

**The Mount - Main Residence**

# Concept Proposal

22.01.2026





# 01 Context



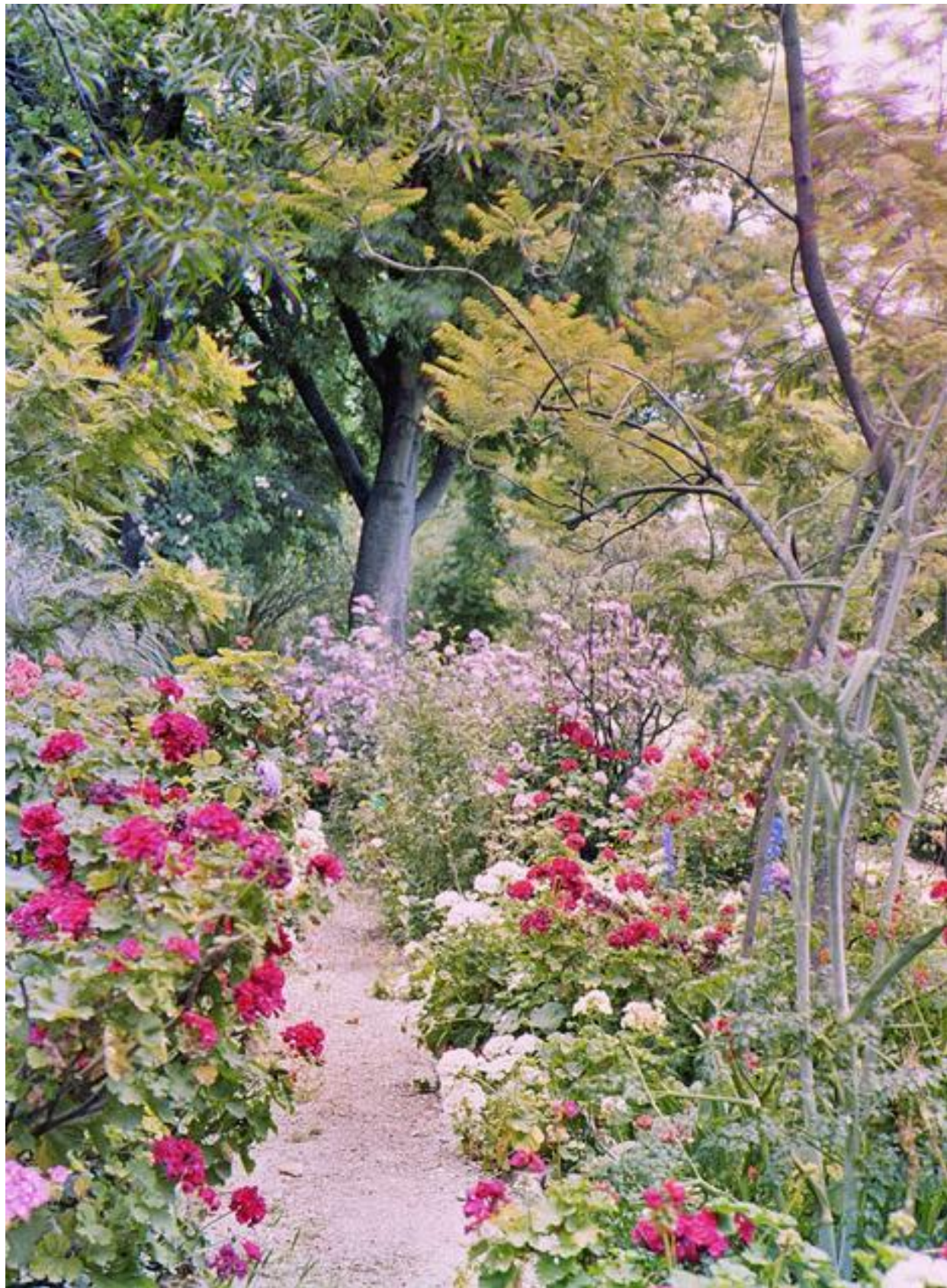












The Defeat of the Floating Batteries at Gibraltar  
(John Singleton Copley)



The 'Victory' Towed into Gibraltar  
(Clarkson Frederick Stanfield)

The Mount is one of Gibraltar's most significant historic assets and has, until more recently, been relatively well maintained. Having been first built and occupied by one of the most influential historical figures in Gibraltar - Sir William Greene, the chief engineer during the Great Siege - the very fabric of The Mount is given added weight in terms of historical importance.

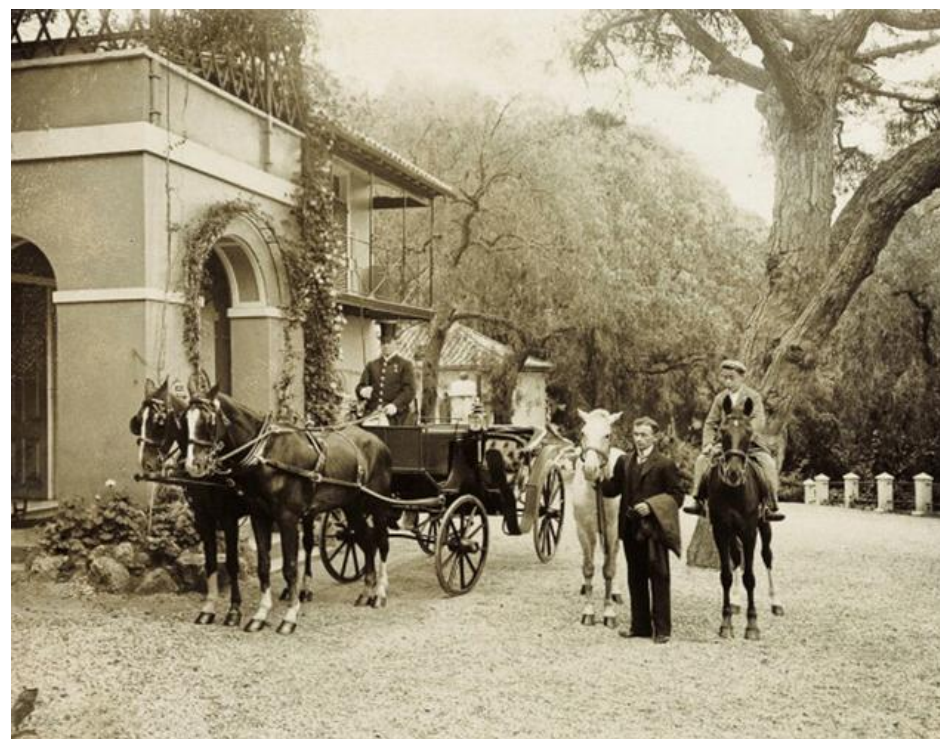
The Gibraltar Heritage Trust provides the following historical summary of the Mount and its grounds:

"The history of the Mount dates back to before the Great Siege (1779-83), when Major William Green (1725-1811) was posted to the Rock as Chief Engineer in 1760 to strengthen the rock's defences. In 1777 he was promoted to Colonel. Although Green's official residence was Engineer House in Engineer Lane (today the site of Hindu Temple), he also acquired a private residence. In 1775 he was granted a piece of land in the south district on the proviso that he cleared it at his own expense. There, Col. Green built his house, which he called Mount Pleasant, a name later given by the Eastern Telegraph Company for the property in South Barrack Road."

