

Identification of Potential Heritage Zones in Mysore City

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ABSTRACT: The conservation of Heritage Buildings and Areas are important components of heritage regulations. In order to develop heritage regulations, identification of heritage zones are vital for developing zone-specific regulations for planning, conserving, managing and controlling the heritage areas, It serves as an effective tool in Zoning Regulations of the City. Though, Zoning Regulations are monument-centric, which limited to only identified few monuments, Areas of Special Control and heritage zones have not been spelt out in Zoning Regulations. In the absence identification of heritage zones, heritage regulations are not comprehensive in nature. Therefore, there is a need for identifying heritage zones. In this paper an attempt has been made to identify the potential heritage zones for the City of Mysore for conservation and management of heritage areas.

Key Words: Heritage Zone, Regulations, Conservation, Strategy

I. Heritage Background of Mysore

Mysore is the third largest city in the State of Karnataka and it had a population of 7,85,800 as per 2001 census.

The name of Mysore was derived from *mahisha* (a demon). Formerly, the city was the state capital and head quarters of the Princely State of Mysore. It is situated at a distance 140kms from Bangalore, on the southern part of Karnataka State at 12° 18' North latitude and 76° 12' East longitude, and at an altitude of 770 mts above mean sea level. The city lies in a saucer shaped basin flanked by Chamundi hills on the south-east and a raised platform near Hinakal village on the west. The city has a salubrious climate and the temperature varies from 12° C to 35° C. It has an average annual rainfall of about 798mm. The city spreads across an area of 128.42sq.kms.

Mysore is a cultural and prime heritage city and it exhibits both tangible and intangible elements. It combines the historical facts and anecdotes with a harmonious combination of natural and built heritage. The city is known as 'cultural capital' of Karnataka. It was the capital of Wodeyar Kings who ruled Mysore Kingdom for many centuries and contributed significantly to make the city as a cultural centre including art, poetry and music. The city is as known city of palaces and the museums, art galleries and the festivities that take place during the period of *Dasara* which attract worldwide audience.

The total harmony of buildings, sites, lakes, parks and open spaces including backdrop of Chamundi hill adds to the city's aesthetics with different cultures and different styles of architecture. The heritage buildings have four distinct architectural styles viz. Indo-Saracenic, Traditional Hindu Style, Greco-Roman and Gothic (Pearl). The city exhibits both tangible and non tangible elements of heritage character, and the Government of Karnataka recognized the city as Heritage city and Government of India has selected the city for Urban Renewal Project under cultural and heritage tag.

II. Heritage Zone

Heritage Zone is defined as an area of special architectural or historic interest and character of which it is desirable to preserve or conserve. Heritage Zone is also defined as an area, which has significant concentration, linkage or continuity of buildings, structures, group of complexes united historically or aesthetically by plan or physical development. The objectives of the heritage zone are:

- To conserve or preserve heritage buildings or sites and heritage areas of historical, architectural and cultural significance that they are not adversely affected by any new development.
- To enhance the elements of urban design and built character including landscape of the city
- To provide the guidelines with regard to demolition, protection, conservation or re-building of and alterations or additions to the existing building those are to be designated and conserved in heritage areas.

III. Zoning Regulations of Mysore

As per the provisions of Karnataka Town and Country Planning (KTCP) Act, the Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP) for Mysore-2011 was prepared approved by the Government of Karnataka in 1997. The Zoning Regulations for Mysore –Nanjangud Local Planning Area which were prepared under clause (iii) of sub-section (2) of Section 12 and 21 of the Karnataka Town and Country Planning Act, 1961, the following are the salient features of Zoning Regulations for managing heritage areas in the City of Mysore in the Master Plan

[1] The zoning regulations emphasis that proper care should be taken towards their aesthetic environs while permitting developments around the monumental building which were notified by State Archaeology Department and ten buildings listed within the Local Planning Area of Master Plan. The monuments notified, as required under Archaeological Monuments Act, 1961, which are coming in the local planning area were considered and developments around these buildings have been regulated by declaring ‘*zone of special control*’ and imposing the special regulations as per the Section 6A: Areas of Special Control.

[2] The building regulations with regard to architectural control and established building lines, for permitting new proposals in selected roads/boulevards of the city, shall include, necessary clearance (after examination) by a special subcommittee constituted by the authority, for each proposal, along the roads. The subcommittee, which is the Arbitration committee, shall examine the compatibility of the architectural effect proposed to be given to the proposed structure in relation to the existing monumental buildings structures in the vicinity and the established building lines along the roads.

