

Seat of the First Philippine Republic

Management Plan for the Barasoain Church Historical Landmark

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Façade of the Barasoain Church Historical Landmark

Abstract

This paper focuses on the Management Plan for the Barasoain Church Historical Landmark. It is to provide strategy and program of action to conserve, restore, rehabilitate, protect and enhance the structure of cultural-historic significance.

The management plan for the Barasoain Church Historical Landmark is comprehensive programs that address all possible problems, interpolate all parameters, compromise the most practical solution, work through with least interference and go beyond. It must be scientific but with respect to the original materials and standard conservation principles.

Introduction

The conservation of cultural heritage is pioneering and evolving discipline in the Philippines, where the deterioration and destruction of old historical and significant structures have awakened the desire to preserve them. Indeed, these old structures are tangible links to the

Filipinos' past and assist in maintaining its identity as a nation in the rapidly changing scenes of development and modernization.

Significant for their age and cultural values, these ancient structures are indispensable media and sources of artistic and historic information and thus, measures to preserve them from the onslaughts of time, nature and man are imperative.

Background

Location

Barasoain Church is situated near latitude $14^{\circ}50'46.82''\text{N}$ and longitude $120^{\circ}48'44.79''\text{E}$. It is located near the town plaza of Malolos, the capital city of the province of Bulacan and about 50 kilometers away from Manila. It is bounded by the towns of Calumpit, Plaridel, Sta. Isabel and Paombong.



Map of the Philippines



Map of Bulacan



Aerial view of Barasoain Church Historical Landmark from Google earth



History

The three centuries of Spanish rule in the country left long lasting legacies in the country. The culture of the Filipinos was inevitably inspired by the Iberian rule in the Philippines. From the food that we eat and even our names were rooted in the blood of our Spanish ancestry. Furthermore, the massive structures like churches and cathedral are silent witness of that time. During the Spanish era, Christianity was introduced by missionaries who came to the country.



Old picture of Barasoain Church

They not only used the sword as part of controlling the country but also used the cross. The Spaniards forced the Filipinos to construct churches as a place of worship. In the entire Philippines, there are countless churches built during the Spanish period; a product of hardship and perseverance of many Filipinos. These churches served not only as a place of worship but also as a place of refuge during trying times.

One of the more significant churches in the country is the Barasoain Church. Located in Malolos, Bulacan, this church has contributed in the struggle for independence. Barasoain was a visita of Malolos from which it separated in 1859. The first parish priest, Fr. Francisco Arriola was appointed on June 1, 1859. He built its convent. A small ermita was constructed during the time of Fr. Melchor Fernandez in 1816, which served as a temporary parish church. He was the priest of Malolos from 1816-1840. One of the existing bells in the church, dated 1870, was installed by Fr. Emeterio Ruperez, which was donated by the principalia of Malolos. It was dedicated to Our Lady of Carmel of Barasoain. The temporary chapel was replaced with a hewn stone church by Fr. Francisco Royo in 1871 and 1878 but was destroyed by fire later on. What was left was one of the bells that were installed by Fr. Royo on February 30, 1873 which was dedicated to St. Francis Xavier. During the term of Fr. Juan Giron, the chapel of the cemetery was used until it was also destroyed during an earthquake of 1880. He then built a temporary chapel made of nipa and bamboo, however, it was burned down in 1884 during the solemn celebrations of the feast of Our Lady of Carmel. In 1885, Fr. Giron hired a contractor and started the construction of a massive church made of bricks and masonry. The church was completed under the supervision of Fr. Giron. However there was no specific date of its completion. Some historian said that “at the time it was completed, the pockets of Fr. Giron were drained”, he might have put every penny for the construction of the church. The construction of the tower and the restoration of the convent started during the term of Fr. Martin Arconada in 1889. There were three bells installed in 1897. One of them is dedicated to St. Martin and was donated by Fr. Arconada. The convent undertook another restoration in 1894 by Fr. Miguel Vera.

