GIBRALTAR DEVELOPMENT PLAN

THE OLD TOWN PLAN

2009

Approved by the Chief Minister of Gibraltar, the Hon P R Caruana, QC, 25th September 2009.

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CONTENTS

S	SUMMARY OF POLICIESi		
1	INTRODUCTION	1	
•	General		
	Progress		
	The strategy		
2	CONSERVATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT		
	General		
	Design Guidance		
	Planning Briefs		
	Demolition of existing buildings		
	The City Walls		
	Tall Buildings		
	Timber windows and shutters	8	
3	RETAILING	9	
	General	9	
	Locational Policy	9	
	Pedestrianisation	10	
	Shopfront design	10	
	Amalgamation of shop units	11	
	Advertisements	11	
	Character of shopping streets	12	
	Sandwich Boards		
	Al Fresco entertainment	13	
4	HOUSING	15	
7	General		
	Loss of residential accommodation		
	Condition of buildings		
	3		
5	TOURISM		
	General		
	The City Walls		
	The Northern Defences		
	Upper Town Tourist Route		
	Giralda Tower		
	Orange Bastion		
	Orange Bastion/King's Bastion		
	King's Bastion		
	Wellington Front		
	Charles V Wall		
	The Tower Of Homage	21	

6	BUSINESS	23
	General	23
	Offices	23
7	TRAFFIC	27
	General	27
	Off Street Car Parking	27
	Parking schemes	27
	Motorcycles	28
	Road Schemes	28
	Directional Signage	28
8	KEY SITES	31
	General	
	Key Sites- Environmental Improvement Schemes	
	Governor's Parade	
	Castle Street	32
	Key sites - Redevelopment and refurbishment/conversion schemes	
	St Bernard's Hospital	32
	Old Police Barracks	
	Orange Bastion Casemates (Ex-electricity depot) Irish Town	33
	Engineer House	
	Wellington Front	
	Infrastructure	34
9	IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND REVIEW	35
	,	
U	RODOSAI S MAD	37

SUMMARY OF POLICIES

POLICY OTC2 – APPLICATION OF DESIGN GUIDE	6 7 8 9
POLICY OTC4 - DEMOLITION OF BUILDINGS	6 7 8 9
POLICY OTC5 – PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF CITY WALLS	7 8 9 0
	8 9 0
POLICY OTC6 - TALL BUILDINGS	9 9 0
	9
POLICY OTR1 – CHANGES OF USE IN SHOPPING AREAS	0
POLICY OTR2 – CHANGE OF USE TO RETAIL ELSEWHERE IN THE OLD TOWN	
POLICY OTR3 – ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT 1	n
POLICY OTR4 – ALTERATIONS AND NEW SHOPFRONTS1	J
POLICY OTR5 - CORPORATE IMAGE1	1
POLICY OTR6 – AMALGAMATION OF SHOP UNITS1	1
POLICY OTR7 – ADVERTISEMENTS1	2
POLICY OTR8 – EXTERNAL DISPLAY OF GOODS1	2
POLICY OTR9 – SANDWICH BOARDS1	3
POLICY OTR10 – TABLES AND CHAIRS1	4
POLICY OTH1 – CHANGE OF USE OF RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION 1	5
POLICY OTH2 – BUILDING REFURBISHMENT1	6
POLICY OTT1 – PROMOTION OF TOURISM1	7
POLICY OTT2 – CITY WALLS TRAIL1	8
POLICY OTT3 – NORTHERN DEFENCES1	8
POLICY OTT4 – UPPER TOWN TOURIST ROUTE1	9
POLICY OTT5 – GIRALDA TOWER 1	9
POLICY OTT6 – ORANGE BASTION/KINGS BASTION2	0
POLICY OTT7 – WELLINGTON FRONT2	0
POLICY OTT8 – CHARLES V WALL2	1
POLICY OTT9 – TOWER OF HOMAGE2	1
POLICY OTB1 – CHANGE OF USE OF FIRST FLOOR PREMISES FOR OFFICE USE2	3

POLICY OTB2 – CHANGE OF USE OF UPPER FLOORS FOR OFFICE USE	24
POLICY OTB3 – ADVERTISING SIGNS - UPPER FLOORS	25
POLICY OTTR1 – OFF-STREET CAR PARKING	27
POLICY OTTR2 – REPROVISIONING OF OFF-STREET CAR PARKING	27
POLICY OTTR3 – 'RESIDENTS ONLY' PARKING	28
POLICY OTTR4 – MOTORCYCLE PARKING	28
POLICY OTTR5 – DIRECTIONAL SIGNAGE	29
POLICY OTK1 – GOVERNOR'S PARADE	32
POLICY OTK2 – CASTLE STREET	32
POLICY OTK3 – ST. BERNARD'S HOSPITAL	32
POLICY OTK4 – OLD POLICE BARRACKS	33
POLICY OTK5 – ORANGE BASTION CASEMATES (EX-ELECTRICITY DEPOT) IRISH	33
POLICY OTK6 – ENGINEER'S HOUSE	
POLICY OTK7 – WELLINGTON FRONT	34

1 INTRODUCTION

General

- 1.0 The Old Town is contained by the City Walls to the west, and south, by the Northern Defences to the north and by the vegetated slopes of the Upper Rock to the east.
- 1.1 It is the historic centre of settlement within Gibraltar and as such displays, through its layout of street, buildings and open spaces, and through its architecture and historic structures, the development of the town of Gibraltar since it was first occupied by the Moors up to the present day.
- 1.2 The Old Town contains the greatest concentration of activity in Gibraltar. It is:
 - · A significant residential area;
 - · A shopping centre of local and regional importance;
 - · An important commercial, financial and employment centre;
 - The centre for cultural, leisure and entertainment activities;
 - · A prime focus of tourist interest.
- 1.3 The strategy of the 1991 Development Plan was to relieve development pressure on the Old Town by the provision of land outside the town for residential purposes and for the growth of office uses, particularly office uses linked to the development of Gibraltar as a financial centre. In addition, the other strands of the strategy were to maximise the potential of the Old Town to promote fully the economy particularly in the retail and tourism sectors. This was to be achieved through environmental improvement by both direct action by the Government and by providing incentives and encouragement to the private sector to improve the appearance of individual buildings. Traffic speeds and movement were also to be addressed to assist in the general improvement of the environment of the Old Town.
- 1.4 The Old Town Plan is one of a suite of documents that constitute the Gibraltar Development Plan. The other documents comprise Parts I and II of the Written Statement and the Old Town Design Guide. Whilst the Old Town Plan provides the planning context specifically for the defined area of the Old Town, it should be borne in mind that other over-arching policies and proposals may also apply to the Old Town and any development proposals will be expected to be in full compliance with all relevant policies of the Gibraltar Development Plan.

Progress

- 1.5 The strategy of the 1991 Plan has in general been successful and the following are examples of action undertaken that have resulted in environmental improvement:
 - Pedestrianisation and environmental improvement scheme for Casemates and Main Street;
 - Refurbishment of Casemates Barracks and conversion to retail/entertainment use;
 - Pedestrianisation and environmental improvement schemes for, Cooperage Lane, Parliament Lane, Bell Lane, Irish Town, Library Street, Engineer Lane;
 - Refurbishment of City Hall;
 - Environmental improvement scheme for John Mackintosh Square and refurbishment of House of Assembly;

- · Refurbishment of Magistrates Courts;
- Refurbishment of Joshua Hassan House, Post Office, and Ex-Sergeant's Mess;
- Traffic safety measures such as at Town Range and Cornwall's Parade;
- Introduction of tax relief scheme for works to the façade of buildings (over 250 applications since the scheme was started in 1996);
- Continued use of Town Planning Act powers to require external refurbishment of private buildings.

