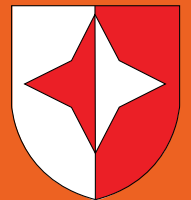


SLOW STREETS NETWORK

September 2020

SLIEMA



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Acknowledgements

The project teams would like to express their gratitude to the Local Councils’ Association for its constant support, to Transport Malta for providing important geospatial datasets for the locality, and to the Planning Authority for providing the digital base plan of the locality.

Document images are cited by source. Unless otherwise specified, images have been produced by studjurban and Studio Tom Van Malderen.

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Slow Streets is a project of the Local Councils’ Association’s Resident First vision 2024. Follow Resident First on <https://www.facebook.com/ResidentFirst>

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Streets in Malta 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, 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.



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.



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.

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.

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.

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.

Sliema

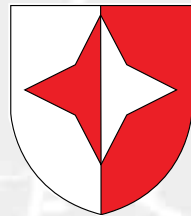
Sliema is a densely populated locality and a popular leisure destination for locals and foreigners alike. The locality also contains numerous important service landmarks and civic and community buildings, such as four large churches – the Parish Church of Sacro Cuor, the Parish Church of Stella Maris, the Parish Church of Saint Gregory the Great, and St Patrick's Church – together with the well-known St James Hospital, numerous hotels, guesthouses and private rental accommodation (including both serviced and self-catering units). While many families reside in the locality, some of the narrow streets do not promote pedestrian safety and suffer from congestion, particularly those next to schools during peak hours.

Sliema is relatively walkable since distances are short, services are easily available and, most of the time, within good reach, and the narrow streets provide much-needed shade during the hot summer months. These very same streets however, which are very characteristic of parts of Sliema, are in dire need of traffic reduction, specifically through traffic that should instead be diverted primarily towards the arterial road network. Sliema's promenade, its long coastline and many beaches, as well as the presence of numerous commercial amenities (both retail and catering-related), make it an attractive destination, also attracting residents from neighbouring localities. This, however, further increases the number of cars within the locality, with drivers often opting to circulate around the locality's internal street network in order to seek on-street parking and to park as close to their destination as possible.

The main aim of Sliema's 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, much-needed change to the entire network and enable a stronger and safer street environment for pedestrians and cyclists alike.

SLOW STREETS LOCALITY

SLIEMA



ST JULIANS

GZIRA



0 100 200 300 400 500M

SLOW STREETS ACTIVITY ZONES

SLIEMA



LEGEND

Public open space

Activity zone

LOCAL
COUNCIL

ST JAMES
HOSPITAL

SLIEMA CHALET

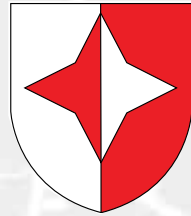
TIGNE POINT



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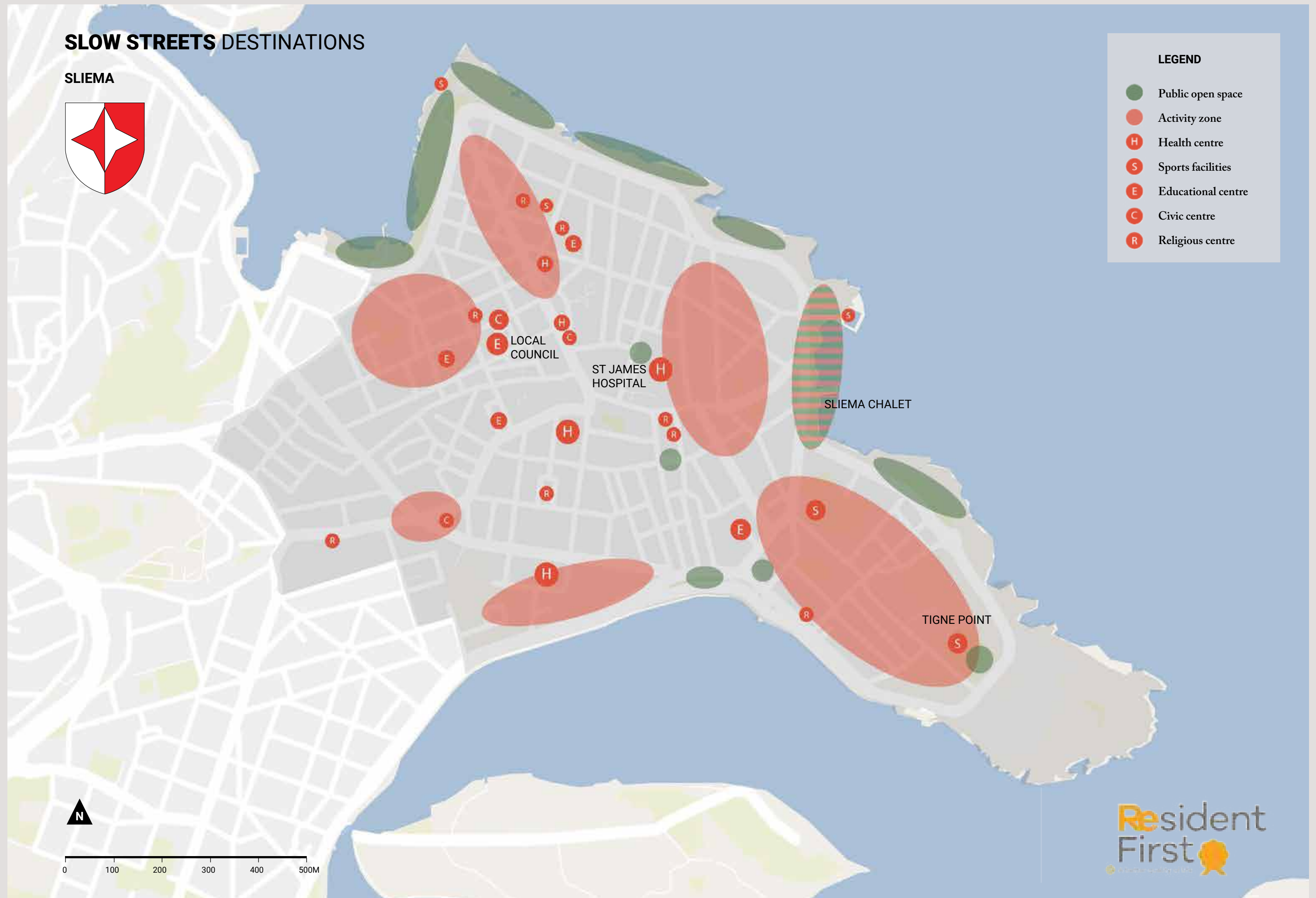
SLOW STREETS DESTINATIONS