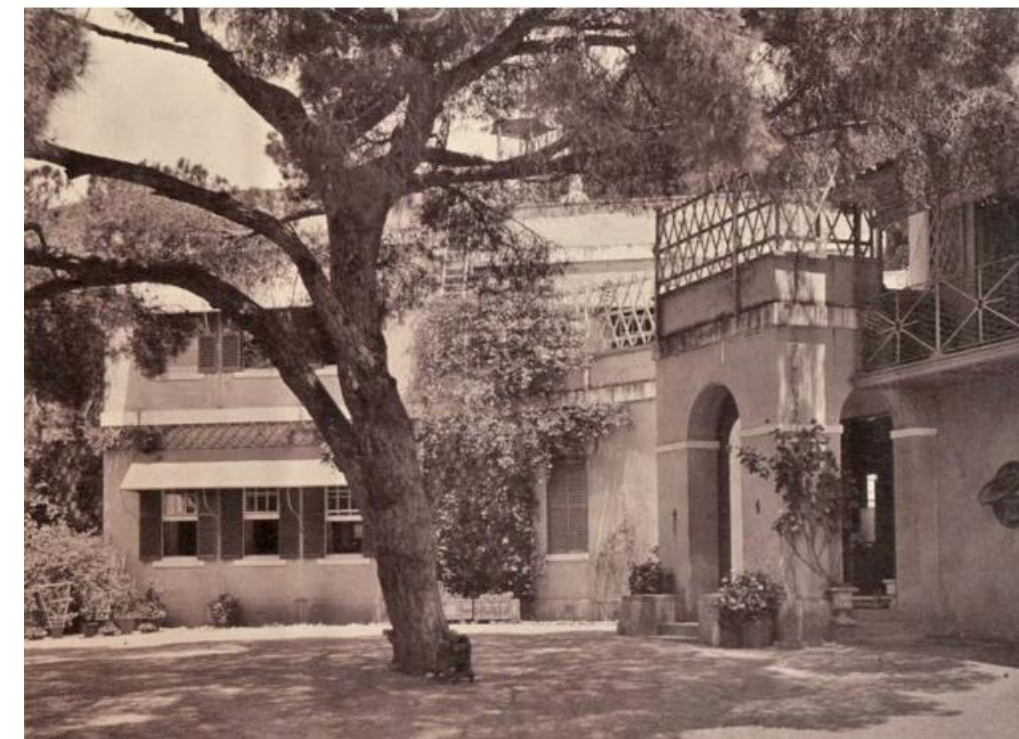


The entire land was purchased by the Admiralty for £1500 in 1797 and it is believed to be have first been occupied by the Admiralty commissioner, as he was then called, in charge of the naval yard. The residence at The Mount was reconstructed in 1846 and the stables reconstructed after a fire in 1859. The first senior Naval Officer to occupy The Mount was Captain Sir John G. Sinclair Bart in 1842. Twenty-nine senior officers have in turn occupied The Mount since 1842 and their names appear on a Tablet there.