The strategy

- 1.6 The progress made during the previous Plan period must now be built upon and developed further. The key elements of the strategy for the Old Town are set out below:
 - 1. To continue the programme of pedestrianisation and environmental improvement of the shopping side streets.
 - 2. The encouragement of more select and diversified range of retail premises and to provide enhanced facilities and attractions for the tourism sector.
 - 3. To encourage the vitality and viability of the Old Town as a shopping centre by resisting the loss of retail floorspace in existing shopping streets.
 - 4. A continuation of measures aimed at encouraging private owners to maintain and improve the condition and appearance of their buildings. This will include the use of statutory powers where necessary to secure environmental improvement.
 - 5. The identification of key sites suitable for environmental improvement, refurbishment and redevelopment in accordance with the principles contained within the Development Plan.
 - 6. To ensure that all new development proposals, whether of traditional or contemporary design, are sympathetic to the character and appearance of the Old Town.
 - 7. To investigate the problems of traffic movement and car parking provision and devise appropriate solutions. Such investigations and solutions should also address the need to encourage alternative means of transport.
 - 8. To encourage residential use, particularly in the upper town.
 - 9. To encourage the relocation of inappropriate uses out of the Old Town.
 - 10. To encourage sustainable development through the re-use of existing buildings for a variety of uses, including residential, office, retail, subject to the principles and policies of the Plan.
 - 11. To identify and encourage conservation of those parts of the Old Town that are of significant heritage value.

- 1.7 The following chapters contain policies and proposals that are aimed at achieving the above strategic elements. However, this is a land use plan and whilst it is a significant tool for the achievement of the above strategy it is essential that all Government departments and agencies, in undertaking their own activities are cognisant of the strategic aims and ensure that their actions do not conflict with these.
- 1.8 It is important to understand that proposals for development within the Old Town will be subject to the general policies contained in Part I of the Development Plan as well as to the policies of this Plan and to the guidance set out in the Old Town Design Guide.

Old Town Plan

3

2 CONSERVATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT

General

- 2.0 Whilst the Old Town may only have relatively few individual buildings of exceptional quality it does contain a wealth of buildings that are uniquely Gibraltarian and which in their group context make an invaluable contribution to Gibraltar's townscape.
- 2.1 In addition to the buildings, there is the historic street pattern, the public squares and spaces between them and it is the inter-relationship of these that creates the sense of place and gives the Old Town its own unique character and identity.
- 2.2 In view of the special architectural and historic character of the Old Town it is essential that all new development proposals, whatever their size, are sympathetic to the area. This is not to say that the design of new development must slavishly follow that of existing buildings. However, the design must be of a high quality and respect such fundamentals as scale, setting, massing, layout, use of materials and colours. Innovative design solutions that can be shown to be sympathetic to the area will be welcomed.

POLICY OTC1 - DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE OLD TOWN

PLANNING PERMISSION FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE OLD TOWN WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE IT IS SYMPATHETICALLY DESIGNED AND ENHANCES THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE AREA.

Design Guidance

2.3 A Design Guide has been prepared for the Old Town as part of this Development Plan to provide detailed guidance on design matters. This guide aims to ensure that new development proposals are designed to be sympathetic to the character and appearance of the Old Town and to make a positive contribution. It is therefore expected that all new development proposals within the Old Town comply with the contents of the Design Guide.

POLICY OTC2 - APPLICATION OF DESIGN GUIDE

APPLICATIONS FOR PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE OLD TOWN WILL BE CRITICALLY ASSESSED AGAINST THE CONTENTS OF THE OLD TOWN DESIGN GUIDE. WHERE APPLICATIONS DO NOT COMPLY WITH THE DESIGN GUIDE PLANNING PERMISSION WILL NOT NORMALLY BE GRANTED.

Planning Briefs

2.4 This document contains a number of proposals to prepare site-specific planning briefs. The purpose of a planning brief is to identify the opportunities and constraints of specific sites and to provide more detailed guidance on the nature of development that will be considered acceptable. Each site will need to be analysed in depth and various factors assessed including infrastructure issues, conservation issues and appropriate use, amongst others. It

is therefore important that proposals for such sites conform to the relevant briefs to ensure that the overall aims and objectives of the Plan are achieved.

POLICY OTC3 - PLANNING BRIEFS

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS THAT DO NOT COMPLY WITH A PUBLISHED BRIEF FOR A SPECIFIED SITE WILL NOT NORMALLY BE APPROVED.

Demolition of existing buildings

- 2.5 Where buildings have a high intrinsic value in their own right, or where they have value because of their contribution to a group of buildings, their demolition would be seen as a retrograde step that would not contribute to the furthering of the conservation objectives. On the other hand, where an existing building is considered to have a negative impact through its design, scale, massing, etc, on the townscape, its demolition may actually make a positive contribution to the conservation objectives. Clearly, if the site is to be redeveloped the proposed redevelopment scheme would need to be considered in detail before a decision can be taken on the merits of the application for demolition. It is recognised however, that there may be situations where severe structural problems have developed over time and there is no realistic alternative to demolition. In such cases, an independent detailed structural report will need to be submitted to justify the application for demolition.
- 2.6 Landowners who deliberately allow buildings to fall into disrepair with a view to their eventual demolition will not be looked on favourably. Where it is suspected a landlord is deliberately allowing a property to fall into disrepair, action shall be taken under the Town Planning and Public Health Acts to require the owner to properly maintain the building.

POLICY OTC4 - DEMOLITION OF BUILDINGS

PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THE DEMOLITION OF BUILDINGS WITHIN THE OLD TOWN WILL NOT NORMALLY BE GRANTED EXCEPT WHERE:

- A) THE BUILDING IS NOT CONSIDERED TO MAKE A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION TO THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE AREA; OR
- B) IN THE CASE OF A BUILDING THAT DOES MAKE A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION TO THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE AREA, THE APPLICATION IS SUPPORTED BY:
 - I. THE SUBMISSION OF AN INDEPENDENT STRUCTURAL REPORT WHICH CLEARLY JUSTIFIES THE NEED TO DEMOLISH THE BUILDING; AND
 - II. ANY OTHER SUPPORTING INFORMATION, SUCH AS AN ECONOMIC FEASIBILITY REPORT, JUSTIFYING THE CASE FOR DEMOLITION.

PERMISSION FOR ANY DEMOLITION WILL NOT BE GRANTED UNTIL A SUITABLE REDEVELOPMENT SCHEME HAS BEEN APPROVED.

The City Walls

- 2.7 The Old Town of Gibraltar is largely defined by the City Walls, which in the main have remained intact. These walls are of great historic interest, often displaying evidence of the succession of occupations of Gibraltar through history. The walls are also a significant feature in the townscape and have a significant visual presence. Unfortunately, some unsympathetic development has been permitted in the past that detracts from the appearance and setting of some areas of the wall.
- 2.8 The long term aim is to preserve and enhance the appearance and setting of the walls by seeking the removal of all existing buildings and structures currently located on or adjacent to the city walls and by preventing new development on or adjacent to the walls that may detrimentally affect their setting.
- 2.9 Proposals for the use of the walls as a tourist resource are detailed in chapter 5.

POLICY OTC5 - PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF CITY WALLS

THE CITY WALLS WILL BE PRESERVED AND ENHANCED BY:

- A) THE EVENTUAL REMOVAL OF ALL INAPPROPRIATE BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES FROM THE WALLS;
- B) THE REMOVAL OF BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES THAT HAVE A DETRIMENTAL IMPACT ON THE SETTING OF THE WALLS; AND
- C) ENSURING THAT NEW DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS DO NOT HAVE A DETRIMENTAL EFFECT ON THE CHARACTER, APPEARANCE OR SETTING OF THE CITY WALLS.

Tall Buildings

- 2.10 Buildings within the Old Town are traditionally of three or four storeys in height although many buildings have been extended by the addition of a further storey. The exceptions to this building scale are mainly civic buildings and some more modern developments. To preserve the historic landscape of the Old Town future new development should be of a similar scale. Therefore tall buildings (defined as being more than five storeys) will not normally be permitted within the Old Town. Only in exceptional cases will this policy be relaxed and it will be necessary to justify the exception in urban design terms. A design statement will therefore be required justifying the height of the building in terms of its scale and massing and other urban design considerations.
- 2.11 Tall building proposals additionally require the approval of the Government.

