

# ACHR Heritage for People Project



## Bhaktapur, Nepal Mission Report

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### Cover Images:

left: Durbar Square before the 1934 earthquake (UDEL)

right: Durbar Square in 2007

this page: Café Nyatapola, Taumaldhi Square

## INTRODUCTION

In 1997 Bhaktapur, along with 6 other sites in Kathmandu valley, was inscribed as a monumental zone in a UNESCO World Heritage site of Kathmandu Valley. In 2003 UNESCO's World Heritage Committee inscribed Kathmandu Valley and its monumental zones on its list of World Heritage in Danger, giving its reason as 'Newari Architectural Design, which has gradually disappeared due to uncontrolled urban development'<sup>1</sup>. Among contributing factors to this 'uncontrolled urban developments' are population growth, economic and social changes, increase pollution, looting and illegal building activities.

Koto Kanno, Head of the UNESCO office in Kathmandu states that 'in the Kathmandu Valley, the surroundings are as much part of the cultural heritage as the monuments themselves. Yet people are largely unaware of the treasures right there in front of them'<sup>2</sup>

This report aims to study the past and present working of World Heritage restoration and maintenance scheme in Bhaktapur, Nepal, in order to understand impacts of heritage conservation and tourism on the urban poor.

During our stay in Nepal, the essence of 'Nepal' came across strongly as being more than just its architecture and culture, the very components that make Kathmandu Valley known around the world for its 'living museums'. The strength of its people, their highly sophisticated social structure and its reflections on the daily lives and living environments were seen as opportunities for building and expanding a strong foundation for the region's growth.

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<sup>1</sup> UNESCO World Heritage: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/121>

<sup>2</sup> UNESCO Kathmandu: <http://www.unesco.org/kathmandu>

## BHAKTAPUR: LOCATION, HISTORY, AND ITS PEOPLE

Located 1320 m above sea level on the eastern rim of Kathmandu Valley, Bhaktapur is 12 kilometer east of Kathmandu, capital of Nepal. This royal kingdom, also known as Bhadgaon or 'the city of devotees', was built in the shape of a conch shell spread out over a ridge which rises up between Hanumante river to the South and its small tributary, Kasan Kusi river, to the North.

Today the city's southern edge is more clearly defined by Arniko highway, built in the early 60's to connect Kathmandu with Tibet, and its northern edge marked by the Kathmandu-Narkagot road. The main road through Bhaktapur still coincides with the city's historical trade route between India and Tibet. Most commercial and retail outlets are situated long this curving West-East road which leads from its mini bus park in the west to Nasamana, passing Potters' square through Taumaldhi, Skuldhaka, Golmadhi and Dattatreya, with its famous five-storey Nyatapola Temple, before exiting the town's eastern periphery (see map page 4). Most activities are concentrated around Sukuldhaka while tourists wandering spiraled out from Durbar Square, the Malla Royal Center, to join in with this main thoroughfare.



left to right: Dattatreya Square, Potters' Square, Golden Gate in Durbar Square and Nyatapola temple in Taumaldhi Square

### GOVERNANCE:

Bhaktapur is the headquarters of Bhaktapur district in Bagmati Zone within Central Development Region of Nepal. Within Bhaktapur Municipality itself (previously known as the Nagar Panchayat), the city is divided into 17 wards, which elect one representative each to the Municipality. Local inhabitants, however, still very much distinguish themselves into 24 toles, the traditional divisions within built up area of the town.



map of Bhaktapur with its water bodies and public spaces mapping (not to scale)

THE RISE:

Though today it is the smallest of the three royal kingdoms in Kathmandu Valley, Bhaktapur was once the valley's center of cultural, economical and political power. Founded in 889AD by king Ananda Dev, it was initially no more than a string of villages along this prosperous trade route.

