Changing Social Perception of Historic Precincts within Urban Areas - - An attempt for Designing Sustainable Historic precinct in Hubli

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ABSTRACT

In the age of cultural fluidity, the norms governing the social behavior of people are changing rapidly from their traditional structure to a merged global conscience. This has a direct impact on people's perception of their private and public spaces. Since many of the Urban areas of Developing nations like India especially in Karnataka are constantly in a stage of redevelopment either initiated by local populace or authorities, their association meanings and identity are also in a state of flux. In this context, historic urban areas are usually considered as socially infallible, which are usually recommended to be preserved in their original state. This notion is adopted on Urban heritage precincts, which are secluded from such changing societal impacts. But in many historical patches of the urban fabric, which have existed from their initial stages of development to the present day, the associated meanings and identities have already transformed, with several conducive as well as inhibitive results. The paper aims to study the coexistence of such historical patch with present-day development, and the changing functions of these spaces as their original uses get obsolete.

In this fast-changing landscape of the cities little of the old recognizable features have survived. One of such historical patch the study picks up to document, analyse and attempts to design sustainable solutions for changing societal behaviors in "Siddharoodha matha" campus at Hubli. The Actual morphological development of Siddharoodha matha has been taken roots from 18TH century in North Karnataka, Hubli.

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The suggestions for future architectural interventions made herein attempt to reflect the best architectural traditions evident on campus. While many aspects of the Siddharoodh math campus make it one of the most memorable compositions of buildings and open spaces to be found in the Hubli city, it is not the purpose of this document to replicate the historic core in order to create a new architecture of empty nostalgia. The Math campus forms a collection of buildings from many different time periods and of various styles. It is hoped that the insights of this study will enable the campus community to better recognize and understand the architectural traditions of the campus, while simultaneously forming a touchstone for architects, landscape architects & planners working on future projects.

1. Introduction

The rate of Urbanization at an unprecedented rate is resulting in socio - cultural change and growth which needs to be harnessed at local, regional, national & international level. This rate of development transforms the character of Urban areas. It may cause fragmentation and deterioration of Urban Heritage precincts with deep impacts on community values throughout the world. Urban heritage precincts are usually considered as "monuments" also usually of institutional use by planners, thereby excluding historic residential areas, city centers and non-tangible elements such as customs and beliefs, each of which play an important role in the articulation of spaces and built environment. This approach leads to a lacking development plan for these areas. In the process of preserving cultural identities, great effort is put into the conservation of old monuments, which are usually earmarked as "protected" and hence, only partially accessible to the public as places of Historical interest exist. In India, Architectural Conservation parameters regularly enforces its protection of monuments, generally through 'isolation', instead of integration with surrounding development. Old buildings stock is conserved in historical parts of the Urban area and re-engage, at times without authorization, to cater the rising societal behavior and commercial needs of the urban population. The historic fabric, as a result, is left out of the conservation and development process adversely affecting the socio-cultural perception of the spaces.

The context of any Indian city remains very complex, Historic Urban campus is the Urban area understood as the result of a historic layering of cultural and natural values and attributes, extending beyond the notion of "historic Centre" or "ensemble" to include the broader urban context and its geographical setting. The concept will help in the integration of the cumulative understanding of the religion, economy, culture, history of a place into local development processes and urban planning to maintain the urban integrity and character. This approach moves beyond the preservation of the physical environment and focuses on the entire human environment with all of its tangible and intangible qualities. It calls for the adaptive usage of spaces associated with the culture, history, economy and religion of people at any place. However, it is a concern that due to the onslaught of wanton and uncontrolled development, these cities are fast losing their historic matrix and values.

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This paper aims at studying the relationship between Architectural conservation and Sustainable development in the historic patches of any Indian city understanding the changing social identities and perception of the areas and expressing them in terms of an Urban design viewpoint.

"The objective of the paper is to provide Historic Urban campus planning parameters" AND "This study is an attempt for proposing sustainable design solutions for Historic Urban precinct in Hubli."