POLICY OTC6 - TALL BUILDINGS

PLANNING PERMISSION FOR TALL BUILDINGS (DEFINED AS BEING MORE THAN 5 STOREYS IN HEIGHT) WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED IN EXCEPTIONAL CASES AND WILL REQUIRE A DESIGN STATEMENT JUSTIFYING THE EXCEPTIONAL HEIGHT IN URBAN DESIGN TERMS. IN CONSIDERING SUCH APPLICATIONS CONSIDERATION SHALL BE GIVEN, IN PARTICULAR TO:

- A) APPROPRIATENESS TO THE LOCATION AND CONTEXT;
- B) VISUAL IMPACT;
- C) QUALITY OF DESIGN; AND
- D) CONTRIBUTION TO THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE OLD TOWN.

IN ADDITION TO PLANNING PERMISSION, TALL BUILDING PROPOSALS WILL ALSO REQUIRE THE APPROVAL OF THE GOVERNMENT.

Timber windows and shutters

2.12 Timber windows and shutters are traditional features of buildings in the Old Town as well as elsewhere. The policy framework for the replacement of these features is set out in Part I of the Plan under the General Design and Standards chapter. Additional guidance is provided in the Old Town Design Guide.

3 RETAILING

General

3.0 Gibraltar's primary shopping area is concentrated along the line of Main Street from Casemates Square to Southport Gates, with subsidiary areas along Engineer's Lane, Cornwall's Parade, Governor's Street, Irish Town and a number of streets interconnecting with Main Street. The primary and secondary shopping frontages are identified on the proposals map.

Locational Policy

3.1 To ensure that the vitality and viability of Gibraltar's shopping centre is maintained it is important to ensure that the function of the primary shopping area is protected and strengthened by preventing its dilution through the introduction of non-retail uses and by directing demand for new retail uses to the existing primary and secondary shopping areas.

POLICY OTR1 - CHANGES OF USE IN SHOPPING AREAS

THERE WILL BE A GENERAL PRESUMPTION AGAINST CHANGES OF USE FROM RETAIL TO NON-RETAIL USE OF GROUND FLOOR ACCOMMODATION IN THOSE PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SHOPPING FRONTAGES IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP.

FAVOURABLE CONSIDERATION SHALL BE GIVEN TO PROPOSALS FOR THE CHANGE OF USE OF GROUND FLOOR ACCOMMODATION FROM NON-RETAIL TO RETAIL PURPOSES IN THE PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SHOPPING FRONTAGES AS IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP.

3.2 The strict implementation of the above policies will ensure that retailing activities are concentrated in the primary and secondary shopping areas. However, there may still be some limited demand for small scale retail activity to be located elsewhere within the Old Town to meet specific local demand, e.g. local 'corner' shops, video libraries and 'take aways' It is not the intention of the above policies to prevent such development provided that it can be clearly shown that the proposal is small scale and aimed at meeting a local demand. Similarly, demand may arise as a result of proposals elsewhere within this Plan to promote pedestrian tourist routes through the Upper Town. In particular, such an initiative could encourage small cafes and tourist-related shops to locate along these routes. Such retail activity is considered to be part of the urban renewal strategy and so would be favourably considered provided that it complies with the other policies of the Plan.

POLICY OTR2 – CHANGE OF USE TO RETAIL ELSEWHERE IN THE OLD TOWN

PROPOSALS FOR CHANGE OF USE TO RETAIL PURPOSES ELSEWHERE WITHIN THE OLD TOWN WILL ONLY BE FAVOURABLY CONSIDERED WHERE:

- A) THE PROPOSAL IS CLEARLY SMALL SCALE IN NATURE; AND
- B) IT CAN BE DEMONSTRATED THAT IT IS INTENDED TO SATISFY A LOCAL DEMAND OR IS RELATED TO TOURISM (INCLUDING CAFES AND RESTAURANTS).

Pedestrianisation

3.3 The Government has implemented pedestrianisation schemes for a large part of the shopping area. The streets set out in the policy below, although pedestrianised have not yet benefited from environmental improvements such as surface treatment, landscaping and the provision of street furniture. The Development and Planning Commission wishes to encourage the extension of the programme to these streets so as to encourage pedestrian flows to these areas so benefiting trade, and to act as a catalyst to landowners in these areas to carry out improvements to their property resulting in the general improvement of the overall environment.

POLICY OTR3 - ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT

THE DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING COMMISSION SHALL ENCOURAGE THE PREPARATION AND IMPLEMENTATION FOR SHARED PAVED SURFACES, LANDSCAPING AND STREET FURNITURE, FOR THE FOLLOWING STREETS:

- A) BOMB HOUSE LANE:
- B) KING'S STREET;
- C) COLLEGE LANE; AND
- D) TURNBULL'S LANE.

Shopfront design

3.4 The design of shopfronts has a major impact on the shopping environment. Shopfront design shall be expected to be of a high quality and designed so as to be sympathetic to the character and appearance of the building in which it is located as well as to the area generally. Particular attention should be given to the use of materials and colours to ensure that the proposed shopfront is sensitive to its surroundings. The Old Town Design Guide provides detailed guidance on shopfront design and any proposals shall be expected to fully comply with this guide.

POLICY OTR4 - ALTERATIONS AND NEW SHOPFRONTS

APPLICATIONS FOR ALTERATIONS TO EXISTING SHOPFRONTS OR NEW SHOPFRONTS, WILL ONLY BE APPROVED WHERE THE PROPOSAL COMPLIES WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THE OLD TOWN DESIGN GUIDE.

3.5 Shop owners are encouraged to utilise suitably qualified professionals when preparing designs for their shopfronts, and to take account of the need to obtain planning permission prior to any works starting. All too often, shopfront works have to be stopped on site because the owner did not obtain planning permission or through inadequate project management that did not allow sufficient time for the application process. This results in unnecessary delays and can have considerable financial implications particularly where the owner has already purchased materials, particularly, windows, frames, shutters, etc. Owners are also encouraged to seek early discussions with the Town Planning Division to discuss their proposals. One issue that often arises is the use of corporate design and colour schemes. It is important to appreciate that in the design of shopfronts, including advertisements, the overriding need is to ensure that the proposal is sympathetic to the character and appearance of the building and surrounding area. The corporate image of any particular company will not override this consideration.

POLICY OTR5 - CORPORATE IMAGE

THE USE OF A CORPORATE IMAGE WITHIN THE DESIGN OF A SHOPFRONT SHALL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE THIS IS SYMPATHETIC WITH THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE BUILDING AND THE AREA GENERALLY.

Amalgamation of shop units

3.6 The historic nature of the area means that many shops have narrow frontages. This often leads to a need to amalgamate two or more units to enable an existing retailer to expand his existing shop or for a larger retailer to acquire sufficient floorspace. It is important to ensure that such proposals retain the architectural integrity of the original building and comply with the provisions of the Old Town Design Guide.

POLICY OTR6 - AMALGAMATION OF SHOP UNITS

PROPOSALS FOR THE AMALGAMATION OF PREMISES TO FORM ONE RETAIL UNIT WILL NORMALLY BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THERE IS NO SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE EFFECT ON THE ARCHITECTURAL INTEGRITY OF THE ORIGINAL BUILDING AND THAT IT COMPLIES WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THE OLD TOWN DESIGN GUIDE.

Advertisements

- 3.7 Advertisements placed on fascias, blinds, canopies and projecting signs is often cluttered and ineffective. The visual impact on residents and visitors alike is overpowering and as a consequence its effectiveness is negated. The advertisements also often distract from the architectural quality of buildings and promote a garish image that is counter-productive to the objective of improving the general shopping environment.
- 3.8 It is not the intention to eliminate all advertising material but rather to ensure that it is displayed more discretely so as to make a positive contribution to the streetscape rather

than to have a detrimental impact. The Old Town Design Guide provides more detailed guidance on the design and use of advertisement signs so as to ensure that it does not have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the area. Proposals for advertising material will therefore be expected to comply with the guidance.

