

THE
**GRAND
HARBOUR**
REVIVAL PLAN

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GHRC

Grand Harbour
Regeneration Corporation

The Grand Harbour Revival Plan

A Vision for Malta's Future



Public Consultation

Overview

The Government of Malta has launched a **six-week public consultation (6 Feb – 19 Mar 2026)** on an ambitious long-term plan to regenerate the Grand Harbour.

This **Grand Harbour Revival Plan** proposes to transform historically industrial waterfront areas – especially **Marsa** – into vibrant, accessible districts for public use, culture, green spaces, and sustainable economic activity. The project will be rolled out in four phases over the coming years, focusing on different zones of the harbour. It prioritises heritage restoration, improved public access (opening up waterfront promenades and parks), and environmental sustainability, in line with Malta's 2050 Vision. Residents, businesses, NGOs, and all interested parties are invited to give feedback to help shape the plan and ensure it reflects community needs and values.

Plan at a Glance – Four Phases:

- **Phase 1: Marsa Waterfront & Old Power Station** – *Catalyst phase.*



Redevelop the former Marsa Power Station site and nearby shoreline into a mixed-use quarter with new public waterfront promenades and plazas, cultural venues (e.g. an arts centre), recreational areas, restaurants and cafes, offices, and potentially hospitality accommodation. Historic structures (such as former harbour warehouses and the Customs House) will be restored and repurposed for community, cultural and public-oriented uses. Supporting infrastructure will include a strategically located parking facility designed to serve visitors, commuters and commercial activity while reducing surface parking pressure across the waterfront.

Along Jesuits Hill, development will be limited to residential dwellings designed to support long-term community living and neighbourhood cohesion, supported by a designated parking area to serve residents and reduce pressure on surrounding public spaces. The residential development will be subject to planning safeguards and design controls aimed at discouraging speculative property development and maintaining architectural quality. Building heights along the coast will be kept below the existing bastion walls to protect the skyline and heritage setting. Marsa's waterfront, long closed off by industry, will be reopened for public enjoyment.

(Estimated timeline: approximately 5–7 years for Phase 1.)



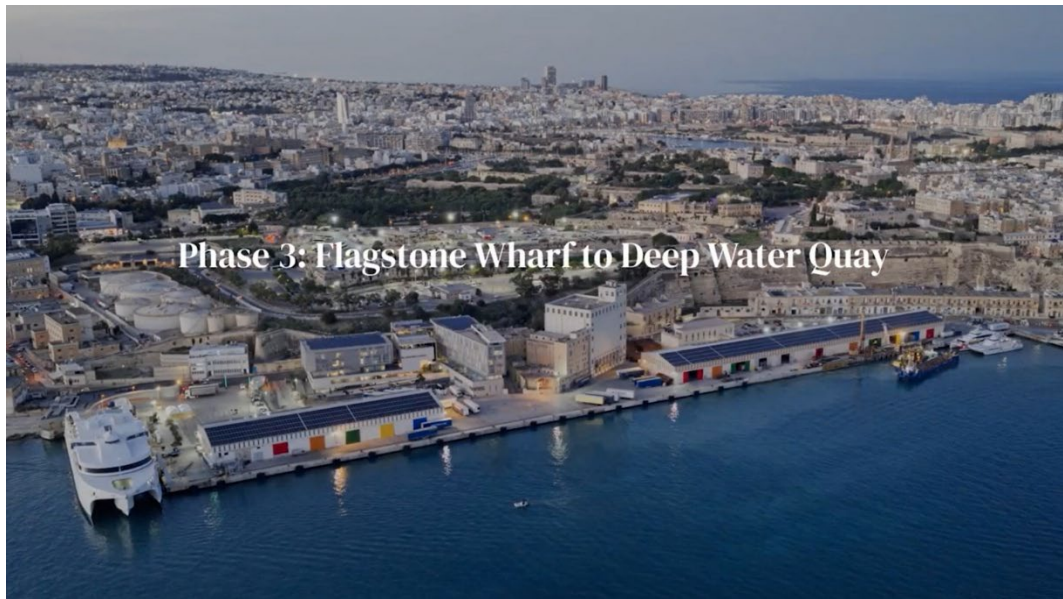
- **Phase 2: “Menqa” – Lighters Wharf & Flagstone Wharf**



