

EXTENDED ABSTRACT



Monumental set of Vila Viçosa

New Uses And New Dynamics In The Historical Center

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ABSTRACT

This report was developed in the context of the Final Project in Architecture 2, included in the 5th year of the Master's degree in Architecture, of the Instituto Superior Técnico in Lisbon. It presents a proposal that resulted from an exercise developed during the academic year 2016/2017 and introduces new uses and new dynamics to Vila Viçosa historical center.

The urban project is based on the recognition of the potential of the historical center of Vila Viçosa.

It adds important architectural structures to the existing urban texture, giving it a strong identity to the city and the central area that organizes all the development of the village.

The urban intervention strategy is the requalification and introduction of vital uses/dynamics in the public spaces in the urban center of Vila Viçosa. The aim is to boost its natural qualities and functionalities as the qualifiers and articulators of the urban spaces, making them more appealing and inviting, as well as promising experiences for their users.

However, it is sought to ensure the continuation of the urban design of great historical value.

The first approach to the architectural project was the definition of the program for the rehabilitation and adaptation of existing buildings and outer spaces annexed to the palace. The aim was to create potential and to reintegrate these structures, for the fulfillment of new requirements and functions of Cultural, Civic and Tourist interest, in a context of diversification of the Ducal Palace attractions.

The proposal for a new multipurpose building with the assignment of new spaces that complement the structures already built, and arises in the segment of the diversification program of the Ducal Palace. However with a new interest – an autonomous building connected to the Ducal Palace, with a cultural function. A key unit, aimed at performing cultural activities or events, such as: musical exhibitions, theatre, art exhibits, research, teaching of plastic arts and music, community leisure, among others. Furthermore it will become a tourist attraction for visitors of the palace.

It is intended that this new cultural pole plays a key role for consolidating and creating links at local level, and thereby strengthening the "social loop" where relationships are experienced and where solutions can be discovered. It can be concluded to be a positive point, because it will contribute to the cultural activities in Vila Viçosa, assuming itself a stimulating agent of the participation of people, families and social groups, local development factor and promoting citizenship.

Keywords: historical centre, Heritage, Regeneration, New uses and new dynamics, Ducal Palace, Vila Viçosa.

1 – INTRODUCTION

1.1 – General Objectives

The main objective is the development of a MasterPlan for the urban fabric of Vila Viçosa, contemplating: new valences of new uses and new dynamics and of the territorial context of the Village and regeneration and valorization of the surrounding areas of the Monumental Set of the Ducal Palace with the introduction of a new building.

1.1.1 – Specific Objectives

According to the Urban and Architectural Project, the objectives are:

- Promote the urban regeneration, intervening in the disqualified public spaces or undervalued, to create new public spaces, more pleasant and appealing for leisure, not only for those who visit Vila Viçosa but also for its inhabitants.
- Promover uma partilha mais equilibrada do espaço público por parte dos diferentes modos de deslocação (pedestres vs. automobilistas), através da reorganização das acessibilidades, criação de zona 20 no centro histórico, nas áreas de estacionamento e acolhimento de visitantes.
- Promote a more balanced sharing of the public space by the different means of transport (pedestrians vs. motorists), through the reorganization of accessibility, creation of zone 20 in the historical center, parking areas and reception of visitors.
- Establish new connections between the municipalities of Vila Viçosa, Borba and Estremoz, with the introduction of a new route made by the ecopist as a smoother mean of transport.

After the approach to the urban context, it was intended to choose an area of greater relevance or interest to be developed on a closer scale. The programmatic and design intervention strategy, is the creation of new spaces, throughout the reuse of existing spaces and buildings in the Ducal Palace, and also by the creation of a new building complementary to the structures already built. It was also hoped that this additional volume would perform new functions compatible with the character and vocation of the entity that manages the Ducal Palace (the Casa de Bragança Foundation), in that way the introduction of new uses should allow the maintenance of traditional uses and the cultural singularity and historical background.

1.2 - Motivation

Due to the fact that Vila Viçosa City Hall is in the process of preparing an application for the historical centre to be classified as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO, it is understood that this project constitutes an opportunity to revitalize the urban center, ensuring the preservation of an important architectural heritage and boosting uses which are able to transform the territory.