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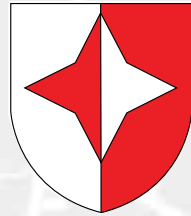
LEGEND

- Public open space
- Activity zone
- Health centre
- Sports facilities
- Educational centre
- Civic centre
- Religious centre



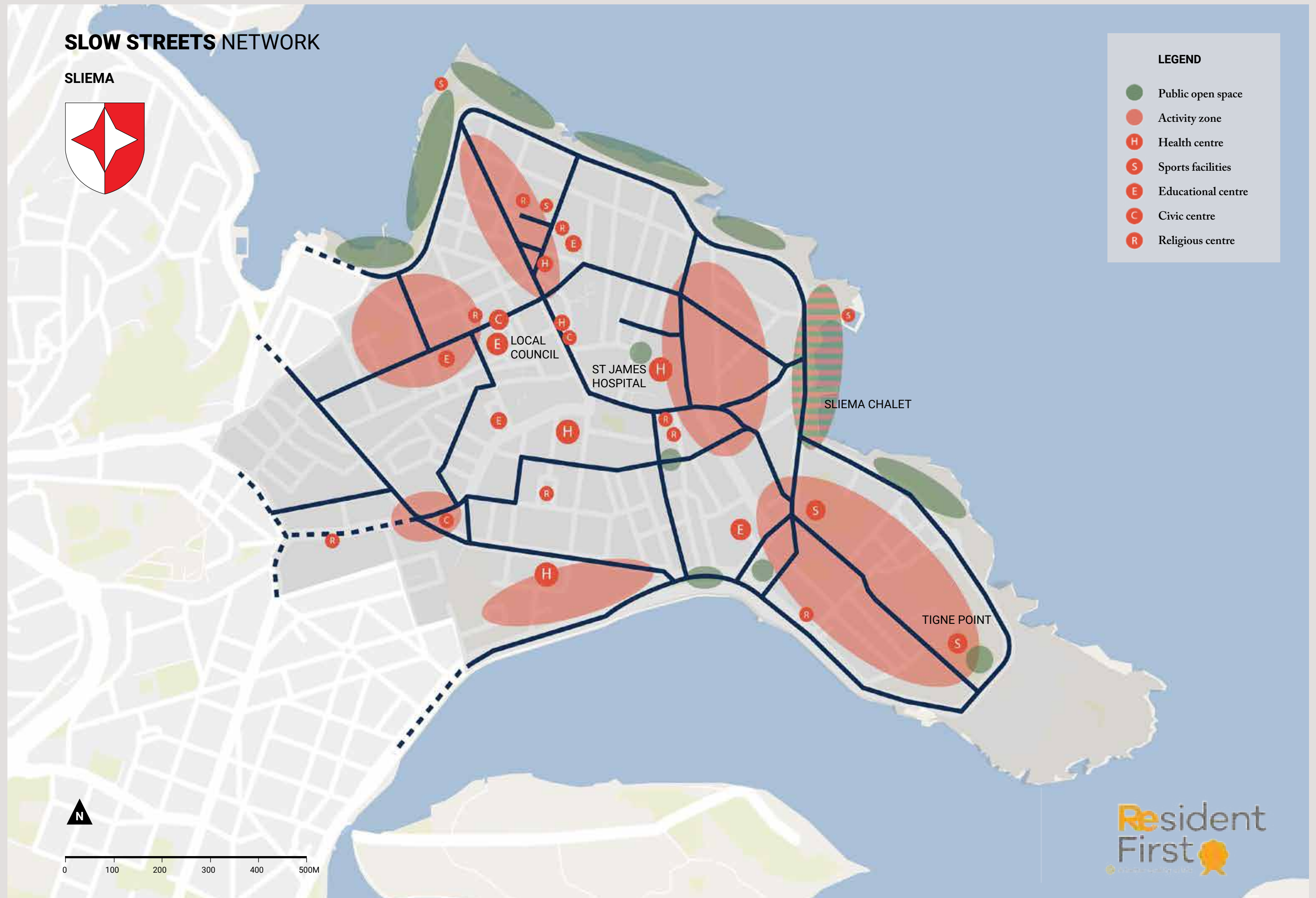
SLOW STREETS NETWORK

SLIEMA



LEGEND

- Public open space
- Activity zone
- Health centre
- Sports facilities
- Educational centre
- Civic centre
- Religious centre



“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

Sliema 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.



source: Pikist



source: Transport Auckland



source: Londonplay.org.uk



source: houstonpublicmedia.org

IMPLEMENTATION



source: Auckland Council



source: Auckland Council

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.



source: Chicago Tribune

IMPLEMENTATION

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.



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),



‘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 – 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.



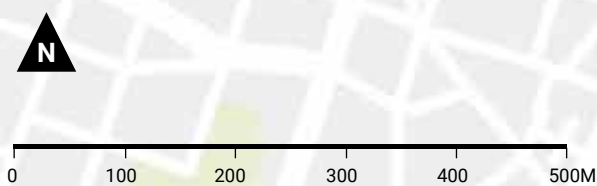
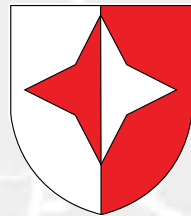
■ **‘Play streets’** are a type of intervention where local roads are closed off to cars temporarily, for example on weekends, so that they can be transformed into places where neighbours of all ages may gather around together and play freely. Children may use skates, bicycles, and movable playgrounds 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.



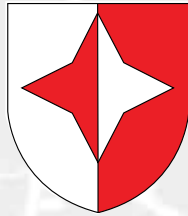
SLOW STREETS NETWORK

SLIEMA



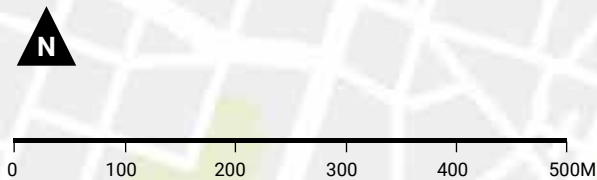
SLOW STREETS INTERVENTION

SLIEMA



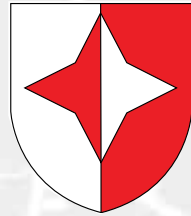
LEGEND

- Slow street level 1
signage & branding
- Slow street level 2
rerouting/repurposing
- Slow street level 3
tactical urbanism
- Slow street level 4
reconfiguration
- Slow path
- Play street
- Extension



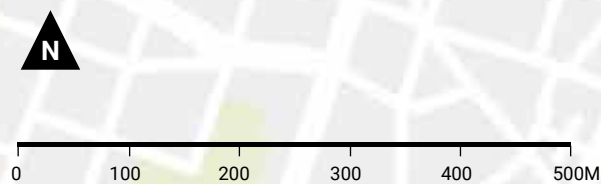
SLOW STREETS INTERVENTION

SLIEMA



LEGEND

- Public open space
- Activity zone
- Health centre
- Sports facilities
- Educational centre
- Civic centre
- Religious centre
- Slow street level 1 signage & branding
- Slow street level 2 rerouting/repurposing
- Slow street level 3 tactical urbanism
- Slow street level 4 reconfiguration
- Slow path
- Play street
- Extension



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.

