

**NORTH WEST LOCAL PLAN**

**REVISED  
TA' QALI ACTION  
PLAN**

**Approved Plan**

**August 2006**

**TA' QALI**

**MEPA**

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## **Viżjoni u Strategija**

Iċ-Ċentru Nazzjonali għar-Rikreazzjoni irid jahseb għall-protezzjoni u titjib tal-karattru tiegħu biex ikun jista' jipprovdi rikreazzjoni u kultura; post li wiehed iżur biex igawdi l-hin hieles tiegħu matul is-sena; faċilitajiet għaż-żgħażaġh u l-anzjani, għall-Maltin kif ukoll għat-turisti; faċilitajiet sabiex ikunu provduti l-isport u l-kultura; kemm formali kif ukoll dawk informali. Iċ-Ċentru Nazzjonali għar-Rikreazzjoni ta' Malta, huwa rifless f' din l-istrategija tal-Pjan ta' Azzjoni:-

### **Għan Ġenerali**

L-għan ġenerali tal-Pjan ta' Azzjoni għal Ta' Qali hu li jtejjeb iċ-Ċentru Nazzjonali għar-Rikreazzjoni għal aktar żvilupp rikreattiv, inklużi sport, arti u kultura fuq bażi nazzjonali kif ukoll fuq dik reġjonali, kif ukoll biex jipprovdi spazju miftuħ għall-pubbliku.

Għalhekk, l-Awtorità ta' l-Ippjanar trid tiżgura li l-użu ewlieni ta' Ta' Qali jkun dak ta' rikreazzjoni u kultura.

### **Ċentru Nazzjonali għar-Rikreazzjoni**

Il-Pjan jipproponi t-tkabbir ta' iċ-Ċentru Nazzjonali għar-Rikreazzjoni biex tingħata opportunità akbar għall-harsien tal-karattru, promozzjoni u titjib ta' Ta' Qali għall-użu rikreattiv, kemm għaż-żmien immedjat kif ukoll fit-tul, b' enfasi partikolari fuq il-possibiltà li jkun provdut aktar spazju fil-beraħ.

Bdil fl-użu, minn dak agrikolu għal dak rikreattiv u kulturali, jithalla jsehh fil-limiti ta' l-art disinjata bhala iċ-Ċentru Nazzjonali għar-Rikreazzjoni.

Il-Pjan jidentifika siti għall-faċilitajiet ta' rikreazzjoni u jipprova joħloq bilanċ permezz ta' tfassil u amministrazzjoni xierqa ta' l-art.

Il-Pjan jirrakkomanda li dak l-isport b' impatt qawwi li jolqot hażin l-ambjent taż-żona tal-Pjan ta' Azzjoni u l-proprjetà residenzjali ta' viċin, għandu jkun rijallokat f' partijiet aktar adatti.

### **Strategija għab Bażi tas-Siti**

Huwa importanti li jiġi identifikat x'tip ta' attivitajiet rikreattivi huma adatti għaċ-Ċentru Nazzjonali għar-Rikreazzjoni. B'hekk ikun jista' jsir studju ta' kif qed tintuża l-art bħalissa u jekk l-użi huma kompatibbli maż-żoni residenzjali tal-viċin. Jiġu implimentati l-proposti għal dan il-għan fiż-żona tal-Pjan ta' Azzjoni.

Peress li ż-żona residenzjali tal-Mosta kienet kibret lejn in-nofsinhar, din giet qrib hafna taż-żona tal-Pjan ta' Azzjoni għal Ta' Qali. Għalhekk huwa importanti hafna li

l-hsejjes ikunu kkunsidrati bhala fattur essenzjali meta jiġu studjati l-użi eżistenti ta' l-art kif ukoll dawk proposti.

Ma jithalla jsir l-ebda żvilupp residenzjali maġenb il-Pjan ta' Azzjoni, hlief dak indikat preżentament fl-iskemi temporanji.

Kumpless Sportiv - Ghandu jinstab post fiċ-Ċentru Nazzjonali għar-Rikreazzjoni għal kumpless sportiv fejn ikun jista' jintlagħab il-logħob kemm ġewwa kif ukoll barra. Dan ghandu jservi għall-attivitajiet sportivi internazzjonali/nazzjonali/reġjonali.

L-Ispazju Miftuħ Informali - jipprovdi bilanċ għall-istrutturi mibnija u jikkumplimenta l-faċilitajiet rikreattivi adatti għall-familji.

Arti u Kultura - Esebizzjonijiet (wirjiet) fil-miftuħ u mużewijiet speċjalizzati jgħinu sabiex tingħata aktar haġja liċ-Ċentru Nazzjonali għar-Rikreazzjoni u jinkoraġġixxi aktar l-użu tiegħu tul is-sena kollha.

Sistema ta' Passaġġi fil-Kampanja - Huwa maħsub li Ta' Qali jkun jiffirma parti importanti mis-sistema ta' passaġġi fil-kampanja.

Sport li jhalli Impatt - Sport bħal tigrijiet tal-karozzi, huwa kkunsidrat bhala inkompatibbli ma' Ta' Qali minhabba l-impatt tal-hsejjes fuq il-faċilitajiet rikreattivi u l-proprietà residenzjali tal-qrib. Il-kaċċa u l-insib huma wkoll meqjusa bhala inkompatibbli f'żona ta' rikreazzjoni minhabba periklu għas-sigurtà.

Il-provvediment ta' dawn il-faċilitajiet għar-rikreazzjoni jkun kkunsidrat wara li tiġi analizzata d-domanda u l-kapaċità fiżika tas-siti speċifiċi goċ-Ċentru għar-Rikreazzjoni.

### **Arti u Kultura**

Ġiet identifikata zona fiċ-Ċentru Nazzjonali għar-Rikreazzjoni, qrib tal-Ġnien Formali, fejn jistgħu jiġu żviluppati xi Mużewijiet. Dawn għandhom iservu ta' attrazzjoni tul is-sena kollha.

Il-Mużew ta' l-Avjazzjoni ser ikun jista' jespandi maġenb l-istadju nazzjonali u l-punent ta' l-istadju tal-*Basketball*.

### **Agrikoltura u Ortikoltura**

Il-Pjan ta' Azzjoni, bi qbil mal-Pjan ta' Struttura, jiżgura li tithares ir-rikreazzjoni f' Ta' Qali. Bdil fl-użu ta' art agrikola jew ta' ortikultura li hemm fil-limiti taċ-Ċentru Nazzjonali ta' Rikreazzjoni jithalla jsir biss għal għanijiet ta' rikreazzjoni. L-art li tinsab fin-nofsinhar taċ-Ċentru tas-Snajja' u fil-punent u n-nofsinhar tal-kumpless industrijali ta' "Attard Bros.", għandha tinzamm għal għanijiet agrikoli.

## **Konservazzjoni**

Iż-żona tal-Pjan ta' Azzjoni għal Ta' Qali tinsab f'Area ta' Konservazzjoni Rurali u Wied il-Hemsija għe identifikat bhala Żona ta' Importanza Ekoloġika. Huwa propost li tiġi ddikjarata żona ta' riserva naturali fiċ-Ċentru Nazzjonali għar-Rikreazzjoni.

## **Kummerċ u Industrija**

Il-Pjan ta' Azzjoni jimponi kontrolli stretti, li jillimitaw l-użu ta' l-iżvilupp kummerċjali eżistenti. Bi qbil mal-*Policy* REC 7 tal-Pjan ta' Struttura il-Pjan jissuġġerixxi li għandu jinstab post alternattiv għall-użi industrijali jew kummerċjali li jinsabu fiċ-Ċentru Nazzjonali għar-Rikreazzjoni.

Il-Pjan jipproponi l-iżvilupp mill-ġdid/riabilitazzjoni taċ-Ċentru tas-Snajja; l-użu ekonomiku ta' dik li kienet il-fabbrika ta' l-insiġ, provvediment għal tkabbir fil-ġejjieni taċ-Ċentru tal-Pitkali għad-distribuzzjoni bl-ingrossa ta' frott u hxejjex; u bdil tal-użu tal-art tal-mixtla għal l-użu rikreajattiv jew , arti jew kultura. Qiegħed jiġi rakkomandat li l-fabbrika tal-konkos li tinsab maġenb l-*istadium* tal-Basketball, tittiehed post ieħor. Biċċa art li tinsab maġenb dik li kienet il-fabbrika tal-insiġ ('*Spinning and Weaving Factory*') ser tkun riservata għall-industriji mhux tas-snajja' li għandhom ikunu rijallokati miż-żona proposta għal Ġnien Formali.

## **Tfassil tal-Pajsaġġ u Disinn**

Il-Pjan jidentifika l-htieġa urġenti biex jithawlu siġar li jipprovdu pajsaġġ sabiħ u li jgħattu strutturi li jkerrhu. Huwa propost li jithejja '*Landscape Master Plan*' u jissuġġerixxi li Ta' Qali għandu jsir ċentru għal titjib tal-pajsaġġ, u b'hekk iservi wkoll ta' eżempju kif dan it-titjib jista jsir fil-bqija ta' Malta.

L-Imdina hi belt storika mhux wisq mittiefsa li qiegħda f'pożizzjoni drammatika taż-Żona tal-Pjan Lokali. Il-Pjan ta' Azzjoni jħares din il-qagħda viżwali bit-tfassil ta' Żona ta' Pajsaġġ ta' Sbuħija Naturali.

Qegħdin jiġu proposti wkoll limitazzjonijiet fl-għoli tal-bini f' Ta' Qali biex jinholoq bilanċ bejn l-iżvilupp ġdid u dak eżistenti u sabiex jintlaħqu l-għanijiet tal-Pjan ta' Azzjoni għal titjib fl-ambjent billi jitnaqqas u jitrazżan l-impatt viżwali ta' l-iżvilupp ġo Ta' Qali, kif ikun jidher mill-Imdina u mill-kampanja ta' madwar.

## **Forom tal-Bini**

Il-Pjan ta' Struttura jidentifika ż-żona tal-Pjan ta' Azzjoni bhala ċ-Ċentru Nazzjonali għar-Rikreazzjoni ta' Malta, u għalhekk dawk l-użi kompatibbli ma' sport u rikreazzjoni jintlaqghu favorevolment u jkunu jistgħu jikkonsistu minn varjetà ta' strutturi. Dawn l-istrutturi għandhom jipprovdu faċilitajiet, bħal sala ta' l-isport, mużewijiet, postijiet fejn atleti jtellqu, u faċilitajiet għal tahrig biex ilaħħqu mad-domanda li hemm għalihom.

Biex jinżamm il-karattru miftuħ tal-mitjar li kien hemm qabel, qed jiġi propost li dawn l-istrutturi ġodda jkunu żviluppata f'żona apposta. Dawn jistgħu jiġu żviluppata hekk:- l-ewwel, l-art ta' maġenb u mal-lvant ta' l-istadju Nazzjonali; u t-tieni, l-art fin-naħa tal-grigal tal-mixtla . Ser ikun hemm xi limitazzjonijiet fil-gholi tal-bini f'dawn iż-żoni.

### **Aċċess**

Qed jiġi propost li, sabiex jitjieb l-aċċess għal Ta' Qali, it-triq eżistenti minn Wied il-Hemsija li tingħaqad mat-triq arterjali eżistenti bejn H'Attard u r-Rabat, issir ukoll triq arterjali.

Qed tkun proposta triq ġdida biex ittejjeb l-aċċessibbiltà għall-istadju Nazzjonali tal-'football' min-naħa ta' wara ta' l-istadju għat-triq sekondarja li tiffurma l-konfini tal-punent ta' Ta' Qali.

### **Immaniġġjar tat-Traffiku**

Se jiġi pprovdut aktar parkeġġ għall-karozzi minħabba t-tkabbir fil-faċilitajiet rikreattivi.

Is-sistema ta' toroq f'din iż-żona se tkun żviluppata b'tali mod li tippromwovi l-għanijiet prinċipali taż-żona u li tiskuraġġixxi milli tintuża għat-traffiku bejn il-Mosta u r-Rabat. Dan għandu jsir permezz ta' tabelli u miżuri oħra xierqa biex jikkontrollaw it-traffiku.

Dawn il-miżuri għandhom ukoll l-għan li jmxexxu t-traffiku industrijali u kummerċjali, 'l ġewwa jew 'il barra miż-żona, bil-heffa u bl-inqas tfixkil għall-għanijiet prinċipali taż-żona, u fl-istess ħin, biex jiskuraġġixxu aktar żvilupp ta' dan it-tip f' Ta' Qali.

### **Żona ta' Konservazzjoni Rurali**

L-area tal-Pjan ta' Azzjoni tinsab ġo Żona ta' Konservazzjoni Rurali. Iż-Żoni ta' Konservazzjoni Rurali, kif imfassla fil-Pjan ta' Struttura, għandhom l-għan li ma jhallux aktar żvilupp ta' strutturi jew attivitajiet f'żoni rurali, hlief dawk meħtieġa fil-kampanja.

Għal dak li hu bini eżistenti u strutturi oħra, l-għan ġenerali hu li jittejjeb l-ambjent. Għalhekk tithalla ssir rijabilitazzjoni u bdil xieraq ta' użu ta' xi bini, kif ukoll jitneħhew xi binjiet u strutturi oħra li jħassru l-ambjent.

### **Attrazzjonijiet għall-Viżitaturi**

Il-fatt li Ta' Qali huwa popolari mal-viżitaturi, ma jiġġustifikax l-allokkazzjoni ta' attrazzjonijiet ġodda. In-nuqqas ta' art addatta f'dawn l-inħawi qieghda tirriżulta fil-ħtieġa ta' ipplanar sabiex din iż-żona tkun użata aktar għall-isport u rikreazzjoni, kif

ukoll li jiżgura li dawn ikunu kompatibbli ma' xulxin u ma' l-użi eżistenti ta' l-art. Jigu inkoraġġiti dawk l-attrazzjonijiet/faċilitajiet li jattiraw lin-nies fuq skala nazzjonali. Hemm ukoll il-htieġa għall-provvediment ta' aktar spazju informali għall-pubbliku, żoni fejn jilagħbu t-tfal u faċilitajiet għall '*picnics*'.

### **Servizzi Pubbliċi**

Il-Pjan jishaq fuq il-bżonn li s-servizzi pubbliċi, '*substations*' jew faċilitajiet ta' hażna jsiru taht l-art jew inkella jkunu inkorporati għol-bini. L-Awtorità ta' l-Ippjanar se tesiġi li dawk il-faċilitajiet li għandhom impatt negattiv fuq l-ambjent jitnehhew jew ikunu rijallokati.

### **Ċentru għall-Infommazzjoni**

Ser jiġi pprovdut ċentru żgħir għall infommazzjoni magħenb il-parkeġġ taċ-Ċentru tas-Snajja', biex ikun jista' jagħti infommazzjoni dwar il-faċilitajiet rikreattivi li hemm għall-viżitaturi.

### **Twettiq**

Il-Pjan ta' Azzjoni jirrakkomanda li tinhatar aġenzija li tiehu ħsieb it-twettiq tal-Pjan għal Ta' Qali.

### **Strateġija Ġenerali**

**L-istrateġija ġenerali tal-Pjan ta' Azzjoni tinsab f'Mappa 6, fuq paġna 32.**

| <b>Contents</b>   | <b>Page</b> |
|---|-------------|
| <b>Vižjoni u Strategija (Executive Summary)</b>         | i           |
| <b>Interpreting and Using the Action Plan</b>           | xii         |
| <b>1 Introduction</b>                                   | 1           |
| Location  | 1           |
| Boundary  | 1           |
| History   | 1           |
| Land Ownership and Management                           | 2           |
| <b>2 Strategic Background (Structure Plan)</b>          | 6           |
| Development in Non Urban Areas                          | 6           |
| Recreation  | 6           |
| Conservation  | 7           |
| Agriculture and Horticulture                            | 8           |
| Commerce and Industry                                   | 8           |
| Transport   | 9           |
| Tourism   | 9           |
| Public Utilities  | 10          |
| <b>3 Existing Situation and Analysis of Main Issues</b> | 11          |
| Recreation  | 11          |
| Agriculture and Horticulture                            | 13          |
| Conservation  | 14          |
| Commerce and Industry                                   | 14          |
| Landscaping   | 15          |
| Transportation  | 16          |
| <b>4 Aims and Objectives of the Action Plan</b>         | 20          |
| Overall Aim   | 20          |
| Objectives  | 20          |
| <b>5 What is Recreation?</b>                            | <b>21</b>   |
| Introduction  | 21          |
| Resources   | 21          |
| Facilities  | 22          |
| <b>6 Action Plan Area</b>                               | 24          |
| <b>7 Vision</b>   | 26          |
| <b>8 Strategy</b>                                       | 27          |
| Overall Aim   | 27          |
| National Recreation Centre                              | 27          |
| Location Strategy                                       | 27          |
| Art and Culture   | 28          |

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| Agriculture and Horticulture            | 28        |
| Conservation                            | 29        |
| Commerce and Industry                   | 29        |
| Landscape and Design                    | 29        |
| Built Form                              | 29        |
| Access                                  | 30        |
| Traffic Management                      | 30        |
| Rural Conservation Area                 | 30        |
| Visitor Attractions                     | 31        |
| Utilities                               | 31        |
| Information Centre                      | 31        |
| Implementation                          | 31        |
| Policy Strategy                         | 31        |
| <b>9 Recreation and Sport</b>           | <b>33</b> |
| Recreation and Sports                   | 34        |
| Formal Recreation                       | 38        |
| Informal Recreation                     | 43        |
| <b>10 Art and Culture</b>               | <b>45</b> |
| Art and Culture                         | 46        |
| <b>11 Agriculture and Horticulture</b>  | <b>49</b> |
| Agriculture and Horticulture            | 50        |
| <b>12 Conservation</b>                  | <b>52</b> |
| <b>13 Commerce and Industry</b>         | <b>54</b> |
| Commerce and Industry                   | 55        |
| <b>14 Landscaping and Design</b>        | <b>68</b> |
| Landscaping and Design                  | 69        |
| <b>15 Access and Traffic Management</b> | <b>76</b> |
| Access and Traffic Management           | 77        |
| <b>16 Utilities</b>                     | <b>85</b> |
| <b>17 Information Centre</b>            | <b>87</b> |
| <b>18 Implementation</b>                | <b>88</b> |
| Pre-Development Stage                   | 89        |
| Design and Approval Stage               | 91        |
| Construction Stage                      | 93        |
| Policy Implementation                   | 93        |
| Monitoring and Evaluation               | 93        |
| <b>19 Appendix</b>                      | <b>97</b> |
| I Government Committee Report (1986)    | 98        |



|           |                         |            |
|-----------|-------------------------|------------|
| II        | Planting Plan (1988)    | 104        |
| III       | I.U.C.N. Categories     | 108        |
| IV        | Structure Plan Policies | 110        |
| V         | Visual Vulnerability    | 115        |
| <b>20</b> | <b>Acknowledgements</b> | <b>116</b> |
| <b>21</b> | <b>Index</b>            | <b>117</b> |

## Maps

|               |                                       |    |
|---------------|---------------------------------------|----|
| <b>Map 1</b>  | Ta' Qali Action Plan Area             | 4  |
| <b>Map 2</b>  | Ownership                             | 5  |
| <b>Map 3</b>  | Existing Land Use                     | 18 |
| <b>Map 4</b>  | Existing Nature Reserve               | 19 |
| <b>Map 5</b>  | Policy Map                            | 25 |
| <b>Map 6</b>  | Strategy Map                          | 32 |
| <b>Map 7</b>  | National Recreation Centre            | 37 |
| <b>Map 8</b>  | Proposed Nature Reserve               | 53 |
| <b>Map 9</b>  | Former Spinning and Weaving Factory   | 58 |
| <b>Map 10</b> | Height Limitations                    | 75 |
| <b>Map 11</b> | Stadium Link Road                     | 78 |
| <b>Map 12</b> | Junction Improvement (Crafts Village) | 84 |
| <b>Map 13</b> | Relocations                           | 92 |

## Policies

|  | <b>Page</b> |
|--|-------------|
| <b>Action Plan</b>                                       | <b>24</b>   |
| NWTQ 1 Action Plan Area                                  | 24          |
| <b>Recreation and Sport</b>                              | <b>34</b>   |
| NWTQ 2 National Recreation Centre                        | 34          |
| NWTQ 3 Recreation, Sport, Art and Cultural Uses          | 34          |
| NWTQ 4 International Sport, Art and Culture Facilities   | 35          |
| NWTQ 5 Change of Use of Land to Recreational Purposes    | 36          |
| NWTQ 6 Basketball  | 38          |
| NWTQ 7 Camping   | 38          |
| NWTQ 8 Cycling   | 39          |
| NWTQ 9 Athletics   | 39          |
| NWTQ 10 Football (Training Facilities)                   | 40          |
| NWTQ 11 Formal Garden                                    | 40          |
| NWTQ 12 Model Aircraft Flying                            | 41          |
| NWTQ 13 Motor Racing                                     | 42          |
| NWTQ 14 Informal Open Space                              | 43          |
| NWTQ 15 Picnic Areas                                     | 43          |
| NWTQ 16 Recreation (Mixed Use)                           | 44          |
| NWTQ 17 Country Parkways and Footpaths                   | 44          |
| <b>Art and Culture</b>                                   | <b>45</b>   |
| NWTQ 18 Aviation Museum                                  | 46          |
| NWTQ 19 Museums  | 46          |
| NWTQ 20 Cultural Centre                                  | 47          |
| NWTQ 21 Animal Sanctuaries                               | 48          |
| <b>Agriculture and Horticulture</b>                      | <b>50</b>   |
| NWTQ 22 Restriction of Use                               | 50          |
| NWTQ 23 Areas of Agricultural Value                      | 50          |
| <b>Conservation</b>                                      | <b>52</b>   |
| NWTQ 24 Area of Ecological Importance                    | 52          |
| NWTQ 25 Nature Reserve                                   | 52          |
| <b>Commerce and Industry</b>                             | <b>54</b>   |
| NWTQ 26 Existing Development                             | 55          |
| NWTQ 27 The “Crafts Village”                             | 55          |
| NWTQ 28 Former Spinning and Weaving Factory              | 56          |
| NWTQ 29 Pitkali (Fruit and Vegetable Distribution Depot) | 59          |
| NWTQ 30 Precast Concrete Plant                           | 60          |
| NWTQ 31 Garden Centre/Nursery                            | 61          |
| NWTQ 32 Industry and Storage                             | 62          |
| NWTQ 33 Service Parking                                  | 63          |
| NWTQ 34 Santa Maria Reservoirs                           | 63          |
| NWTQ 35 Trade Fair                                       | 63          |

|                                      |   |           |
|--------------------------------------|---|-----------|
| NWTQ 36                              | Convention Centre                             | 65        |
| <b>Landscaping and Design</b>        |   | <b>68</b> |
| NWTQ 37                              | Landscape Master Plan                         | 69        |
| NWTQ 38                              | Area of High Landscape Value                  | 69        |
| NWTQ 39                              | Strategic Open Space Gaps between Settlements | 70        |
| NWTQ 40                              | Advertisements                                | 70        |
| NWTQ 41                              | Fencing and Rubble Walls                      | 70        |
| NWTQ 42                              | Soft Landscaping                              | 71        |
| NWTQ 43                              | Hard Landscaping                              | 71        |
| NWTQ 44                              | Height Limitations                            | 72        |
| NWTQ 45                              | External Lighting                             | 73        |
| <b>Access and Traffic Management</b> |   | <b>76</b> |
| NWTQ 46                              | Improvements to Road Network                  | 77        |
| NWTQ 47                              | New Stadium Link Road                         | 77        |
| NWTQ 48                              | Improvements to Western Boundary Road         | 77        |
| NWTQ 49                              | Improvements to the Military Cemetery Road    | 79        |
| NWTQ 50                              | Directional Road Signs                        | 79        |
| NWTQ 51                              | Provision of Public Transport                 | 79        |
| NWTQ 52                              | Bus Stops                                     | 79        |
| NWTQ 53                              | Car Park Upgrading                            | 80        |
| NWTQ 54                              | Stadium Car Parks-Western                     | 80        |
| NWTQ 55                              | Stadium Car Parks - North East                | 80        |
| NWTQ 56                              | Car Park (Former Site of Glass Factory)       | 81        |
| NWTQ 57                              | Management of Through Traffic                 | 81        |
| NWTQ 58                              | Traffic Calming                               | 81        |
| NWTQ 59                              | Stadium Access                                | 82        |
| NWTQ 60                              | Triq il-Pitkali                               | 82        |
| NWTQ 61                              | Access for All                                | 83        |
| <b>Utilities</b>                     |   | <b>85</b> |
| NWTQ 62                              | New Development                               | 85        |
| <b>Information Centre</b>            |   | <b>87</b> |
| NWTQ 63                              | Information Centre                            | 87        |
| <b>Implementation</b>                |   | <b>88</b> |
| NWTQ 64                              | Management Agency                             | 88        |

## **Interpreting and Using the Action Plan**

### **What is an Action Plan?**

A primary responsibility of the Planning Authority is to secure the implementation of the Structure Plan by preparing more detailed plans for particular areas or sectors of activity.

Action Plans are defined under Section 26 of the Development Planning Act, 1992, as being:-

- (i) An Action Plan is made by the Authority for an area where a department or an agency of the Government intends to carry out, or cause to be carried out by agreement with the private developer, substantial development on its own land or on land it intends to acquire by agreement or by compulsory purchase.**
- (ii) An Action Plan may form part, or be the whole of, a Local Plan.**
- (iii) In addition to the information required to be contained in a Local Plan, an Action Plan shall also show the land which is in public ownership and the land which is intended to be brought into public ownership.**

This particular Action Plan forms an important part of the North West Local Plan. It has been formulated in order to guide land use and the development process in Ta' Qali throughout the 10 year life span of the Local Plan. It examines in detail the current situation within Ta' Qali in terms of landscaping problems, lack of space for recreational uses, inappropriate development, traffic and parking problems, as well as recognising the opportunities for the future development of the area. The Plan identifies opportunities for recreation in a co-ordinated manner in order to encourage public and private investment.

