Future *Place* making in Mumbai: Analyzing Mumbai Development plan 2034

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Abstract

Genesis of Mumbai from fisherman settlement to financial hub has several layers of development, redevelopment and spatial expansion. Consequently, Mumbai has rich diversity of urban fabric, each exhibiting a distinctive social and cultural character. The thriving cotton mills during the British colonial period lie derelict and therefore are some of the prime land for redevelopment. Traditional Bazaars, heritage precincts and buildings, planned colonies in some of the older neighbourhoods   together with community-based colonies are some of the distinct features of Mumbai urban scape. Moreover, there are several urban villages in Mumbai, such as Koliwades (fishermen community), Gaothans etc. Majority of these '*place*s' have distinguishing character, some of which are traditionally vibrant while some of them are congested having narrow streets and inadequate infrastructure provisioning.

To strategies *place* making of these areas, it might be essential to integrate and enhance local community, assets and potential on one hand, and on the other hand, there is a need for localized development control regulation. Analysis of the existing situation analysis shows that many of such cotton mills have been redeveloped into residential and commercial real estates, while others are still lying vacant. While of the older retail and commercial hubs is being redeveloped with floor space index of 4. Net result of this sporadic development is evident in terms of limited scope, space and capacity of the local administration to provide adequate infrastructure, while endangering the cultural precinct of the city. In this paper we attempt to analyze the special development control regulation 2034 proposed in Mumbai development plan 2034.

Keywords: Place making; heritage; neighbourhood; floor space index; Development Plan

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Introduction

Mumbai's urbanization is coterminous to growth and transformation. With large-scale fabrication, there has been rapid modification of urban forms. The policies and plans, like Vision 2013, has contributed in promoting the up-gradation of Mumbai to a world-class city. This over emphasis on transformation has eclipsed the contextual urban patrimony, inextricably linked with the city's past. Mumbai has a rich diversity of urban fabric, each exhibiting a distinctive socio-cultural character. Historically, Mumbai has grown from a cluster of seven islands to a colonial centre and then to the present financial capital has a rich cultural legacy, reflected in its numerous urban artefacts. The old neighbourhoods, bazaars, monuments and the old Koliwades (fishermen community) and Gaothans are some of the distinct features of Mumbai's urban scape.

The present perspective of urban planning in Mumbai is towards the preservation of *place*s. The current plan, Development Plan (DP)-2034 has adopted an approach towards *place- making* both as legal and social process. According to DP, "*Place making capitalizes on a local community's assets, inspiration, and potential, towards formulation of proposals for future development, ultimately creating 'places' that promote local quality of life*". It essentially emphasizes on the 'geography- based method' to address both development and preservation.

The present paper is an analysis of this new proposition made in the Urban Development Plan of Mumbai from the perspective of strategies and impacts. In order to carry out *place making*, it is essential to integrate and enhance the local community, assets and potential along with localized development control regulation. The DP captures the contextual richness of place through the formulation of "Special development controls regulations".

In light of the above, this paper discusses the essence of *place making* as proposed for Mumbai. The remainder of the article is organized as follows. The next section details the study area and the methodology. The third section deals with the relevant literature on *place*, *place making* and its significance in urban places. The fourth section discusses the phenomenon in the study areas separately, followed by discussion and conclusion.

Study area

Mumbai grew from a group of seven islands in 1661 to the largest urban agglomeration of the country until date. "*Mumbai is neither an ancient or a medieval city, but was created during the British rule in India*"(Bhagat & Jones, 2013). Presently Greater Mumbai has an area of 437.71 sq. kms, divided into 31 wards, under the jurisdiction of Greater Mumbai Municipal Corporation. Mumbai started as a port centre and with the initiation of the first cotton mill in 1856 it entered its industrial phase. In the 1970s, Mumbai expanded the industrial arena to include the petrochemical and engineering industries. "*In the 1960s and 1970s, industry was the powerhouse of Mumbai....*" (Nainan, 2008). The tertiary sector evolved in the 1980s when Mumbai underwent a massive deindustrialisation. This phenomenon is related to the policy of decongestion taken up by the then government as a part of urban development. "*The de-industrialization of Mumbai in the 1980s and 1990s was so prominent that it turned into a service city*" (Bhagat & Jones, 2013).

