



MEDIA RELEASE

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF GHADIRA BAY

After careful analysis of Government's proposed plans for Ghadira Beach, the MHRA considers positively the enlargement of this beach with the addition of sand and recreational areas.

The proposed development should result in an enormous boost to our Island's touristic potential, especially considering that Ghadira should be Malta's flag ship beach, in view of the scarcity of sizeable sandy beaches on the Maltese Islands. MHRA supports any initiative which ensures that our 'product' is maximised to the benefit of our industry and that of the Maltese people. It is without doubt that a good majority of people from Northern Europe travel South for the enjoyment of the warm climate and seas the Mediterranean offers. It is equally obvious that we can only manage to compete with our neighbours which boast lovely endless sand beaches on the blue Mediterranean seas, with proper development of our 'Product' Malta.

The proposed project will not only embellish and enhance this very important beach which has been neglected over the years, and is crying out for a complete overhaul, but the proposed increased footprint will go a long way towards alleviating the discomforts as a result of the very high density levels registered in Ghadira, which indicate that the density levels per square meter are amongst the highest not only in Malta, but also in the world.

Simultaneously, one must not prejudice or negatively affect other earlier developments such as the bird sanctuary and that of Foresta 2000 which has now reached an appreciable stage and into which so much dedication, funds and energy has been invested. MHRA cautions that considering the magnitude of the proposed upgrading exercise, it is important that there is an in-depth consultation process and detailed planning before embarking into this development. This will also help to minimise the impact that such a major development can have on the business operators and establishments in the area, as well as on the surrounding natural environment, while it is being undertaken.

It is this balance that Government and all the interested parties - whether those directly involved, hotel owners, NGOs or otherwise, must strive to achieve in the interest of sustainable development and that everyone should seek to ensure that the necessary technical planning and environmental assessment process is properly undertaken, in order to evaluate the outcome, before shooting down the

proposed project. We have to bear in mind that today's development will affect not only us, but also future generations to come. I

Monday 26th January 2009

About MHRA

The MHRA has been established since 1958 and today represents 70% of all hotels in Malta and 35% of all restaurants, collectively representing an investment of over Euros 1.1 billion and employing in excess of 20,000 people. For the past 50 years the MHRA has represented the interest of hoteliers and restaurateurs on the Island acting as a lobby group to ensure that the policy decisions taken on the Island are in line with what the tourism industry needs to flourish. For more information about the MHRA visit www.mhra.org.mt or call (356) 21 318133.



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