

## Community-led Urban Strategies in Historic Towns (COMUS)



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### Preliminary Technical Assessment

## Restoration of the Former Men's Gymnasium Building and establishment of the People's (Public) School (Training Centre)

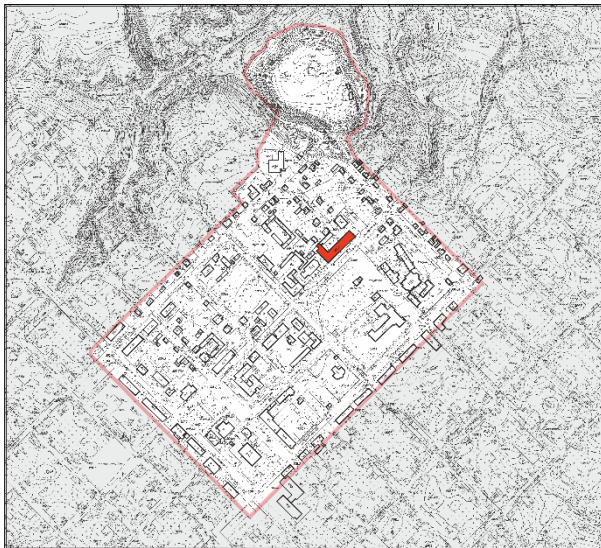
**Mscislaŭ, Belarus**

March 2017



## 1. Introductory page

### Mscislaŭ Men Gymnasium



Site location in the historic center of Mscislaŭ



Site plan

- 1.1 Country or Territory: Belarus
- 1.2 Name of organisation compiling the information: Mscislaŭ District Executive Committee
- 1.3 Contact name: Biskup Natallia, Elena Androsava
- 1.4 Email address: [okinchits.mst@tut.by](mailto:okinchits.mst@tut.by), irmaultra@yandex.by
- 1.5 Name and address of building or site: Former Men's Gymnasium Building. Address: Mscislaŭ, Mahileu region; Str. 1th of May,14.
- 1.6 Inventory reference number(s): 513F000509
- 1.7 Building/Monument/Site type: Architectural monuments of regional importance, 3<sup>rd</sup> category.
- 1.8 Main dates: The Architectural monument from the early-20<sup>th</sup> century. Designed by the architect from St.-Petersburg S. Volonsevich in the style of Art Nouveau. In November 1925, during the Soviet times, Belarusian Pedagogical College was located in the gymnasium building. In 1937, it was reorganized into the Pedagogical School. Since 1953 to 2001 in the building there was the Mstislav Secondary School No. 1.
- 1.9 Current use(s): The building is not being used, and is currently closed.

## 2. Executive Summary: the site and its management

The Architectural monument of the early 20th century. Designed by the architect from St. Petersburg S. Volonsevich in Art Nouveau style . It is asymmetric, T-shaped in plan, two-story building which consists of three interconnected housings. The main façade flanked by avant-corps, dissected by high semi-circular windows (narrower at the first floor and wide at the second).

The central entrance is decorated by a visor on consoles. There is an arched window with a keeled pediment. The cornice divides the façades into two floors. In the overlap of the premises of the central building, both cross and cylindrical vaults are used. The plan is typical of such buildings.

In November 1925, during the Soviet period, the Belarusian Pedagogical College was located in the gymnasium building. In 1937, it was reorganized into the Pedagogical School. Between 1953 and 2001, Mstislav High School No. 1 was located here. Currently the building is empty, and is closed to the public. It is the budgetary responsibility of Mscislaŭ History and Archaeology Museum. In 2015, the building was restored. It is planned to create a city educational centre here, to extend for adults and child educational provision.

## 3. Administrative information

### 3.1 Responsible Authorities

- Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Belarus
- Mscislaŭ Local Administration
- Mscislaŭ District Educational Department
- Mscislaŭ District Culture Department
- Mscislaŭ Museum of History and Archaeology

### 3.2 Building/Site, Name and Address

Ensemble of the Jesuit collegium: Mscislaŭ, 213453, Mahileu region, Belarus;  
Str. 1th of May, 14.

### 3.3 Map reference

No data

### 3.4 Type of monument

Historic and cultural value – 3rd category (architectural monuments of regional importance).

### 3.5 Ownership

The building is the budgetary responsibility of Mscislaŭ History and Archaeology Museum.

