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Saudi Commission for Tourism & National Heritage  
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## Cultural Rock Arts in Himā Najrān, Saudi Arabia

### A SERIAL NOMINATION OF ROCK ART AND ROCK ART INSCRIPTION SITES

at Hima Wells, An Jamal, Dhibah, Minshaf, and Najd Khayran, near Najrān  
Submitted by the Saudi Commission for Tourism and National Heritage as a  
proposal for inclusion in the UNESCO World Heritage List as a Serial  
Nomination 2018 CE - 1439 AH

## MANAGEMENT PLAN

## Foreword

Over the past millennia great civilizations have left their imprint on this distinctive land that characterizes the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

As empires rose and fell, the Arabia Peninsula remained a crossroads for those who braved the harsh climate and arid terrain, linking various cultures through its trade routes.

Through the spread of Islam these routes were expanded to disseminate science, philosophy and commerce throughout the world.

In recognition of its outstanding role in shaping the ancient world and its contribution to the interchange of human values, the Saudi Commission for Tourism and National Heritage is proud to nominate the Cultural Rock Arts in Ḥimā Najrān, with the hope that this significant site will be inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

Thereby, SCTH in its endeavor to realize its commitment and its duty towards the Kingdom's cultural heritage will see the site protected according to international guidelines and its legacy preserved as a treasure for future generations.

Ahmed A. Al-Khateeb

Chairman and President  
of the Saudi Commission for Tourism and National Heritage

A photograph of a stone wall made of irregular, stacked stones in shades of brown and tan. A white rectangular box with a thin black border is centered on the wall, containing the text 'EXECUTIVE SUMMARY'.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Executive Summary

This Management Plan for Cultural Rock arts in Ḥimā Najrān forms part of the serial nomination of the Rock Art and Rock Inscription Sites in Najrān Region: Ḥimā Wells, Saidah, ‘Ān Jamal, Dhibāh, Minshaf and Najd Khayrān for inscription on the World Heritage List. The six sites have been singled out as the most outstanding examples of the region’s vast corpus of rock art and rock inscriptions that make up one of the largest rock art and rock inscription concentrations in the world.

The passage of vast armies and myriad caravans has resulted in an unequalled historical ‘library on rock’, comprising massive numbers of rock inscriptions and petroglyphs that reflect Arabia’s history over the duration of the Holocene period. Tens of thousands of pre-Arabian texts confirm sometimes incredible historical facts, and the enormous corpus of often spectacular petroglyphs records the irreversible changes wrought by climate variations and the human responses to them. The Ḥimā wells are one of the most important and possibly oldest.

The desert Bedouins whose history it tells still occupy the area, still relate to the rock art, and still modify it or produce new images today. Moreover, the rock art’s ethnographic potential is often found enhanced by accompanying rock inscriptions. This is both an outstanding archaeological complex and a living tradition that extends back many millennia.

Other factors contributing to the OUV are the pristine preservation and spectacular desert setting, landscape, natural, cultural, social, research and educational values of the site.

The sites are located in the Najrān Region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and situated approximately 80km to the north of the regional capital Najrān and to the west of the Rub’ Al-Khali desert. The sites and the designated buffer zone are in the ownership of the Saudi State, are under the protection of the Saudi Commission for Tourism and National Heritage (SCTH).

The rock art and rock inscription sites of the Cultural Rock Arts in Ḥimā Najrān have been preserved in excellent condition, with few natural risk factors prevalent in the remote desert environment in which they are situated. However, a WHS inscription and increased tourism interest in the site also means that they need to be carefully and sensitively managed.

This Management Plan is conceived as a first step towards recognizing the broader archaeological significance and impact of the sites, with the objectives to:

1. Protect the rock art and inscription sites and their OUV in line with international best practice and guidance, and as an exemplar of good practice.
2. Engender wider appreciation and understanding of the sites in the local communities and beyond.
3. Enhance the experience of visitors engaging with the sites.
4. Realize the potential of the sites to serve the tourism, economic and social development of Najrān Region and the communities associated with the sites in a sustainable manner.

These objectives will be met through low impact interventions, and the use of local human capital to manage and monitor the sites. The rationale for the management of the site is to concentrate interpretation at the new Ḥimā Regional Museum and a new Visitor Centre to be located in the old Governorate building to act as a gateway to the sites. There will be some physical interpretation at the sites in the Ḥimā hub, but at the more remote sites in the northern ‘undeveloped’ zone will be dependent on local guides and additional information on personal hand held devices. The entire buffer zone will be protected and managed as a cultural landscape.

The local Bedouin community hold the sites in high regard and consider the rock art to their own heritage. As such they will be important partners in the protection and management of the sites and the development of low-impact tourism through a structured ranger and site guardian program.

Structures and interventions into the natural landscape will be minimal, focusing on virtual interpretation and visitor centers where information is concentrated. The visitor experience will focus on a unique natural and cultural environment and a sense of discovery, and local engagement through guides and story-telling. Stopping points such as rest points, camps, visitor centers will all be low impact and at one with the landscape and sustainable. The sustainable use of natural resources will be a common theme for the management and interpretation of the sites. In doing so, the development and management of the sites contribute to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

The implementation of the Management Plan will be overseen by the SCTH World Heritage Unit in coordination with SCTH Najrān Branch. Management policies have been organised according to their urgency from category A through to category D, and under the umbrella headings of: Management resources (M) Protection (P), research and conservation Interpretation (I), Visitor management (V), Tourism planning and infrastructure (T) Natural environment and sustainability (N):

***Category A: Urgent actions (within a year, the run to inscription)***

M1: The SCTH Najrān Branch resources and capacity will be strengthened to manage the Cultural Rock Arts in Ḥimā Najrān Archaeological Park.

M2: A system of local guardians, rangers and guides in partnership with the local communities living in close proximity to the sites will be established and will form the core of site protection and visitor services offered.

P1: The site zones identified as core zones for the World Heritage nomination will be fully protected.

P2: The buffer zone including jabal Al-Kawkab will be designated and protected as the Cultural Rock Arts in Ḥimā Najrān Archaeological Park.

V1: No vehicular traffic will be permitted within the core areas.

T1: Improve access to the sites by stabilizing road surfaces.

N1: The collective value of rock art sites and their landscape settings will be recognized as a cultural landscape.

***Category B: Essential actions (within 1 to 3 years)***

M3: A risk preparedness plan will be drafted.

M4: A visitor health and safety plan will be prepared.

P4: A region-wide sites database will be established to share all scientific information relating to prehistoric rock art and petroglyphs in the region.

P5: A monitoring program as per the WHS nomination and linked to the GIS platform (Policy P4) will be established.

I1: An integrated interpretation plan for the Cultural Rock Art in Ḥimā Najrān will be adopted.

I2: Interpretation material and signage within the site boundaries will be kept to a minimum.

I3: A coordinated digital media presence for the site that combines visitor information with multi-layered interpretation across various platforms will be developed.

I4: Najrān Regional Museum and the Ḥimā Visitor Centre will act as interpretive gateways to the sites.

I5: Local site guardians will be the main point of information and guides at the sites.

V2: Areas suitable for rest stops will be identified.

T2: Infrastructure works and developments will be discouraged in the buffer zone.

T3: All new structures within the buffer zone will conform to strict guidelines in terms of design, materials and impact.

N2: The sustainable use of water resources will be promoted and monitored.

*Category C: Necessary Actions (within 2 to 5 years)*

M5: Regular outreach and engagement activities will support the conservation and management of the sites.

P6: The buffer zone/Archaeological Park will be zoned to ensure the most sensitive areas around the nominated sites can be protected.

P7: Archaeological surveys, research and excavations at the sites in partnership with Saudi Universities and international institutions will be supported.

P8: A Centre for Rock Art Research will be established in Najrān.

P9: The SETH visitor center will continue to serve research and archaeological teams working in the area.

P10: All excavations will be protected once investigations have been completed.

I6: An education component will be developed as part of the interpretation of the sites and rock arts.

V3: Programs will be undertaken to raise awareness with local stakeholders on the significance and value of the natural and cultural heritage.

V4: Optimum visitor numbers at sites at any one time will be established.

T4: The Archaeological Park will become part of a wider eco-tourism destination for Najrān.

N3: Waste collection and recycling systems will be established across the region.

*Category D: future actions (within 5 to 10 years)*

P11: Based on further research, surveys and in the event of new findings, re-evaluate the nominated property and the boundaries of the buffer zone.

N4: Key views of the rock art sites and significant views from the sites will be protected.

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PART 1  
THE SITES & CONTEXT



# 1. INTRODUCTION

This Management Plan for Cultural Rock Arts in Ḥimā Najrān has been prepared as part of the serial nomination of the Rock Art and Petroglyphs Sites in Najrān Region: Ḥimā Wells, Saidah, ‘Ān Jamal, Dhibāh, Minshaf and Najd Khayrān for inscription on the World Heritage List. The six sites have been singled out as the most outstanding examples of the region’s vast corpus of rock art and rock inscriptions. The sites are located in the Najrān Region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The Management Plan is presented alongside a Tourism Management Plan.

The Cultural Rock Arts in Ḥimā Najrān is the core area of one of the largest rock art concentrations in the world. It is 47.5 km long and up to 15 km wide, with a perimeter of 85.90 km total length. However, it comprises only the densest concentration of the general region’s rock art and rock inscription sites with numerous sites scattered beyond its limits. Nonetheless, most of the currently known 550 sites are within the nominated buffer zone and form part of the present application.

The sites are situated approximately 80km to the north of the regional capital Najrān and to the west of the Rub Al-Khali desert. The sites are under the protection of the Saudi Commission for Tourism and National Heritage (SCTH) and some of the core archaeological areas are protected by fences surrounding the sites. The sites and the designated buffer zone are in the ownership of the Saudi State, and to date have not been opened to regular visitation.

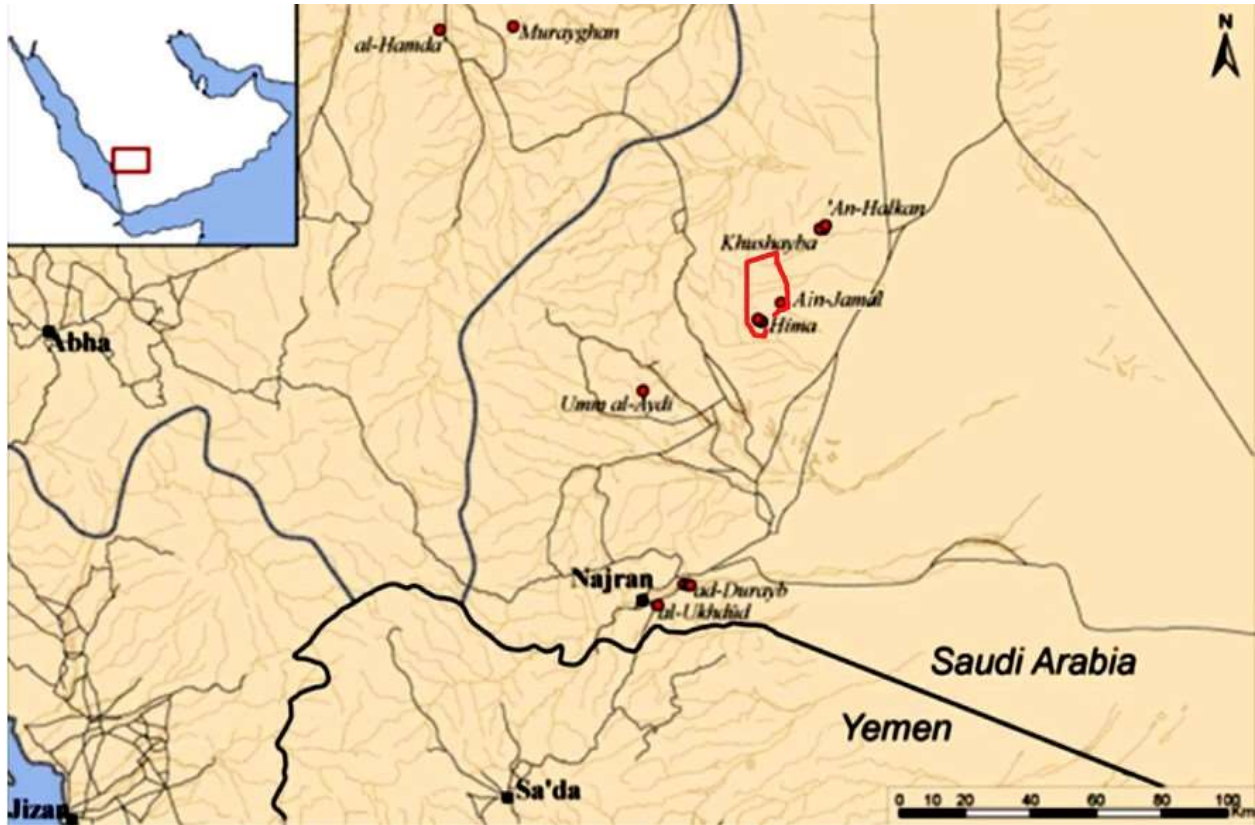
This Management Plan is conceived as a first step towards recognizing the broader archaeological significance and impact of the sites, seeking operational means for their ‘protection and conservation’ and communicating the value and significance of the sites to a broad audience, including managed opening of the sites to visitors.

