

SPATIAL INVENTORY OF TOURISTS SITES IN ZUNGERU FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN NIGER STATE NIGERIA

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Abstract

Tourism is a veritable industry a country requires for its national development. It involves the travel of tourists away from their homes for purposes of sightseeing in a different environment, and in most cases involves sleeping away from home. In Zungeru town of Wushishi Local Government Area of Niger State, there are varied physical and human potentials which can be harnessed for veritable tourism development. Such potentials include water resources; conducive environment; conducive and friendly natural landscape; fertile agricultural arable soil; fairly motor able road net - work; nodal railway net - work and a potential river port development. Investigations showed that despite these viable potentials that exist, tourism development in the area still at abysmal level. There is the need to tap the natural and man-made tourism resources available in the area, and hence professional recommendations were offered for the proper and full utilization of the resources for the overall land sustainable development of Niger state and Nigeria in general.

Key Words: *Tourism sites, Tourism Infrastructure, Tourism destination, Eco-tourism and Recreation*

Introduction

The word tourism can be very cumbersome to define. According to the World Tourism Organization (1999, 2005), tourism is any activity of people travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year, for leisure, business or any other purposes. Tourism is one of the world's largest and fast growing industries and a high income generating sector especially in the developing nations of the world. It is a leisure activity which involves short term movements of people

to destinations away from their usual places of abode, which produce great socio-cultural, economic and physical impacts on the host community. The World Tourism Organization (1963) defines tourism as a "temporary visit to a destination for at least 24 hours or overnight stay for purposes of leisure and business" (Candela and Figini, 2012).

Tourism could be looked at as a temporary and short term visit by people from one geographical area to another outside where they usually live and work. The difference between tourism and

change of residence is for specific purpose. It involves various forms of temporary short term visits to places but with regards to purpose, duration and activities in tourist attraction areas. It could be domestic or international. Domestic tourism involves the movement within tourists own country and the international tourism involves movement outside one's country.

Tourism as defined by Olokesusi (2001) is "a trade of many trades" because it encompasses a wide range of activities and disciplines, all of them complex in their own right. It ranges from transport, accommodation and catering, to arts festivals, language, schools and business conferences. The success of tourism promotion according to Olokesusi (2001) depends upon a complete understanding of how the various activities can be brought together to create a sought-after and saleable product.

The full development of tourism in Niger state has enormous economic potentials and a veritable source of employment creation and revenue generation for both the public and the state government. There is no doubt that with the presence of numerous tourism attraction spots in Zungeru such as the River Kaduna, River Nanamaye dam, the colonial cemetery, the colonial army barracks and mammy markets and many others, a careful planning of such tourism potentials would usher in rapid sustainable tourism development to the state and Nigeria at large.

The study is aimed at a spatial inventory of Tourists sites in Zungeru for sustainable tourism development in Niger state, Nigeria. There are four thrust objectives of this study as stated below:

- i. To examine the existing physical characteristics of tourism sites in

the study area using remote Geographic Information System (GIS)

- ii. To evaluate the attractiveness and potentials of the surrounding physical outcrops and natural features for tourism purpose in the area.
- iii. To appraise the problems which continuously confront tourism development in Zungeru and Nigeria in general.
- iv. To highlights appropriate physical planning recommendations for the preparation and implementation of a tourism development plan for the area.

Study Area

Zungeru is a traditional ancient town in Wushishi L.G.A of Niger State. With a population of 8347 (1991), it has an estimated population of 13,722 (2009) with an annual growth rate of 2.8% (National Population Commission, 2009). It is about 60 kilometers from the state capital of Minna and about 130 Kilometres from Kontagora in Kontagora local government area. The town lies between Latitude 9° 42'North of the Equator and Longitude 6° 15'East of the Greenwich Meridian. According to Muhammed (1995), Ogedengbe (1998) as quoted by Sanusi (2005), Zungeru is a traditional Gbagyi settlement, whose origin can be traced to one Nda, who settled at the bank of river Nanamaye in Zungeru, for the purposes of fishing and at times entertained his customers with a native guitar called Dunguru. This spot where Nda lived later became an expanded popular settlement and was named Nduguru, because of the guitar musical instrument played by Nda. This name remained the settlement's traditional name until the arrival of the colonial

administrators who called the name Zungeru because of difficulties in its pronouncements.

