

Research on the Development Plan and the Method of Heritage Preservation and Utilisation in Asuka Village

Nan Jiang¹ & Yasufumi Uekita²

¹ Heritage Studies Degree Program, University of Tsukuba, Tsukuba, Japan

² Faculty of Art and Design, University of Tsukuba, Japan

Correspondence: Nan Jiang, Heritage Studies, University of Tsukuba, Cooperative Research Building A-204, Tennodai 1-1-1, Tsukuba City, 305-8577, Japan.

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Abstract

Asuka Village, known as “the beginning of the Japanese state,” started its protection in 1996. Asuka Village has begun its unique system of protection: the “Asuka Village Traditional Scenic Beauty Preservation Plan” to provide the regulations and the “Asuka Village Development Plan” to guide the preservation and utilisation of historical resources and village development. In the 40 years since the preservation of Asuka Village began, the village has continued this planning system. This study summarises the preservation and utilisation of the historical resources of Asuka Village. By analysing the changes in the “Asuka Village Development Plan,” the trend of preservation and utilisation in Asuka Village is clarified. By studying three cases of heritage improvement at different times, this study clarifies the changes in the heritage improvement methods and concerns in the heritage preservation and utilisation process in Asuka Village. It elucidates the relationship between the Asuka Village Development Plan and heritage improvement. From a planning perspective, this research aims to provide some suggestions for preserving the ancient village and improving Asuka Village for future generations.

Keywords: Asuka Village, historic village, preservation, utilisation, heritage improvement, planning, development

1. Introduction

1.1 The Preservation of Asuka Village

Asuka Village is a village with a long history and culture in Japan. The land of Asuka Village was once the location where the capital city of the Asuka Era (592–710) was located. According to Japanese history, Japan established its legal system during the Asuka Era. This is referred to be the “beginning of the Japanese state.”

Since the 1960s, the destruction of the city’s natural and historical environments has progressed. Furthermore, this problem is severe in the ancient capital cities, including Asuka Village. Then, the “Act on Special Measures Concerning the Preservation of Traditional Scenic Beauty in the Ancient City (Ancient Capital Preservation Law)” was enacted in 1966 to protect the traditional scenic beauty of ancient capital cities. Because of the difficulties in preserving the traditional scenic beauty of Asuka Village and the special place of Asuka Village in Japanese history, special legislation, “Act on Special Measures Concerning the Preservation of the Traditional Scenic Beauty and Improvement of the Living Environment in Asuka Village (Asuka Law)”, was promulgated for the preservation of the traditional scenic beauty of Asuka Village.

As stipulated in the “Asuka Law,” the “Asuka Village Traditional Scenic Beauty Preservation Plan” for land use regulation, and the “Plan for Improvement of Living Environment and Industrial Infrastructure in Asuka Village (Asuka Village Development Plan),” for leading the village’s development and improvement, are enacted.

These two plans make up the preservation system of Asuka Village. The preservation system lasted more than 40 years, which is quite unusual in the preservation of ancient villages. Modifications have occurred over the last 40 years due to changes in the “Asuka Village Development Plan,” which has been updated every ten years since 1981.

1.2 Previous Research

So far, the studies related to Asuka Village have been mainly about the agricultural system and tourism. Takashi Fujimoto assesses the benefits and costs of farmland preservation policies in Asuka Village (Takashi, 1998). Kenji Takao and others evaluate the rice terrace ownership system in Asuka Village (Kenji, 2003).

Tourism in Asuka Village has been studied from several viewpoints. Yuko Shioji provides a case study of Asuka Village, showing that heritage tourism at the regional level should carefully focus on the locality (Yuko, 1996). Simon Potter analyses Asuka Village as a location that offers informal educational possibilities and points out that Asuka Village is a suitable locale for cultural tourism's "educational" side (Simon, 2014). Hideo Yoshikane analyses the heritage tourism in Asuka Village. He concludes that the historical resources' value of Asuka Village is high, and the protection system is perfect, but it is too strict for the resident's life. Asuka Village stands in just the first stage for tourist use of cultural heritage, understanding and protecting itself (Hideo, 2001).

There is also research about the residents of Asuka Village. Fujii Yoshio analysed the consciousness of residents towards the living environment in the preservation area of historical landscape (Fujii, 2003).

As a region rich in historical resources, there are few studies related to the regional heritage of Asuka village. Therefore, this study attempts to explore the preservation and utilisation of the regional heritage of Asuka Village from the Asuka Village Development Plan that promotes the preservation and development of Asuka Village.

1.3 Purpose and Significance of the Research

The protection of Asuka Village has changed directionally over the past 40 years in response to changes in the Asuka Village Development Plan. Such changes are difficult to observe in a short period of time and can only be seen in the village, where protection activities are continuously carried out. This study aimed to examine the trend of this change by analysing the Asuka Village Development Plan, which is the direction of protection in Asuka Village. This study focuses on how the trend of the development plan relates to the changes in the heritage improvement practices of the village.

The protection of historic villages is an ongoing process. The changes that have occurred in Asuka Village, one of the cases that fully demonstrate this characteristic, may not be universal. However, they can reflect the thinking of Japan in the protection of historic villages. The history of historic village protection will also undergo changes in the future, and Asuka Village, as a relatively pioneering case, can provide some reference.

