Integrating heritage in urban development: Nagpur, Maharashtra

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Abstract

Most often, the heritage resources in the Indian cities are ignored in planned development process. A city's heritage represents a significant physical and socioeconomic capital accumulated by communities as a result of the knowledge, investments and labour of past generations. Due to non-cognizance of heritage, deterioration takes place that results in loss of economic opportunities and the city loses its identity. The city of Nagpur is presently facing similar problems. It has a history of around 300 years and was ruled by the Gonds (1636- 1743), the Bhonsales (1743-1854) and the British (1854-1947). Thus, it has two distinct types of heritage: Colonial heritage and heritage of Bhonsales (Maratha style of architecture). Therefore, this paper proposes strategies for integrating heritage conservation in urban development process to safeguard it in future. Various levels of intervention i.e., city, study area and precinct levels are analysed. Based on the analysis it is inferred that heritage is not considered in planned development process. Hence, heritage based urban development of the city needs to be looked into so as to retain the identity and values of the city. Further it is suggested to utilize its potential for sustainable tourism and economic purposes.

Keywords: Urban heritage, development, colonial, gonds and bhonsale, regulations

1. INRODUCTION

One of the most pressing and frequent problems in the Indian cities is that the heritage resources are most often ignored in the process of development. It is a known fact that city's heritage is significant and is often inherited by the local communities that have inhabited since long. This gives an insight into the evolution of the city and how the city has managed to evolved over different layers of time. City's heritage is a reflection of the regional laws and social structures that prevailed in the past and the way they have transformed over a period of time. India has been ruled by several rulers, who have left their imprint and played exceptional role in shaping the contemporary cities. The cultural blend of different styles can be sensed in the architecture and communities living in the city. Heritage has value as a 'cultural' asset. The General Conference of UNESCO in 1972 noted that the cultural heritage and the natural heritage are increasingly threatened with destruction not only by the traditional causes of decay, but also by changing socio-economic conditions. In response to this need, on one hand the United Kingdom has listed over 500,000 structures and the United States of America over one million, while on the other hand, India with an unbroken history

of over 5000 years has protected only about 8000 structures. Out of which 6000 are archaeological monuments (Pradyumna et al., nd).

Given this background, this paper aims to propose strategies for integrating heritage conservation in urban development process to safeguard it in future. The key objectives include an understanding of the urban development process in the context of heritage conservation, assessing and formulating strategies for the identified precinct area so as to retain the heritage value. This paper focusses on the built architectural heritage (listed heritage buildings). Existing/ formulated planning documents related to the development of Nagpur city with heritage value were analysed. For this purpose, the data collected through secondary and primary sources (through observations) were analysed.

2   REGIONAL SETTING OF NAGPUR AND ITS HISTORY

2.1 Regional Setting

According to the Census of India 2011, Nagpur is a metropolitan city (Figure 1a) in the Indian state of Maharashtra. It is centrally located in the country with a population of 24,05,665. The municipal area of the city is around 220 sq. km. A multi-modal international passenger and cargo hub airport (MIHAN) has been under construction at Nagpur. It is known for the international airport and a multiproduct special economic zone and International Technology Park. The city is well connected (Figure 1a) with the neighbouring states and serves as a business hub in the region. It is surrounded by many tourist spots, attracting people from all around the world. The historical heritage of Nagpur is over 300 years old.
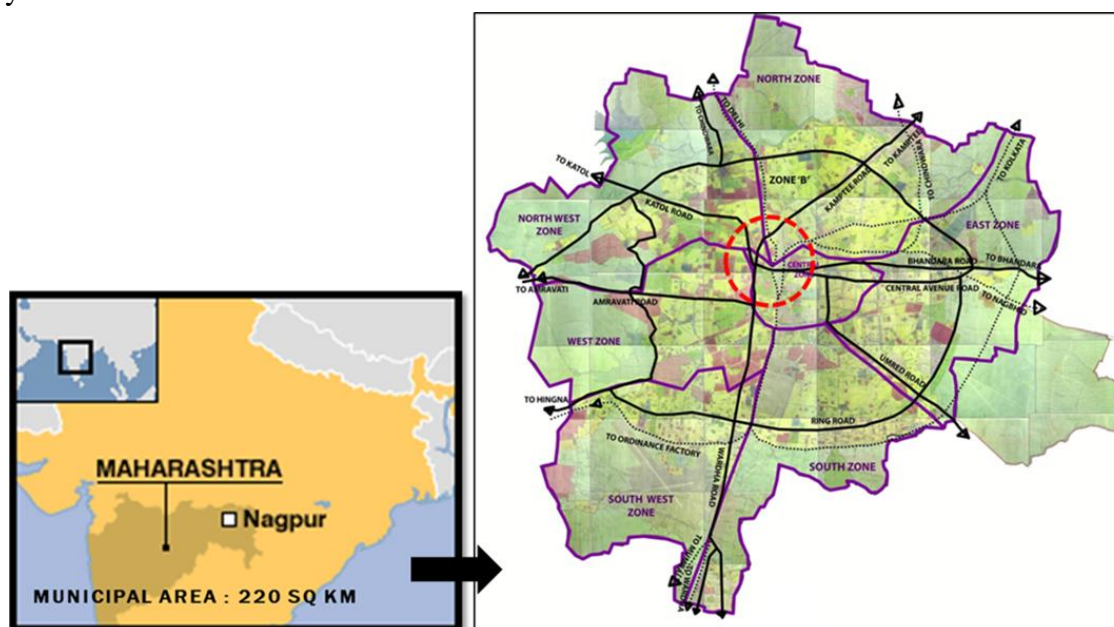

