

**IMPORTANCE OF HERITAGE DOCUMENTATION : A CASE STUDY OF
VITTHAL(GHUI TRMPLE), NAGPUR**

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Nagpur being the Second capital of Maharashtra state, also has rich cultural heritage structures standing still from the Gond and Bhosale era. Wada's, Forts, Temples plays a very important role in heritage of Nagpur settings. Wada's Like Bhonsale, Chitnavis, Forts Like Sitabuldi and famous temples like Adasa ,Kalyaneshwar ,Shri Siddhi Vinayaka Temple at Kelzar have achieved importance, but there are few structures which are still unidentified built during the historic era of Gonds and Bhosales. Ghui temple located at Mahal, Nagpur is one of such structures identified. As Ghui temple has legend attributed and is unique in its own way documentation of this structure is done. This research paper focuses on methodology of documentation ,construction techniques, materials and various architectural elements associated with this temple.

KEYWORDS:

Documentation, Temple, Mahal Nagpur, Heritage structures.

INTRODUCTION

This Vitthal temple of the Ghui family is almost 250-300 years old. Unlike most others temples, the Vitthal idol installed here is white. There is also a legend attributed to the temple. Originally, there were idols of Rai and Rukmani on either side of Vitthal. But the ruler at that time insisted that he would establish the temple and not a Brahmin. But when that was attempted, the idol of Rai melted into water which scared the ruler and a Brahmin was called to establish the temple. The idols in the temple still stand to a little right, having left space for the third one

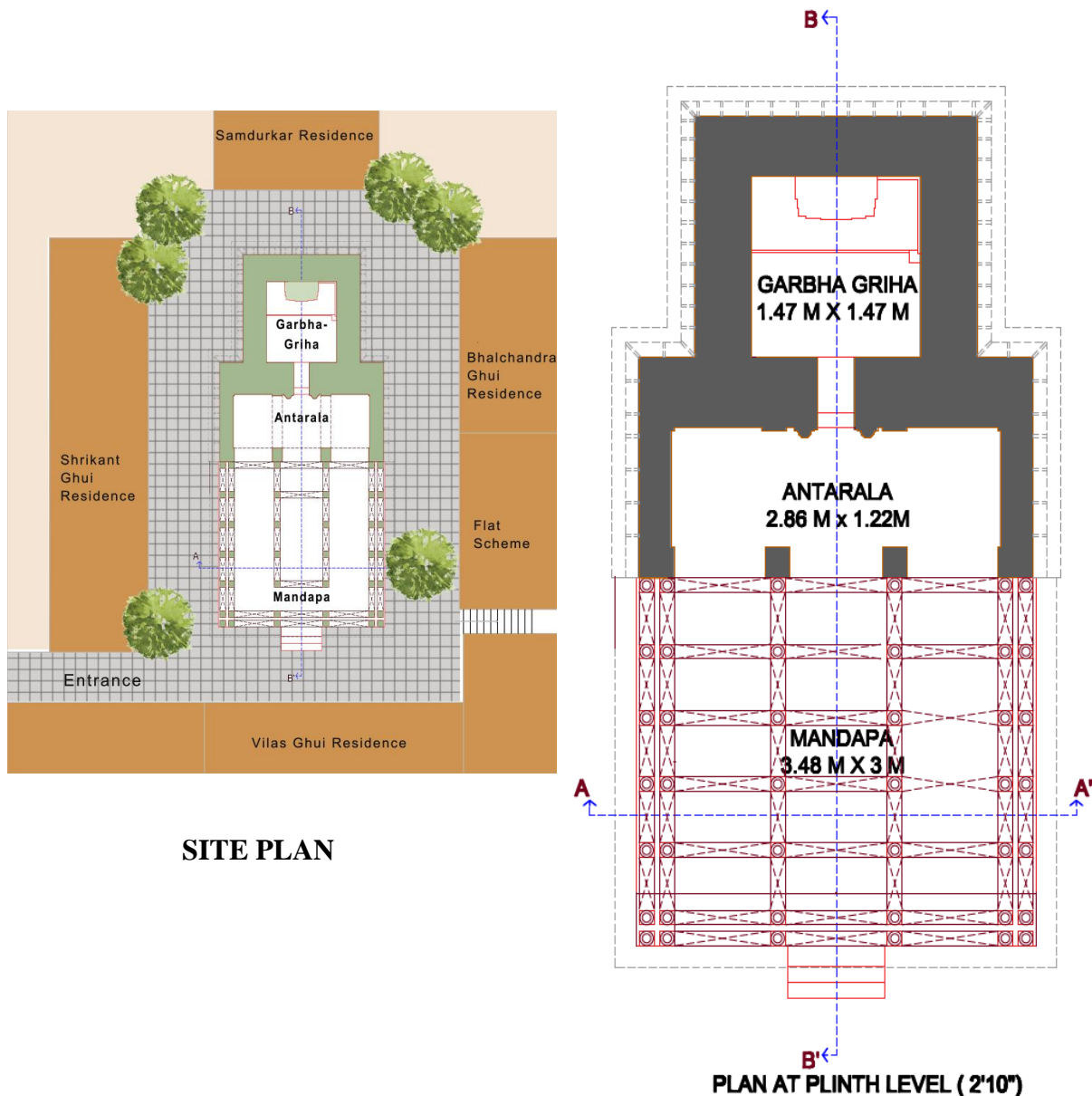
The temple is unique in its story as the image of the idol is white. All Vithoba images are generally modeled on his central image in Pandharpur. The Ghui Vitthal image is a white marble sculpture that is 3 feet 9 inches (1.14 m) tall. Vithoba is usually depicted as dark young boy but here the image is depicted as white . He wears high, conical headgear or a crown. Previously there was a samadhi existing at this place and after that temple was constructed by Mudhoji Bhosale in 1782.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**ICONOGRAPHY:****METHODOLOGY OF DOCUMENTATION:**