2.   Methodology

A survey was conducted to understand the perspective of the visitors and how they socially relate to the Historic campus. Certain established relationships were observed, which reflects the socio-cultural perception of historic urban campuses. These were documented and analyzed on the basis of Historic conservation & applying the skills of Urban design parameters to Develop sustainable design solutions. Analytical approach for design development included Urban design strategies so that the new insert in the Heritage campus integrate well with the conserved building blocks, also develop the sustainable campus planning principles which will cater to design and develop master plan so that it Self sustain for future Architectural Proposal. For the purpose of simplicity, the MASTER Planning principles were formulated which is the objective of the paper where each principle caters to the definition of a Historic Urban Campus Planning, through various degrees of cultural preservation and transformation. This in fact further helped us to generate requirements for future developments that campus can focus on sustainable solutions.

The study area selected to establish this definition was an Urban historic patch "Siddharoodha Matha campus" located in North Karnataka at Hubli. Initially the study started with Campus survey which helped us to observe and recommend Campus planning principles, then these observations were converted to set Requirements for Campus in terms of phase wise developments. Sustainable parameters were part of Planning principles for planning successful self-sustained historic Urban campus. Hence, this was an attempt for proposing sustainable design solutions for Historic Urban precinct. Study was initiated and presented to the Math trust for Campus Developments. The study concerns were as follows:

1. Historic patch conserved and integrated with surrounding urban development.

2. Historic patch adapting with surrounding urban changes.

A user survey was conducted to understand the soico-cultural perception of Historic urban landscape.

Documenting the development of historic upban campus

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Hubli, the Humble little city of Karnataka houses the famous Siddharoodha Math campus – A Holy Historic campus for the Hindu community. A unique significance in Modern Hinduism. This famous tourist spot is a renowned Hindu holy center. This famous Historic Urban Campus evolved in the year 1929 where Sri Siddharoodha took samadhi, to honor him Refer fig 1; for Morphological development of Historic campus. Sadguru Siddharoodha Maharaj lived in the style of an ascetic throughout his life. He condemned practice of casteism and conceived divinity in everything that exists, as well as disagreeing with the common notion that brahmins were the only ones entitled to liberation, firmly believing that everyone is equally entitled. Considered to be an incarnation of Shiva, one of the trinity deities of Hinduism, Siddharoodha renounced his home and his family ties at the very young age of 6 years, and set himself the goal of finding his Satguru or spiritual master. Siddharoodha later surrendered himself, as a student to the realized soul Shri Gajadandaswami and served at his ashram. People including followers and devotees started reaching out to him for seeking solace, attaining mental satisfaction and gaining spiritual enlightenment. The Siddharoodha Math happens to be built at the place where he died in Hubli in 1929.There are more than 3000 Ashrams and spiritual centers of Swamy Siddharoodha in India & abroad. His divine presence ever blesses the devotees through his Shivayoga Samadhi at the Sri Siddharoodha Math built by his devotees in memory of the great saint. Siddharoodha Math Campus is completely dedicated to Siddaroodha swami's life and his work. This campus incorporates the historic three mandir, i.e Siddharoodha Mandir, another famous saint by the name of Rukmabai Mallapur is known to be the disciple as is Gurunatharudha, whose Samadhi is next to Siddharoodha's samadhi & the Kailash Mandir preaching's by disciplines takes place Refer fig 2; Façade section representing three markers of the campus. These historic built structures represent the unique Architectural styles refer fig 3, 4 & 5; The major festive celebration including Shiva ratri invites the huge crowd inflow to the campus. To accommodate the devotees in the campus the second phase of new built forms are emerging with respect to the donations donated by the devotees. Built forms like Dasoha (Dining hall), Kitchen block, Accommodation blocks for visitors, Admin block for Trust management, Toilet blocks for visitors, Marriage hall, Blind school. All these built forms have emerged in times, Emerging built forms in the Historic Urban campus is an indication of transformation.

