

7. Viability of Conservation Area Designation - Case Study: Karachi

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The historical outlook of Karachi is diminishing day by day; the demolition of the listed buildings and unsympathetic development in Karachi caused rapid loss of the cultural and historic urban landscape and destroying the collective character of the city. The characteristics of historic layout do not only include heritage buildings alone; it extends beyond buildings and include streets, boundaries, trees, paths and views. A particular use of buildings, open spaces between, and around buildings such as parks, greens, thoroughfares, chowks (squares) also remind historic views. These '*collective character*' of tangible monuments and intangible memories need to be protected. The research aims to introduce the concept of Conservation Area Designation to outlive the heritage beauty existing in the city.

Designation of a conservation area is an established philosophy and practice in most developed countries, from which Pakistan can take positive guidance. The research is based on the pre research understanding about the subject including international policies and charters; and how they influenced on the viability of the conservation of historic areas. The research starts by critically analyzing the status of heritage properties, from retrospection to transformation and then its revival form; placing special emphasis on the urgent need of the conservation of historic quarters of Karachi. An analysis of the current status of heritage of Karachi is following by the research project of Karachi Heritage Building Resurvey Project, conducted by DAPNED. Finally, the paper intends to propose the merit of conservation area designation in terms of cultural, economical and environmental regeneration and its potential of benefits in the context of Karachi.