The effective protection and management of rock art sites are complex in most parts of the world. They are often spread out over a wide geographical area, and may share more characteristics with an area of natural beauty than a typical cultural heritage site. The fragility

and vulnerability of the rock art to a number of human-induced threats requires any visitation to be carefully managed. Furthermore, like many prehistoric sites, interpretation plays an important role in explaining the significance of the sites, telling their story and ‘bringing them to life’.

The nomination follows the inscription of the Rock Art in the Hail Region in 2016 as a World Heritage Site. The experience gained by the SCTH of managing the rock art sites in Hail Region and in other parts of the Kingdom, place them in a good position to effectively protect and manage the sites. This management plan specifically builds on the experience of heritage management at various other sites in the Kingdom, as well as drawing on international best practice.

This management plan has been prepared by Dr. Aylin Orbasli and Peter Whitehead in collaboration with Dr. Robert Bednarik, Dr Majeed Khan, the SCTH World Heritage Unit and the SCTH Najrān Branch.



MAP showing location of Najrān Region and nominated sites

## 1.2 Location and Remit

### 1.2.a Location

The sites are located 80km north of Najrān City, extending from just south of Ḥimā to 40 km to the north along the eastern outliers of jabal Al-Qāra, though at this stage excluding jabal Al-Kawkab. To the east of Ḥimā lies the seemingly endless sea of sand aptly named Rub' Al-Khālī, the Empty Quarter. To its west is a succession of poorly accessible mountain ranges, beginning with nearby jabal Al-Qāra and extending all the way to the coastal Asir ranges along the Red Sea. The majority of rock art and petroglyphs sites covered by the Cultural Rock Art in Ḥimā Najrān – the area described here as the buffer zone – occur along the eastern margins of jabal Al-Qāra, a complex system of sandstone stacks dissected by canyons and sand-filled wādīs.

Remit of the Management Plan

Although the Management Plan (MP) is primarily concerned with the nominated properties and their buffer zone, a number of the management recommendations also cover a wider geographical remit and/or have implications to other sites of significance in the

Najrān Region. The regional capital of Najrān is also considered, both as a gateway to the sites as well in the context of a new regional museum, which will play an important role in supporting the protection and presentation of the sites.

The Management Plan has been prepared in conjunction with a Tourism Development Plan, which more specifically addresses issues of tourism growth and the development of tourism infrastructure around the sites.

### 1.2.b Boundaries of the WHS

The site boundaries are shown in Figure 1.1. The nomination consists of six distinct sites and an extensive buffer zone that encompasses all of them. The six nominated sites are:

1. ḤIMĀ WELLS, comprises two sites of extensive rock inscriptions, both in close vicinity of the historical wells of Bi'r Ḥimā. The five ancient wells of Bi'r Ḥimā are arranged in a V-shaped pattern and about 25m apart from one another. These wells are believed to be the oldest in the Middle East, having been in use continuously for at least 3000 years, and may even be older.

On a small hill 150m from the wells is one of the largest inscribed rock panels in the world (HIM02). Along the foot of the cliff and extending over 45 m are 15 Thamudic and South-Arabian inscriptions and 11 South-Arabian monograms, as well as six Arabic graffiti and 95 petroglyphs (Arbach *et al.* 2015). The main area of over 20 m<sup>2</sup> of writing includes the 4m long inscription.

2. JABAL SAIDAH, is a small isolated hill 1.3 km southeast of the wells, immediately north of the sealed road leading to Bi'r Himā. The site consists of a rock outcrop c. 20 m high and 90 m in diameter. On its top occur three dry-laid stone tombs and a recent necropolis extends next to the hill.

Saidah's main feature is a large inscription high up on the cliff face and another 43 smaller inscriptions, both Thamudic and South-Arabian. There are also numerous petroglyphs, mostly on boulders around the base of the hill.

3. 'ĀN JAMAL, is a low rocky ridge extending from the southeastern-most foothills of jabal Al-Qāra into the sand desert, located c. 8.5 km northeast of Bi'r Himā. The site is marked by a group of very large angular boulders, which together with the vertical cliffs above them are densely covered by petroglyphs and rock inscriptions. There are some 245 petroglyphs and 438 inscriptions in South Arabian, Thamudic and Arabic (Arbach *et al.* 2015).

4. DHIBĀH, is a small petroglyph site comprising several rock art panels, one of the ten sites of the Dhibāh complex. This stretches 2.5 km from west to east, one being just 900 m north of 'Ān Jamal. The site consists of a series of large boulders located at the foot of a mountain slope. The site is best known for its presumed depictions of elephants, animals not naturally found in Arabia during the Holocene.

5. MINSHAF, is part of a small site complex about 3.5 km east of Dhibāh. The site's dominant features are the large bovid depictions, up to about 2m long, with elaborate body decoration and geometric markings. These depictions are regarded as being of the Bronze Age, but preceding the final desertification phase.

6. NAJD KHAYRĀN, one of hundreds of sites found among the sandstone stacks to the southeast of jabal al-Qāra. A total of 58 sites have so far been recorded immediately north of and along wādī Saad. The perhaps most outstanding among them is Najd Khayrān, located along the base of a meandering cliff. Its focal point is where during rains a waterfall occurs at an impressive overhang. Thousands of petroglyphs have been created along the escarpment, on the cliffs and on large blocks of sandstone at their base. Within a maze of large boulders to the east of the 'waterfall' are a number of panels of petroglyphs with depictions of bovids in combination with human figures.



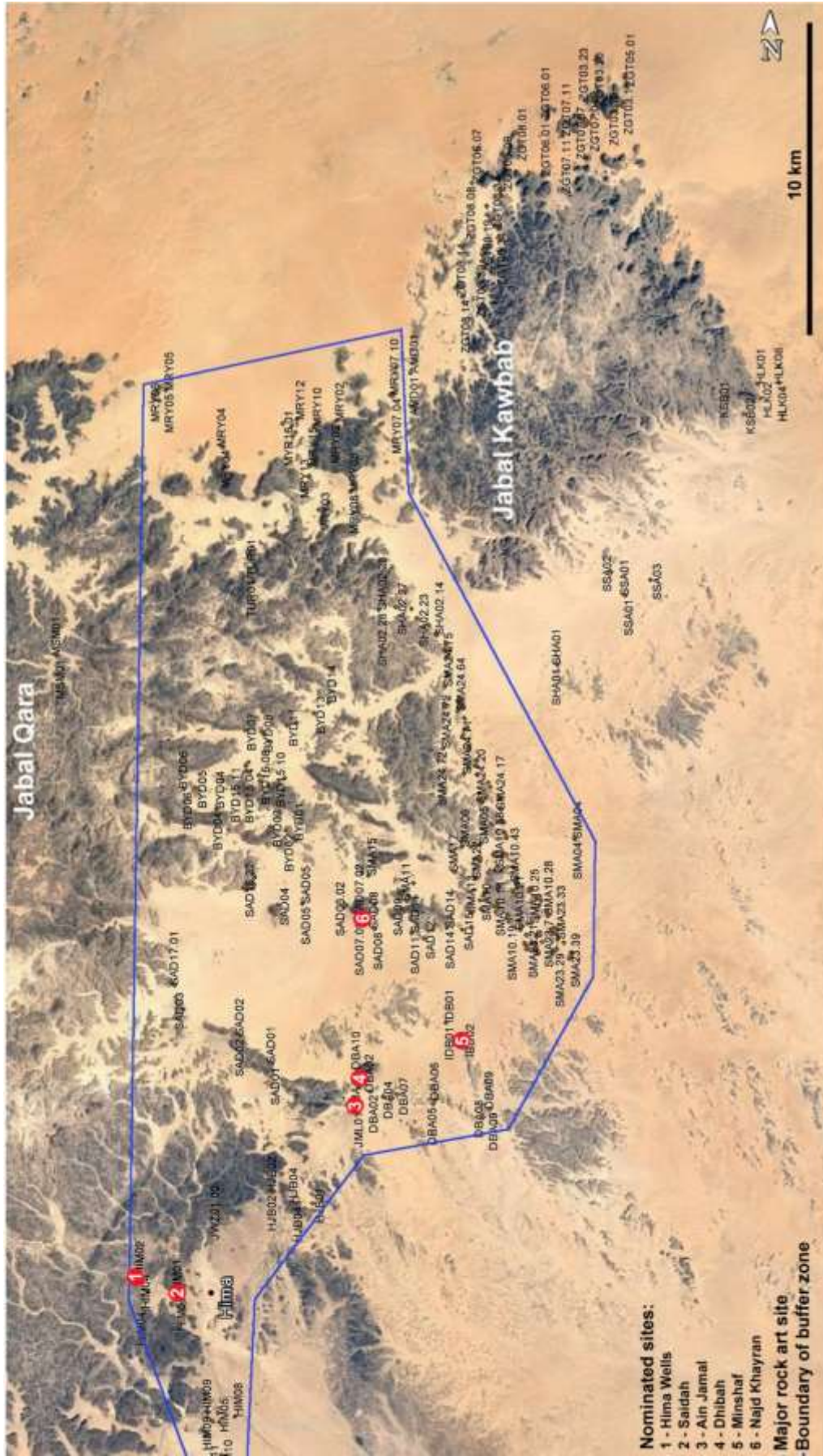
*Figure 1.1 Large bovid depictions at Minshaf*

### **1.3 Management Plan Aims**

The focus of this Management Plan is to develop an operational management plan that address protection, conservation and visitor interpretation needs whilst identifying integrated approaches to site management practices.

Key objectives of the MP are to:

1. Protect the rock art and inscription sites and their OUV in line with international best practice and guidance, and as an exemplar of good practice.
2. Engender wider appreciation and understanding of local communities in the sites and beyond.
3. Enhance visitors experience site engagement.
4. Realize sites potential to serve tourism, economic and social development of Najrān and communities associated with the sites in a sustainable manner.



MAP showing the WHS nominated sites and proposed buffer zone

## 1.4 Methodology

### 1.4.a Management Planning Process

The care and management of the cultural heritage for the appreciation and benefit of all, is best served through an MP that integrates the wide range of concerns for the site. MP is a practical operational guide for a cultural heritage site that will provide the means for establishing an appropriate balance between the cultural needs and natural resources, conservation, tourism, access, sustainable economic development and the interests of the local community. An MP is also a policy framework that provides the necessary indicators to enable decision makers to efficiently and effectively respond to change.

The process of preparing the MP is as important as the completed plan. This enables the multi-disciplinary team to work together, benefit from shared experiences and negotiate conflicting issues or demands. An interactive consultation period allows for decisions to be evaluated, responsibilities for implementation to be established and most significantly ensures that the management plan is established within the community who will be responsible for its implementation. Some of the major decisions taken during the planning process can begin to be implemented or acted on before the final version of the approved plan is published.

This MP has been prepared in line with the Operational Guidelines of the World Heritage Convention (2017), clauses 108-118 relating to sites management, and also addresses clause 119 on the sustainable use of the sites. Risk preparedness (*clause 118*) is addressed in section 4.5 and as part of the Management Resources policies (Section 6.4.1).

The MP adopts a values-based approach, considering both the established OUV of the sites, alongside the range of values ascribed to the sites and their wider context. The sites are also considered in their wider landscape and topographical context, much of which is integral to the OUV and the existence of the cultural sites, essential to their protection, conservation and interpretation today.

This management plan draws on the expertise of the consultant team, archaeologists and rock art specialists who have advised on and prepared the nomination file, the SCTH

World Heritage Site Unit, the team at SCTH Najrān Branch, alongside local stakeholders. The SCTH WHSU and the SCTH Najrān Branch have well established links with the local communities in Ḥimā.

### 1.4.b Stakeholder Consultation

This is integral to the preparation of both the nomination file, the MP and the TDP. The key stakeholders and implementation partners identified during the process of preparing this plan are:

1. The Ministry of the Interior represented by the Governor of Najrān Region, HRH Prince Jalawi ibn Abdul-Aziz ibn Mesa'ed, fully supports the WHS nomination. The Governorate of Najrān also directs local public security services and police to ensure site safety and have an established working relation with the local communities in the region, and specifically in Ḥimā Township.
2. SCTH World Heritage Sites Unit, based in Riyadh, is the State Party representative both managing the nomination process and following inscription ensuring a site is adequately protected and managed.
3. SCTH Najrān Branch, the SCTH WHS Unit maintains a close working relationship with the branch based in Najrān City. The Director General of the Regional branch, Mr. Saleh M. Al Mereah, and his team, are directly responsible for the day to day running of the sites and monitoring their condition. SCTH Najrān branch also work closely with local security services to ensure site safety and have an established working relation with the locals, and specifically in Ḥimā Township.
4. The Junior Governor of Ḥimā, will play an important role in supporting day-to-day services to the site as well as providing an important link with local communities. The Governor has been actively engaged in the preparation of the nomination and the management plan. The Amara headquarters are located within the heart of the Ḥimā Township, in close proximity to the Ḥimā Wells and sites that are referred to as the Ḥimā hub.
5. The Local Security Force and Civil Defense, located in Najrān City, have a network of precincts across the region. Security forces operating in Ḥimā Township are generally

recruited locally and with the advantage of their local knowledge provide important security back up in protecting the sites. Alongside attending meetings, a number of the police officers have joined site visits with the teams.

