
Initial Environment Examination (IEE) report for Retrofit of Government Working Women's Hostels at Vellore

Final Report

(Strictly confidential for controlled circulation)

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1. PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Tamil Nadu Infrastructure Fund Management Corporation Limited (TNIFMC) is an Asset Management Company (AMC) promoted by the Government of Tamil Nadu (GoTN) for the purpose of raising and managing alternative asset funds focused on sectors like infrastructure, affordable housing etc. TNIFMC is currently managing two Alternative Investment Funds (AIF), viz., Tamil Nadu Infrastructure Fund (TNIF) and Tamil Nadu Shelter Fund (TNSF). Tamil Nadu Shelter Fund (TNSF) is registered as a Category I (Social Venture) Alternative Investment Fund, with a mandate to invest in affordable housing in Tamil Nadu. TNSF invests in affordable housing projects in the private, PPP or Government and/or its agencies. The primary focus of TNSF is:

- Affordable housing – housing for the economically weaker (EWS) and low-income groups (LIG),
- Hostels - for working women from all sections of the society
- Industrial accommodation for workers in SIPCOT Industrial Complexes/ Parks
- Senior and assisted living

Tamil Nadu Working Women’s Hostels Corporation Limited (TNWWHCL) is a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) established in 2019 and incorporated on 6th February 2020 as per Companies Act 2013 by Department of Social Welfare and Nutritious Meal Programme under Government of Tamil Nadu in order to handle the social infrastructure projects in the state such as Working Women’s Hostel, Senior Citizen Homes, Inclusive Living, etc. Owing to the huge demand for safe and affordable accommodation for working women, the TNWWHCL has initiated the process of retrofitting existing Working Women Hostel so as to provide affordable accommodation and protection to working women. TNSF is planning to invest in TNWWHCL for the retrofitting of existing Working Women Hostel at eight locations (Salem, Tiruppur, Perambalur, Villupuram, Vellore, Tirunelveli, Thanjavur and Chennai)

This Initial Environment Examination (IEE) report is for the proposed retrofit of working women hostel in Vellore. The description of proposed site is provided in table below:

Table 1. Description of proposed site

Parameters	Description
Project details	The project aims to retrofit the existing hostel for working women and girls in Vellore, Tamil Nadu. The hostel will be retrofitted with environmentally friendly interventions suited to the needs of the occupants.



Location	The hostel is located Katpadi, Vellore Latitude: 12°59'7.79"N , Longitude: 79°7'58.55"E
Total area	Total land area of the site is 1474 Sq. m and build up area is 624.5 Sq. m
Present and Past land use	The site is presently being utilized as a Government Welfare hostel for working women but is currently unoccupied
Adjoining area	The hostel is surrounded by empty land and kachha road. There is a residential area within 500 m. The area is known for leather processing, shoe manufacturing, automobile assembly units, iron & steel works, precision tool milling, explosive materials production industries. The district (state) border is 2 km north of the hostel facility
Access road	The subject hostel is located at a distance of around 300m from the Katpadi main road
Building	Own building Structure (number of floors) – Ground + 1 floor Number of Rooms - 22
Operational Since	Operations yet to start
Present Strength (as on 15.10.20)	Total 22 Rooms with 46 Beds <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4-seater - 1 rooms,• 2-seater – 21 rooms.
Present Staff Details	Assistant Cook-1

