

NEED ASSESSMENT STUDY FOR RESTORATION OF A CULTURAL HERITAGE SITE - JOHN HALL, GURUGRAM



A Report by

Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs and Haryana CSR PMU

1.1 CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY POLICY OF IGT SOLUTIONS PRIVATE LTD.

This CSR Policy is formulated in compliance with Section 135 (3) (a) of the Companies Act, 2013 read with Companies (Corporate Social responsibility Policy) Rules, 2014 and has been approved by the Board of Directors of IGT Solution Pvt. Ltd. ("IGT" or "Company").

Philosophy:

IGT has been inspired by the vision to serve a larger national purpose. IGT identifies its core values as: highest standards of integrity, respecting its customers' interest, and future mindedness. IGT is committed to being a good corporate citizen as it is believed that this would help it to achieve its goals and objectives that it has set for itself and build a sustainable business for its current and future stakeholders. A conscious strategy will be followed to design and implement CSR programs under the CSR Policy to create shared values with its stakeholders.

Vision:

IGT's vision is to contribute to the social and economic development of communities in which it operates and to participate in conserving environment and promoting national heritage, art & culture.

Implementation process: Identification of projects / processes:

All CSR activities undertaken by IGT will follow certain rules and procedures to ensure that the chosen programs reach the intended target and create tangible & intangible impact. The process for identification and implementation of a program here will include:

- Identification of priority areas
- Stakeholder identification
- Due diligence of implementation partner
- Project preparation/ project evaluation
- Budgeting
- Project implementation and Review

2 Introduction

2.1 Brief introduction of the site

The site is located in Civil Lines of Gurugram near Deputy Commissioner Camp Office (a landmark for the site). The site is accessible via Jail road and Civil Lines road and is located at a distance of approximately 7.5 kms from Huda City Centre (nearest metro station) and nearest bus stands i.e. Police Commissionerate/SCERT Haryana.

