

Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus (India)

No 945 rev

1. BASIC DATA

State Party: India
Name of property: Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus
(formerly Victoria Terminus) Station
Location: City of Mumbai, Maharashtra State
Date received: 30 January 2003

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*.

Brief description:

The Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus, formerly Victoria Terminus Station, in Mumbai, is an outstanding example of Victorian Gothic Revival architecture in India, blended with themes deriving from Indian traditional architecture. The building was designed by the British architect F.W. Stevens, and it became the symbol of Bombay as the 'Gothic City' and the major international mercantile port of India.

2. THE PROPERTY

Description

The Victoria Terminus (VT), now called Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus (CST), was built to the design of the consulting British architect, Frederick William Stevens (1848-1900). Work began in 1878 and was completed ten years later. It is in High Victorian Gothic style based on late medieval Italian models. This style was acceptable to both European and Indian taste, since it is compatible in its use of colour and ornamentation with the Mughal and Hindu architecture of the sub-continent. The skyline, turrets, pointed arches, and eccentric ground plan are close to traditional Indian palace architecture.

The VT was constructed using high level of engineering both in terms of railway engineering and civil engineering. In India it is one of the first and the best products of use of industrial revolution technology merged with revival of the Gothic Revival style. The centrally domed office structure has a 330 feet deep platform connected to a 1,200 feet long train shed, and its outline provides the skeleton plan for building. VT's dome of dovetailed ribs, built without centering, was a novel achievement of the era. The use of dome was more for aesthetics and drama rather than for use.

The interior of the building was conceived as a series of large rooms with high ceilings. It is a utilitarian building and has had various changes required by the users, not always sympathetic. Its C-shaped in plan is symmetrical on an east-west axis. All the sides of the building are given equal value in the design. It is crowned by a high central dome, which acts as the focal point. The dome is an

octagonal ribbed structure with a colossal female figure symbolizing Progress, holding a torch pointing upwards in her right hand and a spoked wheel in her left hand.

The side wings enclose the courtyard, which opens on to the street. The wings are anchored by monumental turrets at each of their four corners, which balance and frame the central dome. The façades present the appearance of well proportioned rows of windows and arches. The ornamentation in the form of statuary, bas-reliefs, and friezes is exuberant yet well controlled. The columns of the entrance gates are crowned by figures of a lion (representing Great Britain) and a tiger (representing India).

The constructional materials were selected with care. The main structure is built from a judicious blend of India sandstone and limestone, whilst high-quality Italian marble was used for the key decorative elements. The main interiors are also lavishly decorated: the ground floor of the North Wing, now as the Star Chamber, which is still the booking office, is embellished with Italian marble, polished Indian blue stone. The stone arches are covered with carved foliage and grotesques.

History

The site on which this property is situated, Bori Bunder, is of great historical importance and is associated with the origins of Bombay (now Mumbai) as a city. The city derives its name from the goddess Mumba Devi, and the earliest temple dedicated to her is believed to have stood at the site of the Victoria Terminus. The original shrine was demolished in 1317 by Mubarak Shah and reconstructed. This was demolished by the Portuguese in 1760.

The Bombay Island had formed a coastal outpost of the Hindu in Western India, but was not used for commerce. It was first passed to the Portuguese and then, in 1661, to the British. In 1667, the island was transferred to the East India Company, who was principally responsible for its commercial development. Merchants started settling here from elsewhere, and ship building industry and cotton trade prospered. The town flourished especially after the building of railway connections with the inland and the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869.

With the development of trade, the governor of Bombay planned a series of works aiming at the construction of a more representative city. This involved land reclamation and the construction of a magnificent ensemble of High Victorian public buildings along the sea front. The Victoria Terminus, the most impressive of these buildings, was named after Queen Victoria, Empress of India, on whose Silver Jubilee it was formally opened in 1887. Originally intended only to house the main station and the administrative offices of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway, a number of ancillary buildings have been added subsequently, all designed so as to harmonise with the main structure. A new station to handle main line traffic was erected in 1929. The original building is still in use to handle suburban traffic and is used by over three million commuters daily. It is also the administrative headquarters of the Central Railway.

Management regime

Legal provision:

All legal rights of the property are vested in the Ministry of Railways, Government of India.

Mumbai was the first city in India to have heritage legislation, enacted by Government Regulation in 1995 (N° 67). The CST and the Fort area, of which it is part, are protected on the basis of this legislation. There are 63 grade I buildings, which include the Terminus.