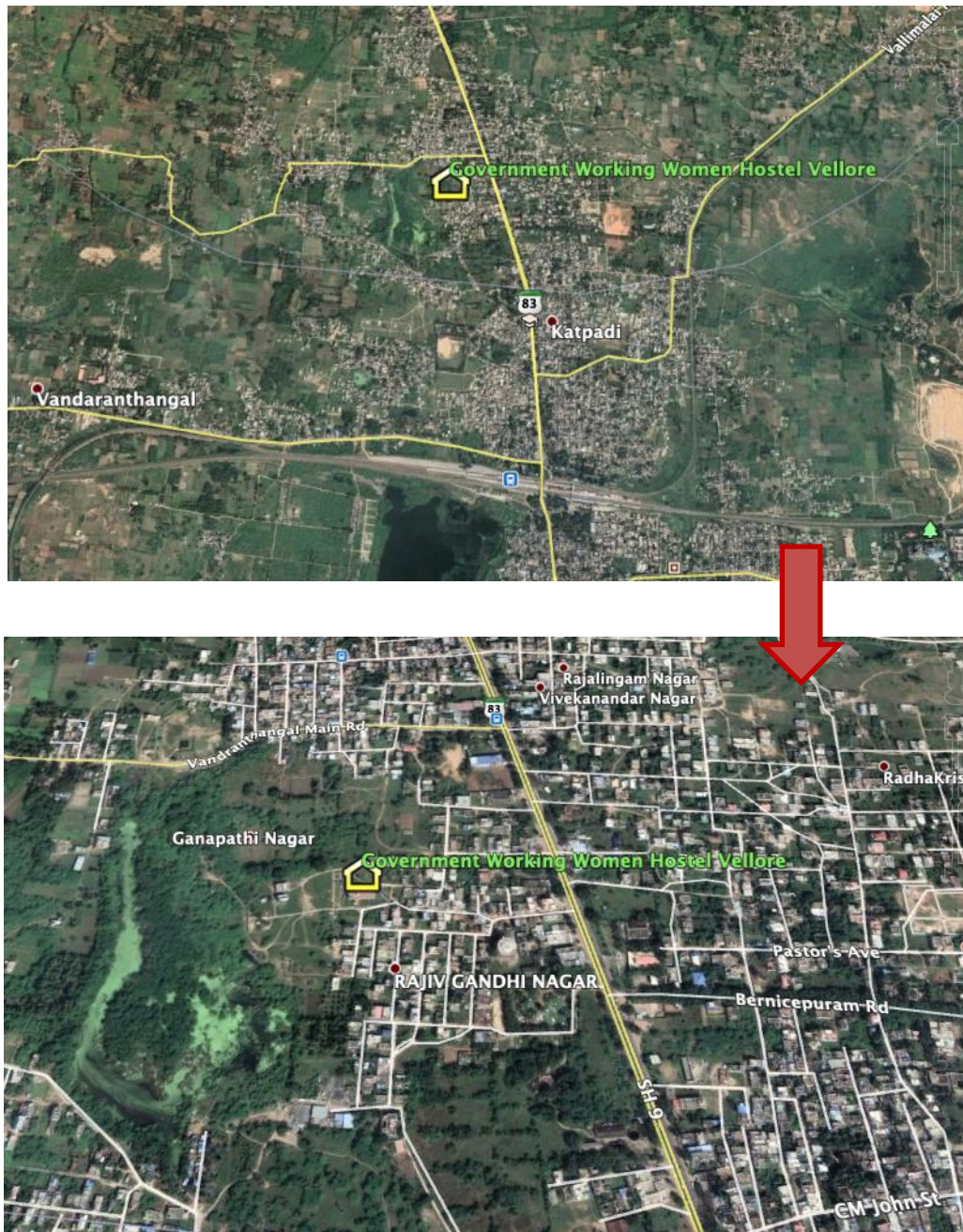


Figure 1. Location of project site on Google earth

The feasibility report prepared by Cushman and Wakefield details out the present status of the Vellore Working Women Hostel, requirements of retrofitting and proposed enhancements.

The retrofitting plan is proposed for all the hostel floors. As per the plan, a covered parking for two wheelers will be built in the hostel premise along with a play area. A security cabin will also be provided with a toilet. A separate laundry area will also be provided. The layout of the 2 bedded

rooms and 4 bedded rooms will be retrofitted to include foldable study units and beds. Additional storage will be provided in 4 bedded rooms.

