

# Understanding the Conversion of Existing Agrarian Landscapes into Designed Agro Tourism Destination to Conserve Associated Cultural Heritage and Ecology: Shrirampur Taluka, Ahmednagar

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*Abstract: Traditional agrarian landscapes form part of cultural and natural heritage, ecological integrity and scenic value of landscapes make rural areas attractive for the establishment of enterprises, places to live, tourism and recreation businesses. Agriculture and Tourism brings in together booming sector now a days, called Agro Tourism. This research focuses on understanding the character of Agrarian Landscapes and planning, designing of agro tourism destination, for conservation and enhancement of existing habitat and Temple. Offering new employment and income generating opportunities for rural populations, including agro tourism as expression and cultural exchange of agricultural practices, artistic heritage, craftsmanship , culinary traditions.*

Keywords

**Agrarian Landscapes, Agro Tourism Designing, Ecology, Heritage, Habitat, Conservation**

## Introduction To The Topic

The first dimension of Agro- tourism is the agriculture. Agriculture, earlier in the broadest sense, included activities aimed at the use of natural resources for welfare of the human being and it included all primary activities of production. However, agriculture generally means the growing and raising crops and livestock. Over the years it has emerged as an enterprise that encompasses all production activities integrated on commercial lines to maximize profits at minimum costs on bases. Agriculture is backbone of Indian economy. Majority of our country lives in the rural areas. Approximately 70% of the Indian population is dependent on Agriculture And allied fields. Hence it is the largest part of our economy. This sector's contribution towards GDP is decreasing and farmers are finding it difficult to carry the agricultural activities without an additional income. It is observed that excesses of modern agriculture technologies causing damages to the local ecology. The returns from farming are slow and low of which the price is determined not by the farmer but somebody else.

The second dimension of the concept in agro -tourism is related to Ecosystem which include biodiversity, organic farming systems, and ecological systems, Hence agro-tourism means **making little environmental impacts** as far as possi-

ble, help to sustain the indigenous populace, thinking and encouraging the preservation of wild life and habitats when visiting the places. Farming activity is a key factor in shaping the visual features of rural areas and creating valuable habitats for wildlife.

## Aim

To design an agro tourism destination and conserve associated cultural heritage and ecology.

## Objectives

- To study tourism profile of Ahemadnagar district.
- To study Connectivity & Road Network pattern.
- To study agricultural profile of Ahemadnagar district

## Scope

Study focuses on planning & designing of agro tourism destination To conserve & enhance existing habitat for peacocks & other wildlife associated with the site.

## Limitations

Scope of the the study is limited to only Khandala village.

## Need Of The Project

The combination of agriculture and tourism, under the scope of a rational development, may help towards a sustainable way of maintenance and planning of the rural landscapes. Farming activity is a key factor in shaping the visual features of rural areas and creating valuable habitats for wildlife.

Agro tourism is developed as a sector with the aim of not only a development instrument for local people who are dependent on agricultural production, but also for sustaining the agricultural lands. Since few years the expected yield has reduced affecting the monetary returns obtained from farming, hence additional resources are needed for bread and butter in agrarian communities also in many areas, farming practices and land management associated with highly valued landscapes are at risk. By proposing such a project we can conserve it. Indirectly, the study would throw light on how to reduce the rapid growth of urbanization and negative impacts on villages and project public awareness and participation.

### Study Area

Khandala village is a tourist place in Shirampur taluka, District Ahemdnagar. Famous for ganesh temple and it is believed that the idol of lord Ganesha is self embedded. The temple is surrounded by agricultural fields & peacocks are seen in this area.

