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Layers of Memory in Kayaköy (Levissi)

Conservation and Valorization of the Upper Church Area

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ABSTRACT

Layers of Memory in Kayaköy (Levissi): Conservation and Valorization of the Upper Church Area

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Kayaköy (Levissi), located in the Fethiye district of Muğla province in southwestern Türkiye, is one of the most prominent examples of Anatolian Greek settlements. It was abandoned after the 1922-1924 Turkish-Greek Population Exchange. Unlike many other settlements affected by the population exchange, Kayaköy has largely preserved as it is until today, and the physical traces of abandonment, forced displacement, and interrupted daily life remain visible in the landscape. Consequently, the settlement not only possesses architectural significance but also strong values related to collective memory, historical and cultural identity.

This thesis evaluates Kayaköy as a multi-layered cultural landscape and aims to contribute to a holistic conservation framework through site-specific intervention strategies, while addressing the settlement's diverse heritage values, challenges, and potentials. The research is structured around a multi-layered methodology consisting of research, analysis, evaluation, and design phases. First, Kayaköy's development, spatial organization, and relationship with the surrounding context are examined through territorial, historical, and architectural analyses. Subsequently, as a synthesis of these analyses, the settlement is evaluated in detail within the framework of values, problems, and potentials, supported by a SWOT analysis.

These studies reveal that Kayaköy contains multiple focal points with different characteristics; moreover, a single and homogeneous intervention approach would be insufficient to adress the multi-layered and heterogeneous complexity of Kayaköy. Therefore, the design proposal developed in this thesis chooses to focus in detail on one of these focal points, while analyzing and evaluating Kayaköy as a whole. This approach aims to develop a site-specific intervention that contributes to the broader holistic conservation framework that can also provide information for future studies focusing on other focal points within the settlement.

Within this framework, the Upper Church (Taxiarchis Church) area was selected as the detailed intervention area due to its symbolic importance in terms of architectural and historical perspectives , and its role as a significant spatial junction point within the settlement. The design proposal aims to reveal and communicate the historical, material, spatial, and experiential layers embedded in the site. Instead of reconstructing lost elements, the proposal aims to reveal the traces of them with the principles of minimal intervention, reversibility, and respect for originality. Existing traces, patterns of abandonment, and material evidence are preserved and interpreted through a series of landscape, circulation, and public space interventions.

The study concludes that the preservation of abandoned rural settlements requires approaches that integrate architectural preservation with memory, landscape, and visitor experience. The proposed strategy demonstrates how site-specific interventions can contribute to a broader, holistic preservation framework while preserving Kayaköy's authenticity, legibility, and cultural significance.

Keywords: Kayaköy (Levissi); Cultural Landscape; Collective Memory; Heritage Interpretation; Upper Church (Taxiarchis Church); Minimal Intervention; Reversibility; Legibility of Historical Traces

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INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background & Context

Rural settlements are formations shaped by the long-term interaction between human activities and the natural environment, and they also represent multi-layered cultural landscapes. These settlements consist not only of physical structures but also represent local traditions, production systems, and collective memory. For these reasons, rural settlements accommodate various heritage values that should be preserved. Yet, many of these settlements are either in the process of population decline or have already been abandoned due to different factors such as socio-economic changes, migration, and political reasons.

Consequently, abandoned rural settlements are increasingly subject to degradation, and the lack of sustainable use and maintenance accelerates the loss of both physical integrity and cultural value. This emphasizes the need for conservation approaches that consider not only the preservation of the built environment but also the cultural significance of such settings.

In abandoned settlements, the act of abandonment itself can become a meaningful component of heritage value, bearing the traces of historical events, social transformations, displacements, and collective memory. Empty buildings, silent streets, interrupted daily life, and the relationship between nature and the built environment over time create unique cultural landscapes where absence becomes physically visible. In such places, heritage is represented not only by what remains but also by what is lost.

Kayaköy (Levissi) stands out as a significant example among these abandoned rural settlements. It is an old Anatolian Greek settlement, located in southwestern Türkiye. Following the 1922-1924 Turkish-Greek Population Exchange, it was completely abandoned. Over time, it has deteriorated due to lack of maintenance plan and management. However, it has survived to the present day in a largely unchanged state, contributing to its distinctive identity.

The significance of Kayaköy is strongly connected to the memory of abandonment, displacement, loss of belonging, and interrupted continuity of community life embedded within the site. The ruined houses, abandoned churches, empty spaces, and fragmented traces of everyday life continue to communicate these historical experiences through the physical environment. Thus, Kayaköy functions as a cultural landscape where architectural remains, memory, and historical narratives coexist.

However, the complexity of Kayaköy extends beyond its multi-layered character, as the settlement itself contains different focal points with different qualities. As a result, the challenges and potentials observed throughout the settlement are not uniform but vary according to these focal points. This condition shows that a singular and homogeneous intervention approach would be insufficient to address the conservation needs of this complex site. Instead, there is a need for a holistic conservation framework that recognizes Kayaköy as an integrated cultural landscape while allowing for site-specific strategies adapted to the special characteristics of different nodal points.

1.2. Resarch Question

As mentioned in the previous section, the multifaceted memory and heritage in Kayaköy create a heterogeneous, complex structure and distinct spatial focal points within the settlement. These focal points also possess different spatial forms, heritage values, problems, and opportunities. This demonstrates that a uniform, homogeneous intervention would be unsuitable for the settlement. To address the unique characteristics of each focal point, area-focused, diverse strategies must be considered within a holistic conservation framework.

In this context, the study addresses the following research question:

How can the multi-layered heritage values, challenges, and potentials of Kayaköy be addressed through a holistic conservation framework supported by site-specific intervention strategies?

1.3. Aim and scope of the study

Considering the multi-layered structure, values, challenges, and potential for reuse of the Kayaköy settlement, it is clear that a uniform and homogeneous intervention approach would be insufficient.The settlement exhibits a complex structure consisting of numerous focal points, each possessing unique spatial characteristics, potentials, and conditions at different scales.

Therefore, Kayaköy requires a hybrid conservation approach that is sensitive to the unique qualities of each focal point while also addressing it within a holistic framework. This approach enables both the preservation of the settlement's overall character and the development of site-specific strategies. In this context, as a result of analyzing the main focal points of the area, the Upper Church and its surroundings stand out as a significant focal point. Due to its strong symbolic value, topographically dominant location, and potential to form a spatial nodal point, it offers a clear focus for understanding conservation problems and developing design interventions.

This study, treating Kayaköy as a cultural landscape, reveals its fundamental values, current problems, and future potentials, and develops a conservation and design proposal centered on the Upper Church. The proposed approach aims to enhance the spatial experience while supporting public use and preserving the authenticity of the existing fabric.

The main objective of this study is to develop a design proposal focusing on the Upper Church and its surroundings, anticipating that there should be different approaches specific to different focal points within the Kayaköy settlement. In doing so, it is proposed that a hybrid conservation approach for the focal points be considered holistically across the entire area. Accordingly, the study is based on understanding Kayaköy primarily as a holistic cultural landscape.

The sub-objectives of the study are defined as follows:

• Analysis of Kayaköy at regional, historical, and architectural scales

• Revealing the spatial structure and cultural values of the settlement

• Conducting a comprehensive evaluation within the framework of values, problems, and potentials

• Identifying the strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the settlement through SWOT analysis

• Defining the spatial characteristics, circulation systems, and important focal points within the settlement

• Justifying the selection of the Upper Church as an intervention area from spatial, cultural, and conservation perspectives

• Developing a design and intervention strategy in line with conservation principles

The scope of the study is limited to the Upper Church and its immediate surroundings as a detailed intervention area. However, a spatial and conceptual framework has been created for Kayaköy as a whole in order to establish the relationship of the developed proposals with the settlement as a whole. This study adopts a conservation approach based on the principles of minimum intervention, reversibility, and preservation of original materials, rather than a reconstruction approach. The design approach aims to enhance the legibility of the existing fabric, support controlled public use, and strengthen the spatial experience.

1.4. Methodology

The methodology followed in this study is based on a multi-layered approach encompassing analysis, evaluation, and design processes.

In the first stage, Kayaköy was analyzed at different scales. This included a regional analysis to understand the settlement's geographical location and environmental relationships, a multi-layered historical analysis revealing its historical continuity, and an architectural analysis examining its spatial organization and building typologies. These analyses formed the basis for understanding Kayaköy as a cultural landscape.

In the second stage, the settlement was evaluated at regional, settlement, and building scales within the framework of values, problems, and potentials. Subsequently, a SWOT analysis was conducted to systematically identify the settlement's strengths and weaknesses, as well as its opportunities and threats. As a result of these analyses, the complex structure of the area was once again understood, and it became clear that a singular and homogeneous intervention approach would be insufficient. Therefore, it is proposed that Kayaköy be addressed with a hybrid and holistic conservation approach that works in an integrated manner through different focal points. For this reason, different focal areas that can be focused on in the area have been defined through the settlement's basic spatial characteristics, circulation systems, and important landmark buildings.

The Upper Church and its surroundings were selected as one of the focal areas for detailed study due to their spatial, symbolic, and topographical characteristics. However, the aim of this selection was not only to develop an intervention specific to this area, but also to test and represent a holistic conservation approach that could be applied throughout Kayaköy.

In the third stage, a conservation and design proposal was developed. In this context, a general strategic framework was created that includes conservation principles, circulation strategies, and landscape decisions. Subsequently, detailed interventions were developed specifically for the Upper Church; ground and courtyard arrangements and facade interventions were addressed.

Throughout the study process, the principles of minimum intervention, material harmony, recyclability, and preservation of the existing fabric were adopted. The research methodology combined literature review, archive and document analysis, on-site observation, photographic documentation, and plan-based spatial analysis. Diagrams, mapping studies, plans, sections, and elevations were used as analytical and design tools throughout the study. The findings obtained through these methods informed both the evaluation process and the development of conservation and design strategies.

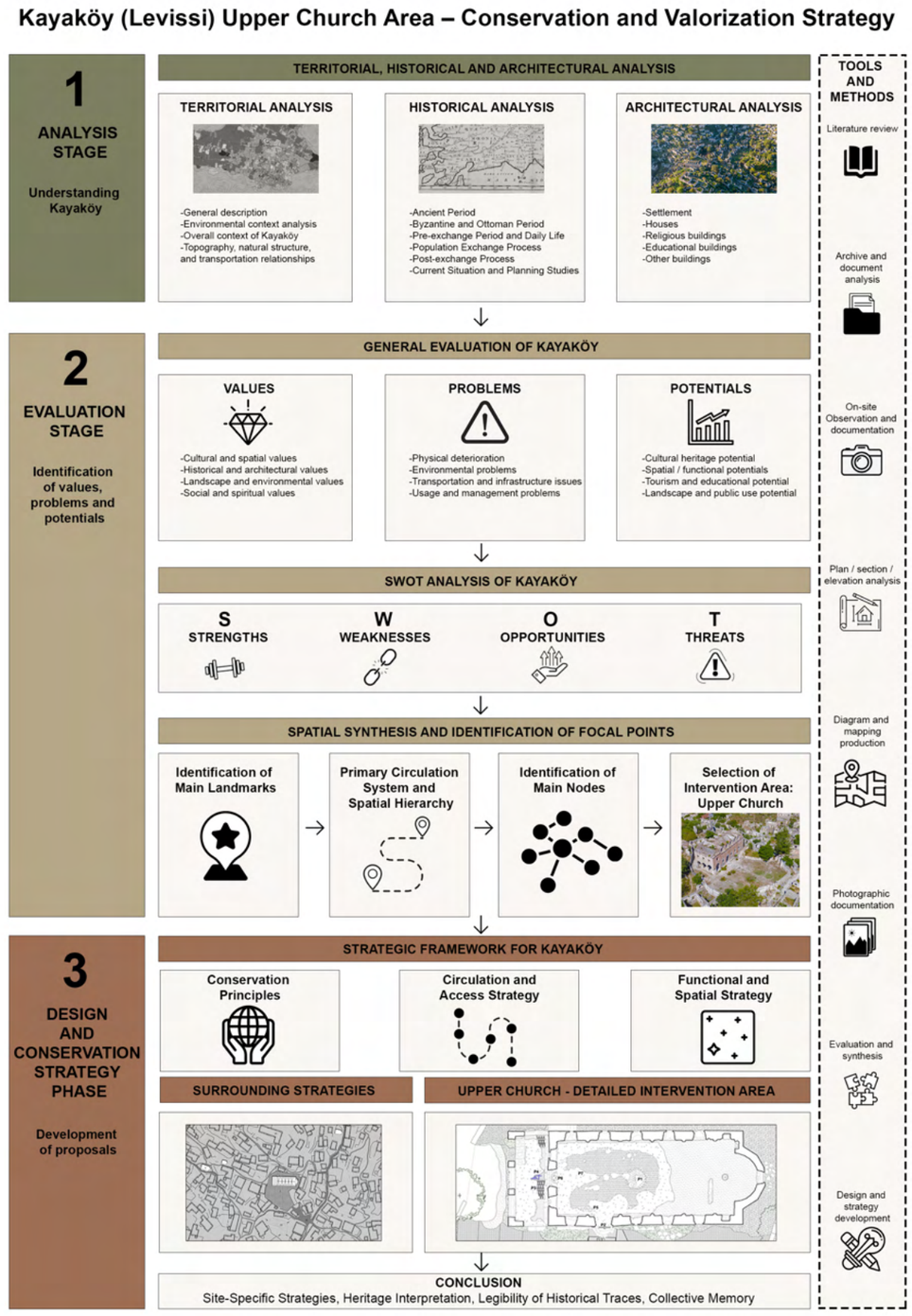


Figure 1: Methodology Diagram (Author, 2026)

CHAPTER 1
TERRITORIAL, HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL OVERVIEW OF KAYAKÖY



Figure 1.1: Aerial Photo of Kayaköy Levissi (Terraviva, 2024)

1.1. Territorial Analysis of Kayaköy

Kayaköy is an rural settlement that is located in the Fethiye district of Muğla province in southwestern Türkiye.[1]It accommodates a historical abandoned Anatolian Greek village in its boundaries, which is known as Levissi and also associated with the name Kayaköy as well (Figure 1.1). In this section, the territorial characteristics of the historic settlement of Levissi, are considered more broadly within the context of Kayaköy, and its wider surrounding area is analyzed.

1 Location can be verified via this link: https://geohack.toolforge.org/geohack.php?pagename=-Kayak%C3%B6y&params=36_34_30_N_29_5_28_E_region:TR_type:adm1st_dim:100000



Figure 1.2: Aerial Photo of Kayaköy Levissi (Terraviva, 2024)

1.1.1. General description of Kayaköy

Levissi is the historical settlement of Kayaköy, and a heritage site that serves as an open-air museum today, due to its state of abandonment after the compulsory population exchange between Greece and Türkiye in 1922-1923. This result from the subsequent abandonment of the settlement to a large extent by the Rumelian Turks who came after the departure of the Anatolian Greeks in 1922.[2] Today, it has also become a point of attraction due to the impression it gives as a ghost village.

It consists of the ruins of nearly 900 houses, around 14 small chapels, 2 large churches, 2 schools, 2 fountains and a certain number of unspecified shops, which are thought to have been built in the mid-19th century (Fethiye Municipality , n.d.; Muğla İl ve Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, n.d.).[3]

Kayaköy is a larger rural settlement that includes the historical settlement of Levissi. It is located on an agriculturally fertile plain surrounded by mountains, and from this point of view, it stands out with its natural beauty and the agricultural goods as

2 The section 1.2. Historical Development of Kayaköy covers these topics in detail.

3 The building numbers are based on the site plan of Kayaköy obtained from Fethiye Municipality.



Figure 1.3: Aerial Photo of Kayaköy Levissi (Terraviva, 2024)

well, although it has been damaged by the effects of unsuitable tourism activities, especially in recent times.

Today, the local population's livelihood is based on agriculture and tourism. The locals involve in tourism generally by accommodation, food and beverage services, and touristic horseback riding. Apart from these, sports and art tourism also stand out in the region. In this regard, activities such as trekking and hiking are popular.[4]The routes that are connected to Kayaköy are described in detail in the book A Guide to Kayaköy (Akatay, Livesley, 2013). Besides the art camps, there are also pottery and leather shops and workshops, especially located close to Levissi.[5] Moreover, there is the Kayaköy Carpet Workshop, that is located away from Levissi. Kayaköy Carpet is a distinctive cultural product of the region. (FTSO Kayaköy Carpet Tourism Assets Inventory, n.d.). Although new social spaces are increasing in Kayaköy, the number of social spaces, either new or historical, that preserve the authentic characteristic of the area is quite limited. The historic Kuyubaşı Coffeehouse is one of these rare examples. In terms of educational facilities, only one school currently serves in Kayaköy under the name of the Muğla Fethiye Kaya Primary School.[6]

4 These informations are based on observations and oral sources during the site visit by the author.

5 Ibid.

6 These informations are based on observations and oral sources during the site visit by the author.



Figure 1.4: Aerial Photo of Kayaköy Levissi (Terraviva, 2024)

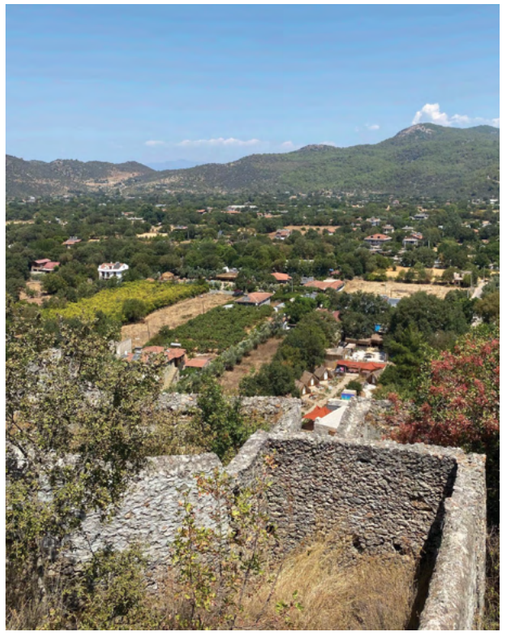
Figure 1.5: Aerial Photo of Kayaköy Levissi (Terraviva, 2024)

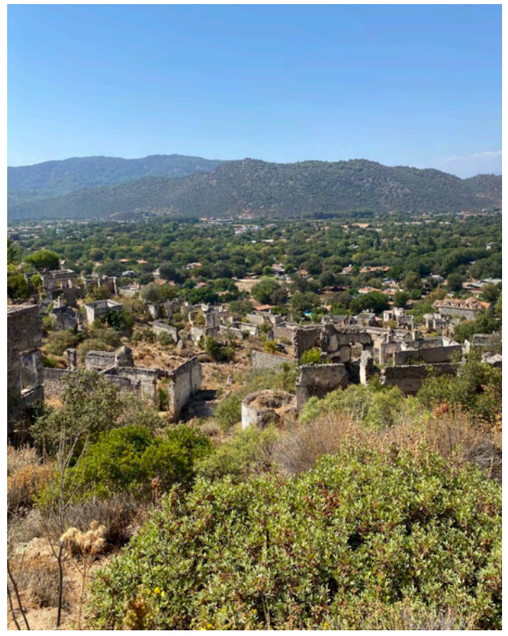




Figure 1.6: Aerial Photo of Kayaköy Levissi (Terraviva, 2024)

Figure 1.7: View of Kayaköy Plain from Levissi (Author, 2024)





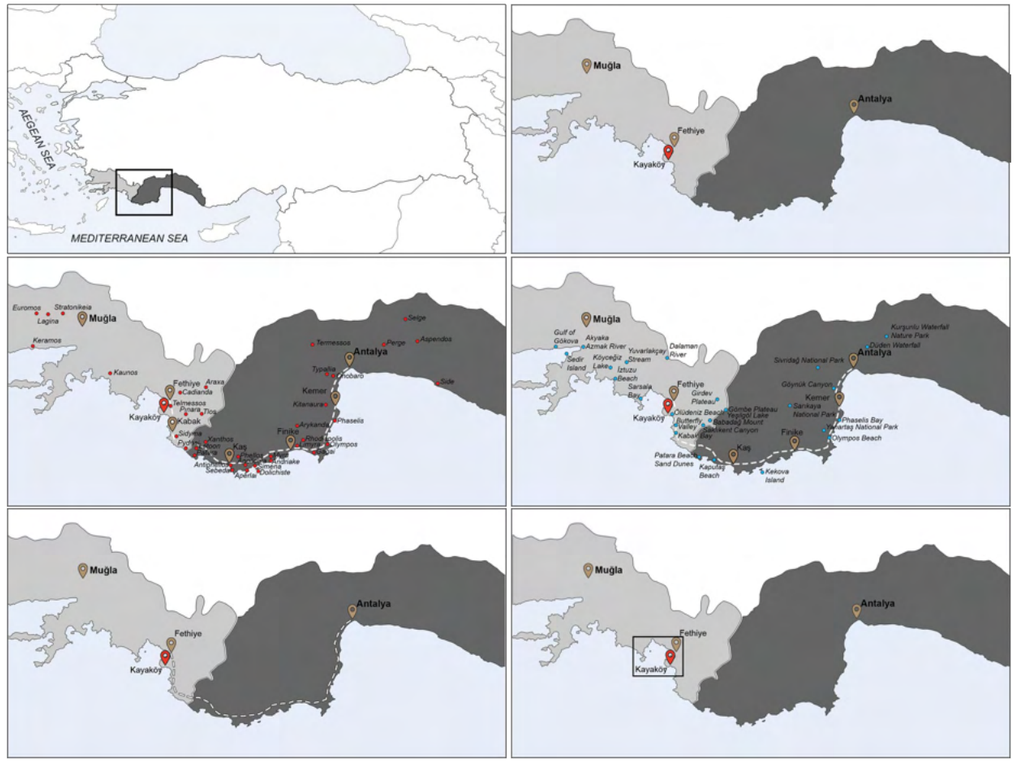


Figure 1.8: 1- Location of Kayaköy (Author, 2025) (base map source: MapCarta)
2- Right - Map of ancient cities located between Muğla and Antalya (Author, 2025)
Left - Map of natural attraction points located between Muğla and Antalya (Author, 2025)
3- Right - Lycian Way (Author, 2025)
Left - Fethiye-Göcek Special Environmental Protection Area (Author, 2025)

Kayaköy is located in a very rich and strategic geographical position, both naturally and culturally, thanks to its location between Muğla and Antalya provinces; this situation further increases the historical and touristic value of the region.

The province of Muğla that Kayaköy is affiliated to is adjacent to the province of Antalya on the Mediterranean coast and the province of Aydın on the Aegean coast. Muğla have districts both on the Mediterranean and the Aegean region, so it reflects the richness of these two regions.

Fethiye is one of these districts and is located in the Mediterranean region; therefore, Kayaköy as well (Figure 1.9.).[7]

7 Kayaköy is indicated as red sign

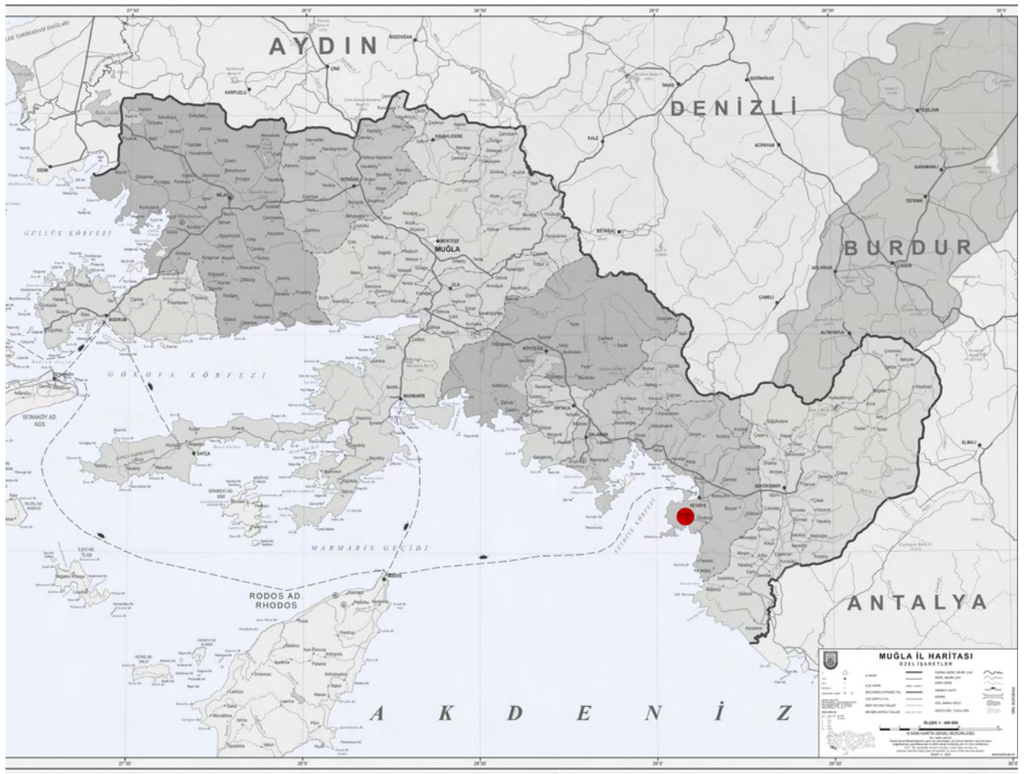


Figure 1.9: Muğla Province Map, edited by the author (T.C.General Directorate of Mapping, 2023)

1.1.2. Overview of General Surrounding Context

Kayaköy exists in the area defined as Fethiye-Göcek Special Environmental Protection Area (Figure 1.10)[8] which is characterized by the Mediterranean climate and rich flora and fauna, and serves as a significant natural and archaeological conservation zone. The region accommodates fertile agricultural lands, greenhouses and also important nesting sites for sea turtles. Moreover, the area is significantly popular for various touristic activities, such as yacht tourism and nature sports. Additionally, this area is classified as a first-degree earthquake zone, which makes the place geologically sensitive (T.C. Ministry Of Environment, Urbanisation And Climate Change, n.d.).

8 Location of Kayaköy, Levissi is indicated by red dot, surrounding attraction points are indicated by blue dot. Location of the attraction points shown in the following images are marked on the map.

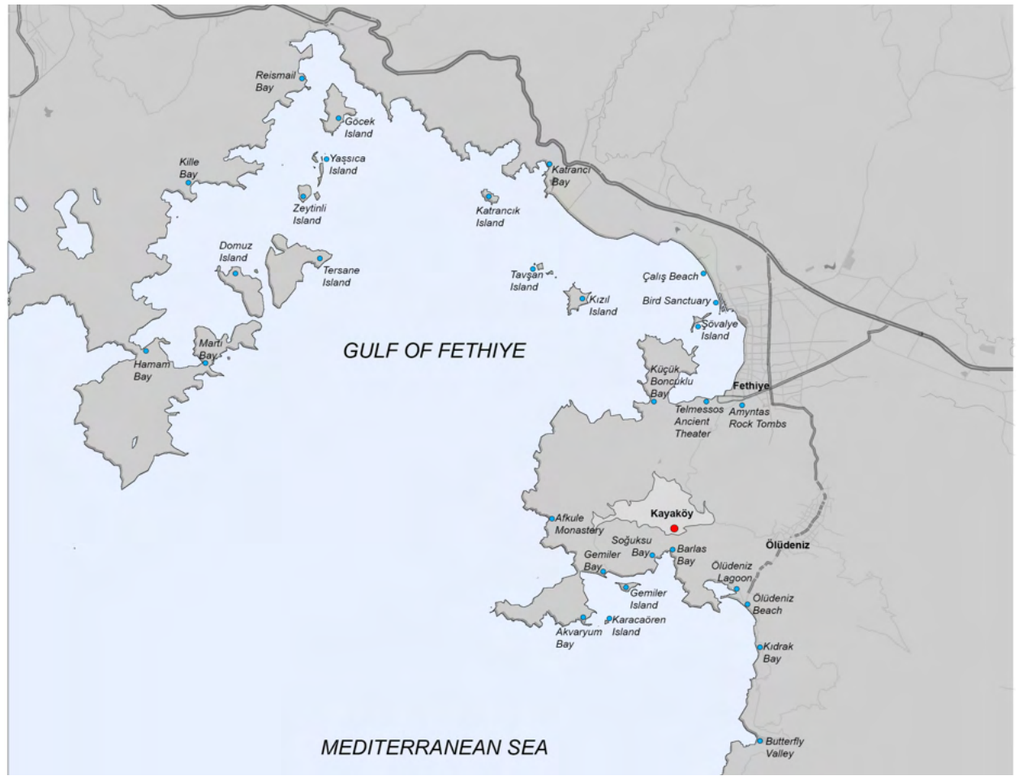


Figure 1.10: Fethiye-Göcek Special Environmental Protection Area with attraction points (Author, 2025) (base map source: MapCarta)

Figure 1.11: Telmessos Ancient Theater in Fethiye after its restoration (Arkeolojik Haber, 2022)





Figure 1.12: Amynthas Rock Tombs in Fethiye, photo by Bünyamin Şahiner (T.C. Fethiye Kaymakamlığı, n.d.)

Figure 1.13: Şövalye Island, Fethiye photo by FTSO (Türkiye Kültür Portalı, n.d.)





Figure 1.14: Gemiler Island, Fethiye (Turkish Museums, n.d.)

Figure 1.15: Afkule Monastery, Fethiye (Slow travel guide, n.d.)





Figure 1.16: Tersane Island, Fethiye (Kekova Travel, n.d.)

Figure 1.17: Ölüdeniz Lagoon & Beach, Fethiye photo by Bünyamin Şahiner (T.C. Fethiye Kaymakamlığı, n.d.)





Figure 1.18: Karacaören Island, Fethiye (Yahyaoğlu, 2024)

Figure 1.19: Butterfly Valley, Fethiye (Wikipedia, 2022)



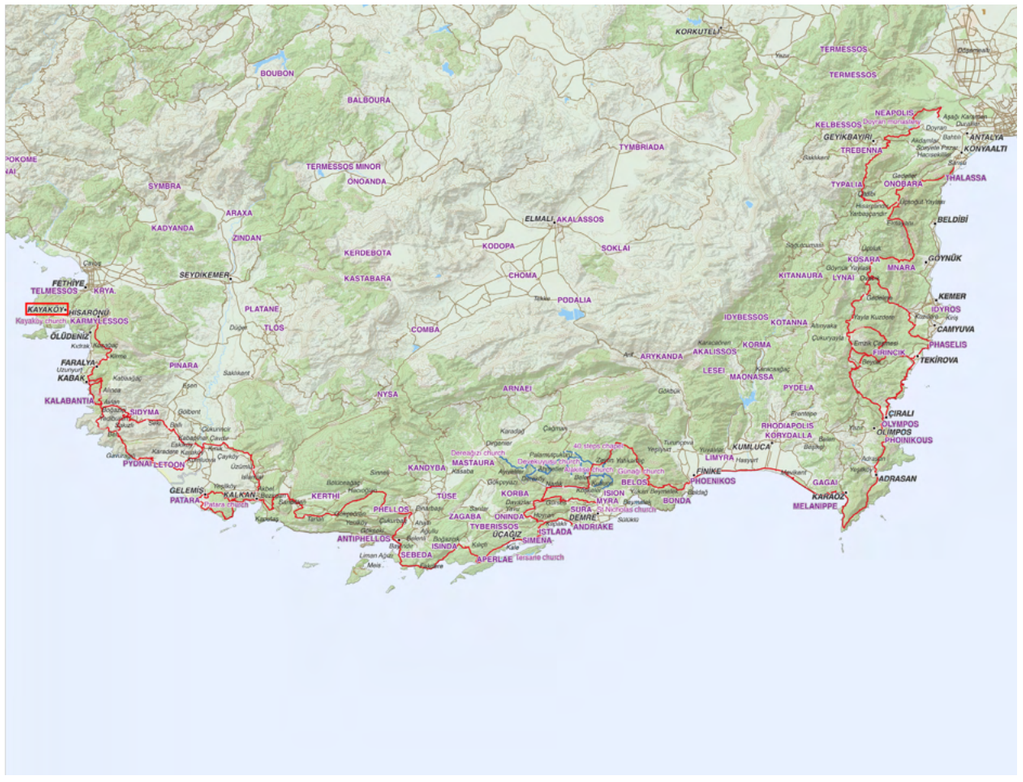


Figure 1.20: Lycian Way Route Map (Wikipedia, 2022)

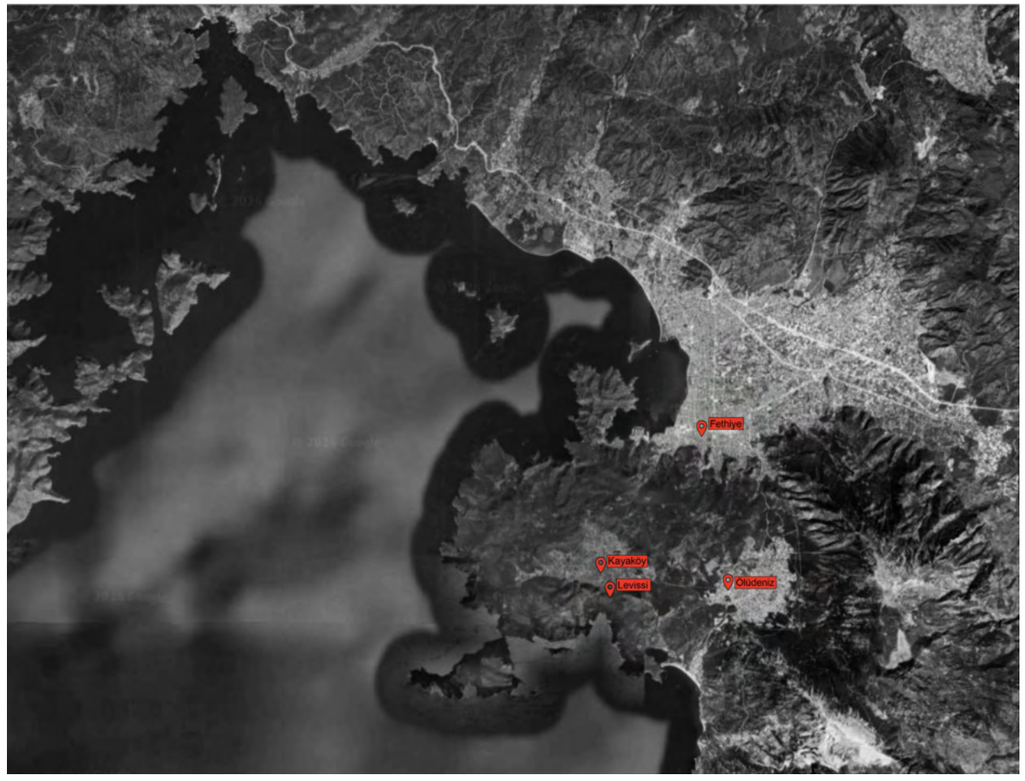


Figure 1.21: Satellite view of the broader context of Kayaköy (Google Earth, 2024)

In addition to being included in the Fethiye Göcek Environmental Protection Area, Kayaköy is also included as extended route in the Lycian Way (Figure 1.19) which is a marked hiking trail that extends from Fethiye to Antalya on the southern coast of Türkiye. The Lycian Way is 760 km long, taking 35 days to complete. First marked by Kate Clow in 1999, it is the first long-distance walking trail in Türkiye. It includes the ancient Lycia coastal and mountain trails, Roman roads, former footpaths and mule paths. Along the route, hikers pass by more than 25 historical sites. Futhermore, swimming, canoeing, and paragliding are also offered. The preferred trekking times are between February and May or between September and November. Along the trail, accommodation can be found in village houses, pensions, small hotels or camping sites. The alternative route that includes Kayaköy starts from Fethiye and reaches Ovacık or Ölüdeniz via Kayaköy. Kayaköy is usually preferred as the first or last stop of the walk. The path from Fethiye to Kayaköy is approximately 8.8 kilometers long and takes approximately 3.6 hours to complete, whereas the section from Kayaköy to Ovacık is approximately 5.5 kilometers and requires a 2.5-hour walk (Culture Route Society, n.d.; Trekopedia, n.d.).

1.1.3. Overview of General Context of Kayaköy

Kayaköy exists between coordinations of 36° 34′ 30″ North, and 29° 5′ 28″ East.[9] It is located 8 kilometers to the southwest of Fethiye, and 5 kilometers to the west of Ölüdeniz, Hisarönü.[10] It is surrounded by mountainous and rugged terrains on all sides; therefore, it is not a coastal settlement.

The area stays between the mountains and hills is defined as Kayaköy Polje (Bayrakdar et.al., 2020), Kaya Plain (Biricik et.al., 1998, p.153) or Kayaçukuru Plain today.In addition, this polje area exists inside of a river basin area that is indicated in Figure 1.22 which also shows *Belen* (528 m), *Kara* (520 m), *Geymene* (624 m), *Baba* (1958 m) Mountains, and *Halilbaba* (1535 m), *Arı* (1757 m), *Süle* (537 m), *Pınar* (346 m), *Karabuz* (518 m) Hills that surrounds the polje. On the other hand, Kayaköy Polje is an area at high risk of flooding due to the lack of surface drainage formation that

9 Location can be verified via this link: https://geohack.toolforge.org/geohack.php?pagename=-Kayak%C3%B6y&params=36_34_30_N_29_5_28_E_region:TR_type:adm1st_dim:100000

10 The distance calculations are based on Google Maps data.

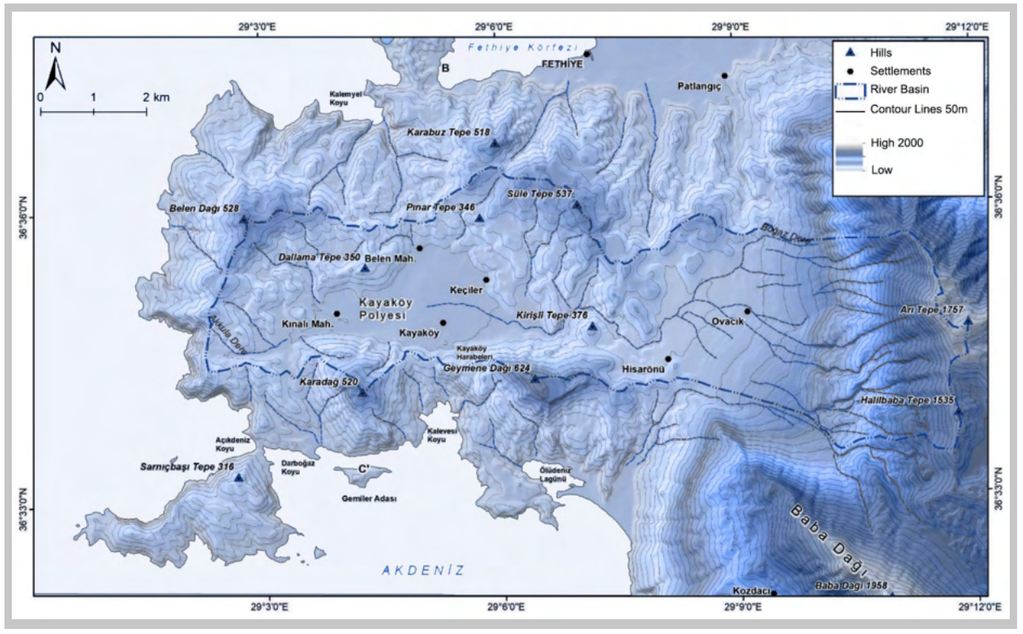


Figure 1.22: Physical characteristics of the Kayaköy Polje and immediate surroundings, edited by the author (Bayrakdar et.al., 2020, p.114)

allows water flow from the surface. In addition, the excessive presence of human interventions such as overdevelopment in the water basin area are increasing the risk of flooding, which in 2019, a flood has occured in Kayaköy Polje, more particularly in the area near to the Kınalı Neighborhood (Bayrakdar et.al., 2020).

There are rural settlements such as *Kınalı*, *Belen* and *Karakeçililer* in the surrounding area of Kayaköy, Levissi. These settlements including Kayaköy, except Levissi, are defined in the border of the area that is decided to be preserved for agricultural use according the Zoning Plan by Fethiye Municipality.[11] However, the agricultural fabric of these settlements has begun to deteriorate over time due to the influence of insuitable tourism activies and overdevelopment. In the same zoning plan, some parts of Kayaköy which also includes Levissi is also defined as both an urban and archaeological conservation site, while a portion of the forest area adjacent to Levissi is defined as an archeological conservation site as well.

The Kayaçukuru plain is generally shaped by agricultural lands, cultivated lands, orchads and vineyards. Particularly the Kayaköy region is rich in terms of orchads, which are mostly cultivating with figs (Figure 1.25). Kaya inciri, fig of Kayaköy is marked product of the region and it is indicated in the tourism asset inventory of the Fethiye Chamber Of Commerce and Industry (FTSO, n.d.). In addition to the fig, Kayaköy chickpea is an another marked product as well (FTSO, n.d.).

11 The Zoning Plan was obtained from Fethiye Municipality in 2024.



Figure 1.23: Satellite view of Kayaköy Polje, Kayaçukuru Plain (Google Earth, 2024)

Figure 1.24: Satellite view of Kayaköy, Levissi (Google Earth, 2024)



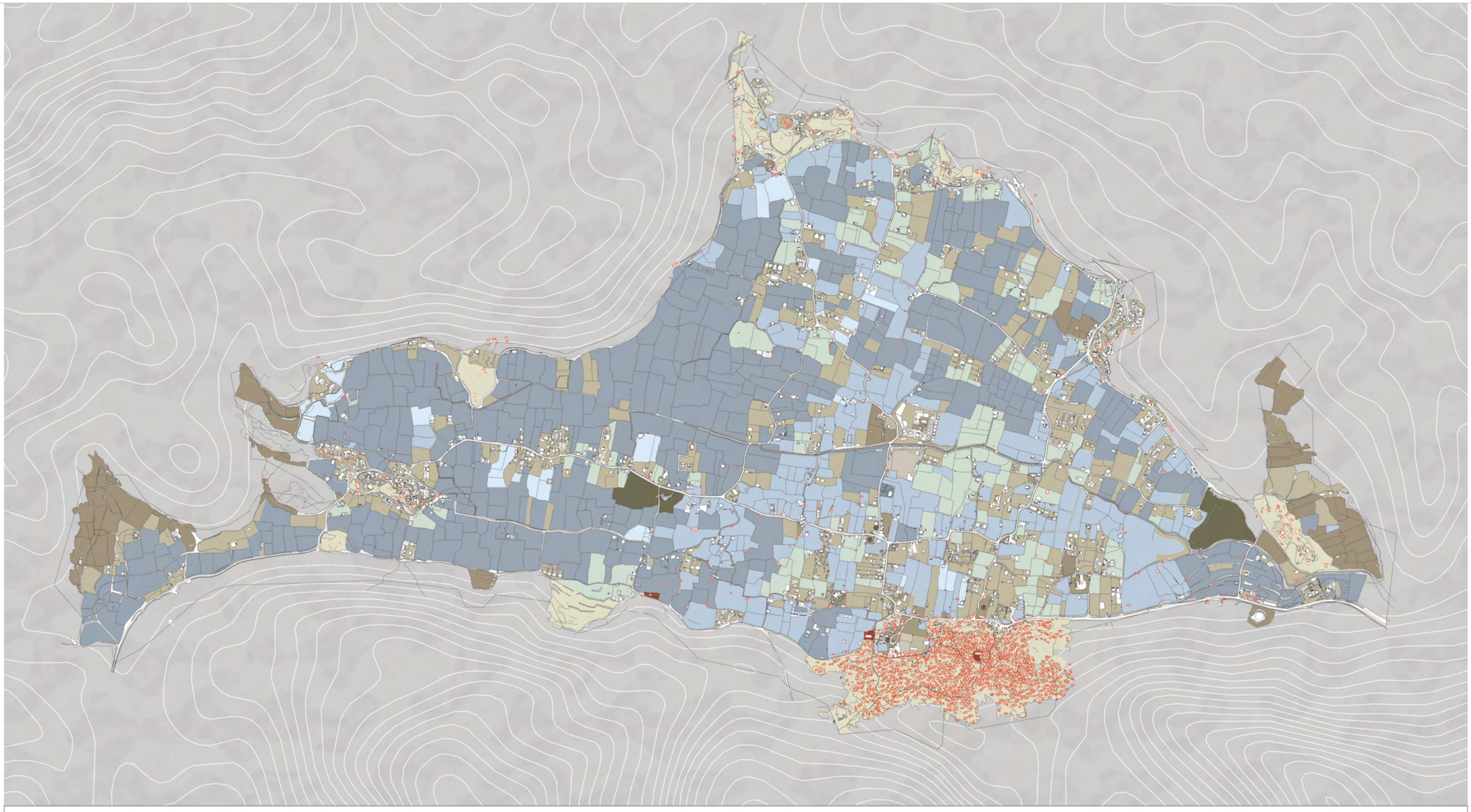


Figure 1.24: Landuse map of Kayaçukuru Plain (Author, 2025)

(base map source: Terrraviva Competition, landuse information: Fethiye Municipality)

1.2. Historical Development of Kayaköy

Kayaköy has evolved through various historical periods and cultural influences that have shaped its identity. It is also known as Levissi, especially during the period when it was inhabited by the Greeks and also called Kaya by the locals in modern times. Throughout its history, it has maintained a close relationship with Fethiye, known as Makri until relatively recent times, a region with a deep-rooted historical background that goes back to antiquity. In ancient times, Fethiye was known as the city of Telmessus which is in a significant position as being one of the main urban centers in Lycia region with its political and military history and its archaeological heritage (Bean, 1978, pp. 38–41).Thus, examining the historical development of Kayaköy from ancient period to the post-population exchange period is essential to understand the transformation of the area over time until today.

1.2.1. Ancient Period (15th century BCE – 395 CE)

The Lycian civilization was first mentioned in 14th-century BCE Hittite texts as the “Lukka lands,” indicating an early cultural presence in southwestern Anatolia. Although its identity formed long before classical antiquity, Lycia became a formally organized political entity in 167 BCE with the establishment of the Lycian League,a federative system recognized by the Roman Senate and composed of twenty-three self-governing cities (Bean, 1978, pp. 20–21, 26–27). Lycia was a rugged, mountainous region stayed between Caria and Pamphylia regions (Figure 2.1) (Wells, 1719). It had small arable and inhabitable plains. Its coastal location and excellent ports allowed Lycia to play an important role in trade between the Aegean, the Eastern Mediterranean, and the Egypt. Telmessus was one of the important ports of the region. It had fertile lands and was surrounded by sheltered bays. Especially in the late antique period under Roman Empire rule, Lycia region experienced its most prosperous period; urban life developed with cities expanding and new churches and monasteries being built (Foss, 1994, pp. 1– 4).



Figure 2.1: A new map of the western parts of Asia Minor, largely taken: Shewing their ancient divisions, countries or people, chief cities, towns, rivers, mountains, etc. (Wells, 1710)

Ancient sources also reflect the region’s historical prominence. Greek geographer Strabo mentions Telmessus in his travel notes, as he mentions many other ancient cities. After mentioning Telmessus, Strabo (1929 [orig. ca. 7 BC], pp. 315–317) describes a settlement called Carmylessus.

> *4. After Daedala, then, I mean the mountain in Lycia, one comes to a Lycian town near it, Telmessus, and to Telmessis, a promontory with a harbor. Eumenes (King of Pergamum 197-159 B.C.) received this place from the Romans in the Antiochian War, but when his kingdom was dissolved the Lycians got it back again.*
>
> *5. Then, next, one comes to Anticragus, a steep mountain, where is Carmylessus, an inhabited place situated in a ravine; and, after this, to Cragus, which has eight promontories and a city of the same name. The scene of the myth of Chimaera is laid in the neighbourhood of these mountains (Strabo, 1929, pp. 315–317).*



Figure 2.2: Excerpt from Asia Minor / auctore Phi. de La Rue; ... J. Sommer, sculp.
A selected section of the map of antique Asia Minor, dated 1652, showing the Daedale Mountains,Telmessus and Carmylessus (La Rue, 1652?)

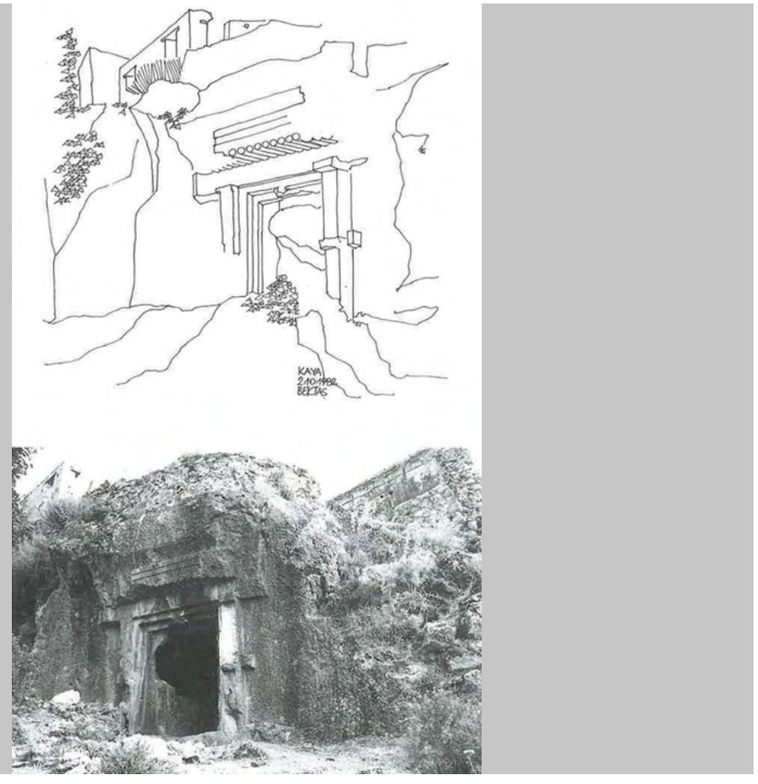


Figure 2.3: Sketch and photograph of the rock-cut tomb located beneath the Kayaköy houses, documented by Architect Cengiz Bektaş during his visit to Kayaköy in 1982(Bektaş, 2008, pp. 22–23).

Today the settlement of Carmylessus is identified with Kayaköy due to the presence of sarcophagi and rock tomb ruins belonging to the Lycian Civilization in its near vicinity (Çevik, 2021, pp. 201– 204). These rock-cut tombs, pillar tombs and sarcophagi emerged in the 4th and 5th centuries BC, leading to Lycian language and tomb architecture had flourished (Bean, 1978, pp. 22, 30–31). Therefore, it is said that foundation of Kayaköy dates back to 4000 BC (Muğla İl ve Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, n.d.); however, there is insufficient research based on archaeological data on this subject; therefore, it is not possible to speak of scientific clarity about Kayaköy's foundation date and relationship with ancient Carmylessus.

When the name of this settlement examined as Karmylessos, more commonly known in Greek pronunciation, it is observed that;

> *In the Latin spelling of Karmylessos, the sound represented by the letter 'e' corresponds to the Greek spelling, where the letter eta 'η', which in the past had a value close to 'a', is used. Most likely, the 'Mylessos' part of the name is actually the same as the name Mylassa (Milas), with the addition of the word 'Kar' at the beginning. If this is the case, the name of the small town would indicate 'City of the Mill on the Summit'. Indeed, 'Kayaköy' is a village located on an incline. However, the name Karmylessos may not be derived from the components 'kar + mula + assa', but rather could come from a word on its own, 'karmula', whose meaning we do not know, with the addition of 'assa', meaning 'settlement', hence; village, town, city (Şahin, 2000, p. 80).*

1.2.2. Byzantine (4th Century-15th Century) and Post Byzantine/Ottoman Period

Kayaköy was known as Levissi or Levision in the Byzantine and later periods (Masuda, 2010, p. 222). At that period, one of the important places around Levissi was Gemiler Island,which was called as Lebissos in Byzantine era, and developed between the 5th and 7th centuries.Although it was a small island, it was a densely populated settlement at that times. It is thought that the island was a religious center with the spread of Christianity until the Arab attacks in the 7th century (Masuda, 2010, p. 226). In the early 1900s, a group of researchers from Osaka University conducted a comprehensive archaeological study on Gemiler Island and its surroundings (Figure 2.4), and as a result, they published their research both in the university archives[1] and as a book (Asano, 2010).

They also worked in Kayaköy within the scope of this research and Gemiler Island has enabled them to think about some theories about life before the Greeks settled in Kayaköy.
At that time, the inhabitants of Gemiler Island were dependent on the cities on the mainland for food. In this sense, Kayaköy probably served as a mainland that provided food to the inhabitants of Gemiler Island and became an important settlement center of the island (Masuda, 2010, p. 222).

1 OSAKA UNIVERSITY KNOWLEDGE ARCHIVE [OUKA], *Memoirs of The Faculty Letters*, Osaka University Literature Club Bulletin / volume 35.



Figure 2.4: Map of Gemiler Island and its surroundings (OUKA,1995)

Archival Source: OSAKA UNIVERSITY KNOWLEDGE ARCHIVE [OUKA], *Memoirs of The Faculty Letters*, Osaka University Literature Club Bulletin / volume 35, file:14, ID: 6048, « Figures, Memoirs of the Faculty of Letters Osaka University».

Although there is not enough information about Kayaköy in the Byzantine era due to the settlement of Greeks in later periods, some sources mention that Kayaköy was also called as Kástro, means castle, because it was thought to have been built on and around the ruins of a Byzantine castle (Δελησάββας, 2013, p. 159). Moreover, as a result of the survey of Osaka University research group, Byzantine ruins were found in Kayaköy. They discovered many spolias (Figure 2.5) from the early Byzantine period still exist today. While some of the marble pieces and limestone reliefs are similar to those on Gemiler Island (Figure 2.6), some are specific to Kayaköy such as four different large marble column capitals decorated with stylized plant patterns.Furthermore, Late Byzantine frescoes were also discovered in two chapels of Kayaköy (Masuda, 2010, p. 224).

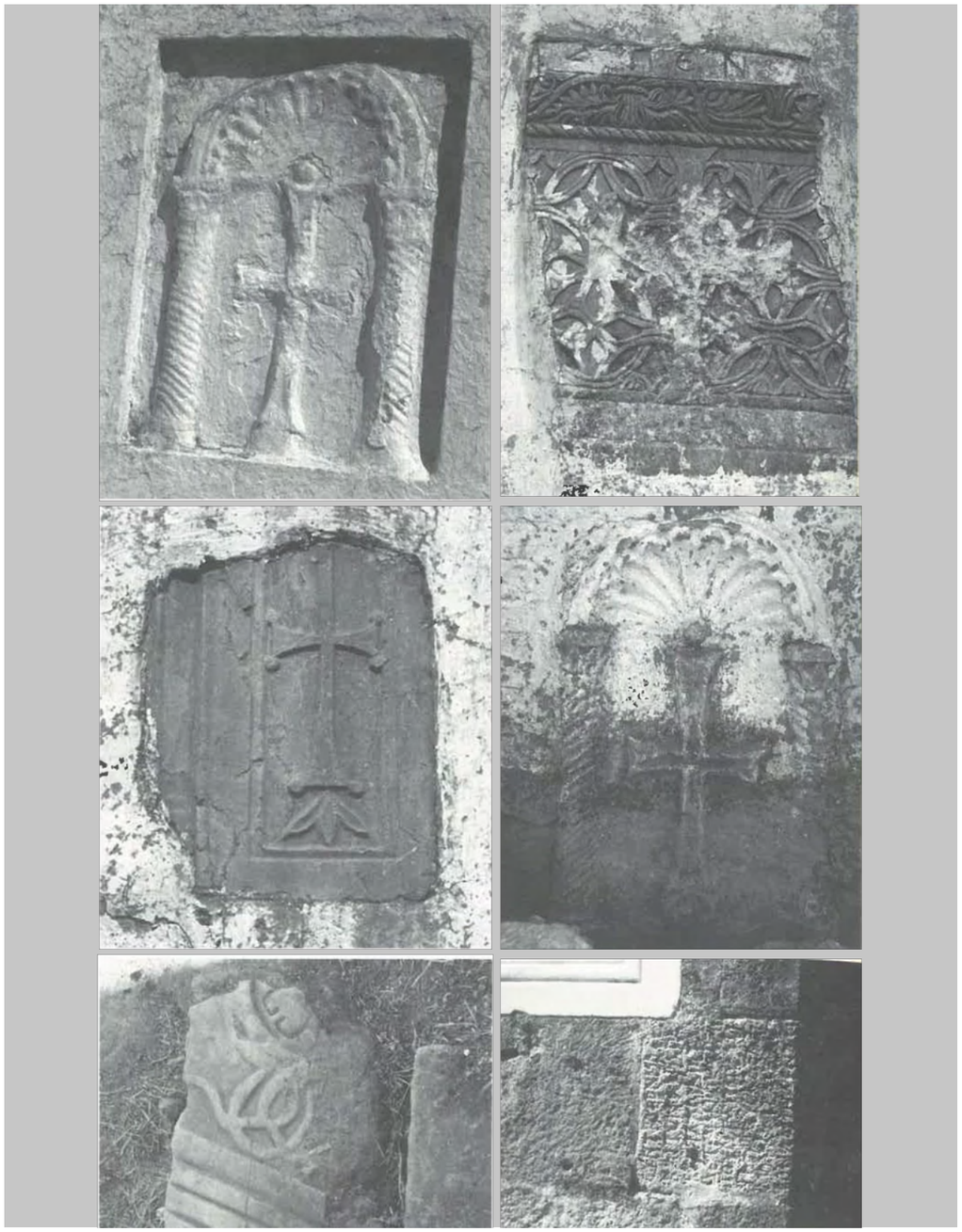


Figure 2.5: Early Byzantine Spolias in Kayaköy (Masuda, 2010, p.232)
Figure 2.6: In bottom left -Marble fragment of a slab of templon in Lower Church that has same ornamental pattern of the ones in Church III on Gemiler Island (Masuda, 2010, p.226)
Figure 2.7: In bottom right-Roman inscription reused in the apse wall of Lower Church (Masuda, 2010, p.226)

In addition, inscriptions from the Roman period (Figure 2.7) were found in the Lower Church Panagiá i Pyrgiótissa and in the spolia of a fountain; thereby researchers assume that Kayaköy developed during the Roman Empire and early Christianity periods. Moreover, they suppose that there was another large church that has been lost where the one of the existing churches is located now.They suggest that this lost church should have been bigger than the ones in Gemiler Island, and they believe that this church may have supported pilgrimage activities on Gemiler Island area (Masuda, 2010, p. 226).

Another theory proposed by the research group is that inhabitants of Gemiler Island abandoned the island during the Arab naval raids due to its easy access by sea. It is possible that they moved to Kayaköy, which was safer due to being hidden by the mountains on the coast (Asano, 2010, p. 4). It is likely that this theory is correct because during these raids that began in the mid-7th century, some cities on the Mediterranean and Aegean coasts were burned, and coastal towns began to be abandoned or diminished (Foss, 1994, p. 3). The inhabitants moved to more protected inland areas. In the naval battle that took place at Phoenix, modern Finike, which was very close to the Gemiler Island region, the Byzantine Navy suffered a heavy defeat.Therefore, it is thought that Gemiler Island was also subject to these attacks due to its location.Indeed,one of the churches on the island called as Church III, was destroyed during the Arab attacks,was later used as a cemetery and was not rebuilt (Fukunaga, 2010, p. 75). In the excavations carried out by the research group in this church, they found three different coins (Figure 2.8) that may be associated with Kayaköy.They assumed that last Byzantines, probably residents of Levissi (Kayaköy), came to the island in the late eleventh or early twelfth century to use this ruined church as a cemetery. They excavated the mosaic floor and built sarcophagi out of wall materials, templon and ambon fragments in the area. They propose this hypothesis for the reason that all the three coins were found approximately 60 cm above ground level and near the apse,so they probably indicate the period when the sarcophagi were constructed (Masuda, 2010, p. 234).



Figure 2.8: Byzantine and Roman Coins found in Gemiler Island (Masuda, 2010, p.236).

When examining the city of Telmessus during the Arab raids between the 7th and 9th centuries, it is seen that the city became a bishopric and was briefly renamed Anastasiapolis in the honour of emperor Anastasius II, later returned to its original name, Telmessus. In the 10th century, it was renamed Makris/Makri (Foss, 1994, p. 4). According to one interpretation, Makri was the name of the long and narrow island opposite Telmessus, which controlling the entrance to the port and is still located in the same place today. When part of the island sank, its inhabitants moved to Telmessus and the city was renamed Makri (Αχλάδη, 2008, p. 551) meaning distant city (Karaege, 2003, p. 27), which reflects the population movements from the islands to the mainland for defensive purposes (Foss, 1994, p.4). Makri also means long in Greek and far in Latin.Later,the name Makri called as Meğri by Turks (Karaca, 2013, p. 14). Lastly, in 1914, in the honour of Fethi Bey, one of the first Turkish pilots, the name changed as Fethiye (T.C. Fethiye Kaymakamlığı, n.d.).

After the Arab raids, security was temporarily established in the Lycia, and the region saw a shift in power dynamics in the following centuries.Turks temporarily gained dominance in the region after the Battle of Manzikert in 1071 and conquered it in the Battle of Myriokephalon in 1176. Despite this, Byzantine rule still continued in Telmessus and along the western coast (Foss, 1994, p. 3) until the mid-13th century, when the region came entirely under the rule of the Menteşe Principality (Karaca, 2013, p. 17). The principality was established in the Meğri region, and it was particularly notable for its naval power. Various maritime raids as far as Rhodes were conducted during the rule of the principality. However, the power of the principality began to weaken, and with the Ottomans gaining power in the region, it joined the Ottoman administration in 1390s, and it came under Ottoman rule permanently in 1424 as Menteşe Sanjak (Karaca, 2013, pp. 17–19).

