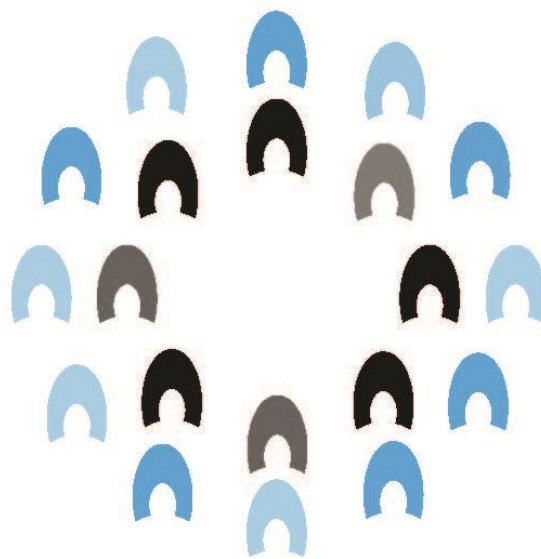


## AT FORT 'MANAGEMENT PLANS' WORKSHOP REPORT

13-16 October 2013, Antwerp



**FORTEN**  
**GORDELS**

Sunday 13 October (optional)

**Breendonk Memorial, Willebroek** - *non-commercial management, owned by the federal government*

The group was welcomed at Fort Breendonk and an introduction was given by the curator, Olivier Van der Wilt. He gave a presentation in the conference room about the history of the Memorial, the use of the fort, the administration and management and possible future uses. As a National Memorial to remind people of the SS concentration camps, the fort aims to keep the site and its atmosphere as it was during the occupation.



The fort is visited by many people every year (especially schools) and derives income from these visits. The aim is to write a mission, develop a media and management plan and to continue to play a

prominent role in the future. Linking the memory of WWII camps to current affairs, like International Human Rights, is one of the practical ideas we have in mind.

The fort is owned by the Ministry of Defence, a federal institution. That is why we have encountered difficulties with the application for restoration subsidies. The implementation of the management plan is also uncertain due to the fort's unique ownership and management situation.

During the guided tour the different aspects of the prisoners' life were mentioned (the prison cells, the isolation cells, the workshops, the torture room, ...), as well as the museum rooms about the prisoners and the camp leaders, and the site with Jewish barracks. In the context of the remembrance of 100 years WWI in 2014, the idea was raised to develop a theme about the role of Breendonk during the first World War.

*Report by Karen Minsaer, city of Antwerp*

**Fort Lievele, Puurs** - non-profit management; owned by the local authorities (municipality of Puurs)

This museum fort is actually owned by the local authorities of Puurs and is operated by the non-profit organisation Fort Lievele, to which many employees and volunteers are affiliated. We were welcomed by the chairman of the fort, Marc Van Riet. The guided tour taught us about the history of the fort, the scale model, the museum rooms (e.g. the hospital, kitchen and quarters), the turret and the artillery museum.



The restoration works of the left wing were thoroughly explained: the roof and walls were getting a new waterproofing. The earthen dam was temporarily removed for these works, while the drainage canals were repaired. The walls were replastered and repairs. In the meantime a budget was prepared for the restoration of the right wing. In view of the huge sum required to complete the works, the necessary funds are being sought.

The fort's policy plan includes the restoration of the right wing, the decoration of new museum rooms and the development of a catering facility. The further development of cultural tourism and recreation is also a main goal.

Fort Liezele, just like Fort Breendonk, belongs to the bunker line, which makes it interesting to compare both forts in terms of conservation, experience and management. The live demonstration of the rolling bridge operation was a nice surprise. Both the mechanics room and the closed island effect was demonstrated.

*Report by Karen Minsaer, city of Antwerp*

Monday 14 October

**Fort 8, Hoboken** - social employment project; owned by the local government (city of Antwerp)

The workshop officially started on Monday morning. Meeting place was the caponier at Fort 8 Hoboken. In his welcome speech project leader Karen Gysen talked about the European perspective of the military heritage. An impressive overview map of all lines in the whole of Europe showed a strong concentration in Belgium and the north of France.

