



RECOGNIZING THE PAST-A TRIBUTE TO HERITAGE

KEYWORDS

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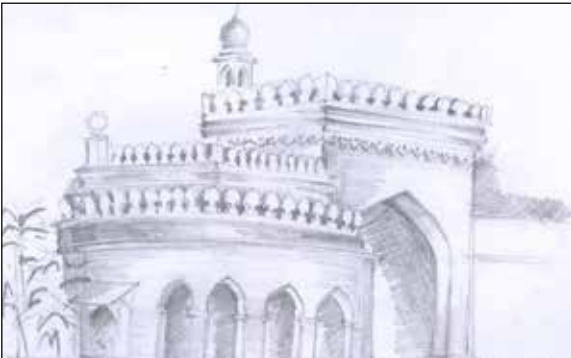
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ABSTRACT *Heritage has now been recognized by society as an important asset but the actual preservation and conservation process pose a very real challenge. It is important to conserve historic buildings and monuments because it provides a sense of identity and continuity in a fast changing world for future generations. This paper intends merely to focus on the Built Heritage which is a part of the tangible cultural heritage. It will also look on some conservation issues that may arise while defining the significance and values of the heritage areas. Finally it will provide some basic management & maintenance guidelines which may help to conserve the built heritage.*

INTRODUCTION

Heritage is seen as a major component of quality of life, but the two main methods of identifying and protecting built heritage – the listing of individual monuments and buildings and designation of heritage areas is yet not



HERITAGE STRUCTURE

done in most part of the country. The reason behind it, we don't know the significance and values of our heritage. It is important to give attention towards the building of any age. Existing building along with its surrounding can often be energy efficient through their use of good ventilation, durable materials, and spatial relationships and have the advantage of saving the time, new building materials, infrastructure etc.

IMPORTANCE OF BUILT HERITAGE

Heritage encompasses people, places, practices and artefacts of enduring significance, beauty and value. Historic buildings are parts of built heritage. They are the product of much thought, philosophy, architectural, aesthetics and culture of the people. It is important to understand why we are drawn to a good building of any age. Firstly, there is the intellectual achievement of creating an artefact of beauty and interest. Secondly, the human achievement perceived by the later generations in the care of the craftsmen in its construction. This care can also be visible in later repairs and alterations. Thirdly, we are drawn by the sense of place created both by the designers and many humans who have lived and worked in the building.

CONSERVATION

Conservation is the planned management of resources to prevent their over exploitation, destruction or neglect. Conservation efforts are aimed at preservation of the sources at the same time, so that the resources can be used judiciously to give maximum benefits with minimum damage to built

heritage for a long period of time. Basically, all conservation consists of actions taken to prevent decay, and within this objective it also includes management of change and preservation of the object so that the objects' messages are made comprehensible without distortion. Architectural conservation is more complex; first because the building must continue to stand up; secondly, the economic factors usually dictates that it should remain in use; thirdly, it has to resist and use the effects of climate and lastly; the micro environment of that individual building ie. its site planning should not be disturbed and should be restored, since it is the integral part of the built environment.

An immediate advantage of older buildings is that a building already exists; therefore energy is not necessary to create new building materials and the infrastructure is already in place. Minor modifications can be made to adapt existing buildings to compatible new uses. Systems can be upgraded to meet modern building requirements and codes.



This not only makes good economic sense, but preserves our legacy and is an inherently sustainable practice.