6. The new Najrān Museum, nearing completion at the time this MP was prepared, falls within the administrative remit of the SCTH Najrān Branch, and will also receive input from the SCTH General Directorate of Museums, based in Riyadh. The Najrān Museum will play an important role in the implementation of MP, acting as a gateway to the sites of the Cultural Rock Arts in Ḥimā Najrān from the regional capital and providing key educational services in support of the WHS.

7. The Ministry of Municipalities and Rural Affairs represented by the Central Municipality of Najrān, based in Najrān City, although not directly responsible for the area that the sites cover, have expressed their full support for the nomination.

8. Academic partners include the local University of Najrān, alongside academics and researchers from Saudi and International Universities. Beyond the nominated sites, the prehistoric heritage, rock art and inscription sites remain relatively unexplored generating significant potential for research teams and for partnerships.

9. The local communities of the sparsely populated area are semi-settled Bedouin tribes, living in scattered housing clusters, the most dense occupation being around the Ḥimā Township (a total population of 2,500). The local Bedouin communities are very aware of their heritage in the valley and take pride in symbols which link them to their ancestors. The local communities as a whole will play an important role in safeguarding the sites, and those employed as ranger or guides will be taking on specific responsibilities. SCTH has experience of working with local guardians, including the Rock Art Sites of the Hail Region WHS.

A number of more remote stakeholders identified as potential partners were not directly involved in the preparation of the MP, but will be contacted during the implementation phase, once the MP has been approved.

Consultation the local community groups has largely followed traditional means of consultation, much of it directed through community leaders.

#### ***1.4.c Implementation***

The primary responsibility for implementing the MP falls the SCTH Najrān Branch, with the support of the STCH WHSU. The Najrān Branch will work with its partners in Najrān City and Ḥimā Township to deliver the MP policies. Regular meetings with local community leaders, events and other engagement activities are planned as a component of the delivery.

The MP has set out an Action Plan (Section 7) which clearly identifies the steps for implementation, institutions responsible, timeframe and monitoring indicators.

The SCTH World Heritage Sites Unit will be responsible for monitoring the implementation of the MP through a process of annual reviews, including site visits and meetings with key stakeholders.

The SCTH World Heritage Sites Unit will be responsible for reporting progress back to UNESCO through the State of Conservation reports.



## 2. HISTORY AND BACKGROUND



*Figure 1.2 Himā wells are an important part of the story of life, travel and trade in the desert and continue to be of significance to current day communities who continue to practice many of their ancestral traditions*

### 2.1 Geographical Context

#### 2.1.a Geology, Hydrology and Climate

The rocky mountain ranges, which can rise several hundred meters above the sand plains and wādīs, are composed of Wajid Sandstone. This is a permeable sedimentary rock facies of the Paleozoic that retains water poorly. Just south of Ḥimā, the underlying granite of the Precambrian Arabian Shield is exposed (Figure 2), and it is that rock's low permeability that accounts for the raised aquifer at Ḥimā. As the aquifer retreated underground during the first millennium BCE, the wells at Ḥimā had to be progressively deepened into the solid bedrock and they are now about 20 m deep. However, there were great differences in the lowering of water levels across Saudi Arabia; for instance at Jubbah, the aquifer is now 75 m below ground level.

Rainfall is generally light and are most frequent from February to April, when 10 mm of the annual average precipitation of 132 mm tends to occur. Temperatures range from an

annual average low of 16°C to an annual average high of 31°C, with an average annualized daily mean of 23°C. Today's desert climate extends just a few millennia into the past as there is ample evidence that the region was much wetter in the past. In particular, the rock art of the Neolithic and early Bronze Age includes apparent depictions of species that could not possibly inhabit the region today. More directly, in various parts of the Cultural Rock Arts in Ḥimā Najrān, carbonate encrustation of the sandstone bedrock indicates the former presence of super-saturated pools of water. Such a deposit has been dated at 'Ān Jamal (*Liritzis et al. 2013*). The canyons in the mountain massifs also provide evidence of greater flashfloods than are possible today, although that erosive activity may predate human presence.

In the past the climate fluctuated considerably, between relatively moist and hyper-aridity. The major moist interval of the final Pleistocene (the Würm), marked by

grasslands and playa lakes in the Ḥimā region gave way to the aridity of the Last Glacial Maximum about 17,000 years ago.

The arrival of the final aridity 3500 to 3000 years BP was not so much the result of climatic deterioration, but of a gradual lowering of aquifer level. This led to the progressive final desertification marking the last 3000 years. In the Cultural Rock Arts in Ḥimā Najrān, the human reactions to the environmental conditions are perfectly recorded, in both the rock art and the rock inscriptions.

### **2.1.b Landscape and Natural Environment**

The region's environment is highly arid today, with very sparse vegetation and minimal wildlife. Meagre tree cover can be found in canyons that are subjected to sporadic flooding. Other vegetation consists of small shrubs and dormant small plants that are activated by rains. Episodic pools are rare in the entire region, but one occurs at Al-Ḥuṣayba in a narrow gorge at Jabal al-Kawkab. The only other surface water in the area is found in clay pans after rain falls. The area therefore continues to draw its primary water supply from the five ancient wells of Bī'r Ḥimā.

The fauna of the wider Najrān region includes various birds, such as eagles and pigeons, several snakes and lizards, rabbits, desert rats, foxes, and rare larger animals, such as ibex and wolves. These have been subjected to much hunting.

### **2.1.c Historic Geo-political Context (trade routes/connections)**

Ḥimā is famous for its wells and known as a routing point on the silk road between Najrān and northern Arabia during Antiquity. Located at an important node on the ancient trade routes of Arabia (Arbach et al. 2015). To avoid the western mountainous regions, caravans from Yemen from the south were compelled to follow a narrow corridor along the western margins of the vast Ar-Rub' Al-Ḥālī (Rub' Al-Khālī) desert, the. The wells at Ḥimā offered the last water supply on the way north, and the first after crossing the deserts south. This intensive traffic channeled through Ḥimā is reflected in tens of thousands of rock inscriptions written in several scripts, and in at least one hundred thousand petroglyphs. Both preserved in pristine conditions.



*Figure 2.1 Vegetation at Ḥimā Wells*



*Figure 2.2 Vegetation in a flood bed in Saidah; plastic litter is evident even in this 'untouched' environment*

The rock art provides a continuous record from the Neolithic to the very present, i.e. for a timespan of 7000 years or so (Bednarik and Khan 2005). It has only recently been discovered that in the Cultural Rock Arts in Ḥimā Najrān, rock art continued to be created, modified and venerated during the last 30 years (Bednarik 2017a). This is therefore one of very few places in the world, outside of Australia, where rock art expresses a living cultural tradition. Moreover, the ethnographic record effectively extends for millennia into the past, through the myriad rock inscriptions. They occur in various scripts, such as the Al-Musmad alphabet of 29 letters, Aramaic-Nabatean, South-Arabic, Thamudic, Greek, as well as Arabic. All of these scripts can be deciphered and provide rich information about the world of the authors. They also confirm historic events and several are precisely dated. Moreover, these scripts are an invaluable source of epigraphic understanding concerning the development of alphabetic writing.

Such a rich and informative source of archaeological, epigraphic, historic and even ethnographic information is of great scientific and cultural value. However, this is underscored by the vast archaeological resources in the nominated area, found in the form of cairns, stone structures, interments, stone tool scatters and deep ancient wells. The caravan traffic was so intensive that a toll station once existed at ‘Ān Jamal, one of the six sites nominated here. It is this intensive use, especially after the region’s final desertification, that explains the extraordinary concentrations of rock art, one of the largest in the world, and of rock inscriptions.

## 2.2 History

The history of the region and the site are explained in detail in the nomination document. Here we provide a brief summary by way of introduction.

### 2.2.a Prehistory

Ḥimā is an ancient Paleolithic and Neolithic occupation zone that has been categorized as a Lower Paleolithic or Oldowan site, although propositions concerning the presence of chopping and cobble tools specifically in this area remain to be verified.

Nevertheless, Site No. 226-63 near Najrān to the south has yielded Mode 1 artefacts (*Whalen and Pease 1992*). The presence of Acheulian hand-axes and Mousterian implement types from the Cultural Rock Arts in Ḥimā Najrān has been reported, e.g. at ‘Ān Jamal and Sha’ib Hinmat (*Bednarik and Khan 2005*). Elsewhere in Saudi Arabia, Acheulian tools have been attributed ages of c. 200,000 years by uranium-series dating (*Whalen et al. 1982*). Recently Mode 2 tools were reported from sites near the Red Sea coast, including specimens embedded in coral deposits c. 130,000 years old at wādī Dabsa, and chert tools encased in a lava flow near wādī Dhahaban that has been dated to c. 440,000 years (*Sinclair 2017*).

Upper Paleolithic artefact types occur at Ḥimā sites such as Sha’ib Mahash, while Neolithic finds are ubiquitous. Stone tools comprise implements made of quartzite, andesite and chert. Ceramic remains of mid to later Holocene times occur widely, and are especially common at a series of rock tumuli at Najd Sahi, near site MRY11.

Based on the records of the Saudi-French Archaeological and Epigraphic Mission led by Prof. Christian Robin, May 2017 - and incorporating the records of earlier expeditions, there are 550 individual sites within the buffer zone that have been recorded as having archaeological significance and assets. Archaeological data from the Ḥimā area remain limited as no excavations have been conducted to date.

### 2.2.b Antiquity

The intensive caravans traffic, as mentioned by Herodotus in his Histories Vol. (III) “*Arabia is the last of inhabited lands towards the south, and it is the only land which produces frankincense, myrrh, cassia, cinnamon, and ledanum*”.

Throughout antiquity, myrrh and frankincense were highly sought-after commodities. Considered highly precious as to equal its value in gold in offerings to the Divine. The Arab merchants who had a monopoly on these products brought frankincense from the southern part of Arabia to Egypt, Mesopotamia and the Mediterranean where they were in great demand.

From the 8th century BCE, when the Arab-Assyrian conflicts first began, competing interest of the great empires tried to control the trans-Arabian trade through to the advent of Islam. Convoys consisting of hundreds of camels crossed the endless paths that crisscrossed Arabia for over a thousand years transporting precious commodities along the legendary Incense Road. Inscriptions along these paths describe exploits of war, commemorate the construction of temples or water wells, attest the devotion of worshippers in long dedications to the gods, and even provide information on how merchant caravans were organized.

All these inscriptions, backed by results of archaeological research, provide a glimpse into the organization of long-distance trade network that gave rise to a most lucrative commercial systems of the Near East in Pre-Islamic times. Regular exchanges between the north and south of Arabia already started to be established. Trans-Arabian trade developed on a massive scale in the 8th century BCE. A key factor behind its expansion was the introduction of dromedary camels as pack animals.



Figure 2.3 Map of the major trade routes that passed through Arabia

The earliest trade routes of Southern Arabia generally relate to the trade of frankincense and myrrh from the south of the Peninsula (Dhofar in Oman and Hadramawt in Yemen) through to numerous ports of the Red Sea and up as far as the Mediterranean via Petra and Palestine (*van Beek, 1958*). The most cited routes are the inland routes that circumvent the Rub Al-Khali and move through the Sarawat and Hijaz mountain ranges passing through Najrān, Taif and Yathrib (Al-Medina Al-Munawarra) northwards, and a route that crosses the peninsula via Qaryat Al-Faw and the ancient Port of Gerrha to reach the Gulf (*van Beek, 1958*).

Pliny the Elder (23–79 AD) describes the route of the frankincense from Hadramawt valley to the Mediterranean coast. After the animals were loaded, the camel train would take off towards the west, going around the Rub Al-Khali desert and moving along the foot of the mountains on the outer edges of the

deserts. From the land of the Sabaeans in the south to Nabataea, Pliny cites not less than 28 people and cities that were encountered along the way. Different routes were taken based on the time of year, the experience of the guide, how safe the area was, with the latter depending on the often ephemeral alliances between the tribes that controlled the region. Stopping at Ḥimā watering wells was a welcome respite, but it could also be risky.

The big oases served as important stopovers along the way. Over time, stations grew into large cities, becoming capitals of prosperous kingdoms and busy marketplaces that drew many merchants. These cities were famous far and wide for their opulence and wealth, now corroborated with archaeological evidence.