A historic campus may be related as an Urban fabric with historically significant built form, socio-economic profile, cultural elements and its function within the city, differentiated from the rest of the city by its traditional tangible or intangible resources (Menon,2005). The contextual problems of a particular place in order to preserve and adapt the Urban fabric with changing time and altered understanding of Space and place. Advocates of Sustainable planning principles & Urban design guidelines emphasize the importance of a comprehensive and integrated approach for planning the older campus, and especially the need to consider complete conservation areas, not just individual buildings, (Steinberg, 1996).

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Theorists such as Bourdieu (2002), Foucault (2009) suggest that architectural identity is culturally, historically malleable and transformative in nature, and hence cause associated meanings and values to change with time. Most building conservation strategies tend to protect and maintain particular cultural, historical values associated with the built forms. These practices conceptualize architectural identity as physically defined and unyielding. Such historic campus may get limited to the image of a monument and not a relatable aspect of the changing surrounding fabric. On the other hand, controlled development and integration of these campus with their surroundings may prove to be more popular as pliability of associated meanings encompass the whole historic patch and its urban fabric, hence making it an urban place.

Figure 1: Morphological Development of the Sri. Siddharoodha Matha

Figure 2: Front Facade elevation, Representing the Three Heritage Markers

Figure 3: Entrance Torana for the Historic Urban Campus

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Figure 4: Kailasa Mantapa Representing Architectural Features

Figure 5: Plaza in front of the Historic blocks in Urban Campus

3. India Unbuilt Architecture Qualifies Associated meanings of Historic urban Campus

There are as many (if not more) unbuilt designs in Campus planning, integrating unbuilt design strategies in planning will actually associate the social needs to make it a complete atmosphere to breath in, which will make it a sensitive approach design to modulate the sustainability. Unbuilt design components play an important role in cultural heritage, several architects formulate Campus principles and design Sustainable master plan for Historic precincts around the nation. The basic goal of these Architects / Planners has been to predict successful use of space through natural environments and historic landscapes. Social and cultural factors determine a set of planning parameters for environmental programming and evaluation; namely, how people sense/ perceive both recreation and beliefs through historic campus design.

"What is built cannot be easily unbuilt. An increasingly entrenched tendering based 'design procurement' process for most public projects usually demand high turnovers for prequalification and eventually often reward the lowest bidder. This reinforces the status quo while leaving little room for innovation. In an increasing glut of concrete, space for radical and relevant architecture is diminishing.

When, by and large, the eco system of built architecture does not encourage innovation, it is worth exploring if the realm of unbuilt architecture can provide an alternative, (Amritha Ballal)."

"The very nature of being unbuilt makes the interpretation of unbuilt architecture far clearer, but renders the evaluation of experience as comparatively inaccessible. To resolve this, we must examine the relationship

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between architecture and life more closely and for this we must review how the design process actually happens in practice, Prem Chandavarkar".

It was found that people relate to their built and unbuilt environments through certain ways such as:

- Through Iconic / Image or Historic values of the Place.
- Biographical relationship, where there exists social connection to people's childhood and other significant memories refer fig 7.
- Experiential relationship, which is used to perceive the physical and social environment of the place refer fig 8;
- Functional relationship, which is mainly related to the economic activity of the area, and
- Dependent relationship, where trips to the place are obligatory due to factors such as family and friends.
- Belief and rituals tie up the strong relations in the historic campus, which gets associated within the campus.
- Social and cultural patterns in the historic campus are the strong sensory elements that invites the visitors on all occasions for vibrant celebrations.

Hence the challenge lies in setting up the Campus planning principles and design strategies to frame the Requirements in the Historic campus so that it frames the strands for future phase developments. This process will not only satisfy the campus design solution but also addresses the contextual issues that blends perfectly with the Urban Fabric of the Place.

Historic urban settings are found to satisfy all the above-mentioned associated relationships with the people, and hence considered the most viable area, within a city, to be qualified as an 'urban place'. For the Campus planning principle study, three of the parameters, for perception of Historic Campus, have been divided into sub-parameters for qualitative analysis:

Table 6: Refers Parameters for investigation of Social Perception of Historic cultural campus.

