III. HERITAGE CONSERVATION
THE CAPE COAST STANDARD FOR HERITAGE CONSERVATION

Heritage Conservation is a process of identification, recordation, analysis and protection of historic and cultural resources. The protection of one’s environment, both built and natural, is of the greatest importance. Conservation of heritage resources brings about wiser decisions concerning development and one’s personal and collective quality of life. Authenticity is paramount in conservation efforts and the authentic representation of Cape Coast’s history should be everyone’s goal. This section addresses existing conditions, future directions and potential opportunities represented in the historic town center of Cape Coast.

The built environment of the historic district of Cape Coast accommodates an intricate combination of social and cultural traditions, sites, activities and practices that is unique to Cape Coast. Proposed changes in the physical form and infrastructure of the historic district should not disturb or displace these practices or activities. Those that negatively impact the historic or natural environment or public health conditions should be examined carefully.

Cape Coast represents layers of history. Each layer is significant. Vernacular buildings and traditional activities are as important in the story of Cape Coast as its colonial past of slave trade. Each layer prior to the European arrival, during colonization and after independence contains resources that should be recognized and protected. Only after justification should alteration be considered.

The relationship of new experiences for cultural, heritage and ecotourists to the physical improvements made in Cape Coast should be driven by local cultural experiences, not the expectations of non-local persons. The existing cultural patterns of Cape Coast are historic resources worthy of protection in and of themselves.

Heritage conservation involves authenticity. The authentic lessons in Cape Coast, as represented in the physical environment, should be explained as part of visitor orientation.
THE ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE

The historic district of Cape Coast represents and accommodates the cultural heritage of Cape Coast in all its manifestations, and enables its long and honorable history to be encountered and interpreted.

The architectural heritage is rich and diverse, ranging from the national monumentsó Cape Coast and Elmina Castles and the fortsó that are World Heritage properties, to substantial private houses, civic and religious buildings, extensive neighborhoods of traditional vernacular housing and structures, such as Posuban shrines, that embody the cultural traditions of the citizens and public open spaces, large and small, that are treasured and well used. Together with the distinctive morphology of Cape Coast, of densely packed buildings on the slopes of, around, and between the many low, steep sided hills (at least a dozen hills in the historic district alone) it gives the city its unique character.

The heritage is well documented, and the task of further surveying and documenting is continuing. A start has been made on researching its architectural history. The Geographic Information System (GIS) series of maps and the Cape Coast cultural resources inventory initiated by US/ICOMOS records this documentation, and forms an invaluable resource for those who are responsible for the conservation of the architectural heritage and for the continuing development of the historic district and municipality.

THE PRESENT CONDITION

The present conditions of the buildings and open spaces that constitute the built environment of the historic district, does give cause for concern. The economic development of the town has not kept pace with demographic expansion during the past fifty years, with the result that most of the buildings and public open spaces have not been properly maintained, allowing overcrowding and lack of maintenance to place intolerable pressures on the fabric of the older buildings. The level of redevelopment of the downtown area has been limited by the lack of economic development, and this has to some extent protected the historic environment. The dilapidated condition of much of the property also reflects the lack of economic development.

A few key buildings are well maintained and in good structural order. The Castle is a model of effective intervention to restore a dilapidated and underused public building to its former pre-eminence in the town. Structurally sound and water tight, and in good decorative order, the building provides the local community and visitors with a range of cultural, educational and social amenities. On a smaller scale, St. Mary’s Lodge on Royal Lane, and Heritage House (formerly Government House) have benefited from similar intervention. Most of the
Much of the demolition in the historic centre of town is caused by neglect and lack of maintenance.

churches in the historic district, the banks and major commercial buildings are also well maintained in good order, as are a few, very few, of the private houses.

Dawson Hill and Ntsin/Idan area are two large densely populated areas of vernacular housing, predominantly built of coursed monolithic earth or sundried brick construction. Between them, they contribute a great deal to the image of Cape Coast that residents and visitors alike retain in their memory. But their locations on sloping ground with inadequate foundations, and general lack of maintenance, makes them extremely vulnerable to strong winds and heavy rain, both of which are characteristic of the Cape Coast climate. Most parts of the historic district contain derelict, and abandoned buildings, many of them prominently visible on the hills of the city.