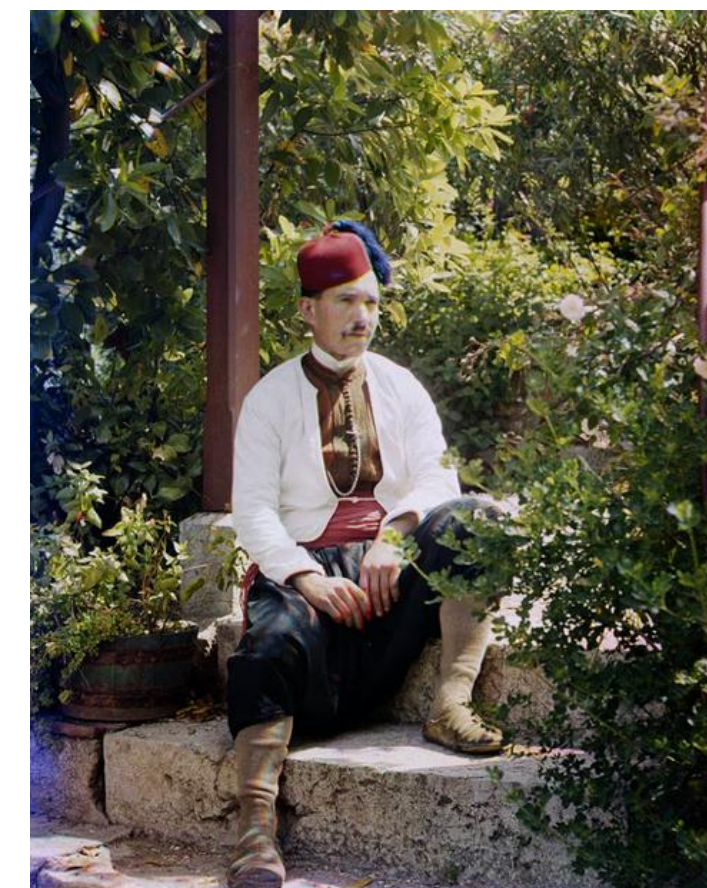
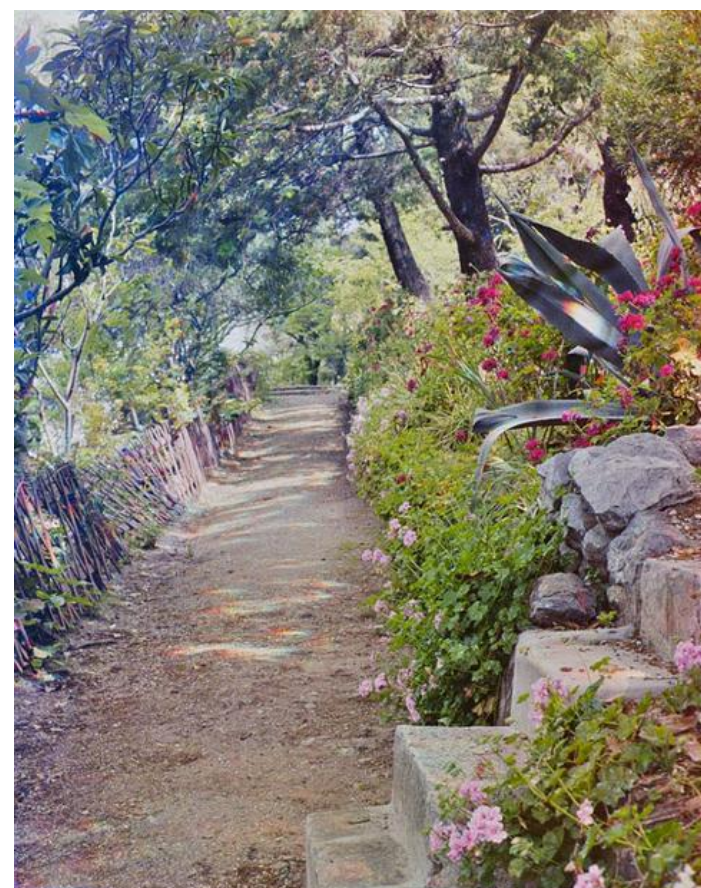
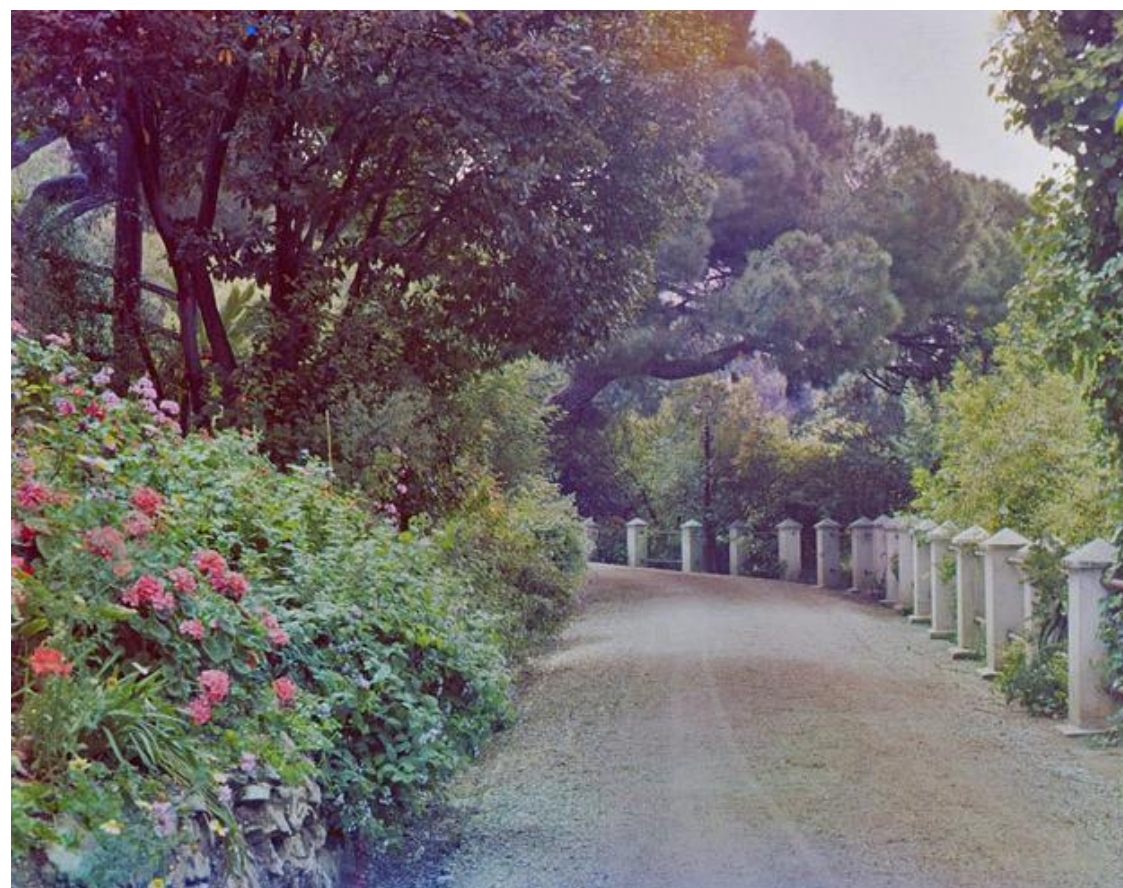
With the advent of colour photography, The Mount came to prominence with the visit of Sarah Angelica Acland to her brother Admiral Sir William Acland in 1903. She is said to have been the first traveller to use colour photography and took extensive photographs on The Mount and its grounds, a collection now housed at the Museum of the History of Science in Oxford. These striking early images captured by a photography pioneer provide a glimpse of The Mount at the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.



Mount Pleasant, early 19th Century



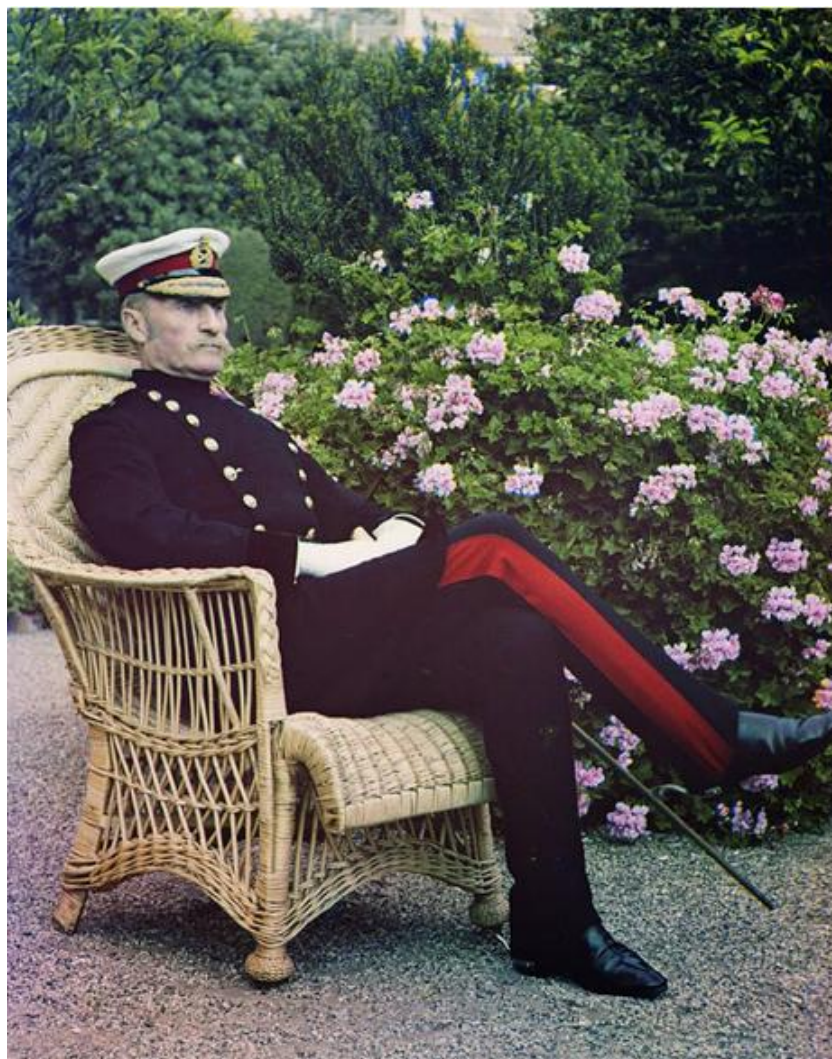
Royal coach outside Mount Pleasant, 1903







