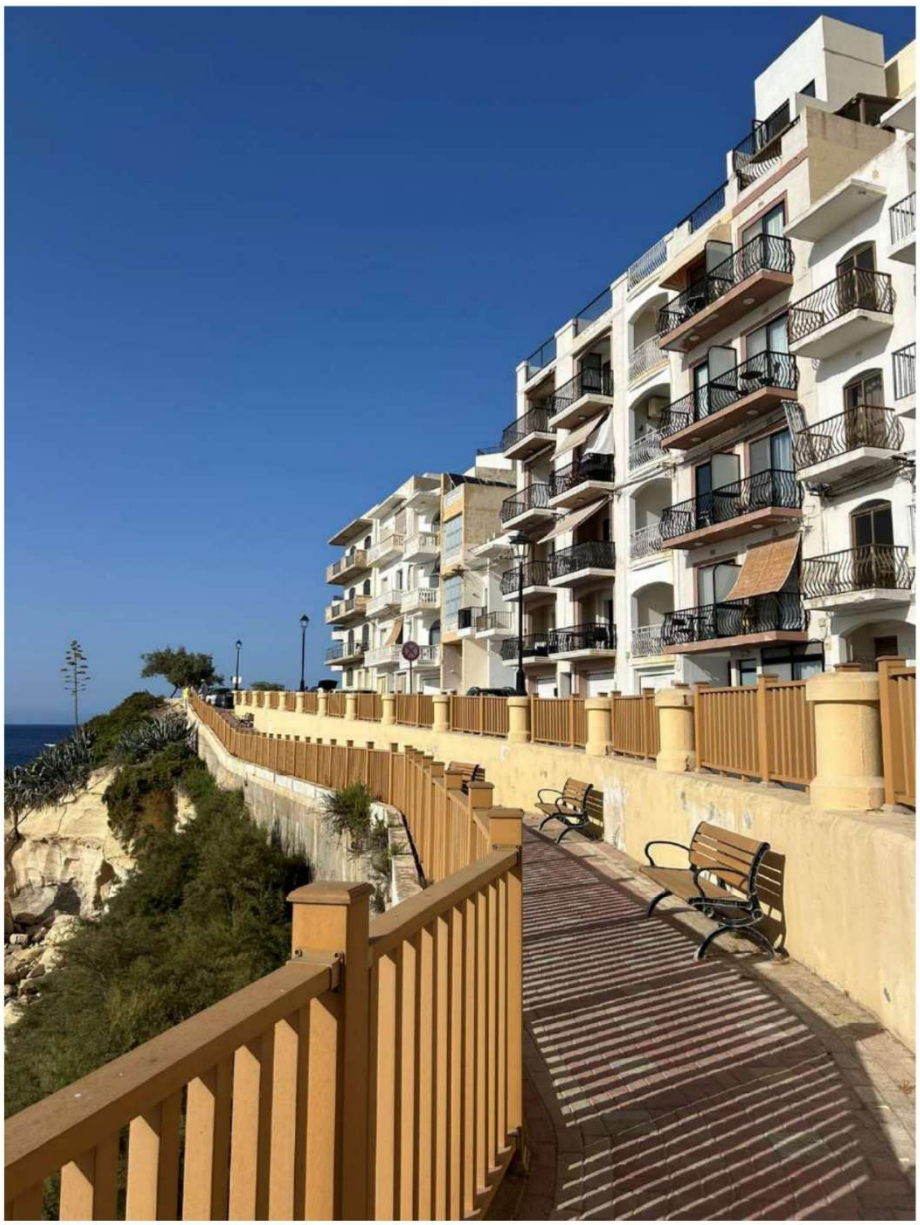


Photo 26

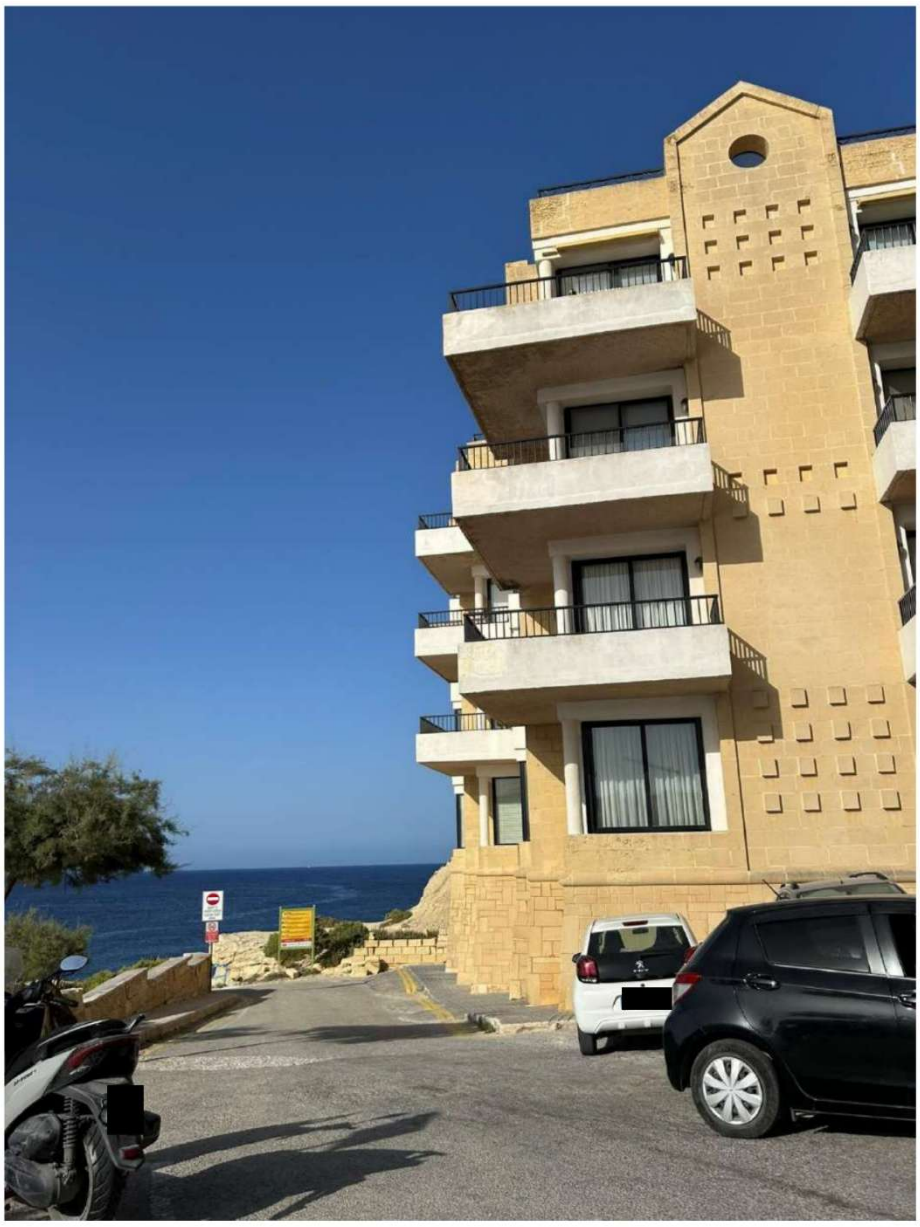


Photo 27



Photo 28

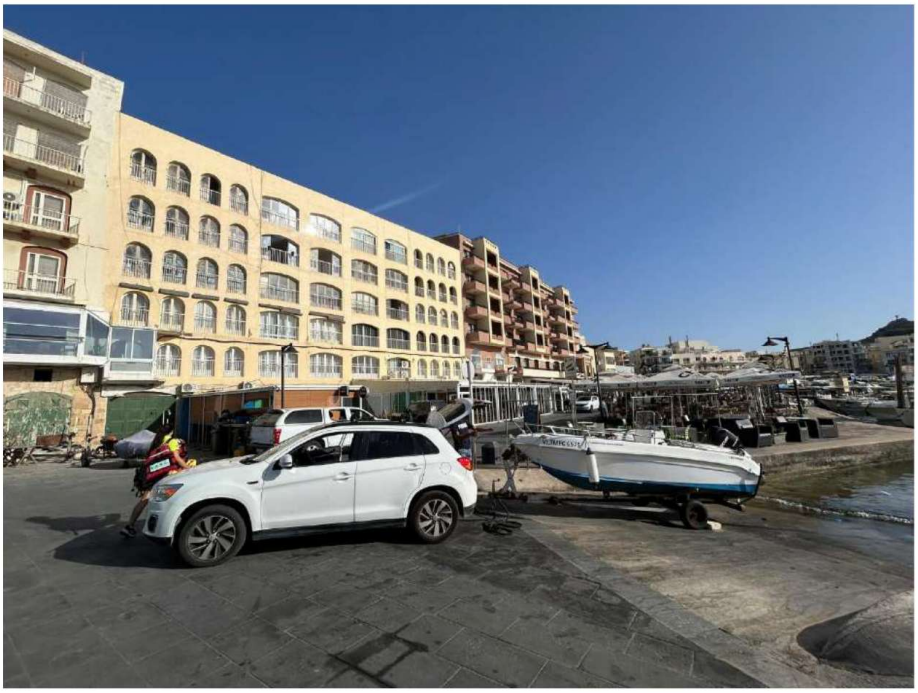


Photo 29



Photo 30



Photo 31



Photo 32


PA/07154/25 · 17b · Valid · Anthony Zammit · 23/05/2026
1
2
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ALEXANDER BIGENI
ARCHITECTS
calypso
MARSALFORN GOZO
BLOCKPLAN
DATE
OCT 2025
Page 1 of 1



Photo 1



Photo 2



Photo 3



Photo 4



Photo 5



Photo 6



scripta