Management structure:

The property, including its moveable and immovable assets, is owned by Central Railway under the Ministry of Railways, Government of India.

A multidisciplinary committee, called Mumbai Heritage Conservation Committee (MHCC) was established to ensure protection of heritage buildings. There are 624 listed buildings in the whole city.

The administrative control and the management of this property are with the Divisional Railway Manager, Mumbai division, Central Railway. The day-to-day maintenance and protection of the building is also the responsibility of the Divisional Railway Manager.

On a regional level, the Railways are in the process of formulating a re-structuring plan regarding the zoning of the railways across the country. As a result, this would lead to decongesting and reducing the pressures on this Terminus Station, which is now over-crowded by traffic. The Mumbai Metropolitan Regional Development Authority (MMRDA) is working on the Mumbai Urban Transportation Plan, aiming at up-grading the transport network.

On the local level, there will be changes in the management system, which will have consequences on the area of the eastern water front of the city. The Terminus, which is situated in this area is in a strategic position, and will therefore also be affected by these developments.

There is a five-year management plan for the CST, which was initiated in 1997-2003 by the appointment of the Architectural Conservation Cell (ACC) as Consultants to the Central Railway for the Terminus building. The Central Railway has accepted this plan. At the moment, the second phase, 2004-2009, has been initiated involving the restoration of the Terminus station, the management of traffic around the site, tourism management, and training of personnel.

Resources:

The funding of the management of the Terminus station comes from the Indian government. The Railways have the means to set aside funds for conservation work required for the upkeep of their buildings.

Justification by the State Party (summary)

Criterion i: CST or VT when designed was the first terminus station in the subcontinent, a trendsetter, a commercial palace representing the new economic wealth of the nation. It was the symbol or signature of the city that claimed to be the jewel in the crown. ... The scale and

grandeur of this building produce a sense of wonder and awe. It is the most prominent and symbolic landmark of Mumbai. Bombay city has been described as the finest Victorian city East of the Suez. The Gothic Revival style was deliberately chosen as most suitable to express the aspirations of the wealthiest and most dynamic of Indian cities. ...

Criterion ii: CST is the physical representation par excellence of the meeting of two great cultures. The British conceptualised and planned the architecture of the city to represent dramatically the new ideas of progress and modernity. British architects worked with Indian craftsmen to include Indian architectural tradition and idioms, in the process forging a new style unique to Bombay. ...

Criterion iii: CST is one of the finest buildings in the world to have a stone dome. It is also amongst the first grand public buildings of this scale to be built in the city and the country that integrated the industrial revolution technology with a historic architectural style. It introduces the technique of dome construction, which became popular with all later public buildings in the city.

Criterion iv: It must surely stand among the half dozen greatest railway stations of the world. The railway epitomises the industrial revolution. The technological development is also highlighted in the architecture of the concourse, which covers the large uninterrupted spans of the concourse with extensive structural steel. This use of decorative ironwork and structural steel is the earliest example of industrial architecture adapted to public buildings in Mumbai.

Criterion v: The station is still very much in use as a terminus and administrative headquarters of the Central Railway, as it was planned 115 years ago. Unlike many other stations of the world that have become redundant on account of a drop in rail passengers, this station has expanded its use and is as active as ever. ...

Criterion vi: CST is a statement of national pride, a symbol of the city because of the transport and technological revolution it celebrates. The building is therefore directly associated with the ideas of Indo-British development, and has become a symbol of national pride.

3. ICOMOS EVALUATION

Actions by ICOMOS

The property was presented for inscription under the name: 'Victoria Terminus (Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus)' in 1998. An ICOMOS expert mission visited the site in 1999. ICOMOS then recommended that further consideration be deferred to allow the State Party to 'undertake a properly formulated conservation programme, to be implemented under the direction of properly qualified professionals in this specialisation field. A relevant comparative study of historic railway termini on a worldwide basis should also be carried out.'

A second ICOMOS expert mission visited the site in September 2003.

Conservation

Conservation history:

The CST station has been in constant use since its inauguration in the late 19th century. The building has been protected since 1995. Furthermore it is part of the so-called 'Fort precinct', which has been identified for protection and conservation. There is a proposal to extend the eventual World Heritage nomination with a series of other buildings in this precinct dating from the same period with the CST.

