



**Presentation to
University of Westminster
Tourism Studies students
19 October 2017**

Tourism in Bugibba and Qawra: An introduction

**Dr. John Ebejer
Institute for Tourism, Travel and Culture
University of Malta**



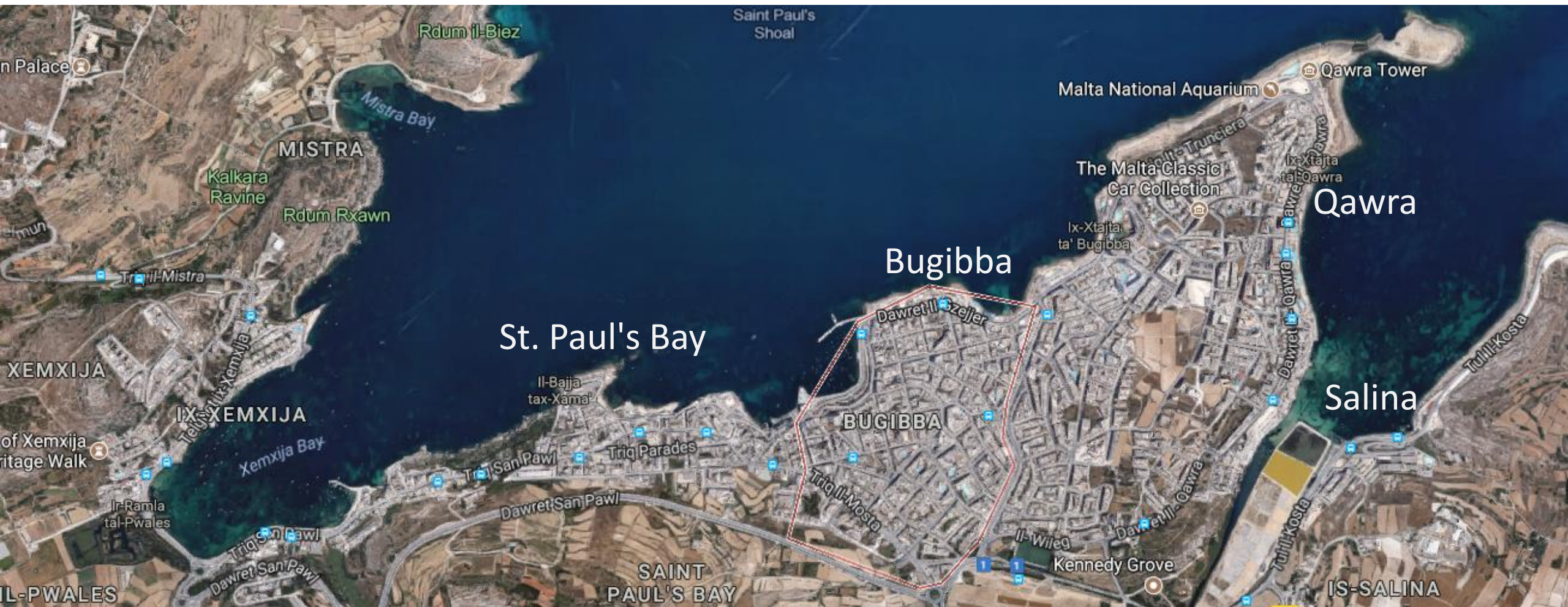
St. Paul's Bay

Xemxija

Bugibba

Qawra

Salina

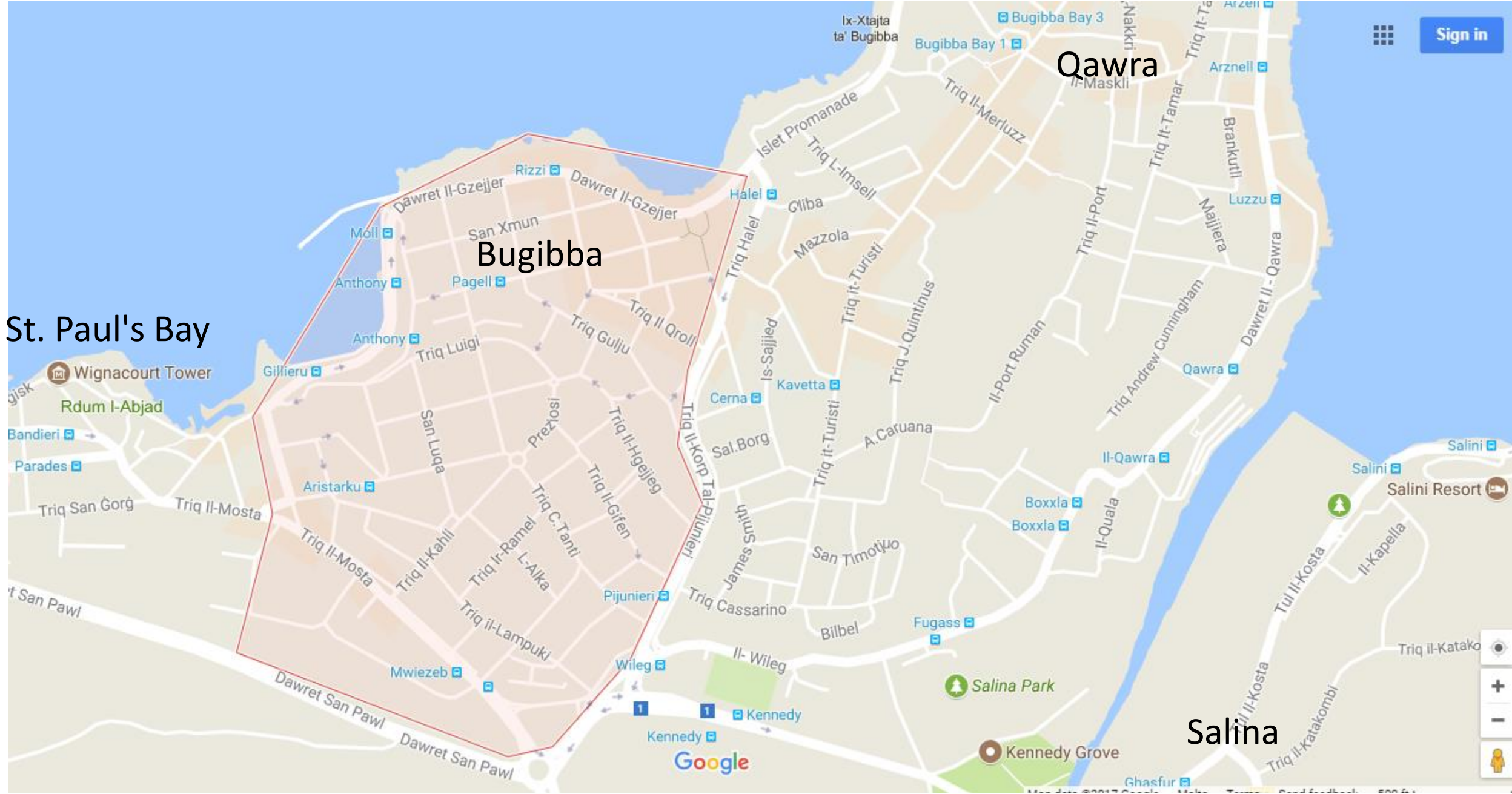


St. Paul's Bay

Bugibba

Qawra

Salina



1960's:

- Bugibba started off as a place for summer residences for Maltese.

1970's, 1980's, 1990's:

- Rapid development for tourism,
- Tourism accommodation mostly in self-catering apartments, and to a lesser extent in hotels, bars and restaurants.
- Also popular with Maltese as a summer residence



2000's, 2010's:

- Development for tourism continues but at a lower pace than previously
- Tourism accommodation shifts to predominantly hotels
- Remains popular for summer residence
- More people take up permanent residency.

Today Bugibba and Qawra are a mix of permanent homes, summer residences and accommodation for tourists (mainly in hotels but also in self-catering).