The town became a royal kingdom during the reign of Malla Kings (1350-1768) where Newari art, craft and architecture blossomed, reaching their heights in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century. Well supported financially by tax collected from traders passing through town, enroute between India and Tibet, the town prospered until the end of Malla reigns. At its peak the city boasted 172 temples and monasteries, 77 water tanks, 172 pilgrim shelters and 152 wells<sup>3</sup>.



left to right: Tachupal Tole in the early 60's with Dattatreya Temple; Barbuche Dhoka, the city's western gate in early 1920s, Nyatapola Temple can be seen in the background; the palace and temples in ruin in 1934; residential buildings were severely damaged or destroyed in the same quake (UDEL)

THE FALL:

Several factors contributed to the decline of Bhaktapur, their main components are:

- 1768 Gorkha King, Prithvi Narayan Shah overthrown the Malla Kings and established a united Kingdom, centralized power is relocated to Kathmandu, stripping Bhaktapur of its seats of power.
- 1846-1951 During the period of Rana Kings Newari Arts were suppressed.
- 1934 A big earthquake that came at the time where Bhaktapur's economical situation is already deteriorating and no fund was available to its inhabitants to sufficiently repair their houses.
- 1951 After the revolution against Rana rule in 1950, Nepali Congress Party was found to lead a new government. This created large amount of administrative and governmental jobs in Kathmandu, generating a drain of young, educated Bhaktapurians towards secure income and improved status.
- 1959 The closing of Tibet border, and therefore the closing of its trade route to India via Bhaktapur, severely affected its declining economy.

<sup>3</sup> Lonely Planet Guide to Nepal, 2006

Early 60's Construction of Arniko Highway linking Kathmandu to China, bypassing Bhaktapur along with construction of Tribhuvan International Airport in Kathmandu. Introduction of cheaper products made from materials like plastic and aluminium from India contributes to the fall of demand for locally products of brass and clay.

**THE PEOPLE:**

Indigenous inhabitants of the valley, the Newars, who initially populated the town still accounts for more than 50 percent of its occupants today. Majority of the Newars lead their lives as subsistence farmers then, as many still do, up-holding hard but self-sustained life styles. The farmers grew most of what they needed on their own land, and traded services for grains. Their settlements show a very high contrast between densely populated private dwellings and the generously proportioned public spaces that are located around the city - the key essence of their social life.

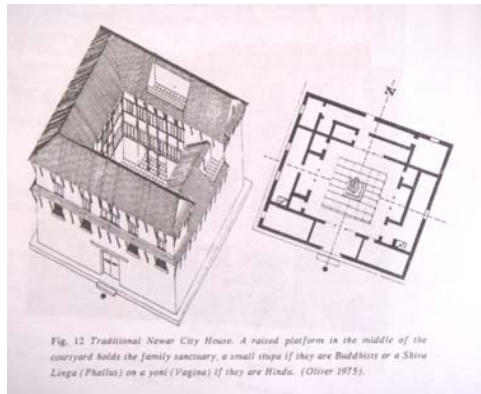


Fig. 12 Traditional Newar City House. A raised platform in the middle of the courtyard holds the family sanctuary, a small stupa (if they are Buddhists or a Shiva Linga (Phallus) on a yoni (Yagine) if they are Hindu. (Oliver 1975).



left to right: traditional Newar city house (BDP); patti generates great social spaces on street sides; water are just as an important part of the city

**THE CASTE:**

Caste defines private and professional opportunities as well as guiding religious rituals, marriage partners, eating habits and social interactions. The four main castes in Hindu are: The Brahmins, originally priests; the Chhetries, who were warriors and kings; the Vaishyas, merchants and farmers; and the Shudras, who were the cultivators, artisans and servants. Beneath the shudras were the outcastes, those who work with waste and dead animals and are confined to live in the periphery of the settlements. In Bhaktapur, the 4 main castes are further divided into 64 occupational sub-caste, people within the same caste share supportive relationships, providing each other with stability and personal security. Though the caste system was officially abolished in 1962, it continues to define the lives and status of most Nepalis.

The effect of caste system also encompasses the architecture in which they live in. Decorative windows, world-famous in Bhaktapur, are only to be found on houses of higher caste while the lower caste are prevented to build more than two

stories and barred from putting small tiles on their roofs. The outcastes had to live outside the built up areas and, until the 20<sup>th</sup> century, were only allowed to build houses on one floor and use sun dried bricks, bamboo and straw.