The purpose of site visit was not just documentation or taking measurements on site , but also explore heritage structures and their contribution in historical background of our city. The process of documentation started with interview of few people , before taking actual measurements on site .

Few interesting facts and stories related to Vitthal ghui temple were unfolded during this process. we came to know that previously there was a samadhi existing at that place and after that temple was constructed by Mudhoji Bhosale in 1782. Photographic documentation of this was done. Interior photography was a easy task but in interiors light source was minimum so photographs were captures at minimum shutter speed and as there is no space available outside it was difficult to capture wide angle Photography for exteriors

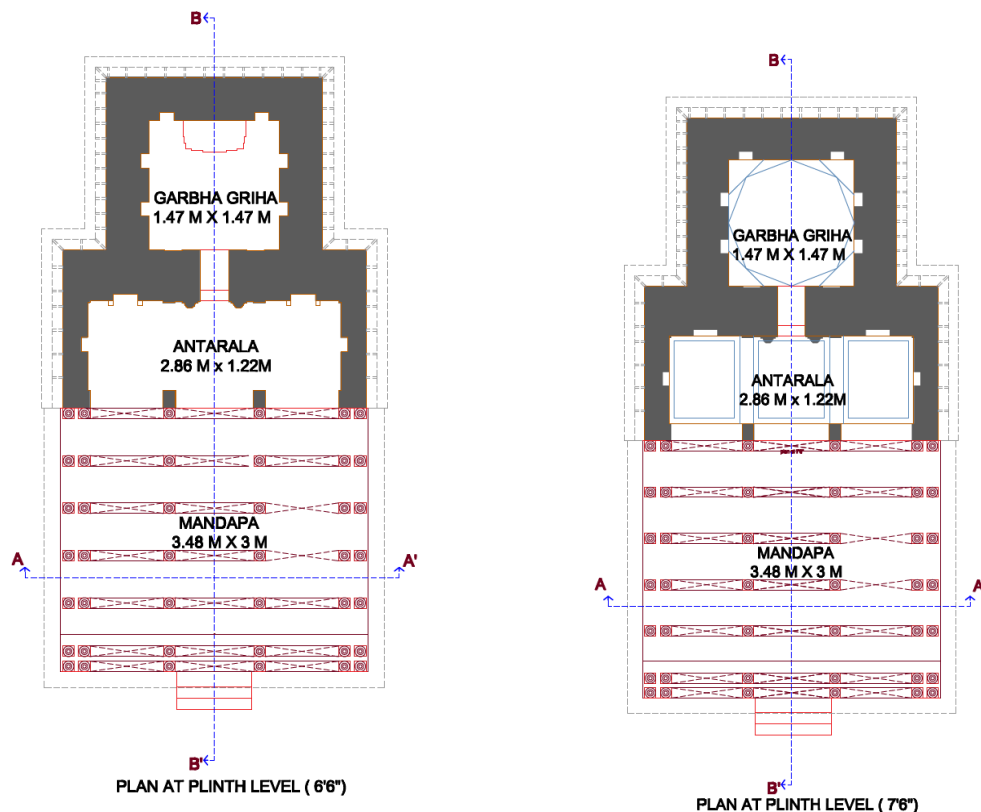
Detail carvings on columns were documented with the help of tracing on paper. Inventories were filled on site and detail measurement of Sabha Mandap ,Garbha Griha and Antarala were taken with the help of Measuring tape , Ceiling of Garbha Grhiha and Antarala was measured with Disto meter.