The plan proposes the preparation of a Landscape Master Plan and a Management Plan, as examples of positive government intervention.

The policies and suggestions in the Action Plan have been formulated after public consultation procedure and discussions with various public and private organisations concerned with the area, during which the views and concerns of these organisations were recorded and in many instances incorporated within the plan. Land use, traffic, environmental and landscape surveys were also conducted in order to collect information needed to formulate these policies.

## **Aims of the Action Plan**

Structure Plan Policy REC 7 identifies Ta' Qali as the National Recreation Centre for Malta, and the optimisation of the site for further recreational development. Sport and recreational development uses will therefore be considered favourably within those designated Policy Areas of the Action Plan allocated for such development.

The Action Plan's main aims are to secure Ta' Qali as a recreational area providing wide ranging formal and informal activities for both the general public and tourist. This objective is consistent with the Structure Plan Policy for the area which designates Ta' Qali as the National Recreation Centre. In order to achieve these goals, it is necessary to make land available through planning policies in order to accommodate new and existing recreational and sports uses whilst separating and containing non-recreational land uses which may cause adverse impacts on these areas. Major impact sports or commercial/industrial uses which constitute an unacceptable adverse environmental impact will be relocated.

The Action Plan provides additional safeguards to protect the existing strategic gaps between Attard and Ta' Qali, and Mdina and Ta' Qali.

The Action Plan contains specific land use policies suggesting ways of improving the general environment of the area and working towards a more harmonious existence between the different uses in Ta' Qali. These policies are concerned with general and specific issues and areas within Ta' Qali. The parts of Ta' Qali to which they apply are indicated on the policy map accompanying the Action Plan. Various policies relate to more than one particular area.

## **Using the Action Plan**

The policies in the Action Plan should be read in conjunction with those relevant policies contained in the Structure Plan and the Local Plan, in particular those relating to Ta' Qali and the rural conservation area for the north of Malta, development outside urban areas, recreation and transport.

Throughout the Action Plan, policies are highlighted. The accompanying text with each policy, known as the written justification, explains the background to the policy. A full index of all policies is shown in the contents page along with their paragraph number and page number.

Current Structure Plan Policies relevant to the Action Plan are listed for ease of reference in Appendix IV page 105 to this Local Plan.

# Ta' Qali Action Plan

## 1 Introduction

### Location

- 1.1 Ta' Qali is situated in central Malta. To the east and north lie the towns of Lija, Attard and Mosta. Agricultural land surrounds the rest of Ta' Qali.
- 1.2 The ancient capital of Mdina overlooks Ta' Qali. It forms a dramatic backdrop to this largely flat area which in itself is visible from the walled city against the urban backcloth of Attard. Ta' Qali slopes slightly from west to east and therefore lies higher than Mosta, Lija and Attard. The area itself is mainly flat although its periphery is undulating and a rocky outcrop in the south west corner rises to approximately 135 m above sea level.
- 1.3 The Wied il-Hemsija which runs west to east through the agricultural area to the south of Ta' Qali is an Area of Ecological Importance. It forms part of the valley network running from the high ground around Rabat and links to Wied Incita on the southern side of Attard.

### Boundary

- 1.4 The study area of the Action Plan coincides with that area excluded from the responsibility of local councils under the Local Council Act 1993 (Map 1 page 4).

### History

- 1.5 Ta' Qali was developed as a civil airfield in the 1930's. It was the main military airfield in World War II. Its use as a military airfield ceased in 1964 when it was handed over to the Maltese Government. Until 1986, no clear policy existed for the area.
- 1.6 In 1986, the general degradation of Ta' Qali and its unplanned development, particularly for industry, prompted the Government to appoint a committee to consider the area's future.
- 1.7 In February 1986 the committee was set up to advise the Government on the best way to develop Ta' Qali into a National Park or an Amenities Park. S. Sant' Angelo (Ministry of Education) was appointed chairman, assisted by Anthony Cassar, Joseph Spiteri (Faculty of Architecture), Joe Galea (Works Department) and Maurice Galea (Malta Development Corporation). The report prepared by the committee outlined (i) the current situation at the time, (ii) planning and management, and (iii) proposed outline plan. The plan envisaged unspoiled landscape and recreational areas. The committee expressed concern that industrial uses (i.e. concrete processes) were causing

adverse impact on the area and “are quite incompatible with the nature of the proposed development”.

- 1.8 The committee’s report (Appendix I page 91) and the subsequent designs of Architect Joseph Spiteri formed the basis for the current layout of Ta’ Qali comprising the Crafts Village, National Football stadium, agricultural areas, open recreational areas and a Formal Park.
- 1.9 In November 1988 a report by Joseph Borg outlined a planting plan for Ta’ Qali (Appendix II page 97).
- 1.10 In 1972, the Nissen huts were leased out to craft industries and are now known as the “Crafts Village” and a vegetable distribution centre was opened on the Triq il-Pitkali on the eastern boundary of the Action Plan, utilising existing aircraft hangers.
- 1.11 A considerable amount of landscaping and afforestation has taken place with the former runway area now being used as a main road through the area and for providing car parking.
- 1.12 Certain areas were landscaped to protect and delineate them from car parking areas and a new service road was constructed to ensure that industrial traffic was excluded from the recreational area. The first phase of the Formal Garden envisaged in the 1986 plan has been implemented, consisting of garden, arcaded loggia and a Greek style amphitheatre. Two areas north of the national football stadium originally allocated for landscaping and informal recreation, have been enclosed for a vineyard and motor racing track.

### **Land Ownership and Management**

- 1.13 A large extent of the land, supporting the majority of existing recreational uses, is government owned, and leased to various sports organisations, (i.e. Malta Football Association, Malta Basketball Association). Large areas of privately owned land exist in the north, south and west of Ta’ Qali (Map 2 page 5).
- 1.14 The Malta Development Corporation as the lease holder is responsible for the administration of the Crafts Village.
- 1.15 Previously the Secretariat for the Environment was responsible for the management of the National Recreational Centre.
- 1.16 The Ta’ Qali area which includes the National Recreation Centre is excluded from the responsibility of local councils. It was proposed by Government to designate the majority of the area as a National Park under the management of a National Park Committee.
- 1.17 The World Conservation Union definition of a National Park stipulates that National Parks consist of areas relatively undisturbed by human interference

where conservation and recreation are managed by one authority. Ta' Qali does not conform with the terms of this definition as the Action Plan area is primarily zoned for recreational/sports development and is not a major conservation area. Details of I.U.C.N. categories are included in Appendix III, page 101 of this Local Plan.



# Map 1

## Map 2

## 2 Strategic Background (Structure Plan)

### Development in Non-Urban Areas

- 2.1 The Structure Plan states that in non-urban areas, such as the proposed Action Plan area, no form of urban development will be permitted outside existing and committed built-up areas, and primary development areas except: farmhouses and other genuine agricultural buildings, reservoirs, picnic areas, toilets, car parks, control buildings, and walls/fences at archaeological and ecological sites. These structures are considered normal and legitimate in the non-urban scene (Structure Plan Policy BEN 5) providing the proposal does not infringe on skylines and scenic views and satisfies all other relevant Structure Plan policies governing such development. The purpose of this policy is to direct development to designated areas, by means of infilling, rehabilitation and redevelopment, so that these areas develop higher quality features and conditions consistent with improving the built environment and tourist areas. Also, non-urban areas and areas on the urban fringe will be protected from development pressures - thereby protecting the countryside from further encroachment.
- 2.2 **However, in accordance with Structure Plan Policy REC 7 which identifies Ta' Qali as the National Recreation Centre for Malta, and the optimisation of the site for further recreational development; then appropriate sport and recreational development uses will be considered favourably within the designated National Recreation Centre of the Action Plan.**

### Recreation

- 2.3 *The Structure Plan recognises the function of Ta' Qali as the National Recreation Centre for Malta, and adopts a policy for the optimisation of the site for further recreational developments. (Structure Plan Policy REC 7)*
- 2.4 It states that further international standard recreational and sports facilities will be located in specified areas, one of which is at Ta' Qali. (Structure Plan Policy REC 5) The Planning Authority will assist with the relocation of the inappropriate industrial uses identified in the formulation of this Plan.
- 2.5 Adequate provision for sports recreational facilities will be made in the Local Plan, which recognises that certain recreational and sport uses may have to be located outside urban areas and it is the location and character of these which could threaten the Structure Plan Policy of restricting further development of non-urbanised land. For this reason, it will be necessary to restrict recreation facilities in non-urban areas to specific sites where environmental impact can be contained and is acceptable. A limited number of tracks and training facilities need to be designated in suitable locations for major impact sports. (Structure Plan Policy REC 8)

- 2.6 The Structure Plan identifies several sites (for instance, Ta' Cenc in Gozo) as suitable for National Park status according to the World Conservation Union definition. This stipulates that National Parks consist of areas largely undisturbed by human interference where conservation and recreation are managed by one authority. No sites in Malta meet the strict terms of this definition. The difference between the suggested National Parks and Ta' Qali, however, is that the former are of major conservation importance while the latter is primarily a recreational area.
- 2.7 The Structure Plan therefore recommends that Ta' Qali is renamed as the National Recreation Centre. (Structure Plan para. 13.22 Tourism and Recreation )
- 2.8 The Structure Plan proposes the designation and implementation of a series of Country Parkways throughout Malta, one of which passes through Ta' Qali National Recreation Centre on a NW to SE bearing. Along these routes there will be a series of picnic areas and other facilities for the public's enjoyment. Due to its central location, Ta' Qali is ideally situated to provide some of these ancillary facilities whilst providing added interest along the route.

### **Conservation**

- 2.9 The Structure Plan designates a series of Rural Conservation Areas in order to afford the necessary protection to and enhancement of the countryside. The prohibition of urbanisation outside existing and planned urban areas as designated in the Structure Plan is designed to prevent the development of any structures or activities in rural areas other than those legitimate or natural to them.
- 2.10 Ta' Qali is located within a designated Rural Conservation Area and will need to address the following policies:-

Policy RCO 1. Within Rural Conservation Areas the following sub-areas will be designated:-

- i. Areas of Agricultural Value - to protect high grade agricultural land including irrigated and partially irrigated land;
- ii. Areas of Ecological Importance - to protect typical and rare habitats;
- iii. Sites of Scientific Importance - to protect individual species, groups of species and geological features;
- iv. Sites of Archaeological Importance - to protect individual and/or isolated archaeological sites;
- v. National Parks - to protect large areas of national significance not materially altered by human use; and
- vi. Areas of High Landscape Value.

Policy RCO 5. Permission for the development of new or extended infrastructure will only be given if the Planning Authority is satisfied that all possible measures have been taken to mitigate the visual impact of the proposed development.

Policy RCO 6. Programme of enhancement and management including afforestation and landscape schemes

Policy RCO 32. Trees and Afforestation: the planting of appropriate species of trees will be encouraged where they enhance the landscape.

Policy RCO 33. Specified individual trees or groups of trees of aesthetic, historical, cultural, arboricultural and/or scientific interest will be protected by means of tree preservation orders.

### **Agriculture and Horticulture**

- 2.11 The Structure Plan encourages improvements in agriculture, horticulture, aquaculture and the prevention of soil erosion. Buildings and structures essential to the needs of agriculture may be permitted in the countryside, subject to strict criteria that they blend with the rural landscape. This policy includes irrigation works and other utility structures. Additionally only low quality land should be used and the impact of the buildings on the local neighbourhood and the surrounding environment carefully considered.
- 2.12 The Structure Plan recognised that the National Recreation Centre is being progressively developed at Ta' Qali and will increasingly have an urbanised appearance. It has been designated on an area of good agricultural land which should ideally have been left as a rural setting to Mdina, and as an effective buffer area between Mdina and Attard. Nevertheless the Structure Plan accepts that development has proceeded too far to allow consideration of the reversion of the site to agriculture, and a **policy of optimising the site for further recreation development is adopted.**

### **Commerce and Industry**

- 2.13 The Structure Plan provides limited guidance on commercial development within the Local Plan area.
- 2.14 The Structure Plan allows for small service industries but not for industrial development in the north west.
- 2.15 The strategy of the Structure Plan encourages the reinforcement of existing retail areas within settlements by instituting rehabilitation programmes. Reference to the provision of superstores at Luqa Airport Business Park and Pembroke are made under Policy COM 6, and the Explanatory Memorandum states the necessity to experience the benefits of this form of shopping development before deciding on any further locations. The Structure Plan makes no reference or provision for the need for shopping at Ta' Qali.
- 2.16 There is a demand for improved premises for small service industry uses which are characterised as garage businesses because they tend to locate in such premises, often in or near residential areas, and the Plan encourages the

relocation of activities which have an unacceptable environmental impact on the general areas in which they are located and on adjacent uses in particular. (Policy IND 7).

- 2.17 Existing commerce and industry at Ta' Qali has expanded since the closure of the airport, in an unplanned and sporadic manner. An overall policy is required for its containment and enhancement in order to avoid further adverse impact on existing or proposed recreational activities/facilities.

### **Transport**

- 2.18 The general strategy of the Structure Plan for surface transport seeks the co-ordination of land-use with transportation, together with the development of a road hierarchy. The Structure Plan also aims for the effective management of the road system and its traffic to reduce their impact on the environment, and the promotion and improvement of public transport where this can provide a reasonable alternative to the car. Further to this, and in order to minimise local traffic congestion, new developments are required to provide adequate access arrangements, parking provision and any necessary highway works.
- 2.19 Ta' Qali is well served by existing and proposed arterial and distributor roads, which reach its boundaries where there are a number of strategically located junctions for access into the Action Plan area. The character of the local access roads and minor roads in this area should reflect the recreational nature of Ta' Qali, and therefore their use by pedestrians and the provision of landscaping needs to be considered. This area is particularly appropriate for the provision of environmental highway or traffic calming measures which will reduce speeds and limit access to those areas where there is a high pedestrian activity.

### **Tourism**

- 2.20 The recreational elements in Ta' Qali are to provide a focal point to attract both tourists and locals. Such elements will include visitor attractions such as the Crafts Village, informal recreation, sports, art and cultural events.
- 2.21 In projecting this role, the relationship between Ta' Qali and Mdina should be maintained and access between the two localities should be improved through the provision of footpaths.
- 2.22 Ta' Qali's role in tourism product development is currently limited mainly to the Crafts Village and the newly opened Aircraft Museum. There is ample scope to extend Ta' Qali's recreative and cultural appeal during evenings, particularly during the summer months through the provision of evening entertainment. (e.g. Greek Theatre), recreational facilities, and well designed leisure equipment.

- 2.23 This fulfils Ta' Qali's role as directed in the Structure Plan to optimise its recreational potential. As regards sports tourism the improvement of sports facilities at Ta' Qali should attract major international events.

### **Public Utilities**

- 2.24 The Structure Plan is intended to be a contextual document indicating a frame work for the co-ordination of public utility service provision. The agencies involved should be able to plan their own programmes with some degree of certainty and relate them to wider national planning policies.
- 2.25 In this regard Local Plans and action area plans for all new development areas should include proposals for the layout and siting of private utility services, and allow for the construction of the relevant structures and facilities required. (PUT 5)
- 2.26 **Current Structure Plan Policies relevant to the Action Plan are listed for ease of reference in the Appendix IV page 106 to this Local Plan.**

### 3 Existing Situation and Analysis of Main Issues

- 3.1 The existing situation outlining the present uses, as illustrated on Policy Map 3 and activities within Ta' Qali; with brief details of the issues involved (*in italics*) set out below:-

#### **Recreation**

- 3.2 Football - The National Football Stadium is located at Ta' Qali. It is administered by the Malta Football Association and forms the most prominent feature in the area, hosting international, Premier League and cup matches. The stadium seats 17,000 spectators and also includes a gymnasium, players accommodation, conference facilities, restaurant and administration offices. Adjacent to the stadium are three full size training pitches which are also used for minor league matches. In the winter, overseas teams from Northern Europe visit the stadium for use of the training facilities.
- 3.3 *Vehicular access and parking to the stadium during major events causes serious traffic congestion.*
- 3.4 *An additional training pitch is required in order to use existing facilities more efficiently, together with a new spectator stand, to relieve pressure on the national stadium. Consideration should also be given to the provision of a sports injury clinic.*
- 3.5 Basketball - Basketball is played in a former aircraft hanger which is the sport's national centre and is managed by the Malta Basketball Association. It caters for seated spectators and provides its own parking facilities and is located to the south east of the football stadium.
- 3.6 *A need for additional land has been requested in order to provide facilities for more young people to enjoy the sport.*
- 3.7 Model Aircraft Flying - Model aircraft are flown at a site in the north west area at the end of the former runway and administered by the Malta Model Flying Association.
- 3.8 *Additional facilities are required together with a spectator viewing area and off-road car parking in order to relieve the existing dangerous parking of spectator cars on the perimeter access road. Careful control over noise emission may be required.*
- 3.9 Motor Racing / Motorcycle Racing - A race track is located within a walled enclosure lying to the north of the football stadium.
- 3.10 *Race meetings are held normally on a Sunday and because of the noise emission generates a serious environmental impact, not only on the users of the adjacent informal open space but also on the residential property located*



*immediately north of the Action Plan area. Serious consideration should therefore be given to the relocation of this facility to a more suitable location.*

- 3.11 Road Running - Ta' Qali is used for training by joggers but there is no formal training in terms of specific routes, circuits or regular club meetings. Training tends to be on an individual basis with only two formal races a year incorporating Ta' Qali.
- 3.12 *There is considerable conflict between vehicular traffic and participants, particularly at weekends. A need exists to segregate the users and to make provision for jogging and running tracks.*
- 3.13 Cycling - The former runway and aircraft taxi ways are used for cycling. Three types of cycling can be identified at Ta' Qali.
- i. Use by small children under close adult supervision, usually within the car parking areas;
  - ii. General leisure riding, along peripheral roads; and
  - iii. Sport and training - a circuit based on the former runway is currently used both for formally organised races and for training.
- 3.14 *The need exists for the segregation and protection of cycling activities.*
- 3.15 Public Open Space - Areas of open space, including car parking areas, are used for general recreation such as picnics and ball games. These activities, particularly picnics, take place throughout Ta' Qali and even within the Crafts Village.
- 3.16 The area is popular for walking and, as mentioned above, cycling and road running.
- 3.17 *Ta' Qali is very popular on Sunday afternoons in winter as a venue for family outings. Conflict between incompatible recreational activities does occur, and this detracts from the enjoyment potential of certain areas. The value of public open space is considerable, as Malta is critically short of expansive areas where informal recreation can take place. The urgent provision of additional space at Ta' Qali may take pressure off other areas throughout the Maltese Islands. As stated previously (para. 1.12) two areas intended for informal recreation in the original layout plan have now been enclosed for other uses.*
- 3.18 Formal Garden and "The Greek Theatre" - A formal garden and 'Greek Theatre' are situated at the south east end of the former runway. As the name implies, the theatre is designed in the form of an amphitheatre, but suffers from aircraft noise and poor acoustics from certain areas of the seating. The existing garden is the first phase of a larger scheme designed to extend in an east/west direction to form a link with the Crafts Village. As well as providing gardens and seating areas, the amphitheatre is used for organised events such as concerts.

- 3.19 *A number of non conforming, inappropriate, commercial and industrial developments which are located within the proposed Formal Garden area will require to be incorporated within the redevelopment of the Crafts Village. Non craft businesses will require to be relocated to more appropriate sites.*
- 3.20 *A decision on the future size of the Formal Garden is required in order to facilitate the planning of the adjacent land to the south.*
- 3.21 Visitor Attractions - Activities (i.e. Dinosaurs Museum, Crafts Village) at Ta' Qali are enjoyed by both local residents and tourists. These attractions do not contain accommodation facilities and therefore are not specifically provided solely for the tourist market. However, they play an important role in providing attractions for the islander and visitor which may relieve some of the pressure on coastal areas and conservation areas.
- 3.22 The attractions vary in their scale and character, the numbers of visitors they attract, and their compatibility with other recreational uses. Some have an affinity with the area such as historical background, whilst others were located at Ta' Qali for the simple reason that land was available.

### **Agriculture and Horticulture**

- 3.23 Within the Action Plan area there are extensive areas of agricultural land, some of which are occupied by squatters and a number of former military buildings which accommodate non-agricultural uses such as the storage of scrap metal and building materials.
- 3.24 A large site in the north of the Action Plan area, operated as a Nursery produces agricultural and horticultural products for sale on a wholesale and retail basis. A garden centre provides facilities for the sale of flowers and pot plants to the public. A small cafe is incorporated within the complex. The company is well located on the periphery of the Action Plan area with adequate parking facilities for staff and visitors.
- 3.25 *However, not all the land is utilised for production because of insufficient soil content, and therefore an opportunity exists to introduce recreational uses.*
- 3.26 A wholesale vegetable distribution centre (Ministry for Agriculture and Fisheries) is located on the eastern side of Ta' Qali, immediately north of the Water Services Corporation reservoirs. The depot which is located adjacent to Pitkali road on the eastern edge of the plan area distributes fruit and vegetables, mainly on a wholesale basis with limited retail facilities. Imported fruit is also distributed.
- 3.27 *Serious congestion occurs on the adjacent perimeter road and on site as a result of hawkers' vehicles queuing for access in order to collect vegetables. The need for future provision for expansion requires to be investigated in view of the congestion on site and the possible growth of importation of overseas*

*fruit requiring refrigeration storage facilities. It should be noted however, that an improved access road has recently been construction.*

- 3.28 At the south east boundary within the former spinning and weaving industrial complex of buildings is located a potato store, also administered by the Ministry responsible for agriculture. During a national election the empty buildings adjacent to the perimeter road are used for vote counting.
- 3.29 *An opportunity exists for a more efficient use of certain of these existing buildings.*
- 3.30 Meridiana Ltd., has established a vineyard on land north east of the former runway. This was previously allocated for informal recreation in the original plan prepared by the appointed Government Committee. The company have recently converted a warehouse into a winery.

### **Conservation**

- 3..31 Nature Reserve - A “Nature Reserve” designated under the Environment Protection Act 1991 for the protection of birds and where hunting and trapping are prohibited is illustrated on Map 4 page 19, and includes the Vineyard, National Stadium, former runway, Crafts Village and informal public open space.

### **Commerce and Industry**

- 3.32 Crafts Village - The Crafts Village is based in former military Nissen huts located in the centre of Ta’ Qali, south of the basketball stadium. Various companies carry out manufacturing and retail sales on site and are not only diverse in product but also working methods, varying from handmade pottery and jewellery to joinery manufacture. The village is a popular venue for tourists, but is untidy in appearance and needs urgent rehabilitation and landscape enhancement.
- 3.33 *The Malta Development Corporation is proposing a regeneration scheme for the Crafts Village which involves the relocation of certain units presently located outside the main complex being incorporated within the new scheme. The “Use Class” needs to be defined in order to restrict the redevelopment of the units to genuine “Craft Businesses”.*
- 3.34 Industry - The general industrial area is located to the east of the recreational area and the formal gardens.
- 3.35 The former spinning and weaving factory located within the existing industrial/commercial complex adjacent to the eastern boundary of the plan area is currently occupied by the Electoral Commission, potato storage depot of the Ministry responsible for agriculture, and a storage depot of the Ministry of Finance.

