

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



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### Dusheti Local History Museum

### Preliminary Technical Assessment

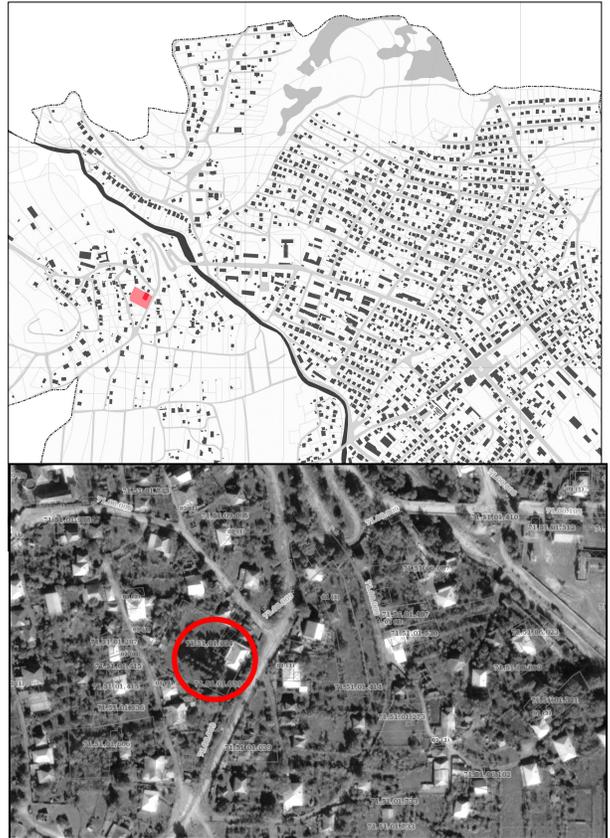


Dusheti, Georgia 2016

## 1. Introduction

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- 1.1. Country or territory: Georgia
- 1.2. Name of the organization, which collects information: Dusheti municipality
- 1.3. Contact name: Konstantin Natsvlshvili
- 1.4. E-mail address: k.nat.art@gmail.com
- 1.5. Name and address of the building or site:  
Dusheti Local History Museum, Ketevan Tsamebuli str.,  
Milakhvriantkari settlement, Dusheti town, Dusheti  
municipality, Georgia.
- 1.6. Inventory number: Cultural Heritage  
Monument, registry number: N 6933, 08.01.2014.  
{<http://dataherita.ge/uploads/files/uZravi%20Zeglebis%20reestri%20www%2029-09-16.pdf>}
- 1.7. Type of the building/monument/site: historical-  
archtectural
- 1.8. Key dates: XIX century, 60-70s
- 1.9. Current application: museum



## 2. Summing-up: the object and its management

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The object is situated in the town of Dusheti, Milakhvriantkari settlement, 54 km from Tbilisi. It presents an extant type of post stations – an important element of the XIX-XX century infrastructure of the Georgian Military Road. An author of the project was Swedish architect Otto Jakob Simonson, who worked in Georgia and created a typical project of post stations for the Georgian Military Road. 8 stations were built according to this project, Dusheti post station was among them.

Georgian Military Road played a great role in cultural, social and economic transformation process. Despite the fact that Georgian Military Road used to be an important tool of conducting colonial policy for Russian Empire, for decades it remained the only road, which allowed Georgia to restore/establish cultural relations with Christian world. Through this road Russia changed geopolitics not only for Georgia and Caucasus, but for Front Asia as well. Therefore, Georgian Military Road has international cultural value.

Both new and old routes of this road pass through and nearby Dusheti, The old route had special significance for Dusheti, it promoted formation of the town and its rapid economic development.

Today, only the post building has remained out of the post station complex. In the beginning of 50s the building was adapted for the local history museum, which was allocated there.

At present the building is in extremely hard state: cracked and broken spandrels due to leaking, the roof needs an urgent mending. Adjacent territory is covered by bushes, though the cypress lane and the small pool have still remained.

In the process of development of the building rehabilitation concept, the local work group has also considered the archeological base and further rehabilitation plan of the National Museum located in the Chilashvili Palace, which is near the object. According to this plan, the artefacts, which are placed in the Local History Museum, may be relocated to the Chilashvili Palace. There is no specific plan of possible merging of these two museum spaces and its further management; the future of the station is also vague.

Taking into consideration special historical significance of this context and station, the local work group has formulated a proposal according to the following criteria: a) historical, cultural and architectural importance of the building; b) social meaning; c) high quality of public accessibility.

Therefore, they recognized a strategic importance of preserving the station building in municipal ownership and maintaining / developing of public function in it. In the process of discussing alternative scenarios, the best chosen version was modification of the present Local History Museum into the Georgian Military Road Museum.

The building and the surrounding territory allow to locate there permanent and temporary display areas, museum cafe and the shop.