### 3.6 Statutory Protection/Constraints

Any intervention on the site will be undertaken in accordance with the requirements and constraints of a 3rd category listed monument. The Former Men's Gymnasium monument is located in the historic centre of Mscislaŭ. Any work on the construction, modernization, restoration and repair will be carried out on the basis of the project for the protection zones of the historical centre, which has been developed as part of the detailed part of the central part of the city of Mscislaŭ with the regeneration of the historic zone. (project No. 40.08-00.ГМ-10, UE "BELNIIPRGADOSTROITELSTVA").

The project for the restoration and use of the site was developed in 2015, according to the legislation of the protection of historic and cultural heritage. This project has been agreed with the public authorities responsible for the protection of heritage.

## 4. Summary of condition

No.	Address of the building	Summary of the physical condition (very bad to good)	Condition Risk Assessment A-H	Priority for intervention – High/Medium/Low
1	Former men's gymnasium Building. Mscislaŭ, 213453, Str. 1th of May, 14.	Bad condition: emergency technical works to reinforce the roof, internal slabs between floors and stairs are required.	F	Medium

## 5. Existing information





## 6. Scope of the PTA

### 6.1 Extent/Nature of the assessment:

The PTA was developed by a team of local experts together with experts from the NSG:

- a heritage specialist, museum worker with good knowledge in the history and culture of the city, responsible for the evaluation and development of heritage rehabilitation concept;
- a specialist in investment management, responsible for assessing project profitability, sustainability, risk assessment, and for compiling final reports;
- a specialist in construction management, responsible for assessing the physical condition of the site and the need for intervention, preliminary assessment of the restoration costs.

The final version of PTA will be reviewed by a specialist from the Department of Cultural Heritage of the Ministry of Culture, after which it will be sent to an international expert for comments. In addition, contributions from the central authority will be considered, together with any existing studies on the area. It is anticipated that the drafting period will take two months.

In case of developing a Feasibility Study, the involvement of a restoration specialist is required for assessing the exact nature of the work and allowed interventions. Also, a landscape architect should be involved for managing the courtyard.

### 6.2 Limitations of the study:

No practical limitations were noted.

## 7. PTA

### 7.1 Background: Form, Function and Evolution

#### 7.1.1 *Summary description of the building/site, with comments on its urban or rural context if appropriate.*

The early-20th century architectural monument was designed by an architect from St. Petersburg; S. Volonsevich, in the Art Nouveau style. It is asymmetric, T-shaped in plan, a two-storey building consisting of three interconnected houses. The main façade is flanked by avant-corps, dissected by high semi-circular windows (narrower at the first floor and wide at the second).

The central entrance is decorated by a visor on consoles. There is an arched window with a keeled pediment. The cornice divides the façades into two floors. In the overlap of the premises of the central building, a cross and cylindrical vaults are used. The planning system is typical for such building.

The building has always been used as an educational institution, first as the high school for men, then as a Pedagogical College (1920-1930). By 2001 it was being used as a high school. Now the building is not used, and is empty.

After restoration in the building of the men high school is scheduled to open as the People's (public) School, a kind of Community House offering various educational courses, including foreign languages, IT, and cooking. Also planned are: a children's educational and cultural centre; a music school and school of arts; exhibition halls; conference area; and, play areas for children, etc. Part of the premises will host the City library as the current library is in an unsuitable building heated by stove. A cafe with book-crossing and dance halls will also be located here. Thus, all of these functions are educational, related to the provision of further education to adults and children which will all find a

spacious home in the building of the former gymnasium. Furthermore, premises currently occupied by art and music schools located in the Jesuit College buildings, will be used for alternative functions following their restoration.

### 7.1.2 Summary historic development and evolution of the building or site, from the earliest times until the present day.

An architectural monument of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, this Art Nouveau building was designed by an architect from St. Petersburg named S. Volonsevich. The initiative behind this educational institution belonged to the local newspaper "Belarusian Commissioner", published by Baron Pilar von Pilch early in 1889. Mscislaŭ City Council approved the decision at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and appealed to the Ministry of Education for funding. However, the majority of funding for the high school came from a local noblewoman named A. Stakhovskaya. On August 15<sup>th</sup>, 1906, the Ministry of National Education gave permission to build gymnasium in Mscislaŭ. On August 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1908, the building was completed. Its first director was a graduate from St. Petersburg University, the historian and philosopher Vladimir Krasnyanski, author of the book " Mscislaŭ City, past and present", published in Vilna in 1912. Between 1925 and 1937, during the Soviet period, the gymnasium building housed the Belarusian Pedagogical College. A total of 142 students graduated each year from the college. Among the teachers were the Belarusian writers Yakub Kolas and Maksim Haretsky. In 1937, the Pedagogical College was reorganized into the Pedagogical School. Between 1953 and 2001 the Mscislaŭ Secondary School No. 1 was located here. Currently, the building is empty, and is closed to the public.

