



Rohini Rural Municipality

OFFICE OF RURAL MUNICIPAL EXECUTIVE

Dhakdhai, Rupandehi

Lumnini Province, Nepal

Final Report

On

“Preparation of Conservation Plan for Historical, Archeological, Religious and Cultural Heritage.”

Dhakdhai, Rupandehi

Lumini Province, Nepal



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Submitted by:

Engineering and Power Harnessing Pvt. Ltd.

Baneshwor, Kathmandu

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-The Study Team

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Rohini Rural Municipality, located in Rupandehi District of Lumbini Province, Nepal, possesses rich and diverse historical, archaeological, religious, and cultural heritage assets that reflect its agrarian traditions, indigenous knowledge systems, and vibrant community life. Recognizing the growing threats posed by unplanned development, environmental degradation, and gradual neglect of traditional practices, the municipality initiated the preparation of a comprehensive Conservation Plan for Historical, Archaeological, Religious, and Cultural Heritage. This final report presents the findings, documentation, analysis, and strategic framework developed to safeguard and sustainably manage these valuable heritage resources.

The study was conducted by Engineering and Power Harnessing Pvt. Ltd. through a systematic and scientific methodology. The approach included extensive review of published literature and legal frameworks, preliminary consultations with municipal authorities, structured field surveys, stakeholder interactions, ward-level discussions, and GIS-based mapping. Both tangible and intangible heritages were identified, documented, assessed, and analyzed to ensure that the conservation plan reflects ground realities as well as community perspectives.

Rohini Rural Municipality covers an area of 64.62 sq. km. with a population of 43,327 and 7,526 households. The municipality is predominantly agrarian, with over 92 percent of its land used for agriculture. The Rohini River and other seasonal water bodies significantly shape the natural and cultural landscape, supporting agriculture, religious rituals, and community activities. The area also exhibits typical Terai settlement patterns and architectural forms, including traditional Tharu houses and rural temples constructed with locally available materials.

The study identified a range of tangible heritage assets, including temples, shrines, river ghats, ponds, sacred sites, and traditional settlements. Notable religious and cultural sites include the Rohini River corridor, various Shiva and Durga temples, Hanuman temples, Kotahi Temple, and other community-based sacred structures. Traditional water bodies and ghats play an important role in ritual practices such as Chhath Puja and other seasonal festivals. In addition, archaeological traces and culturally significant landscapes were recorded and mapped.

Equally important are the intangible heritages of Rohini RM, including festivals, rituals, oral traditions, local craftsmanship, agricultural practices, and Tharu cultural expressions. These living traditions strengthen social cohesion and reinforce the municipality's cultural identity. However, modernization, migration, changing lifestyles, and limited documentation pose risks to their continuity.

The assessment revealed several challenges affecting heritage conservation, including lack of systematic documentation, limited technical capacity at the local level, inadequate maintenance practices, encroachment, environmental impacts such as flooding and erosion, and gradual replacement of traditional materials with modern construction techniques. Many heritage sites lack proper boundary demarcation, signage, conservation guidelines, and integration into local development planning.

Based on comprehensive analysis, the report proposes a multi-dimensional conservation and management framework. Key recommendations include:

- Preparation of a detailed and regularly updated heritage inventory.
- GIS-based mapping of heritage sites.
- Site-specific conservation guidelines respecting traditional architecture and materials
- Community-based heritage management committees.
- Integration of heritage conservation into local development and land-use planning
- Promotion of responsible cultural tourism linked with river corridors, temples, and traditional settlements.
- Capacity building and awareness programs targeting youth, schools, and local leaders.
- Institutional strengthening and policy support for long-term heritage governance.

The conservation plan emphasizes that heritage in Rohini Rural Municipality is not merely a collection of monuments but a living cultural system embedded in everyday life. Therefore, conservation efforts must be participatory, sustainable, and aligned with socio-economic development goals. By linking heritage preservation with tourism promotion, education, environmental management, and local livelihood enhancement, the municipality can transform its cultural assets into drivers of inclusive and sustainable development.

In conclusion, this report provides Rohini Rural Municipality with a comprehensive, technically sound, and community-informed roadmap for the protection, promotion, and sustainable management of its historical, archaeological, religious, and cultural heritage. Implementation of the proposed strategies will help safeguard the municipality's unique identity while ensuring that its rich cultural legacy continues to benefit present and future generations.

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Human civilization as we know it today has emerged through centuries of gradual cultural, social, and intellectual evolution. Throughout this long journey, human beings have continuously shaped and reshaped their surroundings, beliefs, and ways of living. In doing so, they have created a rich legacy of both tangible and intangible elements that embody their experiences, values, and creativity. Tangible heritage such as artworks, monuments, buildings, archaeological remains, and traditional crafts provides physical evidence of human ingenuity and technological progress. Intangible heritage such as languages, oral traditions, performing arts, customs, and belief systems preserves the collective knowledge, wisdom, and emotional expression of communities. Together, these elements form what we call heritage, an inseparable and meaningful part of human existence. Heritage stands as a living testimony of how societies have grown, adapted, and interacted over time, reflecting their struggles, achievements, and aspirations. It also acts as a powerful symbol of identity, fostering a sense of belonging and continuity among people by linking the present with the past. Through the preservation and appreciation of heritage, communities not only honor their ancestors but also build a foundation for future generations to understand and celebrate their roots.

Every community, regardless of its size or geographic location, carries its own unique historic and cultural heritage that reflects its origins, identity, values, and way of life. Nepal is exceptionally rich in such heritage, ranging from ancient temples and archaeological sites to diverse festivals, oral traditions, and artistic practices. Several of these treasures have earned global recognition by being listed as UNESCO World Heritage Sites, highlighting their universal value to humanity. Yet, beyond these well-known landmarks, countless local heritages scattered across rural areas remain undocumented, undervalued, or poorly protected. Many are gradually deteriorating due to neglect, urbanization, environmental factors, or lack of awareness and resources for proper conservation. Without timely intervention, these irreplaceable cultural assets risk being lost forever.

Recognizing this urgency, systematic programs have been initiated in Rohini Rural Municipality of Rupandehi, Lumbini Province to identify, study, document, and safeguard the region's historic and cultural heritages. These initiatives involve field research, community engagement, cataloguing of tangible sites and artifacts, and the recording of intangible practices such as rituals, oral histories, and traditional knowledge. The goal is not only to preserve these assets physically and culturally but also to ensure that their significance is understood and valued by present and

future generations. Through sustainable preservation strategies, awareness campaigns, and proper management, Rohini Rural Municipality aims to protect its cultural legacy while promoting local identity, community pride, and opportunities for cultural tourism and educational development. Such efforts contribute to the broader mission of safeguarding Nepal's diverse heritage for the long-term benefit of society.

To achieve these objectives, Rohini Rural Municipality now seeks to engage a qualified domestic consulting firm with relevant expertise and a proven track record to undertake the preparation of Conservation Plan for Historical, Archeological, Religious and Cultural Heritage. The selected consultant will be responsible for conducting technical assessments, field surveys, stakeholder consultations, and all necessary studies to deliver a high-quality and actionable planning concept.

1.2 Objective of the Study

The main objective of this program is to prepare a conservation plan for historical and cultural heritage in Rohani RM, Rupandehi District. Along with this, the specific objectives are as follows:

- To conduct study and research on various aspects such as physical, social, economic, political, historical, archaeological, and educational dimensions of the rural municipality.
- To study and research the geographical formation, natural conditions, and distinctive characteristics of the RM.
- To identify and document the tangible heritages that are on the verge of deterioration or extinction.
- To prepare plans and programs for the conservation of endangered heritages.

1.3 Scope of the Work

The scope of work includes all necessary tasks and activities required for the identification, documentation, assessment, and conservation planning of historical and cultural heritages within Rohini Rural Municipality (RM), Rupandehi District. The consultant shall undertake a comprehensive and systematic approach to ensure the preservation, promotion, and sustainable management of tangible and intangible heritages. The specific goals are as follows:

a) Preliminary Review and Data Collection

- Review existing documents, reports, and publications related to the historical and cultural heritage of Rohini RM and surrounding areas.

- Collect relevant maps, photographs, and archival materials available from government offices, local institutions, and other sources.

b) Stakeholder Consultation and Coordination

- Establish coordination with the Rohini Rural Municipality and other concerned agencies.
- Conduct consultations with local representatives, heritage experts, community elders, and relevant organizations to gather indigenous knowledge and oral histories.

c) Field Identification and Documentation

- Identify and document all tangible heritage sites such as temples, monuments, traditional settlements, religious structures, and archaeological remains.
- Record intangible heritages including festivals, rituals, music, crafts, traditional skills, and oral traditions.
- Prepare photographic, geospatial, and descriptive documentation for each identified heritage asset.

d) Condition Assessment and Mapping

- Assess the physical condition, authenticity, and integrity of identified heritage sites.
- Prepare GIS-based maps showing the location, access routes, and conservation zones.
- Identify threats, vulnerabilities, and potential risks (e.g., encroachment, environmental degradation, neglect, etc.).

e) Cultural and Socioeconomic Analysis

- Analyze the interrelation between heritage, local livelihoods, and social practices.
- Assess the potential of heritage for tourism promotion, community development, and local economic benefits

f) Conservation and Management Planning

- Develop site-specific and municipality-level conservation and management strategies.
- Recommend appropriate preservation techniques, maintenance guidelines, and design standards respecting traditional architecture.
- Formulate policies and institutional arrangements for long-term heritage management.

g) Preparation of Conservation Plan Report

Prepare a preliminary/conceptual conservation plan including:

- Inventory of all tangible and intangible heritages
- Site-specific condition reports
- Conservation priorities and action plans

- Include recommendations for integration with tourism, education, local use, and local development plans.

h) Final Presentation and Submission

- Present the draft conservation plan to the Rohini RM and relevant stakeholders for review.
- Incorporate feedback, finalize the report, and submit both hard and digital copies of all outputs including maps, photographs, and documentation.

2.1 EXPECTED OUTPUT

Different reports required to be submitted by the consultant are inception reports, draft reports and final reports. All the reports shall be in English language. The reporting schedule is as follows:

Inception Report (two copy): describing overall understanding of the project and detailed work plan/ implementation schedule within one month from the date of work order.

Draft Report (two copy): within 2.5 months from the date of work order. It should accommodate all the requirements of the plan as per objective and scope of work.

Final Report (3 copies): within 3.5 months from the date of work order incorporating the suggestions and comments on draft report.

Besides, the task also includes

- Close consultation with officials of municipality and consultation with the stakeholders and other line agencies including user committee especially in order to propose the best location of the water supply components such as reservoirs, collection chambers, break pressure tank and pipe layout.
- The consultant will follow any relevant suggestions or instructions provided by municipality in connection to the study of the proposed assignment.
- The consultant will maintain a close liaison with the designated officials/engineers from the municipality. Discussion with the concerned officials, local bodies and engineers will be done prior to carrying-out fieldwork and initiating plan-making.

1.4 Output of the Assignment

Different reports required to be submitted by the consultant are inception reports, draft reports and final reports. All the reports shall be in English language. The reporting schedule is as follows:

Inception Report (two copy): describing overall understanding of the project and detailed work plan/ implementation schedule within one month from the date of work order.

Draft Report (two copy): within 2.5 months from the date of work order. It should accommodate all the requirements of the plan as per objective and scope of work.

Final Report (3 copies): within 3.5 months from the date of work order incorporating the suggestions and comments on draft report.

1.5 Justification and Need of the Study

The Heritage Conservation Concept of Rohini Rural Municipality envisions a comprehensive and sustainable approach to safeguarding the municipality's diverse cultural, historical, and natural heritage assets. The region is rich in archaeological remains, traditional settlements, religious sites, folk traditions, and distinctive cultural practices, all of which constitute the foundation of local identity, collective memory, and community pride.

This concept emphasizes the systematic exploration, identification, and scientific documentation of both tangible and intangible heritage resources to establish a reliable and comprehensive heritage inventory. Such documentation is essential for informed planning, protection, and long-term management of heritage assets.

Recognizing that heritage is a living and community-centered resource, the concept strongly promotes community participation. Local residents are acknowledged as the primary custodians of cultural heritage, whose traditional knowledge, skills, beliefs, and continued involvement are crucial for sustainable conservation. Their active engagement ensures that conservation efforts remain culturally appropriate, socially inclusive, and locally owned. The concept integrates expert-led assessments, appropriate restoration and conservation techniques, awareness and education programs, and local capacity-building initiatives to prevent deterioration, loss, and inappropriate alteration of heritage sites and traditions. Emphasis is placed on the use of traditional materials and methods, wherever feasible, to maintain authenticity and cultural integrity.

The Heritage Conservation Concept also highlights the importance of linking heritage preservation with sustainable development. This includes promoting responsible cultural tourism, strengthening heritage-based education, supporting local livelihoods, and reinforcing policy and

institutional frameworks at the local level. By aligning conservation objectives with socio-economic development, heritage is positioned not as an obstacle to progress but as a valuable and dynamic resource. The Heritage Conservation Concept of Rohini Rural Municipality seeks to protect and revitalize its cultural legacy while ensuring that heritage contributes to social cohesion, cultural continuity, and sustainable economic opportunities for present and future generations.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Nepal is one of the world's most culturally diverse and historically rich countries, with heritage that reflects continuous human settlement, religious evolution, artistic excellence, and indigenous knowledge systems spanning several millennia. From prehistoric archaeological remains and ancient trade-route settlements to medieval temple architecture and living religious traditions, Nepal's historical, archaeological, religious, and cultural heritage forms the foundation of national identity and social cohesion.

The country's heritage assets include monumental architecture such as temples, stupas, monasteries, palaces, forts, and rest houses; archaeological sites containing stratified cultural deposits; historic towns and traditional villages; sacred landscapes associated with rivers, forests, and hills; and a wide range of intangible cultural heritage such as festivals, rituals, oral traditions, music, dance, craftsmanship, and traditional construction techniques. These heritage elements are not isolated relics of the past but living heritage, closely integrated with the daily religious, social, and economic life of communities.

However, Nepal's heritage faces increasing threats. Rapid urbanization, unplanned infrastructure development, population pressure, road expansion, and modern construction practices have resulted in the physical deterioration and visual intrusion of heritage sites. Natural factors such as earthquakes, floods, landslides, climate change-induced weather extremes, vegetation growth, and material decay further exacerbate these risks. The 2015 Gorkha Earthquake highlighted the vulnerability of historic structures and the urgent need for systematic conservation planning rather than ad hoc restoration.

In addition, institutional challenges such as limited technical capacity at the local level, inadequate documentation, insufficient funding, weak enforcement of heritage laws, and declining use of traditional materials and skills have contributed to gradual loss of authenticity and integrity. Many archaeological sites remain undocumented or unprotected, while religious and cultural sites are often altered without professional guidance, leading to irreversible damage.

Recognizing these challenges, the Government of Nepal has enacted legal and policy instruments such as the Ancient Monument Preservation Act, 2013 (1956 AD) and empowered local governments through the Local Government Operation Act, 2074, assigning them responsibility for the protection and management of cultural heritage. Nepal is also a State Party to international conventions, including the UNESCO World Heritage Convention (1972), which emphasize value-based, community-oriented, and sustainable conservation approaches.

In this context, a comprehensive Conservation Plan for Historical, Archaeological, Religious, and Cultural Heritage is essential to provide a clear framework for identification, protection, management, and sustainable use of heritage resources. Such a plan helps balance conservation needs with development aspirations, strengthens community participation, guides decision-making at federal, provincial, and local levels, and ensures that Nepal's heritage is preserved for future generations while continuing to serve as a living source of cultural identity, spirituality, and economic opportunity.

2.1 Types of Heritage

2.1.1 Tangible Cultural Heritage

According to the Ancient Monument Preservation Act, 2013 (1956 AD) of Nepal and UNESCO conventions, tangible cultural heritage includes physical and material cultural properties of historical, archaeological, architectural, or artistic significance. Tangible cultural heritage consists of physical and material expressions of human creativity, history, and cultural values that have been inherited from past generations. This type of heritage includes monuments, temples, monasteries, mosques, churches, palaces, forts, archaeological remains, traditional houses, historic settlements, artifacts, sculptures, manuscripts, and inscriptions. These resources provide concrete evidence of historical events, architectural styles, construction techniques, religious practices, and artistic achievements. Tangible heritage often serves as focal points for community life, religious worship, and cultural identity. Due to exposure to natural hazards such as earthquakes, floods, and weathering, as well as human-induced threats like neglect and unplanned development, tangible heritage requires scientific conservation, regular maintenance, and legal protection to preserve its authenticity and integrity.

2.1.2 Intangible Cultural Heritage

As defined by the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, 2003, intangible cultural heritage refers to practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, and skills that communities recognize as part of their cultural heritage. Intangible cultural heritage refers to living cultural expressions that communities recognize as part of their cultural identity. It includes languages, oral traditions, folklore, religious beliefs, rituals, festivals, music, dance, traditional healing systems, food culture, and indigenous knowledge and skills. Unlike physical heritage, intangible heritage exists in social practices and collective memory and is transmitted through active participation and intergenerational learning. It plays a crucial role in strengthening

social cohesion, reinforcing cultural continuity, and maintaining diversity. However, rapid modernization, migration, changing lifestyles, and declining interest among younger generations threaten its survival. Safeguarding intangible heritage requires documentation, community-based transmission, education programs, and policy support that respect cultural ownership and local values.

