

# PROJECT: Ajanta and Ellora World Heritage Sites Conservation and Tourism Enhancement Plan

**LOCATION:** Maharashtra, India

**DATE:** 1991-92

**ROLE:** Planning Team Member, Architecture Conservation Consultant

**DESCRIPTION:**

In 1991, the United States National Park Service provided a park planning team to assist the Maharashtra Tourist Development Corporation (MTDC) in developing a concept plan for visitor facilities. The team also provided consultation to the Archeological Survey of India (ASI) regarding the conservation of the Ellora and Ajanta monuments.

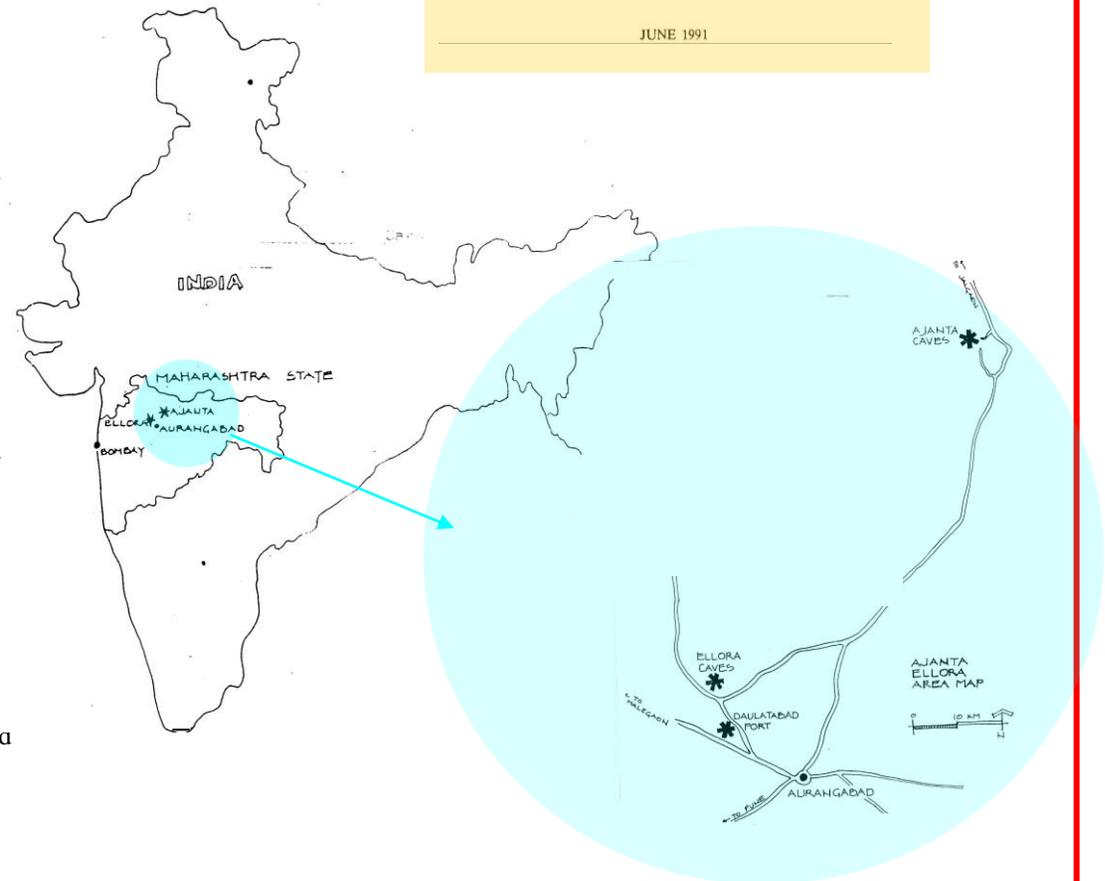
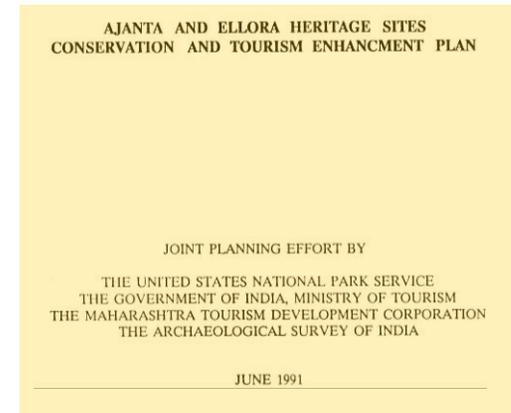
The temples consisted of architectural spaces carved into the in- situ rock. These were constructed from 2nd century BC to 5th century AD. There are more than 34 monuments at the Ellora and 27 at the Ajanta World Heritage Sites.

