

Port Administration Building L.G. Smith Boulevard 23 | Oranjestad, Aruba | D.W.I.

# **Port City Oranjestad**

# **Document B**

# **Summarized description**

# **Urban Development Plan**

Version 1.2, d.d. December 14, 2019





1



#### **Introduction**

After multiple years of preparation and various stakeholder consultations with several government entities and market participants, the preparatory phase of Port City Oranjestad is in its final stages. Prior to the issuance of the lots by tendering, planned in 2020, Aruba Ports Authority (APA) proudly presents the plan to all interested participants. By means of a market consultation, APA gives market participants the opportunity to contribute to the optimization of the Port City Oranjestad project.

Aruba is well known for its touristic appeal and as a great place to visit and live. Pride of the island and all it has to offer is widespread among the local population. This pride and love for Aruba is one of the factors that drives the continuous efforts to further develop the island.

Oranjestad is one of the main points of attraction and has always drawn in tourists and locals alike. Ever since the middle of the '90s, plans have been formulated to further improve the city, with a focus on the transformation of the cargo terminal in Oranjestad.

With the move of the cargo terminal to Barcadera, the time has now come to bring these visions to fruition and to embark on one of the biggest transformation projects in the history of Aruba.

Port City Oranjestad is unique in both vision and scale. Port City Oranjestad will connect people and different areas on the island in a sustainable manner and stimulate the economy.

In order to bring this vision to fruition, a project team consisting of APA, Port of Amsterdam International, Directie Infrastructuur en Planning (DIP) and Dienst Openbare Werken (DOW) was established to develop the spatial plan (by OZ Architect), to set up the technical and financial support (based on the approved area vision) as well as to analyze and establish support from various stakeholders with the government of Aruba being the most prominent one.

All of this work has led to a definitive urban development plan, an appearance direction plan and parcel passports, which have been approved by the Council of Ministers on the 22nd of February 2019.

Documents that are referred to can be downloaded via the APA website: <a href="http://www.arubaports.com/portcityoranjestad">www.arubaports.com/portcityoranjestad</a>



# **Characteristics of Port City Oranjestad**

The area needs to be a vibrant urban district and certainly not mono functional. Based on the market potential and canvassing among stakeholders, five key business activities/functions were selected as the primary components of development area.

Function	M <sup>2</sup> per lot	% of total	Gross Floor Area
Boutique hotel	12,937	16%	30,120
Apartments / condos*	16,551	21%	40,028
Residential	21,608	26%	50,056
Business, conference and office center	11,725	14%	27,238
Food and Beverage, recreation and retail**	18,230	22%	42,559
Total	81,050	100%	190,000

\* This type of accommodation is catalogued as 'verblijfsrecreatie' within the ROP(V)

\*\* Mainly functions for ground level

The configuration of these business activities will follow the vision and principles of the entire transformational area and will be complementary to the city of Oranjestad and to Port City Oranjestad as a whole. However, the exact configuration and the selection of these business activities is not yet defined, as APA has made it a point to keep an open mind.

Several opportunities have been discussed with and are based on suggestions of developers and other stakeholders, including the Aruban government. Options like universities, museums, art experiences and medical tourism will be seriously considered. Port City Oranjestad has unique characteristics that cater to global trends.

First, it can best be profiled as an attractive living area that enhances inclusiveness among locals and visitors alike by creating an area where a mix of functions is actively created. The synergy between these various business activities is to create a unique city vibe, one that is currently non-existent on Aruba. Second, flexibility is front and center.

The proposed composition is a strong starting point for the development, based on the knowledge currently available. However, this should not be taken as a set-in stone composition that stays the same over the course of 20 years. The exact balance between the activities will be determined in a continuous dialogue, like this market consultation, making Port City Oranjestad future-proof.



The connection and interaction between Port City Oranjestad and the surrounding areas will be of the utmost importance to the success of the project. With the transformation area located in the southwestern part of Oranjestad, it is surrounded by five designated areas:

Oranjestad itself, the cruise terminal and Schoenerhaven to the southeast, the Bushiri Beach area to the northwest and the L.G. Smith Boulevard, including the light industrial site to the north.