After this introduction Luk Lemmens, first deputy of the province of Antwerp, who is in charge of Culture and Urban Planning, emphasised the importance of our military heritage in general and the fort belt around Antwerp in particular. This value and meaning are not isolated in time, but should be seen in combination with the future options for this exceptional heritage. The project 'Culinaire Antwerpen Sociale Economie' (CAS vzw) which is co-responsible for the management of the caponier at Fort 8 is, just like the learning work project which took care of the restoration, a good example of an integrated approach: social employment and the upgrading of the estate, linked to the building of new attractive infrastructure for a variety of groups and associations. Deputy Lemmens also underlined the importance of the intensive collaboration of lots of partners, both at the different authorities and in the private sector (associations, volunteers and professionals). In order to provide maximum support for all of this and coordinate the different initiatives, the province accepts the role of coordinator.



Wim Lux, head of department Urban Planning and Mobility, talked in more detail about the content of the entire project, starting by an overview of the initiatives which were already taken by the province over the past ten years. A first study about the entire 'inner fort belt' (2002) needs to be updated, but the approach of a variety of uses with their own unique character, still stands. But it is more than ever essential to involve everyone actively in redevelopment plans (consultation), in view of an approach from all perspectives, in search of a logical, coherent and controllable concept.

Wim Lux emphasised that it is necessary to draw a clear line in the diversity of sites and projects. This requires, among other things, a clear gradation in approach. For a number of sites minimal adjustments can suffice, for others we can place a stronger bet on high dynamics, linked to a wide range of public activities. The hierarchy, introduced in recent studies (framework plan for both fort belts), resulted in five 'development levels' always with respect for the historic meaning and the current natural value. The combination of these aspects results in a clear framework on and a large regional cohesion between the different lines, sites and initiatives and a concrete image of the future per site. In years ahead the province will develop all its further initiatives within this framework, based on consultation and in view of cohesion, both in terms of visual aspects and experience.

After that Peter Ros, main partner of AT FORT and project manager of the Nieuw Hollandse



Waterlinie, talked in more detail about the European perspective, with a focus on cultural heritage and spatial development. In the course of AT FORT attention is successively paid to the exchange of knowledge about three major aspects: restoration techniques, redevelopment scenarios and 'management and policy'.

At the end of this fascinating morning a press conference was held to present the brand-new brochure 'From strategic reduit to strategic project'. After that the attending people were invited for a group photo, network moment and lunch.



*Report by Peter Vermeulen, Stramien cvba*

**Fort Lillo** – *management plan at municipal level; partly owned by the federal government agency of Finance, partly privately owned*

In the afternoon the seminars on the content of the plan were linked to site visits. Lillo was visited as Scheldt fort because it is an example of a new spatial design at the municipal level. Lillo forms part of the Berendrecht-Lillo district of the city of Antwerp. It was built during the first years of the Eighty Year War and it still is a green oasis in the industrial area of the port of Antwerp.

The group was welcomed by Achilles Van der Donck, manager of the Landhuis, former town hall of the Lillo fort, located on the Havenmarkt. This renovated building is a cultural-historic symbol of Lillo and offers possibilities for conferences, cultural events and meetings.

Planner David Verhoestraete (Cluster Landscape, see OOT) explained the winning project for the redevelopment and rebuilding of Lillo. In 2009 the city of Antwerp launched a contest for a masterplan for Lillo. This plan was part of the INTERREG IVA project 'Forts and Lines in the Border-Wide Perspective', in which the province of Antwerp was also a partner. In order to meet the new plans of the Flemish government for the completion of the Sigma dyke (heightening of the river dyke along both Scheldt banks) at Lillo, the relation between Lillo and the Scheldt had to be revised. The new dyke to be constructed would be 3 m higher and would result in a widening of 25 m to 65 m at the base, which would completely destroy the visual relation between Lillo and the Scheldt.

