

INTEGRATED SURVEY TECHNIQUES: NEED FOR REDEVELOPMENT PROJECTS: EXPERIENCE OF AN INDIAN CITY AMRITSAR

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ABSTRACT

The importance of heritage has not been yet realised in India. There are more than 3000 historic towns and not even a single has got been declared as world heritage city. This does not mean that survey techniques have not been evolved in this country. Various surveys and studies are required for the planning and development of towns and cities, residential neighbourhood, commercial areas, recreational areas, Industrial estates etc.

Similarly for the preparation of redevelopment plan various surveys and studies are required. Redevelopment projects have also not been given due consideration as for as surveys are concerned.

The present paper is an attempt to highlight the surveys & studies undertaken while preparing redevelopment plan for important historical & religious city Amritsar. Paper will also highlight the need of integrated survey techniques required for such studies on the one hand and various surveys which should form part of the integrated survey techniques such as Physical survey, Land use survey, Building condition, Building use, Building height, Utility network, Circulation, Traffic & transportation surveys, etc. on the other hand.

Amritsar, the city of Golden Temple, was founded by the fourth Sikh Guru, Guru Ramdas in 1577 AD. The city has seen various ups & downs in this short history. Upto 1662 it was attacked by Mughals and from 1665 to 1849 Sikh period or Golden period for the city's physical development especially from the art & architecture angle. From 1849 to 1947 onwards British period and 1947 onwards post independence period.

But the surveys and studies required were completely ignored for preparing redevelopment plans. Redevelopment has always been considered as demolition. The paper will be supported by maps and drawings.

1. INTRODUCTION

The word heritage is getting importance since the last decade as for India is concerned. But still out of more than 3000 historic towns/cities not even a single has got been presented for getting the World Heritage City status. These towns/cities whether historic, religious or princely capitals encompasses rich heritage in terms of forts, palaces, historic gardens, important landmarks, squares, groups of buildings, streets (streetscape), townscape, etc. depicting the way of life of the people, craftsmen skills, building materials and techniques of the period. But most of these cities are changing fast due to absence of attitude for conservation, market pressures and other priorities of development or redevelopment.

The present paper is an effort towards highlighting the experience of redevelopment and surveys & studies conducted for an important historical and religious city, Amritsar while undertaking redevelopment projects. The paper will also highlight the importance of integrated survey technique rather than piecemeal survey approach which had been adopted in the case of existing study.

2. AMRITSAR : AN INTRODUCTION

The city of Amritsar, also famous for its Golden Temple, is located in the north-west part of India about 465 kms from New Delhi. It is located in the east of International Border (Pakistan) waga at a distance of 26 kms. The city was founded in 1577 by the 4th Guru of Sikhs.

The city has seen various ups and downs in its physical development in this short history. Upto 1665 it was invaded by Mughal rulers. From 1665 AD to 1802 it was ruled by different Sikh rulers. They constructed their forts and places, havelis (house with courtyard), gardens, etc. The period from 1802-49 is considered as the Golden period for the physical development of the city. During this period Maharaja Ranjit Singh did lot for

this city such as a garden Rambagh was laid down on the pattern of Shalimar Bagh Lahore, Gobindgarh Fort was constructed, wall around the city with twelve gates was constructed, many Bungas (rest houses), Akharas (Centres of learning), havelis, gardens, beautiful buildings with frescoes & decorative architectural elements added during this period. The basic objective of development was defence. The narrow zig-zag streets, squares (surprising open spaces), streetscape, townscape and above all the gorgeous art work in the Golden Temple are other important landmarks of the period. The next period was from 1849-1947, the British period. The development started beyond the walls. Concept of detached and semi-detached housing introduced, wide road network, cantonment, etc. are the features of this period. Next period is from 1947 to 2005.

It is this period during which many areas were damaged due to the partition of the country in 1947. A special Act was enacted and many redevelopment projects were prepared. Further another redevelopment project was undertaken in 1988 which is still in the implementation stage. On the whole redevelopment was considered as demolition and required surveys were never given due consideration.

