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# **World Heritage Patrimoine mondial**

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**UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL,  
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POUR L'EDUCATION, LA SCIENCE ET LA CULTURE**

**CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF THE WORLD  
CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE**

**CONVENTION CONCERNANT LA PROTECTION DU PATRIMOINE  
MONDIAL, CULTUREL ET NATUREL**

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**Item 7 of the Provisional Agenda: State of conservation of properties inscribed on the World Heritage List and/or on the List of World Heritage in Danger**

**Point 7 de l'Ordre du jour provisoire: Etat de conservation de biens inscrits sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial et/ou sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial en péril**

**MISSION REPORT / RAPPORT DE MISSION**

**Historic Areas of Istanbul (Turkey) (C 356)  
Zones historiques d'Istanbul (Turquie) (C 356)**

**12-14 December 2016**

**REPORT ON THE JOINT UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE CENTRE/  
ICOMOS REACTIVE MONITORING MISSION  
TO THE WORLD HERITAGE SITE OF HISTORIC AREAS OF ISTANBUL, TURKEY  
12 - 14 DECEMBER 2016**



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2016 revised draft World Heritage Site Management Plan represented a considerable step forward from the first, 2011, plan, but still lacks a systematic definition of the attributes of the property that convey its OUV in the context of the broader setting of the historic peninsula, in a format that can directly inform and guide property management. This is an essential prerequisite to managing and monitoring the state of conservation of the property.

The Eurasia Tunnel approach road has been completed along the Marmara Sea (south) shore of the historic peninsula, as an eight-lane urban expressway with two grade-separated interchanges at the Committee in its decisions of 2013 and 2015<sup>4</sup> was the re-routing of the road south of the Marble Tower, reuniting it with the Land Walls rather than it falling within the central reservation. Otherwise, and notwithstanding the pre-existing road, Kennedy Cadessi, it has had a strong visible impact on the southern edge of the historic peninsula. This is compounded by the completion of the 58ha Yenikapi reclamation project that has significantly changed the shape of the peninsula. A 10,000m<sup>2</sup>, 20m tall, 'Activity Tent' was in course of construction on the land late in 2016, (however assurances were given when the project began that only structures less than 5.5m high would be permitted on the reclaimed land). Taken together, they have caused moderate harm to people's ability to appreciate the historic form and some views of the silhouette of the peninsula, and thus to the OUV of the property.

The common factor in all the recent major infrastructure projects on the peninsula, from the Haliç metro bridge onwards, has been that the decision to proceed has been made in advance of a heritage impact assessment. There has not been enough engagement with the national or international conservation community about either the principle or the strategic means of achieving it prior to contractual arrangements being made for delivery. In that context, HIA can only achieve cosmetic change. The most recent example, the Yenikapi Activity Tent, although of a lesser scale and impact than the others, tends to demonstrate that a clear understanding of the HIA procedures is still lacking. This has already been underlined by the World Heritage Committee on the basis of the way previous infrastructure projects have been procured. This is a matter of very serious concern in relation to the integrity and ongoing conservation of the WH property, although the mission acknowledges that steps are now being taken to change approaches to the way projects are assessed.

Work to major monuments is ongoing, and particularly from proposals to consolidate 5.6km of the Land Walls, it appears that very generous public funding is being made available to restoration. However, no details of this or other recent conservation projects have been provided to the WHC in advance of interventions, in accordance with par. 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*. It has not been practicable for recent Missions to look in detail at such work, but some concerns about the degree of restoration and replacement were raised by brief visits in 2016, including to the Pantocrator Church/ Zeyrek Mosque and the *Tekfur Sarayı*. There is no doubt that the land walls, and the Bucoleon Palace, are in serious and urgent need of conservation.

The state of the remaining Ottoman timber houses is of serious concern. Despite all that has been said by successive missions, and by the World Heritage Committee, the decay and loss continues. The proposed reintroduction of grants for basic repair is particularly welcome. But without concerted action by the authorities most of the remaining authentic houses will be lost, as they have been in Sulukule and Ayvansaray, both through decay and through publicly and privately financed urban renewal schemes. What appears to be the case from site visits is that timber houses – even houses

occupied at the start of these projects – are being demolished and reconstructed in modern materials. What has been done since the 2012 mission to take urgent action to arrest the decay of these buildings and stop some buildings being replaced with superficially similar modern ones is not apparent. It should be recalled that the contribution of these buildings to OUV is carried not only by (superficial) ‘form and design’ but also, indeed particularly, by ‘materials and substance’. This current situation emphasises the need for the Management Plan fully to articulate the attributes of these components of the property. The mission concludes that the residential areas of Sulukule and Ayvansaray no longer contribute to the Outstanding Universal Value of the WH property.

Overall, the mission concludes that the outstanding universal value of the property continues to be under potential threat, primarily from commitment to projects in advance of Heritage Impact Assessments, implementation without prior notification to the World Heritage Centre and, particularly in relation to the Ottoman timber houses, a failure to articulate their attributes that contribute to OUV., or to take meaningful action to stem their decay or ultimate replacement once their situation seriously deteriorates.

However, the mission wishes to acknowledge the increased complexity of addressing development pressures in World Heritage historic urban areas and wishes to praise the Site Management Directorate and the Department of Cultural Assets Conservation, as well as their dedicated staff, for the way they are trying to advance the understanding of the World Heritage Convention and its implementation, and subsequently adapt the organisational culture of the administrations concerned.



**Key recommendations are:**

- That management tools and legal and administrative processes be strengthened:
  - To establish effective objectives within, and organisational relationships and co-ordination between, the public bodies whose decisions affect the World Heritage property, so that
    - an understanding of the potential impact of major projects informs ‘in-principle’ decisions
    - in those decisions, great weight is attached to the objective of safeguarding the OUV of the property; and
    - that principle continues to guide all subsequent stages of design and implementation;
  - To ensure that renewal area powers under Law 5366 and disaster risk powers under Law 6306 are used to safeguard and rehabilitate, and that adequate powers and processes are rapidly put in place to facilitate emergency action to prevent deterioration and loss of cultural heritage, particularly Ottoman timber buildings.
- That to avoid the risk of the OUV being considered at threat, by June 2018:
  - The attributes of the heritage assets of the historic peninsula that carry the OUV of the property must be fully and clearly defined in the Management Plan and where necessary surveyed and documented;
  - All proposed or ongoing major projects ‘which may affect the Outstanding Universal Value of the property’ will have been subject to Heritage Impact Assessment and notification to the WHC with adequate time to respond prior to commencement. These include, but are not limited to, the rehabilitation of the Land Walls and Bucoleon Palace and the reconstruction of the Hagia Sophia medrese;

An emergency plan for the conservation of Ottoman/ vernacular timber buildings, including urgent works to stem ongoing decay and loss, must be devised and implemented alongside an overall long-term conservation strategy; these must be based on adequate documentation of what remains (*It is understood that the above-mentioned urgent works have already been initiated by IMM Department of Cultural Assets and Historic Areas of Istanbul Site Management Directorate*)

  - That the authorities measure and monitor the effects of both rail and road transportation changes within the historic peninsula, to test outcomes against predictions and introduce further traffic management measures if necessary to deliver the predicted benefits;
  - That the authorities urgently provide to the WHC details of the ongoing restoration of the Zeyrek and Khora mosques; and invite a mission to review the state of conservation of all attributes of the Zeyrek mosque and area, and possibly also of the Khora mosque.

## 1 BACKGROUND TO THE MISSION

The Historic Areas of Istanbul, comprising four separate component sites within the historic peninsula, was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1985 under cultural criteria C (i), (ii), (iii), and (iv).

Since its inscription, significant threats to the property have been identified, including but not limited to:

- the loss of Ottoman-period timber houses
- past practice of poor quality of repairs and excessive reconstruction of the Roman and Byzantine Walls
- the negative effects of large scale infrastructure projects on the historic peninsula, including the Haliç metro bridge, the Eurasia Tunnel approach road, and the Yenikapi reclamation project

Concerns have continued to be expressed over the legislative arrangements, renewal area plans under law 5366 and the effectiveness of organisational and coordination relationships between decision-making bodies responsible for the safeguarding of World Heritage.

Most recently, these threats have resulted in yearly World Heritage Committee decisions between its 27th (2003) and its 39th (2015) sessions, and requests for progress reports from the State Party in order for the Committee to review if these threats would represent a potential danger to the property in accordance with Paragraph 179 of the Operational Guidelines.

This current mission arises from a decision made by the World Heritage Committee during its 39th Session (Decision 39COM 7B.83 , see the Annex), where it:

- *Welcomed the efforts made by the State Party to review the Management Plan for the property and noted that completion of the review is foreseen for mid-2015;*
- *Regretted that the requested HIA and Options Appraisal for the Eurasia Tunnel were only undertaken at a late stage in the project rather than at the design stage, and that as a result few options could be properly assessed;*
- *Reiterated its view that the new six-eight-lane highway would have a highly significant, negative impact on the Sea Walls, the Marble Tower, and the overall relationship between the Historic Peninsula and the sea, one of the attributes of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV);*
- *Expressed its concern that the HIA for the Yenikapi Land Reclamation Project was also undertaken while work was in progress, and further noted that this project will add cumulatively to the negative impacts of earlier developments along the Marmara Sea side of the Peninsula;*
- *Noted the urgent need for an integrated plan on the peninsula's coastlines and the open spaces surrounding the Theodosian Land Walls, in line with the recommendations of the 2012 Mission;*

- *Welcomed the intention of the State Party to set up a new Directorate for Restoration and Repair within the new Department of Cultural Properties, and the proposed protocol that would enable grants to be offered to private owners for the repair and maintenance of vernacular buildings; and reiterated the need for an overall long term conservation strategy to be developed for Ottoman timber buildings;*
- *Expressed concern that a number of major projects have been developed without adequate Impact Assessments being undertaken in advance of approval or work commencing, and without formal notification being provided in line with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines; and considered that there is a need for progress to be made with the revision of the Management Plan in order that these procedural issues might be addressed in a revised governance structure.*

Accordingly, the Terms of Reference of the 2016 joint Reactive Monitoring Mission were defined as being to:

- Assess the major impact of the proposed six-eight lane Eurasia tunnel approach road on the Sea Walls, the Marble Tower and on the overall relationship between the Historic Peninsula and the Sea, in the context of the property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), and consider any possible mitigation measures;
- Review the Yenikapi Land Reclamation project, analyse its impact on OUV and consider any possible mitigation measures;
- Consider the effectiveness of Cultural Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs) for these two major projects;
- Evaluate how the revision of the Management plan might address procedures to ensure that HIAs for major projects are carried out appropriately and in a timely way, in line with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines;
- Review the proposed new management structures in relation to the challenges facing the property;
- Review progress with the development of an integrated plan for the peninsula's coastlines and the open spaces surrounding the Theodosian Land Walls, and with a strategy for the Ottoman timber buildings;
- Assess the overall state of conservation of the property, including factors and conservation issues that could impact on its Outstanding Universal Value, including its conditions of authenticity and integrity.

The complete Terms of Reference for this Mission are attached in Annex 6.1.

## 2 NATIONAL POLICY FOR THE PRESERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE WORLD HERITAGE PROPERTY

### 2.1 Legal and institutional framework

Turkey<sup>1</sup> became a State Party to the *1972 Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage* in 1982, and has ratified the *Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe* (Granada, 1985), the *European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage* (Revised; Valetta 1992) and the *European Landscape Convention* (Florence, 2000). According to the Turkish constitution, international conventions which have been properly ratified have statutory effect.

All activities related to identification, management and conservation of cultural and natural heritage are implemented under the legislation for the Conservation of Cultural and Natural Heritage and the Guiding Principles of the Superior and Regional Conservation Councils. The principal legislation is Law 2683 (1983), amended by Laws 3386 (1987) and 5226 (2004). The Ministry of Culture and Tourism (acting in collaboration with any other government institutions concerned) is responsible for the implementation of this legislation, including taking measures to protect immovable cultural and natural property to be conserved, regardless of the ownership, providing funds, and supervising those measures or having other public institutions supervise them. There is no law or regulation requiring public/ civil society participation in planning or conservation decisions.

There is no specific planning legislation to protect World Heritage properties. Individual monumental and civil cultural sites within them are registered, and the value of the ensemble recognised through registration as Conservation Areas (areas that have to be conserved for the protection and preservation of immovable cultural and natural property within their historical context). The Historic Peninsula as a whole was declared an historic urban conservation zone in 1995<sup>2</sup>. The State Party decided to prepare a Management Plan for the whole Historic Peninsula rather than for just the components sites of the World Heritage property. The first was prepared in 2011 and revised in draft in 2015. The draft is anticipated to be adopted in the first half of 2017.

Within the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the General Directorate for Cultural Heritage and Museums carries out planning and implementation of the conservation measures, acting through *The Superior Council of Immovable Cultural and Natural Heritage* and 31 *Regional Conservation Councils* operating within the Superior Council's guiding principles, supported by professional and technical staff. Practical responsibility for conservation of state-owned properties within the World Heritage site lies with Istanbul Directorate of Survey and Monuments and the Directorate of Istanbul National Museums. Law 5226 was intended to provide 'more efficient technical and administrative tools in the field of conservation with the aim of enhancing public participation and state support for the conservation of the historical assets'. Under Article 10, Conservation Implementation and Control Bureaux (KUDEB) have been established within municipalities including both Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality (IMM) and Fatih Municipality, the district municipality responsible for the whole Historic

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<sup>1</sup> Information on Turkish heritage legislation is based on the summary in the 2012 Mission Report, updated based on the 2015 Management Plan Section 1.2.2

<sup>2</sup> For details see 2011 Management Plan, 1.4.1

Peninsula.<sup>3</sup> Employing specialists in art history, archaeology, architecture, urban planning and engineering, these bureaux are in charge of controlling the implementation of the conservation plans and projects approved by the Regional Conservation Councils, and are empowered to approve minor repairs to historic buildings. Within IMM a Cultural Properties Department has been established, embracing the Cultural Properties Projects Directorate, KUDEB, and the Cultural Heritage Conservation Directorate.<sup>4</sup>

The General Directorate of Pious Foundations is legally responsible for protecting and evaluating cultural and natural property under the ownership of foundations administered by the General Directorate and of property such as mosques, tombs, caravanserais, medressas, inns, public baths, convents, Mevlevi lodges and fountains under private or public ownership. However, all conservation and restoration projects are subject to the prior approval of the Regional Conservation Councils, regardless of the contracting authority (including the General Directorate and all municipal authorities) or ownership.

