Site Analysis Checklist

Source: Kevin Lynch & Gary Hack (1984):

A – General Site Context

- Geographic Location, adjacent land use patterns, access system, nearby destinations and facilities, stability and change in development pattern.
- Political authority, social structure of the locality, population change in surrounding areas.
- Ecological and hydrographic system of the region.
- Nature of the area economy, other proposals or projects nearby and their effects on the site.

B – Physical Data, Site and adjacent Land

1- Geology and Soil:
   - Underlying geology, rock character and depth, fault lines.
   - Soil types and depth, value as an engineering material and as a plant medium, presence of hazardous chemicals or contaminants.
   - Areas of fill or ledge, liability to slides or subsidence, capability for mining.

2- Water:
   - Existing water bodies – variation and purity.
   - Natural and man-made drainage channels-flow, capacity, purity.
   - Surface drainage pattern – amount, directions, areas of continuing erosion.
   - Water table – elevation and fluctuation, springs, flow directions, presence of deep aquifers.
   - Water supply – location, quantity and quality.

3- Topography:
   - Contours.
   - Pattern of landforms-typology, slopes, circulation possibilities, access points, barriers, visibility.
   - Unique features.

4- Climate:
   - Regional pattern of temperature, humidity, precipitation, sun angles, cloudiness, wind direction and speeds.
   - Local microclimates: warm and cool slopes, wind deflection and local breeze, air drainage, shade, heat reflection and storage, plant indicators
   - Snowfall and snow drifting patterns.
   - Ambient air qualities, dust, smells, sound levels.
5- Ecology:

- Dominant plant and animal communities – their location and relative stability, and vulnerability.
- General pattern of plant cover, quality of wooded areas, wind firmness, regeneration potential.
- Specimen trees – their location, spread, species, elevation at base, unique or endangered, support system needed.

6- Man-Made structures:

- Existing buildings: location, outline, floor elevations, type, condition, current use.
- Networks: roads, paths, rails, transit lines, sewers, water lines, gas, electricity, telephone, steam - their location, elevations, capacity, condition.
- Fences, walls, decks, other human modifications to the landscape.

7- Sensory qualities:

- Character and relationship of visual spaces and sequences.
- Viewpoints, vistas, focal points.
- Quality and variation of light, sound, smell.

C- Cultural Data, Site and Adjacent Land

1- Resident and using population:

- Numbers, composition, pattern of change.
- Social structure, ties, institutions.
- Economic status and role.
- Organization, leadership, political participation.

2- Behavior settings: nature, location, participants, rhythm, stability, conflicts.

3- Site values, rights, restraints:

- Ownership, easements and other rights.
- Zoning and other regulations that influence site use and character.
- Economic value and how it varies across the site.
- Accepted territories.
- Political jurisdictions.

4- Past and Future:

- History of the site and its visible traces.
- Public and private intentions for future use of site, conflicts.

5- Site Character and images:

- Group and individual identification with aspects of the site.
- How the site is organized in people's minds.
- Meanings attached to the site, symbolic associations.
- Hopes, fears, wishes, preferences.
D- Correlation of Data

1- Subdivisions of the site: areas of consistent structure, character, problems.
2- Identification of key points, axes, areas best left undeveloped, areas where intensive development is possible.
3- Ongoing changes and those likely to occur without intervention – the dynamic aspect of the site.
4- Ties to context – current and possible linkages areas where consistent uses are desirable, patterns of movement to be preserved.
5- Summary of significant problems and potentials, including a summary of the key positive and negative impacts of the proposal.