

EDITED BY
LILIA MAKHLOUFI

URBAN HERITAGE AND SUSTAINABILITY
IN THE AGE OF GLOBALISATION





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10. Heritage as a Vector of Sustainable Urban Regeneration: The Case of North Shahjahanabad

Mrinalini Singh

Introduction

The city of Old Delhi, established in the seventeenth century by Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan, possessed a unique quality and culture. Originally designed as a residential city with winding roads, streets, waterways, nurseries and structures, today it stands as a bustling market centre and modern town, worn down by development.

However, amidst the crowded streets and masked buildings, there are still hints and glimpses of the town that existed in the seventeenth century. Centuries-old havelis,¹ with their intricate carvings and rich cultural heritage, endure amidst the commotion. These havelis were once the cultural centres around which cities evolved to meet the needs of affluent households. Bazaars, warehouses, gardens and religious and educational institutions surrounded these structures.²

Cities serve as arenas for cultural, social, physical and economic co-existence and conflict. Many traditional Indian cities, conceived according to the relative autonomy of the existing societal structure,

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- 1 A haveli is a traditional townhouse or mansion, usually with historical and architectural significance.
 - 2 DevikaSanah Rao, *Interactive Museum: Shahjahanabad Ki Haveli* (2017), <https://www.behance.net/gallery/56221609/Interactive-Museum-Shahjahanabad-Ki-Haveli>

were transformed into complex, fragmentary urban landscapes due to their failure to contend with relentless population pressures and new urbanisation trends. One of these cities is Shahjahanabad, commonly known as Old Delhi, which stands out as a prime example of this phenomenon. The walled city of Shahjahanabad was initially developed according to the formal geometries of axial planning and later devolved into a chaotic web of considerable complexity—first due to deliberate neglect under British colonialism and later as a result of the growing challenges of human migration.

Although the walled city is renowned for its historical significance due to its numerous architectural monuments, the indigenous settlement, known as Old Delhi, reflects the lasting socio-cultural patterns that isolate the city's traditional core from the rest of Delhi. The walled city of Shahjahanabad is characterised by the introverted nature of its public activities, bolstered by specialised markets (bazaars) and indigenous neighbourhoods (mohallas)³ structured around religious sanctuaries. While this traditional core is known for its local economy, it grapples with the serious threats posed by internal traffic congestion and excessive commercialisation. Although various attempts have been made to decongest and revitalise the traditional core, these efforts have proven insufficient to address the root causes of these problems, which extend beyond the city peripheries to Delhi's broader urban and economic growth.⁴

Between Chandni Chawk and Kashmere Gate, the city's northern area has witnessed the bulk of the transformation. This part of the city remains one of the most vibrant and authentic areas of Delhi, surviving countless urban transformations, demolitions and reconstructions.

When the British first arrived in Delhi, they established this area as a hub of administrative power, constructing several new religious and institutional buildings and repurposing existing structures. This part of the walled city is a living example of diverse construction materials and architectural styles, encompassing Sultanate, Mughal and colonial influences as well as the fusion of these styles in unique combinations.

3 Mohallas are a sub-division spatially forming a pattern of quarters, divided and embedded with complex social inter-relations and primarily residential.

4 Ajit Singh, *Confrontation, Comparison and Reconstruction of the Walled City of Shahjahanabad* (Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2006).

Since the nineteenth century, North Shahjahanabad has been nationally recognised as a commercial hub for the automobile industry, leading to increased trade and job opportunities. Zone-1, sub-zone C-1 (North Shahjahanabad) stretches from Kashmere Gate to north of the Red Fort and east of Mori Gate to the Old Delhi Railway Station. The area is well connected and has nearly all essential amenities and facilities like schools and markets, fulfilling the daily needs of its residents.

Urban Regeneration

Cities emerge from the layering and intertwining of cultural and natural values over time, including the broader urban context and geographical setting.⁵ India is home to one of the world's oldest civilisations and most Indian cities are enriched by multiple layers of history. Though India is progressing and evolving along with the rest of the world, the country's deep historical roots must not be forgotten. Thus, it is imperative to develop a framework that serves as a bridge between India's past and future.