The greatest motivation was to rehabilitate and also to design spaces where tourists, locals and visitors can cohabitate in a creative and dynamic way.

1.3 - Methodology

The methodology adopted to reach the proposed objectives was developed in four fundamental phases, which present different contents and strategies due to their theoretical and practical nature:

In the first phase, a brief and intuitive SWOT analysis exercise was carried out on the municipality of Vila Viçosa, where some potentialities and weaknesses were identified: among the others stands out an outstanding evaluation of the exceptional architectural and historical sets integrated in the urban structure of Vila Viçosa, and the loss of the dynamics of the socio-economic life of the inhabitants of Vila Viçosa.

In the second phase, the project intervention area was analyzed by approaching themes such as: historical and urban evolution, road network, pedestrian networks, and typologies of public spaces, which resulted in the selection of the site, and the urban intervention strategy, which consisted in the requalification and introduction of new uses and new dynamics (Masterplan) in some existing public spaces, as an incentive for the release of the first ideas, to revitalize the historical centre.

In the third phase, the project exercise focused on the Monumental Set of the Ducal Palace, "where the architectural and patrimonial value of it, the value of the urban fabric" are very important. It was proposed an analytical and suggestive study, centered in the definition of a program and an architectural proposal of restoration and adaptation of the buildings and exterior spaces annexed to the Palace, aiming to strengthen and reintegrate these structures, in order to fulfill new demands and functions of socio-cultural and tourist interest.

The fourth and remaining phase, the "Architectural Project", emerge with the fourth exercise of the project methodology. It was intended that the project is committed to the social and cultural context of the inhabitants of Vila Viçosa. It is aimed to accomplish the program presented by the Fundação da Casa de Bragança with the proposal. Briefly, it is an architectural typology, destined to the reception and promotion of cultural activities and leisure.

1.4 - Problem Of The Study Area

- Reduction of the population of the Municipality;
- Lack of work to the qualified inhabitants;
- Low access of the younger population to the high school;
- Buildings underused;
- Low qualified public space;
- Lack of the cycling network in the urban context;
- Reorganization of the parking areas;

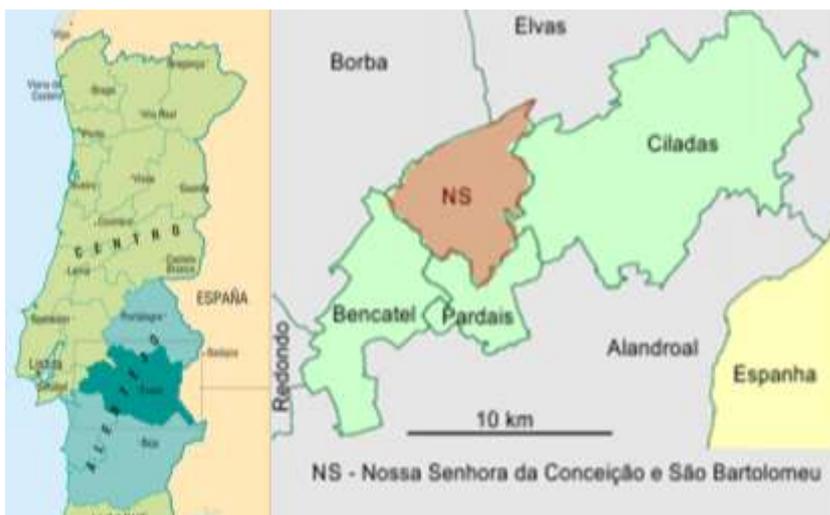
2 – STATE OF ART

A narrative was created about the concepts used in the report, to better describe the theme of heritage, using concepts drawn from some letters, including the Letter of Venice (1964) and the Letter of Krakow (2000) and the Convention of Granada (Council of Europe 1985).



3 - CHARACTERIZATION OF THE INTERVENTION AREA

3.1 – Historical Context



Vila Viçosa is a beautiful Alentejo town in the district of Évora. It is a municipality with 194.86 km² with approximately 8 319,000 inhabitants (INE, 2011), subdivided into five parishes: Bencatel, Ciladas, Pardais, Nossa Senhora da Conceição e São Bartolomeu.

