

VALLETTA MALTA

REHABILITATION OF ST. GEORGE'S SQUARE

URBAN MANAGEMENT – PUBLIC SPACES AND MOBILITY

Rehabilitation of a key public space, St. George's square, and related upgrading works in line with the Valletta Management Plan.

SIZE OF THE CITY:	6 098 Inhabitants	56 ha
SIZE OF THE PROJECT:	A square	

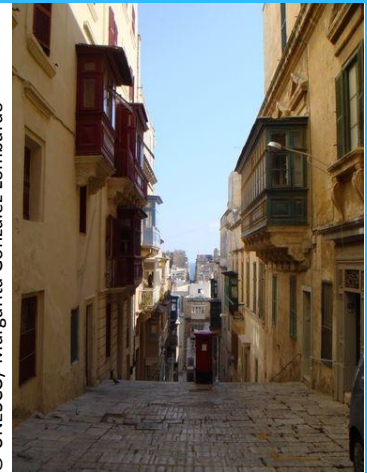
PRINCIPAL FUNCTION(S) OF THE CITY:

National capital, administrative centre, services, tourism

PRINCIPAL FUNCTION(S) OF THE PROJECT AREA:

Central public space, car park

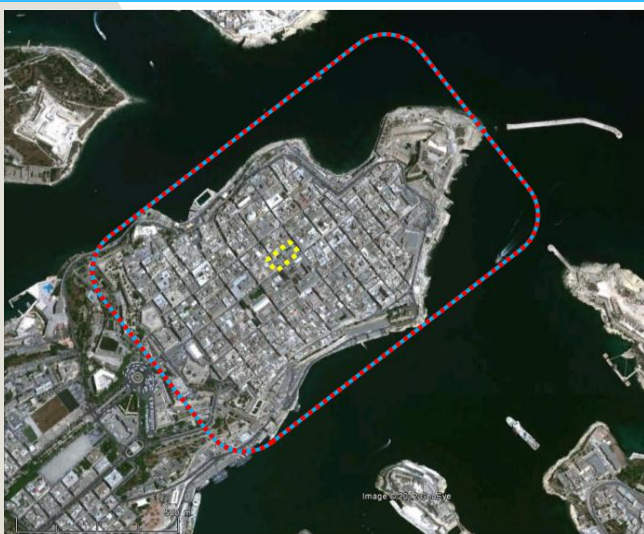
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St. Dominic street, Valletta

IDENTIFICATION

PROJECT SCALE



■ City

■ World Heritage Property

■ Project

WORLD HERITAGE PROPERTY

CITY OF VALLETTA

Inscription	1980	The capital of Malta is inextricably linked to the history of the military and charitable Order of St John of Jerusalem. It was ruled successively by the Phoenicians, Greeks, Carthaginians, Romans, Byzantines, Arabs and the Order of the Knights of St John. Valletta's 320 monuments, all within an area of 55 ha, make it one of the most concentrated historic areas in the world.
Criteria	(i) (vi)	
Area	56 ha	

STAKES

DIAGNOSIS/ STATUS	Valetta is a small dense city (56 ha.) with a population of less than 7 000 inhabitants. Traffic control issues are crucial in such a dense city. The Maltese capital has developed an innovative traffic congestion charging model to regulate traffic. Reclaiming public space and removing an open air car park is part of a overall process to make the city more attractive and enhance the World Heritage site. Heritage is one of the key assets of Valetta and tourism an important sector.
PROBLEMS/ ISSUES	The lack of public spaces of high quality, attractive to both locals and tourists alike was a negative aspect of Valletta, both in terms of social and commercial sustainability as well as generating a lack of interest in the built environment through its apparent neglect. How to restoring St. George's Square and reclaiming public space in front of the Presidential Palace contributed to create an attractive area for people and events, such as the Changing of the Guards?
OBJECTIVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Provision of a high quality public space through removal of central parking areas ➔ Promotion of large scale urban rehabilitation projects within Valletta ➔ Incentive to initiate conservation projects on the surrounding historic monuments ➔ Heritage conservation and enhancement ➔ Implementation of traffic and transport plan

PARTNERS / PROCESS

THE INITIATIVE

Government of Malta

THE PROJECT DRIVERS

Ministry for Resources and Rural Affairs
Government of Malta

THE PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Rehabilitation Projects Office
Ministry for Resources and Rural Affairs

Manages

ACTION PROGRAM

REGENERATION OF ST. GEORGE'S SQUARE

Qualified craftspeople

Carry out

Conservation of the historic fabric of the square: the two fountains on either side and the façade of the Presidential Palace