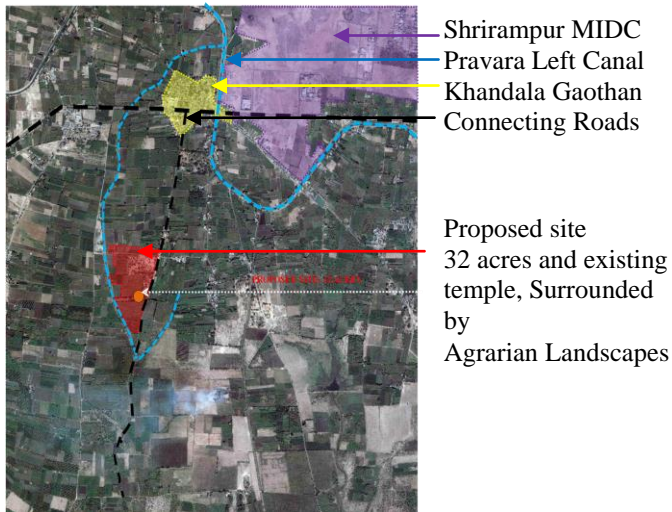


Fig No-1 showing proposed site , surrounded by agri fields, connecting Roads and major landmarks

### Methodology

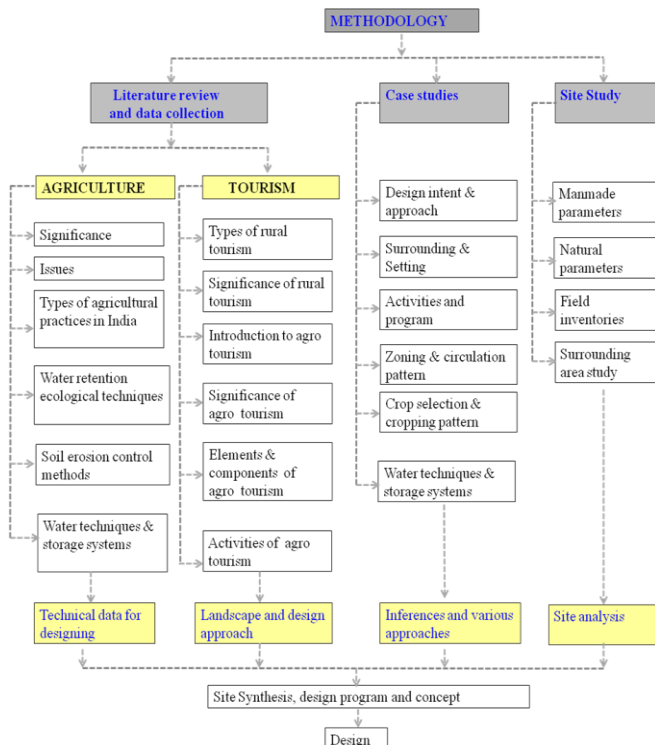


Chart No-1- Methodology

### A. Literature Study

Literature study is conducted through reading books, research papers etc.

### 1. Agricultural Profile

To understand the significance and issues at regional level, different types of Agricultural practices based on geographical locations of India, different types of water techniques and storage techniques adopted according to region and climatic conditions, ecological methods for soil erosion control, Cropping Pattern Of Ahemadnar District.

### 2. Tourist Profile

This study is conducted through interview and reading method. To understand and study types of tourism, significance, elements of agro tourism, Division wise Norms for agro tourism designed by MART (Maharashtra State Agri Rural Tourism), Tourist profile of Ahemadnar District.

### B. Case Studies

This study is conducted through books and live case study. Mapping, Interview method and observations in case of live case study. Case studies has been selected by having certain parameters such as setting, intent of project, scale. To understand Design approach, activities and program briefs, zoning , circulation, services , Movement Pattern, Crop selection, Natural parameters, Water Requirement.

### C. Site Study

This study is conducted through site visit, field inventories, survey, mapping , interview method. To study manmade parameters like Visual, Aesthetic, View Corridors, Economic, Social, Cultural, Religious, Cultural/Religious/Heritage Value , Functional, Human Ownership, Physical Connectivity Built Form. To study natural parameters of region for understanding of Soil Type, Rainfall, Hydrology. Slope, Relief, Hydrology, Vegetation study at site level to derive a synthesis map.