The winning project of Cluster Landscape provides a double approach: on the one hand consider the dike, the marina and the boat house, situated between the Scheldt and the village, as one unit and, on the other hand, repair the pentagonal form of the bastion-like profile of the walls. Land inwards new green plants were provided along the Scheldelaan, and also a parking lot. A new access road with a bridge over the moat would also be built. Then you access the former fort and a connection of public spaces lead the visitor to a new fort square, where you reach a panoramic terrace over a gentle slope. From there people have a panoramic view of the Scheldt and the marina.

The group of participants asked whether the inhabitants had been involved in finding the new functions and the redevelopment. The city of Antwerp invited the residents during the hearings, for example with regard to the Sigma plan.



Prof. Dr. Piet Lombaerde (UA) gave a short historic overview of the powder store of Fort Lillo, one of the most originally conserved constructions in Antwerp from the period of the French First Empire. In the Liefkenshoek Fort, on the other side of the Scheldt a powder store was also built by the French. It is, however, much smaller than the one at Lillo. After that a short walk on the historic walls of the fort was taken.

*Report by Piet Lombaerde, University Antwerp*

**Fort Stabroek – *privately managed; privately owned***

The Stabroek fort is managed by Stafort bvba. Stafort was founded in 1997 to give the fort an fitting use and to protect it in all its aspects (tourist recreational, cultural historic and natural sciences). Stafort started with the organisation of adventurous activities because this is perfectly in line with a fort's adventurous character. The organisation aims for the symbiosis of protecting the fort and setting up useful activities.



Owner Tom Callens, Managing Director at Stafort, gave a tour of the fort and explained how the organisation works. The objective is to offer a range of sustainable activities which are in line with the context of a fort and appropriate for a large target audience. The activities are described as 'Outdoor experience, Shoot, Drive, Explore, Play, Highland games' (see [www.stafort.be](http://www.stafort.be)). There are 30 employees (mainly students) and 1 full-time maintenance technician. Every year 25,000 visitors and participants are welcomed.

The entrepreneur encounters obstacles in terms of spatial planning, and also due to the financial insecurity. Due to a combination of activities which require a licence and a change of the zoning plan of the fort, a legal insecurity was created with regard to the further existence of Stafort bvba. After a long period this legal insecurity was removed because a Spatial Development Plan was prepared by

the municipality of Stabroek. Together with the legal insecurity, there is also the financial insecurity, because a private fort, as opposed to a public fort, must come up with the funds alone.

Whether a fort is operated by a private or public partner has certain consequences for the management plan. Private means self-supporting, and more, being profitable in order to invest in sustainable activities and to save for large investments. Public forts do not have the immediate need to change and provide new activities to cover the maintenance costs and therefore, the management is a bit more conservative.

Stafort aims, by means of high-quality activities, for the conservation and restoration of the entire fort. To this end the owner wishes to maintain good relations with the municipality of Stabroek, local governments, the province of Antwerp and others, such as the local historical circle of Stabroek and Simon Stevin Vlaams Vestingbouwkundig Centrum.

*Report by Tom Callens, owner of Stafort*

#### **Presentation: Preparing a Management Plan - The Case of Suomenlinna (Petteri Takkula, Finland)**

*See PPT*

##### **Summary:**

- Process and management plan
- Sea fort, 15 min with ferry from Helsinki
- Mid 18th century
- The most popular tourist destination in Finland
- 2010 start management plan
- 7 heritage sites – cooperation
- Objective: support, same structure of management plan, 7 meetings/20 months
- Structure procedure: EOH toolkit = heritage toolkit for cultural sites
- 2011 collaboration with stakeholders
- spring 2013 – version 1, action plan still lacking
- Current situation: comment text – version 2, action plan

Questions:

- Implementation management plan AT FORT? Yes
- Action + management plan > communication is important = dynamic plan

*Summary by Wim Debaene, Stramien cvba*

**Presentation: Range of present and future management plan scenarios for Forte Marghera  
(Daniele Sfera, Italy)**

*See PPT*

Summary:

Defence system Venice, Verona, Hungary

- 12 forts: 1880s, WWI
- Forte Manghera: 48ha main land-lagoon, French fort 1805
- 2003 bought
- Marco polo system takes care of management fund raising, public works ...
- Key-points future
- Listing buildings in good/bad state
- Analysis 78 buildings: materials, condition > intervention scenario
- 3 areas
  - 1) red: no transformation - conservation/restoration
  - 2) yellow: new functions/recreation
  - 3) green: environment connection
- Future scenarios: restoration funds 500,000 city of Venice
- Consolidation current situation

*Summary by Wim Debaene, Stramien cvba*

## **Presentation: Planning heritage tourism (Jos Cuijpers, The Netherlands)**

*See PPT*

### Summary:

- Management plan – heritage tourism
- Book written about heritage tourism
- 4 different tourists:
  - 1) smallest group: old, lot of money, visit castles, museums etc. ... demanding group
  - 2) educational group, families, children
  - 3) recreational (high season), low-skilled, setting, shopping
  - 4) never visits historic centres and not interested (60% of the total)
- Tourist-slide, e.g. Valkenburg
- Business-model Ostewalder – for historic objects:
  - 1) City itself (or fortress)
  - 2) Heritage tourists
  - 3) Transportation/accommodation
  - 4) Romance
  - 5) Money: traditional = tickets, funds. Desire to spend money
  - 6) Management: clean/safe
  - 7) Investment
  - 8) Spatial renewal + development
  - 9) Partner strategy – working together
  - 10) City branding – marketing: good tourist product is important!
- E-book: [www.lulu.com](http://www.lulu.com), Making money with heritage

### Questions:

- Forts cannot compete with city = impossible
- Forts = specific target group
- What is the most profitable group? What are the best investment choices?

Difficult to say, depends on the product. Group 1 = small group with lot of money but require a lot of investments, Group 1+4: group 1 does not come because too many people

*Summary by Wim Debaene, Stramien cvba*

**Presentation: Benefits of a bottom up approach - Fort Vechten 1999- 2010 (Martin Vastenhout, The Netherlands)**

*See PPT*

**Summary:**

- Nieuwe Hollandse Waterlinie
- Utrecht defence line
- Owners? 1 private, the rest is public
- Public bodies: 8 sites Utrecht, 4 sites State, 1 site University (botanical garden)
- Public-private partnership: 10 sites
- Private partners have to pay rent: 200,000 €/yr, future 350,000 €/yr
- Fort Vechten: 20 employees, 40,000 visitors/yr, 100,000 €/yr maintenance
- Users get 2 accounts:
  - Commercial activities: pay for use
  - Exploitation: pay for using the fort (happy to pay) – the revolving fund
- Rent from tenants: ironworker, outdoor company
- 200 friends, 20€/yr
- 25,000 guests party = 25.000 chances for friends!
- What is private partner confronted with? difficult situations
- What does private partner expect? be careful, involve neighbours – local network, strategic alliances (government ...), enterprise is used to achieve governmental goal
- Frustration: public owners = institutional, legislation slows things down
- Entrepreneurs: passion + pragmatism
- Public/private + bottom up = benefits

**Questions:**

- Open to the public on certain days (when there is no private party)
- Foundation/trust works faster than the government

*Summary by Wim Debaene, Stramien cvba*

Tuesday 15 October

**Fort Duffel** - *non-profit management; owned by vzw (Kempens Landschap vzw)*

Guided tour by Annemie Nagels, project manager (Kempens Landschap vzw)

Kempens Landschap owns the fort since 2009. The fort belongs to the outer belt of forts surrounding Antwerp. It was constructed to protect the railway between Antwerp and Brussels. Along this railway there is a bicycle and footpath that connects Fort Mortsel (inner belt) with Fort Duffel. This unique connection between both belts is very interesting for recreation.



The 14 years before Kempens Landschap acquired the fort, it was owned by a constructor and his family. The constructor planned to use the site for storage. The bridge was replaced by an earthen dam. One year after he bought the fort the constructor died and the family left the fort unused. The municipality of Duffel asked Kempens landschap to value the different aspects of the fort: heritage, nature, recreation.

This valuation resulted in the creation of a management plan which aimed at finding a compromise between the three values: heritage, nature, recreation. The management plan was made in cooperation with all stakeholders and governmental organizations.

