Chapter 1

Introduction

The chapter one deals with the heritage concepts, statement of problem, importance of conservation of heritage areas, need for study, aim and objectives, methodology, scope, limitations and organisation of the thesis for undertaking research work in the Heritage City of Mysore,

1.0 Background

India has a long history of human habitation and it has inherited enormous wealth of built heritage. Both built and natural heritage have crucial links between the past and the present and they play a crucial role in shaping the urban structure and built form. Built heritage provides us with vital information and know how about the ancient culture, way of life, level of development, building techniques, use of material, art and architecture and other areas concerning physical, social, economic aspects of a society of a particular period. Therefore, it becomes necessary to appraise the repository of knowledge of heritage structures, which are to be carefully preserved, conserved and managed appropriately.

‘Heritage’ is a broad concept which includes the cultural as well as the natural environment. It encompasses built environments, historic places, sites, landscapes as well as biodiversity, knowledge collections, past and continuing cultural practices including living experiences. It is a dynamic reference point and positive instrument for growth and change. The collective memory of each locality or community or a particular heritage is unique. The protection, conservation, interpretation and presentation of the heritage and cultural diversity of any particular place are important challenges for planners.

Manmade structures of historic and architectural significance have become a part of the cultural heritage of any city and the society. In this regard, the preservation of historical structures has to have an objective of safeguarding national cultural identity. Owing to rapidly modernizing built environment, there is a need for devoting attention to preserve the cultural and architectural heritage, before it disappears.
Buildings and areas of historic or architectural value in all cities are disappearing very fast due to neglect and decay or deliberate demolitions results in changing the specific characters of city centres, leading to monotonous and incongruent new modern constructions.

Heritage conservation and modernity are not necessarily in opposition. Rather they are inseparably linked in what Clifford Geertz describes as the dialectical relationship between the “search for identity” which looks back to the past, and the forward-looking modernity of “demand for progress” with increasing globalization. The “search for identity” may be expected to play a larger role in harmonious urban development, bringing both economic growth and employment. The appropriation of economic benefits from conservation is a long standing feature of the heritage conservation movement (Belinda Yuen, 2005).

Conserving the unprotected architectural heritage areas and sites ensures that the survival of the countries’ sense of history and its very much character in a globalizing environment. It also offers the opportunity not only to conserve the past, but also to define the future. It provides alternate avenues for employment and a parallel market for local building materials and technologies. In India, conservation cannot be seen in isolation either as a subject or as an activity.

Conservation of architectural heritage acts as preservation of templates in the museum of world cultures. The majority of India’s architectural heritage areas/sites are unprotected. They constitute a unique civilization legacy, as valuable as the monuments legally protected by Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) or State Archaeological Department and other governmental and non-governmental agencies. This legacy is being steadily eroded as a result of insensitive modernization and urbanization, and the fact that it does not command the same respect as legally protected monuments. Many unprotected heritage areas/sites are still in use, and the manner in which they continue to be kept in use represents the ‘living’ heritage of India. This heritage is manifest in both tangible and intangible forms, and in its diversity defines the composite culture of the country. Beyond its role as a historic document, the unprotected heritage embodies the values of enduring relevance to contemporary Indian society, thus making it worthy of conservation. These ‘living’ heritages are not legally protected. The buildings and sites are subject to demolition or
unsympathetic interventions. The knowledge of traditional building skills with which it is associated is also in danger of being lost in the absence of patronage and official recognition. Conserving the ‘living’ heritage, therefore, offers the potential to conserve both traditional buildings and traditional ways of building.

The definitions and views of various scholars in the concerned field who have expressed their views regarding the heritage conservation as follows:

The Town and Country Planning Act, 1961 defines the *heritage buildings* as a building possessing architectural, aesthetic, historic or cultural values which is declared as heritage building by the Planning Authority or any other competent authority within whose jurisdiction such building is situated; and *heritage precinct* as an area comprising heritage building or buildings and precincts thereof or related places declared as such by the Planning Authority or any other Competent Authority within whose jurisdiction such area is situated.

As per the UNESCO’s definition, the “cultural heritage” is the entire corpus of material signs, either artistic or symbolic, handed down by the past to each culture and therefore, to the whole of human kind.

According to the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH), heritage conservation area is an area of special architectural, historical and cultural interest; the character and appearance of which is desirable to preserve and enhance. These are areas which lend a cultural and traditional identity to the locality. Such areas can be large or small, whole towns, squares, groups of buildings or streets and gardens.