Apart from the national monuments in state ownership, which are under the care of the Monuments Division of the Ghana Museums and Monuments Board (GMMB), there is currently no statutory protection of the architectural heritage of Cape Coast.

The Town and Country Planning Department is responsible, at the regional level, for the preparation of structure plans for development at regional and district levels and for the development control process. The district plan for Cape Coast does contain several small conservation areas in the historic district but lacks specific directions for further protection.

The Cape Coast Municipal Assembly (CCMA) is responsible for the issuing of development and building permits and the monitoring of the building process, as well as for the provision and maintenance of the physical infrastructure of drainage and sanitation. They are also responsible for the maintenance and cleaning of roads, public open spaces, and for garbage collection.

The CCMA is also empowered to institute local legislation to protect and to define conservation areas, to control development in those areas and to administer the control process, however, it has not yet done so.

**Threats**

The built environment of the historic district is continually under threat. Environmental degradation by erosion of sloping land, and undermining of foundations by heavy rain, damage to roofs and windows, by wind, heavy wear and tear on walls and ground surfaces from pedestrians and vehicles, and by insect and vegetation attack, is a continuing hazard to the fragile earth buildings that constitute the bulk of the building stock.
Economic development may lead to the conversion of old buildings to inappropriate new uses and the introduction of building services and equipment that may reduce the structural integrity and stability of walls and upper floors. Also proposals may be made for the demolition or extension of historic buildings, or their replacement by intrusive new buildings alien in character and materials.

The complexities of property ownership resulting from the traditional Akan system of matri-lineal inheritance, especially with regard to residential buildings, inhibits decision making about repair, maintenance, alteration or disposal of buildings, and discourages investment in existing buildings.

Absence of monitoring and control of building activity by the CCMA may lead to construction taking place where it should have been prohibited (e.g. the construction of a commercial facility on top of Fort Victoria, a national monument).

**OPportunities**

Under-used buildings in public ownership may be acquired for restoration and adaptation to appropriate new uses to demonstrate the potential of architectural conservation programs for bringing old buildings back to life, and to regenerate the local economy. For example, Gothic House, overlooking Victoria Park, formerly district headquarters for several government departments, could become, according to different proposals, a new palace for the Omanhen or a 30-bedroom heritage guest house.

The history of several other buildings, especially family houses, and their associations with important personalities in Ghanaian history (e.g. St. Mary’s Lodge, the Cape Coast home of Prince Owusu Ansa) can be published and interpreted for visitors. Monuments and memorial tablets in the historic churches can become fascinating objects of interest to visitors, especially to Europeans and Americans of Ghanaian descent, and to Ghanaians resident overseas. Research into the architectural history of the older buildings should be pursued systematically.

Owners of properties adjacent to buildings recently restored and put in good order, may be encouraged to repair, improve or redecorate their own properties, and so extend the benefits of conservation to whole groups of buildings (e.g. the line of old houses including the historic Kofi Hill House, along Garden Street, overlooking the Ato Austin Memorial Garden). The urban landscape will then be transformed by the conservation of contiguous groups of buildings.
The building activities generated by such a program will lead to the acquisition and application of specialist artisan and construction skills in masonry, carpentry/joining, metal work, etc. and the consequent regeneration of the local economy.

Overseas investors (e.g. Ghanaians resident overseas, African-Americans, Caribbean and European-Africans) will be encouraged to invest in the growing tourism economy of Cape Coast. Such investment, and the revenues derived from the increasing number of in-country tourists and overseas visitors attracted by Ghana’s cultural heritage, will bring increasing economic benefits to Cape Coast.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In 1995, proposals were submitted to the Government of Ghana (Hyland: The Conservation of the Ghana’s Architectural Heritage) for the protection of the built heritage through legislation and statutory provision for the listing of historic buildings and sites and the designation of conservation areas.

