

STRUCTURE PLAN

For The Maltese Islands



WRITTEN STATEMENT

November 1990

1st Draft

MINISTRY FOR DEVELOPMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE
PLANNING SERVICES DIVISION

PLANNING *for Malta's Development*

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FUNDED BY

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TO ALL INTERESTED PARTIES

DRAFT STRUCTURE PLAN

1. This draft of the proposed Structure Plan for Malta is being circulated for comments from all Government ministries and departments, other official, political, and voluntary organisations in Malta, and also for comments from the general public, through a consultation programme organised by the Planning Services Division.
2. The draft has been prepared by the consultants in association with the Planning Services Division, and has been referred to the Minister for the Development of Infrastructure for his consideration. The Minister has authorised this publication for the purpose of consultation as required by the relevant legislation.
3. The preparation of this draft plan is the result of a lengthy process of research and consultation which has included:
 1. A sample survey of public attitudes
 2. Circulation and comments on the Structure Plan Inception Report
 3. Ongoing consultation with Government departments and key representative organisations and individuals
 4. Statistically representative surveys of household travel, traffic flows, and housing stock
 5. Circulation and comments on the Structure Plan Report of Survey
4. Your comments/the comments of your organisation on the draft plan itself are equally important to ensure an appropriate, acceptable, and practical final plan which brings together all the various aspects of life in Malta, and meets the aspirations of all sections of the community as far as possible.
5. There are many competing uses for limited land resources in Malta. This draft seeks to achieve an acceptable balance in the short, medium, and long term. In doing so some policies are included which will not suit everyone. The purpose of this working draft is to obtain feedback from both Government and the public, so that the final plan can achieve the best balance.
6. To assist in presenting the final plan for Parliament's consideration before the end of this year, your written comments should be received by the Assistant Director of Works, Planning Services Division, Ministry for Development of Infrastructure, Beltissebh, preferably before the end of November but by 7 December, 1990 at the latest. All comments will be considered, and the draft plan amended and augmented as appropriate.

7. The purpose of the Structure Plan, following approval by Parliament, is to:
1. Provide a strategic direction and context to guide both Government and the private sector in matters concerning Malta's development over the next twenty years
 2. Provide policies which will be applied on a day to day basis in determining development permit applications and any other proposed changes in the use of land
 3. Provide a strategic context for the preparation of site specific local plans, subject plans, and action plans
8. It should be emphasised that this is a draft for consultation purposes. It does not necessarily contain what will be recommended for Government approval, although it seeks to meet the main strategic requirements which have been identified to date. It also focuses on the more fundamental aspects of strategic policy, and further policies and guidance on implementation measures will be added. The recommended Structure Plan will be accompanied by a factual report on public consultation, and also by an Explanatory Memorandum which will give the main reasons and technical background for the recommendations.
9. The legal requirements for the Structure Plan are given in the Building Permits (Temporary Provisions) Act of 1988, in Section 4 (3):

The Structure Plan shall be a written statement not being site specific:

- (a) formulating the national planning policy and general proposals in respect of development and other use of land including measures for the improvement of the physical environment and the management of traffic
 - (b) interpreting the relationship of national policies in terms of physical and environmental planning in so far as those policies concern the integration of economic, social, and environmental policies, and
 - (c) containing such other matters as may be established by the Minister
10. In addition to this consultative draft of the Structure Plan, a draft bill for a Development Planning Act has been prepared by the consultants for consideration by Parliament. This is based on the consultation document which has already been circulated: Planning Legislation and Related Matters, Appraisal and Outline Proposals.
11. Whilst it is expected that the approved Structure Plan policies will remain as the strategic context for Malta's development for some years, circumstances will change, and it is important that the plan is kept up to date. This will require the monitoring of the various key factors on which the plan is based, and a review of the plan based again on public consultation procedures. In general however, further planning policies and planning procedures will result from local plans, subject plans, action plans, and also statutory instruments drawn up after the approval of the Development Planning Act.

12. The proposed Development Planning Act includes provisions for the establishment of a Planning Authority. It is expected that the Act will be approved at about the same time as the Structure Plan itself, and this draft assumes this to be the case. The majority of the proposed policies can however be used by the Planning Area Permits Board and other Government agencies before the Planning Authority and the related full planning system come into force. During this interim period the technical functions of the Planning Authority will continue to be performed by the Planning Services Division, Ministry for Development of Infrastructure.

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PART 1: THE STRUCTURE PLAN STRATEGY

1. CONTEXT

Background

- 1.1 The decision by the Government to evolve a Structure Plan for the Maltese Islands is enacted in the Building Permits (Temporary Provisions) Act, 1988. The Act requires that the Structure Plan shall be a 'written statement not being site-specific:
1. formulating the national planning policy and general proposals in respect of development and other use of land including measures for the improvement of the physical environment and the management of traffic
 2. interpreting the relationship of national policies in terms of physical and environmental planning in so far as those policies concern the integration of economic, social, and environmental policies, and
 3. containing such other matters as may be established by the Minister'.
- 1.2 The purpose of the Plan, following approval by Parliament, is to provide:
1. a strategic direction and context to guide both Government and the private sector in matters concerning Malta's development over the next twenty years;
 2. policies which will be applied on a day-to-day basis in determining development permit applications submitted by both the public and private sectors and any other proposed changes in the use of land;
 3. a strategic context for the preparation of site-specific Local Plans, Subject Plans, and Action Plans together with guidance on priorities for further studies as part of the new planning process; and
 4. identify and promote opportunities for development and harness private sector resources to assist in carrying out that development.

Character

- 1.3 The Structure Plan is a strategic long-term plan for the Maltese Islands which, for most purposes, covers the 20-year period to year 2010. It is concerned with all aspects of social, economic and physical structure, but it is distinguished by the following characteristics:

1. It does not attempt an in-depth analysis of all sectors of Maltese life (housing, transport, education, etc.): this is essentially the job of the various Ministries and other public agencies. Instead, the objective of the Plan is to be comprehensive and to examine each sector in sufficient detail to ensure that individual sectoral policies are as compatible as possible with those of other sectors. In this sense, it is basically a coordinating plan.
2. As well as being strategic in an analytical sense, it is strategic in a physical sense. It covers the whole territory of the Maltese Islands and, for the most part, is expressed in terms of areas, zones and districts rather than sites. It provides the context for the subsequent more detailed plans.
3. Although many of its analyses and recommended policies are non-physical, its basic concern is with land - essentially what should be developed where, when and how.
4. It is not a plan for the total restructuring of the Islands' fabric and way of life: such a plan does not exist, and probably should not. The Islands are what they are, and the broad disposition of homes and workplaces will remain largely as they are now. Planning has been defined as 'cooperation with the inevitable': the Structure Plan seldom seeks to reverse trends, but rather to divert them where this seems to be beneficial.
5. It is essentially an enabling plan. The inclusion of some forecast or proposal does not mean that it will happen, particularly if applicable to the private sector. Rather the Plan says 'If and when this particular demand arises, this is where and how it should be accommodated'.
6. It is not a static instrument. Changes in the various sectors of activity with which it deals will be monitored, and amendments to the Plan will be made when this seems appropriate.

Content

1.4 The components of the Structure Plan are:

1. The Written Statement: This, the present document, sets out the background to the Plan; summarises the principal problems and issues to be confronted; describes the recommended planning strategy and how it was evolved; lists specific policies aimed at the realisation of the strategy; identifies priorities; and considers the resources required for implementation.
2. The Key Diagram: This diagram, which accompanies the Written Statement, shows the physical locations where particular policies will be applied.

Following public consultation, these two documents are approved by Parliament and acquire the status of law.

- 1.5 The Written Statement and Key Diagram are supported by the Explanatory Memorandum. This is a more detailed report which records the entire Structure Plan study. It summarises the preliminary surveys and their results; describes the various analyses and forecasts leading to the formulation of the strategy; and generally provides more detailed evidence and justification for the policies put forward in the Written Statement. It also includes design guidelines and standards of provision to be adopted in Local Plans.

Implementation

- 1.6 The responsibility for developing and reviewing the Structure Plan, Local Plans, etc. and for coordinating their implementation, is given by Parliament to the Planning Authority which, as the sponsoring agency for the Structure Plan, remains responsible directly to Cabinet. The Authority is supported by a Planning Directorate which provides all administrative and technical services.
- 1.7 Some aspects of the Structure Plan are implemented directly by the Planning Authority, but generally the activities of the Authority reflect the coordinating role of the Plan. The Authority therefore more typically initiates action to secure realisation of Plan policies by forming inter-Departmental committees and working groups and by using the powers and expertise of individual agencies in an integrated fashion.
- 1.8 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. These plans comprise the following:
1. Local Plans prescribe for particular areas the development intentions in greater detail than is available in the Structure Plan, and where it is anticipated that substantial development is likely to be initiated by the private sector. These are site-specific plans.
 2. Action Plans are similar in character to Local Plans but deal with smaller areas and are appropriate where the public sector intends to positively intervene in the development process by, for example, developing or redeveloping land within the Plan area.
 3. Subject Plans deal with specific issues relevant to the strategy and may relate to the whole of the territory as might be the case in respect of environmental protection, or to a particular activity such as quarrying.
 4. Planning Briefs set out all the planning requirements, limitations, opportunities and targets which must be met in preparing a plan for an area. They may also be used as an interim or preliminary document prior to the preparation of a Local Plan or alternatively as guidance to the developer (whether being another Government Department or a private developer) of a large area where the Planning Authority considers that the developer can be entrusted with the preparation of a Local Plan or Action Plan within prescribed guidelines.

5. Development Briefs are somewhat similar in nature to Planning Briefs but relate to single sites and should prescribe all matters affecting the form, content and design of the development. They need not be confined to planning requirements.

2. EXISTING SITUATION

- 2.1 The initial surveys which preceded the development of the Structure Plan strategy verified and quantified what had long been obvious or suspected. The Maltese Islands can boast of many beneficial features: there is modest but steady economic growth; generally increasing prosperity; no significant national deficit; a very large housing stock mostly in good repair; a wide range of recreational and cultural outlets; a rich cultural heritage of World Heritage status around magnificent harbours; an adaptable and easy to train labour force; a rich and diverse wildlife including many varieties which are of scientific importance; and the mixed blessing of high car ownership. There is also an increasing awareness by the public of environmental issues and of the need for planning.
- 2.2 The Islands suffer, however, from many well known problems. Development is largely undertaken without serious concern for evaluating its impact and taking measures to mitigate it, and there is no overall strategy for development. Residential development is the largest user of developed land, with a sizeable vacancy rate especially in the historical areas. No real private rental sector exists, and with the generous subsidies of loans and plots of land for housing, there is a very large demand for yet further housing. As new residential development takes place, the older residential stock and related infrastructure deteriorates further.
- 2.3 The amount of land devoted to agriculture is contracting principally due to housing development. There is fragmentary land ownership, lack of irrigation water, and an ageing agricultural workforce. Malta is thus becoming more and more dependent on imports for its basic food supplies.
- 2.4 There is a mis-match between employment opportunities and the supply of skilled labour. Training opportunities are not geared to meeting this situation which is further complicated by an excessively high level of employment in the public sector, black labour, and a low female participation rate.
- 2.5 Leisure and recreation opportunities are not well integrated with the built-up areas, while sports facilities are lacking at district level. Tourism is the highest foreign income sector, but extensive tourism development is causing further strain on infrastructure.
- 2.6 The road network is in a poor state, and parking facilities and pedestrian areas are limited. Road design standards are not applied, resulting in badly designed junctions giving rise to serious congestion problems. There is a lack of road hierarchy. Public transport is outdated in all respects and has a declining patronage.
- 2.7 Many of the older and more valuable, parts of the urban fabric are in a state of decay; new, and often ugly, development has erupted from the traditional built-up areas and sprawled across the countryside; and everywhere the quality of all aspects of the environment has deteriorated significantly in comparison with what it used to be and with equivalent standards in Europe.

- 2.8 There is a general lack of resources being channeled to maintenance and rehabilitation of Malta's heritage, which can also be promoted for tourism purposes. There are many competing uses impinging on the coast mainly resulting from illegal tourism development which has rendered parts of the coast inaccessible. Coastal resources are deteriorating from visual intrusions and pollution threats.
- 2.9 Due to the rapid rate of development, natural landscapes have been replaced by manmade ones and consequently there has been a loss of habitats and concurrent reduction of wildlife populations. Due to a lack of overall objectives or policies relating to the quarrying industry, damage to the visual qualities of the landscape and to sites of archaeological significance has occurred.
- 2.10 Despite recent improvement, public utilities (water, sewerage, electricity, telephones) remain inadequate, and the health, education and welfare agencies struggle to match outworn structures, equipment, and procedures with steadily increasing demand and higher standards.
- 2.11 Some of these problems are a direct result of Malta's limited economic base and the consequent lack of financial resources, but many exist because for a long time there has been no real planning. The lack of a concerted view on long-term objectives and the way in which development should be handled has meant a lack of liaison between supply agencies and providers of various sorts, and a great deal of wasted effort to produce dubious results. No one agency or instrument can effect a turn-round, but the existence of the Planning Authority and of Structure Plan mechanisms offer an opportunity to begin to correct the situation and to provide a framework for the initiation of more orderly and productive development processes.

3. OVERALL STRATEGY

Resources

- 3.1 The essential issue which must be confronted in the Structure Plan is how best Malta can use its resources to further its social and economic development over the next two decades. To do this it must harbour existing resources, create new ones, and manage both efficiently.
- 3.2 The Islands' primary existing resource is its land. The consumption rate of land for urban purposes has increased dramatically over the last thirty years, and if society is serious about conserving what is left of the countryside, there must be a dedicated effort to rationalise the way in which development is organised and to get the most from those areas which are already built-up or planned.
- 3.3 The primary resource which can be created is national wealth. From this will flow the funds necessary to implement the overall planning strategy, and it follows that every effort has to be made to encourage wealth production. However, that process depends ultimately on human resources and the skills available to create the wealth and use it effectively.
- 3.4 The effective use of wealth and skills requires resource management - a phenomenon which is as much an attitude as a skill. The Structure Plan essentially comprises a series of policies aimed at managing development. If development can be regarded in this way, there is every possibility that the goals of the Structure Plan can be realised.

Goals

- 3.5 The Planning Authority, mainly through the Structure Plan, has three major goals:
1. To encourage the further social and economic development of the Maltese Islands and to ensure as far as possible that sufficient land and support infrastructure are available to accommodate it.
 2. To channel development activity and energy into existing and planned developed areas through a programme of the rehabilitation and upgrading of the existing fabric and infrastructure, thus constraining further inroads into undeveloped land.
 3. To radically improve the quality of all aspects of the environment of both urban and rural areas.

Development Demands

- 3.6 With reference to the first of these goals - the accommodation of future development - Structure Plan analyses include forecasts of the growth of population, households and jobs over the 20-year Plan period and of the other sectors of development which basically derive from these. It is anticipated that the population of the Islands will increase by about 11% from the present 355,000 to approximately 394,000; that there will be some 60,000 new houses to be accommodated; and that labour supply will increase by some 30,000, mainly because of the larger number of women taking jobs. Labour demand is much more difficult to forecast, but there are indications that to sustain the level of development which seems possible more Maltese than the presently estimated 10-15% of the labour force will take up part-time second jobs and there could be a need eventually to attract foreign labour irrespective of whether Malta becomes a member of the European Community. The presence of a foreign labour force is, however, speculative and likely to occur later rather than sooner during the Plan period. For this reason, no allowance is made in the Plan for the housing and other facilities which foreign workers and their families would require: this is for some future review of the Structure Plan to consider.
- 3.7 From these projections the likely growth of all sectors of the economy and of the demand for services has been estimated - housing; social and community facilities; offices, shops and the various forms of industry; tourism and recreation; roads and transport; and public utilities. The forms and standards of provision of all new development are postulated at a gross level thus enabling estimates to be made of the hectareage of land and of the site characteristics required by these site-seeking uses. It is these estimates which are mainly used in designating zones and areas for development. Inevitably, some development demand or opportunity will arise which has not been foreseen in the Structure Plan. If and when this occurs the Plan's strategic policies will offer guidance on how such exceptions can be dealt with.

Rehabilitation

- 3.8 With respect to the second goal - the revitalisation of existing built-up areas as opposed to the further development of virgin land - it is proposed to encourage as much development and redevelopment as possible in these areas commensurate with the conservation of valuable urban fabric and the achievement of higher environmental standards. It is also proposed to phase out public sector encouragement of new housing in undeveloped areas in the form of subsidised land plots and low-cost loans, and to switch this effort to existing built-up areas. In these areas the Plan envisages substantial public sector investment in the upgrading of infrastructure and publicly-owned buildings, paralleled by the offer of grants and low-cost loans for the refurbishment of privately-owned property and the conversion of large housing units to multi-occupancy. The Plan also recommends the phasing out of the present rent control legislation which, as in all countries which have tried this approach, has led to atrophy of the private rented sector and gross imbalances of 'housing fit' - that is, the relationship between the size of a dwelling and the number of people in the household inhabiting it.
- 3.9 Such measures are the positive aspects of the policy of urban containment. The negative aspect is a cruder and more easily realised instrument - a blanket presumption against any further urbanisation outside existing and planned built-up areas as these are defined and designated in the Plan.

Environment

- 3.10 The third goal - the general upgrading of all aspects of the environment - requires a comprehensive set of policies covering all land and coastal waters in the Islands. In existing built-up areas an extensive series of Urban Conservation Areas is designated. Within these, the Plan sets out policies for the retention and enhancement of all buildings, structures and spaces of architectural or historical interest; the redevelopment to Conservation Area standards of any ugly or alien buildings which have been allowed to despoil the area in the past; the rationalisation and control of traffic movement and parking, including where appropriate, pedestrian priority measures; the undergrounding of all electricity and telecommunications cables; and the improvement of townscape and landscape.
- 3.11 Urban Conservation Areas and other key areas such as shopping concentrations will be given priority, but it is the Planning Authority's intention that all existing built-up areas will be progressively upgraded in this fashion. Where any key area is so grossly inadequate that upgrading is not worthwhile, the relevant Local Plan will designate it as a Comprehensive Development Area in which policies aimed at securing joint public/private sector participation in redevelopment will be put forward.
- 3.12 In new urban areas as designated in the Plan there will be strict policies of development control and design guidelines aimed at ensuring that new areas do not repeat the mistakes of previous developments in terms of inadequate provision of community facilities such as schools, clinics, local shops and so on; unfinished surfaces and abandoned heaps of rubble and other construction industry discards; lack of proper infrastructure, townscape and landscape. The aim is to create new urban areas which are a pleasure to live in and visit rather than areas with the substandard, ragged and unfinished ambience which characterises most newly-developed schemes.
- 3.13 Outside existing and planned urban areas, policies prohibiting further desecration of unbuilt land will ensure that the spread of concrete into the countryside is halted. But the Structure Plan adopts a more positive stance toward the rural areas than these prescriptive policies imply. The Plan designates a series of Rural Conservation Areas within which agricultural, ecological, archaeological and landscape interests are protected and enhanced. These particular interests within the Rural Conservation Areas are occasionally in conflict with each other in competing for land or in terms of management techniques: the Structure Plan also contains guidelines aimed at resolving such conflicts and at establishing and maintaining an overall high standard of environment. The impact of known or suspected mineral deposits on other activities within the Rural Conservation Areas is identified as a subject for further study.
- 3.14 The third type of conservation area put forward in the Structure Plan is the Marine Conservation Area. In these areas, more investigation is needed in order to define specific policies which will safeguard the more vulnerable marine environments by controlling destructive land-based activities; prohibiting certain forms of marine-based development; banning certain types of fishing; and controlling recreational diving and other marine-based activities.

Development of the Strategy

- 3.15 The establishment of the Rural Conservation Areas, where all forms of urbanisation will be prohibited, allowed the subsequent definition of non-conservation areas which in principle are available for further urban development. The final development strategy adopted by the Structure Plan is essentially derived from the process of allocating new forecast uses to specific areas within this stock of developable land.

Roads

- 3.16 A major criterion in this process of optimal site allocation is surface transport and particularly the configuration of the road network which determines the level of accessibility which particular development areas enjoy. The Structure Plan seeks to create a hierarchy of roads in which each element of the hierarchy has a particular function. The highest element in the hierarchy is the arterial network: this takes fast, heavy, longer-distance flows and feeds these to the next level in the hierarchy, the distributor roads, and so on down the hierarchy to local roads and access roads. In entirely new development such hierarchies can be readily formulated: in and around existing developed areas they largely comprise rationalisations, adaptations and extensions of the existing network. The Structure Plan deals with the two upper elements in the hierarchy - the arterial and distributor networks: subsequent more detailed plans will consider local and access roads.

Housing Provision

- 3.17 New housing will be developed in three areas - existing built-up areas, Temporary Provisions schemes, and entirely new development areas which will be needed to accommodate housing which the other two areas cannot absorb. The amount of new housing which will be developed over the next twenty years in existing built-up areas through development of vacant sites, redevelopment of existing sites and conversions is extremely difficult to forecast, particularly since there will be a corresponding loss of dwelling units from the housing stock because of conversions to other uses and demolitions for infrastructural works. A working assumption was adopted to the effect that there would be a net increase of 8,000 dwellings in such areas.
- 3.18 The Temporary Provisions schemes were originally conceived as providing land for new housing over the two to three-year period during which the Structure Plan would be prepared. Largely as a result of pressure from landowners the provisions eventually approved by Parliament were considerably in excess of those originally recommended by the Planning Services Division of the Ministry for the Development of Infrastructure. Structure Plan analyses found that, if developed at a realistic medium density which would allow a full range of house types to be provided, something like 50,000 housing units could be accommodated. However, the layouts prepared for these areas under the 1988 Act are now judged to be deficient in their provision of non-residential uses - mainly community facilities of various sorts - and the Structure Plan therefore contains provisions for the review of both the boundaries and the layouts of these areas in order to correct these deficiencies.
- 3.19 It was concluded that it was unlikely that forecast housing demand could be met in the existing built-up areas and Temporary Provisions schemes and that it would be advisable to identify additional new sites.

Primary Development Areas

- 3.20 For non-industrial uses, attention focussed on three major new sites - Ta' Ceppuna, Manoel Island and Pembroke. Ta' Ceppuna is the only genuine newcomer: the possible development of the other two sites has been under consideration for some time. Ta' Ceppuna, the large site in the district of Marsa, is regarded by the Planning Authority as the prime development site in mainland Malta. Centrally located between Luqa air terminal and the Valletta/Floriana peninsula, at the hub of the heavily urbanised zones of the Harbour area, and served by a powerful road network which can be conveniently upgraded as necessary, Ta' Ceppuna is a perfect location for commercial offices and new forms of shopping complex of which there are currently no significant examples in the Islands but for which a strong demand is forecast. Manoel Island is designated primarily for tourist and recreation uses, and Pembroke for mixed development with priority to residential and recreation uses. It is estimated that the addition of Pembroke to the list of future housing areas will allow total forecast demand for housing to be satisfied. A wide distribution of additional tourist facilities is put forward.
- 3.21 It is estimated that of the 30,000 new workers estimated to join the labour force by year 2010, some 7,000 will be engaged in industrial jobs. Of the latter, approximately one half are projected to work in industrial estates. It is further estimated that if new development in industrial estates were to be built at high densities, most of these new industrial jobs could be absorbed in existing estates. However, the universal achievement of high densities is unlikely and, as noted earlier, it is forecast that industrial as well as other jobs will probably exceed labour supply. It was concluded that additional industrial estates will have to be developed sometime during the Plan period.
- 3.22 Traditionally, manufacturing industrial sites in or near the main built-up areas of the Harbour zone have been favoured, but because of past development, new environmental constraints, and competition from site-seeking warehousing and obnoxious industry, suitable sites are difficult to identify. Two zones - neither new to industry - are designated for new manufacturing industrial development. The first is in the San Gwann area and the second in the Birzebbuga/Hal Far area. Smaller sites at Mriehel and Cospicua are also designated.
- 3.23 A final potential major land user is quarrying. Although there are fewer than 300 jobs in the quarrying industry, it is uniquely important as a supplier to the construction industry, and it has an equally unique impact on the environment in terms of both the legacy of abandoned quarries and of current and future activity. The Structure Plan strategy is to temporarily sterilise land where deposits are known or suspected; to immediately launch a study to verify deposits; and as a result of the study, to extend sterilisation over the Plan period or to release land from it. It is also intended to progressively tighten up control of quarrying practice through a new Minerals Board which will also be charged with advising on optimal after-use of quarries for such uses as fish farming, horticulture, recreation, storage, obnoxious industry and dumping.

