

ResidentFirst

SLOW STREETS

November 2020



KUNSILL LOKALI
GHAJNSIELEM

ResidentFirst

This document has been authored by studjurban and Studio Tom Van Malderen on behalf of the Local Councils' Association Malta and Għajnsielem Local Council.

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Introduction

Streets in Malta and Gozo are mostly dedicated for vehicles, including local streets which should encourage a greater pedestrian activity. Vehicles also travel at relatively high speeds, causing safety concerns for residents and other street users.

At the same time, the average width of pavements is, at best, 1m – too narrow to allow two people to pass each other comfortably, or for wheelchair users to be able to navigate along a pavement, or even for an individual to pass by with a stroller. As a result, people are

forced to be in close proximity with passing vehicles, risking walking, running, scooting, or cycling in the street next to speeding cars. This is a street safety issue, as well as a public health issue, in the light of the new social distancing guidelines.

What is the Slow Streets initiative?

Slow Streets is a pioneering initiative in Malta and Gozo geared towards giving back streets to the people rather than cars, focusing primarily on residents' wellbeing. The Local Councils' Association, in partnership with Transport Malta and the Planning Authority, is collaborating on this action plan in order to give priority to pedestrians and cyclists by promoting walking, cycling and better accessibility to public transport networks. These new strategies will plan to ensure that mobility within localities is safe, sustainable, healthy and efficient, in addition to providing more public open space that contributes to an elevated quality of life.

The initiative focuses on strategies of traffic calming and management. In addition, each Local Council will study the degree of pedestrianisation it should implement according to the

locality's street network and the needs of its residents, whether temporarily or permanently. Slow Streets provides residents with an opportunity to experience their neighbourhoods in a new way, as a number of safe walking corridors will connect civic landmarks, medical facilities and other important services. This includes linking cycling priority routes and temporarily designated streets converted into creative play areas for children to enjoy safely.

In Malta and Gozo, streets are the primary public spaces, used daily by everyone. In order to improve the liveability of our localities, therefore, we need to start from our streets. Having pedestrian-friendly streets implies greater, equitable access to the outdoors, active transportation, opportunities to exercise, and the support of both physical and mental health.

Slow Streets provides residents with an opportunity to experience their neighbourhoods in a new way.



Source: publicspace.org

Who are Slow Streets for?

At the heart of Slow Streets lies the local community and the need for better well-being for all residents. The ultimate objective is to make streets more welcoming and accessible to

people of all ages, who want to travel on foot, by bicycle, wheelchair, scooter, or skateboard. In particular, there is special consideration for the needs of the elderly and physically disabled.

How do Slow Streets work?

The Slow Streets programme is designed to limit through traffic on certain residential streets so as to allow such streets to be used more as shared spaces. 'Through traffic' is vehicular traffic which passes through a particular locality or area, rather than stopping there, solely in order to arrive at another destination.

Simple tools such as signage, floor markings and cones will be used to slow down speeds and block roads, either temporarily or permanently, to improve safety for people who want to walk or cycle. This type of intervention is commonly referred to as 'tactical urbanism'. Access to private driveways/garages and loading and unloading of goods will be maintained for residents and businesses respectively, with better management schemes, as well as access for emergency and service vehicles as required.

Different degrees of interventions are subsequently proposed according to findings from comprehensive site analyses and the development of a vision for each street as part of a wider, more extensive, network.



source: Global Designing Cities



source: Global Designing Cities

At the heart of Slow Streets lies the local community and the need for better wellbeing for all residents.

What is 'tactical urbanism'?

Tactical urbanism involves using temporary materials in order to repurpose places and transform them into more dynamic public spaces, with pedestrian safety as a primary concern. The strategy is a phased approach, with short-term commitment that eventually leads to more permanent solutions.

Such experiments are carried out inexpensively, and with flexibility, in order to assess the potential success of an idea and to enable making adjustments before committing significant capital expenditure. Tactical urbanism can push existing ideas to move closer to implementation in the quickest manner.

Some examples of tactical urbanism strategies are:

- temporary signage and bollards to close off some streets for different uses, such as play streets or the setting up of markets;
- use of planters to define a boundary, especially at important pedestrian entrances;
- use of temporary movable furniture to turn a parking space into public space;
- use of painted markings on pavements to highlight priority for pedestrians; and
- added signage to help minimise through vehicular traffic and prioritise walking and/or cycling.



source: Chicago Tribune



source: changing-transport.org

Selected materials will likely involve some level of trial and error before reaching the optimal design for the particular context. The flexibility of tactical urbanism initiatives provides an opportunity for creative thinking, and is the starting point for real change.

Tactical urbanism involves using temporary materials in order to repurpose places and transform them into more dynamic public spaces, with pedestrian safety as a primary concern.

At the heart of Slow Streets lies the local community and the need for better well-being for all residents. The ultimate objective is to make streets more welcoming and accessible to people of all ages, who want to travel on foot, by bicycle, wheelchair, scooter or skateboard.

The Slow Streets Network is based on this important concept, wherein local streets become primarily focused for local resident access and services, as opposed to through traffic.

Slow Streets Network

In order to propose a solid strategy for the locality, both desktop and on the ground research was conducted to assess the potential of a Slow Streets network.

The first step of in-depth desktop 'macro' analysis entails studying the locality in terms of transportation networks, main activity zones, development density and the presence of public open spaces. Analysing transportation networks is important to understand the main vehicular and pedestrian routes, in order to be able to identify which roads should be mainly encouraged for vehicular use and, subsequently, which streets may be alleviated, or even liberated, from traffic so as to be prioritised for pedestrians. Over the recent years, there has been significant investment within the arterial and distributor road infrastructure in Malta, which has undergone expansion and upgrading, however it is not being used to its maximum potential. The widening of the arterial and distributor road networks should enable us to relieve the pressure on our local roads, particularly from through traffic.

The strategies of Slow Streets are based on this important concept, wherein local streets become primarily focused for local resident access and services, as opposed to through traffic. Within these strategies, access to public transportation is always being permitted, even within those streets which have been selected to have no (or very limited) access for vehicles, so as to further encourage the public to use buses rather than their

private cars.

The main outcome of the desktop analysis is the selection of potential Slow Streets, which together make up a comprehensive network. The selection of streets to be included within this network comprises a critical stage, as it sets the overall strategic vision for the locality. The selected streets undergo further in-depth 'micro' analysis, wherein on-site observations are carried out at different times of day and for different days of the week, in order to ensure that the selected strategy may be carried out successfully. These observations include:

- pedestrian connectivity (understanding the location and frequency of crossings and pavement continuity);
- other connections, such as stairs or informal/unsurfaced paths;
- solar exposure of the street network (and the amount of shade throughout the day);
- the presence of green or urban open pockets, including front gardens;
- the availability of street furniture;
- ground floor use (for instance, whether commercial or residential);
- the amount and frequency of garage doors and the presence of reserved parking; and
- social behaviour and activity within the urban spaces.

Pavements and roads are further measured on site in order to sketch an accurate section for each of the selected streets. This exercise is crucial for determining the possible intervention within each street, based on the available road space, and taking into account both the activities and characteristics of the street.

All the data is collated and the proposed network is analysed with all the information at hand. The project team goes through this analysis and establishes a vision for the locality – with a prime objective being that of resolving existing problems caused by through traffic and improving the connections to important public spaces – following which, individual street and space interventions are discussed and agreed upon.

The strategy is finally concluded once it may be established that the individual interventions are able to coexist seamlessly, without creating any unwanted repercussions and while further considering potential extensions with neighbouring localities.

Within these strategies, access to public transportation is always being permitted, even within those streets which have been selected to have no access for vehicles.

Għajnsielem

Għajnsielem is a large, historic village in the south-eastern area of Gozo, Malta's sister island, and includes the area known as Mġarr which houses the Mġarr harbour where the Gozo Ferry stops. In Għajnsielem, one can find the iconic Parish Church dedicated to St. Catherine of Alexandria, decorated with gothic-style features and a central tall spire. Other attractions in the village include the Chapel of Lourdes, a niche dedicated to Our Lady of Lourdes, and the large Fort Chambray — all dominating the views from Mġarr harbour.

Most of the village is residential, especially the central area surrounding the Parish Church, with some commercial activity around the centre (such as clubs and the civic centre), however the peripheral zones of the village are being increasingly dominated by commercial accommodation. Whilst the village is quite large due to the surrounding agricultural and natural land, the residential zone is very walkable since distances across the built up areas are short. Services are also within walking distance as they are mainly situated around the square.

Some of the surrounding roads, stemming

out of the central square, are narrow and shaded throughout most of the day, thus having the potential to form part of the Slow Streets Network especially as more pedestrian-oriented routes. Other roads are more vehicle-oriented, allowing two-way traffic even if some of these roads are narrow and may not have the appropriate street width. Such roads have the potential to reduce vehicular traffic therein and be used as public spaces in their own right by local residents. This could be achieved by diverting cars primarily towards upgraded main and arterial/distributor roads or by programming road closures during designated times and/or days.

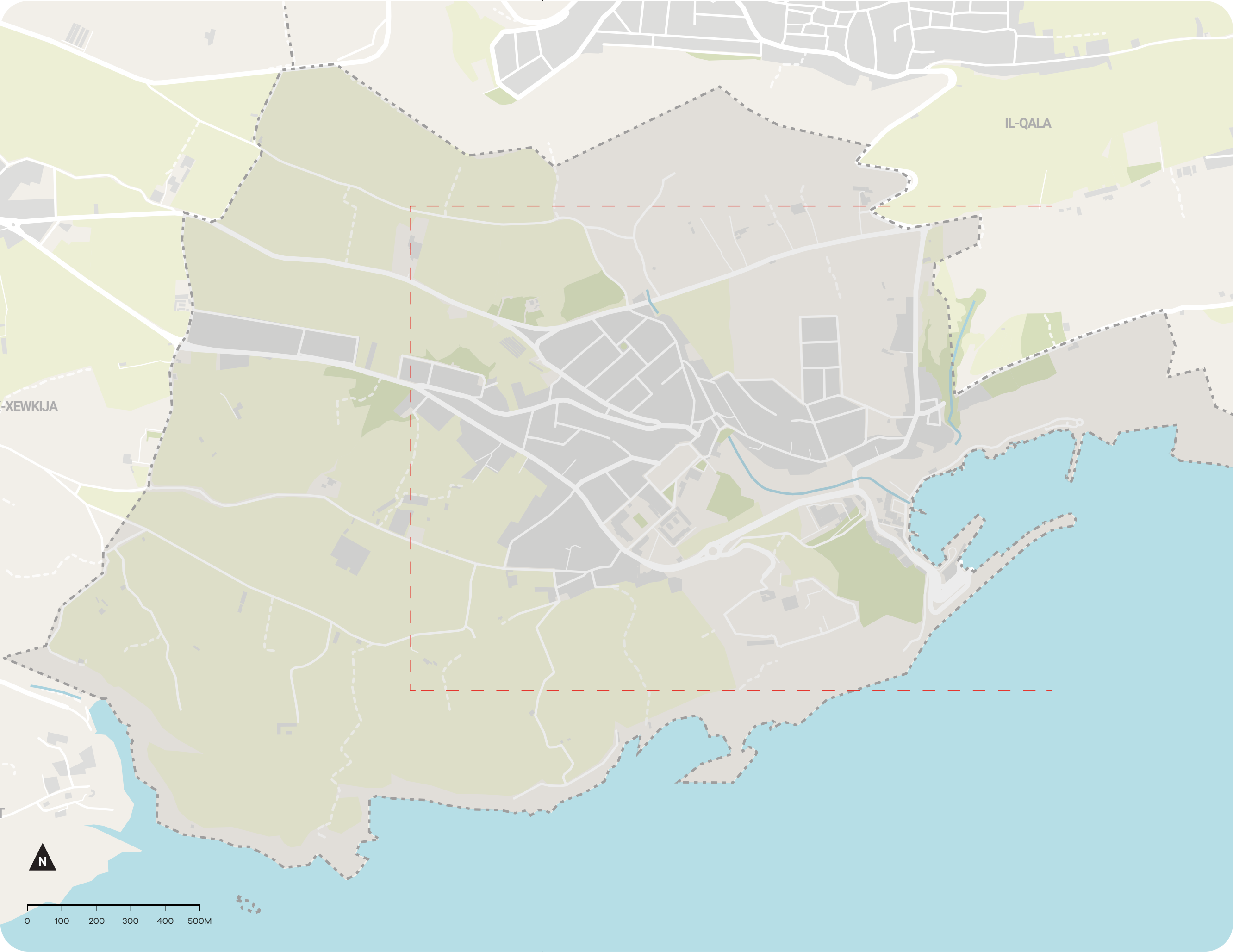
The main aim of the Slow Streets strategy, therefore, is to liberate local streets from extraneous traffic that could instead be safely used by residents. By using different schemes of traffic management, including both rerouting opportunities and tactical urbanism interventions, the priority within these streets is being shifted to pedestrian and cyclist use rather than cars, while still retaining the important bus routes that navigate within the locality. A number of key routes have also been identified for potential reconfiguration since they could provide critical and much-needed change to the entire network and enable a stronger and safer street environment for pedestrians and cyclists alike.



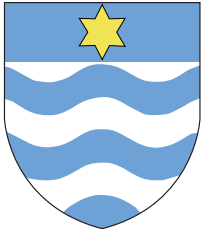
LOCALITY



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LOCALITY



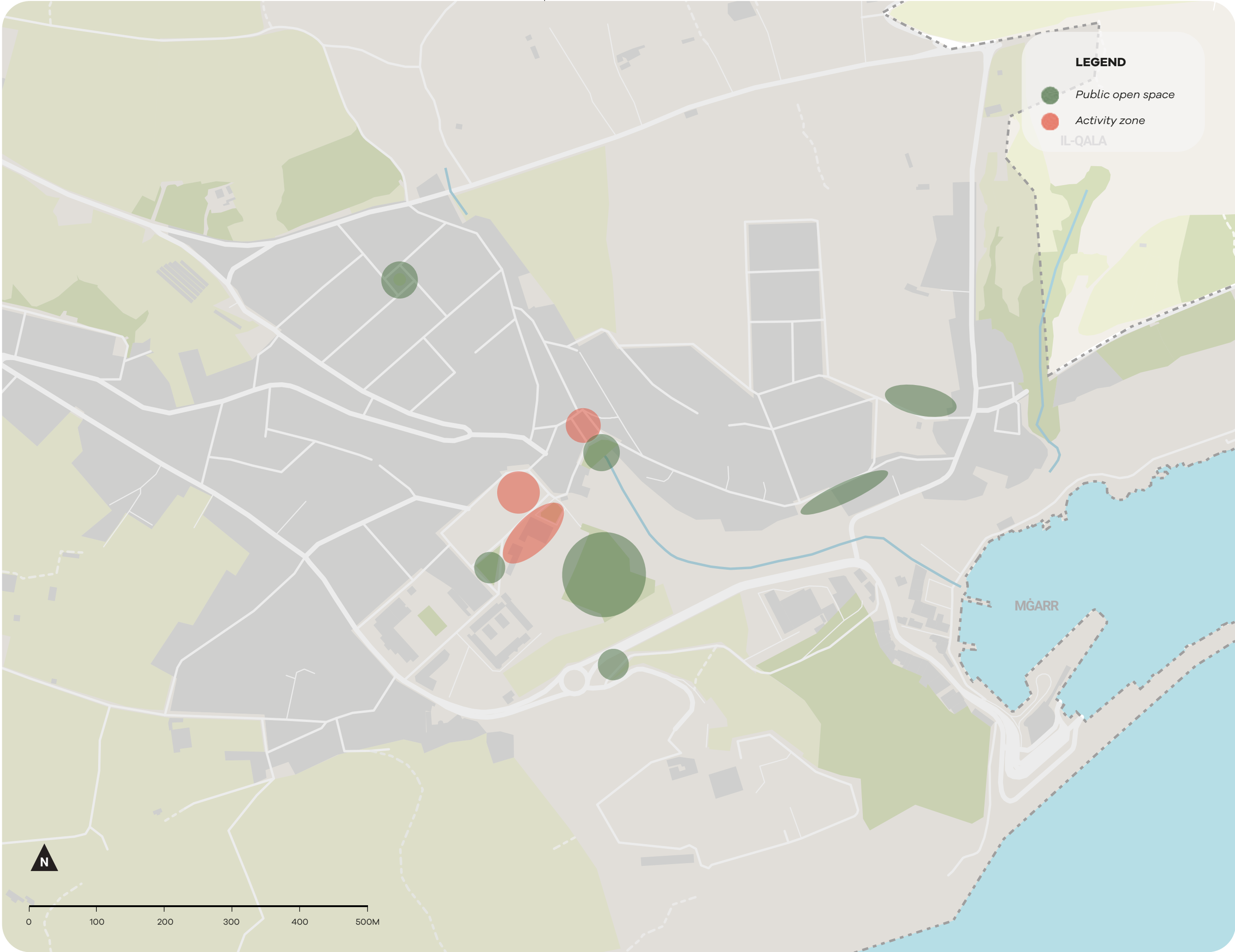
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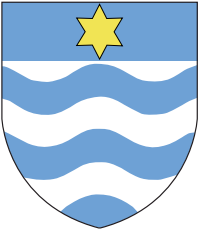
ACTIVITY
ZONES



