

Changing Identities and Refunctionalisation of Heritage: *A Case Study of Nairobi Clubhouse Demolition and Regeneration*

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Abstract

This research study sought to analyze the demolition and regeneration of the Nairobi Railways Clubhouse within the context of not only the evolution of Nairobi City as a major urban metropolis, but also continued evolution and re-functionalization of the country's colonial heritage, with a view to understanding the changing meanings of the conserved cultural fabric and the identities it projects. The paper employed an exploratory methodology of both a case study analysis of the Nairobi Railways Clubhouse demolition and regeneration, together with a desktop archival review of the existing body of heritage conservation literature, with a view to identifying the changing identities and meanings within the country's conserved heritage fabric. The review found out that the symbolism and meanings within the historic fabric of Kenyan colonial cultural heritage are evolving to support the changing identity aspirations of post-independent Kenya, and with this evolution, different social groups are appropriating aspects of colonial heritage to buttress their group identities within the larger post-independent Kenya identity. The paper therefore recommends that colonial heritage fabric ought to be studied and its lessons employed in conservation and management of the nation's heritage while being anchored in the African context, so as to guarantee sustainability of the conservation process by giving a conserved fabric reflective of the society's identity aspirations.

Keywords: Conservation, Heritage, Identity, Refunctionalisation, Regeneration, Sustainability.

INTRODUCTION

The global urban population by 2050 is projected to be at 68% up from 55% in 2018 (United Nations [UN], 2018), within Africa, this urban population growth is projected to be at 60% (UN-DESA, 2014). According to Africa Urbanization Dynamics report, Africa's key feature of its urbanization dynamics is the mostly rural population involved in the ongoing transformations triggering urbanization increase from 31% in 1990 to 50% in 2015 (OECD, 2020). These factors include natural population growth within urban areas, rural to urban migrations and expansion of urban areas, leading to reclassification of rural areas into urban, among others.

On the other hand, the New Urban Agenda states that by 2050 urbanization will be one of the twenty-first century's most transformative trends (UN, 2017). This is seen by the concentration of populations, economic activities, social and cultural interactions and their

resultant environmental and humanitarian impacts in cities. As a result, housing, infrastructure and basic services, among other sustainability challenges, will arise. Therefore, to ensure a sustainable and inclusive growth, the African Union Agenda 2063 was developed to raise the profile of urbanization as a force for the structural transformation of Africa (African Union Commission, 2015).

As a development blueprint for Africa, Agenda 2063 will be executed from the national to the continental level. In this context, Kenya's Vision 2030 contributes to the larger continental development plan. Kenya's Vision 2030 is a long-term development blueprint to propel Kenya into a prosperous and globally competitive stage by the year 2030 (GOK, 2008a). To achieve this, cities and regions in the country will have to play their part in ensuring a steady and inclusive economic growth, while ensuring a healthy social, economic and political environment.

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THEORY

Nairobi History and Urban Development

Nairobi's history spans from the pre-colonial era when it was a swampy land occupied by native herders and agriculturalists to the colonial capital, and finally an independent Kenya capital city. Nairobi master planning inception started in 1898 when Arthur Frederick Church was commissioned to prepare a town layout for the railway depot as the rail construction neared Nairobi. The town's designed layout had two streets, Victoria Street, currently known as Tom Mboya Street, and Station Street, currently Moi Avenue. These were suitable for cart transport radiating from the railway station. It also had 10 avenues off Station Street, plus the layout earmarked the Hill for senior railway staff and defined European and Indian commercial areas (Njuguna, 2018).

The city's urban development was spurred by the first British railroad camp and supply depot built in early 1900s for the Uganda Railway (Mundia, 2017). The railway line linked Mombasa through Nairobi and terminated at Kisumu port on the shores of Lake Victoria, opening up the East African hinterland for trade and colonial settlement; the first master plan for Nairobi as a Railway Town, as previously mentioned, catered for the European settlers and Asian traders as seen in **Figures 1** and **3** (Twinokwesiga, 2020).

The Independence period saw Kenya being handed over to the natives and a further change in Nairobi's skyline to date. Agwanda et al. (2003), state that the post-colonial period saw the onset of rapid urbanization from a rate of 4.6% per year in the 1950s to 12.2% per year between 1962 and 1969. This was then followed by a sustained and constant rate of a little less than 5% a year to date. Continued urbanization saw a further spatial growth of the city into the nearby satellite towns, leading to the development of Nairobi Metropolitan Region (NMR) under the Ministry of Nairobi Metropolitan Development in the year 2008. NMR consists of four counties; Nairobi at the core, with Kiambu, Machakos, and Kajiado on the outskirts (**Figure 2**). These counties have grown to be highly interdependent with Nairobi providing employment, social and residential facilities, thereby characterizing the daily commute into and out of the core Nairobi

Central Business District (CBD).

Due to both its history and geographical location, Nairobi city has grown from the early East African protectorate capital to the current commercial and industrial hub for the East and Central African Region. According to Katyambo et al. (2017), the NMR is strategically located as a central gateway to the East and Central African region, as well as its positioning on the Northern corridor and the Cape to Cairo highway. NMR which is charged with development issues of the Nairobi Metropolitan Area came up with the Nairobi Metro 2030 strategy to align its resources with sustainable development plans (GOK, 2008b). This set in motion the process to achieving the city's vision to be a world class African metropolis by the year 2030 in line to the overall national vision as outlined in the Kenya Vision 2030.

Nairobi Heritage and Identity Transformation

As an emerging African metropolis, Nairobi boasts of a rich heritage comprised of both the tangible and intangible assets that have seen a major transformation over the last century. Intangible cultural heritage makes people and communities distinguishable in term of their history, nationalities, languages, ideology and values (UNESCO, 2012). Furthermore, Smith as quoted by Wang (2018), argues that the prime raw material for constructing ethnicity is history. This history may be in terms of intangible narratives together with tangible assets held by the community. Tangible assets range from artefacts to monuments and architecture. Others have noted that conservation is meant to satisfy a longing to anchor ourselves in time and relate ourselves to the continuum of our ancestors and society. Watson (2013), indicated that preservation of evidence of subsequent changes was necessary so as to educate society on the changes over time in history, or rather the evolution of the community identity.

