



# Għaqda Residenti Sliema

**Sliema Residents Association**

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## **Subject : Sliema's Concrete Jungle**

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The Sliema Residents Association (SRA) fully empathises with Ms Camilleri's concerns regarding Tigne's concrete jungle (STOM 21/2/2010) and would like to inform Ms Camilleri and Sliema residents that the Association shares similar concerns for all of Sliema. Furthermore the SRA is not stopping at voicing such concerns publicly via the media, but is actively interacting with the relevant authorities. The SRA has also submitted a significant number of objections to MEPA against various 'development' applications where the application indicates further crowding. These formal objections indicate breaches in MEPA's own Northern Harbours Local Plan (NHLP) of 2006, the text of which makes very pertinent references to Sliema as an over-developed location.

The NHLP states in no uncertain terms that Sliema is suffering from a limited recreational space, infiltration of traffic, noise and other effects resulting from tourism development, commercial intensification and high housing densities' (234 dwellings per hectare) and is considered as "an area which cannot comfortably accommodate further development."

Regrettably, MEPA's continued approval of more projects is undermining its own NHLP which states that, in the congested areas of Sliema, the emphasis will be on new housing through rehabilitation and selective redevelopment rather than through extensive building, height relaxation or re-designation of open space. It further advises that in localities such as Sliema, further development would increase further noise, traffic, overshadowing, and sense of enclosure and degradation of the public realm.

When 25% of Sliema housing units are still vacant, Sliema residents are suffering from air pollution which has already surpassed the EU threshold for NO<sub>2</sub> and Benzene on several occasions. SRA is also concerned regarding expected higher pollution levels, in the eventuality of these vacant premises being occupied and when the approved development projects on plan, in progress and built are occupied and functioning.

More buildings in Sliema, will exacerbate matters due to the inadequate road infrastructure, water, electricity supply and drainage infrastructures, which are already overloaded.

The Sliema Residents Association has also brought these matters up also to attention of the Prime Minister through the Hon Dr. M. deMarco, Parliamentary Secretary responsible for Tourism Culture and the Environment and MEPA Chairman Mr. Walker, during a meeting held recently at the Auberge D'Italie. The SRA presented a well researched and considered proposal to safeguard and rehabilitate Villa Bonici and its gardens as an open public garden and to rehabilitate a building in the same area as the long promised and much needed old peoples' home for aging Sliema residents. Once the grounds of Villa Bonici and the area around it are built over as proposed by some current development applications under consideration at MEPA, the number of housing units within Sliema will increase significantly, causing further strain on the infrastructure and robbing Sliema of the last of its grand gardens and green spaces.

The Sliema Residents Association Committee, with the help of some volunteers, is doing its utmost with its limited resources to safeguard the locality of Sliema against overdevelopment in the interest of incumbent Sliema residents' health and quality of life.

Sliema residents are invited to join and support the SRA in its mission. Please visit the SRA website [www.sra.org.mt](http://www.sra.org.mt) and contact the Association on [info@sra.org.mt](mailto:info@sra.org.mt) or SRA PO Box 66 Sliema.

From Sunday Times

Sunday, 21st February 2010

## Tigné's concrete jungle

Carmen Camilleri, Sliema



The processing of applications for the building of further blocks at Tigné must be stopped immediately to avoid further cramming.

Foreign and local residents are alarmed at the lack of adherence to what was initially spelled out.

Building further blocks will have a disastrous effect. The Sliema council and residents' association need to follow Mepa's processing of these applications.

Mepa needs guidelines on Tigné, if not a clear-cut policy, which would be more than welcome by the people.

For example, let us preserve the most open sea views from a public square. It seems that the allowable proportion of built-up area to open spaces has already been reached in Tigné, which was always meant to be the lung of overbuilt Sliema.