When examining sources related to Kayaköy from that period, it is seen that the Italian traveler Marino Sanudo Torsello, who came to the region in the 14th century, mentioned it as Levissi in his travel notes. According to his notes, it is likely that Christian community had been living in Levissi since at least the 13th century (Ekinci, 1997, p. 26).[2] There is a reference from 1316 to support Sanuda's notes. In this reference, the Makri and Levissi diocese was mentioned, which also indicates that the relationship between Makri and Levissi dates back to very old times (Αχλάδη, 2008, pp. 551–552). According to Professor Konstantinos Amantos, a native teacher from Levissi, the locals of Levissi probably came here from Lívyssa (Λίβυσσα) in the ancient Bithynia region, now part of northwestern Türkiye, in 12th or 13th century, after Seljuk Turks took over the area. Then,they named their new homeland after their previous one; therefore, he assumed that the correct spelling version of Levissi should be Lívyssa (Λίβυσσα) (Λαμέρα, 1964, p. 12). Supporting this, according to the studies of historian Dilek Yarcan, the similarities between the dialect of Sille, an old Greek village near Konya, and the dialect of Levissi indicate that the inhabitants of Levissi may have settled here from Central Anatolia in the 11th and 12th centuries (Ekinci, 1997, p. 26). Considering these inferences, it is believed that the locals were Anatolian Greeks.

2 TMMOB CHAMBER OF ARCHITECTS ISTANBUL BÜYÜKKENT BRANCH ARCHIVE, *Oktay Ekinci*, «Kaya Köyü Barış ve Dostluk Köyü Olsun».

When looking at the etymology of the word Levissi /Livissi; there are different theories about the correct spelling of it besides the one were offered by Professor Konstantinos Amantos. Ioannis Louizidis, a native of Levissi who was engaged in archaeology, believes that the inhabitants came from the island of Lagousa, today known as Kızıl Island, exists in north of Levissi near to the Fethiye coastal. The inhabitants of Lagousa escaped from the pirates, settled in here and named it Lagousa (Λαμέρα, 1964, p. 13). According to his 1911 study Perí tis Livisianís Dialéktou (On the Levissi Dialect), the name Lágousa evolved into Livisi as Lágousa = Livoúsi = Livísi (Δεληςάββας, 2013, p. 159). Mihail Musaios, a native teacher from Levissi, assumed that the word Livisi is derived from Karmylessus, then evolved into Leivísion. Similar to M.Musaios, K. Lameras says that since the Livisian dialect retains many ancient words and toponyms, albeit more or less corrupted, and swapping the letters ‘m’ and ‘l’ mutually was common,it would be correct to acknowledge that it derived from the Karmylessus by truncating the initial syllable ‘Kar’, which is not rare in the renaming of ancient cities, and (Kar) Mylissós = Lymissós = Lymísin = Lyvísin, more correctly as Lyvísion similar to Leivísion (Λαμέρα, 1964, p. 13).

In addition to these, Osaka University research team also found inscriptions from the 19th and early 20th centuries in Kayaköy. In some of these inscriptions, when mentioning the name of this place, it is seen that it was written as ΑΕΙΒΗΣΙΟΝ and it is pronounced as Livision (Figure 2.9) (Masuda, 2010, p. 228). In another inscription, it was mentioned as ΑΟΙΒΗΣΙΩ and again it is pronounced as Livision. Thus, while there is no agreed upon way to spell or pronounce the name of the settlement, in today’s context it is usually called Levissi, Livissi, or Livisi.

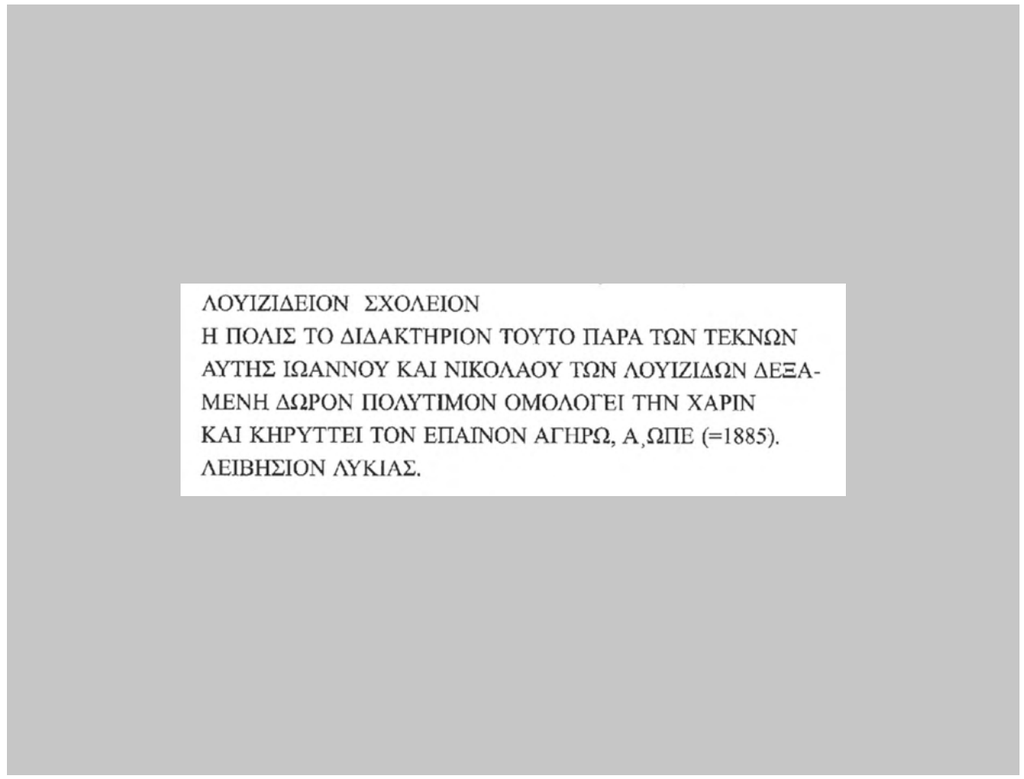
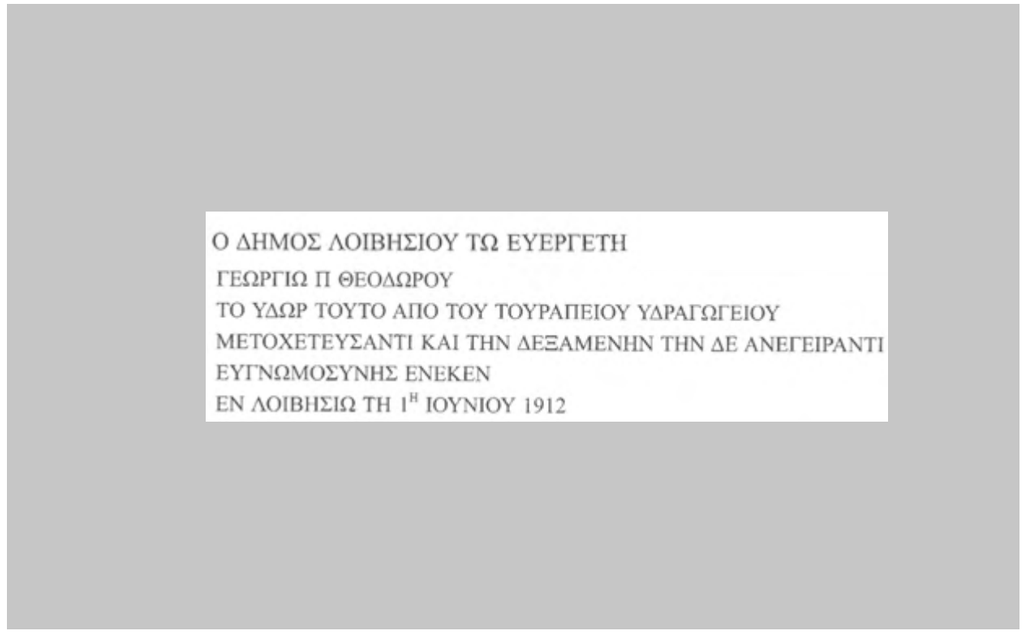


Figure 2.9. A marble dedicatory inscription of the elementary school in Levissi (Masuda, 2010, p. 228).

Figure 2.10. Dedicatory inscription of a fountain on the main road of the village (Masuda, 2010, p. 230)



As previously mentioned, Makri and Levissi have been in constant interaction due to their geographical proximity. To illustrate, in 1473, Makri was attacked during the Ottoman-Venetian wars (Karaca, 2013, p. 18). The migration to the safer inlands was repeated, and during this period, the inhabitants of Makri migrated to Levissi out of fear of pirates (Αχλάδη, 2008, p. 552).

Other sources that provide information about the situation of Levissi and Makri in the Ottoman era are the Tax Registers and Waqf Documents belonging to the empire. These books are official documents that provide information about the population structure of the settlements, income types, land and property. When examining these documents of this period, Levissi is mentioned as one of the large villages connected to Makri/Meğri with the name of Elviz or Uluviz, and it is stated that it is the only village that was inhabited exclusively by a Christian community (Karaca, 2013, p. 13). It is stated that Levissi had 66 households in 1530, and that some of its inhabitants worked in the salt mines in Meğri. Furthermore, it is noted as one of the villages in which beekeeping was done (Karaca, 2013, pp. 24, 30, 35). When examining the Waqf documents of Meğri District in the 16th century, a church called Kilise-i Elviz is mentioned in the Church Waqfs section. However, it remains unclear whether this church still exists today, and if so, which one it is (Karaca, 2013, p. 14).

John Speed's map (Figure 2.11) dated 1626 is the earliest known representation of Levissi as a settlement (Şahin, 2000, p. 80). While Evliya Çelebi, who visited the region in 1675, referred to region as Kaya (Ekinci, 1997, p. 26) means rock, stone; the use of another name as Tuslee, referred to Taşlı in Turkish, was found in the writings of later travellers who visited the region.



Figure 2.11: A section of the map of Turkish Empire. Newly Augmented by John Speed (Speed, 1626)

In the 1800s, many travelers visited Makri (İlter, 1991, pp. 475–476) and some of them also visited Levissi (İlter, 1991, pp. 474). One of these travelers, Charles Fellows, mentioned Levissi as follows during his visit in 1840.

> *May 15th.*
>
> *We have today ridden for two hours southward, to the village called by the Greeks Lavisse, and by the Turks Tuslee, a name which signifies 'stone village'.The first hour's ride was along a zigzag path up the steep mountain-side at the back of Telmessus, and then down a considerable descent into a highly-cultivated plain :the latter is divided into gardens, most of which have summerhouses or shelter from the sun, and each with walled fences. The town of Lavisse consists of about 300 or 400 houses, well built, and entirely occupied by Greeks:from its commanding situation and the remains of a few tombs, I judge that it may probably be the site of a small ancient town, perhaps Cissidae. Rising from this plain*

in all directions, on the bare rocks, are seen scattered huts, mostly belonging to the Turks; one of these groups is formed by the establishment of the Aga and a small mosque. Macry is the port or scala of this place, and it is here that the post is conducted, and all official business. Skirting the plain we passed through Lavisse, and over a hill to the sea-coast, in order to examine the ruins of an ancient city, supposed to be Carmylessus, situated principally upon an island and partly along the coast. After an hour's walk however in the burning sun, we were disappointed at finding that the only boat which the coast supplies had just put to sea for Kastelorizo. Delighted with the wild grandeur of the rugged scenery, we walked back to Lavisse, and for two hours sat under the welcome shade of its luxuriant trees, surrounded by a number of Greeks, all apparently wealthy, and with talent to increase their riches. I purchased several coins of the country,and have no doubt that these people possess many which would be valued for their rarity in Europe. The intrinsic value of the metal seemed the price expected for the silver coins. I hope that some which I have collected in Lycia may prove useful in illustrating the lost history of the country (Fellows, 1852, pp. 394–395).

Alongside travelers' accounts, newspapers published during that period provide significant insights into Makri and Levissi.As understood from the article published in Efimerís tis Smýrnis newspaper in 1851, Makri, which had remained relatively unnoticed for its commercial activities until 1840, emerged as a significant trade center attracting international attention after that date.It is possible to understand the growth in trade from the population increase; as stated in the same article, the population, which was 200 in 1840, increased to 1000 in 1850. Thus, within 10 years, Makri became one of the richest ports in the Mediterranean.To illustrate, an Austrian merchant living in İzmir at that time mentioned about Makri as Hidden India (Εταιρεία Ιστορικών Ερευνών "Λυκία", 2021, p. 19).

Similar to Fellow, when L. Vivien de Saint-Martin mentions about Levissi, he says that there was a Greek settlement of 300 or 400 houses overlooking the gulf to the southwest of Makri, and Turks called it as Tuslee. He also mentions that it had a port (İlter, 1991, pp. 475). [3]

3 İlter attributes this information to MARTIN L. V. 1852, *Description Historique et Géographique de l'Asie Mineure*, Firmin Didot, Paris, p. 525, though the cited passage could not be verified in the original text.

Unfortunately, this development was interrupted by a very destructive earthquake that occurred in Makri and its surroundings in 1851. Newspapers from this period indicate that Levissi was also significantly impacted by this destruction.

[…] Makri was deserted; almost all the shops collapsed. Many villages around Makri, especially the town of Levissi with its 1,500 houses, were utterly destroyed, and up to 600 souls from the interior were buried when two hills collided as a result of the earthquake. Water springs dried up in some places, while in others new ones appeared; and at the port of Ekincik, half a mountain collapsed into the sea, among other similar events (Efimerís tis Smýrnis, 1851, in Εταιρεία Ιστορικών Ερευνών "Λυκία", 2021, pp. 19–20).

The foreign press published news related to the earthquake as well:

[…] in the town of Levissi, none of the 1,500 houses remained standing, and it is estimated that about 600 people are trapped under the rubble, a number that would have been much larger if the seismic tremor had occurred after sunset, when residents retire to their homes at the end of the day's work (Weekly North Carolina Standard, 1851, in Εταιρεία Ιστορικών Ερευνών "Λυκία", 2021, p. 20).

The following year's newspapers indicate that the earthquakes continued:

From Rhodes, on April 17, 1852. In Makri and Levissi, the earthquakes continue, sometimes strong and sometimes light. The unfortunate residents of Levissi cannot repair their fallen houses because they collapse again. The fear of the earthquake among the inhabitants of the shaken areas is no longer fear, but a natural characteristic of the place (Amáltheia, 1852, in Εταιρεία Ιστορικών Ερευνών "Λυκία", 2021, p. 56).

However, the fact that Levissi was mentioned as a settlement with 1,500 houses in these newspapers does not coincide with the censuses conducted in the years close to the time of the earthquake. According to the Ottoman censuses, 328 houses were recorded in 1835 and 429 houses in 1848 (Αχλάδη, 2023, p. 240). These Ottoman censuses are consistent with the numbers in the newspapers published in later years. These differences may result from the confusion between the terms house and household in the translations of the texts, or from variations in number between individual houses and resident households or household members in the censuses, or from differences in the areas included within the region referred to as Levissi.To illustrate,the population development of Levissi can be seen in the article published in the Periodikó Ómiros newspaper in 1875:

> *Levissi is inhabited by 550 Christian families, living in a neighborhood entirely separate from any other ethnic group. The total population of the inhabitants does not exceed three thousand people. In the census of families conducted in 1852 by the Archbishop of Pisidia, 450 families were found. The government census from 1840 records 400 families (house 121). In the surrounding villages across from the Christian neighborhood, there are five Turkish villages with 100-150 Turkish families, located ¼ to ½ hour away, corresponding to the width and length of the plain. (Periodikó Ómiros, 1875, in Εταιρεία Ιστορικών Ερευνών "Λυκία", 2021, p. 69)*

According to an article from the Philomaths Newspaper in 1880, the number of families in Levissi increased to 700, and the inhabitants spoke Greek in a mixed vernacular dialect (Εταιρεία Ιστορικών Ερευνών "Λυκία", 2021, p. 85). In 1885, Levissi was mentioned as one of the 72 villages of Makri, with a population of 3500 (Εταιρεία Ιστορικών Ερευνών "Λυκία", 2021, p. 90), which can be considered as coherent with the 726 houses recorded in an Ottoman document dated 1887 (Αχλάδη, 2023, p. 240).

As the period of the population exchange approached,in 1902, 6000 Orthodox Greeks were living in Levissi while around 500 Turks lived in the surrounding neighborhoods such as Apoforon, Aga Konak, Pelegio and Monastirkio (Εταιρεία Ιστορικών Ερευνών "Λυκία", 2021, p. 85). It is possible that these neighborhoods are likely related to current neighbouring villages around Kayaköy, which are known by different names today. Lastly,it is known that in 1912, number of Greek inhabitants increased to 6500 (Δεληςάββας, 2013, p. 159).



Figure 2.12. Date on façade (Saraç, 2001, p. 23)

Thus,when examining the newspapers published chronologically, it can be observed that the population of Levissi increased gradually in the second half of the 19th century, after the earthquake. In addition, the common style and features in the construction technique and architecture of the buildings in Levissi, especially in the houses, indicate that these buildings were constructed concurrently or simultaneously. Considering these, it can be said that Levissi showed a rapid population increase and physical development after 1852. This suggestion is supported by the dates engraved on the facades of some buildings (Figure 2.12) (Saraç, 2001, pp. 22–23).

It is very likely that the Tanzimat era began with the Gülhane Hatt-ı Hümayun decree of 1839 played a role in this development. Despite the controversies concerning the implementation of the reforms from that time, the Tanzimat period in its essence led to the modernization process in the Ottoman Empire. This decree promised reforms in areas such as justice, equality and personal rights for all but especially for minorities. The Tanzimat reforms influenced by Western legal systems, placed emphasis on the Ottoman identity for all citizens, meaning that all people living in the Ottoman Empire, regardless of their ethnic and religious identities. Islahat Edict was one of these reforms and issued in 1856. It provided legal protection of life and property as well as equality in taxation and military service. This edict allowed autonomy of internal and religious governance and assured the community of a fair trial (Hanioğlu, 2008, pp. 72–76). The Islahat Edict included a clause that promised foreign nationals the right to acquire real estate in the Ottoman Empire.However, due to the concerns about the potential increase in the foreign population and the excessive expansion of granted privileges, this promise was not fulfilled during that period (Sabahoğlu, 2024, pp. 74–81).

In addition to the regulations on rights for citizens, the property rights of foreigners in the Ottoman Empire were also shaped over time by various legal regulations.While the Land Code of 1858 restricted foreigners' right to acquire property, the Safer Law of 1867 allowed foreigners to acquire real estate under certain conditions, reflecting equality with Ottoman citizens but in a limited way (Sabahoğlu, 2024, pp. 74–81).

During this period, it is seen that Greek Orthodox settlements, especially in coastal cities, developed greatly in terms of public and civil architecture (Colonas, 2005, pp. 250–251). It is very likely that the rights granted by these reforms also triggered migration movements to the Ottoman lands and the population of Levissi was also affected by this situation. The results of the censuses of Makri and Levissi support the migration movements. The population composition consists of people coming from Cyprus, the Dodecanese Islands and, to a lesser extent, from Greece, in addition to the inner parts of Anatolia (Αχλάδη, 2023, p. 240).

1.2.3. Pre-exchange period and daily life in Kayaköy, Levissi

Undoubtedly, one of the best sources of information about life in Levissi is the memoirs of the locals who lived there at the time. In the studies conducted by the Galata Student Study Group in Kayaköy in the 1990s, an interview with Nikolaos Karageorgiou (Νικόλαος Καραγεωργίου), who was born in 1903, was included with the support of Kayaköy Primary School teacher İsmail Zerman, and it was published in the Galata Bulletin (Zerman, Öner, 1994, 42–50). In this section, the memoirs of Uncle Nikolaos were supported by various sources and life in Levissi was described before the population exchange period. Unless otherwise indicated, narratives referenced in this section are based on the memoirs of Uncle Nikolaos (Zerman, Öner, 1994, 42–50).

Levissi was 8-9 kilometers away from Makri, and was located on a large fertile plain, surrounded by the mountains that are connected to the east and west. Levissi was one of the settlements established from this plain towards the hillside. In the plain area of the settlement, there are religious buildings that are older than the houses. This situation supports that the town was initially established on this plain and later expanded towards the hillside as time passed, and its inhabitants increased. Moreover, there are many other villages around this plain,where Turks who engaged in agriculture and animal husbandry lived (Λαμέρα, 1964, pp. 9–10).

As in the past, the settlements and locals of Makri and Levissi were in close contact. While the Levissians benefited from the trade activities in Makri,the Makrians benefited from the mild and healthy climate conditions, and fertile plateau in Levissi. Therefore, the natives of this region traveled back and forth between Makri and Levissi during the year. Especially in the summer months, the environmental conditions in Makri, which got worse due to the swamp and malaria, caused the Makrians to move to Levissi (Εταιρεία Ιστορικών Ερευνών "Λυκία", 2021, p. 21). The residents of Levissi and Makri lived in the houses on this plain during the summer months. Those who did not have a house on the plain built temporary shelters in their gardens or fields. Therefore, as Evangelia Achladi (Ευαγγελία Αχλάδη) states, the people of these two regions were like "twin communities" (Αχλάδη, n.d.), deeply intertwined. This close relationship is also demonstrated by the historic stone-paved road, approximately 6-7 kilometers long, connecting Makri and Levissi, built according to the old paving system (Figure 2.13). The road is called Τογρού in Greek, and Togru, more correctly Doğru in Turkish as meaning straight (Δεληγιάββας, 2013, pp. 288–289).



Figure 2.13: Stone-paved road connecting Makri and Levissi.
Photograph by Μιχάλης Π. Δεληγιάννης (Δεληγιάννης, 2013, p. 289).

Although Levissi was near the sea, it was not a coastal town.However, Vain beach was used for swimming and to do shopping from the boats arrived from Kastellorizo,Symi and Rhodes islands. Vain, To Βαΐν, today known as Cold Water Bay or Beştaş Bay, is located to the south of Levissi and is about half an hour away (Figure 2.14). The name of this bay comes from the trees that were found there, whose branches were known as Vágia, βάγια (Λαμέρα, 1964, p. 17).

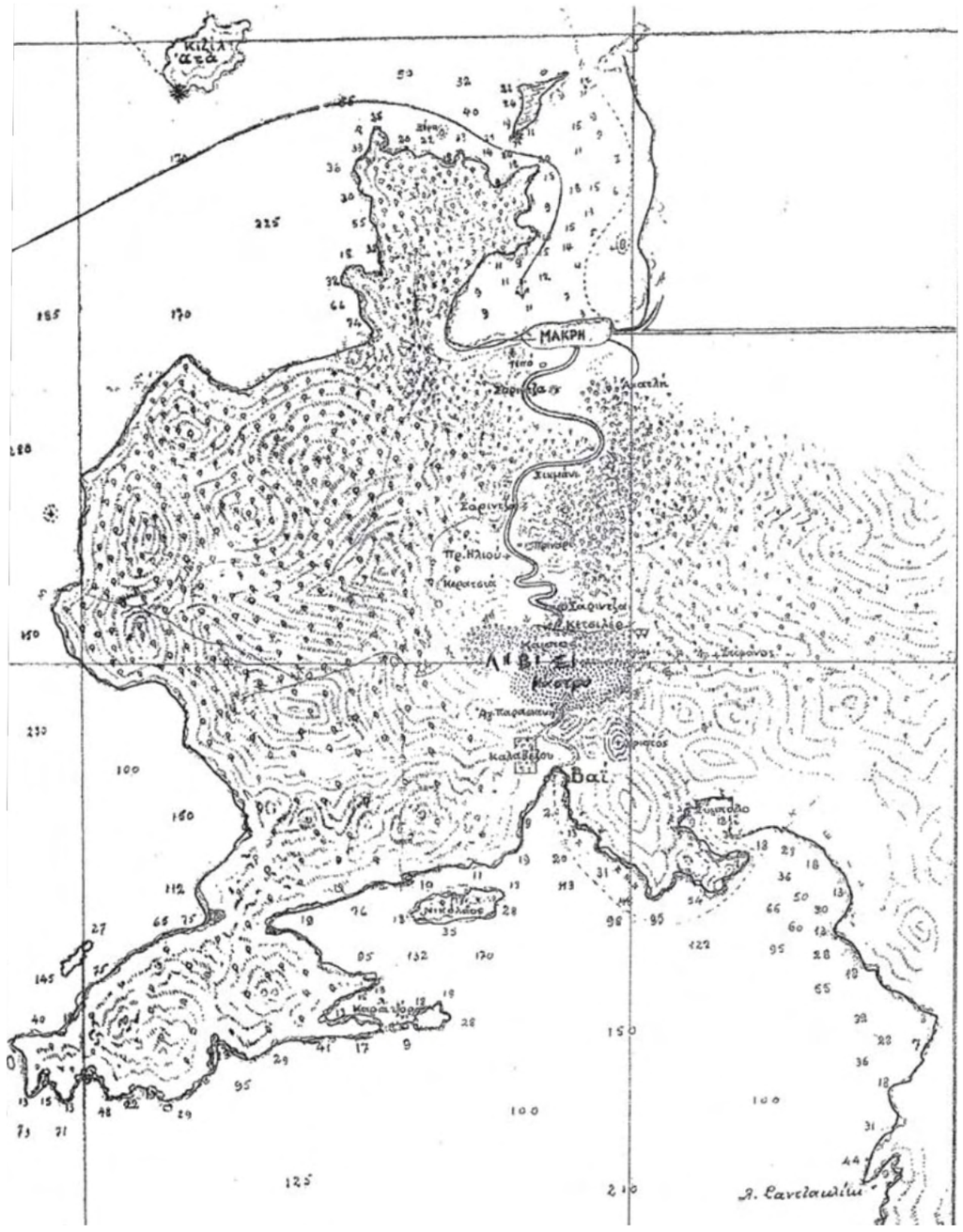


Figure 2.14: Map showing the Glaukos or Makri (Μάκρης) Bay and Levissi (Λιβίσι) with surrounding areas Kızıl Island, Gemiler Island, Vain (Βαΐν) Beach (Δεληγιάννης, 2013, p. 70).

Levissi was divided into three parishes: Upper, Middle, and Lower (Εταιρεία Ιστορικών Ερευνών "Λυκία", 2021, p. 125). Accordingly to the places of worship that are Upper Church as Taxiárchis (Archangel), Middle Chapel as Tis Agías Ánnas (Saint Anna) and Lower Church as Panagiá i Pyrgiótissa (Virgin Mary) (Δεληςάββας, 2013, p. 159). Levissi had 15 neighbourhoods with various names : Αϊ Παρασκηυγή (Ay Paraskevi), Καμάρα (Kamara) , Ορούτζα (Orouja), Στούμπους (Stoumbous), Αλαμᾶ (Alama), Κουνουσᾶτα (Kounousata) , Πουρτίν (Pourtin), Φουρνάρη (Fournari), Βουνάριν (Vounarin), Ληὰ τοῦ κύρ Παληού (Lia tou Kyr Palioy), Σκυλλαρούδα (Skillarouda), Χάνιν (Chanin), Βούρβουρη (Vourbouri), Ξηρὰ Πηριβόλια (Xira Pirivolia), Σταυρὶν (Stavrin) (Λαμέρα, 1964, p. 14). However, today it is not possible to find any informative signage in Levissi that indicates the locations or names of these former neighborhoods.

The houses were typically two stories.They were stone-built houses supported by wooden structure. Each house had a cellar on the lower floor, accessible by a staircase from inside as well as from the outside. They stored food and drink there, kept their wood and tools, and those who had horses used it as a stable. The houses had a rectangular shape and their roofs were flat, and covered with a special soil called patélia. On the roof, there was a 60–70 centimeter-long kýlindros carved from hewn stone. When it rained, this cylinder was moved to seal the cracks in the roof, preventing rainwater from leaking inside (Λαμέρα, 1964, p. 58).

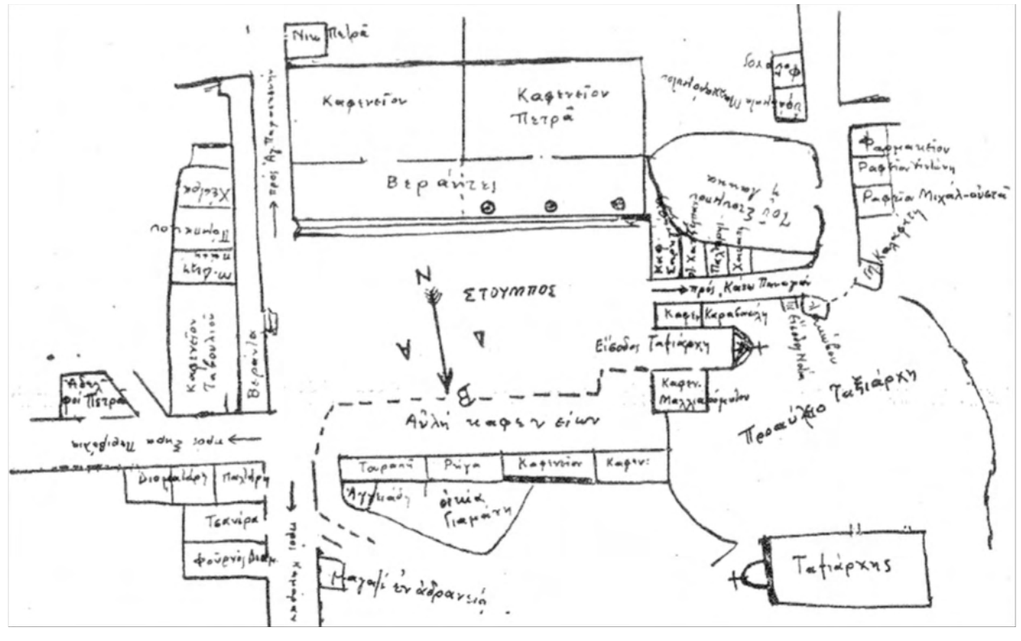
Cisterns were built in every house to collect rainwater, as the village did not have enough water to use for household purposes. Drinking water was also very scarce and they obtained it from wells dug in different parts of the village. There was no sewage system and the toilets were built outside the house.Additionally, each house had their own oven.

The roads of Levissi are narrow, 1.5-2 meters wide, are made of soil, stone or stone steps.
Inhabitants often whitewashed both the interior and exterior of their houses with a mixture of lime and indigo. Thanks to this, when viewed from a distance, the village looked like pure white. Lime and argilo (clay), when mixed with lime, became stronger than cement, were used in stone masonry. They usually took the argilo from a pit was called Stumbo (Stoumbous), which was 30 meters deep and 70 meters long. This pit was located next to the square with the same name in front of the Upper Church (Taxiárchis) where Levissi's market was situated,There were many cafes and shops such as butchers, shoe repairers, barbers, grocers, bakeries, pharmacies, and tailors around the Stumbo Square. In Stumbo, inhabitants would gather to enjoy music and have fun (Figure 2.16) (Εταιρεία Ιστορικών Ερευνών "Λυκία", 2019, pp. 23–24). There were also a few shops in other neighborhoods as well.



Figure 2.15. Levissi (Λαμέρα, 1964, p. 5)

Figure 2.16: Levissi: Diagram-Sketch by Antonis Tzitzis. Stumbo Square along with the surrounding shops (Εταιρεία Ιστορικών Ερευνών "Λυκία", 2019, p. 23)



As mentioned earlier, there are two churches in Levissi. The Taxiárchis church, located in the upper part of the village, and the Panagiá i Pyrgiótissa church, situated at the entrance to the plain, are the larger churches.Meanwhile, in the middle part of the settlement, there is the largest chapel, Tis Agías Ánnas, or St. Anna, which is older than the churches (Εταιρεία Ιστορικών Ερευνών ‘‘Λυκία’’, 2021, p. 125). In addition to St. Anna Chapel, there are many small single-apse vaulted chapels. Each one bears the name of a different holy religious leader. Two of the chapels are on the southern hills overlooking the sea, while the others are scattered in the inner parts of the settlement.Another important structure in terms of the religious life of the Levissians is the Afkule Monastery, which is located kilometers away to the west of the village. All religious holidays were celebrated with ceremonies in Levissi.They celebrate the three days of Easter with great enthusiasm: On the first day, prayers were held in the Lower Church. On the second day, everyone would attend the Agías Paraskevís fair and have fun. During carnival times, families would eat together and perform local dances called gyristoús or syrtos.Additionally,horse racing and wrestling competitions were held. These festivities took place in the churchyards and nearby rural areas (Εταιρεία Ιστορικών Ερευνών ‘‘Λυκία’’, 2021, p. 84). On the last day, they would go to the Afkule monastery and pray.

The people of Levissi placed great importance on education as well. Especially after 1845, education started to gain significance and become compulsory. Then, the first school was built in 1864 (Λαμέρα, 1964, p. 36). Schools were supervised by religious leaders and the council of elders. Students were frequently given exams in schools and successful ones were rewarded. Wealthy families supported the education of poor children. There were two primary schools in Levissi, as separate schools for girls and boys. Both schools provided education up to secondary school. For higher education, students would go to Rhodes, Istanbul or Athens. Education was conducted in Greek, and all the teachers were Greek. The schools for Turks and Greeks were separate.

The people of Levissi were also known for their hard work, a small part of the people were engaged in trade and commerce, while others went to distant Turkish villages to work. Many people began working in chrome mines from 1872 onwards (Λαμέρα, 1964, p. 92). However, they were generally engaged in crafts such as tinsmithing, carpentry, shoemaking, construction, coppersmithing, tailoring, leatherworking, and others. Shoemaking was a common profession. They processed the leather that arrived in Vain by ship from other regions. In spring, they went to the inner regions to make and sell γεμενή (Yemeni), special shoes for Turks, and stayed there for a few months. In exchange, they received money and goods like wheat, flour, sesame, and others, which were then sent back to Levissi by pack animals. The ganotés (tinsmiths) would go to distant regions to practice their craft and return years later. The songs sung by the tinsmiths as they left, and the farewells from the people, were part of a cultural ritual (Λαμέρα, 1964, p. 91–92).

Primary agricultural activities of inhabitants were viticulture and tobacco farming. They sold the goods in Makri or exported them through the ports. In this respect, the ones who engaged in this work were quite prosperous (İlter, 1991, p. 476). Figs, grapes and various fruit trees have been grown in Levissi for many years.Inhabitants used to produce wine and raki out of these fruits.

Women also worked in jobs such as sewing, embroidery, weaving, thread-making, as well as in silkworm breeding and lime production, in addition to doing household chores. They were especially skilled at silkworm breeding, silk processing, and weaving. Many women would go to the inland regions to trade these products, thereby helping their families in this way as well. They used to work together in solidarity and made these tasks enjoyable (Λαμέρα, 1964, p. 94–95).

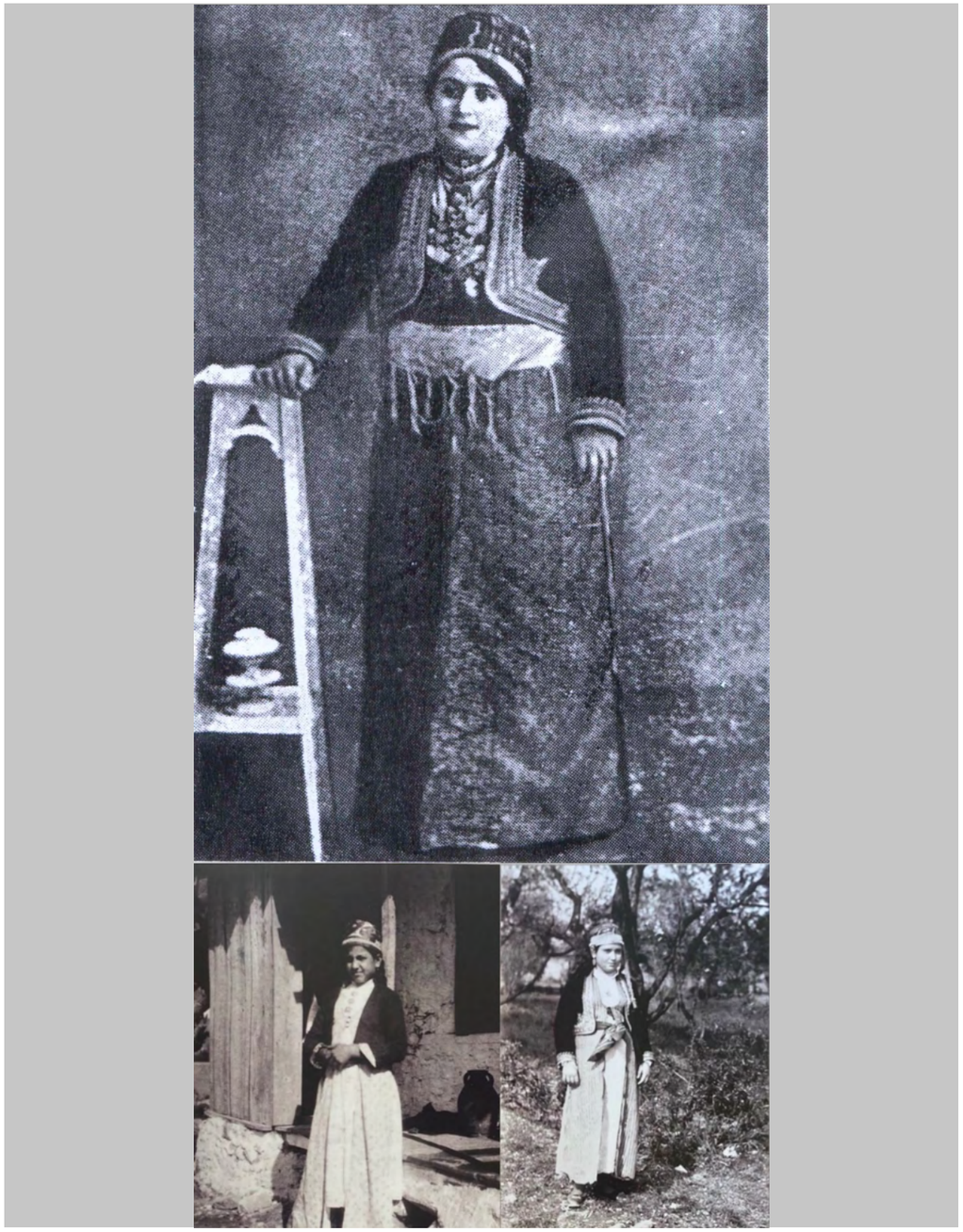


Figure 2.17: Levissi traditional women’s clothing (up) (Λαμέρα, 1964, p. 1).
Figure 2.18: Levissi traditional children clothing (down) (Gürel, n.d.)

The documentaries titled Ayrılığın Yurdu Hüzün (Sorrow Homeland of Seperateness) (Rıza, 2001) and Yeni Bir Yurt Edinmek (Adopting A New Homeland) (Rıza, 2006), Mübadelenin İki Köyü (Two Villages of the Population Exchange) (Foundation of Lausanne Treaty Emigrants, n.d.) and Barış İçin Bir Yer (A Place for Peace) (Etikan, 2005) include interviews with Turks and Greeks who lived together or with their younger relatives who know the past, clearly show the peaceful relations and sharing between Turks and Greeks in Kayaköy. According to what emerges from these verbal sources, Turkish and Greek men would spend time together in coffee houses and play games such as checkers and cards, while women would gather during the day to socialize, and their children would also play together.Furthermore, it is noted that they engaged in barter trade, with Greeks exchanging handicraft products and Turks offering agricultural goods. They lived in friendly relations with each other, they would know and respect the important days and times of each other’s religions, and they did not interfere with each other’s lifestyle.

1.2.4. Population exchange period (1922-1924)

Makri and Levissi experienced a period of prosperity until the Balkan Wars (1912–1913). The wars that took place during this time and the subsequent years, continuing up to the population exchange, led Makri and Levissi, like many other Anatolian settlements,into a time of great hardship. With these wars, various migration movements,both internal and external,that triggered one another took place, initiating a process that lasted for nearly a decade and ultimately the official decision for the population exchange was taken in 1923.

Thus, the population exchange decision of 1923 was the final stage of a long process that started with the Balkan Wars.

The situations that emerged with the nationalist movements of the period, which had a significant effect in the Balkan Wars, played a role in the disintegration of multi-ethnic states such as the Ottoman Empire. As a result of the war, the Ottoman Empire lost most of its lands in the Balkans and millions of Muslims there had to migrate to Anatolia (Hirschon, 2005, pp. 3–10). In fact, problems began to arise between the Muslim population that arrived at that time, namely the Rumelian Turks, and the Anatolian Greeks; then a verbal agreement was reached between the Ottoman and Greek governments for a non-mandatory exchange decision, but the issue fell off the agenda with the start of World War I. However, approximately 200,000 Anatolian Greeks migrated to Greece at that time, although not as many as the Rumelian Turks who had migrated to Anatolia (Aktar, 2005, pp. 121–122).

Later on, World War I occurred between 1914 and 1918. At the end of the war, with the de facto end of the Ottoman Empire, and the signing of the Mondros Armistice Treaty (1918), Ottoman lands were made open to occupation (Erim, 1953, pp. 519–524), and many parts of Anatolia, as well as other regions, began to be occupied. In this regard, the Turkish War of Independence (1919-1923), led by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk began as a resistance against these occupations. In 1920, the Treaty of Sèvres, which aimed at the partitioning of Ottoman territories,signed between the Ottoman Empire and the Allied Powers. The Treaty of Sèvres promised significant territorial gains for the Allied powers, and for Greece in the Aegean region, and the opportunity to realize the Megali Idea[4].However, the treaty was rendered null and void as a result of the Turkish victory in the War of Independence (Hirschon, 2005, pp. 3–10).

4 The Megali Idea was a 19th-century concept of nationalist expansionism that aimed to conquer lands once within the borders of Ancient Greece, including such parts of modern Türkiye, such as the Aegean coastlines, and Istanbul which were under Ottoman control.

The social and demographic consequences of these wars were deeply felt especially in Anatolian settlements. The military recruitment system of Christian communities had changed, and they were called to work in the labour battalions of the army until the Turkish War of Independence. In this context, some Christian communities, also from Makri and Levissi, started migrating to neighbouring islands such as Samos, Rhodes and Kastelorizo.

During the occupation on Western Anatolia by the Greek army, Christian communities, especially the male population, were subjected to forced displacement to the inner parts of Anatolia. As a result, only women, children, and a small number of elderly people remained in Levissi, like many other Anatolian settlements. Consequently, the economy of Levissi and Makri collapsed after 1914. Women began to provide for the family. Therefore, the majority of the migrants were women and children (Δεληςάββας, 2010, pp. 23–25; 2019, p. 56). Men who were able to return after the war also tried to find their families in migration time or later.

After the defeat of the Greek army in 1922, and before the population exchange decision was made official by Treaty of Lausanne, a great wave of migration to Greece began (Hirschon, 2005, pp. 18–19). Approximately 1 million people had to migrate, mostly from the Aegean Region (Oran, 2005, p. 166).At the end of the war, the Lausanne Peace Conference was held between 1922-1923. Within the scope of the conference, the Convention on the Exchange of Greek and Turkish Populations was signed mutually by the governments of Greece and Grand National Assembly of Türkiye on 30 January 1923 (Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Foreign Affairs, n.d.).

According to Article 1;

> *As from the 1st May, 1923, there shall take place a compulsory exchange of Turkish nationals of the Greek Orthodox religion established in Turkish territory, and of Greek nationals of the Moslem religion established in Greek territory. These persons shall not return to live in Türkiye or Greece respectively without the authorisation of the Turkish Government or of the Greek Government respectively (Lausanne Peace Treaty VI. Convention Concerning the Exchange of Greek and Turkish Populations, 1923).*

First, Greek Orthodox inhabitants of Istanbul and Turkish Muslims living in Western Thrace were exempted from this exchange decision (Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Foreign Affairs, n.d.), and later, with the comprehensive Lausanne Peace Treaty signed on 23 July 1923, Imbros (Gökçeada) and Bozcaada were also exempted from the exchange (Hirschon, 2005, p. 11).

All types of population movements before the Treaty of Lausanne were also included in the exchange in accordance with Article 3 (Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Foreign Affairs, n.d.);

> *Those Greeks and Moslems who have already, and since the 18th October, 1912, left the territories the Greek and Turkish inhabitants of which are to be respectively exchanged, shall be considered as included in the exchange provided for in Article 1.*
>
> *The expression "emigrant" in the present Convention includes all physical and juridical persons who have been obliged to emigrate or have emigrated since the 18th October, 1912.*

Therefore, after the signing of the agreement, starting from 1923 and continuing until 1926, the remaining Orthodox Greek population, especially those in Central Anatolia, approximately 190 thousand people, and the Muslim Turkish population in Greece, approximately 355 thousand people, migrated. By the end of the population exchange process, Greece had received approximately 1.2 million migrants, including the 1922 migration (Hirschon, 2005, pp. 18–19).

The inhabitants of Levissi were among the communities that had to leave the country before the official population exchange decision of 1923, and they had to abandon Levissi in September 1922. Given a short time to prepare, the people of Levissi went down to Makri and from there began to cross to Greece by ship (Δεληςάββας, 2010, p. 25). The locals could not take much with them, hide their valuables in the basements,and walls of their houses or left them with their Turkish neighbors.Most of the families who left Makri and Levissi went to various settlements in the Attica region (Περιφέρεια Αττικής). Most of the families in this region first settled around Athens and Piraeus, then, some of the families moved to the Xylokeriza region, east of Athens, in 1923. They named this region Nea Makri (Νέα Μάκρη) in memory of the place they came from. Similarly, a few families who moved to the region called Oropos in the following years, also named here as Nea Levissi (Νέο Λιβίσι). Such names are seen in many of the settlements established after the population exchange. Outside the Attica region, families were scattered in different regions such as Rhodes, Kastellorizo, Tzia, Tinos, Cia, İtea, Amfissa, Galaksidi, Thiva, Thessaloniki, Larisa, Crete (Δεληςάββας, 2019, pp. 59–61; Εταιρεία Ιστορικών Ερευνών "Λυκία", n.d.).



Figure 2.19: Houses of the Migrants in Nea Makri (Δαμιανού, n.d.)

1.2.5. Post-exchange period (1924-1950s)

According to the interviews in Enis Rıza's documentary Adopting A New Homeland, it is understood that Nea Makri was once a rural forested area, even a swamp, and that the people who settled there established a settlement from scratch. Families who arrived in Greece in difficult conditions, stayed in tents and had difficulty in meeting their basic needs. Over time, they built the settlement they named Nea Makri, and developed water sources. They even named the first street of the new settlement Levissi. Especially around 1950, the settlement showed great development.Although they were not welcomed warmly by the locals of the surrounding settlements, over time they taught them the works and occupations they had practiced in Levissi, contributing to development of the settlement into one like thriving Levissi.Therefore,they continued to pursue their professions in the Nea Makri settlement over time (Rıza, 2006).



Figure 2.20: Forklore Museum of Makrians-Levissians Cultural Association (ΠΟΛΙΤΙΣΤΙΚΟΣ ΣΥΛΛΟΓΟΣ ΜΑΚΡΗΝΩΝ - ΛΙΒΙΣΙΑΝΩΝ, n.d.).

In order to preserve their culture and history, they founded the Makrians-Levissians Cultural Association in 2005. In addition to publications and archives about their history, they also established a forklore museum and exhibited the memories left from Levissi and Makri (ΠΟΛΙΤΙΣΤΙΚΟΣ ΣΥΛΛΟΓΟΣ ΜΑΚΡΗΝΩΝ - ΛΙΒΙΣΙΑΝΩΝ, n.d.).

Another important community is the Society of Historical Research “Lycia” (Εταιρεία Ιστορικών Ερευνών ‘‘Λυκία’’), founded in 2017. The community, which has a wide archive and publication list, also organizes events for families and descendants from Makri and Levissi.

It is also possible to obtain information about their new life in Nea Makri from newspapers such as Levissi(ΛΙΒΙΣΙ), Makri(Η ΜΑΚΡΗ), Levissi and Makri’s voice (ΦΩΝΗ ΤΟΥ ΛΙΒΙΣΙΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΤΗΣ ΜΑΚΡΗΣ), Nea Makri’s voice (Η ΦΩΝΗ ΤΗΣ ΝΕΑΣ ΜΑΚΡΗΣ) which were published in Nea Makri.[5]

5 Society of Historical Research “Lycia” Digital Archive, *Library Material*, Makrolivisian Newspapers.

After the Greeks migrated, Turkish families, mostly from Thessaloniki and its surrounding areas, settled in their place through the population exchange, starting from 1923. It has been determined that the total population of these families was 2,000 (Saraç, 2001, p. 24). These families were generally engaged in wheat farming (Tanç, 2001, p. 10) and animal husbandry in the vicinity of Thessaloniki. Since most of the Levissi settlement consisted of hillside houses, and tobacco and viticulture were generally carried out in the plateau part, the Turkish families had difficulty in maintaining their lifestyle based on agriculture and animal husbandry. They evacuated the settlement in a short period of 10-15 days or continued to stay in the plain part of the settlement. Therefore, the houses on the hillside, which constituted the majority of the settlement, remained abandoned.

Another result that emerged from verbal sources is that some of the Turkish families sold the given houses and fields to the locals living in the surrounding area, and migrated to other settlements that they thought would be more suitable for them. In addition, the fact that the number of Turks who arrived was lesser than the number of Greeks who left, and the time gap between the departure of the Greeks and the arrival of the Turks, significantly affected the outcomes of the population exchange (Foundation of Lausanne Treaty Emigrants, n.d.).

Unfortunately, after the war ended, it was seen that the abandoned Greek settlements that were looted by some groups of people. This situation led to population movements towards these regions where abandoned settlements were located (Arı, 2000, pp. 9–10). According to oral testimonies, unfortunately, this situation also occured in Levissi. In the documentary Two Villages of the Exchange (Foundation of Lausanne Treaty Emigrants, n.d.), it is mentioned that after Greeks left Levissi, some locals from the surrounding villages entered the houses to take the belongings left behind by the Greek inhabitants.The houses were severely damaged as their walls were demolished in the aim of finding valuable items, or wooden materials were removed to use as firewood.

Similar to what Greeks experienced when they arrived in Nea Makri,it is said that Salonica (Thessaloniki) Turks, were not welcomed warmly by the local people; therefore, they preserved their muhacir[6] or Selanikli (coming from Salonica) identity and remained physically and socially separated from the local people for about twenty years. The area where the migrants continued to live in the houses on the plain part of the settlement was called the Muhacir neighborhood.They used the Lower Church as a mosque for a certain period of time, separately from the local people (Tanç, 2001, p. 11).

6 The term that refers to the Muslim population who migrated to Anatolia

While the demographic, economic, and political impacts of the population exchange may vary depending on the conditions each country faced at the time, from the perspective of people who experienced it, the situation found common ground. Both communities suffered similar losses and shared the same pain. Being compelled to leave the lands where they were born and raised, regarded as outsiders in their new surroundings, and burdened with an unending longing for the home they left behind.

In 1952, a group of Greek migrants came to visit Levissi, which was generally empty after the Turkish migrants left, except for some families who stayed in the plain. They stated that they were warmly welcomed by Turks when they arrived. In the documentaries mentioned in the previous sections, the positive attitudes and emotional moments between Greeks who visited also in 1982, and local Turks were mentioned. This visit in 1952 was their first visit after the population exchange, and they carried it out together with the folklorist researcher Kalliopi Mouseou.[7] As it can be seen from the photographs they took during their trip, Levissi suffered serious damage and looting in the last 30 years until 1952.

7 Society of Historical Research “Lycia” Digital Archive, *Archive Material*.



Figure 2.21: Taxiárchis Church in 1952 (Μουσαίου, 1952)

Archival Source: Society of Historical Research “Lycia” Digital Archive, *Archive Material*.

Figure 2.22: Levissi in 1952 (Μουσαίου, 1952)

Archival Source: Society of Historical Research “Lycia” Digital Archive, *Archive Material*.

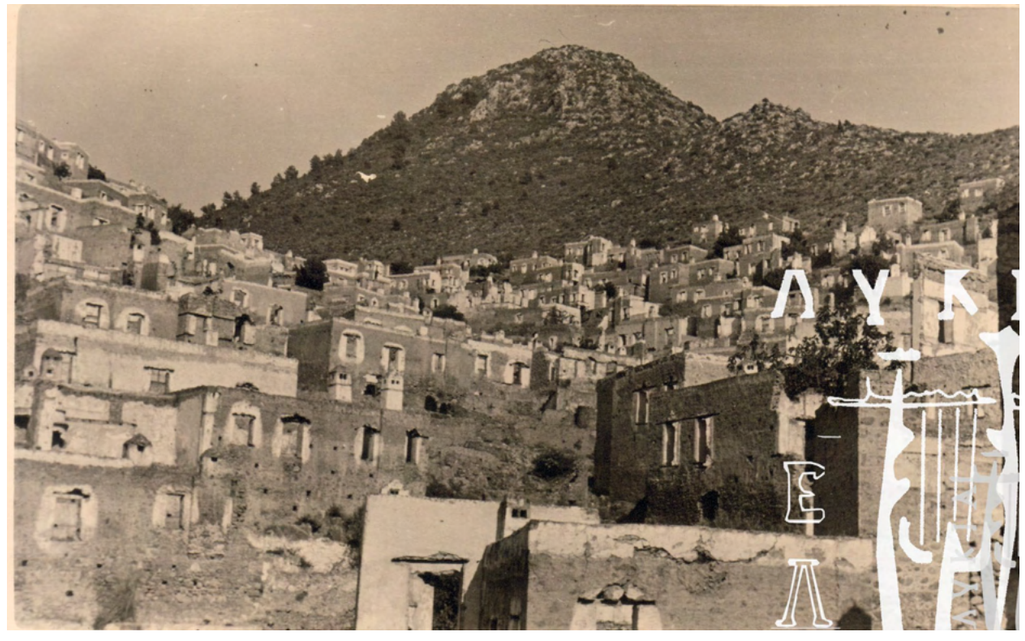




Figure 2.23: Right- Levissi in 2024 (Author, 2024)
Left- Levissi in 1952 (Μουσαίου, 1952)
Archival Source: Society of Historical Research “Lycia” Digital Archive, *Archive Material*.



Figure 2.24: 1958 newspaper article mentioning their visit in 1952 (Η Φωνή του Λιβισιού της Μακρής, 1958, p.3)

In 1957, a very destructive earthquake of magnitude 7.1 occurred in Fethiye (Makri) (Muğla-Yenigün Newspaper, 2024). According to the conversations with locals during the field survey, during this earthquake, especially the houses in the plain part of Levissi were seriously affected and building materials from the hillside houses were taken and used in the damaged houses. As a result, Kayaköy was damaged even more.

In addition, in the same year, the Land Registry and Cadastre Directorate registered and gave title deeds to the Thessaloniki residents of Kayaköy for the houses they lived in, while transferring the ownership of the vacant houses to the state treasury (Yazman, 2012).
According to observations during the field trip of Kayaköy, while some of these houses with title deeds are still inhabited by the immigrant families and their relatives, some houses have been sold and restored to be used by their new residents. In addition to these,there are also those that are used commercially in different ways such as hotels, shops, workshops and cafes.

When the population distribution in Kayaköy is examined between 1935 and 1990, a fairly steady population growth is seen with a population of 655 in 1935 and 703 in 1960. However, from 1960 to 1990, like the trend throughout the country, Kayaköy shows a slight population decrease due to migration from rural to urban areas, falling to 584 people. The population started to increase once again in the 1990s, this time due to the development of tourism in the region. Interestingly, a large growth was recorded in the 2000 census with 1,524 people. It is thought that this is due to the tourist season ending shortly before the census was conducted, and the fact that there were still many seasonal workers residing in Kayaköy at that time. In later years, a much more realistic population increase was reported in 2009 with a population of 680 people, provided with an address-based census (Bozyiğit, Tapur, 2010, p. 372). It has increased steadily in the following years as population of 739 in 2013,771 in 2017, 975 in 2022 and today has a population of approximately 1000 people (TÜİK, 2024).

1.2.6. Current situation and Planning Activities

In order to understand the current situation of Kayaköy, it is important to examine the decisions made and proposed approaches from the late 70s to the present. Because, after the population exchange period, until it was declared as a 3rd degree Urban Site by Ministry of Culture on 14 October 1978 (Saraç, 2001, p. 24), it is not possible to come across any planning work or initiative about it, except for its name being mentioned on the Western Archaeology map prepared in 1952 (Bektaş, 2008, p. 8). After the late 70s, it started to draw attention of the experts from different fields as well as public institutions and non-governmental organizations.

In a meeting held in 1982 (Bektaş, 2008, p. 23–25), attended by professionals from various fields,including architect Cengiz Bektaş, writers, art historians, architects, doctors, teachers, textile designers, economists, and others, discussed about the future of Kayaköy.The central theme that emerged from the highlighted proposals and contributions was that Kayaköy should not be based on a single function, but rather on a multi-functional and diverse range of uses such as;

-Summer Academy for students, internship opportunities for architecture students, offering educational opportunities through restoration projects

-Temporary accommodation in restored houses for artists in exchange for producing art works.

-Return to former owners under appropriate conditions for certain part of village.

-Film production by using Kayaköy as a film set.

-Third-age village for a retreat and living space for elderly people from Mediterranean countries.

-Retreat village, planning Kayaköy as a peaceful vacation destination.

-International promotion, giving Kayaköy an international identity.

-Mediterranean Art University or a more inclusive international university for young people from all around the world.

-Preservation as a Monument of Shame, keeping certain parts of the village untouched as a symbolic reminder.

-Integration with rural life, opening the area to people who will live there and engage in agriculture.

-Gradual and conscious revitalization, slowly reintroducing the houses into use with care.

-Local ownership by Fethiye residents, involving the local community in the process to foster a sense of belonging.

-Spontaneous development, allowing Kayaköy to revive itself in a planned yet organic manner (Bektaş, 2008, p. 24–25).

The tourism value of Kayaköy was first recognized in a document prepared by the Ministry of Tourism and Promotion in 1978. The proposal imagined developing the site into an international resort with 16,000 units, which was to be connected to the sea by a cable car. It also envisioned funding from the World Bank (Kızılkayak, 2013). This proposal was modified later and was included in the

1:25,000 scale Fethiye-Dalaman Environmental Master Plan prepared by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism in 1985. This plan projected a tourism hub in Kayaköy with 12,000 beds. The Ministry of Public Works developed the Akkulak-Gemiler Bay-Kayaköy Tourism Center Plan in 1988 and that same year, the Special Environmental Protection Agency declared Kayaköy and its surroundings as a Fethiye-Göcek Region Special Environmental Protection Area, highlighting it as a priority zone for planning (Aktüre, 2015 p. 363).

With these plans that were on agenda, Kayaköy started to attract more attention, especially from tourism investors, but the geographical structure of the land reveals the difficulty of implementing the holiday village-style projects planned for this place. In this respect, this situation, which seems negative for investors, has turned into an advantage in terms of protecting Kayaköy.

In 1988,a forum was organized with the participation of the people from various section of the society such as Chamber of Architects as organizer,locals,students,artists,journalist,tourism investors,and members of Turkish-Greek Friendship Society.The forum was shaped under the idea of conserving Kayaköyü as Turkish -Greek Peace and Friendship Village (Köymen, 2015). At the end of the forum,the decisions taken by the participants are documented to be announced. The most prominent ones among the decisions as written are as follows;

-As the Turkish-Greek Peace and Friendship Village, it sees and supports the initiatives and efforts to revive the village as an economic, social and cultural integrity and a continuously developing process, as a contribution to the construction of peace and friendship between the two countries and their peoples and thus to world peace.

-Forum aims that Kayaköy to be realized as a Peace and Friendship Village as a product of the organization, joint thoughts and efforts of thinkers, scientists, artists, architects and engineers of the two countries, and emphasizes that the continuity of its life can be ensured with this understanding.

-The Forum recommends that Kayaköy be enriched with functions such as a research center and an education center that will ensure continuity of life throughout all seasons, as well as a tourism concept based on inter-societal and inter-cultural relations and interactions. In this context, it recommends that efforts be initiated to establish an international education center that will provide Aegean Cultures Research and Master's level education, including art and cultural history, architecture, plastic arts, archaeology, anthropology, ethnology and similar branches.

-Forum argues that the act of revitalizing Kayaköyü depends on organizations consider the human and life before an architectural design and construction action.In this regard,at the same time under the aim of solving financial problems,forum proposes ideas such as establishment of multi-partner tourism cooperatives and companies under the support of the Chamber of Architects and Turkish and Greek Friendship Society,etc (TMMOB Mimarlar Odası, 2005).

The declaration, consisting of a total of seven articles, four of the prominent articles of which are mentioned above, was sent to the relevant institutions. Following this, the Ministry of Public Works officially declared its support for the results obtained at the forum in a letter dated 29 November 1988 and stopped the allocation of Kayaköy to businesses (Kızılkayak, 2013).

In that period,with the assistance of the Chamber of Architects,this project was tried to be involved in UNESCO's ''10 World Years of Cultural Development Program''; however, requirements could not be met (Saraç, 2001, p. 28).

In an event organized by the Fethiye Municipality and TÜRSAB (Association of Turkish Travel Agencies) in those years, a ceremony to foster peace and friendship was held in Lower Church with the attendance of the people from both countries alongside their religious officials, Priest Nicolaos from Rhodes and Imam Ali Yurtkul from Fethiye (Foundation of Lausanne Treaty Emigrants, n.d.).

In 1991,Kayaköy was declared as a 3rd degree Archeological and Urban Site by the İzmir 2nd Council of Cultural and Natural Objects Preservation Council (Aktüre, 2015 p. 365) . Afterwards, Galata Voluntary Students Group worked on documentation and technical aspects.At the end,they prepared the Kayaçukuru Preservation Plan in 1994.Similar to them,İstanbul Technical University and Middle East Technical University worked on measured drawings at building scale and site plans (Saraç, 2001, 28–29).