2.1.3 Natural Heritage

Under the UNESCO World Heritage Convention, 1972, natural heritage includes natural features, geological formations, ecosystems, and landscapes of outstanding universal value from ecological, scientific, aesthetic, or conservation perspectives. Natural heritage comprises natural features and ecosystems of outstanding environmental, aesthetic, spiritual, or cultural importance. This includes mountains, rivers, forests, wetlands, caves, wildlife habitats, and sacred natural sites that are often associated with religious beliefs and traditional practices. Natural heritage supports biodiversity, ecological balance, and climate resilience while also providing livelihoods and spiritual inspiration to local communities. In many cultural contexts, natural elements are revered as sacred and are integral to rituals and belief systems. Conservation of natural heritage requires sustainable resource management, environmental protection measures, disaster risk reduction, and the integration of traditional ecological knowledge to ensure long-term sustainability.

2.1.4 Cultural Landscape (Integrated Heritage)

Cultural landscapes represent the combined interaction of humans and nature over time, reflecting how communities have shaped and adapted to their environment. Examples include terraced agricultural systems, traditional irrigation canals, sacred forests, pilgrimage routes, historic trade paths, and settlement patterns influenced by topography and climate. Cultural landscapes embody both tangible and intangible heritage values and are living systems that continue to evolve. They illustrate sustainable land-use practices, cultural resilience, and community stewardship. Protecting cultural landscapes requires an integrated and holistic approach that balances conservation, development needs, and community livelihoods, ensuring that cultural and natural values are preserved together for future generations.

2.1.5 Archaeological Heritage

Archaeological heritage, as recognized by both UNESCO and Nepalese heritage legislation, includes material remains of past human life that are of historical or scientific value, whether visible on the surface or buried underground. This includes ancient habitation sites, mounds, ruins, burial sites, and artifacts. Many archaeological sites in Nepal remain unexplored or

undocumented, making them vulnerable to destruction from development activities. Protection of archaeological heritage requires scientific investigation, controlled excavation, legal safeguards, and proper site management.

2.2 Temple Architecture

Temple architecture in Nepal is a profound expression of the country's long religious history, cultural diversity, and rich indigenous architectural knowledge developed over centuries. Influenced primarily by Hinduism and Buddhism, Nepalese temples embody deep philosophical concepts, cosmological beliefs, and ritual practices that shape their form, orientation, and spatial organization. Each temple reflects the historical period in which it was built, the patronage of rulers or communities, and the artistic traditions of local craftsmen, making temples valuable records of Nepal's religious and cultural evolution.

Beyond their spiritual function, temples serve as important social, cultural, and artistic centers within communities. Traditionally, temples have been gathering places where people come together not only for daily worship but also for festivals, life-cycle rituals, fairs, and communal decision-making. Open courtyards, plinths, rest platforms, and surrounding spaces associated with temples function as venues for assemblies, storytelling, music, dance, and other cultural expressions. In rural areas especially, temples often act as the heart of village life, strengthening social cohesion and collective identity.

Temples in Nepal are deeply embedded in the everyday practices and rhythms of life. Annual and seasonal festivals, agricultural rituals, processions, and religious observances revolve around temple calendars. These practices ensure that temples remain living heritage rather than static monuments. The continuous use of temples helps transmit religious beliefs, cultural values, and traditional knowledge from one generation to the next, reinforcing cultural continuity and community pride.

Nepal's diverse geographical setting, ranging from the high Himalayas to the hills and the Terai plains, has significantly influenced temple architecture. In mountainous and hilly regions, temples often use stone, brick, and timber, with sloping or tiered roofs designed to withstand heavy rainfall and seismic activity. In contrast, temples in the Terai region are generally built with brick, mud mortar, lime plaster, bamboo, and thatch or tiles, reflecting local material availability and climatic conditions such as heat and humidity. Raised plinths, open verandas, and shaded spaces are common features that respond to environmental challenges.

Construction techniques and architectural forms also reflect indigenous knowledge systems and craftsmanship passed down through generations. Local builders developed flexible structural systems, particularly through timber framing, to enhance earthquake resistance. Decorative elements, carvings, and symbolic motifs are carefully integrated into structural components, blending functionality with artistic expression. This close relationship between environment, materials, technology, and belief systems makes Nepalese temple architecture both resilient and culturally meaningful.

Overall, temple architecture in Nepal represents a harmonious integration of religion, culture, community life, and environmental adaptation. It stands as a living testament to the creativity and wisdom of Nepalese society, underscoring the importance of conserving temples not only as architectural monuments but also as vital cultural spaces that continue to shape social life and spiritual practice.

2.2.1 Basic Form of a Hindu Temple

The garbhagriha (sanctum sanctorum) is the most sacred part of the Hindu temple and forms its spiritual core. It is a small, enclosed space that houses the main deity and is usually dark, with minimal openings, to create an atmosphere of deep spiritual focus. Architecturally, it is often square in plan, reflecting stability and cosmic order. Symbolically, the garbhagriha represents the “womb of creation,” where the divine energy resides and from which life emerges.

The **Antarala (vestibule)** is the narrow transitional space that connects the garbhagriha to the mandapa. Though modest in size, it plays an important symbolic role by marking the gradual movement from the outer, worldly space to the inner, sacred realm. Architecturally, it helps support the superstructure above and visually links the sanctum with the hall. Ritualistically, it prepares devotees mentally and spiritually before they encounter the deity.

The **Mandapa (pillared hall)** is the main gathering space of the temple and serves both religious and social functions. It is used for prayers, chanting, ritual performances, and festivals, allowing collective participation by devotees. Mandapas may be open or enclosed and are often richly decorated with carved pillars, ceilings, and sculptures depicting gods, myths, and celestial beings. In larger temples, multiple mandapas may be arranged in sequence, emphasizing the gradual approach to the sanctum.

The **Shikhara or Vimana** (superstructure) rises vertically above the garbhagriha and is the most visually dominant element of the temple. In North Indian temples it is known as the shikhara, while in South Indian temples it is called the vimana. This tower symbolizes Mount Meru, the

cosmic axis connecting heaven and earth. Its upward movement represents spiritual ascent and the devotee's journey toward enlightenment, making it a powerful symbol of divine presence visible from a distance.

The **Pradakshina Patha** (circumambulatory passage) is a pathway that allows devotees to walk clockwise around the sanctum as an act of devotion. This ritual movement symbolizes respect, surrender, and harmony with cosmic rhythms. Architecturally, it may be enclosed within the temple structure or open to the sky, depending on the regional style. The act of circumambulation reinforces the central importance of the deity and the sanctum within the temple layout.

The orientation and overall planning of the Hindu temple are guided by sacred geometry and cosmological principles. Most temples are oriented toward the east to welcome the rising sun, symbolizing knowledge, purity, and new beginnings. The layout follows the Vastu Purusha Mandala, a sacred grid that represents the universe and the cosmic being. Through this planning system, the temple becomes a microcosm of the universe, harmonizing natural forces, human activity, and divine order into a unified architectural form.

2.3 Terai Architecture

Terai architecture represents the traditional built form of Nepal's southern plains and reflects a close relationship between climate, locally available materials, cultural practices, and socio-economic conditions. Shaped by the hot and humid subtropical climate, Terai architecture emphasizes functionality, thermal comfort, and adaptability rather than monumental scale. Buildings are generally low-rise, spread horizontally, and designed to allow ventilation and shade.

Traditional houses in the Terai are commonly constructed using mud, baked bricks, bamboo, timber, thatch, and clay tiles, materials that are easily available and environmentally responsive. Thick walls help regulate indoor temperatures, while wide verandahs (dalan), open courtyards, and overhanging roofs protect interiors from heat and monsoon rain. Roofs are often sloped and made of thatch, tiles, or corrugated sheets to ensure efficient drainage during heavy rainfall.

Settlement patterns in Terai architecture are typically linear or clustered, aligned along roads, rivers, or agricultural fields. Houses often face inward toward courtyards or communal spaces, reinforcing social interaction and community life. Religious and cultural structures such as temples, shrines, and community rest houses are modest in scale and integrated into village layouts, often located near water bodies or sacred trees.

2.3.1 Tharu Architecture

Tharu architecture is the traditional architectural style of the Tharu community, one of the indigenous peoples of Nepal's Terai region. It reflects a deep understanding of the local climate, environment, available materials, and cultural values. Developed over generations, Tharu architecture is highly climate-responsive, sustainable, and closely connected to the agrarian lifestyle and social structure of the community.

Settlement Pattern

Tharus live in tiny, sparsely inhabited communities that are frequently out of reach for miners. The Tharus are always looking for a suitable location to establish their communities. Tharu settlements are typically compact and clustered, reflecting a strong sense of community and collective living. Houses are arranged close to one another, fostering social interaction, mutual support, and shared responsibilities.

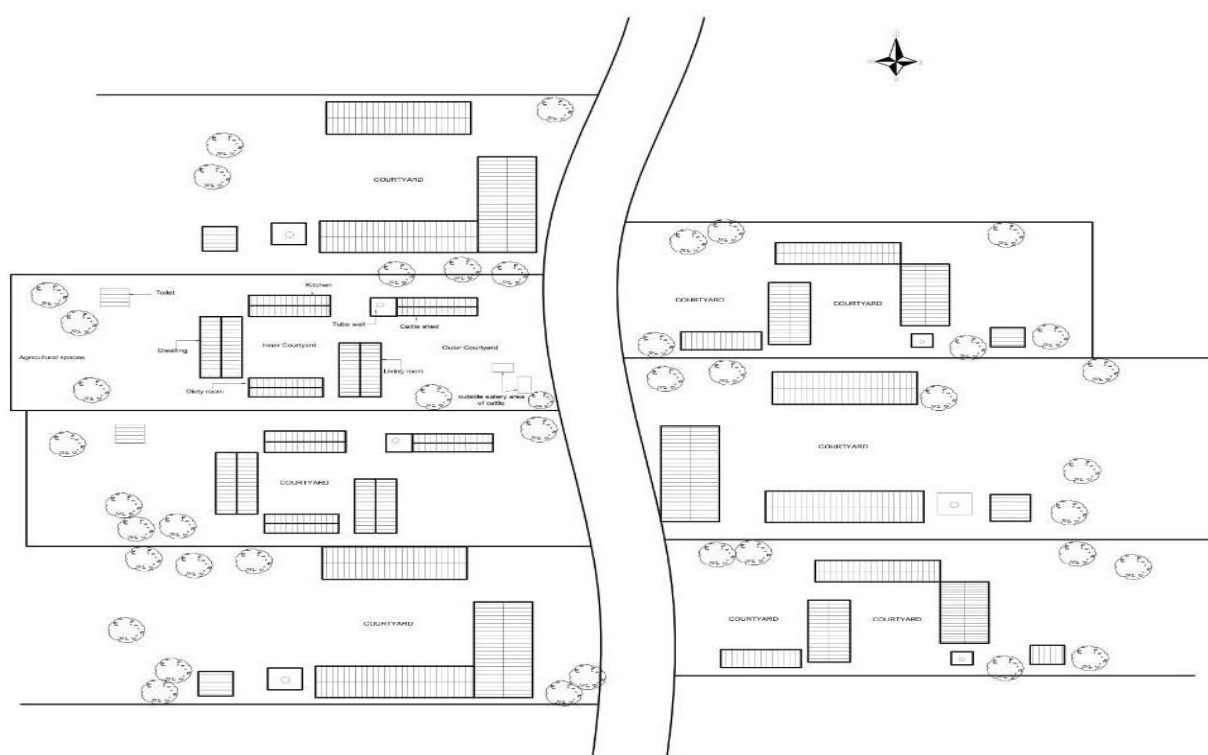


Figure 2-1: Typical Tharu Settlement

They believe that an ideal location must be high ground near a river or other source of water that is protected from flooding and water logging during the rainy season. Tharus built their homes far enough apart to provide for a higher quality of life. The settlement lacks specific granaries for shared usage and distribution, bachelor's dormitories, communal cottages, menstrual huts, and

guest houses. Tharu village symbolizes a well-knit society that has grown closer together through shared responsibilities and partnerships.

According to Tharu mythology the orientation of village and the houses are north south oriented because the almighty god guru baba resides in “Harikabilas”, to the north up in the mountain. The Villages are made up of houses built in two lines running north-south, on either side of a central village lane. Apart from the village and household the most important unit in the structure of Tharu society is the clan.

Building Materials and Construction Techniques

Tharu architecture relies almost entirely on locally available, natural materials, making it environmentally sustainable and economically accessible. Mud mixed with straw, rice husk, or cow dung is used for wall construction, providing strength, insulation, and resistance to insects. Bamboo and timber form the primary structural framework, while roofs are thatched using rice straw, reeds, or locally available grasses. These materials are renewable and easily repairable, allowing houses to be maintained through community knowledge rather than external resources. Construction techniques are traditionally passed down through generations, reflecting indigenous engineering skills adapted to local conditions.



Figure 2-2: Typical Tharu House Building

Form, Layout, and Spatial Organization

Traditional Tharu houses are generally single-storey and rectangular, arranged in linear or clustered patterns within villages. The layout is highly functional, with spaces designed according to daily activities and seasonal needs. A prominent verandah (dalan) at the front of the house acts as a social and transitional space for resting, receiving guests, and household work. Interior spaces typically include living and sleeping areas, a kitchen, grain storage rooms, and sometimes separate cattle sheds. Courtyards are common and serve as important spaces for domestic chores, rituals, and community interaction.

Climate Responsiveness

Tharu architecture demonstrates a strong understanding of the hot and humid Terai climate. Thick mud walls regulate indoor temperatures by keeping interiors cool during summer and warm during winter. High ceilings and limited openings enhance air circulation while reducing direct heat penetration. Steeply sloped thatched roofs allow quick drainage of heavy monsoon rainfall, and extended roof overhangs protect walls from rain and sun. These climate-responsive features reduce the need for artificial cooling and contribute to comfortable living conditions year-round.

Decorative Elements and Artistic Expression

One of the most distinctive aspects of Tharu architecture is its decorative mud reliefs and wall paintings, traditionally created by women. These decorations use natural pigments and feature geometric patterns, floral designs, animals, and symbolic motifs associated with fertility, protection, prosperity, and harmony with nature. Decorations are renewed during festivals, marriages, and special occasions, making the house a living expression of culture. Beyond aesthetics, these artworks reinforce cultural identity and transmit symbolic meanings across generations.

Cultural and Spiritual Significance

Architecture in Tharu society is deeply connected to religious beliefs and spiritual practices. Sacred spaces are incorporated within houses, and village shrines are strategically located within settlements. Construction, renovation, and relocation of houses are often accompanied by traditional rituals to seek blessings from ancestral and natural spirits. These practices highlight the spiritual relationship between people, land, and the built environment, making architecture an integral part of cultural and religious life rather than a purely physical structure.

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGIES

The consultant after the critical review of the objectives and the scope specified in the TOR, has evolved a scientific study methodology to accomplish the project in the stipulated time frame.

The consultant's methodology hence has been based on the followings as:

3.1 Study and Analysis of Published Materials

The consultant will undertake a comprehensive review process by collecting, studying, and analyzing all relevant published materials, reference documents, and available literature related to heritage conservation planning within Rohini Rural Municipality. This will include examining historical records, archaeological reports, cultural studies, policy documents, previous surveys, maps, and any existing documentation of local heritage sites. Through this research, the consultant will gain a deeper understanding of the municipality's cultural, historical, and geographical context, as well as past and ongoing conservation efforts. The analysis of these sources will help identify gaps in knowledge, assess the significance and current condition of heritage assets, and inform the development of an evidence-based conservation plan. By grounding the project in reliable literature and contextual research, the consultant ensures that the conservation strategies proposed for Rohini RM are both informed and aligned with established heritage management principles.

3.2 Preliminary Discussion

The consultant will conduct initial meetings with officials of Rohini Rural Municipality to discuss, refine, and agree upon the study's methodology and overall approach. These discussions will help ensure that the project's objectives, expectations, and processes are clearly understood by all parties. Through this collaborative exchange, the consultant and municipal representatives will jointly determine the most suitable research methods, fieldwork strategies, stakeholder engagement plans, and documentation procedures. This step is essential for aligning the conservation study with local priorities, available resources, and the specific heritage context of Rohini RM, thereby laying a strong foundation for effective and coordinated implementation of the project.

Field Preparatory Works (Preparation of questionnaire, checklist and equipment)

The scope of the study clearly indicates the important of the primary data information for the preparation of meaningful, functional, purposeful, structurally safe and implementable plans and design for the balanced development of the study area and its linkage within the surrounding. On the basis of literature review a check list will be prepared for primary data collection, Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with different stakeholders like local people, local leaders, women group, business community and other ethnic groups. Similarly, a Key Informant Survey (KIS) questionnaires will be prepared to collect views from recognized individuals, experts and institutions. These questionnaire and checklist will be revised even during the survey.

The following points will be focused during the collection of primary data.

- Key informant: Interview of the key informer (may be teacher, NGO personal, elderly person, ward secretariat, etc.) will be taken for reliable data.
- Observation: This approach will be taken to gather the information about life situation, infrastructural needs and environmental and economic condition of the study area.
- User committee will be used to help from data collection to planning phase so that the same committee holds ownership of report and explore the development/conservation/sustainable utility of the project.
- Questionnaire method will be used to collect data from key informant.
- Checklist will be used to collect data during field visit.

