Europe’s Smallest Capital City in the Heart of the deep Blue Mediterranean Sea, Valletta is a dynamic City which has never ceased to change and move forward, retaining its original beauty and splendour. Valletta is the designer city of the 16th Century built straight from the drawing-board of three men, a Political Leader and Head of the Order of the Knights, Jean Parisot de la Valette, a warrior engineer Francesco Laparelli, and a Maltese Architect, Girolamo Cassar. Valletta is one of Europe’s most sophisticated micro cities with an intense concentration of baroque architecture and a defence line of Fortifications that is second to none.

Valletta and its Harbours have always responded to the dynamics of time and change. From a Maritime Super City of the 17th Century Valletta developed into a Cultural and Commercial Hub in the 18th Century, becoming yet again the strongest Naval Base in the Mediterranean during the 19th and mid-20th Century. Valletta and its harbours developed from a Port of War to a Port of Peace and from a Port of Heavy Industry to a Port of Culture and Tourism. Valletta is considered to be one of the finest harbours in the World and a unique experience to all seafarers and passengers sailing on the luxury yachts and liners.

Valletta is a city rich in cultural tradition. Compared to other older cities in Europe, Valletta is only 440 Years young, yet it has the stature, history and profile similar to its sister Capitals of Europe, proud of being a World Heritage City.
Through the HerO project and the compilation of this Action Plan, the Valletta Local Council, the Local Support Group and committed stakeholders are striving to make Valletta a unique living experience, aiming towards a better quality of life based on a safer and healthier environment, with an improved transport system and infrastructure. We do our best to have a City with an open mind and outgoing Administration, a City fit for work and leisure, for the younger generation as well as for our senior citizens, easy to do business in and above all an enjoyable tourist experience.

It is up to us all to carry Valletta to future generations with greatest respect to those who built and shaped the City and its history.

Background to the Action Plan

In developing this Action Plan as consultants specialising in spatial planning, regeneration and heritage management we have sought to follow principles of ‘best practice’ measures which have been established both on a national and internationally level.

The project of the Action Plan in the context of HERO has been an opportunity to adopt a new approach to planning for conservation and planning for the city. The complexity of compiling such a Plan is not only meeting the stakeholders’ aspirations but to integrate the various forms of planning regimes based on national planning systems, EU Directives and International Conventions and Charters.

The foundation of this document dates back to 2009 when it was originally commenced and has been gradually established based on the CHIMP framework and criteria set by the HERO network project. However, to enable this plan to be as fully effective and accessible as possible we, have ventured to apply the following measures and standards; (i) Create a Character Appraisal as a system to analyse and evaluate fully the resources and assets of the City (ii) Use the World Heritage City Guidelines (iii) involve the EU 2020 Strategy (iv) follow the reference made by the Leipzig Charter and (iv) include the planning framework as applied and used locally.

Why was the system of action planning applied? The reason was fundamentally based on being proactive and dynamic. It is counter-productive to create a plan without being activated. It is therefore with this main aim that at the Valletta Midterm-1 Conference that the Action Plan was presented with a system of project-based actions and funding packages. This system was further sustained by a delivery plan.

In the development of this Action plan together with the Urban Local Support Group we considered that a crucial component of any plan is the local citizens’ intangible heritage of the City, that is, how they first came to live within the community and how they live within it today. In this regard apart from the Urban Local Support Group we developed a system of walk-abouts to understand better the neighbourhoods with the Mayor and representatives of the local community. Furthermore a survey was created to used within the areas included within this Action Plan to gain a deeper understanding of the community and their personal histories and future aspirations for this location and the City of Valletta. This consultation process with the community, went beyond that established by the current planning legislation and beyond what the project was initially aimed towards. However, it was to become a useful tool to further develop the Action Plan as well as to check the relationship the citizens’ have to UNESCO and Valletta’s World Heritage status.

The publication of this Action Plan is in tandem with its implementation stage. The project was launched with the idea of developing multi-speed projects in these three years and activate these in the short-term. This gave us an opportunity at an early stage to check related indicators and propose performance benchmarking.

We take the opportunity to thank all those who supported the compilation and drafting of this project in all its aspects especially Ms Gabriella Agius Executive Secretary and the Local Support Group and the Citizen’s of Valletta who assisted us to create this document.

Dr Malcolm Borg and Ms. Samantha Fabry Heritage Enterprise Action Plan Coordinators

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1 HERO Midterm Conference - 9th-10th November 2009.
Local Support Group

The Local Support Group was set up early 2009 as part of the HerO project and development of the Action Plan for the Marsamxett area. The LSG includes various key experts which are based within Valletta and play a key role within various activities which are based in this city in particular within the location of the Marsamxett as well as the surrounding areas. The following organizations are included within the LSG. Their input into the development of the CHIMP is paramount to the success of this project.

St. Augustine’s Parish Church

St. Augustine’s Community –
Father Saviour Grima O.S.A. and
Mr. Denis Darmanin

The Augustinian Community in Valletta is a religious order which administers the Parish of St. Augustine that incorporates over half of the land area and population covered by the Marsamxett Action Plan. Other to the needs of the parishioners, through outreach projects, the Community launched the program ‘Youth in Action Programme’ (EU 1.2), as encouraged by the Archdiocese of Malta’s ‘Church and Culture’ participation. Part of the program was in collaboration with YMCA Homeless. The program consisted of a number of projects, the first of which was a 3D Walkthrough of St. Augustine’s Parish Church (http://www.staugustinechurchtour.com). For the past three years, the parish has also hosted ‘Skola Sajf’ (Summer School) where some 60 children from the parish and beyond, were taught various creative skills, given lectures, attended excursions, met with local dignitaries and visited places of historical importance, with the support of the Valletta Local Council, the YMCA (Malta), the Valletta Community Network, St. Albert’s Collage, the Civil Protection, Malta Police Force and other agencies and departments.

The most recent project in the line is a group work on the history of the Valletta Mandraggio, where youths aided by church helpers have conducted research, took photographs, interviewed residents and built models, which were then used for an audio-visual program. Another project recently launched is the ‘Santu Wistin 6pm IT & Resource Centre’ for kids, where underprivileged children from Valletta have a better environment in which are aided with their studies, learn computer skills and receive counseling related to their studied. In the near future, the project intends ‘Values – Internet Awareness’, to cater for adults of the parish, in conjunction with the Valletta Local Council and ETC. The volunteers and helpers contribute significantly in the parish and are entrusted with coordination in historical and cultural matters within the parish. The vision of the Parish is to attract the community and visitors to the area through education and culture by making its heritage assets accessible to all.

Valletta Local Council

Secretary – Ms. Gabriella Agius

One of the main objectives for the Valletta Local Council is to improve the residents’ quality of life. During the course of the council meetings the commitment to install a safer and healthier environment within the City Residents is always directly or indirectly referred on the agenda.

The council, commissioned experts to identify those short comings which were significantly affecting negatively on the local resident. The experts were also asked to suggest and recommend new approaches and methods as to how to improve and upgrade over the existing methods or environmental localities (zones). The requests of the residents are always given close attention.

Through EU funds the council has just received the green light to start a new project worth 1,000,000 euros. These funds will be invested on Peacock Garden, a site which had been neglected for quite a long time. The residents of the City especially those residing in the zone of Marsamxett will benefit from the upgrade to this open space. The improvement of this garden gives a breath of fresh air to the local residents. The plans and the application to MEPA are already completed and approved. The project will start in due course.

In addition this, and earmarked within the same area, is the Mattia Square giving the local residents will have another garden where they can enjoy a
healthier lifestyle and a safer place for children. The traffic management have been improved and more parking spaces for the residents have been created.

It is worth also mentioning that during the course of this project, the architect and the planning of this location have respected the built fabric of the area by making use of the natural stone to compliment with existing fabric of this Baroque area. Other infrastructure works have been carried out in the lower part of Valletta, where various streets were repaired and paved.

On the educational side, the Council has also achieved good results. By means of EU funds a various groups of young adults undertook a cultural exchange to these Islands from other European countries.

Local cultural activities are almost on a daily agenda. The council organizes various activities during the year ranging from those which are held according to season or others which pop up according to occasions both on National Level and Council Business. To install a sense of leadership among the young children of Valletta, the Council organizes on regular bases the Youth Council to give youths the opportunity to express their opinions.

The council is also involved indirectly with the capital projects which are continually being carried out including the Valletta Gate Project.

The Malta Chamber of Planners

Treasurer –
Mr. Rene Attard

The Malta Chamber of Planners (KMaP) has been established since 1997 with the primary aim of bringing together a multi-disciplinary approach to the Maltese planning system. It unremittingly strives to obtain official recognition for the Planning profession in Malta, and discusses ways to ensure that qualified planners are in a position to participate in policy debates, to give their valuable contributions, and proactively influencing the development of spatial planning policy and practice.

The Chamber is an active member in international planning associations primarily the European Council of Spatial Planners (ECTP) and the Commonwealth Association of Planners (CAP).

KMaP is also embarked on a painstaking task of ensuring that decision takers and new employees within the Malta Environment and Planning Authority (MEPA), the national planning institution, are given basic planning training in order to gradually introduce newcomers to their new roles by means of academic background rather than solely basing themselves on experience and ‘common sense’.

The Chamber managed to actively involve itself in the MEPA reform process by highlighting the shortcomings in the current planning process and providing viable solutions to the existing problems through the vast practice experience into policy that the Chamber possesses.

The Malta Council for Culture and the Arts

Chief Executive –
Ms. Davinia Galea

The Malta Council for Culture and the Arts (MCCA) was set up in 2002 to promote Malta's culture through all forms of creative expression, to make the arts more accessible, and to enhance Malta's cultural heritage locally and abroad. The MCCA is the cultural advisor to the Ministry of Culture and is authorised and obliged by law to advance funds allocated by government for the management, administration, and operational requirements of the following government entities: Fondazzjoni Patrimonju Malti, Malta Society of Arts, Manufacture and Commerce, Manoel Theatre, Mediterranean Conference Centre, the Malta Philharmonic Orchestra, and the Centre of Creativity at St James Cavalier. The MCCA is also responsible for the Malta Arts Fund which supports creative and innovative initiatives by artists and cultural organisations, supports cultural and artistic interaction with all sectors of society, invests in artistic development and training of arts professionals and practitioners, supports multidisciplinary in artistic practice, including new media and technologies and strengthens the quality and diversity of Malta’s cultural life within an international dimension. The MCCA operates at arm's length from government and is currently responsible for the organisation of the national festivals such as the Malta Arts Festival, the Mediterranean Folk Music Festival (Ghanafest), Carnival, the Malta Jazz Festival and Notte Bianca, which form an intrinsic part of the local cultural calendar. MCCA’s role within the HerO project is primarily that of promoting culture from a wide socio-economic perspective and focusing on creative clusters, some of the HerO projects envisaged will be active within some of MCCA’s Festivals.
Paul Camilleri was born in Valletta and he studied at the Royal University of Malta graduating as a Perit in 1977 and subsequently also obtained his post-graduate degree from the Politecnico di Milano in 1980. He set up the architectural and engineering practice ‘Paul Camilleri & Associates’ 20 years ago, with offices in Valletta, upon his return to Malta, after having worked for eight years in Italy, Belgium, Libya and Saudi Arabia. He has placed first in two design competitions, the first in a design for a commercial centre in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia and the second for the design of the Mtarfa new town, in joint venture with another Maltese firm. Besides being involved in various projects in Malta for both local and foreign clients, including the rehabilitation and conversion of various properties in Valletta, ‘Paul Camilleri & Associates’ is also involved in projects in Italy, Saudi Arabia and Libya. He is also a past President of the ‘Kamra tal-Periti’.