## 7.2 Significance

This is one of the most interesting monuments of 20<sup>th</sup> century Mscislaŭ, and is located in the centre of the historic city. Its current condition is not very good, but after the restoration this building will stand out in a number of ways.

## 7.3 Vulnerability/Risk assessment

The main potential risks are physical or of management:

<i>Potential risk</i>	<i>Contingency plan</i>
<i>Inappropriate interventions, which do not consider the authenticity of the buildings</i>	<i>Detailed supervision of the process of design and implementation</i>
<i>Use of cheap materials and inadequate technologies</i>	<i>Close supervision of materials and technologies used</i>
<i>Lack of skills, poor expertise</i>	<i>Hiring only experienced restoration specialists, requesting and involvement of international expertise; holding trainings for restores</i>
<i>Political pressure - instability and divergence between decisional structures</i>	<i>Coordination between different levels of administration; facilitation and de-politicization of the restoration process</i>
<i>Financial problems, inability to cover quality rehabilitation</i>	<i>Involvement of policy makers and funding authorities; considering alternative scenarios and identifying potential funders.</i>
<i>Post-restoration management</i>	<i>Involvement of young specialists in the museum's activities; Creating innovative partnerships with other institutions and organizations;</i>
<i>Natural hazards (earthquakes, floods, temperature fluctuations)</i>	<i>Extended project implementation</i>

## 7.4 Technical conditions

The building is in poor condition. It is empty and closed.

### 7.5 Outline summary of required repairs

The building of former men's gymnasium requires the following repairs and restoration works:

1. Emergency maintenance work
2. Restoration of façades and windows
3. Introduction of services (heating and electricity)
4. Restoration of historical façades on the basis of chemical and physical research.
5. Landscaping and restoration of lost features.

### 7.6 Conservation/rehabilitation policy and proposals

#### 7.6.1 *Broad summary of the vision for the site, and its sustainability, at this preliminary stage.*

The project sets out the full rehabilitation, conservation and restoration of buildings, interiors and landscaping of the surrounding area. The use of the gymnasium building will be appropriate for its historic features.

*However, there are several different scenarios available for the gymnasium's rehabilitation.*

The first scenario: interventions are limited, the task is to adapt the site for visitors without involving significant resources.

With this in mind we need to do:

- 1) Landscaping of the buildings surroundings, addition of sports equipment for activities outdoors.
- 2) The progressive restoration of the façades
- 3) Carrying out the emergency response work on the building, strengthening overlaps.

Under this scenario, the object is included into a cultural and tourist context and becomes a place where citizens can participate in mass sports activities outdoors.

The second scenario (after the implementation of the first scenario):

Restoration of the main building housing of the gymnasium. Introduction of the educational functions.

The third scenario:

The final completion of the restoration, the implementation of all possible functions.

#### 7.6.2 *Conservation philosophy*

The monument requires the conservation to the highest professional level, taking into account the existing international rules and standards, and the requirements set out in national legislation on the historic and cultural heritage. The great importance is the use of appropriate materials and techniques which will not lead to loss of authenticity and integrity of the monument.

The design of domestic and foreign routeways around the monument, the improvement of its territory and the surrounding landscape is also of great importance.



### 7.6.3 *Level of intervention*

It is necessary to

- investigate the level of damage and the amount of restoration required at the site;
- conserve existing architectural details and restore lost features;
- Implement interior decoration and provision of services with minimum interference to the fabric of the building;
- Improve landscaping: i.e. pedestrian access to the surrounding area, outdoor lighting, provide areas for recreation, landscaping gardening, repair of existing communication and drainage.

The intervention level will differ, according to the intervention scenario, see section 7.6.1.

### 7.6.4 *Preliminary proposals for appropriate uses, as applicable*

After its restoration, the building will reopen as the People's (public) School, a Community House offering various educational courses, including foreign languages, IT, and cookery. A children's educational and cultural centre, music school and school of arts, exhibition halls, conference area, and play areas for children, will also be opened in the building. Some of the premises will be provided to the City library as it is currently housed in an unsuitable building heated by stove. A café with book-crossing, dance halls will also be sited here. Thus, all educational functions related to further education for adults and children will take place in this spacious building. The premises currently occupied by art and music schools located in the buildings of the Jesuit College, will be restored and be free to perform other functions.

### 7.6.5 *Opportunities for social uses and sustainable development*

Described in section. 7.6.4.

