

The Red Fort Complex (India)

No 231 rev

Official name as proposed by the State Party: The Red Fort Complex

Location: Delhi

Brief description:

The Red Fort was the palace fort of the Mughal Emperor Shahjahan's new capital, Shahjahanabad. It gets its name from its massive enclosing walls of red sandstone.

Originally known as 'Qala-a-Mubarak'a' - the auspicious Citadel - the fort was built together with the city, by Shahjahan, fifth Mughal Emperor of India (1628-58) when he moved his capital from Agra. It is adjacent to an older fort, the Salimgarh, built by Islam Shah Sur in 1546, separated originally by a river and now by a road. Together the Red Fort and the Salimgarh Fort are known as the Red Fort Complex

The extensive walls originally faced a moat. Two gates give access to the bazaar, audience chamber and series of finely proportioned palace rooms, lavishly decorated in white marble. The private apartments consist of a row of pavilions connected by a continuous water channel, known as the Nahr-i-Behisht, or the Stream of Paradise. The palace was designed as an imitation of paradise as described in the Koran; a couplet inscribed in the palace reads, 'If there be a paradise on earth, it is here, it is here'.

The planning of the palace is based on Islamic prototypes, but each pavilion reveals architectural elements typical of Mughal building, reflecting a fusion of Persian, Timurid and Hindu traditions. The Red Fort is considered to represent the zenith of Mughal creativity under the Emperor Shahjahan. After 1857, some structures were demolished by the British and replaced by military barracks buildings.

Category of property:

In terms of the categories of cultural property set out in Article 1 of the 1972 World Heritage Convention, this is a *monument*.

1. BASIC DATA

Included in the Tentative List: 16 March 2005

International Assistance from the World Heritage Fund for preparing the Nomination: No

Date received by the World Heritage Centre:
15 October 1982
26 October 1992
31 January 2006

Background:

This is a deferred nomination (17th extraordinary session, Cartagena, 1993).

A first nomination dossier was examined by the Bureau of the World Heritage Committee at its 17th extraordinary session (Cartagena, 1993). At the time, ICOMOS recommended that: "the inscription of this property be deferred until the handover of the major portion of the monument to the Archaeological Survey of India has been completed and statutory protection has been extended to entire monument."

The Bureau of the World Heritage Committee approved the following recommendation:

"The Indian authorities provided additional information on the legal protection of historical sites, indicating that all sites have a protection area of 100 meters and a buffer zone of 300 meters. ICOMOS emphasized that there is a long conservation tradition in India and that the protection meets World Heritage requirements. In the case of Red Fort, however, major parts of the site are under the authority of the army. ICOMOS therefore recommended to defer this nomination until these parts of the Fort have been handed over to the Archaeological Survey of India. The Bureau endorsed this recommendation."

The previous nominations covered a smaller area, encompassing only the Red Fort and not the Salimgarh Fort.

A new revised nomination dossier was submitted to UNESCO on 31 January 2006.

Consultations: ICOMOS consulted its International Scientific Committee on Fortifications and Military Heritage.

Literature consulted (selection):

Koch, Ebba, *Mughal Architecture*, 1991.

Mukherji, Anisha Shekhar, *The Red Fort of Shahjahanabad, Delhi*, 2003.

Tillotson, Giles, *Mughal India*, 1990.

Technical Evaluation Mission: 19–22 September 2006

Additional information requested and received from the State Party: ICOMOS sent a letter to the State Party on 11 December 2006, and the State Party submitted additional information on 9 January 2007. ICOMOS sent a letter of request of supplementary information on 31 January 2007 and the State party submitted information on the 27 February 2007.

Date of ICOMOS approval of this report: 11 March 2007

2. THE PROPERTY

Description

The Red Fort Complex along with the earlier Salimgarh Fort occupies an area of around 120 acres.

The Red Fort was built by the Mughal Emperor Shahjahan as part of his new capital Shahjahanabad in the mid 17th century. The structure of the new planned city drew inspiration from Isfahan, the Persian Capital, and reflected the power and grandeur of the Mughal court. The Fort was the focal point of the city, strategically sited at the end of the primary axis and next to the Yamuna River. It abuts the earlier fort of Salimgarh, constructed on an island in the river and linked to the Red Fort by a bridge.

Construction of the Fort was begun in April, 1639 and completed in 1648. Its massive red sandstone walls – from which it gets its name – enclose an area 656 by 328 metres and rise to 23 metres in height.

