

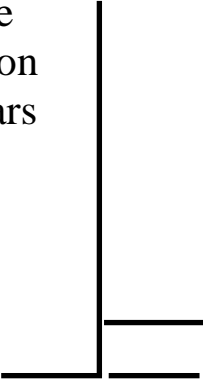
PROJECT FOR THE RESTORATION OF THE DELIMARA LIGHTHOUSE TOWER EXTERNAL MARITIME COLOURS



Appearance of the soon after restoration of the tower 10 years

Lighthouse and painting ago

TOWER



## HISTORY

The Delimara Lighthouse was commissioned by Governor O'Ferrall in 1850 but was initiated at around 1854. In fact a plan of the site to be acquired for the construction of this lighthouse is dated 1854. It was functional by 1855. The Delimara lighthouse is the only one in Malta to be equipped with Fresnel Lenses which are housed on the top of the Tower. The Tower is seen and admired by the scores of people who walk in the area of the Delimara Promontory and its improved appearance will enhance the standard of this popular relaxation space for the many visitors that use the swimming areas and trekking trails that abound around it. It is also seen by ships that are on their way to the harbours of Valletta and admired by the many pleasure cruisers that visit the pleasant bays of the southern coast and throw anchor below.

The Delimara lighthouse consists of a rectangular block of two stories and a central octagonal tower. There are three doors at ground level. The door on the left side leads to a four-sided room which in turn leads to a flight of stairs on the left, and another much smaller room on the right hand side. The door on the right leads to a four-sided room which in turn leads to another smaller room which was used for storage of fuel. On the right hand side of the ground floor is a small extension which was constructed in two phases, the first one measuring only 1.2 metres and carried out in 1864 while the second enlargement brought the room to the present size. This addition is accessed through a doorway to the front room.

Globigerina limestone was used for the construction of the lighthouse but the upper courses of the coping which secure the lantern housing on the summit of the building were made of hard stone. This lighthouse sustained damages during World War II and indications of shrapnel are still easily identified on the outside elevations. Indeed damages involved breakages to a number of glass panes.

By summer 2005, the Lighthouse had not been in use for several years and was facing abandon. *Din l-Art Helwa* approached the then Malta Maritime Authority, now Transport Malta, and offered to manage and restore it. This request was met with approval and the lighthouse was officially devolved to the organisation soon after.

The first phase of restoration involved the restoration of the exterior and included repairing damage to the walls, roof and tower. All cement accretions added in previous years were removed and the mortar joints were plastered with a hydraulic lime-based mix. The external apertures required extensive maintenance and any missing timber apertures were replaced. The second phase involved internal works such as cleaning the stencilled concrete floor, plumbing and electricity, maintenance of internal apertures and the installation of kitchens and

bathrooms. The first two phases were completed in the first months of 2008. The third and last phase, perhaps the most delicate, included the restoration of the light and lantern mechanisms and their housing, including the complex system of glass prisms.

### **Current Condition**

The restoration planned for this purpose will only involve the turret of the structure. 10 years have passed since this tower of the lighthouse was restored. Since then the pointing, plastering and the paint layer underwent deterioration. Reasons for this include the strong winds prevailing in the area, the close proximity to the sea and exposure to sea spray, and the constant changes in temperature leading to expansion and contraction of the fabric as well as wet-dry cycles of water contaminated with salt due to the close proximity to the sea.



#### **Loss of Plastering**

Loss of plaster revealing stone deterioration  
in some parts of the lighthouse tower

Deterioration is mainly characterised by the loss of plastering and paint and decay of mortar joints which are exposed to the elements following to the loss of the overlying plaster. In the past cement was used and this also

accelerated the deterioration of the underlying stonework and loss of plaster. It is not excluded that cement plastering which could not be removed in the previous restoration, still exist in some parts.

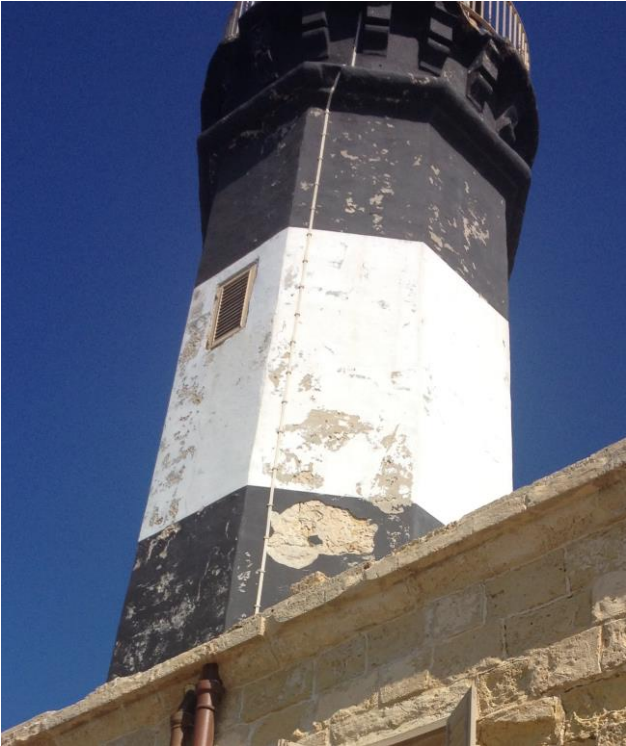
### Loss of Paint

Many parts of the tower experienced loss of paintwork since it was last painted 10 years ago. The tower was painted for the first time in black and white stripes in 1950 and lead oil paint was used. This colour scheme was used following a complaint by a Flag Officer of the 1st Cruiser Squadron that the lighthouse was not enough visible during the day.