Paul Camilleri would like Valletta in 2016 to be a living Capital City, a leading city, ‘Il-Belt’, not only of Malta, but of the Mediterranean and Europe, in all aspects – Arts, Culture, Architecture, Politics - becoming again a city to live in, a city to die in, a city to enjoy life in, a city to study in, a city to debate in, a city to trade in, a city to celebrate life in – Valletta in 2016 picking up the continuous thread it has lost over the past half a century, through successful architecture and with an architecture which reflects our aspirations and beliefs.

Other Stakeholders

The project included other stakeholders to produce a document following principles of best-practice in planning, heritage management, architecture and design and consider all the parameters for ‘good’ forward planning for regeneration. The earliest document produced was a full Character Appraisal of the Il-Biccerija and Environs compiled and written by Mr Neil Greive Head at the Town and Regional Planning School (University of Dundee and Chief Executive of Tayside Building Preservation Trust) in collaboration with the Ministry of Urban Development and Roads. He presented a Character Appraisal as part of a stage with his students in 2005. Other agencies assisted directly as in the case of Building Industry Consultative Council which organized a specific forum and seminar on the rehabilitation and design proposals for the Biccerija building and its environs. These assisted in considering adaptive re-use options for the area. The area was also subject to studies by Anhalt University of Design for which a separate document was produced referring to principles of Landscape Architecture.
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Compiled, written and developed by: Dr Malcolm Borg and Ms Samantha Fabry
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SECTION I – LONG TERM VISION

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to prepare an integrated approach sustainable urban conservation through regeneration for the City of Valletta specifically aiming at the Marsamxett area. Through improving and creating new physical and social regeneration projects, as well as through the local heritage, tourism and cultural industries, new opportunities for transportation links and revitalised living conditions will be harnessed for all residents in the area. The current large scale regeneration projects which have been implemented within the waterfront enclave and adjacent to the area will assist to spearhead a regeneration process within the environment of Valletta. This will occur along its axis with St. Elmo and the Main Gate. However the economic drive and tourism development should also work in tandem with social regeneration.

A stream of initiatives and projects has been launched for the Marsamxett area; The Marsamxett Waterfront Redevelopment, the rehabilitation of Mattia Preti Square, Restoration Programme for the Fortifications and the upgrade and embellishment of Palace Square. There are other projects which are addressing regeneration namely; new forms of mobility, the restoration of the Fortifications and a number of initiatives launched by the Local Council, the Malta Tourism Authority and the various agencies and volunteer groups responsible for Social Welfare.

The purpose of this document is to integrate these various initiatives and to launch regeneration with a holistic approach as to create multi-speed projects, which will affect the core areas of the Marsamxett areas. The node interventions are intended to target specific areas which are considered vulnerable with the idea of promoting various sectors. The stepped approach being proposed will streamline the spin-off effect from the hub and will make regeneration projects targeting the localities more sustainable in the long-term. For this reason the principles and objectives of this Action Plan will refer to the Priority Axis developed in the Operational Programme I (2007-2013).²

Main Objectives

There are six guiding principles for this Action Plan which permeates on the physical regeneration and regeneration of communities;

(1) The sustainable urban conservation is achieved through the correct balance between environmental, economic and social needs promoting best practice and SMART benchmarking for the conservation, rehabilitation, restoration and adaptive re-use of the architecture and the architectural space.

(2) Transit Orientated Development is a form of urban development that clusters a greater mixture of land uses around a high quality transport service. The transport node in the Valletta area is designed to be the focus for the development or regeneration action and ideally becomes the community ‘heart’. It is the node where people shop, work, meet, relax and live.

(3) The principle of Sustainable Communities lies at the heart of the planning parameters for stronger neighbourhoods. Neighbourhood renewal should be based on empowerment to make sure that communities are equipped to respond to challenging economic, social and cultural trends.

(4) Social inclusion and subsidiarity are vital in delivering action plans with a social base. The Action Plan will seek the input of the smallest entity and cover the needs of all individuals especially those effected by unemployment. Social Inclusion Partnerships will be the vehicle to create better

accessibility within the social texture of the Valletta area.

(5) The community heart is also established and developed through the creation of a sense of place and a sense of space. The points of reference in the urban fabric are created through ‘good design’. It is the intention in this Action Plan to adhere to the principle of Baukultur as promoted through the Leipzig Charter. The built environment has a direct impact on the quality of life of every citizen and the enhancement of design will directly affect the “raison d’etre” of the community.

(6) Energy efficiency is a crucial component in regeneration and planning for a more eco-friendly society. Climate change is currently topical in designing urban development for the future. It is crucial that the strategic actions in this document fully adhere to European Policies tackling climate change and follow the Green Paper on Urban Transport.

Rationale

This Action Plan is contemplating an integrated and holistic approach towards launching sustainable conservation and sustainable communities and ‘investing in competitiveness for a better quality of life’ in Valletta through:

(1) Restoration of heritage assets,
(2) Promotion of a diverse tourism product,
(3) Creating competitiveness of tourism and culture operators,
(4) Development of niche market and branding,
(5) Creating better mobility and increased access,
(6) Sustaining the local communities.

This concept is geared to reactivate deprived areas and badly designed housing blocks and counteracts gentrification through the development of dynamic activities. From the indicators collated for Valletta it is vital to plan in earnest for balanced social development, tackle vacancy rates and develop new methodologies to consolidate a mixed community.

A balance between commercial, touristic activities and residential needs will necessitate new planning systems to revitalize the historic urban core with modern amenities meeting today’s needs. The Valletta Action Plan has been designed specifically for the communities of Valletta and the areas specific for Marsamxett which responds to unique land-use parameters. The main focus will be to create a long term effect within the community from regeneration project spin-offs. This may be achieved through improved business, social amenities, well-designed public spaces, enhanced neighbourhoods centred on new transit systems and supported by cleaner and innovative modes of public transportation.

Based on the principles outlined the pressing issues of a fragmented community dealing with its past and future may only be tackled with a long term vision and tangible projects. The application of these principles is aimed at an improved quality of life not just for residents, but also for visitors and local businesses. With the implementation of these projects a more sustainable environment is being developed to build upon the heritage, assets and resources of this area and its residents.

Main Objectives

The Action Plan is designed to;

(1) Develop projects promoting sustainable conservation for the rehabilitation, restoration and adaptive re-use of the architectural fabric and space of this area of Valletta,
(2) Regenerate the area of Marsamxett through better connectivity, mobility and accessibility,
(3) Integrate all the communities and neighbourhoods around the Marsamxett quarters which are socially fragmented and create green and open spaces to soften the urban fabric and instigate further community life,
(4) Regenerate nodes and disused or under-utilised sites into active and integrated zones with a mixed use regime,
(5) Improve the public realm and space with design as a fundamental principle and targeting community life,
(6) Create business opportunities in these reactivated zones which will sustain in the long term the community and locality,
(7) Sustain neighbourhoods through a policy of empowerment and support them through the establishment of amenities and services,

(8) Induce and launch outreach programmes to develop stronger neighbourhoods,

(9) Induce schemes for improved housing schemes and rehabilitation of public areas,

(10) Improve public transport to reduce congestion and instill modal shift,

(11) Improve the traffic management of the area to reduce on street parking and congestion,

(12) Induce projects to assist the Housing Improvement Area,

(13) Improve circulation and upgrade the residential zone facilitating access and mobility,

(14) Launch cultural industries to sustain the local community and to promote local intangible heritage,

(15) Instigate improvement schemes for the promenade and waterfront to create walks and heritage tours connecting the various areas between St. Elmo and Marsamxett Gate,

(16) Re-launch the cultural assets of the locality as part of the scenic qualities of Valletta and launch these as recreational areas,

(17) Create a sense of space and of place through the promotion of modern feature buildings as part of the new developments,

(18) Promote ‘good design’ and landscaping as a measure to create a better environment and quality of life,

(19) Reactivate the fabric and integrate the waterfront with the neighbourhoods into a dynamic zone.
SECTION II – THE CONTEXT

Valletta World Heritage Site – An Action Plan or a Master Plan?

This Action Plan moves away from the Master-Planning concept with a more pro-active approach to planning and performance based actions. Master Planning has been applied by Architect Renzo Piano in 1989 and successively by Richard England for the Valletta Main Gate and environs but these have been superseded with the Local Plan policy framework. Referring to the proposal and the integrated planning mechanisms in vigor it is doubtful whether Master Plans for the whole of The City of Valletta will achieve the necessary energy to spur conservation and regeneration actions in the core. For the purpose of this Action Plan the planning tools already made available through public consultation process launched by the Malta Environment and Planning Authority and other government agencies are being deemed as a system of integrated planning in its own right and a platform to spur the regeneration action plan.

WHC Description

The City of Valletta (N35 54 02 E14 30 52) was inscribed in 1980 (Ref: 131). It is in the Inner Harbour Area of the Republic of Malta and the local Government is the Valletta Local Council. The capital of Malta is inextricably linked to the history of the military and charitable Order of St John of Jerusalem. It was ruled successively by the Phoenicians, Greeks, Carthaginians, Romans, Byzantines, Arabs and the Order of the Knights of St John. Valletta’s 320 monuments, all within an area of 55 hectares, make it one of the most concentrated historic areas in the world.

The World Heritage Site boundaries and the State Party

In 1980, when Valletta was inscribed on the World Heritage List, the nomination papers did not specify a boundary for the proposed site, either on a map or by description. There is no ambiguity however in the nomination papers because the fortified peninsula is distinct geographically and the site includes the fortifications. The inscription of the site as ‘The City of Valletta’ is widely seen as an indication that it is the entire fortified city. However it has been pointed out that Valletta as listed in the original identification does not fall under the ‘comune of Paola’ and it specifically falls under the Local Council of Valletta which boundaries are the jurisdictional. However in 2009, the World Heritage Committee further examined the lack of boundary definition for the WHS of Valletta as well as the following:

a) Lack of definition of a buffer zone
b) Changes in building heights might alter the city’s skyline
c) Major potential development of the new City Gate and the Opera house
d) Development, visitor/tourism pressures
e) Change of use of resident houses for business

The final outcome was that in 2009 the World Heritage Committee requested the State Party within Malta to confirm the boundary definition for the WHS of Valletta as well as the following:

5 http://whc.unesco.org/archive/advisory_body_evaluation/131.pdf (7 August 2009)
a) Provide a clear map showing the boundary of the property,

b) Establish a declared buffer zone in accordance with Paragraph 103 of the Operational Guidelines, with height controls around the property as a means of protecting the skyline configuration of the city and prepare a "Views and Vistas Analysis" from strategic points within and outside the property,

c) Establish clear policies in relation to height controls within the property as a means of protecting the skyline configuration of the city, by means of a "Views and Vistas Analysis" covering key areas and streetscape,

d) Submit detailed information on the proposed large scale developments within the property to the World Heritage Centre in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines;

e) The State Party also requested to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 February 2010, a state of conservation report on the issues above and in particular on the progress made with the establishment of a buffer zone and height controls within the property, together with information on the proposed large scale development projects.

