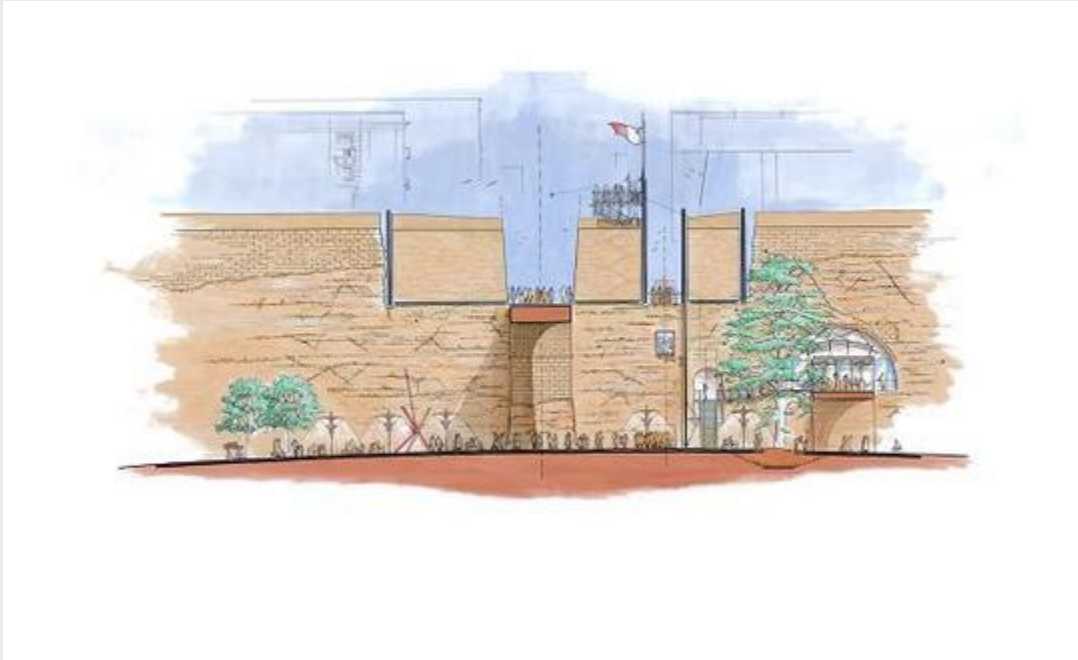


## Bastion line continuity essential for fortified city function - FAA



Piano's proposal for City Gate.

Something more than a bare gap in the bastions might be more suited as the main entrance to a fortified city, environmental organisation Flimkien għal Ambjent Aħjar (FAA) said.

Continuity of the bastion line was essential for its function and ethos, it said.

FAA said it recognised the difficulty of redesigning City Gate following the rather insensitive construction of the present gate in 1964 but the plans as submitted did not reflect the particular character of the fortified capital.

“Some might feel that it is time to move on from this image of Valletta, but has the change in citadel status and image been studied and accepted in view of Valletta's history, its status as a World Heritage site and the importance it has in respect of the thousands of tourists who visit the capital city or is it an individual interpretation?”

“This action contradicts the measures being planned to restore the continuity of the fortifications by re-closing the breaches by the Siege Bell Memorial in Valletta and at St John's Cavalier, Vittoriosa.”

FAA said that the conversion of the ditch and Yellow Garage into a garden area and access point was creative integration of this space into the rest of the project.

“Piano's proposal to hold open-air performances in this garden should be pursued and implemented since it might prove to be more protected from noise and wind than the theatre without a roof,” it said.

FAA argued that the opening of City Gate would sever the main artery into Valletta with the result that access from one side to the other would necessitate that drivers exited and reentered the city.

Adequate access for residents, the business community and its suppliers needed to be provided.

It said that plans shown briefly in ADT's advertising indicated that all of Valletta from City Gate to St Dominic Street and from Old Bakery Street to St Paul's Street would become a pedestrian area.

“Although this is a positive measure which will reduce pollution in the city, these changes have to be formally integrated in the local plan which will need to study the rerouting of heavy traffic through narrow St Mark Street, and also the change of direction of traffic through Old Bakery Street.

“Traffic which presently drives down Old Bakery street will now have to turn upwards towards St John's Cavalier at the road's steepest point.

“Because of this sharp corner, cars will have to accelerate powerfully, emitting toxic exhaust fumes, blackening recently restored buildings and increasing the rate of asthma among city dwellers.

This runs counter to the intention of reducing pollution in the city by enlarging the pedestrian zone.”

FAA said that before eliminating a considerable number of parking spaces, alternative arrangements should have been studied, proposed and presented to the public for consultation

“It might be worth looking into the possibility of linking an expanded park and ride to Valletta using a regular electric shuttle in the former railway tunnel.

“Another multi-storey car park could also be created under the Floriana football ground, with access from Sa Maison.

“The MCP car park should be roofed-over, fulfilling the terms of its contract with the government and replacing the current eyesore with a garden.”

FAA said that the social impact on Valletta's elderly residents was of particular concern and therefore in the interest of the residents, the business community, Valletta commuters and visitors, social and traffic impact assessments needed to be carried out

along with the processing of the Piano project so that any inconveniences resulting from the changes could be eliminated or at least mitigated.

[www.faa.org.mt](http://www.faa.org.mt)

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## Comments

Max Farrugia (3 weeks, 2 days ago)

M.Farrugia

From the daily reports and commens by FAA I formed an opinion that they can Govern the Island at a relatively low budget. They have consultants and experts who are dedicated on all aspects of life.

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