This complex society also shaped the layout of Bhaktapur as their social structures are reflected in the city's architecture and infrastructure. As with other Newar city, the city is divided into neighbourhood, or *tole*, usually consisting of around 150-300 houses each 3-4 stories high. *Tole* names, used instead of street names, were often the result of the neighbourhood temples and monasteries; or it is a reflection of the *tole*'s socio-economic structure such as Lower Butcher *Tole* or Carpenter's *Tole* as most of the occupational caste groups live together in clusters. The *toles* are often dominated by one caste though it is seldom caste-homogenous.

#### GUTHI:

Guthi is a local caste-based system of organizations formed within neighbourhoods to protect their traditional and cultural heritage, from birth, marriages, death and festivals. Land ownership gives them incomes that are then used in maintenance of local temples and public spaces. This seems a role model to modern day religious co-operatives.

Traditionally there were three main types of guthis; those supported by the government, registered privately funded guthis and unregistered private guthis. In 1959, however, the government introduced Land Tax and by the early 60s agreements were made for the government to take over Guthis' land and provide for their funds and maintenance. Through various change of policies and 'fixed rate' approach to its funding, as well as guthi land being reused as governmental offices or army camps, guthi system slowly deteriorates, and with it the decline of family dependency structure, where a sense of neighbourhood ownership slowly disappears.



## TOWARDS WORLD CONSERVATION

In 1974 to walk through Bhaktapur would mean to wade through its muddy alleys. Sadly this once prosperous city has come to be known for its disease-ridden city and Bhaktapurians were known in the past to be dirty, poor, traditional and stubborn. Communicable diseases kept life expectancy low and infant mortality rate high.

### BHAKTAPUR DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

It all started with the restoration of Dujahari Math on Dattatreya Square as a wedding gift to His Majesty the King Birendra from the Federal Republic of Germany. This led into an agreement between the two governments to form Bhaktapur Development Project (BDP) 'an integrated urban development project', sometimes better known among the locals as the 'German Restoration Project'. The project started in 1974 to 'improve the living conditions of the Bhaktapurians'<sup>4</sup> and lasted for 11 years.

The work done by BDP can be divided into 3 phases, and what was most important to the project was its philosophy in working simultaneously between planning and implementation. This is evident through the phases and we believe the project had much benefited as the result.

#### PHASE 1: 1974 - 1976

The project started off as a 'technical assistance' project, and the proposal made by German consultants with little or no involvement from the Nepali side. The first phase comprises of two main sectors:

1. Construction Work: Concentrating in the North Eastern part of the town, the work included
  - a. Installing sewage system; including public and private toilets as well as oxidation ponds
  - b. Renewal of existing water distribution network
  - c. Paving of lanes and squares
  - d. Restore Architecturally important buildings
  - e. Assist in private house renewals
2. Urban Development Planning: Resulting in the initial Bhaktapur Development Plan

While this phase was carried out successfully, lack of local involvement in the decision making phase came to cause problems in the next phase.

#### PHASE 2: 1976 - 1979

Part of this phase was a continuation of phase 1, and by 1979 various works has been accomplished:

1. Construction Work: 40% of the town has been covered by sewers, water systems and paved streets; as well as continued restoration work, though at a slower pace than in phase 1.
2. Urban Development Planning: Bhaktapur Town Development Plan and Land Use Plan, the two major planning documents, were finalized.

The project team, however, was beginning to realize a mismatched agenda between BDP and the locals whose requirements are more towards economic and educational developments. As works on restorations and infrastructure continues, local

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<sup>4</sup> Haalard, Anne: Bhaktapur - A Town Changing, Craftsman Press, Bangkok, 1982, p.50

workers are hired and their skills developed, but at the same time they are being pulled away from their subsistence farming and their thoughts turned towards sustainable employments. Restorations were all very well, but they could not envisage direct benefits towards themselves. Work began to slow as locals drag out the project to prolong their employments.