The western route, from south to north was among the busiest, but many others existed across Arabia, such as that from Najrān through Al-Faw which passes through Ḥimā.

Current archaeological fieldwork is attempting to reconstruct these different trade routes and identify, outside of the main stopover towns, the simple way stations where the caravan drivers often left inscriptions and graffiti.

Different peoples or tribes controlled this enormous trade network at different times, depending on the changing political structure of the peninsula, but its basic structure, in terms of the roles played by the various nomadic and sedentary communities, always remained the same. The nomadic herders, who became increasingly important over time, were also 'service providers'; their involvement was vital to the successful operation of this transport business for they supplied the mounts, worked as camel drivers or caravan leaders and could furnish the convoys with a protective escort (Ghabban *et al.*, 2010).

#### **2.2.c Islamic Period**

From the start of the Christian era, a drop in demand for incense that had been an important part of Roman pagan worship, and growing knowledge of the monsoon winds which saw a rise in the use of sea routes for trade, resulted in the dwindling importance of the inland trade routes (van Beek, 1958). With the birth and rapid spread of Islam in Arabia, however, many of these ancient trade routes started to be utilized by the pilgrim caravans heading to the Holy City of Makkah Al-Mukarramah. The routes were adapted to the pilgrim's use with facilities including regular rest stations.

According to historic sources, there were three main routes for Yemeni pilgrims: the coastal routes along Tehama; the sea routes and the inland routes linking Sana'a and Makkah through Najrān, known as Darb Al-Sudur, the Najdi Route. The route passes through Najrān, before reaching the Sarawat mountains to the west.

Geographers, such as Ibn Kurraddbih, Qudama ibn Ja'far, Ibn Hawqal, Al-Mugaddasi, Al-Idrisi and Ibn Al-Mujawir provide more concise descriptions of stages along the pilgrimage road. Recently, the expeditions of Philby, who travelled the region in 1932 and South-West Saudi Arabia in 1936–37, the observations of Twitchell, who worked on the a road between Abha and Najrān around 1940,

provided some information on certain sections of the route.

The continued use of the historic trade routes as pilgrim routes for the Yemeni pilgrims is very significant as it is evidences the continued passage through the region from as early as the 1st millennium AD.

#### **2.2.d History of Sites Exploration**

Bi'r Ḥimā rock inscriptions were initially reported by Jamme (1965, 1966) and later investigated by Zarins *et al.* (1981), Zarins (1982) and Zarins *et al.* (1983).

From 1979 to 1981, the Rock Art and Epigraphic Survey of Saudi Arabia conducted a first survey of the Ḥimā region, recording several dozen sites (Zarins *et al.* 1980). During 1980 alone, 31 sites were recorded (Zarins *et al.* 1981). Further sites were added by the Survey during 1983 (Hester 1984: 115, 124) and again in 1990 (Al Kabawi *et al.* 1990). During this period, age estimates for the rock art were based on stone tools and pottery shards, but neither their provenance nor relationship with any rock art can be regarded as secure. In 2004, Bednarik and Khan (2005, 2009) commenced a scientific investigation of Ḥimā rock art. They provided the first testable rock art dating evidence at the Ta'ar site, established a new micro-erosion calibration curve, applied optically stimulated luminescence analysis at 'Ān Jamal, and they conducted colorimetric sequencing of patina at Najd Sahī. Their work, a collaboration between the Saudi Commission for Tourism and National Heritage (SCTH) and the International Federation of Rock Art Organizations (IFRAO), has been continuing to the present, with expeditions undertaken as recently as 2017.

In 2002, a Japanese mission led by Mutsuo Kawatoko sought to explore the rock inscriptions of Al-Ḥuṣayba at jabal Al-Kawkab (Kawatoko 2005; Kawatoko *et al.* 2005), in the first attempt to record one site comprehensively. It was followed by the painstaking survey of the Saudi-French Archaeological and Epigraphic Mission in Najrān, in 2007 (Robin 2008, 2010; Robin and Ṭayrān 2012; Arbach *et al.* 2015). This project is sponsored by SCTH, the French Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the French Embassy in Riyadh and the French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS-UMR 8167).

The sites are mentioned briefly in the records and writings of several European travelers and historians who visited the region, The rock art of the Property first came to attention through an expedition by Philby, Ryckmans and Lippens in 1951–52 (*Ryckmans 1952, 1954; Lippens 1956; Grohmann 1962, Philby, 1952*). They traversed the region and took photographs along the route. Using 232 of their photographs, Emmanuel Anati invented a chronology of all Arabian rock art based on selected sites at Ḥimā (*Anati 1968a, 1968b, 1972, 1974*).

### **2.2.e Local Communities and Their Links to the Sites**

The dominant tribe of the area are the Bani Yam, a large tribe native to Najrān, belonging to the Qahtanite branch of Arabian tribes.

However, as the designation Cultural Rock Arts in Ḥimā Najrān emphasizes, this is not just a vast rock art and rock inscription depository; it is the site of a living, continuing cultural tradition. The Bedouins living there are the descendants of some of the authors of the rock art and inscriptions, and the culture underwriting the rock art production still continues today. This is amply evident, for example in the use of the several millennia-old tribal markings called Wasm (وسم) that are still current today (*Khan 2000*), and through the continuing veneration of the fertility goddess Alia, both of which are prominent features in the Ḥimā rock art.

Moreover, the evidence from the Cultural Rock Arts in Ḥimā Najrān illustrates the interaction between people and nature, such as the response of the local population to the gradual lowering of the aquifer and the economic adjustments to the desertification. It thus represents an exceptional example of a traditional human settlement and land-use which is representative of a series of cultures, or human interaction with an environment that has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change.

### **2.3 Ownership and Management**

#### **2.3.a Ownership and Responsibility**

The Cultural Rock Arts in Ḥimā Najrān and the areas indicated as the buffer zones are the property of the Government of Saudi Arabia, and in accordance with Royal Decree No. M/26 dated 23/06/1392H (1972) and through the

Resolution by the Council of Ministers No. 78 dated 16/3/1429H (2008), are managed by the Saudi Commission for Tourism and National Heritage (SCTH).

Immediate responsibility for sites lies with SCTH Regional office in Najrān. At SCTH, the responsibility for World Heritage Sites falls into a specifically created Unit.

The sites to the south of the Ḥimā are currently fenced and boundary markers indicate parts of the buffer zone boundary. There are 12-15 local guards appointed to patrol the sites.

#### **2.3.b Legal Protection**

All antiquities sites in the Kingdom are managed and protected by SCTH, following the integration of Antiquities and Museums into the Supreme Commission for Tourism through the Resolution by the Council of Ministers No. 78 dated 16/3/1429H (2008).

The Cultural Rock Arts in Ḥimā Najrān are government property and as site of archaeological and historic importance protected by Royal Decree No. M/26 dated 23/06/1392H (1972), Law for Antiquities, revised and amended by Royal Decree No. M/3 as Law for Antiquities, Museums and Urban Heritage (2015).

The revised Law for Antiquities, Museums and Urban Heritage (2015) clearly stipulates that:

Article 1 (relevant definitions):

Antiquities/Archaeological Sites: Movable or immovable, buried or submerged objects, which lie within the borders of the Kingdom and in maritime zones under its sovereignty or jurisdiction, which are built, made, produced, adapted, or drawn by man resulting in the formation of archaeological properties throughout the ages, including objects dating back to a recent period, provided they are not less than a hundred years old. However, objects which are less than a hundred years old may be considered by SCTH as antiquities. Antiquities shall include historic and traditional heritage sites and artefacts.

Immovable Antiquities: Antiquities related to land, such as natural or human-excavated caves, rock drawings, rock carvings, rock engravings, rock inscriptions, stone piles, stone circles, urban and rural ruins, prominent or buried structures, water structures, ancient pilgrimage and trade routes, traditional cities, villages and neighborhoods, buildings constructed for various purposes as well as their ruins, and any related architectural elements.

Article 2:

All movable and immovable antiquities available in the Kingdom or in maritime zones under its sovereignty or jurisdiction shall be considered public property of the State.

Article 6

1. It is prohibited to trespass to, distort, remove, damage or deface archaeological or urban heritage sites by writing, painting, inscription, posting flyers, setting fire, or altering or obliterating their features.
2. No signs, banners, or any other advertising posters may be placed on archaeological or urban heritage sites without the approval of SCTH.

Article 8

1. SCTH shall maintain a record named "Antiquities Record" for registering all antiquities. The Record shall include the following:
  - a. Movable and immovable antiquities.

Article 9:

1. SCTH shall determine archaeological and urban heritage sites and coordinate with the Ministry of Municipalities and Rural Affairs and relevant agencies, each within their jurisdiction.
2. Archaeological and urban heritage sites shall be preserved when carrying out projects for planning, expansion or improvement of urban or rural areas. In addition, easement rights shall be taken into consideration, including designation of construction-free areas, in coordination with the Ministry of Municipalities and Rural Affairs. Planning projects, in which, or in the vicinity of which, there are archaeological and urban heritage sites, may not be adopted without the approval of SCTH.
3. Licenses for construction or renovation in areas adjacent to archaeological and urban heritage sites may not be issued without SCTH's agreement.

Article 20:

A fund named "Antiquities, Museums and Urban Heritage Fund" shall be established at SCTH to cover the expenses of the protection, preservation, maintenance, display and utilization of antiquities and urban heritage; establish new museums; provide support to museums bearing the logo "Saudi Museum"; and provide support to efforts exerted by the private sector, whether individuals, associations or societies, to realize the objectives set out in this Law.

Article 22:

Archaeological and urban heritage sites may not be altered; the debris found thereat may not be used; and soil, rocks or any other material may not be removed therefrom without the permission and supervision of SCTH.

Article 24

The following activities may not be carried out within the limits of archaeological and urban heritage sites without the prior approval of SCTH:

- a. Whole or partial demolition.
- b. Utility, and any activity or process that may change the physical appearance of the

archaeological and urban heritage sites, or buildings thereon, or disturb their archaeological layers,

c. New construction or landscaping projects.

Article 42:

SCTH shall have the sole right to carry out archaeological survey and archaeological excavation. This shall include submerged antiquities in maritime zones or under the sovereignty the jurisdiction of the Kingdom. SCTH, in coordination with relevant authorities, may authorize universities; national organizations, institutions and scientific societies; archaeological excavators; and foreign missions to conduct archaeological survey and archaeological excavation, either individually or in conjunction with SCTH, in accordance with the provisions of this Law and its Regulations.

Article 43:

SCTH and authorized agencies shall have the right to conduct archaeological survey and archaeological excavation on public and private property in coordination with owners or persons having control over such property. If there is a need to acquire the discovered immovable antiquity, the owners of the private property shall be compensated for the value of the land in which the archaeological find is located. If there is no need to acquire the discovered immovable antiquity, compensation shall be assessed upon completion of the excavation work in accordance with procedures set in the Law of Eminent Domain and Temporary Taking of Property.

Article 44:

1. Any antiquity discovered by SCTH or an archaeological excavation license holder shall be considered property of the State and may not be assigned. The President may allow the license holder to display the discovered movable antiquity for an agreed upon period of time.

2. Movable antiquities may be loaned to an archaeological excavation license holder or to individuals affiliated with a scientific body for a period of time for study, analysis or restoration, and shall be returned to SCTA afterwards. The Regulations shall provide relevant controls.

### ***2.3.c Habitation Within the Buffer Zones***

Within the total buffer zone area of 320 square kilometers, the only population is the township of Ḥima, with a population of 2,500 is located. This Bedouin population live in semi-permanent encampments spread out in the desert. The community mostly derives its livelihood from camel herding, most of their animals graze in the upper reaches of the surrounding wadis.

## ***2.4 Tourism***

### ***2.4.a The Regional Tourism Plan***

Following the National Sustainable Tourism Plan for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia completed in 2002, a regional tourism plan was prepared for Najrān in 2004.

The Regional Tourism Plan recognizes the role of cultural heritage to the development and growth of tourism in the region. In particular, it identifies the significance of the Frankincense route to the region and proposes a Tourism Development Area that connects Najrān with the site of Al-Faw to the north, and taking in Ḥimā.

The plan also identifies eco-tourism, desert safaris and community-based tourism projects as growth areas, amongst others. Issues identified for development include the need to improve tourism infrastructure and the quality of the accommodation offer.

### ***2.4.b Visitor Profiles and Growth Forecasts***

Most visitors to Najrān Region are domestic tourists, with only a very small number of international visitors. However, the region's cultural heritage assets feature as a main motivation for visiting for both groups. The main cultural sites being visited and located in Najrān include the archaeological site of Al-Ukhdoon (Figure 2.4), the traditional village of Abu As-Su'ud, several palaces and the souq where craftsmen can still be found producing traditional crafts. Ḥimā is only accessible to visitors through pre-arranged guided tours.

