

ASANTE TRADITIONAL BUILDINGS: SURVEY AND CONDITION ASSESSMENT

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A project Sponsored by World Monuments Fund



in collaboration with
Ghana Museums and Monuments Board



A project Sponsored by:

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Detail of Decorations at Patakro Shrine

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Unless noted otherwise, all photography by Gina Haney, Sébastien Moriset, and Emily Williamson.

NOTE:

The character ") " used throughout this report is pronounced "O". For example, the commonly used term ") bosom", defined as an everyday object embodying the god or spirit, is pronounced "O-bu-sum". For a full list of pronunciations, please see the Glossary in Appendix C.



Asante Stools at Patakro

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project Objectives and Background

In 2012, the International Centre for Earth Construction - National School of Architecture of Grenoble (CRAterre-ENSAG) and the Ghana Museums and Monuments Board (GMMB) submitted a proposal for possible inclusion of the Asante Traditional Buildings (ATBs) to the 2012 World Monuments Fund (WMF) Watch list. Nominated for its strong symbolic, social, religious, and historical value as well as its link to the historical memory of surrounding communities and larger Asante culture, the distinct and unique artistic values of the buildings as embodied in the intricate earthen decorative elements were also highlighted¹. It was this artistic value that led to the previous inscription of the ATBs to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) World Heritage List in 1980.

Prior to the Watch nomination and successful listing by WMF in 2012, CRAterre in conjunction with the GMMB mounted a restoration campaign at the sites between 1998-2002. UNESCO and the French Embassy in Ghana jointly funded this initiative. There are ten buildings in total that are officially known as the ATBs.

After Watch listing in 2012, WMF supported a public awareness day at Asawase. Interest generated from this event resulted in a WMF request for funding from the Ambassador's Fund for Cultural Preservation (AFCP) in 2013. Subsequently, AFCP funded a mission to survey and formulate a baseline condition assessment of the ATBs in January 2014. This report is the result of the WMF mission.

The objectives of the survey and baseline condition assessment are to help inform a comprehensive project targeting the restoration of selected buildings as well

as a community-based development strategy for the collection of ATBs. It is hoped that this project would be supported by the AFCP and managed by WMF.

A private, non-profit organization founded in 1965, WMF has worked in over 90 countries to preserve global heritage. Since 2012, WMF has been interested in the long-term preservation and promotion of the ATBs. In this respect, WMF convened a team of experts from Community Consortium and CRAterre to undertake the 2014 mission to Ghana. This mission was carried out with members from the GMMB, Kumasi Regional Office and concluded with strategic planning meetings with GMMB in Accra.

Established in 1979, CRAterre is the International Center for Earth Construction, a research center within the Grenoble national superior School of Architecture. Having broadly contributed to the recognition of earth architecture as a discipline, CRAterre seeks to improve and disseminate knowledge and best practices internationally, with a focus on Africa. Since 1998, CRAterre has been actively engaged in the preservation and conservation of the ATBs and worked with agencies such as UNESCO, the French Embassy in Ghana, and WMF on their long-term sustainability. Five years of collaboration with GMMB led to a complete repair of the ten buildings and the restoration of the thatched roof of Besease shrine. A key outcome then was the revival of the restoration expertise for the earthen decorations.

Founded in 2008, Community Consortium works where traditional built and natural environments contribute to community reinforcement and economic development. Since 1996, Community Consortium associates have been actively working with traditional, municipal, and regional authorities in Ghana on long-term economic development strategies involving planning and cultural tourism.

Established in March 1957, GMMB is a public institution and the legal custodian of all listed national monuments. The GMMB derives its powers from the National Liberation Council Decree 387 of the 1969 National Museum Act. GMMB worked closely with CRAterre from 1998-2002 on the ATBs and supported the WMF Watch nomination of the buildings in 2012. Since the ATBs are national monuments, they fall specifically under the jurisdiction of the Monuments Division, GMMB and while management of the sites is shared with the site custodians and caretakers, GMMB has legal authority to approve all physical interventions.

Methodology

The methodology employed in undertaking the survey and condition assessment encompasses a variety of strategies to revise documentation of, as well as to better understand use of, the sites while fostering the engagement of stakeholders.

At each of the ten ATBs inscribed to the World Heritage List, floor plans that had been previously produced by a number of scholars as well as the GMMB, were revised to reflect current conditions by measuring, photographing, and recording wall thicknesses, room dimensions, openings, and elevation heights. In addition to the revised floor plans, site plans were created to further understand the relationship of these buildings to their context. Furthermore, information on the state of conservation was collected through photographic documentation, field notes, and conversations with the custodians and other community members. This information helped inform budgets for emergency repairs and additional longer-term initiatives. Data regarding the current use of the spaces was also gathered by conversations with the custodians, caretakers, and other community members. This included information regarding

the intangible heritage and movable heritage contained at the site. Finally, oral histories were collected from the residents of the communities hosting the ATBs, associated custodians and caretakers, traditional authorities, and the **)k) mfo** (pronounced O-kum-fo). The **)k) mfo** may be defined as the priest/priestess acting as mouthpiece of a god or spirit. Questions were asked concerning the use of the shrine, the vision for the future of the site, and the nature of the **) bosom** (pronounced O-bu-sum). The **) bosom** may be defined as an everyday object embodied with the God or spirit.

This on-site documentation was then combined with a systematic search of primary evidence undertaken at the Military Museum photographic archives (Kumasi) the regional archives in Kumasi and the national archives in Accra. Key words search included “fetish”, “shrine”, “) bosom”, “tradition”, and “Asante”. The archival documentation of court cases and petitions recorded by the British government during the late 19th and early 20th century were particularly illuminating in their demonstration of the contested nature of the **) bosom**.

In addition to the ten building complexes inscribed to the World Heritage list, three additional traditional building sites, historically referenced as having similar physical characteristics, were also surveyed. These sites had been listed as possibly having extant decorated buildings within the late 20th century. Although much data concerning the intangible values of such buildings was gathered, the architectural configurations and decorations did not correspond with those of the ATBs. These three sites provide important contextual information and will be included in the Survey and Condition Assessment chapter.

It should also be noted that the site plans and floor plans of the shrines are drawn for reference only and are not suitable for construction purposes.



Decorated Façade at Asawase

Brief Site Description and Definition

Ten ATBs survive and speak to the vernacular architecture produced during the height of the Asante Kingdom². These buildings are located in the Asante Region of Ghana, around Kumasi and Obuasi. As the popularity of Christianity, Islam, and other religions grew, the practice of Animism at these shrines decreased and many fell into disuse. As a result, UNESCO values the ten sites as being “rare surviving examples of a significant traditional architectural style of the influential, powerful and wealthy Asante kingdom”.



ATB Location	Latitude	Longitude
Abirim	6°44'42.52"N	1°32'44.36"W
Adarko Jachie	6°43'25.41"N	1°30'41.01"W
Asawase	6°41'09.59"N	1°29'18.66"W
Asenemanso	6°42'16.48"N	1°43'12.54"W
Besease	6°43'25.34"N	1°26'58.55"W
Bodwease	6°55'04.70"N	1°20'15.10"W
Edwenase	6°41'19.10"N	1°26'05.56"W
Kentinkrono	6°41'36.25"N	1°33'10.56"W
Patakro	6°16'48.95"N	1°38'40.69"W
Saaman	6°46'15.06"N	1°32'32.83"W

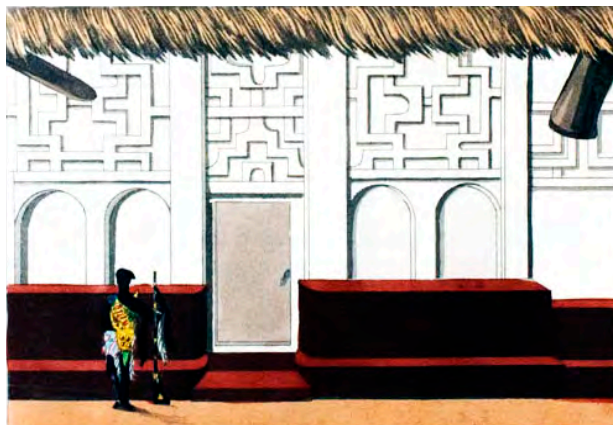




The ATBs are comprised of rectangular cob or wattle and daub buildings enclosing a courtyard. The) bosom can be found in either the courtyard itself or any of the surrounding buildings, with most being found in the shrine building itself. Each building is raised on a plinth and open or partially open (shrine building only) to the courtyard and is assigned exclusively to a single function: singing, drumming, cooking, or ritual. The ritual plinth or "dais" is restricted to use by the priest/priestess and this building is either partially or fully closed to the public.

The ATBs are also characterized by the presence of a sacred tree or "Nyame Dua" within the central courtyard. This tree may be surrounded by forked branches forced into the ground and holding a calabash or ceramic bowl used to provide food for the) bosom and hold sacred water. This space is highly ritualized. The courtyard is also used for pouring libation and performing sacrifice. There may be additional uses of this space that were not observed.

Historic steep roofs (many of which are now lost) and intricate decorative elements, sometimes depicting animals and Adinkra symbols, distinguish the ATBs from other buildings.³ Nineteenth-century European visitors to the region commented on this architectural style with the most detailed documentation in 1819 when T. E.



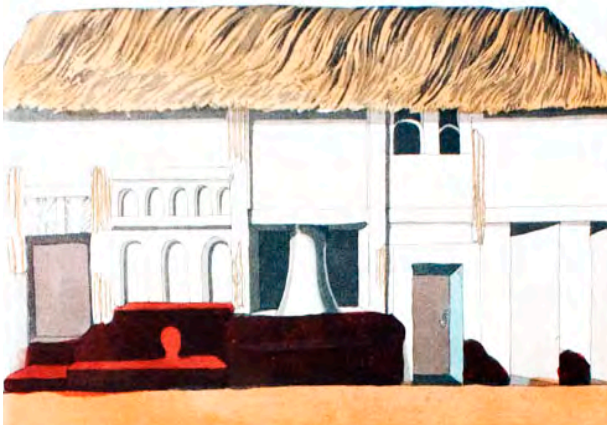
"The Oldest House in Coomasie", T. E. Bowdich, plate 4.

Bowdich, a British employee of the African Company of Merchants, published the book, *Mission from Cape Coast to Ashantee*. He describes the buildings as having

"poles and pillars..encircled by twists of cane..being filled with plaster, resembled the lozenge and cable ornaments of the Anglo-Norman order; the quatre-foil was very common..."⁴

Historically, ATB roofs were covered with palm leaves tied to bamboo battens and supported by a wooden structure. Around the 20th century it is thought that this roofing type was replaced with corrugated roofing sheets and the pitch lowered by approximately 60 percent. It is unclear why the traditional pitch was lowered. Today, these roof types remain on only one of the ten ATBS. Only Besease is covered with traditional materials and a sharply pitched roof thanks to an earlier restoration campaign organized by CRAterre and GMMB. The Chief's Palace in Bodwease displays the traditional construction techniques although the roof line has been altered and corrugated metal sheets cover it.

The decorative elements are modeled in bas-relief with earth. Some elements are reinforced with palm sticks



"The Oldest House in Coomasie", T. E. Bowdich, plate 5.

and rendered with red clay. Wall bases are colored with red clay washes while upper portions of the same surface are colored with a white clay wash. Gable ends of walls are constructed with timber and filled with wattle and daub.

These buildings, as well as an eleventh building (the Chief's Palace at Bodwease) found during the survey and assessment, are the last known surviving architecture directly related to the Asante Kingdom.



"Decorated House, Coomasie", photograph by T E Bowdich, 1817.

A History of Conservation

The history of conservation at the sites began in the mid twentieth century with the reported revival of the production of decorative elements. It is unclear who spearheaded this effort and how long it lasted. The next major event involves the 1980 inscription of the ATBs to the World Heritage List. Between the 1950s and 1980, the GMMB oversaw the physical well being of the sites. Active conservation work spearheaded by the GMMB began in the late 1980s and extended into the beginning of the 21st century. Since this time, the GMMB has been overseeing the physical maintenance of the buildings, with a highpoint between 1998 and 2002 when the GMMB and CRAterre developed a joint safeguarding campaign.



Exterior at Besease

Results

This survey and condition assessment provides a needed baseline for the state of conservation of the ATBs as well as their current level of use. In general, this initiative determined that overall, conservation activities undertaken between 1998-2002 and subsequent maintenance by GMMB has kept the buildings sound. However, there are several instances where erosion is impacting the sites and needs to be addressed.

Buildings located outside of the principle shrine area but part of the overall conceptual site design of the ATBs are, in general, in a poor state of preservation. For example, this is evident at Patakro at two locations on-site: in the quarters supporting the) t) mfo and) bosom that are attached to the main building but in undecorated spaces and at an adjacent mausoleum whose surrounding walls are collapsing. In addition, the Chief's Palace at Bodwease (a formerly unrecorded but highly decorated building nearby the recognized ATB) is in need of urgent and substantial repair. Erosion has greatly affected the exterior of the building, rendering at least one wall close to collapse. At Adarko Jachie, the living spaces adjoining the ATBs are on the verge of collapse.

It is evident from the baseline that certain ATBs shelter a higher degree of ritual and use than others. Abirim is the only location with an active) t) mfo. Even though caretakers at other ATBs feed the) bosom, they do not seem to actively channel the spirits embodied in it. Other sites see ritual activity sporadically and in accordance with the Asante Forty-Two Day Calendar (as shown below). There are also sites that see no ritual use. Some sites experience tourism-based visitation. Besease probably hosts the most tourists due to its comprehensive former restoration by CRAterre and GMMB. An exhibition at the site as well as marketing activities targeting international visitors to Kumasi most likely still encourages visitation today. Other sites experience little or no visitation due to little to no marketing strategies, their distance and accessibility from Kumasi.

Asante Forty-Two Days (Six Weeks) Calendar

1. SUNDAY	AKWASIDAE	26. THURSDAY	KWAYAWOO
2. MONDAY	ADAE-DWOADA	27. FRIDAY	MONOFIE
3. TUESDAY	MONOBENA	28. SATURDAY	FOMEMENE
4. WEDNESDAY	FOKUO	29. SUNDAY	NWONAKWASIE
5. THURSDAY	NWONAYAWOO	30. MONDAY	MONODWOO
6. FRIDAY	ADWEDEE-FIADA	31. TUESDAY	KURUBENA
7. SATURDAY	KURUMEMENE	32. WEDNESDAY	KWAWUKUO
8. SUNDAY	KWAKWASIE	33. THURSDAY	NONOYAWOO
9. MONDAY	NKYIDWOO	34. FRIDAY	FOFIE
10. TUESDAY	FOBENA	35. SATURDAY	NWONAMEMENE
11. WEDNESDAY	NWONAWUKUO	36. SUNDAY	NKYIKWASIE
12. THURSDAY	NKYIYAWOO	37. MONDAY	KURUDWOO
13. FRIDAY	KURUFIE	38. TUESDAY	KWABENA
14. SATURDAY	KWAMEMENE	39. WEDNESDAY	NONOWUKUO
15. SUNDAY	MONOKWASIE	40. THURSDAY	FOYAWOO
16. MONDAY	FODWOO	41. FRIDAY	NWONAFIE
17. TUESDAY	NWONABENA	42. SATURDAY	DAPAA
18. WEDNESDAY	NYIWUKUO		
19. THURSDAY	KURUYAWOO		
20. FRIDAY	KWAFIE/FIDAMPAN		
21. SATURDAY	MONOMEMENE		
22. SUNDAY	FOKWASIE		
23. MONDAY	NWONADWOO		
24. TUESDAY	DAPAA		
25. WEDNESDAY	AWUKUDAE/ KUUDAPAKUO		



Asantehene, Akwasidu, at the Akwasidae festival

2. CONTEXT

Site History

Though there is no exact construction date, it is estimated that the Asantes first built the ATBs during the 18th or 19th centuries.⁵ The Asantes are the largest of the Akan communities continuously inhabiting the southern, forested areas of the Guinea Coast (later known as the Gold Coast during the colonial period and then Ghana upon independence). The Akans (including the Asante and other ethnic groups) form a very large and influential ethnicity.⁶

The Asante Kingdom, of which the Asantehene is the head, was founded in the 17th century to create a community independent from other Akan groups that were halting direct trade from the European coastal castles to the interior. The Asante Kingdom expanded rapidly because they were able to create a thriving trade route connecting the North and South. This territorial expansion gave rise to a highly sophisticated kingdom organized around a military that they required to defend and protect their commercial and economic interests.⁷

By the 18th century, the Asante single handedly controlled the trade of items from the savanna to the forest, providing vital and efficient channels to coastal areas.⁸ As the powerful kingdom grew so, seemingly, did their reliance on ritual and use of) bosoms, possibly giving rise to the decorated buildings housing them. Various military defeats against the British culminated in the deportation of Asantehene Nana Prempeh II in 1896 and affected the solidarity and authority of the Kingdom.⁹ As part of their strategy to fully colonize the Gold Coast, the British installed regulations targeting ritual and the) bosom.

During the 1930s and 1940s many accounts from users of the various) bosoms across the Asante Kingdom petitioned colonial administrators to preserve the) bosom or “fetish” to cure various ailments and for the general “welfare of the town.”¹⁰ Ailments such as infertility and premature death were mentioned frequently and many of the accounts stressed that fetish was not used for extortion.

Community members during this time also wrote to seek permission to start fetishes in their respective villages and while permission was not needed, strict regulation of ritual and use of it existed. In 1940 District Commissioner C. O. Butler wrote:

“The policy of the Government is not to interfere with any fetish which is used solely for the curing of sickness or the protection of people against evil influences. Should, however, the fetish be used for witch or wizard finding or any ceremony in connection therewith the owner of the fetish and all persons connected therewith are liable to prosecution and the fetish may be destroyed.”¹¹

In a few instances the physical nature of the fetish is described but nowhere are decorated buildings mentioned. A “cone of red earth with a spot on the top under a shade” describes the local shrine at Dante while a superintendent of police describes “worshiping place(s)” as a large fenced area enclosing “a pile of stones measuring about 2 feet high.”¹² The superintendent continues to describe these areas as

having cutlasses and spears fixed to the ground as weapons of the fetish.¹³ The cone of earth, piles of stones, as well as spears fixed to the ground were observed at various sites during the January survey.

The only village mentioned in the historic sources where a traditional building still exists today is Patakro. A detailed description of a “fetish celebration” in Patakro sheds light on the ceremony attached to the ATBs.¹⁴ A “Fetish House” is referred to in this document as a place where the) bosom resides but the structure itself is not described. In this case, the) bosom or fetish has been summoned for a variety of reasons included appointing its priest, to end quarreling, to ask for peace and progress “on the lines of modern civilization.”¹⁵

Others details regarding ritual are mentioned in the primary sources from the twentieth century that were corroborated by oral histories collected during the survey. The survey team was told that the eating of pepper prior to a consultation is prohibited by the) t) mfo. This is confirmed by the superintendent’s precise description indicating that soups cooked for the fetish officers and servants do not contain salt or pepper. In addition, this source mentions ceremonial days as Sundays and Fridays; oral histories collected during survey indicate that ceremonial days include Sunday, Friday, and Wednesday.

Stakeholder Evaluation

Stakeholders contributing to the conservation of the ATBs and the continual use and promotion of the sites are diverse and complimentary. They range from traditional authorities and governmental agencies to individual users. The descriptions below explain the responsibilities of the stakeholders. Although most stakeholders were engaged at some level during the January mission, a more substantial project and long-term execution should include defined roles for all stakeholders listed below.

Otumfuo Osei Tutu II, Asantehene and the Nananom of the Asanteman Traditional Authority

The Asantehene and the Asanteman Traditional Authority is the recognized owner of all of the ATBs, including the chief's palace at Bodwease, within the region. The authority is comprised of a number of chiefs who have various responsibilities and act in the name of the Asantehene.

World Monuments Fund

As the principle agency seeking funding for the ATBs and leader of the January mission, WMF believes that these buildings are unique assets physically embodying important elements, both tangible and intangible, of the Asante culture. WMF maintains that these assets are also threatened and would greatly benefit from a long-term conservation and planning initiative.

All of the Ghanaian stakeholders operate within recognized legal (national) or customary law (tradition area) frameworks. At times these frameworks seems to intersect and at other times they do not. If a larger ATB project is initiated these frameworks will be explained in terms of current and proposed future management structures.

Ghana Museums and Monuments Board

The GMMB is the is the legal custodian of Ghana's material cultural heritage. The GMMB undertakes maintenance and conservation work at the ATBs as a national authority and, at times, in conjunction with the traditional authorities. GMMB has a regional office in Kumasi and it is from here that work on the ATBs originates.

Local Communities (includes caretakers and custodians)

Local communities may attach the highest degree of direct value in the ATBs and, therefore, are important stakeholders. These individuals are the direct caretakers and custodians of the buildings and act either for the traditional authorities, the GMMB, or out of their own interests and beliefs. They seem to be loosely organized under local chieftaincies that, in turn, ultimately fall under the Asantehene. Moreover, these stakeholders may be the best suited for craft and skills training.

Kumasi Metropolitan Assembly (KMA)

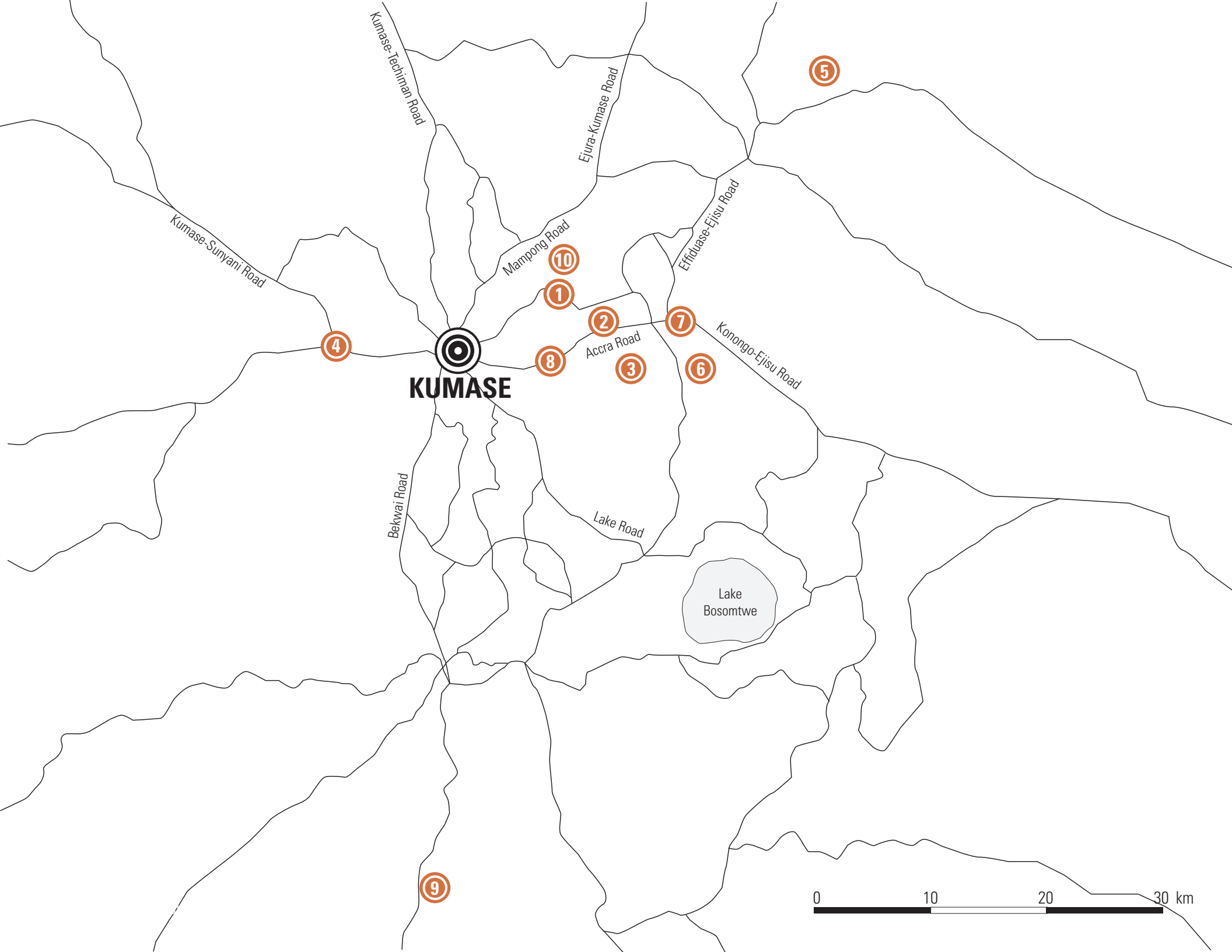
KMA is the local government body responsible for the general administration and development of the metropolis and is the regional governing authority. It contains no technical expertise in conservation but is responsible for larger, regional planning and economic development initiatives.

