

Protecting the Identity of an Everyday Heritage Street: Dastur Meher Road, Pune Cantonment, and the Draft Building Bye-laws, 2016

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ABSTRACT:

Dastur Meher Road is a narrow bazaar street in the civil area of the Pune Cantonment, India. It grew in the nineteenth century when the British military invited traders to settle beside its camp. Parsi, Bohra, Goan and Anglo-Indian families-built shop-houses here, with shops on the ground floor and homes above. The result is a street of timber-framed, two-storey buildings with carved brackets, enclosed balconies and sloping tiled roofs. None of these buildings, except a Parsi fire temple, is formally protected, and the street is now changing through demolition, high-rise infill and careless repair. This paper documents the precinct and proposes a framework for its management. The study used archival maps, building-by-building survey, figure-ground, land-use, building-age and height mapping, measured drawings, transect walks, behavioural observation and informal interviews with residents. The findings show that the street still keeps a continuous edge, a human scale and a shared community life across religions. They also show that its survival was partly an accident of planning rules: a permissible floor space index (FSI) of 1.00, against an existing built density of about 2.00, made rebuilding unattractive to owners. A comparison with the draft Pune Cantonment Board Building Bye-laws, 2016 shows that this protection would be lost, since existing floor area could be rebuilt in buildings of up to ground plus four floors, while the same bye-laws provide a heritage regulation that has not yet been applied to the street. Tenancy, low rents, lack of awareness and the absence of design controls continue to erode the fabric. The paper proposes a heritage management framework adapted from international charters and from the policy statement of The Rocks in Sydney. It includes a vision, listing and grading of the precinct under the heritage chapter of the draft 2016 bye-laws, a special precinct regulation, design guidelines for infill and repair, public realm improvements, a heritage walk, a conservation cell within the Cantonment Board and a programme of public participation. Read through the physical setting, activity and meaning of the place, the findings show that the draft rules threaten the identity of the street and not only its buildings. The paper argues that ordinary, unlisted streets such as Dastur Meher Road carry much of a city's identity, and that they can be conserved only if the values of their community are conserved together with their buildings.

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Keywords: urban heritage, historic precinct, cantonment, Pune, sense of place, place identity, building bye-laws, heritage management, vernacular architecture, community participation.

Introduction

Indian cities are changing fast. Pune, once known mainly as a seat of the Peshwas and a centre of learning, is now one of the largest metropolitan regions in Maharashtra, with a strong base in information technology, manufacturing and education. Most people who move to the city, and most visitors, know little about its past. Even fewer know how much of that past still stands in the older parts of the city and in the civil lines of the cantonment.

Conservation in India has long focused on monuments: forts, temples, palaces and tombs that the Archaeological Survey of India and the state archaeology departments protect under law. The ordinary fabric of the city, the streets, bazaars and houses where most people live and work, has received far less attention. Yet it is this everyday fabric that gives a city much of its character. When it disappears, the city does not lose a single landmark; it loses its familiar texture, its scale and the memories attached to it. Dastur Meher Road in the Pune Cantonment is a good example of such everyday heritage. It is a short bazaar street lined with timber shop-houses built by trading communities who came to serve the British army in the nineteenth century. It is still lived in, and its residents still celebrate the festivals of several faiths in its lanes and open spaces. At the same time, a few new buildings have already broken the scale of the street, and many older ones are being altered without any reference to their character.

This paper has three aims. The first is to document the physical and social character of the Dastur Meher precinct. The second is to identify the issues that threaten it. The third is to propose a practical framework for its conservation and management that the Cantonment Board, the residents and other stakeholders could adopt. The paper builds on documentation work with a detailed management framework and with a discussion of the planning conditions that have, so far, helped the street survive. The paper is organised as follows. Section 2 reviews the literature on urban heritage, sense of place and heritage management. Section 3 introduces the study area. Section 4 explains the method. Section 5 presents the findings, and Section 6 discusses them.

Section 7 sets out the proposed heritage management framework, and Section 8 concludes.

2. Literature Review

2.1 From monument to place

The idea of what deserves to be conserved has widened steadily over the last century. The Athens Charter of 1931 dealt mainly with the restoration of historic monuments. The Venice Charter (ICOMOS, 1964) took an important step when it said that a historic monument includes its urban or rural setting, and that modest works of the past which have acquired cultural significance over time also deserve care. The Burra Charter (Australia ICOMOS, 2013, first adopted 1979) moved further and spoke of 'place' rather than monument. In its terms, a place may be a building, a group of buildings, a street, a landscape or even a route, and its cultural significance lies in its fabric, setting, use, associations and meanings.

The Washington Charter (ICOMOS, 1987) addressed historic towns and urban areas directly. It recognised that such areas carry the values of traditional urban cultures and that they are threatened by modern development. The Nara Document on Authenticity (ICOMOS, 1994) then made it clear that authenticity must be judged within the cultural context to which a heritage belongs, rather than by a single universal standard. ICOMOS' Washington Charter (1987) made a direct reference to historic towns and urban areas. It acknowledged that these areas have traditional values of urban cultures and are vulnerable to modern development. Later, in the Nara Document on Authenticity (ICOMOS, 1994), it was made clear that there is no universal standard for judging authenticity, but an understanding of the cultural context to which a heritage belongs. In 2003, the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage was adopted by UNESCO which recognized practices, knowledge, skills and cultural spaces associated with them (UNESCO, 2003).

Jokilehto (1999) explains the gradual transition in detail, and demonstrates how conservation changed from concern for individual masterpieces to concern for the care of historic environments as a whole. In the context of this paper the important thing to note is that a street like Dastur Meher Road, which has no

monument of national importance, is now wholly in the realm of conservation thinking.

2.2 Historic urban landscape and living heritage

The UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (UNESCO, 2011) sees a historic city as a layered product of cultural and natural values over time, not as a collection of protected objects. It encourages planners to plan for change in historic areas, rather than to prevent it. This is particularly beneficial in rapidly growing cities in Asia, where people continue to reside and work in heritage areas and where there is high development pressure on these areas, argues Bandarin and van Oers (2012). Later work has progressed from this into a feasible approach. Bandarin and van Oers (2015) set out tools for applying the approach, and Taylor (2016) argues that it treats cities as cultural landscapes, in which everyday places and the meanings people give them matter as much as listed buildings. A review of the literature by Ginzarly et al. (2019) finds, however, that the approach is still applied unevenly, and that the link between mapping a place and changing the rules that govern it is often weak.

This links to the idea of 'living heritage'. A living historic area is one where the original community, or a community with a long association, still uses the place much as it was meant to be used. Conservation of such an area cannot be a museum exercise. It must allow for daily life, small changes and economic activity, while protecting what is significant (Feilden & Jokilehto, 1998; Tiesdell et al., 1996). Mason (2002) adds that heritage values are many and sometimes in conflict: historic, aesthetic, social, spiritual and economic values may pull in different directions, and planning must find ways to weigh them openly.

Recent writing has also asked who decides what is significant. Smith (2006) describes an 'authorised heritage discourse' in which experts, and the grand and old, define heritage, while the views of local communities are pushed aside. Pendlebury (2013) shows how this discourse is built into planning systems through listing and design control. Studies of social value suggest that the attachment of people to ordinary places is real and can be recorded, even when those places have little architectural merit (Jones, 2017; Madgin et al., 2018). Ripp and Rodwell (2016) argue that the governance of urban heritage must therefore bring residents, owners and public bodies together, rather than rely on the state alone.

2.3 Sense of place and identity

Writers on urban form have long argued that the identity of a place comes from a mix of physical setting, activity and meaning. Lynch (1960) showed how people form a mental image of a city through paths, edges, districts, nodes and landmarks. Cullen (1961) described how townscape is experienced in sequence as one walks, and how small details, enclosure and changes of view create a sense of 'here'. Relph (1976) warned of 'place lessness', the loss of distinct places through standardised development. Norberg-Schulz (1980) used the term *genius loci* for the spirit of a place, which architecture should understand and respect.

Jacobs (1961) and later Gehl (2010) drew attention to the life between buildings. Narrow streets, active ground floors, mixed uses and buildings of human scale encourage people to walk, meet and watch over the street. These qualities are present in many old Indian bazaars and are often lost when such streets are redeveloped. This paper will use Relph's three parts as its lens for reading Dastur Meher Road, and for testing the impact on each of these of the draft 2016 bye-laws and the proposed framework.

Relph (1976) described the identity of a place as made up of three linked parts: its physical setting, the activities that take place there, and the meanings that people attach to it. Environmental psychology has since shown that place identity and place attachment are closely tied to memory, and that people are attached most strongly to places where their own history and that of their community can be read (Lewicka, 2008, 2011). Ujang and Zakariya (2015) note that urban regeneration often weakens this identity when it changes the physical setting faster than the users can adapt to it, or when it displaces the activities and people that gave the place its meaning. This paper uses Relph's three parts as its framework for reading the identity of Dastur Meher Road, and for testing how the draft 2016 bye-laws and the proposed framework would affect each of them.