The history of urbanization of Mumbai carries with it the footprints which mark the exclusiveness of her urban landscape. The old Gothans and Koliwades, the cotton mill neighbourhood of Girangaon, the industrial *chawl*s, planned lay outs like Hindu Colony and Parsi Colony and the older Colonial areas of Ballard Estate and Fort, all carry the historical imprints of Mumbai. As stated in the DP-2034, these places attribute immense value to Greater Mumbai. The DP-2034 also maps these places with the objective of formulating *place* specific Zoning Strategies and Development control regulation. For this study, we have selected neighbourhoods and places from among the myriad of urban fabric of Mumbai, based on the proposition mentioned in the DP- 2034 and the Special Development Control Regulations. They are Dadar Parsy Colony, Ballard Estate, Bhendi Bazar, Cotton Mill area of Lower Parel and Mahalaxmi and BDD *chawl* (see table 1 and figure 1).

Table 1: Study Area and characteristics

Urban Fabric	Location	Character	Proposition
Dadar Parsi Colony	F/N ward	Community neighbourhood	Higher FSIs allow multi-storeyed structures
Bhendi Bazaar	C ward	Old Chawl and	Cluster Redevelopment

		Market	
Ballard Estate	A ward	Heritage Office Place	Maintenance
Shakti Mill	Mahalaxmi	Dilapidated Cotton Mill	No development
BDD Chawl	G South	Residential Chawl	Redevelopment into affordable housing

Note: As recommended by the Special Development Control Rules in The Development Plan. for Greater Mumbai. 2014-2034
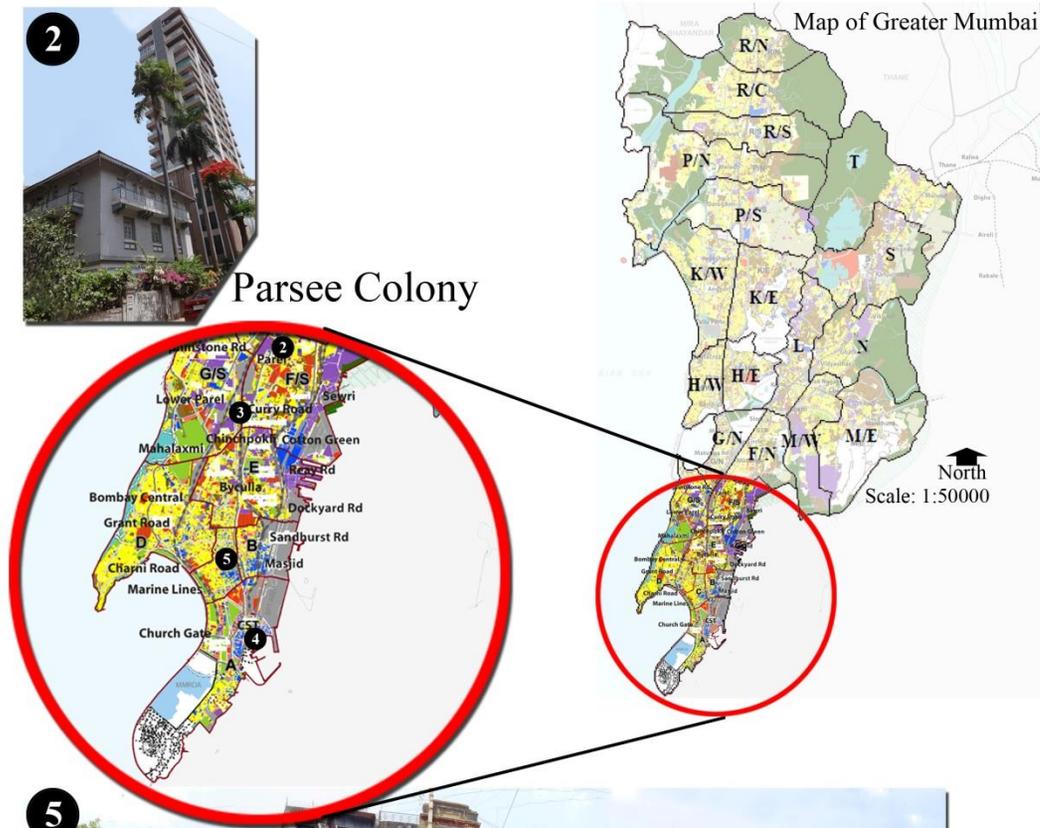
Figure 1: Location of the selected study areas

Source: Photographs: taken and owned by authors;