Sarah Angelica Acland



Sir George Stuart White



Admiral William Alison Dyke Acland



Colonel William Willoughby Cole Verner

*“During the Great Siege the Green family often lived at Mount Pleasant, where a bomb proof shelter had been built under the southern end of the tennis court – today used as a water tank. The family moved permanently to Mount Pleasant in 1781 after Engineer House was destroyed by a bombardment. Col. Green lived at the Mount until 1783, upon which point he returned to England, after having been stationed in Gibraltar for 23 years.*

*Until 1785, the Admiralty Commissioner in charge of Naval Stores had lived in Irish Town, but by the end of Siege so many buildings were in ruins that the Admiralty decided to rent Mount Pleasant from Col. Green until finally buying it from him in 1797. The original Navy residence was built in 1797 and was further extended in 1811. The Navy renamed the property The Mount. Major alterations followed in 1846, the stables were built in 1859 and the property was further enlarged in 1905. The building has over the centuries been home to various Admiralty Commissioners, Senior Naval Officers, Admiral Superintendent, Flag Officers and the Commander British Forces (CBF). Altogether some 74 Senior Naval Officers.*

*Its grounds are home to many mature specimens and one of Gibraltar's only woodland habitats (most areas of Gibraltar were stripped of trees post Great Siege in the search for building materials). Over the centuries, visiting dignitaries to Gibraltar have planted trees, such as King George V in 1912 and as recently as Princess Anne in 2004.”*



Statement of Cultural Significance

The Mount, located off Mount Road, falls within an area, which is being proposed by Government for statutory protection. Fortunately this historic asset has been relatively well maintained and having served as Sir William Green and the Admiral's residence, is one of Gibraltar's most significant historic assets. A number of original features, such as doors, windows and fireplaces, are extant within The Mount and consequently add to the cultural value of this property.

The grounds associated with this property are also of significant value since it not only provides an appropriate setting to the residence but also contains a number of trees, which also have historic value.

Historic Significance

Sir William Green, General of the engineers, as a private individual obtained in 1778 the original grant as a freehold as part of the property now know as the 'Mount'. The property was originally called 'Mount Pleasant' (a name now given to another property close by). Sir William Green cultivated and planted the grounds, built a house and a reservoir, as well as digging a well. All at his own expense. Additional land was obtained in 1783. The whole land was purchased by the Admiralty for £1500 in 1797, and it is believed to be have first been occupied by the Admiralty commissioner, as he was then called, in charge of the naval yard. The residence at 'The Mount' was reconstructed in 1846, and the stables reconstructed after a fire in 1859. The first senior Naval Officer to occupy 'The Mount' was Captain Sir John G. Sinclair Bart in 1842. He bore the title 'Naval Officer in charge of stores'. Twenty-nine senior officers have in turn occupied 'The Mount' since 1842 and their names appear on a Tablet there.

Gibraltar Society Annual Journal 1930. Article by Captain A Gonzalez.

Sir William Green

Colonel (later Major General) Sir William Green (1725 - 1811) had served with Wolfe at Quebec and was chief engineer during the Great Siege and a serving officer at Gibraltar from 1761 to 1783 (he was promoted to Brigadier General in 1781). He is a historically important figure as he was responsible for the design and oversaw the construction of the King's Bastion, and also carried out major modifications to Orange Bastion. As these were the two main locations that not only took the brunt of the 'Grand Attack' of the floating batteries on the 13th

September 1782, but were also responsible for eventually winning the day, it can be argued that without this man Gibraltar would probably have fallen. Moreover, many historians believe his most important accomplishment was the raising of the Soldier Artificer Company, which later became the Royal Engineers. This gives the very fabric of the Mount an added value because of its first designer and owner.

The Grounds

The Upper Rock Nature Reserve is a product of the last 150 years, at least in terms of vegetation. The Mount's grounds contain both landscaped gardens and a wooded, natural, section, which is to be considered to be of historical significance as it is a remnant of the original vegetation of the Saved to N: Drive led off from the logging that de-vegetated the Upper Rock. It is in these grounds that one can appreciate the different composition in the plants that must have covered Mediaeval Gibraltar such as carob tree, as against the predominance of olive woodland that is now the case. There is thus a historic case not only for preserving the gardens, but also in retaining this natural wooded area, possibly even more so in the case of the latter.

Within the grounds there are also various historic items such as furniture and trees. Some of these trees have been planted by members of the Royal family and past guests to the Mount and hence add to the cultural value of this property.

Architectural Significance

This fine building is directly related to Gibraltar's role as a fortress and as such its very fabric is of significant cultural value. This villa is an example of Gibraltar's very own vernacular architecture where British styles, Palladian proportions and Georgian and Victorian features are evident yet local conditions have imposed their dictates on style and materials.

Architecturally this building, all associated structures and its present setting are of cultural significance. Having been designed by engineers, the buildings lack ornate architectural details except for the use of some wrought ironwork. Genoese timber shutters, sash windows and Spanish glazed clay tiles all add to the flavour of this property.

As highlighted its external, as well as its internal features and plan layout, are of significant value and are to be respected, with a view to conserving and restoring.

The associated grounds to this property also hold significant value not just aesthetically but historically as highlighted above. Again features such as lamp standards, plaques, trees and cannon are to be respected.



Existing Building

Area 1 is defined by the boundaries of the main residence. This consists of an eighteenth century, two-storey masonry construction, with ancillary accommodations and timber architectural features.

The full restoration of this building, both externally and internally, remains one of the priorities of this project.

(Refer to the Heritage Officer's report for detailed historical background and restoration guidelines).