1.4 Research Methods

(1) Literature Survey

Collected documents related to the plans of Asuka Village and the improvement plans and reports of Asuka Village heritage through a literature survey, and summarised, compared, and synthesised these documents to obtain the basis for the study thesis.

(2) Field Survey

Visit each heritage site in Asuka Village, and document the current status of Asuka Village and the preservation and utilisation situation of the heritage through photographs.

(3) Arrangement and Analysis

On the one hand, organise the first to the fifth Asuka Village Development Plan, and summarise the characteristics of each phase. On the other hand, analyse the improvement plans of heritage in Asuka Village and summarise the characteristics of each plan.

(4) Comparative Study

The study adopts a comparative approach to identify the main changes in the heritage improvement plans and the relationship with the "Asuka Village Development Plan."

1.5 Definition Explanation

Some differences in understanding the terms used in the Japanese and English contexts for preserving and utilising historical resources have arisen.

In Japanese, the term "seibi (整備)" is often used to preserve and utilise cultural heritage. In this study, the term "seibi" is translated as "improvement" based on the ICOMOS evaluation of the Mozu-Furuichi Kofun Group (ICOMOS, 2019), and the "improvement method" is used in this study as a generic term for preservation and utilisation methods. Moreover, "hizon (保存)" is translated as "preservation", and "katsuyou (活用)" is translated as "utilisation" (Inaba, 2021).

There has been some confusion and controversy about expressing the word “improvement” in English. At the World Heritage Conference in 2021, there was a discussion on explaining the Japanese word “seibi” (Nishi, 2021).

The protection - preservation and utilisation- of historic sites is a comprehensive process of conserving the first component and preparing the second component to extract and enhance their potential value. Various technical measures for such a comprehensive process are called “seibi.” (Agency for Cultural Affairs, 2005)

The main concern in this study is the improvement of historical sites. The term “improvement” is used for all activities in the area, from management, repair, and restoration to disaster prevention projects, infrastructure development, exhibition facilities, visitor facilities, and others.



Figure 1. Relationship between the concepts of “protection, preservation, and utilisation” and “improvement” of historic sites

2. Overview of Asuka Village

2.1 Basic Situation of Asuka Village

Asuka Village is located in the Nara Prefecture in Japan, in the southeastern part of the Nara Basin, 40 km from Osaka City and 25 km from Nara City.



Figure 2. Position of Asuka Village

At the end of the 6th century, starting with the 33rd Emperor Suiko, several emperors set up their residences in the present-day Asuka Village. After the 7th century, the emperor’s residences were located predominantly in the north area of Asuka Village.

The population of Asuka Village started to decrease in the year 2000. It had decreased by about 25% over 20 years and was designated as a depopulated area in 2017. The population of Asuka Village in 2020 was 5237 and continues to decrease. With the decline in the birthrate and population ageing, the number of workers in the first industry decreases.

Forest land and agricultural land are the main components of the landform of Asuka Village. Agricultural land is

decreasing, and residential land is increasing. Because of the gradual increase of designated cultural properties, the amount of cultural property land has gradually increased.

Asuka Village has rich historical resources. Many underground historical relics remain from the 6th to 8th centuries. The relics include palace relics, temple relics, ancient tombs, etc.

Table 1. Designated and selected cultural properties in Asuka Village

	Type/Classification		Number	Total
National Designation	National Treasures	Paintings	2	3
		Sculptures	1	
	Important Cultural Properties	Structures	3	19
		Paintings	1	
		Sculptures	10	
		Applied Crafts	2	
		Archeological artifacts	3	
Special Historic Sites	3	24		
Historic Sites	20			
Places of Scenic Beauty	1			
National Selection	Important Cultural Landscapes		1	1
Prefectural Designation	Paintings		1	5
	Structures		2	
	Historic Sites		2	
Village Designation	Sculptures		2	7
	Structures		1	
	Historic Sites		2	
	Natural Monuments		1	
	Intangible Folk Cultural Properties		1	

Many tourists have visited Asuka Village since the Edo period (1603-1867). The archaeological remains of the Asuka period attract many visitors. The discovery of the Takamatsuzuka mural in 1972 led to a kind of “Asuka Explosion,” which means a nationwide archaeological and historical boom. After reaching a peak of over 1.5 million in the 1970s, the number of visitors declined. In recent years, the number of tourists visiting Asuka Village has been about 800,000 per year.

2.2 Regulation of Preservation and Utilisation of Historical Resources

The regulations of Asuka Village are mainly from the Ancient Capital Preservation Act and the Asuka Law.

According to the “Ancient Capital Preservation Act,” the historic preservation district is divided into “Traditional Scenic Beauty Preservation District” and “Traditional Scenic Beauty Special Preservation District.” The whole area of Asuka Village is designated as the “Traditional Scenic Beauty Special Preservation District.”

According to the “Asuka Law,” the preservation area of Asuka Village is divided into the “First-type Traditional Scenic Beauty Preservation District” and the “Second-type Traditional Scenic Beauty Preservation District.”