Local Action Plan Boundary

The area being earmarked and set by the project and agreed by the Valletta Local Council is the area of Marsamxett extending to the West from the area known as Il-Mandragg (Manderaggio) and to the East to the area known as the Dui Balli or (Deux Bali) stretching into the Arcipierku. In the centre of this area is positioned in the quarter known as Il-Biccerija (La Boucherie) and the Jews Sally Port. (Refer to Plan below)

The area is endowed with tangible and intangible heritage assets. The fabric of the area is authentic and critical in nature with elements including: Romano Caracoppia's Church, the Biccerija, a series of Churches and Chapels, the Auberge d'Aragon and the Auberge de Baviere, the old Hospital, systems of fortifications and palatial residential buildings.

In the Grand Harbour Local Plan and the Valletta Local Plan the area GV03 and GV01 are marked as a Housing Improvement Action Area and a Residential area respectively. The Marsamxett area has been included in the Brief for St. Elmo and the Environrs (MEPA 1999) and in the Vision for Fort St. Elmo and the Port of Marsamxett (MITI 2007) and it is earmarked as an area for regeneration and renewal as part of the integrated nodes for Valletta and the Grand Harbour.

Significance and Authenticity

The City of Valletta qualifies on all six counts for inclusion in the World Heritage List by virtue of its history and architecture and its function as the administrative, ecclesiastical, cultural and social hub of the Maltese Islands:

1 - Due to the character of its civic, religious and domestic architecture, it is a Baroque city par excellence; in fact, this European style is here to be seen at its southern-most extension vis-a-vis the continent and the larger central Mediterranean islands such as Sicily, and absorbed and transformed to suit Maltese craftsmanship and aesthetic taste.

2 - From early after its foundation in 1566, Valletta set the pace in architectural and artistic developments throughout the country until the first half of this century;

3 - Apart from a history of more than 400 years, Valletta is unique among contemporary European cities owing to the survival up to the present day of the majority of monuments and buildings which give it its particular character and their concentration within the restricted limits set by its original enceinte of fortifications;
4 - The buildings of Valletta afford innumerable examples of the use of the local globigerina limestone in the erection of buildings intended for civic, religious, cultural and social purposes; the basic techniques of ashlar masonry, vaulting, arches and corbelling are utilised and experimented with successfully to solve all constructional and architectural problems, and to find place and scope for architectural expression in the form of elaborate mouldings, relief work and sculpture;

5 - Due to the medium durability of the stone of which it is built, Valletta now finds itself assailed by problems which emanate from the chemical composition of the stone itself and from the action of rain and changes of temperature; modern transport fumes also add their share of deleterious action on the stonework;

6 - Valletta is almost synonymous with the Hospitaller and military Order of St. John which founded the city in 1566 and developed and maintained it as its headquarters for nearly two and-a-half centuries; members of the Order were duty-bound to live and act according to the ideals of chivalry and Christian religious beliefs which often in practice boiled down to harassment of lands and shipping of Moslem nations in the Mediterranean and to the search for the patronage of rich European powers to safeguard the Order’s revenue from their many properties on the continent, if not to increase it; the Order’s rich and varied history during its occupation of Malta and Gozo is mirrored in Valletta’s monumental buildings and the outstanding cultural patrimony of works of art and historical records conserved therein.  

ICOMOS Recommendation

Inclusion as qualifying under criteria 1 and 6.

1 - The city is pre-eminently an ideal creation of the late Renaissance with its uniform urban plan, inspired by neo-platonic principles, its fortified and bastioned walls modelled around the natural site and the voluntary implantation of great monuments in well-chosen locations.

6 - It is irrevocably affiliated with the history of the military and charitable order of St. John of Jerusalem which founded the city in 1566 and maintained it throughout two and a half centuries. Valletta is, thus, associated with the history of one of the greatest military and moral forces of modern Europe. Moreover, the state of preservation of its well-constructed patrimony serves to make Valletta an example of historic conservation on a universal scale.

The Wider Significance – The Harbour Fortifications

In 1998 subsequent to the inscription of Valletta, the Government of Malta inscribed the Knights’ Fortifications around the Harbours of Malta as a World Heritage Site. These are still on the Tentative List and are significant in gauging the importance of Valletta in the context of the Harbours and the military architectural value.

The Knights’ Harbour Fortifications;
1 - Represent a masterpiece of human creative genius;
2 - Exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design; 3 - Is an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history.  

Significance of the Harbour Fortifications as part of the full ensemble of the urban fortifications

‘Quoting the words of Prof. Quentin Hughes, “a monumental heritage... for sheer concentration and majesty quite unmatched”. The building of Valletta was set in motion with the coming of the Knights of the Order of St. John to Malta in 1530. Although some medieval fortifications already existed inside the Grand Harbour, it was the Hospitaller Knights who set out to establish the harbour as a fortified naval base. In 1800, the British inherited this vast complex of fortifications and continued to augment and modify it as technology advanced and the range of attackers’ guns increased. By the end of the 19th century considerable parts of the older bastioned enceinte had metamorphosed into heavy gun fortifications designed to counter the threat of the heavily armed and armoured ironclad warships. These fortifications are unique not only for their sheer scale and concentration (totalling some 25 Km in length) but also because they document the

7 The harbour fortifications of Malta: a) constitute inter-related elements within a large fortress system comprising all the harbour area of which the fortress of Valletta was only the inner keep or citadel b) represent important examples of gunpowder fortifications designed by prominent European Engineers - Ferramolino, Laparelli, Floriani. Pagan Valperga, De Tigne etc. - with later important additions made during the British period of the island’s history c) document the development of military architecture across a span of 400 years. http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/982/ (18 October 2009)

6 Ibid.
development of the art and science of gunpowder fortifications through nearly four centuries of history. They range from the fronte bastionato of the 16th century, through the opere coronate all’olandese of the late 17th century, on to the French systems established by Vauban and his followers in the 18th century, the emergence of the polygonal style and the influences of the writings of Montalambert, on to the imposition of iron-fronted defences and eventually to the concrete emplacements of the Second World War. Scattered around the whole span of the harbour fortifications are gun emplacements which range from the simple masonry cannoniere, armour-plated embrasures, masonry casemates, concrete pens, Brennan torpedo installations, boom defences, defence electric light positions etc. The nodal point of the harbour area, the City of Valletta, is already designated a World Heritage Site. However, Valletta, as a fortress, only forms the core part of the network of the harbour fortifications - it was the keep, or citadel, of these defences. The other harbour fortifications, although separate fortified entities, were inter-related elements in a larger system - the outer works, of the fortified city itself.’

Statement of Significance – The Marsamxett Area and its’ Environrs

The Marsamxett area plays a significant role in the early history of the establishment of the City of Valletta. As a result of this, the Statement of Significance for the City of Valletta has contributed towards the Statement for the Marsamxett area and is based upon the UNESCO State Party example for the City of Valletta. By converging these two statements together, the importance of these two locations is further strengthened and united in importance. The history and architecture of the Marsamxett area and the high level of residential housing, SMEs, ecclesiastical, cultural sites and social activities which occur contributes towards the locations significance through the following:

i) Due to the character of its civic, religious and domestic architecture, the Marsamxett area is part of a unique Baroque city which highlights the unique craftsmanship and aesthetic taste of this early period within Maltese architecture and town planning.

ii) From early after its foundation in 1566, the Marsamxett area contributed towards setting the pace in architectural and artistic developments throughout the country until the first half of this century;

iii) The Marsamxett area is unique among contemporary European cities owing to the survival up to the present day of the many monuments and buildings which survived from this period through various Military attacks, the most destructive being the WWII.

**Heritage@Risk Assessment**

The built fabric of the Marsamxett area and its context are in section, currently at ‘At Risk’ as a result of the current state of neglect. Therefore there has been given a Risk Factor of Level 3. A full analysis using ICOMOS parameters for heritage risk assessment indicated that the area is affected mainly by Insufficient Conservation Standards, Maintenance Deficiency and significantly damaged through Risks from Social and Collective Behaviour. The bomb damage and emergency restoration to the buildings over the decades has compromised the Heritage Values of the site.

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<tr>
<th>RISK FACTOR</th>
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<td>NOT AT RISK</td>
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<td>VULNERABLE</td>
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<td>GRAVE RISK</td>
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<td>EXTREME RISK</td>
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The Marsamxett area is characteristic of Maltese urban cores especially those in the harbour area which are an agglomerate of large, medium and small properties with problems of adaptive-reuse and sustainable management. However considering the age of many of these buildings within this location and the amount of bomb damage, the location has survived fairly well intact. However many buildings within Valletta suffer from fragmented ownership and low rents through Government and private ownership which have been effected by Insufficient Conservation Standards, Maintenance Deficiency. As a result of this, the area has been maintained in a fair condition with only some areas experiencing an overall negative affect towards the fabric through largely incorrect methods of maintenance or lack of maintenance. The location has scored low in the risk level because of the processes mentioned above which are related to Maintenance Risks and Risks arising from Social and Collective Behaviour.  

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SECTION III — CHARACTER APPRAISAL

Cnr of St. Dominic and Melita Street

Current and past land use

The land use plan for Valletta has been compiled as part of the Valletta Local Plan in the Grand Harbour Local Plan approved in August 2006 and has undergone two successive reviews in 2007 and in 2009. The land-use plan for Valletta identifies the area delineated for the Action Plan as predominantly residential (GV01) with a zone earmarked as a Housing Improvement Action Area (GV03). The area has only two identified squares which are areas of open space within the city fabric and the open area (GH03, 06) is only at the fringes over the fortifications on the girdle road. The Local Action plan area is clasped between the primary town centre (GV19, GD06) which is secondary retail frontage and the Development Brief Area for St. Elmo (GV26, GV29). The foreshore and waterfront which is adjacent to the Manderaggio and contiguous to the Jews Sally Port is targeted for Maritime related uses (GC03, GC04).

To an extent this area of Valletta has been transformed with the urbanization of the Island the development of the Inner Harbour area in the nineteenth and twentieth century. The area has been transformed from a services related bustling quarter where the flanks of Valletta were the life line of the City to predominantly social-housing. The Marsamxett area, the Manderaggio and the Baviera area catered for the British Military and Navy stationed in the harbour and the City. The area in the pre-war days had the bakery on Old Bakery Street and the slaughter house or abattoir which provided provisions for the regiments in the area. The area was also highly residential. From inception the Valletta grid-iron plan followed the lay of the land where the central and upper part of Valletta (collachio) was reserved mainly for the administration and quarters of the Order of St. John whereas the residential areas were in the lower part of Valletta around the main accesses (Marsamxett Gate and Victoria Gate). These were densely populated even during the British period (1800-1964).

Social and economic background

The City of Valletta has a population of 7,137 and covers an area of an area of 0.84 square kilometres. Despite a steady suburbanization of the population, Valletta remains the cultural, administrative and commercial centre of the Maltese Islands. The parliament is located in Valletta. Valletta's economy relies on tourism, the city has been designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and trade. The dockyards operating in the Grand Harbour in Valletta, the Island’s chief harbour, play an important role.

The area identified for the Action Plan may be divided into two main Parishes; St. Augustine’s with a population of 1,660 (families 650) and St. Domenic’s Parish with a population of 3,000 (Families: 900).

The increase in commercial activity and the presence of several offices, both public and private, in the capital, lead to an increase in daytime population. The heritage value of the city and the number of museums in Valletta is an attracting pole to a considerable number of tourists throughout the year which has increased through the development of the Cruise-Liner industry. Such influx, opposed to the night time population, and the lack of evening activities in the city, reduces the capital to a ghost city during the evening. Another problem caused by the considerably high daytime population is the decay in environment. The untidiness of the streets in the city centre is but one aspect which is causing environmental decay.

