

INTEGRATING HERITAGE SITES INTO CONTEMPORARY URBAN AREAS - THE CASE OF THE LAGOS METROPOLIS

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Abstract

Urban and Regional Planning is primarily concerned with city development, incorporating physical, socio-cultural and economic growth of places. It is expedient for planning to integrate historical factors into the general outlook of a city's image, identity and overall form. Planners and policy makers are responsible for devising means by which a city's historical aspects could be harnessed to achieve both political and economic development within the framework of city planning. The Lagos metropolis, Nigeria's primary urban centre, is growing both in size and population. However, as the city develops, its history, form and ancient characteristics are gradually and continually being expunged. This has led to the development of a Lagos metropolis that has all the properties of an urban center but has failed to realize the potentials which its historical background can contribute to its overall physical, socio-cultural and economic development. This paper assesses the key sites of historical value and importance in the Lagos metropolis, their maintenance and management over the years and the efforts of government and other stakeholders towards their integration into the emerging megacity in line with global best practices, heritage preservation and sustainable urban development

KEYWORDS: Urban Planning; Historic Preservation District; Heritage Sites

1.0 Introduction

With the current size and foreseen increase of the world's population living in urban areas, supplemented by insufficient policies to recognize and facilitate sustainable use of heritage assets, pressures on historic cities will continue to rise, making historic urban landscape conservation one of the most daunting tasks of our time (George, 2004). The issues negatively affecting the protection and conservation of World Heritage sites are numerous and often inter-related ranging from uncontrolled urban development, urban upgrading, need for accessibility and housing, to high-rise constructions and inner city functional changes. Contemporary urban planning has evolved over the years both in theory and practice concerning issues of managing the existing urban fabric and the built heritage landscape, largely as a result of economic forces. Many cities have been transformed from concentrated and identifiable towns into amorphous urban areas. Although the contribution of cities to the national economy of both developed and developing countries is crucial, the forces of urban growth often destroy the very social, cultural and environmental fabric they were intended to improve.

Changes accompanying urban growth frequently involve the destruction of distinctive and meaningful built and natural elements, eradicating the physical expression of former indigenous ways of life that are very much part of the settlement culture. Consequently, all urban communities, whether they have developed gradually over time or have been created deliberately, are an expression of the diversity of societies throughout history and charter. This charter concerns historic urban areas, large and small, including cities, towns and historic centres or quarters, together with their natural and man-made environments (World Heritage Convention, 2006). However, beyond their role as historical documents, these areas embody the values of traditional urban cultures. Today many such areas are being threatened, physically degraded, damaged or even destroyed, by the impact of the urbanization. With about 50% of the world's population living in urban areas today, the pressure on historic sites and urban landscape continue to mount, making heritage conservation one of the most dynamic and daunting tasks of our time, especially in the urban areas. There is need to look into how to accommodate the needs for modernization and investment in historic cities and city centres, without compromising historic character and identity as well as ways to protect the image and identity of a city within the framework of its status as a fast growing urban centre.

Lagos is one of the greatest cities in Nigeria steaming from its background as an ancient city dating back to the 15th century. As Lagos is developing into a megacity replete with global city indices, its history, form and ancient characteristics are gradually and continually being expunged. This has led to the development of a Lagos metropolis that has all the properties of an urban center but has failed to realize the potentials which its historical background can contribute to its overall physical, socio-cultural and economic development. This paper therefore does an inventory of the major heritage sites and historical buildings of Lagos, with a view to looking at its current status and how it is being integrated into the emerging megacity in light of the ongoing Lagos Revitalization Project.