Urban regeneration refers to a means of constructively addressing the problems faced by growing urban environments. Beyond infrastructural provisions like housing, sanitation, transport and basic amenities for populations, this constructive engagement also includes generating livelihoods and meeting the needs of society's most vulnerable.⁶ Within this context, culture and heritage are often mistakenly perceived as expendable resources by administrators looking for ways to tighten budgets. However, these resources are far from expendable. Cultural and heritage initiatives often assume key roles in boosting local economies, renewing decaying urban areas and nurturing active citizens whose pride and self-esteem are assets to any community. Committing to these activities as an economic and social strategy constitutes a valuable investment for a nation-state. The rejuvenation of human settlements

5 Getty Conservation Institute, *Historic Urban Environment Conservation Challenges and Priorities for Action* (Los Angeles, CA Getty Conservation Institute, 2010), https://www.getty.edu/conservation/publications_resources/pdf_publications/historic_urban_environment.html

6 Rajeev Sethi, 'Art for the Sake of Urbanscape' (27 June 2014), *The Hindu*, <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/Art-for-the-sake-of-urbanscape/article11640724.ece>

stands at the core of India's future, integral to a long-term strategy where business, technology and heritage intersect.⁷

Over the years, the government has introduced various urban development and modernisation schemes, including the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) between 2005 and 2012, the 2015 Smart City Mission and 2015 Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) housing for all initiative. Although these schemes have shown progress, they have proven unable to swiftly transform the liveability standards of Indian cities. Important reforms visualised under JNNURM, like the enactment of a community participation law, water supply transfer, city planning functions and rent control reforms, have been implemented only sporadically by the country's states.⁸

Conservation can serve as a tool for integrating the past into modern functions. The urban regeneration approach aims to strike a balance between conservation and development, drawing upon heritage-led urban regeneration.⁹ In recent years, as the regeneration and renewal of towns and city centres has gained momentum, the careful integration of historic buildings and areas has played an increasingly important role in major regeneration schemes, successfully generating noticeable benefits for local economies and communities. A heightened understanding of how places change and how historic buildings can enhance urban character and distinctiveness is now acknowledged as fundamental to successful and sustainable regeneration. Leveraging and reinvigorating the historic environment has become a cornerstone of the economic and social revival¹⁰ of towns and cities. This chapter explores the use of urban regeneration as a tool, with heritage and culture as focal points.

7 Ibid.

8 Sanjay Das, 'Time to Re-imagine the Urbanscape' (12 June 2020), *Hindu Business Line*, <https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/opinion/time-to-re-imagine-the-urbanscape/article31805877.ece#>

9 Ahmed Elseragy and Amira Elnokaly, 'Heritage-led Urban Regeneration as a Catalyst for Sustainable Urban Development', in *HERITAGE 2018*, ed. by R. Amoêda, S. Lira, C. Pinheiro, J. M. Santiago Zaragoza, J. Calvo Serrano and F. García Carrill (Granada: Editorial Universidad de Granada, 2018), <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/163028369.pdf>

10 Simon Thurley, Mark Walley and Liz Peace, 'Heritage Works: The Use of Historic Buildings in Regeneration. A Toolkit of Good Practice' (2013), *Academia*, https://www.academia.edu/30421656/The_use_of_historic_buildings_in_regeneration_A_toolkit_of_good_practice

Historical Background

Delhi, over its expansive history, has been an important Indian political centre as the capital of several empires. Its habitation was governed by certain natural advantages due to its geographical location, including a perennial river, hills rich with stones for construction, protection during times of war and a fertile agricultural hinterland to sustain its vast urban population engaged in non-agricultural pursuits. Over the years, various settlements emerged in the triangular area formed by the River Yamuna and the Ridge. The rulers of the successive dynasties that conquered Delhi developed portions of land in this triangular region, each with distinct walls, forts and supporting fabric, shaping the different forms of the city over time.¹¹