Valletta has gone through a steady decline in population and was like all the maritime cities in the harbour area subject to migration either to the inner harbour area outside the fortifications or to the towns and villages. The reasons for this mass migration and decline comes as a result of various crises and elements. Valletta's colonial dimension created a series of fluctuations with a population explosion and a subsequent decline. Valletta was a thriving city based on an Imperial economy which oscillated
Malta historically provided a strategic connection between Sicily and North Africa. It was a vital stop across the Mediterranean. Most antique and early modern shipping hugged the coasts of the Mediterranean to travel from one port to the other. Its strategic significance escalated not only because of the presence of the Order of St. John but also because of power politics in the Mediterranean. It was a maritime fortress against the Ottoman Turk; it offered shelter to the Spanish fleets and provided a quasi-neutral zone for European Princes. The Hospitaller Knights were not just ‘border warriors’ by the 1600s and 1700s they had established a sovereign independence giving Malta the political clout of a principality. The British in 1800 took the opportunity to exploit Malta’s position to extend their influence in the Mediterranean region from Gibraltar, to Minorca through Malta and Egypt. The main interest was, increasing the possibilities of export and import and consolidating the British Empire. The presence of the Mediterranean fleet in the Maltese Islands and concentrated around the harbour created an industrial urbanisation. Today as a European State Malta still maintains a crucial political role in Euro-Mediterranean relations. The several historical strata, its mixed European population, the various influences through colonisation have transformed the Island into a veritable European Nation fusing diverse European culture. These are reflected in the people’s customs, their religion, language and politics. The evolution of the Maltese culture and population is recorded in its urban fabric; in its architecture, styles and grammar, in the urban plans, development and urban fabric and in the social texture. This is more vividly pervaded and portrayed in the Harbour area which from the early 1500s saw the transformation of the Island into a maritime city and fortress.

Malta’s population based on the 1995 statistics is of 375, 132. Due to its size it has one of the highest population densities in the world. The census rates published recently are based on local council boundaries and Malta is usually described as predominantly urban. The latest census is also classified by regions: Inner Harbour, Outer Harbour, South Eastern, Western, Northern, Gozo and Comino. The largest concentration of population recorded recently is in the outer harbour region. This region has seen the largest population growth between 1985 and 1995 from 98,610 to 112,882, an increase of 14.5 percent. Although this region recorded also an increase in population density in the same period (from 3,301 to 3,389 persons per square kilometre) it is still not the most densely populated region of the Island. The Inner Harbour is the region which expanded mostly during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This area still retains the highest population density with 5,258 persons per square kilometre. Nonetheless the localities in the Inner Harbour region registered a decrease in population levels losing 13,202 inhabitants or 12.9 percent in a decade. The region’s relative share of the total population dropped substantially to 23.5 percent from 29.5 percent in 1985. The reasons for these recorded shifts especially from the inner to the outer harbour area may be the result of; internal migratory flows, a net inflow of migrants, the emergence of new residential areas, the conversion of residential units into business premises and the further degradation of substandard residential units. The changes in locality boundaries may also have affected the recordings on which the census was based. However the localities forming the inner harbour region may be divided into three groups and all record an urban growth from 1530 to 1950.

Topography, Toponomy and Geography

Mandragg / Manderaggio

The first building to be built, in the new city, was the church dedicated to Our Lady of Victory. By the end of 1566, new buildings began to rise, and on December of that year, the Council carried out a compulsory purchase order on all the land which lay inside Laparelli’s fortifications. On the 18th March
1571, Grand Master Fra Pietro del Monte moved the headquarters of the Order from Il Borgo to the new city (Hughes 1969). The last areas to be developed in the new city were il Mandraggio, and the area of the Ghetto Valley (the area now bounded by Marsamxett Road, St. Sebastian Road, Old Bakery Street and St. Christopher Street).

The development of the Mandraggio was delayed because the stone for the construction of the city was cut from this area, with the main objective of forming a sheltered basin within the fortifications, for the berthing of the Order's navy. This plan was subsequently abandoned, and the area was developed, and occupied by poor citizens. The urban pattern of this area did not follow the rigid grid-iron plan of the rest of the city, but was very similar to the inorganic medieval pattern of narrow and serpentine streets found in most of the local villages. The other area, the Ghetto Valley area, is one of the lowest parts of the city, and the closest to sea level. The area was also originally the site of a lime kiln, and therefore was considered to be an industrial area.  

**Arcipierku**

There have not been significant references to the place name. Sir Temi Zammit in his book ‘Valletta – An Historical Sketch’ refers to a possible connection to the word ‘Archipelago’. He states that ‘Strada Pozzi, behind the old military Hospital is popularly known as ‘L-Arcipierku’ probably on account of the many lanes which break up the place into numerous islands of small houses.

Although this may sound similar in sound as a word many Maltese terms have interchangeable plosives as in the case of ‘p’ and ‘b’. The provenance may be Latin-Greek referring to the ‘borgo’ or pyrgos as in the place name Birgu. The place name arco-borgo or archi-borgo is commonly found in Italian towns and cities referring to an area usually in proximity to a Gate or Sally port or an architectural feature as in the case of a number of arches or arcading. This could be a more plausible contextual reference indicating the ‘borgo’ beyond the Fort ‘St. Elmo’ and connectivity to the gates on the fortification. Other related place-names indicate other important geographical and topographical aspects namely ‘Fuq il-Ghajn’ referring to a spring/water source and ‘fejn halla il-karkura ix-xilan’. The latter phrase refers to very distant and unreachable areas. 

**Il-Bavira (Baviera) and Il-Biccerija**

The area around the Auberge de Baviera is known popularly as il-Bavira. Built in 1629 as a private house in St Sebastian Street, it was subsequently purchased for the newly instituted Anglo-Bavarian langue in 1784. It has served as an army officers’ mess, a school and a ministry. The area around the Auberge is delineated by Bakery Street, Archbishop Street, Marsamxett Road, St. Sebastian Road and includes the coastal area under the English Curtain Wall and St Sebastian Bastion. The area is popularly known as il-Bividada, since the Auberge of the Anglo-Bavarian Langue is found in the area.

Adjacent to il-Baviera is the area known as il-Biccerija (la boucherie), since the slaughter-house of Valletta was built in this area. It seems from studying local maps and old plans that the boucherie was first located under Marsamxett Gate where the Paralatorio was later established. This area has a direct link to the coast, through what is known as the Jews Sally Port and to the exposed inlet known as il-Fosso or St. Elmo's Bay.

**Dui Balli Deux Balles**

The place name is related to a French Street name which must have been given during the French occupation. It is not certain whether the Street name refers to an architectural and military element as in the case of Portes Des Bombes or a linguistic reference. This area merges with Il-Baviera and distinct boundaries are sometimes hard to establish or delineate.

**Il-Camarata**

Lutheranism in Germany, the Reformation in England and France and the arrival of the Jesuits in Malta all contributed to the erection of the Camarata. The Jesuits built a house in 1592 for private spiritual retreats for the knights near the hospital at the end of Valletta. It was subsequently enlarged and had rooms holding the hospital linen. The British tore it down and built a massive block of housing to be used as married quarters. This essentially was the first social housing development through a design competition in the Maltese Islands. It was built on Victorian principles and responded to new laws on sanitation.
and had tap water installed a novelty in nineteenth century Victorian buildings.

**Il-Fossa - Jews Sally Port**

In Mdina, Birgu (Vittoriosa) and Valletta one can still finds a reference to the Jews’ stay in our islands. At Mdina one finds the place where the “Jewish Silk Market” was and there is a Jews’ Gate and Jews sally port in the three cities. At Birgu one can also find “Jewry Street”, whilst at Zejtun there is “Jewry’s square”. In Valletta there is to this day a place known as “Jews Sally port” very near to where the Jewish Slave prison was to be found. In Valletta the area around the Biccerija or Baviera is referred to the Jews’ quarters and the Jews Sally Port indicating a high presence of the Jewish population who typically inhabited the area outside the collachio and the sally port areas.

**Place Names and Street Names within the Marsamxett area**

The strategic position of Mount Sceberras, on the promontory protected by the sheltered waters of the Grand Harbour on one side and Marsamxett Harbour on the other, did not escape the notice of the Order of St John when it took up residence on the Maltese Islands in 1530 and a project to build a city thereon was considered shortly after. However, it was not until the end of the Great Siege of 1566 that the plan was put into effect and the foundation stone laid by Grandmaster Jean de la Valette on 28 March 1968. The city was built in the form of a grid and the names given to the streets lasted to 1798 when the Order was expelled by Napoleon Bonaparte. During the brief French occupation, new revolutionary names were assigned but, following the uprising by the Maltese and the subsequent absorption of Malta into the British Empire, the names were changed once more and survive to this day with the exception of a handful. Some were renamed in the 1970s after Malta achieved independence.

The Italian version of the names persisted even during the British period and it was not until the rise of fascism in Italy, followed by World War II, that they were officially discontinued. Through studying the names of Old Bakery, St. Mark, St. John’s Street and Old Mint Street, we gain an understanding from which period these Streets were originally constructed and therefore named.13

The development of West Street dates from The Order of St. John period where it was firstly known as Strada San Michele. During the French Occupation it was then changed to Rue des Moulins au Vent. During the British Period it was known both in Italian as Strada Ponente and then in English as West Street. In Maltese West Street was known as Triq il-Punent. Today it is still known in its Maltese form and in English as West Street.

The development of St. Christopher street dates from The Order of St. John. Its earliest known name was Strada Fontana then during Malta’s French occupation the street was known as Rue des Droits de l’Homme. During the British Period it was known both as Strada San Cristoforo and St Christopher Street. In Maltese St. Christopher Street was known as Triq San Kristofru. Today it is still known in its Maltese form and in English as St Christopher Street4.

When comparing early maps of Valletta it appears that Bounty Street was not constructed at the same period as the previous two streets but rather at a later date. Therefore Bounty Street does not date from the Order of Knights but rather from the early British Period. Originally known in Italian as Strada Soccorso, Bounty was then named in Maltese as Triq l-Għajnuna and then finally known in English as Bounty Street.

The Italian version of the names persisted even during the British period and it was not until the rise of fascism in Italy, followed by World War II, that they were officially discontinued. Through studying the names of Old Bakery, St. Mark, St. John’s Street and Old Mint Street, we gain an understanding from which period these Streets were originally constructed and therefore named.

The development of Old Bakery Street dates from the Order of St. John period where it was firstly known as Strada San Gio Battista. During the French Occupation it was then changed to Rue des Fours.9 During the British Period it was known both in Italian as Strada Forni and then in English as Old Bakery Street. In Maltese, West Street was known as Triq l-Ifran. Today it is still known in its Maltese form and in English as Old Bakery Street.

The development of this street dates from The Order of St. John and was named as Strada San

12 John Cilia La Corte, The Evolution of Valletta’s Street Names, 2008
http://cilialacorte.com/Valletta%20Street%20Names.htm

13 John Cilia La Corte, The Evolution of Valletta’s Street Names, 2008
http://cilialacorte.com/Valletta%20Street%20Names.htm
Sebastiano then during Malta’s French occupation the street was known as Rue de la Monnaie. During the British Period it was known both in Italian and English as Strada Zecca and Mint Street. In Maltese it is known as Triq iż-Żekka. Today it is still known in its Maltese form and in English as Old Mint Street.