Since it was built, the Fort has been added to and some parts demolished. Additions include the Moti Masjid (Pearl Mosque) built by Shahjahan's son and successor Aurangzeb in 1659-60, and additions by the last Mughal Emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar. After 1857, many structures within the fort were demolished by the British who erected colonial style military buildings in their place, and transformed the Mughal gardens into English gardens, interrupting the spatial planning within the Red Fort. An equally profound change has been brought by the river changing its course and moving further east; its original line between the two forts is now taken by the Inner Delhi Ring Road.

Within the enclosing walls, the spatial organisation and architectural attributes of the ensemble of Mughal monuments display most of the main day-to-day activities of Shahjahan's court, which at its height accommodated some 3,000 people.

The Red Fort was the first Mughal palace fort developed on the basis of a geometrical grid pattern set within an octagonal form, (and within an octagonal city plan). The architecture of the Red Fort is based on the concept of pavilion structures, set within the grid. The primary building material is brick, clad with sandstone or marble. The buildings were characterised by decorative elements that synthesised Persian, European and Indian motifs creating a unique Shahjahani style which incorporated intricate geometric compositions, pietra dura inlay, bright colours and flowing water. Shahjahan was the first to use tall, complex pierced marble *jali* partitions, based on hexagonal forms. These design elements were a culmination of those developed by preceding Mughal rulers.

The Mughul remains contrast starkly with those from the British period which reflect the basic requirements of an occupying force.

The nominated Red Fort Complex consists of the following main elements:

Red Fort :

- Walls, bastions and gates
- Chhatta Chowk, palace market
- Naubat Khana or Naqqarkhana Drum House
- Diwan-i-Am, Hall of Public Audience

- Palace pavilions and the Nah-i-Bihisht, Stream of Paradise
- Diwan-i-Khas, Hall of Private Audience
- Hammam Baths
- Moti Masjid, Pearl Mosque
- Hayat-Baksh Bagh, Lifegiving Garden
- British period buildings

Salimgarh Fort

These are considered in turn:

Red Fort

- Walls, bastions and gates

Along the red sandstone walls are at intervals bastions surmounted by domed kiosks. The two principal entrances are the Lahori Gate and the Delhi Gate. The Lahori gate was the ceremonial public entrance used by visitors and the emperor himself. It consists of three storeys between two semi-octagonal towers topped by a delicate, seven arch arcade with white domes flanked by two minarets. The Delhi Gate was used mainly by soldiers and all other people working in the fort.

- Chhatta Chowk, palace market

The Lahori gate leads directly into Chhatta Chowk, a vaulted arcade formerly used as the palace market.

- Naubat Khana or Naqqarkhana Drum House

From the market access leads to the Naubat Khana or Naqqarkhana (Drum House), a three-storey rectangular building. Here grand arrivals were serenaded by musicians and only princes could ride through on horseback beyond this point.

- Diwan-i-Am, Hall of Public Audience

The audience hall is based on the concept of an open forty pillared hall, as used at Agra Fort. The rectangular hall is on a raised plinth with openings on three sides and three aisles deep with a façade of nine multiple arches. Formalised tapering octagonal pillars with still leafed capitals and cusped arches supported a decorative inlaid ceiling. The royal throne used to stand beneath a marble canopy at the back of the hall decorated with pietra dura and floral motifs inlaid with polychrome semi-precious stones.

- Palace pavilions and the Nah-i-Bihisht, Stream of Paradise

Proceeding further, there is a string of finely proportioned palace buildings parallel with the river course constructed of white marble, and raised up on platforms, all connected by the Nah-i-Bihisht (Stream of Paradise), which flowed through them, its channel decorated differently in each

palace. Each building is different and yet each is in harmony with the others.

- Diwan-i-Khas, Hall of Private Audience

This is the most ornamental of all Shahjahan's buildings, of white marble decorated with floral pietra dura patterns on the columns, with precious stones and gilding. Raised on a plinth it is open on all sides except where it faces the river and is enclosed by pierced *jali* panels. Its flat roof originally faced with silver on the underside, is supported by 32 columns with acanthus carving. In the centre of the structure the Peacock throne originally stood. Today, the Diwan-i-Khas is a pale shadow of its original glory, yet the famous Persian couplet inscribed on its wall is a reminder of its former magnificence: "*If there be a paradise on earth, it is here, it is here*".

- Hammam Baths

Built of marble and decorated with pietra dura inlay and glass windows, the baths consists of a series of chambers equipped with hot and cold water which ran over channels inlaid with carved flowers to give the impression of a garden.

- Moti Masjid, Pearl Mosque

Constructed by Shahjahan's son and successor Aurangzeb in 1659-60 for his personal use, it is built entirely of marble. Its triple bulbous domes were originally clad with copper. The floor of the prayer hall is inlaid with outlines of musallas (prayer carpets) in black marble

- Hayat-Baksh Bagh, Lifegiving Garden

The Garden to the north of the Moti Masjid is laid out in characteristic Mughal form in squares with water-channels between them. These have been recently reconstructed.