Create a marina basin and yacht club in the sheltered Marsa “Menqa” inlet. Develop a lively waterfront dining promenade with seafront restaurants, cafes, marine services, and a new public square for community events and leisure. Any supporting built development should prioritise mixed-use maritime, tourism and community-oriented activity, with limited ancillary residential use only where it demonstrably supports marina or waterfront operations. Like Phase 1, ensure the water’s edge is fully accessible with walkways, benches, and open space so the public can enjoy harbour views alongside these new amenities.



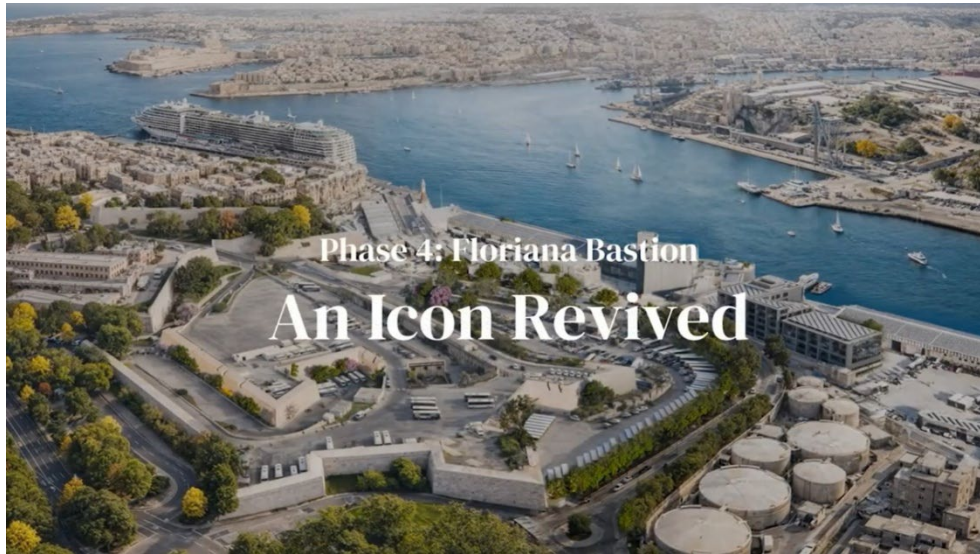
- **Phase 3: Deep Water Quay**



Establish a modern ferry hub with a terminal for ferry and catamaran services (e.g. potential Malta–Sicily link), improving maritime transport. Convert the disused grain silo building into a cultural centre or museum, surrounded by a public square and retail/café spots. Introduce harbour-view mixed-use buildings that prioritise employment, cultural, hospitality and live-work activity, with any residential component remaining secondary, integrated, and subject to safeguards preventing speculative property development, alongside additional shops and restaurants along the quay. The quay will also be strategically dedicated to accommodating niche cruise liners, targeting smaller, higher-value cruise operations that align with sustainable tourism objectives and minimise large-scale passenger congestion. This phase brings new life to an area currently used for cargo, integrating it into the public waterfront experience while strengthening Marsa’s role as a diversified maritime destination.



- **Phase 4: Floriana & Blata l-Bajda (Harbour Head)**



Create a large urban park around Floriana’s Park-and-Ride and the Blata l-Bajda area, providing green recreational space and a “garden gateway” to the Grand Harbour. Build a better pedestrian connection to Valletta (such as a landscaped bridge or pathway) so people can easily walk or cycle from Floriana/Marsa to Valletta. Restore Floriana’s historic fortifications (bastion walls) and integrate them into the design (illumination, heritage trails). Improve transit links and structured parking so that new attractions (park, ferry, marina, etc.) remain accessible while supporting sustainable mobility and minimising pressure for speculative residential expansion in surrounding areas.