Figura 1 – Regional Context of the Municipality of Vila Viçosa (Font: Author 2017)

In 2005, the Council presented a total of 8766mil inhabitants.

The natural or inhabitant of Vila Viçosa is called Calipolense or Vila-Viçosense.

The municipality is limited to the north and springs by the municipality of Elvas, to the south by the Alandroal, the west by the round and northwest by Borba.

However, the urban fabric of Vila Viçosa municipality, today We know the results from three evolutionary stages. The first of the primitive medieval matrix, the second Renaissance root, and a third related to the current contemporary experience.

In 1267, the church and monastery of the Augustines were founded, to give the necessary encouragement to the settlement of these lands. But it is known that Vila Viçosa only received from D. Alfonso III, his letter of outwards, in 1270, from then on, the municipality is constituted.

4 - PROPOSAL FOR URBAN REORGANIZATION (MASTERPLAN)

In order to redesign the urban land by correcting the identified deficiencies, we defined the masterplan. This was of utmost importance to rethink the area of Vila Viçosa and the urban planning of it. With the masterplan was taken care to integrate the urban tissues in the existing context to regard the heritage and to reinterpret the urban fabric in order to connect the Ducal Palace, place subject to the greatest prominence and intervention, with the rest of the village.

On the other hand, it also tried to integrate historical elements, green spaces and public spaces, creating a unity and a motor force of urban life in the region.

We propose a requalification of the Republic square and the Ducal Palace, the implementation of a bike path, and a bike lane/Ecovillage which connects the municipality of Vila Viçosa with other municipalities, rehabilitation of the building that lies in the adjacent area of the Ducal Palace. Finally, the pinnacle was the creation of a large park (Green Zone).



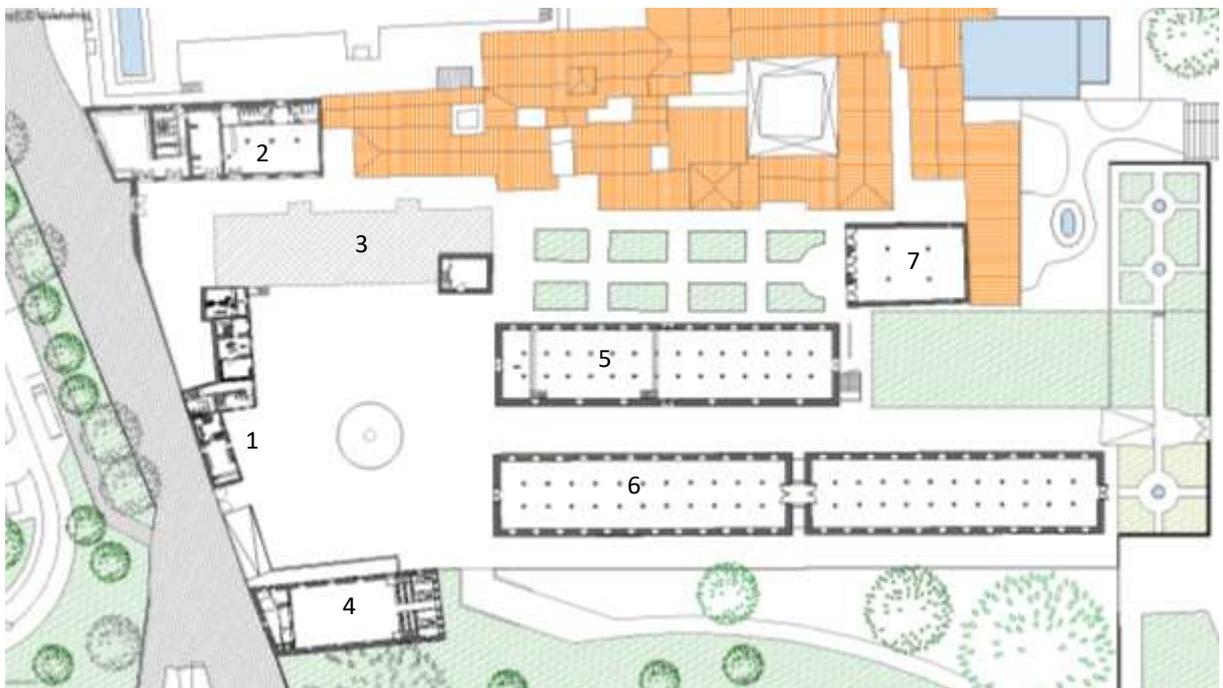
Figure 3 - Masterplan, without scale - Proposal (Source: author, 2017)