Inset map of Greater Mumbai: The Development Plan for Greater Mumbai. 2014-2034

Methodology

In this paper we take a phenomenological approach towards studying the *place making* in Mumbai.We follow the *first person phenomenological approach* where the researcher uses his or her own firsthand experience of a phenomenon as basis for examining its specific characteristics and qualities (Seamon, 2000)(refer to figure 2). We have captured our experience about the *place* on the basis of visual imprints. Through extensive use of photographs, we have tried to capture the *imageability* (Lynch,1960) and *coherence* of the respective *place*s. "*Imageability* is the quality of a *place* that makes it distinct, recognizable and memorable" while *coherence* refers to "the sense of visual order" (Ewing et al., 2006). This helps to capture the mental images or the *legibility* of the places. "*Visuals are necessary to help define and illustrate place making and how it is reflected in and related to physical environment*" (Al-Kodmany, 2013).On the basis of first hand visual experience, we have tried to portray the genius loci of the *place* and have analyzed the newly proposed *place making* policy of DP-2034.
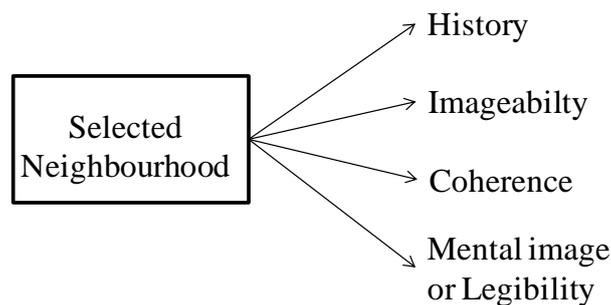

Figure 1Place Character Analysis Diagram

Source: Authors' compilation

***Place* and *Place* making in Urban Areas**

The concept of *place* is a unique way of relating the physical space with human aspects. "*Place incarnates the experience and aspiration of a people*"(Tuan, 1979). The concept of *place* looks beyond the physical limits of space and involves the temporal aspect as well. Pred (1984)defined place as *"a process whereby the reproduction of social and cultural forms, the formation of biographies, and the transformation of nature ceaselessly become one another at the same time that the time specific activities and power relations ceaselessly*

become one another" .For Cresswell (2014), *place* is a meaningful combination of location, locale and sense, as shown in figure 3.
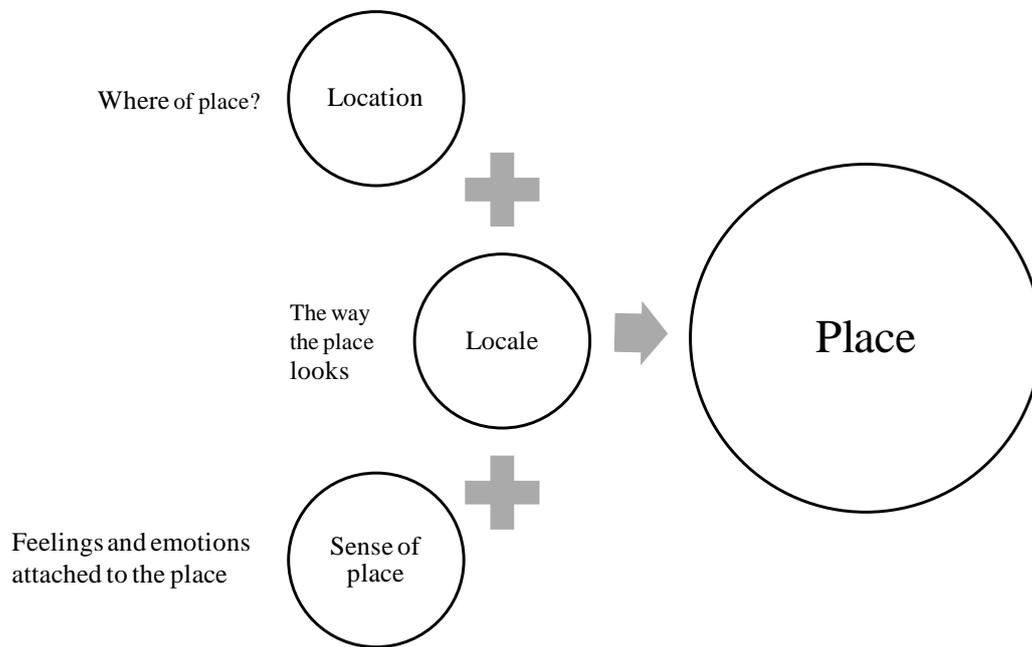