Parameters affecting people's perception of Historic campus	Sub-parameters
Image (Forms)	Architectural features, CAMPUS Planning Principles
Experiential (Spaces)	Spatial Pattern and Intensity, Sectional Relation / Scale of Transformations.
Functional (Activities)	Building use, Cultural spaces, Associated User Beneficiaries.

Table 6: Parameter for investigation of Social Perception

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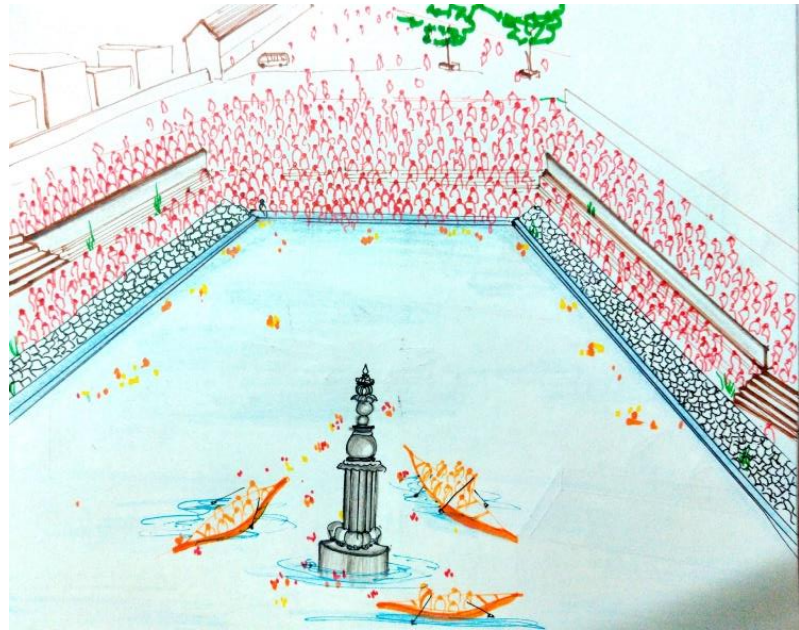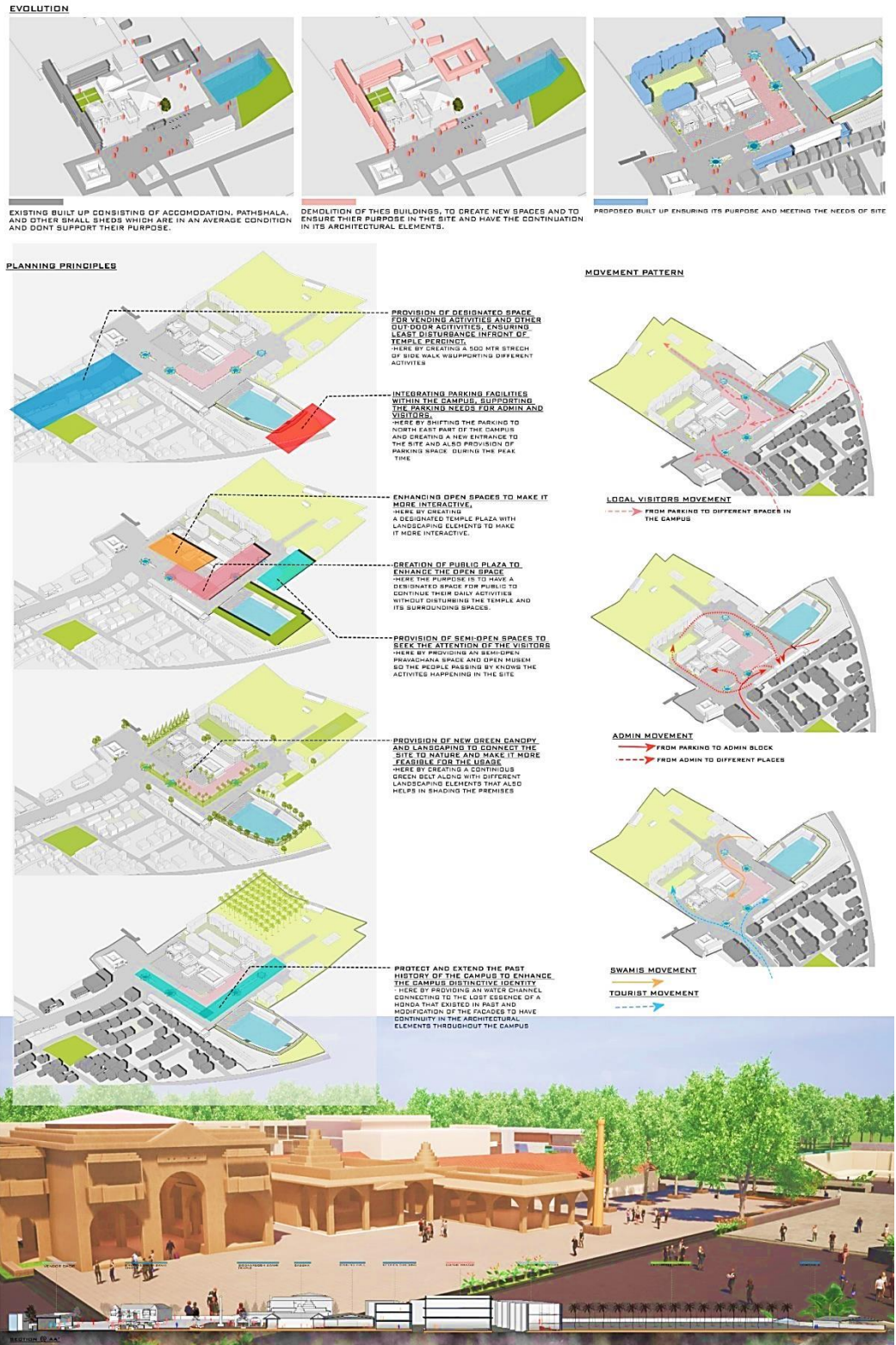
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Figure 7: Kalyani an Unbuilt Architecture in Historic Campus

