



A SPACE FULL OF HERITAGE RICHNESS BAZA, GRANADA

The municipality of Baza has been selected by the jury of the Competition for proposing a project that seeks to reorganise an area that has remained embedded in the urban fabric. Despite its rich heritage, which includes a set of historical gardens and monuments such as the Palace of the Enríquez or the Monastery of San Jerónimo, it is today disarticulated and degraded. It has therefore been proposed to connect this area with the environment which surrounds it, thus creating a new urban space. It will be based as much on the new buildings that articulate the existing elements, as the recovery of such elements to form a network of cultural and purposeful spaces (institutional, cultural and hotels). As an enclave of high patrimonial value, it must be regenerated, rehabilitated and, in part, reconstructed, without distorting the character of this Grenadian municipality.

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BAZA

The city of Baza is located in the northeast of the province of Granada. It is the largest municipality in the region, with an area of 545 km², and has a population of 20,656 inhabitants. In addition, it is the main city, serving as the nucleus for the inhabitants of Granada's High Plateau, offering a large number of services. It has in fact been so historically, going back to the Iberian period, when it was the capital of the region to which it gave its name, the Bastetania.

It is located at the foot of the mountain range of the same name, precisely at the meeting point between it and the indentation that makes up Hoya de Baza. This location, straddling two different territorial and environmental units, has deeply marked the urban structure of Baza and, consequently, its internal articulation.

Baza is declared a Site of Cultural Interest (BIC) for being a Historical Site, among other reasons, such as its survival in a good state of conservation, at least until the year 70 of the 20th Century, from the medieval part which is formed by the old medina and a series of large suburbs that surround it. These neighbourhoods are characterised by an intricate labyrinth of narrow streets and alleys. Even though all of this underwent a profound modification since the Christian conquest of the city, including the implementation of a new urban centre which gives way to streets of greater size, the opening of squares and a new scale of both civil and religious buildings. During the 16th Century the medieval part was surrounded by a series of convent buildings and churches that appear to surround the old medieval city.

History of the Place

The historical evolution of the city and its urban articulation could be summarized in the following stages:

The Late-Medieval City was defined by two elements that formed its urban layout. Firstly, the part formed by the Alcazaba and the Medina which is the origin of the current city; as well as its relationship with the Rambla de la Mancoba through the gate of San Francisco and the Peso. The layout of which coincided with the urban environment of the Granada-Murcia road, the main historical route connecting Baza with the rest of the territory, and which currently continues to be one of the main components of the urban layout. Secondly, the communication provided by the Granada-Murcia road between the Medina and the Arrabales, and with those between them, as well as with the old cemetery located partially under the current Parque de la Alameda. This constitutes the only clearly laid out east-west route, capable of traversing the entire heart of the region in that direction.

Between the 15th and 18th centuries, urban growth was limited, and urban reformations were not very significant. Indeed, during this period of almost four centuries urban growth was limited to the occupation of some existing spaces linked to the walled enclosures of the Alcazaba (Cava Alta street) and the Medina (Dolores street); the cladding on some edges of the outskirts and the overall appearance of Carrera de Palacio street, linked to the construction of the Monastery of San Jerónimo and the Palace of Los Enríquez. As far as urban reformations went, they were linked to the opening up



of squares and the construction of new facilities, both as the result of the Christianization of the city: the town hall, the butchers, the corn exchange, the granary, the hospital, and fundamentally the churches, hermitages and convents.

From the perspective of ensuring the city's urban structure in the future, it is worth highlighting the appearance of a more complex system of roads linking the urban nucleus with the agrarian environment, which with time will support urban growth, structuring the urban fabric of the new neighbourhoods.