The Barasoain Church played a major role in the history of the Philippines. Three important episodes in the history of the Philippines took place there. After the declaration of the Philippine independence in Kawit, Cavite in June 12, 1898, Aguinaldo transferred his government to Malolos, Bulacan. The Barasoain Church became the venue for the inauguration of the First Philippine Congress on September 15, 1898, for the drafting of the Malolos Constitution on September 29, 1898 to January 21, 1899 and for the inauguration of the First Philippine Republic on January 23, 1899. These events count among the proudest moments in the struggle of Filipinos for self-rule.

In recent years, the buildings have undergone thorough restoration under the supervision of the National Historical Institute. Because of the significant events that took place in the said church and its



Church main altar



Church two side altars

convent, and its distinct architectural design, it was declared a National Landmark on August 1, 1973.

Description of the Building

Barasoain Church is a complex site of about 6,000 square meters consisting of the church proper, a belfry, a convent cloister, a front patio and an interior court.

The features of the façade are Neo-classic in style. The semicircular pediment is like the opening bar to a symphony of variations on a circle motif. The shoulders of the pediment swing into curvilinear slopes and terminate in the contrapuntal sphere-topped urn finials. The smaller entrances are the repetitions of the main entrance with recessed arches rest on triple columns with graceful cylindrical shafts. The recurring melody is faintly played out in the arched niche on the pediment, which is rendered deep and narrow by the recessed arch and by the slim obscure statue it houses. At present, it continues to function as a church.

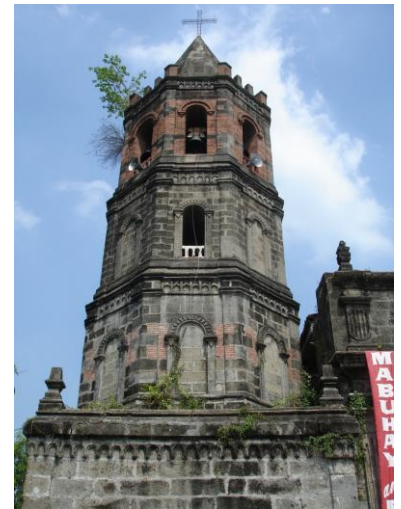
The belltower on the right side of the church rises from a cube and tapers into three layers, rhythmically accented by blind and open windows. Inverted scallops, metamorphosing at some point into simple plant forms, run along the base of each layer like grace notes embellishing an otherwise simple passage.

The convent on the left side where the Universidad Literaria Cientifica de Filipinas was first housed is a combination of adobe and wood construction. At present, it features a light and sound museum under the management of the National Historical Institute.

Analysis

In 1997, the National Centennial Commission (NCC) initiated major restoration and development works for the Barasoain Church and Convent for the celebration of the centennial anniversary of the Malolos Congress on September 15, 1998 and the First Philippine Republic on January 1999.

Many parts of the structure were reconstructed in accordance with the approved plans and concept for the National Centennial Celebrations. One of the crucial interventions was the reconstruction of the entire roofing system of the church. The new roofing system covered with replicas of clay tiles used in the 19th century was constructed 3 meters higher than the original level. The marble flooring was replaced by the checkerboard design of black and white cement tiles. The original motif and design of ceilings and walls are copied.



The ground floor adobe walls of the convent were retained and most of the wooden components at the second floor were replaced. At present the structure is used by the NHI as office and museum. Additional structures with design simulated of that of the existing convent were also built to house the ecclesiastical museum, office of the parish and the residence of the parish priest.

As a whole the original features of the church were preserved, and because of its historical contribution, tourists and visitors from different places and localities always include Barasoain church Historical Landmark in their itinerary of important historical places to visit in Bulacan.

The church and its facilities are being maintained with continuous support from the national government, local government, other institution and the church.

Value Typologies

- **Historical Value**

The Barasoain Church Historical Landmark is popularly known as the seat of the Malolos Congress of September 15, 1898, for the drafting of the Malolos constitution on September 29, 1898 and the site of the inauguration of the First Philippine Republic in January 23, 1899.



A session during the First Philippine Congress in Malolos

- **Religious Value**

A Roman Catholic Church, Barasoain become an independent parish in 1859 dedicated to Our Lady of Mount Carmel. It was one of the countless churches built during Spanish period as a place of worship.