### 7.6.6 *Broad assessment of priorities for consolidation/covering, repair, conservation, restoration, rehabilitation*

As described in section 7.1. several rehabilitation scenarios are possible. The first scenario only requires landscaping, emergency response work on the building and its inclusion in the cultural and tourist context. In the second scenario; the project would include the restoration of the main gymnasium building and the introduction of educational uses. The final scenario comprises the restoration and repair of the building and implementation of the entire project. Implementation of all three scenarios will only be possible if all the phases are funded.

### 7.6.7 *Public access*

The building will be open to visit for everyone.

### 7.6.8 *Other benefits*

Due to its unique and advantageous location in the heart of the city, the Former Men's Gymnasium building will become an attraction for citizens and tourists. It will contribute to the formation of local identity, the growth of the city's popularity, its sustainable image as the modern cultural centre with a colourful and interesting history.

## 7.7 Finance

### 7.7.1 *Broad assessment of budgetary needs and phasing*

The following repair and construction works can be identified at this preliminary stage:

Activities	Estimated Cost
Emergency engineering works, including the strengthening of slabs	390,000 BYR
Floor	250,000 BYR
Septum	26,217 BYR
Engineering systems	3,300,000 BYR
Restoration of the façades and the blind area	550,000 BYR
Strengthening and stucco of walls, insulation	280,226 BYR
Interior finishing	2,263,750 BYR
Windows	114,400 BYR
Doors	61,632 BYR
Earthmoving works and foundation strengthening	258,907 BYR
Roof repairs and a new coating	130,059 BYR
Landscaping	650,000 BYR
Others	19,000 BYR
Total cost	8,294,191 BYR / 4,147,095.5 EUR

### 7.7.2 *Assessment of (real) possibilities for attracting investments*

In order to attract investment for restoration works, the following financing bodies can be considered:

- Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Belarus;
- National and regional development funds;
- International and cross-border co-operation funds;
- Local funds of the city and of the district of Mscislau (the applicant).

### 7.7.3 *Assessment of (real) possibilities for recovering investments*

Potential income includes:

- Tourism
- Sale of souvenirs, publications
- Sale of courses, other activities
- Donations, sponsorships

### 7.7.4 *Have you already tried to raise funds for this site or monument?*

Yes, funds were approved as part of the State Programme on Development of Historical Cities, but they were not allocated.

7.7.5 *Have you already received funds for this site or monument?*

Funds have been received for the development of the restoration project in 2015.

#### 7.8. Management

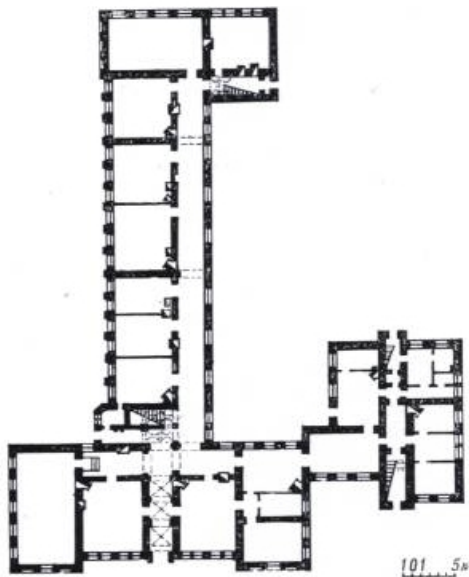
The rehabilitation project will be implemented by a Project Implementation Unit (PIU), responsible for planning, organizing the process, monitoring and visibility. The PIU is made up of long- and short-term experts, responsible for delivering such tasks as the organisation of internal meetings to ensure the project is delivered on schedule. Highly specialized activities will have a specific coordinator, supervised and supported in his activity by the main expert.

The Mscislaŭ District Executive Committee is responsible for ensuring the sustainability of the project and allocating funds for maintenance and the institution's running costs. Further management will be the responsibility of an informal consulting body who will coordinate the institution's activities.

## 8. Documentation / additional images



*Mscislaū. Former Men's Gymnasium Building, beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century*



*Mscislaū. Former Men's Gymnasium Building. Plan of first storey*



*Mscislaū. Former Men's Gymnasium Building*





*Mscislaŭ. Former Men's Gymnasium Building.  
View from the Jesuit College*



*Mscislaŭ. Former Men's Gymnasium Building. View from  
1<sup>st</sup> of May Str.*



*Mscislaŭ. Former Men's Gymnasium Building. View from 1<sup>st</sup> of May Str.*







