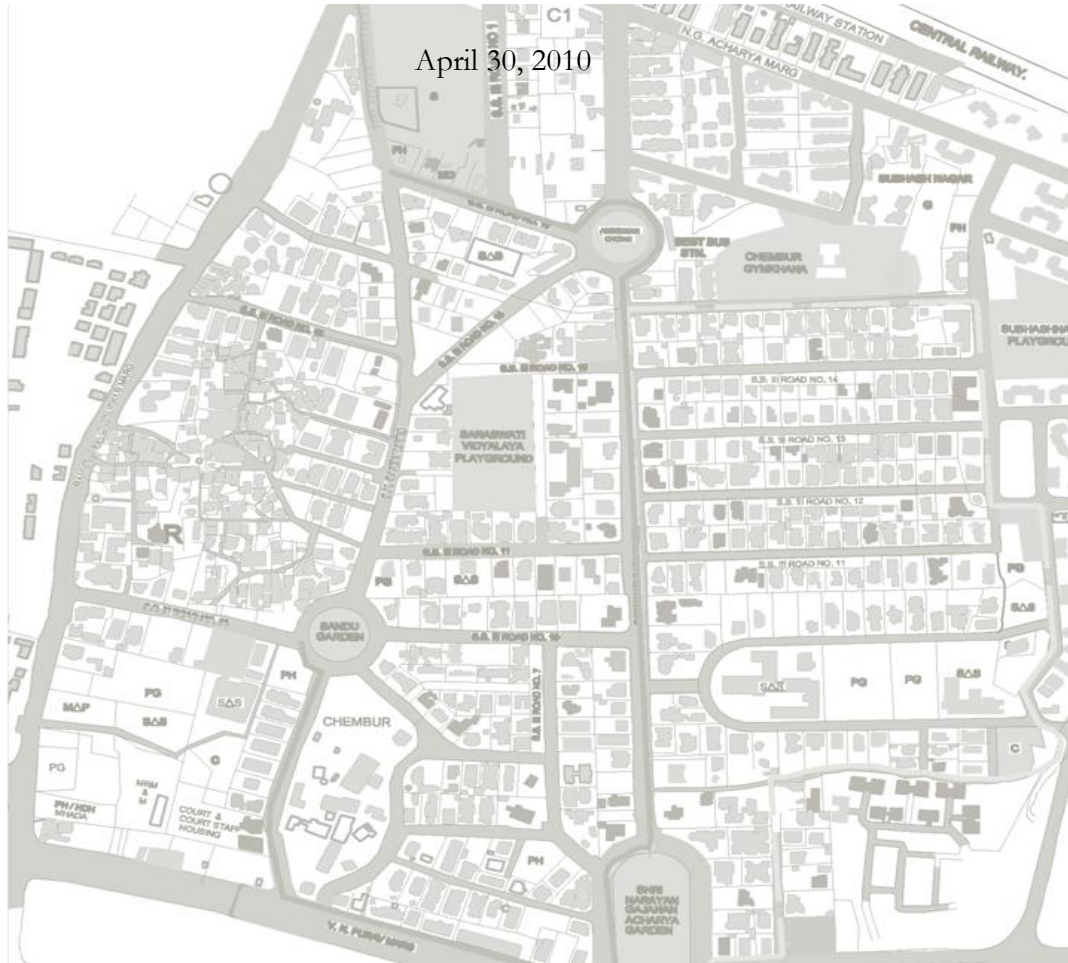


ACTION PLAN FOR CONSERVATION OF HERITAGE PRECINCTS IN MMR
CHEMBUR PRECINCT

INCEPTION REPORT

April 30, 2010



Adarkar Associates

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1.0 TERMS OF REFERENCE

1.1 The Project

The MMR-HCS, appointed Adarkar and Associates to prepare an action plan for conservation of Heritage Precinct located at Chembur consisting of 3 Sub-Precincts namely,

1. Chembur Gaothan
2. Old Chembur
3. St. Anthony's Society

1.2. Project Objectives

- A. To evaluate current status and conditions of the precinct through detailed documentation and analysis of key issues.
- B. To identify schematic projects, programmes for conservation of precincts through participation of local communities and stakeholders.
- C. To formulate financial, institutional and regulatory strategies for project implementation, phasing, operations and maintenance.
- D. To prepare draft Guidelines for conservation of the heritage precinct.

1.3 Scope of work for Inception report

To review all data on the precinct, available with the MMR-HCS and also in the public realm.

Reconnaissance surveys, to update and provide details of location, history, origin and growth, context with respect to the region, understanding of built fabric and settlement pattern, community pattern, development plan reservations, ownerships, land use, note on cultural aspects etc. Review the present precinct boundaries and suggest revision if required.

Establish contact with the local community and other stakeholders. Based on the review, survey and consultation, the inception report will specify detailed methodology of work.

2.0 The inception report: Introduction

This Inception Report gives history and an overview of Chembur establishing the context, its linkages with the rest of MMR, history of the suburb, growth pattern, transformations and reasons for the same, unique attributes and features of Chembur, settlement pattern both physical and socio-cultural. The report also explores the existing information/ data in public realm and tries to analyse and update the same. The landuse pattern has been studied and the changes which have happened are highlighted. The Development Plan reservations were studied and changes in the same noted. The ownership pattern of land was also studied but requires further insight.

