



Paola Local Council

**PAOLA CORRADINO ATELIER**  
**MULTI-FUNCTIONAL ADAPTIVE-REUSE OF FORTIFICATIONS AND MILITARY SITES**

**22-23 APRIL 2013**



**Matteo Perez d'Aleccio 1565—The Great Siege**

**REPORT**

## **SCOPE**

The scope of the Paola Atelier was to focus on the principle of adaptive re-use especially through Malta based projects. The Atelier also considered various sites and agents spurring multi-functional use, best-practice management and systems of governance related to adaptive re-use. These had to be further supplemented by examples from AT FORT partners and experts invited to participate to the 3-day atelier. (For a full Programme please refer to Annex 1)

## **DAY 1**

The conference opened with study visits to the Floriana Fortifications and Valletta Fortifications. The on-site discussion included conservation and restoration methods being adopted and types of deterioration through natural erosion and weathering. The main projects visited were the Renzo Piano City Gate Project and the new Parliament Building. The debate focused on the functionality of the gate as a bridge and the design of the new parliament building. The group also focused on the project of the Old Opera House Site and the necessity to re-build what is part of Malta's identity. The visit also included the re-design of St.James Cavalier into an Arts Centre by Richard England. The visit considered the re-design of the core and the adaptive re-use of space. The other projects which were discussed were the Stock Exchange, the Saluting Battery and the War Rooms. The latter were examples of how a local VO (Fondazzjoni Wirt Artna) had adapted these spaces for cultural tourism and developed viable projects. The study group then analysed the various areas of the Grand Harbour as in the case of Fort Ricasoli (now functioning as an area managed by the Malta Film Commission), the Bighi Hospital which now functions as Heritage Malta Offices and houses the Malta Council for Culture and the Arts. The discussion then focused on accessibility and mobility; the new Lift Project and the Cruise Liner Terminal were discussed as forms of transit supporting the local tourism industry.

## **DAY 2**

The conference was inaugurated in the Excelsior Floriani Hall and was opened by Member of Parliament Dr Luciano Busuttill. Dr Luciano Busuttill referred to adaptive-reuse as 'clue to the conservation of buildings and assets especially the fortifications and related disused and misused sites. Meeting in Malta in such a moment of change is vital especially in the local context but more importantly in a European context with the restoration of fortifications in progress. The balance between economic growth and conservation in this climate of economic strife is ideal in discussing public monuments and sites. We are responsible to conserve our heritage and equally responsible to sustain our community, our European citizens without jeopardizing our goals in achieving a sustainable Europe.' (For a full copy of the speech refer to Annex 2)

The speech by Dr Luciano Busuttill was followed by the representative of the Paola Heritage Foundation Mr Kevin Borg (Executive Secretary) in the absence of Mr Ronnie Calleja (Chairman). Mr Kevin Borg emphasised the need of these Research Programmes as; 'AT FORT is contribution to

Paola's future plans. As a foundation we have sustained the Local Council in the past few years in various projects and initiatives. In fact the Paola Heritage Foundation which is young and established in 2009 developed through the involvement of Paola citizens in the Urban Support Group and in the compilation of the REPAIR Action Plan launched in 2010.' (For a full copy of the speech refer to Annex 3)

The Mayor thanked Mr Peter Ros for organising the Atelier but also referred to the importance of the project in the context of the REPAIR Action Plan. The Mayor Perit Roderick Spiteri praised the Foundation's work and referred to how it 'has diligently developed a Strategy which although in Draft will be ready for consultation in second quarter of this year. The proposal also sees the possible participation of Nature Trust. We already have contacted and discussed with them the adaptive re-use of the Ditch as it is now not only an asset of cultural value but amazingly in the middle of an industrial site we have nature and endemic species taking over.' (For a full copy of the speech refer to Annex 4)

Mr Peter Ros made a brief introduction of the project and the objective of holding the Atelier in Malta.