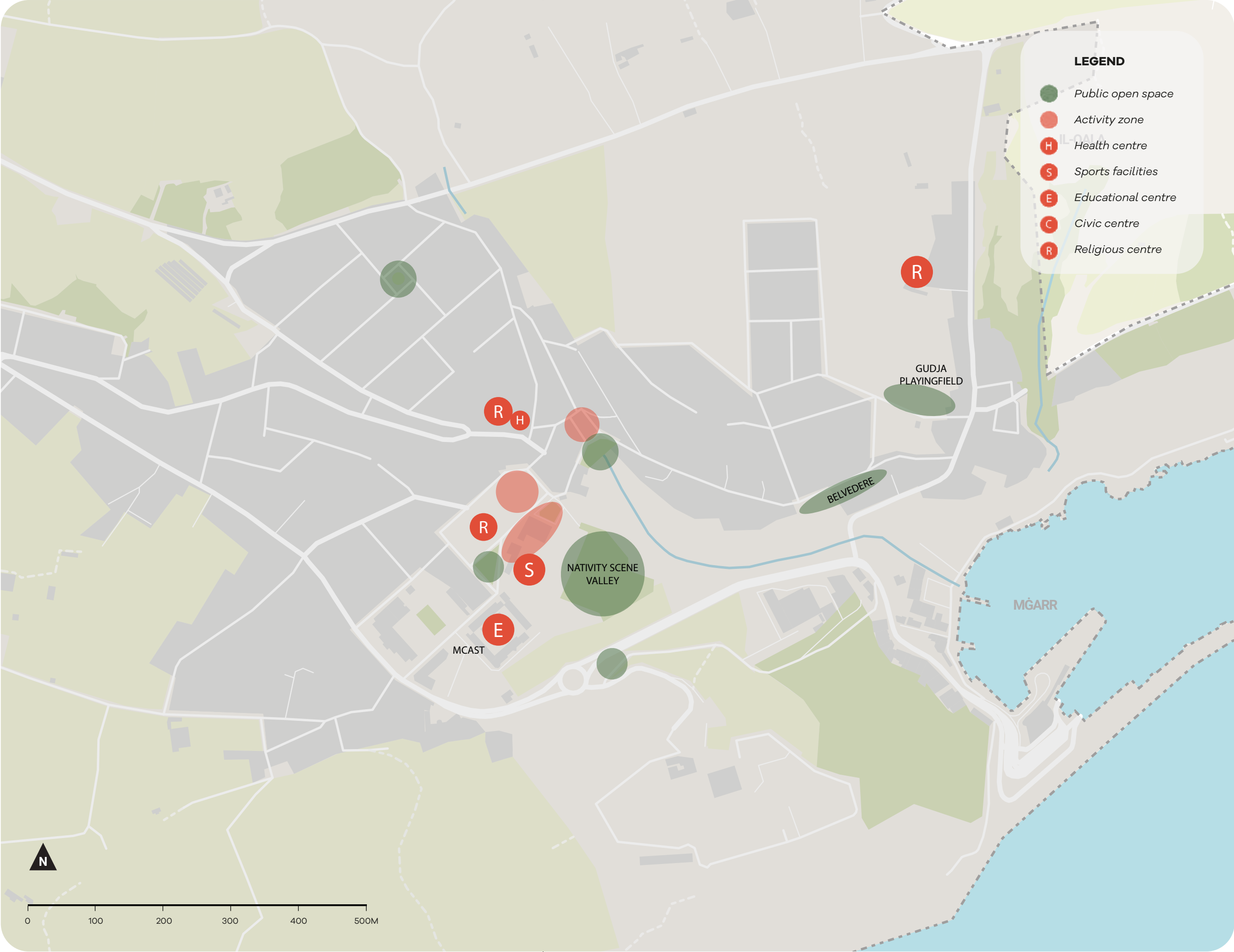
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DESTINATIONS



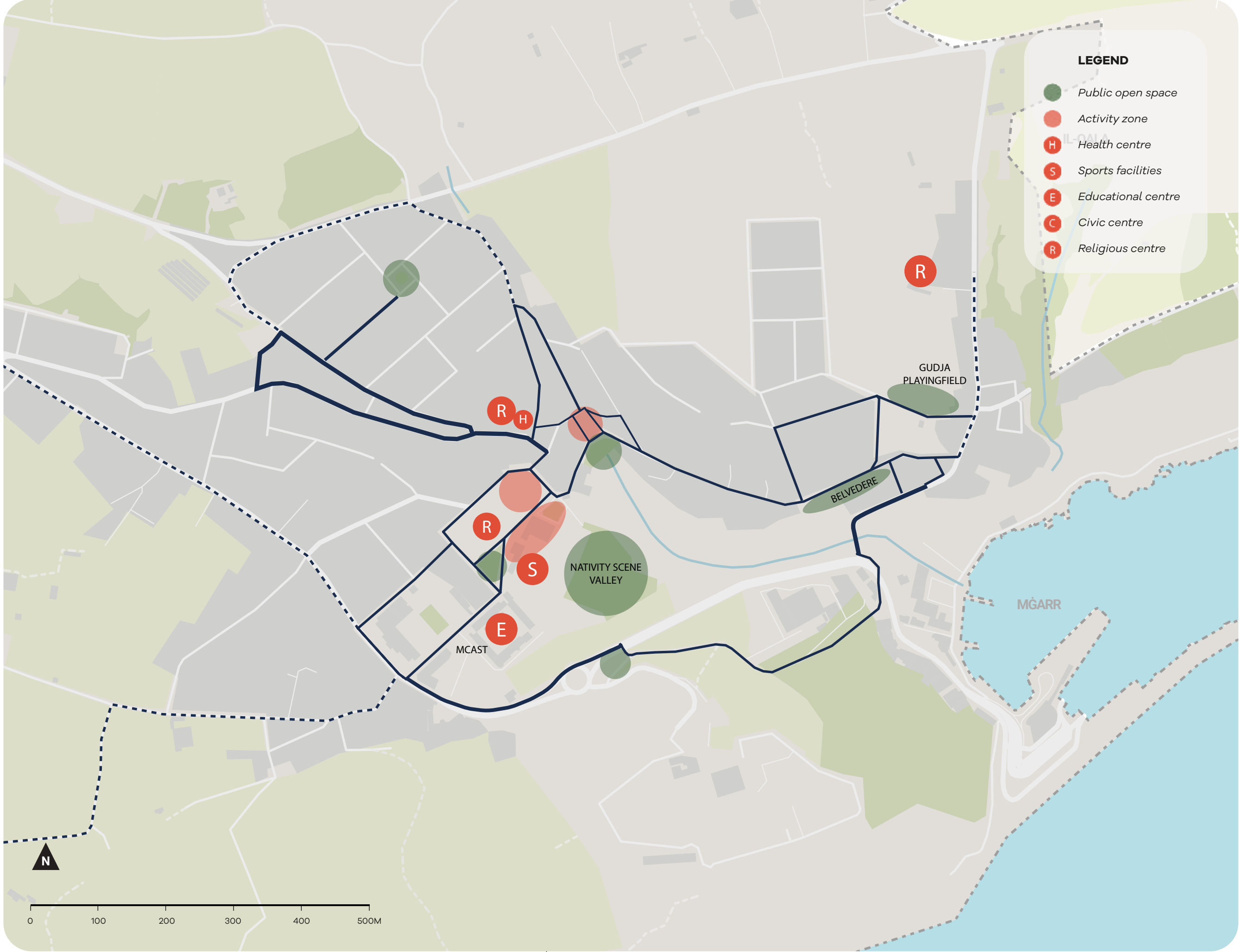
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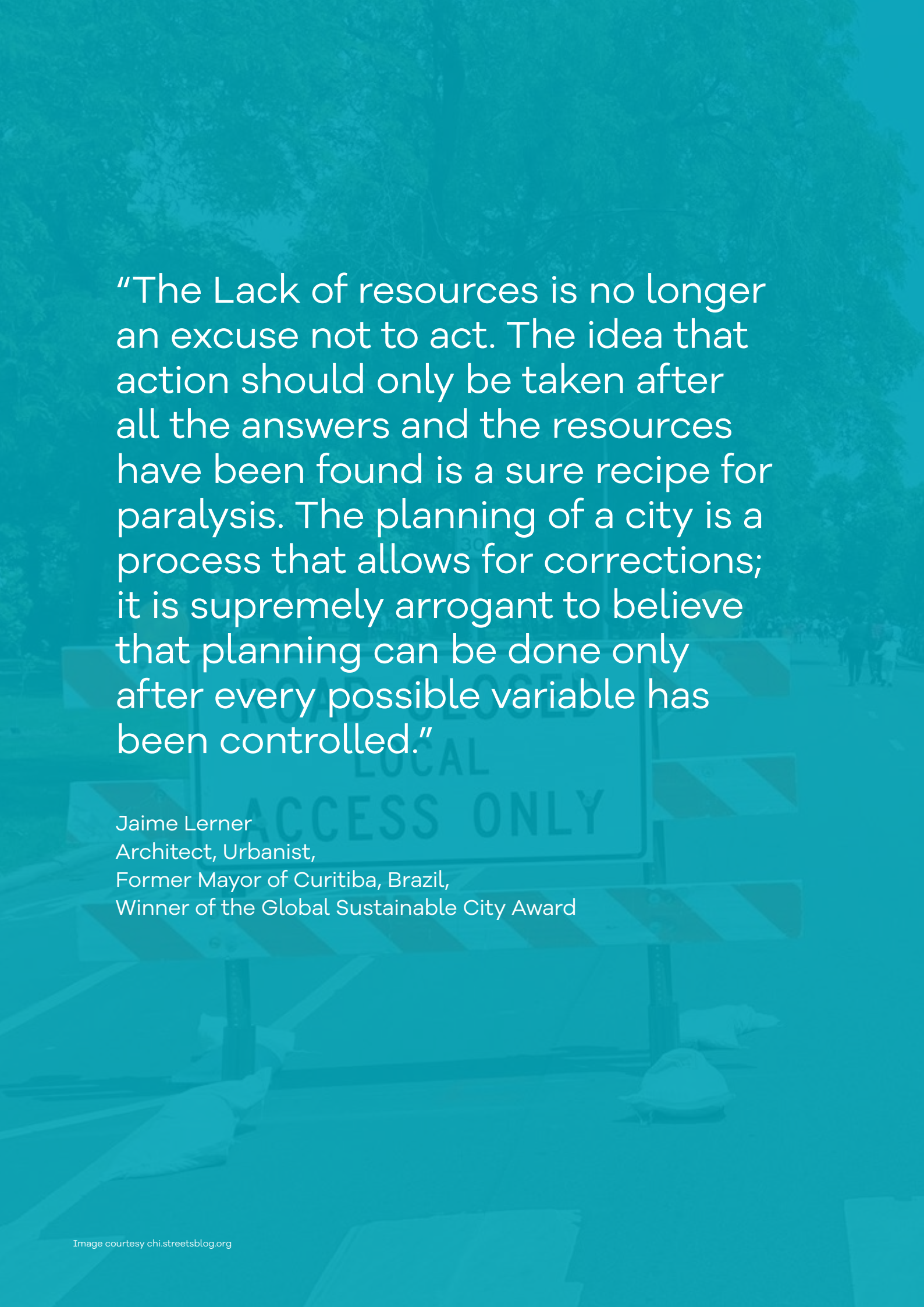


NETWORK



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“The Lack of resources is no longer an excuse not to act. The idea that action should only be taken after all the answers and the resources have been found is a sure recipe for paralysis. The planning of a city is a process that allows for corrections; it is supremely arrogant to believe that planning can be done only after every possible variable has been controlled.”

Jaime Lerner
Architect, Urbanist,
Former Mayor of Curitiba, Brazil,
Winner of the Global Sustainable City Award

Implementation

Type of Interventions

Slow streets level 1 - signage & branding

Slow streets level 2 - re-routing

Slow streets level 3 - tactical urbanism

Slow streets level 4 - reconfiguration

Slow Paths

Play Streets

Extensions

Cycling

Ghajnsielem Interventions

Phasing Strategy

Types of Interventions

The interventions that are envisaged to take place on different streets have been collated into the following four levels:

Level 1 - signage & branding

refers to interventions such as signage, branding measures and basic floor marking that emphasise the slowing down of vehicular traffic, without altering the nature of the street. Level 1 has been applied to streets that contribute to the formation of a continuous network

Level 2 - re-routing

entails traffic management measures such as the introduction of dead ends and access-only to local traffic, rerouting and converting two-way streets to one-way routes. Such actions are critical in order to allocate more space for pedestrian or cycling use. At the same time, as discussed earlier, traffic management is also crucial to encourage drivers to use the arterial and distributor roads rather than the local roads, enabling faster access across localities. The shift of vehicles onto the main infrastructural routes would free up local roads from unnecessary traffic, and resultant congestion, allowing more people to use the streets and resulting in less noise and air pollution for residents.



Level 3 - tactical urbanism

mainly refers to tactical urbanism initiatives, defined previously, within a specific area, focusing particularly on traffic intersections and pedestrian crossings. These markings first highlight the need to prioritise pedestrians and their safety, which eventually might lead to a more permanent infrastructural change, such as raised crossings and wider pavements. The paint markings may also introduce colour and/or artistic flair to the area, potentially contributing to a greater sense of place and local identity.