3.3 Field Study

a) First Phase:

In the first phase of the project, the consultant will focus on establishing a strong foundation for heritage conservation work through systematic coordination, engagement, and field exploration across Rohini Rural Municipality. This begins with setting up formal communication channels with all ward offices and key stakeholders to ensure smooth collaboration and timely information flow throughout the study. Engaging with local writers, intellectuals, journalists, people's representatives, and community members is essential, as their knowledge, memories, and perspectives provide valuable insights into the historical and cultural significance of local heritage sites. Through these interactions, the consultant will be able to gather oral histories, community narratives, and local interpretations that enrich the understanding of heritage assets. The phase also includes the systematic identification and documentation of both historical and cultural heritages across

the municipality, ranging from monuments and archaeological remains to traditions, rituals, and cultural practices. To ensure accuracy and inclusiveness, detailed field studies will be conducted with the support of program coordinators and subject experts, enabling thorough assessment, photography, mapping, and verification of heritage sites. This collaborative and research-driven approach in the first phase lays the groundwork for developing a comprehensive and authentic heritage conservation plan for Rohini RM.

b) Second Phase:

In the second phase, the project will shift toward deeper community engagement and comprehensive documentation of the heritage assets within Rohini Rural Municipality. The field study team will organize at least one discussion or interaction program in every ward, bringing together local stakeholders to validate findings, gather additional insights, and ensure that the conservation process reflects community perspectives. These ward-level interactions are crucial for confirming the significance of identified sites, uncovering lesser-known heritage elements, and fostering local ownership of the conservation initiative. Simultaneously, the team will carry out detailed documentation through written descriptions, photography, mapping, and visual recording of all heritage sites and cultural practices identified during earlier surveys. This phase also involves further research and investigation to locate and interpret heritage elements that were not fully identified or understood in the initial study. Special attention will be given to intangible heritages such as festivals, rituals, performances, and seasonal cultural practices that occur only at specific times of the year. The team will determine appropriate timeframes and conditions for documenting these event-based heritages to ensure accuracy and authenticity. By combining community engagement, meticulous documentation, and targeted research, the second phase strengthens the foundation needed for a robust and comprehensive conservation plan.

c) Third Phase:

In this stage of the project, the focus will be on validating findings and enhancing the technical accuracy of the conservation plan. To begin with, discussion programs will be organized at the Rural Municipal Office, bringing together local representatives, concerned authorities, and key stakeholders. These sessions will serve as a platform to present the preliminary report, gather feedback, clarify observations, and incorporate community perspectives that may not have been fully captured during fieldwork. Such collaborative

review ensures that the draft report reflects both expert analysis and local realities, making the conservation plan more inclusive, practical, and credible.

Alongside this review process, a detailed GIS map of all identified historical and cultural heritage sites within the municipality will be prepared. This map will visually represent the geographical distribution, locations, and spatial relationships of heritage assets, enabling better planning, monitoring, and management. The GIS mapping will help the municipality understand patterns, identify areas requiring urgent conservation attention, and support decision-making for infrastructure development, tourism planning, and heritage protection. Together, these activities strengthen the accuracy, transparency, and strategic value of the overall conservation plan.

d) Fourth Phase:

In this phase of the project, the consultant will focus on refining and finalizing the conservation plan through thorough analysis and collaborative review. A detailed study of all the collected materials ranging from field data, photographs, community inputs, GIS information, and historical records will be carried out to ensure that every heritage site and cultural element is accurately interpreted and contextualized. The consultant will also provide necessary explanations and clarifications to the Rural Municipality, stakeholders, and related authorities whenever questions arise regarding the findings or proposed strategies. To enhance the quality and comprehensiveness of the final report, additional feedback will be gathered through consultations and discussions, allowing the content to be refined, strengthened, and aligned with community expectations and expert recommendations. Furthermore, goodwill messages from officials of relevant institutions, such as local government bodies, cultural organizations, and academic institutions, will be collected to reflect institutional support and acknowledgment of the heritage conservation initiative. This step not only enriches the final document but also reinforces the collaborative spirit behind the project.

e) Fifth Phase:

In the fifth phase, the project reaches its final stage, where the consultant consolidates all research findings, analyses, feedback, and documentation into a comprehensive final report. This report will present a complete picture of Rohini Rural Municipality's historical, archaeological, religious, and cultural heritage, along with detailed conservation strategies,

GIS mappings, recommendations, and action plans. Once finalized, the consultant will formally submit the report to the municipal office and conduct a presentation to communicate the key outcomes, methodologies, and proposed conservation measures. This presentation will allow municipal officials, stakeholders, and community representatives to clearly understand the heritage assets identified, the significance of each site, and the steps required for their preservation. It also provides an opportunity for final clarifications, ensuring transparency and shared ownership of the conservation plan. Through this final submission and presentation, the project is officially completed, equipping the municipality with a well-structured, practical, and community-informed heritage conservation roadmap.

3.4 Reporting and Submission Phase

The study report will be concise. The report will cover all aspect of overall survey of facilities and public flow trend, settlement pattern, historical development, selection criteria, survey of study area, population trend, water consumption pattern, structural design, drawings, maps, photographs, minutes of different level discussion and presentation etc.

The report will be submitted in following stages:

- i) **Inception Report**: The consultant will submit 2 copies of inception report within one month after the date of signing of contract agreement. It will mainly contain information stated in desk study and collection of secondary information stage. Also the report will contain clear detailed work plan/ implementation schedule.
- ii) **Draft Report**: The consultant will submit 2 copies within 2.5 months after the date of signing of contract agreement. It will mainly contain the field visit record, collected field data, data analysis and will accommodate all the requirements of the plan as per objective and scope of work.
- iii) **Final Report**: The consultant within 3.5 months after the date of signing of contract agreement, final report will be submitted. It will mainly contain corrected draft report on the basis of comment obtained on the draft report. The report will be presented in 3 copies and softcopy. Report will be in word and Pdf format and drawing will be in AutoCAD format. Also Presentation slide will be submitted with final report

CHAPTER 4 STUDY AREA OVERVIEW

This chapter provides an overview of the study area, i.e., Rohini Rural Municipality with respect to its geographical features, demographic patterns, distribution of physical and social infrastructure, environmental condition, social-cultural settings, economy as well as the institutional framework of the governance structure.

4.1 Background

Rohini Rural Municipality is located in the southeastern part of Rupandehi District. It was formed by merging six former Village Development Committees, Dhakdhai, Bagaha, Pajarkatti, Pokharbhindi, Chipagadh, and Bodabar. The municipality lies along the north–south stretch of the Bhairahawa–Dhakdhai section of the East–West Postal Highway, between 83.549742° east longitude and 27.512130° north latitude, at an elevation of approximately 92.1 meters above sea level. Covering a total area of 64.62 square kilometers, Rohini Rural Municipality is bordered by Nawalparasi District to the east, Siddharthanagar Municipality to the west, Omsatiya Rural Municipality to the north, and the neighboring country of India to the south. Enriched by the Rohini River flowing from the north, the municipality is endowed with distinctive natural, geographical, cultural, and scenic features. The municipality consists of 7,526 households with a total population of 43,327, and the majority of the residents are engaged in agriculture and livestock farming as their primary occupations.

Rohini Rural Municipality represents a predominantly agrarian and rural landscape shaped by fertile plains, riverine systems, and traditional settlement patterns characteristic of Nepal’s Terai region. The presence of the Rohini River not only enhances agricultural productivity but also contributes to the cultural and religious life of local communities, as riverbanks often serve as sites for rituals, festivals, and social gatherings. The municipality’s strategic location along the Postal Highway provides connectivity while still preserving strong traditional practices and community-based lifestyles.

4.2 Geographic Location

This rural municipality lies in the southern part of Rupandehi District and forms part of the lower Terai region. Geographically, it is situated to the north of the Indo-Gangetic plains and south of the Himalayan outer foothills and the Siwalik range. The municipality is characterized by flat and fertile land with a warm, tropical climate, which is highly favorable for agriculture. The geological

composition of the area mainly consists of sand, soil, gravel, and pebbles. Each year, seasonal rivers and streams deposit fresh layers of sand and fertile soil, continuously enriching the land and enhancing agricultural productivity.

4.3 Geographical Formation, Natural Conditions

Rohini Rural Municipality is located in the southern plains (Terai) of Nepal within Rupandehi District of Lumbini Province. The municipality lies in the alluvial plains formed by riverine deposits over thousands of years. The landscape has been shaped primarily by the sedimentation processes of the Rohini River and its tributaries, which originate from the Siwalik (Chure) hills and flow southward toward the Indo-Gangetic plains. Continuous deposition of sand, silt, and clay during monsoon floods has created fertile agricultural land with gentle slopes and low elevation.

The terrain is predominantly flat with slight undulations and seasonal floodplains. The soil profile typically consists of deep, fertile alluvial soils suitable for intensive agriculture. However, in some areas, riverbank erosion and sand deposition occur due to seasonal flooding, influencing land use patterns and settlement distribution.

Rohini RM experiences a humid subtropical climate characterized by hot summers, a pronounced monsoon season, and mild winters. The monsoon, generally from June to September, brings the majority of annual rainfall, replenishing groundwater and supporting crop cultivation. However, heavy rainfall often leads to localized flooding, waterlogging, and riverbank cutting along the Rohini River.

The area has fertile loamy and sandy-loam soils that support diverse agricultural production, including paddy, wheat, maize, pulses, oilseeds, and vegetables. Groundwater availability is relatively high due to alluvial deposits, enabling irrigation through shallow tube wells and traditional water systems.

Vegetation in Rohini RM mainly includes agricultural crops, scattered community forests, riverine vegetation, and native trees such as sal, sissoo, khair, peepal, and banyan. The river corridor and ponds provide habitat for aquatic life, birds, and small wildlife species, contributing to local biodiversity. Seasonal wetlands and water bodies also serve as ecological buffers and cultural sites for rituals such as Chhath Puja.

One of the most distinctive features of Rohini RM is its integration of natural and cultural landscapes. Rivers, ponds, temples, sacred trees, and agricultural fields form a continuous cultural-ecological system. Religious and cultural practices are closely connected to natural

elements, particularly water bodies and riverbanks, reflecting a strong traditional environmental ethic.

The municipality's fertile plains make agriculture the primary livelihood source, shaping settlement patterns and socio-economic activities. Villages are typically clustered along roads and slightly elevated lands to avoid seasonal flooding. The presence of sacred ponds (Kunds) and Chhath Ghats along the Rohini River adds cultural significance to the natural environment.

Another distinctive characteristic is the cross-border cultural and ecological connection, as the Rohini River flows toward India, linking communities beyond national boundaries. This shared river system enhances both ecological interdependence and cultural continuity.

In summary, Rohini Rural Municipality is characterized by fertile alluvial plains, a monsoon-driven climate, river-based geomorphology, and a strong interrelationship between natural resources and cultural heritage. Its geographical formation and natural conditions have directly shaped its agricultural economy, settlement structure, and religious landscape, making environmental conservation essential for sustainable development.

4.4 Administrative Units

Rohini Rural Municipality, located in Rupandehi District of Lumbini Province, is administratively divided into 7 wards. These wards serve as the smallest local governance units within the municipality. The administrative center (municipality office) is located at Dhakdhai in Ward No. 3.

4.5 Climatic Condition

Rohini Rural Municipality experiences a subtropical monsoon climate, which is typical of the southern Terai region of Nepal. The climate is characterized by hot summers, a distinct monsoon season, and mild winters. Summer temperatures are generally high, often exceeding 35°C during the peak months of April to June, creating warm and humid conditions. These climatic conditions strongly influence agricultural activities, cropping patterns, and daily life within the municipality.

The monsoon season, which usually lasts from June to September, brings the majority of the annual rainfall. During this period, heavy rainfall replenishes surface and groundwater resources, supports rice cultivation, and sustains the fertile alluvial plains of the area. However, intense monsoon rains can also lead to localized flooding, waterlogging, and soil erosion, particularly along riverbanks and low-lying areas near the Rohini and Mahuwa rivers.

Winters in Rohini RM are short and relatively mild, with temperatures generally ranging between 8°C and 20°C from December to February. Occasional fog, cold waves, and dew are common during this season, especially in the early mornings, which can affect visibility and certain winter crops. Overall, the favorable climate of Rohini Rural Municipality, combined with fertile soil and good groundwater availability, supports diverse agricultural production and shapes the natural and cultural landscape of the area.

4.6 Water Resources

Rohini Rural Municipality is endowed with diverse and valuable water resources that play a vital role in sustaining agriculture, livelihoods, and the local ecosystem. The municipality is primarily influenced by seasonal rivers originating from the Chure (Siwalik) range, among which the Rohini River and the Mahuwa River are the most significant. These rivers flow mainly during the monsoon season, contributing to surface water availability, groundwater recharge, and the fertility of agricultural lands through alluvial deposits.

In addition to rivers, the municipality possesses substantial groundwater resources due to a high water table and permeable alluvial soils composed of sand, gravel, and silt. Shallow and deep tube wells, hand pumps, and dug wells are commonly used for drinking water supply, irrigation, and livestock purposes. Groundwater-based irrigation has become increasingly important, enabling year-round agricultural production and reducing dependency on monsoon rainfall.

Traditional water bodies such as ponds, canals, and seasonal wetlands also exist within the municipality, serving multiple functions including irrigation, domestic use, religious rituals, and cultural activities. These water resources are closely linked to local heritage, as many temples, festivals, and community practices are associated with rivers and ponds. Overall, the availability of both surface and groundwater resources provides significant opportunities for agricultural development and cultural continuity, while also requiring careful management to ensure sustainability, flood control, and conservation of water-related heritage sites in Rohini Rural Municipality.

4.7 Land Use/Land Cover

Out of the total 6,462 hectares of land in Rohini Rural Municipality, approximately 92.4 percent is used for agricultural purposes, reflecting the municipality's strong agrarian character and

dependence on farming for livelihoods. Agricultural land supports the cultivation of major food crops, vegetables, and cash crops, and forms the backbone of the local economy.

Forest areas occupy about 0.43 percent of the total land area, indicating limited forest cover within the municipality. These forested patches mainly consist of scattered trees, community-managed greenery, and small vegetated areas that contribute to local biodiversity and environmental balance.

The residential or settlement area covers around 2.78 percent of the municipality, primarily concentrated along road corridors, village centers, and market areas. Although currently limited, residential land is gradually expanding due to population growth and increased demand for housing, which poses pressure on agricultural land.

Rivers, ponds, and water bodies account for approximately 1.61 percent of the total area. These water resources play a crucial role in irrigation, groundwater recharge, cultural practices, and ecosystem services. No mining or mineral extraction areas have been identified within the municipality. Overall, the existing land-use pattern highlights the need for planned land management to protect agricultural land, water bodies, and environmentally sensitive areas while accommodating future development in a sustainable manner.



Figure 4-1: Agricultural Field

Table 4-1 : Land Use Data of Rohini Rural Municipality		
Existing Land Use	Sum of Sum of Area(ha)	Area %
Cultivated Land	5971	92.42

Commercial	50.3	0.778
Archeological	0.42	0.006
Forest	27.89	0.432
Water Bodies	106.1	1.647
Industries	41.78	0.647
Public Use	84.42	1.306
Settlement	179.2	2.772
Grand Total	6462	100.00

4.8 Physical Infrastructure

4.8.1 Road and Transportation

Road and transportation infrastructure in Rohini Rural Municipality plays an important role in connecting rural settlements with nearby urban centers and markets. The municipality is strategically located along the Bhairahawa–Dhakdhai section of the East–West Postal Highway, which serves as the main transportation corridor and provides north–south connectivity within the area. This highway links Rohini RM with major towns such as Bhairahawa, Butwal, and Siddharthanagar, facilitating the movement of people, agricultural produce, and essential goods. In addition to the postal highway, the municipality is served by a network of district and rural roads that connect individual wards, villages, farmlands, and local service centers. Many of these roads are earthen or gravel-surfaced, while some have been upgraded to blacktopped or paved roads in recent years. Seasonal challenges such as monsoon rainfall often affect road conditions, causing waterlogging and reduced accessibility.



Figure 4-2: Parasi Road

Public transportation is available mainly along the major road corridors, with buses, minibuses, rickshaws, tractors, and motorcycles being commonly used modes of transport. Non-motorized transport such as bicycles and walking remains important for short-distance travel within villages. Overall, while Rohini Rural Municipality has basic road connectivity, there is a continued need for planned road upgrading, proper drainage, and climate-resilient infrastructure to improve accessibility, support economic activities, and ensure better connectivity to heritage sites and community facilities.

4.8.2 Housing

Household ownership and construction types/materials (households by foundation, outer wall and roof) denotes characteristic of housing and settlement pattern. Most of the buildings are residential. Most of the households are constructed without following building bye-laws as they do not have idea regarding it. Only few houses are earthquake resistant.

Ownership of House

Almost 98% of the households are the house-owners in Rohini Rural Municipality. A few numbers of households live under rented houses, including 1.7% of the total households, and 0.5% are under other categories.