- 3.36 Further industry lies to the north and east of the Crafts Village. The industries include a pre-cast concrete plant, glass manufacturing and general building contracting (refer to Existing Uses Insert Map 3).
- 3.37 *In terms of their location, appearance, adverse impact on the environment and the amenity of the area, the majority of these industries which are located within the National Recreation Centre are incompatible with the recreation uses of the area.*
- 3.38 *Policy REC 7 of the Structure Plan encourages the relocation of the on site industrial uses, and therefore strict control on the limitations of use in these areas must be included in the Plan. The precast concrete plant occupies a large central site which together with large buildings and untidy surroundings contributes to a major adverse impact on the amenity of the area. The Planning Authority will need to assist with the relocation in accordance to Structure Plan Policies.*
- 3.39 *Policy IND 7 (Service Industry) also states that incentives will be offered to assist the relocation of existing service industry activities which have an unacceptable environmental impact on the general areas in which they are located and on adjacent users in particular.*
- 3.40 Driving Tuition - A section of the former aircraft taxiing area on the north east side of the winery is used for driving tuition.
- 3.41 *The use of the concrete apron for driving tuition is an uneconomical use of land which could otherwise be utilised for recreation purposes.*

### **Landscaping**

- 3.42 Landscaping - Tree planting and landscaping have been carried out throughout Ta' Qali and have made a significant impact on its appearance, particularly the benefit derived in screening some of the heavy industry, the Crafts Village and part of the National Stadium.
- 3.43 *Overall, however, there is a cluttered, confused feeling, not helped by wide but apparently under-used roads. There is also a lot of tipping in roadside areas near the urban edge, itself an unattractive feature.*
- 3.44 *There is a need for an overall programme of landscaping to be carried out, particularly to enhance and protect the setting of Ta' Qali as viewed from Mdina.*
- 3.45 Mdina - National Landmark - Mdina is the most unspoilt and dramatically sited settlement in the Local Plan area.
- 3.46 *The quality of the landscape and the view of Mdina, and Ta' Qali as viewed from Mdina must be protected and preserved at all costs.*

## **Transportation**

- 3.47 Access - Ta' Qali is bordered to the south by the arterial road connecting Attard to Rabat, and to the west by the distributor road crossing the Ta' L-Isperanza Valley towards Rabat.
- 3.48 Access can currently be gained to the area via six junctions: one access directly off the arterial road, two via local access roads and three other access points from minor roads in the area.
- 3.49 The road network within the Action Plan area remains unplanned having developed around the system of runways and taxi-ways developed for the former military airport. A local access road crosses the area north to south with connections to the Crafts Village, Attard and the National Stadium. This road is often used as a through-route between Mosta and Rabat. (Map 3 illustrates existing road network).
- 3.50 *There is an urgent need for regulatory and directional signage in the area and some key junctions have no signage, adding to the disorientation of visitors who are new to the area. Even the existing signs can be unclear and confusing.*
- 3.51 The two bus services passing through Ta' Qali are the no. 65 (Sliema Ferry to Rabat) and the no. 86 (Bugibba to Rabat). These are used mainly by tourists who use either of two sets of bus stops - both of which are close to the entrance of the Crafts Village. There are no other public transport facilities within the area. A bus stop on the arterial road is used by passengers travelling to the area from Valletta on bus numbers 80 and 81.
- 3.52 *A need exists to examine public transport facilities and resolve whether an improvement to services would be beneficial.*
- 3.53 *There are few footpaths, and pedestrian/vehicular conflict is a major concern both within the area and on the approaches to it.*
- 3.54 Parking - There are extensive areas for parking within Ta' Qali but these are poorly located in relation to many of the recreational facilities. As a result, many potentially hazardous situations have developed between pedestrians and vehicles. These situations arise particularly during the peak hours of Sunday afternoons when the car parks are also used as play areas.
- 3.55 Other problems occur around the National Football Stadium when it is hosting a major event. The police are required to manage the traffic, and vehicles are directed to use one main entrance point. This limits access to some of the parking areas and results in long queues of delayed cars.
- 3.56 There are approximately 1,800 informal off-road parking spaces around the stadium, and another 1,200 formal parking bays along what used to be the main runway of the military airport. These latter spaces are some five to ten

minutes walk from the stadium. With a capacity of 17,000 seats the number of spaces required for this facility, as recommended by the Planning Authority in circular PA3/93 for spectator sports, is between 1,700 (10% of the capacity being the lowest standard) and 5,100 (30% of the capacity being the highest standard) plus suitable coach parking provision.

- 3.57 *Existing car parks are poorly located with limited access which causes congestion. A need exists to rationalise parking with particular emphasis on the selection of new locations adjacent to perimeter road access points.*
- 3.58 *An overall traffic management scheme is required which segregates commercial traffic from recreational uses and re-routes extraneous traffic (Mosta to Attard traffic using Ta' Qali roads as a short cut) onto adjacent arterial roads.*

## Map 3

## Map 4



## 4 Aims and Objectives of the Action Plan

### Overall Aim

- 4.1 *To promote and optimise opportunities for sport and recreation in a co-ordinated manner in co-operation with the range of public and private agencies involved. To ensure that sites for an adequate and varied range of facilities are included at Ta' Qali to reconcile recreational provision with competing interests with a view to achieving a sustainable use of the area.*
- 4.2 *To protect remaining public open space and to add to it whenever possible.*

### Objectives

- i. To formulate general principles for the future of Ta' Qali within a land use framework consistent with the objectives of the Structure Plan, and North West Local Plan;
- ii. to define a boundary for the Action Plan Area and the National Recreation Centre and to promote Ta' Qali as a centre for international standard sports facilities;
- iii. to promote the enhancement of the Action Plan Area and in particular the Crafts Village, within a programme of landscape enhancement/ environmental improvements and traffic management;
- iv. to retain the open rural setting of the area by emphasising the need to prohibit further expansion of the existing adjacent urban settlements, and the protection of Areas of High Landscape Value and Areas of Agricultural Value between Ta' Qali and the Urban Conservation Area of Mdina;
- v. to promote the National Recreation Centre for recreation, sport and culture and to increase the use of Ta' Qali during summer and winter, weekday and weekend;
- vi. to identify compatible recreation activities for the area and to promote and assist with the relocation of incompatible and inappropriate industrial uses;
- vii. to exclude inappropriate uses and develop and protect the recreational, landscape and environmental resources of the area;
- viii. to highlight the need for a new management structure involving all interested parties including the public;
- ix. to recommend the use of a marketing strategy to co-ordinate physical improvements, the promotion of activities; and to encourage public and private sector investment; and
- x. to emphasise the importance of public participation in the future development of Ta' Qali.

## 5 What is Recreation ?

### Introduction

- 5.1 Recreation can mean many things to many people. It is a word in common usage, but seldom clearly defined, particularly in the context of land use planning.
- 5.2 Recreation ranges over a wide spectrum from the highly active to the purely passive. It has a broad role of functions, some social, some cultural and some creative, enjoyed by individuals or groups.
- 5.3 *However, recreation is mainly about an activity in which participants have chosen to engage - an active use of available leisure time.*<sup>1</sup>
- 5.4 Whether it is a stroll in the countryside or foreshore, a ball game with children, family outing to facilities or attractions, a visit to a museum, or an active team game, the recreational event is enhanced or devalued by the nature of the environment in which the activity is located, or if indoor, the quality of the facilities that are available.

### Resources

- 5.5 There are many different types of resource areas, but two basic types are clearly apparent:-
- the linear resource - walkways, parkways, coastal foreshores; and
  - the focal resource - sports grounds, playgrounds, multi purpose sports halls.
- 5.6 The activities encouraged by this pattern of resources will tend to lead towards two main types of recreation:-
- active or passive informal pursuits, and
  - sports, in particular, team games - indoor and outdoor, and cultural recreative experiences, such as a visit to a museum or theatre.
- 5.7 *It is important to identify and analyse the needs of various forms of recreation/sport in order to provide suitable locations within the Action Plan Area. This is particularly so in relation to activities which because of their impact on Ta' Qali, or non compatibility with each other, require selected areas or relocation to more suitable sites for successful operation.*

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<sup>1</sup> Outdoor recreation and the Urban Environment - Stephen Williams

## Facilities

5.8 An identification, clarification and analysis of various recreation/sport activities considered to be appropriate for location at Ta` Qali, is as follows:-

### 5.9 Formal Recreation

- i. Theme/Leisure Parks - The main objective of a theme/leisure park is to stimulate, educate and entertain visitors. This could be achieved through a number of attractions having a common theme of either leisure or sport, or a combination of both. Projects compatible with Ta` Qali could include outdoor water facilities, adventure playgrounds, junior commando courses, cycling and running tracks, tennis and opportunities for informal recreation in a setting of increased natural landscaping. Ancillary services such as catering and toilets should also be provided. It is important that the open character of the area is retained and for development to provide an emphasis on formal and/or informal use of open space rather than an environment dominated by buildings or structures. Development proposals would be subject to strict criteria including visual/landscape impact, parking and traffic impact.

Major impact sports are not acceptable in the action plan area and must be located at more appropriate locations.

- ii. Sports Facilities - Provision for sports facilities are required by Structure Plan Policy REC 5 which states that international and sports facilities are to be located at five centres of which one at Ta` Qali is within the Local Plan area. Multi use and high density facilities will be encouraged, some of which can take place simultaneously, but others will need exclusive use for a specific time.
- iii. Playing Pitches - Although no data exists, there is a demand for additional grass pitches for certain types of organised games. The lack of pitches may well be constraining certain sport development. The shortage of land, hot climate, scarce water resources and maintenance costs are major constraints on provision of grass pitches.

The location of playing pitches requires a careful study of demand, accessibility for participants, and management control to ensure availability and quality control. This last factor is particularly important in certain locations where water resources may be available and grass pitches could be provided.

- iv. Playgrounds/Adventure Areas/Playparks - An area suitable for play by children of pre-school and primary school age where adequate facilities are made available. Such areas should be designed in such a way as to provide for the security of the children incorporating suitable play equipment such as swings, slides and climbing frames, together with

safety surfacing. Where appropriate, provision of fencing to be provided in order to prohibit entry by dogs.

Older children, who are more competitive, require more challenging patterns of activity with appropriate equipment such as junior commando courses and other forms of obstacle challenges. These activities must be separate from the play spaces provided for younger children.

- v. Art and Culture - Art and Culture (including theatres, cinemas, exhibitions, museums) does not have the same land use implications or constraints as more formal sport or recreation but makes a major contribution to the quality of life and enjoyment of leisure time.

The arts are an important part of community life and can also be an inward investment due to their attraction to tourists. It is this interface between a community function and leisure time, i.e. recreation, that is an issue for consideration within the plan area.

#### 5.10 **Informal Recreation**

- i. Informal Open Space - Informal open space is considered to be that which is used for passive recreational activities such as walking and picnicking, requiring a location away from noisy uses and, because it is often associated with family use, a safe area away from traffic intrusion.
- ii. Country Parkways - Essentially linear open spaces and their immediate surroundings within which a variety of open air recreational activities can be located. A major priority being to link the countryside to the urban settlements and provide circular walking routes wherever possible.

## 6 Action Plan Area

### NWTQ 1

### Action Plan Area

**The area illustrated on Map 1, is designated as the Ta' Qali Action Plan area, and relevant Policies and Proposals are shown on Policy Map 5.**

- 6.1 The area at Ta' Qali excluded from the responsibility of the local councils under the Local Councils Act 1993 will be known as an Action Plan Area as defined under Section 26 of the Development Planning Act 1992 and shown on Map 1. Policies and proposals are illustrated on Map 5.
- 6.2 *A development proposal/Planning Application will be affected by several Structure Plan, Local Plan, Action Plan and Planning Authority policies, each dealing with a different aspect of planning, so they need to be read together to appreciate the Action Plan properly. Where several policies apply to a development proposal, they must all be complied with if the proposal is to be acceptable.*

## Map 5

# 7 Vision

- 7.1 **The National Recreation Centre; its character protected and enhanced for the provision of recreation and culture; a place to visit and to enjoy leisure time throughout the year; facilities for young and old; locals and tourists; facilities providing sport and culture; informal and formal. The National Recreation Centre of Malta, reflected in the following strategy of the Action Plan: -**

## 8 Strategy

### Overall Aim

- 8.1 The overall aim of the Ta' Qali Action Plan is to optimise the National Recreation Centre for further recreational development, including sport, art and culture on a national and regional basis together with the provision of open air enjoyment for the general public.
- 8.2 The Planning Authority will therefore ensure that the primary use of recreation and culture is provided for at Ta' Qali.

### National Recreation Centre

- 8.3 The Plan proposes the enlargement of the National Recreation Centre in order to provide greater opportunity to protect the character, promote, enhance and optimise Ta' Qali for recreation use, in the short and long term, with particular emphasis on the provision of additional informal open space.
- 8.4 Change of use from agriculture/horticulture to recreational and cultural purposes may be permitted within the land designated as the National Recreation Centre.
- 8.5 The Plan identifies sites for formal and informal recreation facilities and the reconciliation of conflicts between uses through appropriate designation and land management.
- 8.6 The Plan recommends that major impact sports that have an adverse effect on the environment of the Action Plan area and the adjacent residential property, should be relocated to more suitable locations.

### Location Strategy

- 8.7 It is important to identify which recreational activities would be compatible for location within the National Recreation Centre. An assessment of the existing uses and the formulation of policies for uses which are compatible with each other and on the nearby residential areas can then be implemented within the Action Plan.
- 8.8 However, since the preparation of the Structure Plan the urban perimeter of Mosta had expanded southward, (within the Temporary Provisions Boundary), towards the northern perimeter of Ta' Qali. **Residential property is now in close proximity of the Action Plan area and noise is therefore a major constraint to be considered in relation to existing and proposed uses.** No further expansion of residential property beyond that of the existing Temporary Provisions Boundary adjacent to the Action Plan area should be contemplated in the future.



- 8.9 Sports Complex and Pitches - an indoor and outdoor sports complex with provision for international/national/regional catchment should be located within the National Recreation Centre.
- 8.10 Informal Open Space - provides an attractive foil to the formal built structures and complements a range of recreation facilities suitable for family use.
- 8.11 Art and Culture - open air exhibitions and specialist museums would help provide a more balanced contribution to the National Recreation Centre and encourage year round use.
- 8.12 Country Parkways - it is envisaged that Ta' Qali will form a focal point within the overall provision of a country parkway network.
- 8.13 Major Impact Sports - sports such as motor racing are considered incompatible at Ta' Qali because of adverse noise impact on adjacent recreation uses and nearby residential property. Hunting and trapping is also considered inappropriate in a recreational area because of safety hazards.
- 8.14 The provision of the above recreation facilities will be considered in relation to the demand and to the physical capacity of the specific sites within the recreation centre.

### **Art and Culture**

- 8.15 A site has been identified in the Natural Recreation Centre adjacent to the Formal Garden for the possible relocation of Museums. Museums have a genuine national catchment area and would provide an "all year round" attraction at Ta' Qali.
- 8.16 Provision will be made for an extension of the Aviation Museum which will be located adjacent to the National Stadium and west of the Basketball stadium.

### **Agriculture and Horticulture**

- 8.17 The Action Plan, in accordance with Structure Plan policies, will ensure that the primary use of recreation is safeguarded at Ta' Qali. Change of use will be permitted for recreational purposes only on existing agricultural or horticultural land within the National Recreation Centre. Land to the south of the Crafts Village and west and south of Attard's Contractors industrial complex will be retained for agricultural purposes.

### **Conservation**

- 8.18 Ta' Qali Action Plan area is located within a designated Rural Conservation Area and Wied il-Hemsija is identified as an Area of Ecological Importance. The declaration of an additional Nature Reserve at the National Recreation Centre is proposed.

### **Commerce and Industry**

- 8.19 The Action Plan imposes strict controls, limiting the use of existing commercial development and in accordance with Structure Plan Policy REC 7 suggests the assistance with the relocation of the on site industrial uses with particular emphasis to those industrial/commercial uses within the National Recreation Centre.
- 8.20 The Plan proposes the redevelopment/rehabilitation of the Crafts Village; more economic use of the former Spinning and Weaving factory, provision for future expansion of the wholesale fruit and vegetable distribution depot at Pitkali, and a change of use to recreation, art or culture on land operated by the Nursery and garden centre. The existing concrete factory adjacent to Basketball Stadium is recommended for relocation and a small site adjacent to the former Spinning and Weaving factory reserved for non-craft industries requiring relocation from the proposed Formal Garden area.

### **Landscape and Design**

- 8.21 The Plan identifies the urgent need for a tree planting framework to provide landscape structure and to screen eyesores and the urban fringes. A Landscape Master Plan is proposed and suggests that Ta' Qali should become a centre for landscape enhancement, a demonstration ground for similar improvements in the rest of Malta.
- 8.22 The national landmark of Mdina is perhaps the most unspoilt and dramatically sited settlement in the Local Plan Area; with its unique skyline and visual composition. The Action Plan protects this visual composition and setting by the designation of an Area of High Landscape Value.
- 8.23 Height limitations are also proposed in order to seek compatibility of new development with existing, and achieve the landscape objectives of the Action Plan by reducing and containing the visible impact of development within Ta' Qali when viewed from Mdina and the surrounding countryside.

### **Built Form**

- 8.24 The Structure Plan identifies the Action Plan Area as the National Recreational Centre for Malta, and therefore compatible sport and recreational uses will be considered favourably and may consist of a wide variety of built structures. These structures would provide such facilities as a sports hall,

museums, tracks and training facilities to meet the demand of many diverse users.

- 8.25 In order to retain the open spacious character of the former runway, it is proposed to group new building structures, to specific areas. First, land adjacent to, and to the east of, the National Stadium, and secondly, land to north-east of the garden centre/nursery . Height limitations are proposed for these areas.

### **Access**

- 8.26 In order to improve access to Ta' Qali it is proposed in the North West Local Plan and Action Plan to upgrade to arterial road status the existing access road through Wied il-Hemsija to its junction with the existing arterial road between Attard and Rabat.
- 8.27 A new link road is proposed to improve accessibility to the National Football Stadium from the stadium's rear access road to the secondary road which forms the western boundary of Ta' Qali.

### **Traffic Management**

- 8.28 The current road network within Ta' Qali provides sufficient road space for the access needs of the area. However there has been no previous consideration of the links between land-use and access requirements. One of the aims of this plan is to co-ordinate access and parking with the planned growth of the area.
- 8.29 The road network within the area will be developed in such a way as to promote the main functions of the area and discourage its use as a through-route between the Mosta and Rabat areas. This will be done mainly through signage and other appropriate traffic management measures.
- 8.30 These measures will also aim to move industrial and commercial traffic in and out of the area quickly with minimum disruption to the main functions of the area, and at the same time discourage the further development of this type of land-use.

### **Rural Conservation Area**

- 8.31 The Action Plan Area is located within a Rural Conservation Area. Rural Conservation Areas as designated in the Structure Plan to prevent the development of any structures or activities in rural areas other than those legitimate and natural to them.
- 8.32 With regard to existing buildings and other structures, the overall aim is to improve the environment. To this end the rehabilitation and suitable change of use of some buildings will be permitted, in conjunction with the removal of other buildings and structures which adversely affect the rural environment.

### **Visitor Attractions**

- 8.33 The fact that Ta' Qali is popular with visitors, is not considered to be a sufficient planning justification in itself for the location of new attractions. The shortage of suitable land within the area now results in the need for planning policies which optimise sport and recreational use of the area and also ensure that they are compatible with each other and existing land uses. Particular encouragement will be given for those attractions/facilities with a genuinely national catchment area. There is also a need for the provision of additional informal public open space for relaxation, children's' play areas and picnic facilities.

### **Utilities**

- 8.34 The Plan emphasises the requirement for utility supplies, substations or storage facilities to be sited underground or incorporated within a building complex.
- 8.35 The Planning Authority will also seek the removal/relocation of unsightly facilities associated with the supply of utilities which have an adverse impact on the environment.

### **Information Centre**

- 8.36 A small information centre adjacent to the Crafts Village public car park will be provided to supply location maps and information on the range of recreational facilities available to visitors.

### **Implementation**

- 8.37 The Action Plan recommends that a Management Agency be appointed to implement the Plan of Ta' Qali.

### **Policy Strategy**

- 8.38 **The overall strategy of the Action Area Plan is illustrated on the Map 6 page 32.**

## Map 6

# 9 Recreation and Sport

## **9 Recreation and Sport**

### **NWTQ 2**

### **National Recreation Centre**

**At the Ta' Qali National Recreation Centre as designated and illustrated on Policy Map 5 and Map 7 page 35, the Planning Authority will allow the siting of further recreational, sports, art and cultural uses, particularly those with a genuinely national catchment area and which are compatible with the area and each other in accordance with NWTQ 3, NWTQ 4, and NWTQ 5. The Planning Authority will assist with the relocation of the existing industrial uses.**

- 9.1 The existing area of the National Recreation Centre is now virtually taken up with existing uses and land is required to enable additional facilities to be located within the centre during the life span of the Local Plan. The Planning Authority and appropriate Government agencies will assist with the relocation of the existing industrial uses (Structure Plan Policy REC 7).
- 9.2 The existing boundary of the National Recreation Centre is therefore enlarged to increase and safeguard land availability for recreational use, including appropriate ancillary facilities such as car parking, picnic areas and toilets.

### **NWTQ 3**

### **Recreation, Sport, Art and Cultural Uses**

**The development of recreational, sports, art and cultural facilities (excluding major impact sports), may be permitted if it accords with the following criteria:-**

- i. It is located within the National Recreation Centre;**
- ii. the development has a genuinely national catchment area; or has a special affinity to visitors with the historic heritage of the wartime airfield;**
- iii. the scale, location, landscaping and quality of design is consistent with the character and appearance of the Action Plan area;**
- iv. it is well-related to access roads and has no significant adverse impact on the local highway network;**
- v. adequate access and off-road parking is provided;**
- vi. use is made of existing buildings if possible and any new buildings are reduced to the minimum necessary size and are acceptable to the specific location within the plan area;**
- vii. the proposed use is compatible with the adjacent existing or proposed recreational use; and**
- viii. it has no significant adverse impact by way of noise on adjacent users or residential areas.**

- 9.3 Where a recreational or sports use is acceptable in principle, i.e. within the National Recreation Centre the proposal will need to comply with specific criteria concerning scale and design, and impact on the adjacent land uses.

Wherever possible, use should be made of existing buildings to house attractions, and new buildings will be subject to strict control in order to minimise any visual impact and to retain as far as possible the open character of the site. Adequate access to and from the perimeter main roads is essential in order to prevent inconvenience on the minor internal access roads which may be unsuitable for the volume and type of traffic generated by some uses.

- 9.4 Many sports organisations have expressed an interest to be represented within the National Recreation Centre. An opportunity exists in addition to sports referred to under specific policies for the following activities to be considered - Golf Driving Range, Equestrian Centre, Indoor Shooting Range, Indoor Swimming Pool, Hockey, International Tennis and Gymnastics and parachuting.
- 9.5 The proposed Country Parkway system for North West Malta consists of numerous circular and linear routes including their immediate surrounds within which a variety of open air recreational activities are located, such as walkways, cycle tracks, horse trails and picnic areas.
- 9.6 Ta' Qali is bisected by one of these routes, the location of which is illustrated on Policy Map 5. People using this route will, on entering the Action Plan area, be free to wander around Ta' Qali to link up with the country parkway on the other side of the Action Plan area.

#### **NWTQ 4 International Sport, Art and Culture Facilities**

**An area of land, illustrated as Policy Area NWTQ 4 on the Action Plan is allocated for the provision of international standard Sport, Art and Culture facilities together with adequate spectator accommodation. These facilities to be suitable for international and national sporting events (Structure Plan Policy REC 5).**

- 9.7 A site is allocated for the provision of sport, art and culture facilities, with adequate spectator facilities. It is envisaged that multi use facilities will be provided suitable for international and national sporting events. Particular consideration to be given to securing professional sports facility management and international coaching.
- 9.8 The provision of a sports clinic for clinical investigation and therapy of ailments associated with sport and health may be beneficial for inclusion within the National Recreation Centre.



## **NWTQ 5**

### **Change of Use of Land to Recreational Purposes**

**The Planning Authority will give favourable consideration for a change of use of land or buildings from agricultural/horticultural purposes to recreational, sport, art and cultural purposes only on that land designated within the National Recreation Centre.**

- 9.9 The Planning Authority, in accordance with Structure Plan Policy, will ensure that the primary use of recreation is safeguarded at Ta' Qali. Change of use from agriculture, commerce or industry to recreation purposes will be encouraged (Refer to Policy NWTQ 22, including an area currently occupied by a nursery and garden centre. Refer to Policy NWTQ 31).
- 9.10 This policy will enable land to be made available during the life of the Action Plan for suitable recreation use. This is in accordance with Structure Plan policy to optimise the area for recreation use. In order to assist the relocation of existing farmers it is recommended that the Department of Agriculture in conjunction with the Lands Department and other appropriate Government agencies give consideration to incentives of long leases and free rent for initial periods.
- 9.11 However, in the short term, agricultural use may continue, but when relocation is achieved, the land is designated for informal recreation use, and no buildings/structures will be permitted which would prejudice this policy.

## Map 7

## **Formal Recreation**

### **NWTQ 6**

### **Basketball**

**An area of land, shown as Policy Area NWTQ 6 on the Action Plan, is allocated to allow for an extension to the Malta Basketball Association facilities.**

- 9.12 Basketball is played in the former aircraft hangar located east of the stadium and immediately north of the concrete plant, and is the sport's national centre. An additional area is required to provide facilities, particularly for children's use. The association also proposes to improve the spectator facilities within the hanger.

### **NWTQ 7**

### **Camping**

**The Planning Authority will give favourable consideration for the provision of a camp site on land located within the National Recreation Centre, subject to the following criteria:-**

- i. The preparation of a Development Brief to prescribe form, content and design of the development;**
- ii. no new building other than toilet facilities will be permitted to be erected, subject to satisfactory siting and use of sympathetic materials and landscape enhancement;**
- iii. no tent will be permitted to be erected for a period in excess of 28 days;**
- iv. no static or touring caravans or any other temporary accommodation other than tents, will be permitted on site;**
- v. an adequate access and off road parking is provided;**
- vi. details of the provision of water supply, washing and toilet facilities shall be submitted and approved;**
- vii. details of the proposed waste disposal, drainage and sewage disposal arrangements shall be submitted and approved; and**
- viii. details of provisions of fire prevention, fire fighting and first aid facilities shall be submitted and approved.**
- ix. there is a programme for the overall improvement of the site including a landscape scheme, which shall be implemented in its entirety within the first planting season and shall be maintained;**

- 9.13 There is an absence of any formal camping sites on the Maltese Islands, and the North West Local Plan identifies suitable locations. The Action Plan recognises the potential at Ta' Qali and makes provision for a small organised camping area on land within the National Recreation Centre.

## NWTQ 8

## Cycling

**A cycle track, shown as Policy Area NWTQ 8 on the Action Plan, is identified for cycling purposes together with support facilities.**

- 9.14 Cycling is potentially an important recreational activity in Malta, but expansion is severely inhibited by the limited road network, the physical condition of many roads, the number of vehicles and driver behaviour. A practical solution to this problem is to develop parks or cycleways where cycling can be practised and enjoyed without interference from motor traffic. Ta' Qali and its surrounding area present an ideal opportunity for this approach to be adopted. The three types of cycling identified at Ta' Qali; children under supervision, leisure riding and sport training, are provided for by the designation and protection of a circuit and practice areas, suitably protected from extraneous vehicle traffic. Leisure riding is also provided for in the Local Plan with Ta' Qali identified as an ideally located centre where cyclists could enjoy circular routes, using trails and secondary routes which already exist in the area. It is also proposed to identify suitable access routes to link Ta' Qali with the urban areas of Mosta and Attard. Land is reserved for a circuit of 2.7 km in length, together with provision for a changing room with toilet facilities adjacent to a parking, picnic and play area, in order that all members of the family can participate. A smaller circuit is also required to be provided for junior members.