The country's identity has seen several transformations through time. This historical evidence ranges from the pre-colonial agrarian societies to the colonial culture and infrastructure introduction. The infrastructural developments during the British rule, the Kenya-Uganda Railway line included, represented not only a means to extraction of raw materials for the British

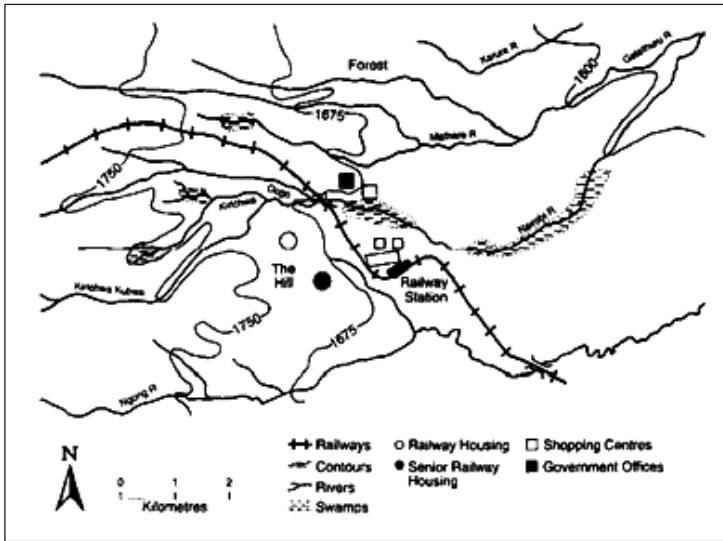


FIGURE 1
 1900 Nairobi showing the early formation of an urban settlement/center along the Railway line
 Source: Twinokwesiga 2011; White et al. 1948

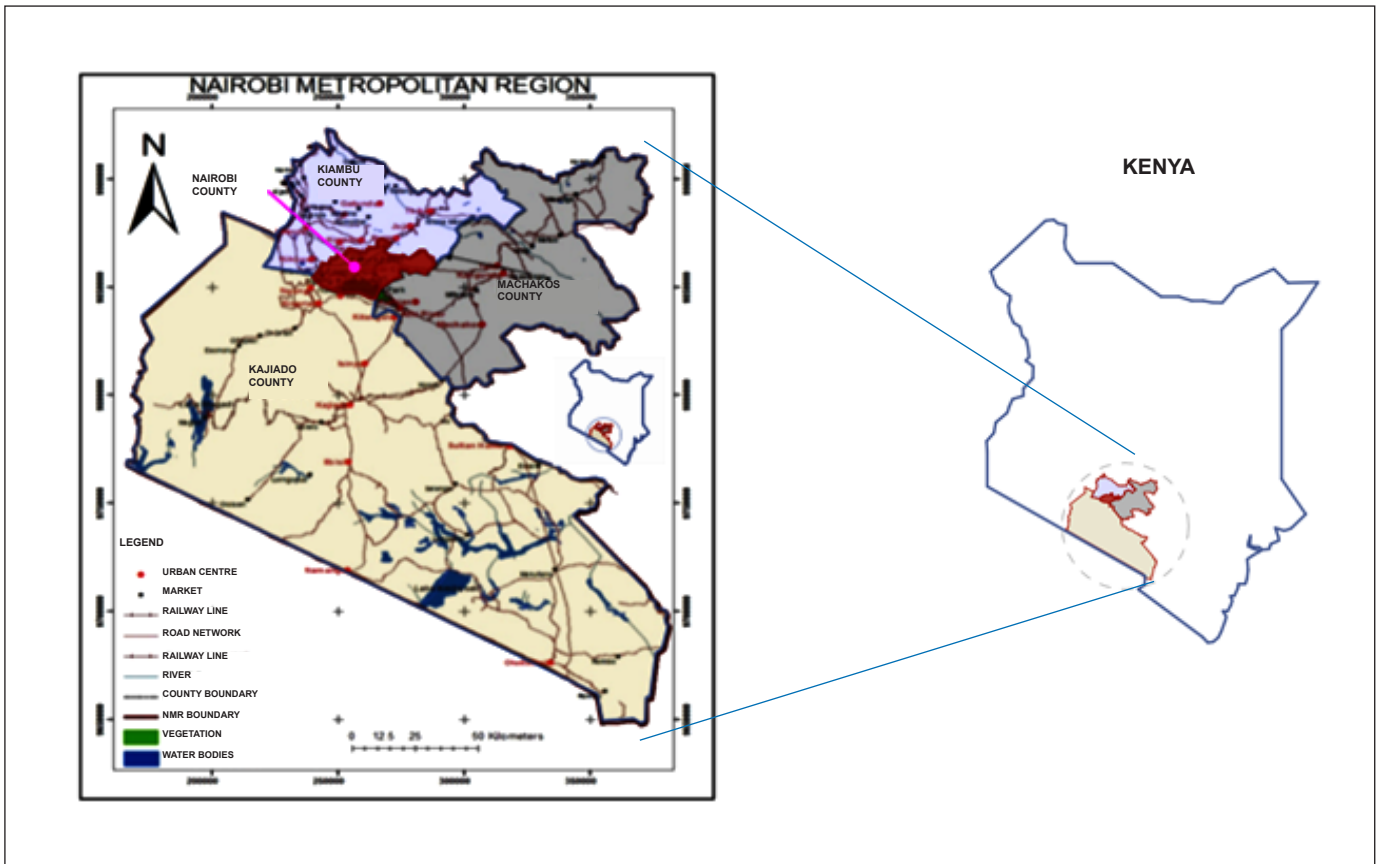


FIGURE 2
 Nairobi Metropolitan region
 Source: Adapted from Katyambo et al. 2017

empire through the Imperial British East African Company, but taken together with other notable social amenities such as clubs, hotels and administrative buildings, were a means of projecting the British civilization and culture on the colonies, hence giving it its identity; a civilized occupying power to be distinguished and exclusive to the backward colony.

However, to the collective identity of the independent colonies such as Kenya, these represented the collective memory of what they liberated themselves from. The subsequent infrastructural developments served to put a perspective as to how far the country has developed and thus project a national identity of development backed by these historical memories. In a bid to ensure the preservation of national heritage assets for future generations, the Government of Kenya, through the National Museums and Heritage Act of 2006, has put in place rules and regulations to recognize, preserve and gazette heritage assets as part of the collective memory of the nation.

The railway together with the historic caravan trading route and its locations such as Nairobi, functioned as a pre-colonial trading center for the Kikuyu and

Maasai communities which later on informed the city's location, as seen in **Figure 3** (Njuguna, 2018). At the heart of the town's original master planning, the city development sprawled outwards from the railway station yard (**Figure 3**) to include government offices, roads, racially zoned residential areas and private members clubs.

