

ZONE

UPDATE

Interview with **MR LOUIS FARRUGIA**

CHAIRMAN OF THE FARSONS GROUP AND THE FIRST CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF ADMINISTRATORS - MRIEHEL ENTERPRISE ZONE FOUNDATION



WHAT DOES MRIEHEL MEAN FOR FARSONS?

Farsons was the first tenant in Mriehel. It has experienced the growth of Mriehel like no other operator in Mriehel has experienced. A lot of private money is pouring into Mriehel with all the investment that is being earmarked by the private sector. Above all, Mriehel is already the place where many important operators are located. These two factors alone already provide a sufficient catalyst for Farsons to team up with the authorities and other private sector operators to do something and improve the site at least for the employees who spend much of their daily life working there.

WHY IS THE FOUNDATION AN IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENT?

Mriehel needs a vision which the Foundation must work on. Malta wants to realise a high quality district from an existing 'brownfield' area. Malta wants a high quality city area comparable to other EU centres. That said, nothing precludes stakeholders, working within a structure, to implement small initiatives that help

transform the industrial area into a lively mixed use area focused on international business with accessible public spaces for employees to enjoy. This structure, if implemented, will preclude haphazard initiatives as has been going on up until now.

DO YOU THINK THE FOUNDATION WILL IMPROVE THE AREA?

The Foundation is a development that can embrace both private and public investment in a common goal of economic and urban growth responsive to international business and investment potential. The Foundation is a structure that deals with the scale of industrial and commercial activity in the area and allows diversity of micro-planning and design to enable a rich urban development. The Foundation wants to embrace an environmental vision for the area that draws on traditional urban qualities – landscaped streets, landscaped public areas and pedestrian zones with a focus on integrating cycle and public transport systems. Such improvement can be phased from

strategic nodes of existing and ongoing investment. The Foundation is adaptable to investment demand yet capable of maintaining an excellent environmental quality at all stages of its realization.

WHAT IS YOUR ADVICE FOR OPERATORS IN MRIEHEL?

It is hard to imagine an Mriehel that is anything more shabby, congested and chaotic than it is today. Yet it supports many thousands of employees who report to work on a daily basis. As an employer myself I wish to give something better to the employees in the area as well as our visitors. Rather than sitting back and complain I have realised that Farsons can already contribute to make things better. Irrespective of how small a contribution it is, every operator is called upon to support this initiative and make sure that the objectives the Foundation was set up to achieve are achieved in the interest of all.

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Interview with **MR WILLIAM WAIT**

NON-EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN OF MALTA
ENTERPRISE AND THE CURRENT CHAIRMAN
OF THE BOARD OF ADMINISTRATORS -
THE CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT FOUNDATION

WHAT DOES MRIEHEL MEAN TO YOU?

Mriehel is a zone where private enterprises have invested a lot of money. Such enterprises come from various sectors, from the smaller operators to the larger businesses. Thousands of employees work at Mriehel. As the Foundation we need to ensure not only that all operators go about their business in harmony but also operate in an environment which is of a standard expected nowadays.

YOU ARE PRACTICALLY NEW TO THE MRIEHEL ZONE, HOWEVER YOU COME WITH OVER 25 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE IN INDUSTRY. HOW WOULD YOU SEE THIS EXPERIENCE USED TO BENEFIT THE FOUNDATION?

I have lived most of my working life on the Bulebel Industrial Estate and I was one of the first members of the 'Bulebel Industrial Estate Tenants Association' (BIETA). Using this experience, I am one of the team representing government that worked hard to create the Foundation together with the private sector. Some of the challenges faced at Bulebel are similar to the ones being faced at Mriehel. However, whilst Bulebel was an MIP run industrial estate housing solely manufacturing concerns, Mriehel is a 'Business District' housing various economic activities on mostly privately owned land and property.

Mriehel needs a vision for the next decade and beyond. I strongly believe that the Public Private Partnership model that the Foundation operates in, is the best way to formulate the vision and actually implement it.

We have started from the basics, taking stock of what we have and doing 'simple tasks' such as cleaning the area and organising it. We have also carried out some road repairs of the areas mostly in need.

However, we now need to go to the next step, that is enforcing rules and regulations, improve the accessibility to Mriehel including the improvement in public transport connections, and improve the landscaping of the zone.

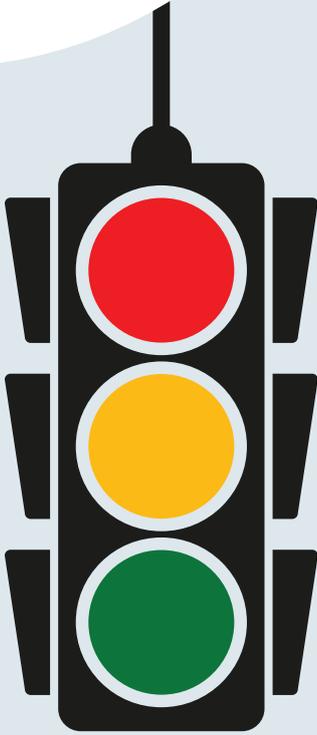
Government has made large financial commitments towards Mriehel including a direct budget allocation, a substantial financial contribution

from the Planning Authority and also an additional contribution towards the cost of administering such an entity. The private sector has responded very positively. In fact, as at today, we have 30 private sector members who are contributing financially on an annual basis.

WHAT IS YOUR ADVICE FOR OPERATORS IN MRIEHEL?

Hundreds of operators have chosen Mriehel as their base for operations, employing thousands of workers. Together we need to continue working to take the next steps forward.

We need to look back only to learn from mistakes and ensure that they are not repeated. However, the best way to move forward is to look at the future with optimism. I encourage all operators in Mriehel to join the Foundation and participate in the strategy and its implementation.



TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

MRIEHEL BY-PASS JUNCTION

The Foundation is working closely with Transport Malta in order to improve the access from the Mriehel By-Pass to Triq in- Negozju. This junction is currently among the busiest in Malta and as is noted in the National Transport Master Plan, it needs to be upgraded as soon as possible, together with other links and junctions along the section of the Comprehensive

Malta TEN-T network which includes the Mriehel By-Pass. In fact the Foundation managed to get the approval from Central Government in order that the upgrade will commence prior to 2025.

Until this happens the Foundation believes that the short term solution should incorporate traffic lights at this junction. This will not

solve any capacity problems. In other words, the queuing and delay problems would not be resolved. It would however contribute to the disciplining of traffic flows especially the dangerous right-turns from the Mriehel By-Pass to Triq in-Negozju. This turning movement involves vehicles cutting across two fast lanes, which should not be permitted in arterial roads.

Street Lighting Project



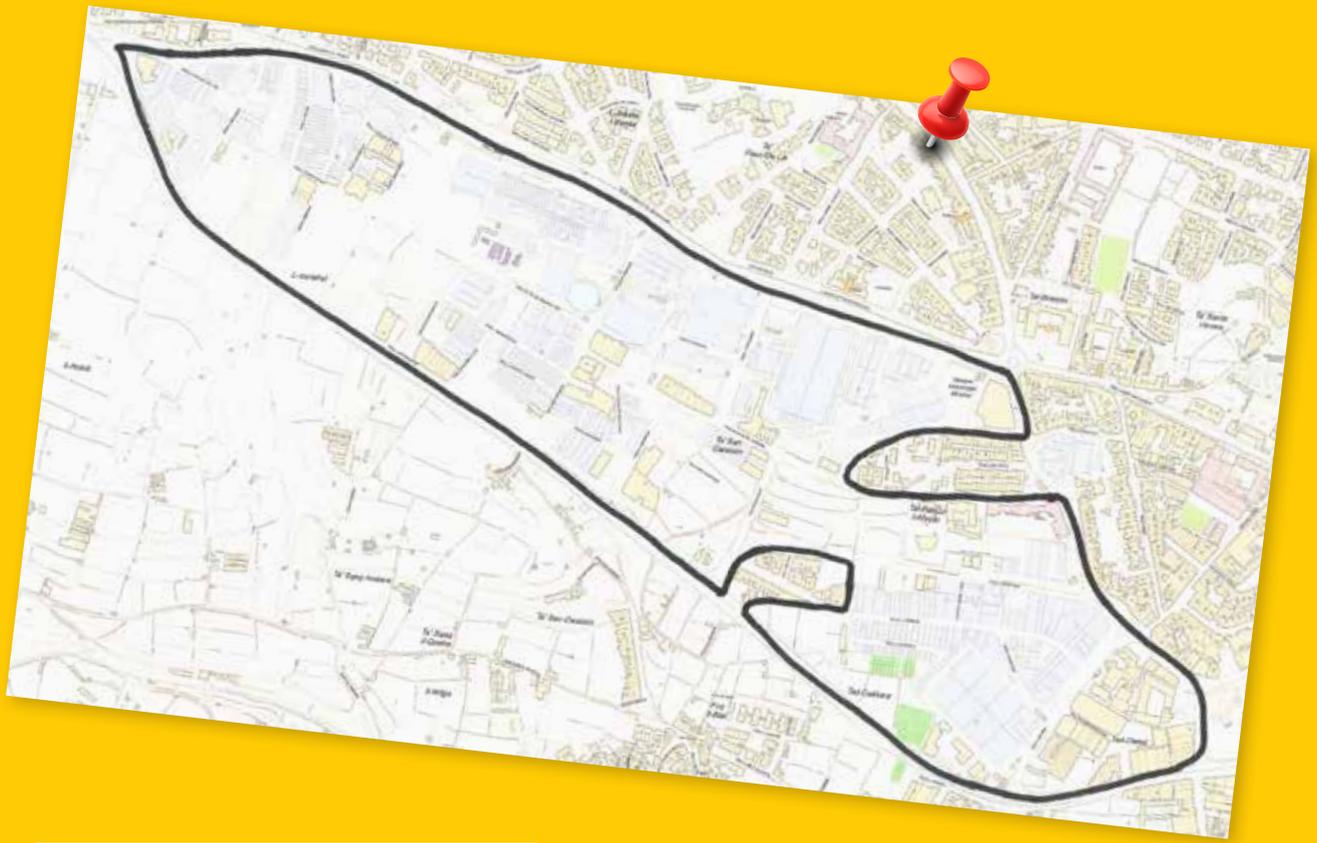
THE FOUNDATION HAS BEEN WORKING FOR THE PAST MONTHS IN ORDER TO UPGRADE THE CURRENT STREET LIGHTING IN THE AREA. STUDIES HAVE BEEN COMPLETED AND SHORTLY A PUBLIC TENDER WILL BE ISSUED THROUGH THE DEPARTMENT OF CONTRACTS.

The scope for this project will be:

- To upgrade the existing street lighting infrastructure at the industrial zone.
- To improve the quality of the street lighting system and reduce

energy consumption by adopting the latest technology available.

- To design and implement a CCTV system to cover the areas indicated by the CCTV coverage layout.



FACT FILE



APPROXIMATELY
97 DIFFERENT BUSINESSES
IN MRIEHEL



€170,000 BUDGETED
FOR EMBELLISHMENT
TO BE CARRIED OUT IN THE
AREA NEAR MILL STREET



STORM WATER PROJECT
WILL COST **€110,000** AND WILL BE
FUNDED BY THE FOUNDATION



167 TONS OF WASTE
TONS OF WASTE
COLLECTED TO DATE