

2014



(Left) A ceramic tile finial was found under the cement plaster on the dome. This will be displayed at the proposed Humayun's Tomb Site Museum.

Barah Khambha

Conservation works on this prominently sited Lodhi period monument at Hazrat Nizamuddin Basti, New Delhi have been carried out with the support of the Delhi Urban Heritage Foundation of the Delhi Development Authority. 'Bara Khambha' built in 15th -16th century and so called on account of the 12 pillars on the four façade's.

Action Taken:

- Conservation works have aimed at ensuring long term preservation of this monument of national importance by removing inappropriate 20th/ 21st century layers and using traditional materials and architectural craft techniques to restore the design intention of the original builders.
- Detailed architectural documentation including condition assessment of the monument was done, as a precursor to conservation works.
- 200mm thick layer of concrete causing severe damage to the monument was removed from the terrace and new lime concrete prepared with traditional additives was laid as per original levels and slope.
- Repairing of domes which included removal of multiple layers of inappropriate cement plaster, applied in 2002-4 and replacing it with new lime plaster including conservation of architectural elements followed by a 2mm thick layer of protective lime coat.
- Damaged lime concrete flooring from the inside the monument was removed and new 50mm thick red sandstone flooring was laid here.
- The missing or damaged Delhi quartzite eave stones (*Chajja*) were replaced to ensure long term preservation.
- Delhi quartzite stone steps have been provided in the centre of the northern and eastern side where the principal access pathways leading to the tomb are situated.
- On the removal of the cement plaster from the principal dome, a ceramic finial base was uncovered though shattered. This has been removed for safe keeping and will be eventually displayed at the Humayun's Tomb Site Museum.

Next Steps:

Conservation works at the Barah Khambha will be completed by mid 2015.





Barah Khambha Park

The prominently sited Delhi Development Authority Park within which the Barah Khambha monument stands was landscaped to provide an appropriate setting for the monument.

Action Taken:

- The landscape design aimed to enhance the visual and physical access to the monument while retaining existing vegetation and incorporating existing pathways wherever possible.
- The landscape works were also an opportunity to provide an access to the park from the Hazrat Nizamuddin Basti while closing access from points not utilized by the public and hence taken over for inappropriate usage.
- 600 cubic metres of debris was removed to clear the area for landscaping of the park.
- 13000 square feet of 50mm thick red sandstone paving has been laid enhancing the historic setting of the monument.
- Plazas or sitting areas have been developed which will provide for significant pause along the walk and acts as contemplative spots too.

Next Steps:

- Lime plastering of internal surfaces including conservation of exquisite geometric motifs and mouldings.
- External lime plastering which includes undoing the inappropriate 20th century repairs.
- Landscaping works which includes leveling of the open area and plantation.

(Below) The DDA Park is being landscaped to provide an appropriate setting for the monument as well as allow shaded spaces for use of visitors to the area and residents of Hazrat Nizamuddin Basti.



2015

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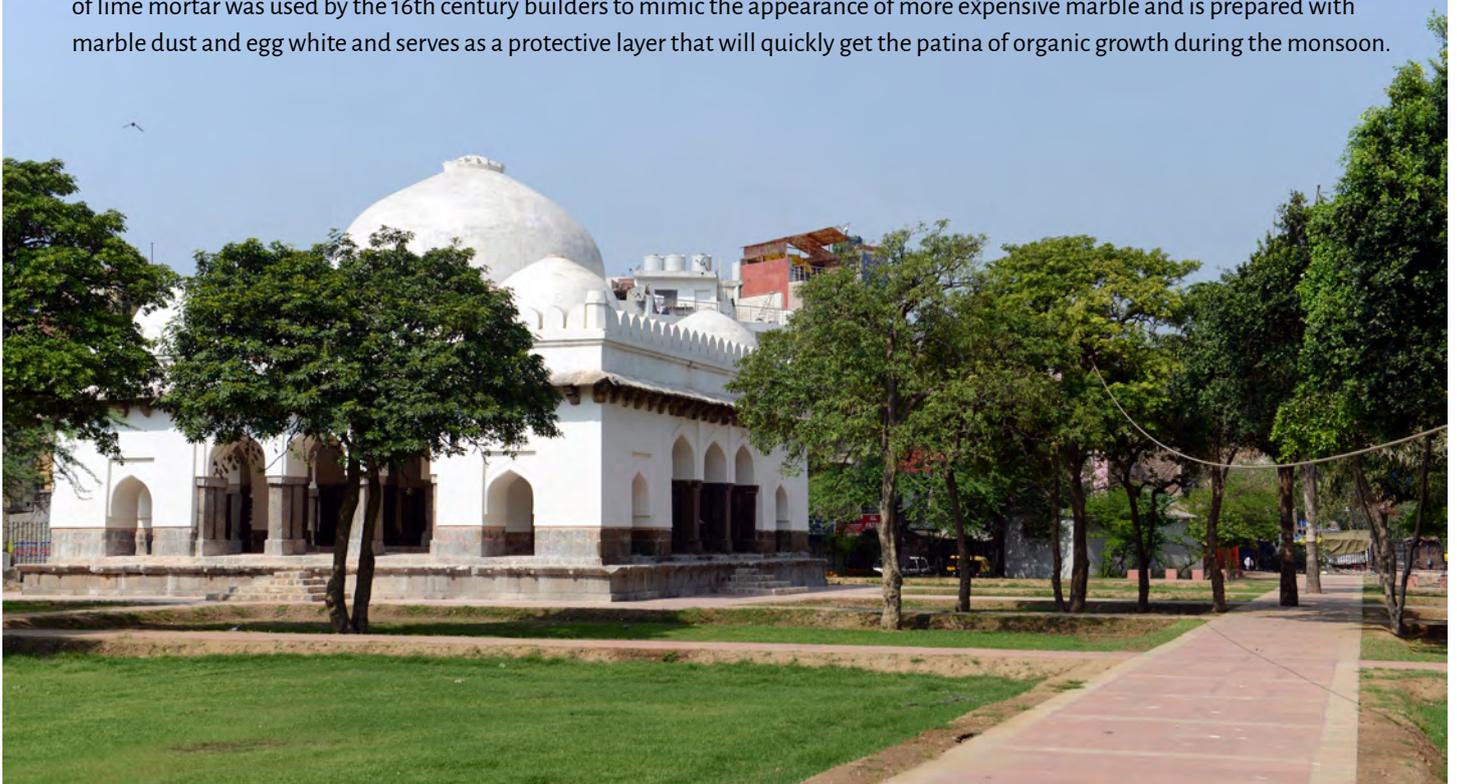
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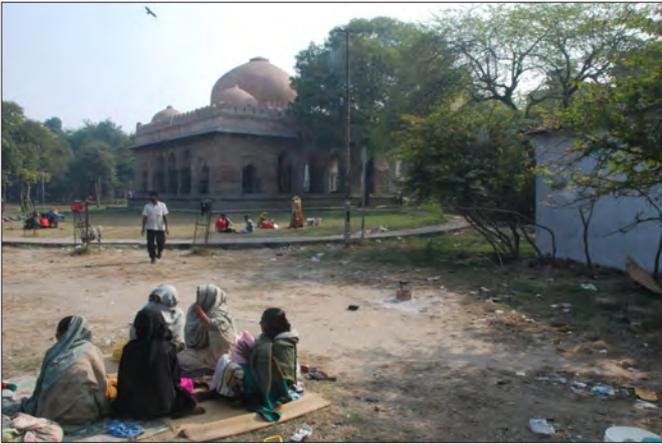
Barah Khamba Tomb: Conservation & Landscape Restoration

On the eastern end of Lodhi Road, at the edge of Hazrat Nizamuddin Basti stands a 16th century Lodhi era domed tomb building, known as Barah Khamba on account of the twelve pillars that stand on its four sides. The tomb is considered to be of national importance and is a monument protected by the ASI, and the park in which it stands is owned by the DDA. Barah Khamba stands within the Delhi Master Plan designated heritage Zone of Nizamuddin and within the buffer zone of the Humayun's Tomb World Heritage Site.

In 2014, the Delhi Urban Heritage Foundation of the DDA awarded a grant to AKTC to undertake the conservation of Barah Khamba, located prominently on Lodhi Road as well as sensitively landscape the park within which this 16th century monument stands. Conservation works were undertaken by master craftsmen using traditional materials such as lime mortar to conserve the building to how the original builders, five centuries ago had meant it to be seen, and were supervised by a multi-disciplinary AKTC team comprising conservation architects, engineers, historians, landscape architects, designers and horticulturists, amongst others.

The layers of cement applied to the monument during past repairs and causing extensive damage to the structure were carefully removed and replaced with lime mortar, structural cracks in the dome and other parts of the building repaired and sandstone flooring provided. The final layer of lime mortar was used by the 16th century builders to mimic the appearance of more expensive marble and is prepared with marble dust and egg white and serves as a protective layer that will quickly get the patina of organic growth during the monsoon.





(Top Left) Barakhamba DDA Park in 2011, before the landscape development; (Top Right) Conservation works on the monument; (Below Left) Landscaping development in progress, with craftsmen carrying the stone blocks required for landscape works; (Below Right) Restoration of internal ceiling

ACTION TAKEN:

- Conservation and landscape works undertaken through 2014 typically included removal of modern cement-*surkhi* layers, restoration of lime plaster and traditional sandstone flooring.
- Landscape works at the park designed by landscape architect M Shaheer included creation of sunken planting beds, incorporating several earlier features in a new formal layout.
- Mr. Balwinder Singh, Vice Chairman, Delhi Development Authority inaugurated the restored Barah Khamba and landscaped DDA Park on the completion of conservation and landscaping works on 28th March 2015.
- The setting of the monument has been enhanced with formal landscaping as well as an additional access from the Basti – thus allowing residents to use the park and create greater visibility from the Lodhi road.