

ANKARA CASTLE PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT RECONSTRUCTION PLAN PROJECT COMPETITION REPORT

A competition has been organized by Ankara-Altındağ municipality to develop Ankara Castle Preservation and Enhancement project. The detailed specification shows that significant design points. One of the our main points is that the castle is an area that has kept its Turkish urban texture throughout history, and also this region has been witnessing gradual unhealthy formation, lastly that the castle walls are monuments that still contain most of Ankara's historical past.

The important points that will make this project possible such as who could carry out this organization, how this organization would be handled (ownership), how the historical texture is being approached and how this texture could be brought into a way more healthy state and address today's mankind are stated as following;

I. The Organization Model :

In our opinion, this opinion seems more functioning among the existing ones is a corporation that is representative of numerous public institutions –mainly one of them- In case of responsibility of the project is divided equally among these institutions in such a project that might take quite a long time; moreover full cooperation between these parties is difficult unlikely. Altındağ Municipality should fully take this responsibility. Since the project's coverage of the whole castle might take from 10 to 15 years, the municipality should set up a new department which named Ankara Castle Preservation and Development Project Management. The head of the this department should be the Deputy Mayor and the department's founding members should include one member from Municipality Town Planning manager, Culture and Tourism Ministry Relics and Museums Headquarter, Relief and Monuments Headship, Culture and Nature Pieces Preservation Ankara region council, and a representative from Tourism Headquarters, and Public Works and Settlement Ministry. After the department has been established, members from the other institutions could be demanded to join. Department services should be provided by the municipality.

II. The Matter of Ownership:

Ankara Castle has lost the characteristic of being the center for a long time ago. According to the Ankara Reconstruction Plan, it is not likely for now that this area will gain its vitality. Our opinion is that these works are not likely to receive restoration manually by owners of buildings because most of them are the properties of low-income groups. It cannot be expected from private institutions to make investments to this area because it does not seem entirely attractive place for the moment. Our primary inclination about this matter is that only, culturally responsible public institutions could claim the "Kaleiçi". We believe that this responsibility will be shared among the public institutions in the long run with this joint model is more convenient for the project:

1. As stated before it will take long time for the project to be complete. For that reason, municipality and, Culture and Tourism Ministry lead the way and confiscate one or two candidates, start restoration at once and evaluate the possible outcomes.

2. In case of a serious work begins in "Kaleiçi", persons, private corporations (banks etc.), private foundations (Koc foundation, Sabancı foundation etc.) will change their point of view and may get involved in the project.

3. The management office that will be set up measures these outcomes, on the other hand they research in what ways public institutions could support the project. For example, the quarter that has the Hippodrome, Youth Park (Ulus), and Independence War and Republic museums is announced to be the Atatürk Culture Center. In brief, a kind of cultural activity is tried to be created in Ulus. The castle project should be regarded as one of these activities. Anatolian Civilizations Museum that is situated right under the Castle has great potential to attract visitors. The chance of these tourists spending at least one night at Kaleiçi around an ancient Turkish city atmosphere is looked into, and an area in Kaleiçi could well be spared for accommodation. Depending on this fact, it could be looked into if Tourism Headquarters and Tourism Bank could afford the cost of restoration.

4. Also in Kaleici, some houses could be bought by Public Institutions to convert them into lodging buildings. For instance, Culture and Tourism Ministry has been buying apartment buildings in numerous districts in the last few years for convert them into lodging buildings. With the same purpose in mind, a part of this fund could be spent for Kaleiçi project.

As a result, in today's conditions, it should not be expected from the original house owner's in Kaleiçi to restore their houses all by themselves. It is not a viable way to give away money support to these owners, either. Because these buildings do require constant renovation, house owners are not able to afford the cost of maintenance for restoration is an expensive operation. Most of the houses in Kaleiçi need restoring and, expropriation will not cost too much when compared to restoration. This is why we believe that expropriation along with restoration should be performed by public institutions.

