

The Great Hammam in Prishtina

Conservation, Restoration and Re-Functionalizing Project

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Abstract

Safeguarding of cultural heritage is a great challenge, especially in the countries that are in transition phase. Sometimes the requirements of our modern times are very selfish, and usually it ends up with destroying remarkable values that have lived upon through the centuries.

Feeling the risk that many of important buildings have been lost and also the risk of losing the others that were left in pretty bad conditions, the restoration of the Great Hammam have been initiated, although with experiencing of lots of difficulties, we realized that this project in its own way is the learning process for the relevant institutions and owners that weren't able until now to deal with these matters.

The process of conservation and restoration of the Great Hammam in Prishtina, which is described in this study, through involving all identified partners, stakeholders and community, intends to raise the awareness and promote proper contemporary standards of reviving of our historical buildings, which unfortunately its not the case to other ongoing restoration project, but at the meantime to be able to generate incomes and secure maintenance and sustainability of this building, so the next generations can learn more and be proud of their history.



Characteristic view of the site where the Hammam is situated,

Introduction

The Hammam's/Turkish Baths are one of first buildings that were built in city cores through all Ottoman Empire. In the region of Kosovo there are left few example of this remarkable architecture, which through centuries represented great social and cultural values for all citizens. The one of the most important building is Prishtina Hammam, and it was built in the second half of the 15th century. Till last year the building was in very bad shape as a result of the sporadic devastation of time factor and negligence of respective institutions, especially in last decades. The CHwB in cooperation with Municipality of Prishtina have initiated its saving and until now have finished the first phase of restoration/structural consolidation. The project is still ongoing and according to the financial means secured and the problematic of interventions the project will last another two years. This process aims to identify the responsibilities and key actors in maintaining and welfare of this important monument, and also to have different options that will secure the needed incomes to functionalize this building and secure the sustainability of it.



Photo from the above of the Hammam, Year 1955



View of the Hammam from street, Year 2007

Background

The city of Pristina is situated in the south eastern edge of the great high Kosovo Plateau, at an altitude of 700 meters. Having rich natural resources and an important geographical position, it is at the meeting point of routes from the west, east and north of the Balkans. The region's history goes back to the 4th millennium BC; Neolithic, stone and bronze age, succeeded in the 2nd millennium BC. by the Illyrians, and in the 1st century AD by the Roman Empire. The Middle Ages were dominated by the Byzantine and Ottoman empires.

In the 14th century Kosovo fell to the Turks. In the late 14th century, during Ottoman rule, Prishtina grew as a characteristic oriental urban settlement with various building types, including Mosques, hammams, shops, and houses. It was an important centre for culture, art, trade, religious and caravan routes.

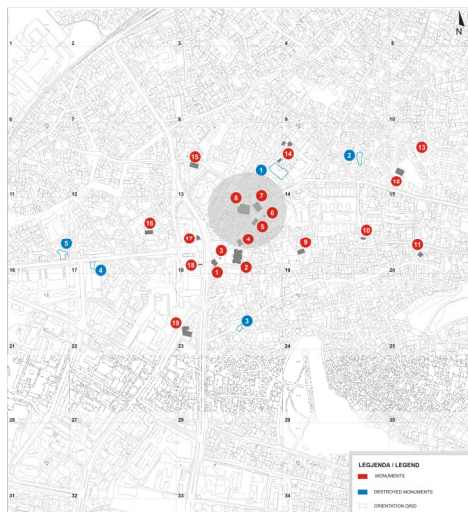
The oldest part of the settlement contains the Fatih Sultan Mehmet II Mosque, Fatih Sultan Mehmet Han Hammam (The Great Hammam), bazaar, traditional houses, the clock tower, han, tyrbe etc.