Nature of development





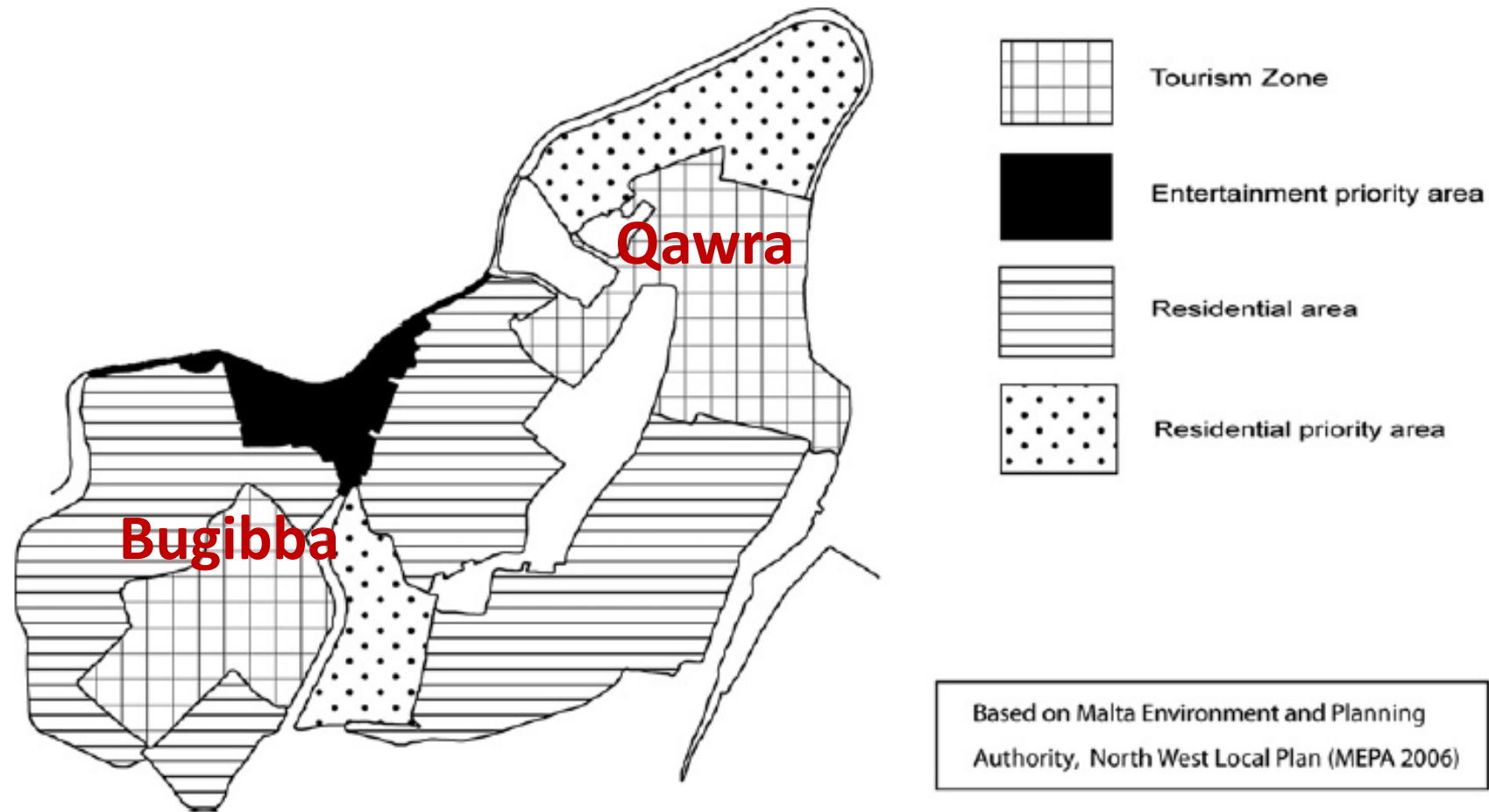


Fig. 2. Land use planning zones in Bugibba.

Increased demand in the summer

- Subject to an enormous influx of residents in the summer, (in St. Paul's Bay, an estimated 17,000 in the winter going up to 60,000 in the summer) (2008 figures).
- Area also receives of day visitors for leisure, (mostly for swimming on the rocky beaches) and evening visitors for bars and restaurants).

Large numbers of people exert pressures on services and infrastructure, mostly refuse disposal, traffic congestion and availability of parking.

High influx of people in the summer impinges on the tourist experience directly (crowded promenade, crowded beaches, excessive noise and pollution from traffic, etc.) or indirectly (because services unable to cope).