The team gathered available data on the sites, such as site surveys and photographs. Site visits included a thorough on-foot reconnaissance of the monuments and the site proposed for new tourist facilities. The team produced narrative and sketches describing the existing situation and proposals for the Ellora development site.

The Ajanta planning effort project focused on four components: the Viewpoint overlooking the monument scene; the immediate monument area; the visitor arrival area at the base of the trail up to the monuments; and the visitor center development site proposed by MTDC. The latter would sit about 4.5 kilometers from the monument area. The team conducted a thorough on-foot reconnaissance of these areas. The team completed a draft narrative and graphic concept proposals for the Ajanta site. In collaboration with other team members, I developed a list of design concepts for compatibility of existing and new on-site visitor facilities.

The effort included a review and discussion of our initial drafts with Indian professional counterparts, officials of the MTDC and ASI. The effort concluded with the team's presentation of the final draft to managers with the Ministry of Tourism, the MTDC and the ASI.

At the invitation of Indian Institute of Architects and the United States Information Service, I co-presented a seminar on architectural design and historic preservation projects in the United States National Parks.



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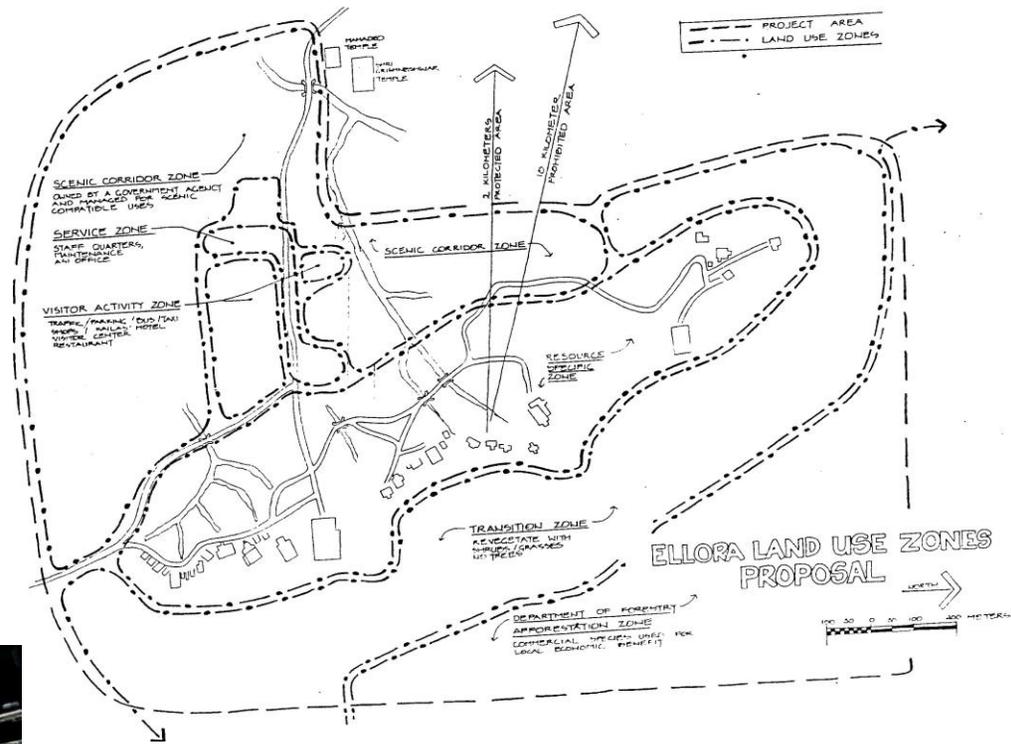
Rock-cut architecture was used most extensively in Western India. The rock-cut sanctuaries are found within a two hundred mile radius of Mumbai, known as Bombay at the time of this project.

The method of carving the rock-cut structures was to cut long alleys out of the living rock and then break down the intervening walls, unless they were needed for support. The sides of the caves were then smoothed and sculpted.

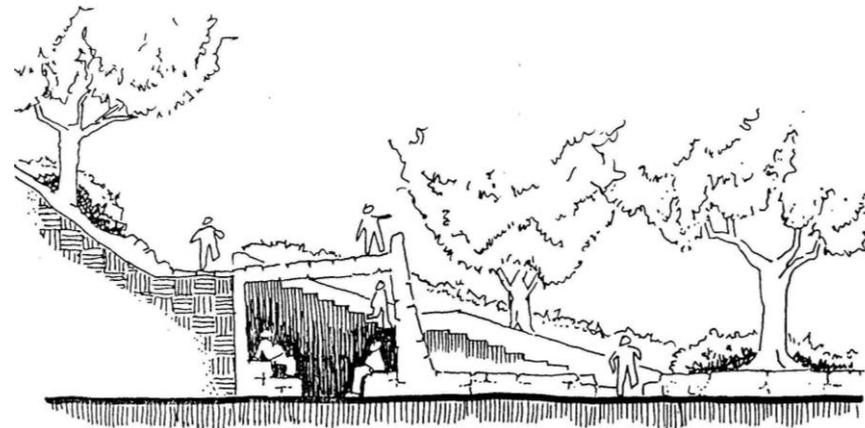
The temples at Ajanta and Ellora are the most comprehensive examples of a phase of rock-cut architecture in India that extended from the 3rd century B.C. to the 11th century A.D.