The development of St. Mark Street dates from the British Period when it was firstly known in Italian as Strada San Marco. During the British Period it was known in English as St Mark Street. In Maltese Triq San Marku. Today it is still known in its Maltese form and in English as St. Mark Street.

The development dates from The Order of St. John. Its earliest known name was Strada del Monte then during Malta’s French occupation the street was known as Rue du Peuple. During the British Period it was known both in Italian and English as Strada San Giovanni and St John Street. In Maltese it is known as Triq San Ġwann Today it is still known in its Maltese form and in English as San Gwann Street.

Through comparing early maps of Valletta it appears that St. Marks Street was not constructed at the same period as the previous three streets but rather at a later date. Therefore St. Mark Street does not date from the Order of Knights but probably from the Georgian early British Period.

Statutory and non-statutory designations

Listing and Scheduling

Through Chapter 15 of the Structure Plan of the Maltese Islands and as per Section 46 of the Development and Planning Act identifies levels of heritage assets of significance are identified and assigned a level of protection. Once a property is assessed and considered to contain heritage significance it is then ranked according to the degree of protection. These properties published on the Government Gazzette are referred to as scheduled property. In terms of planning the degree of protection provides guidance regarding what development is considered and not considered acceptable.14 These are also included in the Malta Scheduled Property registrar. Together with Mdina, Valletta is a City with a considerable number of cultural heritage assets scheduled and protected.

Urban Conservation area designation

The Urban Conservation Area of Valletta was designated through Government Notice 307 of 1995 with and Floriana, Mdina, Cittadella (Gozo) as contemplated in the Structure Plan for the Maltese Islands and referred to as priority areas. The UCA is not simply a heritage conservation designation but is tightly connected to planning including issues connected to redesign of the fabric and spaces which have to take into account the historical setting. This does not mean that projects of redesign have necessarily to be a copy of the baroque architecture of the past, but the Urban Conservation Area and World Heritage City status of Valletta must be respected. Any redesign also has to take into account the adjacent schemes which include the Opera House Site, the Arts Centre Project, especially in terms of vehicular and pedestrian access, and parking.15

Local Plan

Valletta’s Local Plan has been compiled as part of the Grand Harbour Local Plan. The GHLP stipulates

14 http://www.mepa.org.mt/heritage-general-info#types_and_categories (18 October 2009)

15 Public Consultation Draft August 2009, pg 5.
general policies for the area and specific policies and land-use framework specifically for the City. The Grand Harbour Local Plan is one of seven for the Maltese Islands. Local Plans set a framework to base decisions on land use and development over the next ten years. Decisions on the use and development of land clearly affect all members of the community including residents, businesses and visitors. The main purpose of the plan is to provide a land use strategy that balances environmental, economic and social issues.

The Plan includes protective policies to safeguard the area’s remaining open spaces and historic buildings but also highlights opportunities for development. The plan will be implemented by both Government and the Private Sector. The local plan was approved by the Planning Authority’s board on 12th July 2006 and endorsed by the Minister for Rural Affairs and the Environment on 3rd August 2006.

Following the General Policies set out in the Grand Harbour Local Plan it must be noted that according to GH01 the following applies:

\[\text{GH01} \quad \text{Urban Conservation Areas}\]

In the light of specific Sections of the GHLP the suggested interventions have followed closely the guidance set in ‘Development Control within Urban Conservation Areas’ published by MEPA in 1995. It also refers to the document ‘Conservation Philosophy and a new approach to Conservation Issues’ published by MEPA in 1998 which looks into the implications of sustainable conservation and the adaptive re-use of critical and constant assets.

More specifically the GHLP refers to Valletta’s potential as an Urban Conservation Area and its World Heritage Status encouraging ‘good design’.

\[\text{GF13} \quad \text{Urban Conservation Area}\]

According to MEPA the strategy adopted seeks to establish an improved attitude towards Cultural Heritage. This implies a better understanding of, and an improved respect for, issues of historical importance, whether relating to an individual object, a building or a line of fortifications. The approach and emphasis is on conservation rather than preservation only; and on reuse for compatible reasons rather than for no use at all or for illegal and/ or uncomplimentary uses. Therefore the Policies try to achieve a sense of balance between the need to safeguard Heritage through adaptively reusing it and the need to protect it from incompatible uses. The Action Plan will thus be applying criteria set for Grade 1/Grade 2 buildings as prescribed in Policy UCO7. The Planning Authority acknowledges the important role of structures considered as national monuments, in the social and historical spheres of the Local Plan area. No development which adversely affects such monuments will therefore be allowed in their vicinity, or where it will reduce or compete with importance of the monuments of the Plan area.

The area is earmarked as a Residential Zone and Housing Improvement Action Areas. Although some areas will be adaptively re-used an effort is being made to address the land-use areas and work within the lines of the Local Plan designation. The interest of new property owners to extend the residential numbers and catalyse living in Valletta in designated areas through restoration and rehabilitation of authentic fabric should be commended.

However under this regime the Local Plan calls for a reinforcement of Valletta’s commercial potential through the regeneration of its buildings (1.14).

The Local Plan also specifically refers to the adaptive re-use of buildings as Offices and refers directly to the need by Corporate Companies to invest in the area (1.20);
MEPA policy goes beyond the purpose of re-use and adaptive use. It is realized that restoration work is very expensive to carry out and the responsible organizations should embark on a funding plan rather than carry out works on an adhoc basis. For this reason also, MEPA must ensure that the techniques used restoration are the best ones, and that the quality of restoration will not be affected by the lack of funding. If not done professionally and in the correct manner, restoration techniques can themselves be a threat to the monuments that they are trying to protect. It is imperative that this scenario does not occur. It is also important to emphasize that any preservation work carried out on a listed building needs development approval according to Section 46 (iv) of the Development Planning Act 1992. This will also apply to those structures with a potential for listing.

Development Planning Act, Cap. 356 Section 46

This Act gives MEPA the authority to inventorize and schedule assets falling under the various categories. Apart from the main section the legislation also formulates Emergency Conservation Orders issued to safeguard assets in eminent danger of being destroyed or jeopardized. Scheduling is a discretionary national list which includes properties, sites and assets which are published in the Government Gazette as per Section 46 of the Development Planning Act. Section 46 describes scheduling as "a list of areas, buildings, structures and remains of geological, palaeontological, archaeological, Architectural, historical, antiquarian or artistic importance, as well as areas of natural beauty, ecological or scientific value". The list of scheduled property may be revised and the Authority may issue "conservation orders" to regulate their conservation. To fit within these parameters Heritage Enterprise has devised the CMP to act as a Conservation Order geared to conserve the site. The planned re-development falls within the conservation policy parameters and is geared to develop as a conservation project with a Maintenance Plan following international conservation criteria. The property of St. Augustine Church and Convent has been included in the Scheduling register for Valletta.

Cultural Heritage Act, Cap 445

The Cultural Heritage Act, Cap 445 is administered by the Superintendent of Cultural Heritage. Although the Act falls beyond the responsibility of MEPA, it does give the Superintendent, powers to request a building to be scheduled which it deems fit. The SCH however is an advisor and consulting body together with MEPA and regulates restoration interventions in listed buildings. For the purpose of this Act, and to comply with Part II and Part III of the same this project has been devised to apply 'good practice' and direct the adaptive reuse of this Cultural Heritage resource. In accordance with the principles and objectives of integrated conservation, the Action Plan;

1. Sustains the integration of conservation and management practices with respect to Cultural Heritage at all levels through private-public partnership.

2. Ensures that this initiative takes into account policies of social inclusion through education and public awareness.

3. Ensures that existing local communities benefit directly from the project by creating a better quality of life through environmental upgrade and embellishment.

4. Directs financial development by encouraging the owners of this asset to maintain, conserve, protect and make good use of such property.
SECTION IV - PLANNING FOR ACTION

The main aim of this Action Plan is not to drift away from main stream planning but to create new regeneration planning initiatives within an existing planning context.

The Action Plan will harness the knowledge base from existing reports and studies. This Action Plan is based on an integrated and holistic approach which builds upon valid existing policy and planning frameworks which have been studied and reviewed successively by local stakeholders. Therefore the Action Plan will not only tie in Government priorities and solely on Operational Programme Axis but is identifying a series of planning and policy systems which are legislatively set to direct urban development.

The Structure Plan

The Structure Plan which was drawn up in 1990 provides strategic guidance on land use in the Maltese Islands. It was compiled as a Government initiative through the newly instilled Planning legislation ‘to encourage further social and economic development of the Maltese Islands and to ensure as far as possible that sufficient land and support infrastructure are available to accommodate it.’ The Structure Plan is directed ‘to use land and buildings efficiently and consequently to channel urban development activity into existing built up areas particularly through rehabilitation and upgrading of urban areas thus constraining further inroads into undeveloped land.’ The Structure Plan is also targeting the improvement of the quality of all aspects of the environment. In this case reference is being directed specifically at the Structure Plan Policy.

The Local Plan

The Local Plan is prepared by the Malta Environment and Planning District for the various localities in the Maltese Islands. These plans in the

Maltese context have been integrated into regions one of which is the Grand Harbour Local Plan which encapsulates Valletta and neighbouring Council areas. The legislative standing of the Local Plan is pivotal and all development applications must be assessed in the light of the respective policy applicable to the site in question, and not in relation to other commitments (use or height) in the vicinity, unless this is allowed in the specific policy in the Local Plan itself or in another policy document in force.

Development Briefs

A series of Development Briefs and Action Plans were compiled by MEPA to address specific areas or sites in the Maltese Islands. With regards to the Action Plan of particular relevance is the Fort St. Elmo & Environs Development Brief, March 1997 which directs possible redevelopment of the Fort and its environs. The Action Plan area is adjacent and partly overlapping and therefore there will be particular objectives which are considered as possible options in revisiting or refocusing on regeneration opportunities in the area. There were no Action Plans developed to address this particular area of Valletta or Valletta itself but reference has been made to the Crown Works/Hornworks Action Plan (July 2001) because it has direct pertinence to Valletta especially with regards to new modes of transport and modal split.

A Vision for Marsamxett Harbour

The Government, during December 2007 formally announced the regeneration of the historic Fort St. Elmo site along with other projects in the Marsamxett Harbour. An ambitious target has been set to deliver urban renewal projects within this historic but important central port within the Maltese islands by 2015. The document targets under-utilised space to stimulate new levels of investment to turn the harbour into one that is functional all year round. Through the document the Government has committed itself to reopen parts of the Valletta historic landscape and plan a continuous heritage walk.


Valletta Urban Conservation Area

The Urban Conservation Areas (UCAs) are important areas within Maltese cities, towns and villages. These areas represent the identity of the various localities. However, over the years these areas have experienced various changes as a result of a number of interventions which in various instances have transformed the character of the UCAs. UCA Street Categorization Exercise is to establish a streetscape classification hierarchy within Urban Conservation Areas in the localities falling within the South Malta Local Plan, Marsaxlokk Bay Local Plan, Central Malta Local Plan and North West Local Plan. The Valletta UCA was established in 1994 (3039/94) together with Floriana and the Three Cities which were set as a priority as part of the Structure Plan. There has been no Street Categorization for Valletta but the value with the landmark buildings and visual connectivity in these streets will definitely put most of Valletta in the Category A scale.