After consultations with the locals, some of the project's efforts were put towards income generating activities as in construction of Handicraft Bazaar and Workshop. At the same time, due to various reasons, the anticipated transfer of responsibilities to the Nepali counterparts was being stuck on paper.

During this phase, the project team has come around to the conclusion that both the problems they were having with the locals and Nepali experts were sprung from lack of emphasis on participation within decision-making stages of the project. The result is lack of feeling of 'ownership' towards the projects. This led into the 'Carry Over Phase' in 1980-1981 where construction work continued at a much reduced speed. During this year BDP was being restructured to introduce people participation into this experimental urban development project.

#### PHASE 3: 1980 - 1985

'The keyword to this phase is participation.'<sup>5</sup> This new approach has brought about changes in project organization and decision-making, and several groups and committees were formed to help Bhaktapurians develop their own skills and promote self-reliance and independence:

1. Local Development Committees (LDCs) were conceived in the carry-over phase 'as a system to give towns people more freedom to decide on projects and development priorities in their own neighborhood. The LDCs were to organize the work to be carried out, with material, technical and financial support from BDP. It was hoped that in some areas people would rejuvenate the traditional social organizations, and cooperatively work on the tasks of common concern to the community.'<sup>6</sup>
2. Community Development Unit (CDU) was created by BDP's initiative to involve and make use of social scientists from different fields - mainly in communication and anthropology. CDU was staffed with community planners and communication specialists and work as an important link between BDP and the locals as well as within BDP itself.
3. On the government level, Ministry of Panchayat and Local Development (MPLD) - the beginning of present day Bhaktapur Municipality Office - was created to implement His Majesty's Government's new policy of decentralization, with the intention of promoting a more people-oriented development. BDP was the first project practicing user group approach to be sanctioned by MPLD.

BDP's international staffs were cut by half at the beginning of this phase, and those that remained become more of an advisors rather than doers and the main responsibility for BDP was given to MPLD. Emphasis on training and scholarships has also increased in this third phase, taking into account the new approach of community development and economic resource promotion.

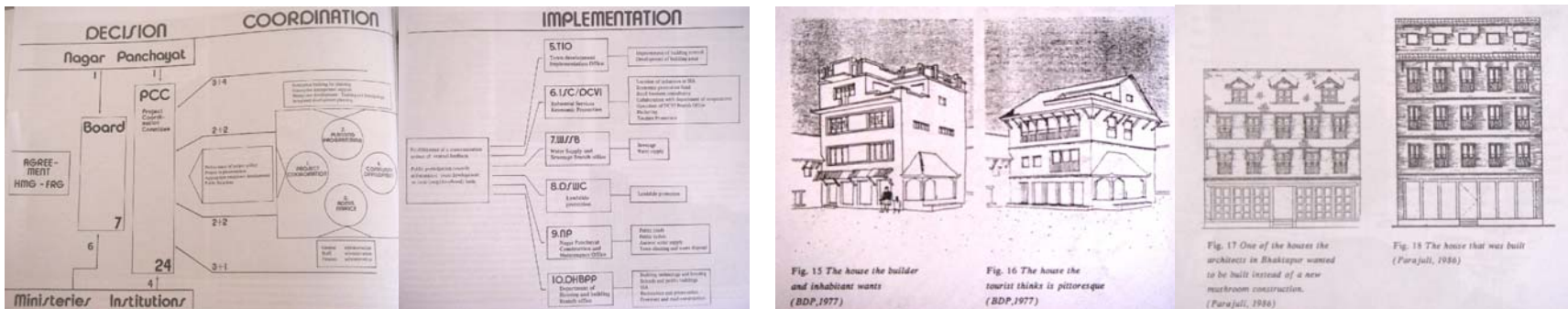
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<sup>5</sup> Haalard, Anne: Bhaktapur - A Town Changing, Craftsman Press, Bangkok, 1982, p.59

<sup>6</sup> Haalard, Anne: Bhaktapur - A Town Changing, Craftsman Press, Bangkok, 1982, p.59

While this new approach came out with mixed results, as some LCD worked much better than others, it meant a change of attitude from local people towards the project; development is no longer something that 'happens' to them, but that they were active members in making development happens around them. At the same time, it is difficult to measure the extent of people's improved ability to organize themselves, using their old traditional social structures, in the context of functional user groups. It is also 'difficult to show that attitudes have changed, or that knowledge about the link between damp houses and health, or hygiene and health, has improved as a result of a process where people were involved in all stages of the planning and implementation of the work'<sup>7</sup>.