The connection of Port City Oranjestad with the city of Oranjestad is one of the defining features of the entire project. Port City Oranjestad should complement and strengthen the city of Oranjestad as a whole. The guiding principles and elements for development was specifically designed to create synergy with the city of Oranjestad, thus amplifying the strong points of both areas. Another important connection is with Bushiri Beach. The beach experience should be extended towards the project area, as this will give visitors a destination on the western side of the project area and therefore a reason to pass through the entire area. This public beach will be an attraction that increases the appeal of the project area and the city of Oranjestad as whole. This will create an area that can be used and enjoyed by cruise tourists, visitors to Port City Oranjestad and the Aruban population.

# Vision Port City – the area development

The area vision defines the desired look and feel and the seven main spatial elements.

These spatial elements interact with and strengthen one another and form the foundation for Port City as the link in the chain that brings together people, areas, sustainability, and culture. The seven elements are as follows:

- 1. The area must be the gateway for Aruba as it is the first introduction for all cruise tourists
- 2. Park as a recreation and meeting place for Arubans and tourists
- 3. Area development as an opportunity for Aruba
- 4. Scenic road with a view of the sea and the park
- 5. Flexibility in scale building blocks
- 6. The experience of water and park are central elements in the design
- 7. Sustainable design

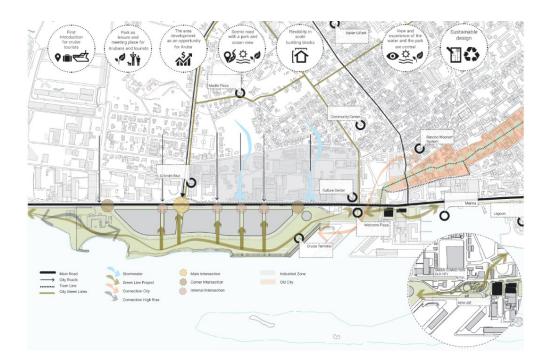
Besides these seven pillars, five design principles have also been defined, all incorporated in all seven pillars.



These design principles serve to smoothen the incorporation of Port City Oranjestad within the existing structures, as well as to preserve the Aruban identity. This will make Port City Oranjestad truly an example of all that Aruba has to offer:

- 1. No competition for surrounding regions
- 2. The destination is mixed-use
- 3. Accessibility
- 4. Local Aruban touch for ambiance
- 5. An iconic building landmark

The morphology of Port City is in line with Oranjestad, creating one unified whole. The total issuable land is approximately  $81,050 \text{ m}^2$ , upon which about  $170,000 \text{ to } 190,000 \text{ m}^2$  of gross floor space can be developed. The plan consists of six issuable blocks, varying in size between  $7,000 \text{ m}^2$  and  $20,000 \text{ m}^2$ .



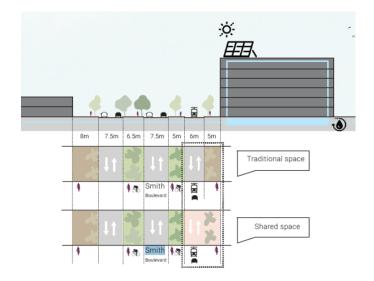
# Port City in a glimpse

# L.G. Smith Boulevard and service road (primary road)

The L.G. Smith Boulevard is currently a through route for traffic. It does not link up areas, acting instead as a barrier. Traffic acts as an impediment to walking and socializing. Even though the L.G. Smith Boulevard falls outside the planned area, developing it integrally with Port City Oranjestad offers an opportunity to remove this barrier function.

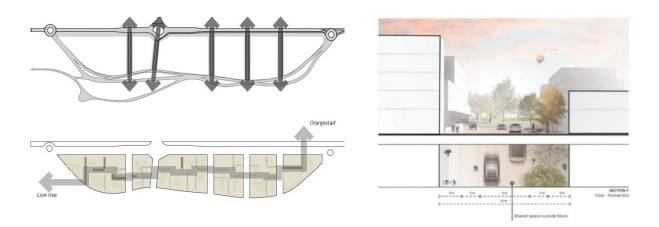


On the side bordering of Port City Oranjestad, a shared space will be designed as a connection for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport (with the possibility of a number of tram-stops). A proposed tram-route along the boulevard will also attract more people to pass through Port City Oranjestad, not only making the boulevard livelier on the ocean side, but also on the in-land side.