2.4 Unprotected urban heritage in India

Most of India's historic urban fabric is not protected by central or state law. The INTACH Charter for the Conservation of Unprotected Architectural Heritage and Sites in India (INTACH, 2004) was written to address this gap. It recognises that the bulk of Indian heritage is living, that traditional building skills are part of it, and that conservation must involve local communities and craftspeople. It also accepts that

the Indian context may need approaches different from those in the Western charters.

Local level heritage regulations have been introduced in several cities in India. In 1995, the Government of Maharashtra issued the heritage regulations for Greater Bombay (Regulation 67 of the development control regulations for Greater Bombay) that implemented a three-grade classification for listed buildings and precincts. This model has since spread: the Model Building Bye-Laws issued by the Town and Country Planning Organisation (2016) include a chapter on heritage sites and precincts, and the Unified Development Control and Promotion Regulations for Maharashtra (Government of Maharashtra, 2020) carry heritage provisions to municipal areas across the state. At the national level, the HRIDAY scheme (Ministry of Urban Development, 2015) funded heritage-based improvement of selected cities. Cantonments are governed by the Cantonments Act (Government of India, 2006) and by their own building bye-laws, and they sit outside the municipal heritage lists. The Pune Cantonment Board Building Bye-laws, 2016 (draft) include a chapter on the conservation of heritage sites, with listing, a three-grade system and a Heritage Conservation Committee (Pune Cantonment Board, 2016, Chapter VIII). However, a regulation is only useful once places are listed under it, and historic civil areas within cantonments, such as the Sadar Bazaars of Pune, Bengaluru or Secunderabad, still have little effective protection.

Studies of urban conservation in developing countries also point to common problems: weak institutions, lack of funds, rent control that removes the incentive to maintain buildings, and low public awareness (Steinberg, 1996). In Indian cities, rent control has been shown to lead to the decline of the old rental stock, since owners have neither the income nor the incentive to maintain it (Tandel et al., 2016). Tourism is often suggested as a source of funds, but it brings its own risks if it is not managed (Orbaşlı, 2000).

2.5 Research gap

Much has been written on Pune's old city and its peths, and on the city's colonial history (Diddee &

Gupta, 2000). Much less is available on the civil areas of the Pune Cantonment. Recent work on the Sadar Bazaars of cantonment towns in Bengal has documented their shop-houses and facades (Prasher & Satpal, 2023), and a study of the Saddar Bazaar quarter of Karachi has argued for a value-based, urban-scale framework in place of building-by-building conservation (Akbar et al., 2026). but similar studies are lacking for western India and on the architecture of the trading communities who settled there. There is also little work in India that moves from documentation of such a street to a complete management framework that fits the legal and administrative setting of a cantonment. This paper tries to fill that gap through a single, detailed case study. It also links the physical findings to the idea of place identity, and to the specific building rules that will decide whether that identity survives.

3. The Study Area

3.1 Pune and its cantonment

Pune has a recorded history that goes back many centuries. It became politically significant in the eighteenth century when the Peshwas of Maratha state was based here, and the Chhatrapati of Satara ruled the state. As the old city developed it was made up of neighbourhoods (peths), frequently based on specific communities and trades. The houses were compactly built along the narrow winding streets, which shaded the streets and made them cool (Gazetteer of the Bombay Presidency, 1885). After the British defeated the Peshwa in 1818, they set up their military and administrative base to the east of the old city. The area first used for this purpose was later handed over for civilian use, and the military moved to a larger tract further east. Over time, the cantonment came to have two distinct parts. One was the military area, with barracks, churches, parade grounds and officers' bungalows set in large open grounds. The other was the civil area, often called the Sadar Bazaar or civil lines, which housed the traders and service communities who supplied the army (Figure 1).

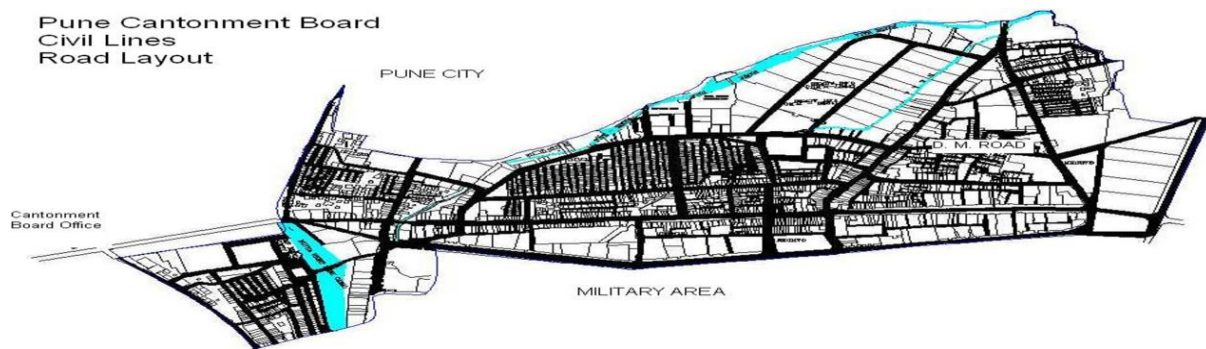


Figure 1. Road layout of the civil lines within the Pune Cantonment, with the military area to the south and the old city to the west. Source: Pune Cantonment Board layout,

3.2 The Sadar Bazaar and Dastur Meher Road

The British invited traders to settle near the camp. They came from several communities, chiefly Parsis, Bohra Muslims, Goan Christians and Anglo-Indians, along with others from the region. The bazaar was laid out with four main north-south streets, East Street, Main Street (now Mahatma Gandhi Road), Centre Street and West Street, and a number of cross streets that followed the shape of the available land. The streets were first allotted to particular trades or communities, but over time they became mixed. Shops with homes above them were built along these streets, much like the peths of the old city. The bazaar thus became a meeting point between the city and the military camp (Figure 2).

Dastur Meher Road is one of the cross streets of this bazaar. Parsi merchants formed its main trading community. They sold textiles, grain, tea, coffee, sugar, kerosene and imported goods, and some ran wine and liquor shops. Local accounts collected during the survey say that the street was once known informally as 'Gutta Street' because of these liquor shops. Other trades such as carpentry, watch repair and book binding also took root. One early trader, who carried mail for the British by horse carriage, built stables at one end of the street; the stable building survives, though it now houses shops. The present name is linked locally to the spiritual teacher Meher Baba, whose family house on the street is still visited by followers]. The street also has a Parsi fire temple (Agiary), which is already a listed heritage structure.



Figure 2. Location of the precinct in relation to the old city, Sadar Bazaar, M.G. Road, East Street and the military area. Source: Author, annotated on satellite imagery

4. Methodology

Case study design with accompanying simple descriptive analysis was used to analyze the study. The selection of a single precinct was done because the intention was to gain an understanding of one precinct in great detail, and to assess the feasibility of the implementation of a management framework in a real legal and social context. The fieldwork was done by the author and two research assistants from February 2025 to December 2025. In 2026 the street was re-visited to look for subsequent changes which were not identified.

The first step, for fixing the area of the study, was to correct the boundary. The length of Dastur Meher Road and the internal lanes and open spaces behind the buildings behind the street was considered as the precinct. The boundary was drawn so that it included all buildings that share the street's character and the community spaces linked to them.

The methods used are listed in Table 1. Archival maps and the cantonment layout plans were used to understand the history of the area. A building-by-building survey recorded the age, height, use, materials and condition of each structure. These data were mapped to produce figure-ground, building-age, height and land-use maps. Selected buildings were measured and drawn to record typical plans, sections and elevations, and architectural details such as

windows, grilles, brackets and eaves boards were sketched. Transect walks and behavioural mapping at different times of day and during festivals were used to record how people used the street and its open spaces. Informal interviews were held with residents, shopkeepers and members of the Parsi community.

The building survey covered almost all structures within the precinct boundary. The 65 interviewees were chosen purposively, so as to include owners and tenants, shopkeepers and residents, people living on the main street and in the inner lanes, members of each community, and both older and younger people. Further older residents and community leaders were reached through referrals from the first interviewees. The interviews were open and conversational. They covered memories of the street, the use of shared spaces, festivals, the condition of buildings, and hopes and fears for the future. Interviewees took part voluntarily and are not named in this paper.

The regulations were examined clause by clause. The provisions of the 1988 and draft 2016 bye-laws on floor space index, height, setbacks, balconies, parking, amalgamation of plots and heritage were listed side by side and compared with the existing buildings (Table 3). They were then applied to a typical shop-house of the precinct to find the building that each set of rules would produce (Section 6.2).