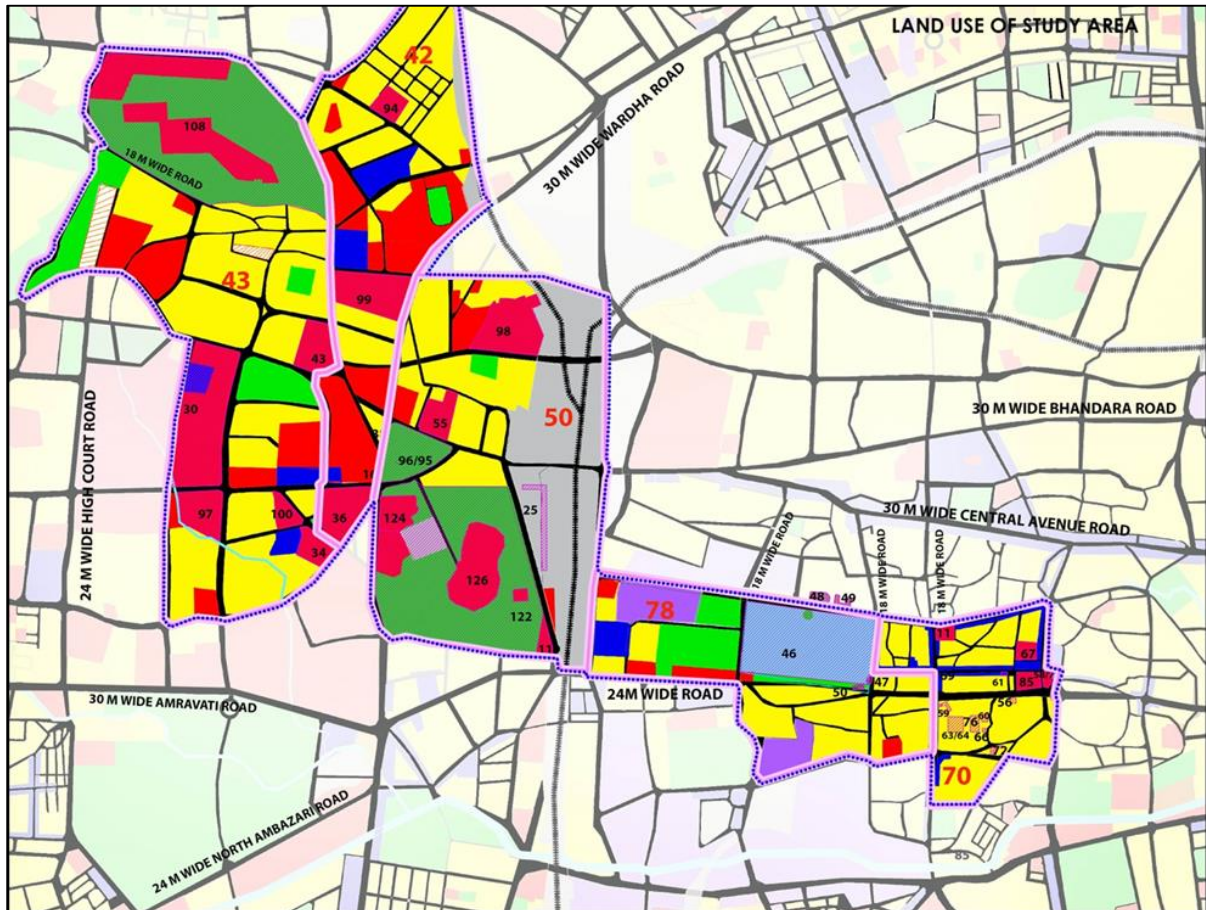**Figure 1a**: Location map of Nagpur

**Figure 2b**: Location and linkages of Nagpur

2.2 History

History of Nagpur dates back to the 18th Century when Bhakt Buland (Raja Buland Shah) established this city with his Gond tribesmen. The city was ruled by the Maratha dynasty of the Bhonsle for many years by various rulers of their kingdom and was later ruled by the British. After India's independence from the British, Nagpur became the capital of central provinces and Berar. Later, on linguistic basis, the city became a part of the present day Maharashtra.