Valletta

- 3.24 The Structure Plan acknowledges the special status and role of Valletta - not only as a World Heritage site but as Malta's traditional centre of authority and public administration and a primary centre for shopping, offices and cultural activities. Over some years

there has been a steady loss of population and jobs, partly because of a declining level of accessibility; rent legislation has led to under-utilisation of the housing stock; and much of the fabric is in a state of decay.

- 3.25 The Structure Plan has no detailed or site-specific proposals for Valletta: that is the job of the relevant Local Plan. However, the Structure Plan strategy nominates Valletta as the principal beneficiary of the establishment of Urban Conservation Areas; of a formal shift of interest, energy and investment from new to existing built-up areas; and of priority in the creation and implementation of Local Plans. The Structure Plan sets the strategic context of the Valletta Local Plan; specifies the issues which must be analysed in detail; requires the careful consideration of the analyses, concepts and recommendations of the Valletta Rehabilitation Committee and its consultants; and envisages the active participation of the Committee in implementing approved Local Plan policies.

Gozo

- 3.26 The goals and policies outlined in the Structure Plan for mainland Malta apply equally to Gozo: the general strategy is to encourage economic development, constrain further urbanisation, and give much greater importance to conservation and the quality of the environment.
- 3.27 The strategy therefore is to ensure that the development of further housing and ancillary uses is confined to the Temporary Provisions schemes. With reference to the further development of tourist facilities, the Plan assumes development at Ta' Cenc but suggests that any further development of tourist accommodation should be confined to the conversion of property in favoured positions in existing built-up areas, mainly for the self-catering market, and the expansion of tourist facilities accommodation at Marsalforn, Xlendi and Mgarr and, in the latter part of the Plan period, at other sites. The earmarking of further land for industrial development is also recommended.
- 3.28 The principal recommendation with regard to the road network is the provision of a bypass to Victoria. Additional and better ferry berthing facilities are envisaged. On environmental grounds, the Plan recommends a cautious approach to the provision of fixed wing aircraft landing facilities on the island but advises the continued safeguarding of the affected land.

4. LOCAL PLANS

- 4.1 As has been stressed already, the Structure Plan covers the whole of the land and coastal waters of the Islands, and is intended to be strategic in nature. As such, it sets the context for the production of more detailed and site-specific Local Plans for particular areas. It also identifies areas for which such Local Plans will be prepared and sets out draft terms of reference.
- 4.2 Local Plans are usually prepared for areas in which pressure for development already exists or is anticipated. Due to the wide dispersal of development activity envisaged in the Structure Plan there is not one urban area or settlement which will not experience some form of development. The Planning Authority therefore requires that a series of Local Plans for all existing or planned urban areas be prepared as speedily as possible. If approval of the Structure Plan or the setting-up of the Planning Authority is delayed for any reason, the first of these Local Plans will be commissioned under the auspices of the Planning Services Division of the Ministry for the Development of Infrastructure.
- 4.3 The draft list of Local Plans to be prepared for urban areas is as follows:
1. Valletta/Floriana
 2. The Three Cities
 3. Sliema, Gzira and Ta' Xbiex
 4. St. Julians, San Gwann and Pembroke
 5. Msida, Pieta and Gwardamangia
 6. Marsa, Qormi, Hamrun and Sta. Venera
 7. Birkirkara and the Three Villages
 8. Paola, Tarxien and Sta. Lucia
 9. Kalkara, Rinella and Xghajra
 10. Zabbar and Fgura
 11. Luqa, Gudja, Ghaxaq, Mqabba, Kirkop and Qrendi
 12. Marsaxlokk and Birzebbugia
 13. Zejtun, Marsascalea and St. Thomas Bay
 - 14.

15. Siggiewi and Zebbug
16. Rabat, Mdina and Dingli
17. Mosta, Naxxar, Gharghur and Burmarrad
18. St. Paul's Bay, Bugibba, Qawra and Mellieha
19. Victoria and Fontana
20. Qala, Ghajnsielem and Mgarr
21. Xaghra and Nadur
22. Xewkija and Sannat
23. Kercem, San Lawrenz, Munxar and Xlendi
24. Gharb, Ghasri, Zebbug and Marsalforn

4.4 Local Plans will be prepared in the following order of priority:

1. Areas comprising or containing the primary Urban Conservation Areas - Valletta/Floriana, the Three Cities, the Citadel and its environs in Gozo.
2. Areas containing the primary development areas Ta' Ceppuna, Manoel Island and Pembroke.
3. Areas comprising or containing Urban Conservation Areas other than those listed in 1) above.
4. Areas not listed in the foregoing but containing recognised areas of current or future development activity.
5. All other areas not listed in the foregoing.

4.5 Specific terms of reference will be drawn up for each Local Plan, but generally all plans will be required to:

1. Indicate the way in which Structure Plan principles, policies and standards will be applied to the local scale
2. Show by means of plans and schedules the proposed use allocated to areas and sites
3. Specify the development control policies and design guidelines which will apply to particular areas
4. Illustrate the application of additional control policies applicable to any Urban Conservation Areas included in the Local Plan area

5. Put forward proposals for the improvement of conditions for both vehicular and pedestrian traffic
6. Include specific proposals for the enhancement of townscape, landscape and environmental quality generally
7. Explain the reasoning behind policy and design proposals, with particular reference to the evaluation of any alternatives
8. Designate any Action Plan Areas or Comprehensive Development Areas within the Local Plan boundaries; develop conceptual proposals for these; and draw up Planning Briefs or Development Briefs for their further detailed study and implementation
9. Present an implementation plan including phasing proposals, land acquisition proposals, implementation responsibilities, and, where appropriate and feasible, costs and budgeting.
10. Carry out consultation with the public
11. Prepare feedback input to any future review of the Structure Plan

4.6 It is also the Planning Authority's intention to prepare a Local Plan or Local Plans for Rural Conservation Areas designated in the Structure Plan. The intention of the Local Plan will be to develop further specific policies and, where appropriate, management procedures for specific sites and areas of agricultural, ecological, archaeological and landscape value, with the overall objective of protecting and enhancing that value and environmental quality generally. Once the minerals survey has been completed, Mineral Areas and their particular characteristics and operational policies will be established in conjunction with the analysis of the Rural Conservation Areas in order to minimise potential conflict. The recommended marine surveys should be completed concurrently with the minerals surveys so that Marine Conservation Areas can be established at the same time as and in conjunction with the Local Plans for Rural Conservation Areas. At that time a comprehensive Coastal Management Plan will be prepared.

4.7 Until the Local Plan for any particular area is approved, development control procedures will be derived from existing legislation, the Development Planning Act and the policies and guidelines of the Structure Plan.

5. ENFORCEMENT

- 5.1 In the past, Malta has had a poor record not only in relation to strategic planning but also with respect to enforcement of those land use and development controls which have been enacted. This was due partly to a belief on the part of many members of the public that what appeared on the ground had little to do with the content of plans and much more to do with an individual's ability to pressurise the right people in Government. It is anticipated that the Government's determination to develop a proper planning system through the medium of the Structure Plan combined with the setting up of the Planning Authority, will signal that this is an approach with a limited future.
- 5.2 The lack of respect toward planning has also been generated by a perception that it basically comprised a 'hand to mouth' approach in which the public authorities reacted hastily to events which were in danger of overtaking them and, as a consequence, did not produce anything in which the public could have much confidence. The Planning Authority believes that the length of time taken to develop the Structure Plan and the care which has been exercised in doing so will be demonstrable and appreciated.
- 5.3 Also in the past the public has felt a sense of isolation from the whole process of planning which appeared as a clumsy and mostly unwanted imposition which seemed to do a lot of people harm and nobody any good. In contrast, the Structure Plan has been uniquely open to public input and comment at all stages, and the Planning Authority anticipates that there will be a much deeper understanding by the public of the intent and content of the Plan and a much more productive identification with it.
- 5.4 The Planning Authority believes, therefore, that the public will more readily appreciate and accept the Plan as an instrument whose basic intention is to secure the greatest good for the greatest number, and that the need for enforcement will be much less than before. Nevertheless it is part of the Plan and its supporting legislation that tightened enforcement mechanisms are available and will be actively applied as needed.

PART 2: POLICIES

6. SETTLEMENT PATTERN

Development in Existing Built-up Areas

6.1 A major objective of the Structure Plan is to secure as high a proportion of future urban development as possible within existing built-up areas commensurate with the maintenance and enhancement of their environmental quality, thus minimising the volume of development on undeveloped land outside such areas.

6.2 The existing built-up areas can be broadly divided into two categories. The first, the Inner Harbour area, has been steadily losing population as households move out to newer areas in search of more acceptable housing. Most of the jobs, however, remain in these older areas, as do the social and community facilities which were used by these 'emigrant' households. The second category, the outer areas, have mostly been growing rapidly to absorb the new and 'emigrant' households establishing there, but are frequently deficient in the provision of social and community facilities and of job opportunities. The result is that travel between outer area homes and inner area jobs has increased substantially thereby adding to peak time traffic congestion.

POLICY SET 1: The Planning Authority will encourage continuing development and redevelopment within existing built-up areas as defined in the Structure Plan as long as such development does not infringe development control Policies BEN 1 - BEN 3.

POLICY SET 2: In order to reduce the volume of home/workplace travel and make better use of existing infrastructure, the Planning Authority will particularly encourage residential development in the Inner Harbour area while giving greater priority to the establishment of new jobs in the outer residential areas.

6.3 As an incentive to development in existing built-up areas, it is proposed to abolish as from the commencement date of the Structure Plan all public sector encouragement of new housing in undeveloped areas in the form of subsidised land plots and low-cost loans and to switch this effort to existing built-up areas. In these latter areas the Plan envisages substantial public sector investment in the upgrading of infrastructure and publicly-owned buildings, paralleled by the offer of grants, low-cost loans and tax incentives for the refurbishment of privately-owned property and the conversion or redevelopment of large housing units to multi-occupancy units.

6.4 This process will be greatly facilitated by the phasing out, over a long period, of the present rent control legislation which, as described in para. 8.5 of Part 2, has led to atrophy of the private rented sector and gross imbalances of 'housing fit' - that is, the relationship between the size of a dwelling and the number of people in the household inhabiting it.

POLICY SET 3: As from the commencement date of the Structure Plan the granting of subsidised land plots and of low-cost loans for the development of housing outside existing built-up areas will cease. Where plots have already been allocated, the current low-cost loans will continue to be available.

POLICY SET 4: As soon as is practicable after the commencement date of the Structure Plan applications for grants and loans for the rehabilitation, and conversion to multi-occupied of privately-owned residential property will be favourably considered.

POLICY SET 5: As soon as is practicable after the commencement date of the Structure Plan and over as short a period as possible commensurate with the avoidance of undue hardship, the present legislation governing rent levels and security of tenure of both public and private rented accommodation will be phased out (Policy HOU 7).

POLICY SET 6: As soon as practicable after the commencement date of the Structure Plan the Planning Authority will draw up and implement Local Plans for all existing built-up areas as specified in Section 4 of Part 1 of this Statement with the objective of substantially improving the environmental quality of such areas.

6.5 The Planning Authority is also concerned to ensure that where development in existing built-up areas or Temporary Provisions areas is proposed, whether by redevelopment of existing property or by development of vacant sites, the opportunity should be taken to provide any social and community facilities which particular areas currently lack.

POLICY SET 7: When considering applications for permission to develop in existing urban areas, and particularly in the outer residential areas, the Planning Authority will favour the uses given in order of priority below and will normally give permission only if it is convinced that there is no demand for or the site is not appropriate to the use having greater priority:

1. Community services: schools, clinics, local recreational uses
2. Local employment: service workshops and other employment uses
3. Local shops
4. Housing.

Temporary Provisions Schemes

6.6 In terms of effective land use distribution, Structure Plan analyses concluded that with one exception (para. 8.4 and Policy HOU 5), land for the development of new housing and ancillary facilities outside existing built-up areas should be dispersed in the form suggested by the Temporary Provisions schemes rather than concentrated on one or more major sites. Accordingly, the Structure Plan generally confirms the location of the Temporary Provisions schemes.

6.7 However, the layouts prepared for the Temporary Provisions areas are now judged to be deficient in two respects. First, a number of the schemes infringe policies newly developed as part of the Structure Plan with respect to Rural Conservation Areas and airport safety zones. Second, insufficient provision is made in the layouts prepared for these areas for social and community facilities - schools, clinics, service industry, shops, etc. and, in some cases, for the provision of tourist and recreational facilities. It is therefore the Planning Authority's intention that the Local Plans to be prepared for areas containing Temporary Provisions schemes will include a review of both the boundaries and layouts of such schemes.

POLICY SET 8: Non-industrial urban development will be permitted in the areas designated for Temporary Provisions schemes. The present boundaries and layouts of all such schemes will, however, be reviewed as part of the Local Plans to be prepared for areas in which these schemes are located.

POLICY SET 9: During the interim period between the commencement date of the Structure Plan and the adoption of any particular Local Plan, applications for permission to develop in Temporary Provisions scheme areas will be judged in accordance with development control policies BEN 1 - BEN 4 and SET 7.

Primary Development Areas

6.8 As noted in Section 8, Housing, the Temporary Provisions areas are not extensive enough to contain all the new housing and ancillary facilities required up to year 2010: additional land outside existing built-up areas and the Temporary Provisions areas is therefore required for these uses. Similarly, subsequent sections of this Statement explain in greater detail why additional land will be needed for all other uses - offices, shops, industry, tourist facilities, recreational facilities and so on. Five primary development areas, the content of which is detailed in the relevant sections, are designated in the Plan to accommodate such urban development - Ta' Ceppuna, Manoel Island and Pembroke for non-industrial uses, and Hal Far and San Gwann for industrial uses.

POLICY SET 10: The Planning Authority will give favourable consideration to the comprehensive development of the following areas:

- 1. Ta' Ceppuna as defined in Policy COM 3 and for the uses specified therein.**
- 2. Manoel Island as defined in Policy TOU 7 and for the uses specified therein.**
- 3. Pembroke as defined in para. 8.4 and in Policy HOU 5 and for the uses specified therein.**
- 4. Hal Far and San Gwann as defined in Policy IND 1 and the uses specified therein.**

Non-urban Areas

- 6.9 As noted in Part 1 of this Statement, the Planning Authority's overall strategy is to permit and, where appropriate, to initiate and encourage development in existing built-up areas, Temporary Provisions areas and primary development areas as designated in the Structure Plan, but to prohibit any form of urbanisation outside these designated areas.

POLICY SET 11: The Planning Authority will not permit any form of urban development outside existing and committed built-up areas, Temporary Provisions areas and primary development areas as designated in the Structure Plan even where roads and public utilities are available. Permitted forms of non-urban development outside such areas are restricted to the categories listed in Policy BEN 5.

- 6.10 The Planning Authority recognises that it is impossible to forecast all demands for development over a 20-year period with any precision. Inevitably, there will be applications for permission to develop some use which has not been foreseen in the Structure Plan analyses, and there will also be applications for uses which may have been foreseen by the Authority but which applicants wish to develop outside the areas zoned in the Plan for further urbanisation. The Structure Plan strategy is perfectly clear on this issue: it comprises a blanket prohibition of any form of urbanisation outside areas specifically designated for urban uses in the Plan. However, there may be occasions on which the Authority has to seriously consider the merits of proposals which break this rule. If and when these arise the Authority will require an exhaustive examination of the pros and cons of each such proposal in order to arrive at a fair conclusion. If such situations arise, appropriate modifications may be made in the first subsequent review of the Structure Plan.

POLICY SET 12: Notwithstanding the presumption against any form of urbanisation outside areas designated for urban uses in the Structure Plan, the Planning Authority will allow submission of applications for permission to develop which ostensibly infringe Policy SET 11. In any such case, the onus will be on the applicant to present evidence as to why the policy should be infringed, and the Planning Authority will additionally require the applicant to submit at his own expense a full Environmental Impact Assessment of a form and content satisfactory to the Authority.

7. BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Urban Areas

- 7.1 It is the Planning Authority's intention to exercise strict control of development in all parts of the Islands through the medium of the Structure Plan and of Local Plans when these have been completed. Development will be permitted only if in the opinion of the Planning Authority the proposal fulfils all of the conditions applicable to the particular type of area in which it is located. These prototypical areas are defined in terms of their predominant use (e.g. residential and ancillary uses) and of their urban design, architectural and environmental characteristics. With reference to permitted uses, it is not the Authority's intention to enforce an over-rigid zoning policy (in which, for example, service industrial uses are totally excluded from residential areas), but rather to ensure that any proposed development does not have a deleterious impact on existing or planned adjacent uses.

POLICY BEN 1: Development will not normally be permitted if the proposal is likely to have a deleterious impact on existing or planned adjacent uses because of visual intrusion, noise, vibration, atmospheric pollution, unusually high traffic generation, unusual operating times or any other characteristic which in the opinion of the Authority would constitute bad neighbourliness.

- 7.2 With reference to the design of proposals, the Authority's aim is not to constrain innovative design but to ensure that the proposed design is compatible with (rather than necessarily identical to) the visual characteristics of the area or street within which the proposal is sited. Thus, for example, in areas or streets composed primarily of two and three-storey housing with traditional oriel windows and no set-back from the rear of the footpath, other architectural forms such as high buildings with facades of tinted glass in aluminium frames and set back from the footpath will not be permitted.

- 7.3 Design guidelines for 'traditional' areas have already been issued by the Aesthetics Board. These guidelines will remain applicable, and it is the Planning Authority's intention that similar design guidelines will be developed for all prototypical areas referred to in para. 7.1.

POLICY BEN 2: Development will not normally be permitted if, in the opinion of the Planning Authority, it is incompatible with the urban design, architectural and environmental characteristics of existing or planned adjacent uses and is unlikely to maintain the visual integrity of the area in which it is located. There will be a presumption against development which does not generally observe the design guidelines issued by the Planning Authority for existing built-up areas.

- 7.4 As part of the environmental upgrading noted in Policy SET 6, it is the Authority's intention to implement a programme of undergrounding of electricity supply and telecommunications cables wherever practicable, but particularly in urban areas, in conjunction with statutory undertakers ENEMALTA and TELEMALTA.

POLICY BEN 3: Permission for development will normally be given only if provision is made in the proposal for the installation of underground ducts to link electricity and telecommunications distribution networks to the development, the ducts to be utilised immediately if underground supplies are available or held in reserve for subsequent use if only overhead supplies are available at the time of the development.

7.5 The Planning Authority is aware that since the Temporary Provisions schemes were put forward in 1988, some development has taken place in the affected areas and that further applications for permission to develop will be submitted during the interim period between the commencement date of the Structure Plan and the adoption of the relevant Local Plan which will contain both revised layouts and specific development control guidelines. The Authority does not wish to unduly constrain legitimate development especially if this is in accordance with the approved 1988 proposals, but it must make sure that newly proposed development does not compromise the review of these layouts nor disrupt the orderly provision of roads and utility services.

POLICY BEN 4: During the interim period between the commencement date of the Structure Plan and the adoption of any particular Local Plan, permission for development in Temporary Provisions areas will be subject to Policies BEN 1 - BEN 3. Additionally, permission will not normally be given unless the Planning Authority is satisfied that such permission would be unlikely to compromise the objectives of the review forming part of Local Plan preparation. Within this overriding concern the Authority will also have regard to the location of the proposed development, with more favourable consideration being given to development close to developed areas and already provided with roads and services, and less favourable consideration to development relatively remote from existing buildings and infrastructure.

Non-Urban Areas

7.6 The term 'urbanisation' means the creation of new built-up areas containing all or most urban uses - houses, shops, offices, factories, and all the 'hard' support facilities which these accumulate. The Planning Authority believes that in seeking to prohibit urbanisation of existing non-urban areas it cannot and does not wish to prohibit built structures of various kinds which are normal and legitimate inclusions in the non-urban scene - farmhouses and other genuine agricultural buildings, reservoirs, picnic area toilets and car parks, control buildings and walls/fences at archaeological and ecological sites, and so on. Nevertheless, the provision of such structures must be controlled in order to preserve and enhance the environmental quality of the countryside.

POLICY BEN 5: The definition of development requiring permission is given in the Use Classes Order annexed to the Development Planning Act. It includes all structures and changes to uses and surfaces outside urban areas. The Planning Authority requires applications to be made with respect to all such developments. Applications will be judged against the policies and design guidelines of the Local Plans for Rural Conservation Areas, and, in the interim period, to the guidelines contained in the Explanatory Memorandum.

Advertisements

7.7 The definition of development includes advertisements of all kinds.

POLICY BEN 6: Advertisements are classed as development and the Planning Authority will require applications for permission to erect or display all types of advertisements to be submitted to it. There will be a presumption against permission of any proposal which infringes the design guidelines for advertisements issued by the Authority.

Application Procedures

7.8 The Planning Authority believes that a great deal of time and effort can be saved and frustration avoided if the general principles of particular development proposals can be established early in the application procedure. It therefore wishes to encourage pre-application consultations and applications for outline permission.

POLICY BEN 7: The Planning Authority will welcome pre-application consultations with intending applicants for permission to develop.

POLICY BEN 8: The Planning Authority advises intending applicants for permission to develop to consider applications for outline permission which establish the principles and general characteristics of a development proposal before the applicant is faced with the expense of the more detailed application for full permission to develop. Where this procedure is used, the application fee will be payable for the outline application only.

7.9 It is the Planning Authority's belief that the upgrading of the visual environment by the means described and in the locations listed in the Structure Plan could be only partially effective unless supported by further policies aimed at eliminating the widespread environmental degradation which characterises the Islands. This comprises the very frequent occurrence of derelict and neglected sites; broken-down walls; boundary markers and minor structures of totally inappropriate materials; unfinished surfaces; discarded piles of building materials and other rubble; illegal, unsightly and insanitary rubbish dumps; the residue of inadequate cleansing procedures; and much else in both urban and rural locations. The extent and seriousness of this situation is particularly apparent when compared with equivalent standards in the rest of Europe, and particularly galling in so far as it is so frequently occurs in what would otherwise be attractive urban and rural settings.

7.10 It is the Planning Authority's further belief that only a comprehensive and determined attack on such conditions bears any hope of success and that the Structure Plan is a fitting instrument and focus for that attack.

POLICY BEN 9: The Planning Authority will ensure that conditions attached to any permission to develop will be such as to preclude unneighbourly construction procedures, unfinished surfaces, and the permanent dumping of building materials and other rubbish on or near the site.

POLICY BEN 10: The Planning Authority will seek powers to require owners of undeveloped and unused sites to maintain such sites in an environmentally acceptable condition.

POLICY BEN 11: The Planning Authority will seek to ensure, in conjunction with other appropriate agencies, that environmental blemishes of the type described in para. 7.9 which were in existence prior to the commencement date of the Structure Plan will be removed.

7.11 There will be occasions on which it will be possible to make a reasonable judgement of an application for permission to develop only if information additional to that normally required is submitted, particularly where questions of environmental impact are likely to arise.

POLICY BEN 12: The Planning Authority will have the power to decide if an Environmental Impact Assessment of a form and content satisfactory to the Authority is required to accompany any application for permission to develop.

7.12 Satellite dishes will be a cause for concern not only in Urban Conservation Areas (Policy UCO 12) but elsewhere in built-up and rural areas.

POLICY BEN 13: The Planning Authority will not normally grant permission for the installation of more than one satellite antenna where a shared system is possible. Such an antenna is not to be conspicuously located; should be of the smallest feasible size; of a colour that matches the existing background; and screened from public view where appropriate.

7.13 The Planning Authority will wish to involve the public in reaching decisions on applications for development which is important in scale or likely impact.

POLICY BEN 14: The Planning Authority will require the applicant to give publicity to applications for development which it regards as important enough in terms of scale or potential impact to merit consultation with adjacent users and the public in general.

8. HOUSING

- 8.1 It is estimated that by year 2010, approximately 22,000 new housing units will be required in addition to units which already exist. This does not include additional housing units to be used as second homes by Maltese or let to short-stay tourists.
- 8.2 To achieve this net increase of some 22,000 housing units for family residences, a larger number of dwellings will need to be created to replace housing which is lost due to redevelopment, demolition for infrastructural works, and changes from residential to non-residential use. Allowing for these replacements, additional second homes and tourism-related demand, the gross total of housing units required could be as high as 60,000 over the twenty year period.
- 8.3 This new housing will be spread throughout existing urban areas, the Temporary Provisions schemes and primary development areas. Within these areas there is also the need for space to accommodate new and improved social and community facilities, employment, recreation, roads, commercial needs, tourism, open space, and various other uses required to meet modern standards. Until the various Local Plans are completed it is not possible to identify the housing capacities of these areas with any precision, but approximate totals are 50,000 units in the Temporary Provision schemes (assuming a medium density allowing for a balanced provision of detached, terraced and flatted accommodation), 8,000 in existing urban areas and 2,000 in the primary development areas, mainly Pembroke.

