



School of Planning of Architecture, Vijayawada

(An institution of National Importance under the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Govt. of India)
Survey No.4/4, ITI Road, Vijayawada-520008, Andhra Pradesh, India.

DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE

STUDIO PROGRAM AND DESIGN BRIEF			
Course	MACO 121 Conservation Studio-II	Internal assessment	500
Class	M.Arch (AC) 1 st Year 2 nd Semester	External assessment	500
Contact hours	15	Total marks	1000
Attendance	75%	Passing marks	
Faculty: Ar. Sanjay Bhandari (Studio Coordinator), Ar. Sushant Bharti (VF), Ar. Williams (VF)			

Reviving the Legacy: Conservation of Gordon House (Attara Kacheri) and Gordon Park, Mysuru

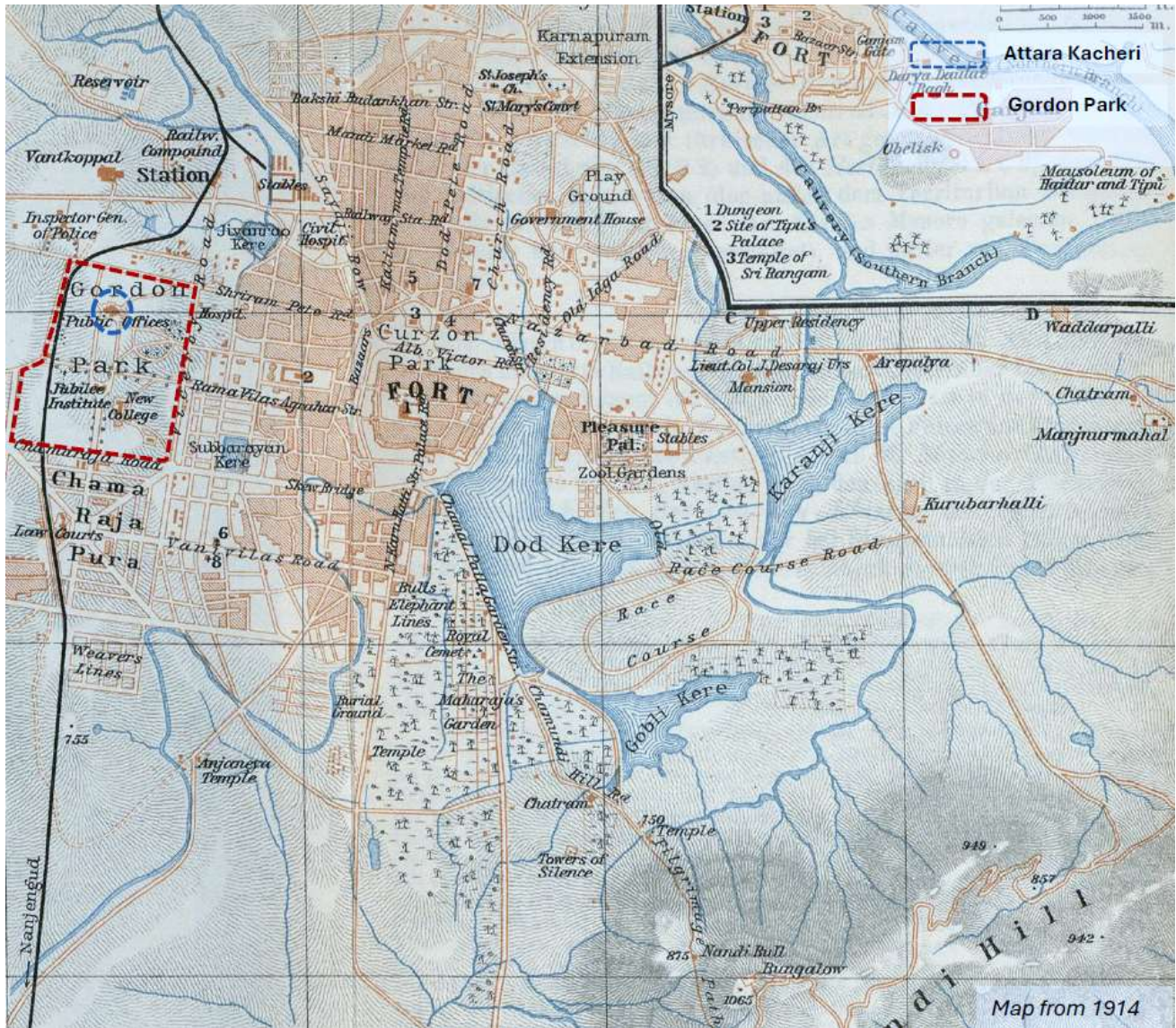
Studio Project Summary-

The Attara Kacheri, a 128-year-old heritage site located on Krishnaraja Boulevard in Mysuru, stands as a testament to the colonial-era administrative architecture and socio-political history of the region. Built in 1895 during the reign of Maharaja Chamaraja Wadiyar X, the complex served as the administrative hub for the district, playing a pivotal role in governance and decision-making processes that shaped the socio-political landscape of Mysore. The site originally included Gordon Park, a sprawling 92-acre open space named after Sir James Davidson Gordon, the British administrator who served as the guardian of Maharaja Jayachamaraja Wadiyar. However, urban transformation and changes in land use over the years have significantly reduced the park to a mere 2 acres, with much of it converted into playgrounds and other university-related facilities. The Attara Kacheri building, covering an area of 29,588 square feet, is a striking example of colonial architecture with a frontage of approximately 300 feet. The structure features two wings with 27 spacious rooms and a verandah adorned with arches of varying shapes—round-headed and flat-segmented—each detailed with floral keystones and Corinthian pilasters. These architectural features reflect the stylistic sensibilities of the late 19th century, making the building an essential part of Mysuru's architectural heritage.