The Commissioner of the Archaeology, Museum and Heritage, Government of Karnataka defined the “heritage building” as a building possessing architectural, aesthetic, historic or cultural values.

According to the National Commission on Urbanisation (1988), the urban conservation would be concern inter-alia with those components of the urban heritage that, (a) possesses architectural, historical and cultural interest; (b) have a special or unique quality or charm that provides distinctiveness either because of its ambience
or because of some distinctive activity centred on or associated with the place; (c) constitute a focal point in a city of importance to the social, psychological or spiritual well-being of its residents and (d) are elements that enhance the physical environment of the city.

Conservation of old building and spaces preserves the citizen’s sense of identity and community. Conservation is an action taken to prevent the decay (M. Feilden, M Bernard, 1991).

Historic cities have been places of life, vitality, wealth, power, enlightenment and culture (Kadam Anjali 2002).

Buildings and properties under conservation may have architectural, historical, cultural or scientific or technological values (Gosh, Santhosh, 1996).

Conservation should go beyond conserving individual buildings, buildings built by kings, powerful people and that conservation cannot be seen in isolation. It needs active participation of community and numerous agencies both government and non government (Thakur, Nalini, 1997).

Spreiregen, D. Paul (1990) emphasises the importance of preservation of old city parts and historical buildings through proper planning measures. The author says, we must find valid modern uses for old buildings and areas, and that we should restore them in ways that express the better of their two worlds - the past and the present. The city is an assemblage of buildings and streets, systems of communication and utilities and the manner of arranging these elements together, both functionally and beautifully, is the essence of urban design. Beauty in cities is not an afterthought. It is a necessity. Man cannot live long without beauty without becoming distorted as a human being.

Lynch, Kevin (1991) explains that a collective picture of what people obtain from the physical reality of a city is a major contribution to understand urban form and architecture as component parts of that form. In his examination of the city, Lynch finds that there are five basic elements which people use to construct their mental image of a city and they are Pathways, Districts, Edges, Landmarks and Nodes.
English heritage report on “A guide to planning in conservation areas” emphasizes that, conservation areas to cover the historic parts of our old towns. Conservation areas invariably have a concentration of historic buildings, many of which are listed buildings, but areas character and attraction comprises more than the buildings alone. The uses they are put to and the spaces around and between them are also important – so a conservation area protects the whole area and not just the buildings within it.

Conservation requires careful planning and management of limited and selected cultural resources. It is a conscious process to control and manipulate change to a minimum- to a rate that ensures that survival of cultural heritage over a long time. In human time scale, this ‘time’ means hundreds and possibly thousands of years (Ihsan Fethi, 1996).

Conservation should go beyond the monumental relics of church, state, and monarchy to include the process of celebrating the more familiar and beloved cultural heritage in our everyday lives (Belinda Yuen, 2005).

Thapar B. K. (1989) discussed the origin, need and its role of INTACH towards preserving historic areas/buildings in India. The author says the main objective of INTACH is of creating and stimulating awareness among the public for the preservation of cultural and natural heritage. Unless people realize the value of the heritage and its benefits, no conservation scheme is likely to be successful.

According to the National Commission on Urbanization (1988) recommendations, the conservation should go beyond preservation of monuments and encompass the whole built heritage; the rules and regulations should be amended to encourage conservation of the living environment; the city planning must encourage conservation of old city areas and not just development of new areas; and direct fiscal and other incentives should be offered as an encouragement to individuals to conserve places and sites.

1.1 Need for Heritage Conservation

Conservation is continually mirroring the phenomenon that the cultures are constantly in flux from the local to the global scale. As social and cultural change intensifies, greater demands are made to conserve heritage as a brake against unwanted change and even as a means of effecting change. Heritage is one of the mainstays of culture,
art and creativity. Conservation needs to be approached in a comprehensive manner. No aspect can be treated in isolation; or safely ignored. If this is borne in mind and problems are addressed on a broad comprehensive basis systematically, conservation can improve the quality of life and maintain cultural continuity.

The significance of architectural heritage and the desirability of conserving it are now more readily recognized, as noticed in the largely increasing public concern in favour of preserving and enhancing the familiar local scene. If, we are to maintain or create surroundings which enable individuals to find their roots and feel secure despite abrupt sociological changes, significant links with the past must be preserved in the environment. The need to preserve the cultural property arises not merely to preserve evidence of the historic past, but in order to forge a concrete linkage between the past and the present in public memory.