How the concept of Redevelopment was considered? Which surveys were conducted? Which legislation was enacted? What was the objective of Redevelopment Projects? These are some of the questions which will be highlighted for understanding the efforts made in this important historic city.

3. AMRITSAR: REDEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCE

During the partition of the country in 1947, the city of Amritsar was affected very badly. It is estimated by Town and Country Planning organisation that due to the riots of 1947, about 20% to 30% of the areas were burnt in the walled city due to riots. Taking into account the above situation an ordinance called Punjab Damaged Areas Ordinance 1949 was promulgated. This

was followed by the Punjab Development of Damaged Areas Act 1951 which supplemented the powers of the Improvement Trust. The Amritsar Improvement Trust was created under the Punjab Town Improvement Act 1922.

3.1 Main Features Of Punjab Development Of Damaged Areas Act 1951

- i) The Act could be applied in the whole state of Punjab.
- ii) Accordingly any area can be declared as damaged area under the preview of the Act for purpose of redevelopment/improvement.
- iii) This new legislation laid down a more convenient procedure for acquisition of land enabling the Trust to take immediate possession of land, defer the payment of compensation for land to each owner to a proportionate share of the income i.e. sale proceeds minus the cost of the scheme.
- iv) All redevelopment projects are to be planned and implemented on no profit, no loss basis.
- v) Power to demolish the structures constructed in contravention to the sanctioned layout plan.

Under this Act, the walled city of Amritsar was declared as damaged area and the Amritsar Improvement Trust was given the responsibility of Planning and implementation of redevelopment projects.

Amritsar is the only city in Punjab where maximum number of redevelopment projects i.e. 56 (fifty six) have been undertaken. The other cities in Punjab where very little efforts have been made for redeveloping the congested and decaying areas are Ludhiana, Patiala and Jalandhar.

But while looking into the redevelopment projects in depth it has been found that the integrated survey technique was missing. The reasons are :

- i) Integrated redevelopment plan for the whole of walled city was not prepared.
- ii) In addition to the areas damaged due to the riots in 1947, various other areas were included for redevelopment. These areas were not damaged due to riots of 1947. For example "An approach road project from Bus Stand to Jallianwala Bagh and Golden Temple" was not part of damaged areas. The objective of this project was different from the concept of redevelopment. i.e. to widen the road to 60' from the existing width which varied from 8' to 13'. No doubt this was an integrated plan, but the desired surveys & studies were not conducted. The whole project was divided into small projects such as Chowk Phowara Jallianwala Bagh Scheme, Chowk Ghanta Ghar Scheme, Bazar Sandukan Scheme, etc. but the main aim was road widening. Some portions of the whole project were implemented. Many people were dislocated and not properly rehabilitated near the area. Similarly the detailed study of another project which was undertaken of the damaged area i.e. 'Katra Moti Ram Area' has shown that the integrated survey techniques were not adopted. Moreover the basic concept of redevelopment has not been understood. It has various reasons :
- a) Amritsar Improvement Trust was the agency which undertook these projects under the "Punjab Development of Damaged Areas Act, 1951". But the Amritsar Improvement Trust was not having any qualified Town Planner at that time.
- b) Some project plans were got prepared from the office of the Divisional Town Planner but they also lack the

understanding of basic techniques of the surveys & redevelopment.

- c) Conservation is an important component of redevelopment which has not yet received due consideration in this city.
- d) The concept of redevelopment has always been considered as equivalent to 'demolition'.

In addition to these projects another project known as "Project for the Redevelopment of Areas around Golden Temple Complex" was undertaken in 1988. It was having five phases. Last phase has yet to start. But the surveys required were never undertaken. The basic objective of this project was "to beautify the areas around Golden Temple". They demolished 30' areas all around the Temple Complex and created open space with trees, shrubs and grass. The press termed this project as "operation demolition". This project also became popular as "Corridor Plan".

In this way, in the city although maximum number of redevelopment projects have been undertaken but the aim was to simply demolish and either widen the road or create a corridor and an open space. The basic surveys required were never undertaken.