Figure 8: View of the Historic Campus Plaza representing vibrant activities

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Figure 9: Historic Urban Campus Master plan development, Aligned with Proposed Planning Principles

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According to twin city (Hubli-Dharwad) Master plan the urban landscape of Hubli is dotted with few historical buildings and architectural remains, such that the culture of the city exists as product of its ease for Transformation towards modern traditions. Based on the Historic campus survey study and associated relationship analysis, the Study qualifies Historic campus Planning parameters to adhere the Sustainable Design quality for phase developments in the campus. The detail existing campus study and Active user analysis of the Campus is emphasized for framing the design strategies.

Proposed planning Principles for Historic Campus at Hubli are as follows: Also refer fig 9 for spatial demonstration of these recommended Principles.

1. Landscape as connecting link to Nature & Culture.
   - Source of sensing the precinct: Contrasting features are seen in the Historical building and urban built form with no degree of integration.
2. Protect & extend the past – like character to the Historic campus to reinforce & enhance the campus's distinctive identity.
   - Source for identification of Architectural Features to Reinforce the Identity.
3. Enhance the open spaces quality to make it more interactive.
   - Source for the sectional relationships of the urban fabric as well as historic patch provide human and urban scales, leading to better perception of built & unbuilt form by the people.
4. Promote efficient land use that protects existing & create new green canopy.
   - Source spatial pattern is extroverted, with axial connection within the urban area. Spatial intensity of the urban fabric and historic patch is uniform, with ground coverage up to 40%.
5. Protect, maintain & develop the campus as an arboretum (a botanical garden devoted to trees.) to support the campus teaching/learning, research & outreach mission.
   - Source for knowledge exchange integrating unbuilt Architecture.
6. Provide opportunities for academics & social interactions. (space for Institutional activity).
   - Source for including institutional activities associated with Vedic literature study.
7. Provide a variety of open spaces that accommodate the full range of outdoor activity example space for personal reflection & meditation.
   - Source for accommodating meditation center.
8. Preserve & protect existing natural areas & enhance their interconnectivity.
   - Source for retaining the existing greenspace and provide value added landscaping features to enhance the Area.
9. Integrate public art appropriate to surrounding context.