Contact was established with the local community by meeting some prominent long staying residents. They were interviewed and the same is documented and analysed in the later chapters. Some important institutions were also contacted and their views recorded. These were namely, The Axis bank (financial institution), Chembur First, ALM of old Chembur precinct, The Bhulingeshwar Temple Trust (religious institution). While the process of identifying and meeting some other important institutions, (both public and private), of the area is going on.

2.1 History of Chembur: Chambur, Chimbur, Chimboor.....

The Portuguese wrested from the Muslims, the control of the cluster of islands now known as Bombay/Mumbai in 1534 AD and ruled the islands for 130 years before they were finally passed on to the British in 1665.

Under the Portuguese system of “land parceling” – the granting of lands to loyal subjects for meritorious service- the general distribution that was effected after 1534, during the viceroyalty of Dom Joao, Trombay and Chimbur were given to Dom Roque Telles de Minezes. Simao Bothelo, the Portuguese comptroller, who recorded these transactions in his “Tombo do Estado da India” refers to the place as “Chambur”.

“Chimbur or Chimboor” hit the headlines in the third quarter of the 19th century as a gambling settlement. The Act of 1856 forbade certain type of gambling in the city of Bombay. The

gamblers then took themselves to places like Coorla (Kurla) where a row of gambling-houses were set up. People commuted daily from the city to Coorla to gamble. The gamblers then resorted to “Chimboor”. By 1887, most professional gamblers who could not carry on their operations successfully in Bombay had transferred their activities “to places in Salsette especially to Chimboor where for years past, regular gaming-houses had been established. Chimboor became infested with gamblers.”.

In the year 1846 the Chembur causeway linking Kurla in Salsette with Chembur in Trombay was built- 3,105 feet long, 22 to 24 feet wide and five to 12 feet high. It was used at all seasons. The chief traffic besides passengers was grass, rice, fruit and vegetables being transported to the city. In 1873, a European firm established a distillery in Chembur, with the object of manufacturing rectified spirits but it closed in 1877’.

(The above information is contributed by Olga Valldares in the daily, Evening News, 1982)

The gazetteer of Thane district does not mention any clear information with respect to the historical perspective of the region. The gazetteer mention an Animal Home supported by Hindu Merchants from Bombay which housed 1000 animals/year of different species which were not productive. It mentions plots of grassland for the Animal Home purpose.

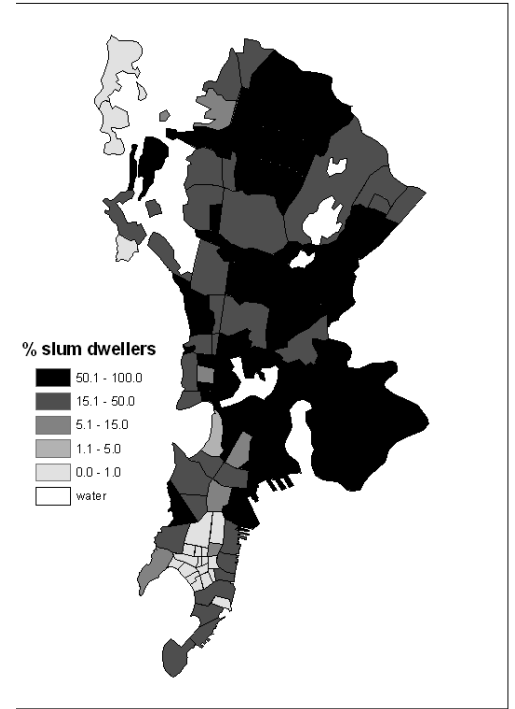
Originally a cluster of villages surrounded by marsh land, mangroves and creek, this north eastern suburb of Mumbai is at present the most important link between the city of Mumbai and the mainland. There are still over 8 goathans, some settled over three centuries ago.

2.2 Overview of Chembur

In early 20th century The Town Planning Suburban Scheme III was laid out which saw low rise development of bungalows. The area of Old Chembur is popularly known as the Hindu neighbourhood where as the adjoining Church complex and surrounding development is known as the Chritian neighbourhood. Up until 1960s M Ward (East and West) was a sleepy village known for its villas and hills. It was also used to relocate displaced poor residents of the island city as lands on which they lived were being taken over in the 1950s for urban development. Lotus Colony is one such community which was displaced to M Ward from the western suburb of Bandra. M Ward also houses one of Mumbai’s two solid waste dumping grounds. In 1972, a large dalit population migrated to Mumbai -

and to the M Ward - to escape the drought that hit rural Maharashtra. Mumbai's single largest dalit agglomeration lives in this ward.

Large chunks of land in M Ward are also occupied by industries – both small and large. This Ward also houses two state-owned petroleum refineries: Bharat Petroleum and Hindustan Petroleum, state-owned fertilizer factory Rashtriya Chemical and Fertilizers, the government of India's Bhabha Atomic Research Centre and also the Tata Power Station. Each of these large units have their staff quarters also here, making this Ward a mix of poor and middle class housing along the main roads and bungalows (high income housing) near the Chembur railway station. Despite this population mix, M Ward also happens to be one of Mumbai's poverty hot spots, and has perhaps the largest number of households living in poverty. (Baud and others, 2007). After independence in 1947, Trombay in the north eastern M ward attracted large scale state-owned companies in the fertilizer and petroleum sectors while the other emerging suburbs in the north eastern part of the city saw the setting up of engineering, chemicals and pharmaceuticals factories, mainly along the suburban route of the Central Railway and in areas such as Kurla and the eastern part of Andheri.