Archaeological findings have revealed continuous cultural layers from the third to fourth centuries BC to the Mughal period, pottery fragments dating back to approximately 1000–500 BC and Lal Kot, the first city of Delhi, founded by the Tamar dynasty in AD 1060. The Chauhans succeeded the Tomars in the mid-twelfth century and extended Lal Kot to form Qila Rai Pithora. Delhi came to be the imperial capital in the time of the Delhi Sultanate, with the establishment of Siri, the second city of Delhi. Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq (r. 1320–1324), the first of the Tughlaq kings following the Khaljis, built Tughlaqabad, Delhi's third city. In AD 1326–1327, Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq linked the older cities of Lal Kot and Siri with two walls, creating the fourth city of Delhi, Jahanpanah. Firoz Shah Tughlaq (1351–1388) built Firozabad, the fifth city of Delhi, on the banks of River Yamuna. Unlike other dynasties, the Sayyid (fifteenth century) and Lodi dynasties (mid-fifteenth century) did not leave behind distinct cities during their rule. Delhi then served intermittently as the capital of the Mughal Empire, with a hiatus from the mid-sixteenth to mid-seventeenth centuries. Emperor Humayun, in 1533, built Dinpanah, the sixth city of Delhi. In 1639, Shahjahan shifted the Mughal Empire back to Delhi and the walled city of Shahjahanabad, Delhi's seventh city, was built. Delhi was taken over by the British in 1803, following their defeat of the Marathas. In 1911, they relocated their

11 Amit Mukherji and Indu Rawat, *Compilation on Heritage of Delhi* (New Delhi: Heritage Conservation Committee, 2012), <https://hccdelhi.in/Upload/Link%20Page/Compilation%20of%20HCC/783144217514590.pdf>

capital from Calcutta to Delhi, constructing New Delhi to the southwest of the walled city, Shahjahanabad.¹²

Today's historical core reflects a dramatic juncture between the imperial 'Traditionalism' and colonial 'Modernism' born from the architectural upheavals of industrial revolutions in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This city, which was plundered, redefined and changed hands several times, still retains an overwhelming and enigmatic historical and symbolic character. This essence flourishes even today in the enduring socio-cultural patterns embedded in the lifestyles of its inhabitants.¹³

By the early nineteenth century, the British had effectively dominated the Indian subcontinent. In 1803, their control was further reinforced with the defeat of the Marathas under Mahadaji Scindia. They legitimised their rule by offering protection to the weakened Mughal Emperor, Shah Alam II, and ruling through him. However, their power was again challenged in 1857, when Indian soldiers in their employment, together with rebellious princes, rose up in an open revolt which came to be known as the Rebellion of 1857. However, this uprising was doomed from the start and brutally crushed by the British, marking the end of the Mughal Empire.

Soon after, the British embarked on a deliberate campaign of destruction, demolishing many of the buildings in the Red Fort, the seat of the recently extinguished Mughal Empire, and replacing them with towering but unremarkable barracks. This was the first step towards erasing the architectural legacy of the Mughals.

However, a distinct architectural tradition was necessary to usher in the new era of the British 'Raj'. Hence, they contemplated a fusion of existing Indian styles with styles imported from the West such as Gothic (with its sub-styles like French Gothic and Venetian-Moorish), Neo-Classical and Art Deco. Gothic architecture was particularly favoured because its design philosophy was inclined towards grand scale, exemplified by buildings like the Taj Hotel. By blending elements of British and European architecture with Indian characteristics and by

12 UNESCO, 'Tentative List: Delhi – A Heritage City' (22 May 2012), UNESCO, <https://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5743/>

13 Jyoti Hosagrahar, *Indigenous Modernities: Negotiating Architecture and Urbanism* (New York: Routledge, 2005), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203022733>

allowing some regional Indian princes to remain in power, the British attempted to make their presence more 'palatable' for the Indian populace. The British tried to encapsulate South Asia's past within their constructions, granting legitimacy to the British Raj while creating a modern network of railways, colleges and legal courts.

In the interim, various agencies have been established to preserve these elements of Indian heritage, with their historical, architectural and commemorative significance.

Table 10.1 Agencies responsible for managing tangible and intangible heritage in India.

Central agencies for the conservation of built heritage
Ministry of Urban Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Delhi Development Authority (DDA) Heritage Cell ● Delhi Urban Arts Commission ● Central Public Works Department ● Heritage Conservation Committee ● National Capital Region Planning Board ● Forest Department
Ministry of Culture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) ● National Monuments Authority
Ministry of Home Affairs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD)
Ministry of Defence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Delhi Cantonment Board
Ministry of Tourism