Tourism accommodation



To note:

Malta has a high proportion of repeat visitors especially for British tourists.

Many of the tourists staying in Bugibba and Qawra during the winter are likely to be more elderly persons, on a repeat visit and having a longer stay in Malta of say 2 or 3 weeks. The advantage of this profile of tourist is that it addresses issues of seasonality i.e. it keeps the accommodation relatively reasonably full in the winter – the alternative would be to close down for the winter.

The downside of this cohort is that they spend relatively little and the rooms are sold at low rates .



The region of St. Paul's Bay holds 26 per cent of all licensed accommodation, equating to 11,833 tourist beds, of which 860 are in self-catering accommodation. Until ten years ago, most accommodation was taken up by tour operator business. The situation has now changed with a significant growth of independent travelling.

Bugibba hotels are less attractive than hotels further north. Further north, many hotels are within walking distance from a sandy beach. The best Bugibba can offer are rocky beaches and one small perched beach.

Bugibba hotels are less attractive than those in St. Georges/Paceville/St. Julians/Sliema area because they are more distant to Malta's main cultural sites.



During the summer, evening leisure activities are extensive, with numerous bars and restaurants, some of which provide music entertainment and other activities. There is also a cinema complex and a casino.

Promenade



The promenade extends from Bugibba quay at one end to Qawra at the other. There is a length of about 3 kilometres of uninterrupted promenade with open sea views. It includes two open space – this one next to aquarium and the Bugibba Bay square.

Bugibba square acts as a central reference point for the Bugibba-Qawra visitors. The new Aquarium site in Qawra point includes an extensive area of public space with excellent sea views. .

Parts of the promenade at St. Pauls bay was refurbished to a high standard in 2011, however since then it is showing signs of wear and tear due to insufficient maintenance.



Main seafront
urban spaces



Rocky beaches +
Hotel pools



Development sites (?)



Visitor attractions (within walking distance)

Bugibba /Qawra

- National Aquarium
- Malta Classic Car Collection

Salina

- Kennedy Grove Park
- Salina salt pans
- Birdpark Malta



St. Pauls Bay

- St. Pauls Bay Parish Church
- Wignacourt Tower

Xemxija

- Xemxija Heritage Walk
- Simar Nature Reserve

Feedback on St. Paul's Bay

- Out of total comments generated, 60% were positive while 40% were negative.

LIKE MOST	Respondents N=107	%	SPOILT VISIT	Respondents N=86	%
Friendly/welcoming locals	30	28.0	Dirty street/litter/dog dirt	26	30.2
Promenade	22	20.6	Timeshare touts	15	17.4
Accessible/close to all amenities	20	18.7	Public transport (unfriendly bus drivers, overcharging, lack of info)	10	11.6
Peaceful, quiet and relaxing	13	12.1	Accommodation (expensive, poor service)	9	10.5
Views, scenery, landscape	13	12.1	Overdevelopment/too much construction works	5	5.8
Public transport (cheap/efficient)	9	8.4	Lack of public conveniences	4	4.7
Harbour/coast/bay/sea	8	7.5	Insects	4	4.7
Sun/weather	8	7.5	Lack of entertainment/nightlife	4	4.7
Restaurants (good food, VFM)	7	6.5	Steep/Hilly locality	3	3.5
Atmosphere/local character	6	5.6	Restaurants (expensive, lack variety)	3	3.5
Shops/good service/variety	4	3.7	Poor maintenance of locality	3	3.5
Cleanliness/upkeep of locality	2	1.9	Inadequate facilities for disabled	3	3.5
Safe	2	1.9	Lack of tourist information	3	3.5
Cafes/bars	2	1.9	Poor pavements/footpaths	3	3.5

Multiple responses

Branding and identity

The focus of Malta's branding is on culture and heritage. There is a mismatch between what is being promoted for Malta as a national destination on the one hand and what Bugibba can offer on the other hand.

Other than price and possibly choice of hotel, there is no clear well-defined reason why tourists should for example choose to stay in St. Paul's Bay over other areas. The only exception to this may be that in the summer, tourists staying in the area will be closer to beaches and leisure activities.

This is also applicable to the architecture and the physical environment – there is nothing to show it is distinctively Maltese or local, as there is for example in a historic core.

End of presentation