

Protected Views

Gibraltar

Draft



8th April 2016

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Gibraltar Heritage Trust, in collaboration with The Environmental Safety Group and Gibraltar Ornithological and Natural History Society, is proposing a new Planning Scheme to address the preservation of Gibraltar's iconic Views and Vistas – our Scenic Heritage.

- Attention is drawn to the need for a holistic Landscape Management Plan which would necessitate a professionally conducted character assessment of the whole landscape of Gibraltar, with resultant mapping and geolocation of areas of scenic heritage (see reference to Geospatial Information Systems – GIS within document).
- Statements of significance would be allocated to each designated zone and/or monument.
- The Views and Vistas to be preserved would be designated and operated via the planning process.
- A working model is outlined, citing the 'St. Paul's Heights' policy in force in the City of London since 1938; the principles of which have been widely adopted in other metropolitan areas within the United Kingdom. Similar models are in use in other developed countries.
- A case study of the Moorish Castle is presented using the cited model, by way of illustration and example, together with relevant photographic evidence given at Appendix A.
- An indicative list of other potential zones and structures for consideration is given at Appendix B.

A Collaborative Paper On The Protection
of
Gibraltar's views and vistas.

by
The Gibraltar Heritage Trust
and
The Environmental Safety Group
and
Gibraltar Ornithological and Natural History Group

April 2016

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INTRODUCING THE CONCEPT OF SCENIC CONSERVATION

The protection of iconic and highly significant features that make Gibraltar uniquely recognisable, either internationally or locally is paramount, in order to preserve what makes us who we are and what we are. It is not enough to preserve and maintain the fabric of those features, it is imperative that they remain accessible in a form commensurate with their standing and status in our history and culture.

Views of The Moorish Castle and other historic landmarks and skyline features in Gibraltar are not currently protected by planning policy or legislation. The Gibraltar Heritage Trust, in consultation with the Gibraltar Environmental Safety Group is working to bring this issue into the public domain and propose a mode of application to protect our Views and Vistas. A working model has been researched which could be applied in Gibraltar.

This document draws attention to the current lack of policy and enforcement mechanisms to protect Strategic Views and Vistas in Gibraltar and proposes the protection of the first of these - Views and Vistas of the Moorish Castle.

A working model

We cite the 'St. Paul's Heights' policy which has been in force in the City of London since 1938. The policy came about due to public outcry when the 1930 Building Act allowed taller buildings to be erected in the vicinity causing obstruction to well known views of the Cathedral. At the time, the Surveyor to the Fabric of St. Paul's Cathedral, surveyed the existing views and proposed an area of control where building heights would be limited to protect and restore important views of the Cathedral. More detailed information on the history and application of the model may be found at <http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/services/environment-and-planning/heritage-and-design/Pages/protected-views.aspx>

Format of "The Heights"

The St. Paul's Heights operate by defining a series of inclined planes between the viewpoint and the Cathedral, forming a ceiling on development through which no building can be permitted to rise if the views are to be preserved. In some cases, where the buildings are further away from the Cathedral, the upper storeys are set back from the frontage to respect the view to be preserved.

Operation

Development proposals within the Heights policy area should comply with the Heights limitations. Applicants would be expected to submit drawings showing the relationship between the limitations and the proposed development to ensure compliance.

Where existing buildings exceed the Heights limitations, thereby obstructing or partially obstructing the views of the structure to be protected, these would be expected to comply on redevelopment or alteration of the buildings.

It is recognised that strict observance of the St Paul's Heights has sometimes led to a uniform roofscape and developers should be encouraged to provide design solutions to help provide a more articulated and interesting roofscape, whilst still adhering to the policy.

Why protect iconic views and vistas in Gibraltar?

The Rock of Gibraltar provides us with steep inclines and escarpments which naturally aid the views of our Moorish Castle and the old citadel from the lower new town areas and the sea, in this we have an advantage. However, the building of tall structures outside the Historic City Walls and the massing of these structures are causing obstruction to these iconic views within our own living environment and threaten to make our hitherto unique home into a place like any other place.

The status of The Rock of Gibraltar as a Heritage site of world renown is indisputable. The Rock has always stood for stability and is a symbol of endurance the world over. We, the Gibraltarians of today, stand at a crossroads in time. We can take the path of disregard of what has brought us here and what has endured or we can choose to take the path of balance - respectful development progress and an enhanced legacy to our children. There is no need to forego our history and culture in our effort to belong and flourish in the 21st Century, rather we should take stock of what is really important to us. What will we pass on to our children and grandchildren? How will they judge our role as custodians of our unique Gibraltarian identity, culture, history and way of life?