Heritage conservation has been cited as fulfilling at least four needs: (1) Scientific (research and knowledge), (2) Political (through messages and symbolism), (3) Social (sense of place and cultural identity), and (4) Economic (attraction of tourists and visitors) (Boyd and Timothy, 2003). Therefore, as a heritage property evolves over time it may serve any of the above needs depending on the property owners or uses that it has been repurposed into. Given the case of many colonial buildings in Kenya, and in Nairobi in particular, there has been a pattern of re-functionalization and appropriation by different groups after independence to project and prop new group identities. **Table 1** shows a selection of colonial buildings in Nairobi which have been re-functionalized and which now project new identities in line with whatever groups that have acquired them.

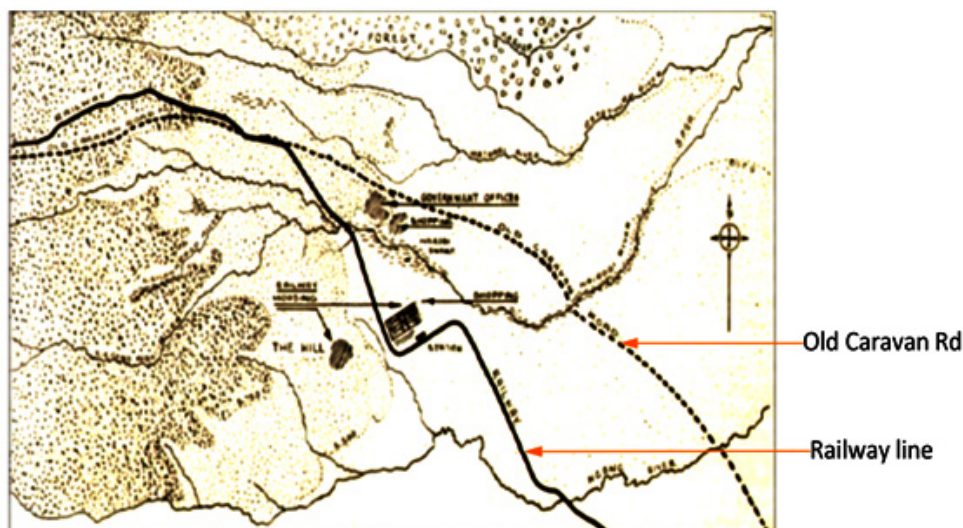


FIGURE 3

Nairobi circa 1900

Source: Njuguna 2018; Thornton et al. 1948

TABLE 1: Evolution of identities and meanings of Nairobi's colonial buildings

Construction Date	Building	Original Purpose	Symbolism/ Identity	Current Use	Symbolism/ Identity
1932	City Market	Was meant to be a more modern market following the publication of new regulations by Nairobi Municipal Council	Injection of decorum and civility in the whole vending process through provision of well-organized marketing stalls and offices	Still being used as a market	An added layer of meaning has developed as a result of it being a tourism attraction and a historic monument. It also serves as a symbol of economic empowerment to the citizens
1913	Kipande House	It initially served as a depot/ warehouse, served as ID (Kipande System) registration centre from 1914-1917	To the Europeans this building represented their system of keeping control of the masses, while for the Africans it represented a symbol of the subjugation and lack of freedom that they experienced prior to independence	Banking Hall	Emancipation and freedom from subjugation. Economic empowerment. A city landmark and a historic monument
1907	Old Mutual	Initially used as the East African Cooperative Trading Society offices	A facilitator of the economic system of the European settlers	Insurance and pension management company offices	Emancipation and economic empowerment. A historic monument
1906	Kenya National Archives	Initially built to serve as a bank to cater for Europeans and Asians	A facilitator of the economic system of the European settlers	An archive of Kenya's historical records	An archive of Kenya's emancipation and economic empowerment. A historic monument
1924	Kenya Railways Headquarters	Built as an administrative head for the East African Railway Corporation	A facilitator of the economic system of the European settlers and symbol of the advancement of the British Empire	Kenya Railways Headquarters	A symbol of emancipation and economic empowerment of the country. A historic monument

Existed as iron-timber structure from 1913; 1934-35 (new building)	City Hall – Nairobi	Office of the civic government, colonial capital	Symbolized the seat of the colonial government's administrative arrangements over its citizens. Enforcement of colonial settlement policies	Office of the County Government, Capital of the country	Symbolizes the seat of the post independent government's administrative arrangements over its citizens. A seat for the formulation and implementation of government's policies
1910	CFC Stanbic	Initial were entrepreneur's offices then transitioned into a hotel exclusive for European clients	A symbol of the freedom and relaxation lifestyles of the elites among the colonial settlers	Banking hall and offices	Emancipation and economic empowerment. A city landmark and a historic monument
1928	Westminister House	Formerly the parliament of the Kenya colony	Symbolized the seat of the colonial political arrangements over the colony	Bank, retail business, Art Caffé and offices	Emancipation and economic empowerment. A city landmark and a historic monument
1925-31	Law Courts	Designed to be the Law Courts, the headquarters for the administration of justice in the Kenyan colony	A symbol of the foremost power in the enforcement of the colonial legal system and arbitrator of justice during that period	Headquarters of the Judiciary of post-independent Kenya	A symbol of one of the arms of the government – that is the Judiciary, an important provider of checks and balances of the other arms of government. A city landmark and a historic monument
1931	McMillan Library	Initially designed as a library in memory of Lord McMillan and for the exclusive use by Europeans	Symbol of the superior culture of the colonial settlers	Community library	Symbol of the intellectual emancipation and empowerment of the citizens. A city landmark and a historic monument

Source: Authors 2021

RESEARCH METHODS

Research methodology may be classified as either qualitative or quantitative. This paper adopted a mainly qualitative methodology, which entailed observation and interpretation of a case with the aim of providing understanding on the sample of colonial heritage buildings. The paper employed an exploratory methodology, which was qualitative in nature, of both a case study analysis of the Nairobi Railways Clubhouse demolition and regeneration, and thereafter combined it with a desktop archival review of the existing body of Heritage Conservation literature with a view to identifying the changing identities and meanings within the country's conserved heritage fabric. This approach was found to be most suitable, particularly in using an archival review study that best expounded on the variables, the changing meanings and symbolism of colonial heritage fabric vis a vis Nairobi's and Kenya's development, that were critical for the research enquiry. Thus, the paper employed a desktop archival review of heritage conservation literature which formed a template for the understanding of the analysis of the Nairobi Railways Clubhouse demolition findings, plus its proposed regeneration configuration which was subsequently mapped out against the prevailing development of the country in general, and Nairobi in particular. The paper then subsequently analysed these findings in the context of the larger colonial heritage in the country with a view to understanding how colonial heritage fabric and the identities they represent have evolved in the context of the development of the country.

