

**Partial Local Plan Review of the  
Central Malta Local Plan (2006),  
as amended**

**Area at Tal-Bajjad,  
Qormi**



**Planning Authority  
February 2017**

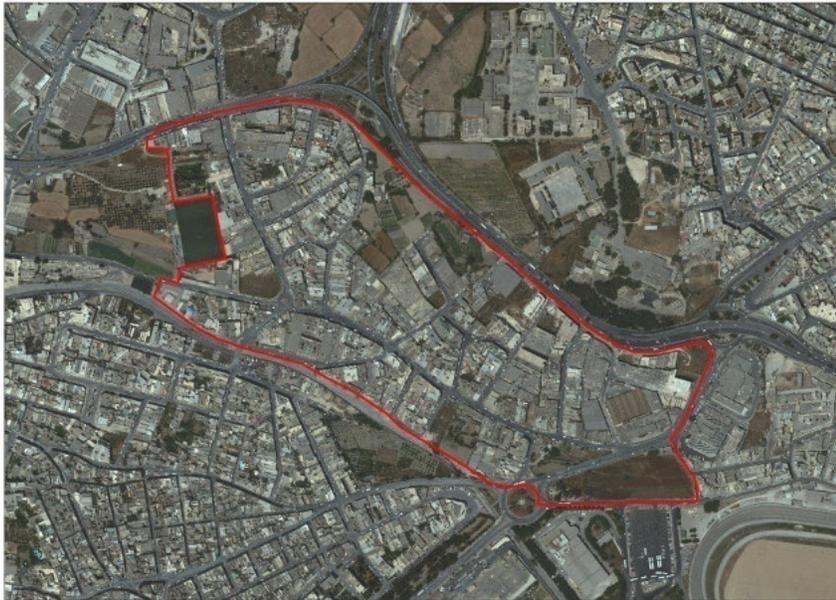
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## 1.0 Scope and Objectives

- 1.1. Following request from Government to the Planning Authority, the Planning Directorate is following a Partial Local Plan Review of the Central Malta Local Plan (2006) for the Area at Tal-Bajjad in Qormi (as shown in Map 1 below). The purpose of the Partial Review is to set the planning parameters (land use zoning, building height and road alignments) for the area. The Government's Objectives as listed below aim to address the conflicting development patterns which currently exist leading to the deterioration of the quality of life of residents living within the area:
  - To establish the relevant planning parameters for the area shown on the attached map; and
  - To seek to reduce deleterious impacts on predominantly residential areas from other incompatible land uses.
- 1.2. In the Phase 1 Public Consultation on Objectives, carried out between 16<sup>th</sup> August 2016 and 19<sup>th</sup> September 2016, 4 submissions were received from stakeholders in the area including: 2 submissions relating to still undeveloped sites requesting a change of zoning to commercial facing Triq il-Burdnara; 1 submission that is requesting an adjustment in building alignment and another submission that involves a site at L-Istabal that was located outside the partial review area. The request to include a site just outside the area of review has been accepted and the boundary has been reviewed accordingly. PA responses to these submissions can be viewed in the Appendix 1.
- 1.3. The Tal-Bajjad Area in Qormi is located south of Triq is-Sliem and Triq il-Burdnara, a major road network route, west of Triq Hal-Qormi up to Triq il-Kanun and north of Triq il-Wied as indicated on Map 1 below, and has a total area of 0.25km<sup>2</sup>.
- 1.4. The area in question consists of a highly developed, mixed use, poor quality, high activity urban environment that needs to be addressed. The partial review attempts to improve the quality of this area by rezoning into more specific character areas to reduce mix of land uses in the longer term. The previous mixed use zoning concept is not being recommended further as this is less likely to reduce deleterious activity from past experiences than the following of a separate zoning strategy based on clustered predominant land uses.