Table 1. Methods used in the study

Method	What was recorded	Output
Archival study	Historic maps, cantonment layout, gazetteers, bye-laws	Historical account, precinct context
Building survey	Age, height, use, structure, materials, condition, alterations	Survey sheets, condition grading
Mapping	Building footprints, open spaces, uses, ages, heights	Figure-ground, age, height, land-use maps
Measured drawing	Plans, sections, elevations, street sections	Typical building typology
Detail documentation	Windows, grilles, brackets, columns, eaves boards	Catalogue of architectural elements
Transect walks and behavioural mapping	Movement, activities, parking, festival use	Activity and open-space maps
Informal interviews	Residents, shopkeepers, community leaders (65 Nos.)	Histories, memories, concerns
Review of regulations	Cantonment building bye-laws (1988) and draft Building Bye-laws (2016): FSI, height, setbacks, parking, heritage provisions	Comparison of rules with existing fabric

The analysis was mainly interpretive. Maps were read for patterns of age, density and use. Field notes and interview notes were coded by hand and grouped into themes covering character, social life, issues and

aspirations. The themes were then read against Relph's (1976) three parts of place identity: physical setting, activity and meaning. Findings were cross-checked between sources: what residents said about

the street was compared with the maps and with observation on site, and only points supported by more than one source were treated as findings. The issues were then classified at area level and at building level, and the proposals were developed in response to each one. Some aspects, especially the intangible associations of the place, could not be measured within the time available. The limitations of the study are discussed in Section 8.

5. Findings

5.1 Street form and the pattern of open space

Along the road, the buildings stand shoulder to shoulder and form a continuous street wall. Most sit

almost on the street line, with only a nominal setback of about one metre. The road is narrow and slightly curved, so the view along it is always closed by buildings and changes as one walks (Figure 3). Behind this street wall, the pattern is very different. The figure-ground map (Figure 4) shows buildings placed somewhat irregularly, some with narrow strips of open space on all sides, some grouped around small courts, and a few standing in larger open grounds.



Figure 3. Streetscape of Dastur Meher Road, showing the continuous street wall, timber balconies and the human scale of the buildings. Source: Author's survey

A surprising finding was that open space actually takes up a large share of the precinct. This is not obvious on the ground, because the space is broken into narrow pieces around the buildings. Only on the western side are there larger open areas. These internal lanes and courts were never meant for through traffic. They are pedestrian spaces that give privacy and safety to the homes and serve as places for children to play and neighbours to meet. Today many of these courts are used for parking, which has changed their character.



Figure 4. Figure-ground plan of the precinct. Source: Author's survey

The street edge is continuous, and matches the old city while the interior has a looser pattern of buildings and small open spaces.



Figure 5. Reverse Figure-ground plan. Source: Author's survey

Contrary to the expectation, the open spaces dominate the layout, a fact not really noticeable while moving through the area as the open space is divided in narrow pieces around the buildings except for some areas in the Western Side

5.2 Age and height of buildings

The building-age map (Figure 6) shows that most structures in the precinct were built before 1900. A

smaller number date from 1900 to 1950, and a few, mostly along the edges of the precinct, were built after 1950. The height map (Figure 7) shows that the street is dominated by ground-plus-one buildings with sloping roofs, about seven metres high. Some buildings have two upper floors, and a small number have three or more. Purely single-storey buildings are mostly the oldest structures

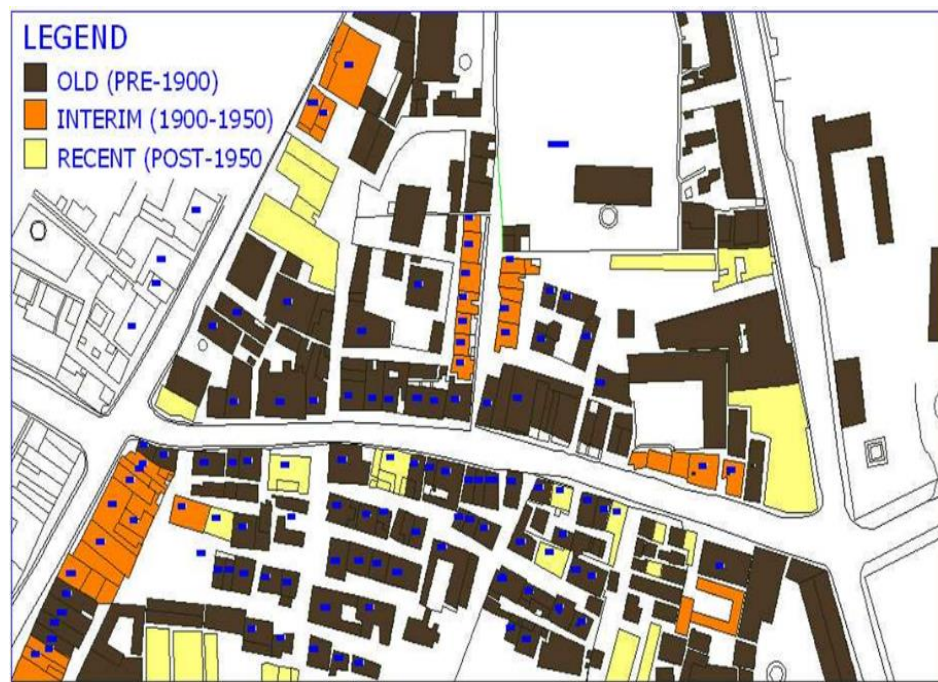


Figure 6. Age of buildings: pre-1900, 1900-1950 and post-1950. Source: Author's survey.

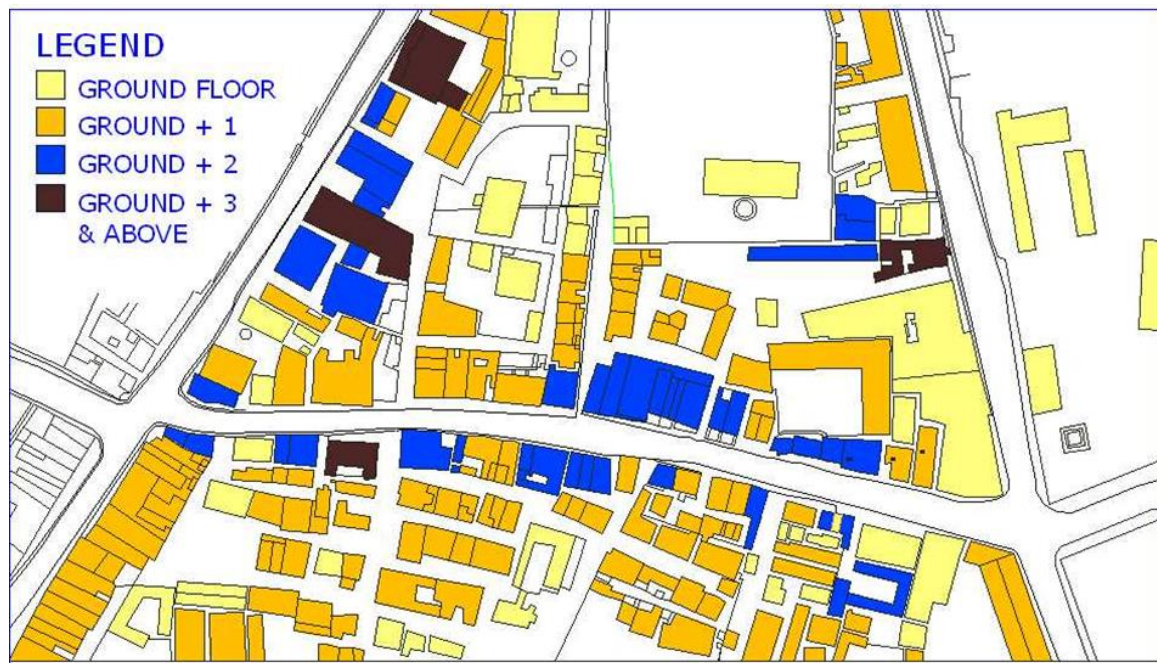


Figure 7. Building heights, from ground floor only to ground plus three floors and above. Source: Author's survey.

5.3 Land use

Along the main road the land use is mixed, with shops on the ground floor and homes above (Figure 8). The shops mostly serve the neighbourhood, since the larger markets of the area are on M.G. Road and East Street. A noticeable number of buildings on the street are purely residential, even though the street was laid out as a bazaar. The interior of the precinct is almost wholly residential. There is no industry, apart from small service workshops within homes. The fire temple and a few community buildings are the main public uses.



Figure 8. Land use in the precinct: residential, commercial, mixed, industrial and public. Source: Author's survey

5.4 Building typology and construction

The buildings share a simple and consistent type. The plan is long and narrow, with rooms placed one behind another. The front room on the ground floor is the shop; the kitchen and toilet are at the rear. Some houses have a small open court inside, but most do not. The upper floor is the home. A balcony, usually enclosed with decorative timber windows, projects about 1.2 metres over the street across the full width of the front. The roof slopes to the street and to the rear, and the space under it is often used as a loft (Figure 9).