State agencies for the conservation of built heritage
<p>Government of National Capital Territory (GNCTC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ASI Delhi Circle ○ Delhi Tourism and Transportation Development Corporation (DTTDC) ○ State Department of Archaeology <p>Delhi Development Authority Shahjahanabad Redevelopment Corporation (SRDC) North Delhi Municipal Corporation (NDMC)</p>
Non-governmental organisations for the conservation of built heritage
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) ● Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC)
Agencies concerned with the protection of Delhi's built heritage
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Heritage Conservation Committee (HCC) ● Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) ● State Archaeological Department, Govt. of NCT of Delhi ● Delhi Development Authority (DDA) ● Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) ● Central Public Works Department (CPWD) ● Cantonment Board, Delhi ● Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) ● Aga Khan Trust

The list of heritage sites, including buildings, precincts and natural features, is prepared by the NDMC, MCD and DDA, with the approval of the HCC and supplemented occasionally.¹⁴ At present, 886 buildings in Delhi are on the official heritage list. Among these, 141 heritage

¹⁴ HCC Heritage Conservation Committee, <https://hccdelhi.in/u/Default>

buildings/precincts are under the jurisdiction of NDMC, and 745 are in areas managed by the Municipal Corporation, with information available on the HCC website.

Many structures have not been recognised on the lists of these established agencies. These unlisted and unprotected structures are thus overlooked amidst rapid urbanisation, with little to no effort invested in their protection. New laws and regulations are required to integrate this heritage into the growing Indian economy for the betterment of society.

The urban fabric of north Shahjahanabad diverges slightly from the rest of Old Delhi. Buildings in this area vary in height from G+1 to G+4, without setbacks.¹⁵ The structures are compact, and even in the narrow alleys, the built environment offers ample light and ventilation. The facades of these structures are also of notable historical significance.

The larger plots serve primarily as storage spaces, while some are used for institutional purposes like banks and schools. Commercial zones with shops and warehouses are located near the cargo handling unit of the Old Delhi Railway Station.

A mixed-use pattern exists along the streets, as the ground floors of buildings are used as shops, followed by warehouses on the first floor and residences starting from the second floor. The residential area is used exclusively by local workers and shopkeepers. Wholesale trade is concentrated in the central area, attracting workers and traders and thus contributing to the deterioration of the city environment. The absence of developed land and infrastructure provisions results in haphazard growth patterns.

Analysis of North Shahjahanabad

Urban Network and Circulation

The location is easily accessible and commutable, situated at the centre of the auto repair market. It is well connected through various modes of transportation, including Interstate Bus Terminal-1 (Kashmere Gate),

15 G+ refers to the number of floors above ground level in a building. Setbacks are the minimum distance a building must be set back from property lines, streets of other structures.

Metro Station-3 (Red, Yellow and Violet lines), Old Delhi Railway Station and arterial roads such as Ring Road and LalaHardev Marg (45 metres). It also features collector roads such as Shyam Lal Marg (30 metres), SP Mukherjee Marg (30 metres), Netaji Shubhas Marg (30 metres), Lothian and Hamilton (24 metres) and Nicholson Road (12 metres). The width of internal streets, also known as galis, varies from 6–9 metres to 2–4 metres.

Retail activities in the area contribute to traffic congestion, exacerbated by the parking of vehicles on the roads by shopkeepers and homeowners. Heavy vehicle traffic from the small- to medium-scale warehouses compounds this problem. Moreover, streets and public spaces are occupied by squatters and other illegal occupants, resulting in poor pedestrian infrastructure.

Table 10.2 Issues related to transportation and connectivity.

Issues	Hamilton Road	Nicholson Road
Public transport	Buses operate on the roads, but the lack of bus stops hinders connectivity. The encroachment of the right-of-way (ROW) also limits the space for buses	Due to inconsistent ROW, this road is devoid of public transport, resulting in a total disconnect from the Metro station
Paratransit system	Non-motorised vehicles operating in the area lack designated pick-up points and regulated parking spaces. Last-mile connectivity and subsequent services to Metro stations are absent due to a lack of connections	
Parking	Irregular on-street parking of both commercial and private vehicles due to non-demarcated spaces leads to heavy encroachment of ROW in this area	

Markets

This area predominantly functions as a wholesale market for spare automobile parts, electrical and electronic items and small-scale machinery. Warehouses have proliferated around these markets in

residential buildings, leading to the deterioration of the infrastructure. The unprecedented illegal and unregulated constructions in the rehabilitation markets like Lajpat Rai has led to increased trade activity without adequate planning, causing further space-related problems. The wholesale trade of hazardous goods and chemicals in Tilak Bazar also continues without regulation. Moreover, the bulk trading of incompatible goods like food grains on Naya Bazar Road is leading to congestion, traffic jams and chaos in the city.

