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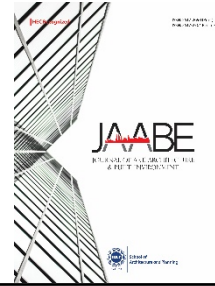
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Author (s): Hira Ovais


Affiliation (s): Dawood University of Engineering and Technology, Karachi, Pakistan

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Khori Garden Transformation and Its Impacts: Tracing the Lost Essence of a Neighborhood Open Space

Hira Ovais*

Dawood University of Engineering and Technology, Karachi, Pakistan

Abstract

Neighbourhoods in the city's core frequently have deep symbolic, cultural, and social meaning for local residents. Commercialization poses a serious danger to these neighbourhoods in the present day. In the face of such dangers, they are compelled to take drastic steps to protect their cultural legacy for the sake of posterity and the continuation of their society as well as their own mental health. Under British rule, Karachi too went through a period of rapid growth and gained a reputation as a thriving port city. Karachi's urban and architectural growth was influenced by colonial city planning ideas. Gardens, public squares, halls, and cultural/recreational places for neighbourhoods were central to these ideas. One such neighbourhood is Khori Garden, which was inspired by the Victorian era and features tiny alleys lined with exquisite buildings. Khori Garden in the center served as a communal space for all the people and this place became a centralized hub which became a source of strengthening community ties. Although, this place has transformed drastically due to overcrowding, pressures of commercialization, and uncontrolled encroachments. Large number of hawkers and vendors set up their make shift shops along the walls of the garden, due to which it displays a completely obscured vision at street level. In addition, the demographic changes in the area have resulted in diminishing community-oriented activities that once took place in this neighborhood park. The current study aims to attempt at tracing the historical timeline of Khori Garden and its precinct, to identify the catalyst/s for its current transformation. This study further aims at engaging the participation of communities living in the area till date in order to interpret their perceptions and aspirations about the community open space. Moreover, the current study also probes into certain possibilities for the reintegration of Khori Garden as a socio-cultural and economic hub of inner-city Karachi.

Keywords: colonial architecture and planning, community space,

* Corresponding Author: hira.ovais07@gmail.com

development, neighborhood garden, urban degeneration

Introduction

Cities are considered as living organisms which tend to change with its period of influence. The formation of a city depicts the reflection of socio-economic, cultural, and political conditions of every age. Each supremacy leaves its mark on the cityscape and the process goes on with the evolving status of the city form and its planning. In this way, cities define a timeline of changing lifestyles, advancement, and development among the inhabitants and the city's growth pattern.

Karachi, being the largest metropolitan city of Pakistan, has undergone a great deal of transformations but it became more severe day by day. Back to the previous times, it developed as a fishing village and flourished under British reign. The British recognized the influential power of communal ties among different communities. They also got acquainted with the fact that it would help not only in strengthening their economy but to win their trust among the native residents of the city too. The provision of basic infrastructure, architectural planning, and urban development fulfills the need of the people. Parks, gardens, and playgrounds were parts of such developments. The main reason for construction of these communal open spaces is to consolidate the communal activities in the particular area by inviting them into one common space and discussing their life styles.

Figure 1

Bunder Road, 1930's



Source: Inspiring Karachi- WordPress.com

The city of Karachi was developed under the supremacy of British reign

and was elevated to the image of a prospering port city because of the administrative and planning skills of its inhabitants. The city was planned according to the colonial city planning principles, forming markets, public squares, and other recreational spaces. All of these places, developed over years, bear a witness to historical, cultural, and social values which now form the core of the city. Market quarter is one such example (See Figure 1). It is one of the older quarters developed under the British Raj. Inside the quarters, exist a Garden that belongs to Victorian Era and is named as Khori Garden.

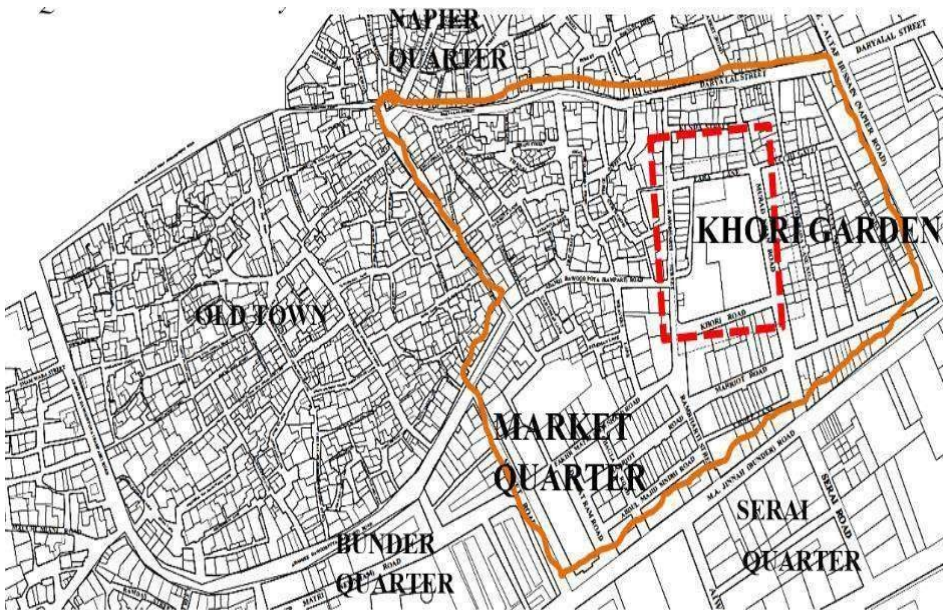
In some cases, these communal developments were achieved by establishing residential squares and in others by providing parks or gardens in the area. Khori garden in Karachi was one such example, where different communal forces were living and working together. The narrow streets are aligned with elegant structures, where different communities once intermingled for business opportunities as well as for living in this classical residential square.

With the passage of time, sudden increase in population and a rise in market demands led to the intensity of space. The growing trade activities forced the residents to travel and expand their businesses outside their city. The newcomers could never have the same sense of belonging because it was merely a business matter to them. Gradually, people started to move out of the area and further densification took place. The pressure of commercialization and the construction boom initiated the degradation of the area. A rise in insecurity, environmental degradation, and traffic congestion forced the living community to move out of the historic core and shift to other developed towns of the city. Hence, when they left, the little remaining sense of belonging was also lost. Whereas communal space such as the Khori garden was subjected to increased commercialization which resulted in the rise of encroachments, haphazard arrangements of hawkers blocking the traffic, poor roads, and sanitation. The old heritage buildings, which were once used by the residents, were subjected to high loads on the upper storey which led to the deterioration of the fabric of such buildings.

Research Methodology

The current study adopted archival analysis, physical observations, and photographic documentation as research methodology including certain interviews and survey areas with architects and shop dwellers.

Figure 2
Market Quarters and its Vicinity



Source: Map Courtesy Heritage Cell- DAP-NED

The physical boundaries of the area were defined by the orange line which included the whole of the Market quarter. Along with that, the adjoining quarters such as Bunder Quarter at the southwest, Old Town Quarter at the north-west, Napier Quarter at the north, and Serai Quarter at the south east are situated. Khori Garden is demarcated with a red dotted line.

The current research was conducted through data collection, archives, libraries, and municipal offices within the city. Information was also gathered from events, newspapers, and the internet.

The discussion in this paper is based on personal experiences acquired through visiting the site and scientific dialogues with the professionals, architects, and conservationists.

Physical observation is based on the study of land-use change, heights, decay, and damage to the place by understanding the degradation process with the passage of time.