Later on in 1999,a panel forum was held under the name of *10th year in process of the Peace and Friendship Village and Kayaköy 2000* (Karaege, 2003).[8] In the following year,under the authority of TÜRSAB and Chamber of Architects,it was aimed to organize a summer school for architecture and city and regional planning students to work on the documentation and building surveys for two main churches and 15 houses. In this regard,main idea was to start restoration process and use these buildings in cultural studies and museumization. Later,these study reports were approved by the Muğla Cultural and Natural Heritage Preservation Board (Köymen, 2015).

8 Appendix in Karaege, 2003: *10th year in process of the Peace and Friendship Village and Kayaköy 2000* (Fethiye, 1999).

Unfortunately, these decisions did not go beyond drawing attention to Kayaköy and have not been implemented still today. Today, these two churches are closed to visitors for “security” reasons and are still waiting to be restored. The fact that visitors cannot enter the churches because these churches have remained closed for many years, and that the necessary maintenance and repairs have not been carried out, causing their heritage components to fade away day by day, is a great disappointment.The necessity of reorganization of the ceremonies in the churches,as it was done in earlier years, to strengthen the relations between the two societies and the atmosphere of peace, is being voiced by different segments of the both communities, but no results have been achieved so far.

Nevertheless, the promotion of peace and friendship became the outstanding theme starting from the late 1980s, which also reflected on tourism, leading to an increase in the number of visitors and even the Ministry of Culture and Tourism decided to take entrance fees starting from 1991 (Aktüre, 2015, p. 364). Furthermore, under the cooperation of the Chamber of Architects, and various student and community organizations; symposiums and meetings were conducted, and documentaries were produced until early 2000s, reflecting valuable contributions to preserve Kayaköy.

In addition, a cooperation between ICOMOS Greece and ICOMOS Türkiye for Kayaköy in 2001 was mentioned (Εταιρεία Ιστορικών Ερευνών “Λυκία”, n.d.)[9] but no informative document could be found on this subject.In the following years, a large-scale organization called Kayafest Youth and Culture Festival was held by AEGEE European Students’ Forum in Kayaköy (AEGE-E-Europe, 2012). Moreover, art and youth themes have been trying to be kept alive in Kayaköy with formations such as the Kayaköy Art Camp which still takes place annually.

9 Mentioned in the text Makri and Livisi in webpage of Εταιρεία Ιστορικών Ερευνών “Λυκία”



Figure 2.25: Photo of Kayaköy from the Kayafest Festival (AEGEE-Europe, 2012)

Figure 2.26: Events from the Kayafest Festival (AEGEE-Europe, 2012)



In 2006, the 1/5,000 scale Fethiye Kayaköy Conservation Development Plan, and Kayaköy Levissi Urban and III. Degree Archaeological Site Conservation Development Plan were approved by the Ministry of Special Environment Agency (FTSO, 2013), but these plans could not move on to the implementation phase.

On the other hand, cultural uses of the area, such as international art camps and workshops, have increased, and by 2010, there was a significant increase in accommodation and restaurant capacities. This can be understood from the evident rise in the number of visitors, the majority of which were foreign visitors, from 57,500 in 2010 to 68,000 in 2012(Aktüre, 2015, p. 366), and 98,865 in 2019 (Dost Newspaper, 2019) In the recent past, it has become the most visited historical site in the Fethiye region with 61,993 visitors in 2022. In 2023, this number increased significantly and reached 100,013 people (Dalaman Newspaper, 2024).

Although it has become a popular tourist destination, its planning and conservation processes have not been properly established on a solid foundation. One of the reasons is that the legal and administrative uncertainties arising from the affiliation of Special Environmental Protection Board to the Ministry of Environment, Urbanisation and Climate Change after establishment of the ministry. To illustrate,the ministry cancelled the deed restrictions, allowing property sales and planning in special protected areas. This decision also affected Kayaköy with a protocol of 2013 that divided it into two as archaeological and natural areas.was signed to open Kayaköy to tourism services. Although the majority of the houses in Kayaköy are state owned, and making private investment difficult, construction rights were anticipated as increased from 3% to 15% in certain regions, to convert 30% of abandoned Greek houses into tourism according to the signed protocol (Aktüre, 2015, p. 366).
Afterwards, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism started an auction regarding the lease of Kayaköy for 49 years. The idea was to convert it into a 300-bed tourism resort managed by a company selected through a bidding process. Conserving the remaining houses would be under selected company's responsibility (Yılmaz, 2019a). The decision was opposed and suspended due to a lawsuit filed on behalf of the public (Yılmaz, 2019b).

In the following years, the Public Interest decision was made in 2016 in order to prepare a Conservation-Oriented Zoning Plan, but the decision did not come into force since it was not approved by the relevant ministry at that time (MUTSO, 2018). In addition, with the Zoning Peace Law that came into force in 2018, which allows buildings constructed without permission or in violation of the zoning legislation were legalized by obtaining a building registration certificate for a fee and being exempt from demolition or fines, has been triggering unauthorized constructions (T.C. Ministry of Environment, Urbanisation and Climate Change, n.d.).

Platform of the Fethiye-Seydikemer Professional Organizations Cooperation met in September 2018 to discuss the outcomes of the lack of a Conservation Zoning Plan and increasing number of illegal constructions and unlicensed buildings around Kayaköy and its surroundings. At the end of the meeting, the necessity of urgently preparing Conservation Zoning Plan for Kayaköy was expressed and it was decided to convey the issue to the competent authorities (MUTSO, 2018).

Following these, according to the decision announced in the official gazette by presidential decision in 2020, it was announced that as a result of the re-evaluation of the protection status of the Natural Protected Site of Kayaköy and the Surroundings of Gemiler Bay, it was decided to register it as a strictly protected sensitive area[10] (Official Gazette, 2020).

Despite this decision, at the current stage, Kayaköy still does not have a proper Conservation-Oriented Zoning and Implementation Plan today.

Especially the historical part of Kayaköy,Levissi, while being largely protected from potential damages due to the failure of the proposed tourism initiatives, it has remained an area that has been left to its own faith and its maintenance has not even been properly carried out. Therefore, although many decisions have been made about Kayaköy since it was abandoned, the official decisions taken regarding the Kayaköy made it difficult to plan conservation and restoration activities of Kayaköy since the relevant state institutions could not find a common ground, and consequently, today, it still continues its existence as an open-air museum.

It is not possible to consider Kayaköy independently of its surroundings. The wide plain, including Kayaköy, is currently referred to as the Kayaçukuru Basin today. Although Kayaçukuru area is officially defined as a zone to be preserved for its agricultural characteristics.Until now, there has been no Agricultural Conservation Zoning Plan or Master Plan for Kayaçukuru, and so, unfortunately, approximately eighty percent of agricultural areas are subject to construction (Nokta TV, 2021), which also leads to serious electricity and water shortages in the region due to excessive pressure on the infrastructure. Especially in recent years, the realization of many new villa projects in the Kayaçukuru area to be rented for tourism purposes is the main reason of this situation today.

10 Definition of the Strictly Protected Sensitive Area, directly quoted from Official Gazette and translated into English.

Areas where land use and all impacts on the area are restricted to protect resource values, where entry is prohibited if necessary, and where special measures are taken for scientific research, education, or environmental monitoring, are terrestrial, aquatic, and marine areas designated by a Council of Ministers decision and where construction is prohibited. These are areas that must be absolutely protected (Official Gazette, 2017).



Figure 2.27: Excessive construction in the Kayaçukuru region, with the area close to Levissi shown in the image.
Satellite image of Kayaçukuru-Kayaköy (Google Earth, 2024)

Before it began to attract attention as a tourist destination, Kayaköy was both a rural area sustained by agricultural activities and natural surroundings of the plain, and a space kept alive through art, sports, and youth initiatives. However, the inappropriate tourism concepts that gradually developed began to damage the character of the area. Moreover, most of the local residents either shifted to the commercial sector or moved elsewhere. Although some families who stayed in the plain still engage in agriculture in their gardens, they struggle with ongoing electricity and water shortages. In addition, the coexistence of abandoned houses in the historical section with privately owned houses further complicates the management and conservation of the area.

As a result, the current situation of Kayaköy can be defined as follows: Kayaköy today encompasses both a heritage area, represented by the abandoned old Greek settlement, and a rural agricultural zone that has been harmed by unsuitable tourism-related developments, particularly within the Kayaçukuru basin.



Figure 3.1: Kayaköy Levissi (Author, 2024)

1.3. Architectural analysis of Kayaköy, Levissi

The architectural analysis of Levissi was conducted both at the scale of the entire settlement, and at the building scale through a separate examination of the houses, religious structures, school building and other typologies which are commercial buildings and fountains.

1.3.1. Settlement

Levissi settlement is a typical example of Mediterranean-Aegean vernacular architecture[1] built on a mountain slope. When the general characteristics of the vernacular architectural phenomenon are examined in the specific context of Levissi, the settlement structure aligns with the principles indicated below. This situation is supported by the results obtained from the typological analysis of buildings (1.3.2. Typology of houses), (1.3.3. Typology of religious buildings), (1.3.4. Typology of school buildings) and the historical development of the settlement (1.2. Historical Development of Kayaköy).

1 This situation has been exemplified in the previous and following sections.

-The structures are built by people who are trained in a master-apprentice relationship (architecture without architects),

-The layout plans are created in harmony with the topography (harmony with nature, rational use of resources),

-The balance between the natural and built environment is achieved (ecological construction),

-The materials are used depending on the geography and climate (recyclable, healthy materials and economy),

-The color and texture of the natural material provide harmony with nature and aesthetic values,

-The material is positively affected by solar radiation and its insulation properties are utilized (energy efficient design),

-The building sizes are shaped according to the economic activities of the building owner and the region (local authenticity depending on the economy),

-The formation of mass aesthetics is influenced by traditional appearance, folk life, art and habits (transfer of traditions and customs to the building culture),

-The spatial organization is developed in harmony with the cultures of the users (importance of user requests),

-The values and belief systems are directly affected by the urban texture and spatial formation is reflected (urban morphology and formation language),

-In the organization of outdoor spaces, neighborly relations are ensured by the distances between buildings (social life),

-The structures have the ability to grow and develop in line with vital needs (flexibility, adaptation to time) (Ovalı et.al., 2016, pp. 516-517).

At the same time, it is an example of sustainable architecture and this supported by the principles of environmental, socio-economic and socio-cultural sustainability that are outlined below (Figure 3.2). Therefore, Levissi is one of the examples of sustainable vernacular architecture.

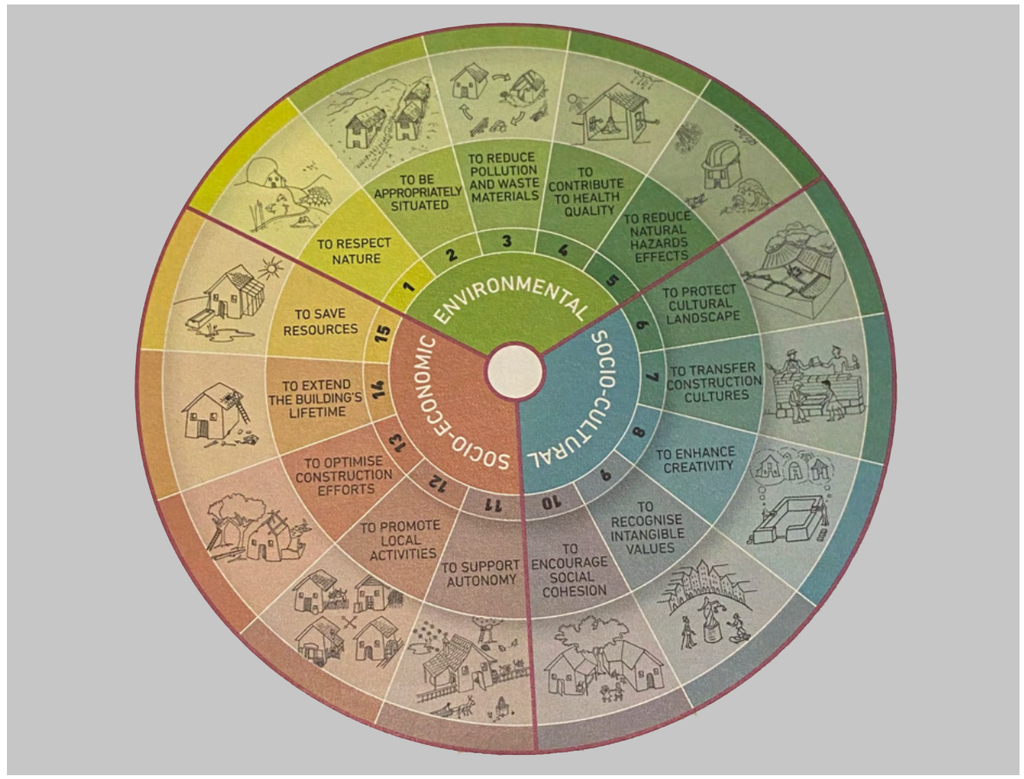


Figure 3.2: Wheel of environmental, socio-cultural and socio-economic sustainable principles (Correia et.al., 2014, p. 27)

The houses of Kayaköy are positioned in a staggered layout, adapted to the hillside as generally positioned parallel to the topography, in a way that does not block each other's air or light. Therefore, the slope line of the topography is the main criterion in positioning the buildings. As a result of this, the facades of the buildings facing the plain side are longer than the ones facing the slope side. The short facades are generally blind facades, while the long facades have building openings such as windows and doors.There is a difference of approximately 100 meters between the highest and lowest levels of the settlement (Terraviva, 2024).[2] In Saraç's topographic study which divides the area into grids, according to the number of buildings included in the grids; 3.62% of the buildings sit on terrain with slope between 0-5% (flat), 16.71% on slope between 10-20% (slightly sloped), 46.38% on slope between 25-35% (sloped), 33.29% on slope 40% and more (steeply sloped) (Saraç, 2001, pp. 46-47). In another study by Saraç, another result was emerged that the building density is concentrated in the upper church and its surroundings area and that the building density varies throughout the area (Saraç, 2001, pp. 50-52). Consequently, Levissi can be identified as an example of an organically evolved settlement (Figure 3.3)

2 According to the information obtained from the Terraviva competition materials, specifically in topography map technical drawing

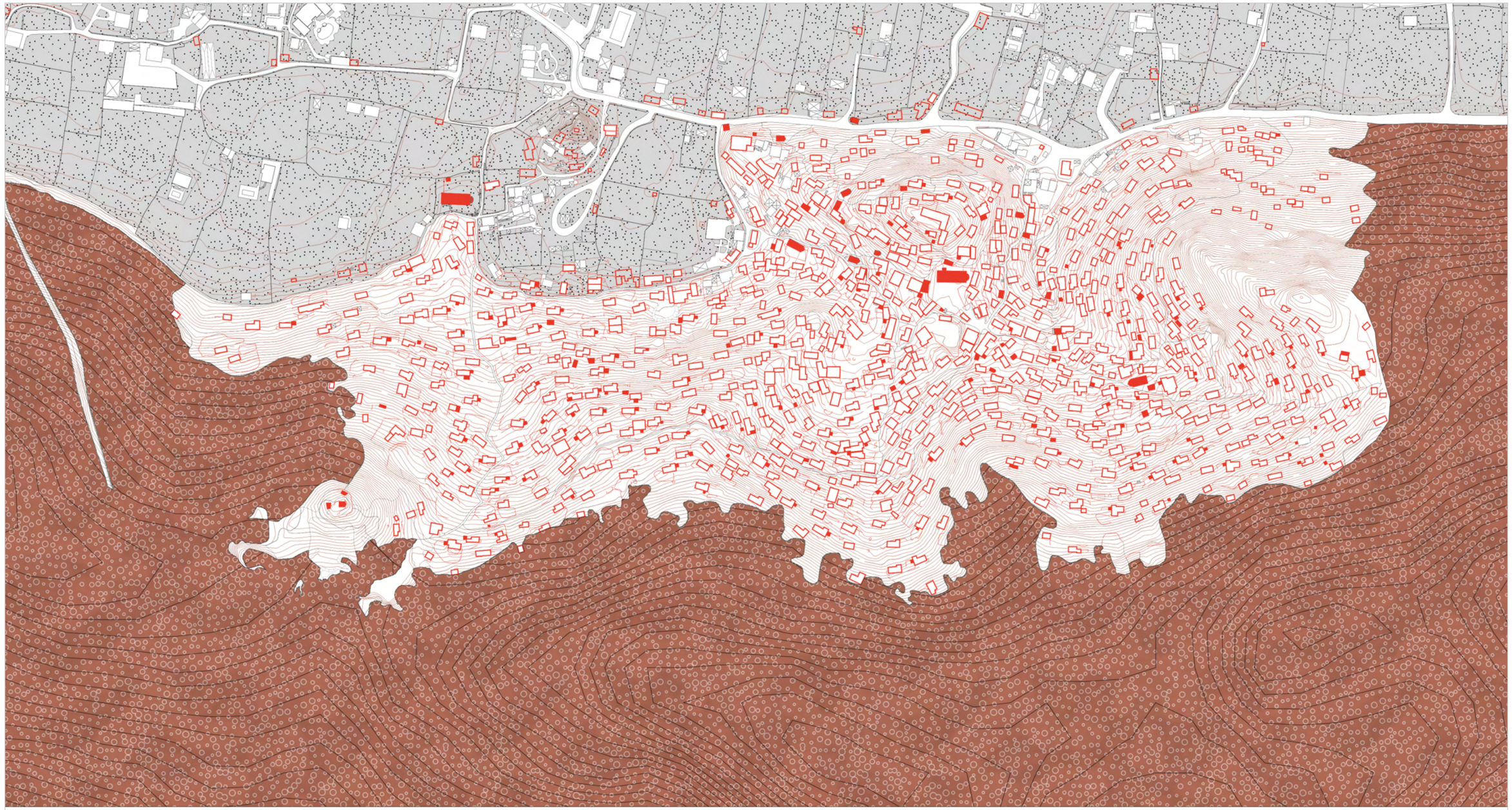


Figure 3.3: Topography &Soil Map (Author, 2025)

(base map source: Terrraviva Competition, soil type data: Bayrakdar et.al., 2020; Ardahanlıoğlu, 2023; Ardahanlıoğlu et.al., 2022)

Geomorphologically, the hillside where Levissi was founded has dolomite characteristics, while the plain part is alluvial soil (Bayrakdar et.al., 2020, p.116). Therefore, the fact that the settlement was established on the slope side is important in terms of leaving the fertile alluvial soils empty for agriculture and constructing buildings on a durable ground such as dolomite. In the part where the settlement ends and the forest border begins, coniferous trees and sclerophyll vegetation are seen (Ardahanlıoğlu, 2023, p. 4016) and the forest soil is red Mediterranean soil (Ardahanlıoğlu et.al., 2022, p. 4) (Figure 3.3).

The roads and streets of the settlement are also shaped organically in a way that will adapt to the natural topography. These roads, which curve according to the slope or run parallel to the slope, are designed to facilitate transportation on this steep hillside and to develop harmony with the buildings' layout. Thus, instead of sharp geometric axes, the street texture exhibits an orientation that develops according to the slope of the land and the need of locals. When evaluated in terms of materials, it is seen that the roads have different ground characteristics: while some streets are paved with natural stone, which is abundant in the region, stone steps are preferred especially in sloping areas; in flatter areas, earthen roads are also encountered.

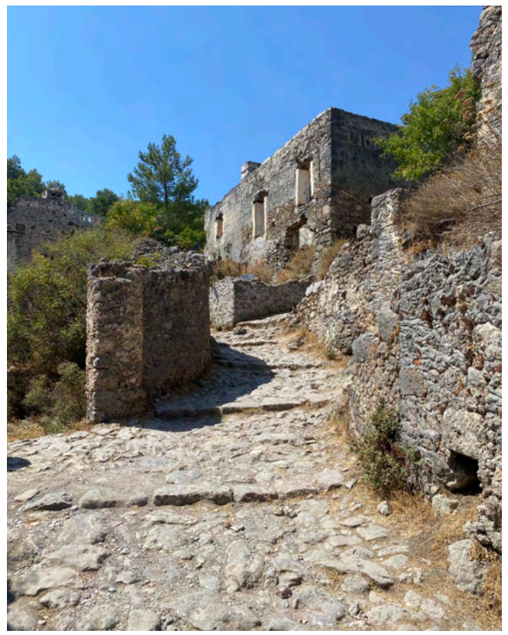




Figure 3.4: Stone-stepped roads of Levissi (Author, 2024)

As mentioned before, the settlement is currently open to visitors as an open-air museum. The historical roads of the settlement are currently used as a visitor route, no other new or different visitor route has been suggested. However, due to the lack of maintenance of these old roads and the lack of sufficient directional signs, visitors have difficulty walking on a specific route time to time. Moreover, since Kayaköy, Levissi is also included in the Lycian Way as an alternative route, there are two trekking routes in the forest part of the settlement.

The museum has three main entrances, but the middle entrance in is not actively providing service. In addition, there are car parks and bus stops in the area close to the entrances (Figure 3.5).

Today, almost the entire area is preserved in its abandoned state. However, restoration work has been carried out on some houses, especially those located in the plain part of the settlement, and these structures are now used as private property or for commercial and tourist accommodation purposes. In the surrounding area of Levissi, there are agricultural fields, orchads (mostly fig), vineyards and cultivated gardens that are maintained by the locals.However, today, as a result of changes in the socio-economic dynamics in the region, these areas have entered a rapid transformation process. Social-commercial areas and tourist accommodation areas are increasing day by day in the vicinity of Levissi and in whole Kayaçukuru area in general [3] (Figure 3.6) (Figure3.7).

3 Kayaçukuru landuse map is presented in the section 1.1.2. Overview of General Context of Kayaköy

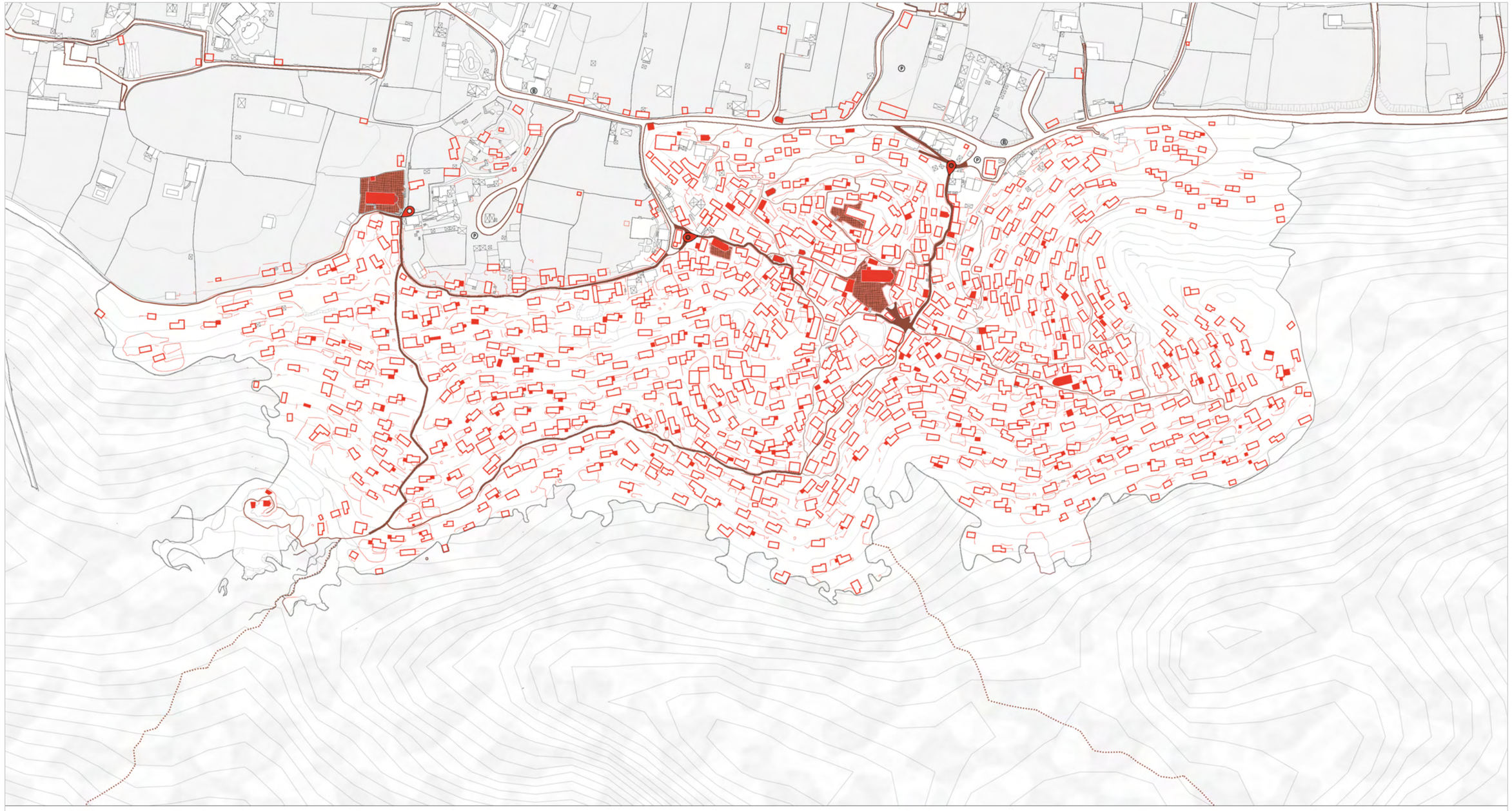


Figure 3.5: Accesibility Map (Author, 2025)

(base map source: Terrraviva Competition, accessiblity data: author's site survey)

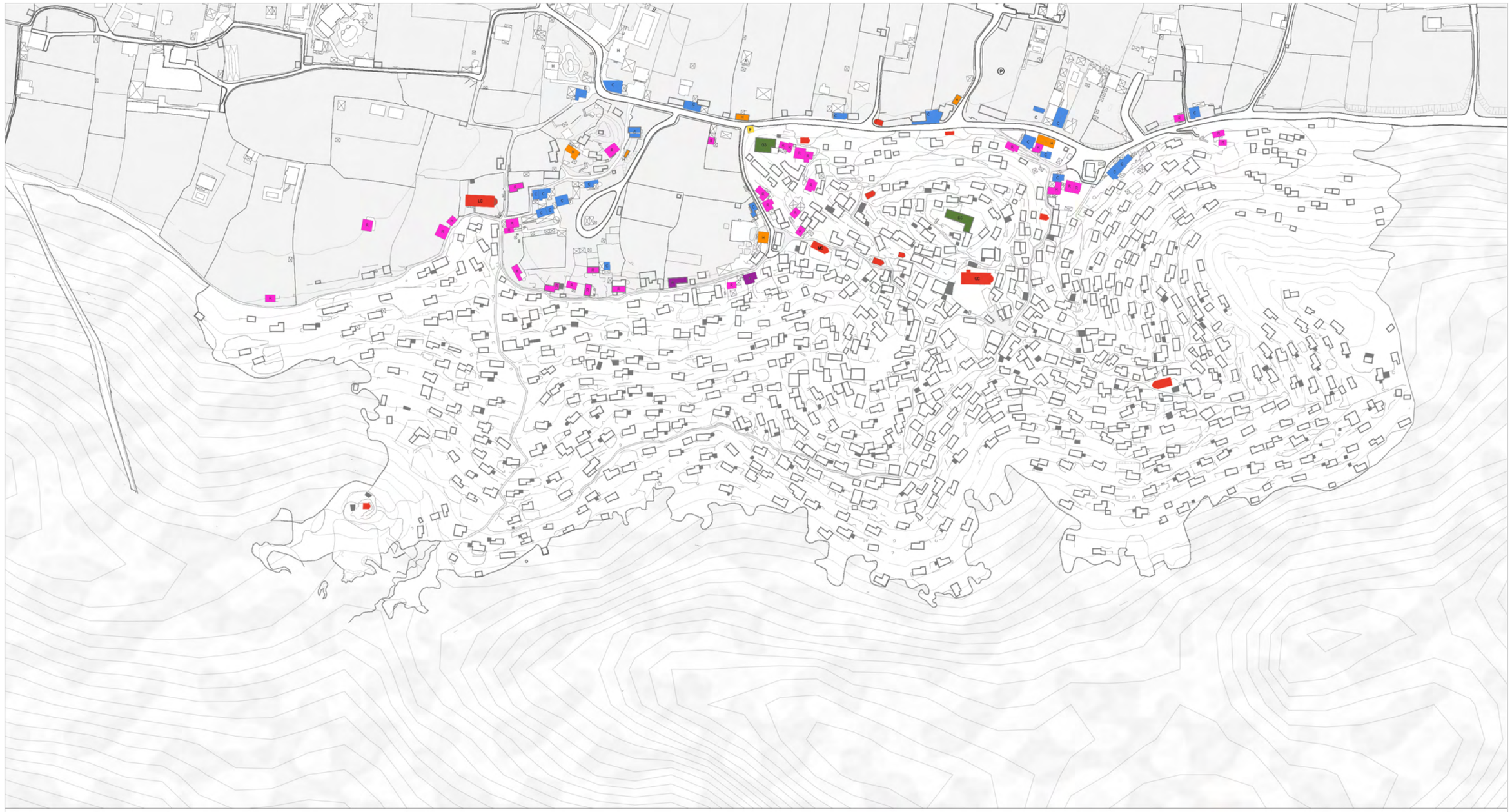


Figure 3.6: Building-Use Map (Author, 2025)

(base map source: Terrraviva Competition, building-use information: author's site survey)

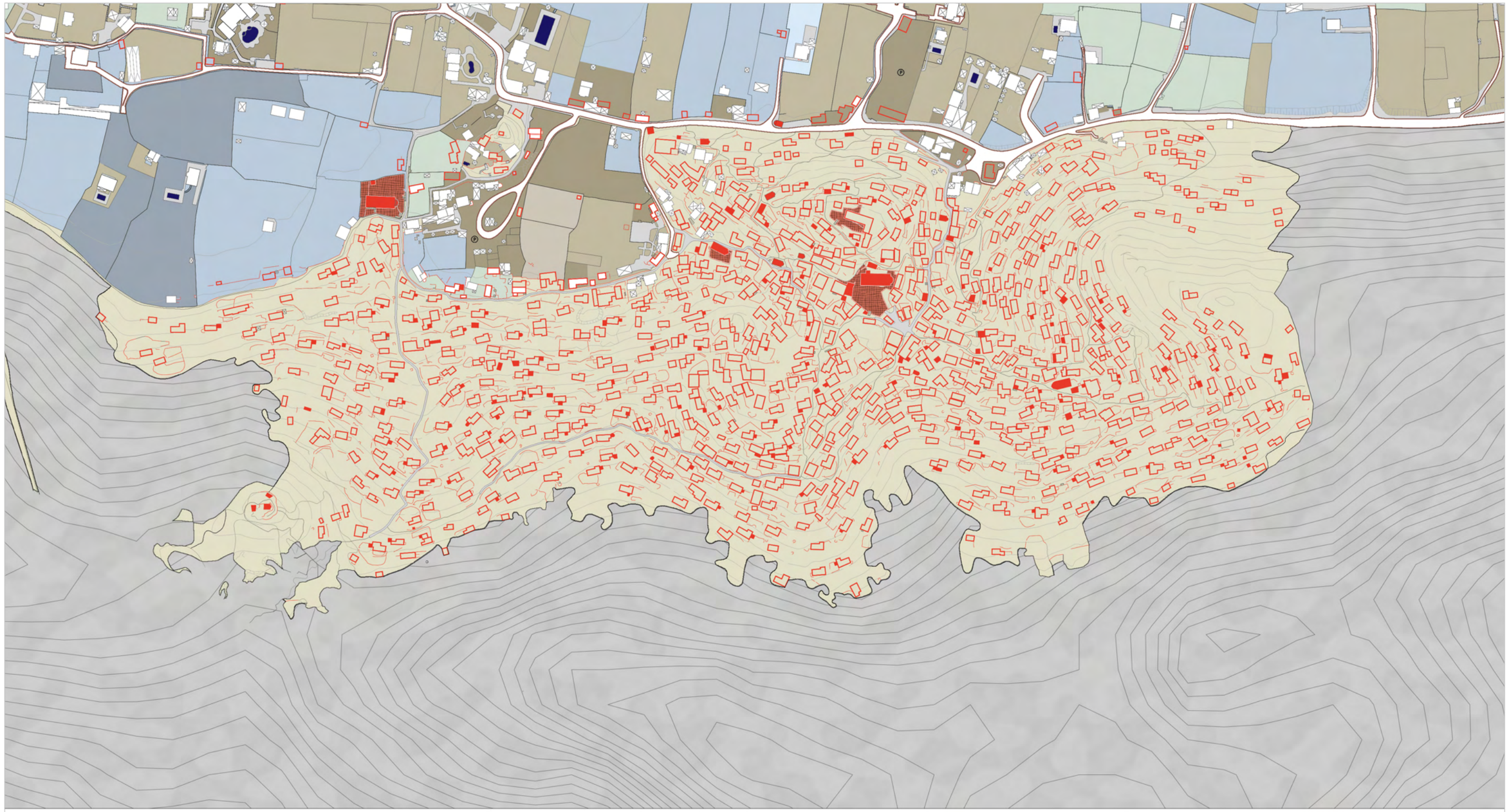


Figure 3.7: Land-Use Map (Author, 2025)

(base map source: Terrraviva Competition, landuse information: Fethiye Municipality and author's site survey)

1.3.2. Houses

Kayaköy houses consist of buildings that originate from simple structures and become more complex with the addition of attached units, showing various plan types from simple to complex (Figure 3.8). Although these different plan types create a diversity, the houses throughout the settlement are read as a single project due to the general unity and harmony that emerged as a result of the use of the same materials and construction methods. This situation is also related to the fact that the houses were built simultaneously in the same period of time starting from the mid-19th century. [4] The houses are generally two-storey and were built by combining stone-walled structures with wooden flooring systems. The floor plans are square, rectangular or L-shaped. In general, plan schemes are directly related to the building mass; therefore, the general building masses can also be defined by these shapes.[5]

Kayaköy houses mainly consist of open, semi-open and closed spaces. The defined areas associated with these spaces can be described as follows:

CLOSED SPACES

Ground floor

-Main room, κύριο δωμάτιο (interior)

-Wood-partitioned room, γουνιά (interior)

-Secondary room, νοτάς (interior)

-Cistern (mainly exterior)

-Toilet (exterior)

Basement floor

-Storage (interior)

-Alaf (interior) (leather processing area)

-Stable

SEMI-OPEN SPACES

-Hayat (entrance sitting & terrace area)

-Entrance area

OPEN SPACES

-Courtyards and gardens (Karaege, 2003, p. 73; Δελησάββας, 2013, pp. 162-163; TMMOB, 2000c; Saraç, 2001).

4 This subject is explained in detail in the section 1.2. Historical Development of Kayaköy.

5 The given information is based on the observations during the site trip.

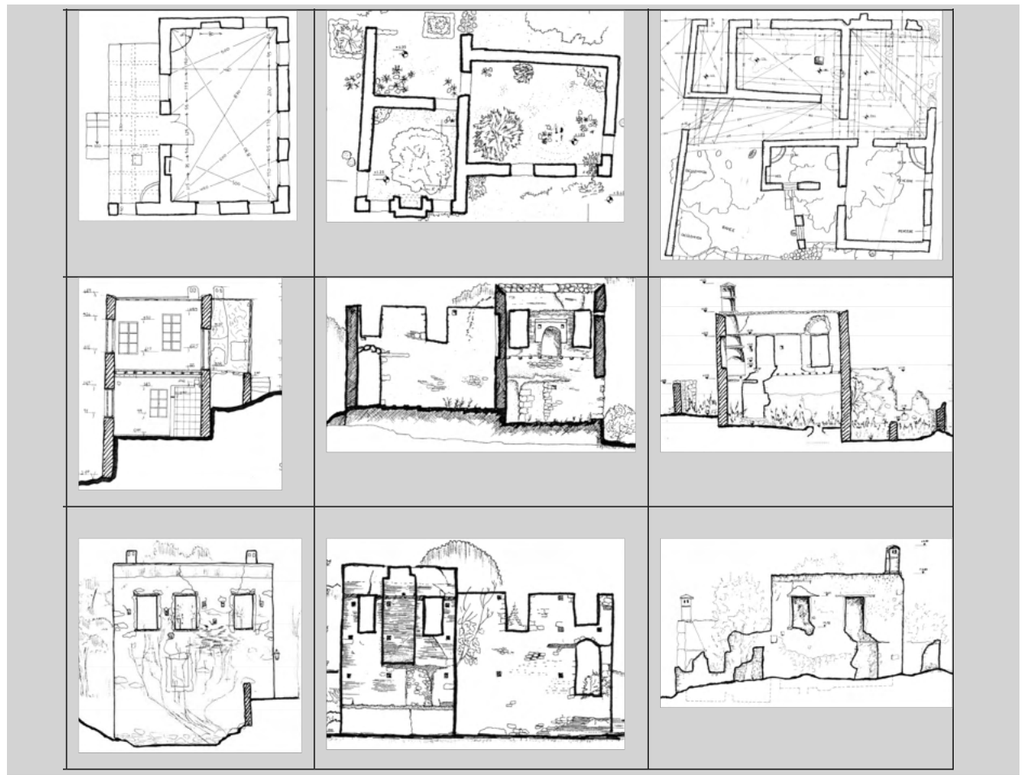
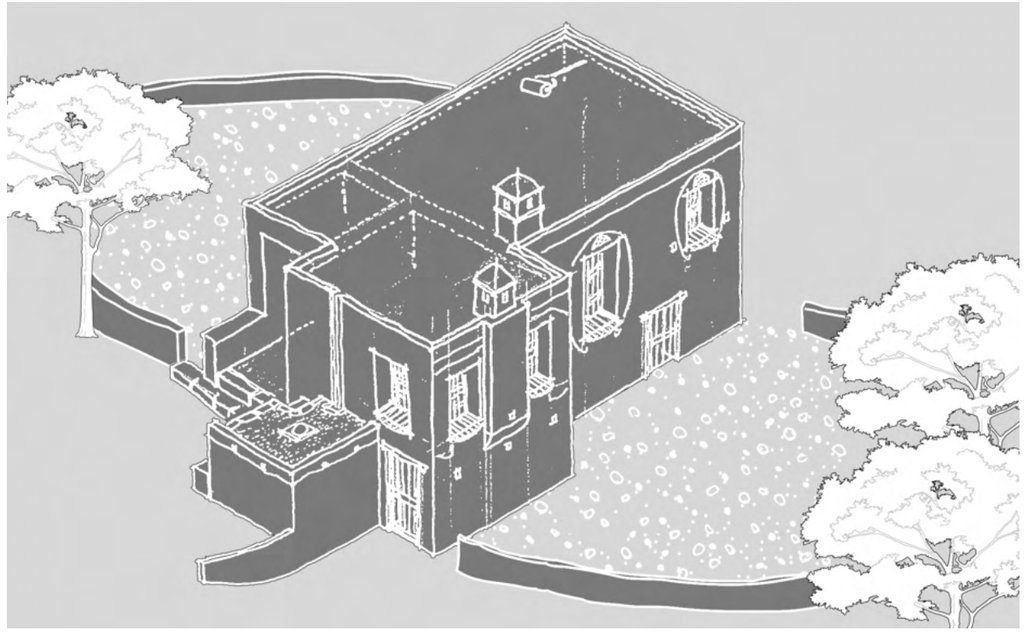


Figure 3.8: Variations of houses (Ovalı, 2009, p.198)
(main source: TMMOB 2000 Report of the Measured Drawing- Residence 1-2-3)

Figure 3.9: Hypothetical sketch of a typical Levissi house drawn by Hakan Saraç, edited by author (Saraç, 2001, p. 259)



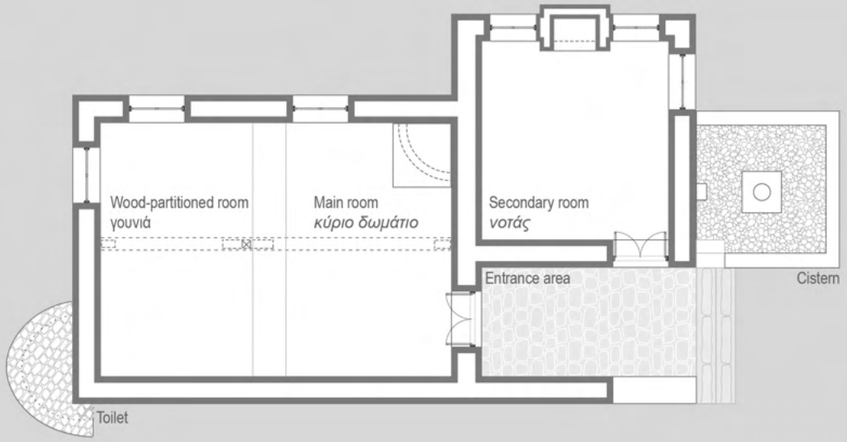


Figure 3.10: 1/100 Ground floor plan of a typical Levissi house redrawn by author according to the Hakan Saraç's drawing (Saraç, 2001, p. 257)

Main room *κύριο δωμάτιο*

The main room is the primary area, located a few steps above the area called kateflin (κατέφλιν), where visitors took off their shoes. This room served as both a bedroom and a socializing area. It contained a fireplace (tzaki – τζάκι), a water jug stand (tesiligi – τεστιλίκι), pantry cupboards and shelves for storing crockery. The room was decorated with wooden partitions and was separated from the children's room (γουνιά) by these partitions.

Wood-partitioned *room γουνιά*

This area was reserved for children or younger family members, and it was separated from the main room by a wooden screen (musandra – μουσάντρα) about two meters high. This screen did not reach the ceiling, leaving the upper part open.

Secondary room *νοτάς*

This room, located to the right of the entrance, was usually used by older family members and contained functional elements such as the loom (argaleiós – αργαλειός) or the fixed water basin (gouva – γούβα) (Δελησάββας, 2013, pp. 162-163).

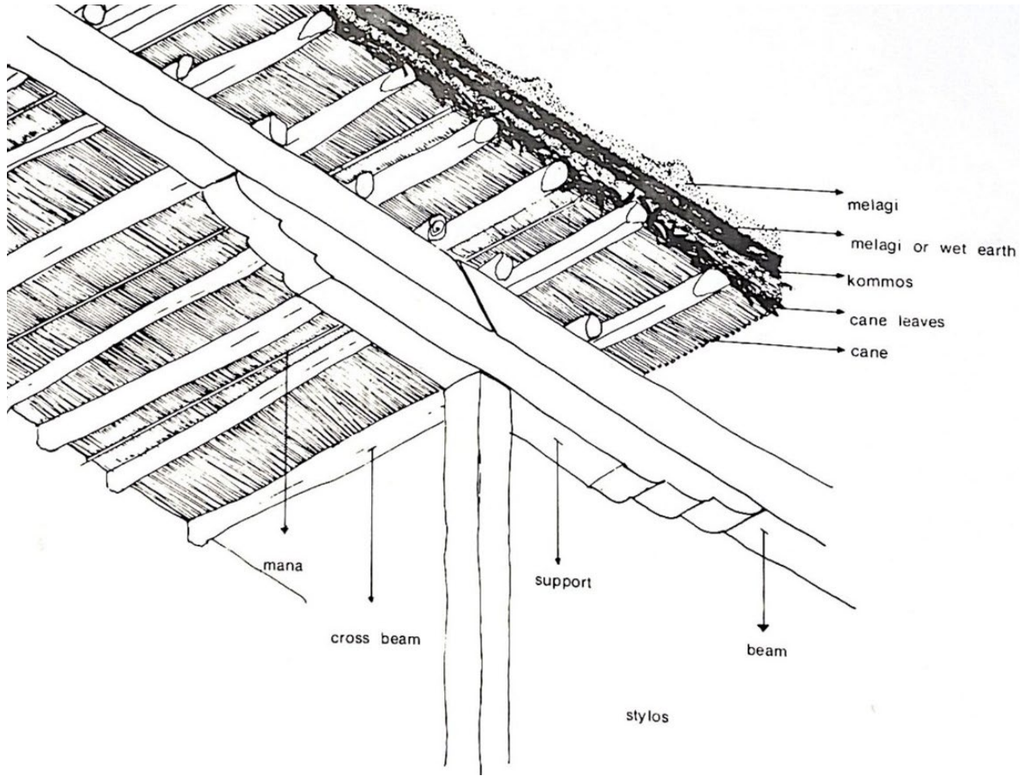


Figure 3.11: Roof construction technique in Skyros Island (Philippides, 1983, p. 204)

The roof of the house rests on a main support beam (misia – μισιά). This beam is supported by a column (stilos – στύλος) made from a solid tree trunk. Wooden planks are laid on the roof beams and then covered with a special earthen material known as kerenin (κερένιν) or patilia (πατιλιά) (Δελησάββας, 2013, pp. 162-163). A movable cylinder made of hewn stone, measuring 60 to 70 centimeters in length, was also situated on the roof to cover the roof's flaws and stop rainwater from leaking inside during rainy seasons (Λαμέρα, 1964, p. 58).This construction technique is also common in the architecture of the Greek islands and how the structural elements come together is shown in the picture (Figure 3.11).

The pictures in the following pages show two houses in Kayaköy which were restorated according to original Levissi houses as closely as possible. The houses illustrate the minimalism and efficiency of daily life during that period. It is a vernacular design that integrated family privacy with collective living within a shared space.





Figure 3.12: Restorated Kayaköy Levissi Houses (Author, 2024)

Figure 3.13: Left-Elevated entrance area, Right-Basement floor entrance area (Author, 2024)









Figure 3.14: Fireplace and wooden partitions (Author, 2024)

Figure 3.15: Wood joist floor system (Author, 2024)



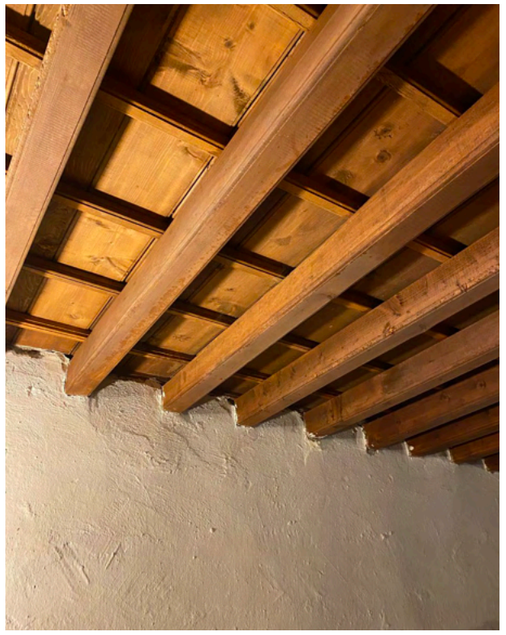






Figure 3.16: Wooden post and beam structural system (Author, 2024)





Figure 3.17: Left- Roof-sealing stone roller (Author, 2024) Right- Basement stairs (Author, 2024)



Figure 3.18: Main room (Author, 2024)

Figure 3.19: Fireplace and functional wall niches (Author, 2024)







Figure 3.20: Traces of wooden structures on house ruins (Author, 2024)

Figure 3.21: Traces of wooden structures on house ruins (Author, 2024)





Figure 3.22: Ruined fireplaces and chimneys type 1 (Author, 2024)

Figure 3.23: Ruined fireplaces and chimneys type 2 (Author, 2024)



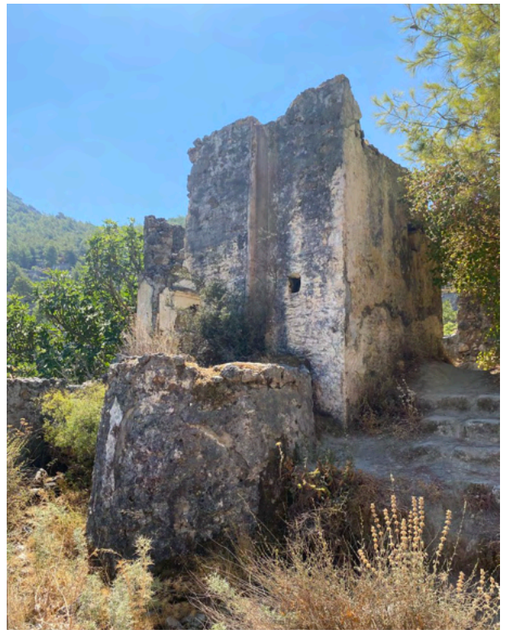


Figure 3.24: Chimneys in relatively good condition (Author, 2024)

Figure 3.25: Ruined elevated entrance spaces & stairs (Author, 2024)



Due to the limited access to water in the settlement, the residents of Levissi gave special importance to collecting rainwater. Cisterns were built in about half of the houses for the purpose of collecting rainwater (Saraç, 2001, p. 78). In addition to residential buildings, cisterns were also built in churches. The cistern system in the houses is based on the transfer of rainwater from the roof to the cisterns via vertical facade elements. These vertical components are sometimes integrated into the facades using water-permeable plaster and become visually distinctive features of the facade, while in other cases, soil pipes are embedded in the building walls. Cisterns are built in cubic, curvilinear or conical forms, with the cubic form being the most common throughout the settlement.They are located adjacent to buildings, separate from them or inside them, and the majority are adjacent to the structures. The interiors of the cisterns, built using rubble stonework, were covered with water-permeable plaster. They were generally elevated from the ground and were accessible by a small staircase leading to the upper platform, where there was an opening for water extraction. Although most of the upper surfaces were finished with water-permeable plaster, some had fragments of earthenware added, and in a few cases, especially in church gardens, pebbles were used (Saraç, 2001, pp. 77–83)



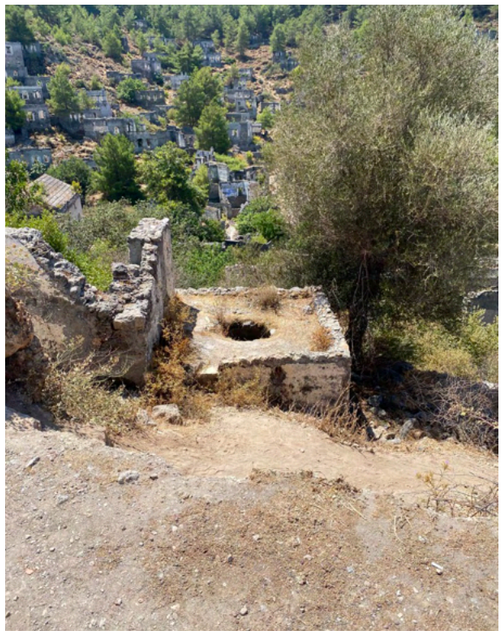


Figure 3.26: Ruined cisterns 1 (Author, 2024)



Figure 3.28: Ruined cistern & toilet (Author, 2024)

Figure 3.27: Ruined cisterns 2 (Author, 2024)





Figure 3.29: Ruined toilets (Author, 2024)





Due to the absence of a sewage system in Levissi, toilets were constructed as small detached structures outside the houses. The waste accumulated in cesspits was used by villagers as fertilizer during the summer months (TMMOB, 2000c). The toilets, built of rubble stone masonry, had dome-shaped roofs. Similar to the traces left on facades by interior timber structures of the houses, similar traces observed around the door openings of the toilets which suggest that the toilet doors were also made out of timber. In some cases, toilets were placed separately from the house facades and were positioned to share a common wall with other toilets (Saraç, 200, p. 88).

Variations in application techniques of plaster in facade arrangements can be observed in the houses. There are aesthetic variations in exterior facades with the differing density, and texture of plaster, along with the diverse use of stone projections in certain areas; this also reflects the craftsmanship skills of the locals.



Figure 3.30: Variations in application of plaster (Author, 2024)

Figure 3.31: Variations in application of plaster & stone projection (Author, 2024)



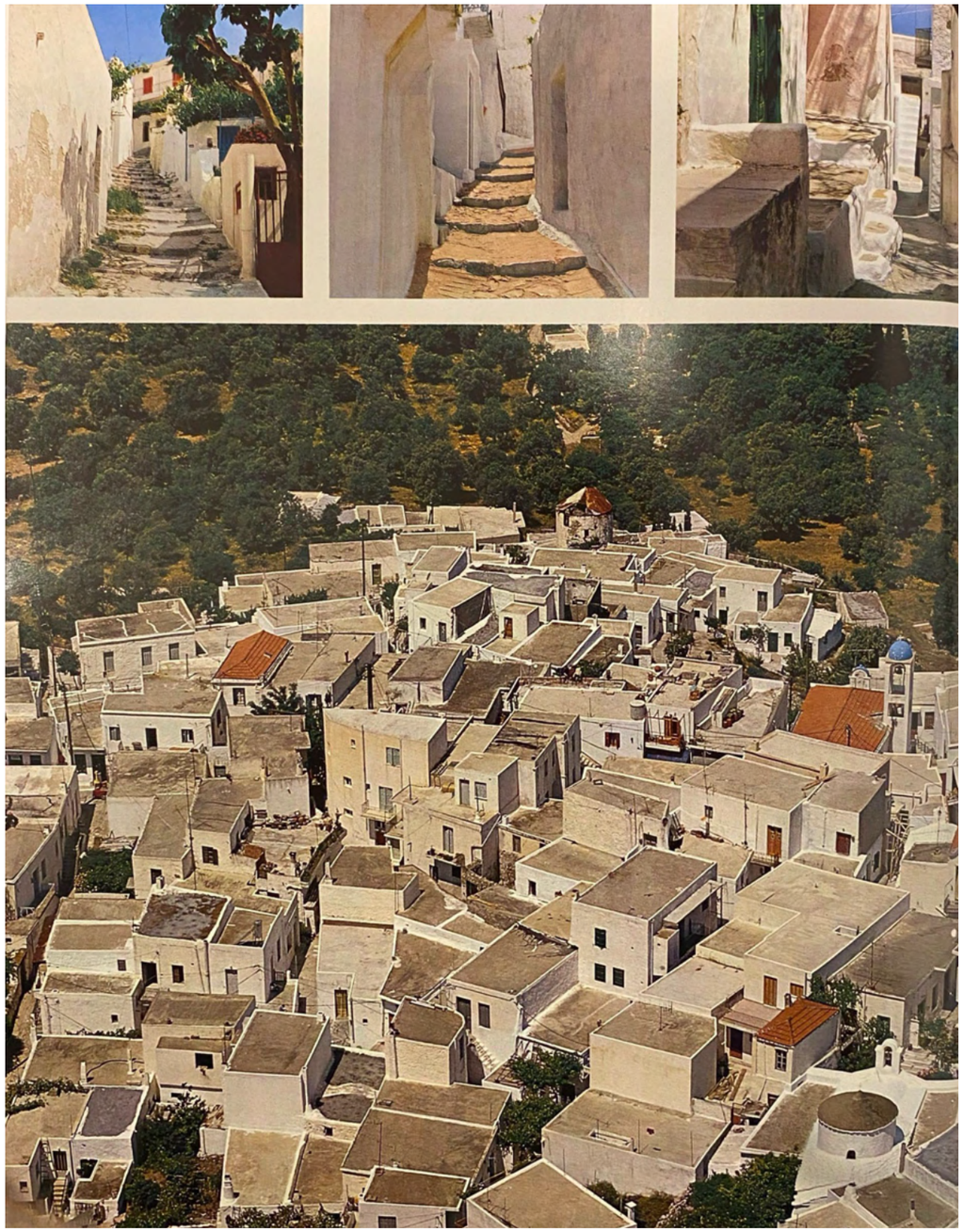


Figure 3.32: Present-day settlement and streets of Skyros Island (Philippides, 1983, p. 192)



Figure 3.33: Historical settlement in Skyros Island (Philippides, 1983, p. 193)

When the architectural characteristics of the houses and the general layout of the settlement are examined, a clear resemblance to the architecture of the Greek Islands especially the Dodecanese Islands is evident. This resemblance supports the idea that craftsmen from the islands played a role in the construction of the Levissi settlement, especially as a result of the migration movements from the islands to Anatolia in the mid-19th century. This issue was discussed in more detail in the historical section.



Figure 3.34: Chora Houses in Skyros Island (Philippides, 1983, p.184)





Figure 3.35: Interior spaces of Skyros Island houses (Philippides, 1983, p. 207, 211)

Figure 3.36: Left - Interior spaces of Skyros Island houses (Philippides, 1983, p. 213)
Figure 3.37: Right - Chimney of Kythera Island houses (Philippides, 1983, p. 274)





1.3.3. Religious buildings

Levissi's religious buildings consist of two large churches and numerous smaller, single-vaulted chapels scattered around the area. One of these chapels called Tis Agías Ánnas, or St. Anna is larger than the other chapels and is said to have been built before the churches. The name of the main churches are Taxiárchis church, exists in the upper part of the village, and the Panagiá i Pyrgiótissa church, located at the entrance to the plain area of the settlement (Εταιρεία Ιστορικών Ερευνών ''Λυκία'', 2021, p. 125). Therefore, Taxiárchis church is also known as upper church while Panagiá i Pyrgiótissa church is called as lower church.

The churches in Kayaköy reflect the influence of the late Byzantine period (13th-15th centuries), which corresponds to the third phase of Byzantine architecture. This can be understood from the domed basilica forms. At the same time, different stylistic elements were combined within the structures; for example, ribbed arches and a roof resembling Gothic style coexisting in the same building (TMMOB, 2000a, p. 6).The churches exhibit a high level of craftsmanship in terms of stonework, stucco reliefs and fresco decoration. Taxiarchis Church is thought to have been built later; it is larger in size and more damaged than the Lower Church (TMMOB, 2000a, pp. 8–9).



Figure 3.38: Taxiárchis Church (Author, 2024)

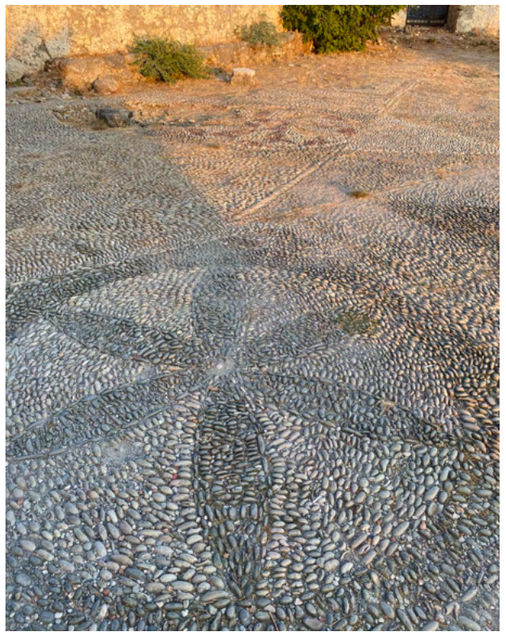
Taxiárchis Church-Upper Church

The Taxiarchis Church is located on the upper east side of the settlement, adjacent to a square formerly known as Stumbo. There is no clear information about the date of construction, but there is the 1910 motif composed by stones on the step in front of the door giving access to the naos section, so it is thought that the construction was completed in this year. It is located within a large courtyard surrounded by walls, originally with two main entrances, now has three. The ground of the courtyard is covered with a vermiculatum mosaic pavement. Spiral and floral motifs are arranged in circular compositions, following a specific modular system. The colours used in these mosaic decorations are generally dark grey for the bands and the infill, with red added between the black and white sections to increase the contrast (TMMOB, 2000a, pp. 20–22).This mosaic technique was also used in the interior of the church. Black, white, red and dark blue pebbles form a variety of decorative patterns in the interior (TMMOB, 2000a, pp. 20–22). The interior mosaics have deteriorated more significantly than those in the courtyard area, which can be recognized when comparing photographs taken in 2000 and 2024. They clearly show how much of the mosaics has lost over time.



