

## **Wied il-Ghasel works should stop until appeal is decided - Deidun**

Works at Wied il-Ghasel should be stopped while an appeal was being considered, environmentalist and MEP candidate Alan Deidun said.

“The decision to allow works to proceed despite the appeal having been postponed and is still to be heard instills a lack of confidence in Joe Citizen about the planning process,” he said.

Mr Deidun said in a statement that a lot had been mooted about the pending reform at the Malta Environment and Planning Authority which was at cabinet stage.

This reform, he said, should iron out anomalies such as that allowing the works to continue when these were being appealed.

“Otherwise, appeals are meant to be clawless and toothless,” he argued.

Mr Deidun said that permit in question would set a precedent by opening the floodgates to further development along valleysides reducing them to mere watercourses, hemmed in from all sides, with no ecological or landscape value.

This had already happened to valleys in San Gwann, Mellieha and Birkirkara.

One hoped, Mr Deidun said, that the upcoming reform would empower residents, NGO's, councils and the planning appeal process and that it would afford longer times for objections to be filed and representations to be made.

“I make these comments as a committed environmentalist and not as an MEP candidate since I staunchly believe that those tainted politically should never interfere in the planning process, in spite of not agreeing with decisions taken,” he said.