



Din I-Art Helwa

Din I-Art Helwa
133, Melita Street,
Valletta
Tel 21220358
email info@dinlarthelwa.org
web <http://www.dinlarthelwa.org>

The Hon Michael Farrugia
Parliamentary Secretary for Planning and Simplification of the Planning Process
Auberge de Castille,
Valletta

30th January 2014

Dear Dr Farrugia,

1) Approval of ODZ Policy by MEPA Board
2) Request to put all new policies on hold till Sped is finalised

Din I-Art Helwa is writing to you as planning procedures fall within the remit of your Secretariat. This organisation wishes you to know that it calls into serious question the decision by the MEPA Board to include the approval of the draft ODZ policy on its agenda only a few days ago.

The approval of this document by the MEPA Board was pushed through in full knowledge that a discussion on procedures governing the launch of any new planning policies in the absence of a Strategic Plan for the Environment and Development (SPED) was about to commence on 29th January 2014 within the Parliamentary Committee for Environment and Development Planning.

This action by the MEPA Board has completely disregarded the scheduled parliamentary discussion about the need to first complete the SPED before such policies are concluded or approved.

It was announced at yesterday's meeting of the parliamentary committee that the draft of the new SPED will be finalised and issued for public consultation very soon, by the end of February or early March. It goes without saying that the new SPED, following consultation and environmental assessments, should guide any new planning policies.

We therefore call on you as Parliamentary Secretary in charge of planning to ensure that government observes the correct procedures, and conducts studies and analysis making results known to the public as required by good governance on issues that impact on the national environment.

Din I-Art Helwa serious calls into question the lack of procedures being observed by government in its hasty desire to bring into effect the development regulations being proposed and without the studies which should precede the drawing up of a new SPED. All new planning policies should follow the new SPED and not be included retroactively.

We therefore would ask you to instruct that all planning policies currently being revised or introduced by MEPA should therefore be reissued for public consultation once the information contained with the SPED has been made available to the public.

This organisation considers it unacceptable that the Mepa Board should disregard and pre-empt this strategic document of national importance, by closing public consultation and approving revisions to important planning regulations just before the publication of the SPED.

At this stage, and with the parliamentary discussion underway, Din l-Art Helwa expects you as Parliamentary Secretary to request a firm commitment from MEPA that NO further new or revised planning policies will be approved until the SPED has been finalised.

A copy of this letter is being addressed to all members of the MEPA Board and to the members of the Standing Committee for Environment and Planning.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Simone Mizzi', with a horizontal line underneath it.

Simone Mizzi
Executive President

- cc. The Chairman of MEPA Mr Vincent Cassar and Mepa Board members
The Hon Marlene Farrugia, MP, Chair Parliamentary Committee for the Environment and Development Planning
The Hon Anthony Bezzina, MP
The Hon Charles Buhagiar, MP
The Hon Luciano Busuttil, MP
The Hon Ryan Callus, MP
The Hon George Pullicino, MP