At this stage, the Town Implementation Office (TIO) - known as Building Permit Section today - has also taken over the job of the previous planning unit in BDP, dealing with Land Use Plan, regulations and design standards. There was, however, a lingering feeling of resentment that the plans did not come as the result of the people's involvement and that regulations were there to tell them what not to do with their own homes.



left to right: BDP's flexible loop project structure from planning to implementation allowed it to adapt to the project's changing demands (Haalard); gaps existed between what is wanted and what is deemed 'traditionally acceptable' (BDP)

All in all, BDP has achieved much and its effects are far reaching into today.

Among those what we found particularly interesting are:

1. Project adaptation through simultaneous working between planning and implementation.
2. Intention to have people participation and involvement in all stages of the work and the subsequent setting up of local user group committees to take over.
3. Training of local skilled labour and teachers.
4. Introduction of social scientists into the working among all interested parties.
5. Collaborations with locally existing social structure, as is the case of locally initiated restoration of a temple in Taumaldhi Square where BDP provided technical and financial help while the locals provided labour.

<sup>7</sup> Haalard, Anne: Bhaktapur - A Town Changing, Craftsman Press, Bangkok, 1982, p.64

## BHAKTAPUR TODAY

Arriving in the middle of the day, a tourist could be forgiven into thinking that Bhaktapur is a sleepy and quiet monumental town. With the sun beating down hard, Durbar Square becomes inhabitable; Random tourists walk around admiring beautiful architectural monuments<sup>8</sup>. Only at 5 o'clock, the end of office (or tourist) hours, do the town come back to life, taking over public spaces, continuing from where it left off at 9 o'clock that morning, at the start of office hour.

Upon careful observations several things soon become apparent:

1. At \$10 or Rs.750, it is one of the most expensive World Heritage's Monumental Sites in Kathmandu Valley.
2. The existence and continued usage of traditional public spaces such as squares, pokhari, patti, hithi, satal, bahal and math (see glossary).
3. Active usage of religious monuments and continuing ritual performances regardless of tourist influx. Co-existence seems to come naturally to Bhaktapurians.
4. Local economy, involving small traders, continues independently outside of office hours.
5. Tourism seems to have little, if any, financial effect on the lives of Bhaktapurians except those who have taken up business that deal directly with tourists, such as souvenir shops, guesthouses or travel agencies.
6. Restorations of religious monuments appear extremely well managed by the Municipality Office.
7. Though complaints can be heard about strict building codes, in general new buildings and private restorations tend to adhere to regulations and integrate well within overall fabric of the city.



from left to right: tourist posing with a guarding lion in front of a math; Taumalddhi Square during local rush hour; Children 'posing' by Guhya pokhari

<sup>8</sup> At the time of this study, the 55 Window Palace in Durbar Square is undergoing major restoration project by Bhaktapur Municipality with the support of Department of Archaeology in Kathmandu.

**BHAKTAPUR MUNICIPALITY OFFICE:**

Today the responsibility of the city's up-keep falls to the Municipality Office. With close to 10,000 visitors arriving in Bhaktapur annually (a fall of almost half from 1998-2001)<sup>9</sup>, each paying \$10 per entry, Bhaktapur Municipality is more or less self-supporting, only partly relying on financial support from central government. Fifty percent of this entry fees goes directly towards restoration works.