Table 2. Traditional Scenic Beauty Preservation District Division

Division	Contents	Law
Traditional Scenic Beauty Preservation District	District where buildings, ruins, etc. of historical significance are integrated with the surrounding natural environment to embody and form the traditions and culture of the ancient capital	Ancient Capital Preservation Act
Asuka Village	Traditional Scenic Beauty Special Preservation District	
	1 st -Type Traditional Scenic Beauty Preservation District	Particularly important areas within the Asuka Village Special Historic Preservation District
	2 nd -Type Traditional Scenic Beauty Preservation District	All of Asuka Village except for the 1 st Type Traditional Scenic Beauty District

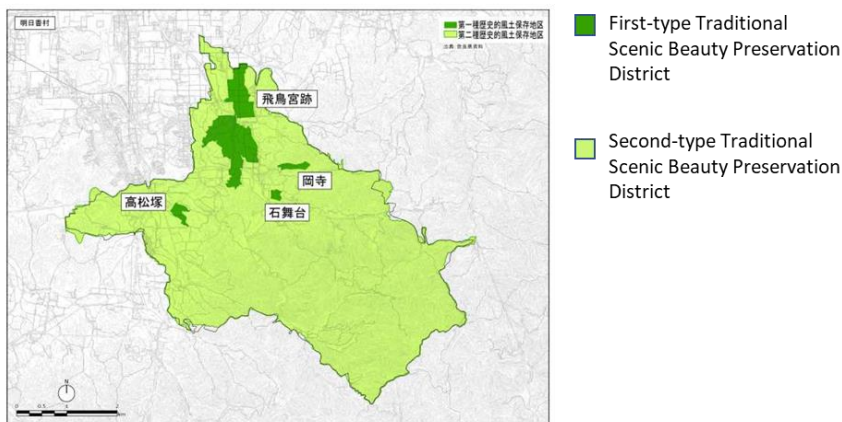


Figure 3. Map of Traditional Scenic Beauty District in Asuka Village

In addition to the “Ancient Capital Preservation Act” and “Asuka Law,” other laws and ordinances regulate Asuka Village. These laws and ordinances together restrict all aspects of the actions and initiatives of the Asuka Village in order to preserve its traditional scenic beauty.

2.3 Preservation and Utilisation of Historical Resources

Almost all the relics in Asuka Village have been improved. The author has summarised the heritage improvement situation of the improved 25 relics. Except for the Yatsuri and Higashiyama Tumulus Group, all of the heritage in Asuka Village has been preserved in its original locations. Moreover, most of the heritage sites have been done with environmental improvement and site exposure. The majority of the temples and palaces’ heritage has been restored in some way. Almost all of the heritage has been displayed and explained.

There are eight exhibition institutions in Asuka Village. The author here divides these institutions into regional and individual types. The regional type refers to the display of history and culture for the whole region. The individual type refers to displaying individual relics, people, etc. These institutions help keep and manage the artefacts and materials and show the history and culture of Asuka Village to people who come to visit.

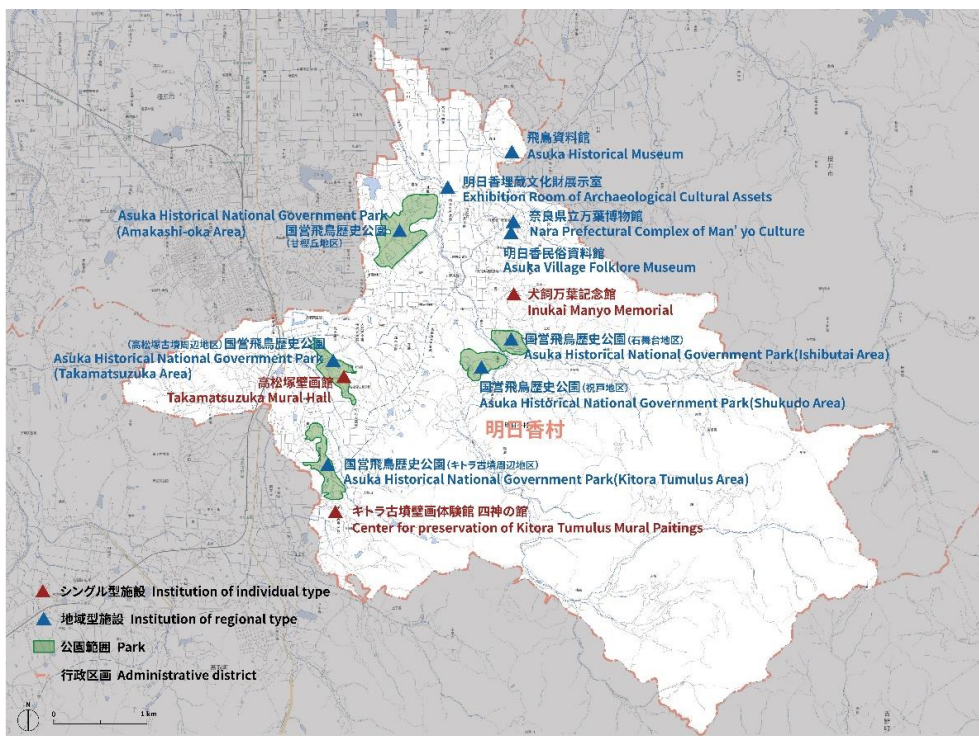


Figure 4. The Institutions in Asuka Village

In 2007, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) announced the addition of the “Asuka-Fujiwara Archaeological Sites of Japan’s Ancient Capitals and Related Properties” to the tentative list of sites to be recommended for registration as World Cultural Heritage sites. Several cultural properties in Asuka Village are included in the world heritage project. Moreover, “The Founding of Japan: The Women Who Made Asuka Thrive” was designated as a Japan Heritage in 2015, the 14th designated story of Japan Heritage.