The contemporary city was established from the nineteenth century by two events that had an important impact on the urban structure: the confiscation of a major part of the Church's assets, and the implementation of the railway west of the centre, with industrial facilities linked to it in the area. These are mainly located at the junction of the road from Granada with the railway and also in confiscated buildings, such as the Monastery of San Jerónimo. The characteristics of these facilities made it difficult to communicate from east-west in the city. Also, data from this period shows the main development of cave houses, which arose as an economic way of solving the residential needs of workers who come to Baza during the boom of esparto, without having to occupy the area's fertile lands. Their location is fundamentally down to two criteria: the capacity of the soil and ease of its excavation amounting to their subsequent stability; and the existence of sufficient slopes to form the cave. In addition, various public spaces were created that are even today among the most important in the city, around the Plaza de las Eras, the Parque de la Alameda and the Humilladero. Finally, the construction of the new Granada highway and the Ronda highway were also fundamental to Baza's urban network, which formed a main alternative to the pre-existing road system and, together with it, make up the current basic road system of Baza.

In the last decades the events that have most influenced the city have been the suppression of the railroad service and the dismantling of the railroad facilities; the construction of the A-92 motorway; the configuration of the end of Avenida Reyes Católicos and that of the second-level road.

Local Architectural Tradition

At present in Baza, within the scope of its historical context, four very defined types of architecture coexist, in terms of morphology and construction materials, as well as location in the urban fabric of the city.

On the one hand, we find civil and religious architecture, of a monumental nature, which uses noble wall material, such as ashlar masonry, mudéjar-type bonds, or rubblework masonry, depending on the case. The wrought iron grills and woodwork made from elaborate wood are abundant in it. Wooden structures covering the ceilings of the main rooms also appear with frequency, and in some cases, the Italian-style alfarje ceilings from the first Renaissance of the sixteenth century also appear. This architecture is mainly distributed around the area of the old Medina and the suburbs or historical neighbourhoods, in a clear bid to distinguish the hamlet of the old Muslim city both physically and symbolically.

On the other hand, we find private architecture of eminently classic designs distributed throughout the city centre, coinciding with the old Medina and adjacent streets. Mainly developed from the nineteenth