Despite the significant business potential of these medieval-era markets, their growth has been hampered by a lack of planning, sanitation, building maintenance, safety, traffic management and order. This unplanned and disorganised expansion of historically important markets results in economic losses to business communities and significant revenue loss for the government.

Festivals and Processional Paths

Three major processional parades take place in North Shahjahanabad:

- Janamasthmi (a celebration of the birth of Lord Krishna).
- Dussehra (a festival symbolising the triumph of good over evil).
- Muharram (a commemoration marking the anniversary of the battle of Karbala).¹⁶

These events attract large crowds to the area, making it difficult to manage the high concentration of foot traffic during the festivities.

Community Profile

Most residents of North Shahjahanabad are working class, as the area is a commercial hub for automobile parts. The community comprises people of diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds. In the seventeenth century, the area was divided into different quarters known as mohallas, generally organised according to occupational and ethnic groups.¹⁷

¹⁶ The Battle of Karbala (680 AD) took place in the city of Karbala, in present-day Iraq, and is one of the most significant battles in Shia Muslim history.

¹⁷ Uzma Azhar, Shahjahanabad: Physical vis-a-vis Socio-Cultural Space' (17 October 2018), *Sahapedia*, sahapedia.org/

Examples include Mohalla Dhobiwara (washerman's quarter) and Punjabi Mohalla (Punjabi quarter).

Different features can be found within the mohallas, including katras (gated building complexes enclosed by high walls, typically with ground floor commercial space and upper floor residences), kuchas (mohallas with one linear road), galis (residential lanes branching out from a main road) and chattas (upper stories of residential structures crossing over streets or lanes).¹⁸

Today, as per the Zonal Development Plan of 1999, the area is under sub-zone C for development works and maintenance. The MCD has further divided it into zones and wards, namely the Civil Lines Zone, the Kashmere Gate Area, and Ward 77.¹⁹

The area lacks tourism facilities, infrastructure to capitalise on economic opportunities and maintenance systems for basic amenities such as hospitals and schools.

Open Space

The unregulated encroachment on open spaces is disrupting the fabric of the historic city. The retail trade and warehouses draw commercial and private vehicles to the area, which has led to the emergence of parking areas as a new typology in open spaces, including neighbourhood public parks. Improper conservation and poor maintenance can be observed at Nicholson Cemetery, and illegal parking occurs inside Maharaja Agrasen Park. While streets and squares offer numerous interactive open spaces within the zone, there is an absence of public parks. Open garbage disposal in the nursery also adds to these challenges.

Built Typology

Most typologies in this zone are mixed-use structures combining shops and houses, followed by standalone shops, making it a highly commercial

shahjahanabad-physical-vis-vis-socio-cultural-space

18 Akhtar Badshah, *Interventions into Old Residential Quarters* (Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1983).

19 Delhi Urban Arts Commission, *Rejuvenation of Shahjahanabad* (New Delhi: DUAC, 2017), <https://duac.org.in/Upload/City%20Level%20Studies/Site%20specific%20design%20for%20wards/653954173410426.pdf>

zone. The zone has become a classic example of the repurposing of heritage buildings, such as the northern railway building, St. Stephen's College, the Chief Electoral Building, while retaining the heritage and functional value of these structures. Due to the extensive commercial activities in the zone, heritage structures are being used as shops and warehouses, resulting in their structural and aesthetic degradation.

Built Heritage

The zone has nine ASI-protected monuments: Nicholson Cemetery, Hathi Gate, Baradari, Qudsiya Mosque, Fortification Wall, Kashmere Gate, Magazine Gateway, Lothian Cemetery and Salimgarh Fort, as well as one state-protected monument, Dara Shikoh's Library.

For recognised heritage structures under ASI jurisdiction, a prohibited area of one hundred metres and a regulated area of two hundred metres must be designated around protected structures. The MCD prohibits intervention in Grade 1 buildings without permission, with some flexibility granted for Grade 3 structures.

INTACH has inventoried all heritage monuments, including in-use buildings and national, regional and local gateways. Several buildings with architectural value within the intervention area require preservation efforts in their present condition in order to maintain their essence and character.

