

Reforming

The

Communications

&

Works

Department

AN INSIGHT INTO SYSTEMATIC &
INFRASTRUCTURAL CHANGE



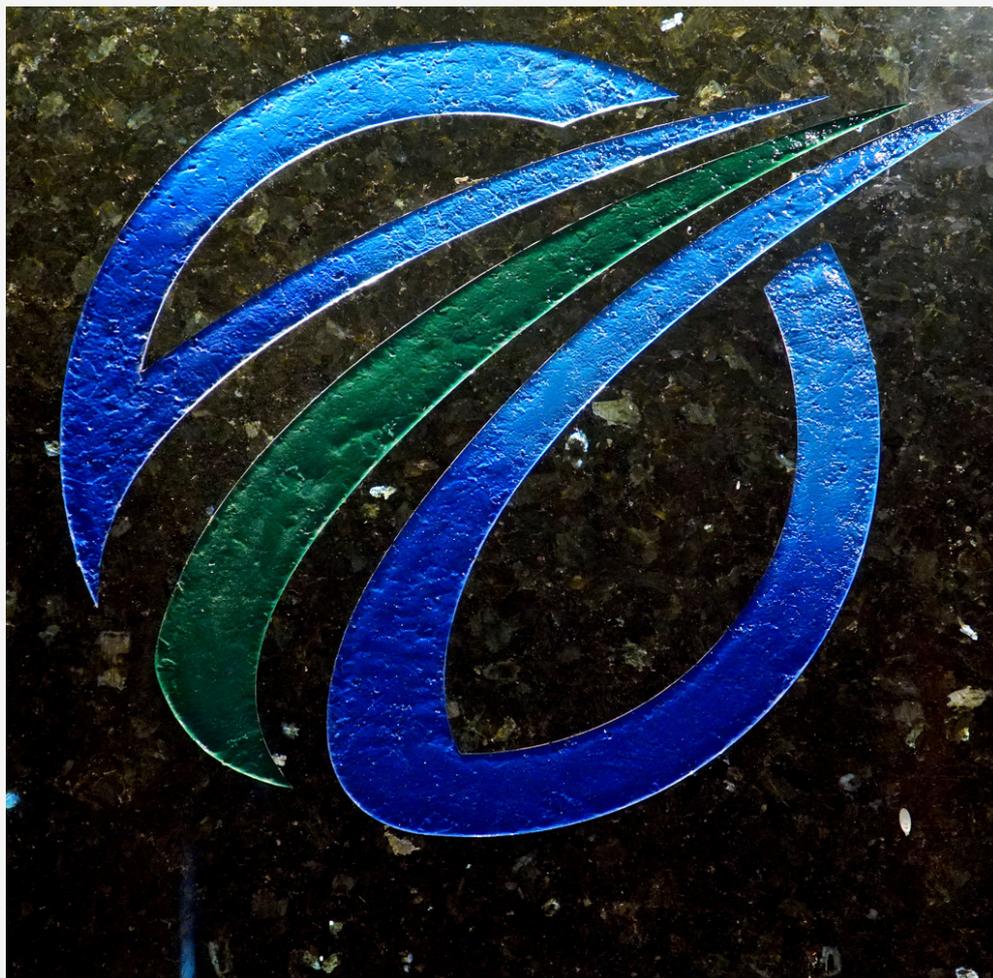
TABLE OF CONTENTS

01 Harmonising The Past With The Present

02 Retaining Classical Architecture

03 Implementing Sustainability Reforms

04 Reviving The System



HARMONISING THE PAST WITH THE PRESENT



The Communication and Works Department (CWD) is located at the west of Mall Road, flanked by the Irrigation Department on one end and the Board of Revenue on the other. Designed according to the eclectic colonial landscape of the late 19th century, the building is an ode to the convergence of two opposing worlds– colonial gothic revival architecture seamlessly weaved into indo–Islamic and neo–classical style.



At present, the CWD has undertaken various strategies commissioned under the directives of Secretary CWD Mujahid Sherdil, to reform the building and its system. In an effort to restore and refurbish, the management has ensured that architectural techniques are compatible with evolving standards of sustainability. Much like the eclectic style that defines the building, the reforms are a rendition of the use of modern technology to reconcile the past with the present.

RETAINING CLASSICAL ARCHITECTURE



The three-storey building is bedecked with scaffolds and arches which makes it an awe-inspiring piece of architecture. Overriding the parking space adjacent to the building, is an expansive veranda, a key architectural element reminiscent of Mughal India.

In view of its new layout, the veranda will be restored to its former glory. In addition to providing shelter, verandas have also been traditionally used as sources of natural ventilation.

IMPLEMENTING SUSTAINABLE REFORMS



As per an ecologically friendly vision, the parking spaces are adorned with sustainable landscaping to provide hedges and planters. The plants used (iresine, euphorbia, carmona bell, marigold and alternanthera to name a few) have been locally sourced which means they require very little maintenance and can easily withstand local temperatures and weather patterns. It is also pertinent to mention here that the management has been resolute in its commitment to environmental sustainability– zero trees were cut down in the process of renovation and rebuilding.

Timeless cobblestone pavers exude an antique charm, which is why their inclusion in the parking spaces enhances the building’s visual appeal. In addition to being aesthetically beautiful, these pavers are sturdy as well. Inherently, cobblestone pavers are tough, as they can endure external pressure and vehicle loads. Moreover, driveways made out of these stones permit water permeation, which keeps these stones secure. In other words, these stones are shielded from strong winds by the exposed grouts as pressure dissipates below the surface. Most importantly, cobblestone pavers permit manageable restoration– individual pavers may be conveniently removed and replaced in times of wear and tear, thus, making the maintenance of a cobblestone paver driveway considerably easy and cost-effective.

REVIVING THE SYSTEM

The management envisages a work environment tailored along the lines of sustainability and minimalism. For this purpose, it aims to invest in the novel shared “green workspaces” in government departments. A co-working space has a huge potential to support environmental sustainability due to its inherently sharing-oriented composition by reducing waste.

In line with its policy to reduce waste by bolstering efficiency, CWD has opened tendering procedures to the general public in order to incentivise an influx of green finance. This means that all firms and contractors registered with the Pakistan Engineering Council can participate in pre-engineering and qualification process even without their enlistment with the CWD. Adding to this is the management's landmark effort to revise certain obsolete standard specifications related to road and bridge construction in order to bring them at par with the latest practices in the field.

With reference to green finance projects, the newly launched Punjab Green Fund serves as a seminal case in enacting sustainability goals within the state agenda. The Fund aims to finance tree cultivation and horticulture initiatives in the Highway Sector development schemes in Punjab. It distinctly distributes budgetary regulations at the beginning and then at accelerated intervals in order to efficiently allow for a transparent process.

Furthermore, the CWD has incorporated a special monitoring unit amidst other reforms which will enable private sector strategists to devise department policies and ensure they are at par with the development specifications enunciated in the SDGs. The SMU serves as the department's independent, autonomous monitoring arm, providing strategic direction to special initiatives and ensuring that intervention objectives align with the Government of Punjab's vision.



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