3. Changes in the “Asuka Village Development Plan”

The Asuka Village Development Plan holds the direction of protection. The “Asuka Village Development Plan” was formulated every ten years from 1981. The latest plan is “The Fifth Asuka Village Development Plan,” which was formulated and implemented in 2020, and the period is from 2021 to 2030.

3.1 Transition of the “Asuka Village Development Plan”

3.1.1 Overview of the “Asuka Village Development Plan” from 1st to 5th

The first development plan focuses on improving villagers’ living environment and industrial infrastructure. The planning projects are infrastructure construction, such as elementary schools and production infrastructure.

The second development plan also focuses on infrastructure development, both for living and industry. There are new measures planned to promote agriculture and tourism. The main improvements to construction are the kindergarten and welfare centre.

The third development plan starts to focus on measures of regional revitalisation. Though there are still many projects for improving the living environment and production infrastructure, this is the first time that utilising traditional scenic beauty appears as a section in the plan independently.

The fourth development plan’s measures are centred on enhancing the attractiveness of Asuka Village. The content of improving the living environment becomes less important, while the measures for utilising traditional scenic beauty become more important. The majority of the plan’s content and activities for increasing tourism are directed guidance, on-site enhancement, and utilisation. During the planning period of the fourth development plan, the Centre for the preservation of Kitora Tumulus Mural Paintings is constructed.

The fifth development plan focuses on preserving and utilising traditional scenic beauty, which is the main focus of the planning contents. Measures to promote the historical display and create a landscape are planned. The measures for promoting tourism have become a separate section. Strategies for improving the living environment, like the fourth plan, have become less prevalent.

Table 3. Overview of the First to Fifth Asuka Village Development Plans

Number	Time	Period	Summary of the plan	Major improvements
1st	1981.12	1980-1989	Comprehensive development of living environment, industrial infrastructure	Elementary schools and production infrastructure
2nd	1990.9	1990-1999	Development of living environment; Promotion of industries Regional Revitalization	Kindergarten and health and welfare center
3rd	2000.9	2000-2009	Creative improvement and utilisation of traditional scenic beauty	Direct sales of agricultural products and Complex of Man’yo Culture
4th	2010.7	2010-2019	Enhancing the attractiveness of Asuka Village Promotion of tourism and exchange, and improvement of regional vitality	Promotion of educational travel, institution of Kitora Tumulus
5th	2020.4	2020-2029	Promotion of understanding of the value of Asuka Improvement appropriate for a World Heritage Site	Improvement of Asuka Palace Site and Asuka-kyo Site Garden Pond, and the new Asuka Village Office Building

3.1.2 The Trend of the “Asuka Village Development Plan”

The Asuka Village Development Plan trend is analysed in chronological order and project categories.

The author has organised four aspects in chronological order: the discovery of heritage, the designation of heritage, the unfolding of plans or strategies related to Asuka Village, and the conduct of related projects. From the analysis, the Asuka Village Development Plan is closely related to improving production, living

infrastructure, and hardware facilities. The temporal relationship of heritage improvement does not have a specific temporal link to the Asuka Development Plan. Heritage improvement is more associated with archaeological discoveries and designations.

From the analysis of the project categories, the project categories of the development plan have gradually shifted from a focus on production and living infrastructure to a focus on the utilisation of historical resources. The development plan has the characteristic of changing from hardware-levelled projects to software-levelled projects. As well, the major industry shifted from agriculture and forestry to tourism.

3.2 Transition of the Basic Policy of the Asuka Village Development Plan

From the first to the third development plan, the keyword of the basic policy is “harmony,” which means the main work is to preserve the traditional scenic beauty and villagers’ lives harmonious. In the third plan, the keywords “utilisation” and “attractive” are added to the basic policy, which means using the traditional scenic beauty and making Asuka Village an attractive historical village. The fourth development plan added “vitality,” which means increasing the vitality of the village. From the fourth development plan, “historical display” is added and continues to the fifth development plan, conveying Asuka’s historical value through the historical display. Moreover, the fifth plan added “succession,” which means passing traditional culture to future generations.

Table 4. The Basic Policies of Asuka Village Development Plan

Plan	Basic Policy
1st	Comprehensive development of the living environment and industrial infrastructure in harmony with the traditional scenic beauty Creation of a “village of history and culture” with a focus on agriculture and forestry
2nd	Creating a village with a traditional scenic beauty Creating a healthy and livable village Development of projects in harmony with the preservation of the traditional scenic beauty
3rd	Preservation of historical landscape and harmony of residents' lives To realize an attractive “Asuka Village, Home of the Heart of Japan” as a place of historical and cultural learning where people can learn, experience and utilize the traditional scenic beauty in a creative way.
4th	Promotion of historical display to convey the value of Asuka Maintaining and improving the traditional scenic beauty through independent and self-reliant efforts, etc. Efforts to disseminate attractions and promote tourism and communication Improve regional vitality
5th	Promotion of historical display Passing on to the next generation Preservation and utilisation of historical and cultural resources in cooperation Succession and activation of ritual events

3.3 Transition of the Basic Directions for Historical Resource Preservation

The basic policy of historical resources has changed from preserving historical resources to utilisation and then to the historical display. This means that the process of preserving and using the history of Asuka Village is moving from a preservation-oriented process to a use-oriented process.