Table 10.3 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>(1) Proximity to mass transit options to reach the centre of the old city</p> <p>(2) Importance as a centre of retail trade</p>	<p>(1) Lack of solid waste management facilities (for treatment and disposal), leading to the indiscriminate dumping of garbage and land pollution</p> <p>(2) Insufficient parking space and poor pedestrian infrastructure</p> <p>(3) Absence of tourism facilities, parks and open spaces</p> <p>(4) Inadequate public amenities</p> <p>(5) Ineffective integration of heritage concerns within planning processes</p>

Opportunities	Threats
<p>(1) Interest zones based on the different architectural styles of monuments can enhance the area's appeal as a tourist destination</p> <p>(2) Developing heritage walks can educate people about the history, architecture and community</p> <p>(3) A time-based traffic management plan can reduce congestion</p> <p>(4) A disaster management plan can be formulated based on wider roadways</p>	<p>(1) Continued neglect of heritage areas can reduce tourism revenues</p> <p>(2) Lack of repair and maintenance of heritage buildings can lead to rapid deterioration of the built fabric</p> <p>(3) Poor infrastructure like narrow streets, dilapidated buildings and outdated drainage systems pose a threat to residents' quality of life</p> <p>(4) The illegal occupancy of streets and public spaces occupied by squatters and other unauthorised occupants can have various negative impacts on the community</p>

Issues and Strategies

Historical urban areas are integral to the collective memory of cities, encapsulating the distinctive essence of specific historical eras. Given their immense cultural and historical value, the preservation of these areas is imperative. This section highlights existing issues related to North Shahjahanabad and suggests various strategies for addressing them and thereby protecting and maintaining the integrity of this historical urban area.

1. Abandoned and Dilapidated Structures

Abandoned and dilapidated structures are a major issue in North Shahjahanabad. This is particularly evident in a heritage building under the ownership of the National Cadet Corps (NCC), the built fabric along Lothian Road, and the Art Deco and colonial architecture along Nicholson Road. The neglect and deterioration of these structures can be primarily attributed to insufficient building repair and maintenance compounded by a lack of public awareness about the commercialisation of heritage conservation.

Strategies to address this situation include the introduction of regulations and the creation of an informational guidebook for residents and business owners about safeguarding this urban heritage. Additionally, introducing heritage walks and a tourist information centre would contribute to raising awareness about the built heritage and conserving disintegrated structures on Nicholson and Lothian streets.

2. Obstruction of Facades

Another concern is the obstruction of building facades in this zone. High tension wires running parallel to the buildings are hazardous and diminish the aesthetics of the area. Similarly, the internal facades of heritage structures are entangled by electrical wires and cables, posing a serious safety threat. Furthermore, the haphazard placement of hoardings not only obstructs facades but also causes structural damage to buildings. Aesthetically pleasing architectural elements are being concealed by advertisements or shop hoarding boards.

Potential solutions for these challenges include advocating for underground wiring to avoid the clutter of wires on facades, while internal electrical wires could be hidden by false ceilings. Introducing guidelines for shop hoardings can also ensure harmony and aesthetic appeal for shops and residents. Facade improvements and heritage structure maintenance should also be implemented in collaboration with heritage-related authorities.

3. Signage and Heritage Interpretation

In many parts of North Shahjahanabad, there is inadequate signage and heritage interpretation, contributing to the neglect of this heritage and the loss of tourism interest. Nicholson Cemetery has no ASI protection signage, while the informative signage about the zone at Kashmere Gate Metro lacks basic details about the buildings highlighted by INTACH Delhi Chapter. Similarly, the signage at Kashmere Gate Metro is insufficient given the amount of tourist transit traffic at the location.

These oversights could be remedied by identifying effective locations for signage at the Metro Station and ASI-protected sites, and by posting both informative and directional signage at all tourist hotspots.

4. Open Spaces

There are also significant issues pertaining to the area's open spaces, such as the negligent maintenance of Nicholson Cemetery and the illegal parking of vehicles inside Maharaja Agrasen Park. In general, the zone lacks public parks, with streets and squares constituting the only interactive open spaces. Moreover, garbage is being improperly disposed of in the nursery and there is concerning encroachment along the bank of the Yamuna River.

Given that the relevant authorities are unable to maintain the zone's cemetery and parks, issuing private contracts for the upkeep of these spaces would be an effective strategy for their improvement, along with identifying open spaces in the zone for risk preparedness.