4. SURVEYS & STUDIES CONDUCTED

Evaluation of three projects by case study method revealed that no methodology had been adopted for conducting surveys-studies before preparation of redevelopment plans. In case of Chowk Phowara-Jallianwala Bagh Scheme the only available document was the survey plan which was prepared by the Amritsar Improvement Trust after two years from the date of notification. The survey plan (Appendix-I) shows only property numbers, temples & circulation pattern. This was the only information used for the preparation of layout plan i.e. redevelopment plan. How many people uprooted? Where to rehabilitate them? Which buildings need restoration, refurbishment, repointing, cleansing, etc? These questions remained unanswered, as the basic aim was widening of the road under the name of redevelopment.

In addition, the layout plan was also having so many drawbacks such as 'undetailed areas', proposal of a big gate at the Jallianwala Bagh monument (thereby destroying the historic city) etc (Appendix-II). While looking at the implementation stage, it became clear that the main aim was to widen the road only and not redevelopment exercise (Appendix-III).

5. REDEVELOPMENT: SURVEYS & STUDIES REQUIRED

The concept of redevelopment is very sensitive and it needs an integrated approach. A comprehensive study of the whole area should be made. Accordingly, comprehensive redevelopment plan should be prepared. This plan may be divided into small projects but all will have an integrated approach and not adhoc or piece meal approach. Integrated survey approach consists of various surveys and studies which must have relation with each parameter. The various surveys and studies have objectives . The basic objective is healthy living environment without disturbing the character of the area. The various surveys are :

- i) Land use surveys;
- ii) Building condition surveys;
- iii) Building height and floor use surveys;
- iv) Architectural detail survey;
- v) Materials used survey;
- vi) Socio-economic surveys;

- vii) Utilities, facilities & services surveys;
- viii) Traffic & transportation surveys;
- ix) Encroachments survey;
- x) Visuals

The above surveys are very essential for the preparation of redevelopment plan. All the above ten categories need further details. These are detailed in the form of proformas. For example, land use survey will give clear picture of the latest use of land. Use can be residential, residential-cum-commercial, godowns, industrial, circulation, public-semi public, etc. The percentage of land under different uses will have to be as per planning norms and standards. While redeveloping, the existing situation should be kept in mind for evolving planning considerations. Similarly various architectural details, decorative elements and building materials will be an important source of the authenticity of the period of the buildings. They depict the values & life styles of the people of the period. Socio-economic surveys will give the true demographic profile on the one hand and social requirements of the residents on the other hand. It will detail the data in terms of religion, caste, handicapped, blind age sex composition of population which will help in the working out of requirements at the redevelopment stage. Age-sex composition is an important component which is generally neglected. It gives information about males & females in different ages say, below 3 years or between 19-24 ages or above 60 years. This helps in the provision of need based facilities and services.

These proformas will be supported by the base map of the area with each and every property marked on it. All these surveys will be conducted by different teams under the supervision of a team coordinator. After collection of data, the next stage will be compilation of data and then analysis of data. Permutation combination of different parameters will help in understanding the physical and socio-economic profile of the area in real terms.

6. CONCLUSION

Infact, integrated survey technique is an important tool for the diagnose of the area in hand for redevelopment purpose. Just as

a doctor/physician diagnoses a patient before giving any prescription, similarly a planner should diagnose an area with the help of an integrated survey technique and only then proposals for redevelopment should be prepared. But in the case of Amritsar, integrated survey technique is missing. Perhaps the concept of redevelopment is considered as demolition at the cost of rich heritage, which we have lost on the one hand and dislocation of people on the other hand.