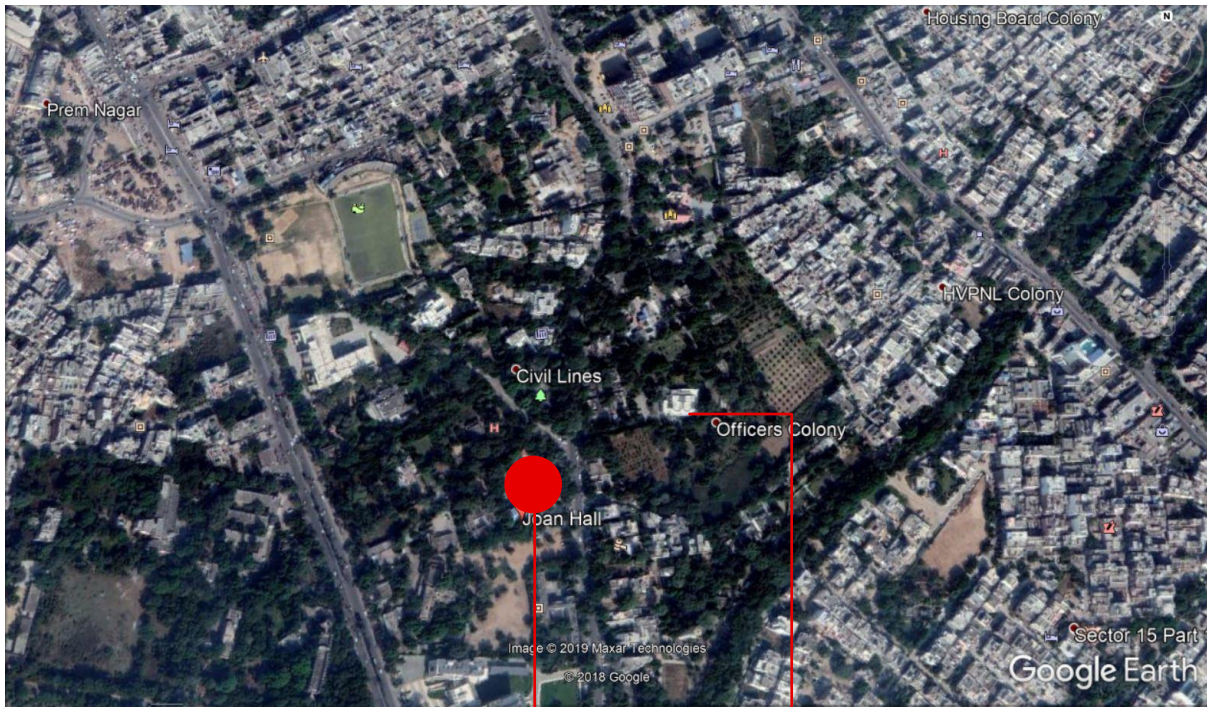


Image 2-1 Location of John Hall;
Source - Google Maps

John Hall

Deputy Commissioner
Camp Office

The main access road to the site i.e. Civil Lines road, lies to the east of site and hence main entrance to site is from eastern direction. In the northern direction of site lies a park known as Tikona Park while to the south, PWD office is located. Office of Zila Parishad is located in the northern direction at a distance of 350 meters from the site. Major landmarks for the site are Deputy Commissioner Camp office, Epiphany Church and office of Zila Parishad. The site is under the jurisdiction of Zila Parishad, Government of Haryana and is currently responsible for management and maintenance of the site.

2.2 Objectives of the study

The major objectives for conducting this study are:

1. Establishing the importance of this site in historical as well as modern setting of Gurugram
2. Analyzing the site from every respect to arrive at recommendation pertaining to conservation and adaptive reuse of the site.

3. Establishing management frameworks in order to ensure proper maintenance of site
4. Creating awareness amongst local community regarding the significance of cultural heritage of the city by making this site a platform for all the unknown and untapped heritage resources of this region.

2.3 METHODOLOGY

The process adopted for the work is detailed and meticulous which ensures that each and every parameters of the project are addressed individually while paving its way to holistic recommendations.

STEP 1

Research and Data collection on the historical narrative of the site to understand its significance

It is a very important part of the process as it helps in understanding the original historic fabric of the site while documenting the events associated with the site. This step contributes a great deal towards proposing recommendations. Research and data collection will done by secondary research through sources such as archival maps and photos, studies done in past, other academic and scholarly resources

STEP 2

Documentation of historical narrative through oral history and other local sources

This step helps in documenting historical narrative which may or may not have been documented in literary sources. Oral history is as important as documented history as it gives an idea of how local community engages with its heritage. This will be helpful in understanding the different kinds of use that this structure has been subjected to over the course of years.

STEP 3

Review of existing management plans or any other design interventions

As the site is historic and has been in use by Zila Parishad, there may be existing management plans or other proposed interventions by local body or state government. It is critical to analyse these plans before making any recommendation in need assessment report as it helps in keeping a check on what kind of interventions should or should not be done on site.

STEP 4

Understanding the development of site through the process of historic layering

Steps 1 to 3 will help in understanding how the present structure came to be about, hence all the documentary evidence and oral history collected will be taken into consideration at this step. Evolution and development of site will be studied and analysed through historic layering.

3 Literature Review

3.1 History and Association

The historic structure of John Hall is very closely associated with an eminent personality of colonial era, known as Frank Lugard Brayne. Gurugram was a village till 1819 which was later converted to a district. In 1920, an ICS British officer by the name of F.L. Brayne was posted here as the Deputy Commissioner of this region. F.L. Brayne was a very outspoken and opinionated person who believed that he could make Gurugram a model village and district in the Indian Empire and he named his plan as ‘The Gurgaon Experiment’. He also believed in social and moral uplift of the community as his bounden duty and he took it upon himself to redeem the Haryanvi speaking peasantry¹.