2.3 Evolution of the city under different rulers

The walled city existing earlier forms a base for the inception of civil lines signifying the historic evolution and the morphological developments.

During the Gond rule (1636-1743), the city was fortified with six major gates. The residential area for Kings and Nobles was within the fort in the eastern side. The common people lived outside the fort area. While during the Bhonsala rule (1743-1854), the neighbourhoods were designed on the basis of occupation & caste system. The king's palace was in the centre, surrounded by high class people. Lower class people lived along the fringe areas. Mixed land use pattern was followed. Importance was given to the pedestrian movements and hence the city was designed in a radial street pattern.

The British settled during the years 1854-1947 on the west side of the old Maratha city, on a high land. This high altitude helped them to keep a watch on the activities of local people. Sitabuldi Fort was built for the monitoring purposes. The city was divided by the railway line between the old and the new city. Wide streets, advanced transportation & communication, industries for automobiles were built during this period. However, during the post-**colonial** rule (1947 onwards), the north east area of the city became an administrative zone. MIDC Hingna was established as a new workplace. Large academic & medical institutes were established in north-west. The open spaces developed by the British were gradually encroached upon for residential development. The streets leading to Sitabuldi and Itwari area became major shopping streets. Due to the increased employment opportunities, people started migrating to the city resulting into the formation of many unauthorized colonies. The architecture style of the old city was called the Maratha style which was influenced by British and Islam. Brick, timber and lime were used to construct residential buildings (Wadas) and wood, stone and lime for religious buildings
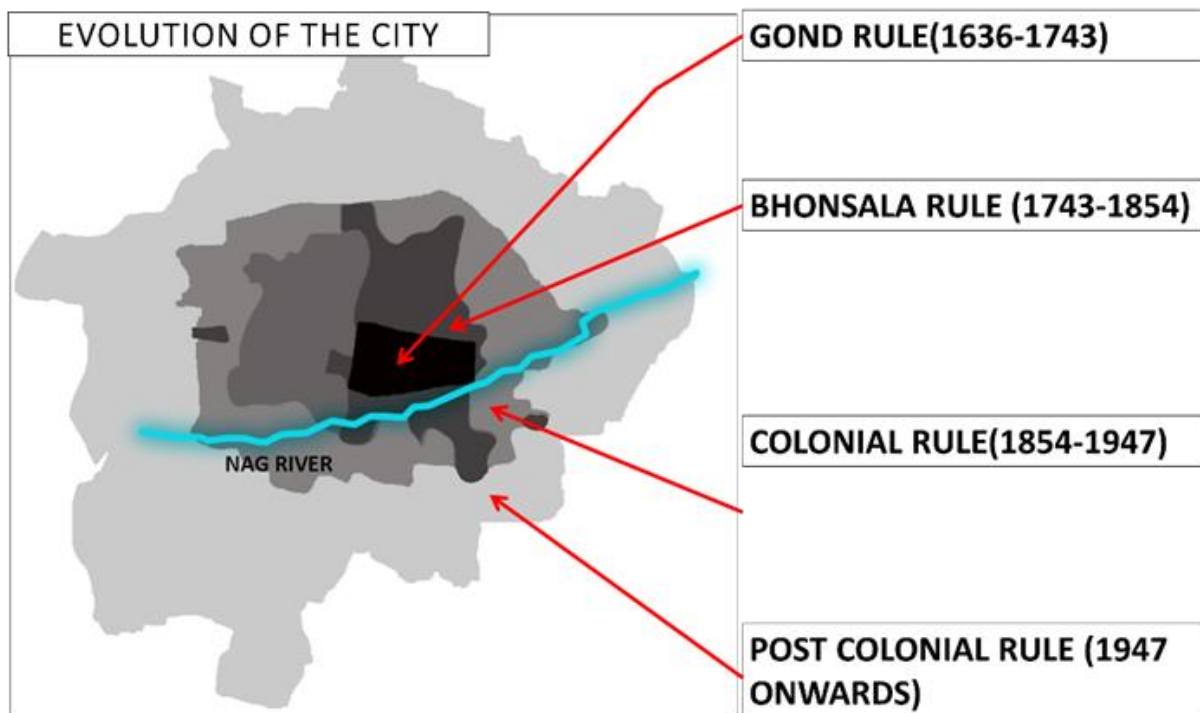
Figure 3: Evolution of the city of Nagpur (Urban planning department (Unpublished research work))

2.4 Need of the Study

Although the history of Nagpur is more than 300 years old, the city has no conservation plan. More than 200 sites and buildings are already being identified. Haphazard construction in historic zones and precincts can be observed throughout the city. A revision of heritage listing is to be taken up.