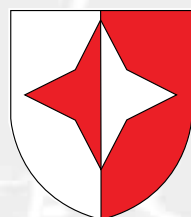
In narrower streets characterised by less space, signage is being proposed to slow down cars and raise the awareness of shared space with cyclists. These streets are included within the Level 1 interventions discussed previously.

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.






SLOW STREETS CYCLING NETWORK

SLIEMA



LEGEND

-  Shared road, clear signage and reduced speed
-  Dedicated cycling lane
-  Extension



0 100 200 300 400 500M

Sliema 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. The main challenge in Sliema is to decongest the narrower local streets from extraneous, through traffic and instead divert drivers onto more prominent routes, particularly the arterial road network.

Intervention 1 Dingli Circus: Level 3

Dingli Circus is a wide, circular intersection through which three streets – Triq Sir Adrian Dingli, Triq il-Creche and Triq Karm Galea – intersect. It contains perpendicular parking spaces surrounded by aesthetically pleasing buildings and frontages. Dingli Circus is also currently characterised by significant wasted, leftover asphalted space for vehicular use. The future vision for this node is that it may potentially become an important public open space with better amenities and landscaping for residents to use and enjoy. In this spirit, tactical urbanism interventions within this central



IMPLEMENTATION

space may catalyse future infrastructural improvements geared towards this vision, signalling drivers to slow down as they are approaching this node thus creating a safer space for pedestrians. In a future scenario, the on-street parking next to the buildings could also potentially shift towards the main road, thus liberating more space for pedestrian and cyclist use next to the existing pavement and using the parked cars as a protective barrier.



Intervention 2 Triq Karm Galea: Level 3

The Ursoline Sisters Convent is located on this street, with a very well preserved historic facade. To highlight this landmark, and also highlight the connection to Triq San Gwann Bosco (discussed in Intervention 3), floor markings are proposed for the street at the intersection with Triq Sir Adrian Dingli Street. These markings would attract pedestrians from Triq Sir Adrian Dingli Street, and also represent pedestrian and cyclist priority over vehicular traffic, while contributing to a stronger sense of local identity.



Intervention 3

Triq San Gwann Bosco: Level 2

This upper stretch of this street is a pleasant place to walk, due to the presence of open front gardens, interesting architectural heritage buildings and the landmark of St Patrick's church. Such low front garden walls and well-landscaped gardens are certainly more appealing for people to walk. The middle and lower stretches of this road are admittedly less successful in this respect, nevertheless the presence of a positive street environment at the upper end and the access to the promenade towards the bottom end may together act as pull factors to draw more people onto this street. There is therefore potential to consider this street for more active pedestrian and cyclist use and have the last portion of the road accessible only to resident parking, such that it may cease to be a through route for vehicles into the promenade. This may be possible given that there are only six on-street parking bays, that may manoeuvre with ease, considering that the street widens due to the presence of garage entrances.