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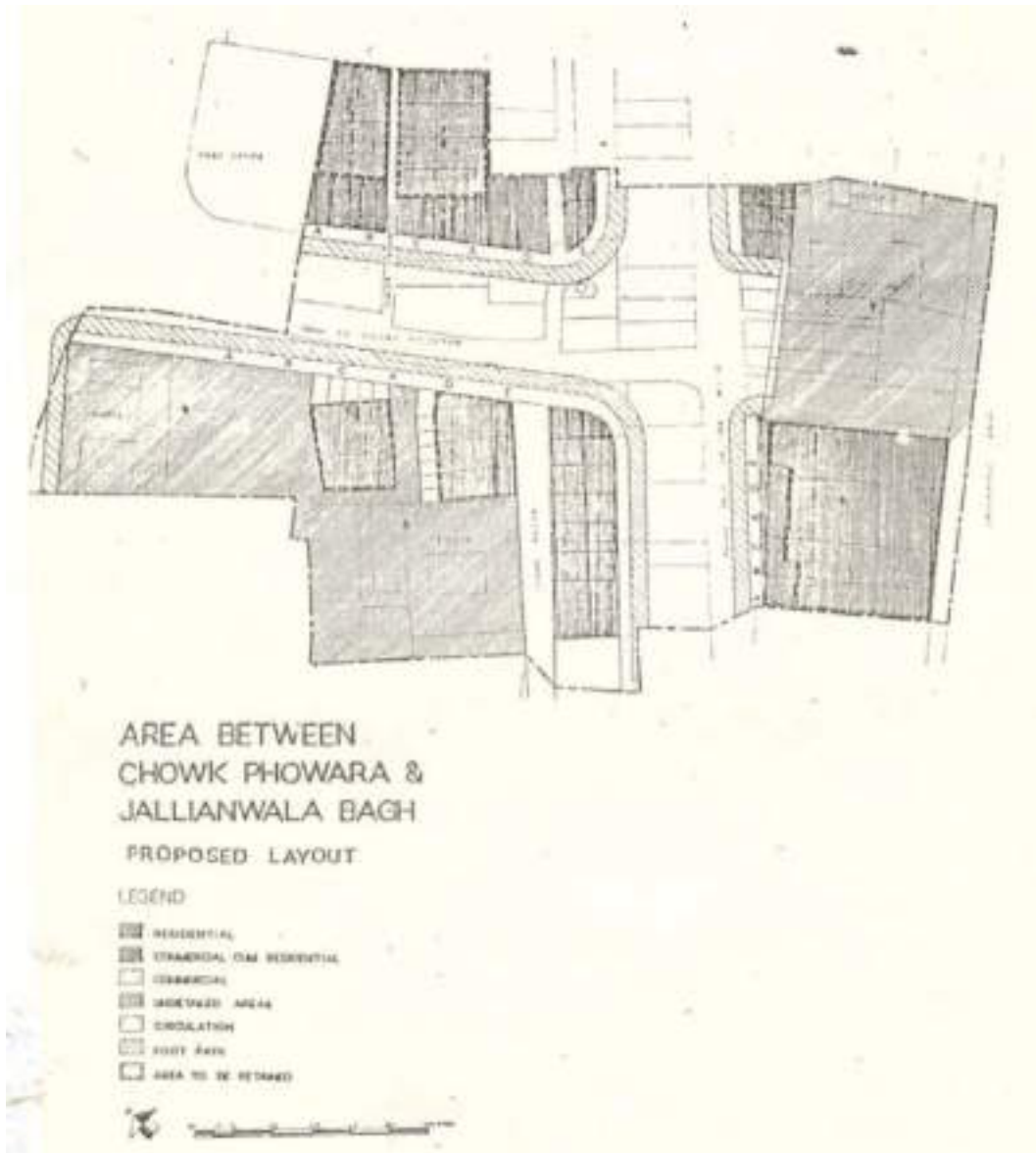
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APPENDIX A. TITLE 4



Survey Plan which indicates the narrow entry of the historic Jallianwala Bagh : inadequate surveys.

APPENDIX B. TITLE 4



Proposed layout plan : Many areas were not detailed. The traditional entry to the historic monument proposed to be replaced by a big gateway, reflection of attitude towards conservation. Proposed layout plan: Many areas were not detailed. The traditional entry to the historic monument proposed to be replaced by a big gateway, reflection of attitude towards conservation.

APPENDIX C. TITLE 4



Implementation: Only road was widened, fortunately the traditional entry to the historic Jallianwala Bagh not demolished due to poor enforcement of the plan.