Figure 3.39: Taxiárchis Church (Author, 2024)

Figure 3.40: Pebblestone pavements in the courtyard of Taxiárchis Church (Author, 2024)





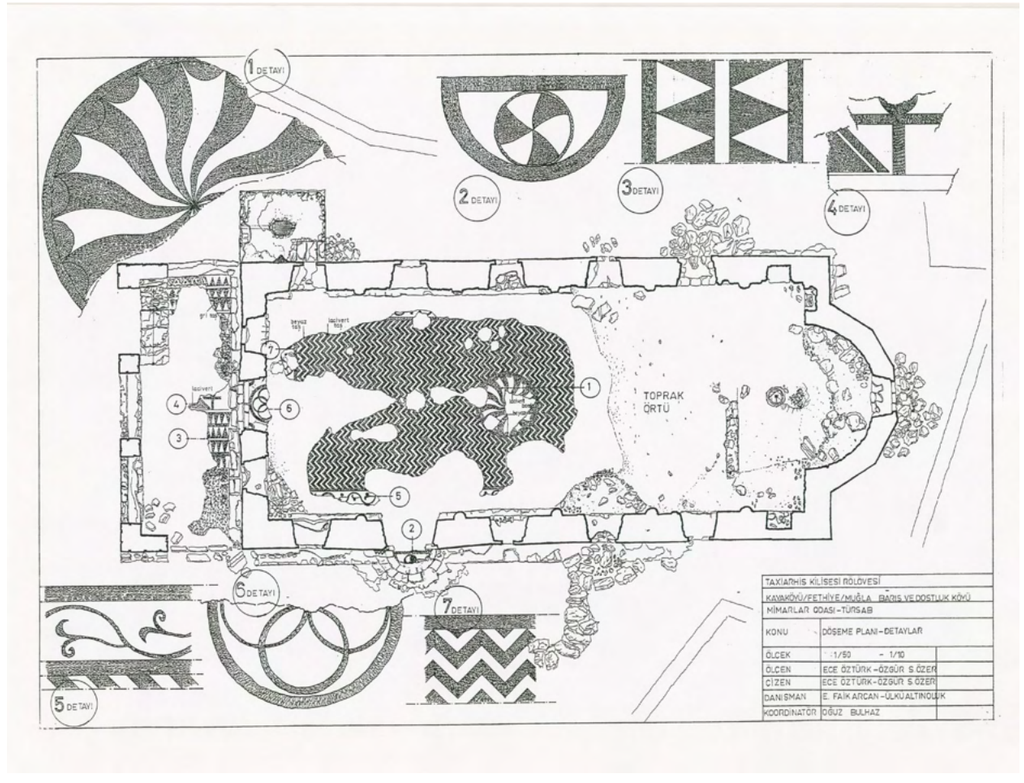
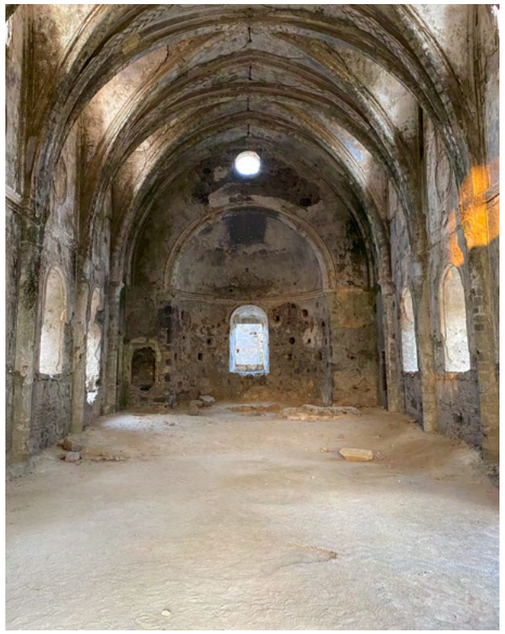


Figure 3.41: Taxiárchis Church pavement plan (TMMOB, 2000a, p. 31)

Figure 3.42: Left- Taxiárchis Church in 2000 (TMMOB, 2000a, p. 50) Right- Taxiárchis Church in 2024 (Author, 2024)





The structure was built using rubble stone. On the exterior, the stone walls are covered with a thick layer of red plaster that is shaped with rectangular patterns. There are two main entrances providing access to the naos. The southern entrance is framed with marble jambs on the exterior, while the narthex door is defined by a plaster profile. In addition, the windows on the first floor are framed with white marble jambs and tufa stone. There are notable differences in the decorative use of tufa stone between the north and south facades. The roof and gallery windows are surrounded by finely cut stone moldings. It is reported that the roof windows were once filled with stained glass (TMMOB, 2000a).

A plaster ornamental detail was applied to the exterior arches. Additionally, a cistern is attached to the north facade of the church.

The remains of stairs in the narthex area, traces of beams on the walls and the presence of windows in the upper parts of the narthex area suggest that there was once a gallery space here (Erol, 2003, p. 68). Most likely, the gallery floor was made using a wooden flooring system similar to that in the houses.

The naos is covered with five ribbed cross vaults, the narthex with a barrel vault, and the apse with a semi-dome. The naos is designed in a highly decorative manner: the walls have plaster ornamentation with vegetal and various geometric patterns, while the columns with marble capitals, attached to the walls and integrated with the intersecting vaults, have carved stone detailing.

Different types of decorative patterns are also present on both the columns and the ribbed vaults (TMMOB, 2000a).

On the apse side, blue painted cross motifs were used, but these have disappeared over time. The section where the iconostasis once stood has collapsed and its remains are now scattered on the church floor (TMMOB, 2000a).



Figure 3.43: Left- Marble jambed door of Taxiárchis Church (Author, 2024)
Right- Plaster profiled door of Taxiárchis Church (Author, 2024)



Figure 3.44: Left- Tufa stone framed window on South facade of Taxiárchis Church (Author, 2024)
Right- Tufa stone framed window on North facade of Taxiárchis Church (Author, 2024)

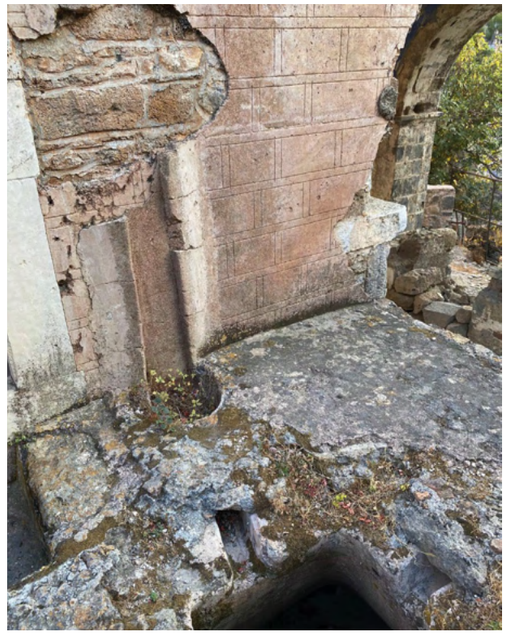




Figure 3.45: Plaster ornamental detail on the exterior arches of Taxiárchis Church (Author, 2024)

Figure 3.46: Cistern of Taxiárchis Church (Author, 2024)





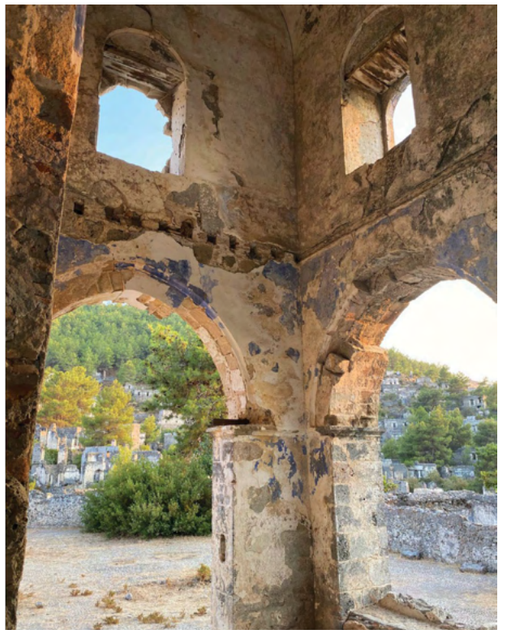




Figure 3.47: Left- Traces of beams and gallery windows of narthex area (Author, 2024)
Right- Remains of stairs in narthex area (Author, 2024)

Figure 3.48: Left- Ribbed cross vaults of Taxiárchis Church (Author, 2024)
Right- Decorative patterns (Author, 2024)









Figure 3.49: Decorative patterns (TMMOB, 2000a, p. 45)

Figure 3.50: Left- Remains of a window opening in Taxiárchis Church (Author, 2024)
Right- Remains of a door opening in Taxiárchis Church (Author, 2024)



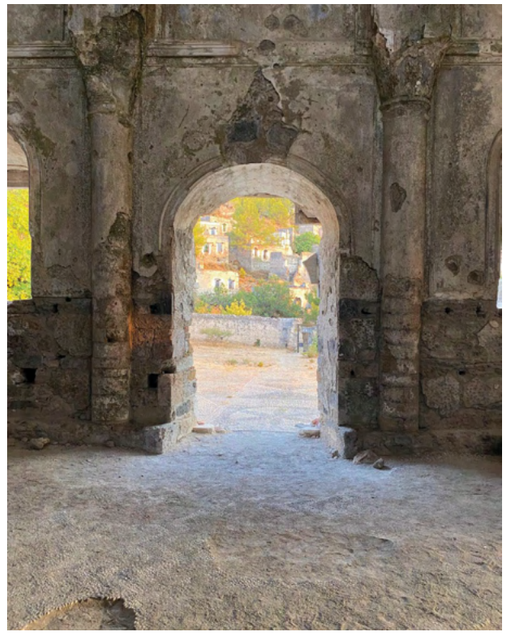






Figure 3.51: Articulation of interior walls of Taxiárchis Church (Author, 2024)

Figure 3.52: Wall niches of Taxiárchis Church (Author, 2024)









Figure 3.53: Left- Remains of a blue painted cross motifs in apse area (Author, 2024)
Right- Apse area of Taxiárchis Church (Author, 2024)

Figure 3.54: Taxiárchis Church (Author, 2024)



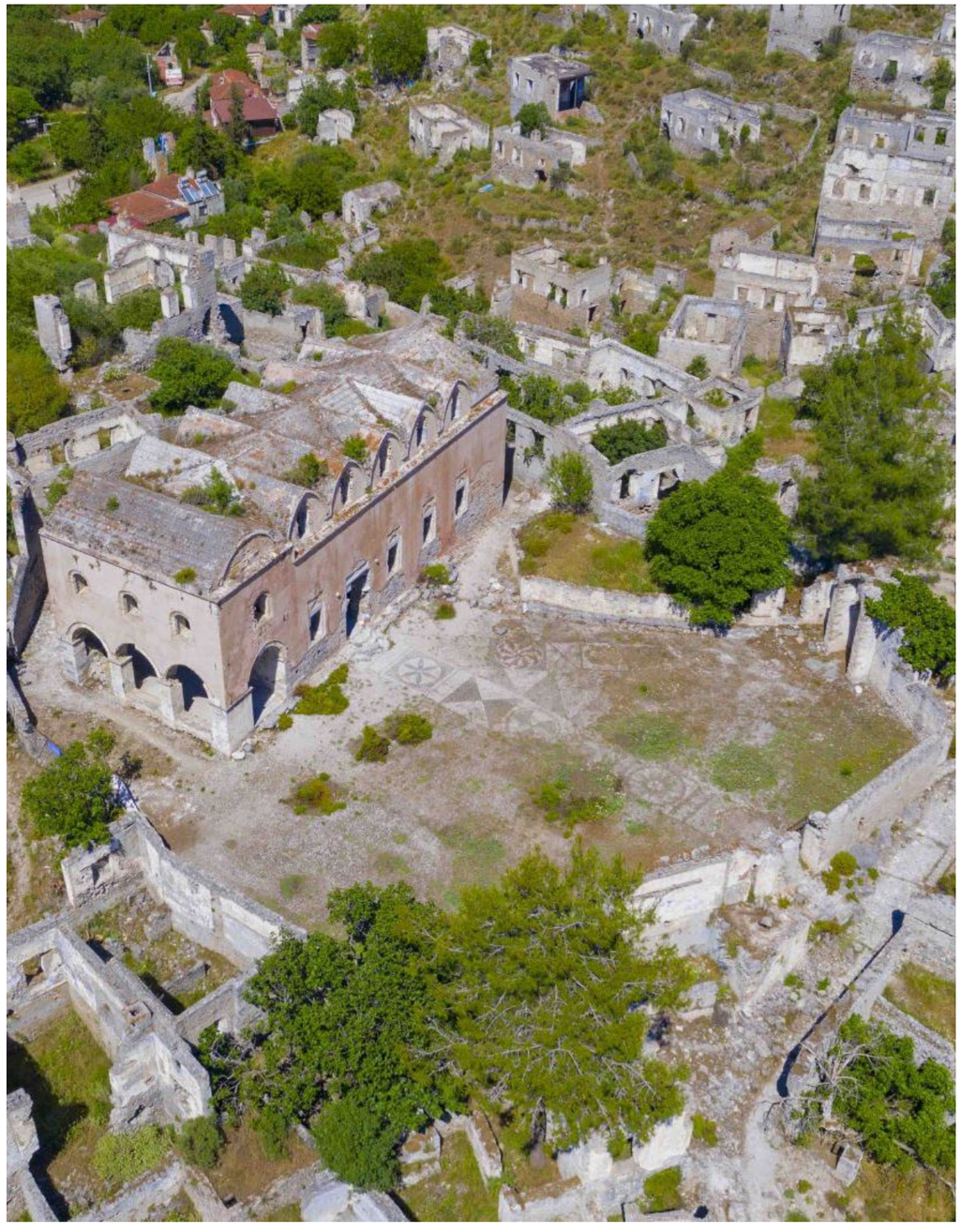


Figure 3.55: Taxiárchis Church (Terraviva, 2024)



Figure 3.56: Panagiá i Pyrgiótissa Church (Author, 2024)

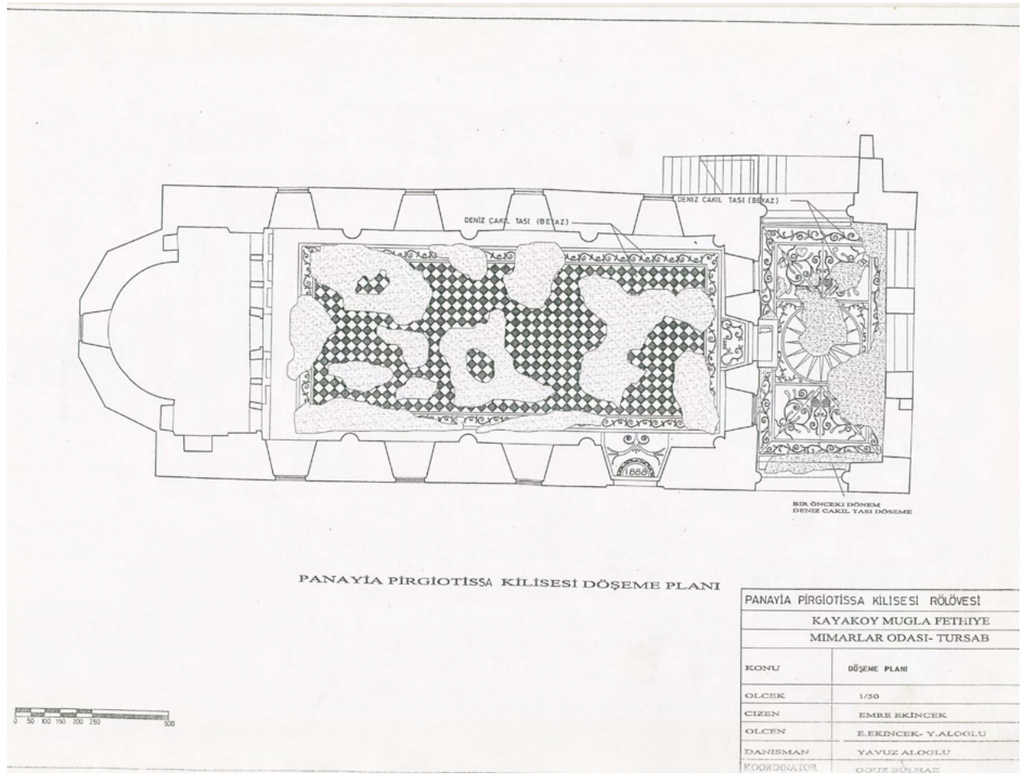


Figure 3.57: Panagiá i Pyrgiótissa Church pavement plan (TMMOB, 2000b, p. 28)

Panagiá i Pyrgiótissa Church-Lower Church

The Church of Panagiá i Pyrgiótissa is located at the entrance to the plain part of Levissi. Like the Taxiarchis Church, it has a walled courtyard. There is an inscription above the entrance gate of the church. According to what is written in this inscription, the church was destroyed to its foundations in the earthquake in 1840 and was rebuilt for about 40 years. It is thought that the restoration was completed in 1888 because this date is engraved on the church floor. Additionally, the text mentions an Italian architect and explains that the marble used for the building was shipped from Rhodes and carved en route (TMMOB, 2000b). In addition, inscriptions from the Roman period were found in the exterior facade of the church[6] (Masuda, 2010, p. 226).There is one main entrance to the courtyard of the church. Although the courtyard ground does not have as many mosaics as the Taxiarchis Church, various patterned designs made of black and white pebbles can be seen throughout the floor of naos and narthex areas.

6 Information was detailed in the section 1.2. Historical Development of Kayaköy.

Figure 3.58: Left- Floor pattern in narthex area of Panagiá i Pyrgiótissa Church (Author, 2024)

Right- Floor pattern in naos area of Panagiá i Pyrgiótissa Church (Terraviva, 2024)







Figure 3.59: Panagiá i Pyrgiótissa Church (Author, 2024)

It is constructed with dark-colored ashlar masonry on the exterior facade. At the level of 350 centimeters, the walls are recessed inward as forming a cornice detail that surrounds the structure on the outside. The window openings on the north and south facades are framed with white marble moldings, creating a harmonious contrast in color on the exterior. The main entrance door on the north facade is also framed with white marble; the original door is a finely crafted wooden piece; however, it is currently on display at the Fethiye Museum (TMMOB, 2000b).

On the southern facade, the white marble window moldings have floral motifs, and above the windows, at the upper levels of the exterior facade, there are niches decorated with cross shaped marble pieces. On the northern facade, simpler white marble moldings are used, and the upper part of each window is topped with an arched decoration made of ashlar stone. Unlike the southern façade, the upper levels of this side do not include any niche decorations.



Figure 3.60: Left- Doorway of Panagiá i Pyrgiótissa Church (Author, 2024)
Right- Original door of Panagiá i Pyrgiótissa Church (Sanat Tarihi Platformu, n.d.)

Figure 3.61: Left- Windows on Southern facade of Panagiá i Pyrgiótissa Church (Author, 2024)
Right- Windows on Northen facade of Panagiá i Pyrgiótissa Church (Author, 2024)





Figure 3.62: Marble decorative elements on the doorway and the wall niches on the southern facade of Panagiá i Pyrgiótissa Church (TMMOB, 2000b, pp. 45, 50)

Figure 3.63: Left- Plaster ornamented narthex door of Panagiá i Pyrgiótissa Church (Author, 2024)
Right- Narthex area of Panagiá i Pyrgiótissa Church (Author, 2024)





Figure 3.64: Left- Interior ornamentation of Panagiá i Pyrgiótissa Church (Author, 2024)
Right- Interior ornamentation of Panagiá i Pyrgiótissa Church (TMMOB, 2000b, p. 37)

The external staircase attached to the northern façade and the beam traces in the narthex walls support the presence of a gallery floor that disappeared, similar to the one in the Taxiarchis Church. The door in the narthex leading to the naos is defined by plaster ornamentation.

The naos section is covered with tree ribbed cross vault and a domed section intersecting the vaults. The narthex is covered with a single-ribbed cross vault, while the apse is surrounded by a pentagonal dome. The naos is designed in a highly decorative manner; the walls are decorated with plaster plant motifs and various geometric patterns. In addition, the ashlar stone columns attached to the walls and intersecting with the ribbed vaults, and the vaults themselves, are decorated with white plaster relief motifs painted in different patterns on a blue background. There are also blue designs resembling window shapes above the windows. In general, the colored motifs inside the church are predominantly blue and gilded gold tones (TMMOB, 2000b).



Figure 3.65: Iconostasis of Panagiá i Pyrgiótissa Church (Terraviva, 2024)

The iconostasis structure is built with marble cladding over an ashlar stone wall and is divided into sections by arched marble columns. At the center, there is a low, rounded-arched door framed with marble. The two uppermost rows feature plant motif decorations, followed by a row depicting the twelve religious feasts (Dodekaorton). In the lowest row of medallions, Jesus is depicted in the center, flanked by the twelve apostles (TMMOB, 2000b).

Along the northern wall of the church courtyard, there is a three-stepped seating area adjacent to the wall. Next to this seating area, toward the west, a cistern and a toilet are located against the northern wall of the courtyard. Within the courtyard, on both the eastern and western sides, there are gardens with cypress pine, plane, walnut, and bitter orange trees. In the southwestern corner of the courtyard, a small cemetery is located, while in the southeastern corner, there is a bell tower (TMMOB, 2000b).The bell tower, like the church itself, is built from ashlar stone and stands on four supporting pillars. The platform at height +422, where the bell and its supporting pillars were originally located, is reached by 21 stone stairs that lean against the courtyard wall. The bell and the supporting structural components are no longer in existence (TMMOB, 2000b, pp. 10–11).



Figure 3.66: Details of Iconostasis (TMMOB, 2000b, p. 39)

Figure 3.67: Bell tower of Panagiá i Pyrgiótissa Church (Author, 2024)





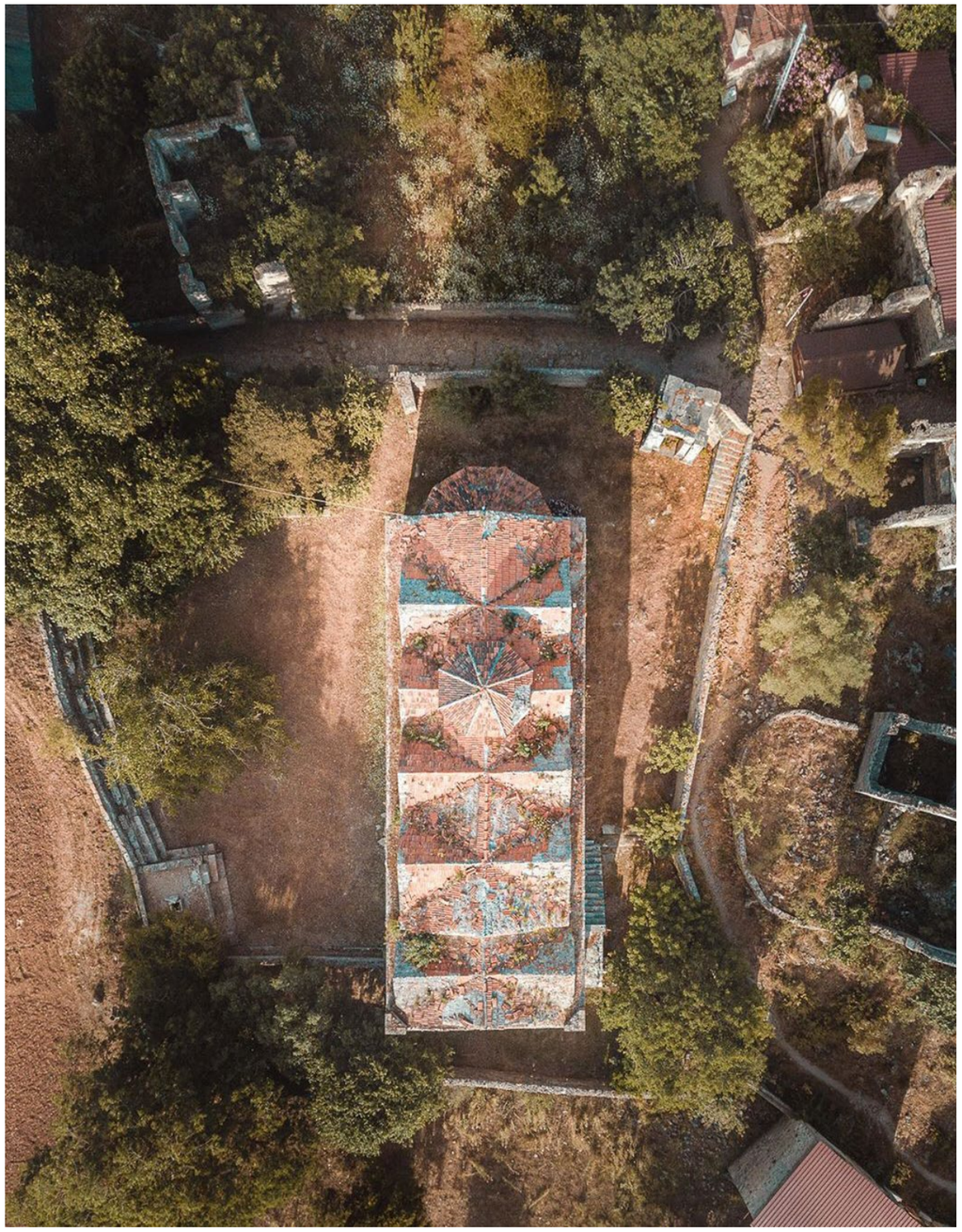


Figure 3.68: Aerial view of Panagiá i Pyrgiótissa Church (Terraviva, 2024)



Figure 3.69: St. Anna Chapel (Author, 2024)

Chapels

In Kayaköy, there are many small, stone-built and single-vaulted chapels. There are approximately 15 chapels scattered throughout the settlement. Each of them bears the name of a Saint. In some of the chapels, stones from the Byzantine period have been reused as spolia.In addition, although their traces are hardly perceptible today, Byzantine frescoes were encountered in some chapels during past field studies by Osaka University research team (Masuda, 2010, p. 224).



Figure 3.70: Early Byzantine Spolia in the St. Anna Chapel (Author, 2024)



Figure 3.71: Garden entrances and courtyard of St. Anna Chapel (Author, 2024))

St. Anna Chapel

The Chapel of St. Anna is significantly larger than the other chapels and is said to have been built even before the main churches (Εταιρεία Ιστορικών Ερευνών “Λυκία”, 2021, p. 125). It is located in the plain area, positioned between the two large churches. Unlike the other chapels, it also has a courtyard and two garden entrances. One of the most noticeable use of spolia can be seen in St. Anna. In the chapel walls and the surrounding courtyard walls, early Byzantine spolia can be observed (Masuda, 2010, p. 232). The chapel is structurally supported by an arch located at its center. The interior ground has mosaic patterns created with small pebbles. Additionally, before the school buildings were constructed, education was provided in this chapel (Λαμέρα, 1964, p. 36).

Figure 3.72: Interior of St. Anna Chapel (Author, 2024)





Figure 3.73: Interior floor pattern of St. Anna

Chapel of Passion Cycle

The saint to whom this chapel is dedicated, could not be identified from Greek sources; therefore, it has been named according to the designation given by the Osaka University research team (Masuda, 2010, p. 225). Frescoes dating to the Late Byzantine period have been discovered in this chapel (Masuda, 2010, pp. 224, 229–230). Numerous spolia with cross motifs can also be observed on its walls. In the middle of the chapel, there is an arch that provides structural support.



Figure 3.74: Chapel of Passion Cycle (Author, 2024)





Figure 3.75: Early Byzantine Spolia in the Chapel of Passion Cycle (Author, 2024)

Figure 3.76: Interior of Chapel of Passion Cycle (Author, 2024)







Figure 3.77: Ai Paraskevi Chapel on the hill (Terraviva, 2024)

Ai Paraskevi Chapel

This chapel is located on the southwestern hill of the settlement. From hill that it is located on, it is possible to view both Kayaköy and the Ölüdeniz sceneries. Additionally, when looking eastward from this point, another chapel can be seen. These two chapels are situated at the highest edges of the settlement.



Figure 3.78: Panoramic view from Ai Paraskevi Chapel hill (Author, 2024)

Figure 3.79: Left- Ai Paraskevi Chapel (Author, 2024) Right-Interior of Ai Paraskevi Chapel (Author, 2024)

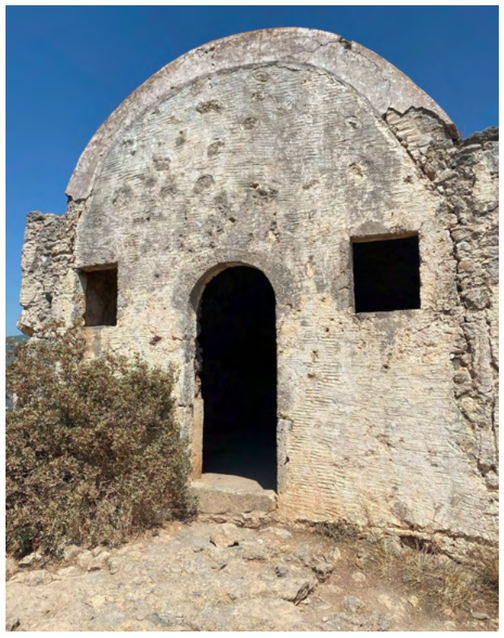




Figure 3.80: Interior of Ai Paraskevi Chapel (Author, 2024)







Figure 3.81: Boy’s School (Karadağ, 2022)



Figure 3.82: Aerial view of Boy’s School (Terraviva, 2024)

1.3.4. School buildings

There are two main school buildings in Levissi. According to historical sources, before these school buildings, education was provided in the St. Anna Chapel. Education remained at a basic level until 1845; a more organized system was established between 1845 and 1848, and the construction of school buildings began in the following years (Λαμέρα, 1964, p. 36). There is no existing measured drawing documentation regarding the school buildings.

Boy’s School, Pano Scholeio, Upper School

The first school building was constructed in 1864. It is believed that this initial school was the building currently known as the boys’ school, located on the hillside near the Taxiárchis Church (Λαμέρα, 1964, p. 36). In Greek sources, the boys’ school is also referred to as ΠΑΝΩ ΣΧΟΛΕΙΟ (Pano Scholeio), or upper school (Εταιρεία Ιστορικών Ερευνών ‘‘Λυκία’’, 2019, p. 179). Compared to the girls’ school, it is situated in a more accessible location and is one of the buildings frequently visited by people exploring the settlement; however, due to its position on the hill, it is still not very easy to reach.



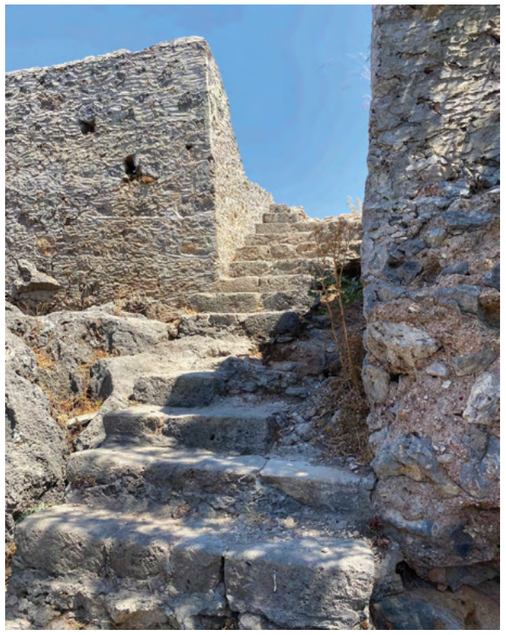


Figure 3.83: Left-The stepped path leading from the Taxiárchis Church to the Boys' School (Author, 2024)
Right- Remains of stairs of Boys' School (Author, 2024)

Figure 3.84: Remains of Boys' School (Author, 2024)







Figure 3.85: Girl's School (Karadağ, 2023)

Girl's School, Kato Scholeio, Lower School

Following the boys' school, the school that is now believed to have served as the girls' school was constructed in 1885. The construction date is understood from an inscription located on the facade of the chapel adjacent to the school building. The same inscription also indicates that the school was built by Ioannis and Nikolaos Louizidis, who are mentioned in historical sources as significant figures in Levissi's educational history and as educators themselves. In Greek sources, the girls' school is referred to as Κάτω Σχολείο (Kato Scholeio), or lower school (Εταιρεία Ιστορικών Ερευνών "Λυκία", 2019, p. 179). The aforementioned inscription also refers to it as the Louizideion School.The girls' school is located next to houses that are currently used as private residences. In terms of topography, it is located in a relatively difficult area to access and, unlike the boys' school, it is not in a position to be easily discovered among the ruins. For these reasons, it cannot be considered a structure that visitors can easily visit. However, the surroundings of the girls' school include important historical elements such as a chapel adjacent to the school, a historical fountain and a rock tomb nearby (Bektaş, 2008, pp. 22–23).





Figure 3.86: Left- Girls' School (Author, 2024)
Right- Remains of a window opening in the Girls' School (Author, 2024)



Figure 3.87: Left- Descriptive inscription on the chapel adjacent to the Girls' School (Author, 2024)
Right- Descriptive inscription (Masuda, 2010, p. 228)

ΛΟΥΙΖΙΔΕΙΟΝ ΣΧΟΛΕΙΟΝ
Η ΠΟΛΙΣ ΤΟ ΔΙΔΑΚΤΗΡΙΟΝ ΤΟΥΤΟ ΠΑΡΑ ΤΩΝ ΤΕΚΝΩΝ
ΑΥΤΗΣ ΙΩΑΝΝΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΝΙΚΟΛΑΟΥ ΤΩΝ ΛΟΥΙΖΙΔΩΝ ΔΕΞΑ-
ΜΕΝΗ ΔΩΡΟΝ ΠΟΛΥΤΙΜΟΝ ΟΜΟΛΟΓΕΙ ΤΗΝ ΧΑΡΙΝ
ΚΑΙ ΚΗΡΥΤΤΕΙ ΤΟΝ ΕΠΑΙΝΟΝ ΑΓΗΡΩ, Α.ΩΠΕ (=1885).
ΛΕΙΒΗΣΙΟΝ ΛΥΚΙΑΣ.



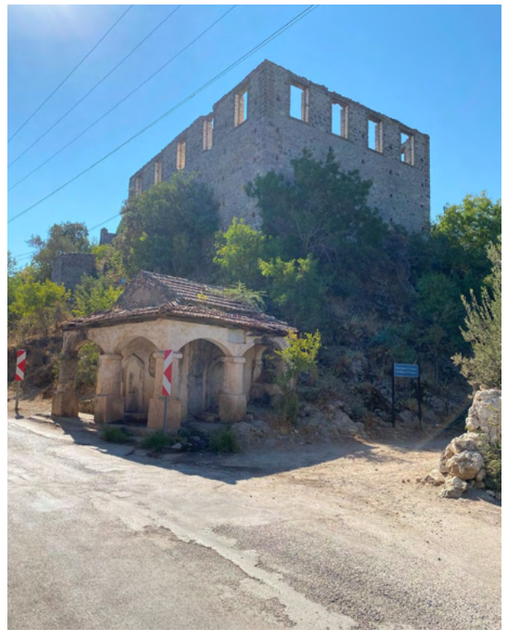


Figure 3.88: Left- Rock-cut tomb near to the Girls' School (Auhor, 2024)
Right- Historical fountain (Author, 2024)

1.3.5. Others

Apart from residential, educational and religious structures, there are two other typologies in the settlement: commercial buildings and fountain structures. The existence of commercial structures has been determined by on-site observations and supported by historical sources. Fountains, on the other hand, are important historical structures, at least one of which is still in use today. The fountains are located along the main roadside that is adjacent to the settlement.



Figure 3.89: A commercial street lined with many small shops, adjacent to the Taxiárchis church (Terraviva, 2024)

Commercial buildings

Commercial structures in the settlement are concentrated around Stumbos Square, an important public space for Levissi residents located in front of the Taxiárchis Church, These structures include shops such as a butcher, barber, grocery store, bakery, pharmacy, tailor, repair shop and cafes (Εταιρεία Ιστορικών Ερευνών ‘‘Λυκία’’, 2019, pp. 23–24).

According to on-site observations, the presence of these commercial structures is further supported by their smaller scale compared to houses, their alignment in rows and the presence of multiple shelf recesses observed in the remaining interior walls. In terms of materials and construction techniques, they were built in the same way as houses.





Figure 3.90: Left- Turabi Tourapeio Fountain (Author, 2024)

Right- The spout section of the Turabi Tourapeio Fountain (Author, 2024)

Fountains

There are two historical fountain structures in Levissi, both located along the main road. The first of these is the Turabi Tourapeio fountain, situated in front of the girls’ school. According to the inscription on the fountain, it was donated to the settlement in 1912 by a benefactor named Georgios P. Theodorou. The fountain is constructed out of stone and coated with plain plaster. It has a sloped roof covered with tiles, which is supported by wooden beams at the junction of the roof and walls. The structure features two spouts and the area containing the them is defined by a portico with arches.

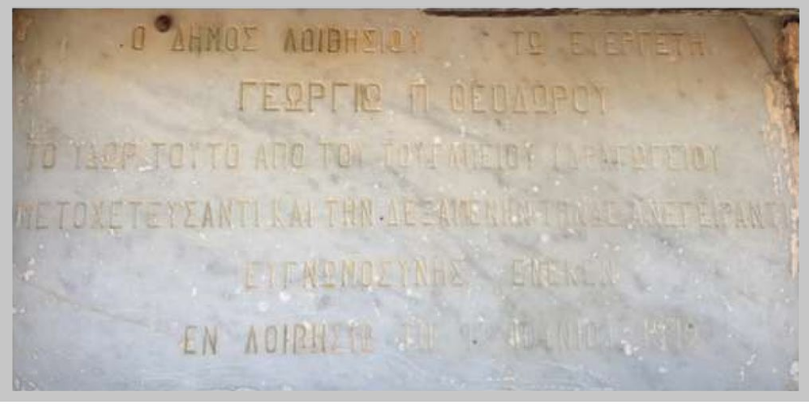


Figure 3.91: Descriptive inscription on Turabi Tourapeio Fountain (Εταιρεία Ιστορικών Ερευνών “Λυκία”, 2019, p. 172)

The name of the second fountain is unknown, but it is currently known as the Muhacirlik Fountain. It is located near the edge of the settlement, towards the Ölüdeniz region. Unlike the Turabi Fountain, its structure resembles chapel structures, a single-arched structure made of stone. However, there is an arrangement of arched openings filled with marble stones on the side facades. This facade arrangement may indicate that there were once spouts here; this is also supported by the remains of a basin found at the base of this facade. Since the taps are no longer present, it was not an actively used fountain like the Turabi Fountain. A rectangular plaster pattern similar to that used on the facade of the Taxiárchis Church was applied to its facade; however, this plaster is discolored.



Figure 3.92: Muhacirlik Fountain in 1952 (Εταιρεία Ιστορικών Ερευνών “Λυκία”, 2019, p. 173)

Figure 3.93: Muhacirlik Fountain in 2021 (Köroğlu, 2021)



CHAPTER 2
GENERAL EVALUATION OF KAYAKÖY AND SELECTION OF THE INTERVENTION AREA

2.1. Kayaköy as a Cultural Landscape

In the first chapter, territorial, historical and architectural overview of Kayaköy reveals that settlement of Kayaköy is not merely a physical settlement but a comprehensive system in which cultural, social, and economic processes are reflected in space. Therefore, Kayaköy can be evaluated as a multi-layered rural cultural landscape shaped by long-term interactions between humans and the natural environment as the integrated analysis of Kayaköy validates. Thus, understanding and evaluating Kayaköy requires a theoretical framework that recognizes rural landscapes as form of cultural heritage. In this context, the following section will address the fundamental concepts and approaches related to the evaluation of rural landscapes as cultural heritage.

2.1.1. Rural Landscapes as Cultural Heritage

Cultural landscapes are spatial systems having both tangible (physical) and intangible (cultural, social, and symbolic) values, shaped through long-term interactions between human communities and the natural environment (UNESCO World Heritage Centre, 2003). In this sense, rural landscapes can also be referred to as cultural landscapes since they embody the tangible and intangible outcomes of long-term human–nature interactions, reflecting cultural practices, spatial organization, local knowledge, and biocultural diversity across time (ICOMOS–IFLA, 2017). Therefore, in broader context, rural landscapes are included in the category of cultural heritage.

Rural areas are defined as living systems shaped by activities such as agriculture, livestock farming, fishing, forestry, and the use of natural resources according to the Principles for the Assessment of Rural Landscapes as Heritage created by ICOMOS-IFLA. These systems includes production areas, water networks, settlements, rural structures, infrastructure, and the natural environment in an integrated manner (ICOMOS-IFLA, 2017). In this framework, rural landscapes are understood as the joint product of human and natural processes, which makes that rural landscape heritage is a holistic concept that addresses both the physical components and socio-cultural dimensions of rural areas. This perspective shows that rural areas are not solely physical environments but systems reflecting layers of life and cultural meaning since it includes not only physical entities of rural architecture such as production areas, topography, water systems, vegetation, infrastructure, settlements, but also cultural elements like local knowledge, traditions, production practices, and community identity (ICOMOS–IFLA, 2017). This approach is compatible with the UNESCO's Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) framework, which considers heritage sites not only as monuments but as an accumulation of natural, cultural, social, and economic layers formed over time, and supports the holistic integrated conservation of them (UNESCO, 2011). In this context, physical components such as topography, land use, and open spaces should be considered together with the socio-cultural elements such as identity, sense of place, and collective memory.

Cultural landscapes are dynamic entities constantly evolving due to social, economic, and environmental changes. Therefore, heritage value depends not only on physical remains but also on human-space interactions such as the continuity of land-use practices and collective memory (UNESCO World Heritage Centre, 2003). Consequently, cultural landscapes create a strong sense of identity and belonging for communities and strengthen the relationship between people and place (UNESCO World Heritage Centre, 2003). Unfortunately, when traditional land-use and production systems weaken, landscapes face the risk of deterioration, abandonment, or loss of meaning. Therefore, the preservation of rural landscapes should not be limited to the preservation of physical structures but should adopt integrated approaches that address natural, cultural, social, and economic dimensions together (ICOMOS–IFLA, 2017).

Similarly, the Washington Charter emphasizes that the preservation of historic settlements should extend beyond monuments, and include settlement patterns, spatial organization, and environmental context. In this way, historical settlements should be understood as integrated spatial systems (ICOMOS, 1987).

In conclusion, rural landscapes are not merely natural environments or production areas, but dynamic and multi-layered heritage systems shaped over time by human-nature interactions. Therefore, their preservation requires a holistic approach that goes beyond the physical environment and consider the local knowledge, cultural identity, social continuity, and sustainable living practices.

2.1.2. Heritage Values of Rural Settlement

Rural settlements are the spatially concentrated components of this rural landscapes. However, they should not be seen as mere accumulation of buildings but as systems which are closely related with production areas, the natural environment and a particular way of living (UNESCO, 2011; ICOMOS–IFLA, 2017). Rural settlements fabric is actually more than housing; it includes barns, storage structures, courtyards, gardens, mills village rooms, bridges and other shared or production-related facilities. The configuration of these components are influenced by climate, topography, water resources and cultural objects. In short they express the spatial organization resulting from daily life in combination with production and environmental constraints (UNESCO, 2011; ICOMOS–IFLA, 2017; ICOMOS, 1987).

UNESCO's definition of historical sites identifies villages and small settlements as cultural heritage as a result of the historical stratification of natural and cultural values, emphasizing the need for a holistic approach that considers physical, social, cultural, and economic dimensions together; this means that rural settlements should also be examined in relation to the broader landscape (UNESCO, 2011). From this perspective, if we consider rural settlements as heritage, we need to look at architecture, production, spatial organization, the spatial syntax of the local environment, enduring traditions, and social life.Rural areas are not only the primary spaces of food and natural resource production, but also the environments that directly influence the life styles as well as cultural identities of local communities. Agricultural diversity and biocultural richness constitute one of the main pillars for facing up to climate change challenges at global level; meanwhile, these territories produce economic, social and cultural wealth fostering local development. Consequently, conservation of rural landscapes should be addressed as the preservation not only of heritage but also as a prospective guarantee for tomorrow sustainability (ICOMOS–IFLA, 2017).

At the same time, rural landscapes face a range of pressures including rural-to-urban migration, the decline of traditional production systems, globalization, economic transformation and environmental change and these present issues that physical preservation alone cannot address but rather need to engage broader social and economic perspectives. Support to local communities, economic viability and cultural continuity should be central to that (ICOMOS–IFLA, 2017).

The HUL approach also recognises that the fast pace of development, pressure from tourism, drastic economic changes, changing demographics and environmental threats pose real challenges to maintaining the character and integrity of heritage areas. The HUL approach calls for an equilibrium between conservation and development; it supports a more inclusive governance structure (i.e., engaging multi-stakeholder participation); and it stresses the need for information- or knowledge-based planning processes (UNESCO, 2011).

By the definition of rural landscapes under ICOMOS-IFLA Principles (2017), these include not only well-preserved places but also degraded or abandoned sites with significant heritage values that could be redeveloped or reused. This new definition allows for sites such as Kayaköy, with cultural significance left in its abandonment, to be studied under a conceptual lens of complex cultural landscape systems. Thus, rural settlements that are depopulated or abandoned do not lose their heritage value but it is a synthesis of natural processes, built structures, and cultural layers. Their conservation requires documentation, tourism policy, governance, and participation of the local population (ICOMOS–IFLA, 2017; UNESCO, 2011).

In this context, the settlement of Kayaköy was similarly approached from this point of view, in light of the multi-layered character and heritage value of rural landscapes. Shaped by human–nature relationships and transformed through time, Kayaköy is not just a collection of physical remains, but also a landscape with cultural, social, and spatial layers. In order to understand the site and its potential for intervention, it is necessary to assess its current state. In the following section, Kayaköy's values, potentials, and challenges is analyzed.

2.1.3. Abandonment, Memory and Dissonant Heritage

Cultural heritage is not always a shared and harmonious past that everyone agrees upon and interprets in the same way. Cultural heritage sites may possess a layered mode of interpretation and contested memories and meanings, determined by various social, cultural, and political forces (Battilani et al., 2024). Such sites are often analyzed using the concept of dissonant heritage proposed by Tunbridge and Ashworth (1996). Dissonant heritage describes cultural heritage sites that lead to tensions and conflicting perspectives on the past among different communities (Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996). As the authors state, dissonant is not an exceptional case of cultural heritage, but an inherent characteristic of cultural heritage due to different communities interpreting the same place differently (Tunbridge and Ashworth, 1996).

The phrase “Dissonant Heritage” refers to the idea that cultural heritage is not merely a tangible remnant of the past, but also a phenomenon shaped through interpretation, representation, and collective memory. Laurajane Smith (2006), through the Authorized Heritage Discourse, argues that institutions and experts often decide which pasts will be preserved, how they will be represented, and whose interests will be served. Cultural heritage represents a space where identity, memory, politics, and power relations converge (Smith, 2006).

Dissonant Heritage conveys the idea that different communities assign conflicting meanings to the same heritage site (Tunbridge and Ashworth, 1996; Battilani et al., 2024). It is particularly important in interpreting heritage sites related to war, political ideologies, difficult pasts, and contested memories (Battilani et al., 2024). Viewed in this way, an abandoned settlement is not understood solely in terms of damage or destruction. It also embodies the ideas of absence, silence, change, and memory. Abandonment is not merely a process of decay; it can also contribute to the heritage value of a site. Empty streets, ruined buildings, traces of daily life, and nature’s reclaiming of the structure all contribute to the spatial memory and identity of abandoned settlements as elements found in their material content.

In this sense, although Kayaköy was not directly a battlefield, it also carries traumatic historical layers due to the Population Exchange, forced displacement, loss of belonging, and abandonment that occurred after the war. This trauma is felt not only through historical events but also physically through empty buildings, traces of interrupted daily life, and abandoned spatial fabric.

Kayaköy’s dissonant heritage character stems not only from its traumatic past but also from the differing interpretations of the settlement by various communities, visitors, and institutions today. Kayaköy is a heritage site, an abandoned village, an open-air museum, a tourist center, a traditional settlement, and a cultural landscape carrying collective memory. While some see it as a romanticized ruin and tourist experience, others view it as a trace of displacement, loss, and disrupted daily life. At the same time, the settlement is also recognized for its cultural landscape qualities, architectural continuity, and modern tourism functions. These multiple and sometimes contradictory meanings attributed to the settlement make Kayaköy a layered and partly conflicted landscape of memory (Tunbridge and Ashworth, 1996; Smith, 2006; Battilani et al., 2024).

Therefore, the dissonance in Kayaköy is shaped not only by the historical processes experienced in the past but also by how this past is represented, interpreted, and experienced in the present. Different communities, visitors, institutions, and conservation approaches assign different meanings and values to the settlement (Tunbridge and Ashworth, 1996; Smith, 2006). In this context, concepts such as “dissonant heritage,” “contested memory,” “memory landscape,” and “layered cultural landscape” offer a more balanced and inclusive theoretical framework for understanding Kayaköy’s complex heritage character.

Therefore, conservation approaches developed in Kayaköy should not only focus on the physical preservation of architectural remains but also consider the interpretation of memory, spatial experience, and the transmission of the site’s multi-layered cultural values. Through minimal and reversible interventions, the ruined character of the settlement can be preserved while simultaneously allowing visitors to experience the site’s historical, cultural, and spatial complexity more powerfully.

2.2. Analysis of Values, Problems and Potentials in Kayaköy

The analysis was conducted at territorial, settlement, and building scales in order to gain a holistic understanding of the area. These analyses are synthesis and outcomes of the territorial,architectural and historical overview of Kayaköy explained in Chapter 1.

The study area's spatial hierarchy is expressed through a nesting of Levissi into progressively larger geographical and environmental contexts. Levissi is the historic settlement core of Kayaköy at the most detailed level. Kayaköy itself is in Kayaçukuru Plain in between the settlement and the wider topographic settlement there is a transitional landscape. This plain is located in the Fethiye Peninsula, which is a larger unit with coastal morphology and historical landscape continuity. The Gulf of Fethiye defines the coastal and ecological character of the peninsula. The broadest context of the area is the Fethiye-Göcek Special Environmental Protection Area which may not be altered extensively but may only be intervened with controlled and sustainable means.

This hierarchical structure enables the understanding of Levissi not as an isolated entity, but as an integral component of a multi-layered cultural and environmental system.

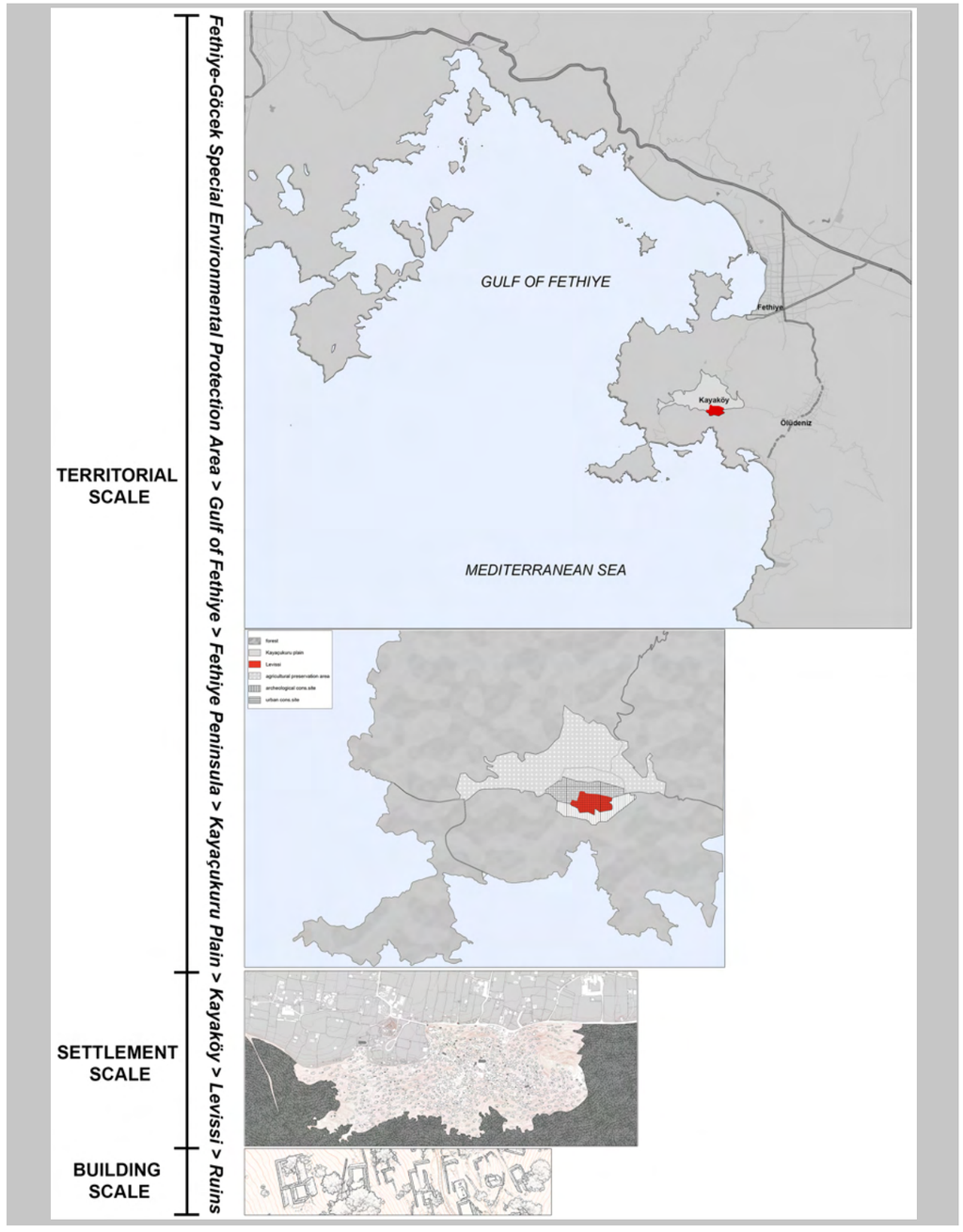


Figure 4.1: Multi-Scale Analysis Framework of Kayaköy, Levissi (Author, 2026)



Figure 4.2: Territorial Scale Analysis Framework (Author, 2026)

(base map source: MapCarta and Fethiye Municipality, land border information: Fethiye Municipality)

2.2.1. Territorial Scale

Values

• The Fethiye Peninsula is part of a broader historical context associated with the ancient regions of Caria and Lycia.The region produces high archaeological value with numerous ancient remains which gives the area a strong historical and cultural continuity and archeological network.

• Kayaköy's location between a major coastal corridor between Muğla and Antalya, which is one of the most prominent touristical zones in Türkiye, enhancing its accessibility, integrating it into regional tourism networks, and increasing both its historical connectivity and contemporary touristic significance.

• The Fethiye Peninsula is included in the Fethiye-Göcek Special Environmental Protection Area, which makes Kayaköy an ecologically sensitive and valuable landscape.

• The Kaya Köyü–Ölüdeniz trail and other historical routes are important parts of the region's historical transportation system.

• The area's connection to the Lycian Way makes it an important cultural route on an international scale.

• The coastline, bays, islets, forest cover, and rich flora represent the area's strong natural landscape value.

• The agricultural areas in the Kayacukuru plain, local products such as figs and chickpeas, activities such as carpet, ceramics, and craft production in Kayaköy create local production and cultural value.

Potentials

• A cultural landscape interpretation system can be developed to integrate Kayaköy and surrounding heritage sites, in order to showcase the region's archaeological, historical, and spatial layers. Narrative and experiential pathway systems can be designed to connect the main focus areas and landmarks.

• Visitor management strategies can be developed to control tourist flow, reduce pressure on sensitive areas, and promote appropriate tourism practices throughout the region.

• Low-impact and reversible design interventions can be developed within the Special Environmental Protection Area to ensure ecological sustainability.

• The region can function as a pilot area for sustainable rural landscape transformation and landscape-based design approaches by testing adaptive reuse and conservation strategies.

• Agricultural and local production-based landscape renewal strategies can be implemented to revitalize traditional agricultural and craft practices and integrate them into contemporary use. In this way, local production systems can be revitalized and integrated into tourism to support the local economy and cultural continuity.

• Collaborative management and community-based initiatives can be encouraged to involve local stakeholders in conservation and management processes.

Problems

• Rapidly increasing and unsuitable tourism activities in the region are putting pressure on the natural and cultural environment.

• Illegal construction and speculative developments threaten the authenticity and the cultural continuity of the area.

• The decrease in agricultural activities and the loss of local production in the Kayaçukuru basin negatively impacts the local community and life.

• Inadequate surface drainage and past floods in Kayaköy Polje may be a significant environmental risk to the area.

• The region's location in a first-degree earthquake zone is a risk factor in general but especially for the cultural heritage structures which are in poor structural condition.

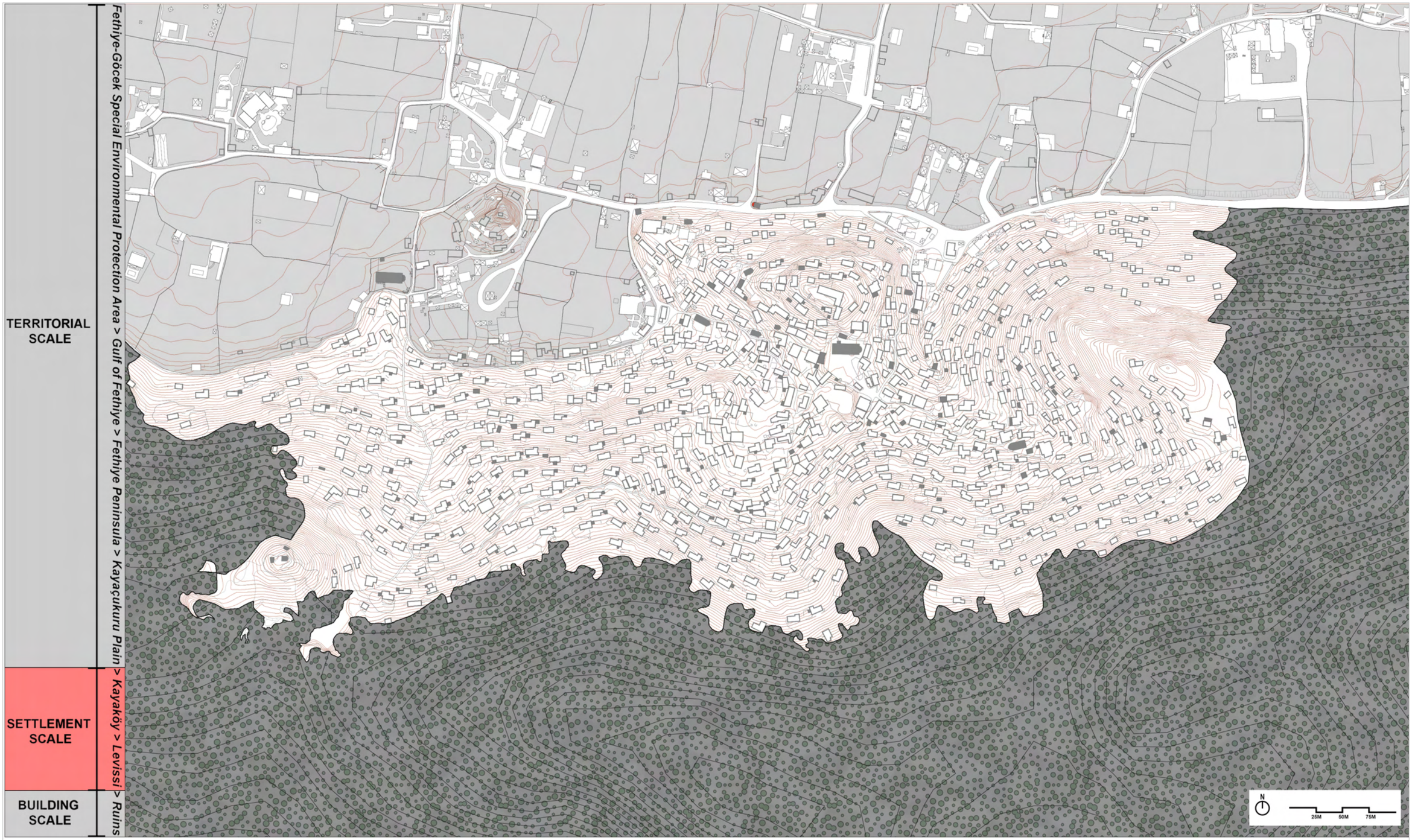


Figure 4.3: Settlement Scale Analysis Framework (Author, 2026)

(base map source: Terrraviva Competition)

2.2.2. Settlement Scale

Values

• Kayaköyü is one of the most prominent settlements that represents Anatolian Greek culture.

• It is a significant example reflecting typical Aegean-Mediterranean vernacular architecture.

• It carries a strong sense of identity, belonging and collective memory due to being a spatial witness to the population exchange.

• The prolonged abandonment of the settlement and its survival in this state to the present day distinguish it as a large-scale, authentic, and rare example among other similar settlements.

• Its “ghost village” character generates a strong visual,spatial and experiential value.

• Its location in a region with high tourism potential creates economic value.

• It is a strong attraction point in terms of cultural tourism.

• The settlement has documentary value with its architectural and historical features.

• Open spaces and structures have functional potential that can be used for cultural events.

• Being a hillside settlement and the relationship with the topography create a strong spatial character.

• With approximately 900 houses, churches, and chapels, the settlement exhibits strong morphological integrity.

• In addition to the buildings, stone-paved streets, staircases, and paths are important spatial elements of the settlement.

• Churches, chapels, and squares form strong focal points.

• The settlement’s historical relationship with Fethiye (Makri) strengthens its regional context.

• The ruin state of the buildings contributes to the preservation of the area’s character through its lack of intervention.

Although the lack of intervention has led to the gradual physical deterioration of the structures, at the same time, it has also contributed to the preservation of the settlement’s original authentic character to a great extent and creates a ruin value.

Potentials

• Heritage-based cultural tourism can be developed.

• The area, due to its size and values, is suitable for preservation as a cultural landscape; this allows for the development of different conservation approaches in different focal points.

• The route and circulation system within the settlement can be improved, and new path proposals can be developed.

• Open spaces and churh courtyards can be used for cultural events.

• The settlement can be more effectively designed as an open-air museum in terms of interpretation and communication of heritage to the visitors.

• The holistic perception of the settlement can be improved in a way that enhances the visitor experience.

• Art production, workshop, and studios can be developed and integrated into the area.

Problems

• The existing car road adjacent to the site and increasing traffic put pressure on the historical fabric and threaten the physical integrity of the settlement.

• Uncontrolled tourism development and inappropriate tourism activities are damaging the authenticity, and disregarding the settlement’s heritage value.

• Inappropriate restorations and new additions damage the authenticity of the site.

• Lack of signage and information weakens the visitor experience.

• The lack of a clear circulation system within the settlement and the poor condition of existing roads are significant problems. In addition to these, deep topography creates problem of accessibility.

• The scarcity of authentic social and public spaces weakens the settlement’s distinctive character.