3. ANALYSIS AND ISSUES

The city of Nagpur has been governed by various planning documents such as revised draft development plan of Nagpur city 1986-2011 (NMC, 2015), Development control regulations-2000 for Nagpur city, Notification by urban development department- regulations for conservation of heritage buildings/ precinct and natural features 2003 (List of Heritage Buildings and Conservation Areas, 2003) and Nagpur city development plan made in 2006 (NMC, 2014). The provisions regarding urban heritage conservation in these documents were reviewed and compared based on the common parameters identified. These identified parameters include: heritage buildings and precincts, accessibility, infrastructure provisions, special development control regulations, tourism, and institutional framework. At study area level, five wards (ward nos. 42, 43, 50, 78 and 70) were chosen. Around 43 heritage structures within the study area were analysed on the basis of typology, period of construction, ownership, public entry, grading and values. The old city area was studied in detail at the precinct level. It is divided into one stretch and five heritage sites. The study of the precinct level can be used as a prototype/ model to conserve other historic sites in the city.

From the above study, it is inferred that heritage is not considered in planned development process. Within the study area, most of the heritage belonged to the period of British that were under the ownership of the government. Hence, conservation intervention within these areas was easier. These areas have a threat of inadequate alterations and modifications as the these precincts are most often compared to the other heritage precincts. Heritage structures belonging to Gonds and Bhonsales are under private ownership that is difficult to conserve. They are presently located in the old city area and faces traffic related problems. Therefore, there is a need for intervention. Several modifications regarding heritage conservation were suggested for planning documents at the city level. The stakeholders and their roles were identified. The revival of linkage between the old city and the new city was proposed. Separate recommendations were suggested for conserving colonial and old city heritage. The recommendations at the precinct area shows how heritage conservation can be practiced at a small scale.

3.1 At city level

Identification of heritage buildings and precincts- Under the list of statements (statement 5- list of properties suggested for preservation of historical monuments and structures of architectural value of revised draft Development Plan of Nagpur City 1986-2011), 11 monuments were identified for conservation. As per the notification Heritage Buildings and Conservation Areas (2003), 138 heritage buildings and conservation areas were identified in the city. The city of Nagpur has more than 200 heritage structures and conservation areas (Vidarbha Heritage Society, nd). Thus, the listing in the planning documents is not updated and these planning documents do not compliment each other.

Infrastructure provisions- There are various provisions for the infrastructure development in and around the heritage sites of the city. These include, a proposal of Jumma Tank road widening scheme (in the revised draft Development Plan of Nagpur City 1986-2011). As per

this the street parking is not allowed and should be provided in nearby open areas. However, these proposals are yet to be implemented. On-street parking along the stretches is leading to decrease in carriage width of roads.

Special development control regulations- Central zone of the city is designated as hawker's free zone to decongest the core city area. The plan also demarcates the roads on which further shopping frontage is restricted (the plan shows that shopping frontage is not allowed on one of the roads Kelibaug). Despite provisions, encroachment by the hawkers on the streets at few locations can be found. Thus, reorganization of hawkers is required.

Tourism - Eight heritage structures were identified as important for tourism. This list does not include the heritage of the old city area, the origin of the city. As per the Nagpur City Development Plan 2006, provision of appropriate infrastructure at the tourist destinations is required to be taken up.

Special development control regulations- As per the Development Control Regulations, 2000, Nagpur is divide in three zones viz., TDR (Transfer of Development Rights) zones (Zone A, Zone B and Zone C) (Figure 3). Zone A is the inner-city area, Zone B is the area between the ring road and Zone A and Zone C include the remaining area (excluding zone 'A' and 'B') within Nagpur Municipal Corporation limit. According to these, FSI regulations are to be followed to avoid haphazard development.
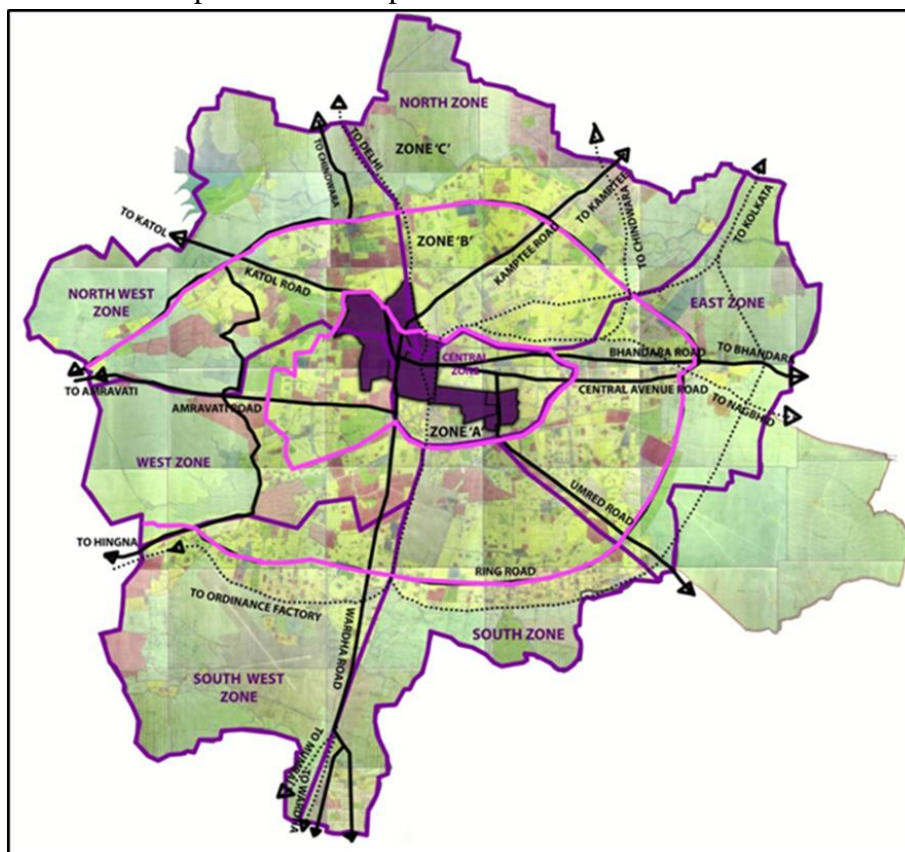