Zungeru was once under the traditional administration of the Sokoto Caliphate until the advent of the colonial administrators in the area (Muhammed, 1995). It played a significant role as the capital of the Northern Protectorate of Nigeria during the time of Lord Lugard between 1900 and 1914 and it was the

centre from where the amalgamation of Nigeria was proclaimed and hence it stood in principle as the first capital of Nigeria. These developments contributed tremendously to its growth and urbanization and popularity (Sanusi, 2002) and by 1916, with the movement of the seat of colonial government from Zungeru to Kaduna, by Lord Lugard, the traditional system of governance was moved to Wushishi.

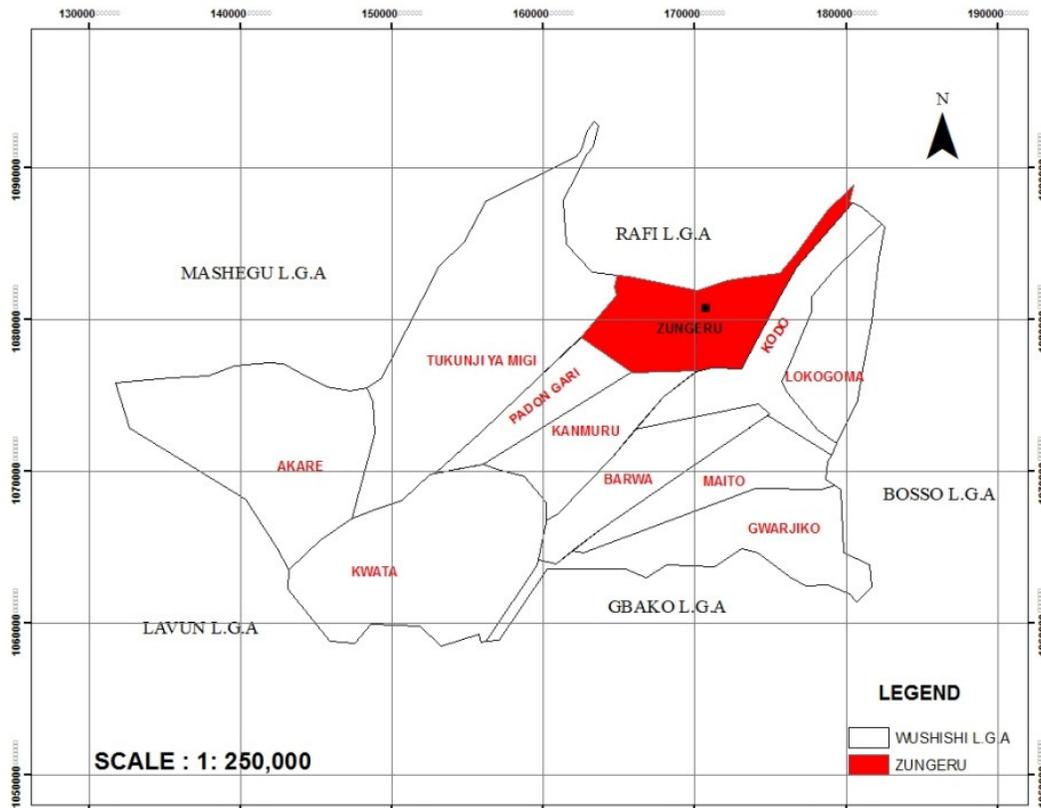


Fig. 1: Zungeru in Wushishi Local Government Area of Niger State

Source: Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Federal University of Technology, Minna

Climatic Conditions

Zungeru is located in the middle belt zone of Nigeria with unique climatic characteristics of moderate rainfall that commences in April and last till October. The dry Harmattan cold wind which ushers in the dry season commences around November and lasts till May at the onset of the rains. Rains generally begin

around April/May and last till October/November, with a mean annual rainfall of 1334mm and a high mean monthly rainfall in September. The raining season is usually characterized with heavy wind storms and Thunder storms, which terminate by May and resurface again in October towards the end of the raining season.

