

# A timeless modern landmark inspired by the city's heritage

**Project:** AURIC Hall, Aurangabad  
**Architects:** IMK Architects, Mumbai



 CLUSTER PLAN

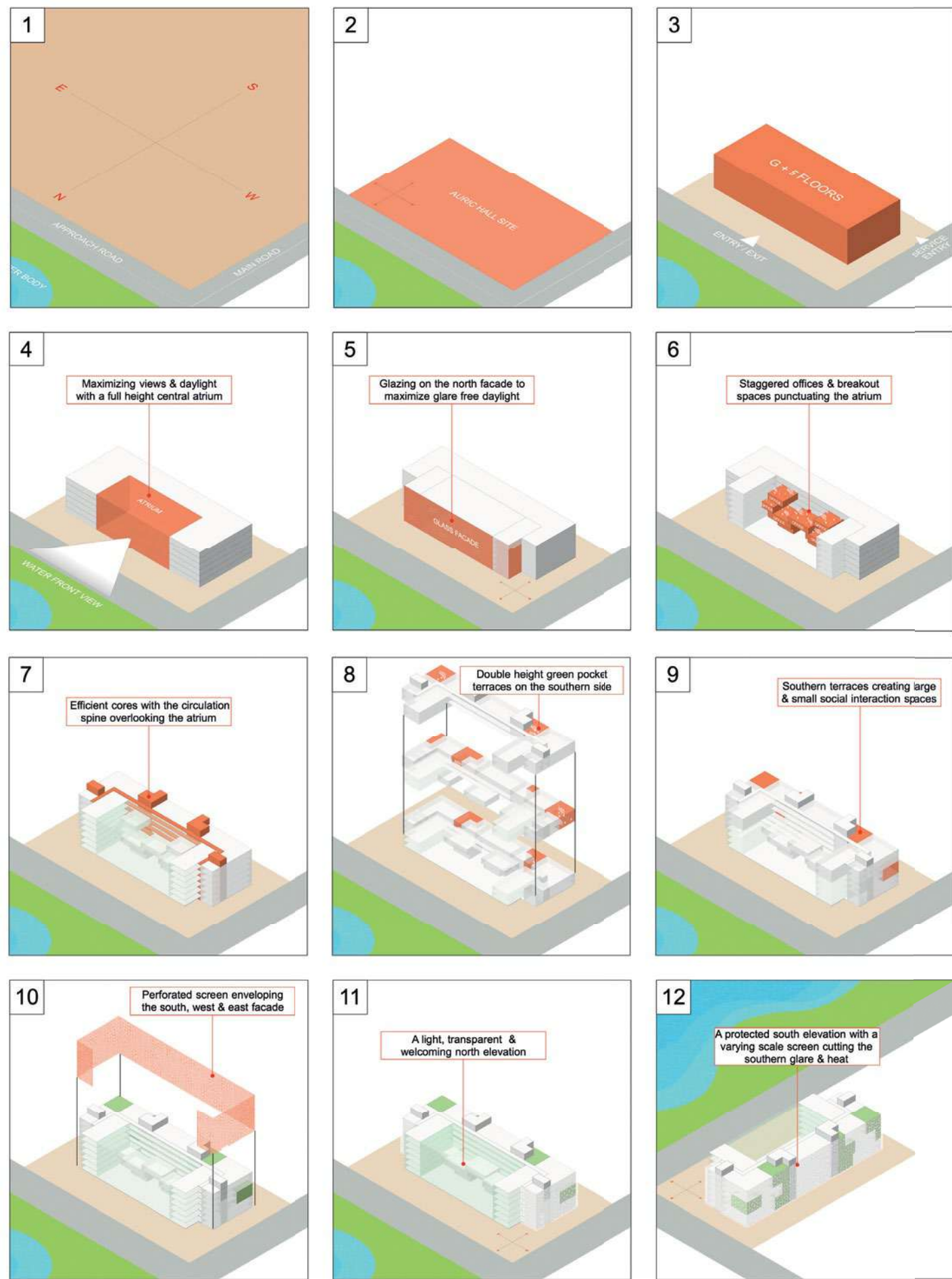
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|------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. EXHIBITION HALL-1   | 6. DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION BUILDING |
| 2. CONVENTION CENTER   | 7. SERVICE APARTMENTS               |
| 3. COMMERCIAL BUILDING | 8. HOTEL                            |
| 4. OFFICE BUILDING     | 9. ICONIC TOWER                     |
| 5. INCUBATION CENTER   | 10. EXHIBITION HALL-2               |

