

Date: 31/08/2017

FAQs FOR THE BLACK TAJ

1. Does the demarcated Site area (363.25m x 372.85) include the Approach Roads, Entrance plaza etc?

Answer: No. The approach road is separate from the demarcated area and the existing plaza is in the demarcated area. The same can be seen in the Updated drawings attached with the resources.

2. Large areas of Parking for cars, buses would be required for a new development of Black Taj. Is it assumed that all such Parking will be Off Site? Or are certain number of Parking spaces should be provided within the competition Site area?

Answer: At present, there is a small area that has been allotted for parking at Mehtab Bagh. While designing, participants need to formulate their own proposal for the site and define the function accordingly. There can be “NO” to “SUBSTANTIAL” parking in the area, however this is completely dependent on participant’s proposal. Any parking that will be provided in the proposal will have to allotted within the given site area only.

3. Does the Site have an established Approach Road from the City or Town’s developed areas? Google earth site provided as Competition resource shows heavy Forestation on the North and East Boundaries of the Site. An Access Road is seen along the West site Boundary. Is it stipulated that The Approach to the Site is only from the Northwest corner of the Site?

Answer: Yes, the site has an established approach road with entrance from the north-west of the site which further leads to the settlements on the north-west corner of the site. There is dense plantation as marked in the area and can be seen in the Satellite images as well. Considering the present scenario, it can be from the north west, however participants are free to propose different access to the site depending on their design as well.

Registered participants can find the reference images from the resources provided after registration

4. What is the Grade Elevation of the Site in relation to the River Bank along the South Site Boundary, and how high is the Site Grade from the River Bank? Would it be possible to provide a diagram section showing the height of the Site?

Answer: Registered participants can access the grade elevation of site in reference to the Yamuna river and the reference section of the site with respect to Yamuna and the Taj.

5. What is the relationship of the Site Grade Elevation to the finished elevation of the top of the Taj Mahal Plinth?

Answer: The diagram for same has been attached in the CAD drawing for the registered participants

6. Does the Title or Theme of the Competition “Black Taj” automatically stipulate that all design solutions should bear the obvious black color? Is there an established resolution to this question by the Competition organizers or Is it left to interpretation of the entrants?

Answer: No. Competition neither demands the resolution in black color nor does it have a predefined resolution. The competition is open to ideas and UNFUSE is expecting varying resolutions and outcomes to the given brief in present scenario of Agra while keeping the legacy of TAJ intact

7. The Brief stipulates Maximum Two A1 size Presentation Board.
But then it requires the Cover Image.
What is expected as the Cover image? Is it an additional drawing?
What is the Size of the Cover Image Board? Is it a Third A1 presentation Board?

Answer: **2 A1 presentation board** are meant for the Jurors and judging of the entries will happen on these boards along with the submitted **questionnaire**.

Cover Image will be used for web presentation to draw the attention of viewer while exploring entries. It will be a thumbnail of your entry among many others. It can be an image that has been used in the A1 presentation board or a separate image but relevant to your entries. The quality of this image will not affect the judging criteria however submitting such image do grab the attention of viewers.

No cover image is not a third A1 presentation board. As mentioned in the obligatory submission guidelines, Size of the cover image is 1024 x 410px or larger in aspect ratio 2.5:1.

8. The brief suggests that we can submit additional material such as Physical Model images and/or Additional textual material by Mail. Please clarify what type of Mail? Does that mean via Postal Service? What is the mailing address? Can this additional material follow after the deadline?

Answer: The additional material will have to be sent by e-mail or through file sharing websites like google drive, dropbox etc. These materials will be used only for web presentation and exhibit purpose. In case your entry gets shortlisted for unconference exhibition we may request you to bring these materials physically for the exhibition and related details will be given to the participants upon selection. However, submission of these material won't affect the judging criteria for the competition.

Yes, these additional material can be given after the deadlines as well.

9. The Brief suggests sending Individual images, Graphics used on the two presentation boards. It also suggests additional views. If there is no limit to Additional views, it conflicts with "Maximum Two Presentation boards". Please clarify Additional views.

Answer: As explained above the 2 A1 boards are only for judging. Rest of the individual images will be used for the web presentation, media and publication purpose only.

10. The Brief stipulates not adding the entrants name or identification mark. Can there be the Title of the Competition on the Presentation Board? Can there be the text "The Black Taj" Design Competition on two Presentation boards? Or would this be considered to be "Mark of Identification"?

Answer: Yes you can put the title of the competition on the presentation board.

Yes there can be the text "The Black Taj" on both the presentation boards.

You are not allowed to put your name, registration number, organization/institution name on the board.

11. Can the textual design statements or notes be included on one or both Presentation boards as part of the drawing presentation which would help describe the Design solutions Theme?

Answer: Yes, you may include the textual contents on the presentation board as part of the drawing presentation. However, you will need to submit the questionnaire as a compulsory document separately.

12. Could we build the structure under the existing ground level? If yes, is there any restriction as to how deep we can go?

Answer: It is an open idea competition hence there is no restriction given for building structure under the existing ground level.

While intervening with the site, the depth of groundwater in the city and the water level of the River YAMUNA can be taken in consideration.

13. Is it necessary that the design should be a tomb?

Answer: No it is not necessary to make a tomb. As the topic says it is a myth that "Black Taj" exists therefore the design has to be for today's era and in present context. However, the interpretation is open and you can propose any design that you feel suits at present.

14. Could we build the structure under the existing ground level? If yes, is there any restriction as to how deep we can go?

Answer: Yes, you may include the textual contents on the presentation board as part of the drawing presentation. However, you will need to submit the questionnaire as a compulsory document separately.

15. The site given for the competition consist of some ruins of the Black Taj, is it mandatory to consider and retain their existence on site and in the proposed building?

Answer: No, it is not mandatory to consider and retain the existing ruins of anything on site. However, as a designer it is up to you to propose what you think will fit best in present scenario.

16. Can the intervention be just a landscape intervention?

Answer: Yes, the intervention can be a landscape intervention as well.

17. The Brief suggests a secondary Site Parcel (mostly the area of the River) and it has been clarified that no superstructure like buildings or bridges could be proposed. But it suggests that Landscape could be proposed... which is not clear. Proposing landscape in the River area would imply that continuous flow of River would be blocked. If artificial islands are proposed, does not that still amount to "Building"? Is not the Reclaimed land also building?

Answer: It is mentioned in the brief that there can be landscape intervention in that zone which imply that there can be landscaping proposal in that area to improve the condition of Yamuna. It doesn't ask necessarily an Island/series of plantation, however there may be a way that the same can be used to improve the condition of Yamuna. The intervention may happen at bank or within Yamuna itself. It completely depends upon how the designer may treat the Yamuna. The whole purpose of proposing a landscape intervention by organizing team in that area, was to improve the condition of Yamuna. A thoughtful proposal may be accepted by juror but at the same time a proposal that deteriorates its quality may not be the right way.

18. Is it possible to give the upper level and bottom level of the historical wall of the octagonal pool and the level of pool level, in addition to site levels given on site plan?

Answer: The bottom level of the pool can be taken as 152.8 (refer contour level on the CAD plan). There is no exact size of wall ruins surrounding pool, as they are undulating at irregular intervals. The top level of the floral octagonal wall is 153.7 i.e. 0.9m from the pool bottom level. You can approximately trace the ruins from the maps provided and reference photographs. Alternately, can also take help of [Google street view](#) of Mehtab Bagh.

***NOTE:** These queries will be updated on a weekly basis on the beginning of every week till the standard registration period ends. Participants are requested to send all the queries before the end of the standard registration.*