- British period buildings

Constructed of dressed stone with round headed arched openings, four three-storey barracks, seven two-storey barracks and thirteen single-storey barracks were constructed between 1867-8 and occupy the north-east and south-east corner of the fort.

Salimgarh Fort

This fort is earlier than the Red Fort, built by Shah Suri in 1546 AD. However, apart from the remains of a small earlier structure, the remaining buildings all date from the late British era. Constructed on a river island Salimgarh Fort was linked to the banks by a bridge. The old bridge was replaced by another bridge in a different location during British rule, and connects the two forts. A two-track railway line runs through Salimgarh Fort.

History and development

Prior to the Mughal period, the principles of city planning had been developing in India since around the 3rd millennium BC. In the intervening centuries the construction of forts, palaces, temples, gardens and water systems had all come to be seen as key elements of local architecture. During the early Mughal period, in the 16th

and 17th centuries, architectural styles from Persia came to be fused with local Hindu traditions to create what became a distinctive Mughal style. This process was begun by the first Mughal Emperor Babur (1526-1530), enlarged by the second Mughal Emperor Humayun who introduced the octagonal form for planning and building components. Under Shahjahan this was lifted to a delicate elegance and refinement of detail, illustrated in the magnificent palaces erected in his reign at Agra and Delhi, combining grandeur with a high aesthetic sense and underpinned by the economic prosperity of his reign.

Construction of the Red Fort was begun in April 1639, and was completed in 1648 as part of the construction of Shahjahanabad, his new capital transferred from Agra. Shahjahan was instrumental in introducing various innovative approaches to town planning in Shahjahanabad where the whole city was designed within an octagonal concept and focused on the Red Fort.

The Fort was added to by his son who built the Pearl Mosque; and by the last Mughal Emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar. The fall of the Mughal Empire began with the fall of Shahjahan; the Peacock throne was removed and the building assumed new and different functions. In 1718 the Naqqar Khan was used as a prison. The place was ransacked in 1739 by Nadir Shah from Persia who emptied the Treasury. The buildings were damaged by bombs thrown by the Marathas and the Jats in 1759.

After the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857, the Fort was captured by Britain and became the headquarters of the British Indian Army. It had been shorn of its jewels by the Emperor to fund his resistance to the British. Many major structures within the fort were demolished by the British who erected colonial style military buildings in their place. They also re-designed the Mughal Gardens in English style. An equally profound change has been brought by the change in course of the river which no longer flows between the two forts. Its place has been taken by a busy ring road. When India achieved independence in 1947, the Indian Army took control of the Red Fort Complex. In December 2003 the Indian Army handed the fort over to the Archaeological Survey of India, thus satisfying the requirements set in 1993 by the World Heritage Bureau. The army barracks buildings now stand empty.

The Fort is open to the public and attracts several million visitors a year. The Fort is also the site from which the Prime Minister of India addresses the nation on August 15 each year, marking the day that India achieved independence from the United Kingdom.

Construction of the Salimgarh Fort was begun in 1544 AD by Islam Shah. It was subsequently used by Humayun to re-conquer Delhi from Islam Shah and by Shahjahan as a residence during the construction of the Red Fort. Shahjahan was also imprisoned there at the end of his life. Almost all the Mughal period buildings, including the bridge linking it to the Red Fort, were demolished by the British. As noted above, many new structures were built by the British, including a railway line that passes through the site.

3. OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE, INTEGRITY AND AUTHENTICITY

Integrity and Authenticity

Integrity

- Red Fort

The spatial layout of the Fort and its relationship with the river and with the city were key aspects of its design. It is said to be a unique synthesis of Persian, Hindu and Islamic concepts of city planning and the first Mughal fort palace to be systematically planned (in distinct contrast to Lahore and Agra). Within the enclosing walls there was careful spatial differentiation of the various functions of the court and the buildings reflected hierarchical social structures.

Since it was built, two major interventions have interrupted this harmony: the demolition of buildings and their replacement by British barracks and the re-location of the river and its replacement by a major road. Both of these impact on the integrity of the Mughal planning.

The landscape between the pavilion buildings was part of the overall spatial planning of the Red Fort. The landscape inside the fort has changed to a great extent, mainly due to interventions by the British occupying force. From the current layout of the gardens, it is difficult to identify what is authentic Mughal design and what is not. Currently, the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), with the help of consultants, is conducting research on the landscaped areas to determine what remains of the original Mughal garden layouts.