Ghana Tourism Authority (GTA)

The GTA is a recent outgrowth of the Ghana Tourism Board and is legally responsible for implementation of the government policy on tourism. There is a regional office in Kumasi. The National Tourism Development Plan 2013-2027 stipulates that the GTA should market the ATBs.







KUMASE

Lake
Bosomtwe

0 10 20 30 km

3. SURVEY AND CONDITION ASSESSMENT

The following chapter explains each ATB in terms of the context of the site, architectural and social history, as well as the condition assessment. Each section ends with a list of urgent work needed at the site. Three additional traditional building sites, historically referenced as having similar physical characteristics, are also included in this section as they provide useful contextual information. Their architectural configurations and decorations however, did not correspond with those of the ATBs.

The Asante Traditional Buildings include:

1. Abirim
2. Adarko Jachie
3. Asawase
4. Asenemaso
5. Bodwease
6. Edwenase
7. Ejisu-Besease
8. Kentinkrono
9. Patakro
10. Saaman

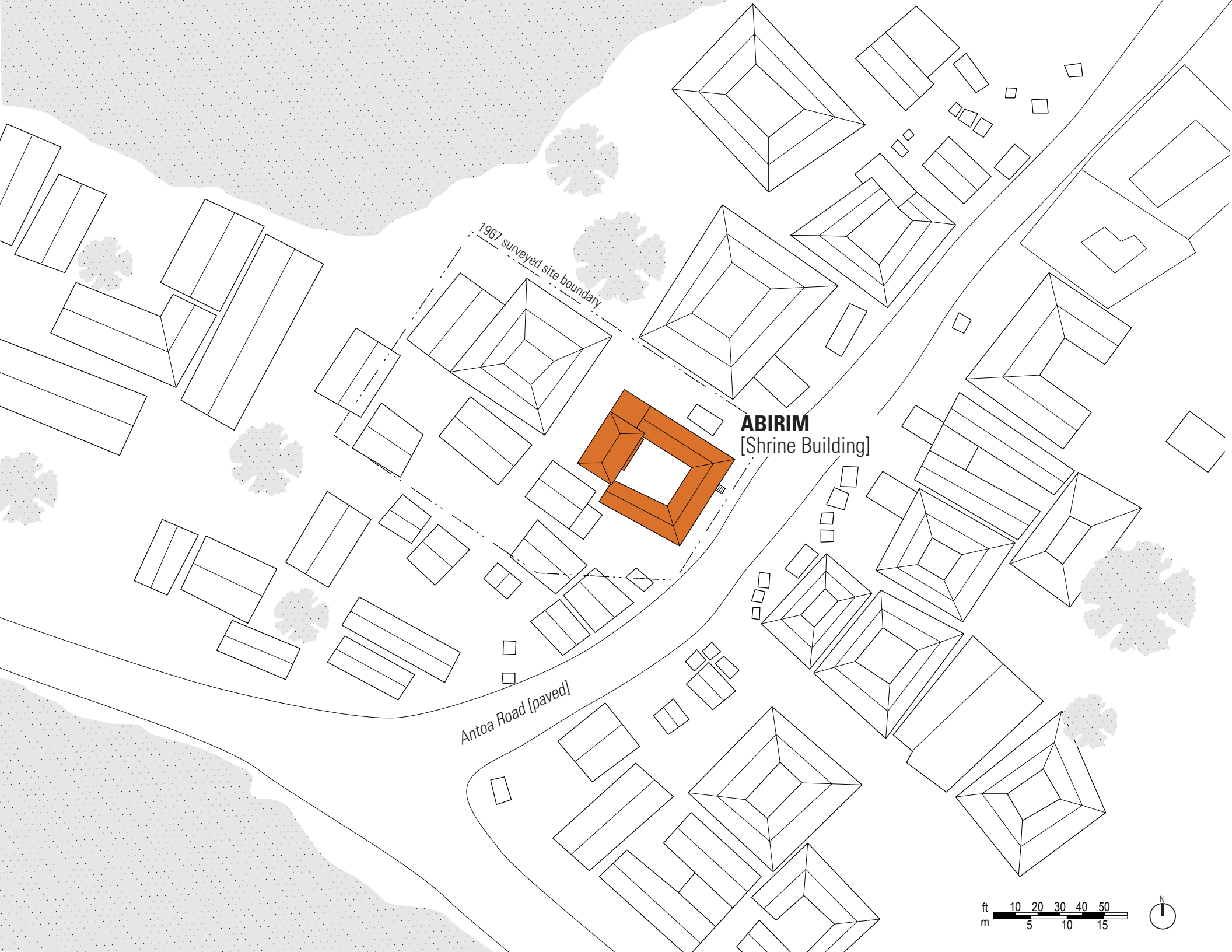
Other Traditional Buildings include:

Abetifi
Akokoamong
Bisuana
Bonafie
Obomeng



ABIRIM

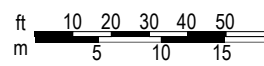




1967 surveyed site boundary

ABIRIM
[Shrine Building]

Antoa Road (paved)



Site Description

The building is located adjacent to a paved road known as Antoa in the village of Abirim. It is a typical ATB, yet it is the only one maintaining all of the tangible and intangible elements, including the *Ɔt) mfo* who resides there. It is widely visited by Ghanaians and international tourists as the *Ɔbosom* is strong and the living heritage of the place very powerful. There is also signage marking the building; this was not observed elsewhere. The money generated from these visits helps the *Ɔt) mfo* execute a small amount of preservation work at the shrine.



Decorated Elevation at Abirim



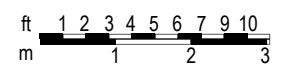
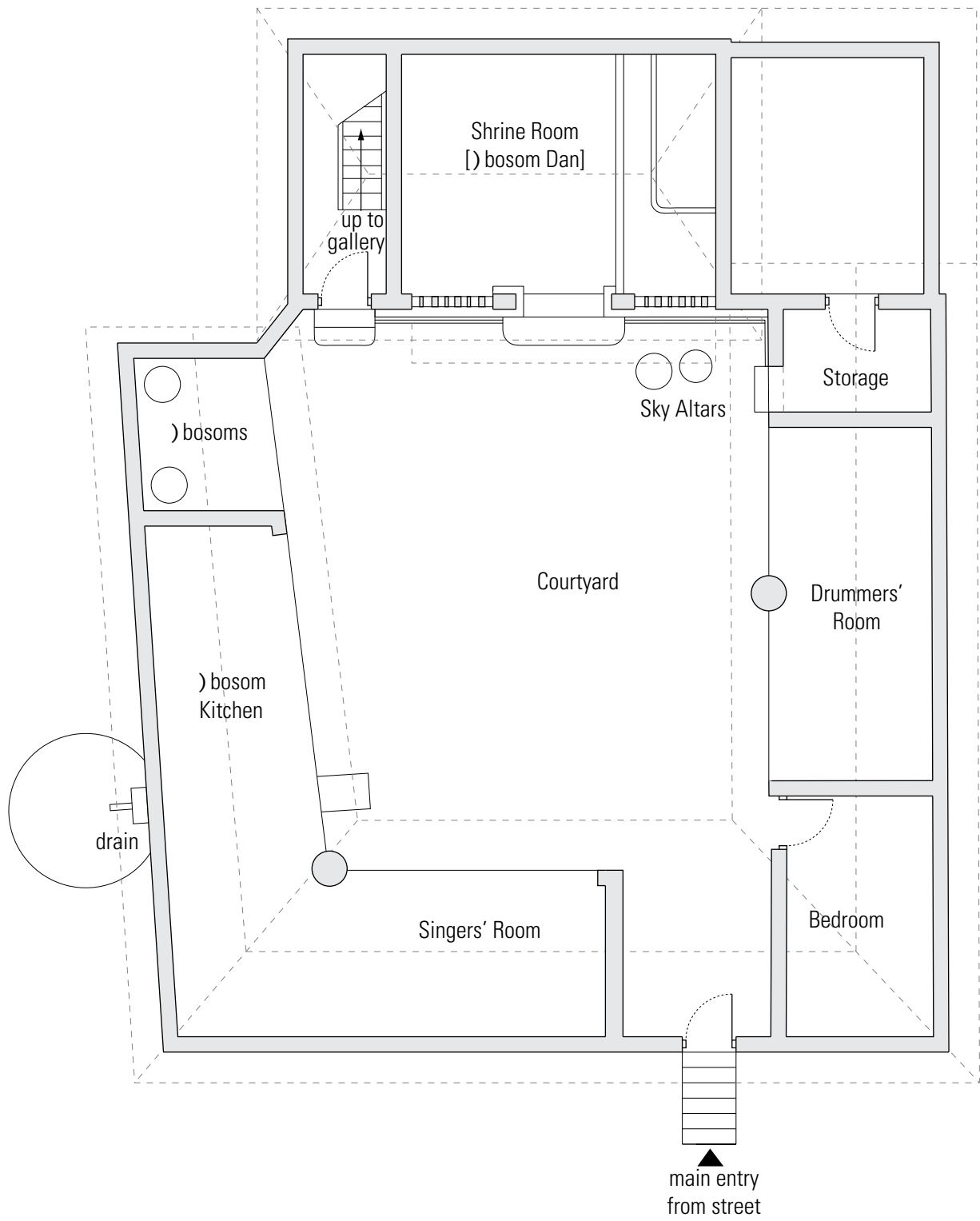
Priestess Nana Nyarkomerit



Historic Chair at Abirim



Rear Elevation at Abirim



Architectural Description and Social History

As mentioned above, Abirim is a typical ATB with a courtyard enclosed by the Shrine Room, the Kitchen Room, the Drummer's Room, and the Spectator Room, now housing the) bosom, the spirit of the shrine.

The) bosom Dan, or Shrine Room, is partially screened, contains many decorative elements, and is, seemingly, used on a daily basis (except Tuesday). The most sacred day is Wednesday or "kwabena wukuada" day. Much of this use may be due to tourist visitation to the site. The) t) mfo does not eat pepper during the days that she performs ritual.

Notable movable elements which are visible include two Sky Altars in the courtyard and the) bosoms in the Spectator Room. In one corner of this room are machetes, guns, shot cases, and Akpeteshie, a local gin. In the opposite corner are a stool, on which sits a copper pot said to date to the period of Osei Tutu, and several packages of crackers. Interviewees at the shrine indicated that each) bosom prefers different drinks.

The) k) mfo resides in the building and is on the verge of retiring or transferring her spirit to another younger woman. This will occur on March 23 at the week-long Bayer) Afahy) or festival celebrating the yam. At this event, the younger woman, age 26, will be "outdoored". Both women will be possessed by) bosom during this time.

The younger woman is now in training in Mahame, approximately a four hours' drive from the village (Mahame also contains an) bosom), and will live in the ATB when the older) k) mfo retires. It has been four years since the) bosom transferred to this woman. She is the granddaughter of the current) k) mfo and will be known as Abirim) k) mfo Asantewaa.

The current) k) mfo was possessed at the age of menopause and was taken to various informal schools to confirm her possession. It took seven years to confirm that the) bosom had possessed her. Her status was finally approved when she was able to predict the future by gazing into water.

Legends surrounding this ATB maintain that the) bosom at the shrine assisted Nana Osei Tutu I when he went to war and that the Asante have been historically known to consult this) bosom. After consultation with the) bosom, Osei Tutu I gave several gifts to the) k) mfo there—a palanquin for males and females as well as a chair. The current Okyeame for the) k) mfo brought this chair out for us to photograph. Only a possessed male can sit in this chair and only a chief and those associated with the) k) mfo may enter the dais in the shrine room.

The) bosom is fed only on special occasions, as opposed to daily, at this site. The breaking of eggs occurs when someone seeks consultation from the) bosom. Water located in the calabashes located in the Sky Altar is reported to heal the sick as well as offer protection from evil spirits.

There are numerous wooden and metal figures hidden in the Shrine Room which were brought out. Some are clearly fertility dolls and others depict missionaries, hunters, and dwarfs. A person seeking help from these figures is meant to place a donation in front of them; the) k) mfo will then say a prayer.



Sky Altars at Abirim



Sky Altars at Abirim

State of Conservation

The site is in very good condition and very well maintained by the)k)mfo and her extended family. It is always opened to visitors, very visible in the village, and well known by the community who can witness consultations almost on a daily basis. The decorative elements, walls, and roofs are in very good condition. No significant damage has occurred to the decorative elements since they were restored in 2000 and 2001.

The inhabitants recently repaired the roof, yet some new repairs, also by the residents, use concrete and industrial oil paint, that negatively impact the integrity of the building fabric. Moreover, thick mud pillars supporting wooden beams have been changed into round concrete columns supporting a concrete beam. A new room has been built at the back after thieves attempted to rob the place. The room cannot be seen from the courtyard interior.

The sacred tree in the courtyard has been removed as it was deemed a safety hazard, two Sky Altars have replaced it.

On the exterior, the eastern drainage pit is chocked and could lead to water infiltration affecting the structure in the long term. This is the major problem impacting conservation at the site.

An overwhelming asset is that maintenance is done on a daily basis by the site custodians and caretakers including the)k)mfo. They clean, maintain, and repaint the wall base with natural red clay on a regular basis.

Urgent Work Needed

-Clearing the eastern drainage pit to avoid water stagnation near the building.



Kitchen at Abirim



Detail of Decorated Wall at Abirim



Red Clay Slurry Application at Abirim



Courtyard at Abirim

ABIRIM: State of Conservation Visual Summary

OPPORTUNITIES



① The building is easily accessed, centrally located, and in a very good state of conservation. Possibilities for encroachment are limited.

②)k)mfo well known and very active despite her age. A new priestess is being trained as a replacement.

③ Building custodians and residents use this space regularly.

④ Beautiful and well conserved decorative elements are regularly repainted by custodians.



⑤ Very high authenticity of intangible values; the)k)mfo and all other custodians perform their roles very seriously. The)bosom is regularly consulted.

⑥ Movable heritage is visible and in use.

CHALLENGES



① Custodians have restored the rooms around the courtyard without respect to material authenticity. Concrete columns replaced original thick mud posts, but the Shrine Building itself has remained untouched.



② Room added to anterior, between the Drummers' Room and the Shrine Room without GMMB's consent. However, it cannot be seen from the Courtyard.



③ Unsightly roof gutter added to the northern corner of the courtyard.



④ Soak away pit chocked on the southern side, behind the kitchen.



⑤ The temporary roof installed above the decorative elements in 1998 to protect them from the rain is conspicuous but working well.



⑥ Another unsightly temporary protection has been added to the Shrine Room (located to the left of the temporary roof).

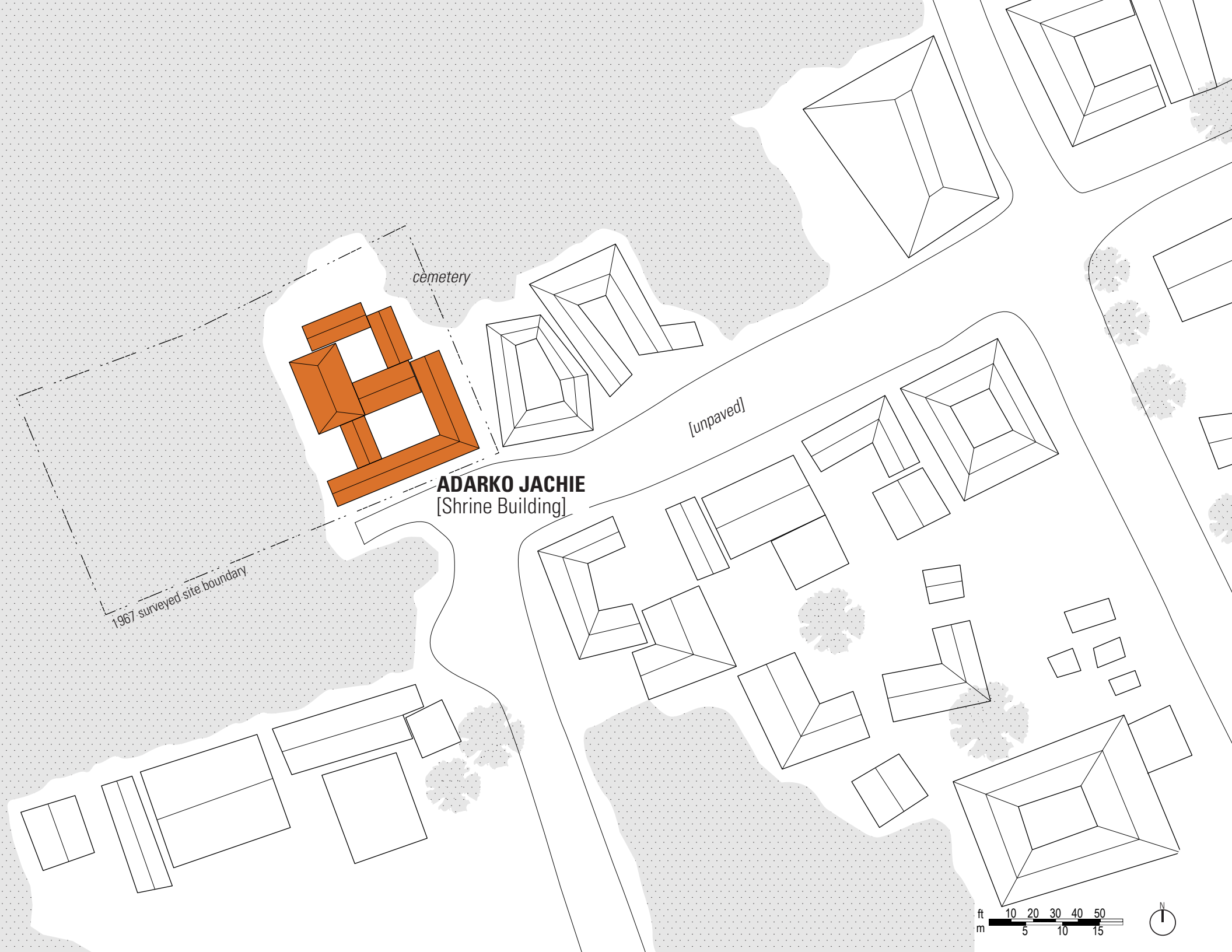


⑦ The)k)mfo is getting very old and will soon retire.



ADARKO JACHIE



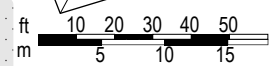


cemetery

[unpaved]

ADARKO JACHIE
[Shrine Building]

1967 surveyed site boundary

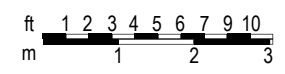
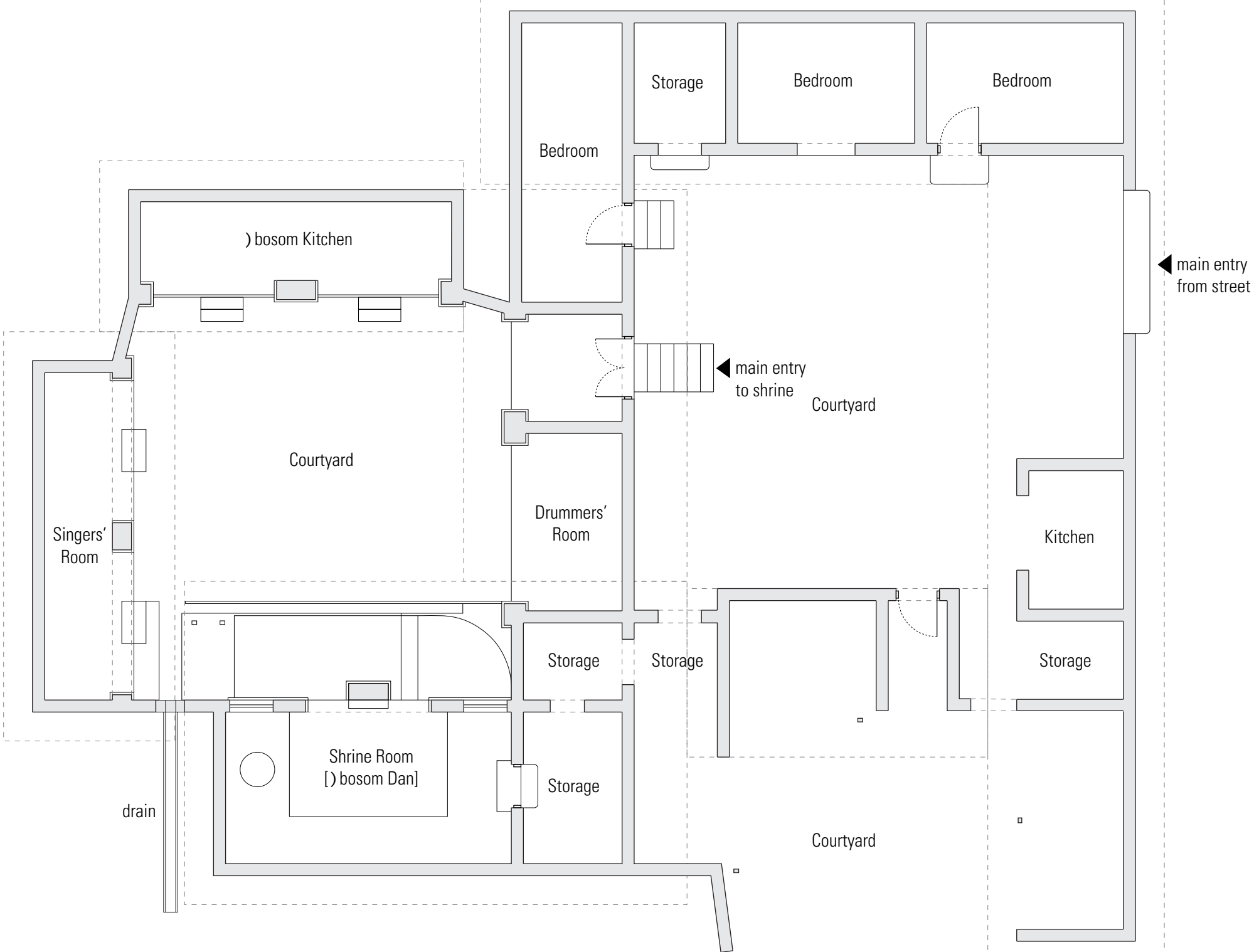


Site Description

The building is located at the end of an unpaved road; tangible and intangible values here are very weak. It experiences some visitation by international tourists as mentioned in guidebooks. The custodian of the shrine is the Obaapanin Akua Badu family.



Courtyard at Adarko Jachie



Architectural Description and Social History

The building is made of two parts with the house in front and the ATB in the back. The house is twice as large as the ATB and, in plan, is that of a traditional Asante house with a large courtyard enclosed on its four sides by small rooms used as bedrooms or storage spaces. The ATB is accessed from the house courtyard and has a typical composition of four spaces, with distinctive uses, surrounding a courtyard. Upon entering the ATB, the Singer's Room is in front, the Kitchen Room on the right, and Shrine Room on the left. The Drummers Room is adjacent to the entrance.

There is no) bosom here, but the chief occasionally pours libation. At the time when CRAterre worked at the building, there was still an active)k) mfo. There is no movable heritage inside apart from the skeletal remains of two drums.



Drummers' Room at Adarko Jachie



Shrine Room at Adarko Jachie



Kitchen at Adarko Jachie

General State of Conservation

Generally, the site is extremely clean and well maintained inside and outside. A strip of seven meters of land is kept clean without any plants around the entire building.

The house is in a very poor state of conservation and cannot be used for accommodation. Specifically, several sections of the walls are missing and others are only in a stable condition due to erosion resulting in leaning wall sections on the southern and western sides. The house roof needs to be replaced. The house also displays decorative elements. These are in a very poor state of conservation and could disappear because of the instability of the walls.

In sharp contrast, the ATB itself is in a very good state of conservation. Specifically, the roof is stable and there are no drainage problems on the interior as all of the water dripping from the roof seems to find its way out. No sign of water stagnation was found. The eastern external wall of the ATB is significantly eroded at its base.

The walls and columns of the ATB are in excellent condition and the only problem observed is that the cement-sand plaster applied on the external wall surface is rapidly peeling off. Decorative elements are in good condition, but all require painting.