4.1- Restoration Project

The first approach to the architectural project was the setting of the recovery and adaptation program, of the buildings (annexes to the island Barracks) and exterior spaces annexed to the palace (areas of forest and agricultural areas), aiming at the potentialization and reintegration of these structures, For the fulfilment of new demands and functions of cultural, civic and tourist interest, in a scope of diversification of the Ducal Palace attractions.

In this context the programme reflects:

1-building next to the entrance of the island's barracks, will be divided into the area of reception and administration (ticket office and information desk), for the reception of visitors to the Ducal Palace of Vila Viçosa, by interdicting the ticket area inside the palace. 2-the area of the mill's ship house will harbour a souvenir shop and a public restaurant. Its location was strategically chosen not only by the possibility of being accessible by those who want to enjoy the events inside the palace. 3-Rehabilitation of the old building of the residences of the servants of the palace. The first floor will be residence for temporary permanence of researchers and students; 4-recovery of the old covered ring for performing spectacles with presentation of classical riding exercises and choreographies performed by the Knights and their horses, 5-In the Museum of the Royal Coodor, it is proposed to adapt/reuse the nave to the hostel of events of a sociocultural nature of public interest, such as the permanent exhibition of the photographic and artistic collection of the foundation of the Bragança House; 6-The Museum of the Royal Coscent will be adapted to the archive of the Bragança House Foundation; 7-Museum of the Royal Coodors proposes to adapt reuse of the ship to the hostel.



1 Administração (bilheteira) | 2 Loja de souvenirs / restauração | 3 Residências /estudantes | 4 Picadeiro | 5 Espaço Exposição | 6 Museu da Coche | 7 Arquivo Fundação da Casa FCB | 8 Palácio Ducal

Figure 4-Rehabilitated buildings (Source: author, 2017)

4.2 - Architectural Project (proposal)

The proposal of a new multipurpose building with the allocation of new spaces that complement the existing structures built up, appears in the segment of the program of diversification of the attractions of the Ducal Palace. But now with a new interest-create an autonomous building to the Ducal Palace in functional terms. The building contains two floors with cultural function. A key unit, intended for the realization of socio-cultural activities or events, such as: Musical exhibitions, theatre, art exhibits, research, teaching of plastic arts and music, community leisure, among others.