Table 1: Roads Prescribed for Architectural Control and Building Line

Name of the Road	Stretch
Narasimharaja Boulevard Road (Lalith Mahal Road).	Zoo garden junction to Lalith Mahal.
Bangalore- Nilgiri Road.	Harding circle to Gun House.
Albert – Victor Road.	K.R. Circle to Harding Circle.
New Sayyaji Rao Road.	Chamaraja Double Road to K.R. Circle.
Purandaradasa road.	New Sayyaji Rao Road to B.N.Road.
Chamaraja Double Road.	New Sayyaji Rao Road to B.N. Road. Ramaswamy Circle to Fire Brigade.
Jhansi Lakshmi Bai Road.	Rajaji Circle (Railway station Circle) to Hardwick Circle.
Krishna Raja Boulevard Road.	Kantharaja Urs Road to Vinoba Road.
Radhakrishna Avenue.	MUDA Circle– Kuvempunagar Double road.
Princes Road.	J.L.B. Road to Yadavagiri Circle.
Vinoba Road.	Metropole circle to Valmiki Circle.
Bannimantap Road.	Azad Circle – New Mysore-Bangalore road.
Ashoka Road.	Chamaraja Statue to silver Jubilee Clock Tower.
Krishna Vilas, Desika (Parkal Mutt), Jagan Mohan Palace Roads.	Area around Jagan Mohan Palace.

Source: Zoning Regulations of Mysore, MUDA, 1997

IV. Heritage Toolkit

The Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) has developed heritage toolkit for preparation of projects and schemes for conserving the heritage areas in the identified heritage cities. The toolkit enables the cities to identify the heritage component and formulate strategy for protection, conservation and development. The toolkit has been designed to highlight the role that heritage plays in the socio-economic and cultural profile of the JNNURM cities, and to suggest how heritage can be utilized to reshape and revitalize the city’s economy and culture. It rests on the principle that heritage is an important lever used for rejuvenating

the economy and quality of life in cities. The toolkit rests on the premise that heritage is an important lever for rejuvenating the economy and quality of life in cities. The toolkit provides framework for setting the boundaries, listing of heritage buildings, identifying heritage zones, determining legal status, planning and financing of infrastructure and services for preparation of city development plan.

The guidelines suggested for setting heritage boundaries in which the buildings that are protected by State Archeology Department and ASI are already on record and unprotected urban heritage needs to be identified through a process of Listing. Both protected and unprotected heritage buildings and sites are required to be located on a city map, in relation to road connectivity and other major infrastructures. The purpose of mapping is to identify significant concentration of listed buildings within wards, which are to be as Heritage Zones. Each Heritage Zone /ward forms an integral part of the plan. A comprehensive analysis of the existing status and future role of heritage needs to be undertaken for the identified Heritage Zone for preparation of conservation plan. The conservation plan involves identifying the Heritage Zones of the city.

V. Effort of Different States for Identification of Heritage Zones

A) Heritage Regulations in Goa

The Goa Planning and Development Authority (Development Plans) Regulations 1989 deals with Zoning Regulations to be applicable for urban areas in the State of Goa. The zoning regulation has a designated conservation in its land use zones as a separate entity i.e. under zone (f).

B) Heritage Zones in Delhi

The Delhi Planning and Development Authority Act, 1957 has provision for preparation of Zonal Development Plan. The Master Plan Delhi for 2021 which was published in 2007 has identified 15 zones that are A to H and J to P zones zone -A has been designated as special area, which consisted 15 sub-zones of zone-A and one sub zone of zone-C with a total area of 569 hectares in the walled city. Master Plan for Delhi-2021 emphasized that conservation of the environment, preservation of Delhi's heritage to be blended with the new and complex modern pattern of development. For conserving the heritage areas, the proposals to include (i) identification of heritage zones and archaeological parks and (ii) development of special conservation plans for the listed buildings and precinct. The walled city and continued area in between has been designated as Special Area for the purpose of development. For the conservation of monuments or buildings within walled city five control zones have been identified and Measures such as control over the volume and façade treatment in the adjoining building, landscape and street-scape, provision of designed approach and building materials harmony with existing monuments have been proposed around the historical premises within the control zone.