Current visitor numbers to Najrān are under 50,000, with 46,000 being domestic visitors. However, neighboring Asir receives 500,000 visitors/year. Only a three-hour drive from Najrān, this market could also be tapped into.



#### *2.4.c Implications for Cultural Rock Arts in Ḥimā Najrān*

Saudi families visiting friends and relatives in the province are not the immediate target for visits to rock art sites, whilst groups that are most likely to be attracted to such sites are less well represented in the region's tourism profile.

Rock art sites in general are more likely to be part of a composite attraction combining natural and other complimentary cultural resources. A World Heritage Site designation is likely to induce the interest of some international visitors. It is recognized that the isolated location of the site and the limited interest in rock art type attractions will always limit the number of visitors to the site.

Approaches to the development of tourism and its management are outlined in detail in the Tourism Management Plan that accompanies the nomination.



*The Tranquil scenery of the desert landscape in Najrān and its natural rock formation*



*Figure 2.4 The site of Al-Ukhdood is one of the main cultural heritage attractions in Najrān City. The sacking of the city by the Himyarities in the 6th century CE is documented on an inscription in Ḥimā.*

## 3. SIGNIFICANCE AND VALUES

### *3.1 Outstanding Universal Value*

#### *3.1.a Brief Synthesis*

Cultural Rock Arts in Ḥimā Najrān is not merely one of the world's largest concentrations of both rock art and ancient rock inscriptions; it is not just a historic site of remarkable qualities or a splendid example of the pristine Arabian desert landscape; and it is not only an archeological zone of immense promise. It is all of these things, but it is also a living cultural zone, where some practices of the distant past have remained alive. It is an immense monument to the human interaction with a volatile environment and to the human ingenuity in the face of irreversible climatic and environmental changes.

The Property being submitted for inscription bears exceptional testimony to a continuous succession of ancient cultural traditions spanning many millennia that still survive today among the Bedouins of the desert, who still live among the relics of the past created by their ancestors. These remains are of an extraordinary density and number, unequalled at least in the Middle East. The masterpieces of the human creative genius found among the rich and highly diverse rock art of the Property, together with thousands of decipherable rock inscriptions, illustrate the interchange of human values and conceptions across the vastness of the Middle East.

The focal site of Bi'r Ḥimā, compelled the caravans and armies of millennia to pass through the Property as they travelled to or from Yemen, Syria, Egypt and other parts of the greater region. What remains of their passage are the myriad inscriptions, found in many scripts and languages, and the many thousands of petroglyphs—the precipitate of many millennia. These many traditions of rock art have continued to the present time, and their ethnographic potential is enhanced by the often accompanying and decipherable rock inscriptions.

The wells at Ḥimā have been suggested to be the oldest desert wells in the world. This claim cannot be substantiated at present, but there is no doubt that they were of exceptional importance due to their strategic location. They

are the reason for the extraordinary concentration of rock art, inscriptions and other ancient evidence.

But just as the water of these wells still sustains the present Bedouin population, continuing its role during past millennia, the cultural precipitate found in the Property also remains of cultural relevance to that population, in a relationship persisting in few other parts of the globe. Therefore, this Property is not submitted as an archaeological site complex, or as an epigraphic resource, or as a rock art gallery, but as an integrated cultural area of Outstanding Universal Value. It remains of cultural relevance today, not least of all in this time of global climate change, when many other societies may face the challenges faced by those who created the rock art of this Property.

One of the most tantalizing qualities of this nomination is the mystery that it engenders. The presently known values of the Property already amply justify its inscription, but the area remains incompletely explored. Not only has archaeological investigation been very limited methodologically; surveys have been largely restricted to those areas that are readily accessible to vehicular approach, essentially the fringes of the rock stacks.

Most of the canyons and less accessible wādīs remain unexplored and it would be unreasonable to expect so much of the extensive sandstone massifs to be devoid of rock art and inscription sites. The only interior of a massif reconnoitered so far, that of jabal Al-Kawkab, features large concentrations of both types of evidence. Many of the countless valleys and recesses of the neighboring massif of jabal Al-Qāra are still to be explored, and therefore the presently registered 550 sites (as listed in Annex 3 of the nomination) may only provide a glimpse of the full extent of this monument.

Inscription of the Property would provide a strong incentive to the relevant agencies to pursue its further exploration.



*Figure 3.1 The large corpus of rock art and inscriptions discovered thus far demonstrate a high artistic quality and craftsmanship.*

### **3.1.b Criteria for Inscription**

Criterion (i) “representing a masterpiece of human creative genius”: The huge number of rock art images of the Property and the high quality of many of the petroglyphs renders it almost inevitable to find a large number of exceptional individual images or group compositions that are exceptional masterpieces of creativity and skillful workmanship. Creative genius is evident in the artistic or conceptual solutions the ancient artists employed in solving challenges of depiction or perspective, or simply those of a location’s given attributes.

In literally thousands of cases, unique solutions are evident in selecting topographic context, visual impact, use of rock texture or patination, integration of natural rock markings, foreshortening and similar devices to achieve desired creative effects. Therefore, the artistic skills demonstrated in the high depictive standards of this corpus of rock art are undeniably exceptional.

Criterion (ii), “exhibiting an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town planning or landscape

design”: The location of the Property at this important node of main caravan routes across the Arabian Peninsula has contributed to a wide interchange of values, involving numerous ethnic groups of the Middle East for many millennia. Their values are not only reflected in the work of successive generations of rock artists but also in countless rock inscriptions of several ancient scripts. The developments of the monumental arts over more than 7000 years evident in the Property reflect changes in human values, thoughts and priorities. They also manifest changes in the environment and the human adaptations to these variations.

Criterion (iii), “bearing a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared”: From the Neolithic, to the Chalcolithic, the Metal Ages and the historical periods, this corpus of rock art presents an exceptional record of cultural priorities and dramatic environmental adaptations during the Holocene period. It is exceptional at least in terms of its sheer quantity, being one of the largest concentrations of rock art and non-architectural rock inscriptions on the planet. Both these resources provide a unique testimony to a whole sequence of cultural traditions, one through their graphic and the other through their written materials.

Criterion (v), “being an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use which is representative of a culture(s), or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change”: The cultures that created the massive bodies of petroglyphs and inscriptions at Ḥimā present an outstanding record of human environmental interaction where successive societies became vulnerable to irreversible changes in climate and aquifer level. Rock art and inscriptions present a library recording interaction of successive cultures or people with their environment. Especially the final desertification before the introduction of writing, the effects of that characterize Arabia, with profound effect on the population, fauna and flora. This rich record also demonstrates people’s resilience, adaptability in the face of change.

### 3.1.c Outstanding Universal Value

The overarching cultural role implied by its name, Cultural Rock Arts in Ḥimā Najrān, reflects the site's historical function as one of the most important desert wells in the Middle East, if not the world. The passage of vast armies and myriad caravans has resulted in an unequalled historical 'library on rock', comprising massive numbers of rock inscriptions and petroglyphs that reflect Arabia's history over the duration of the Holocene. Tens of thousands of pre-Arabian texts confirm sometimes incredible historical facts, and the enormous corpus of often spectacular petroglyphs records the irreversible changes wrought by climate variations and the human responses to them.

But this record not only covers the past; it continues right up to the present: the desert Bedouins whose history it tells still occupy the area, still relate to the rock art, and still modify it or produce new images today. Moreover, the rock art's ethnographic potential is often found enhanced by accompanying rock inscriptions. This is not just an outstanding archaeological complex; it presents a living tradition that extends back many millennia.

In that sense alone, it is almost unique in the world. Other factors contributing to the OUV are the area's status as one of the largest concentrations on the planet of both rock art and rock inscriptions. The pristine preservation and spectacular desert setting also add to the OUV of the Property.

### 3.2 Values Associated with the Site

#### 3.2.a Cultural Historical Value

Much of the cultural historical value of the sites is linked to their pivotal position on the ancient trade and later pilgrim routes that crossed Arabia. The multiple layers of settlement and important trade links evidence a cultural and historical value that is of wider regional relevance.

Some of the Ḥimā inscriptions are among the largest such panels in the world, particularly those at Ḥimā Wells and Saidah (HIM02 and HIM01), located in the Ḥimā hub.

The inscriptions are also of significance for providing written evidence of historic events, such as the description of the sacking of Al-Ukhlood by the Himyarites.



*Figure 3.2 The inscriptions are of historic value in their content supports the better understanding of the region's history*

The number of different scripts used in the inscription are of epigraphic and cultural historical importance for providing important evidence on the alphabets and languages used in the region, and by those passing through.

The primary objective of the State in this serial nomination is the improved public appreciation of the Kingdom's ancient cultural heritage.

#### 3.2.b Artistic/aesthetic Values

The nomination clearly recognizes the artistic endeavor that has produced the rock art and the aesthetic values of the outcomes:

'The high quality of many of the petroglyphs renders it almost inevitable to find a large number of exceptional individual images or group compositions that are exceptional masterpieces of creativity and skillful workmanship. Creative genius is evident in the artistic or conceptual solutions the ancient artists employed in solving challenges of depiction or perspective, or simply those of a location's given attributes. In literally thousands of cases, unique solutions are evident in selecting topographic context, visual impact, use of rock texture or patination, integration of natural rock markings, foreshortening and similar devices to achieve desired creative effects. Therefore, the artistic skills demonstrated in the high depictive standards of this corpus of rock art are undeniably exceptional.' (*criterion i justification*)

### **3.2.c Research value**

As largely unexplored, with a significant potential to inform on a significant span of human history and exchange, the area has high research value.

The inscriptions are an invaluable source of epigraphic understanding concerning the development of alphabetic writing. Such a rich and informative source of archaeological, epigraphic, historical and even ethnographic information is of great scientific and cultural value.

### **3.2.d Intangible Values**

The ongoing significance of the rock art and inscriptions to the present day communities, and the symbolism of the tribal markings "Wasm", exemplify the intangible values of the sites. Local daily life and traditions continue to be played out amongst the inscriptions and the petroglyphs. There is a strong sense of attachment to the sites and the rock art.

The Cultural Rock Arts in Ḥimā Najrān also has rarity value for being a 'living' rock art site, where the petroglyphs are linked to present day local lifestyles and traditions and even continue to be produced.

### **3.2.e Social and Communal Values**

The area as whole holds social and communal value to the local Bedouin tribes who live and graze their livestock in the region, who consider the rock part of their own heritage and until recently used the wells as a water source.

### **3.2.f Landscape Values**

The desert settings of the sites are an important component of how they are understood, interpreted and appreciated. The landscape setting and context is highly significant to the Cultural Rock Arts in Ḥimā Najrān, and to the interpretation of its Outstanding Universal Value.

While the site as a whole has an overarching desert landscape character, each specific site also has a unique landscape setting, character and values associated with it.

### **3.2.g Natural Values**

The desert landscape on the edge of the Ar-Rub Al-Khali desert has a sparse but nonetheless significant flora and fauna. Cultural Rock Arts in Ḥimā Najrān is part of a greater desert ecology that includes the 'Uruq Bani Mu'arid Reserve, and among the few untouched regions of the planet.



*Figure 3.3 many Islamic Inscriptions are found in various forms and scripts reciting supplications', quotes from the Holy Quran and Prayers left by travelers*



*Figure 3.4 The untouched landscape setting of the sites is integral to the understanding and appreciation of their historical significance, and natural and social values*

### **3.2.h Education Value**

The sites offer a wide range of educational opportunities to those training in the professional fields of archaeology, epigraphy, history, geology and natural sciences. Both site-based activities as well as linked tourism industries generate opportunities for training and capacity building in areas including site maintenance, security, guiding, excavation, conservation and business skills.

### **3.2.i Economic value**

Although tourism activity at the sites has been minimal to date, the sites can generate economic value at various levels from job creation, servicing visitor requirements and the development and sale of handicrafts. In this respect, the sites have low, but nonetheless notable economic value.

The cultural heritage is of economic value in the Najrān Region to those who make a living directly from the sites or in industries generated from the site's value, such as tourism.



*Cultural Tourism is a big market that needs to be accessed in Najran, as its traditional Folk markets*



A photograph of a rocky, desert-like landscape. In the foreground, a concrete marker with the number '140' is visible. The background shows a large rock formation and a rocky slope. A white box with a black border is overlaid on the center of the image, containing the text 'PART 2 MANAGEMENT APPRAISAL'.

PART 2  
MANAGEMENT APPRAISAL





## 4. MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENT

The management assessment considers the sensitivities of the various sites, threats and known, perceived and probably future risks that will need to be addressed in the management policies. This section also considers what works and the strengths of the sites and area as a whole, and identifies opportunities that can be built on when planning for effective cultural heritage management.