## NWTQ 9

## Athletics

**An area of land, shown as Policy NWTQ 9 on the Action Plan, is identified for a running track together with support facilities.**

- 9.15 Athletics is a popular sport in Malta where a large numbers of young athletes and adults participate in the various disciplines, including in the Malta Marathon, and Half Marathon apart from the usual track and field meetings. Additionally large numbers practice running, sometimes even by the road side, just for the sole purpose of keeping fit.
- 9.16 The Malta Amateur Athletic Association, the recognised official body promoting athletics in Malta, have identified the need for the provision, at Ta' Qali, of a Grass Running Track of at least 2.3 km in length, and having an approximate width of 5m to 8m. Having such a track at Ta' Qali would enable the M.A.A.A. to organise cross country running on international level thereby attracting foreign athletes to participate in Malta. The M.A.A.A., being the association most concerned with running activities could be asked to take over responsibility for the maintenance and upkeep of the running track once it is installed.
- 9.17 The Action Plan indicates a provisional alignment for the grass running track of approximately 2.65 km in length. Provision at the periphery of the Formal

Gardens and areas of informal open space would need to be allocated at the initial design stage of implementation of the Action Plan. Changing and toilet facilities will be required but joint provision with cycling clubs should be investigated.

- 9.18 Additionally, the M.A.A.A. have identified the need for a 400m synthetic running track to be provided at Ta' Qali which would enable the area to be developed into a training centre and provide complementary facilities for other recreational uses at Ta' Qali. The provision of a running track at Ta' Qali would enable the management of the Matthew Micallef St. John Athletic Stadium at Marsa to concentrate more on the development of the stadium into a 'warm weather' training camp, enabling it to put into practice the concept of 'sports tourism'. Having a second track in Malta would also enable the M.A.A.A. to submit a bid to hold the European Athletic Championships, which it cannot do due to the limitations of its facilities.

## **NWTQ 10**

## **Football (Training Facilities)**

**An area of land, shown as Policy Area NWTQ 10 on the Action Plan, is allocated to allow for an extension to the football club training facilities for an all weather training area.**

- 9.19 A portion of the area north of the football stadium currently used as a car park is allocated for an extension to the football training facilities in order to accommodate an all-weather training area. Alternative car parking is to be provided by the enlargement of the existing parking area located to the west of the stadium. These additional parking facilities and highway improvements will be subject to a phased programme. Care must be taken to retain a 10 metre access to the land to the north.
- 9.20 A need exists for an additional spectator stand with changing facilities adjacent to the existing football pitches located north of the national stadium. Provision of these facilities would relieve pressure on the use of the national pitch and enable additional league matches to be played on a more regular basis. Careful consideration of the height of the structure is required because of its proposed location near the western boundary of the Action Plan. A maximum height of 10 metres is suggested. (N.B. This facility has recently been provided).

## **NWTQ 11**

## **Formal Garden**

**The completion of the Formal Garden will be implemented concurrently with the release of land at present occupied by non-compatible commercial/industrial business uses.**

**The Planning Authority in conjunction with the Malta Development Corporation will promote the relocation of existing Crafts Businesses which are located within**

**the Formal Garden area identified as Policy Area NWTQ 11, to the proposed redevelopment area/rehabilitation of the Crafts Village complex; in order to facilitate the completion of the garden.**

**Vacated buildings within the Formal Garden area will be demolished.**

**Existing Non Crafts Businesses which fall within the General Industrial Use Class Order will be relocated to alternative suitable sites outside the National Recreation Centre.**

- 9.21 The completion of the formal garden is to be integrated with the design for the redevelopment/rehabilitation of the Crafts Village. Any redevelopment which involves an increase in site area of the existing village should incorporate the relocation of various “units” which are currently located outside the main village complex and prevent the completion of the Formal Garden area. Consideration to be given to improving the acoustics of the Greek Theatre, together with improved safety railing to the tiered seating. Greater use could be made of the theatre by encouraging small dramatic companies to give short programmes at weekends, including children shows.
- 9.22 If the total area for the final phase of the Formal Garden is not taken up, then the area could be made available for informal open space in accordance with NWTQ 14. Alternatively, provision could be made for small sports facilities that are compatible with the formal garden area, such as mini golf, which only requires a minimum amount of space and is now being played throughout Europe, and in some instances at international level. The greater use of decorative water gardens should be given consideration as they provide for quiet and restful areas.

## **NWTQ 12**

## **Model Aircraft Flying**

**An area of the periphery road immediately adjacent to the south eastern boundary of the existing model aircraft flying enclosure, illustrated as Policy Area NWTQ 12 on the Action Plan, is allocated for additional public viewing and parking area. A landscape scheme is to be submitted and approved to mitigate the impact of the parking area, together with a programme of implementation and maintenance.**

- 9.23 The flying of model aircraft on the north west end of the former runway adjacent to the periphery road attracts spectators who park on the highway. Space is required by the Malta Model Flying Association for additional flying facilities and it is also proposed that parking is provided off road for spectators. Careful control will be required to limit noise emission, and conditions will be attached to permits specifying maximum noise emission. In order to maintain the open character of the area, no addition structures or buildings will be permitted.

**The area of land shown as Policy Area NWTQ13 on the Action Plan is allocated for informal open space. The Planning Authority in conjunction with the appropriate Government Agencies will assist in the identification of a site for the relocation of the Motor Racing facilities to a suitable area outside the Action Plan.**

- 9.24 Due to the noise intrusion on adjacent users and nearby residential property caused by the racing, this facility is not considered to be compatible with the area and the aims of the Action Plan. Motor car and motor cycle racing are major impact sports which are best located on derelict, degraded or despoiled land adjacent to areas of high ambient noise levels, or secluded areas, away from residential areas and informal recreation parks. The present location is immediately adjacent to the major informal recreational area and a larger, more suitable site should be identified for relocation. .
- 9.25 Structure Plan Policy REC 8 states that provision should be made for sports and recreational uses in the countryside with particular attention being paid to minimising adverse impact on the environment. A limited number of tracks and training facilities need to be designated in suitable locations for major impact sports such as ‘off tarmac’ motor sports. Possible sites that are identified and comply with location criteria must be the subject of a satisfactory environmental impact assessment.
- 9.26 When the present uses are relocated to a more suitable site, then the area shall be made available for informal open space. Improved pedestrian access to be provided to the existing parking area to the north and the existing informal recreational area to the south east. Additional landscaping should be provided along the north wall boundary to create an amenity screen to the parking area.

## **Informal Recreation**

### **NWTQ 14**

### **Informal Open Space**

**Areas of land, shown as Policy Area NWTQ 14 on the Action Plan are allocated for informal recreational use only, together with appropriate support facilities.**

**Landscaping schemes shall be implemented, as a matter of urgency, on all existing areas of informal open space and thereafter maintained.**

- 9.27 It is essential that high priority is given to the protection of informal open space and the provision of additional areas for informal recreational use including children's play areas and picnic sites, together with the provision of toilet facilities. The practice of driving on the informal green areas of open space and picnicking in the presence of one's own car must be discontinued. The provision of low timber posts, bollards or traditional stone walling is a possible solution.
- 9.28 The relocation of the motor racing facilities would enable the area to be used for informal recreation. This would make a significant increase in the limited amount of space available within the plan area for informal recreation.
- 9.29 Consideration should be given to the long term opportunity, although outside the 10 year period of the Action Plan for the land in the current use as a vineyard, to be used as Informal Open Space as envisaged in the 1986 Government Committee Report (Appendix I page 91).
- 9.30 If an opportunity arose during the current life span of the Action Plan for the vinery to be relocated, then the area shall be immediately landscaped and made available for informal recreational use.
- 9.31 The central section of the former runway, between the existing eastern roundabout and the north western car park will be pedestrianised and landscaped to permit informal recreation activity.

### **NWTQ 15**

### **Picnic Areas**

**Picnic areas are allocated as shown as Policy Area NWTQ 15 on the Action Plan. The Planning Authority will encourage the provision of support facilities such as picnic tables, play equipment and toilets.**

- 9.32 Picnicking opportunities with support facilities are relatively scarce on Malta, and Ta' Qali provides an ideal location for providing additional sites together with support facilities.



## **NWTQ 16**

## **Recreation (Mixed Use)**

**An area of land, illustrated as Policy Area 16 on the Action Plan is allocated for general recreational purposes.**

- 9.33 The main function of this area is to provide family facilities accessible by the general public.
- 9.34 Possible uses for consideration to include children's play areas, picnic sites, informal open space, animal sanctuaries and horticultural clubs. Management emphasis will be directed to provide provision for clubs, groups or associations, rather than individual users.

## **NWTQ 17**

## **Country Parkways and Footpaths**

**The section of designated country parkway passing through Ta' Qali is shown as Policy Area NWTQ 17 on the Action Plan.**

**A network of footpaths will be provided and integrated within the Ta' Qali area to link up informal open space, public transport, car parks, picnic sites, visitor attractions and the country parkway system. Emphasis will be given to the provision of circular routes together with pedestrian safety.**

**No development will be permitted except to enhance the recreational and educational use of the area.**

**The Planning Authority will prepare or commission in conjunction with the Secretariat for the Environment and the Ministry responsible for agriculture, the preparation of a management plan for the Country Parkway.**

- 9.35 The North West Local Plan designates parkways that will link recreation and tourist attractions by tracing routes through areas that are of intrinsic natural or man made value. They will provide facilities for walking, hiking, cycling, jogging, orienteering, school outings for educational purposes, horse riding and archaeological and historic specialist groups. Emphasis will be given to road safety and pedestrian care.
- 9.36 The positive creation of a system of safe footpaths and access ways that are clearly "way marked" will provide a major attraction within the Ta' Qali area. The network to link the various public facilities with public transport and car parking facilities.

# 10 Art and Culture

## 10 Art and Culture

### NWTQ 18

### Aviation Museum

**An area of land, shown as Policy Area NWTQ 18 on the Action Plan is designated for an extension of the Aviation Museum. The structure shall be of a scale and built form compatible with the site. The provision of on site parking shall be provided; and a landscape scheme to be submitted with the permit application and approved to mitigate the visual impact of the proposed development, together with a programme for implementation and maintenance.**

- 10.1 An area of land has been identified adjacent to the National Stadium and west of the Basketball stadium for an extension of the Aviation Museum. The area identified includes the existing “Spitfire Hut”, the nissen hut immediately adjacent and land to the south. An area to the north is reserved for future expansion. Care is to be taken to preserve the existing trees on site.
- 10.2 It is not envisaged that the small pottery factory to the north of the ‘Spitfire Hut’ will be relocated. However, provision should be made for the public to have the opportunity to see the craft products being made.
- 10.3 An area of land currently occupied by Southern Concrete is designated for possible future expansion of the Aviation Museum. The existing access road to the concrete works is to be extended to the south in order to provide an alternative access to the National Football and Basketball Stadiums.
- 10.4 Relocation of the existing Government workshop and stores is recommended as a matter of priority in order that the implementation of the aviation museum may be carried out.
- 10.5 It should also be noted that a wartime quarry located to the north of the Action Plan adjacent to the main perimeter road was used for the dumping of damaged World War II aircraft. The remains would be of great value to the Museum Foundation.

### NWTQ 19

### Museums

**A site is identified for the possible location of museums, as illustrated as Policy Area NWTQ 19 on the Action Plan. Any proposal is to be sited within a landscape setting in order to integrate with the Formal Garden and adjacent Informal Open Space.**

- 10.6 Various requests have been made for the allocation of land for the location of museums within the National Recreation Centre. Museums can make an important contribution to the quality of life and enjoyment of leisure time. They can also be of an educational value. The arts are an important part of

community and also an inward investment due to their attraction to tourists. The museums would have a genuine national catchment area and provide “an all year round” attraction to Ta' Qali. An appropriate area for their location would be adjacent to the existing large structures within the central area of the National Recreation Centre. Any new museum is to be integrated in landscape surroundings in an appropriate setting adjacent to the Formal Garden to the east and the informal open space to the north. Additionally, the museums would be complementary to the existing Aviation Museum. Opportunities may arise for a possible combination of displays and exhibitions within one structure, e.g. motor vehicles of historic, modern and military interest.

- 10.7 National Motor Museum - A exhibition of cars of interest locally that have been connected with Malta's history and heritage.
- 10.8 Military Vehicles Museum - A permanent display of an existing collection of World War II military vehicles including motor cycles is urgently required. Over 130 vehicles exist on the island, of which a number are currently being restored. An exhibition would be an attraction for visitors, contribute to the military history of the former Ta' Qali airfield and complement the Aviation Museum, particularly if located on an adjacent or nearby site. A possible location being on the western boundary of the existing precast concrete plant.
- 10.9 Natural History Museum - There may be an opportunity for the possible relocation of the Natural History museum from Mdina to within the National Recreation Centre.

## **NWTQ 20**

## **Cultural Centre**

**The Planning Authority may permit the use of the existing hamlet of agricultural buildings/structures as illustrated as Policy Area NWTQ 20 on the Action Plan, as a location for a cultural centre, subject to the following criteria:-**

- i. The submission and approval of a detailed Development Application in the form of an overall comprehension plan for the rehabilitation of the whole of the site, together with a management plan;**
- ii. the conversion/restoration of the buildings to be of a domestic scale, proportion and character in keeping with the former traditional vernacular rural setting, existing height of buildings to be retained, all illegal structures/buildings or accretions shall be removed;**
- iii. articles for sale must be made using traditional practical skills which involve an emphasis on the production of products utilised by villagers in rural times on a small scale and shall be made on site;**
- iv. provision shall be made for visitors to have the opportunities to see trades at work and products being made;**
- v. the access road to be improved and boundary walling to be repaired/built in traditional rubble walling;**

- vi. **parking to be provided on the periphery of the scheme and located in such a way as not to dominate the cultural purpose of the centre, which shall be totally pedestrianised;**
- vii. **details and provision of water supply, utility services and drainage shall be submitted and approved. All utilities to be underground; and**
- viii. **a landscaping scheme is submitted and approved together with a programme for implementation during the first available planting season and thereafter maintained.**

10.10 The existing hamlet (listed property) consisting of one and two storey agricultural buildings/dwellings has been identified as a site for a cultural centre. One possible use is for a “living rural museum” demonstrating the traditional life and culture of former times. Traditional trades and crafts such as farming, honey making, cheese processing, metal working, leather processing, weaving, shoe making, carpenter, cooper and wine making could be demonstrated. The manufacture of modern products will not be permitted.

## **NWTQ 21**

## **Animal Sanctuaries**

**The Planning Authority will give favourable consideration for the provision of Animal Sanctuaries at Ta’ Qali provided they comply with the following criteria:-**

- i. **Details of any effluent disposal shall be submitted to and approved by the Water Services Corporation, Public Health Department and Drainage Department prior to the submission of the permit application, such details to incorporate measures to ensure that there is no pollution of adjoining land, water course or water aquifers;**
- ii. **the site is at least 200 metres from Temporary Provisions Schemes;**
- iii. **a high standard of design, layout and use of materials is achieved such that the building as erected is compatible with the general ambience of Ta’ Qali and which does not detract from the open character of the area; and**
- iv. **a landscape scheme is submitted and approved together with a programme for implementation and maintenance in order to mitigate the visual impact of the proposed development.**

10.11 An animal sanctuary would provide a peaceful haven for animals and animal lovers. Additionally it would also provide an educational centre for the husbandry and management of animals, and illustrate the benefits to be derived from the keeping of pets. The sanctuaries would house farm animals, dogs, cats, fish and birds, together with other types of domestic animals.

# 11 Agriculture and Horticulture

## **11 Agriculture and Horticulture**

### **NWTQ 22**

### **Restriction of Use**

**No additional development will be permitted on agricultural/horticultural land other than designated within areas NWTQ 3 (National Recreation Centre) NWTQ 36 (Convention Centre) and NWTQ 29 (Extension to Pitkali Depot).**

**The Planning Authority will encourage the relocation of existing service industry activities which have an unacceptable environmental impact on the National Recreation Centre and on adjacent uses.**

**The Planning Authority will designate alternative sites in the North West Local Plan for relocation of non-compatible industrial activities which are currently located within the Formal Garden.**

- 11.1 The Planning Authority, in accordance with Structure Plan policy, will ensure that the primary use of recreation is safeguarded at Ta' Qali. Change of use of land and building will only be permitted for recreation, sport, art or cultural purposes on existing agricultural or horticultural land within the National Recreation Centre in accordance with policies laid down for the specific areas shown on the Action Plan. (Refer to Policy NWTQ 5).

### **NWTQ 23**

### **Areas of Agricultural Value**

**Within the "Area of Agricultural Value" designated as Policy NWTQ 23 on Map 5 only buildings, structures and uses essential to the needs of agriculture will be permitted and then only if it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority that they will not adversely affect water supplies, soil, and the Area of High Landscape Value.**

**Improvements to the existing agricultural land aimed at increasing productivity will be favourably considered by the Planning Authority providing they are well designed, efficient and contribute to, rather than detract from, the quality of the local and surrounding environment.**

**The Planning Authority, in conjunction with the Water Services Corporation, Department of Agriculture and Drainage Department, will work to secure means of increasing the quantity and quality of second class water available for the land designated as an Area of Agricultural Value (Refer to Policy NWTQ 62).**

**Soil conservation and soil saving measures will continue to be mandatory in accordance with the Fertile Soil (Preservation) Act 1973 (as amended 1983) on all occasions.**

- 11.2 The Planning Authority in accordance with Structure Plan Policies will protect agricultural land from all forms of urban development except for specific areas designated for change of use within the Action Plan Area.
- 11.3 Within the Area of High Landscape Value, south of the National Recreation Centre the erection of greenhouses will not be permitted (Refer to Policy NWTQ 38).



## **12 Conservation**

### **NWTQ 24**

### **Area of Ecological Importance**

**An area of land, shown as Policy Area NWTQ 24 on the Action Plan, has been identified as an Area of Ecological Importance (A.E.I. Level 4).**

- 12.1 The Wied il-Hemsija which runs to the south of the Action Plan area through agricultural land is part of a valley system which must be protected. A management plan will be prepared, in conjunction with the appropriate agencies, for the valley including the watercourse. It is crossed by a section of a proposed country parkway in the south of the plan area.

### **NWTQ 25**

### **Nature Reserve**

**An additional Nature Reserve at Ta' Qali National Recreation Centre is proposed as illustrated on Map 8 page 53.**

- 12.2 The existing reserve at Ta' Qali provides protection against hunting and trapping for the participants of the National Recreation Centre. In order to extend this protection over the proposed extension to the National Recreation Centre, it is proposed that in conjunction with the Environment Protection Department an additional area to the north and north east is declared a Nature Reserve in accordance with the Environmental Protection Act 1991.

## Map 8

# 13 Commerce and Industry

## 13 Commerce and Industry

### NWTQ 26

### Existing Development

**The Planning Authority will exercise strict control of limitation of use on existing commercial development, and assist with the relocation of the on site industrial uses which are located within the National Recreation Centre.**

- 13.1 The Structure Plan and Action Plan policy for Ta' Qali is for optimisation of the site for further recreational developments. Existing commercial/industrial uses will therefore be contained within specific areas and where possible relocated, particularly if they create an adverse impact on the amenity of the recreational area, or prejudice the implementation of the Action Plan.
- 13.2 The plan therefore proposes strict controls of limitations of use on existing commercial/industrial developments.

### NWTQ 27

### The "Crafts Village"

**The Planning Authority in conjunction with the Malta Development Corporation will promote and secure the redevelopment/rehabilitation of the Crafts Village, as illustrated on Map 5, subject to all of the following criteria:-**

- i. The redevelopment of crafts businesses in accordance with Use Class 11 (Business and Light Industry) of the Development Planning Use Classes Order 1994);**
- ii. articles for sale must be made using traditional, practical skills which involve an emphasis on the production of unique products on a small scale, rather than a process of repetitive manufacture or production in series;**
- iii. provision shall be made for visitors to have the opportunity to see the craft products being made;**
- iv. adequate access and off-road parking is provided in accordance with Structure Plan Explanatory Memorandum Guidelines;**
- v. provision is made for the protection, replacement and enhancement of the existing trees and landscape;**
- vi. maximum height of 7 metres for this zone is not exceeded;**
- vii. the external design of the units will be compatible with the general ambience of Ta' Qali and will promote unity of design in terms of building line, height, silhouette, fenestration and materials, within the perimeter of the site designated for the Crafts Village;**
- viii. a landscape scheme is submitted and approved to mitigate the visual impact of the proposed development, together with a programme for implementation and maintenance;**
- ix. provision to be made for a public car park together with public toilets.**

**The Planning Authority will initiate a planning obligation to ensure that existing craft businesses outside the main complex of the village are relocated within the Policy Area NWTQ 27 as shown on the Action Plan.**

- 13.3 Any redevelopment or rehabilitation of the Crafts Village should involve an increase in overall site area in order to incorporate the relocation of various “units” which are currently located outside the main village complex and which prevent the completion of the formal garden area. Parking should be provided for coaches and cars to park off road and the site should be extensively landscaped to provide amenity screening to the craft units.
- 13.4 A craft business is defined as a process using traditional and practical skills which predominantly are made by hand, with a minimum of mechanisation and with an emphasis on the production of unique products on a small scale rather than a process of repetitive manufacture. Examples of crafts industries could include textile weaving, spinning, lace making, pottery, jewellery, model making, leather work and wood carving. Emphasis should be given to the sale of local products.

## **NWTQ 28**

### **Former Spinning and Weaving Factory**

**The site indicated on Policy Map 5 and Map 9 containing the buildings of the former Spinning and Weaving Factory is being allocated for the development of a diplomatic mission on the western portion and for residential development only on the eastern portion provided that a development application for a comprehensive scheme, with a phasing programme, for each portion is approved by MEPA and:**

#### **A. For the development of the diplomatic mission:**

- (i) The footprint of the replacement building/s does not exceed 20% of the total site area;**
- (ii) The overall height of the new building/s does not exceed 10m except for the chancery building which should not exceed 16.5m and any storage buildings which should not exceed 13m;**
- (iii) The new building/s and any ancillary structure, and perimeter walls, should be designed to high architectural standards, should not unduly dominate the surroundings and every effort should be made to screen roof structures and any telecommunication equipment from view. Any buildings higher than 10m should be located as distant as possible from the surrounding residential properties to minimize visual intrusions;**
- (iv) Adequate access and off-street parking is provided;**
- (v) A satisfactory landscaping scheme, incorporating (as much as possible) the existing landscaped areas, with a substantial buffer along the western perimeter of the site, is approved;**

**And**

**B. For the residential development:**

- (i) The residential units include only semi-detached dwellings (i.e. residential units with only one common party wall). No maisonettes, flats or terraced houses will be allowed;**
- (ii) The built footprint at ground floor of each dwelling is not less than 120sqm but not more than 250sqm;**
- (iii) The site coverage does not exceed 30%;**
- (iv) A minimum curtilage of 3.0m around all the perimeter of each block is imposed and left free of structures;**
- (v) The overall building height should not exceed two floors;**
- (vi) Semi-basements/basements are restricted to the built footprint;**
- (vii) The design should promote innovative architecture and urban design, a pedestrian friendly environment and include communal pedestrian areas around a cluster of residential blocks, with landscaped open spaces. The function of each open space should be clearly indicated on plans submitted with the development application;**
- (viii) Adequate off-street parking is provided. Garage courts at or below ground level are preferred over individual garages with each dwelling;**
- (ix) In the case of a phased development, all infrastructure services are provided for the whole site prior to occupation of any dwelling.**

**The provisions of the Policy and Design Guidance 2005 shall be applied to all other aspects of the scheme not covered by A (i) to (v) and B (i) to (ix).**

**The land allocation for residential development constitutes an amendment to the development zone boundary and is subject to the Structure Plan Review.**

13.5 The former spinning and weaving factory located within the existing industrial/commercial complex adjacent to the eastern boundary of the plan area is currently occupied by the Electoral Commission, potato storage depot of the Ministry responsible for agriculture, and storage depot of the Ministry of Finance. In order to provide a more economic use of the factory complex, the site has been allocated for the alternative uses of a diplomatic mission on the 4.24ha western portion and residential development on the 1.96ha eastern side next to the development zone boundary of Attard. Detailed development control criteria seek to obtain a high quality design with emphasis on interesting site layouts and creative urban design while minimizing any negative impacts on the adjacent residential villa area. With respect to the Diplomatic Mission, particular attention needs to be afforded to technical issues of interference from telecommunication equipment.