POLICY OTR7 - ADVERTISEMENTS

APPLICATIONS FOR NEW ADVERTISEMENT MATERIALS THAT DO NOT COMPLY WITH THE DESIGN GUIDE WILL NOT NORMALLY BE PERMITTED. LEGAL ACTION SHALL BE TAKEN TO ENSURE THE REMOVAL OF UNAUTHORISED ADVERTISING DISPLAYS.

Character of shopping streets

- 3.9 The character and appearance of Gibraltar's shopping areas have seen major improvements in recent years. The implementation of environmental improvement schemes such as at Casemates Square including the comprehensive refurbishment and conversion of Casemates Barracks to shops and restaurants, the pedestrianisation schemes, and the recent improvements undertaken at John Mackintosh Square, together with the fiscal incentive scheme in the shape of tax relief for improvements to facades (including shops), have all been instrumental in achieving this improvement in the shopping environment.
- 3.10 The improved shopping environment provides for a better shopping experience for both residents and tourists, encourages up-market retailers and inward investment. However, the practice of certain retailers of displaying their merchandise externally on the public highway can have a negative effect on the up-market environment that the Development and Planning Commission wishes to achieve. Gifts, clothing, etc, hanging around shop windows or displayed on free-standing racks lowers the quality of trade, disfigures and conceals attractive building features, and can have a counter-productive effect on the effectiveness of the shop window display. Attractive, well-designed shop window displays are more compatible with an up-market shopping environment, are less likely to have a damaging effect on the visual appeal of shopping streets or the attractiveness of buildings, and can make a significant contribution to the vitality of a shopping area after dark.
- 3.11 Free standing display shelves located in a thoroughfare only serve to congest an area and can often result in potential customers avoiding the area altogether. A thoroughfare free of obstacles has a far greater carrying capacity of potential customers than one congested with displays.

POLICY OTR8 - EXTERNAL DISPLAY OF GOODS

THE EXTERNAL DISPLAY OF GOODS FOR SALE, PARTICULARLY ON PAVEMENTS AND FORECOURTS, WITHIN THE PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SHOPPING FRONTAGES AS DEFINED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP, WILL NOT BE PERMITTED. POWERS UNDER THE TOWN PLANNING AND PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS, OR ANY OTHER RELEVANT LEGISLATION, SHALL BE USED IF NECESSARY, TO ENFORCE THE REMOVAL OF INAPPROPRIATE DISPLAYS.

Sandwich Boards

- 3.12 The Government, through the Development and Planning Commission, controls the use of sandwich boards through a licensing system.
- 3.13 As for the external display of goods, excessive use of sandwich boards leads to congested thoroughfares and unnecessary clutter that has a detrimental impact on the streetscape. Demand for the placement of sandwich boards comes primarily from, bar and restaurant owners located along the side streets who wish to have a board located on Main Street. The Development and Planning Commission recognises the desire for such boards but shall strictly control these so as to avoid the negative effects of a proliferation of sandwich boards.

POLICY OTR9 - SANDWICH BOARDS

APPLICATIONS FOR SANDWICH BOARDS TO BE LOCATED ON MAIN STREET WILL ONLY BE GIVEN FAVOURABLE CONSIDERATION WHERE THE FOLLOWING ARE SATISFIED:

- A) THE SANDWICH BOARD IS FOR A BAR, RESTAURANT OR CAFÉ;
- B) THE PREMISES CONCERNED ARE LOCATED ON A SIDE STREET AND WITHIN 20 METRES OF THE JUNCTION WITH MAIN STREET;
- C) THE PROPOSAL WILL NOT RESULT IN MORE THAN ONE SANDWICH BOARD BEING LOCATED AT THE JUNCTION WITH MAIN STREET;
- D) WHERE THERE IS ALREADY AN EXISTING SANDWICH BOARD AT THE PROPOSED LOCATION THE APPLICANT WILL NEED TO SHARE THE SAME BOARD AS THAT ALREADY EXISTING;
- E) THE DESIGN AND SIZE OF THE PROPOSED BOARD IS NOT INAPPROPRIATE.

ELSEWHERE, WITHIN THE OLD TOWN PERMISSION SHALL NOT BE GRANTED FOR SANDWICH BOARDS.

Al Fresco entertainment

3.14 Al fresco entertainment refers to the provision of outside table and chairs for restaurants, cafes and bars. Such activity can make a significant contribution to the vitality of an area and can also add colour and interest. However, care has to be taken to ensure that such activity does not result in congestion of thoroughfares, restriction of access to premises and interference with visibility of premises, especially retail premises. Where any of these concerns apply permission will not be granted.

3.15 The style, material and colour of the furniture to be used can also have a significant impact on the streetscene and the Development and Planning Commission will only permit furniture that is of good quality, well designed and appropriate in colour to ensure that its objective of improving the environment is not undermined.

POLICY OTR10 - TABLES AND CHAIRS

PERMISSION FOR THE SITING OF TABLES AND CHAIRS OUTSIDE RESTAURANTS, BARS AND CAFES WILL NORMALLY BE GRANTED PROVIDED THAT:

- A) THE PROPOSAL WILL NOT RESULT IN AN UNACCEPTABLE LEVEL OF CONGESTION;
- B) THE PROPOSAL DOES NOT SIGNIFICANTLY RESTRICT ACCESS TO, NOR INTERFERE WITH, THE VISIBILITY OF OTHER ADJACENT PREMISES; AND
- C) THE DESIGN, COLOUR AND STYLE OF FURNITURE ARE CONSIDERED TO BE SYMPATHETIC TO THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE AREA.

4 HOUSING

General

- 4.0 The Old Town is one of the principal locations for residential accommodation accounting for almost 25% of the total dwelling stock¹. Much of this residential accommodation is packed into the Upper Town where the land use is almost exclusively residential. Much of the remaining residential accommodation is located above shops in the more central part of the Old Town. It is intended to maintain this pattern of land use.
- 4.1 Maintaining residential accommodation in the Old Town contributes significantly towards the achievement of sustainability objectives. Residents of the Old Town are generally within walking distance of all the services they require, shops, offices, health facilities, and community facilities. This means that the dependence on car use is reduced which has significant environmental benefits.

Loss of residential accommodation

4.2 In some parts of the Old Town, particularly around the main shopping areas, there is a lot of pressure, from competing uses and particularly office use, on existing residential accommodation. Except for the specified circumstances allowed for in the Plan, the loss of residential accommodation in the Old Town will normally be resisted.

POLICY OTH1 - CHANGE OF USE OF RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION

THERE WILL BE A GENERAL PRESUMPTION AGAINST THE CHANGE OF USE OF RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION TO OTHER USES WITHIN THE OLD TOWN EXCEPT WHERE OTHER POLICIES OF THE PLAN ARE APPLICABLE.

Condition of buildings

- 4.3 As is to be expected the Old Town has a high concentration of old buildings many of whose external facades are in poor condition. The physical improvement of the environment is one of the primary objectives of any urban renewal initiative and leads to economic and social benefits for the community as a whole through the improvement of confidence in an area, encouragement of inward investment, and improving the quality of life for residents. The Development and Planning Commission is therefore committed to continuing with its efforts to encourage the improvement of building facades through financial incentive schemes and by undertaking environmental improvements of public spaces and buildings.
- 4.4 One such incentive scheme has been in place since 1996, the 'Tax Relief on Façade Improvements' scheme. Since the launch of the scheme there have been over 300 applications representing a significant capital investment. The Development and Planning Commission shall keep this scheme under review as well as consider other potential incentive schemes.

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¹ Census, 2001

4.5 Where there is lack of action from landowners in maintaining the external façade of their properties the Development and Planning Commission will make use of powers under the Town Planning and Public Health Acts to ensure that improvements are carried out in the interests of the general environment of the area.

POLICY OTH2 - BUILDING REFURBISHMENT

ENCOURAGEMENT THROUGH APPROPRIATE INCENTIVE SCHEMES SHALL BE GIVEN TO LANDOWNERS FOR THE REFURBISHMENT OF THE FACADES OF BUILDINGS.