Throughout all phases, the plan stresses respect for the harbour’s historic character: no high-rise buildings will be allowed. New buildings must remain low-profile and use designs/materials that complement the bastions and warehouses. By phasing the project, the government aims to deliver early benefits (starting from the ex-Power Station site in Marsa) while maintaining momentum to eventually rejuvenate the entire Grand Harbour over the next ten to fifteen years, largely through private investment partnerships.

How to Participate

Below are the consultation questions organized into six key sections. Each section begins with a brief description, followed by specific questions. We encourage you to consider each and provide your feedback. Your input will directly influence the final masterplan and its implementation. Please submit your responses by **19 March 2026** via the official consultation portal or by email (details provided on the consultation website). Together, we can shape the future of Grand Harbour in a way that honors its past and meets our present and future needs.

Section I – Vision & Goals

The plan's overall vision is to turn Marsa's harbourfront (and the broader Grand Harbour) from a closed industrial area into an open, mixed-use waterfront destination of international quality, while preserving its maritime heritage. We want to know your views on this big-picture vision and what goals matter most to you.

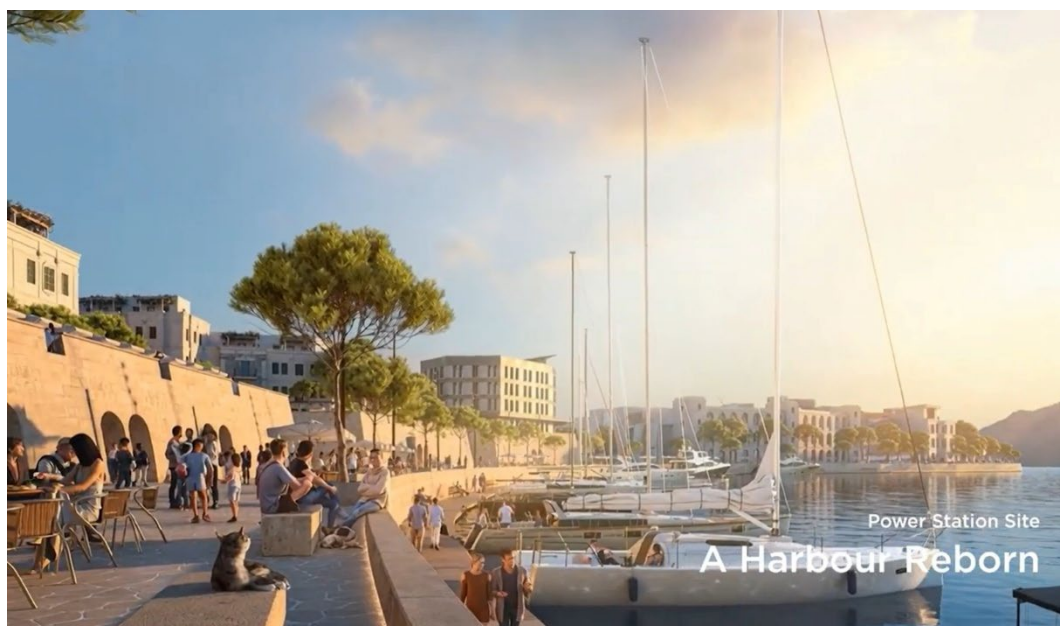
1. **Overall Vision:** Do you agree with the vision of transforming the Marsa waterfront (part of Grand Harbour) into a mixed-use public space open to all? Please explain why or why not.
2. **Priorities:** What priorities should the plan emphasize? (*Examples: creating public parks and open spaces, establishing cultural venues and events, boosting economic activity and jobs, ensuring sustainability and green design, preserving historic sites, etc.*) Which of these are most important to you, and are any missing?
3. **Harbour Identity:** How important is it to you that the revival preserves the maritime and historical character of the Grand Harbour? *For instance, should the design and activities strongly reflect the harbour's naval history and traditional uses?* Please elaborate on what "harbour character" means to you.