The most dramatic impacts on the integrity of the Red Fort Complex come from the change of the river into a major road, which alters the relationship of the property to its intended setting, and from the division of the Salimgarh Fort by a railway.

What now exists cannot be said to reflect all the principles of Mughal planning and design. Rather the built remains of the Red Fort complex now display the impact of British colonisation on surviving Mughal architecture and planning. ICOMOS considers that the Red Fort demonstrates integrity in relation to these two layers.

- Salimgarh Fort

In the Salimgarh Fort, all structures apart from one date from the late British era. A two-track railway line divides the Fort into two parts. The State Party justifies the presence of the railway line as an example of a British layer on top of the Mughal layer.

ICOMOS considers that, while the concept of “layer” is acceptable in the case of Red Fort in relation to the substantial remains from the Mughal period which are still visible, the presence of a railway line running across the middle of the Salimgarh Fort, combined with the absence of substantial visible Mughal remains, does impact on the integrity of the Salimgarh Fort and also on the complex as a whole.

Nevertheless the Salimgarh Fort is inextricably linked to the Red Fort in use and later history and is perceived to belong to the Red Fort Complex. ICOMOS therefore considers that it is justified to include it within the

nominated property. ICOMOS emphasises that, in isolation, Salimgarh Fort does not manifest adequate integrity in terms of demonstrating features related to the identified values of the Red Fort; therefore its integrity can only be seen in terms of its value as part of the overall Red Fort Complex.

Authenticity

ICOMOS considers that there is no doubt over the authenticity of the Mughal buildings or of the buildings constructed by the British. As noted above, there is more uncertainty over the layout of the gardens within the fort which have been recreated in Mughal style from their English form, and until current research is completed, it is not known if these reflect the original Mughal layout.

ICOMOS considers that in the case of the Salimgarh Fort so little remains of the Mughal period that the authenticity can only relate in tangible terms to buildings and the railway constructed by the British, and in intangible terms to its association with earlier periods and the imprisonment of Shahjahan. In this sense what remains are authentic expressions of later history. Again Salimgarh can only be seen as an adjunct to the Red Fort included for completeness.

In conclusion, ICOMOS considers that integrity of the Red Fort Complex is satisfactory as a layered expression of both Mughal architecture and planning and the later British military use of the forts.

ICOMOS considers that the authenticity of the Mughal and British buildings in the Red Fort Complex is established, although more work is needed to establish the veracity of the current garden layout. In the specific case of the Salimgarh Fort, ICOMOS considers that the authenticity of the Mughal period is related to knowledge of its use and associations, and of the built structures dating from the British period.

Comparative analysis

The dossier puts forward a detailed comparison of the Red Fort with three other Mughal forts already inscribed on the World Heritage List, Agra Fort (1983), Fatepur Sikri (1986), and Lahore Fort (1981), all constructed prior to the Red Fort.

In planning terms the Red Fort was fundamentally different from the other three in being deliberately planned on a grid basis with social zoning in contrast to what is called the haphazard nature of the other three forts. The Red Fort therefore represents advancement in Mughal architecture and can be seen to represent its ultimate expression before the Mughal dynasty collapsed after Shahjahan’s demise.

The Red Fort occupies a unique place in the development of Mughal architecture and is of significance as a symbol of the power and influence of the Mughal Emperor Shahjahan.

ICOMOS considers that the comparative analysis justifies consideration of this property for the World Heritage List.

Justification of the Outstanding Universal Value

The State Party proposes that the Red Fort Complex has outstanding universal value for the following reasons. It:

- Is the most significant palace in India in terms of its planning and construction process and its unique reflection of Islamic, Hindu and Persian traditions.
- Demonstrates layers of historical development beginning with the Mughals and continuing to the present day.
- Is associated with the struggle for independence and now stands as a symbol of a free India.

Criteria under which inscription is proposed

The Red Fort Complex is nominated on the basis of criteria i, ii, iii and vi.

Criterion i: The State Party justifies this criterion on the grounds that the Red Fort Complex epitomises the palace architecture of the Mughals and demonstrates the zenith of the development and achievements of Mughal architecture and planning under Emperor Shahjahan. It demonstrates innovation in planning, construction techniques, hydraulic systems, garden design and intricacy of art-work.

ICOMOS considers that the Red Fort was undoubtedly a landmark of Mughal architecture and a masterpiece of planning, design and construction when built. However since its construction, major interventions have diminished its overall integrity and intactness and shorn it of its opulent magnificence. What remains is dramatic but does not show the wholeness or luxuriousness of the original creation. As the nomination dossier states ‘the entire concept of fort architecture was negated’. Salimgarh Fort pre-dates the Red Fort and was never an integral part of the Mughal design for the Red Fort.