Based on the fact that there is no museum with such themes in Georgia and the region, it is anticipated that this museum will be of great success in Georgian museum space, as well as in regional/world museum landscape, which will further serve as a locomotive for cultural, social and economic development of the town. The station museum will fill gaps and needs of Dusheti cultural infrastructure, while the temporary display area will host various thematic exhibitions about social and cultural relations of Georgia with neighboring countries, as well as photo exhibitions, various themes from different countries and museums, which are related to profile of the museum. The museum may establish its own relationship and cooperation with both Georgian and Central editorial office of National Geographic and arrange topical photo exhibitions.

Development of the Georgian Military Road Museum will promote maintaining / attracting highly qualified specialists of cultural sphere in Dusheti and further preserving of human resources in the town.

The museum will perfectly fit in with Dusheti cultural landscape, where there exist archeological museum in The Chilashvili historic palace, the Modern Art Center with its display area in MTS building, the Youth Center in the library building and the multifunctional theatre building will meet cultural requirements of both Dusheti residents and its guests and will considerably increase number of visitors. Functioning of MTS, the Chilashvili Palace Museum and the Station Museum close to each other will facilitate development of joint strategy of attracting people to these organizations.

Various exhibitions, regional and international cooperation projects will considerably improve image of Dusheti as cultural town, on national and regional level, and will raise competitiveness of the town in the touristic market, it will be positively reflected in Dusheti economy and environmental quality.

## 3. Administrative Information

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### 3.1. Responsible authorities

Dusheti Local History Museum is a property of Dusheti municipality and it is direct responsibility of self-government institutions to take care of it. The state is also responsible for its protection as a cultural heritage site. Any kind of intervention should be agreed with National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation.

### 3.2. Building/territory, name and address

Dusheti Local History Museum,

Milakhvriantkari settlement, Dusheti town, Dusheti municipality, Mtskheta-Mtianeti region, Georgia

### 3.3. Cartographic information

X: 42 08 6668

Y: 44 68 1335

### 3.4. Type of the site

Historic, architectural

### 3.5. Property

Dusheti municipality

### 3.6. Mandatory protection/restrictions

According to the Law of Georgia on Cultural Heritage, the building is given the status of cultural heritage monument. Therefore, it has at least 50-meter area of physical protection, and 150-meter of visual protection of cultural heritage, this rate is specified by the law on cultural heritage. A license on intervention is issued by the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Protection.

## 4. Conclusion about physical condition

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### 1.1. Assessment of physical condition – from very bad to good;

(ruins, very bad, bad, medium, good, very good)

bad

### 1.2. Risk assessment - A-H

(High risk - A, medium - B, low - C, no risk -D)

A

### 1.3. Priority for intervention (high/medium/low)

High

## 5. Existing information

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### 5.1. Documental resources

Historic photos of the building are protected both in Dusheti Local History Museum and in National Archives of Georgia, where author's project and sketches are also preserved. Registration form and relevant photo material are protected in the archives of National Agency of Cultural Heritage Protection.

### 5.2. Bibliography

Georgian Military Road and its former infrastructure is not properly studied in Georgia. The only perfect work on Dusheti historic, architectural and urban heritage is the work by the historian of architecture, Maia Mania, "Dusheti, urban and architectural heritage", Tbilisi, 2016. The book contains interesting information about the station building, besides, there is discussed general history and infrastructure of the Georgian Military Road, especially its Dusheti section, there is also given information about the architect and the late reconstruction of the building.

Information about the object is also given in following sources:

– Mgaloblishvili N., Shilakadze T., Makharashvili T., (1983), Along the friendship road, Tbilisi

### 5.3. Carried out field-work

Historic-architectural assessment of the building within framework of the inventory works conducted by the Agency for Cultural Heritage Protection in 2011, and also the joint regional project of Council of Europe and European Union "Rehabilitation of Cultural Heritage in Historic Cities" (PP2).

First field assessment of the constructive stability of the building was carried out by engineer- constructor of the National Agency of Cultural Heritage Protection, within the framework of the current research, in 2016.

#### **5.4. Current projects**

There are not conducted any works in the building now.

#### **5.5. Already planned projects**

The issue of the building rehabilitation is included into the regional development third program, which is financed by the World Bank and managed by the Municipal Development Fund of Georgia. In 2017-2019, the program provides for rehabilitation of Dusheti historic center and important heritage objects, including the given building, though specific works have not been started yet.

#### **5.6. Already elaborated financial estimate**

An estimate of the building rehabilitation has not been made up yet

### **6. PTA limits**

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#### **6.1. Scope/content of the assessment**

This form was developed by the complex group of the local and national experts, consisting of architects, an engineer, a specialist of cultural policy.

#### **6.2. Restriction of the research**

Technical, cultural and historic significance of the Georgian Military Road and its infrastructure has not been fully researched yet. There is not enough analytical information on public and engineering objects of this period. Detailed engineering assessment of the building and geological research of the foundation could not be carried out due to lack of time and resources.