GMMB is trying to add decorative elements to wall sections in the Singer's Room that are now empty. The idea is to duplicate one panel on another panel

that was empty. Unfortunately, the quality of the work is substandard. The design details are distorted and the earth layers are not respected. Instead of a complex 3-D sculpture, the mural designer has created a flat 2-D drawing. This is still reversible, but if the decorations have to remain they will need to be entirely redone.

Urgent Work Needed

- Halt work on the new decorative elements.
- Reduce the effect of water splashing against the wall of the shrine by fixing roof gutter on the northern side of the shrine room.
- Create drainage slopes with laterite on the eastern side where the wall is severely undermined.
- Install wooden posts to support house roof.
- Document the remaining decorations for future restoration.



Decoration in Poor State of Conservation at Adarko Jachie



Doorway at Adarko Jachie



Decorations in Shrine Room at Adarko Jachie



Entrance to Shrine at Adarko Jachie

ADARKO JACHIE: State of Conservation Visual Summary

OPPORTUNITIES



① The building is easy to access.



② The roof, replaced in 1997, is still in very good condition. The decorative elements are very well protected.



③ Some decorative elements are unique, such as this beam with an arch.



④ The courtyard is cleaned daily by a caretaker from the village who is paid by GMMB.



⑤ Great variety of decorative elements. Most of them are very well conserved.

CHALLENGES



① The building is located on the outskirts of a village and is hidden at the back of the adjoining house resulting in low visibility.



② The house, which is part of the building but does not contain the shrine, is in very poor condition.



③ Decorative elements in the house have eroded or have simply been destroyed.



④ Some wall sections of the house have already collapsed.



⑤ Plaster peeling behind the shrine room.



⑥ Erosion of the wall base behind the kitchen.



⑦ The Shrine Room is empty and the building itself is lifeless. There is no)k)mfo and no) bosom.

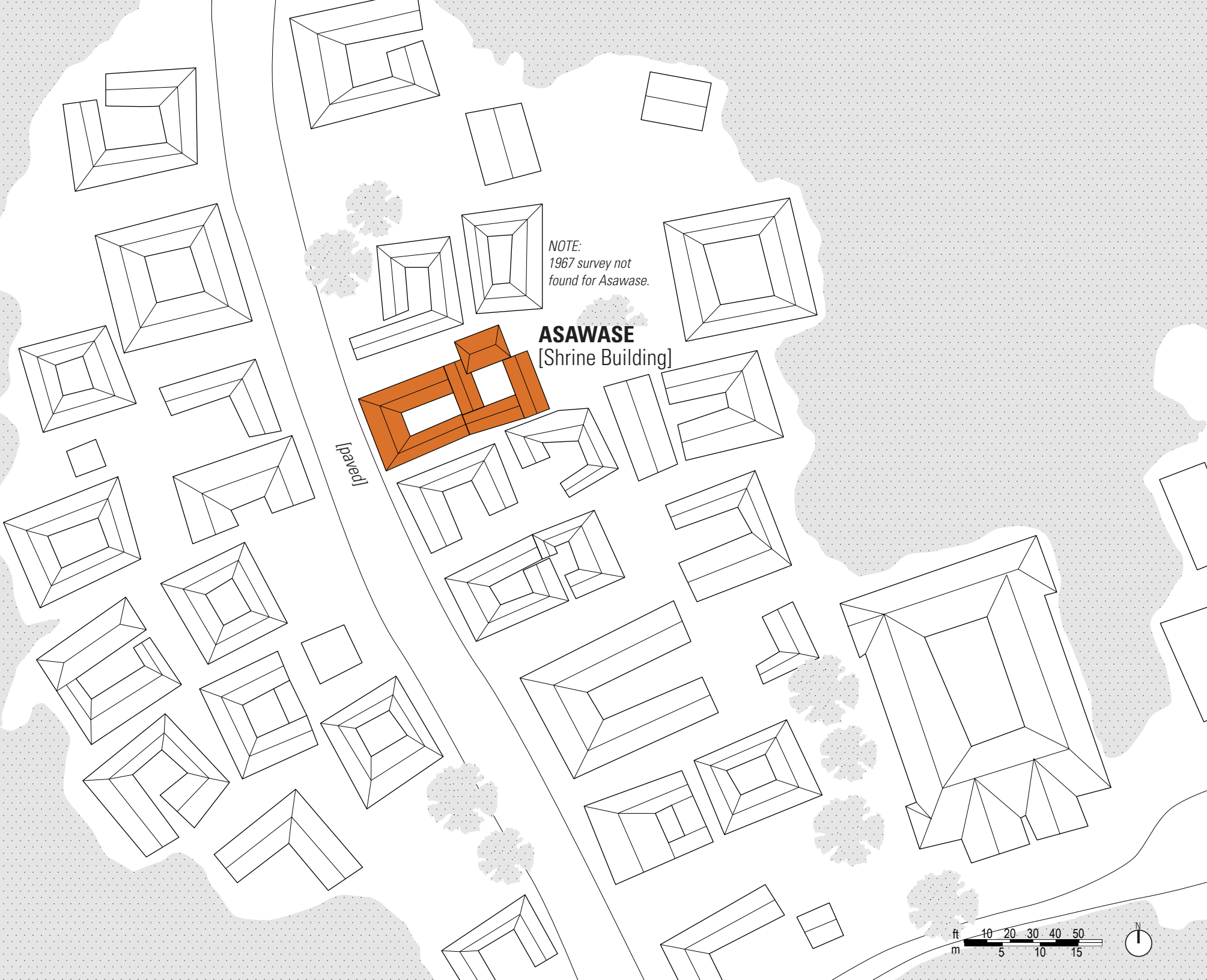


⑧ New decorative elements, whose quality is unacceptable, have been applied to the building walls.



ASAWASE

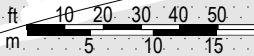




*NOTE:
1967 survey not
found for Asawase.*

ASAWASE
[Shrine Building]

(paved)

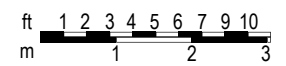
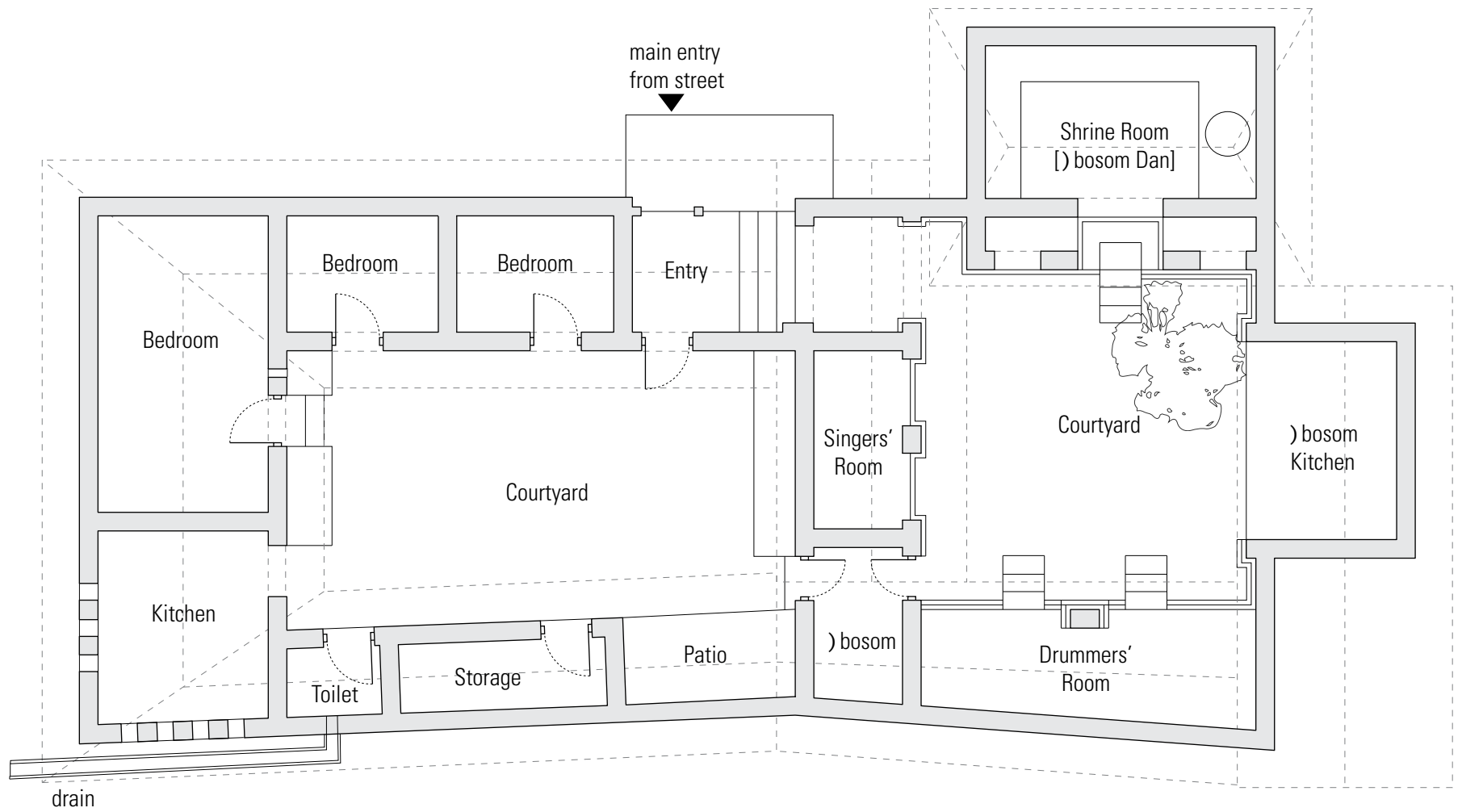


Site Description

The building is located on a paved road in the center of the small village; tangible and intangible values here are very weak. According to the caretaker, no tourists visit this ATB. Osei Kuffour represented the custodians. There are buildings very close to three sides and the entrance is not visible from the street.



Courtyard at Asawase



Architectural Description and Social History

Asawase is a typical ATB with a spacious adjoining living quarters that is still actively used. In general, this site sees little or no visitation from Ghanaians and international visitors as the entrance door is locked. There is an) bosom here but the) k) mfo died 30-40 years ago (virtually rendering the) bosom silent). However, on the first Sunday of the month, known as Akwasidae, local people visit as this day is marked by drumming. A caretaker comes to clean during ceremonial days, she feeds the) bosom with boiled yam, eggs, and palm oil.

Movable heritage is in very poor condition and none of the stools and chairs can be used; the drums are beyond repair.



Drummers' Room at Asawase



Drums at Asawase



Schnapps at Asawase

General State of Conservation

The site itself is in a good state of conservation. The walls are stable and most of the decorative elements are in good condition despite one being partially broken above the entrance. One of the panels has received new decorations under the auspices of GMMB. However, the panel needs to be redone as it lacks depth in the layering. Good archival photographs are available to reconstruct the decorative elements. GMMB trained three students from the Junior Secondary School for one week and small decoration samples were produced.

Roofing sheets are old and leaking, many needing replacement. The site is well-drained. Yet, the ground at the back of the building has been considerably lowered as a result of significant erosion. The ground is approximately one foot below the original level. This is not a problem at the moment, but could become an issue in the near future. Water stagnation could occur if erosion continues.

Urgent Work Needed

- Add one truck of laterite at the back of the building to replace the eroded soil.
- Replace roofing sheets, one hundred ten, and ridge caps.
- Recreate the decorative element.
- Adjust the drainage slope along the Drummers' Room.
- Restore the decorative element above entrance door.



Decoration Detail at Asawase



Entrance to Asawase



Worshipping Clay Pot at Asawase



Decoration Detail at Entrance to Asawase



Courtyard at Asawase

ASAWASE: State of Conservation Visual Summary

OPPORTUNITIES



① Buildings are in a good state of conservation and the walls are stable. A sign indicates that this is a National Monument.



② Decorative elements are in good condition.



③ The roof extension installed in 1997 has protected the building decorative elements.



④ The sacred tree survives intact and alive.



⑤ The kitchen is still being used to prepare meals for the) bosom.



⑥ The Shrine Room and the) bosom are respected and well kept.



⑦ Training was organized in 2013 with school children in the village on the traditional Asante clay decorations.

CHALLENGES



① The roofing sheets are aging and the roof is leaking. Some of the sheets could easily be removed in a severe storm.



② Corridor on the southern side is very narrow and water evacuation is difficult here.



③ The ground at the back of the Shrine Room is highly eroded and over one foot of soil is missing due to erosion.



④ Some drainage problems exist in the courtyard along the Drummers' Room.



⑤ Decorative elements partially broken above the entrance.



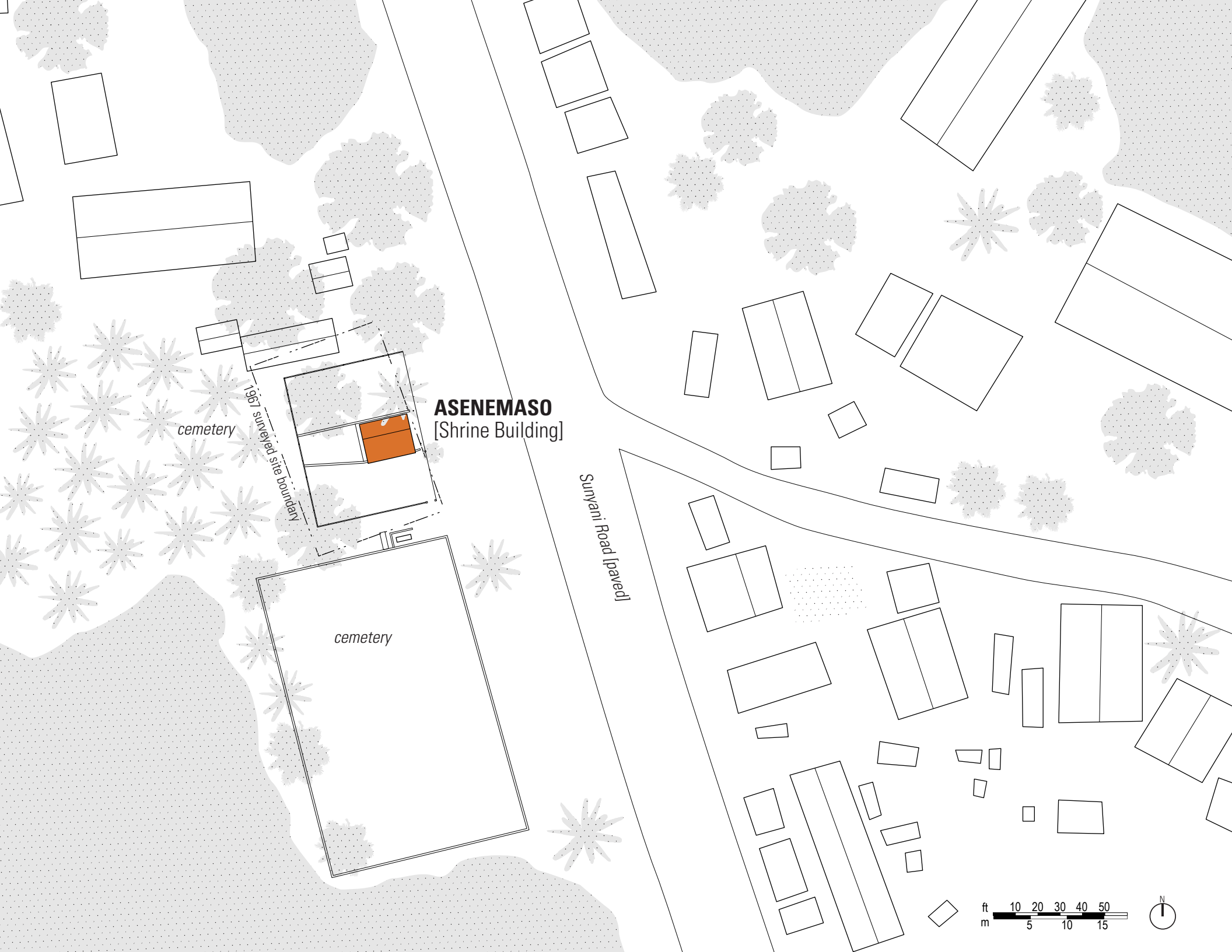
⑥ The furniture is in very poor condition to the extent that none of the stools and chairs can be used and the drums are beyond repair.





A SENEMASO





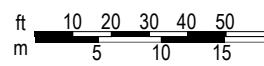
ASENEMASO
[Shrine Building]

cemetery

1967 surveyed site boundary

cemetery

Sunyani Road [paved]

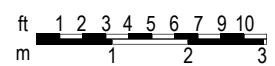
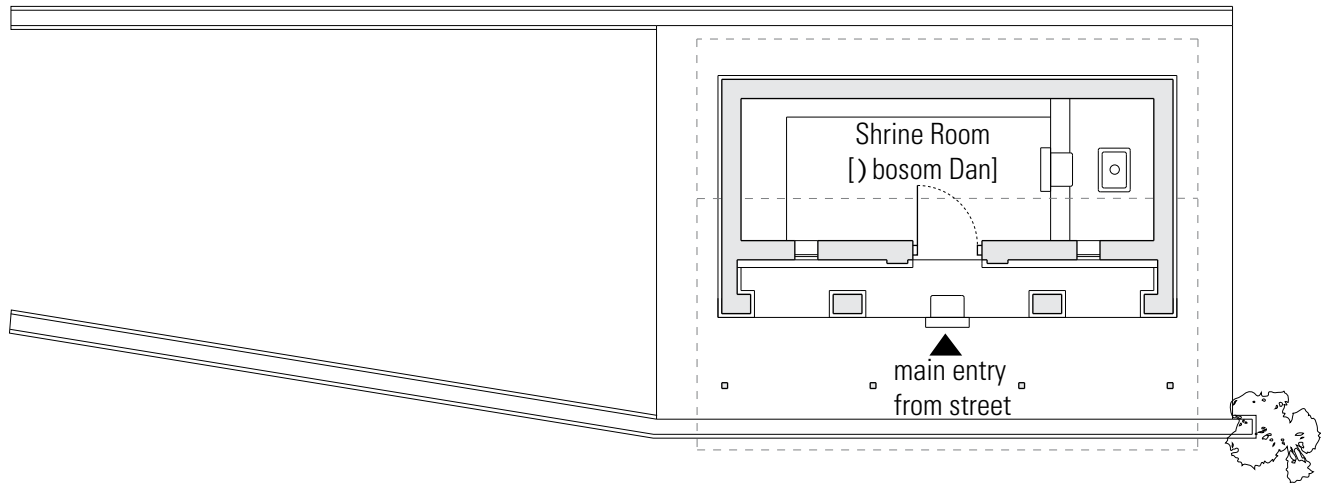


Site Description

This ATB is located adjacent to a paved road, Sunyani Road, in the village of Asenemaso. Its decorative elements are visible to the public and the building is fenced. The barbed-wire fence is being replaced by a concrete-block one. There are many blocks around the site and several poured cement posts are in place. Exposed re-bar marks the envisioned position of the new wall as do small plantings. A cemetery abuts the site boundary on the western side. The cemetery has been planted, but this is not unique to Ghana. Several trees and a low pile of rocks can be found in the enclosed area.



Asenemaso Shrine from Sunyani Road



Architectural Description and Social History

This is the smallest ATB and consists of one room, the Shrine Room, and the three other spaces that usually surround the courtyard do not exist. Therefore, it is fully exposed to public view. This is the only case among the ten ATBs.

The Shrine Room is not open as in the other buildings; it is a fully enclosed space with a door in the center and two small windows on both sides. The building is generously decorated on the front side, all other walls are plain white walls.

Interviews with nearby residents indicated that the ATB was to be demolished when the government wanted to widen Sunyani Road, but the community objected. The building is only used by local chiefs on ceremonial occasions. It is locked and may be contested by the local chieftaincy. The sacred tree is no longer there.

A local woman Abena Kwabena, recorded by CRAterre as sweeping the yard of the site in 1999, is still doing this job every morning. She is considered the caretaker and the custodian.

The daughter of the chief explained that the) bosom lives in another residential house near the ATB. This house is home to the area) k) mfo. On festive days and other occasions the priest carries the) bosom to the ATB; sometimes he is possessed by the) bosom.

The house of the) bosom was also surveyed. It is a modern residential house where the) k) mfo lives and architecturally has no distinguishing characteristics. In one corner resides the) bosom and various fetish accouterments including a royal chair, drum, gong gong, hanging cow tails, schnapps, and Sky Altar. A male) k) mfo between 30 and 40 years old, lives here and performs rituals on Wednesdays and Fridays when people come for consultation.



Shrine at Asenemaso



Drainage Channel at Asenemaso



Tree and Shrine at Asenemaso

General state of conservation

Between 1993-1995, GMMB executed works at this shrine including adding a concrete slab plinth around the building, constructing two concrete drainage canals on the exterior, lowering the roof pitch, and replacing both ceiling joists and wooden decorative materials directly under the porch roof.

Thus, the site is in a good state of conservation. The site shows signs of regular maintenance such as whitewashing and sweeping. However, the design of the new fence pillars is not sympathetic to the site. The pillars do not pay homage to Asante architecture.

The drainage of the site consists of two drains diverting the roof water towards the cemetery. Both drains are

unclogged near the shrine but are blocked towards the cemetery. This does not seem to have affected the structure yet, but may in the future.

The walls are in good condition and only three minor cracks are visible towards the anterior. However, traces of termites are visible all around the building, especially at the base. Termites have also adversely affected all wooden elements such as the four wooden posts supporting the roof overhang. The door and the only remaining wooden window shutter have been partially destroyed by termites. The other shutter, once wooden, has been replaced by three precast concrete blocks.

Decorative elements are all visible, but slight deterioration can be seen. Elements of concrete plaster

have detached from the wall, but the process is slow and was also observed ten years ago. Perforations made by insects can be seen in various parts along the wall base mainly on the principle elevation.

Despite the rather good state of conservation, the decorations suffer from maintenance inconsistency. For example, some were shaped with tools and have sharp edges while others are very smooth and more organic in form. Some decorative elements also lack the three dimensional effect and are more difficult to read.

Urgent Work Needed

-The two drains should be cleared.

-The four wooden posts need to be replaced with treated wood, 3 x 3", preferably with a termite shield installed.



Decorated Wall and Beam at Asenemaso



Window at Asenemaso



Drainage Channel at Asenemaso



Entrance to Shrine at Asenemaso

ASENEMASO: State of Conservation Visual Summary

OPPORTUNITIES



① The building is visible from the road.



② The proximity to the road is an opportunity for better presentation and education.



③ The courtyard is swept daily by a designated caretaker



④ The roof is well conserved.



⑤ Traditional custodians seem willing to contribute to site preservation and have started to build a fence around the site.



⑥ One of the few buildings with decorative elements exposed to the public.



⑦ Gutters draining the site are currently blocked but they can easily be cleaned.



⑧ The cemetery is a means of protection against encroachment at the anterior of the site boundary.

CHALLENGES



① Inconsistent and poor repairs to decorative elements.



② One of the wooden shutters has been replaced by cement blocks.



③ Remaining wooden shutter is weak.



④ Termite holes can be seen at the base of the walls.



⑤ A small cement block production yard seems to be encroaching on the site. The sacred tree has disappeared.



⑥ Wooden poles supporting the roof are rotten at the base.

