

Editorial:

New Developments in Gozo

Many consider that Gozo has not quite benefitted adequately from the not inconsiderable economic advances that have occurred on the bigger sister island. It is therefore of interest to note that over the past years a considerable amount of funds, largely provided by the EU, has been directed to improvements in Gozo also.

Perhaps the most dramatic change occurring recently in Gozo has involved the transformation of the Ċittadella from a relic of the past to an attractive centre reflecting Gozitan historical existence.

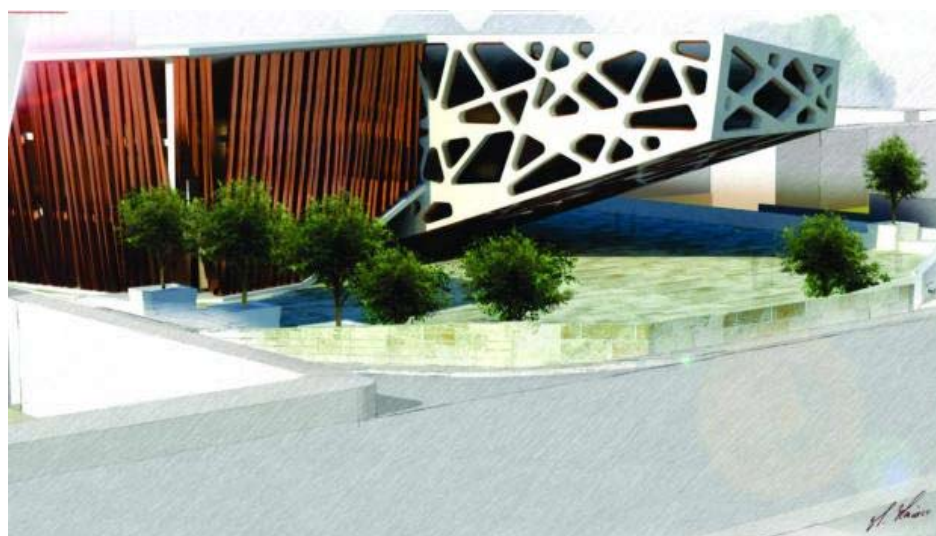
Major works of restoration and embellishment of the Ċittadella have now been completed, transforming a neglected backwater into an attractive historical and archaeological jewel. The work has included essential consolidation of crumbling bastions, as well as the more obvious cleaning of the walls and transforming neglected areas into green nooks which contrast with the solidity of the stoneworks. In addition, the work has involved paving of roads, restoration of buildings within the citadel, as well as work on the reservoirs.

The result has been described as ‘spectacular’ and will no doubt attract tourists both from Malta as well as from overseas. It will also encourage

various cultural activities, including concerts and exhibitions. This extensive work has been partly funded by the EU.

The next major development will be the Gozo museum. Plans for a new Gozo museum have been recently unveiled. It will be erected in place of the Ninu Cremona Boys’ Lyceum in Victoria. It is meant to be not just an old-fashioned museum but it is expected to serve as a cultural centre, that will “narrate the story of Gozo and the achievements of its people throughout the island’s history, from early Neolithic times to the present.” It will bring together the various collections currently scattered around the island. It will also contain a library as well as a 150-seat auditorium. Costing around €5 million, this will certainly be a new and important landmark.

Yet another projected development is that of the law courts. Up till now, these were housed in cramped conditions within the Ċittadella, causing considerable inconvenience for those who had to walk up the hill or park in the limited space up there. The law courts will now be built in Triq Ġorġ Borg Olivier (Victoria). The project is expected to provide ample underground car parking space. It is estimated that the cost will be around €12 million.



These developments will certainly have a major impact on the facilities available on the island. The investment of these not inconsiderable funds is bound to have an effect on the economy, on culture as well as, hopefully, on the level of education in Gozo.

Maurice Cauchi

A render of the new law courts building