These proposals called for the identification by the Government for architectural and urban conservation as a priority for national development, requiring institutional support, specialist training, technical assistance and funding for major projects (Hyland 1995:27). These proposals still hold good. The concept of historic preservation is still new in Ghana, and without the full visible support and commitment of the central Government and a sustained program of public education and consultation, local programs of historic preservation are unlikely to win the confidence of the local community.

Heritage legislation should be put in place by CCMA to protect the historic districts and promote its conservation. Proposals for such legislation are set out below.

An agency should be established to promote the rehabilitation and repair of old buildings, as a service to homeowners. Proposals for such an agency are set out below. There should be the establishment of a Building Conservation Craft-Skills Training Center, to train masons, carpenters/joiners, metalworkers, etc., in building conservation.

Recommendations regarding survey activities for heritage resource preservation:
1. Survey all buildings at the reconnaissance level within the proposed historic district.
2. Develop a systematic program of research into architectural history of selected key buildings in historical districts: architectural research in British colonial and church archives will be necessary.
3. An intensive level survey should be undertaken on those buildings that are 50 years or older or of significant local importance.

4. The storage and use of the inventory (and its ongoing update) should be a co-operative venture of the GMMB, the University of Cape Coast, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, GHCT, Ministry of Culture, UNDP/Town and Country Planning.

5. Survey interior blocks of historic core.

6. Commence Phase II: detailed/intensive level to include review for accuracy.

7. Storage and use of the inventory and periodic updates should be done at one location (University of Virginia, for now) and shared with participating partners using WWW technology. Care should be taken with multiple locations to make sure all information is updated and distributed promptly.

8. Training programs in schools for preservation-based traditional building skills should be developed with the Tour Guides Association of Ghana (TORGAG), the Department of Geography and Tourism of the University of Cape Coast, with the technical advisory services of the Department of Architecture, UST Kumasi.
COMMUNITY EDUCATION

One cannot underscore strongly enough the role of community education in the protection of historic resources. No preservation effort can be successful unless the residents, decision makers, elected officials, merchants and visitors understand the role that historic resource identification and protection can play in telling the story of a community.

Currently there are very successful activities beginning in Cape Coast regarding education. The desires of the sanitation officer and the program to begin to change the public image regarding solid waste and sewerage should complement the equally important message about the conservation of Cape Coast community character.

The following should serve as points of departure for future education efforts:
1. The recent production of the community development theatre ‘concert party’ by the CIL-TAD/AGORO Theatre Company is a superb way to influence large numbers of people in an extremely innovative fashion. This initiative is the kind of education opportunity that should continue for years to come.

In addition to the AGORO technique, other options like travelling puppet shows and humorous programs and productions in the schools and in the churches should be explored.

2. A well designed radio program with ongoing episodes and recurring characters would have a far reaching impact in communicating the goals of heritage preservation efforts.

3. A competition or contest to submit examples of heritage conservation efforts for recognition and awards might begin a ‘domino effect’ of privately initiated efforts.

4. The school systems should begin class projects of writing local history or a ‘family treasure’ research program that would illuminate neighborhood resources and community history. Awards could be provided through teachers for the best work or most interesting facts uncovered.

5. A program of education on tourism might begin to open the eyes of the public regarding the value and economic impact of tourism hospitality.

6. A revitalization of Asafo companies and their involvement, especially the youth, in maintenance of the resources associated with their company’s district should be considered.
7. Always use bold, easy to understand graphics to illustrate the process of heritage preservation.

8. Include heritage protection in environmental quality, health care, and birth control education efforts. Use EVERY media format available.

9. Educate the tourist, perhaps at the airport, to relate better to the cultural traditions of Ghana. This would improve the community’s reaction to the tourism initiatives and improve the tourist’s experience. Areas to include are:
   - don’t give money to children, it undermines economic development and school age discipline,
   - don’t take photographs of people without asking them first,
   - always be friendly, smile and speak to people,
   - be careful when taking photographs of religious and traditional areas.