The author categorises metrics relating to historical resources into preservation, landscape, tourism, and display.

Table 5. Cases of heritage improvement

Heritage	Nakaoyama Tumulus	Kitora Tumulus	Asuka Palace
Designation	Nationally Designated Historic Site	Nationally Designated Special Historic Site (Tumulus) National Treasure (Mural Painting)	Nationally Designated Historic Site
Plan	Historic Site Nakaoyama Tumulus Environmental Improvement Plan	Special Historic Site Kitora Tumulus Environmental Improvement Basic Plan Basic Plan for Kitora Tumulus Area in the Asuka Historical National Government Park	Basic Concept of Asuka Palace Ruins Utilisation Report on the Study of the Concept of Preservation and Utilisation of the Asuka Palace Ruins (Planning in progress)
Implement Time	1975.2 ~ 1975.3	2013 ~ 2016	
Constitutor	Asuka Village	Monuments Division, Cultural Properties Department, Agency for Cultural Affairs	Nara Prefecture

The three heritages are all nationally designated heritage. The improvement plan for the three cases is formulated at different times, and the improvement of the three cases is carried out at different times.

Table 6. The timeline of improvement for the three cases

Time	Nakaoyama Tumulus	Kitora Tumulus	Asuka Palace Ruins
1972			The first improvement: the indication of the plan scale and pillar positions of the remains of buildings and walls, the restoration of the stone pavement and large well
1976	Environmental improvement of tumulus		
1983			The second improvement: the indication of a building, a wall, and a masonry ditch
1985	Open of the Takamatsuzuka Area of Historical Asuka National Government Park		
1992			The third improvement: the indication of a building, a wall, and a masonry ditch
2004		The preservation and repair of the mural painting: mural removal	
2013		Environmental improvement of Kitora Tumulus	
2014			The planning of fourth improvement: improve by zones for different functions
2016		Open of the Kitora Tumulus Area of Historical Asuka National Government Park and preservation facility	
2018			The planning for utilisation: Diverse measures, display ruins, regional cooperation, information transmission
After 2020			The fourth improvement

4.1.1 Nakaoyama Tumulus

The Nakaoyama Tumulus is estimated to have been built around the beginning of the 8th century, at the end of the Kofun period. The environmental improvement of Nakaoyama Tumulus was carried out from February to March 1975. Nakaoyama Tumulus's improvement depends on the "Special Historic Site Nakaoyama Tumulus Environmental Improvement Plan."



Figure 6. Nakaoyama Tumulus and Park Tour Road (Author’s Photograph)

Table 7. Improvement Method of the Nakaoyama Tumulus

	Basic Direction	Method
Preservation	i. Never affect underground remains ii. Installed a fence to keep out of the mound of tumulus iii. Turfing to prevent the destruction of the mound.	Ceiling stone, filling in the perimeter, setting up the fence, marking on the ground at the corner of the octagonal shape, explanatory board, backfilling of the research area, etc.
Utilisation	Establish a tour park road for a tour of the tumulus	Improvement of tour park road

4.1.2 Kitora Tumulus

Kitora Tumulus is a heritage tumulus discovered in Asuka Historical National Government Park, Kitora Tumulus area, with mural paintings. The Kitora Tumulus is a two-tiered circular tomb. It was built from around the end of the 7th century to the beginning of the 8th century.



Figure 7. Kirota Tumulus and Center for the Presentation of Kitora Tumulus Mural Paintings

Source: Photographed by the author and https://www.nabunken.go.jp/shijin/about/kitora-atlas/images/mural_img06_1.jpg

The improvement period of Kitora Tumulus is from 2013 to 2016. The improvement of Kitora Tumulus consists of three parts, The environmental improvement of Kitora Tumulus, the improvement of Asuka Historical National Government Park, the Kitora Tumulus area, and the improvement of the Center for Presentation of Kitora Tumulus Mural Paintings.

The improvement of the kitora tumulus is complex because it also includes mural paintings. The author has divided the improvement method of the kitora tombs into two objects: the tumulus and the mural paintings.

Table 8. Improvement method of Kitora Tumulus

		Basic direction	Method
Preservation	Tumulus	i. Restoration to ensure protection of the exterior and interior ii. To express the unique characteristics of the site iii. Preserve the mound and surrounding unexcavated areas without excavating them	Covering soil, planting, drainage, ensuring good overall landscaping, visiting space, perimeter landscaping, etc,
	Mural Painting	i. Preserve and manage safely while controlling the environment ii. Release while preserving and managing in an appropriate facility outside the stone room	Removal of mural painting, preservation of the removed mural painting, microbial measures, repairation of mural painting, construction of the preservation and management facility
Utilisation	Tumulus	i. The utilisation of ancient time and space of the mural paintings and Kitora Tumulus	Construction of Asuka Historical National Government Park,
		ii. Preservation of the environment around the cultural property and provision of rest and convenience functions	Activities for historic experience and study
		iii. Creating a place for experiential learning of history	
		iv. Revitalising the local area and creating a base for participation and exchange with the East Asian region	
Mural Painting	i. To give top priority to the preservation of the mural paintings, and to realize the exhibition utilisation as much as possible.	Construction of Center for presentation of Kitora Tumulus Mural Paintings.	
	ii. Exhibition methods that allow visitors to experience and understand the cultural property that is the Kitora Tumulus.	Activities for publicity of mural paintings Activities for historic study	

4.1.3 Asuka Palace Ruins

Asuka Palace Ruins is an urban heritage site comprised of several ruins, primarily palaces. The ruins are dated from the late 6th century to the late 7th century. It is the central remnant of the Asuka Ancient Capital.