World Heritage Site Management Guidelines

Reference is being made to overarching regulatory or international frameworks which guide World Heritage Sites. According to paragraph 97 of the Operational Guidelines for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention (2005), “All properties inscribed on the World Heritage List must have adequate long-term legislative, regulatory, institutional and/or traditional protection and management to ensure their safeguarding”. In the Draft Resolution WHC-07/16.GA/12 ‘Protection and Management plans, conservation tools and promotion of World Heritage properties’ reference is made to the Operational Guidelines which in paragraph 108 state: ‘each property should have an appropriate management plan or other documented management system which should specify how the outstanding universal value of a property should be preserved, preferably through participatory means.” The Operational Guidelines provide also general guidelines in terms of protection and management. As stated in paragraph 96, “Protection and management of World Heritage properties should ensure that the Outstanding Universal Value, the conditions of integrity and/or authenticity at the item of inscription are maintained or enhanced in the future”.

EU Directives and Charters

The EU Strategy 2020 also sets out targets and objectives for Cities this has been further emphasised through the launching of the Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities which has an objective of protecting, strengthening and further developing European cities and is targeting strong support for the EU Sustainable Development Strategy. Valletta like other European cities has unique cultural and architectural qualities, strong forces of social inclusion and exceptional possibilities for economic development. It is also a centres of knowledge and sources of growth and innovation. The recommendations which have been also used as a platform for this action plan includes; (a) the implementation of integrated policy, (b) the creation of high-quality urban spaces and (c) modernizing of infrastructure and energy efficiency.

Preparation of the Action Plan

The preparation of the Action Plan has been overseen by the Valletta Local Council and the Local Support Group a network of key stakeholders of local and national organisations with management responsibilities, and representatives from various sectors of the City. The Local Support Group has developed ideas and objectives which assisted in compilation and development of the Action Plan by the Co-ordinator and Consultants. Consultations ensued with specific stakeholders and the general public. The stakeholders are a large group of interested local individuals and organisations from different sectors of the City including residents, business, planning, heritage, tourism and education.

References:
Sustainable urban conservation

Instilling “best practice” in sustainable conservation calls for a regeneration process driven by aesthetics and ethics. The high level status of Valletta as a World Heritage City instigates benchmarking in conservation practice of International standards.

The application of International Conventions and Charters is only one of the many processes which may lead to ‘best practice’. The evolution or development of conservation professionals, the diversifying of the building industry to include conservation works and the development of related skills and vocations are all vital.

The success of plans for Valletta depends on the effort that brings together the various bodies, organizations and institutions directly involved in the management of the City’s resources. The main entities concerned here include; The Valletta Local Council, The Valletta Rehabilitation Committee, The Planning Authority, Works Division and Restoration Unit, Lands Department, Housing Authority, The Malta Tourism Authority and Heritage Malta. It is, therefore, proposed that a database holding information relating to Valletta should be created and updated by regular monitoring of the condition and use. This database will be shared by all entities mentioned to monitor all types of activities in Valletta, including commercial activities in order to assess the various effects these are having on the character of the City and its residents.

The Council of Europe Committee of Ministers meeting in March 1998 signed a recommendation on "Measures to promote the Integrated Conservation of Historic Complexes". From then on integrated conservation became the tool to approach Government Gazzette Notice 235/95 and Gazzette Notice 133/2001. With this document, important moveable and immovable historic heritage was put into a context and the assets considered as a complex. This idea of complex heritage systems also has a pan-European dimension. A further development which occurred because of the introduction of this element is an integration of tools. On a legislative and administrative level European States are asked to cooperate not only in the state but also on an interstate level. The latest survey commissioned by the Council of Europe on Heritage systems in Europe calls for more networking and cooperation between the various departments and entities.

Improving Accessibility and Mobility

An efficient City is only possible through well-organized and safe transit. Developing a system calls for (a) inducing modal split, (b) implementing a green transport regime (c) create alternative transport modes and (d) make the fabric and urban fabric permeable permitting safe pedestrian transit. This combination is an essential element for Sustainable Development. In this regard, an integrated transport strategy encompassing sustainable mobility is required which takes into consideration efficiency in transporting people, protection of the environment, promotion of public health and safety and social inclusion are cardinal elements in a TOD project.

Currently the Ministry for Infrastructure, Transport and Communication is coordinating a series of concession based partnership regeneration projects extending along the Marsamxett Waterfront aimed at restoration, rehabilitation and development of major heritage assets in mixed-use facilities. These are based on a long-term management plan and will see the regeneration of the whole of the waterfront and reconnection and embellishment of the promenade into a main social venue and space. The Valletta Local Council has targeted main nodes along the Marsamxett fabric to extend the effects of regeneration from the maritime area to the core of the fortified City. The regeneration includes 3 main nodes and the components.

Sustainable Communities

Social sustainability requires intra-generational and inter-generational equity, which in turn calls for recognition and acceptance of differences between social groups and generations. The resolution of such differences through policies and actions which are aimed at reducing poverty and dismantling social inequalities will assist the most disadvantaged groups.
Social sustainability also requires human development and empowerment, with education, health and social security playing a central role to improve human capacities. It also calls for social integration and cohesion, involving social support, safety and mutual understanding, and the development of networks and social norms that permit the effective functioning of society.

The geography, morphology and history of the locality have determined the shape of Valletta’s Marsamxett quarters and the fortified enclaves which detach Valletta in separate zones. The peninsular formation with a converging valley system has segregated or fragmented communities particularly in Valletta where the high gradient of the terrain and density of fabric has not permitted interlocking space. Six neighbourhoods have been identified which have been segregated because of the nature of the urban sprawl, building typology or geography and traumas as in the case of the WWII.

The main objectives have been geared specifically at the integration or development of Marsamxett’s neighbourhoods without compromising the historical or socio-cultural characteristics of the area. Festa rivalry, voluntary groups and the regatta have consolidated the character of the Valletta area and any intervention in the texture of the zones named has to consider as soft approaches.

Social inclusion and subsidiarity

In developing the concept and strategy of decentralisation and transfer of competencies to lower level of governance (first local government, condominium), the principle of subsidiarity represented important part of the justification of reform in administering and governing the City.

Social inclusion and subsidiarity are vital in delivering action plans with a social base. The Action Plan will seek the input of the smallest entity and cover the needs of all individuals especially those effected by unemployment. Social Inclusion Partnerships will be the vehicle to create better accessibility within the social texture of the Valletta area.

Good Design

The community heart is also established and developed through the creation of a sense of place and a sense of space. The points of reference in the urban fabric are created through ‘good design’. It is the intention in this Action Plan to adhere to the principle of Baukultur as promoted through the Leipzig Charter. The built environment has a direct impact on the quality of life of every citizen and the enhancement of design will directly affect the “raison d’etre” of the community.

Energy Efficiency

The production of energy from fossil fuels is the most obvious source of environmental pressure because of the combustion processes involved. Indeed, this sector contributes to about 63 per cent of Malta’s GHG emissions. In this respect, energy efficiency can have a significant impact on the demand for energy and so, it can reduce the country’s fuel bill and the release of carbon into the environment.

Energy efficiency is a crucial component in regeneration and planning for a more eco-friendly society. Climate change is currently topical in designing urban development for the future. It is crucial that the strategic actions in this document fully adhere to European Policies tackling climate change and follow the Green Paper on Urban Transport.

More specific measures have to be taken in the restoration, redevelopment and adaptive re-use of the heritage assets and the environment. A policy geared at energy saving devices, the use of renewable energy sources and application of new technologies is fundamental in the physical and social regeneration of the City.
SECTION VI
LOCAL PERCEPTIONS AND ASPIRATIONS

In 2009 as part of the development of this Action Plan, Heritage Enterprise Ltd. together with Knowledge Miners created a questionnaire to understand better the perceptions and aspirations of Valletta citizens in the action plan area. This questionnaire was carried over a period of two weeks and was aimed at a cohort of 200 from the various neighbourhoods.

The survey was designed to assess identity and the sense of belonging of Valletta citizens within the area. The questions were directed at understanding the level of participation of citizens to local festas, events and activities. The interviewees were also asked about the value of their locality, whether they felt proud of their neighbourhood as a World Heritage Site and what they aspire to see their locality developing in the future.

Out of a total of 187 interviews only 98 were born in Valletta the other 88 which were interviewed came from other locations outside of Valletta. The largest age bracket interviewed was 60 to 74 years of age and therefore first generation citizens. Out of 187 interviews 133 interviewees rented their premises only 44 out of this number owned their property. There were residents who had connections to Valletta either through their grandparents (100 interviewees stated that their grandparents lived in Valletta) or others married their spouse from Valletta (81 out of 187).

All those interviewed lived within the areas earmarked for this Action Plan and were married within the Parish areas. Most of those interviewed had between 1 to 4 children who lived within Valletta and 26 of the same lived within the same house as their parents. Eighty out of those interviewed attended and were attracted to local cultural activities and events when they were younger the rest did not. Most of those interviewed were active within the Parishes of St. Augustine’s Church or St. Dominic’s Church. Only 88 interviewees were directly involved with the local feast days a total of 90 were not. Most were not directly involved with the preparation of the feasts or were active in the church festa organisation groups.

Out of the 187 responding to the survey, 138 interviewees felt pride in contributing to the neighbourhood and 175 were proud to live within the area or neighbourhoods. Over 148 interviewees aspire to see more activities and would like to see more cultural events held within their location. These according to those interviewed should be aimed at families and the younger generation. Over 173 felt that cultural activities made their community feel closer. Many were aware of the increase of tourists within the locality and 173 interviewees were happy to have more people visit these locations and 169 interviewees knew that Valletta was a WHC and were proud of it.\footnote{Please refer to Annex I for Graphs related to cohort.}

Graph Q 25a: Over 173 felt that cultural activities made their community feel closer.
SECTION VII-
PROGRAMME FOR ACTION

Through the Hero partnership the City of Valletta is targeting the following goals; A) Further develop and exchange experiences in the City management and administration, B) Further the concept of WHC which has not been tackled with the necessary political and administrative clout or governance, C) Analyse together the possibilities of re-launching the City core even with the use of World Heritage Site Management Guidelines, D) Tap together possible funds also at UNESCO level to develop coherent strategies, E) Address the pressing problems in the cores as in the case of social inclusion and regeneration in neighbourhoods for a more sustainable community and ultimately long term sustainability.

A sustainable development and sustainable conservation policy could enhance the liveability of the city centre. The balance to harmonise sustainable conservation, redevelopment and regeneration in line with the conservation of historic fabric depends on the integration of heritage and redevelopment planning. Sustainable development is also highly dependable on a living and thriving community which may be achieved through an integrated policy which targets the sustainable conservation of the historic landscape.

The Programme for Action has identified through the Local Support Group and the various stakeholders four (4) strategic nodes and three (3) main strategic components in delivering a sustainable Action Plan with short, medium and long term objectives.

SC1 Sustaining the Transit Oriented Development Strategy for Better Accessibility and Mobility

An efficient City is only possible through well-organized and safe transit. Developing a system calls for (a) inducing modal split, (b) implementing a green transport regime (c) create alternative transport modes and (d) make the fabric and urban fabric permeable permitting safe pedestrian transit. This combination is an essential element for Sustainable Development. In this regard, an integrated transport strategy encompassing sustainable mobility is required which takes into consideration efficiency in transporting people, protection of the environment, promotion of public health and safety and social inclusion are cardinal elements in a TOD project.