The unit of analysis of this research was one element of colonial heritage which was represented in the form of the Nairobi Railways Clubhouse. Given that this building was a typical colonial building built before independence, its demolition offered a unique opportunity to study and understand the colonial design philosophy of the culture and identity they represent. Hence it was an ideal unit of analysis of the conservation of colonial heritage in Kenya, and which would afford a good platform to assess the efficacy of this philosophy. The analysis of this unit allowed the identification of the identity aspirations of the original design together with the refunctionalised regenerated building, while reflecting on these transformations in the context of a developing post-independent Kenya.

This study sought to understand how community identities related to colonial heritage have changed over time in relation to the development of the country Kenya. The paper looked at two key variables, namely the development-conservation of colonial heritage mix vis-à-vis the changing community identities so as to understand what informs the appropriation of these colonial vestiges and what identities they serve to support.

RESULTS

Nairobi Railways Clubhouse and The City's Colonial Heritage

Funded and managed by a settler elite of British aristocrats and officers, private members' clubs institutionalized European unity (Connan, 2015). Wang (2018), notes that collective identities are always partially relational – composed comparisons and references to other collective identities from which they distinguished. The relational characteristics of collective identities include exclusivity, status and hostility (Wang, 2018). The clubs therefore performed an essential part within the social fabric of uniting British citizens in foreign lands. They were characterized by racial and socio-economic exclusivity. Mombasa Club founded in 1895 became the earliest club in Kenya, followed by the Nairobi Club in 1899. The late 19th and early 20th century saw the onset of foreign settlers inhabiting Kenya and the introduction of clubs that are still functional to date. Nairobi Railways Club dates back to 1921 when the Railways Golf course was initially opened by Mrs. Couper, wife of the then Kenya Railways General manager. The established golf course was exclusively for Railways' staff but subsequently opened for general membership in 1924. As the golf course gained more members, the need for a clubhouse arose.

Nairobi city's urban development was spurred by the first British railroad camp and supply depot built in early 1900s for the Uganda Railway (Mundia, 2017). The urban environment during the colonial period exhibited a heavy European design character mixed with Asian influences. Architecture styles in the city ranged from classical revival, renaissance revival, English gothic renaissance, Georgian, Tudor revival, art deco and Asian influences (Deisser et al., 2016). Due to their current historical and cultural value, a

majority of these buildings have been gazetted and conserved as national monuments.

Nairobi Railways Clubhouse is one such building. Designed in 1936, the Clubhouse is an impressive neo-classical styled building with a very impressive entrance flanked by classic Doric columns supporting an entry portico. The building is built using Nairobi blue masonry stones with a combination of rich details and finishes, which not only depicts the style of the period but also emphasizes its rarity. As part of Nairobi’s rich colonial history and heritage, the building is gazetted as a national monument. Current efforts to build Nairobi’s identity as a world class African metropolis by 2030 saw the implementation of improved transport systems in line with Kenya Vision 2030 and Nairobi Metro 2030. The proposed public transport terminus at the site is aimed at decongesting the city. This saw the need for its demolition and relocation to the Railways Golf Course as a means of maintaining/enhancing its integrity and paving way for land re-appropriation.

The area on which Nairobi Railways Clubhouse stood was therefore earmarked for compulsory acquisition by the government to pave way for the Nairobi Expressway Project, as well as a commuter terminal

for buses plying Mombasa, Langata and Ngong roads, as shown in **Figures 4 to 6**. The project being part of Kenya’s Vision 2030, aimed at decongesting the city of Nairobi by expanding Uhuru highway and banning Matatus and other Public Service Vehicles from accessing the CBD with a future plan of introducing a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) network.

Initially designed as a clubhouse for Nairobi Railways employees, the proposed regeneration proposal envisages incorporation of new income generating activities and adapting it to the modern context of the Nairobi Railways Golf Club which will be its new home. Therefore, while maintaining its identity as a cultural asset, the building will retain its status as a national monument and at the same time adopt a new identity of an enhanced cultural asset through its flexibility to adapt to the current socio-economic environment. The demolition and regeneration of the Nairobi Railways Clubhouse represents another level of identity up-cycling where the building acquires a new life cycle as a formwork for the projection of a collective identity by an elite social group within Kenya society. With a presidential order, Kenya National Highways Authority (KeNHA) commenced site clearance on the 15th of September 2020 to pave way for the Nairobi Expressway and planned commuter terminal projects. This set-in motion



FIGURE 4
Nairobi Railways Clubhouse location
Source: Adapted from Google earth 2021