The next seven years of his service was duly spent in the village reconstruction as per his blueprints and was a greatly applauded government scheme of that time. He was inexhaustible in his ideas of betterment and hence, was greatly appreciated by local population. The love of local citizens for this personality was expressed when his second son John Goble Brayne died at an early age, and an agricultural hall was built in 1925 in the honor of his name². Originally known as Gurgaon Agricultural Hall, the hall was renamed as John Hall and is presently known by this name only.

Two plaques, embedded in the masonry walls of the structure gives details of the construction of this hall. The hall was built by Rai Sahib Dhanpat Rai, Tehsildar of Gurgaon from subscriptions raised by Lala Shiv Shankar, Revenue Assistant of Gurgaon. The donations were collected from zamindars of the districts and names of some donors (those who contributed 250 rupees and above) are displayed on the second plaque.



*Image 3-1 Plaque displaying names of eminent people associated with the construction of John Hall;
Source - Project Team*

¹ (Oldenburg 2018)

² (Haryana Tourism 2017)



*Image 3-2 Front elevation of John Hall showing the entrance to structure from porch;
Source - Project Team*



*Image 3-3 War memorial on the north-eastern corner of site;
Source - Project Team*



Image 3-4 Site plan showing major spaces and access routes to the site;
Source - Project Team

3.2 Architectural Style

The construction of John Hall was completed in 1925, while the British were still ruling India, hence this structure is an example of colonial architecture which is rarely to be seen in Gurugram, except for the Epiphany Church that lies at a distance of 500 meters from the site. Glimpses of neoclassical architectural style can be seen in this building. Neoclassical architecture emerged as a result of neoclassical movement in mid eighteenth century. It's a style derived from architecture of classical antiquity and Vitruvian principles. The characteristics of this style is grandeur of scale, simplicity of geometric forms, Greek or Roman details, dramatic use of columns and preference of blank walls. There are various examples of neoclassical buildings in India such as Raj Bhawan of Kolkata, Bangalore Town hall, British Residency in Hyderabad etc, but they are on a much larger scale.

John Hall, although not entirely neoclassical in nature, does have certain elements of the architectural style which can be seen in symmetry of spaces, dramatic use of columns inside the structure and on façade of the building and in details of column and cornice bands.



Image 3-5 Front elevation of the structure showing original elements of architectural style (in green), and later additions in red; Source - Project Team