The Government is coordinating a series of concession based partnership regeneration projects extending along the Valletta waterfront (St. Elmo and Marsamxett) aimed at restoration, rehabilitation and development of major heritage assets in mixed-use facilities. These are based on a long-term management plan and will see the regeneration of the whole of the waterfront and reconnection and embellishment of the promenade into a main social venue and space. The Valletta Local Council has targeted main nodes along Marsamxett for upgrades to extend the effects of regeneration from the maritime area to the core of the City.

Other important and significant developments include various projects promoting modal split and alternative transport modes namely with the development of the Controlled Vehicular Access and the introduction of electric taxis and sea ferries. The Action Plan promotes these activities and is setting out new approaches to further spur the Transit Oriented Development principle as a strategic priority which has been developed by Central Government.

The specific development objective of Component I is to safeguard and valorise the City's urban heritage and promote an overall improvement in quality of life through better accessibility, enhanced education, social and health systems and increased

- Environmental monitoring. The objectives of Component 1 include:
  - To upgrade the physical environment and visual appeal of the urban core through urban regeneration and integrated local development;
  - To improve internal mobility through new initiatives;
  - To promote repaving of streets and pedestrianisation;
  - Promote alternative and green transport;

23 Priority Axis 6, Urban Regeneration and Improving the Quality of Life,
Social Regeneration and Strengthening Neighbourhoods

As noted in the previous section the geography, morphology and history of the locality have determined the shape of Valletta and its various residential quarters and the fortified enclaves are segregated through virtual sectioning as in the case of pride, taboo, rivalry and social dynamics. The formation with an agglomeration of housing quarters has segregated or fragmented communities particularly in the Marsamxett area and the Arcipierku. Six neighbourhoods have been identified which have been segregated because of the nature of the urban fabric, building typology or geography and laying on the fringes of the commercial and administrative core of Valletta. These have been subdivided according to quarter;

The main objectives listed in the Component have been geared specifically at the integration or development of Valletta’s neighbourhoods without compromising the historical or socio-cultural characteristics of the area. Festa rivalry, Carnival, football, voluntary groups and the regatta have consolidated the character of the Valletta area and any intervention in the texture of the zones named has to consider soft approaches. Policies for community benefits may also be designed through sectarian policies or cross-cutting measures; education, accessibility and tax breaks. These strategic actions have been devised within a time bracket extending from 5 (lowest) to 10 (highest) years with 2018 as a benchmark year of Action Plan review time.

Further integrated urban regeneration and embellishment will be endeavoured through the active role of the local government system. Local communities are considered to be the backbone of the country's social infrastructure. OP I will therefore finance Local Council Initiatives centred, inter alia, around the provision of supporting facilities such as playgrounds, open and green spaces and other social infrastructure to improve urban cores and contribute to restoring the rejuvenation of the area. Moreover, efforts will be made to emulate such projects within the context of integrated Local Plans and Urban Regeneration Plans, ideally drawn up by neighbouring local councils, working on a partnership basis. Given their role in local development, the non-profit sector will also be encouraged to participate in development initiatives. However, ad hoc initiatives in local communities which are more geared to support measures relating to conservation for conservation’s sake will be supported by the EAFRD. Exploring the potential of achieving urban regeneration through such tools as JESSICA and Public-Private Partnerships may also be considered.

The Local Council has identified seven (7) projects falling within these national priorities;

Six of the projects are physical upgrades and landscaping concentrated over; East Street, Toni Bajjada Alleyway, Carmelites Street, Mattia Preti Square and lower end of Republic Street. The other project is being developed in collaboration with Pieta Local Council which extends the Park and Ride Scheme which has been developed and a further 250-300 strong car-park.

The potential interventions responding to national priorities include;

- The upgrading of urban cores through urban regeneration projects;
- Integrated interventions by local councils to enhance the socio-economic and environmental fabric of the various towns and cities around the Islands;
- Upgrading non-TEN-T roads;
- Promotion of Modal Shift through the setting up of Traffic Management Systems and enhancement of Public Transport.

Economic Regeneration - Creating Commercial Opportunities

In the above section the document referred to a developing but slow commercial zone which spreads along the waterfront from the Marsamxett Gate into the main axis reaching the fringes and hub of the Valletta core. This is the result of the historical development of the City which has been transformed from a city based on maritime transform to one based significantly on land transport. Access points have therefore changed from the Maritime gates on the flanks of Valletta to the Main Gate. Whilst the commercial area is in itself creating congestion through servicing, temporary car parking and alighting of pedestrians the area necessitates traffic management studies with a focus on increasing accessibility and mobility through and from the Action Plan area. The commercial zone has not developed sporadically and its consolidation lies only in its promotion as a quarter within the precinct and hub which is a permeable and lively area promoting the Valletta atmosphere. Without compromising this and maintaining its sustainability alternative commercial areas in line with the Residential area upgrade should be promoted. The Local Plan has also proposed
The following four main actions (nodes) focus on the distribution of the current commercial outlets and their strengthening by promoting the idea of a quarter with enhanced facilities and through a revitalised environment the promotion of better standards.

The potential interventions responding to national priorities include:

- The creation of new form of industries;
- Promote alternative forms of industry and niche industry;
- Promote cultural industries and culture clusters;
- Promote Valletta as a main venue for Cultural Tourism.

Node 1
Architecture and Landscape Design - The Biccerija Building and its Environs

The Biccerija area itself specifically has been targeted as a zone per se ideal for a Landscape Architecture proposal. The zone identified includes the immediate environs around the Biccerija itself (from Old Bakery Street to West Street) and extending down to the Jews Sally Port. The area therefore includes the Jewish Quarter and the Jews Sally Port.

The document will set a benchmark based on the Baukultur concept entrenched in the Leipzig Charter (2007). There will be a reassessment of extant UCA guidelines and how these may be upgraded for this particular project. These will make direct reference to UNESCO Guidelines for World Heritage Cities.

Therefore in relation to the area the Brief is targeting the following:

- Baukultur benchmarking for Landscape Architecture as an integral part of the Leipzig Charter criteria,
- The development of concepts for these areas with an idea to enhance the heritage assets and create a sense of place,
- Develop design ideas for the Biccerija building respecting the fabric, massing and space,
- Create a dynamic area and adaptive re-uses possibilities for the Biccerija building in consultation with the Local Support Group,
- Develop design concepts to make the space and place more permeable, accessible promoting mobility,
- Design options to lead guidance for innovative design in historic landscapes respecting UNESCO Charters and Conventions.

Node 2
Conservation, Adaptive Re-Use, Recreation, Tourism and Social Inclusion - St. Augustine’s Priory and The Manderaggio Quarter

St. Augustine’s Community launched one of the earliest initiatives in the area. The complex comprises a convent, church and extensive undercroft (16th century to 20th century) currently utilized for community gatherings. The Project started in 2006 with an application for the removal of debris in the crypt area (WWII) and the restoration of parts of the crypt.

The archaeological excavations revealed further interesting architectural aspects and therefore these works were extended in 2007 with a compilation of a possible Conservation Management Plan and Interpretation Framework. With the help of volunteers the WWII shelters were rehabilitated with the assistance of Heritage Consultants to tap possibilities for EU funding. The interesting areas of the Convent and undercroft are now being targeted for an Interpretation centre with various amenities, a business centre with conferencing and the rehabilitation of the community centre for further education and recreation.

The project’s main objectives are the following:

- Develop the Crypt/Undercroft as an interpreted site and an interpretation centre for the Manderaggio Quarter and its development,
- Redevelop sections of the Convent as a Business Centre,
- Provide a wide range of resources reflecting the history and culture of the precinct,
- Ensure the Interpretation Centre and Business Centre is promoted widely in Malta and overseas,
- Ensure that the complex which has been identified as an Interpretation Centre retains its identity. Additionally this area should be also highlighted through various interpretative panels within the remaining Wings.
- Promote the Church and Convent precinct as an essential part of a Valletta/Malta experience,
- Ensure areas use facilitates for a range of visitor experiences,
- Work with local groups to promote the Church and Convent precinct as a community facility,
- Promote the Church and Convent as a preferred venue for, conferencing, entertainment and recreation,
- Promote the Church and Convent as a centre of research in areas related to conservation, interpretation and management of Valletta and especially the Manderaggio,
- Provide an education centre with relevant resource information and activities for use by schools, tertiary institutions and the general public,
- Deliver a range of public programmes and education.

The restoration and adaptive-reuse of the St. Augustine's Church and Convent is an investment in tangible and intangible assets relating to the setting-up of a new Interpretation Centre with ancillary services i.e. Café and Bookshop and the extension of an existing Conference area for Business Centre amenities. This targets a diversification of the output of an establishment into new additional products with conferencing, recreational and tourism related activity and therefore will create a fundamental change in the overall production process of the existing establishment which is currently addressing the development of the product as a platform to a more marketable complex and a better tourism and visitors package. The objectives follow those of Priority Axis 2 that is to promote a sustainable and competitive tourism industry able to achieve its potential for growth and re-affirm its central role in Malta’s and essentially in Valletta’s economic activity.

The operational objectives of this project therefore refer;

- To the upgrading of the tourism product;
- To the promotion of Valletta as a prime and diverse tourist destination;
- Create further competitiveness in the area of tourism and promote new culture operators.

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Promote the Church and Convent precinct as an essential part of a Valletta/Malta experience,

The Malta Council for Culture and the Arts has targeted two Government owned palatial buildings in West Street for restoration, rehabilitation and adaptive re-use. The Palaces from the 17th century have been dilapidated and disused for years. These have also been subjected to several interventions which have negatively affected their building envelop.

The Malta Council for Culture and the Arts sees the potential of redevelopment of these two properties as a hub for culture clusters and cultural industries. The social texture of the area and the possible soft adaptive re-use of the historic components of the Marsamxett area call for such investment. The MCCA also sees the potential for the proliferation of the Arts and Culture through small medium sized enterprises which already are mushrooming in the area and which may create the necessary economic spin-off.

The proliferation of cultural industries in the area would generally include; textual, music, television, and film production and publishing, as well as crafts and design. In the Valletta and specifically Marsamxett scenario; architecture, the visual and performing arts, carnival, sport, advertising, and cultural tourism are deemed as adding value to the content and generating values for individuals and societies. These are knowledge-based and labour-intensive, creating employment and wealth. By nurturing creativity and fostering innovation societies will maintain cultural diversity and enhance economic performance. These may be sustained also by the tourism as the area will be more amenable for cultural tourism through the new access points for Valletta.

Cultural industries include new digital technologies which have radically altered the context in which cultural goods, services, and investments flow between countries and, consequently, these industries have undergone a process of internationalization and progressive concentration, resulting in the formation conglomerates. It is envisaged that the MCCA will instigate a digital cultural industry which is clean and may well be adapted to the Marsamxett fabric.

The project’s main objectives are the following;

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24 Priority Axis 2, Sustainable Tourism Criteria
• Restore the palatial buildings in West Street,
• Redevelop sections of the buildings as a centre for cultural industries and hub,
• Provide a wide range of resources to promote cultural industries.
• Ensure that the complex which has been identified is an essential landmark for culture and the arts.
• Ensure areas use facilitates for a range of cultural experiences,
• Work with local groups to promote cultural industries
• Promote the area as a preferred venue for, conferencing, entertainment and recreation.
• Promote the cultural development through heritage.

Responding to National Priorities

Integrated urban development projects are vital mechanisms which spur the main industries in the nerve centre of the Maltese Islands, the City and the Harbour region. The regeneration of this area integrates the major sectors of the local economy; maritime, tourism, the building industry, transit and commercial services. Given that human resources are Malta’s premier resource, knowledge and higher educational attainment levels are critical contributors to Malta’s economic growth and the improvement of the standard of living of its citizens.