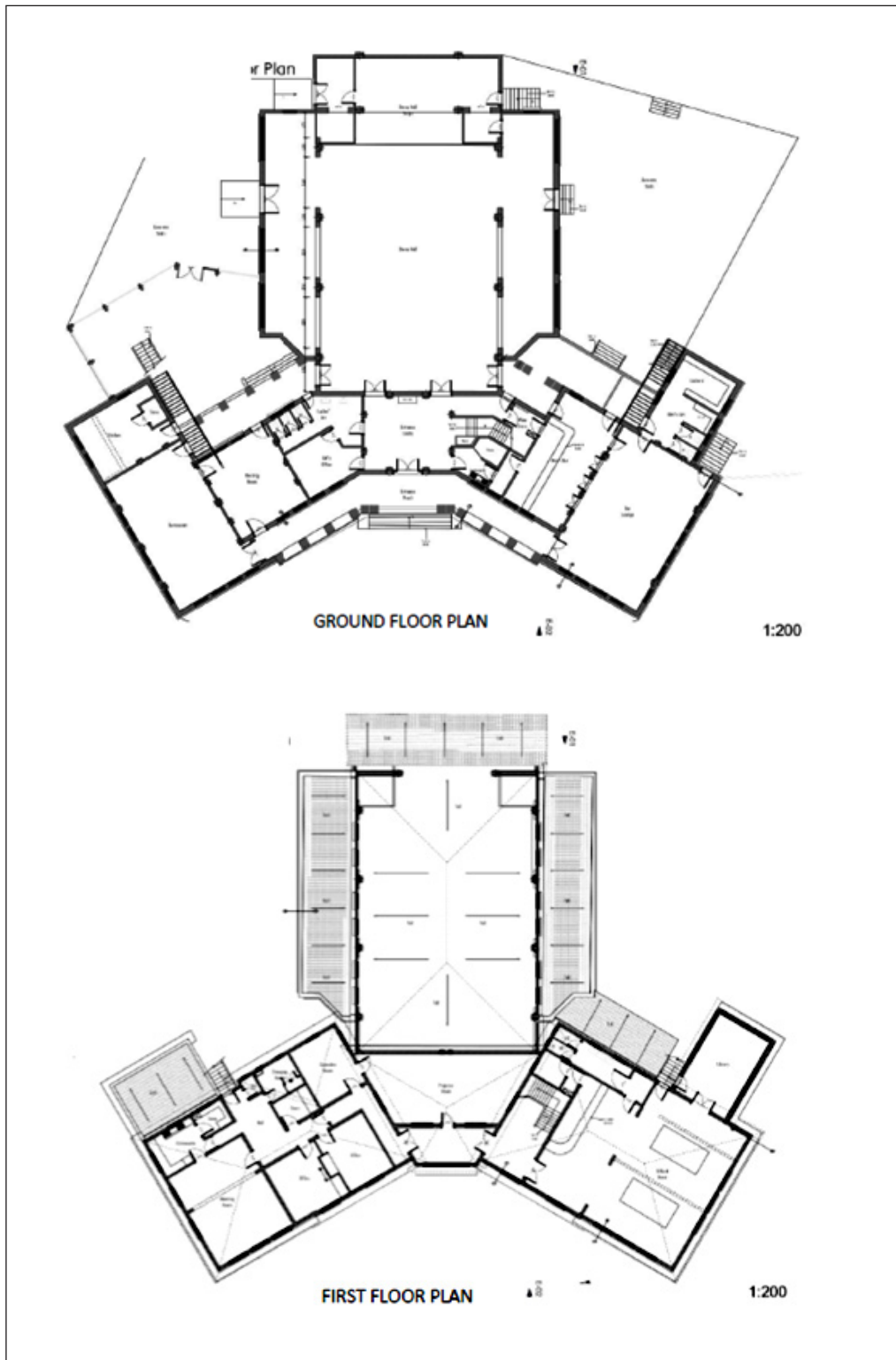


FIGURE 6
Nairobi Railways Clubhouse floor plans before demolition
Source: Authors 2020



FIGURE 5
Front view of Nairobi Railways Clubhouse
Source: Authors 2020

planned demolition discussions and preparations for the Railways' Clubhouse.

The planned demolition conservation project was carried out in phases with the aim of recycling 70-80% of building materials and components. Documentation of the entire process was structured along five broad areas, namely; structural, general layout, materials finishes and fixtures, architectural style detail and demolition process. This ensured that the building details, together with its transformation over the decades brought about due to adaptation to various uses, were captured and relevant schedules of recyclable materials with their degrees of recovery maintenance recommendations noted.

As a national monument, the building was carefully demolished with the intention of saving 70 to 80% of original building materials for regeneration and restoration of the building at an alternative site on the Railways Golf Course land.

The subsequent demolition aimed to achieve a series of objectives, namely: -

- Document the entire building as is while noting the spatial, structural and activity transformation over the decades.
- Document the demolition process and develop schedules of recyclable building materials,

their treatment and storage.

- Capture intricate details to be replicated as is in the new site.
- Make recommendations with regard to structure and space use that will adapt to the new context and activities, thereby introducing the enhanced/functionalized cultural asset identity.

Demolition Procedure, Process and Challenges

With a limited time period spanning through the 21st of December 2020 and 6th of January 2021, the demolition process was carefully managed to ensure that key architectural elements, features and materials were salvaged. This was to guarantee a faithful regeneration of the building. This conservation decision was informed by not only the rarity of the features and elements that gave the building its unique identity, but also due to the fact that it might not be possible to get the necessary skills to faithfully reproduce them.

The demolition works were done in phases that overlapped for effective time management:

Phase 1: Removal of doors, windows, hardwood skirting and wainscoting

This period saw the removal of movable furniture and fixtures. Demolition commenced with the removal of windows from the dining rooms, kitchen and the ground floor bar lounge (**Figure 7a**). Door leaf removal in the same spaces followed and was performed concurrently with partial removal of the dining room wainscoting. The windows were preserved and stacked ready for storage. Windows were in good condition with a few broken panes, plus all the steel and hardwood doors salvaged were still intact. The windows were stacked against storage containers on site. They were to be later stored and transported to the new construction site. The doors were in fairly good shape and stored well for later transportation.

This was followed by the careful removal of dining hall wainscoting together with the main hall skirting.

Phase 2: Roof demolition

The building, due to its transformation over time, had a double roof. The original flat roof lay beneath a pitched roof. Roof demolition works started with the removal of the corrugated iron sheets and pvc ceiling to Tsavo hall, iron sheets and roof trusses, rainwater collection gutters, soffit, fascia boards and Tsavo hall ceiling formwork (**Figure 7b**).

The flat roof was composed of three layers; approximately 50mm thick bitumen layer, horizontal wood plank layer beneath it and timber joists supporting the plank layer above and the ceiling below. Demolition works on the roof was carried out by two teams; one was tasked with removal of the bitumen layer over the soffit/eave as shown in **Figure 7c**. This allowed for a different team to handle soffit and eave removal as the tar waterproofing layer was being stripped over the rest of the roof. Demolition on the flat roof thereafter proceeded concurrently as different layers were being stripped off. Where one team was removing the bitumen layer, other teams dealt with the exposed timber boards, joists and ceilings. Timber joists and boards recovered at this stage were to be later sorted and stored for reuse as firewood for the broken pieces and construction material for those still in a good condition. The entire roof, apart from the main hall, was brought down. Most of the roof trusses were collected, sorted, stock checked and transported for recycling. Outstanding work on the ground floor was done and materials gathered awaited transportation to the storage containers.

Phase 3: Demolition of the main structure, sorting and transportation of salvaged materials

In this phase, the valuable fixed furniture in the building, for example, the mahogany bar counter, cabinetry, hardwood staircase handrails and wall shelving on the ground floor, were systematically extracted and stored for re-assembly. The controlled demolition of the main structure followed. Bull dozers were used to bring down the first-floor walls and internal partitions as shown in **Figure 7d**. Extra caution was employed in the demolition of the first-floor slab, as well as the ground floor walls, ensuring that the cast iron beams and the classical columns were salvaged. With the help of a bulldozer, the main pre-cast concrete columns were unmounted off their pedestals and carefully transported off site for storage.

Demolition of main structure happened concurrently with the collection and sorting of building materials, such as building blocks (Nairobi blue stone) and cast-iron beams, as shown in **Figure 7e**. Works through the entire process were carried out concurrently to ensure efficiency in time management. There was partial removal of main entry verandah columns. Two columns were accidentally destroyed during the first-floor slab demolition. This therefore called for careful planning to extract the remaining precast columns.