### **Session 1**

The conference proceeded with a full presentation by Mr Peter Ros on the phasing of AT FORT project and the milestones leading to multi-functional use and referring to the meetings in Kaunas and Arras. The presentation included a discussion on the adaptive and multifunctional uses of the different forts of the partners. (Refer to Presentation 1)

The morning session followed with two presentations. One presentation considered the history of restoration and adaptive re-use of Fort St. Angelo. The presentation by Senior Curator Mr Godwin Vella and Perit Ruben Abela traced the various uses of Fort St. Angelo and its various uses under the lease regime and the complexity of multi-functionality and the interaction between the various leases i.e. Heritage Malta, the Hospitaller Order of St. John and the Cottonera Waterfront Group. The presentation also considered the ERDF Funding project its phasing and the proposed functions as a cultural centre.

The next presentation on the programme was by Ms Willeminj Simon van Leeuwens on GEOFORT - Launching and developing it through PPP. (Refer to Presentation 3) Ms van Leeuwens made a business case using multifunctional use through a process of lease-holding, sponsorship and zoning plans with private entrepreneurship as support. The multi-function of the different areas proved to be the viable solution based on strategic communication and public relations.

## **Session 2**

The next was held at the Banca Giuratale in Mdina. The group had the possibility to view and have a presentation on the national archives and the research that goes into fortifications. The presentation in this session was combined. It was a general introduction by Dr Malcolm Borg on the types of lease agreements, planning and design briefs which launched the regeneration of Harbour Fortifications in the 1980s. The overview included the development, restoration and adaptive re-use projects of Manoel Island and Tigne by Midi Consortium, the Cruise liner Terminal by VISET and the Cottonera Waterfront by various consortia. It also considered the development of various lease agreements through the 90s and currently which give a possibility of regeneration of fortifications by public and private agents but also by Voluntary Organisations. Dr Malcolm Borg also introduced the plan for the Grand Harbour based on TOD and launched in 2007 which later supported the development of the Cottonera Action Plan and subsequently spurred the Dock No.1 and the Cottonera Waterfront Project. This led to the exposition on the Cottonera Waterfront Project delivered by Mr Hector Chetcuti which considered the various aspects and phases and the financing of the project. (Refer to Presentation 4)

The Session continued with a boat-trip and on-site study visits referring to the areas under study namely; Fort Cambridge Development, Point Tigne, Fort St.Elmo, Cruise Liner Terminal, Fort St.Angelo and the Cottonera Waterfront.

## **DAY 2**

### **Session 3**

The session was hosted by AS Hibernians at the Royal Navy prison Corradino. The opening presentation was delivered by Ms Maria-Grazia Cassar from Din I-Art Helwa Executive. Her presentation focused on Forts and Towers managed by the Voluntary Organisation and how these are leased, restored and funded. The presentation focused on the management by volunteers and the capabilities that the VO has to attract the necessary funds for restoration. (Refer to Presentation 5).

### **Session 4**

The afternoon session included various contributions by the partners. The session started with Medway UK with a double presentation by Martin Rogers (Turstee – Fort Amherst Heritage Trust) and by Ben Found (Archaeological Officer – Kent Count Council). The presentation included a historical overview and the various uses and development proposals and the Heritage Lottery bid. The presentation showed the stepped approach from desk-top study to watching brief. The project included the development of a park secured through a planning obligation and entrusted to a Trust. (Refer to Presentations 6a and 6b)

The Arras presentation followed by Mr Patrice Joosep. The presentation 'Citadelle of Arras , France , : how to welcome new activities' was an overview of the assets included in the site. The presentation also focused on the various development and multi-functional uses being proposed for the area. The proposed uses were also highlighted with reference to the landmark building for which the managing authority had traced a buyer and the re-designing of the place d'arms into a multi-functional space. Mr Joosep also highlighted the current uses and the staging of major events and concerts to attract funds. (Refer to Presentations 7)