10. A strong and well trained tour guiding core, members drawn from the community, and undergoing regular in-service and upgrading courses, can help enhance community education and pride.
HERITAGE LEGISLATION

The improvement being made in Cape Coast by the Project regarding the documentation of cultural resources is significant. The identified resources must be protected in perpetuity. Good intentions alone will not ensure protection of resources that are identified and restored. A regulatory (legal) framework for protection is necessary. Local heritage legislation for designating resources and providing an approval process for proposed changes is the primary tool throughout the world for protecting privately owned property. This will be the first time in Ghana that this legislation has been adopted. It will be significant that it occurs in Cape Coast. Cape Coast has been a national leader in education, now the community will have a chance to be an educator of communities by adopting the first local protective law for heritage legislation in the nation.

1. **What is Heritage Legislation?**

The development and adoption of a set of enforceable laws and regulations that control the treatment of designated historic, prehistoric sites, buildings, monuments, shrines, natural areas or districts for the purpose of preserving the nation’s heritage will ensure that the changes made to historic properties are compatible, appropriate and will last for generations to come.

This legislation is fully authorized in existing Ghanaian law. A local historic district acts as an ‘overlay’ designation. That is, no existing land use classifications need to change because the new historic district is an additional form of protection to those already in place.

A property owner and/or resident within the historic district will seek approval from a committee of peers (local Cape Coast residents) to make material changes to property. The approval comes in the form of a permit to proceed with proposed changes. The committee, usually called a ‘commission,’ bases its decisions on publicly agreed upon standards and guidelines. The commission works best when staffed by a preservation professional or municipal planner who will manage day to day activities such as:

1. Assisting property owners with applications for approval from the commission to make changes to property.
2. Scheduling and helping to run meetings of the commission.
3. Providing training and education for residents, commission members and elected officials.
### Conservation Legislation Does: vs. Does Not:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Does:</th>
<th>Does Not:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Provide a municipal policy for the protection of historic properties.</td>
<td>- Prevent new construction within historic areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Establish an objective and fair process for designating historic properties.</td>
<td>- Require that historic properties be opened for tours.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Protect the integrity of designated historic properties with a design review requirement, while allowing for and encouraging change.</td>
<td>- Restrict the sale of property.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Authorize design guidelines for new development within historic districts to ensure that it is not destructive to the area's historic character.</td>
<td>- Require improvements, changes or alterations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Stabilize declining neighborhoods and protect and enhance property values.</td>
<td>- Require approval of interior changes or alterations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Require approval for ordinary repair or maintenance.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2. Typical Components of Local Legislation

#### A. Statement of Purpose
This section states that the legislation is designed to ensure a high level of economic development, health, safety and the quality of life for the general public. The heritage of Cape Coast must be protected, enhanced and perpetuated for this generation and generations to come.

#### B. Types of Structures and Areas Protected
Preservation ordinances can be tailored to fit the needs of every community with historic neighborhoods and buildings. Some towns with only a few historic houses may pass an ordinance that designates all of them at the same time. Other larger cites, such as Cape Coast with historic houses, neighborhoods and business districts may simply establish a set of standards for designation and a process for systematically considering and desig-
nating landmarks and districts.

1) Designations: The designation of Cape Coast Historic District should be recom-
mended by the commission, planners, citizens or governmental units and af-
irmed by the municipal assembly. The designation decree should list the prop-
ties being designated and describe the legal boundaries of the area.

2) Landmarks: The designation of individual properties should be done in the same
way as districts. [Note: An individual property is a district with only one re-
source in it.]

C. Legal Basis
See legal study by Johanes Vegba, (US/ICOMOS, 1999)

D. Basic Components of a Preservation Ordinance
The preservation ordinance for Cape Coast should contain the following ten component
parts:
1. Purpose of the ordinance;
2. Statement of powers and authorities;
3. Creation of a historic preservation commission;
4. Criteria for designation of landmarks and/or historic districts;
5. Procedures and criteria for nomination and designation of landmarks;
6. Types of actions that are reviewable by the preservation commission and the legal
effect of the review;
7. Criteria applied by the commission to the action reviewed;
8. Consideration of the economic effect of designation or review of an action;
9. Procedures for appeals from a preservation commission decision; and
10. Fines and penalties for violation of ordinance provisions.