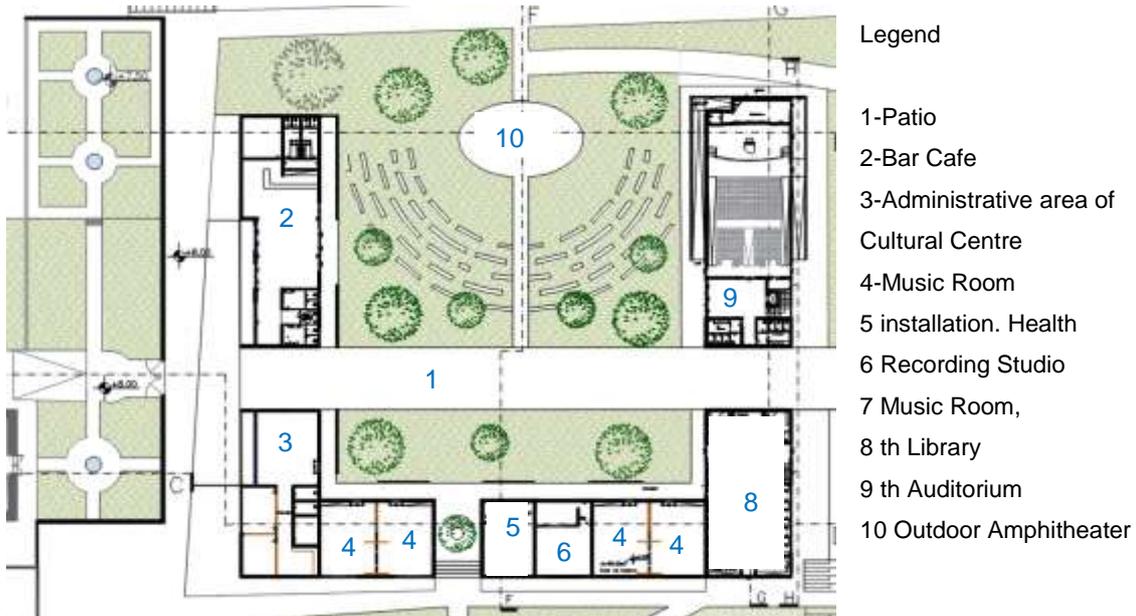
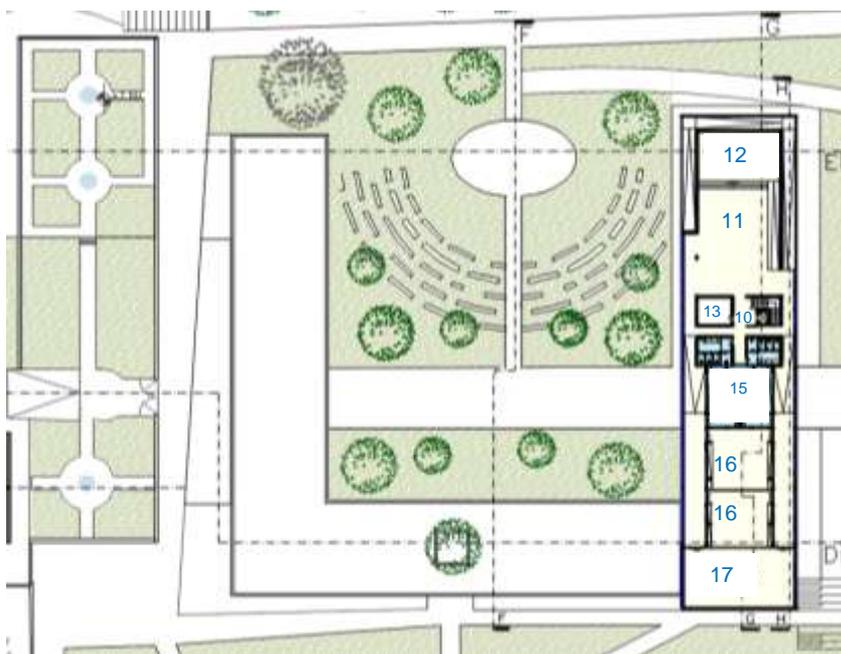


Figure 5-Floor plan 0 of the proposed building – Cultural Center (Source: author, 2017)



10-Hall | 11-Exhibition SPACE | 12-Dance Zone | 13-Cabinet
14-Sanitary Installation | 15th Spa | 16-Arts Room | 17-Atelier

Figure 6-Floor plan 1 of the proposed building – Cultural Center (Source: author, 2017)

The building is multifunctional and multi-purpose. It intends to respond to existing shortcomings. It matters the activities, which generate new experiences and experience (of new dynamics), sharing events in spaces in order to provide the satisfaction of those who enjoy the place, which should be as welcoming and cozy as possible, and allow for



Figure 7-Building cuts – Cultural Center - S/scale (Source: Author, 2017)

The structure of the projected building is characterized by using the reinforced concrete as the main element in its structure: The floor 1 consists of a papillae slab with a thickness of 50 cm, to alleviate the structure's own weight and to ensure a better use of materials, steel and concrete. However, it should be noted that the roof is made up of lattice slabs and beams of prefabricated concrete forming a base, being able to receive complementary steel bars, a layer of reinforced concrete, as this receives the insulation coating.

The structures of the building, mainly the pillars are made of reinforced concrete, prefabricated, with favorable dimension, which support the great distances of the beams that support the slabs of the floor 1 and the slab of the roof.

Three-Dimensional Proposal of the New Building - Cultural Center



The use of wood in the facade has a relation of the built with its natural surroundings, the ground floor and on the first floor, gives a lightness to the building itself. The idea is to use the wood as a vertically ripped on the facades, working as a filter of the sun, allowing light and natural ventilation to be entered into the building.