Figure 2Components of *Place*

Source: Authors' interpretation

Neighbourhood, town and city are *place*s; a distinctive region is a *place* and so is a nation (Tuan, 1975). *Place* is more than a locational aspect based on a physical existence, it is more of a concept based on memory, aspiration, identity, experience and perception(Boyer, 1996; Castello, 2006; Lynch, 1960; Montgomery, 1998).Urban areas have a rich myriad of places interwoven to the urbanization process itself. Any urban form, which carries with it the imprints of urban life, becomes a *place*, be it be a building, a street, a market area or an entire neighbourhood. *"Place in an urban-architectural literature is a construct that implies on the existence of a created environmental form, and that form is imbued with significant significance to its users"* (Castello, 2006). Therefore, in urban areas places are dealt with both physical and psychological perspectives. Cullen (1971) emphasized on design, ornamentation and featuring while Lynch (1960) stressed upon the senses and feelings related to a particular space. According to Montgomery (1998), any successful urban *place* must carry three essential qualities- physical space, sensory experience and activity. Canter's(1977) interpretation represents *place* as an amalgamation of physical attributes, activities and conceptions. Punter (1991) also provides a very similar approach where he

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indicates physical setting, activity and meaning as the components of sense of *place*. Montgomery (1998) has summed up the various indicators of urban *place* following Sherman and Schwarz (1988) as illustrated in table 2.

Table 2: Indicators of Urban places

Indicators of successful urban *place*s
1. Planning will be invisible and the results will look natural, as though they happened of their own accord.
2. There will be interesting and stimulating shapes.
3. The familiarity of streets and street life will be celebrated.
4. There will be secret *place*s which once discovered grow on you making you look deeper to find more.
5. There will be surprises, to keep citizens awake, provide topics for conversation, and prevent ennui.
6. Experiments will be encouraged and there will be exciting things to do.
7. There will be areas and opportunities for informal, casual meeting to take *place*, including warm and friendly bars and pubs.
8. Food and drink will be a treat, and people will be able to purchase and consume it at varying prices and degrees of leisure.
9. There will be a variety of comfortable *place*s to sit and wait- a city worth living in has to be a city worth sitting in
10. There will be a good balance between the needs to prevent loneliness and to preserve anonymity and privacy.
11. Changing season will not draw attention away from the sterner pursuits of daily life but rather will be an integral part of a continually changing city and celebrated as such,
12. The sense will be highlighted: affection/ friendliness/ hospitality; a sense of belonging; historical and cultural continuity; a sense of fun/ humour; opportunities for gossip; open mindedness; vitality; fantasy; flamboyance; colour; beauty/ aesthetic stimulus

Source 1: Adapted from Montgomery (1998)

This *place* concept is largely used in urban planning, where it is linked with urban conservation. The two well-known approaches are *place making* and *place marketing*. *Place making* is the remaking of pre- existing old and abandoned structures, stressing the

predominant forms, and usually employing these forms as a recurrent theme(Castello, 2006). It is the intermingling of preservation and inception. According to Buchanan (1988), *"Urban design is essentially about place making, where place is not just a specific space, but all activities and events which made it possible"*.Montgomery (1998) mentioned three basic principles of *place* making- activity, image and form, elaborated in the following figure. 4
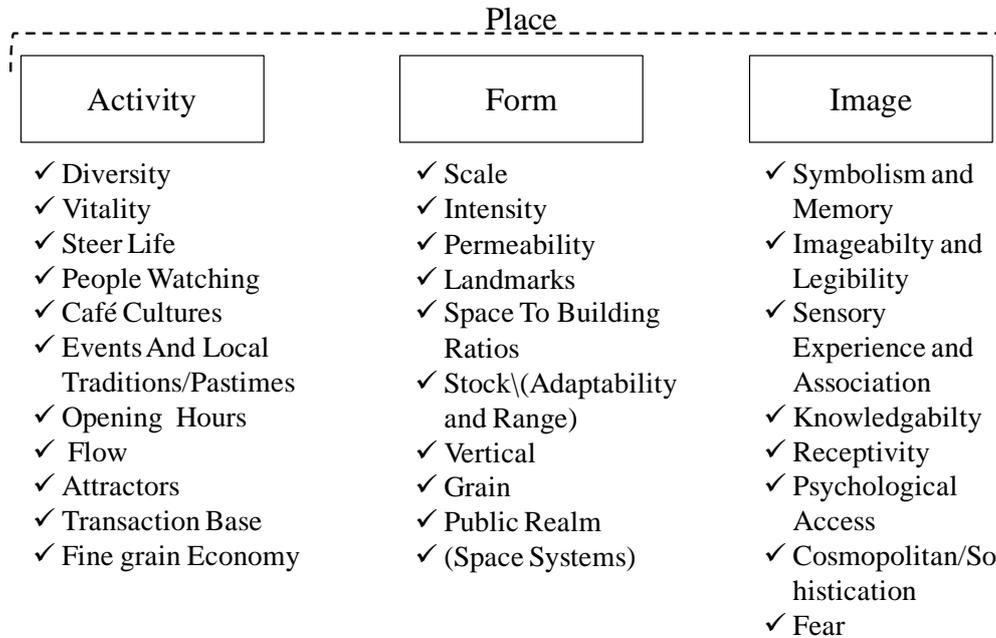
Place