Table 1
Selected Indicators of the Study

S. No.	Indicators	Data Sources	Methodology
1.	Original Character of the Area	Local people, Historians Architects and conservationists related Documents	
1 a	Building Heights	Interviews & Records from the municipal offices	Quantitative
1 b	Land-use	Old Maps & Locals	Quantitative
1 c	Living Communities	Interviews Interviews with experts and locals	Qualitative
2.	Penetration of Commercial Movement	Conservationists Historians Architects Related documents Books Journals	
2 a	Precinct Activity	Archival Database, Interviews	Qualitative
2 b	Building Condition	Existing Documentation,	Quantitative
3.	Repercussions of Commercial Activities		
3 a	Present Activity around the precinct	Physical Survey, General Observations, Interviews	Quantitative
3 b	Transportation Pattern	Surveys and Photographic Documentation	Quantitative
3 c	Present condition of the Garden	Documentation and Physical Observations and Interviews	Qualitative Quantitative

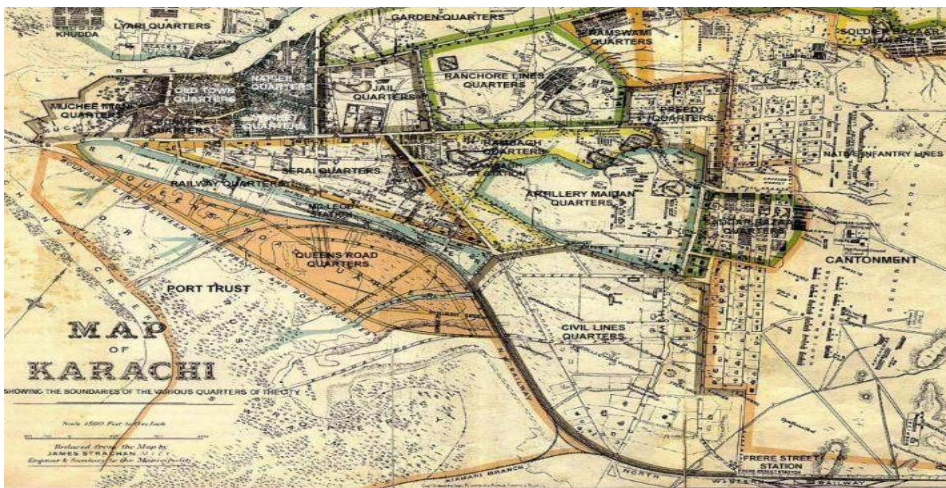
Literature Review

Khori Garden, one of the native towns, developed under the British Raj is situated in Market Quarters in the city of Karachi. The Market Quarter, located at the north-east of Dispensary Road, is bounded by Napier Road, Market Road, and Daryalal Street (Figure 1). It was established as an open ground to serve as the market place for caravan traders, who operated out of temporary sheds. Later, it got transformed into an open fish, vegetables,

and meat market, catering for the needs of dock workers and residents of other surrounding native quarters (Outram, [2012](#)). Around the middle of the 19th century, the Market Quarter was incorporated into municipal limits and the Karachi Metropolitan Authority developed it. Boulton Market, constructed with stones, slowly replaced the earlier open market. The remaining area was transformed into a well laid out residential area for army officers. In 1856, Denso Hall and a library were constructed in this area and around the same time the famous Khori Garden was laid out (Cheema, [2008](#)).

Bellasis map of 1852, (see Figure 3) shows the extension of the Old Town into areas later designated as the Napier and Market Quarters. In these two quarters, unplanned organic growth on the pattern of the old town appeared after annexation but was soon regulated by ‘Frere’s Municipal Commission’. Today, the Boulton Market bus stop is the only reminder of the market which was demolished some years ago. ‘Mohammeden Burial Ground’ was also located in the Market Quarters. During the mid-1870’s, there were five masjids, one temple, three *pir* dargahs, and one *tikana* in the Market Quarters (Lari & Lari, [1996](#)).

Figure 3
Bellasis Map showing Quarters of Karachi



Khori garden was selected as a case study because of its importance in wholesale markets and its earlier reputation as intellectual’s place. The changed land and usag patterns in the area and increased commercial activities have resulted in the loss of essence of this communal space- once

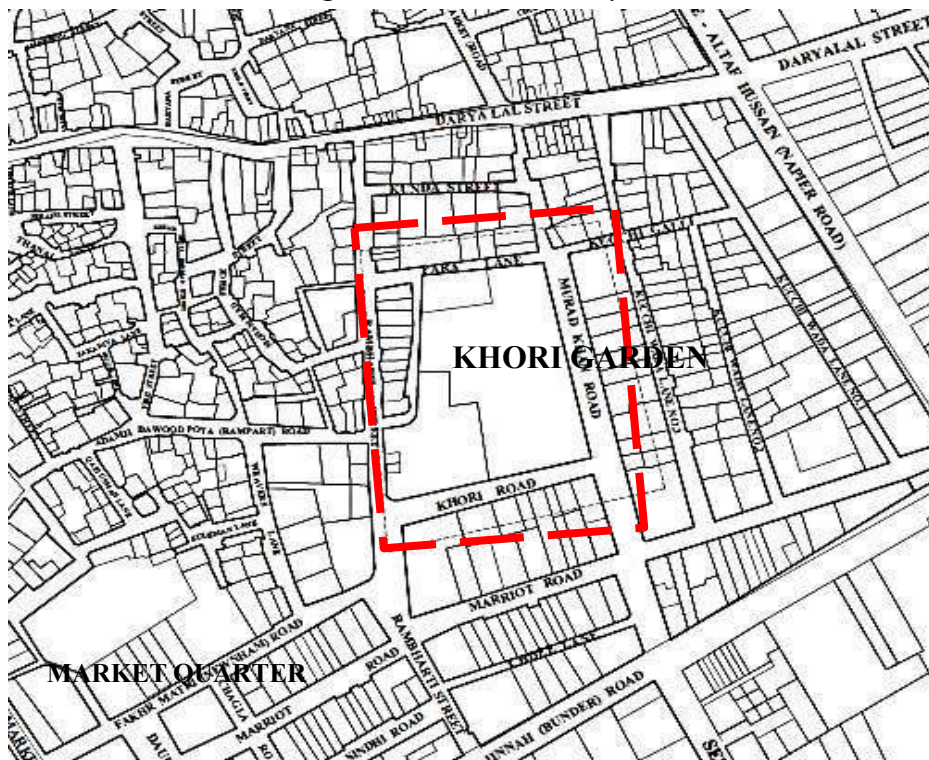
used by residents of the area. The changed patterns of this neighborhood space which have now been converted into a commercial hub, are the focus of investigation in this current paper.

Origins of Khori Garden and its Environs

Khoree or Khori which was named as Erskine Garden is an example of the earliest planning efforts of Karachi Metropolitan Corporation. It was developed in the 1870's on the pattern of English residential square (Sharif, 1987) (see Figure 1). Khori Garden, which belongs to Victorian Era is situated in the Market Quarters of Karachi and is lined by elegant structures, where different communities once co-existed. This historic garden is enclosed by Para Lane to the north, Rambharti Road to the west, Murad Khan Road to the east, and Khori Road to the south (Naeem & Soomro, 2018). (see Figure 4)

Figure 4

Khori Garden in Market Quarters and its vicinity



Source: Map Courtesy Heritage Cell- DAP-NED

Figure 5

Street view of Khori Road during 1950's



Source: WMF Watch Day-Khori Precinct 2018

The square was inhabited by Gujrati speakers where Hindus were in majority as compared to the Muslims. Kutchi and Kathiawari Memons also dominated the area at that time (Hassan, personal communication, January 31, 2018). According to the old residents, Khori Garden was named after a Parsimajor, who was the honorary magistrate of the area at that time. The cast iron fountain in the center of the garden dated 1887 was constructed by a London firm (Figure 6). The inscription on the fountain reads 'A WANDY SIDE AND CO, LTD, 1887, DERROY & LONDON'. Interestingly, the old wooden benches also retained the beauty of the garden (Sharif, 1987)¹. The garden was named after Henry Napier Bruce Erskine, who was the commissioner in Sindh from the year 1879-1887 (Damoochi, [1996](#)). It is also said that there was a statue of Queen Victoria which was removed after the year of Independence in 1948. There are many other statues which were later removed with no records available on their whereabouts² (Rustomji, [1952](#)).