# Vistas (secondary road)

The envisioned vistas are an extension of the intersecting streets on the industrial side of the L.G. Smith Boulevard. The layout of the existing streets should become one whole with the vistas, thereby reinforcing the visual connection with the ocean. The vistas will be designed as a shared area space for pedestrians, bikes and cars. For car traffic, the vistas will be one-way streets.



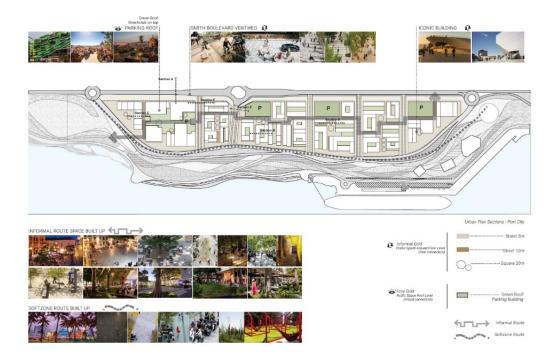


# Building blocks

As indicated before, the goal is for the morphology of Port City Oranjestad to adhere to the one of the city of Oranjestad, creating one unified whole. The plan consists of six issuable blocks, varying in size between 7,000 m<sup>2</sup> and 20,000 m<sup>2</sup>.

Within the building blocks, approximately 30 % of the space will be semi-public, in the form of small streets and squares. This is what APA calls the informal route. An informal grid was chosen for the urban development plan. This means that the grid is flexible in time and can be modified in phases.

The positions of buildings and open spaces are flexible within the building blocks. This means that buildings can be adapted in scale and can be adjusted to market demand over time.



#### Parking

Parking is concentrated in four parking garages and three semi-underground parking facilities on the eastern and western ends of the project and under the elevated part of the park. The three semi-underground parking facilities were introduced to bring the size of the parking buildings in harmony with the rest of the buildings.

To comply with the design principle of having the buildings directed towards the public space, the ground floor of the parking buildings always has a public function. The vertical circulation of the parking buildings will be on the perimeter, thus making the user of the parking facility part of the public space when he/she is walking from or to



his car. By planning beach clubs on the roofs of the parking garages, another layer of (semi) public space is introduced.

This usage is promoted because the roofs of the buildings offer a magnificent view on the ocean and on the island. The location of the parking garages is part of the strategically chosen distribution of source points in the areas. These consider the defined parking norms, as well as walking distance for users.

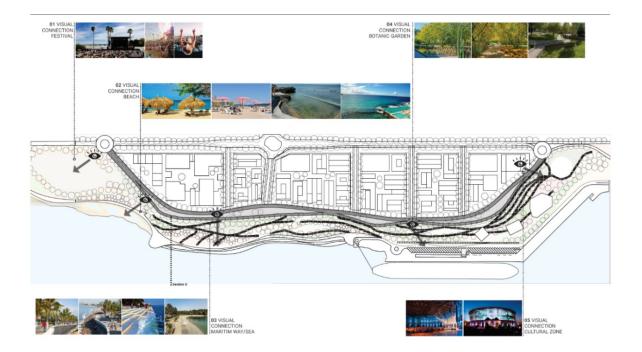
In this plan, APA has chosen to build parking facilities from the perspective of spatial quality and space saving. The developer is responsible for the realization of sufficient parking and will therefore have to invest in the parking solution.



#### Scenic road (primary road)

The scenic road connects the built-up and the waterfront park. The scenic road will run alongside the city development and the park, providing ever-changing views and sightlines. Pedestrians, cyclists and cars will be able to access the scenic road, designed as a shared space, with vehicles moving at a walking pace.

On the oceanfront side, there will be terraces with cafes, bars and restaurants, as well as verandas of the residential buildings. Arcades for hotels or retail and commercial spaces will also be a part of this. In short, a lively area along the new boulevard with a diverse usage.



# Park

The Port City Oranjestad park is designed both for activity and relaxation. The green areas are made up of different zones: with local tree species, areas with grasses and trees or beach sand and trees, or a layered structure with borders, thickets and trees. The park will be bounded by the new scenic road, which will run alongside the development and the park. The park incorporates a rolling landscape on the eastern side, so that there is no direct view of the cruise terminal and its fences.

On the eastern side, the park also joins the existing linear park, forming a single larger area of parkland. This section of the park also contains the former water tank, which will be converted into an entertainment center with a façade developed by an artist. There are locations within the park that are suitable for holding concerts, festivals and events (possibly the Bushiri Beach area).