Built heritage conservation, particularly historic area conservation, takes place within the spatial planning system, the responsibility of the Ministry of Environment and Urban Planning at national level, the Urban Planning and Planning Directorates within the IMM Public Works and Urbanisation Department at Municipal level, and a Directorate of Housing and Urban Development at Fatih Municipality level. Use and construction are regulated under the Spatial Planning Law (3194). Conservation development plans have been prepared by the Directorate for the whole Management Plan area at 1:5000 and 1:1000, in coordination with IMM and Fatih District Municipality. The Ministry is also directly responsible for planning the coasts, filling areas (including Yenikapi), and all public lands subject to privatisation.

The Tourism Encouragement Law (2634) authorises the Ministry of Culture and Tourism to make plans in every scale and 'to single-handedly' approve those plans in areas declared by the Council of Ministers as tourism areas, districts and centres. The 'Archaeological Park' Tourism and Culture Area Plan was declared in 2000 for the site of the Byzantine Palace in Sultanahmet. The Atakoy Tourism Centre, on the Marmara coast at Zeytinburnu (declared 1989) extending east to the Land Walls, proposes high density marina development, with the potential for negative impacts on the silhouette of the peninsula.

## 2.2 Funding

Recent legislation has increased the amount of funding available for conserving the World Heritage property. The regulation (*Procedure and Principles for the Utilization of the Fund Providing for the Restoration of Immovable Cultural Properties*), authorising the Ministry of Culture and Tourism to give grants for the design and implementation of projects for the conservation of cultural heritage, came in to effect on 15 June 2005. Law 5226 also provided that 10 % of the real estate tax is allocated as 'the contribution share for the conservation of immovable cultural property' in accordance with the law on real estate tax (Law 1319), in order to be used for the conservation and evaluation of the cultural entities within the boundaries of municipalities. This enables the Governorship of Istanbul to support

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<sup>3</sup> Areas outside the Land Walls but within the World Heritage property remain the responsibility of Zeytinburnu and Eyüp municipalities.

<sup>4</sup> 2015 Draft Management Plan, p7

municipalities in the design and implementation of projects (including expropriation, planning and implementation) for the conservation and evaluation of cultural assets.

Law 5225 on Encouraging Cultural Investments and Law 5228 (revising the Act of Taxation) encourage the sponsorship of cultural heritage conservation through tax concessions. Financial aid for conservation projects is exempt from income tax, cultural property is exempt from inheritance and succession tax, and approved works to registered properties (including professional fees) are exempt from VAT and municipal taxes.

## 2.3 Regeneration and Disaster Planning

Law 5366 for the ‘Preservation by Renovation and Utilization by Revitalizing of Deteriorated Immovable Historical and Cultural Properties’ enables local authorities to prepare regeneration proposals for degraded historic areas. Areas are proposed by local authorities for designation by the Council of Ministers. The emphasis is on renewal and the operation of the conservation plan and remit of the Regional Board are suspended. The *Istanbul Urban Renewal Areas Regional Conservation Board for Cultural and Natural Heritage* has been created to approve projects presented by local authorities within the framework of the law. The whole of the Süleymaniye component site, most of the Land Walls, and part of the Sultanahmet component sites have been designated.<sup>5</sup> The consequences are addressed at section 3.5 of this report.

Law 6306 on the Transformation of Disaster Risk Areas provides for buildings that are at risk from disaster, particularly earthquakes, to be strengthened or demolished and rebuilt.<sup>6</sup> This is in effect a renewal law, and the Management Plan notes that it ‘should be reformed according to the law numbered 2683’s purpose and goals’, with the implication that it could conflict with the law on heritage conservation (for which see above).

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<sup>5</sup> See 2012 Mission Report Fig 1; 2015 Draft Management Plan Map 9, p47

<sup>6</sup> There is an unofficial English summary at <http://www.sariibrahimoglu.com/details.php?id=77>

### 3 IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT OF ISSUES

The 2016 reactive monitoring mission was the fifth mission carried out to the property in the last decade (2006, 2008, 2009, 2012 and 2016). This simple fact mirrors the importance of the threats, but also the steps taken by the State Party to mitigate them by inviting missions to monitor the situation and providing reports and information.

The main recommendations of the 2012 mission were concerned with the adequacy of the emerging Management Plan and the effectiveness of site management in avoiding harm to the OUV of the property; the impact of major infrastructure projects (particularly the Haliç Bridge, Eurasia Tunnel and Yenikapi Meeting Ground), the political and organisational frameworks which led to them being commissioned without prior assessment of their impacts or prior notification to the World Heritage Centre, so that only minor mitigation was possible; and the ongoing failure to secure the future of the remaining Ottoman timber houses, particularly in the context of the use of Renewal Area powers. These long-standing issues were again the principal concerns of the 2016 Mission.

#### 3.1 Outstanding Universal Value and attributes: the framework to assess potential threats

Protection and management of World Heritage properties aims to ‘ensure that the OUV, including the conditions of integrity and authenticity, are sustained or enhanced over time’ (*Operational Guidelines [OG]* par. 96). For this reason, the management plan ‘must specify how the OUV of a property should be preserved’ (*OG* par. 108). It is further explained that ‘effective management involves a cycle of short, medium and long-term actions to protect, conserve and present the nominated property. An integrated approach to planning and management is essential to guide the evolution of properties over time and to ensure maintenance of all aspects of their OUV. This approach goes beyond the property to include any buffer zone(s) as well as the broader setting [...] management of the broader setting is related to its role in supporting the OUV’ (*OG* par. 112).

The Statement of OUV of the property was adopted in 2011. In line with the *OG*, the 2012 reactive monitoring mission report recommended that a revision of the World Heritage Site Management Plan should ‘articulate more clearly the attributes of the site and its setting that carry its Outstanding Universal Value’ and in particular ‘to [consider] how each of the four parts relate to each other and the Historic Peninsula which forms their geographical, historical and practical context, and how elements of each of them convey the attributes of the OUV of the site as a whole’.

Following the 2012 mission, the State Party submitted a revised version of the Draft Management Plan in December 2015. Subsequently, a meeting was held at the World Heritage Centre on 4 April 2016, attended by Dr Halil ONUR, Site Manager, Historic Areas of Istanbul Site Directorate, and Hüseyin TOK, Head of Department, Department of Cultural Assets Conservation, Susan Denyer and Regina Durighello of ICOMOS and the WHC. ICOMOS provided its comments on the revised Draft Management Plan in writing. Among these comments, it underlined that ‘ICOMOS strongly supports the idea of the Plan being for the whole Historic Peninsula, which provides the essential context and setting for the serial World Heritage Property.’ It further commented: ‘what needs strengthening is **the definition of the Peninsula**, its value in terms of what assets it contains, and what needs protecting and managing.’ It was also recommended that ‘the Plan sets out parameters not only for managing the attributes that

contribute to the OUV of the World heritage property, but also for the attributes that relate to other areas or aspects of the Peninsula that are of national or local value, including intangible assets.'

The overall assessment of the state of conservation of the property relies on a clear definition of the OUV of the WH property, which, in this case, is contextualized today in a broader entity, i.e. the **Historic Peninsula** that includes the WH property and its buffer zone. In this context, and on the basis of the previous recommendations, the main elements that will allow for an assessment of the level of threats to the WH property are:

- 1) **a clear definition of the Historic Peninsula;**
- 2) **the identification of the assets the Historic Peninsula contains;**
- 3) **the definition of the attributes of the outstanding universal value of the WH site carried by those assets, in the new context of the whole Historic Peninsula.**

During the mission, the site manager Dr Halil ONUR recalled that the Management Plan had considered the broader area of the property and that a Minor Boundary Modification had been submitted to the World Heritage Centre for evaluation at the next session of the World Heritage Committee, i.e. the 41st session. He also recalled that the revised version of the Management Plan will be approved by the Directorate in the coming months. However, since the submission of the revised version of the Management Plan in April 2016, and subsequently during the mission, no additions have been made to provide the preliminary definition of the attributes that convey the OUV in the broader setting of the Historical Peninsula, in a form that can directly inform and guide property management. The Mission reiterated many times during the meetings that this is a prerequisite to thoroughly monitor the state of conservation of the property. The Mission considered that since this prerequisite is still not met, recommendations related to the identified threats to the OUV or heritage impact assessments may lack an adequate basis for evaluation, especially for all HIA until now and for the future.

**The Mission therefore considers that the revision of the Management Plan to include a definition of the Historic Peninsula and a reasoned articulation of the attributes that contribute to the OUV with the Historical Peninsula *remains a top priority* and should be completed before any further report is made on the state of conservation of the property.**

This step is all the more important given that the management plan is in the final phase of approval and that the Site Management Directorate is committed to ensuring the wide circulation of the plan and sharing it with all stakeholders, including ICOMOS Turkey and the universities. Regular meetings with all stakeholders are foreseen, and the Management Plan will be made public on the website of the Directorate.

### 3.2 Heritage Impact assessment

Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) is a key process in understanding and contributing to maintaining the full meaning of the OUV of a WH property, and in preserving the integrity and the authenticity of the attributes that manifest the OUV. The assessment process, conducted by the State Party, consists of asking the questions related to potential risks and the impact of development proposals on OUV, and considering actions that would avoid, minimise or compensate for potential impacts on OUV. The



HIA report should provide in a clear and practical way the evidence on which decisions can be made. Upon submission of the HIA, results of the evaluation are reviewed by the respective Advisory Bodies, ICOMOS International and IUCN, and should be reflected in the development process as well as future modifications and archaeological investigations.

The HIA must be initiated prior to the commissioning of projects, to inform decisions rather than to mitigate consequences. As a practical tool, it should be used at each level of decision-making about projects that have the potential to impact on the Outstanding Universal Value (and other local cultural and natural heritage values) of the property. It should guide the assessment of options about how an issue might be addressed at the highest, strategic level, inform the decision about **if** and how to proceed by evaluating impacts (positive and negative) on attributes of the site that carry its OUV, and be followed through in an iterative process at each subsequent level down to detailed planning and design, generating measures to mitigate harmful impacts at each stage. The further a project has progressed, the less scope there will be for mitigation; so **it is vital that Heritage Impact Assessment of major projects affecting the World Heritage property is undertaken to inform the initial ‘in principle’ decision.** HIA is not intended primarily as a means of assessing the impact of schemes already defined in location, extent and form and suggesting essentially cosmetic or marginal means of mitigating some of that harm.

While the need for HIA is made clear in the 2015 Management Plan,<sup>8</sup> the Mission has seen no clear evidence that HIA has been applied at the conceptual stage to major projects in Istanbul. The decision in principle on the Eurasia Tunnel approach road was effectively taken through the definition of the project at tender stage in 2008. The impact of subsequent retrospective HIAs has, necessarily, been marginal. The primary decision in that case was made almost a decade ago and so is effectively historical. Yet in 2013, the HIA of the Yenikapi fill area was begun after work had started on site. The 2015 draft Management Plan states:

*‘The Heritage Impact Assessment Report shows that the realization of the Yenikapi Coastal Area Fill Project will yield both positive and negative results. Experts have underlined that it is saddening that most of the negative impacts of the Yenikapi Coastal Area Fill Project on the World Heritage Site’s Outstanding Universal Value, integrity and authenticity can no longer be mitigated as the project is already in the implementation phase. This is a problem that was encountered before in Istanbul like the problem regarding the Golden Horn Metro Bridge. These recommendations aim to ensure exchange of know-how between local, national and international decision mechanisms in order to support Istanbul’s sustainable development within the city and to support the conservation of Istanbul’s World Heritage Sites and their associated areas that are under the huge pressure of change.’*

Despite this official acknowledgement of the inevitable consequences of *post-hoc* Heritage Impact Assessment, the mission was informed that the HIA for the Yenikapi Activity Tent (see 3.3.3 below; actually a building of 10,000 m<sup>2</sup>) was being undertaken in parallel with its construction.<sup>9</sup> These are both public sector projects, which should set an example to the private sector, by establishing a local benchmark of good practice. Unfortunately the failings acknowledged in the Management Plan have

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<sup>8</sup> Section 2.6.1, p145

<sup>9</sup> The SP 2017 state of conservation progress report mentions that the HIA for the Yenikapi Event Tent Project has been completed and a report was in preparation at the time of our writing the mission report.

not yet been addressed. In the private sector, the HIA, conducted post-completion, of the Onaltı Dokuz İstanbul towers which dominate the Marble Tower<sup>10</sup> and southern end of the Land Walls, concluded *'it would not be realistic to make a recommendation to mitigate the impact of the interaction between constructions and the historic fabric as respecting such a recommendation has got very small chances of realization'*.<sup>11</sup>

#### **The Mission therefore**

**(1) emphasizes, in support of the 2015 draft Management Plan, that under the WHC *Operational Guidelines* 'Impact assessments for proposed interventions are essential for all World Heritage properties'<sup>12</sup> in advance of decisions to proceed;**

**(2) also emphasizes that HIA must be undertaken before in principle decisions have been taken rather than after a project has been approved or work started;**

**(3) regrets that despite acknowledgement of this issue in the 2015 Management Plan, the HIA for the Yenikapi Activity Tent is being prepared in parallel with its construction, which is almost complete.**

### **3.3 Infrastructure projects along the south shore of the historic peninsula**

#### **3.3.1 The Eurasia Tunnel Approach Road**

##### *Background*

The background to the project for a motor vehicle tunnel under the Bosphorous, with the European portal at the south-east corner of the historic peninsula, is fully set out in the 2012 Mission Report, and so is not repeated in detail here. The contract was let in 2008 and finance was in place by December 2012. The 2012 Mission recommended that a heritage impact assessment of European Approach Road (along the south shore of the peninsula) be commissioned, including detailed mapping and evaluation of potential archaeological levels; options for extending the tunnel to a point beyond the land walls be explored; and that *'the Marble Tower should not, under any circumstance, be left isolated in the central reservation of a road'*.

