

Fact Sheet Malta – Regional Planning Level

Planning system of Malta						Type of plan
Planning level	Planning instrument	Content of plan	Legal basis	Policy maker	Legal impact	Scale
National	Strategic Plan for Environment and Development (Act VII of 2015 renames this plan as the Spatial Strategy)	Strategic spatial development, including economic, social and environmental balances and policies	Chapter 552 Development Planning Act (Act VII of 2015)	Malta Planning Authority (as approved by Parliament)	Binding for lower-tier spatial plans and policies	Nationwide (up to 25 nautical miles from the baseline coast)
National	Subject Plans	Deals with specific matters of an area setting out detailed strategic policies in relation to development	Chapter 552 DPA sub-article 47	Malta Planning Authority	Plan applies to all relevant areas of the Spatial Strategy such that it is superseded by	Nationwide
Regional (not conformant to NUTS aggregation)	Local Plans (Currently there are seven in place. To be revised to 2 – one for Malta and one for Gozo)	Deals with specific planning matters of an area by setting out detailed strategic policies that are not taken into account by Subject Plans	Chapter 552 DPA sub-article 48	Malta Planning Authority	Binding localities falling within the region	Regional
Sub-regional/ Sub-Local	Action Management Plan	Deals with specific zone in local plans in a more thematic or focussed action (e.g. Gawra Action Plan)	Chapter 552 DPA sub-article 49	Malta Planning Authority	Binds sub-regional/sub-local areas	Sub-regional/sub-local
National spatial thematic	Other policies e.g. Planning Guidance	Deals with specific matters on a national scale e.g. Retail Planning Guidance	Chapter 552 DPA sub-article 50	Malta Planning Authority	Takes forward strategic policy in greater detail as binds to a specific thematic requirement	National in a thematic context
Site specific	Development brief	Deals with a specific site or specific small area	Chapter 552 DPA sub-article 51	Malta Planning Authority	Sets detailed environmental and development planning parameters for a specific site	Site specific

Facts on the Local Plan

Legal basis and competence

- The Development Planning Act of 1992, repealed by the Environment and Development Planning Act of 2010 and subsequently repealed by the Development Planning Act of 2016 requires the Malta Planning Authority to prepare Local Plans for the whole of the Maltese islands. The South Malta Local Plan (SMLP) is one of seven plans and includes 18 localities covering a total area of about 63.1 km² or approximately 20% of the entire territory of the Maltese islands. The plan area comprises the localities of Fgura, Ghaxaq, Gudja, Kirkop, Luqa, M'Scalia, Mqabba, Paola, Qrendi, Safi, Sta. Lucia, Siggiewi, Tarxien, Xghajra, Zabbar, Zebbug, Zejtun and Zurrieq as well as the Marsa and Hal Far Industrial Estates.

Binding force

- The current set of local plans were approved by the minister responsible for development planning.

Tasks and content

- A Local Plan deals mainly with land-use planning and development issues, and indicates where development can take place, the type of development permitted and the criteria against which development proposals are to be assessed by the Malta Environment and Planning Authority (MEPA). Its main function is to guide development by seeking a sustainable balance between the economic and social needs of the public (e.g requirements for homes, shops, employment, transport, recreation and community facilities) and the need to protect and improve the existing urban and natural environment and to meet future demand in a sustainable manner. This is a complex task as requirements are diverse and very often conflicting and the various individual interests have to be balanced against the needs and interests of the general public.

