

ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis: PRESERVING AND INTERPRETING
HISTORIC ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND
ARCHITECTURAL RUINS
WITHIN PRIVATE DEVELOPMENTS

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This study examines the preservation and interpretation of historic archaeological and architectural ruins within private developments. Additionally, it presents a criteria-based rating system to evaluate the long-term preservation and economic potential of ruins. The criteria are: 1) visual image and setting; 2) history; 3) purpose; 4) interpretation; and 5) legal protection. This rating system can be used to identify a preserved ruin's values and limitations. Also, the system can be used to evaluate the preservation and economic potential of ruins yet to be preserved. Applying the rating system to either type of ruin may grant those interested in ruin preservation with strategies to energize and strengthen their plans.

This study presents an historic overview of ruin preservation beginning with the Sublime and Picturesque movements of the late eighteenth century. It continues with

reasons for preserving ruins, targeting on particular audiences such as the public, archaeologists, architects, architectural historians, and artists. The economic benefits and values of ruin preservation discussed include ways that ruin preservation can benefit a locale by providing a sense of history and community pride.

Using the criteria-based rating system, this study evaluates eleven preserved ruins for their long-term preservation and economic potential. Besides a basic description of each ruin, the narrative rates each and makes recommendations for improvements to gain additional economic benefits and to ensure long-term preservation.

Finally, the principles of ruin preservation and interpretation are applied to a special case study, the Wilson House Ruin, Palmetto Bluff, South Carolina. Preservation and interpretive plans for this ruin are presented, and opportunities for economic gains from the ruin are discussed.