Among these are the Buddhist chaityas, or places of worship, and viharas, or monasteries, at Ajanta of the 2nd century B.C. through the 7th century A.D and the Buddhist, Hindu and Jain temples at Ellora from the 5th to 11th centuries A.D

The rock-cut temples at Ajanta and Ellora capture the spirit of three of the major religions in India: Buddhism, Hinduism and Jainism. The sequences of caves reveal the changes in religion and society and their expression in art and architecture.

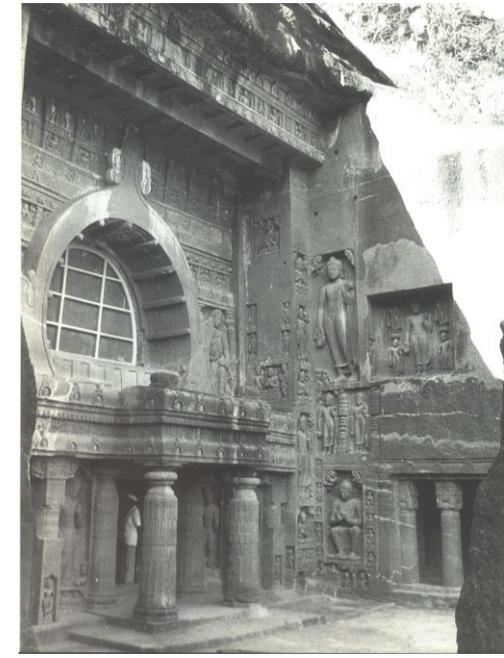
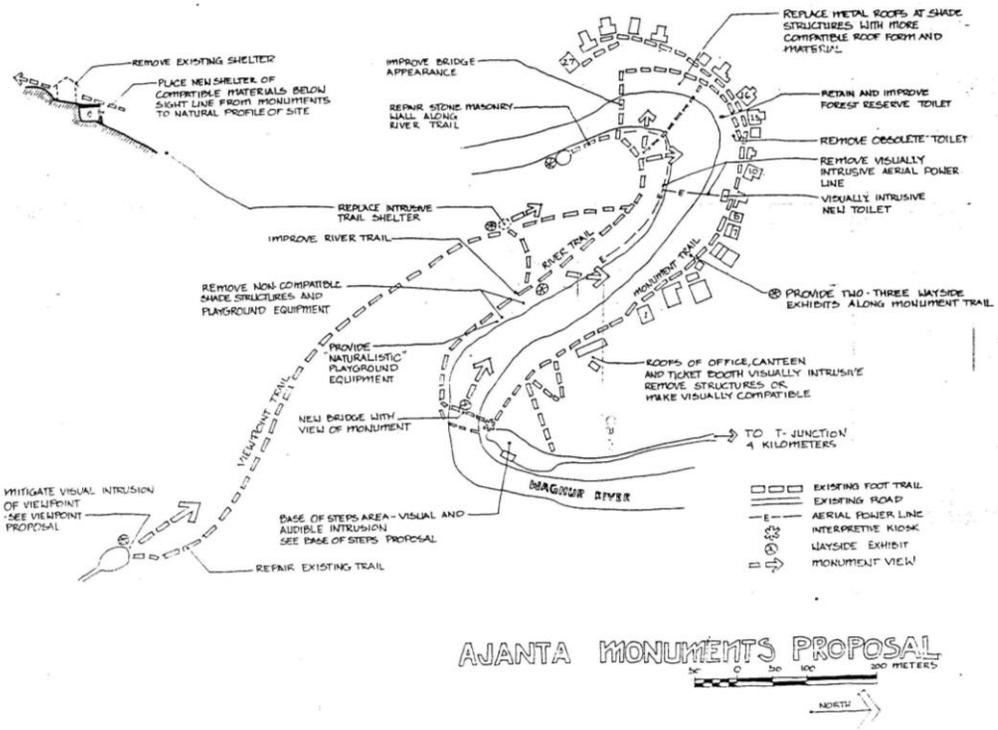
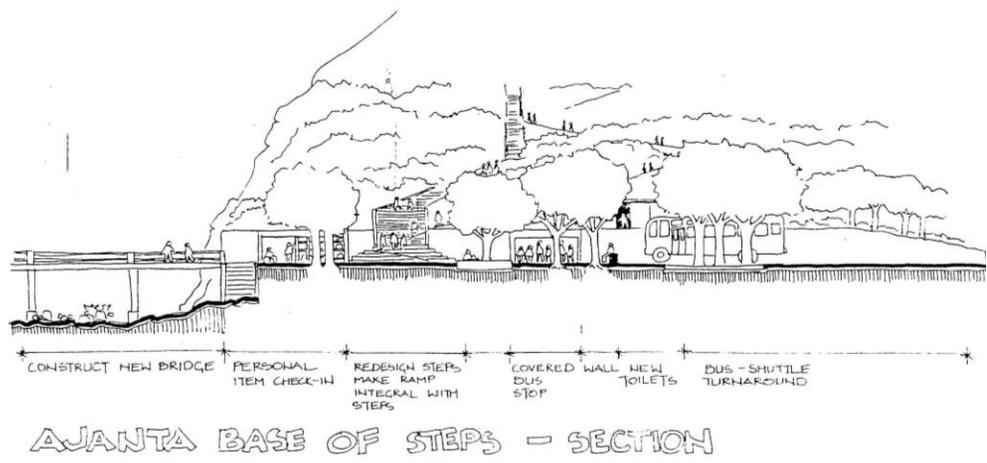
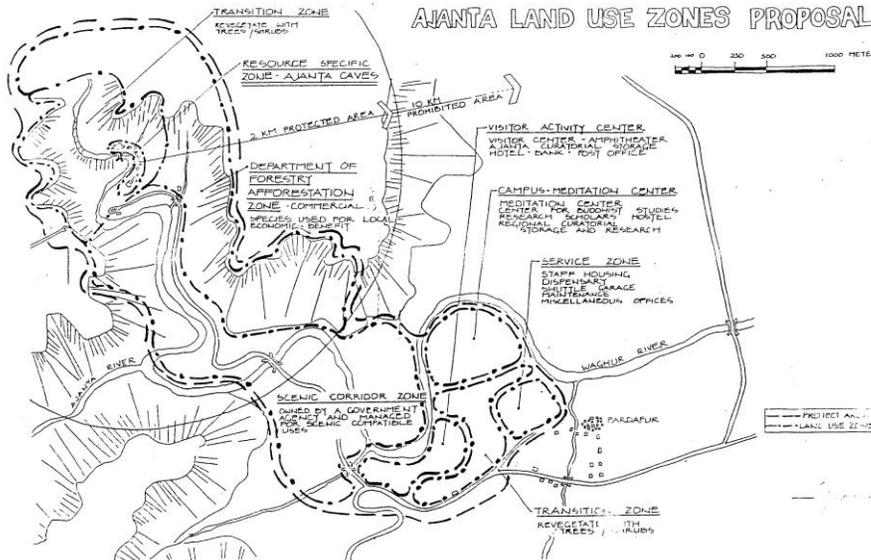


