


## The final countdown



Photo: Darrin Zammit Lupi

It's the end of the arcades as we know them. Demolition works continued yesterday at Valletta's Freedom Square when all the arcades were knocked down. Only columns and structures supporting the road above were left standing as heavy machinery inched closer to City Gate, which will go down in March, to complete the Renzo Piano project by the end of 2012.


## Comments

Emmanuel Marmara'(3 days, 1 hour ago) 

Mr.Cassar speak for yourself.No the MAJORITY of the Maltese are against this project. As has been said before...THE MALTESE DO WANT A PROJECT FOR THE CITY ENTRANCE ..BUT NOT THIS FARSE OF A PROJECT. YES A CLOWN ON STILTS NEAR A TENNIS COURT/ PETROL STATION /MP FUTURE PARKING PLACE AND A SLIT ( NOT A GATE ) FOR OUR BELOVED CITY. AND if you and the rest of the minority are so sure than join the majority f to call for a referendum..This of course will never happen...because Gonzi/Gatt/Piano and the rest knows exactly and we mean exactly the result....Agree with you Mr.Humphries...

C Cassar(2 days, 22 hours ago)

Can't wait until it's all finished, will be a fantastic view for at least the next 50 years. Looks like you'll have to avoid Valletta for the next few decades then :-)

Kieron O'connor(3 days, 5 hours ago) 

I would love to know how they risk assessed having demolition equipment on top of the structure it is demolishing.

That is certainly a photo for the "only in malta" data base.

C Cassar(3 days, 4 hours ago)

"columns and structures supporting the road above were left standing "

quite clearly stated in the article that the road above and it's supporting columns remained untouched, so what's the problem?


J. J. Borg(3 days, 3 hours ago)

No problem at all. Some people are always looking for baseless criticism.


Karl Farrugia(1 day, 22 hours ago)

For your information Mr. O'Connor, the demolition plan has been drawn up very carefully, including risk assessments, that have been endorsed by several parties, mostly foreign if you must know since the public's belief (that includes foreigners like yourself) is that all things Maltese are a farse. The plant position poses no risk of structural collapse.. and the gentlemen beside it is wearing a full body harness and is tied to ensure he can't fall over.

Let's not try make this project look unprofessional just cos there's public debate about what it should look like esthetically. Safety issues, as with all other matters involved, are paramount and constantly under the strictest control for the benefit of passers, people living/working in the surrounding areas as well as the dedicated people working on site.

DVella(3 days, 6 hours ago) 

Pity the demolition can't continue to include those disgusting building overlooking the square housing the government flats . . . and the equally disgusting 'shopping arcade' beneath them!

Jon Vercellono(3 days, 7 hours ago) 

C. Cassar should be aware - and hopefully is - that EU membership also includes responsibilities to animals (and being held accountable for behaviour towards animals). Speaking of funds flowing in to Malta to provide for further enhancements is all well and good; however, cosmetic enhancements do not have an effect on behaviour towards animals. In this vein, the government should be setting the example by providing full funding toward animal sanctuaries as was promised. I should hope also that government will not set a negative example by promising one thing and doing another. I agree with I Galea in that C. Cassar should be concerned about integrity and government setting a positive example for the youth of today - not providing bread and circuses distractions.

C Cassar(3 days, 4 hours ago)

If you read this article it mentions nothing about promoting cruelty to animals. Neither does it state that funds destined for animal sanctuaries (one of which recently newly opened by the way) have been diverted to this project. I really am amazed how certain people can divert the discussion of one subject to that of a completely unrelated one. If you want to discuss another subject, submit an article related to that subject rather than waste people time with irrelevant statements.

Back on topic, the enhancement of Valletta through the current project is way long over due. It should start a great momentum in the upgrading of other sites in Malta that also desperately need bringing into the 21st century.

Jon Vercellono(3 days, 3 hours ago)


I didn't mention anything about promotion of cruelty to animals - only that funds (as mentioned in this very newspaper) and as promised to animal sanctuaries in the previous election were not received and have not been forthcoming. I was stating that funds used for this project could be better spent elsewhere and on fulfilling promises. It certainly was on target. Please put on your blue coloured glasses when the project is completed and enjoy the view while other worthy infrastructure and institutions fall to pieces. P.S. Please read all of my comments as a whole - not tit-bits of them.

C Cassar(3 days, 3 hours ago)

I think you need to read more. Investment in animal care is current and ongoing:

<http://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20101003/local/animal-aftercare-centre-inaugurated-at-ta-qali>

So, now that's clear, how about some relevant comments on the subject of Valletta's marvelous revival?

Igalea(3 days, 9 hours ago) 

Destruction simply to create a breach in a fortified city, a roofless theatre and a parliament on stilts as used by circus clowns. Speaks highly of what Parliament has been reduced to under Gonzipn.

C Cassar(3 days, 8 hours ago)

Igalea, you want to live in the past but the majority of Maltese, particularly the younger generations, want to live in a modern and progressive Malta. As usual, bringing in a political statement shows you're out of touch with a Malta that is now and integrated part of the EU. Due to this, substantial funds flow into Malta each year as Malta is a net receiver of these funds for many years to come. Membership of the EU also allows many other European citizens easily and simple access to Malta bringing further funds which can be used to further enhance the islands.

Jon Vercellono(3 days, 7 hours ago)

C. Cassar - there is nothing modern and progressive about animal cruelty, and a distracted government turning a blind eye towards the animal sanctuaries and prosecution of animal cruelty offenses. This majority of Maltese you speak of I

believe would agree with me on that point. Modern and progressive ideas include animal rights which should not be precluded for some vanity project.

J. J. Borg(3 days, 3 hours ago)

Lawrence Galea: always repeating the same crap like a broken record. What a fun life you must have!

Phil Humphries(3 days, 3 hours ago)

@ C. Cassar.

Whether we like it or not, Malta's economy still relies heavily on tourism and it is essential to conserve what little heritage remains; otherwise this island will become just another characterless, uninviting ( and relatively unvisited) place in the sun. The Gonzi/Piano crimes against common sense and good taste won't turn Valletta into a 'Modern and Progressive' city, however, they will horribly disfigure a major tourist attraction and World Heritage site.

If you recall, Russia's 1960's tower blocks were once considered 'modern and progressive' but now they are just a national embarrassment. It seems that GonziPN is heading the same way.


Igalea(2 days, 21 hours ago)

C Cassar what has this got to do with the eu Cassar? Not able to counter my argument?


J. J. Borg broken record Borg? Is the truth hurting you?

Igalea(2 days, 20 hours ago)

C Cassar the old city gate was destroyed by a PN administration and another PN administration is destroying what a PN administration had done before it. Is history going to repeat itself in 50 years time?

Jon Vercellono(3 days, 9 hours ago) 

Hopefully, they will include a plaque enumerating the number of animals killed due to spending being diverted to this project rather than to animal sanctuaries as promised - or the number of vehicles ruined while passing through Msida after the rain (or shoes replaced after crossing in the same area after the rain). As to confidence in other projects mentioned by C. Cassar - I hope before they occur that necessary considerations are made concerning animals who may live and hunt in the vicinity of these "projects" and alternative domiciles are identified and built.

C Cassar(3 days, 9 hours ago) 

Fantastic! Finally visual progress that will upgrade Valleta for the 21st century instead of it becoming a boring and stagnant museum.

This will now give the confidence and momentum for other projects of similar scale to take place throughout Malta.