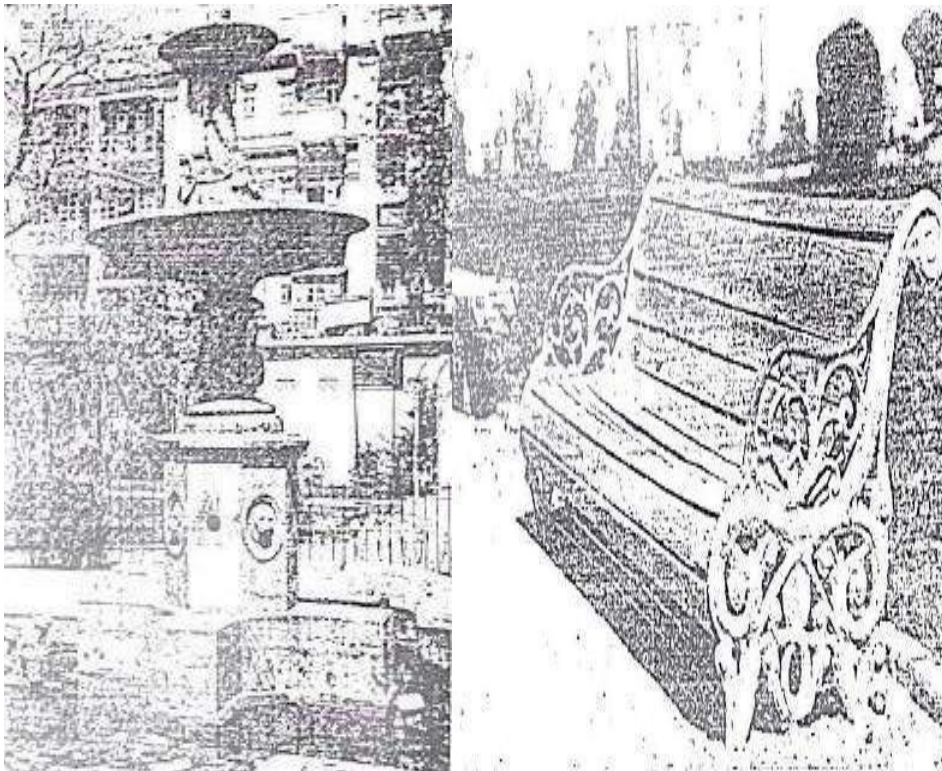
During the British reign, three factors were used to construct a colonial city namely culture, technology, and power. Retaining the culture and development of open spaces is one such aspect (King, [2012](#)). The period of such open spaces started around 1870's where several grounds, parks, and

communal spaces were allocated to Karachi's historic core during the British reign. "The earliest of those gardens were Erskine Garden and a compound of the Frere Hall while other green spaces, such as Government/zoological and burns garden were established around 15 years later. As the water resources were quite scarce in the city, the Garden committee suggested some recommendations to the municipality which in return provided several fountains to green spaces after resolving water issues (Baillie, [1890](#)).

The architectural edifices possess Victorian resemblance with other British quarters. As the residents were mostly Hindus and Muslims, local architectural vocabulary with a mixture of Victorian art was observed (see Figure 7). Pediments, arches, entrance portals, balconies, and other features were molded according to the native needs (Sharif, [1987](#)).

Figure 6

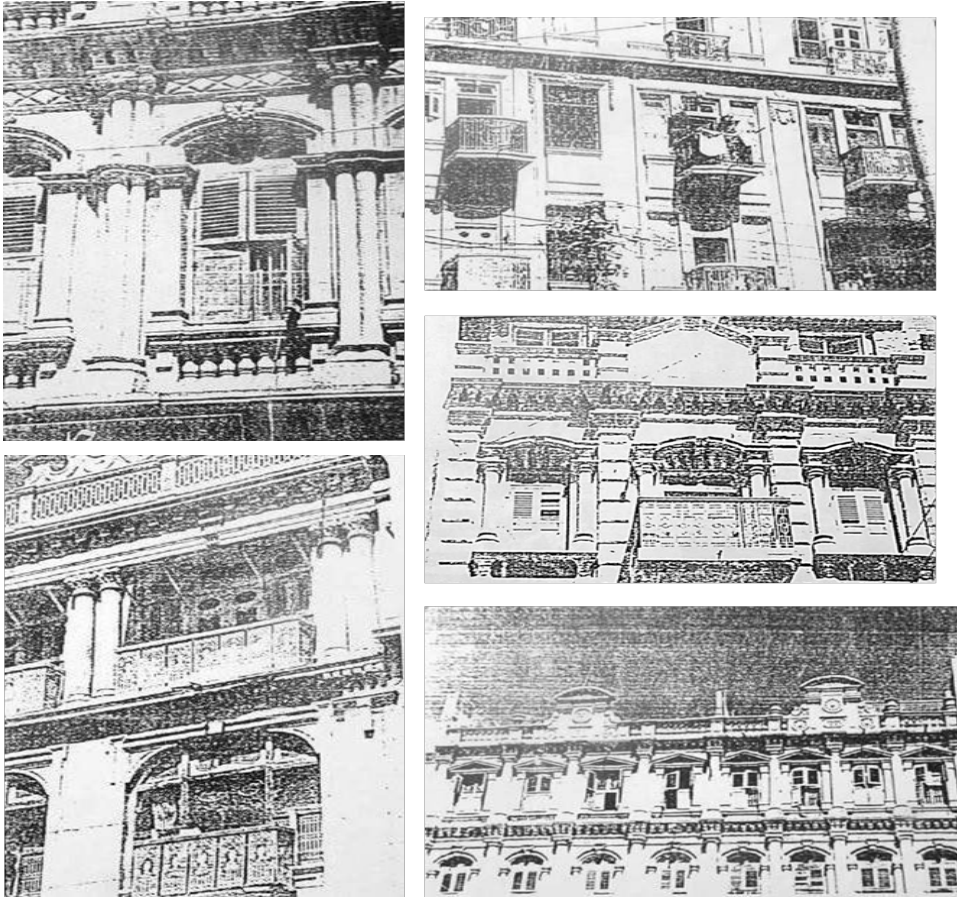
Original Fountain and Wooden Benches in Khori Garden



Source: Photographed by Mussarat Sharif in 1987

Figure 7

Heritage Buildings around Khori garden



Source: Photographed by Mussarat Sharif in 1987

Case of Khori Garden

According to Arif Hasan, “the area was mostly inhabited by Hindus and that too by wealthy Hindu traders. After the partition around February 1948, many Hindu families migrated from the area. This migration resulted in the construction of a building, once owned by a single Hindu family, now dwelled by eight Muslim families. The families grew in number and resulted in densification. Secondly, the thing which is of importance is that even these people who settled after Hindu families had a sense of belonging to the area. However, when the wholesalers and vendors arrived they took

over the area. This area didn't belong to those wholesaler and vendors. Moreover, they weren't even from Karachi nor were they here because of partition. They were established here because of the trade and commerce. Therefore, these people didn't have the connection as the ones who inhabited this area earlier. The growing trade activities forced the residents to move out. The newcomers could never have the same sense of belonging. This was merely a business matter. Gradually, people started to move out of the area and further densification resulted in environmental degradation and commercialization. Moreover, warehousing forced the residents out of the area and with their departure, the little remaining sense of belonging was also lost".

At the present time, urban fabric of the area has been completely altered. While strolling through the streets, the market doesn't evoke nostalgia, instead it paints a completely different picture. On the southern end of the Garden is Kohri Road also known as "Kitab Gali", which was once famous for selling second hand books and art supplies. To the left of Khori road is Murad Khan Road, which looks like a covered market. It is covered by canvas sheets, which is the main commercial commodity on this street (Hotchand, [1982](#)). The tensile canvas has overshadowed the ornate heritage in such a way that it makes it difficult to imagine the merchant's enclave which existed in the past. Moving towards Para lane, the dynamics of the area takes a shift. As compared to other streets, it has a more peaceful and steady pedestrian flow. Metallic utensils along with tin sheet utensil retail is the major commercial activity (Khuhro & Mooraj, [2010](#)). The walk becomes challenging again as the users shift to Ram Bharti street. The frenzy continues as hawkers and vendors are seen selling plastic toys, while bystanders make their way through carts and vehicles jamming the street. Apart from this hustle and bustle, if one takes a step back and reflects, a very distinctive and aromatic character of the street would be seen. The air is filled with the scent of itar, perfumes and tea along with the surrounding heritage buildings and the aroma of the street. It is not hard to visualize and experience the old life it once had. The harmony that once existed in the area, is now a story of the past.