POLICY HOU 1: In accordance with Policy SET 1, the Planning Authority will encourage the development and redevelopment of residential uses in existing built-up areas with a view to increasing the housing stock in such locations, but within the priority constraints set out in Policy SET 7.

POLICY HOU 2: Within Urban Conservation Areas as designated under Policy UCO 1 the overriding consideration will be the conservation of existing housing units and the enhancement of their environmental context in accordance with Policy SET 6.

POLICY HOU 3: The Local Plans to be prepared for all existing built-up areas will include specific policies for the development and redevelopment of residential property and will include mandatory rules and advisory guidelines concerning plot ratios, building heights, design, and parking and other standards appropriate to particular localities. Until these Plans have been completed and adopted, Structure Plan development control policies and guidelines will be applicable.

POLICY HOU 4: In Temporary Provisions areas the provision of housing will be in accordance with the Local Plans for such areas when these have been completed and adopted. Development control policies BEN 1 - BEN 3 and, during the interim period, BEN 4, will apply.

Pembroke

8.4 Pembroke is defined as the area lying to the east of the main Valletta/Mellieha road, and north of the present built-up area of St. Julian's. The area has been designated as being of ecological value because it is the only area in the islands where certain plants are found. However, samples could be replanted in similar habitats elsewhere, and the Planning Authority is satisfied that the benefits accruing from the development of the area far outweigh the cost of replanting.

POLICY HOU 5: The Planning Authority will give favourable consideration to the development of the Pembroke area for the following uses:

1. Private and social housing and ancillary facilities
2. Sport and recreation facilities (Policy REC 5)
3. Hotel
4. Shopping centre (Policy COM 6)
5. Private sector offices (Policy COM 3)

POLICY HOU 6: A Local Plan will be prepared for the Pembroke area as soon as is practicable and in accordance with the priority list given in para. 4.4 of this Statement.

Rent Legislation

8.5 The current rent legislation has virtually annihilated the private rental market and this has led to the following problems:

1. New households can no longer be established without the considerable capital investment of buying or building a house.
2. Since the cost of repairs required in rented dwellings is frequently greater than can be recovered from the rents allowed, these repairs are often neglected as neither the owner nor the tenant accept to pay for the maintenance. As approximately one third of privately rented dwellings are situated within areas designated in the Structure Plan as Urban Conservation Areas, it is considered that this is a major cause of inner area decay.

3. As the rent laws controlling the lease of older properties are even more draconian, property owners find greater financial reward in demolishing and redeveloping older properties so that the quality of the built environment in historical core areas is declining.
4. Owners of vacant houses who for various reasons (temporary emigrants, engaged couples, summer residences, living in homes for the elderly, etc.) would otherwise be prepared to put them up for rent for some fixed period of time prefer to leave them vacant.
5. There is little social mobility and houses tend to be underutilised for much of the lifespan of the household as there is no economic incentive to make full use of the available space.

POLICY HOU 7: The Planning Authority will seek to reduce the demand for new house-building through the optimal use of existing housing stock which can partly be achieved through the establishing of an equitable rental market. New leases will be made subject to rent control legislation fixing rents of both public and private sector dwellings within ranges depending on the size, location and condition of the property and reviewable yearly according to the index of inflation. Existing tenancies will be phased out gradually through the termination of the lease on the death of the current tenant and spouse.

Social Housing

- 8.6 Approximately 10% of the housing stock of the Islands is in the form of Government-funded 'social' housing. The Planning Authority envisages that the phasing out of the current rent legislation will encourage developers to re-enter the private rental market and increase the number of houses available in that sector. Since the resultant rent increases will apply equally to private and social housing, there will be a tendency for 'social' households to seek accommodation in private rental schemes.
- 8.7 Such a shift will allow the progressive phasing out of social housing which, although providing reasonable accommodation for genuine low-income households, also provides a low-cost haven for households which no longer require it, creates ghettos of social stigma, represents a heavy burden on scarce public sector finances, and generally distorts the housing market.
- 8.8 The Planning Authority therefore foresees a new approach to social housing in which some form of public support for the cost of accommodation is confined to genuinely needy households whose 'need' is regularly monitored and where 'social' households generally blend with all others in the private sector market. Irrespective of whether and when this approach comes to fruition, the Authority will seek to ensure that in future any form of social housing or publicly-subsidised private rental housing will be located on sites which are first and foremost suitable for residential development rather than simply on land which happens to belong to the Government.

POLICY HOU 8: The Planning Authority will encourage the provision of low-cost housing for rent by the private sector.

POLICY HOU 9: The Planning Authority will seek to ensure that any new social housing or publicly-subsidised private rental housing is optimally located within areas designated in the Structure Plan for residential development to suit the needs of developers and residents irrespective of whether the land is publicly-owned.

9. SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

- 9.1 None of the social services supply agencies has a 20-year development strategy compatible with the scope and timing of the Structure Plan, although some have identified existing needs and forecasts of needs to various dates during the next decade. The full land requirements of these agencies cannot therefore be a part of the Structure Plan. Where requirements are known these have been taken account of in the Plan and relevant policies are proposed. However there is an urgent need for these agencies to evolve a 20-year development strategy as soon as the Structure Plan becomes operational and data become available on which to base such plans. The final requirement of the agencies will then be added to the Structure Plan or, where more appropriate, used as input to Local Plans.

Health

- 9.2 Medical facilities include the entire range of services provided by the public and private sector, from public health to dental services. From the Health Services Development Plan 1986-1990, it is known that facilities at St. Luke's and other hospitals require upgrading and extension and that new health centres are required at Zabbar, Qormi, Birkirkara, Hamrun, Rabat and Luqa. Decentralisation of services from St. Luke's Hospital to the various health centres is required. Demographic projections indicate that health centres at St. Julian's/Sliema and St. Paul's Bay/ Naxxar will be also required during the Structure Plan period. It is assumed that these developments will take place within the boundaries of existing and planned built-up areas as defined in the Structure Plan.

POLICY SOC 1: The Planning Authority will seek from the Department of Health an updating of the Health Services Development Plan 1986 - 1990 to the year 2010 in order to relate the health plan more closely to the Structure Plan. The Authority will cooperate with the Department to ensure the most favourable siting of new facilities, including support services.

POLICY SOC 2: Land adjacent to existing hospitals will be reserved in Local Plans for hospitals or other medical uses.

- 9.3 With the large increase in the elderly population of Malta, an effort must be made to identify locations suitable for sheltered housing - whether fully medically supported or relatively independent. In many cases sites near or adjacent to health centres could prove to meet the criteria applicable to accommodation for the elderly.

POLICY SOC 3: Land and buildings adjacent to existing or proposed health centres will be safeguarded in Local Plans and utilised for the expansion of medical facilities or other community uses.

9.4 Rapid and efficient road access, with alternatives if possible, is required for all hospitals with accident and emergency departments. There are currently access problems, particularly at St. Luke's.

POLICY SOC 4: The Planning Authority will seek opportunities to improve access to existing hospitals, and, for new hospitals, a safe and efficient standard of road access will be required.

POLICY SOC 5: The facilities at St. Luke's Hospital will be brought up to a standard capable of handling serious emergencies.

9.5 Private hospitals and other private medical and care facilities have a role to play in the expansion of care and medical treatment. This involves not only private hospitals but also the potential for a private sector contribution to the provision of care and sheltered accommodation for the elderly. Although the size, specialities and means of integration of the private sector with Government provision requires constant monitoring, recognition must be given to the potential role of the private sector.

9.6 New private hospitals and nursing homes for the frail elderly and the severely handicapped will require sites during the Plan period. Because of the extent of their land requirements it is assumed that they may be located outside or adjacent to existing and planned built-up areas as defined in the Structure Plan. The sites will be identified in conjunction with the Planning Authority and added to the Structure Plan.

POLICY SOC 6: The Planning Authority will cooperate with the developers of private hospitals and other medical facilities in consultation with the Secretariat of Health to secure the most relevant facilities, located on the most appropriate sites.

9.7 Hospitals not only absorb large amounts of land but they also generate considerable traffic: patients, visitors, supplies, staff. They can be polluters, depending on the toxic waste policy of the hospital. There are special transportation demands of such a large employer operating 24 hours a day and with a staff that includes cleaners, catering staff, non-medical technicians, etc. In turn, the neighbourhood in which a hospital is located may adversely influence the hospital if it is noisy, with poor access, heavy traffic on poor roads and a generally poor environment.

POLICY SOC 7: Locational criteria for new hospitals will include but not be specifically limited to impacts on the hospital of the proposed location, and impacts on the local area of the siting of the new facility. An Environmental Impact Assessment will be required for all new hospital proposals and major extensions to existing hospitals.

POLICY SOC 8: Health centres will be sited and designed with due regard to population catchment areas, public transport access, potential for expansion, centrality of location, mobility access, and other criteria which the Planning Authority may deem appropriate.

9.8 The role of voluntary organisations is most important and must be given full recognition for their role in medical provision, now and in the future.

POLICY SOC 9: The Planning Authority will give favourable consideration to proposals put forward by voluntary organisations, charities or the church to increase the provision of medical facilities and support activities in the Maltese Islands.

Education

9.9 The Education Department's 1988 planning paper indicated a need for 18 new primary schools with kindergarten centres and 21 new independent kindergarten centres. However, these estimates could not take into consideration the demographic projections of the Structure Plan and the probable distribution of the population in 2010: they reflect current under-provision. There are no proposals for new secondary schools, although it is probable that some will be required up to 2010.

9.10 The University has expansion plans but these need to be extended to the Structure Plan design year to illustrate whether such expansion might require land additional to the present site designation. Until this is done, no commitment should be made with respect to the siting of the many uses considered suitable in the past for location adjacent to University land. The Structure Plan analysis showed a clear need for the unification and expansion of technical, vocational and polytechnic levels of education.

POLICY SOC 10: The Planning Authority will seek from the Ministry of Education a 20-year development plan based on the Structure Plan. The Authority will cooperate with the Ministry to ensure the optimal siting of new facilities for addition to the Plan, and will safeguard sites for new schools and expansions within the Temporary Provisions schemes. As an interim measure existing schools will limit expansion.

POLICY SOC 11: The land adjacent to the University of Malta will be reserved for uses which the University defines as essential to its development and expansion.

POLICY SOC 12: A new vocational education/technical college is required to develop scarce skills, particularly in the fields of technology and management. The Planning Authority will seek the cooperation of the Ministry of Education in determining the feasibility of establishing such an institution in Valletta through the medium of the Local Plan. Particular consideration will be given to the conversion of underused or empty building and to the inclusion of student residential facilities which could be used during college holidays for the accommodation of conference participants.

9.11 The land and buildings occupied by primary and secondary schools are valuable assets. The 20-year education development plan should take into account not only the present population totals in the various school catchment areas but likely demographic characteristics resulting from the implementation of Structure Plan policies. The ability to do so will vary enormously by area. Growth in areas such as the Temporary Provisions areas and the primary development areas will be planned, and population distribution and characteristics reasonably forecastable. In existing built-up areas where the Planning Authority will be attempting to control mainly private sector development activity, forecasts of demographic characteristics will continue to be much more difficult to formulate.

9.12 Nevertheless, the joint endeavour of the Ministry of Education and the Planning Authority, mainly through the mechanism of the Local Plans, must be to optimise existing sites and buildings to better serve their catchment populations and to ensure that new sites and buildings are developed to higher standards of classroom and specialist facilities, playing fields and servicing/parking.

POLICY SOC 13: The Planning Authority, mainly through the Local Plans, will cooperate with the Ministry of Education in implementing policies aimed at seeking the optimal use of existing education sites and buildings in relation to forecast demographic characteristics, and in realising higher standards of provision on new sites of classroom and specialist uses, playing fields and servicing/parking.

POLICY SOC 14: The Planning Authority, in conjunction with the Ministry of Education, will seek to ensure the adoption of standards of provision and operational procedures which will allow to the fullest practicable extent for the joint use of school facilities for the provision of community services such as clubs, cultural and leisure activities, social services and sport.

POLICY SOC 15: New schools, including private schools, will be located in areas where demographic projections indicate that such a facility is required and on sites which are adequate for the provision of a full range of educational and sports facilities, and providing good accessibility and a safe environment.

POLICY SOC 16: The Planning Authority will give particular consideration to the siting of special schools in order to assist in their integration with the rest of the education system.

Care of the Elderly

9.13 The rise in the proportion of the Maltese population who will be over 65 years of age by 2010 will have a profound effect in all sectors of social and community facilities and programmes. Housing, health programmes and leisure activities will have to adapt to a change in the age profile of the country. All providers of services must play a role and new and innovative solutions must be tried, particularly in the field of housing.

9.14 The Department for the Care of the Elderly will require to update its projection of needs to year 2010, although it is not anticipated that the Department will have any significant requirements for new facilities outside existing and planned built-up areas as defined in the Structure Plan.

POLICY SOC 17: The Planning Authority will seek from the Secretariat for the Care of the Elderly a 20-year development programme based on the Structure Plan and building on policies already developed by the Department.

POLICY SOC 18: The Planning Authority will cooperate with the Secretariat for the Care of the Elderly to identify in the various Local Plans new sites and buildings suitable for conversion to accommodate day-care centres, sheltered homes and other required facilities.

POLICY SOC 19: The Planning Authority will cooperate with voluntary organisations and will encourage the establishment of housing associations specifically catering to the needs of the elderly.

POLICY SOC 20: Full support will be given to a range of initiatives for the provision of housing for the elderly (the adaptation and renovation of existing housing units; the conversion of existing hotels and non-housing buildings for use by the elderly; and the construction of purpose-built accommodation). The accommodation will be suitable for all - from fit, active elderly to those requiring extensive medical and social services assistance, and will be conveniently sited in relation to health centres, social centres, shops and public transport.

Community Facilities

9.15 The existing central library at Beltissebh is badly located from the point of view of public access, and there is a scarcity of library facilities at local level, particularly in the southeastern and western parts of mainland Malta.

POLICY SOC 21: The Planning Authority, through the medium of the relevant Local Plans will seek sites for a new central library and for district libraries in Qormi, Rabat and Luqa.

9.16 With the exception of villages with parish halls and of national facilities, venues for the entire range of cultural activities (such as clubs, cinema, dance, theatre, music, exhibitions, meetings) are lacking at a village, regional and national level.

POLICY SOC 22: Facilities will be provided for the full range of cultural activities, as part of existing and new schools (Policy SOC 14), new and upgraded district libraries or in purpose-built units.

9.17 Existing housing areas require additional services and facilities: for example kindergartens, primary schools, convenient transport, accessible shops. The absence of these constrains women from taking their full part in the labour market now and in the future. Demographic forecasts suggest that the fall in the numbers of those of working age and the increase in numbers of the elderly will create a shortage in the labour market. A greater contribution from women will be required to ensure economic progress.

POLICY SOC 23: Both the public and private sectors will be encouraged to provide community facilities, transport and retail services in existing housing areas which lack such services and facilities.

9.18 The elderly and the handicapped cannot take part in all the activities available to the able bodied if the buildings and other facilities are not accessible to them. There is an absence of ramps, lifts, reserved parking spaces and waiting bays designed to assist those with limited mobility and those in wheelchairs.

POLICY SOC 24: Building and development proposals for new buildings and renovations will be required to meet full mobility standards.

9.19 Many housing areas, especially the newer ones, are deficient in the provision of local community facilities.

POLICY SOC 25: The Planning Authority will seek the provision of an adequate range of community facilities in new housing areas.

10. COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

- 10.1 There are four main uses to be addressed by the Structure Plan under this heading - offices, shops, industry, and warehousing.

Offices

- 10.2 The Government will choose a site for a new Government administration centre to house the staff and functions of most Government Departments, while Parliament itself and the Ministries will be located in the palaces and auberges of Valletta. No public sector office accommodation additional to this provision is allowed for in the Structure Plan.
- 10.3 However, there continues to be a shortage of private sector office accommodation, and it is probable that demand will continue at a high level during most of the Plan period as the proportion of total jobs found in this sector increases. The nearest thing to an office centre in Malta is Valletta/Floriana where the natural trend will be a continuation of conversion of residential to office use. This, however, would exacerbate the problem of accessibility to Valletta/Floriana by commuters, and the Planning Authority wishes to constrain the growth of private sector offices generally on the Valletta/Floriana peninsula. Accordingly, policies are put forward in the Structure Plan for the allocation of land outside the peninsula for the development of private sector offices.
- 10.4 There are two major locations for such uses. The first is at Pembroke as described in POLICY HOU 5. The second is at Ta' Ceppuna in the district of Marsa. Structure Plan analysis has indicated that this is probably the prime development site in the Islands, particularly for office and internationally-oriented business use generally: it is approximately midway between Luqa airport and Valletta/Floriana; it lies at the hub of the built-up area of the Harbour zone; it is served by a powerful existing road network which can be conveniently and economically upgraded without land expropriation; and as a magnet for both public and private development investment, it could become a springboard for the redevelopment of outworn waterfront sites clustered around the southwestern extremities of Grand Harbour (only 250m away). The site is referred to in the Structure Plan as the Ta' Ceppuna Business Centre and its prime component is a new Business Park and Financial Centre.
- 10.5 The characteristics of the site are also attractive to other uses for which a demand exists during the Plan period. Accordingly, the Plan also allocates a major shopping complex (Policy COM 6); a Science and Technology Park; a business-oriented hotel with conference facilities; a transport interchange and travel centre; and an unallocated site for some future Government or private sector use. The Planning Authority will support the relocation to this area of the Malta Development Corporation and similar agencies. The site is currently occupied by the Marsa Sports Club and other sports facilities (paras. 13.24 and 13.25).

POLICY COM 1: A new Government administration centre will be developed outside Valletta to house most Government Departments, while Parliament itself and the Ministries will concentrate in the palaces and auberges of Valletta.

POLICY COM 2: Development of private sector offices, by either conversion or new building, will not normally be permitted in Valletta/Floriana.

POLICY COM 3: In addition to the private sector office development allocated to Pembroke in Policy HOU 5, the Planning Authority will support the development of a Business Centre at Ta' Ceppuna in the district of Marsa. Uses allocated to this site are:

1. Business park and financial centre
2. Shopping complex
3. Science and Technology Park
4. Business hotel with conference facilities
5. Transport interchange and travel centre
6. Unallocated site for Government or private sector use.

10.6 These allocations of new private sector office space to Ta' Ceppuna and Pembroke are intended to accommodate primarily large-scale high-quality development comprising up-to-date 'smart' buildings with generous support facilities, ample parking and high environmental standards - a form of development of which there are currently no examples in Malta but which will certainly be required over the next two decades if the Islands are to keep pace with European developments. There will also be a continuing demand for smaller-scale development of more modest dimensions and design characteristics. The Planning Authority intends to fulfil this demand in two ways: first, by encouraging such development at Manoel Island as part of the more comprehensive development package described in Policy TOU 7 and second, by giving favourable consideration to the development of such uses on infill sites in existing outer urban areas and by conversion from other existing uses in acceptable locations.

POLICY COM 4: The Planning Authority will encourage the provision of small offices at Manoel Island.

POLICY COM 5: The Planning Authority will give favourable consideration to the conversion of existing residential and other uses in outer built-up areas to small office use as long as such proposals do not infringe development control Policies BEN 1 - BEN 3.

Shopping

- 10.7 Structure Plan forecasts indicate that the Islands are likely to experience a substantial change in shopping habits and that demand exists for the development of one or more large out-centre indoor shopping complexes of the type which has grown rapidly in western Europe over the last twenty years. Such centres have very precise locational and site requirements - basically, large sites (capable of supporting generous parking provision) at points of good accessibility by car to the principal catchment areas. It is therefore the Planning Authority's view that it is to the general good and convenience of the public that such development be permitted and that the best possible sites are made available.
- 10.8 Two sites are identified for such uses. The first is at Ta' Ceppuna as described in Policy COM 3: this site is ideally located to serve the central/southern built-up areas. The second is at Pembroke as described in Policy HOU 5: this is well located on the arterial road system to serve the northern built-up areas. It is considered that Gozo does not have a sufficiently large catchment population to support such a complex but if an application for permission to develop one were to be submitted the Planning Authority would give it favourable consideration.

POLICY COM 6: The Planning Authority will give favourable consideration to the development of new indoor shopping complexes at Ta' Ceppuna and Pembroke.

- 10.9 The bulk of the shopping floorspace in the Islands will continue to be located in the existing major centres, principally Valletta/Floriana, Sliema, Hamrun, Victoria in Gozo, and in a number of minor centres. The advent of the new shopping complexes described in Policy COM 6 will increase retail turnover in the Islands in absolute terms but will probably lead to a decrease in the turnover in the existing centres both as a percentage of the total and in absolute terms. A number of shops, mainly those already close to non-viability, will probably close and floorspace will become available for conversion. In order that these existing centres can retain as high a percentage of total turnover as possible, it is essential that their environmental conditions are improved so that shopping becomes a more pleasant, and profitable, experience than it is at present.

POLICY COM 7: Local Plans for areas containing existing shopping centres will be required to particularly consider ways in which these centres can be made more efficient and pleasant by instituting rehabilitation programmes (including shop fronts and advertisements); traffic calming and pedestrianisation; rationalised service delivery and customer parking provision; and townscape design.

POLICY COM 8: The Planning Authority will give favourable consideration to the conversion of vacated shop premises in existing built-up areas to other uses, as long as such proposals do not infringe the development control guidelines given in Policies BEN 1 - BEN 3.

Manufacturing Industry

- 10.10 Structure Plan forecasts indicate that additional land should be allocated for new manufacturing industrial development during the Plan period in addition to completing the development of existing industrial estates. Industrial firms have generally preferred to be located in or close to the central urbanised area of the Harbour zone in order to have good accessibility to the port and its associated warehousing for the importation of materials and components; to suppliers traditionally located in the same area; and to both labour force and markets for finished goods. They also seek reasonably flat land with good local access and adequate utility services.
- 10.11 Even when well-designed, industrial development can have substantial environmental impact, and the location of new industrial estates must be considered with great care in terms of their impact on other uses and the environment generally. Additionally, the constraints on undeveloped land imposed by conservation policies mean that there are now fewer areas in the Islands suitable for further industrial development, and some sites may have to be used which do not fully satisfy perceived requirements - particularly the traditional links with the Harbour zone. However, in Malta the issue of accessibility is very much one of perception and habit: by international standards, Malta is so small and compact that it does not matter greatly where industrial development is located as long as the chosen site is acceptable from the viewpoints of environmental impact and the provision of local support infrastructure.
- 10.12 Two sites have been identified for the further development of manufacturing industry on mainland Malta. The first comprises an extension of the existing San Gwann industrial estate toward the northwest into an area which is already compromised by industrial development but is well located for such uses. The second comprises an eastern extension of the Hal Far industrial estate to link with the hinterland of Malta Freeport. Lastly, it is considered that the existing estate at Mriehel can accept general manufacturing industry rather than smaller-scale service industry which can be readily provided elsewhere.
- POLICY IND 1: The Planning Authority will encourage the development of new manufacturing industrial uses northwest of the existing San Gwann industrial estate and east of the existing estate at Hal Far.**
- POLICY IND 2: The current designation of the site at Mriehel for service industry is changed to manufacturing industry.**
- 10.13 The Planning Authority will support the policy of introducing new industrial jobs to Gozo. The Structure Plan designates two areas where such uses should be located.
- POLICY IND 3: The Planning Authority will encourage the development of new industrial uses on sites to be identified in the relevant Local Plans northwest of the existing industrial estate at Xewkija and at Ghajnsielem.**
- POLICY IND 4: In judging applications for permission to develop new manufacturing industry facilities, preference will be given to those which will be constructed to the highest practicable density in order to economise on land take.**

10.14 The Planning Authority believes that in the long term there is considerable potential for the firmer establishment of tourist, heritage and recreational uses in the northeastern section of Grand Harbour and for the development of waterfront business uses at the southwestern end in association with the Ta' Ceppuna Business Centre (para. 10.4 and Policy COM 3). Such developments would be in conflict with the heavy port and industrial uses which characterise the southeastern flank of the Harbour, and the Authority wishes to consider more closely the advisability and feasibility of a progressive decanting of these heavy uses to the Marsaxlokk area.

POLICY IND 5: The Planning Authority will prepare a Subject Plan aimed at establishing the potential for the longer-term relocation of heavy port/industrial uses from Grand Harbour to the Marsaxlokk area. In the interim period, no new industrial uses will be permitted in Grand Harbour.

Service Industry

10.15 There is already a strong demand for proper premises for small service industry uses which are currently characterised as 'garage industries' because they tend to locate in such premises, often in or near residential areas. Not only are the premises sub-standard and inefficient from the point of view of the user, but the use frequently has a deleterious environmental impact on adjacent users.