Figure 8-New building-Cultural Center-(Source: Author, 2017)

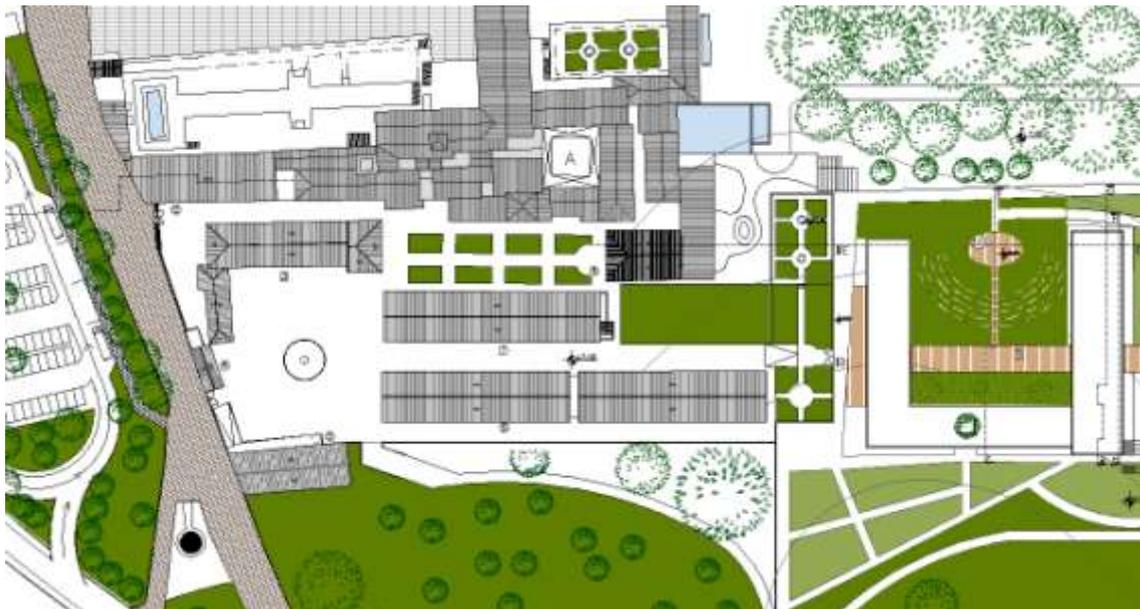


Figure 9-three-dimensional Cultural centre-main-handle-S/scale (Source: Author, 2017)



Figure 10-three-dimensional Cultural centre -rear-S/scale (Source: Author, 2017)

Overall Deployment Of The Set



1 Administration (Ticket office) | 2 Souvenir shop/Catering | 3 Residences/Students | 4 ring Room 5 exhibition space | 6 Coach Museum | 7th Archive FCB House Foundation | A-Ducal Palace

Figure 11-General deployment of the set

5 - Conclusion

The present work, should be understood as the result of a balance between the willingness to draw new dynamics and new uses that contribute in concrete to a sustainable development and integrated in Vila Viçosa and surroundings. The general and specific objectives defined in the initial programme have been achieved.

Translating a proposal aimed at maintaining and valuing the historical and symbolic character of the monumental set of the Ducal Palace of Vila Viçosa, seeking to maximize its attractiveness, through the adaptation and or introduction of new uses, at the level of Structures built annexed to the Ducal Palace, in the context of the diversification of its attractions as a witness with cultural value in the valorization and socio-economic and environmental dynamisation of the community. It is understood in the same way that the quality of the urban fabric where the monumental set is inserted, constitutes a relevant factor for the appreciation of its positive image, the urban strategies developed in the present work, focused mainly on the improvement of the Conditions of sharing of public space in the areas confined to the patrimonial set, and in the regeneration of some urban spaces, abandoned and without driving dynamics, through the conversion and introduction of vital uses, capable of attracting new audiences and generating the most varied type of Urban experiences, and to counteract the processes of abandonment or underutilization that has suffered between times.

Thus proposing a more aware view, it is hoped that this project can contribute in some way, as little as it is, for the redesign and intervention architectural of the village contributing to the evolution of it, with a substantial history and a singular heritage architectural existing in Vila Viçosa.