WHERE APPROPRIATE, NOTICES UNDER SECTION 37 OF THE TOWN PLANNING ACT SHALL BE SERVED ON LANDOWNERS TO REQUIRE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AN APPROVED SCHEME OF IMPROVEMENT.

5 TOURISM

General

- 5.0 The Old Town is one of the prime destinations for tourists visiting Gibraltar. Its main attractions are:
 - its historical associations;
 - · its shopping; and
 - its unique sense of place exemplified by its vernacular architecture that demonstrates an interesting mix of British colonial and Mediterranean influences.
- 5.1 The previous Development Plan identified that there were shortcomings in all these aspects and established a strategy aimed at upgrading the environment and shopping facilities of the Old Town.
- 5.2 Whilst there has been much progress since the last plan further improvements are required to ensure that the tourist potential of the Old Town is maximised.

POLICY OTT1 - PROMOTION OF TOURISM

WITHIN THE OLD TOWN THE DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING COMMISSION WILL ENCOURAGE THE GOVERNMENT TO CONTINUE TO PROMOTE TOURISM BY DEVELOPING AND PROMOTING ITS UNIQUE HISTORICAL QUALITIES, THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT, AND BY MAINTAINING AND ENHANCING ITS SHOPPING FACILITIES.

5.3 Conservation and built environment have been dealt with elsewhere in the Plan, as has shopping. This section shall therefore concentrate on the historical dimension as it relates to tourism.

The City Walls

- 5.4 One of Gibraltar's most valuable assets is its impressive City Walls that remain largely intact and which, in places, are a vivid reminder of the various periods of Gibraltar's history.
- 5.5 Regrettably, the visual appearance and historic integrity of parts of the City Walls have been damaged, to differing degrees, by inappropriate development over the years. Furthermore, historic interpretation of the walls is sadly lacking in places and this makes it difficult for tourists to appreciate what it is that they are seeing. Furthermore, parts of the walls have suffered from a lack of maintenance and there is a need for repair and improvements to take place in certain areas.
- 5.6 The overall strategy then is to create a continuous (as far as possible) City Wall trail, and to restore the walls wherever necessary, to provide an attractive and readily accessible asset that can be easily interpreted. The outcome of the successful implementation of this strategy would be to create an almost continuous walk from the Northern Defences, along the western fortifications and as far as Charles V wall in the South of the Old Town. Such

- a walk would cover all the periods of occupation of Gibraltar from the times of the Moorish occupation to the current day.
- 5.7 The following is the Development and Planning Commission's general policy in relation to the walls and is clearly related to land use matters. However, for the policy to be effective all Government departments, agencies and other bodies need to be aware of the policy and ensure that their activities do not conflict with its aims. In this respect, co-ordination will be assisted by the preparation of the Heritage Management Plan which will provide more specific detail on positive action that can be taken to assist with the achievement of the policy set out below.

POLICY OTT2 - CITY WALLS TRAIL

THE DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING COMMISSION SHALL SEEK TO ESTABLISH A TOURIST TRAIL ALONG THE CITY WALLS AS SHOWN ON THE PROPOSALS MAP AND TO IMPLEMENT A PROGRAMME OF RESTORATION AND MAINTENANCE OF THE WALLS.

The Northern Defences

- 5.8 The line of defences ascending the Rock from Casemates Square to the Tower of Homage is probably the most impressive series of fortifications in Gibraltar and yet, despite its proximity to the concentrated activity at Casemates Square, is not easily accessible to the general public. A walk up these defences would provide an unparalleled historical experience and, in addition, offer panoramic views of the Old Town and Spain.
- 5.9 Progress has been made towards the eventual opening up of this area as a historical walk and clearly this would make a significant contribution towards the achievement of the objective of creating a City Wall trail. The Government has, as a first phase, cleared out and made safe for public use part of the WWII and 18th Century tunnel complexes accessed from Princess Caroline's Battery. The second phase is to provide public access along the line of the defences from Casemates Square (including the Grand Battery) as far as Princess Caroline's Battery. Following completion of the second phase the feasibility of opening up the remainder of the Northern Defences will be investigated.

POLICY OTT3 - NORTHERN DEFENCES

THE DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING COMMISSION SHALL SEEK THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A SCHEME TO PROVIDE PUBLIC ACCESS ALONG THE NORTHERN DEFENCES FROM CASEMATES SQUARE TO PRINCESS CAROLINE'S BATTERY AND INTO THE WWII AND 18TH CENTURY TUNNELS. THE FEASIBILITY OF OPENING UP THE REMAINDER OF THE NORTHERN DEFENCES SHALL BE ASSESSED.

Upper Town Tourist Route

5.10 The opening up of the Northern Defences provides a greater choice of activity for tourists to Gibraltar. In particular it will provide the opportunity to encourage tourists to explore the Upper Town thereby assisting in the aim of regeneration of this part of the Old Town. A circular walk could be created that would encompass the Northern Defences, a visit to the WWII and 18th Century tunnels, and a visit to the Tower of Homage, and return to the centre of town through the Upper Town area. With this in mind attention needs to be given to the environment, sites of historical interest and interpretation facilities, along the route through the Upper Town.

POLICY OTT4 - UPPER TOWN TOURIST ROUTE

THE DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING COMMISSION SHALL SEEK THE PREPARATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEME FOR THE UPPER TOWN TOURIST ROUTE AS SHOWN ON THE PROPOSALS MAP.

Giralda Tower

5.11 Part of the site of the Giralda Tower is currently used as a petanque club with the remainder as an unkempt garden. Public access to the site is currently restricted. In order to maximise the tourism potential of this site access for the general public needs to be provided with appropriate historical interpretation, and the site improved to provide an attractive garden area for general use. The proximity of Grand Casemates Battery on the opposite side of the road and the plans to incorporate this into the Northern Defences tour, makes the Giralda Towers site an important link between the western fortifications and the Northern Defences.

POLICY OTT5 - GIRALDA TOWER

THE DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING COMMISSION SHALL SEEK THE PREPARATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF A SCHEME FOR THE RESTORATION OF THE SITE OF THE GIRALDA TOWER.

Orange Bastion

5.12 For many years Orange Bastion was used as an electricity depot but is now vacant. In accordance with the aim of opening up the City Walls for public access a scheme for the restoration of this site has recently been completed. Orange Bastion Casemates (exelectricity workshops at Irish Town) formed part of the overall Orange Bastion complex and is currently vacant. The site offers an opportunity for an imaginative improvement scheme with the potential to provide a pedestrian link to Reclamation Road. The site is dealt with in the section on key sites.

Orange Bastion/King's Bastion

5.13 The existing pedestrian route to the rear of the Central Garage is used as a car park and is heavily congested. This makes physical access to the walls very difficult and detracts from their setting. The route links to the War Memorial at Prince Albert's Front and then to the King's Bastion. In order to improve pedestrian access and to enhance the environment of this section of the wall it is proposed that an environmental improvement scheme be prepared that will need to take account of parking provision.

POLICY OTT6 - ORANGE BASTION/KING'S BASTION

THE DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING COMMISSION SHALL SEEK THE PREPARATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEME FOR THE PEDESTRIAN ROUTE LINKING ORANGE BASTION TO KING'S BASTION.

King's Bastion

- 5.14 The King's Bastion formed an essential part of the Line Wall defences and is considered to be an impressive engineering feat. For many years the site was used as part of the electricity generating station that was constructed immediately adjacent to the northern flank of the bastion. A new generating station was constructed at the North Mole in the 1990s resulting in the consequent closure of the station at King's Bastion. The last remaining electrical department facilities vacated the site in 2003.
- 5.15 The site has been extensively refurbished and redeveloped for recreational and cultural purposes whilst retaining and respecting the historic character of the bastion. The new King's Bastion Leisure Centre opened in 2008 and incorporates bowling facilities, an ice rink, two cinemas and bars/restaurants.
- 5.16 The potential exists to create a pedestrian link from the Line Wall Boulevard to Wellington Front that would make a significant contribution to the creation of the City Walls trail. The main obstacle to this link is the location of the ex-Parish Hall at the south end of the boulevard that effectively blocks the link. The Ex-Parish hall is temporarily in use as a Mosque and the Government will therefore seek to reprovide this use elsewhere.

