



SOVRINTENDENZA
TAL-PATRIMONJU KULTURALI

National Inventory of the Cultural Property of the Maltese Islands

NICPMI Inv. No. 1686

Date of Publication 28 June 2013

Property Name	Fort St Elmo				
Address	Fort St Elmo				
Town Name	Valletta	Toponym	-	Local Council	Valletta
Property Owner	Government	Managing Body	Heritage Malta / Police Academy		
Guardianship Deed	-				

Period	Modern (16th to 18th Century AD)				
Phase	Early Modern: Knights of St John (16th Century)				
Cultural Heritage Type & Value	Historical	Cultural Heritage Property Value Assessment	Outstanding		
Property Function	Fortification	Conservation Area			

Outline Description	Bastioned fort				
Property Description	<p>Fort St Elmo was built in 1552 and the original structure contained a star-shaped plan, with four acute arms, two of which form a short demi-bastioned front but by 1565, the work had acquired a large detached triangular cavalier, a ravelin, and a few other hastily built outworks. During the Great Siege of 1565, Fort St Elmo received the initial brunt of the Turkish attack, and although suffering heavy damage was quickly rebuilt. With the foundation of the new enceinte of Valletta, particularly after the fort was enclosed within a vast apron of bastions (i.e., the Caraffa Enceinte) erected in 1680s - its role was eventually changed to that of a keep of the new fortress. This period saw various modifications to the fort, including the incorporation of the cavalier into the main enceinte (this involved the demolition of the northern ramparts and the filling-in of the ditch which separated the fort from the cavalier) around the late 17th-century, the construction of new landward gate and the remodeling of the <i>piazze basse</i> (the original entrance to the fort was situated on the Grand Harbour side - Porta del Soccorso); and the construction of a complex of arcaded barracks and church set around a central piazza in the early decades of the 1700s. The British, after 1800, continued to heavily invest in its defences, upgrading both its armament and its resistance to bombardment. The sea front defences received considerable attention, particularly the cavalier, which housed a succession of heavy RML guns, breech-loaders and QF-guns and was heavily modified with concrete structures and magazines. A lighthouse, which was erected around 1633 on top of the cavalier, was dismantled at the start of WWII.</p>				

Scheduled by MEPA	Yes	Degree of Protection	Grade 1	G.N. No.	133	G.N. Date	2001
--------------------------	-----	-----------------------------	---------	-----------------	-----	------------------	------

Recommended Bibliography	<p>S.C. Spiteri, Fortresses of the Knights (Malta, 2001), 252-61; The Great Siege, mdlxv (Malta, 2005), 120-39; 'In search of Fort St Elmo 1565' in MilitaryArchitecture.com, http://www.militaryarchitecture.com/index.php/Building-Methods/in-search-of-fort-st-elmo</p> <p>Hoppen, The Fortification of Malta by the Order of St John 1530-1798 (2nd Edition, Malta, 1999), 12, 38-40, 41-49, 52-67, 70-1, Caraffa Enceinte 97-9, 111, 118, 133, 134, 148, 225, 242, 253, 255</p> <p>Q. Hughes, Malta, a guide to the fortifications (Malta, 1985) 188-96; Q. Hughes & K. Thake, Malta, The Baroque Island (Malta, 2003), 53</p>				
---------------------------------	--	--	--	--	--

Coordinates : Easting

56638

73377

Northing : Coordinates

Property Plan



Property Images