2.0 Context of the Research

The study area is restricted to the Lagos Island, one of the twenty local government areas in Lagos State. The Local Government occupies an area of about 70sq km of the Lagos Metropolis and is the commercial and business nerve centre of Nigeria. Lagos Island, traditionally called Eko is the Island from where Lagos State began to spread. It was established as a small fishing settlement around 1450 by the Aworis, a Yoruba sub-ethnic group. The city became a Portuguese trading post in the fifteenth century, exporting ivory, peppers, and slaves. It subsequently fell into the hands of the British, who began exporting food crops after outlawing slavery in 1807. It served as the seat of the colonial government (1914 - 1960) and post colonial federal capital of Nigeria, until the federal capital was moved to Abuja in 1992. Its administrative role at different periods and its natural setting have provided impetus to its present level of economic and physical infrastructure and service for population within and far beyond the area. The significance and growth of Lagos Island is due partly to its historical and cultural background. Lagos Island plays a dominant role as most of the ancient sites, artifacts, and cultural legacies of Lagos State are domiciled here. Therefore this study will investigate these legacies in light of their historical importance, current status and potential for integration into the Lagos Megacity

3.0 Integrated Conservation and Preservation of Heritage Resources

The World Heritage Council (1996), defines Heritage is our legacy from the past, what we live with today and what we pass on to future generations. Our cultural and natural heritages are both

irreplaceable sources of life and inspiration. They are our touchstones, our points of references, our points of references, our identity (ICOMOS, 1987). Heritage sites are ancient sites of a country or city which have significant cultural value. A heritage site denotes an area with well-defined limits created by nature, or by man and nature jointly, remarkable for its beauty or its archaeological, historical, artistic, cultural, scientific or social interest.

Heritage sites must have the following characteristics:

1. They must be of interest by reason either of their social, historical, archaeological, scientific or artistic value, or of their typical or picturesque character;
2. They must form a coherent whole or be remarkable for the way they fit into the landscape;
3. They must be sufficiently closely grouped to allow the buildings, the structures connecting them and the site which they occupy to be delimited geographically.

The Provincial Policy Statement of Ontario (2005) defines built heritage resources as involving “one or more significant buildings, structures, monuments, installations or remains associated with architectural, cultural, social, political, economic or military history and identified as being important to a community. Heritage preservation is the practice of creatively maintaining the historic built environment and controlling the landscape component of which it is an integral part while conservation refers to all actions or processes that are aimed at safeguarding the character-defining elements of a cultural resource so as to retain its heritage value and extend its physical life.

Integrated conservation and preservation of cultural heritage monuments and sites therefore, is the whole range of measures aimed at ensuring the perpetuation of that heritage, its maintenance as part of an appropriate environment, whether man made or natural, its utilization and its adaptation to the needs of society. These measures of integrated conservation are primarily aimed at the conservation of monuments, groups of buildings and sites through measures to safeguard them; steps to ensure the physical preservation of their constituent parts; and operations aimed at their restoration and enhancement. On the other hand integrated conservation also ensures the integration of monuments, groups of buildings and sites into the physical environment of present-day society through programmes designed to: revitalize monuments and old buildings belonging to groups by assigning them a social purpose, possibly differing from

their original function but compatible with their dignity, and as far as possible in keeping with the character of their setting; rehabilitate buildings, particularly those intended for habitation, by renovating their internal structure and adapting it to the needs of modern life, while carefully preserving features of cultural interest(Walter, 2006)

Integrated conservation of the cultural heritage monuments and sites is one of the basic constituents of urban planning. This is because when monuments and heritage are properly used, they provide the essential element of man's environment, whose quality depends upon their cultural value. It is important to integrate them into social life and, for that purpose, assign them a modern function in the context of man's present-day activities and requirements (revitalization) and adapt them judiciously to the needs of our time (rehabilitation). Consequently, the policy of affording individual protection to the most outstanding monuments and sites must be broadened and supplemented by a comprehensive policy for the integrated conservation of architectural complexes, especially old urban districts and villages forming part of a tradition. It is also important to note that the integrated conservation of a country's cultural heritage of monuments and sites concerns its citizens first and foremost as it helps in the preservation of their identity and core values. If the community is responsible for the preservation and conservation of their historical sites, it shows their determination to maintain a balance between man and his traditional environment and prevent the debasement of those assets inherited from the past. Public authorities at all levels are especially responsible for the conservation of the historic urban landscape and so should play a direct role in the protection of such buildings, artifacts and site and in particular ensure that adequate funds are allocated for the restoration, revitalization and rehabilitation schemes of such sites.