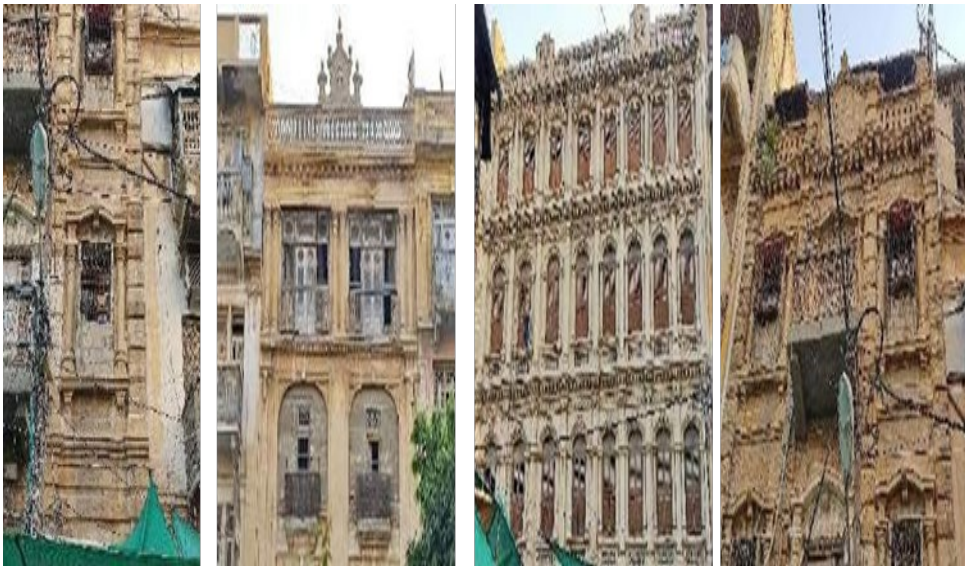
Tangible and Intangible Aspects of the Garden

The Khori Garden possesses historical importance in terms of tangible and intangible characteristics which are vanishing with the passage of time. Whereas, urban chaos is not only the character of Khori Garden precinct.

Considering the tangible aspect of the garden, the merchant's enclave offers much more in terms of its colonial architecture, which needs to be highlighted/revived. The feature of ghizri stone structures elaborate pilasters and ornate parapets which are topped with acroterions or crowns. Buildings are framed horizontally by a cornice and elaborated/enhanced by the extended balconies with crafted cast iron grills. Rosettes and roundels are also additional features on most of the buildings (Haroon & Baig, 2004). The ornamentation of the structures glorifies the earlier times, such as the engraved symbols of "OM," signifying the faith of Hindus, an embossed crown representing the British reign (See Figure 8).

Figure 8

Colonial Architecture around Khori Precinct



The garden has some oldest trees in the vicinity which have been represented during the latest survey of 2022. According to the interviews with locals, there were almost 20 Neem trees and few Banyan trees whereas, conucarpus and coconut trees were planted later. There were few lignum trees too among which some were old, while most of them were planted recently. During the survey, it was observed that only few old trees are left out of which only one Banyan Tree, 4 Neem Trees are left (See Figure 10). It was also compared with the 2018 survey that few old benches, which were reminiscence of that time, were also scraped.

Figure 9
Current Status of Khori Garden, 2022



Figure 10
Trees in Khori Garden



Transformational Analysis of Khori Garden

During 1890, the open market near Khori Garden was converted into Bolton Market. Till 1941, market quarters managed to retain its originality and strong communal forces were residing in the area. Later on, after the first intrusion of commercial based activities by KMC inside the residential square, the social and commercial activities of the area got disturbed.

Afterwards, the situation got worse which led to increase in transportation modes, more wholesale and retail shops, encroachment of hawkers and vendors, and migration of residents to the suburbs. All these factors led to deterioration of the urban fabric of the area which was once intact. Due to commercial pressures, the old buildings were used as godowns and warehouses whereas, the garden lacked its beauty and encroached by mosque and other temporary sheds (see Figure 11).

The residential square, which was developed for social gatherings, has now been converted into a commercial hub. Many old buildings were demolished or are under the threat of demolition. Many residents left the area because of the interference in their social life while the ones who did not leave, are still living in an abandoned course. The building conditions are in a dilapidated state where no maintenance measures were taken by the authorities. The garden also faces many problems due to the negligence of authorities where no measures were taken against garbage dumps and debris sites.

Figure 11

In and Around the Garden

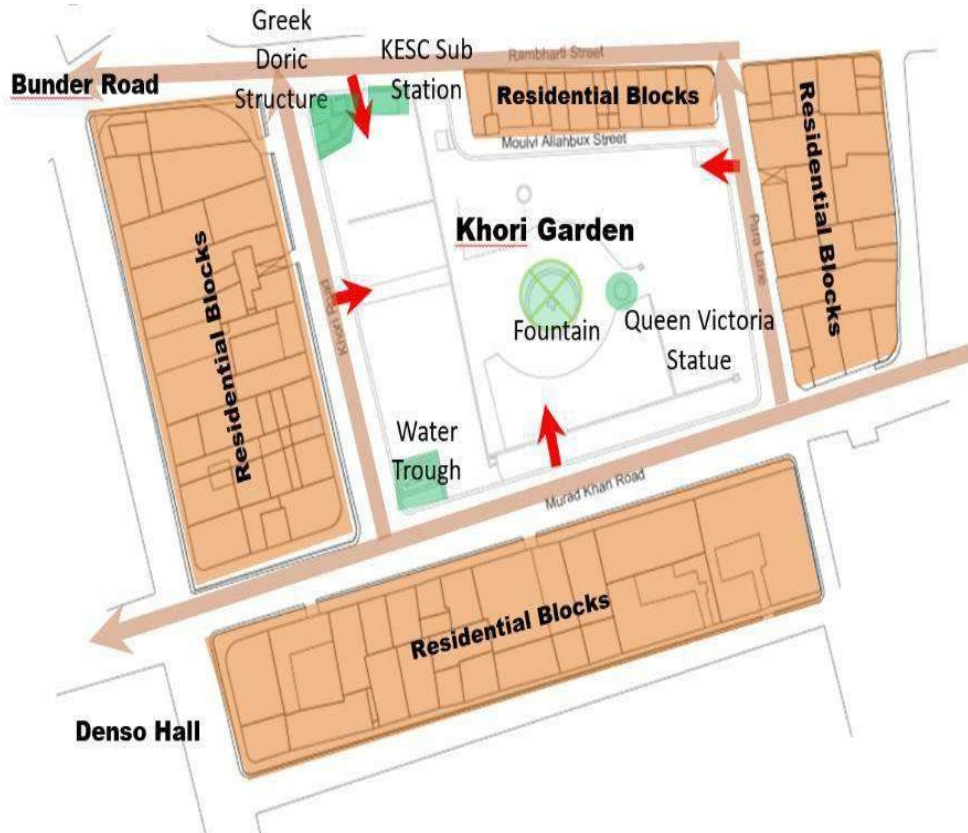


Source: Photographed in 2018 by the Author

A historic map dated 1941, available in KMC archives, indicates that there was a water trough and Greek Doric order structure³ at one corner of the garden. The structure of the garden was then demolished whereas, the water trough survived but in a very degraded condition. Later this corner was converted into public toilets by the Corporation (see Figure 12).

Figure 12

Original Character of Khori Garden, 1941



Source: Land Department, KMC

According to Mr. Hassan,

One of my French friend and I visited Khori Garden to buy canvas for her painting around 1998. At that time, the fountain of the garden was in good condition. The chaos and haphazard encroachment was not there. The buildings surrounding the garden were having their original functions that is, on ground there were shops and in the upper storey, there were residents.

He defines another coincidence about the Khori area that,

It happened around 2007, where a man owned two buildings in that residential square which were listed and he wanted to demolish those

buildings to build a plaza on them. At that time, the commercial activity arisen, ground floor activity became more intense, and upper stories were converted into godowns. (Hassan, personal communication, 2018)

The above mentioned facts have cleared two main aspects that the commercial activity raised in 1998 and the residential buildings started converting into storage spaces. Moreover, it also states that the new constructions gave rise to the demolitions of the older structures.

The assessment of Khori Garden may be done in three phases according to the timeline illustrated below (see Figure 13). For instance, original state/condition/form of the area which contains community existence, building heights, and extent of commercial and social activities are included in the phases. The second phase is the insertion/introduction of commercialization in the area with the constraints of how, when and, why. The third phase of assessment is based on the changes due to commercialization which include social and physical patterns of the area.