Figure 8. Asuka Palace Ruins (Author's Photograph)

Asuka Palace Ruins have been improved three times so far: in 1972, 1983, and 1992. Nara Prefecture carried out the improvement three times.

Table 9. Improvement method of Asuka Palace Ruins

	Basic Direction	Method
Preservation	i. Preservation of remains, promotion of additional designation and preservation management	Indication of the plan scale and pillar positions of the remains of buildings and walls
	ii. Continuous archaeological excavation in order to elucidation of remains	Restoration of partial remains Planar display improvement
	iii. Conservation of rural landscape, coordination / harmony with surrounding landscape	Removal / repair of obstacles, installation of buffer zone
	iv. Visualization of archaeological sites in the field	Public ownership of land

Utilisation	i. An easy-to-understand display of the value of the ruins	Improvement by zones for different function
	ii. To understand the range, scale, contents, etc. of the ruins	Interaction with the latest research results such as archeology and history
	iii. Viewpoint for viewing the ruins	Disseminate significance and value to the world
	iv. Provide easy-to-understand explanations of archaeological sites and disseminate information on research results, etc.	Liven up the festival Create a comfortable space
	v. Preservation management with the participation of various actors and exchanges through events, etc.	Guidance facility Full-scale restoration of the building
	vi. Complex efforts with disguise restoration technology	Improve the network of historical and cultural resources and the ability to disseminate information Improving hospitality through regional cooperation and cooperation

4.2 Characteristic of Improvement Method

The author summarised the improvement method from the preservation and utilisation methods. The three cases have different characteristics in the following aspects.

Table 10. Characteristic of improvement method of three cases

Case	Nakaoyama Tumulus	Kitora Tumulus	Asuka Palace Ruins
Time	1975	2005	2014
Preservation	Objective	Individual	Individual and Environment
	Accessibility	Inaccessible	Inaccessible
	General Environment	Exist	Exist
	Improvement	Exist	Exist
	Exposure of ruins	Partial	Partial
Utilisation	Tendence of utilisation	Low	High
	Direction of utilisation	A part of historical park	For experiential learning of history and communication
	Exhibition methods	Simplex	Multiple
	Heritage Interpretation	Basic and individual	Systematic and regional
	Communication	Regional	Regional and East Asian
Impact on the region	Less	More	

4.3 Changes in Heritage Improvement for Preservation and Utilisation

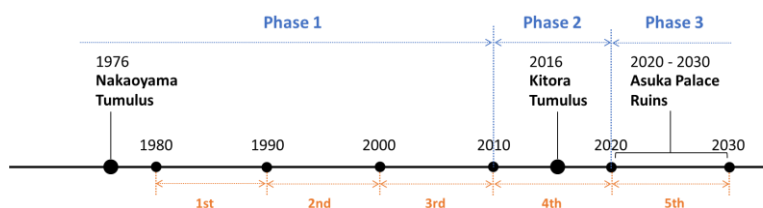


Figure 9. Coss-reference of the Three Cases and Asuka Village Development Plan

The description of the changes in the heritage improvement of the Asuka Village is divided into three parts, overall trend, preservation measures, and utilisation measures.

To facilitate the description, the authors cross-referenced the periods corresponding to the three cases to the planning period of Asuka Village Development Plan, designating the period 1980–2010 as phase 1 and 2010–2020 as phase 2, and the period beyond 2020 as phase 3.

(1) Overall Trend

The characteristics of the three cases show that heritage preservation and utilisation are going in the same direction.

The trend of heritage improvement is initially centred on heritage preservation measures. Then it gradually changes into a kind of tendency with an increased tendency to utilisation based on the preservation measures.

Finally, it changes into a tendency to centre on heritage utilisation.