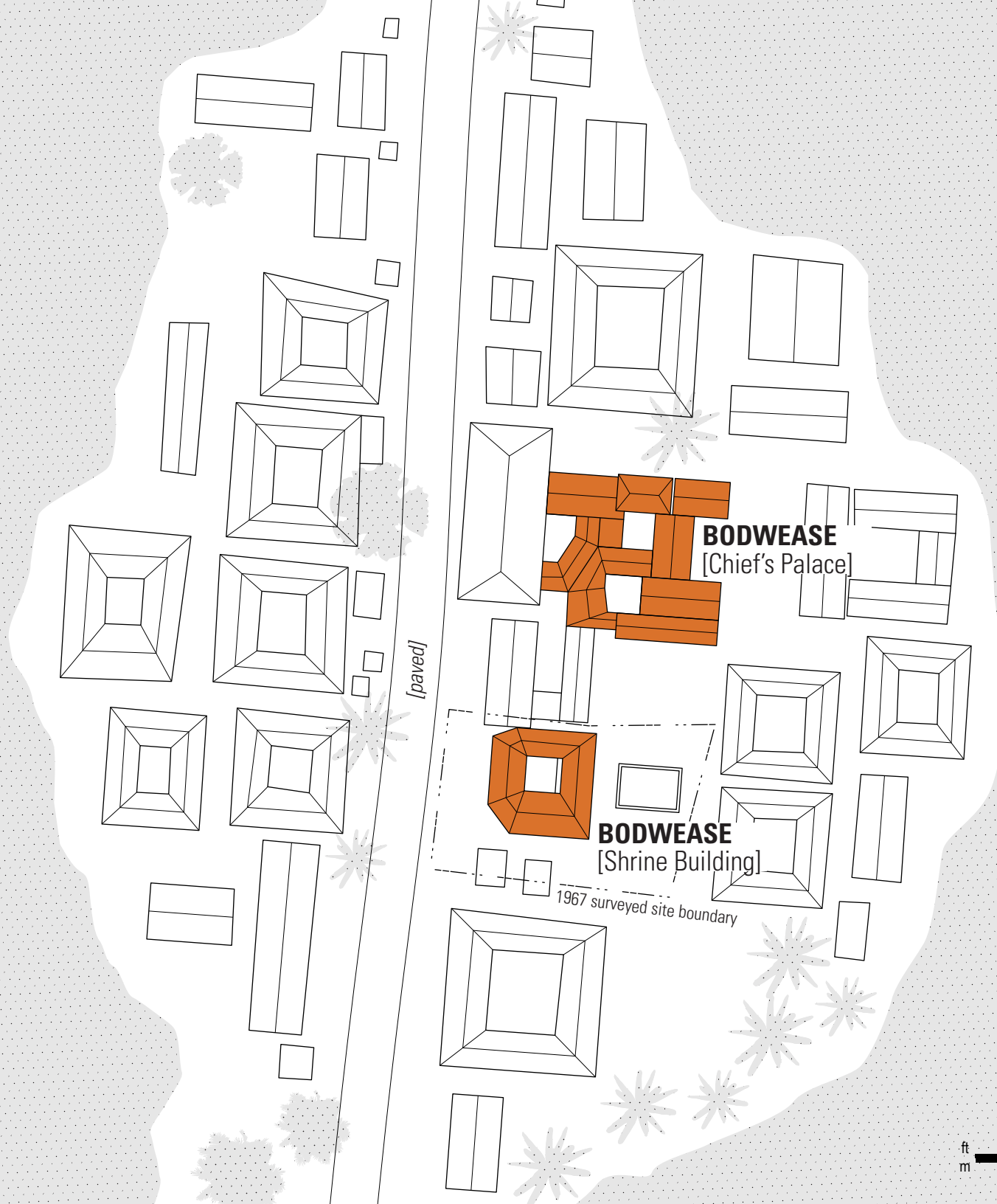


⑦ Termite infestation is affecting all of the wood elements.



BODWEASE



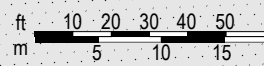


BODWEASE
[Chief's Palace]

BODWEASE
[Shrine Building]

[paved]

1967 surveyed site boundary



Site Description

The site encompasses both a recognized ATB as well as a Chief's Palace with decorative elements similar to the World Heritage sites. Until this survey, the Chief's Palace was not recognized as such. Both buildings are located adjacent to a paved road known as the main road passing through Bodwease village. The shrine rests on a two meters high base, which makes it very visible from the main road. The Chief's Palace is not visible from the road. The Chief's Palace still receives a few Ghanaian and international visitors. The chief is often here and sometimes sleeps in the building. This ATB is unique as it is the only space directly tied to a black stool - a place where the chieftaincy and sacred space meet.

The ATB is still very authentic with a great number of traditional furniture especially in the shrine room. This great authenticity is certainly due to the remoteness of the location. The shrine is situated in the heart of a small village away from urban areas.

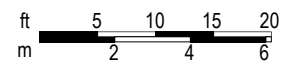
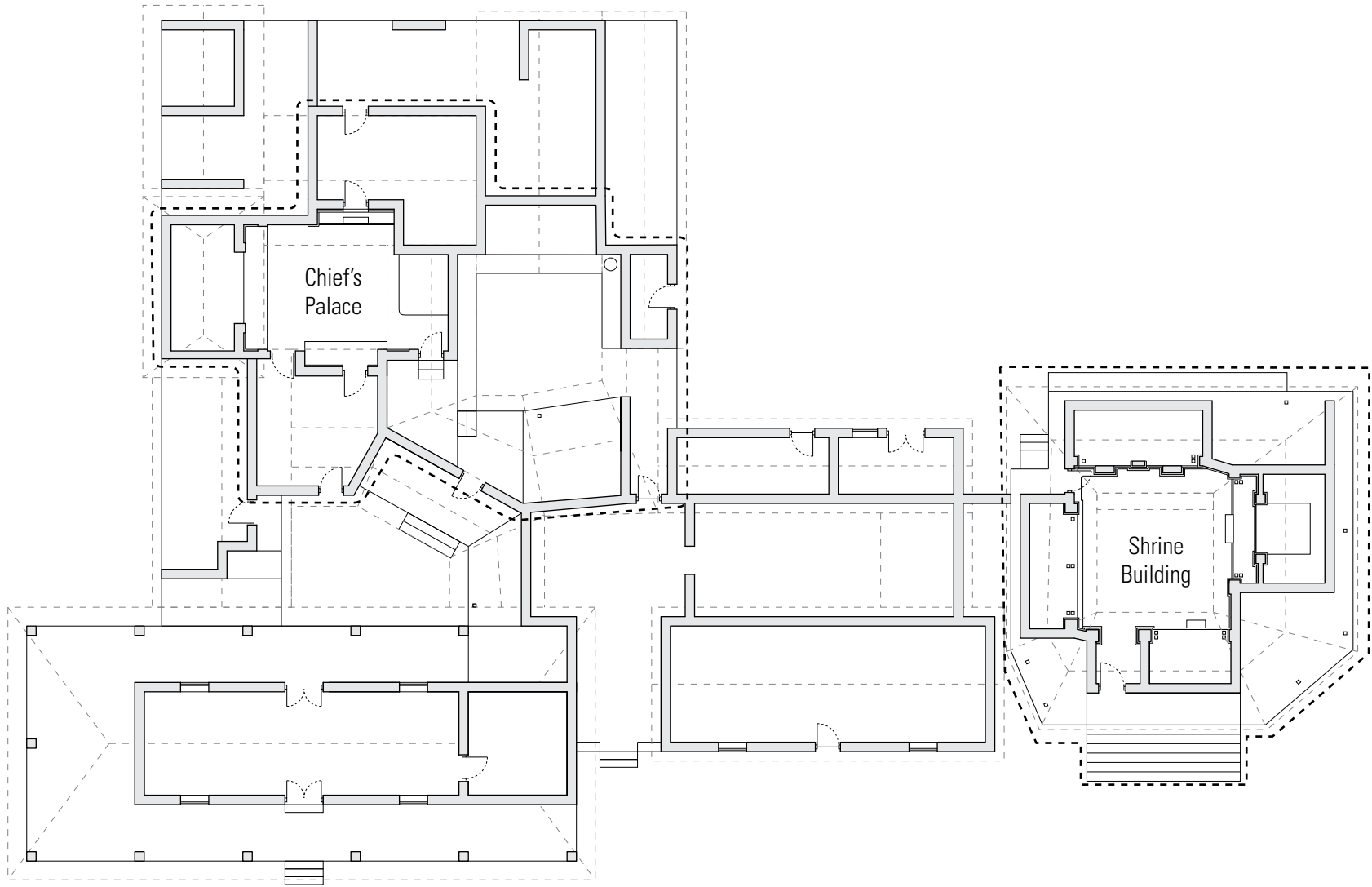
A caretaker is paid by the GMMB but also has a traditional role at the site.



Courtyard of Chief's Palace at Bodwease



Shrine Room at Bodwease



Architectural Description and Social History

The Chief's Palace is a special place and was a new discovery for members of the survey team. The Palace was once a ten-room complex encompassing residential, burial, court, and ceremonial spaces. Now only some of those rooms exist, many of which are in danger of collapse. The) bosom, formerly in the ATB, is now housed in the Palace.

The) k) mfo of the ATB died in 1995 and has not been replaced. The Palace and ATB were reportedly built in 1843 when exiled community members (Jabahene) returned to the village from the Eastern Region following battles with the Asante. The chief and elders hold the primary responsibility for maintaining the building physically and spiritually. Both the) bosom and stool are fed by the Okyeame and chief respectively.

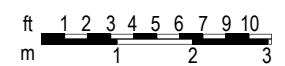
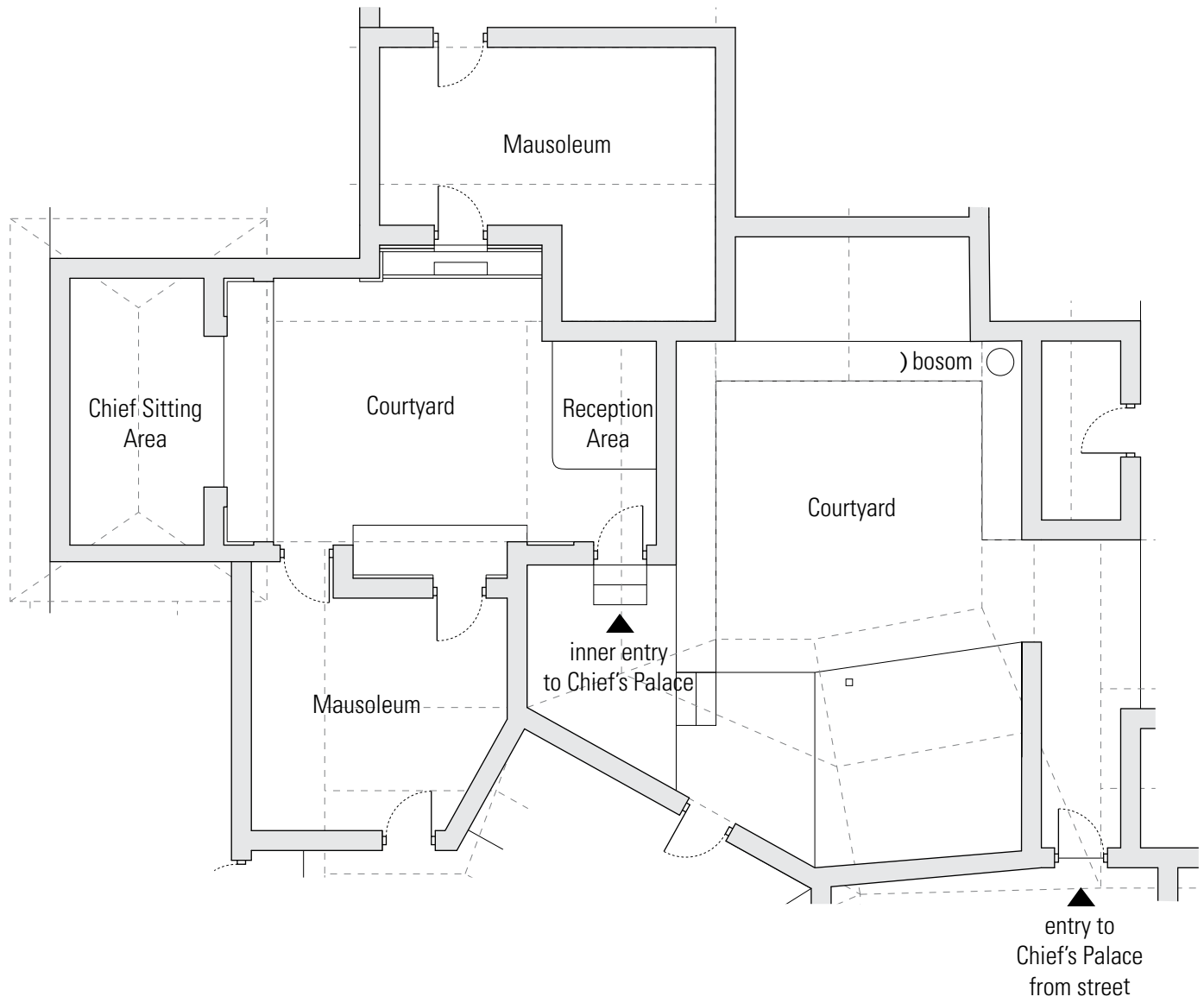
Taboo days that fall within the Asante Forty Two Day Calendar are days when white clay from the river is used to wash the upper portions of the buildings. These days are known as "aquei dei". The team was told that the level of decorative detail at each ATB depended upon the popularity of the) bosom. Women who had not yet passed menopause are not allowed on the dais in the Shrine Room.

The Chief's Palace contains the black stool, but is also an important burial space for past kings. The current chief will be buried here and when he dies the stool will go to the Jasahene Gyasehene until a new king is chosen.

The outer rooms of the Palace hold traditional court activities. A list of illegal activities and associated fines are posted just outside of the Chief's Palace.



Chief at Bodwease





Chair inside Chief's Palace at Bodwease



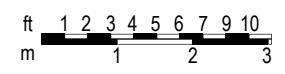
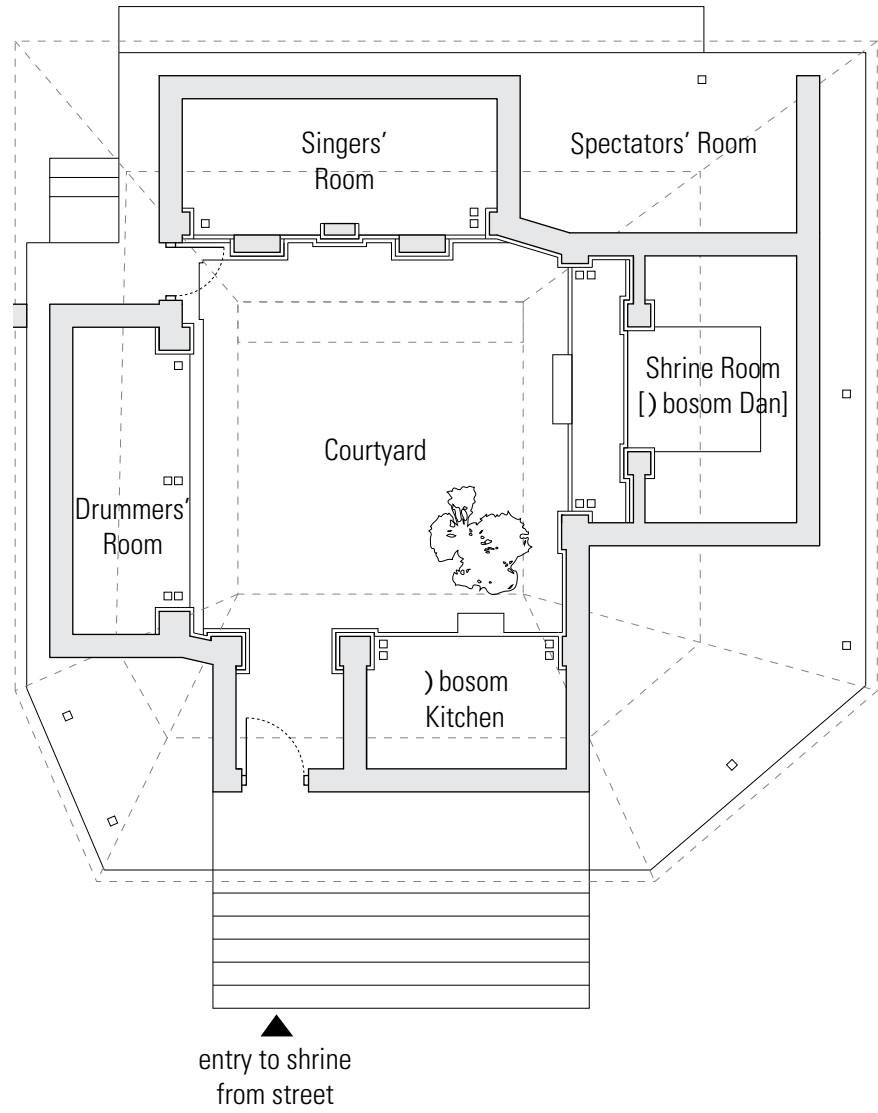
Courtyard of Chief's Palace in Bodwease



Decorated Panel in Chief's Palace at Bodwease



Decoration in Chief's Palace at Bodwease





Shrine Room at Bodwease



Ram Jaw Bones at Bodwease Shrine



Handcuffing Criminals to Stone in Chief's Palace at Bodwease



Sacrifices at Bodwease Shrine

General State of Conservation

The state of conservation of the ATB is generally satisfactory. A hole can be seen in the roofing sheets, but the structure below is not affected. The structure is sound and the timber posts are intact without any sign of termite attacks. Several decorative elements are eroded especially on the right hand side of the Shrine Room.

The red base around the courtyard is very humid and covered with moss in some places. This is due to the fact that the entire courtyard is covered with cement slabs preventing the ground from drying. Moisture can only evaporate through the walls. Drainage around the building is working well.

In sharp contrast, the Chief's Palace is in extremely poor condition. This is very worrying because the central room where the chief receives the village elders keeps a high level of authenticity. Maintaining this authenticity will be a real challenge. Any intervention should be made with the greatest care to avoid falsifying this unique testimony. For example, it is important to accurately measure the level of restoration if conservators intervene. The destruction of this element would be an irreparable loss. All the rooms have lost their roofs and part of the walls except the central room where the chief sits. It is therefore urgent to react quickly so as to avoid losing this last element.

Urgent Work Needed

CHIEF'S PALACE:

- Preparation of a risk management and conservation strategy.
- Cleaning the ruins and dismantling the broken roofs.
- Work on the drainage to avoid water stagnation in the ruins.
- Reconstruct the missing walls of the Palace.
- Remove and replace the roofs of the Palace.
- Restore the damaged decoration.
- Underpin the heavily eroded exterior wall bases.

ATB:

- Seal the hole in the roof.
- Restore the decorative elements.
- Establish signage for way-finding and on-site education.



Collapsed Section of the Chief's Palace at Bodwease



Shrine Room at Bodwease

BODWEASE [Chief's Palace]: State of Conservation Visual Summary

OPPORTUNITIES



① The Palace maintains a very high level of authenticity of design, materials, use, and function.



② It displays unique decorative elements and seems to have been untouched for a long period of time.



③ The central part of the Palace complex is still standing and being used by the chief and his elders for arbitration and other functions.



④ Construction details that cannot be seen in the other buildings are visible here. The Palace has never gone through a major restoration campaign.



⑤ All walls are covered with movable material culture enforcing the strong intangible values of the Palace. None of the ten buildings enlisted on the World Heritage List has kept such a level of authenticity.



CHALLENGES



① Collapse is imminent in many places within the interior.

② The central receiving hall where the Chief sits is surrounded by ruined elements (seen from the exterior).

③ In particular, the anterior wall of the reception hall is highly eroded.



④ The roofs and walls of the Chief's Palace complex are in a very poor state. Many elements have collapsed already. The central room where the chief sits is the last standing element.

BODWEASE [Shrine Building]: State of Conservation Visual Summary

OPPORTUNITIES



① The building is situated in the heart of a small village away from urban areas. The risk of encroachment is low.



② The structure is sound, and some roofing sheets have recently been replaced by GMMB.



③ The building is still very authentic with a great number of traditional movable heritage, especially in the Shrine Room.



④ The courtyard is kept clean and the sacred tree is in situ.



⑤ Decorative elements are in very good condition.



⑥ More intricate decorative elements are unique to this building.



⑦ The caretaker speaks English and can easily guide visitors.



⑧ Movable heritage related to intangible values are well kept and authentic.

CHALLENGES



① The Spectators' Room at the back has collapsed.



② A large empty space behind the Singers' Room may provide an opportunity for encroachment.



③ Some decorative elements are eroded, but not yet beyond repair.



④ The courtyard is covered with cement slabs that prevent the ground from drying.



⑤ As a result, the red plinth is very humid.



⑥ Also, the red base around the courtyard is very humid and covered with moss in some places.



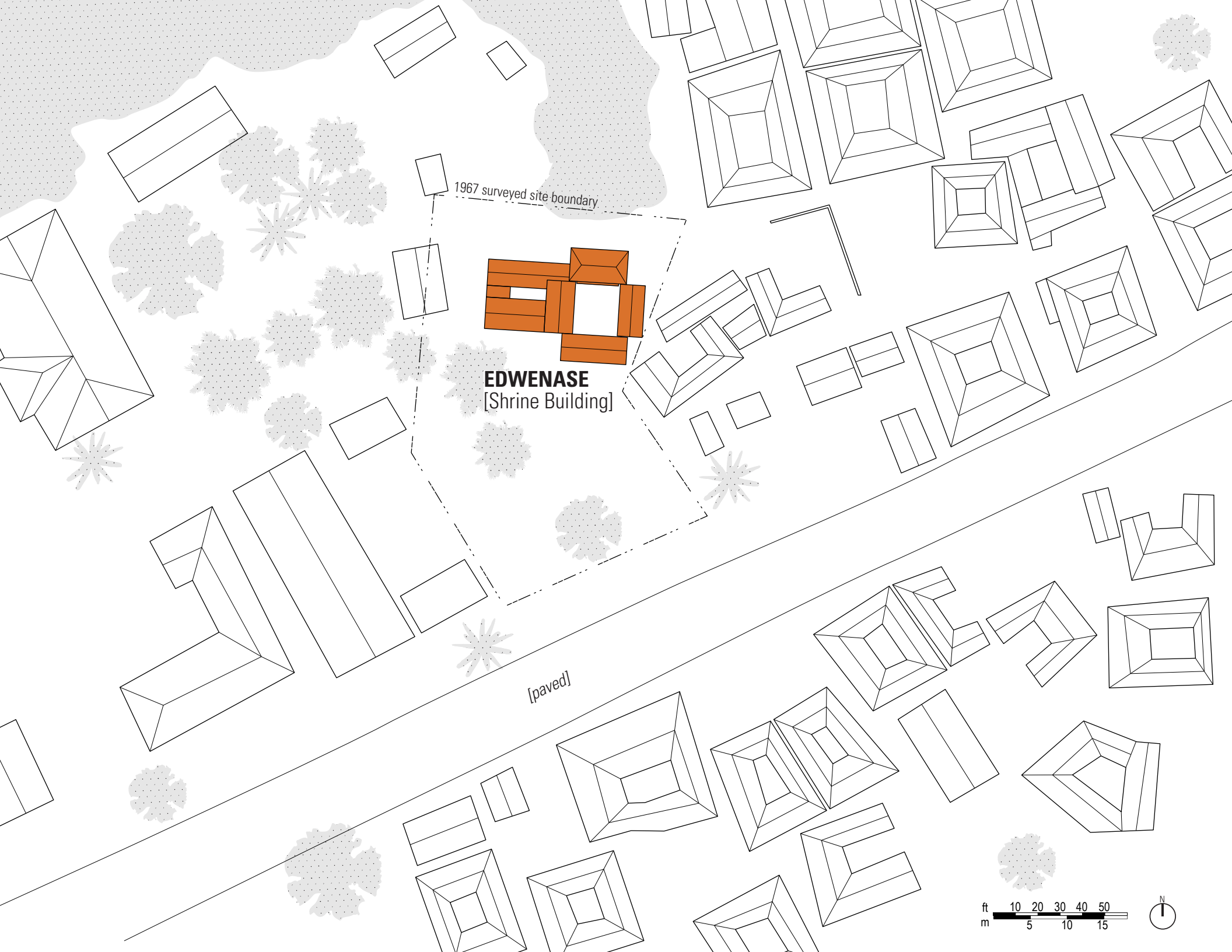
⑦ Roofing sheets contain holes.