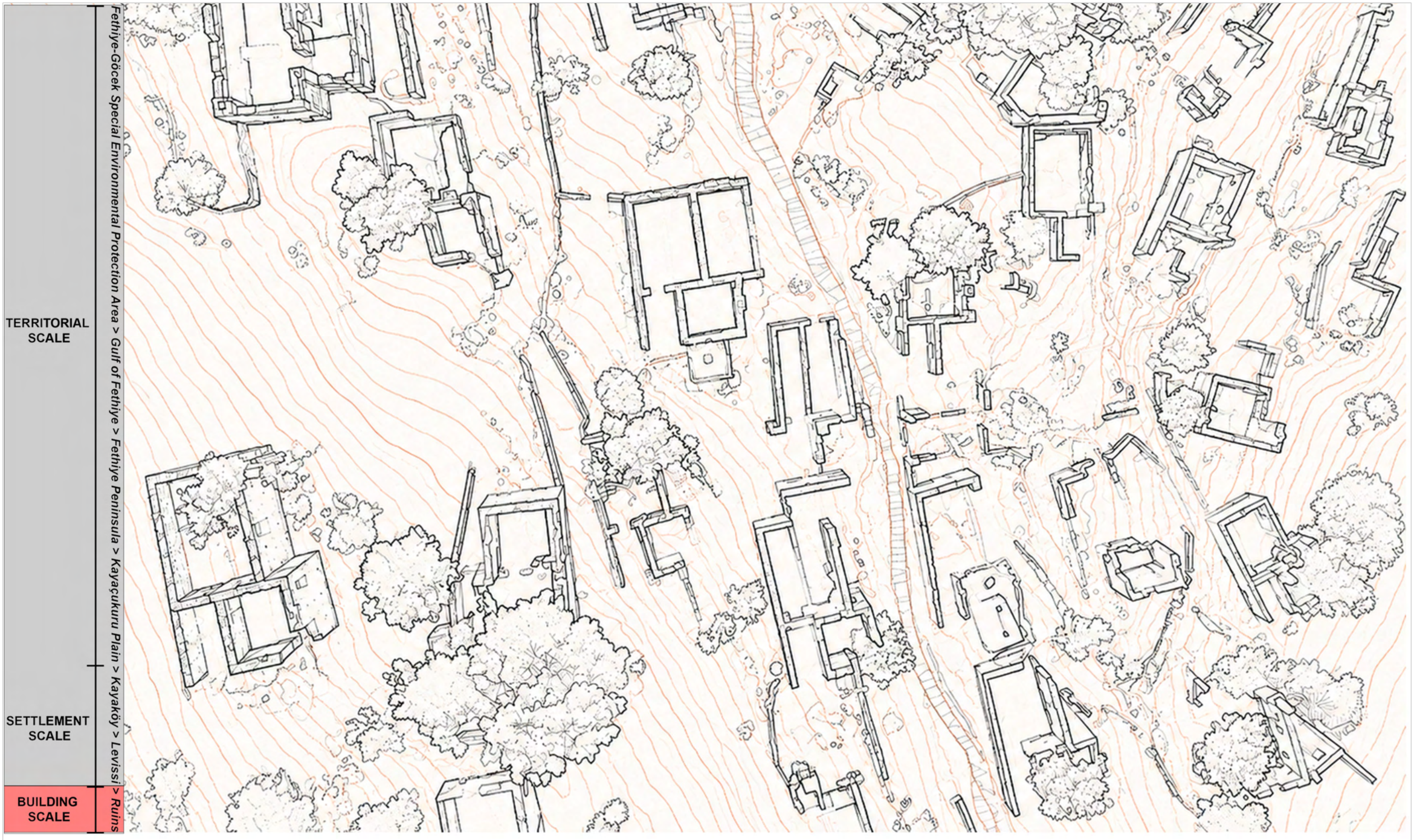


Figure 4.4: Building Scale Analysis Framework (Author, 2026)

(base image source: Terrraviva Competition)

2.2.3. Building Scale

Values

• The structures, especially the houses, are examples of sustainable vernacular architecture, reflecting typical Aegean-Mediterranean architecture and lifestyle of the Anatolian Greek communities. They also have rural architectural value and represent rural architectural heritage.

• The houses are constructed using stone and wood systems, reflecting the usage of local materials.

• The construction techniques and architectural elements are significant value for research and documentation of Anatolian Greek architectural heritage.

• The buildings are designed to adapt to the climatic conditions.

• The churches are one of the key landmarks of the settlement. The Upper Church, located in a topographically dominant position, acts as a major node within the circulation system, while the Lower Church connects the settlement to the plain.

• The churches represent the Greek Orthodox religion and social life of Levissi in the 19th-early 20th century. In the past, churches with their courtyards and squares were served for communal events and social activities such as religious celebrations, gatherings. Therefore, they hold strong collective memory and represent the social life of that times.

• The presence of Roman inscriptions and Byzantine spolia within the churches demonstrates the long-term cultural continuity by revealing the connection with the earlieat historical periods.

• The Upper Church (Taxiarchis), Lower Church (Panagia Pyrgiotissa), St. Anna Chapel divide Levissi into Upper, Middle, and Lower parishes, which shows that churches were not only places of worship but also key elements organizing the spatial and social structure of the settlement.

• The churches exhibit significant architectural qualities with their construction techniques, spatial configurations, and stylistic features; such as stone masonry, vaulted structures, and decorative elements influenced by Byzantine traditions.

• In the churches, the presence of pebblestone pavements with spiral and floral compositions represents a high level of artistic craftsmanship and aesthetic value of the structures.

Potentials

• Although the fact that most of the houses in Kayaköy remain in ruins contributes to the ongoing physical deterioration, it has also ensured that the original character and atmosphere of abandonment of the settlement can be felt to this day. In this context, preserving the ruined value of the area can strengthen its character as an open-air museum. However, to represent a typical Levissi house, one or more selected houses could be restored and opened to visitors as a house museum.

• Structures in relatively good condition are suitable for reuse. For this aim, different conservation approaches such as restoration, preservation as is, or consolidation can be considered.

• Churches are the structures in the best condition within the area,

• Structures can be utilized for cultural, touristic, or public functions.Especially churches due to their better condition than the houses, which give them serve as key points for interpreting the historical, religious, and cultural layers of Kayaköy through informative and guided routes for visitors.

• Structures with high accessibility may be priority intervention areas.

• Upper Church and its surroundings, especially in relation to Stumbo Square, offer strong potential as a primary intervention node within a network-based design strategy.

Problems

• Significant physical deterioration has occurred due to neglect and lack of maintenance.

• The loss of wooden load-bearing elements of houses weakens the structural stability.

• Vegetation damages the walls and accelerates deterioration.

• Rain and surface water cause material loss and disintegration.

• Widespread deterioration is observed in plaster and surface coatings.

• Past human-induced interventions such as animal grazing and treasure hunting have damaged the structures, especially the houses.

• The loss of architectural elements complicates restitution efforts.

• Inappropriate restorations and new additions weaken the originality of the structures.

• There is a lack of sufficient information and interpretation systems explaining the historical, religious, and spatial significance of the settlements.

• Being roofless or partially damaged, the structures are directly exposed to climatic conditions such as rain, sun, vegetation growth, and humidity, accelerating the deterioration process.

• The churches, especially the Upper Church, have severe deterioration due lack of maintenance. Significant loss and degradation of original materials, particularly mosaic pavements and surface finishes, reduce the physical integrity and visual legibility of the structures. Furthermore, it is causing the fine craftsmanship and details within the churches to gradually disappear.

• As part of an open-air museum, especially the churches are exposed to uncontrolled visitor movement, which increases physical wear, especially on fragile surfaces such as floors and mosaics.

2.3. SWOT Analysis

(Settlement Scale: Kayaköy / Levissi)

Kayaköy (Levissi) has been evaluated within the scope of SWOT analysis, considering its values, existing problems, and development potential.

Strengths

• An authentic and old Anatolian Greek settlement

• Rare example of a large-scale abandoned settlement

• Strong historical, symbolic and documentary value due to its witness to the population exchange

• A high degree of atmospheric quality due to long-term abandonment

• A strong spatial and experiential identity shaped by its “ghost village” character

• A coherent and holistic settlement fabric consisting of the ruins of approximately 900 traditional houses, 14 small chapels, 2 large churches, 2 schools, and 2 fountains

• A hillside settlement that adapts to the topography and displays a strong spatial organization and impressive viewpoints

• An original circulation system defined by old stone-paved streets and pathways

• Strong focal points formed by churches, courtyards, chapels, and squares

• A sustainable vernacular architecture character reflecting local materials and traditional construction techniques

• A high level of spatial readability and overall perceptibility despite the current ruin state

Weaknesses

• Advanced and ongoing physical deterioration resulting from prolonged abandonment and neglect.

• Structural weakness resulting from the loss of timber load-bearing elements and damage to the stone wall structures

• Material degradation accelerated by vegetation growth and water exposure

• Widespread loss of plaster and surface finishes

• Unclear circulation system and poorly maintained pathways

• Insufficient wayfinding and informational infrastructure for visitors

• Limited availability of social and communal spaces

• Restricted accessibility due to challenging steep topography

• Loss and deterioration of architectural elements that complicate intervention processes

Opportunities

• Potential for the holistic conservation of the settlement as a cultural landscape

• Opportunity to develop hybrid and site-specific conservation approaches at different focal points

• Potential for cultural tourism and heritage-based uses

• Opportunity to develop circulation routes and visitor guidance systems

• Potential for the adaptive reuse of open spaces, courtyards, and squares

• Capacity to be used more effectively as an open-air museum

• Opportunity to create spaces for both local and broader art & craft activities, workshops, and cultural production

• Potential for the reuse of relatively well-preserved structures

• Strategies for public use in more accessible areas

• Potential for spatial reorganization that enhances the overall visitor experience

Threats

• The architectural and cultural heritage is increasingly damaged and in danger of disappearing due to insufficient conservation and maintenance work

• The historical development of the settlement is not adequately explained to visitors, and its historical significance is not sufficiently known

• Uncontrolled and inappropriate tourism development threatening the authentic character of the settlement

• Unsuitable restoration practices and new additions disrupting spatial integrity

• Increased traffic pressure due to the road adjacent to the settlement

• Loss of cultural continuity due to the decline of agriculture and local production

• Human-induced damage (past interventions and usage pressure)

• Seismic risk and structural vulnerability of the buildings

Strategic Implications

When the multi-layered values of Levissi are considered together with the physical, environmental, and managerial challenges it faces, and the potentials it has, it becomes evident that a singular and homogeneous intervention approach would be insufficient. The settlement presents a complex structure composed of multiple focal points, each with distinct conditions, potentials, and spatial characteristics at different scales. Therefore, a hybrid and holistic conservation approach is required that is sensitive to the specific qualities of each focal point while operating within an integrated framework. Such an approach enables both the preservation of the overall character of the settlement and the development of site-specific strategies. Accordingly, the main focal points of the area are analyzed in detail in the following sections.

2.3.1. Identification of Key Nodes within the Settlement

The settlement area functions as an integrated spatial system shaped by the interaction of topography, building, and circulation components.

• The settlement area is located on a steep slope, and the building has developed in a terraced layout, creating a stepped spatial organization that adapts to the natural topography.
• The circulation system is defined by narrow, stepped and stone streets connecting different elevation levels
• Churches, squares, and open spaces function as primary spatial nodes (focal points).
• The settlement area establishes a strong visual relationship with the surrounding landscape with its viewpoints

2.3.1.1. Main Landmarks of the Settlement

Although dominant layer shaping the identity of the settlement is its housing fabric, there is not a distinct landmark among them standing out as a single structure. Everywhere within the site, the houses exhibit generally similar levels of ruins, although the level of deterioration might differs house to house at some areas. Therefore, the housing fabric can be described and experienced as a continuous field. The varying states of decay and preservation of houses is experienced in the spatial observation as visitors move through the site.

However, the two main churches are the most outstanding landmarks that can be identified in Levissi. Their floors and roof structures are still extant, giving them a relatively better condition than the houses. They are, therefore, some of the few structures that still have a high degree of architectural legibility despite advanced levels of deterioration. The two main churches are the Lower Church, is at an accessible location at the museum entrance area, and the Upper Church, is at the main central area of the settlement, supporting their prominence as landmarks.

Among the chapels, St. Anna Chapel and the Chapel of the Passion Cycle are among the most visited chapels as they are located within easy

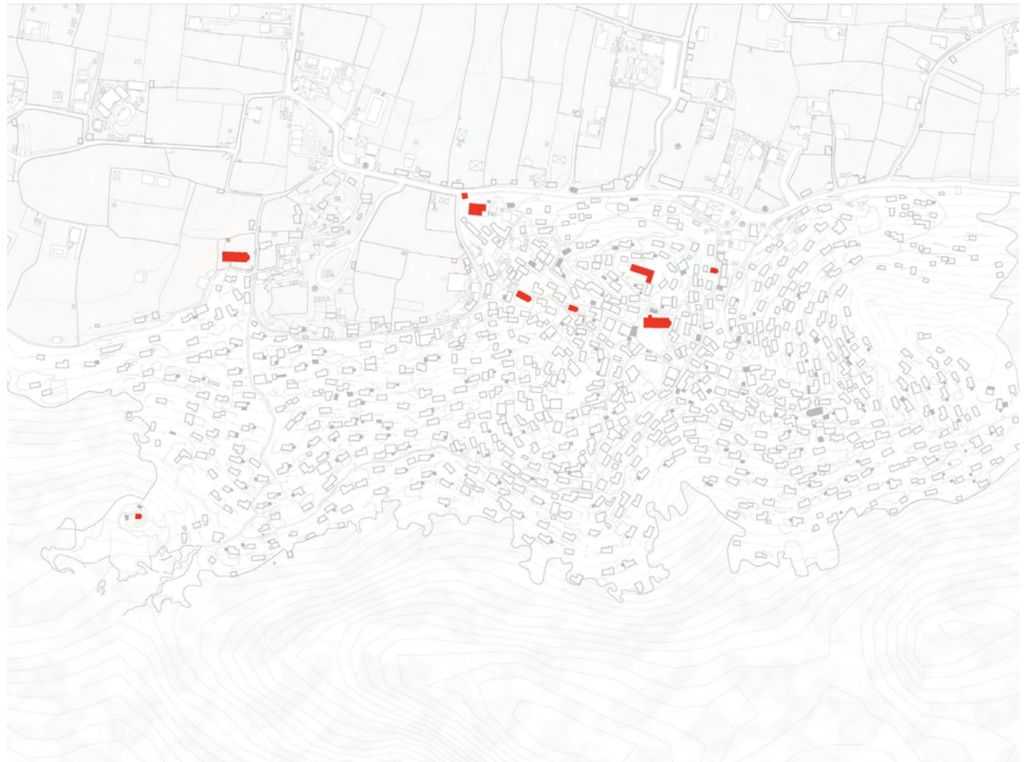


Figure 4.5: Main Landmarks (Author, 2026)

reach. St. Anna Chapel is the largest chapel, whereas the Chapel of the Passion Cycle has a relatively well-condition facade. In addition to them, Ai Paraskevi Chapel, located one of the highest point of the area on the southwestern slope, is a high scenery point overlooking both Kayaköy and Ölüdeniz, making it a significant landmark, although it is not easily accessible due to topography. Lastly, the unnamed chapel near the eastern entrance is also one of the most visited due to accessible location.

School buildings form another significant category of landmarks in the settlement, apart from the religious buildings. In particular, the Boys' School, located at one of the highest points of the site, is a significant view point. Although it is difficult to get there, the place is often seen by the visitors. On the contrary, the Girls' School is accessible only to a little extent, and it is mainly perceived from the main car road of Kayaköy due to its location.

The Turabi Fountain itself is also a landmark element and is distinguished by its location along the main car road of Kayaköy. It is easily accessible and is still being used in everyday life, thus continuing to have a functional and symbolic importance within the modern days.



Figure 4.6: Main Circulation Axes and Entrances/Exits (Author, 2026)

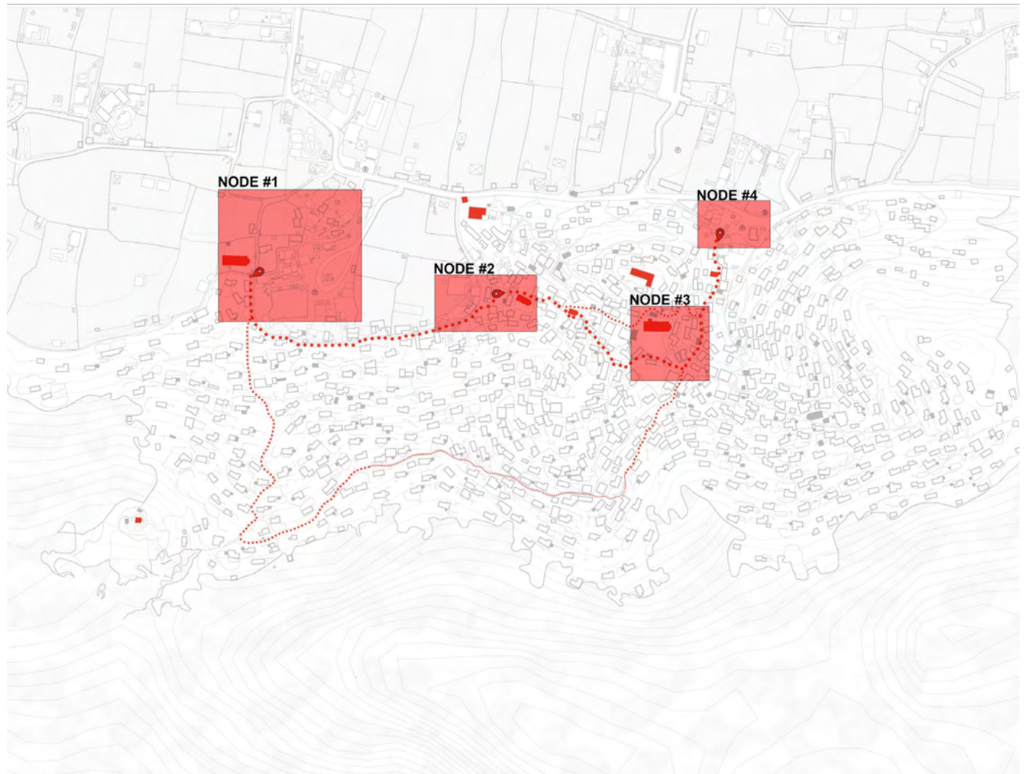


Figure 4.7: Main Nodes (Author, 2026)

2.3.1.2. Main Circulation Axes and Entrances/Exits

The accessibility analysis carried out in the previous section considered all currently walking routes within the site. However, the site visit showed that there was a hierarchy of walking routes internally. This also does not take into account the condition of the paths but only depends on how easy it is for visitor to get around.

The most frequently used routes are marked on the diagram, though a route which connects the two main churches is most frequently preferred by visitors. The choice of the most preferred route passes through two main churches for visitors is attributable to its relationship with the main entrances and the presentation of landmark structures along the routes and a more navigable and accessible route than other alternatives.

2.3.1.3. Main Public and Cultural Nodes

Main nodes of the settlement are found to be located along the most intensively used circulation axes, as expected. Thus, the amount of movement and the development of focal areas for stopping, gathering, and interaction are mutually supportive. This dynamic increases the accessibility, visibility, and spatial significance of these focal points.

The first focal area is also among the main nodes that developed around the Lower Church and its surrounding areas. It also serves as one of the entry way to the Kayaköy Open-Air Museum.

Alongside the Lower Church, social and public facilities such as restaurants, cafes, souvenir shops, horseback riding, and boutique hotels are located in the surroundings.

The second area is important due to its location around the largest chapel in Levissi, St. Anna Chapel and its role as one of the entrances to the museum, although, today, it is not in active use. Besides, its connection to a street on a lower level, which accommodates the houses that were restored for public and social functions, including workshops and boutique hotels, suggests further

potentials for this area.

The third node, located around the Upper Church, is one of the most critical nodes in Levissi because of its central location and servicing as a junction of main circulation routes in the settlement. The third node, which also incorporates the former Stumbo Square, has considerable historical and collective memory significance, in addition to the Upper Church and its courtyard. It is one of the places where visitors most frequently pause during their visit, and regardless of the chosen route, it is almost inevitably encountered due to being junction point.

The fourth area is one of the main entrance gates to the open-air museum. There are small tea gardens and cafes, and stands with local products. Its access by vehicle is connected directly to the main car road, and this makes the fourth area one of the main entrance points, especially for visitors arriving at the open-air museum by tour, and access plays a major role in its potential.

2.3.2. Selection of the Upper Church as the Intervention Area

Among the focal points identified within the Kayaköy settlement, the Upper Church and its surroundings emerge as the most critical intervention area due to the intersection of spatial, cultural, and functional characteristics. While the Lower Church and entrance-related focal areas are primarily defined by accessibility and existing public uses, the Upper Church area presents a more complex and multi-layered spatial structure. Its central location within the historic settlement, its position at the intersection of major circulation axes, and its topographically dominant setting, together with its association with the former Stumbo Square, endow the area with strong historical and collective memory value.

Moreover, the fact that it is an inevitable point of passage regardless of the route taken by visitors further enhances both its accessibility and its significance within the overall spatial continuity of the settlement. In this context, the Upper Church and its surroundings are evaluated not merely as a focal point, but as a representative node where movement, memory, and spatial organization converge, and are therefore selected as the primary intervention area.



Figure 4.8: Taxiárchis Church, Upper Church of Kayaköy, Levissi (Köroğlu, 2021)

2.3.2.1. General Evaluation of Upper Church

A detailed architectural analysis of the upper church was conducted in Chapter 1; this section is a synthesis of those detailed analyses and a transitional assessment prior to the analysis of its conservation status.

The Taxiarchis (Upper) Church has the highest cultural, architectural, and spatial value amongst the Kayaköy settlement's built forms. Its details showing the date of 1910, rich mosaic pavements, plaster decorations, and unique structural system make the building a high representative of Anatolian Greek heritage. The spatial unity that has been created together with Stumbo Square establishes the building as one of the primary nodes of the settlement.

However, the advanced level of material loss and structural deterioration observed in the building reveals an urgent need for conservation. This condition positions the church both as a critical heritage asset requiring preservation and as an ideal case for developing and testing intervention strategies.

Strengths

• High historical and symbolic value
• Strong importance in collective memory
• Distinct topographic and visual location
• Clear architectural identity
• Strategic role as a key element in the spatial structure of the settlement and a primary nodal point in the circulation hierarchy
• High architectural and craftsmanship value (e.g., mosaics, stone masonry, vaulted structures, decorative plasters)
• Representation of religious and social life in the early 20th century
• The role of churches in organizing the spatial and social structure (parish system)
• Strong relationship between landscape and settlement through topographical integration

Weaknesses

• Advanced material deterioration (surface erosion, material loss)
• Deterioration of the roof structure
• Surface deterioration (plaster loss, erosion)
• Lack of regular maintenance and function
• Loss of architectural elements affecting structural integrity
• Reduced visual readability due to material loss and deterioration
• Damage to decorative elements such as mosaics pavements
• Risk of loss of fine craftsmanship
• Interpretive and informational systems describing the area

Opportunities

• Potential for detailed conservation intervention
• Suitable for testing conservation and stabilization strategies
• Potential for restoring spatial and cultural value
• Opportunity to enhance visitor experience
• Potential for developing a spatial narrative through the church and courtyard
• Potential for interpreting historical layers through guided routes and spatial narratives
• Potential to strengthen the open-air museum character of the site
• Potential for adaptable reuse for cultural, educational, and touristic functions
• Potential for developing a network-based intervention strategy through focal points

Threats

• Ongoing material deterioration
• Damaging vegetation growth
• Weather exposure accelerating decay
• Risk of further material loss
• Uncontrolled human impact
• Uncontrolled tourism
• Pressure and visitor mobility
• Risk of inappropriate restoration interventions
• Loss of authenticity due to uncontrolled interventions
• Long-term abandonment leading to irreversible damage
• Human-induced damage

In the next sections, the Upper Church was analysed in terms of conservation status, material and deterioration. The State of Conservation, Material Analysis, and Decay Analysis were prepared based on field observations and documentation collected by the author during the site survey. The base survey drawings used in the analyses were produced by digitizing, redrawing, and revising the measured survey documentation prepared by the TMMOB Chamber of Architects in 2000 and were updated according to the findings of the field survey. The identification and classification of deterioration types, and the development of the proposed conservation interventions, were carried out with reference to the ICOMOS–ISCS Illustrated Glossary on Stone Deterioration Patterns, EwaGlos: European Illustrated Glossary of Conservation Terms for Wall Paintings and Architectural Surfaces, and Manuale Operativo per il Restauro Architettonico. The terminology, conservation and intervention strategies presented in these references were interpreted and adapted to the material characteristics, deterioration conditions, and site-specific conservation requirements of the Upper Church.

2.3.2.1.1. State of Conservation

The Upper Church exhibits varying degrees of preservation in terms of its architectural components and surrounding landscape. To a large extent, the main walls, vaults, and openings, as well as the spatial organization, have been affected by weathering and prolonged abandonment.

Of the church's features, the stone walls, arches, and stone-framed openings are preserved and continue to define the church's spatial character.

Due to abandonment and exposure, layers of plaster have been lost, exposing the underlying stone walls. Surface erosion, material loss, and weathering are present on both the interior and exterior surfaces of the church.

The preservation of the church floor is variable. The narthex area's pebble floor, while heavily eroded, still displays original decorative patterns in some parts and is consequently partially legible. However, the nave floor is in a much worse condition, with missing pebbles, surface erosion, and fragmentation causing mainly the loss of decorative patterns.

The outer courtyard, while still displaying decorative pebble arrangements in a better condition than the interior of the church, has suffered erosion, exposed soil, and loss of surface integrity due to vegetation growth.

2.3.2.1.2. Analysis of Materials

Material analysis indicates that the construction system primarily relies on rubble stone masonry, complemented by decoratively crafted limestone plasters. The masonry walls, ribbed vaults and barrel vaults, and arches serve as the main structural system.

The church features a range of traditional surface finishes and paving techniques. The lime-based plaster are present on both interior and exterior walls, indicating that extensive areas of the building were finely crafted Decorative stone carvings are found around the openings and arches, showing a higher degree of workmanship and contributing to the architectural beauty of the church.

One of the most striking features is the use of pebble pavements. Different arrangements of pebblestone pavements can be seen in the interior of the church, at the entrance, and in the courtyard. Various geometric, circular, and linear arrangements of pebbles of different colors are present. It has been observed that the pavements were created with compacted earth, coarse rubble, lime mortar, and a layer of pebbles.

2.3.2.1.2. Analysis of Decays

A study of deterioration processes integrating the various forms of decay identified in and around the church has been conducted. The most common deterioration processes include plaster loss, pebblestone loss, surface erosion, material deterioration, cracking, biological growth, and vegetation growth.

Plaster deterioration is observed on the exterior walls of the church, resulting in the walls being exposed. Erosion and weathering lead to slow material deterioration in areas where the walls are highly susceptible to rain and environmental factors. Damage caused by surface erosion creates as deep cracks in some walls.

Deterioration caused by plant growth is a significant and persistent problem. Plant growth in wall joints, roofs, pavements, and even accumulated soil applies extra mechanical pressure, widening existing joints and further accelerating material deterioration.

Pavements show varying levels of erosion and deterioration. Pavements considered sound show minimal erosion and retain ornamental designs, while severely deteriorated pavements exhibit surface erosion and gravel loss, as well as broken mortar joints. Deterioration in some sections of the entrance pavement and courtyard is greater than in the central interior pavements.

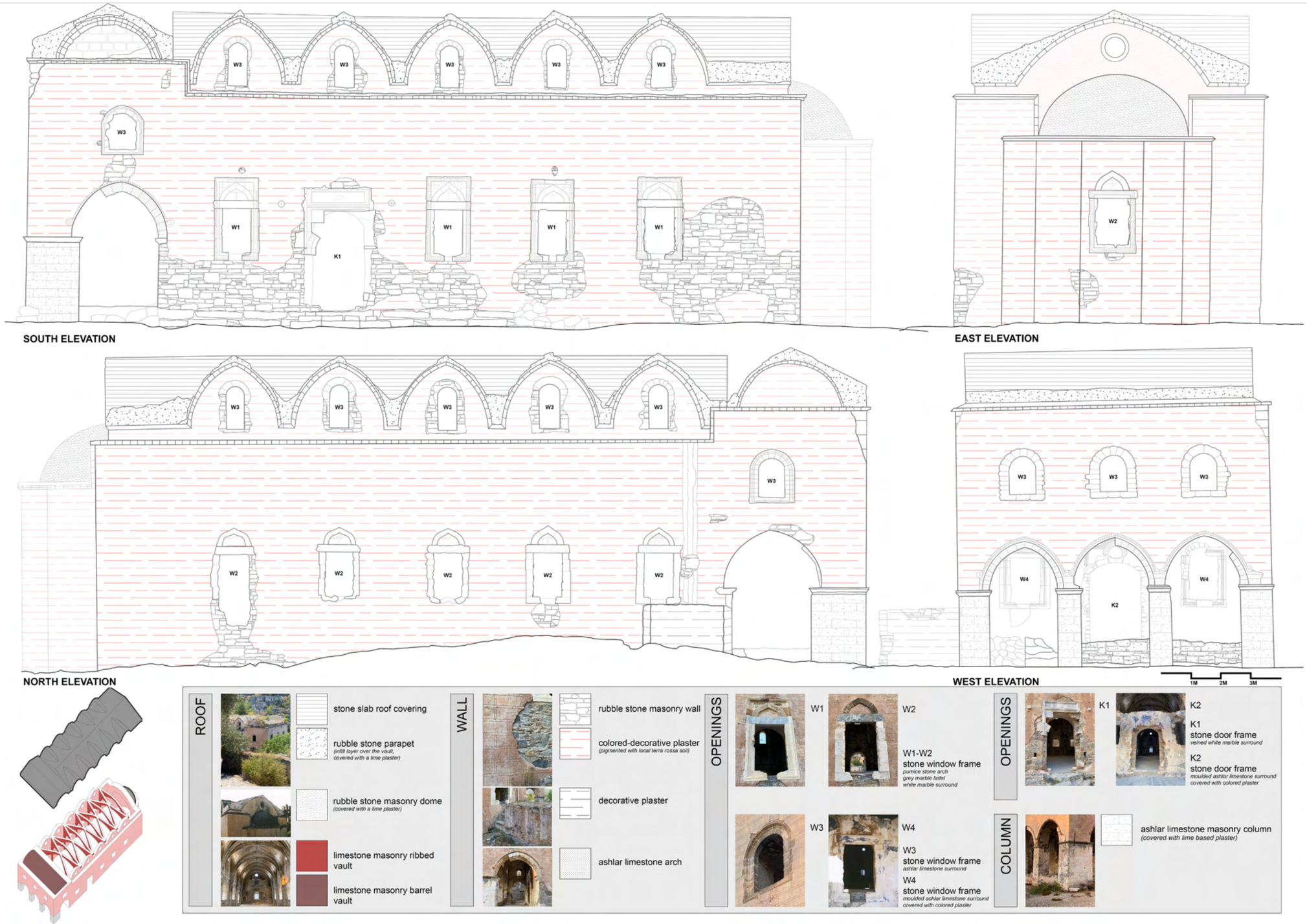


Figure 4.9: Material Analysis of the Upper Church Facades (Author, 2026)

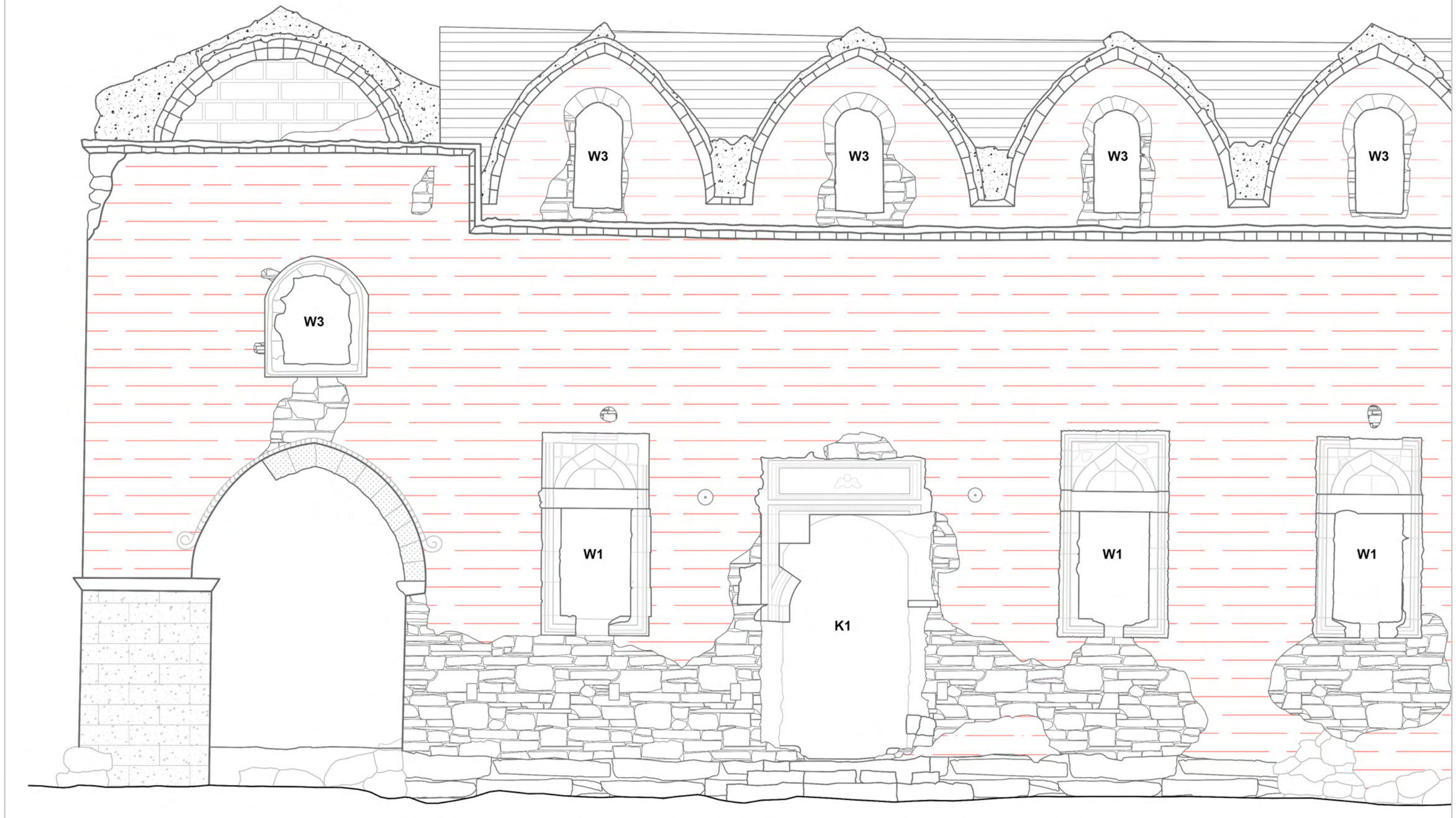


Figure 4.10: 1/50 Material Analysis of the Upper Church South Facade 1 (Author, 2026)

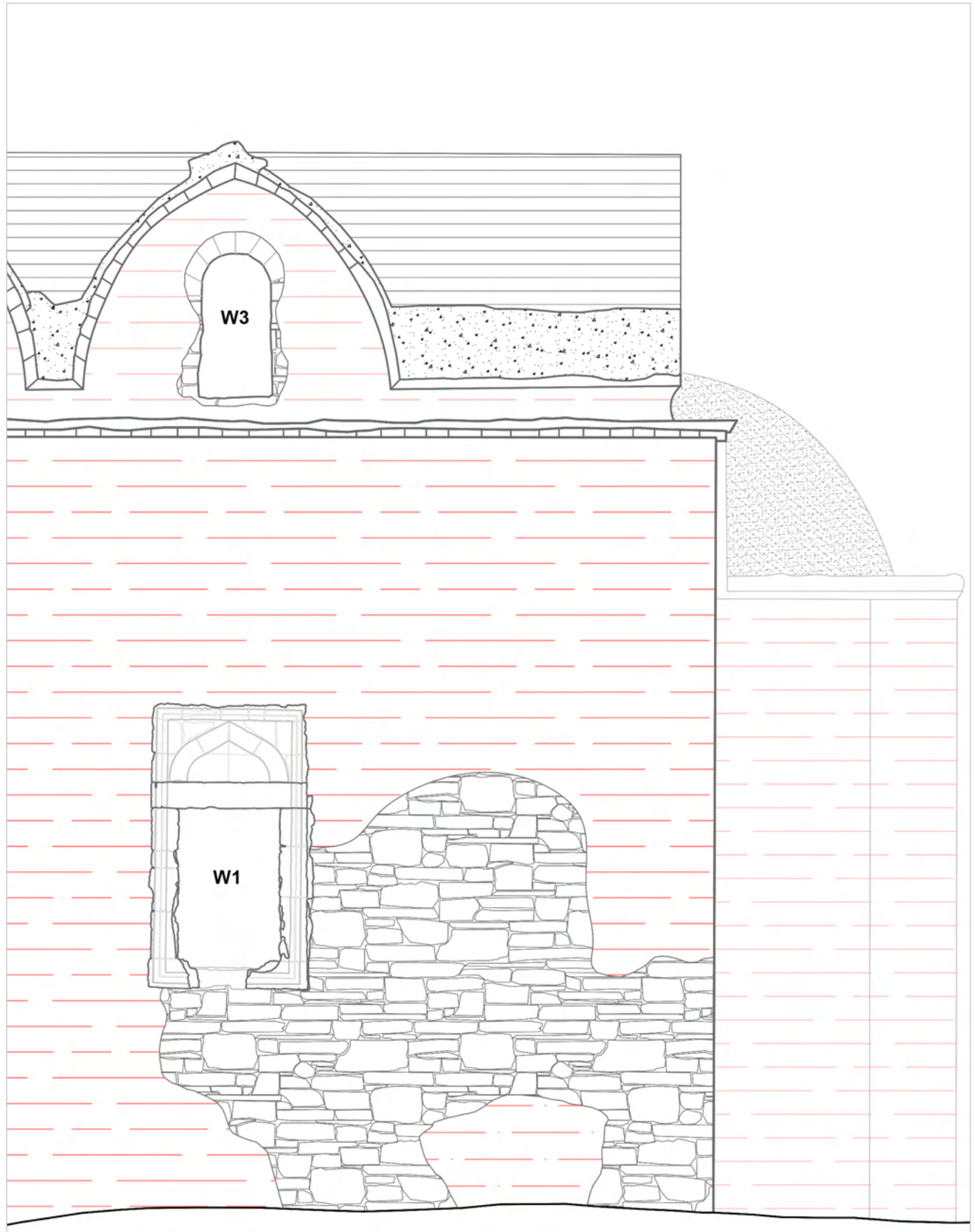


Figure 4.11: 1/50 Material Analysis of the Upper Church South Facade 2 (Author, 2026)

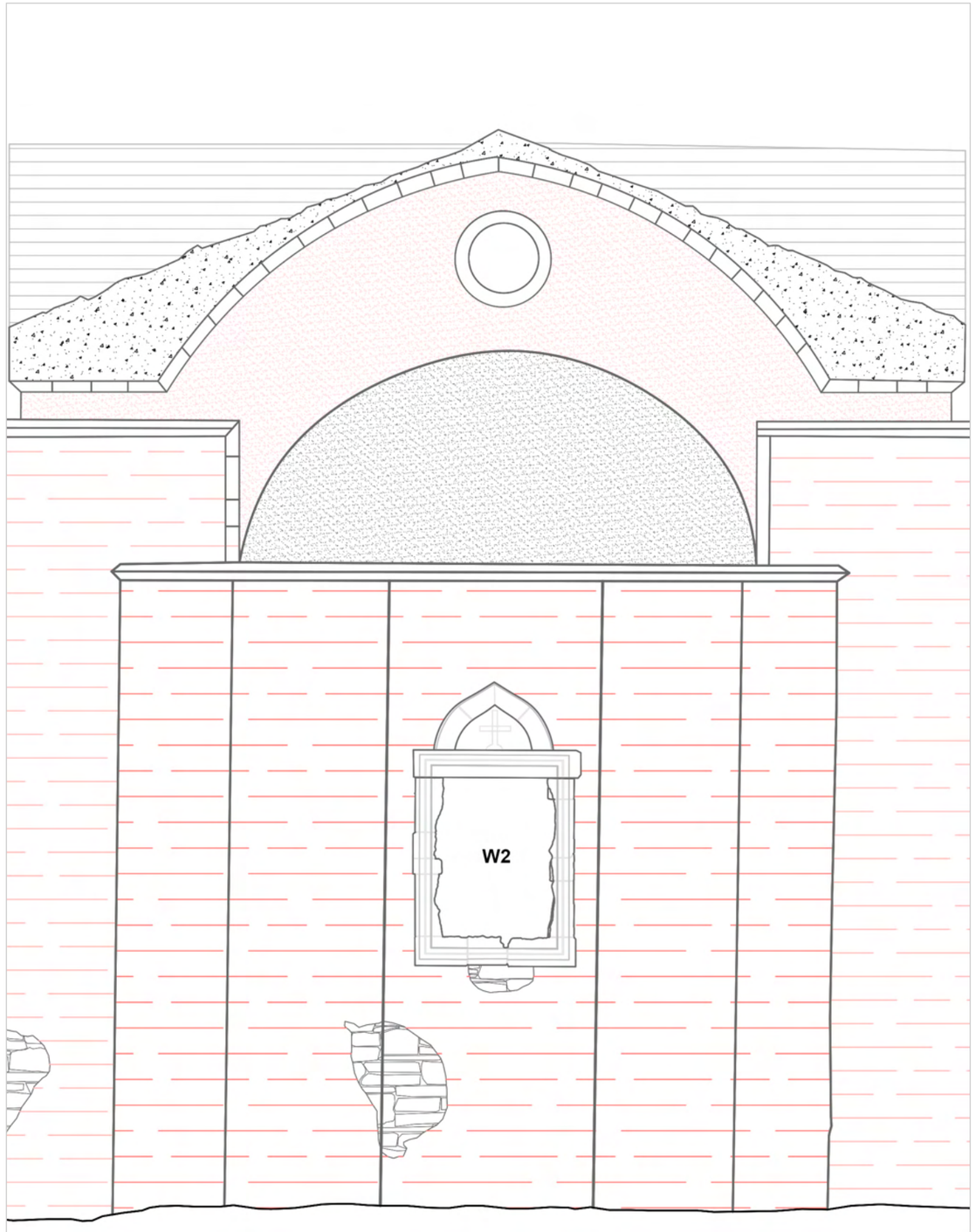


Figure 4.12: 1/50 Material Analysis of the Upper Church East Facade (Author, 2026)

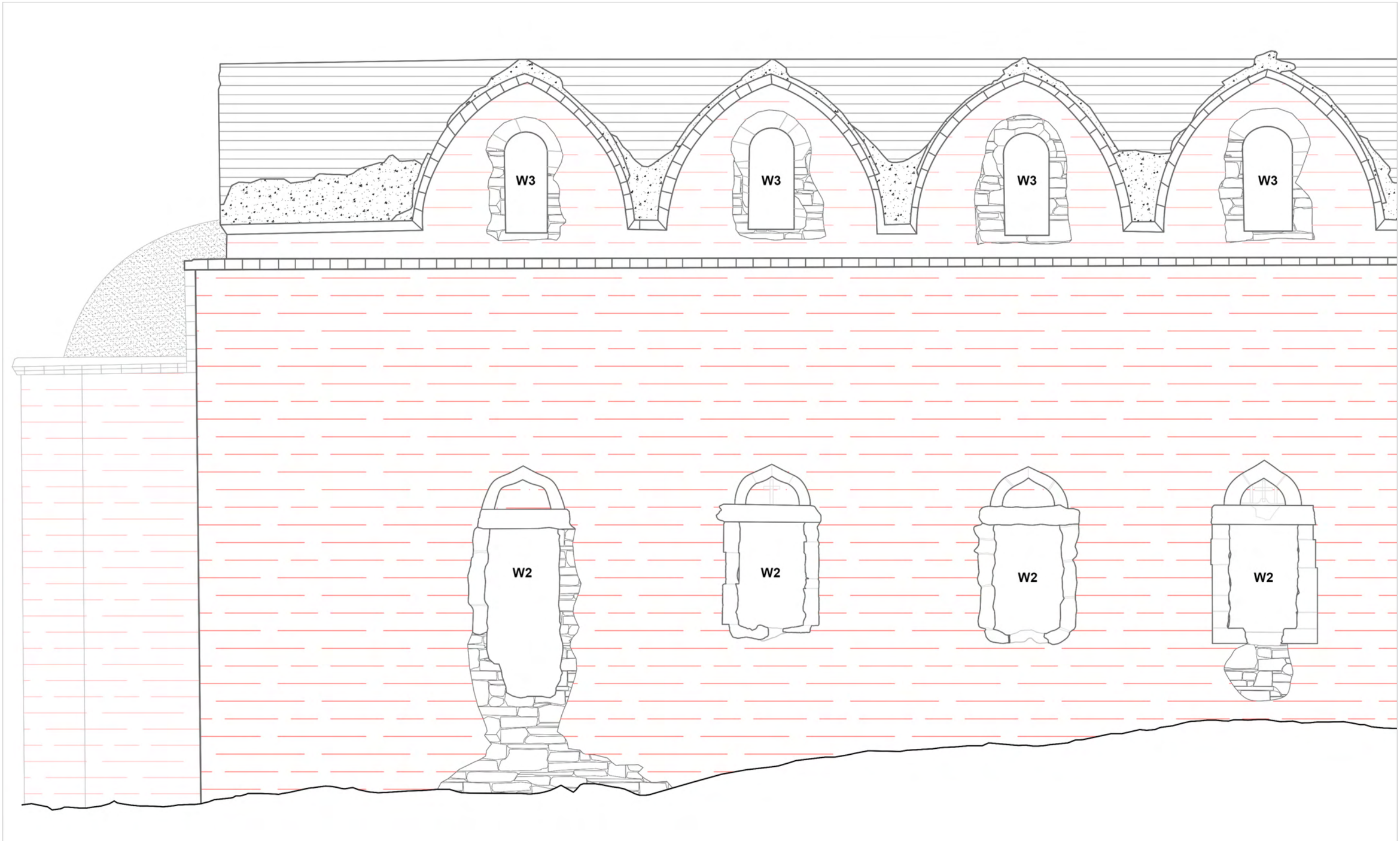


Figure 4.13: 1/50 Material Analysis of the Upper Church North Facade 1 (Author, 2026)

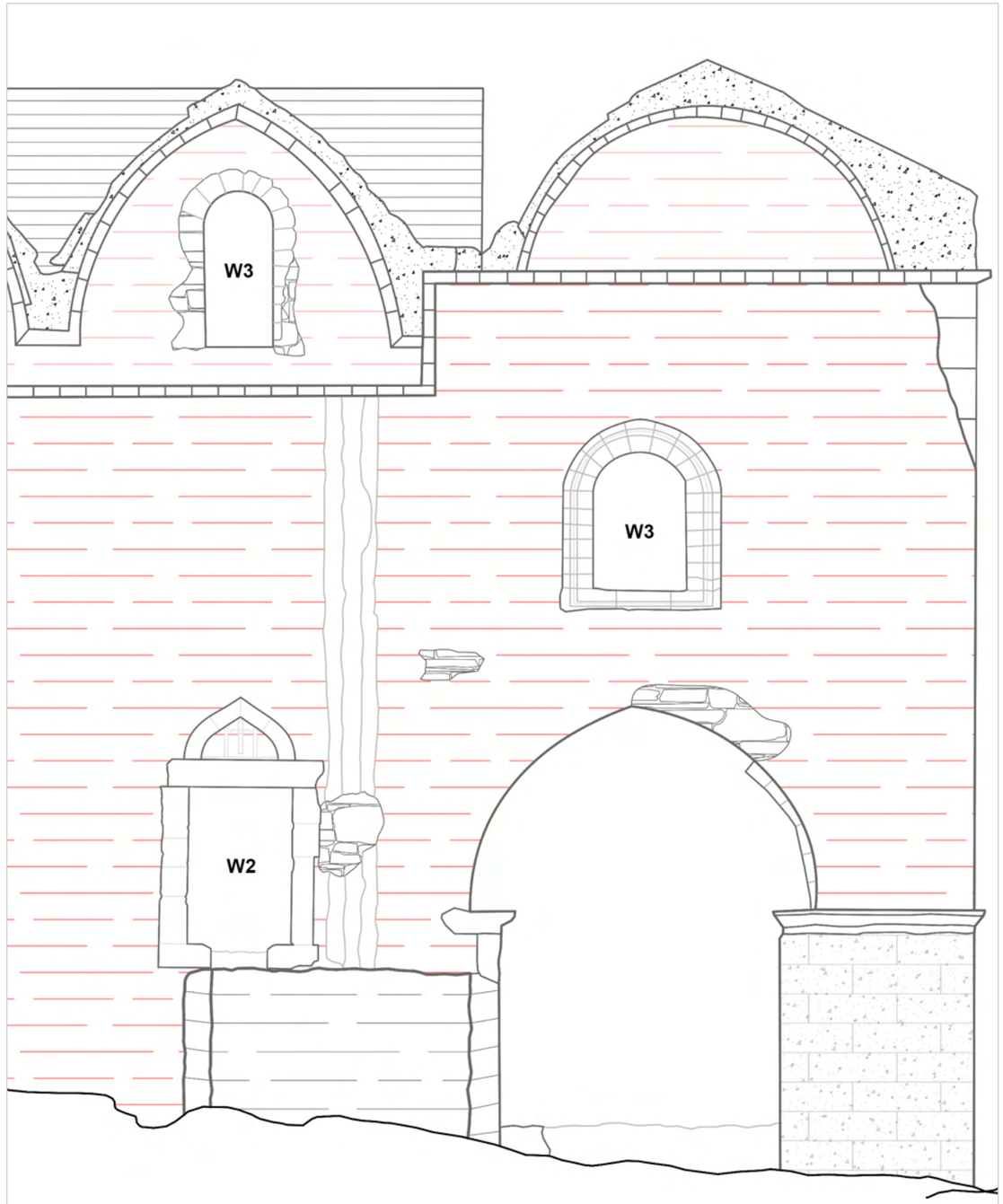


Figure 4.14: 1/50 Material Analysis of the Upper Church North Facade 2 (Author, 2026)

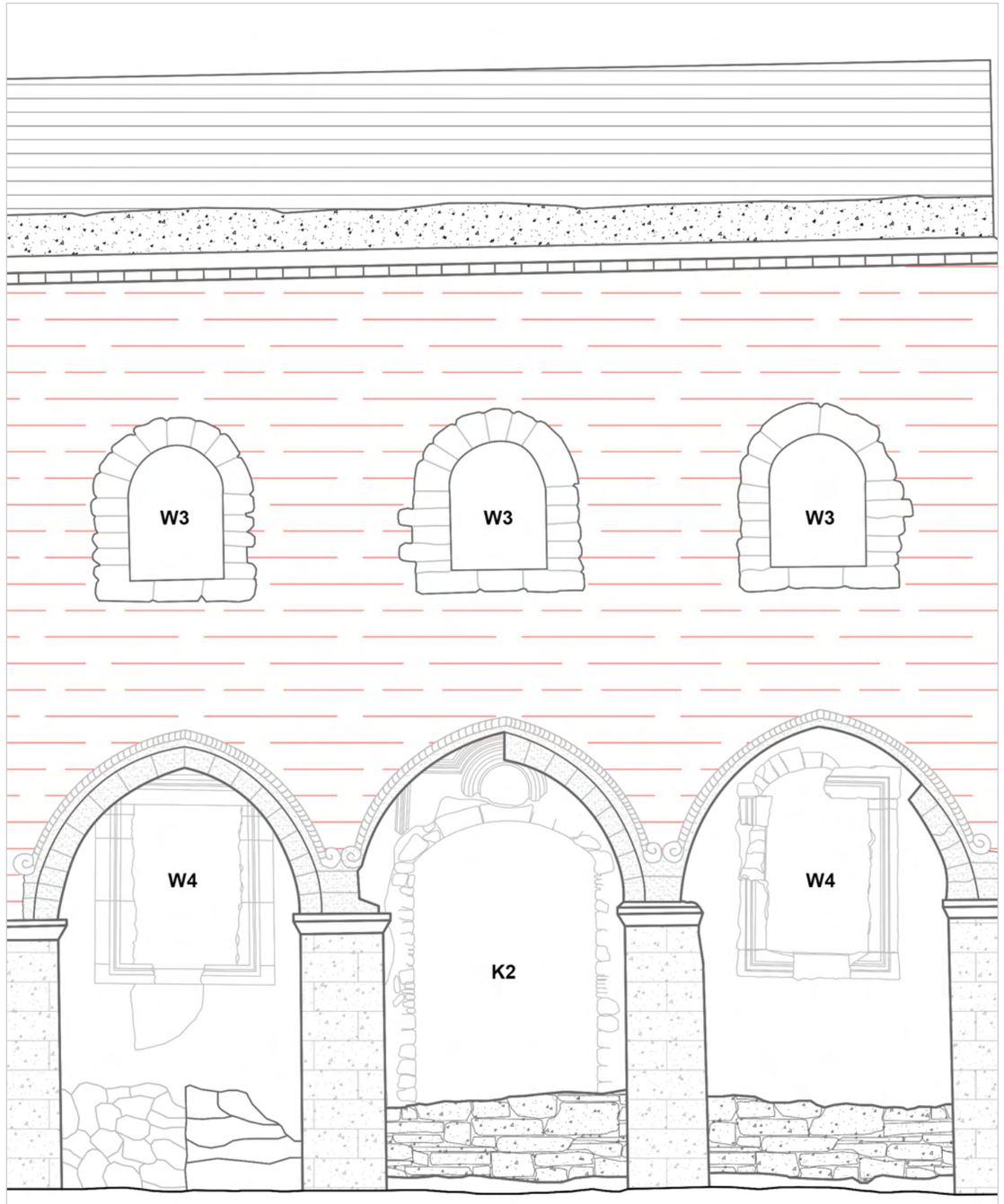


Figure 4.15: 1/50 Material Analysis of the Upper Church West Facade (Author, 2026)

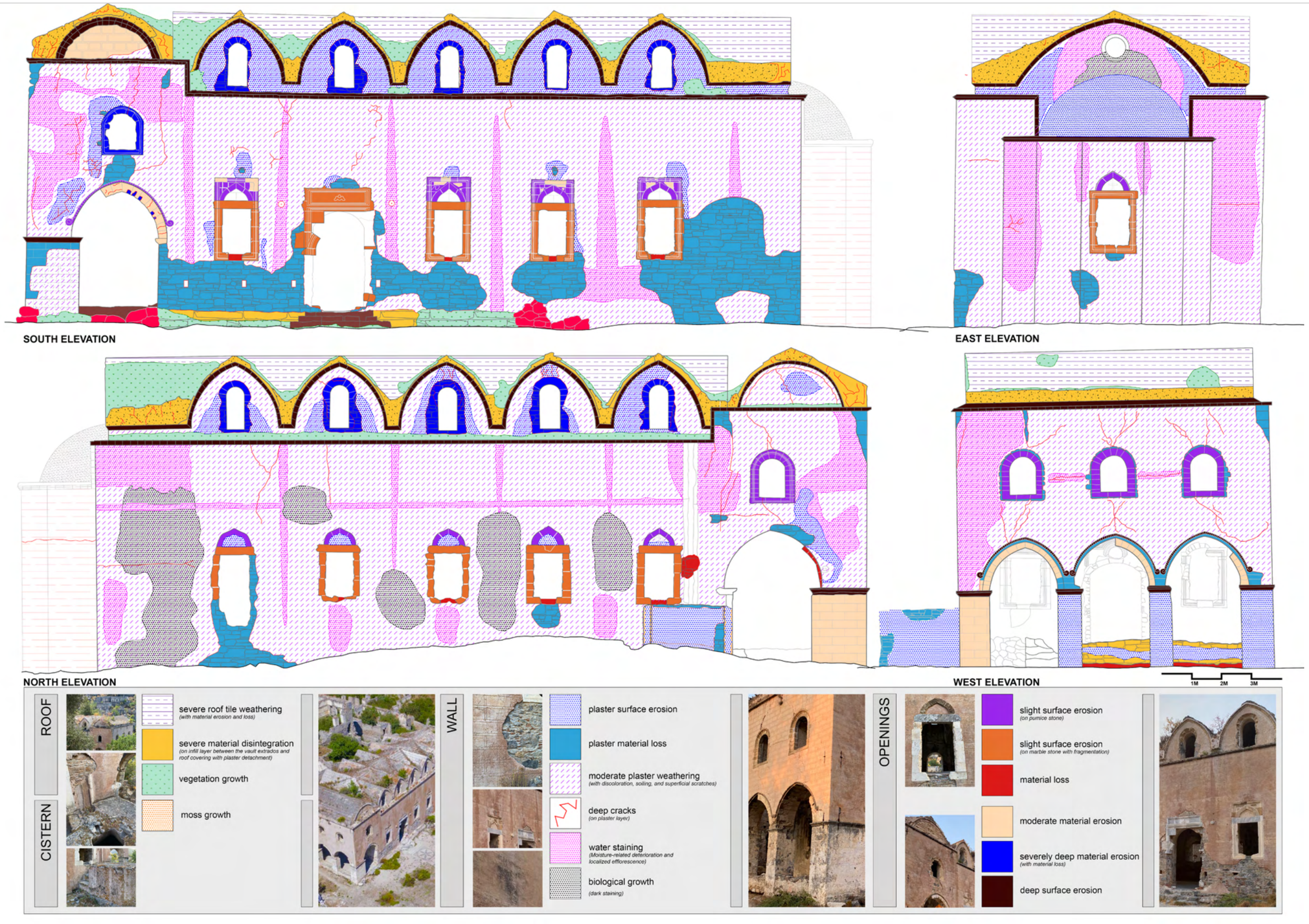


Figure 4.16: Decay Analysis of the Upper Church Facades (Author, 2026)

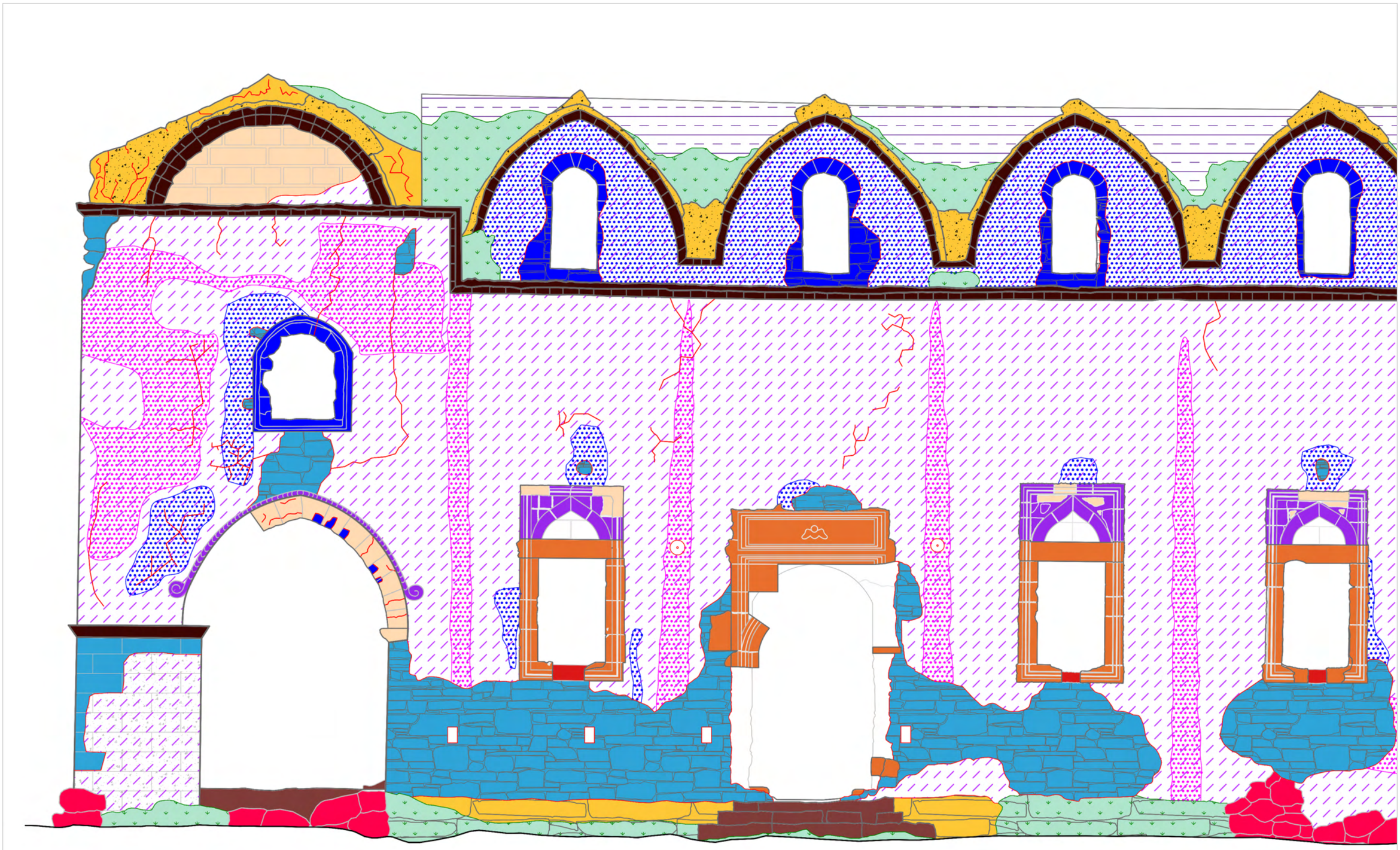


Figure 4.17: 1/50 Decay Analysis of the Upper Church South Facade 1 (Author, 2026)