POLICY IND 6: The Planning Authority will give favourable consideration to the development of the service industry sites already identified under the Temporary Provisions schemes, and will designate further such sites in the relevant Local Plans at locations where no such designations have been made.

POLICY IND 7: The Planning Authority will consider the extent and form of incentives which could 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 IND 8: In order to make maximum use of available land, new service industry uses will be encouraged to build to a higher density than has been the practice in the past. Multi-storey building forms will therefore be encouraged.

Obnoxious Industry

10.16 There are many small industrial sites scattered around the Islands whose uses can be described as 'obnoxious industry' because of the processes involved: lime kilns and concrete batching plants are typical examples. There would be little point in attempting to group these on existing or proposed industrial sites since the environmental impact of such uses is as unwelcome on manufacturing industry sites as on others. Nevertheless, the Planning Authority believes that at least two sites on mainland Malta and one on Gozo should be found for such uses and incentives provided to encourage these uses to relocate to them. It is proposed that fireworks factories be included in this category.

POLICY IND 9: The Local Plans to be prepared for areas in which abandoned quarries are located will specifically research the feasibility of establishing sites for obnoxious industry in such areas in accordance with Policies MIN 13 - MIN 15.

POLICY IND 10: The Planning Authority will consider the extent and form of incentives required to secure the relocation of obnoxious industrial uses for environmental reasons.

Warehousing

10.17 The Planning Authority anticipates continuing demand for new warehouse premises outside traditional warehouse areas where access for heavy vehicles is constrained and the buildings themselves are frequently no longer suited to modern procedures. The Authority's strategy in this regard is to encourage the conversion and rehabilitation of existing buildings in traditional warehouse areas where adequate access exists or can be arranged, but to give favourable consideration to the development of new warehousing premises on industrial estates where it can be shown that development or redevelopment in traditional areas is impracticable.

POLICY IND 11: The Planning Authority will encourage the conversion and rehabilitation of existing warehouse premises to facilitate continuity of use where adequate access exists or can be arranged.

POLICY IND 12: The Planning Authority will give favourable consideration to the development of new warehousing on dedicated sections of industrial estates where it can be shown that development or redevelopment in traditional areas is impracticable or would maintain or exacerbate unacceptable environmental impact.

Retail Warehouses and Showrooms

10.18 A further retail phenomenon familiar in Europe but unknown in the Islands is the retail warehouse in which a wide range of household, gardening and DIY goods is sold. The building form is traditionally that of a single-storey shed of large warehouse proportions although more recent examples are architecturally more acceptable than this implies. Extensive car parking facilities are the other standard characteristic.

10.19 Showrooms selling anything from cars to household and industrial freezers are another common feature of the European retail scene and one which has already put in an appearance in the Islands. In Europe, the difference between a large showroom and a small retail warehouse is becoming difficult to detect, and for the purposes of the Structure Plan they can be considered together. The bulk, cheap construction and extensive car parking of such developments suggests that they are more appropriately located adjacent to storage warehouses than shopping centres.

POLICY IND 13: The development of retail warehouses and showrooms will not normally be permitted on sites other than those in or adjacent to storage warehouse areas.

11. AGRICULTURE, HORTICULTURE AND FISHERIES

- 11.1 Agriculture is the largest user of land in Malta. Cultivated land has however decreased from 15,200 ha in 1971 to 12,000 ha in 1986 and the trend is continuing. Imports of agricultural products represent 20% of total imports, and two thirds of fish consumption is imported. Fish consumption in Malta is about a third of recommended nutritional standards.
- 11.2 Agriculture (including horticulture) and fisheries are in decline, and despite a relatively good climate in Malta, agricultural productivity is low, and many people find other occupations more attractive. The major problem is lack of irrigation water. Other problems include fragmentary land ownership; lack of tenant security; access difficulties for vehicles and machinery; lack of export distribution facilities; lack of land and forage for livestock; unsuitable and visually intrusive farm buildings; and pressures on the coastline for fish farming (aquaculture).

POLICY AHF 1: Major improvements in agriculture, horticulture and fisheries will be encouraged, so that food supplies are safeguarded in the event of natural, accidental, or deliberate calamities, including the stockpiling of food supplies for national security reasons and to offset market surpluses.

POLICY AHF 2: A national system of irrigation water supply will be developed using all suitable means, including recycled water and water storage. The system will include provisions for urban and rural landscaping as well as agriculture.

POLICY AHF 3: A survey of the inherent agricultural quality of all land will be undertaken to supplement the 1989/1990 survey of existing agricultural land use.

POLICY AHF 4: Soil conservation, soil saving, and soil replenishment measures will be adopted where there are such opportunities.

POLICY AHF 5: Buildings and structures essential to the needs of agriculture will be permitted in the countryside. They will however either blend with the rural landscape through the use of natural stone or be hidden from view. This includes irrigation works and other utilities structures. In addition:

1. Least good quality agricultural land will be used where this is feasible, with a presumption against the use of land irrigated from naturally occurring sources of water

2. Locations must be acceptable in terms of noise, smell, and effluent impacts on nearby urban and recreational areas and wildlife
3. Greenhouse and similar structures will in particular be hidden from longer distance views, possibly amongst other buildings or in disused quarries.

POLICY AHF 6: No land ownership subdivisions will be permitted unless suitable vehicular access to all subdivisions is provided, and right of way boundary walls in random stone are built.

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 to promote the reinstatement and maintenance of random stone walls throughout the countryside will be developed, with priority given to walls alongside rural roads.

POLICY AHF 9: Encouragement will be given to the relocation of livestock units which are unsuitable in urban areas because of noise, smell, or other impacts, to suitable locations in the countryside. It will be a condition of all development permits for redevelopment of land currently occupied by livestock units in urban areas that the re-establishment of the livestock unit in the countryside will take place before redevelopment occurs.

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 will be promoted at a suitable harbour location.

POLICY AHF 12: Food stockpile depots including cold storage will be promoted in areas designated for warehousing.

POLICY AHF 13: Government will promote efficiency in agriculture and fisheries including land assembly for genuine permanent businesses.

POLICY AHF 14: A small fisheries centre and fishing boat berthing facilities will be promoted in the north of mainland Malta, and a deep sea fisheries centre at Marsaxlokk Bay.

POLICY AHF 15: Marine-based aquaculture will be encouraged in sheltered locations free of coastal conservation and tourism constraints as long as simple visually unobtrusive cage construction is used.

POLICY AHF 16: In view of the large land requirements of land-based aquaculture and the low ratio of workers per hectare, such development will be confined to abandoned quarries or other areas for which no alternative use is apparent.

12. MINERALS

Introduction

- 12.1 The only minerals of concern in the Islands at present are limestone rocks. These comprise softstone quarried from the Lower Globigerina formation, used as cut building blocks, and hardstone quarried from the Upper and Lower Coralline formations, used for marble, aggregates and concrete. Although it is possible that in the future other mineral reserves of economic significance may be exploited, such as clay and oil, the Structure Plan is concerned principally with quarrying. Nevertheless, policies are applicable in broad terms to any form of mineral exploitation.
- 12.2 The Structure Plan provides a framework for the continued working of important mineral deposits and exploitation of future deposits in an environmentally acceptable way. There are three principal concerns:-
1. Mineral resources must be made available to meet all the Islands' reasonable needs as an essential contribution to the economy and fabric of Malta. These minerals must be of a suitable quality for the purposes to which they are put. However, bearing in mind their finite and irreplaceable nature, the optimal use of mineral resources should be sought by ensuring that they are worked to the maximum extent possible and are not unnecessarily sterilised.
 2. It is necessary to minimise conflict with, and where necessary to safeguard, non-mineral interests, general amenity and other legitimate uses of land.
 3. Worked-out land must be satisfactorily restored in a way which allows beneficial afteruse.
- 12.3 Thus, mineral policies form an approach which seeks to balance the environmental disadvantages of mineral working, processing and transport with the social and economic need for minerals. The quarrying industry will continue to be essential to the Islands, not only as an employer but as a supplier to the construction industry and possible as an exporter.

Mineral Working

- 12.4 The strategy towards the minerals industry is twofold. First, the Planning Authority will seek to prevent or minimise development in areas where there are valuable but as yet unexploited mineral deposits, and second, to extend existing controls governing the siting, means of operation and restoration of mineral workings.

12.5 In areas of known or suspected mineral deposits it will be necessary for any development proposal to demonstrate that economic reserves are not being sterilised. As more becomes known about the Islands' mineral reserves, it will be easier to specify areas of known reserves. In the meantime, applications for development on Coralline and Globigerina formations will be required to include a mineral evaluation. Developments will be favourably considered where they include the extraction of any mineral present.

POLICY MIN 1: Proven and potentially workable mineral resources will be safeguarded from development which would lead to their sterilisation. Non-mineral development will not normally be permitted in areas of known or suspected mineral reserves, unless it can be demonstrated that the deposits beneath the site are not workable.

12.6 Very little is known at present about the occurrence, distribution and quality of economically viable mineral reserves. This makes planning for the future very difficult for both the quarrying industry itself and for the Planning Authority. It is essential therefore that information is obtained as quickly as possible and integrated with other land use policies.

POLICY MIN 2: The Planning Authority will undertake a strategic evaluation of stone, aggregate and marble resources in the Islands. This evaluation will assess the distribution, quantity and quality of the resources, including the existing licensed reserves and operating quarries.

POLICY MIN 3: The Planning Authority will establish a Minerals Board that will compile information on, and periodically review:

- 1. potential demand for mineral resources, particularly building materials, having regard to regional and national utilisation and possible exports;**
- 2. the quantity, distribution and quality of exploitable mineral deposits; and**
- 3. the ability of existing quarries to provide stone, aggregates and marble in the required quantity and quality.**

The Minerals Board will also make recommendations to the Planning Authority on appropriate environmental standards for the industry to adopt.

12.7 It is envisaged that the Minerals Board will comprise representatives of the Planning Authority, Director of Works (Quarries and Explosives), Director of Trade, Water Works Department, Department of the Environment, Department of Agriculture and the quarry owners/operators. The Planning Authority and Minerals Board will additionally be required to consult with other agencies, departments and industries on matters relevant to their interests.

12.8 The Maltese Islands need to be effectively self-sufficient in limestone building materials and aggregates. There should be little need to import such materials, except specialised minerals such as cement. However there may be some potential for export of specialist mineral products, such as carved building blocks. It is essential for the

minerals industry that it has adequate permitted reserves to allow proper capital investment and to ensure medium to long-term supply of stone. At the same time it is important to prevent unnecessary proliferation of mineral workings with permitted reserves well beyond that necessary for the foreseeable future.

POLICY MIN 4: Proposals for mineral working and processing will be considered in the context of overall rates of production and the levels of exploitable reserves of that mineral. The Planning Authority will seek to provide for the release of land for mineral extraction in order to maintain a level of economic reserves which is sufficient for about 20 years' extraction over the Islands as a whole, having regard to regional demands and a level of export approved by the Government. There will be a presumption against the granting of permissions which would result in the release of significantly higher levels of permitted reserves.

12.9 In the absence of detailed knowledge about the occurrence of exploitable mineral deposits, it is not possible to identify potential mineral working areas at this stage. However it is important to make it clear that quarrying will not be allowed or will be strictly controlled in areas where other valuable uses or conditions pertain. The degree of exclusion or control of quarrying in these areas will depend on the importance of those other interests, and on their compatibility with quarrying and other mineral working activities.

POLICY MIN 5: There will be a presumption against mineral working in or near areas of acknowledged interest for ecology, archaeology, and in areas of high quality agricultural land.

12.10 The link between the occurrence of Coralline Limestone and areas of landscape and ecological value is fundamental. Consequently it is not practical or realistic to bar all quarry working from these areas if sufficient workable reserves cannot be identified elsewhere. To minimise the impact of quarrying, special attention will need to be paid to the location and extent of the affected area, control of working, routes and means of transport, and restoration of extraction sites.

12.11 In normal circumstances, the continuation of mineral extraction in existing workings is preferable to opening up new sites. Similarly the coalescence of small adjacent quarry units into single larger units is usually more efficient and gives more scope for environmental control and restoration to a beneficial afteruse. However, this policy will be subject to other constraints, and due regard will have to be paid to Policy MIN 5.

POLICY MIN 6: The extension of existing workings and the merging of adjacent workings will be given preference to the development of new mineral workings. In support of any application for new or extended mineral workings, evidence will be required to demonstrate that the existing site has been worked to the maximum practicable depth.

POLICY MIN 7: In order to better apply Policies MIN 1 - MIN 6, the Planning Authority will prepare and periodically review a Minerals Subject Plan incorporating the mineral resource survey referred to in Policy MIN 2.

Safeguarding the Environment

12.12 The implications of a proposal to extract minerals will be wide ranging and can include significant impacts on the natural and human environments. It is therefore essential that these impacts should be identified and examined before a decision to grant or refuse permission is given. The purpose of the following policies is to ensure that appropriate information is provided at an early stage, covering the main areas of environmental concern, justifying the application in economic terms, and providing for proper environmental protection and restoration.

POLICY MIN 8: An application for mineral extraction and processing will not normally be determined until an Environmental Impact Assessment has been prepared for consideration by the Planning Authority. This statement will provide information on the following:

1. Operational and economic needs, demonstrating the need for the mineral to be worked; the extent, quantity and quality of the mineral reserve; the methods of working; and the duration of the operation.
2. Provisions for environmental protection, including control of nuisance or damage from dust, noise and vibration; protection of water resources; prevention of discharge of pollutants into air, water or land; reduction of visual impact; management of vehicular traffic within, to and from the site; and protection of archaeological and ecological features.

POLICY MIN 9: Proposals for mineral extraction and processing will normally be refused where the need to work the mineral is not sufficient to justify the environmental impact that is likely to arise.

POLICY MIN 10: When granting permission, the Planning Authority will normally limit the consent to a fixed term, not usually less than 10 years, with a maximum of 20 years, conditional on a review every five years. Conditions attached to the permission may be amended following the review in the light of requirements for environmental protection.

POLICY MIN 11: Proposals for the exploration and assessment of mineral deposits will normally be permitted subject to the provision of satisfactory environmental safeguards. However, permission for exploration will not imply acceptance in principle of any subsequent exploitation of the minerals.

Afteruse and Reclamation

12.13 Although it may last for many years, the process of mineral extraction should be considered as a temporary use of land. A fundamental approach of the Structure Plan is to ensure that land affected by mineral extraction is worked or reclaimed so that it can subsequently be used for some other beneficial purpose. This affects disused quarrying areas, active quarries and new extraction areas yet to be defined. The approach in

each of these cases is likely to be different. For current and future mineral extraction areas, reclamation will be the responsibility of the mineral operator or quarry owner. For disused quarries, the Government will need to make other arrangements and offer incentives to assist reclamation and re-use.

- 12.14 Quarrying is a very long-term activity and it is therefore normally impracticable to make firm decisions about the eventual afteruse at the time a mineral extraction application is made. Nevertheless, it is necessary to identify in principle the range of afteruses to which the quarry could be put, in order to be able to set reclamation objectives. It is important, for example, to ensure that the method of working, eventual landform and stability of rockfaces is such that a range of afteruses is possible without major engineering works being required.
- 12.15 Reclamation should involve measures to improve the visual appearance of the workings, to ensure public safety and to protect adjacent landowners and users. A reclamation scheme will include all extraction voids, spoil tips, plant, buildings, roadways and other infrastructure associated with the mineral extraction and processing operations, and must be compatible with the size, characteristics and situation of the site. The scheme will therefore include:-
1. treatment and stabilisation of quarry faces;
 2. treatment, clearing and filling of quarry floors;
 3. treatment and grading of spoil tips;
 4. demolition and removal of buildings and plant;
 5. identification of afteruses to which the site could be put; and
 6. landscaping, vegetation establishment and subsequent management until disposal.

POLICY MIN 12: An application for mineral extraction will not normally be determined until proposals for methods of working, landscaping and reclamation of the application area have been prepared for consideration by the Planning Authority. Mineral extraction proposals involving working methods that allow progressive reclamation and landscaping will be given preference, subject to other environmental and operational considerations. Wherever practicable, the Planning Authority will impose conditions requiring the phased extraction and reclamation of mineral workings.

- 12.16 Disused quarry areas are usually considered as 'problem sites' and incapable of further use. In fact they provide many opportunities for future use, once the basic landform has been made suitable. In addition to the traditional uses of agriculture and horticulture, worked-out quarries can be considered for obnoxious industry, industrial storage, aquaculture and recreational facilities. Some quarries also make natural amphitheatres, with large level areas.

POLICY MIN 13: Development proposals involving the re-use of quarried areas will generally be considered favourably by the Planning Authority, subject to environmental impacts and protection of groundwater resources. Priority will be given to uses which are difficult to locate elsewhere because of their visual or other undesirable impacts.

12.17 There is an extensive backlog of disused quarries requiring reclamation. The cost of reclaiming these areas so that they can be re-used is likely to be substantial, especially as resources for filling and soil reconstruction are scarce, and this cost will largely be borne by Government. The Development Planning Act allows for the imposition of a levy on all mineral production and the Planning Authority will use these levies to establish a Reclamation Fund, the amount of the levy being set and reviewed annually in consultation with the Minerals Board.

POLICY MIN 14: The Planning Authority will prepare and periodically review an inventory of disused mineral extraction sites, compiling data on location, area, depth, landform, adjacent land use and potential afteruse suitability. The Authority will also compile data on potential sources of inert fill material so that these can be directed to the reclamation of quarry areas.

POLICY MIN 15: The Planning Authority will prepare a programme for reclamation of disused quarries, allocating priorities, and identifying resources and initiatives from public and private sectors. The Authority will initiate and promote the acquisition and reclamation of existing worked-out quarries by the Government.

Interim Policies

12.18 Under the previous licensing/permit system, which is superseded by the Development Planning Act, operating quarries renewed their licences at the beginning of each year. On the coming into force of the Development Planning Act, licences will no longer be renewed, and existing quarries will have to make an application in accordance with the Act and with Policies MIN 8 - MIN 11. In future, permission will be for a fixed duration. In order to deal quickly with applications from existing quarries, the Planning Authority will undertake its own review of the operations and their environmental impacts.

POLICY MIN 16: The Planning Authority will undertake an immediate review of all existing quarry operations, their existing licences and the environmental impacts resulting from their activities. Priority action will be initiated in environmentally sensitive areas and for quarries operating without a licence.

POLICY MIN 17: Applications for the continued working of areas covered by an existing licence will normally be permitted, conditional on satisfactory environmental safeguards and reclamation proposals. Where the application involves an extension outside an existing licence area, this will be considered as a separate matter in accordance with Policies MIN 4, MIN 5, MIN 8 and MIN 9.

12.19 Many softstone quarry licences do not specify an extent or boundary to the licence area. In such cases it will be necessary to presume that the licence includes that area currently being quarried and no more. There are also several softstone quarry operations with no licence, or where a licence application has been submitted but not processed pending the Structure Plan: these will be treated on their merits as new applications in accordance with the policies in this Statement. There can be no presumption in favour of continued working of illegal quarries: nevertheless the previous difficulties of the old licencing/permit system, and particularly the interim arrangements since 1986, will be taken into account.

13. TOURISM AND RECREATION

Objectives for Tourism

- 13.1 Probably more than any other activity, tourism poses a dilemma for the Islands. On the one hand, it is a major factor in the economic wellbeing of the country, and its maintenance and further development must be supported. On the other hand, it has been an equally major factor in the environmental degradation of the Islands, and this must now be vigorously countered - not only in the interests of the Maltese themselves, but because Malta has now reached the point (and some might say has passed it) at which tourist infrastructure is destroying the very features which attract tourists in the first place.
- 13.2 The Planning Authority therefore sees its first task as encouraging tourism while preventing the further spread of tourist buildings and associated facilities outside areas already committed to such uses except where the Structure Plan defines specific areas where it is judged that further development could take place without unacceptable harm to the environment. Such a strategy is compatible with the general thrust of the Plan - that is, to prevent any further significant increase in the built-up area of the Islands. The Authority's second main task is to encourage the further development of the tourist industry by concentrating its energies and further investment in the refurbishment and upgrading of existing facilities in existing built-up and developed areas, and by assisting in the general 'upmarketing' of the industry.

Institutional Arrangements for Tourism

- 13.3 In order to realise these objectives it is essential to coordinate the policies of the Secretariat for Tourism with those of the Planning Authority.

POLICY TOU 1: The Planning Authority will seek to establish a joint Tourism Development Committee with the Ministry for Development of the Tertiary Sector's Secretariat for Tourism. The Committee will have responsibility for integrating tourism development policies and programmes with the Structure Plan as a basis for Local Plan formulation.

POLICY TOU 2: The Planning Authority will look to the Parliamentary Secretariat for Tourism and its associated parastatal organisations to assemble, process and analyse data suitable for adequate monitoring and forecasting of supply and demand commensurate with the Authority's more comprehensive planning needs.

Tourist Accommodation

- 13.4 The volume of new tourist accommodation that is likely to come on stream as a result of development applications that already have the approval of the Secretariat of Tourism and are pending PAPB approval is estimated to be some 2,500 rooms short of the projected holiday accommodation demands until 1995. It is of particular concern to the Planning Authority that the already-approved accommodation projects are mainly of a medium to low class category (2 to 3 star) and, as such, contradict the stated objectives for the sector. Therefore, it is imperative that the projects pending approval be rigorously reviewed.

POLICY TOU 3: The Planning Authority fully supports the Tourism Secretariat's objectives and will, within the provisions of the Structure Plan, give favourable consideration only to those development proposals that contribute to the achievement of stated tourism objectives.

- 13.5 It is estimated that some 4,000 additional tourist rooms will be required by the end of the Plan period. In accordance with the Planning Authority's overall objectives, this additional accommodation should be located in existing built-up areas by extension and conversion of suitable buildings and the development of infill sites or in areas to be developed, namely the Temporary Provisions areas and the primary development areas. Certain zones within these general areas are favoured by the Planning Authority because they are likely to appeal to developers and tourists alike. These are mainly in the tourist-oriented areas in the north and south of mainland Malta and in the inner Harbour areas where tourism is already firmly established.

POLICY TOU 4: The Planning Authority will give favourable consideration to the development of further tourist accommodation within the built-up areas and Temporary Provisions areas as amended by the relevant Local Plans at Mellieha, St. Paul's Bay/Bugibba, St. Julian's/Paceville, Sliema, Marsascala, and Marsalforn, Xlendi and Mgarr in Gozo. Within these areas development will comply with the Secretariat of Tourism's Accommodation Projects Policy Guidelines (September 1990) in respect of new provisions, up-grading, extensions to existing premises and holiday furnished premises.

POLICY TOU 5: The Planning Authority will also give favourable consideration to the development of tourist accommodation replacing illegal development between Vendome Battery and White Tower on the northern coastline of the Marfa peninsula in association with a new golf course between this area and the Marfa Ridge road (Policy TOU 12).

- 13.6 The Planning Authority intends to adopt a more interventionist role with respect to other areas which have not traditionally been associated to any extent with tourist accommodation and tourist-related activities but which the Authority believes have exceptional potential. The Authority proposes to formulate Development Briefs for such areas: the current approach to Manoel Island is an example.

POLICY TOU 6: The Planning Authority, jointly with the Secretariat for Tourism, will formulate Development Briefs for the following areas which potentially have a tourist accommodation component, such briefs normally taking the form of Action Plans within the relevant Local Plans:

1. **Manoel Island and waters adjoining Lazzaretto and Sliema Creeks**
2. **Sliema waterfront promenade linking Manoel Island and Tigne Fort/Dragutt Point**
3. **Tigne Fort and Dragutt Point**
4. **Promontories of Senglea, Vittoriosa, Kalkara and Ricasoli**
5. **Valletta**
6. **Floriana bastion area**
7. **Fort Chambray in Gozo.**

13.7 Of these areas of high potential, two are distinctive in that they offer large sties which are currently underutilised and which have been the subject of analysis by the Planning Authority - Manoel Island and Floriana.

POLICY TOU 7: The Planning Authority will give favourable consideration to tourist and tourist-related development at Manoel Island. The following uses are envisaged in addition to the refurbishment of Fort Manoel as a building of architectural and historical interest and a cultural centre:

1. **Marina berths**
2. **Yacht clubs and sailing school**
3. **Boat services**
4. **Yacht hotel and apartment complex**
5. **Sailing stores and shops**
6. **Waterfront restaurants, bars and entertainments**
7. **Small offices (Policy COM 4)**

POLICY TOU 8: The Planning Authority will give favourable consideration to tourist and tourist-related development in the area of Floriana lying between the Floriana Retrenchment and the waterfront of Marsamxett Harbour. The relocation of the AFM naval base and the adjacent Nautical School is envisaged. Development will comprise low-density, low-rise, self-catering tourist accommodation with local restaurant and minor shopping facilities.