EDWENASE



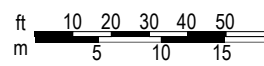
06 072



1967 surveyed site boundary

EDWENSE
[Shrine Building]

[paved]



Site Description

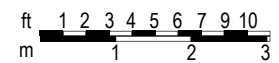
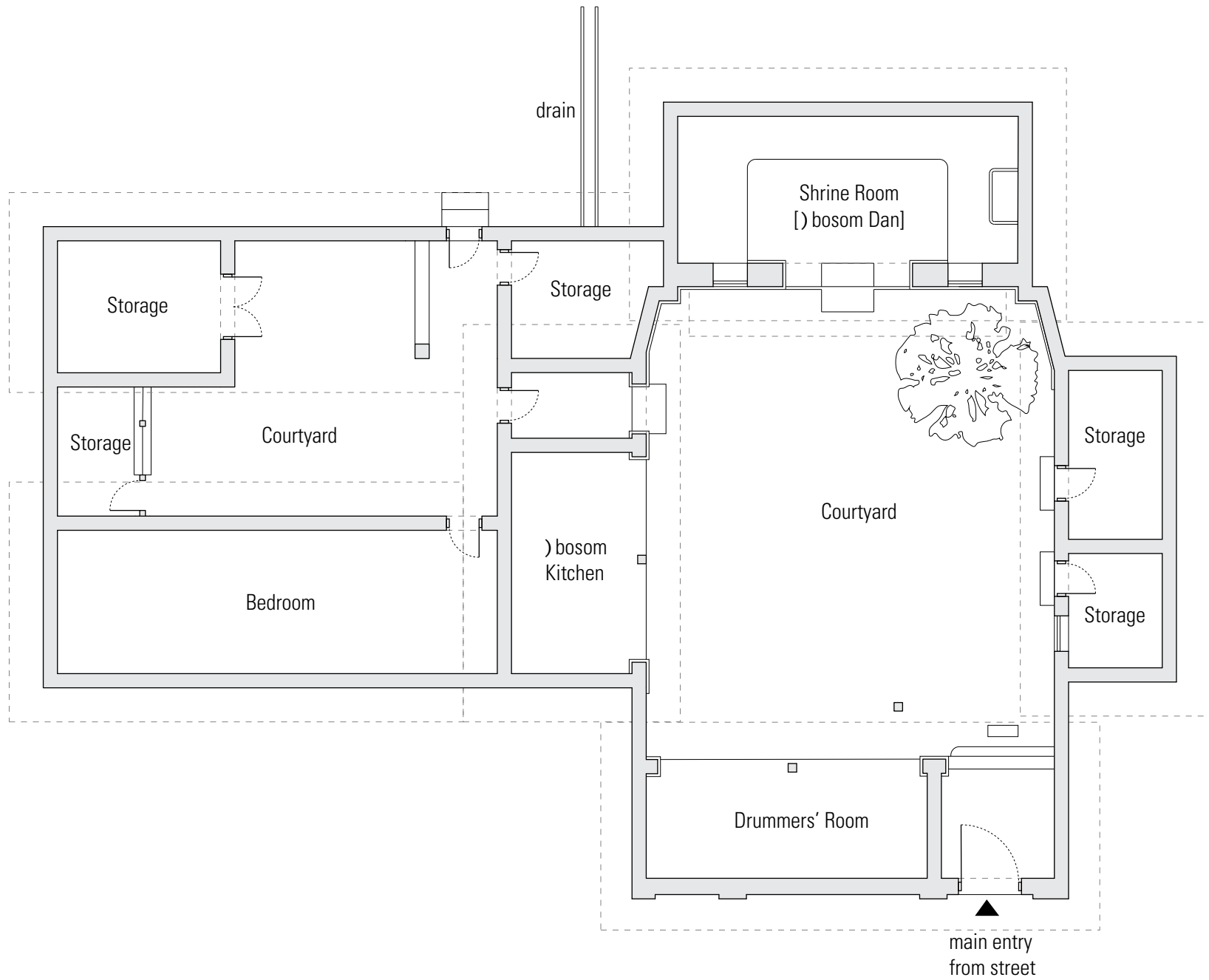
The building is located near a paved road that is the main road of Edwenase. It is a typical ATB and a large square with trees separates it from the road creating a pleasant view of the highly decorated exterior. The building interior contains decoration as well as several additions. The Asuming Family are the custodians. The previous)k) mfo passed away forty years ago.



Courtyard at Edwenase



Front Elevation at Edwenase



Architectural Description and Social History

As most ATBs, Edwenase consists of four buildings enclosing a courtyard. The entrance is on the southern side, the decorated elevation, which is also the wall of the Drummers' Room. The Shrine Room is on the northern side of the courtyard, opposite the entrance. On the western side, the open building houses the) bosom Kitchen. On the eastern side, where one would also expect an open Singers Room, there are two storage rooms. The floor remains earthen.

The ATB is active in the sense that the)k) mfo is here on Sunday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday and certain rituals are performed here on Asanteman ceremonial days. Otherwise, the) bosom itself seems inactive. It may be the spirit of the caretakers, custodians, and associated ritual that keeps the building active here.

The family acting as custodian and caretaker seem to repair the building even though the building is usually locked. They cited the need for additional roofing sheets. No one lives in the building on a full time basis. Over eight years ago, GMMB erected signage here and broken boards highlighting the use of each of the spaces still remain. However, the principal building facade is has itself become a billboard for graffiti.



Shrine Room at Edwenase

General State of Conservation

The shrine is in a very good state of conservation and well maintained. Both the courtyard and the surrounding land are very clean and the structure is perfectly sound. The walls have been recently repainted with red ochre.

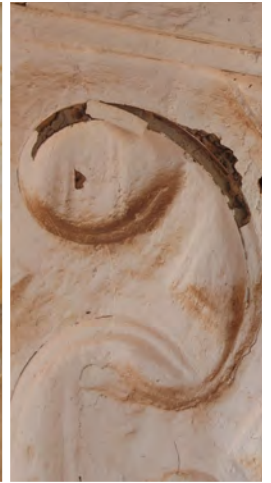
The roof needs attention and water is dripping on the decorative elements in several places leading to slight erosion. Repairs to decorative elements fourteen years ago have not been altered and are, in general, in very good condition. This includes the large decorated wall outside the shrine where only the nose of the figurine on the right hand side is broken. Some termite holes are visible, but no major destruction was observed.



Red Clay Paint at Edwenase



Drums at Edwenase



Decoration at Edwenase

Urgent Work Needed

- Replacement of the roofing sheets, approximately ninety sheets, and timber support elements.
- Treatment of doors and other wooden parts with insecticide.
- Treatment and filling of termite holes.
- Restoration of the damaged decorative elements.
- Replacement of the drop ceiling above the shed in the courtyard of the house.



Fetish Chairs at Edwenase



EDWENASE: State of Conservation Visual Summary

OPPORTUNITIES



① The building is in a very good state of conservation and well maintained.



② It is one of the few buildings displaying decorations on the outside. This exterior decorated elevation is one of the most attractive.



③ Both the courtyard and the surrounding areas are kept very clean and are swept.



④ The building still houses the) bosom and intangible values are strong.



⑤ The walls have been recently been rewashed.



⑥ The red ochre base has recently been rewashed.



⑦ The decorative elements restored in 2001 are still in a very good state of conservation.



⑧ Defects on decorative elements are minor and can easily be fixed.

CHALLENGES



① The roof requires attention as it is leaking.



② Ceiling boards in the adjacent house are damaged by humidity.



③ Water is dripping on the decorative elements in several places and slight erosion has already occurred.



④ Many wood elements, including shutters, doors, and roof elements, are rotten or affected by termites.



⑤ Insect holes have appeared in the wall decorative elements.

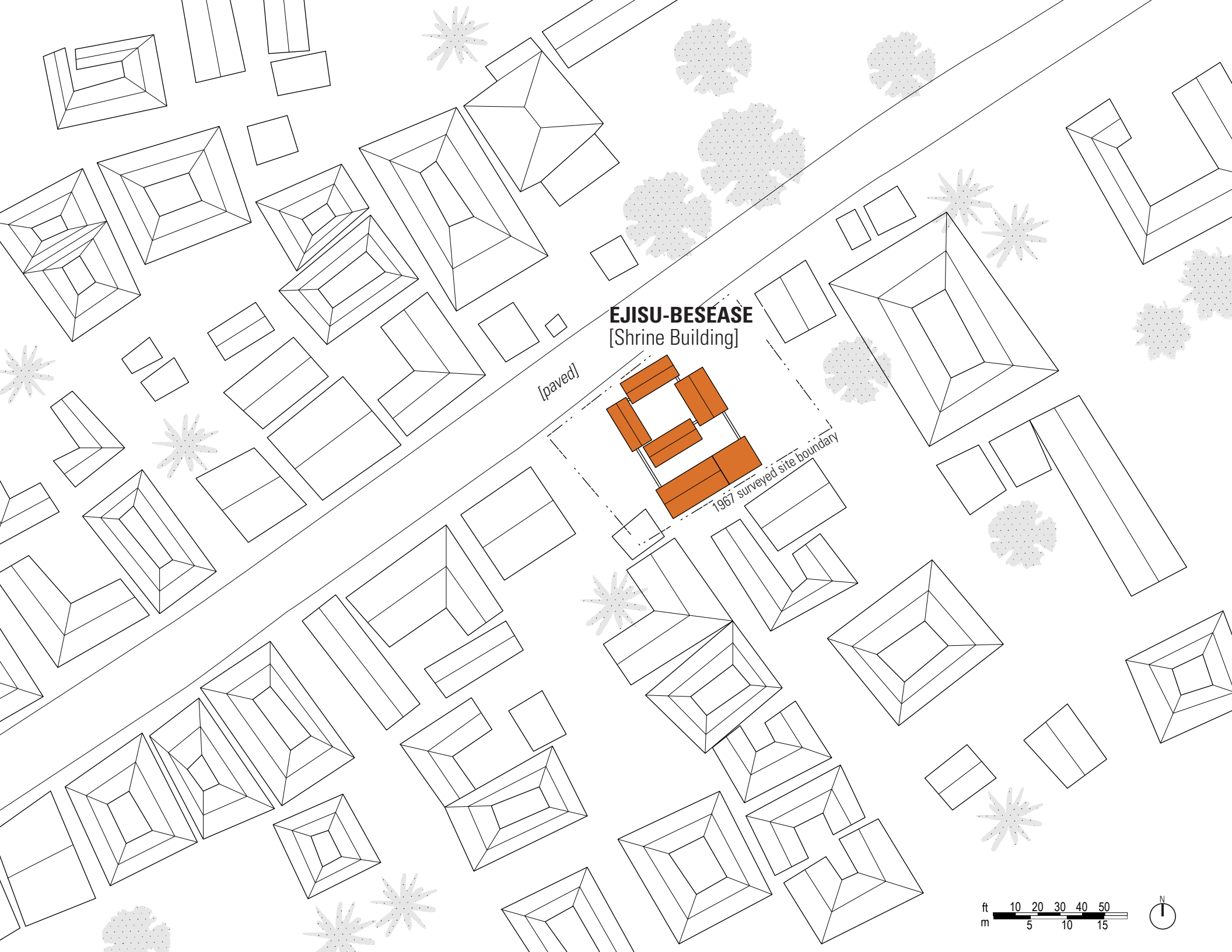


⑥ Industrial red paint has been introduced instead of the traditional red ochre wash.



EJISU-BESEASE

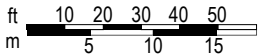




EJISU-BESEASE
[Shrine Building]

[paved]

1967 surveyed site boundary



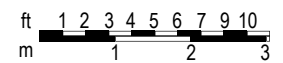
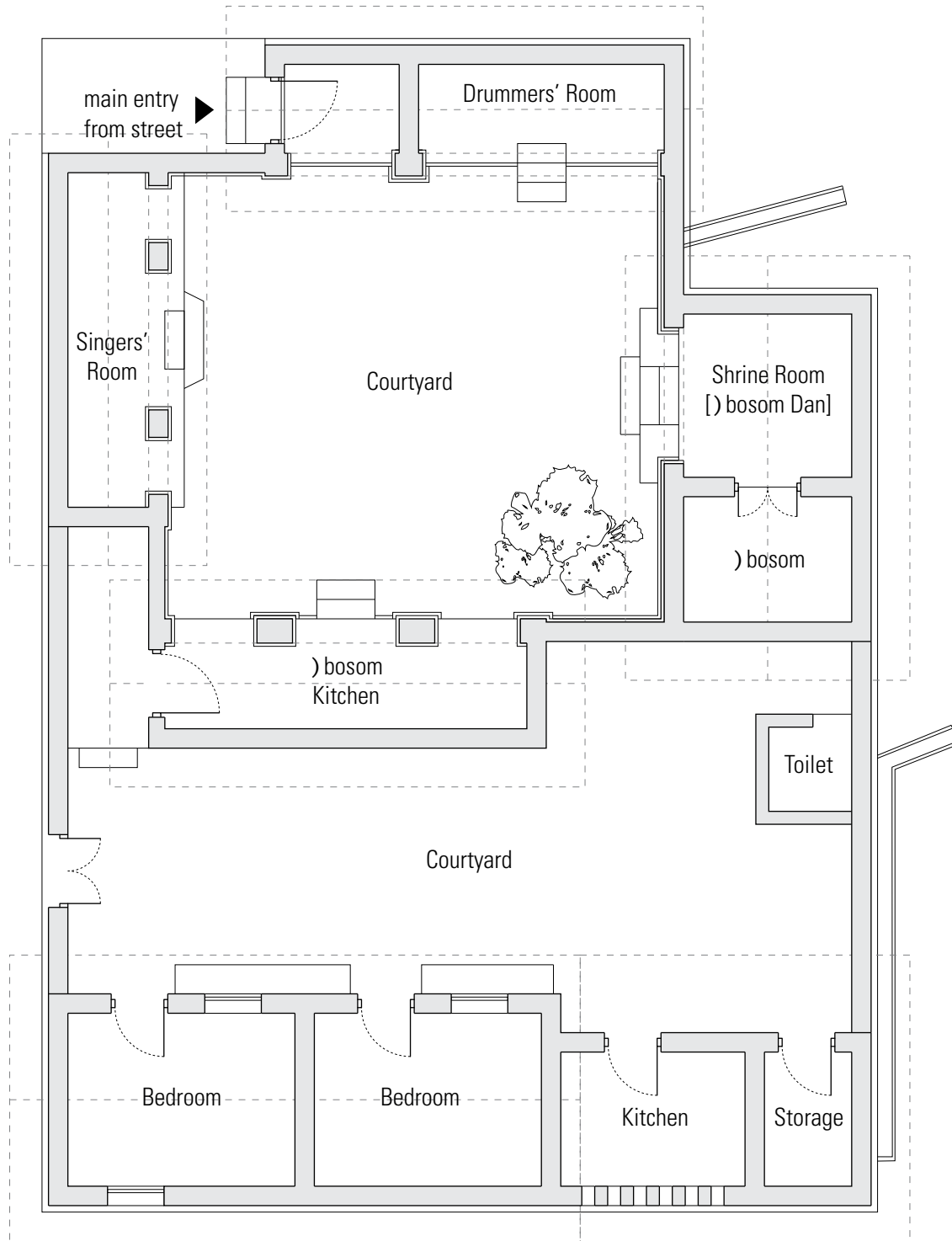
Site Description

The building is located adjacent to a paved road crossing Besease. It is surrounded by new residential and commercial development that directly impacts the site. For example, there are electrical poles situated very close to the ATB. This building is a typical ATB. It is widely visited by Ghanaian and international tourists because it has been marketed as a tourist attraction and has undergone the most extensive restoration and interpretive work by CRAterre and GMMB. The) bosom is somewhat inactive here so visitation is tied to tourism rather than ritual use. Road signage dating to 2002 was, unfortunately, removed when the road was enlarged. Only one low sign remains at the junction along the Kumasi-Accra road.

Kwaku Mensah, the caretaker paid by GMMB, maintains the shrine by cleaning it on a daily basis. When problems occur, he informs GMMB. GMMB inspects the site approximately twice a month.



Ram Backbones at Ejisu-Besease



Architectural Description and Social History

Like other ATBs, there is activity here every forty-two days in accordance with the Asante calendar. The) bosom is present here, but has not chosen a fetish priest or priestess so it is simply fed boiled plantain, bananas, or new yam by the caretaker. If the chief is present, he is not allowed to eat until the) bosom eats. The) bosom resides in a clay bowl and legend maintains that a female, Yasantua Yaa Asantewa, is the mother of this) bosom. When she gave birth to the) bosom it took the form of the blood and the tail of an antelope. It was fed with libation on a daily basis and slowly transformed into the) bosom. The) bosom only leaves the building if it is carried by an) k) mfo. There are two additional) bosoms in Besease across the street from this one. The survey team was not allowed to visit them.

The community is happy to live in proximity to the ATB and on Thursdays the elders do not go to the farm, but come to greet the) bosom instead. This tradition is dying out with the younger generation as many of them go to Church and see a religious conflict between fetish practices and Christianity. This ATB, as all ATBs, is seen as part and parcel of Asante cultural heritage. In order to be enstooled, a chief must come to the shrine first. Kwaku Mensah, the caretaker and custodian, has been here since 1928. He was once the Okyeame of the) k) mfo here.

The Drummers' Room has 4 drums and 12 gongs of different sizes. All these instruments are in good condition and can be played. The) bosom kitchen is empty. The fireplace and the pots it should contain are located in the Singers' Room. Some brass pots are also displayed in the Shrine Room. Other objects in the Shrine Room include a set of Asante stools, a fetish priest dress hanging on the wall, schnapps bottles, old coins and a string connecting the vertebrae of sacrificed sheep. For every sheep sacrificed, one of his vertebrae is added to this "necklace" hung at the entrance of the shrine room. This ATB also holds an exhibition made of 9 panels presenting images and short texts. It is displayed on the walls of the rooms surrounding the courtyard, except the Shrine Room. These panels explain the Asante culture, the history of the people, their religion, the architecture and the significance of the wall decorations.



Shrine Room at Ejisu-Besease



Pots at Ejisu-Besease



Ram Backbones at Ejisu-Besease



Bananas [food for the) bosom] at Ejisu-Besease

General State of Conservation

The shrine is in a good state of conservation and all walls have been repainted. However, some deterioration processes have started and require close attention. The thatched roof is not leaking, but some elements have moved out of their original position. Some elements of the wawa-bark ridge cap and raffia shingles need to be repositioned.

The thatch roof installed in 1998 has been restored three times in 2004, 2007, and 2012 by GMMB and local community artisans. The only the materials covering the roof (raffia shingles and wawa bark ridge cap) have been replaced. The main roof structure made of timber and bamboo has not been altered, it is still the one installed in 1998.

The corrugated aluminum roofing sheets of the caretaker's house, located behind the ATB, are in a very poor state of conservation and leak.

The courtyard is very clean, but presents drainage problems. After years of sweeping the ground from the periphery towards the center, the courtyard is now dome-shaped. This means that water flows towards the walls and columns of the shrine building resulting in high humidity and deterioration of the wall plinth. This high humidity then leads to cracks in the cement crust and could lead to structural deformation during the next rainy season. The slabs are also showing cracks. The cement screed in the Drummers' Room has recently been restored but this does not solve the problem. There is water stagnation around the sacred tree and the Sky Altar, formerly located near the sacred tree, is now missing.

The exhibition mounted by CRAterre and GMMB is still intact although a few photos have faded. Only one of the four road signs installed after 2000 remains and there is no signage at the shrine itself. However, the high-pitched thatch roof contributes to the recognition of the ATB from the road. Visitors come regularly to the shrine, but there is no guide to accompany them.

Instead, guiding is done by the caretaker who does not speak English.

Urgent Work Needed

-Change the drainage slopes in the courtyard. All water should flow towards a diagonal line that crosses the courtyard. This will entail removing soil from the center of the courtyard as well as compacting soil along the rooms.

-Add laterite outside the building and behind the Shrine Room to better channel water away from the building.

-Restore the roof by replacing forty two roofing sheets over the caretaker's house.

-Buy a double ladder for ongoing maintenance.



Caretaker Kwaku Mensah at Ejisu-Besease



Drums at Ejisu-Besease



Courtyard at Ejisu-Besease

EJISU-BESEASE: State of Conservation Visual Summary

OPPORTUNITIES



① Decorative elements are generally in a good state of conservation.



② The traditional roof restored in 1999 is still in place, the raffia shingles have been replaced 3 times.



③ The courtyard is kept clean and there is an exhibition in the Shrine Building.



④ The exhibition panels prepared in 1999 are still in place and intact.



⑤ The caretaker takes his job very seriously.



⑥ The sacred tree and altars are still in situ.



⑦ The walls are well maintained and regularly repainted.



⑧ The bamboo roof structure resists termites.

CHALLENGES



① Some roof elements are leaking.



② Humidity is very high in the wall base due to the dome-shaped courtyard.



③ The caretaker cannot speak English.



④ Noticeable erosion of the ground on the northern side.



⑤ The high humidity level is affecting decorative elements and there are cracks in the cement plaster at plinth level.



⑥ Some raffia shingles need to be replaced.



⑦ The adjoining house is leaking. One of the roofing sheets is already torn.

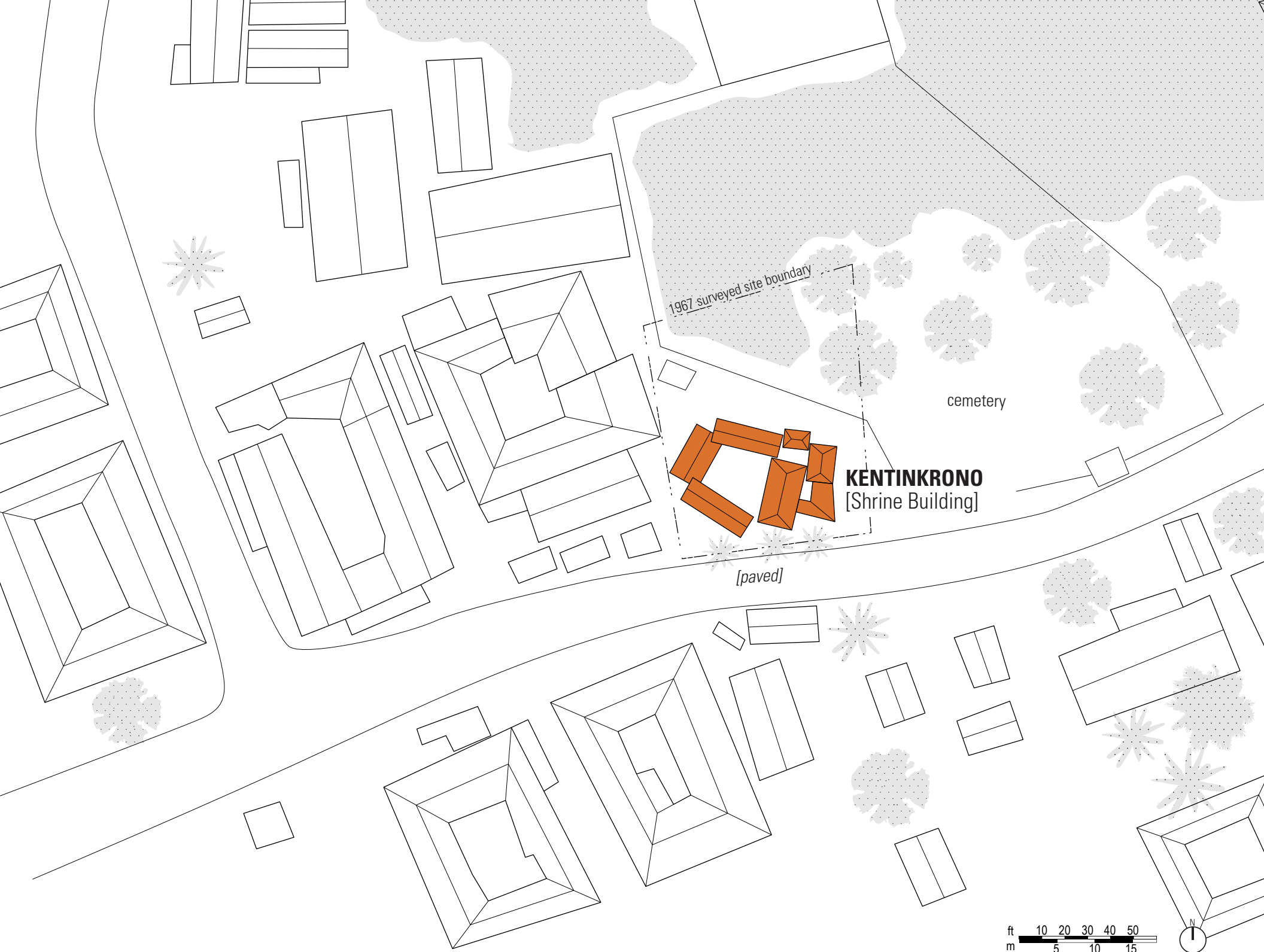


⑧ There is only one damaged roadside signboard left from 1998 work.