## **7. PTA**

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### **7.1. Context: form, function and evolution**

#### ***7.1.1. Summarized description:***

The building presents one of 14 stations (a shelter for passengers, a place for receiving and sending post, catering, hiring carriages and horses) of the Georgian Military Road infrastructure. The author of the project is Swedish architect Otto Jacob Simonson, who created the project almost for all stations of the Georgian Military Road at the end of 1850s, among them the typical project for 8 stations, which is presented by Dusheti station, though modified. Detailed art history research and analysis of the original project allows to identify late interventions. The building is characterized by asymmetric planning and interior spatial system. Initially, it was partially two-storeyed, and partially one-storeyed building. One-storeyed part of the building was open from two sides by roofed terraces with pillars. In the 50s of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the second floor was built on the one-storeyed part of the building during its adaptation for the museum; the triangular fronton of the two-storied part disappeared. Only the erker and porticos remained from the original building.

During the construction of the station, the adjacent territory was mostly unpopulated. One of the nearby buildings was the Chilashvili Palace complex.

Auxiliary facilities of the station are destroyed, and the building is surrounded by the housing development. Though, there is still free space around the building, which is covered by the garden.

Existing cast iron fence was assembled in soviet period, and its lower part, which was constructed of carved stone, is presumably an authentic element of the building.

### ***7.1.2. Historic development and assessment of the building or territory***

Construction of the Georgian Military Road started from the period of annexation of Georgia by Russia, the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Most intensive work was carried out in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when new sections and stations were built. Until 1859, the Georgian Military Road was crossing Dusheti town, but after building 22-verst road through Dusheti mountains and Zemo Mleta slope in 1861, the Military Road moved to so called Kanchi Ridge, one verst from Dusheti. Nevertheless, Dusheti preserved significance and infrastructure of the transit town.

Despite the fact that Dusheti station building presents a typical project (8 stations were built according to this project), it is one of the most important historic sites, which reflects development of Dusheti. Especially that Dusheti Local History Museum is situated there, which has played a very important role in study of Dusheti cultural heritage, as well as in collecting and preserving of archival or scientific material.

## **7.2. Importance**

Georgian Military Road has played a great role in cultural, social and economic transformation process of Georgia. Regardless the fact that Georgian Military Road was an important tool for conducting colonial policy of Russian Empire, during decades it was the only road through which Georgia could restore/establish cultural relations with the Christian world. Through this

road Russia changed geopolitics not only for Georgia and Caucasus, but for Front Asia as well. Therefore, Georgian Military Road has international cultural value.

New and old routs of this road passed through and nearby Dusheti. The old route had special significance for Dusheti, it promoted formation of the town and its rapid economic development.

Foregoing context outlines historic and cultural significance of this object on local, national and international levels.

### 7.3. Vulnerability / risk evaluation

Since 1990s, lack of finances and care led to grave condition of the building. Development of the museum was ceased due to low public interest towards museums. Main part of the building is not used due to hard physical condition, however the museum still exists and preserves funds.

Delay of rehabilitation work puts at risk not only the personnel, who work there, but also funds, which are placed there. In order to reduce these risks, it is necessary to carry out complex engineering study and develop relevant rehabilitation project. Most essential is to evaluate condition of the sewage and the yard drainage systems.

Another threat comes from the idea, which is aimed at integration of the Local History Museum in the space of the National Museum. If the building is released, it will be possible to sell it, as in this case it is not the museum building any longer and its selling is not prohibited by Georgian laws. In case of private property, there is an increased risk of the relevant rehabilitation, as well as restriction of public access, which will be a significant loss for Dusheti cultural and public space.

### 7.4. Technical condition

Technical condition of the building is very grave, it is caused by diversity of factors:

- Cracks through walls;
- Fractured corners;
- Ramming of the north-west wall by the linear inside wall;

Splitting of the walls, particularly in the corners, is caused by intensive subsiding of the outside walls in comparison with the inside ones. It requires geological research of the foundation.

Structural injury may be caused by:

- atmosphere precipitation impact;
- absence of drainage system around the building;
- rain and snow sediment, which was accumulated in the corners of the building and flew down along the wall edges, which resulted in destroying layers and corners;
- as the main reason can be considered long-term neglect.

## 7.5. Summing up required repairs

Before preparing the rehabilitation project of the station building, it is necessary to conduct engineering-geological study of the adjacent territory. The rehabilitation project should be designed in compliance with the museum concept and meet requirements of the museum space. What is needed for preservation of the station building without reference to the museum specific nature:

- to strengthen-underpin foundations of the whole outside contour and maybe of some inside walls;
- to reinforce cracks and cover damaged surface with reinforcing grids;
- to lay partial brickwork;
- to repair and adjust cornices;
- to make ferro-concrete bond on two levels;
- to replace roof and its supports;
- to remove floor and revise condition of rafters;
- to restore the floor;
- to plaster the ceiling;
- to rearrange inside and outside staircases;
- balconies;
- to restore doors and windows;
- to repair the fence;
- to arrange and restore the yard.

## 7.6. Conservation/rehabilitation policy and proposal

### *7.6.1. Overall conclusions on the vision and stability*

For the most effective use of existing heritage resource, it is expedient to modify the concept of the Local History Museum for the purpose of its adaptation to the Georgian Military Road Museum. Main function of the museum will be to present the history of the Georgian Military Road and its cultural importance, presenting the role of Dusheti in the Georgian Road context. Apart from the display area, the museum building should accommodate temporary exhibitions, museum café and shop. Efficient functioning of the museum requires development and planning of its yard and garden for public functions.