Activity	Form	Image
✓ Diversity ✓ Vitality ✓ Steer Life ✓ People Watching ✓ Café Cultures ✓ Events And Local Traditions/Pastimes ✓ Opening Hours ✓ Flow ✓ Attractors ✓ Transaction Base ✓ Fine grain Economy	✓ Scale ✓ Intensity ✓ Permeability ✓ Landmarks ✓ Space To Building Ratios ✓ Stock\(Adaptability and Range) ✓ Vertical ✓ Grain ✓ Public Realm ✓ (Space Systems)	✓ Symbolism and Memory ✓ Imageabilty and Legibility ✓ Sensory Experience and Association ✓ Knowledgabilty ✓ Receptivity ✓ Psychological Access ✓ Cosmopolitan/Sophistication ✓ Fear

Figure 3Authors' interpretation of Policy direction to foster an urban sense of *place* (or *place making*) adopted from Montgomery, 1998

In the present era of globalization, the urban planning has led to architectural homogeneity of cities around the globe, where every city looks alike. The generation of world-class cities or global cities has influenced the designing of the urban landscape as well. Too much emphasis is being led on the processes of beautification and transformation, without giving much impetus on the preservation of the existing landscape features. This lack of conservative attitude has led to the gradual loss of the *sense of place* from the cities. This loss of *place* is equal to the loss of public interaction and social seclusion, thus *placelessness* (Relph, 1976). Therefore, the planners are faced with the challenge to protect the cities from identity- crisis through preserving the *places and the sense of place.*

Sivam and Karuppannan (2013)studied the role of streets in *place making,* where they highlighted the significance of streets as public spaces. They studied the streets of Adelaide in Australia and Georgetown in Malaysia and found out that the constant ongoing economic

as well as cultural activities characterize the streets of George Town with vitality and diversity bringing out the sense of *place*. On the other hand, the streets of Adelaide accomplish the primary objective of mobility and transportation, and hence are less recognized as public spaces. Al-Kodmany (2013) dealt with the *place making* in high-rise building in the city from the perspective of four factors- imageabilty, human scale, socio-economic characteristics and historical- cultural references.

Place Making in Mumbai

A.   Dadar Parsee Colony

Dadar parsee Colony is situated in F/N ward of Greater Mumbai, that falls within the Island city and dates back prior to Independence (refer figure 1). It is mostly a neighbourhood with low-rise buildings and as the name suggests is dominated by a particular section of Mumbai's population. Initially it had FSI of 1 which was increased to 1.33 in 1964 and 50- 70% more FSI was given by DCR 33(7) (DP-2034)(MCGM, 2014). The following figure 5 shows the *place* significance of the area.
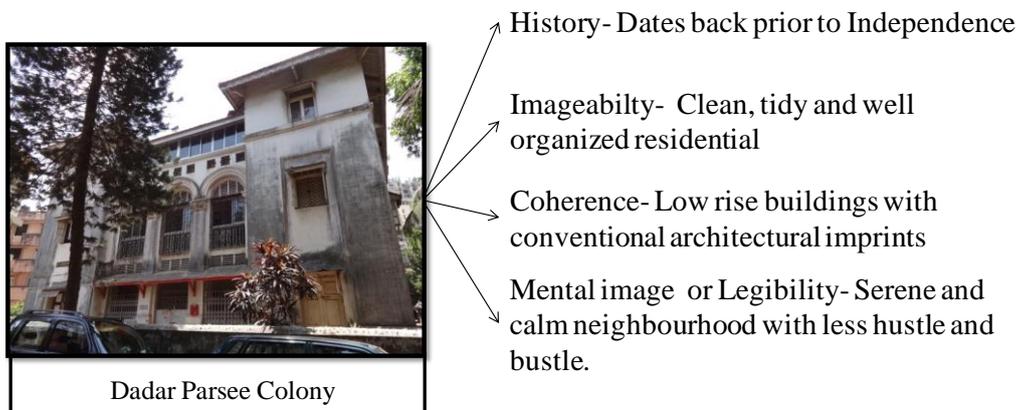
History- Dates back prior to Independence

Imageabilty- Clean, tidy and well organized residential

Coherence- Low rise buildings with conventional architectural imprints

Mental image or Legibility- Serene and calm neighbourhood with less hustle and bustle.