The plan resulted in a map which defined a zonation of the fort. Each zone was assigned a colour:

- green: nature. Not accessible to the public. Restoration only when integrity of the fort is at stake.
- blue: only accessible with a guide in a limited period so bats are not disturbed.
- yellow: restoration; expositions and information on bats, history, nearby attractions, ... for visitors. There is also a plan for a catering project in which autistic youngsters get the opportunity to build working experience.

New infrastructure (gates, bridge) is made according to a design that is clearly different from the original objects. This way it's clear which parts are authentic. The lattice used for the windows is easily passable for bats. In the central hallway the lights are pointed downwards so the disturbance of bats is minimal. In February 2013 36 bats were counted in the fort. Although this is not a very large number, this fort is considered important as a stepping stone between more densely populated forts.

Only the pillars which supported the original bridge remained. In the ongoing restoration the earthen dam was removed and a bridge was made in the location of the original one. To waterproof the roof of the parts of the fort which are to be restored (yellow zone) some trees on top of the fort had to be removed. This was possible because this measure was a part of the management plan which was approved by the Flemish government. Leaving this space open with only grassy vegetation can be justified because this kind of open spaces have also got important ecological value for bats. The earth was reused so the original vegetation could recolonize the roof. Originally there were very little trees

on the fort. About ten oaks were present until the 1970's. Most of the trees present now are seedlings of these oaks. According to the management plan only trees that are considered dangerous for people or the integrity of the fort can be cut.

Recently a volunteer group was established. 40 people are being trained to guide visitors. These people prove to be very engaged and some of them even started cleaning up parts of the fort and doing repairs themselves.

Outside of the original concrete constructions of the fort a new "bat tunnel" was constructed to accommodate bats. The design was based on plans of a Dutch organization called Brabants Landschap. In this U-shaped tunnel humidity and temperature are optimal for bats according to experts. Last winter there were no bats yet, possibly because they had not had the time to discover the new construction. Bats explore the surroundings while looking for food and swarming in summer and fall, so hopefully they will be present next winter.

The entrance of the fort can be closed with a rolling bridge which is also being restored. Parts of the entrance of the fort were destroyed by the Belgian army to prevent reuse by the German troops. These parts will not be reconstructed because these destructions are considered part of the history of the fort.

In front of the fort (friendly side) there was a so-called "Redan". This triangular earthwork will be reconstructed partially as an eye-catcher with integrated parking-spaces. This should make the site more visible, because now the fort is hardly visible from the road.

The management plan does not provide any info on how funding of the project is to be organized. The restaurant is meant to generate funds to support the maintenance of the fort. Subsidies are also available because it is listed as a monument.

*Report by Rembrandt De Vlaeminck, province of Antwerp*

## **Presentation: Concept & business plan Fort 4 (Willem de Laet, Idea Consult, Belgium)**

*See PPT*

Idea consult developed the business plan for the fort. Fort Mortsel is part of the inner belt (Brialmont belt). It was built from 1860 to 1865. 45 hectares of land were expropriated for building the fort. In 1870 the inner belt proved to be too close to Antwerp to be effective and a new belt was built.

The fortresses proved to be of little use for Belgian troops during the war. In WWII the Germans used the fort. The Belgian army used the fort until 1997. In 1997 the fort was sold to the city of Mortsel for one symbolic euro. In 2002 the city decided to make a business plan to generate funds for the expensive restorations (14-million € VAT excluded).

### **Basic concept**

- Main fort
- Green lung
- Creative fort

Parts of the fort will be restored. The central part will be rented and some locations can be rented for events.

Strengths of the fort are the fact that it's the largest and best conserved fort of the Brialmont belt and the easy accessibility (close to train and tram station, roads, city center). The fort also houses bats: 64 specimens of 6 different species in winter, 30 bats in summer. In the business plan new functions are assigned to the fort. Parts are reserved for bats. Making the business plan took 9 months, during which there was a lot of public consultation.

*Summary by Rembrandt De Vlaeminck, province of Antwerp*

### **Questions-discussion**

- Isn't there competition between forts? The provincial government brings owners of forts together. By checking local needs and fine-tuning projects competition can be kept as low as possible.