Wellington Front

5.17 Proposals for the use of the vaults within Wellington Front are set out in the section on key sites.

POLICY OTT7 - WELLINGTON FRONT

THE DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING COMMISSION SHALL SEEK THE PREPARATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF A SCHEME TO PROVIDE A PEDESTRIAN ROUTE ALONG THE TOP OF WELLINGTON FRONT INCLUDING THE DEMOLITION OF THE EX-PARISH HALL.

Charles V Wall

5.18 At Southport gates the Charles V Wall starts its climb up the Rock. It may be possible to provide access on to this wall, at least in parts, and would be a fitting completion to the City Walls trail.

POLICY OTT8 - CHARLES V WALL

THE DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING COMMISSION SHALL ENCOURAGE AN ASSESSMENT OF THE FEASIBILITY OF PROVIDING PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE CHARLES V WALL TO BE UNDERTAKEN. IF FOUND TO BE FEASIBLE THE COMMISSION SHALL SEEK THE PREPARATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF AN APPROPRIATE SCHEME.

The Tower Of Homage

5.19 The Tower Of Homage is one of Gibraltar's most valuable historical assets and is a major tourist attraction. The Tower has recently undergone an extensive refurbishment programme, however the proposed relocation of HM Prison from the grounds of the Tower of Homage will enable extraneous structures to be removed and allow a better appreciation of the Tower, its keeps and associated walls. Any such scheme should take account of the proposal for a tourist route through the Upper Town as the Tower of Homage would be an important attraction on this route and there should be an easy link from this site to the proposed route. The Heritage Management Plan shall provide further detail on how the site should be managed and promoted in the future.

POLICY OTT9 - TOWER OF HOMAGE

THE DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING COMMISSION SHALL SEEK THE PREPARATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF A SCHEME FOR THE SENSITIVE RESTORATION OF THE SITE OF THE TOWER OF HOMAGE INCLUDING ITS KEEPS AND WALLS.

6 BUSINESS

General

- 6.0 The Old Town has a high concentration of office activity mainly centred on the primary and secondary shopping areas. The majority of this activity is contained within converted premises situated on upper floors. However, there have been a number of office developments that have taken place within the Old Town such as at Leanse Place, Natwest House, ICC, The Haven and Gibraltar Heights.
- 6.1 The nature of the Old Town, with its dense building pattern and narrow streets, makes it unsuitable for most industrial-type activities that can cause severe traffic problems and have significant impacts on the amenity of residents and the appearance of the area. In the last decade, such uses have tended to relocate to more suitable premises outside the Old Town.

Offices

- 6.2 There is a constant demand for the conversion of upper floors of premises situated in the primary and secondary shopping areas for office use. Since the majority of these upper floor premises are currently in residential use, there is a risk that such pressure could potentially have a significant impact on existing housing stock. Retaining existing residential accommodation within the Old Town has benefits in terms of avoiding subsequent demand for additional housing elsewhere, and to avoid the reduction in the vitality of the centre after working hours that can occur when the residential element is lost.
- 6.3 The use of upper floors for office use can result in capital investment in buildings and assists in the aim of improving the external appearance of buildings. There is a need to balance these competing needs and the Development and Planning Commission's policy shall be to allow limited conversion of upper floors to office use in the primary and secondary shopping areas only. Elsewhere, within the Old Town such uses will only receive favourable consideration in special cases.

POLICY OTB1 - CHANGE OF USE OF FIRST FLOOR PREMISES FOR OFFICE USE

PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THE CHANGE OF USE OF FIRST FLOOR PREMISES WITHIN THE PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SHOPPING AREAS FOR OFFICE USE, MAY BE GRANTED PROVIDED THAT:

- A) WHERE APPROPRIATE, THE PROPOSAL MAKES PROVISION FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO THE EXTERNAL APPEARANCE OF THE BUILDING; AND
- B) THE CHANGE OF USE IS NOT LIKELY TO HAVE A SIGNIFICANT DETRIMENTAL IMPACT ON THE RESIDENTIAL AMENITY OF NEARBY RESIDENTS.

ELSEWHERE, WITHIN THE OLD TOWN, PLANNING PERMISSION WILL ONLY BE GRANTED FOR SUCH PROPOSALS WHERE ALLOWED FOR BY OTHER POLICIES OF THIS PLAN.

23

6.4 Whilst the Development and Planning Commission's policy is to restrict changes of use to offices to first floor only, in certain circumstances the conversion of additional upper floors may be acceptable. These circumstances are where it can be proven that the premises cannot be marketed for residential use, or that the accommodation does not meet relevant regulations and it would not be feasible to upgrade them.

POLICY OTB2 - CHANGE OF USE OF UPPER FLOORS FOR OFFICE USE

IN CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES ONLY, PERMISSION MAY BE GRANTED FOR THE CHANGE OF USE TO OFFICE USE OF UPPER FLOORS OTHER THAN ONLY THE FIRST FLOOR.

- 1) THESE CIRCUMSTANCES WILL BE:
- A) IN THE CASE OF THE CHANGE OF USE OF RESIDENTIAL PREMISES IT MUST BE DEMONSTRATED THAT THE EXISTING ACCOMMODATION IS NOT ATTRACTIVE FOR EITHER RENT OR SALE AT A REASONABLE PRICE. EVIDENCE MUST BE PROVIDED TO SHOW THAT THE PROPERTY HAS BEEN ACTIVELY MARKETED FOR A MINIMUM OF 3 MONTHS AND THAT IT HAS BEEN UNSUCCESSFUL IN ATTRACTING TENANTS/PURCHASERS; AND/OR
- B) THE EXISTING ACCOMMODATION DOES NOT MEET EXISTING BUILDING AND FIRE REGULATIONS AND TO UPGRADE THEM WOULD NOT BE FEASIBLE. INSUCH CASES A DETAILED REPORT PREPARED BY A SUITABLY COMPETENT PROFESSIONAL MUST BE SUBMITTED DETAILING:
 - I) HOW THE EXISTING ACCOMMODATION DOES NOT MEET CURRENT BUILDING AND FIRE REGULATIONS;
 - II) THE CHANGES THAT WOULD BE REQUIRED TO MEET THE REGULATIONS;
 - III) HOW THESE CHANGES ARE EITHER PHYSICALLY IMPOSSIBLE OR PROHIBITIVELY EXPENSIVE (SUPPORTED BY ESTIMATED COSTS).
- 2) IN BOTH CASES ABOVE, PROPOSALS THAT CAN DEMONSTRATE THE FOLLOWING WILL RECEIVE MORE FAVOURABLE CONSIDERATION:
- A) THE PROPOSAL IS FOR THE CREATION OF OFFICE SPACE TO BE OCCUPIED BY AN EXISTING USER OF THE BUILDING THAT IS THE SUBJECT OF THE APPLICATION;
- B) THE PROPOSAL INVOLVES THE CONSOLIDATION OF A COMPANY WHOSE EXISTING USES ARE CURRENTLY DISPERSED, INTO A SINGLE PREMISES:
- C) REPRESENTS AN ENABLING DEVELOPMENT THAT WILL RESULT IN SOME PUBLIC BENEFIT;
- D) CANBEDEMONSTRATED TO CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS THE REGENERATION OF THE OLD TOWN.