**SITE PLAN****PLAN AT PLINTH LEVEL (2'10")****Plan Form**

The temple is rectangle in plan .The temple is divided into three parts Mandapa,Antarala and Garbhagriha. Flight of steps(plinth) leads towards Mandapa Measures 3.84 m x 3 m. The mandapa is raised on a plinth which is different from that of the sanctuary and is reached by steps leading to the entrance without porches.

The Mandapa holds 42 columns with typical maratha style arches. The mandapa Leads towards the Antarala measuring 2.86 m x 1.22 m. The Antarala Stands on Four Columns. The temple is resting on total of 46 columns intricated in Maratha Architectural style Garbha Griha is square in plan measuring 1.47 m x 1.47 m .Garbha griha hold the idol of Vitthal and Rukhmai and a space left for the idol Rai. The total temple measures 3.9 m x 7.18 m. The Architectural style of the temple is a combination of Hemadpanti and Karnataka temple type.

The sanctum is having a style of Hemadpanti architecture and Shikhara consist of Karnataka style. The vitthal temple is constructed using different materials such as basalt stone, marble, teakwood, Bijawood and bricks. Garbha -Griha wall is constructed using basalt stone. Core walls of the Garbha-Griha are constructed using basalt stone. Mandapa stands on Bijawood column arch frames The shikhar is constructed using bricks and is plastered with lime. The total height of the shikhar measures 9.7 m.



A shikhara over the garbhagriha chamber where the presiding deity is enshrined is the most prominent and visible part of a Hindu temple of North India. As in Hindu temples, the most important and highly distinguishing feature of Maratha temple is the **shikhara** or the superstructure. The shikhar of the Vitthal temple (Ghui) is a Revitalized Bhosale type.

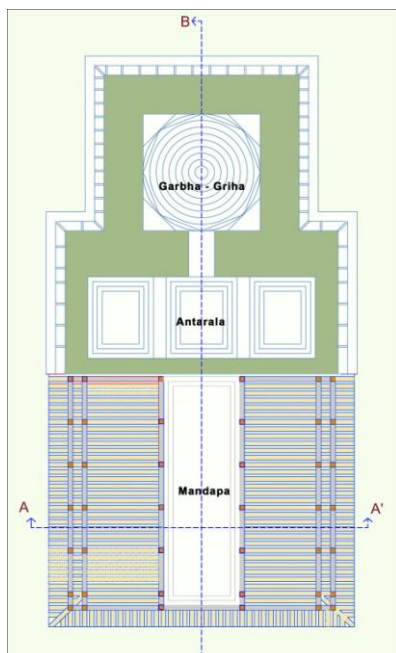
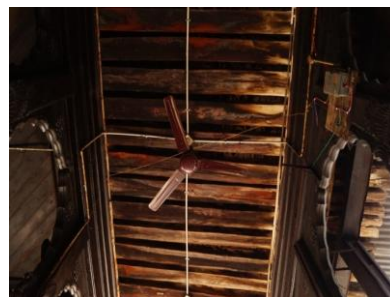
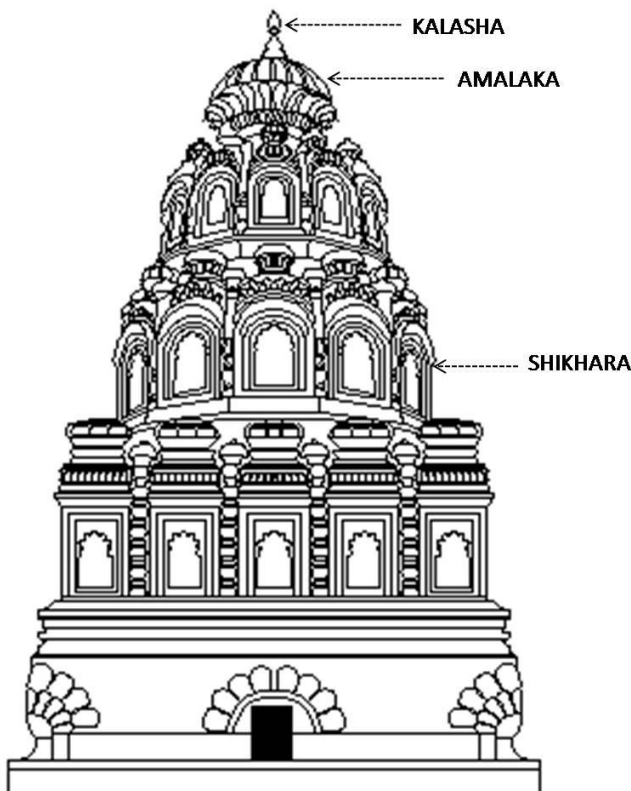
The garbhagriha holds pyramidal shikhar in three tiers and the mandapa has a flat raise shikhar. the Shikhar total height is 9.7 m