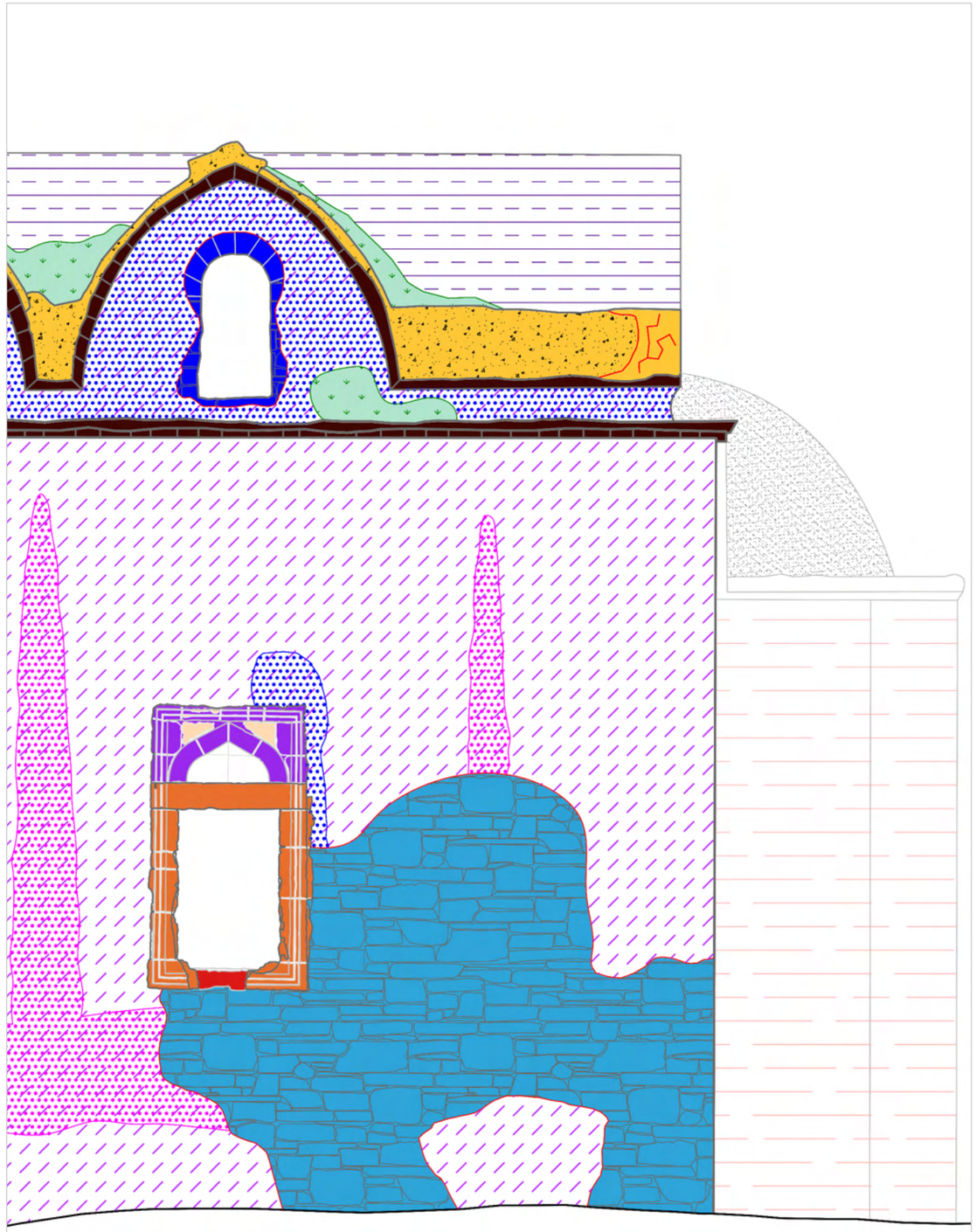


Figure 4.18: 1/50 Decay Analysis of the Upper Church South Facade 2 (Author, 2026)

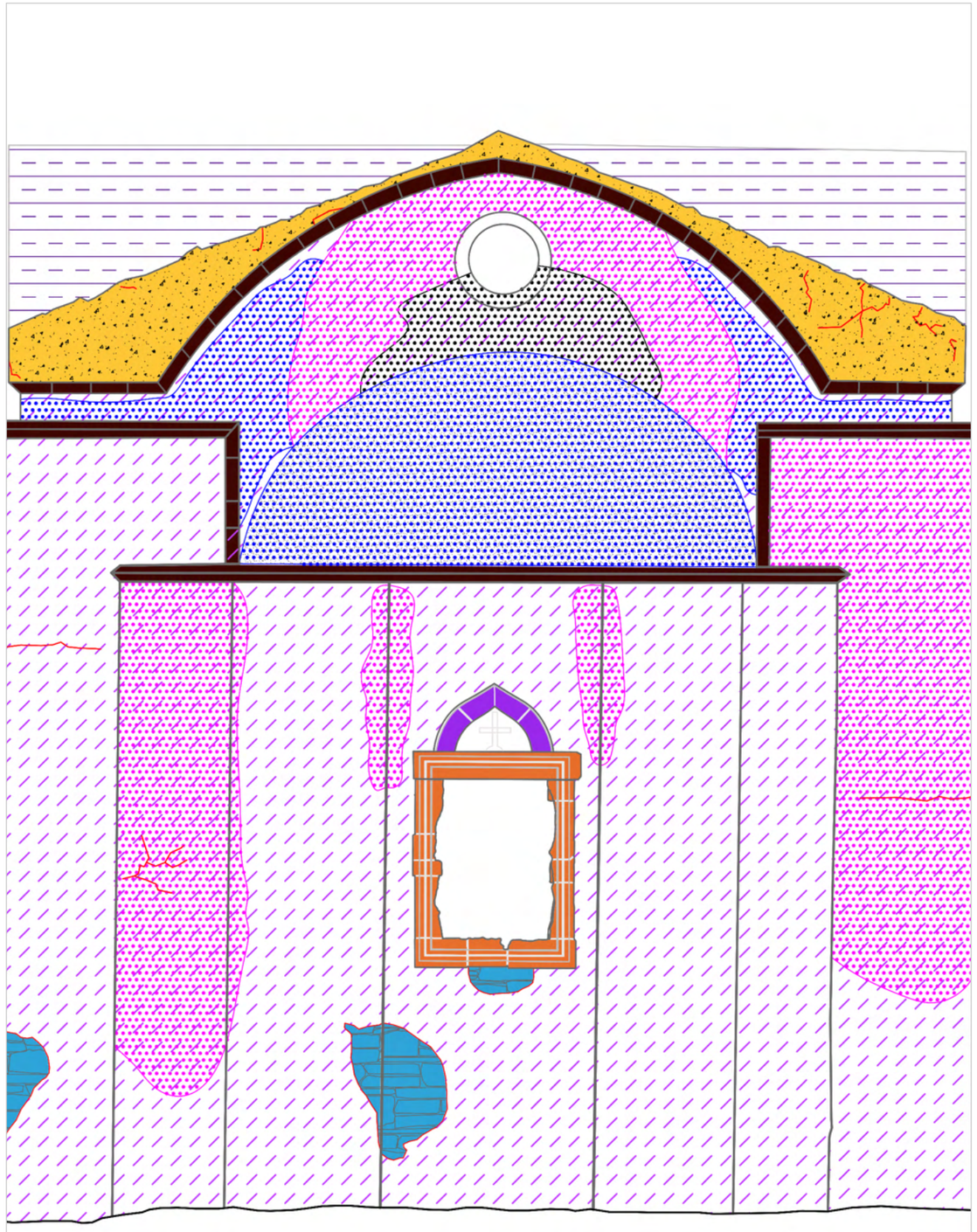


Figure 4.19: 1/50 Decay Analysis of the Upper Church East Facade (Author, 2026)

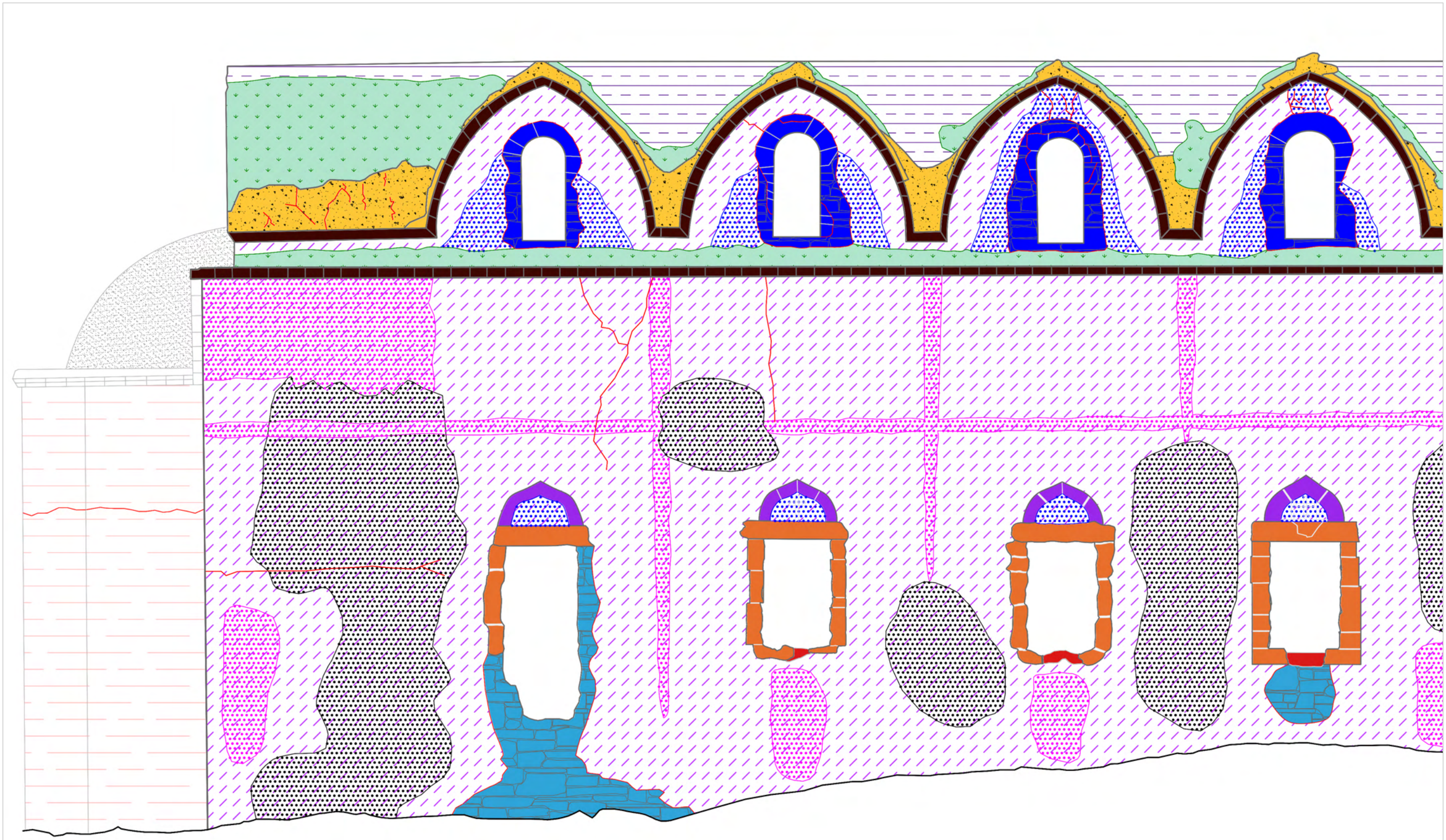


Figure 4.20: 1/50 Decay Analysis of the Upper Church North Facade 1 (Author, 2026)

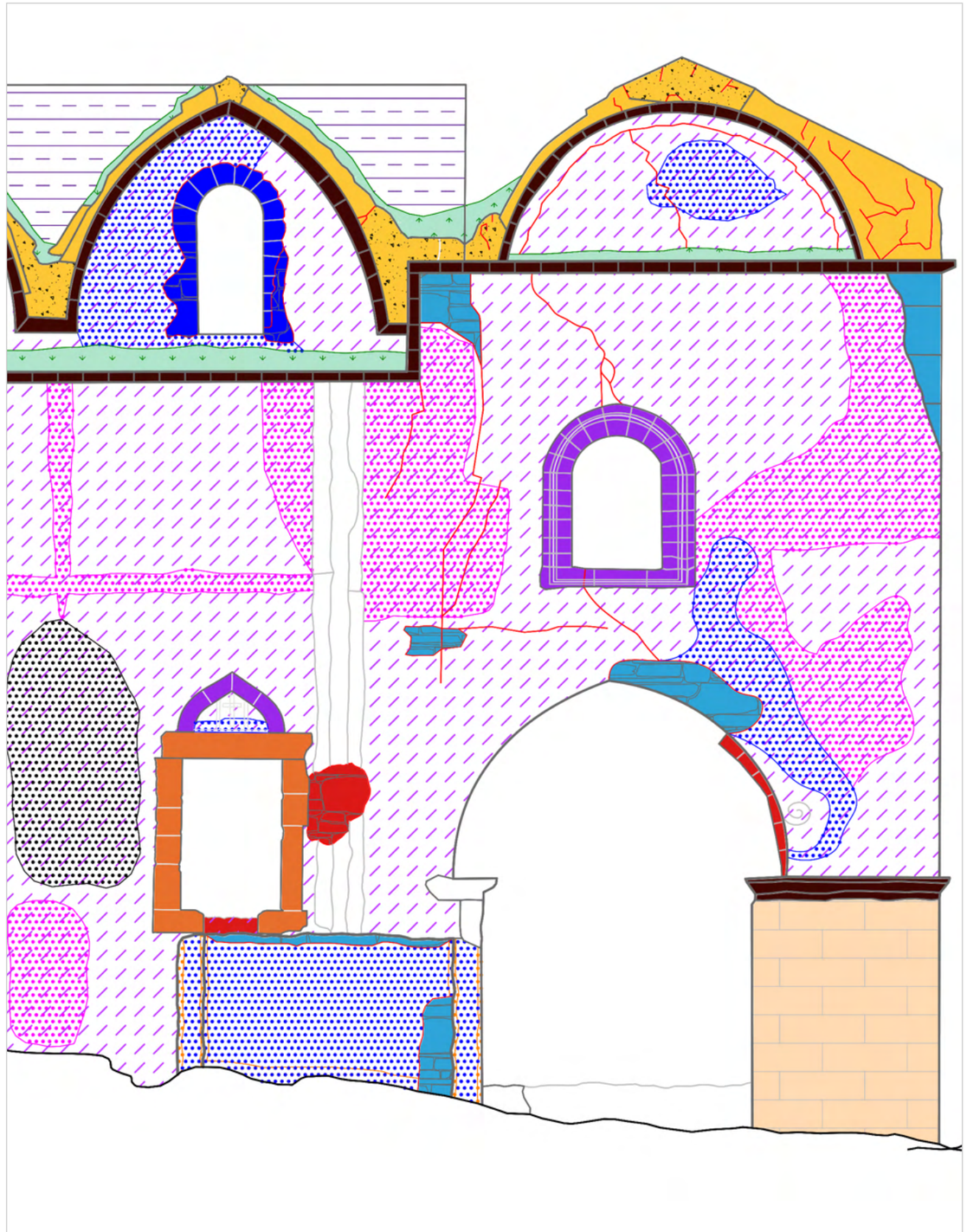


Figure 4.21: 1/50 Decay Analysis of the Upper Church North Facade 2 (Author, 2026)

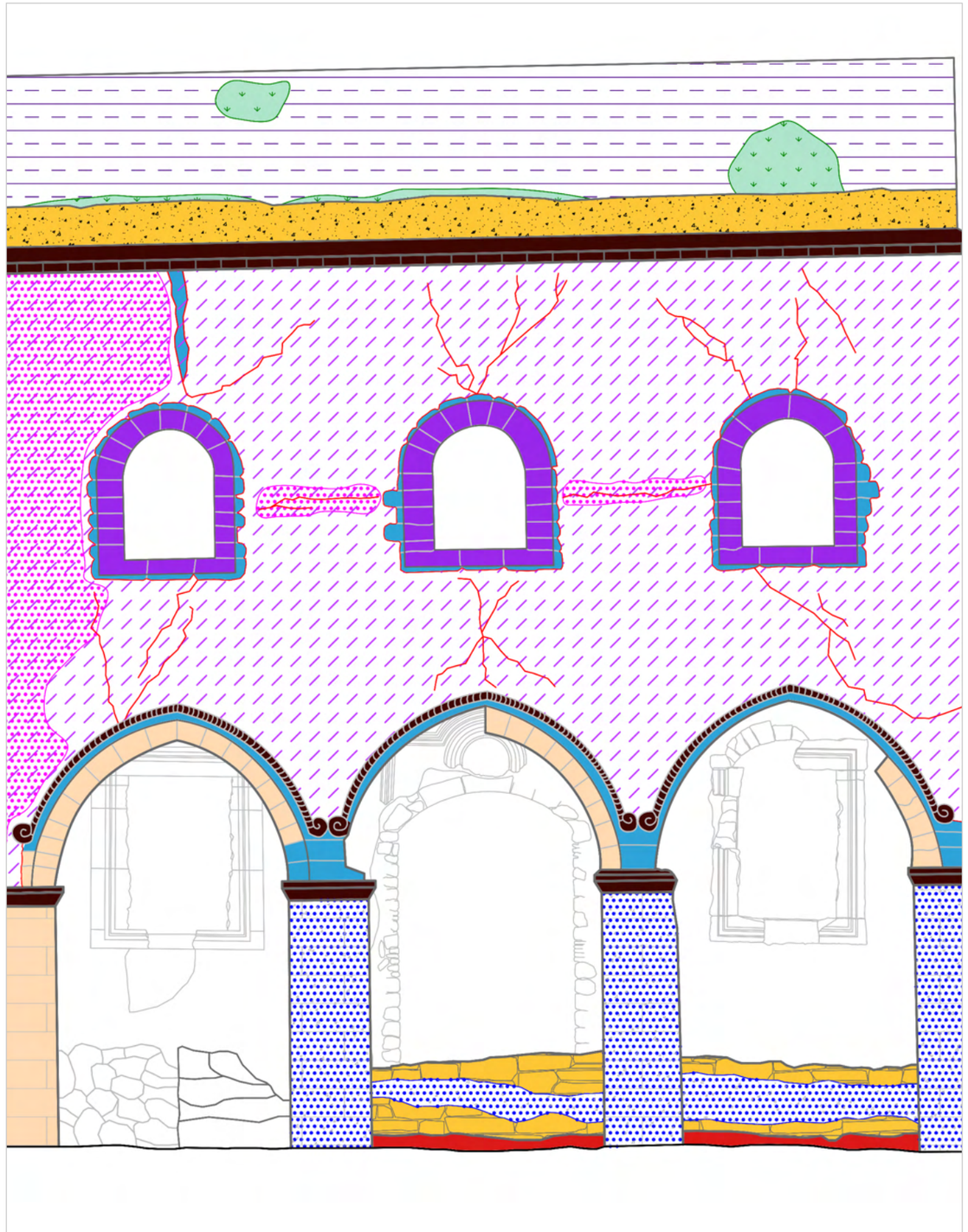


Figure 4.22: 1/50 Decay Analysis of the Upper Church West Facade (Author, 2026)

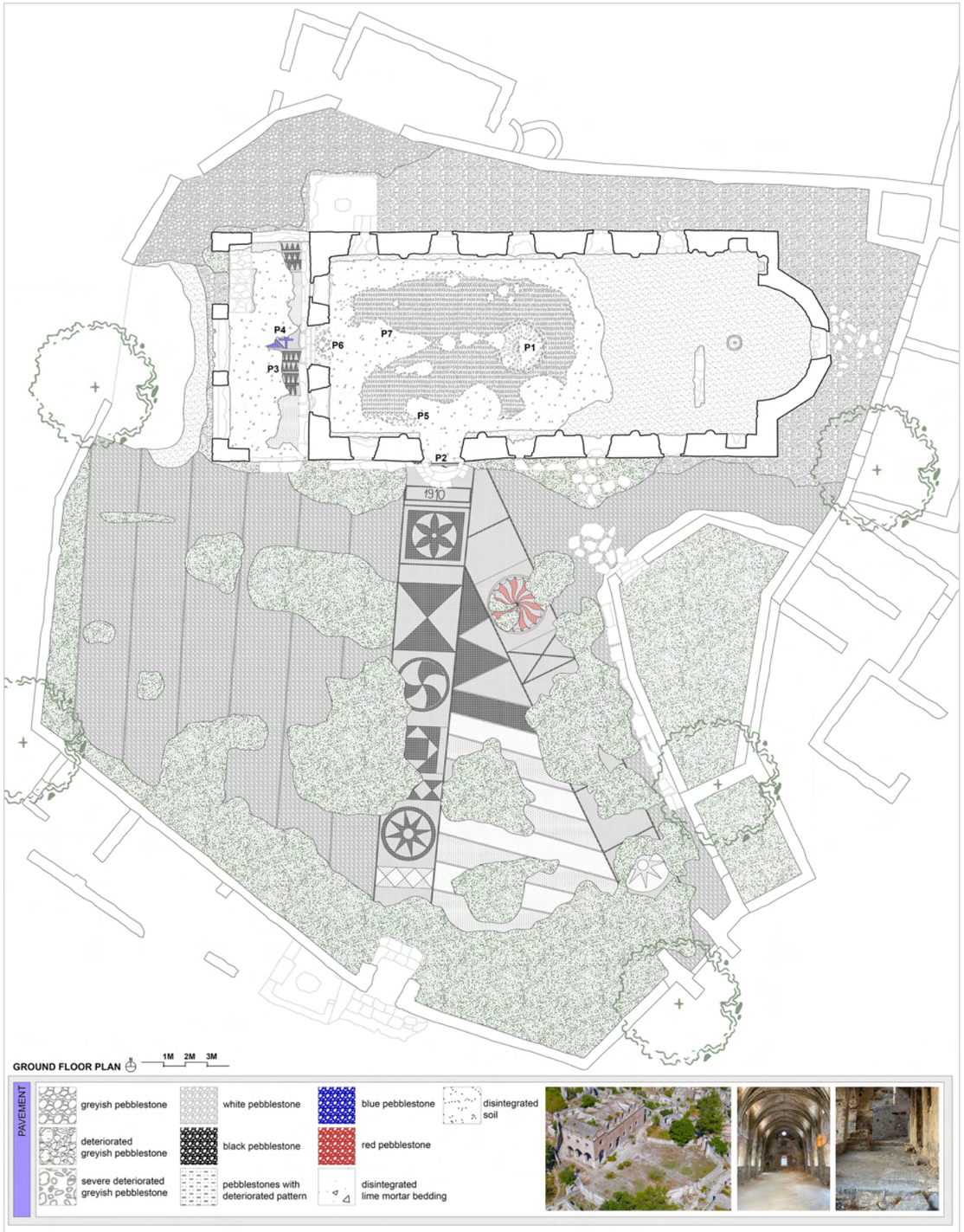


Figure 4.23: Material Analysis of the Upper Church Ground Floor (Author, 2026)

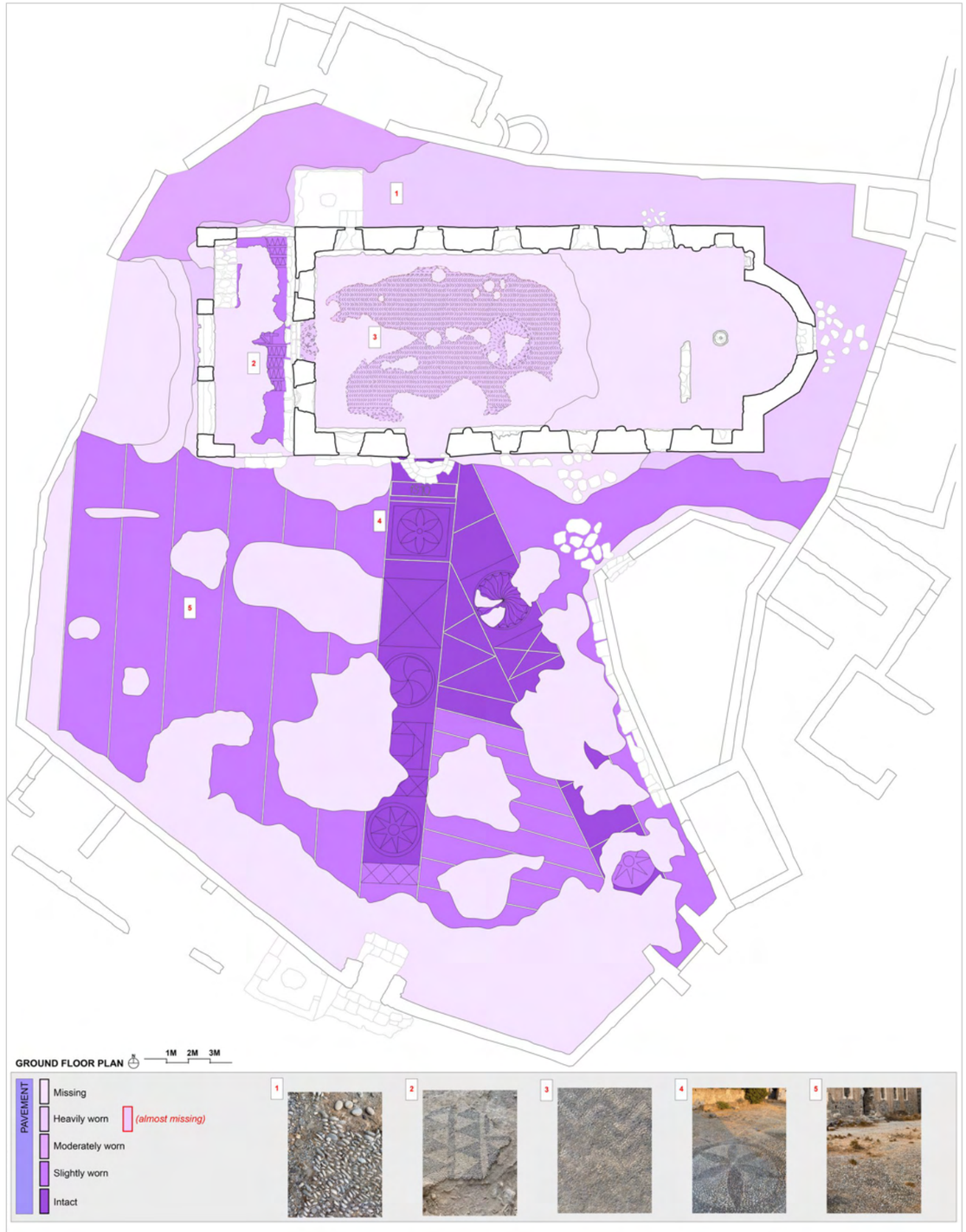


Figure 4.24: State of Conservation of the Upper Church Ground Floor (Author, 2026)

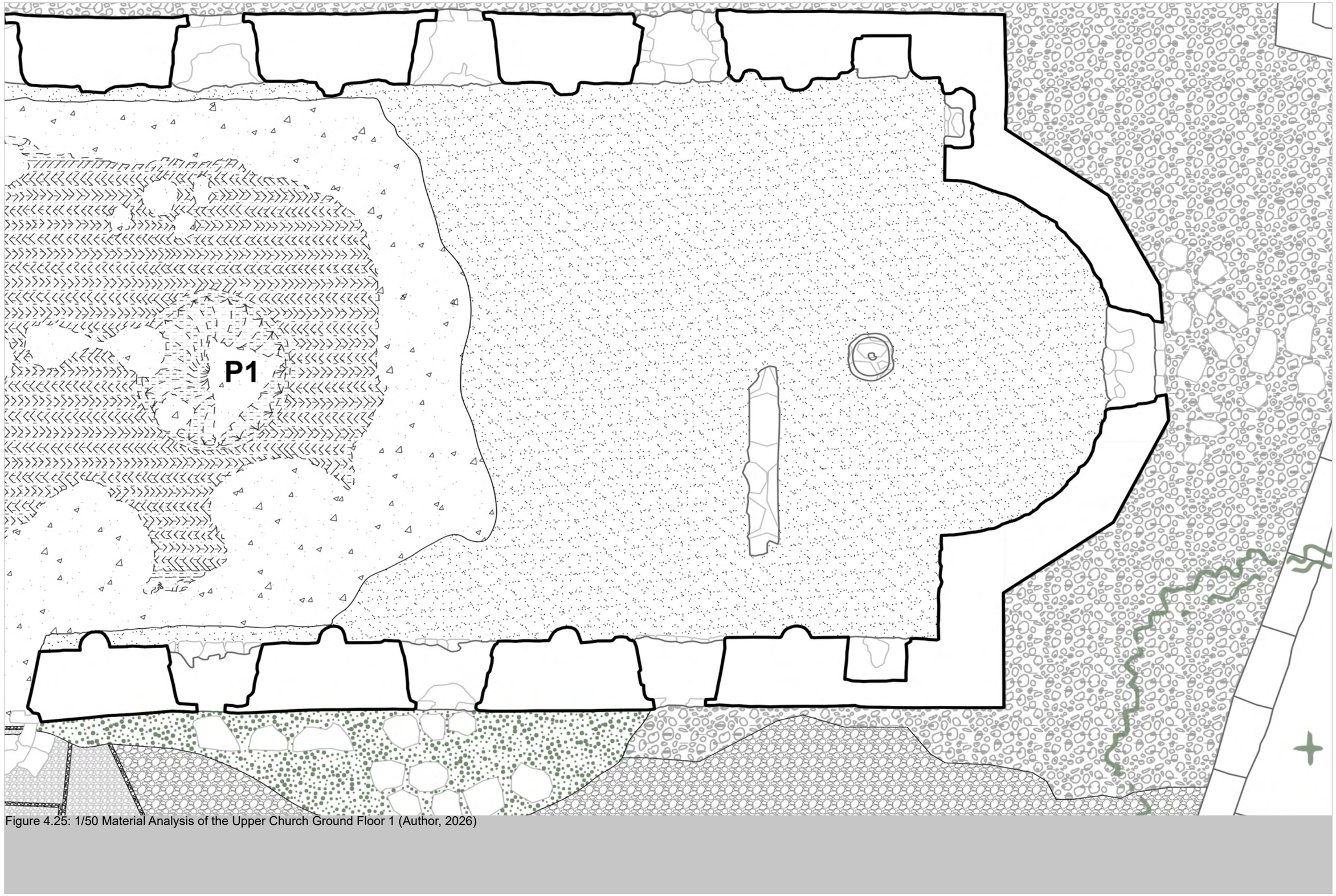


Figure 4.25: 1/50 Material Analysis of the Upper Church Ground Floor 1 (Author, 2026)

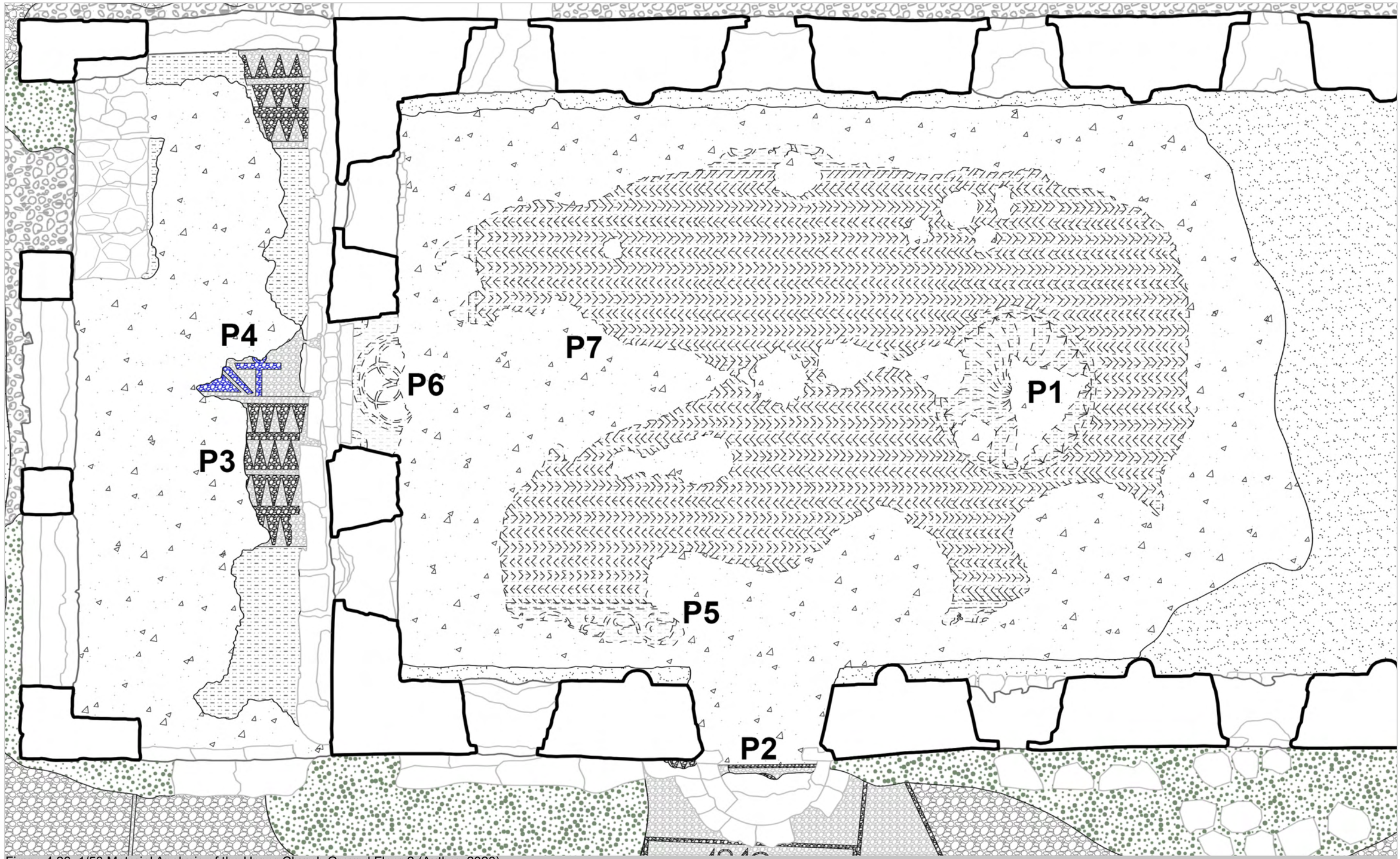


Figure 4.26: 1/50 Material Analysis of the Upper Church Ground Floor 2 (Author, 2026)

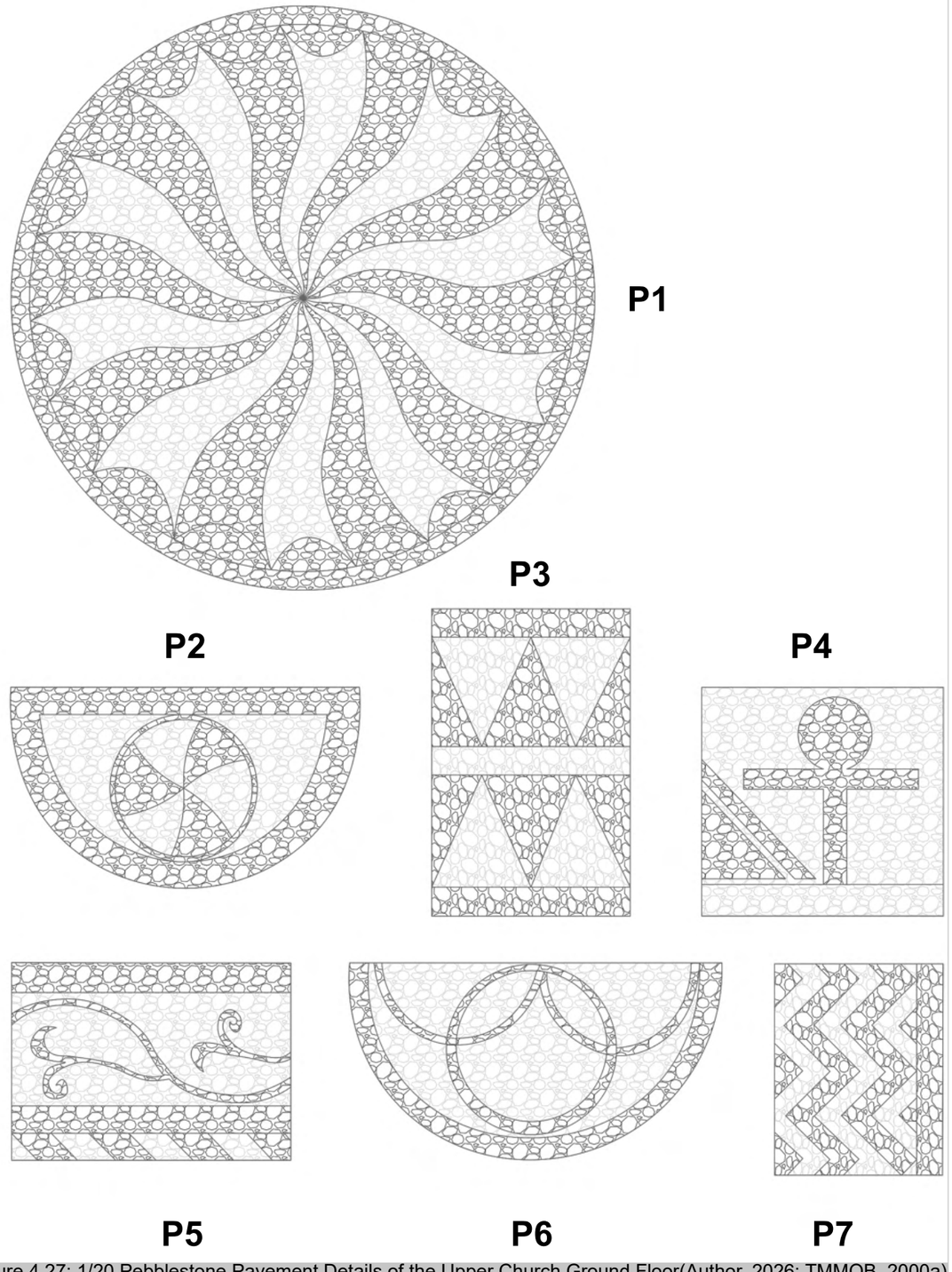


Figure 4.27: 1/20 Pebblestone Pavement Details of the Upper Church Ground Floor(Author, 2026; TMMOB, 2000a)

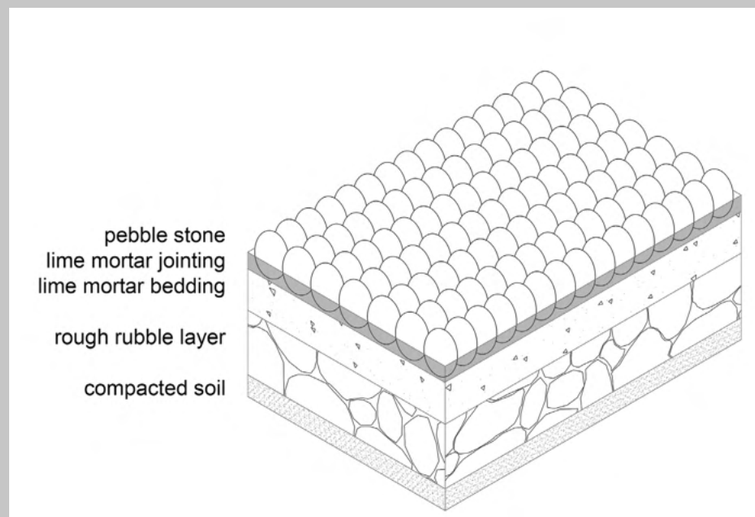


Figure 4.28: Schematic representation of the main components of a traditional pebblestone pavement (Author, 2026)

The traditional pebblestone pavements in the Upper Church exhibit a multi-layered structural system consisting of compacted earth, a layer of coarse rubble, lime mortar bedding, and a surface layer of pebblestone. While detailed documentation of the original construction technique can not directly be found, the possible construction system of the pavement is interpreted based on preserved material traces in the area, field observations, and existing survey drawings. Therefore, the schematic section presented above represents an interpretive reconstruction prepared in light of the available data.

The gravel mosaic patterns in the Upper Church have been redrawn by the author based on examples documented in the survey prepared by the TMMOB Chamber of Architects in 2000. Although a significant portion of these patterns are partially or completely destroyed today, their original arrangements can be read thanks to the survey work. Therefore, the drawings show a schematic representation of the documented original patterns, not the current state.

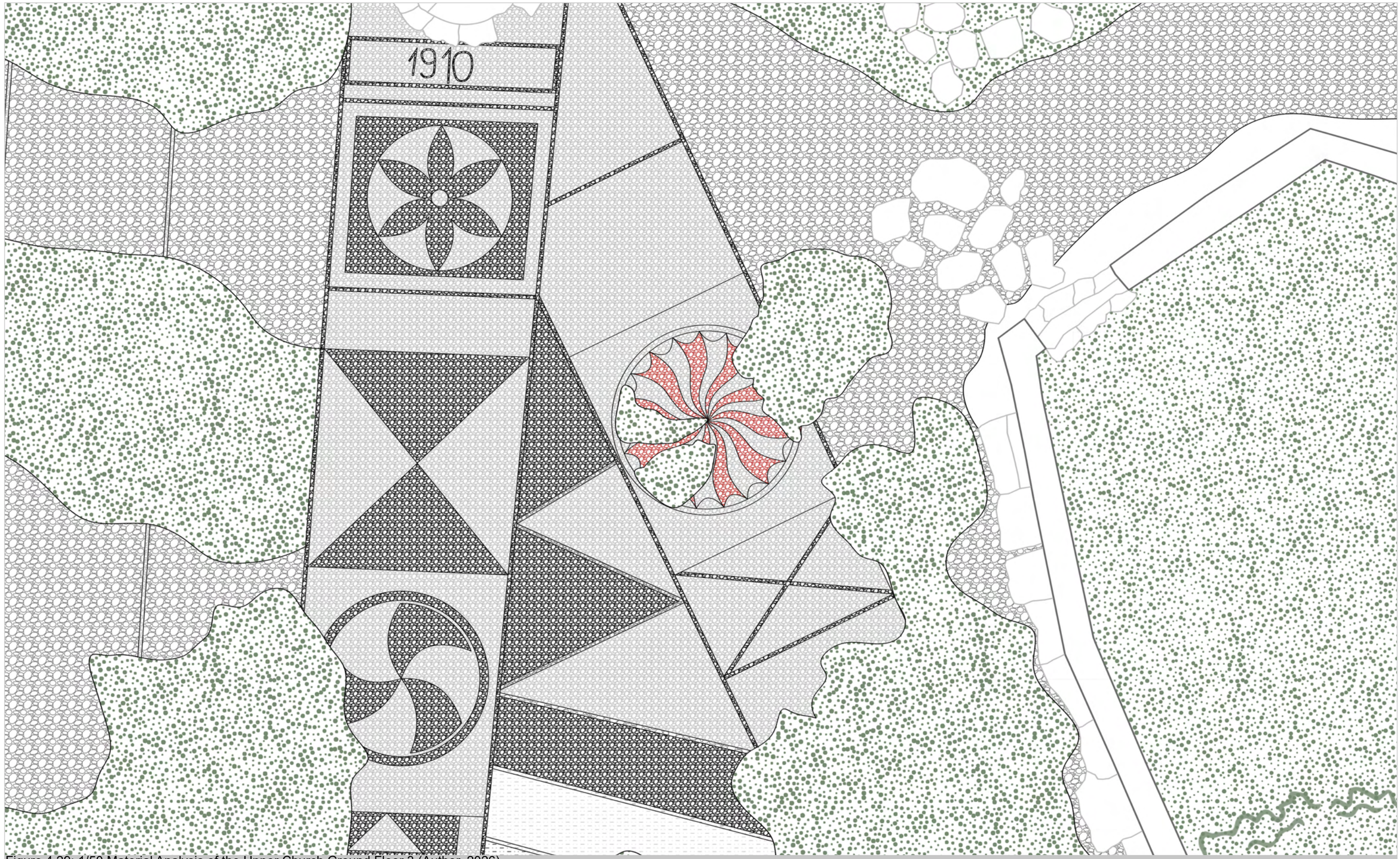


Figure 4.29: 1/50 Material Analysis of the Upper Church Ground Floor 3 (Author, 2026)

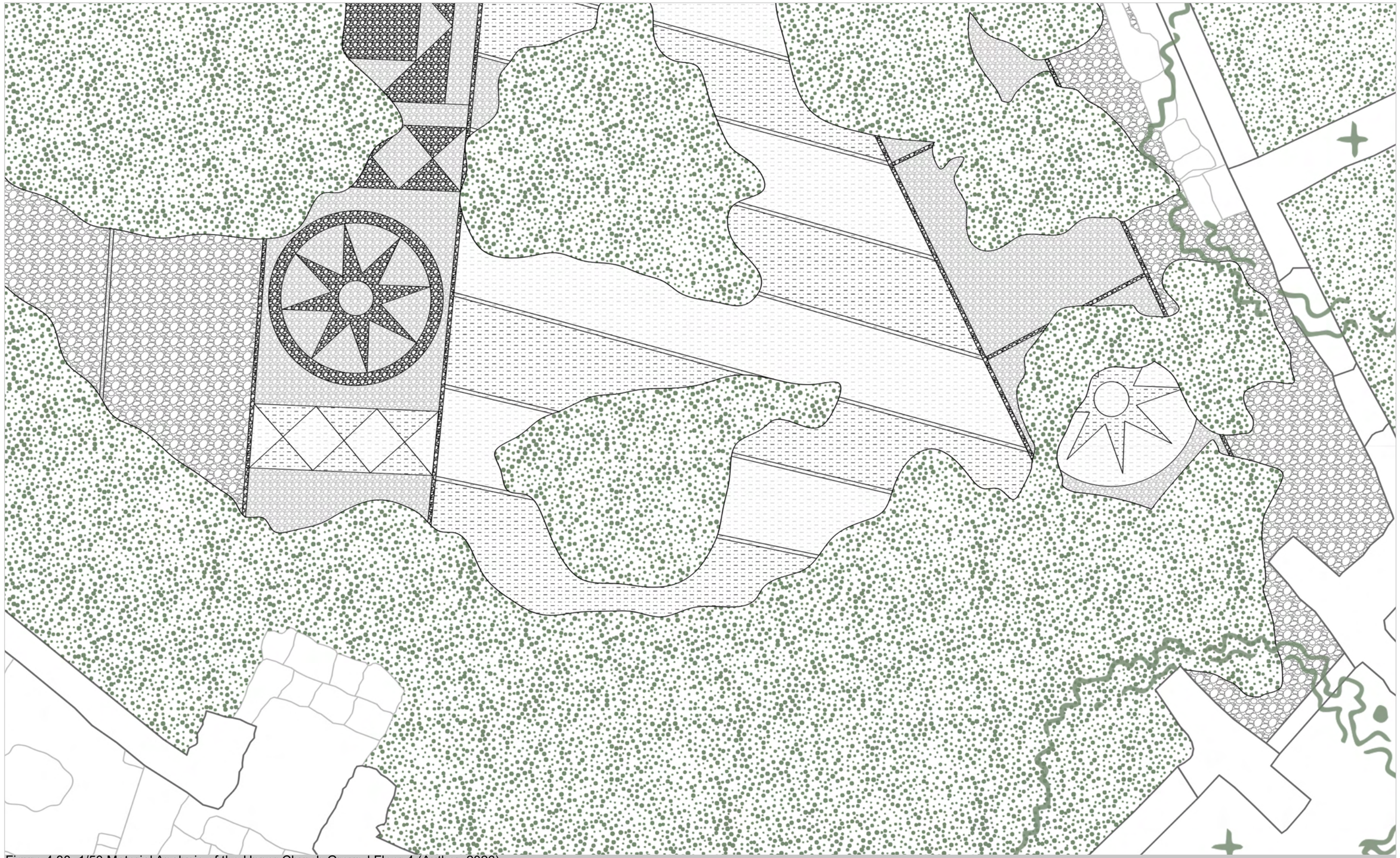


Figure 4.30: 1/50 Material Analysis of the Upper Church Ground Floor 4 (Author, 2026)



Figure 4.31: Decay Analysis of the Upper Church Ground Floor (Author, 2026)

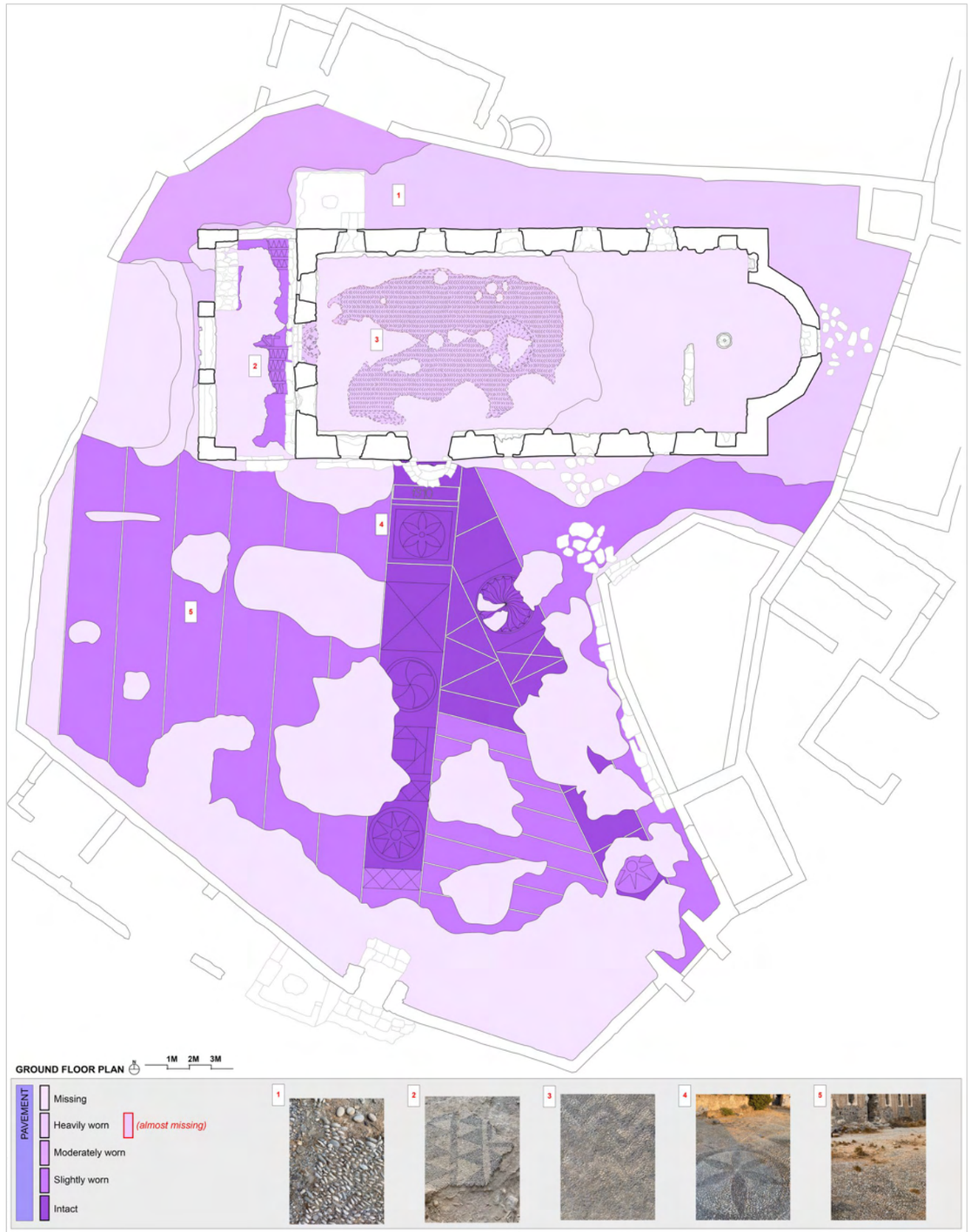


Figure 4.32: State of Conservation of the Upper Church Ground Floor (Author, 2026)

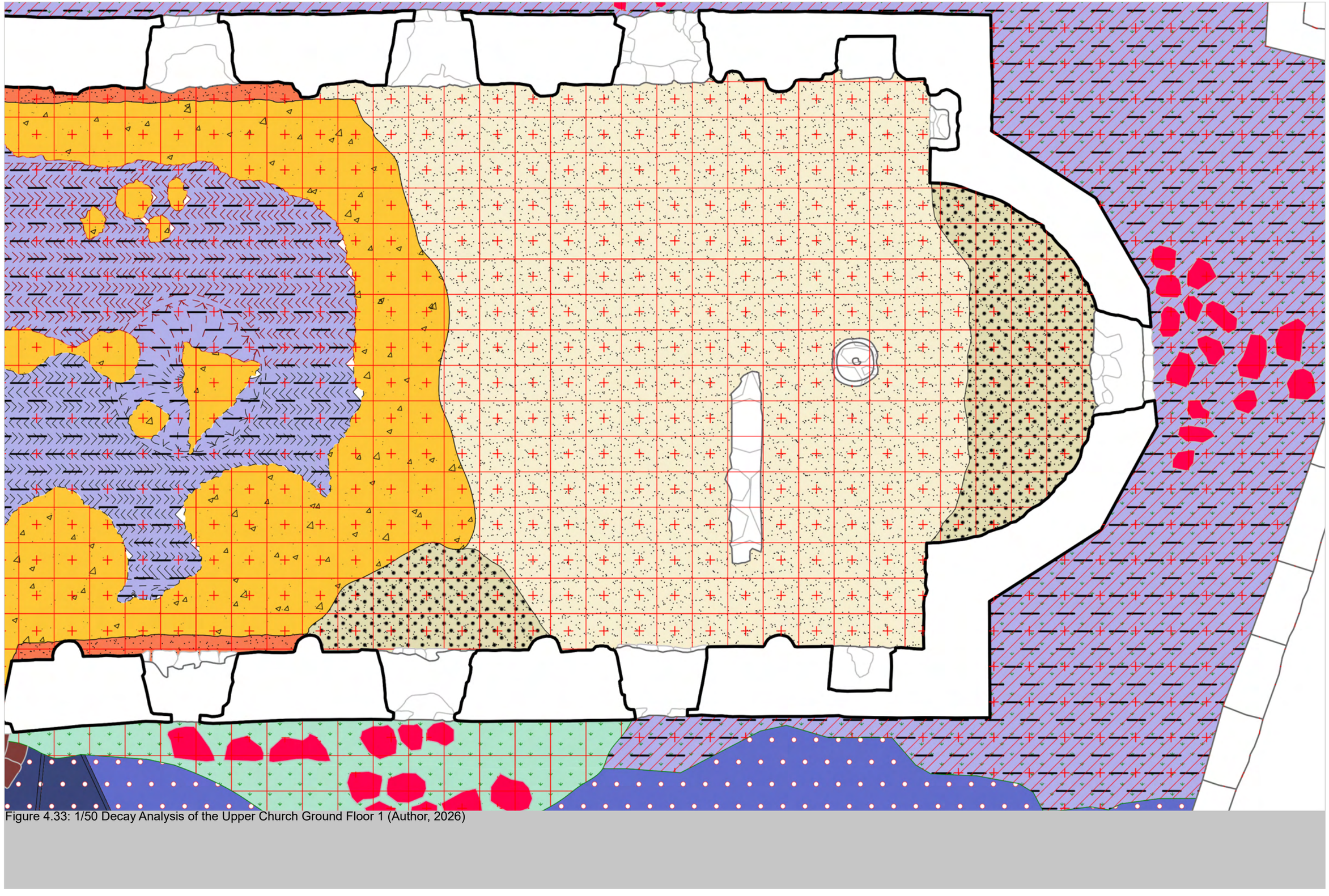


Figure 4.33: 1/50 Decay Analysis of the Upper Church Ground Floor 1 (Author, 2026)

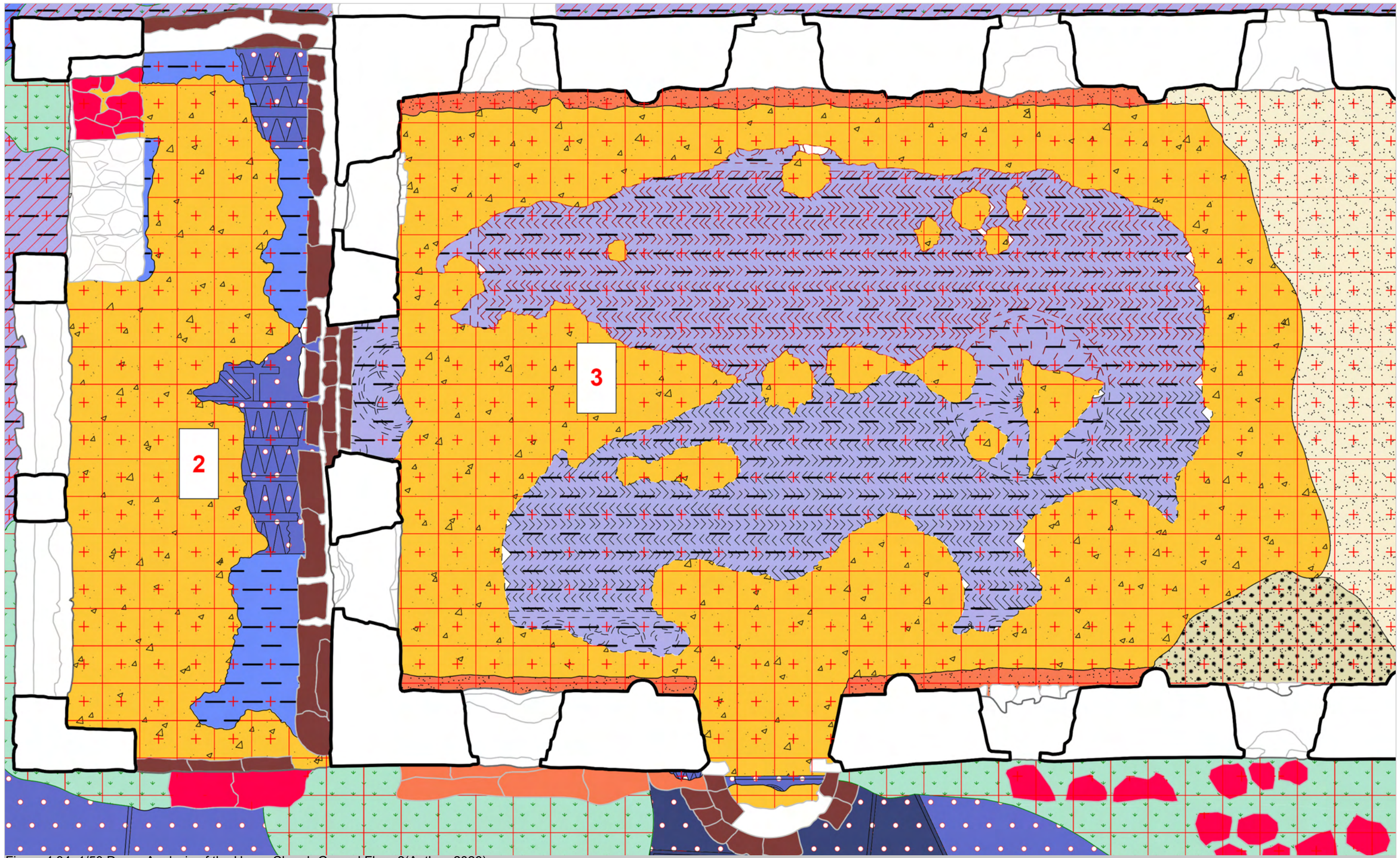


Figure 4.34: 1/50 Decay Analysis of the Upper Church Ground Floor 2(Author, 2026)

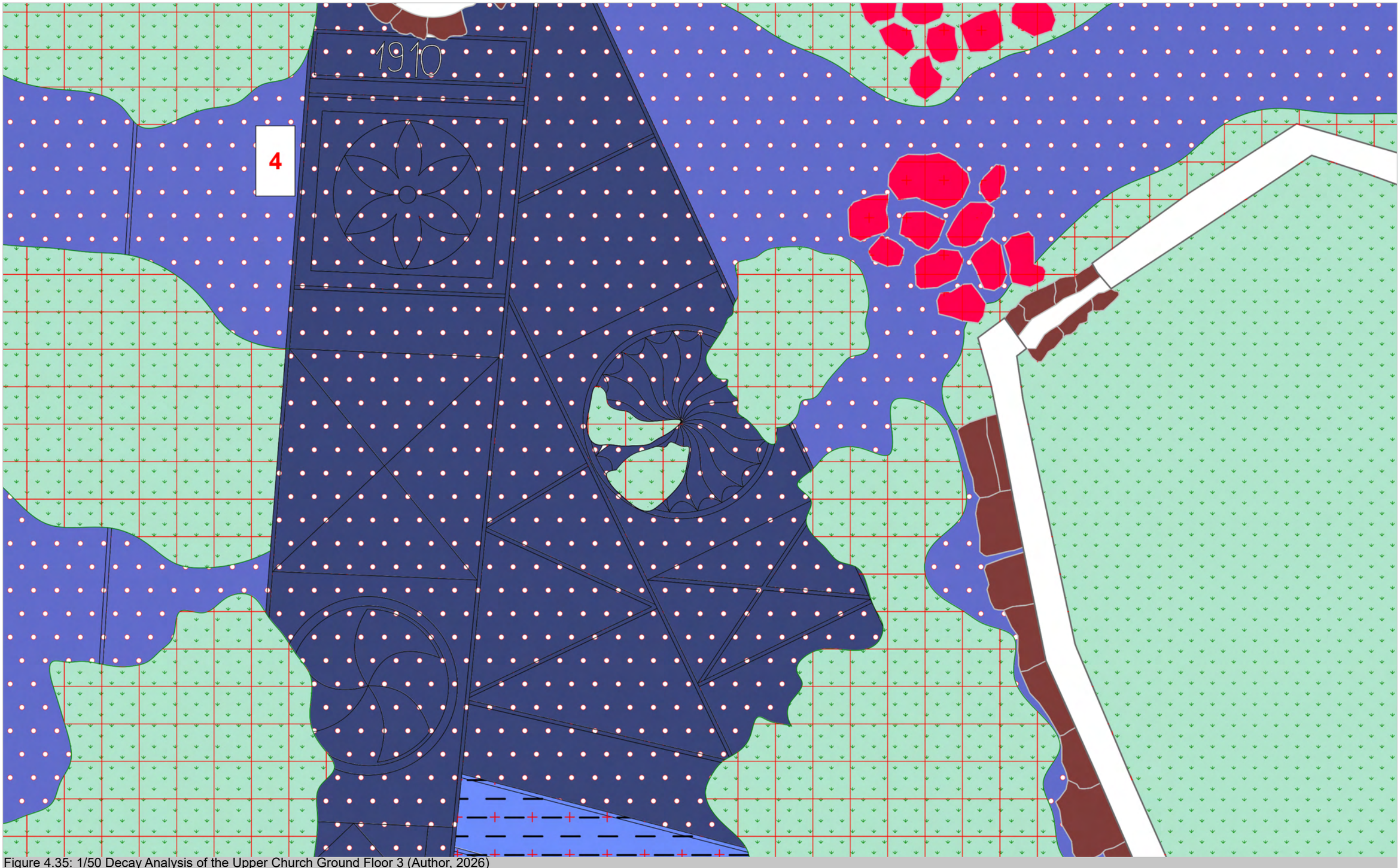


Figure 4.35: 1/50 Decay Analysis of the Upper Church Ground Floor 3 (Author, 2026)