The park also includes spaces for user initiatives, in accordance with the principle of 'bring your own stuff', like, for example, a spontaneous barbecue. The park will have space for urban sports, such as a skating, biking, as well as cross-training, outdoor fitness, 3x3 basketball, volleyball, soccer, jogging, etc. Play elements will be incorporated for children, such as playgrounds and water features.

The transition from the park to the water will be partly occupied by the cruise terminal, which will flow into a stepped pedestrian and recreation area. This zone meanders along the water, forming a kind of viewing gallery and ending in a fishing platform and viewing point. From here, the natural structure continues towards the bay of Bushiri Beach. There are links to this hiking zone via paths through the park, making it well connected to the new scenic road.

# Sustainable design

One of the basic premises of the entire development is a sustainable development. This resonates with the values that APA wishes to hold. Opportunities to incorporate the latest sustainable technologies will be explored.

At the moment, three key themes have been identified that play into the strengths of Aruba's natural endowments: energy efficiency (utilizing wind, sun and shade, and setting sustainability targets on energy efficiency for developers), energy generation (energy neutral public spaces, utilizing solar, and possibly wind power, to illuminate public spaces), and water usage (irrigation of the park through a grey water system (helophytes filter).

Port City Oranjestad is based on the lowest possible energy consumption, with a preference for renewable energy where it is possible. Buildings will all be designed with good insulation in order to prevent heat accumulation. In addition, the project has



been designed in accordance with the prevailing wind direction and to create shade in the streets and squares. Paving is also minimized to prevent heat stress.

This means that dark materials are avoided in the public areas wherever possible, in order to prevent heat radiation. The same applies to the buildings: roofs reflect light and are therefore either light in color, green roofs, or roofs with solar panels, PV tubes or a combination of these. Another design aspect is the shading of façades using louvres, awnings, ridges, and coarse materials to minimize the CO<sup>2</sup> footprint.

# **Connection with the surrounding areas**

#### Oranjestad

The connection of Port City Oranjestad with the city of Oranjestad is one of the defining features of the entire project. Port City Oranjestad should complement and strengthen the city of Oranjestad as a whole. The guiding principles were specifically designed to create synergy with the city of Oranjestad, thus amplifying the strong points of both areas.

At the start of the design process, the morphology of the city of Oranjestad was analyzed. The block sizes to be used in the development of Port City are comparable to the city of Oranjestad. Additionally, the sizes of alleys, streets and squares used in the urban plan are based on designs utilized in the city of Oranjestad as well.

This repeating morphology will bring unity and clarity and truly makes Port City Oranjestad a part of the city of Oranjestad, instead of a separate development. This unison strengthens the aim for inclusiveness, as Port City Oranjestad can be experienced by the local population as an extension of the city of Oranjestad, one that opens it up to the water and gives it new energy.

One of the key aspects is creating an open environment, stimulating a lively back and forth connection between the areas. It is therefore important to create a high-quality connection and to have sight-lines that encourage people to move around.

With routes that offer a lot of variety, visitors are compelled to continue walking. Shadow along the route is crucial for this purpose. The site of the L.G. Smith Boulevard is particularly good for walking and cycling, because of the wind and the shade of the buildings.

Along the L. G. Smith Boulevard, a number of tram-stops are envisioned to make the connection between the low-rise area, Port City and the city of Oranjestad even



stronger. The goal is for Port City to exude high quality and a local atmosphere, creating a unique experience for visitors. Local entrepreneurs should have room to sell typical Aruban and locally produced products. This distinguishes itself from the center of the city of Oranjestad and the high-rise area, where mostly big international brands and American cuisine dominate the streets.

This a difference in atmosphere also allows for the serving of a different type of consumer, limiting competition with existing businesses. It will also offer more opportunities for the Aruban middle class.

#### Cruise terminal

The cruise terminal forms an integral part of the development of Port City Oranjestad, as it serves as the first acquaintance for cruise visitors visiting Aruba. If three ships moor at the cruise terminal, there is suddenly a chance that 10,000 people will enter the city of Oranjestad. Port City Oranjestad will stimulate the dispersion of cruise tourists throughout the city of Oranjestad, easing the pressure on the inner city.