The Delhi Mumbai Industrial Corridor (DMIC) is one of India's most ambitious infrastructure projects. Its goal is to develop new industrial cities as 'Smart Cities' and converge next-generation technologies across the infrastructure sector. Amongst these, Aurangabad Industrial City (AURIC) is one of the Greenfield & Smart Cities that is being developed as part of DMIC. AURIC Hall is the landmark District Administrative Building within the Central Business District of the industrial city. It has been planned as the face of the upcoming development in the area that would complement the vision of AURIC.

The building is both the monitoring and the administrative nerve centre of the smart city, housing the main command control room to manage all the civic utilities on a real-time platform centrally. It offers incubation spaces to the industrial houses that are being set up in the township, and has been designed to operate as the anchor building that will cater to the needs of the staff and visitors and function as a sales centre as well.

AURIC Hall is also a landmark for the city of Aurangabad, designed as a transcendent, inspirational, timeless office building. It has been conceptualised in a way to create spaces that strive to achieve innovation and transcend expectations. It is a socially responsive building that enhances engagement with spaces where people and activities thrive. It encompasses spaces that promote the interaction of ideas to enable effective solutions. While the building is advanced in technology and functions, the design pays homage to the rich culture and history of Aurangabad, while creating a timeless exemplar of beauty and sustainability.





CONCEPT EVOLUTION



## HISTORICAL CONTEXT

In imbibing the architectural and historical values from Aurangabad's legacy, the tradition of gates as a design element stands out most in the historical monuments, marking and punctuating various parts of the city. Here too, ceremonial gateways mark the entrances along the compound wall at the approach to the building, which act as definite pause points. Another series of ceremonious arches mark the entrance to the building at the porch, this time in combination with intricate jaalis that are reminiscent of the tomb complexes of the old city.

The masterplan for AURIC city had located the administrative building in the CBD within a cluster of buildings around a public green. IMK proposed a rearrangement of the block and relocation of AURIC Hall, such that a waterbody that was located away to the north of CBD could add to the value of the spaces within this landmark building. The landscape adjoining the internal driveway is inspired by the Char Bagh concept along with a cascading waterbody at its centre, creating a focal point at the main entrance to the building.

Most of the Mughal building complexes had multiple envelopes creating a sense of enclosure. At AURIC Hall, these are arranged in a series of public, semi-public and private spaces. The first layer of spaces as you enter are lush green open spaces, nestled between a screen and the