Flag of Kosova,



Situation of Prishtina



Map of Prishtina Historic Core, Protected Monuments by law, and Destroyed ones;

The Great Hammam in Prishtina (Fatih Sultan Mehmet Han Hammam) is important historic monument in an equally important urban ensemble in the centre of Prishtina. The proximity of three historic Mosques, a clock tower, several listed houses, and a bazaar, together with its position on a major public route through the city present opportunities to develop and revive the site as a public destination.

According to the little information's and document which were at the disposal, the building is supposed that its been built in the XV century, respectively in 1461, as a facility building for the Fatih Mosque, and its local community. As a hammam, or public bath, it has been used by the general public of Prishtina for many generations, until its original function was abandoned in the 1960s. From this time mainly in the buildings was intervened without criteria, in interior and exterior many openings have been created, but also the installation of new water supply and sewage system have resulted into losing lots of valuable built details and weakening of its built structure.



View of the building just before the restoration

Since 1989 no maintenance work has been carried out despite the building's status as one of the oldest Ottoman structures in the historic part of Prishtina and a rare and valuable example of public architecture of this type. During this time the building has been used as a storage for construction materials, and partially, the main entrance halls were adopted as a shops. In year 1995 the shops, the eastern part of the building, has burned down. In this occasion the main entrance halls have suffered a lot, where the walls were the rebuilt walls and together with the roof covering were done in very unprofessional and improper way. This part of the building continued to be used for shops until recently, when the first conservation activities have been started, in year 2007, while the other part of the building was left to ruins.

Architecture of the Great Hammam

As a typology, Prishtina's Hammam is a "double hammam", with separate sections for both men and women and it has a space of approximately 800 m². It has a regular quadrant shape, it is consisted by the "cold" section (entrance hall), and "hot" section (the baths). The "hot" section is covered from 16 domes of different size, constructed above pandantives and arches. The lightning of this part is from above, done through small holes to prevent the lost of heat in this area. The entrance halls originally are supposed to be covered with domes, but we didn't find the traces of this kind of construction. Now days the main halls are covered with four slopes roof construction.

The great Hammam of Prishtina consists of these areas:

- Entrance hall “shadervan”, as a part of the preparation for the bath, it is been called also the cold section.
- Middle warm area, or” kapallek”,
- Main heated area, where the massages were done,
- Hammam’s, or area for washing,
- Water tank, “hazna” and
- Stove, “kylhan”.

Heating of the building has been done with steam through the hypocausts placed beneath the marble floor.

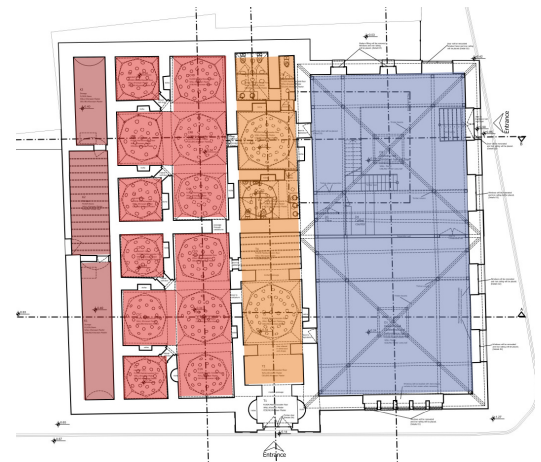
The walls are from stone, while the domes are constructed from brick, in exterior were covered with lead sheets, while in the interior they were plastered with “horasan” mortar, a special traditional mortar which is resistant to humidity. The techniques of the building are traditional ones, by using regular shaped carved stones in the corners of the walls, and linked with lime mortar.

Since 1985 the Institute for Protection of Monuments of Kosova designated as a cultural historic Monument with Regional importance, and it is protected by the law for Protection of the Monument nr.19/77.

Today the building is owned today by the Municipality, and until the beginning of the conservation activities was deteriorating rapidly due to accumulating structural damage, inappropriate earlier interventions and neglect. A conservation project was therefore urgent. Although the hammam has been pretty much modified, particularly to the east and the main public face of the building, the underlying plan form and much of its original structure still remain.