E. Establishment of a Commission
1) Powers and Authority granted to Commissions:
   1. The power to recommend designations to the governing body.
   2. The power to conduct studies and investigations.
   3. The power to grant or deny permits for work within and to designated districts
      and landmarks.
   4. The power to issue stop work orders for activities that have not been permitted or
      for activities which do not conform to approved plans.
   5. The power to employ staff or consultants to assist in the preparation of reports,
      review of projects and/or education of the public.
2) Creation of Review and Approval Body (Commission):
   a) The commission should be called the Cape Coast Historic Preservation Review
      Commission (CCHPRC). It should be part of the planning functions of the Cape
      Coast municipal and/or district government.
   b) The number and professional discipline of commission members, their length of
      service on the commission and how appointments are made should be clearly
      spelled out.

3) Standards of Review:
The standard of review is the principle upon which all decisions of the commission
should be based. It might read like this:
   *No permit shall be granted for work within the historic district or to a historic
   landmark until the commission has determined that the change shall not have an
   adverse impact on the cultural, historic, prehistoric, architectural, or aesthetic
   characteristics of the designated district or landmark.*

3. Criteria for Designation of Landmarks and Historic Districts

A. Nomination and Designation
   Designation: Designation of historic properties or historic districts adopted by local gov-
   erning bodies shall be subject to the following requirements:
   1) Any ordinance designating any property as historic property or any district as an his-
      toric district shall require that the designated property or district be shown on the of-
      ficial zoning map of the county or municipality adopting such ordinance or, in the
      absence of an official zoning map, that it be shown on a map of the county or munici-
      pality adopting such ordinance and kept by the county or municipality as a public
      record to provide notice of such designation in addition to other notice requirements
      specified;
   2) The designation of a preservation district shall describe each property to be desig-
      nated, shall set forth the name or names of the owner or owners of the property, and
      shall include a description of the boundaries of the preservation district;
   3) The board or the local governing body shall hold a public hearing on the proposed
      ordinance. Notice of the hearing shall be published in the principal newspaper of
      general circulation within the municipality or county in which the preservation dis-
      trict is located;
   4) The local governing body shall adopt the ordinance for designation of a preservation
      district as prepared, adopt the ordinance with any amendments it deems necessary, or
      reject the proposal.
B. Reviewable Actions

Areas that are preservation district designations shall be subject to the following requirements:

1) A preservation district management plan shall be developed for each designation of a preservation district under this article and shall address issues pertaining to the identification, protection, and perpetuation of the resources that caused the area to be a preservation district designation;

2) The preservation district management plan shall be compatible with any comprehensive plans, master plans, or documents related to community development, natural systems, or land management in the jurisdiction where the preservation district is located. To the extent possible, the preservation district management plan shall reference in all relevant documents; and

3) The preservation district management plan shall be circulated for comments from local governmental units, state and federal agencies, nonprofit organizations and citizens, as appropriate, and shall be updated periodically.

C. Criteria for Review

1) Guidelines for New Buildings (infill construction)

Where buildings have already been demolished and open space remains, that open space should be maintained until such time as a new building is proposed (if that is desired). At that time the new building guidelines should be put into effect.

New structures within the Cape Coast Historic District should attempt to match in size and configuration the most common buildings surrounding them. The surrounding buildings should be analyzed and should relate in the four following areas:

1) Footprint, Building Line and Orientation - buildings cover a certain amount of land on a particular parcel. This is known as the footprint and the building line. The entrance and primary facade of that footprint is either to the road, to a lane or toward open space - that is the building's orientation.

2) Envelope and Skin - buildings and occupy certain amount of space in the environment, usually defined by height, distance from its neighbors and by projections and indentations. It creates a defined volume in the environment. This is the building envelope. That volumetric envelope is then somehow covered with a material (brick, plaster, wood, stone, cement, etc.) and generally of specified colors - the skin. New buildings should attempt to conform to the volumetric proportions and exterior covering of their neighbors.

3) Roof Shape, Size and Material - perhaps one of the most unifying characteristics of any historic district is the shape of the roofs. One only need look down upon a
city to see the predominant shape of roofs. The roof is defined by size, pitch and material. The roof of any new building should conform to the characteristics of the roofs around them.