▪ **Educational Value**

The Universidad Literaria Cientifica de Filipinas was first housed in the Barasoain convent. It offered Law as well as Medicine, Surgery and Notary Public, the Academia Militar and the Burgos Institute, an exclusive school for boys. Today, the convent houses different museum, a place of informal learning. It tries to carry lessons from history and the importance of civic duties.

▪ **Associational Value**

The site serves as the haven of the *Congreso Revolucionario* during the Philippine revolution with the ilustrados as its delegates and Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo as the leader.

▪ **Authentic Value**

Founded by Augustinian Missionaries, it was originally built in 1630. Even if it was destroyed by fire on 1884 that caused reconstruction and various renovations, the structure itself was very similar to the church during Spanish era with neo-classic style features of the façade.

Current Issues and Problems

1. The adobe wall shows powdering (pulverization) while some are chipped and cracked. Proper consolidation is needed.
2. Some wooden parts are rotted and deteriorated due to weathering.
3. Termite infestations on wooden components are observed.
4. Capiz shell windows are currently tarnished.
5. Presence of botanical growth and black deposits on stone walls.
6. The need of skylight roofing at the azotea to prevent the area from deterioration. This can be use as an additional function room.
7. Rusted window grills
8. Door pivot and locks are deteriorated and some are not functional.
9. Gaps on some part of the stone walls
10. Some wooden window grills and wood balusters are missing and others are broken.
11. Vigan tiles at the azotea area are chipped while others are deteriorated.
12. Some painted parts show blotches.

Proposed Management Plan

This historic structure is intact and currently in-use. Taking care of the church and its facilities shall protect it from decay and attain development. The maintenance plan shall be the continuity of the process of protecting the built heritage in long term perspective. An estimated budget of Php 3,000,000.00 (approximately US\$ 64,000) must be allotted yearly for the maintenance program of the church and convent.

Maintenance and repair

Item	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Semi-annual
1. Mop the floor	√			
2. Dust window sills, exhibition panels, counter tops and voting booths	√			
3. Wipe off finger marks on glass panels	√			
4. Removal of garbage	√			
5. Remove cobwebs and molds from walls and ceiling		√		
6. Application of wax to the floor		√		
7. Wipe lighting fixtures			√	
8. Wipe off dust which may cling to outer windows and outer walls of the church and convent				√
9. Assign a staff member to inspect for termites and insect borers				√
10. Cleaning and maintenance of the statue of saints and other display		√		
11. Proper disposal of waste	√			
12. Establish positions and activities of each	√			

employee				
13. Prepare a safety and health environmental management plan			√	
14. Interact with the community by conducting seminars, lectures and the like.				√

Conservation / Restoration Plan

A. Belltower

- 1.0 Restoration of church belltower
 - 1.1 Documentation
 - 1.1.1 Measured drawings
 - 1.1.2 Photo documentation before during and after restoration
 - 1.2 Cleaning works
 - 1.2.1 Mechanical cleaning
 - 1.2.2 Chemical cleaning
 - 1.3 Stone consolidation/re-grouting of walls
 - 1.4 Installation of neon lightings at the cross on top of the belltower
 - 1.5 Replacement of existing wood hangers to double strut trusses for the main bell
 - 1.6 Improvement of belltower floor drainage

B. Church

- 1.0 Documentation
 - 1.1 Measured drawings
 - 1.2 Photo documentation before during and after restoration
- 2.0 Restoration of church exterior
 - 2.1 Cleaning works
 - 2.1.1 Mechanical cleaning
 - 2.1.2 Chemical cleaning
 - 2.2 Re-pointing of decayed mortar joints
 - 2.3 Consolidation of stone walls
 - 2.4 Finishing works
- 3.0 Restoration of church interior
 - 3.1 Periodic inspection and rehabilitation of the roofing system

- 3.2 Periodic inspection and rehabilitation of ceiling system
- 3.3 Repair/replacement of structural wooden components
- 3.4 Repair/replacement of architectural wooden components
- 3.5 Replacement of damaged floor tiles
- 3.6 Retrofitting of wooden doors and windows
- 3.7 Gold leafing of main and side altars
- 3.8 Periodic inspection and rehabilitation of electrical system
- 3.9 Provision of protection from bird/bat droppings
- 3.10 General repainting and varnishing
- 3.11 Treatment of wooden components with termiticides
- 3.12 Installation and maintenance of in-ground termite bait system