A heritage impact assessment was subsequently undertaken.<sup>14</sup> The 2012 mission's recommendation that the possibility of an extended tunnel be explored was dismissed in a separate report,<sup>15</sup> on the grounds that *'the construction of a tunnel along the Historic Peninsula with consequent downgrading or elimination of the Kennedy Street would define a system totally different from now. This requires that a project of this size and with these goals should be long studied before being implemented'*. More realistically, by this time financial and contractual issues were to the fore – *'the project has no time and*

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<sup>10</sup> Illustrated in Fig 5 below

<sup>11</sup> 2016 Management Plan, Section 2.6.1, p155

<sup>12</sup> Operational Guidelines par. 119; for good practice guidance see *Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments for Cultural World Heritage Properties*. Paris, ICOMOS 2011.

[http://openarchive.icomos.org/266/1/ICOMOS\\_Heritage\\_Impact\\_Assessment\\_2010.pdf](http://openarchive.icomos.org/266/1/ICOMOS_Heritage_Impact_Assessment_2010.pdf)

<sup>14</sup> Its final conclusions are set out in Annexe 1 of the 2015 State of Conservation Report

<sup>15</sup> Annexe 2 of the 2015 State of Conservation Report, p9

*cost flexibilities'* – limiting the scope to mitigate impacts. However, the administration building and half the toll gates were moved to the Asian side and the configuration at Yenikapi changed to avoid buried archaeology (as foreseen in the 2012 Mission Report, 3.4.6). Subsequently the road was moved wholly to the south of the Marble Tower, as recommended by the 2012 mission,<sup>16</sup> more pedestrian overpasses included, and wider at-grade connections between the city and the Yenikapi port and Assembly Ground (see below) provided, with a financial contribution from the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality.

#### *The impact of the road*

Kennedy Cadessi has assumed the physical form of an urban expressway, four lanes wide in each direction plus slip-roads, with a central fence and crash barriers, grade-separated interchanges at Yenikapi and Samatya and pedestrian overbridges (Figs 1, 6, 7). Yet it still also serves the functions of a local road, incorporating bus lay-bys, reflecting its origins as a late 1950s boulevard. Recent widening has avoided intervention in the surviving physical fabric of the sea walls, but in places has reduced their separation from the road. Even with the modest traffic flow observed by the Mission (prior to tunnel opening), it has increased noise levels and created a barrier to the enjoyment of the sea walls and the remaining green space along the shoreline

The severance of the city from the sea in this way commences near the south-west corner of the Sultanahmet component site I of the World Heritage property (the Bucoleon Palace) and extends westwards to and beyond the Land Walls. The pedestrian at-grade connections at Yenikapi and provision of more pedestrian overbridges than originally proposed, all with lift as well as stair access, mitigate but do not overcome the physical barrier of the road. While it was suggested during the mission that a project to valorise the setting of the sea walls is being considered, the scope meaningfully to do so west of the tunnel entrance is now severely compromised. Landscaping, with dense tree planting along the southern edge of the road where substantial green space remains beyond, can mitigate but not eliminate harm to the quality of the shoreline environment.

The impact when viewed from the sea, on the silhouette of the peninsula, is much less dramatic. The pedestrian overbridges are of minimum height (5m) although robust in their construction, and do not read as being higher than the walls or lowest tier of buildings behind. The most visible elements are the hoops over the toll plaza (Fig 8) carrying the signage and lighting over the ramp to the portal (and preventing the entry of over-height vehicles). Their presence is emphasised because the carriageway must rise before descending into the tunnel to provide protection against a surge tide (tsunami) entering the tunnel mouth (Fig 8). This, unfortunately, is in the most sensitive area, with the Bucoleon Palace not far to the east; but ancillary structures including the vent shaft have been kept down to 5-6 m, with minimal impact. Two wide pedestrian overpasses provided at Yenikapi (Fig 7) are nearly at grade, since the vehicle carriageways are sunk beneath the prevailing level. Here, however, any view from (or of) the sea is obscured by the Yenikapi Assembly Ground.

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<sup>16</sup> At 3.4.7, pp32-3

The Mission was assured that in the final route few archaeological features were encountered, and recording was undertaken to the same standard as in the adjacent works at Marmaray. Contrary to expectations, little was found in the affected part of the former harbour of the Bucoleon Palace.

#### *The setting of the Marble Tower*

The 2012 Mission's recommendation that the Marble Tower should not be left isolated in the central reservation of the road was accepted in 2015.<sup>17</sup> A wholly new road passes between the Marble Tower and the shore line (facilitated by minor additional reclamation), and the course of the former road between the Marble Tower and the Land Wall has been broken up and will be reinstated as landscaped space (Figs 3-5). The local effect of this change is highly beneficial, making the connection between them obvious and improving their local setting, notwithstanding the impact of the new road.

More elaborate landscaping is envisaged than simply greening the area. This will involve the (modern) fill level being reduced on the sides that were once lapped by the sea, to expose at least the top of the stepped plinth, and a reflective pool created against only those faces. Otherwise the paving and landscaping will suggest its former connection to the end of the land wall.

#### *3.3.2 The sea walls, Bucoleon Palace and the old railway line*

The sea walls and remains of the Bucoleon Palace were severely damaged by the construction of the railway to the Sirkeci terminus in 1871-2 (doubled 1910), taking a line of least resistance by cutting across bays. Several surviving sections of wall are now in urgent need of careful consolidation, including the Bucoleon Palace itself, a tower of which seemed to be inhabited by squatters. Particularly on the sea-facing side, mortar joints in the remaining sections of wall are in some areas deeply eroded, leading to stones becoming detached, and woody plants and creepers are taking hold. Above the Bucoleon Palace, Ottoman timber houses which once added to the historic multi-layered character and fortuitous aesthetic values of the place are collapsing, while an incongruous modern sea view balcony impacts strongly on the historic architecture (Figs 9, 10).

The Mission was informed that the surface level railway will soon be redundant because of the new underground line through Marmaray, offering an opportunity to create an elevated pedestrian route behind the shore/ wall line. The attraction of this may in places be lessened by the character that Kennedy Cadessi has assumed in its upgrading as the tunnel approach road, but the Mission strongly commends the concept and an integrated approach, along both the railway and road, to conservation and improved presentation of the remains of the sea walls (Fig 10) which in some sections separate the two. Landscaping and presentation of the Marble Tower following the road works could usefully be the start of a project to valorise what remains along the southern course of the sea walls, and would eventually link with the planned Archaeopark at Yenikapi. Consolidation and better presentation of the Byzantine Bucoleon Palace, within the World Heritage property, is long overdue, and, lying east of the tunnel mouth, its immediate setting will be improved once the tunnel works compound has been removed. According to the 2017 SoC report (p48), the Fatih Municipality *'has been developing projects*

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<sup>17</sup> City Plan approval, May 2016

*that bring forward the palace and its location in order to make it one of the places worth seeing in Istanbul*'. These projects were not presented to the mission.

### 3.3.3 The Yenikapi Assembly Ground

As explained in Section 3.2, the reclamation of 58ha of land to form the Yenikapi Assembly Ground was begun in advance of Heritage Impact Assessment. The engineering project was completed in 2014, thankfully leaving the Samatya gate still lapped by the sea by adopting the existing breakwater as part of the perimeter of the reclamation site (Fig 6), allowing it to be viewed over water.

The Mission saw a well-advanced 'Yenikapi Activity Tent' of lightweight PTFE-coated fibreglass membrane stretched over a tubular steel frame (Figs 11-13), covering 10,000 m<sup>2</sup>, towards the western edge of the reclaimed area. A heritage impact assessment of this structure had been commissioned by the Municipality, and completion of it was envisaged in parallel with that of the building. Other uses of the reclaimed area include 'parkland' areas on the fringe (with many new trees already planted), to increase green space in the Fatih District, bus and car parking (although reduced 'to a minimum' from the original proposal to encourage visitors to arrive by public transport), in addition to large assembly ground.<sup>18</sup> In future a subterranean waste water treatment plant is envisaged.

Despite the 2012 Mission being assured that only structures less than 5.5m high would be permitted on the reclaimed land,<sup>19</sup> the tent-like structure is 17m high to the envelope and 20m to the top of the external lattice bridge girders.<sup>20</sup> While the form of the tent-like structure, is generally well suited, structurally and conceptually, to its place on a recently-reclaimed site, both its size and the white finish (necessary to reflect rather than absorb light and heat) make it particularly conspicuous. From the sea it can appear prominent, especially from the south-west (Figs 11-12). Trees planted along the periphery of the reclaimed site will in due course help to screen it – the effect is already filtered in some views (Fig 11) – but these run the risk of further obscuring the peninsula itself, despite assurances about management to keep them to 5-6m high.

Unlike incremental shore line reclamation, the scale of this project has altered the morphology of the peninsula. Despite legal constraints on permanent building on reclaimed land, the site could grow more intrusive over time as use intensifies. The level of the filled land, at about 4m above sea level, has a limited effect on the silhouette of the peninsula seen directly from the sea, decreasing according to distance. However, the impact will increase with peripheral tree cover even if managed at +5-6m from land level and the 'Tent' rising to +20m. A grid of lighting columns around 40m high has little effect during the day but will have much more at night. Because of the concave shape of the historic coastline the greatest harm is in views from the western parts of the shore towards the Sultanahamet component of the World Heritage Site, where instead of sea, a low harbour wall and ships, the

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<sup>18</sup> The *Democracy and Martyrs' Rally* in August 2016 was held at Yenikapi

<sup>19</sup> 2012 Mission Report, 3.5, p36

<sup>20</sup> Figured dimensions on section included in the presentation

reclaimed area and its structures/ planting now fill the middle ground. **In the mission's opinion, this will impact on people's ability to appreciate the historic form and views of the peninsula.**

#### 3.3.4 The Atakoy Tourism Area

Little progress seems to have been made with the planning of this project, although the associated land reclamation proposal is shown on the 'as built' drawings of the Eurasia Tunnel approach road, beginning opposite the Marble Tower.<sup>21</sup>

#### 3.3.5 Traffic and transportation in the historic peninsula

The 2006 Mission recommended that *'within the context of the Management Plan the preparation of a Traffic Plan incorporating clear proposals on how impacts on the World Heritage site can be reduced'*, and this has been endorsed by subsequent Missions. Since then two major changes to the transportation infrastructure have occurred, the metro link across the Golden Horn via the Haliç bridge (with further connections to the rail network at the Yenikapi hub still in progress), and the completion of the Eurasia Tunnel for motor vehicles.

The recent completion of the metro link across the Golden Horn has greatly increased the accessibility of the peninsula by public transport. The 2012 Mission noted that *'Investment was planned to achieve a projected modal shift from 3.6% to 27.7% by rail by 2015.'* Progress with the railway system has not been as rapid as then expected, but the Golden Horn metro bridge has been open since February 2014, so the effects of that link at least should now be established and the actual modal shift measurable. Unfortunately no figures were available to demonstrate the impact achieved to date.

Traffic modelling presented in the Eurasia tunnel ESIA suggested that the tunnel would result in some reduction of traffic in parts of the historic peninsula, 28% on the shore road east of the tunnel portal, and 7-10 % on the Atatürk [Unkapanı] and Galata bridges. Comparison of actual with predicted impacts will only be possible once the tunnel has been open for sufficient time for changes in travel patterns to have stabilised.

The Mission wishes to emphasise the importance of undertaking surveys to enable comparison between predicted and actual effects, so that action can be taken to address unforeseen negative consequences, and further steps devised to reduce the negative impact of motor traffic within the historic peninsula. The 2012 Mission,<sup>22</sup> for example, expressed concern that the grade-separated junction at Yenikapi would encourage traffic flows through the historic peninsula to and from the tunnel unless its use were restricted to public transport (which it is not).

#### 3.3.6 Conclusions

Over the past decade major transport-led infrastructure projects have had major impacts on the shore of the historic peninsula. Changes to the railway infrastructure are predicted to help the historic city by a modal shift away from cars, while the construction of the Marmaray station led to perhaps the most significant European research excavation of its time, of the Theodosian Harbour, with a tremendous contribution to understanding the origins and evolution of the city. The Tunnel Approach Road by contrast has severed the city from the sea by a hostile corridor; yet had it been continued to

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<sup>21</sup> See 2016 Mission Report, 3.7.3 (p45) and fig 71; Road plan, EPCJV – GN – AD – PR1 – RDW – 001 – A0

<sup>22</sup> Report, 3.2.5, 3.4.8, p33

Kazlıçeşme its effects would have been positive. Like the Yenikapi Meeting Ground, the decision had been made prior to addressing its heritage impacts.