2.3 The Context

Chembur as a suburb has recently in the last three to four decades seen tremendous growth. Once known for its green surroundings, with large open spaces and very peaceful, slow pace of life has transformed and now is catching up with the growth impetus just like the rest of the suburbs of Mumbai. Chembur witnessed growth as a result of the TDR where many old small buildings were taken over by developers and loaded with TDR and the skyline of Chembur saw a major change. There are many reasons for this change and sudden jump in the real estate prices (refer fig. showing comparative real estate prices), some of these are

- The MUTP projects such as Chembur Santacruz Link Road, the Trans-Harbour link Road, Metro line Charkop-Mankhurd, Monorail (Chembur –Wadala) are crossing Chembur or originating in Chembur and thus make it a convenient location for residential and commercial development.(refer MUTP plan) Once these projects are completed Chembur will be very well connected to South Mumbai, Bandra Kurla Complex, the Airports and also to the western suburbs, while already it is very well

connected to Navi Mumbai and the other urban centres in the MMR. Thus making a very central location to be in, with good rail and road connectivity.

- It is very well connected by rail and road to Navi Mumbai thus all the commercial and institutional development of Navi Mumbai is also impacting Chembur.
- The new international airport which is proposed at Panvel is also seen as a catalyst for property prices going up.
- Reliance's proposed SEZ is also in close proximity and is seen as an opportunity by many.
- There are a large number of big institutions and industry, such as TISS, BARC, BPCL, HPCL, RCF, Pepsi bottling unit which extends in long term relationship of its employees with Chembur and they prefer to settle down in the vicinity after they retire.
- The Mumbai Pune expressway and the Panvel- JNPT expressway have made the commute, to other towns and urban centres in the MMR, very convenient and fast from Chembur.

All these factors along with the TDR have been responsible for the major upward mobility of property prices in Chembur.

Cultural Chembur

Chembur has witnessed a golden era of the hindi film industry, in the 1960's Raj Kapoor made Chembur his base by acquiring a sprawling bungalow on Deonar Farm Road and also started the RK Studio on the Sion Trombay Road. A large number of other film stars like Ashok Kumar and family, Lalita Pawar Omprakash, Nalini Jaywant, and many more shifted to Chembur. Cultural institution such as the Fine Arts society and many educational institution enhance the cultural character of chembur.

3.0 Existing Literature

- 3.1 Listing and Grading of Heritage structure and Precincts in Eastern suburbs for MMR-HCS has been done by the consultant architects M/S Designer, Mumbai. The above report prepared in 2004 – 2005 listed three precincts in chembur. 1. Old Chembur, 2. Chembur Gaothan, 3. St. Anthony's society.

The report has documented the ownership pattern, land use, significance and value classification, vocabulary of

construction, special architectural features services and utilities, the maintenance and conditions of the heritage quality building within each precinct, transformation and DP remarks, along with physical surveys in the form of photographs and plans.

- 3.2 'Environmental Conscious Development in Chembur The case of the Gaothan : Meeting the needs of the present in the context of tradition' Thesis by Architect Anil Nagrath for M.Arch in Environmental Architecture. The objectives of the report are as follows.

The study aims at understanding the forces of development and change over the last century and their on the social and physical environmental particularly the Gaothan.

Analysis of existing buildings, road network, hydrology, vegetation and landuse and social structure of the Gaothan.

Looking at the impact of modern development on the fringes, and intruding within the Gaothan.

Finding out the aspirations of the residents and their ability to meet the challenge of change.

Propose guidelines for ecological and sustainable development.

- 3.3 Website: www.chembur.com

4.0 Reconnaissance Survey

4.1 Chembur Gaothan Precinct

Settlement patterns:

The Chembur gaothan is one of the seven original villages of the settlement dating back to 300 years portraying evolved organic development depicting vernacular character of built form which is ground and two storied structures with common side wall concept. The gaothan now occupies 37000 sqmts. and has a population of about 2500 residents, hence a density of 675 persons per hectare.



The gaathan is now peculiarly located near the railway station and surrounded by a line of plots the town planning suburban scheme III thereby showing a stark contrasting in the two developments side by side. The gaathan is bound by the Ramakrishna Chemburkar Marg on the west, 15th road to the north, D. K. Sandu Marg on the east and 10th Road on the south with a surprising nine entries to the gaathan, two from the west, one from the north, four on the east and two on the south all culminating to the core of the gaathan which is a vibrant community open space with is accentuated with wells and a temple complex. Other than the winding narrow roads or paths the settlement has very good flora and fauna and that is largely contributed by the high water table and numerous wells.



Existing Built form, Growth and Transformation patterns:

The gaathan portrayed 188 low rise built forms exhibiting pre industrial vernacular character of which only 163 (87%) exists in their original condition with partial transformation. Most of these structures are rentals under the Rent Control Act there portraying poor conditions of the built forms which need to be attained to urgently to avoid them from being lost out due to heavy disrepairs.