## Map 9

## **NWTQ 29**

## **Pitkali (Fruit and Vegetable Distribution Depot)**

**Land is reserved for an extension to the fruit and vegetable distribution depot, for Agricultural and Horticultural Products as shown as Policy Area NWTQ 29 on the Action Plan, subject to all of the following criteria being met:-**

- i. The submission and approval of a comprehensive plan for the overall development of the site;**
- ii. The proposed use falls within Use Class 17 (Storage and Distribution, as defined by Development Planning (Use Classes) Order 1994);**
- iii. the proposal is for the storage and distribution of agricultural and horticultural produce including the relocation of fruit and vegetable depots that are operating in residential areas to the detriment of the local amenity;**
- iv. adequate access and on site parking is provided;**
- v. provision is made for the protection and enhancement of the existing trees and landscape;**
- vi. the design of the building is to be compatible with the general ambience of Ta' Qali and be of a scale and built form which do not detract from the open character of the site; and**
- vii. buildings do not exceed a height of 10 metres.**

13.6 The depot which is located adjacent to Pitkali Road on the eastern edge of the plan area distributes fruit and vegetables, mainly on a wholesale basis with limited retail facilities. Imported fruit is also distributed. A new internal access road has been constructed and this should help alleviate hawkers' vehicles being parked on the main access road adjacent to the depot. The depot is well located for island wide distribution of vegetables and fruit and the Action Plan recognises its important function in relation to the island's agriculture/ horticulture industry and protects' it retention. To meet the increased need for larger accommodation, particularly for the importation of fruit which requires refrigeration, an adjacent area to the north, north east and north west, is reserved for additional facilities for importation, storage of fruit and distribution of vegetables.

13.7 Additionally, this would enable the relocation of fruit importation depots that are operating in residential areas to the detriment of the local amenity. The relocation of the potato depot from the former Spinning and Weaving Factory is also provided for in the proposed additional allocation of land.

13.8 A change of use from the current arable/intensive raising of crops must be justified. Height limitations will be imposed on land to the north of the existing complex.

13.9 It is important that a comprehensive plan is prepared to incorporate the existing and future complex by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries and Ministry responsible for Public Works and Construction. The plan to consider including changes to the operations of the market in order to alleviate the problems of congestion created by only a twice weekly distribution of produce. Provision, or the rationalisation, of internal access roads must not



encourage through routes for extraneous traffic, heavy goods vehicles or increase the amount of heavy traffic along Triq il-Pitkali, (ref. NWTQ 58). A landscaped buffer zone must be incorporated between the commercial activity and proposed recreational areas.

## **NWTQ 30**

## **Precast Concrete Plant**

**The Planning Authority in conjunction with the Malta Development Corporation will assist with ensuring the relocation of the precast concrete plant to a suitable industrial location outside the Action Plan Area.**

**The area currently occupied by buildings and the undeveloped ground to the north is allocated for recreational, sport and cultural use as shown as Policy Area NWTQ 30 on the Action Plan (Refer to Policy NWTQ 4).**

**No new commercial or industrial development will be permitted within Policy Area NWTQ 30 in order to safeguard the area for future sports, art or cultural facilities and for the possible location for art and culture museums.**

**Development to be subject to all of the following criteria being met:**

- i. In accordance with Policy NWTQ 4, NWTQ 5 and NWTQ 18, NWTQ 19;**
- ii. adequate access and off street parking is provided;**
- iii. provision is made for the protection, replacement and enhancement of the existing trees and landscape;**
- iv. maximum building heights for this zone (15 m) are not exceeded;**
- v. the external design of the built form will be compatible with the general ambience of Ta' Qali;**
- vi. a landscape scheme is submitted and approved to mitigate the visual impact of the proposed development, together with a programme for implementation and maintenance.**

**In the interim period the area will be allocated as an area of informal public open space prior to the construction of International Sports Hall, Art or Cultural Facilities, including museums.**

13.10 In accordance with Structure Plan policy it is the intention of the Planning Authority in conjunction with the Malta Development Corporation to assist in the relocation of the Precast Concrete Factory as a matter of priority.

13.11 The concrete plant occupies a large central site which is required for the location of recreation, sport or cultural uses. This site which is located within the National Recreation Centre is of critical importance to the overall strategy of the Action Plan for optimisation for sport and recreation of the Ta' Qali area. The scarcity of suitable land in the Action Plan coupled with its situation adjacent to the National Football Stadium and National Basketball Stadium make it ideal as the site for large/tall structures required for future long term needs for sports, art or culture facilities. It is also strategically placed in relation to the Formal Gardens to the east, the major informal open

space to the north and the Crafts Village to the south which will be subject to redevelopment and enhancement. It offers an excellent opportunity to act as a focal point not only for the National Recreation Centre, but also for Maltese sport and culture.

- 13.12 Within the undeveloped northern area of Policy Area NWTQ 30 in the interim period, the Action Plan allocates this zone for informal public open space, and in accordance with Structure Plan Policies REC 5 and 7, the area be reserved for the siting of sports facilities of international importance for the use of the general public and tourists. It is also an area identified for the location of art and cultural museums. .

## **NWTQ 31**

## **Garden Centre/Nursery**

**The Planning Authority may permit a change of use from agriculture/horticulture to recreation or sport purposes within the area operated as a garden centre/nursery, which is located within the National Recreation Centre as illustrated on Policy Map 5, subject to the following criteria:-**

- i. The submission and approval of an Outline Development Application in the form of an overall comprehensive plan for the whole of the site;**
- ii. the development has a genuinely national catchment area; or has a special affinity with the historic heritage of the wartime airfield;**
- iii. the scale, location, and quality of design does not detract from the open character of the area;**
- iv. it has no adverse noise impact on adjacent residential areas located immediately to the north;**
- v. the access road to the south east boundary of the site shall be upgraded to include the necessary improvements to its width and surface where required;**
- vi. adequate access and on site parking is provided;**
- vii. building structures will only be permitted within the building zone adjacent to the north east boundary and be restricted to a maximum height of 7 metres;**
- viii. details of water supply, drainage and sewage disposal arrangements shall be submitted and approved; and**
- ix. a landscape scheme is submitted and approved to mitigate the visual impact of the proposed development, together with a programme for implementation and maintenance.**

- 13.13 In order to increase the area of land available for recreation purposes within the National Recreation Centre, an opportunity exists to rationalise the site and introduce recreation/sports and cultural uses in accordance with Structure Plan Policy and Strategy of the Action Plan (para. 8.8 - 8.14) to optimise the area for further recreational development. Part of the site may be retained for garden centre use. Suitable uses for consideration include sports facilities, 400 metre running track, sports pitches golf court and informal open space. Residential, retail, commercial offices, or manufacturing/service industrial uses will not be permitted.

- 13.14 It is important that the open character of the area is retained and buildings/structures ancillary to the recreational/sports purposes will only be permitted within the specified building zone adjacent to the north eastern boundary.
- 13.15 A major constraint, because of noise impact, is the close proximity of residential property to the north of the Action Plan area. Care must also be exercised to make sure development is compatible with adjacent or proposed recreational uses. The preparation of an overall comprehensive plan for the area in order to avoid piece-meal development.

## **NWTQ 32**

## **Industry and Storage**

**Within Policy Area NWTQ 32 of the Action Plan, permission will only be given for development proposals falling within Class 11 Business and Light Industry, Class 12, General Industrial, and Class 17 Storage and Distribution, as defined by the Development Planning (Use Classes) Order 1994, subject to the following criteria:-**

- i. Priority will be given to new development that is a “non conforming” use (industrial) currently existing within the National Recreation Centre which has been identified for relocation;**
- ii. adequate access and off-street parking is provided in accordance with Structure Plan Explanatory Memorandum Guidelines.**
- iii. the proposal would not result in a significant build up of traffic, causing congestion within the Action Plan area and on the access road serving it;**
- iv. noise and visual intrusion on neighbouring zones and other areas is minimised;**
- v. the development does not exceed a height of 8 metres; and**
- vi. a landscape scheme is submitted and approved to mitigate the visual impact of the existing development, together with a programme for implementation and maintenance.**

13.16 Existing commercial/industrial development will be contained in order to safeguard land for the optimisation of Ta' Qali for recreational developments and to safeguard the scenic value of the landscape.

13.17 In order to mitigate the visual intrusion of the existing industrial development in the countryside, the existing boundary walling to the north, western and southern boundaries shall be reduced to 7 courses high. A strip of land not less than 7 metres in width, within the boundary of the site, shall be landscaped adjacent to the boundary to include shrubs and indigenous trees. The erection of new buildings will be restricted to a height of 8 metres.

## **NWTQ 33**

## **Service Parking**

**No new development will be permitted within Policy Area NWTQ 33. The zone will be safeguarded to provide organised car parking and turning facilities for vehicles associated with adjacent uses. The area should be enhanced through the removal of stored materials and a landscaping scheme to improve its general appearance.**

13.18 The area lying to the north of policy areas NWTQ 28 and NWTQ 32 is used as a parking area by employees and works vehicles including storage of materials associated with the land uses in these two policy areas. There is no regular parking structure with vehicles of all descriptions and size parked randomly. Unorganised parking and traffic circulation presents dangers in this area, which when combined with poorly designed boundary fencing and walls using visually obtrusive materials, gives the area a poor visual amenity. Landscaping is needed to lessen the impact of such problems.

13.19 Policy Area NWTQ 33 will be zoned for car parking associated with land uses in Policy Areas NWTQ 28 and NWTQ 32. Parking will be organised and the area will incorporate Planning Authority standards defined in the Explanatory Memorandum ensuring adequate space is available for the safe manoeuvring and parking of vehicles within this zone. Access from this zone to the local access road will be via a single point designated in such a way as to ensure the passage of two way traffic, without conflicting with traffic using the nearby roundabout or the road network. The Planning Authority will as part of the proposed Landscape Master Plan, make specific reference for the need for the landscaping of this car parking area in order to reduce the visual impact of parked vehicles, boundary fences and walls.

## **NWTQ 34**

## **Santa Maria Reservoirs**

**The Planning Authority will not permit any development in the immediate vicinity of the reservoirs which would adversely effect water supply.**

13.20 The two reservoirs in this zone provide an essential supply of drinking water to neighbouring settlements and as such their future will be safeguarded from any other development which may disrupt this supply or hinder the efficient servicing or functioning of them.

## **NWTQ 35**

## **Temporary Fairs**

**Temporary flea markets will be permitted on the two aircraft parking areas as shown in MAP 5.**

The erection of temporary demountable structures for the purpose of Trade Fairs or similar sheltered activities may be permitted for a period not exceeding two years from the approval of this revised plan strictly within the boundaries of the site indicated in Map 10a. The footprint of the covered areas shall not exceed 7,000sqm. Any supporting facilities (such as toilets, plant room, storage, etc) must also be within temporary demountable structures, located within the site shown on MAP 11 and should only occupy 550sqm of the total site area. The demountable structures should be located on the western half of the site and the existing car park within the site should be upgraded at the developer's expense.

A full development planning application will need to be submitted to MEPA with all the details requisite for a proposal of this nature. The proposal should ensure that visual impact is minimised and that adequate measures to minimise other possible adverse impacts on existing or proposed uses are adopted. Measures to mitigate noise should also be included in the development planning application. Any services, structures or facilities displaced or removed through the erection of the temporary demountable structure must be done at the applicant's expense and applicant must ensure continuity of services supply to third parties.

MEPA will require a suitable planning gain in the form of a monetary contribution aimed towards the upgrading of public open space within Ta' Qali. A condition in the permit for the temporary structure will be imposed to ensure that this gain is obtained.

Open areas beyond the site boundary shown on MAP 10a for the temporary structure should not be adversely affected by the operations of the structure and should remain fully accessible to the public. Overspill of activities onto adjacent open areas is not acceptable.

After the period of two years elapses, MEPA will reconsider a one time only extension for a period not exceeding two years, only provided that the operation of the Convention Centre mentioned in policy NWTQ 36 has not commenced and provided that MEPA is satisfied that preparations for the Convention Centre mentioned in policy NWTQ 36 are well underway. Apart from a new full Development Planning application requesting the extension of the approval period, MEPA will also require a rigorous impact assessment together with a strong justification as to why the use of temporary structures would still be needed on this particular site.

Once the Convention and Exhibition Centre facilities become operational (as per NWTQ 36), temporary structures will no longer be allowed on this site and it will be developed in accordance with policy NWTQ 55.

13.21 Trade Fairs and other activities have been held over a period of time at Ta' Qali because of the suitable open space for the erection of tents and stands on the former runway area. Adequate parking is also available nearby.

13.22 A flea market has been located at Ta' Qali at weekends and is acceptable as a temporary use provided that no permanent structures/buildings are erected.

No precedent must be created for purely commercial/retail uses of the recreational areas.

- 13.23 A temporary structure on a site to the north east of the stadium including vacant derelict land and the existing car park is considered to constitute a stop-gap solution to accommodate indoor trade fairs until such time that the Convention Centre indicated in policy NWTQ 36 becomes operational, given that the lease of land at Naxxar for the use of Trade Fairs is to expire shortly. This structure should be permitted for a period not exceeding two years after the approval of this revised plan. Further extensions to the two year permit will only be granted if the Convention and Exhibition Centre is not yet operational. Moreover, the applicant would need to tangibly demonstrate that all adverse impacts that might have occurred during the previous two years of operation are adequately mitigated.
- 13.24 This site is considered suitable to accommodate a temporary structure as it is currently a derelict area partly providing car parking for the stadium users,, has good access, offers an adequate land area and lies within an area of lower visual vulnerability.
- 13.25 Suitably located utilities such as water and electricity together with toilets need to be given urgent consideration.
- 13.26 However, the provision for the site to be used for car parking and ancillary facilities to the Convention and Exhibition Centre as defined by policy NWTQ 55 should not be prejudiced. The need for the site for indoor temporary fairs will significantly diminish once the new Convention and Exhibition Centre is established and hence MEPA will prohibit temporary fairs on it.

## **NWTQ 36**

## **Site for Convention and Exhibition Centre**

**An area of land has been allocated for the development of a Convention and Exhibition Centre illustrated on Map 11 subject to the following criteria: -**

- i. Any building on this site should accommodate the following uses: multi-purpose halls (exhibitions, sports/arts/culture venues), convention centre, supporting amenities to these two main uses (such as offices, catering, storage, plant and equipment) provided the total built footprint does not exceed 32% of the site. No temporary or permanent residential accommodation shall be permitted;**
- ii. a high standard of urban design and architecture, layout and use of materials is achieved which has regard for the open character of the countryside abutting the western boundary;**
- iii. maximum height of 10 metres above existing ground level is not exceeded. The creation of architectural features and focal points, which exceed 10m, will only be considered if the merits of the design are of sufficient quality to outweigh the impacts on long distance views;**
- iv. adequate access and parking below ground level and located on the site of the existing stadium car park, is provided for vehicles on site. The developer will**

- be required to fund the new link road identified in policy NWTQ 47 as a planning obligation;**
- v. adequate pedestrian access is provided to the adjacent car park covered by policy NWTQ 55;**
- vi. all proposed buildings of the new Convention and Exhibition Centre are kept at an adequate distance away from the National Stadium, so as to safeguard access to the West Side of the National Stadium;**
- vii. details of water supply, drainage and sewerage disposal arrangement shall be submitted and approved; and**
- viii. a landscape scheme is submitted and approved to mitigate the visual impact of the development with special attention to the southern and western boundaries, together with a programme for implementation and maintenance.**

13.27 Over recent years the increased activities related to the Malta International Trade Fair have rendered the Naxxar Fair Grounds unsuitable for the purpose. These grounds are today fully utilised with no space left for growth and expansion. The inability of the existing halls and open areas in Naxxar to adapt to modern fair needs, as they were not originally designed for multi-purpose use, further exacerbates the problem. The relocation into newly built premises will enable the development of new fair grounds in a manner and design ensuring far more versatile uses and activities. The strategic location of Ta' Qali in the central part of the island with good links to the arterial road network make the area a suitable location for a new Trade Fair. Further more the convention and exhibition centre proposed by this policy would enable various sports/cultural organisations to hold conventions at Ta` Qali, the location being immediately adjacent to the indoor/outdoor sports/cultural facilities.

13.28 This policy limits the site coverage of the 8.28 ha site to 32% or 26,000sqm to ensure provision of a substantial open and unbuilt space as part of the scheme and adequate developable land to accommodate the convention and exhibition space, administration, ancillary facilities, covered circulation between halls, sanitary facilities, minor storage, and small scale indoor catering. The provision of two levels in some parts of the building will be favourably considered to allow the efficient use of the site.

13.29 The predominant use of the open space can include circulation space and uses for open-air exhibits provided it does not exceed 14,000sqm. The area may also include small-scale open-air catering and leisure facilities, provided that the combined area for these outdoor leisure and catering uses does not exceed 1,000sqm. Appropriate soft landscaped areas are to be provided within the open space to create a more pleasant ambience for visitors.

13.30 Generous landscaping is to be provided around the periphery of the site. Views into the site from Ta' Qali and from more distant view points of Mdina and Mtarfa will need to be carefully considered. There should be a clear distinction between the open space referred to above and the landscaped buffer area to which public access will not be allowed during operational hours of

conventions or exhibitions. A minimum of 12,000 sqm should be allocated for the landscaped buffer.

- 13.31 The circulation of visitors through the centre should be clear and well defined taking into account the large number of visitors and the need to minimize crowding conditions. Separate access for exhibitors and servicing are to be provided. Circulation should also allow for the use of sections of the convention and exhibition facilities to allow for smaller events.
- 13.32 The design of the halls should allow for multi-use of the facilities. When facilities are not in use for a convention or exhibition, other uses which may be considered for one or more of the halls include sports and leisure, conference facilities, arts and culture festivals (music, dance, etc), or as counting halls for general and local council elections. The use of open-air piazzas for festivals and/or open leisure activities is also to be encouraged. Convention and exhibition buildings should have the highest quality urban design and architecture to create attractive and inviting views into and from the site. Energy saving features should be incorporated in the design scheme wherever possible.
- 13.33 Buildings of different heights are encouraged but none of the buildings should exceed a height of 10m above current site levels. The creation of architectural features and focal points, which exceed 10m, can contribute towards a higher quality design and will be favourably considered.
- 13.34 The provision of the appropriate number of car parking spaces is essential for the efficient operation of this facility, especially when considering its high intensity use and its proximity to the national stadium. MEPA will seek the provision of at least two levels of underground parking on the site of the existing surface car park to allow the ground level to be developed for the convention and exhibition centre. A transport assessment will most likely be required for this project which will address in a comprehensive manner all the transport related issues.



# 14 Landscape and Design

## 14 Landscaping and Design

### NWTQ 37

### Landscape Master Plan

**The Planning Authority will assist the Secretariat for the Environment and the Department of Agriculture to initiate the preparation, implementation, and maintenance of a Landscape Master Plan for the Action Plan Area.**

- 14.1 A Landscape Master Plan is needed for the whole area, including a new tree planting framework to provide structure planting and to screen eyesores and the urban fringe. The proposed plan is to be a natural follow-up to the planting plan initiated in 1988. The plan will also give guidance to developers in relation to landscape provision and maintenance when submitting an application. The area should become a centre for landscape enhancement and restoration techniques, a “demonstration ground” for similar improvements in the rest of Malta. Priority to be given to the enhancement of the peripheral boundaries and entrances to the National Recreation Centre, together with the treed landscaping of the existing open spaces.

### NWTQ 38

### Area of High Landscape Value

**An area shown as Policy NWTQ 38 on Policy Map 5 is designated as an Area of High Landscape Value.**

**The Planning Authority will not permit the development of any structure or activity which in the view of the Authority would adversely affect the scenic value of the landscape or setting of Mdina because it would:-**

- i. break the undisturbed skyline;**
- ii. obstruct the panoramic view;**
- iii. adversely affect any element of the visual composition;**
- iv. adversely affect trees or shrubs; or**
- v. introduce alien forms and materials such as greenhouses which will be prohibited.**

- 14.2 The area lying to the west and south of the National Stadium and Crafts Village and stretching westwards to Mdina is an Area of High Landscape Value.

- 14.3 The national landmark of Mdina is perhaps the most unspoilt and dramatically sited settlement in the Local Plan area, with its unique skyline and visual composition. The Local Plan and the Action Plan protects this setting and promotes the enhancement of this significant landscape composition. The view of Ta' Qali as seen from Mdina is also important to protect. The need for substantial tree planting is clearly apparent in order to soften the urban fringes to the north of the action plan area and to the periphery of existing buildings within the recreational centre.

## **NWTQ 39**

## **Strategic Open Space Gaps between Settlements**

**Strategic gaps between settlements will be protected. The Planning Authority will not permit the development of any structure/buildings or activity within the open area between Attard and Ta' Qali as shown as Policy Area NWTQ 39, on the Action Plan.**

14.4 It is important that Attard retains its identity and contact with the countryside around it. This is easily lost through ribbon development, particularly along the existing roads, allowing it to coalesce with the commercial/industrial complex of Ta' Qali. No scheme amendments are proposed in this Action Plan. Therefore this policy is included as an additional safeguard to protect existing strategic open space areas/gaps. It is important to protect the remaining open area from development and where possible to supplement the tree screen adjacent to the existing industrial/commercial development in Ta' Qali.

## **NWTQ 40**

## **Advertisements**

**The Planning Authority will seek to preserve and enhance the visual amenity of the area, whilst improving the pedestrian and vehicular circulation around Ta' Qali through the use of appropriate and well sited advertising and signage, which minimises the visual impact on their surroundings.**

**Existing inappropriate advertising which is visually obtrusive will be removed.**

**New proposals must accord to the standards and design guidelines set out in Planning Authority Policy and Design Guidance on Billboards and Signs (as amended from time to time).**

14.5 Advertisements constitute development under the Development Planning Act 1992 and as such will require a development permit for their display. Certain types of advertisement do not require consent for their display and these are indicated in the Advertisement (Regulation) Order, 1993. In the case of Ta' Qali there has been the proliferation of inappropriate advertising which, due to poor location, is visually obtrusive, and causes confusion.

## **NWTQ 41**

## **Fencing and Rubble Walls**

**New fencing or boundary walls will not be permitted where they detract from the visual amenity of the area through the use of inappropriate materials or where they result in the loss of or disruption to important views and landscapes because of their height, scale or location. Existing rubble walling to be repaired and inappropriate fencing such as chain-link fencing will be replaced by traditional rubble walling.**

- 14.6 In the agricultural areas to the south and west of the Crafts Village there is an abundance of dry stone rubble walls (Hitan Tas-Sejjieh) which provide an important feature in the area of high scenic value extending towards Mdina. Within Ta' Qali and the surrounding areas, there has also been a steady growth in the use of building materials for fencing purposes, which because of their height or state of disrepair and the incongruity of their appearance, detract from the overall amenity of the area creating a poor visual impression. Such boundary fencing and walls include the use of rusty oil drums, concrete panels and chain link all of varying lengths and heights. These inappropriate materials need to be replaced with more appropriate traditional dry walls to improve the area. Where security warrants the use of more secure forms of fencing, measures should be taken to mitigate their visual impact through landscaping measures.

## **NWTQ 42**

## **Soft Landscaping**

**Proposals for development must include a detailed landscape scheme of the type, location, and quantity of trees and other vegetation to be used, as well as proposals for the use of earth mounding. Proposals resulting in the loss of important views or adverse impacts on neighbouring land uses giving rise to loss of amenity will not be permitted.**

- 14.7 The tree planting programme being carried out in Ta' Qali under the auspices of the Department of Agriculture and the Secretariat for the Environment will continue in order to enhance and improve the visual setting and amenity of various locations and structures. The use of inappropriate building and fencing materials, loss of privacy, visual disruption to neighbouring land uses, settlements and areas of scenic value are all too common within Ta' Qali and this must be rectified through appropriate landscaping. The Landscape Master Plan will identify areas and vistas in need of embellishment and improvement. Comprehensive tree planting schemes which make use of appropriate and approved species combined with other soft landscaping methods all of should be incorporated within a landscaping Master Plan, initiated by the Planning Authority in conjunction with the Department of Agriculture and the Secretariat for the Environment. (NWTQ 37).

## **NWTQ 43**

## **Hard Landscaping**

**The use of inappropriate materials in the construction of street furniture and other hard landscaping will not be permitted. Hard landscaping which detracts from the visual amenity of an area by way of its colour, massing or size will also not be permitted. Development schemes will be required to include details of the materials to be used in landscaping as well as the size and layout of the various components involved.**

- 14.8 Throughout Ta' Qali there is a lack of street furniture which could, when used sympathetically and making use of local materials, serve to enhance certain areas and provide much needed facilities e.g. litter bins, seating areas, street lighting, clear and attractive signage and paved walkways. The use of fountains and sculptures at various locations could provide items of interest within themselves. Street furniture may be artistic as well as functional. The Planning Authority will identify in the Landscape Master Plan several locations to be used as seating areas or children's play areas. These should be floodlit, provide litter bins, be interconnected via walkways and possibly provide a sculpture or series of sculptures which could be changed on a regular basis in order to display local art work in the outdoor arena.

## **NWTQ 44**

## **Height Limitations**

**The Local Plan regulates the height of proposed development in the Action Plan area in accordance with Map 10 page 71. Specific height zones are as follows:-**

- i. Within the Policy Area NWTQ 27 (Crafts Village and an area to the south-east), building heights will be restricted to a maximum of 7 metres;**
- ii. Within the Policy Area NWTQ 28 (Former Spinning and Weaving Factory) building heights will be restricted to a maximum of 10m, and 13m and 16.5m for specific buildings on the diplomatic mission site as provided in the policy;**
- iii. within the Policy Area NWTQ 33 (Nursery and garden centre) building heights will be restricted to a maximum height of 7 metres;**
- iv. within the existing and proposed extension to the Pitkali complex, Policy Area NWTQ 29 and NWTQ 32, (Industry and storage) building heights will be restricted to a maximum of 10 metres;**
- v. within the Policy Area NWTQ 30 building heights will be restricted to a maximum of 15 metres;**
- vi. within the Policy Area NWTQ 36 (Convention and Exhibition Centre) building heights will be restricted to a maximum of 10 metres above existing ground level and subject to the provisions of NWTQ 36 (iii); and**
- vii. within the Policy Area NWTQ 55 (Stadium Car Parks- North East) buildings will be restricted to a maximum of 6 metres.**

**Development must be appropriate and sympathetic in design, layout and scale with the adjoining buildings, spaces and views. Permission will not necessarily be granted for all development to these maximum height limits, but considered on their individual merits.**

**All structures, mechanical plant, tanks, air conditioning units or satellite dishes must be contained and hidden within the building or roof structures, and within the overall height limitations stated above which shall be taken from the existing adjacent road levels.**

- 14.9 Ta' Qali is visible from the heights of Mdina and as such existing development is often visually obtrusive. Attempts have been made to screen certain land uses but more often than not their height prevents this.