13.8 The Planning Authority believes that considerable potential for the development of tourist accommodation exists in the Urban Conservation Areas designated in the Structure Plan because of the known preference of upmarket tourists for accommodation located in areas of high quality urban environment. Other favoured locations, especially in the self-catering sector, include the outer edges of existing, mainly rural, communities which afford uninterrupted views of good inland and coastal scenery as, for example, in some of the smaller settlements in Gozo.

POLICY TOU 9: In Urban Conservation Areas, the Authority will particularly encourage tourist development in the form of conversion, extension and refurbishment of existing buildings and facilities as long as the proposed development does not infringe the provisions of Policies CON 6 - CON 8.

POLICY TOU 10: The area of Ta' Cenc, Gozo, from east of the Mgarr ix-Xini inlet to the village of Sannat, will be further studied as a potential demonstration project of high quality for both:

1. Malta's first nature park, covering the majority of the area
2. Malta's first multi-ownership tourism hotel development, in the vicinity of the existing Ta' Cenc hotel.

Note:

The term 'nature park' includes both the protection and enhancement of the natural environment and other heritage items, particularly archaeological remains; restocking with species of flora and fauna indigenous to the Maltese Islands; a visitor centre and interpretive facilities. The term 'multi-ownership tourism hotel' (sometimes called a condominium hotel) is primarily a development of houses and apartments each bought or built by individual foreign and local investors, and rented out of most of the time as tourism accommodation, with central recreational and other hotel facilities usually owned by the development promoter. A major feature of both the hotel and the nature park is that they have professional management acting on behalf of all owners, and which at Ta' Cenc will be a single management company responsible for both the nature park and the hotel. Further studies of this potential will require a particularly thorough assessment of potential on and off-site impacts, including traffic, utility services, recreation, labour requirements, skills provision, materials supplies, as well as impacts on the natural and cultural heritage, and measures by which adverse impacts will be overcome. The height of buildings will be restricted to one and two storeys with the exception of traditional taller features such as stone built windmills, lookout towers, and churches. The blending of the hotel into the landscape, and the use of the best traditional features which are characteristic of Gozo, are of particular importance.

13.9 It may not be practicable to accommodate all long-term tourist demands within the boundaries of existing, committed and planned built-up areas as designated in the Structure Plan. In this event, the Planning Authority will look particularly at the feasibility and advisability of siting such development in the following areas:

MAINLAND MALTA

1. Coastal plains of Marfa Peninsula
2. Hinterland of Mistra Bay
3. Hinterland of Mgiebah Bay
4. Mellieha Peninsula/Headland
5. Hinterland of Ghajn Tuffieha and Gnejna Bays

GOZO

6. Hinterland of San Blas Bay
7. Hinterland of Dawlet Qorrot Bay

Note: Many of the above locations contain areas requiring conservation measures to protect flora, fauna and wild habitat. These considerations shall take priority in any future evaluation.

Heritage

- 13.10 Malta is unusually rich in areas and buildings of architectural and historical interest - the heritage of the Islands which is presumed to attract higher-spending tourists, and in this sense they can be regarded as tourist facilities. The conservation policies contained in the following section of this Statement should be adequate to preserve and enhance such artifacts, but it is the Planning Authority's belief that more has to be done to bring them to the attention of tourists and to facilitate their appreciation of them through publicity and interpretation facilities.

POLICY TOU 11: The Planning Authority will seek the cooperation of relevant public and private sector agencies to ensure that the Islands' many heritage items are made more accessible and interesting to tourists.

Golf Courses

- 13.11 There is a recognised and very substantial international demand for golf courses as components of tourism development, and any serious attempt to attract further tourists to the Islands will have to take this phenomenon into account. Although relatively few Maltese have any interest in golf, its more forceful introduction into the Islands would probably release a considerable latent demand and thus add to the stock of locally-used recreational facilities.

- 13.12 In terms of rural conservation, one of the benefits of golf courses is that they can be made to blend into the rural landscape and become a permanent guarantee that the area they occupy is unlikely to be urbanised. A major disbenefit is that no developer can now afford to open up a golf course in isolation: development economics dictate that courses have to be accompanied by profit - making urban development (high-value residential areas, hotels, etc.) since golf courses alone do not produce profit. The ideal location for a golf course is therefore on the periphery of an existing built-up area which can absorb the urbanised accountments rather than the latter sprouting in open countryside because of the presence of the course.
- 13.13 In the Islands a further complexity attaches to the location of golf courses. Because they require such extensive areas of land (60 ha for a modern 27-hole course), land assembly is a major criterion of implementation. In the Islands, such large areas in one ownership are rare and developers tend to think first of Government land. This however runs the obvious risk that, just as with social housing, golf courses land up where the Government happens to own land and not where the courses should be located in accordance with Structure Plan policies. Structure Plan policy therefore is to make provision for golf courses but to locate them where they should optimally be sited, irrespective of land ownership.

POLICY TOU 12: The Planning Authority will give favourable consideration to the development of golf courses at the following locations:

- 1. At the eastern end of Marfa ridge with urban uses concentrated along the coast between the Vendome Battery and the White Tower (Policy TOU 5).**
- 2. East of Mellieha with urban uses merged with the eastern flank of the town.**
- 3. To the east of Rabat with urban uses merged with the eastern periphery of Rabat and the Verdala Hotel site.**
- 4. North of Ghajnsielem/Mgarr in Gozo with urban uses on the northern flanks of these settlements.**
- 5. East of Qala in Gozo with urban uses merged with the eastern periphery of the settlement.**

Sailing

- 13.14 The Planning Authority will support the objective of the Marine and Offshore Affairs Department to 'provide safe haven and all necessary amenities to yachtsmen'.

POLICY TOU 13: In conjunction with the appropriate agencies the Planning Authority will prepare a Subject Plan including Environmental Impact Assessments to determine the advisability and feasibility of various types of harbour for yachts and sailing dinghies at the following locations:

1. Mainland Malta

St. George's Bay, Qalet Marku, Salina Bay, Mistra Bay, White Tower and Armier Bay, Anchor Bay, Gnejna Bay, Fomm Ir-Rih Bay, between Ghar Lapsi and Blue Grotto, St George's and Pretty Bays within Marsaxlokk Bay, St Thomas Bay and Marsascalea.

2. Gozo

San Blas Bay, Ir-Ramla, Marsalforn Bay, Xlendi Bay, Mgarr Ix-Xini, and Mgarr Harbour.

3. Comino

Santa Marija and San Niklaw Bays.

Diving

- 13.15 The coastal waters of the Islands provide a number of opportunities for diving and the National Tourism Organisation of Malta is committed to an advertising campaign to promote the Islands as a diving venue. The marine environment in popular diving areas is fragile and must be protected.

POLICY TOU 14: The Planning Authority will include in the Subject Plan proposed in Policy TOU 13 additional analyses aimed at reconciling the conflicting interests of recreational diving and marine ecological conservation.

Coastal Management Plan

- 13.16 Sailing and diving are the two principal activities related to tourism which are most likely to conflict with marine conservation needs. The latter, in turn, can be fundamentally affected by what is happening on shore. In this sense, the coastal areas can be distinguished as a unique category which provides the bridge between terrestrial and marine interests. It is essential that these be looked at in an integrated fashion so that a comprehensive management plan can be evolved for this unique resource.

POLICY TOU 15: The Planning Authority in cooperation with the Ministry of Education's Secretariat of the Environment and other relevant bodies will define a comprehensive policy for the coastal zone. This policy should aim at enabling the Government to:-

- 1. assess the different components of the coastal zone considered as a unique ecosystem;**
- 2. identify permissible uses, development criteria and standards;**
- 3. promote and enforce policies; and**

4. **Include in the Bill of Environmental Protection the coastal zone as an area requiring mandatory Environmental Impact Assessment procedures.**

Objectives for Recreation

- 13.17 The Planning Authority's general objectives with regard to recreation are to encourage the provision of opportunities for recreation in a coordinated manner in cooperation with the range of public and private agencies involved; ensure that sites for an adequate range of facilities are included in Local Plans; and reconcile recreation provision with competing interests.

Institutional Arrangements for Recreation

- 13.18 In the main the provision of basic recreational facilities in Malta has been largely provided by a wide range of voluntary organisations and associations with the financial support of Government. Increasingly, more intensive and specialised recreation, sports/health and entertainments facilities are being provided on a commercial basis by the private sector. At present there are no specific public sector policies for the provision of recreation facilities.

POLICY REC 1: The Planning Authority will establish recommended standards of provision and will seek to overcome deficiencies in the provision of recreational facilities by defining sites in Local Plans.

POLICY REC 2: In view of the limited financial resources likely to be available for additional recreation facilities, the Planning Authority will, whenever possible, encourage private initiatives and if appropriate, enter into joint schemes for recreation provision.

POLICY REC 3: In order to make the best use of existing recreational land and in particular the major open space areas, the Planning Authority 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 proposals. Such schemes should improve the range, type and quality of facilities and their accessibility.

POLICY REC 4: In preparing Local Plans the Planning Authority will seek to identify sites for district-level recreation centres where a range of facilities can be accumulated and managed effectively. The Authority will assist in assembling land and will coordinate publicly-provided facilities with commercial and voluntary-aided facilities.

Sports

- 13.19 Provision for sports poses a problem in that it potentially conflicts with the Structure Plan's fundamental policy of restricting further development of non-urbanised land. Many recreational activities can be provided within the boundaries of existing built-up areas, particularly in the many parts of Malta where urban development is fragmentary

and incomplete and where there is a richness of infill sites. Nevertheless, there could be demand for large land-using recreational activities outside urbanised areas and it is the location and character of these which menace overall policy. This is because active recreational uses, although essentially comprised of open space, also accumulate substantial volumes of built development in the form of support facilities - pavilions, clubhouses, stores, refreshment outlets, car parks, flood lighting, and even complete stadia. For this reason, it is Planning Authority policy to restrict the further development of recreational facilities in non-urban areas to specific sites where environmental impact can be contained.

13.20 The most immediate need concerns the siting of facilities for the Small Nations Games. It has been determined that these should be located at Pembroke (Policy HOU 5).

POLICY REC 5: The Planning Authority will encourage the development of land at Pembroke for the following uses:-

1. Athletics track
2. Uncovered heated freshwater swimming and diving pools
3. Multi-purpose hall
4. Sailing facilities and clubhouse
5. Gymnasium
6. Administration block.

POLICY REC 6: The existing rifle range at Pembroke will be relocated to a site below Fort St. Leonardo at Xghajra.

13.21 The National Park, with all its potential for having a generally urbanised appearance, has been designated on an area of good agricultural land which should ideally have been left as rural forefront to the important Urban Conservation Area of Mdina and as an effective buffer area between Mdina and Attard. Nevertheless the Planning Authority recognises that development has proceeded too far to allow consideration of the reversion of the site to agriculture, and has adopted a policy of trying to optimise the site for further recreational development.

13.22 The Planning Authority notes that the term 'National Park' as understood elsewhere is a rural conservation area or wilderness area to which restricted and conditional access is allowed for the enjoyment of nature and good scenery. Particularly with the possible entry of Malta to the European Community, with all the implications for standardised international terminology, it is recommended that the area should be named for what it is, a National Recreation Centre.

POLICY REC 7: The Planning Authority confirms the designation of the National Recreation Centre and will support the siting in it of further recreational uses, particularly those with a genuinely national catchment area. The Authority will concurrently seek to assist with the relocation of the on-site industrial uses.

13.23 The Planning Authority would like to see adequate provision of sports and other recreational uses at district level. This should be relatively easy to achieve in those areas which are to be planned - the Temporary Provisions and primary development areas. It will be harder to achieve in existing built-up areas but opportunities will be defined in the relevant Local Plans.

POLICY REC 8: The Planning Authority will ensure that adequate provision for district-level sports and recreational facilities will be made in the Local Plans for both new and existing urban areas.

13.24 It is anticipated that the development of the Ta' Ceppuna Business Centre (Policy COM 3) will necessitate the relocation of the Marsa Sports Club which currently provides facilities for swimming, tennis, cricket and golf. It is anticipated that the first three facilities will be replaced by one of the district recreational centres (Policy REC 8) the management of which could feasibly be entrusted to the Club. Policy TOU 12 designates three new golf courses on mainland Malta each of which will be of a standard superior to that of the current Marsa facility.

13.25 The Ta' Ceppuna site also houses the Marsa horse race track and Ministry of Education sports facilities. Until a Local Plan comprising or containing the site is produced it is difficult to say how the new development would affect these facilities. However, in terms of the size of the site (over 80 ha) and the general disposition of existing uses, it is probable that the new Business Centre and other uses could be established without affecting either facility.

Foreshore Areas

13.26 Of major concern to the Planning Authority are the numerous unsightly and frequently insanitary developments of various forms of huts and other structures usually sited in what would otherwise be attractive coastal recreational and tourist areas. In order to improve the environmental quality of the coastal areas and make them once more suitable for the legitimate enjoyment of both local residents and tourists, the Structure Plan proposes the complete and permanent clearance of such areas and, where necessary their restoration at the expense of the owners of the offending structures.

POLICY REC 9: As from the commencement date of the Structure Plan and with the exception of permanent commercial and other structures approved by the Planning Authority, no structure other than tents, windbreaks and shading devices will be permitted on any area of the foreshore or other land not specifically designated for the purpose. All such approved temporary structures will be demounted and removed by midnight.

POLICY REC 10: The owners of all illegal structures on foreshore or adjacent areas will be served with eviction notices requiring the removal of the offending structures within a period of three months and the restoration of the site to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority. Any structures remaining on these sites after the expiry of three months from the serving of the notices will be demolished by the Planning Authority and the site restored at the expense of the owner(s).

13.27 Another recreational land use which the Planning Authority believes has got out of hand is caravanning and camping. Both of these activities, as normally defined, are legitimate and have to be catered for, but sites allocated so far to this use have been misused and have virtually become officially-recognised shanty towns complementing the illegal structure areas referred to in Policies REC 9 and REC 10. The Planning Authority proposes to designate two official mobile caravan and tent sites for the use of genuine caravanners and campers in addition to that recently sanctioned at White Rocks. On these sites all users will be short-stay (maximum two weeks in any season).

POLICY REC 11: The Planning Authority designates sites at White Rocks and Marfa for the short-stay accommodation of mobile caravans and tents.

13.28 The problem of existing permanent holiday home sites remains. It is tempting and would be politically expedient to allow them to remain undisturbed on the grounds that they have been there for a long while; they are generally of a better quality than the shanty towns noted in para. 13.25 and Government has turned a blind eye to the problem in the past. On the other hand, they are just as illegal as the shanty towns and create as much environmental impact. There is no housing shortage in Malta: these structures are not required as permanent accommodation - they are merely examples of private interest at public expense. If they are allowed to remain, evicted shanty town users would ask why they are being proceeded against and not the others; and most importantly it would be seen as another case of benefit accruing to those who break the law at the expense of those who do not, and a signal that it is worth attempting further illegal development because of Government's reluctance to enforce the law. For these reasons, the Planning Authority will seek the removal of all such development.

POLICY REC 12: The owners of all illegal constructed property sited on Government or other land will be served with eviction notices and a demand that the offending structures be demolished and the site restored within a period of one year from the serving of the notices. Any structure remaining on expiry of the notice will be demolished and the site restored by the Planning Authority at the owner's expense. No fines will be imposed on illegal occupiers and no compensation will be payable to them.

13.29 It can be debated as to whether the Structure Plan should define sites for approved permanent holiday home development since there is clearly a demand for such a provision. The Planning Authority is not antagonistic to holiday homes in principle but recognises that visually and functionally they are little different from normal housing estates except that they are generally cheaper and uglier. Their common characteristic is that they tend to seek what would otherwise be attractive seafront sites usually divorced from adjacent built-up areas. Such types of development are clearly in conflict with the fundamental Structure Plan principles of precluding the further despoilation of the coastline and concentrating further development in or adjacent to existing built-up areas. For these reasons the Planning Authority concludes that no specific allowance should be made for permanent holiday homes except to note that some less visible parts of the Temporary Provisions schemes could be set aside for such development.

The Countryside

- 13.30 The Planning Authority proposes to establish new forms of development to permit the greater enjoyment of the countryside by both tourists and residents. The first is Country Parks and Parkways which are essentially public rights-of-way and their immediate surroundings within which a variety of open-air recreational activities will be located. The parkways will link tourism and/or recreation attractions by tracing routes through areas that are of intrinsic natural and/or man-made value. They will be used for walking, hiking, jogging, orienteering, horse riding, cycling and by school outings for educational purposes, and by archaeological and historical specialist interest groups, amongst others.
- 13.31 To create and sustain them will mean initiating safeguarding measures for the designated routes and areas and introducing country parkway management schemes for their maintenance and upkeep. It is foreseen that their establishment will involve the provision of safe access and parking; routeway enhancement including picnic, play, exercise and barbecue areas; and occasional facilities in the form of bench seating, shelters, route and interpretive information signs. Therefore, their implementation should not entail major capital investments and, once established, recurrent costs would be limited to a small team of wardens.

POLICY REC 13: The Planning Authority in conjunction with the Ministry of Education Secretariat for the Environment and the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries will seek to formally identify and establish the following network of country parkways and coastal rights-of-ways for footpaths, cycle routes and horse riding trails. Where possible these will facilitate the creation of circular routes and have regular links to natural or man-made attractions and facilities:

Mainland Malta

- 1. Linear park along the ridge of the Victoria and Dwejra Lines.**
- 2. Linear river valley and lakes park from Fiddien Valley to Chadwick Lakes, along Qiejgha Valley and Ta' I-Isperanza Valley to Wied il-Ghasel northwest of Mosta.**
- 3. Linear parkway along the western coastal cliffs joining Gebel Ciantar to Fomm Ir-Rih Bay.**
- 4. Coastal undulating area between Salina Bay and Bahar ic-Caghaq.**
- 5. Waterfront park at Ricasoli seafront, linked by a parkway to the Cottonera Lines.**
- 6. Linear parkway from the landward end of Grand Harbour to the vicinity of Rabat, passing through the Ta' Ceppuna Business Park, shopping facilities and transport Interchange.**

Gozo

- 1. Northwest coast between Xwieni Bay (Redoubt Salt Pans) and Gharb.**
- 2. West coast at Oawra Tower (Dwejra Bay) along Wied Ilma inland to Santa Lucija.**
- 3. From Mgarr eastward along the coast to Wardija off Qala and west to Mgarr Ix-Xini and along Wied Hanzira.**

13.32 The Planning Authority believes that picknicking has to be rationalised by the establishment of officially recognised and sensitively designed and equipped picnic areas, mostly for the use of Maltese residents during the cooler months. The objective would be twofold: first, to provide picknickers with adequate access and parking, pleasant environmental conditions and sufficient support facilities; and second, to provide recreational magnets which will attract countryside users from vulnerable conservation sites.

POLICY REC 14: The Planning Authority will identify and designate a series of picnic areas within the parkway system (Policy REC 13). These will include all support facilities, designed to be sympathetic with the natural setting of the sites.

14. TRANSPORT

General Strategy

14.1 The general strategy of the Structure Plan with respect to surface transport has five main elements:

1. The better co-ordination of land use and transport
2. The improvement of roads and the development of a road hierarchy
3. The effective management of the road system and of the traffic using it, and the control of the impact of both on the environment
4. The improvement of public transport, especially where it can provide a reasonable alternative to the private car
5. Legal and educational measures aimed primarily at improving road safety and the efficiency of road use.

14.2 The proposed institutional structure of the Planning Authority includes some links between those who plan, construct, maintain, manage, and finance roads; those who regulate and operate public transport; those who manage and enforce traffic and parking legislation; and those with responsibility for land use planning. It is however considered essential that an inter-Departmental transport committee is established, responsible to the Planning Authority. In order to ensure that this committee and other Government Departments are adequately advised, a transport function must be established within the Planning Department with direct links to the Ministry for the Development of Infrastructure, the Public Transport Authority, and the Police. These links are to ensure that all relevant transport and traffic matters are fully integrated.

POLICY TRA 1: The Planning Authority will seek the establishment of a Transport Co-ordinating Committee reporting to the Authority, with responsibility for integrating land use planning, the planning and design of roads, the planning of public transport, and the introduction and enforcement of traffic regulations (including traffic management regulations). The Committee will be supported by a Transport Division within the Planning Directorate, comprised of suitably qualified staff.

Co-ordination of Transport and Land Use

14.3 The object of the general policy of coordinating transport and land use is to reduce transport problems by minimising the need for travel. This can be achieved by locating activities that generate travel in closer proximity to each other. In addition there is a need to control the sort of developments which take place and their relationship to the road networks. Much of this will be achieved through Policy SET 2.

14.4 Given the general aim of better coordination of land use and transport it will also be necessary to reduce transport problems by regulating developments with significant impacts on the road network. Detailed policies will be required in order to ensure that access arrangements are adequate, to achieve the necessary provision of parking and highway remedial works, and to prevent new developments causing local traffic congestion.

POLICY TRA 2: The promoters of major developments will be required to prepare traffic impact statements illustrating the likely impact of their proposals on the local highway network.

POLICY TRA 3: Agreements will be sought with prospective developers for the funding of the necessary remedial highway works required to accommodate their proposals.

POLICY TRA 4: The following parking principles will be adopted in different areas for new developments:

1. Valletta/Floriana and other Urban Conservation Areas: restraining standards catering for operational vehicles only
2. Remainder of Harbour area: moderate restraint standards
3. Rest of mainland Malta: accommodating standard.

Development and Maintenance of a Hierarchical Network of Roads

14.5 The intention of the Structure Plan is to ensure that the existing road network is gradually upgraded to form a hierarchy of improved roads comprising:

1. Arterial roads
2. Distributor roads
3. Local access roads
4. Access-only and pedestrian streets

14.6 The arterial network will cater for the principal longer-distance traffic flows and should carry a high proportion of all the vehicle-miles driven on the Islands. The network will comprise existing major roads (improved where necessary) and extensions of or replacements for such roads. The network will commonly but not always be of dual-carriageway standard and its junctions will sometimes be grade-separated. The network will be used for longer-distance bus services but will not normally be used for parking or access to property. The operational and safety requirements for traffic will be a major consideration in the design, improvement, and management of the network.

- 14.7 The distributor road network will give access to the arterial network. It will provide for more local traffic movements, will carry the majority of bus services, and will give some access to property. The distributor network will normally be single-carriageway and junctions will generally be at grade (ground level). Parking restrictions will apply on much of the network. It will be necessary to achieve an appropriate balance between the operational traffic requirements of the system and its use for other purposes.
- 14.8 Local access roads will give access to property from the distributor road network and their character will vary according to adjacent land uses. They may also be used for parking. On local roads the need to consider the use of the road by pedestrians, for access and as part of the urban landscape will be of greater importance relative to the higher levels in the hierarchy. In access-only and pedestrianised streets the needs of pedestrians and the environment will predominate and access traffic will be severely restricted. These restrictions may be full-time or part-time and exceptions may be made for buses and delivery vehicles. Such streets will often be paved and the aim will be to give them a high quality environment.
- 14.9 Guidance for road design and construction is laid out in an appendix to the Explanatory Memorandum. This guidance addresses the operational and environmental aspects of design.

POLICY RDS 1: The Planning Authority will seek the development and improvement of the arterial and distributor road networks shown on the Structure Plan diagram.

POLICY RDS 2: Land required for new links and the widening of existing links of the arterial and distributor networks will be safeguarded from development where necessary.

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 and will be consistent with appropriate best practice in Europe.

POLICY RDS 4: The principal new links and major improvements required on the arterial network are:

1. High Priority (0-5 years)

- Marsa - Msida link (Tal-Qroqq to Aldo Moro Road)
- Regional Road - Sliema link (Kappara to Rudolphe Street)
- Regional Road - St. Andrews upgrade (Entrance to Paceville, Swieqi, Pembroke and St. George's Bay)

2. Medium Priority (5-10 years)

- South East Sector upgrading of arterial and distributor networks
- Salina - Bahar ic-Caghaq bypass to Coast Road
- Attard bypass
- Mriehel bypass

3. Low Priority (10-20 years)

- Northern Coast Route upgrading of arterial and distributor networks
- Western Sector upgrading of arterial and distributor networks.

POLICY RDS 5: New developments will not normally be granted access directly onto the arterial road network.

POLICY RDS 6: Compensation will be made under other powers to owners of property which has to be acquired in order to permit the development of the arterial and distributor road networks. Additionally, remedial measures will be implemented or made available to owners of existing property adjacent to the network which suffers from deleterious environmental impact (noise, visual intrusion, severance and atmospheric pollution) resulting directly from the implementation of the network.