4.0 The Nature of legal Protection and Promotion Mechanisms for Heritage Resources in Nigeria

There is universal consensus on the importance of state protection of culture and historical heritage through normative action. To this end, the Federal and State Governments have passed various laws. It is the shared legislative responsibility of the Federal and State Governments as reflected in the Concurrent Legislative List of the 1999 Constitution but solely that of the federal government with regards to the designation of antiquities and monuments.

The main legal protection and promotion mechanisms are:

1. *Urban planning and development control:* except in the Federal Capital Territory, urban planning is the exclusive responsibility of State Governments. They can do this through the listing of buildings of special architectural and historical interest as provided for in the Urban and Regional Planning Law, Decree 88 of 1992.
2. *Protection of objects sites or features by designation as monument or antiquity:* The National Commission for Museum and Monuments (NCMM) is responsible, by virtue of Sections 13-14, the National Commission for Museum and Monuments Act (NCMMA) of 1979 and the 1999 constitution, for the declaration of National Monuments and Antiquities.
3. *Prohibited Transfers of antiquities:* This restricts the buying and selling of antiquities to accredited agents as specified under Section 21, NCMMA. Sections 25 and 27 also give the NCMM the authority to regulate the export of antiquities
4. *Conservation by Museums:* One of the primary functions of a museum is the acquisition, display, care and maintenance of cultural and historical artifacts for the purposes of study, enjoyment, education and research.
5. *Establishment of arts and culture promotion bodies:* These are statutory bodies established for the purposes of promoting and developing Nigerian arts and culture (whether visual, performing or literary). They include the National Council for Arts and Culture (at national level), and their state equivalents. Typically, these bodies organize and promote exhibitions and festivals and may also assist the NCMM in the acquisition and preservation of artifacts, antiquities and monuments.
6. *Environmental management:* Under the Environmental Impact Assessment Act, No. 86 of 1992, there is a general mandatory requirement to conduct environmental impact assessments if a proposed private or public sector development project is likely to significantly affect the environment. This presumably extends to negative impacts on monuments, building and sites of cultural and historic importance. The impact assessment report should describe measures to be undertaken to mitigate adverse environmental impacts of the proposed project.

5.0 Protection and Promotion of Cultural and Historical Heritage in Nigeria

Sixty-four sites in Nigeria have been declared by the Federal Government of Nigeria “to be ancient or historic and therefore to be preserved”. They are known as listed buildings or

scheduled monuments as they are of particular historic or architectural importance. Many of these buildings were listed when Nigeria was still under colonial rule and there has been very little movement forward since then. The first batch of sites monuments and antiquities were declared in February 1956 under the repealed Antiquities Act 1953. Recent research has found that several of the listed buildings no longer exist. One of them the Hebe Mosque, Bebeji, Kano State, was 300 years old when it was listed in the 1950's; unfortunately, it has now totally collapsed. (Fajemirokun, 2004)

The fact that there are so few scheduled buildings and monuments in a country as big as Nigeria may be because there is more concentration on the protection of sculptural antiquities. (Fajemisin, 1999)

The Heritage Urban landscape of Nigeria is quite weak. Maintenance of public infrastructure is practically nonexistent and this infiltrates into the maintenance of cultural artifacts and even heritage buildings. The problem is that by not being able to retain the evidence of the past, there is no sustainability. In Nigeria, most urban centres are growing in both size and population. This is a common trend with other developing countries. However, the rapidity of the demographic and metropolitan changes has brought with it urgent urban challenges in satisfying the demand for access to land, housing, transportation, efficient public sanitation and public security. In the midst of these competing urban priorities, one subject which appears to have been overlooked is the protection and promotion of cultural and historical heritage. This omission can also be seen in the Federal Government's White paper of 2002 on the Presidential committee on Urban Development and Housing. This is rather unfortunate given the employment and income creation potential of culture tourism as well as the educational, recreational and quality of life implications of preserving cultural and historical heritage.