- 14.10 An analysis of visual vulnerability of the landscape was therefore carried out within the Action Plan area. (Appendix V).
- 14.11 Visual vulnerability is the measure of the landscape ability to accept change without adversely affecting its existing qualities. The Action Plan area has been divided into areas of high, medium and low visual vulnerability:-
- High visual vulnerability - areas of high landscape quality, vulnerable to change, in which intrusions would change the character or setting of the landscape;
  - medium visual vulnerability - areas where some change will be acceptable; and
  - low visual vulnerability - areas in which the presumption will be that change is acceptable and that landscape requires enhancement.
- 14.12 Whilst change is inevitable, arising from the physical implementation of the Action Plan, it is important to note that in some locations enhancement of the landscape (aesthetic value) can be achieved by redevelopment, change of use or structural landscape planting. In areas of low vulnerability there is a presumption that change is acceptable and that the landscape could be enhanced. This is particularly so in the context of the precast concrete factory which is located within the National Recreation Centre.
- 14.13 By imposing height limitations, (compatible to the vulnerability areas) on new development and implementing landscaping requirements, the Action Plan seeks to reduce the visible impact of development within Ta' Qali when viewed from Mdina. Whilst development is restricted in the agricultural areas within the south and west of Ta' Qali immediately below Mdina, permitted development in the National Recreation Centre takes account of the impact of buildings which are more readily absorbed by the back drop provided by the settlement of Mosta. Maximum heights relate from existing ground level to the upper cornice or parapet line where appropriate or the highest roof level. *It is not a condition that all new development should strive to reach these maximum heights.* Good design standards which make use of varying roof heights will be considered favourably as these often provide for interesting roof-scapes.

## NWTQ 45

## External Lighting

**The Planning Authority will seek to preserve the night-time view of Mdina as seen from Ta' Qali and vice-versa through the use of high quality street and amenity lighting. Within the Action Plan area, all roads and parking areas will be lit by full cut-off (flat glass) or low-profile bowl lanterns. Floodlighting should be kept to a minimum but where required it should be directed downwards and be properly shielded to minimise the amount of light spill. Floodlights should be switched off when not needed for safety or security. Globes and other poorly-shielded fixtures will not be used. Illumination on billboards and other**

**advertising signs should conform with the Planning Authority's Advertisement Design Guidelines.**

14.14 The night-time view of Mdina as seen from Ta' Qali is already impaired by the floodlighting of the National Stadium and the nearby football training ground, and a further haphazard increase in external lighting would destroy the picturesque setting of the floodlit Cathedral and the bastions beneath it. Bad exterior lighting (the kind that throws light sideways and upward) produces glare, clutter and confusion, thus contributing to an inferior night-time environment. Over-lighting would also adversely affect the flora and fauna in the area. Quality lighting (which is well-shielded and is directed downwards where it is needed) enhances the night-time environment by increasing visibility, safety and security, and by creating more attractive surroundings.

## Map 10



# 15 Access and Traffic Management

## **15 Access and Traffic Management**

### **NWTQ 46**

### **Improvements to Road Network**

**The improvement to the arterial road network which affects the Ta' Qali area is the upgrading to arterial road status of the existing local access road through Wied il-Hemsija to its junction with the existing arterial road between Attard and Rabat as illustrated on Policy Map 5.**

15.1 A hierarchy of roads is indicated on the Policy Map 5. The classification of roads follows the system given in the Structure Plan and the hierarchy is used to define roads in order of their importance for traffic circulation and traffic management. The road network within the plan area will be developed in accordance with the aims of the Action Plan to permit easy and safe access to the facilities.

### **NWTQ 47**

### **New Link Road**

**A new link will be constructed from the stadium's rear access road to the secondary road which forms the western boundary of Ta' Qali, as illustrated on Map 11 page 74 and the new route created around the stadium from the Military Cemetery will be upgraded to a local access road. Traffic to the Convention and Exhibition Site should be encouraged to use the entrance shown on Map 11**

15.2 To improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the road network and vehicular circulation in Ta' Qali some minor highway works and traffic management measures are required. In particular the National Football Stadium requires upgraded infrastructure to improve accessibility and car parking at this facility, and the adverse impacts of commercial and heavy vehicles on parts of Ta' Qali need to be mitigated.

### **NWTQ 48**

### **Improvements to Western Boundary Road**

**The secondary road on the western boundary of Ta' Qali will be widened and improved between its existing junction with the Attard/Mosta road and its junction with the Rabat/Mosta road. The improvement will include a new link access to the stadium described in NWTQ 47.**

15.3 This road widening and junction improvement will assist with managing the flow of traffic between the stadium and the distributor road on Ta' Qali's western boundary.

# Map 11

## **NWTQ 49**

### **Improvements to the Military Cemetery Road**

**The alignment of the road running south of the stadium and its junction with the Rabat to Mosta road will be improved. (Refer to Policy NWTQ 46 for upgrading of the arterial road.**

**A landscaping scheme to be implemented in order to improve the visual amenity of the local access road.**

- 15.4 The junction by the military cemetery is currently poorly aligned and it creates a hazardous situation at the nearby roundabout. This policy seeks to establish a better access point between this road and the roundabout.

## **NWTQ 50**

### **Directional Road Signs**

**The Roads Department will carry out a comprehensive replacement and addition of regulatory and directional road signs within Ta' Qali and on the approaches to it.**

- 15.5 The current scant and often confusing signage in the area will be replaced to provide the required information for routes and directions. If appropriate a distinctive customised signage will be used to increase the awareness and identity of the area, and to be of a scale in keeping with the character of the area.

## **NWTQ 51**

### **Provision of Public Transport**

**The feasibility of additional bus services will be investigated by the *Awtorita Dwar it-Trasport* (ADT) with a view to implementation as the area is developed.**

- 15.6 Access to Ta' Qali by bus will be improved in line with the development of the area. A good public transport service should encourage a reduction in car use, and ease the pressure on the Ta' Qali road network. Currently the recreational areas are most popular on a Sunday afternoon. When assessing major development applications, MEPA may use the development control process to assist the *Awtorita Dwar it-Trasport* (ADT) in the provision of additional bus services.

## **NWTQ 52**

### **Bus Stops**

**New bus stops will be established on the designated route described in Policy NWTQ 57 at its junction with the road to the south of the vineyard.**

- 15.7 The provision of bus stops and bus services for facilities other than the Crafts Village will be investigated and implemented where appropriate.

## **NWTQ 53**

## **Car Park Upgrading**

**The car parking facilities which remain after the implementation of this plan will be upgraded to formal car parks in accordance with the standards set out in the Structure Plan Explanatory Memorandum and in Circular PA3/93 (as amended from time to time).**

- 15.8 The car parks surrounding the National Football Stadium and along the former runway are in poor condition and require improvements and additions. There is also a lack of traffic management with regard to access to parking provision and better organisation of parking is required. Indication of the location of parking areas at key points on approaching the stadium and advance information as to whether they are full or not would greatly assist traffic flows at major events.

## **NWTQ 54**

## **Stadium Car Parks-Western**

**The Planning Authority will encourage in consultation with the Malta Football Association and the appropriate government agencies, the construction of a multi-storey car park on the site of the existing car park.**

- 15.9 There is an opportunity to convert the existing car park into a multi-storey complex. This would provide increased parking capacity for the benefit of adjacent development and have good access to the proposed new stadium link road (Refer to Policy NWTQ 47). It would also reduce pressure on the existing parking areas to the north east of the stadium (Refer to Policy NWTQ 55).

## **NWTQ 55**

## **Stadium Car Parks - North East**

**The car park to the north east of the stadium as shown on MAP 11 will be redeveloped into a multi storey car park below ground level. Minimal ancillary facilities associated with the Convention and Exhibition Centre use such as open-air leisure (not more than 15% of the site), storage and administrative offices (not more than 5% of the site and not higher than 6.0m) may be allowed at ground level as part of the multi-storey car park development, provided that at least 80% of the site at ground level remains car parking within a landscaped setting.**

- 15.10 This proposal is aimed at increasing the parking provision for the stadium and the convention and exhibition centre by requiring the provision of car parking below ground and on a strong proportion of the ground surface on the 2.5ha site. Some development at ground level for supporting uses to the convention centre could introduce an element of flexibility in the use and design of exhibition space on the main site. The layout and design of this car park needs

to address issues of safety and security, which could arise on certain occasions when the stadium is in use.

## **NWTQ 56 Car Park (Former Site of Glass Factory)**

**A new car park will be constructed on the southern portion of the current site of the Mdina Glass Factory together with landscape enhancement.**

15.11 Upon the relocation of the glass factory to the Crafts Village redevelopment, an area will be made available for car parking together with landscape enhancement.

## **NWTQ 57 Management of Through Traffic**

**Commercial and industrial traffic will be encouraged to use a designated route through Ta' Qali as indicated on Policy Map 5.**

**The following traffic management measures will be implemented to facilitate this route:-**

- i. Junction improvements at those locations NWTQ 57, as indicated on Policy Map 5 will help establish the priority of the designated route; refer to Map 12 page 80 for road improvement adjacent to the proposed Visitor Centre and Crafts Village;**
- ii. the section of the designated route which runs along the south east boundary of nursery and garden centre will be upgraded to a local access road and will include the necessary improvements to its width and surface where required;**
- iii. the existing stretch of local access road to the north of the vineyard and its junction with the northern boundary road off Ta' Qali as shown on Policy Map 5 will be downgraded to an access-only road;**
- iv. traffic calming measures such as pinch points and road humps, will be located just off the designated route at its junctions with other roads inside the Action Plan area; and**
- v. the road to the south-east of the vineyard will be closed to motor vehicles.**

15.12 In order to reduce the impact of extraneous commercial and industrial traffic and to manage that traffic which still finds it necessary to pass through Ta' Qali, a route has been designated which avoids the main recreational areas. This route will be established by using appropriate signage as well as traffic management measures which physically discourage drivers from diverting off the main route.

## **NWTQ 58 Traffic Calming**

**Traffic calming measures will be installed along the former runway as shown on Policy Map 5 including a "gateway" construction at each end and**

**pedestrianisation of the central section, in accordance with Planning Authority guidelines. (Refer to Policy NWTQ 14)**

- 15.13 Traffic using Ta' Qali for informal recreational purposes will be encouraged to enter via "gateways." These features are proposed for each end of the former runway, and will be designed to show drivers that they are entering a different driving environment. Vehicles will be prohibited from the middle section of the former runway, and directed to adjacent car parks. The central section of the former runway, between the existing roundabout and the north western carpark will be pedestrianised and landscaped to permit informal recreation activity. Other traffic calming measures such as road humps and raised zebra crossings would provide for a safer and more pleasant environment for the large number of visitors.

**NWTQ 59**

**Stadium Access**

**Traffic will be encouraged to access the National Football Stadium from the west, and the following measures will be undertaken to discourage the wider movement of this traffic within Ta' Qali:-**

- i. A junction improvement with corresponding traffic management measures at point NWTQ 59 as indicated on Policy Map 5; and**

- 15.14 The road improvements proposed in Policy NWTQ 47 and NWTQ 48 will make access to the National Football Stadium from the west much easier. Therefore, to discourage traffic from using the new routes to reach other parts of the Action Plan Area some further disincentives are required. At the same time access to farms and associated buildings and residences must be retained.

- 15.15 These proposals will also assist the police in their management of traffic during popular sports events. The temporary installation of barriers and road signs for these events will be made easier leading to reduced police presence and significant improvements to the traffic flows.

**NWTQ 60**

**Triq Il-Pitkali**

**The Planning Authority in conjunction with Attard Local Council will implement traffic calming and other physical and legislative measures at key locations along Triq il-Pitkali as shown on Policy Map 5, in accordance with Planning Authority guidelines.**

- 15.16 A significant proportion of Pitkali traffic currently enters and exits the depot via the adjacent urban area of Attard. It is proposed that this Action Plan should provide the basis for a solution to the detrimental effects of this commercial traffic on the residential area.

- 15.17 The junction improvements described in NWTQ 57 will reduce the attractiveness of Triq il-Pitkali as a through route from Ta' Qali. This in combination with other traffic calming measures such as road humps, chicanes

and narrow ways, will assist in reducing the amount in type of traffic passing between Attard and Ta' Qali via this route.

## **NWTQ 61**

## **Access for All**

**All new or rehabilitated public buildings and public areas, or buildings which are expected to attract the public, on a regular or frequent basis, will be required to make provision for access by people with special needs, including wheelchair users.**

15.18 It is important that people with special needs, such as the disabled, old, or mothers with young children are not ignored in considering planning proposals at Ta' Qali. This policy underlines the Planning Authority's determination to ensure that access needs are considered at the earliest possible stage (see also Structure Plan Policy BEN 15). Such needs must be taken into account in the design of all the recreational, art and cultural facilities provided within the Action Plan Area. The Planning Authority will also expect dedicated car parking spaces to be provided for people with disabilities, again including wheelchairs within all car parks.



## MAP 12

## 16 Utilities

### NWTQ 62

### New Development

**New development proposals will be required to show measures for the siting and location of all utility and telecommunication requirements and ancillary services.**

**Permission will only be given for utility supplies, sub-stations or storage facilities if siting is underground or incorporated within the building complex, in order to minimise the visual impact, and it is accessible to the utility providers at all times in the event that repair works are required.**

**Schemes must show provision for the on site storage of drinking water and systems to be employed for the catchment and re-use of second class water as well as landscaping requirements.**

**The Planning Authority will encourage the Water Services Corporation to initiate, as a matter of priority, a scheme for the increase production of second class water at Torri Cumbo, Ta' Qali.**

**The Planning Authority will seek the removal of unsightly facilities associated with the supply of utilities which have adverse impacts on the area of scenic value.**

16.1 It is vital that any new infrastructure or utility requirements for existing and proposed development are sited in such a way as not to result in an adverse visual impact on surrounding areas and land uses. In accordance with Structure Plan policies, the Planning Authority will only give permission for the development of new or extended infrastructure when the authority is satisfied that the amenity of the surrounding area or land use is not materially affected to its detriment by the proposal or the works required.

16.2 There are areas within Ta' Qali where the use of concrete pylons, power lines and cables, reservoirs, water storage tanks and electricity sub stations has resulted in the loss of visual amenity and the disruption of scenic value.

#### **Water**

16.3 Second Class Water - Torri Cumbo, Ta' Qali - the Water Services Corporation will feed second class water together with surface run-off collected in the Wied il-Qliegha catchment area and from a future small treatment plant which will treat sewage presently flowing through an old gallery which crosses Ta' Qali. Heavy consumers in the area may be attracted towards this second class water resource provided that proper integrated water pricing policies are adopted.

- 16.4 Unaccounted-for Water Reduction - new pipe work will be installed with emphasis on renewals of corroding mains as part of the unaccounted for water reduction programme - Ta' Qali reservoir distribution trunk main will be a major project.
- 16.5 Underground water channel - An existing underground channel connecting Chadwick Lakes to the Water Services Corporation reservoir at Torri Cumbo, and Tal-Kmand Micropropagation Unit at Lija is programmed for repair by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries during the plan period. The large reservoirs at Tal-Kmand still serve other reservoirs at San Anton Gardens.
- 16.6 Water Reservoirs - Existing government reservoirs have been identified on the Existing Land Map 3. These reservoirs could be of assistance in the formulation of a Fire Control Plan and also provide water for landscaping purposes.

### **Electricity**

- 16.7 Although the plan suggests the relocation of overhead services, the removal of the existing primary overhead circuits will be difficult and may only be achieved in certain locations.

## **17 Information Centre**

### **NWTQ 63**

### **Information Centre**

**An area is designated as Policy NWTQ 63, on Policy Map 5, for the provision of an information centre.**

**A junction improvement will be undertaken at the entrance to the Crafts Village as illustrated on Map 12 page 80.**

- 17.1 A small information and traffic control centre adjacent to the Crafts Village public car park will be provided to supply location maps and information on the Crafts Village and the range of recreational, art and cultural facilities available to visitors within the National Recreation Centre.
- 17.2 The current access into the Crafts Village is substandard where there is little indication of priorities. A large number of adverts and road signs, at this location, also adds to a confusing arrangement. Therefore, it is proposed to improve the access to the Crafts Village to create a clear entry point which also provides access to a public car parking facility and the proposed information centre. The junction will therefore be formalised to ensure that priority is given to the flow of traffic bypassing the Crafts Village.

## 18 Implementation

### NWTQ 64

### Management Agency

**It is recommended that a Management Agency be appointed to implement the Action Plan for Ta' Qali. This agency will be assisted by the Planning Authority, Ministry responsible for Public Works and Construction and other appropriate Government agencies.**

#### Introduction

- 18.1 In order to optimise the use of the recreational land and public open space within Ta' Qali and in accordance with the recommendation of the Department of Information in drawing up Locality Boundaries in 1994, that such an area of national importance should be managed by a separate entity; and in accordance with Policy REC 3 of the Structure Plan, it is recommended that a Management Agency be appointed by Government to administer and to implement the Action Plan. The Management agency to be given initial funding by Government, but thereafter to use receipts from leasing of land for development to provide ongoing finance for management, maintenance and promotion of the Action Plan Policies. Implementation of the main elements of this Action Plan, recreation and sports and cultural facilities, environmental management protection, roads and utilities, will depend on the action, co-ordination and co-operation of many different bodies including Ministry responsible for Public Works and Construction, National Parks Steering Committee, Ta' Qali National Parks Committee, Ministry of Education, Parliamentary Secretariat in the Ministry of Education, Culture Department, Malta Sports Council, Roads Department, all Utility Authorities (Drainage Department, Water Services Corporation, Enemalta and Maltacom, Land Department, Malta Development Corporation, Environmental Protection Department, Planning Authority and other appropriate key Government agencies and parastatals.
- 18.2 The Ta' Qali Action Plan, with its complementary development and protection strategies, is incorporated within the North West Local Plan, which is scheduled for public consultation during the spring of 2000.
- 18.3 In order that the Action Plan can be successfully implemented, it is essential that:-
- There is a means of funding, monitoring and evaluating all of the plan policies;
  - the plan should provide guidance to those proposing development whether it be in the public or private sector;
  - the plan should contain measures to influence and programme investment, and
  - the plan should identify those agencies that should assist in implementing each proposal.

- 18.4 The implementation programme can be usefully subdivided into 4 main stages:-
- Pre-Development
  - Design and Approval
  - Construction
  - Monitoring
- 18.5 It is vital, to ensure timely implementation of key elements of the Action Plan, that these stages (at least in part) run in parallel or overlap each other. This can be achieved by overall co-ordination and responsibility being established immediately at the highest level; appropriate funding, co-operation and provision to achieve the programme; and adherence to the Action Plan.

### **Pre Development Stage**

- 18.6 Following approval of the Action Plan by the Planning Authority, this stage consists of five main elements, as follows:
- i. Management - A management agency or corporation should be set up at the earliest opportunity under the responsibility of a Government Minister. This agency in conjunction with the Planning Authority will be the co-ordinator of the Action Plan implementation. Membership of this agency will include public and private sectors. It is suggested that a two tier agency be set up, at executive level and for day-to-day implementation. The agency will report direct to the Minister and be responsible to ensuring the establishment of funding and implementation tasks according to a co-ordinated plan prepared by a Project Manager appointed by the agency or commission. Regular progress reports will be submitted to the appropriate Minister for review.
  - ii. Funding - Initial Government funding is vital in order to implement key elements of the Action Plan, particularly: road improvements, utility upgrading and provision, and landscape/environmental upgrading. The co-ordination to achieve this funding is the responsibility of the Project Manager. Receipts to offset future management, maintenance and promotion will be forthcoming in the form of rents and private sector contributions which may form part of development packages. Estimates of income and expenditure to be prepared by the Management Agency.
  - iii. Relocations - There are several existing uses which require relocation to enable key aspects of the Plan to be implemented. (Map 13 page 88) The Management Agency will be responsible for relocation through early and continuous discussions with the affected parties assisted by the Planning Authority for the issue of permits in order to achieve an equitable, appropriate and timely solution. The key relocation problems are:
    - a. Southern Concrete - The concrete plant is located centrally within the National Recreation Centre and its relocation is of critical importance

to the overall strategy of the Action Plan for optimisation of recreation, sports and cultural uses. The relocation to be in conjunction with the Malta Development Corporation (Refer to Policy NWTQ 30).

- b. Commercial/Industrial Units within the area of the Formal Garden which in conjunction with Malta Development Corporation, are to be relocated within the Craft Village include:-
- Muscat Mobili
  - Mdina Glass
  - Silver Magic (Gold & Silver Filigree Works)
  - Verre de Mic (Glass Engraving)
  - The Arcades Porcelaine
  - Charles Filigree
  - Jade Filigree Manufacture
  - Artistika Enterprises
  - Ceramart
  - C & F Prints Ltd
  - JMS Art Metal Craft
  - D Psaila
  - Ellas Funkraft
  - Peel and Go
  - Joe Xuereb
- c. Dinosaurs Exhibition and Open Air Disco - The present exhibition and disco within the Formal Garden area are to be relocated to the south of the Garden Area within land designated under Policy NWTQ 3).
- d. Commercial/Industrial Units within or adjacent to the Formal Garden Area that fall within Class 12 Business and Light Industry, as defined by the Development Planning Use Classes Order 1994), but do not conform to the criteria required of a craft business. An area has been designated for the relocation south west of the Former Spinning and Weaving factory (Refer to Policy NWTQ 28).

In order to assist relocation of larger developments, the Local Plan identifies alternative sites, or where appropriate, the need for further study including environmental impact assessment for locations for major impact sports. However, it is recommended that Government may give consideration to incentives of long leases, options to purchase, free rent for initial periods and grants or loans to assist in the construction of new premises. It must be stressed that relocation will not be achievable solely through planning legislation, but also by effective estate management.

- iv. Traffic Management - Although the road network is adequate, there is a need to co-ordinate access and re-route extraneous traffic. This will be implemented by signage and traffic management measures. The work to

be carried out as a first stage of implementation ahead of or currently with development proposals.

- v. Land Allocations - There are several areas within the Action Plan which will require a transfer of land and responsibilities, namely:-
- Additional land to the north west and north east of the Crafts Village to be vested in Malta Development Corporation;
  - an embargo on all leases of land other than that designated for recreational use, in order that the overall aim of optimisation of Ta' Qali for recreation is achieved;
  - all lease holders with over 12 months to run on land being of non recreational use within the National Recreation Centre to be advised of termination on the current expiry date;
  - in cases where an unauthorised planning use is proven, then any existing lease to be terminated.

- 18.7 Landscape Master Plan - A Landscape Master Plan is required for the whole of the Ta' Qali Action Plan Area (refer to Policy NWTQ 37). It is proposed that landscape architects are briefed as soon as possible to prepare the design work including environmental upgrading in order that the Management Agency can commence implementation during the first available planting season.

The proposed Plan to be a natural follow-up to the planting plan initiated by the Government in 1988 (Refer to Policy NWTQ 37).

### **Design and Approval Stage**

- 18.8 Concurrently with the pre development stage, work must commence on various design and technical studies: road improvements, utilities and Landscape Master Plan / Environmental upgrading. Relevant approvals must then be obtained.
- 18.9 Road Access - There are several junction improvements, road widening and traffic management schemes to design. A short length of new road is proposed west of the stadium car park linking with the existing perimeter road.
- 18.10 Utilities - The existing drainage, power, water and telecommunication networks will need to be upgraded and improved to cater for the plan provisions. These must be subject to compliance with policy NWTQ 62 which states that facilities should be located underground to minimise their visual impact.



## Map 13

- 18.11 Approvals - All “development”, including relocations, as defined by the Development Planning Act 1992, will require a development permit from the Planning Authority. These must be applied for in a timely manner to ensure no delays to the implementation programme. The Management Agency should be responsible for the co-ordination of all such permit applications and the necessary discussions with the Planning Authority.

### **Construction Stage**

- 18.12 The Management Agency will be responsible for co-ordination of all design work, tendering procedures, co-ordination of working drawing, site management and all dealings with contractors/sub-contractors. Such work will naturally involve the close co-operation of all relevant Government departments, parastatals and private agencies.
- 18.13 All construction will be monitored by the Management Agency and the Planning Authority to ensure compliance with the Ta’ Qali Action Plan together with all subsequent development permits.
- 18.14 Maintenance - The Management Agency will be responsible for the maintenance of the Action Plan area. The appropriate government and private agencies will provide assistance in this work.

### **Policy Implementation**

- 18.15 The following table highlights certain of the key policy proposals contained in the Action Plan together with those agencies, public and/or private, who will assist the Management Agency in their implementation.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

- 18.16 In terms of monitoring and evaluation, the most reasonable test of the policies would be an annual evaluation of a number of selective performance indicators, through a process of data collection, analysis and synthesis. The management agency to set targets for monitoring and evaluation. The effectiveness of the plan can therefore be measured by how each individual policy has or has not been implemented.
- 18.17 A statement of performance can then be produced. Any key policy changes or amendments which should be incorporated to make the policy framework more robust or to align with any new planning guidance resulting from a Structure Plan Review, can be considered by the Planning Authority when the Local Plan and Action Plan are reviewed.