Loading of previously sorted timber frames and transporting them to the Railways Golf Club site was done at this phase. Reusable materials were collected after sorting through building debris, for example,



FIGURE 7a

Systematic window removal to avoid breakage and destruction of adjacent materials

Source: Authors 2020



FIGURE 7b
Pitched roof demolition
Source: Authors 2020



FIGURE 7c
Flat roof demolition (i. Soffit, fascia and roofing joists removal. ii & iii. Stripping of the bitumen layer off the roof)
Source: Authors 2020



FIGURE 7d
Structure demolition
Source: Authors 2020

masonry blocks, buried timber frames, furniture pieces (private members club bar). Cast-iron beams were first cleared of the concrete casing (**Figure 7f**).

Material Extraction, Sorting and Storage

Recyclable building elements were collected and sorted as shown in **Figures 7e** and **7f**. Masonry blocks were sorted with regard to their structural integrity and transported to the new building site at the Nairobi Railways Golf Club (NRGC). Once on the new site, offloading and stacking used the same criteria. Cast iron beams were further cleared of the concrete encasing and collected for storage and recycling. Though carefully removed off of the building, the precast classical columns suffered minor damages, and thus the need for restoration before reuse. Windows, doors and door frames were loaded

on a shipping container for transport to storage at NRGC, as shown in **Figure 8**.

Glass window panes suffered more damage during storage, hence the need for replacement. As for the window frames, surface paint needed to be stripped and a fresh coat of paint applied before reuse.

Before loading on the containers for transportation and storage at NRGC, previously collected and stacked recovered building elements, that is windows, door leaves, frames, skirting, chair rails and wainscoting, were stock checked by a representative of the Nairobi Metropolitan Services (NMS) to confirm the quantities, overall integrity post-extraction and the degree of repair required to determine materials for recycling/repurposing (**Table 2**).



FIGURE 7e
Material sorting and collection (i. Cast iron beams. ii. Salvaged Nairobi blue stones. iii. Stacked classical columns)
Source: Authors 2020



FIGURE 7f
Material sorting and stacking
Source: Authors 2020

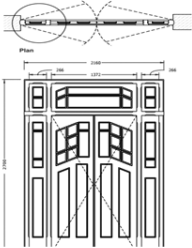



FIGURE 8

Building elements extraction and storage (i. Extracted main lobby hardwood door frame. ii. & iii. Storage of window pane into containers for transportation. Note the broken panes)

Source: Authors 2020

TABLE 2: An example of the initial building elements quantities documentation

Door Id	Quantity	Dims (mm)	Location	Description
D01/01 – D01/09	9	2160*2700	Entry lobby, dining hall & clubhouse	Custom double doors with sidelight and transom
	<p>Appearance</p> 	<p>Furniture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Brass plated handle - Hinges - Latches - Top and bottom barrel bolts 	<p>Comments</p> <p>The door is in good condition with intact furniture and a few broken panes</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Replace broken panes - Repair and restore the door to initial status 	

Source: Authors 2020

DISCUSSION

The study found that in the quest to project their status and culture in the colonies, the British people, who were the colonizers in Kenya, used a series of methods to establish their superiority both in terms of culture and class. Buildings such as the Nairobi Railways Clubhouse served as scaffolds to prop up this unique sophisticated identity to the Kenya

colony. This identity was enhanced not only in terms of the disposition of spaces and their use, but also the technology employed and the level of finishing of the building which was meant to emphasize the class difference, for instance, the ballet dance floor had a unique suspended flooring system which was partly aimed at cushioning the vibrations of the dancing movements, and also meant to ventilate the floor cavity space below and hence prevent the rusting of

the I-beams and rotting of the timber members – see **Figure 9a**.

The study further found that the ballet dance flooring system was adopted due to the fact that the area has black cotton soil and there was evidence that this was not removed on site, thus the suspended flooring on iron I-beams functioned more or less as raft foundation. The above example emphasizes the use of buildings as scaffolds to demonstrate the identity uniqueness, sophistication and superiority of the British Empire right from the nature of space use, that is ballet dancing, to the flooring technology and timber floor finish. **Figure 9b** details the ingenuity of the colonial powers.

Figure 9c shows the exterior of the Clubhouse, further demonstrating this approach where the external facades continued with the same emphasis by employment of high-quality detailing that was in keeping with the Georgian architectural style, and also carried echoes of the culture and identity.

The Regeneration and Repurposing

The demolition process saw the entire building demolished, except the main hall. The main hall was

restored, repurposed and integrated into the new bus terminal scheme as a service and waiting lounge (**Figure 10a**).

The salvaged materials were assessed according to the degree of integrity for reuse (**Figure 10b**). This can be seen in instances where the building blocks- blue Nairobi stone- were arranged at the new site awaiting construction. The classical columns were transported to storage and set for repair before reuse. Windows and doors had the paint stripped off and restored to their initial integrity. The spatial repurposing of the regenerated building will see the addition of new doors into the door schedule; these will be modelled to fit into the original context. Salvaged wooden rafters will be used as either firewood or formwork, depending on their integrity. Aluminum roofing sheets and cast-iron beams were respectively sent out for repurposing and recycling.

The regeneration and repurposing of the Nairobi Railways Clubhouse was aimed at aligning the proposed regenerated building to the tastes of the new users who were the members of the Railways Golf Club, hence it had to adhere to the identity aspirations of this new group of users and thus be able to project their identity. Moreover, in terms of material usage, most of the materials salvaged from the demolition