Section II – Urban Design & Heritage

This section focuses on how the plan's designs integrate with existing historic buildings and the skyline. The project will give new life to old structures and set rules for new construction to respect the harbour's heritage.

1. **Reusing Historic Structures:** The plan proposes to restore and repurpose many historic buildings (for example, converting the old Marsa Customs House into a cultural center, opening up fortifications as public spaces, or turning the Deep Water Quay grain silo into a museum). Do you think the suggested new uses for these historic structures are appropriate? If not, what other uses or ideas would you suggest for specific buildings or sites?
2. **Building Height & Scale:** New buildings along the waterfront will not exceed the height of the existing bastion walls (meaning no high-rises, keeping developments at a low to medium scale). In your view, does this strike the right balance between allowing new development and protecting heritage views and the skyline? Feel free to comment on building heights, density, or architectural style.
3. **Conservation Guidelines:** Do you think the plan should include additional guidelines to ensure new developments blend with the historic environment? For example, rules about using Maltese stone or traditional architectural elements, limits on modern glass façades, or incorporating public art that reflects Grand Harbour's history. Any suggestions for such conservation measures?



Section III – Public Realm & Accessibility

One major goal is to create inviting public spaces around the harbour and make it easy for people to reach and enjoy them—whether on foot, by bike, wheelchair, ferry, or public transport. We want your ideas on what kinds of public spaces are most needed and how to ensure everyone can access the waterfront.

1. **Public Spaces:** What types of public spaces would you like to see most in the regenerated harbour areas? (For example: landscaped parks and gardens, seafront promenades for walking and jogging, children’s playgrounds, plazas for community events and markets, outdoor sports facilities, seating and picnic areas, etc.) Please list the ones you feel are most important for the community.
2. **Accessibility:** Will the plan sufficiently improve access for pedestrians, cyclists, people with disabilities, and public transport users? Consider things like pedestrian bridges, ramps for wheelchairs, bike lanes, ferry stops, bus connections, etc. If you think more can be done, what specific accessibility improvements would you recommend so that the area is easy to navigate for everyone?
3. **Connectivity:** What improvements are most needed to connect Marsa’s waterfront with surrounding areas? (Examples: better pedestrian routes linking Marsa to Floriana and Valletta, expanded ferry services connecting the Three Cities or other towns, dedicated cycle paths connecting to existing networks, more parking or park-and-ride options to keep traffic out of the centre, etc.) Please highlight any connections you view as essential for linking the Grand Harbour communities together.



Section IV – Economic & Social Impact

The revival will introduce new commercial opportunities (like shops, offices, restaurants, and a marina) and attract investment, but it should also benefit local residents and respect community needs. We seek feedback on how to balance development with social wellbeing.

1. **Community vs. Commercial:** How should the plan balance commercial development with community needs? In other words, what is the right mix of things like restaurants, hotels, and offices versus things like community centers, public playgrounds, affordable housing or open public areas? For example, do you support having some new businesses as long as there are also ample free public facilities? Should certain zones be kept non-commercial?
2. **Local Economic Benefits:** What local economic benefits do you want to see prioritised? (For instance: creation of jobs for local residents, affordable spaces for small local businesses and startups, opportunities for artisans or cultural entrepreneurs, increased tourism that supports local shops, etc.) Which potential benefits of this project are most important to you and your community?
3. **Avoiding Negatives:** Do you have any concerns about potential negative effects such as displacement of current residents or businesses, gentrification (rising rents and property prices pushing locals out), or loss of the area's traditional identity and character? If so, please explain your concerns. Do you have suggestions for measures to address these issues (e.g., reserving some housing for locals, support for existing businesses to remain, celebrating local culture in the new development)?



