

Planning and Management of Sustainable Tourism Spaces

Assignment 8

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Heritage Site Chosen: Lahore Fort (Shahi Qila)

1. Different Values/Significance of the Site

Lahore Fort, located in the heart of Lahore, Pakistan, is one of the most prominent Mughal heritage sites and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Its cultural value is reflected in its architecture, which showcases Mughal artistry, including Sheesh Mahal, Alamgiri Gate, and Naulakha Pavilion. Historically, it served as the royal residence of several Mughal emperors, demonstrating political and military importance. Socially, it remains a symbol of local identity, pride, and cultural continuity. Economically, the site supports tourism and contributes to local livelihoods through guides, vendors, and heritage-related activities.

2. Threats the Site Faces

The Lahore Fort faces several threats that endanger its long-term preservation. Environmental threats include air pollution, acid rain, and humidity that weaken the stonework and frescoes. Human-induced threats include overcrowding, vandalism, and unregulated commercial activities near the site. Structural decay caused by aging materials, lack of proper maintenance, and previous restoration mistakes also contribute to deterioration. Urban encroachment and vibrations from traffic further threaten the site's integrity.

3. Proposed Adaptive Re-use

The proposed adaptive re-use for Lahore Fort is the establishment of a "Mughal Cultural Interpretation Center." This center would use restored sections of the fort to host digital exhibitions, guided VR tours, craft workshops, and educational programs. The purpose is to enhance visitor experience while using modern technology to interpret the site's history.

4. How the Re-use Maintains its Values

The adaptive re-use maintains cultural value by preserving original architecture and presenting it through non-invasive digital methods. Historical value is preserved by ensuring that no structural modifications compromise authenticity. Social value is strengthened because the site becomes a space for learning, cultural events, and community engagement. Economic value is ensured by increasing sustainable tourism flow without causing overcrowding or physical harm to the site.

5. Benefits to the Local Community

The proposed re-use can benefit the local community in several ways. It can generate employment in tourism services, heritage management, and cultural education. Local artisans can profit from craft workshops and souvenir markets linked to the interpretation center. Increased tourism can boost nearby businesses, including food stalls, shops, and transport services. Educational programs will help students and researchers learn about Mughal heritage. Moreover, sustainable management ensures that the site remains an asset for future generations.

References:

UNESCO World Heritage Centre. (n.d.). Lahore Fort.
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