ICOMOS does not consider that this criterion has been justified for the Red Fort and could not apply to the Salimgarh Fort.

Criterion ii: The State Party justifies this criterion on the grounds that the planning and design of the Red Fort represent a culmination of architectural development initiated in 1526 AD by the first Mughal Emperor and brought to a splendid refinement by Shahjahan. The architectural style of building components as well as garden design strongly influenced later buildings and gardens in Rajasthan, Delhi, Agra and the surrounding areas.

ICOMOS considers that the fusion of traditions: Islamic, Persian, Timurid and Hindu are relevant for this criterion: the final flourishing of Mughal architecture built upon local traditions but enlivened them with imported ideas, techniques, craftsmanship and designs to provide outstanding results in planning and architecture as demonstrated by what remains of the Red Fort.

ICOMOS considers that this criterion is justified.

Criterion iii: The State Party justifies this criterion on the grounds that the Red Fort Complex has played a key part

of significant stages of Indian history: Shahjahan the last Mughal Emperor built the Red Fort and was subsequently imprisoned in the Salimgarh Fort; the complex was the headquarters of the British Indian Army and witnessed the first war of independence in 1858.

ICOMOS acknowledges that the Red Fort has played a significant historical role. ICOMOS also considers that the innovative planning arrangements and architectural style of building components as well as garden design developed in the Red Fort strongly influenced later buildings and gardens in Rajasthan, Delhi, Agra and further afield. These aspects are relevant to the justification of criterion iii, as are the capacity of the Red Fort Complex to demonstrate the way British military occupation resulted in the overlaying of earlier buildings.

ICOMOS considers that this criterion is justified.

Criterion vi: The State Party justifies this criterion on the grounds that the Red Fort Complex has been a symbol of power since the reign of Shahjahan, has witnessed the key change in history to British rule, became the symbol for the struggle for independence, was the place where independence was first celebrated, and is the place where it is still celebrated today.

ICOMOS considers that the Red Fort Complex has been the setting of events, which have had over time a critical impact on its geo-cultural region.

ICOMOS considers that this criterion is justified.

ICOMOS considers that the outstanding universal value has been demonstrated and that the nominated property meets criteria ii, iii and vi.

4. FACTORS AFFECTING THE PROPERTY

Roads and railway

A convergence of roads and railways near the property and the proximity of the Old and New Delhi Railway Stations and Delhi Bus Station cause high levels of noise and air pollution – acknowledged in the dossier.

The proximity of the road running along the former river bed to the Red Fort greatly increases the air pollution levels within the property, which could adversely affect delicate materials, such as marble and sandstone, and physically damage the underlying structures. The considerable traffic on the road, which is the Inner Delhi Ring Road, also has adverse physical impacts on the bridge connecting the two forts - the bridge is badly damaged – and on the fort walls.

The railway running close to the northern edge of the Red Fort and cutting across the Salimgarh Fort also carries considerable traffic.

The State Party acknowledges that there is a need to decrease air pollution and noise levels from both roads and railways to provide visitors with a more tranquil experience.

ICOMOS considers that consideration needs to be given in the long term to the relocation of the road immediately next to the Red Fort and in the short term the impacts of pollution and physical impacts should be addressed.

Rising Dampness

This affects several structures and currently its cause does not appear to be fully understood. Both rising water tables and watering of lawns are considered possible causes. Climate change could further exacerbate this problem. ICOMOS recommends that this be addressed through the Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan (CCMP).

Emergency Preparedness

Fire is acknowledged to be a major potential threat to the wooden ceilings and other wooden components and portable objects within buildings. The nomination dossier states that the Archaeological Survey of India is developing an in-house arrangement but will need to liaise with the Delhi Fire Service.

ICOMOS considers that emergency procedures for addressing possible fire risks need to be put in place as soon as possible. It is understood that this will be addressed by the Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan (CCMP).

Conservation/Weathering

The porous nature of the red sandstone means that weathering over centuries will present problems. It is acknowledged in the nomination dossier that previous inappropriate conservation work is also an issue to be addressed. On many of the buildings the white marble is also deteriorating from deposits of inorganic matter. Iron clamps for fixing stones are a problem in some buildings as where these are exposed to water or air they can corrode, splitting the stone.

It is stated that a detailed inquiry into the vulnerability of the building materials will be carried out as part of the Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan (CCMP).

Visitor/Tourism Pressures

Between 1998 and 1999 visitor numbers to the Red Fort rose to 2.4 million with approximately 8,000 visitors a day during the peak season. Since 9/11 numbers have fallen to around 1.5 million visitors per year. However the dossier expresses the hope that the high number will again be reached in the future. Currently there is no visitor management strategy in place to even out the distribution of visitors on the property and reduce crowding and congestion in the most popular areas which could cause considerable damage from abrasion, due to dust and dirt as well as touching, and an increase in humidity levels.