Analysis

As the building was exposed to the several changes through the centuries and was devastated due to misuse and neglect, still its values can be categorized as high importance in an historic context of the city of Prishtina, as these type of the buildings are among the first ones that were build in cities in Ottoman Period. But the main values that this building represents are related to society, social and civic respect, as the building presented gathering point, where among the healthcare and hygiene of the people, also discussions related to different issues could be done.



Functioning of the Hammam

Problems

Serious amounts of the original details and features have been lost due to the radically changes that were done, especially in the period after the Second World War. The building from the classical Turkish bath was changed into the “modern” public bath, where the system of it was changed radically, especially on installing the modern equipments and materials. So parallel to physical lost that this building experienced, also the social and environmental values were lost until of closing of it, a action which made the building become a storage for construction material. By neglecting of this building, and several ones in this historical zone, indirect was allowed that the whole zone, in urban context, to be devastated from the raising of new uncontrolled built structures.

As a result of abovementioned facts the building required immediate attention. Mainly, in physical aspect of the building, the problems which have occurred during our investigation phase were : Surface loss, cavities, cracks, element loss, detachment of plaster, high level of moisture, early improper additions and repairs, late additions and improper interventions, corrosion and formations of plants.

Solutions

There were undertaken several steps that, in general they presented crucial moves to begin with solving of the problems in the initial phases of the project, as well as in continuation of it, as it is still far away from accomplishing of the project:

- By creating the Steering Board for the project and involving all parties such as related institutions, owner of the building, experts and local community, it was needed to manage the project, but also send the clear message and determination to save this building.
- Parallel to the steering board the Council of Experts was constituted. This council was formed with international and local experts of different profiles, and their duties are to decide about the alternatives for different matter and offer the solutions for conservation and restoration in accordance with international principles and the requirements for good functioning of the building.
- Creating the team for Supervision of the work, in close cooperation with the team that designs the Conservation and Restoration project.

These three bodies that are mentioned presents the regulatory of this project, where all the voices and thoughts in the sake of the safeguarding of this building were addressed, but also to ensure the quality of the works done in aspect of usage of the materials, techniques and respect of the international principles of restoration.

Proposal

Based on the existing state and survey analyses of the pathologies, the Interventions for conservation and restoration of this building have been divided into Three Phases.

First Phase /

Advanced investigation of the built structure, and its consolidation

- Cutting of the plants and trees re-growing on the roof of the facades of the hammam.
- Removing of the corrupted lead sheets on the roof and depleting the plants and the roots placed under, using the same method.
- Scraping the latter added plaster, especially around the cracks to determine the exact dimensions and character of the crack.
- Laboratory analyzing of the original building material samples.
- Scraping the plaster inside, especially in the parts where later cement plaster were added.
- Removing the additional concrete and terrazzo floor, in order to examine precisely the situation in the hypocausts and the basement.
- Removing of latter added walls and features, chosen after structural evaluation.

Second Phase /

Structural Restoration

- Depleting of the dried tree roots from the roof and facades.
- Re-covering of the roof and domes with lead sheets after installation of structural repairs, as foreseen in structural consolidation project.
- Stitching of the cracks with appropriate methods, suggested in the structural consolidation project.
- Partial re-plastering of the interior walls, with original plaster formula determined with laboratory analyses.
- Rebuilding the appropriate floor, based on the found remaining of the floors.

Third Phase / Re-Functioning

The new function of the Hammam is decided to be a multifunctional space with cultural character. The restoration project proposal of the re-functioning of the hammam consists of open spaces for temporary exhibitions, workshop, conferences and performance halls.

The building will be delivered to the Institute for Protection of Monuments, and Regional Museum of Prishtina, (IPMRM of Prishtina) which is part of municipality structures. The decision was based on the facts that :

- The IPMRM of Prishtina has needs for exhibiting the archaeological items that were found in the region of Prishtina,
- IPMRM of Prishtina has potential and human resources to run and also maintain the building,
- The multifunctional aspect of the building makes it possible financial profit in order that the building can gain the autonomy from Municipality in financial aspect. They would rent out the spaces for different events (conferences, workshops etc).