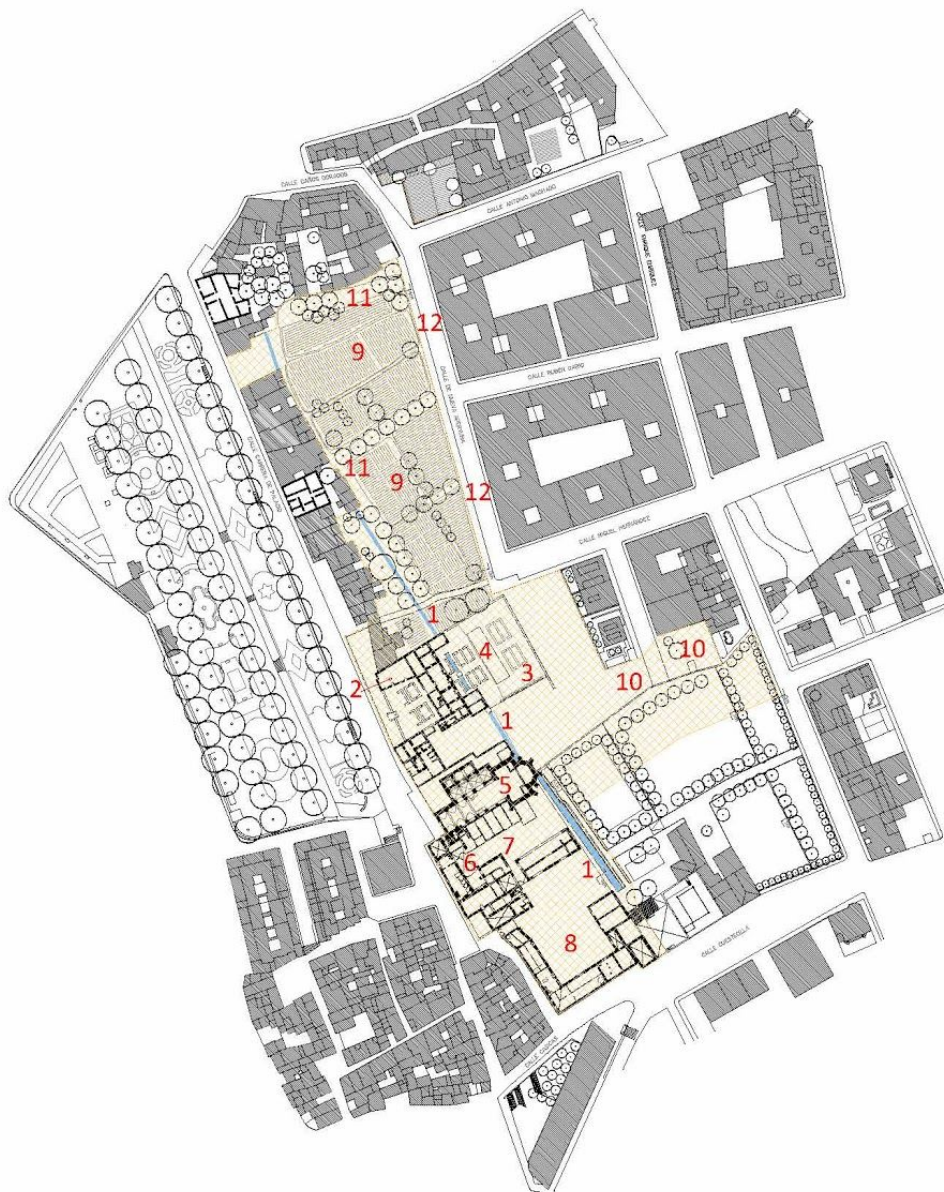
century onward, it features regular, organised spaces and framed openings, with mouldings which also appear to mark out the floors and form cornices. Wooden eaves of corbels are also common, wooden or iron enclosed balconies and balconies forming series, with smaller overhangs toward the upper floors. Masonry is often used on the corners, as well as for the base of the walls on the ground floor. For these, the masonry made with lime mortar is used. Both doors and windows and ironwork are well executed and designed. The façades are usually painted with lime, in cream or white tones.

Thirdly, with a huge presence in all the city's historical neighbourhoods, and especially in the area of the old Muslim suburbs on the outskirts of the Medina, appears a more modest architecture, of distinct popular tradition. Here, functionally combines both general housing and agricultural uses, although at present these have practically disappeared. These buildings have façades with irregularly distributed openings and are generally of smaller dimensions. They are characterised by their complex interior distribution of spaces, corresponding to their traditional uses, which linked to work in the field and subsistence economies: animal pens, stables, patios and small vegetable plots on the bordering area. It formed a beautiful landscape which linked between the established farmhouses, and the agricultural outskirts and the wastelands around the town. Generally, they are of two or three floors, with the top floor, in the latter case, being dedicated to an open wooden gallery or place to dry the produce, mainly those associated with pig slaughter. These modest constructions are basically built with masonry load-bearing walls made with plaster mortars and the use of mudbrick and tapial is also abundant, but generally very poor in lime. The façades are always whitewashed with the plinths usually painted with lime in grey tones. The doors and windows are usually painted in dark brown, blue, blue-grey and green colours; and the bars are wrought iron.

The fourth type of architecture present in Baza is that of cave houses. In this case, they are troglodytic dwellings excavated in the tertiary soft terrain, found especially in the upper area of the city, resting on the foot of the Sierra de Baza and on the banks of the Baza River. Consisting of underground excavation to form a series of spaces for both human and livestock use, they extended into the area in the second half of the 15th century as a result of the high migration caused by the massive clearing of old wooded areas for extensive agricultural use. In any case, the construction of these type of cave dwellings already had a very long tradition throughout the north of the province of Granada, mainly from the eleventh century.