The aim is to create multiple points of exit, since this will not funnel all these cruise tourists into the city of Oranjestad through one route. This will lead to a better distribution and a buzz throughout the whole area. A cruise terminal is a place of transition, with people leaving the ship and stepping over to another means of transport. With an eye on sustainability, walking and cycling should be stimulated as means of transport.

With the Port City Oranjestad development, the cruise tourists arriving at the terminal area around Schoenerhaven will have a shorter route to the city center and their presence will bring more liveliness to Schoenerhaven. The cruise tourists arriving at the terminal will have a shorter walk to the beach, making it more likely that people will walk instead of taking a taxi to the beaches in the high-rise area. The park will create a varied and shady walking route to the Bushiri Beach area, creating a corridor to the beach.

#### Schoenerhaven

Schoenerhaven is not part of the project area, but a proper development of this area is essential for the revitalization of the city of Oranjestad. There is an opportunity to create a Saint Tropez like feeling by allowing people to parade along the water with a view of the beautiful yachts and scenes of the local fishermen coming to shore with their catches of the day. At the moment, the kiosks block the view to the water.

In order to utilize the potential of the ocean to the utmost, the kiosks should be placed strategically and need to have a temporary character. Similar to a daily market, stands can be broken down at the end of the day and set back up the next. This way, the connection with the water can be re-established.



Since the buildings on the southwest corner of Schoenerhaven have been sold and developed, this is the chance to connect the area to the city of Oranjestad again.

The key challenge is to ensure that people walk over there and want to stay. Schoenerhaven is a unique selling point of the city of Oranjestad. Elsewhere on the island, you do not have the opportunity to create that Saint Tropez like ambiance, with wining and dining in the historic Oranjestad Harbor.



# Bushiri

After the remnants of the former Bushiri Beach Hotel have been removed, the qualities of the natural beach need to be enhanced. The beach experience should be extended towards the project area, as this will give visitors a destination on the western side of the project area and therefore a reason to pass through the entire area. This public beach will be an attraction that increases the appeal of the project area and the city of Oranjestad as whole.

This will lessen the pressure on Aruba's other beaches as well. The possibility to walk in the sand and enjoy beach related activities should start before people leave the Port City Oranjestad park, or, better yet, should be incorporated into the park. The beach area will be the pivot point between the low-rise hotel area and the project area. Besides beach related activities, the area is also ideal for events. Most events now take place at the port site and Eagle Beach, causing nuisance.

By creating natural sound barriers in the form of trees and shrubbery, the nuisance to the hotel area can be reduced. This will create an area that can be used and enjoyed by cruise tourists, visitors to Port City and the Aruban population alike.





#### North of Smith Boulevard area

The north side of the L. G. Smith Boulevard is now a classic industrial site. The buildings as well as the layout are practical with the most dominant way of transportation: by car. Since the (port related) industry has left for Barcadera, the purpose of this area needs to change. This trend has already started, but it is important to plan this transformation systematically. The vistas in the Port City Oranjestad plan connect to the intersecting streets on this industrial site.

The layout of these streets should become one whole with the vistas, thereby reinforcing the visual connection with the ocean. It must be possible for pedestrians to cross safely from one side of the L. G. Smith Boulevard to the other, without experiencing excessive disruption in the traffic.

# Legal status of the urban development plan

The urban development plan has been approved by the Council of Ministers on the 22nd of February 2019. The most important principles, such as the mix of functions, the building heights, volumes and other aspects, have already been included in the ROP(V). This provides a solid base for the successful completion of the 'verkavelingsplan' (allotment-plan), an important part of finalizing the urban development plan.

When tendering each lot, APA will take on the responsibility and accountability for the successful completion of the allotment-plan. The awarded developer will subsequently be responsible for the construction of its own building structure and obtaining the required permits thereof.



#### Urban development plan elaborated in two assessment tools

The urban development plan forms the foundation for the area development. The outlines of this plan are set out in this document. The appearance direction plan and the parcel passport zooms in on the detailing of the plan and determine the desired spatial quality.

Ultimately the appearance direction plan and the parcel passport will constitute legal documents for the tender procedure and the issuing of the respective permits. In each phase, proposed plans will be validated according to the binding guidelines stipulated in these documents in order to guarantee quality and consistency over the course of the development.