<i>Table 4-2 : Households by Ownership</i>		
Ownership Types	Households	Percentage
Owned	7362	97.8
Rented	130	1.7
Institutional	15	0.2
Others	19	0.3
Total	2,299	100.00
<i>Source: National Population and Housing Census, 2021</i>		

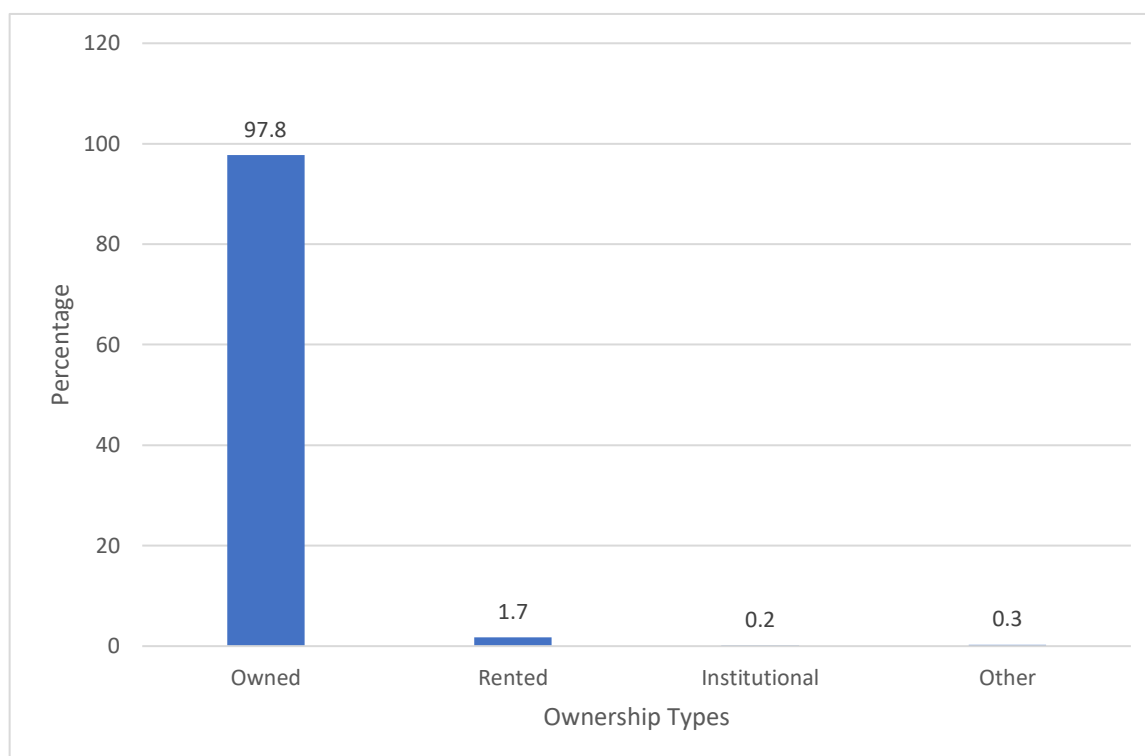


Figure 4-3: Households by Ownership (%)

Foundation Types

Table 4-3 : Households by Foundation Types		
Foundation Type	Households	Percentage
Mud bonded bricks/stone	771	10.2
Cement bonded bricks/stone	4534	60.2
Pillar with RCC	1833	24.4
Wooden/ Bamboo Pillar	303	4
Others	85	1.1
Total	7526	100.00
Source: National Population and Housing Census, 2021		

Most residential buildings in Rohini Rural Municipality are constructed using cement-bonded bricks or stone, which account for approximately 60.2 percent of the total housing stock, indicating a growing preference for more durable and permanent construction materials. Mud-bonded brick or stone houses constitute about 10.2 percent, reflecting the continued presence of traditional

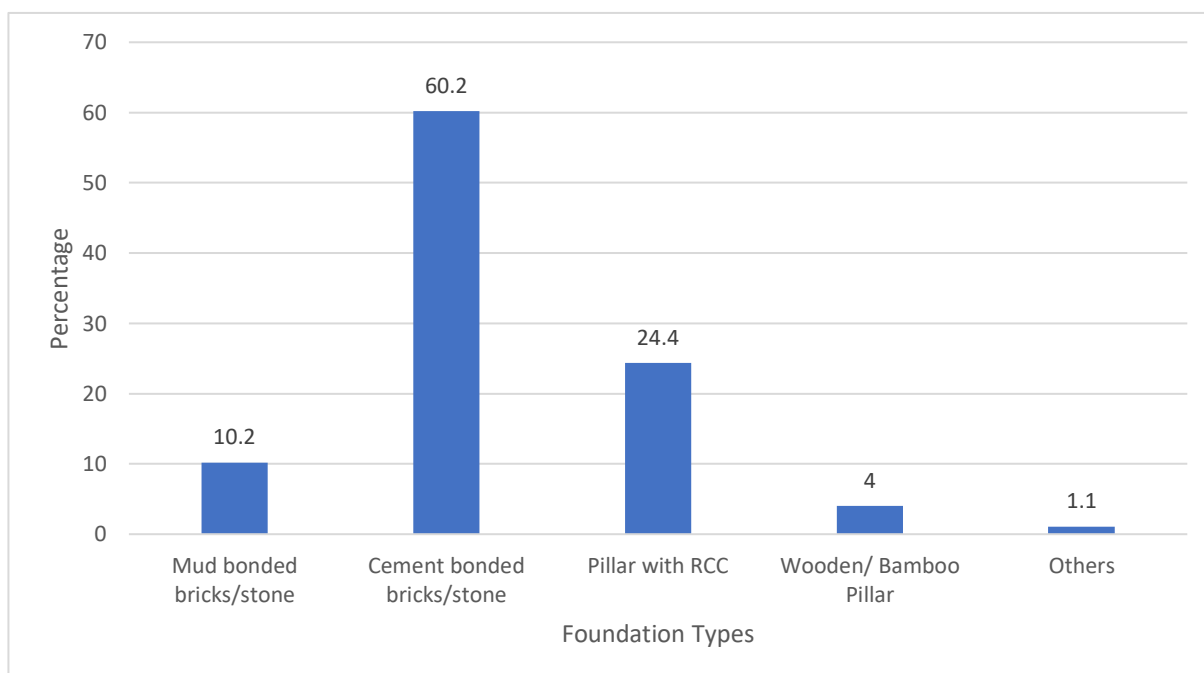


Figure 4-4:Households by Foundation Type (%)

building practices, particularly in older and economically modest households. Reinforced Cement Concrete (RCC) frame structures make up around 24.4 percent, mainly concentrated in areas with better road access and emerging urban influence. A smaller proportion of houses are built using wooden or bamboo materials, accounting for about 4.0 percent, while other construction types represent roughly 1.1 percent. Overall, this housing composition highlights a gradual transition from traditional to modern construction methods within Rohini RM, influenced by economic conditions, availability of materials, and evolving lifestyle preferences.

Outer Wall

The majority of houses in Rohini Rural Municipality display a predominantly rural character, with about 84 percent of the total housing stock constructed using cement-bonded brick and stone as the outer wall material, indicating a shift toward more durable and permanent structures. Around 10 percent of houses still use mud-bonded brick and stone, reflecting the continuation of traditional construction practices, particularly in older settlements and economically modest households. A small proportion of houses utilize bamboo (2.7 percent) and wood or planks (1.4 percent) as outer wall materials, while very limited numbers use galvanized sheets (0.2 percent)

and unbaked bricks (0.1 percent). Overall, these construction patterns highlight a gradual transition from traditional rural housing toward more modern building materials, while retaining elements of indigenous construction practices.

<i>Table 4-4 : Households by Types of Outer Wall</i>		
Types of Outer Wall	Households	Percentage
Mud bonded bricks/stone	749	10
Cement bonded bricks/stone	6371	84.7
Bamboo	201	2.7
Wood/Planks	104	1.4
Galvanized Sheet	15	0.2
Pre-Fabricated Sheet	1	0.01
Unbaked Bricks	9	0.1
Other	76	1.01
Total	7526	100.00
<i>Source: National Population and Housing Census, 2021</i>		

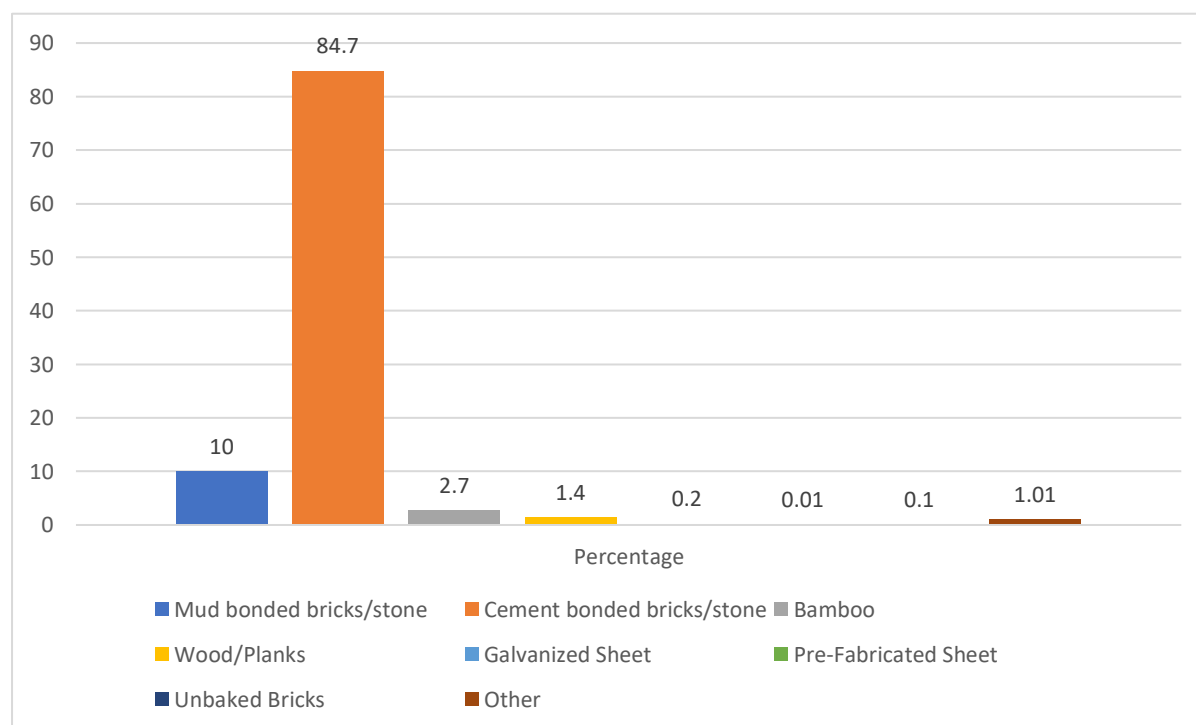


Figure 4-5 : Households by Types of Outer Wall (%)

Types of Roofs

<i>Table 4-5 : Households by Types of Roofs</i>		
Types	Households	Percentage
Galvanized Sheet	992	13.2
RCC	5897	78.4
Thatch/Straw	287	3.8
Tile	188	2.5
Stone/Slate	125	1.7
Wood/Planks	25	0.3
Other	12	0.2
Total	7526	100.00
<i>Source: National Population and Housing Census, 2021</i>		

In Rohini Rural Municipality, the majority of households approximately 78.4 percent have RCC (Reinforced Cement Concrete) roofs, reflecting a strong shift toward permanent and durable housing construction. Galvanized iron (GI) sheet roofs are used by about 13.2 percent of households, particularly in semi-permanent structures and rural settlements. A smaller share of homes, around 2.5 percent, have tile roofs, while 3.8 percent still rely on thatch or straw roofing, indicating the continuation of traditional housing practices among some communities. Only a very limited number of houses use wood or plank roofs (about 0.3 percent) or other roofing types (around 0.2 percent). Overall, the roofing pattern demonstrates a gradual modernization of housing in the municipality, alongside the preservation of a few traditional construction forms.

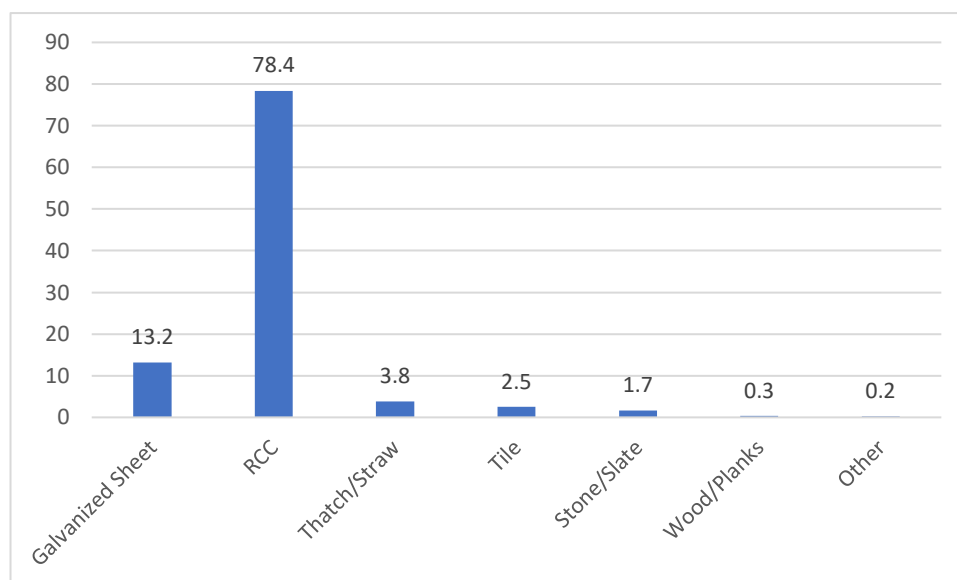


Figure 4-6 : Households by Types of Roofs (%)

4.9 Demography and Socio-economic Setting

4.9.1 Demographic Characteristics

The total population of Rohini Rural Municipality is 43,327 with 21,865 males (50.5%) and 21,462 females (49.5%) within 7,526 households. The average household size and sex ratio (male: female ratio) of the municipality is 5.75 and 101.88 respectively and the municipality has population density of 670 persons per sq. km. The highest population is seen in Ward No. 3 with 6,372 persons.

Table 4-6 : Demographic Indicators		
Indicators		Remarks
Total Households	7,526	
Total Population	43327	
Male Population	21,865	50.5%
Female Population	21,462	49.5%
Average HH Size	5.75	
Sex Ratio	101.88	Male/100Female
Total Area	64.62	Sq. km.
Population Density	120	per sq. km.
Source: National Population and Housing Census, 2021		

4.9.2 Population Distribution

The table below shows the ward wise population distribution in the municipality.

Table 4-7 : Ward wise Population Distribution

Ward No.	Households	Population			Average Household	Sex Ratio (male per 100 female)
		Male	Female	Total		
1	1032	3223	3149	6372	6.17	102.35
2	1288	3828	3750	7578	5.88	102.08
3	1527	4355	4225	8580	5.61	103.08
4	1095	2958	2961	5919	5.40	99.9
5	836	2284	2270	4554	5.44	100.62
6	889	2545	2550	5095	5.73	99.8
7	859	2672	2557	5229	6.08	104.5
Total	7526	4825	4798	9623	5.75	82.98

Source: National Population and Housing Census, 2021

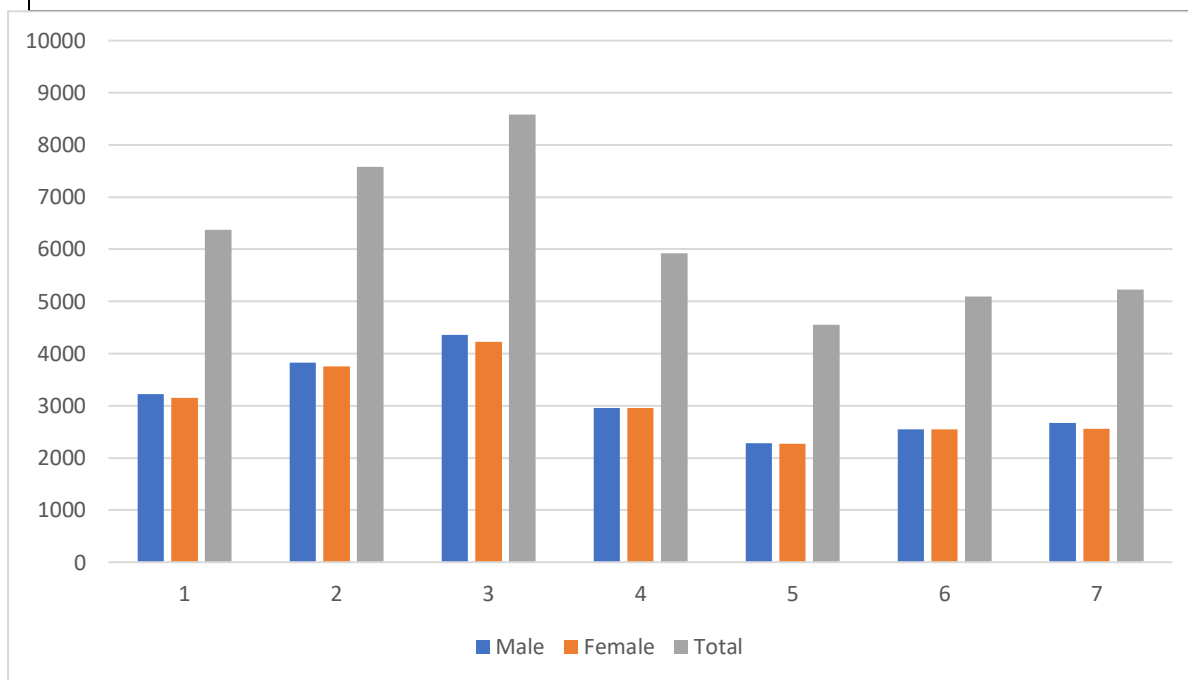


Figure 4-7 : Ward wise distribution of population (HH)

4.9.3 Age-Sex Composition

The age-sex composition of Rohini Rural Municipality shows the age group 15-19 years has the highest share (5.7% in male and 5.5% in female), followed by age group 20-24 (5.1% in male and 5.2% in female).