PROPOSAL OF INTERVENTION

The intervention proposal focuses on the monumental complex that lies to the south of the medina, on the course of the Caz Mayor canal, which irrigates the orchards of Baza. It is made up of the historical gardens of the area, the Palacio de los Enríquez and its gardens, and the Monastery of San Jerónimo, including what was once its cloister, which nowadays lays destroyed.



- 1- Caz Mayor Canal - Caz Mayor
- 2- Palace - Palacio
- 3- Gardens of the Palace - Jardines de Palacio
- 4- Water reservoir - Alberca
- 5- Church of San Jerónimo - Iglesia de San Jerónimo
- 6- Monastery of San Jerónimo - Monasterio de San Jerónimo
- 7- Cloister of the Monastery - Claustro del Monasterio
- 8- Second Patio of the Monastery - Segundo Patio del Monasterio
- 9- Orchards - Huertas
- 10- Blocks to complete - Manzana a completar
- 11- Rears of the buildings to be ordered - Fachadas traseras a ordenar
- 12- Possible location of new constructions to form a new elevation - Posible ubicación de nuevas construcciones para conformar un nuevo alzado.



The structure of this patrimonial complex, due to its dimensions and it being situated outside of the urban area, has hardly been altered over the centuries, with the simple exception of the gardens that have been partly occupied due to the urban growth over the last few years. It is precisely this growth which has turned the complex into an island, isolated from the urban area that surrounds it. The problem is related to the morphology of it all, which to the west has a hardly permeable enclosure, while towards the east is enclosed by the flow of the Caz Mayor canal, which separates the existing buildings from the orchards.

For this reason, the area represents a great opportunity for the city to recover an important cultural heritage, while making it more accessible from the various existing routes within it and their connection between one another. Thus, allowing this area to be more valued, known, used and traversed, without losing its particular character and maintaining the tradition of the place.

This urban intervention must begin by understanding the structure of buildings, orchards and historical gardens, their configurations and relationships, to achieve a reevaluation and dignify this heritage, to define its appropriate environment and to provide this whole area with a new function within the urban complex. The aim is to provide citizens not only with a new network of public spaces, but also with the recovery of a heritage in which historical, architectural, ethnological, archaeological and environmental values converge.

The Palace of los Enríquez was conceived as a country villa, taking advantage of the Caz Mayor to irrigate its orchards and gardens. It represents several constructive phases spanning from the late Gothic period to the full Renaissance. At first it seems to have responded to the model of a towered country house, to later be turned into a Renaissance-style country villa. This was formed in a U-shaped floor, defined by a long bay with a lodge on the main façade and two pavilions or belvederes attached to the end of its back façade, which were supported by columns and opened towards the garden. This configuration makes it the only example of a recreational palace in the style of a large country villa from the Italian Renaissance that exists in Andalusia.

Next to it, stands the Monastery of San Jerónimo, the foundation of the Enríquez-Luna family. It played a fundamental role in the Bastetan society from the 16th to 18th centuries, both in regards to the religious life of the city, its economic power and numerous possessions. Its decline began with the French invasion in the War of Independence and the subsequent disentailment of Mendizábal. The Monastery of San Jerónimo was auctioned, being passed into private hands. Throughout the following years it was converted into dwellings, a mill, sawmill, flour factory and warehouses, with the consequent destruction or transformation of its original architecture. For its part, the Church kept it open as a simple hermitage until, after its dissembling following the Civil War, it became a warehouse. In this way, the Jeronimo Monastery, which for almost three and a half centuries was one of the richest and most powerful institutions of the Bastetan society, fell into disgrace. What is worse, it became forgotten by the then inhabitants of Baza, despite its important presence in the urban layout of the city.