Table 2: Control Zones in Delhi

Control Zone	Areas covered
Zone-I	Green areas of Queen's garden town hall, Delhi Railway station and Harding library
Zone-II	Kashmere Gate, European Institute of Dancing hall, St. James Church, Darashikohas and Mega Zine Obelists
Zone-III	Red Fort and Buildings within the Fort, Sunheri Masjid and Green Area around Red Fort
Zone-IV	Fatepuri Mosque and Surrounding Area
Zone-V	Some of the built-up area between Gokhle Marg and Zorawar Singh Marg

Source: Master Plan of Delhi 2021

C) Heritage Regulations in Greater Bombay

Government of Maharashtra, Urban Development Department has introduced Development Control Regulation in 1995 for Greater Bombay dealing with conservation of listed buildings, areas, artifacts, structures and precincts of historical, aesthetical, architectural and cultural significance (heritage buildings and precincts). It brings control inter-alia on development/ redevelopment/ repairs of listed/ heritage buildings and heritage precincts.

D) Heritage Zones in Kuala Lumpur

The Heritage Zone has been identified in the draft Kuala Lumpur City Plan 2020 as an area of special architectural or historic interest and character of which it is desirable to preserve or conserve. The purpose of designating such a zone was to ensure that the areas within it maintain the essential historic character or ambience and the development within the area is undertaken with care and sympathy to form, character and scale of existing heritage sites and buildings. The objectives of the zone are;

- To preserve and conserve buildings or sites of historical, architectural and social significance and to ensure that they are not adversely affected by any new development;
- To conserve and enhance the character, scale and quality of urban landscape of Kuala Lumpur; and
- To provide guidelines to building owners, planners, architects and other concerned professionals, developers and general public with regard to the demolition, protection, conservation or rebuilding of, and alterations and additions to existing buildings that have been designated to be conserved or which fall within designated heritage areas.

VI. Need for Identifying Heritage Zones

Mysore has extremely rich and varied cultural heritage through its tangible and intangible heritage resources. It is clear that the most of the legislations have not been addressed to appreciate, recognize and value the systems. The heritage is threatened by many factors namely uncontrolled developments without any harmony, environmental pressures, and lack of inventories of heritage resources, inadequate heritage legislations and development control, low levels of funding, inadequate expertise, and political will. Besides, built heritage including heritage buildings, monuments and areas are threatened by the decay, obsolescence, deterioration, ignorance. These areas are easily susceptible to economic pressure, vertical growth, vehicular traffic and other environmental problems. The development control includes zoning regulations, building bye-laws and subdivision regulations are not adequate to prescribe the comprehensive heritage rules and regulations for identifying and managing the heritage areas effectively. It is also not able to impose any design controls which results in fail to achieve the desired goals for conserving the existing old valuable buildings and precincts, before they get decayed or destroyed.

The State Archaeological Department has identified few monuments in the city for protection and preservation, but it has no control over the areas beyond protected limits. The planning legislations tends to factor the concept of monuments by neglecting the other types of heritage structures such as built environment, urban design elements, built structures, architecture, imageability and landscapes. For planning and conservation of heritage areas, legislative provisions of the Karnataka Town and Country Planning Act, 1961 is inadequate. Thus, the present laws have become unsuccessful to meet the contemporary realities of integrated development. The conservation of the heritage areas are to be made as an integral part of Master Plan. The plan will be a statutory document which mandates the Planning Authority (Mysore Urban Development Authority) to undertake conservation measures with detailed planning studies, assessment of heritage areas and involvement of all the stakeholders including local authorities, agencies, NGOs and public. The identification of heritage zones has been mandated by the Government of India.

VII. Criteria for Identification

The heritage tool kit emphasizes that the conservation plan should focus on areas identified as *heritage zones* of the city. These zones should be co-terminus with the defined wards of the city. This enables undertaking planning and making investment decisions in discrete areas of the city. In this context, there is need to assess the heritage resources for identifying the 'heritage potential zones'. The potentials zones are very useful in identifying and delineating different heritage zones for developing and enforcing heritage regulations for harmonious conservation planning and management. The City Development Plan, which was prepared under JNNURM, has recommended for identifying and defining the heritage zones by considering the distinct architectural and cultural heritage areas of Mysore. They are, Palace Complex, Royal Mansions of Mysore, Sayyaji Rao Road, Devaraja Market, Church Precincts, Town Hall and Clock Tower Precincts, K.R. Hospital Area, University Campus, Kukkarahalli and Karanji lake environs, Chamarajendra Zoo, Agraharas of Mysore and Chamundi Hill. The criteria that required for delineation of heritage zones are:

- a) Historical evidence and Dasara Festival.
- b) Main tourist attraction.
- c) High concentration of heritage buildings/areas.
- d) Continuous concentration of heritage buildings/areas.
- e) Core area or CBD.

