



## GET THE FACTS - HERITAGE INFORMATION SERIES

### 25. THE FUTURE OF HERITAGE

The presentation of the material past is conceived more or less as an integrated educational process, yet ironically, its enjoyment by the general public is conceived as an aspect of leisure and entertainment. This dichotomy has a controlling influence, not only as to how much or how little the character of a particular place may be affected by the impact of heritage tourism, but also on the relative level of architectural synthesis that is tolerated between historical and modern building in general terms. At

the planning level, a holistic approach is adopted to cater both to the cultural importance of an evolved heritage place by way of historical interpretation and edification and at the same time setting policies for the conversion of the fabric to meet tourist needs. The question that conservationists have been asking for a long time is how, in an age of greatly increased urban scale and pluralistic complexity, can surviving historic buildings be reinterpreted so that their socio-aesthetic and practical worth can be fully appreciated by every

element of modern society? The extent to which historic monuments become little more than relics within the existing social and economic milieu or, conversely, are constantly reinterpreted as vital (virtual) cultural links between past and present, can be directly related to the way that our cultural traditions have been preserved or destroyed. Having witnessed the ravages of the 60's, 70's and 80's, we instinctively protect the remaining heritage fabric. However, in our attempt to control change, to what extent is progress being stifled?