Serious though these impacts are, there are some limited opportunities, and conservation need, for mitigation and enhancement, through taking the opportunities that the redundancy of the railway line presents to valorise so far as possible the remains of the sea wall from the Marble Tower to the Bucoleon Palace. All of this needs to be considered in the context of a clear strategy for the sea walls corridor, to which further developments, most obviously the Atakoy Tourism Area, should be designed to make a positive contribution; and in the context of traffic management measures that seek to ensure that the predictions of benefits for the rest of the peninsula are actually realised.

### ***The mission***

**(a) regrets that the World Heritage Centre was consulted too late in the development of the Eurasia Tunnel project for a longer tunnel on the European side to be seriously considered, to avoid the construction of an urban expressway severing the historic peninsula from the Sea of Marmara;**

**(b) Nonetheless welcomes the amendment to the road scheme to reunite the Marble Tower and Land Walls, and requests that the landscaping of its immediate setting be designed to demonstrate that relationship, and of the tower with the sea;**

**(c) requests that the opportunity provided by the forthcoming closure of the surface level rail line prompt the development of a pedestrian route along the sea walls and the conservation and valorisation of the surviving remains of the walls, from the Marble Tower to and including the Bucoleon Palace;**

**(d) Requests the State Party to consult with the World Heritage Centre at an early stage in the development of proposals for the valorisation of the Bucoleon Palace, in accordance with par. 172 of the Operational Guidelines;**

**(e) Recalls that the World Heritage Centre was not consulted in advance of the construction of the Yenikapi Meeting Ground, a profound change in the topography of the historic peninsula;**

**(f) Raises questions on the development and use of the reclaimed land at Yenikapi, and regrets that an HIA for the first major development, compounding the harm caused by the reclamation itself, is being prepared in parallel with its construction;**

**(g) Emphasises the need for a Heritage Impact Assessment of projects developed for the Atakoy Tourism Area before development plans are committed;**

**(h) Requests the authorities to measure and monitor the effects of both rail and road changes within the historic peninsula, to test outcomes against predictions and introduce further traffic management measures if necessary to deliver the predicted benefits.**

### 3.4 The land walls

The Theodosian land walls (6.6km long) have been considered by previous missions, in response to interventions that involved restoration and rebuilding that went far beyond the repair and consolidation of surviving structure. Nonetheless, there are significant sections of the walls which are now in poor condition and whose conservation is urgent, in conjunction with improving their landscape setting and making them more accessible to visitors.

Work on the wall between bastions T55-T60 was undertaken around 2000-2006, involving extensive reconstruction and re-facing, contrary to internationally-accepted standards for the conservation of masonry monuments<sup>23</sup> Work to the remainder, which the mission members were assured would take cognisance of the experience of the earlier work, has been split into four stages (for location see Fig 14):

#### *1st Stage - 1.9 km*

*The work was started at 17.03.2016 and surveying was delivered to Conservation Commission. Restitution and restoration are in progress.*

#### *2nd Stage - 1.4 km*

*The work was started at 19.04.2016 and surveying was delivered to Conservation Commission. Restitution and restoration are in progress.*

#### *3rd Stage - 2.3 km*

*The work was started at 26.09.2016. Surveying and land determination are in progress.*

#### *4th Stage - 1 km*

*Bidding process is in progress. Project works have not started yet.<sup>24</sup>*

The Mission did not see any work in progress on site, but a presentation included sample drawings of the proposed works. The Mission asked for details of the proposals, including working drawings, to be sent to the World Heritage Centre. While the need for this work is clear, undertaking work almost simultaneously to 5.6 km of the Land Walls will require a considerable concentration of resources, including appropriately skilled and experienced professional and technical staff and craftspeople, as well as supervision by the authorities. The capacity of local specialist contractors, and of the authorities themselves, has certainly been considered in planning this ambitious project.

Consolidation of the stretch of the walls at Yedikule is closely connected with the future management of the adjacent productive ('truck') gardens both within the walls, between the outer and inner walls, and over the site of the ditch, between the outer wall and the highway (Figs 15-17). This section is in a particularly poor state (Figs 18-19), but unlike the section to its north, has not suffered from extensive reconstruction in the past. Historically these gardens were more extensive, indeed much of the city area within the land walls was agricultural, but they have gradually shrunk through encroachment by

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<sup>23</sup> 2006 Mission Report, pp20-24

<sup>24</sup> From slide presentation



development. What remains is fiercely defended by its gardeners, supported by the promoters of organic food; the Mission was assured that the local Lettuce is a distinct strain unique to the place.

It is welcome to report that these gardens are to be safeguarded and celebrated, with new facilities (market, building for civic society organisations) and repair of the group of vernacular houses on the edge of the site. The principle is to be commended, but the landscaping proposals as they stand (Fig 15) could be simplified for what has always been an informal working area.

### **The Mission**

**(a) welcomes the staged plan for the consolidation and rehabilitation of the Land Walls, which should be conducted in accordance with accepted international standards, avoiding reconstruction and restoration of the original form of the archaeological evidence and their subsequent evolution;**

**(b) requests the state party to submit to the WHC detailed proposals, stage by stage, before physical conservation works begin, in accordance with par. 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*;**

**(c) commends the retention and rehabilitation of the productive ('truck') gardens alongside the walls at Yedikule and but requests caution about over-designing the details of a working horticultural site.**

## **3.5 Ottoman timber (vernacular) houses**

### **3.5.1 Background**

Urban regeneration and the conservation of the vernacular (or Ottoman) timber houses has been a cause of serious concern since the property was inscribed in 1985. The 2006 Mission reported that '*no effective measures were taken*' to prevent their loss until 2003, when progress began to be made; but it was not sustained, so that the 2012 Mission concluded:<sup>25</sup>

*"that despite much excellent repair and restoration of individual buildings and groups of buildings, the extent of deterioration, decay and demolition of Istanbul's Ottoman vernacular heritage is approaching crisis point. Formal Renewal Areas as currently interpreted and implemented appear to be adding to the problem rather than facilitating a solution. Significant adverse impact on the Outstanding Universal Value has already been caused by the redevelopment of Sulukule and demolition in Ayvansaray. It recommends that:*

*(a) urgent 'first aid' works should be facilitated and prioritised, based on a rapid assessment of 'buildings at risk', to slow down the rate of decay and loss;*

*(b) amendments to the regulations governing the use of grants to allow, where necessary, the funding of the whole cost of works urgently necessary for the preservation of buildings, regardless of ownership;*

*(c) urgent works by owners or the authorities are facilitated by timely determination of applications to the Conservation Boards (or for simple maintenance, by KUDEB);*

*(d) Consideration be given to reinstating the previous provision of grants and assistance to owners;*

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<sup>25</sup> Section 3.6

*(e) the fragility and rate of deterioration of buildings which contribute to the OUV of the World Heritage property should be a major factor in the allocation of support by the SPA;*

*(f) a reconsideration of how renewal area powers (identified in the Management Plan as a threat to the integrity of the World Heritage property) and engagement with private sector actors can be used to achieve conservation-led outcomes, rather than maximising development potential and encouraging 'reconstruction';*

*(g) implementation takes place in smaller packages, with a diversity of infill buildings, to avoid the areas becoming dominated by a single contemporary form and style of building.*

### 3.5.2 The current situation

Brief visits were made to the urban renewal projects at Sulukule and Ayvansaray, in the Land Walls component site of the WH property, the former project now complete and occupied, and the latter well advanced. In Sulukule, the Mission saw a sample of the decayed vernacular houses noted by the 2012 Mission. They had been replaced by wholly new buildings that bore little resemblance to their predecessors (Figs 20, 21). In Ayvansaray only one building seen in 2012 was still standing (Fig 25). The other vernacular buildings had been demolished and replaced with new ones of superficially similar form (Figs 22-23). Demolition in 2012- 2013 included not only long-neglected vernacular buildings, but also recently-vacated ones (Figs 22, 24).<sup>26</sup> The construction site management confirmed that no salvaged elements had been incorporated;..

**The mission concludes, having seen these urban renewal projects complete or nearly so, that the residential areas of Sulukule and Ayvansaray no longer contribute to the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage property.<sup>27</sup>**

In brief visits to Sultanahamet and Süleymaniye<sup>28</sup>, also renewal areas, little progress had been made with the repair of surviving timber buildings since 2012. Deterioration culminating in collapse remains an extensive problem. As an example, the Mission noted No 5 Ayranci Sk., Süleymaniye, still essentially intact in 2012, but partly (and recently) collapsed by December 2016 (Fig 26). Two others around the corner in Hoca Giyacetin were in much the same partly collapsed state as in 2012.<sup>29</sup> Both form part of a block of mostly exceptionally well-preserved, if comparatively modest, timber houses.

In Zeyrek, although 14 buildings are stated to have been repaired since 2012, many others remain in a poor state and a large house near the south-east corner of the Zeyrek mosque, fronting Ibadethane Sk,<sup>30</sup> had been demolished (Fig 28). As the restoration work of the Zeyrek mosque is progressing, the contrast with the state of conservation of the surrounding Ottoman timber houses is striking. Most of the timber houses require urgent action to prevent further decay (Figs 27-29). It is not a recent problem, as the first reactive monitoring mission in 1997 (and most subsequent ones, as noted)

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<sup>26</sup> See 2012 Mission Report, especially fig 44

<sup>27</sup> A conclusion previously reached by the 2012 Mission in relation to Sulukule (2012 Mission Report, p38)

<sup>28</sup> See SoC Report 2017, p27 for the Nişanca and Sultanahamet Renewal areas; an agreement was signed on 13 June 2016 for project preparation for 129 blocks; preliminary projects are already approved for 11 blocks

<sup>29</sup> 2012 Mission Report, fig 56

<sup>30</sup> No 33; 2012 Mission Report Fig 53; shown as a Registered Building in Block 2421 in the cadastral plan submitted in connection with the revision and clarification of boundaries, 2017

addressed this specific subject. Except for one or two houses opposite to the Zeyrek mosque (Fig 27), most of the surviving timber houses nearby are in a state of disrepair (Fig 30).

### 3.5.3 Issues and actions

The 2012 mission noted that *'The problem with repairing the timber houses is emphatically not a lack of technical knowledge or skill, but of policy and process.'* A visit to the conservation training workshops and buildings in public ownership reinforced that conclusion. It is to be commended that steps are being taken to extend training of craftspeople;<sup>31</sup> however to sustain and expand a skilled labour force there must be demand for their skills in repair and rehabilitation of historic structures with an adequate and effective system of control of works of historic buildings the **demolition and replacement of repairable buildings must be stopped** and grants and incentives should be made available to owners to undertake the works. The decision to reinstate grants to owners for simple repairs, beginning in 2017, is especially welcome, and potentially addresses point (d) of the 2012 mission's recommendations.

The problems which lead to dereliction and decay are diverse, including multiple ownership through inheritance, absentee owners or abandonment, land speculation, and multiple occupation (legally or otherwise) particularly by squatters or refugees. Apart from decay and eventual loss of the building concerned, this tends to have a corrosive effect on the character and value of the neighbourhood, encouraging further decline. But whatever its causes, there has been no progress on the central issue identified in 2012, that *'urgent 'first aid' works should be facilitated and prioritised, based on a rapid assessment of 'buildings at risk', to slow down the rate of decay and loss'*. The Mission was told in 2016 (but not its predecessor in 2012) that there is currently no legal mechanism by which the authorities, at city or local municipality level, can take action to repair or even temporarily secure a registered civil architecture building, even at its own cost; the owner must make an application to do so. Currently all that the municipality can do is protect public safety by erecting a hoarding with a notice proclaiming 'dangerous structure', of the kind which now appears so frequently across the city. Only through the use of renewal area powers under Law 5366 can action be taken. Despite its potential, its outcomes, whether through public or private sector developers, are not apparent. Meanwhile the number of civil architecture buildings on the peninsula lost through accident or decay is large and continues to grow.

Owners need incentives which has been addressed. However, the authorities should be able to act to protect the public interest in private property that its heritage values represent. Incentives alone will not deal with a problem that has become much worse in the four years since the 2012 Mission and that now requires a strong political will to be addressed.

A lesser issue, raised in discussion, is that if the powers is available, it will take significant time to obtain approval for urgent works from the relevant Conservation Council. However, if such works are limited to a standard range of superficial or reversible interventions (propping, making watertight but with ventilation, making secure), this procedure could become a swift formality with a strong will to do so.

Restitution of 'lost' civil architecture buildings, where their original form is known and they contribute to the integrity of a larger and otherwise coherent group, can be a legitimate conservation tool. However, it is worth recalling that, modern replicas based on old photographs or analytical survey do

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<sup>31</sup> See 2017 SoC report pp 62-71

not carry and convey to future generations the same values as the original buildings, including their contribution to OUV. The original timber vernacular buildings are historical documents whose story can be read, which illustrate the achievements in craft and architecture of their builders, and the social and cultural norms of the society that produced them. They are part of the collective memory of the City, their age (albeit far less than the major monuments) evident from the marks and distortions of time, and often standing in a yet older pattern of blocks and parcels. An underlying issue appears to be the need to articulate the attributes that convey their contribution to the OUV of the whole property and translate that understanding into an approach to their repair and long term conservation. Their value is carried not only by (superficial) 'form and design' but also, indeed particularly, by 'materials and substance'<sup>32</sup>. This will be made clear in defining the attributes which convey the OUV of the site (see Section 3.1 above). Considering the significant amount of public money made available for public infrastructure and other projects, the Mission is of the view that a proportionate amount of money could also be invested in preserving and restoring the relatively few remaining examples of historic timber houses.