- 6.5 The Development and Planning Commission's approach to the change of use of upper floors, as set out in the preceding policies, is intended to provide for a balanced mix of uses in the Old Town. The relaxation of restrictions on the use of first floors for office purposes should make a significant contribution to meeting the demand for small-scale office premises in the central parts of the Old Town. At the same time, the retention of residential accommodation on floors above the first floor should ensure that the residential character and use of these parts of the Old Town are retained. The exception policy will allow for change of use to office use of other upper floors only where special justification can be shown, thereby avoiding the wholesale loss of residential accommodation.
- 6.6 The change of use of upper floors to office premises often leads to pressure for advertising signs on the façade of the building at the upper floor levels. If such signs were allowed it would lead to a general proliferation of advertising clutter that would have a detrimental impact on the streetscene and on the architectural integrity of individual buildings. The Development and Planning Commission's policy is therefore to resist such pressure by limiting upper floor advertising to the first floor only.
- 6.7 Detailed guidance on advertising signs is provided in the Old Town Design Guide and it is expected that proposals will conform to this guidance.

POLICY OTB3 - ADVERTISING SIGNS - UPPER FLOORS

CONSENT FOR ADVERTISING SIGNS ABOVE GROUND FLOOR LEVEL WITHIN THE OLD TOWN WILL ONLY BE GRANTED WHERE:

- A) THE PROPOSAL ACCORDS WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THE OLD TOWN DESIGN GUIDE; AND
- B) THE PROPOSED SIGNAGE IS LOCATED SO THAT NO PART IS ABOVE THE LOWER SILLS OF THE FIRST FLOOR WINDOWS.
- 6.8 Where signs exist above this level the Development and Planning Commission shall seek their removal.
- 6.9 There may be opportunities for new office development on certain sites within the Old Town where benefits to the public could be obtained as part of the development. These are detailed in the section on key sites.

25

Old Town Plan

7 TRAFFIC

General

7.0 The Old Town with its historic narrow pattern of streets and limited open areas for car parking suffers various traffic problems such as limited car parking, restricted accessibility, high volumes of traffic and consequent noise and air pollution. Part I of the Development Plan deals with various aspects related to traffic that are equally applicable to the Old Town as elsewhere within Gibraltar. This Plan concentrates on a number of issues specifically in relation to the Old Town.

Off Street Car Parking

7.1 Within the Old Town public off-street car parking is available at Governor's Parade, Engineer House, Town Range, Central Garage, Fish Market Road and the I.C.C. In recent years parking capacity has been increased on sites outside the City Walls at Commonwealth Parade, Reclamation Road and Landport Ditch. The need to identify additional potential for off-street car parking shall be kept under review and further provision may be made if opportunities arise.

POLICY OTTR1 - OFF-STREET CAR PARKING

THE NEED TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL OFF-STREET CAR PARKING WILL BE KEPT UNDER REVIEW AND NEW FACILITIES WITHIN AND ADJACENT TO THE OLD TOWN WILL BE PROVIDED AS SUITABLE OPPORTUNITIES ARISE.

7.2 Due to the lack of off-street car parking within the Old Town it is important to ensure that existing parking provision is not diminished. Thus any proposal for redevelopment on a site containing off-street car parking will need to make provision for the replacement of the lost car parking which shall be available for public use.

POLICY OTTR2 - REPROVISIONING OF OFF-STREET CAR PARKING

PROPOSALS FOR REDEVELOPMENT OF SITES CONTAINING OFF-STREET CAR PARKING SHALL BE REQUIRED TO REPLACE, AS A MINIMUM, THE LOST CAR PARKING SPACES, AND THESE SHALL BE MADE AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC USE.

7.3 In order to address the limited availability of car parking in the Northern part of the Upper Town the Government has recently completed the construction of a multi-storey car park in the Willis' road area south of the Tower of Homage.

Parking schemes

7.4 In many parts of the Old Town residents have a significant problem with car parking due to spaces being occupied by visitors or those going to work. There is a need for a study to be undertaken to identify areas within the Old Town where it may be feasible to introduce 'residents only' parking.

POLICY OTTR3 - 'RESIDENTS ONLY' PARKING

THE DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING COMMISSION SHALL ENCOURAGE A STUDY TO BE UNDERTAKEN TO IDENTIFY AREAS WITHIN THE OLD TOWN WHERE IT MAY BE APPROPRIATE TO INTRODUCE 'RESIDENTS ONLY PARKING'.

Motorcycles

7.5 The use of motorcycles is becoming increasingly popular as an alternative means of transport to the car. Motorcycle parking provision has already been made at various locations throughout the Old Town and just outside it. The demand for such parking provision shall need to be kept under review and appropriate additional provision made where necessary and where the opportunity exists.

POLICY OTTR4 - MOTORCYCLE PARKING

THE PROVISION OF MOTORCYCLE PARKING SHALL BE KEPT UNDER REVIEW AND ADDITIONAL CAPACITY PROVIDED WHERE NECESSARY AND WHERE THE OPPORTUNITY EXISTS.

Road Schemes

- 7.6 There is limited scope for new road schemes within the Old Town because of its densely built up nature. However, the Government has recently completed a scheme that links Reclamation Road to Fish Market Lane. The first phase involved the removal of existing buildings that occupy the site between Orange Bastion and Chatham Counterguard and the construction of a new road. The second phase, involving the re-provision of the existing car park and improvement to the road and environment along the remainder of Fish Market Lane has also recently been completed.
- 7.7 In order to address the traffic problems of the Upper Town around the area of Moorish Castle Estate (and in parallel with the construction of the multi-storey car park referred to in 'Off-street Car Parking' above) the Government has recently completed the construction of a link road between the estate and Willis's Road. The road begins at the northern end of Tankerville House, proceeds along the rear of the block, past the water reservoirs and up to the eastern end of Tank Ramp exiting onto Willis Road.

Directional Signage

7.8 Directional traffic signs are an integral part of traffic management in ensuring that traffic reaches its intended destination via the quickest and least disruptive routes. Such signage is particularly important for visitors who will not be familiar with the area and who can easily stray into areas where they do not need to be and where the narrow streets combined with one way systems results in them adding to the already existing heavy traffic flows within the Old Town. Directional signage should be used as a tool to direct visitor traffic to car parks outside the City Walls and from where easy pedestrian access is possible.

POLICY OTTR5 - DIRECTIONAL SIGNAGE

DIRECTIONAL SIGNAGE SHALL BE UTILISED TO GUIDE VISITORS TO CAR PARKS LOCATED OUTSIDE THE OLD TOWN. THE SIGNAGE SHALL BE MONITORED AND KEPT UNDER REVIEW TO ENSURE ITS EFFECTIVENESS.

29

8 KEY SITES

General

- 8.0 In addition to the various site-specific proposals made elsewhere within the Old Town Plan there are a number of 'key' sites. These sites are considered to be of significant value in terms of the contribution they can make to the urban regeneration of the Old Town.
- 8.1 Two criteria have been used to identify these key sites:
 - They display existing problems through their run down appearance, both in terms of the physical fabric of buildings and the poor use and appearance of public space; and/ or
 - b) They represent an opportunity to inject new life into an area due to a change in their current use, the physical state of the site, or due to changes taking place (or already taken place) to nearby areas.
- 8.2 The main objective of the identification of such sites is to prioritise action and investment to ensure that maximum benefit is achieved. Action on key sites is likely to act as a catalyst to further investment and improvement by not only bringing about an improved physical environment, but also by creating confidence in an area.
- 8.3 Investment in these sites, as for the majority of site-specific proposals, will need to come from both the public and private sectors. The two sectors need to work closely if the aims of urban regeneration are to be satisfied.
- 8.4 The key sites can be classified into two categories:
 - a) Sites for Environmental Improvement schemes, and
 - b) Sites for Redevelopment or refurbishment/conversion schemes.

Key Sites- Environmental Improvement Schemes

Governor's Parade

8.5 Governor's Parade is one of the few large public open spaces within the Old Town. Around the Parade are a number of buildings of great heritage value but unfortunately the potential for use of the parade as a public open space is not being maximised. In particular, it suffers from the existence of the car park that makes it difficult for pedestrians to utilise this open space and creates an untidy appearance. The piazza adjacent to the north side of the Parade is underused and looking very dated. The improvement of this piazza will complement any proposed scheme for the site of the Theatre Royal and result in an improvement to the public realm providing new focus for the area. An improvement scheme for this area will need to concentrate on creating an appropriate setting for the many historically important buildings around the Parade. The scheme must aim to produce a cohesive public open space that can be fully enjoyed by residents and visitors.