Figure 9. Typical shop-house: ground and first floor plans (left), and street elevation and section (right). Source: Measured drawings by the Author

Construction follows the same logic in almost every building. The structure is a timber frame with timber floors, brick infill walls and a roof of timber trusses of the British type, covered with Mangalore tiles. The side walls are usually of exposed brick. The plinth is about 0.6 metres high, and the floor-to-floor height is about 3 metres. The front of the shop was originally a wide timber-framed opening closed with folding shutters. The front facade is divided into three or four equal bays, and the doors and windows cover almost the whole of it, while the side walls have very few openings.

What makes the street distinctive is the mix of borrowed details. Because the traders lived close to

the British and came from different regions, the local Maratha vernacular is only one of several sources. The survey recorded curved timber brackets and posts that recall Gujarati houses, cusped arches and cypress-shaped columns from the Maharashtrian tradition, glass-panelled enclosed balconies and projecting ornamental windows that recall Goa, and pilasters, Tuscan and Corinthian columns and neo-Gothic or neo-classical mouldings from British practice (Figure 9). These elements sit together on the same facades. The street is therefore best described as hybrid. Its character comes not from one style, but from a shared building type, a shared scale and a shared craft of woodworking that tie the different details together.

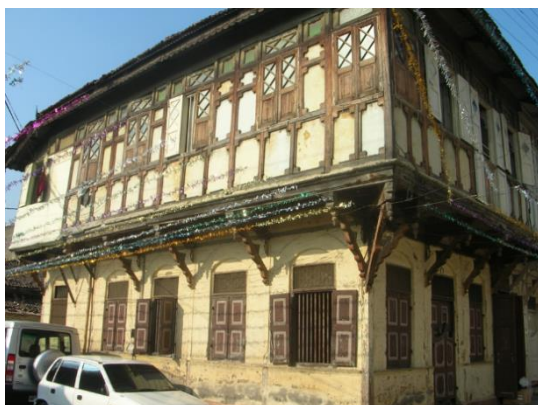


Figure 10. Architectural details: carved timber brackets supporting a balcony, a glazed timber balcony, and an arched window with a decorative timber grille. Source: Author's survey

5.5 Community life and intangible heritage

The precinct is home to several communities. The Parsis, once the majority on the street, are now

fewer, but the community still runs a trust and owns several buildings. Hindu, Muslim, Christian and Parsi families live side by side. The survey mapped the spaces used for different festivals: a common open

space for the Ganesh festival and Navratri, an area used for Christmas celebrations, a stretch where the Mina Bazaar is held during Eid, and the fire temple, which is used by the Parsi community for religious and social events. Pateti and the anniversary observances associated with Meher Baba are also marked. Residents interviewed during the survey recalled events going back forty years or more, and

5.6 Issues

The issues identified in the survey are summarised in Table 2 and described below.

Table 2. Issues identified in the Dastur Meher precinct

Level	Issue	Observation
Area	Traffic and parking	One-way through traffic in the day; at night, one side of the street is almost fully parked; internal courts used for parking.
Area	Land use change	Growing commercial activity brings more traffic and changes the character of the street.
Area	Obliteration of buildings	Demolition and rebuilding, including one G+6 building and others at G+2, without regard to the street.
Area	Street furniture and clutter	Overhead electric and telephone wires, hoardings and large signboards hide facades.
Area	Infrastructure	Water, drainage and electricity are available; services are adequate but not well kept.
Building	Awareness	Little awareness among owners, tenants and authorities of the heritage value of the street.
Building	Occupancy	About 80% of occupants are tenants; low controlled rents leave owners with no money or reason to repair.
Building	Condition	Many buildings need repair; timber and exposed brick are decaying.
Building	Uninformed repair	Repairs with cement, tiles and new materials damage the old fabric and its look.
Building	Aesthetics	Facade cladding, window air-conditioners, unsuitable signs and new openings spoil the facades.

5.6.1 Traffic and parking

Dastur Meher Road is not a city-level traffic route, but it is used as a shortcut by local traffic. Although it is one-way, through traffic creates parking problems during the day. At night almost the whole length of one side of the street becomes a parking lot. Parking is allowed on alternate sides on alternate days. As noted, many internal courts are now used for parking, which pushes out other uses of these spaces.

5.6.2 Demolition and incongruent new buildings

The strongest threat is the arrival of new buildings that ignore the street. One building of ground plus six floors has already been built on the road; it makes no attempt to relate to its neighbours in height, form, material or detail. In at least two other cases, old buildings were pulled down and replaced with

spoke of close ties with neighbours in times of need. This shared life across faiths is one of the most important values of the precinct. It is supported by the physical form of the place: by the small courts, the shaded lanes, the shopfronts that open to the street and the balconies from which people watch the street below.

ground-plus-two buildings in reinforced concrete with plain or tiled facades (Figure 11). Nearby, at the end of Taboot Street, a bank building and a new office building on East Street show the kind of development that could reach Dastur Meher Road if no controls are in place.



Figure 11. New and rebuilt structures that break the scale and character of the street: a high-rise block, and two buildings rebuilt in modern materials. Source: Author's survey

5.6.3 Tenancy and maintenance

About four out of five occupants are tenants. Many tenancies are old and rents are low, so owners earn little from their buildings and have no reason to spend on repairs. Tenants, for their part, have no stake in the building. This is a common problem in Indian cities with old rent-controlled housing, and it is one of the main reasons for the decay of historic buildings (Steinberg, 1996).

5.6.4 Uninformed repair and visual clutter

Even where buildings are not demolished, they are being changed bit by bit. Timber windows are replaced with aluminium, facades are clad in tiles, upper floors are added, roofs are made flat, and air-conditioning units, cables and signboards are fixed to the front. In two cases recorded during the survey, renovation without demolition had already changed the character of the building beyond recognition. Overhead wires and large hoardings add to the clutter and hide the details that give the street its quality.

6. Discussion

6.1 Why the street has survived so far

One of the more interesting findings concerns the planning rules. When the survey was carried out, the cantonment building bye-laws (1988) allowed a floor space index (FSI) of 1.00 in the civil area, 0.50 outside it, and an extra 0.25 where tenants were rehoused, with a maximum height of 18 metres. Most of the old buildings on Dastur Meher Road, however, already have a built-up area of about twice their plot area, an FSI of around 2.00. An owner who demolished an old building and rebuilt under those rules would have lost close to half of the existing floor area, so there was little financial reason to demolish. The draft Pune Cantonment Board Building Bye-laws, 2016 would change this picture in several ways. Their approval and notification status was not clear at the time of writing, so they are referred to here as the draft bye-laws. Table 3 compares the two sets of rules with each other and with the existing buildings.

Table 3. Pune Cantonment building bye-laws of 1988 and Draft Building Bye-laws, 2016 compared with the existing buildings of Dastur Meher Road

Item	Bye-laws 1988 (as recorded in the survey)	Draft bye-laws 2016 (clause)	Existing old buildings	Change and effect on the street
FSI (FAR)	1.00 in the Civil Area (Sadar Bazaar); 0.50 outside; additional 0.25 for tenants	1.00 for leased sites in the Civil Area. Where an existing building exceeds this, re-erection allowed as per the approval granted before FSI restrictions began on 26.03.1984; where below 1.00, up to the existing FAR (App. M, 1a)	About 2.00 (pre-1900 buildings)	Base FSI unchanged, but rebuilding no longer means losing floor area, so the 1988 disincentive to demolish is lost
Number of storeys	Not recorded in the survey	Up to G+4 or stilt+5, to use existing authorised floor space (App. M, 3)	Mostly G+1	Explicitly allows a rebuilt plot two to three times the height of its neighbours
Height	Maximum 18 m	Maximum 18 m (26.3.2; App. M, 5a); floor height up to 4.2 m (App. M, 5c)	About 7 m; floor-to-floor about 3 m	Unchanged at 18 m; in both sets of rules the even height of the street is not protected
Front setback	Marginal open space depends on plot size (not specified in detail)	1.0 m for plots below 50 sq.m; 1.5 m for plots of 51-300 sq.m on roads up to 18 m wide (bye-law Table 2); rear 1.0 m for plots above 101 sq.m	About 1 m nominal; no side or rear setbacks	Now fixed in detail; a rebuilt facade may sit behind the old street line and break the street wall
Balconies and projections	Not recorded in the survey	No projection over minimum setbacks (bye-law Table 2, note ix); balcony 1.2 m within own land, up to one-third of the length; covering a balcony counted in FSI; chajja up to 0.75 m (26.4)	Full-width enclosed timber balcony, about 1.2 m, over the street	The typical balcony of the street cannot be rebuilt in its original form
Amalgamation of plots	Not recorded in the survey	Joint reconstruction of plots in a row allowed as one unit up to 210 sq.m (bye-law Table 2, note vi)	Small, separate plots	New provision that opens the way to larger buildings and a coarser grain
Parking	Basement and stilts permitted, treated as free of FSI	Off-street only; 20% of built-up area for residential plots above 100 sq.m, 25% for commercial; in stilt, basement or upper floors (28; bye-law Table 3)	No parking on plot; shops at ground level	From permitted to required; stilt parking would replace ground-floor shops
Ground coverage	Up to 1.00 for all buildings	Limits only for plots above 2,000 sq.m (App. M, 2b)	Close to 1.00	No practical change for the small plots of the street
Heritage	No heritage or design provisions; no policy on aesthetic character	Listing, grading (I, II-A/B, III), Heritage Conservation Committee, special regulations for precincts and streets, skyline control, sign control and relaxation of norms (Chapter VIII, 53.1-53.18)	Only the Parsi Ajiary is listed	A legal tool for conservation now exists, but it has not been applied to the street