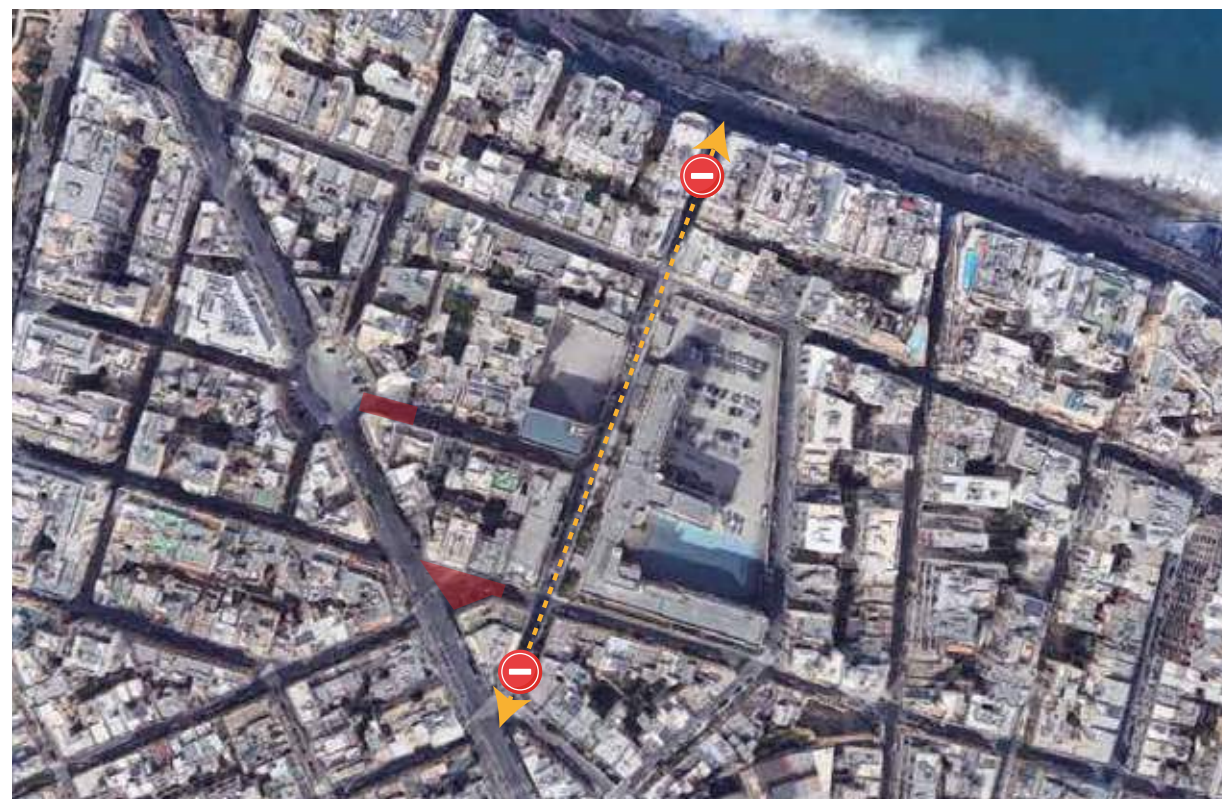
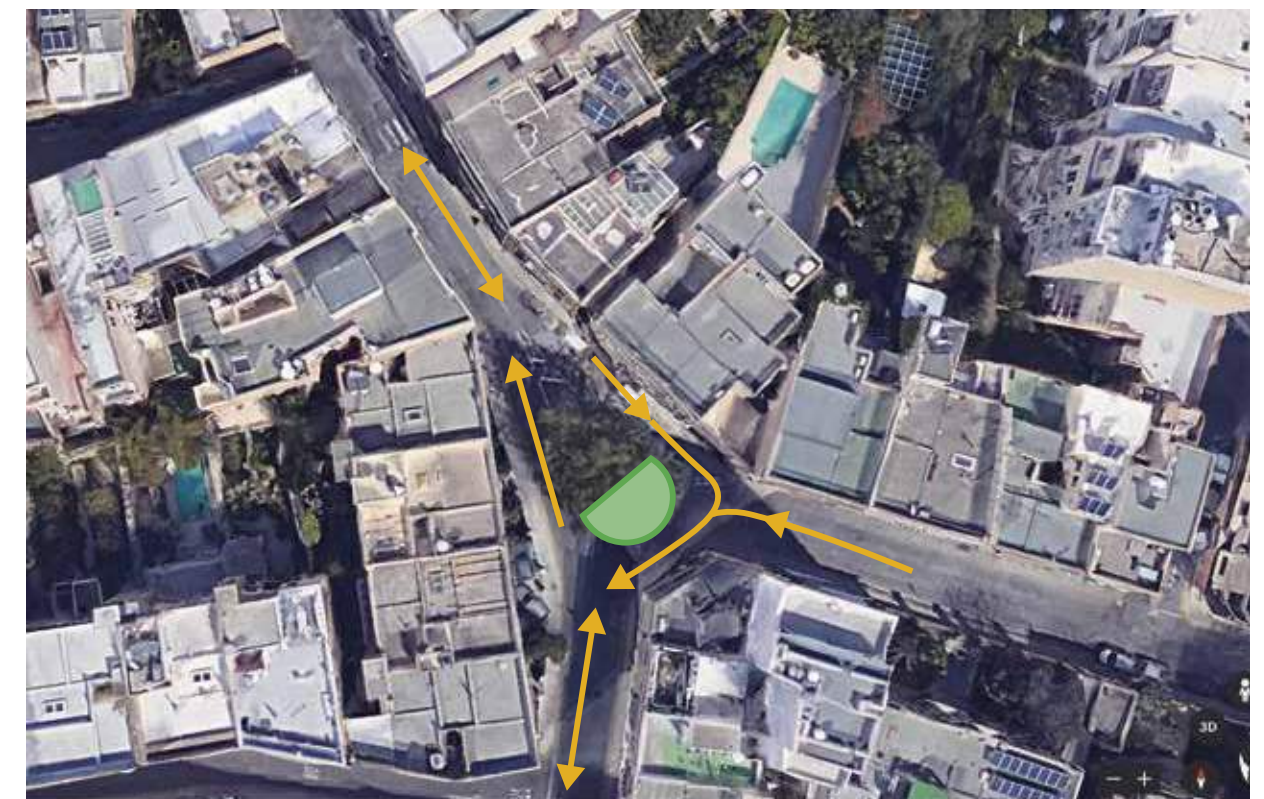
Intervention 4

Triq Sir Adrian Dingli junction: Level 2 and 3

This junction provides a landmark in Sliema, due to the presence of the mature tree therein, as well as pleasant landscaping in front of the surrounding houses and active frontages. To allow for more pedestrian space, the bend in front of the supermarket could be narrowed down by extending the junction outwards to allow for the one-way passage of



a vehicle from Triq il-Kbira out towards Triq Santa Marija, rather than the current two-way configuration, which would furthermore slow down the vehicular speed. The remaining road space could be gained as additional space for pedestrians and cyclists, which could be further delineated with more green. The entire bend could be livened up with floor marking to signal to drivers to slow down further while strengthening the junction's identity further.



Intervention 5

Triq Stella Maris: Level 2 and 3



Triq Stella Maris is a very narrow road that connects Triq il-Kbira to the promenade. It is therefore proposed to be closed to through traffic in its entirety with the inclusion of appropriate signage that would only allow for resident access, as there is a viable alternative for cars to use the adjacent, wider, Triq Amery as a direct route down to the promenade. Moreover, markings at the intersections with both Triq Guze Howard and Triq it-Torri would ensure safer crossing points, especially at the promenade.



source: slowerstreets



source: Dezeen

Intervention 6

Triq Capua: Level 2



In order to enable the previous intervention, the last segment of Triq Capua from Triq Gino Muscat Azzopardi to Triq Stella Maris is also being proposed as resident-only access, so as to avoid extraneous traffic entering the latter street.



source: Pat Dennehy Signs

Intervention 7

Triq Guze Howard: Level 1, 3 and 4



The street is an important lateral link from Triq it-Torri to Triq Sir Adrian Dingli. The intervention proposes several strategies – the bottom segment of the street, from Triq Ghar Id-Dud towards Triq George Borg Olivier, should have signage for low vehicular speeds and pedestrian and cyclist priority. The middle segment, from Triq Don Mikiel Rua towards Triq George Borg Olivier, should have a system of alternating street parking according to the length of each urban block, to further slow down vehicles. This is particularly relevant given that vehicles passing through this street have priority at intersections and therefore tend to speed through this section of Triq Guze Howard. At the intersection with Triq Sir Adrian Dingli, Triq Guze Howard widens due to the presence of perpendicular parking to the pavement, which results in a significant asphalted space that may be better articulated through floor markings, providing a better identity to the street and simultaneously enabling safer crossings for pedestrians.