Figure 4: TDR Zones of Nagpur city

3.2 Study Area level

The study delineation was based on the concentration of heritage structures within the wards in the following two ways: (i) ratio of number of heritage structures to the ward area (number density) and (ii) ratio of heritage area in ward to the area of ward (Area density). Further, the heritage within this area was classified based on the typology, period, ownership, accessibility, grading and values. Heritage buildings and precincts constitute 19.4% of the total study area. Although the Civil lines are wider, the roads in the old city area are narrow and congested.

Classification on the basis of typology: The heritage structures of the study area belongs to various typologies like residential, institutional, religious, open spaces, fort, landmark, gateways and water bodies. Most of the heritage structures are institutional buildings that belonged to the British period.

Classification on the basis of heritage structures of different periods: Ward No. 43, 42 and 50 mainly consists of the heritage that belongs to the period of British rule (Table 1). These wards form the part of civil lines area. The other two wards i.e. ward No. 78 and 70 belong to the old city area and consist of heritage structures that mostly belong to the period of Bhonsales. Few of the colonial buildings are in old city area. Though the British had divided the city between themselves and the locals, they still constructed a few buildings in the area of locals to monitor.

Classification on the basis of ownership: Most of the heritage structures are under the ownership of the government Hence, implementation of heritage conservation regulations is easy. Though, many of the heritage structures of old city area are under the ownership of government, they are not protected due to negligence of government officials (Table 1). It is difficult to conserve heritage under the private ownership. The heritage under the private ownership mainly belongs to the old city area. Thus, this area needs intervention for heritage conservation.

Accessibility: Around 22 out of 43 heritage structures have restricted public access. This reduces public interest in heritage of the city (Table 1).

Classification on the basis of Grading: According to Heritage Buildings / Precinct (2003), the heritage buildings can be classified as Grade 1, Grade 2 and Grade 3 structures (Table 1). The scope of development within or around these structures depends on the grading. Accordingly, it is observed that most of the heritage structures are Grade I structures deserving careful preservation. Most of them are in the old city area i.e. Ward No. 70 (Government of Maharashtra, 2003).
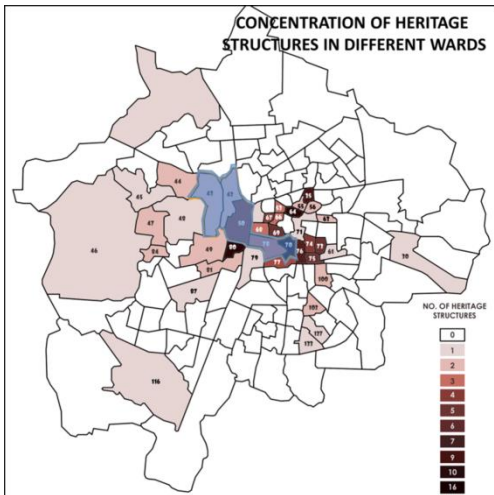
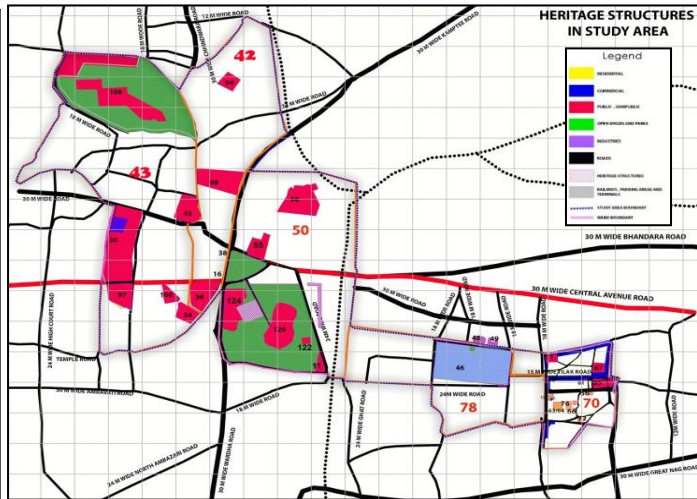**Figure 5**: Heritage structures Nagpur   **Figure 6**: Heritage structures in the study area of the city