During the more than a century of utilisation, the spaces of the building have been adapted to the new requirements on an ad hoc base. Many of such changes are now considered reversible, being additional ceilings, light partition walls or balconies. A relatively small amount of these changes have caused alteration to the original structure.

State of conservation:

There has been a recent analysis of the condition of the building, which has indicated that it is structurally sound, but there are a series of problems that need to be tackled, involving maintenance and repair.

Regarding the changes that have taken place over the years, the report has classified them according to their impact and amount. It is considered feasible to revert most of the alterations back to the original condition. In a few cases, this work will require limited reconstruction. In case, such changes cannot be removed, e.g. being essential for the functioning of the station, the aim is to treat them sensitively in relation to the original context. Particular attention is proposed to be given to the public or otherwise visible areas of the building.

Management:

The State Party has made an important effort to establish a management system for the proposed property and its buffer zone, following the recommendations of 1999. Several initiatives have been taken in the whole area, which are expected to lead to some improvements. Since 1995, the area of which the Terminus station is part has been listed for protection. A part of this area is defined as the buffer zone for the nomination. There is however the project to extend this buffer zone, and to include a fairly large area, including several grade I listed buildings. Mumbai is considered to have the most advanced urban conservation policy in India.

There have been two comprehensive reports on the property, one in 1997-1998 by the Architectural Conservation Unit, the other in 2003 by The Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH). The second report has considered the larger urban context, proposing that an eventual cluster nomination be presented for World Heritage List as the area contains a large number of good-quality buildings from the same period as the Terminus station itself.

The ICOMOS mission was informed that the Railways have already commissioned the first phase of the restoration project of the Terminus, but that the contractor has no previous experience in similar building conservation work. ICOMOS considers it necessary to assure that the work is carried out by qualified firms, which was the recommendation already in 1999, and that

there should be continuity in the project management. This is all the more important considering the need to conserve and occasionally replace damaged elements of 19th-century manufacture.

The ICOMOS mission was also informed about the proposed extension of three more railway lines and a new station to be built as an extension behind the old Terminus station. The new building would have parking areas, taxi station, and other facilities. However, no information was provided regarding the height and volume of the proposed construction.

Risk analysis:

The Terminus is one of the major railway stations in the Metropolis of Mumbai, and there are some 3 to 3.5 million people using it on a daily base. In fact, from an initial 4 railway tracks, the terminus now has 6 suburban and 10 separate out-station tracks. This has led to restructuring of several areas in the surroundings, and the addition of new buildings. Nevertheless, according to recent plans, the Railways are working to decongest this terminus and to deviate some of the traffic to other stations.

The area is part of the central city area, and it is subject to huge development pressures and potential redevelopment. At the same time, it is noted that the area is legally protected and there is a large number of listed buildings. However, considering the business interests in such a central area, it is obvious that there is a continuous challenge regarding development control.

Another risk comes from intensive traffic flow and the highly polluted air in the region around the railway station. Industrial pollution in the area is reported to have been reduced due to reduction in industrial and harbour activities. Another problem is the saline air from the sea.

The management of the building has already taken steps to update fire protection, which is planned to be checked and upgraded.

Authenticity and integrity

The Terminus station has been recently analysed in detail regarding its authenticity. As a general conclusion, structurally the original building is considered to be nearly intact even though, over time, there have been numerous alterations. These have been mainly additions and adjustments to accommodate the immediate needs of the personnel working in the building, resulting in the construction of partition walls, new ceilings, the instalment of lifts, etc. According to the analysis, most of these alterations are reversible, and the present restoration project is expected to improve the legibility of the original architecture by removing the undesirable additions, and restoring the original aspect.

Regarding the context of the building, there are many changes that have taken place here as well. Further changes will certainly be forthcoming as part of the ongoing development process in this busy part of the metropolis. Nevertheless, the urban fabric of the surrounding area as a whole represents an important heritage from the late 19th and early 20th centuries, which merits protection at the highest level. Steps in this direction have already been taken, when the area was listed

for protection. The practical implementations of the consequences are still a challenge to be faced. There are also proposals for development, the impact of which is not yet to be foreseen.

As a conclusion, the Terminus building itself has maintained its authentic structural system and most of the original surfaces. The area has retained much of its integrity from the early 20th century, even though there have been changes.