Use of Geospatial Information Systems (GIS)

A holistic character assessment of Gibraltar's landscape should be undertaken to identify and geolocate items/structures of interest. GIS are able to store, manipulate and combine multiple data sets, making complex analysis of the landscape possible. The data can be displayed using three dimensional modelling. GIS uses inbuilt techniques to study what regions or areas surrounding a given site are visible from given points on the map. This analysis can be used to interpret the relationship of sites to their social landscape. The use of GIS to simulate given situations (e.g. adding a three dimensional model of a proposed building to the map) would enable a data point analysis of the impact a proposed structure would exert on its surroundings thereby providing an aid to decision making regarding both policy and the granting of planning permissions. The Government of Gibraltar has already invested in a GIS platform for Gibraltar; this is an asset that is already in place and requires rolling out to the various Government departments and other stakeholder authorities.

CASE STUDY: MOORISH CASTLE - VIEW DIRECTIONS

The following table and two maps identify the locations that afford a view of the Moorish Castle from the public highway as of the date of this document being presented. This document is not intended to cover all views and does not exclude those that may have been missed or become visible. Appendix A. contains images for each location. It is understood that future areas will have view points from the sea.

Risk Level refers to the currently perceived probability of developments obscuring the view.

It is understood that obstructing a protected view includes items such as signage and trees and not just other structures.

PROTOCOL

The onus will be on the developer to provide graphic evidence that existing views of the Castle at the time of Outline Planning Submission, will not be affected in any way by the proposed development.

Submission of Comparative evidence.

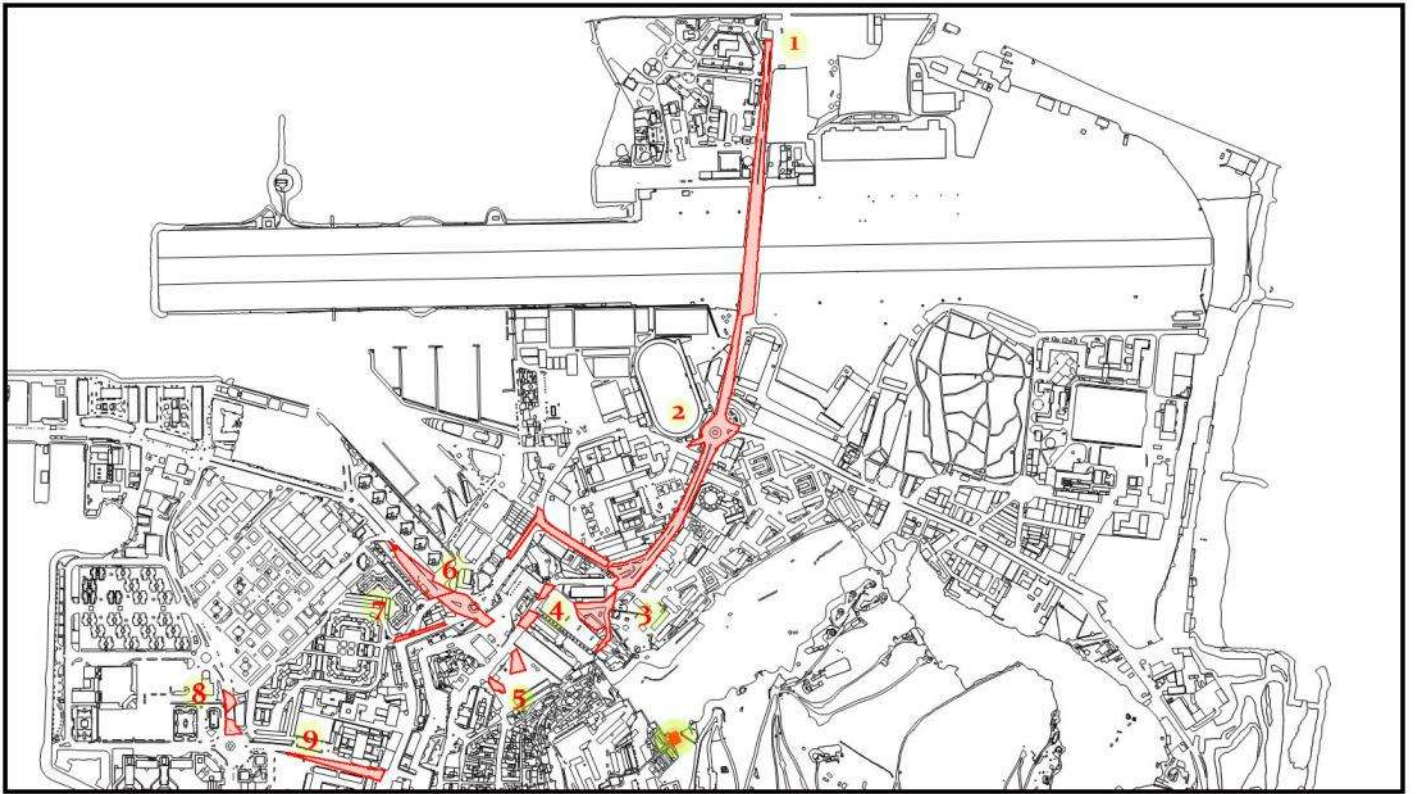
Developers will be required to submit clear and accurate photographs that show the views of the Moorish Castle from all relevant locations whose proposed development could interfere or obstruct, including those identified herein. Photographs should be taken from civic, public areas and highways with a point of view not more than 1.80m above pavement level. Developers may be asked to provide additional photography from specific locations if deemed necessary.