CCTV camera, Garbage bins per room will also be provided along with fire extinguishers as part of the retrofitting process.

The summary of proposed retrofitting is mentioned in table

Table 2. Summary of proposed retrofitting

S. No	Proposed Retrofitting
Site Level Retrofitting	
1	Play courts
2	2-wheeler parking shade with GI sheets
3	Laundry area near septic tank
4	Security cabin with toilet
5	Facade painting in accordance to the standardization scheme
For Existing 2 Bedded Room	
6	Wardrobe with shutters outside the toilet
7	Foldable study unit
8	Beds to be added
For Existing 4 Bedded Room	
9	Wardrobe with shutters outside the toilet
10	Foldable study unit
11	Beds to be added
12	Additional Storage



This is Initial Environment Examination (IEE) report is prepared as per the requirement of ADB's Safeguard Policy Statement. The information collection for preparation of this report includes collection of secondary information, site observation by EVI team, meetings with TNIFMC, TNWWHCL, Department of Social Welfare, Government of Tamil Nadu and District Social Welfare Officer, Vellore.

2. EXISTING ENVIRONMENT

2.1. Physical Environment

a) Topography

The project site is situated at Katpadi town which is a part of Vellore City Municipal Corporation (VCMC) in Vellore district.

The majority of the district is primarily involved in agriculture¹. The district has a geographical area³ of 6075 Sq. km. The major tourist attraction of the district is the Elagiri hills¹.

The Katpadi town lies to the northern boundary of Vellore district, closer to Andhra Pradesh. It has a flat terrain with a slope in the southern side and has an average elevation of 224 meters (734 feet)². The total geographical area³ of the town is 128.61Sq.Km. The town has by two major state highways, Arcot-Villupuram State Highway (SH4)² and Cuddalore-Chittoor State Highway (SH9)².

The site is located at 12°59'7.79"N and 79°7'58.55"E. The project site is in a densely populated residential area. The district (state) border is 2 km north of the site.

b) Meteorology and Climate

The Vellore mostly has a dry semiarid climate¹, with poor rainfall except for some monsoonal rains¹. The average rainfall⁴ of the district is 795mm. The northwest and the southwest monsoons contribute to 535 mm⁴ and 442 mm⁴ respectively. The temperature ranges from 39.4 °C to 13 °C⁵.

c) Hydrology and drainage

Palar River¹ is the major river flowing through Vellore and is a major source of water for drinking and irrigation. Other major tributaries of the river flowing through Vellore are Ponnaiyar¹, Cheyyar¹, Pambar¹ and Malattar¹.

¹ <https://cdn.s3waas.gov.in/s31651cf0d2f737d7adeab84d339dbabd3/uploads/2019/04/2019040961.pdf>

² <https://www.tn.gov.in/dtp/CCBP/Katpadi.pdf>

³ https://censusindia.gov.in/2011census/dchb/3304_PART_B_DCHB_VELLORE.pdf

⁴ http://www.tnenvi.nic.in/WriteReadData/UserFiles/file/3_VELLORE.pdf

⁵ <https://cdn.s3waas.gov.in/s31651cf0d2f737d7adeab84d339dbabd3/uploads/2019/06/2019061196.pdf>

d) Water supply and sanitation

The water for the project site is sourced from both the Borewell and Municipal Corporation.

As per Central Ground Water Board (CGWB), the net groundwater availability in the district is 592.80¹. The district is categorized as overexploited¹.

e) Air Quality & Noise

Air pollution levels in Katpadi are poor with an air quality index⁶ of 222 as on 13th April 2021.

2.2. Biological Environment

a) Forest and Land Use

The project land is currently utilized as a welfare hostel for working women and girls and is unoccupied. There is no established forest cover however; the site has few bushes. The nearby area has a green cover

b) Flora and Fauna

The project site has few bushes. Based on the biodiversity screening of the area using IBAT (Integrated Biodiversity Assessment Tool) no rare, endangered and threatened species were found in the project area.

