

Sustainable Solutions for Urban Problems of Manali - A Case of Aleo Village

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Abstract—Manali with its lush green landscape and scenic beauty of nature is very well known tourist destination. It is located at a distance of 38 kilometers from the town of Kullu. It is located in northern part of the valley. Aleo village of Manali town is a quaint place with village life in its most raw and virgin form. Recent years have seen rapid development of the area which shows setting up of many new hotels and resorts. This has vastly improved the economy of the area by providing better employment opportunities to the local youth. However, this has marked many problematic urban issues which are affecting the local residents. The paper addresses these urban issues along with sustainable proposals for improvement of problems.

1. INTRODUCTION

Aleo is a beautiful village set up on the banks of river Beas. It is home to one of very finest forms of traditional hill architecture. Prior to the year 2000, Aleo village was largely undeveloped with only a few traditional houses made of slates and mud. But boom in tourism and shortage of land in main Manali has led to becoming of Aleo village a major tourist and hotel hub. The sleepy hilly village now has crowd of big hotels and resorts which however do not fit very well with the vernacular tradition of the area. Although the economy of the place has been boosted by growing hotels and tourism industry but still large portion of the population is engaged in agriculture [1]. It has been found that there is a lack of sustainable development for Tourism in Manali and often Tourism is affected by unrelated development [2].

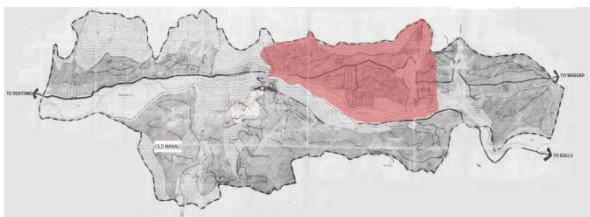


Figure 1. Location of Aleo village in Manali Existing scenario

The village has a combination of permanent and floating population and therefore both types of construction that is vernacular traditional and modern exists simultaneously. Old

construction has sloping roofs made of slates and wood but new construction has flat roofs made of reinforced cement concrete. Landuse includes predominantly residential areas but more than half of the land is covered by forest area. Houses are arranged in organic manner and not a single area is densely overpopulated. Hotels and resorts are arranged along the main road for ease of accessibility.



Figure 2. Landuse of Aleo village

2. URBAN PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED

The survey for the area was conducted and physical infrastructure and social infrastructure was studied using the existing land use map. Different urban design problems especially in category of physical infrastructure were identified using the methodology as explained in [3]. Further, their proposed solutions are also mentioned as under:

1. Drainage: open drains, lack of maintenance, fear of spread of epidemics

Solution: drains be properly covered with all-weather covers and the flow be maintained to allow underground water recharging.



Figure 2: Open Drains



Figure 3: Narrow and ill maintained roads



Figure 3: Housing under development

6. Housing: random and haphazard sprouting of houses without proper planning has arisen many infrastructure service problems.

Solution: housing shall be properly planned with respect to building byelaws of the area.

7. Housing access: width of access routes to houses is so small that four wheelers cannot access in case of emergencies.

Solution: alternate links or access road to a group or clutter of houses be provided after check of ease of accessibility points.

2. Access: width of main road is less which actually allows only two wheelers to pass at a time

Solution: width of the road be increased and encroachment be removed to facilitate movement of vehicles.

3. Signage: no traffic signals and signage in the area which can lead to accidents.

Solution: proper signage boards and traffic signals shall be provided at the junctions and along the road to facilitate ease of accessibility.

4. Parking: insufficient parking space which leads to roadside parking.

Solution: proper and increase parking spaces be provided to accommodate ever increasing demand of parking as per the number of vehicles visiting the area.

5. Health facilities: no clinical and medical facilities are there in entire Aleo village and ambulance service is quite erratic.

Solution: proper medical and health care facilities shall be provided especially with increasing construction in the area.

8. Banking facilities: lack of provision of ATM's and provision of only one bank leads to problem in cash withdrawal.

Solution: provision for adequate number of ATM's shall be made to ease withdrawal of money and financial transactions.

9. Lack of public spaces: there is no assembly and gathering spaces for public

Solution: provision for public open spaces shall be made.

3. DISCUSSION

Based on the above stated problems and propose solutions, urban problems of Aleo village that have arisen mainly due to ever increasing population because of increasing development of the area sustainable answers can be sought for the otherwise ignored issues..

4. CONCLUSION

The study involves identification of problems and their solutions using opinion surveys. This method is best suited for channelizing the development as the direct opinion of the residents is considered. This methodology is also helpful in development of future development plans of the study area.

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