4) Openings - all buildings have openings usually expressed as doors and windows. These are placed at regular intervals in the facade and are generally of similar size. New buildings should also have openings that replicate the size, shape and regularity of the openings in the surrounding buildings.

i Breaking the Rules
In any community there are buildings of monumental importance. These are usually churches and other religious buildings, schools, government buildings and banks. They are often located on the corners of streets, a prominent hill or an important site. One should carefully consider the retention of all of these buildings. The new buildings that are of monumental importance can follow the same design features of the other monumental structures, not necessarily of its neighbors. This is the only case where these new construction guidelines should vary from the four areas listed previously.

2) Guidelines for Rehabilitation of Existing Structures
1) The use of a building should be compatible with the structural integrity and architectural significance of that structure.
2) Skilled examples of craftsmanship, design, details or elements should be retained when improvements are made.
3) Deteriorated features should be repaired rather than replaced. When they cannot be repaired they should be replaced with new material of similar physical characteristics and of similar workmanship.
4) New additions to buildings should whisper they are new, rather than shout. They should most often be placed on non-primary facades and should follow the traditions of making additions to buildings as they have occurred throughout history.
5) Any changes to the buildings that are needed to improve sanitary conditions, retrofitting for water, electricity, air conditioning, or vehicles should be done as inconspicuously as possible. Ideally they should be placed on non-primary facades and should be screened from public view.
6) Character defining features such as roof shape, windows and doors, exterior materials, distance from the road or projections, such as porches, towers, arches, double portals, balconies, shutters or appurtenant features should be retained in the rehabilitation project.
7) Rehabilitation work should always take into account archaeological significance of sites. Non-disturbed soil should not be disturbed. Attempts should be made to

Concrete blocks are best used for new construction, not for the repair of traditional buildings
use existing foundations and utility trenches whenever possible. Where development makes it necessary to disturb previously undisturbed soil, an archaeological investigation should be undertaken.

3) Guidelines for Signs
Public signs and informational systems are critical to the efficient flow of vehicles, pedestrians and tourists in the Cape Coast historic district. People need to know what destinations are available, the best way to proceed to their chosen destination and safety regulations. Improved informational signs and traffic control devices must strive for simplicity, ease of comprehension and immediate visual impact. The public informational sign must also complement the private store and business signs in the district.

1) Signs should not obscure the character defining features of historic buildings. They should never cover more than 1/5 of a building’s primary facade.
2) When possible, ‘gang signs’ should be used to identify multiple occupants of a single building.
3) Signs should be constructed of natural materials utilizing the talents of local individuals to paint and illustrate the signs.
4) Signs should not be internally illuminated nor should they have blinking or glaring lights.
5) Tourism related directional signs and street signs should be consistent in appearance, well maintained and easy to read.

4) Guidelines for Streetscape Improvements
1) Improvements made to the streetscape (the public realm) should take their cue from the historic character of the streets. When historic examples can be documented in historic photographs or drawings then they can be replicated and reintroduced.
2) Paving materials should always be subtle, water permeable and easily maintained. Natural materials and those used historically tend to be the most compatible.
3) Plant materials introduced into the landscape should be sturdy, drought and pollution resistant.

5) Guidelines for Latrines, Storm Water and Gray Water
1) Proper provision should be made in rehabilitation and new development to adequately deal with issues of storm water and gray water dispersement.
2) Positive grading away from building foundations should be encouraged so as to
direct storm water away from building foundations.
3) DVDPT latrines should be encouraged where cess pits and septic tanks are unfe-
sible. Site consideration such as screening with plant materials, cleanliness, ac-
cess, and compatibility with surrounding resources should guide latrine design.

D. Staff Support, Monitoring and Enforcement

All local programs are only as good as the process and people that implement them. An
ongoing system of monitoring improvements and conditions of buildings must occur.
The ideal system of monitoring occurs within municipal government; however, the reality
of short-staffed agencies is that monitoring usually is the first task that becomes deferred.
In those cases it may become necessary to involve local citizens through traditional au-
thorities and agencies and NGO consultants to provide that service. A Memorandum of
Understanding could be used to detail the level of service to be provided.