Heritage conservation is to be viewed not only as a peripheral matter, but also as a major objective of town and country planning. Suitable provisions are needed to be evolved by the Local and Planning Authorities to counter threats, arising both from planned to be evolved development and mounting pressure on land and building and also to the traditional character of our cities.

A primary objective for managing heritage is to communicate its significance and need for its conservation to its host community and to visitors. Reasonable and well managed physical, intellectual and/or emotive access to heritage and cultural development is both a right and a privilege. It brings with it a duty of respect for the heritage values, interests and equity of the present-day host community, indigenous custodians or owners of historic property and for the landscapes and cultures from which that heritage evolved. As per the article 51-A, of the Constitution of India “It shall be the duty of every citizen of India to value and preserve the rich heritage of our composite culture”.

1.1.1 Heritage of Mysore: Mysore city is an ancient, historical, cultural capital and a heritage city in India. It is the third largest city in the state of Karnataka with a population of 7,85,800 as per 2001 census and situated at an altitude of 770 mts. above mean sea level. Mysore city is a classic example of architectural and cultural heritage. It is an imperial and beautiful city, was the erstwhile capital of the
Wodeyars. The city is known as the ‘city of palaces’. The city has been recognised as a heritage city under the cultural tag both by the state and national governments. The total harmony of architectural buildings, sites, lakes, parks and open spaces and the back drop of Chamundi hills adds to the city’s attraction. It fascinated the tourists with its quaint charm, rich heritage, magnificent palaces, beautifully laid-out gardens, imposing buildings, broad avenues of trees and sacred temples and world famous Dasara festival, which is celebrated every year. The city’s intangible elements are known for exotic sandalwood and incense, the Mysore silk sarees and sandal wood carved sculptures, paintings etc. The city has long boulevards radiating from a well defined central axis, with well recessed public buildings balanced on either side, can be a model for any town planner. Architectural heritage includes not only individual buildings of exceptional quality and their surroundings or group of buildings providing a special setting by virtue of uniqueness of their architectural style, but also all areas and settings of cities which have historic or cultural interests. A few examples of important architectural monuments and heritage areas in the city core to include Ambavilas palace and its surroundings, Jaganmohan palace, Town Hall, Devaraja Market, Clock Tower, Procession Street, Harding Circle, K.R. Circle Medical College, Gun House, Deputy Commissioner’s Office, Oriental Research Institute, Crawford Hall and many more structures.

The city’s landscape has been altered due to rapid urbanisation, changing structure of city core and urban decay. The difficulties of today are those of scale, awareness, and visual fronts. The heritage areas of Mysore are slowly deteriorating due to non-recognition of heritage elements, ineffectiveness of planning and conservation measures, improper management coupled with traffic congestion and environmental problems viz. noise and air pollution. The city is losing its values in the vicinity of heritage monuments and buildings due to decay, destructions, disharmonious development around heritage building, encroachments, which indeed eroding an important part of culture and traditions, leaving behind a visible link with the past. Besides, there is a little harmony among buildings, streets and open spaces. Architectural links with the past have been destroying and green spaces, water bodies are disappearing gradually. Therefore, the conservation of heritage areas needs to be viewed on a comprehensive approach to fulfil the objective of Town and Country Planning.
The city has both tangible and in-tangible heritage elements; with many urban design elements of built structure to include monuments, heritage buildings, precincts/heritage areas and natural areas. A very few building have been identified by the State Archaeology Department and Mysore Urban Development Authority. The application of legislations is limited to the regulated zones around the protected monuments. Though, there is enough scope to declare the heritage area as areas of special control under the KTCP Act, the efforts by the planning authority is minimal. The declaration of the city as heritage city by the State Government in the year 2005 followed by selection of city for the centrally sponsored scheme namely Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission scheme under cultural tag in the year 2005-06 has enabled the Mysore City Corporation to give much emphasis for heritage conservation. Prior to this, the city has some experience of conserving few heritage buildings under public private partnership.

Heritage regulations have been brought by a few cities in India by the respective state governments to implement the heritage conservation in Delhi, Ahmedabad, Bombay, Goa etc. In the absence robust heritage regulations and policies, the city government is not in a position to develop harmonious heritage conservation plan. As “prevention is better than cure”, to prevent the heritage area from decay, it is imperative to take appropriate planning measures to conserve the heritage buildings and areas in a holistic approach. Hence, there is a need for evolving comprehensive heritage policies for conservation and protection of heritage areas in an integrated manner. With this background, the Heritage City of Mysore has been selected for the research study with the following aims and objectives.

