



THE MALTA CHAMBER

PRESS RELEASE

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The Malta Chamber Urges for a Holistic Approach to Planning and Development

Piecemeal Review of Policies will only increase misapplication and abuse

The Malta Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise and Industry has expressed its concerns regarding the current piecemeal review process of Phase 2 of the Development Control Design Policy, Guidance and Standards 2015, as issued for public consultation by the Planning Authority.

In its submission to the public consultation process, The Malta Chamber stresses that fragmented reviews can lead to increased speculation, misinterpretation, misapplication, and potential abuse of both the new policies and those already in place. This fragmented approach risks perpetuating the current "pick-and-choose" policy framework, which undermines cohesive and effective planning.

The Malta Chamber reiterates its longstanding position that a holistic approach to planning is not optional but essential to the Maltese Islands. This call has been consistently highlighted in The Malta Chamber's Pre-National Election Manifesto of March 2022, and reinforced in the Pre-Budget Documents for both 2023 and the current fiscal year. The Malta Chamber insists that the country must transition from sporadic policy development and amendments to comprehensive planning strategies that encompass all aspects of development.

Proper planning extends beyond building heights or floor numbers. Proper planning requires also taking into consideration the country's aesthetics and infrastructure, particularly the impact on utilities, sewage, parking facilities, waste management, road networks, and traffic. A holistic approach must evaluate these elements in conjunction with the country's carrying capacity, economic vision, and the overall quality of life for a well-being society.

The Malta Chamber urges the Government to swiftly address the following critical areas:

- 1. Revision of the Strategic Plan for Environment and Development (SPED):** This revision should be based on a thorough carrying capacity study to ensure a sustainable business environment and a well-being society. It must consider the built environment, natural environment, heritage, history, and the Maltese culture.
- 2. Drafting of a National Architecture Policy, an Aesthetics Policy and a Landscape Policy:** There is an urgent need for a National Architecture Policy, an Aesthetics Policy, and a Landscape Policy to foster cohesiveness and harmony in planning design, including skylines. Strict adherence to these policies is crucial.
- 3. Future-Proofing Malta's Building Stock:** It is imperative to prepare the country's building stock to withstand the impacts of climate change, ensuring resilience and sustainability.

The Malta Chamber strongly believes that persisting with sporadic policy amendments goes against the basic principle of sustainable development. A holistic approach to Malta's development planning is indispensable for ensuring proper, ethical, and responsible governance.

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