#### **The Mission therefore**

- (a) reminds the State Party to urgently implement the Decision 39 COM 7B.83 paragraph 8 of the World Heritage Committee, on the need for an overall long-term conservation strategy to be developed for the Ottoman timber buildings;**
- (b) while welcoming the decision to reinstate grants to owners for simple repairs, beginning in 2017, requests the State Party to initiate an emergency plan for the conservation of all timber houses, with adequate funding to do so;**
- (c) as a priority implements the 2012 Mission's recommendation that 'urgent 'first aid' works should be facilitated and prioritised, based on a rapid assessment of 'buildings at risk', to slow down the rate of decay and loss;**
- (d) requests the authorities urgently to address the legal and procedural problems that seemingly prevent this approach and so allow a disproportionate number of timber houses to stand decaying until lost;**
- (e) stresses the need to ensure that all the responsible authorities understand the heritage values of timber vernacular buildings, how they contribute to OUV, and what is necessary to sustain them;**
- (f) requests the State Party stops forthwith the practice of permitting demolition and 'replication' of vernacular buildings that are capable of repair.**

### **3.6 General conservation**

#### **3.6.1 Rehabilitation of the Zeyrek Mosque/ Pantocrator church**

The 2016 reactive monitoring mission took place in December, in difficult weather conditions (heavy rain), which has limited the review of the state of conservation of the monuments and areas. The mission visited the Zeyrek mosque and its area (Figs 31-32) in the Fatih district. The Zeyrek mosque (Zeyrek Kilise camii) and its surrounding area, protected under national law, is one of the four component sites of the World Heritage property. The Zeyrek mosque is composed of three former churches of the monastery of Christ Pantocrator.

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<sup>32</sup> *Operational Guidelines*, para 82

The mosque was listed in 2000 by the World Monument Fund among its 100 sites in peril and subsequently, between 2001 and 2003, was subject to restoration measures.<sup>33</sup> Since then the restoration has been conducted by the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality. The restoration was not completed at the time of the mission visit (Figs 27, 32). The 2012 mission was unable to visit the mosque and assess the conservation work in progress at that time. Consequently, the point of reference is the state of conservation as described by the World Monument Fund, as well as photographs published in art books previous to the 2000 state of conservation of the monument.

The mission visited the inside of the former Pantocrator church. Internal walls have been covered with pink mortar and the low parts of the walls with 19th-century style painted decoration. In the nave and apse visited by the mission, the opus sectile marble floor was apparent. No mosaics were visible. It was also the case in the nave of the Kariye camii or Khora mosque, where no mosaics and frescoes were visible with the exception of a small fragment on a window reveal at high level below the dome; however mosaics of the double narthex of the Khora mosque were visible and in a very good state of conservation. Also, remains of the stained-glass windows (which were said to be very rare testimonies of stained glass in Byzantine art) could not be identified and were not apparent at the time of the visit. Outside, the restoration of the western and eastern facades is a success. The apses of the former San Michele and Mary-the-Merciful churches have kept their recessed brick and stone facing, but the Pantocrator church apse has been covered with pink mortar. The latticework of the apse windows has been replaced in the lower parts by small window panes. The external appearance of the restoration work is well documented in the book published by the Istanbul Municipality in 2016 (a copy was given to the Mission). However, the photograph of the interior dates back to the 2000 state of conservation of the monument. The Mission did not receive information on the restoration plan of the Zeyrek mosque, and no project was submitted to WHC and ICOMOS for review.

#### **The Mission therefore requests the State Party**

**(a) to provide WHC and ICOMOS with the planned project of restoration of the Zeyrek mosque, which will include the methodology followed.**

**(b) to inform the WHC of the completion of the restoration of the Zeyrek mosque and of the Khora mosque and to invite a mission to review the state of conservation of all attributes of the Zeyrek mosque and area, and possibly also of the Khora mosque.**

#### **3.6.2 Tekfur Sarayı (Palace of Porphyrogenitus)**

The mission saw the structural work at the Tekfur Sarayı (part of the Byzantine Blachernae Palace), completed as envisaged in the 2012 Mission report;<sup>34</sup> fit out as a museum is likely. In the works necessary to make the structure a functional weathertight building, old and new are clearly distinguishable, but whether the full restoration of marble window frames and oculi above was a step too far has been a subject of debate (Fig 33). Simple modern glazing within the inherited openings was envisaged in an early scheme in 2008.<sup>35</sup> What is clear, however, is that the modern timber casements behind them are inadequate to keep the water out (as the Mission observed).

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<sup>33</sup> <https://www.wmf.org/project/church-monastery-christ-pantokrator-zeyrek-camii>

<sup>34</sup> 2012 Mission Report, 3.8.2, p45

<sup>35</sup> 2008 Mission Report, illustration, p21

### 3.6.3 *Golden Horn crossings*

The Haliç metro bridge was opened in 2014. Generally the detailed recommendations of the 2012 Mission report were adopted, although the pylon caps eventually followed option 6 (asymmetrical pointed). Taken as a whole, however, the details and finishes finally adopted have achieved as much as cosmetic refinement reasonably could (Fig 34), and the colour scheme does indeed achieve 'chromatic coherence' with its surroundings (although the moving trains do not).

The replacement of the Atatürk (Unkapanı) road bridge remains under consideration, probably by a tunnel; an HIA is due to be prepared for a *Project on a Tunnel under the Sea for Vehicle Passage due to the cancellation of the Unkapanı Bridge*.<sup>36</sup> This has less potential to affect the setting of the WH property and peninsula as a whole than a bridge, depending of course on the location of the portals. The project should be notified to the WHC under par. 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*.

### 3.6.4 *Four Seasons Hotel and Archaeological Park*

Work ceased on the archaeological park on the site of the Byzantine Great Palace and the Four Seasons Hotel extension in 2008;<sup>37</sup> permission both for archaeological research and building works was cancelled by the Administrative Court in 2009. The decision was appealed and the matter remains unresolved, with the archaeological site guarded behind a hoarding. So long a hiatus gives great cause for concern about the integrity of the partially-exposed remains of the palace. **The Mission requests the authorities to do all they can to expedite a resolution of the matter.**

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<sup>36</sup> 2015 Draft Management plan, p156

<sup>37</sup> 2012 Mission report 3.8.4, p48

## 4 ASSESSMENT OF THE STATE OF CONSERVATION OF THE SITE

### 4.1 Management Plan

The 2016 revised draft site management plan represented a considerable step forward from the first, 2011, version, characterised in the 2012 mission report as ‘a plan to make a plan’. However, the 2016 draft still lacks a systematic definition of the attributes of the site that convey the OUV in the context of the broader setting of the historic peninsula, in a format that can directly inform and guide property management. This is an essential prerequisite to managing and monitoring the state of conservation of the property. An understanding of the attributes of the ‘Ottoman’ timber houses, which convey their contribution to the OUV of the property, should inform a greater understanding of their value, and support their repair rather than replacement.

### 4.2 Infrastructure projects affecting the historic peninsula

Over the past decade major infrastructure projects, mostly transport-related, have brought major changes to the historic peninsula as a whole. The Marmaray rail project, now nearing completion, has reinforced the position of the historic peninsula as the focus of the metro and rail systems of the city. This brought direct heritage benefit (the excavation of the Theodosian harbour) and the potential to reduce car use in the peninsula, but the negative impact on the silhouette through the Haliç metro bridge, albeit mitigated to some extent in refinement of the design. The Eurasia Tunnel approach road, an urban expressway with grade-separated interchanges along almost the whole of the Marmara sea shore, has a compensating benefit – reuniting the Marble Tower with the land walls, but (notwithstanding the pre-existing road) an adverse impact on the southern edge of the historic peninsula, compounded by the Yenikapi reclamation project that has significantly changed its shape.

The common factor in all these infrastructure projects has been that the decision to proceed has been taken in advance of a heritage impact assessment. Engagement with the national or international conservation community about either the principle or the strategic means of achieving it prior to contractual arrangements being made for delivery has been far insufficient. HIA needs to be applied to strategic decisions, not to frustrate the needs of a modern city but help to deliver them in ways which minimise harm and maximise benefit, and if the project proceeds, to be employed in each subsequent stage of concept and design development thereafter. Otherwise all that HIA can achieve is varying degrees of cosmetic change. The most recent example, the Yenikapi Festival Tent, although of a far lesser scale or extent than the others, demonstrates that a clear understanding of the HIA procedures is still lacking. This has already been underlined by the World Heritage Committee on the basis of the way previous infrastructure projects have been procured. This is a matter of very serious concern in relation to the integrity and ongoing conservation of the WH property.

### 4.3 Major monuments

Work to major monuments is ongoing, indeed it appears from proposals to consolidate all sections of the Land Walls (save those subject to intervention in 2000-2006) that very generous public funding is being made available to facilitate this. However, no details of any recent projects have been provided to the WHC and ICOMOS in advance of interventions, in accordance with par. 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*. It has not been practicable for recent (2012, 2016) Missions to look in detail at this work, but some concerns about the degree of restoration and replacement were raised by brief visits in 2016

to the Pantocrator Church/ Zeyrek Mosque and the *Tekfur Sarayı*. For example, the approach of ‘restoring’ ruined walls by building up to a false flat top, one of the approaches rightly criticised in 2006 in relation to the land walls, was nonetheless observed again in the outworks of the Pantocrator monastery (Fig 27). There is no doubt that the land walls, and the Bucoleon Palace, are in serious and urgent need of consolidation; but it is vital that this work does not erode their authenticity.

#### 4.4 Ottoman timber (vernacular) houses

The state of the remaining Ottoman timber houses is of serious concern. Despite all that has been said by successive missions, and by the World Heritage Committee, the decay and loss continues. The proposed reintroduction of grants for basic repair is particularly welcome. But without concerted action by the authorities most of the remaining authentic houses will be lost, as they have been in Sulukule and Ayvansaray, both through decay and through publicly and privately financed urban renewal schemes. What appears from site visits is that Timber houses – even houses occupied at the start of these projects – are being demolished and reconstructed in modern materials. What has been done since the 2012 mission to take urgent action to arrest the decay of these buildings is not apparent. Consents should not be granted by the State Party to replace most of these buildings with superficially similar modern ones. It should be recalled that the contribution of these buildings to OUV is carried not only by (superficial) ‘form and design’ but also, indeed particularly, by ‘materials and substance’.



## 5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The 2012 Mission concluded that *‘the Outstanding Universal Value of the property could be threatened’* unless the infrastructure projects then in hand and the approach to the Ottoman timber buildings (especially under Renewal Law 5366) were drastically modified. While welcoming the changes to the infrastructure projects, it was clear in 2016 that they have had an adverse impact on the historic peninsula, which is not capable of further mitigation. What is of greater concern, however, is that despite all that has been said by the WHC, or the guidance of the Management Plan, another major project – the Yenikapi ‘tent’ – has been implemented prior to commissioning a Heritage Impact Assessment and without prior notification to the WHC. Nor have details of ongoing projects affecting major monuments, including the first stage of the ambitious project, recently launched, for the rehabilitation of 5.6km of the land walls, or the proposed reconstruction of the long-demolished medrese adjacent to Hagia Sophia, been notified to the WHC in accordance with par. 172 of the WHC *Operational Guidelines*.

This practice must be discontinued. Similarly, little notice has been taken of the World Heritage Committee repeated concerns about the ongoing loss of the Ottoman timber houses, the absence of visible action to secure their preservation, and the approach in renewal areas, of demolition and replacement with superficially similar modern ones. The present situation has become critical for a key contributor to the OUV of the site, whose attributes seem not to have been understood and omitted from the emerging draft revised Management Plan.

For these reasons, of insufficient power given to site management and inadequate governance, as well as ongoing loss of the historic fabric that carries the OUV of the site, **the Mission strongly recommends that management tools and legal and administrative processes be strengthened:**

- **To establish effective objectives within, and organisational relationships and co-ordination between, the public bodies whose decisions affect the World Heritage property, so that**
  - **an understanding of the potential impact of major projects informs ‘in-principle’ decisions**
  - **in those decisions, great weight is attached to the objective of safeguarding the OUV of the property; and**
  - **that principle continues to guide all subsequent stages of design and implementation;**
- **To ensure that renewal area powers under Law 5366 and disaster risk powers under Law 6306 are used to safeguard and rehabilitate cultural heritage, and that adequate powers and processes are rapidly put in place to facilitate emergency action to prevent deterioration and loss of cultural heritage, particularly Ottoman timber buildings.**

The Mission further suggests that the World Heritage Committee consider resolving at its 2017 meeting that:

- **The attributes of the heritage assets of the historic peninsula that carry the OUV of the property should be fully and clearly defined in the Management Plan and where necessary surveyed and documented;**

- All proposed or ongoing major projects ‘which may affect the Outstanding Universal Value of the property’ have been subject to Heritage Impact Assessment and have been notified to the WHC with adequate time to respond prior to commencement. These include, but are not limited to, the rehabilitation of the Land Walls and Bucoleon Palace and the reconstruction of the Hagia Sophia medrese;
- An emergency plan for the conservation of Ottoman/ vernacular timber buildings, including urgent works to stem ongoing decay and loss, has been devised and implemented, alongside an overall long-term conservation strategy; these must be based on documenting of what remains; *(It is understood that the above-mentioned urgent works have already been initiated by IMM Department of Cultural Assets and Historic Areas of Istanbul Site Management Directorate)*

be implemented by the time of its 2018 meeting.