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: The Planning Authority will seek to improve the standards of road maintenance, giving priority to the requirements of the arterial and distributor networks.

POLICY RDS 9: The Planning Authority will seek the improvement of footways and their maintenance.

POLICY RDS 10: The Planning Authority will seek the introduction where appropriate of common service ducts in order to minimise interruption to traffic movement.

POLICY RDS 11: The Planning Authority will seek coordination of road closures for roadworks and utility services works in order to minimise interruption to traffic movement.

Traffic and Environmental Management

14.10 Much of the road network in Malta at present operates in an inefficient manner with junctions being badly laid out, priority rules unclear, traffic lanes obstructed by parked cars, pedestrians at risk and the environment far worse than it need be. These factors also have an adverse effect on the public transport system, making the buses slow and unreliable. To complement and minimise expensive improvements to the road network there is therefore a corresponding need to manage it more efficiently and to ensure that an appropriate balance is struck between the needs of traffic and those of pedestrians and the environment.

14.11 Appropriate operational traffic management measures on the primary road network, some of which are illustrated in the appendix to the Explanatory Memorandum, will include:

1. Signal control of major intersections and the provision of other appropriate high capacity junction layouts
2. Strict and fully enforced parking, waiting and loading controls
3. Clear directional sign-posting
4. Pedestrian crossings protected by traffic signals and adjacent parking restrictions where necessary, or grade-separated
5. Bus priority measures and bus stop laybys
6. Strict limitations on frontage access, and the provision of service roads.

14.12 Appropriate operational and environmental traffic management measures on the distributor network (examples of which are given the appendix to the Explanatory Memorandum) will include:

1. Signal controlled or priority junctions
2. One-way schemes
3. Parking and waiting restrictions
4. Bus priority measures and bus stop laybys
5. Improved facilities for pedestrians, including widened footpaths and crossings
6. Speed limits
7. Loading and unloading arrangements
8. Environmental management measures to discourage longer distance traffic or unnecessary through traffic.

14.13 On local access roads common management measures will include:

1. The improvement of access to property
2. Some residents' parking schemes
3. Traffic calming measures (illustrated in the Explanatory Memorandum)
4. Widened pavements and pedestrian crossings.

14.14 Access-only and pedestrianised streets may be arranged to give access for delivery vehicles or buses. The general aim will be to improve the environment.

14.15 More general restraint on peak hour traffic approaching the Valletta/Floriana peninsula is desirable. This will be complemented by public transport policies providing better services to the area. Such restraint will be achieved by consideration of parking supply and price, combined with traffic management measures designed to improve the environment. The aim of such measures will be to reduce peak hour trips to the area by 25%.

POLICY TEM 1: The design of traffic management measures will conform to the current set of agreed standards for road design and construction.

POLICY TEM 2: At junctions where congestion occurs now or is expected to occur in the future, layouts will be reviewed, clear priorities will be established and traffic signals or other junction improvements will be introduced.

POLICY TEM 3: In areas where parking is difficult, comprehensive studies of parking supply and demand will be carried out and a parking policy embodying a proper mix of on and off-street, public and private parking space will be developed.

POLICY TEM 4: Parking on the arterial and distributor networks will be strictly controlled at any locations where it interferes with traffic flow or presents a safety hazard.

POLICY TEM 5: Designs will be adopted for the provision of different types of pedestrian crossings and the appropriate types will then be provided where justified.

POLICY TEM 6: Accident locations will be identified and accident remedial measures will be designed and implemented.

POLICY TEM 7: Bus priority lanes and other priority measures will be introduced at all locations where they are feasible and where the time and cost savings to the bus operators and passengers exceed the equivalent delays to other road traffic.

POLICY TEM 8: Speed limits will be reviewed, rationalised and clearly signed.

POLICY TEM 9: Environmental management or traffic calming measures such as speed tables, chicanes, surface treatment, etc. will be introduced on distributor and local access roads. Limited-access or pedestrianised streets will also be introduced where these are justifiable in order to effect environmental improvements.

POLICY TEM 10: Restraint will be sought on peak hour car journeys to the Valletta/Floriana peninsula, based on control of parking supply, an appropriate traffic management regime, and complementary improvements to public transport.

Public Transport

14.16 The improvement of public transport requires action on a number of different fronts and there is some flexibility as to how some of the issues are tackled. The Structure Plan envisages that public transport will continue to be provided primarily by bus and mini-bus but anticipates that there is likely to be a role for new ferry services to provide improved access to Valletta and that there may, in the longer term, be a case for light rail or tram systems. The major public transport problems addressed in the Structure Plan are:

1. The need for an innovative, market-oriented, bus operation and the implications which this requirement has for ownership structure, competition policy and the regulatory framework within which services are currently provided.
2. The need to eliminate passenger overloading, cut waiting times and improve reliability.
3. The need to rationalise service patterns and to cover some gaps in the present network.
4. The need to minimise interchange.
5. The need to maximise revenue from tourists.
6. The need for a faster and fraud preventive ticketing system.
7. The need to understand which services/times of day are profitable and which are unprofitable.
8. The need to use subsidy or cross subsidy only in a progressive way in order to provide services that would not otherwise be economic.
9. The need to replace the current fleet with buses suitable to the special conditions of climate, urban and rural operation, and the narrow congested streets to be found in the Islands.

14.17 The need for buses to be able to operate efficiently and reliably in traffic is partly covered by Policy TEM 7. Other public transport policies, some of which may be incompatible with the Public Transport White Paper of June 1988, are:

POLICY PTR 1: The PTA/operators will draw up plans to rationalise the ownership and regulation of the bus industry so that the whole operation is run on commercial and competitive lines in a way which generates sufficient revenue to renew assets (buses).

POLICY PTR 2: The PTA will ensure that new buses purchased are appropriate to the urban and rural operations required of all buses, to the special climatic conditions of Malta, to the higher quality of urban environment being sought, to the narrow and congested streets on which they will have to operate, and easily accessible to the old, young and infirm.

- POLICY PTR 3:** The PTA will set in motion the appropriate demand studies so that the services, frequencies and fares may be redesigned to eliminate overloading, minimise interchange and provide for some of the passenger movements which are not at present directly served. New links (possibly served by a series of circular routes) to be considered include:
1. Hamrun - Marsa, Msida, Sliema and Gzira
 2. Birkirkara - Sliema, Rabat, San Gwann and Marsa/Qormi
 3. St. Julian's - San Gwann
 4. Paola - Qormi
 5. Zabbar - Zejtun
 6. Gwardamangia - Marsa
- POLICY PTR 4:** The PTA will be encouraged to introduce high speed, cross-harbour ferry services from key points on the bus network at Sliema and Cospicua to give pedestrian access to central Valletta by means of lifts or funicular railways.
- POLICY PTR 5:** The Planning Authority will seek the provision of new bus/ferry interchanges at Sliema and Cospicua.
- POLICY PTR 6:** The PTA and bus operators will review the fare collection and ticketing systems employed in order to speed up boarding times, eliminate fraud, increase revenues, achieve a major switch to off-bus purchase and maximise revenues from tourists.
- POLICY PTR 7:** The Planning Authority will seek a new, smaller scale, more efficient and less environmentally intrusive bus terminus to serve Valletta.
- POLICY PTR 8:** The Planning Authority will ensure that all major new developments are laid out in a way which enables them to be easily and effectively served by bus without undue obstructions to access or operations.
- POLICY PTR 9:** The Planning Authority will seek the provision of improved waiting conditions and shelters at bus stops with easily understandable and reliable passenger information. The bus shelters and publicity will be so designed as to enhance the general image of public transport.
- POLICY PTR 10:** The Planning Authority will ensure that the question of the introduction of a park-and-ride system for Valletta is further investigated during the preparation of the Valletta Local Plan.
- POLICY PTR 11:** Subject to the outcome of the review of ownership structure and the purchase policy adopted for fleet replacement, the PTA will establish an appropriate number of bus depots and workshops providing adequate parking, cleaning, maintenance, and overhaul facilities so that the quality of the fleet can be improved and maintained.

- POLICY PTR 12:** Bus operators will be encouraged to experiment with special types of service for tourists such as open top buses or road trains.
- POLICY PTR 13:** The PTA will review the fare structure, operation and regulation of taxi services.
- POLICY PTR 14:** The Planning Authority will seek extension and rationalisation of paratransit modes such as minibuses and other forms of communal transport. The Authority will, through the appropriate agencies, seek to establish an Islands-wide car-sharing scheme.

Legal and Educational Measures

- 14.18 Malta has an unusually high number of ageing vehicles (17% over 20 years old) running on a network of substandard and congested roads on which junctions are often poorly laid out and traffic priorities unclear. Traffic speeds are at present limited by the poor road layouts, the age of many of the vehicles and the low quality of road maintenance (only 1% of the main road network in good condition). The limited speeds achieved by vehicles at present limit the severity of accidents. However, as road maintenance is improved and vehicle performance increases, and as pressure for the greater use of the existing road network mounts, the frequency and severity of accidents could well rise. To combat this threat a further set of policies is embodied in the Structure Plan.
- POLICY LEM 1:** The Highway Code will be reviewed and re-issued making explicit matters such as lane discipline, overtaking, priority rules at roundabouts, etc.
- POLICY LEM 2:** The introduction and enforcement of tougher drink/driving laws will be pursued.
- POLICY LEM 3:** A specialist team of traffic police or wardens capable of dealing swiftly and effectively with accidents and responsible for the smooth flow of traffic will be formed. There will be greater enforcement generally of traffic laws and regulations, including those dealing with parking.
- POLICY LEM 4:** Greater use will be made of television and the media for the presentation for a series of short 'commercials' aimed at explaining priority rules at roundabouts, parking controls, etc.
- POLICY LEM 5:** A more rigorous driving test will be introduced and periodic retesting considered.
- POLICY LEM 6:** A certificate of road worthiness will be required for all cars of more than three years of age. The certificate will be issued annually after a road worthiness test at the expense of the vehicle owner.

Inter-Island Sea Transport

- 14.19 Transport to and from Gozo is currently by means of ferry from Cirkewwa with a less frequent service from Pieta. Freight services go from both locations and a new container service operates from Grand Harbour. The majority of vehicles accessing the ferry do so by driving to Cirkewwa: this involves a journey along roads currently in a poor condition, and delays and congestion occur at weekends. The Pieta site is restricted and causes localised problems.
- 14.20 Bus services operate between Valletta and Cirkewwa, and Mgarr and Victoria. Both routes are slow because of the number of stops. As a result public transport travel between Gozo and mainland Malta may involve the use of up to four different bus routes in addition to the ferry service.
- 14.21 A fast catamaran sea service operates between Sliema and Mgarr, largely serving the tourist market.
- 14.22 The concentration of patronage on the shortest sea crossing route creates difficulties on the road network. It also makes public transport access to the ferries from much of Malta and Gozo slow. A case exists for operating more weekend services from the Inner Harbour area, avoiding too much traffic using the roads to Cirkewwa. Public transport could also better access a terminal in the Inner Harbour from all parts of mainland Malta. To encourage the use of public transport to access Cirkewwa a case may exist for express routes to the terminal. On Gozo a case exists for considering bus services between Mgarr and locations other than Victoria.

POLICY IIT 1: Ferry services between Gozo and the Inner Harbour should be made more frequent.

POLICY IIT 2: Suitable terminal facilities for passengers and freight should be provided in the Inner Harbour area.

POLICY IIT 3: Bus services to ferry terminals should be reviewed with a view to providing direct services from more parts of Malta and Gozo. Express bus services between the Inner Harbour and Cirkewwa may be appropriate if they do not compromise the viability of the increased ferry services from the Inner Harbour.

POLICY IIT 4: Berthing facilities at Ghadira (Mellieha Bay) and at St. Paul's Bay should be improved as bad-weather alternatives to Cirkewwa.

Aviation

- 14.23 With respect to aviation and the future of Luqa airport, the Planning Authority has two concerns within the context of the Structure Plan - first, whether all future airport operations can be accommodated in an effective fashion within the present land boundaries and second, how best can safety and environmental impact outside the airport boundaries be regulated.

POLICY AVN 1: The Planning Authority will require the Department of Civil Aviation to produce a comprehensive plan illustrating the proposed use of land within the present airport boundary sufficient for all forecast needs to year 2010.

POLICY AVN 2: The Planning Authority will require the Department of Civil Aviation to establish:

1. **Public Safety Zones at both ends of each runway**
2. **A general safeguarding zone including absolute building height restrictions aimed at preventing development outside the airport boundary which could be hazardous to airport and aircraft operations**
3. **A map illustrating forecast noise contours in order that the Planning Authority can evolve policies for the control of development within affected areas.**

14.24 With reference to Gozo, the Planning Authority appreciates the merits of establishing a fixed wing landing facility on the island as a possible means of attracting more tourists. On the other hand, the provision of such a facility could erode the image of Gozo as somewhere different and a bit off the beaten track. The Authority is also concerned about the environmental impact of a landing strip not only immediately but in the future when larger and more economical aircraft are thought to be necessary and the strip accumulates more and more support facilities. The Authority believes that a more exhaustive analysis of the need for a landing facility and of its environmental impact is required.

POLICY AVN 3: An examination will be made of the demand for and implications of an air service between Gozo and Malta, with particular reference to the environmental impact, the terminal facilities required, and the type of aircraft appropriate. In the interim the land area which may be required for a light aircraft facility on Gozo will continue to be safeguarded.

15. CONSERVATION

Approach

- 15.1 Throughout this Statement the Planning Authority has stressed its concern that strict control is necessary throughout the Islands of the location and character of all future development. This is particularly true of those parts of the Islands where valuable built heritage is concentrated and where areas of archaeological, agricultural, ecological and landscape value are found. The Authority's overall strategy in this regard hinges on the designation of Urban, Rural and Marine Conservation Areas within which specific policies will apply to ensure the preservation and enhancement of the valuable man-made and natural resources located within their boundaries.
- 15.2 The Development Planning Act contains all the powers necessary to fulfill the Authority's objective with regard to the formal designation of Urban, Rural and Marine Conservation Areas. It is therefore proposed that designation take place under that legislation on the advice of the Authority and that supplementary policies applicable to these Conservation Areas be included in the Structure Plan.
- 15.3 It is the Authority's intention that the development control measures to be applied through the Structure Plan should not differ in content between Urban Conservation Areas and other urban areas, but only in emphasis. Thus, in both types of area, development use and design will be controlled and public funds will be available for refurbishment and upgrading. In Conservation Areas, however, control will be stricter and more specific; initiatives of the Planning Authority, the statutory undertakers and of Government generally will be more frequent and intense; and the amount of public funds available for refurbishment through both public and private channels will be greater.

Built Heritage

- 15.4 Malta has an exceptionally rich heritage. This ranges from several important neolithic monuments through remains of Phoenician and Roman civilisations, rare examples of indigenous proto-Christian and mediaeval architecture, great complexes of Renaissance and Baroque development created under the rule of the Order of St. John, to 19th century examples of British military and civil architecture.
- 15.5 This unique stratification of several epochs and cultures, concentrated within a relatively small area, constitutes a national heritage of great value not only to Malta but to European culture generally. It is an asset which should be promoted not only for its intrinsic value but also in order that it can be appreciated and enjoyed by residents and tourists alike. Equally important is the need to see such assets in the wider spatial context from which they grew and in which they still exist.

- 15.6 In the past decades this heritage has been largely neglected. In particular, the urban fabric of the historical centres, outside the walled cities, has suffered from traffic intrusion with the opening of new access roads or the widening of existing streets causing grave visual conflicts and restricting pedestrian movement. Loss of traditional character results from a range of assaults on the old fabric: incompatible uses, penetration of facades for garages, inappropriate commercial signs and shop fronts, alien materials and decorative motifs, omnipresent electricity and telephone cables strung carelessly on ancient walls and across intimate spaces, and the destruction of rear spaces by over-development.
- 15.7 The rapid building development that has taken place outside the main historical areas has led to their general deterioration as residents move out. The number of vacant, under-utilised and dilapidated buildings within these areas is high, although they still retain their role as an important focus of the social fabric due to the location of church buildings, clubs and other community facilities. Any further deterioration of the urban fabric and built environment must be prevented. A policy of rehabilitation and revitalisation aimed at making the best use of these resources would help to slow down the spread of development into greenfield sites, retain traditional character, and attract new residents.

Urban Conservation Areas

- 15.8 Urban Conservation Areas have already been identified within the context of the Temporary Planning schemes under Section 8 of the Building Permits (Temporary Provisions) Act 1988. These designations were limited to the historical areas of the villages and towns excluding the walled cities, and must now be extended to the larger areas of architectural and historical interest.
- 15.9 The principal of these areas is clearly Valletta, not only because it is the national capital and a World Heritage site but because of its unique location on the peninsula commanding Grand Harbour and the Three Cities on one side and Marsamxett Harbour, Manoel Island and Sliema on the other. This is a very special place and has to be treated accordingly. The Planning Authority has therefore designated it as the primary Urban Conservation Area and has nominated the city as the first area to have a detailed Local Plan prepared. Because of the close relationship between Valletta and Floriana it is currently envisaged that the Local Plan will cover both. However, when the Plan comes to be done, consideration should be given to extending it to cover the Three Cities, Manoel Island and the adjacent harbours in order that the full visual and operational context of Valletta can be tackled as a whole.

POLICY UCO 1: The Planning Authority will designate the following areas as Urban Conservation Areas which are defined as 'areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'

1. Valletta and Floriana
2. The Three Cities - Vittoriosa, Senglea and Cospicua
3. Mdina
4. Cittadella and its environs (Gozo)

5. The central area of Sliema

6. The central area of Hamrun

POLICY UCO 2: Provisional boundaries of Urban Conservation Areas are defined by the Structure Plan for designation purposes, and precise boundaries will be specified in the relevant Local Plans.

POLICY UCO 3: The Planning Authority will amend the boundaries of designated Urban Conservation Areas and designate additional Areas as appropriate to the fulfilment of its conservation objectives.

Listed Buildings

15.10 In addition to such Urban Conservation Areas there are many isolated buildings and groups of buildings - churches, chapels, fortifications, forts, towers, batteries and other military structures, gardens and other open spaces which require protection. The Planning Services Division, in collaboration with other agencies, has compiled a list of such buildings and spaces in the National Protective Inventory, and it is the intention of the Planning Authority to designate such buildings and spaces as Buildings of Architectural and Historical Interest and to extend to them the protection afforded to Urban Conservation Areas. All buildings and spaces within Urban Conservation Areas will be regarded as listed.

POLICY UCO 4: The Planning Authority will designate for conservation all buildings and spaces listed in the National Protective Inventory and will continue research to enable the addition to the list of items of similar value. All buildings and spaces within Urban Conservation Areas as designated in the Structure Plan will be regarded as listed.

POLICY UCO 5: The Planning Authority will seek to have the various accretions to many listed buildings removed and the original structures and finishes made good.

Conservation Policies

POLICY UCO 6: Within Urban Conservation Areas, the basic objective will be to preserve and enhance all buildings, spaces, townscape and landscape which are of architectural or historical interest, and generally to safeguard areas of high environmental quality and improve areas of low quality.

15.11 There will be a presumption against the demolition of any building of architectural or historical interest. In cases where the interior of a building is of little interest, substantial demolition behind a valuable retained facade will normally be permitted if all other characteristics of the proposed development are acceptable. The demolition of a building of no architectural or historical interest (for example, a more recently erected structure with incompatible massing, detailing or materials) will be given favourable consideration provided that it is replaced by a more compatible building immediately after demolition.

POLICY UCO 7: Listed buildings in Urban Conservation Areas will be graded as Grades 1, 2 or 3 as follows:

Grade 1: These are buildings of outstanding historical or architectural interest that demand to be preserved in their entirety. Demolition or alterations which impair the setting or change the external or internal appearance, including anything contained within the curtilage of the building, will not be allowed. Any interventions allowed must be directed to their scientific restoration and rehabilitation. Internal structural alterations will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances where this is paramount for reasons of keeping the building in active use.

Grade 2: These are buildings of some architectural or historical interest or which contribute to the visual image of an Urban Conservation Area. Permission to demolish such buildings will not normally be given. Alterations to the interior will be allowed if proposed to be carried out sensitively and causing the least detriment to the character and architectural homogeneity of the building.

Grade 3: These are buildings which have no historical importance and are only of minor architectural interest. Demolition may be permitted provided the replacement building is in harmony with its surroundings.

POLICY UCO 8: In Urban Conservation Areas applications for permission to develop existing gap sites or sites on which the existing building is to be demolished will be judged with reference to the following criteria:

1. The development must fully respect the conditions set out in development control policies BEN 1 - BEN 3.
2. The development should be compatible with adjoining buildings in terms of building line, height, silhouette, fenestration and materials.
3. The development generally should follow the design guidelines for Urban Conservation Areas set out in the Explanatory Memorandum.

POLICY UCO 9: In the interim period pending the completion of Local Plans there will be a presumption against the demolition of buildings in Urban Conservation Areas even if the building is in a bad state of repair.

15.12 External views of Urban Conservation Areas should generally be preserved.

POLICY UCO 10: Developments will not be permitted which would obscure or significantly limit views of Urban Conservation Areas, Grand Harbour and Marsamxett Harbour.

- 15.13 Some historical buildings are scattered in the open countryside where further development will not normally be allowed. A positive conservation policy will help the preservation of such buildings.

POLICY UCO 11: In areas where development will not otherwise be allowed the conversion of buildings of architectural or historic interest may be permitted in appropriate circumstances where this would preserve a building.

- 15.14 The Planning Authority will support the intervention of the public sector in a continuing programme of cleaning, renovating and redecorating of listed buildings through the Land Development Trust.

POLICY UCO 12: 1. There will be a continuing commitment to the enhancement of Conservation Areas, listed buildings and structures of outstanding historic or architectural interest, by means of promoting restoration, proper street furniture design, landscaping and finding new uses for vacant and under-used buildings. Where appropriate, grants will be made available to carry out this enhancement work through the Land Development Trust.

2. The Planning Authority will set guidance for the Land Development Trust to make grants for the purpose of defraying in whole or in part any expenditure incurred or to be incurred for repair, maintenance, restoration, or preservation of artistic decorations of a listed building or a building situated in a Conservation Area; or in the upkeep of any land which comprises, or is contiguous with or adjacent to, any such building; or in the repair or maintenance of any objects ordinarily kept in any such building.

- 15.15 There may be circumstances where the relaxation of planning standards or other planning policies and the sympathetic application of building regulations is advisable where these would otherwise prejudice the preservation of buildings of architectural or historic value.

POLICY UCO 13: The Planning Authority will, wherever possible, by control or positive intervention conserve buildings of architectural, historic and townscape importance, gardens and other areas of architectural or historic interest.

Traffic in Urban Conservation Areas

- 15.16 The Local Plans for areas containing or comprising Urban Conservation Areas will include traffic and environmental management measures. These measures should particularly address the control of parking and the problems created in the past through the widening of streets and the building of new accesses to allow faster and heavier traffic flows to penetrate historical settlement cores.

POLICY UCO 14: The Local Plans for areas containing or comprising Urban Conservation Areas will pay particular attention to the control of vehicular traffic and to the creation of a safer and more congenial environment for pedestrians (Policy TEM 9).

Telecommunications Equipment

- 15.17 Conscious of Government's policy to encourage modern telecommunications, but at the same time acknowledging the negative visual impact that satellite antennas normally have, the Planning Authority will seek to prevent the uncontrolled proliferation of poorly sited satellite antennas.

POLICY UCO 15: In Urban Conservation Areas, permission to erect satellite dishes will only be given if the apparatus is hidden from public view.

Promotion

- 15.18 The realisation of the conservation policy will be considerably enhanced if those who inhabit and use heritage areas can be motivated to take a more active part in their protection and improvement. The Planning Authority's broad objective is to create a conservation 'movement' representing private business interests as well as who are interested in the subject and those who can be instrumental in securing its objectives.

POLICY UCO 16: The Planning Authority will seek to increase public awareness of and interest in conservation as a means of assisting the realisation of its objectives.

National Trust

- 15.19 The local heritage society 'Din l-Art Helwa' has been a pioneer in the field of arousing public awareness on conservation issues and also undertaking physical conservation works on a limited number of heritage items. The formation of a National Trust would go a long way toward accelerating this process through the raising of the considerable funds which are needed. The Trust could be funded jointly by the Government, local businesses and individuals. It would acquire vacant properties, refurbish them and sell them again, ploughing the proceeds of the sales into the purchase of other properties. It would also establish through local councils or residents' associations a local network which would help the population to be more aware of their immediate environment and what they themselves can and should do to conserve and enhance it.

POLICY UCO 17: The Planning Authority will seek the establishment of a National Trust to further the interests of conservation.