Khori or Erskine Garden were formed as a result of planned development. The colonial buildings were aligned along straight streets. Different communities living there had converted the area into a lively neighborhood. The area was extensively used by Gujrati Hindus and Muslims, Kutchi Lohana, and Kathiawari Memons. The place comprised of shops selling tea, gathia, pan, and gramophone recordings which enhance the charm of communal space. It remained active throughout the night as businessmen played cards and discussed their business deals. Music was also played and the area served for entertainment and communication purposes, providing a festive ambiance (Smith, [1919](#)). The infrastructure of the area had an impressive design too/was also well laid. Sufficient number of main holes and electric poles were also minimized the drainage, sanitation, and water supply issues.

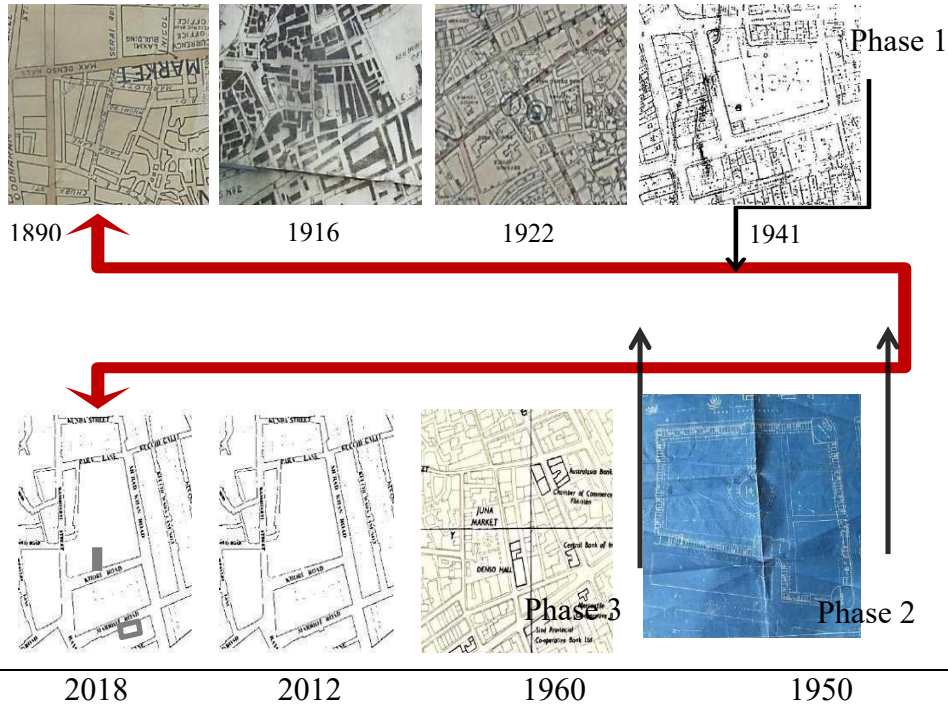
The garden which was used for communal activities was looked after by Devendas, a Hindu councilor of the area. The landscape and features of the garden, such as water trough and fountain gave definition to the communal space, making it a permanent area for congregation (Napier, [1857](#)).

Figure 13
Timeline of Khori Garden Transformation

Phase 1- original character of the area

Fish, vegetable and meat market were designed by Strachanlater known as Bolton market

The garden and thesurroundings remained intact



The garden is intruded by another prayer area and living quarter for staff/ caretaker of the garden

The garden encroached by the masjid and the mausoleum

Commercial activities expand into different market patches later overcrowded by encroachments

First commercial insertion by KMC through temporary shops which becomes permanent afterwards

Source: Developed by the author

The communities including Gujratis and Hindus were in prime domination and had a strong sense of ownership of this area. They not only took care of the garden accessories but also looked after the main infrastructure as provided by the British. Memons owned apartments in the vicinity and participated in commercial activities here as well. It is recorded that on the ground floor they had one or two shops in their buildings. Kutcha Lohana and Muslims were in minority at that time but were residents in the area (Ovais, [2013](#)) (see Figure 14)

Figure 14
Community Forces in the Area



Source: Based on Oral Resources and Records in mukhtiarkar’s office

The building heights were also obtained from the map in KMC department which shows that G+3 and G+4 structures marked the identity

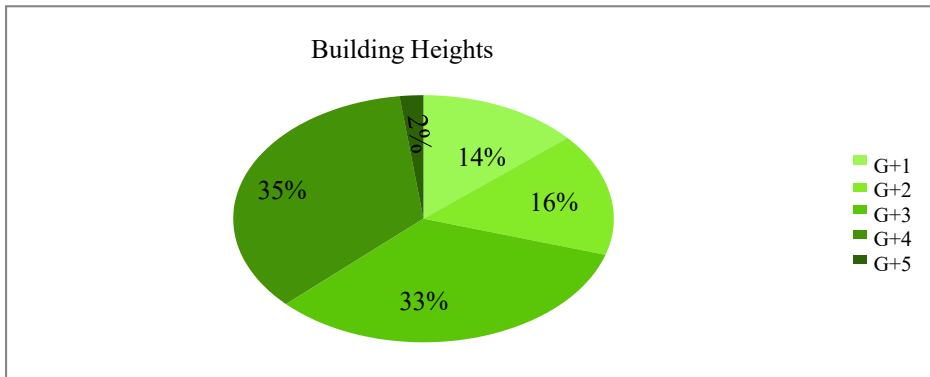
of the residential square. Whereas, G+2 and G+1 were also present there, which were purely residential, while some had shops on the ground (see Figure 16). Some four and five-storey structures were also used for residential purposes. It was seen that commercial activity was quite low at that time⁴. The map below shows the original heights of buildings at Khori Garden.

Figure 15
Building Heights at Khori Garden



Source: Based on Observations during Site visit

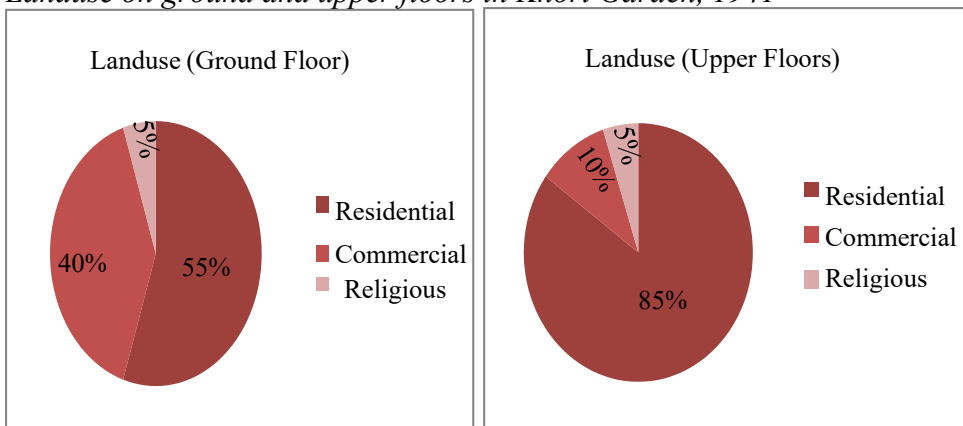
Figure 16
Original Status of the Building Heights, 1941



The social activities in the area were quite high even at night. Not only men but women and children cherished their moments by visiting the garden. As the area possesses residential land-use, the communities living there were more generous to each other. They had different interactions and respected the cultural values of each other. The business deals were made with trust and confidence. They used to visit each other’s apartments and shared their cooked meals. Get together parties were also held in the garden. The activity pattern at the ground had commercial cum residential character whereas, the upper storeys remained under residential use (see Figure 17). The Kutchi Lohana community had a society office in the area whereas, there were two temples on Para Lane.

