

Asia Pacific Cultural Heritage Conservation Training Program 2007:
Conservation and Restoration of Wooden Buildings

Method for Surveying Private Residences and Urban Streetscapes

SHIMADA Toshio, *Section Head*

Architecture Section, Department of Heijo Palace Site Investigation

Nara National Institute for Cultural Properties

09/21, 2007

I. The purpose of the survey

- Defining the history and value of the town →
 - The reason for conservation
 - Identifying the objects which should be conserved
- Defining the characteristics of an area →
 - Specifying the buildings which should be conserved
 - Methods for controlling new architecture
 - (Building location, size, design, etc.)
- Gaining a grasp of the present situation of the area →
 - Creating a basic register of the structures within the area
 - Formulating a policy for improvement with the purpose of restoration
 - Formulating a policy for revitalization of the area

II. Method of investigation

1. Collection of basic informational material

Purpose: To shed light on the history and structure of the town.

Method: Collection of preceding studies, documents, old maps, and old photographs.

Notes: The survey is conducted in advance to obtain background knowledge. Collection is also carried on vigorously during the survey, and interviews with relevant persons are conducted as well.

2. Obtaining and/or creating a basic map

Purpose: To understand the structure of the town. The map is to serve as the basic information for the survey. The map is to serve as the basic information for conservation management.

Method: A map is obtained which contains existing plot boundaries and the outline of existing buildings. When there is no such map, one is created during the initial stages of the survey.

Notes: This information will be necessary for every stage of the process. It is the top priority item in the survey.

3. Gaining a grasp of the present situation of the community

Purpose: To understand the structure of the town. To obtain information for smooth execution of the survey. This information will be utilized in considering the role of community residents in the efforts toward conservation and restoration.

Method: Utilizing government information and interviews with residents, the community units are entered onto the map.

Notes: Workshops are held as needed while the survey is being conducted.

4. Exhaustive survey of the present situation

Purpose: To identify the characteristics (street structure, scenery, etc.) of the entire area. To gain a grasp of the present situation of the area. To select the buildings on which “building inspections” are to be performed. This information will be utilized for the purpose of deciding the range for conservation.

Method: Working from a map, every site and every structure (buildings, gates, fences, stone walls, waterways, wells, and all other man-made structures) within the surveyed area is given a number and plotted onto the map. A list is generated using notes on general descriptions and photographs of every structure.

Notes: This is done as the first step of the on-site survey. It encompasses all traditional and new buildings. The items for the general description notes are to be decided in advance, so that the investigator can focus on writing those notes during the on-site survey. The detailed surveys will be conducted later, so the focus is exclusively on list creation without spending time on individual surveys.

5. Building survey (Survey of private residences)

Purpose: To identify the characteristics of a building in the area.

Method: Based on the exhaustive survey, a traditional building that shows the characteristics of the area is chosen and subjected to a building survey.

A. Drawing up of protocol: The items to be identified are laid out in a spreadsheet, and entries are made on site.

B. Creation of a plot plan: Plot plans are created for each building site.

C. Actual measurement of floor plan: The plane figure is sketched into a field book (plotting paper) and measured.

→ Working from the field book, a drawing is created on the desk.

D. Actual measurement of cross section: The plane figure is sketched into a field book (plotting paper) and measured.

→ Working from the field book, a drawing is created on the desk.

E. Actual measurement of elevation: The plane figure is sketched into a field book (plotting paper) and measured.

→ Working from the field book, a drawing is created on the desk.

F. Evidence survey: Evidence of past modifications to the building are entered onto simplified planes

The changes made to the building are considered on the basis of the evidence.

G. Photography: Rough photographs necessary for on-paper analysis and creation of drawings are taken.

Photographs to be contained in the report are taken.

H. Survey of informational material: Documents, *munafuda* (wooden ridge tag), pictures, diagram of the physiognomy of the house, old photographs

Notes: Whether to conduct a survey on all the traditional buildings within the area or to limit the number of buildings is to be decided on the basis of the budget and time allowed for the survey. The survey is to include not only the building itself but the building site and the usage of the building.

6. Historic survey

Purpose: To shed light on the history of the town.

Method: Analyzing preceding studies and documents, conducting interviews, and performing excavations.

Analyzing the changes in the town's structure on the basis of excavation, document survey, old maps, and old photographs.

Notes: Information is collected individually, and workshops are conducted as well.

7. Folklore survey

Purpose: To define the traditional life of the townspeople. To conserve things which demonstrate the historic nature of the area. This will be used as a tool for rebuilding the community and revitalizing the area.

Method: Investigation of the dates and times, methods, costumes, and equipment used in festivities. Collection of data and interviews are conducted on the resident's daily clothing, food and housing.

Notes: Workshops are held to heighten the awareness of community residents.

8. Consideration of conservation method

Purpose: To identify a basic policy for conservation.

Method: On the basis of the surveys conducted above, the range for conservation is considered.

The buildings to be conserved are considered.

Standards by which to control new buildings are considered.

Policies for community revitalization are considered.

Notes: At the final stage of the survey, a workshop is held with participation by researchers, government administrators, and residents, and a feasible plan is formulated.

9. Preparation of the report

Purpose: This is the duty of the person who conducted the survey. The report defines the value of the area, and disseminates that knowledge to the residents as well as to the general public.

Notes: Items 1 through 7 would suffice for an academic survey; however, a survey report for the purpose of conservation should include item 8 as well.