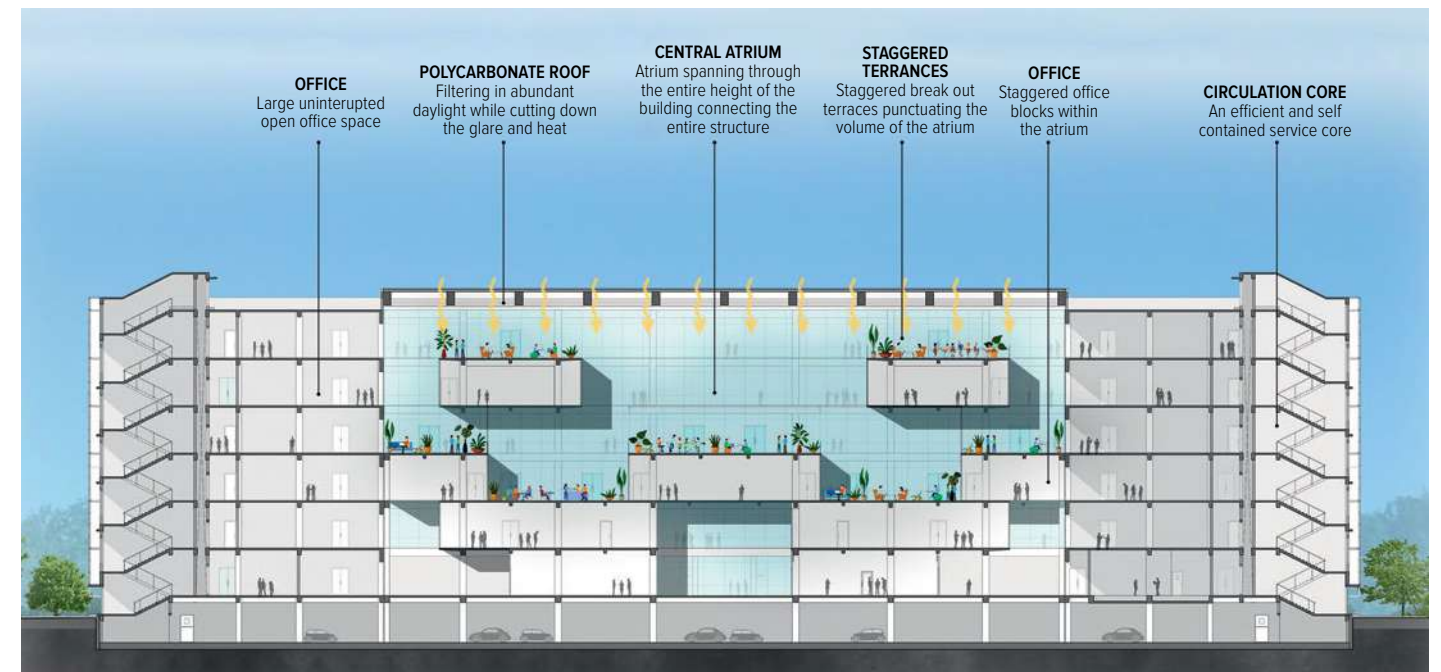


Taking its inspiration from historic structures like Bibi-ka-Maqbara, patterns have been used in the screens that envelope the building and are repeated on the glazed panels as well, echoing the theme of the building. A network of two aluminium screen modules of the same motif but varying scales forms the jaali. This breaks the monotony of the façade, while helping control the light and shadow for open terraces and office spaces accordingly.

In contrast to the external symmetry, the inside hides many asymmetric surprises. The porch leads onto a large linear and full-height atrium space, enclosed by offices on three sides. The atrium was added as a modern interpretation of the garden, with most of the social spaces facing the lake. Every alternate floor has a different layout led by strategically staggering spaces to avoid repetition and homogeneity. The building is a collage of office-spaces and terraces. Simultaneously, along with the atrium, the lift lobby and staircase connect the spaces vertically. Every lift lobby opens onto green double-height terraces that face the south façade on one side and a long connecting corridor on the other.

The building intends to bring back to life the traditional historical elements through means of modern interpretation, repetition and symmetry, which played an essential part in the designing and conceptualisation of the structure. Every floor has access to multiple terraces—either outdoor green terraces on the southern edge or

main building. The subsequent layer of public spaces are enclosures that create an approach to the beautiful refuge within, with screens that maintain the soft and natural quality of light. Traditionally, the use of screens was meant to protect against the harsh sun. Additionally, the use of jaalis allows for the control of airflow and helps in lowering the temperature of internal spaces while letting in diffused natural light.



SECTION

indoor-cantilevered terraces that overlook the atrium, encouraging interaction and allowing the users of the building to thrive. These terraces serve as social spaces for the employees and offer a break-out zone from the closed indoors, to encourage engagement, collaboration and cross-pollination of ideas that would enable flourishing of the people and thereby, the organisation.

Volumes and heights differ from space to space, making it a memorable experience—where the atrium is as high as the building, the terraces on the three sides are double-height, and finally, the office spaces are single floor in height. Office spaces are planned as per an open plan concept to enhance interaction and productivity, along with the spirit and mood of the people. Entry-level spaces have been designed to be free-flowing and transparent, to allow visual as well as physical connectivity throughout the ground floor, which houses all the public facilities. The reception block occupies the

front of the atrium, along with the control room and visitors centre, while the rear is occupied by the public relations teams. The rear blocks are a double-height extension of the atrium, providing free-flowing connectivity at the public level between the AURIC exhibition spaces, the citizen services, the cafeteria, and the toilet blocks.