III. GENERAL APPROACH PRINCIPLES

Our main principle in developing Kaleiçi project has been primarily to protect the historical texture as much as we can. This area has been designed to address today's needs and be a location that people would enjoy spending time. Some steps has been set to make the texture healthy again and refunction the purposes has been set without spoiling the original texture. Tourism is not the only concern here; it is rather the surroundings our own people live in and saving a part of our history. Therefore, it is avoided to harm the cultural texture for the sake of touristic income. Tourism turns out to be the natural outcome of the reasons given.

A- PRESERVE HISTORICAL TEXTURE

1. Houses: It has been observed that the Kaleici has been having unhealthy settlement. So, it's been aimed to make it more visible by cleaning re-settlements and additions. According to Cultural and Natural Assets High Commission's verdict of 15.5.1987, 68 buildings and items are protected as unmovable cultural assets. In this project all of these assets are protected.

2. Courtyards: The courtyards of the houses are divided and could be made into yard blocks.

3. Streets: Existing street plans have not been much intervened. However, some closed streets have been re-opened and they are proposed to be covered with fine sandstone. By eliminating the buildings that are not worth preserving, for the areas that ancient texture is seen densely, with the verdict of Cultural and Natural Assets High Commission that states not to ruin the street structure by giving construction permission, and change the street scale by building yard walls to the yard areas.

4. Castle Walls: Castle itself is the inseparable element to the project. With restorations throughout the history, it is the sole seeable asset in Ankara. That is why the historical texture is aimed to be in the forefront of the project. Around the İçkale east walls, the slums are aimed to be the new green promenade areas. Northern rocky parts of the castle are preserved and they do not cast a shadow on the castle.

So, from the outer looks, the castle is aimed to be the new symbol of Ankara.

The walls have to be visible from the inside as well as the outside; the buildings that are adjacent to the walls have been demolished so that the new green areas are created for different activities.

B- NEW REGULATIONS

Having stated the principles of preserving the historical texture, the new functions to make the new texture of the castle look more attractive go as following;

1. Open Spaces regulation: The road web has not been altered. New squares have not been built. However, naturally created squares have been regulated to alleviate the system. Around outside the walls have been spaced, these spaces are opened for public used green places.

2. Regulations that address the public needs: Some activities created to make easy way to reach necessity of people who lives in Kaleici. Activities that both address the locals and the foreigners in an easily accessible square, there is a shopping bazaar, a bank, a health clinic and a post Office are planned to be built, and since the Castle will be closed to traffic, a parking lot outside the castle has been designed. And for a public library, a house is preserved inside the castle. And one of the houses has been thought to be a child care home.

3. Cultural and Touristic regulations: Along with the surroundings of the walls have pretty much been cleaned up depending on the green areas, the bastion entries have been designed to serve the artists who will have exhibitions in these areas. Therefore inside the castle there will be social/cultural activities, it is imagined to be a lively place after all this time. With the same purpose a bastion that is named "Şarkkale" has been turned into a small amphitheater. One of the houses inside the castle has been designed to be a museum-house.

At the entrance of Dışkale some advertising billboards have been put up to introduce the area, this is considered to be the first touristic activity of the area.

In a square in Dışkale, handcraftsmanship stands and a tourist information office will be ready to meet the visitors.

In the central square in İçkale, there is a restaurant and a tea house. Along the walls' green areas drinks and toasts will be served in the kiosks. They will be serving the public and the visitors, as well.

4. Infrastructure Regulations: One of the main problems is heating a solution in the Kaleiçi project would be the central heating. Ankara's natural gas can be benefited for the project. We thusly believe that it will be best the working for this goal can start as soon as possible.

Fire being one of the biggest troubles of the ancient Turkish cities, could be solved by putting enough fire hydrants on the streets.

As for the garbage issue, we propose having a small garbage truck with wheels would solve the trash problem.