

Use of Urban Pockets to Enhance Walkability in Office Neighbourhoods in Colombo Urban Context with Special Reference to Fort, Colombo

PDJD Premaratne# and MLNH Premarathna

Faculty of Built Environment and Spatial Sciences, Southern Campus, General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University, Sri Lanka

#jithmipremaratne@gmail.com

Urban pockets have been recognized as resourceful collective spaces for urban functions in a modern-day city. Also, urban design and planning of major developed cities incorporate the walkability concept in order to minimize traffic, environmental, and health problems. Colombo is considered the commercial capital with a high density of office neighbourhoods that attract high density of vehicular movement. Fort is recognized as office neighbourhoods in the Colombo area where the traffic congestion is higher. Previous research considers the physical factors of the street in order to enhance walkability. They lacked consideration of the walking behaviour-flow, junctions, and small urban spaces in the process. The study aims to identify the undefined urban spaces that can be used as urban pockets by studying public behaviour patterns regarding walkability in office working hours in Colombo. In order to identify the possible urban spaces that can be developed as urban pockets, the research indemnify the current walking patterns and walkability of the area. The identified walking pedestrian flow laid over the identified leftover spaces which have the possibility to develop without changing the current urban context. Overall images for study area were developed with the existing and possible urban pockets based on walking patterns and the lack of walkable routes in order to enhance the walkability of office neighbourhoods.

Keywords: *walkability, walking behaviour, urban pockets*