The mean monthly highest temperature of 36°C and lowest mean temperature of 28°C in the study area occur in the months of March and December respectively. Between the months of February to April the area usually experiences a very hot and uncomfortable weather conditions. The hot temperatures fall during the rains due to cloud cover and increased vegetal cover thereby causing cooling effects in the area.

Two major air masses are experienced in the study area. They are the Tropical Continental Air Mass (TCAM), dry, dusty and harsh in nature originates from the North-East and it brings Harmattan, while the Tropical Maritime Air Mass (TMAM), warm, moist and cool originates from the South-West and brings rainfall to the area (Maxlock, 1980).

Tourism Development in Nigeria

Tourism and its development in Nigeria has been neglected for many years, but it has recently taken a new dimension of improvement as a result of renewed interest of the private sector to invest in the much needed fund into the sector of the Nigerian economy. This new wave of development in the tourism sector was brought about by the civilian administration's bid to find alternative revenue generation apart from petroleum oils.

In the recent past the tourism sector was dominated by private sector initiatives with little or no government incentives but with the recent democratic developments in the country, with renewed vigour to place the nation on the tourism map of the world, various agencies have been constituted by the government to initiate tourism development efforts in the country. One of such tourism development drive was the resurrection of the Nigeria Tourism

Development Corporation (NTDC) and many other agencies.

Nigeria occupies a total land area of 92,376,864 square kilometres with a population of over 140 million people and 774 local government councils with varied degree of tourism attractions (Ayeni, and Ebohon, 2012). This is a pointer to the degree of richness of the Nigeria cultural heritage and it has become crucial, therefore, for every Nigerian to be involved in the task of promoting and developing tourism to the world over. Therefore, concerted efforts should be geared towards the organization of workshops, seminars and conferences, by both private and public agencies to educate the public and investors on the enormous opportunities that exist in the tourism sector of the economy.

There are varied tourism attractions in Nigeria which include extended and numerous rivers and oceans, beaches ideal for swimming and other water sports, unique wildlife, and vast tracts of unspoiled nature ranging from tropical forest, magnificent waterfalls, and some new rapidly growing cities with enabling conducive climatic conditions conducive for holidaying. Other attractions include traditional ways of life preserved in local customs, rich and varied handicrafts and other colorful products depicting native arts and lifestyles and the real unassuming and friendly attitudes of many people in the country.

The country is enormously endowed with warm, sundry climate and several kilometers of fascinating beaches and evergreen vegetation in the southern part. To the north, the country is blessed with alluring landforms which overshadows the savanna grasslands. In addition to these are the interesting natural features in the form of waterfalls, springs, hills and

mountains, with temperate-like climates and a range of special and common species of tropical wildlife.

Materials and Methods

The study uses a qualitative approach to assess the potential Cultural Heritage Tourism in Zungeru town. Four assessment criteria were employed in a check list context to rate the existing potential artifacts in the area. These include: Scenic, cultural, physical, and natural values. An instrument was developed using the criterion each to help identify values and significance as well as determine how the present condition of the existing potential artifacts. This methodological was used in order to develop a simple effective instrument that could be applied across a broad array of cultural assets (historic buildings/landscapes and heritage attractions), of different scales (small buildings to entire villages), in different physical states (derelict to fully conserved and retrofitted for adaptive re-use) and in different locational contexts (urban, suburban, rural and remote). Inventory of all potential artifacts were taken and assessed. A qualitative approach

employed was deemed to be most appropriate, with each criterion assessed and described. Fourteen cultural or heritage attractions in Zungeru were studied using qualitative and GIS analysis.

Result and Discussion

Tourism Attractions and Characteristics in Zungeru

There are varied tourism potentials attraction areas in Zungeru. They consist of both natural and man – made tourism potentials (Sanusi, 2005). Table 2 present the potential tourists attraction Sites and artifacts found in Zungeru. These tourism potentials are mostly historical relicts which have been in existence for a long period of time. Some of the tourism potentials have become extinct as a result of long time of abandonment by the concerned government authority. The existing tourism potentials in Zungeru are not patronized by both the government and the people alike.

The inventory of the potential tourism attractions in Zungeru (Fig. 2) based on two broad types - man-made and natural features are discussed below.

Table 2: Potential Tourists Attraction Sites in Zungeru, Niger State, Nigeria (2016).