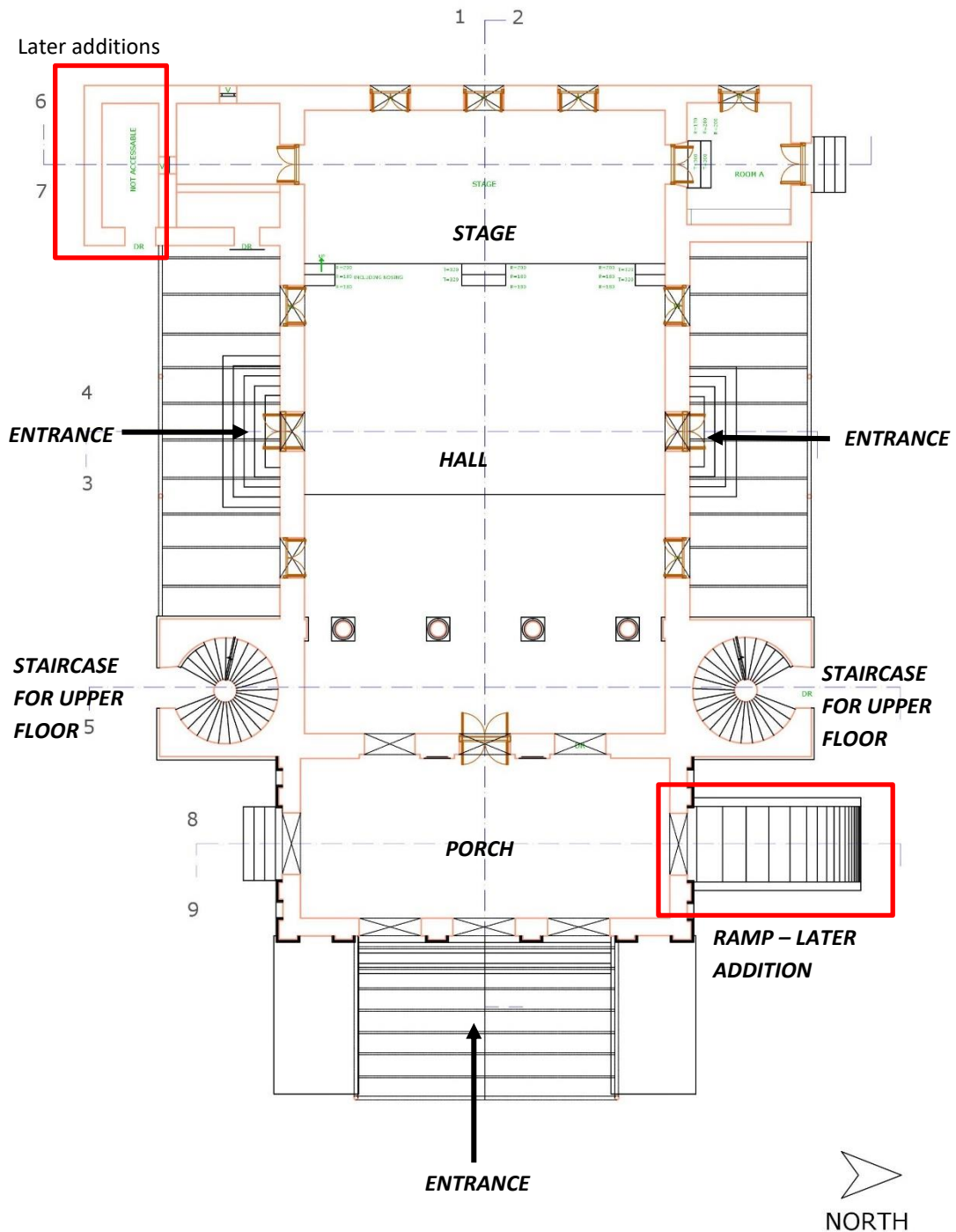


Image 3-6 Plan of structure showing its symmetric nature, red areas depicting addition/alterations done later on; Source - Project Team

Considering the ground floor plan (as shown in the image above), the structure is symmetrical on east –west axis, except for the additions/alterations that were done later, for example – ramp to the porch is a recent intervention which is evident from the concrete pavers used in it, also a new toilet block was added on south-western corner of the structure. There are three entrances to the building, main entrance being from eastern side through porch and secondary entrances from northern and southern side. Sloping shades are there on each entrance of the structure with terracotta tiles on top, it is difficult to say whether it was part of original fabric of the structure or not. Similarly, the northern and

4 Statement of Significance

For any site to be nominated as a World Heritage Site, it is required to define the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of that particular site. OUV is defined as ‘*cultural and/or natural significance which is so exceptional as to transcend national boundaries and to be of common importance for present and future generations of all humanity*’. OUV is defined by the significance of the site and significance of any historic building or site is attributed to the values associated with the site. For accurately defining the significance of any site, it is important that an assessment of values is done. It also helps in an informed conservation and management planning effort as this makes sure that all initiatives are done while ensuring that values of the site are kept intact.