## Policy Implementation

| <b>Policy Ref.</b>                         | <b>Description of Proposal</b>                   | <b>Public, private or voluntary agencies assisting in implementation</b> |
|--|--|--|
| <b><u>Action Plan</u></b>                  |  |  |
| NWTQ 1                                     | Action Plan Area                                 | Management Agency/Planning Authority                                     |
| <b><u>Recreation and Sport</u></b>         |  |  |
| NWTQ 2                                     | National Recreation Centre                       | Management Agency  |
| NWTQ 3                                     | Recreation, Sport, Art and Cultural Use          | Management Agency  |
| NWTQ 4                                     | International Sport, Art and Culture Facilities  | Management Agency  |
| NWTQ 5                                     | Change of Use of Land to Recreational Purposes   | Planning Authority   |
| NWTQ 6                                     | Basketball                                       | Malta Basketball Association   |
| NWTQ 7                                     | Camping  | Private Sector   |
| NWTQ 8                                     | Cycling  |  |
| NWTQ 9                                     | Athletics  | Management Agency/Planning Authority                                     |
| NWTQ 10                                    | Football (Training Facilities)                   | Malta Football Association   |
| NWTQ 11                                    | Formal Garden                                    |  |
| NWTQ 12                                    | Model Aircraft Flying                            | Malta Model Flying Association   |
| NWTQ 13                                    | Motor Racing                                     | Management Agency  |
| NWTQ 14                                    | Informal Open Space                              | Management Agency  |
| NWTQ 15                                    | Picnic Areas                                     | Management Agency  |
| NWTQ 16                                    | Recreation (Mixed Use)                           | Management Agency  |
| NWTQ 17                                    | Country Parkways and Footpaths                   | Local Councils   |
| <b><u>Art and Culture</u></b>              |  |  |
| NWTQ 18                                    | Aviation Museum                                  | Malta Aviation Museum Foundation   |
| NWTQ 19                                    | Museums  | Management Agency  |
| NWTQ 20                                    | Cultural Centre                                  | Management Agency  |
| NWTQ 21                                    | Animal Sanctuaries                               | Private Sector   |
| <b><u>Agriculture and Horticulture</u></b> |  |  |
| NWTQ 22                                    | Restriction of Use                               | Planning Authority   |
| NWTQ 23                                    | Areas of Agricultural Value                      | Planning Authority   |
| <b><u>Conservation</u></b>                 |  |  |
| NWTQ 24                                    | Area of Ecological Importance                    | Planning Authority   |
| NWTQ 25                                    | Nature Reserve                                   | Environmental Protection Dept.   |
| <b><u>Commerce and Industry</u></b>        |  |  |
| NWTQ 26                                    | Existing Development                             | Planning Authority   |
| NWTQ 27                                    | The "Crafts Village"                             | Malta Development Corporation  |
| NWTQ 28                                    | Former Spinning and Weaving Factory              | Management Agency  |
| NWTQ 29                                    | Pitkali (Fruit and Vegetable Distribution Depot) | Department of Agriculture (Fruit and Vegetable Distribution Depot)       |
| NWTQ 30                                    | Precast Concrete Plant                           | Management Agency/Planning Authority                                     |

| Policy Ref.                                 | Description of Proposal                       | Public, private or voluntary agencies assisting in implementation |
|---|---|---|
| NWTQ 31                                     | Garden Centre/Nursery                         | Private Sector  |
| NWTQ 32                                     | Industry and Storage                          | Private Sector  |
| NWTQ 33                                     | Service Parking                               | Management Agency   |
| NWTQ 34                                     | Santa Maria Reservoirs                        | Water Services Corporation  |
| NWTQ 35                                     | Trade Fair                                    | Management Agency   |
| NWTQ 36                                     | Convention Centre                             | Private Sector  |
| <b><u>Landscape</u></b>                     |   |   |
| NWTQ 37                                     | Landscape Master Plan                         | Management Agency/Planning Authority                              |
| NWTQ 38                                     | Area of High Landscape Value                  | Planning Authority  |
| NWTQ 39                                     | Strategic Open Space Gaps between Settlements | Planning Authority  |
| NWTQ 40                                     | Advertisements                                | Management Agency/Planning Authority                              |
| NWTQ 41                                     | Fencing and Rubble Walls                      | Management Agency/Planning Authority                              |
| NWTQ 42                                     | Soft Landscaping                              | Management Agency   |
| NWTQ 43                                     | Hard Landscaping                              | Management Agency   |
| NWTQ 44                                     | Height Limitations                            | Planning Authority  |
| NWTQ 45                                     | External Lighting                             |   |
| <b><u>Access and Traffic Management</u></b> |   |   |
| NWTQ 46                                     | Improvements to Road Network                  | Roads Department  |
| NWTQ 47                                     | New Stadium Link Road                         | Roads Department  |
| NWTQ 48                                     | Improvements to Western Boundary Road         | Roads Department  |
| NWTQ 49                                     | Improvements to the Military Cemetery Road    | Roads Department  |
| NWTQ 50                                     | Directional Road Signs                        | Roads Department  |
| NWTQ 51                                     | Provision of Public Transport                 | Public Transport Authority  |
| NWTQ 52                                     | Bus Stops                                     | Public Transport Authority  |
| NWTQ 53                                     | Car Park Upgrading                            | Management Agency   |
| NWTQ 54                                     | Stadium Car Parks - Western                   | Management Agency   |
| NWTQ 55                                     | Stadium Car Parks - North East                | Management Agency   |
| NWTQ 56                                     | Car Park (Former Site of Glass Factory)       | Management Agency   |
| NWTQ 57                                     | Management of Through Traffic                 | Roads Department  |
| NWTQ 58                                     | Traffic Calming                               | Roads Department  |
| NWTQ 59                                     | Stadium Access                                | Roads Department  |
| NWTQ 60                                     | Triq il-Pitkali                               | Planning Authority  |
| NWTQ 61                                     | Access for All                                | Management Agency   |
| <b><u>Utilities</u></b>                     |   |   |
| NWTQ 62                                     | New Development                               |   |
| <b><u>Visitors Centre</u></b>               |   |   |
| NWTQ 63                                     | Information Centre                            | Private Sector  |
| <b><u>Implementation</u></b>                |   |   |
| NWTQ 64                                     | Management Agency                             |   |

## List of Proposed Performance Indicators

| Para      | Indicators  | Target      |
|-----------|---|-------------|
| 4.1       | Areas of land use type, by year   | Annually    |
| 4.1       | Projects approved by land use, by area, by type (permits granted)                     | Annually    |
| 4.2       | % informal public open space, by year   | Annually    |
| 4.2 (iii) | Number of landscape enhancement/environmental improvement projects implemented        | Annually    |
| 4.2 (iii) | Number of traffic management schemes implemented                                      | Annually    |
| 4.2 (iv)  | New developments in zone between Ta' Qali and UCA of Mdina                            | Annually    |
| 4.2 (v)   | Visitor numbers to National Recreation Centre by season/day                           | Monthly     |
| 4.2 (vi)  | Number of inappropriate uses relocated  | Quarterly   |
| 4.2 (vii) | Yearly budget of Ta' Qali management structure  | Annually    |
| 8.13      | Number of major impact sports relocated over time                                     | Annually    |
| 8.15      | Progress on location of Museums   | Half Yearly |
| 8.18      | Progress on scheduling of Wied il-Hemsija as an AEI and one additional Nature Reserve | Quarterly   |
| 8.19      | Number of industrial/commercial uses relocated  | Quarterly   |
| 8.19      | Number of non-conforming users (buildings/structures) removed from Formal Garden      | Quarterly   |
| 8.21      | Progress on Landscape Master Plan   | Half Yearly |
| 8.26      | Progress on upgrading of road through Wied il-Hemsija to arterial road                | Annually    |
| 8.27      | Progress on new link road to improve accessibility to National Football Stadium       | Half Yearly |
| 8.28      | Parking provision in park area  | Half Yearly |
| 8.29      | Number of road improvement projects including management of through traffic           | Half Yearly |
| 8.29      | Number of traffic calming projects  | Half Yearly |
| 8.30      | Number of vehicles (by type) passing through park by which road                       | Monthly     |
| 8.36      | Progress on Information Centre at Ta' Qali  | Half Yearly |

## Appendix

|   | <b>Page</b> |
|---|-------------|
| • Government Committee Report (1986)        | 94          |
| • Planting Plan                             | 100         |
| • IUCN Protected Area Management Categories | 104         |
| • Structure Plan Policies                   | 106         |
| • Visual Vulnerability                      | 111         |

### 19 Government Committee Report (1986)

Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries  
3A, Old Mint Street,  
Valletta

8th April 1986

Administrative Secretary

The Committee appointed to advise the Government on the best way to develop Ta' Qali into a National Park or an Amenities Park wish to submit the following report.

#### PARK FOR TA' QALI

Situated geographically in the centre of the Island, the relatively large expanse of the old Ta' Qali airfield is within easy reach from the main towns and villages. It has already become popular with the people who frequent it for recreational purposes.

Ta' Qali has therefore great potential as a park. However, before setting out on the 'development' of the area it is important to set out clearly the objectives - that is: whether the area ought to be mainly the nation's 'playground' the nation's 'recreation' area or the nations 'choice of one type of landscape to be conserved.'

The word 'park' has come to recall visions of various ideals. Parks differ greatly in character. Fundamentally there are, however, two basic concepts involved.

A. Concept of "National" parks - these are essentially meant to be large tracts of land, of openness and unspoiled country - intended to give a sense of freedom. Areas of landscape chosen primarily as being unique, which areas become a 'museum' showpiece, hence encouraging very limited developments in these areas, and if allowed at all, developments must be in harmony with their context. These areas are mainly intended for quiet contemplation of nature.

B. Concept of 'Planned' parks - These are areas planned in an organised and functional way for the use by and recreation of the people. The primary purpose is not simply for walking and taking air in the natural surroundings of an unspoiled area, but meant to provide accommodation for 'active' recreation. Such parks differ greatly from country to country and can indeed accommodate a large and varied amount of amusements, sports and play facilities.

It would seem that there is a necessity that Ta' Qali should keep the balance between the two fundamental concepts. Hence the important reason for creating a park, i.e. that of bringing part of nature within easy reach of the city and town dweller must not be endangered and unduly sacrificed to specific recreational functions. The tempo of development at Ta' Qali has gone on rather unchecked, and the demand for further

intensive use of the land will not diminish, but will remain a reality unless protection measures are forthcoming.

Only proper balance of use can offer the people opportunities for relaxation and recreation, if the area is to be a foil or escape from the monotonous uniformity of the built environment, to be found in the conurbation around the cities.

To achieve this aim it is proposed that an area within the confines of the present site be actively redesigned and developed, while a more extensive area

v.i. around the present confines be considered as falling within precincts of the proposed park, thus a development free area will preserve the views enjoyed from the public areas.

The proposed boundaries should hence extend to the existing major roads some distance away from airfield, i.e. the road by-passing Mosta to the North, the road below Mtarfa to the West, the Rabat - Valletta Road to the South, and the roads of Tal-Mirakli residential development to the East.

These boundaries will not need to affect any changes to farming use. They will only ensure that undesirable developments will be contained so that appearance appeal of the immediate scenery is not altered, and hence ensure that policies about any development will not be in conflict with the conservation of the surroundings of the proposed park - and the essential balance between natural surroundings and man-made intrusions is maintained.

The actual design of Ta' Qali calls for careful subdivision of space into a number of smaller ones with particular uses so that the different functions to which Ta' Qali will be put to use, will be organised into a unified whole resulting in the optimum, use of the land.

Particular attention is to be given to the careful zoning of compatible uses (for example noise generating activities to be grouped together) and the relationship between them.

Present State of Ta' Qali - The approximate 80 ha site is at present accommodating within its boundaries various uses. These can be listed as follows: Crafts Village, Sports Pavilion and National Stadium, a number of industries, the School of Agriculture, the Vegetable Market (Pitkali) and Air Modellers' strip.

Crafts Village at present consists of a conglomeration of huts left over by the Services. Its layout, originally ordered, has become rather haphazard and most of the units have been added to in an untidy way - becoming very unsightly in the process. Immediate control has become essential. There are even some remaining derelict huts which serve no purpose.

The Mdina Glass factory which can be considered as forming part of the village, occupies too prominent a site - an island site, which needs modification if it is to be absorbed in setting and its effect mitigated.

School of Agriculture - This area is quite extensive and its land there are also some service roads to the allotments.

Sports Pavilion & Stadium - In front of these buildings there is an extensive unobstructed stretch of flat 'green' area. However, a large car park has been constructed which is really unnecessary, if only people were prepared to walk the short distance from existing hard surface of runway.



Factory buildings - There are three large factories at Ta' Qali, one being right in the heart of the area. The Concrete Products Ltd. Occupies a large area, and appears to be in the process of occupying a further large tract of adjacent land. Due to the nature of works this factory generates an amount of dust which is detrimental to this environment.

There are two other factories, but at least these are found on the fringes of the area. However, another concrete products factory, seems to be in process of expansion. Adjacent to this factory there is also the large textile factory. Both these factories can have their own separate access and thus cut-off from the park's perimeter road.

Compatible Uses - Of the mentioned uses, the School of Agriculture, Pitkali, the Sports Pavilion and Stadium, and Crafts Village can all be considered as having a use, compatible with the nature of the proposed development. However, these uses have generated certain activities which in turn have made further demands on available land, often because of resorting to extensive parking facilities or else the requirement of additional road service facilities. Both sports activities and Pitkali sales generate considerable traffic movement.

Incompatible Uses - The areas devoted to industrial uses are quite incompatible with the nature of the proposed development. It is considered impossible at this stage to move industry to another area.

- V.I. However, it is essential that henceforth any further encroachment on land for industrial use is strictly forbidden. Furthermore, every effort is to be made to minimise not only the unsightly visual impact which these have created but to control all activities that these industries generate, particularly the frequent comings and going of heavy trucks, loaders, concrete carriers, which move around unhampered and undisciplined, at do-as-you-please speeds, all over the roads in the area - giving the surroundings the air of a thriving industrial estate, rather than that of a sketch of open countryside, with unwallled opportunities for relaxation and recreation.

Planning and Management - Prior to any specific development of recreation areas and allocation of land for these - it is essential that internal traffic movement and access points to park be carefully re-organised and controlled.

- v.i The use of the car, its unlimited and unchannelled routing within the area, presents the first real conflict with concept of park. Second to car, there is the heavy vehicle traffic - which type ought to be prohibited in the area. Vehicles should not be allowed into areas reserved for visitors and pedestrians. vehicles if these are to encroach - must do so unobtrusively. Therefore the areas selected as car parks have to be marked out with extreme care.

(Parking around stadium has to be re-sited. Major part of the Stadium's parking requirements can be accommodated on old runway). This car/people segregation is essential if nature of park is not to be compromised. Unless this is understood and enforced there will be little point in marking the area as a place for a salutary and healthful breathing space that serves as relief from heavily trafficked urban areas.

First planning requirement is therefore the establishing of the vehicle traffic routes, with control points at entrances to park. Second is the strategic placing of the parking areas. With a large runway available - most vehicles can be parked on it.

- v.i. Access to factories must be by a separate route and the route should be the shortest possible. Segregation of industrial traffic from normal traffic is essential - not only because the industry generated traffic is a nuisance, but because it is essential that character of park is not negated. The extensive use of runway as a planned and

organised car park, freeing in the process the green areas is perfectly possible and desirable.

The other immediate priority is the removal of eyesores and control of litter and dumping. The old bedsteads and refrigerators chucked all over the place are a minor problem which must be eliminated. Management of the area involves therefore a great deal of basic tidying up work, proper signposting for traffic control and its channelling along pre-established directions. The existing road pattern is on the whole adequate and should be kept, with few alterations, although not necessarily in its present relationship to the site. Organisation of the traffic flow becomes essential, evermore, when many people converge on the area on special festive occasions.

Plan Outline - In order that a balance is maintained between an 'unspoiled landscape area' and a 'recreation' area - as already described, the planning of the park is seen of being made-up in substance of three distinct areas.

The area extending from the Crafts Village up to the boundaries of the Pitkali Market (Southern part of field) - which area has already remnants of a garden layout, should be the repository area for the various recreation uses and activities. This is also the area where the people will tend to continue to converge in large numbers.

The area extending from the Sports Pavilion up to Air modellers' strip, and from Stadium (west of field) to School of Agriculture (East) - should remain as the stretch of 'unspoiled landscape' where people can go to enjoy a quiet rest, relieved of the ubiquitous presence of traffic and hence of resulting annoyance and noise.

The practice of driving on to the green stretches and picnicking there in the presence of one's own car must be discontinued. Cars should be restricted to runway and then people walk on to the green, select their patch and sit there. Indeed an umbrella and deck chair service could be provided. This will not only ensure the pastoral quality of the scene, but will also result in having more people making use of the area. Moreover, children will have more space, and kick and run without being a nuisance. This is the area which is the most pleasant part of Ta' Qali and a distinctive one, the like of which is not available anywhere else on the Island. In winter and spring it gives the impression of a turfed area and hence must be protected from traffic.

The third area is the stretch of land lying between these two - and which sites the National Stadium and Sports Pavilion. It is also the area which sites the unsightly 'Concrete Products Ltd.' factory. This area can be used to site further sports activities. These can include bicycle track, tennis and squash courts, covered pool facilities and sauna. The Stadium together with the new pitches have established sports as an activity in the sea. It is therefore natural that these be improved and extended - though not in such a way that these do intrude with the main function of Ta' Qali as a place for relaxation. The seven new pitches may have done so already.

Recreation Area - The 'recreation' area, as distinct from the 'countryside' area can be adapted for various uses. First of all, there can be additional gardens of a 'romantic' type or otherwise. There can also be provision for playgrounds using informal and natural materials, e.g. the 'junk playgrounds' type or 'adventure playground' type. Another possibility is the 'amusement' park which can bring gaiety and liveliness in the area by use of bright colours and properly selected materials. Indeed design has become a major factor in the contemporary playground. Formerly the playground was considered an open space to be filled with standard equipment for manufacturers - but to-day it could be seen as a challenge to the designer and sculptor. Almost everywhere where there are new playgrounds exciting and original works are produced.

The whole of this area which can exploit the existing vegetation, can be provide with further clumps of trees on narrow winding paths, and possibly with earth modelling that will have to be planned. The setting can be provided with a pronounced centrally-sited promenade which can be a main feature in the area - a place where people can be encouraged to converge. The promenade, wide, with properly designed canopy cover, an imaginative modern structure, and with sides having ample seating space - it can be a dramatic focus, an area for staging occasional displays and pageants. A place where folk music, flower shows and other indigenous recreation forms can take place. In a strategic position along the promenade, a band stand can serve for further attraction.

From an open air stand, people can also watch 'Son et lumière' with Mdina as background - an effective tourist attraction.

The whole of this area reserved for 'active' recreation - (Crafts Village - to Pitkali end) can provide sites for many other uses.

The following are a number of features which can be incorporated.

Types of Gardens - rock and water; cacti display; decorative planting; botanic; mini golf; aviary; aquarium

Types of features - architecturally designed greenhouse with tropical plants; small fountains and ponds; limited use of animals

Amenities - open air cafe, tea rooms; horse riding; beer garden; exhibition pavilion, festival hall

Fun Fair - A recreation park can be a proper place for siting a permanent Fun Fair. Its viability can draw on the large crowds during weekends and holidays. Its siting can be near the Sports area and can include: roller coasters, roundabouts and wings, large wheel, bumping cars, fun train and shooting range.

Possibility of Race Track - A race track can be introduced without significantly affecting the roads system, since a race circuit can make temporary use of roads used for normal traffic. However, it will mean that safety measures have to be strictly adhered to (fences and bumpers). In any case racing can be considered an annual event only. It will then be an added attraction. It is to be noted that the Detroit City circuit and the Monte Carlo circuit race track makes use, temporarily, of the city streets. In other cases, as in Nurburgring, racetrack is found in a park area.

Tourism - A park the size of Ta' Qali can contribute immensely to the tourist industry. Tourists pay regular visits to the Crafts Village - but other than this attraction little else has been devised. However, high standards of development will be needed if the tourist is to be satisfied when he comes. A flourishing inflow of tourism in the area can help provide for the services that will be needed in conjunction with the park's development.

Legislation - There seems to be one way left of avoiding the waste and destruction of unreplaceable areas of scenic beauty or good agricultural land. In the past rules made grants of land for the enjoyment of the people. In modern times parks are gifts from the people to the people. They will be paid for by public funds and hence should be planned and run for the recreation and enjoyment of all.

Drawings - Two plans are attached.

One layout shows the division of Ta' Qali in three main areas; 'agriculture' 'unspoiled landscape' and 'recreation' area.

Another map indicates area which, bounded by the four main roads, ought to be considered for eventual conservation.

Aware of the main scope of the provision of funds for extraordinary capital expenditure during 1986 the Committee considers that the first task in the execution of the project is the cleaning up of the entire area proposed for development. Furthermore three or four security gates should be put up which eventually would enclose the recreational area. The cleaning up coupled with the security measures required would necessitate the immediate employment of some twenty to thirty men. The 'cleaning' period, if the project is to be taken in hand in earnest, may give enough time for the planning and design of the recreational as which presumably will be tackled first.

## Appendix II

### PLANTING PLAN FOR THE TA' QALI NATIONAL PARK

Report by Joseph Borg. 21/11/88

#### 1. Preamble

- 1.1 Barely twenty years passed after the end of World War II when Ta' Qali lost its military importance. Although the official handing over was effected in 1964 it was some years later that parts of the complex was made use of for non-military activity. During 1972 the complex of Nissen huts were let to craftsmen and a crafts village formed. I took steps to plant fast growing species like ACACIA CYANOPHYLLIA and EUCALYPTUS CONPHOCEPHALA to create shade and screening of the metal structures.
- 1.2 During 1974 we planted a belt of windbreak of CUPRESSES SEMPERVIRENS on the perimeter of the airfield. Stands of PINUS HALEPENSIS were planted in areas where it was felt no building projects were in the offing. Almost half of the grassed area was ploughed up or reclaimed for horticultural products. Rubble walls were built and rows of Acacis were planted for quick protection from the winds.
- 1.3 Industrial concerns commenced building in this site and tree planting was rescated to screen the buildings as much as possible. The sporting public soon had a football stadium, training grounds and ancillary buildings connected with sport. The use of NERIUM OLEANDER on the embankments of the stadium give a fair amount of colour during summer and Autumn while at the same time prevents soil erosion. During the planting seasons this pattern of planting this escarpment will be kept.
- 1.4 In the only large grassed area left for the public, groups of evergreen trees were planted in an informal way during 1979. The tall huts on the eastern sides were converted into the Vegetable Market Complex (Pitkali). A number of evergreen trees planted in this complex consist of: OLEA EUROPEA: EUCALYPTUS species, CASUARINA STRICTA and CUNNINGIANA, FICUS NITIDA and SCHINUS THEREBINTIFOLIUS.

#### 2. Main Planting Design

- 2.1 Since the plan of the National Park has been approved and work commenced in earnest it is high time that the planting design be given life.
- 2.2 The Main Entrance - On entering the main entrance the visitor will see before him a formally designed garden carrying neatly laid out display beds and fountains. A gentle slope, which is actually the escarpment of the Greek Theatre, offers a unique opportunity for displaying plant material. This important area will have two main themes namely Roses and Hibiscus.
- 2.3 Rose Garden - The formally designed beds will be planted with named different cultivars of hybrid Tea Roses to create a colourful bed when the roses are in bloom. The colonnade and the hedges used will help to trap the sweet scent roses when in bloom.

Since roses flower twice a year namely in spring and late summer the visiting public is enticed to visit this rose garden more frequently.

- 2.4 Garden Parterre - Clustering around the main fountain in the centre of this parterre there are four geometrical flowering beds each carrying a secondary fountain. This central area is most suited for flowering annuals framed by informal trip hedges of a silvery leafed, low growing shrub SANTOLINA CHAMAECYPARISSUS.
- 2.5 Greek Theatre Embankment for Hibiscus - This embankment facing the main entrance is the ideal site for our second theme, namely HIBISCUS. It is envisaged to plant not less than sixty named varieties/cultivars of the flowering shrubs HIBISCUS SYRIACUS and H. ROSA SINENSIS. Each variety will be presented by ten plants. With a long flowering period commencing in spring till late autumn, the HIBISCUS will provide a special colourful carpet much appreciated by visitors. Foreign visitors coming mainly from northern countries will be pleased to see such a collection growing out doors. All the four blocks carrying roses and Hibiscus will each have a standard ARAUCARIA EXCELSA in their centre. This tall growing species with its symmetrical form will unite this part of the formal garden and also scale down the surrounding colonnade.

In years to come their spreading boughs will provide a different shady micro climate so suitable for particular annuals like CINERARIAS.

- 2.6 The Stage - Since the theatre is an open air one, the planting beds on the stage will carry mature species of CUPRESSUS SEMPERVIRENS VAR. STRICTA so as to provide a living frame to the area. With the use of pot plants the rest of the beds will provide the right setting for any particular play.

### 3. Main Garden Walks

- 3.1 These walks studded by formally designed planting beds offer a scope for a show of colour achieved by climbers BOUGAINVILLEA GLABRA SANDERIANA cultivars, by the flowering trees JACARANDA MIMOSAEFOLIA, and various bushes.
- 3.2 The trellis offer a suitable place for Bougainvillea, while the standard Jacarandas, being deciduous will allow bright sunlight to warm up visitors during winter while offering welcome shade in summer. All beds will also be densely planted with shrubs in a uniform way. These will include MYOPORUM PUNCTATUM; MYRTUS COMUNIS, M. TARENTINA; LANTANA CAMARA, and LISUSTRUM JAPONICUM AUREA VARIEGATUM. These bushes will be kept in check by regulated trimming.