The Lagos Metropolis has also been unable to adequately ensure the conservation and protection of her natural and cultural heritage and so the cityscape is somewhat distorted with modern skyscrapers replacing the vestiges of a glorious history. This study is necessary to identify those built heritage resources that still exist and devise means of protecting and preserving them. The ultimate goal of this exercise is to ensure that Lagos Megacity does not lose finally all pointers to her significant status as a historic city with a wide blend of cultural influences, ranging from

Portuguese to British as well as the Islamic and indigenous influences that have suffused her urban space.

5.1 Inventory of Selected Heritage Sites

This research is exploratory in nature as it is a less charted academic and urban planning discourse in Nigeria. A historic building survey is done to identify key buildings, and also get information on their current condition and status vis-à-vis the subject matter. The study requires historic research and so information provided by historical societies like the National Museum, local historians like property owners and tenants living within the heritage sites, city histories and other available historical sourcebooks are relied on.

Table1: Condition of selected heritage buildings in Lagos Island

Location	History	Current Status
Maja House - Gerber Square	This historical monument was built in the 1880's based on the Brazilian architecture introduced to Lagos. It was built by Mr. C. A. Onigbaralu.	This building still stands but looks very old. It is still inhabited though its glory has been seriously eroded
Ilojo Bar - Tinubu Square	This building also has a taste of the nineteenth century Brazilian Architecture. Imported through the cultural contact with Brazil, by the liberated Yoruba slaves who came from there to settle in Lagos.	The building has been abandoned and is not maintained. It is a haven for miscreants
Cuban lodge - Odunlami street	This building was constructed along Cuban and Brazilian architecture in the British colonial period. Its name and its architectural expression represents continuities in both Brazilian and Cuban cultural legacies which were connected to the Atlantic	The Cuban lodge exists and is occupied by people though it is in a state of disrepair
Vaughan House - Kakawa Street	This building was named after its owners the Vaughan Family whose forebears had been enslaved in the United States and after being liberated and returning to Lagos	The building is abandoned with no form of maintenance.. it is a haven for miscreants
The Ebun House - Odunfa street	This building is an architectural piece that was introduced by the liberated Yoruba slaves.	It was recently burnt down and reconstruction of a modern commercial building has started on the site.

Table 2: Cultural heritage sites religious buildings

Location	History	Current Status
The first Baptist church - Broad street	This was erected in 1857 by some American Missionaries. This church was built on the sites where the transit camps for storing slaves	This church was recently reconstructed. it is a very beautiful architectural though modern building and is in good condition

Shitta bay mosque - Ereko	Shitta bay mosque was built in 1892. It is a beautiful piece of artwork and one of the early modern Islamic monuments located.	It is in excellent condition and still has all features of the Brazilian style.
The Lagos Central Mosque – Nnamdi Azikiwe Street	This mosque was erected in the 1800s	This building was reconstructed in the 1980's and is in good condition. But the surroundings are unkempt because of the presence of market around it.
St Paul's Church, Breadfruit – Davies/ Broad street	The church was built in the 1840's on the site where the transit camps for storing slaves pending their shipment to Europe in the Era of Slave Atlantic Trade were located.	This church is in good condition and is being maintained.

Table 3: Selected Traditional Heritage Sites

Location	History	Current Status
Iga Idunganran - Upper King Street	Residence of the Oba of Lagos State established since 1670. contains Relics of Lagos Monarchy and culture	The old palace building was left and a new one was built beside it. A library that used to exist has been demolished and is undergoing reconstruction
Iga Oluwa - Oluwa court Isale Eko	Residence of the Chief Oluwa	This palace is very beautiful and has been rebuilt into a modern building. It has undergone proper maintenance.
Iga Sasi - Sasi street Isale Eko	This building was built in the Brazilian architecture style.	The building is not properly maintained.
Iga Ogboni Iduntafa - Esiogodo street,	This building was originally a very nice piece of architecture.	This building is very old and not properly maintained.