C. Convent

1.0 Restoration of BCHL History Museum

- 1.1 Documentation
 - 1.1.1 Measured drawings
 - 1.1.2 Photo documentation before during and after restoration
- 1.2 Repair/replacement of structural wooden components
- 1.3 Repair/replacement of architectural wooden components
- 1.4 Replacement of damaged tegula tile roofing
- 1.5 Replacement of damaged corrugated G.I. roofing
- 1.6 Repair/retrofitting of wooden capiz windows
- 1.7 Replacement of wooden window grills
- 1.8 Provision of security grills for exhaust system
- 1.9 Removal of botanical growth on the exterior walls
- 1.10 Chemical cleaning of stone walls
- 1.11 Consolidation of stone walls
- 1.12 Treatment of wooden components with termiticides
- 1.13 Installation and maintenance of in-ground termite bait system
- 1.14 Periodic inspection and maintenance of electrical system
- 1.15 Water proofing of azotea at the second floor
- 1.16 Provision of skylight roofing system at the azotea

- 1.17 Provision of office/library equipment and furniture
- 1.18 General repainting and varnishing
- 1.19 Replacement of deteriorated vigan tiles

- 2.0 Restoration of Diocesano de Malolos (Ecclesiastical Museum)
 - 2.1 Documentation
 - 2.1.1 Measured drawings
 - 2.1.2 Photo documentation before during and after restoration
 - 2.2 Repair/replacement of structural wooden components
 - 2.3 Repair/replacement of architectural wooden components
 - 2.4 Treatment of wooden components with termiticides
 - 2.5 Installation and maintenance of in-ground termite bait system
 - 2.6 Periodic inspection and maintenance of electrical system
 - 2.7 Restoration of library hall
 - 2.8 Restoration of multi-purpose hall
 - 2.9 Provision of cabinets and showcases
 - 2.10 Modification of staircases leading to both museum
 - 2.11 Provision of security cameras and T.V. monitor
 - 2.12 General repainting and varnishing

D. Church Yard

- 1.0 Repair/replacement of outdoor lighting receptacles and fixtures
- 2.0 Installation of flag poles (evolution of Philippine flag) at the church plaza
- 3.0 Upgrading of the Glorietta (Gazebo)
- 4.0 Re-development of drainage system
- 5.0 Provision of waste management program

Method

In management planning thorough research, survey and documentation are necessary. The Barasoain Church and convent is a structure built of bricks, masonry and wood subject to periodic check up, cleaning and replacement of deteriorated parts.

Documentation is required in all stages of work, it include actual measurements of the church and plotting it in form of plans, elevation and section. Photo documentation is also necessary that can be use as a reference for future restoration.

Mechanical cleaning usually involves dry brushing to remove loosely bound materials, dirt and organic growth on the stone and masonry surface.

Chemical cleaning is a cleaning process which applies chemical solution on the surface to be cleaned to remove or extract the unwanted elements or superficial, an initial stage of intervention in preparation for the consolidation of the material.

Grouting injection can be used to improve the homogeneity and strength of weak and porous mortar. This is done by filling the cavities and bonding the faces of crossing cracks.

Repointing is a remedial treatment with the aim of sealing gaps, filling small cavities and replacing decayed mortar joints. It is the method of introducing new mortars with the use of a pointing device or pointing iron.

Termite treatment of all wooden components and ground should be performed by a license and professional termite applicator.

Bird/Bat droppings protection. Bird and bat droppings are not only unsightly but potentially harmful to stone, nets may be improvised or installed to control entry of birds and bats in the buildings.

Consolidation is an act of direct intervention or preservation to prevent, stop or retard deterioration, it is the physical addition or application of adhesive or supportive materials into the actual fabric of the structure.

Results/Current Status of the Work

The planning is still in progress. Coordination between the concerned institutions and organizations are still on-going. The proposed program of works has been done to raise funding from local and international organization.

Discussion & Conclusions

As with all areas of historic preservation, prudence and a systematic approach are required. Problems must be fully understood before attempts are made to solve them, and we must be aware of the ramifications of our methods before we employ them.

An attempt at restoration that irreversibly alters or damages a structure might best not have been attempted.