- Are costs for personnel included during restoration? Yes.
- Why rent out in restored state? It's considered better to restore as a whole (electricity, ...). This also justifies higher, commercial renting prices.
- Has there been market research? Yes. Only creative sector cannot fill whole fort so diversification is needed.
- Why does the business plan still focus very much on public funding? It was a conscious choice to keep one ownership and earn money later on with rent. Renovation is not paid by rent, only maintenance. Because of importance for community, public money is considered well spent. Because of the size of the site rent as a whole is not possible.
- How about the urban context?
  - Buildings in shooting range wood so they could be burned down some of these buildings still remain and are protected now because of their historical value.
  - In the next strategic plan there will also be focus on restoring landscape and surroundings.
- Is renting by local government considered as unfair competition for private sector? Renting prices are on a commercial level so there is no unfair competition. Earned money is reinvested. Prices are the same as in the city because of the unique setting and good accessibility: train, car, tram.
- Why not public services in fort? Some buildings are in fact used by the city services of Mortsel.

*Report by Rembrandt De Vlaeminck, province of Antwerp*

**Fort 4, Mortsel – owned and managed by the local authority (city of Mortsel)**

Guided tour and explanation on management by Bart Van Zele (city architect) and Greet Drooghmans (cultural policy manager).

There were multiple ideas for Fort 4 in the city of Mortsel, a military complex of many buildings on 35 ha:

- (Complete) reconstruction: expensive
- Degradation: difficult idea to defend for a location in the center of the city
- Box in the box system: a new function in a box in an old building, e.g. the lavatories

Lower batteries are only with earth works. It is let for filming companies for movies, TV productions. The Belgian army sometimes uses the fort for exercises.

The space between the 'reduit' and the main front building is made open and green after demolishing old sheds of the army. Open air cultural events are held here in the summer. The 'reduit' counts 180 rooms in total on 2 levels and will be used as offices for creative industries: architects, designers, lawyers etc.



The main front 'caponnière' and the left and right 'caponnière' are in the business plan indicated as buildings for storage, changing rooms for artists (summer events). There is not yet electricity, nor drinking water. Only the front of the buildings are restored, not the interior. In the front 'caponnière', a small and difficult accessible peninsula, are shelters for bats.

The moat was partially filled in WWII and is not reconstructed. All trees are younger than the construction of the fort in 1860-1864.

The Officers House: built in 1872, after research for the business plan indicated as the building for a permanent bar with catering, in a public private partnership: the city restores the building (about €

2,5 million), the private partner furnishes and exploits the bar/restaurant. They hope they can start in 2017.

The business plan is based on quick wins. It is more interesting to restore the Officers House for a bar and restaurant because it's smaller than the partially restored 'caponnière'. The main entrance is restored with a new visitors' center. The bridge of the main entrance is still in use, but will be restored within 2 years.

*Report by Luc Wellens, province of Antwerp*

**Presentation:** Urban conservation (Jukka Jokilehto, Slovenia)

*See PPT*

**Presentation:** From a shared vision to implementation. The management plan of Mont-Dauphin (Marieke Steenberghe & Claire-Marie Collin, Frankrijk)

*See PPT*

**Presentation:** Fort Amherst, turning the vision into a viable plan, the constraints of meeting partner expectations (Keith Gulvin, UK)

*See PPT*

**Presentation:** Flexibility and adjustment of planning while managing fortifications. Introduction to long-term planning strategy (Janina Janik, Poland)

*See video*

### Wednesday 16 October

On the last day we worked on the preparation of the integration report. Only the project partners participated in this work meeting.

Work was done in three theme groups:

- Prior conditions, coordinated by the New Dutch Waterline, in collaboration with partners from Helsinki, Vauban and Antwerp.
  - Regeneration, coordinated by the New Dutch Waterline, in collaboration with partners from Berlin, Venice and Komaróm.
  - Management, coordinated by the New Dutch Waterline, in collaboration with partners from Medway, Paola and Kaunas.
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*Many thanks for your presence and contribution!*