Visitors are not currently provided with adequate information in order to allow them to fully appreciate the significance of the property. There are also inappropriate interventions associated with visitors such as lights, railings and obtrusive newly built walkways. Some Delhi citizens have entered in court a Public Interest Litigation to try and undo some of these recent interventions (see below).

A Lutyens-style bungalow is approaching completion in part of the space formerly used by the army. This does not appear to relate to its surroundings. It is presumably for the administrative staff.

A tourism strategy will be developed as part of the Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan (CCMP).

In conclusion, ICOMOS considers that the main risks to the property are from the nearby railway, the road along the former river bed, air and noise pollution and visitor pressures.

ICOMOS notes that work has commenced on a Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan (CCMP). In progressing this Plan, ICOMOS considers that given the scale and scope of the property and its considerable conservation and visitor management problems, adequate time should be given to the development of the Plan and its full consultation and approval.

5. PROTECTION, CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT

Boundaries of the nominated property and buffer zone

The boundary of the Red Fort Complex includes the whole of the Red Fort and Salimgarh Fort.

The nominated property has well-maintained parks outside the south walls and most parts of the east and west fortification walls. Illegal structures in areas on the north and north-west parts are being cleared for use as green areas. Most of the park areas extend well beyond the legally declared 100-metre-wide "prohibited areas" around the nominated property..

The Archaeological Survey of India controls most of the buffer zone areas. However, some parts of the buffer zone belong to the Delhi Development Authority (DDA), the Central Public Works Department (CPWD) and private owners. There are some slums on the northeast side of the Salimgarh Fort which, according to the nomination dossier are being resettled/removed. Because of ongoing legal disputes, the exact completion date of this process could not be ascertained.

Ownership

The Ministry of Culture of the Government of India owns the Red Fort Complex.

Protection

Legal Protection

The nominated property enjoys the highest level of protection as it has been declared a monument of national importance under the Ancient Monument and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1959.

A 100-metre wide prohibited zone (called buffer zone in the nomination dossier) surrounds the protected areas and further 200-metre wide prohibited areas have been established to control development and land use through a

government notification. In addition, development and land use in the adjoining historic old city of Shahjahanabad is controlled under the Zonal Development Plan prepared by the Delhi Development Authority.

ICOMOS considers that the protective measures for the property are adequate.

Conservation

History of Conservation

The Red Fort has been under the control of the Archaeological Survey of India since 2003. During that time considerable conservation work has been undertaken and the nomination dossier includes a list of recently completed projects such as restoring lime plaster on many buildings, restoring lime concrete flooring, repairing inlay, repairing sandstone flooring and stairs. The precise dates and timescales for these are not given.

Present state of conservation

The nomination dossier acknowledges considerable problems with the conservation of the Red Fort arising from water ingress and rising damp, and the impact of dust, dirt and air pollution. It also acknowledges the need to put in place active conservation programmes for the most damaged structures. This would include restoration of lime mortar, replacing missing inlay, conserving damaged stones, removing iron cramps, and repairing roofs with water ingress.

There is a need for a long-term conservation strategy that would allow on-going preventative conservation measures to be put in place as well as shorter-term conservation programmes to address the more urgent problems. This should be addressed by the proposed Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan (CCMP).

Although, the state of conservation of the building has improved over the past ten years, much more work is needed to put the overall state of the building into a stable condition and to ensure visitors do not contribute to its decay.

Active conservation measures

Because of the Red Fort's strong association with the history of India and its status as a symbol of India's independence, there is considerable public interest in affairs related to its conservation. As a result of a public writ, a court order has been issued that directs the Archaeological Survey of India to postpone all kinds of conservation interventions within the complex until a comprehensive conservation management plan for the entire property has been prepared. Conservation work is now limited to carrying out regular maintenance work and research and documentation of the property.

In conclusion, ICOMOS considers that a conservation approach needs to be developed for the property, as part of the proposed Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan (CCMP), as soon as possible in order to inspire public confidence.

Management

Presently the Red Fort Complex is managed directly by the Archaeological Survey of India, which is also responsible for the protection of all national level heritage sites in India and Indian cultural properties included in the World Heritage List. Among these are a number of Mughal period complexes, including the Agra Fort World Heritage Property. However they are currently constrained, through a Court injunction (see above) only to carry out maintenance work until a Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan (CCMP) has been approved. A transitional management system is thus in place.