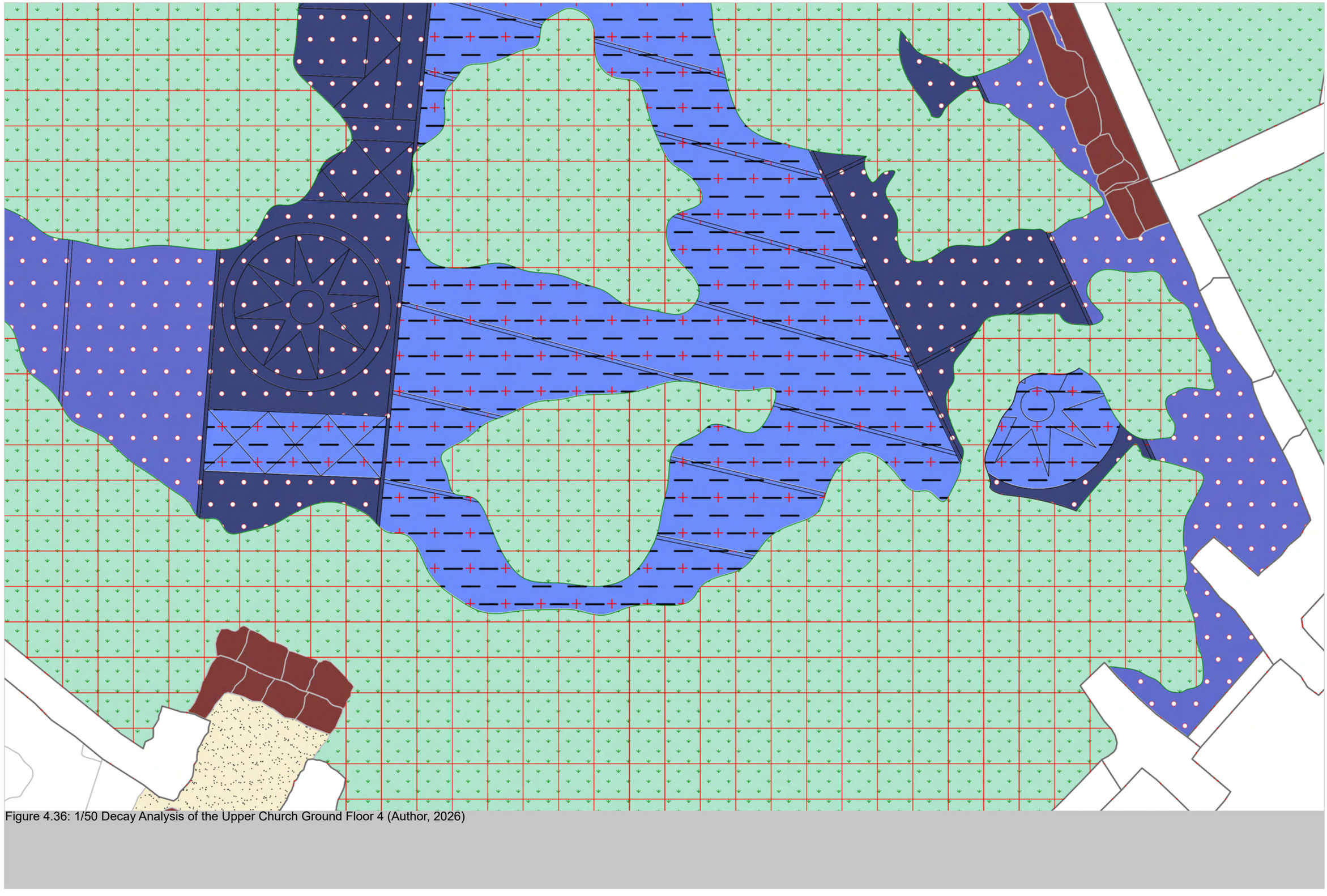
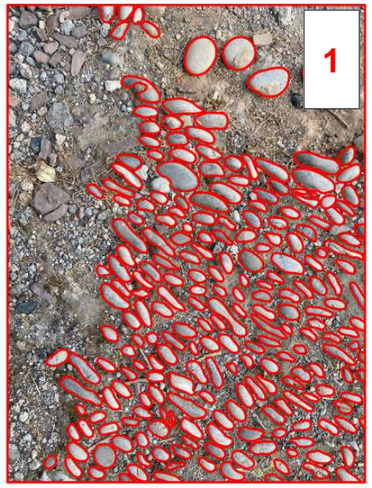


Figure 4.36: 1/50 Decay Analysis of the Upper Church Ground Floor 4 (Author, 2026)



pebblestone pavement type: large stones arranged in a sparse pattern

pebblestone motif type: no motif

pebblestone decay type: severe surface abrasion

-loss of lime mortar bedding
-loosening of stones
-displacement of stones
-loss of stones
-stone surface wear
-soiling / surface contamination
-vegetation

pebblestone decay reason: primary causes:
-rainwater infiltration
-surface runoff and poor drainage
-weathering (sun, wind, temperature var.)
secondary causes:
-vegetation growth
-occasional pedestrian traffic



pebblestone pavement type: small stones arranged in a dense pattern

pebblestone motif type: defined motif

pebblestone decay type: moderate surface abrasion

-disintegration of lime mortar bedding
-loosening of stones
-displacement of stones
-loss of stones
-stone surface wear
-soiling / surface contamination

pebblestone decay reason: primary causes:
-intensive pedestrian traffic
-rising damp (ground moisture)
secondary causes:
-weathering (sun, wind, temperature var.)
-dust accumulation / surface soiling
-church ground&foundation deterioration

Figure 4.37: Decay Analysis of the Upper Church Ground Floor Pavements in Detail (Author, 2026)



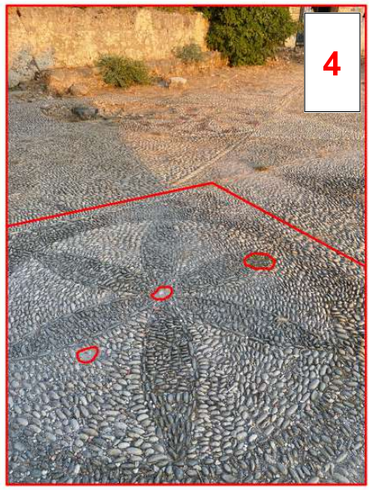
pebblestone pavement type: small stones arranged in a dense pattern

pebblestone motif type: defined motif

pebblestone decay type: severe surface abrasion

-disintegration of lime mortar bedding
-loosening of stones
-displacement of stones
-loss of stones
-stone surface wear
-degradation of pattern definition
-soiling / surface contamination

pebblestone decay reason: primary causes:
-intensive pedestrian traffic
-rising damp (ground moisture)
secondary causes:
-airborne moisture penetration *through openings*
-weather exposure *due to missing doors&windows*
-dust accumulation / surface soiling
-church ground&foundation deterioration



pebblestone pavement type: medium stones arranged in a dense pattern

pebblestone motif type: defined motif

pebblestone decay type: slight surface abrasion

-minimal erosion of lime mortar bedding
-minimal loosening of stones
-minimal stone surface wear
-minimal partial loss of stones
-low level of soiling / surface contamination

pebblestone decay reason: primary causes:
-rainwater infiltration
-weathering (sun, wind, temperature var.)
-occasional pedestrian traffic



pebblestone pavement type: large stones arranged in a sparse pattern

pebblestone motif type: no motif

pebblestone decay type: moderate surface abrasion

-disintegration of lime mortar bedding
-loosening of stones
-displacement of stones
-loss of stones
-stone surface wear
-soiling / surface contamination
-vegetation

pebblestone decay reason: primary causes:
-rainwater infiltration
-surface runoff and poor drainage
-weathering (sun, wind, temperature var.)
secondary causes:
-vegetation growth
-occasional pedestrian traffic

Strategic Implications

State of conservation, material, and deterioration analyses reveal that the stone walls, arches, and vaults forming the main load-bearing system of the Upper Church have largely survived to the present day, and the spatial organization of the structure is still legible. In contrast, the floor coverings and courtyard surfaces stand out as the components of the structure that have suffered the most deterioration due to prolonged abandonment, environmental effects, and biological formations. The ground floor of the building is deteriorating more rapidly than the facade; this conclusion was further clarified by comparing it with old photographs of the building during the site visit. This situation reveals that the ground and courtyard surfaces are one of the key focal points of the design in determining intervention priorities. However, it was also deemed necessary to recommend conservation interventions for the church's facade as a result of the analyses carried out.

The pebble pavements, one of the most characteristic original elements of the Upper Church, are not only a functional floor covering but also an important cultural heritage element that defines the architectural identity and aesthetic value of the building. The geometric, circular, and linear compositions formed by pebbles of varying colors in the entrance area, narthex, interior, and courtyard are original applications reflecting the craftsmanship tradition of the period and constitute one of the most distinctive features of the Upper Church.

Therefore, the pebble pavements have been considered as original heritage components that should be preserved not only for their material value but also for their artistic, historical, and documentary value. However, analyses have shown that these pavements do not have the same state of preservation throughout the area. While the original patterns largely retain their legibility in some sections, significant deterioration of the original compositions has been determined, particularly in certain parts of the nave and courtyard, due to pebble loss, surface erosion, joint loss, plant growth, and ground deformation. Therefore, the area exhibits a heterogeneous structure requiring intervention decisions that vary according to different levels of deterioration, rather than a uniform conservation approach.

2.4. Definition of the Intervention Approach

As a result of the analyses of the values, problems and potentials in Kayaköy carried out in previous sections, the Upper Church area was determined as the focus area for developing a detailed intervention proposal. Subsequently, the church was examined in detail through analyses of its preservation status,material and deterioration. These analyses revealed the architectural and cultural heritage values, existing problems, and potentials of the area, forming the basis of the design and conservation decisions proposed in the next section.

Accordingly, before proceeding to the detailed proposal for the preservation and evaluation of the Upper Church in the next chapter, a strategic framework was established for the Kayaköy settlement as a whole; conservation principles, circulation system, functional and spatial decisions were defined.

In the second stage, recommendations were also made for the immediate surroundings of the Upper Church, and spatial strategies were addressed. In the final stage, detailed conservation and design proposals were developed for the Upper Church and its courtyard. The proposal begins with ground and facade interventions and focuses in detail on interventions to the ground floor of the church and its courtyard as a design proposal.

Moreover; material strategies, visitor experience, and interpretive elements were addressed at detailed scale. Thus, a systematic intervention approach was created, starting from the general settlement scale and progressing to the building detail; continuity was ensured between strategic decisions and detailed implementation proposals.

CHAPTER 3

PROPOSAL: DESIGN AND CONSERVATION STRATEGY FOR THE UPPER CHURCH AREA

3.1 Strategic Framework for Kayaköy

The multi-scale analyses conducted in the previous section revealed that the holistic approach required for the preservation of Kayaköy can be developed through multi-layered and diverse intervention approaches developed across different focal points of the settlement.

The design proposal developed in line with these assessments offers a multi-scale strategic framework that transforms the data obtained from the analyses into preservation and design decisions. The proposal does not focus solely on physical preservation; it considers preservation, circulation, landscape, visitor experience, and the interpretation of heritage as complementary components. Thus, the aim is both to preserve the historical fabric and to make the historical and cultural layers of the area more legible and understandable to visitors.

The proposed strategy primarily focuses on addressing Kayaköy at different scales. Decisions developed at the settlement scale reveal the general preservation approach that will guide future interventions; in subsequent sections, these strategies are first translated to the area around the Upper Church, and then to detailed interventions at the building scale. In this way, the aim is to ensure continuity between general preservation goals and site-specific design decisions.

Accordingly, the strategic framework is built on three main components. First, the conservation principles guiding all design decisions are defined, followed by an explanation of circulation and access strategies throughout the settlement, and finally, the fundamental design decisions regarding landscape and spatial arrangement are presented. These three components form a transition to the conservation and design proposals for the Upper Church, which are developed in detail in subsequent chapters.

3.1.1 Conservation Principles

The proposed conservation and design strategy has been developed in line with the international conservation principles mentioned in the second chapter, and is also structured to respond to Kayaköy's abandoned rural settlement character and multi-layered cultural landscape features.

Holistic Conservation of the Cultural Landscape

The fundamental approach of the proposal considers Kayaköy not merely as a settlement composed of individual structures, but as a holistic cultural landscape formed by the convergence of structures, open spaces, natural landscape, topography, and collective memory. It also foresees that the holistic conservation of the area will be supported by strategies developed for different focal points. Therefore, conservation decisions are not limited only to interventions for the Upper Church; they aim to create a general framework that will preserve the spatial integrity, visual relationships, and historical continuity of the settlement. Detailed intervention proposals developed for the Upper Church have also been considered as part of this holistic approach.

Preservation of the Ruin Character

One of Kayaköy's most important heritage values is its unique ruin character, formed by its abandonment for many years. Today, the current state of the structures, natural aging processes, material losses, the relationship between the vegetation and the structures, and deterioration over time constitute integral parts of the settlement's historical narrative. Therefore, the aim is not to restore the structures to their appearance in a specific period or to reconstruct missing sections. Instead, the goal is to preserve existing remains, reinforce them where necessary, and make them more legible for visitors. In this way, the sense of abandonment and the traces left by time in Kayaköy are preserved.

Minimum Intervention

All proposed interventions are limited only to those deemed necessary for preservation, structural safety, visitor safety, and improving the legibility of the site. The existing historical fabric has been preserved as much as possible, and unnecessary repairs and reconstructions have been avoided. New interventions are only proposed where they enhance the perception of existing traces, regulate circulation, or contribute to preservation.

Preservation of Authenticity

The preservation approach is based on the preservation of the site's original material texture and historical traces. The surviving stone walls, pebble mosaics, erosion, material losses, and traces of natural aging are considered important elements documenting the structure's past. Therefore, the design proposal aims to preserve and make visible the existing traces, rather than reproducing the missing sections.

Distinguishability of Contemporary Interventions

The proposed new elements have been developed with a contemporary design language that

does not imitate the historical structure. Steel profiles, lime mortar applications, information panels, and landscape elements are designed to be easily distinguishable from the original structure while being compatible with the existing historical fabric. Thus, both the legibility of the historical layers is preserved and the period to which the new interventions belong is clearly understood.

Material Compatibility

The materials used were selected taking into account the physical characteristics of the historical structure and the existing material character. While lime mortar was preferred in the repair applications, steel elements were used to increase the legibility of the interventions. Landscape materials such as stabilized soil, natural gravel, and wood were determined to both harmonize with the natural character of the area and keep the visual impact to a minimum.

Reversibility

The aim is for the newly added interventions to be removable or replaceable as much as possible without damaging the existing historical fabric. Thus, the aim is to adapt to different conservation approaches and new scientific data that may be developed in the future.

Presentation and Interpretation of Heritage

The conservation approach aims not only to preserve physical remains but also to enable visitors to understand these remains. In this regard, the circulation system, ground arrangements, information panels, and the use of different materials work together to make the historical, spatial, and experiential layers of the area visible. Thus, instead of seeing the missing parts of the structure reconstructed, visitors have the opportunity to interpret the past through the existing traces.

Integration with the Landscape

In Kayaköy, the natural landscape and the historical fabric are two inseparable fundamental components. Therefore, the proposed interventions have been developed in harmony with the topography, existing vegetation, and open space system. While the controlled removal of plant species that damage the structures is foreseen, a significant portion of the natural vegetation that supports the abandoned character of the settlement should be preserved. In this way, both the historical remains are preserved and the unique landscape identity of Kayaköy is maintained.

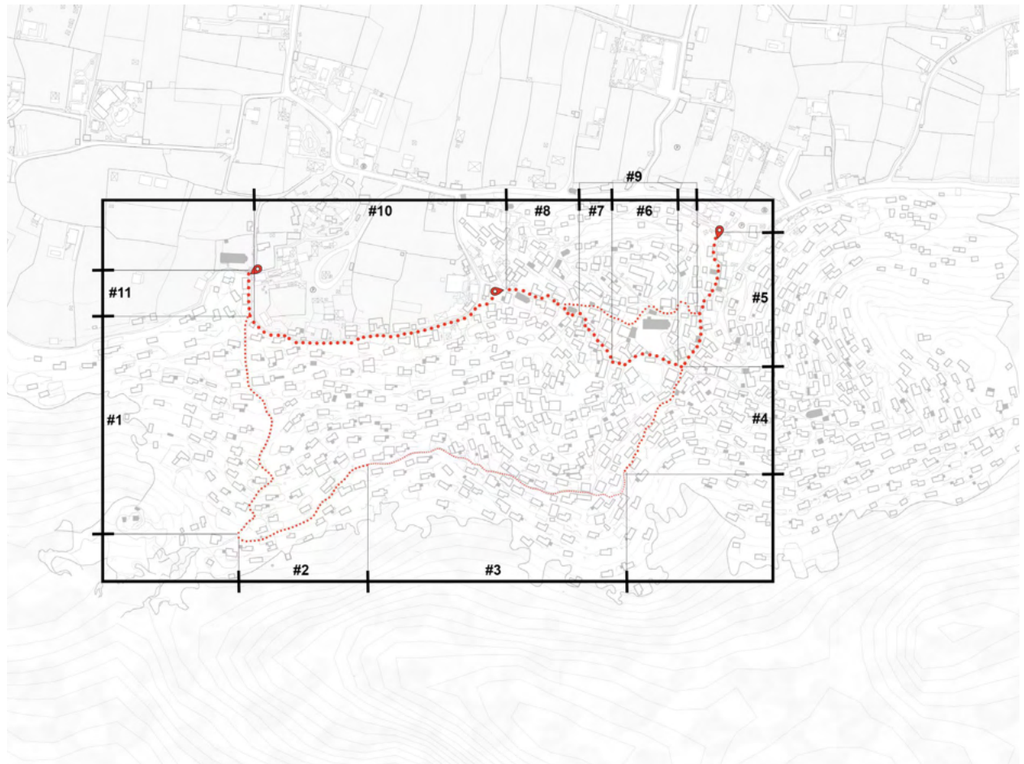


Figure 5.1: Classification of Paths According to Visitor Experience (Author, 2026)

3.1.2 Circulation and Access Strategy

Based on the accessibility analyses conducted in the previous sections, area-specific recommendations have been developed to improve the accessibility, safety, and legibility of the each existing circulation networks. The proposal prioritizes the preservation of the historical road system rather than creating new circulation axes; it aims to provide solutions to the identified physical problems along each route.

PATH1

The path is composed of stone steps. It is quite steep, and the stones are very slippery due to abrasion. It is particularly difficult to descend. However, it remains one of the most clearly defined paths in the area, as the houses are located farther from the path compared to other areas, preventing the ruins from obstructing it.

Recommendation

The stone steps should be preserved, but maintenance and surface improvements should be carried out to enhance visitor safety on surfaces that have become slippery due to wear. The original character of the path should be preserved, and wayfinding elements should be added where necessary.

PATH 2

Walking is relatively easy due to the topography, as the path is a flat dirt trail. There is little accumulation of stones along the route. However, since the path is not clearly defined and lacks informational signage, visitors sometimes prefer to turn back rather than continue forward.

Recommendation

The existing path should be preserved, but directional and informational elements should be added to improve the readability of the route. This will encourage visitors to complete the route.

PATH 3

This path has characteristics similar to Path 2; however, visitors often prefer to turn back via Path 2 or Path 4 rather than continue to this section. This is mainly due to the path not being clearly defined and the lack of sufficient informative and directional signage. Nevertheless, this area offers several attractive viewpoints at certain points.

Recommendation

While preserving the physical character of the path, directional and interpretive elements are recommended to highlight existing viewpoints. This will encourage visitors to use this route.

PATH 4

The slope is gentle, and the path is generally easy to walk, consisting of a dirt trail. As it descends toward the square in front of the upper church, the buildings become more ruined, and debris is scattered onto the path.

Recommendation

Debris accumulations on the path should be selectively removed, and stones obstructing movement should be removed. The connection with the square should be strengthened, making access to the Upper Church more legible.

PATH 5

The path is composed of stone steps. Although the slope is steep, it is easier to descend compared to Path 1. The stones show signs of abrasion. The path is generally clear and not obstructed by debris; however, as it approaches the Upper Church, the buildings are more deteriorated and rubble is scattered onto the path.This path also connects to one of the main entrances.

Recommendation

The preservation of the stone steps should be prioritized, with maintenance applied to worn surfaces. Due to its connection to one of the main entrances, wayfinding and maintenance work should be prioritized along this route.

PATH 6

In this section, the slope is negotiated through stone steps; however, compared to Path 1 and Path 5, the path is in a more deteriorated condition, with visible abrasion and material losses.

Recommendation

Local consolidation and conservation interventions should be applied to deteriorated steps, preserving the existing stone texture as much as possible. Minimal interventions to enhance visitor safety are recommended.

PATH 7

A large number of buildings are in a ruined condition, resulting in debris covering
much of the path. The ground surface is almost entirely in a state of ruin.

Recommendation

Selective removal of debris accumulations obstructing circulation should be carried out, but the ruined character of the area should be preserved. Only interventions necessary for safety are recommended along this route.

PATH 8

This section is also formed by stone steps, which are in good condition. The slope is gentle, making it easy to walk. It also connects to one of the entrances; however, this entrance is not currently in active use.

Recommendation

The existing path should be preserved, and basic wayfinding elements should be added to allow for controlled future use of the unused entrance.

PATH 9

This is one of the secondary paths and is the most frequently used among them. It provides access to the Boys' School and the Upper Church. However, the stone-stepped path can be very slippery at some points which
requires significant maintenance.

Recommendation

This route should be considered a priority maintenance area due to its access to the Upper Church and the Boys' School. Local repairs should be made to slippery stone surfaces to support safe circulation.

PATH 10

This section is particularly interesting due to the intersection of public areas and the Kayaköy Open-Air Museum.The left side of the path is generally composed of private properties, and further along there are buildings such as workshops and small hotels. On the right side, the houses are in moderate to relatively good condition, although some are in ruins. While fallen stones occasionally appear on the path, it is generally open but still in a advanced deteriorated state.

Recommendation

Wayfinding and interpretive elements are recommended to strengthen the connection between public spaces and the Open-Air Museum. Loose debris obstructing circulation should be removed, preserving the existing character of the path.

PATH 11

This section is connected to one of the main entrances of the museum. Although the ground surface is worn, the stone pathway remains clearly defined and is relatively cleaner compared to other areas.

Recommendation

Due to its role as a main entrance, the path's current readability should be maintained, and maintenance should be applied to worn surfaces. Welcoming and informational elements to assist visitors in navigation can be positioned at this entrance.

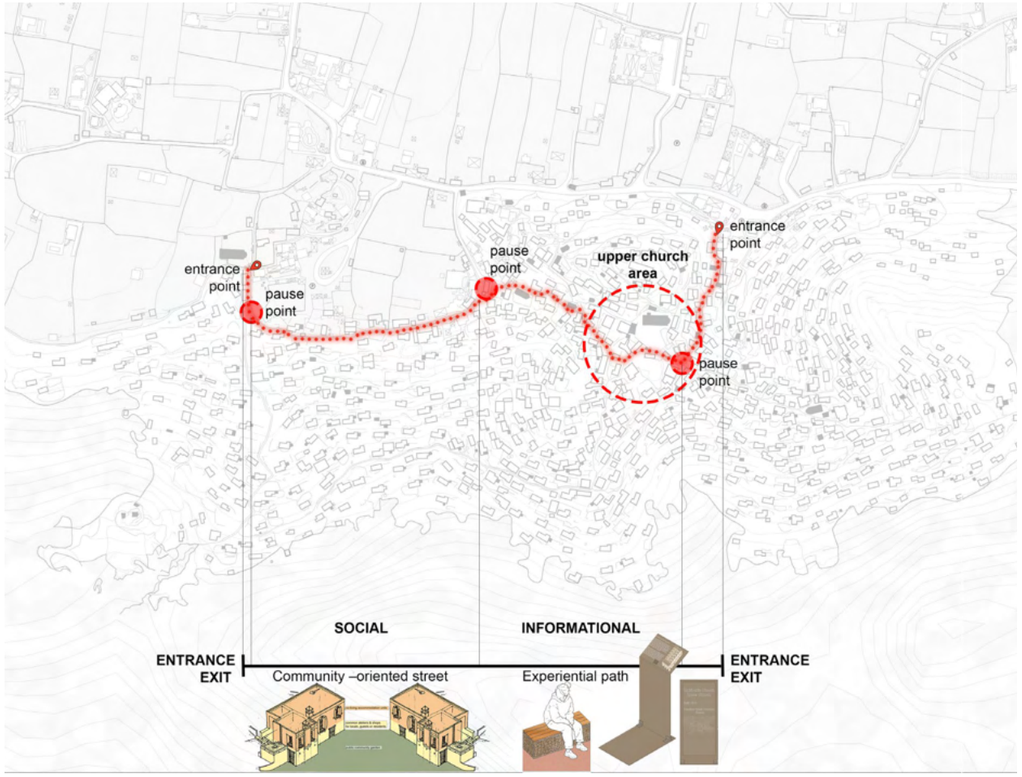


Figure 5.2: Main Path Improvement Strategy and Proposed Functions (Author, 2026)
Hypothetical sketch of a typical Levissi house drawn by Hakan Saraç, edited by author (Saraç, 2001, p. 259)

3.1.3 Functional and Spatial Strategy

The most frequently used route within the settlement is the main circulation axis connecting the two main entrances and the two main churches. Circulation analyses show that this route is the most preferred by visitors. Since this route connects the most important heritage elements of the area, directly links to the main entrances, allows visitors to see the important structures along the route, and is more legible and accessible compared to other alternative routes, it can be considered as the main visitor route of the settlement and has a potential to be re-functionalized with appropriate functions.

The proposed route can be structured through two different experience phases, taking into account its different spatial characteristics. The first section, located in the plain area, can function as a community-oriented street, considering its existing usage potential. Currently, there are workshops, boutique hotels, and small commercial shops that have been restored and are in use along this route. Based on this potential, it can be suggested that some selected house ruins can be restored while preserving their original architectural character and re-functionalized as example structures representing traditional housing typology. These houses functions as a workshop, co-working space, local production area, and also as accommodation units, allowing for co-living and working.

The second section of the route, which passes through the center of the area, can be improved as an experiential path. The main goal of this section is not only to enable visitors to access the area, but also to support them in exploring the historical, spatial, and cultural layers of the area through experience. Accordingly, the proposed directional elements, interpretation boards, resting points, and viewing areas along the route contribute to visitors' more conscious perception of the area.

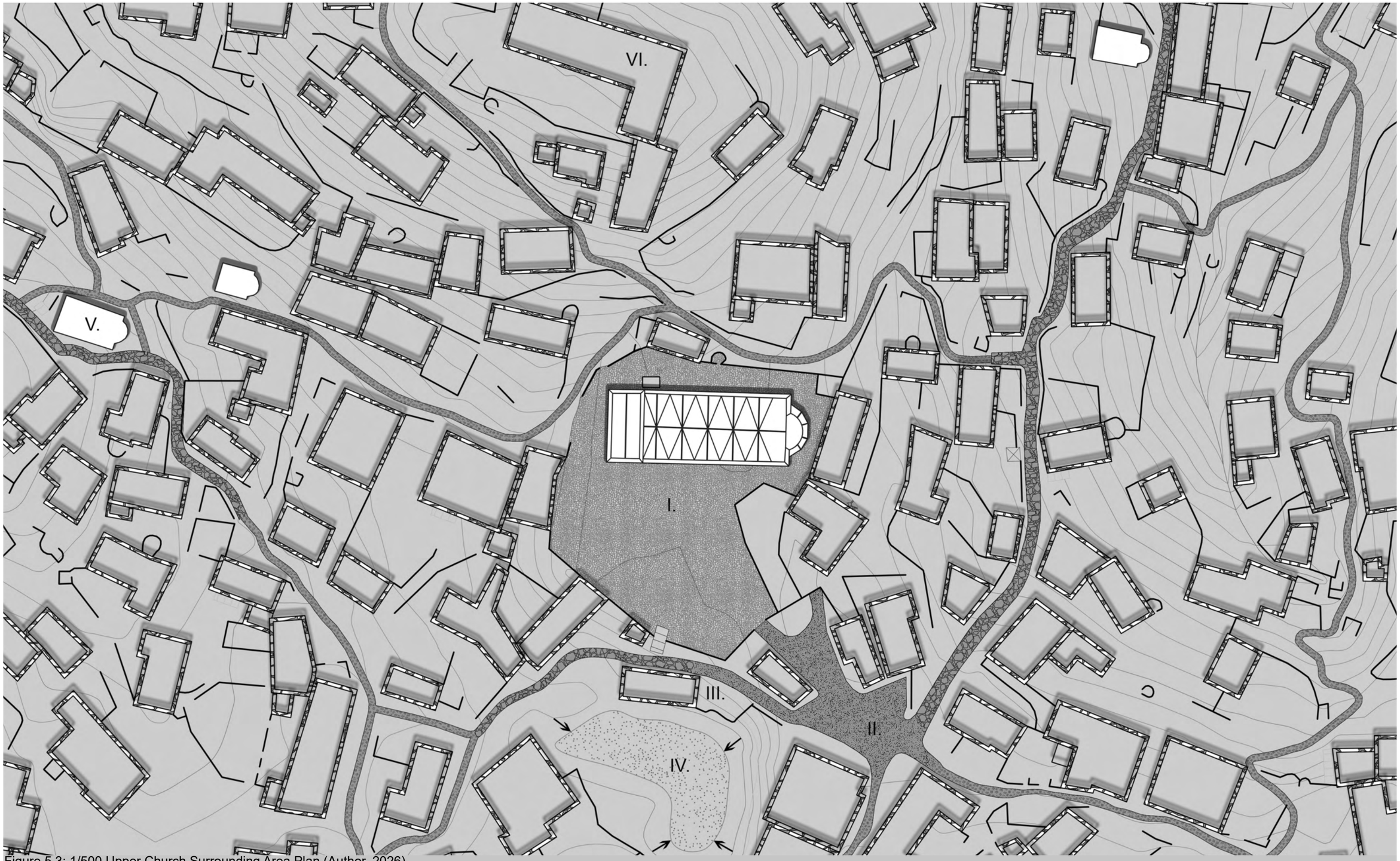


Figure 5.3: 1/500 Upper Church Surrounding Area Plan (Author, 2026)

I.Taxiarchis (Upper) Church, II. Old Stumbo Square, III. Old Commercial Street, IV.Stumbo Pit, V. Chapel of Passion Cycle, VI. Boys' School

3.2 Strategic Recommendations for the Surrounding of Upper Church

In line with the strategic decisions developed at the Kayaköy scale in the previous section, this section presents site-specific strategic recommendation regarding the Upper Church and its immediate surroundings. These proposals do not aim to develop detailed architectural design interventions; rather, they aim to reveal the potentials that can strengthen the spatial relationships between the historical public spaces, circulation system, and important heritage focal points around the Upper Church.

The Old Stumbo Square, one of the most important public components of the Upper Church's surroundings, was used as the main market area and social life center of the settlement during the Levissi period. Butchers, bakeries, pharmacies, barbers, tailors, and various shops were located around the square; the square was not only an area where commercial activities were carried out, but also functioned as an important public meeting point where people came together.

The street starting from the square and passing in front of the Upper Church was also an important circulation axis where commercial functions continued, and it connected the square with the church and other public spaces of the settlement. In this sense, the fact that the main entrances of the church are also from this square and street is another important potential. In this context, it is proposed to make the historical public character of Old Stumbo Square visible again and to strengthen its spatial relationship with the Upper Church. It is thought that considering the square as a stopping, orientation, and meeting point on the visitor route creates potential for flexible uses that can support public use, such as seating areas, shaded resting points, and temporary events. Thus, the aim is to create a transitional space where visitors can experience the historical public life of the area before reaching the Upper Church.

The Stumbo Pit, located behind the square and giving the square its name, is an important landscape element reflecting Kayaköy's production history, as it is the area where the clay soil called argilo, used in the construction of the settlement, was extracted. It is proposed to make the historical meaning of this area more visible while preserving its existing topographical character. Through viewing points, interpretive elements, and limited arrangements supporting security, visitors may be able to better perceive the role of the Stumbo Pit in the formation process of the settlement. Thus, the area can be considered as a memory landscape that complements the historical narrative around the Upper Church.

Another important structure around the Upper Church is the Boys' School. While the main entrances to the church are located on the south and east axes, there is also an unused entrance on the west side for visitors coming from the school. Therefore, re-evaluating this entrance and strengthening its connection with the historical road from the Boys' School is considered a potential way to diversify visitor circulation and make the spatial relationship between the Upper Church and other important heritage sites within the settlement more legible. In conclusion, the proposals presented in this section aim to reveal the existing potential of the historical public spaces and important heritage sites around the Upper Church. These strategic proposals contribute to the consideration of the Upper Church not only as a singular monumental structure but also as a holistic focal point that can be understood together with the surrounding public spaces and cultural landscape components.

3.3 Upper Church as the Detailed Intervention Area

This section primarily presents intervention proposals for the ground floor and the main facades of the Upper Church, based on the problems identified in the analyses conducted in previous sections. Afterwards, detailed design proposal developed for the church ground and courtyard floor, main design approach and concepts ares explained.

3.3.1 Ground Floor & Courtyard Intervention

This section presents recommendations (Figure 5.4 and 5.5.) for the ground deteriorations analyzed in previous sections. The terminology, conservation, and intervention strategies presented have been interpreted and adapted to the material properties, deterioration conditions, and site-specific conservation requirements of the Upper Church by referencing the ICOMOS–ISCS Illustrated Glossary on Stone Deterioration Patterns, EwaGlos: European Illustrated Glossary of Conservation Terms for Wall Paintings and Architectural Surfaces, and Manuale Operativo per il Restauro Architettonico.

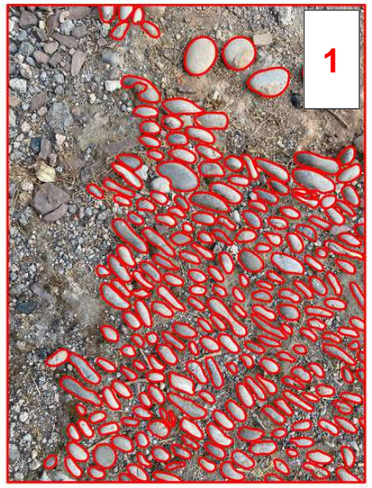
3.3.2 Facade Intervention

Same approach that is explained in the Ground Floor & Courtyard Intervention was applied for recommendations for facade intervention (Figure 5.6)



Decay Type	Intervention
pebblestone loss	Selective reintegration or compatible infill according to the condition of the area
widespread partial pebblestone loss	Stabilization of the remaining stones and selective reintegration where necesssary
joint mortar loss	Repointing with compatible lime mortar
vegetation colonization vegatation growth(between stones)	Selective vegetation management, preserving controlled vegetation while removing invasive growth
depressed area *(with major surface subsidence)*	Ground stabilization and compatible ground resurfacing
soil deposition	Careful manual cleaning
surface unevenness *(with surface subsidence)*	Re-levelling by compatible materials
material disintegration *(on lime mortar bedding following loss of the pebblestone layer)*	Cleaning and consolidation,supported by repointing with compatible lime mortar where necessary
surface contamination	Gentle and non-invasive cleaning
loosening of stones	Careful lifting and re-bedding of original stones, supported by repointing with compatible lime mortar
slight surface abrasion	Monitoring
moderate surface abrasion	Preventive conservation
moderate to severe surface abrasion	Surface consolidation where necessary
severe surface abrasion	Preservation and monitoring
severe plinth material disintegration*(with material loss)*	Localized consolidation and repair
stone step abrasion *(with material loss)*	Localized repair and stabilization
debris	Selective cleaning of the debris while preserving historically significant ones

Figure 5.4: Intervention Proposals for Identified Decays of the Upper Church Ground Floor (Author, 2026)



proposed intervention: -re-bedding of stones using lime mortar

-selective reintegration of missing stones
(using original or compatible materials)

-sub-base stabilization

-improvement of drainage conditions



proposed intervention: -repointing of joints with lime mortar

-gentle surface cleaning
(non-invasive)

-protection from further wear
(controlled access)

-water management strategies
(drainage improvement)

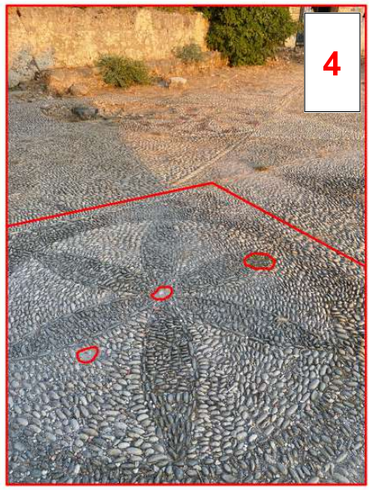


proposed intervention: -surface consolidation

-gentle surface cleaning
(non-invasive)

-protection from further wear
(controlled access)

-water management strategies
(drainage improvement)



proposed intervention: -repair by localized repointing with lime mortar

-gentle surface cleaning
(non-invasive)

-selective reintegration of missing stones
(using original or compatible materials)



proposed intervention: -careful removal of vegetation

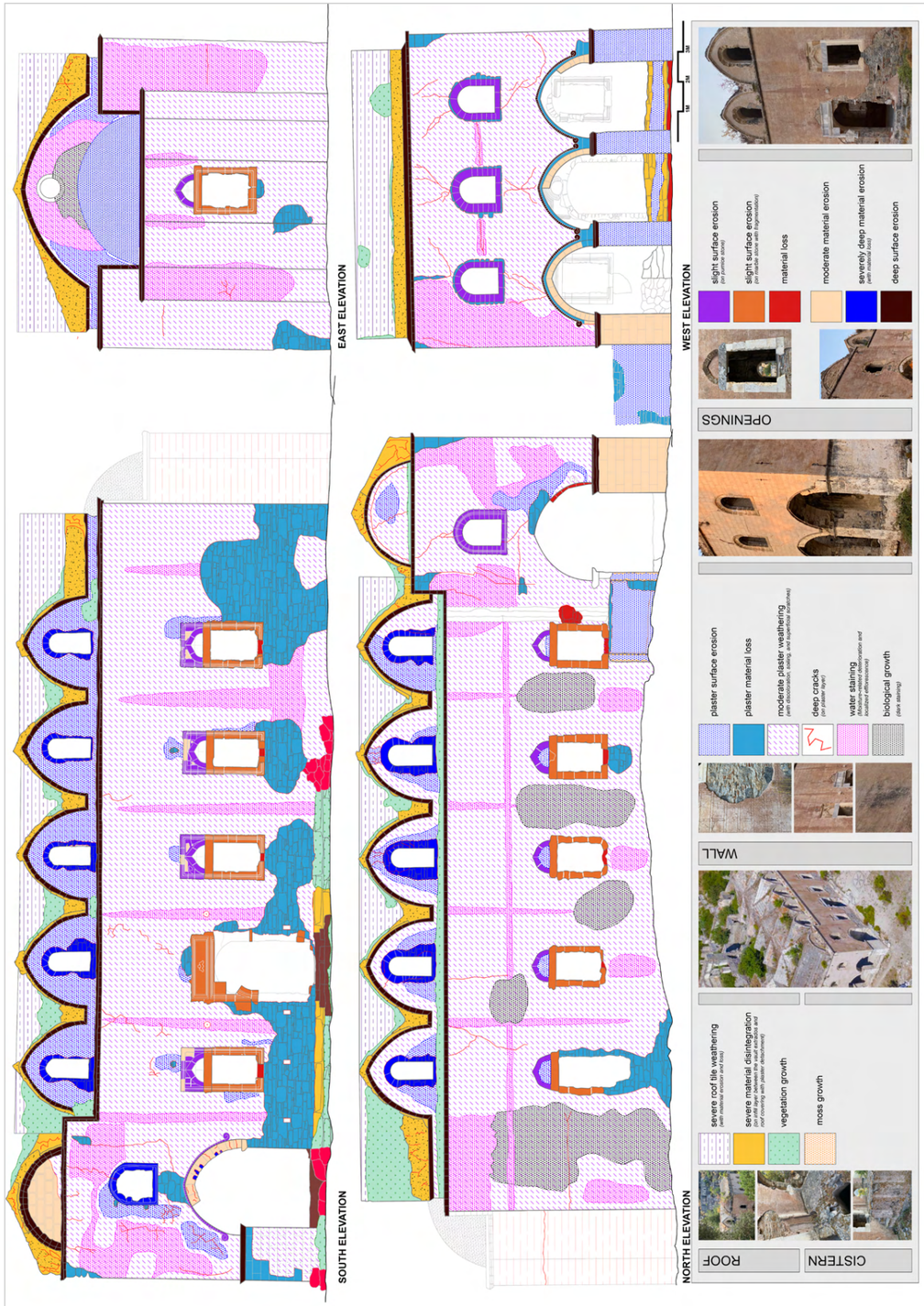
-root extraction

-repointing with lime mortar

-control of future growth
(maintenance plan)

Figure 5.5: Intervention Proposals for Identified Decays of the Upper Church Ground Floor Pavements in Detail

(Author, 2026)



Decay Type	Intervention
severe roof tile weathering *(with material erosion and loss)*	Selective replacement of severely deteriorated roof tiles with compatible materials
severe material disintegration *(on infill layer between the vault extrados and roof covering with plaster detachment)*	Localized consolidation,compatible repair and re-infill with suitable materials where necessary
vegetation growth	Careful removal of invasive vegetation and preventive maintenance
moss growth	Gentle biological cleaning and moisture management
plaster surface erosion	Gentle dry cleaning and surface consolidation using a compatible lime-based consolidant
plaster material loss	Localized stabilization of plaster edges, preserving exposed masonry areas for historical readability
moderate plaster weathering *(with discoloration, soiling, and superficial scratches)*	Minimal dry cleaning and monitoring
deep cracks *(on plaster layer)*	Compatible grout injection and crack stabilization where necessary
water staining *(Moisture-related deterioration and localized efflorescence)*	Identification of moisture sources and improvement of drainage, and gentle cleaning of efflorescence
biological growth *(dark staining)*	Gentle biological cleaning and preventive maintenance
slight surface erosion *(on pumice stone)*	Gentle dry cleaning and localized surface consolidation where necessary
slight surface erosion *(on marble stone with fragmentation)*	Localized consolidation to prevent further fragmentation, maintaining existing material without reconstruction
material loss	Stabilization of surrounding material to prevent further loss, without reintegration of missing parts
moderate material erosion	Surface consolidation and localized repair using compatible materials
severely deep material erosion *(with material loss)*	Structural stabilization and consolidation of weakened areas, without reconstructing missing elements
deep surface erosion	Localized consolidation and surface stabilization

Figure 5.6: Intervention Proposals for Identified Decays of the Upper Church Facades (Author, 2026)

3.3.3. Design Proposal

The conservation and valorization proposal developed in this study is considered a natural continuation of the historical, spatial, architectural, and deterioration analyses carried out in previous sections. The design approach does not aim at reconstructing the existing historical fabric or reproducing an idealized past; instead, it aims to increase the legibility of the Upper Church area by making visible its original spatial character, historical layers, and traces formed over time. Accordingly, the proposal aims to preserve the existing ruined character of the church. The approach treats conservation and valorization as two fundamental components that complement each other; it aims to support physical conservation with the understanding and experience of cultural heritage.

The proposal is based on the principles of minimum intervention, material compatibility, distinguishability of new and old interventions, and reversibility as much as possible, in line with international conservation principles. During the design process, deteriorations were not considered solely as technical problems. On the contrary, vegetation, material losses, erosion, and deficiencies that occurred during the period of abandonment were accepted as historical traces that constitute the memory of the area.

Therefore, the proposal does not aim to complete all deficiencies; it adopts a selective approach between the original traces that need to be preserved and the areas requiring intervention. This approach is based on the concept of **"Framing Layers of Memory**." The Upper Church is a multi-layered heritage site where cultural, historical, material, and spatial-experiential layers are intertwined. Therefore, the aim of the proposal is not to recreate the lost historical situation; but to make visible, interpret, and convey the layers that have survived to the present day to visitors. In line with this approach, the proposed interventions aim to increase readability rather than reconstruction. Instead of completely recreating the historical fabric, existing remains are defined through contemporary but harmonious materials; thus, the relationship between the original and the new is clearly perceived.

The same intervention was not applied to all missing areas; each area was evaluated separately according to its existing physical condition, level of preservation, and historical legibility. Thus, while original pebblestone pavements were preserved in some areas, selective reintegration was applied in others, and deficiencies were deliberately left visible in some areas. These decisions aim to increase the legibility of the transformation the area has undergone. An important component of the conservation proposal is the improvement of the visitor experience. The aim is for the historical meaning of the area to be understood not only through information panels but also through the physical relationship the visitor establishes within the space. Therefore, circulation routes, ground transitions, material changes, seating areas, and information elements were evaluated together throughout the design process; the spatial arran

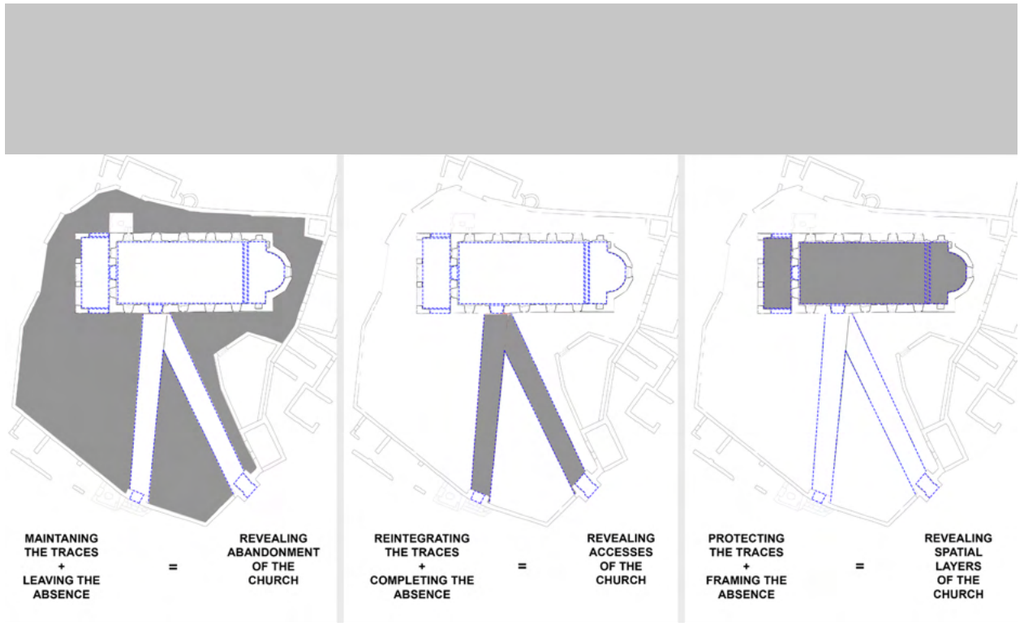


Figure 5.7: Main Design Approaches for Ground Floor Proposal (Author, 2026)

gement was created that guides the visitor but does not overshadow the historical environment.

The design proposal developed within this scope is based on four basic strategies. First, the existing spatial organization was preserved, and the historical circulation system was made legible through different ground materials. Secondly, the area's historical significance has been preserved by carefully maintaining the vegetation and material deficiencies that represent the process of abandonment. Finally, interpretive elements have been developed to convey the historical layers of the site to visitors. The visitor experience is enhanced through contemporary interventions such as information panels, seating elements, and material details, while preserving the visual integrity of the historical environment. In conclusion, the proposal aims not only to physically preserve the Upper Church but also to enable its historical layers to be understood and experienced by visitors. Thus, conservation and valorization have been addressed within a mutually supportive approach; a sustainable design approach has been developed that can meet contemporary usage needs while preserving the original character of the site.

3.3.3.1. Spatial Organization and Ground Surface Strategy

The spatial proposal developed for the Upper Church area is based on the existing topography, historical circulation network, and surviving physical traces. Instead of redefining the existing spatial organization, the design approach aims to enhance the legibility of the historical circulation system and allow visitors to experience the area and imagine how it was in the past. Accordingly, the proposed interventions are based on a holistic ground strategy that respects the original character of the area, adopts the principle of minimal intervention, and highlights the existing material texture. One of the fundamental decisions of the proposal is to prioritize the preservation of the existing historical pebble paving. The surviving original paving fragments are considered one of the most important historical layers of the area, and the goal is to preserve them in situ wherever possible.

A uniform approach to completing missing paving areas has not been adopted. Instead, each area has been evaluated separately according to its existing physical condition, historical legibility, and importance within visitor circulation. In the design proposal of the mosaic pavements connecting the entrance axes of the church, where the historical pattern can be reliably read, selective re-integration was applied. In areas where the original arrangement could not be definitively determined and where there was significant deg

radation, deficiencies were preserved and made visible using contemporary but harmonious paving materials. Thus, instead of imitating the past, the new interventions were designed as complementary elements that support the reading of the existing historical layers. For this purpose, in the areas where selective re-integration was applied, new pebblestones compatible with the old pebblestone material was used, while stabilized compacted earth was applied to the ground and surrounding areas where the worn old pebblestone pavement was preserved. In the compacted earth application, the local soil of the region, terra rossa, which also gives color to the plaster on the church facade, was used, reflecting the local color in the design and simultaneously contributing to the distinctiveness of the new intervention in harmony with the old texture. Moreover, compacted grey gravel was used mainly in the rest of the church courtyard, in areas where there were no traces of the old patterned mosaic, according to different spatial functions.

The transitions between the paving materials constitute one of the important components of the design. The boundaries between historical pavements and new surfaces are defined by organically shaped lime mortar bands and, in places, thin steel U-profiles. This detail not only makes the material transitions more distinct but also contributes to the physical preservation of the historical pavements. The organically designed boundaries follow the irregular geometry of the existing sto

nes, increasing the integration of the intervention into the area while also making it possible for contemporary materials to be distinguishable from the historical fabric. Within the scope of the proposal, the circulation system has not been re-envisioned; the existing entrance axes have been made legible. In the interior of the church, the lost spatial traces have been framed with lime mortar bands, to make the lost parts visible.

Vegetation is also an important component of the ground strategy. Throughout the area, invasive plants that damage historical materials or plants that could cause damage due to their physical proximity to the historical fabric are removed in a controlled manner, while it is proposed that vegetation that does not harm the historical structure and supports the character of the abandoned rural landscape be preserved in certain areas in a controlled manner. This approach aims to make the phenomenon of abandonment legible as an important part of Kayaköy's identity, rather than completely eliminating it.

Among these vegetation-covered areas where the pebblestone pavement has disappeared, particularly those at the church entrances, have been interpreted as potential spaces suitable for new functions such as information panels, seating areas, and observation points. These areas are intended to make the historical layers more understandable and experiential for visitors. The seating area is designed to allow visitors to pause briefly, observing the Upper Church, the courtyard, and the surrounding historical traces, rather than simply passing through. It can also serve as a space for any event or gathering in the churchyard. The aim is to create a spatial pause point that enhances the visitor experience, increasing observation and awareness. Alongside this area and in connection with the entrances, informative panels are intended to convey the historical layers and significance of the area to visitors.

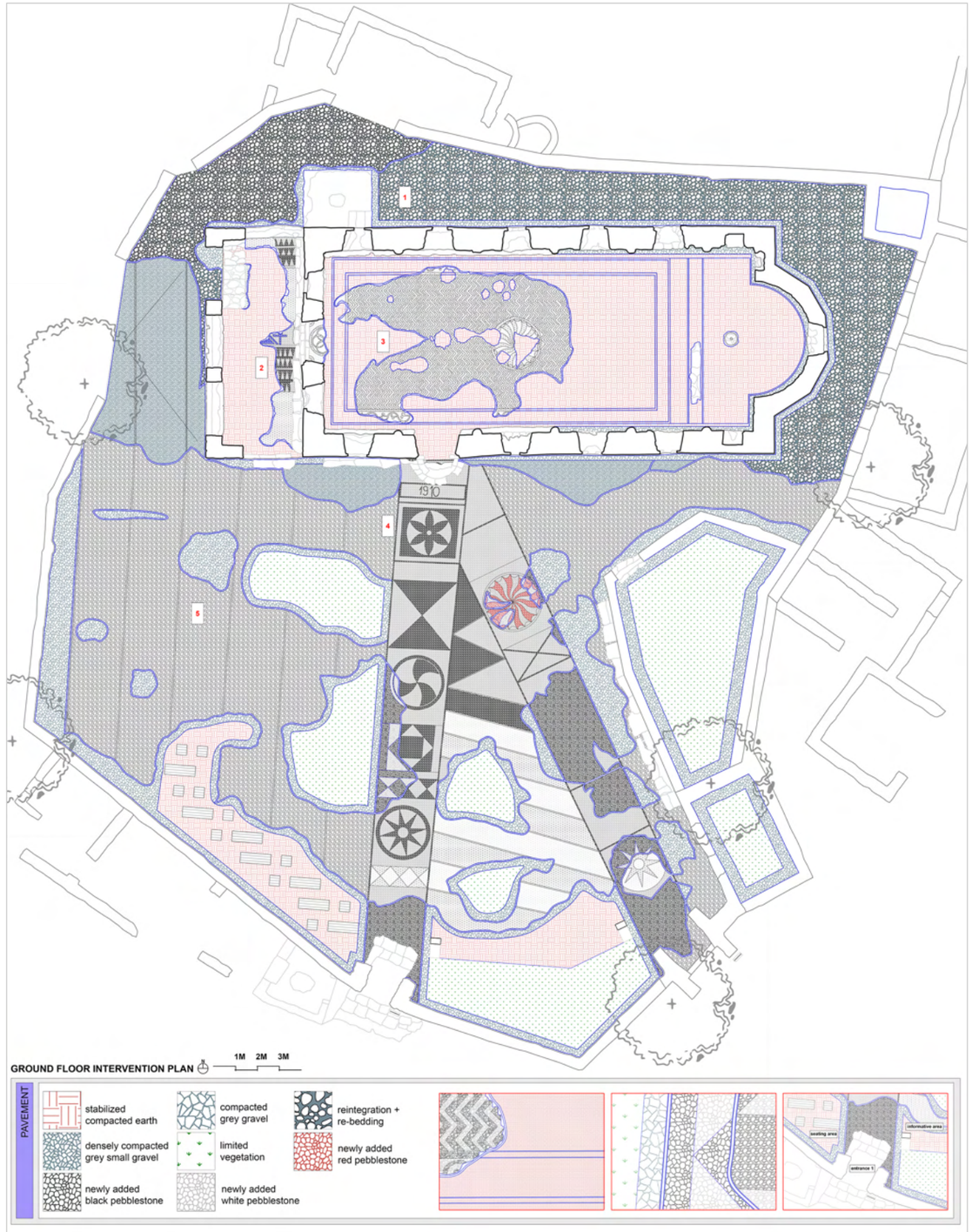


Figure 5.8: Ground Floor Design Proposal (Author, 2026)

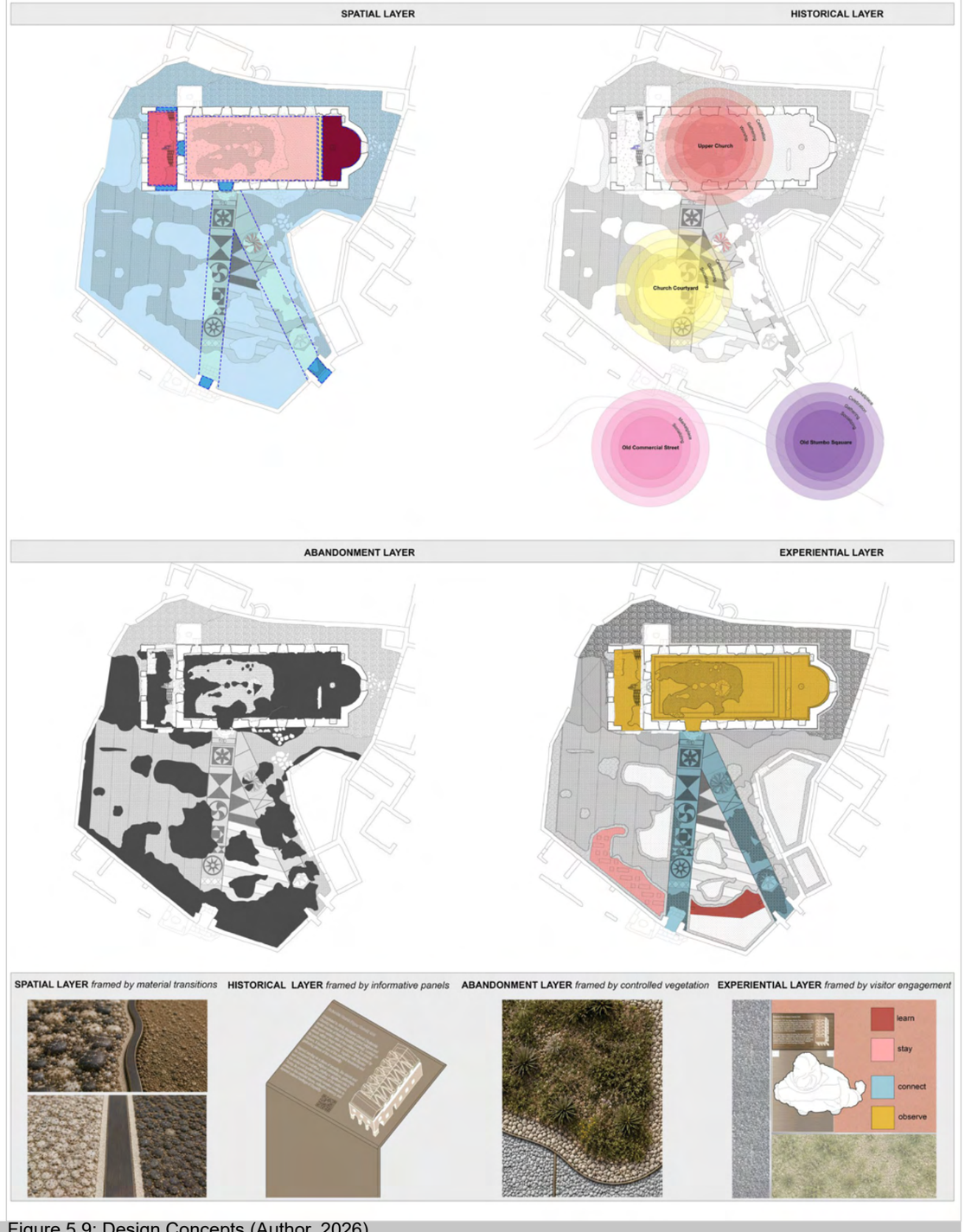


Figure 5.9: Design Concepts (Author, 2026)