Disrepairs and pressures of urbanization have led to 25 odd structures i.e. 13% of the fabric being replaced by ground and four upper storied RCC framed residential structures portraying alien character thereby marring the existing historic built form. Mixed reactions amongst its residents have led to disunity thereby not opposing to the new developments leading to disrepair and loss of original fabric of the vernacular settlement.



Ownership and land use patterns:

The land was owned by the who were farmers from the SKP(Somavanshiya Kshatriya Pathare) community which is one of the original inhabitants of Mumbai along with Kolis, Agris and Suthars. As per our information, 500 mtrs on all sides of the Gaathan was reserved for agricultural use. Later when the Suburban Town Planning scheme was introduced the land around the Gaathan was acquired by the Government. The land in Gaathan is privately owned by the successors of the original inhabitants though it has further got sub divided into much smaller plots portraying predominately residential land use with

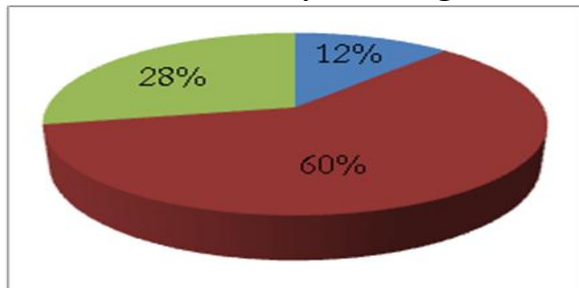


convenient shopping along the ground floor of the built forms along the periphery of the settlement. Numerous MS fabricators have set up their workshops along the ground floor along with flour mills and auto repair workshops. Social institutions such as two temples, mitra mandals and gymnasias dot the gaathan serving various gender and age groups.

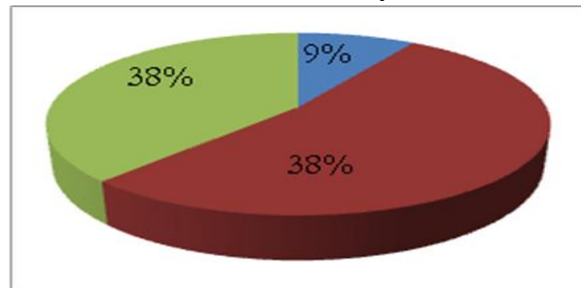


Pie Charts Showing Heritage Value classification in Chembur Gaathan

2004 documentation by Ar. Designers



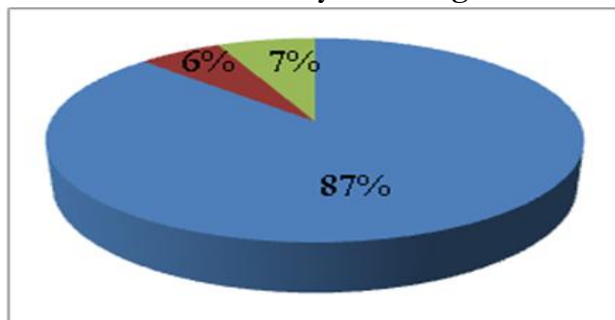
2010 Reconnaissance survey



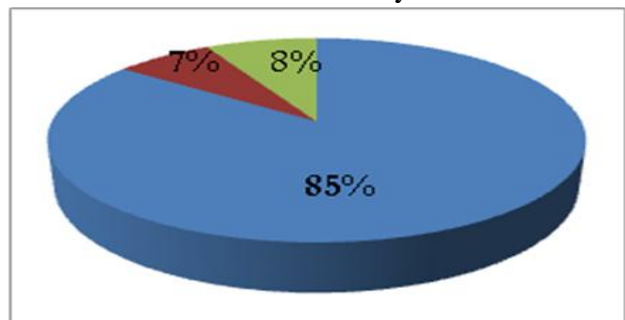
■ 1950-Heritage Buildings ■ 1970-1980 Old Buildings ■ New Buildings

Pie Charts Showing topography in Chembur Gaathan

2004 documentation by Ar. Designers



2010 Reconnaissance Survey



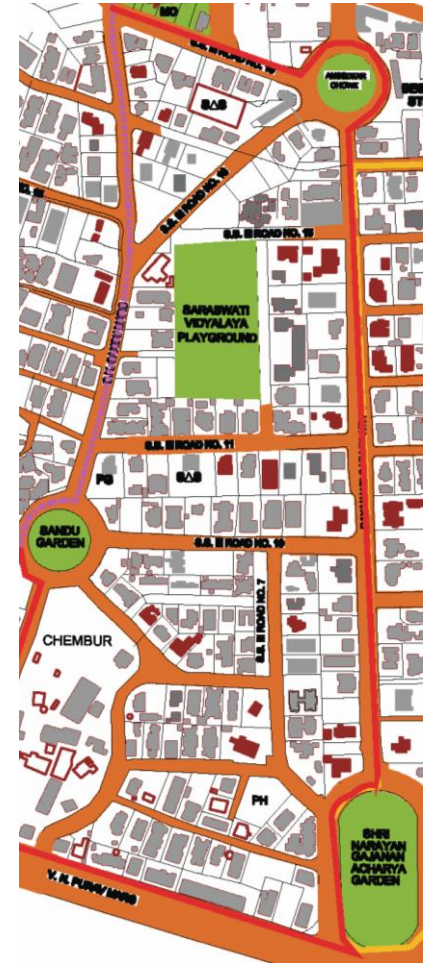
■ Ground/G+1, G+2 Buildings ■ G+3 Buildings ■ G+4 above Buildings

