

K A M R A T A L - P E R I T I

To support members of the profession in achieving excellence in their practice of architecture and engineering in the interest of the community

Is there no shame?

The Kamra tal-Periti has been informed that, notwithstanding its strong recommendations for the Qala primary school building to be preserved, demolition works have commenced in connection with a project for a new facility for the Institute of Tourism Studies, undertaken by the Ministry for Gozo and utilising European Union Funds.

It is to be noted that, in February 2001, a Resolution by the Council of the European Union on architectural quality in urban and rural environments called on the European Commission, '...to seek, in consultation with the member states, and in accordance with the rules governing (the use of) structural funds, ways and means of ensuring, in the application of those funds a wider consideration of architectural quality and the conservation of cultural heritage.'

The Kamra tal-Periti strongly condemns this vandalistic act, taken in defiance of strong objections made by the heritage authorities within MEPA, despite which planning permission was granted last year. Furthermore, MEPA's own Audit Officer prepared a damning report as recently as last month, which called, for the immediate issuance of an Emergency Conservation Order.

The position of the Kamra tal-Periti was also supported by comments from art experts, more so when the project could have been accommodated within the building without destroying its unique architectural character, or else housed in another building altogether.

It is ironic, indeed sad, that, while Malta is trying to diversify its tourism strategy by promoting cultural heritage, the Gozo Ministry, in this instance, is destroying cultural heritage to train tourism employees.



Kamra tal-Periti

23rd March 2006.