Although the Barasoain Church has been declared a National Historical Landmark by the Philippine government, conservation measures are still needed to properly safeguard and manage the existing heritage structure.

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Appendix 1

Key Plan (A)



(1) CONVENT



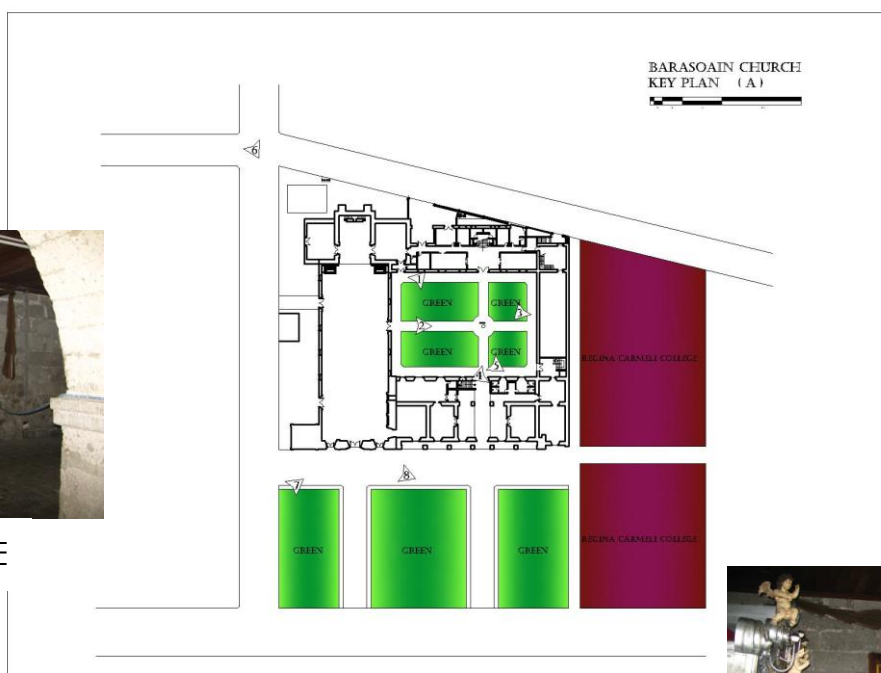
(2) ECCLESIASTICAL MUSEUM



(3) NHI MUSEUM



(4) NHI OFFICE



(5) PARISH OFFICE



(6) SIDEVIEW OF THE CHURCH



(7) BARASOAIN CHURCH



(8) UNIVERSITY OF REGINA CARMELI

Appendix 2

Key Plan (B)



