

MEMORANDUM FOR CABINET BY THE HON. MINISTER OF WORKS AND HOUSING

Erection of Buildings below Road Level, near Il-Vecca
St. Paul's Bay

An application to the P.A.P.B. for the erection of buildings on private property, below road level and between the seaward side of Xemxija Road and the foreshore, was refused by the Board.

Subsequently, an application for the same site, but by a different applicant, was made and this was processed by the Public Works Department and approved by the Planning Area Permits Board.

The Hon. Minister of Works and Housing was informed by an officer of his personal staff of the issue of the said P.A.P.B. permit and as there had previously been a refusal for the same site, the Minister directed that the permit be withdrawn. These instructions were immediately complied with.

The original applicant made representations to the Hon. Minister of Works and Housing and stated that he was very much in favour of the re-issue of the permit to the second applicant as he had conveyed the land to a third party for a sum of money running into four figures and that the second application was made on his behalf.

The Minister of Works and Housing visited the site together with the Director of Public Works who is also Chairman of the P.A.P.B. and he was informed that there should be no objection to the proposed building provided the plans and elevations were approved by the Director of Public Works and provided also that the highest point of the building would not exceed the height of the road retaining wall. He was advised that this structure would not detract from the aesthetic value of the site. On this advice, the Hon. Minister raised no further objection to the re-issue of the P.A.P.B. permit.

Another application was later made for the development of the residual area of the site for the erection of a similar structure. This application was approved by the P.A.P.B. but the permit is not being made use of pending a decision by Cabinet as to whether the structure should go up or not. Although site works were started, these are now at a standstill and no structure has gone up in respect of this part of the site.

~~Attached are~~ Three photographs of the two areas in question, showing the one already developed and the one on which development has been suspended, are at the office of the Secretary to Cabinet.

The Hon. Minister of Works and Housing considers that the existing structure and the one proposed to be put up next to it do not detract from the beauty of the place; moreover, that the structures are not visible from street level and they do not in any way obstruct the sea view. They also form a homogeneous part of a row of buildings on the side. However, Hon. Ministers are asked to decide as to whether the second area should be developed or whether the structure already erected should be demolished. If the latter line of action is decided upon, immediate payment of compensation will have to be made to the owners.

There is another application awaiting consideration for the development of a residual site.

9th October, 1965.