A presentation by Karen Minsaer and Piet Lombaerde referred to the 'Integration and Reuse of military structures in the City of Antwerp'. The first part of the presentation by Professor Piet Lombaerde encompassed a study of valorizing the fortifications in today's contextual landscape. The second part by Karen Minsaer was based on archaeological investigation and excavations in an exercise to recoup lost parts of the fortified parts of the city. It included interventions of emergency archaeology and the reconstruction of lost systems. (Refer to Presentations 8a and 8b)

The next presentation was by Mr Bas Kreuger with an example of 'Public Private Partnership applications in Fort Restoration'. The Dutch example concerned mainly Fort Naarden and the various components and multi-functional uses. The project was based on the mission statement 'from passive restoration to active re-use'. The project is based fundamentally on a tourist route on its main axis. The presentation was one of the few referring to the economic crises and the pressure on some states to sell to the private sector. However the presenter suggested more viable options which the state could endorse to guarantee best governance. (Refer to Presentation 9)

The next presentation considered the Good practise of Spandau citadel "UNVEILED – BERLIN AND IT'S MONUMENTS" presented co-jointly by Andrea Theissen, Carmen Mann and Susann Schröter. The presentation was based on the vision for the Fort based on the vision 'The Island of History'. A series of concepts were built around this idea and working on the possibility of opening up and adaptively re-using as many building components as possible. (Refer to Presentation 10)

The session also included a session on logistics and the future Ateliers. Mr Andrius Baranauskas representing Kaunas Municipality gave an overview and presented the draft programme for Kaunas Atelier which will target financial and economic investment in forts.

The session concluded with a presentation and tour by Dr Malcolm Borg of the Royal Navy Prison Corradino which was not only a historical tour but also considered the milestones in the various restoration and regeneration phases and the dynamics of financing the project through the Voluntary Organisation AS Hibernians. The prison as explained in the presentation would serve as an interpretation centre for the Corradino Lines and Fortifications. Mr Denis Darmanin gave a tour on 'Life in Prison'.

## ATELIER – POINTERS

The examples of regenerated fortifications that were covered in the Malta-Paola Atelier and those examples proposed by the partners considered adaptive re-use and multifunctional uses as a driver for viable redevelopment.

Arras Citadel: Offices, Data Centre, Housing, Recreational, Commercial (diverse).

Antwerp: Multifunctional spaces, Historico-Cultural, Educational.

Geofort : Residential, Commercial (diverse), Recreational, Cultural.

Medway, Fort Amherst: Park, Cultural, Educational, Commercial-Recreational.

Malta, Paola Royal Navy Prison and Corradino Lines: Sport, Interpretation Centre, Hostel.

Malta, Manoel Island and Tigne: Multiuse, Residential, Entertainment, Commercial, Recreational.

Malta, Fort St. Angelo: Recreational, Tourism, Cultural, Residential.

Malta, Cruise Liner Terminal: Gateway, Recreational, Commercial Services.

Malta, Cottonera Waterfront: Commercial, Residential, Recreational (diverse), Cultural.

Naarden, Fortified Town: Commercial, Tourism-Recreational, Residential.

New Dutch Waterline: Residential, Commercial (diverse), Recreational, Cultural.

Spandau: Diverse use of buildings within the Fort, Island of Culture.

Two other practical examples:

(1) Peacock Gardens and the Interpretation Centre – CULTS ERDF 226 Project (Valletta, Malta)

(2) Interactive Centre (Valletta, Centre)

- The best-practice governance examples, the re-development experience of the forts above mentioned point to **multi-functionality** as the most viable option.
- As in the case of the URBACT REPAIR Project multi-functionality proved the more sustainable formula for maintaining and redeveloping forts. In this case it was referred to the **triple-helix** option.
- With reference to sustainability other **viable soft options** may be proposed i.e. the romantic ruin and open parks which provide recreational space.
- The examples also showed a very important component which is oftentimes not connected to fortifications, **archaeology**. The archaeology of buildings is a clue to the study, interpretation and conservation of fortifications.
- The examples shown were not necessarily supported by heavy **capital investment**. Those which were supported by heavy capital investment not necessarily followed best-practice in planning, restoration and adaptive re-use.