• Improved access to e-government services and other e-accessibility initiatives;
• Investment in general public educational infrastructure;
• Investment in social and social inclusion infrastructure (including childcare – both public and for enterprises

tourists is an important element in the promotion of WHC as a primary tourism site which is yet an untapped resource in the context of landscape.

Valletta needs to develop its gateways further and the Peacock Garden as in the case of Marsamxett Gate is exclusively a showcase and access to the WHC. Therefore complementary activities as this project will not compete but will promote other systems as in the case of the Museum on Fortifications which is being launched as part of the restoration of the Fortifications in the area. The objective is to encourage tourists to visit and experience the Marsamxett area of Valletta which is an undiscovered part of the WHC full of heritage interest and effectively cause a fairer distribution of income and employment opportunities

The Project CULTS promotes product development on a local scale with direct spin-offs on the National scale. The Marsamxett Area and its environs are a gateway to the Grand Harbour Fortifications, St. Elmo and the garden heritage of Valletta i.e. Hastings Garden, The Upper and Lower Barracca and the ecclesiastical and architectural heritage in Valletta. The rehabilitation and enhancement of these scheduled sites, the restoration and revalorization of the fortifications are an integral and focal part of Malta’s cultural-tourism product. Valletta therefore has untapped cultural-tourism assets which may be further enhanced. The Project CULTS directly effects the revalorization of the local product with a diverse array of interconnected cultural and heritage venues which through a heritage trail will create further opportunities and attractions in the area and thus developing further the tourism offer in the World Heritage City and the Area of High Landscape Value. An interpretation strategy and a heritage trail through the City and locality will enhance further accessibility to the WHC. The Valletta Local Council will be spearheading this project with the participation of other stakeholders the implementation of the tourism strategy.

1 – PEACOCK GARDENS as a sense of space and a sense of place

Through focusing on elements which truly make this site significant both within Valletta and the Maltese Islands we will be able to identify both, the intangible heritage i.e. spiritual, poverty, local traditions, diversity and community ties, and to the tangible heritage i.e the garden context, monuments, the urban context, the urban landscape. Through the information gained (Through research and consultation phase) a Strategic Plan will be developed which will guide the project.

Node 4
Tourism Industry for sustainable economic development - The Peacock Gardens and Environs Project

The Project for PEACOCK GARDEN – CULTS enhances the tourism product through the redevelopment and embellishment of the cultural urban landscape. The restoration and rehabilitation of cultural heritage assets and garden made accessible to local and foreign
Develop a strategy which will encourage residents, visitors and tourists alike, to get involved (as participants) within the some of the cultural programmes and activities which will be developed in and around the quarter. Most importantly target the urban landscape as a theme of these activities and fully develop system of visual connectivity with the landmark buildings and architectural markers. The Strategy will target vulnerable areas of society and promote social inclusion partnerships through religious activity, heritage, local traditions, culture and cultural diversity.

Improve and develop specific links through interactive interpretation both onsite and offsite which will support the development of a deeper understanding of the importance of Valletta’s past and its landscape, present and future through investing in the children, young people, people with basic skills, needs and the community. This will be delivered through a policy of subsidiarity and solidarity spurred by community based initiatives and ‘out-reach’ programmes.

The future design with ergonomic schemes, interpretation and shelter in focusing on a better space based on better design. Through an analysis and evaluation of the needs of the local community, the tourism benchmarking and objectives (1) local stakeholders will assist in the development of a sense of place and space aided by new design concepts through history and culture i.e. Architectural history, Conservation needs of a critical asset, so that the authenticity of this significant asset is maintained. In addition to this, maximising the partnership opportunities targeting Tourism niche opportunities and developing further the unique position of the garden in discovering the WHC the social and development needs will be targeted through community activity which will see a consolidation of social values for a stronger community.

Responding to National Priorities

The CULTS Project and the PEACOCK GARDENS Valletta Info will aim towards the following:

1. Better tourism offer in the City of Valletta and increasing the possibility of visits to WHC not only by group tourism packages or cruise-liner 1-day trippers but also by individual tourists during shoulder months seeking cultural heritage tourism venues.

2. Increase the attractiveness of the WHC and directly affects the product in the Valletta and Grand Harbour Tourism zone attracting more tourists and directly effecting its branding through the WHC label.

3. Enhance the development of other heritage and cultural sites in the area around the WHC as in the case of St. Elmo and Museums run by the state and private entrepreneurs and therefore influence willing to pay numbers and augment visitor statistics through better information and accessibility.

4. Attract further tourists to areas which have been embellished, restored, rehabilitated and made accessible through best practice effecting qualitative tourism,

5. Enhance visitor management potential through the heritage trail and increases the possibilities and opportunities of the tourist stay in the locality and the zone and spending.

6. Focus on the investment on the node itself but will cause a spin-off contributing to the holistic product of the WHC.

7. Spur the regeneration of the area and catalyses the commercial potential of Valletta’s Marsamxett side. The area has some businesses which afford better amenities and a better environment.

8. Increase sustainable conservation opportunities through the use of RES and EEs.

9. Increase modal split and based on sustainable tourism concept with a proximity to the main sea ferry terminal it increases the potential to use public sea transport and modal shift from the car to bus loop and ferry.
SECTION VIII - PROJECT-BASED ACTIONS AND FUNDING

The Programme of Action as compiled in the previous section targets projects which are measurable, financed and performance based with indicators based on the Operational Guidelines. The development of such project-based actions grafted within the plan is there to guarantee activation and definite actuation something which previous plans or most Master Plans do not. Therefore project based actions are seeking or have targeted definite results through clear objectives. A further assurance and guarantee is connected to the dovetailing of projects to the larger vision and capital projects. This strategy together with the tapping of possible funding mechanisms would spur the Action Plan.

In fact throughout the life-line in the development and compilation of this Action Plan the Valletta Local Council and St. Augustine’s Community have submitted projects for ERDF funding. One of these projects has been accepted and is currently in the initial phases (Peacock Gardens). The Malta Council for Culture and the Arts has developed a Conservation Management Plan and a Brief for its project. The Valletta Local Council is seeking other avenues and contributing to part-funding through other programmes or local based funding. This multi-speed action has been initiated with the development of the Action Plan to assess in earnest the possibilities and opportunities that emanate from the development of these project based actions.

Other ancillary projects include the upgrade of the environment and are in unison with the strategic components targeting accessibility and mobility. Several projects initiated by the Council include street upgrades and green space upgrades. These better the public realm and assist in achieving a better quality of life.

The other factor which determines the success of Action Plans apart from appeasing local aspirations is the integrated and holistic approach. The project-based nodes described earlier have all been selected either within the proximity of an already established project or adjacent to a transit area which is either activated or earmarked for activation. Some of these projects are within both areas coordinating and integrating regeneration founded on a transit-oriented development platform; both Peacock Gardens and the Biccerija are set on this template considering that both sites may be new gateways to Valletta. These capital financed projects create spin-offs and the projects grafted in the action plan should act as catalysts to reach the areas further.
This section has been compiled to create a schema of the projects being delivered through the Action Plan. Schema 1 refers to the main Nodes and related projects horizontal activities. The following schema portrays the capital projects in proximity to the nodes targeted and the relative investment. The third and last schema refers to other projects which are also assisting in the development of the Action Plan and guaranteeing its activation.

**Schema 1 - Flagship Projects**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Stakeholder</th>
<th>Costs</th>
<th>Funding</th>
<th>Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biccerija Area - The old Slaughterhouse is targeted as Artists Studios and Cultural Centre regeneration of the fabric and areas adjacent. The area is targeted as a node for social and physical regeneration and interconnectivity through transit.</td>
<td>Valletta Local Council</td>
<td>€1,500,000.00</td>
<td>Issued Tender for Design and Build</td>
<td>2010-2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop the Crypt/Undercroft of St. Augustine’s as an interpreted site and an interpretation centre for the Manderaggio Quarter and its development targeting the redevelopment of sections of the Convent as a Business Centre.</td>
<td>St. Augustine’s Parish</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
<td>Targeting Priority Axis 2 ERDF</td>
<td>2010-2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture Clusters and Culture Industries for socio-economic development - The West Street Project is the restoration of two Palazzo buildings and adaptive re-use into the main head quarters of the Council.</td>
<td>Malta Council for Culture and the Arts</td>
<td>€800,000.00</td>
<td>Targeting Priority Axis 2 ERDF</td>
<td>2010-2014</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CULTS is a Transit Oriented Development Project proposing the regeneration of a Garden on Marsamxett Bastions and to include a belvedere and Interpretation Centre with a bus-ferry connecting station.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Stakeholder</th>
<th>Costs</th>
<th>Funding</th>
<th>Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MATTIA PRETI GARDENS - Urban Regeneration and Landscape Architecture (NODE 4)</td>
<td>Valletta Local Council</td>
<td>€ 100,000.00</td>
<td>Local Council</td>
<td>2011-2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SURCH - Social Inclusion Partnership through outreach facilities based on training and education</td>
<td>Valletta Local Council</td>
<td>€ 300,000.00</td>
<td>Part-Financing ESF</td>
<td>2011-2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New scheme for creative industries The scheme is also intended to spur the creation of a number of creative zones which have been identified in Valletta (Strait Street, Biccerija area, and Is-Suq)</td>
<td>Malta Enterprise, Create</td>
<td>Under the scheme individuals or enterprises engaged in the creative industry can benefit from a tax credit of up to €25,000, which is 60% of the eligible costs incurred by an eligible creative enterprise.</td>
<td>Malta Enterprise Create Scheme</td>
<td>2010-2012</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Schema 2 – Capital Projects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Stakeholder</th>
<th>Costs</th>
<th>Funding</th>
<th>Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Restoration of Fortifications in the area.</td>
<td>State</td>
<td>€8,114,132.56</td>
<td>ERDF</td>
<td>2009-2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fortifications Information Centre</td>
<td>State</td>
<td>as part of above</td>
<td>ERDF</td>
<td>2009-2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fort St. Elmo</td>
<td>State</td>
<td>€2,000,000.00</td>
<td>ERDF (Targeted)</td>
<td>2011-2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Bus System</td>
<td>State</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>State</td>
<td>2010-2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Ferry System</td>
<td>State</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>State</td>
<td>2011</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Schema 3 – Other Local Council Projects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Stakeholder</th>
<th>Costs</th>
<th>Funding</th>
<th>Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Street Network and Alleys Upgrade</td>
<td>State and Local Council</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>State and Local Council</td>
<td>2009-2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repaving and Pedestrianisation Work</td>
<td>State and Local Council</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>State and Local Council</td>
<td>2010-2012</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Valletta Local Council
HERO ACTION PLAN
LOCAL PLAN AREA
REGENERATION NODES & CAPITAL PROJECTS

- Action Plan Boundary
- Node 1
- Node 2
- Node 3
- Node 4
- Capital Projects c €12M
- c €5M
URBACT is a European exchange and learning programme promoting sustainable urban development. It enables cities to work together to develop solutions to major urban challenges, reaffirming the key role they play in facing increasingly complex societal challenges. It helps them to develop pragmatic solutions that are new and sustainable, and that integrate economic, social and environmental dimensions. It enables cities to share good practices and lessons learned with all professionals involved in urban policy throughout Europe. URBACT is 181 cities, 29 countries, and 5,000 active participants.

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