At the time of submission of the nomination dossier, there was no CCMP for the property. Since that time, the Institute of Archaeology, University College, London, in collaboration with the Cultural Resource Conservation Initiative in India and the Archaeological Survey of India, has been appointed to prepare a CCMP for the property.

It was stated in the nomination dossier that the CCMP would be a holistic site management plan to address the threats from conservation problems and visitor pressures, and the urgent need for a more strongly integrated approach that incorporates, research, education and social values.

The State Party was asked to provide details of this Plan. In January an unedited, consultative draft of the CCMP was submitted by the State Party. This sets out the management issues for the property and outline strategies of how these will be addressed. What still needs to be added are actions for each of the strategic areas. It is stated in the draft that many of these interventions are yet to be developed and will be added after a consultation period in February and March 2007. The draft envisages that the Plan will be implemented over ten years. Two committees will be set up to oversee its implementation: a CCMP Consultative Committee and a Coordinating Committee. The former will advise on the implementation of the plan, monitor its progress and establish appropriate systems, while the latter will ensure inter-departmental coordination and implementation of the action plans.

ICOMOS supports the direction of this draft plan.

Site presentation, interpretation and visitor management

The Red Fort Complex embodies many layers of interventions over a long period of time. The sheer size of the property, the destruction of many Mughal era structures and gardens and the addition of many structures during the British period have made this property difficult for visitors to understand. Despite a few information panels and a sound and light show in the evening, the presentation and interpretation is not enough for a visitor who does not know the property well to enjoy it or appreciate its cultural significance. The three museums inside the property also lack interpretive materials.

The nominated property is one of the most visited sites in India. Because of its historical importance, this site is particularly popular with local visitors. It is likely that in the event of its inscription on the World Heritage List the number of visitors will increase. The existing ticketing system is adequate to control the total number of visitors to

the property on a given day. However, there is no mechanism to control the number of visitors to a particular spot inside the property at any given moment. There is therefore an urgent need for a visitor management strategy.

Considering the important role of the Red Fort in India's history and in creating a national identity, ICOMOS considers that presentation and good on-site interpretive methods should be given a high priority.

ICOMOS considers that the scale and complexity of the Red Fort Complex, its current conservation problems, the high numbers of visitors and the need for better interpretation all point to the pressing need for the finalisation and agreement of the proposed Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan (CCMP), supported by stakeholder involvement.

ICOMOS considers that the transitional management system in place is adequate; and that the longer-term protection and management of the property will be secured through the completion of the proposed Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan and the resolution of the current legal action.

6. MONITORING

The need for documenting the condition of the buildings on an annual basis in order to monitor conservation is acknowledged in the nomination dossier, but such a system is currently not in place.

ICOMOS considers that monitoring measures need to be established for the property in order to build up data on the condition and changes to the buildings over time.

7. CONCLUSIONS

ICOMOS considers that the Red Fort Complex demonstrates Outstanding Universal Value and satisfies criteria ii, iii and vi.

ICOMOS considers that the road running between the Red Fort and Salimgarh Fort, and the railway to the north have adverse effects on the structure and conservation of the property, and on its setting and planning attributes. It therefore suggests that the State Party consider a long-term plan for realigning the road and the railway, perhaps further to the north-east away from the Red Fort; and in the short term, putting in place measures to reduce the overall volume of traffic.

Management of the Red Fort Complex is a challenge given the nature of the building materials, current air pollution and high numbers of visitors. In the light of the current court order which constrains the Archaeological Survey of India to refrain from conservation work until a Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan has been developed and approved, ICOMOS considers that it is essential that the Plan takes an integrated approach to research, conservation, monitoring, tourism, education and local social values, and is carried out in a collaborative way to inspire public confidence. Given the considerable interest locally in the management of the Red Fort Complex, ICOMOS considers that it is important that the

relevant stakeholders are consulted at all key stages of the development of the Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan and that its recommendations are based on consensus among the stakeholders. The consultative draft that has been supplied gives reassurance that this approach will be taken.

Recommendations with respect to inscription

ICOMOS recommends that the Red Fort Complex, India, be inscribed on the World Heritage List on the basis of *criteria ii, iii and vi*.