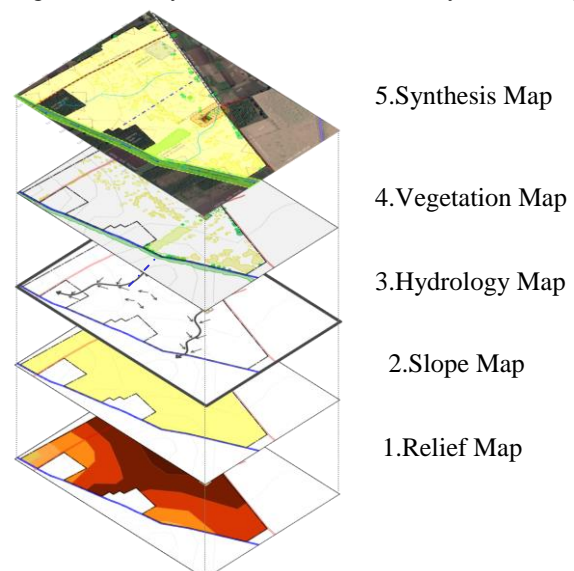


Fig No-2 Showing Layers Of Site Analysis

### Findings and Conclusions

Results of Literature Study , Case Study Analysis, Site analysis are as follow.

No	Parameter	Result
<b>A Literature Study</b>		
1	<b>Agricultural profile</b>	Rabbi crop- jowari, wheat, gram, maize. Kharif crop- bajara sugarcane, maize. -summer crops- groundnut, mug. Highly suitable slope for all the crops is <3m, sprinkler, flood water, drip irrigation are irrigation methods used, maximum crop duration is 4 months for each crop, sugarcane require 2-3 years.
2	<b>Tourist profile</b>	District is having presence of tourist attractions like Religious, Wild Life, Nature, Heritage , Agriculture. Religious tourism is the main typology which is observed in the district.
<b>B Case study</b>		
	<b>Book case study</b>	In case of technology park emphasis was given to different cultivation and Experiments, site setting plays an important role in formulating design brief of project, cropping pattern etc
	<b>Live case study</b>	Zones were divided in following manner 80% agricultural zone,18% tourist zone 02% of educational zone Agricultural zones were totally segregated from tourist zone. Limited areas of the agricultural zone were accessible to tourists. Maximum area under orchard plantation
<b>C Site Study</b>		
1	<b>Manmade parameters</b>	Experience of agricultural lands and orchards while going to temple from Sangmner road, view dry and barren land and agri fields. Acting as a tourist point. Farmers come and sale their products on chaturthi day, when devotees come for worshipping. Temple area has been used for religious, recreation activities and social gatherings.
2	<b>Natural parameters</b>	District is having black catton soil , medium deep black soil. Elevation height of taluka is between 300m-600m, from mean sea level. Shrirampur taluka receives rainfall between 500mm-800mm . District falls under scarcity zone. According to agro climatic zones of district shrirampur lies in scarcity zone. Other than rainfall taluka get manmade water supply from Pravara left canal built on Bhandardara dam. Site is having species like, neem, coconut, vad, pimpal, audumbar, mango, babul, sub-abhul,chandan, lal chinch and overall site has 0-2% slope.

Recreational, conservation of communities like pot maker, stone mason, Bangle saler (kasar),Folk dancers, Village jatra , existing temple, habitat associated. Concept is Celebration of Hindu festivals as per Marathi calendar and agrarian seasons (Kharif, Rabbi, Summer), to conserve traditional systems, which is been derived from site context.