The building should remain the public property. It can be managed directly by the municipal museum, as well as by special municipal fund, which will be an owner of the building along with other municipal cultural objects. In this case, the museum management structure will be accountable both to municipal self-government and to the fund management.

The museum should meet the local needs in the museum sphere, as well as Dusheti visibility on national, regional and international levels, it should become a facilitating factor for the economic development of the town.

### ***7.6.2. Conservation philosophy***

Rehabilitation of the building should be carried out with preserving the function of the building. As a result of the new concept (Georgian Military Road Museum), the museum will get closer to the original function of the building, therefore, the authentic elements of the building should be preserved in the process of rehabilitation, both in interior and exterior. In terms of diverse archive material, it is not difficult to restore small wooden architectural forms in the yard of the museum, which will create specific atmosphere of the station.

In spite of the fact that the building has function of the museum for many years, spatial and technical parameters do not comply with modern exhibition requirements, therefore, modern museum requirements are provided in the rehabilitation project. The station, which was built according to the typical project in late 1850s, was modified into the museum space in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (one storey was added, the facade, interior and fence were changed). Today, these alterations are considered as an integral part of the historic building. After the rehabilitation we should have the building, where each stage of the construction is integrated in a general conception, however, authentic, late and modern construction layers should be simply perceived, both in interior and exterior.

### ***7.6.3. Intervention level***

In terms of museum conception, the building requires high level of intervention into its interior. The facade should preserve authentic architectural details. The yard, which is well-developed and loaded with public functions, is an integral part of the building.

### ***7.6.4. Preliminary proposals of possible use***

Personnel of the museum expressed desire to expand museum's themes and prepare a new concept of development. The concept should reflect historic and cultural importance of the Georgian Military Road, and the role of Dusheti in the context of this road. There is no similar museum in Georgia, so it, probably, may be successful in Georgian museum space and, generally, in world museum landscape, it will further serve as a locomotive for cultural, social and economic development of the town. The museum of such profile will fill gaps and needs of Dusheti cultural infrastructure, besides, Dusheti will occupy its place not only on the cultural map of Georgia and the region, but of the world as well, presenting research of cultural, social and political significance of the internationally important road, though with narrow profile. Temporary exhibition area, which will be arranged in the museum building, will host various thematic exhibitions about cultural and social relations of Georgia with neighboring countries, as well as photo exhibitions, various themes from different countries and museums, which are related to profile of the museum. The museum may establish its own relationship and cooperation with both Georgian and Central editorial offices of National Geographic and arrange topical photo exhibitions.

The museum will perfectly fit in with Dusheti cultural landscape, where there exist archeological museum in The Chilashvili historic palace, the Modern Art Center with its display area in MTS building, the Youth Center in the library building and the multifunctional theatre building will meet cultural requirements of both Dusheti residents and its guests and will considerably increase number of visitors. Functioning of MTS, the Chilashvili Palace Museum and the Station Museum close to each other will facilitate development of joint strategy of attracting people to these organizations. It will positively affect Dusheti economy, improve quality of people's life and image of the town.

#### ***7.6.5. Capacity of social use and sustainable development***

Development of the station museum will promote creating of additional stable jobs for highly skilled specialists, and their further staying in the town. Functioning of the museum with this profile will increase number of visitors in the town, and it will have a positive impact on the economy of the town. Cultural-educational proposals to the local population will provide improvement of the quality of living conditions, which will stop migration of urban population. Diversified exhibitions and cooperation with similar foreign museums and National Geographic editorial office will considerably improve cultural image of Dusheti on national and regional levels and promote rising of competitive ability of the town in comparison with other towns.

#### ***7.6.6. General assessment of consolidation, repairing, conservation, restoring, rehabilitation***

In terms of the fact that the building should maintain its secondary function (museum), though the new museum concept implies preserving of the primary function (Georgian Military Road station), the building should be adapted in compliance with modern museum standards.

Therefore, some basic principles should be observed in the project:

Preservation of historical form and visual separation of construction layers of different periods (especially in the interior); a point of departure should be preservation of authentic elements.

Approximating of technical data of the building to the standards of modern museum space, which implies proper selection of construction materials during designing of the project, and further providing with specific material-technical base, as well as optimal planning of the interior space for proper museum activity.

Envisaging of the place for additional exhibition pavilion during planning of the yard, for the purpose of further expansion of the museum.

Renovation of the yard landscaping, restoration of small architectural details according to old photos, which were characteristic for the station, in terms of its original function.

Adapting of the building and the yard to social requirements, including ramps and taking into consideration the interests of sightless people.