Classification on The Basis of Values: Heritage values (historical, architectural or cultural) are given in Figure 6.

HISTORICAL					
Having little or no historical value. Having no historical impact on the city	■				
Having a historical impact on the local level, community level.	■	■			
Having a historical impact on the area of study.	■	■	■		
Having a historical impact on the city and its environs.	■	■	■	■	
Having a national historical impact.	■	■	■	■	■
ARCHITECTURAL					
Having little or no architectural value. Typically seen, changed architecture	■				
Partially retained and unique architecture.	■	■			
Having some special features and qualities	■	■	■		
Having exceptional architectural features and unique elements	■	■	■	■	
One of a kind structure.	■	■	■	■	■
CULTURAL					
Little or no cultural value	■				
Community level Cultural value	■	■			
Local Cultural centers – for area of study	■	■	■		
Culturally important to residents of the city	■	■	■	■	
National Cultural Impact	■	■	■	■	■

Figure 7: Types of values given to the heritage of a city [Department of Architectural Conservation, New Delhi (Unpublished research work)]

Table 1: Classification of heritage structures

Ward	Sr No.	Name	Typology	Period of Construction	Ownership	Grade	Values	Public Entry
43	108	Raj Bhavan	Residential	British	State Government	1	9	R
	30	Old Secretariat	Institution	British	State Government	1	8	R
	43	Collector's Bunglow	Residential	British	State Government	3	6	R
	97	1840's Church	Religious	British	Church Of North India	2	8	
	100	All Saint Cathedral	Religious	British	Church Of North India	1	8	
	34	Office Of Director's Postal Accounts	Institution	British	State Government	2	6	R
	38	Zero Mile Stone	Landmark	British	State Government	1	11	
42	99	Bishop Residence SFS School	Institution	British	SFS Mission	3	5	R
	94	St. Fransis De Sales Cathedral	Religious	British	St. Fransis De Sales Mission	1	8	
	36	Museum	Institution	British	State Government	1	13	
	16	Reserve Bank Of India	Institution	British	Central Government	2	9	R
	53	St. Joseph Convent Residency	Residential	British	Sister Of St. Joseph Chanberry	3	5	R
50	98	St. John School	Institution	British	St. John School	2	6	R
	96	Chhatri	Landmark	Bhonsale	State Government	1	13	
	95	Kasturchand Park	Open Space	Bhonsale	State Government	1	12	
	55	St. Joseph Convent	Institution	British	Sister Of St. Joseph Convent	2	5	R
	122	Vithoba Mandir	Religious	Bhonsale	Public	1	7	
	124	Morris College	Institution	British	Vasantrao Naik Institute Of Arts And Social Sciences	1	6	R
	125	Railway Station	Institution	British	Central Railways	2	10	
	126	Sitabuldi Fort And Hill	Fort	British	Government Territorial Army	1	15	R
	119	Hanuman Mandir	Religious	Bhonsale	Public	1	7	
78	46	Jumma Talao	Water Body	Gond	NMC	2	11	
	47	Ganesh Temple	Religious	Bhonsale	Public	2	6	
	48	Parsi Agiary	Religious	British	Parsi Trust	1	6	R
	49	JNT Tata Parsi Girl's High School	Institution	British	Nagpur Trust	2	5	
	20	Masonic Lodge	Residential	British	Freemason's Lodge	1	6	R
	50	Shiva Temple	Religious	Bhonsale	Trust	1	6	
70	11	New English High School	Institution	British	Education Society	2	5	R
	56	Old Library Building Of Mcdowell Townhall	Institution	British	NMC	2	9	R
	66	Bhonsale Temple	Religious	Bhonsale	Private Bhonsale Family	2	7	R
	69	Kothi	Institution	Bhonsale	Trust	2	6	R
	72	Bhonsale Wada	Residential	Bhonsale	Private	2	10	R
	76	Bhonsale Wada	Residential	Bhonsale	Private	2	10	R
	85	Municipal Corporation	Institution	British	NMC	2	5	R
	58	Kalyaneshwar Quadrangle	Open Space	Bhonsale	Public	1	6	R
	59	Jumma Darwaza	Gateway	Gond	Public	1	5	