1.2 Aims and Objectives

The aim is to study and propose of planning measures for conservation of heritage areas which are important in architectural merit, historic interests and cultural values. It also tries to frame some guidelines to conserve these heritage areas, save them from ravage and encroachment and destruction.

The main objectives are:

1) To study the existing urban form in relation to heritage sites in Mysore City;
2) To identify the heritage areas on the basis of their historical, architectural,
environmental and ecological values

3) To find out the existing planning regulations and guidelines related to conservation of heritage areas and problems in enforcing the existing policies in the heritage areas

4) To create awareness about heritage areas and to keep their vicinity clean by the public and private bodies; and

5) To suggest the planning and conservation policies for the heritage areas.

1.3. Methodology

The research mainly depended on the primary and secondary sources. To begin with, the literature survey from different sources viz. books, articles, publications, manuals, toolkits, conservation documents, study reports, case studies, web resources, etc., of various scholars of have been carried out to understand the subject, methodologies, approaches, tools and techniques including policies.

The primary survey of selected heritage buildings and heritage areas, precincts has been carried out in the core heritage zone of Mysore. The elements of urban form namely, landmarks, focal points, vista, axis, nodes, edges etc., have been assessed through visual analysis to appraise the imagiability and land-use pattern in relation to urban design elements and heritage resources. The data format has been designed to make inventory of selected buildings. The data and information on age, condition, present use, historical, architectural, cultural and environmental aspects of heritage building along with the visual analysis of each of monuments and precincts were collected in the field study. The identification heritage of buildings was undertaken through listing and grading, which dealt with assessment techniques. The significance assessment of selected group of heritage buildings, heritage areas, precincts, natural areas has been carried out and they have been assessed by assigning values. The problems associated with the heritage areas and buildings are studied and analysed using visual analysis. The efforts were made to review exiting conservation laws which govern heritage areas in the City of Mysore collected from Mysore Urban Development Authority, Mysore Heritage Commissioner’s Office and Town Planning Department. The zone of influence from each of the heritage areas has been assessed to establish control zone and to identify the heritage zones. To understand the factors which are affecting the heritage areas i.e., land use, violation of building bye-laws and regulations, problems of traffic management, damage to architectural facades, and
other aspects of field problems have collected through visual analysis supporting data from secondary source, viz. gazetteer, historical records of palace, library, state archives, and other sources have been validated.

The data from secondary sources of information have been collected from various departments like, heritage commissioner’s office, Mysore City Corporation, Town Planning Department, State Archives, Tourism Department, Lake Authority, Public Works Department, and used them in appropriate chapters. The policies and design guidelines which were proposed in the model building bye-laws, JNNURM heritage tool kit and other heritage cities were appraised. The existing laws for conservation of heritage areas have been reviewed. The issues arising from the study has been documented and appraised to formulate the harmonious heritage policies for planning and conservation of heritage areas in the City of Mysore.

1.4 Scope and Limitations

The research study attempted to address the heritage areas by classifying heritage resources, listing, grading, assessing reviewing legal laws, significance assessment, reviewing legal laws for evaluating heritage monuments and proposing policies for planning and conserving heritage areas. It proposes heritage policies towards harmonious planning and conservation of urban form functions and also establishes compatibility of the surroundings with the heritage area. The research study has wide scope in providing inputs for preparation of master plan, heritage regulations and conservation plan for the city of Mysore. Therefore, the study provides planning policies and framework of heritage regulations for conservation of heritage areas and by integrating the heritage areas within its surrounding activities to ensure aesthetic quality of Mysore city. The policies proposed in this research can act as a tool and guidelines for the Local Authority (Mysore City Corporation) and Planning Authority (Mysore Urban Development Authority) to approach the heritage conservation while preparation of Master Plan. The study is limited to tangible heritage components.
1.5 Organization of the Thesis

The thesis has been organized into seven chapters.

**Chapter one** deals with the introduction. It mainly focuses on an overview of heritage conservation, statement of problem, need for the study, aims and objectives, methodology, scope and limitation of the study and also organization of the thesis.