Over the years, the structural integrity of the Attara Kacheri complex has deteriorated, with visible signs of material degradation and weathering. The reduction in surrounding open spaces and the encroachment of newer constructions have further compromised the site's historical and cultural significance. An urgent and detailed structural condition assessment, along with material characterization of key components, is required to address these issues and prevent further damage.

Studio Objectives:

The studio aims to undertake a comprehensive conservation study and formulate a strategic intervention plan to revive the glory of the Attara Kacheri complex while retaining its historical integrity. The key objectives of the studio include:



- **Architectural Documentation:**
 - Detailed documentation of the building, its spatial configuration, architectural features, and material systems.
 - Mapping of historical layers and changes in land use patterns over time.
- **Structural and Material Analysis:**
 - Assessment of the building's structural condition and component-level material characterization.
 - Identification of patterns of decay and factors contributing to deterioration.
- **Contextual Analysis:**
 - Study of the urban context, including the surrounding garden area, historical Gordon Park, and adjacent developments.
 - Evaluation of the socio-cultural and political significance of the site within Mysuru's heritage landscape.
- **Conservation Strategies:**
 - Formulation of detailed conservation proposals, including restoration, adaptive reuse, and revitalization of the surrounding open spaces.

- Recommendations for integrating urban conservation into planning and policy frameworks.
- Development of community-centric strategies to reconnect the site with the people of Mysuru.

The conservation of the Attara Kacheri complex seeks to revive its historic grandeur and ensure its continued relevance as a symbol of Mysuru's rich heritage. The project envisions the restoration of the complex as a cultural landmark, preserving its architectural, historical, and socio-political values for future generations. This studio project advocates for sensitive interventions that respect the site's historical integrity while addressing contemporary needs, making a strong case for the conservation and revitalization of one of Mysuru's most iconic heritage sites.

Schedule:

Archival Research: Pre-Site Visit (09/01/2025 - 07/02/2025)