Level 4 – reconfiguration

refers to the most substantial intervention which is the reconfiguration of the street section. As explained earlier, streets have been studied and measured on site, in order to assess whether more space may be allocated to pedestrians (extending beyond existing pavements), cycling lanes and/or greening initiatives (such as the introduction of planters). The designation of vehicular space is based on the Planning Authority's Development Control Design Policy, Guidance and Standards 2015 (DC15) Standard S1 (Vehicular Access Width Standards), which establishes a width of 3.7m as required for access by a fire tender, which is the largest emergency vehicle that should be able to access the road safely. In this regard, therefore, roads that are wider than this standard and that are considered to provide important pedestrian routes therein, are being reconfigured to this width. In many cases, a number of the above strategies are combined together in order to achieve a bigger impact.



Slow Paths

comprise another specific typology of Slow Streets (although the two names may seem similar, it must be clarified that 'slow paths' is not another term for 'slow streets'). Slow paths refer to a designated slow section of the road, when intervening on the entire street is not possible. This is often used in larger roads where slower-moving, more localised/dedicated slip roads or dedicated bus lanes are available, and where priority for pedestrians and cyclists is often not considered.



Play Streets

'Play streets' are a type of intervention where local roads are closed off to cars temporarily, for example on weekends, so that they can be transformed into places where neighbours of all ages may gather around together and play freely. Children may use skates, bicycles, and movable playgrounds may be set up while adults may play cards, chess or simply watch their children in a safe environment. Play streets can occur on a regular basis (for instance, weekly or monthly), and may constitute an important part of daily life for the local community because they:

- give children more opportunities to play in a safe space close to their homes;
- provide a chance for residents to come together and for everyone to get to know their neighbours; and
- help residents to be more physically active and healthier.





Play streets – programming

Programmes and cultural activities are important for the success of play streets. They bring together the local community and give residents a sense of ownership of their neighbourhoods. Different festivals and activities attract a broad audience, expanding the circle of participants. They can vary from art and music activities to the organisation of games and fitness classes, or a combination of more than one activity. Preparation for such interactive activities may further occur with the active, hands-on, involvement of residents, which increases their sense of belonging and ownership of the public space (for example, helping with road painting, or further embellishing the streets with their own plants).



Extensions

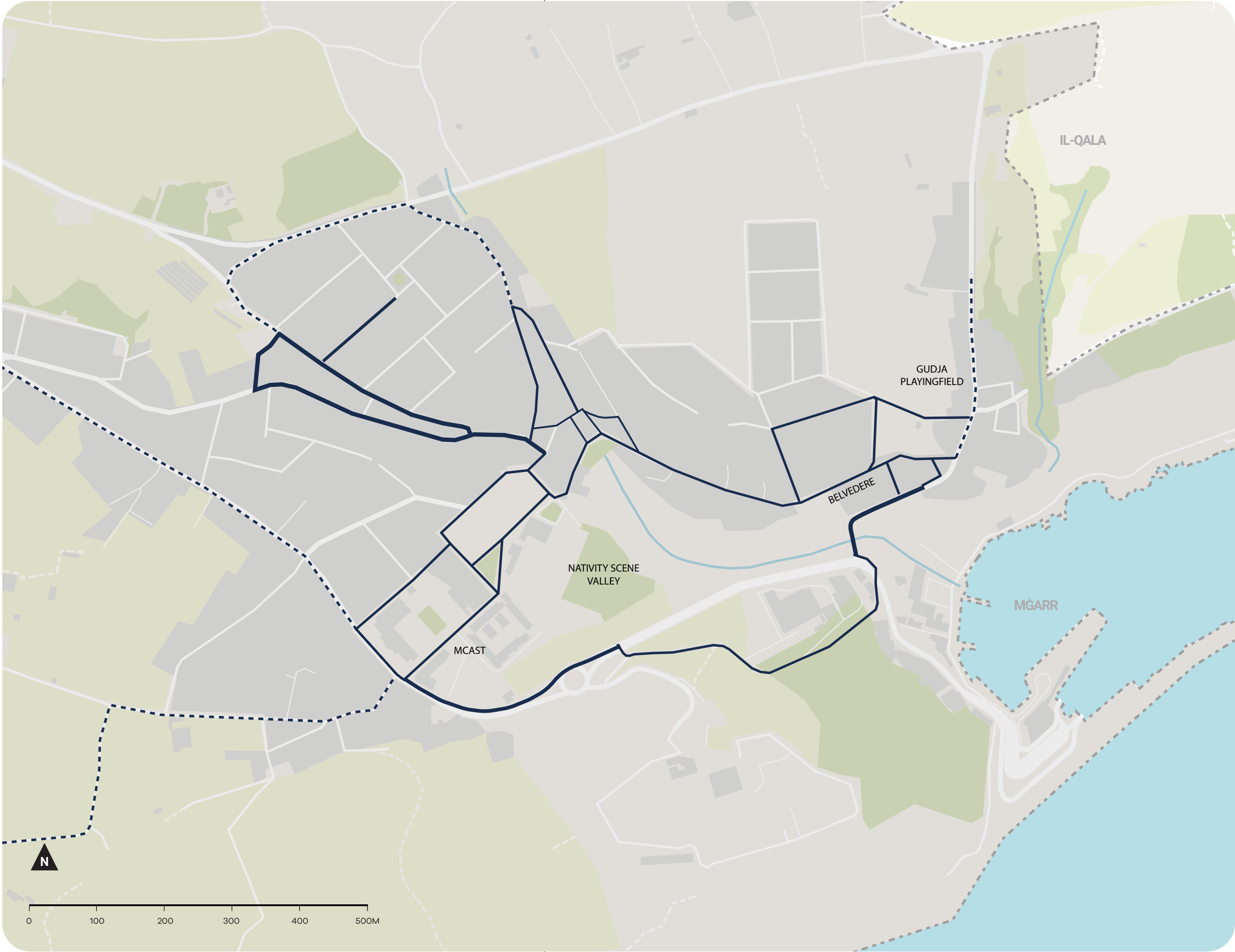
The last type of intervention refers to ‘extensions’ with adjacent localities and /or within the same locality. These links are important as they represent the future potential expansion of the network, resulting in even better connectivity for local and /or neighbouring residents. Such expansion may involve the need for infrastructure upgrading, and could be scope for future local council projects.



NETWORK



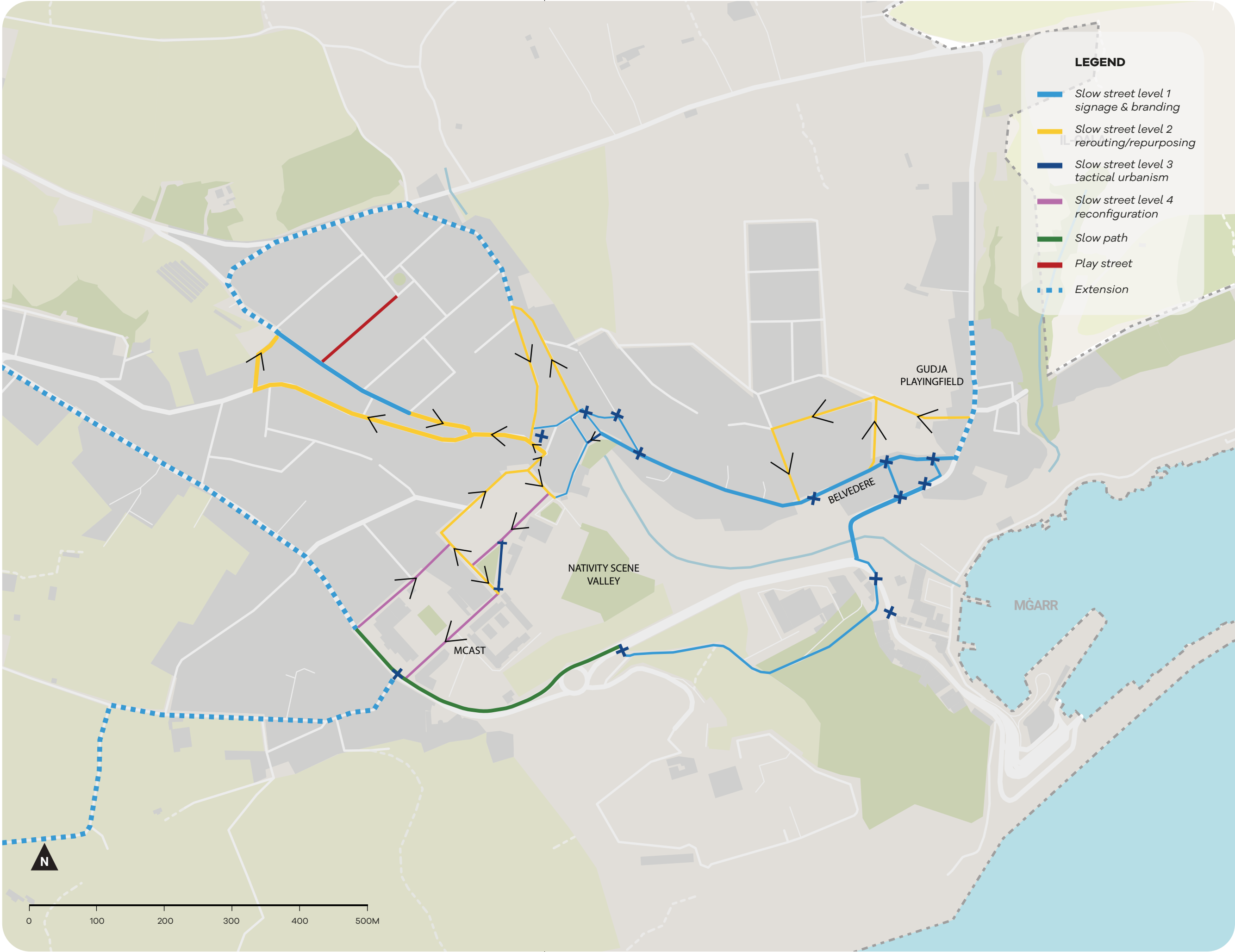
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INTERVENTION



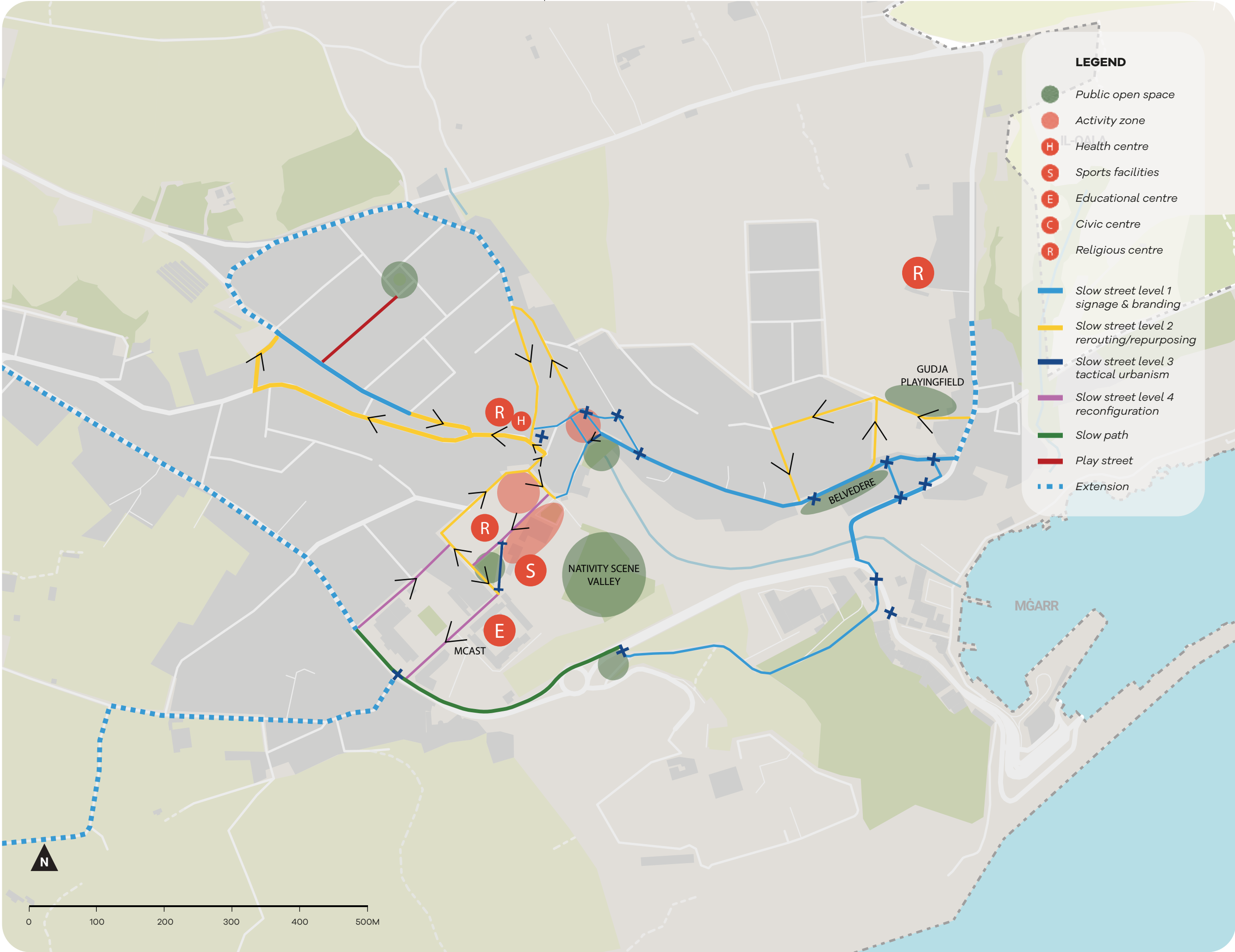
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INTERVENTION



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Cycling

Cycling lanes form an integral part of the Slow Streets network and their inclusion within the interventions discussed above has been a core objective. Providing opportunities for alternative modes of transport may contribute to the decongestion of vehicular traffic and therefore provide more opportunities for space.

According to the Bike Advocacy Group, the solution to traffic congestion is having more people cycle. Since the average distance of a typical journey travelled in Malta is 5km, cycling is the fastest and cleanest mode of transport, especially when taking into account how much time car drivers spend looking for parking. Bicycles also occupy much less space which decongest roads and crossings, and decrease the need for parking space.

This is further reflected in the words of Transport Malta's National Cycling Strategy (2018, p.46): 'The promotion of cycling as an alternative mode of transport is considered to be an essential

part of any scheme or strategy to promote sustainable mobility through which transport authorities can address traffic congestion, improve accessibility, promote personal health, reduce air pollution as well as contribute towards lower greenhouse gas emissions, all of which are attributes necessary to improve the quality of life of any community.'

Providing quality cycle networks creates more accessible neighbourhoods, which in turn increases social relations and benefits the wellbeing of the entire community. Cycle paths therefore improve both the connectivity and the overall liveability in localities.



The real added value of cycling is experienced through a combination of all environmental, social and health benefits combined.

In the Slow Streets interventions, designated cycling lanes have been considered within important connecting routes, especially if there is the opportunity to reroute traffic and create one-way routes so as to allocate the remaining space for bicycle lanes and pedestrian space. In the proposed scheme, both pedestrian and cyclist connections have been given due importance. Naturally, every street case is different depending on its physical features; however, when possible, barriers (such as cones or planters) are further proposed to provide increased cyclist safety, or parallel parking has been shifted such that pedestrians and cyclists may be protected by the parked cars.

In narrower streets characterised by less space, signage is being proposed to slow down cars and raise the awareness of shared space with cyclists. These streets are included within the Level 1 interventions discussed previously.

The Slow Streets initiative lays the groundwork for future strategic locality plans, wherein the urban cores and important public spaces may be freed from car traffic and instead used by pedestrians, cyclists and public transport.



Providing quality cycle networks creates more accessible neighbourhoods, which in turn increases social relations and benefits the wellbeing of the entire community.

CYCLING
NETWORK

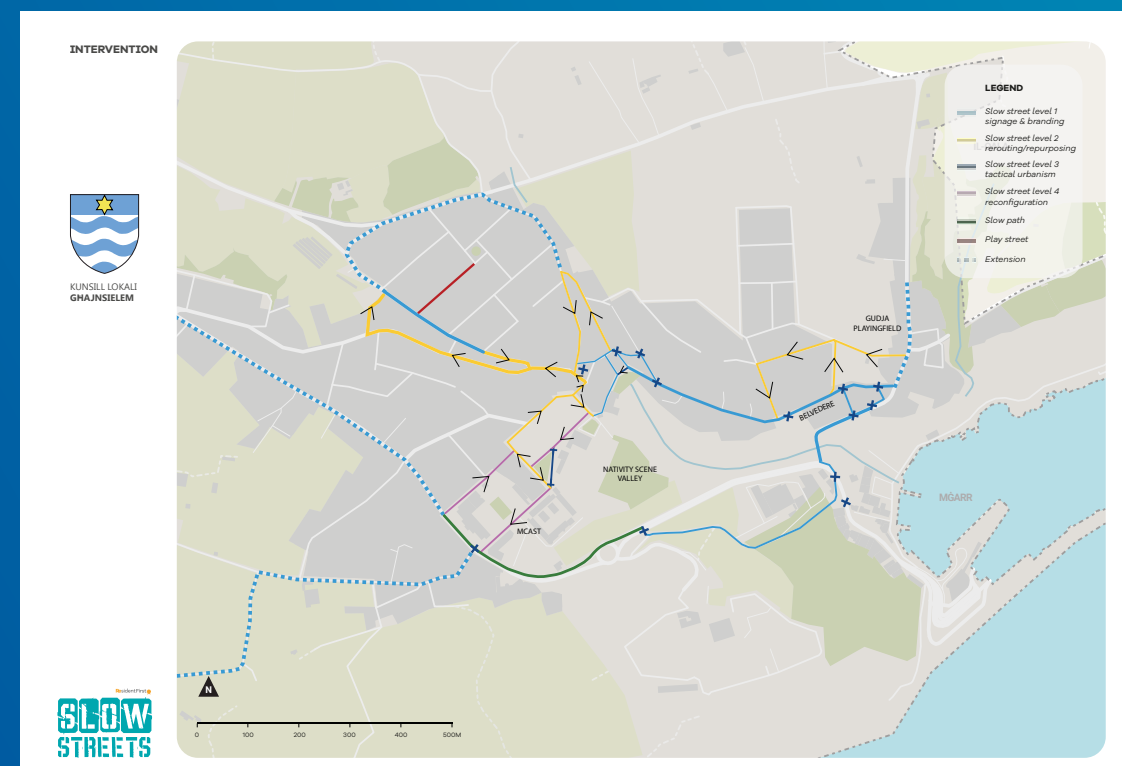


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Għajnsielem Interventions

The Slow Streets route encompasses various interventions that were decided upon based on the individual nature of the streets and the need to resolve particular traffic issues within the locality. One of the main challenges in Għajnsielem is to decongest the narrower local streets from extraneous, through traffic and instead divert drivers onto more prominent routes, particularly the arterial/distributor road network. The second challenge is to identify walkable routes that link peripheral areas better to the centre, so as to avoid a fragmented network disconnecting the edges of the development area from the rest of the urban fabric.



Intervention 1

Triq Lourdes: Level 1 and Level 3

Triq ix-Xatt is the main arterial road leading traffic from Mġarr Harbour to all Gozitan localities. It separates the village of Għajnsielem in two, where the main residential area is on the right hand side and the left hand side is a more secluded, countryside area, including Triq Lourdes. The latter houses the Chapel of Lourdes and a peripheral narrow road going around it, characterised by views and vistas, including that of the Parish Church of Għajnsielem.

In order to increase walkability within Triq Lourdes and provide a safer environment for pedestrians and cyclists to use it as a shortcut, floor markings are being proposed at its entrance, specifically colourful floor paint to attract and encourage pedestrians to use this road as a safer, recreational and scenic route. Despite the presence of cars that access Triq Lourdes to park, this intervention would give priority to pedestrians and cyclists, and in turn slow down traffic. Triq Lourdes is also being proposed to have new signage designating it as a low speed road and pedestrian priority zone, and signage for the new pedestrian/cyclist crossing points.

Suggestion: The eastern end of Triq Lourdes can be reached from Triq ix-Xatt whilst the western end is reached from Triq l-Imġarr, however, both of these roads are part of the arterial network of the Maltese Islands and beyond the remit of Slow Streets. However, to improve accessibility and increase the safety for pedestrians when accessing Triq Lourdes, it is being suggested that better pedestrian crossings could also be introduced along these two roads.

LEGEND

Signage/Tactical Urbanism

- Fully pedestrian space
- Floor marking - slowing cars
- Car parking space

- Physical barrier (bollard)
- One-way
- Limited access

Traffic Management

- Private Cars
- Public Buses
- Bicycles
- Pedestrians
- All modes of transportation
- Cars + Buses
- Buses + Bicycles
- Bicycles + Cars



LEGEND

Signage/Tactical Urbanism

- Fully pedestrian space
- Floor marking - slowing cars
- Car parking space

- Physical barrier (bollard)
- One-way
- Limited access

Traffic Management

- Private Cars
- Public Buses
- Bicycles
- Pedestrians
- All modes of transportation
- Cars + Buses
- Buses + Bicycles
- Bicycles + Cars

Triq l-Imġarr
Għajnsielem



Intervention 2

Triq Sant' Antnin and Triq il-Ħamri: Level 1 and Level 3
Triq il-Gudja, Triq Malta and Triq Kemmuna: Level 2



Triq Sant' Antnin stems out of Triq ix-Xatt and leads to the residential area of Għajnsielem. Along the road, two existing staircases connect Triq Sant' Antnin to Triq il-Ħamri, in which a popular look out point (belvedere) is found. One of the staircases has already been decorated with coloured tiles, making it more evident for pedestrians to use — however, it is still not visible enough from Triq Sant' Antnin as it is concealed beneath a residential block. The second staircase located further easterly, is more visible as it starts from the pedestrian sidewalk and leads up to an already pedestrianised local path.

This intervention therefore proposes tactical urbanism at the bottom and top points of each staircase to make them more evident for pedestrians to use instead of the more vehicular-oriented roads. In addition, floor markings in the form of a pedestrian crossing is being proposed within Triq Sant' Antnin in order to provide a safer crossing for pedestrians. Signage for the new pedestrian crossing point is also being proposed.



Tactical urbanism in the form of road marking is also being proposed around the public seating area at Triq il-Ħamri, in order to slow down cars and emphasise the pedestrianised space. As an attempt to reduce the traffic around the public seating area, and relieve through traffic from the residential roads — Triq Malta, Triq Kemmuna and Triq il-Gudja — it is being proposed to reroute these two-way roads into one-way roads, forming a vehicular loop from Triq il-Ħamri, to Triq Kemmuna, to Triq Malta. All three roads are proposed to have appropriate signage for low speed and sharing of road between vehicles and bicycles, and thus, this intervention would also provide safer routes for different modes of transportation to access the soon to be upgraded Gudja Playground, located in the northern Triq il-Gudja.

LEGEND

Signage/Tactical Urbanism

- Fully pedestrian space
- Floor marking - slowing cars
- Car parking space

- Physical barrier (bollard)
- One-way
- Limited access

Traffic Management

- Private Cars
- Public Buses
- Bicycles
- Pedestrians
- All modes of transportation
- Cars + Buses
- Buses + Bicycles
- Bicycles + Cars

Triq Sant' Antnin and Triq il-Ħamri
Għajnsielem



Intervention 3

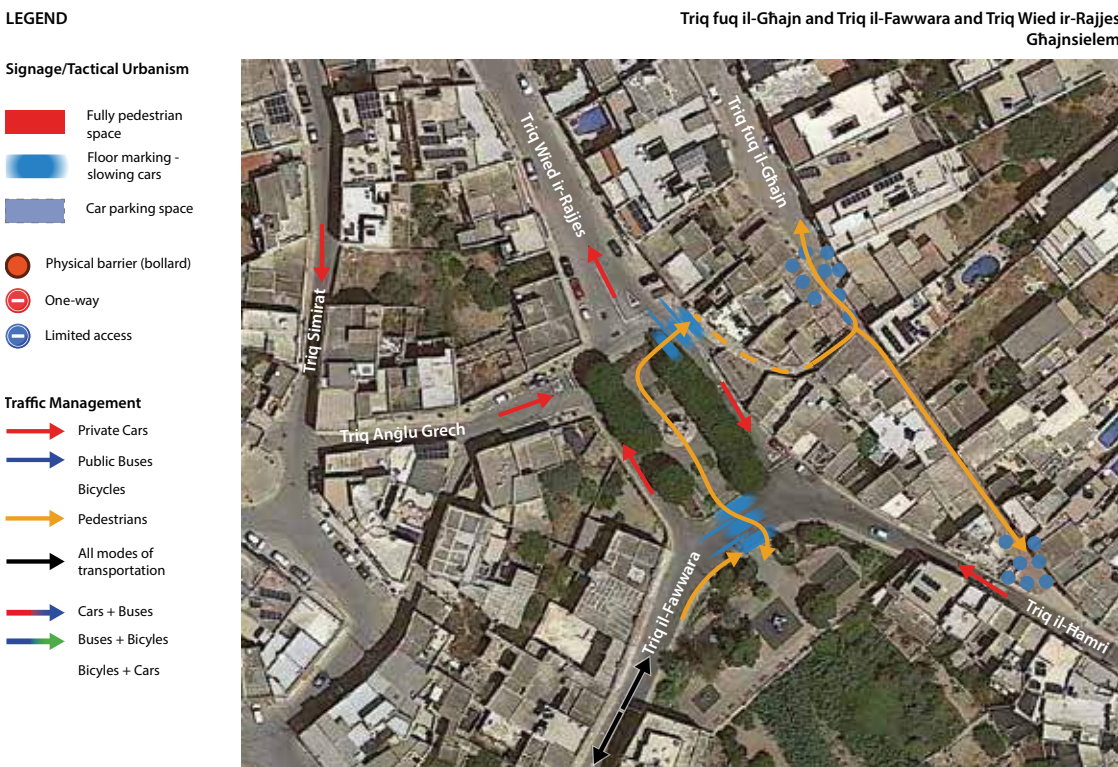
Triq Fuq il-Għajn and Triq il-Fawwara (Playground): Level 1 and Level 3 Triq Wied ir-Rajjes: Level 2

Located in the central area of Għajnsielem, north of the central square, are two public, green open spaces (located from Triq il-Fawwara to Triq Wied ir-Rajjes) one of which is a children's playground and is separated from the other with a two-way road, Triq il-Fawwara. A war shelter can also be found at the edge of Triq ir-Rajjes (crossing the road from the public open space), including an existing pedestrian path stretching from Triq ir-Rajjes to Triq Fuq il-Għajn.

In order to have a safer crossing and better pedestrian connections between the two green open spaces, tactical urbanism in the form of pedestrian crossings is being proposed in both Triq Fawwara and at the southern edge of Triq Wied ir-Rajjes. In addition, to connect these open spaces to the existing pedestrian path in Triq Fuq il-Għajn, tactical urbanism is being proposed to highlight the western and eastern edges of this path, making this link more visible for pedestrians to use as a shortcut.



As the public open space currently acts as a one-way loop (roundabout) for general traffic, it is proposed that the configuration of these streets would remain as existing but include signage to emphasise slow speeds and sharing of the road space between all modes of transportation, including cycling. However, to decrease the flow of traffic towards the one-way loop, Triq Wied ir-Rajjes is being proposed to be rerouted into a one-way road from a two-way, direction north. This would create a loop with Triq Simirat and Triq Anglu Grech (Intervention 4).



Intervention 4

Triq Anglu Grech: Level 1 Triq Simirat, Triq il-Ġnien and Triq Ramon Perellos: Level 2 Pjazza Indipendenza: Level 3

Pjazza Indipendenza is a secondary small square in Għajnsielem in which the old Parish Church dedicated to Our Lady of Loreto is located. It is also located within walking distance from both the main square and the two public open spaces (highlighted in Intervention 3), thus the aim for this area is to have a walkable pedestrian-friendly space with one-way roads to reduce vehicular flow and increase pedestrian safety.



LEGEND

Signage/Tactical Urbanism

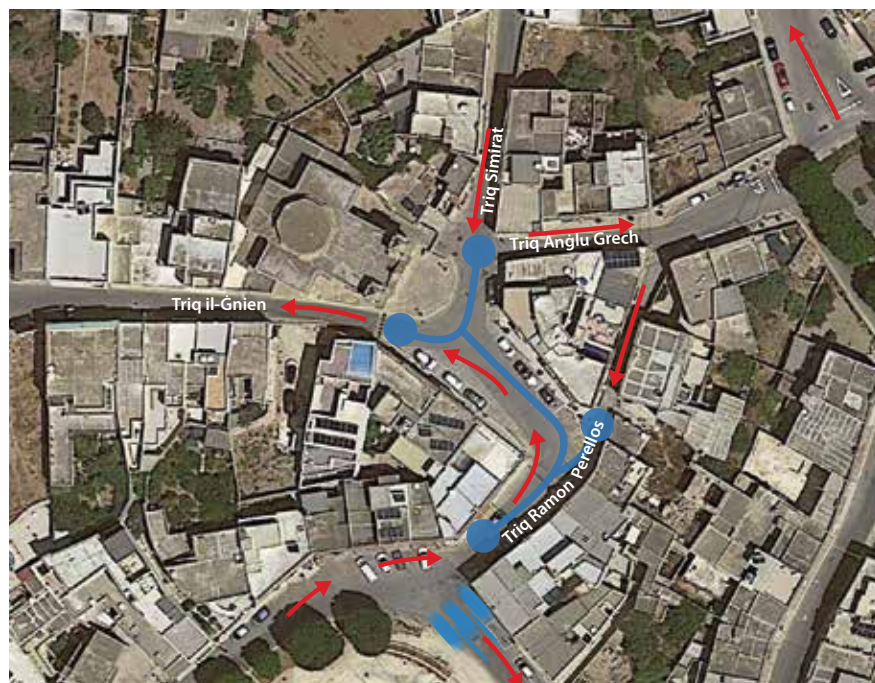
- Fully pedestrian space
- Floor marking - slowing cars
- Car parking space

- Physical barrier (bollard)
- One-way
- Limited access

Traffic Management

- Private Cars
- Public Buses
- Bicycles
- Pedestrians
- All modes of transportation
- Cars + Buses
- Buses + Bicycles
- Bicycles + Cars

Piazza Indipendenza
Għajnsielem



Triq Anglu Grech which connects the two public open spaces and Piazza Indipendenza is already one-way, direction east, and is thus being proposed to have adequate signage for slow speeds and pedestrian priority. In addition, this road is to be shared between vehicles and bicycles.

Triq Simirat, Triq il-Ġnien and Triq Ramon Perellos, which stem out of Piazza Indipendenza, are being proposed to be rerouted from two-way roads to one-way roads, including new signs to designate the roads shared between pedestrians, drivers and cyclists. Piazza Indipendenza will therefore be accessed vehicularly through Triq Simirat (those arriving from Northern areas) and Triq Ramon Perellos (arriving from the main square and other Southern areas), while exiting from Triq il-Ġnien (direction West) and Triq Anglu Grech (direction East towards the two public open spaces).

In addition to the above, tactical urbanism is being proposed in the form of floor markings all across Piazza Indipendenza, alerting drivers to slow down before entering the square.



Intervention 5

Triq Manoel Pinto De Fonseca and Triq Bengħazi: Level 2

These streets are located on the western area of Għajnsielem and connect to Piazza l-Indipendenza via Triq il-Ġnien, which is being proposed as a one-way road (direction west away from Piazza Indipendenza) (Intervention 4). Therefore, in order to reduce vehicular traffic in these streets and cater for a safer network, these are also being proposed to be rerouted into one-way streets.

Triq Manoel Pinto de Fonseca is proposed to be rerouted to cater for vehicles travelling north towards Triq il-Qala. Triq Bengħazi will be partially rerouted into one-way towards Triq il-Ġnien, specifically from the intersection with Triq Dun Frangisk Mizzi.

New signage will also be installed for slow speeds and sharing of the road between cyclists and drivers.

Intervention 6

Triq iċ-Ċief: Play Street

Triq iċ-Ċief is located in an area that currently lacks open spaces. It is also overlooked by residential units which provide natural surveillance on the street. It is therefore being proposed to be used as a play street during designated times and/or days as traffic use is already low and localised. Programming the space for various potential activities could attract residents from a wide catchment within the community and does not need to be limited to the residents on this particular street, given that this road may easily be reached by pedestrians from the main square and surrounding areas.





Barrier elements

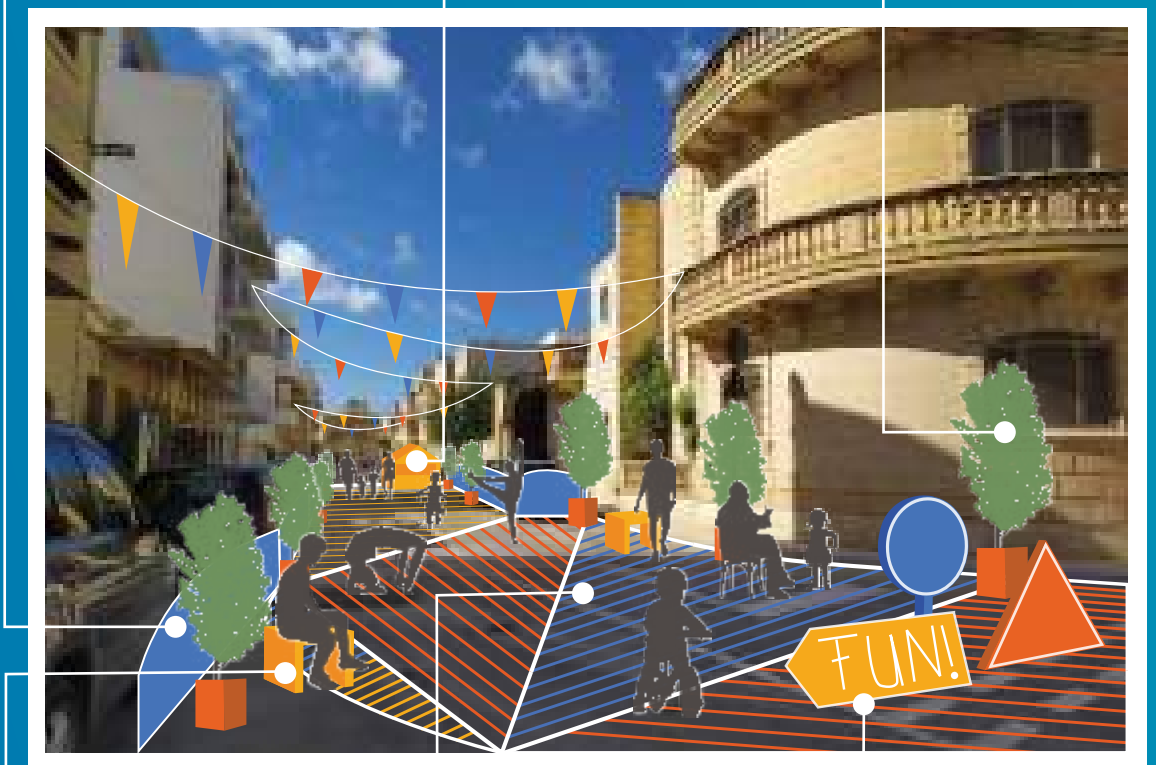
should be used to create a strong edge and define the place as a pedestrian zone

Programming

activating play streets with programming is key to success. Events and activities can include exercise classes, live music, food trucks, markets, etc.

Landscaping elements

plants and trees go a long way in making an inviting space to play and socialize



Street furniture

moveable chairs, tables, play, exercise and shade elements are preferable

Surface treatment

can be used to further define the playstreet

Signs

to announce and explain the Play Streets concept, the Slow Streets branding and to communicate official traffic regulations



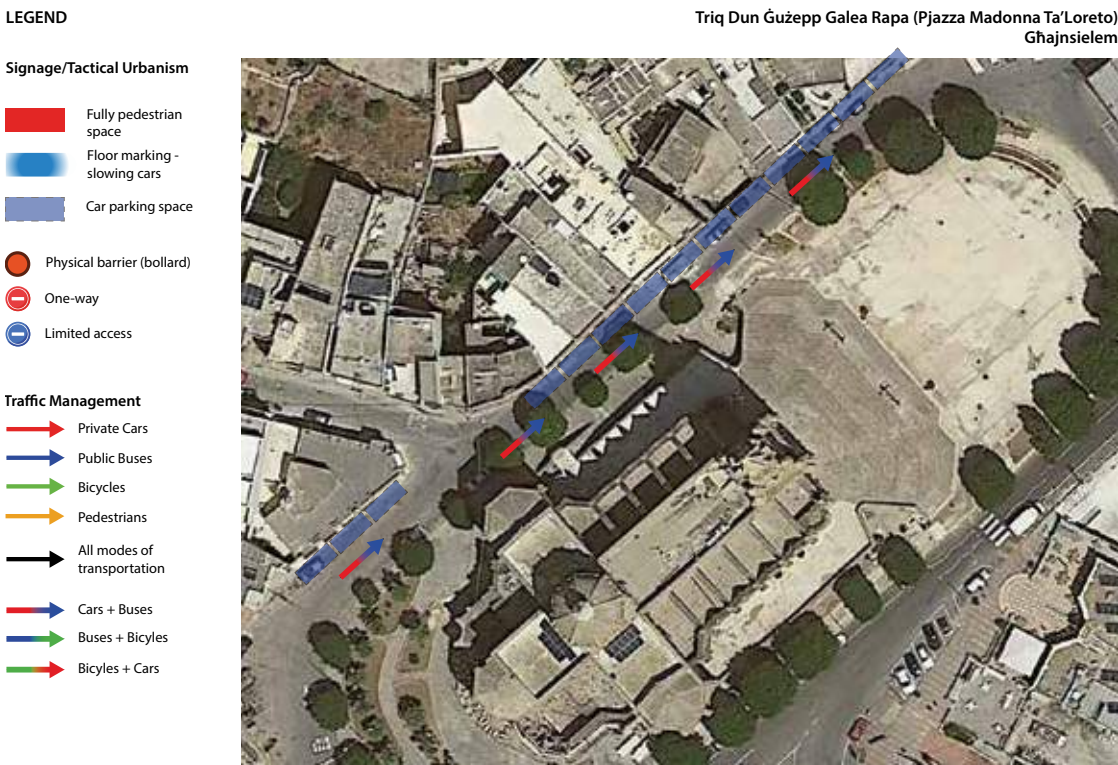
Intervention 7

Pjazza Madonna Ta' Loreto: Level 2 and Level 4

The main square can be accessed by drivers through a road network going around the square in both directions. Similar to Pjazza Indipendenza, to reduce the existing vehicular flow within the square and to improve pedestrian walkability and safety, roads are being proposed to change into one-way routes. Cars would therefore be able to travel in a loop around the square, in a clockwise manner from the north-western side towards the south-eastern one.

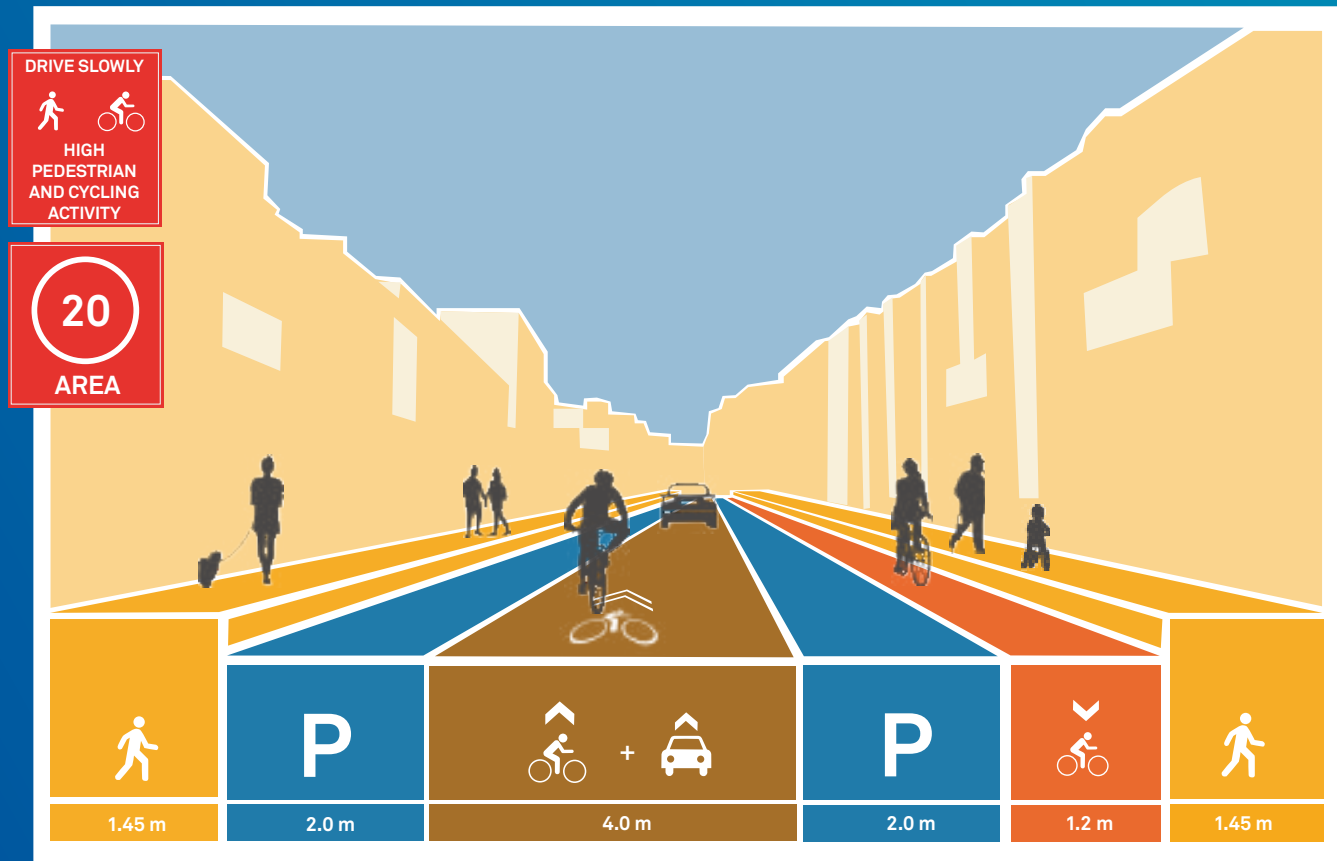
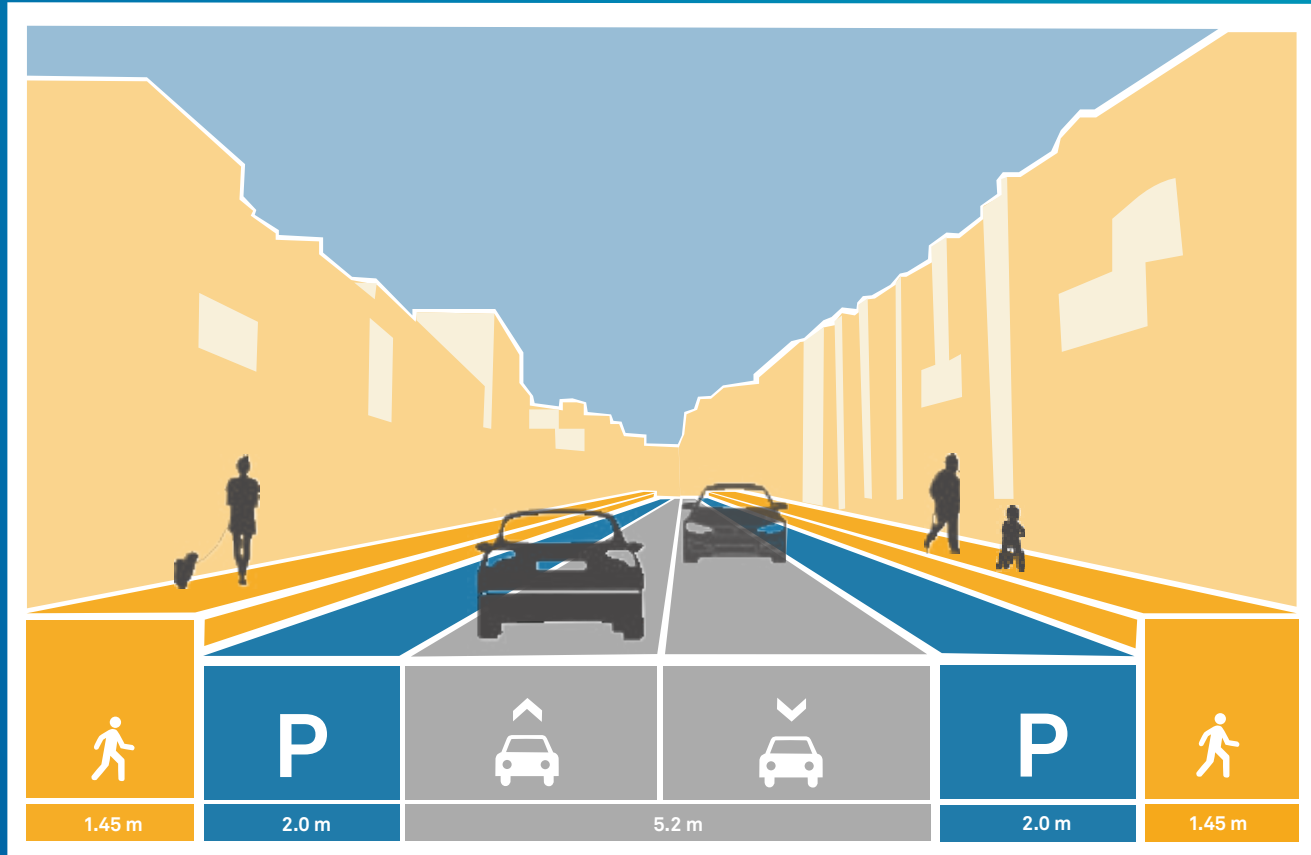


Therefore, Triq Dun Ġużepp Galea Rapa will carry vehicles in the eastern direction and will have adequate signage to share the road between drivers and cyclists. The road would also be able to cater for designated parking on the left side of the road.



The south-eastern road would carry vehicles westwards downwards to Triq J.F. de Chambrai. In the left-over space from the removal of one vehicular lane, tactical urbanism in the form of floor markings is being proposed for two-way designated cycle lanes, designated parking on either side of the traffic lane and a pedestrian crossing in the vicinity of Triq J.F. de Chambrai. New signage is also being proposed for low speeds and to alert drivers of high pedestrian and cyclist activity.





Intervention 8

Triq J.F. De Chambrai (Football Ground access): Level 4

This road stems out of the south-eastern road of Pjazza Madonna Ta' Loreto, and in continuation of the latter it is currently highly used by pedestrians as it is wedged between a green pocket on one side and the band club (cafe and restaurant) and the Football Ground on the other side. In order to reduce vehicular-pedestrian conflicts within the Northern part of this road, it is being proposed to be closed off for through traffic, and limit access to vehicles looking for parking. It would in turn be used by cyclists (in both directions) and pedestrians. Tactical urbanism in the form of floor markings is also being proposed at both ends of this part of the road so as to alert drivers to slow down. The floor markings would also create visual continuity between the green pocket and the commercial activity, while enhancing the aesthetics of this beautiful space.

Note: Both interventions 7 and 8 could be considered as a ground preparation for the "Għajnsielem Pedestrian Centre" project. Before the full pedestrianisation occurs and bollards introduced to close off the south-eastern part of Pjazza Madonna Ta' Loreto, these interventions could be carried out for a trial period. This would enable a smoother transition for residents and visitors alike, as well as help the Local Council better understand the implications on traffic management and use of space, which the final "Għajnsielem Pedestrian Centre" project would eventually consolidate.

LEGEND

Signage/Tactical Urbanism

- Fully pedestrian space
- Floor marking - slowing cars
- Car parking space
- Physical barrier (bollard)
- One-way
- Limited access

Traffic Management

- Private Cars
- Public Buses
- Bicycles
- Pedestrians
- All modes of transportation
- Cars + Buses
- Buses + Bicycles
- Bicycles + Cars

Triq J.F. De Chambrai
Għajnsielem

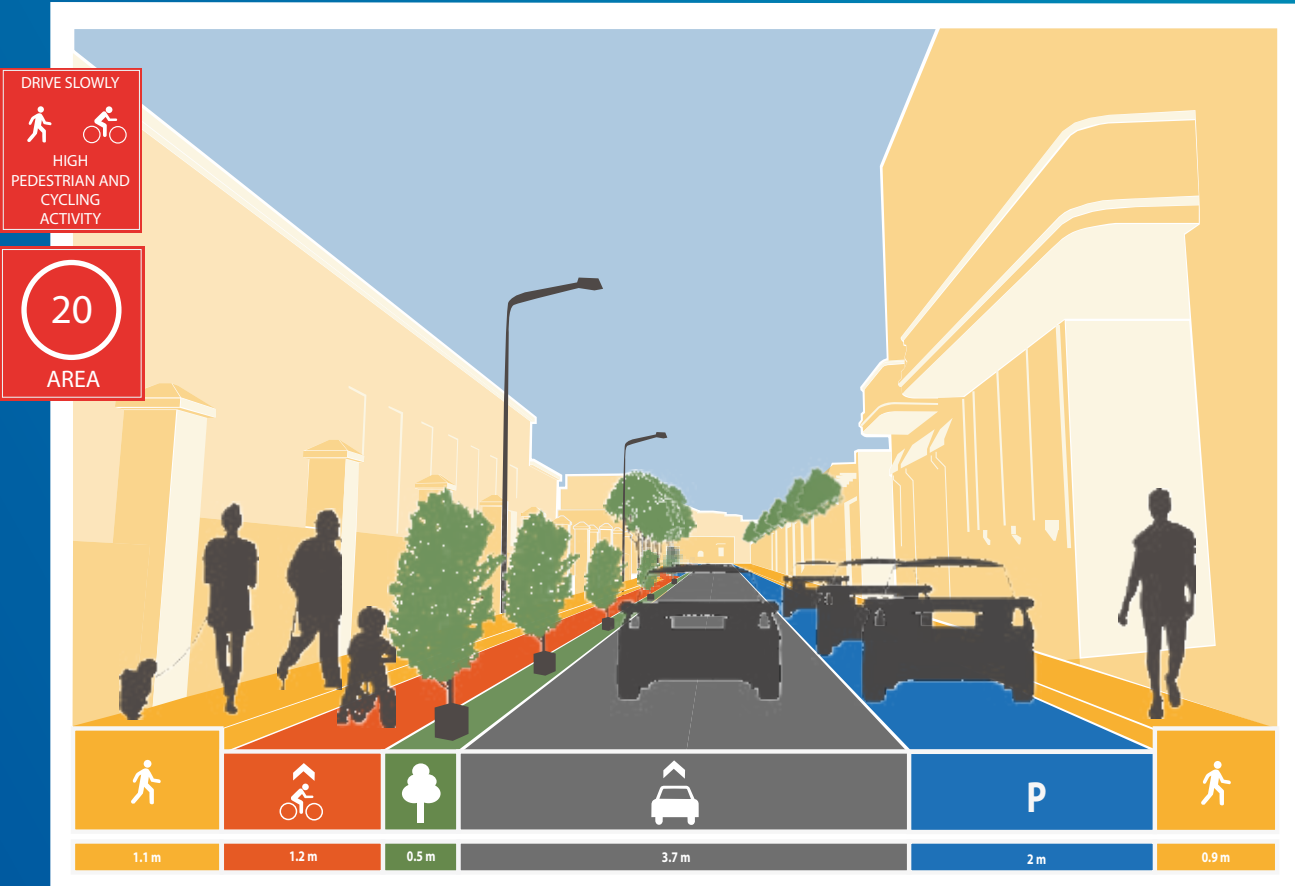


Intervention 9

Triq J.F. De Chambrai (MCAST): Level 4

The rest of Triq J.F. de Chambrai (southern part) provides access to the MCAST Gozo Campus as well as other civic amenities. Due to the high pedestrian activity this road would benefit from less traffic and improved conditions for walkability. Therefore, it is being proposed that this road be rerouted into a one-way access, direction south, from its current two-way configuration.

The space leftover from the removal of one traffic lane could include floor markings for designated parking bays at either side of the traffic lane and a designated cycle lane in one direction. Other tactical urbanism interventions, in the form of planters, will be incorporated to buffer the cyclists from the parked vehicles, allocated strategically so as to not disturb access to garages and to other amenities along this street.



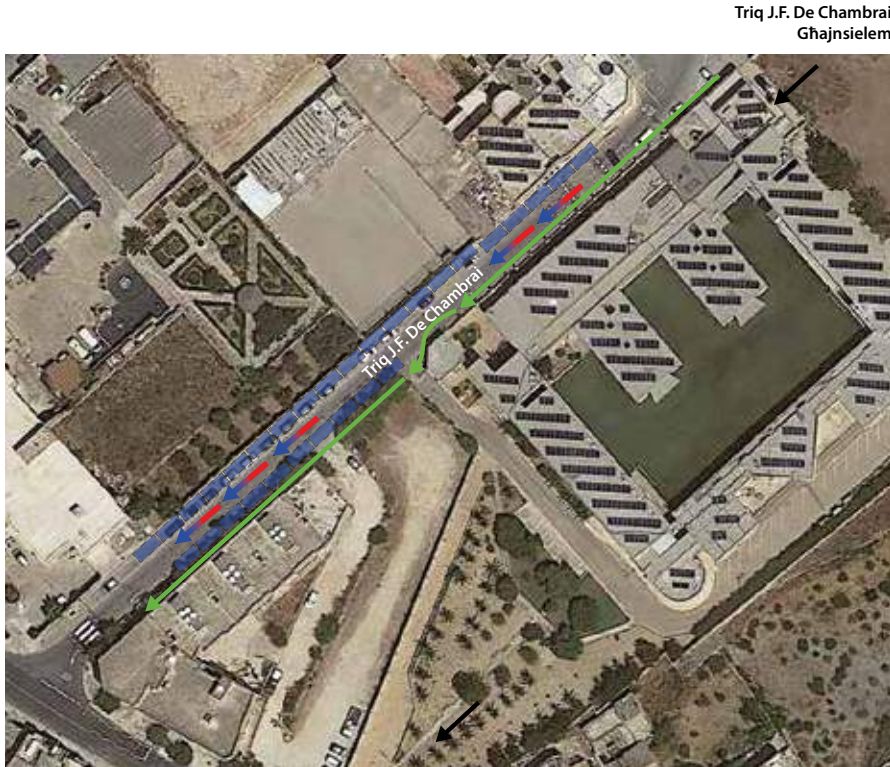
LEGEND

Signage/Tactical Urbanism

- Fully pedestrian space
- Floor marking - slowing cars
- Car parking space
- Physical barrier (bollard)
- One-way
- Limited access

Traffic Management

- Private Cars
- Public Buses
- Bicycles
- Pedestrians
- All modes of transportation
- Cars + Buses
- Buses + Bicycles
- Bicycles + Cars



Intervention 10

Triq il-Mogħdija: Level 4

Whilst vehicles will be exiting the main square from the southern part of Triq J.F. de Chambrai, access towards the square would occur via Triq il-Mogħdija. The latter is being proposed to be rerouted into a one-way road from its current two-way configuration, direction towards the square, to relieve the road from current vehicular conflicts happening because of the narrow street width. In a similar manner to Triq J.F. de Chambrai, this intervention is also being proposed to reduce the vehicular flow towards the square and increase walkability and accessibility to the square for pedestrians and cyclists alike.

Tactical urbanism is also being proposed in the leftover space as floor marking for a designated cycle lane in one direction and additional pedestrian space on one side, as well as designated parking bays on the other side of the road, and the intervention would include signage emphasising low vehicular speeds and pedestrian priority.

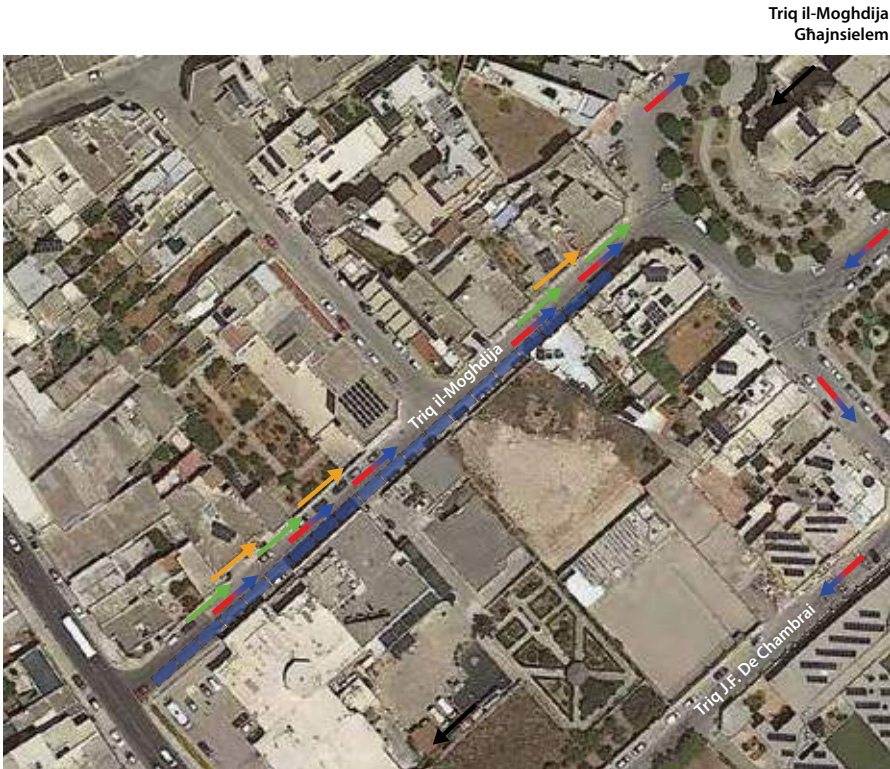
LEGEND

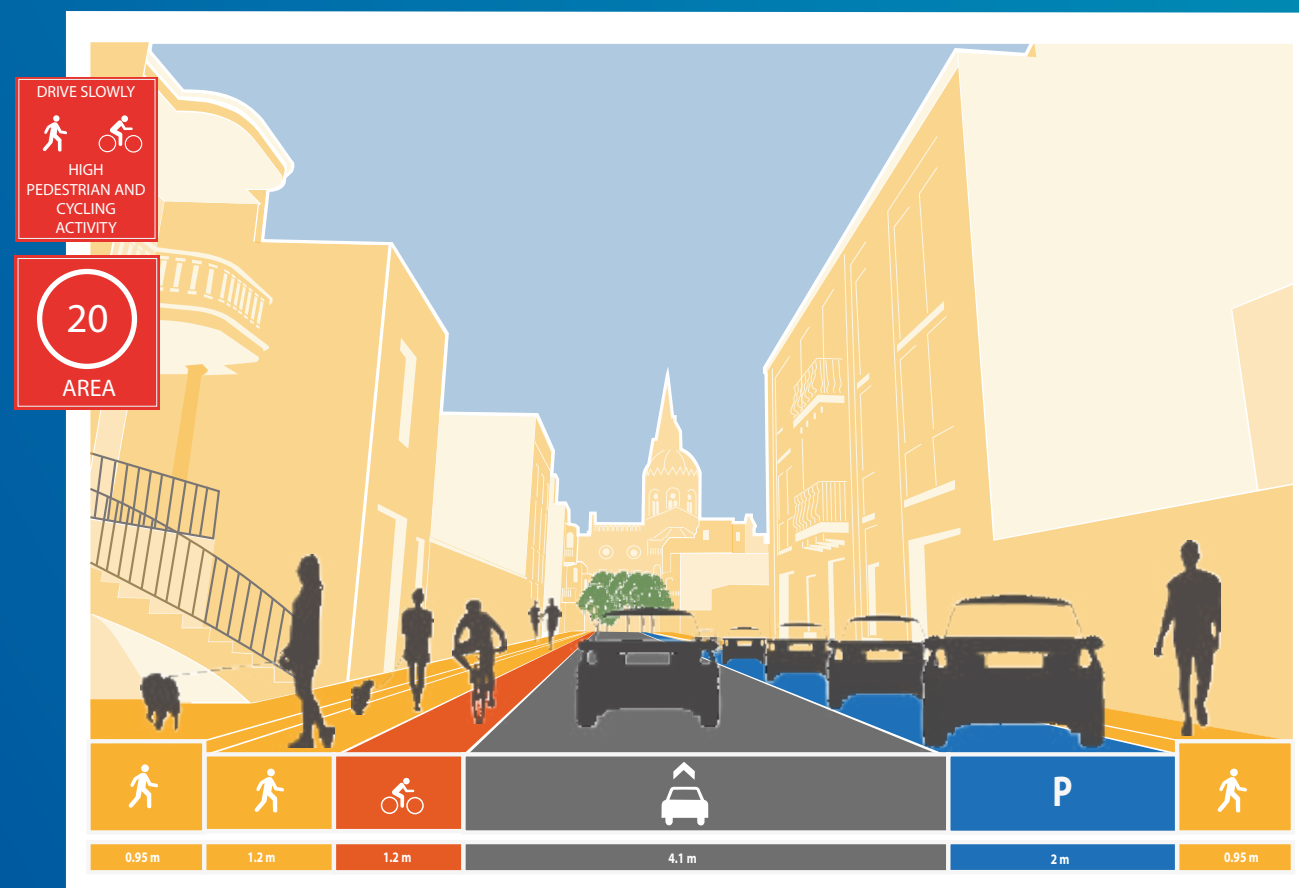
Signage/Tactical Urbanism

- Fully pedestrian space
- Floor marking - slowing cars
- Car parking space
- Physical barrier (bollard)
- One-way
- Limited access

Traffic Management

- Private Cars
- Public Buses
- Bicycles
- Pedestrians
- All modes of transportation
- Cars + Buses
- Buses + Bicycles
- Bicycles + Cars





DRIVE SLOWLY
HIGH PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLING ACTIVITY

20
AREA



source: no source

Phasing Strategy

The interventions have been phased in stages, starting with those that are simple to implement and that could potentially catalyse bigger changes in the near future. The stages have been designed to facilitate the implementation of the overall Slow Streets vision.

Phase 1

Starting and Testing: Projects that are straightforward and easy to implement and that can provide the groundwork for a more significant future reconfiguration, thus requiring less initial financial investment. This phase includes the creation of play streets, tactical urbanism interventions and the testing of elements for eventual Level 4 interventions and are characterised by the use of temporary (removable or reversible) elements that could be deployed on certain days and during certain times.

Phase 2

Strengthening: This phase is envisioned to require more investment into signage and branding in order to build on Phase 1, and implement the necessary re-routing measures as discussed previously.



Phase 3

Monitoring should be carried out simultaneously with execution, and post-implementation, in order to gauge whether the intervention is achieving the desired outcome, and if there are actions to be done that could achieve better results. Monitoring will determine whether the interventions could become permanent in nature, and eventually further transformed into more significant infrastructural changes.



Ghajnsielem

The simplest interventions to implement first would be the play streets, tactical urbanism interventions (namely floor markings) and temporary signage. Floor markings at intersections and critical crossings may be carried out first as pedestrian priority is the primary concern of the Slow Streets initiative. Specifically the entrances to already existing paths can be implemented first to increase the attraction and use of these roads, together with floor markings around the main central square and Pjazza Indipendenza to improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists. Play street closures during this phase may be carried out on designated days and at times when traffic is already low, such as on a Sunday. Testing of the key interventions around the square leading to their eventual implementation may also be carried (specifically the roads of Pjazza Madonna Ta' Loreto, Triq J.F. Chambrai and Triq il-Mogħdija).

During the second phase, the rerouting and tactical urbanism interventions of Pjazza l-Indipendenza can be tested and eventually carried out as these will link to the roads tested in Phase 1. Simultaneously, Phase 1 testing on Sundays may extend over the entire weekend. In addition, the northern roads leading to and from Pjazza l-Indipendenza (specifically Triq il-Ġnien, Triq Manoel Pinto De Fonseca and Triq Bengħazi) and the interventions around the two open public open spaces can be tested for closure and, if this proves successful, eventually rerouted.

Finally for Phase 3, the implementation of all interventions at their full scale is envisioned to occur, including the eastern area's rerouting interventions and all outstanding Level 1 interventions that enable the network to be consolidated.

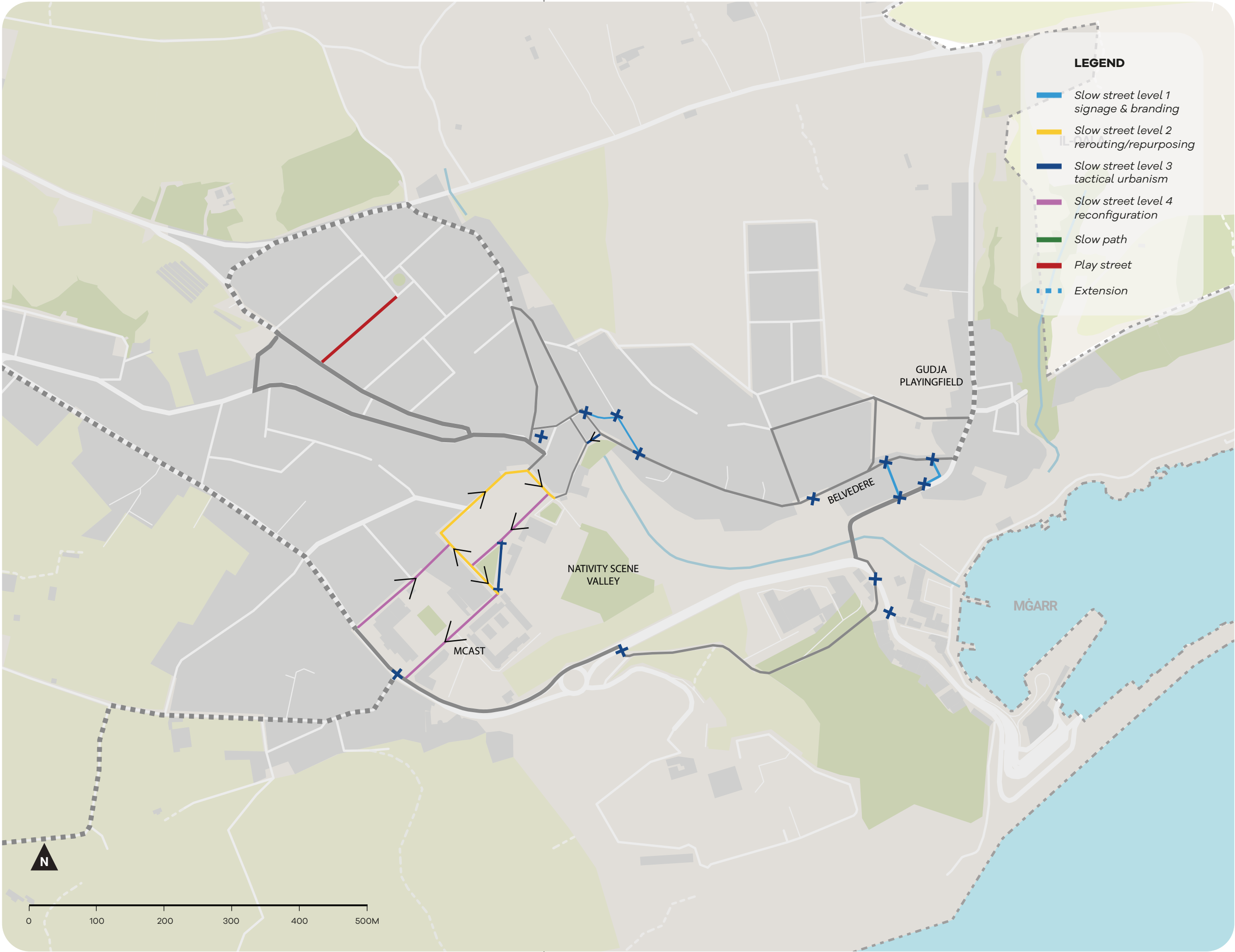


PHASING

STARTING &
TESTING THE
NETWORK

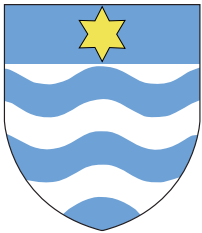


KUNSILL LOKALI
GHAJNSIELEM

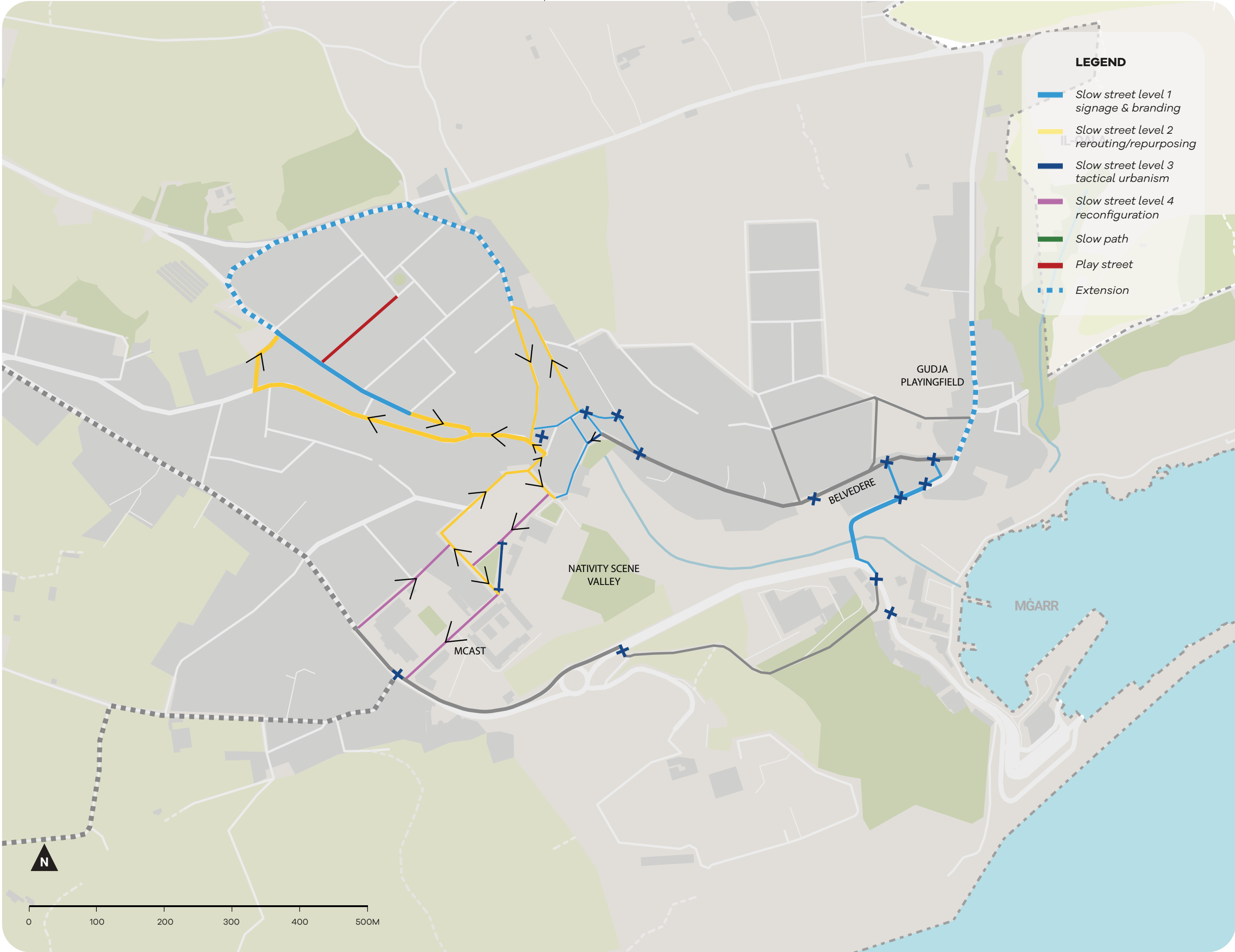


PHASING

STRENGTHENING
THE NETWORK



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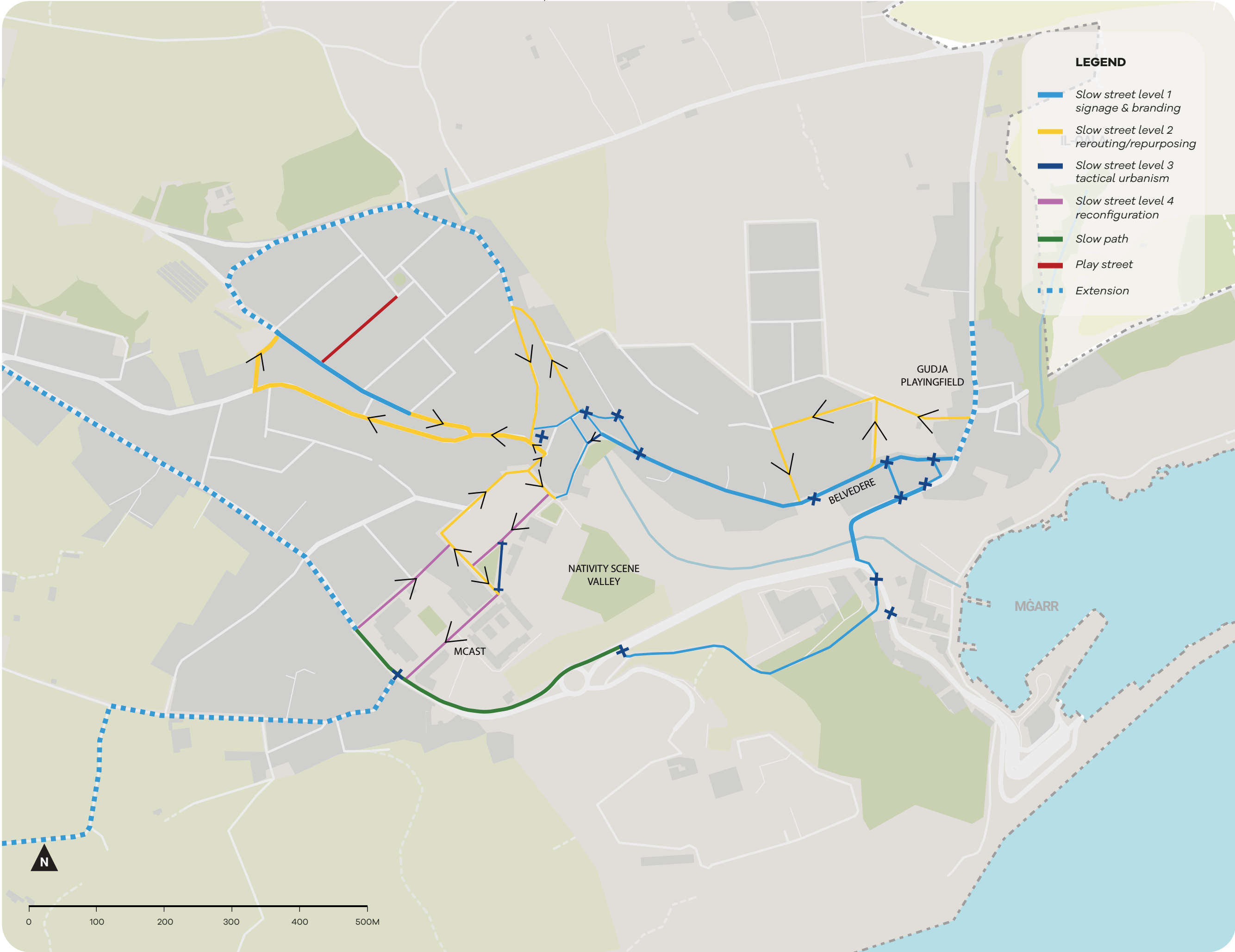



PHASING

COMPLETING
THE NETWORK



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People traffic replaces car traffic, and the streets become ‘paved parks’ where people of all abilities can come out and improve their mental, physical and emotional health.

Slow Streets is a concept that can potentially extend to a permanent network of social places to stay, safe walkways and low-stress biking.

The Way Forward

In order for Slow Streets to be successfully executed, a high degree of collaboration and communication is required between various stakeholders.

Whether at the testing or strengthening phase, projects require collaborations between Local Councils (as well as the Local Councils’ Association and the Regional Committees) and local residents, with the involvement of other entities – NGOs and community groups such as the Bike Advocacy Group and Walking Malta, Transport Malta, Malta Public Transport, the Planning Authority, the Environment and Resources Authority and other government entities.

Partnerships are important for creating an agreed-upon plan for signage, programming, and for the creation of an ongoing management plan once the project is implemented. Specifically within tactical urbanism projects, a collaborative

effort with residents is beneficial for its successful implementation. The most successful plans for change often come from the residents themselves, as they centre on their daily needs. Therefore residents should be engaged throughout the entire process such that the outcome may be more fruitful.

Slow Streets involves a combination of strategies that aim to result in safer and more frequent use of streets by pedestrians. However, the future vision is for Slow Streets to incentivise larger scale projects that could give back high quality urban public space to the residents. For these future projects, partnerships, active resident involvement and participatory design will be essential.

Għajnsielem is a large, historic village in the south-eastern area of Gozo, Malta's sister island, and includes several attractors, most notably the Parish Church located within the main square. Most of the village is residential, especially the central area surrounding the Parish Church, with some commercial activity around the centre (such as clubs and the civic centre), however the peripheral zones of the village are being increasingly dominated by commercial accommodation. Some of the surrounding roads, stemming out of the central square, are narrow and shaded throughout most of the day, thus having the potential to form part of the Slow Streets Network especially as more pedestrian-oriented routes. Other roads are more vehicle-oriented and have the potential to reduce vehicular traffic therein and be used as public spaces in their own right by local residents.

The main aim of Slow Streets strategy, therefore, is to liberate local streets from extraneous traffic that could instead be safely used by residents by using different schemes of traffic management, including both rerouting opportunities and tactical urbanism interventions. Key routes have also been identified for potential reconfiguration since they enable a stronger and safer street environment for pedestrians and cyclists alike.

The individual strategies are categorised according to the level of interventions, which entail diverse tools of traffic management and tactical urbanism. These include:

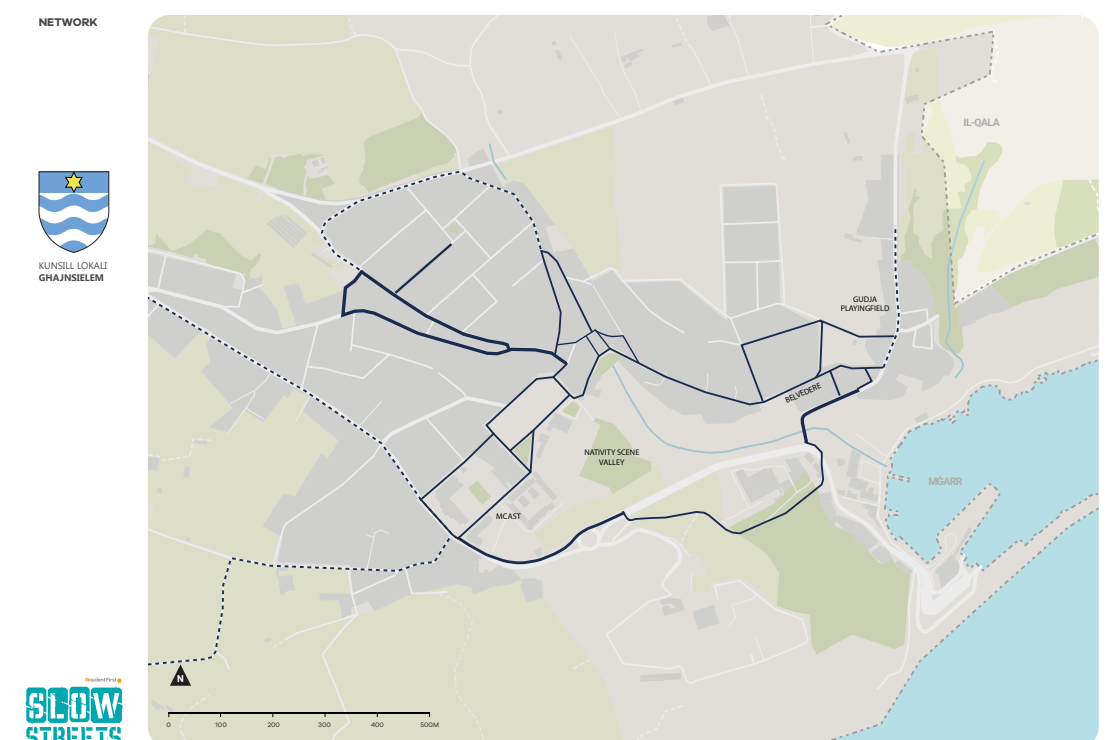
- Level 1 interventions: Introduction of signage which alerts drivers to slower speeds and increased pedestrian and cyclist presence and activity
- Level 2 interventions: Rerouting of traffic, which shifts priority of the spaces to pedestrian and cyclist use
- Level 3 interventions: Tactical urbanism initiatives – low cost and temporary solutions that are focused on reallocating more space to pedestrians and cyclists rather than cars and that can be used in the short term (to test Level 4 interventions) or the long term
- Level 4 interventions: Reconfiguration of the street section to allocate more physical space to pedestrians and cyclists
- Slow Paths: A designated slow section of the road, when intervening on the entire street is not possible, particularly for use in larger roads where slower-moving, more

Summary

- Play Streets: A type of intervention where a local road is closed off to cars temporarily, for example on weekends, so that it may be transformed into a place where residents of all ages are free to gather, socialise and play
- Extensions: Important links that represent future potential expansion of the network, and better connectivity for residents of different localities

The phasing strategy is designed to begin with the interventions that are simple to implement and that could potentially catalyse bigger changes in the near future.

Slow Streets involves a combination of strategies that aim to result in safer and more frequent use of streets by pedestrians. In order for Slow Streets to be successfully executed, a high degree of collaboration is required among various stakeholders. Engaging the residents, preferably throughout the entire process, will produce the most successful plans for change.



Intervention Summary street by street

Intervention 1 - Triq Lourdes (signage & branding and tactical urbanism)

Signage: Slow Streets Branding

Signage: 20km/hr speed limit (Triq Lourdes)

Signage: pedestrian priority (Triq Lourdes)

Tactical Urbanism: floor markings in the form of colourful floor paint

Suggestion: floor marking in the form of pedestrian crossings at Triq ix-Xatt and Triq l-Imġarr (for safe access to Triq Lourdes)

Intervention 2 - Triq Sant’ Antnin and Triq il-Ħamri (signage & branding and tactical urbanism)

Signage: Slow Streets Branding

Signage: 30km/hr speed limit

Signage: share the road (vehicles and bicycles) - Triq il-Ħamri

Signage: pedestrian crossing points

Tactical Urbanism: floor markings in the form of pedestrian crossing and colourful floor paint

Intervention 2 - Triq il-Gudja, Triq Malta and Triq Kemmuna (rerouting)

Signage: Slow Streets Branding

Signage: 20km/hr speed limit

Signage: share the road (vehicles and bicycles)

Signage: one-way road

Rerouting: two-way road into one-way road (forming a loop from Triq il-Ħamri to Triq Kemmuna to Triq Malta)

Intervention 3 - Triq fuq il-Ġhajn and Triq il-Fawwara (Playground) (signage & branding and tactical urbanism)

Signage: Slow Streets Branding

Signage: 20km/hr speed limit

Signage: share the road (vehicles and bicycles)

Signage: pedestrian crossing points

Tactical Urbanism: floor markings in the form of pedestrian crossings and colourful floor paint

Intervention 3 - Triq Wied ir-Rajjes (rerouting)

Signage: Slow Streets Branding

Signage: 20km/hr speed limit

Signage: share the road (vehicles and bicycles)

Signage: one-way road

Rerouting: two-way Triq Wied ir-Rajjes into one-way road, direction northwards

Intervention 4 - Triq Anġlu Grech (signage & branding)

Signage: Slow Streets Branding

Signage: 20km/hr speed limit

Signage: pedestrian priority

Signage: share the road (pedestrians, drivers and cyclists)

Intervention 4 - Triq Simirat, Triq il-Ġnien and Triq Ramon Perellos (rerouting)

Signage: Slow Streets Branding

Signage: 20km/hr speed limit

Signage: share the road (pedestrians, cyclists and drivers)

Signage: one-way roads

Rerouting: two-way Triq Simirat to one-way road, direction south to enter Pjazza l-Indipendenza

Rerouting: two-way Triq il-Ġnien to one-way road, direction west to exit Pjazza l-Indipendenza

Rerouting: two-way Triq Ramon Perellos to one-way road, direction north to enter Pjazza l-Indipendenza from the central square.

Intervention 4 - Pjazza Indipendenza (tactical urbanism)

Signage: Slow Streets Branding

Signage: 20km/hr speed limit

Signage: pedestrian priority

Tactical Urbanism: floor marking emphasising pedestrian space, alerting drivers to slow down.

Intervention 5 - Triq Manoel Pinto De Fonseca and Triq Benghazi (rerouting)

Signage: Slow Streets Branding
Signage: 30km/hr speed limit
Signage: share the roads (drivers and cyclists)
Signage: one-way roads
Rerouting: two-way Triq Manoel Pinto De Fonseca to one-way road, direction east
Rerouting: two-way Triq Benghazi to partially one-way from intersection with Triq Dun Frangisk Mizzi direction east.

Intervention 6 - Triq iċ-Ċief: Play Street

Signage: Slow Streets Branding
Signage: road closure on designated Play Street days
Play Street: programming of activities

Intervention 7 - Pjazza Madonna Ta’ Loreto - north-western road/Triq Dun Ġużepp

Galea Rapa (rerouting)
Signage: Slow Streets Branding
Signage: 20km/hr speed limit
Signage: one-way road
Rerouting: two-way north-western road (Triq Ġużeppi Galea) to one-way road, direction east
Signage: share the road (Triq Dun Ġużepp Galea Rapa)

Intervention 7 - Pjazza Madonna Ta’ Loreto - south-eastern road (reconfiguration)

Signage: Slow Streets Branding
Signage: 20km/hr speed limit
Signage: pedestrian and cyclist priority
Signage: pedestrian crossing point
Signage: one-way road
Rerouting: two-way road to one-way road, direction east
Reconfiguration: reduce street width to 4.1m, designate parking spaces on either side of the traffic lane, and introduce two designated cycling lanes on the left side of the traffic lane
Tactical Urbanism: floor markings in the form of pedestrian crossings; floor markings for two designated cycle lanes and parking bays.

Intervention 8 - Triq J.F. De Chambrai (access to Football Ground) (reconfiguration)

Signage: Slow Streets Branding
Signage: 20km/hr speed limit
Signage: pedestrian and cyclist priority
Signage: no entry except for parking
Signage: one-way road
Rerouting: two-way road to one-way road, direction south
Reconfiguration: limit access to street for parking only, designate two cycle lanes and include floor marking to alert drivers.
Tactical Urbanism: floor markings at both ends of street to alert drivers to slow down.

Intervention 9 - Triq J.F. De Chambrai (MCAST) (reconfiguration)

Signage: Slow Streets Branding
Signage: 20km/hr speed limit
Signage: drive slowly, high level of pedestrian and cyclist activity
Signage: one-way road
Rerouting: two-way road to one-way road, direction south
Reconfiguration: reduce street width to 3.7m, introduce designated parking on the right hand side, and planters and a designated cycle lane on the left hand side
Tactical Urbanism: floor marking for designated parking spaces on the right side and cycling lane and planters on the left side

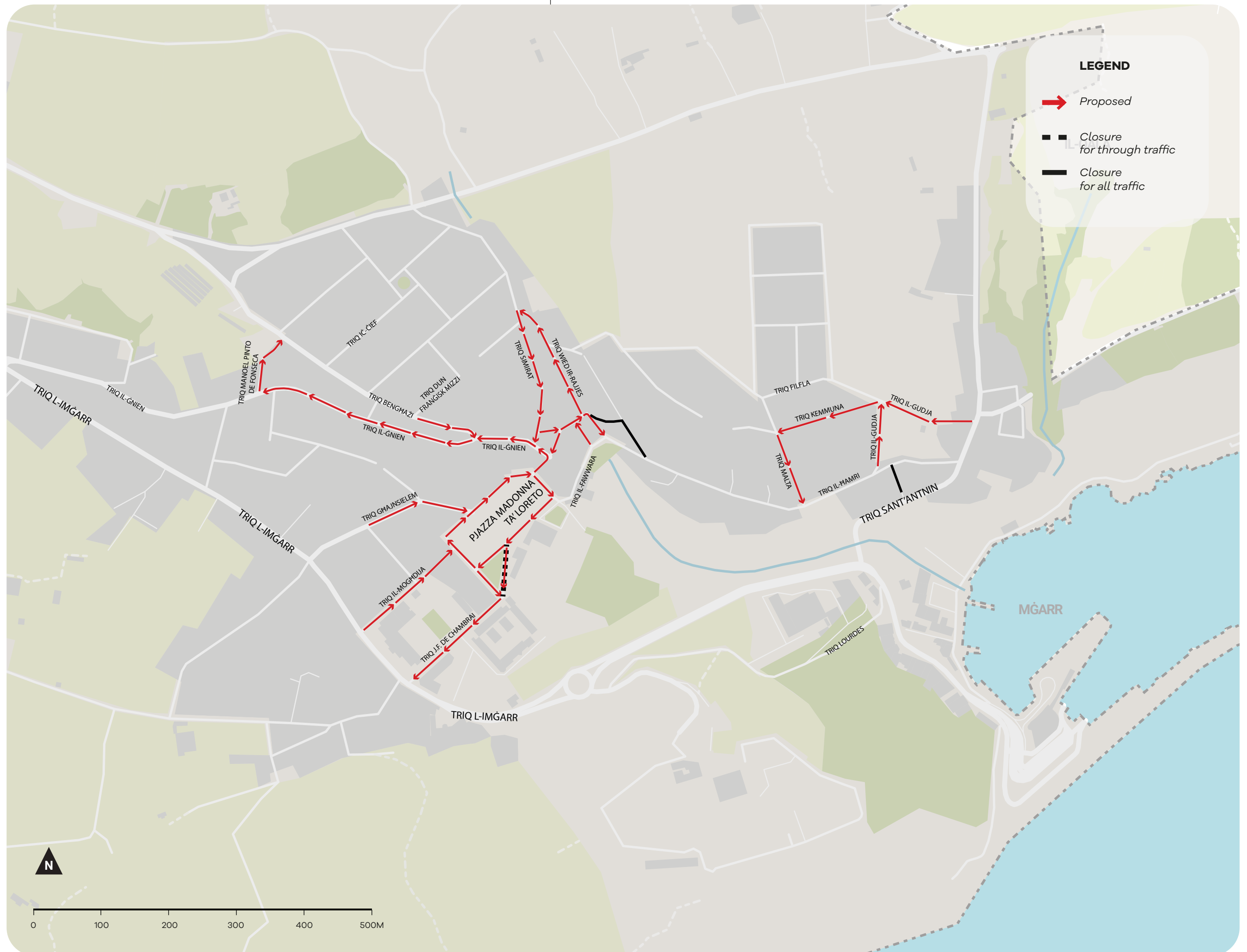
Intervention 10 - Triq il-Mogħdija (reconfiguration)

Signage: Slow Streets Branding
Signage: 20km/hr speed limit
Signage: drive slowly, high level of pedestrian and cyclist activity
Signage: one-way road
Rerouting: two-way road to one-way road, direction north
Reconfiguration: reduce street width to 4.1m, introduce designated parking on the right hand side and a designated cycle lane and additional pedestrian space on the left hand side
Tactical Urbanism: floor marking for designated parking spaces on the right side and cycling lane and additional pedestrian space on the left side

TRAFFIC



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