Kailasa Temple at Ellora.



Concept design for visitor shade structure.

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Entry to Ajanta Cave 19.

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Ajanta Cave Complex from east end of the monument trail.



View of Ajanta Cave Complex from the viewpoint.

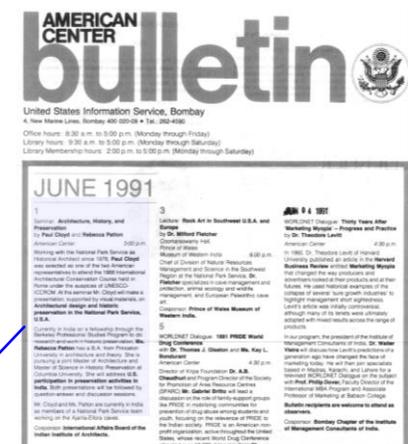
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**Seminar: Architecture, History, and Preservation**  
 by **Paul Cloyd** and **Rebecca Patton**  
 American Center 3:00 p.m.

Working with the National Park Service as Historical Architect since 1978, **Paul Cloyd** was selected as one of the two American representatives to attend the 1988 International Architectural Conservation Course held in Rome under the auspices of UNESCO-ICCROM. At the seminar Mr. Cloyd will make a presentation, supported by visual materials, on **Architectural design and historic preservation in the National Park Service, U.S.A.**

Currently in India on a fellowship through the Berkeley Professional Studies Program in the Berkeley Professional Studies Program in the U.S., **Rebecca Patton** has a B.A. from Princeton University in architecture and theory. She is pursuing a joint Master of Architecture and Master of Science in Historic Preservation at Columbia University. She will address **U.S. participation in preservation activities in India.** Both presentations will be followed by question-answer and discussion sessions.

Mr. Cloyd and Ms. Patton are currently in India as members of a National Park Service team working on the Ajanta-Ellora caves.

Cosponsor: **International Affairs Board of the Indian Institute of Architects.**



Announcement for presentation to Indian Institute of Architects.