4.2 Old Chembur Precinct

Settlement patterns:

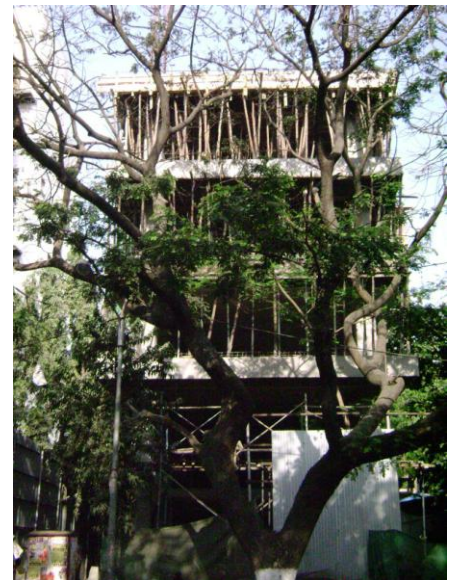
The term old is a misnomer to the Old Chembur Precinct considering that the plotted development is of the 1960s Town Planning Suburban Scheme III planned between the three nodes mainly the Sandu garden, Ambedkar chowk and the renowned Diamond garden.

The precinct is surrounded by Dayananda Saraswati marg along the east, V.N. Purav Marg along the south, D. K. Sandu Marg along the west and 18th Road along the North. Further six roads cut across the precinct along the east west direction accentuating the grid iron pattern of development. Further the precinct portrays an isolated bungalow type character of settlement of ground and two storied structures. Majority of the earlier developments portrays the 1960s Art Deco Style with appreciable features such as elaborate openings with stain glasses, curvilinear balconies and otlas, accentuated staircase blocks, etc. The precinct enjoys the advantage of an open playground accessed to all associated with the Saraswati Vidyalyaya school which is one of the major institutions in the precinct. The north south wide roads are abundantly shaded with ever green trees that create an ambience truly known to Chembur.



Existing Builtform, Growth and Transformation patterns:

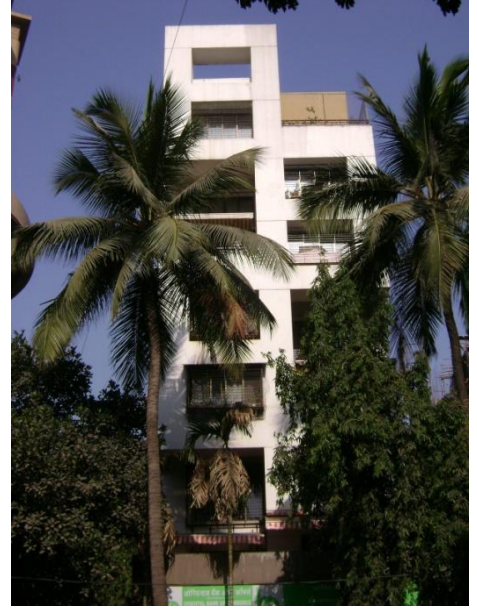
Large plots, rising prices of real estate and the pressures of urbanization have led the 188 isolated ground and one storied RCC framed 1960-70s bungalows of which 109 structures i.e. 58% have been pulled down to give way to high rises of seven stories or above considering the wide roads affronting the plots and the scheme of TDR developments resulting into an intermittent development of low and high rises consequently. The recent high rises are concrete edifices with contemporary or post modernist styles with very little response to the earlier fabric as well to the environs of the precinct. Considering the present trend of development and the potential the large plots hold to development, it is very evitable that the Old Chembur precinct is most susceptible to change through redevelopments and that addressing any issues of controlled development in the precinct should be taken up urgently before it is too late. Further the impetus of the alignment of the monorail and other infrastructure



projects in the vicinity hold great potential for accelerated development in the area.

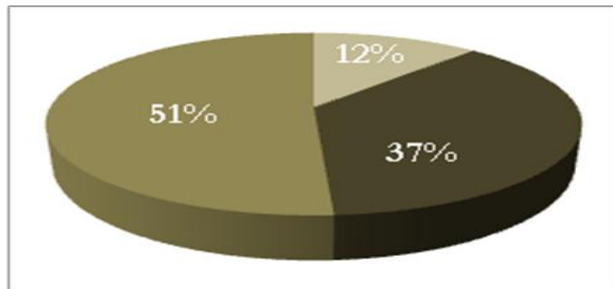
Ownership and land use patterns:

Most of the plots are privately owned and developed under the pretexts of Residential Cooperative Housing societies except for those of the Institutions such as the school which would be under the auspicious of a private Trust. The majority of the community is of multi ethnic belonging to the largely homogenous middle class. The main north south spine between diamond garden and Ambedkar Chowk has commercial developments on the ground floor specially those such as Banks, restaurants, health clubs, etc. Abundant activity along the roads can be observed considering that they are shaded for most parts of the day thereby making it an inevitable public space.

