

# Nasrid Tower Restoration

Almeria, Spain

*Architects* Castillo Miras Arquitectos  
Almeria, Spain

*Client* Junta de Andalucía,  
Ayuntamiento de Huercal  
Overa  
Seville, Spain

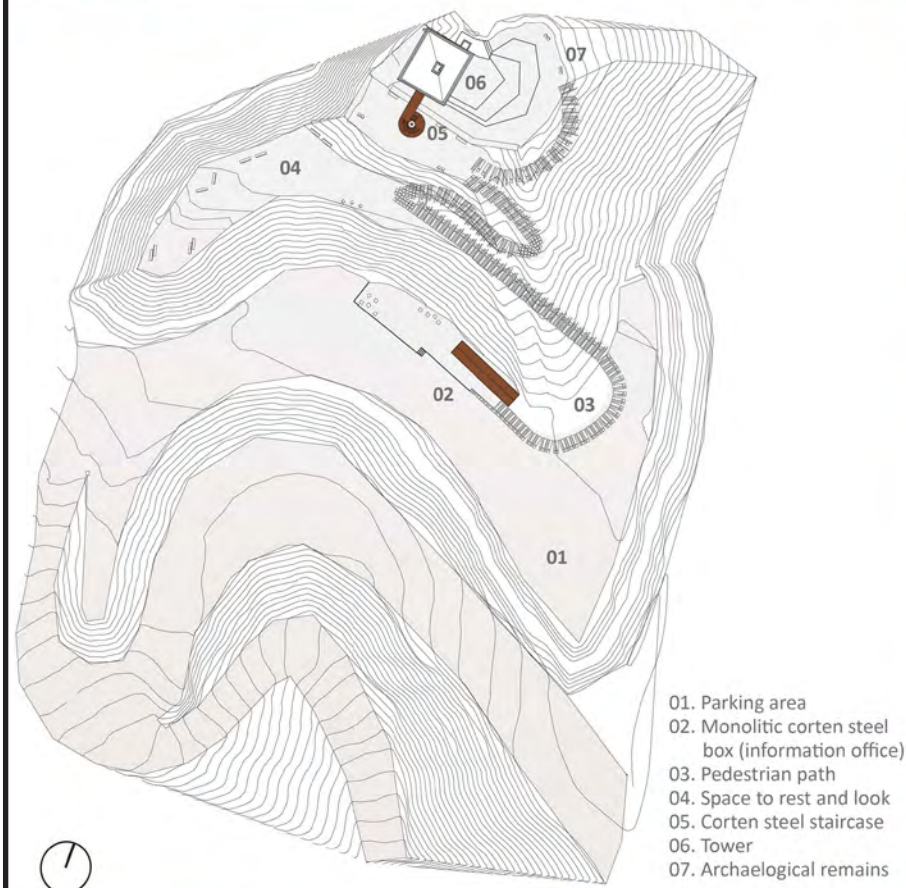
*Commission* 1995  
*Design* 2005-2006  
*Construction* 2009  
*Occupancy* 2010

*Site* 3'484 m<sup>2</sup>  
*Ground Floor* 78 m<sup>2</sup>  
*Total Floor* 224 m<sup>2</sup>

*Costs* USD 639'000

*Programme* The restoration of the Tower itself involved the preservation of original materials where possible, removing modern additions and resurfacing the original mud wall and interior brick fabric. To restore the original entry to the tower, four meters above ground level, a new weathering steel staircase was built. It is conceived as a light, removable object of a contrasting nature with the existing building. The space was adapted for use as an exhibition space but a range of events have taken place. The landscaping of the area adjacent to the tower re-uses the existing topography to minimise ground alteration. New elements are designed as removable objects, placed directly onto the ground without foundations and made with contrasting materials.

*Building Type* Restoration & Adaptive Re-Use  
*2016 Award Cycle* 4702.SPA



## HISTORY. LANDSCAPE. OBJECT.

The project explores the dichotomy between the solid, ageless construction, of the existing Nasrid tower, made by anonymous craftsmen, and the provisional, light, degradable nature of the contemporary. The additions to the original building are conceived as future ruins, removable, temporary objects with a short live span that will deteriorate and eventually be replaced.

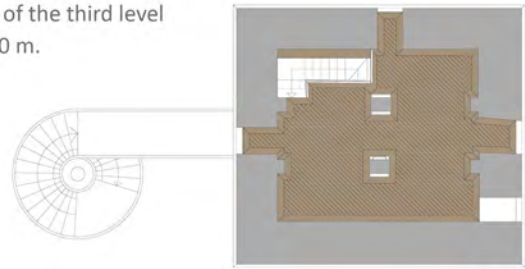
This is not a conventional conservation project, but one that reuses and recycles. The Tower is like an "object trouvé", a found object from past times whose precise functioning is unknown to us. The intervention explores the tension between its original use and the unplanned future ones to be implemented.

The design is also a reflection on the relationship between landscape and the architectural object. Without the barren background encircling this viewpoint, the project could not be understood. All the additions and new elements placed on the landscape are conceived as foreign, autonomous objects of a removable nature, placed directly on the ground emphasizing a sense of otherness in relationship with the existing remains.