*Mscislaū. Former Men's Gymnasium. View from the city park.*



*Mscislaū. Former Men's Gymnasium Building. View from the city park.*





*Mscislaū. Former Men's Gymnasium Building. View of the façade.*

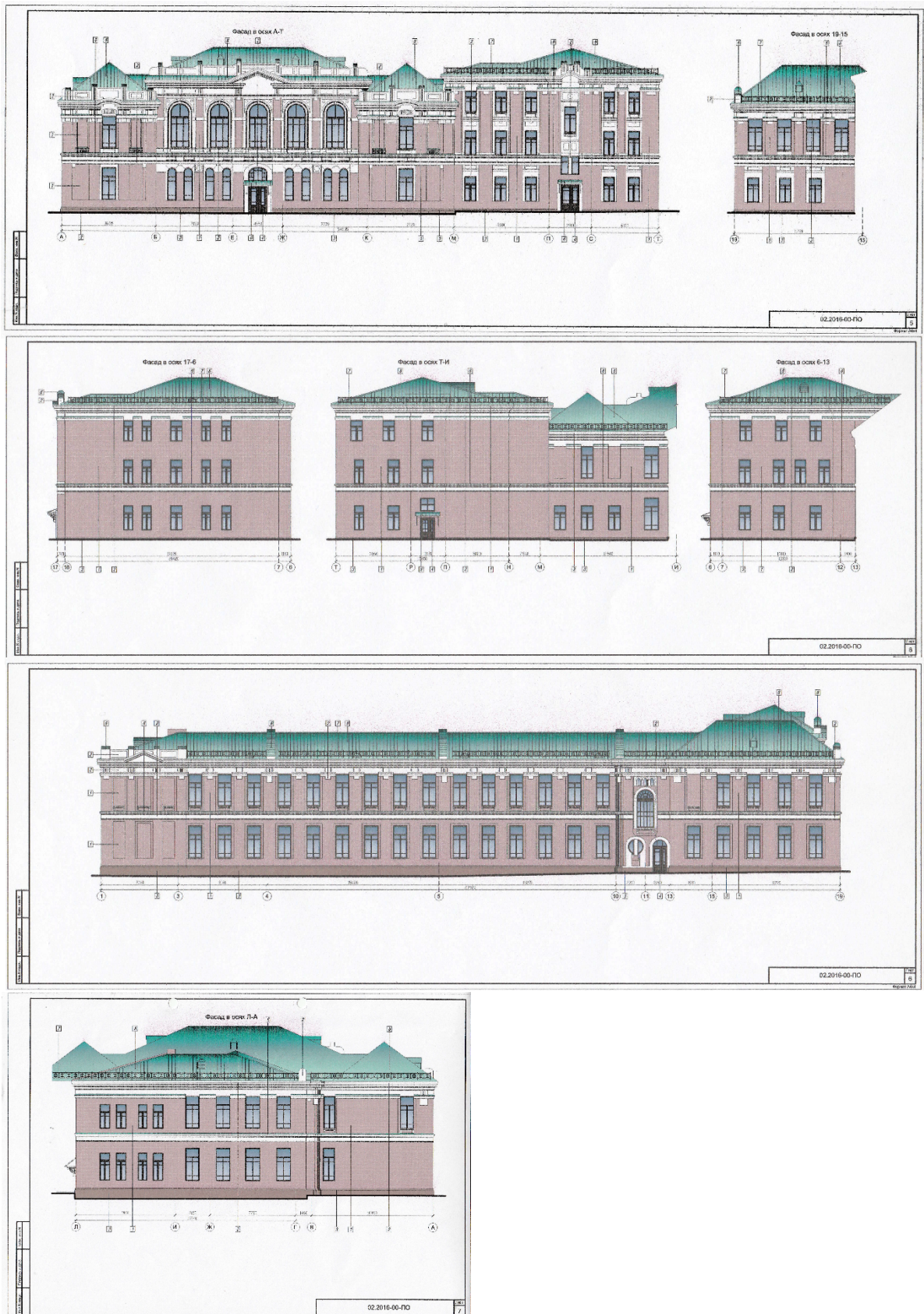


*Mscislaū. Former Men's Gymnasium Building. View of the interior.*





*Mscislaū. Former Men's Gymnasium Building. View of the interior.*



Mscislaū. Former Men's Gymnasium Building. The restoration project. Facades

## 9. Conclusions and recommendations for elaboration of a Feasibility Study

If a Feasibility Study for the restoration project of Former Men's Gymnasium Building is drafted, the following recommendations should be taken in account:

- Defining the management structures and types of activities to be carried out for implementation
- Additional technical analysis of the structure to produce a detailed timeline, typology of works phased costing;
- Additional expert advice from structural engineers and professional restoration craftsmen. Consideration of involvement of international expertise.

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