

Portelli Sandra at Heritage Superintendence

From: Portelli Sandra at Heritage Superintendence
Sent: Tuesday, 29 March 2016 10:12
To: 'Francesca Azzopardi'
Subject: PA 03604/15 – Site at it-Torri ta' San Tumas, Dawret it-Torri c/w Triq is-Salini c/w Triq Wignacourt, Marsascale, Malta.

29 March 2016

Our Ref. SCH 671/15
Your Ref. PA 03604/15

To the attention of:
Director of Planning
MEPA

Ref. Cultural Heritage Act 2002 (CAP 445)

PA 03604/15 – Site at it-Torri ta' San Tumas, Dawret it-Torri c/w Triq is-Salini c/w Triq Wignacourt, Marsascale, Malta.

We refer to your Letter of Consultation dated 18 February 2016 and related documents received through E-Apps including: site photos at 1A/1B; proposed plans at 1L/1Y/1Z/1AA-1AG/16A-16E/18B-18E/21C-21D/77B/77D; Updated Restoration Method Statement at 77A.

Site Description

St. Thomas Tower, one of the coastal fortifications by Grandmaster Wignacourt dates to 1614. The tower and battery are scheduled at a Grade 1 monument of architectural significance.

Proposed Development

The proposed development includes various interventions consisting of:

1. Restoration on the internal and external historic fabric;
2. Reconstruction of original timber drawbridge;
3. Construction of a lift;
4. Construction of raised flooring and hanging artefacts;
5. Construction of a shading canopy over proposed lift at roof level;
6. Increase in height to surrounding rubble walls;
7. Dismantling of recently constructed embrasures;
8. Cleaning of ditch.

Recommendations and Conditions

1. *Restoration of internal and external historic fabric.*

The Superintendence does not object to the proposed works and approves the Restoration Method Statement at Doc.77A (1-3.9) in line with the following conditions:

- i. Before commencement of work, a Curriculum Vitae of the restorer/conservator in charge is to be submitted to the Superintendence;

- ii. The applicant is bound to proceed in keeping with the Restoration Method Statement at Doc.77A (1-3.9);
- iii. Following the completion of works, the architect is to draw up a report on the completed interventions and submit the report to the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage;
- iv. The architect/applicant shall inform the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage of the date of his/her intent to commence works. This notification should be sent in writing at least two weeks prior to the start of works.

2. Reconstruction of original timber drawbridge.

The Superintendence does not object to the proposed development provided that it is in line with the updated RMS at 77A.

3. Construction of a lift.

Following an inspection on site the Superintendence noted that the proposed lift shaft already exist at roof level. No lift pits are being proposed; therefore no excavation is required for this particular intervention.

The Superintendence does not object to the proposed lift on condition that there are no damages to the existing historic fabric in order to accommodate the lift.

4. Construction of raised flooring and hanging artefacts.

As clarified by the applicant the proposed raised flooring and hanging artefacts will not have a physical impact on the existing historic fabric. All proposed works will be attached to steel frames.

The Superintendence does not object to the proposed development.

5. Construction of a shading canopy over proposed lift at roof level.

Any shading structures including the proposed canopy over the proposed lift must respect the aesthetics of the Grade 1 Tower. Visual impacts on the existing views of the fort are to be avoided.

6. Increase in height to surrounding rubble walls.

The Superintendence does not object to the proposed increase in height to surrounding rubble walls on condition that proposed works are carried forward using traditional methods and tools.

7. Dismantling of recently constructed embrasures and 8. Cleaning of Ditch

The semi-circular gun platform has been recently restored and fitted with a rebuilt parapet and embrasures designed on modern interpretative lines.

Furthermore the application proposes the surface cleaning of the ditch.

The Superintendence does not object to the proposed dismantling of the modern accretions and cleaning of the ditch on condition that all works are to be archaeologically monitored in line with the following conditions:

- i. Any clearing or excavation works are to be monitored by an archaeologist who has to be approved and directed by the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage. The cost of such monitoring is to be borne by the developer. The Superintendence reserves the right to issue appropriate method statements and terms of reference with regards any cultural heritage remains that may be unearthed or noted during every stage of the development.
- ii. The architect/applicant shall inform the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage of the date of his/her intent to commence works. This notification should be sent in writing at least two weeks prior to the start of works. Commencement of works is subject to the issue of specific Terms of Reference by the Superintendent of Cultural Heritage, and to the appointment of a monitor approved by the Superintendence.
- iii. Any features and remains of cultural heritage value discovered or noted during all stages of the development, are not to be disturbed and are to be protected in situ. The Superintendence is to be immediately informed of such cultural heritage remains. The Superintendence will intervene in terms of heritage legislation. Any cultural heritage features discovered are to be investigated, evaluated and protected in line with the Cultural Heritage Act 2002 (CAP 445).
- iv. The discovery of cultural heritage features may require the amendment of approved plans and the rerouting of services.

Sandra Portelli

f/Superintendent of Cultural Heritage