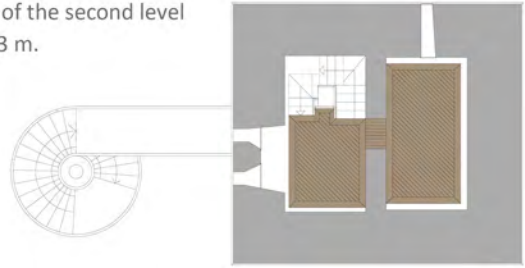




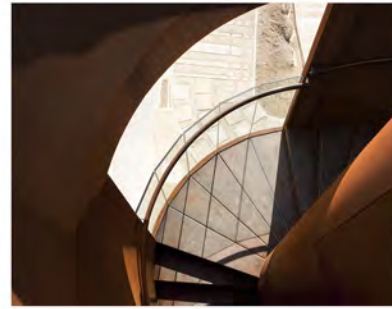
Plan of the third level  
+5,90 m.



Plan of the second level  
+9,53 m.



Plan of the first level  
+5,90 m.



The building location was the border at a time the Nasrid Kingdom was reduced to the small bastion of Andalusia.

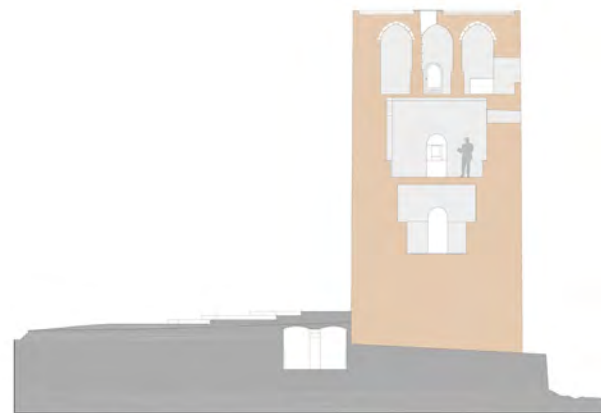
Situated on the edge of a cliff, the existing remains were part of a bigger fortress now disappeared. This raised enclave was part of a defensive belt since ancient times: in the surroundings there are archeological remains dating back to the bronze age.

After the fall of the Nazari kingdom the fortress lost its main function and slowly deteriorated, subsequently falling in a state of dilapidation. During the Spanish civil war it was used as a bunker and several openings were made to fire machine guns. The tower was privately owned during the last fifty years and the proprietor carried out a number of significant alterations to suit his needs. In recent years the municipality gained the rights of property and commissioned the project for the restoration.

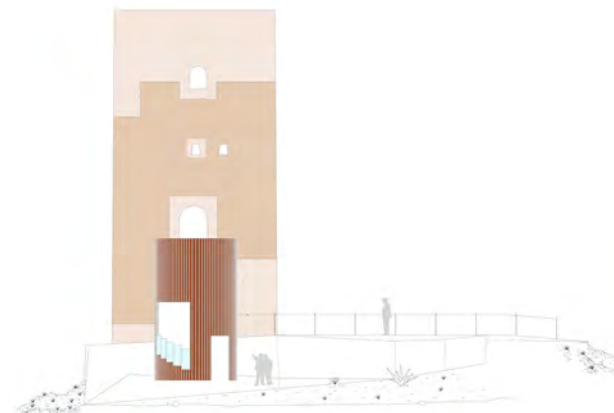
To restore the original entry to the tower, four meters above ground level, a new weathering steel staircase is built. It is conceived as a light, removable object of a contrasting nature with the existing building. In opposition to the solid, quadrangular materiality of the tower, the staircase is a rounded, rusty, temporary structure. Like a foreign object, its materiality reinforces its provisional nature. This steel cylinder is punctured in order to create controlled views into the landscape. In a sort of "promenade architectural", as they climb, visitors are invited to enjoy the beauty of this deserted landscape lashed by the wind.

The restoration of the tower itself involved the preservation of original materials where possible, removing modern additions and resurfacing the original mud wall and interior brick fabric.

The landscaping of the area adjacent to the tower reuses the existing topography to minimize ground alteration. New elements are designed as removable objects, placed directly onto the ground without foundations and made with contrasting materials. A monolithic Corten steel box is placed to house the information office. Like a shipping container, it is intended to show its removable, traveling nature.



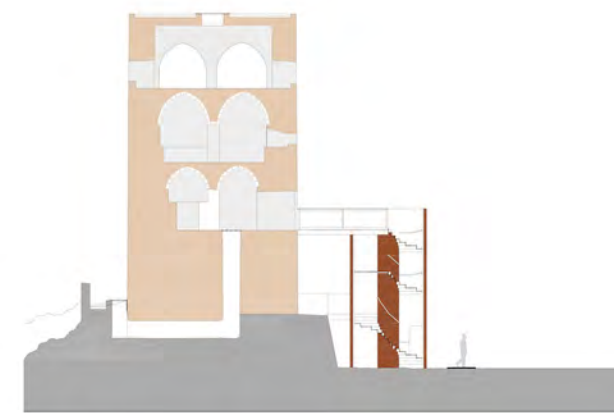
Cross section



Southern facade



Eastern facade



Cross section

4702.SPA

