



SOVRINTENDENZA
TAL-PATRIMONJU KULTURALI
SUPERINTENDENCE OF CULTURAL HERITAGE

National Inventory of the Cultural Property of the Maltese Islands

NICPMI Inv. No. 00031

Date of Publication 30 March 2012

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|--------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| Property Name | St. Mary Tower | | |
| Address | Triq il-Liberta | | |
| Town Name | Comino | Toponym | N/A |
| Property Owner | Government | Managing Body | Din L-Art Helwa |
| Local Council | Għajnsielem | | |
| Guardianship Deed | Yes | | |

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|---|--|--|---------------|
| Period | Modern (16th to 20th Century AD) | | |
| Phase | Early Modern: Knights of St John (1530-1798) | | |
| Cultural Heritage Type & Value | Architectural Historical | Cultural Heritage Property Value Assessment | High |
| Property Function | Military | Conservation Area | Not Available |

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| Outline Description | A large tower located on Comino and built in 1618 during the reign of Grandmaster Wignacourt. |
| Property Description | <p>St Mary's Tower is sited on the south coast of Comino, at a height of approximately 80 metres above sea level. The tower monitored the South Gozo Channel and was a valuable link in a chain of towers linking Malta and Gozo. The tower was designed by the military engineer, Vittorio Cassar for Grandmaster Alof de Wignacourt in 1618. It is a large square building with 4corner turrets that could provide covering fire for the walls. The tower itself is about 12 metres high with walls around 6 metres thick. The tower is sited on a platform that adds around 8 metres to the overall height. Internally, the tower has two floors, each roofed by a large barrel vault and divided into 4 rooms.</p> <p>At times of crisis, the garrison would have numbered up to 60 soldiers. By 1791, the tower was equipped with 6 cannon, including 2 12-pound iron cannon. Through the 17th Century, the tower served as a place of exile for errant knights, who would be posted to this isolated and dangerous site by way of punishment. Abandoned by the British Services in 1829, the tower was again manned during the World Wars. Since 1982, it has been manned by the Armed Forces of Malta and still serves as a lookout and staging post. The tower underwent extensive restoration between 2002 and 2004.</p> |

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| Scheduled by MEPA | Yes | Degree of Protection | Grade 1 | G.N. No. | 729 | G.N. Date | 1995 |
|--------------------------|-----|-----------------------------|---------|-----------------|-----|------------------|------|

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| Recommended Bibliography | <p>Spiteri, S.C. (2001) <i>Fortresses of the Knights</i>, Malta: Book Distributors Ltd.</p> <p>Spiteri, S.C. (2008) <i>The Art of fortress building in Hospitaller Malta</i>, Malta: Book Distributors Ltd.</p> <p>Spiteri, S.C. (1994) <i>Fortresses of the Cross, Hospitaller Military Architecture (1136-1798)</i>, Malta: Heritage Interpretation Services.</p> |
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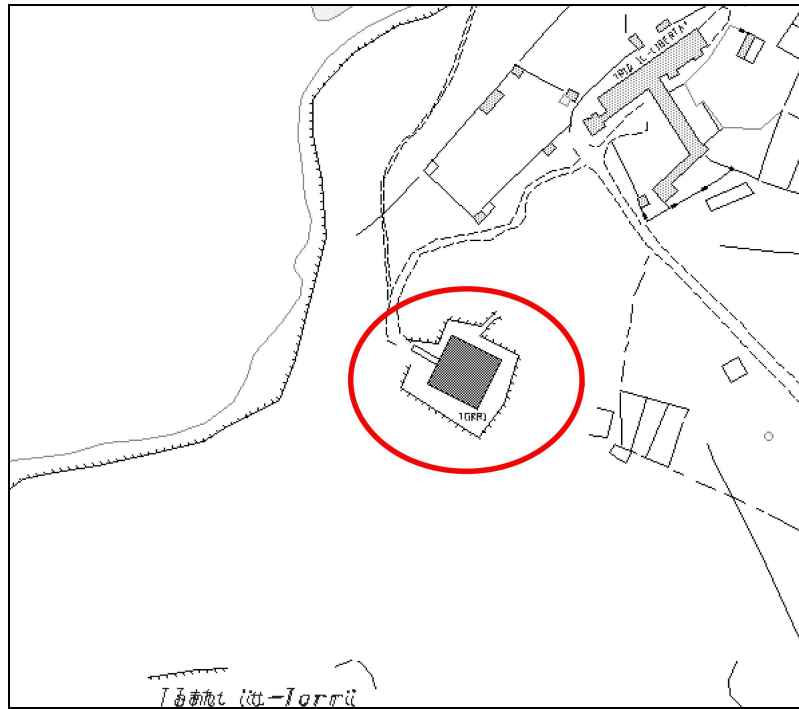
Coordinates : Easting

39586

85223

Northing : Coordinates

Property Plan



Property Images