Table 4: Selected institutional buildings Heritage Sites

Location	History	Current Status
CMS Bookshop - Broad Street	It was built in the 1800s. This is the original building	Some parts of the building have been sold to commercial outfits and this lends a bit of incongruousness to the physical appearance of the building
CSS Bookshop - Broad Street	The CSS Bookshop was built since 1869 by the colonial masters.	The old building has been demolished and rebuilt into a fine structure and it is properly maintained. .
The National Museum -Onikan	The museum houses different works of art from various past civilizations e.g. Benin Bronze, Nok culture, Ife Bronze and so on. The artifacts in the museum date	The National museum is not so well maintained but is in a tolerable condition and its surroundings are neat.
The 1st Prison - Broad Street	This was built in the early 1800s by the British government. It was used to house criminals at that period.	This building has been abandoned and is gradually falling apart.

Tafawa Balewa Square - Onikan	This was the venue for the change of government from the Colonial Authorities to the Indigenous government on October 1, 1960. Race track and cricket pitches were added to give it a more regular usage, while a shopping mall was also constructed around it.	It is dilapidated and has been leased to private developers who principally rent it out for social events.
The Love Garden	The site used to be the Love Garden, an open park where citizens went to relax and meditate.	This site has been converted to the City Mall housing shops, restaurants and a movie theatre.

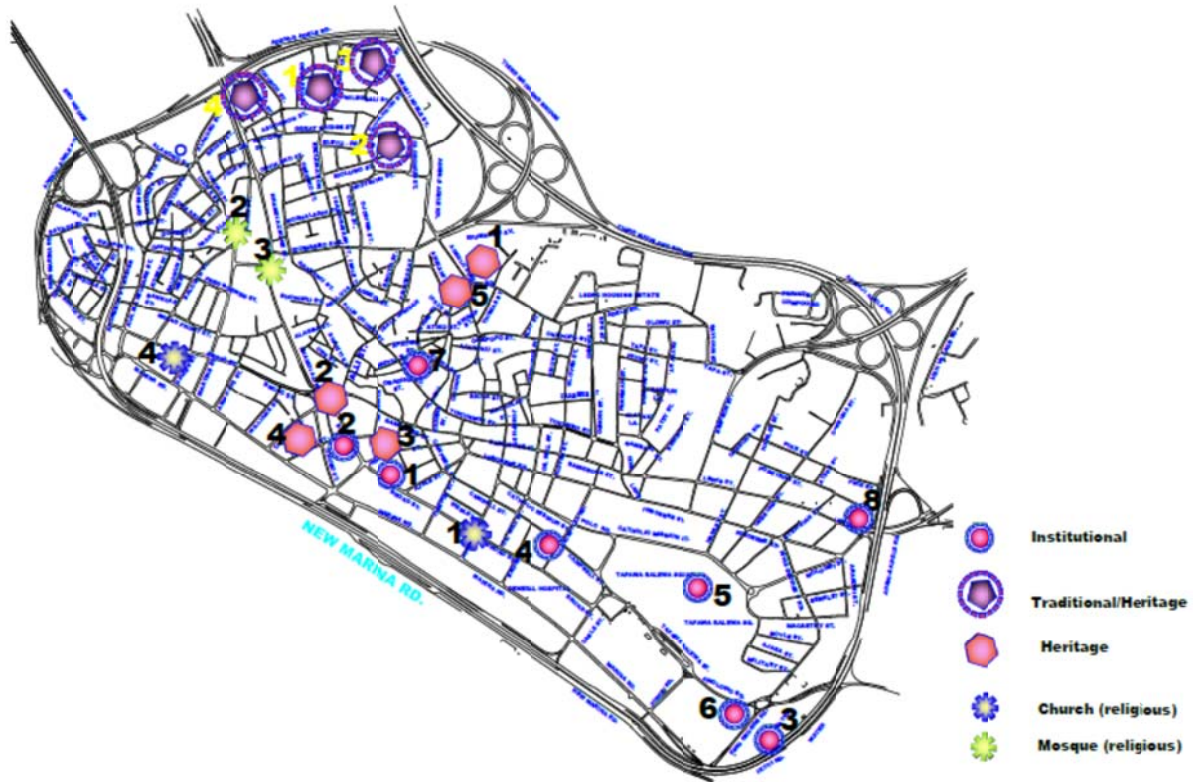
Table 6: Selected commercial centres

Location	History	Current Status
Tom Jones Building	This used to be a residential house, built with Brazilian architecture	It has been converted to a shopping mall and none of its original façade remain
Sandgrouse - Lewis street	This market was initially located at Glover Street. People gather here to buy foodstuff	This market has been rebuilt over the years and is being maintained, even though it is largely made of temporary structures.
Docemo Street	This market was built for the trading of almost anything including Fabric, Plastics and kitchen utensils.	This market is very rowdy and disorganized causing traffic