(1) PREPARATORY SCHOOL



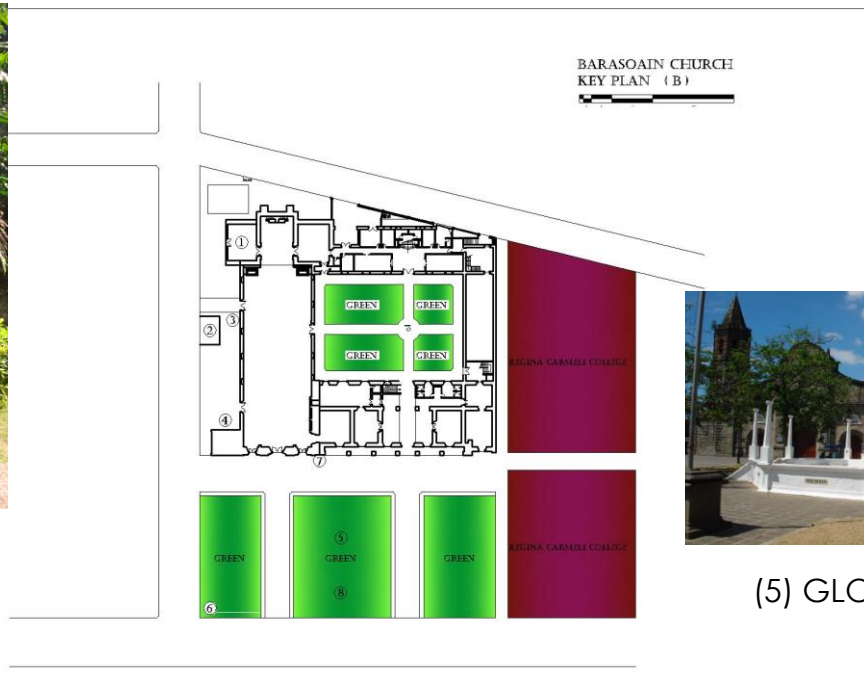
(2) PUBLIC TOILET



(3) VIRGIN MARY & JESUS



(4) STATUE OF JESUS



(5) GLORIETA



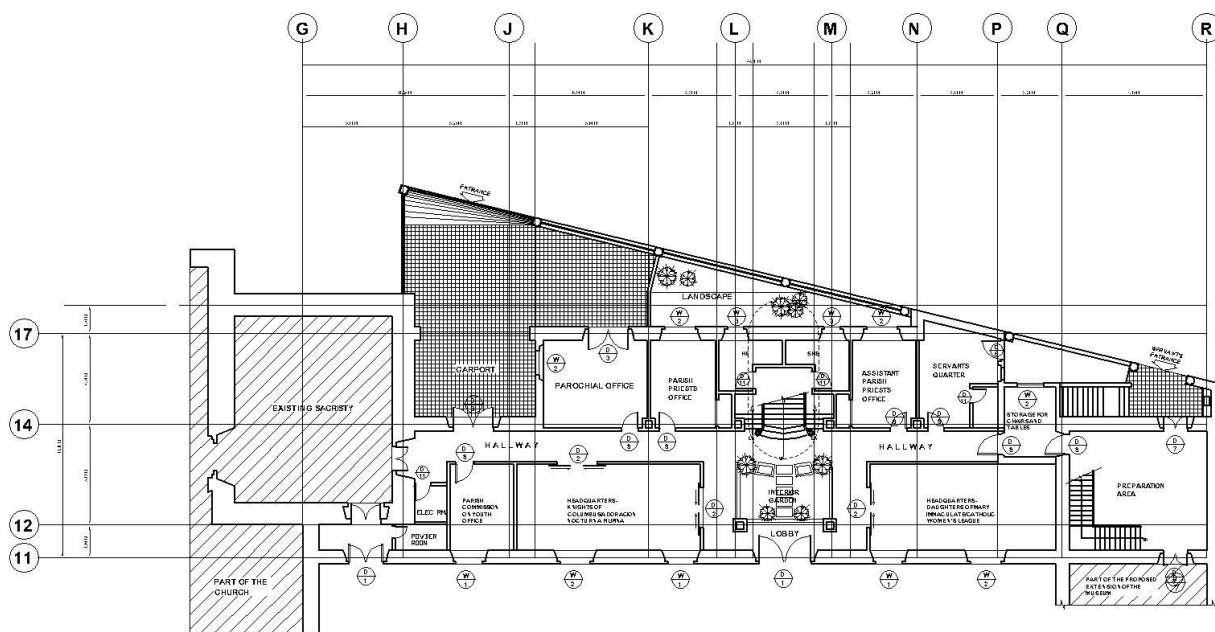
(6) GROTTTO TO THE
VIRGIN MARY

(7) MARKER FOR
CENTENNIAL
FREEDOM TRAIL



(8) AGUINALDO MONUMENT

The ground floor plan of the Church of the Holy Spirit shows a rectangular nave with side aisles. The nave is labeled 'NAVE' and contains a central altar area marked 'SPP'. The side aisles are labeled 'SIDE AISLE'. The narthex is labeled 'NARTHEX'. The plan includes a scale bar (0 to 6 meters) and a north arrow. The drawing is labeled 'GROUND FLOOR PLAN' and '1:500 (2020)'.