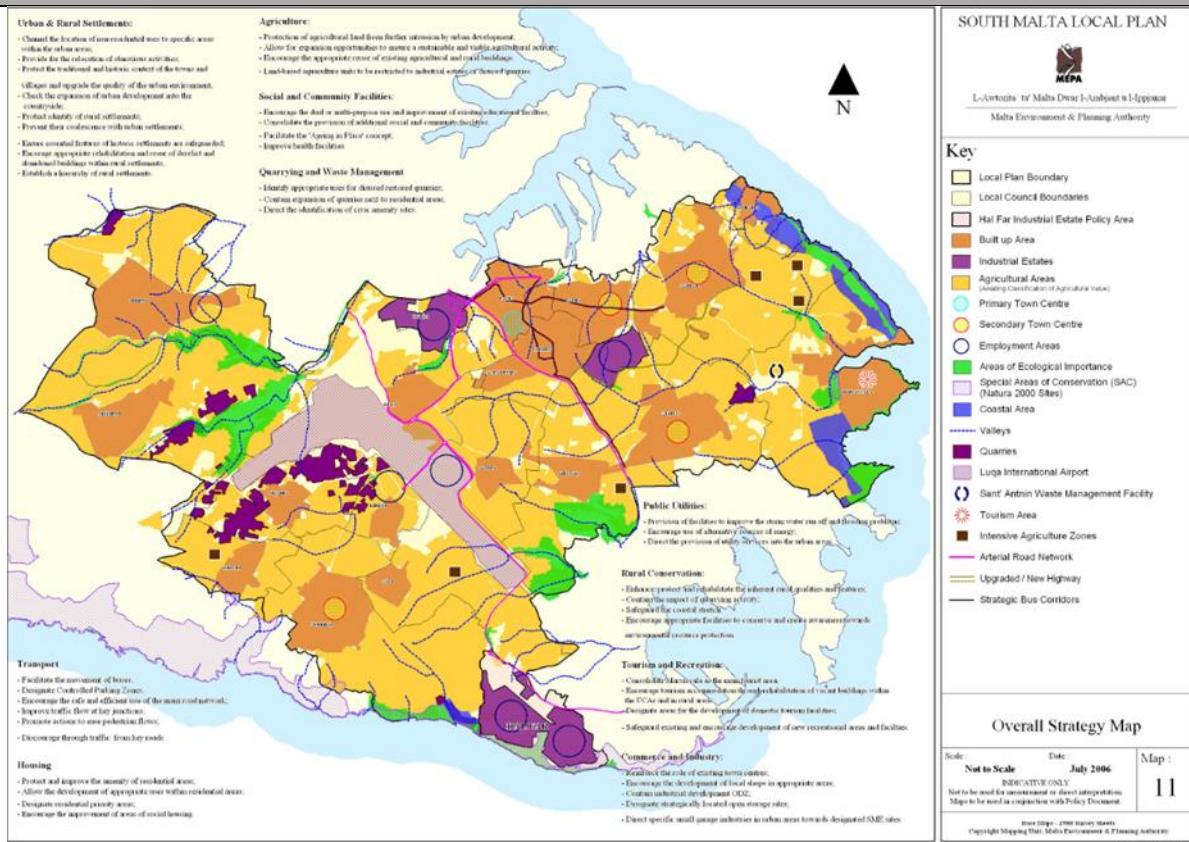
Process, duration, participation

- The South Malta Local Plan was approved by the minister responsible for development planning in 2006.
- Besides information events, workshops and extensive public consultation meetings the plan was coordinated with the government.
- The plan came into force in 2006.

Duration of validity

- The plan was approved in 2006 and is to be reviewed after 10 years.

Details of the Plan



Characteristics

The Local Plan provides the framework for development within the plan area for up to 10 years, following its adoption by the government. The primary thrust of the Local Plan is to protect and secure the enhancement of all the assets in the area, to achieve a more sustainable quality of life and efficient use of land for all sectors. The SMLP area borders most of the other Local Plan areas (North West, Grand Harbour, Central and Marsaxlokk Bay) and thus pays due regard to the relevant proposals in these other plans in devising proposals for the plan area. In addition, this plan ensures that its policies and proposals are generally compatible with the relevant plans of the adjoining areas to ensure an overall consistent and comprehensive approach. The Local Plan consists of maps and 'inset' maps supported by written policy statements. The written statement comprises two sections. Section One is the main policy document containing general policies that affect the whole plan area or large parts of it and sets out the guiding planning principles for each issue, e.g. settlements, social and community facilities, tourism, conservation, etc. which are then taken forward in the Area Policies in Section Two. General policies deal with issues not covered by the Structure Plan (or any other policy documents approved by the authority) in sufficient detail for the purpose of the Local Plan. Section Two deals with different parts of the South Malta Local Plan area.

Notes and Links

Planning Authority (2006): Planning Authority - Local Plan Details. Available at: <https://www.pa.org.mt/en/local-plan-details/south-malta-local-plan> (Accessed 23 May 2022).