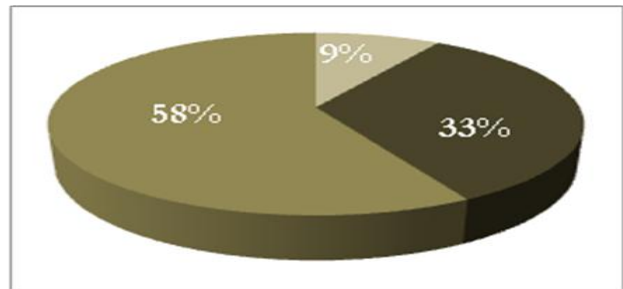


Pie Charts Showing Heritage Value classification in old Chembur

2004 documentation by Ar. Designers



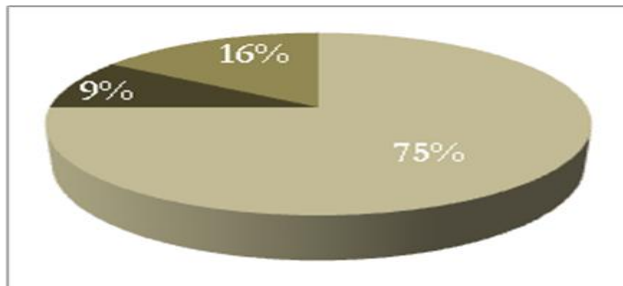
2010 Reconnaissance survey



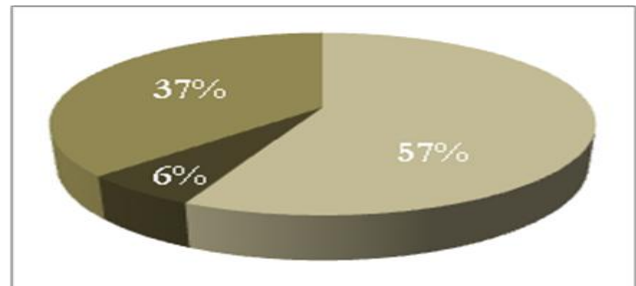
■ 1950-Heritage Buildings ■ 1970-1980 Old Buildings ■ New Buildings

Pie Charts showing topography in Old Chembur

2004 documentation by Ar. Designers



2010 Reconnaissance survey



■ Ground/G+1, G+2 Buildings ■ G+3 Buildings ■ G+4 above Buildings

4.3 St. Anthony's Precinct

Settlement patterns:

The plotted development is of the 1960s Town Planning Suburban Scheme III planned to the west of the Gaathan as well as the old Chembur precincts under the Christian covenant of community development has led to the identity of this precinct for long. Other than the church and the playground complex the settlement is planned along a grid iron with roads such as the 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th and 16th as internal roads running along the east west direction. The covenant development led to isolated two storied bungalows along large plots. Lush green trees line either side of the roads giving a distinct identity to the precinct of serenity.



Existing Builtform, Growth and Transformation patterns:

Out of the 216 isolated plotted development, 55 odd structures have been pulled down and given way to high rises considering the great potential of large plots and wide internal roads. Considering only 25% of the development influenced by the ongoing trends, the precinct still holds great potential for development guidelines to be framed for a more sensitive development.



Ownership and land use patterns:

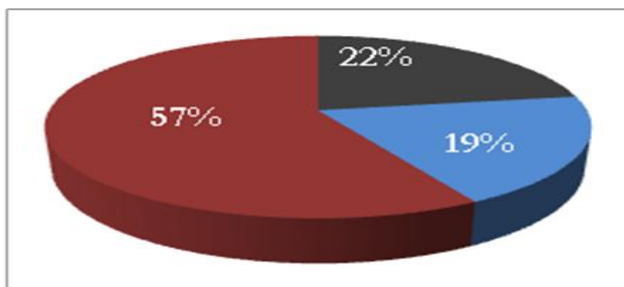
The plots of land owned by St. Anthony's Co-op housing Society were reserved for Christian community. They were allotted to the members of the St. Anthony's Church Parish. Later as the real estate prices soared the community has found legal loopholes to forgo the law and they have found ways to sell the apartments built on individual plots to even non-Christians. More insights are required to understand how these deals happen and we will collect the information in the subsequent stage and analyse it. Some of the most beautiful and heritage value structures are found in this area.



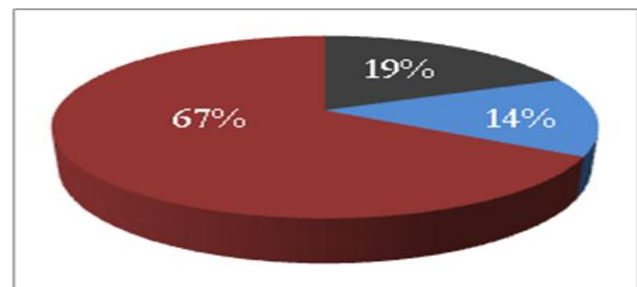
Other than the Christian community the residents of the settlement have a multi ethnic group with a predominant middle class background and the land use predominantly in the precinct is Residential other than the Institution of St. Anthony's Church and school itself.

