

## City Gate to be demolished in March

City Gate will be demolished at the end of March to make way for the new entrance into Valletta, Infrastructure Minister Austin Gatt said today.

He said that the demolition of the Freedom Square Arcades, which started yesterday, was now picking up momentum and will continue over the coming days.

Strict health and dust abatement measures are being enforced to have the least impact on the area, the minister said, with the site having been closed off with new hoarding and water cannon being employed to keep the dust down.

Arrangements have also been put in place to keep the presence of heavy trucks on Valletta's streets down to the bare minimum and any trucks entering the city or leaving the construction site will be washed beforehand. Debris is being deposited down a chute to the ditch below City Gate. Project offices and workers' rest rooms are also being built in the ditch.

The demolition of the arcade and shops at Freedom Square will be followed by excavations of Freedom Square ahead of the construction of the new Parliament Building.

Meanwhile, workers will also be demolishing the police station and the Bank of Valletta offices in South Street, creating a new open space bordering South Street, which will also provide backstage facilities for the new open theatre that will be built on the ruins of the old Opera House.

The new open theatre will be completed before Parliament House.

Dr Gatt and officials from project management company Bovis said that the demolition of City Gate would be preceded by a new traffic management plan for Valletta with new access into the City from Marsamxett since the demolition of the Gate will also eliminate Pope Pius V Street, which leads from the area of the Central Bank across the top of City Gate to the area of St John Cavalier and Bakery Street.


Officials are also planning to 'surgically' demolish the bridge leading from the bus terminus to City Gate to ensure that access would, as much as possible, still be available for pedestrians. The current bridge will be replaced by another bridge which will be one-third the width of the present one.

Dr Gatt said the whole project was on time and the target remained for completion at the end of 2012.


The project will also include the creation of a garden down in the ditch below City Gate in January 2012, when some 140 parking spaces there will cease to exist. However, Dr Gatt said, new parking spaces will be made available through an extension of the park and ride and other parking spaces in Floriana including the area of the football ground, as well as in St James Ditch.

The project will also see the bus terminus moved from the current site to part of St James Ditch. Mepa is to discuss the proposals later this week.


## Comments

J Fenech(4 days, 6 hours ago) 


Tearing down one monstrosity to build an even greater one! This govt's sense of priority has gone haywire!

gcForte(4 days, 7 hours ago) 


Quote....." Dr, Gatt said the whole project was on time,and the target remained for completion at the end of 2012 ". Dr. Gatt, are you aware that as the scientist, the world is going to come to the end, by 12..12..2012. So can you please hurry the project, so we will be able to see it ready?Thank you.

iCocker(5 days, 8 hours ago) 


Like it or not, controversy or not ... this is the best part of this project, FINALLYwe are getting ride of that Fascist style, garage-like city gate ...

M.Borg(5 days, 10 hours ago) 


Ok, ha jnehhi l-parking mid-ditch, u nies u minn jahdem hemm fejn se jipparkjaw u l-parking ta fejn il war rooms se jibqa jew ser jispicca.. Veru ma jahsbu xejn dawn in-nies..... u ghala ghajnhom mill haddiema u l-poplu

Paul Mangion(5 days, 12 hours ago) 

Well done. Looking forward to see this project take shape. What a relief for all of us citizens, been waiting for such a project for ages. Looking also forward to see the bus terminus project take place, can't stand the miserable state of that area. I would like to do one suggestion, could the Palazzo Francia elvation (opposite the royal theatre be restored and cleaned, it would really compliment the project. Well done to all involved.

Justin Gerald Saliba(5 days, 13 hours ago) 


At Last, something is being done !

Anthony Mizzi(5 days, 21 hours ago) 


All the money spent on advertising about giving back open spaces to the people down the drain when the OPEN SPACE at the entrance to Valletta is practically taken from under the people's feet for the WHIM of a Prime

Minister that wants to go down in history for building a new Parliament Building when it is a Parliament that truly functions and better management of tax-payer's money that the people want and not more buildings.


Or maybe Piazza Helsien does not ring well in the Prime Minister's ears and wants to eradicate an open space that has been the venue for public manifestations, some of them National and other crowd pullers like Carnival ?

Gerard Cassar(5 days, 23 hours ago) 

An exit from Valletta is being lost thanks to Gonzi's Piano's dream. There will only be one natural entry the one in front of Castille through Merchant street, St Paul's street and possibly St Ursola street. To go to Bakery street one will have to go round Hotel Phoenicia down to the Valletta water polo pitch into Saint Mark's street or down to the Baviera . Bakery street which is a nearly dead street will see its agony.

Steve Sant(6 days, 1 hour ago) 

Did they write 140 car spaces lost. You are joking, the Piazza San Gorg took 140 cars. Yellow car garage had a capacity of close to 1,000 cars including the actual Yellow private garage. A loss of almost 1200 car spaces. Where are you going to get that back. Not to mention almost another 220 car spaces taken up by the Parliament Ministers. Melita street another 25 cars. So the plan is to turn Valletta into a pedestrianized city. Very nice, except no one gets compensated of course, except those few.

s.grima(6 days, 2 hours ago) 

il gvern jifanfra u l poplu ma jistax ilahaq mal hajja!!! tal biki!! ahjar ra kif ghamel u naqas id dawl u l ilma forsi nihdu ruh!!

A calleja(6 days, 1 hour ago)

jekk ma tridx kontijiet gholjien oqghod attent kif tuza l-elettriku.