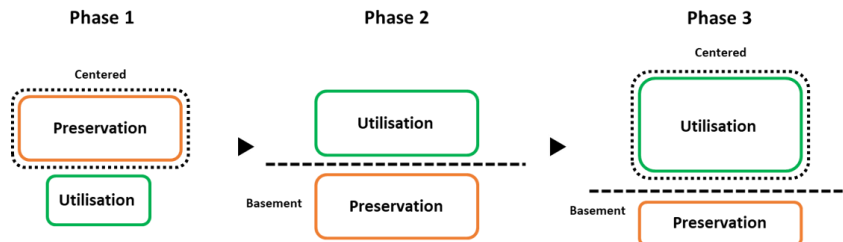


Figure 10. The overall trend in the improvement of Heritage Preservation and Utilisation

(2) Preservation Measures

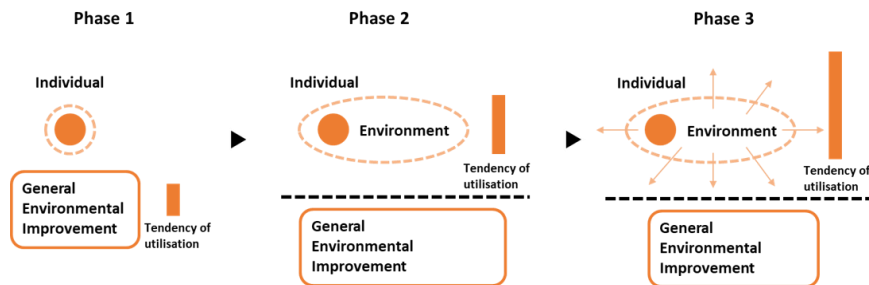


Figure 11. Changes in preservation measures

First, there is a change in the target object. The target of heritage preservation measures expands from the heritage itself to the environment around the heritage. Second, the tendency of measures concerning heritage utilisation increases gradually. The utilisation of heritage is being considered together with the preservation of heritage. Third, the importance of environmental improvement changed. It has changed from the main measure to a primary method of heritage preservation.

(3) Utilisation Measures



Figure 12. Changes in the purpose of Heritage Utilisation

First, there is an apparent change in the purpose of heritage utilisation. The purpose of heritage utilisation is changing from experience to communicating values. Second, the utilisation methods become multiple and complex. Third, heritage interpretation has become more diverse and international. More technology is being used for heritage interpretation, which is available worldwide through the Internet. Fourth, the impact on the region and communication are considered more.

4.4 Comparison of the Changes in the Heritage Improvement Method and the Changes in the Asuka Village Development Plan

a. General Trends: Shift to the utilisation of historical resources

Regarding the overall trend of the Asuka Village Development Plan, the plan’s focus has mainly changed from the improvement of produce and the living environment to the utilisation of historical resources. The project categories have changed from mainly hardware-levelled projects to software-levelled projects.

As for the overall trend of the improvement method of heritage, the focus of the improvement method changed from preservation to utilisation. Also, compared to the hardware-levelled projects, the software-levelled projects are increasing.

History has become more important in the Asuka Village Development Plan and Preserving Asuka Village's history.

b. From a consideration of the surrounding area: from environmental harmony to the vitalisation of the region

To preserve traditional scenic beauty, the Asuka Village Development Plan needs to consider harmony with the surrounding historic and natural environment in all aspects of constructing facilities and improving heritage. At a later stage, this consideration of the surrounding environment has gradually transformed into an impact on the area's vitality.

Similarly, in terms of heritage improvement, the target object of heritage improvement gradually expanded to include the surrounding environment and landscape. Furthermore, it began to consider the heritage as a medium to enhance the area's vitality.

c. Purpose: Communication of the Historical Value

In the Asuka Village Development Plan, the plan specifies that the value of Asuka Village is history, and the history display is made the basic policy of the plan. The communication of the historical value of Asuka Village has also become one of the goals of the historical display.

It has also become more important to communicate the value of heritage as part of heritage improvement. Asuka Village's heritage improvement has made this goal more important.

d. Global communication and cooperation

The Asuka Village Development Plan gradually shifts from a national to a global orientation to communicate historical values and attract visitors.

The heritage improvement is also gradually shifting from a regional utilisation to a global one. The projects "World Heritage" and "Japan Heritage" are both regional utilisations that link the heritage of Asuka Village and other regions to form a regional interpretation of heritage. What's more, the "World Heritage" project focuses on the theme of cultural exchange with East Asia. It seeks to use the registration of World Heritage sites as an opportunity to communicate with the world.

5. Recommendation and Conclusion

5.1 Conclusion

The focus of the Asuka Village Development Plan has gradually changed from improving the productive living environment for residents to the utilisation of historical resources. The basic direction of the plan has also undergone a series of changes: harmony between life and preservation, the beginning of utilisation and emphasis on the vitality and attractiveness of the area, and the advancement of historical display and cultural succession. Changes in planning initiatives have gradually moved away from focusing on hardware-level projects to working on software-level projects.

The heritage improvement method in Asuka Village has gradually shifted from being preservation-centred to utilisation-centred. The scope of heritage preservation and utilisation gradually expands from the heritage itself to include the environment and landscape surrounding it. In heritage utilisation, historical display and communication of heritage values become the main purposes. The relationship and the link to the regional heritage are considered. The methods of heritage improvement are becoming increasingly diverse. The utilisation of heritage is planned to increase regions' vitality and promote cultural exchange between them and the world.

There is a partial consistency between the changing trends in the Asuka Village Development Plan and the changing trends in the heritage improvement method of Asuka Village. Consistency includes the general trends of change to utilising historical resources, consideration of the surrounding area from harmonising the environment to vitalising the region, the purpose of communication, the historical value, and global communication and cooperation. This trend results from the interaction between the Asuka Village Development Plan and the ongoing exploration of heritage preservation and utilisation approaches. The Asuka Village Development Plan plays an important role in this process.