VIII. Delineation of Heritage Zone for Mysore

Comprehensive Development Plan of Mysore city has emphasized that, while permitting developments around the monumental buildings proper care should be taken towards their aesthetic environs. The notified monuments are to be regulated by declaring zone of special control and imposing the following special regulations; building height restrictions starts from 100mts radius with building height of 7.5mts and to a maximum of 400mts radius distance up to 14mts height from ground floor level or inclusive of third floor, whichever is less are only permitted at a distance of 200 to 400mts from the monuments premises. Extending the

same rule to all the notified or listed buildings/areas in the Local Planning Area and also allowing for maximum distance of 400mts radius to all the heritage buildings and 400-500mts distance line from each of the monuments or the line overlaps with each buildings at 400-500mts distance joins together will form a special boundary which will unite all the heritage buildings and delineate from the rest of the city built forms. The delineated area or boundary can be called as control zone heritage boundary or core heritage area and then it can be further classified based on potential of the area as primary, secondary and tertiary heritage zone to carry out to frame special regulations towards their conservation, development and management.

a) Primary Heritage Zone or High Potential Zone

Heritage Zone is an area of special architectural or historic interest and character of which it is desirable to preserve or conserve. These areas are having high potential and contiguous concentration of heritage buildings/areas concentrated and attract more tourists. The central area of Mysore city is historically, architecturally and culturally very prominent due to the presence of Ambavilas Palace and many interesting architectural structures located here in addition to nine day Dasara festival held every year, attracts lakhs of people from all over the world. Palace being the focal point where may be within a 3kms radius many interesting and architecturally important buildings are concentrated contiguously (more than one third of the listed heritage buildings). By keeping these factors the central area (or core area) of Mysore city can be delineated as Heritage core zone or Primary Zone or high potential zone area to formulate special regulations towards conservation and preservation.

b) Medium Potential or Secondary Heritage Zone

These areas/buildings are also richly contributing to the city's imagiability and attract tourists but less potential compared to the primary heritage zone. In these areas buildings may be less contiguous or scattered with few groups here and there. The area beyond primary zone or may influence from 2kms radius and up to 3kms from heritage core boundary and can be delineated as medium potential zone or secondary heritage zone.

c) Tertiary Heritage Zone or Low Potential

This zone consists of mixture of few individual heritage buildings or may old residential areas or may be with new monumental buildings with less significant located beyond core area with less potential as compared to secondary heritage zone.

d) Buffer Zone

Areas that adjoin or connect heritage areas to others and has little historic existing character or natural areas or water bodies or lakes which require conservation.

e) Heritage Site

These are individual buildings or assets located in the local planning area of the city.

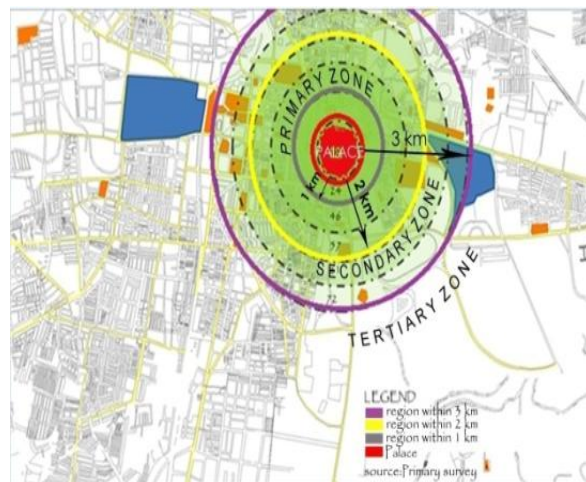


Fig. 1 Concept of Heritage Zones

IX. Strategies for Heritage Zones

Heritage Zone is an area of special architectural or historic interest and character of which it is desirable to preserve or conserve. The purpose of designating this zone is to ensure that the areas within it maintain the essential historic character or ambience and developments are taken care of sympathetically. Heritage zone has not been identified so far by the planning authority in Mysore city and it is the need of an hour to identify heritage zone as stated in the heritage tool kit for all cultural cities. Many incompatible developments and architectural buildings are diminishing in the absence of regulations. In order to delineate heritage zones, the zones of influences of each of monuments are to be known. As the zones of influences varies

from 100 mts to 400 mts for each of the monument as per the state archaeological act, the zone of influence of these monuments can be assumed as 500mts for developing heritage zones or control zone or zone of influence and application of development control regulations to be evolved within the identified heritage zones viz, primary, secondary and tertiary zones. Heritage zone is to be identified on the basis of contiguous and potentials of the heritage buildings/areas and to be delineated by the planning authority. Identified zones may be classified into primary zone, secondary zone, tertiary zone, buffer zone and heritage site.