Specific conclusions and recommendations are summarised as follows:

### 1. The Management Plan

- (1) The Mission considers that the revision of the Management Plan to include a definition of the Historic Peninsula and a reasoned articulation of the attributes that contribute to the OUV with the Historical Peninsula *remains a top priority* and should be completed before any further report is made on the state of conservation of the property.
- (2) This requires a clear definition of the Historic Peninsula; the identification of the assets the Historic Peninsula contains; and the definition of the attributes of the outstanding universal value of the WH property carried by those assets, in the context of the Historic Peninsula.

### 2. Heritage Impact Assessment

- (1) Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) is a key process in understanding and contributing to maintaining the full meaning of the OUV of a WH property, and in preserving the integrity and the authenticity of the attributes that manifest the OUV. It is vital that Heritage Impact Assessment of major projects affecting the World Heritage site is undertaken to inform the initial ‘in principle’ decision.
- (2) The Mission therefore
  - (a) emphasizes, in support of the 2015 draft Management Plan, that under the WHC *Operational Guidelines* ‘Impact assessments for proposed interventions are essential for all World Heritage properties’ in advance of decisions to proceed;
  - (b) **also emphasizes that HIA must be undertaken before in principle decisions have been taken rather than after a project has been approved or work started;**
  - (c) regrets that despite acknowledgement of this issue in the 2015 Management Plan, the HIA for the Yenikapi Activity Tent is being prepared in parallel with its construction, which is almost complete.

### **3. Infrastructure projects along the south shore of the historic peninsula**

#### **(1) The Mission**

- (a) In the light of the reality of the completed Eurasia Tunnel Approach Road, deeply regrets that the World Heritage Centre was consulted far too late in the development of the Eurasia Tunnel project for a longer tunnel on the European side to be seriously considered, to avoid the construction of an urban expressway severing the historic peninsula from the Sea of Marmara;
- (b) Nonetheless welcomes the amendment to the road scheme to reunite the Marble Tower and Land Walls, but urges that the landscaping of its immediate setting be designed to demonstrate that relationship, and of the tower with the sea;
- (c) Urges that the opportunity provided by the forthcoming closure of the surface level rail line prompt the development of a pedestrian route along the sea walls and the conservation and valorisation of the surviving remains of the walls, from the Marble Tower to and including the Bucoleon Palace;
- (d) Requests the State Party to consult with the WHC at an early stage in the development of proposals for the valorisation of the Bucoleon Palace, in accordance with par. 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*;
- (e) Regrets that the World Heritage Centre was not consulted in advance of the construction of the Yenikapi Meeting Ground, a profound change in the topography of the historic peninsula;
- (f) Was concerned that the overall strategy for the development and use of the reclaimed land at Yenikapi is unclear, and that an HIA for the first major development, the Yenikapi Activity Tent, compounding the harm caused by the reclamation itself, is being prepared in parallel with its construction;
- (g) Emphasises the need for a Heritage Impact Assessment of projects developed for the Atakoy Tourism Area before development plans are committed;
- (h) Requests the authorities to measure and monitor the effects of both rail and road changes within the historic peninsula, to test outcomes against predictions and introduce further traffic management measures if necessary to deliver the predicted benefits.

### **4. The Land Walls**

#### **(1) The Mission**

- (a) welcomes the staged plan for the consolidation and rehabilitation of the Land Walls, which it trusts will be conducted in accordance with accepted international standards, avoiding reconstruction and restoration, or falsifying or obscuring the

archaeological evidence of their original form and, especially, their subsequent evolution;

- (b) requests the state party to submit to the WHC detailed proposals, stage by stage, before physical conservation works begin, in accordance with paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*;
- (c) commends the retention and rehabilitation of the productive ('truck') gardens alongside the walls at Yedikule; but urges caution about over-designing the details of a working horticultural site.

#### **5. Timber Vernacular Houses**

- (1) The mission concludes, having seen these urban renewal projects complete or nearly so, that because of the reconstruction rather than conservation of the vernacular timber houses, the residential areas of Sulukule and Ayvansaray no longer contribute to the Outstanding Universal Value of the WH property. Elsewhere decay and loss continues.
- (2) The Mission therefore
  - (a) reminds the State Party to implement urgently the recommendation 39 COM 7B.83 paragraph 8, on the need for an overall long-term conservation strategy to be developed for the Ottoman timber buildings;
  - (b) while welcoming the decision to reinstate grants to owners for simple repairs, beginning in 2017, requests the SP to initiate an emergency plan for the conservation of all timber houses, with adequate funding to do so;
  - (c) as a priority implements the 2012 Mission's recommendation that 'urgent 'first aid' works should be facilitated and prioritised, based on a rapid assessment of 'buildings at risk', to slow down the rate of decay and loss';
  - (d) requests the authorities urgently to address the legal and procedural problems that seemingly prevent this approach and so allow a disproportionate number of timber houses to stand decaying until lost;
  - (e) stresses the need to ensure that all the responsible authorities understand the heritage values of timber vernacular buildings and what is necessary to sustain them;
  - (f) requests the State Party stops forthwith the practice of permitting demolition and 'replication' of vernacular buildings that are capable of repair.

#### **6. General conservation**

- (1) In relation to the Zeyrek Mosque, the Mission requests the State Party
  - (a) Because of the lack of information available, to urgently provide WHC and ICOMOS with the planned project of restoration of the Zeyrek mosque, which will include the methodology followed.
  - (b) to inform the WHC of the completion of the restoration of the Zeyrek mosque and of the Khora mosque and to invite a mission to review the state of conservation of all attributes of the Zeyrek mosque and area, and possibly also of the Khora mosque.
- (2) Work on the archaeological park on the site of the Byzantine Great Palace and the Four Seasons Hotel extension ceased in 2008 because of a legal dispute still

unresolved. So long a hiatus gives great cause for concern about the integrity of the partially-exposed remains of the palace. The Mission urges the authorities to do all they can to expedite a resolution of the matter.

## **6 ANNEXES**

### **6.1 Terms of reference of UNESCO World Heritage Centre-ICOMOS Joint Reactive Monitoring Mission to the World Heritage Property of the Historic Areas of Istanbul**

Based on Decision 39 COM 7B.85 (see below) of the World Heritage Committee, concerning the state of conservation of the World Heritage property 'Historic Areas of Istanbul', inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1985, and taking into consideration the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention, the mission shall:

1. Assess the major impact of the proposed six-eight lane Eurasia tunnel approach road on the Sea Walls, the Marble Tower and on the overall relationship between the Historic Peninsula and the Sea, in the context of the property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), and consider any possible mitigation measures;
2. Review the Yenikapi Land Reclamation project, analyse its impact on OUV and consider any possible mitigation measures;
3. Consider the effectiveness of Cultural Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs) for these two major projects;
4. Evaluate how the revision of the Management plan might address procedures to ensure that HIAs for major projects are carried out appropriately and in a timely way, in line with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines;
5. Review the proposed new management structures in relation to the challenges facing the property;
6. Review progress with the development an integrated plan for the peninsula's coastlines and the open spaces surrounding the Theodosian Land Walls, and with a strategy for the Ottoman timber buildings;
6. Assess the overall state of conservation of the property, including factors and conservation issues that could impact on its Outstanding Universal Value, including its conditions of authenticity and integrity;

The mission will take place from 12-14 December 2016. Based on the results of the above-mentioned assessments and the on-site discussions with the State Party representatives, the reactive monitoring mission shall prepare a report on the findings and recommendations to the State Party. ICOMOS shall submit the report to the World Heritage Centre within eight weeks of the mission.

## 6.2 Decision 39 COM 7B.85 of the World Heritage Committee adopted at its 39th session (Bonn, 2015) on the Historic Areas of Istanbul (Turkey) (356)

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC-15/39.COM/7B.Add,
2. Recalling Decision **37 COM 7B.85**, adopted at its 37th session (Phnom Penh, 2013),
3. Welcomes the efforts made by the State Party to review the Management Plan for the property and notes that completion of the review is foreseen for mid-2015.
4. Also notes of the State Party's submission of the Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) for the Eurasia Tunnel and requested Options Appraisal but regrets that the requested HIA and Options Appraisal for the Eurasia Tunnel were only undertaken at a late stage in the project rather than at the design stage, and that as a result few options could be properly assessed;
5. Reiterates its view that the new six-eight-lane highway would have a highly significant, negative impact on the Sea Walls, the Marble Tower, and the overall relationship between the Historic Peninsula and the sea, one of the attributes of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV);
6. Expresses its concern that the HIA for the Yenikapi Land Reclamation Project was also undertaken while work was in progress, and further notes that this project will add cumulatively to the negative impacts of earlier developments along the Marmara Sea side of the Peninsula;
7. Notes furthermore the urgent need for an integrated plan on the peninsula's coastlines and the open spaces surrounding the Theodosian Land Walls, in line with the recommendations of the 2012 Mission;
8. Also welcomes the intention of the State Party to set up a new Directorate for Restoration and Repair within the new Department of Cultural Properties, and the proposed protocol that would enable grants to be offered to private owners for the repair and maintenance of vernacular buildings and reiterates the need for an overall long term conservation strategy to be developed for Ottoman timber buildings;
9. Also expresses its concern that a number of major projects have been developed without adequate Impact Assessments being undertaken in advance of approval or work commencing, and without formal notification being provided in line with Paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*, and considers that there is a need for progress to be made with the revision of the Management Plan in order that these procedural issues might be addressed in a revised governance structure;
10. Requests the State Party to invite a joint World Heritage Centre/ ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to the property to consider the impact of the proposed six-eight lane highway on the OUV of the property and all possible ways to mitigate this impact; to

consider the impact of the Yenikapi Land Reclamation project on the profile of the Historic Peninsula; and overall to consider the management of the property;

11. Also requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2016**, a progress report on the implementation of the above and, by **1 December 2016**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 41st session in 2017, both reports including a 1-page executive summary.



### 6.3 Composition of the mission team

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## 6.4 Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (2011)

### Brief synthesis

Strategically located on the Bosphorus peninsula between the Balkans and Anatolia, the Black Sea and the Mediterranean, Istanbul was successively the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire, and the Ottoman Empire and has been associated with major events in political history, religious history and art history for more than 2,000 years. The city is situated on a peninsula which is surrounded by the Golden Horn (Haliç), a natural harbour on the north, the Bosphorus on the east and the Marmara Sea on the south. The Historic Peninsula, on which the former Byzantium and Constantinople developed, was surrounded by ancient walls, built initially by Theodosius in the early fifth century.

The Outstanding Universal Value of Istanbul resides in its unique integration of architectural masterpieces that reflect the meeting of Europe and Asia over many centuries, and in its incomparable skyline formed by the creative genius of Byzantine and Ottoman architects.

The distinctive and characteristic skyline of Istanbul was built up over many centuries and encompasses the Hagia Sophia whose vast dome reflects the architectural and decorative expertise of the 6th century, the 15th century Fatih complex and Topkapi Palace - that was continually extended until the 19th century, the Süleymaniye Mosque complex and Sehzade Mosque complex, works of the chief architect Sinan, reflecting the climax of Ottoman architecture in the 16th century, the 17th century Blue Mosque and the slender minarets of the New Mosque near the port completed in 1664.

The four areas of the property are the Archaeological Park, at the tip of the Historic peninsula; the Süleymaniye quarter with Süleymaniye Mosque complex, bazaars and vernacular settlement around it; the Zeyrek area of settlement around the Zeyrek Mosque (the former church of the Pantocrator), and the area along both sides of the Theodosian land walls including remains of the former Blachernae Palace. These areas display architectural achievements of successive imperial periods also including the 17th century Blue Mosque, the Sokollu Mehmet Pasha Mosque, the 16th century Şehzade Mosque complex, the 15th century Topkapi Palace, the hippodrome of Constantine, the aqueduct of Valens, the Justinian churches of Hagia Sophia, St. Irene, Küçük Ayasofya Mosque (the former church of the Sts Sergius and Bacchus), the Pantocrator Monastery founded under John II Comnene by Empress Irene; the former Church of the Holy Saviour of Chora with its mosaics and paintings dating from the 14th and 15th centuries; and many other exceptional examples of various building types including baths, cisterns, and tombs.

**Criterion (i):** The Historic Areas of Istanbul include monuments recognised as unique architectural masterpieces of Byzantine and Ottoman periods such as Hagia Sophia, which was designed by Anthemios of Tralles and Isidoros of Miletus in 532-537 and the Süleymaniye Mosque complex designed by architect Sinan in 1550-1557.

**Criterion (ii):** Throughout history the monuments in Istanbul have exerted considerable influence on the development of architecture, monumental arts and the organization of space, both in Europe and the Near East. Thus, the 6,650 meter terrestrial wall of Theodosius II with its second line of defence, created in 447, was one of the leading references for military architecture; Hagia Sophia became a

model for an entire family of churches and later mosques, and the mosaics of the palaces and churches of Constantinople influenced both Eastern and Western art.

**Criterion (iii):** Istanbul bears unique testimony to the Byzantine and Ottoman civilizations through its large number of high quality examples of a great range of building types, some with associated artworks. They include fortifications, churches and palaces with mosaics and frescos, monumental cisterns, tombs, mosques, religious schools and bath buildings. The vernacular housing around major religious monuments in the Süleymaniye and Zeyrek quarters provide exceptional evidence of the late Ottoman urban pattern.

**Criterion (iv):** The city is an outstanding set of monuments, architectural and technical ensembles that illustrate very distinguished phases of human history. In particular, the Palace of Topkapi and the Süleymaniye Mosque complex with its caravanserai, madrasa, medical school, library, bath building, hospice and imperial tombs, provide supreme examples of ensembles of palaces and religious complexes of the Ottoman period.