Antoine Vella(5 days, 8 hours ago)

s.grima, xi trid tieñu r-ruñ? Inti mhux ruñ għandek bżonn imma moññ.

a.galea(4 days, 10 hours ago)

@ A.Calleja u Antoine Vella

Issa nibdew nixalu ix xemgha mela u nibdew insajru bil hatab ukoll halli zgur nkunu qed naraw kif nuzaw l elettriku. u jiddispjacini nghidlek sir,anke inti anke bzonn mohh ta ...ax if you're not consired, hawn hafna nies f faqar kbir.mhux kulhadd jiflah ghall dak l estrem ta kontijiet... jigifieri is sinjur s.grima ghandu punt.

Alex Zammit(6 days, 3 hours ago) 

This is not a project. It's a vision for valletta.

looking forward

Marianna Galea Xuereb(4 days, 6 hours ago)

Seems more like a nightmare to me.

Emmanuel Marmara'(6 days, 4 hours ago) 

If the like of you don't remember the real CITY GATE, that we proudly had, before being destroyed by the same party, better shut up...Two mistakes do not make a right .YES the majority of the Maltese nationals want a project, but not this blasphemy of a project.

if the administration were so sure of themselves a referendum should have been accepted.

yes a CLOWN ON STILTS and A PETROL STATION AREA TO COMPLIMENT IT.

I bet you that when ready the theatre AREA will soon be used for an MP PARKING PLACE.

I wonder why the PL kept mum on this project..and the other organisers just talk..talk.

J. Cassar(6 days, 3 hours ago)

It's obvious why Labour and the "organisers" kept their opposition mum... because there really isn't that much opposition after all!


C Cassar(6 days, 3 hours ago)

looks like it's not going to go your way. Tough luck because most Maltese think the new project is fanstastic.

Finally, a breath of modern fresh air for Valletta.

M.Cachia(6 days, 2 hours ago)

I'm sorry, but to see the real city gate you would have to been born in the early 17th Century since the real city gate was demolished in around the 1650s to build a more modern one, which was demolished in the mid-1800s to build a modern one.....

R Saliba(6 days, 4 hours ago) 

Please everyone. Comment when it is finished. I'll reserve judgment till than, hope you too

Edwin Mifsud(6 days, 3 hours ago)

When finished the Malteses proverb goes "Fatta la Zorba!"

U diga troppo!


J Farrugia(6 days, 3 hours ago)

When Mintoff destroyed the other part of City Gate to build pigeon holes, NO ONE had the guts to oppose it. So let's shut up and let the works go on until the final project is finished. And then one can judge on the fait accompli. At least it will be much better than those obscene pigeon holes which were erected in front of this site.


Alfred Said(6 days, 4 hours ago) 

The bastions are marvellous. Pity we could not see them for all these years.


Project well thought.

Esther Vella(6 days, 4 hours ago) 

Money well invested.

Joseph Bonello(6 days, 4 hours ago) 


Prosit. A project that we should be proud of. Valletta is truly regenerating.

Jane Attard(6 days, 4 hours ago) 

Finally.

At last.


Deo Gratias.

R. Caruana(6 days, 4 hours ago) 

Good to see the bastions again after so many years buried behind those hideous arcades.

Antoine Grech(6 days, 1 hour ago)


Have fun watching them and maybe take a few photos now my friend before the view is blocked again by the hideous Parliament on stilts ;)

Carm Mangion(6 days, 4 hours ago) 


Jigri jitla l-progett ghax se jkollna belt mill-isbah. Min jghid li progett ikrah irid ikun ghajjur u ma jifhimx.

Edwin Mifsud(6 days, 3 hours ago)


Enlighten us Carm!

Steph Falzon(6 days, 4 hours ago) 

It's good that those archaic arcades have begun to come down at last. I thought I'd never see the day that hideous structure would be destroyed! Well done.

E. Camilleri(6 days, 4 hours ago) 

How exciting! Can't wait to see the new project unfold! :)


G Pace(6 days, 4 hours ago) 

Glad to see the start of a historic project . I am sure that the press will keep us updated continuously as this is history in the making.

As regards to some comments below, especially Mr/Ms Marmaras' please speak only on your behalf. I, for one, am glad that this project started and am looking forward to see its completion.

L. Cutajar(6 days, 5 hours ago) 


Where is the new Valletta police station going to be placed? Is the police station part of Lorenzo Piano project? The police station is one of the most places frequented by tourists and locals who visit Valletta for a number of reasons. Let's hope that a suitable and adequate place for a police station is located.

c. camilleri(6 days, 5 hours ago) 


@ em Marmara. Go on grumbling and waning while Malta is being big anew. That is all what you are able to do.

Emmanuel Marmara'(6 days, 6 hours ago) 


Simple Mr.Paul.....Because no sane Maltese wants to have anything to do with this insane, miserable, unwanted project. 1960's History is repeating itself .

I fenech(6 days, 6 hours ago) 

Ghaqta x'gost qed ittghina ahbar bhal din, pastasata ohra f'lok dik li kien hemm u li ghamiltu inthom. Capcipa.

D Stellini(6 days, 6 hours ago) 


One other ghastly building is St Albert the Great College in Old Bakery Street. Perhaps Piano could come up with some cladding idea, as a bonus !

Paul Grech(6 days, 6 hours ago) 

How come this is being managed by non-Maltese? Don't tell me there was not 1 suitable MALTESE candidate to do the project management job!

C Cassar(6 days, 5 hours ago)

Clearly not. Other much larger countries have far more experience of many more similar projects. Always bring in the best yo can that have the most expertise.

M Mifsud(6 days, 6 hours ago) 

Thanks to who had the idea to demolition the police station. That building is simply ugly!

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