31

POLICY OTK1 - GOVERNOR'S PARADE

THE DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING COMMISSION SHALL SEEK THE PREPARATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEME FOR GOVERNOR'S PARADE AND PIAZZA.

Castle Street

8.6 The junction of Castle Street with New Passage represents a unique stepped public open space that although currently appearing rather run down, offers the potential to create an attractive public space. Furthermore, the area is the link between the main shopping area and the predominately residential Upper Town on the proposed Upper Town Tourist Route and as such will become an important nodal point.

POLICY OTK2 - CASTLE STREET

THE DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING COMMISSION SHALL SEEK THE PREPARATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEME FOR CASTLE STREET.

Key sites - Redevelopment and refurbishment/conversion schemes

St Bernard's Hospital

- 8.7 The site of St Bernard's Hospital covers an area of almost 0.6ha in an elevated position within the Old Town. The relocation of the existing hospital to a new facility at Europort has resulted in the existing buildings becoming redundant. The original core of the hospital contains attractive buildings dating from the 19th Century with subsequent extensions added at various times during the life of the hospital.
- 8.8 The Government has identified the John Mackintosh Wing as a suitable site for a sheltered housing scheme whilst the remainder of the site has been identified for use by St Bernard's School that requires re-location. The intention is to retain and refurbish the original hospital buildings and to demolish some of the later additions that have little architectural merit.

POLICY OTK3 - ST. BERNARD'S HOSPITAL

WITHIN THE SITE OF ST BERNARD'S HOSPITAL IT IS PROPOSED TO:

- A) LOCATE A SHELTERED HOUSING SCHEME; AND
- B) RELOCATE ST BERNARD'S SCHOOL.

PROPOSALS WILL NEED TO BE SENSITIVE TO THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THOSE BUILDINGS OF HERITAGE VALUE CONTAINED WITHIN THE SITE.

Old Police Barracks

- 8.9 Immediately south of St Bernard's Hospital is the site of the Old Police Barracks that lies largely vacant. The existing buildings are in a poor state and the site gives off an air of neglect. Notwithstanding their current physical appearance, the buildings are an important feature in the streetscene. Considering that the site is on a major tourist route being the exit from the Upper Rock, it is essential that a suitable use be found for this prominent site.
- 8.10 The redevelopment of the site for residential purposes would be appropriate in the context of the surrounding land use pattern. However, the redevelopment of this site also presents an opportunity to address another need identified by the Government, being the provision of additional off-street car parking for residents of the upper town. However, as referred to above the buildings are an important element of the streetscene and it is therefore proposed that any redevelopment proposal should seek to retain the building facades.

POLICY OTK4 - OLD POLICE BARRACKS

IT IS PROPOSED TO REDEVELOP THE OLD POLICE BARRACKS FOR RESIDENTIAL AND CAR PARK USE SUBJECT TO THE RETENTION OF THE BUILDING FACADES.

Orange Bastion Casemates (Ex-electricity depot) Irish Town

8.11 The site of the former electricity depot at Irish Town is currently lying vacant. The site is well located within one of the main shopping areas and is linked to the Orange Bastion that has recently been refurbished. Any proposed use for the site should be compatible with surrounding uses. It is envisaged that compatible uses would include retail, office, cultural, entertainment or tourist-related. Any scheme for the site should incorporate public access from Irish Town to Reclamation Road providing a pedestrian access route at grade. This would provide a safer and more convenient route between the Old Town and developments to the west of the City Walls.

POLICY OTK5 - ORANGE BASTION CASEMATES (EX-ELECTRICITY DEPOT) IRISH TOWN

A PLANNING BRIEF SHALL BE PREPARED TO FACILITATE THE REDEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE FOR APPROPRIATE USES.

Engineer House

8.12 The site of the former Engineer House together with the former stables site provides an important redevelopment opportunity. Any scheme would need to be sensitively designed to ensure that it respects the character of the Old Town and should also result in a positive community benefit by protecting and enhancing the large wooded area to the east of the site and providing proper pedestrian access to this area so that an attractive pedestrian link could be provided to Moorish Castle Estate from the central part of town.

33

POLICY OTK6 - ENGINEER'S HOUSE

A PLANNING BRIEF SHALL BE PREPARED FOR THE SITE OF THE FORMER ENGINEER'S HOUSE AND STABLES.

Wellington Front

8.13 An environmental improvement scheme is already proposed for a pedestrian link along the top of Wellington Front as part of the plan to improve the appearance and access to the City Walls. However, at ground level Wellington Front has a number of vaults that are currently used for a variety of purposes such as clubs, places of worship and storage use. These uses have been established over time in an unplanned way. As a consequence, the area appears untidy and uncoordinated and it is therefore the intention of the Development and Planning Commission to investigate the most appropriate use for the site that would be compatible with its heritage value.

POLICY OTK7 - WELLINGTON FRONT

THE DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING COMMISSION SHALL SEEK A STUDY TO BE UNDERTAKEN TO ASSESS THE MOST SUITABLE USE OF THIS SITE THAT WOULD BE COMPATIBLE WITH ITS HISTORIC VALUE.

Infrastructure

8.14 It is important that in preparing schemes for these key sites due consideration is given to infrastructure requirements. The existing infrastructure in many parts of the Old Town may be dated and in need of replacement. The opportunity should therefore be taken to replace underground infrastructure where necessary or to rationalise services as part of any improvement scheme.

9 IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND REVIEW

9.0 Implementation, monitoring and review are dealt with in the final chapter of Part II of the Plan including details of the actions required to be taken to implement some of the main policies contained in Parts I and II of the Plan. This section, in Table 1 below, similarly sets out the actions to be taken, and the main responsible body for implementing those actions, for the policies contained in this part of the Plan, The Old Town Plan.

POLICY NO	ACTION REQUIRED	RESPONSIBILITY FOR EXECUTION
OTR3	Prepare environmental improvement schemes for identified streets	TSD
OTH2	Encouragement of building refurbishment and promotion of tax relief scheme	TP
OTT2	Creation of City Walls trail	H/T
ОТТЗ	Preparation of scheme to open up Northern Defences	H/T
OTT4	Preparation of Environmental Improvement Scheme for Upper Town Tourist Route	TSD/ H/T
ОТТ5	Preparation of Environmental Improvement Scheme for Giralda Tower	TSD/ H/T
ОТТ6	Preparation of Environmental Improvement Scheme for Orange Bastion	TSD/ H/T
OTT7	Preparation of Environmental Improvement Scheme for Wellington Front	TSD/ H/T
ОТТ8	Feasibility study into opening up part of Charles V Wall for public access	TSD/ H/T
ОТТ9	Preparation of restoration scheme for the Tower of Homage	H/T
OTTR1	Keep under review off-street car parking	TSD
OTTR3	Undertake a study to identify possible areas for Residents Only parking	TSD
OTTR4	Keep under review motorcycle parking provision	TSD
OTK1	Preparation of Environmental Improvement Scheme for Governor's Parade	TSD/H/T
OTK2	Preparation of Environmental Improvement Scheme for Castle Street	TSD/H/T
ОТК5	Preparation of Planning brief for ex Electricity depot, Irish Town	TP/H
ОТК6	Preparation of Planning brief for Engineer House	TP/H
ОТК7	Study into the suitable use of Wellington Front	LPS/H/T

35

NB: For the purposes of this summary table the Town Planning Division has only been listed in the last column as being 'responsible for execution' where it would be taking a leading role. The Town Planning Division would expect however to be involved in all the above to varying degrees and the responsible body should therefore ensure that appropriate consultation procedures are put in place so that the Town Planning Division is fully involved in the implementation of the policies and proposals of this Plan.

Abbreviations:

TP Town Planning

T Tourism

TSD Technical Services Department

H Heritage Division

LPS Land Property Services Ltd

PROPOSALS MAP

OLD TOWN



Policies and Proposals



GIBRALTAR DEVELOPMENT PLAN

2009

KEY TO MAPS

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