Figure 17

Landuse on ground and upper floors in Khori Garden, 1941

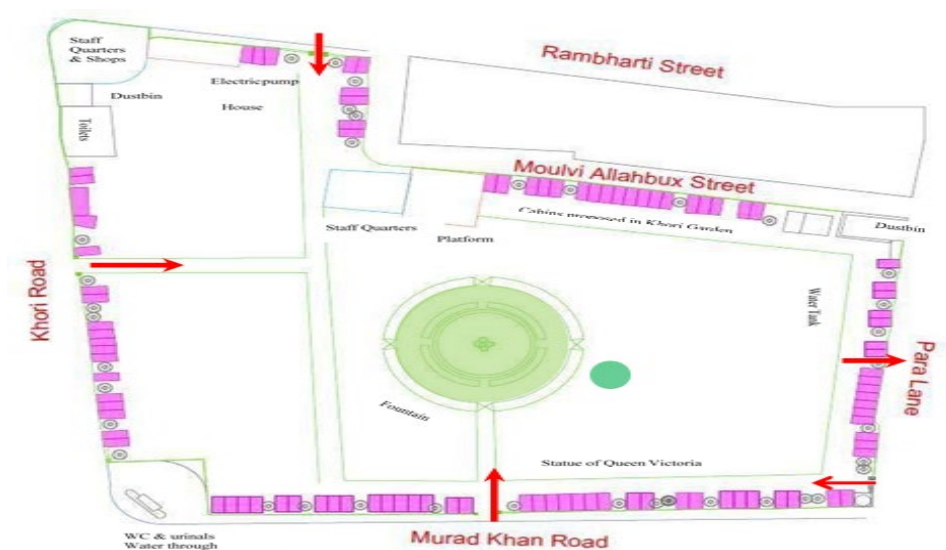


Phase 2- Penetration of Commercial Movement

The commercial penetration of any old area is based on three main questions-when, why and how. The area was partly commercial due to the shops manufactured at the ground level, which makes it more productive for generating economy. Furthermore, it also led to introduce more commercial movements there. A map dated 1950 obtained from KMC Land Department shows the transformation of the garden into a commercial area. A total of 90 cabins were manufactured inside the garden after the demolition of the original boundary wall of the garden. These cabins were used as shops to provide necessary household items to the residents (see Figure 18). The measurement of these cabins was 7'x10' which were later transformed into permanent shops in 1962 by Devendas's daughter, who was the second councilor after her father under KMC. Perpendicular to the water trough were toilets and urinals provided for the workers. The staff quarters were also part of the scheme. Though, it may be derived that the commercial diffusion into a residential center started through KMC. Whereas, the original integrity of the area as well as the garden untied the ambiance of neighborhood space which was there in early times.

Figure 18

Showing proposed services by KMC in 1950



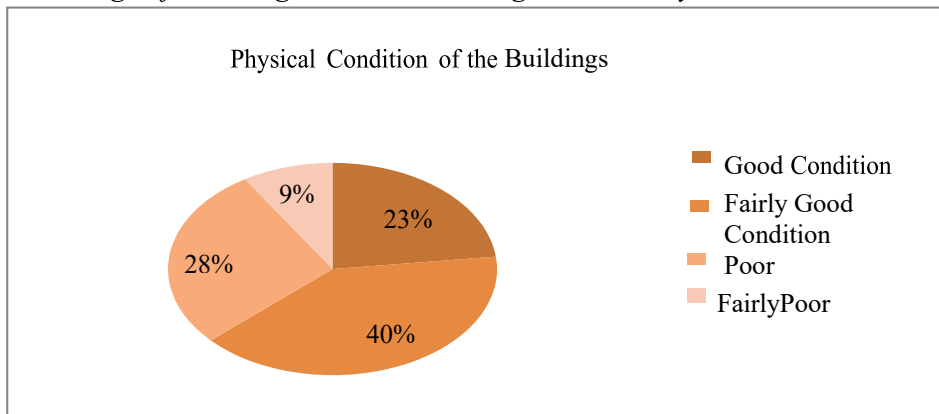
Source: Original Map from Land Department, KMC

The forced commercial pressure on the residential square intensified in later years. The area gained more fame for wholesale goods mainly and retail market. The residents who participated in maintaining the communal ties of the area were compelled to leave their residences due to overcrowded activities.

Till this time, the physical condition of the buildings was quite good. Only few buildings were subjected to alterations and additions. The building fabric was intact and very small signages were observed during 1987 survey on the buildings (see Figure 19). The infrastructure was well maintained and could cater the population as well as the market needs at that time.

Figure 19

Percentage of Building Condition During 1987 Survey



Source: Report by Musarrat Sharif, 1987

Phase 3- Repercussions of Commercial Activities

After 1970's, the commercial activities of the area intensified. Many other problems, such as traffic congestion and noise pollution became main indicators to deteriorate the area. Many people moved out due to security threats pertaining to law and order situation. The area became major commercial hub for plastic goods, hardware, and electrical items, and most importantly old books market for which Khori Garden attained fame.

Due to commercial activities, the physical changes in the area were quite worse. The area has fairly wide straight road network. All these roads were subjected to heavy load of traffic. It has varying modes of transport which includes animal driven carts, pick-ups, trucks, hand carts, rickshaws, motor cycles, and cycles. The loading and unloading activities create disturbance

for the pedestrians and congestion in the flow of traffic. The traffic flow is further hampered by mobilehawkers and encroachments. The infrastructure which was well designed is now subjected to excessiveloads. Electricity and sewerage lines do exist, but they are old and need replacement/ upgradation. Streets are often flooded due to lack of maintenance for sewerage lines.

Figure 20

Additions and Renovations at Khori Garden



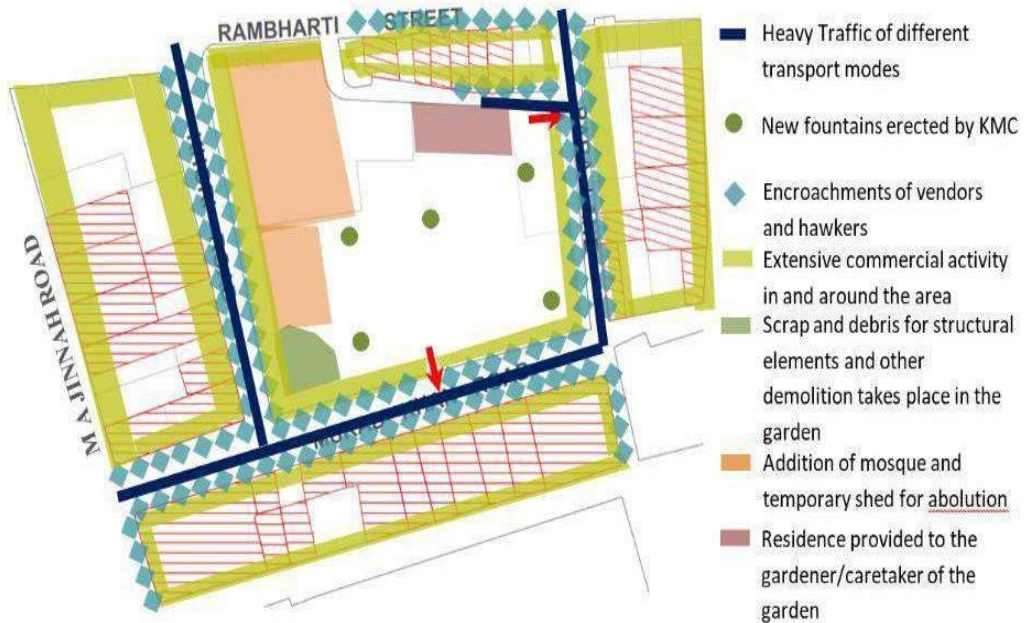
Source: Photographed by the Author

The expansion of such commercial activities threatens the original character/form of the garden. The mausoleum of Qari Muslehuddin was built in the garden during 1980's, which led to its expansion into a mosque under Ahle-Sunnat Jammāt (See Figure 20). Later on, the mosque was extended which restricts the entrance of the garden from Rambharti Street to the mosque and shrine visitors. In 2016, Allama Shah Turabul-Qadri was laid to rest beside Qari Muslehuddin resulting in increase of visitors to the garden. Moreover, another steel structure was built as praying area due to congestion inside the mosque. The garden was also encroached by the temporary structure provided by the KMC to the caretaker (gardener). Whereas, the corners of the garden became debris sites due to low up-keep by the authorities. The old fountain was replaced by the new one whereas,

the water trough although in poor condition, is the only reminiscent of the old times (see Figure 21).

Figure 21

Present status of Khori garden vicinity



Source: Map provided by Heritage Cell, DAP-NED

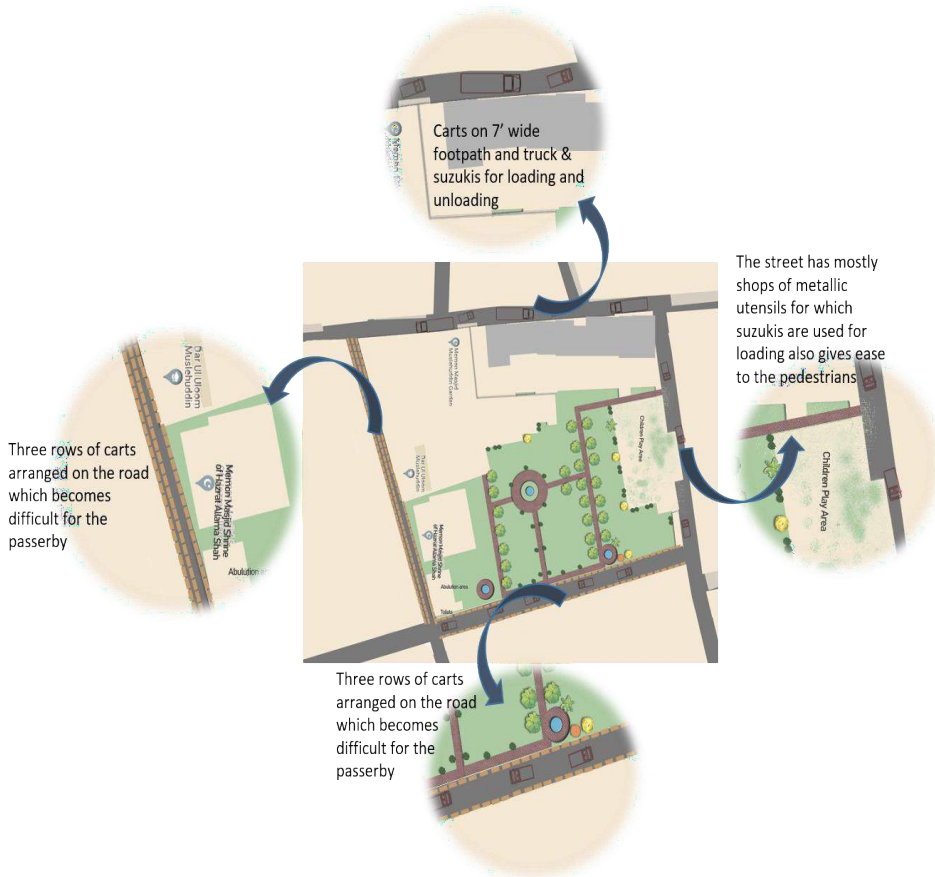
The second threat of these commercial activities includes exposition to the existing old buildings which are getting worse day by day, as these edifices are subjected to extra loads by the commercial hub. The residential character of the buildings is lost and replaced by warehouses and godowns on upper stories. Violation of heritage laws was also observed which resulted in haphazardly adding mass on structure or various alterations. Different signages, electric wires, and even supports for cloth shades deteriorated the fabric of these structures. The area is also threatened by demolition of old structures to construct new market plazas. Many buildings are being declared dangerous by SBCA due to structural failures – likely to end up soon as, ‘demolished’.

Transportation is another prevailing issue and the usage of carts for transportation purposes, standing along the road, tends to block the road. Therefore, it becomes difficult for the people to reach their destination. On Murad Khan Road, generally Suzuki cars are seen engaged in loading and

unloading. Whereas, the wooden carts are used for transporting dry fruits and plastic goods. The number of carts standing by the road are 70. Moving towards Khori Road, the transportation is similar to that of Murad Khan Road while food carts and hand carts (hath gari) are used for moving goods. These carts stand in 3 rows and the number of these carts is around 150. Rambharti Street has trucks and Suzuki whereas, carts are placed on 7' wide footpath and counted as 50 in numbers. Para lane has Suzuki on both sides, used for loading the goods whereas, pedestrian flow is much better because of the absence of carts.

Figure 22

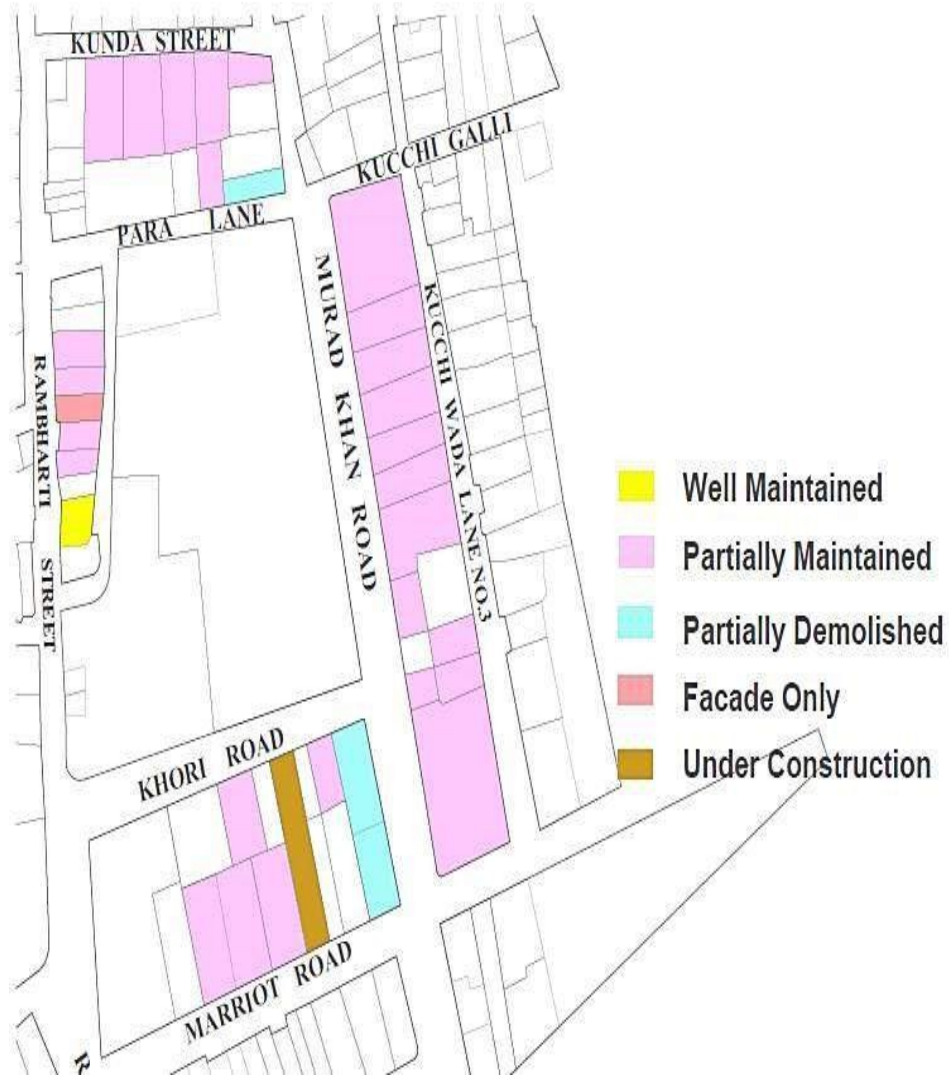
Present Transportation pattern of Khori garden vicinity



The present building condition in the area is quite vulnerable. As the residential character of the buildings is now converted into the commercial

community, the necessary spaces for storing their products posed current threat to the heritage (see Figure 24). The map below shows the status of the buildings which are partially maintained. Whereas, many of them were left vacant or demolished (see Figure 23).

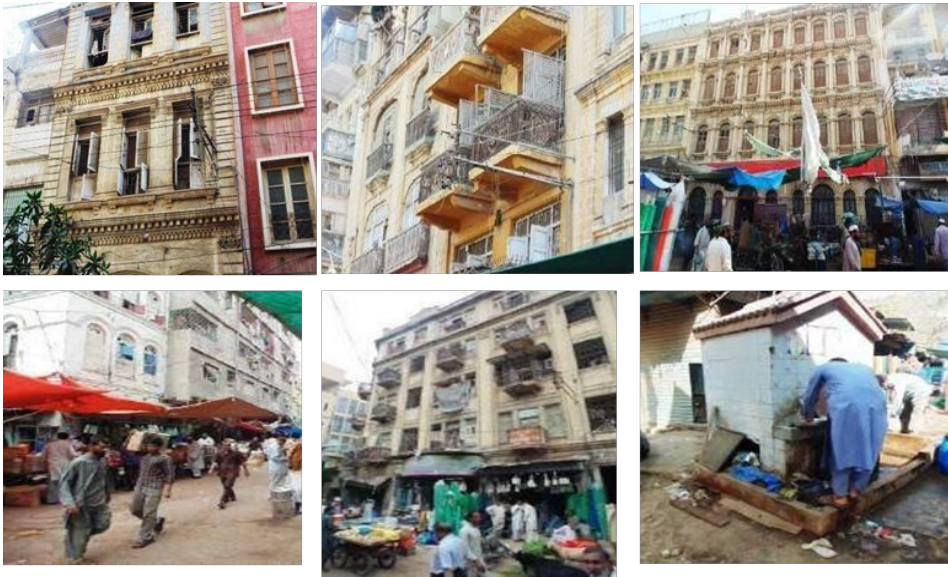
Figure 23
Present Status of the Area



Source: Heritage cell, DAP-NED

Figure 24

Residential Square around Khori Garden



Source: Photographed by the Author

The area is not only adversely affected by physical changes but the transformation of social systems has impacted it as well. Seemingly, the area is densely built and was never a British residential square. The majority of original communities have moved out of this area to other locations of the city. The place has become a heap of garbage where many small dump sites lay the debris. The hawkers and vendor encroachments worsen the condition of the area by occupying the whole street by blocking pedestrian movement. The garden presents a lifeless view. The original fountain and the water trough were demolished after being subjected to vandalism and theft. The garden is also encroached upon by the addition of a temporary shed for ablution and a mosque built in the previous year⁵. The mosque was built within 8-9 months back in 2017. The place is only used by the people coming to offer prayers who sit there for a while to take some rest after having hectic work in the market.

The buildings are extensively used as warehouses and godowns which threaten the long life of Khori garden and its surroundings. Most of the buildings are left vacant where only 10 percent retain its residential character. Many buildings of this residential square were demolished. Some

of them were subjected to political revesges and others for occupying the piece of land after the residents left the area. There are no gatherings and discussions in the garden. The night life of the area and garden becomes unexciting as the business discussions come to an end. Moreover, there are fewer residents left who seem rather insecured and the garden becomes lifeless as it closes at 7 in the evening. A quarter is given to the gardener by KMC who works as a caretaker of the garden. The streets were covered with temporary green shades of cloth which creates social alienation. The extensive commercial activity has eroded the beauty of the area. During 1990's, the councilor at that time planned to sell out the garden to a property developer, so that he could build a gymnasium for the community. However, the proposal met a strong disapproval from the board of trustees and also due to the resistance put up by resident's retaining the place as a public space.

Results and Discussion

Policy Framework for Upgrading Khori Garden

Cities survive when commercial and social entrepreneurs move simultaneously for the upgradation. In the case of Khori Garden, social activities almost vanished due to huge penetration of commercialization. Many people who were old residents of this area moved out due to many insecurities and the lacking provision of basic necessities. Physical degradation posed threats in the survival of Khori Garden's identity. The whole infrastructure was subjected to changes under heavy load by usage commodities. Buildings around the area, which are now used for warehousing are in poor state of condition and no maintenance measures are taken by the owners (see Figure 25).

Arif hasan in one of his latest interviews stated that

a city somehow fulfills its needs and it has been observed not only within this city but all over the world. Planning is required to accommodate these needs over time. The area is a market place and it should remain one as it would not have been there if it wasn't needed. Vendors stand along the Garden walls throughout the day. Men with trained monkeys (madari) provide entertainment to the people with their amusing acts saying, "feed the aloo master (monkey). A tarot card reader waits with his parrot in tow. The fact is, if these activities are a part of our popular culture, then why are they standing outside, why not allocate them specific place in the

park?

“Here you can have the monkey performance for entertaining the people”. You give the money and get a license, renewable in one year, and pay annual taxes. If it doesn’t work well they could be held accountable. This happens all over the world therefore, according to the above- mentioned facts this area should remain a market. However, if there are any informal necessities of the area, they should be addressed, initially on a temporary basis.

Thirdly, to introduce major transformations in the area for tourist attraction to benefit people such as any institutional building, library, café, or an art gallery.

Figure 25

Showing Encroachments, Pedestrian Blocks and Vehicular Congestion



Source: Photographed by the Author

Shifting commercial activities from the area cannot be done presently, as the economy of the city is based on these local businesses. However, it is essential to provide a proper space for hawkers and vendors to stop further encroachments in the area. 2800 hawkers according to a 2010 survey⁶ were witnessed who need some proper space for selling goods. In recent interviews, the hawkers need a proper scheme for revitalization process. They need gathering space and traffic problems to be solved. Restrictions

on types of vehicles can be put in place during peak hours to reduce blocking and pedestrianize some of the streets to elevate social constraints. The circulation of traffic also needs to be revised for retaining the leftover fabric in the area for future generations to witness its ecstatic glory.

Another major threat faced by the area is the demolition of the old buildings, major, and minor alterations on the buildings, and vandalism on vacant structures. Almost 25 structures had been demolished after the partition for making commercial plazas and banks. It alarms other older structures in the area and needs protection for future survival as well.

Short-term tasks can be applied to this particular area. These tasks include traffic management program which contains one-way traffic strategy, traffic-free zones, and fixed timings for unloading goods, parking problems. These problems are solved by developing parking lots or multi-storey parking plazas, complete segregation of pedestrian and vehicular movement need to be achieved. Secondly, the sanitation programme must be revised by providing garbage bins and relocating of the existing garbage collection points. Administration is responsible for cleaning waste from manholes, and above all sewerage infrastructure should be revised. Thirdly, by upgrading the area by maintaining the old fabric through conservation consultants and sustain the height of the new ones to preserve the scale of the old area.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Due to the increased urban confusion, communal spaces have vanished in the current scenario. Community spaces have become a critical resource and are essential for the growth of urban neighbourhoods. In older parts of Karachi, such as native towns of the city, the organizing elements and the primary source of interaction were the spaces left between buildings. They get spilled onto the streets, which essentially leads to congestion. There is a need to address such connective spaces responsibly and with proper planning which would eventually revive the old gatherings and ambiance of communal space.

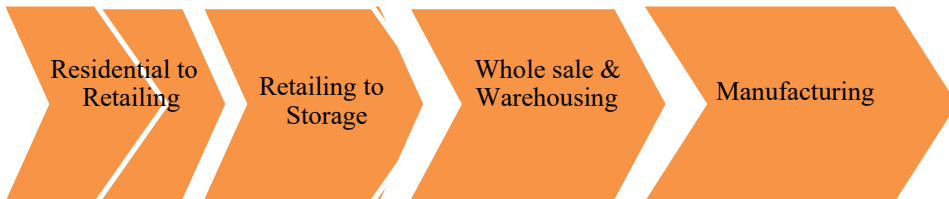
Commercial chaos is the main reason for the area converting from residential to manufacturing units and go downs. The negligency shown by people and the government has led to deterioration of the historic core. Khori Garden that once breathed life in the area now lies vacant and neglected, while the frenzy continues around it. The Garden that was once used to host

the communal activities today facilitates the business merchants.

The increasing issues in the area can be solved by providing space for the informal sector and stop the informal growth. The degradation process in any old area takesplace according to the transitional aspects. It then slowly penetrates inside the residential zones of such places and makes room for commercialization.

Figure 26

Process of degradation in old areas of Karachi city



It is a natural process that was mainly faced by Karachi's historic center. The process has not only changed the demographics of the area but also evacuated the social interaction of the old residents. As a result, the residents started moving towards the suburbs because of the chaos generated in the old city. The domination of the communal forces somehow diminished due to the factors mentioned above. The neighborhood spaces where once outdoor sitting, enjoyment, and utilization which took place as an expression of the overall sense of safety among people of different communal sectors. These keypoints play an important role in the growth of personal development in a society.

In that case, some policy measures must be achieved which would help to revive activities linked from the past at a certain level. Firstly, one strategy would be accepting the activities taking place in the area and organizing them through a proper management. Secondly, it would be negotiating gentrification in the area and applying these strategies to other areas of the old city through planning.

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