In 2004, the Gibraltar Government Heritage Division, working in collaboration with the appointed architect, prepared comprehensive guidelines for the development of the Mount. These guidelines addressed both the Main Residence building and the surrounding grounds.

The document included a *Statement of Cultural Significance*, which highlighted the heritage value of the Main Residence and the wider site. It also set out detailed recommendations for the sensitive refurbishment of the existing building, ensuring that this important 18th-century structure would be preserved, carefully restored, and returned to its former prominence.

Significantly, the strategy document—now more than two decades old—already anticipated the potential hotel use of the Main Residence. The current proposal builds directly upon this vision. Overall, the scheme presented here has been deliberately tailored to align with the long-established strategy for the site, reinforcing continuity with the original heritage-led approach.



# 02 Existing Condition







The 'Main Building' consists of a series of interconnected structures that together form a single formerly residential complex.

Having remained unused for an extended period and subjected to minimal upkeep, the external fabric has deteriorated noticeably. As a result, the building now requires significant improvements to restore its condition and ensure its long-term preservation.

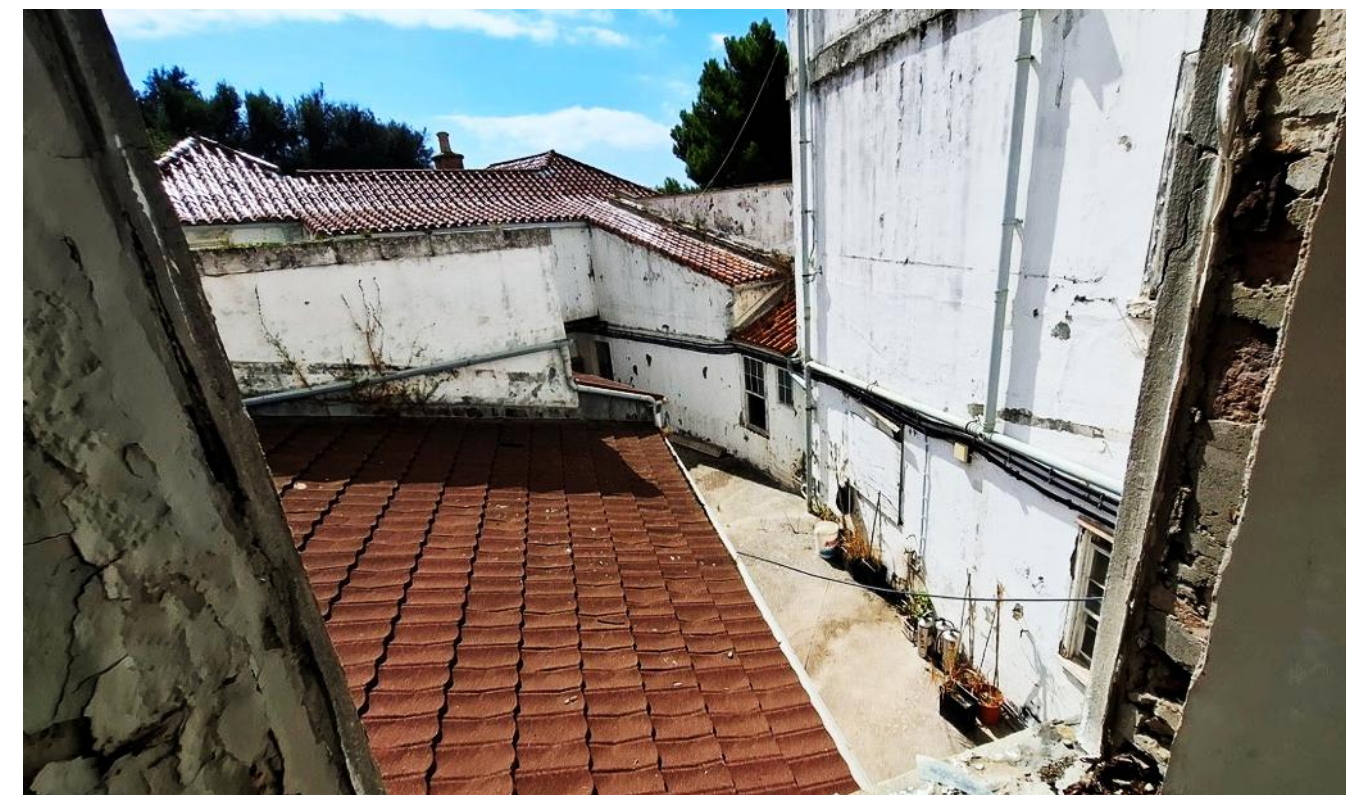




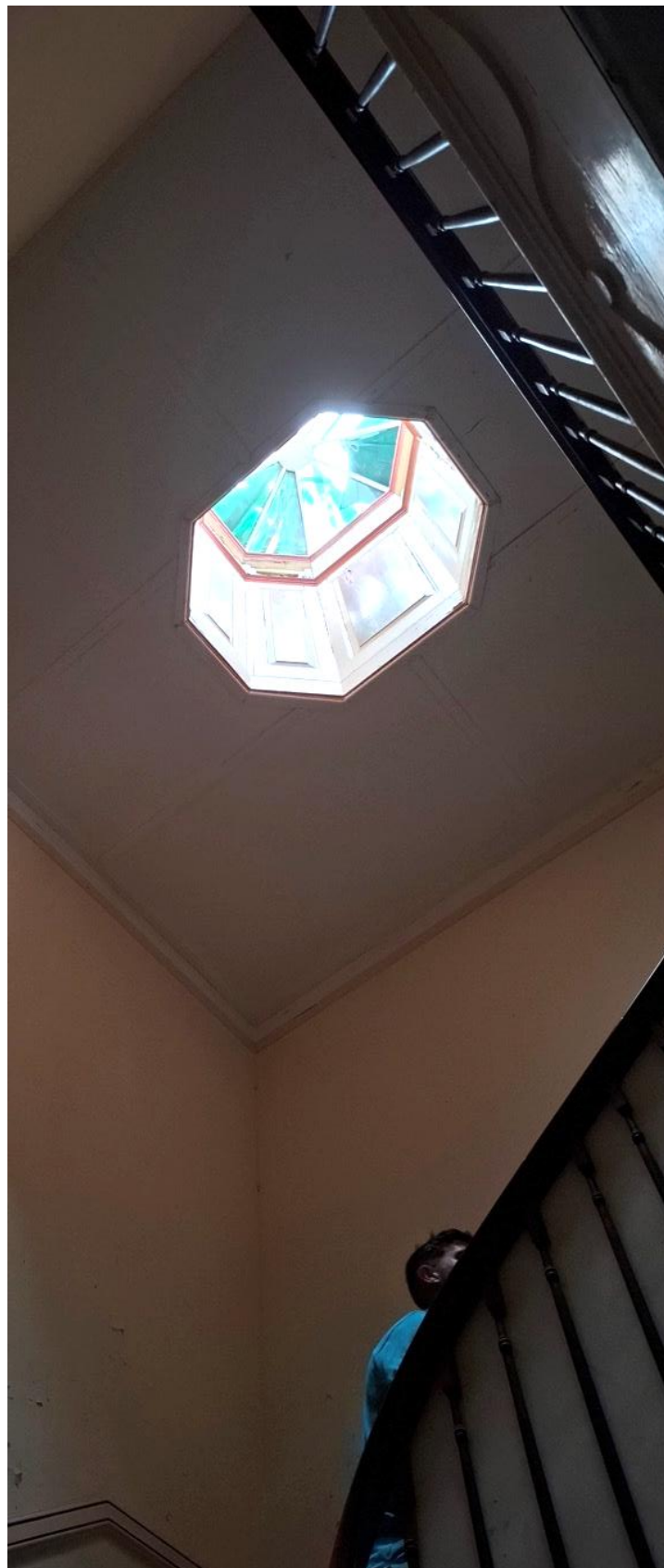
The external timber structures are in particularly poor condition, which is unsurprising given their prolonged exposure and lack of maintenance.