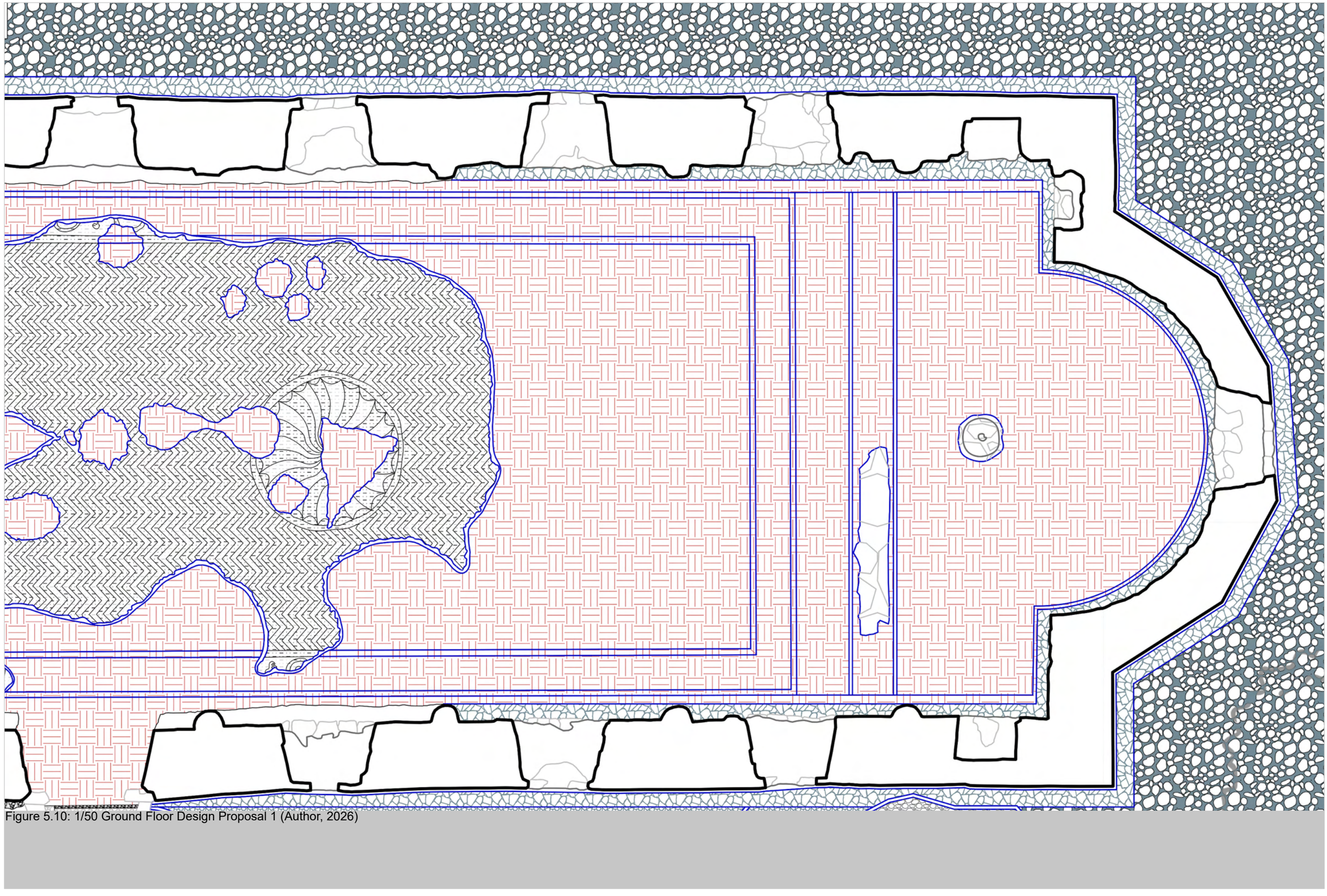


Figure 5.10: 1/50 Ground Floor Design Proposal 1 (Author, 2026)

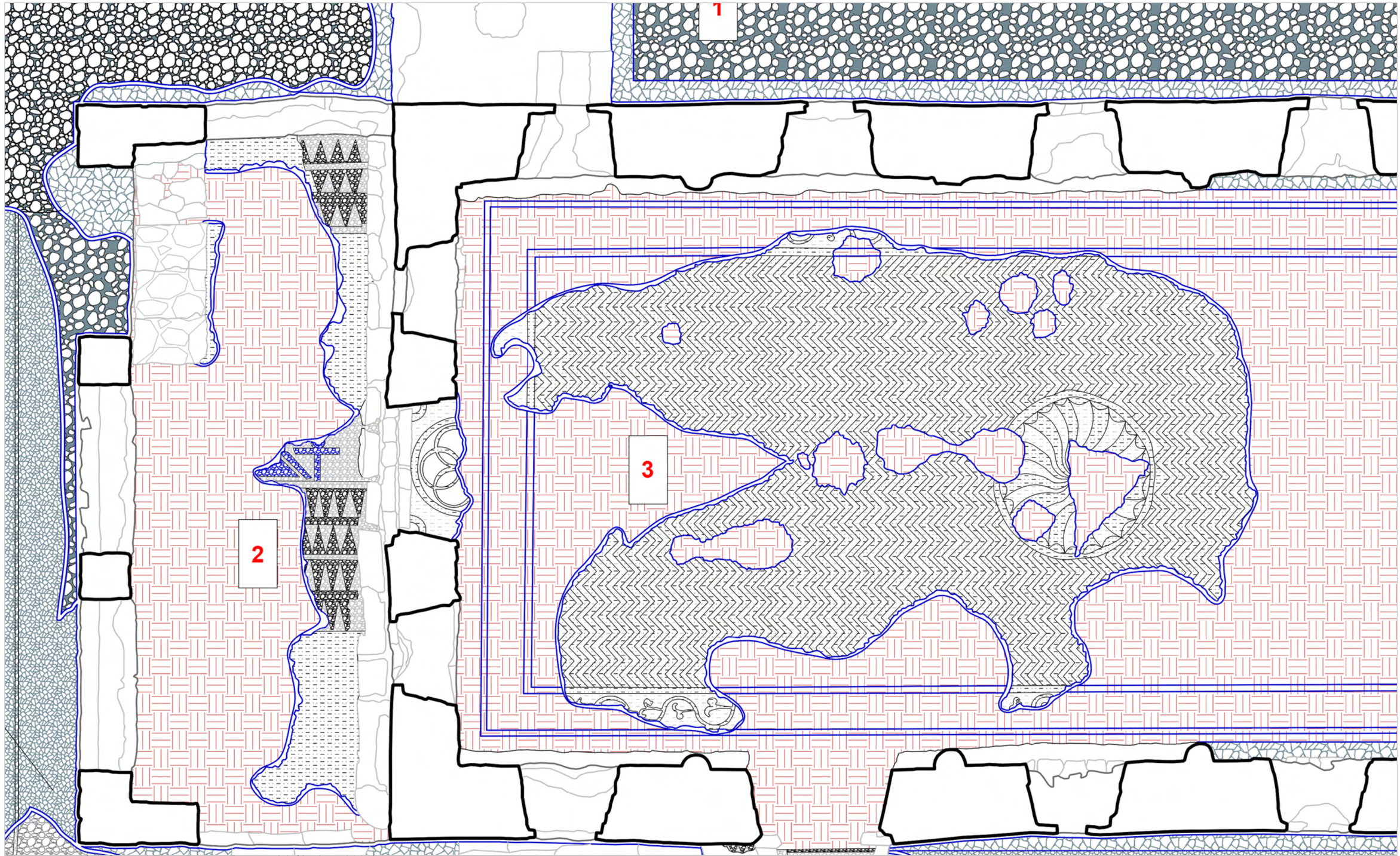


Figure 5.11: 1/50 Ground Floor Design Proposal 2 (Author, 2026)

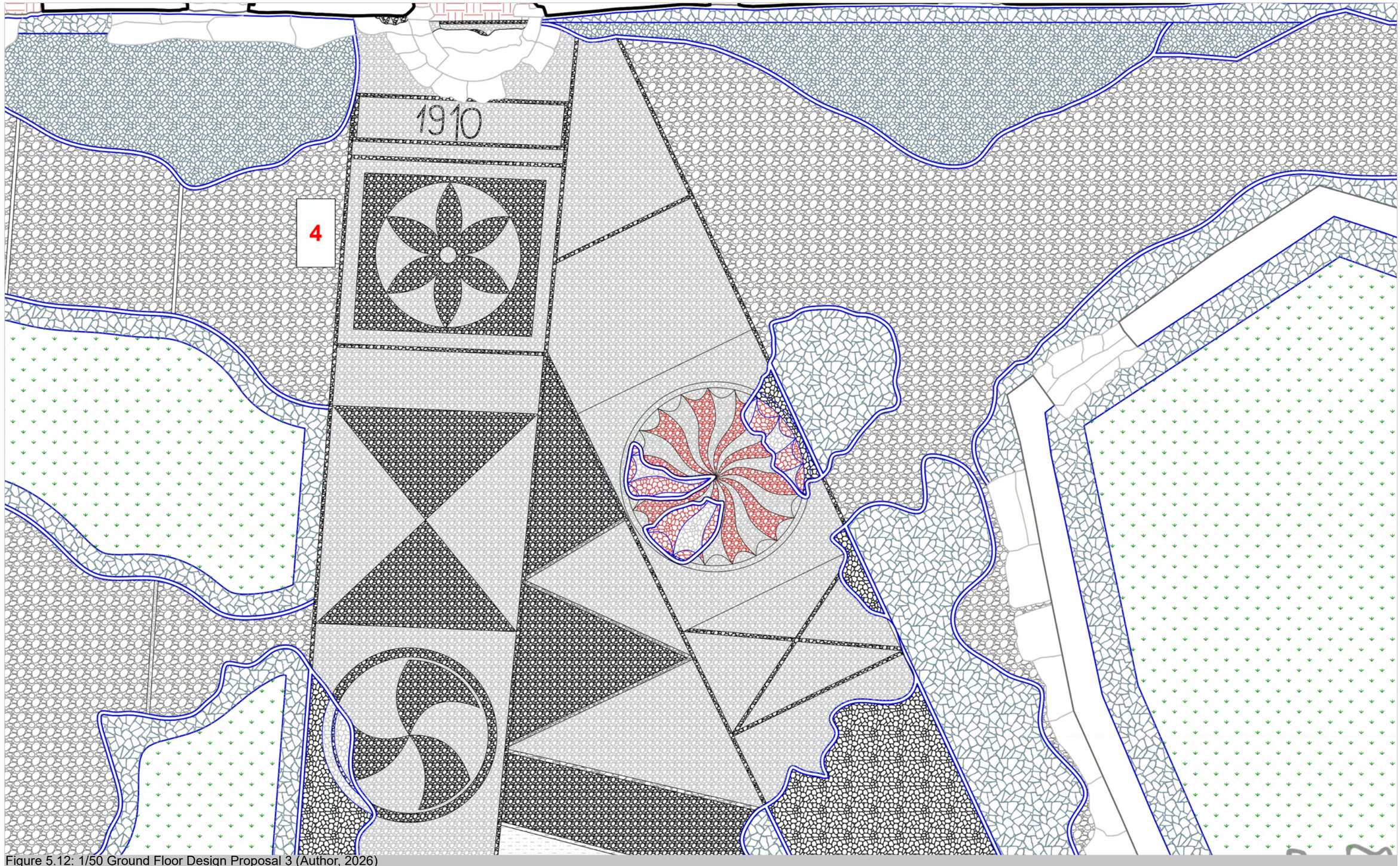


Figure 5.12: 1/50 Ground Floor Design Proposal 3 (Author, 2026)

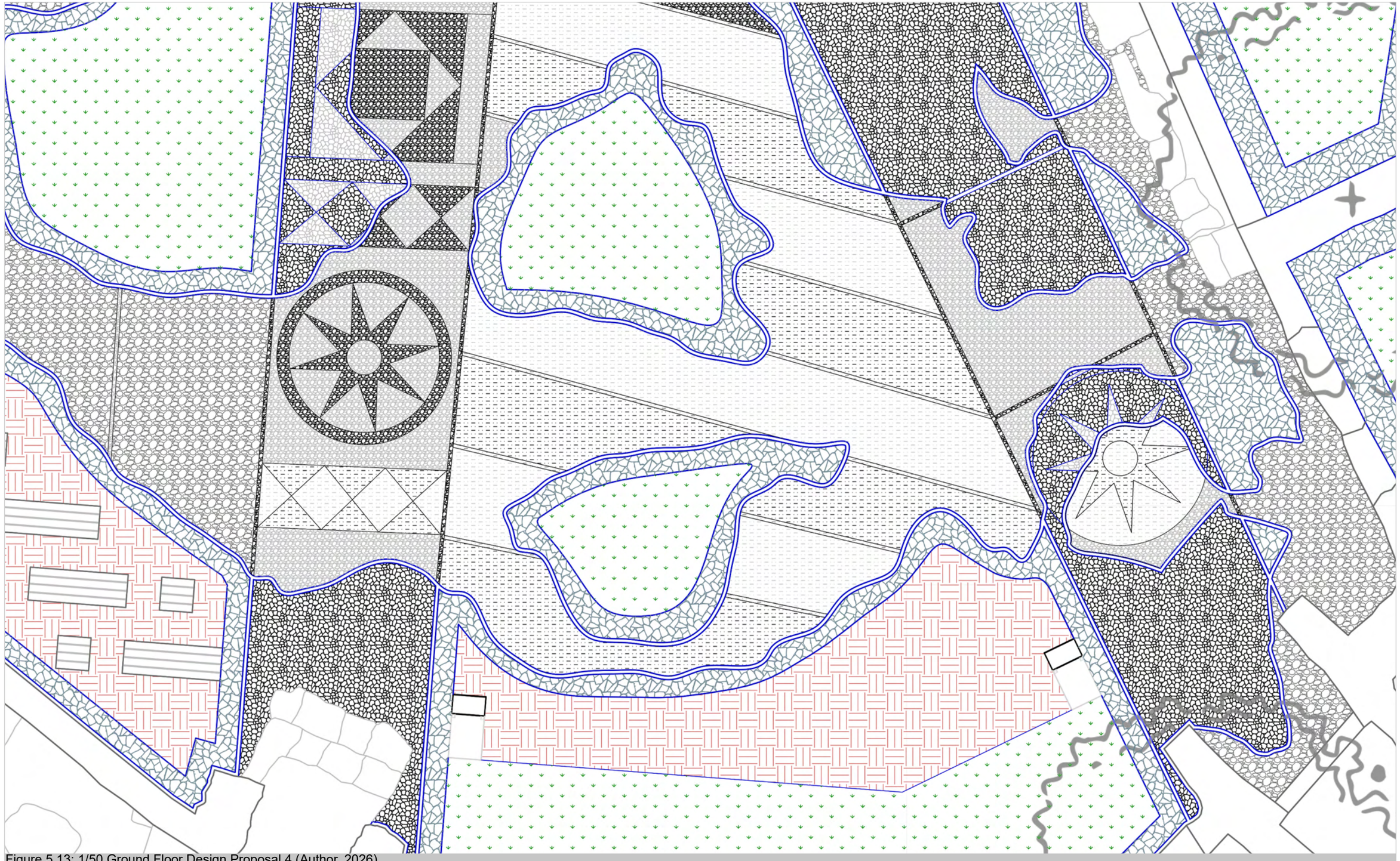


Figure 5.13: 1/50 Ground Floor Design Proposal 4 (Author, 2026)

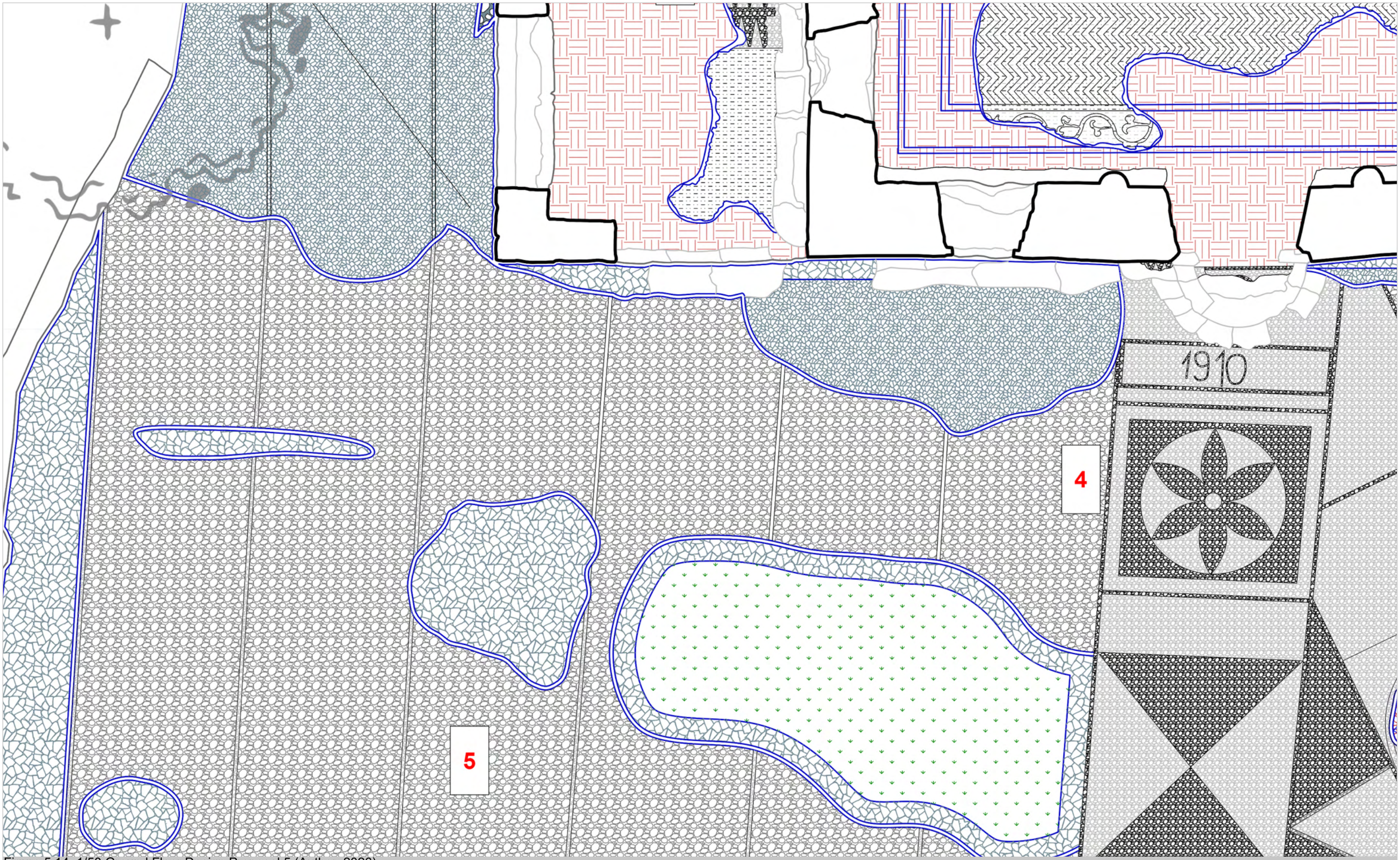
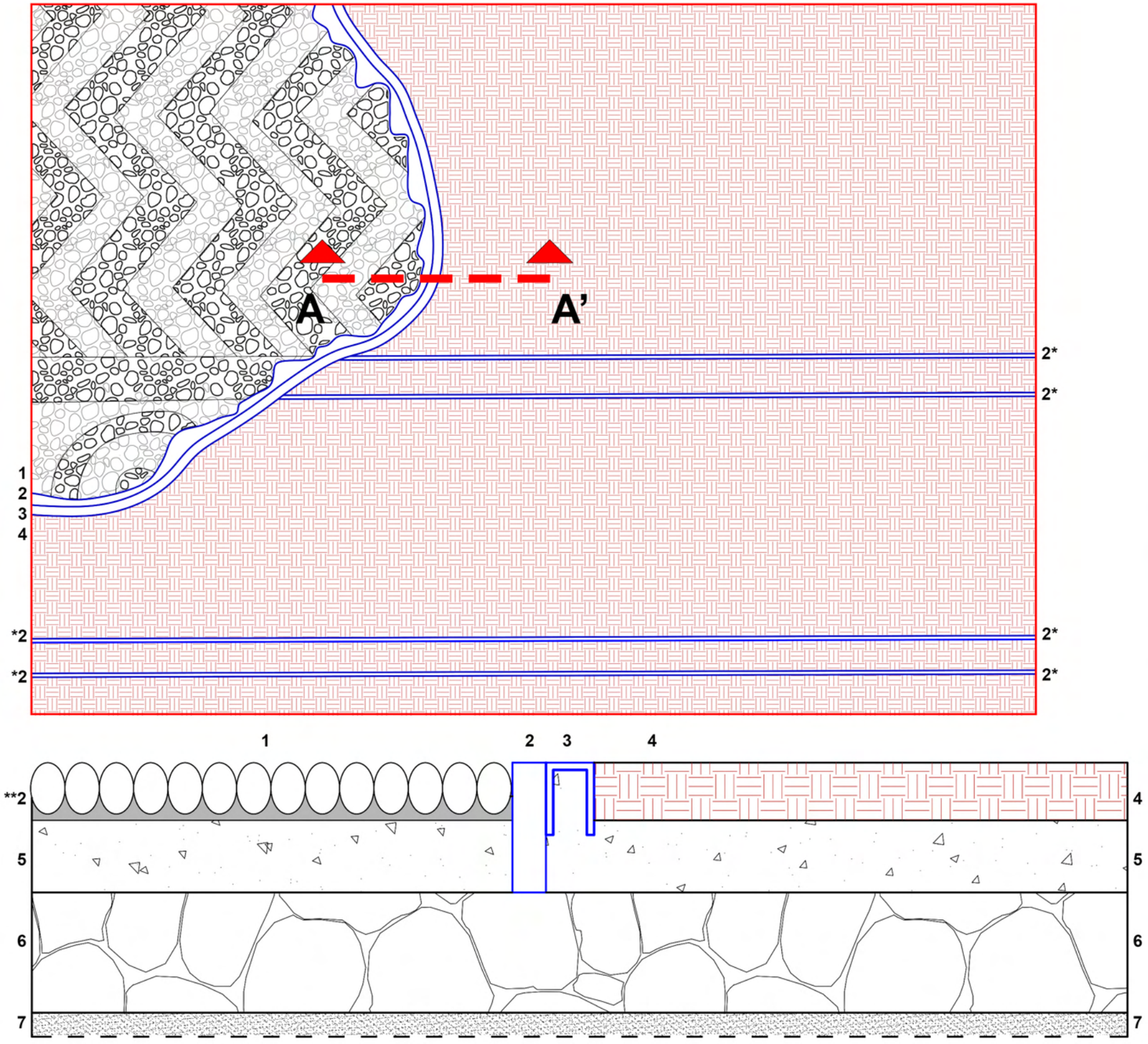


Figure 5.14: 1/50 Ground Floor Design Proposal 5 (Author, 2026)



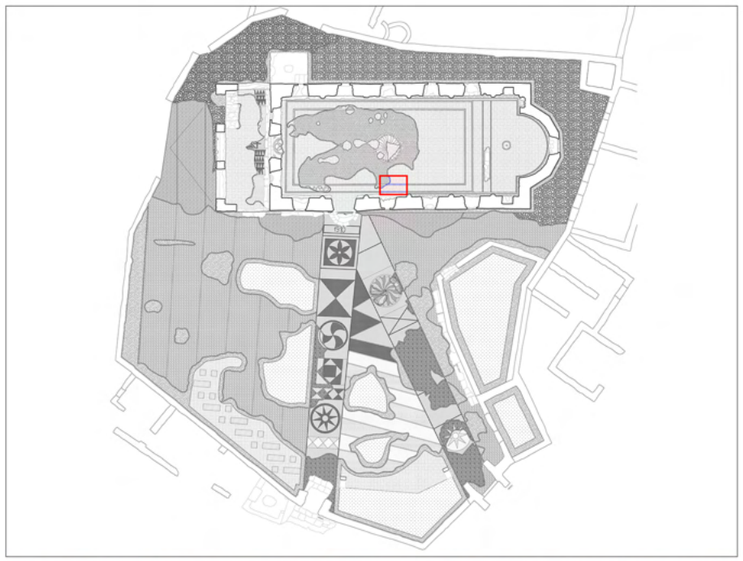






Figure 5.15: Existing Pebblestone –New Surface Interface Details (Author, 2026)

1/10 Existing Pebblestone –New Surface Interface Plan

1/2 Existing Pebblestone–New Surface Junction Section

1- existing pebble stone

2- variable lime mortar joint (4–40 mm)

2*- 4mm lime mortar joint

2**- existing lim mortar joint

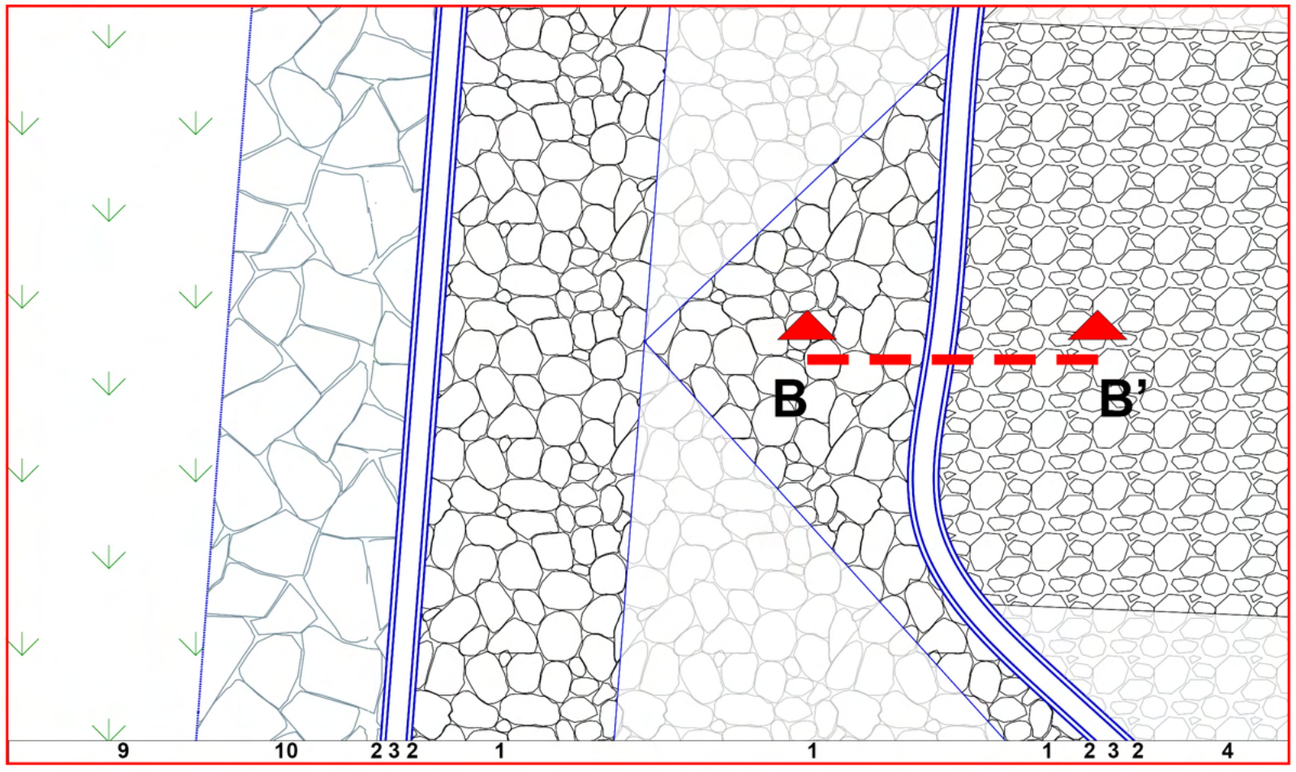
3- 20 mm dark bronze PVD stainless steel U-profile

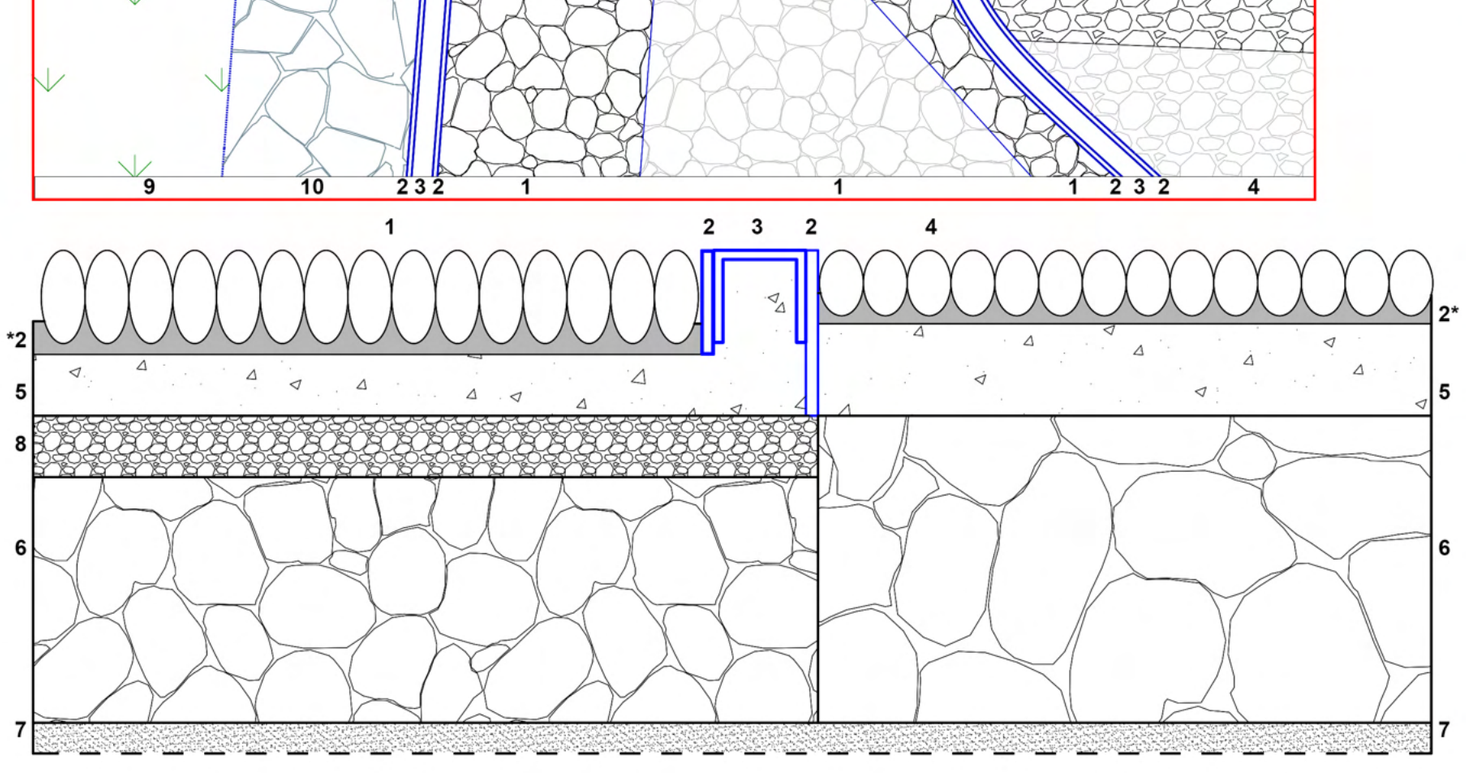
4- stabilized compacted earth

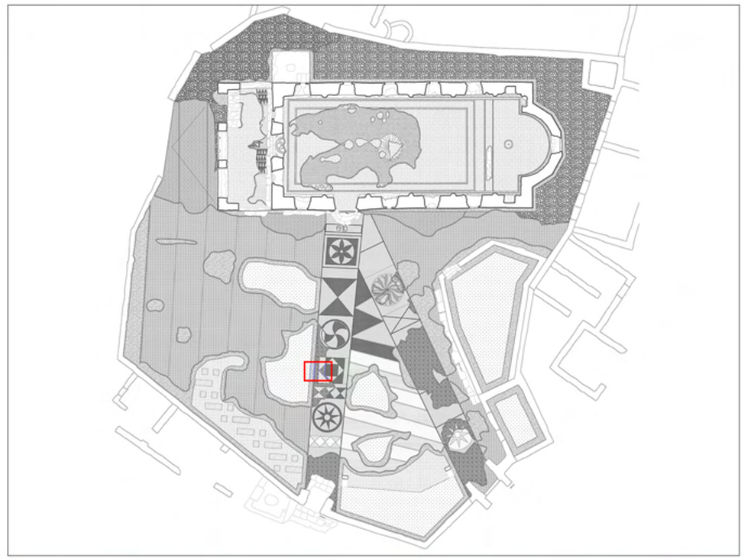
5- lime mortar bedding

6- rough rubble layer

7- compacted soil







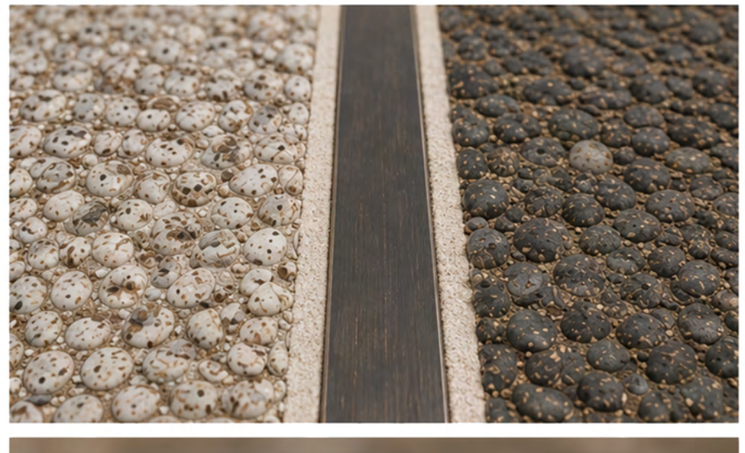




Figure 5.16: Existing –New Pebblestone Interface Details (Author, 2026)

1/10 Existing –New Pebblestone Interface Plan

1/2 Existing–New Pebblestone Junction Section

1- existing pebble stone

2- 4mm lime mortar joint

2*- existing lime mortar joint

3- 30 mm dark bronze PVD stainless steel U-profile

4- new pebblestone

5- lime mortar bedding

6- rough rubble layer

7- compacted soil

8- fine gravel bedding layer

3.3.3.2. Site Furniture and Interpretation Elements

The information panels, with their dark bronze PVD coating applied to stainless steel, create a contemporary expression while also offering a harmonious look with the historical stone texture. Two types of panels have been designed. The first is designed to help visitors understand their location within the area, while the second provides information about the history of the area. QR codes also provide visitors with access to more comprehensive digital content.

The seating elements, consisting of wooden seating surfaces placed on gabion stone walls, both create a character that is harmonious with the existing stone material and clearly reveal the contemporary nature of the intervention. The permeable structure of the gabion system supports the natural drainage of rainwater, while the use of local stone ensures integrity with the surrounding material texture. In terms of the use of local stone, it was envisioned that stones from the debrises in the area that did not need to be preserved in situ were selected and used in this gabion system, thus encouraging the reuse and reinterpretation of materials in the area. Particular attention was paid to avoiding direct contact with historical remains in the placement of the information panels and seating elements. In this way, both the preservation of the original material is ensured and a flexible system is created that allows for the reversal of new interventions if necessary.

In conclusion, the proposed contemporary elements were evaluated as auxiliary design components that enhance the visitor experience without overshadowing the historical environment, support the interpretation process, and complement the conservation approach.

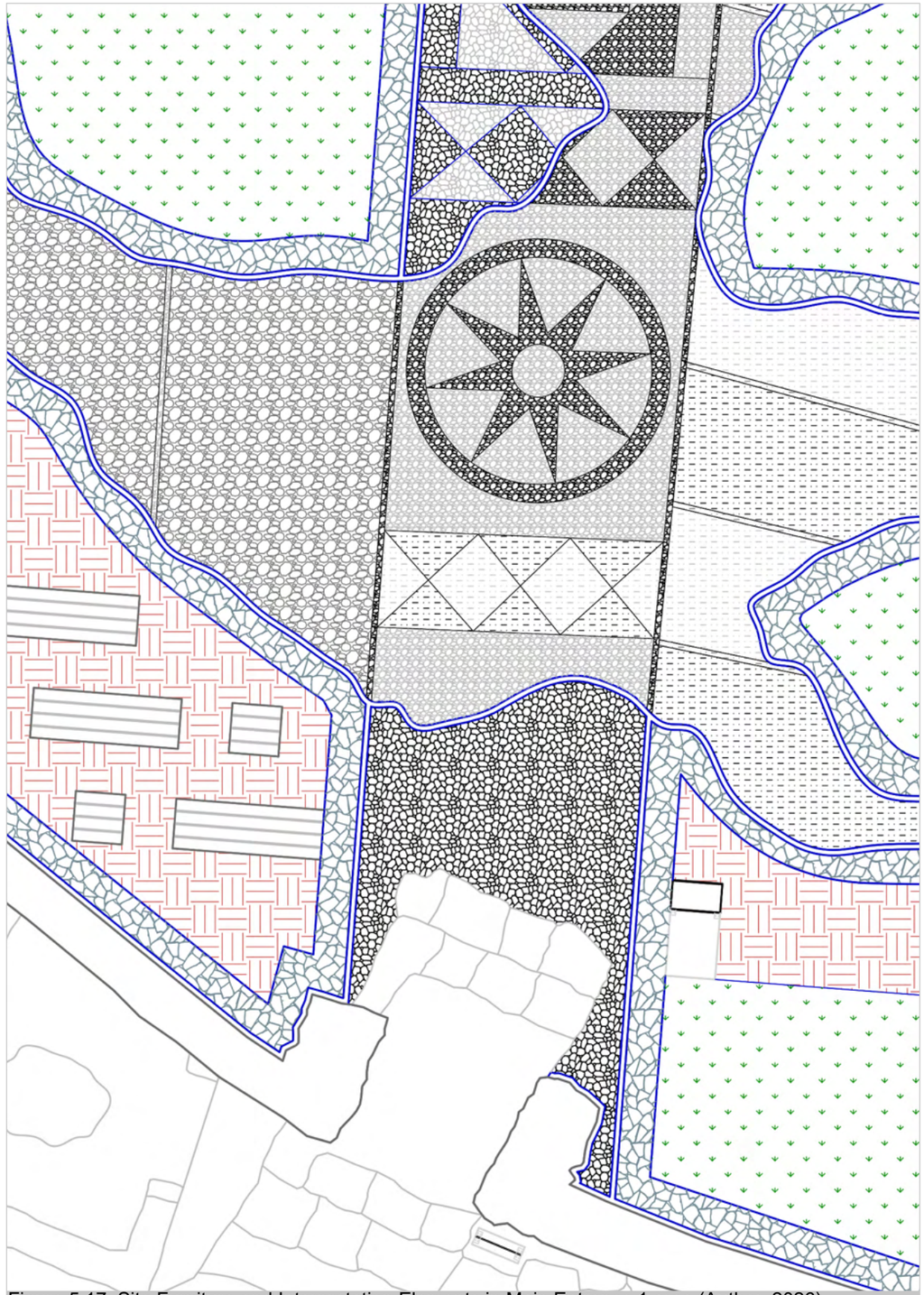
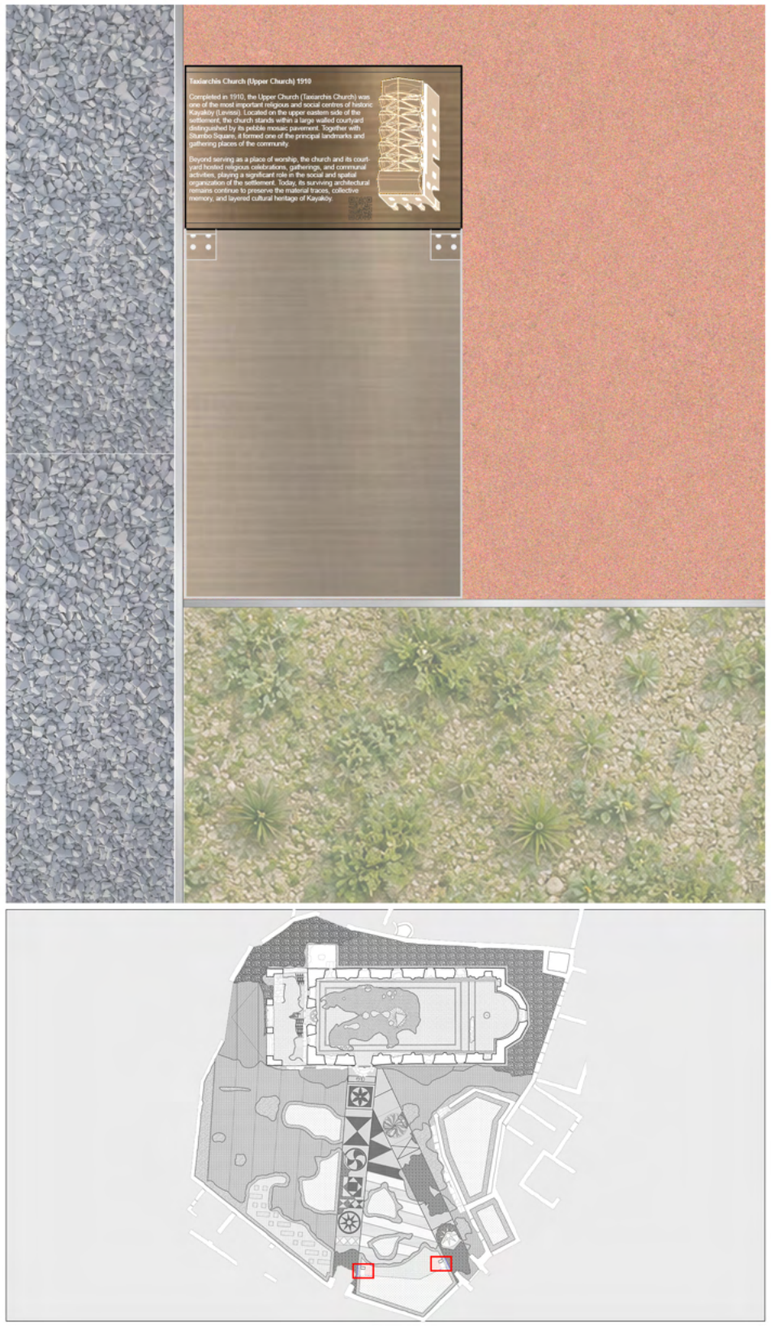
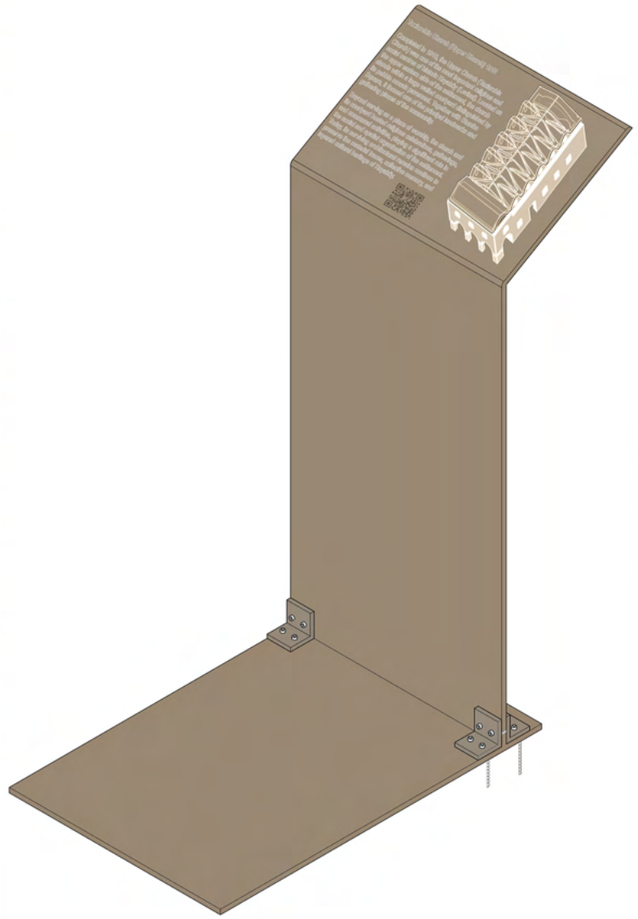


Figure 5.17: Site Furniture and Interpretation Elements in Main Entrance 1 area (Author, 2026)





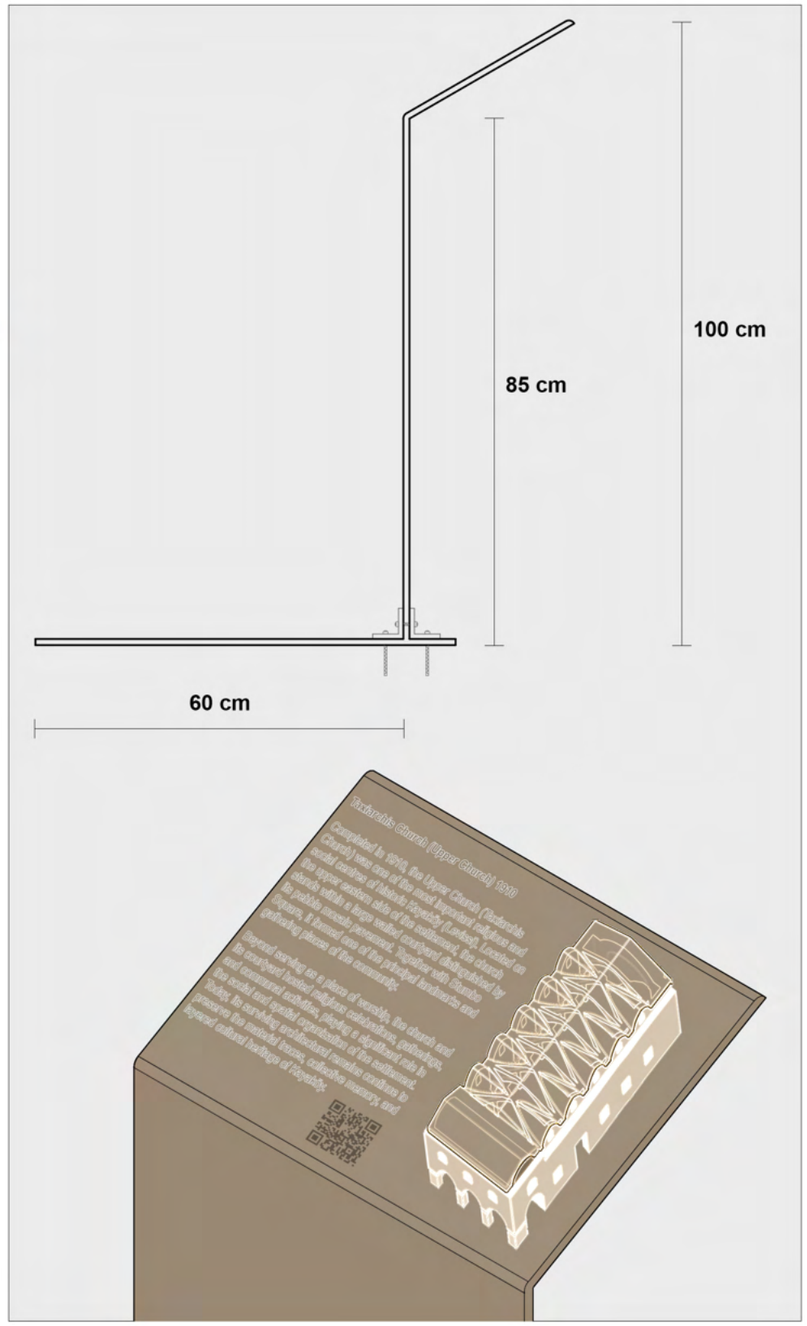
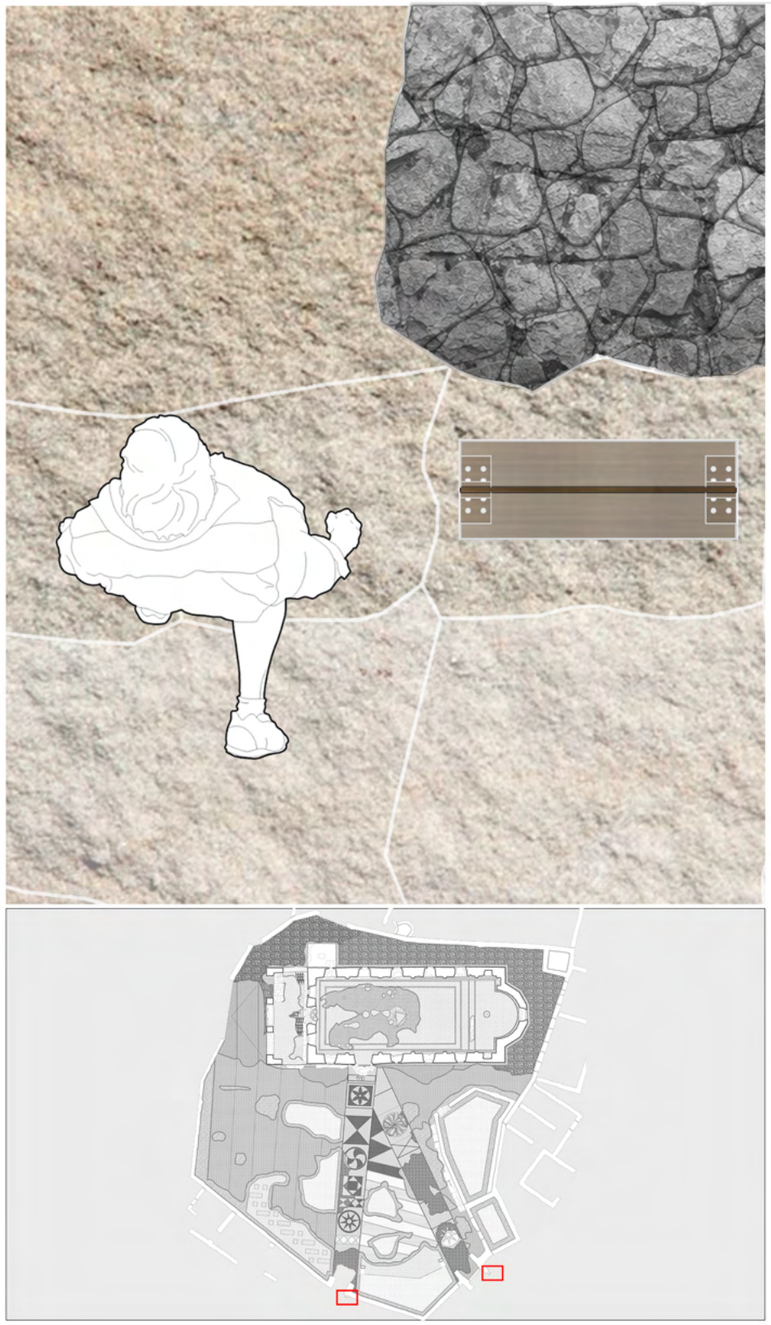
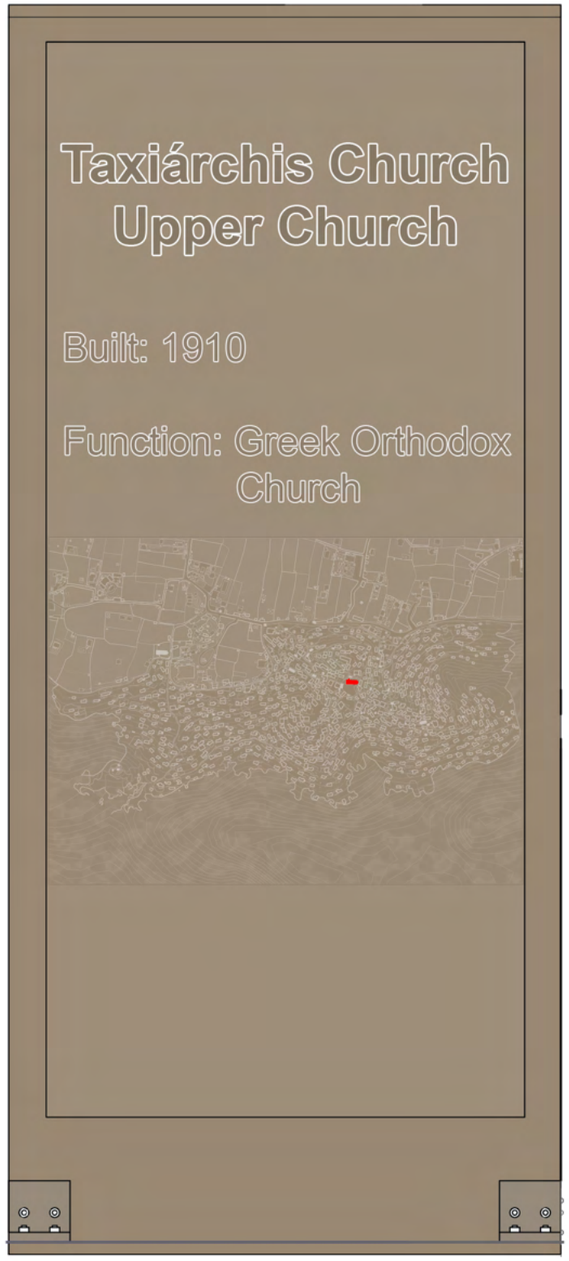


Figure 5.18: 1/10 and 1/5 Information Panel Type 1 Details (Author, 2026)





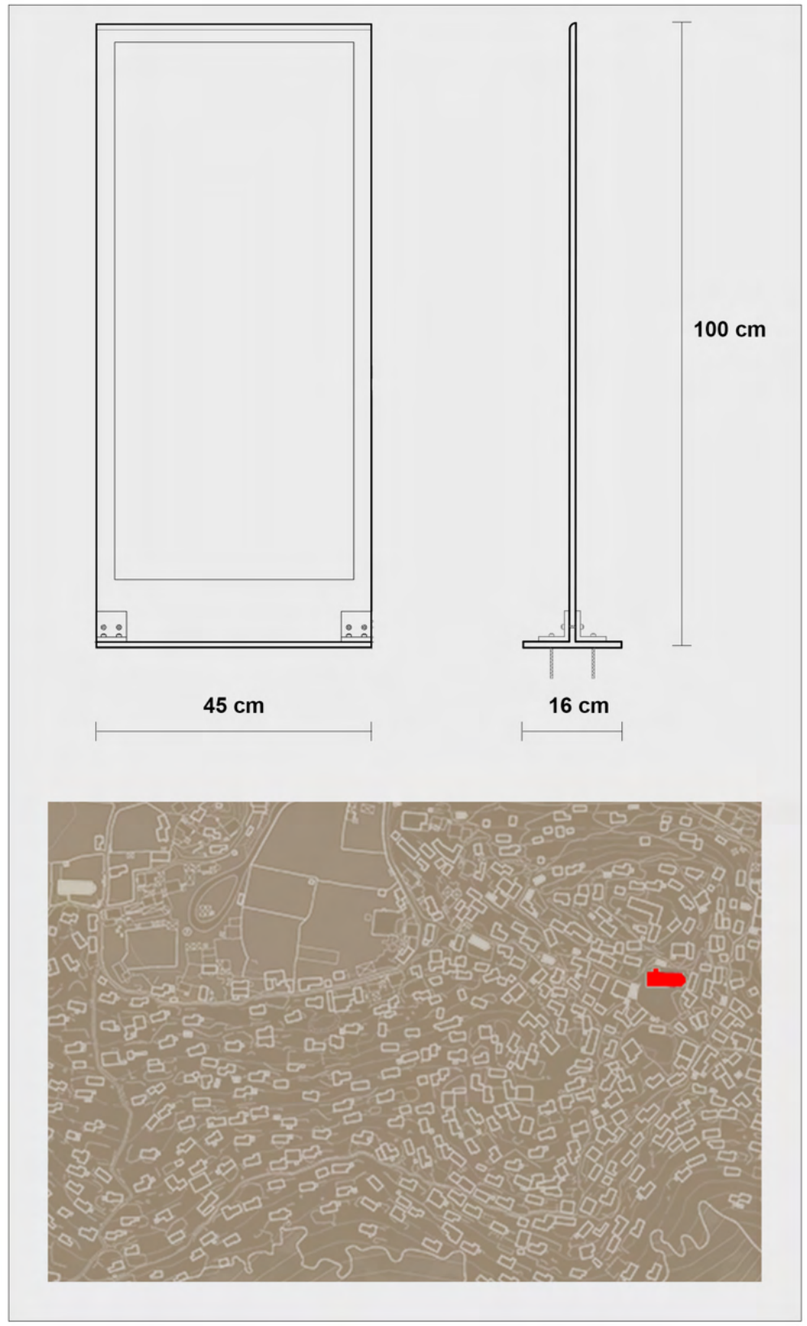


Figure 5.19: 1/10 and 1/5 Information Panel Type 2 Details (Author, 2026)

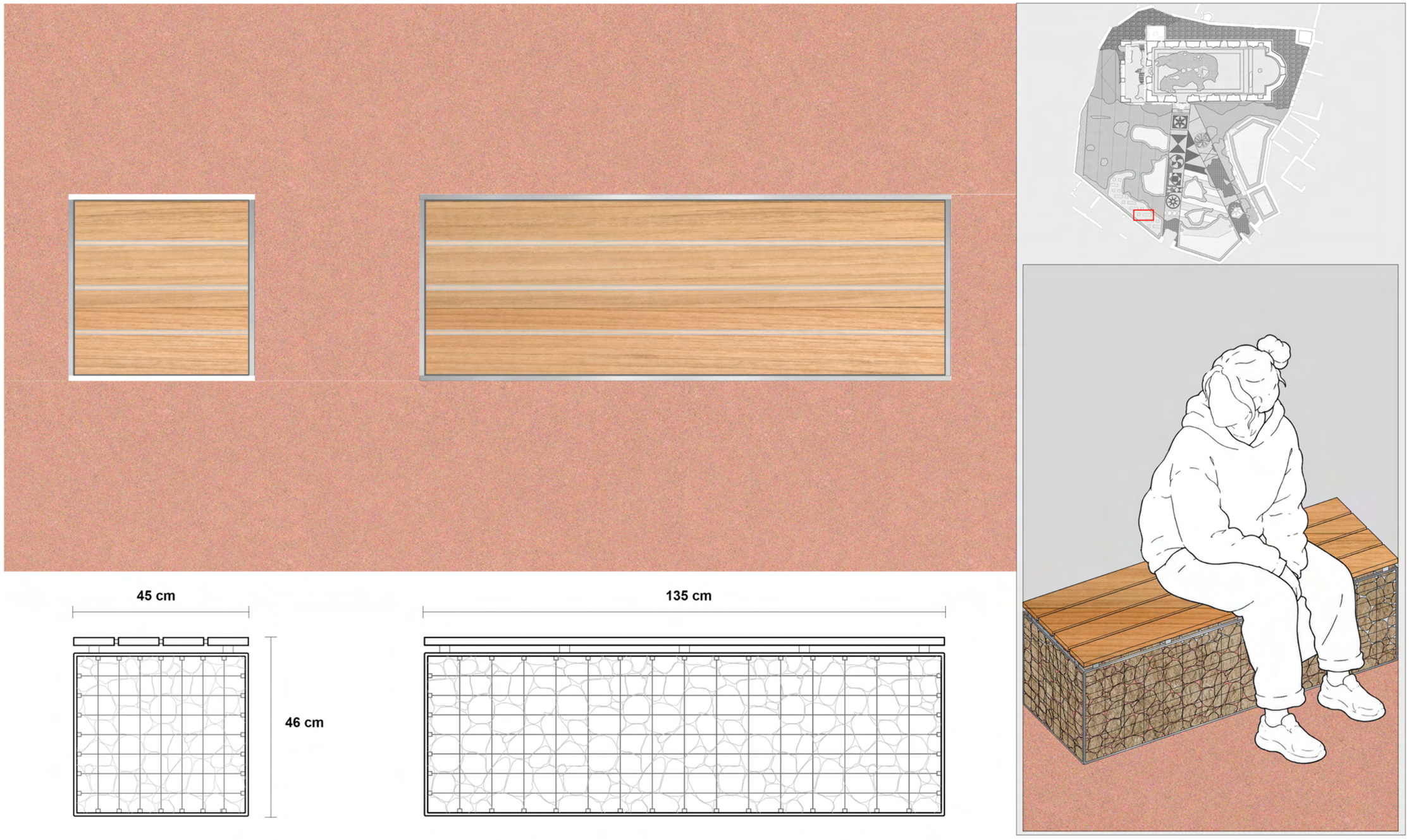


Figure 5.20: 1/10 Seating Furniture Details (Author, 2026)

CONCLUSION

This thesis examines Kayaköy not merely as an abandoned rural settlement, but as a multi-layered cultural landscape where architectural remains, historical layers, material traces, and collective memory coexist. The territorial, historical, and architectural analyses, along with assessments of value, problems, and potential, conducted throughout the study revealed that Kayaköy consists of different focal points with distinct characteristics and conservation needs. This indicates that a uniform intervention approach for the entire settlement would be insufficient; instead, site-specific interventions should be developed within a holistic conservation framework.

Accordingly, the Upper Church was selected as the area for detailed intervention due to its historical significance, value for the former community, spatial location, and symbolic value. The state of conservation analysis, material analysis, and deterioration analysis show that despite significant physical deterioration, the structure has preserved its original architectural character, spatial organization, and many original material elements to this day.

In particular, the traditional pebblestone pavements in the church and courtyard are considered one of the most important original elements defining both the craftsmanship value and the spatial identity. Despite varying degrees of deterioration, these floor slabs offer significant information regarding the historical development and use of the structure; therefore, their preservation and improved legibility constitute a key focus of the design decisions. Furthermore, facade analyses have revealed the need for interventions aimed at preserving the existing material, slowing down deterioration processes, and sustainably transmitting the structure's original character to the future.

The intervention approach developed based on these analyses prioritizes the preservation, visibility, and interpretation of existing historical traces, rather than reconstruction or historical re-creation. Developed in accordance with the principles of minimal intervention, reversibility, respect for original materials, and the distinguishability of new additions, the proposals aim not to complete the existing remains, but to enhance their legibility. The "Framing Layers of Memory" approach, developed within this scope, aims to enable visitors to experience the site not merely as a physical remnant, but as a multi-layered cultural heritage site, by considering the historical, material, spatial, and experiential layers of the area together. The prepared design proposal includes not only physical interventions for the Upper Church structure; the study presents a holistic conservation approach encompassing circulation systems, landscape arrangements, material transitions, visitor guidance elements, information boards, and public use areas. Thus, conservation is not limited to technical interventions aimed at preventing physical deterioration, but is also considered a process that enhances the comprehensibility of the area and strengthens the visitor experience.

Although the study focuses on the Upper Church area, it is believed that the developed methodology and design approach offer a framework that can be adapted to other focal areas within Kayaköy and abandoned rural heritage sites exhibiting similar characteristics. This approach, which combines multi-scale analysis, site-specific intervention, and heritage interpretation, is expected to contribute to future studies on the conservation of abandoned cultural landscapes.

In conclusion, this thesis demonstrates how site-specific intervention strategies can contribute to the development of a holistic conservation approach in multi-layered cultural landscapes like Kayaköy. Accordingly, the proposals developed for the Upper Church offer an exemplary approach that can contribute not only to the conservation of this focal area but also to a holistic conservation framework for the preservation of Kayaköy's multi-layered heritage values.

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