Method

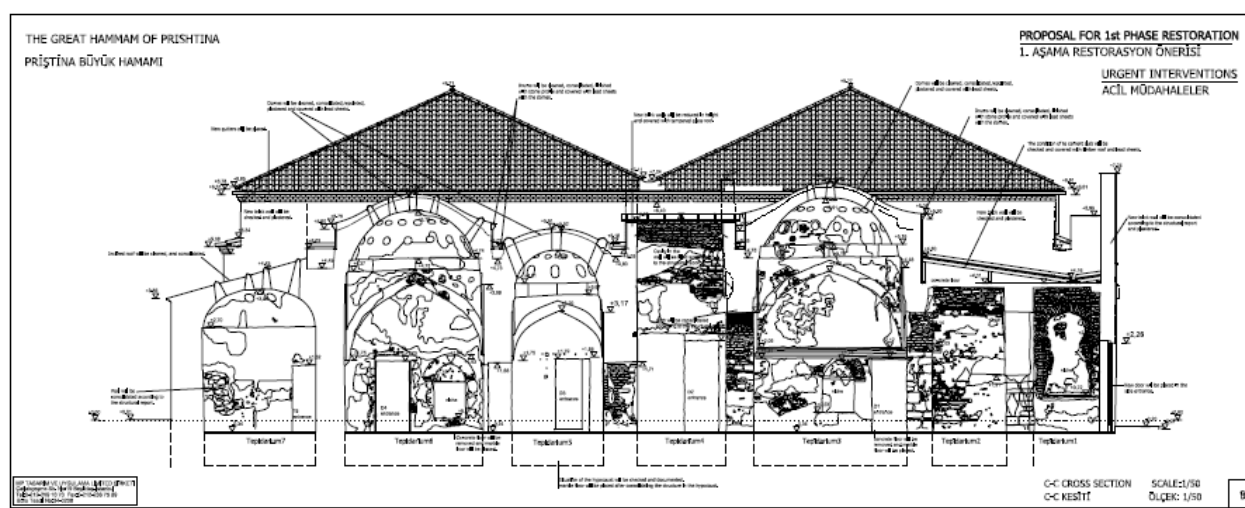
All the conservation actions that were undertaken were done based on the previous information that could be founded. We have also relied into the existing state of the building, as the building itself is the best and most trusted source of the information in these cases.

Regarding this matter the activities were concentrated in the carefully cleaning of the building, from the plants that were growing in the structures, removal of later additions of plasters in interior and exterior through latter added wall separations and concrete floors.

It was obvious, as the building seemed quite complicated, it is needed to engaged professional team, in this case from Turkey, that by using contemporary methods of surveying the building, we could identify the main structural and technical problems that were present. In meantime the structural analyses of the building were done, in order to supervise its behaviour after the removal of latter additions, and propose the consolidation options.

By knowing the existing state of the building it was possible to initiate and compile the measures that were needed to be undertaken for structure consolidation. The most convenient for the council of experts was to do the strengthening of the structure by using the carbon fibers and wraps, as a new technology but also based on the strategy of “minimum intervention, maximum saving”.

Beside the works on site, which were all the time supervised by the experts the discussions for the future usage of the building were initiated, so the team of designers from Turkey could offer several options of the function, based on the requirements of the project board. Currently the option for its new usage was chosen.



Cross section of building, existing state (the measurements were done by using Total Station)

The budget for completing all needed works was secured by the Municipality of Prishtina, and SIDA.