Section V – Environmental & Resilience Considerations

Environmental sustainability and climate resilience are core principles of the plan. We want to ensure the regenerated Grand Harbour is green, energy-efficient, and prepared for future climate challenges like sea-level rise.

1. **Sustainability Standards:** What environmental standards or features should the project include to be truly sustainable and eco-friendly? (Think about green building design, renewable energy use like solar panels, energy-efficient lighting, rainwater harvesting and water-saving systems, electric vehicle charging, shore power for ships to reduce air pollution, planting trees and creating green roofs for cooler microclimates, etc.) Which “green” features are most important to you?
2. **Climate Resilience:** How should the plan address climate resilience – for example, dealing with sea-level rise, stronger storms, and other climate-related impacts on a waterfront area? You might consider ideas such as building sea walls or tidal barriers in vulnerable spots, elevating critical walkways or structures, installing better storm-water drainage to prevent flooding, using flood-resistant materials, and so on. What measures do you think are necessary to ensure the Grand Harbour developments last long into the future despite climate changes?
3. **Mitigating Environmental Risks:** Are there any environmental risks or nuisances you worry the project could cause or worsen (e.g. noise from construction or increased activity, air pollution or dust, traffic congestion, waste management issues)? If yes, what mitigation measures would you propose to prevent or minimize these problems? For instance, controlling construction hours to reduce noise, building new parking or improving public transport to reduce traffic, using barriers and landscaping to block noise or air pollution, etc.



Section VI – Implementation & Monitoring

Finally, this section is about how the project will be carried out and followed up. The Grand Harbour revival will span many years and involve many stakeholders. Your input on implementation priorities, success measures, and ongoing public involvement is valuable to guide a smooth and transparent process.

1. **Phasing Priorities:** The plan will be executed in phases. In your opinion, how should the phases or specific projects be prioritised to ensure the community sees benefits early? For example, are there certain aspects you'd like to see happen first – such as opening a particular park or promenade as soon as possible? Do you agree Marsa's waterfront (Phase 1) should be the top priority, and are there “quick wins” within that phase that should come first (like cleaning up the site or opening interim public access)?
2. **Success Indicators:** What performance indicators or benchmarks should be used to measure the project's success over time? Please list any specific metrics you think are important – for example: number of jobs created for locals, amount of new public open space (in square meters), improvements in air quality or traffic levels, number of historic buildings restored, community satisfaction survey results, investment attracted, or any other measure that matters to you. These will help ensure accountability as the plan is implemented.
3. **Ongoing Engagement:** What role should the public have during the implementation of this long-term project? How would you like to be kept informed or involved as work progresses? Options could include regular community update meetings, progress reports or newsletters, setting up a stakeholder committee or community monitoring group, interactive websites or surveys for continued feedback, etc. What forms of ongoing engagement would you find most useful or trustworthy?



Next Steps:

Thank you for reviewing the Grand Harbour Revival Plan and considering these questions.

Please send in your feedback by 19 March 2026 through the official consultation portal at

<https://www.gov.mt/en/publicconsultation/Pages/2026/NL-0007-2026.aspx>

<https://ghrc.gov.mt/revival/>

or via email at consultations.meec@gov.mt.

After the consultation period, the government will publish a summary of the feedback and may refine the plan accordingly. A pre-market engagement with investors is planned to follow, especially for the Marsa Phase 1 projects, to ensure funding and expertise for implementation. Importantly, construction on initial projects is slated to begin soon after the consultation concludes, so early community input is crucial.

Your voice matters in this process. By contributing your ideas and concerns, you will help shape a Grand Harbour that balances economic revival with quality of life, turning the harbour into a space that all Maltese can be proud of. We look forward to your responses and to working together in making this vision a reality.

Ministry for the Environment

Energy and Public Cleanliness

(MEEC)

05/02/2026



**Reviving the Grand Harbour
Celebrating Heritage, Creating Opportunity,
Building Malta's Future.**