Embellishment and reconversion of the square: transformation from a car park into a pedestrian zone, construction of a large central fountain

Information strategy regarding the project : especially in terms of loss of parking and re-routing of traffic during works

Citizens

Culture professionals

Design

Enlivenment of the square: setting-up of a music and water show which plays hourly during the daytime, free wi-fi, daily scheduled events

Implementation of new regulations: vehicular access, maintenance of the square and terms of use during festivals

STAKEHOLDERS / ACTORS :



SITE MANAGEMENT TOOLS

- The Grand Harbour Local Plan, 2002
- Revisions to the Grand Harbour Local Plan (Valletta), 2010
- Valletta Management Plan (to be adopted 2012)
- A vision for Public Transport, 2008

SPECIFIC PROJECT MANAGEMENT TOOLS

- International conservation charters and guidelines, especially in the case of archaeological findings
- Regulations for the management and maintenance of the new public square

FUNDING

DETAILS ON PUBLIC FUNDING

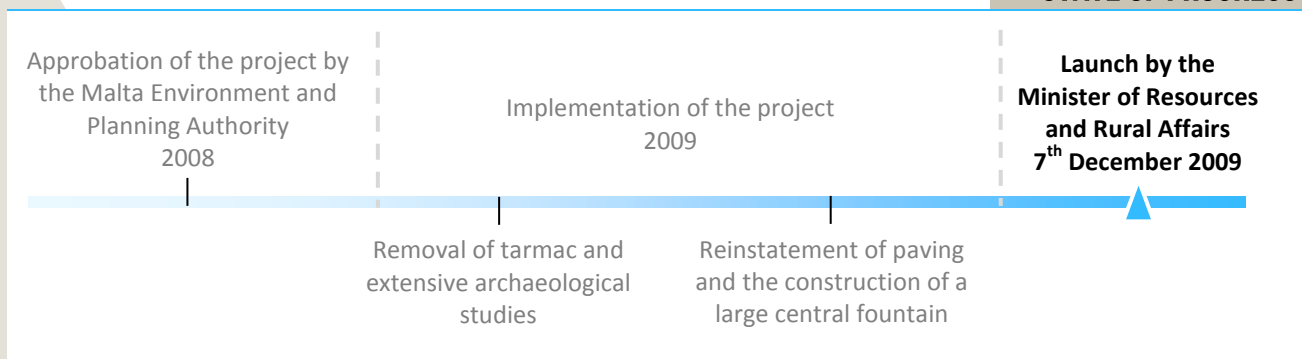
Government of Malta

The project is financed by the Ministry of Resources and Rural Affairs budget through a capital vote endorsed in the budget of the Government of Malta.

TOTAL PROJECT AMOUNT

The project, including archaeological excavations, paving, lights and the installation fountain; cost €1.3M. Another €100,000 were spent on the restoration of the façade of the Presidential Palace.

STATE OF PROGRESS



RELATION BETWEEN THE PROJECT AND THE VALUE OF THE PROPERTY

St. George's Square is located in the middle of the World Heritage site. The project allowed the revitalization and transformation of a key public space by removing the open air parking.

This project links heritage conservation and enhancement, urban revitalization and traffic management, these being core issues in a very dense walled city attracting a high number of visitors.

Specifically the renovation of the square enhances the Outstanding Universal Value of the site.

The immediate results are the enhancement and embellishment of one of the main squares of Valletta and the increase in use by the local and visiting population. In the longer term, the project is an example for future rehabilitation initiatives and will provide learning experiences for the management of multi-use spaces.

The targets set have been achieved, mainly by means of thorough management. The regulations in place will serve as a guide for future projects and lessons learnt will be acted upon.

- The square now attracts visitors and new commercial activities have been set up to satisfy increased demand;
- The project served as a catalyst for the pedestrianisation or partial pedestrianisation of other squares and streets in Valletta, currently being

implemented within the context of a general traffic management plan, coordinated by Transport Malta;

- Awareness of government projects was raised, as well as awareness of the potential use of public spaces previously used for parking or other uses not conducive to public activity;
- Return of the Changing of the Guards after 39 years.

Completing the St. George's Square project and its continued management increases the profile of other potential projects and acts as a catalyst for conservation projects as befits a World Heritage Site; and for the participation in the European Capital for Culture bid as Malta's capital city and the focus of the inner harbour region.

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The St. George's square before and after its rehabilitation

QUESTIONS

The main lessons are:

- The importance of liaison with key entities;
- The issues encountered when dealing with management of public spaces;

- The attention to detail that is essential for the infrastructure of the space to function sustainably.

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