

SPECIAL FEATURE



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He is a thoughtful architect and a talented artist who loves to sketch and explore architectural ideas. He has a deep interest in studying design philosophies and further developing them. **He has been awarded** Council of Architecture Awards for Excellence in Architectural Thesis 2022 & JK AYA Best Architecture Student of the Year Award 2022.

He is also a visual artist and has been involved in designing cover pages for multiple books and magazines, created multiple visualizations for many typologies of architectural projects, and has also developed conceptual visuals for a history-based web series.

BELAKU-The Hampi Interpretation Centre

Abstract

To create an Architecture that interprets the Heritage and Culture of Hampi in a way that relates with its visitors, through basic instinctive aspects of light, psychology, and Architecture through the understanding of the layers of inherent cultural Practices, cultural fabric, and mythological significance of a historical context.

Keywords

Architecture, Heritage, Light, Psychology and Cultural Fabric.

1. Introduction

Hampi, a UNESCO World Heritage site aka the City of Ruins, is the epicenter of rich heritage and culture. But in recent times, Hampi has been subjected to illegal land encroachments and demolitions that has led to desecration of heritage property. The reason for this is the lack of relatability between people, place/context and acknowledgment of heritage, rather a lack of awareness amidst people.

In the wake of all these events, Govt of Karnataka (GOK), Archeological Survey of India (ASI) & Hampi: World Heritage Area management Authority (HWHAMA) have proposed for the development of an Interpretation Centre.

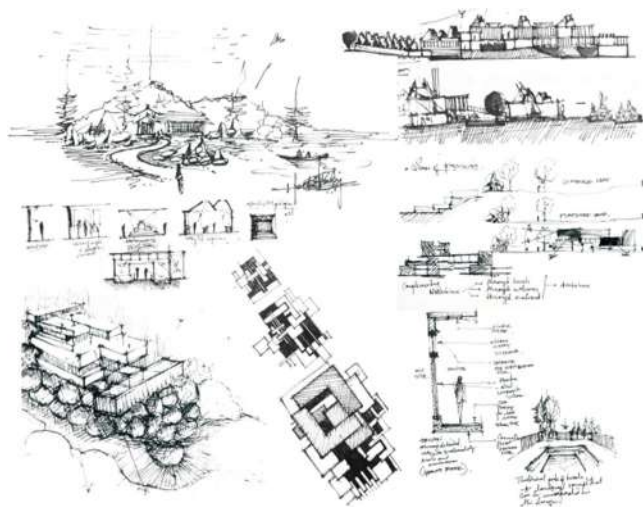
The intent of the research, thus, is to Create an Architecture that interprets the Heritage and Culture of Hampi in a way that relates with its Visitors, through basic instinctive aspects of Light, Psychology and Architecture.

Belaku- A Kannada word that means “Light” which is the main theme of the research i.e to shed light on the glorious empire that Hampi once was.

An Interpretation center is an institute for disseminating knowledge of Cultural heritage closely associated with visitor centers within or around Sites of Natural or Historic Importance.

In order to develop a Vision for the Interpretation Centre, it is of key importance to understand the Layers of Inherent Cultural Practices, Cultural Fabric, and Mythological Significance of the Heritage Site which upon assimilation will play a crucial role in developing a meaningful concept.

The Vision of the project is crucial in understanding the typology of spaces derived from the study of the aforementioned layers, interpreted in a Modern Dialect that majorly comprises of developing multiple Spatial Scales and Ambiences. It showcases the various experiments performed with Light and Form of the spaces, and how their treatment affects the psyche of the viewers.



RESEARCH OUTCOME (VISION OF THE PROJECT)

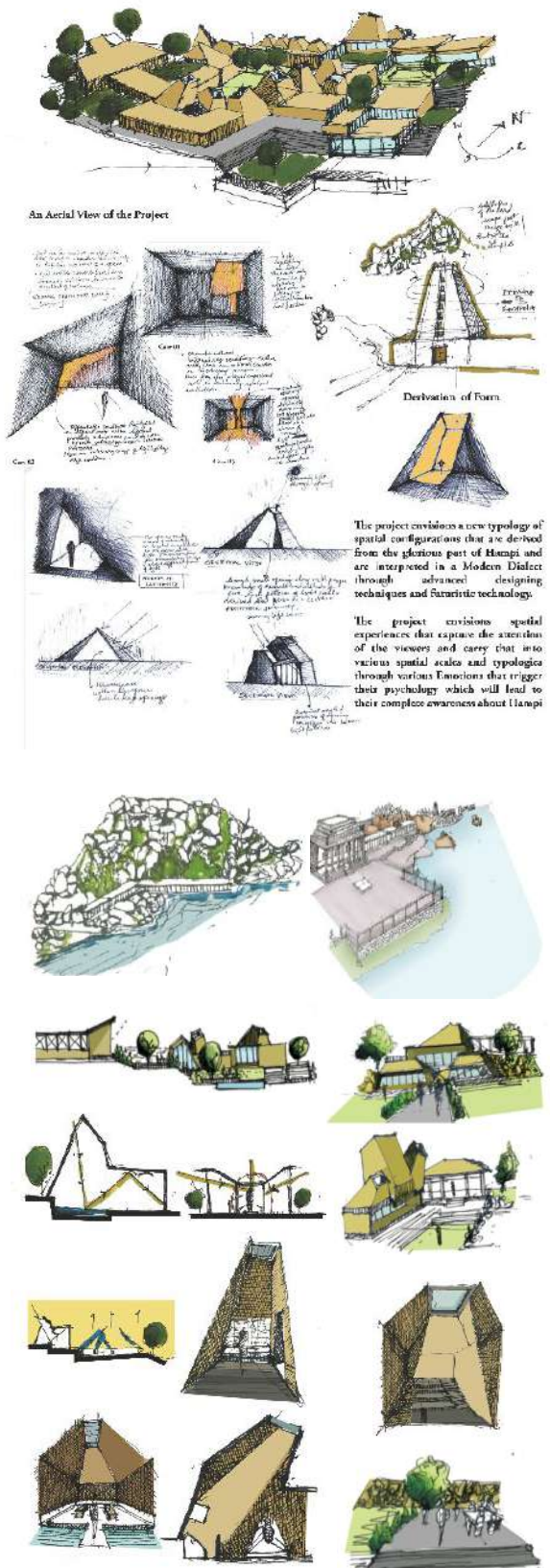


Figure 1-Sketches presenting the vision of the Project, Source: Author

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1.2 Inferences from the Case Studies

Case Studies were crucial for the point of view of developing a concept, circulation, and play of mass and voids. Two case studies were conducted, with projects possessing a common underlying theme: Representation of Culture and History through Architecture.

The first one is Bharat Bhavan, designed by Ar. Charles Correa. Here, Charles Correa has developed the concept of a ritualistic pathway, a pathway that has a universal impulse that basically can be interpreted as the psychology of the viewers as they transition from closed spaces, to semi-open to open spaces at various scales.

He believed that it is essential to have an Effective Transition between functional spaces, through the play of Scalar Multiplicity, right from human scale to monumental scales, and also stressed upon the flow of function from built to unbuilt (courtyards), how functionality and leisure activity within spaces merge seamlessly.

The Holocaust Museum designed by Ar. Moshe Safdie. Moshe Safdie developed the concept of creating a visitor's path that was dictated by an Evolving Narrative. The Concept is based on the Philosophy of symbolism, where a particular element such as Light, or a parameter such as the Emotions attached to the Holocaust were manipulated and Interpreted through Architecture.

His design revolves around developing an emotive circulation pattern, natural light psychology and transitioning scales.

The design takeaways from the case studies are :

- 1) Development of a strong narrative that is the backbone of the project.
- 2) Emphasis on the Emotional experience through spaces
- 3) Developing an emotive circulation based on a strong narrative, nodal way finding, thus interlinking spaces to create a free flow of pedestrian traffic.
- 4) Manipulating scalar and spatial transformations.

Through these case studies, it is evident that it is required to develop a very strong narrative to determine the character of Spaces.



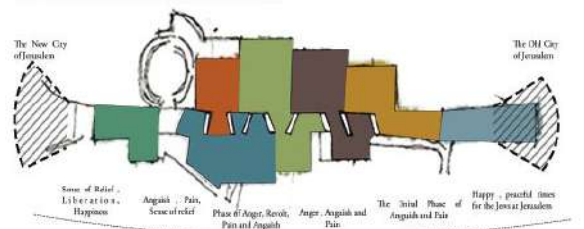
SYMBOLISM:

Symbolism is the philosophy that the architect has used throughout the design to depict the trauma of the Jews. The architect has used the following tools to evoke a sense of symbolism:

1. Circulation Pattern and Program within the Museum Space.
2. Natural Light Psychology.
3. Varying / Transitioning Scales.
4. The Material Palette.

SYMBOLIC CHARACTER :

1. CIRCULATION PATTERN AND PROGRAM:



THE EMOTIVE CIRCULATION

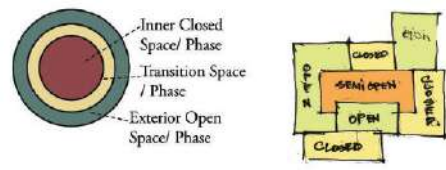

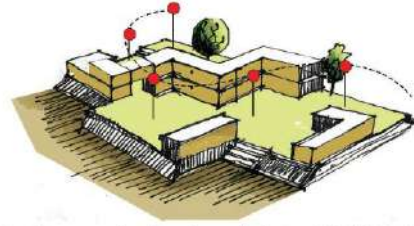
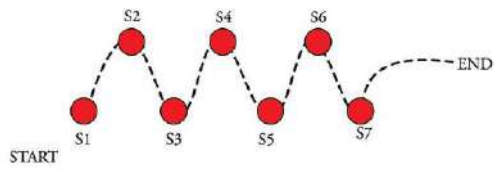
The Emotive Circulation is the path that the visitors travel through in the museum and has been programmed to showcase the chronological passing of events during the Holocaust, to impact visitor psychology using Light and Scale.

LEGEND

- | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|
| 1900 to 1933 - Jewish world before holocaust | 1933 to 1939 - Nazi Germany and the Jews | The Ghettos and Jewish fate in Europe | Observation Terrace - Symbolism of Liberation |
| The Final Solution and Resistance in the Ghettos | Jews in Concentration Camps and death marches until Liberation | Closing exhibitions- reflection of holocaust | |

Figure 2-Sketches presenting the Emotive Circulation, Source: Author

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Parameters	Design Takeaways	
<p>Philosophy/ Concept</p>	<p>Case Study 01- Bharat Bhavan</p>  <p>Expression through Spatial transitions and transformations:</p> <p>The development of an underlying concept that justifies every action or decision made in terms of design that is taking place. Correa's underlying concept of ritualistic pathways talks how spatial transitions can affect the ambience and the psychology of the viewer.</p>	<p>Case Study 02- The Holocaust Museum</p>  <p>Spatial Movement based on emotional experience</p> <p>Interplay of light and Shadow</p> <p>Colour Palette of materials used in the design.</p> <p>Symbolising Emotions- Emphasis on Emotional Experience through Space, Scale, Materiality, Interplay of Light and Shadow</p>
<p>Circulation</p>	 <p>The Circulation must be designed on the basis of Nodal Wayfinding. Circulations are to be designed in such a way that they interlink the nodal spaces and create a free flow of pedestrian traffic</p>	 <p>The Circulation is based on a Narrative that has been set up or a program centric circulation and connects the viewer to the spaces based on the narrative. As shown above, the circulation pattern represented by the dotted lines connect the programs S1, S2 and so on in a chronological narrative.</p>

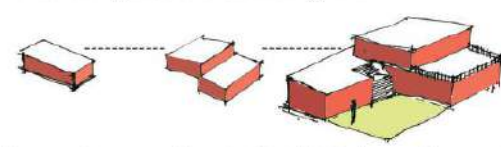
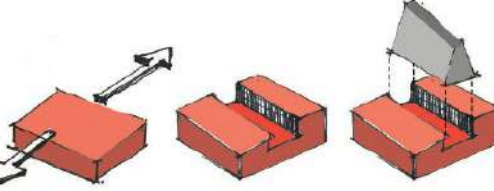
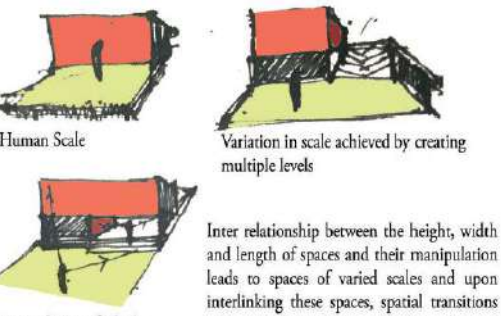
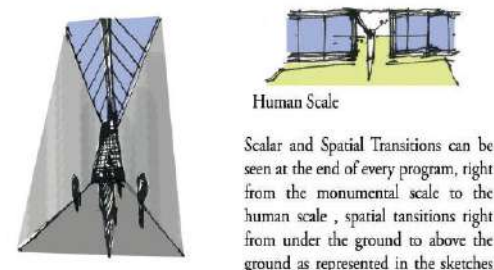
<p>Form / Character</p>	<p>Minimalism- Representation of restraint through form</p>  <p>The approach w.r.t. to form is characterised by the Principle of Restraint following the style of Minimalism.</p> <p>A single cuboidal volume or space as shown above can be articulated with multiple levels and courtyards to create a complex space .</p> <p>Complexity in character of a space can be achieved through appropriate articulation of simple geometry as well.</p> <p>Repetition of simple form in multiple configurations can give rise to varied typology of spaces that give rise to varied ambiances.</p>	 <p>Mountain Herzl upon which the museum is built holds historic significance and the architect didn't want to change the exterior form of the mountain and hence provided a depression in the ground and embedded the museum program within. Thus, it can be inferred that, for the development of form , understanding of immediate context is important.</p>
<p>Scales and Spatial Transformations</p>	 <p>Human Scale</p> <p>Variation in scale achieved by creating multiple levels</p> <p>Inter relationship between the height, width and length of spaces and their manipulation leads to spaces of varied scales and upon interlinking these spaces, spatial transitions and transformations can be observed</p> <p>Manipulation of Block volumetrics to achieve effective transition</p>	 <p>Human Scale</p> <p>Scalar and Spatial Transitions can be seen at the end of every program, right from the monumental scale to the human scale , spatial transitions right from under the ground to above the ground as represented in the sketches above. The monumental scales are observed more in the museum spaces in order to evoke dramatism.</p> <p>Mounmental Scale</p>

Table 1-Takeaways from the Case Studies,
Source: Author

1.3 The Site

The Site for the Interpretation Center has been proposed by ASI and GOK and is situated 1.5 km from the heritage zone of Hampi. The Site lies along SH39 that connects Bellary, Hosapete, and Hampi, and the site is located at the Junction leading to the Hampi heritage zone.

The site has a gentle slope of 8m downwards from the North East to South west that has been utilized strategically to not only implement the concept of evolving narrative but also to develop the scenic views of Anegundi hills throughout the western side of the site.

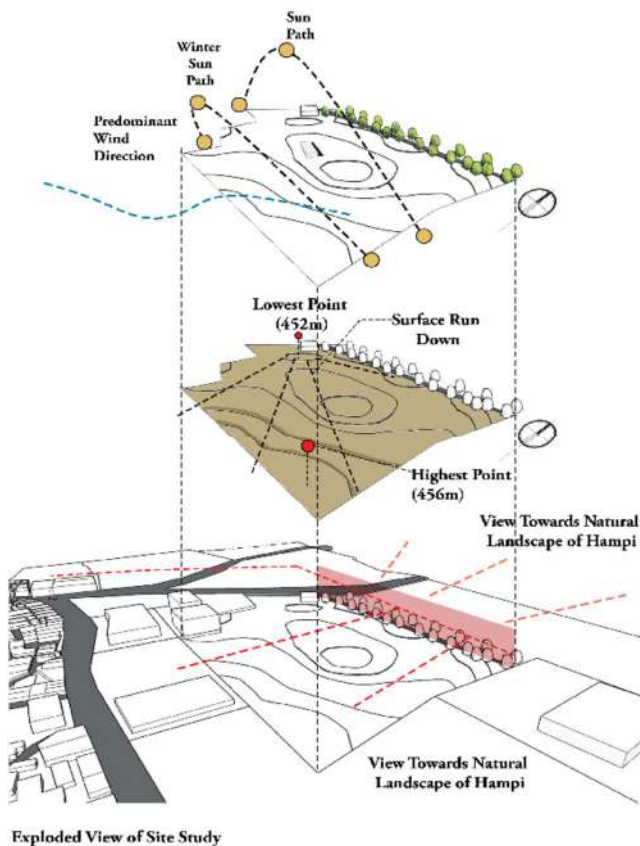


Figure 3- Site Analysis Diagram

Source: Author

2. Climatic Analysis

Hampi has Hot and Dry climate, characterized by intense solar radiation and dry winds. In order to tackle these conditions, the following strategies have been used:

1. Utilising courtyards and waterbodies throughout the complex where open spaces facilitate wind movement and waterbodies humidify the incoming wind thus creating a cooler microclimate
2. Mutual Shading where one building mutually shades the open spaces and other buildings as well.
3. Vegetative shading
4. Implementing Passive Cooling Strategies such as :

- a) Earth Air Tunnel Systems
- b) Vertical Shading Devices
- c) Earth Berming Techniques.

3. Activity Mapping and User Analysis

The Junction along which the site is located is majorly frequented by Tourists and School Students. The localites spend most of their time in leisure activities Under trees on Jagli Kattes. The Design development further takes place by determining the Users and their Requirements. The four User Categories are:

1. Tourists
2. Research Enthusiasts
3. School Students

4. Localities

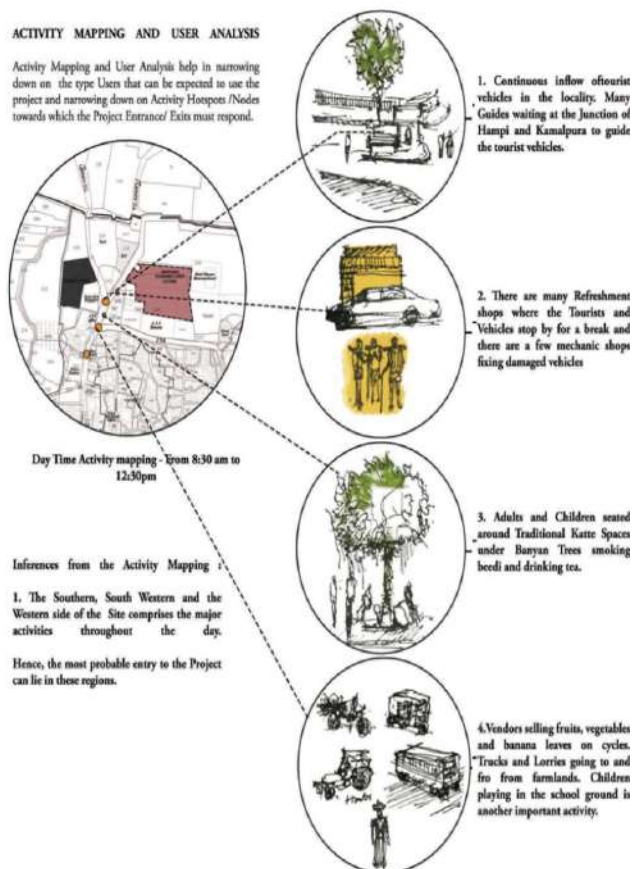


Figure 4-User Analysis Diagram

Source: Author

5. The Narrative

The Crux of the design lies in the narrative Developed for it. The Concept is to base the Design on a progressive narrative of Hampi showcasing the Journey of Hampi as a civilization right from its genesis to its mass desecration.

The progressive narrative creates an ambiance of cultural aesthetic spaces depicted through light and architectural elements. The progressive narrative has been incorporated in the massing of the project where the mass and void are determined based on the emotion that the particular space is supposed to depict, thus adhering to the concept of Emotive Circulation.

The functions are divided into multiple levels such that every level has something new to offer to its viewers.

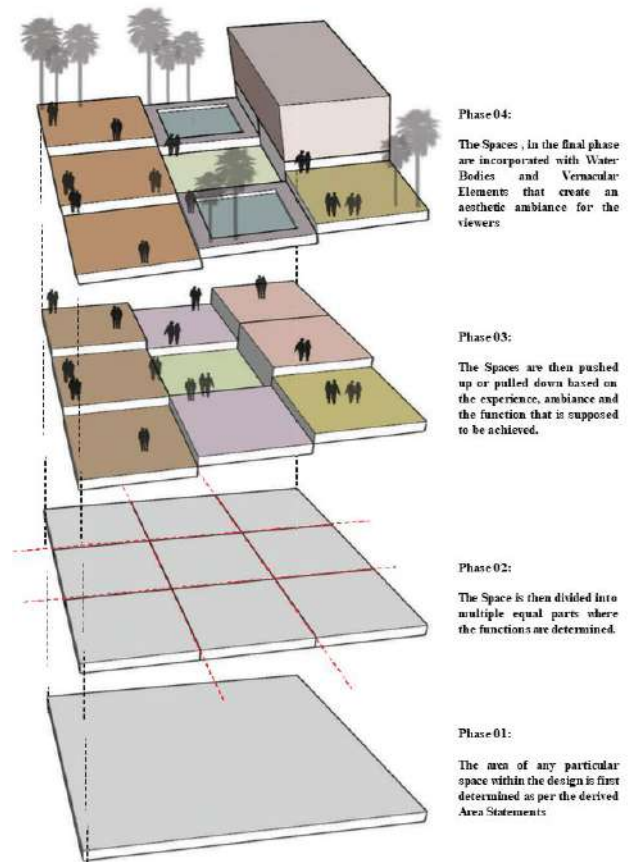


Figure 5- Concept Development

Source: Author

The form development is synonymous with the existing hardscape of Hampi and the structure of the gopuras.

The axonometric view here depicts the micro-level spatial development within the project.

It begins with phase 1 where any space within the design has been developed based on area statements.

Grids divide the space into equal or modular parts based on the function that is to be associated with them in Phase 2.

Phase 3 involves leveling the spaces up or down by the incorporation of emotive circulation and progressive narrative.

Phase 4- Introduces the Architectural, landscape, and waterscape elements into the design.

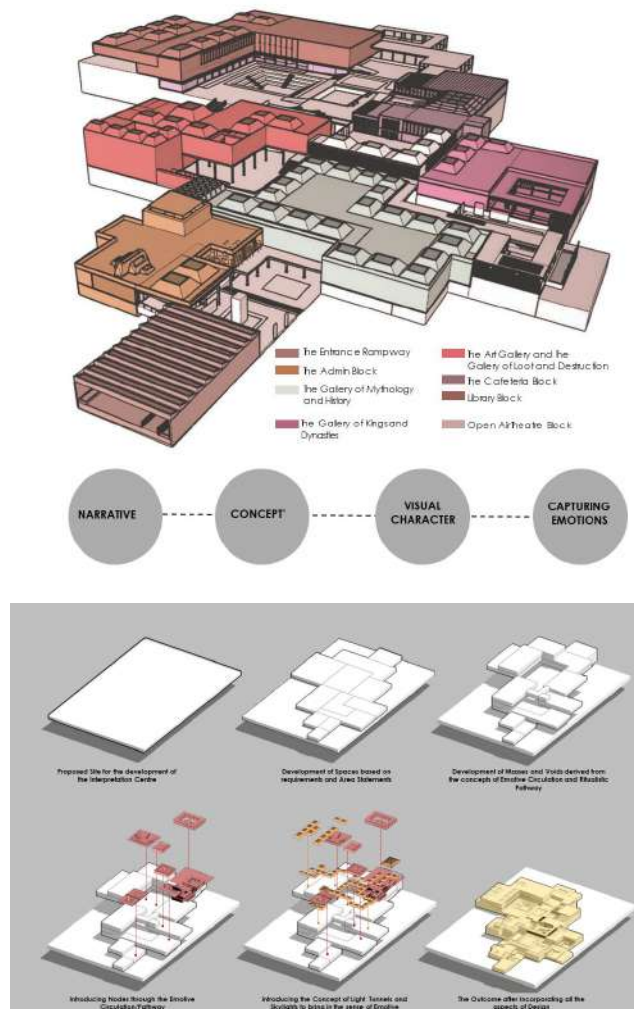


Figure 6- Design Program Development

Source: Author

5. The Design Program

The Interpretation Centre comprises of following typologies of spaces:

- 1) Administrative Block
- 2) Galleries:
 - a) Gallery of History and Mythology
 - b) Gallery of Kings and Dynasties

- c) Gallery of Art and Literature
- d) Gallery of Loot and Destruction

3) Recreational/Relaxing spaces:

- a) Cafeteria
- b) Open-Air Theatre
- c) Katte Spaces- Courtyard sit-outs

4) Educational-

- a) Digital and Manual Library of Etymology and Anthropology

The functions and spaces have been derived from a detailed user study as discussed earlier. cultural elements such as the Pushkarani, Statue Courtyards, Nodal Obelisks, and Landscaping Elements.

5.1 The Masterplan

The Masterplan follows the concept of the ritualistic pathway where alternating mass and void has been implemented, where in, after every built structure, there is a provision made for stepped courtyards that are functional. Every courtyard space facilitates an increase in level based on the narrative. Following this circulation, the highest point reached will be on the North Western part of the site, the library symbolizing the epitome of knowledge.

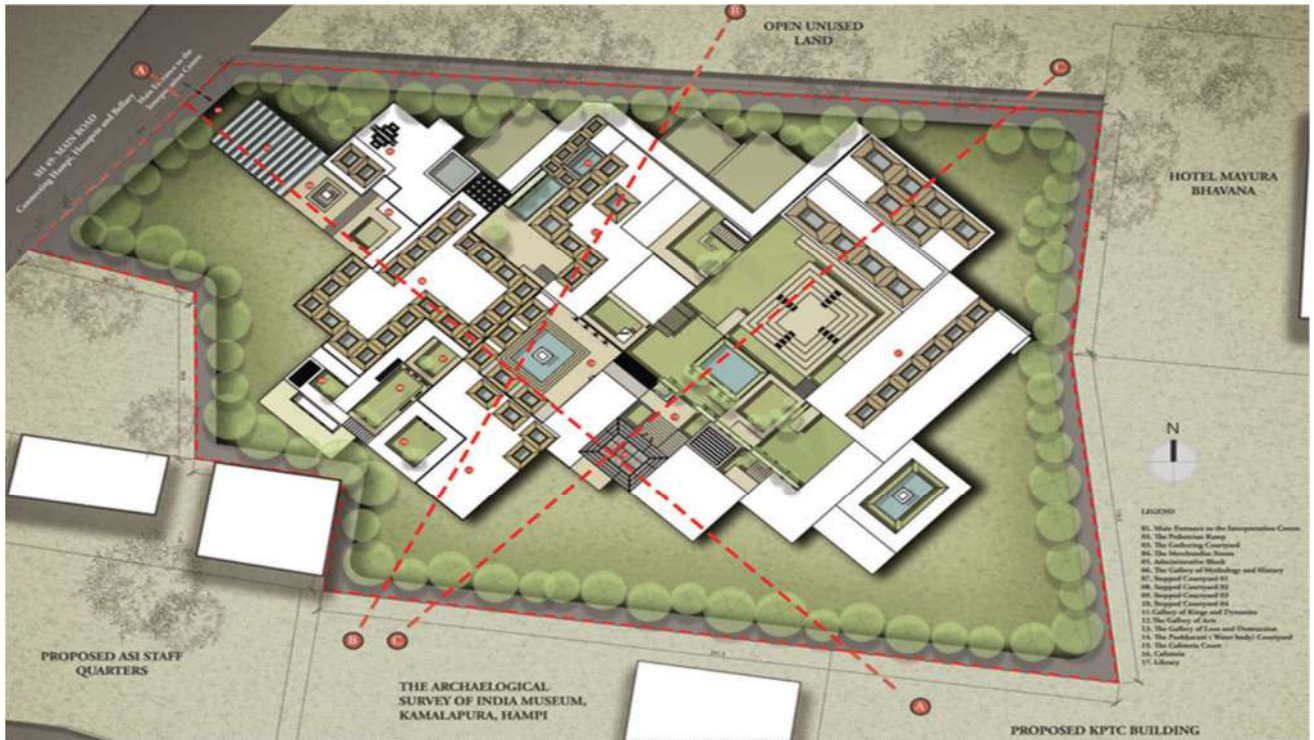


Figure 7- The Masterplan, Source: Author

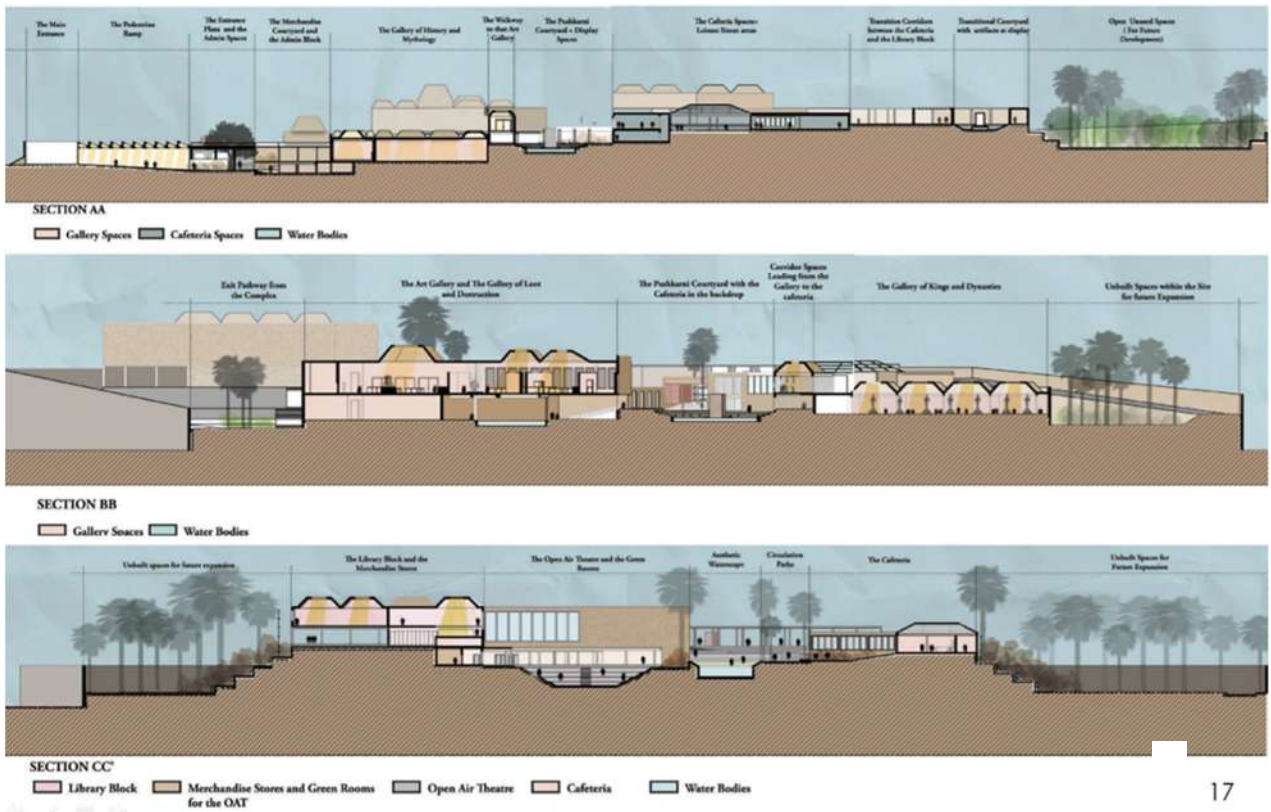


Figure 8- Sections and details, Source: Author

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Figure 9- Rendered views showing the Ideas

Source: Author

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, the project aims to psychologically connect the Localities and the Tourists with Hampi, its cultural fabric, and mythological context through Architecture thereby creating a positive impact in protecting and preserving the heritage site.

7. Acknowledgements

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I would finally like to thank my Parents, Venkatesh S Shastry and Savitha H Shastry and brother Rohit V Shastry, for the relentless support and love that they have given me throughout all these years.

7. References

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