The change reflects a trend in the method of heritage preservation and utilisation, gradually expanding from the improvement of the heritage to its surroundings, paying more attention to the value of the heritage, the interpretation of the locality brought about by links with other heritages, and the involvement of human activities. This is the most advanced approach to preserving and utilising modern regional heritage.

5.2 Considerations and Recommendations

Although Asuka Village is only one of many historic villages globally, heritage preservation and utilisation

activities have been carried out in Asuka Village for more than 40 years. During the last 40 years, the heritage improvement of Asuka village has gradually changed from individual preservation to regional and even global utilisation, with more emphasis on the communication of historical values and regional cooperation and communication. The overall trend of its heritage preservation and utilisation method can also represent the trend of heritage preservation and utilisation in Japan and even in the world. It can be seen that the trend is more international, communicative, and valuable.

As can be seen from the case of Asuka Village, it is fundamental to identify what its value is and, indeed, to protect it. Only by doing the most basic preservation can people have the opportunity to utilise it in the future. It is vital to strike the right balance between the protection and development of historic villages. There is always a balance to be found between protecting and growing. This is a process that needs long-term planning and thought.

As the archaeological survey continues in Asuka Village, new heritage improvements will continue, and the heritage that has been improved will be renewed. With increased focus on the connections between heritages, a better understanding of the relationship between heritage and other aspects will become the foundation for heritage utilisation.

Although the links between heritage and Asuka Village have been formed through the heritage projects, there are still shortcomings in the practical application of heritage interpretation. The author deems that the interpretation of regional heritage may rely more on cell phone applications or the Internet so that visitors can understand, feel, and touch different angles. The existing heritage interpretation APPs also need to be updated to include more content related to heritage connection. Combining this connection between heritage and the region's history will be a topic that will continue to be explored in the future.

At the same time, the utilisation of regional heritage does not depend only on one place but requires the cooperation of several regions. It is essential to consider how to encourage other regions to work together and how different regions, especially different countries, can work together.

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Appendix

Table A1. Japanese-English comparison of laws and plans

Japanese	English
1 古都における歴史的風土の保存に関する特別措置法 (古都保存法)	Act on Special Measures concerning Preservation of Traditional Scenic Beauty in Ancient Capitals (Ancient Capital Preservation Act)
2 明日香村における歴史的風土の保存及び生活環境の整備等に関する特別措置法 (明日香法)	Act on Special Measures concerning Preservation of Traditional Scenic Beauty and Improvement of Living Environment in Asuka Village (Asuka Law)
3 明日香村歴史的風土保存計画	Asuka Traditional Scenic Beauty Preservation Plan
4 明日香村における生活環境及び産業基盤の整備等に関する計画 (明日香村整備計画)	Plan for Improvement of Living Environment and Industrial Infrastructure in Asuka Village (Asuka Village Development Plan)
5 都市計画法	City Planning Act
6 都市公園法	Urban Park Act
7 奈良県風致地区条例	Nara Prefecture Scenic Area Ordinance
8 文化財保護法	Act on Protection of Cultural Properties
9 景観法	Landscape Act
10 森林法	Forest and Forestry Basic Act
11 農業振興地域の整備に関する法律	Act Concerning Establishment of Agricultural Promotion Areas
12 奈良県屋外広告物条例	Nara Prefecture Outdoor Advertising Ordinance
13 明日香村景観条例	Asuka Village Landscape Ordinance
14 明日香村景観計画	Asuka Village Landscape Plan
15 史跡中尾山古墳環境整備計画	Historic Site Nakaoyama Tumulus Environmental Improvement Plan
16 特別史跡キトラ古墳環境整備基本計画	Special Historic Site Kitora Tumulus Environmental Improvement Basic Plan
17 国営飛鳥歴史公園キトラ古墳周辺地区基本計画	Basic Plan for Kitora Tumulus Area in the Asuka Historical National Government Park
18 飛鳥宮跡活用構想	Basic Concept of Asuka Palace Ruins Utilisation
19 飛鳥宮跡保存活用構想検討報告書	Report on the Study of the Concept of Preservation and Utilisation of the Asuka Palace Ruins
20 大和都市計画にぎわいの街特別用途地区	Yamato Urban Planning Revitalize Special Use District
21 明日香村文化財総合管理計画	Asuka Village Cultural Properties Comprehensive Management Plan
22 明日香村歴史的風土創造的活用事業計画	Asuka Village Traditional Scenic Beauty Utilisation Project Plan
23 明日香における歴史展示実施計画	Implementation Plan for History Display in Asuka
24 飛鳥京地区都市再生整備計画	Asuka-Kyo Area Urban Renewal and Improvement Plan
25 明日香村歴史文化基本構想	Asuka Village Basic Plan for History and Culture
26 飛鳥観光案内サイン整備計画	Asuka Tourist Information Sign Development Plan
27 牽牛子塚古墳・越塚御門古墳 整備基本計画	Kengoshizuka Tumulus and Koshizuka-Gomon Tumulus Improvement Basic Plan
28 明日香村公共施設等総合管理計画	Asuka Village Comprehensive Management Plan for Public Facilities
29 阪合にぎわいの街特別用途地区に関する都市計画	City Plan for the Sakaai Revitalize Special Use District
30 明日香村空家等対策計画	Asuka Village Vacant House Countermeasure Plan

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