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- Source for proposing exhibition center, making the Urban area a temporal activity/visitors center, but not for daily recreational uses.

10. Integrate parking facilities into the campus, setting in an aesthetically pleasing manner consistent with its park-like setting. Safety & efficiently meet the parking needs for admin and visitors.

11. Use centralized utility systems wherever feasible to maximize production efficiencies and to minimize life-cycle operational costs.
    - Source for integrating sustainable design ideas like Ventilation coefficient, Natural Fuel consumption.

12. Prepare campus for developing technologies and their integration into the campus infrastructure.
    - Source for making self-sustained Historic Urban campus.

13. Suggestive Measures for use of Public Spaces During the COVID 19 Pandemic.
    - Source, Crisis offers one more opportunity, to reinforce the protection of spaces and societies, with reinvented solutions, that man improvises.
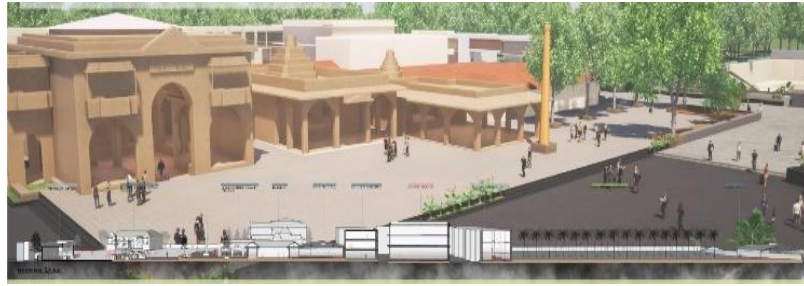
All the above sources are practically analyzed based on the concerns observed in the Historic campus.

An Attempt to Design Master Plan Proposal for Urban Historic Campus

This historical campus patch lies within the medium rise residential areas of Hubli city. Mainly accessed through a Highway, the campus welcomes with grand thorana at the entrance. The campus is porous which is a positive energy in the urban fabric. The campus holds a strong vibration which emphasis the significance of the Historic place. All these observations and analysis helps us to generate strong Design Strategies such us reclaiming the water networks, Conserving the three Historic building blocks, Redefining the Kalyani, Proposal for meditation center, Goushala (Cattle management center), Enhancing museum space, Proposal for Vedic pathashala, All these proposals caters to Strengthen the identity of the campus by providing structured master plan for phase wise development so that there is uniformity and continuity in the Design process Refer fig 10 (a). As in the current scenario the built blocks which has emerged in times in this campus has no uniformity nor continuity of Architectural Features, there is threat of losing its original essence Hence the study aim's at Resilient Socio-cultural campus planning for the people. When we say people yes, the planning emphasis is also on Unbuilt Architecture, this unbuilt design strands will address to enhance, safeguard the activities of all age group categories, Street vending activities, Visitors integration for Self-sustainable design interventions. With current activities observation on campus we figured out that this campus has visitors flow of 3000 per day. All of them are served with food at Dasoha. Also, an attempt for few conservative surgeries required on campus is considered in master plan to establish the disciple visitors' network to experience and sense the notion of positive energy.