The Developer's promotional/presentation images relating to this matter must be produced with an identical point of view (location, eye height, angle of view and direction) as the initial photographs and must clearly show the proposed works/structures.

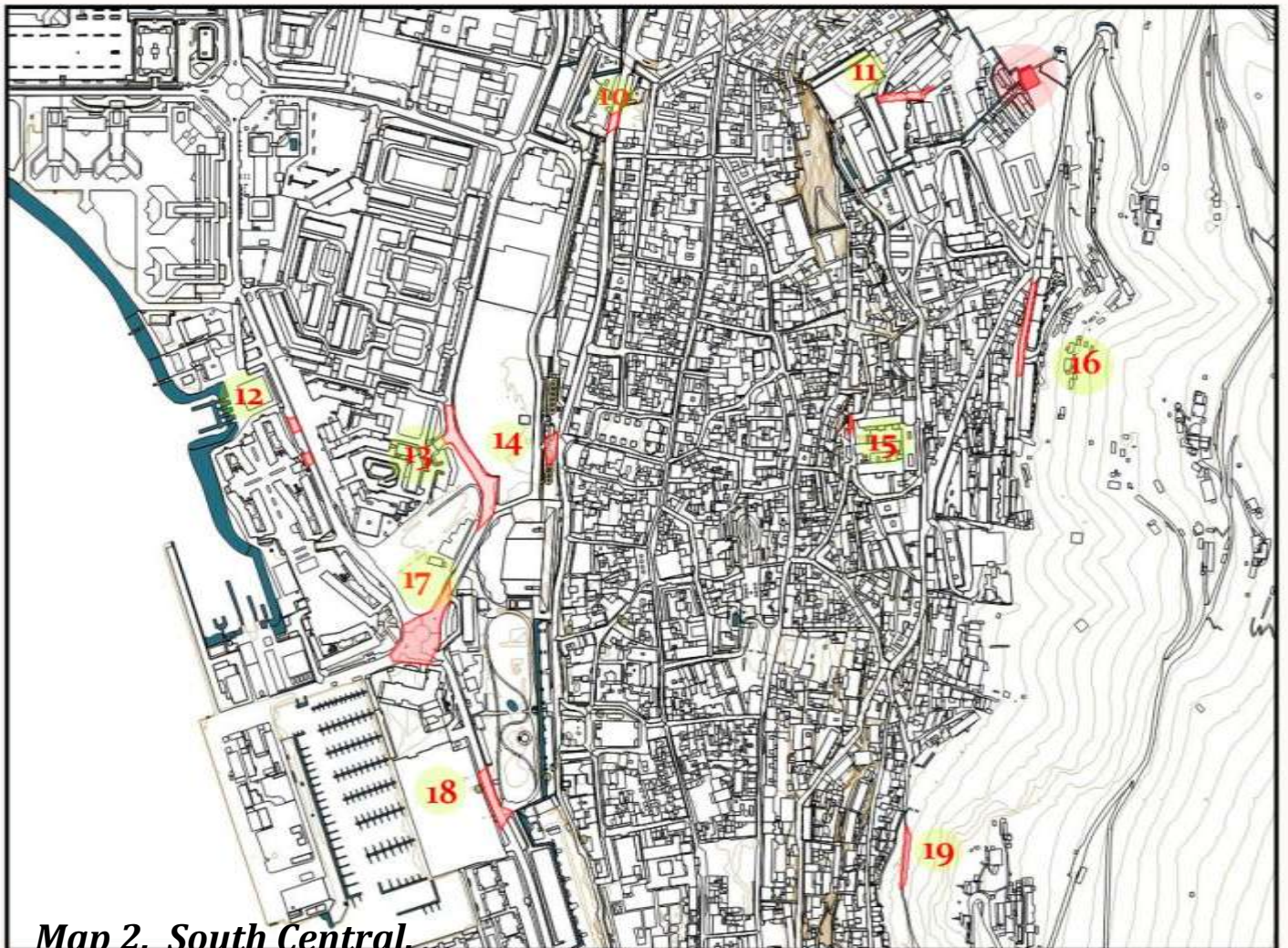
If there is uncertainty by any stakeholder on this matter then the developer must provide mathematical evidence to the effect. This evidence to be checked by G.o.G Surveyors/Engineers.