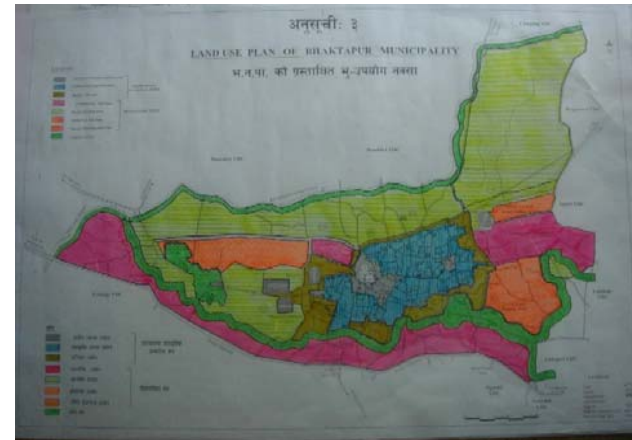
During the course of our study we came into contact with 3 sections within the Municipality Office:

1. Heritage Section: Mainly taken up by architects, the section is responsible for cataloguing buildings, especially those within conservation zones, and assigning their restoration priority based on importance and urgency. Technical support is also provided for those wishing to do private restorations and approval of traditional restoration is required from this section before subsidies can be received from the Municipal. They also play an important role in establishing Land Use map.
2. Building Permit Section: Building map is managed from this section and it was the major player in setting of Land Use map 3 years ago. In the case of private sector restorations, this is the first place to set things in motion. Proof of land ownership and, if the building is within the 2 central zones, approved plan of restoration or construction according to strict building codes are needed before the applications can be endorsed.
3. Planning and Technical Section: Despite what the name implies, this section deals mainly with the technical side of the city, namely in reconstruction, repair and maintenance of roads, water and sewage system as well as solid waste management system.

**LAND USE MAP:**

This most recent Land Use Map, a joint effort between Building Permit section and Heritage section as a result of defining protected monumental zone and possibly in an effort towards removing Kathmandu Valley from UNESCO World Heritage in Danger List, was drawn up in 2004. It divides land use around Bhaktapur Municipality into three main zones:

1. Traditional Cultural Zone: consisting of Protected Monumental Sub Zone, Cultural Heritage Sub Zone and Buffer Sub Zone. Buildings in this area have a height restriction of 35 ft. of no more than 4 storeys while the Buffer zone allows buildings to go up to 41 ft. without exceeding the 4-storey limit. Private buildings within the central two sub zones are eligible for restoration subsidies by the Municipality, which include 100% of front façade bricks and roof tiles along with 75% of the total cost of timber.



Land Use Map (Bhaktapur Municipality)

<sup>9</sup> Monthly Tourist Record for 1993-2006 from Tourist Service Centre, Bhaktapur Municipality

2. Developing Zone: divided into Residential, Commercial, Industrial and Special Planning Sub Zones. This Zone has a limit of 5-storey with a 42-52 ft. height restriction.
3. Green Zone: covering areas of set back from the city's two rivers.

#### SETTLEMENT PATTERNS:

In the past, Brahmin settlement can be found in the immediate surroundings of Durbar Square, with other castes forming expanding rings of settlements around this epicenter and the main trade route in descending order. This general pattern no longer holds true today as those of higher caste who can afford to have either moved to Kathmandu or to the suburb where they have no control over their building size and style, with no traffic restrictions. Their houses' ground floors are rented out to souvenir shops operating around the Traditional Cultural Zone. There have also been changes in financial status hierarchy as those of lower caste adapt their professions towards tourist-orientated trades or taking up newly emerged professions like taxi drivers and guides, while middle class would not take up jobs that are 'below' them and slowly decline financially. It is therefore no longer a simple matter of identifying 'poor' region(s) within the city, but further detailed study must be conducted to identify those with low income.

As far as we could ascertain, no eviction has occurred as the result of tourism boom in the city apart from one or two cases where houses were bought for the purposes of converting them into guesthouses.

#### PUBLIC SPACES:

Public spaces within the city are in good conditions, partly due to some central restoration works of the Municipality but also as the result of them being in constant use by the city's inhabitants that their maintenance and upkeeps are constantly cared for by local communities as well as by traditional local support structure like the guthis.