5. Infrastructure and Waste Management

North Shahjahanabad also faces considerable infrastructural challenges. Amenities like hand pumps are inappropriately located near heritage sites like the Fortified Wall, and public toilets are ineffectively allocated by local authorities. The dumping of waste near heritage sites, such as the portion of the wall not under ASI protection, as well as along the Nigambodh Ghat riverfront and Ganesh Ghat is unacceptable and contributes to the pollution of the Yamuna River. Overflowing waste encroaches on pedestrian paths and creates unhygienic conditions at roadside dumping areas. Additionally, dhalaos²⁰ are poorly designed, without adequate space for the sorting and separation of waste.

Various departments like the MCD and NDMC who are responsible for monitoring the zone's waste management system should be engaged in addressing these issues, including in the identification of suitable locations for dhalaos and adopting guidelines for waste management in and around heritage structures.

²⁰ Dhalaos are large three-walled concrete structures meant for garbage collection from a locality or market.

6. Traffic Discipline

There are numerous traffic-related issues in the zone arising from a lack of discipline among drivers. Buses frequently stop near intersections, across lanes, and in the middle of the road to pick up and drop off passengers, without any consideration for the flow of traffic. Motorised vehicles park along roadsides, even where it is forbidden to do so. Drivers often fail to adhere to traffic rules, and are sometimes not even aware of them. This is attributable to poor driver training and a lax licensing system amenable to bribery.

Penalising bus and vehicle drivers for parking outside of designated areas and installing roadside bollards to prevent vehicle parking on streets would be major steps towards confronting these issues. Furthermore, strict traffic regulations must be applied consistently to all drivers.

7. Traffic Management

Compounding issues of traffic discipline are substantial shortcomings in roadway management. Road markings, including traffic lanes, are faded or non-existent, and very few road signs are installed even on the primary and secondary roads. Malfunctioning traffic signals are an additional problem, as are inefficient schedules for loading and unloading trailers, which add to roadway congestion.

To rectify these issues, traffic authorities should install proper road signage and markings and develop an appropriate time management plan for the loading and unloading of cargo. Additionally, the traffic department should be engaged to address traffic light issues.

8. Pedestrian Infrastructure

There is a notable deficiency in pedestrian infrastructure in North Shahjahanabad. Pedestrians are often forced to walk on roadways because the sidewalks are used by hawkers or for illegal vehicle parking. The lack of designated pedestrian crossings, even on wide and busy streets, creates safety risks. Moreover, there are no proper pick-up and drop-off points for paratransits, encroaching on the existing footpaths,

and pathways are obstructed by various obstacles like garbage and construction materials.

To improve pedestrian infrastructure, a designated vendor zone should be established to eliminate encroachment on walking paths, alongside designated pick-up and drop-off points for paratransits. Furthermore, appropriately situating and marking garbage cans would reduce obstruction on these pathways.

Proposals

It is crucial to formulate a vision for positive urban development to improve the quality of space and affordability for local communities and other users. This must be achieved by integrating urban heritage conservation strategies to enhance the overall human environment. The objective is to tap into the potential of the existing built heritage and develop an urban landscape that supports this heritage. The focus should encompass the following heritage elements: built heritage, social practices, rituals and festive events, and trade and commerce. Thus, heritage, tourism and development emerge as three aspects that need to be interwoven to form effective strategies.

By prioritising heritage values, new intervention opportunities can be identified to capitalise on the historic environment as an asset and give it new life. This can serve as a cornerstone of the economic and social revival of North Shahjahanabad. Preserving and revitalising the essence of the heritage city to reflect its unique character can promote an aesthetically appealing, accessible, informative and secure environment. Furthermore, public-private partnerships offer an effective tool for adaptive urban rehabilitation. Identifying viable economic uses can support initial refurbishments, provide owners and developers with reasonable returns on their investments and generate sufficient income to ensure the long-term maintenance of the built fabric and associated public spaces. Moreover, the introduction and enhancement of basic services such as sanitation, public amenities, toilets, water taps and streetlights should incorporate the latest technologies to improve resident and visitor experience.

a) Interpretation Centre in Qudsiya Bagh

Providing a tourist information centre within the Baradari in Qudsiya Bagh would enable visitors to better understand the site's history. The centre should include an informative programme detailing the Rebellion of 1857 and the various historical layers of settlement from the Mughal period to the British colonial era.