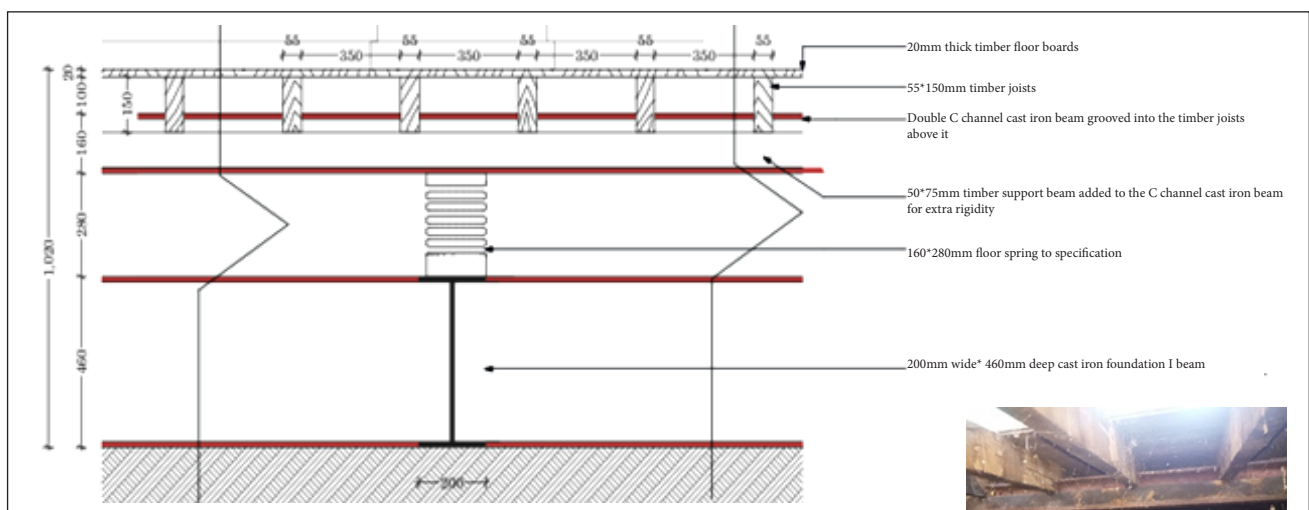


FIGURE 9a

Foundation details

Source: Authors 2020



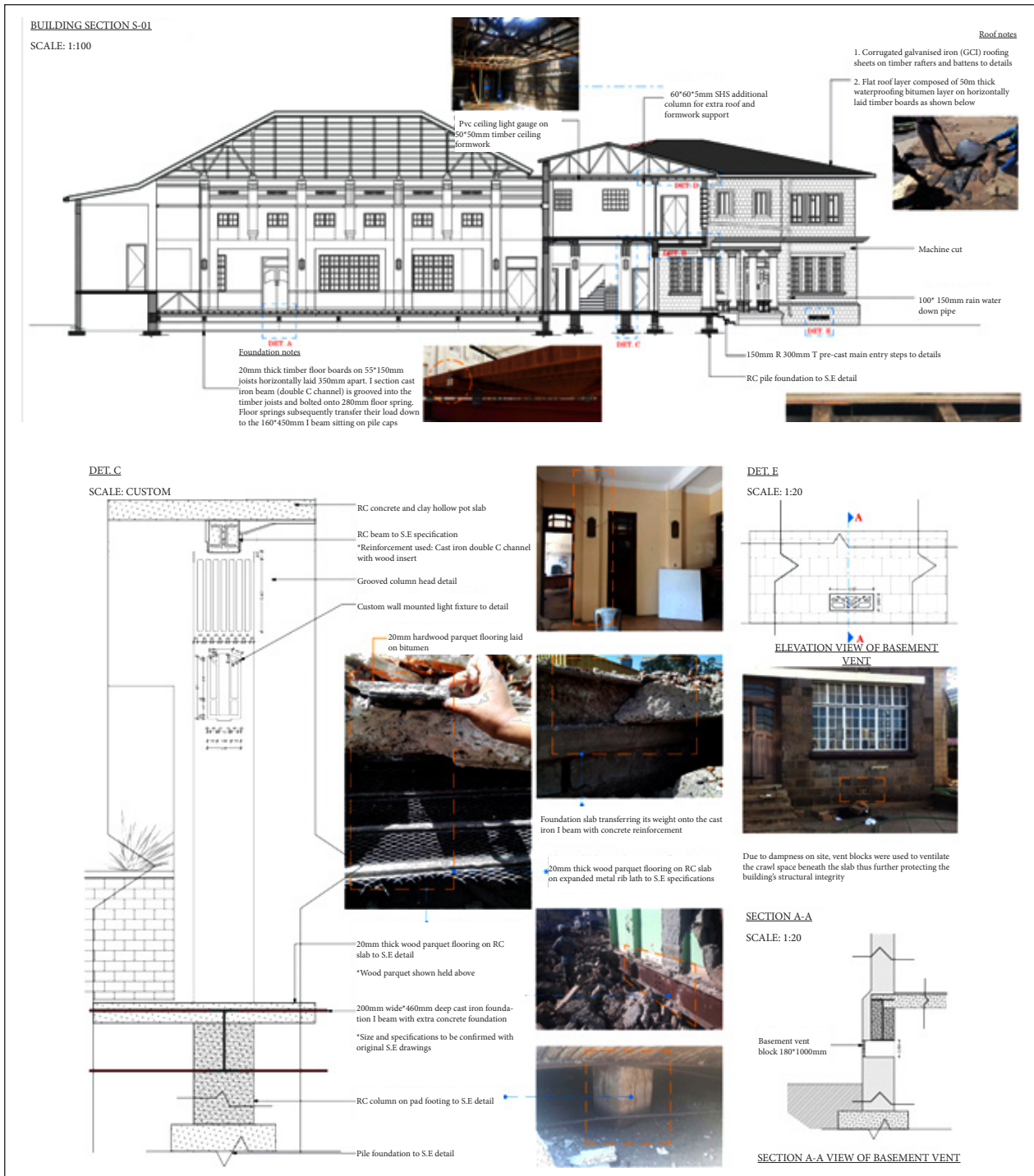


FIGURE 9b
Building details
Source: Authors 2020



FIGURE 9c
Part front view of Nairobi Railway Clubhouse
Source: Authors 2020



FIGURE 10a
Main Hall retained for renovation and re-purposing on the site's new program
Source: Authors 2021



FIGURE 10b
Precast column extraction and assessment of the degree of damage
Source: Authors 2021

would be used in the regenerated and repurposed building as some of them cannot easily be sourced, whereas other fixtures, like the columns, require great detail and workmanship. Hence, as per the plans in **Figures 11a** and **11b**, the building was regenerated and re-functionalized in keeping with the new users' class and identity.

Figures 11a and **11b** show the space allocation for activities such as squash, aerobics, billiards' and gymnasium, among others, as uses that were aimed at offering the new users activities that solidify their identity as a group and distinguish them from others. It has been argued that collective identity content can be cognitive, explaining how group membership associates with how the world works and describes the group's social reality and allows interpretation of the world (Wang, 2018). Therefore, the individual actor's world perception will be shaped by the collective identity and how the group interprets the world, this explains the British attitude and conduct before independence and the subsequent assimilation and evolution of membership clubs post-independence. Further, the relational characteristics serve to define and enhance the relative status of an identity in comparison to another, so that one group is eventually identified as superior to another. The colonial heritage, such as the Nairobi Railways Clubhouse initial use and re-functionalization, therefore, serves an important role of not only propping up this identity, but also emphasizing the relative superiority of one group verses the other.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The foregoing discussion has clearly highlighted how built heritage has multiple lives over its lifetime and, in the process, gets appropriated by different groups to articulate their different identities, while continuing to be useful in the lives of the communities at the time. This underscores the importance of such heritage assets, which also go beyond to offer useful lessons, be it in terms of technology usage or solutions to some of life's problems. It is therefore important that these heritage assets are conserved, both for their use value, and also as tangible reminders of our past history and evolution of our collective identity.