#### ***7.6.7 Public accessibility***

Decision to preserve museum function of the station, which was made by self-government on the basis of the town-dwellers' request, will ensure maintenance of public function of the building. The museum "Station" is considered by the self-government as public good, which will be financed by the local budget, and public accessibility will be provided in terms of the following steps:

- Planning of moderate prices for museum and educational proposals, which will ensure accessibility of this product for local population.
- Making the museum space available for curators, so that they can fulfil their ideas, it will be one of basic demands of the municipality, which is directed at the future management of the station.
- Guaranteed preservation of the museum function for the building, it implies founding of Dusheti Municipal Fund, which will provide non-interference of municipal government and separation of the museum property from the municipal property, for the purpose of its dispositions in preliminary defined framework.
- Choosing the democratic principles of Dusheti Municipal Fund management, which provide political non-interference in the museum activity, freedom of expression and accountability before society.
- Providing accessibility for people with disabilities.

#### ***7.6.8. Other benefits***

Rehabilitation of the building and implementation of the new concept will consolidate sense of citizenship in local population towards their town, raise motivation of young people and develop economic activities.

### **7.7. Financing**

#### ***7.7.1. General evaluation of budget requirements and phases***

Five basic phases should be considered for the budgeting of the project.

Pre-project costs, e.g. geological research, engineering and technical research, study of the authentic parts of the building and identification of the elements, which should be preserved. Study of the archive materials, identification of small architectural elements and designing of an outline, study of modification of the building facade on the basis of the archive materials. Working out of the museum concept according to requirements of the new function, identification of needs, defining of technical parameters, as well as necessity of spatial planning of the building, and preparing of the technical tasks, which are required for the projecting. Costs of preparing and implementation of the project.

<b>Name of the work</b>	<b>Approximate value in GEL</b>
Pre-project research and projecting costs (according to the law on cultural heritage, with regard to required work) for the building and the	95 000 GEL

territory	
Preparing of the interior project according to the museum concept and display area plan	60 000 GEL
Building rehabilitation work	500 000 GEL
Arranging of the museum	500 000GEL
Making up of the territory and additional premises	300 000 GEL
Sum	1 440 000 GEL

### ***7.7.2. Evaluation of capacity to attract investments***

Project financing is envisaged within the framework of the third regional development program, which is financed by the World Bank.

### ***7.7.3. Evaluation of revenue capacity***

Functioning of the museum may generate following revenues: tickets, books, gift packages, events, tours to the old section of the Georgian Military Road, etc. Capacity of revenue obtaining will be discussed in details within the technical and economic study, and the indirect benefit is discussed in Chapter 6 of the foregoing document.

***7.7.4 Have you tried fundraising for this site or monument?*** Rehabilitation of the building in included within the framework of the third regional development project, which is financed by the World Bank.

***7.7.5 Have you received financing for this monument or site?***

Rehabilitation of the building in included within the framework of the third regional development project, which is financed by the World Bank.

## **7.8. Management**

### ***7.8.1 Shortterm management of the project***

Management of the building rehabilitation project will be carried out by Dusheti municipality with coordination of the museum administration.

### ***7.8.2 Long-term management of the project***

*Institutional arrangement*

Management of the museum will be carried out according to special democratic model of management. Functions of ownership of the building and its management will be differentiated and free from the political influence of the municipal or central government. Accordingly, Dusheti municipality establishes "Dusheti Municipal Fund".

#### *Property*

Dusheti Municipal Fund – will be an owner of the property along with other cultural or social objects (MTS, Youth Center, Tourist Center of Geophysical Laboratory). The property will be disposed in accordance with the Fund regulations, which prohibits its alienation. According to the regulations, it may be cancelled only by the municipality on the basis of agreement of central government and Dusheti population (agreement needs conducting referendum on the local level), though, according to Georgian legislation, the cancellation of the fund does not imply alienation of the museum property.

#### *Functions and commitments of the fund*

The fund will be obliged to coordinate the budget of the museum with the municipality and to control expenditures; ensure transparency of annual accounts of the museum; carry out periodical repairs of the museum building and improvement of its material and technical base, on request of the museum administration.

#### *Financing of the museum*

Operation costs of the Station Museum, as an important cultural-educational organization for Dusheti, will be financed by the local budget and revenues of the Dusheti Municipal Fund. Due to the fact that museum assumes functions of national significance, the Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection will finance temporary exhibitions of the Station Museum, within the projects.

#### *Management of the museum*

Management of the Station Museum will be carried out in accordance with Georgian legislation, museum regulations and Dusheti municipal fund regulations and requirements. Organizational management of the museum will be performed by the director, who is elected for 5 years on the basis of competition. The competition is announced by the municipal cultural service, according to the worked out terms, which are agreed with Dusheti municipal fund, Dusheti municipal services of economics and tourism, and museum support group (friends of the museum, major donors).

#### *Transparency of the museum operation*

At the end of the year, the museum presents the annual account to Dusheti municipal fund (financial account, description of the implemented projects, public analysis, press analysis), which is integrated by the fund in its own annual account, and published within certain period of time (printing or putting on the website).