b) NCC: Adaptive Reuse of Neglected Heritage

The abandoned structure near the NCC building could be repurposed as a cafe, catering to the local student population and generating revenue.

c) Art Deco District

The street at Lothian Road and Bada Bazar road has various Art Deco buildings which have been neglected for some time. Focus should be given to refurbishing the facades of these neglected structures by installing proper hoardings and signage along the entire street.

d) Traffic Management for Nicholson Road

The parking issue can be resolved by making Nicholson Road a non-motorized vehicle zone, facilitating pedestrian movement. Additionally, an automated parking system in the bus parking area could be proposed to address parking concerns.

e) Fortification Wall

The historic dilapidated wall should be consolidated using appropriate conservation repair strategies. The cleanliness of the wall could also be enhanced by providing trash cans and public toilets at the site. A bicycle track could be introduced to improve mobility along the wall and bollards installed to prevent encroachments by vehicles.

f) Heritage Walks

Heritage walks can be conducted through the zone, focusing on neglected heritage. Designing various walks to shed light on both built and unbuilt aspects of local heritage would contribute to raising awareness about North Shahjahanabad. Themed walks could explore topics such as the Rebellion of 1857, Art Deco and Industrial Heritage, and the lesser-known area of North Shahjahanabad.

g) Informational and Directional Signage

Installing directional and informational signage at protected, listed and unlisted monuments like the Fortification Wall, Baradari, Bengali Club and the Art Deco buildings would help to generate awareness and address the information gap regarding the value and significance of these sites.

h) Recognition of North Shahjahanabad in the Master Plan Delhi (MPD)

While the MPD has classified Shahjahanabad as a significant zone, a similar designation should be granted to North Shahjahanabad to ensure its distinctive recognition.

Conclusion

Delhi is a thriving city that houses the remnants of over a thousand years of architecture in various states of preservation. The area of North Shahjahanabad, with its rich history and lasting legacy, continues to shape the cultural and historical landscape of this Indian city. North Shahjahanabad has evolved over time, most significantly in the aftermath of historical events like the Rebellion of 1857, which changed the spatial character of parts of the walled city. During this period, many of its grand structures and gardens were destroyed or repurposed. However, the urban landscape and monumental buildings of the British era remain intact across much of the city. North Shahjahanabad is a melting pot of cultures and traditions, known for its diverse population. The

narrow lanes of Old Delhi are lined with temples, mosques, churches and gurdwaras, reflecting India's religious pluralism.

North Shahjahanabad holds a special place in the history and culture of Delhi and India as a whole. Its architectural marvels, cultural diversity, culinary traditions and historical significance continue to make it a captivating and vibrant part of the city. All of the proposals and strategies outlined in this chapter would make a significant contribution to maintaining the area's authenticity in both structure and design. While Shahjahanabad is no longer an imperial capital, it is an important commercial sector, and these proposals seek to overcome its contemporary challenges and enhance the urban environment.

The twentieth and twenty-first centuries have been characterised by the rapid development of science, technology and social systems but also by a desire to consciously preserve the valuable parts of our past and present for future generations. Heritage has always existed, but it is now consciously preserved and researched. The increasing visibility and significance of heritage has heightened its influence in culture and politics, which can be observed at all levels of society.

Heritage can be used in a variety of ways to achieve various objectives. When dealing with cultural heritage, it is important to consider three crucial dimensions: the wide range of potential heritage objects and phenomena, the level of society at which heritage is being managed and the values upon which the definition of heritage is based.

Interventions to conserve architectural landmarks and upgrade the infrastructure of heritage cities facing urbanisation challenges are of immense importance. Special attention is needed to conserve the urban tissues shaping the unique sense of place and character in these environments. This chapter emphasises the revitalisation of the lost identities of old heritage cities, which can guide developers and stakeholders towards a more socio-economically sustainable development approach. In addition, this supports the preservation of the symbolic significance of heritage buildings and the city's distinctive sense of place. The economic strategies for urban regeneration projects can utilise urban heritage centres to promote sustainable urbanisation and inclusive growth. If harnessed properly, urban heritage, nature and culture can act as catalysts for socio-economic and environmental development through tourism, commercial use and higher land

and property values, thereby generating revenue for maintenance, restoration and rehabilitation.

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