Pilot Project

- 15.20 Rehabilitation and renewal programmes are long-term and require funding. Although priority action is being focussed initially on Valletta, the Planning Authority feels that a pilot programme of renewal in one of the smaller historic areas should be established. This would be a demonstration project which would involve Government together with residents and private interests. An area management team would be set up to be responsible for the execution of the project and to seek input from other community interests.

POLICY UCO 18: The Planning Authority will seek Government funding to promote a pilot project of urban rehabilitation in one of the smaller Urban Conservation Areas.

Natural Resources in Rural Areas

- 15.21 The countryside and the coast are recognised as being two of the nation's most valuable natural resources. Together, countryside and coast provide the backdrop and raw material for much of the country's industrial, commercial, agricultural and recreational activities. The intensity of use of these resources, and the delicate equilibria operating within and maintaining them, necessitate very careful management in order to harmonise the various uses of the local countryside and coast and derive maximum benefit from them without their deterioration. Recognising this, the Planning Authority will rigidly control development of the countryside and coast in general, and particularly of aquifer recharge areas and other important water catchment areas; afforested areas; sites of ecological and scientific importance; sites of scenic value; coastal cliffs and sandy beaches; established and proposed bird sanctuaries, Nature Reserves and other types of protected areas; and of areas prone to erosion.
- 15.22 The Maltese Islands have a range of typical Mediterranean habitats. Some habitat types are rare within the Islands while others are fast degrading and disappearing due to intense human pressure. Coastal habitats are particularly vulnerable. Continued survival of local wildlife is only possible if its habitat is preserved in good condition and in adequate quantities.
- 15.23 The Maltese Islands also possess a diverse flora and fauna. A relatively large number of species are endemic - that is, found only in the Maltese Islands and nowhere else in the world. Because of their uniqueness, these species are of great cultural and scientific importance. Other locally occurring species are of regional importance as they have a restricted Mediterranean distribution, while others still are of local interest because of their rarity within the Maltese Islands.
- 15.24 The geology of the Maltese Islands presents numerous features of interest. Particularly important are certain tectonic structures which give an insight on the processes occurring in the central Mediterranean region as a whole. Some fossils and their sites, particularly those of Quaternary age, are of local and regional interest because of the light they throw on the geological, geographical and biological evolution of the Islands and the surrounding lands. The Maltese Islands also have an interesting and attractive landscape which is a product of the interaction of geology, climate and man.
- 15.25 The limited land area and high population density result in strong pressure being exerted on the natural environment, particularly in areas which are relatively undeveloped. Many species, endemic and other valuable ones included, are threatened with extinction, while habitats are fast degrading. Some geological sites are in danger of complete obliteration, while many intrusive elements are spoiling the scenic value of the landscape.
- 15.26 The natural landscapes of the Islands are intimately related to agricultural activity. Both have to be protected from urbanisation, and conflicts between them have to be resolved.

- 15.27 Protection must also be afforded to areas and sites of archaeological importance, most of which are located in rural areas. Where there are concentrations of such sites, an opportunity exists to afford comprehensive protection to areas rather than individual sites.

Rural Conservation Areas

- 15.28 In order to afford the necessary protection to and enhancement of the countryside, the Structure Plan designates a series of Rural Conservation Areas. The blanket prohibition of urbanisation outside existing and planned urban areas as designated in the Plan is designed to prevent the development of any structures or activities in rural areas other than those legitimate and natural to them. The designation of Rural Conservation Areas not only reinforces these protective constraints but provides the physical context and institutional means of positively channelling effort and investment into the enhancement of the natural phenomena and activities found within them.

POLICY RCO 1: The Planning Authority designates Rural Conservation Areas as illustrated in the diagram. The definitive characteristic of a Rural Conservation Area is that it is synonymous with an area of scenic value. Within any such Area five types of sub-area are identified:

- 1. Areas of Agricultural Value: areas comprised of high grade agricultural land including irrigated and partially irrigated land.**
- 2. Areas of Ecological Importance: relatively large areas designated to protect typical and rare habitats.**
- 3. Sites of Scientific Importance: sites containing individual species, groups of species and geological features.**
- 4. Areas of Archaeological Importance: concentrations of valuable archaeological sites.**
- 5. Sites of Archaeological Importance: individual and/or isolated archaeological sites.**

POLICY RCO 2: Within Rural Conservation Areas and in accordance with Policy SET 11 no form of urban development will be allowed. However, in accordance with Policy BEN 5, applications for permission to develop structures or facilities essential to agricultural, ecological or scenic interests will be favourably considered as long as the proposed development does not infringe the principles set out in Policy RCO 4 as subsequently detailed in the relevant Local Plan (Policy RCO 3).

POLICY RCO 3: As soon as is practicable after the adoption of the Structure Plan, the Planning Authority will draw up Local Plans covering all the areas designated by the Plan as Rural Conservation Areas. The purpose of these Local Plans will be to:

1. Specify the precise boundaries of areas having different forms of scenic value, Areas of Agricultural Value, Areas of Ecological Importance, Sites of Scientific Importance, and Areas and Sites of Archaeological Importance.
2. Specify in detail the measures of protection and enhancement to be adopted with respect to the various uses and activities.
3. Consider the results of the assessment of mineral deposits initiated by the Planning Authority (Policy MIN 2) and the implications for the further working of minerals and the sterilisation of land.
4. Resolve conflicts between the various uses and activities.

Scenic Value

15.29 Within Rural Conservation Areas as a whole and with particular reference to the various types of scenic value to be specified in the Local Plans, the Planning Authority's general strategy is to both protect and enhance areas of scenic value.

POLICY RCO 4: The Planning Authority will not permit the development of any structure or activity which in the view of the Authority would adversely affect scenic value because it would:

1. break a presently undisturbed skyline;
2. visually dominate or disrupt its surroundings because of its mass or location;
3. obstruct a pleasant and particularly a panoramic view;
4. adversely affect any element of the visual composition - for example, cause the destruction or deterioration of traditional rubble walls;
5. adversely affect existing tree or shrub planting; or
6. Introduce alien forms, materials, textures or colours.

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 in conjunction with the Ministry of Agriculture and the Secretariat of the Environment comprising:

1. afforestation schemes;
2. rehabilitation of abandoned quarries;
3. reactivation of abandoned agricultural land, encouraging compatible methods of cultivation;
4. reuse and conversion of rural buildings which are compatible with their scenic setting;
5. rehabilitation of degraded habitat; and
6. 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.

Agriculture

15.30 The designation of Areas of Agricultural Value in the Structure Plan is intended primarily as an instrument of protection and as a statement of the importance of such areas in the resolution of conflicts with scenic, ecological, archaeological and mineral interests in the Local Plans. It is assumed that conflict between scenic, ecological and archaeological interests will be rare, but certain agricultural processes can menace all three. Therefore, notwithstanding the Planning Authority's support and protection of agricultural interests, it is the Authority's intention, in conjunction with the Ministry of Agriculture and individual farmers, to seek ways in which these other interests can be protected without unduly constraining efficient agricultural practice.

POLICY RCO 7: Structure Plan policies with respect to agriculture generally are set out in Policies AHF 1 - AHF 13. In applying these policies, particular attention will be paid to the needs of designated Areas of Agricultural Value and to their importance in the resolution of conflicts with other rural interests in Local Plans.

POLICY RCO 8: In Rural Conservation Areas, individual cultivators will be required to illustrate to the Planning Authority how any planned agricultural development will not harm the ecological, archaeological and scenic value of the Area.

POLICY RCO 9: In Rural Conservation Areas, individual cultivators will be required to put forward proposals to the Planning Authority for the cultivation of abandoned or derelict agricultural plots and for the restitution of ecologically, archaeologically or scenically valuable environments which have been degraded because of agricultural malpractice or neglect.

Ecology

POLICY RCO 10: In identifying and designating Areas of Ecological Importance in Local Plans, one or more of the following habitat types must be present:

1. Permanent springs
2. Saline marshlands
3. Sand dunes
4. Forest remnants
5. Semi-natural woodland
6. Natural freshwater pools and transitional coastal wetlands
7. Deep natural caves
8. Coastal cliffs.
9. Representative examples of typical Maltese habitats such as garigue, maquis, valley sides, watercourses and gently sloping rocky coasts.

POLICY RCO 11: In identifying and designating sites of Scientific Importance in Local Plans, one or more of the following features must be present:

1. The only known locality in the Maltese Islands where certain endemic and/or non-endemic species are found
2. One locality where certain endemic and/or non-endemic species with a restricted distribution in the Maltese Islands occur ('restricted distribution' is taken to mean occurrence in five sites or less)
3. The type locality of an endemic species
4. An important bird nesting site or of some other major ornithological interest
5. A locality of special palaeontological interest
6. A lithostratigraphical type section
7. A locality of particular geomorphological interest
8. Some other specific feature not listed above.

POLICY RCO 12: In Local Plans, the Planning Authority will give protection ratings to Areas of Ecological Importance and Sites of Scientific Importance as follows:

1. **LEVEL 1 zones will include important habitat types present only in very small areas and/or sites with unique species or features.**
2. **LEVEL 2 zones will include important habitat types present in relatively large areas and/or sites with rare species or features.**
3. **LEVEL 3 zones will include areas where control is necessary to preserve habitats/species/features in adjacent sites.**
4. **LEVEL 4 zones will include habitat and/or features of general interest.**

Protection policies to be applied to those rated areas by the Planning Authority are detailed in the Explanatory Memorandum.

15.31 The Planning Authority recognises that all local wildlife constitutes part of the natural heritage of the nation and that in some cases wildlife populations are suffering significant reductions.

POLICY RCO 13: In collaboration with the agencies concerned with the protection of wildlife, the Planning Authority will develop and implement policies for the protection and conservation of all local wildlife, but particularly threatened species. These policies may include the prohibition and/or regulation of certain activities; regulation of the use of weapons, traps and similar equipment; the establishment of open and closed seasons; and regulations concerning commercial and other exploitation of wildlife. In the wider interests of conservation, the Planning Authority will seek legislation regulating the killing, capture, collection and maintaining in captivity of certain flora and fauna, particularly those protected in European Community member states.

POLICY RCO 14: The Planning Authority will encourage the development of two Nature Parks which will be protected and managed areas to which the public has access and where reception and interpretation facilities will be provided. The first is at Ta' Cenc in Gozo (Policy TOU 10) and the second on the Ras il-Wahx headland north of Golden Beach.

15.32 The Planning Authority recognises that even built up and urban areas may include elements of scientific and natural interest which are worthy of preservation.

POLICY RCO 15: The Planning Authority will have a general presumption against developments in urban and other built up areas which are insensitive to the continued existence of identified features of scientific importance and significant elements of the country's natural heritage present within the area.

Sandy Beaches and Dune Areas

15.33 The Planning Authority recognises that sandy beaches are one of the country's most valuable resources especially due to their recreational use by the local population and by tourists. The Planning Authority further recognises that due to the human pressure on these beaches they are also among the most threatened of local environments.

POLICY RCO 16: No form of permanent construction will be allowed in sandy coastal areas and existing constructions will be removed wherever practicable.

POLICY RCO 17: Camping on sandy beaches and sand dunes will be prohibited and access of vehicles to sandy beaches and dune areas will be prevented.

POLICY RCO 18 Without prejudice to any other policy or regulation protecting dune areas, the Planning Authority will actively discourage the removal of sand-binding vegetation from such areas.

Rehabilitation of Degraded Habitats and Landscapes

15.34 Many local habitats and landscapes, including some considered to be of great scientific and cultural importance, are much degraded. The Planning Authority recognises that in some cases, these habitats and landscapes can be rehabilitated.

POLICY RCO 19: The Planning Authority will carry out surveys in order to identify sites where the habitat and/or landscape has degraded. Such surveys will be reviewed every two years.

POLICY RCO 20: The Planning Authority will take positive action to rehabilitate identified areas of degraded habitat and landscape and will look sympathetically on proposals from Government agencies and non-governmental bodies for rehabilitation schemes for these areas provided that such schemes do not conflict with other policies and/or regulations concerning these areas, and that they are scrutinised and approved by competent experts.

Control of Erosion

15.35 The Planning Authority recognises that erosion, particularly of coastal sediments including beach sand and coastal clay slopes, of soil and of cliff edges is a problem which needs special attention. The Planning Authority also recognises that beach erosion may be reduced by constructing coastal defences and additionally, that existing beaches could be enlarged and new ones created by dredging sand from the seabed and dumping it on land. However, the Planning Authority further recognises that inappropriate developments of this type could result in serious and irreparable damage to the coastal systems they are seeking to establish, protect and enhance, as well as to other coastal, nearshore and offshore marine resources.

- POLICY RCO 21:** The Planning Authority will have a general presumption against development in areas prone to erosion.
- POLICY RCO 22:** The Planning Authority will take positive action to prevent further erosion of sandy beaches, sand dunes, coastal clay slopes, soil, and cliff edges.
- POLICY RCO 23:** Developments connected with the construction of coastal defences, the enlargement of existing beaches, and the creation of new ones will only be allowed following a scientific study by competent persons of their short-term and long-term environmental, social and economic impact and provided that it is clearly demonstrated that there is a real need for such development and that the benefits outweigh the negative impacts.
- POLICY RCO 24:** The Planning Authority will continue to support existing regulations concerning excavation and transport of sand and soil.
- POLICY RCO 25:** The Planning Authority will take positive action to promote the repair of breached retaining walls on valley sides in order to prevent further soil erosion.
- POLICY RCO 26:** The Planning Authority will discourage the removal of the vegetation cover from abandoned fields and derelict land without good reason.
- POLICY RCO 27:** The Planning Authority will not allow any developments which involve the excavation of large quantities of Blue Clays.

Valleys

- 15.36 The Planning Authority recognises that valleys (=widien) are a valuable national resource in terms of water resources, agriculture, wildlife, landscape, soil conservation and leisure. The Planning Authority also recognises that dredging of valleys is necessary to keep the watercourses free of debris. However, it is aware that this dredging can be very disruptive to the natural communities of valleys and could lead to accelerated soil erosion.
- POLICY RCO 28:** The Planning Authority will continue to protect valleys as important water catchment areas.
- POLICY RCO 29:** No new physical development will normally be allowed on the sides of valleys and especially on valley watercourses except for constructions aimed at preventing soil erosion and the conservation and management of water resources.

Trees and Afforestation

- 15.37 The Planning Authority recognises that trees are a very important feature of the Maltese landscape and a valuable yet threatened resource.

- POLICY RCO 30:** The Planning Authority will have a general presumption against the siting of afforestation projects where stable indigenous natural vegetational communities are already established, but will encourage the siting of afforestation projects on abandoned agricultural land and on derelict ground.
- POLICY RCO 31:** Afforestation projects sites in non-urban areas will make use only of indigenous and archaeophytic species. The use of exotic species will be limited to urban areas.
- POLICY RCO 32:** The Planning Authority will encourage the planting of appropriate species of trees where they enhance the landscape and particularly along roadsides and where they provide a screen to visually unattractive areas.
- 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 regulates any other activity which may cause harm or death of such trees.

Minor Islands

- 15.38 The Planning Authority recognises that many minor islands of the Maltese archipelago support species or races which are unique to them besides other features of scientific interest. Because the land area of these islands is very small, any disturbance, even if small scale, is likely to disrupt the ecosystem and could lead to the extinction of the endemic populations.
- POLICY RCO 34:** Without prejudice to any other policy or regulation protecting the environment of the smaller islands of the Maltese archipelago, the Planning Authority will have a general presumption against any new physical development on these islands.

Explanatory note:

The minor islands of the Maltese archipelago are: St. Paul's Islands (=Selmunett Islands), Ghallis Rocks, rocks off Xrobb il-Ghagin, rocks off Delimara Point, Filfla Island, Cominotto, rocks in the Blue Lagoon area, Gebla tal-Halfa, Il-Hnejja, Tac-Cawl Rock, Fessej Rock, and Fungus Rock (=General's Rock).

The Qawra/Dwejra Area in Gozo

- 15.39 The Planning Authority recognises the Qawra area, including the Inland Sea and Dwejra Bay, in Gozo as a site of potential international scientific importance because of the complex of features of geological, geomorphological, ecological, archaeological, historical and aesthetic interest in this area.

- POLICY RCO 35:** The Qawra area including the Inland Sea and Dwejra Bay, in Gozo, will be declared a National Park as defined by the World Conservation Union.
- POLICY RCO 36:** Efforts will be made to declare the Qawra area including the Inland Sea and Dwejra Bay, in Gozo, a Natural World Heritage Site in terms of the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (Paris, 1972).
- POLICY RCO 37:** A management authority for the Qawra Area National Park will be set up. This management authority will formulate detailed management plans which take into consideration the type, location, size, traditional human use and activities, and the presence of features of natural, historical, archaeological, scientific or aesthetic interest in the Qawra area including the Inland Sea and Dwejra Bay, in Gozo, so that the public may enjoy these features without their suffering any degradation or harm.
- POLICY RCO 38:** Without prejudice to any other policy or regulation governing the Qawra area including the Inland Sea and Dwejra Bay, in Gozo, Conservation Areas, including Marine Conservation Areas, may be designated within the Qawra Area National Park, and policies relevant to such designated Conservation Areas are applicable in addition to any applicable to the National Park as a whole.

Education and Research

- 15.40 The Planning Authority recognises that the introduction of legislation to manage the country's natural resources, to protect the environment, and to guide sustainable development will not by itself be sufficient to attain these aims unless the Maltese public becomes aware of the necessity for this legislation and of the need for observing it. The Planning Authority further recognises that a positive attitude towards the environment can best be achieved through education.
- POLICY RCO 39:** The Planning Authority will actively promote educational programmes aimed at creating positive patterns of behaviour of individuals, groups and of society as a whole, towards the environment.
- POLICY RCO 40:** In conjunction with the Department of Education and the Government's environment agency, the Planning Authority will establish a resource centre for environmental education whose functions will be:
1. to keep the Maltese public adequately informed about environmental matters;
 2. to increase awareness of the necessity for environmental protection and the wise management of natural resources; and
 3. to provide the mass media with good quality information and educational material on the environment.

POLICY RCO 41: Provided that these are set up in harmony with existing policies and regulations, the Planning Authority will encourage and promote the establishment of Field Centres by recognised educational institutions, and of interpretive Visitor Centres associated with Conservation Areas.

15.41 The Planning Authority recognises the importance of research aimed at improving standards of scientific and technical knowledge with a view of taking effective action to conserve and improve the environment and to combat pollution and nuisances.

POLICY RCO 42: The Planning Authority, in conjunction with the appropriate Government agencies, will encourage and actively promote public and private research institutions to carry out research on the environment and on environmental problems, and to disseminate it widely.

Archaeology

15.42 Malta's archaeological heritage is one of the most important in the Mediterranean region. The Ggantija Temples and the Hal Saflieni Hypogeum are listed by UNESCO as World Heritage sites. More than 200 items and areas are identified and listed in the National Protective Inventory. It includes temples, caves, menhirs (monumental standing stones), dolmens (stone tables and sepulchral chambers), cart ruts, catacombs and tombs, from prehistory to the Roman age. Archaeological sites, existing and potential, need to be carefully identified, restored, maintained and made accessible. This need is urgent to avoid any further destruction or dilapidation. As with ecological interests, the Planning Authority's strategy is to identify Areas of Archaeological Importance and smaller Sites of Archaeological Importance and to grade these in terms of the level of protection required.

POLICY ARC 1: In Local Plans for Rural Conservation Areas, the Planning Authority will identify and designate Areas and Sites of Archaeological Importance. In Local Plans for urban areas, whether Urban Conservation Areas or not, the Planning Authority will identify and designate Sites of Archaeological Importance.

POLICY ARC 2: In making the designations referred to in Policy ARC 1, the Planning Authority will give protection ratings as appropriate to local circumstances as follows:

Class A: Top priority conservation. No development to be allowed which would adversely affect the natural setting of these monuments or sites. A minimum buffer zone of at least 100m around the periphery of the site will be established in which no development will be allowed.

Class B: Very important to be preserved at all costs. Adequate measures to be taken to preclude any damage from immediate development.

Class C: Every effort must be made for preservation, but may be covered up after proper investigation, documentation and cataloguing.

Class D: Belonging to a type known from numerous other examples. To be properly recorded and catalogued before covering or destroying.

POLICY ARC 3: Applications for planning permission for development affecting ancient monuments and important archaeological areas and sites, including areas and sites having such potential will normally be refused if there is an overriding case for preservation. Where there is no overriding case for preservation, development of such sites will not normally be permitted until adequate opportunities have been provided for the recording and, where desirable, the excavation of such sites.

POLICY ARC 4: As a matter of priority, the Planning Authority will designate Hagar Gim - Mnajdra and Ggantija as an Area of Archaeological Importance.

POLICY ARC 5: The Planning Authority will initiate investigations into the early designation of the following as Areas or Sites of Archaeological Importance:

1. Il-Qiegha (Bahrija Valley)
2. Bingemma Gap (Dwejra)
3. Gebel Ciantar to Ghar il-Kbir I/o Siggiewl
4. Ghar Dalam area I/o Birzebbugia.

POLICY ARC 6: In the interim period all sites recorded in the National Protective Inventory will be protected in accordance with Development Planning Act powers and by reference to the ratings given in Policy ARC 2.

POLICY ARC 7: The Planning Authority will adopt, maintain and extend the National Protective Inventory by initiating a programme of further investigation of recorded categories.

Marine Conservation Areas

15.43 Coastal zones and contiguous marine habitats often prove to be sites of extreme resource conflicts in any part of the world. In the case of the Maltese archipelago, the situation is quite critical since the Islands support one of the highest population densities in the world. It is not surprising, therefore, that Malta was instrumental in the promulgation of the Law of the Sea Treaty which is aimed at providing a rational and objective basis for allocating marine resources. Article 192(5) of the treaty charges states with the 'obligation to protect and preserve the marine environment'. The same article also provides a legal framework for preserving coastal and marine ecosystems.

- 15.44 Malta is still lacking in protected areas: At present no marine protected areas exist anywhere around the Maltese Islands. With mounting development pressure all along the coastal zone and increasing offshore resource exploitation, the need for marine protected areas becomes even more obvious.
- 15.45 Unfortunately the data needed to precisely identify Marine Conservation Areas is only partially available, and further analysis is required before such areas can be defined with confidence. The Structure Plan therefore designates candidate sites. The further analysis will require a good information system. The establishment of a Maritime Geographic Information System may be envisaged as an extension of the Geographic Information System which is being set up by the Mapping Unit of the Ministry for the Development of Infrastructure. A more practical alternative may be the setting up of a separate interlinked system joining Government and private organisations sharing some interest in marine affairs. This second alternative may be more desirable since the MGIS deals essentially with three dimensional oceanographic phenomena.

POLICY MCO 1: The Planning Authority designates the following sites as candidates for the status of Marine Conservation Areas. Following further analysis, these and other possible sites will be categorised and enjoy the protection accorded to each particular category:

1. Dwejra
2. Qbajjar
3. Famlia I-Hamra
4. Mgarr ix-Xini
5. Comino
6. Filfla
7. Cirkewwa
8. Mistra - St. Paul's Islands - Selmun
9. Qawra Point
10. Ranges to Dragonara
11. Outer Marsamxett
12. Delimara to St. Thomas Bay
13. Wied iz-Zurrieq to Ghar Lapsi
14. Blata ta' Ras il-Wahx.

POLICY MCO 2: The Planning Authority will, as far as possible, include archaeological sites and structures within the boundaries of Marine Conservation Areas. Access to archaeological sites and wrecks will be strictly regulated.

POLICY MCO 3: The Planning Authority will take the necessary steps towards the establishment of a Maritime Geographic Information System designed to integrate data related to coastal zone management and Maltese territorial waters.

15.46 A national system of marine protected areas should aim at:

1. Maintaining ecological processes which exist in Maltese waters thus protecting the various types of ecosystems which result from such processes

2. Maintaining the biodiversity provided by such ecosystems to the benefit of present as well as future generations. It should be borne in mind that the loss of genetic resources is now perceived as an unacceptable loss on a global scale and this trend must be checked immediately
3. Maintaining natural ecosystems for education purposes and research. This includes studies conducted at such sites to establish base lines aimed at assessing human impact of development projects on the environment at other locations
4. Maintaining sustainability of resource exploitation. Several species of marine organisms constitute valuable renewable resources with very significant economic benefits. Protected areas would prevent over-fishing of such resources through sustainable cropping
5. Rehabilitating degraded ecosystems. Centuries of human exploitation of the marine environment have resulted in the depletion of stocks of marine organisms. This has been effected either directly, through overfishing, or indirectly with the dumping of pollutants and other similar activities
6. Maximising social and economic benefits while ensuring sustainability of such benefits. Recreational uses and tourism have been recognised as compatible uses of protected sites if they are regulated and if their effects are regularly monitored. They also yield a constant and much needed revenue which is often much greater than other forms of short-term exploitation. Attempts should be made to quantify, within the methods of Natural Resource Accounting, the benefits that could be derived from area protection, the actual benefits accruing from existing protected areas, and the cost of no protection. The benefits of protected areas should be assessed within their boundaries and in non-protected areas. An example of this is the value of sea-grass meadows to fisheries in their role as nurseries.

