



Threads of Conservation

Social fabric • Fabric and place • Conserving fabric

Australia ICOMOS Conference
5-8 November 2015
Adelaide Australia



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Elizabeth Vines is an experienced conservation architect. She is the current President of Australian ICOMOS and an Adjunct Professor at the Cultural Heritage Centre for Asia and the Pacific, Faculty of Arts, Deakin University, Melbourne. She is a visiting Professor at the University of Hong Kong and a partner in the firm McDougall & Vines.

Elizabeth consults to a wide range of Government authorities and local authorities throughout the region, and is a consultant to UNESCO, the Getty Institute and the World Bank. Elizabeth spent February and March 2015 in Yangon, working on a European Union project with the Yangon Heritage Trust. Elizabeth is committed to the practical reuse, improvement and rejuvenation of city centres and historic buildings and is a passionate advocate for heritage conservation issues.

Yangon – Can the Fabric of this Colonial City be Saved Before it is Too Late?

Paper Abstract

This paper will examine the current pressures facing the capital of Myanmar, Yangon, a fast developing city of nearly 6 million people and described as the most intact remaining Asian Colonial city. It will look at the current heritage planning initiatives, which are being proposed both by the city government, the local Yangon Heritage Trust, and facilitated/ assisted by the many organisations from around the world.

It will comment on the appropriateness or otherwise of these initiatives to date. It will pose a key question - How can a well preserved Colonial City, which needs to “catch up” on 30 years of planning and heritage management succeed in creating a future for the city which is sustainable and robust? It will outline the key challenges to the city, which are critical to the retention of its heritage character and social fabric. The unusual role of the Yangon Heritage Trust will be outlined, and some possible solutions and strategies outlined.