**Chapter two** deals with the Review of Literature, which is relevant to the study topic. The chapter explains the views and approaches expressed by various scholars in the field of heritage conservation and provide knowledge on the subject. The chapter deals with literature on the topic of history and architecture, land use and urban form, listing and grading, heritage conservation and significance assessment methods, heritage acts and policies, strategies concerned with heritage areas. The case studies and the cases of the cities provide insights and experiences to form the conservation policies. The review of literature enabled to develop the research framework, approaches, tools and techniques and methodologies of other cities to approach the heritage conservation problem in systematic approach.

**Chapter three** depicts the profile of Mysore city in terms of location, historical and cultural background of the city, natural and architectural resources and explains the architectural character of the city. It also deals with demography and morphology. It has been observed from the study that the city is a historic city ruled by Wodeyars for many centuries and it has contributed significantly in the field art and crafts, culture and yoga to make the rich cultural aura and cultural centre. The study of architectural built form of Mysore city lead by Ambavilas palace as landmark and a focal point of city’s elements indicate that the city is meticulously planned and accompanied by distinctive monuments, royal mansions and other buildings; gardens, lakes and water bodies, boulevards and urban design elements like, focal points, vista, axis, landmarks, water fountains, statues, etc., make it undoubtedly the most important heritage components of the city.

**Chapter four** deals with urban form and its relation with urban design elements and heritage components. The study reveals that the urban design elements which reflect the image of the city and exhibit strong linkages between elements and heritage resources. Built form that refers to the individual elements of building design,
collectively contribute to the character and appearance of the built environment. Study highlights the urban form, aesthetics and urban design elements, which are contributing to the city’s image and growth dynamics on land use and its effects in the heritage core area. Urban form of the heritage core area is slowly transforming into more commercial developments by altering the city skyline. It is observed that there is a greater change in the architectural styles from traditional built form into modern buildings which is altering the character and image of the city. From the study it has been observed that traditional built forms are under severe threat due to expansion of commercial activities, vertical growth of high rise buildings, encroachments of public space, violation of building bye-laws lines including miss- use and abuse of public spaces. Residential areas are undergoing a major transformation from residential to commercial uses which has resulted in diminishing neighbourhood environment in the city core area. The urban design elements namely vistas, edges, water bodies, landscapes, gateways, signage and street furniture are affected greatly and diminishing their importance day by day.

**Chapter five** deals with Heritage areas of Mysore city. The criteria for identification of heritage monuments, for listing and grading has been carried out and accordingly data and information have been developed for selected buildings covering majority of the buildings in the heritage core areas. This forms the basis of developing criteria for significance assessment of the building. The criteria for significance assessment of heritage buildings are adopted by assigning values to the historical, architectural, cultural and environmental aspects. The evaluation of heritage building has been done for assessing the significance and its relative rankings. The significance assessment covering the historical and architectural significance, visual and functional analysis including the present status has been assessed. The above assessments formed a basis for identifying the heritage zones, issues and for developing policies for conserving the heritage areas and for framing Development Control Regulations as well.

**Chapter six** focuses on the existing conservation laws including acts, regulations and rules relating to the heritage conservation. The legislations that are governing heritage monuments, buildings and areas have been examined to find out the effectiveness of legal tools for planning, conserving and managing the heritage areas in the city of Mysore. From the study, it has been observed that, the available regulations are not
adequate to address the issues of heritage areas, even though, there is enough scope to include the heritage subject in the preparation of master plans under section 12(1) (f) of the Karnataka Town and Country Planning Act and to include separate heritage regulations to the cities like Mysore. The toolkit of Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission and Karnataka Town and Country Planning, Act provides a basis for identifying heritage zones in the zonal regulations of the master plans to be regulated as Areas of ‘Special Control and Development’. The study attempted to delineate heritage zones and classify the identified zones as Primary heritage zone, Secondary heritage zone, Tertiary heritage zone, buffer zone including heritage sites.

The chapter also highlights the efforts that are required for creating awareness to the people. The proposals to include, Information Education Communication, heritage walk, freedom walk, street plays, light and sound shows, tonga tour, heritage festivals, heritage awards, heritage newspaper etc., are the effective policies for promoting awareness in the city of Mysore.

**Chapter seven** proposes conservation policy measures based on the issues arising out from the study. The proposals to include, vision , establishing conservation principles and charter, constitution of heritage cell, establishment of heritage cell, resource management system, guidelines for listing, grading, significance assessment, developing control/heritage zones, development control, establishing architectural harmony, building control and permits, incentives, preparation of conservation management plan including protecting environmental aspects , education, awareness for planning and conservation of heritage areas in the City of Mysore.