- 1.5. It is highlighted that although the planning tool of ‘separate zoning’ can be utilised to create more distinct clusters of uses, yet operating entities with older permits cannot legally be directed to cease operations or be relocated. These will therefore continue to operate as per permit conditions unless redevelopment is proposed in future where the latest approved zoning would legally be applicable. It is emphasised that the possession and existence of an approved permit does not imply that operational transgressions are acceptable and such land uses are required to operate efficiently and sustainably.
- 1.6. The current Partial Review recognises that parts of the area are in predominantly small and medium enterprise industrial use to the eastern part of the site and these areas are being recommended to be retained as is. Various areas are however predominantly residential and these are being zoned accordingly to improve the quality of the street environment of these urban areas by reducing the long term mix of land uses and reducing incompatible uses. The areas along the main transport routes are predominantly commercial with retail and showrooms and these are being recommended to be rezoned as commercial areas subject to the full implementation of the planned service road. Other recommended policy requirements are aimed at regulating the overall quality of the environment within the area.



**Map 1: Tal-Bajjad Area, Qormi**

## 2.0 Strategic and Local Planning Guidance

2.1 The 'Strategic Plan for the Environment and Development' (SPED, 2015) considers and guides developments within the Urban Area in line with the Vision in Section 1.27 as follows:

**'The Urban Area shall become an attractive place for people to live, work, play and interact. It shall be [a] clean, pollution free, safe....'**

2.2 The SPED (2015) strategic guidance is to improve upon areas with existing deleterious impacts and attempts to ameliorate on their current situation by reducing incompatibility between existing land uses through this partial review. Industrial SME operations are supported in view of their economic benefit. However the need to protect amenity of adjacent uses and surrounding areas is also being prioritised by this partial review exercise.

2.3 SPED Policy TO 6.1 in effect is applicable as it requires the safeguarding of environmental health from deleterious impacts as follows:

**'Controlling the location, design and operation of development'.**

2.4 Furthermore under SPED Urban Objective 3, SPED Policy UO 3.4 and 3.5 call for the following, respectively:

**'Identifying sites which are derelict, in a state of abandonment, of poor quality or include incompatible uses and seek their upgrading through high quality development.**

**'Controlling the proximity of non-residential uses in urban areas.'**

2.5 Following the Temporary Provision Schemes (TPS, 1988) which originally zoned parts of this area as industrial areas, the CMLP (2006) zoned this area for residential, commercial, SME site and mixed uses as indicated on Map QOM 1. The Local Plan zoning of the area was followed by other Partial Reviews through the Planning Control Applications (PC Rezoning) namely PC62/07 and PC7/08. These followed public demands for further review to amend some of the areas to try to address the situation of incompatibility of uses that has arisen over time. These amendments designated parts of

the area into a number of specific mixed use areas as per amended Policy QO04 including Mixed Use Areas with Residential Units, Mixed Use Areas with Residential Units and Other Uses and Mixed Use Areas without Residential Units.

- 2.6 The mix of conflicting land uses is characterised by incompatibility of uses at different levels of the same block (different ground and upper floor land uses) and between adjacent properties. Although the CMLP (2006) policy guidance tried to address this situation of incompatibility of land uses through mixed use zoning, this incompatibility has persisted to the extent that the public demand for further review continued.

### **3.0 Amended Policy Guidance for Tal-Bajjad Area, Qormi**

3.1 The following Policy shall apply for the Tal-Bajjad area as shown on Map CMTB 1. Development within this area is to conform to the following parameters:

#### **QO05**

#### **Tal-Bajjad Area, Qormi**

Within the Tal-Bajjad Area, Qormi as indicated on the Map CMTB 1, the Planning Authority will consider development planning applications subject to the following:

##### **Land Use Framework**

1. Within the areas designated as Industrial (Small and Medium Enterprise) Sites, the provisions of General Policy CG15 (except supermarkets) and Area Policy QO08 shall apply.
2. Within the areas designated as Commercial Areas, the provisions of General Policy CG14 (except Class 5A light industry and supermarkets) shall apply.
3. Within the areas designated as Residential Areas, the provisions of General Policy CG07 (excluding supermarkets and Class 5A light industry) and QO06 shall apply.

##### **Development Parameters**

In the case of existing permitted developments that are not in line with the assigned land use for the area these will continue to operate as per existing permit conditions. When a development planning application which involves redevelopment/intensification/change of use is submitted, the new land use parameters above will become applicable.

The building heights of this area, as indicated in Map CMTB 1, shall not exceed the maximum allowable height of 17.5 m as per Development Control Design Policy, Guidance and Standards 2015 (DC15).