#### PUBLIC MONUMENT RESTORATION AND TRAINING:

Monumental restoration works are carried out by Heritage section within Municipality Office, and sometimes in collaboration with Department of Archaeology in Kathmandu. There is also training provided by Municipality for 2-3 participants from each ward, especially in woodcarving skill. Skilled labours are hired on a freelance basis. Though Heritage section has only come into existence 5 years ago, the work seems to run smoothly and methodologically and the work produced in this sector is astounding.

The local, Municipality-run, Kwoppa Engineering College now offers and MA course in Urban Planning and Conservations, the first in the country. Mr. Pratapati, Heritage section's senior architect, also teaches there in the conservation department.

There have been one or two community-initiated restorations where local people put in their labour for free, in order to restore temples that are close to their hearts, obtaining material support through donations and Municipality.

#### PRIVATE SECTOR RESTORATION:

As mentioned above, in order to obtain permission from Building Permit Section for a private residence restorations and new builds, proof of ownership and Heritage section approved plan of restorations/buildings are required. Subsidies can then be obtained from the Municipality, in the form of materials (bricks and roof tiles) as well as financial (75%

of timber cost), if the building falls within the two central sub zones. Even with subsidies the cost of restoring and upgrading a house would still be high, woodcarving in particular is very costly.

One private house in the north of the city has been restored with support fund from Department of Archaeology, though details of how this came about are not known to us at present.



left to right: it's \$10/Rs750 per entry; woodcarvers working next to restoration site; 55 Windows Palace under going restoration; public display notice on restoration work

## WHAT IS NOT WORKING?

On a city scale:

1. Lack of water - both in quantity and quality: Royal systems of water distribution that relied on ground and surface water has either run out of its sources or been hampered by new building foundations. While many now have private water taps in their houses, a large majority still relies on well, working hithi and water tank stations provided by the Municipality.



left to right: women of the house line up their wares for the water line; disused hithi; the city's ancient sewer line to the river; Bhaktapur's compost site south of the city

2. Sewage system: the population has simply outgrown the system put into place during the BDP era, the oxidation pond as planned and implemented by BDP simply lay overgrown and disused as it is incapable to deal with what the city requires today. There is also lack of household level wastewater treatment initiatives. Wastewater currently goes directly into Hanumante River in the south of the city.
3. Solid Waste Management: Again, a growing problem along with the city's growing population (close to 70,000 today<sup>10</sup>); only a small portion of this farming society goes towards compost.
4. Roads Maintenance: despite the Municipality's effort at banning heavy vehicle from Protected Monumental zone, traffics and building activities around town are causing heavy damage to Bhaktapur's brick laid streets, which Municipality is having trouble keeping up with the repair and maintenance works.
5. Land title: we have identified two groups of people living without land ownership in the city; one are those settled illegally on the edge of compost site, the other are people who have settled in a *satal* over a long period of time and have socially-accepted rights to inhabitations though with no legal rights.
6. Monumental Restorations: apart from those skilled labours being hire by the Municipality, there is no participation from the side of Bhaktapurians. Though there still exist some forms of 'local user groups', their roles and functions are unclear, seemingly acting as no more than consultation panels.
7. Private Sector Restoration and Land Use Map: Setting of criteria for restoration and its subsidies are still very much top down and discontents are expressed regarding building codes and zoning regulations.

<sup>10</sup> Nepal District Profile 2006





left to right: dark and damp streets have lead to respiration related illness; restorations are being treated individually while the city fabric is more complex; improvised open sewer

On a household scale:

1. Structurally Newari city houses were built as part of row houses or courtyard houses and their structures are dependent on each other. Since properties are often divided up among the sons of the family, restorations do not always occur at the same time, depending on which brother has the financial means first. As the result, Restoration work in one house can cause serious structural problems to its neighbours.
2. Building regulations within Traditional Cultural Zone aims at 'freezing' the buildings, which are not always well suited to today's need. Height restrictions also mean that extended families cannot expand their habitation spaces to house their extra members.
3. Lack of awareness of official Land Use map and its implications.