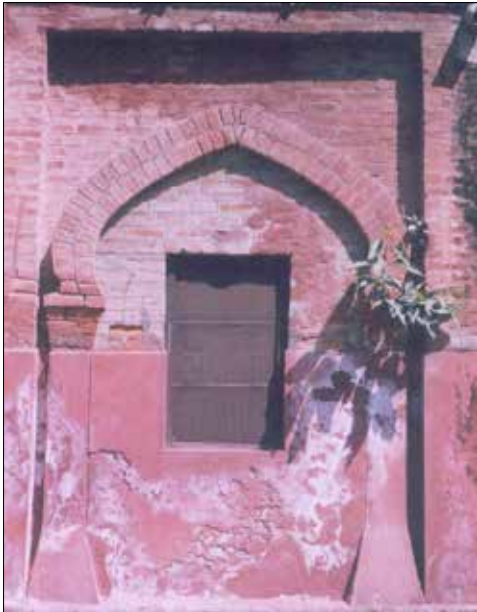
PROBLEMS

Most of the heritage areas are getting affected firstly, because of the physical factors including structural cracks which occur due to settlement of foundations, wall, damaged architectural elements and damaged roofing & flooring in the form of plaster peeling. Secondly, the environmental factors contribute to the problems including dampness, salt deposition which occurs due to the change in the weather conditions etc. Thirdly, the biological factors like algal and termite growth leading to rising dampness and other related problems. Lastly; the major factor which is damaging most of the buildings of national importance is the "human intervention". Unmaintained landscapes, improper parking, new building blocks incompatible with the original character of the site, improper placement of new services in old buildings and many more problems are

faced due to human intervention.

Most of the problems discussed above are due to the lack of maintenance and management in most of the heritage areas. For most of us maintenance of anything is a real bother whether it is our clothes, electrical appliance, or house. It seems much easier to replace them rather than to carry out small repairs. However there are many good reasons to maintain our property ourselves, especially if it is of some significance (*historic, associational, architectural, and educational*) or value.

A regular maintenance by doing the cleaning of gutters and drains in the terrace can limit the need for expensive repairs and can be much cheaper and less inconvenient than to cope with the repair of the whole roof, that got damage due to the collection of rainwater on the rooftop when the spouts are not cleaned regularly.



FILLED UP ARCH

Any building will only continue to function if you carry out regular maintenance. If ignored, minor faults such as blocked drainpipes or slipped tiles can cause significant and expensive structural damage. Some maintenance work can be done as you carry out your inspection, such as clearing leaves out of gutters. Dampness is another constant source of worry in most of the heritage buildings. Dampness, that is in effect water out of its place, can be due to broken pipes and cracks in roofs and walls or can come from the ground as rising damp due to the absence or damaged damp proof course. In both cases, it causes peeling of paint, damage of plaster and brick, and structural problems like rusted reinforcement bars. Other faults may need more planning to repair, such as active structural cracks or repainting of woodwork.

MANAGING THE BUILT HERITAGE

It is not very early to suggest the specific and detailed guidelines for the conservation of any heritage complex, since it requires a lot of research and analysis to develop a conservation plan for any particular site.



MAINTAINED LANDSCAPE

But, some general guidelines can be given to maintain any built heritage site.

The first and foremost important is the making of a maintenance plan. The plan should have the details of the works which are to be performed daily including cleaning, washing, wiping of roads, maintaining of lawns etc. Then weekly works like cleaning of roof, spouts, drains etc. The monthly works like small repair and maintenance work, cleaning of water tanks etc. Lastly annual maintenance which requires the cleaning of exposed brick walls, white wash, major repairs, repointing etc. Green areas should be maintained and proper landscaping should be done since they are the integral part of every site planning. This landscape development should also be incorporated in the maintenance plan.

Finally, inappropriate additions and repairs is a cause of decay in the heritage buildings. New walls add more load to an otherwise stable structure thereby weakening the structure. Whenever non-compatible materials such as cement are used to repair old lime buildings, more problems are created since proper binding cannot take place between them. All this should be properly taken care of and improper additions should be avoided since this can damage the aesthetic and architectural character of any heritage building.

Heritage belongs to each one of us and all of us have a responsibility to contribute towards its conservation and protection. With our small individual efforts we can together help in conserving our built heritage to a large extent.

CONCLUSION

There must be a maintenance plan followed by management guidelines for each of the heritage sites. Maintenance work must be done according to the guidelines of the maintenance plan. The original character of the built heritage should be preserved, alteration of any feature in heritage buildings and also any new construction should be avoided as it will affect the existing structure and site planning. Deteriorated architectural features should be repaired rather than replaced, wherever repairing is not feasible, replacement should be done with similar style, materials and construction system. The new additions and alterations should be done in such a way, that if removed in future the essential form and integrity of the structure should be restored. Not only the heritage buildings but also its landscaping should be restored since that will be the part of the site planning of that particular heritage.

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