### 4. Woodland Parks

- 4.1 There are two such areas one on each side of the main entrance. The focal point of the circular pathways are formed by imposing jets of water emitted by the fountains. These two areas offer an excellent scope for planting an initial amount of trees and shrubs. This area will also be suitable for planting specimen plants when the case arises to enlarge as much as possible the variety of trees and shrubs which thrive in our country. This site offers also a possibility of display of Cacti and Succulents not necessarily in a rock garden setting but definitely in beds carrying a mulch of spalls.
- 4.2 The part of the park flanking the carpark will carry a two-tiered belt of Eucalyptus and Oleaders to camouflage the parking area and offer a shelter belt to the planted areas.

5. Earth Mound Screen - The mound of soil meant to screen the concrete factory and the ring road from the park will be planted with pines and Cypress forestry seedlings. The system to be used will be that suitable for slopes, namely the digging of contour lines and planting seedlings all along the bottom of the contour trenches at, approximately, 2 metres spacing. The area will be mown by the knapsack type grass trimmers. This will prevent soil erosion, offer a better green effect at least during winter and early spring and prevent fires in summer.
6. Car Park - The carpark has been created from the runway surface. A screen of Eucalyptus all along the back of the car park will also cut down the noise in the park created by cars. The raised bed dividing the access road from the car park will be planted with a medley of shrubs and perennials. These will include SANTOLINA CHAMAECYPARISSUS IVY geranium and VERONICA species. All these species are low growing, and meant to overflow over the harsh line of the stone planting trough. Colour is provided by their flowers and also their different foliage.
7. The Large Grassed Area - The large area between the formally designed area and the sporting facilities, namely the National Stadium, Sports pavilion and Model Plane area, will be kept under grass. This area will be left free for picnics and strolling. It will be managed as a turfed area relying solely on rainfall. This means that as spring passes out the rough sward will commence browning. Mowing of any summer or weeds must be seen to while spiking and re-seeding bald patches will commence each autumn. Dressing the sward with fertilisers will embetter the sward but extreme care will be taken because of the water table. The clumps of Pines and Eucalyptus planted some years ago in the Pepton style will be attended to as the need arises.
8. Agricultural Area - The large agricultural areas at Ta' Qali will continue to provide the country side effect so much needed in our highly populated country. However the Cypress (and other species) windbreaks which we planted some years ago will be fully rehabilitated since in some areas trees have been vandalised or removed.
9. Crafts Village - The shade trees in the village consist mainly of Eucalyptus, Casuarinas and some pines. Care will be taken to maintain a reasonable amount of control of undergrowth. As soon as plans are formulated for the projected stone buildings which will replace the metal huts, it will be sensible to plant more trees before actual construction work commences.
10. General Observations
  - 10.1 Plant Purchases - Steps have to be taken to commence with the purchasing procedure of the plants listed in appendices I, II and III according to the set Schedule. Unless this Schedule is kept faithfully we shall not be able to effect the planting programme properly in time for the official August 1989 opening.
  - 10.2 Irrigation - Hand in hand with para. 10.1 one must mention the availability of water and facilities for irrigating newly planted plants from planting time right through summer till early winter.
  - 10.3 Purchases of other equipment - The following items should be purchased also:-
    - a) Six power mowers - Knapsack type at an estimated cost of £130 each - Specifications as at Appendix IV.
    - b) One dumper - for general use including garbage collection. Estimated cost £2000.

- c) One two-wheeled tipper trailer - not less than two ton weight capacity - to operate in conjunction with the hydraulic system of an existing tractor. Estimated cost £2000.
- d) Two grass types for the rear wheels of the existing tractor. Estimated cost at £600 both.
- e) Six rain guns, oscillating type to work on 2" hydrants. Estimated cost is £30 each.
- f) Thirty bale of Sphagreen peat fir the planting area. Estimated cost is £300.
- g) Two chainsaws. Estimated cost is £160 each.
- h) Two rotary cultivators, Estimated cost is £600 - Appendix V. Specifications for items b, c and d are to be prepared by the Works Department.

10.4 Staff recruitment and Training - The planting and maintaining of a national park necessitates a group of skilled, dedicated workers. For this end it is imperative that a group of at least twenty men plus two supervisors be selected for this work. Selection is to be based on willingness to learn and keenness to carry out gardening jobs. The techniques of marking and planting bedding designs, floral beds, judicious pruning and grass maintenance means that this group of people, once chosen, should immediately be made available for training with experienced gardeners in the Public Gardens and Afforestation Section. Amongst these men there should be at least six men who are keen to learn and ready to operate rotary cultivators, mowers, grass cutters and tractors. One could suggest the recruitment of these men from the Auxiliary Workers Training Scheme since recruitment from the department of Agriculture, in my opinion is nigh impossible. It is envisaged that these men would work with a core group of ten newly qualified gardeners with the committee should ask from the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries.

For this end provisions are to be made for the 1989 estimates to cover the wages of the above mentioned thirty-two men.

11. Conclusion - In drawing up this report I have taken into consideration that Phase I of this projects includes the formal garden together with the car park and ring road areas. We are taking it for granted that accommodation for workers, their tools and equipment will be provided for on site. These facilities will also include eventually offices for the administration unit.

It is understood that Phase II would include the building of the other facilities envisaged in the overall plan. During this period and also after the civil engineering work is completed, provision must be made for a maintenance unit to take care for civil engineering, electrical and plumbing routine maintenance work.

25/11/88

Joseph Borg  
Member National Park Committee



### BOX 6. IUCN PROTECTED AREA MANAGEMENT CATEGORIES

Through its Commission on National Parks and Protected Areas (CNPPA), IUCN has guided the international categorisation of protected areas since 1969. In 1978, IUCN published the CNPPA report, *Categories, Objectives and Criteria for Protected Areas*, which proposed a system of protected area management categories. The system has subsequently been incorporated into the national legislation of many States and it has been used worldwide by protected area managers. It has also been the basis for the organisational structure of the *UN List of National parks and Protected Areas*. IUCN has since revised the original system, retaining the first five categories and adding a new category six. The result has been released as *Guidelines for Protected Area Management Categories*. The *Guidelines* provide general advice on the protected area management categories, describe the categories and provide examples demonstrating the categories' application.

The precise purpose for which protected areas are managed differ greatly. The main management purposes include: scientific research, protecting wilderness, preserving species and genetic diversity, maintaining cultural features, tourism and recreation, education, sustainable use of resources from natural ecosystems and maintaining cultural and traditional attributes. From these main management objectives, six distinct protected area categories have been identified as areas mainly managed for:

Strict Protection - Protected areas managed mainly for science or wilderness protection (sometimes called strict nature reserve/wilderness areas) (Category I).

Ecosystem Conservation and Tourism - Protected areas managed mainly for ecosystem conservation and recreation (sometimes called national parks) (Category II).

Conservation of Natural Features - Protected areas managed mainly for conservation of specific natural features (sometimes called natural monuments) (Category III).

Conservation Through Active Management - Protected areas managed mainly for conservation through management intervention (sometimes called habitat/species management areas) (Category IV).

Landscape/Seascape Conservation and Recreation - Protected areas managed mainly for landscape/seascape conservation and recreation (sometimes called protected landscape/seascapes) (Category V).

Sustainable Use of Natural Ecosystem - Protected areas managed mainly for the sustainable use of natural ecosystems (sometimes called managed resource protected areas) (Category VI).

Protected areas that are part of international networks, such as biosphere reserves, or which are recognised under international conventions, such as the World Heritage Convention (Paris, 1972) and the Wetlands Convention (Ramsar, 1971), can fall into any of the above categories and are no longer treated as separate categories in their own right.

A great deal of confusion has surrounded the 1978 system because national names for protected areas may vary. For example, "national park" means different things in different States. In fact, globally over 140 names have been applied to protected areas of various types.

As a result, IUCN categories are defined by the objectives of management, not by the title of the area. Protected areas should be established, according to national legislation, to meet objectives consistent with national, local or private goals and needs. They can only then be labelled with an IUCN category according to the management objectives pursued. Finally, the IUCN management categories should in no way be considered as a “driving” mechanism for governments or organisations in deciding the purposes of potential protected areas.

## Appendix IV

### STRUCTURE PLAN - RELEVANT POLICIES TO TA' QALI ACTION PLAN

#### Policy BEN 5

#### Non Urban Areas

Applications for development permits outside urban areas will be judged against the policies and design guidelines of the Local Plans for Rural Conservation Areas, and in the interim period, to Structure Plan policies and the guidelines contained in the Explanatory Memorandum.

#### Policy BEN 15

#### Access For All

All buildings and facilities used by the general public will be accessible to self propelled wheel chair users, and adequate provision allowed for convenient access and parking of vehicles for the physically handicapped. Facilities used by the general public include public transport and pedestrian footpaths.

#### Policy COM 6

#### Shopping

New superstore based indoor shopping complexes will be developed at Luqa Airport Business Park and Pembroke. Detailed shopping studies including market research and impact implications will be undertaken to help identify the scale and general content. Particular regard will be given to Policy COM 7.

#### Policy IND 7

#### Industry

Incentives will be offered to assist the relocation of existing service industry activities which have an unacceptable environmental impact on the general areas in which they are located and on adjacent uses in particular.

#### Policy TRA 4

#### Transport

The following vehicle parking principles will be adopted in different areas for new developments:

- i. Valletta/Floriana and other Urban Conservation Areas: restraining standards catering for operational vehicles only, with peripheral public parking for cars and other vehicles.
- ii. Remainder of harbour area and other congested locations: accommodating standards where feasible and desirable, plus public parking for cars and other vehicles.
- iii. Rest of Malta: accommodating standards for all developments.

Where a development is not required to meet full standards, the cost of providing the shortfall of spaces in public parking facilities shall be a requirement of the development.

#### Policy RDS 1

#### Roads

The development and improvement of the arterial and distributor road networks shown on the Structure Plan Key Diagram will be undertaken (See also PTR 4).

### **Policy RDS 2**

Land required for new links and the widening of existing links and junctions of the arterial and distributor networks will be safeguarded from development including land required for adjacent utility services, landscaping, and pedestrian routes and cycleways.

### **Policy RDS 3**

The design and construction of all new and improved roads will be in line with a set of agreed standards to be drafted by the appropriate Government Departments. These standards will take account of the guidance in the Explanatory Memorandum, will be consistent with appropriate best practice in Europe, and will include hard and soft landscaping.

### **Policy RDS 7**

Through the Local Plans the Planning Authority will seek to extend pedestrian priority and access only restrictions in Urban Conservation Areas, shopping areas, and other areas suffering from the environmental impact of traffic.

### **Policy RDS 8**

Standards of road maintenance will be improved, giving priority to the requirements of the arterial and distributor networks.

### **Policy RDS 9**

Footways and their maintenance will be improved.

### **Policy AHF 1**

### **Agriculture**

Major improvements in agriculture, horticulture, and fisheries will be encouraged, so that:

- i. The sector assists the overall economy of the country through reduced imports and increased exports;
- ii. better quality products are available to domestic consumers;
- iii. the countryside land resource is used efficiently and does not become derelict;
- iv. food supplies are safeguarded in the event of natural, accidental, or deliberate calamities; and
- v. the countryside is safeguarded for the benefit of future generations.

### **Policy AHF 7**

The removal of visual intrusions in the landscape, the reinstatement and maintenance of random stone boundary walls, and the establishment of rights of way will be a condition of development permits.

### **Policy AHF 8**

Further measures will be developed to promote the reinstatement and maintenance of random rubble walls throughout the countryside with priority given to walls alongside rural roads, and for the removal of visual intrusions.

### **Policy AHF 10**

Encouragement to agriculture will be given by the promotion of grading and packing stations, generally on industrial estates.

**Policy AHF 11**

An agricultural products depot for exports and imports will be promoted at a suitable harbour location, and one at Luqa airport.

**Policy REC 3**

**Institutional Arrangements for Recreation**

In order to make the best use of existing recreational land and in particular the major open space areas, Government will prepare and implement management schemes for publicly owned open spaces and water areas. The Authority will also give advice and encouragement to other agencies and landowners to prepare and implement similar management schemes. Such schemes should improve the range, type, and quality of facilities and their accessibility.

**Policy REC 5**

**Sports**

International standard sports facilities will be located in the following areas, shown in the Key Diagram as Sports Facilities of National importance. Particular consideration will be given to securing professional sports facility management and international standard coaching. To assist in this, the part use of facilities for sports tourism with linked hotel or apartment accommodation will be encouraged.

- i. Ta' Qali
- ii. Marsa Park
- iii. Pembroke
- iv. North of Marsascalea
- v. Victoria, Gozo

**Policy REC 7**

**Sports**

The Ta' Qali National Recreation Centre will include the siting in it of further recreational and sports uses, particularly those with a genuinely national catchment area. The Planning Authority will assist with the relocation of the on site industrial uses.

**Policy REC 8**

**Major Impact Sports**

The Planning Authority will ensure that adequate provision for district-level sports and recreation facilities will be made in Local Plans for both new and existing urban areas. Provision will also be made for sports and recreational uses in the countryside with particular attention paid to minimising adverse environmental impacts. A limited number of tracks and training facilities need to be designated in suitable locations for major impact sports such as vehicle racing, and managed professionally. Locations should only be chosen after full environmental impact assessments, in conjunction with sieving techniques to narrow areas of search. Following designation of suitable facilities, the use of any other location will be specifically prohibited.

### **Policy RCO 1**

Rural Conservation Areas are designed as illustrated in the Key Diagram. Within such areas the following sub areas will be designated, using World Conservation Union definitions and criteria where relevant:

- i. Areas of Agricultural Value: areas comprised of high grade agricultural land including irrigated and partially irrigated land;
- ii. Areas of Ecological Importance: relatively large areas designated to protect typical and rare habitats;
- iii. Sites of Scientific Importance: sites containing individual species, groups of species, and geological features;
- iv. Areas of Archaeological Importance: concentrations of valuable archaeological sites;
- v. Sites of Archaeological Importance: individual and/or isolated archaeological sites;
- vi. National Parks: relatively large areas of national significance not materially altered by human use, with managed visitor access and amenities;
- vii. Areas of High Landscape Value.

### **Policy RCO 5**

In Rural Conservation Areas, permission for the development of new or extended infrastructure (roads, reservoirs, overhead electricity and telephone cables, pipelines, tipping sites, etc.) will only be given if the Planning Authority is satisfied that all possible measures have been taken to mitigate the visual impact of the proposed development.

### **Policy RCO 6**

Following the adoption of the Local Plans for Rural Conservation Areas, the Planning Authority will institute a programme of enhancement and management in conjunction with the Ministry of Agriculture and the Secretariat for the Environment comprising:

- i. Afforestation and landscaping schemes;
- ii. rehabilitation of abandoned quarries;
- iii. reactivation of abandoned agricultural land, encouraging compatible methods of cultivation;
- iv. reuse and conversion of rural buildings which are compatible with their scenic setting;
- v. rehabilitation of degraded habitats;
- vi. the encouragement of and provision of incentives for the relocation to appropriate existing or planned urban areas of structures and activities which are incompatible with the creation and maintenance of a high quality of rural environment.

### **Policy RCO 32**

The planting of appropriate species of trees will be encouraged where they enhance the landscape, particularly along roadsides, where they provide a screen to visually unattractive areas, and alongside footpaths where they provide shade. Species which attract birds will be encouraged in suitable locations.

### **Policy RCO 33**

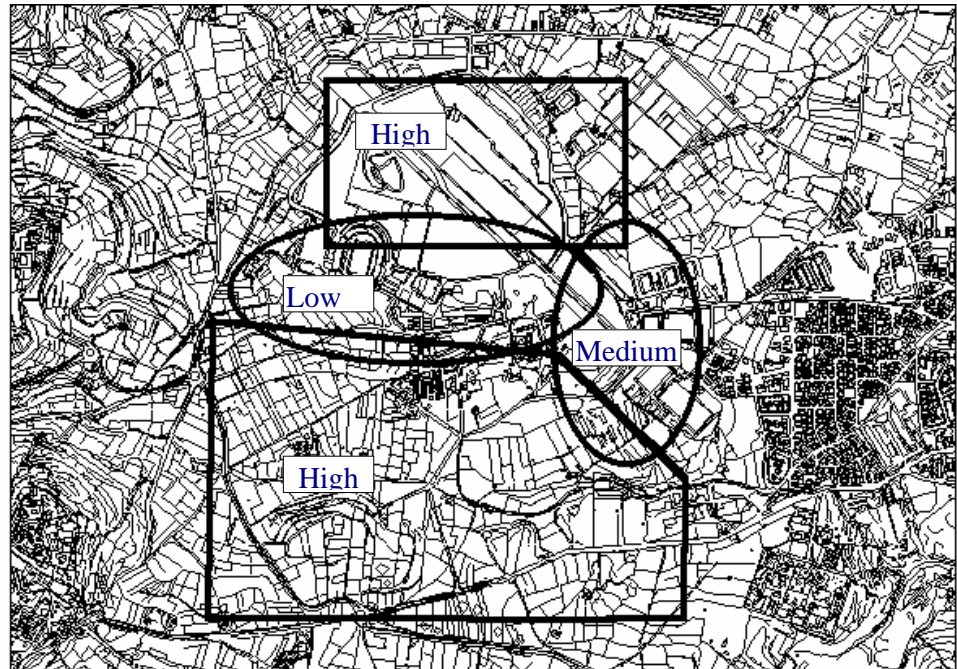
Specified individual trees or groups of trees of aesthetic, historical, cultural, arboricultural, and/or scientific interest will be protected by means of Tree Preservation Orders which prohibit the uprooting, destruction, or damage to trees growing in the wild and in public parks, gardens, and other spaces, or on private land, and regulate any other activity which may cause harm or death of such trees.

**Policy PUT 5**

**Services Planning**

Local Plans for all new development areas will include proposals for the layout and siting of primary utility services, structures, and facilities.

### Visual Vulnerability



Visual vulnerability is the measure of the landscape ability to except change without adversely affecting its existing qualities. The Action Plan area has been divided into areas of high, medium and low visual vulnerability:-

- High visual vulnerability - areas of high landscape quality, vulnerable to change, in which intrusions would change the character or setting of the landscape;
- medium visual vulnerability - areas where some change will be acceptable; and
- low visual vulnerability - areas in which the presumption will be that change is acceptable and that landscape requires enhancement.



## 20 Acknowledgements

### Photographs

*Football at Ta' Qali - Times Newspaper*  
*Basket Ball at Ta' Qali - Times Newspaper*  
*Pitkali - Advantage Advertising Limited*

### Paintings

*“Spitfire of Malta” - Painting by Ray Gargett*

### *Appendix II*

*Planting Plan for the Ta' Qali National Park - Joseph Borg*

### *Appendix V*

*Visual vulnerability - George Buhagiar*

## 21 Index

### A

Access and Traffic Management, viii, xi, 74, 92  
Access for All, viii, xi, 80, 92  
Acknowledgements, ix, 112  
Action Plan Area, vi, ix, x, 21, 22, 25, 30, 31, 52, 60, 66, 79, 80, 88, 91  
Advertisements, viii, xi, 67, 92  
Agriculture, vi, vii, x, 9, 14, 29, 37, 51, 59, 66, 68, 83, 91, 94, 95, 96, 97, 103, 107, 109  
Aims and Objectives, vi, 21  
allotments, 95  
Animal Sanctuaries, 49  
Area of Ecological Importance, viii, x, 2, 30, 53, 91  
Area of High Landscape Value, viii, xi, 30, 51, 52, 66, 92  
Art and Culture, vii, x, 24, 29, 36, 47, 91  
Athletics, vii, x, 40, 91  
Attard, iii, xiii, 2, 9, 17, 18, 31, 40, 67, 74, 79, 80  
Aviation Museum, vii, x, 29, 47, 48, 91

### B

Basketball, ii, iii, vii, x, 3, 12, 29, 30, 39, 47, 60, 91  
boundary, 3, 15, 16, 21, 31, 35, 41, 43, 57, 61, 62, 63, 67, 68, 74, 78, 107  
Built Form, vii, 30  
Bus Stops, viii, xi, 76, 92

### C

Camping, vii, x, 39, 91  
Change of Use of Land to Recreational Purposes, vii, x, 37, 91  
Commerce and Industry, vi, vii, viii, x, 9, 15, 30, 56, 91  
Conservation, vi, vii, viii, x, 3, 8, 15, 21, 30, 31, 53, 91, 104, 106, 107, 109  
Convention Centre, 51, 64, 69, 92  
Country Parkways and Footpaths, x, 45  
Crafts Village, viii, ix, x, 3, 10, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 21, 29, 30, 32, 42, 56, 57, 61, 66, 68, 69, 76, 78, 84, 88, 91, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 102  
Cultural Centre, 48, 49, 91  
Cycling, vii, x, 13, 40, 91

### D

Directional Road Signs, viii, xi, 76, 92  
Disco, 87

### E

Electoral Commission, 16, 57

### F

Fencing and Rubble Walls, viii, xi, 67, 92

Football, vii, x, 3, 12, 18, 31, 41, 47, 60, 74, 77, 79, 91, 93, 112  
Formal Garden, vii, x, 3, 13, 14, 29, 30, 41, 42, 47, 48, 51, 87, 91, 93

### G

Garden Centre, viii, x, 61  
Government Committee Report (1986), ix, 94  
Greek Theatre, 11, 13, 42, 100, 101

### H

Height limitations, 30, 31, 59  
Horticulture, vi, vii, x, 9, 14, 29, 51, 91

### I

implementation, xii, 8, 41, 42, 47, 49, 56, 60, 61, 62, 66, 70, 76, 77, 86, 88, 90, 91, 92  
Industry and Storage, viii, x, 62, 92  
Informal Open Space, vii, x, 24, 29, 44, 47, 91  
Information Centre, 84  
International Sport, 36

### L

Land Ownership and Management, vi, 3  
landscape, xii, 2, 9, 15, 17, 21, 23, 30, 39, 42, 47, 48, 49, 56, 57, 59, 60, 61, 62, 66, 68, 70, 78, 86, 88, 93, 94, 97, 104, 107, 109, 111  
Landscape Master Plan, viii, xi, xii, 30, 63, 66, 68, 69, 88, 92, 93  
, 23  
Lighting, viii, xi, 70  
Location Strategy, vi, 28

### M

major impact sports, 7, 28, 35, 43, 87, 93, 108  
Malta Development Corporation, 2, 3, 15, 42, 56, 60, 85, 87, 88, 91  
Management Agency, ix, xi, 32, 85, 86, 88, 90, 91, 92  
Mdina - National Landmark, 17  
Military Vehicles Museum, 48  
Model Aircraft Flying, vii, x, 12, 42, 91  
Motor Racing, vii, x, 12, 43  
Motorcycle Racing, 12  
Museum of Science and Technology, x, 48

### N

national football stadium, 3  
National Motor Museum, x, 48  
National Recreation Centre, vi, vii, ix, x, xiii, 3, 7, 8, 9, 16, 21, 27, 28, 29, 30, 35, 36, 37, 39, 42, 47, 48, 51, 52, 53, 56, 60, 61, 62, 70, 81, 84, 87, 88, 91, 93, 108

Natural History Museum, x, 48, 60, 61, 93  
Nature Reserve, viii, ix, x, 15, 30, 53, 91, 93  
Nursery, viii, x, 14, 30, 61, 69, 78

## P

Parking, viii, x, 17, 57, 63, 92, 93, 96  
Picnic Areas, vii, x, 44, 91  
Pitkali, iii, viii, x, xi, 3, 14, 30, 51, 59, 60, 69, 79,  
91, 92, 95, 96, 97, 98, 100, 112  
Planting Plan, ix, 112  
Precast Concrete Plant, viii, x, 60, 91  
Public Open Space, 13  
Public Transport, viii, xi, 76, 92  
Public Utilities, vi, 11

## R

Recreation, vi, vii, ix, x, xiii, 3, 7, 8, 9, 12, 16, 21,  
22, 23, 24, 27, 28, 29, 30, 35, 36, 37, 39, 42, 44,  
45, 47, 48, 51, 52, 53, 56, 60, 61, 62, 70, 81, 84,  
87, 88, 91, 93, 97, 104, 108  
Road Running, 13  
Rubble Walls, viii, xi, 67, 92  
Running Track, 40  
Rural Conservation, vii, 8, 30, 31, 106, 109

## S

Santa Maria Reservoirs, viii, xi, 63, 92  
Spinning and Weaving Factory, viii, ix, x, 57, 59, 91

Spitfire, 47, 112  
Sports, ii, vii, x, 23, 24, 29, 60, 91, 95, 96, 97, 98,  
102, 108  
Stadium Link Road, viii, ix, xi, 74, 92  
Strategic Background, vi, 7  
Strategic Open Space Gaps between Settlements, 67  
Strategy, vi, vii, ix, 28, 32, 61  
Structure Plan Policies, ix, xiii, 11, 16, 52, 61

## T

Tourism, vi, 8, 10, 99, 104  
Trade Fair, viii, xi, 63, 92  
Traffic Management, vii, viii, xi, 31, 74, 88, 92  
Transportation, vi, 17

## U

Utilities, vi, vii, ix, xi, 32, 82, 88, 92

## V

Vineyard, 15  
Vision, vi, 27  
Visitor Attractions, vii, 14, 32  
Visual Vulnerability, ix, 111

## W

Water, ix, 14, 49, 51, 82, 83, 85, 92