The level of enforcement of local laws and regulations depends on the attitude and nature
of the municipal government. The level of enforcement of other building and environ-
mental permits will be mirrored in the enforcement of the preservation legislation.
Whether it is a fine, community service or incarceration, the penalty and punitive nature
of a particular violation should be applied consistently and fairly.

A system of delivering notice of violation, advising on how to obtain remedy and a time
frame for action should be easily understood by residents. The system should be put in
writing and distributed to all Municipal Assembly zones and the Oguaa Traditional Coun-
cil. The process will only work well when it is most broadly understood.

4. Other Legal Issues

A. Historic Preservation and Economic Hardship

Economic hardship exists when the application of the recommendations of the commis-
sion cause an undue economic burden on the property owner or when a reasonable eco-
nomic return cannot be made on the property due to dilapidated or unsafe conditions as
determined by the commission. The economic hardship should not be of the property
owners own making. It should be based on the potential for economic return in selling the
property to a person who could rehabilitate it.

B. Appeals from Preservation Commission Decisions

All decisions and determinations of the commission should have a judicial or administra-
tive remedy. If a property owner does not think the commission has made a fair and ap-
propriate determination, then there should be a way to take that determination to a higher judicial or administrative body to assess the decision and see if the commission has abused its discretion. This process should mirror other aspects of local land use decisions and their appeals in Ghanaian local governments.

C. Staff Approval
Many commissions find it useful to delegate to municipal staff the approval of common or minor alterations to historic properties. This will facilitate the rapid processing of applications for permits; the delegated process will serve to quicken the pace of change within designated districts.
ECONOMIC INCENTIVES

In order to encourage the private sector's voluntary compliance with the adopted heritage laws, incentives should be developed. These could take the form of outright grants, matching grants, low interest loans and/or tax credits. A system of incentives is needed for the process of cultural heritage development. Funding from the private sector and from government is encouraged.

The incentive scheme outlined below is based on the following assumptions. 1) All levels of government (local, regional and central) are committed to the development of cultural heritage tourism based on the preservation of historic sites, buildings, monuments and districts. 2) The community involved shares a vision that supports this development which could involve some social changes that may be necessary to promote heritage tourism.

A. INCENTIVE PACKAGES

1. Revolving Fund:
   a. Definition: A pool of money set up by a government or NGO that provides low interest loans to person/s or companies that can demonstrate the ability to repay the loan. This is much like going to a commercial bank for a loan. When the money is paid back is it then ‘revolved’ (loaned) to another person.
   b. Example: An application is made by the owner, or persons holding a lease on a property, to an appropriate body that judges the merits and pay back abilities of the submitters. Approval of the application should be based on the following factors: 1) Can the applicant demonstrate the ability to payback the loan within a reasonable amount of time? 2) Does the project comply with historic preservation laws and regulations? 3) Will the project enhance and contribute to the master plan for historic attraction development?

2. Matching grants for commercial property owners:
   a. Definition: Funds provided to property owners, or persons holding a lease on a property, who wish to preserve and develop historic buildings for commercial use. The applicant provides a percentage or share of the costs of the project.
   b. Example: A property owner or leasee submits development plans to an appropriate body for approval. A quantity surveyor/architect conducts an appraisal of the building and building plan prior to the commencement of work. After the work is completed a quantity surveyor determines the amount expended on the project as it relates to preservation and stabilization. Then the owner of the property is awarded a percentage of the funds expended on the preservation aspects of the
3. Grants to private homeowners of historic buildings:
   a. Definition: Funds provided to owners of historic buildings for the purpose of stabilization, restoration or rehabilitation. Many small historic buildings are owned by persons of modest financial means. In order to preserve these important structures, it is necessary to develop a mechanism to provide controlled funding for materials and skilled labor. The following criteria for building selection for such a grant program is recommended. 1) The building must be historic. 2) It should be owned and occupied by persons known to have limited financial means. 3) The structure must be able to be repaired with a reasonable amount of funds. 4) The owner must agree to terms set forth in the agreement. 5) Within their ability, the owners should contribute some funds or labor to the project.
   b. Example: It is recognized that a home owner of a historic building does not have the financial means to stabilize or repair their house. That person requests or is approached with an offer of assistance in the form of repairs and a written agreement is reached between the home owner and the review committee or board. Funds are allocated for the project. The project is designed, monitored and implemented by the grant agency or their designated operatives with input from the home owners.