### 4.1 State of Conservation

#### 4.1.a Protection

The sites of the Cultural Rock Arts in Ḥimā Najrān have been preserved in excellent condition under the custody of the Deputy Ministry of Education for Antiquities and Museums since the 1980s and are now under the care of the Saudi Commission of Tourism and National Heritage (SCTH). Three of those nominated - Ḥimā Wells, Saidah and ‘Ān Jamal - which are close to Ḥimā Township is enclosed in steel fences, debris are removed and site guards were appointed. The remaining three sites - Dhibāh, Minshaf and Najd Khayrān - are currently at some distance from inhabited areas and are protected by traditional means with local guardians.

Access to the fenced-in core areas will be fully controlled and sites supervised. Unauthorized access to the unprotected sites of the Property is not realistically possible. There is no recent development in the core zones, except protective measures; and none in the buffer zone except for Ḥimā township. Due to the highly arid environment of Najrān and the Bedouin custodianship since time immemorial, its OUV have been exceptionally well preserved.

Both the core zones and the proposed buffer zone are of adequate sizes to ensure the continuing integrity of the monument.

#### 4.1.b Condition & Natural Causes of Deterioration

A combination of favorable aridity and remoteness has been conducive to preservation of the properties and evident high levels of conservation. Effects of natural factors (wind, water, temperature) and expansion stresses caused minor deterioration of rock surfaces.

Aeolian erosion, by the effects of air-borne quartz sand does occur, but it is limited to low elevations that are usually free of rock art, and microscopy has shown it to be of comparatively low effect. The principal weathering process is through the removal of interstitial colloid silica, leading to granular exfoliation. However, on most surfaces, this process proceeds very slowly, and in particular, seems to inhibit effectively where adequate patina, probably stabilized by silica, is established.

On such surfaces, it is clear that no significant deterioration happened in more than 6,000 years, and would be reasonable to expect, in the absence of significant changes in climatic and atmospheric conditions, these petroglyphs can survive several more millennia - if avoiding anthropogenic (*human factors*) impairment. This includes direct threats (*from visitation*), and indirect threats (*atmospheric acidification*).

Of particular importance seems the absence of capillary moisture, probably attributable to the extremely low aquifer level. These factors already establish basic parameters of effective management practices for the site complexes.

#### 4.1.c Anthropogenic (Human) Damage

The sites continue to hold an important place in the local culture of this sparsely inhabited region. There is some evidence of bullet impacts and scars on the petroglyph panels. The practice of discharging firearms has been discontinued within the precinct of the monument. More common forms of site vandalism, such as graffiti, are strikingly absent throughout the many sites. There is a palpable respect evident, especially for inscriptions. Moreover, the research team have reported no noted evidence anywhere in the Ḥimā Property that any cultural features have been removed, chiseled out or sawn off, and note that the sites are ‘essentially pristine’.

On a larger scale there is no polluting industrial activity or mining in the region and the land is not suitable for agricultural development.



*Figure 4.1 The red paint seen in this image at jabal Dhibah is a rare occurrence at the sites, as is the practice of shooting bullets at the petroglyph surfaces*

Urban growth or damage from encroachment is also not an issue. Proposed tourism development around the sites will also be in the spirit of the natural environment and only low-impact sustainable and eco-tourism activities will be permitted within and on the periphery of the buffer zone.

Overall the sites have been protected by their out of the way location, local respect of the rock art and role of the SCTH fulfilling their obligations of protecting the Kingdom's cultural heritage.

## **4.2 Evaluation of the Sites**

### **4.2.a The Ḥimā Hub**

A cluster of heritage sites in close proximity to heart of Ḥimā Township, including the Ḥimā wells and Saidah sites, alongside the visitor center. The Amara of Ḥimā and a redundant school building, both of which could potentially be adapted for visitor-linked uses are also in this zone (Figure 4.2).

### **4.2.b Significance**

As mentioned, Ḥimā is famous for its wells and it is known as a routing point on the trade routes between Najrān and northern Arabia during antiquity.

Also, for the presence of some important inscriptions. Ḥimā is an area with the most important concentration of protohistoric tombs in the region.

Saidah is a small isolated hill 1.3 km southeast of the wells protected by a fence. On its top are three stone tombs and a recent necropolis occurs next to the hill. Saidah's main feature is a large inscription on the cliff face and another 43 smaller inscriptions, both Thamudic and South-Arabian. There are also numerous petroglyphs, mostly on boulders around the base of the hill.

### **4.2.c Setting and Condition**

Ḥimā enjoy a distinct setting in a secluded location surrounded by a comparatively high level of vegetation. The top of the wells have been conserved and built up, but with heavy use of cement mortar the results detract from the original structures. There are also built up walkways connecting the wells, which are not necessary and if anything detract from the visitor experience.

Small shade and seating structure at the wells blends in with the environment. The 20th century water pumps may not be in keeping with the ancient site, but tell the story of the site and its continued use by the Bedouin tribes as a source of water.

Saidah is also fenced. There is level access within the site and the inscription surfaces and prehistoric remains are easy to view. Some of the prehistoric tombs have been recently excavated, and may require some protection if there is a notable increase in visitor numbers. There is some evidence of flooding at Saidah, but not near the monuments, alongside plastic waste.

#### **4.2.d Visitor Facilities**

A small visitor center established by the SCTH (Figure 18) is used to host research teams and provides an essential facility in this respect and should continue to do so just outside of the buffer zone. The building has two bedrooms, bathroom and kitchen facilities as well as shared space that can be used as an office. Two additional ‘tents’ or reception for entertaining guests or visiting delegations with independent tourism facilities.

Within the Ḥimā is a redundant school building providing potential space for tourism operations and storage of temporary materials, alongside the Governorate building, which could also be made available for a visitor/tourism use. The re-use of either or both these buildings would provide a sustainable opportunity to accommodate visitor or research functions without the need for new construction.

#### **4.2.e Accessibility**

Ḥimā Township is served by an asphalt road, and is the most easily accessible of the sites and also closest to Najrān. Both sites have level access. No cars are permitted into the fenced areas.

#### **4.2.f Opportunities**

These are the sites easiest to access from Najrān and form a good cluster with differing attractions: the famous wells and inscriptions. The presence of a small visitor center for researchers and the availability of two further buildings that could be re-purposed for visitor purposes make this a potential site for early development as a visitor destination.



*Figure 18. The existing Visitor Centre at Hima.*



*The existing road connecting Ḥimā*



MAP showing management zones for the buffer zones, and the core zone around Himā Hub (inset)



*Figure 4.3 Himā wells (right and below) are located in a secluded valley setting. The ancient wells have been restored using cement mortar.*

*The small shade structure is in keeping with the character of the site and its natural setting*



*Figure 4.4 The site of Saidah is significant for the inscription of ... (above) and also contains a number of pre-historic remains including tombs (left)*



*Figure 4.5 The site of 'Ān Jamal(left) is formed of rocky outcrops that are relatively easy to navigate on foot. Natural erosion in this case has caused the loss of some inscription panels (below)*



*Figure 4.6 Jabal Dhibah (above and right) is easy to navigate on foot and offers a glimpse of the vast desert landscape that lies beyond the rocky outcrops*



#### **4.2.b 'Ān Jamal**

##### **4.2.b.i Significance**

This site is a rocky outcrop rising in the plain between Himā and jabal Dhibāh, where cliffs are covered with petroglyphs and South Arabic and Ḥimaitic (Thamūdic) inscriptions. Other panels in this site show a large camel with dark patina, big bovid and apparent hunters. 'Ān Jamal was the first site discovered and protected in this area during the early survey project.

##### **4.2.b.ii Setting and Condition**

The site is fenced and generally well protected. There are small incidents of graffiti and bullet marks on the rock faces. A sand dune provides natural protection to the rock faces. From the rock face, the setting opens up to the vast desert landscape.

##### **Visitor Facilities**

There is an SCTH sign with general information at the entrance. The site is walkable on a sand base. There are no further visitor facilities at the site at this time.

##### **Accessibility**

Off road access only, but there are plans for the site to be served by a stabilized road.

The base of the rock is walkable and inscriptions and petroglyphs can be viewed without climbing.

##### **Opportunities**

The story of this final watering point for the caravans embarking on a dangerous desert crossing is compelling, and is an easy story to narrate in this landscape setting.

The beauty of landscape and link to the desert, could make this site a potential starting point for camel expeditions.

#### **4.2.c Jabal Dhibāh**

##### **Significance**

The site is located 9.5 km north-east of Himā, consisting of a complex of scattered sandstone outcrops overlooking the northern path towards wādī al-Sammā' and jabal Al-Kawkab. The various clusters of rock art are a few hundred meters to roughly one kilometer apart. The most notable images are three petroglyphs representing an elephant with its mahout. Other sections are rich in South Arabian and pre-Islamic Arabic inscriptions.

##### **Setting and Condition**

The site is not fenced, but concrete boundary markers identify the protected zone.

The sites are located in a spectacular open desert setting with wide-reaching views that start to capture the enormity of Ar-Rub Al-Khali.

##### **Visitor Facilities**

Most rock art is on low lying boulders and easy to walk around. There are no formal visitors facilities or interpretation signs. At the present, the absence of visitor infrastructure adds to the attraction of the site in an open desert setting and provides visitors with a sense of discovery.

##### **Accessibility**

Off road access only, which is also acting as a deterrent for passing traffic.

##### **Opportunities**

The views out of the site are impressive and start to depict the connection the rock art and inscription sites have to the open desert that lies beyond. The site is best explored as an open landscape.

#### **4.2.d Minshaf**

##### **Significance**

The area has two rock stacks with a large smooth vertical panels adorned with huge bulls, other animals and palm trees, and many small inscriptions.

##### **Setting and Condition**

The rock art and inscriptions are generally in good condition and well protected.

The desert setting with rocky outcrops makes for an impressive view from a naturally shaded area.

##### **Visitor Facilities**

None at this time, but an overhang within the rock face provides a naturally shaded area/rest point.

##### **Accessibility**

Off road access only. Some of the most impressive sections of rock art are above a rocky outcrop and boulders.

##### **Opportunities**

The shaded area is a welcome space in the hot climate and provides the opportunity for a rest stop that does not require visitor infrastructure, thus maintaining the natural setting and attractiveness of the site.



*Figure 4.7 Access to the rock faces at Minshaf require some climbing (left); the rock face provides natural shade cover and some inscription a good outlook (below)*



*Figure 4.8 The cluster of inscriptions and petroglyphs at Najd Khayran (above and right) make it one of the sites most suitable to develop as a visitor attraction*





#### **4.2.e Najd Khayrān**

##### **Significance**

The northernmost property in the nomination, a major site complex among the 58 sites so far recorded north of and along wādī Saad. Thousands of petroglyphs have been created along the escarpment, on the cliffs and on large blocks of sandstone at their base.

##### **Setting and Condition**

This the largest cluster of rock art amongst the nominated sites spread out over an area of rocky outcrops.

##### **Visitor facilities**

None at this time.

##### **Accessibility**

Off road access only. As visitor interest in the site increases these could be developed with walkways and barriers, to improve visitor circulation whilst protecting the surfaces.

#### **4.2.f Najrān Regional Museum**

A new museum is being realized in Najrān as part of the Regional Museum Initiative, approved in 2005. The aim of the initiative is to make each regional museums civil landmarks and tangible testaments to regional culture and history, operated at international standards. The design of the building takes into account local urban heritage identity and will include sufficient space to display the region's artefacts, culture, natural environment and role of Arabia in the history of the world. The new museum will include audio-visual and interactive displays directed to all age groups and especially children and school students, and displays that identifies the regions environment and natural culture.

There are plans for the old museum building to be re-purposed as a research center.

### **4.3 Issues Affecting the Sites**

#### **4.3.a Natural Environment and Sustainability**

The relative isolation of the area and low population density has helped protect the environment. Nonetheless, like many places in the Kingdom, there is evidence of garbage strewn in the desert landscape, and plastics in particular which will impact negatively on the fauna as well as the visitor experience (Figure 2.2) (Policies N1 and N3).

#### **4.3.b Archaeology and Research**

There are a significant number of rock art and inscriptions, as well as a significant number of prehistoric structures such as tombs and cairns across the region. These could be negatively impacted by future development projects, including those related to tourism growth.

The risk identified is not imminent, but the first stage in preparedness against any such risk is to undertake surveys to identify the location and nature of this large corpus of rock art, inscriptions and prehistoric monuments. (Policies P4, P7 and P8)

Overall, the area remains incompletely explored. Not only has archaeological investigation been very limited methodologically, surveys have been largely restricted to those areas that are readily accessible by vehicles, essentially at the fringes of the rocky outcrops.



*Figure 4.9 To date only sites to which there has been relatively easy car access have been recorded, with potential for many new discoveries in coming years.*

#### **4.3.c Heritage Protection and Conservation**

The sites closer to the Himā Township are protected by fences and those that are further to the north marked only with boundary markers (Policy P1). Local stewardship plays an important role in the protection of the sites and has proven effective for a number of years. Thus incidents of graffiti are almost non-existent and the practice of shooting at rock art has been discontinued (Policy M2).

The boundary markers showing the location of the buffer zone are not as yet all correctly placed and this is currently being addressed (Policy P2).