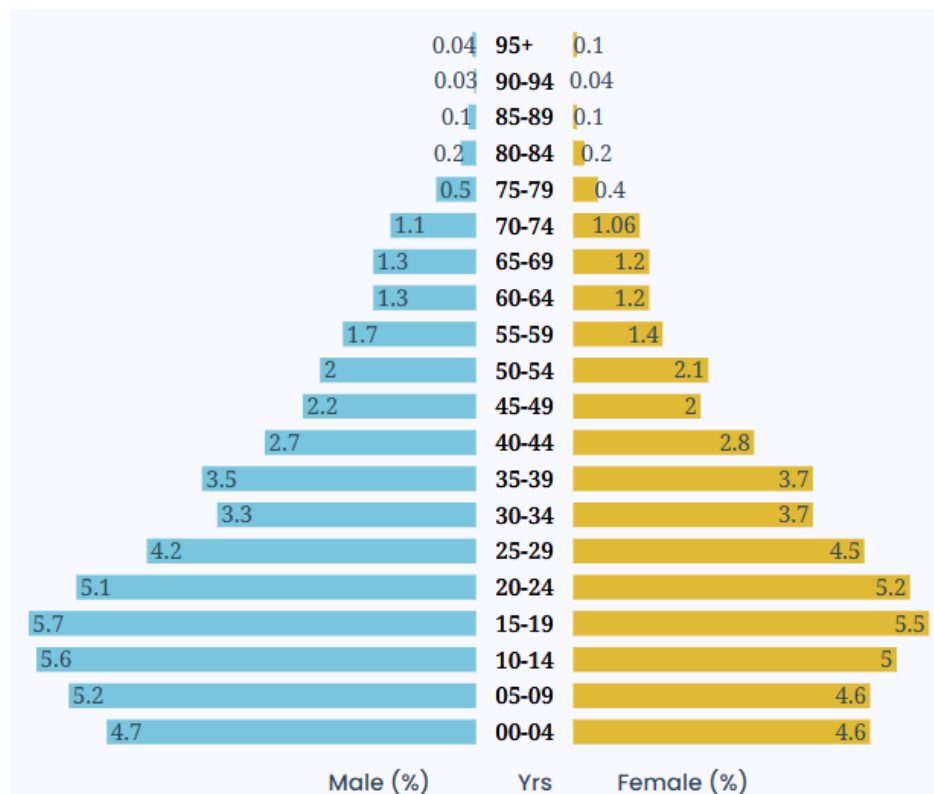


Figure 4-8 : Age and sex composition of Rohini Rural Municipality

Age	Male	Female	Total
95+	18	38	56
90-94	13	16	29
85-89	37	27	64
80-84	80	83	163
75-79	215	178	393
70-74	486	461	947
65-69	542	512	1054
60-64	574	537	1111
55-59	753	610	1363
50-54	886	910	1796
45-49	933	887	1820
40-44	1191	1215	2406
35-39	1501	1624	3125
30-34	1440	1599	3039
25-29	1801	1965	3766
20-24	2199	2259	4458
15-19	2478	2399	4877

14-Oct	2410	2166	4576
9-May	2268	1996	4264
00-04	2040	1980	4020

4.9.4 Caste/Ethnicity and Mother Tongue

Caste/Ethnicity

Rohini Rural Municipality shares a diverse realm of caste and ethnicity with Musalman (23.5%) and Yadav (15.4%) constituting the highest percentage of the total population.

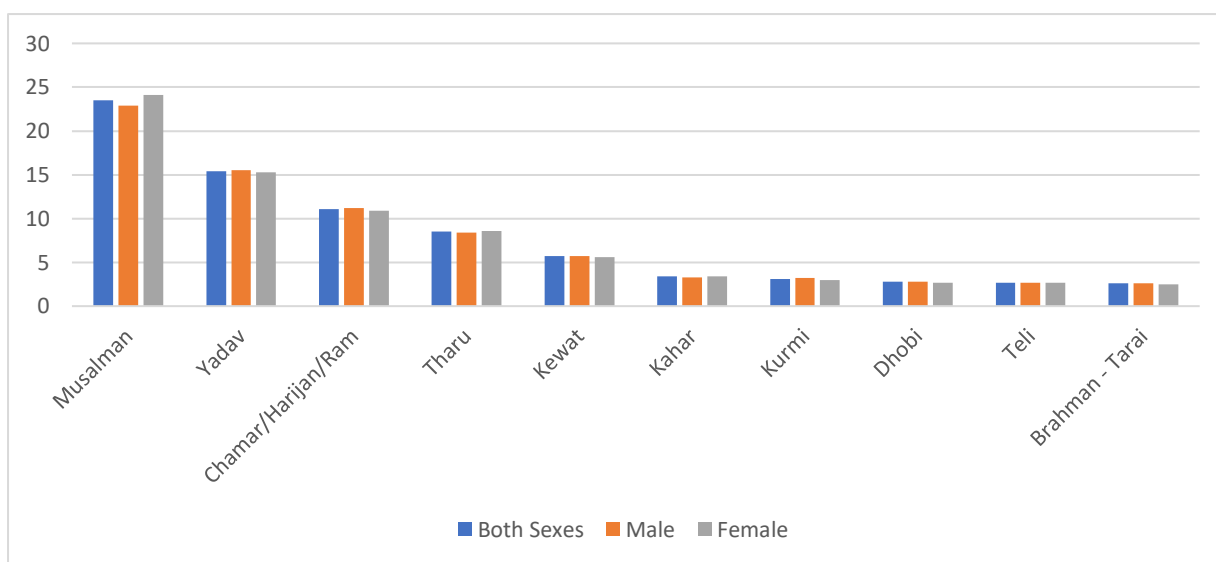


Figure 4-9: Caste/Ethnic Groups of Rohini Rural Municipality

Chamar/Harijan/Ram 11.1%, Tharu 8.5%. Other castes, which constitute about 20% of the remaining population include Kewat, Kurmi, Dhobi, Tarai-Brahman etc.

Caste/Ethnic Groups	Both Sexes	Male	Female
Musalman	23.5	22.9	24.1
Yadav	15.4	15.5	15.3
Chamar/Harijan/Ram	11.1	11.2	10.9
Tharu	8.5	8.4	8.6
Kewat	5.7	5.7	5.6
Kahar	3.4	3.3	3.4
Kurmi	3.1	3.2	3.0
Dhobi	2.8	2.8	2.7
Teli	2.7	2.7	2.7
Brahman - Tarai	2.6	2.6	2.5

Religion

Majority of population in Rohini Rural Municipality is Hindu with 75.5% of total population. As the muslim population is high, Islam is second major religion the rural municipality with 24.1%.

Table 4-10 : Religion Composition

Religion	Total	Male	Female
Hindu	75.5	76.1	75
Bouddha	0.1	0.1	0.1
Islam	24.1	23.6	24.7
Christian	0.2	0.2	0.2

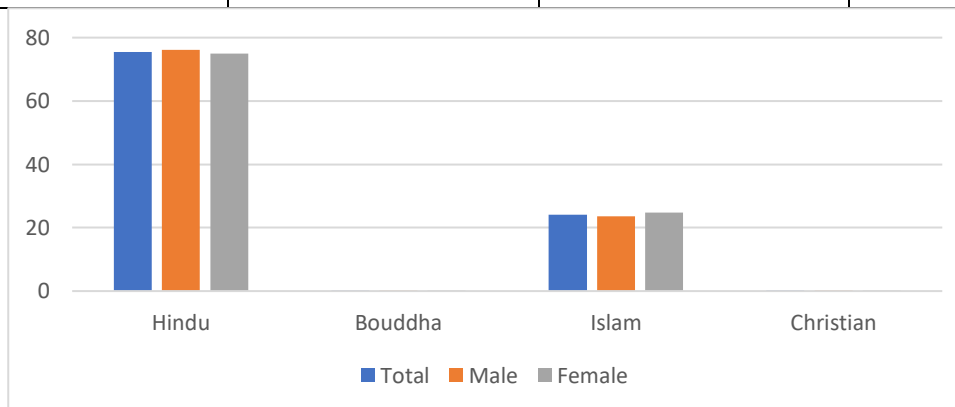


Figure 4-10 : Religion Composition of Rohini Rural Municipality

Mother Tongue

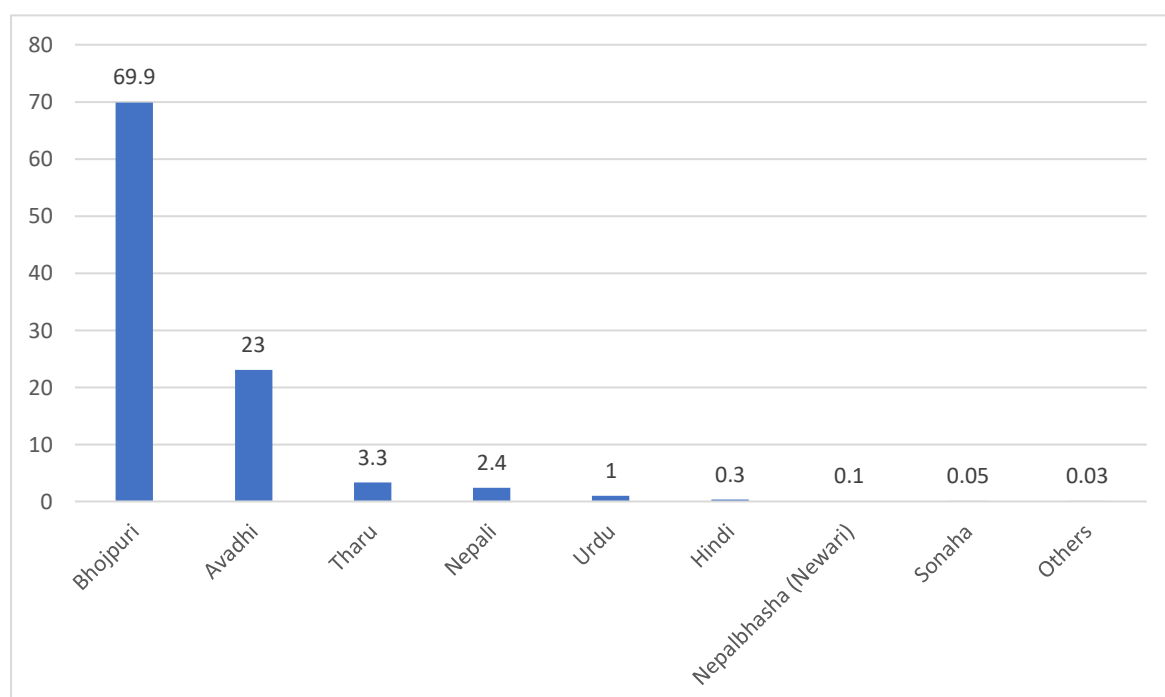
Table 4-11: Population by Mother Tongue	
Language	Percentage
Bhojpuri	69.9
Avadhi	23
Tharu	3.3
Nepali	2.4
Urdu	1
Hindi	0.3
Nepalbhasha (Newari)	0.1
Sonaha	0.05
Others	0.03

The linguistic composition of Rohini Rural Municipality reflects the rich cultural diversity of the Terai region. Bhojpuri is the dominant mother tongue, spoken by approximately 69.9 percent of the population, highlighting its central role in daily communication and cultural expression. This is followed by Avadhi, spoken by about 23 percent of residents, an indigenous language widely used within local communities. Other languages spoken in the municipality include Tharu (3.3 percent), Nepali (2.4 percent), and Urdu (1 percent), reflecting the presence of diverse ethnic and cultural groups. Smaller segments of the population speak Nepalbhasha (Newari) at around 0.1 percent, and Sonaha at approximately 0.05 percent. Overall, this multilingual environment underscores the importance of linguistic heritage in Rohini RM and highlights the need to preserve local and indigenous languages as part of the municipality's intangible cultural heritage.

Figure 4-11 : Population by Mother Tongue (%)

4.9.5 Local Culture, Festivals, and Heritage

Rohini Rural Municipality is rich in local culture and heritage, deeply rooted in the traditions of the Terai region and shaped by its diverse ethnic and linguistic communities. The cultural life of the municipality reflects a harmonious blend of Bhojpuri, Avadhi, Tharu, and other indigenous



traditions, which are expressed through language, customs, social practices, and religious beliefs. Agriculture-based lifestyles, close kinship networks, and strong community bonds continue to play a central role in shaping everyday cultural practices.



Figure 4-12: Chhath Puja

Festivals are an important expression of local identity and are celebrated with great enthusiasm across the municipality. Major festivals such as Chhath Parva, Dashain, Tihar, Holi, Maghi, Eid, and Ram Navami are widely observed by different communities, reflecting religious harmony and cultural diversity. Chhath Parva, in particular, holds special significance in the Terai region and is celebrated along riverbanks and water bodies with rituals dedicated to the Sun God. These festivals are not only religious events but also serve as social gatherings that strengthen community cohesion and intergenerational cultural transmission.

The heritage of Rohini RM includes both tangible and intangible elements. Tangible heritage comprises local temples, shrines, traditional houses, ponds, ghats, and archaeological remains that reflect historical settlement patterns and religious practices. Intangible heritage includes oral traditions, folk songs, traditional dances, rituals, indigenous knowledge systems, and local craftsmanship. Many of these cultural expressions are closely linked to the agricultural calendar and natural environment. Together, the local culture, festivals, and heritage of Rohini Rural Municipality form a living cultural landscape that represents the identity, history, and continuity of its people, highlighting the importance of systematic documentation and conservation for future generations.

CHAPTER 5 HERITAGE WITHIN ROHINI RM

5.1 Major Religious Place

Rohini Rural Municipality possesses a diverse range of religious places that reflect the deep-rooted spiritual traditions and cultural practices of the local communities. These religious sites are not only centers of worship but also important spaces for social interaction, cultural expression, and community cohesion. The majority of religious places in the municipality are associated with Hindu traditions, alongside sites linked to Buddhism and local folk beliefs, illustrating the pluralistic religious landscape of the region.

5.1.1 Rohini River



Figure 5-1: Rohini River

The Rohini River in the eastern part of Rupandehi district is a symbol of peace. The discovery and research of Buddhist civilization has proved this river as a symbol of the path of peace. The Rohini River is a river established by The Buddha. During the Buddha period, the Rohini river was the border of the Kolya Republic (Devdaha) and the Shakya Republic (Kapilvastu). The river originates from Chure hills of Palpa district. Devdaha municipality and Tilottama municipality of Rupandehi district share a border and Omsatia rural municipality and Rohini rural municipality. This peaceful river flowing from Nepal to India merges with the Ganges River of India. Experts say that the length of this river is about 80 miles in Nepal and India. The historic Rohini River is also known as the Rohini River during the Buddha era. This river, which was the border of the

Kolya Republic and the Shakya Republic during the Time of Buddha, has its significance as it is a river calmed by the Buddha in the war over water.

This river, which carries the Rohini, Buddhist civilization, is a river of peace by The Buddha. There was a dispute between the farmers of the two states over the water sharing of this river, which is on the border of the Kolya Republic and the Shakya Republic. When the farmers' quarrel reached the state level, the problem took a violent form, it is found in the Jatak Athkatha story of the Rohini civilization of the Buddha era. The water of the Rohini River has been used by the farmers of the Kolya Republic and The Shakya Republic for years on the basis of need. There was never a dispute about water and borders. But in the year of conflict, the water in the river decreased due to less water in the year. As the water in the river receded, the farmers faced a shortage of water for irrigation. Farmers of the two countries could not use the water together as there was less water in the river. There was a big dispute among the farmers of both the countries over who would use the water as the water in the river could be irrigated only to the farmers of one country. The peasant conflict reached a state of war between the state level and the army of the state. After the situation of war was created, the commanders of the two countries as well as the kings decided to fight. Buddha's war over water was about to take place when Buddha came to the banks of Rohini river and managed to stop the war. After knowing that the war would take place, Buddha came to the banks of the Rohini River and convinced the kings and people of both the countries and ended the war forever and made peace. Therefore, the Rohini River is a historical river associated with Buddha as a symbol of peace. It is necessary to promote it and develop it as a tourist area.

The Rohini River, a symbol of peace, is known as an important river in Buddhist times. Due to this river, the Shakya Republic and the Kolya Republic of that time were strong in the agricultural economy. It is found in Buddhist history that these two states, which have established a prosperous state in the field of agriculture, have managed irrigation by building the same barrier in the Rohini River. Buddha's discourse on the banks of the same river became a way to institutionalize the path of peace and non-violence in order to end the dispute and war-like situation of these two kingdoms, which were art, culture, civilization and prosperous. This river is still a symbol of peace. At present, the four local levels associated with this river and the Lumbini Development Trust need to carry out research and develop it as a symbol of peace.

Lumbini, the birthplace of Buddha, is being propagated all over the world, its other sites have not been developed. Many Buddhist sites in Rupandehi, Nawalparasi and Kapilvastu have been

neglected due to lack of cultural and infrastructure development. Similarly, Rohini is a historic and sacred river hidden in Rupandehi. There is a need to institutionalize this river, which was established by Buddha, as a symbol of protection and peace. During the Buddha period, the river, which falls on the border of the Koliya Republic (Devdaha) and the Shakya Republic (Kapilvastu), seems to be supporting the agricultural economy and sending a message of its peace.

This river can be an example for developing positive thinking when morality and character are disappearing in human beings. In order to take the world on the path of peace, it is necessary to remember Buddha's teachings on the banks of Rohini river. In today's time, peace can be maintained by imitating and following Buddha's word. Therefore, it is necessary for the state to recognize the Rohini River, which is a symbol of peace. If the peace of the Rohini river can be taken to the world, the war and crime among the people can be ended. The Buddha message of the Rohini river will be able to put an end to the ongoing wars in different countries and lead peace. The Government of Nepal and The Lumbini Development Trust need to pay attention to this.

Conservation of Rohini River

The conservation of the Rohini River is of critical importance for Rohini Rural Municipality, as the river is not only a natural water resource but also a cultural, religious, and ecological lifeline of the region. Flowing through the Terai plains and connecting communities across Nepal and India, the Rohini River supports agriculture, biodiversity, groundwater recharge, and traditional rituals. Over time, however, increasing pressures such as riverbank erosion, unmanaged sand extraction, solid waste dumping, encroachment, and seasonal flooding have threatened its ecological balance and cultural value. Therefore, an integrated river conservation strategy is essential to ensure environmental sustainability and community well-being.