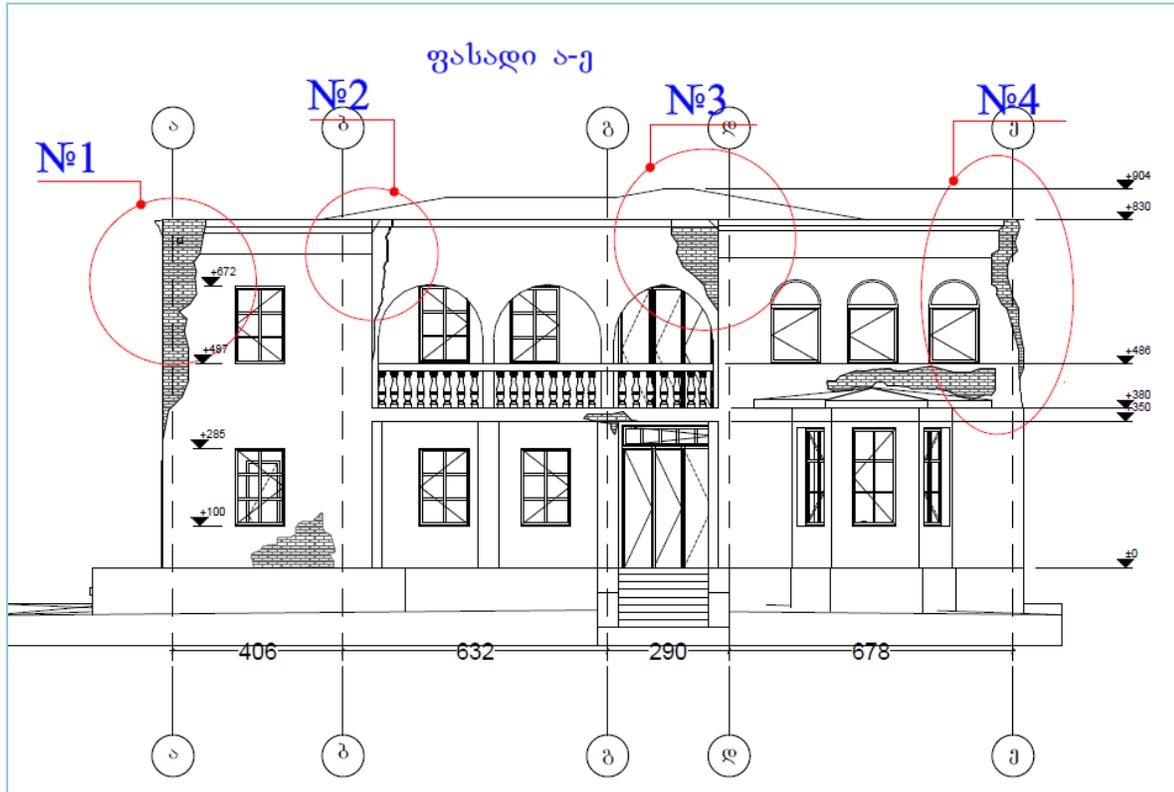
The museum will operate in accordance with freedom of speech, generally acknowledged human rights, with consideration of economic and social interests of Dusheti town, in compliance with culture policy and legislation of Georgia, at discretion of the museum management group.

## 8. Documentation

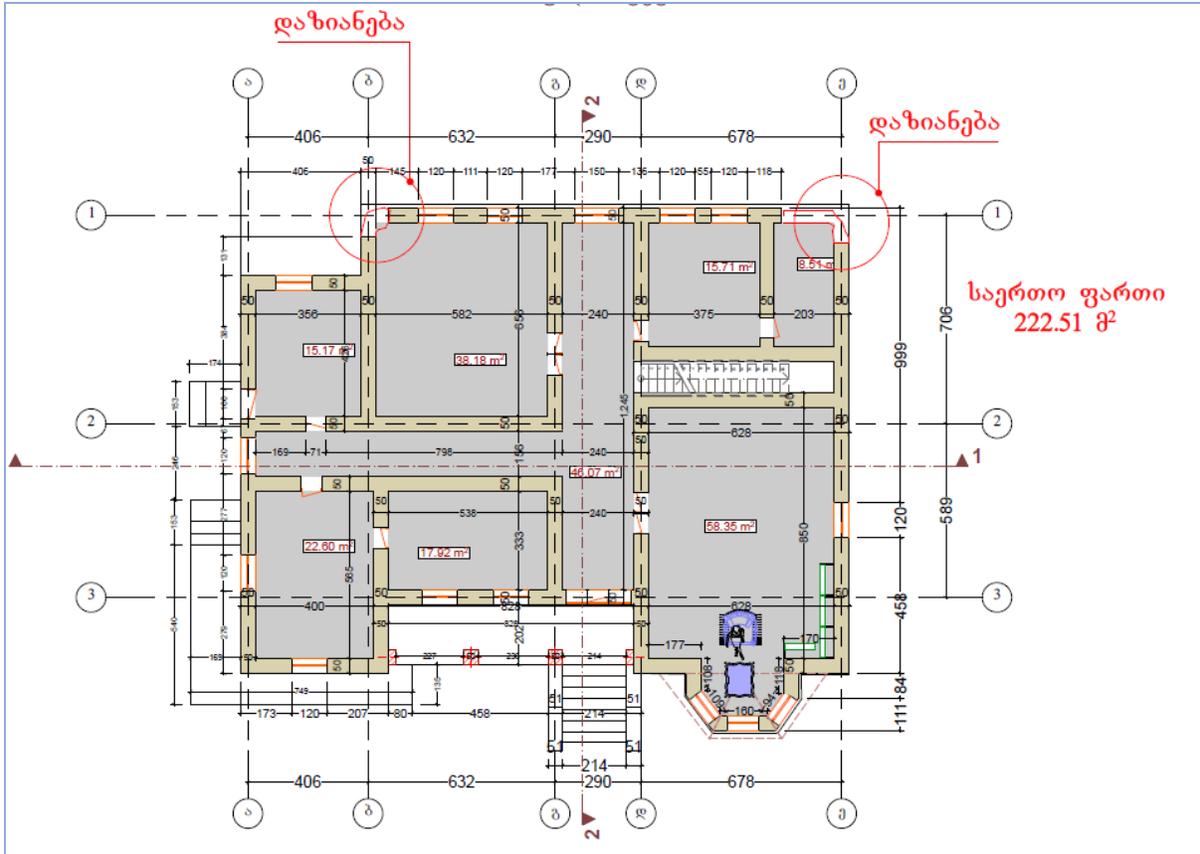
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1. A copy of the archive project of the building, National archive of Georgia, Mania M. (2016) "Dusheti: Urban and Architectural Heritage", Tbilisi
2. Registration form of the building, 2011, Archive of the National Agency of Cultural Heritage Protection
3. Primary measures (facades, sections, plans, indicating damages), 2016, L. Ketelauri, G. Sinzharadze
4. Photo documentation 2016, L. Ketelauri, G. Sinzharadze,