Dadar Parsee Colony

Figure 4 Place Characteristics of *Dadar Parsee Colony*

B.   Bhendi Bazar

Bhendi bazaar is located in C ward of Greater Mumbai. It originated as a *chawl* area for housing the immigrant labour population. Primarily dominated by the islamic population, the area reflects a mixed and tightly knitted land use. The region has been taken over for restructuring under a new project called 'Cluster Redevelopment' or redevelopment of urban renewal clusters, as mentioned in Special Development Plan. The SDCR defines urban renewal cluster as "*a cluster of buildings and structures over a minimum area of 4000 sq.m in the island city of Mumbai, bounded by existing distinguishing physical boundaries such as*

roads, nallas (drains), railway lines etc. and accessible by an existing or proposed road which is at least 18 m wide, or Urban Renewal Plan (URP) or a road for which Regular Line of Street has been sanctioned by the Municipal Corporation under MMC act, 1811". The redevelopment is to be carried out by a private developers. It aims to convert the region into a "*modern urban area*". The project is spread over an area of 16.5 acres and involves the building of as many as 249 buildings ranging from 32-62 storeys. The following figure 6 indicates the place characteristics of the study area.
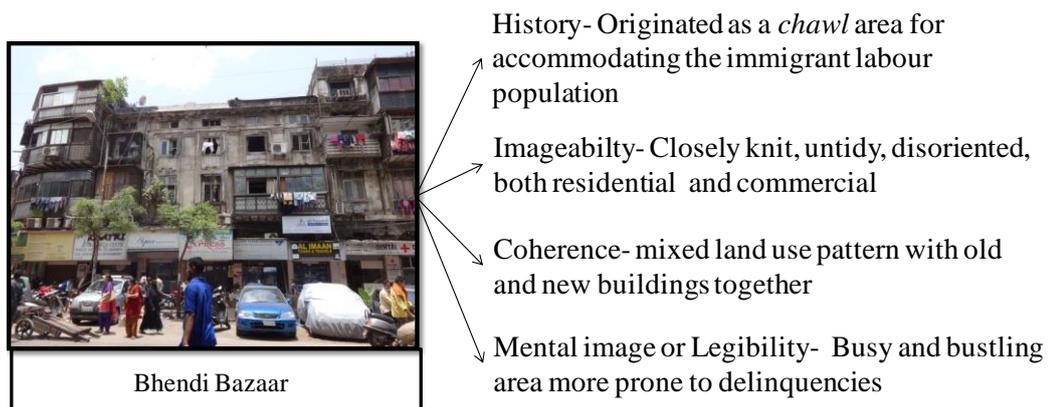

History- Originated as a *chawl* area for accommodating the immigrant labour population

Imageabilty- Closely knit, untidy, disoriented, both residential and commercial

Coherence- mixed land use pattern with old and new buildings together

Mental image or Legibility- Busy and bustling area more prone to delinquencies

Bhendi Bazaar

Figure 5 Place Characteristics of *Bhendi Bazaar*

C.   Ballard Estate:

 Ballard estate was formed on reclaimed land by the then Bombay Port Trust during the 1920s. The buildings follow european and colonial architectural patterns.Until present day, it bears the European aura as its genius loci. The Ballard Bunder Gatehouse has been designated as a grade one heritage structure and has been converted to a museum as a part of the conservation process (Heritage Conservation Act, 1995).The place significance of Ballard Estate has been summarized in the following figure 7.
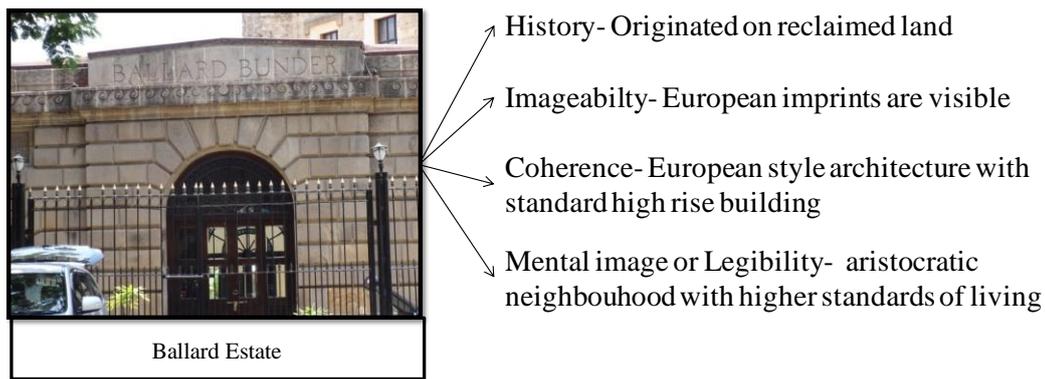
History- Originated on reclaimed land