## CONSERVATION FOR TOMORROW

No project in Bhaktapur can be ignorant of the ever-present, sophisticated and complex structure of Newari societies. Use of the society's communal, supportive elements could well be done to benefit future development related projects in Bhaktapur. We were particularly drawn to the system of guthis as its traditional function was also to maintain, restore and protect for the benefit of the communities.

At present, private housing restorations are being seen as individual private projects rather than taken as opportunities for neighbourhood-wide restorations, upgrading its scenery and public spaces at the same time while encouraging community participation that could lead towards setting up of a co-operative like structure to support the upkeep of communities' housing. By co-existing with social support structure, like guthi, this should be more than promising as well as giving the poorer inhabitants of the communities the possibility of financial support to repair their houses.

While some guthis have closed down over the years due to lack of funding, a large number still operates today maintaining maths, bahals and pattis as well as conducting religious festivals for their neighbourhoods. Involvement of local participation through these social structures in all stages of the process, as realised by the BDP team, is deemed vital in these processes.

### POSSIBLE IMMEDIATE ACTIONS:

1. It would be most beneficial for the capable Municipality staffs, especially those in the Heritage section, to get exposed to different models of heritage conservations, where community participation play an important role in restorations of 'their' heritage. Workshops and discussions with ACHR members could largely allow them to develop a new approach to their conservation work.
2. Identification of the urban poor within Bhaktapur should be done in collaborations between the Municipality, Tole representatives and Guthi representatives in order to prioritize groups of houses that will urgently need assistance. It should be stressed that these surveys should be done through community representatives using community members as 'surveyors'. Apart from being a way to gauge their readiness to work as a community, it will also paint a truer picture of their living conditions than can be done by outsiders. In this process of identifying both problems and opportunities, people can also be encouraged to start looking at 'conservations' as a community activity rather than individualistically, which can lead to discussion on how each community should proceed with their own set of requirements. Problems such as 'freezing' of house styles can possibly be solved through design process with a help of architects through discussion within the communities.

This should lead to identification of toles that have the potential to run as pilot projects, where little of the social setting has changed and its inhabitant influxes are low.

FURTHER STUDIES:

We feel that the following requires more insights prior to further work within the city:

1. identification of a tole that have potential as a pilot project where little of the social setting has changed and its inhabitant influxes are low.
2. Direct discussions with local Bhaktapurians to gain their insights, which we have not had the chance to pursue, also as a way to confirm understandings made in this report.
3. Land ownership systems in both private and public sectors.
4. Cost of construction for different types of Newari houses; their material costs as well as labour cost.
5. Detailed understanding of local groups and organisations such as guthi, co-operatives, saving groups, occupation groups, women groups, youth club, etc.



## GLOSSARY

Bahal	quadrangle surrounded by houses on all sides with a temple in the middle
Ghat	area by the river where cremations take place
Guthi	religious or caste-bound association of persons responsible for the management of religious, cultural and philanthropic land endowments
Hithi	deep set watering places or well with one or more stone taps, often with artistic stone ornaments, walls and steps
Khola	River
Mahanta	keeper of a math appointed by a guthi to maintain the building and to execute the donor's will
Math	building provided by a guthi, usually to feed and house pilgrims or the poor
Nagar	town
Panchayat	the local council of elected representatives
Patti	resting place for travelers, usually in the form of a roof-covered platform, open on two or three sides
Pokhari	artificial pond
Satal	public resting place for longer sojourns

## RESCOURCES

### INTERVIEWS:

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#### Heritage Section:

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#### Jangjyoti Library:

- Bhupal Mool, Library Officer

### LUMANTI URC

We would also like this opportunity to thank those at Lumanti URC, Nepal for the use of their resource library and help in providing us with contacts and all the information we needed.



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- UNESCO Kathmandu: <http://www.unesco.org/kathmandu>
- Visit Nepal: <http://www.visitnepal.com>