Pie Charts Showing Heritage Value classification in St. Anthony Precinct

2004 documentation by Ar. Designers



2010 Reconnaissance survey

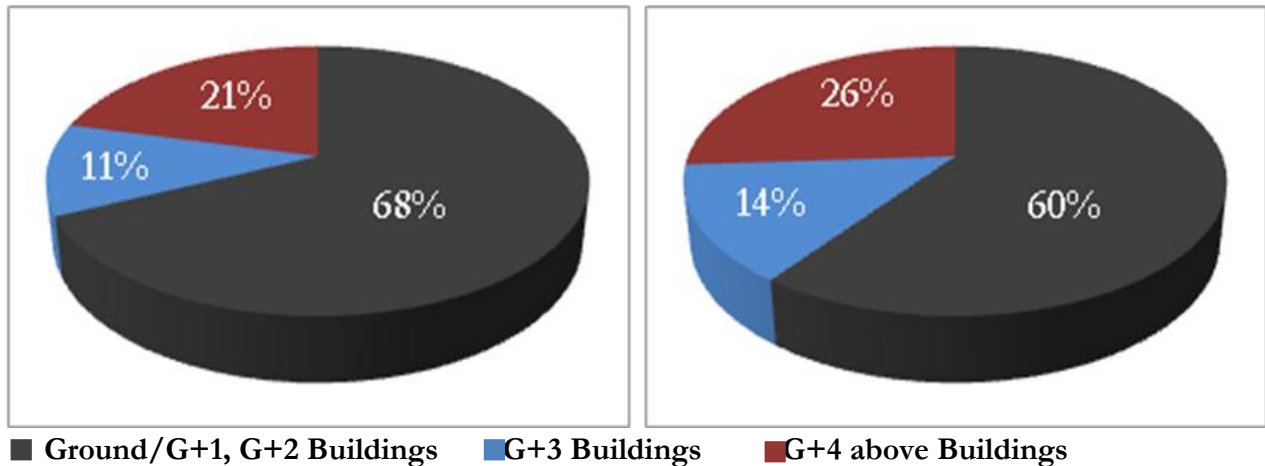


■ 1950-Heritage Buildings ■ 1970-1980 Old Buildings ■ New Buildings

Pie Charts Showing topography in St. Anthony precinct

2004 documentation by Ar. Designers

2010 Reconnaissance survey



5.0 Community Participation and identification of the Stake holder.

5.1 Community Participation:

We identified residents from the three precincts on the basis of their association with the respective precinct. Our selection was based on the cross section of caste, class gender and professions. For this stage we tried to establish contact with members of the community who are part of stakeholder groups.

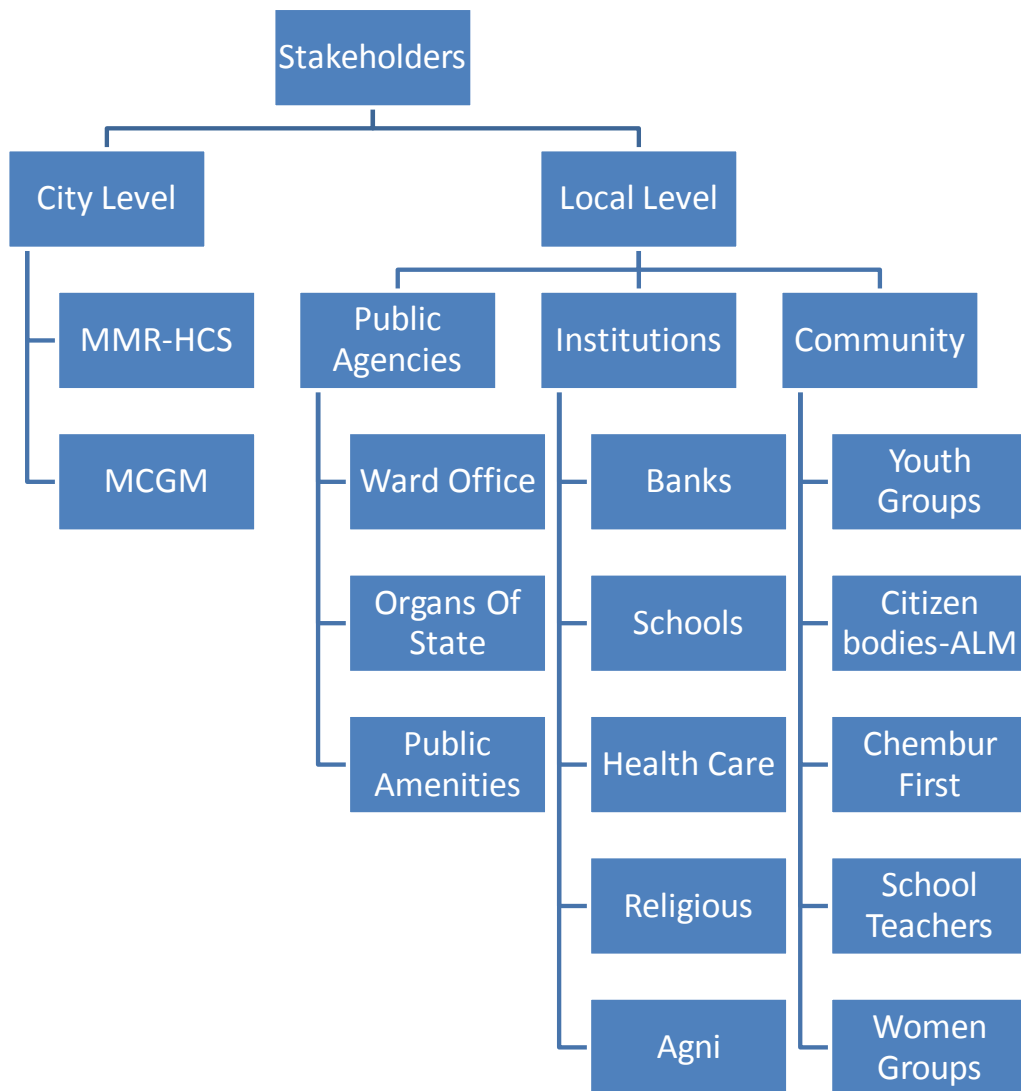
We interviewed following people from the 3 precincts, for a preliminary discussion about the project and future role in the process.