Recommended Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

The Red Fort Complex has Outstanding Universal Value:

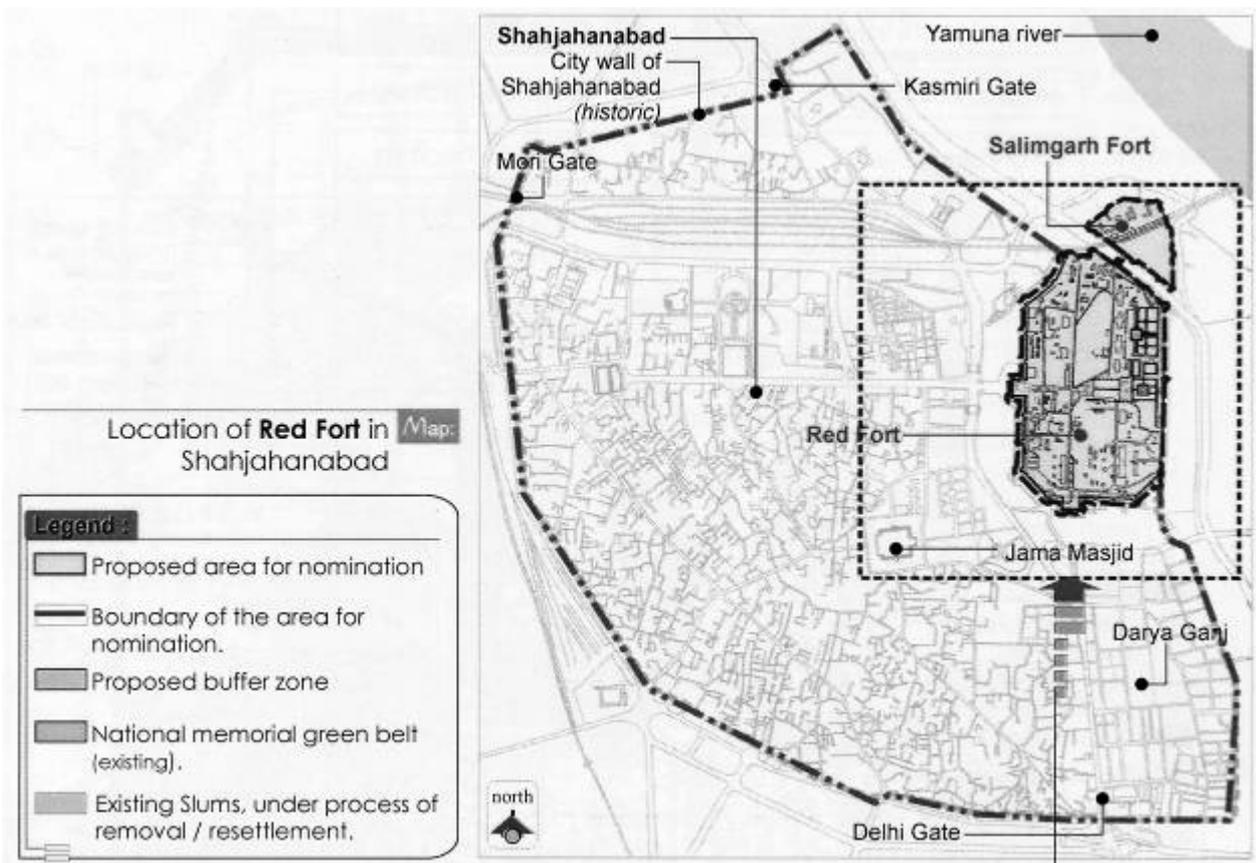
- The planning and design of the Red Fort represent a culmination of architectural development initiated in 1526 AD by the first Mughal Emperor and brought to a splendid refinement by Shahjahan with a fusion of traditions: Islamic, Persian, Timurid and Hindu.
- The innovative planning arrangements and architectural style of building components as well as garden design developed in the Red Fort strongly influenced later buildings and gardens in Rajasthan, Delhi, Agra and further afield.
- The Red Fort has been the setting for events which have had a critical impact on its geo-cultural region.

Criterion ii: The final flourishing of Mughal architecture built upon local traditions but enlivened them with imported ideas, techniques, craftsmanship and designs to provide a fusion of Islamic, Persian, Timurid and Hindu traditions. The Red Fort demonstrates the outstanding results this achieved in planning and architecture.

Criterion iii: The innovative planning arrangements and architectural style of building components and garden design developed in the Red Fort strongly influenced later buildings and gardens in Rajasthan, Delhi, Agra and further afield. The Red Fort Complex also reflects the phase of British military occupation, introducing new buildings and functions over the earlier Mughal structures.

Criterion vi: The Red Fort has been a symbol of power since the reign of Shahjahan, has witnessed the change in Indian history to British rule, and was the place where Indian independence was first celebrated, and is still celebrated today. The Red Fort Complex has thus been the setting of events critical to the shaping of regional identity, and which have had a wide impact on the geo-cultural region.

ICOMOS recommends that the State Party submit the completed and agreed Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan to the Committee for approval at its 32nd Session.



Map showing the boundaries of the nominated property



Lahauri Gate



Mughal structure



Zafar Mahal



British structure