Riverbank protection and erosion control must be prioritized. Bioengineering techniques such as bamboo piling, gabion walls in critical zones, and plantation of deep-rooted native species along the riverbanks can stabilize soil and reduce land loss. Structural measures should be carefully designed to avoid altering the natural flow pattern of the river. Protection of floodplains is equally important to maintain natural water absorption capacity and reduce disaster risks during monsoon seasons.

Pollution control is a fundamental component of river conservation. Strict measures should be taken to prevent the discharge of untreated wastewater, agricultural runoff, and solid waste into the river. Establishing designated waste collection points, promoting household-level waste management practices, and conducting community awareness campaigns can significantly reduce contamination. During religious events and ritual activities, temporary waste management systems should be arranged to maintain cleanliness and protect water quality.

Ecological restoration of the river corridor should be undertaken. Plantation of indigenous tree species along the riverbanks will create green buffers, enhance biodiversity, and improve microclimatic conditions. Wetland pockets along the river should be identified and preserved as natural habitats for aquatic and bird species. Protecting these ecological zones will strengthen the environmental resilience of the river system.

Community participation and local stewardship are essential for sustainable conservation. Since the river supports irrigation, fishing, religious rituals, and daily livelihood activities, local communities should be actively involved in monitoring and management. Formation of River Conservation Committees at the ward level can ensure regular cleaning campaigns, monitoring of illegal activities such as uncontrolled sand mining, and coordination with municipal authorities.

The river corridor has potential for eco-friendly development. Carefully planned riverfront landscaping, pedestrian pathways, and designated ritual Ghats can enhance public access while protecting the natural ecosystem. However, any infrastructure development should be environmentally sensitive and avoid excessive concretization that disrupts natural processes.

The conservation of the Rohini River requires a holistic approach that integrates environmental protection, disaster risk reduction, pollution control, ecological restoration, and community engagement. By safeguarding the river, Rohini Rural Municipality can protect its agricultural productivity, religious traditions, biodiversity, and long-term environmental sustainability for future generations.

5.1.2 Ponds and Water Bodies

Ponds have played a vital role in shaping the historical, cultural, religious, and environmental identity of Rohini Rural Municipality (RM) since ancient times. In the flat and fertile Terai landscape, where surface water management has always been crucial, ponds were traditionally constructed as community assets to store monsoon rainwater and seasonal runoff from rivers such

as the Rohini and Mahuwa. These water bodies supported early settlements by providing water for drinking, agriculture, livestock, and household use, making them foundational elements in the development of villages within Rohini RM. Many older settlements still derive their identity and spatial organization from the presence of historic ponds.

From a religious and spiritual perspective, ponds in Rohini RM hold deep sacred value. They are closely linked with Hindu religious practices and local belief systems. Ritual bathing before worship, purification ceremonies, ancestor worship, and offerings to deities are commonly performed at these ponds. Festivals such as Chhath Parva, Maghe Sankranti, and other seasonal rituals center around pond spaces, transforming them into sacred landscapes during these occasions. Several ponds are believed to be associated with local deities, sages, or mythological events, and such beliefs have helped protect them for generations through community respect and customary rules.



Figure 5-2: Chhat Ghat

Culturally, ponds function as living heritage spaces that foster social cohesion. Traditionally, they served as meeting points for villagers, especially for women engaged in daily activities such as washing, collecting water, and social interaction. Elders often gathered near ponds to share oral

histories, folk tales, and cultural knowledge, ensuring intergenerational transmission of traditions. Seasonal fairs, cultural performances, and community rituals held around ponds further strengthened their role as centers of social life and cultural continuity in Rohini RM.

Environmentally, ponds contribute significantly to the local ecosystem and climate balance. They help recharge groundwater, regulate surface runoff, reduce flood risks during monsoon seasons, and provide habitats for fish, amphibians, birds, and aquatic plants. In an agrarian municipality like Rohini RM, ponds have historically supported irrigation and enhanced soil moisture, thereby sustaining agricultural productivity. Their presence reflects indigenous knowledge of sustainable water management adapted to the Terai's monsoon climate.

In recent decades, however, many historic ponds in Rohini RM have faced serious threats, including encroachment, siltation, pollution, conversion into agricultural or residential land, and declining cultural use. The weakening of traditional management systems and increasing urbanization have further accelerated their degradation. As a result, both the tangible and intangible values associated with these ponds are at risk.

Conservation of Ponds and Chhath Ghats

The conservation of ponds and Chhath Ghats in Rohini Rural Municipality is essential for preserving religious traditions, protecting water resources, strengthening local identity, and improving environmental sustainability. Ponds in the Terai region are not only water bodies but also sacred and social spaces deeply connected with rituals such as Chhath Puja, daily worship, bathing, and community gatherings. Therefore, conservation efforts must address ecological restoration, structural improvement, cultural preservation, and long-term management in an integrated manner.

The ecological conservation of ponds is crucial. Many ponds face problems such as siltation, water pollution, uncontrolled waste disposal, and seasonal drying. Scientific desiltation and cleaning programs should be carried out periodically to maintain adequate water depth and quality. Natural filtration methods, such as planting aquatic vegetation along the edges, can help improve water quality while maintaining biodiversity. Measures should also be taken to prevent sewage discharge and solid waste dumping into ponds by constructing proper drainage systems and installing waste collection facilities around the site.

The structural conservation of Chhath Ghats is necessary to ensure safety and durability. Ghats should be constructed or upgraded using stable and long-lasting materials, with proper stepped platforms that allow safe access to water during religious rituals. The design should incorporate non-slippery surfaces, handrails where necessary, and gradual slopes to accommodate elderly devotees. Wherever possible, the architectural design of ghats should reflect local Terai identity and traditional aesthetics rather than purely modern concrete forms. Protective embankments should be built to prevent erosion, especially during monsoon seasons.

Landscaping and site planning around ponds are equally important. Planned green buffers, tree plantation, shaded seating areas, and paved walkways should be developed to create a clean and peaceful environment. Proper lighting systems should be installed for safety during early morning and evening rituals, especially during Chhath Puja. Open spaces around ponds can also be designed to manage large crowds during festivals without disturbing the ecological balance of the water body.

Community participation plays a vital role in sustainable conservation. Since ponds and Chhath Ghats are closely linked to local religious practices, a community-based management committee should be formed or strengthened to oversee maintenance, cleanliness, and festival management. Awareness programs can educate local residents about the environmental importance of ponds, encouraging responsible behavior and long-term protection.

Additionally, ponds can contribute to local economic and social development. With proper conservation, they can become attractive cultural and religious destinations within Rohini Rural Municipality, supporting small-scale trade during festivals and promoting eco-friendly tourism. However, commercialization should be controlled to prevent environmental degradation.

The conservation of ponds and Chhath Ghats requires an integrated approach that combines ecological restoration, structural strengthening, cultural preservation, proper landscaping, and active community management. By protecting these sacred water bodies, Rohini Rural Municipality can safeguard its religious heritage, enhance environmental sustainability, and promote social and economic well-being for future generations.





Figure 5-3: Typical Design of Pokhari

5.1.3 Temples

Temples in Rohini Rural Municipality (RM) constitute some of the most important religious, cultural, and architectural heritage assets of the area. Rooted deeply in the everyday life of local communities, these temples function not only as places of worship but also as centers for social interaction, cultural expression, and collective identity. Most temples in Rohini RM are associated with Hindu traditions, reflecting the dominant religious practices of the Terai region, although local belief systems, folk deities, and nature worship are also strongly embedded in temple culture.

Temples play a central role in festivals and rituals, including Mahashivaratri, Ram Navami, Krishna Janmashtami, Navratri, Durga Puja, Chhath Parva, and other local religious events. During these occasions, temple precincts become vibrant cultural spaces hosting prayers, fairs, bhajans, storytelling, and communal feasts. Such activities reinforce social bonds, transmit religious knowledge, and sustain intangible cultural heritage within Rohini RM.

Ward Number 1

Hanuman and Chanuli Durga Temple



Figure 5-4: Hanuman Chanuli Durga Temple

Hanuman and Chanuli Durga Temple, located in Ward No. 1 of Rohini Rural Municipality, is a prominent religious and cultural site that reflects the strong spiritual traditions of the local community. The Chanuli Durga Temple, constructed in 2059 B.S., stands as a symbol of devotion to the goddess, who is worshipped as a protective and powerful deity. Alongside the Durga shrine, the presence of Lord Hanuman further enhances the religious importance of the temple complex, representing strength, loyalty, and unwavering faith.

A distinctive feature of this temple complex is the pond adorned with lotus flowers, which adds both aesthetic and spiritual value to the site. The pond is not only an integral part of ritual practices, such as purification and worship, but also contributes to the environmental and cultural landscape of the area. The large Hanuman statue positioned prominently in front of the temple serves as a visual landmark and attracts devotees from surrounding villages.



Figure 5-5: Pond with Lotus Flower

The temple complex also plays a vital role during major religious events, particularly Chhath Puja, when devotees gather around the pond to offer prayers to the Sun God. During festivals and special occasions, the site becomes a vibrant center of religious activity and social interaction, strengthening communal bonds and preserving intangible cultural traditions. Owing to its religious significance, architectural elements, and associated rituals, the Hanuman and Chanuli Durga Temple complex represents an important heritage asset of Rohini Rural Municipality and deserves proper documentation and conservation for future generations.

Conservation of Hanuman and Chanuli Durga Temple

The Hanuman and Chanuli Durga Temple in Ward No. 1 of Rohini Rural Municipality, despite its strong religious and cultural importance, faces several conservation-related challenges that require immediate and systematic attention. At present, the temple complex lacks a comprehensive master plan or Detailed Project Report (DPR), resulting in unplanned development, ad-hoc construction, and the absence of a long-term vision for conservation and management. Without such planning tools, it becomes difficult to protect the temple's cultural values while guiding future improvements in a sustainable manner.

Access to the temple is another major concern, as the connecting road is in poor condition, limiting safe and convenient movement for devotees, especially during festivals such as Chhath Puja when large crowds gather. Inadequate access not only affects visitors but also poses challenges for maintenance, emergency services, and ritual processions, reducing the overall functionality of the site.

Architecturally, the temple complex shows limited reflection of traditional or local architectural character. Modern construction methods and materials have been used without considering the indigenous Terai temple style, which weakens the site's cultural authenticity and visual harmony. The absence of traditional elements such as local materials, forms, and decorative motifs reduces the heritage value of the temple from an architectural perspective.



Figure 5-6: Hanuman Temple

The pond located within the temple complex, an important ritual and ecological feature, is in need of proper conservation and management. Encroachment, lack of regular maintenance, and potential pollution threaten its religious, cultural, and environmental significance, particularly since it is used during Chhath Puja and other rituals.

Additionally, the temple surroundings lack planned landscaping, resulting in an unorganized open space with limited greenery, seating and pathways. The absence of proper landscaping diminishes the spiritual ambiance of the site and reduces its potential as a serene communal and cultural space. Addressing these issues through integrated conservation planning, infrastructure improvement, architectural enhancement, pond restoration, and landscape design is essential to safeguard the Hanuman and Chanuli Durga Temple as a valued heritage site of Rohini Rural Municipality.

Ward Number 2

Ram Janaki Temple

Shri Ram Janaki Shaktipith Ashram, Bairihawa Dham (Ram Janaki Temple) वैरिहवां धाम (राम जानकी मन्दिर), located in Ward No. 2 of Rohini Rural Municipality, is one of the prominent religious and cultural heritage sites of the area. Its location near the Rohini River greatly enhances its spiritual importance, as rivers are traditionally regarded as sacred in Hindu belief systems and are closely associated with purification, meditation, and ritual practices. The serene riverine setting, combined with the calm rural surroundings, makes the temple an important destination for worshippers, saints, and visitors seeking spiritual peace.



Figure 5-7: Shri Ram Janaki Shaktipith Ashram, Bairihawa Dham

The Ram Janaki Temple is a Hindu religious structure dedicated to Lord Ram and Goddess Sita (Janaki), symbolizing righteousness, devotion, and ideal family values. Architecturally, the temple follows the fundamental principles of Hindu temple design, with the garbhagriha serving as the most sacred space where the idols of Ram and Janaki are enshrined, often accompanied by Lakshman and Hanuman. The sanctum is designed to create a spiritually focused environment for daily worship and major rituals. In front of the sanctum is the mandapa, which functions as a space for congregational prayers, recitation of the Ramayana, and community gatherings, especially during festivals such as Ram Navami, Vivah Panchami, and other Vaishnava celebrations. The temple superstructure may take the form of a shikhara or a pagoda-style roof, reflecting regional architectural traditions and local construction practices. The temple is usually oriented toward the east and planned in accordance with Vastu Purusha Mandala, emphasizing harmony between the

built form, cosmic order, and spiritual life. Beyond its religious significance, the Ram Janaki Temple also acts as a cultural and social center, preserving religious traditions, hosting festivals, and strengthening community identity and collective devotion.

From an architectural perspective, the temple is distinctive within the local context due to its influence from South Indian temple architecture. The most striking feature is the pyramidal tower, known as the Vimana, which rises directly above the sanctum and creates a strong vertical emphasis. This form symbolizes spiritual elevation and the connection between the earthly and divine realms. The temple rests on a rectangular base, which provides both structural strength and clear spatial organization. At the heart of the structure lies the main sanctum, where the principal idols of Lord Ram and Goddess Janaki are enshrined. The placement of the deities at the center reinforces the symbolic axis of the temple, with the Vimana rising directly above them.

The entrance level is defined by a portico featuring arches supported by columns, creating a transitional space between the outer world and the sacred interior. This architectural element not only enhances the visual appeal of the temple but also provides shelter and gathering space for devotees before entering the sanctum. Adjacent to the main shrine is a Hanuman Temple, which adds further religious significance to the complex, as Lord Hanuman is revered as the devoted servant of Lord Ram. The presence of multiple shrines within the same complex reflects the integrated nature of Hindu worship practices.

The temple complex is surrounded by mature trees, which contribute to a tranquil and contemplative environment. These trees provide shade, regulate the microclimate, and strengthen the visual harmony between the built form and the natural landscape. The natural setting, combined with the architectural and spiritual qualities of the site, makes the Ram Janaki Temple not only a place of worship but also a living cultural landscape. As a heritage site, the temple holds significant potential for conservation through sensitive planning that respects its architectural character, religious functions, and environmental context, ensuring its preservation and continued relevance for future generations in Rohini Rural Municipality.

Conservation of Ram Janaki Temple (वैरिहवां धाम)

The conservation of Ram Janaki Temple (वैरिहवां धाम) in Ward No. 2 of Rohini Rural Municipality requires a holistic and well-planned approach that respects its religious significance, architectural character, and natural setting near the Rohini River. Preparation of a Detailed Project Report

(DPR) is essential as a guiding framework for all future development, conservation, and management activities. Any further construction or expansion within the temple premises should be carefully planned in accordance with Vastu principles while also reflecting local Terai and traditional architectural styles, ensuring harmony between new interventions and the existing form of the temple.

Proper landscaping of the temple complex is necessary to enhance its spiritual ambience and environmental quality. This includes organized open spaces, pedestrian pathways, shaded seating areas, native tree plantation, and controlled green buffers along the river edge. Landscaping should strengthen the visual and spiritual connection between the temple, the river, and the surrounding natural environment without disturbing the existing trees and ecological balance.

Improvement of connectivity and access is another major conservation priority. The existing connecting road to the temple should be upgraded to ensure safe and convenient access for



Figure 5-8: Google Earth Image of Ram Janaki Temple

devotees, pilgrims, and visitors throughout the year. Considering the temple's location near the Rohini River, the construction of a bridge is vital to improve accessibility, and to strengthen regional connectivity between surrounding settlements and the temple site.

The surrounding land of the temple should be properly utilized through planned development, such as designated spaces for religious gatherings, meditation areas, Dharamshala or resting

facilities, cultural activities, and parking zones. Planned land use will help prevent encroachment, unorganized growth, and environmental degradation while supporting temple-related activities.

The promotion of Ram Janaki Temple as a religious and cultural destination is essential to attract local and nearby tourists. This can be achieved through improved infrastructure, signage, cultural events, festivals, and coordination with religious tourism circuits in the Lumbini region. Enhanced visitation will not only strengthen the temple's cultural importance but also generate local employment and economic activity, benefiting the surrounding community while ensuring the long-term sustainability of the heritage site

Ward Number 3

Tarakeshwor Mahadev Temple



Figure 5-9: Tarakeshwor Mahadev Temple

This temple can be classified as a modern vernacular pyramidal shrine (Mandir) with a flat-roofed mandapa and symbolic shikhara element, commonly seen in rural Terai regions of Nepal and North India. Architecturally, the structure consists of a rectangular enclosed hall (mandapa or prayer hall) with a flat reinforced concrete roof, above which rises a small square tower capped by a pyramidal spire (shikhara-like form). The superstructure is symbolic rather than monumental, serving as a visual marker of sacred identity rather than following strict Nagara proportional canons. The finial (kalasha) at the top maintains traditional Hindu temple symbolism, representing auspiciousness and cosmic energy.

The building materials and finishes plastered masonry walls, tiled lower façade, iron grills, and integrated loudspeaker indicate a contemporary community-built temple, adapted to present-day construction techniques. Ornamentation is minimal, and the focus is functional, providing enclosed space for worship, ritual gatherings, and protection from climate.

The Tarakeshwor Mahadev Temple, located in Ward No. 3 of Rohini Rural Municipality, is an important religious and spiritual center that serves not only as a place of worship but also as a space for meditation, residence, and community gathering. Dedicated to Lord Shiva (Mahadev), the temple holds strong spiritual significance, especially during major Hindu festivals such as Mahashivaratri, when devotees from nearby villages and surrounding areas gather for worship, night-long prayers, and religious rituals.