(a) Primary Heritage Zone

These areas are having high potential and contiguous concentration of heritage buildings/areas concentrated and attract more tourists. Palace being the focal point may be within 2kms radius from the palace, many interesting and architecturally important buildings are concentrated contiguously in the CBD or the central area (or core area) and its adjoining areas in Mysore city; and to be delineated as High potential or Heritage core zone or Primary heritage zone. The development in these areas have to be strictly controlled so as to maintain their existing ambience and to ensure that any alterations or additions to non-gazetted buildings within the areas or new developments do not adversely affect the appearance of the existing buildings or public open spaces. Specific set of guidelines are to be provided to maintain the unique character of these areas. All new developments or proposals for alterations and additions to existing buildings to be referred to a Heritage Cell for review.

(b) Secondary Heritage Zone

These areas/buildings are less potential compare to the primary heritage zone. In these areas, buildings may be less contiguous or scattered with few groups here and there old residential areas are covered. Alterations and additions to the designated heritage buildings as well new developments in Secondary Heritage Zone which are to be subjected to review by the Heritage Cell.

(c) Tertiary Heritage Zone

This zone consists of mixture of few individual heritage buildings or residential areas and along with new buildings with less significant and less potential as compared to secondary heritage zone. Requirements in these areas will be the least stringent and aimed primarily at maintaining the ambience, scale and urban continuity. Alterations and additions to designated heritage buildings as well as new developments in this zone are to be subjected to the review by the Heritage Cell.

(d) Buffer Zone

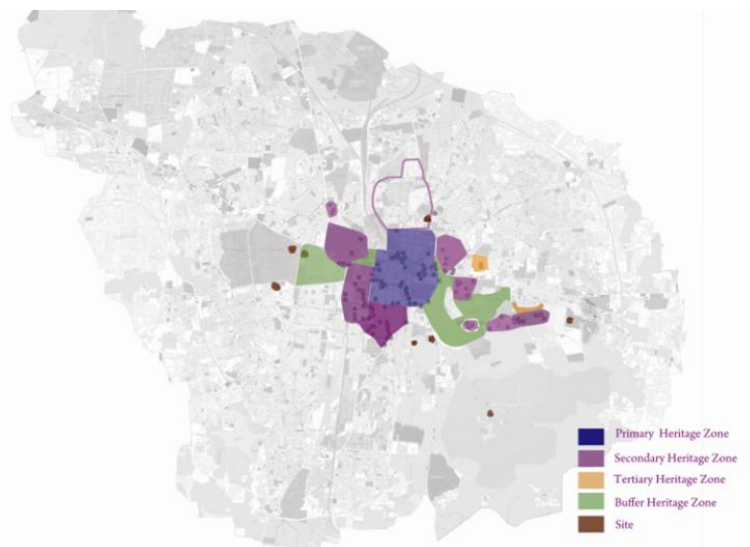
Areas that adjoin or connect heritage areas to others and has little historic existing character or natural areas or water bodies or lakes which require conservation. Its function is to maintain a degree of urban continuity between or around heritage areas and to avoid the sudden juxtaposition of development that is out of scale. Buffer Zones may be in the form of low intensity or predominantly green areas adjoining Primary Heritage Zones where development should maintain the existing character. These zones may also be redevelopment areas between heritage areas where urban continuity in the form of pedestrian linkages, covered walkways and active frontages to be maintained.

(e) Heritage Site

These are individual heritage buildings located within the Local Planning outside the heritage zones. The development control around these sites to be subjected to review by the Heritage Cell.

For the above identified heritage zones, detailed bye-laws and regulations, architectural control and conservation measures need to be framed in the zoning regulations or under *areas of special architectural zone* by the planning authority keeping in view the following aspects:

- a) Restriction on development, redevelopment, repairs etc. in the listed areas/buildings to protect natural / cultural heritage;
- b) Guidelines to ensure protection, preservation, maintenance and conservation of heritage buildings and precincts;
- c) Guidelines to ensure equity & development rights; and
- d) Guidelines and controls to ensure architectural harmony and maintaining the skyline.



Source: Heritage Zones Identified by the Authors

X. Conclusions

The city of Mysore is cultural city and it has been identified as Heritage City both by the Central and State Governments for implementing the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission. In the absence of clear cut identified heritage zones, guidelines and heritage regulations are not been able spelt out in the Zoning Regulations. Heritage zones are to be identified on the basis of contiguous and potentials of the heritage buildings/areas and to be delineated by the planning authority. Identified zones may be classified into primary zone, secondary zone, tertiary zone, buffer zone and heritage site. These zones would act as enabling tools for developing regulating the heritage areas in the City of Mysore effectively.

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BIOGRAPHIES



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