The comparison shows that the change from 1988 to 2016 is less about the headline numbers than about how they are applied. The base FSI of 1.00 and the 18-metre height limit are the same in both. What changes is, first, that the draft 2016 rules let an owner rebuild the floor area approved before 1984 and spread it over up to five floors; second, that they fix front setbacks, balcony sizes and parking in detail, in a way that suits new detached buildings rather than a row of shop-houses on a street line; third, that they allow plots in a row to be rebuilt together; and fourth, that they add, for the first time, a chapter on heritage. The 1988 rules protected the street by making redevelopment unprofitable, but gave no positive guidance. The draft 2016 rules would make redevelopment profitable and shape it in a suburban form, while also offering the legal means to prevent it.

In other words, the low FSI was an accidental form of protection, and the draft 2016 bye-laws would remove it. Before FSI restrictions were introduced in Pune Cantonment on 26 March 1984, higher densities were allowed, and the high-rise buildings on and near the street date from that period. Under the draft rules, an owner could rebuild the full authorised floor area of an old building, and stack it in up to five floors, set back from the street, with stilt parking at ground level and smaller balconies. Each of these rules is reasonable for a new suburb, but together they would produce the very kind of building that has already broken the scale of the street (Figure 11). The bye-laws also say nothing specific about alterations that do not need demolition, which remain the most common form of damage.

At the same time, the draft 2016 bye-laws give the Cantonment Board the means to act. Chapter VIII allows streets and precincts to be listed, graded and protected through special regulations (53.5, 53.7); requires the advice of a Heritage Conservation Committee for any change to listed buildings, including repairs, painting and plastering (53.3); asks new buildings in precincts to keep the existing skyline and architectural style (53.10); and allows the Board to relax general norms such as setbacks and parking where conservation needs it (53.6). The street therefore does not need new law. It needs to be listed and given its own precinct regulation under the law that already exists.

6.2 Impact of the draft 2016 bye-laws on the precinct

The likely impact of the draft bye-laws can be judged by applying them to a typical shop-house on the street: a narrow plot with a ground-plus-one timber building, a shop at street level, a home above, a full-width enclosed balcony over the street and an FSI of about 2.00. Under the 1988 rules, rebuilding this house would have halved its floor area. Under the draft 2016 rules, the same floor area could be rebuilt, and the result would look very different. The impacts fall under six heads.

Street wall and building line. The new building would have to leave a front setback of 1.0 to 1.5 metres, and possibly a rear setback, so its facade would stand behind those of its neighbours. Every rebuilt plot would leave a gap in the continuous street wall, which is the single most important feature of the streetscape.

Height and skyline. With the same floor area on a smaller footprint, and up to ground plus four floors allowed, the new building would rise two or three storeys above the sloping roofs on either side. The even skyline and the humane ratio of street width to building height, which give the street its comfortable scale, would be lost plot by plot.

Ground-floor life. Where off-street parking is required, the easiest solution on a narrow plot is a stilt floor. The shop at street level, and with it the active frontage that keeps the street lively and safe, would be replaced by parked vehicles. This would weaken both the bazaar character of the street and the small local economy that supports its residents.

Architectural character and craft. Balconies would be limited in length and could not project over the setback, and enclosing them would count against the owner's FSI. The full-width timber balcony, with its carved brackets and decorative windows, would therefore disappear from new buildings. Floor heights of up to 4.2 metres, flat roofs and reinforced concrete would replace the proportions, sloping roofs and timber frame of the old type, and the demand for traditional carpentry and repair skills would fall further.

Grain and community. Allowing plots in a row to be rebuilt together would make larger developments possible, changing the fine grain of narrow frontages. Redevelopment of tenanted buildings also puts long-standing tenants, who make up about four out of five occupants, at risk of moving away. Since the community life of the precinct is one of its main

values, this social impact is as serious as the physical one.

Heritage protection. On the positive side, the draft bye-laws would for the first time give the Cantonment Board a legal framework for heritage: listing, grading, a Heritage Conservation Committee, special precinct regulations and the power to relax general norms. Their overall impact on Dastur Meher Road will therefore depend on one decision. If the street is listed and given its own regulation, the heritage chapter can override the suburban norms described above. If it is not, the general norms would apply and, over time, would replace the historic street with a row of setback, stilted, five-storey blocks.

The impact is likely to be gradual rather than sudden. Each rebuilding would be a separate, lawful decision by one owner, but together they would change the precinct as completely as a single large redevelopment. This makes early listing more important, since the character of the street can be lost long before anyone recognises the cumulative effect.

6.3 The value of an ordinary street

Dastur Meher Road has no single building of outstanding architectural merit. Its value lies in the whole: the continuous street wall, the repeated building type, the small courts behind, and the life that fills them. This matches the shift in conservation thinking traced in Section 2, from monument to place and from object to landscape (ICOMOS, 1987; UNESCO, 2011). Using the categories of the Burra Charter, the significance of the precinct can be stated as follows.

- **Historic value:** the street records a particular stage in the growth of the Pune Cantonment, when trading communities were invited to settle beside the military camp, and it is linked to the Parsi community and to Meher Baba.
- **Aesthetic value:** the hybrid shop-house facades, the timber craft and the human scale of the street create a coherent and attractive townscape.
- **Social value:** the precinct is a living, mixed community with long associations and shared festivals across religions.
- **Spiritual value:** the fire temple and the house associated with Meher Baba are places of worship and pilgrimage.

- **Scientific or technical value:** the buildings record a timber-frame building tradition and a range of craft details that are now rarely made.

These values are closely tied together. The social value depends on the physical form, and the physical form survives because people still live in it. This is why the architecture of the street cannot be conserved without conserving the value system of its community, the habits of shared living and communal harmony that the street's planning made possible.

6.4 Protecting the identity of the street

Read through Relph's (1976) three parts, the findings show what the identity of Dastur Meher Road consists of. Its physical setting is the continuous street wall, the narrow plots, the sloping roofs, the timber balconies and the repeated grammar of openings and details. Its activity is the small bazaar at street level, the homes above, and the shared use of courts and open spaces for daily life and festivals. Its meaning lies in the memories of residents, some going back forty years or more, in the associations with the Parsi community and with Meher Baba, and in the habit of different communities living side by side.

The impacts described in Section 6.2 fall on all three. Setbacks, taller buildings and flat roofs would break the physical setting. Stilt parking would remove the shops at street level and with them much of the activity. Redevelopment of tenanted buildings would move long-standing residents away and weaken the memories and associations that give the street its meaning, which is the kind of loss of place identity that Lewicka (2008) and Ujang and Zakariya (2015) describe. The draft bye-laws, in other words, threaten not only buildings but the identity of the place.

Protecting that identity therefore needs measures for each part, and the framework in Section 7 is organised with this in mind. The design guidelines and the precinct regulation protect the physical setting. The controls on land use, the keeping of ground-floor shops and the care of open spaces protect activity. Interpretation, associative uses, support for tenants and owners, and public participation protect meaning. This also answers the concern raised by Smith (2006) and Jones (2017): the identity of the street is defined here not only by experts but by the people who live in it.

6.5 Lessons from comparable places

Pondicherry offers a useful Indian comparison. There, INTACH's work in the French and Tamil quarters, supported by heritage regulations, has helped the town keep its sense of place. Pondicherry shows that listing, design guidelines and technical help to owners can work together in an Indian town. The heritage management policy proposed in this paper is also modelled on the policy statement prepared for The Rocks in Sydney, a historic area beside the city centre that is managed by a public authority with a strong commitment to conservation, interpretation and mixed use (Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority, 2006). The Rocks differs from Dastur Meher Road in that most of its property is publicly owned. On Dastur Meher Road, almost all buildings are privately owned, although the land is held by the Cantonment Board. Any framework here must therefore rely on consensus with owners and tenants, supported by incentives and by the Board's control over building permission.

7. Proposed Heritage Management Framework

The framework has three parts: a policy layer that sets the vision and principles, a planning layer that controls development and improves the public realm, and a management layer that sets up institutions, funding and participation.

7.1 Vision and guiding principles

The proposed vision is that the Dastur Meher precinct is recognised as an authentic heritage area, managed for the benefit of present and future generations; that it stays a living, mixed-use neighbourhood; and that residents, workers and visitors can enjoy its real history and community spirit. The following principles support this vision.