Comparative evaluation

The nomination document includes a comparative study on railway architecture, and comparing particularly with St. Pancras station in London as well as with other railway stations in India. From the 1860s, and especially after the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, Bombay flourished as the main trading port with Europe on the west coast of India. It was conceived as a free trading and commercial city, a European city, not as a city under the British rule, but as a meeting place of two civilisations at an equal level. Gothic revival style came to be accepted by Europeans as well as by Indians. It is commonly recognised that the work of Sir G.G. Scott and particularly his St. Pancras station are the closest reference to the design of the Victoria Terminus in Bombay by F.W. Stevens. However, the Victoria Terminus has its own distinctive character, marked by its massive masonry dome, its exuberant Italian Gothic revival detailing in polychrome stone, decorated tile, marble and stained glass. When the Victoria Terminus was built (completed 1887), it was considered the grandest Gothic Revival building in the British Commonwealth, and it came to mark the specific character of Bombay as the ‘Gothic City’ in India.

Outstanding universal value

General statement:

The Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus, formerly Victoria Terminus Station, in Mumbai, is an outstanding example of Victorian Gothic Revival architecture in India, blended with themes deriving from Indian traditional architecture. The building is considered the most splendid expression of its period and type of construction. It was the first terminus station in India, and it was built using innovative industrial technology of high quality. It is part of the Gothic Revival fashion that distinguished the late-19th century construction of ‘Gothic Bombay’.

The development of Bombay in this period was part of the mercantile development of the 19th century, which characterized Liverpool as a major mercantile harbour in the British Commonwealth, as well as Valparaiso in Chile. In this context, Bombay is distinguished for its architectural and mercantile character, of which the Terminus Station became a symbol.

Evaluation of criteria:

It is proposed that the CST/VT would qualify for inscription under criteria ii and iv, but not under criteria i, iii, v and vi.

Criterion i: Whilst recognizing the quality of the architecture of the CST/VT, ICOMOS does not consider that this criterion is appropriate to characterise its outstanding universal value, which is more relevant under criteria ii and iv.

Criterion ii: The CST/VT exhibits an important interchange of human values related to late 19th century mercantile culture and the early industrial era. It is an exceptionally splendid example of influences from Europe, i.e. Victorian Italianate Gothic Revival architecture, and from India, reflecting the traditional forms of Hindu and Moghul buildings. The Terminus building became a symbolic monument for Bombay as a major mercantile port city on the Indian Subcontinent within the British Commonwealth.

Criterion iii: While recognizing the quality of CST/VT as an example of the early industrial period, ICOMOS believes that this aspect is better covered by criterion iv referring to the type of construction.

Criterion iv: The CST/VT is considered an outstanding example of railway architecture in the Indian subcontinent and in the British Commonwealth in general. It is characterized by its architecture, which has blended influences from European and Indian cultures. The structural and technical solutions represent some of the most advanced in the period. The building symbolizes the introduction of industrial and mercantile technologies to India.

Criterion v: While recognizing that area of the CST/VT in Bombay developed as part of a project to reclaim land from sea, the nomination is not considered to represent an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement or land-use as required by this criterion.

Criterion vi: While the CST/VT certainly is a statement of national pride and a symbol of the city, such association is not considered sufficient to justify the outstanding universal value on the basis of this criterion.

4. ICOMOS RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation for the future

Considering the architectural quality and character of the CST/VT, ICOMOS strongly recommends that restoration be undertaken by appropriately trained and qualified firms and specialists.

Taking note of the high quality of the urban fabric in the Fort Precinct, where the CST/VT is the focal point, ICOMOS stresses the importance for the State Party to make every effort to guarantee its integrity for the future.

ICOMOS welcomes the proposal to extend the buffer zone to cover the entire precinct area which in itself forms a fine example of the development in the 19th century Bombay.

Taking into account that the nomination refers to late 19th century development, when the station was inaugurated as Victoria Terminus, ICOMOS proposes that the State Party consider changing the name back to the first proposal: ‘Victoria Terminus (Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus).’

Recommendation with respect to inscription

That the property be inscribed on the World Heritage List on the basis of ***criteria ii and iv***:

Criterion ii: The Victoria Terminus of Bombay/Mumbai exhibits an important interchange of influences from Victorian Italianate Gothic Revival architecture, and from Indian traditional buildings. It became a symbol for Bombay as a major mercantile port city on the Indian Subcontinent within the British Commonwealth.

Criterion iv: The Victoria Terminus is an outstanding example of late 19th century railway architecture in the British Commonwealth, characterized by Victorian Gothic Revival and traditional Indian features, as well as its advanced structural and technical solutions.

ICOMOS, March 2004