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Historic Campus Planning with more rapid development in technology and people approach towards shift in life style is hard to designers to retain the essence of the place for force one to perceive it, with so much modernization people have lost their roots towards religion. This design speaks on getting back the lost essence of the campus by recreating the past usage of the space in an abstract form to match the modern architectural styles. The main focus is to have continuity in the campus through movement, through architectural features and to help user to experience the essence of the place. These notions are achieved through addition of Different elements. The history of the campus speaks about the public "honda" in front of the Shri Siddharodh Swami Matha, this is brought back by creating a spine of water fountain in front of it which runs throughout the campus till the new swami block. This is designed so that it defines the movement flow within the campus so that visitors don't get lost. The campus requires a directional movement, as it invites high density of visitors. The visitors flow exceeds during special occasions up to 2 lakhs. Hence to accommodate the huge crowd proposals for Accommodation block, 100 Toilet units are recommended. An interlocking design style is established so that Historic campus depicts and promote the unity. The movements through the campus follows a series of levels depicting the struggle of Shri Siddharodh Swami. The cultural landscaping in the campus represents that everything in the end is peaceful and there is hope to every struggle of life. The open and semi open transition space creates an opportunity for knowledge exchange. The parking space is shifted towards secondary entry that's at the north east part of the campus. The campus is kept pedestrian friendly. A pedestrian plaza with various innovative space making elements next to Dasoha is created for people to continue their usual leisure time followed from ages. The designed movement paths are 9m wide enough so that during main festive season that path can be utilized for fair activities also provides opportunity for vendors to accommodate comfortably to attract visitors. A leisure walk or a surprise stop at Pushkarni is designed so that its invites visitors to relax for a movement, away from their hustle bustle routine life. Hence, this Historic master plan accommodates the sensitive planning parameters which is evolved as a Design process. Knowledge of Urban design guidelines, Architectural innovative design framework, Conservation parameters is all aligned and integrated in the design evolution. Refer fig 11. For visual representation of Proposal.

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Figure10(b): Represents the Visual images of Proposed campus design

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LEGENDS

1 KAILASH MANTAP
2 GRUNATH SWAMI TEMPLE
3 SIDDHARODHA SWAMI TEMPLE
4 DASOHA
5 DINNING HALL
6 KITCHEN BUILDING
7 GODOWN
8 KALYAN MANTAP
9 SHARANESHWAR SWAMI TEMPLE
10 TOILETS
11 ACCOMODATION BLOCKS
12 MUSEM / LIBARY
13 SWAMI ACCOMODATION
14 VENDORS PLAZA
15 ADMIN BLOCK
16 ADMIN FOR ACCOMODATION
17 GOWSHALA
18 SAMADHI
19 MAIN PARKING
20 TEMPORARY PARKING
21 ENTRANCE FOR VEHICLES
22 TWO WHEELER PARKING
23 SERVICES
24 TEMPLE PLAZA
25 PUBLIC PLAZA

Figure 10 (a): Proposed Master Plan for Sri. Siddaroodha Math at Hubli.

4. Changing Perception of Historic Urban Precincts

The character of space depends on the activities associated with it. The associative value of a space helps making it more vibrant and functioning. In the context of reframing the identity of the Historic urban campus, the primary focus falls on the incorporation of transforming social image into the fabric, while still preserving the important physical aspects. This is a Historic moment

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where cities can change course. This pandemic situation prepares designers to rethink of space making elements. New possibilities for people to use streets for healthy activity right now, and they form the outline of the future cities we need to build refer fig 11. Creating safe, walkable streets and choices for getting around are critical during the initial crisis's response, and also to achieve a long-term economic recovery that is equitable, sustainable & enduring. During a few short weeks, much of the world as we know is changed. This Urban disease has radically altered the life style, huge shifts to how we move in the cities. The requirement of "Social or Physical distancing" – maintaining at least 6' (2m) distance between people, with significant reductions on group gathering and crowds, combined with what we know today about the transmission of this coronavirus and is increased communicability in indoor settings, requires that we reallocate our Urban Campus for public use during this crises and for the future. Few ideas and design attempts are tried out in form of sketches, as how these community spaces can look for shift in thought process.