The above documentation, clearly showing that the existing view of the Moorish Castle will not be obstructed, should be part of the Outline Planning submission. All stakeholders must have access to this information in order to carry out on-site checks if deemed necessary.

Ref.	Location	Description	Risk Level	Remarks	Photo Ref.
1	Land Border & Airfield	From border pedestrian/vehicular entry point along Winston Churchill Avenue to the Sundial roundabout.	Low on the West, High on the East.	Critical unrestricted first impact/impression. Both sides of the road although the east pavement has trees that restrict view. Airport car park development possible. Traffic signage!	1a - 1d
2	Winston Churchill Avenue Including Glacis Road	South along Winston Churchill Avenue to its junction with Smith Dorrien Avenue continuing along Glacis Rd .	Low Med along Glacis Rd.	Possible development of St Martin's School	2a & 2c
3	Landport	Top end of Corral Road to Landport Tunnels including the Ditch and Glacis.	Low High on car park.	Control of vegetation around this area is critical.	3a - 3f
4	Smith Dorrien Bridge & Line Wall (part)	Abutments and Bridge itself to top of Casemates Hill.	Low		4a - 4g
5	Casemates Sq.	Waterport Gate	Low	Very limited view	5a - 5c
6	Waterport incl. North Mole Rd.	Waterport Fountain Roundabout and Waterport Road up to North Mole barrier.	Low but High with new developments	Not visible completely along the Water Garden north pavement. Entry Point direction.	6a - 6f
7	Queensway North	From Waterport roundabout to junction of Devil's Tongue Rd. and Queensway.	Low	Only along the north east pavement.	7a & 7b
8	Europort Road	Sections between Morrison's Petrol Station and Europort Avenue roundabout.	Med	View through gaps in blocks passing overhead Westside School. School may have additional floors built.	8a - 8b PENDING.
9	Europort Avenue	Primarily along the south pavement. From Europort roundabout to junction with Queensway	Med / High	Depends on possible height increase to Middle School development.	9a - 9b
10	Line Wall Road	American War Memorial area	Low / Med	Generally seen between existing bldgs. Risk from additional storeys or possible development of the Irish Town 'void'..	10a - 10b
11	Outer Keep	Moorish Castle Housing Estate	Low	Subject to old building remaining	11a - 11b
12	Bishop Caruana Rd.	From junction with Europort Avenue to Coaling Island roundabout.	High	Subject to New development incl. Euro City, HMS Rooke development, Mid-Town and possible Hyatt Hotel project.	12
13	Queensway	Opposite City Hall by ex-HMS Rooke entrance.	High	Mid-Town project will block view almost in totality.	13a - 13b
14	Boulevard	Southern section adjacent the Children's' playground	High	Visible only over the Bristol Hotel Gardens/Swimming pool	14a - 14 b
15	Upper Town	Old St Bernard's Hospital	Low	Hardly visible at all.	15
16	Calpe	Calpe Rd.	Low	Only from Calpe Rd. New car park now blocks it further down.	16a - 16d
17	Coaling Island Roundabout	Pavements on the west side opposite Britannia House.	High	Hyatt Hotel project, view combines with King's Bastion.	17a - 17b.
18	Commonwealth Park	Southern end of park along Queensway	Low	Just visible over city wall.	18a - 18b
19	Devil's Steps	Upper part.	Low to Unknown!	Depends on where the Upper Rock limit lies in this area.	19a - 19b



Map 1. North.