Attractions	Location	Size (m2)	GPS Values	Attributes	Remarks
Man – Made Tourists Attractions					
Colonial Rest House	Gada Angwaua	300x400ft	188213/1084912	Very unkempt, warn out historical relics	To be reactivated
Colonial Cemetery	Tegina road	52/97 paces	189687/1084562	Attractive and well kept	Surrounded with bush
Army Barracks/Market	Off Tegina road	Not defined	188623/1087653		
Gada Matulu	Zungeru	Not defined	187823.6/1087633.47	Connecting bridge, built in 1902	Dilapidated
River Nanamaye Dam		Expanded land		Dilapidated	Requires renovation
Government House	Off Tegina road	Not defined	186987/1089345	Dilapidated and in ruins condition	To be reactivated
The Railway Station	Zungeru	Expanded land	189461.09/1085893.54	Very old	Requires rehabilitation
Missionary Churches	Zungeru	NA	NA	Old	Requires reconstruction
Ebenezer Primary School	Zungeru	NA	NA	Old and dilapidated	Requires rehabilitation
Azikiwe Birth Place	Zungeru	Not defined	212225/191117	Bushing	Requires rebuilding and repair
Chief Odumegwu Ojukwu	Zungeru	Not well defined		Scattered Area	Require rebuilding and repair
Natural Tourists Attractions					
River Kaduna	Zungeru	Not defined	187605.01/1085431	Fast flowing river	Requires river side resorts
River Nanamaye	Zungeru	Not defined	NA	Seasonal	Requires dredging and side filling
Alluring Flora	Zungeru	Not defined	NA	Evergreen	Good for relaxation purposes

a) Man-Made Attractions

- i. *The Colonial Administrators Rest House:* This is the resting place for the first colonial administrator of Nigeria, Sir Lord Lugard. The feature is located adjacent to river Kaduna and it occupies a large expanse of land area. The rest house consists of a veranda and two room apartment with a kitchen attached for cooking. The entire compound of the house is fenced with barbed wire to prevent it from vandalization. It is a goodsite for tourist attractions. The house now serves as a museum for the storage of colonial artifacts such as medical equipment and drugs containers, key to Lord Lugard's residence, Lugard's tea kettle, assorted guns and rifles and bullets that were used by the West African Frontier Force and many other data base on the colonial antecedents in the town.
- ii. *The Colonial Cemetery:* The colonial cemetery, of well over 3000 square metres is located to the northern part of the town along the Zungeru- Teginina road. The cemetery is divided into two sections; one section is the final resting place of the diseased colonial administrators and the second section was the final resting place for the country's black colonial administrators who lived and died in the struggle for the growth and development of the country. These sites are attractive places for tourists.
- iii. *The Army Barracks and Mammy Market:* The barracks and Mammy market for the West Africa Frontier Force is located along the Zungeru-Teginina road. The feature is on a large expanse of land and it is about 500 metres away from the colonial cemetery.
- iv. *The Gada Maitulu:* This is one of the bridges constructed by the colonial administrators in Nigeria to aid the development of land transport in the country then. The Maitulu bridge which is over 60metres in length and 4 metres wide was constructed over River Inna Maye, a major tributary of river Kaduna in Zungeru, to connect the western part of the town to the colonial government house. There are other such bridges in the town which are good sites for tourist attraction as they stand out significantly as colonial relics during the colonial days.
- v. *River Inna Maye Dam:* This is about 10 metres wide dam, constructed over river Nanamaye by the colonial administration for community water supply in Zungeru in northern Nigeria. The town was co habited by both the colonial white men administrators and the indigenous African settlers in the study area and they depended solely on the water from the dam for sustenance.
- vi. *The Government House and Warehouse:* These two landmarks are located in the eastern part of the study area, adjacent to each other. The site of the government house is unkempt and unattended to by both the government and the general public. There is an untarred road which connects the government house to the main road. The warehouses on the other hand are in ruins in the form of

foundation pillars of about 500 metres apart. The warehouses are separated from the government house by a gate.