KENTINKRONO



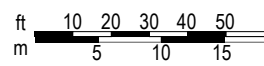


1967 surveyed site boundary

cemetery

KENTINKRONO
[Shrine Building]

[paved]



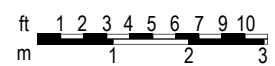
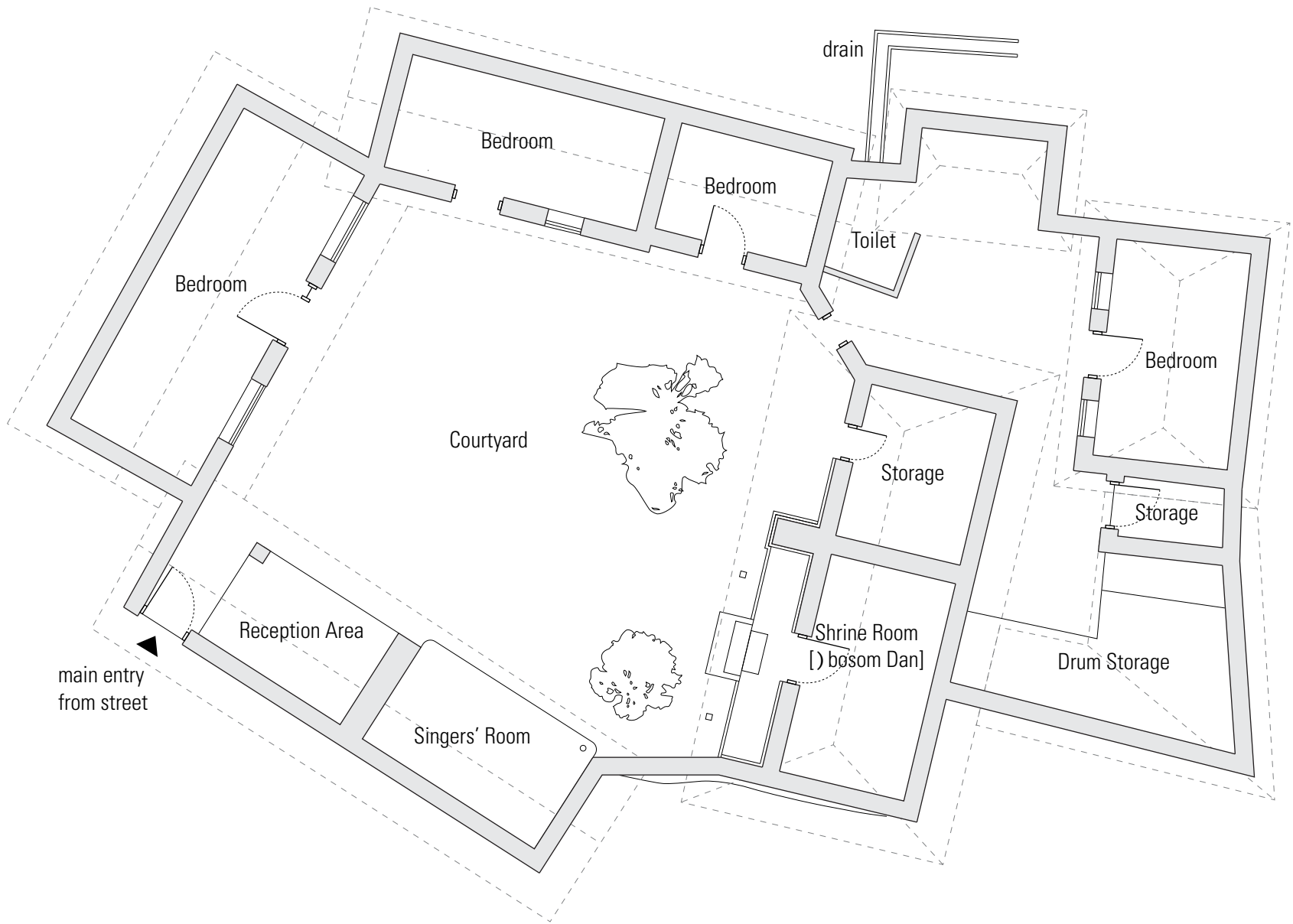
Site Description

Kentinkrono is located adjacent to an unpaved road inside the village. This ATB is the closest to Kumasi, and the village is located on the main Accra-Kumasi road. It is therefore very easy to access and recognizable by a molded crocodile on the exterior. It is rarely used for ritual as there is no) bosom and no) k) mfo here. Significant modern additions can be found at Kentinkrono and the GMMB is in legal dispute with the former caretaker over these additions.

Residents of the building, all of whom have nothing to do with any associated ritual or current maintenance, maintain that GMMB and visitors stopped coming here over a year ago. Kwame Appau was the caretaker employed by GMMB.



Crocodile Decoration at Kentinkrono



Architectural Description and Social History

The shrine once comprised of three buildings, but now there are only two. A modern building, containing two residential rooms, was added two years ago. There seem to be sacred items here, but no)k) mfo . The Shrine Room is locked and has not been open for thirty years since the)k) mfo left. If a visitor's libation is poured, it occurs in the Courtyard.

Reportedly, the Cultural Center in Kumasi owns the original exterior crocodile motif from this building, yet there is no physical evidence of removal.



Courtyard at Kentinkrono



Entrance at Kentinkrono



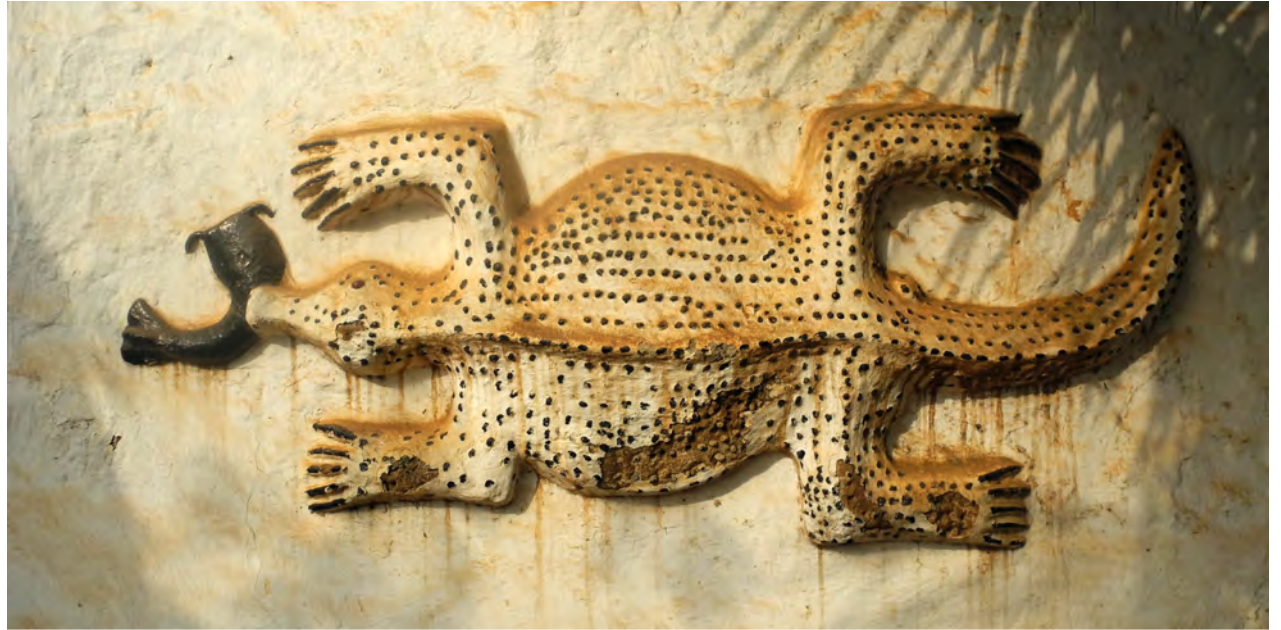
Shrine Room at Kentinkrono

General State of Conservation

Despite the fact that people live here, this site is poorly maintained. The courtyard is used for indoor farming and the Drummers' and Singers' Rooms are used as storage spaces for tools and building materials. The activities taking place in the shrine are neither compatible with its function nor its status as World Heritage Site. This being said, the structure is perfectly sound and the decorations are in very good condition. It is only the roof that is getting old and needs replacement in several places.

Urgent Work Needed

- Request that site users better respect this sacred and important building.
- Replace roofing sheets, approximately eighty sheets.



Crocodile Decoration at Kentinkrono



Decoration Detail at Kentinkrono



Decoration Detail at Kentinkrono



Courtyard at Kentinkrono

KENTINKRONO: State of Conservation Visual Summary

OPPORTUNITIES



① The structure is sound and looks strong from the exterior.

② The cemetery at the back is good protection against encroachment.

③ The decorative element on the front elevation is in a very good state and serves as a marker for the use of the building.



④ Despite the general lack of site maintenance, all decorations remain in a very good state of conservation.

CHALLENGES



① Site poorly maintained by the people living in it and little care taken to clean and respect the site. Residents of the site have no spiritual or intangible link to the building and the side rooms (Drummers' and Singers' Rooms) are used as storage spaces for all sorts of tools and building materials. Storage against the wall is seen on the exterior.

② Termite infestation is visible.



③ The courtyard is used for farming.

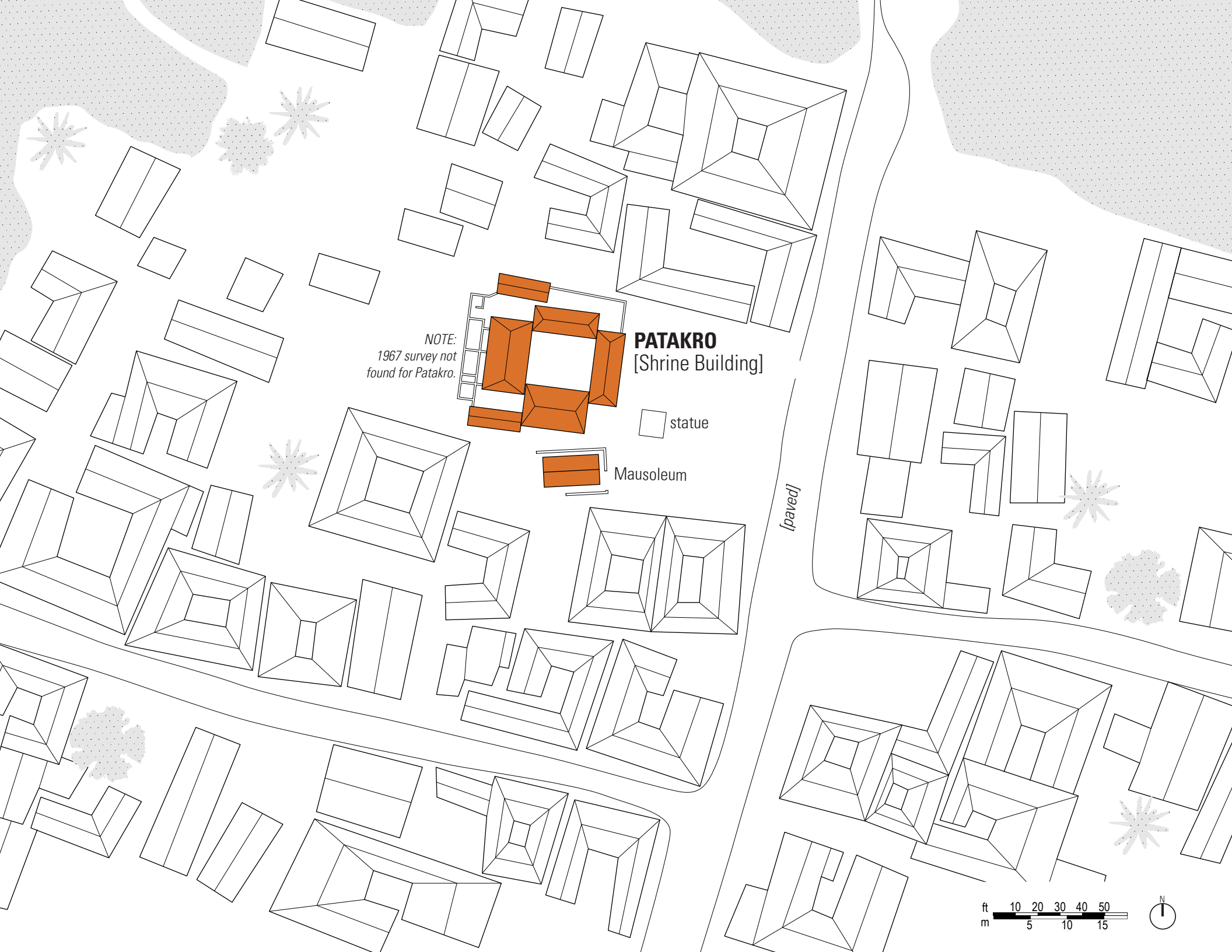
④ The roof is in poor condition, many parts are leaking.

⑤ The walls are in poor condition due to the roof leakages and short overhangs.



PATAKRO





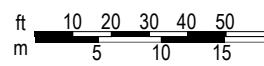
NOTE:
1967 survey not
found for Patakro.

PATAKRO
[Shrine Building]

□ statue

□ Mausoleum

(paved)



Site Description

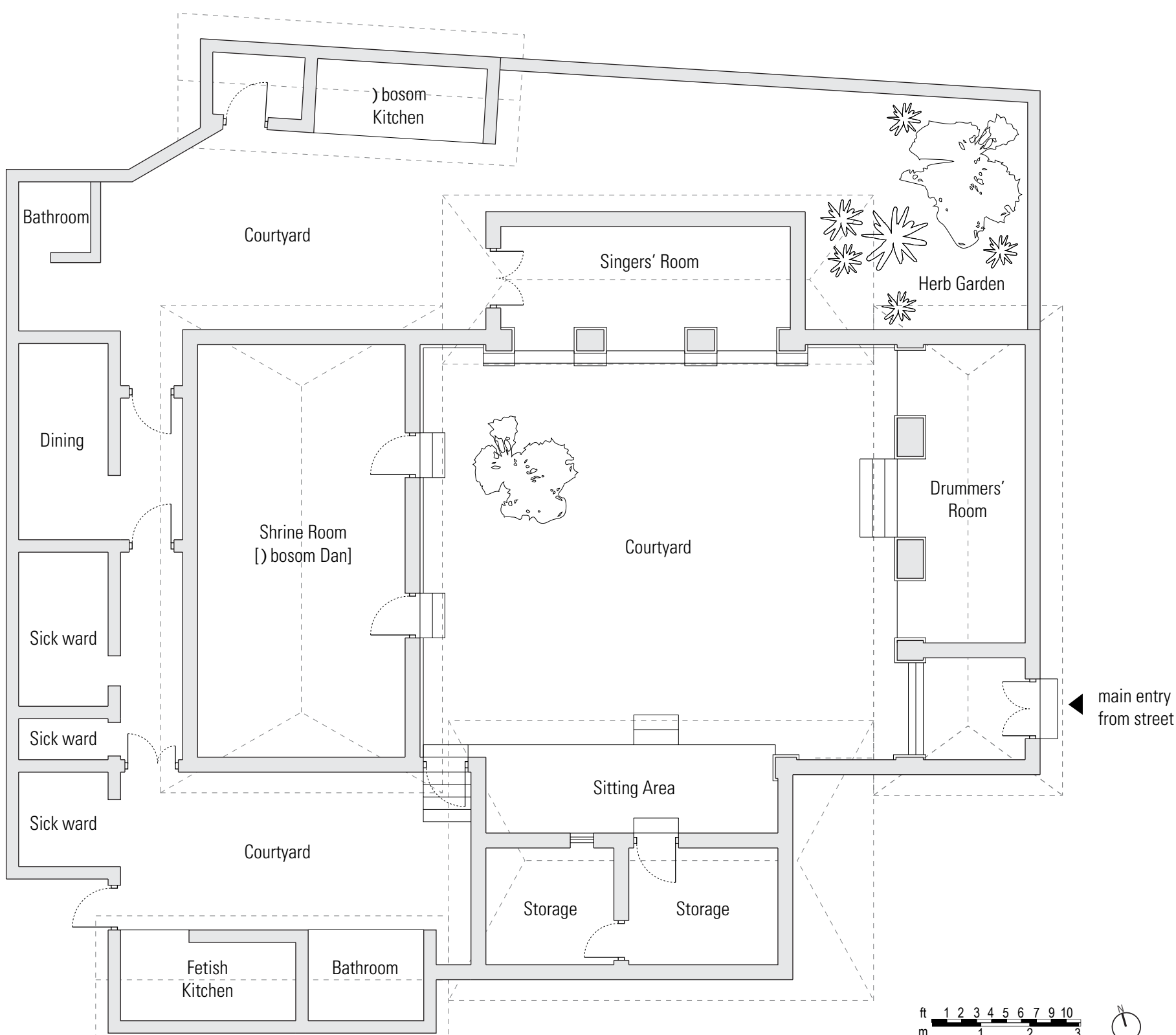
The building is located adjacent to the paved Kumasi-Obuasi Road in the village of Patakro near Obuasi. It is easy to access and could become an important tourist destination. There is no road signage providing information to access the site. It is located in the Adansi area. "Adansi" in Akan means "the art of building" so it is believed that the Adansi people were the ones who first started constructing buildings in the Gold Coast, now Ghana.

It is atypical and holds the highest level of significance to traditional leaders at the local and regional levels. It is widely visited by Ghanaians as the bosom is strong and the living heritage of the place very powerful. An)k) mfo has not resided here since 1978.

A member of the Asantehene's court, Baffour Asabre Kogywoasu Ababio III, the Sumankwahene visited the Patakro ATB with the team. It is important to note that this person is in charge of all sacred activities as they relate to the Asanteman. He was accompanied by the Dabehene (Nana Owusu Gyamfi) and the Nkonwasofohene (Nana Dabo Kwateng) of the Asanteman Traditional Council. The Dabehene is in charge of all accommodation in the Sumankwahene's palace and the Nkonwasofohene is in charge of the palace black stool. This responsibility includes feeding the stool. The delegation also included Baffour Asabre, the son of the Sumankwahene. Their presence alone resulted in a very informative visit to the shrine as well as added validity to the mission within the community. Moreover, it demonstrated commitment and interest in the initiative by a representative of the Asanteman Traditional Council at a very high level. The Sumankwahene will be a powerful stakeholder in future activities related to the ATBs.



Nkonwasofohene Pouring Libation at Patakro



) bosom
Kitchen

Bathroom

Courtyard

Singers' Room

Herb Garden

Dining

Shrine Room
() bosom Dan]

Courtyard

Drummers'
Room

Sick ward

Sick ward

Sick ward

main entry
from street

Courtyard

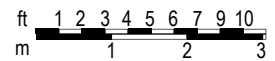
Sitting Area

Storage

Storage

Fetish
Kitchen

Bathroom



Architectural Description and Social History

It is atypical because it contains an extensive and intact residential area for the)k) mfo, including an)bosom kitchen washed with white clay. This same complex surrounding the shrine also includes areas servicing traditional medicinal practice such as sick wards and a medicinal garden. It is in very poor condition while the ATB is in better condition. In addition, a mausoleum situated adjacent to the ATB contains burials for former)k) mfos as well as significant movable heritage (tables where the deceased)k) mfo take food). The landscape immediately surrounding the Mausoleum is also significant and sacred. Earthen walls mark the rooms for the)k) mfo wives. A cast concrete series of figures dating to 1958 mark the entrance to the building.

Within this complex the ATB is similar to other ATBs. What is different, is that a kola tree serves as the sacred tree. The kola tree is significant because its fruit are ochre and white in color—the same color scheme of the ATB. Libations are poured into a bottle embedded in the ground. This bottle is where the)bosom is fed. Dapa Nwama is the Okyeame for the former)k) mfo at Patakro. He led the tour with various input from the caretaker, the son of the former)k) mfo. The former)k) mfo, Nana Adu Kwaku and his wife Nana Benefaa, seem to have been responsible for the popularity of the shrine. The mention of his wife as a significant player in the history of the site is important because few women are mentioned in relation to the ATBs.



Courtyard at Patakro



Fetish Priest Kitchen at Patakro



Medicinal Garden at Patakro

General State of Conservation

The site is one of the most interesting because of the wide variety of elements and decorating techniques. The community is well informed and conscious about the shrine's values.

The shrine building is generally in good condition except the decorations which have a great deal of damage. This is due to the short roof eaves that cannot prevent water from splashing against the walls. The sand-cement plaster that covers the external walls also suffers a great deal of damage. Many parts have started to peel off. Four rooms at the back of the shrine, servicing the)k) mfo, have no roof. This leads to direct erosion of

the walls by rain and causes high humidity levels in the rooms that could lead to damage in the future.

The Mausoleum housing the previous fetish priest is in very good condition. However, the fence wall, supervised by GMMB in 2012 and constructed by community members, which protects the site has partly collapsed. It was very poorly built without any attention to drainage.

Urgent Work Needed

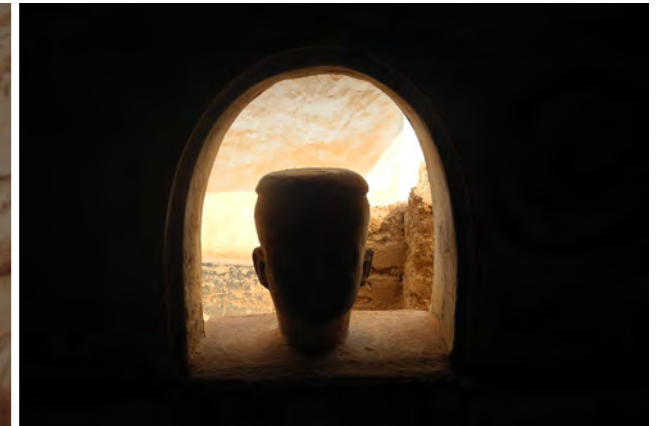
- Dismantle the fence around the mausoleum.
- Drain the site.
- Build a new fence on a proper foundation and drainage

holes at the base to allow for water evacuation.

- Extend the roof eaves all around the courtyard.
- Restore the decorative elements.
- Re-roof the four rooms at the back.
- Replace the missing door in the first room.
- Break the sand-cement plaster where it has started peeling off and replace with stabilized soil plaster.
- Treat the wood.



Interior of Mausoleum at Patakro



Statue Head in Mausoleum at Patakro



Mausoleum Exterior at Patakro



Bottle of Schnapps for Libations at Patakro

PATAKRO: State of Conservation Visual Summary

OPPORTUNITIES



① The site is rather well kept by the caretaker. Statues of previous priests mark the importance of this place.



② The small mausoleum where previous Okmfo are buried is of great interest.



③ The site embodies a wide variety of decorative elements and techniques.



④ Ceremonies are regularly performed in the building.



⑤ Movable heritage related to the shrine embodies intangible and is visible.



⑥ Historic photographs are in the possession of local residents.



⑦ The kitchen areas are very authentic and well maintained (shown here is the) k) mfo kitchen).

CHALLENGES



① Roof eaves are too short and do not protect decorative elements. Several sheets are leaking.



② Decorative elements are also impacted by erosion at the wall base level.



③ The mud wall hiding the mausoleum building has collapsed.



④ As a result, wall remains are blocking water drainage.



⑤ The four rooms that are part of the house complex have no roof.

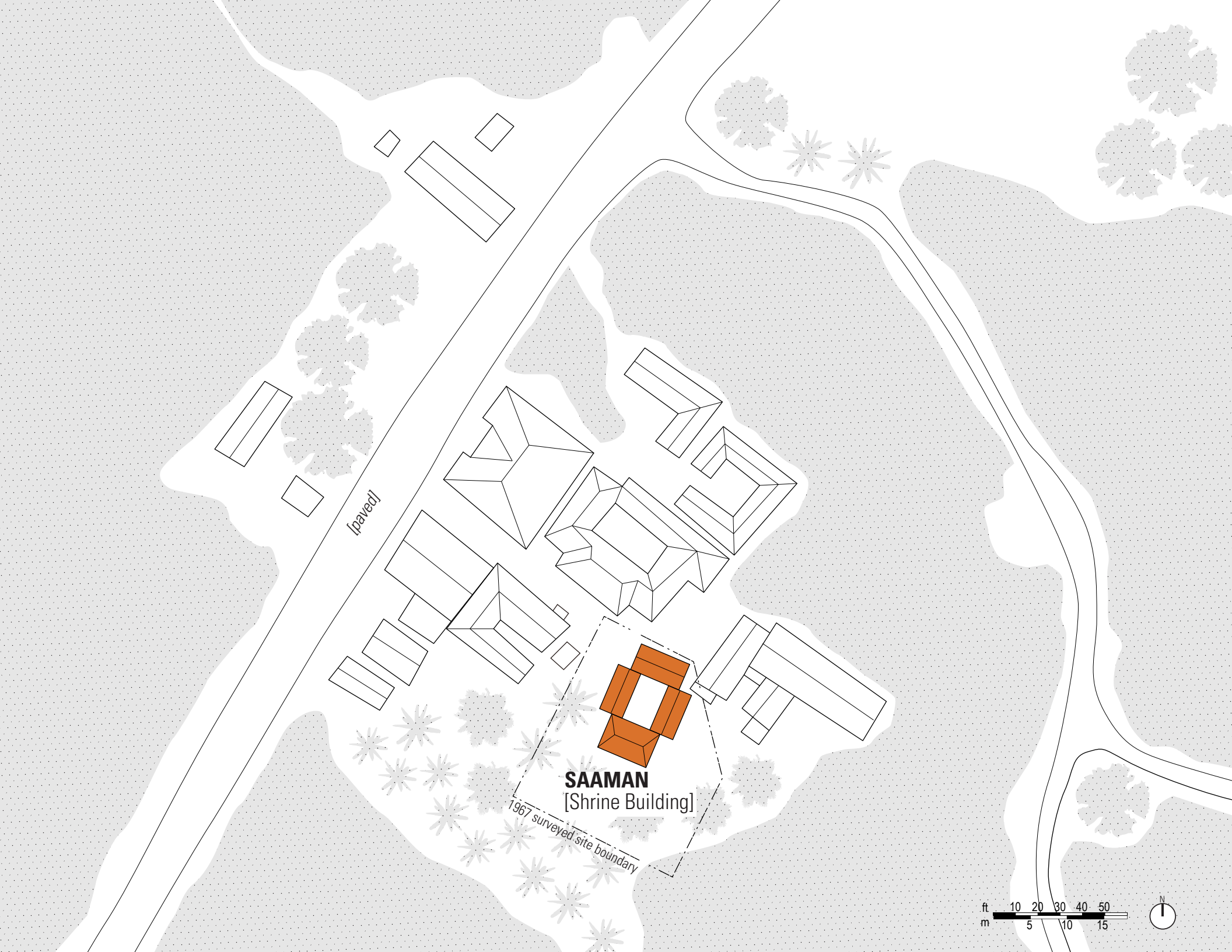


⑥ The sand-cement screed on the external walls contains a great deal of damage and many parts have started to peel off.



SAAMAN

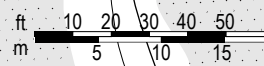




[paved]

SAAMAN
[Shrine Building]

1967 surveyed site boundary

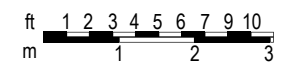
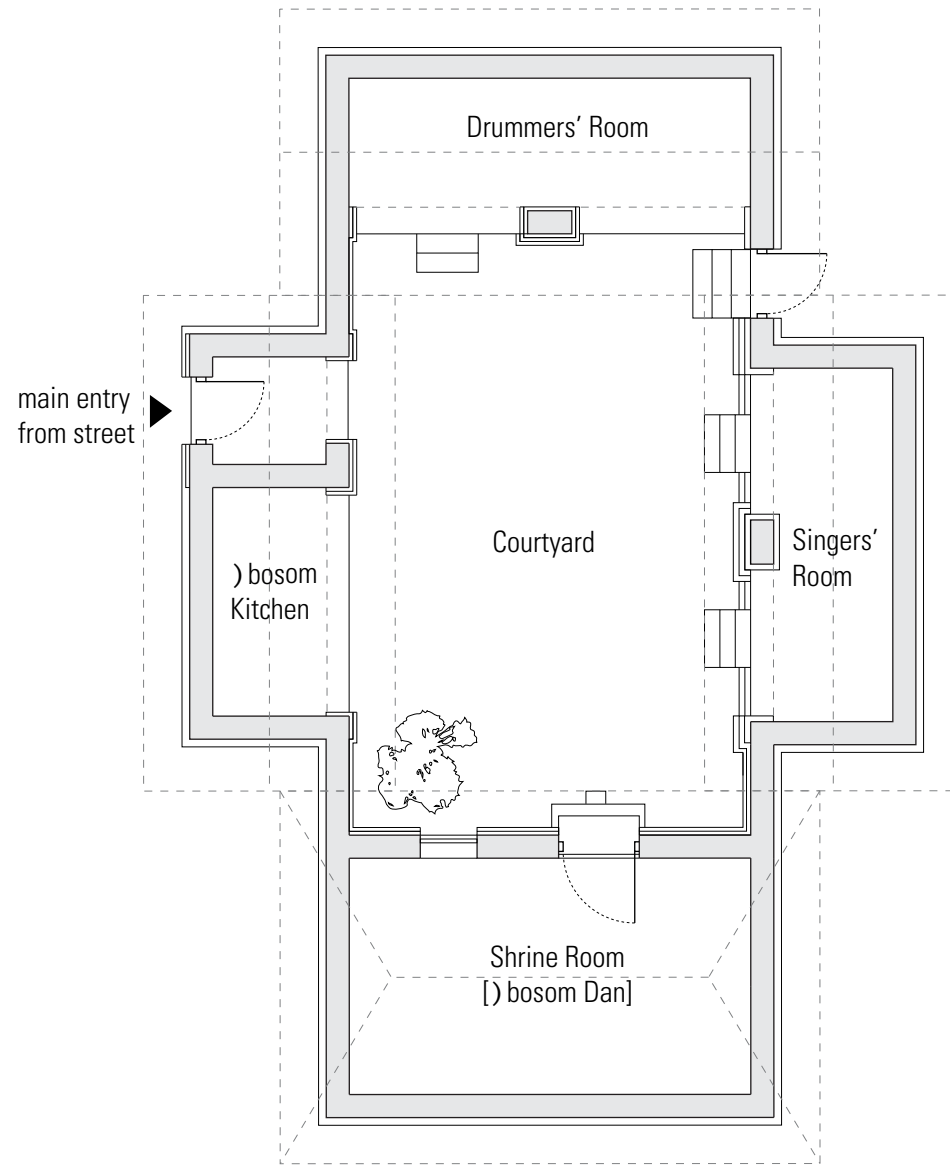


Site Description

The site at Saaman is located off a paved road running through the very small Saaman village. The building is surrounded by residential dwellings. Bonwire, the kente weaving town, lies between Saaman and Bodwease.



Entrance to Shrine at Saaman



Architectural Description and Social History

Saaman is a typical ATB without an)bosom or a)k)mfo. The)k)mfo died thirty years ago. Ophelia Prempeh is the designated caretaker of the site. Ophelia mentioned that no one comes to this shrine - neither tourists or locals or chiefs. Ophelia mentioned Abirim as the active shrine.

Various buildings surround the courtyard and very little visible movable heritage remains. Even the sacred tree is dying as Ophelia tried to cut it down as she was afraid of it falling on neighboring houses.

The Shrine Room remains unlocked and the spiritual items inside are dusty.



Courtyard at Saaman



Decoration Detail at Saaman



Door Detail at Saaman



Decoration at Saaman

General State of Conservation

Rainwater management is key to the continued preservation of this site. The gutters are currently forcing water into the building and lack proper drainage which has resulted in severe erosion and high humidity. Connections between various roof lines are poorly designed. At the back of the Singer's Room outside the building, several humidity problems also occur due to the topography and nearby refuse heaps. The slopes allow high quantities of water to flow towards the shrine including rain water but also bathing water from the neighbors' house.

As a result, the entire building is very wet and the structure could suffer deformation in the future. Termites are also present in high numbers and have started attacking most of the wood. As a result, door frames are in a poor state of conservation. Most of the decorative elements are damaged as well.

A raffia palm tree outside the shrine needs to be trimmed as some branches touch the roof of the building. Despite these observations, the place is clean and rather well kept.

Urgent Work Needed

- Introduce soft landscaping on the ground around the shrine to reduce humidity, especially behind the Drummers' Room
- Landscape the courtyard
- Trim branches of the sacred tree but also branches of the raffia palm tree at the back
- Design new water gutters under the roofs
- Landscape the courtyard to drain water towards the center rather than on the edges
- Shift the refuse waste piles further away from the building
- Restore the decorative elements once the roof problem is fixed
- Install road signage



Decoration on Pillar at Saaman



Pots at Saaman



Gina talking with Resident at Saaman



Courtyard at Saaman

SAAMAN: State of Conservation Visual Summary

OPPORTUNITIES



① The site is clean and rather well kept.



② A custodian cleans the site on a daily basis.



③ The structure is sound.



④ GMMB conducted repairs on the roof above the Drummers' Room in 2013.



⑤ Decorative elements are still visible despite issues with erosion.



⑥ The sacred tree is in situ but is dying.



⑦ Many decorative elements are well conserved.



CHALLENGES



① Connections between the roofed components are not well designed. Gutters don't work and all water coming from the roof splashes on the walls. Most of the decorative elements are eroded.

② The courtyard is dome-shaped and water flows towards the walls and columns. Humidity at the base is therefore very high.

③ Drainage around the building is not efficient. Humidity in and around the building is extremely high.



④ Termites are present in the entire structure.

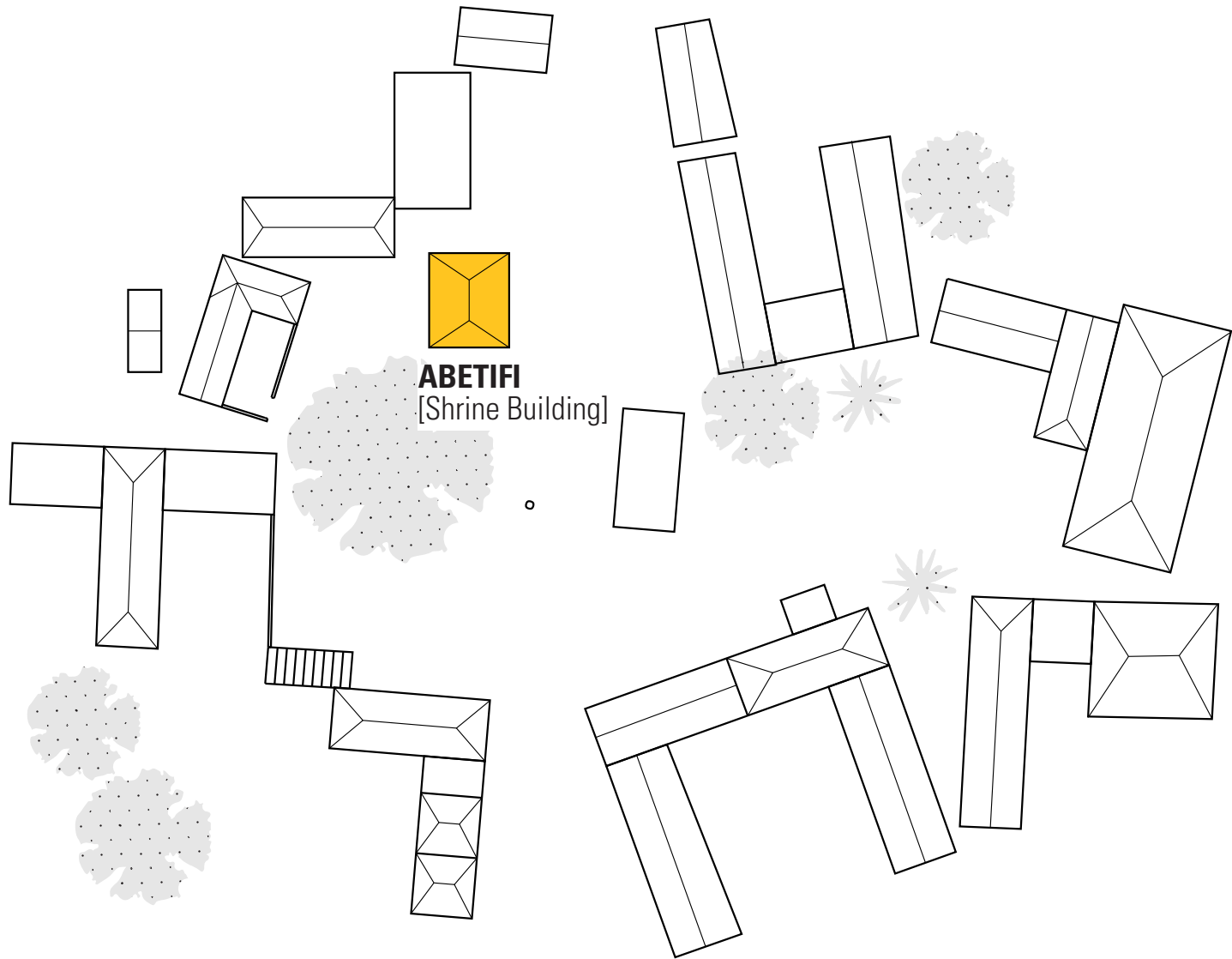
⑤ Rain water collection at the roof level is not efficient.

⑥ Garbage heaps exist behind the building.



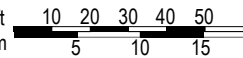
ABETIFI





ABETIFI
[Shrine Building]

NOTE: scale is approximate and compass direction needs to be confirmed.





Tree at Abetifi

The shrine at Abetifi is referred to as a Posuban or Asafo shrine and it greatly resembles these types of shrines found in Fanteman. The shrine is only utilized during a funeral, a festival or on occasion of impending war. The shrine here is referred to as “Kyermu” and it is considered to be an act of religion to believe in the power of the shrine.

The posuban here takes the form of a copper pan. It is locally referred to as Yaawa. Constructed of concrete with a pitched roof, the single-room building comprising the shrine was constructed in 1948 when a resident of Abetifi was impressed with the Asafo Company shrines found in Fante land and proceeded to replicate it in Kwahu. Oral history suggests a small, earthen structure preceded this building. During this time, the structure only housed the posuban.



Elevation at Abetifi

Today the concrete building houses drums, flags and other accouterments commonly found in Asafo shrines within Fante areas along the coast of Ghana. This shrine may have encompassed elements more common with ATBs prior to 1948. However, since 1948 this shrine seems to resemble, function, and house elements very similar to Asafo Company shrines. It is interesting in this way.

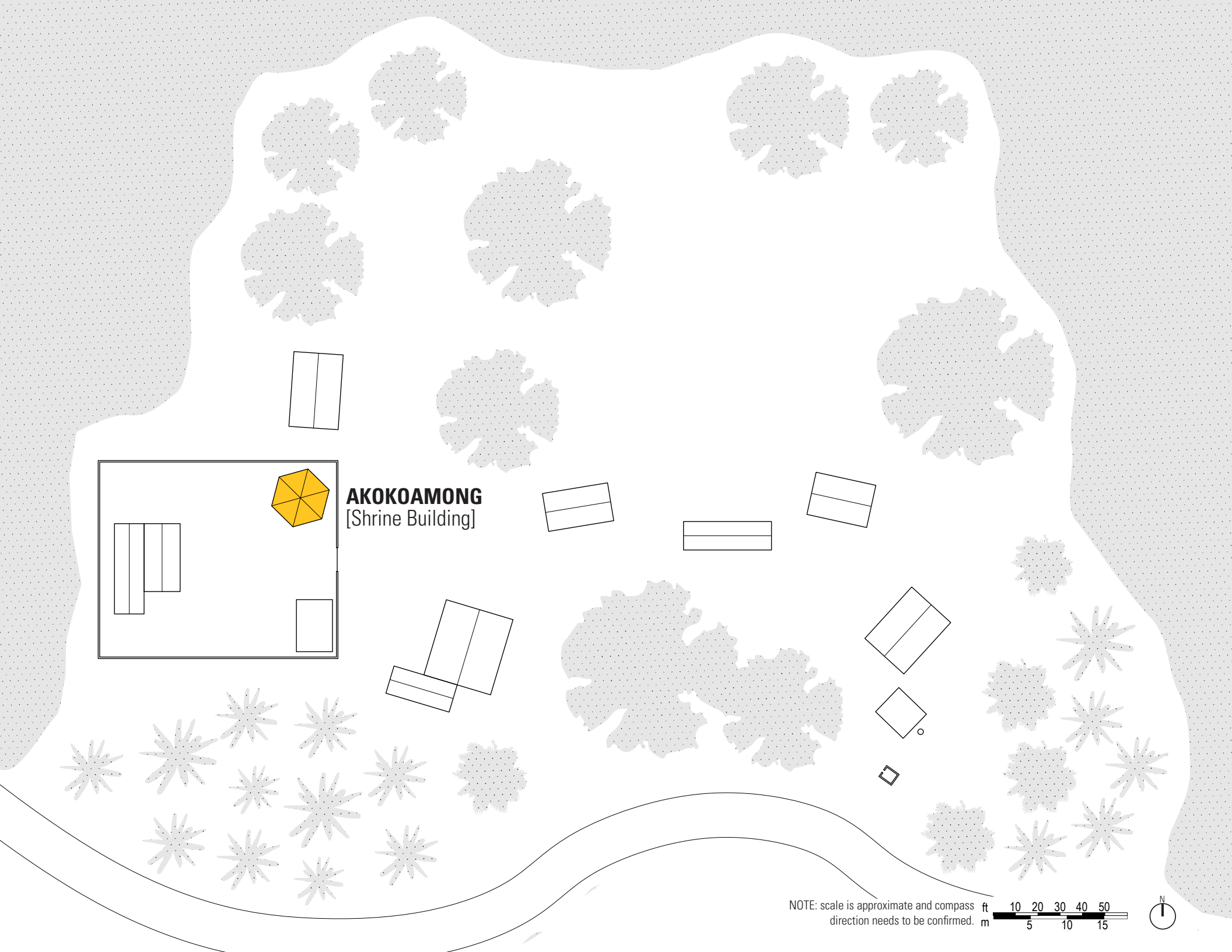
The shrine is found in a primarily residential setting. There is a very ancient and impressive Dedua tree adjacent to the shrine and a mound of sacrificial debris lying adjacent to the principal façade. This mound contains discarded calabash and schnapps bottles. A concrete bench has been constructed as part of the principal façade.

An interesting legend surrounds the tree. The tree is remembered to have been planted by the first inhabitants of the town, marking the boundary of the place in the future. The Asafo Company of Abetifi meets at the shrine but only brings out the) bosom or posuban on the occasions mentioned above. Elders sitting outside the shrine, and members of the company, indicated that there are younger people currently in the company. When local children were asked about the shrine none of them indicated that they knew anything about the building. The idea of performance as an important part of the ritual of this place is very strong; the company is responsible for maintaining the shrine.



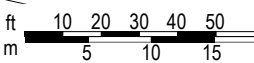
AKOKOAMONG





AKOKOAMONG
[Shrine Building]

NOTE: scale is approximate and compass direction needs to be confirmed.





Earthen Building Housing) bosom at Akokoamong

GMMB reported that there was a shrine in Akokoamong, as per the initial nomination set forth to UNESCO, so the team went to this place to confirm the presence of the shrine. It is there but is not contained in a decorated earthen building at present. Historically there was a decorated earthen building here and a person close to Osei Tutu once lived here.

The immediate area around the shrine is comprised of modest houses; the whole area is immaculately swept and is adjacent to a grove of medicinal trees. Akowsia Boatemaa led us around as she had a key to the modern shrine, built seven years ago. We were allowed inside the shrine compound but could not photograph it.

Unfortunately, the fetish priest, Odei Esubrafo, was not available. Outside of the active compound there is a very small concrete building which once housed the) bosom; medicinal plants surround this building. There



Outdoor Hearth at Akokoamong

is also an earlier small earthen structure which is not in use but still contains a platform for the shrine objects. It also contains an embedded spear and a "witch's seat" outside. There are various ritual objects within the adjacent grove.

The modern shrine operates on Sundays and Wednesdays. The shrine, a large consultation rooms, and outdoor waiting area and living space for the priest are all constructed in concrete and surrounded by a high concrete wall with a locked gate. The shrine room is room and contains various ritual items including the) bosom. The) bosom is surrounded by red cloth, a gun, and machete ; cowrie shells are strewn about. A curtain covers it as well as an old roofing sheet. It is very impressive.

The consultation room here is very large and is locked. In front of this space is are an embedded spear and an



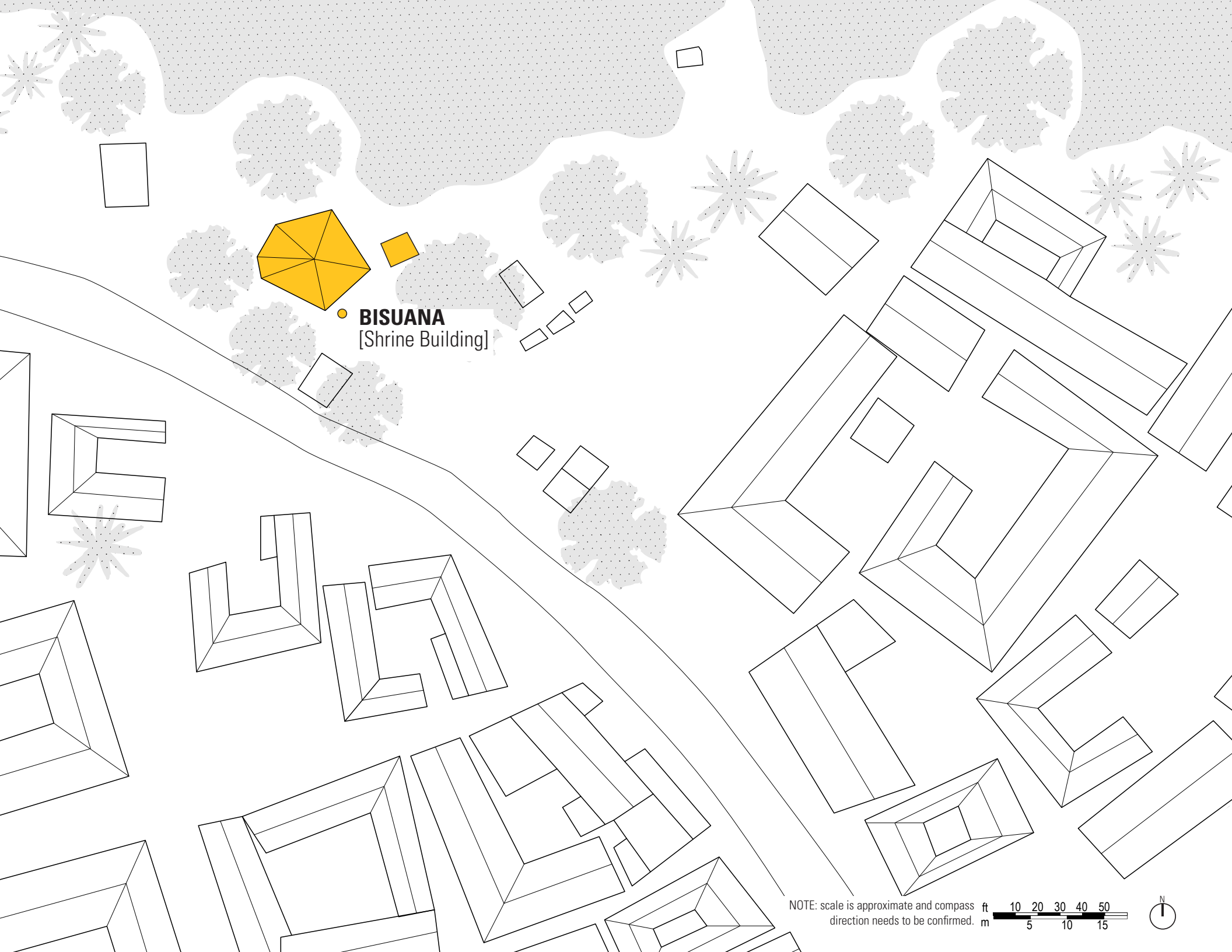
Interior of Earlier Obosom Fie at Akokoamong

earthen pot. A Spectator's Room, with a room for the priest, completes the compound. No one can sleep in the compound as spirits disturb them. The interesting thing about this shrine is that it is basically an abstraction of the elements found in the ATBs.



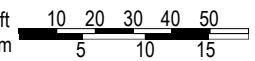
BISUANA





● **BISUANA**
[Shrine Building]

NOTE: scale is approximate and compass direction needs to be confirmed.





Side Elevation at Bisuana

This shrine is comprised of three shrines—one located in the courtyard and the other two located in earthen buildings on the site. The shrine in the courtyard is a mound of red clay. A round earthen building is the largest on the site and it is decorated by two molded faces. A smaller earthen building also contains a shrine. It is located adjacent to an unpaved road and a large baobob tree is located nearby. The tree is wrapped on flags.

Three embedded spears are located in the courtyard here as well as a witch's seat. The caretaker of the shrine, a retired customs officer Nana Antim Adjei, is the son of the former caretaker. He calls himself a traditionalist. Active days at the shrine include Tuesdays, Fridays, and Sundays. The)k) mfo here died 20 years ago and the caretaker performs rituals. There was a



Face Decoration Detail at Bisuana

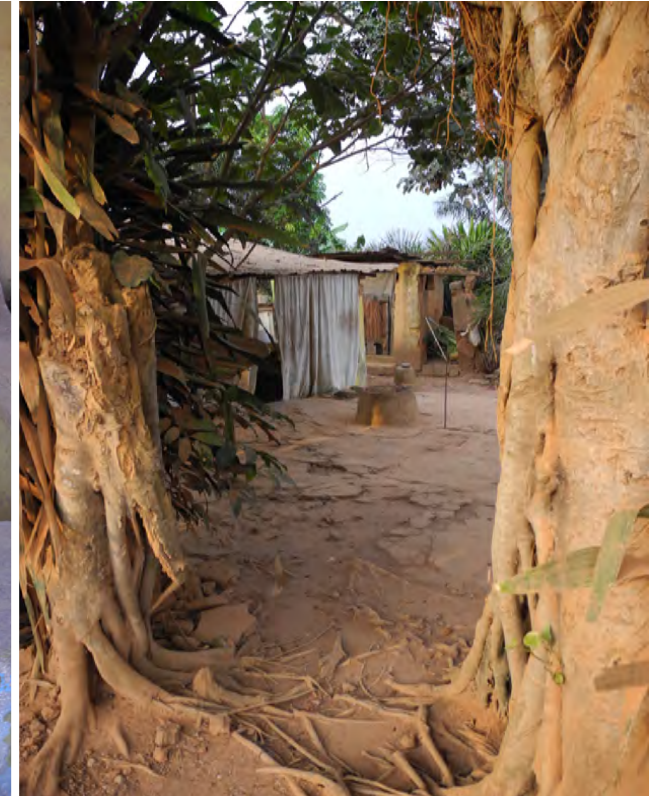
decorated building here many years ago.

Bisuana Tano

The shrine known as Tano is located within a residential house. One molded decoration, and a downward pointing arrow, can be seen in the main hall. We were not allowed to enter the main shrine area as the)k) mfo here has not been trained and could not perform the correct rituals. There are, reportedly, some exposed decorative elements but most have been plastered over.

Bisuana (name not given)

This shrine is located within a residential house and consists of a room with historical images (we did not enter as the shrine was closed) as well as a mounded Sky Altar within the courtyard of the residential area. A



Side Entry Point to Shrine at Bisuana

small skull and organic materials hung behind the Sky Altar. The)k) mfo here is Kobi Apumasu. A decorated shrine stood here before; the remains of this building are in front of the current building. Active days at the shrine include Sunday, Wednesday, and Friday.



BONAFIE





Sumankwahene Showing Tobacco at Bonafie

On the way to Patakro, is Bonafie where the father) bosom to Patakro is found. This spirit is said to ride in a palanquin. The historic shrine buildings at Bonafie have been destroyed and replaced with modern structures by the township. The new buildings generally a layout similar to that of the ATBs with sitting areas for)k) mfo and observers as well as an open kitchen and bedroom for the)k) mfo. The) bosom area or Shrine Room is not prominent, but it located along the courtyard.

The shrine area contains a large brass basin supported by an elephant. Rain water collects in this basin and is brought to the Asantehene. This shrine is an extremely sacred place and very important to Asante culture. The shrine was rebuilt in hopes of attracting tourists to the site. The Sumankwahene told the representative of the local traditional are who accompanied us that they must do their best to keep the traditions of the shrine and not invent new things.

Tobacco is found growing here as the) bosom likes to smoke it via the fetish priest. There is currently no fetish priest in Bonafie.



Sumankwahene with Shrine Caretaker at Bonafie



) bosom at Bonafie



Sumankwahene and Drum Remnant at Bonafie



Palanquin for) bosom at Bonafie

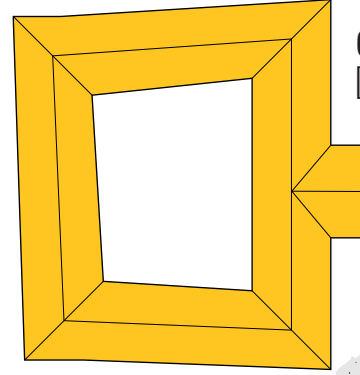


OBOMENGAHENFIE

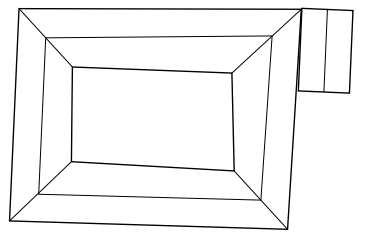
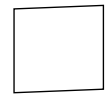
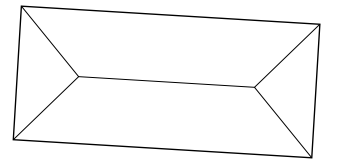
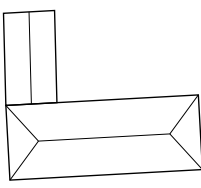
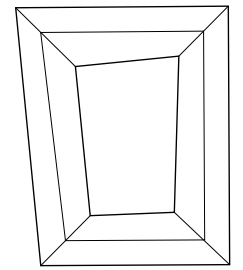
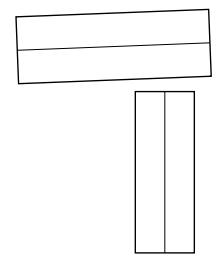
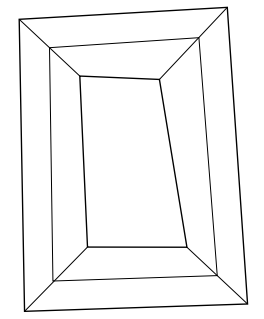
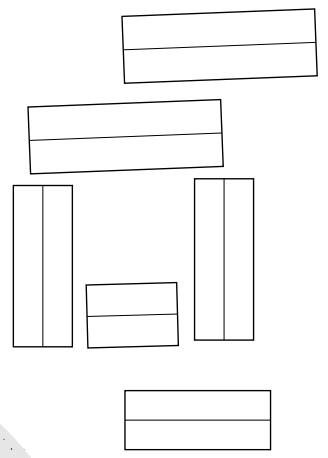
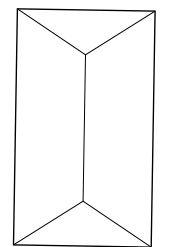
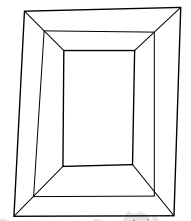
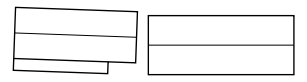
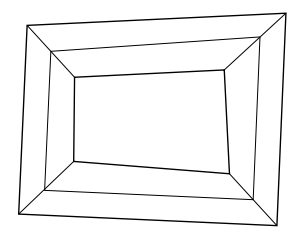
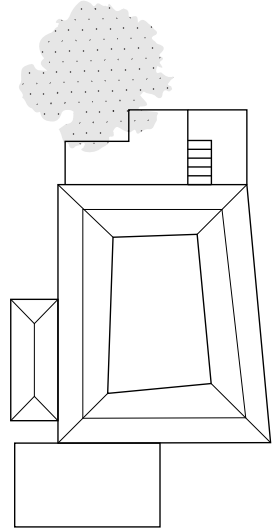
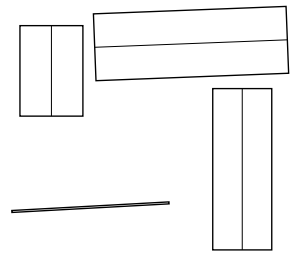
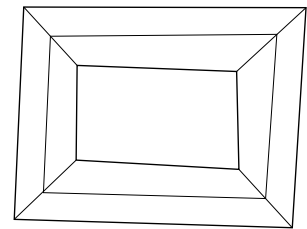
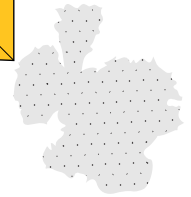
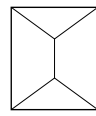
OBOMENGA



In The Glory Of God
This AGENFEC Was Committed
On 27 March 2007 By
HIS EXCELLENCY
ALHAJI ALJI MARAMA,
The Vice-President Of The Republic
OF Ghana



OBOMENG
[Chief's Palace]



NOTE: scale is approximate and compass direction needs to be confirmed.
 ft 10 20 30 40 50
 m 5 10 15





Gyabum in Chief's Palace at Obomeng

The Palace at Obomeng is located just off Obomeng High Street in a residential area. Several large Nyame Dua trees are nearby. These trees are surrounded by low, modern walls and are thought to be very spiritual. In fact, legend indicates that one tree, found in the former earthen palace, extended its roots into the open space outside of the new modern building to grow again.

In the palace, constructed in the 21st century, is found an) bosom known as "gyabum". This) bosom initially resided in the former Chief's Palace which was located on the same spot and was a large earthen building. According to local members of the Traditional Council and a caretaker, the chief took it upon himself to rebuild the palace in brick. Residents initially disagreed with the destruction.



Photograph of Demolished Shrine at Obomeng

A caretaker feeds the) bosom every day by giving it libations. This man, named Kwame Debrah, was also the caretaker in the former palace. He indicated that older archives and photographs of the former palace exist. An older photograph of the earthen palace is framed and hangs inside.

Inside the older palace various modern decorative elements can be found on panels flanking the foyer of the modern palace. When the earthen palace was destroyed, the Okyeame indicated that libations were poured and prayers were said to protect the workers at the new building.

The black stool and the "gyabum" are the most important elements of the building indicating a link to

the former palace and the reference to the) bosom. During festival times to the "gyabum" is carried outside by members of the royal family who sometimes are possessed due to the potency of the) bosom.

Legend has it that the Odwen tree which is located closest to the Obomeng High Street came into being when a fetish priest named Atia Yaw left his walking stick at the spot and it sprouted and grew to become that tree.

4. CONCLUSION

The survey and condition assessment of the ATBs has resulted in an up-to-date baseline of data concerning the state of the tangible and intangible heritage at these World Heritage sites. Most ATBs are in a good state of conservation with only a few in poor condition. The condition of the auxiliary structures outside of but adjacent to the ATBs, primarily Bodwease, Patakro, and Adarko Jachie, is what has contributed to the poor condition of the site. In this respect, WMF strongly recommends that the cultural landscapes, associated buildings, objects, and structures that relate to the ATBs in physical form and use be recognized and receive conservation initiatives.

Poor drainage, both at the roof and ground levels, very much affect erosion at the wall and foundation levels as well as exacerbate humidity. This directly affects the decorative elements and, in the long term, could impact the structures themselves. At this point in time, these negative effects can be easily and affordably remedied with new roofing designs and materials as well as revised ground-level channeling. Termite damage, directly related to the moisture problems, is evident but not too extreme and preventative measures should be taken to mediate these conditions within the near future.

A low standard of repairs made to the decorative elements on a few buildings, primarily Adarko Jachie and Asawase, is the result of substandard work initiated by GMMB over the last years. The skill level has decreased over the years due to the cessation of practices, a refresher training is needed. This can also be easily addressed with a skills training program, spearheaded by WMF and undertaken by CRAterre, targeting both GMMB employees and young residents of the villages encompassing the ATBs.¹⁶ A broader training for young villagers could revive the practice of wall decoration and open new markets for community members looking for employment incentives.

The state of intangible heritage at these sites is in decline. While many of the sites contain) bosom and observe ceremonial days only one ATB has an active) k) mfo, Abirim. The mere presence of the) k) mfo gives a certain life to the site, imbuing it with cultural vitality. Moreover, the presence of this person also speaks to the continuity of historical use, maintenance, and content of the ATBs—an incredibly valuable asset that is being marginalized with the popularity of other religions. It is not clear how to address this issue as the process of the) bosom choosing an) k) mfo is a seemingly slow and deliberate. Basic interest and attention and engagement by the Asanteman Traditional Council as part of larger project engagement may help to address intangible heritage.

The survey also highlighted the very low rate of visitors to the sites. Sites like Saaman or Asawase receive virtually no tourists. While use of these sites is a sensitive, there is room for well-managed visitation and better promotion in order to increase benefits to the local communities and region. Besease is a success in this regard, the exhibition is still in place, the thatched roof was replaced regularly, and visitors do come to the site.

The capacity to support either short-term initiatives or a long-term project at the ATBs seems high. This conclusion is based on the numerous interactions with community members during the surveys and the presence of caretakers and custodians who care for the sites. The high level of energy and commitment demonstrated on the national and regional levels by the GMMB, primarily Mr. Zagba Oyortey, Executive Director and the Asanteman Traditional Council, primarily Nana Ohenaba Adusei Poku, Akyempemhene and Nana Baffour Asabre Kogywoasu Ababio III, Sumankwahene further strengthen this capacity.



Statues of Previous Priests at Patakro





Chiefs and Umbrellas at Akwasidae Festival

5. NEXT STEPS

Following the submission of this survey and condition, an assessment a scope of work and budget for emergency repairs to be executed in 2014 will be submitted. The GMMB will be mobilized to begin small works addressing erosion control within the next months. This will be followed by additional initiatives addressing roof design and repair of decorative elements.

A proposal for a larger project will be submitted to the Department of State earlier in 2014. This proposal will address long-term initiatives targeting both the conservation of tangible heritage at the ATBs as well as the revival of intangible assets.

Endnotes

- 1 Sebastien Moriset, "Asante Traditional Buildings Nomination Form," submitted to WMF in 2012, p. 7.
- 2 UNESCO World Heritage nomination, <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/35>.
- 3 Adinkra symbols are Akan visual symbols explaining stories or concepts.
- 4 T. Edward Bowditch, "Mission From Cape Coast Castle to Ashantee", London: Griffith and Farran, 1873, p. 255.
- 5 Oral testimony gathered by WMF, January 2014.
- 6 Manhyia Palace, Official Souvenir Brochure and Programme, 10th Anniversary Celebration, *The Enstoolment of Otumfuo Osei Tutu II, Asantehene, 1999-2009*, Manhyia Palace Planning Committee, 2009, p. 85.
- 7 Ibid.
- 8 Ibid, p. 86.
- 9 Osei Kwadwo, "An Outline of Asante History, Part 2, Vol. 1," O. Kwadwo Enterprise, 2000, p. 9.
- 10 Letter dated January 31, 1938 to Otumfuor, *Asante Regional Archives, Fetishes 7/7/44-13/5/48*, no page number. These petitions include letters from native doctors.
- 11 Letter dated July 23, 1940 from C. O. Butler District Commissioner to Chief Yaw Yeboa, Odikro of Kasam, *Asante Regional Archives, Fetishes 7/7/44-13/5/48*, p. 96.
Note: Ashanti Order No. 12 of 1934 is listed as the overarching regulation.
- 12 Minutes by the Secretary for Native Affairs, September 24, 1915, *Asante Regional Archives, Fetishes 7/7/44-13/5/48* and letter from the superintendent of police Bekai, E. A. Attah, *Asante Regional Archives, Fetishes 7/7/44-13/5/48*, no date, p 2.
- 13 Ibid.
- 14 Letter dated June 3, 1941 from the District Commissioner in Obuasi regarding The Fetish Bonsam, *Asante Regional Archives, Fetishes 7/7/44-13/5/48*, no page number.
- 15 Ibid.
- 16 It is worth noting that only one GMMB employee has the knowledge to undertake these repairs.

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UNESCO, 1980. World Heritage nomination, <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/35>.

7. APPENDICES

Appendix A: ATB TIMELINE

End of the 17th century

The Asante people are unified as one single group under King Osei Tutu, the first Asantehene

18th century

Expansion of the Kingdom's territory and wealth due to trade of gold and enslaved people

18th or 19th century

Probable construction of Asante Traditional Buildings

19th century

Series of Wars to resist British colonization and preserve economic interests (1806-1901)

Beginning of the 19th century

Decorated Asante architecture is documented by European travellers. At that time, this style is widespread, and not limited to shrine buildings.

1901

The Asante Kingdom becomes formally part of the Gold Coast colony administered by the British

1956

Revival of Asante Traditional Buildings motifs documented

1957

Ghanaian independence

1969

The Asante Traditional Buildings are under the care of the GMMB

1960's- 1970's

The shrine roofs are replaced with low-pitch roofs covered with corrugated iron. Some of the decorated surfaces are plastered with cement.

1979

World Heritage nomination for Asante Traditional Buildings deferred

1980

Asante Traditional Buildings inscribed to the World Heritage List. This nomination was one of the earliest in Africa.

1987

UNESCO granted \$47,000 to CRAterre for preventative conservation at the Asante Traditional Buildings

1993-1995

Ghana Museums and Monuments Board conducts work at the Asante Traditional Buildings with funding from the Asante Traditional Council

1997

UNESCO granted \$20,000 to CRAterre to continue with preventative conservation

1998

UNESCO and the Embassy of France grant \$47,000 and \$20,000 respectively to support more substantial conservation work (including full conservation at Ejisu Besease) as well as a traveling and permanent exhibition and other promotional activities. Ghanaian local business also provide some small funding.

1999

The Embassy of France grants CRAterre \$20,000 for continued conservation

2000

The Embassy of France grants CRAterre \$17,000 for continued conservation

2001

The Embassy of France grants CRAterre \$600 for continued conservation

Appendix B: DETAILED MISSION CONTENT

January 3

Team meeting and activation of phones, Accra.

January 4

Travel to Kumasi, with survey stops in Abetifi and Obomeng.

January 5

Attended Akwasidaie, an Asanteman festival. Surveyed Asenmaso

January 6

Team meeting and courtesy call to GMM Regional Office, Kumasi. Courtesy call to GTA Regional Office, Kumasi. Survey of Abirim ATB, Akokoamong and Bisuana shrines.

January 7

Met with the Regional Director of GMMB in Kumasi. Surveyed Edwensae, Adarko Jachie, Kentinkromo.

January 8

Manhyia Palace Archives and Palace Museum research. Research also undertaken at the Military Museum, Kumasi followed by a team work session.

January 9

Team work session followed by research at the Regional Archives, Kumasi.

January 10

Meeting with Akyempemhene and Sumankwahene; survey of Asawase, Besease.

January 11

Survey of Saaman and Bodwease.

January 12

Survey of Bonafie and Patakro, travel to Accra.

January 13

Meeting with GMMB executive staff, Accra.

January 14

Meeting at United States Embassy in Ghana, work on SWOT analysis with GMMB, Accra

January 15

Review of emergency repair budget with GMMB, Accra.

Appendix C: GLOSSARY

) **bosom** (pronounced O-bu-sum)

These are everyday objects, that when mixed and a series of rituals and sacrifices performed, are embodied with the god or spirit. To maintain the spirit, the) bosom is fed and ritualized. The)k) mfo is key to keeping the) bosom intact at the site.

) **bosomfie** (pronounced O-bu-som-fee)

traditional Asante courtyard house which also acted as the abode of a god or spirit

) **k) mfo** (pronounced O-kume-fo)

priest/priestess acting as mouthpiece of a god or spirit

) **kyeame** (pronounced O-chee-yahm-ee)

linguist to the traditional priest/priestess or chief

Adinkra symbols

Akan visual symbols explaining stories or concepts

Cob

massive mud walls not containing organic matter

Dais

raised, often ornamented, platform on which shrine itself is placed

Gyaase

central courtyard of) bosomfie

Nyame Dua (pronounced Ne-yaam-ee)

tree of god or spirit; important natural object found in ATB; also a known species of tree or sky altar (see below)

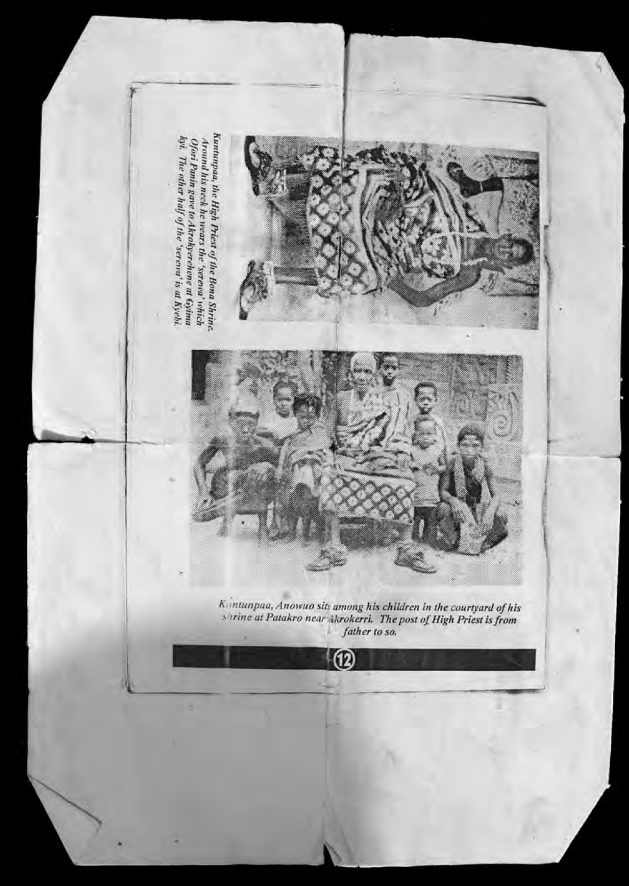
Sky Altar

form of a tree or a forked post supporting a calabash or earthenware bowl in which) bosom stays. It is traditionally placed to the right of the shrine room entrance. Food for the) bosom is placed here.

Wattle and daub

a timber framework made of vertical posts linked together by organic horizontal members (vines, raffia, etc.) and resting on an earthen platform. Both sides are plastered with clay to reach a thickness of about 25cm.

Appendix D: ARCHIVAL PHOTOGRAPHS



Photograph from Residents at Patakro



Photograph from Residents at Patakro



Shrine Entrance
Image from Shrine Exhibit at Ejisu-Besease

ARCHIVAL PHOTOGRAPHS CONTINUED



"In the Compound of an Asante Man"
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"Village Scene in Bekwai"
<http://bmpix.usc.edu/bmpix/controller/view/imp-m25838.html>, Accessed February 3, 2014.

ARCHIVAL PHOTOGRAPHS CONTINUED



"Palace Front"

<http://discussions.ghanaweb.com/viewtopic.php?t=127053>, Accessed February 3, 2014.

ARCHIVAL PHOTOGRAPHS CONTINUED



"The Royal Compound in Bekwai"

<http://bmpix.usc.edu/bmpix/controller/view/imp-m25840.html>, Accessed February 3, 2014.



"Fetish place in Asante"

<http://bmpix.usc.edu/bmpix/controller/view/imp-m26729.html>, Accessed February 3, 2014.

ARCHIVAL PHOTOGRAPHS CONTINUED



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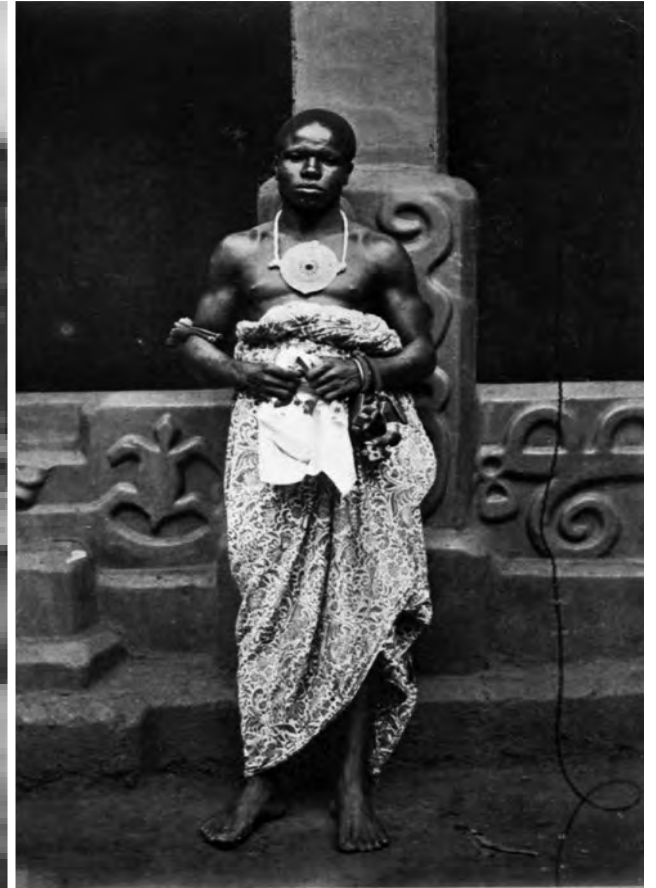


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