Map 2. South Central.

Appendix A: Photographs



Images 1a - 1d. Land Border,
Airfield and Winston Churchill
Avenue.



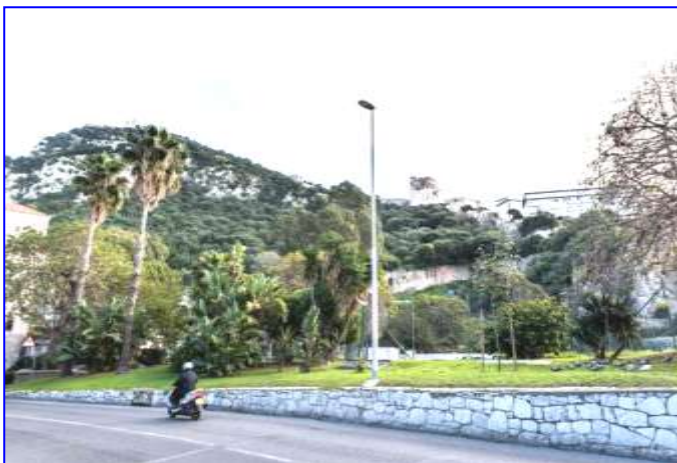
Images 2a - 2c. Winston Churchill Avenue
and Glacis Road.



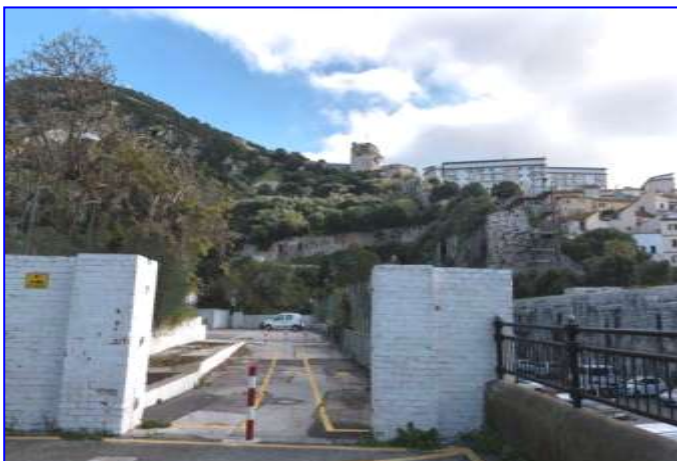
3a.



3b.



3d.



3f.

Images 3a - 3f Landport.



3c.



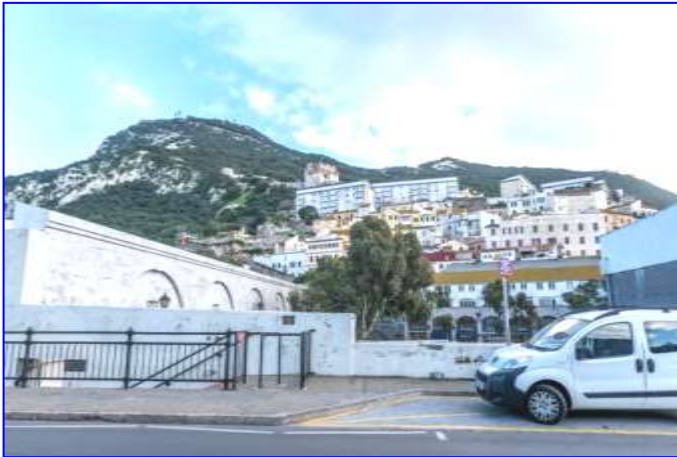
3e.

Images 4a - 4g

Smith Dorrien Bridge and part of
Line Wall Road.



4a.



4b.



4d.



4f.



4c.