- **Conservation first:** heritage conservation should guide all other decisions about the precinct. Where a balanced outcome is not possible and other interests conflict with heritage values, conservation

should prevail. This alone can stop the slow erosion of the fabric through so-called repairs and renovation.

- **Authenticity:** original fabric, design details and patina should be kept. Repairs should use matching materials and methods, and any unavoidable change should be reversible where possible.
- **Living community:** the residential use and the mixed community are part of the heritage and should be kept. Compatible new uses may be introduced in buildings that have lost their original use.
- **Fine grain and human scale:** the existing plot pattern, building footprints, heights and skyline should be maintained.
- **Tangible and intangible together:** festivals, uses, associations and meanings should be conserved together with the buildings.
- **Shared responsibility:** the Cantonment Board, the state and central governments, the community and other stakeholders should share the cost and effort of conservation.

7.2 Precinct boundary and grading of structures

The Dastur Meher precinct, with its boundary marked on the Cantonment Board's plans, should be proposed for listing as a heritage precinct under Chapter VIII of the draft 2016 bye-laws (53.5), with public objections and suggestions invited as the bye-laws require. Within it, all structures should be graded using the three grades set out in the bye-laws (53.12), as shown in Table 4. Once listed, any development, repair, addition, alteration, painting or demolition within the precinct would need the permission of the Chief Executive Officer on the advice of the Heritage Conservation Committee (53.3), and demolition or major alteration would also need public notice.

Table 4. Proposed grading of structures in the precinct (grades as defined in bye-law 53.12)

Grade	Description	Buildings
Grade I	Buildings and precincts of national or historic importance; careful preservation	None identified
Grade II (A and B)	Local landmarks of special architectural, cultural or historic merit; intelligent conservation; internal changes and adaptive reuse under strict scrutiny	Parsi fire temple (Agiary); house associated with Meher Baba

Grade	Description	Buildings
Grade III	Buildings important for townscape that set the character of the locality; intelligent conservation with protection of special features; harmonious changes allowed	Most of the shop-houses along the street
Non-graded	Recent or heavily altered buildings	High-rise and rebuilt structures; any future rebuilding to follow the precinct regulation

7.3 Development and design guidelines

Clear design guidelines are needed so that owners know what is expected of them and so that decisions are consistent. The main guidelines are summarised below.

- **Footprint and form:** new construction or rebuilding should follow the footprint and volume of the original building. Plots should not be amalgamated, since joining plots would lead to large buildings that upset the balance of the street.
- **Height and roofscape:** the skyline of sloping roofs with Mangalore tiles and timber eaves boards should be kept. An additional floor, where allowed, should be set so that it does not change the street facade or skyline.



Figure 12. Height and roofscape. Source: Author's drawings.

- **Street edge and facade:** any new construction, rebuilding, addition or alteration should follow the horizontal floor and roof lines and the lintel levels of its neighbours, and should keep the typical configuration of three or four bays on the front facade (Figure 12).
- **Openings and details:** the street has a clear grammar of rhythm and scale, set by the placement of openings and of details such as balconies, brackets, grilles and columns, and new work should follow it. Old windows should be restored, and old glass, including crown glass, kept

where it survives. Painted timber casements should match the existing ones; synthetic or stained timber should be avoided. The proportions of the windows should be kept as far as possible; the survey drawings show tall openings, with heights of about twice the width for single windows and about four to three for wider ones. Grilles and railings follow a small number of typical cast-iron patterns, which should be repeated in repairs and new work. The typical designs of columns, mouldings, brackets and eaves boards also shape the character of the street and should be kept or repaired, not removed (Figure 13).



Figure 13. Building grammar. Source: Author's drawings.

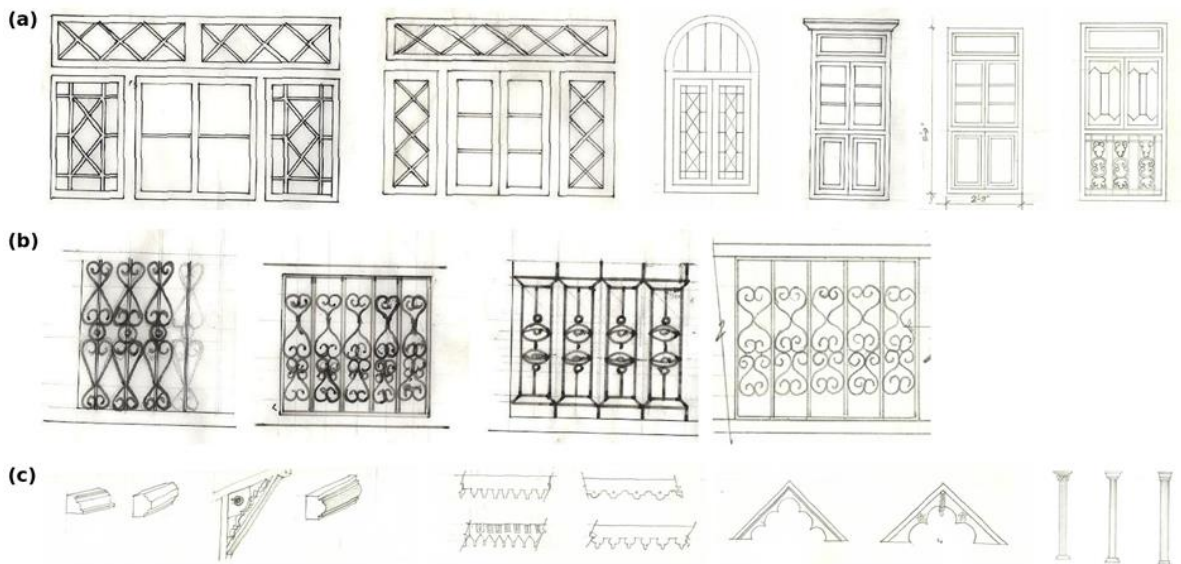


Figure 14. The grammar of openings and details: (a) typical windows and doors, (b) typical cast-iron grille and railing patterns, (c) mouldings, brackets, eaves boards and columns. Source: Author's survey drawings.

- Materials and repair:** most buildings are old and need repair, so periodic maintenance should be planned for. Original materials should not be replaced unless they are beyond repair. Where they are, the replacement should match the original in look and quality, and for structural repair, rebuilding or new construction a close match should be found; new materials with similar physical properties may be used with care. Decorative features on the facade should not be changed or removed. Cladding, boarding up of details and infilling of balconies or external walls should not be allowed. Signs on the street facade should not hide architectural details or overpower the character of the building.

- Additions on the facade:** air-conditioners, cables and satellite dishes should not be placed on the front facade.

- Demolition:** no building, listed or not, should be demolished without the consent of the heritage cell. Where demolition is unavoidable because of structural failure, the building should be rebuilt to its original form.

- Road widening:** the street should not be widened, since its buildings sit directly on the street line and any widening would cut into them.

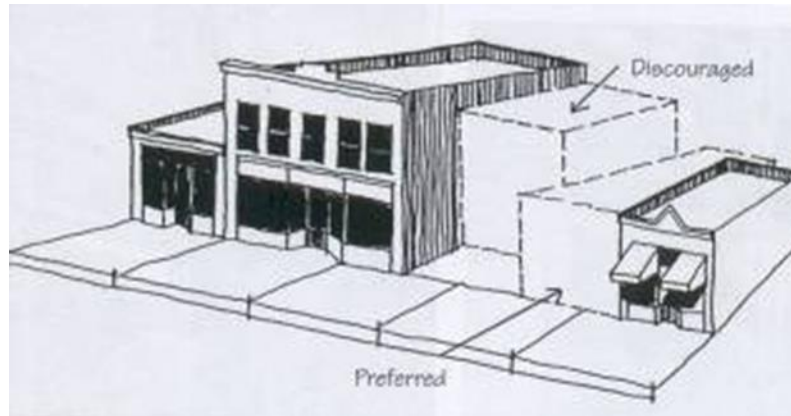


Figure 15. Guidance for additions: an upper floor set back from the street facade and kept below the roof line (preferred), compared with a full-height addition on the street line (discouraged). Source: Author's proposal

Planning controls should support these guidelines. Because the draft 2016 bye-laws allow existing floor area to be rebuilt in buildings of up to ground plus four floors, the old low FSI can no longer be relied on. It is therefore proposed that the Board, on the advice of the Heritage Conservation Committee, frame a special regulation for the precinct under bye-law 53.7, and use its power to relax general norms under bye-law 53.6, so that:

- height is limited to the existing height of the building or G+1 with a sloping roof, and any additional floor, where allowed, is set back from the street facade and kept below the ridge line of its neighbours (53.10);
- the existing authorised floor area may be retained, but only within the existing building envelope, so that owners do not lose area by conserving
- rebuilt facades stand on the existing street line, with the front setback of bye-law Table 2 relaxed for the precinct;
- the traditional full-width balcony of about 1.2 m, enclosed with timber windows, is permitted over the street, and is not counted against the owner's FSI;
- the joint reconstruction of plots under note vi of bye-law Table 2 does not apply within the precinct;
- on-plot and stilt parking is not required, and the requirement is met instead through common parking under bye-law 28(b), as proposed in Section 7.4; and

- land use along streets 9 metres wide or more stays as it is, with shops on the ground floor and homes above, no commercial use on upper floors, and purely residential use in the interior; the tenement density, the floor area and the area under commercial use are held at their present levels, and ground coverage stays as it is, up to the full plot (a coverage of 1.00).