Table 2: Values given to the heritage of the city of Nagpur

Ward No	Name Of The Heritage Structure	Historical	Architectural	Cultural	Total
43	Raj Bhavan				9
	Old Secretariat				8
	Collector's Bunglow				6
	1840's Church				8
	All Saint Cathedral				8
	Office Of Director's Postal Accounts				6
	Zero Mile Stone				11
42	Bishop Residence Sfs School				5
	St. Fransis De Sales Cathedral				8
	Museum				13
	Reserve Bank Of India				9
50	St. Joseph Convent Residency				5
	St. John School				6
	Chhatri				13
	Kasturchand Park				12
	St. Joseph Convent				5
	Vithoba Mandir				7
	Morris College				6
	Railway Station				10
	Sitabuldi Fort And Hill				15
	Hanuman Mandir				7
78	Jumma Talao				11
	Ganesh Temple				6
	Parsi Agiary				6
	Jnt Tata Parsi Girl's High School				5
	Masonic Lodge				6
	Shiva Temple				6
70	New English High School				5
	Old Library Building Of Mcdowell Townhall				9
	Bhonsale Temple				7
	Kothi				6
	Bhonsale Wada				10
	Bhonsale Wada				10
	Municipal Corporation				5
	Kalyaneshwar Quadrangle				6
	Jumma Darwaza				5
	Pataleshwar Dwar				8
	Rukmini Temple				8
	Mahadev Temple				8
	Kotwali				8
	Kalyaneshwar Dwar				8
	Gol Bangla				7
	Laxminarayan Temple				6

The linkage between civil lines and the old city area is broken because of the introduction of railways and other developments by the British. This link needs to be revived to connect these two parts of the city. As there are two types of heritage in the city i.e. colonial and the heritage of Gonds and Bhonsales, issues regarding conservation of heritage are also different. The public welfare departments are mainly responsible for the maintenance and repair of colonial heritage. These heritage areas lack facilities like parking, tourist information centre, brochures, maps, drinking water fountains, etc. As many as 10 out of 22 heritage structures have restricted public entry, reducing citizens' interest in heritage. Development of the area around heritage is not in harmony with the existing structures. Visual barriers like hoardings,

HVAC ducts and electrical wires can be seen in the old city area. The heritage buildings suffer from defacement problems.

3.3 At Precinct level

In the old city area, a majority of the heritage structures are privately owned with maintainance related issues. The area is divided into a commercial street along the axis and five heritage sites (institutional, religious, residential, public and administration). Majority of the buildings along the stretch are two floried. The roads are narrow and congested. Encroachments and road side parking along the stretch have apparently led to 20% reduction in carriage width. The road lacks footpath and dividers. Around 47% of the land is under heritage in the precinct area. Six heritage buildings are Grade 1 structures. Only essential and minimal changes are permitted. As many as 10 out of 12 heritage structures have the value between 6-10. Six heritage buildings are restricted to public and may be considered for opening to public.
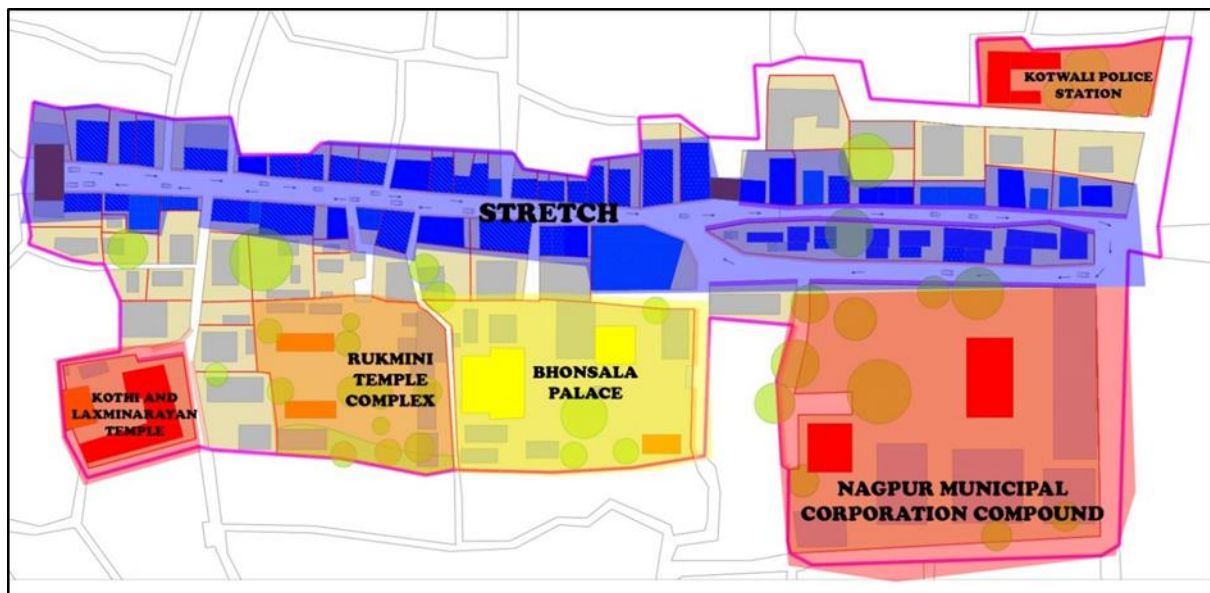