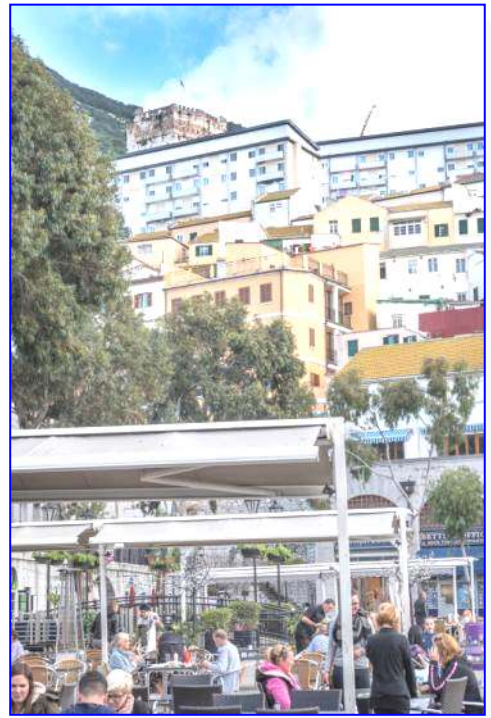
4e.



4g.



5a.



5b.



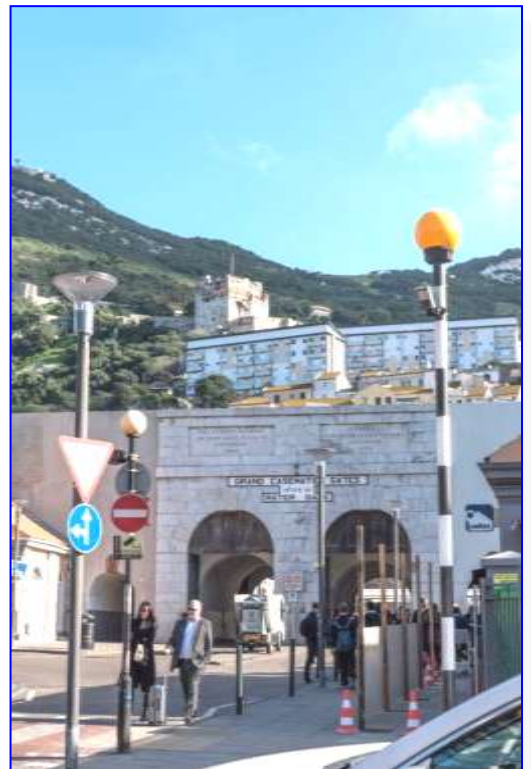
5c.

Images 5a - 5c.
Casemates Square.

Images 6a - 6f. below
Waterport Roundabout and
Waterport Road.



6a.



6b.



6c.



6d.

6e and 6f Waterport Rd. pending.

Images 7a - 7b. below

Waterport roundabout to junction of Devil's
Tongue Rd. and Queen's Way.



7a.



7b.



8a.



8b.

Images 8a - 8b.
Left

Sections between
Morrison's Petrol
Station and Europort
Avenue roundabout.



9a.



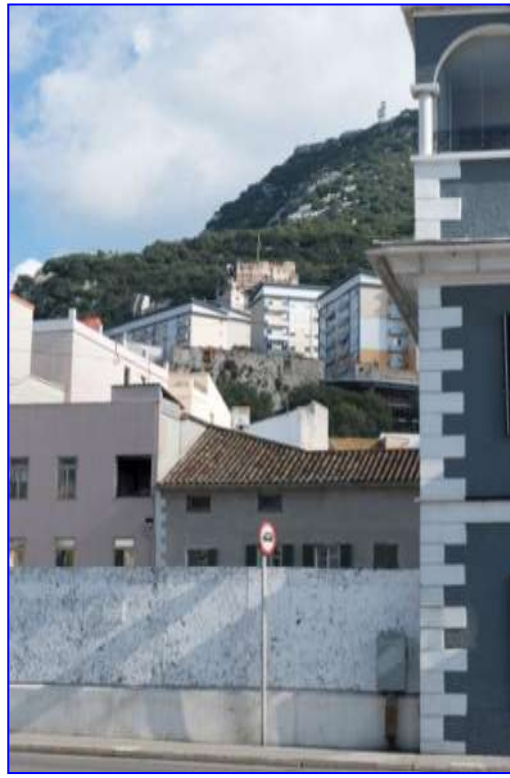
9b.

Images 9a - 9b.
Left

Europort Avenue..



10a.



10b.

Images 10a - 10b.
Left

Line Wall Rd. by
American War
Memorial.



11a.



11b.

Images 11a - 11b. Above
Upper Town Moorish Castle Estate.



Image 12.

Bishop Caruana
Rd. junction with
Coaling Island
roundabout.

12.