The top of the wells at Ḥimā have been restored, using cement mortar that neither reflects their original construction nor is visibly attractive. Nonetheless, some form of built up structure is essential for visitor safety (Policy P3).

A number of recently undertaken excavations, usually of pre-historic monuments have been left exposed (Policy P10).



*Figure 4.10 The visitor centre located in the Ḥimā hub and managed by the SCTH Najrān Branch provides facilities for researchers and guests*

#### **4.3.d Visitor Facilities and Services**

The sites generally have very limited visitor facilities as visitation to date has been very limited. The sites that are fenced and gated have information boards at the entrance, and a shade structure has been built at Ḥimā Wells, alongside some pathways. However, these are not strictly necessary and partly detract from the site values (Policies P3 and V2).

At the sites themselves there are the typical hazards of open air sites, including steep slopes and rocky outcrops leading to the rock faces. The remote location of the sites increases the need for safety as distances to health facilities can be considerable (Policy M4).

The sites to the north of the Ḥimā hub only have off road access, though this plays a role in their protection, including from passing traffic (Policy T1). Additionally, there is some uncontrolled car access to some areas whereby vehicles are in very close proximity to the rock faces (Policy V1).

#### **4.3.e Interpretation**

At present there is very limited interpretation on the sites with signage only at the fenced sites. However, since the sites are not open to regular visitation this is not an issue at the present time (Policies I1, I2 and I3).

#### **4.3.f Other Risk Factors**

The risk of earthquakes in the region have been identified as low. Climate related risks such as heavy weather events, storms and flash flooding are rare in the region. Although depressions and clay-pans between the sand dunes may hold shallow water for a few days after heavy rains, actual flooding does not occur in the region. Moreover, the rare heavy rains only affect the sandplains and wadi systems as all rock art occurs at elevated locations.

Bush fires are also a low risk based on vegetation patterns. Fires, associated with picnicking activities for examples, in close proximity to rock art can also cause damage (Policy V2).

The Cultural Rock Arts in Ḥima Najrān are located hundreds of kilometers away from any major industrial, agricultural or mining development hence experience no danger of any kind of vandalism, destruction or damage by this or any other development, as there are no plans of establishing such projects in the region, not even in the long-term. The nearest major urban center is Najrān, more than 80 km to the south.

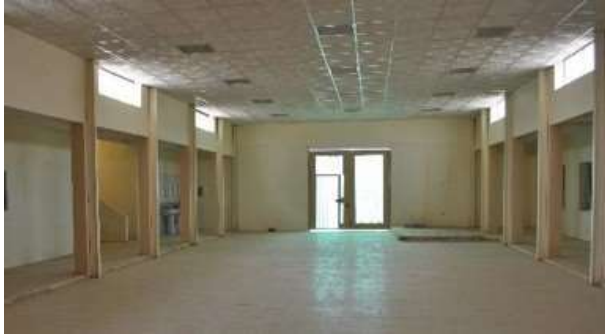
### **4.4 Opportunities**

#### **4.4.a Natural Environment and Sustainability**

The untouched natural beauty of the area and low level of population has been fundamental to the protection of the sites to date. It also means that the sites can continue to be seen and understood in settings that are not significantly different from the time when they were originally occupied and visited. The natural beauty of the landscape setting is a significant asset in their protection and development as a tourism destination (Policy N1).

Low population densities, and the continued semi-nomadic lifestyle of the local tribes has continued support the protection of the rock art and maintained it as a living cultural value.

Furthermore, the proximity of the sites to the protected area of the Urouq Bani M'aradh Wildlife Sanctuary to the north provides opportunities for linked sustainable tourism initiatives (Policy T4).



*Figure 4.11 The Governorate building in Ḥimā Township could potentially be re-purposed for use as a small visitor centre with interpretation alongside other visitor facilities*

#### **4.4.b Archaeology and Research**

There are a number of ongoing archaeological research studies in the region, with the potential for significant future research. This will also be a means for growing collaborations between international research teams and Saudi Universities, including Najrān University.

#### **4.4.c Heritage Protection and Conservation**

Prevalent climatic and environmental conditions coupled with the remote location has thus far safeguarded the sites.

Local communities continue a semi-nomadic lifestyle and live close to nature. For many the rock art is a direct link to their own ancestry and traditions and therefore of cultural significance to them. Those in formal roles, such as the police force operating in the area, and the site guards are all local to Ḥimā area take pride in caring for the heritage. This largely informal local stewardship can potentially be extended to semi-formal arrangements of guardianship (Policy M2).

#### **4.4.d Visitor Management, Facilities and Services**

There is a visitor center managed by SCTH Najrān Branch that is used for research teams as well as a reception for special visitors (Figure 4.10). The center has capacity for overnight accommodation, communal area, kitchen and toilet. Two tents located alongside the building can be used for reception (Policy P9).

Ḥimā Governorate indicated the availability of the Amara building (Figure 4.11) and an old school for potential re-use for visitor functions. Re-use of existing structures would reduce the need for new facilities and other uses (Policy I4).

#### **4.4.e Interpretation**

The new Najrān Museum is nearing completion and will include displays on the rock art and inscription sites of Ḥimā and act as a gateway to the site. The Museum is also an opportune starting point to engage in educational programs (Policy I4).

#### **4.4.f Infrastructure and Planning**

There is tarmac road access to the center of Ḥimā and the sites in the Ḥimā hub, which makes them relatively easy to access from Najrān.

### **4.5 Risk Preparedness**

#### **4.5.a Identification of Natural Risk Factors**

The sites are open sites in a very dry region and there are no identified flood risks that would present a threat to the cultural sites. Heavy rains are rare and only affect the sandplains and wādīs. All rock art and inscriptions occur at elevated locations.

Najrān region experiences very low seismic activity and earthquakes are a negligible risk to the cultural heritage sites.

With the very sparse vegetation there is no risk of wildfires.

#### **4.5.b Identification of Man-made Hazards**

The key risks to the sites are linked to human activities. The most significant risk is deliberate vandalism such as graffiti and bullet shots.

Dust generated by vehicles in close proximity to the rock surfaces can over time damage the surfaces.

#### **4.5.c Identification of Risks Linked to Increased Visitation**

Risks to visitors are predominantly health and safety concerns, including falls or impacts from the heat. The remote location of the sites and distances to health centers add to the risk.

The main risk from increased visitor numbers is increased garbage, especially plastics which negatively impact on the natural environment.

#### **4.5.d Risk Preparedness Strategy**

Predominant risk mitigation is by building awareness, education and outreach.

1. Local community Engagement on risks.
2. Local guardians trained in First Aid.
3. Trained security force to reduce vandalism and to mobilize in an emergency.
4. Ambulance link with Najrān hospital.
5. Restrict vehicles to reduce dust.
6. Linked sanitation to recycling.

## 5. BEST PRACTICE OVERVIEW

Rock art sites around the world share a number of similarities in terms of vulnerability and access which generally informs the ways in which these sites are protected and opened up to visitors. The sites that are most popular are often so for their natural beauty and setting, and though not the primary attraction this can impact on the rock art. Ultimately each site will require its own unique approach.

### 5.1 Protection of Rock Art Sites

#### 5.1.a Vulnerability

Humans are the greatest cause of damage to rock art through theft, vandalism including graffiti and inadvertent damage. Even researchers investigating the sites and practices such as taking tracings are known to have caused damage.

Collecting baseline data on the condition of the sites before they are opened to visitors enables cyclical and dynamic monitoring to ensure the rock art is not harmed as sites become more accessible to visitors and attract more research interest.

Other impacts can be vehicles especially on the desert habitat and human presence on wildlife. The impacts of up to 80 vehicles a day at peak times in Wadi Rum in Jordan have been noticeable on the natural habitat.

Littering can be another problem, which is added to when there is camping activity in the vicinity. Camping can also have associated implications of human waste management.

Distance of some sites to settlement centers requires good health and safety management on site, sufficient first aid equipment at a nearby center and/or in vehicles, and guards that are trained in administering first aid.

#### *Implication for Himā*

Awareness of these vulnerabilities will inform how the sites are developed, including managed camping areas and control of vehicle numbers in the buffer zone.

#### 5.1.b Access

Rock art sites often located in difficult terrain and far from populous canters ensured their survival. Remoteness and difficult terrain play an important role in managing visitor access to sites and their movement.

Rock faces can be dangerous and rock art is just as likely to be on a steep surface. Protecting both the rock art and the health and safety concern for visitors is an essential consideration at most sites.

#### *Implication for Himā*

The sites have been preserved partially thanks to its remoteness. Most of the rock faces are not too high, and can be accessed by scrambling. This may need to be managed if visitor numbers grow.

#### 5.1.c Management by Restriction and Regulation

It is common to regulate access to certain areas of a site. This may involve closing off section(s) at peak times to reduce pressures. Such practice needs to be balanced with the provision of sufficient alternatives or activities to ensure visitor experience remains satisfactory. Protection of fragile sites worldwide depends on management. In France and Spain it was immediately proven that human access was causing damage to rock art cave sites. Since then the visitor experience has focused on state-of-the-art replica sites nearby for visitors and access to the caves is limited to researchers only.

In Australia and elsewhere, restricting access or controlling numbers at fragile sites is necessary for protection. It is often that a small section of the site is open against more inaccessible sites on visitor routes. Restrictions can also apply to numbers permitted at any time and may set an upper limit for permitted visitor numbers per day.

At Sierra de San Francisco in Mexico, there are 4 levels of access and a permits that discourages wondering and help control numbers at remote sites:

1. Areas with easy access can be reached with a private vehicle.
2. Areas with easy access can be reached on-foot with camping requiring a permit.
3. Areas with limited access needs special permits.
4. Areas restricted accessible for research purposes.

Interpretative tools such as audio guides, displays and leaflet guides can be employed by a site manager to 'direct' visitors around a site, avoiding sensitive or closed areas. A more positive approach to reducing pressure is through highlighting, developing and marketing other attractions or similar sites in the area that could distribute visitor pressures and economically benefit the region.

Guided tours can also help in regulating site numbers at any time. In the Côa valley rock art site in Portugal where a strict limit is set on daily numbers, all visits have to take place in a conducted tour. This is required for the safety of the finds and those visiting the difficult to access terrain. Visitors are taken around the site in groups of 8 in SUVs. This allows for a better experience for visitors as they can enjoy the sacred site in a peaceful rather than crowded setting, and there is more time for interpretation by guides. Meanwhile, the use of a special vehicle controls visitor movement, with less opportunity for people to 'wander off' and on their own.

At more remote sites deliberate measures of geographical restrictions is applied to reduce accessibility of rock faces, include re-vegetation to act as a deterrent. If a site is not a visitor attraction, then the location should not be publicized.

Behavior can also be regulated though discouraging or banning certain site activities, such as stepping off predetermined pathways or smoking. Some forms of activity or behavior not permitted in a core area, may be permitted in a less sensitive buffer zone. Camping may be an example. The impact of any permitted activity should nevertheless be carefully monitored and arrangements reviewed as necessary through the MP.

#### *Implication for Himā*

In the initial stage, all sites will be open, but managed through guided tours. As further sites become known, some may be protected until sufficient protection measures are in place.

#### *5.1.d Site Based Management: paths, steps and Elevated Platforms*

Surfaces may play a role in protecting archaeological material below, but the base or foundation of a path should not be damaging to archaeological remains.



*Figure 5.1 Raised walkways, like this example in Uluru WHS in Australia, can be used to keep visitors at a distance from rock surfaces, as well as improve access across a site*

Elevated paths are often designed to raise and isolate visitors from vulnerable archaeological nature of the site and to guide site access.

The experience in Australia has been that the use of designated paths considerably improves visitor behavior and reduced damage to the rock art. Pathways are an integral part of the visitor management strategy at Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park (c. 450,000 visitors in 2018) and Kakadu National Park (184,000 visitors in 2018).

Walkways, paths and signage have in many cases been proven to be useful psychological barrier. In South Africa too raised pathways are used to help ensure visitors stay on paths.

#### *Implication for Himā*

At present, visitor targets in the 5-10 year horizon are much smaller and such interventions will only become necessary once there is a notable increase in visitor numbers.

#### *5.1.e Enhancing and Additional Facilities*

Site interpretation can fulfil an important role in the regulation of visitor flow, and importantly, the explanation of why it is necessary.

Good signage, interpretation and explanations reduce vandalism. At Kakadu, Australia, and other sites, embedding the message on the importance of the site and the landscape and the need to protect it plays an important role in influencing visitor behavior.

Visitor centers, act as good gateways often at a short distance from the sites themselves, means of orientation, various facilities.

By being placed in more built up areas such as a nearest village they can also generate economic benefits for that locality such as in Côa valley. A similar center at San Francisco di Sierra that also houses the INAH (National Heritage body) offices, provides orientation and small museum function with some replicas.