### **Integrity (2011)**

The Historic Areas of Istanbul include the key attributes that convey the Outstanding Universal Value of Istanbul as the parts of the city that had escaped major changes and deterioration in the 19th and 20th centuries and were already protected by national legislation at the time of inscription.

Vernacular timber housing in the Süleymaniye and Zeyrek quarters, was recognized as vulnerable at the time of inscription. Despite the threat of pressure for change, many efforts have been executed in order to conserve and strengthen the timber structures within the site since then. Changes in the social structure within the area have also affected the use of those structures. The urban fabric is threatened by lack of maintenance and pressure for change. The Metropolitan Municipality is attempting to rehabilitate the area to revive its degraded parts. The revival of the Süleymaniye and Zeyrek quarters is a long project which demands a long and careful process of cleaning, conservation and restoration. The Süleymaniye Complex has retained its structural and architectural integrity, except some minor changes in the commercial part of the compound. Zeyrek Mosque, originally the Church of Pantocrator, has suffered from several earthquakes.

The integrity of the major monuments and archaeological remains within the four Historic Areas are largely intact but they are vulnerable due to the lack of a management plan. With the management plan, which is under approval process by related authority, it is aimed to address all the issues and solve the problems within the site gradually.

The setting of the Historic Areas of Istanbul and the outstanding silhouette of the city are vulnerable to development.

### **Authenticity (2011)**

The ability of the monuments and vernacular housing to express truthfully the Outstanding Universal Value of the Historic Areas of Istanbul has been compromised to some extent since inscription in terms of their design and materials. The conservation and restoration works in the setting of the Historic

Peninsula are being led and followed by the central and local authorities as well as newly established institutions with the financial funds provided by the legal amendments.

The setting and distinctive skyline of the Historic Peninsula continues to express the Outstanding Universal Value of the property. However the ongoing ability of the wider maritime setting to do this depends on ensuring that development does not compromise views of the skyline.

### **Protection and management requirements (2011)**

The Historic Areas of Istanbul is legally protected through national conservation legislation. There is no specific planning legislation to protect World Heritage sites. The management structure for the protection and conservation of the properties includes the shared responsibilities of national government (The Ministry of Culture and Tourism General Directorate of Cultural Assets and Museums, General Directorate of Pious Foundation) local administration and several state institutions. The approval of the Conservation Council has to be obtained for physical interventions and functional changes in registered buildings and conservation sites.

The Site Management Directorate for Cultural and Natural Sites of Istanbul was established within the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality in 2006 to coordinate management planning processes for World Heritage Sites of Istanbul. The work of the directorate is supported by an Advisory Board and a Coordination and Supervising Board. A site manager has also been appointed. A department was also structured under the Ministry of Culture and Tourism to coordinate the management issues of the World Heritage Sites in Turkey and to collaborate with relevant authorities for the implementation of the ***World Heritage Convention*** and the ***Operational Guidelines***.

The first conservation plans for Zeyrek, Süleymaniye and the Land Walls were prepared and approved in 1979 and 1981. A new conservation plan including World Heritage sites was endorsed by the Council of Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality and submitted to the Conservation Council for approval. The impressive skyline of the Historic Peninsula with the Topkapı Palace, Hagia Sophia and Süleymaniye is preserved by planning measures. The legal protection and the management structures are adequate for ensuring the proper conservation of the properties. The national government has allocated a large amount of funding for restoration and conservation projects within the site as part of the European Capital of Culture campaign, in addition to the Ministry of Culture and Tourism's, the Istanbul Special Provincial Administration's, General Directorate of Pious Foundation's and the local administration's annual budgets.

Finding a balance between change and preservation is a delicate issue in the Historic Areas. The Management Plan, which is currently being prepared in collaboration with all stakeholders in conformity with the related legislation, will address this issue. It will address the traffic and transport plan for the city, the urban regeneration strategy and tourism management, and will provide a proper framework to ensure that construction and infrastructure projects respect the Outstanding Universal Value of the property. It will also include policies for conservation, standards for restoration and rehabilitation, management responsibilities, accessibility, visitor management, policies for increasing the perception of the site, increasing the quality of daily life, risk management, awareness raising and training.



## 6.5 ILLUSTRATIONS

## ILLUSTRATIONS



*Fig 1 The Eurasia Tunnel Approach Road, just east of the Marble Tower, from the adjacent pedestrian overpass*



*Fig 2 The Marble Tower from the sea, with the southern turret of the land wall beyond; the road is between the sea wall and the yellow trucks. To the left the extension of the sea wall is visible, slightly higher than the existing; further infill is anticipated in the foreground*



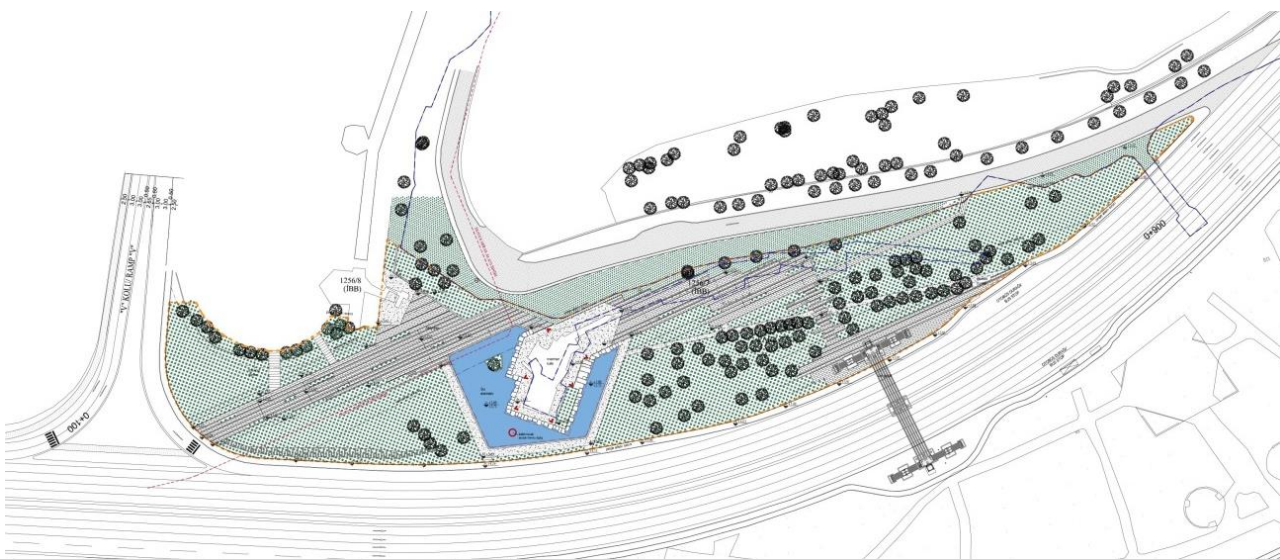
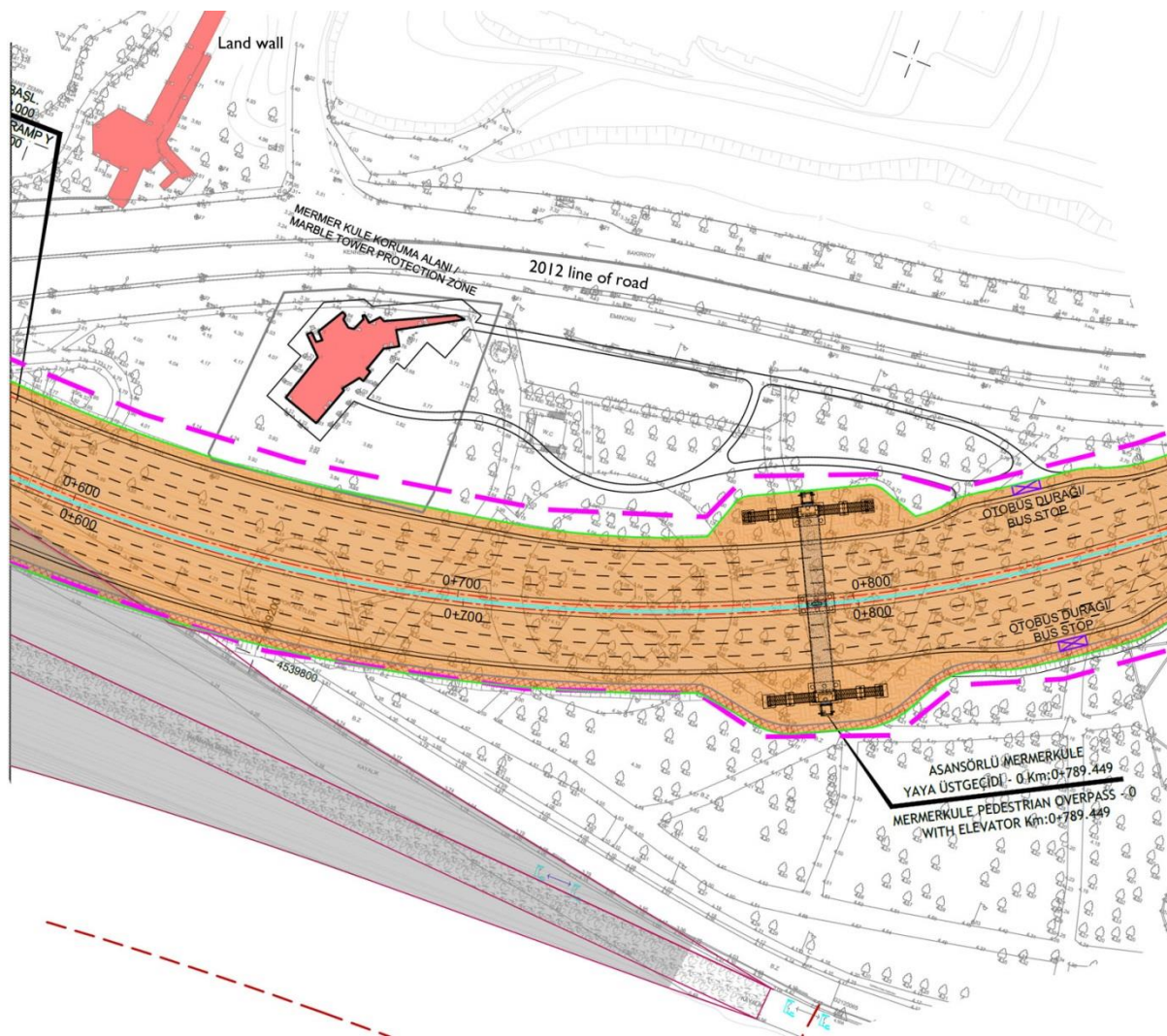






Fig 5 The Marble Tower from the pedestrian overpass, with Onaltı Dokuz Istanbul in the background

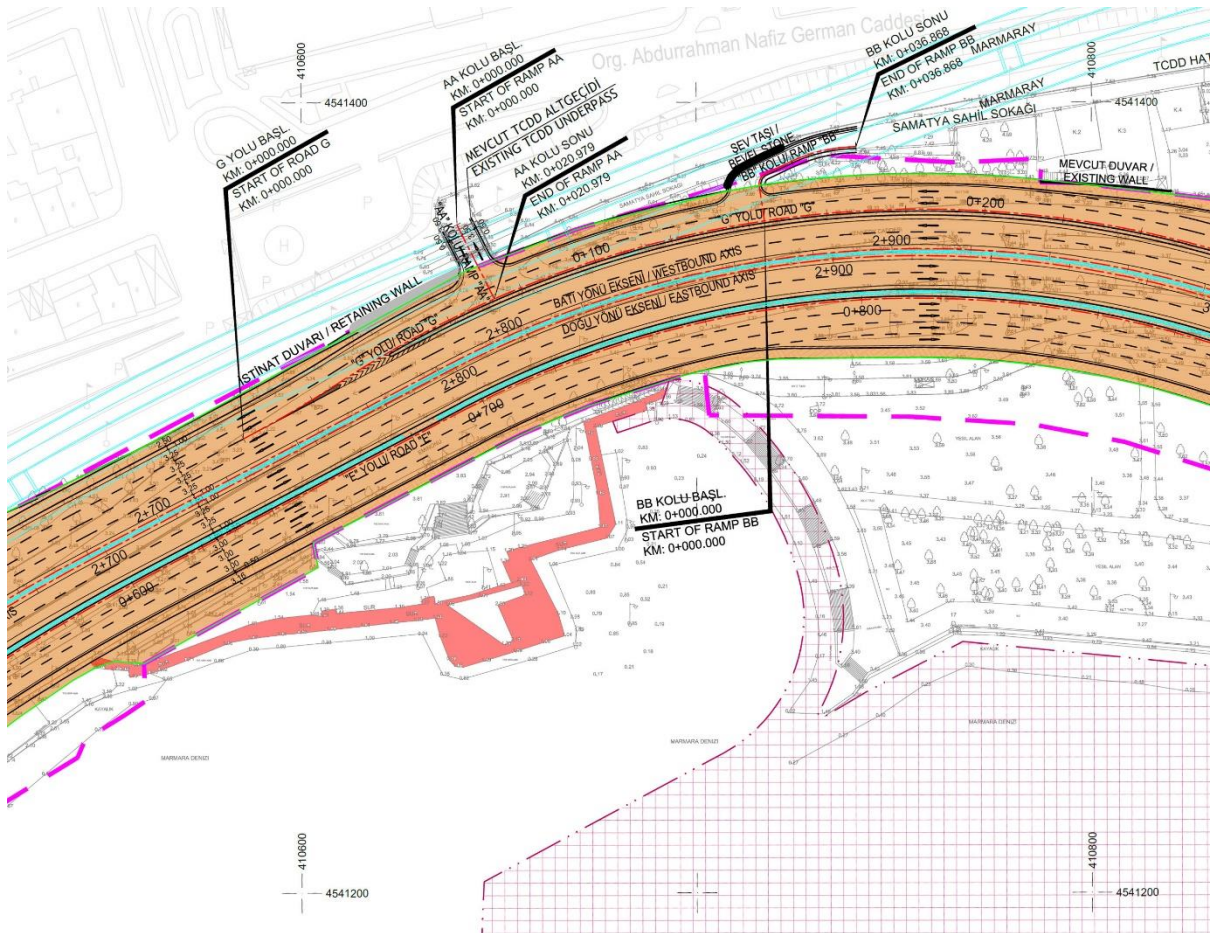


Fig 6 Extract from as built plan of the tunnel approach road, showing the arrangements at the Sumartya Gate; Yeniciapi infill area cross-hatched pink