No.	Actions	Timetable	Budget (Euro)
First Phase /			
1	Advanced investigation of the built structure, and its consolidation	2007 - 2008	190.000 €
2	Second Phase / Structural Restoration	2008 – 2009	280.000 €
3	Third Phase / Re-Functioning	2009 - 2010	220.000 €

Current Status of the Work

Currently the First Phase of the activities on site has been finished. Parallel to advanced investigations that were done, also the restoration project design has been brought to its final stages, by taking into consideration the additional information's that were found on site during the investigations, and also by taking into account the new decisions from the board of project and council of experts, which were the results of long discussions. The Second Phase of restoration works is in its initial stage, and based on the budget that is in disposal this phase will end in the second half of the year 2009.

Conclusions

Although the process is in its mid terms, with our efforts, especially in initial stages of the project, it was possible to create a model example of restoration for the city of Prishtina, in sense of the professional approach, high respect of international restoration criteria's, but also when it comes to the involvement of all main actors, that have key role in the future, and to present ability of gaining from this process, in social and economical aspect.

Taking into the consideration of the whole historic core, the restoration and re-usage of this building will aim to launch a chain reaction for other monuments of the area, preserve and maintain them, to include them into the priority lists of the respective institutions, in order that this zone can once again gain its complexity, gain in gravity for the citizens that are longing for an area such as this - a cultural "living" centre.

Photos

Photos used in the paper were done by:

Old Photos of Prishtina ,

Institute for Protection of Monuments and Regional Museum of Prishtina,

Existing State, Restoration photos,

MP Design & Const.ltd.co Turkey

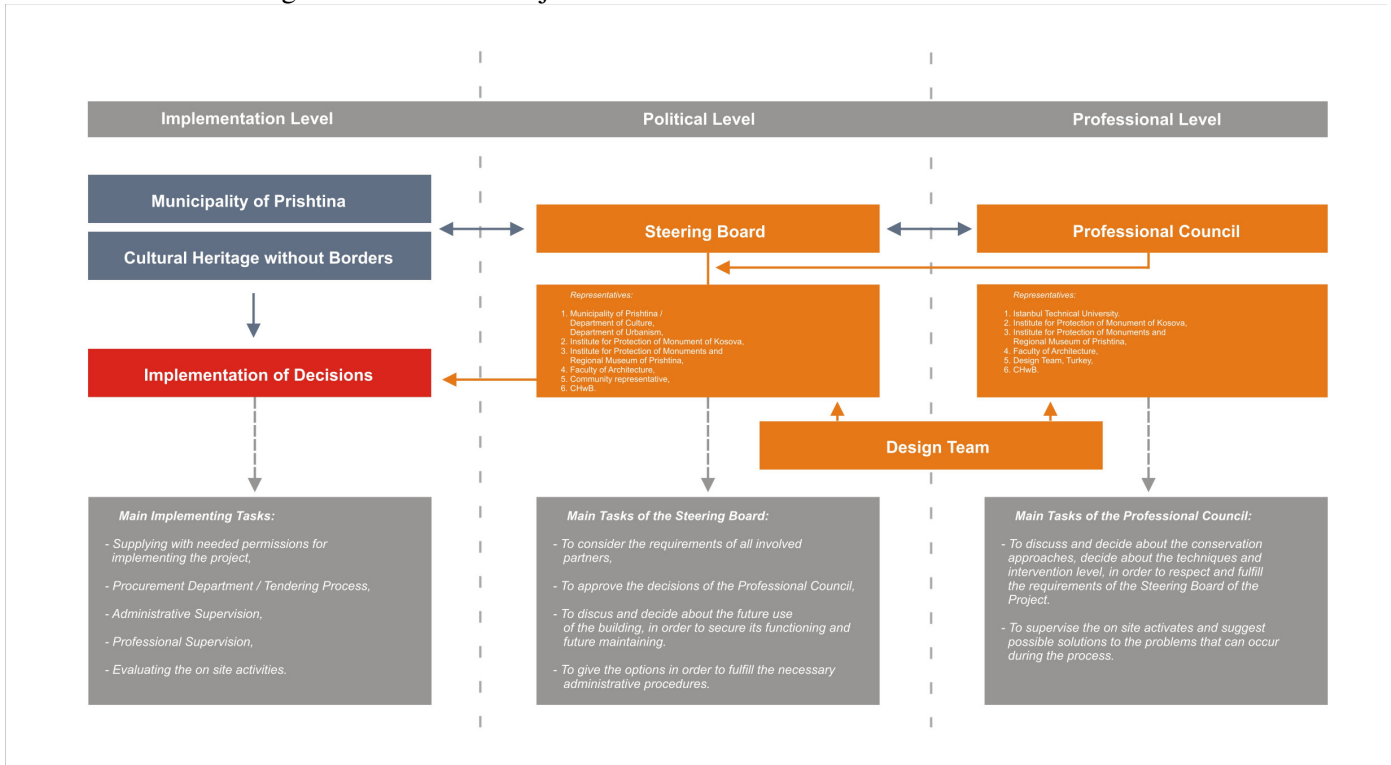
Drawings

MP Design & Const.ltd.co Turkey

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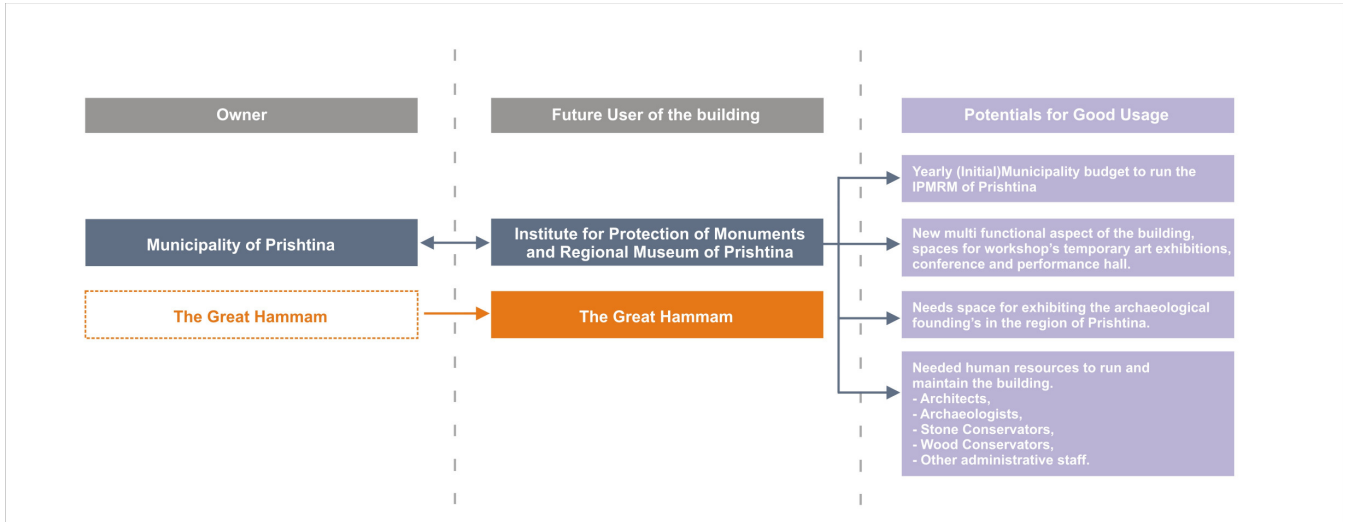
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Annex 1 Functioning Structure of the Project



Annex 2

Re-Functioning Scheme / New Owner and potentials for running the building



New Function Scheme

The Great Hammam of Prishtina

Third Phase / Re-Functioning

- New function of the Hammam is decided to be a multifunctional space with cultural character.
- The restoration project proposal of the re-functioning of the hammam consists of open spaces for temporary exhibitions, workshop, conferences and performance halls.