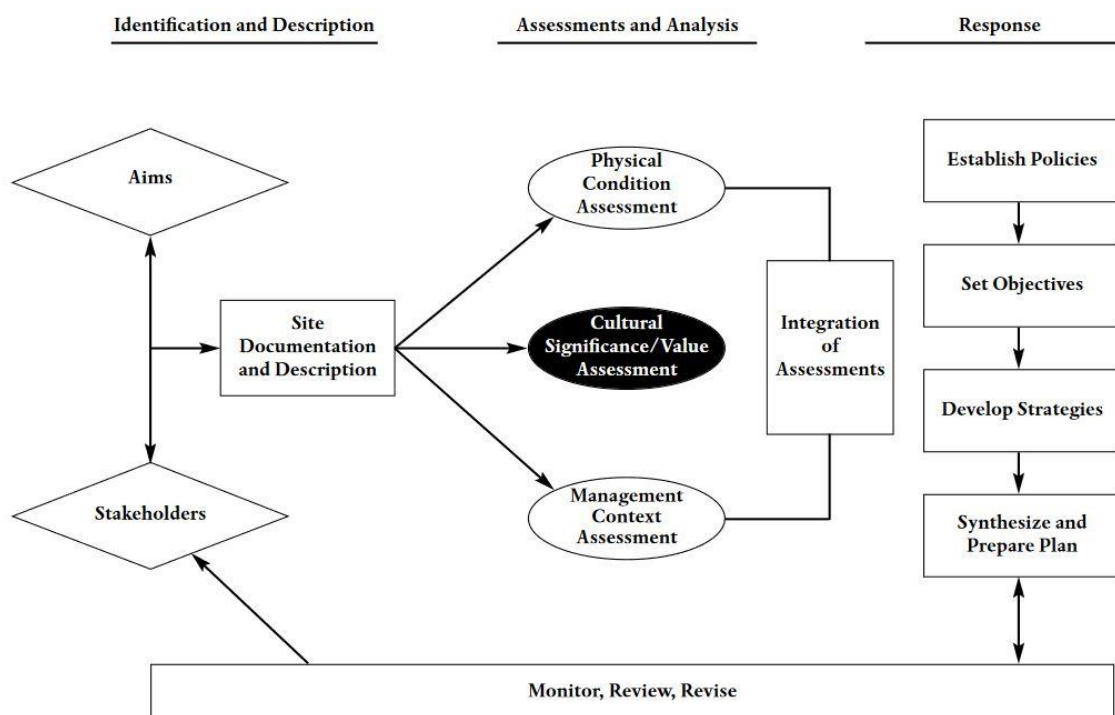





Image 4-1 Planning Process Methodology; Source - (Mason 2002)

The diagram shows three important steps in conservation planning of any site which includes physical condition assessment, cultural significance/value assessment and management context assessment. In this chapter, aspect related to value assessment is addressed. There are a set of values such as historical value, associational value etc., accepted worldwide as per UNESCO guidelines which helps in establishing the significance of any heritage site. These value along with their attributes are discussed in the table below:

4.1 Gaps and Issues related to the structure

As explained in the earlier section, several areas and spaces have been added to the original structure, harming the historic fabric of the site, these includes:

S.no.	Interventions	Issues	NB or B	Reference Drawings/Photographs
1.	In order to make the interior echo proof, sound proof panels were laid on walls and false ceiling made of same panels were also added	<p>a. This action has stripped the structure of its identity as it no longer looks like a historic building of 20th century from inside. With the technical advancement, there were a number of less evasive ways to achieve the desired result. However, if these panels are taken out, the original walls can be retained.</p> <p>b. Before carrying out this task, no documentation and photo documentation of original structure was done. As there is very less archival information available for this particular site, documentation of original structure would have been helpful in making recommendations so as how to restore it to its former glory.</p>	NB	
2.	Flooring of structure is completely new, modern tiles have been laid all around the structure, even on terrace	<p>a. This is the most evasive intervention carried out in this structure. No evidence of original flooring can be seen, original levels are lost which is evident at several places where <i>chaukhats</i> or door frames are buried in the flooring.</p> <p>b. Before carrying out this task, no documentation and photo documentation of original structure was done. As there is very less archival information available for this particular site, documentation of original structure would have been helpful in making recommendations so as how to restore it to its former glory.</p>	NB	 

Annexure 1: Drawings of the Site