source: gosantaacruzca



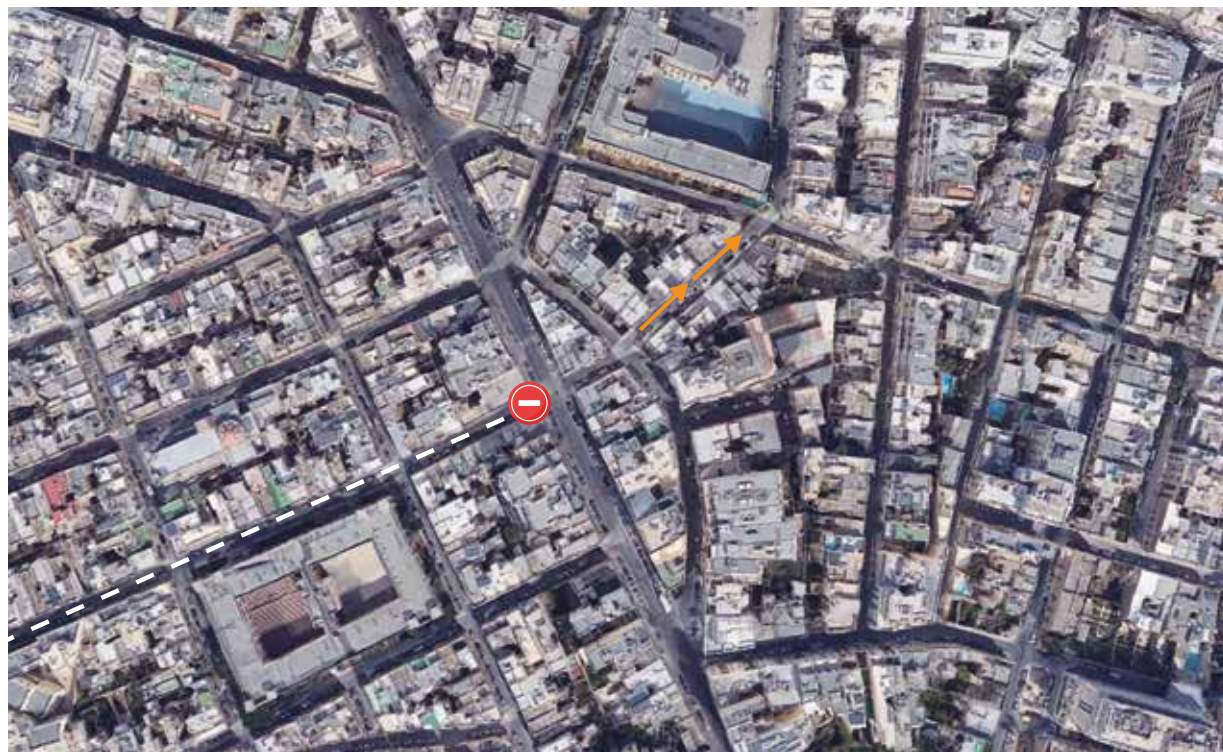
source: shutterstock



Intervention 8

Triq Don Mikiel Rua: Level 2

This street is residential in nature and through traffic tends to use it as a shortcut in order to access Triq Mons. Depiro towards Triq Sir Adrian Dingli and beyond. In order to deter traffic from using this shortcut, it is being proposed to convert this two-way street into a one-way route towards Triq Guze Howard.



Intervention 9

Triq Mons. G. Depiro Street: Level 1 and 2 and Play street



Triq Mons. Depiro is a long stretch and is an important street as it includes the Local Council and two primary schools. The street intervention consists of two strategies. The first strategy proposes to close off the extent of the street, from the intersection with Triq Sir Adrian Dingli to that with Triq San Frangisk, to through traffic (local access only). This strategy is important given the presence of the two schools and their potential use also after school hours, as well as the Local Council building and ancillary amenities contained therein. The second strategy is to improve signage from the interaction with Triq San Frangisk to that with Triq Manwel Dimech in order to slow down local cars, providing further safety to pedestrians and cyclists.

A dedicated play street is proposed to be located in front of the school, particularly given that the street is aesthetically pleasing due to the green strip and seating that is already present in front of the Local Council offices. This play street can be tested at specific times of the day when traffic is low, for example during the evenings or on Sunday mornings. Through testing this programme, and getting feedback from residents, a permanent timetable for the play street can be created.





Intervention 10
St Francis Street: Level 1 and 3



The intersection of St. Francis Street and Triq it-Torri is located at a particularly busy strip of commercial activity. As restaurants and catering establishments are located around this node, there is a demand for better pedestrian crossings, which are currently lacking, so as to slow down cars and buses at the curve. Therefore the intervention proposes tactical urbanism interventions for a clear pedestrian crossing across Triq it-Torri, preferably with bright paint marking so that it is clearly visible for approaching cars. St Francis Street would also have appropriate signage emphasising slow car speed and pedestrian and cyclist priority.





Intervention 11

Triq Rodolfu / Triq Manwel Dimech junction: Level 3

The junction is an entry route into Sliema and is also an important node given the presence of a local landmark, the Sliema police station. In front of the station, there is a public convenience facility that is accessible through underground stairs, albeit not very visible. Efforts should be made for making this space more visibly and physically accessible. Therefore, the entire junction could be marked with colourful pavement markings, and wide zebra crossings may be introduced. It would be important to extend this road surface marking into each street that feeds into this space, in order to slow traffic ahead of time. This strategy would shift the priority to pedestrians and increase the safety of crossings. The on-street parking along this intersection (there is only one officially designated parking bay at present) may further be potentially rethought in order to restrict the width of this junction, and simultaneously instead provide more pedestrian space next to the shops. This would furthermore preclude the possibility of double-parking, which is quite commonplace at present.



There is furthermore increased potential for the diverter in front of the Police Station to become greener, and its delineation with planters would furthermore provide more clarity to car drivers so as to respect the pedestrian space, besides making the junction more visually pleasing.



Intervention 12

Triq Manwel Dimech: Level 1 and 4

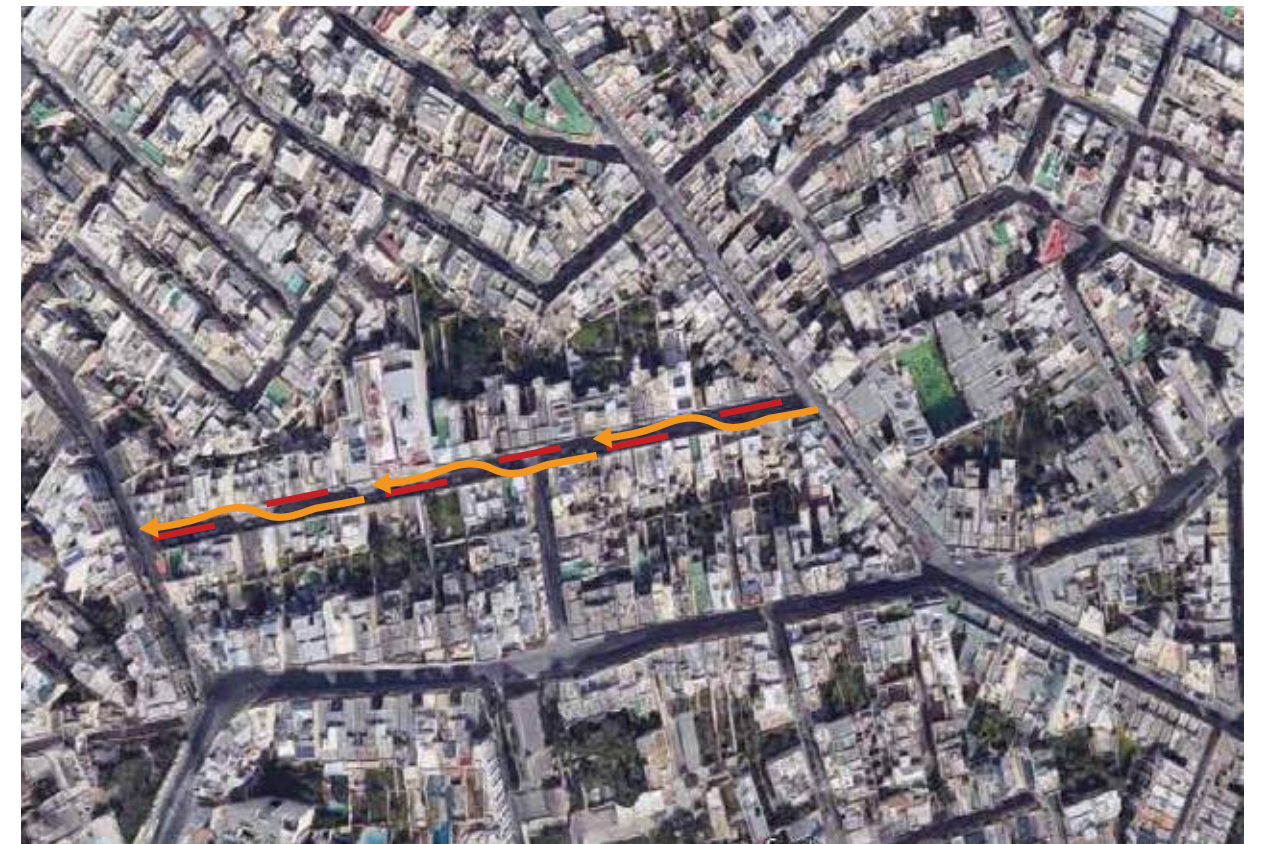
This street is particularly important as it cuts through the entire locality, connecting Triq ix-Xatt to Balluta Bay. The intervention encompasses two strategies to control car traffic speeds. The first segment of the road from Triq ix-Xatt towards Triq Guze Ellul Mercer would use signage for slow car speeds and pedestrian and cyclist priority. Throughout the second segment, from Triq Guze Ellul Mercer towards Balluta Bay passing through the junction with Triq Rodolfu, the street would have alternate parking. As explained in Intervention 11, there would be tactical urbanism of floor markings and possibly planters at the junction with Triq Rodolfu.



Intervention 13

Triq Tonna: Level 4

As an entry route into Sliema, cars would be slowed down in this street using alternate parking before accessing the local roads. This strategy is important as Triq Tonna is a straight and direct road, which encourages cars to drive faster. Such roads are unsafe for pedestrians, particularly in residential neighbourhoods.



Intervention 14

Triq Guze Ellul Mercer: Play street

This street is an important pedestrian connector and provides a good shortcut between Triq Manwel Dimech and Triq Rodolfu. It could be reserved as a play street on designated days and at designated times during the week, as local cars would instead be able to access the adjacent Triq San Gwann Battista to navigate from Triq Manwel Dimech towards Triq Rodolfu. This intervention would therefore give this street space back to the local residents.



IMPLEMENTATION

Barrier elements

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

Landscaping elements

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

Programming

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



Surface treatment
can be used to further define the playstreet

Signs
or slow street branding and explanation and to communicate traffic regulations for street use

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





Intervention 15

Triq it-Torri: Level 1, 2 and 4



Triq it-Torri is an active commercial street, particularly near St. Anne's square. Therefore, limiting vehicular access significantly within the street would make pedestrians and shoppers feel more safe, and would contribute further to the liveliness of the area. The street would only be accessed by residents living in Triq il-Kattidral, school transport to St Joseph School and service vehicles, for which the loading and unloading times could furthermore be restricted to specific times. Appropriate signage would need to be placed at the beginning of Triq it-Torri indicating local access only for Triq il-Kattidral.

In addition, the upper part of Triq it-Torri (between Triq Tigne and Triq il-Kbira) would be allowed as a one-way direction for cars which need to either access the multi-storey car park on Triq il-Kbira or local access only to Triq Tigne, while the other lane is proposed to be allocated for a buffered cycling lane. In this way, cars would be obliged to make a one-way loop from Triq it-Torri through Triq il-Kbira and back to the promenade through Triq Ghar il-Lembi.

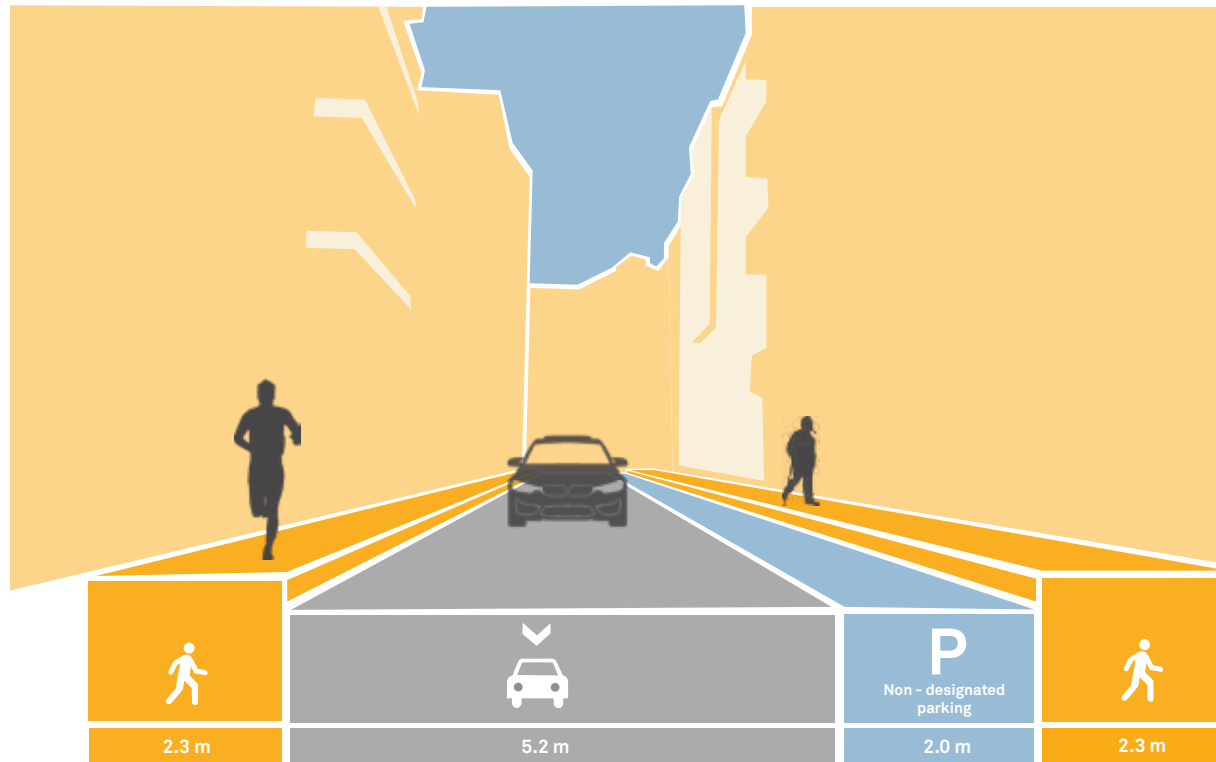
IMPLEMENTATION

This proposal may be simple to implement given that there is a viable alternative for both cars and buses which are heading onto the Sliema promenade to remain driving onto Triq ix-Xatt and access the promenade via the tunnel at Tigne point, passing through Ix-Xatt ta' Qui-Si-Sana. To this effect, the bus stop (Sliema stop) may further be shifted towards the end of the road, at the intersection with Ix-Xatt ta' Qui-Si-Sana. The added benefit of this shift is that cars would have more space to overtake the bus while it stops for passengers.

Triq it-Torri may be closed off during weekends and occasional weekdays during an initial testing phase (for instance, outside of school hours), and then implemented permanently if shown to have positive results overall.

The remaining stretch of the promenade from Ix-Xatt ta' Qui-Si-Sana towards Balluta Bay is proposed as a slow route, with the introduction of appropriate signage to provide safer routes for pedestrians and cyclists.





Intervention 16 Triq il-Kbira: Level 1 and 2

Currently, Triq il-Kbira allows two-way traffic at the junction with Triq it-Torri. However, in order to complement the previous intervention, the vehicular direction on this street should be limited to one-way so as to restrict the number of cars accessing Triq it-Torri. Cars could instead exit the car park onto Triq il-Kbira and down through Triq Ghar il-Lembi to the promenade. The remaining segment of the street connecting to Triq Sir Adrian Dingli is proposed to introduce appropriate signage for slow speeds highlighting pedestrian and cyclist priority.



Intervention 17
Triq Bisazza: Play street

As an already pedestrianised street which is continuously and actively used, the proposal aims to encourage more programming and activities that targets local residents and their children rather than visitors who solely come here for the commercial activity. What further makes this street successful as a potential play street is the shade from the surrounding buildings and seating opportunities on the available benches and within adjacent cafes, for parents to watch their children play.



Intervention 18
Triq Tigne: Level 1 and 2



Given that this is a densely populated residential street, the segment from Triq Censu Xerri to Triq Hughes Hallet would include appropriate signage to ensure slow speeds and to emphasise pedestrian priority. The remaining section of the street that currently leads to Triq it-Torri is proposed as a one-way street in the opposite

direction, towards Triq Hughes Hallet. This strategy ensures that only local users would choose to take this route, resulting in fewer vehicles passing through both this portion of Triq Tigne and Triq it-Torri, completing the vision of a more pedestrian-oriented Triq it-Torri as discussed in Intervention 15.



Intervention 19

Ix-Xatt Ta' Qui-Si-Sana: Level 1

This segment of the promenade enjoys a frequently used playground located opposite a strip of dense residential blocks. Therefore, given that it is highly used the road should enforce low vehicular speeds through appropriate speed signage and pedestrian priority signs, which would also increase safety for cyclists.



Intervention 20

Ghar Id-Dud: Level 2 and 3

This street is proposed to have no through access to the Sliema promenade for cars, reducing the amount of cars that use this particular access to exit onto the promenade. Cars could instead use Triq Amery for this purpose. Since cars would only be able to access Triq Guze Howard, the junction could be redesigned to expand the space for the bus stop (Chalet) with planters and seating, as well as through tactical urbanism interventions.



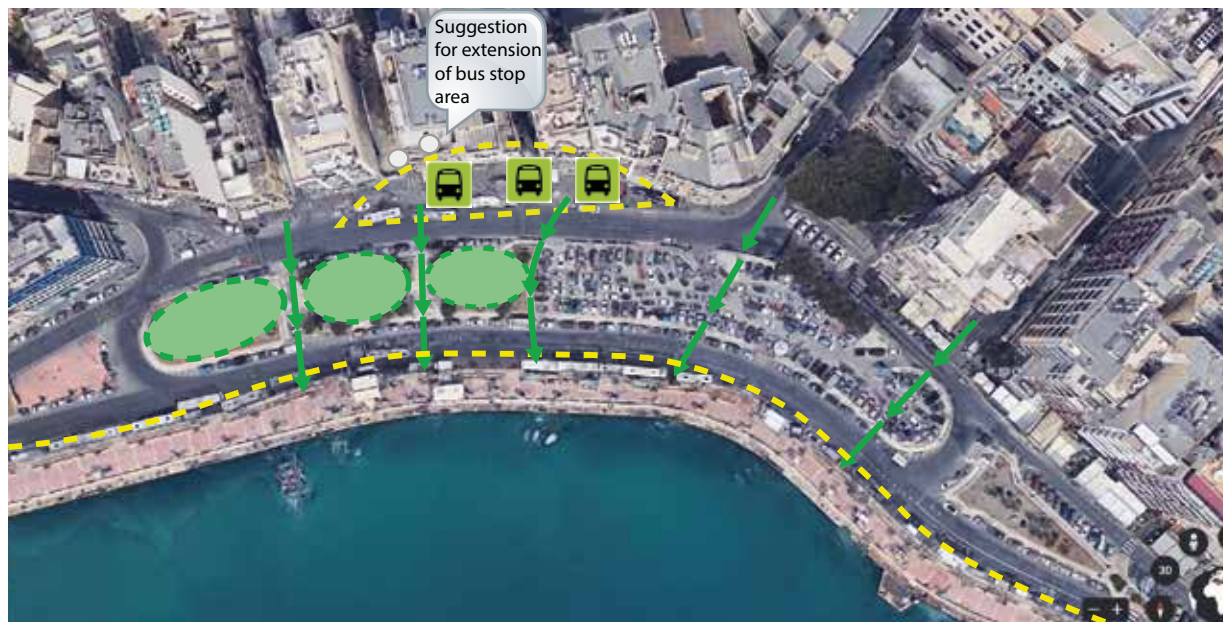
Intervention 21

Triq ix-Xatt (the Promenade, Sliema Ferry side): Slow path

As the existing promenade is a successful public space, some interventions could contribute to further enhance the pedestrian experience and safety. First, access to service vehicles for loading/unloading should be strictly limited to specific service times, outside of rush hours, which would decrease the number of such vehicles on the streets. Second, the Ferries bus stop could be extended backwards towards the preceding taxi service lane, as currently many buses arrive at the same time and cause congestion due to insufficient parking bays.



As there is significant activity of pedestrians crossing from the promenade to the shopping area and vice-versa, more zebra crossings should be marked. The crossing should connect the building facades to the central garden and then to the promenade, as one continuous band. In addition, a coloured crossing could be marked between St Anne's Square to and through the parking area and to the promenade. As such, vehicles would have to pass more slowly due to the increase in crossings. The parking area may be reorganised better, with a zone left clear of parking forming a walking corridor for pedestrians to navigate through, rather than having to meander between the parked cars.



Intervention 22 Triq San Vincenz: Level 1

This street is a main axis connecting the promenade to the inner parts of Sliema, passing through Annunciation Square, which has attractive frontages and already serves as a small social space for residents to congregate and interact together. This route may be strengthened as a pedestrian and cyclist connection through the introduction of appropriate signage.



source: no source

Intervention 23 Triq il-Karmnu: Level 1

Triq il-Karmnu is a narrow road that runs across Sliema, also passing through the iconic Annunciation Square and connecting this node to the landmark Parish Church of Sacro Cuor. Similar to many of the narrow streets in Sliema, it is a good pedestrian route to take because it is shaded throughout most of the day, and provides a direct walking axis from Triq Ghar il-Lembi to Triq Rodolfu. Given that this street goes in



opposing directions at Annunciation Square, vehicles are precluded from using it as a through route. This route may therefore be strengthened further as a pedestrian and cyclist connection through the introduction of appropriate signage.

Intervention 24 Triq San Gwann Battista / Triq San Trofim: Level 1

These streets serve as a continuation to Triq il-Karmnu, connecting to Triq Rodolfu and the play street at Triq Guze Ellul Mercer and may also be strengthened further as pedestrian connections through the introduction of appropriate signage.

Intervention 25 Triq San Gakbu / Triq Falzon / Triq Nicolo Isouard (up to Triq Mons. Depiro): Level 2



These streets connect Triq Rodolfu to Triq Mons. Depiro and complete the Slow Streets network. The strategy proposes to close off these streets to through traffic (local access only). This strategy is important given the connection to both play streets proposed for Sliema.

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 the proposed play street, 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 intervene on important connector routes and often requires more investment in order to build on Phase 1, such as designating cycling lanes.

Phase 3 - Completing: Concluding the Slow Streets network, with branded signage, completing necessary rerouting and making testing of street closures more permanent

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.



source: Brend Toderian



source: Carolina Angles

Sliema

The simplest interventions to implement first would be the play streets on Triq Bisazza, Triq Mons. Depiro and Triq Guze Ellul Mercer. Tactical urbanism interventions (namely floor markings) at intersections and critical crossings can be carried out first as pedestrian priority is the primary concern of the Slow Streets initiative. Equally crucial is the implementation of signage along Triq it-Torri and Ix-Xatt Ta' Qui-Si-Sana, which would need to address pedestrian and cyclist priority and controlled speed limits. Specifically at intersections along the promenade, pedestrians would feel safer to cross the road to access this busy public space. In addition, play street closures during this phase may be carried out on designated days and at times when traffic is already low. Testing for the closure of Triq it-Torri (Intervention 15) could begin testing during designated days and times during this phase.

During the second phase, the interventions for important axes for the pedestrian network should be carried out, including, among others, Triq Manwel Dimech, Triq Mons. Depiro, Triq Don Mikiel Rua and Triq Guze Howard. Simultaneously, the proposal for the pedestrianisation of Triq it-Torri (Intervention 15) may extend over the entire weekend and during other times on weekdays, while the testing for local access within local inner roads could occur at designated times. All signage for Level 1 interventions should be completed during phase.

Finally for phase 3, the implementation of all interventions tested during phase 1 and 2 at their full scale is envisioned to occur.



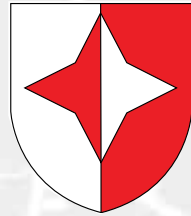
source: New Urbanism



source: The City Fix

SLOW STREETS PHASING: STARTING & TESTING THE NETWORK

SLIEMA



LEGEND

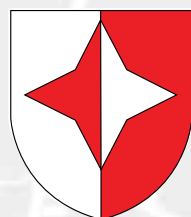
- Slow street level 1
signage & branding
- Slow street level 2
rerouting/repurposing
- Slow street level 3
tactical urbanism
- Slow street level 4
reconfiguration
- Slow path
- Play street
- Extension



0 100 200 300 400 500M

SLOW STREETS PHASING: STRENGTHENING THE NETWORK

SLIEMA



LEGEND

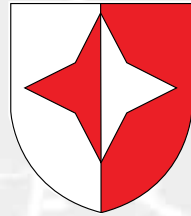
- Slow street level 1
signage & branding
- Slow street level 2
rerouting/repurposing
- Slow street level 3
tactical urbanism
- Slow street level 4
reconfiguration
- Slow path
- Play street
- Extension



0 100 200 300 400 500M

SLOW STREETS PHASING: COMPLETING THE NETWORK

SLIEMA



LEGEND

- Slow street level 1
signage & branding
- Slow street level 2
rerouting/repurposing
- Slow street level 3
tactical urbanism
- Slow street level 4
reconfiguration
- Slow path
- Play street
- Extension



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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.

Sliema is a densely populated locality, with many religious and civic landmarks and a large and popular coastline. The beaches attract residents from neighbouring localities, further increasing the number of car users. Sliema's narrow streets however do not promote pedestrian safety and suffer from congestion, particularly next to schools. As the locality is quite walkable, it is crucial to decrease their usage by cars and instead divert them towards the arterial road or the promenade.

The main aim of Sliema's Slow Streets strategy therefore, is liberating local streets that can instead be safely used by residents through different schemes of traffic management, such as rerouting and tactical urbanism, that shift the priority within these streets to pedestrian and cyclist use.

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 localised/dedicated slip roads are available, and where priority for pedestrians is often not considered

- 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.



Traffic Diagram



ResidentFirst 