

Revamping the Hotel Development Strategy to reinforce the competitive edge of Mauritius as an attractive tourism destination

With a view to maintaining and sustaining the present growth momentum in the tourism industry, it has been decided that henceforth, the following measures will constitute the basis for a coherent and cohesive hotel development strategy:

Grading

- Priority of consideration will be given to hotel projects of the highest standard providing high quality service and belonging to the 4 and 5-star categories to avoid a situation where middle-range or budget hotels would constitute the broader range base. A revamping of our hotel development strategy with 4 and 5-star category hotels as linchpin is urged in an attempt to generate traffic flows belonging to the high-spending segments.

Investment

- Our investment strategy will be geared towards a more targeted approach, especially with regards to foreign direct investment in the hotel sector. More discernment will be exercised in our choice of foreign investors to ensure a diversified mix of capital mobilization. In order to have a varied investment portfolio, opportunities will be given to international brand names currently absent to invest in luxury hotel development and thereby benefit from their marketing network, managerial skills and financial muscles as equity partners.

Coastal Guidelines

- So as to preserve the natural, exquisite and pristine characteristics of our seascapes, the Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) for coastal development should be strictly adhered to. Derogations regarding setback, height and plot coverage should not be allowed. Development should observe setback, height and plot coverage regulations as detailed at Annex with a view to protecting the general landscape and seascape characteristics of the area and avoid the disfigurement of the coastal character. Development should take place in clusters with adequate natural vegetation in between. The design of built-up structures should minimize the harmful visual effects by combining judicious land use principles with environment-friendly development. The low-density and low-rise hotel development policy should not be departed from and negative visual impacts resulting from obtrusive development should be resisted.

Architectural Design

- Notwithstanding compliance with the Planning Policy Guidance (PPG), the architectural drawings should reflect the distinctive and

(PPG), the architectural drawings should reflect the distinctive and appealing local cachet of Mauritius as a tropical island destination. The design of the proposed hotel should aim at providing a truly unique “Mauritian” experience to the visitor. The tropical resort-type architecture should make use of distinctive features such as canopies, open verandahs, overhanging eaves and local materials like thatch and timber. Project proposals should include artistic impressions or sketches describing the design character of the proposed development.

*Eco-friendly
& Energy -
saving
practices*

- ⊞ Due consideration needs to be given to eco-friendly and energy-saving practices by hotel promoters. In the design of new hotel projects, provision should be made for the adoption of energy-saving devices, renewable energy supply (such as solar energy) and eco-friendly practices such as the installation of desalination plant, recycling plant and other similar facilities.

*Preserving
the natural
integrity*

- ⊞ Sites which are not conducive to quality development should be kept undeveloped and left as green breathing spaces with open vistas on the sea. Ribbon development, i.e development along the narrow strip of the coastline, should not be allowed and the promoter will be encouraged to go into greater depth so as to make the maximum use of the available beachfront. In the same line, beach recharging or re-engineering works should as far as possible, leave untouched the existing natural features of the site such as rock outcrops, mature trees and natural habitats.

*Community
Inclusion*

- ⊞ The importance of striking the right equilibrium between the exigencies of the tourism sector and the recreational needs of the Mauritians is recognised. Applications for annexure of part of public beaches to existing hotel sites will be examined with utmost care and regionwise, taking into consideration the community needs and the availability of recreational facilities in the area.

Islets

- ⊞ It is reckoned that the main island is severely constrained in terms of coastal land resources especially prime hotel sites. Consideration will be given to making an optimal use of those islets which are not classified as strict nature reserves and have a touristic potential. The development of very low density, luxurious hide-aways for the jet-set and the top-end segments will certainly induce a move upmarket and propel Mauritius as an icon of quality tourism. Stringent regulations will however, have to be worked out with all authorities concerned in conformity with the carrying capacity of each islet.

ANNEX

PLANNING POLICY GUIDANCE

RESORT HOTEL DEVELOPMENT

HOTEL RESORT	Coastal Frontage
Maximum Building height	G+1 + 33% within 81.21 m G + 2 remainder of land
Maximum Building height in metres	13 m – 15 m
Maximum plot coverage	20%
Setback from High Water Mark	30 metres Provision: Light structures permitted within 15 – 30 metres

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