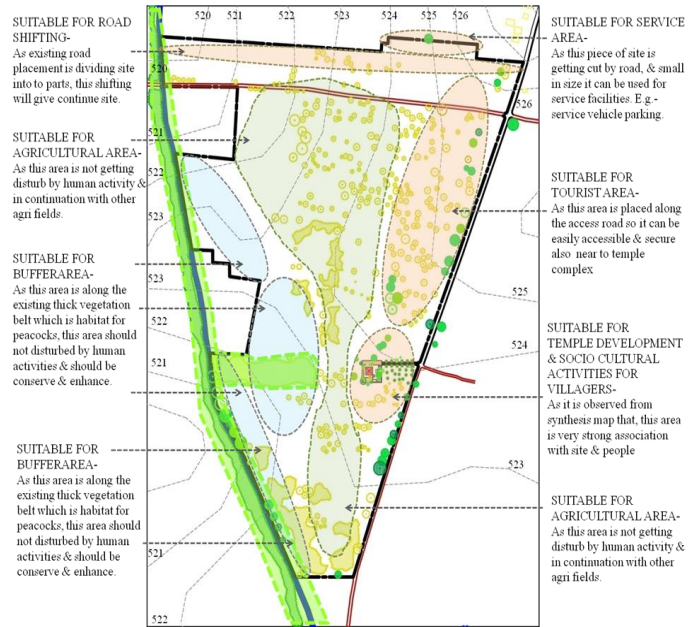


Fig No- 3- Suitability Map Derived from Synthesis Map Showing area suitability for activities.

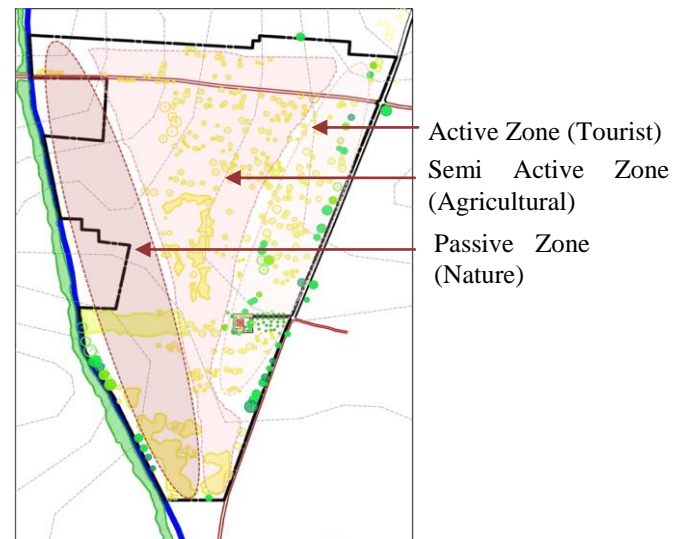


Fig No- 4- Zoning Map Derived from Suitability Map

Tourist zone is placed in such a way that it is easily approachable have minimum disturbance to agri zone and nature zone. Planting pallet for this zone has been selected by studding cultural importance of plants in Hindu festivals. Flowering species has been studied according to their blooming season wise and planted along that months festival celebration area or activity zone.

### Final Design Output

From all the base study site has been divided into three zones Tourist zone, Agricultural zone and Nature zone. Design approach for this project is informative, Educational,



Nature zone has been placed and design in such a way that, minimum human intervention will happen in this area. It is combined with existing grove of *Caesalpinia bonduc* which is habitat for peacocks and many other birds on site. one existing water canal is present along these groves, which get waters twice a year. Such a water feature is helpful for developing and conserving bird and other fauna. Hence, to get water throughout the year, longitudinal trench has been designed which will also prevent direct human intervention with grove of *Caesalpinia bonduc*. Three storied plantation, fruit and flower bearing species has been selected for this zone, for enhancement and conservation of existing fauna.

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Fig No-5-Final landscape layout for Agro Tourism Dstination.

Agricultural zone is placed in such a way that it could act as a buffer between nature zone and tourist zone. Agrarian landscapes are ever changing due to production of kharip, rabbi, summer seasonal crops, hence for, visual character of each piece of land would be different in each season. Orchards will act as transition between these two zones.