Imageabilty- European imprints are visible

Coherence- European style architecture with standard high rise building

Mental image or Legibility- aristocratic neighbouhood with higher standards of living

Ballard Estate

Figure 6 Place Characteristics of *Ballard Estate*

D.   Shakti Mill in Mahalaxmi

The economic growth of Mumbai is primarily industry driven and it initiated with the growth of the cotton textile industry in the 19th century. The first cotton mill came up in 1854. This industry drew large number of immigrants from neighbouring districts as well as distant states of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, who added to the workforce of the growing mills. There is a large concentration of mills in the central part of the city in Lower Parel and Mahalaxmi region. The popular cotton mill neighbourhood named Girangaon is located in this central part of the city. However, post 1980s the impacts of the cotton mills declined and the region gradually lost its significance. With the relocation of the industries outside the citylimits, land was made available for the brownfield development. This area became a prime location for urban restructuring and hence underwent rapid gentrification. Presently, the area is symbolic to hyper urbanization exemplified by skyscrapers and other massive urban forms. The SDCR provides categories for the development of lands for cotton textile mills. There are three categories- i) Category one- lands of sick and/or closed cotton textile mill where a package of measures as recommended by the BIFR for the revival/ rehabilitation of a potentially viable sick and/or closed mill; ii) Category two- land for cotton textile mill for purpose of modernization; iii) Category three- Land of cotton textile mill which is shifted or proposed to be shifted outside Greater Mumbai but within the State of Maharashtra with the permission of the competent authority. However, there are some mill areas left where no development has taken place like Shakti Mill. These regions have become breeding grounds for social pathologies and delinquencies. The following figure 8 shows the place characteristics of the Shakti Mills.
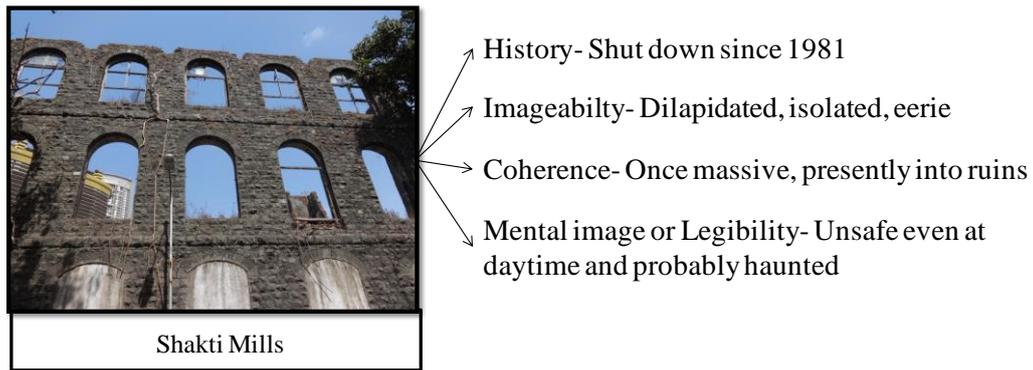
History- Shut down since 1981

Imageabilty- Dilapidated, isolated, eerie

Coherence- Once massive, presently into ruins

Mental image or Legibility- Unsafe even at daytime and probably haunted

Shakti Mills

Figure 7 Place Characteristics of *Shakti Mill*

E.   BDD *Chawl*s

Significant cityscape feature of Mumbai are the *chawl*s. "*Chawl*s are buildings with one or two room units of not more than two hundred square feet attached by a common corridor with shared toilets on each floor" (Karandikar, 2010). These were built primarily to accommodate the single males who worked as labourers in the industries. However, with the immigration of the entire families later, these tenements became extremely congested and unfit for hygienic living. The deterioration of living conditions in some *chawl*s is so extreme that they can be equated with that of the slums. Bombay Development Directorate (BDD)*chawl*s were set up in the 1920s to provide low cost housing solutions for the city's population.These *chawl*s have been considered for redevelopment under the Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Authority with the objective to produce affordable housing. Presently, there are about 16000 tenements in BDD *chawl*, paying a total rent of around 60 lakh INR to the Public Works Department while the latter spends around 20 times of that sum for *chawl* maintenance purpose (Nair, 2015).The following figure 9 shows the place characteristics of the study area.
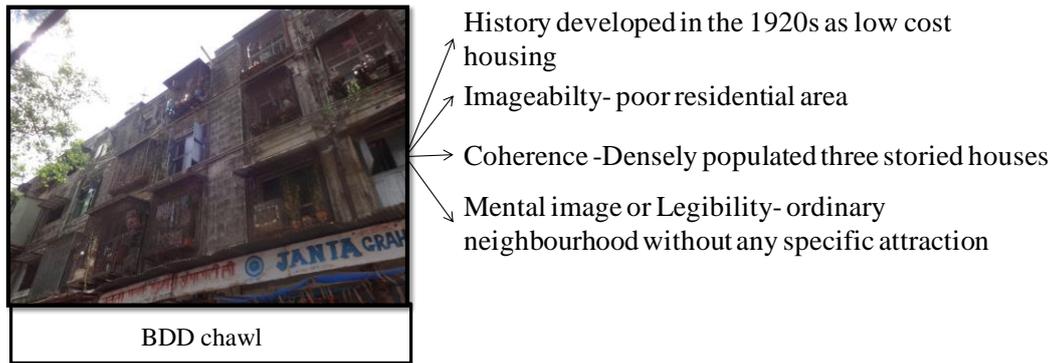
History developed in the 1920s as low cost housing