#### Appearance direction plan

The appearance direction plan brings the foundational elements of the vision of the area including the urban development plan to life. It describes the desired qualities of the plan on the level of the public space and the architecture. It also lays out the qualities specified in the urban development plan in more measurable and visual quality. The appearance direction plan does not provide ironclad regulations, but instead provides guidelines that describe the desired quality. These guidelines hold criteria that are utilized to ensure that all developments meet the required level of quality. The developer is provided a clear understanding of the desired quality level. It also provides assurance of the level of quality of their neighboring buildings and public spaces.

#### Parcel passports

The parcel passport is a tool to guide future developers. passport provides quantitative guidelines.

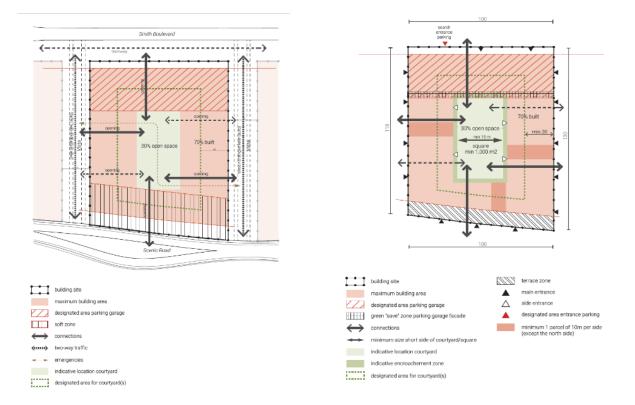
Where the appearance direction plan deals with the desired quality of the public space and the architecture, the parcel passport provides quantitative guidelines.

It gives guidance in:

- Where to build and where to leave open space. In other words, the position of the building on the lot is regulated;
- The size of the parcels in length and width;
- The height of the buildings and the relation between different heights of buildings;
- The distribution of the different functions within the block.



The parcel passports were set up in such a way that the development will have the appearance of an organically grown city. APA strived to define regulations in such a way that diversity in volume, height and appearance will be created.

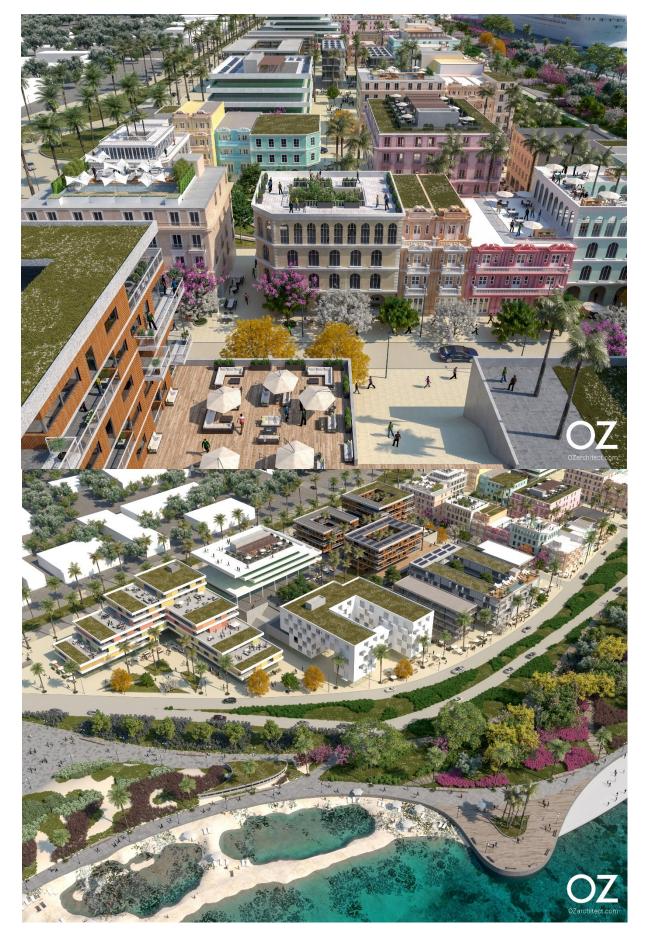


The urban development plan, the appearance direction plan and parcel passports can be downloaded after registration for the market consultation at: <u>www.arubaports.com/portcityoranjestad</u>

#### **Disclaimer**

This document is a summary of the completed process and the documents in question, it is indicative and has an informative character. No rights can be derived from the content (including texts and images)





16