*Fig 7 Looking east across the Sumatya pedestrian connection, with Yenikapı harbour in the distance, the assembly to its south and the cultural centre bottom right (from Avrasya tuneli presentation)*



*Fig 8 The toll plaza from the sea, slightly elevated to protect the tunnel mouth from tsunami waves; the hooped steel frames carry lighting and prevent over-height vehicles from entering the tunnel*





*Fig 9 Sea façade of Bukoleon Palace – woody plants, collapsing Ottoman buildings, unfortunate modern balcony*



*Fig 10 Bukoleon Palace, left, detail at left side of Fig 12; sea wall outside Kalyon Hotel showing deep erosion of mortar and debris at the foot of the wall*





*Fig 11 The new cultural/ convention centre at the west end of the Yenikapı meeting area, seen from the sea*



*Fig 12 The cultural/ convention centre from the south-west*



*Fig 13 The interior of the hall looking east, indicating (in relation to the people within) the scale of the building*

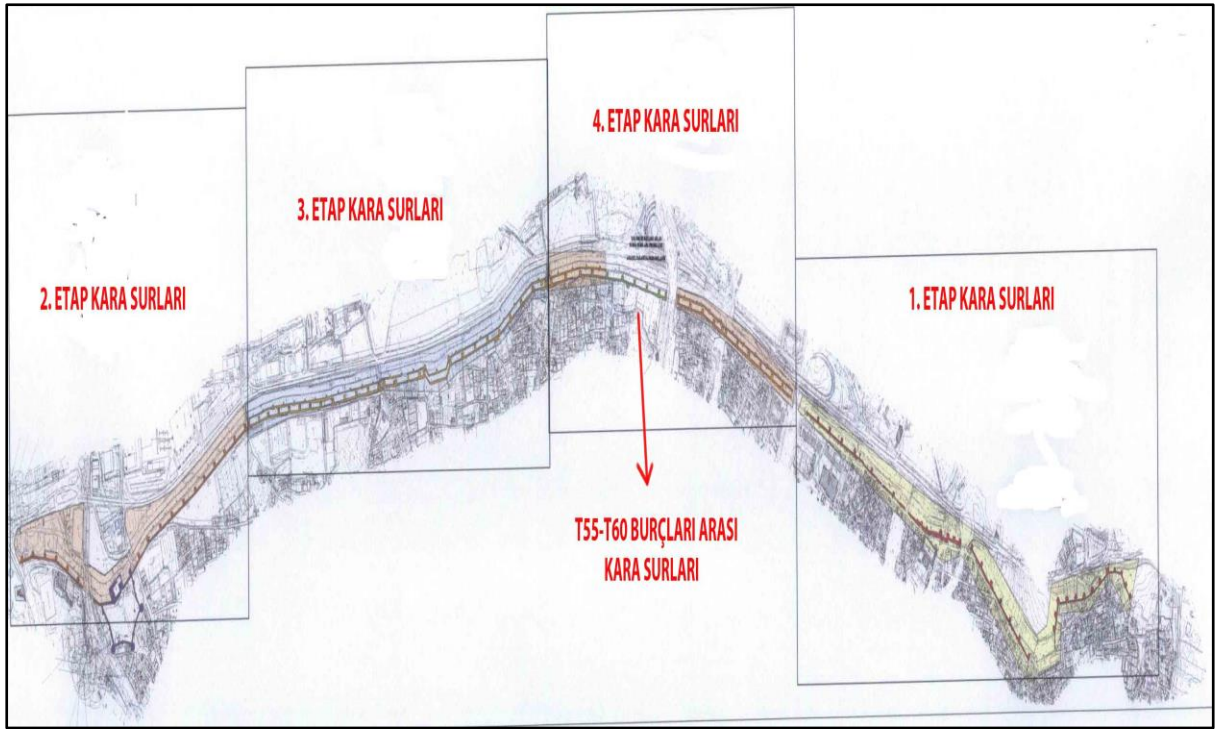


Fig 14 Stages in the proposed conservation of the land walls; north to the right



Fig 15 Concept drawing for the Yedikule Truck Gardens; north to the left





*Fig 16 The gardens outside the walls; highway to the left*



*Fig 17 Looking across the gardens within the walls, towards a group of vernacular timber houses to be restored under the project. The water trucks are gathered around a well, still in use*





*Fig 18 One of the bastions that has long been unstable (the large section to the right at high level is an ancient repair)*



*Fig 19 Looking north along the interior of the land walls*





*Fig 20 Sulukule: A once-grand house in Muhtar Muhittin Sokagi, historically raised from two storeys to three, looking east (top) in 2012 (Mission Report, fig 43); below, in 2016, completely rebuilt in rather different form*





Fig 21 Sulukule: A once interesting house on Muhtar Muhittin Socagi, with timber-laced, clay bonded masonry to the lower storey (top) in 2012, and the travesty that had replaced it by 2016





*Fig 22 Ayvansaray: An historic house, top, as seen by the 2012 mission; its replacement in course of erection (IMM presentation)*



Fig 23 Ayvansaray: Toklu Ibrahim Dede Sk. looking north in 2012 (top) and December 2016 (bottom) showing replacement houses





Fig 24 The building in the foreground of Fig 22, in November 2012; not long vacated; in course of dismantling, roof removed, by 21 February 2013 (inset)



Fig 25 Ayvansaray; The sole building not replaced (inset, in 2012, from 2012 Mission Report Fig 43)





Fig 26 Suleymanye: 5 Ayranci Sk, left in 2012, right in 2016



Fig 27 Derelict and restored (or rebuilt) timber houses opposite the south side of the Zeyrek Mosque, seen across the site of the demolished house at 33 Ibadethane Sk





Fig 28 Left: The site of the demolished house at 33 Ibadethane Sk, ringed in red, to the south-east of the Zeyrek Mosque, at the south-east corner of Block 2421 (Extract from cadastral plan of the Zeyrek component of the World Heritage Site; Registered buildings shown in yellow); Right: The house in 2012 (2012 Mission Report Fig 53)



Fig 29 Zeyrek: The mosque can be seen at the end of the street





*Fig 30 Zeyrek: Inhabited house in poor condition*



*Fig 31 The east elevation of the Zeyrek Mosque/ Pantocrator Church*





*Fig 32 The entrance court of the Zeyrek Mosque*



*Fig 33 The inner façade of the Tekfur Sarayı (Palace of Porphyrogenitus)*





*Fig 34 The Haliç Metro Bridge from the Galata Tower*



## 6.6 Mission Programme

Sunday, December 11, 2016			
TIME	SUBJECT	RELATED PERSON/INSTITUTION	PLACE
18.30 - 19.30	Arrival	Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality	Istanbul Ataturk Airport
20.30 - 21.00	Transfer	Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality	Kalyon Hotel
21.00	DINNER		

Monday, December 12, 2016			
TIME	SUBJECT	RELATED PERSON/INSTITUTION	PLACE
09.30 - 10.30	The Process and General Information	Dr. Halil ONUR - Site Management	Kalyon Hotel
10.30 - 11.45	PRESENTATION (Yenikapı Land Reclamation Area)	IMM Directorate of Infrastructure Projects IMM Directorate of Superstructure Projects	
11.45 - 12.15	Discussions		
12.15 - 14.00	LUNCH		
14.30 - 16.00	FIELD VISIT (Yenikapı Land Reclamation Area)	IMM Directorate of Infrastructure Projects IMM Directorate of Superstructure Projects	Yenikapı Land Reclamation Area
17.00 - 18.00	TOUR (Hagia Sophia Museum- Optional; <i>omitted</i> )	Assoc.Prof.Dr.Ferudun ÖZGÜMÜŞ	Hagia Sophia Museum
19.00 - 21.00	DINNER		Haveran Restaurant

Tuesday, December 13, 2016			
TIME	SUBJECT	RELATED PERSON/INSTITUTION	PLACE
09.00 - 09.45	PRESENTATION (Eurasia Tunnel)	Marmaray Regional Directorate	Kalyon Hotel
09.45 - 10.15	Discussions		
10.15 - 10.30	COFFEE BREAK		

10.30 - 12.00	PRESENTATION (Land Walls; Marble Tower, Project Stages, Garden Areas)	Hüseyin TOK - IMM Department of Cultural Assets	
12.00 - 12.30	Discussions		
12.30 - 14.00	LUNCH		
14.30 - 17.00	FIELD VISIT (Through the Eurasia Tunnel to the Anatolian Side - According to the construction conditions)	Marmaray Regional Directorate	Eurasia Tunnel
	FIELD VISIT (Land Walls; Marble Tower, Anemas Dungeons, Tekfur Palace)	Hüseyin TOK - IMM Department of Cultural Assets Assoc.Prof.Dr.Ferudun ÖZGÜMÜŞ	Marble Tower, Anemas Dungeons, Tekfur Palace
17.30 - 18.30	Visit to Traditional Turkish House and Turkish Music Concert <i>[Cancelled]</i>		Dede Efendi House
19.00 - 21.00	DINNER		Sur Balık

Wednesday, December 14, 2016			
TIME	SUBJECT	RELATED PERSON/INSTITUTION	PLACE
08.30 - 10.00	BREAKFAST		Galata Tower
10.30 - 11.30	PRESENTATION (Management Plan)	Assoc.Prof.Dr.Hülya BERKMEN	Kalyon Hotel
11.30 - 12.00	Discussions		
12.00 - 13.30	LUNCH		
13.30 - 16.00	General Evaluation	Dr.Halil ONUR	
16.30 - 18.30	TOUR (Topkapı Palace – Optional; omitted)		Topkapı Palace
19.00 - 21.00	DINNER		Haveran Restaurant

## 6.7 List of institutions and participants

### *National and regional authorities:*

- *Ministry of Transport, Maritime Affairs and Communication - Marmaray Regional Directorate*
- *Ministry of Culture and Tourism*
- *UNESCO National Commission*
- *Historic Areas of Istanbul Site Directorate (1. After the amendment of the law in September 7th, 2016 Site Directorate is linked to the ministry of culture and tourism. 2. Name of the site management directorate had changed by the ministry during the reactive monitoring mission)*

### *Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality:*

- *Directorate of Infrastructure Projects*
- *Directorate of Superstructure Projects*
- *Directorate of Cultural Assets Conservation*

### *Fatih Municipality:*

*Istanbul has 39 districts, Fatih District has the largest area in management plan area. District Municipalities are not under the hierarchy of Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, they are local municipalities working separately.*

*Dr. Halil ONUR, Site Manager, Historic Areas of Istanbul Site Directorate*

*Hüseyin TOK, Director, IMM Directorate of Cultural Assets Conservation*

*ICOMOS Turkey*

Zeynep ENLİL

Yegan KAHYA

Nurdan KUBAN

Gülsün TANYELİ

Yıldız SALMAN

Zeynep Gül ÜNAL

Zeynep AHUNBAY

İclal DİNÇER

İrem GENÇER

*UNESCO Turkish National Commission*

Nevra ERTÜRK

Ufuk KOCABAŞ

*Prime Ministry Directorate General of Foundations - Istanbul Regional Directorate*

Olca AYDEMİR

*Ministry of Culture and Tourism*

Umut ÖZDEMİR

*Ministry of Transport, Maritime Affairs and Communication - Marmaray Regional Directorate*

M. Levent ACET

*Historic Areas of Istanbul Site Directorate*

Dr. Halil ONUR

Yakup DEMİRHAN

Muzaffer ŞAHİN

Yeşim BÖREK

Zeren ALPAGUT BARKANA

Ümit BAŞARAN

Fatma Sema SEKBAN

Füsun BALEK

Fatma KUŞ

Sümeyra KANTARCI

*IMM Chairman Advisor*

Sefer KOCABAŞ

*IMM Department of Cultural Assets Conservation*

Hüseyin TOK, Director

Bayram TAŞKIN, Directorate of Cultural Heritage Projects (Manager)

Tülin ÖZGAN, Directorate of Cultural Heritage Projects (Deputy Manager)

FİLİZ TAŞ, Directorate of Cultural Heritage Projects (Chief)

Merve ALKAN, Directorate for the Conservation, Implementation and Supervision of Cultural Assets

*IMM Directorate of Infrastructure Projects*

Fatih YILDIZ, Deputy Manager

Vildan KAYA

*IMM Directorate of Superstructure Projects*

Raziye YAZAR, Deputy Manager

*BİMTAŞ Inc. (Private Company owned by Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality- They also worked for the management plan)*

Gülşen ÖNÜÇ

Emel ÖZTEP

Özge İMREK

Tuna KAN

*AĞAÇ Inc. (Private Company owned by Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality)*

Melike Afra CEBECİ

*Fatih Municipality*

Okan Erhan OFLAZ

Sümeyye İstif KOÇ

Gülşen NEMLİ

*European Tunnel Inc. (Private Company)*

Melih MUMCU