**New and/or redevelopment shall lead to a general improvement in the appearance of the area, with form and treatment of the elevations that enhance through improved design the streetscape and the surrounding environment.**

**Development planning applications on the sites within the Commercial Area with a frontage onto the service road running parallel to Triq Burdnara shall be subject to a planning gain towards the implementation of the stretch of the service road abutting the green area. The amount of the planning gain due shall reflect the cost of implementing this stretch of service road as determined by Transport Malta.**

**Within the triangular site located between Triq Hal-Qormi, Triq L-Erba' Qaddisin and Triq il-Belt Valletta, the Planning Authority may consider the consolidation of the allocated private and green space, if it is satisfied that this will result in a higher quality development proposal.**

### **Traffic Management**

**The early implementation of the still unopened parts of the service road around the Tal-Bajjad area, the extension of the service road and the junction improvements on Triq Hal-Qormi and Triq l-Erba' Qaddisin as shown on Map CMTB 1 are encouraged.**

### **L-Istabal Site**

**The Site at L-Istabal, Qormi area as shown on the Map CMTB 1 is designated for the following uses:**

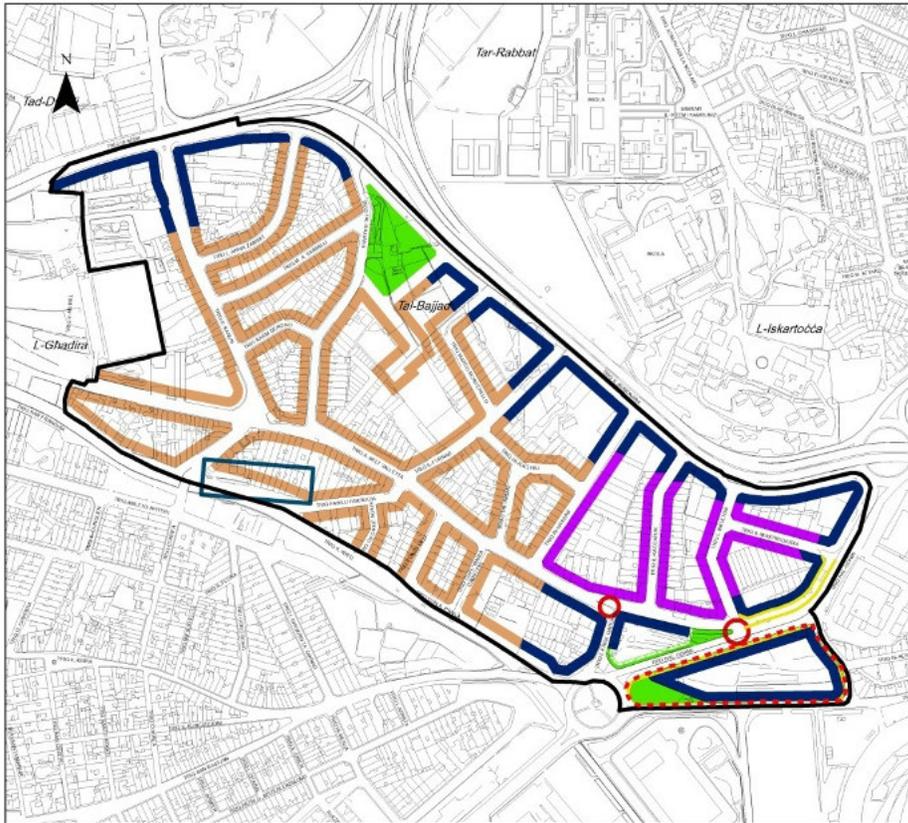
- (1) Commercial Area where the relevant provisions of this policy for this designation apply. Supermarkets shall also be permitted within this site.**
- (2) An open space for soft landscaping which shall be provided at the expense of the developer of this site.**

