Many of them are under illegal occupation, threatening their existence further. People of the locality are usually oblivious of the treasure they have and could not care less.

There are many ways, often inexpensive, to promote the cause of architectural conservation. This on one hand requires examples of successful conservation work, and on the other hand awareness, cooperation and participation of the community in which the heritage structures are located. The measures need proper documentation with measured drawings, visuals and texts. Since the 1990s, the awareness about their value, the need for conservation, and means of economic regeneration has increased, especially among the architects and environmental pressure groups. A handful of efforts faced formidable challenges brought by other issues as criteria and listing, awareness and participation, management and funding. The enthusiasm of the 1990s needed resurgence.

The idea of holding the recent architectural heritage conservation workshop cropped up when the British Council received a few posters on urban regeneration and wanted to put these on display. They came to know about drawings of old historical buildings in Dhaka by students of the North South University architecture department. So the Chairman of NSU Architecture and the Cultural Manager at the British Council decided to hold a joint poster exhibition on the theme 'Old but New: New but Old'. Eventually it evolved into a 3-day event when the British Council Director suggested that they would fly in Michael Morrison from London- a conservation architect who has been putting new life in all sorts of listed buildings in the UK by restoring and making adaptive reuse. Neer Ltd. came forward by sponsoring Dr. Sharif Imon from Macao, who as a Consultant to UNESCO and World Heritage Cen

With this cross-section of stakeholders, the deliberations were lively and informative. People participated in discussions and opinions, and queries and criticisms were rampant.

The conclusion was drawn on evening the third day at the British Council, with two more keynote presentations by two visiting experts summarising the findings, a report by the coordinator on the activities during these three days and the future ahead and certificate distribution by Prof. Hafiz GA Siddiqi of NSU. The exhibition of measured drawings by the students of architecture at North South University and Ahsanullah University of Engineering and Technology continued till 31 March at the British Council Lobby. It brought together 35 panels of detailed drawings and brief history of as many buildings in Puran Dhaka and Panamnagar. The issue of ongoing work by the Department of Archaeology at restoring some buildings in Panamnagar came under heavy criticism by the workshop participants. The Director General of Archaeology, who was present in the workshop, defended his department rather unconvincingly.