7.4 Area-level proposals

The area-level proposals deal with the precinct as a whole rather than with single buildings. They cover six themes: traffic management and parking; the development of community open spaces; the removal of visual intrusion and clutter; signs, street furniture and street lighting; the promotion of activities associated with the history of the street, with the adaptive reuse of selected buildings; and the demarcation and grading of the precinct, described in Section 7.2. Together they aim to keep the quiet, pedestrian character of the precinct and to give its residents and visitors better reasons to value it. They are summarised in Table 5, with the clauses of the draft 2016 bye-laws that could be used to put them into effect.

Traffic and parking: during the day, through traffic should be diverted so that the street becomes mainly pedestrian. One way to do this is a pedestrian block near the middle of the street, which would keep access to every property from one end or the other but prevent through movement. Parking should be moved to a few sites that do not spoil the precinct, such as a pay-and-park area near the bank at the end of Taboot Street, and to sites freed by the removal of a few out-of-character structures. Since the draft 2016 bye-laws do not allow parking on streets and require off-street parking for new work (bye-law 28),

these common parking sites can also serve as the shared parking that bye-law 28(b) allows a group of owners to provide, which removes the need for stilt parking in individual buildings. The proposed circulation plan marks the links that would carry two-way traffic and those that would be one-way, so that through movement is kept on the outer roads. The precinct is quiet, with little through traffic, and any new development that would add to traffic within it should not be permitted.

Community open spaces: the special character of the community open spaces should be respected,

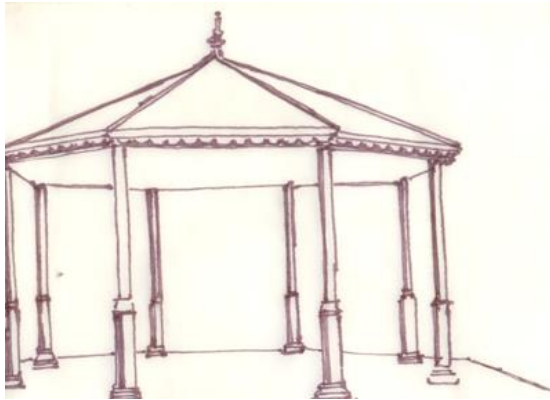


Figure 16. Proposed bandstand (left) and improved community space with planting, paving and street lights (right).
Source: Author's proposal.

Services and signage: overhead electric and telephone wires should be moved into ducts, preferably underground. Road markings and signs should be kept to a minimum. The entrance to the precinct should be marked with a well-designed sign, and street names and pedestrian routes should be clearly shown. Shop signs should not cover more than one-fifth of the main facade, should not hide architectural details, and should not flash or use glaring lights. Benches, lamps and litter bins should be designed to

suit the character of the street, and the heritage cell should approve their designs before they are installed. These rules on signs, outdoor displays and street furniture should be issued by the Board on the advice of the Heritage Conservation Committee, as bye-law 53.15 provides. Sketch designs for benches with cast-iron frames and timber slats, litter bins, lamp posts, direction posts and notice boards, all in a style that suits the street, are shown in Figure 15.

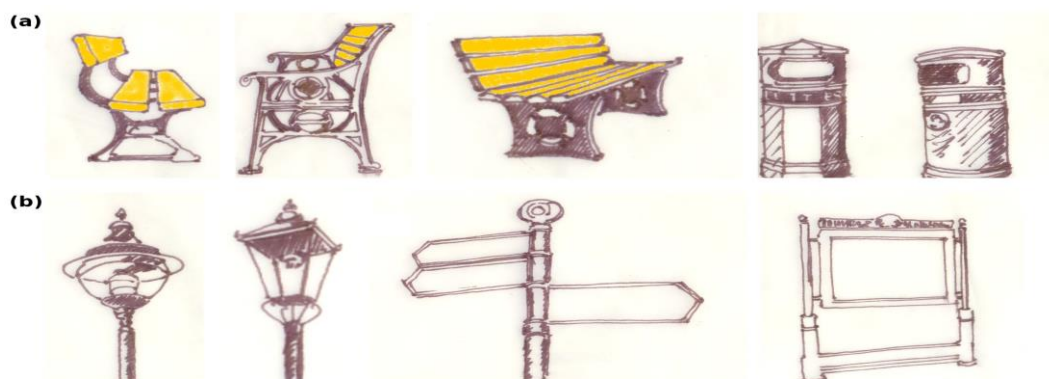


Figure 17. Proposed street furniture: (a) benches and litter bins, (b) street lamps, direction post and notice board.
Source: Author's proposal.

Visual intrusion and clutter: the clutter of overhead cables, hoardings and temporary structures should be cleared from the street and the community spaces. Any new or relocated power line, telecommunication cable or mast that would affect the precinct should need planning permission from the Board. Road

names should be shown at both ends of the street, and one-way and pedestrian routes marked with simple graphic signs; signs should not blink or use glaring fluorescent light, and their materials should suit the character of the street



Figure 18. Proposed removal of visual clutter. Source: Author's proposal.

Associative activities and adaptive reuse: the proposal plan (Figure 16) identifies sites for activities that draw on the history and community of the street. Existing restaurants would be encouraged to serve Parsi food; an interpretation centre would introduce visitors to the precinct; existing shops would sell local specialities; Meher Baba's house would be a place to

visit on the heritage walk; selected buildings would be adapted for recreational use; and public toilets, landscaping, a parking lot, street lights and signs would support the heritage walk route. These uses are chosen so that they bring income and visitors without displacing the residents.

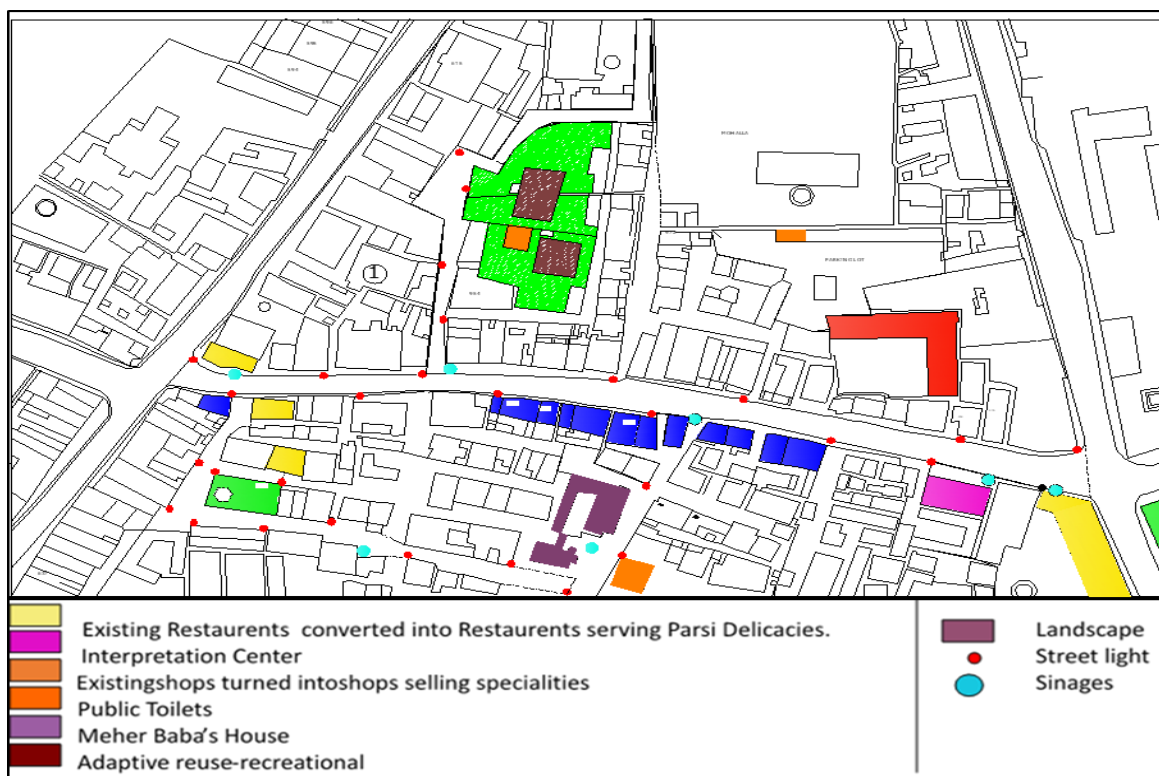


Figure 19. Area-level proposal plan: restaurants serving Parsi food, interpretation centre, speciality shops, public toilets, Meher Baba's house, adaptive reuse, landscape, parking and heritage walk. Source: Author's proposal.