**The site shall also be subject to the following additional development parameters:**

- i. Building heights shall not exceed the level of Triq Hal-Qormi (arterial road) along its entire extent, except for the first 50m from the east of the site, where the height shall not exceed 9.8m from the highest street level, subject to DC15. Buildings shall also be terraced down towards Triq it-Tigrija;**
  - ii. The part of the roof of the underlying commercial development below the level of Triq Hal-Qormi (arterial road) shall be allocated for soft landscaping;**
  - iii. Archaeological and historically significant features which may be identified within the site are to be safeguarded. The retention of the sections of the building on the eastern side of the site worthy of conservation shall be retained in-situ;**
  - iv. Development is to conform to the requirements of Policy CG30 regarding water runoff management and flooding;**
  - v. No direct vehicular or pedestrian access onto Triq Hal-Qormi (arterial road) shall be permitted.**
- 3.2 The Tal-Bajjad Area, Qormi was partly zoned as an industrial area in the Temporary Provision Schemes of 1988. The area was designated in the Central Malta Local Plan in 2006, as amended in 2007 and 2008, for industrial, commercial, residential land uses and mixed-use areas. However over time the number of permitted residential and commercial land uses increased, to the extent that the urban character and use-mix of the area has changed substantially from the previous zoning in a number of areas. This has led to the need to address the current situation. Much present activity is incompatible and conflicting, leading to a situation of declining urban quality.
- 3.3 The policy framework for the area has been reviewed a number of times. It is however noted that most issues are in effect a result of operational failures. This review is intended to ameliorate on the current situation by controlling deleterious activity, leading to an improved quality of life and increased compatibility between the different land uses in the area.
- 3.4 The review ameliorates the current situation by departing from the mixed use planning concept by introducing distinct zones in the area that clearly define the allowable land uses. A poor quality urban environment is detrimental and unacceptable, regardless of whether the land use activities include industrial, commercial or residential uses.

3.5 Traffic management is required to improve vehicular circulation and road safety. These measures include the upgrading of accesses into or out of the Tal-Bajjad area. The completion of the schemed service road parallel to Triq il-Burdnara is required for the effective operation of the commercial zoning and to increase amenity to the residential areas. Planning gain is required by the Planning Authority to implement the opening of the entire stretch of service road and to this end, development planning applications fronting the service road will be required to contribute towards its implementation. The extension of the service road parallel to Triq Hal-Qormi is being proposed.

- 3.6 On the basis of an initiative from the land owners, the L-Istabal site was rezoned from warehousing with overlying soft landscaped roof to a retirement complex, sports facilities, and parking area in 2009. In line with the nature of the developments permitted in the surroundings, this policy earmarks the site as a Commercial Area, forming a contiguous commercial zone across Triq Hal-Qormi. Additional parameters have been included to control the scale of commercial development, the height of resulting buildings and also to allow for required road widening.
- 3.7 The site has a number of features of historic importance within it, namely a number of late Roman rock-cut tombs, cart-ruts, part of an ancient wall, the foundations of a mill room dating to the Knights' Period and an old building with an original coat of arms and two niches on the corners of the facade. These features are to be safeguarded by any ensuing development.
- 3.8 Triq Hal-Qormi is to be widened to improve vehicular flow towards Qormi. Triq it-Tigrija is to be re-aligned in order to rationalise the existing road alignment, to adequately provide for the safe pedestrian access and appropriate road widths along the length of the road at the stretch abutting the site in consideration.



Central Malta Local Plan



**Legend:**

- Partial Review Boundary - Q005
- L-stabal Site
- Commercial - CG14
- Industrial (SMEs) - CG15, Q008
- Residential - CG07, Q006
- Green Area - CG18
- Private Garden (PC07/08)
- Road Realignment
- Junction Improvement
- Proposed Amendment to Alignment
- Proposed Extension to Service Road

**Partial Review  
Tal-Bajjad Qormi**

Scale: 1:3,000 Date: February 2017

Map:  
CMTB1

INDICATIVE ONLY  
Not to be used for measurement or direct  
interpretation. Always to be used in conjunction  
with Policy Document.

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## **4.0 Public Consultation**

- 4.1 The Planning Authority invites individuals and organizations to send their representations pertaining to the Partial Local Plan Review of the Central Malta Local Plan (2006), as amended Area at Tal-Bajjad, Qormi Public Consultation Draft.

Representations are to be made in writing to the:

The Director of Planning,  
Planning Authority,  
Partial Review of the Central Malta Local Plan (2006)  
Area at Tal-Bajjad, Qormi  
P.O. Box 200, Marsa GPO 01

or on the email address: [cmlp.review@pa.org.mt](mailto:cmlp.review@pa.org.mt)

Submissions are to be sent to the Authority by Wednesday 05<sup>th</sup> April 2017

**4.1**