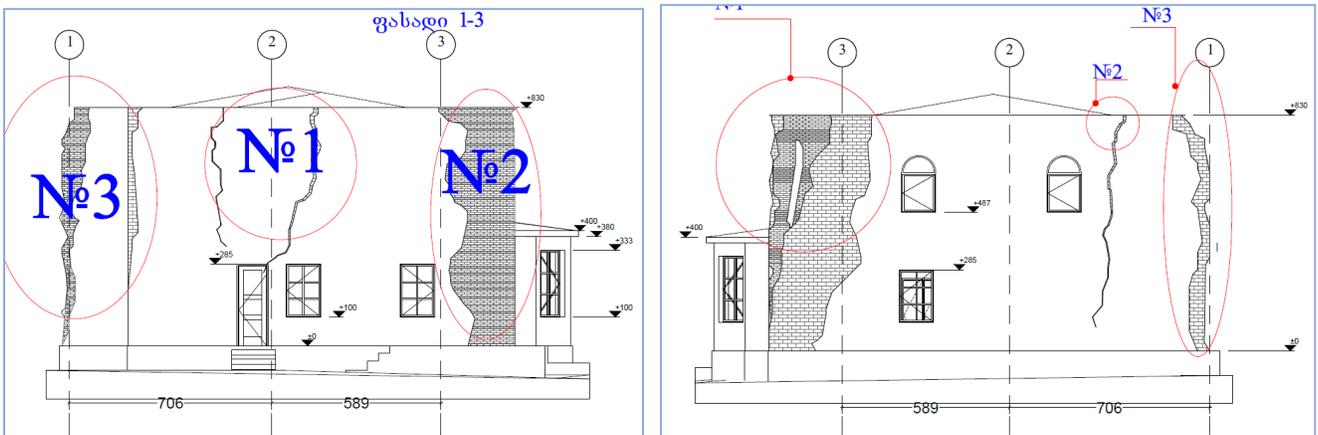
Appendix 1: Schematic measures



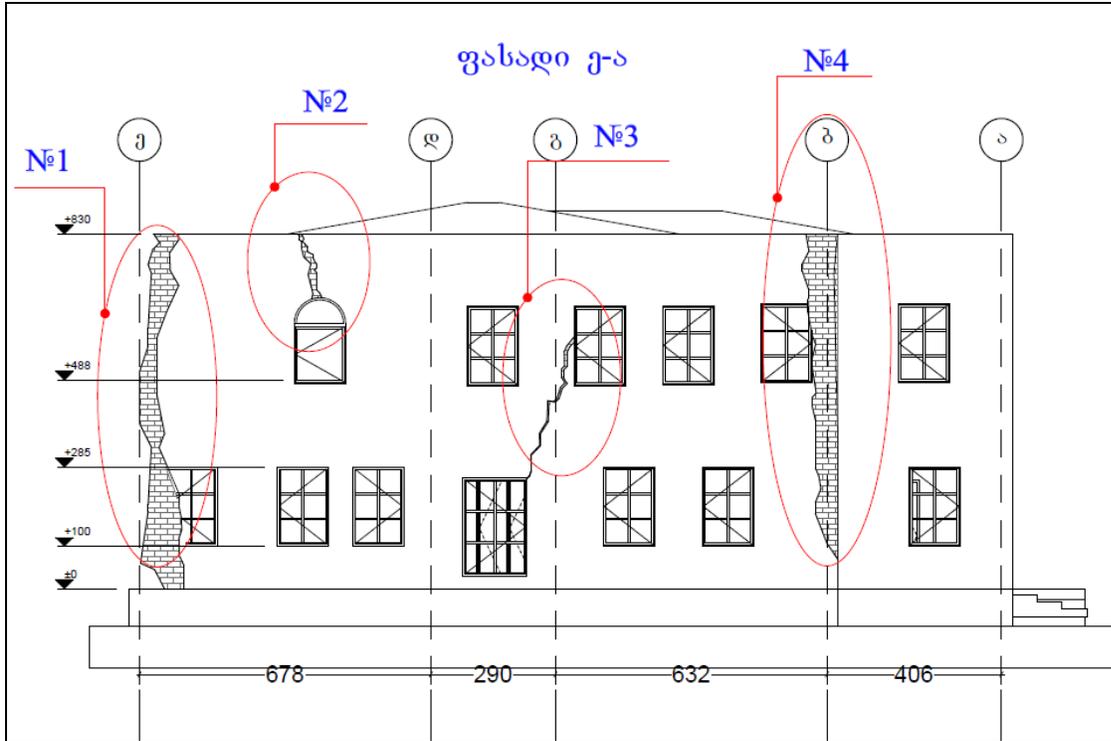
1. *Façade A-E, Schematic measure, L. Ketelauri, G. Sinzharadze, 2016*



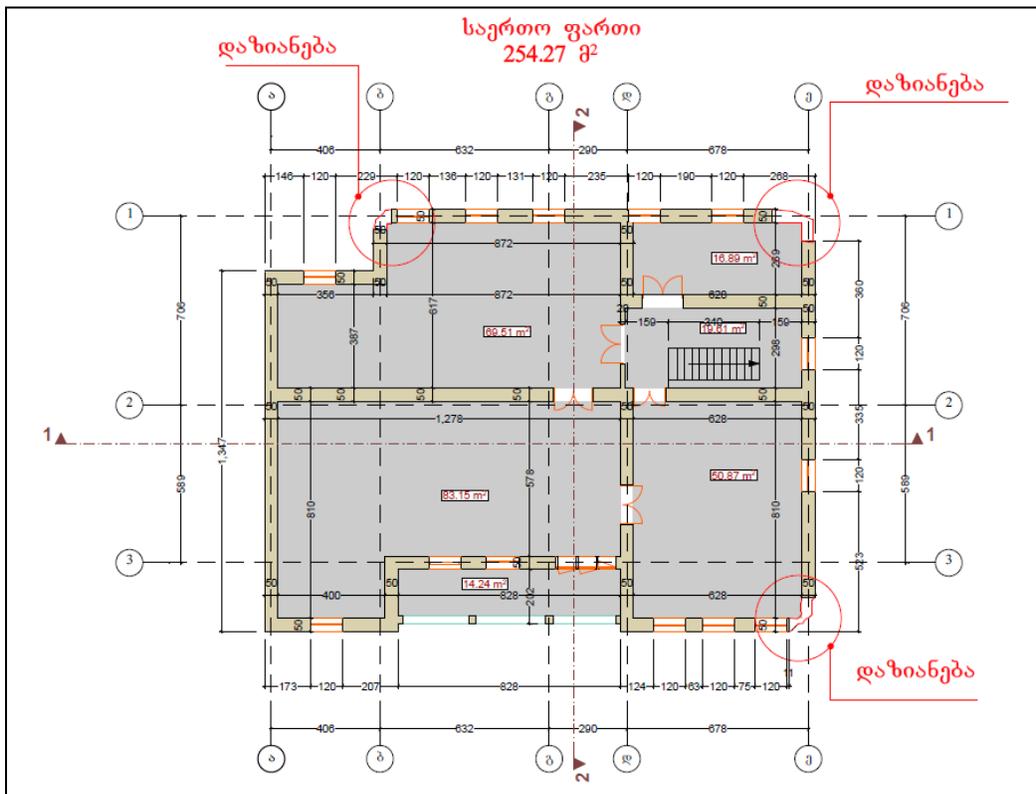
2. Plan of the first floor, Schematic measure, L. Ketelauri, G. Sinzharadze, 2016



2. ფასადები 1-3 და 3-1, სქემური ანაზომი, ლ. ქეთელაური, გ. სინჯარაძე, 2016 Schematic measure, L. Ketelauri, G. Sinzharadze, 2016



3. Façade E-A, Schematic measure, L. Ketelauri, G. Sinzharadze, 2016



## Appendix 2: Current situation













*2. Station, archive photo, (rendered by Shadi Hadadi).*



*3. Old Military Road at Dusheti, archive photo (from the book of Mgaloblishvili N., Shilakadze T., Makharashvili T., 1983, Along the road of friendship, Tbilisi)*