AITL (Aurangabad Industrial Township Ltd) offices are planned on the topmost floors with adjoining terraces, which serve as apt viewing galleries for potential buyers who will visit the AITL offices. The atrium is intended to serve as an exhibition space, with a display of artworks showcasing Aurangabad's rich history. All level corridors overlook the atrium, thus making it the central display area in the entire building. With the staggered terraces punctuating the atrium volume and north light filtering through the glazed façade, the atrium transforms into a vibrant centre of activity, pulsating with positive energy.

Parking is provided on the surface for VIPs

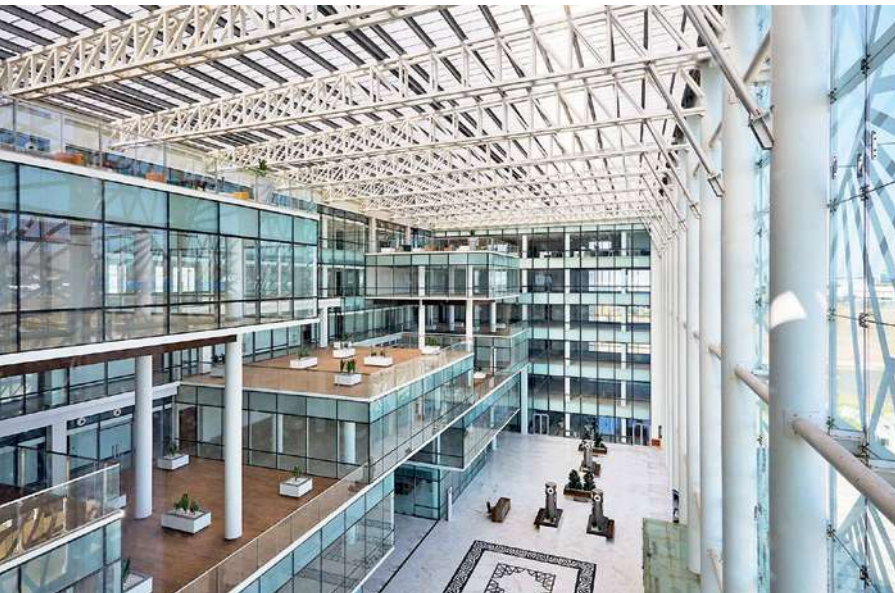


GROUND FLOOR PLAN

1. ATRIUM
2. CAFETERIA
3. CONFERENCE ROOM
4. SOUTH TERRACE
5. MARKETING DEPARTMENT
6. PUBLIC UTILITIES
7. BANK
8. PUBLIC ENTRANCE







and other occupants, and at the lower ground level for the public. The ground adjoining the parking level is at a lower level, which aids in camouflaging the parking spaces as well as the utilities with the surrounding green spaces. A garden with a large waterbody lines the entrance approach, which integrates with the water recycling system—the end process of aeration of recycled water.

#### MATERIALS

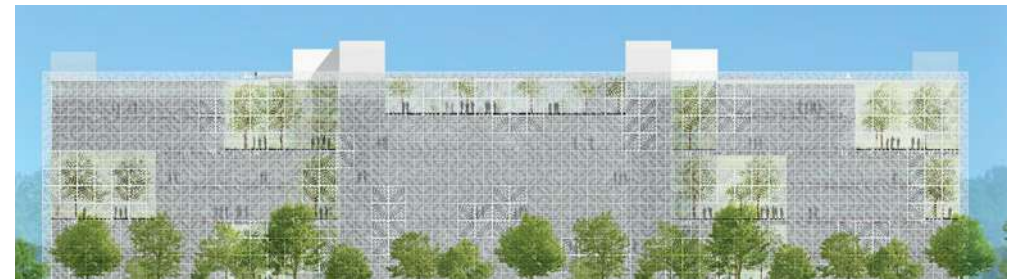
Commercial and office spaces call for large structural grids to allow for flexibility. In this project, post-tension beams were used to enable the large spans and the services height clearances required within a proportionate floor-to-floor height. Steel has been used on the façade and roof truss, which are crucial elements of the building. For the larger truss span, steel was a choice due to its durability, structural flexibility and higher load-carrying capacity. Due to the advantage of steel construction being rapid, it was the chosen technique so as to fit within the constrained building completion deadline. Another quality of steel is that it can be constructed off-site and assembled on-site, which saves a lot of time, and multiple works can happen simultaneously.