The temple complex is well-developed compared to many smaller rural shrines and includes a two-storey Ashram building. This Ashram provides accommodation facilities for Sadhu and Santa (holy men and spiritual practitioners) who may visit and stay for extended periods, sometimes for months, for meditation, religious discourse, and spiritual practice. The presence of the Ashram enhances the temple's function beyond ritual worship, transforming it into a spiritual retreat center. The inclusion of a kitchen facility within the complex allows for preparation of food for residents, visiting saints, and devotees during religious gatherings and special events, reflecting organized management and community support.

The land for the temple complex has been donated by the local community, demonstrating strong local devotion and collective ownership. Community members have also contributed significantly to the construction and development of the temple and Ashram buildings, highlighting the temple's role as a shared cultural and religious asset. The site is enclosed within a compound wall,

which provides physical protection, defines the sacred boundary, and ensures security and organized use of the premises.

Within the temple compound, there is a designated shed for Hawan (sacred fire rituals), allowing rituals to be performed in a sheltered environment. This feature supports regular religious practices and special ceremonies conducted by priests and devotees. Additionally, vegetable farming within the compound area reflects a self-sustaining approach to temple management. The cultivation of vegetables may support the Ashram kitchen and resident saints, promoting economic sustainability and practical use of available land.

During important religious occasions, especially Mahashivaratri, the temple becomes a vibrant spiritual center attracting devotees from surrounding villages. Such gatherings strengthen social bonds, reinforce religious traditions, and contribute to local economic activities through small-scale trade and services.

Overall, the Tarakeshwor Mahadev Temple represents a well-established religious complex combining worship, residence, agriculture, and community participation. It stands as a significant spiritual and social institution within Rohini Rural Municipality, reflecting the deep-rooted devotion and collective effort of the local community.

Conservation of Tarakeshwor Mahadev Temple

The Tarakeshwor Mahadev Temple in Ward No. 3 of Rohini Rural Municipality, as a significant religious and spiritual center with Ashram facilities, requires planned conservation measures to enhance its functionality, accessibility, and spiritual environment while preserving its community-based character.

One of the primary needs is the upgrading of the approach road leading to the temple complex. Improved road conditions with proper drainage, surface finishing, and signage will ensure safe and convenient access for devotees, especially during major festivals such as Mahashivaratri, when large numbers of worshippers visit from nearby villages. Better connectivity will also support the stay of saints and visitors residing in the Ashram for extended periods.

The existing Hawan shade (ritual shed) should be upgraded with a more durable and aesthetically appropriate structure. The new design should use locally suitable materials and reflect traditional architectural elements, ensuring that the ritual space is safe, well-ventilated, and protected from

weather conditions. A properly designed Hawan area will enhance the dignity and functionality of ritual practices within the temple complex.

Introduction of proper landscaping is essential to organize the open spaces within the compound wall. Planned pathways, shaded seating areas, tree plantation, and green buffers should be developed to create a calm and spiritually uplifting environment. Landscaping should also integrate the vegetable farming areas harmoniously within the overall design, maintaining both functionality and aesthetic balance.

Through improved infrastructure, upgraded ritual facilities, and thoughtful landscape planning, the Tarakeshwor Mahadev Temple can be conserved and developed as a well-managed spiritual complex that continues to serve devotees, resident saints, and the broader community of Rohini Rural Municipality.

Durga and Shiva Temple

The Durga and Shiva Temple Complex located in Ward No. 3 of Rohini Rural Municipality is an important religious site where two temples are situated within a single compound, creating a shared sacred space for devotees of both Goddess Durga and Lord Shiva. The coexistence of these two shrines within one complex reflects the integrated nature of Hindu worship traditions and strengthens the religious importance of the site for the surrounding community.

Within the temple premises, a new building is currently under construction, intended to provide accommodation facilities for Santa (saints), spiritual practitioners, and visiting devotees. This building will allow individuals to stay for extended periods for meditation, prayer, and spiritual learning. The temple complex is not only a place for daily worship but also serves as a retreat space where people can reside temporarily for religious devotion and inner reflection.

This temple can be classified as a modern tiered (pagoda-influenced) vernacular Hindu temple, incorporating elements of both traditional Nepali multi-tiered forms and simplified contemporary construction. The construction within the complex largely uses modern building materials, which provide durability but may not fully reflect traditional temple architectural styles. Despite this, the temple remains an active spiritual center, drawing devotees from nearby areas. In addition to regular worship, the complex is also used as a venue for marriage ceremonies and other religious functions, making it a multifunctional community space.

The temple is managed by the local community, demonstrating strong local participation and ownership. Community management ensures daily operation, organization of festivals, maintenance, and religious events. Overall, the Durga and Shiva Temple Complex in Ward No. 3 functions as a dynamic religious, social, and cultural hub, serving both spiritual and community needs within Rohini Rural Municipality.



Figure 5-10: Durga and Shiva Temple

Conservation of Durga Shiva Temple

The Durga and Shiva Temple Complex in Ward No. 3, being a shared religious space with residential and ceremonial functions, requires a comprehensive conservation approach that balances spiritual significance, community use, and sustainable development.

First, an integrated master plan should be prepared for the entire complex. Since two temples and a residential building exist within one compound, proper spatial planning is necessary to organize worship areas, residential facilities, marriage ceremony spaces, circulation paths, and open areas. Future construction should follow a clear layout plan to avoid haphazard development and ensure harmonious growth.

The building under construction for saints and visitors should be completed following a defined architectural guideline. While modern materials are currently used, efforts should be made to incorporate elements of local and traditional architectural identity—such as appropriate roof forms, façade treatment, color schemes, and detailing—to maintain religious character and visual harmony within the complex.

Proper landscaping and open space design are also essential. The temple grounds should include paved pathways, shaded seating areas, plantation of native trees, and designated spaces for marriage ceremonies and gatherings. Landscaping will enhance the spiritual atmosphere and improve the overall visitor experience. Infrastructure improvement such as drainage management, sanitation facilities, solid waste management, and lighting systems should be prioritized to maintain cleanliness and environmental quality, especially during large gatherings and ceremonies.

Since the temple is community-managed, capacity building and awareness programs should be conducted to help local committees understand the importance of heritage-sensitive development and long-term maintenance planning. Financial sustainability strategies such as managed donation systems or event-based contributions can support regular upkeep.

Through planned development, architectural refinement, and improved infrastructure, the Durga and Shiva Temple Complex can be conserved as a well-organized religious and social center that continues to serve worshippers, visiting saints, and the broader community of Rohini Rural Municipality.

Durga Temple



Figure 5-11: Durga Temple

A Durga Temple is a Hindu religious structure dedicated to Goddess Durga, the embodiment of divine feminine power (Shakti) and the destroyer of evil. Architecturally, Durga temples generally follow the basic form of Hindu temple design, with a garbhagriha housing the image of Goddess Durga often depicted slaying Mahishasura, symbolizing the victory of good over evil. The sanctum is the spiritual core of the temple, where daily worship and major rituals are performed. In front of the sanctum lies the mandapa, a space used by devotees for prayer, offerings, and gatherings, especially during festivals such as Dashain and Navaratri, when Durga temples become major centers of religious and social activity. The temple superstructure may take the form of a shikhara or pagoda-style roof, particularly in the Nepali context, reflecting local materials, craftsmanship, and traditional aesthetics. Many Durga temples are oriented toward the east and planned according to Vastu principles, reinforcing their symbolic connection to cosmic order. Beyond their religious function, Durga temples also serve as important community landmarks, hosting cultural events, rituals, and collective celebrations that strengthen social and spiritual bonds.

Durga Temple, located in Ward No. 3 of Rohini Rural Municipality, is an important local religious site situated near the Parasi Road, making it easily accessible and frequently visited by devotees and passersby. The temple holds strong spiritual value for the surrounding communities and functions as a key center for daily worship, festivals, and collective religious activities. A prominent feature of the temple complex is the large Hanuman statue positioned on the side of the temple, which serves as a visual landmark and reinforces the religious character of the site.



Figure 5-12: Hanuman Statue

The temple land has been donated by the local community, reflecting strong community ownership and devotion. The boundary wall has been constructed through community effort, and the temple itself has largely been built and managed by local residents, with limited financial

support from Rohini Rural Municipality and the Provincial Government. This collective involvement highlights the temple's role as a community-driven heritage asset.

At present, a new building is under construction within the temple complex; however, it lacks a clearly defined architectural style. The absence of design guidelines risks weakening the cultural and architectural identity of the temple, particularly if modern construction continues without reference to local or traditional forms. Additionally, the site suffers from poor landscaping, with unorganized open spaces and limited greenery, reducing the spiritual and visual quality of the temple environment.

The temple also faces solid waste management issues, especially during festivals and peak worship periods, leading to environmental and sanitation concerns. Addressing these challenges through planned architectural guidance, improved landscaping, organized waste management systems, and continued community participation is essential to conserve the Durga Temple as a sustainable religious and cultural heritage site of Rohini Rural Municipality.

Conservation of Durga Temple

The Durga Temple in Ward No. 3 of Rohini Rural Municipality requires a planned and inclusive conservation approach that recognizes its strong community-based origin, religious importance, and strategic location near Parasi Road. Conservation efforts should aim to enhance the temple's spiritual environment while safeguarding its architectural, environmental, and social values.

A primary conservation need is the preparation of a clear design guideline or mini-master plan for the temple complex. The new building currently under construction should be guided by a defined architectural style that reflects local Terai traditions and Hindu temple principles, rather than uncoordinated modern forms. Use of appropriate proportions, materials, colors, and symbolic elements will help strengthen the visual identity and cultural authenticity of the temple complex.

Given the temple's accessibility and frequent use, landscape improvement is essential. Proper landscaping with organized pathways, green spaces, shaded seating areas, and plantation of native trees will enhance the spiritual ambiance and improve visitor comfort. Special attention should be given to integrating the large Hanuman statue harmoniously within the landscape so that it becomes a focal spiritual and visual element rather than an isolated structure.

The temple currently faces solid waste management problems, particularly during festivals and community gatherings. Introducing designated waste collection points, regular cleaning schedules, awareness programs for devotees, and coordination with municipal waste services is crucial to maintain hygiene and environmental quality within the temple premises.

As the temple land and boundary wall have been donated and developed by the community, continued community participation should remain central to conservation. Support from Rohini Rural Municipality and the Provincial Government can be strengthened through technical guidance, small-scale funding, and monitoring to ensure sustainable development. Through architectural control, environmental management, improved landscaping, and community-led stewardship, the Durga Temple can be conserved as a dignified, functional, and culturally meaningful religious heritage site for local community.

Ward Number 4

Shiva Temple



Figure 5-13: Shiva Temple

A Shiva Temple is a Hindu religious structure dedicated to Lord Shiva, the symbol of destruction, regeneration, and cosmic balance. The spiritual focus of the temple is the garbhagriha, where the Shiva Linga is enshrined as the primary object of worship, representing the formless and infinite nature of Shiva. This sanctum is usually simple and austere in character, reflecting Shaivite philosophy, and includes a yoni base to symbolize the union of cosmic energies. In front of the sanctum lies the mandapa, a space for devotees to assemble, chant mantras, and perform rituals such as abhisheka, especially during auspicious occasions like Maha Shivaratri and Mondays

dedicated to Shiva. A prominent Nandi (bull) statue, Shiva's vehicle, is typically placed along the central axis facing the sanctum, reinforcing the sacred alignment and devotional hierarchy. The temple superstructure may take the form of a shikhara or a pagoda-style roof in the Nepali context, rising above the sanctum to signify Mount Kailash, Shiva's divine abode. Planned according to Vastu principles and usually oriented toward the east, the Shiva Temple functions not only as a place of worship but also as a spiritual and cultural center, supporting rituals, festivals, and communal religious life.

Shiva Temple, located in Ward No. 4 of Rohini Rural Municipality, is one of the oldest religious sites in the area and holds significant historical, spiritual, and cultural value for the local



Figure 5-14: Shiva Temple

community. Despite its long-standing importance, there is no available information or interpretative signage at the site explaining the temple's history, origin, or cultural significance, which limits public awareness and understanding of its heritage value.

This temple can be classified as a vernacular mandapa-type Hindu temple with a pyramidal roof, a form commonly found in rural and forested areas of Nepal and adjoining regions of North India.

Architecturally, it is characterized by a simple raised plinth supporting an open, pillared mandapa that serves as the primary worship space, rather than a fully enclosed sanctum crowned by a tall Shikhara.

Over time, additional temples and buildings have been constructed around the main shrine without proper planning or design control. These structures, largely built using modern construction materials, have altered the traditional setting of the temple and weakened its architectural coherence and historic character. The absence of a coordinated development plan has resulted in a cluttered temple environment that does not fully respect the sanctity and prominence of the original Shiva temple.

The temple is protected and managed by the local community, reflecting strong devotion and a sense of collective responsibility. However, the site faces several physical and environmental challenges. The access road to the temple is in poor condition, making it difficult for devotees, especially during large gatherings such as Mahashivaratri, when worshippers arrive from surrounding villages and across the municipality.

The temple also suffers from poor landscaping, with unorganized open spaces and limited infrastructure for pilgrims, despite being surrounded by large, mature trees that offer shade and create a naturally serene and sacred atmosphere. These trees form an important part of the temple's cultural landscape and contribute significantly to its spiritual character.

Overall, the Shiva Temple in Ward No. 4 represents a valuable heritage asset of Rohini Rural Municipality. Its conservation requires documentation of its history, planned management of surrounding structures, improved access and landscaping, and continued community involvement to ensure that the temple's historic and spiritual significance is preserved for future generations.

Conservation of The Shiva Temple

The Shiva Temple in Ward No. 4 of Rohini Rural Municipality is one of the oldest and most revered religious sites in the area, carrying deep historical, spiritual, social, and cultural value. Its conservation therefore requires a holistic and long-term approach that integrates architectural planning, environmental management, community participation, and heritage promotion, rather than isolated or short-term interventions.

A fundamental requirement is the preparation of an integrated design framework and master plan for the entire temple precinct. This master plan should clearly identify the core heritage zone around the original Shiva shrine, regulate the placement and design of surrounding temples and buildings, and establish guidelines for future construction. It should promote visual harmony by controlling building height, form, materials, and colors, and by encouraging the use of locally appropriate and traditional architectural elements. Such planning will help restore the primacy of the original temple and prevent further unplanned development.

Regular and systematic maintenance is essential to safeguard the physical condition of the temple. This includes routine inspection of structural elements, roofs, floors, and drainage systems; timely repair of cracks and surface deterioration; and protection from moisture and vegetation damage. Maintenance plans should be institutionalized through a temple management committee with technical support from the Rural Municipality, ensuring that conservation is preventive rather than reactive.

Upgrading the approach road is another critical conservation need. Improved road access will ensure safer and easier movement of devotees, particularly during large festivals such as Mahashivaratri, when pilgrims arrive from surrounding villages and the wider municipality. Road improvements should be designed sensitively, with proper drainage, pedestrian safety measures, and signage, so that accessibility is improved without compromising the sacred character of the site.

Thoughtfully planned landscaping can significantly enhance the temple's spiritual atmosphere and visitor experience. Existing large trees, which are an integral part of the temple's sacred landscape, should be carefully preserved and integrated into the design. Landscaping interventions should organize open spaces, define pathways, provide shaded resting areas, and create visually calm zones for prayer and meditation. Native plant species should be used to reinforce ecological sustainability and cultural continuity.

Raising community awareness about the temple's importance is central to successful conservation. Educational programs, information boards, and local cultural events can help communicate the temple's religious significance, its role as a social gathering place, and its potential economic benefits through pilgrimage and local tourism. Strengthening this awareness will encourage community stewardship and pride in the temple as a shared heritage asset.

By improving infrastructure, enhancing the landscape, and promoting its historical and spiritual value, the Shiva Temple can be positioned as a local pilgrimage and heritage destination. This will help attract visitors from nearby areas, stimulate small-scale economic activities such as local shops and services, and contribute to sustainable local development. In this way, conservation of the Shiva Temple will not only protect a sacred site but also support the cultural, social, and economic vitality of Rohini Rural Municipality.

Ward no 6

Kotahi Temple



Figure 5-15: Kotahi Temple

Kotahi Temple can be classified as a vernacular Nagara-influenced rural Hindu temple, reflecting a simplified adaptation of the North Indian temple tradition. Architecturally, the temple combines an enclosed sanctum (garbhagriha) crowned by a modest curvilinear Shikhara with an open pillared Mandapa extending to the front and sides, a layout typical of small countryside shrines. The Shikhara is plain and undecorated, indicating a functional and locally executed form rather than a fully canonical Nagara composition.

The Kotahi Devi Temple, located in Ward No. 6 of Rohini Rural Municipality, is regarded as one of the oldest religious sites in the area and holds strong historical and spiritual value. Although the name of the temple reflects devotion to a goddess (Devi), the main shrine within the temple complex is dedicated to Lord Shiva, indicating a layered religious history and the evolution of worship practices over time. This dual identity adds cultural depth and suggests the possibility of historical transitions in local belief systems.

The temple is constructed on designated temple land, reflecting its established religious status and community recognition. Within the complex, there is a separate Ashram building, which provides space for saints (Santa) and spiritual practitioners to reside, meditate, and conduct religious teachings. This ashram component enhances the temple's function beyond ritual worship, making it a place for spiritual learning and contemplation.



