

INDIA

Taj Mahal

II.1 Introduction

Year of Inscription 1983

Organisation Responsible for the Report

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II.2 Statement of Significance

Inscription Criteria C i

Statement of Significance

- Proposed as follows (new):
"Constructed during 1631 - 48 AD by Shah Jehan in the memory of his beloved Queen Arjumand Banu Begam, Taj Mahal, famous equally for its architecture as well as for serene aesthetic beauty of white marble, stands majestically on masonry well foundations necessitated by the close flowing river. Double bulbous dome sitting on tall drum, outwardly tilting minarets at the four corners are the architectural features best executed at Taj Mahal. Artistically laid out 'charbagh' garden in the foreground is an aesthetic departure from the early models of garden Tombs."

Status of Site Boundaries

- The demarcation line and buffer zone are adequate.
- The site boundaries should be revised, for the purpose of developing a 500m green belt around the property which extends the buffer zone.

II.3 Statement of Authenticity/Integrity

Status of Authenticity/Integrity

- Changes in authenticity/integrity.
- Tourism pressure necessitated some alteration in the originality (integrity) of the property. However, they are not of permanent nature.
- In the future: development of tourist facilities might affect the functional aspects of some of the enclosed areas or entry points.



II.4 Management

Administrative and Management Arrangements

- Legal protection considered as sufficient.
- Property management at local and national levels and the above arrangements are considered sufficient.
- Management plan exists, Xth Five Year Plan of 2002.
- To preserve the values in future: site management plan under development.

Present State of Conservation

- Successive intervention since 1997.
- Changes since inscription: property in good state of conservation: minor defects addressed, wear and tear and degradations from visitors.

Staffing and Training Needs

- Staff total number: 283. Staff is insufficient to monitor the site. Increased manpower and monitoring instruments needed for tourism flow control.
- The staff need training in computer, visitors management, lime preparation, GIS, digital surveying and ground penetrating radar system.

Financial Situation

- Sources of funds from Central Government.
- Funding is considered as insufficient.
- * International Assistance: * (i) from WHF, US\$17,865, emergency assistance to monitor pollution problems, * (ii) from WHF, US\$20,788, technical co-operation, Konarak, Taj Mahal.

Access to IT

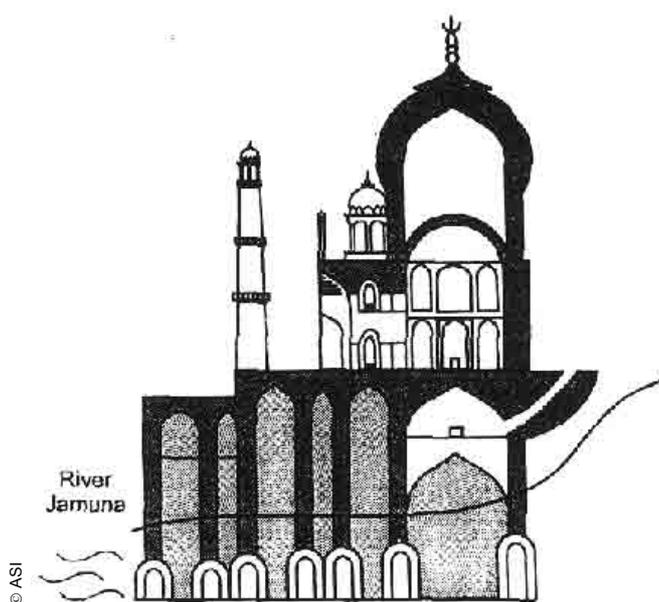
- No computers, nor email or Internet access.
- No use of GIS.

Visitor Management

- 2001: 2.226,725 visitors. Table of tourism income.

"The site boundaries should be revised, for the purpose of developing a 500m green belt around the property which extends the buffer zone."

- Various facilities exist but reduced to basic services.
- Needed facilities: interpretation orientation centre, information kiosks, toilet blocks, water points, rest areas, ramps, library, research centre, security equipment, etc.
- No existing public use plan, a site management plan is needed.
- Communication WH values through: heritage days and weeks, other national days, publications and Internet.
- Educational programmes: school students are occasionally invited and get involved in educational and creative activities.
- Role of the inscription into the List of World Heritage: makes the site a place of special importance, attracts tourists & researchers.



Section of Taj Mahal with well foundations

II.5 Factors Affecting the Property

Threats and Risks

- Development pressures: rising from population, vehicles, tourism based economy, inadequate and bad infrastructure, increase in hotel facilities, increase of small-scale industries.
- Environmental pressures: impact of small industries, petrol pollution, polluted river, high air pollution rate.
- Natural disasters and preparedness: flood, seismic shocks.
- Tourist/visitor pressures: effect on floors and vandalism.

Counteractive Plans

- No emergency plan.

- Actions: security measures.
- Improvements needed: sophisticated systems of screening visitors and surveillance.
- Impacts of factors are increasing.
- Measures adopted or planned: green belts around monuments, heritage zones, controlled development of zones in proximity of the site.

II.6 Monitoring

Monitoring Arrangements

- Reporting on structures supported by photo-documentation and air quality monitoring.
- Foreseen improvements: no details.

Monitoring Indicators

- Photo recording and systematic record archiving.
- Telltale glasses, fixed, but no formal indicators yet.

II.7 Conclusions and Recommended Actions

Conclusions and Proposed Actions

- Management and factors affecting property: legal arrangements could be effective if properly implemented; repairs carried-out, manpower increase necessary to monitor and control visitors and a visitor management plan is urgently needed.
- Future actions: site management plan for proper maintenance, monitoring and visitor facilitation.

* State of Conservation Reports

1997 Ext Bureau, WHC-97/CONF.207//2 - Serious air pollution surrounding led deterioration of the white marble, stone inlays and sandstone of the three sites. The ASI and Government have systematically cleaned the surfaces, replaced deteriorated panels, and taken measures to reduce air pollution by imposing restrictions on the industries. The planned construction of a new industrial complex recently prevented. However, a comprehensive assessment of the origin and impact of pollution is necessary. A French private enterprise will provide US \$ 236,735, to fund a three-year research project for conservation of Taj Mahal and monuments at Agra Fort and establish a conservation laboratory in Agra Fort. This will fund UNESCO participation in the TA-2474, funded by the Asian Development Bank.

"The Bureau takes note of information on the extra budgetary support for conservation and enhancement of the management of these three sites. It requests the authorities to keep the Secretariat informed on progress of the research project, the establishment of the conservation laboratory, and of the TA-2474."