Dressing hall - D1
Conference and performance hall



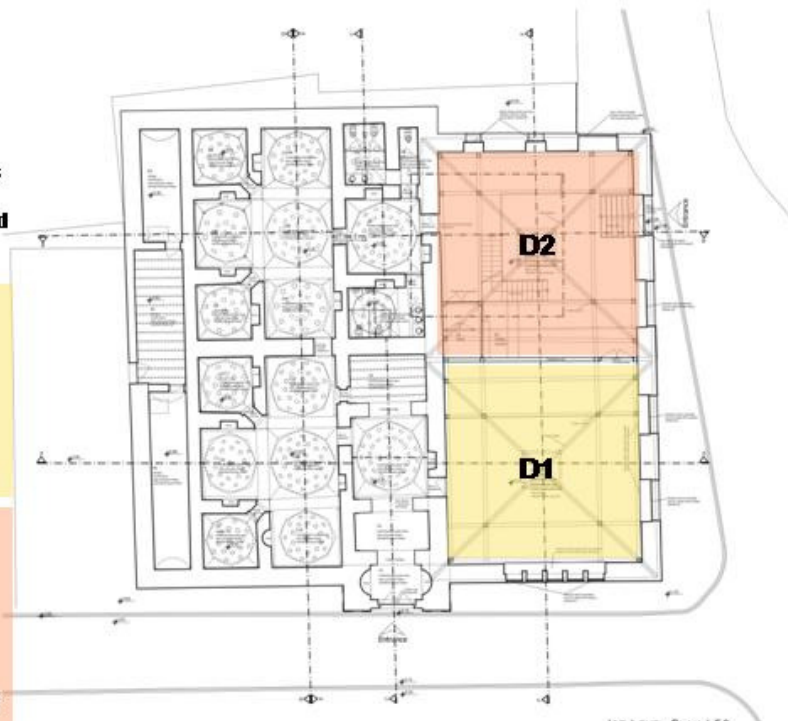
D1

Dressing hall - D2
Exhibition hall and foyer



D2

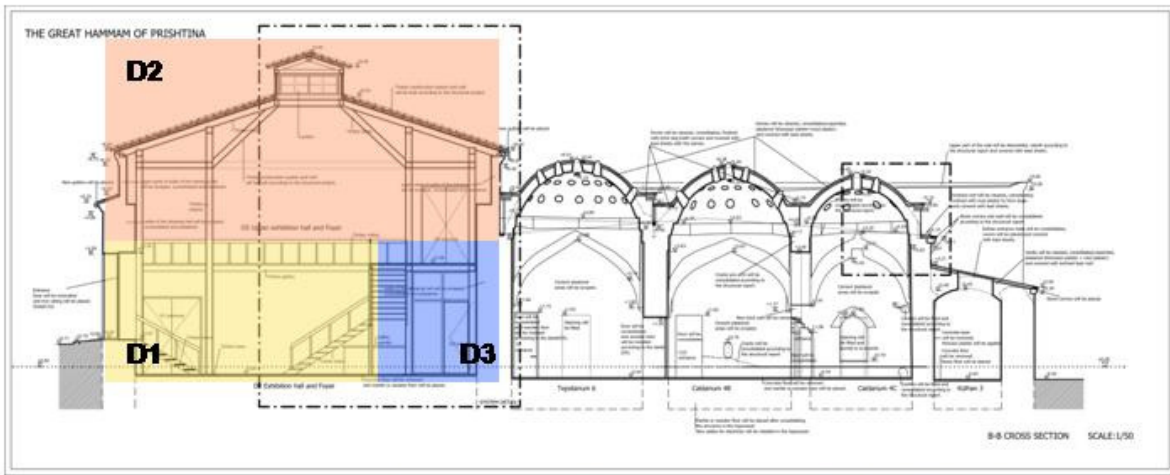
THE GREAT HAMMAM OF PRISHTINA



1ST LEVEL PLAN 1:50

The Great Hammam of Prishtina

2



Dressing hall - D1
Conference and performance hall