Figure 5-16: Bamboo Structure

A notable traditional feature within the complex is the presence of an old bamboo structure used for Hawan (sacred fire rituals). This structure reflects indigenous construction practices and ritual traditions that are gradually disappearing in modern temple settings. The preservation of such elements is important as they represent intangible religious heritage linked to ritual performance and community gatherings.

Near the temple lies a public pond, which plays a significant role during religious festivals, especially Chhath Puja, when devotees gather to perform rituals dedicated to the Sun God. The proximity of the pond enhances the temple's religious landscape and strengthens its cultural connection with water-based rituals common in the Terai region.

Despite its religious importance, the temple faces several infrastructural and environmental challenges. The approach road is in poor condition, limiting accessibility, particularly during festivals and the rainy season. An electricity line passing through the temple complex creates visual disturbance and potential safety concerns. Additionally, the site suffers from poor

landscaping, with unorganized open spaces and limited environmental management, which diminishes its spiritual ambiance.

Overall, Kotahi Devi Temple represents a significant religious and cultural heritage site in Rohini Rural Municipality. With proper planning, infrastructure improvement, landscaping, and heritage-sensitive management, the temple complex has strong potential to be conserved as a valuable spiritual and historical landmark for the community.

Conservation of Kotahi Temple

The conservation of Kotahi Devi Temple, one of the oldest religious sites in Rohini Rural Municipality, requires a comprehensive and well-planned approach that respects its historical depth, spiritual importance, and cultural landscape. Proper planning is essential to guide future development within the temple complex. A clear master plan should define the sacred core area, regulate new construction, and ensure that any additional structures reflect traditional temple architecture rather than unplanned modern forms. The Ashram building, the old bamboo Hawan structure, and open spaces should be harmoniously integrated into a unified layout. Infrastructure elements such as the electricity line passing through the complex should be reorganized or relocated in a way that preserves safety and maintains the visual sanctity of the temple.

Landscaping improvement is equally important to enhance the spiritual and environmental quality of the site. Organized pathways, shaded resting areas, plantation of native species, and proper boundary treatment should be introduced while preserving existing natural features. The nearby public pond, which plays a vital role during Chhath Puja, should be incorporated into the overall conservation plan with proper cleaning, edge protection, and ritual-friendly access steps to maintain its religious and ecological significance.

Upgrading the approach road is crucial to improve accessibility for devotees and visitors, particularly during festivals and special religious gatherings. A well-constructed road with proper drainage, signage, and pedestrian safety measures will enhance the temple's connectivity and encourage greater visitation. Regular maintenance and infrastructure upgrades, including sanitation facilities, lighting, drainage, and safe electrical systems should be institutionalized to ensure long-term preservation of the temple environment.

Conservation efforts should aim toward economically sustainable development by promoting the temple as a local religious and cultural destination. Improved infrastructure and organized

management can attract pilgrims and local tourists, generating small-scale economic opportunities for the surrounding community. Through proper planning, landscape enhancement, infrastructure improvement, and community participation, Kotahi Temple can be preserved as a spiritually vibrant and sustainably managed heritage site for future generations.

Ward Number 7

Shiva Mandir

This Shiva Temple can be classified as a vernacular domed Hindu temple with Indo-Islamic architectural influence, commonly found in the Terai and North Indian plains. Architecturally, the temple consists of a square sanctum (garbhagriha) enclosed within thick masonry walls and surrounded by a low boundary platform. Above the sanctum rises a circular drum supporting a prominent hemispherical dome, topped with a finial. Unlike the curvilinear shikhara of the classical Nagara style, the use of a dome reflects regional adaptation and historical interaction with Indo-Islamic construction traditions. The attached flat-roofed open mandapa with simple pillars provides space for devotees to gather and perform rituals, reinforcing its community-oriented character. Overall, this Shiva Temple represents a regional vernacular adaptation, blending basic Hindu temple spatial principles (sanctum + mandapa) with a domical superstructure, rather than a classical Nagara shikhara form.

The Shiva Temple located in Ward No. 7 of Rohini Rural Municipality is a developing religious site that is currently under construction. Despite being incomplete, the temple displays a unique architectural character, particularly through its dome-shaped roof, which distinguishes it from the more common shikhara or flat-roof temple forms seen in the region. The dome form creates a strong visual identity and may symbolize unity and cosmic wholeness, adding architectural interest within the local religious landscape.

Adjacent to the main Shiva Temple is the Siddhi Binayek Temple, an older and smaller shrine with traditional characteristics. This small structure carries historical and devotional value and reflects earlier phases of temple development in the area. The coexistence of the newly constructed Shiva Temple and the older Siddhi Binayek shrine represents a transition between traditional and contemporary religious architecture within the same sacred precinct.



Figure 5-17: Shiva Temple

An Ashram building is also under construction within or near the temple complex. However, due to insufficient funding, construction has been halted, leaving the structure incomplete. The unfinished state affects both the visual quality and functional potential of the complex, as the ashram is intended to provide space for saints, spiritual practitioners, and religious activities.

Nearby, there is a pond used during Chhath Puja, which enhances the cultural and ritual significance of the temple area. The presence of the pond strengthens the religious landscape, linking water-based rituals with temple worship practices. Overall, the Shiva Temple in Ward No. 7 has strong potential to become an important religious and cultural destination once construction is completed and the surrounding area is properly planned and developed.

Conservation of Shiva Temple

The conservation and development of the Shiva Temple in Ward No. 7 require a coordinated and forward-looking approach, especially as the temple and associated structures are currently under

construction. Preparation of an integrated master plan is essential to guide the future growth of the temple complex. This master plan should include not only the main Shiva Temple and the under-construction Ashram but also the nearby Siddhi Binayek Temple and the adjacent pond used during Chhath Puja. A unified planning framework will ensure harmonious spatial organization, controlled development, proper circulation, and preservation of the sacred atmosphere.

The nearby pond should be incorporated into the conservation design as an important ritual and environmental element. Its edges should be stabilized, access steps for worshippers properly designed, and cleanliness maintained, particularly during major festivals. Landscaping around the pond and temple complex should enhance the spiritual ambiance while protecting the ecological balance.

Priority should be given to completing the under-construction structures, including the main temple works and the Ashram building. Securing adequate funding through community support, municipal assistance, and possible provincial or donor contributions will help prevent long-term structural deterioration due to incomplete construction. Completion should follow a consistent architectural vision that respects the unique dome-shaped design and maintains visual harmony with the older Siddhi Binayek Temple.

Upgrading the approach road is also critical to improve accessibility for devotees, especially during religious events and festivals. A well-constructed road with proper drainage, pedestrian safety measures, and signage will enhance visitor experience and strengthen the temple's role as a religious destination.

Through integrated planning, completion of construction, infrastructure improvement, and inclusion of the pond within the conservation framework, the Shiva Temple in Ward No. 7 can be developed into a well-managed, spiritually vibrant, and culturally significant religious complex within Rohini Rural Municipality.

5.2 Intangible Heritages

Intangible heritage in Rohini Rural Municipality represents the living cultural traditions, practices, expressions, and knowledge systems that are transmitted from generation to generation within the community. Located in Rupandehi District of Lumbini Province, Rohini is culturally diverse, with communities such as Brahmin, Chhetri, Tharu, Magar, Madhesi, and Muslim groups living together. This diversity has created a rich cultural environment where religious festivals, rituals, oral traditions, music, dance, and social customs form an essential part of everyday life. Unlike tangible heritage such as temples and monuments, intangible heritage exists in the form of practices, beliefs, skills, and collective memory that shape the identity of the local people.

Religious festivals are one of the most significant components of intangible heritage in Rohini. Major Hindu festivals such as Dashain, Tihar, Holi, Janai Purnima, Shivaratri, and Chhath are celebrated with great enthusiasm. These festivals involve ritual worship, traditional music, community gatherings, preparation of special foods, and intergenerational participation, strengthening social harmony. Buddhist observances such as Buddha Jayanti are also influenced by the proximity of Lumbini, the birthplace of Lord Buddha. Similarly, Muslim communities celebrate Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-ul-Adha, contributing to the multicultural religious landscape of the municipality. These religious practices reflect tolerance, shared participation, and cultural coexistence.

Festivals in Rohini Rural Municipality are the heart of the community's intangible heritage, reflecting the religious devotion, social cohesion, and cultural diversity of its people. Among Hindu festivals, Dashain is the most prominent, celebrated over fifteen days during the autumn season. It commemorates the victory of good over evil and involves the worship of Goddess Durga, family gatherings, the Tika ceremony, and exchanging blessings from elders. The festival is marked by flying kites, feasting on traditional foods, and performing animal sacrifices in some households, reflecting both spiritual and agrarian traditions. Tihar, also known as the festival of lights, follows Dashain and spans five days, during which families honor dogs, cows, and the goddess Laxmi through rituals, decorations, and candle-lit lamps, symbolizing gratitude and prosperity. Holi, the festival of colors, celebrates the arrival of spring and the victory of good over evil. It is observed with vibrant color play, singing, dancing, and community gatherings, fostering joy and unity across caste and ethnic lines.

Another important Hindu observance is Chhath, dedicated to the Sun God, which involves rigorous rituals including fasting, holy bathing in rivers, and offering prayers to the setting and rising sun. This festival, especially observed along riverbanks, strengthens family and community bonds and connects people to nature. Shivaratri, the night of Lord Shiva, is celebrated with fasting, night-long vigils, and worship in local Shiva temples, emphasizing devotion and spiritual discipline. Other festivals such as Janai Purnima involve the renewal of sacred threads and rituals associated with family and social well-being.

Buddhist and Muslim festivals also form an integral part of Rohini's cultural calendar. Buddha Jayanti, celebrating the birth, enlightenment, and death of Lord Buddha, is observed with prayer gatherings, meditation, and lighting butter lamps, particularly influenced by the proximity of Lumbini, the birthplace of Buddha. Muslim communities celebrate Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-ul-Adha, which involve communal prayers, charity, feasting, and visiting relatives, emphasizing compassion, generosity, and communal harmony.

The Tharu community, one of the indigenous groups of the Terai region including Rohini Rural Municipality, possesses a rich and distinct cultural heritage that is deeply intertwined with their social structure, traditional knowledge, and relationship with nature. Tharu culture is characterized by its vibrant festivals, unique dances, indigenous music, oral traditions, and traditional clothing, which together form a living expression of their identity. Traditionally, the Tharu people were skilled agriculturalists and forest dwellers, and their lifestyle and rituals reflect a deep connection with the land, rivers, and seasonal cycles. Their homes, often built from locally sourced materials such as mud, bamboo, and thatch, are adorned with symbolic motifs representing fertility, prosperity, and protection from evil spirits, reflecting a worldview that blends spirituality with everyday life.

Festivals are central to Tharu cultural expression. The most significant is Maghi, the Tharu New Year, celebrated in mid-January, which marks the winter solstice and the start of the agricultural season. Maghi is observed with ritual bathing, feasting, singing, and group dances, along with offerings to ancestors to seek blessings for health, prosperity, and a good harvest. Other major festivals include Dashain and Tihar, celebrated with a Tharu interpretation involving traditional music, dances, and community feasts, showcasing their ability to blend broader Nepali festivals with indigenous practices. Naach, the traditional Tharu dance, is performed during festivals and social gatherings, featuring elaborate movements, colorful attire, and live folk music with drums, flutes, and other local instruments, serving as both entertainment and a medium for storytelling.

The oral traditions of the Tharu are another cornerstone of their intangible heritage. Folktales, proverbs, myths, and epic songs are passed down from elders, preserving historical memory, social values, and moral lessons. Tharu music, characterized by rhythmic drumming, the sarangi (string instrument), and vocal storytelling, often accompanies festivals, agricultural work, and communal events, reinforcing community cohesion. Traditional attire also reflects Tharu identity: women wear bright, embroidered dresses called ghagra-choli with distinctive jewelry, while men wear dhotis, kurtas, and headgear with symbolic designs, highlighting social and marital status.

Tharu culture is also embedded in social organization and customary practices. Clan-based systems govern marriage, inheritance, and social responsibilities, while rituals related to birth, marriage, death, and agriculture reflect indigenous knowledge and respect for nature. For example, planting and harvesting rituals involve offerings and prayers to local deities, showing the integration of spirituality with ecological wisdom. Despite modernization and external influences, Tharu cultural practices in Rohini Rural Municipality remain resilient, serving as a vibrant example of intangible heritage that connects the past with present community identity.

CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Conclusion

The historical, archaeological, religious, and cultural heritage of Rohini Rural Municipality represents a living testimony of the region's spiritual devotion, traditional knowledge systems, and community-based cultural continuity. The temples, sacred ponds, Chhath Ghats, Ashrams, and ritual landscapes are not merely physical structures; they function as dynamic centers of worship, social interaction, seasonal festivals, and collective identity. These heritage assets embody layers of history shaped by local beliefs, oral traditions, land donations, craftsmanship, and indigenous construction techniques. The integration of built structures with natural elements such as sacred trees, water bodies, and riverbanks reflects a holistic cultural landscape rather than isolated monuments.

However, the study also reveals that many heritage sites are developing in an unplanned manner due to the absence of comprehensive master plans, technical guidance, conservation frameworks, and regulated construction practices. The increasing use of modern materials without sensitivity to traditional forms, environmental degradation of ponds, poor drainage systems, unmanaged waste during festivals, and lack of systematic documentation pose significant threats to long-term sustainability. While community involvement remains strong, conservation efforts are often reactive rather than strategic. Without timely intervention, gradual loss of architectural authenticity, environmental balance, and historical integrity may occur.

Despite these challenges, Rohini RM possesses significant opportunities. The continued religious vitality of temples, active participation of local management committees, availability of donated lands, and strong social attachment to heritage create a favorable environment for structured conservation planning. With integrated conservation strategies that combine architectural preservation, environmental management, infrastructure improvement, and cultural tourism development, Rohini RM can transform its heritage assets into sustainable community resources. A long-term, participatory, and environmentally sensitive conservation approach is therefore essential to preserve both tangible and intangible heritage for future generations.

6.2 Recommendations

Preparation of Comprehensive Master Plans and DPRs

A detailed master plan and Detailed Project Report (DPR) should be prepared for each major heritage site to guide systematic development and conservation. These documents should clearly define heritage zones, buffer areas, architectural control guidelines, infrastructure planning, landscaping proposals, and environmental protection measures. A planned approach will prevent haphazard construction and ensure that future expansions respect traditional architectural character and spatial organization. The master plan should integrate long-term development vision with conservation principles to balance modernization and heritage protection.

Documentation and Heritage Inventory

A comprehensive documentation program should be undertaken to record all historical, archaeological, religious, and cultural assets within Rohini RM. This should include architectural drawings, measured surveys, photographic documentation, mapping of ponds and sacred landscapes, oral history collection, and archival research. Proper documentation will create an official heritage database that supports informed decision-making and prevents loss of historical information. Informational signage at heritage sites should also be installed to educate visitors and promote cultural awareness.

Architectural and Structural Conservation

Existing temples, shrines, and associated structures should undergo structural assessment and conservation using compatible materials and techniques. Restoration works should respect original design elements, proportions, ornamentation, and construction methods. The use of inappropriate modern materials that alter authenticity should be minimized. New constructions within temple complexes should follow architectural guidelines to maintain visual harmony and preserve cultural identity. Regular maintenance programs should be established to prevent structural deterioration.

Conservation of Ponds and Chhath Ghats

Sacred ponds and Chhath Ghats require systematic environmental management to ensure their ecological and cultural sustainability. Regular desiltation, water quality monitoring, erosion control, safe stepped ghats, and proper drainage systems should be implemented. Waste management strategies must be enforced, especially during major festivals. Native vegetation should be planted around pond peripheries to enhance biodiversity and stabilize soil. Conservation

of water bodies should be integrated with overall landscape planning to maintain both religious function and environmental health.

Infrastructure Improvement

Basic infrastructure improvements such as road access, drainage systems, sanitation facilities, drinking water supply, and proper electrical management are essential for heritage site sustainability. Infrastructure development should be carefully designed to avoid visual or structural damage to heritage structures. Underground wiring and planned lighting systems should be encouraged within temple premises. Improved infrastructure will enhance visitor safety, accessibility during festivals, and overall site functionality.

Landscaping and Site Planning

Planned landscaping should enhance the spiritual and environmental quality of heritage sites. Open spaces should be organized for ceremonial gatherings, pedestrian pathways should be clearly defined, and shaded seating areas should be provided for pilgrims. Sacred trees must be preserved and integrated into site planning. Native plantation should be encouraged to maintain ecological balance. Thoughtful landscape design will improve aesthetic value while maintaining the sacred atmosphere of the sites.

Community Participation and Capacity Building

Since heritage sites in Rohini RM are largely community-managed, strengthening local participation is crucial. Awareness programs, technical training workshops, and capacity-building initiatives should be organized for temple management committees and local youth. Community-based monitoring systems can ensure regular maintenance and responsible festival management. Encouraging youth involvement will foster long-term stewardship and cultural continuity.

Promotion of Religious and Cultural Tourism

Rohini RM has strong potential for developing sustainable religious and cultural tourism. Temple circuits, cultural festivals, heritage walks, and informational brochures can be developed to attract visitors. However, tourism development should prioritize cultural sensitivity and environmental sustainability. Local communities should directly benefit through employment opportunities and small-scale businesses. Responsible tourism planning can generate revenue for conservation while preserving authenticity.

Institutional Coordination and Sustainable Funding

Effective conservation requires coordination between Rohini Rural Municipality, provincial authorities, technical experts, and community stakeholders. A dedicated heritage conservation fund should be established to ensure continuous financial support for maintenance and restoration activities. Public-private partnerships and grant opportunities may also be explored. Institutional collaboration will ensure technical oversight, accountability, and long-term sustainability of conservation initiatives.

ANNEX