Material and construction :

The temple is constructed using material such as basalt and marble stone. Core walls of the Garbhagriha are constructed using basalt stone. The shikhar is plastered.

Shikhara

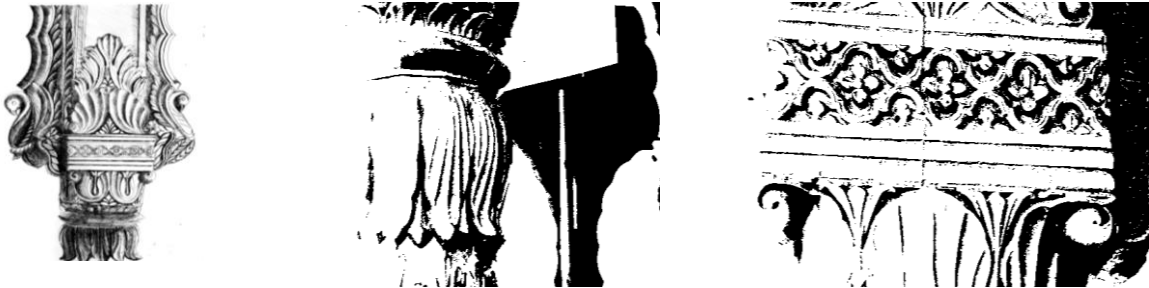
As in Hindu temples, the most important and highly distinguishing feature of Maratha temple is the shikhara or the superstructure. The Shikhar of the temple is a revitalized Bhosale type. The garbhagriha holds pyramidal Shikhar and the Mandapa has a flat raise Shikhar. The Shikhar total height is 9.7 m.



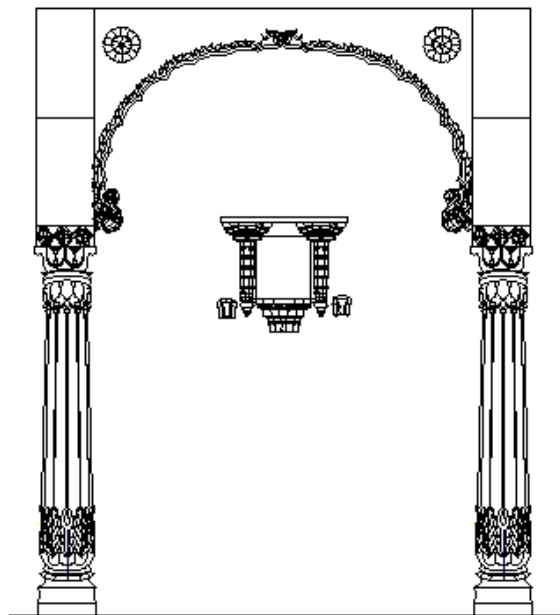
Ceiling of Garbha-Griha, Antarala and Mandapa.

1. *Garbha-Griha* – Corbelled courses create a semi circular dome resting Octagonal base
2. *Anrarala* –corbelled flat ceiling.
3. *Mandapa* – bijawood celing

ELEMENTS OF ARCHITECTURE:-



Sketch showing the intricate carving details on the column



Intricate floral pattern carving seen on the columns in the Mandapa. The wooden column is resting on a marble stone base which is also called as Sagargoti in local language .

CONCLUSION

Conservation of heritage structures is an important tool in city development. It plays an important role to define the landmark within the heritage area therefore Architectural Documentation is the first step for conserving heritage structures. Vitthal Ghui temple is unique in its own way as it is the only Vitthal temple in India where the idol can be seen in white stone. To preserve and revitalize soul of the city this step is necessary for generations to learn the existence and importance of heritage structures.

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