Further, and in cases like this where a national heritage asset is in the way of a national project, conservation of heritage and development should be considered as complimentary goals for national development as opposed to being seen as divergent poles in the process of national growth. This paper therefore recommends that colonial heritage fabric ought to be studied and its lessons employed in conservation and management of the Nation's heritage while being anchored in the African context, so as to guarantee sustainability of the conservation process by giving a conserved fabric reflective of the society's identity aspirations.

Moreover, it is also recommended that heritage of any type must be made useful to current community, be it in terms of society education or research, social wellbeing and economic welfare; this will not only guarantee a longer life for the heritage, but its conservation would also be sustainable. It is further recommended that in cases where heritage property needs to be demolished or repurposed or regenerated, then careful documentation must precede the actual demolition or repurposing so as to record not only materials, but also techniques. Thereafter, the demolition itself must be carried out in such a manner as to salvage as much materials and elements to be reused in the repurposed or regenerated building. This will ensure the continuity of the community's memory and also ensure that the repurposed building maintains the material integrity as per the original heritage property.

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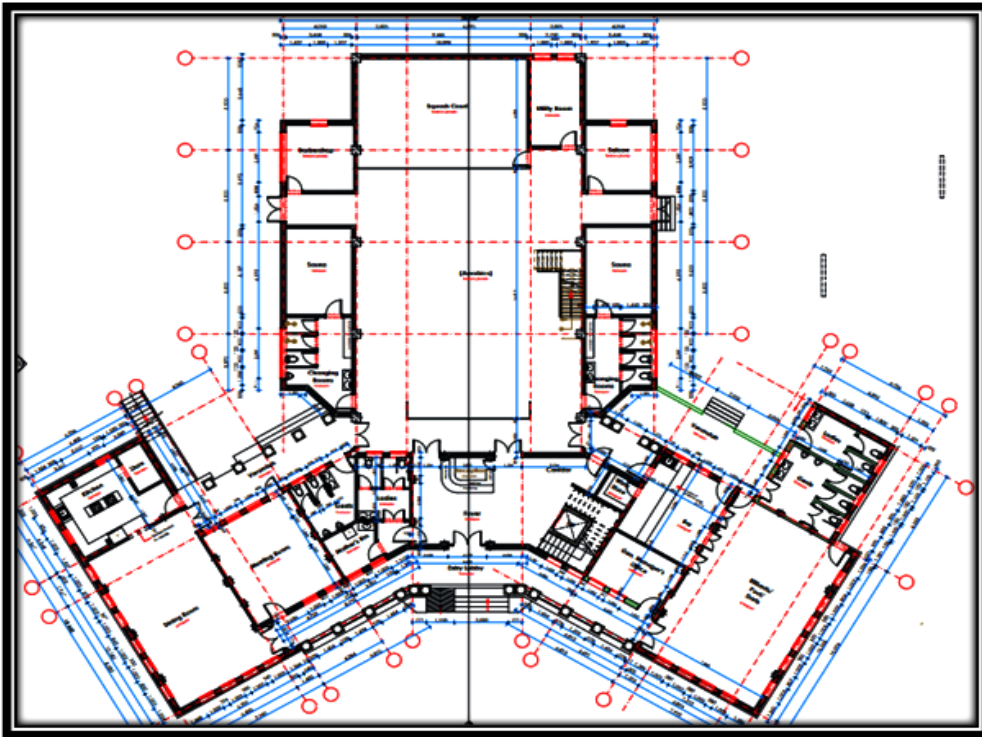


FIGURE 11a
Ground floor plan of regenerated and re-functionalized building
Source: Authors 2020

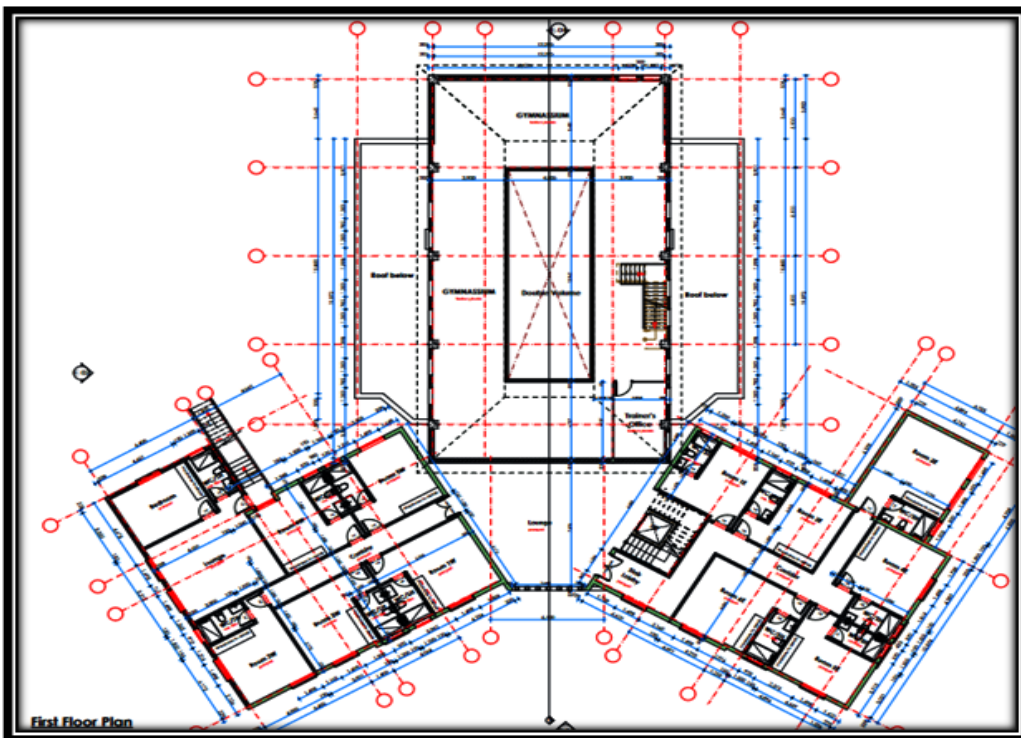


FIGURE 11b
First floor plan of regenerated and re-functionalized building
Source: Authors 2020

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