The roofing similarly requires careful review to assess its integrity and determine the extent of necessary repairs..

Notwithstanding the mentioned issues, the building still retains a number of attractive features that contribute positively to its character and highlight its potential for future restoration.







Internally, the building has been affected by areas of water ingress and shows signs of general disrepair.

While some original features remain and continue to add character, these are contrasted by more recent interventions and finishes that are less sympathetic to the building's historic fabric.



As illustrated in the floor plan, the original residential building remains clearly distinguishable from the later additions to the south. These structures are connected by the curved wall that features prominently on the front façade and is documented in historical photographs of the area.

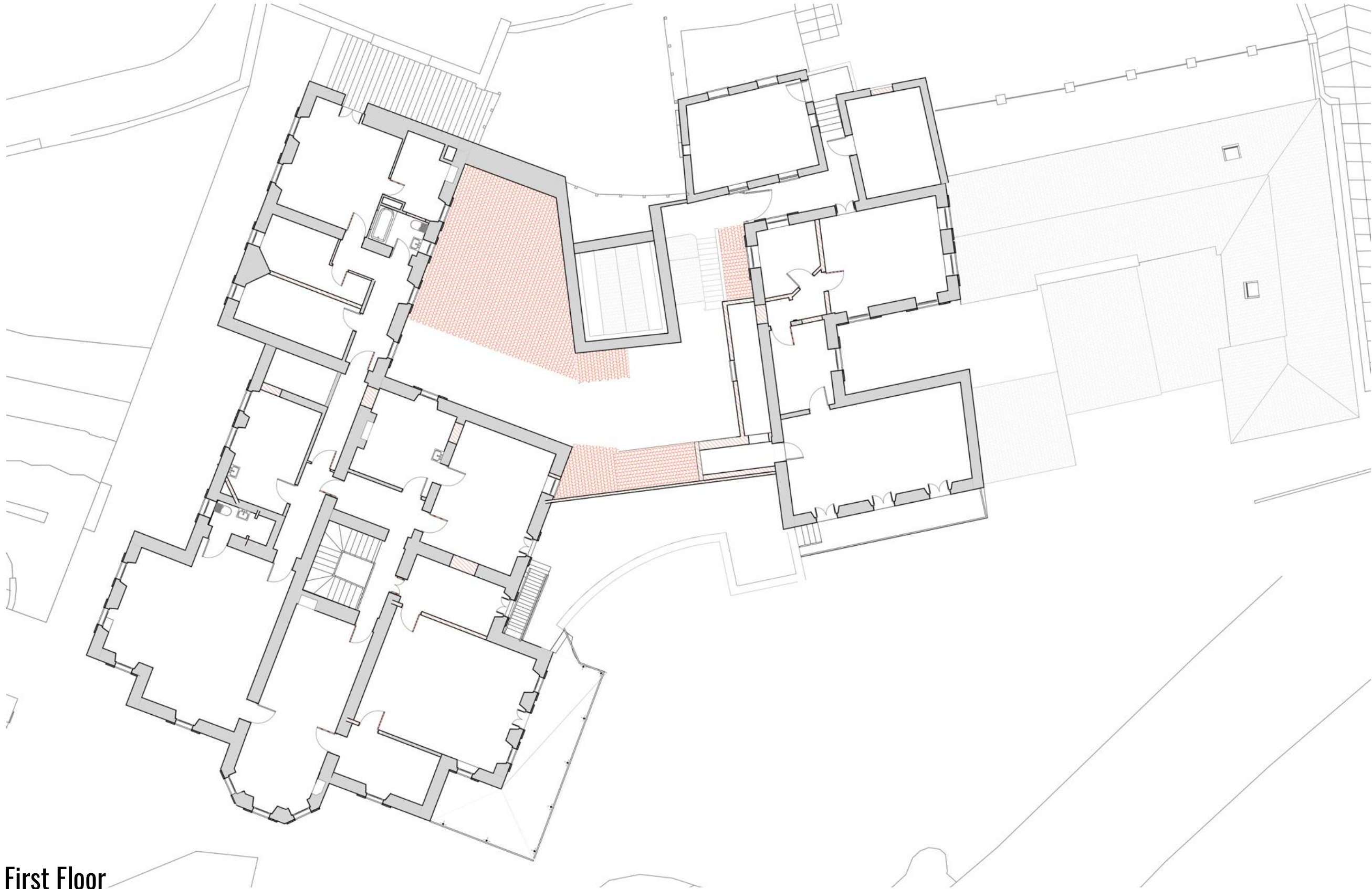
This project will involve removing only a select few elements including some internal partitions and the secondary stairs adjacent to the internal courtyard, in order to improve the overall flow and usability of the space, and improve the reading of the original main historic residence.



Ground Floor



Some roofing areas are also in precarious condition, and would need to be addressed as part of the works. This applies particularly to the roof over the rear room adjacent to the newly refurbished kitchen.



First Floor



# 03 Wider Masterplan







This masterplan scheme was submitted and granted Outline Planning Permission (No: 8278) back on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of March of 2022 under the reference O/17802/21G. and its inspired somehow in a guideline developed by the Gibraltar Government Heritage Division back in February 2004.

PL. Porter's Lodge

EH. Events Hall

#### Future proposed intervention phases

1. Reinstatement of water catchments.
2. Reinstatement of pathways to upper portion of site.
3. Nature activity areas.
4. Development of swimming pool area to house new uses.
5. Development of water tanks area to house new uses.
6. Improvement to lower landscaped gardens and paths.





