

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	Valletta City Gate Project	
Project Number:	20110455	
Country:	MALTA	
Project Description:	Construction in the Maltese capital, Valletta (a UNESCO world heritage site), of a new city gate, a new Parliament building and a piazza and performing space at the site of the former Royal Opera House destroyed during World War II.	
EIA:	Required	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Not required	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Carbon Footprint:		
	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Summary of Environmental and Social Assessment, including key issues and overall conclusion and recommendation

As a Member State, Malta has transposed the relevant EU Directives concerning the environmental impact of projects (i.e. Directive 2001/42/EC on the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Directive 85/337/EEC (as amended by Directives 97/11/EC and 2003/35/EC) on the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC and Birds Directive 79/409/EEC) and the EPBD (2002/91/EC and its 2010 recast) and, accordingly, the Borrower will implement all the schemes under this loan in compliance with EU and national environmental legislation.

The construction of a public building falls under Annex II of the EIA Directive 85/337/EC according to which the competent authority decides on the need for an EIA on a case by case basis. The Environment Protection Directorate within Malta Environment and Planning Authority (MEPA) has screened out the project.

Despite some adverse environmental impacts during the construction phase, the project is likely to have on overall positive impact on the environment during operation once the construction works are completed.

In conclusion, the project is acceptable for EIB financing.

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

EIA

The construction of a public building falls under Annex II of the EIA Directive 85/337/EC according to which the competent authority decides on the need for an EIA on a case by case basis. The Environmental Impact Assessment related Directives were transposed into National Legislation in 2007, Legal Notice 114 of 2007.

The Ministry of Infrastructure, Transport and Communication (MTIC) presented the proposed project to Malta Environment and Planning Authority (MEPA) for a Full Development Permission. An EIA screening process has been carried out for this project, according to the criteria set out in Schedule IB of the 2007 EIA Regulations, based on the information submitted in the Project Description Statement and the Environment Protection Directorate within MEPA has concluded that no EIA is required. However environmental aspects were taken into account to meet potential impacts during construction and operation, and mitigation measures on the impacts on cultural heritage, landscape, visual amenity, noise, emissions and vibration, energy, water and waste and traffic related noise and emissions were

taken. Moreover, the building permission required a detailed construction management plan to be submitted, and which was approved by the MEPA and is carefully implemented by the site manager.

SEA

In 2002 when the Grand Harbour Local Plan was approved, Malta was a Candidate Country in the process of adapting the Maltese legal framework to the EU *Acquis*. The SEA Directive 2001/42/EC was transposed in December 2005: Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Regulations (Legal Notice 418 of 2005). The Grand Harbour Local Plan was approved in 2002, before the SEA Directive came into force and an SEA was not required at the time. However should an SEA be required according to the EU Directives, the Non Technical Summary of the SEA should be provided to the Bank.

Biodiversity

Taking into account the urban location of the project, no Natura 2000 area will be affected.

EPBD

Malta implemented the Energy Performance of Building Directives (2002/91/EC) in 2008. The energy consumption of the Parliament building is expected to be 50% lower compared with a high standard technology offering intelligent controls, mixed mode ventilation and good insulation. This “nearly zero energy” new parliament building to be operated from 2013 with most of its energy coming from renewable sources would be a national public landmark anticipating the requirements for 2018 of the EU Energy Performance Building Directive recast (2010/31/EU) which will be gradually implemented in Member States as of January 2013. Energy Efficiency certificates would be required ex post.

The predicted annual building load for the Parliament building for heating and cooling should target approximately 41 MWh and 180MWh for the whole annual electricity consumption which covers heating, pumps and fans, lights, small power and hot water and is equivalent to 40 kWh/m²/year, which is very low.

It is also planned that 59% of predicted annual energy consumption would be coming from a photovoltaic array.

From a qualitative point of view, the Parliament building is contributing notably to energy savings due to the high energy efficiency standards well above legal requirements. At the final use, when all occupiers are in place, the final energy consumption may increase by 30 to 50% in comparison to the calculated energy consumption figure.

Environmental impacts

The project consists of urban renewal and public building construction within an UNESCO World Heritage site. Therefore from the outset, special care was put in the project design and implementation. The Full Development Permission issued by MEPA requires that measures to diminish the impact on archaeological remains and aesthetic considerations are taking into account as well as the traffic management during and after construction.

A Landscape and Visual Amenity Assessment considering aesthetics has been carried out which concludes that the project has no adverse residual impact and that it will have long term major beneficial impacts on the urban design of the area.

Given the proximity of several protected structures as cultural heritage, a Construction Management Plan was set in order to minimise potential damages; an excavation works method and suitable techniques together with regular and close inspections from the various archaeological authorities were implemented.

The operation of the project would impact on pedestrian and vehicles traffic and, for this reason the promoter has required the Malta Transport Authority to develop a Traffic Impact Statement (TIS). The TIS estimates impacts derived from the closure of an important access and the decrease in car park spaces. The Parliament building is well connected by public transport and future shows in the open air theatre will be performed out of peak hours. The TIS recommends that the new traffic directions and pedestrian movements to be able to deal with the new situation. In general, TIS concludes that the environmental effects will be positive with the exception for some specific road sections.

Social Assessment, where applicable

The project required the relocation of few small shops (those occupying parts of the shopping arcade from the 1960s at Freedom Square annexed to the ruins of the Opera House). The Government of Malta already assigned new premises to displaced shops in the immediate vicinity.

It is expected that the proposed urban renewal project can generate positive impacts from the economic and social perspective by making the area more attractive to leisure and business activities. In conclusion, the social effects are acceptable to the Bank.