



**Friends of
the Earth
(Malta)**
Moviment għall-Ambjent



Friends of the Earth (Malta)
PO Box 13, Valletta CMR 01, Malta
tel: +356 21 79420042. e-mail: info@foemalta.org
Website : <http://www.foemalta.org>

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Nature Group against proposed development at Ta' Cenc

Din L-Art Helwa, BirdLife (Malta), Nature Trust (Malta) and Friends of the Earth (Malta), have submitted their objections to the proposed development at Ta Cenc to Mepa. The NGO's are totally against any development which is not in the vicinity of the hotel, and any such development should be in keeping with the current style of the hotel and relatively small in size. Furthermore they are against any proposals for a golf course in the area.

Ta Cenc consists mainly of beautiful open countryside and the proposed development, which is of a massive scale will irreversibly change the whole landscape and nature of the area. It is sought after as a remote place of outstanding beauty, with stunning views and containing typical fauna and flora of the Maltese islands. It has been scheduled or is due to be scheduled in the Gozo and Comino Local plan as an area of high landscape value, of scientific interest, of ecological importance, of scientific importance, of archaeological importance and of agricultural value. It contains one of the largest and most important colonies of sea birds and part of the development is actually on a bird sanctuary.

The development goes directly against the Structure Plan passed by Parliament in 1992 which states that the development must be in the vicinity of the hotel, and that the majority of the area must be a National Park. This is not the case. The developers are putting forward a project that is enormous in size, containing :

- Extension to the hotel 66 units or 148 Beds
- Sannat Hotel 5 stories high– 180 beds
- 49 Bungalows near the hotel
- The 57 Villas in the vicinity of Mgarr ix Xini
- And in a future phase the possibility of an 18 hole golf course and an area for future unspecified development.

The arguments being put forward that this is important for the economy (in this case of Gozo), and that it is crucial for employment, have been heard every time a development is proposed in an area which is outside the development zone (or where building is prohibited). This project will bite into Gozo's natural heritage and as such, its main selling point will be irrevocably diminished.

It is also clear that many people are concerned about this proposed development and that there is widespread opposition to losing such a large piece of open countryside to further building.

The environment NGO's call on Mepa to reject the application outright and ensure that any future applications are in line with the provisions of the Structure Plan and in keeping with the area.