Vernacular architecture used to be quite abundant in the Maltese islands. This is mostly thanks to rubble walls scattered all over Malta and Gozo. However nowadays, these rubble walls and adjoining fields are constantly being destroyed so that new buildings could be built. It seems that, the people who take these decisions are finding it very easy to turn their back on all the hard work our ancestors had to endure in order to construct those walls. Their functionality and aesthetic appeal seems to have been lost.

According to the last census, 43,108 properties are completely vacant throughout the year. This amount is far larger than most other EU states, except for Portugal and Greece. Isn’t it possible that people dwell in these houses, instead of demolishing them to build new ones? One in every five buildings in Malta is vacant. Isn’t it time to stop the demolition and start the conservation?

The building frenzy has taken Malta by storm. A tempest that is sweeping away our heritage and replacing it with the debris left over in the aftermath. The street name depicted in the
photo makes one ponder if the tempest will soon sweep away even this rubble wall, seemingly retreating towards the back at the sight of what could take its place.

I think it is high time that we take a look in the mirror and see how our decisions will reflect on this generation, which seems to have decided that the land’s exploitation is its birthright. We should stop and think if our past has been a good foundation for our present, and try to pass it on to our future.

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