- vii. *The Railway Station:* The railway station which lies to the eastern part of Zungeru contains some abandoned warehouses, residential and administrative buildings which depict relics of colonial artefacts in the area. The area can be sub divided into two parts; one part contains colonial warehouses and the second part consists of dilapidated residential buildings and an abandoned swimming pool of an appreciable size which was probably used by the colonialists.
- viii. *The Zungeru Market:* This an open stall market made up of iron poles and roof provided by the colonialists for the natives of Zungeru and its environs to boast commercial potentials. The market lacks direct contact with the main road and some of the items sold in the market are meat and other goods of daily needs by the people of the town.
- ix. *Missionary Churches:* There are two main churches which attract tourists in the area. They are the Anglican Church and the St. Patrick Catholic Church, all in Zungeru. From available records, the Anglican Church in Zungeru is said to be the first church to be sited in the northern part of Nigeria. The church was constructed in the year 1906 by the colonial missionaries to serve in spreading the gospel of the Lord Almighty. The Church is located within the vicinity of the famous Zik Centre in the town. The St. Patrick Catholic Church, on the other hand, was constructed and renovated in 1916 and 1986 respectively (Sanusi, 2005).
- x. *The Ebenezer Primary School Zungeru:* This primary school was constructed by the colonial missionaries to give sound education to the people in the area during their time. The educational edifice is located very close to the main road and it occupies an area of about 2.3 hectares. This school where the first indigenous President of Nigeria, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe had his primary school education has been re - named after him for purposes of posterity.
- xi. *Birth Places of Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe and Chief Odumegwu Ojukwu:* The birth places of these two eminent personalities of Nigeria are precisely located opposite the St. Patrick Church in Zungeru. The Zik's birth place which can only be identified by a sign board is located close to the main road fronting the church. Late Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe born in Zungeru, in 1904, was the first President of Nigeria from the time of independence in 1960 to 1963. Another prominent Nigerian born in Zungeru of igbo extraction is Late Chief Odumegwu Ojukwu whose place of birth is not far from that of Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe. He was the leader of the defunct Biafra Republic. The unique roles of these great men in the political antecedents of Nigeria in particular, who were born outside their places of origin (Igbo land), has made these sites relevant places of tourist attractions and

veritable potentials for sustainable tourism development of the country.

b) *Natural Tourist Attractions*

There are numerous natural tourist attraction sites in Zungeru but the artificial attractions at times tend to overshadow the natural ones.

- i. *The River Kaduna:* The presence of river Kaduna in Zungeru is one of the attractions that compelled Lord Lugard to relocate the capital of Northern Nigeria to Zungeru in 1900 (Mamman, 2005). The river takes its source in the northern part of the country and passes through the area of Zungeru. The river is relatively wide and occupies an appreciable land mass in the area. In most parts of its course are numerous cataracts which were brought about by continuous weathering processes which had taken place in the past. There are mini waterfalls along the river course which constitute some unique water movement and sounds at these points, and there are also gorges and trenches with attractive rock formations which provide beautiful platforms for site seeing, picnics, and general recreation and tourism attractions.
- ii. *The River Inna Maye:* The River Inna Maye is a tributary of river Kaduna in Zungeru. The seasonal river has numerous gorges along its course with depositional sand features that constitute attractive tourist features in the area.
- iii. *The Alluring Flora:* The study area of Zungeru is surrounded by a natural flora with different plant species that are attractive avenues for the promotion of sustainable

tourism development of the area. There is the mango, cashew, neem, Shea butter trees in the surrounding vicinity of Zungeru which serve as impetus for sustainable tourism growth in the study and Niger state at large.

Conclusion

Tourism is regarded as a veritable tool for the overall sustainable development of the state and Nigeria. Niger state is replicated with numerous tourism potentials which have remained untapped but with the recommendations given in this study, much stands to be achieved for the development in terms of sustainable tourism of the state and the country in general. There is the need therefore, for the government to re - order its priority in the diversification of the economy by giving attention to tourism development. The tourism industry should be developed as viable option for the employment of the teeming unemployed youths in the state and Nigeria at large.

Additionally, there is the need for our national and state development plans to re - echo the value and relevance of the sector for sustainable tourism development of the country. Fiscal and financial allocation should be extended to local government areas as the third tier of government for tourism potentials development in the country. The National Tourism Development Corporation (NTDC) should be adequately funded to be able to extent its operations effectively to the local areas for sustainable tourism development of states and the country at large. Public awareness and education should be given to tourism industry developers and the public on the viable opportunities and benefits accruable from tourism development for the country.