POLICY MCO 4: The Planning Authority, in conjunction with the Secretariat for Environment, will conduct an underwater survey of infralittoral ecosystems for the Maltese Islands.

POLICY MCO 5: The Planning Authority will establish a national system of Marine Conservation Areas within the shortest possible time and only after full consultation with interested Government institutions, environment advocacy groups, maritime resources users' groups, and the general public.

POLICY MCO 6: It will be the policy of the Planning Authority to site, as much as possible, Marine Conservation Areas contiguous with terrestrial Conservation Areas. This will guarantee the protection of the littoral zone from any terrestrial activities likely to pose threats to the marine environment and vice versa.

- POLICY MCO 7:** The Planning Authority will ensure that the system of Marine Conservation Areas will include representative areas of all existing marine and coastal ecosystems as outlined in the infralittoral habitat survey.
- POLICY MCO 8:** Candidate sites for Marine Conservation Areas which exhibit a wide variety of ecosystems and habitats over a relatively small area will be accorded preference during the selection process. This will ensure greater ecological stability in the protected area and offer greater scope for a wide variety of activities.
- POLICY MCO 9:** The Planning Authority will as far as possible establish categories of Marine Conservation Areas which conform to international categories
- POLICY MCO 10:** The Planning Authority will establish a priority list of all Marine Conservation Areas and place sites within a ranked hierarchy.
- POLICY MCO 11:** The Planning Authority will recognise the traditional rights of fishermen to utilise resources. Wherever jobs may be threatened, fishermen will be given first option for jobs and services related to site protection.
- POLICY MCO 12:** The Planning Authority will include Marine Conservation Areas that benefit other nations or world-wide interests as, for example, where migrating species pass through or breed in a particular off-shore area.

16. PUBLIC UTILITIES

Services Planning

16.1 There will be two major benefits to be derived from the advent of the Structure Plan as far as the planning of public utility services is concerned. First, it will provide the various supply agencies with a common, comprehensive and long-term context within which to plan ahead. The first task therefore is to require these agencies to produce 20-year development plans to be compatible with the content and planning period of the Structure Plan. Second, the Structure Plan, or more correctly the Planning Authority, can be used to coordinate the efforts of the different agencies in order that a more efficient and integrated total services system can mature.

POLICY PUT 1: The Planning Authority will form an inter-Departmental working group whose primary task will be to:

1. implement the production of 20-year development plans for each of the public utility providers within the context of Structure Plan forecasts;
2. where applicable, to define common standards and procedures, particularly those required by the European Community;
3. to coordinate the immediate provision of services in order to give the consumer a more efficient and effective product; and
4. to initiate further studies and research within the context of shared objectives - for example, into alternative sources.

POLICY PUT 2: With the objective of convenient supply procedures and minimal disruption to both vehicles and pedestrians, the inter-Departmental group will consider the feasibility and optimal form of common services reservations, rights-of-way and common service ducts, particularly with respect to the development of the arterial and distributor road systems and new development areas.

POLICY PUT 3: A major strategy of public utilities planning will be the efficient management and conservation of resources, the recycling and reuse of waste water and waste materials, the minimisation of waste, and the avoidance of land, sea, and air pollution.

POLICY PUT 4: Strategies will be developed for the safeguarding of essential supplies (particularly fuels and water) and distribution systems, to achieve minimum disruption in the event of natural, accidental, or deliberate calamities.

- POLICY PUT 5:** Local Plans for all new development areas will include proposals for the layout of primary utility services, structures and facilities.
- POLICY PUT 6:** The present system of recording network alignments on survey sheets is both time-consuming and inaccurate. All services providers using land based maps should use the recently available Geographical Information System (GIS).

Potable Water

- 16.2 It is estimated that no land for new water supply facilities will be required before year 2010. The current provision of reverse osmosis plants is sufficient to cover demand to the design year. It is possible that new technologies will be introduced during that period but these would replace existing facilities on the same sites.
- 16.3 New water storage reservoirs will be required for water distribution purposes, but their locations have yet to be identified.
- POLICY PUT 7:** Water storage reservoirs shall either be located underground or be designed so as to blend to the maximum extent with the landscape.
- POLICY PUT 8:** In order to conserve potable water resources, the feasibility of using seawater systems in appropriate circumstances will be investigated.

Irrigation Water

- 16.4 This subject is dealt with in Section 11 of this Statement.

Sewerage

- 16.5 New sewage treatment plants will be required in mainland Malta, and new plants and outfalls in Gozo. A study is being commissioned by the Works Department and results should be known by late 1992 when new land demands will be added to the Structure Plan. The scope of the study should be extended to the 2010 to be compatible with the Structure Plan.
- 16.6 Complete restructuring of the sewerage network is necessary and very major capital sums will be required to do this. A large proportion of the funds available for physical development during the Plan period will have to be devoted to this utility.
- POLICY PUT 9:** The scope of the proposed study of sewerage requirements will be extended to year 2010 to ensure compatibility with the Structure Plan.
- POLICY PUT 10:** Proposals for sewage treatment and disposal will be the subject of environmental impact analyses, including proposals for treated sewage effluent for irrigation.
- POLICY PUT 11:** Three new treatment plants, all related to existing outfalls, will probably be required and the relevant Local Plans will designate sites with suitably sound geology at the following locations:

1. The hinterland of Anchor Bay
2. Wied Ghammieq near Ricasoli
3. Between Sannat Valley and Victoria in Gozo: there may also be a need for a water reuse plant at this site.

POLICY PUT 12: The relevant Local Plans will identify sites for new sewage pumping stations at Wied il-Kbir near Qormi and Bahar ic-Caghaq for existing demand. Local Plans for areas to be developed may have to include additional pumping station sites.

Solid Waste

16.7 The generation and disposal of waste is a national concern. Methods are outdated and enforcement ineffective. Illegal dumping is a national pastime. A complete turn-round of policies, procedures and attitudes is required.

POLICY PUT 13: Development involving processes likely to give rise to the generation of wastes, especially hazardous wastes, will only be permitted where the Planning Authority is satisfied that:-

1. There are no practicable or reasonable alternatives to the process proposed
2. All reasonable measures and procedures have been adopted to minimise the generation of waste
3. Wastes will be treated, stabilised or neutralised on site as far as practicable
4. Appropriate measures for safe transport, handling and disposal can be implemented and enforced

POLICY PUT 14: Applications for the handling, treatment and disposal of all waste, excepting totally inert mineral wastes, will be considered only if an Environmental Impact Assessment has been prepared for consideration by the Planning Authority. Permission will only be granted when the responsible authorities are satisfied that the nature and control of the operation will:

1. protect natural resources against pollution;
2. protect the local environment against nuisance; and
3. provide for an appropriate afteruse

POLICY PUT 15: An adequate number of controlled tips will be provided for use by the public for the deposit of domestic refuse.

- POLICY PUT 16:** Sites will be identified at strategic locations in relation to the main areas of population, commerce and industry for the transfer or treatment of municipal, commercial and industrial inert/non toxic waste.
- POLICY PUT 17:** The ultimate disposal of municipal, commercial and industrial inert/non toxic waste will normally be by controlled landfill. Sites will be identified at strategic locations, and there will be a presumption in favour of fewer, larger sites located in areas already derelict, such as voids created by quarrying operations. The Planning Authority will seek to provide for the release of suitable sites for landfilling in order to maintain sufficient capacity for a minimum of 5 years' and a maximum of 20 years' anticipated disposal requirements. Location and operation of landfill sites will take full account of the need to protect groundwater from pollution, and adjacent property from gas migration. Reuse and disposal of power station fly ash will be given priority.
- POLICY PUT 18:** The Planning Authority will actively investigate the need for and most appropriate facilities for the treatment and safe disposal of hazardous and toxic wastes. Appropriate facilities will be established within five years of the formal adoption of the Structure Plan, subject to environmental and public health considerations.
- POLICY PUT 19:** The relevant Local Plan(s) will give consideration to the siting of a transfer station in a central location for the onward transmission of waste material to the St. Antnin recycling plant.
- POLICY PUT 20:** The Planning Authority will give high priority to the preparation of a Waste Disposal Subject Plan.

Electricity

- 16.8 It is unlikely that the new electricity generating plant at Delimara will cater for all demands in the Islands until year 2010. What is unknown at this stage is whether additional generating capacity will be found by retaining all or part of the existing Marsa station or by commissioning an entirely new station or stations. National security as well as technical issues will have to be considered in reaching a decision. Until this is done the Planning Authority can make no provision in the Structure Plan either for new generating station sites or for reuse of the Marsa site in the event of decommissioning. In any of these events, the Planning Authority will require Enemalta to carry out comprehensive Environmental Impact Assessments of a form and content satisfactory to the Authority.
- 16.9 A major Environmental Impact Assessment is needed now with reference to the new 132 KV distribution line from the new Delimara station via Marsa. An overhead line would have a pronounced visual impact and sterilise a great deal of land. An underground line would have important environmental, maintenance and security benefits and, if in specialised tunnel form, could be used by other services: the additional cost, however, could be up to Lm8 million.

- POLICY PUT 21:** The Planning Authority will require the Inter-Departmental working group (Policy PUT 1) to decide on the optimal form and alignment of the new 132 KV distribution line from the new electricity generating plant at Delimara. The group will commission whatever Environmental Impact Assessment the Authority judges to be necessary.
- POLICY PUT 22:** The Planning Authority will seek from Enemalta a 20-year development plan based on the Structure Plan, and will co-operate with Enemalta to ensure the optimal siting of new facilities for addition to the Plan. The Authority and Enemalta will liaise as necessary with the Inter-Departmental working group described in Policy PUT 1.
- POLICY PUT 23:** As from the commencement date of the Structure Plan, and in conjunction with Policy BEN 3, the Planning Authority will require Enemalta to install only underground electricity distribution systems in areas of new urban development. The Planning Authority will also seek to establish in conjunction with Enemalta a programme of progressive undergrounding of all existing overhead supply cables and apparatus in existing built-up areas, the programme to include any necessary adaptation of internal connections within the properties of individual consumers.

Telecommunications

- 16.10 Telemalta has forecast a need for 13 new telephone exchanges by 1995 but has no development plan beyond that date.
- 16.11 In the future it is envisaged that households will have more communication equipment including phone, videophone, access to selected databases such as travel, hobbies, and catalogue shopping, access to video information, central automatic control of equipment such as airconditioning and lights, satellite communications, and cable TV. All this necessitates a study of how future houses should be networked, and how this influences present practice in building plans.
- 16.12 Large institutions increasingly have their locations computerised including modern data networks. Standards in the laying down of local area networks within an institution's internal ground area are needed to protect the institutions. Among other issues is the use of proper earth installation to protect both equipment and users of such communications equipment, and adherence to mechanical and electrical standards. In the business environment in general the applications required include voice, information (electronic mail, financial transactions, electronic directories), video (videophone, videoconferencing), and data transfer including colour fax. These will impact on the growth of Telemalta exchanges.
- 16.13 Another issue is security in terms of surviving disaster. Business corporations such as off-shore companies, banks, the proposed stock exchange, and on-line Government departments cannot afford downtime of the communications network. This necessitates the requirement of alternative routing paths with the full necessary bandwidth in the case of a broken main network line or a major fault in an exchange. It also necessitates all the safety requirements both at the public utility and at work premises.

POLICY PUT 24: The Planning Authority will seek from Telemalta a 20-year development plan based on the Structure Plan and on meeting all new telecommunications requirements, and will co-operate with Telemalta to ensure the optimal siting of new facilities for addition to the Plan.

POLICY PUT 25: As from the commencement date of the Structure Plan and in conjunction with Policy BEN 3, the Planning Authority will require Telemalta to install only underground telecommunications systems in areas of new urban development. The Planning Authority will also seek to establish in conjunction with Telemalta a programme of progressive undergrounding of all existing overhead cables and apparatus in built-up areas, the programme to include any necessary adaptation of internal connections within the properties of individual users.

Posts

16.14 The Posts Department has immediate plans for new branch and sub post offices but has no specific plans for the design period to year 2010.

POLICY PUT 26: The Planning Authority will seek from the Posts Department a 20-year development plan based on the Structure Plan, and will co-operate with the Department to ensure the optimal siting of new facilities for addition to the Plan. The development plan will take into account the likely growth in electronic post (facsimile transmission) and the possible use of post offices for other Government services.

PART 3:

IMPLEMENTATION RESOURCES

17. FINANCE

- 17.1 A primary resource in any society is the human resource, and the Planning Authority, through the Structure Plan, stresses the need to augment efforts to increase skill levels in all sectors of the economy, but particularly in management and technology. Nevertheless, an equally important resource is finance, and the one which will inevitably be the major concern for Government.
- 17.2 The central issue is the likely availability of finance to implement Structure Plan recommendations and thereby provide some measure of the Plan's viability. There are three main sources of development finance - the indigenous public sector, the indigenous private sector, and foreign finance in the form of either public to public aid or private sector entrepreneurial investment.
- 17.3 None of these sources is capable of precise forecasting, but it is probable that publicly-generated resources will increase in absolute terms over the 20 year plan period. In Malta this will result from the steady move of labour out of the public into the private sector thus lowering the public sector wage bill and increasing the labour force in the wealth-producing private sector which can then be taxed in both its individual and corporate forms to permit a further claw-back of wealth into the public sector. These increased public resources will be further augmented by more effective tax mechanisms and, if Structure Plan recommendations are adopted, by realisation of a major Government asset - its land holdings. Membership of the European Community, even in any transitional period which may be negotiated, would generate higher levels of aid through the Community's regional development grants. In summary, resources available for Government investment will almost certainly increase in real terms, after discounting for inflation, but not to a level which will allow any significant breakthrough in public spending.
- 17.4 The indigenous private sector provides the capital for the bulk of housing, commercial and industrial development. Assuming even a modest increase in the general level of prosperity and continuing Government attempts to mobilise the private sector by more liberal financial controls and reform of rent legislation, it is probable that the level of investment by this sector will also increase in absolute terms. In terms of fulfilling Structure Plan objectives and forecasts it is essential that it does. For example, the annual house-building rate in the Islands is currently about 2,500 of which some 2,200 are private sector. The new units forecast by year 2010 imply an annual production rate of some 3,000 of which at least 2,700 will be private sector - an annual increase in investment of almost 25%. At the same time there will be many new investment opportunities - in large shopping complexes and private office developments, for example, which will be new to the Maltese economic scene. The message is that an influx of foreign capital may be necessary to sustain the level of growth which the Structure Plan postulates.

17.5 A complementary phenomenon will possibly be an influx of foreign labour to fill the gap between labour supply and labour demand which the Planning Authority suspects will be evident by midway through the Plan period - with or without membership of the European Community. This may be offset to some extent by Maltese emigrating to work in other Community countries, but a net increase in the labour force in Malta is the more likely scenario. Such labour immigration could help to alleviate skill shortages. What is more certain is that its implications in terms of the provision of housing and services would have to be seriously considered in some future review of the Structure Plan.

17.6 The major issue in considering development resources is the relationship between the assumed increase in public and private investment capability on the one hand and on the other, the cost of those Structure Plan recommendations which are additional to normal Government expenditure. The following is a list of Structure Plan policies which imply Government investment:

1. Set up/operate Planning Authority
2. Refurbishment grants and loans (SET 4)
3. Traffic and environment management schemes (SET 6, TEM 9)
4. Environmental improvement measures (BEN 11)
5. New technical college (SOC 11)
6. Additional education provisions (SOC 13)
7. Joint use education/community facilities (SOC 15)
8. Extended library provision (SOC 21)
9. New cultural facilities (SOC 22)
10. Handicapped mobility standards (SOC 24)
11. New Government administration centre (COM 1)
12. Shopping area rehabilitation programme (COM 7)
13. Service industry relocation incentives (IND 7)
14. Obnoxious industry relocation incentives (IND 10)
15. Irrigation water network (AHF 2)
16. Agricultural survey (AHF 4)
17. Agricultural packing stations (AHF 10)
18. Agricultural harbour depot (AHF 11)
19. Food stockpile depots (AHF 12)

20. Fishing centres (AHF 14)
21. Minerals evaluation (MIN 2)
22. Mineral sites inventory (MIN 14)
23. Quarry reclamation (MIN 15)
24. Relocation of AFM naval base and Nautical School (TOU 8)
25. District recreation centres (REC 4)
26. Foreshore enhancement (REC 10, REC 12)
27. Country parkways (REC 13)
28. Picnic areas (REC 14)
29. Arterial and distributor road networks (RDS 1)
30. Roadworks compensation (RDS 6)
31. Improved road and footway maintenance (RDS 8, RDS 9)
32. Cross-harbour ferries (PTR 4)
33. Bus/ferry interchanges (PTR 5)
34. New bus terminus at Valletta (PTR 7)
35. Car-sharing scheme (PTR 14)
36. Highway Code (LEM 1)
37. Traffic police/wardens (LEM 3)
38. Inner Harbour Terminal (IIT 2)
39. Improved berthing facilities (IIT 4)
40. Environmental enhancement of Urban Conservation Areas (UCO 6)
41. Conservation promotion programme (UCO 13)
42. Set up/operate National Trust (UCO 14)
43. Conservation pilot project (UCO 15)
44. Rural Conservation Area enhancement (RCO 6)
45. Areas of Ecological Importance and Sites of Scientific Importance (RCO 10, RCO 11)

46. Areas and Sites of Archaeological Importance (ARC 1)
47. Maritime Geographic Information System (MCO 3)
48. Marine Survey (MCO 4)
49. Controlled domestic tipping sites (PUT 15)
50. Undergrounding of electricity supply cables (PUT 23)
51. Undergrounding of telecommunications cables (PUT 25).

17.7 Some of these items are not generated by the Structure Plan and would have to be provided in the normal course of events (eg. new sewage treatment plants); some are normal cost centres but have been increased in level of provision (eg. arterial roads); and some represent a diversion of resources rather than completely new expenditure (eg. a reorientation of Lohombus Corporation funds from new to refurbished housing). However most represent new public investment demands.

17.8 The increase in public funding resources noted previously will clearly contribute substantially to investment needs but it is the Planning Authority's belief that new procedures will be necessary to extract from the private sector some of the profit it will make from the public sector's provision of development - supporting infrastructure. The Authority suggests:

1. A registration fee for applications for permission to develop, similar to the present Building Levy. This could be varied to support other Government policies - for example, a small or zero charge for housing refurbishment and a higher charge for new housing.
2. If the application is approved, a substantial charge against the cost of providing infrastructure (roads, public utilities, etc.), protecting the environment, developing communal parking, or any other provision which the Planning Authority may decide.
3. A tax on undeveloped, derelict or abandoned sites which are ripe for development and on building shells in urban areas.

17.9 The most important issues for Government to consider, however, are the timing of the various provisions and the priorities to be established between them. Some items such as public utility services will simply have to be provided in the normal manner if the house-building or industrial development programmes are not to be unduly delayed. However, with some other items the Government has the flexibility of choice - for example, a dramatic push forward with arterial road building might be achieved if nothing were done about the refurbishment of conservation areas; or high standards of rural and marine conservation might be established at the expense of road maintenance.

17.10 The Government must decide such issues, but it is probable that technical and political objectives and values will coincide to produce a policy of a little of everything. If priorities and emphases are found to be feasible, the Planning Authority recommends strongly that they be given to the upgrading of the general environment.

18.3 These data will be used to determine if and when a review of the Structure Plan is required and as input to any such review and to Local Plan preparation. Much of the monitoring process will comprise the transfer of data from Government Departments and other agencies, and the Planning Authority will seek agreement on the format of such data in order to ensure its usefulness. In other cases the Planning Authority will carry out its own surveys for its own purposes, but will ensure that results are passed to other interested agencies.

19. PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

Government Procedures

- 19.1 The successful realisation of Structure Plan policies is heavily dependent on effective property management. Land management is not solely achieved through planning legislation. Land assembly and land ownership offer a more certain mode of management, and where large areas of land fall under one ownership every effort should be made to ensure that the policies and programmes of the landowner are compatible with those of the Structure Plan.
- 19.2 There is an opportunity for Government, being itself a major land holder, to address these issues effectively. The Government practice of disposing of land for certain uses at preferential rates may have short-term benefits in encouraging some kinds of popular development, but in the long term it can have serious adverse effects. Not only does it depress land values and thereby encourage the extravagant use of land which is in short supply. It also deprives the Government of revenue which it urgently requires to overcome environmental and other problems. It is recognised that the Government's room for manoeuvre is restricted by the cumulative effect of emphyteutic leases granted in the past. However, steps should be taken to ensure that in future leases and disposals maximum benefit accrues to the community through the State. These measures should apply to all uses, but particularly to commercial uses where development values can appreciate rapidly.
- 19.3 Government is also responsible for a substantial number of buildings without having the necessary resources or ability to maintain them properly. Due to the lack of proper information, it is not able to make the best use of real estate resources whether they comprise buildings or land. There is a need for the establishment of an estate management function within Government in order to realise the full economic potential of these resources.
- 19.4 In some parts of urban areas the realisation of full economic potential within the framework of environmental requirements is severely limited by fragmented and spatially incongruous property holdings. If urban land uses are to be intensified as envisaged by the Structure Plan it will be necessary for the Government to intervene in the land market to rationalise land ownership patterns and to obtain for the community some of the economic benefits of the rationalisation. Such intervention is particularly necessary where large-scale redevelopment or rehabilitation is intended.
- 19.5 Administrative mechanisms will have to be in place, backed by the necessary legislation, to be able to mobilise private sector resources into a collective effort for the implementation of rehabilitation and renewal policies on a large scale.
- 19.6 Planning decisions inevitably influence land values. The existing situation in which different criteria are used for determining compensation values when land is being taken over for a public purpose as opposed to values attached to land for taxation purposes, creates inequities and other problems.

19.7 The Planning Authority therefore makes the following recommendations:

1. An Estates Department should be established within Government, with responsibility for real estate and estate management functions aimed at ensuring the best use of Government land and helping to achieve Structure Plan policies.
2. Government should assist the process of land assembly for private and joint venture development where the Planning Authority is inclined to grant a development permit consistent with Structure Plan policies, and should ensure equitable compensation or rights to participate in the development.
3. An independent and impartial body should be established to value land and buildings for all purposes, based on open market values.

Multi Ownership Accommodation

19.8 An increasing number of tourism complexes and other developments worldwide are being established and operated by professional management companies as being considered with respect to Ta' Cenc in Gozo (Policy TOU 10). Typically, the development promoter sells apartments and villas to individual purchasers. The management company then operates both the central facilities, such as are normally found in hotels, and also the apartments and villas when an owner is not present. The accommodation is used in this way as a normal part of the tourism or other facility.

19.9 There are several advantages to this approach:

1. High outlays of development capital are recouped quickly. This assists the initial viability of the project, and reduces the risk of financial problems during the course of the project.
2. An opportunity is provided for the small investor to own a second home, or one to which he may eventually retire or part retire, and use it as a source of income.
3. Professional estate and property management of all apartments and villas, and the total development, is secured at all times.
4. The project can be competitive with similar ones in other countries where this practice is common.
5. Utilisation of the housing stock is maximised.

19.10 The purchaser of the apartments or villa typically obtains the freehold, and also enters into a management agreement with the management company. The purchaser is also at liberty to sell his freehold as he would be with a normal property, although the management agreement would go with the property. The approach is very different to timesharing where no freehold purchase is involved. Because of the freehold ownership of individual apartments or villas, the total project is described as multi ownership.

19.11 Existing dwellings and other facilities can be included in property and estate management operations by a management company. Common ownership of apartment accesses and gardens can benefit from such operations. In this instance the management company is sometimes owned by the residents themselves.

19.12 Types of development to which multi ownership can apply include:

1. New tourism complexes
2. Schemes aimed at upgrading existing tourist accommodation and general housing stock
3. Housing for the elderly
4. Specialist markets such as health farms and language schools
5. Schemes promoted by non-profit organisations to provide lower cost housing for sale or rent, sometimes called Housing Associations
6. Yachting-related and similar dwellings where owners are absent for extended periods
7. Voluntary organisation schemes aimed at historical area improvements and the renovation of the old buildings.

19.13 It is therefore recommended that consideration is given to legislation which permits and controls multi ownership schemes, together with their associated property and estate management companies.