Imageabilty- poor residential area

Coherence -Densely populated three storied houses

Mental image or Legibility- ordinary neighbourhood without any specific attraction

BDD chawl

Figure 8 Place Characteristics of BDD *chawl*

Discussion

From the study, it emerges that though all the five selected case study areas have spatial proximity, they are vastly apart in respect of neighbourhood features and characteristics. They give us a glimpse of the heterogeneity of the urban fabric of Mumbai. Each bears a strong significance in terms of their contribution to the city. Neighbourhood like Dadar Parsi Colony need to be maintained to preserve the traits of the community culture it has carried since pre-independence. The massive modern construction process and high rises may rob it of the serenity and sanctity. The new development plan, hence mentions, about the preservation of planned layouts as a part of its *place* making policy. Again, neighbourhood like Ballard estate needs to be totally conserved as a part of heritage conservation of the city. The evolution of the city as a major economic centre has its imprints on this place, which still accommodates numerous high-end offices and commercial houses. Though there have been other such commercial centres formed in the later part of the city's history like Bandra- Kurla Complex and Andheri, the significance of this *place* cannot be replaced. People of the city can relate them to their city's past in such places and this is the *genius loci* of this place. It, however, does not mean that there is no scope for redevelopment in the city. The *place making* involves preservation as well as new development.

There are places left in the city, which though bear strong prospects of development, are left orphaned of such scopes and have become the grounds of negativity. A good example of such places is the Shakti Mills. It was once a part of the grandeur of the flourishing cotton textile industry of the city but now it carries only the carcases of the past. It does not arouse any sense of belongingness and the very spirit of the *place* connotes insecurity and crime. Such places need restructuring more than preservation. These places bear the scope of further development that can add to the city's economic growth. There exist ample scope to develop

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these areas as the accessible public open spaces that can serve as the lung of the bustling city. There are some other places, which can be centres for redevelopment, but their nature is not as same to that of the former areas like the BDD *chawl*s. The BDD chawls accommodate a large section of the lower income class of the city, and bears a strong historical legacy. Nevertheless, the conditions of habitation bear huge scope for redevelopment. The current venture of transformation of the entire residential *chawl* into affordable houses with better facilities shall not be a very objectionable idea. This policy of in situ-resettlement is not faulty but its implementation process needs to be properly administered. It then can only come out as a successful attempt of *place making* by providing better living conditions for all.

Finally, the exclusive neighbourhood of the city-Bhendi Bazar having its own contextual significance is currently undergoing massive transformation process under Cluster Redevelopment. This neighbouhood bears the stimulus of particular community, well reflected in the *genre de vie* of the localities. The very essence of the *place* lies in the mixed land use and the extreme busyness of the commercial activities. There are structures belonging to colonial times, which the residents feel proud to acknowledge. This *place* deserves to be redeveloped but not at the expense of these legacies. A total transformation may generate a growing economic hot spot but shall kill the identity of the *place* and its residents.

Conclusion

As Mumbai's urban development is being intrinsically linked to the globalization, global economic forces are increasingly channelizing its urbanization. In the effort to transform Mumbai into "world city", large-scale urbanscape is getting increasingly inclined towards a homogeneous development comprising of modern skyscrapers and high rises similar to other world *places* like Manhattan or Hongkong. Therefore, it is getting more important to protect the essence of the urban fabric through preservation of *places,* which hold significant place in the city's history. This *intrinsic-ness* of Mumbai gives it a unique *sense of place.* The present Development Plan has focused on this issue and has developed Special regulations earmarked for designated area. However, *place making* is not to become a synonym of transformation only, and needs to be more focused and strategically implemented. Mumbai, in the making of a global city, should not be separated from its *genius loci*.

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