- **Historical & Archival Research:**
 - Study of the **Attara Kacheri Complex** and its evolution, including its architectural style, historical significance, and its role in the administrative history of Mysuru.
 - Comparative analysis with other significant British-era administrative complexes in India to understand regional architectural characteristics and influences.
 - Collection of historical documents, books, maps, photographs, and other secondary sources related to the complex.
- **Understanding Urban Context:**
 - Analysis of the urban setting of the Attara Kacheri complex within Mysuru city, focusing on its spatial and functional integration with the surrounding garden area and its relationship with other heritage sites.
 - Study of the **architectural features**, including the octagonal dome, Corinthian pilasters, and verandahs, to identify unique design elements.
- **Stakeholder Identification:**
 - Identification of stakeholders, including government departments, local heritage experts, and conservation professionals, relevant to the Attara Kacheri complex.
- **Policy and Plan Review:**
 - Critique of existing **Master Plans, Heritage Regulations**, and conservation policies in Mysuru.
 - Preliminary assessment of government initiatives and programs related to heritage management in the city.
- **Preliminary Focus Area Identification:**
 - Identification of tangible and intangible heritage elements within the **Attara Kacheri complex and associated garden area**.
 - Design of inventory formats for primary surveys and data collection.
 - Preparation of base maps and activity schedules for the site visit.
 - Compilation of preliminary lists of archival material and documentation needs.

Review I (03/02/2025): Presentation of Historical Evolution, Base Map & Preliminary Focus Areas- 100 Marks

Site Visit (08/02/2025 - 20/02/2025)

- **Preliminary Survey:**

- Site visits to the **Attara Kacheri complex**, associated garden area, and nearby urban spaces.
- Stakeholder meetings and participatory exercises to identify and map cultural and natural heritage resources. Making Site work methodology and Plan for documentation.
- **Primary Surveys:**
 - **Detailed site documentation**, including:
 - Natural heritage systems and landscape features of the garden area.
 - Urban systems and circulation patterns within and around the complex.
 - Land-use patterns, built heritage typologies, and architectural analysis of the complex.
 - Detailed study of **construction systems, materials, and techniques**, including the condition assessment of the historic building stock.
 - Documentation of intangible heritage, including associated administrative and cultural practices.
 - Inventory of **historic elements** such as the octagonal dome, finial, Corinthian pilasters, and verandahs.
 - Mapping of **patterns of transformation** and their socio-economic and planning drivers.
- **Community Interaction:**
 - Surveys and interviews to understand the **perceptions, aspirations, and needs of stakeholders**, including the community, administrators, and conservation experts.

Review II (03/03/2025): Presentation of Site Studies, Surveys, and Preliminary Analysis – 200 marks

Diagnosis: Post-Site Visit (21/02/2025 - 31/03/2025)

- **Analysis of Documentation and Studies:**
 - Compilation and collation of data from primary and secondary sources.
 - Assessment of the values and significance of the Attara Kacheri complex, including its **architectural, historical, and cultural importance**.
- **Issues and Priorities Identification:**
 - Identification of threats to the conservation of the complex, including inappropriate urban transformation, lack of maintenance, and community disconnect.
 - Analysis of socio-economic trends, administrative frameworks, and policy gaps impacting the complex.

Review III (17/03/2025): Presentation of Issues, Values, and Action Plan- 50 Marks

- **Draft Strategies and Proposals:**
 - Development of strategies to integrate necessary urban conservation measures into Mysuru's planning framework, including updates to the **Master Plan and heritage byelaws**.
 - Formulation of policies for heritage management, sustainable reuse, and revitalization of the complex.
 - Proposals for **disaster management, cultural tourism**, and improved infrastructure while retaining the historic character.

Review IV (31/03/2025): Preliminary Strategies and Conservation Approach- 50 Marks

Conservation Proposals: Final Phase (25/03/2025 - 23/04/2025)

- **Detailed Conservation Projects:**
 - **Restoration and Adaptive Reuse:**
 - Restoration of architectural features, including the dome, pilasters, and verandahs.
 - Proposals for adaptive reuse of spaces within the Attara Kacheri complex.
 - **Revitalization of the Garden Area:**
 - Landscape restoration and integration with the urban environment to enhance public use and heritage appreciation.
 - **New Design Interventions:**
 - Contextual infill design and retrofitting of infrastructure to improve functionality while preserving historic integrity.
 - **Community-Centric Development:**
 - Initiatives to engage stakeholders in the long-term conservation and management of the site.
- **Final Report and Presentation:**
 - Comprehensive documentation of the project, including **architectural analysis, conservation strategies, and implementation plans.**

Review V (21/04/2025): Final Conservation Proposals and Project Submission for Internal Assessment- 100 marks