2.3. Socio Economic & Cultural Environment

The project site is situated at Katpadi Town which is a part of Vellore City Municipal Corporation (VCMC) in Vellore district. Katpadi has a total of 25,817 households³. The town has a total population³ of 1,05,805 out of which 52,105 are males³ and 53,700 are females³. The population of children (age 0-6)³ is 11,341 out of which 5,746 are males³ and 5,595 are females³.

The total number of literate population³ is 75,784 out of which 40,757 are males³ and 35,027 females³. The population of Scheduled Caste (SC)³ is 18,191 and Scheduled Tribe (ST)³ is 1,485.

The hospitals are within distance of 1.6-3.4 km from the project site. All educational institutions are at a distance of 1.5-9.5 km from the site. Vellore Institute of Technology University is also in Katpadi. Major connectivity of the town is through the rail network. Katpadi Junction is located 4 km from the Vellore bus stand (9.7 km). The Katpadi bus stand is at 1.5 km. The nearest airport is the Chennai airport which is at a distance of 130 km. There are no cultural or heritage site present in and around the site.

⁶ <https://airpollutionapi.com/aqi/india/tamil-nadu/katpadi-katpadi-vellore>

3. POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

The proposed retrofitting requirements include minor changes in the furniture, painting and layout of the hostel. It doesn't involve the structural changes i.e. no civil construction is anticipated in the project implementation. Based on the ESG due diligence study conducted by EVI, there were no major environmental and social risks identified in the retrofitting project implementation. Few minor risks were identified and the proposed mitigation plan against them is motioned in the table below:

S. NO	Material Risk	Related Key findings	Mitigation action plan
1	Consumption of water	Records of consumption of water are not maintained.	A monitoring mechanism shall be developed to record the daily and monthly consumption of water. The hostel staff i.e. security guard may be assigned this responsibility. Water meter may be installed to monitor and record the ground water withdrawal.
2	Health, Safety and security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The security guard is not available at all. •Scope of retrofitting includes installation of security cameras and fire extinguishers which will enhance safety and security. 	A 24/7 security guard should be appointed for the hostel premises
3	Corporate level governance policies	As TNWWHCL is in early stage the corporate policies i.e. prevention of sexual harassment, anti-bribery &	As TNWWHCL is a Government owned company registered under company act 2013, it would be good to

		<p>corruption etc. have not been developed so far. However, the company is owned and operated by Government of Tamil Nadu, the government regulation and guidelines shall be applicable</p>	<p>have company's corporate policies on following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention of sexual harassment • Anti-bribery and corruption, • Child labor and Forced labor • Whistle- blower • Environment health and safety policies
4	Grievance Redressal Mechanism	<p>At present grievance redressal is done through District Social Welfare Officer (DSWO). Evidence of documented records of grievances is not available. Grievance redressal system for the company needs to be put in place before start of retrofitting of hostels. However, GRM of TNIFMC as a Fund Manager will be in effect. This further requires company to appoint field level GRO. GRM guidelines should be displayed and communicated to women staying in hostel.</p>	<p>A Grievance Redressal Mechanism (GRM) may be put in place with clear process of grievance receiving, documenting, closure and contact details of GRO.</p>
5	Monitoring and Reporting	<p>At present Monitoring and reporting of hostel is through DSWO. A periodic monitoring and reporting</p>	<p>A periodic inspection or monitoring mechanism may be developed. The mechanism can include the key ESG risk</p>

		system specific to company as well as project sites needs to be prepared before start of retrofitting of hostels.	i.e. floods, GRM, Contractor management etc. inspection/audit template for each ESG risk shall be prepared.
6	Contractor management	Contractor for retrofitting work will be appointed through tender process. Guidelines of the Government of Tamil Nadu (Tamil Nadu Tender Transparency Act) will be followed to the extent applicable	Company may ensure that site specific ESG aspects are integrated in tender and contractor's agreement. This should include monitoring and reporting system, system to ensure non ethical practices, anti-bribery and anti-corruption measures, guidelines for prevention of sexual harassment, system to handle grievances of contractor, ensuring presence of designated officer at the time of retrofitting done by workmen