Gaothan : 1) Ramakant Patil (senior resident and practicing artist and architect), 2) B.K.Mhatre (practicing architect), 3) Puravji (trustee of Bhulingeshwar Temple Trust, 4) Geetanjali Chile (domestic help and active resident)

Old Chembur : Rajkumar Sharma (member of Agni), Anil Nagrath (architect, member chembur First), Rupali Balan (Old resident and house maker)

St. Anthony Society: 1) Valerie Louis Desouza (senior resident, ex-teacher and active member of the community), 2) Nickle Britto (Secretary St. Anthony's Co-operative Housing society), 3) Derich Desouza (member of the Parish)

5.2 Stakeholders chart



5.2 Analytical Framework for Interviews

1. Community Actors

Category of actors- residents, commercial, recreational, service providers, visitors, temporary residents(beggars home residents)

Awareness, Interests, Resources and willingness to engage in the process of participatory action planning

Existence of actor organizations and networks

Network amongst the 3 neighborhoods

Their earlier experience with working with the state- learning's from it.

Their earlier experience of working with the private sector

Their willingness to engage with the action planning efforts

Their expectations from the process, their expectation from the state, and facilitators if any.

2. Actors Perceptions

Their perception of Heritage Structure and Heritage Precincts

do they view their own community as one?

What in their view is the boundary for the same?

What in their view are the attributes which need to be retained?

What in their view are attributes which have been lost / but can be brought back ?

What in their view are attributes which have been lost and can never be bought back?

3. Actors Willingness to participate in the process

What are the actors willing to do to engage in the dialogue?

What are the willing to contribute?

Time

Information

Place

Network Etc

(Here we could use the ladder of participation as an analytical tool. From no participation-token participation- facilitator lead participation- participate with them leading the process)

4 Facilitators

Awareness, Interests, Resources and willingness to engage in the process of participatory action planning

Approach of the Facilitator

Suggested methodology

Time frame

Resources that they may have / need to add on

Their willingness to engage with the action planning efforts

Their expectations from the process, from the state, from the community, if any.

6.0 Methodology:

In order to prepare an action plan for management of the three heritage sub-precincts namely: 1. old Chembur 2. Gaothan 3. St Anthony's Society, the prime focus is the community participation and involvement. To achieve that we will conduct workshops with the stakeholders and residents, and iterate with our interventions thereby finally preparing the action plan with guidelines and policy.

Phase 1: Preparation for the first workshop with the community and the stakeholders.

In this stage we will prepare detail documentation of the three precincts showing existing conditions, landmarks, cultural practices, existing infrastructure, amenities, demographic characteristics and transformations. Along with the salient features of the built fabric.

Phase 2: First Workshop.

During this workshop we shall make presentations to the community and show them the available development alternatives which exist and collectively appreciate the existing precincts. We try to identify the socio-cultural and physical aspects which the community appreciates and identifies with and would like to preserve. During this workshop the architectural , historical, socio-cultural, technological, environmental and economical significance will be evaluated and graded, with local opinion so that there is a clear indication of what needs to be conserved, why and to what extend.

Phase 3: After the workshop a SWOT analysis will be done by us to analyse the regulatory socio-economic characters with respect to institutional and environmental aspects with relation to the precincts.

Phase 4: To prepare an action plan based on the above analysis which will highlight the local community participation and public private partnership. Identifying categories of interventions required and urgency of the same.

Phase 5: Workshop II- at this stage the action plan is presented to the community and with their input iterated so that it is acceptable to majority of the stakeholders.

Phase 6 : Prepare a management action plan with development guidelines, policy, projects and programmes.

Phase 7: Identify possible partners for implementation of the action plan and for financial support thereby looking for opportunities for networking and partnership with corporate sector, industries and social institutions. A detailed institutional mechanism for implementation and subsequent activities required in the next few years after the projects and programmes are phased out.

Team members involved in the preparation of the Inception Report

Shivani Singh.	Architect, Master in Urban Planning HOD Urban and Regional planning at Rachna Sansad College of Architecture.	Team Leader
Jamshid Bhiwandiwalla.	Architect, Master in Architecture Master In Arts (Ancient Indian Culture) Conservationist	Team Member
Navtej Kaur.	Urban Scholar.	Team Member
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Swapnil Bhole.	Architect, Master in Environmental Architecture.	Team Member
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