Figure 8: Old city area of Nagpur (Precinct)

The Bhonsala palace which is a residential site, has suffered the incongruous use of building material, marring its beauty. The Golbangla adjacent to it was once used as bar and restaurant and now remains a closed building. The Rukmini temple complex is another site that has suffered from similar problems. The other three sites also suffer from similar problems of inappropriate alterations and additions, garbage problems, restricted public entry and encroachments.

4. PROPOSALS

4.1 At city level

Several modifications regarding heritage conservation are suggested for planning documents at the city level. Maharashtra Regional and Town Planning Act, 1966 states the procedure to be followed in preparing and sanctioning Development Plans. Under this procedure, the

provision of heritage conservation should be included in the beginning itself. The listing should be revised by the Heritage Conservation Cell, which is formed under Nagpur Municipal Corporation. It should also provide the guidelines and its expertise to conserve heritage of the city.

Any building, after a specified period requires maintenance. A separate fund for maintainance by the local authorities would be helpful. The timelines for the revision of development plans and guidelines should not be long and required to be periodically updated. Under Development Control Regulations, the norms regarding the heritage conservation as given by ASI should be included. There should be institutional strengthening mechanism at the state level and the city level to avoid overlapping of their functions. The planning documents needs to be in line with each other to avoid discrepancies. Last but not the least, there is a need to have a participatory approach and thus needs identification of volunteers to take efforts to conserve heritage.

4.2 At Study area level

As mentioned previously, the study area comprises of two types of heritage structures i.e. colonial heritage and heritage. These need different approaches of conservation. As far as Colonial heritage is concerned, there should be restricted public access and thus, opening and closing timings should be provided to the public. Encroachments should be removed from the compounds of these buildings. The additions and alterations should be according to the norms as provided in the planning documents. Trained conservation professionals should be engaged for a better maintenance of the heritage sites. Parking facilities, signage, information centres, schematic maps, brochures etc. should be provided to the visitors of heritage sites.

The heritage belonging to the old city area (mainly under private ownership) should be guided by the conservation professionals to make repairs. They must also be provided with incentives to have regularized development (Floor Space Index, Transfer of Development Rights, tax incentives and funds). The Heritage Conservation Committee should have the right to acquire the private heritage property, if the owners are unable to maintain the heritage as per the norms and guidelines. A revival of the linkage between the colonial and the old city heritage will help. A detailed project report can be made for this connectivity.

4.3 At Precinct level

The stretch, called as the Tilak road, is the main axis that connects various heritage structures in the old study area and hence need to be enhanced (visually as well as functionally). Road side parking should not be allowed along this stretch. It should have footpath for the people to walk on. It should be marked by the signage that shows the way to other heritage structures. Building height needs to be restricted along the road. Architectural features of new construction coming up in the area should be in harmony with the old one (façade, setbacks, building heights etc.). Hoarding and electrical wires needs to be removed. Façade regulations needs to be enforced to avoid unsuitable additions to the fronts (structural condition, masonry works, plaster works, physical intervention etc.).

As far as heritage sites within the precinct area are concerned, each of them needs to be studied in detail to provide them with conservation intervention. The funds may be provided by the government to the owner of the heritage property in order to maintain its grace and functionality. The owner may also be exempted from paying the property tax and may be given the leverage to use the TDR elsewhere rather than the same place. The heritage sites can be ticketed. Cultural fests can be organized to promote conservation of these heritage sites. The additions and alterations done to maintain these buildings should be in harmony with the original structure. The type of adaptive reuse of heritage buildings should preferably be decided by the concerned professionals/ conservationists.

5 CONCLUSION

Different historic layers of Nagpur have been studied. Each layer encompasses heritage with distinct characteristics. The shape of the city today is due to the transformations that each layer has undergone. Before colonialization, different architectural styles and planning models for different regions were existing. However, with colonization, a different typology was established both in architecture and city planning (radial planning by Gonds and Bhonsala). There were remarkable differences both in their styles. Eventually due to urbanization, the past of the city lost its importance. The buildings started decaying with time. As these buildings have values associated with them, they need to be protected. These heritage buildings can be put to some use or the other. Other than the functional aspects, these provide a strong link to the past. Hence, heritage based urban development of the city needs to be looked into so as to retain the identity, values and its potential should be utilized for sustainable tourism and economic purposes.

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