4. ANALYSIS OF ALTERNATIVES

As the proposed project is to retrofit the existing government working women hostel in Vellore, the alternative analysis is not applicable. Moreover, the proposed retrofitting activities have minimal or no impact on environment and social aspect. It can be concluded that the proposed retrofitting options are the best suited environment and social friendly options hence alternative analysis is not required.

5. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

Project is being developed by Tamil Nadu Working Women's Hostels Corporation Limited (TNWWHCL), a SPV established by the Department of Social Welfare and Nutritious Meal Programme (DSW) under Government of Tamil Nadu. TNWWHCL was incorporated on 6th February 2020 as per Companies Act 2013. The purpose of the SPV is to oversee construction, maintenance and operations of selected Government Hostels. The Chairperson and Directors of the



company are from Government Departments. TNWWHCL shall be the key institution with the responsibility to implement the Environment and Social recommendations at the site.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING & MANAGEMENT PLAN (EMP)

As the proposed retrofitting project has no major environmental and social impact, a separate environmental monitoring and management plan is not required. There are few minor impacts can be easily manageable with the suggested mitigation actions. However, due care will be taken to follow 'Good Engineering Practices' to ensure least pollution (air, noise, etc.) during the retrofit works. Company may develop guidelines for the contractor to ensure good engineering practices. Some onetime changes in the governance structure of the TNWWHCL have been suggested for the implementation of mitigation plan.

7. PUBLIC CONSULTATION & DISCLOSURE MECHANISM

As the proposed retrofitting project involve only cosmetic changes in the layout of the hostel and the rooms. There are no structural changes suggested as part of retrofitting hence no additional construction activity shall take place. The complete project implementation shall be done with the hostel premises. Hence, this proposed retrofitting project doesn't warrant public consultation. Regarding disclosure mechanism, there is a provision of notice board to share the information regarding the retrofitting project with the residents.

8. GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL MECHANISM

As the overall responsibility lies with Department of Social Welfare, Government of Tamil Nadu, the grievance redressal is done through District Social Welfare Officer (DSWO). However, evidence of documented records of grievances is not available. GRM of TNIFMC as a Fund Manager will be in effect. This further requires company to appoint field level GRO. It is suggested in the mitigation plan that TNWWHCL may develop a company level Grievance Redressal Mechanism detailing out the process of grievance receiving, addressing, documenting and closure along with contact details of GRO. The GRM guidelines should be communicated to women staying in hostel.

9. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

This Initial Environment Examination (IEE) study reveals that there are no major environmental and social impacts of the proposed retrofitting project. There are few minor possible impacts, but these are very much understood and manageable i.e. Impacts can be completely avoided, or minimized. The proposed project site is not located in environmentally or culturally sensitive areas. The hostel complex is Government owned, so no further land acquisition is anticipated; hence no physical and/or economic displacement of people shall be required for project implementation.

Based on the findings of the IEE, the classification of the project as **Category C** is confirmed i.e. it is likely to have minimal or no adverse environmental impacts. Hence no further special study or detailed EIA needs to be undertaken to comply with ADB SPS (2009).

10. ANNEXURES

Annexure 1: Documents received and reviewed

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| 1. Detailed feasibility report |
| 2. TNWWHCL - Certificate of Incorporation |
| 3. GO's stating TNWWHCL Under SPV- formation |
| 4. GST Certificate TNWWHCL |

Annexure 2: Site Photographs



Hostel Entrance



Hostel Entrance



Hostel Premise



Hostel Premise



Staircase



Corridor



Washroom



Hostel premise



Hostel premise



Hostel premise



Adjoining area



Adjoining area