D1

Dressing hall - D2
Exhibition hall and foyer

D2

Coffee counter - D3

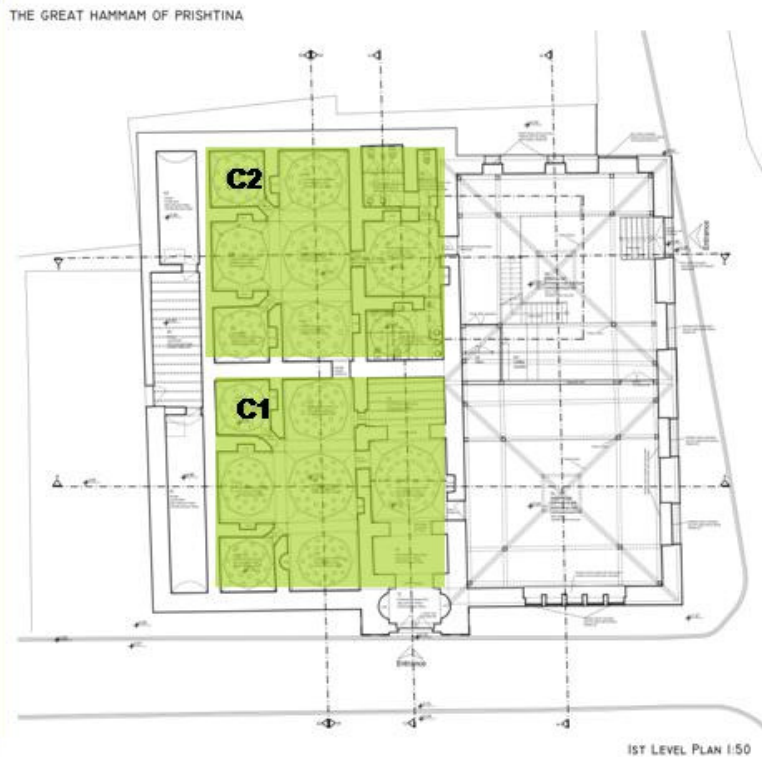
D3

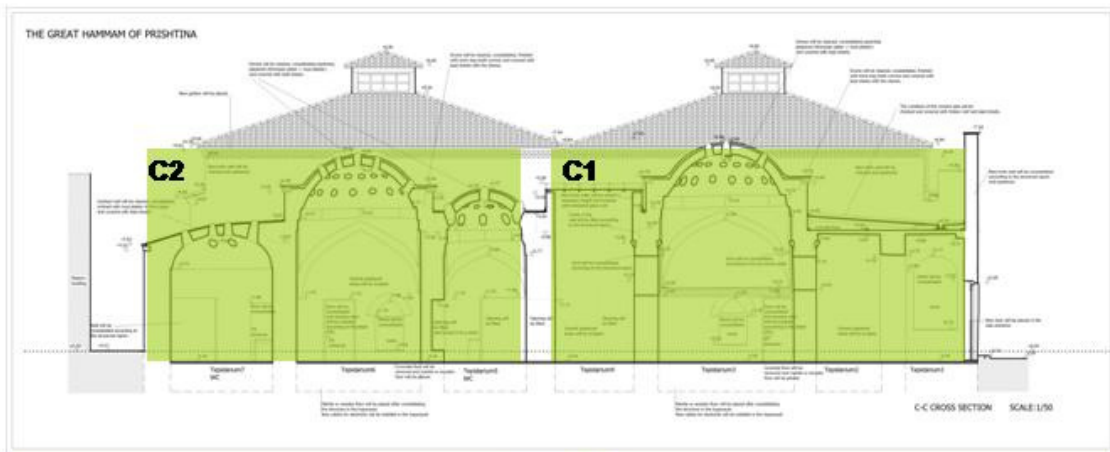
The Great Hammam of Prishtina

3

C1
Temporary archaeological exhibitions

C2
Workshops





C2
Workshops



C1
Temporary Sculpture exhibitions