Table 5. Summary of area-level proposals

Theme	Main proposals	Supporting clause in draft 2016 bye-laws
Demarcation and grading	Mark the precinct boundary on the Board's plans; list and grade all buildings	53.5 listing; 53.12 grading; 53.7 precinct regulation
Traffic and parking	Divert through traffic by day; pedestrian block mid-street; two-way and one-way links; common pay-and-park sites; no new traffic-generating uses	28 (no parking on streets); 28(b) shared parking
Road widening	No widening within the precinct	53.8 road widening to consider heritage buildings
Community open spaces	Keep hierarchy of lanes, courts and community spaces; bandstand; planting, paving and benches; clear clutter	53.7 precinct regulation; 53.10 views and skyline
Visual intrusion	Cables in ducts, preferably underground; permission for new lines and masts; remove hoardings	53.15 signs and outdoor display structures
Signs, street furniture and lighting	Entrance sign; road names at both ends; signs below one-fifth of the facade, non-flashing; benches, lamps and bins approved by the heritage body	53.15; 53.14 approval of exterior design
Associative activities and adaptive reuse	Parsi restaurants, interpretation centre, speciality shops, living museum, Meher Baba's house, recreational reuse, public toilets, heritage walk	53.9 incentive uses; 53.12 adaptive reuse in Grade II and III

7.5 Land use, economy and tourism

Three options were considered for the future use of the street. The first was to keep the present mixed use and promote the street as an ethnic shopping area. The second was to develop it as a place of religious importance centred on the house associated with Meher Baba. The third was to keep the present character, with modest repairs, better street furniture and graphic design, and to bring in visitors through a heritage walk. The framework adopts a mix of the first and third options, since these keep the street a living place while giving it an economic reason to be conserved.

The proposals include a heritage walk through the precinct; an interpretation centre; restaurants serving Parsi food in existing eating houses; shops selling local specialities; a small living museum of Parsi domestic life; public toilets; and the adaptive reuse of selected buildings. The heritage walk could be linked with existing tourist circuits in Pune. For example, the luxury tourist train that visits Pune already includes a stop at a synagogue close to Dastur Meher Road, and a walk through the precinct could fit into the same itinerary. Any tourism should be managed with care so that it supports, and does not displace, the resident community (Orbaşlı, 2000).

Visitors also need to be managed. The first step is a tourism map that places the precinct within the wider heritage of the city. A visitor management and information cell would then be set up, with trained guides, administrative and accounts staff, and people to carry out market research. Visitor demand should be assessed through surveys, so that facilities are provided in step with it rather than ahead of it. Basic facilities would include clear signs, paid public toilets, controlled parking and litter bins. A small toll or entry charge for organised groups could help meet the running

7.6 Institutional set-up

The Pune Cantonment Board is the planning authority for the precinct and should lead its management. Under bye-law 53.16, development permission for listed heritage is given on the advice of a Heritage Conservation Committee appointed by the State or Central Government, which includes a conservation architect, an urban designer, a historian and town planners, and which also prepares lists, design guidelines and façade controls. It is proposed that the Board set up a small heritage cell, with a conservation architect, two assistant architects, two structural engineers and a legal adviser, to act as the working arm of this Committee for the precinct. The

cell would prepare the listing proposal and the precinct regulation, check applications before they go to the Committee, advise owners, and monitor the condition of buildings. A separate unit, or a partnership with the state tourism corporation, would handle visitor services, the heritage walk and promotion. A resident committee and a maintenance committee would represent the community and look after day-to-day upkeep. The Board should also draw on outside expertise from INTACH and academic institutions where needed.

The main stakeholders are the Cantonment Board; local elected representatives; the heads of religious institutions; the residents and tenants; the traders and business community; the Parsi Panchayat and other social bodies; the state and national tourism corporations (MTDC and ITDC); businesses linked to tourism such as hotels, craft shops and publishers; local masons, carpenters and artists; and co-operative banks and other possible funders.

The management plan for the precinct is organised around five tasks. Financial planning covers the cost of both infrastructure and buildings, for example public toilets and parking lots, and the sources of money described in Section 7.7. Manpower planning covers the training of staff and craftspeople. Administrative planning covers the heritage cell and a second cell of the Board for tourism, visitor services and the upkeep of the precinct. Marketing and promotion would use the internet, the media and print. Monitoring would review progress against short-term goals (survey, analysis and documentation, the heritage cell, the guidelines, public awareness, finance, and staff training) and long-term goals (promotion, feedback, periodic evaluation, and refinement of the programmes and of the legal framework), as set out in Table 6.

7.7 Funding and incentives

Since the main obstacle to maintenance is the lack of money and incentive among owners and tenants, the framework must include financial measures. These could include grants for repairs to graded buildings, tax relief for owners who maintain their buildings to the guidelines, technical guidance free of charge, low-

interest loans through co-operative banks, and support for home-stay or bed-and-breakfast use that gives owners an income from their property. The first step is an estimate of the cost of the public works and of the repairs. Funds could come from the Cantonment Board, the private sector, state and central government schemes, the tourism corporations, and private sponsors. This support matters all the more because the draft 2016 bye-laws place the duty of repair and maintenance of listed buildings on their owners (53.2), and punish neglect by refusing permission to rebuild on the site (53.4). Without help, owners on low rents may see listing only as a burden. The incentive provided in bye-law 53.9, which allows part reconstruction on a listed property where the owner undertakes to maintain the heritage building, should be extended to the precinct through its special regulation.

7.8 Public participation

Because almost all the property is privately held, conservation will succeed only if the residents agree with it. The framework proposes a step-by-step process of participation. All households would be invited to a meeting to launch the work. Questionnaires would be sent to every household, and workshops and walkabouts held on site. Households that do not take part would be visited and interviewed. A draft design statement would be exhibited and a copy sent to every household, with comments invited at an open meeting. Only after this would the final guidelines be adopted.

Awareness is a key part of this process. Interpretation, through plaques, leaflets, walks, exhibitions, the internet and the press, can help residents and visitors see the value of the precinct and become supporters of its conservation. Training for local masons and carpenters in traditional repair would also help keep the craft skills alive.

7.9 Phasing and monitoring

The framework is set out in short-term and long-term stages in Table 6. Progress should be reviewed at regular intervals, and the guidelines and legal framework revised in the light of experience.

Table 6. Phasing of the management framework

Stage	Actions
Short term	Detailed survey and documentation; proposal to list the precinct and grade its buildings under Chapter VIII (53.5, 53.12); drafting and notifying the special precinct regulation (53.7); setting up the heritage cell; public awareness and participation; arranging finance; training staff and craftspeople

Stage	Actions
Long term	Public realm and traffic works; heritage walk and interpretation centre; promotion; feedback from residents and visitors; periodic evaluation; refining programmes and revising regulations

8. Conclusion

Dastur Meher Road shows how much of a city's identity is held in ordinary streets. It has no grand monument, but it has a continuous street wall, a coherent building type, fine timber craft, a human scale and a mixed community that has lived together for generations. These qualities make it a valuable record of how the Pune Cantonment grew and of the communities who shaped it.

The study found that the street has survived partly by chance. A low FSI once made rebuilding unattractive, but the draft Pune Cantonment Board Building Bye-laws, 2016 would allow the existing floor area to be rebuilt in taller buildings, set back from the street and raised on stilts. Tenancy, low rents, weak awareness and the lack of design controls are already eroding the fabric. The same bye-laws, however, contain a heritage chapter that can list and protect the precinct. Without listing and a precinct regulation, there is a real risk that its character will be lost. Because the threat falls on the physical setting, the daily activity and the meanings of the street together, protecting its identity needs measures for all three.

The framework proposed in this paper combines a clear vision and principles, a precinct boundary and

grading, design guidelines, public realm improvements, a heritage walk, a dedicated conservation cell, financial incentives and a structured process of public participation. It is meant to be practical within the existing legal and administrative setting of a cantonment. Its central message is that the buildings of the street cannot be saved on their own. The values of community living and communal harmony that the street supports must be conserved alongside them, and the residents must be partners in the work.

The approach may be useful for other historic civil areas in Indian cantonments, many of which face similar pressures and similar gaps in protection.

Limitations and future scope

The study relied mainly on qualitative methods, and the intangible attributes of the place could not be mapped in a systematic way within the time available. Future research could repeat the survey to measure the rate of change, study the associative memories of residents in more depth, assess the economic feasibility of the proposed incentives, and compare Dastur Meher Road with the Sadar Bazaars of other cantonments.

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11. Author Declaration

- The authors confirm that this manuscript is their original work, that it has not been published previously, and that it is not under consideration for publication elsewhere.
- The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest.