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## Architectural and Cultural Legacy of the British Era: A Case Study of Gardezi's Bungalow in the Walled City of Multan

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### ABSTRACT

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#### **Article History:**

Received:	May	21, 2024
Revised:	Jul	12, 2024
Accepted:	Aug	29, 2024
Available Online:	Dec	30, 2024

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#### **Keywords:**

Architecture, British Era, Bungalow, Conservation, Historic, Heritage

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#### **Funding:**

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

The British Gardezi Bungalow, situated in the historic Walled City of Multan, is an outstanding representation of British colonial-era architecture. Renowned for its elegant design, the bungalow features intricately crafted wooden doors and ceilings, a symmetrical façade, gracefully arched semi-circular entrances, and the striking magnificence of a double-height atrium. These architectural elements highlight the colonial era's design aesthetics and demonstrate the meticulous craftsmanship of the time. Constructed with robust brick masonry walls strengthened by lime mortar and adorned with wood and plaster details, the building exemplifies resilience. However, the effects of time are evident, with visible cracks in the walls, signs of erosion, and other forms of wear. Despite these challenges, the British Gardezi Bungalow continues to exude its timeless allure, serving as a significant testament to Multan's rich architectural legacy. The study aims to analyze the architectural features and current condition of this British-era bungalow in Multan, offering an in-depth evaluation of its structural and historical state. By conducting this assessment, the research identifies key areas requiring conservation and maintenance, providing valuable recommendations for future restoration efforts. The ultimate goal is to protect the bungalow's architectural heritage for future generations while maintaining its historical significance amidst the evolving urban landscape of Multan.

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**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.61503/ciissmp.v3i3.256>

**Citation:** Imtiaz, S., Abbas, M. H., & Haider, S. (2024). Architectural and Cultural Legacy of the British Era: A Case Study of Gardezi's Bungalow in the Walled City of Multan. *Contemporary Issues in Social Sciences and Management Practices*, 3(4), 181-193.

## 1.0 Introduction

The city of Multan was governed by different groups until the present day because they crossed into South Asia through the Chenab River and Punjab plains. Through several centuries Multan existed independently although Greeks Arabs Mughals Afghans Sikhs and British rulers all imposed their control over the city. The British captured Multan in 1849 which led them to implement reforms across technology and governance and also in irrigation and canal colonization as well as administrative systems and justice systems. Multan joined Pakistan after the partition occurred. The gradual development pace in Multan compared to other cities in Punjab let other urban centers surpass it in both size and commercial trade importance. Post-1857 war colonial officials began using local influential figures to connect between government authorities and common people (Bilal, 2018).

The supporting religious elites actively supported the foundation of Khairul Madaris in the future. Important families from Multan such as Gilani and Bukhari together with Qureshi and Gardezi fully supported the social and economic changes from Indian partition which resulted in the founding of Khairul Madaris. The British Raj established a long-lasting administration which delivered progress through law and order improvements as well as irrigation systems, road and bridge construction and schools and railways systems and telegraph networks alongside public health services (Tandon, 1968).

The colonial administration depended on local elites to establish connections between the administration and general people through their position of influence in governing and maintaining control. These elites made a smooth transition to become leadership figures after Britain left and Partition resulted in Pakistan and India creation. The sacred shrine management role made them influential figures who shaped both societal and cultural developments. Since the British colonial era the dominant caste communities of Multan successfully worked with colonial officials which enabled them to acquire leadership positions and power to strengthen their regional authority. The British provided various privileges to the Gardezi Syeds and the Qureshis of Kabirani, Qadirpur, Jalalpur, and Ghauspur as well as the Gilani Syeds, Sadozais, Badozais, Khakwanis, Mullazais, Bosans, Khokhars, Bagai, and Raizadgans families (Touseef & Papas, 2019).

The bungalow stands as an architectural design which raises numerous technical and historical concerns about heritage. The academic discipline considers bungalows to be an architectural type that stems from imperial era traditions. The bungalow design developed as an alternative concept to the communal lifestyle patterns which defined both urban and rural houses within indigenous communities. At the end of the nineteenth century British bungalows emerged as fashionable residences which elites and professionals wished to replicate. During the 1930s the bungalow experienced a transformation which led to middle-class population adaptations and customizations. This imperial socio-political housing design concept evolved substantially throughout colonial and postcolonial times and transformed into a well-accepted and refined cultural representation. The bungalow became intensively embedded within shared social awareness while receiving various socio-cultural interpretations throughout millions of minds. The evolution of modernist residences became enabled by spatial designs together with stylistic

additions and technological breakthroughs (Muhamad, 2020).

Since gaining independence in 1947 Pakistan has developed its cultural character from diverse sets of ideologies that have been influenced by multiple civilizations. The Mughals and Sikhs along with Hindus coexist with the most influential presence belonging to the British who ruled the territory under colonial dominance. During their long occupation the British developed the bungalow-compound complex as the standard residential structure. The housing style adapted and integrated into Pakistan's architecture contributed to both national architectural identity development and the blending of East and Western cultural influences within people's lifestyle (Ain et al., 2024). The large and small ranges of colonial architecture showcase unique characteristics of colonial power. Cantonments and civil lines demonstrate urban-level colonial influence through their purpose of segregating British colonial officials from natives. The locations followed strict British styles through their planned structure featuring broad streets and big houses together with institutional buildings which showcased British urban concepts. The bungalow-compound complex took over as the most common residential form for both British officers and settlers at the building level of architectural development. The basic residential unit for daily life combined comfort with convenience to support inhabitants' needs (Khan et al., 2024).

Bungalows reflect unique elements from British and indigenous Indian design aesthetics because they combine English cottage elements with Bengali architectural practices. The British settlers merged their climatic adjustments in Indian culture with local building traditions to create a new architectural fusion. This architectural fusion of British and Indian influences appeared in mid-19th century Bengal Presidency when the initial bungalows emerged as they became the classic residential form of colonial architecture. Indian bungalows built during that time incorporated traditional Bengali construction elements which included wooden framing and clay walls in addition to bamboo and palm thatch roofs to accommodate the regional climate (Bhardwaj & Garg, 2016). The upper-class members of Indian society-initiated bungalow adoption soon after the British colonizers because Western structures represented modernity to them. A fresh middle class developed during the 1950s from both economic growth and a rural-based elite class influence in the city. The middle class accepted bungalows as their new residential solution then adapted this form to match their allocations alongside site-specific conditions. Time transformed the bungalow into a unique cultural symbol which collected multiple socio-cultural interpretations. Billings developed a house typology which combined innovative technology with contemporary design elements while creating contemporary living spaces that became a modern representation of home architecture. The architecture manifested social identity and core values of its residents through which they demonstrated their changing social position and economic situation (Desai & Desai, 2011).

The walled city of Multan hosts numerous residential areas which extend from essential landmarks among houses and bazaars and mosques as well as shrines and temples that hold unique historical significance combined with cultural heritage and architectural value. During the 10th century Shah Yousaf Gardezi proclaimed Sufi teachings from Afghanistan through Mohallah Shah Gardez in Multan. Habitations began in Multan after Shah Yousaf Gardezi relocated from

Afghanistan to preach religious beliefs and build the foundations of present-day Multan history. All residents inside the walled Multan city respect the Gardezi family because they protect the traditional ways of life of this historic city. From the time Babur invaded until 1849 the Gardezi family operated in Multan to construct both its religious background and its political and social structure during the Mughal, Surian, Afghan, Sikh and British periods. The Gardezi family's nine-century-long authority has preserved traditions which now remain fundamental elements of Multan's cultural and religious heritage thus obtaining their central role in the city's historical documentation. The documentation and protection of British-era bungalows in Multan demands the presented research discussion as a foundation. The developed framework provides developers with the necessary knowledge to create preservation strategies that protect this historically important location for future generations.

## **2.0 Literature Review**

### **2.1 Historical Background of Selected Building**

During the late 19th century Syed Hasan Baksh Gardezi received his Khan Bahadar title for his work with Multan Municipal Committee Vice President while he was son of Supreme Judge Syed Murad Shah who served under Nawab of Bahawalpur. 1899 marked the occasion when his important work earned him the distinction of Khan Bahadar. During 1880 to 1890 he began his work on the colonial architectural masterpiece which created enduring historical impact on the region. Architectural structure operated as the guest accommodation for Khan Bahadar Syed Hasan Baksh Gardezi from 1922-23 until 1922-23 before serving as a holder for important books and manuscripts. New Bangla became his new architectural achievement because he constructed it outside the city walls, surpassing New House's former shape. A magnificent structure exists on Abdali Road in Multan at Haveli Hassan-Koshak which Syed Hasan Baksh Gardezi Khan Bahadar constructed. The historical estate passed through matrimonial succession from Khan Bahadar Syed Hasan Baksh Gardezi to his grandson Syed Abbas Hussain Gardezi after the ownership transfer.

From 1940 to 1947 Syed Ali Hussain Gardezi started to play an essential role in political leadership following his cousin Syed Abbas Hussain Gardezi. The Bungalow served as the dual headquarters of Muslim League and Pakistan Independence Movement while Syed Ali Hussain Gardezi conducted all Muslim League operations from there. The structure becomes a symbol of political history because its flagpole displays the party flag that represents Pakistan Muslim League gatherings. The new Pakistan witnessed him take up his primary political role as the first Minister of Industries for Punjab during the Doltana Cabinet. The government granted him an official gold medal because of his leading role in establishing Pakistan. The Bungalow chapter demonstrates political significance as an assembly space for Pakistan Muslim League meetings yet it also marks the enduring Gardezi clan legacy in Pakistan's historical period of nation development.

During his term as Member of the National Assembly Syed Abbas Gardezi established the Bungalow as a political hub that he successfully managed. After its conversion the structure became the principal operation base for the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy (MRD) with Pakistan People's Party members as leaders. The combined role of Deputy Commissioner and successful political leadership of Syed Abbas Hussain Gardezi led the public to oppose Zia ul

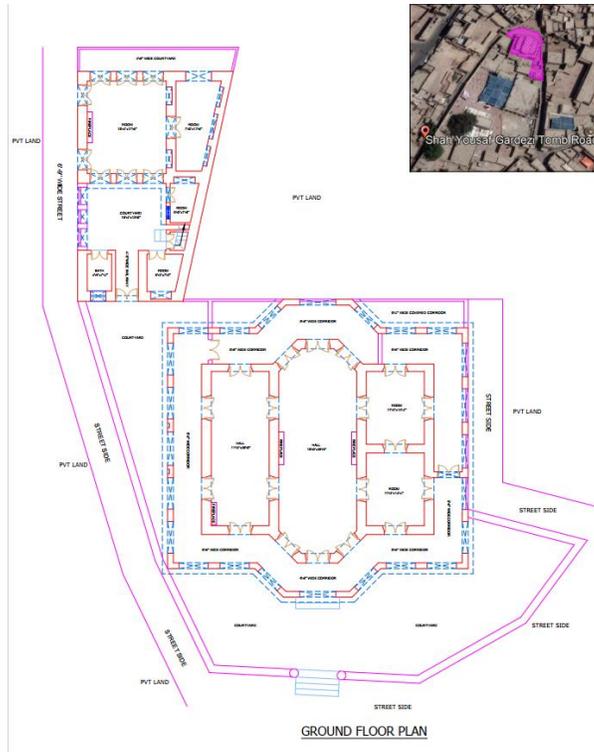
Haq's dictatorship by winning both general elections in 1970 and 1977. The Bungalow reached historical importance after his dedicated political activities. The Bungalow gained important status as an intellectual center from the private library collection amassed by Syed Abbas Hussain Gardezi. Security risks compelled the library to move to the city's main residence in 2004 but its book collection of more than 5000 items consisting of historical books and distinctive manuscripts attracted Benazir Bhutto and many historians researchers and visitors. Syed Hur Rehai Gardezi handed leadership responsibility for the family dynasty to his son Syed Ali Abbas Gardezi as they protect the Gardezi ancestral legacy.

## **2.2 British Bungalow Architecture**

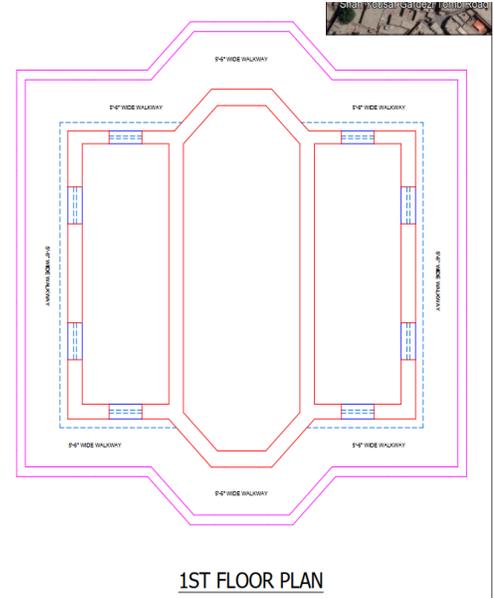
British colonial bungalows fulfilled their administrative requirements yet brought an innovative lifestyle with social methods to this region. The structures made important contributions to the built environment of Multan which already demonstrated Indo-Islamic and Central Asian traditions. The research investigates British colonial bungalows in Multan using historical analysis as well as analyzing their structural aspects. Drawing on colonial records, structural maps, and empirical observations, this paper explores the fusion of Indo-Saracenic and British Victorian architectural styles in the colonial railway bungalows of Multan. It highlights how the region's hot climate significantly shaped the architectural concepts and designs. Distinct features such as jack-arched roofs, verandahs, curved pediments, vertically aligned rectangular windows, dormers, skylights, chimneys, buttresses, and centrally elevated high-roofed halls were integral to the railway-built structures across Multan (Basit & Shafique, 2023).

The British constructed two types of bungalows in India: winter bungalows and summer bungalows (Irving, 1981). In Multan, bungalows were designed with specific considerations for the seasons. Summer bungalows featured high roofs, verandahs encircling the structure, and ample doors, windows, and ventilators for ventilation. Winter bungalows, on the other hand, had lower roofs, lacked verandahs, had limited cross ventilation, and included fireplaces. Typically, single-story or occasionally one-and-a-half stories tall, these bungalows were intentionally designed to remain discreetly below the tree height.

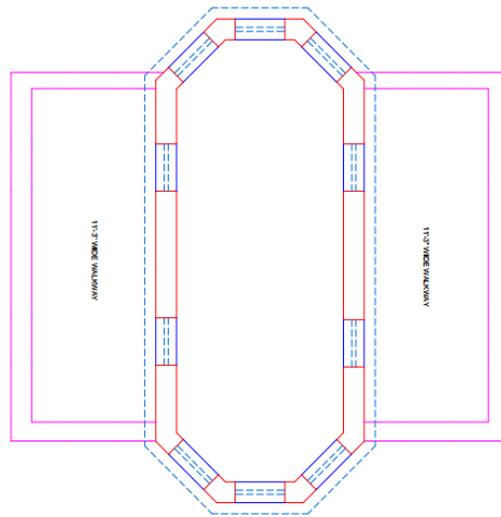
The bungalow architectural style developed as a hybrid form during the British Raj, termed "Indo-Saracenic." It combined elements of Buddhist, Hindu, and Islamic architecture with Neo-classical and Gothic revival styles (Syamsiyah et al., 2018). Examples of borrowed elements in Indo-Saracenic architecture include "jaali" (pierced stone lattice screens for sun protection and ventilation), "chhajja" (sunshades used across various building types), cupolas (common in administrative buildings), "Chhatris" (typically seen in station buildings), chimneys (found in residential structures), and parapets. Most of the bungalows exhibit a uniformity in structure and design (Basit & Bhatti, 2024).



**Figure 1: Ground Floor Plan**



**Figure 2: 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Plan**



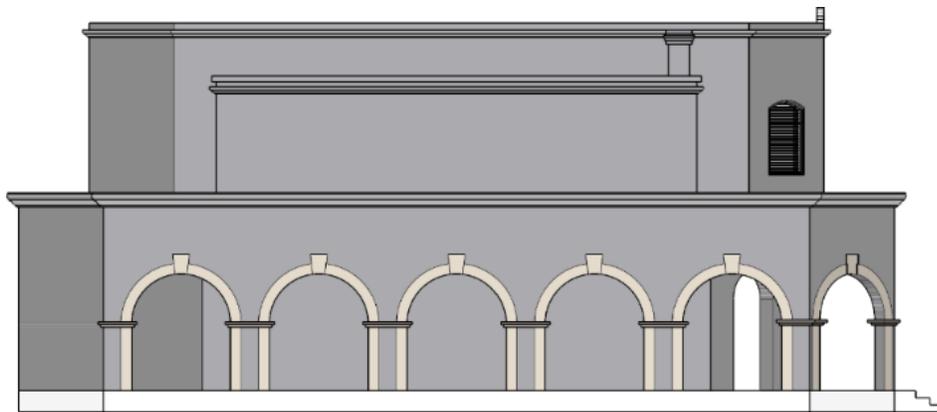
**Figure 3: Top Floor Plan**

The bungalow features a symmetrical shape with a distinct layout: a central hall flanked by rooms on each side, and a front veranda facing streets of Mohallah Shah Gardez on three sides. Kitchens and rooms for servants were in most cases separate and same is experienced here in this building which is shown in the ground story plan. The bungalow's design reflects careful

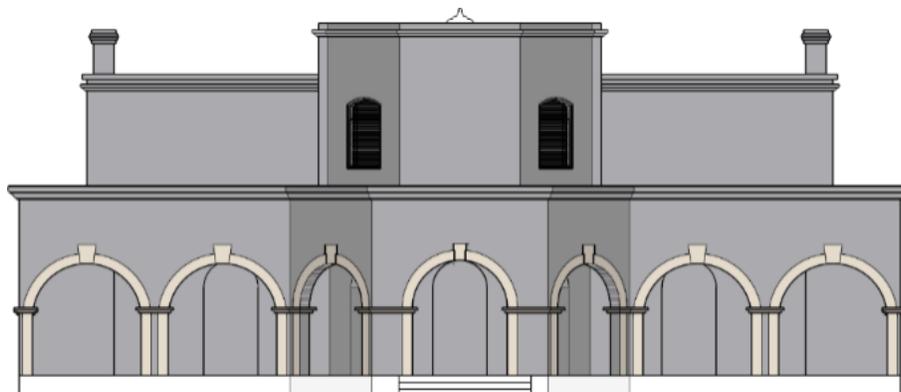
consideration of regional environmental conditions and safety requirements. The veranda features circular arch openings, while the central and side rooms are equipped with dormer windows for ample ventilation and natural light. The flat roof design includes a veranda roof slightly lower than the main structure, and the raised ceilings throughout create a spacious feel compared to typical regional houses. The primary method for controlling the thermal environment is the construction of a veranda.

Instead of altering the building itself, it was essential to adapt behaviors to suit the climate: when it became excessively hot indoors, occupants would retreat to the veranda. This approach was adopted from local Indian practices. Additionally, Indian bungalows relied on labor-intensive methods for environmental control. During the hot season, servants would sprinkle water on the veranda floor and surrounding areas to cool down the air circulating near the residences. The overall ambiance of the bungalow and its compound, including its construction, heavily relied on the colonial practice of utilizing cost-effective native labor (Ghosh, 1979).

The positioning of the bungalow within its compound, in the local settlement of Mohallah Shah Gardez, reflects the political and social dynamics among the native inhabitants.



**Figure 5 (a) :2D side elevation**



**Figure 5 (b) :2D Front elevation**



**Figure 6: East Corridor**



**Figure 7: Front Façade**



**Figure 8: South-West Courtyard**



**Figure 9: Interior of Main hall**

British Bungalows are typically constructed on a brick foundation, raised one, two, or three feet above ground level. They consist of a single floor and are designed with a central dining and sitting room. A spacious hall occupies the center of the structure, with additional rooms at each corner designated for sleeping and other functions. The entire structure features windows along its sides. Verandas or open porticoes are situated between the corner rooms, providing spaces for evening relaxation. Windows and large doors are centrally placed, and sometimes the end porches are converted into rooms (King, 1974). Same construction style is visible in the selected historic British Bungalow situated in Mohallah Shah Gardez near Shah Yousaf Gardez Complex.

### 3.0 Methodology

This research aims to study the Colonial Bungalow architecture in Multan and to identify the defects in the selected building to conserve this historic British Era Architecture. The basic methodology deals with the site selection to study the British Era Bungalow with its features, components, design, style and material of construction. Historic data analysis is carried out to collect data regarding its history. A careful site survey was conducted to inspect the bungalow. The present condition was recorded by visual inspection. All the dimensions were taken carefully to develop 2D and 3D drawings and design. Structural and non-structural components were measured and captured with high resolution camera to study its present condition and to identify the defects present in the building. This identification lead towards a defect analysis to make suggestions for its restoration. The main methodology adopted is presented in the following steps and in the flow chart in fig. 10.

**Step-1:** The Gardezi Bungalow in Multan stood as the research site because it showcases historical value through its well-preserved sight of British-era colonial architecture. This structure represents a perfect combination of British features integrated into local architectural elements that complement the local weather and social traditions. The bungalow functions as a vital field of study for architectural research on Multan because it demonstrates vital insights about colonial spatial designs and construction techniques alongside socio-cultural trends from that period.

**Step-2:** The researcher depends on literary documents and cartographic resources and old records and images to build comprehensive understanding about British-era bungalow environments. The analysis of site importance along with research goals depends on architectural principles and building materials and socio-cultural forces and interpretation methods.

**Step-3:** The initial action requires fieldwork to document the design elements and current state of the British-era bungalow in its location. The methods of visual analysis include studying architecture, spatial distribution and material selection along with building techniques. The collection of data consists of photographic, sketching and measurement methods which deliver primary research findings for historical analysis and research purposeful support.

**Step-4:** Building damage assessment involves a careful study of British-era bungalow weaknesses together with structural problems and material wear patterns as well as all environmental effects on the property. Professionals document findings to determine how extensive and severe the damage has been for building purpose and strategy selection.

**Step-5:** Professional evaluation during this stage examines British-era bungalow condition through structural analysis alongside material status and essential elements such as roofs walls and foundations. A process assessment helps determine crucial regions for focus and it offers guidance to direct preservation and conservation work.

**Step-6:** The recommendations in this stage outline necessary repairs and material substitution and structural modifications for British-era bungalow conservation and restoration work. The plan includes modern building techniques which enhance lifespan together with steps to protect original historical value as an inheritance for generations ahead.

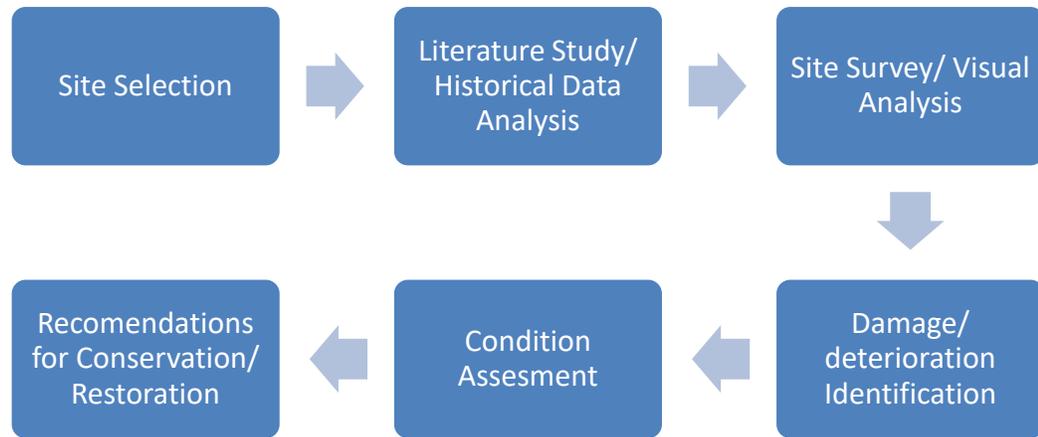


Figure 10: Flow chart of methodology.