Summary

Heritage sites exist all around the Lagos Megacity, and development projects, including the Lagos CBD Revitalization Project have the potential to destroy them (Figure 1). Only a fraction of the Heritage sites in Lagos Island have been discovered and recorded in recognition that these sites contain a unique record of Lagos history. The heritage buildings represented in the study area are various styles and periods of architecture, ranging from timber-framed cottages, Brazilian style buildings, to modern buildings and skyscrapers. Most of the buildings are in danger of losing their former character, and many are being demolished mainly through the increase of pressures for development. Only a fraction of the Heritage sites in Lagos Island have been discovered and recorded in recognition that these sites contain a unique record of Lagos history. It is therefore essential that an archeological assessment be done to identify, examine and preserve the non-renewable vestiges of the past. It is important to note that archaeological conservation in land-use planning process does not mean putting a stop to development The

Lagos Megacity Development can proceed unimpeded when heritage sites are protected, thereby retaining the status of Lagos as a Historic city with a contemporary outlook.



Recommendations

The United Nations has through its UNESCO great faiths project, put great faith in a number of urban destinations and due to its assessment of their historical heritage characteristics and the fact the planners and policy makers in these cities have been able to establish plans and policies that protect these characteristics UNESCO is in its great faith 2007 program, to earmark these cities as world urban heritage sites. These cities include Kyoto Japan, Lalibela Ethiopia, Islamic Cairo, Lahsa in Tibet and many more. UNESCO describes these cities as places of extraordinary and universal cultural, historical and natural value due to the authenticity of their background and the retention of their historical character.

Lagos with its rich history qualifies to be so named. This is if the remaining vestiges of its core identity are preserved. This can be done by the establishment of a Historical Commission and the adoption of Lagos Island as a Historic Preservation District. .

The Historic Commission will be responsible for the following

- i. maintenance of inventory of archeological and historic resources through the maintenance of a historic sites map which would identify underground sites, artifacts, buildings, structures, landmarks, districts, linear resources, landscapes, gardens, sites, trees and other vegetation.
- ii. Adoption of archaeological or historic districts where significant numbers of archaeological or historic resources are grouped together.
- iii. Cooperate with interested institutions and other stakeholders to identify historic resources and plan for their preservation.

The Local Planning Authority can also do the following

- i. Incorporate measures to protect and preserve historic and archaeological resources into all planning and development by creating appropriate standards for alteration, rehabilitation and rebuilding of historic resources.
- i. Review proposed alteration to City-designated historic resources and improvements within historic districts and ensure that construction new structures is done in a manner consistent with the historic character of the region; and provide design assistance to property owners, tenants and builders who work with historic resources.
- iii. Develop incentives for property owners to restore historic buildings, such as reduced permit fees
- iv. Ensure treatment of historic landscapes

The Lagos Island Local Government should be responsible for the following actions

- i. Assist and encourage property owners and tenants to maintain the integrity and character of historic resources, and to restore and reuse historic resources in a manner compatible with their historic character
- ii. Create a facade improvement program that encourages preservation of historic facades and exteriors.
- iii. Create a property owner recognition program to reward citizens who have demonstrated excellence in maintaining and/or rehabilitating a historic resource.

- iv. Create a program to encourage the reuse of salvaged architectural materials.

6.CONCLUSION

The paper has been able to identify selected built heritage resources in Lagos Island. The paper also highlighted the fact that heritage resource protection is an important municipal objective. It explains why the planner should be directly involved in preservation efforts as evinced by the establishment of a Historical Commission and the adoption of Lagos Island as a Historic Preservation District. Lagos is only assured of her future when her past is protected adequately in order to bequeath same to her future generations.

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