5.   Conclusions

To understand what should be done in order to integrate the character of a Historic urban campus in context to its changing social and cultural background, it is necessary to understand changing perception or human understanding of spaces. The urban design guidelines suggest that an integrated approach to reframe with respect to context must be adopted for historic precincts, incorporating the improvement of living conditions for the inhabitants also for the preservation of important physical aspects. For proper functioning of these areas over time, the Transforming Urban heritage campus must be well Designed & Planned prior considering the future requirements which align with the city developments. Hence the decision makers and designers of such Historic campus should take design strands in such a way that unity in campus aligns with future needs. But mere preservation of these areas through isolation might lead to the loss of their values as markers of the city. Many of such historic patches lack proper infrastructure to survive the changing urban character. Without proper planning of adaptive reuse. As an anticipatory move to development of Historic precincts, the relationship of the urban setting to its people should be considered without fail. This will help to adapt the meanings and values of the historic cultural campus with changing surroundings and ensure its survival through reuse. It must be ensured that small localities with such historic patches to be treated as special development zones, with three dimensional physical planning and design measures, not only to protect the markers, but also to ensure the survival of its intangible heritage and blend it successfully with the present scenario to make it sustainable.
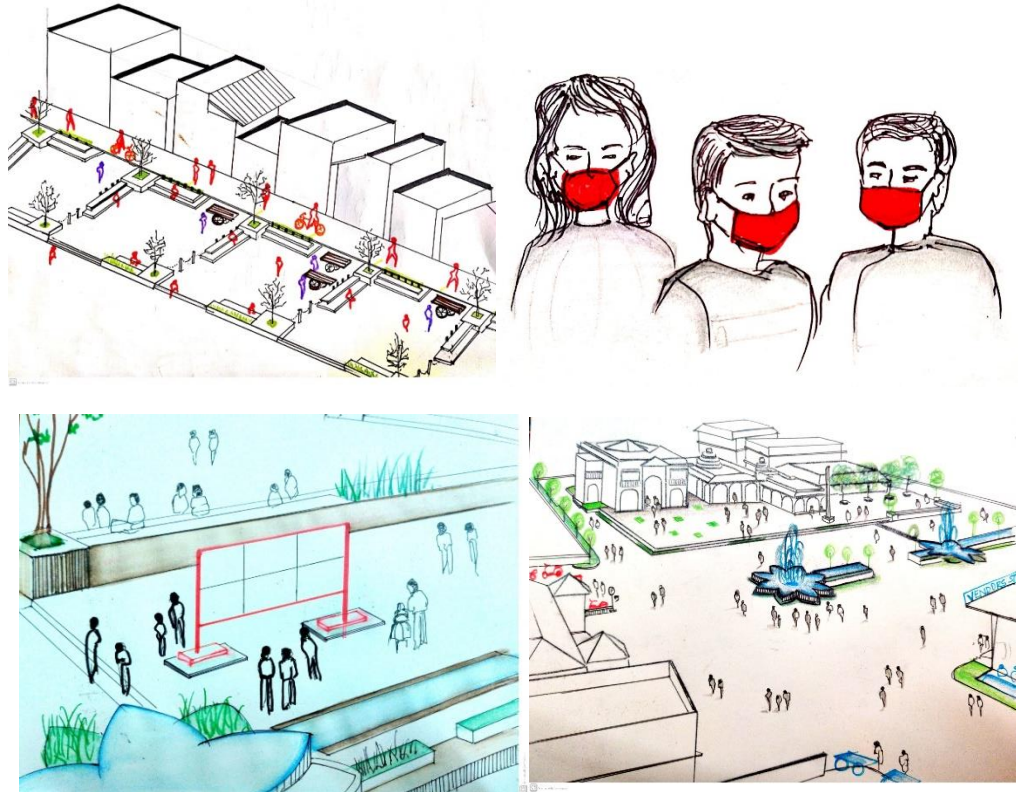
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Figure 11. Suggestive Measures for use of Public spaces During the COVID 19 Pandemic. Social Distancing for Street Vendors and Pedestrians

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