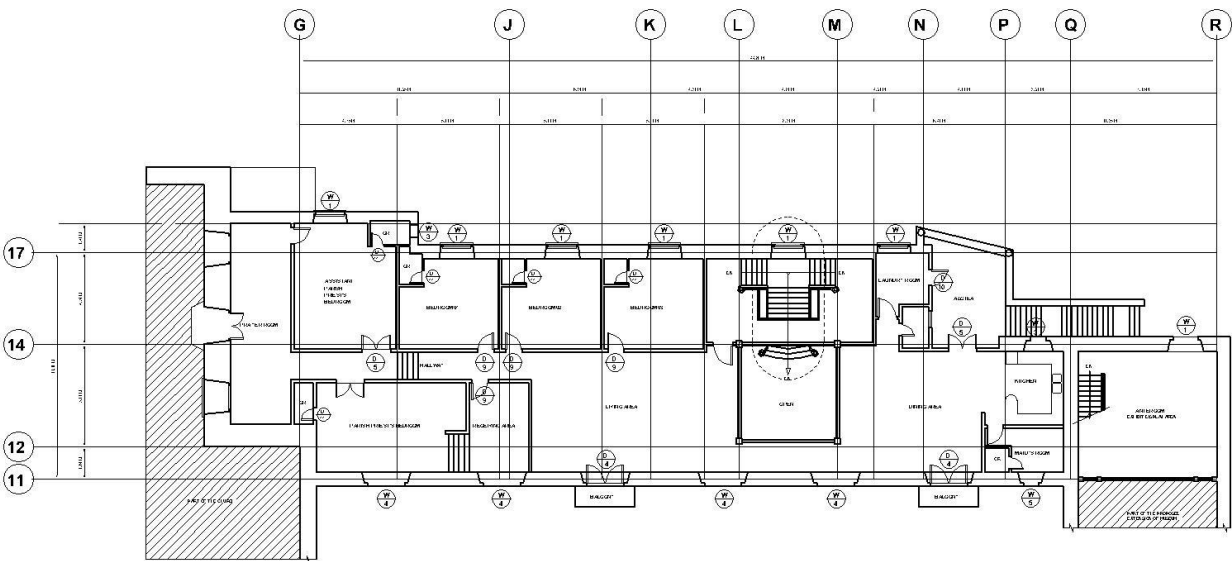


GROUND FLOOR PLAN (CONVENT)

SCALE: 1 : 100 METERS

Appendix 4

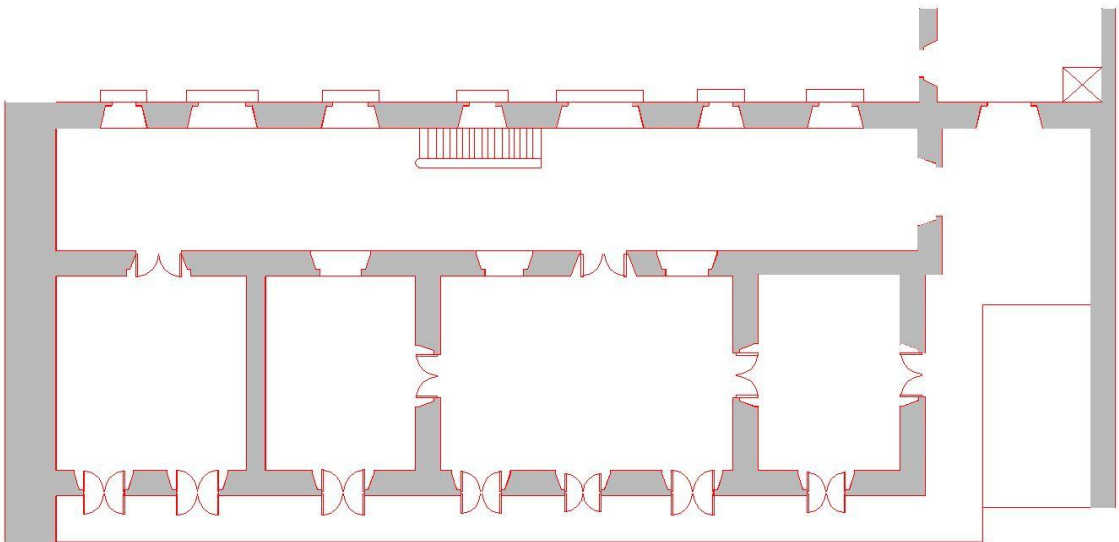
Floor Plan and Elevation



I
A-3

SECOND FLOOR PLAN (CONVENT)

SCALE: 1 : 100 METERS



NHI MUSEUM FLOOR PLAN

SCALE: 1:150 MTS.

Appendix 4