## 4.0 Findings and Results

### 4.1 Defect Analysis

The British constructed urban and religious establishments to showcase their power, authority, wealth, and control. Multan, a region rich in architectural heritage from ancient Hindu times to the era of Muslim predecessors, saw significant contributions from the British to this legacy (Basit & Shafique, 2022). The bungalow in its current state is protected but after the visual inspection, it is required to preserve and restore the historic British Era Bungalow in the premises of Mohallah Shah Gardez which has its historic and spiritual value because of Shah Yousaf Gardez Complex. The whole structure is constructed with bricks which is special construction unit of British Era. Wood is used in doors, windows, ventilators, lintels, railings and main hall and corridors ceiling. The use of stained glass in the windows give a sense of decoration in simple brick masonry structure.

**Table. 4.1: Defects on Structural Components**

DEFECTS	STRUCTURAL COMPONENTS							
	Walls	Arches	Beams	Roof	Floor	Stairs	Boundary Wall	
Cracks	✓	✓	✓	x		✓	✓	✓
Erosion/Broken	✓	✓	x	X		✓	✓	✓
Peeling	✓	x	x	x	x	x	X	
Spalling	✓	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Termite Attack	✓	x	x	x	x	x	X	
Discoloration	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Dampness	✓	✓	X	x		✓	x	
Efflorescence	✓	✓	x	x		x	x	✓

**Table. 4.2: Defects on Non-Structural Components**

Defects	Non- Structural Components							
	Doors	Windows	Ventilators	Drain Holes	Fire Place	Pillars	Railings	
Cracks	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Erosion/Broken	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Peeling	✓	✓	✓	x		✓	x	
Spalling	x	x	x	x	x		✓	x
Termite Attack	✓	✓	✓	x	x	x		✓
Discoloration	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Dampness	x	x	x		✓	✓	x	x
Efflorescence	x	x	x		✓	✓	✓	x

✓ = defect present in the mentioned component

X = defect not present in the mentioned component

#### 4.2 Adaptive Reuse of Bungalow

British Era Bungalows represent a distinct and unique typology, holding a strong cultural and historical significance as relics of a bygone era. Historically, they represent the individualization of private property, a concept that was new to the collective way of life in traditional societies [7]. Mohalla Shah Gardez, a tribal-enclave with roots dating back to the Walled City's inception, has predominantly belonged to a single family for generations. This longstanding family ownership fosters a conducive environment for streamlined cooperation and management within the community, presenting an opportunity for cohesive and effective collaborative activities. The adaptive reuse of Bangla envisions transforming it into a public archives' facility, preserving historical records and cultural heritage (facsimile). The repurposing of the Bangla aligns with a comprehensive vision, combining archival preservation (facsimiles) with contemporary cultural and recreational engagement for the wider community. This approach also enhances tourism potential and generates income opportunities.

#### 5.0 Discussion and Conclusion

A study has evaluated the Gardezi British-period Bungalow of Multan by assessing its current condition found in Mohallah Shah Gardez. The research looks at structural declines from weathering and erosion effects together with managing incompetence and unapproved building alterations. The proper maintenance scheduling system should protect the initial state of the bungalow together with its cultural worth by stopping major structural damage. The Gardezi Bungalow displays British colonial architectural elements together with local cultural

characteristics because it carries essential historical importance. The execution of preservation strategies demands the implementation of stable structural methods together with comprehensive preservation practices that fulfill industry-defined methods. The protection strategy establishes instant stabilization methods that provide safety measures to resources until their preservation needs become applicable. The research findings establish that emergency preservation interventions must start immediately at Gardezi Bungalow. The protection of this building will allow Multan to grow its cultural heritage conservation activities and will benefit its present and future citizens. Gardezi Bungalow will find future sustainability by implementing strategic management approaches that connect its cultural heritage value to the present era through historic preservation standards.

**Sunera Imtiaz:** Problem Identification and Theoretical Framework

**Muhammad Hassan Abbas:** Data Analysis, Supervision and Drafting

**Sohail Haider:** Methodology and Revision

Conflict of Interests/Disclosures

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest in this article's research, authorship, and publication.

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