13.a



13.b

Images 13a - 14b. Above

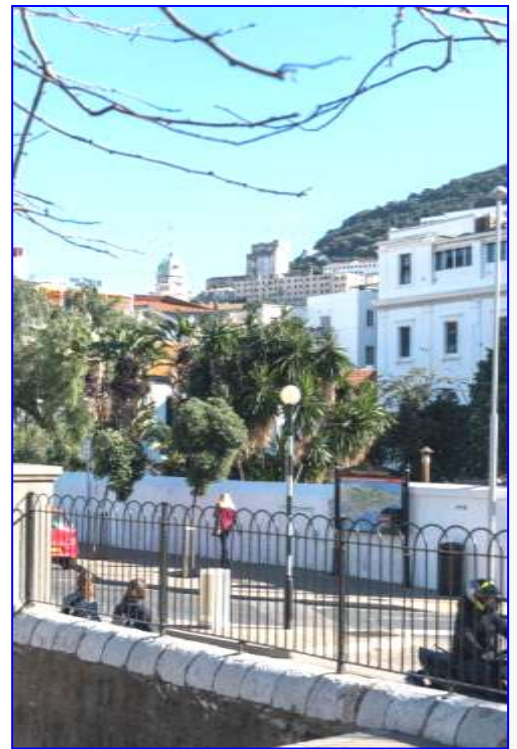
Opposite City Hall by ex-HMS Rooke entrance.



14a.

Images 14a - 14b. Above

Boulevard along Line Wall Rd opposite Children's Playground..



14b.



15.

Images 15 Left.

Old St Bernard's Hospital main entrance.

Images 16a & 16b. Below.

Calpe Road.

16b.

16a.





17a.

Images 17a & 17b. Above

Coaling Island roundabout by Britannia House.



17b.



18a.

18b.



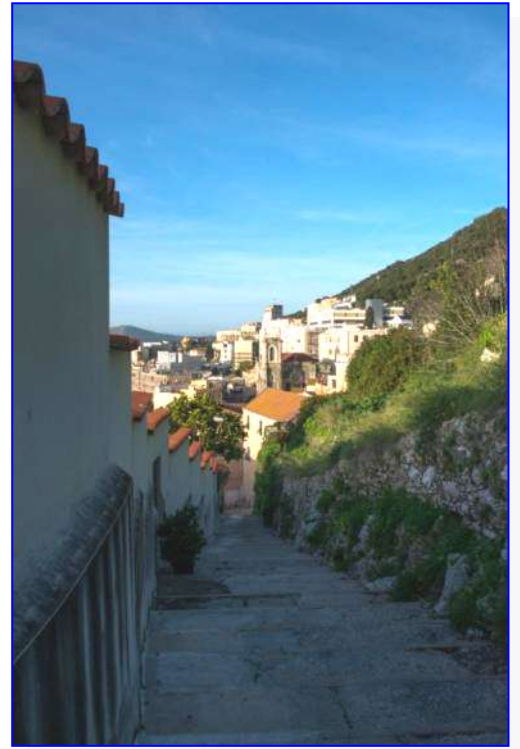
Images 18a & 18b. Above

Commonwealth Park south, along Queens Way



19a.

Images 19a & 19b. Above
Devil's Gap Steps



19b.

Appendix B: Indicative List of potential inclusions:

1. Zones:

- 1.1. The Old Town:
 - from a walking perspective (Accretions, signage, new build/extensions)
 - from a distance perspective (general views including from the sea).
- 1.2. The North Face
- 1.3. East Side coastline including slopes and ridge.
- 1.4. Seafront coastline in its fullest possible integrity from Seven Sisters southbound to Little Bay
- 1.5. Europa Point
- 1.6. Upper Rock Nature Reserve
- 1.7. Dockyard warehouses and landmarks looking south from Queensway
- 1.8. Charles V Wall from Grand Parade
- 1.9. Catalan Bay

2. Structures:

- 2.1. Clock Towers
- 2.2. Churches, Mosques and Temples
- 2.3. Civic Buildings
- 2.4. Other historically and or architecturally significant buildings
- 2.5. Monuments, War Memorials in particular.
- 2.6. Key Military elements such as:
 - The Moorish Castle(included in this document)
 - King's Bastion,
 - Parson's Lodge,
 - City Walls,
 - Charles V Wall,
 - the Old Mole and Mole Head,
 - Grand Battery and Northern Defences,
 - Retired Batteries
 - Barracks