The external jaali façade of the building had to be selected after various considerations—lightweight but at the same time robust, incurring low maintenance costs, and long-lasting. Laser-cut aluminium panels were finalised among alternative materials such as concrete, MS, Corten steel and zinc. The atrium has been provided with multi-wall polycarbonate sheet roofing. This is not only light in weight, and hence, requires a lighter truss design, but also effectively blocks the glare and minimises the heat gain within the atrium. This, in turn, helps in reducing the air conditioning cost for the large atrium volume, as well.

The north-facing atrium façade has large glass panels with ceramic fritting. All the offices facing the atrium also have glass walls in line with the open office concept. The glass was carefully chosen, again with the required technical specifications, making it effective against glare, heat gain, and toughened at the same time against wind pressures and other loads.

#### SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

AURIC Hall has been designed incorporating climate-responsive and sustainable design practices, embodying low energy costs and use of high-performance materials to achieve IGBC Gold Performance. The building receives amazing daylight with minimal heat gain. It is a functionally efficient building, well-integrated with natural features and landscapes within the site to create an interesting blend of the built-form with semi-covered or open spaces, while meeting access,



ELEVATIONS



parking and other on-site requirements.

The building is oriented to allow maximum glare-free light into the office spaces, while simultaneously minimising heat gain. The layout consists of the large central north-facing atrium, maximised with a glass surface to optimise the daylight from the north, with office blocks abutting it on the other three sides, wrapped with an intricate modular jaali. The atrium width, as well as the width of the offices surrounding it, was controlled to ensure maximum daylighting. The jaali screen controls the airflow and lowers the temperature of internal spaces, while also providing natural diffused sunlight into the building. The atrium is covered with a skylight at the roof level, made of polycarbonate sheets that permit glare-free light but block the heat gain.

Water conservation measures have been adopted by maximising landscape plantation areas with controlled irrigation measures. Additionally, the runoff from the paved surfaces

as well as the terraces is harvested by allowing for groundwater recharge. The use of efficient plumbing fixtures and installation of wastewater treatment systems further aids the same. The use of solar panels and energy metering and management systems facilitate energy efficiency, while CO2 monitoring enables indoor environmental quality control.

The AURIC Hall design lends a fresh contemporary touch to the traditional Mughal architecture. The choreography of light and shadows, created by the intricacies in the bold jaali patterns embracing the building, along with elaborate yet structurally minimalistic gateways, form a fascinating storyline. A precise harmony of proportion, rhythm, materials, textures, details and beauty, is achieved to craft a functional and robust office space that sets a new paradigm amidst such institutional buildings.

Inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in September 2019, AURIC Hall is not only meaningful in its objective, but also manifests itself as indigenous and leading edge of people's highest aspirations, whilst allowing them to thrive in its environs. ✚

Photo credit: Rajesh Vora

#### FACTFILE

**Client:** AITL – Aurangabad Industrial Township Limited

**Principal architect:** Rahul I. Kadri

**Design team:** Anuprita Dixit, Bhumiika Ganjawala, Heena Shaikh, Suvidha Mhatre, Tejashree Rajeshirke

**Consultants:** Structural, Mechanical, Electrical, Civil, HVAC, Plumbing, PMC & Engineering – Shapoorji Pallonji And Company Private Limited (SPCPL); Façade - FCD

**Contractors:** Structural, Mechanical, Civil, Plumbing & Engineering – SPCPL; Electrical – Alfadeal; HVAC – Zamil India; Façade – Chiniwala Facades/Glazium Facades/ New Look Interiors

**Site area:** 1,54,172 sq ft

**Built-up area:** 1,79,334 sq ft

**Year of completion:** 2019