The Church is made up of a nave with a transept marked out in the floor, and chapels on its north side. The main chapel of the Church was built in 1535 in a late Gothic style. The head of it is octagonal with buttresses on the outside. This first version is covered with starred cross vaults. The central nave is covered by a half-barrel vault with lunettes that rests on transverse arches on a running entablature. The choir space lies at its feet. The sacristy was built in 1588. The church was completed in 1690, with the construction of the entrance done in stonework and the closing of the lateral walls in masonry.



Regarding the Monastery, the western bay is still preserved, with some remains of the cells, the refectory and part of the southern arcade of the splendid cloister built by Juan García de Gibaja in 1554 in Tuscan style. The southern façade of this bay also stands out, facing a second cloister or courtyard adjacent to the previous, around which rose the production and storage units of the Monastery, such as the wine press, the cellar or the mill, of which some remains have are still preserved. In what remains of the western area of the complex, the flour factory machinery has been conserved. Finally, on the eastern flank of the complex, the retaining wall which resolves the change of elevation between the cloister of the Monastery and the Caz Mayor, has also been conserved. This wall is executed in ashlar masonry and has blind openings that could correspond to rooms of a possible former and now lost semi-cellar from the convent.

After decades of neglect, only the monastic church has been modified to date, with structural changes and roofing arranged that allows it to be used as a cultural and exhibition space. However, both the palace and the rest of the remains from the monastery that are still preserved need urgent interventional refurbishments and in some cases complete reconstruction. These actions must first of all address its progressive deterioration; whilst, it is also essential that they define the facility's function and consider its recovery for the benefit of all the citizens.

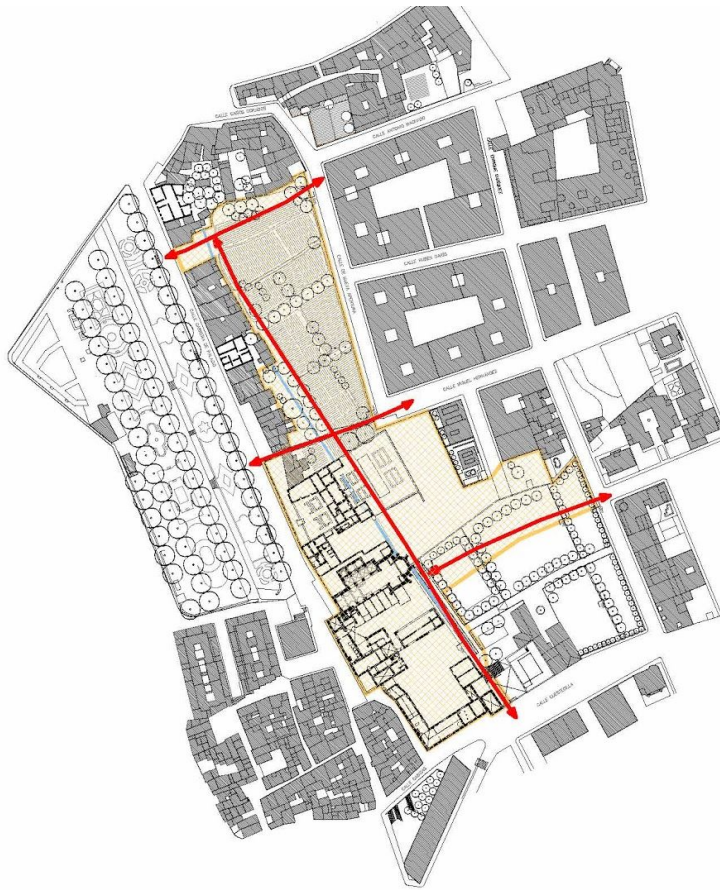
The proposal must therefore include the following aspects:

- Restoration and refurbishment of the whole of the Monastery of San Jerónimo, the Palace of los Enríquez and its orchards and historic gardens. The Monastery of San Jerónimo will be used in a hotel capacity. The uniqueness of its position and cultural associations inherited from the primitive Monastery of San Jerónimo, guarantee the creation of an installation that possesses all the necessary ingredients to become the touristic benchmark that Baza seeks. The proposal must include the reconstruction of the original layout of the cloister, completing the lost features, defining the patio that is linked to the flour factory, and recovering of the old Monastery garden to shape the new hotel gardens. Both the Church and the flour factory will be able to combine their cultural uses with the complementary functions of the rest of the hotel spaces. The arboreal strip on the eastern edge of the sector will have to be preserved. As for the Palace of los Enríquez, it will be used in an institutional capacity, linked to the Mayor's Office. A council chamber and the General Secretariat are proposed for its first floor. The ground floor and the gardens will be best used as representative spaces. All this must be undertaken allowing a musealisation of the Palace which pays consideration to the citizens. The water reservoir that existed in front of the Palace, on the other side of the Caz Mayor, will also be recovered. To the north of the palace there are several minor service buildings in poor condition that can be restored or redesigned. The main access from the Carrera de Palacio to the orchard area is conserved; this can be used as an access point to one of the proposed pedestrian routes that would that could be carried out as a continuation of the Miguel Hernández street.

- Creation of a new public space or park that highlights the important role of the Caz Mayor in the configuration of this whole area, and that maintains the character of the gardens irrigated by it, becoming at the same time more accessible and passable. The treatment of this public space should allow the perceived relationship between the Caz, the orchards and the historical buildings that are housed in the area, to take advantage of these resources.

- Opening of new pedestrian road connections to the Carrera de Palacio, crossing the proposed area. Recovery of the walk that runs along the Caz Mayor and its connection with Casicas street.

Connection of Caños Dorados and Huerta de Palacio streets with María de Luna street. The maintenance of the urban and architectural structure as well as the general characteristics of the environment are adopted as management criteria, understanding such re-modelling as an improvement on its relationship with the urban environment.



- Ordering of the rears of the buildings on Carrera de Palacio. The design of residential or mixed-use buildings to complete the blocks defined by the streets Caños Dorados, Huerta de Palacio, Miguel Hernández and María de Luna, which are still not too clogged, so as to generate an appropriate context in which the historical site will recover. To the same end, new residential or mixed-use buildings can be designed to serve as a transition between Caños Dorados street and the orchard area, as long as their elevations and relationship with the latter are treated in accordance with a main façade and not as one of the rear. The same operation can be carried out for organising the rears of the buildings that define the proposed northern area, between Plaza de las Eras and Caños Dorados street. As a whole, the new buildings proposed must above all respond to the enhancement and framing of the historical complex's recovery, in harmony with the architectural tradition within of Baza's historical context. The proposed buildings will not require the same level of detailed treatment in their entirety, as the designs proposed for the rehabilitation and reintegration of those that make up the historical complex to be recovered. Although their composition and constitution must be taken care of and demonstrated.



Basic Conditions for the Proposal Based on the Municipal Regulation of Application in the Area of Intervention

In the new proposed buildings, their volume, the construction materials, the finishes and their tonalities, the proportions and the sizes of the alcoves and the decorative elements should be those characteristic of Baza's architectural tradition.

The use of open courtyards or open wooden structure galleries are recommended on the façade, as traditional elements of the architecture of Baza's Historical Complex, as well as the use of earth and lime in construction. For exterior cladding, lime plaster or plaster with traditional natural pigments will be used. It is prohibited to use imitations and false veneers of precious materials, as well as polished stone elements and pre-fabricated materials.

The openings must have eminently vertical proportions. As for the doors and windows, they must be made of wood and with traditional finishes and parts. The ironwork will be of iron, of a traditional design and treatment. The blinds will be in wood and be in the traditional colours.

The roofs will be inclined. Their gables shall not exceed 30 degrees of inclination and the height of the ridge shall not exceed 3.50 metres measured from the upper face of the last slab. In no case shall they have dormers or skylights. The only material allowed for coverage is the traditional curved ceramic tile.