The primary objective of the intervention is to establish a boutique hotel at The Mount Main Residence where guests can enjoy unique accommodations surrounded by nature with exceptional views of the Bay.

This project is designed to create a meaningful synergy with the overall layout of The Mount. By offering high-quality overnight facilities for a select number of guests, we can better support events held in The Event Hall pavilion adjacent to the Main Building and provide a dedicated space for relaxation and exploration of the surrounding green areas.

Alongside the aforementioned Events Hall, other interventions have already been completed, such as The Porters Lodge for administrative use, as well as upcoming phases projects like The Children's Playgrounds Park. We believe this integrated approach will significantly enhance the overall usability and appeal of the site.

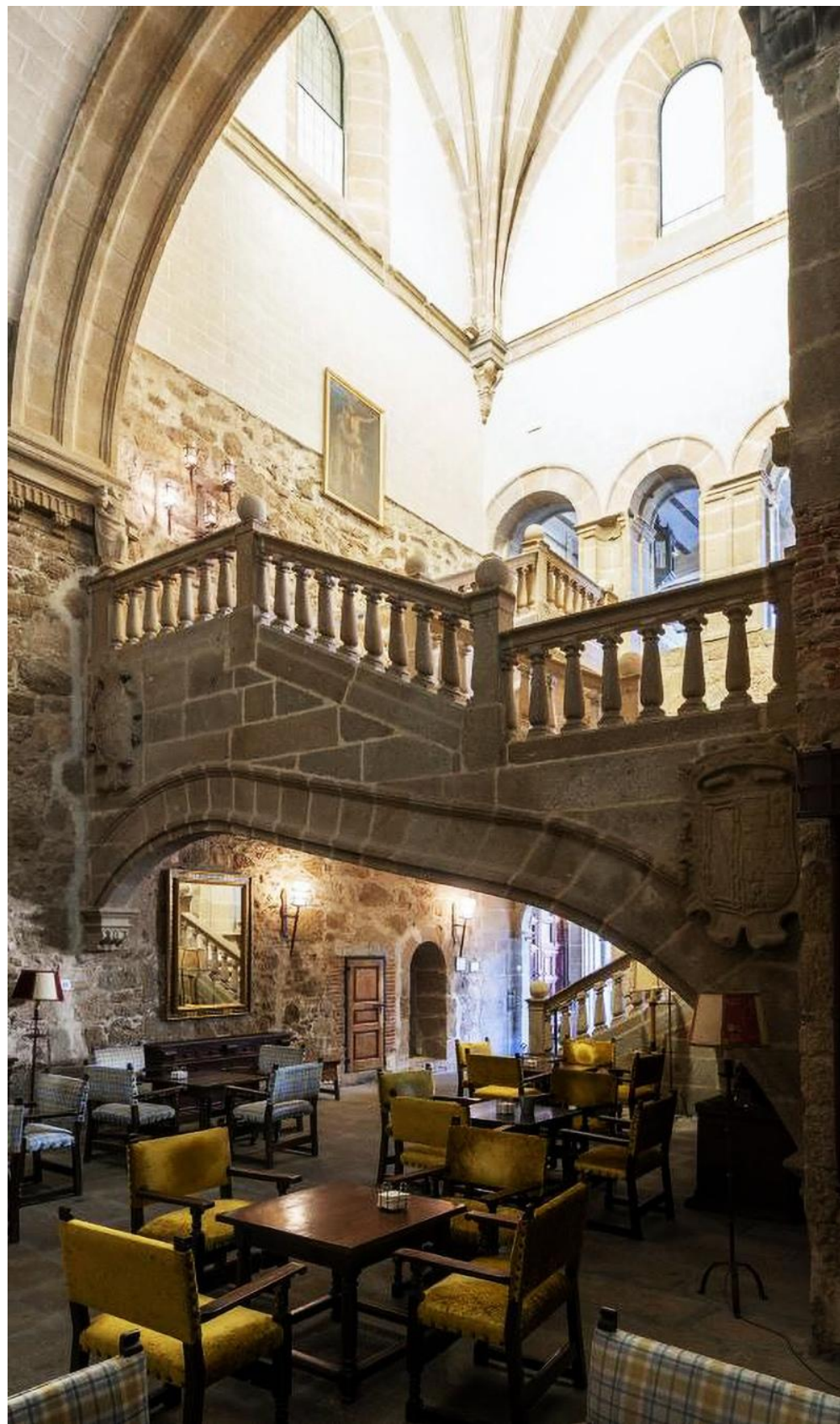




# 04 Concept Proposal







The objective of the project is to undertake a sensitive refurbishment of the Main Residence, highlighting its heritage while transforming it into a boutique hotel. The scheme will incorporate a range of amenities and ancillary uses designed to complement the wider development of the Mount area, including the recently refurbished Event Hall.

Across the world, there are numerous precedents where historic buildings have been successfully adapted into distinctive hotels. These projects not only preserve the architectural and cultural significance of the structures but also enhance their value by giving them a renewed purpose and contemporary relevance.









While the design is primarily focused on the sensitive restoration of the existing structure and the reinstatement of its vernacular historic features, it also introduces one notable intervention: a glazed atrium covering the rear internal patio.

This addition is conceived with simple, clean lines that deliberately contrast with the preserved historic fabric, ensuring a respectful yet contemporary complement to the original architecture.

Beyond its aesthetic contribution, the atrium enables a fundamental reorganisation of the wider complex - improving circulation and enhancing the legibility of the various components that together define the Main Residence.





### Accommodation

- 1. Room
- 2. Suite

### Other Internal Areas

- 3. Technical / Back-of-house
- 4. Common Areas
- 5. Offices
- 6. Stores
- 7. Circulation & Lobby

### Hard and Soft Landscaped Areas

- 8. Private Balcony
- 9. Terrace
- 10. Covered Entrance
- 11. Courtyard / Exterior corridor
- 12. Service Courtyard



Ground Floor

A primary objective of the envisaged intervention is to highlight the distinct volumes that comprise the Main Residence complex. Simultaneously, we aim to unify these elements through the creation of an interior courtyard. Currently a residual space formed by various additions, the courtyard will be revitalized by refining its geometry.

By removing certain elements of the interior courtyard to optimize its geometry, it is possible to create a covered space that will serve as an impressive hotel reception area. This space is designed to function as the primary communications hub and the central heart of the entire complex.