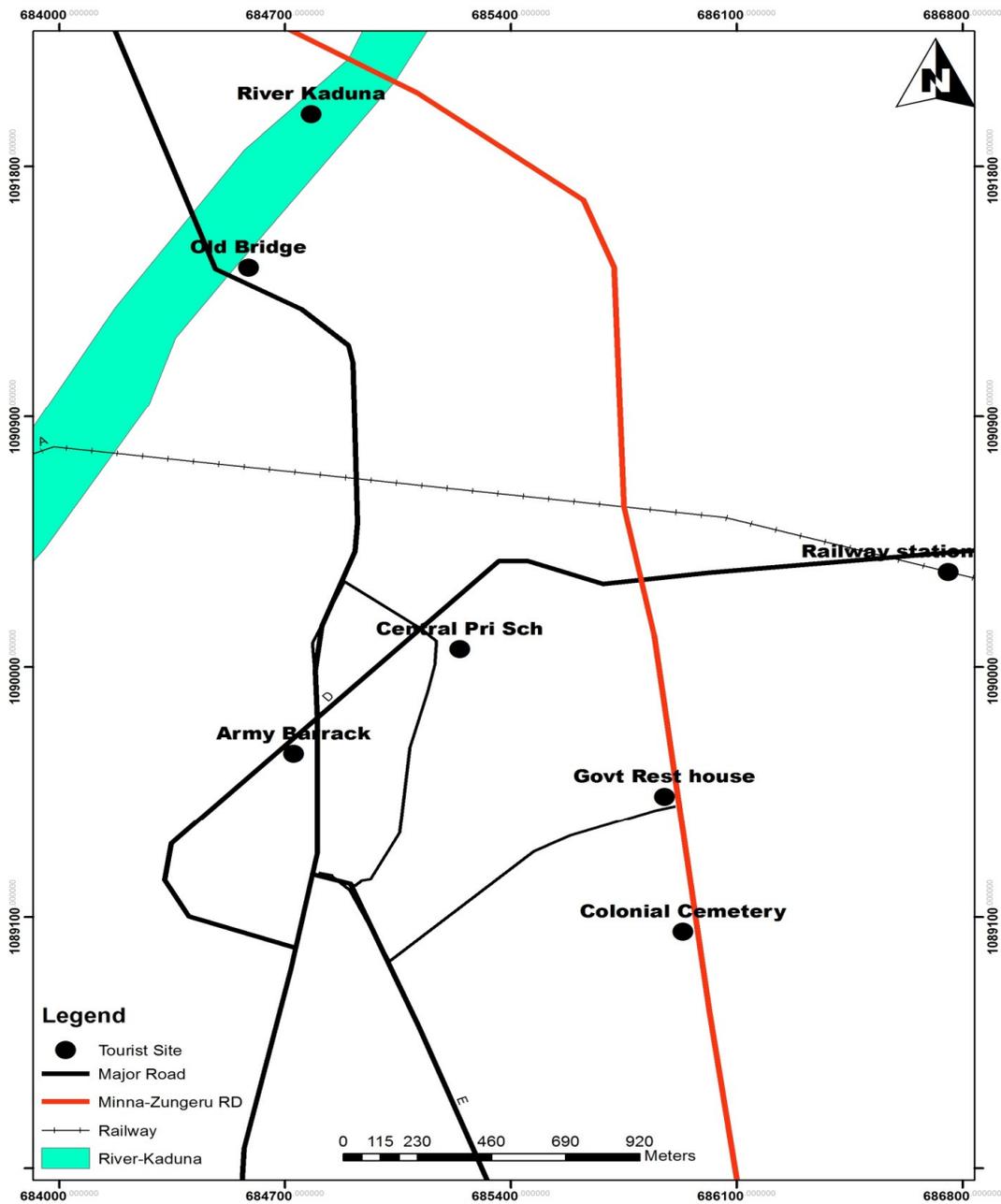


Fig. 2: Mapping of Tourists Sites in Zungeru

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