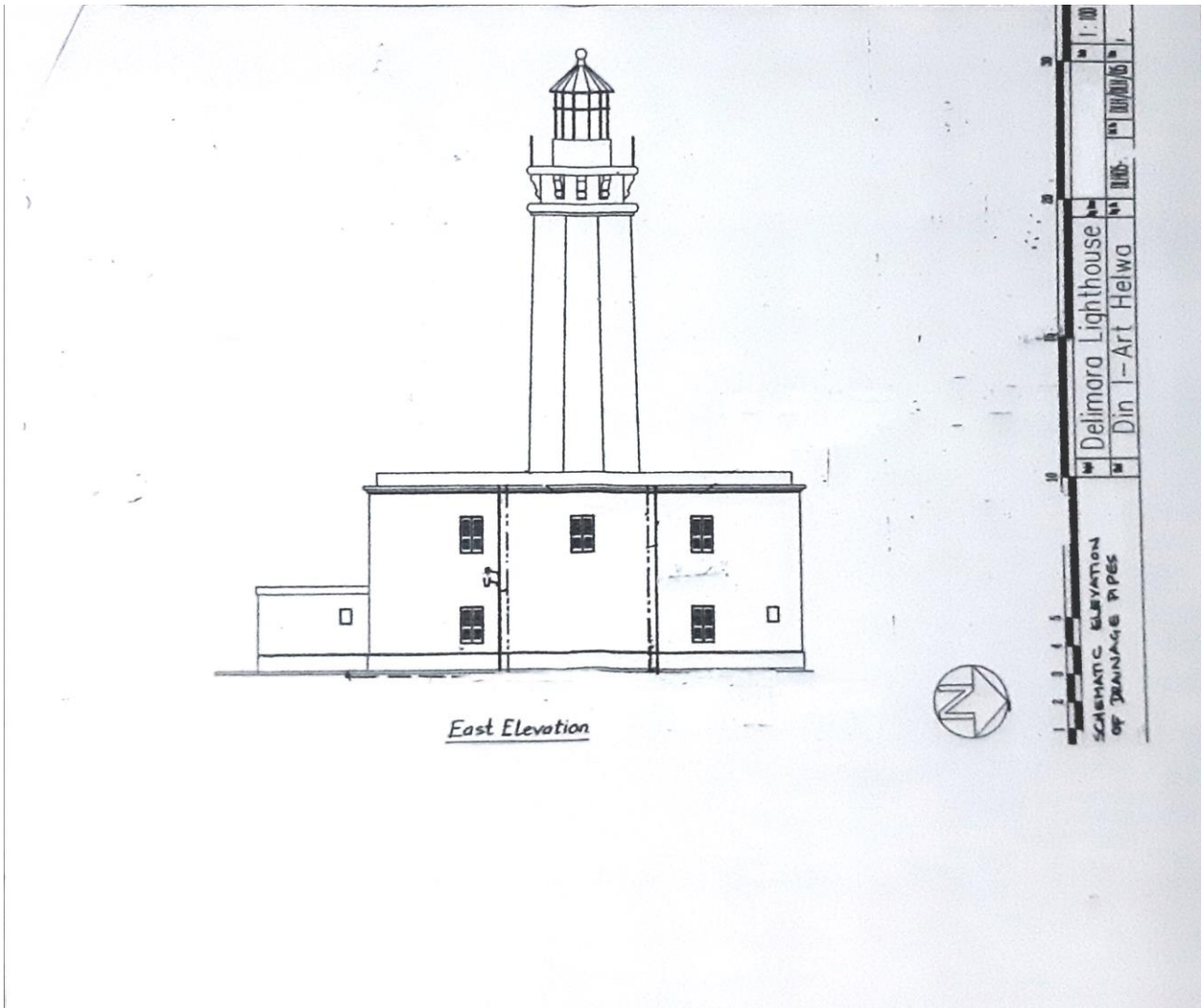
Din l-Art Helwa would like to restore this part of the Delimara Lighthouse while retaining the paint scheme which is an integral part of this landmark.



A breathable paint will be used.



Methodology for Restoration/Maintenance and repainting of the Tower



The turret is an octagon and conical in shape. It houses the stairs leading to the lantern

The methodology adopted should be as follows:



- Opening and manual cleaning of exposed loose mortar joints.
- Manual cleaning/removal of loose plaster and paint. Any attempt has to be made to preserve as much as possible of the original if this is not loose.
- Repointing of open joints using lime based mixes. Small amounts of white cement or lo-alkali cement may be used with the predominantly hydraulic lime-based mix. This was also included in the approved Full Development Permit Planning Application Number 03884/05.
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- Plastering of missing parts with a predominantly hydraulic lime based mix. Small amounts of white cement or lo-alkali cement may be used with the predominantly lime-based mix. This was also included in the approved Full Development Permit Planning Application Number 03884/05.
- Painting of the whole tower with breathable black and white paint.

Any interested contractors are to submit their quotation addressed to Din l-Art Helwa's Office Manager Mrs Rosanne Zerafa by email [admin@din-larthelwa.org](mailto:admin@din-larthelwa.org) by not later than 20 July.

If you intend to visit personally the site please contact Mrs Zerafa on 21225952 or 21220358.

Quotations are to include:

The maintenance and painting of the tower structure of the lighthouse only (the part which is painted in black and white stripes and which is labelled as 'Tower' in the image in page 1)

Use of scaffolding and any other ancillary costs

VAT number

Original signature of contractor

The materials which will be used.

Work needs to be completed by June 2020.

Din l-Art Helwa

June 2019