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First Floor

Furthermore, we have taken advantage of the building's emblematic terraces with decorative wrought iron railing to accommodate a café or small restaurant, making the most of the exceptional views over the bay. To ensure guest comfort, common recreation areas are situated on the ground floor, allowing the guest rooms to be positioned on the upper levels. This layout prioritizes the most engaging views for residents while providing necessary protection from external noise and foot traffic.

The current scheme counts with eight generous sized rooms including one big suite, but the current disposition can allow increasing this number by reducing the area of each unit.

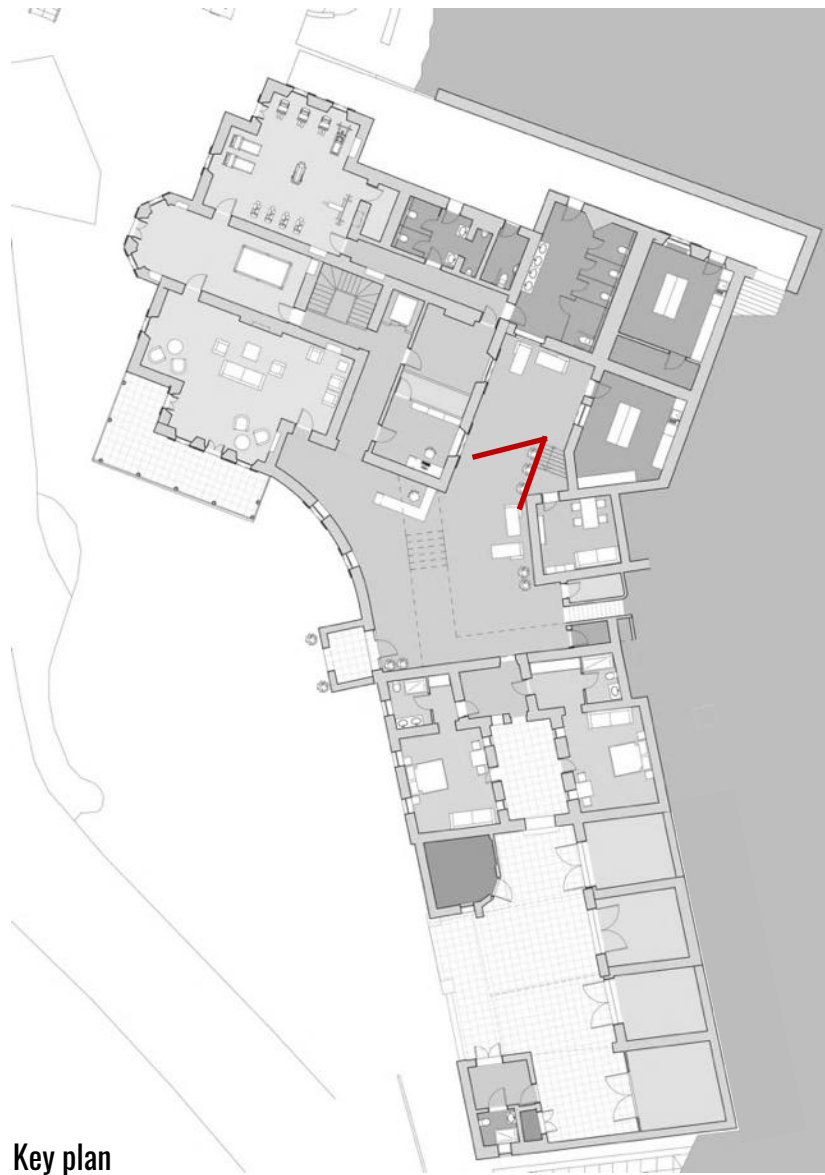










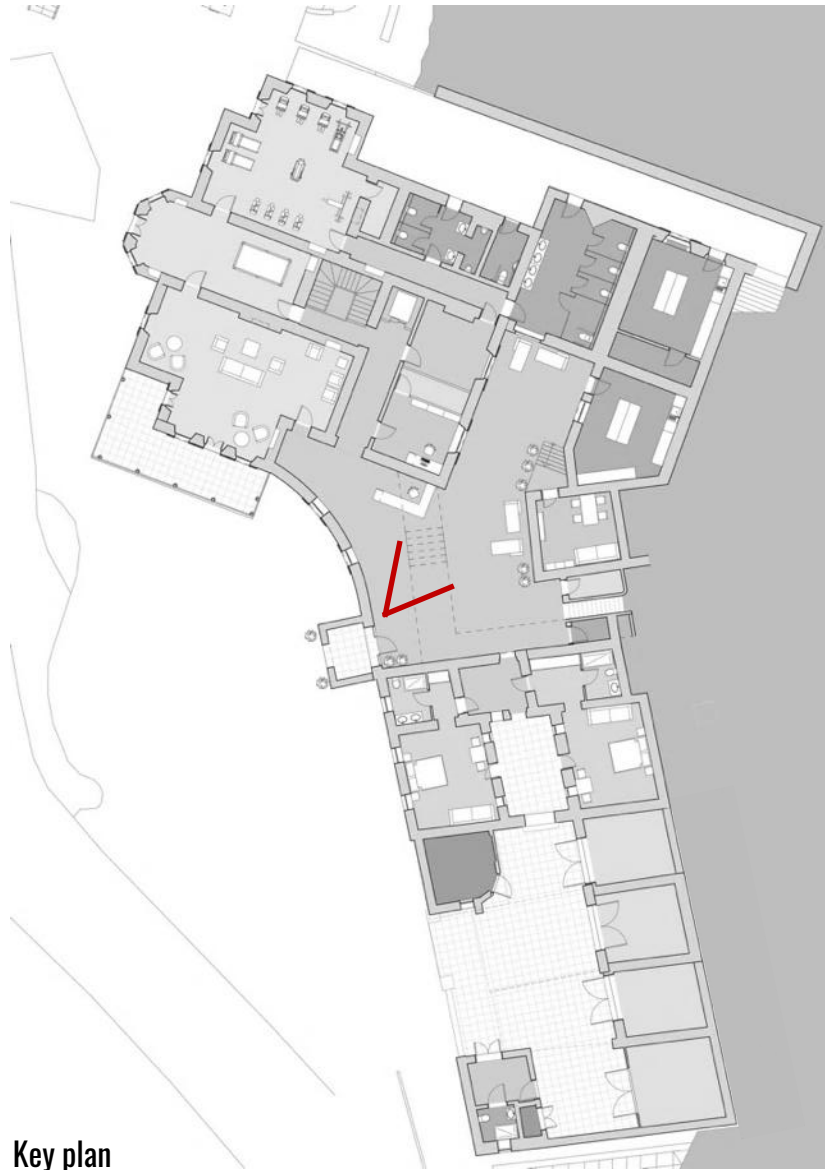


Key plan



04 Concept Views





Key plan



04 Concept Views