



PA approves outline application for sea passenger terminal



The Planning Authority yesterday approved an outline application for a Lm10 million sea passenger terminal at Pinto Wharf in Valletta.

The development was proposed by the VISET Consortium which combines Maltese with foreign investment.

At a public hearing at St Francis Ravelin in Floriana, the PA board unanimously approved the permit after Robert Vella from the Planning Directorate recommended approval, subject to a list of conditions.

The outline application was for the development of a cruise passenger and ferry terminal including related leisure and commercial facilities and the construction of a car park and leisure facilities in Crucifix Bastion.

The developers withdrew part of the application for the construction of a tunnel and access road in Magazine bastion and Crucifix Bastion.

VISET Consortium is made up of nine companies, five of which are AX Holdings, Demajo Group, Malta International Airport,

Full permit subject to traffic impact assessment

Michael Testa

Farsons and Valletta Investment Bank. The foreign investment, making up 30 per cent, will come from the US, Spain, France and Hong Kong.

In recommending approval the Planning Directorate said that a full development permission would be awarded subject to a traffic impact statement to determine the type and extent of any traffic junction improvement which will be required to accommodate the additional traffic expected to be generated by the development.

The PA reserved the right to withdraw the permit for the car park if works would affect heritage sites.

The directorate also said that the views of the bastions and the historic buildings from the Grand Harbour would be taken into account in the assessment of the full development application.

Yesterday's hearing was not controversial by nor-

mal standards, but the project met with stiff opposition from Valletta resident Miriam Cremona who claimed that the development was to the detriment of Valletta.

The building to house the terminal would ruin the view of the fortifications, she said.

Environment Minister Francis Zammit Dimech said earlier this month that negotiations between the government and VISET for the construction of the Valletta cruise liner terminal were expected to be concluded before the end of February.

The process of public consultations would start shortly after, and Dr Zammit Dimech said he hopes that work would start by the end of the year.

The PA also approved in principle an outline development permit for the construction of office to house the Malta Maritime Authority and other related bodies at Gas Works, Pinto Street, Marsa.

The directorate had expressed itself in favour of this development within certain parameters including the external appearance of the proposed building, access and landscaping of the site.