This process has been used successfully in Jamaica.

4. Tax credits to persons, groups, associations, foundations or companies who invest in the preservation of historic buildings.
   a. Definition: Often there are individuals or organizations that are willing to take on the preservation of a historic structure for various reasons. This particular incentive package offers these persons tax credits on future tax obligations.
   b. Example: A business person wishes to establish a business that requires floor space. He has a choice of building a new structure or restoring an historic one. From an economic view he may be better off building new. This incentive package could influence his decision towards an existing historic structure. The tax credit could be given on tax obligation created by the business in the restored building.

Similar tax incentive packages have been adopted in Jamaica.

B. FUNDING FOR INCENTIVES PACKAGES
1. Allocation from the Central Fund for the revolving loan package.

2. Special taxes
   a. Airport Departure Tax charged to all non-residents. The tax income would be set aside to fund the development and maintenance of historic attractions.
   b. Hotel room taxes set aside for the development and maintenance of historic attractions.
   c. Any other locally assessed taxes (such as sales tax on handicrafts) could be dedicated to fund preservation activities or infrastructure improvement within the historic district.

3. Encouraging the establishment of NGOís that are interested in the preservation and maintenance of historic structures and districts. The NGOís would seek funding for a full range of preservation activities in the district.

While it is recognized that the incentive package outlined above is ambitious, the need for dedicated funding is crucial to the success of the proposed heritage development. Little can be accomplished in any endeavor without funds.
The following list represents a schedule for the recommendations that appear throughout the Heritage Conservation section of the report. Specific recommendations for ongoing survey and inventory activities are at the end of section III, The Architectural Heritage.

**NINE MONTHS**
1. Manage current small building grants program for private site owners.
2. Evaluate success of grants to Posuban shrines and make adjustments to the grant program.
3. Establish criteria for expanded rehabilitation and repair program.
4. Introduce economic incentive package to municipal, regional and central governments.
5. Secure a role for heritage representatives in the development of the 2001-2006 five-year district development plan.
6. Begin development of a radio program for explaining the benefits of heritage preservation, heritage legislation and design guidelines. Outline concept, script and draft production schedule (Use contacts at AGORO Theater Company, Central FM, ATL).
7. Refine design guidelines using expertise from US/ICOMOS and University contacts. Use the guidelines in administering small grants program.
8. Begin organizing school programs by meeting with teachers and education officials.
9. Draft heritage legislation and develop a schedule for adoption by educating the CCMA and the public.
11. Conduct many performances of the concert party and develop a video tape for distribution.

**TWO YEARS**
1. Expand and institutionalize building grants program and dedicate a percentage of the additional funds from economic incentive opportunities to the program.
2. Establish traditional building crafts training program to teach proper repair of historic structures.
3. Create a regular (annual?) heritage preservation awards program.
4. Establish framework for administering the adopted local preservation legislation and design guidelines.
5. Provide orientation for newly appointed preservation review commission.
6. Find demonstration project to illustrate the heritage based tourism development process,
funded by first stream of income from economic incentive package (properties like Gothic House or Kofi Hill House would make ideal candidates).
7. Evaluate and make necessary corrections to ongoing projects and programs from year one.
8. Continue survey and inventory activities until all properties have been intensively documented.
9. Begin classroom projects that collect local history and obtain sponsorship of a small awards program for the student.
10. Begin drawing revenues from the new economic incentive opportunities (departure tax and local point of sales tax).
11. Conduct training and education program for elected officials and preservation review commission.

FIVE YEARS
1. Continue all programs and expand where necessary.
2. Entire district survey should be completed and updates should be made regularly.
3. Complete and privatize (if feasible) the demonstration project.
4. Measure impact of building grants program and nominate the project for an international development award.
5. Use media coverage to show the impact of increased preservation activity in Cape Coast on quality of life and the local economy.
I live in a fortified house