In Wadi Rum the visitor center with ample car parking provision performs a single 'gateway' function to the wadi, including the management of all tourist operations. The visitor center also includes cafes, gift shops alongside interpretation and orientation to the site.

The Yinchuan World Rock Art Museum is built in close proximity to the Helan mountains rock art sites of Inner Mongolia. The dedicated museum built in stone to fit in with the surrounding environment, has 4,000 square meters of floor space. Dedicated and substantial gallery space allows for thematic, temporal and spatial displays on rock art. The Museum also includes a dedicated education space for school visits, and regularly organizes festivals.

At the Lascaux caves, where rock art in the caves is closed to visitors for environmental conservation purposes, Lascaux II has been created nearby as a replica of the caves with the rock art meticulously recreated using the original techniques to provide a near similar experience to visitors.

The nearby Le Thot Prehistoric Theme Park on the other hand provides interactive displays and experiences that appeal to younger audiences and families. Attractions include animals similar to those that would have lived in the region in prehistoric times, videos and animatronics.

Rock art, alongside places of prehistoric origin are often the most difficult to interpret for visitors. Compared to later period and more monumental sites, there is relatively little to see and what there is to see is perceived as being abstract by many visitor, and therefore needs to be interpreted. In some cases the 'story' and how it is told can be as much part of the attraction as the site content.

#### ***Implication for Himā***

Both the new Museum in Najrān and a small visitor center in Himā will be important to telling the story of the sites to visitors before their visit.

#### ***5.1.f Public Education***

Effective tourism management can be bolstered by a number of complimentary techniques ranging from public education, marketing and involvement of local communities.

The importance of public education, including that focused at school children, as an essential component of a tourism management strategy is stressed time and time again in international case studies. The better and more the public is aware of the value and vulnerabilities of a site then the better they will take care of it, and also more broadly support their protection and conservation.

Public education can include programs conducted in or outside schools, engagement with local communities and as information extended to tourists. These can include visiting ethics with explanations on its necessity.

Involving local communities, and providing opportunities to benefit equitably from emerging tourism, will also support site operations. However, this may require strict regulation to avoid discontent that can lead to damaging archaeological material, as experienced in Petra.

Wadi Rum (*inscribed in 2011*) now regulates tourism activity in the valley very carefully by:

1. Introducing site management team(s) and rangers.
2. Reducing and regulating the number of access points.
3. Managing vehicles that visitors must use in a strict system to ensure spreading benefits equally amongst operators.
4. Limiting tour packages to six options for management.
5. Training guides and drivers in good site stewardship.

#### ***Implication for Himā***

The employment and training of local guards and guides can provide local employment and support site interest. The general regional tourism growth on the other hand can support a range of small businesses.

#### ***5.1.g Ranger Programs***

Parks Canada ranger program is among the most established programs operating in national parks.

Park rangers act as stewards of state and national parks, working to keep these natural areas safe for wildlife and plant species and accessible to the millions of people who visit each year.

Park rangers are recruited for a number of different roles:

1. Those with a background in science, support scientific activities like collecting information on wildlife populations, and participate in decisions affecting the park health.
2. Those who focus on education are responsible for teaching the public not only about the park, but also how it is affected by pollution, litter and climate change. They teach people how to enjoy nature and history while helping to preserve it.
3. Another common focus for park rangers is law enforcement and firefighting. Rangers are the first line of defense, especially in remote areas. They make sure visitors follow park rules for everyone’s safety.
4. Others provide services such as fee collection, grounds maintenance, paperwork, permit and equipment sales.



*Poaching of extremely rare and near extinct Arab Tigers needs to be halted, this can only be done through positive cooperation with local communities*

### 5.2 Summary and options appraisal for *Himā*

<b>Approach</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Survey and document depository.</li> <li>2. Undertake and maintain good records of contents to protect the sites.</li> <li>3. High quality imagery.</li> <li>4. SoC Records.</li> </ol>
<b>Benefits</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provides a good record of the assets and its state of conservation</li> <li>2. Easier to monitor (through hand held devices).</li> <li>3. Opportunities for local engagement in conducting surveys.</li> <li>4. Existence of high-quality image deters vandalism.</li> </ol>
<b>Challenges</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Surveys are expensive.</li> <li>2. Surveys need to be linked to regular monitoring to be effective.</li> </ol>
<b>Application to <i>Himā</i></b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Documentation is underway (Policy P4)</li> <li>2. A monitoring system will be established (Policy P5)</li> </ol>

<i>Approach</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Legal protection instruments.</li> <li>2. National level legislation, zoning and designation policies to protect antiquities and/or areas of natural beauty.</li> </ol>
<i>Benefits</i>	Legal instruments of protection are the first level and can support enforcement in cases of damage.
<i>Challenges</i>	Legal instruments alone cannot protect, and much will depend on how they sites are guarded.
<i>Application to Himā</i>	As new sites are recorded through survey, they shall be included in SETH register of legally protected objects. When legal protection is in place, it needs support by enforcement in the event of damage to antiquities is evident (Policy P4).

<i>Approach</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maintain a low profile.</li> <li>2. Presence of rock art is not publicized</li> </ol>
<i>Benefits</i>	Newly discovered sites shall not be publicized until sufficient protection measures are in place.
<i>Challenges</i>	Added difficulty when the source of damage are the locals who are already aware of the new sites.
<i>Application to Himā</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Activities shall not be encouraged close to the designated sites and local guards/stewards will be placed (Policy P6).</li> <li>2. Some areas could be deliberately left off the visitor maps/apps.</li> </ol>

<i>Approach</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Restrict visitor access.</li> <li>2. Restrict access to extremely fragile areas for being most likely to be damaged.</li> </ol>
<i>Benefits</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Oneness and scientific value exceeds access benefits.</li> <li>2. Easier to achieve a biodiversity zone with no access provision in remote sites with specific boundaries, such as caves, or within a larger protected area.</li> <li>3. A selected number of sites are open to visitors based on location, access conditions and quality/diversity of the asset.</li> </ol>
<i>Challenges</i>	Un-achievable where the areas may have other uses.
<i>Application to Himā</i>	The site is an "open landscape" as experience shows that fencing is counter-productive drawing more attention to the presence of the sites.



<i>Approach</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Restrict access to panels.</li> <li>2. Direct access to the panels is restricted, viewing from a safe distance is still possible.</li> </ol>
<i>Benefits</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use of natural or artificial barriers (fences) to restrict direct access to panels.</li> <li>2. Reshape topography and modify landscape to hinder access routes to panels.</li> </ol>
<i>Challenges</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Shifting boulders to control access may disrupt or detract from site settings.</li> <li>2. Boulders and fencing can have limited effect when there is a desire for access or vandalism.</li> <li>3. A solution must be applicable to assets on higher areas.</li> </ol>
<i>Application to Himā</i>	This may be necessary but not an immediate concern, as visits will be accompanied by tour guides

<i>Approach</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Manage access.</li> <li>2. Access to certain parts of the site are controlled.</li> </ol>
<i>Benefits</i>	Most case studies indicate areas selected for visitor access are those that are 'representative' of the rock art of the region, and are reasonably easily accessible (these principles were adapted for Hail WHS)
<i>Challenges</i>	How to protect the remaining sites that are not selected for access, especially as rock art sites can be very dispersed.
<i>Application to Himā</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The spread of the sites in a desert setting means that those more remote with more difficult access will be less visited.</li> <li>2. Deliberate policies to restrict roads to these areas will support limiting accessibility to remote sites and avoid through traffic through these areas (Policy T1).</li> </ol>

<i>Approach</i>	Manage access to panels.
<i>Benefits</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use of elevated paths and platforms to provide a good viewing point while restricting direct contact to rock panels.</li> <li>2. Where rock art is at ground level, paths with railings may also help to keep visitors at some distance.</li> <li>3. Access managed by guided tours and restrictions on numbers per tour.</li> </ol>
<i>Challenges</i>	Paths can diminish the landscape value of the setting
<i>Application to Himā</i>	In the early years of opening, there will be no paths at sites, but guides or rangers will ensure that visitors do not climb up or touch the panels. The situation will be carefully monitored and re-evaluated if they become a necessity for conservation and visitor management purposes later on.

<i>Approach</i>	1. Build local awareness. 2. Public education programs.
<i>Benefits</i>	Almost all rock art protection initiatives are accompanied by public education and awareness programs
<i>Challenges</i>	Awareness building can take time and may not necessarily deliver immediate results. It will require repeated and concerted effort.
<i>Application to Himā</i>	Develop awareness programs that are culturally sensitive and distributed through media that will have the most impact. (Policies M5 and V3)

<i>Approach</i>	Visitor engagement (value, significance, damage, defacing and graffiti).
<i>Benefits</i>	These are best conveyed to visitors through orientation and guides.
<i>Challenges</i>	Rock art has an appeal to a very small market segment (educated, interested) as a cultural attraction
<i>Application to Himā</i>	Through interpretation, some strong "stories" and narratives around the rock art will be developed that will appeal to visitor segments most likely to visit (policy I1).

<i>Approach</i>	1. Preservation of the larger landscape where rock art is located. 2. Recognition that the assets is not just the panels, it is the landscape as a whole. 3. In the case of Himā, landscape is also linked to trade routes.
<i>Benefits</i>	Improves visitors' understanding of rock art to understand the landscape where it was created, including fauna and flora.
<i>Challenges</i>	If the landscape is significantly altered, which is not the case at Himā
<i>Application to Himā</i>	The protection of Himā's stunning open landscape is part of the vision for the area. This can be supported by an interpretive approach that links the rock art to the trade routes that crossed the region (Policy N1)



PART 3  
MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

## 6. HERITAGE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

### 6.1 Overview

#### 6.1.a Management Objectives

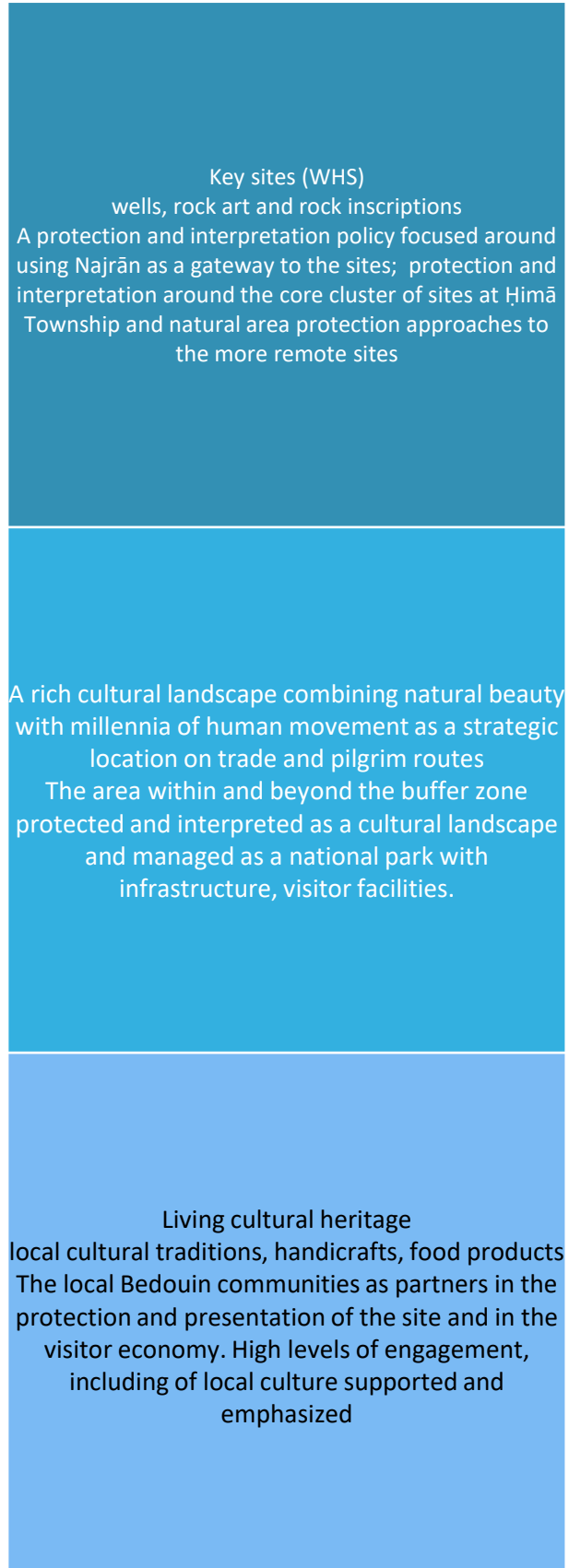
The key objectives of the Management Plan are to:

1. Protect the rock art and inscription sites and their OUV in line with international best practice and guidance, and as an exemplar of good practice.
2. Engender wider appreciation and understanding of the sites in the local communities and beyond.
3. Enhance the experience of visitors engaging with the sites.
4. Realize the potential of the sites to serve the tourism, economic and social development of Najrān Region and the communities associated with the sites in a sustainable manner.

These objectives will be met through low impact interventions, and the use of local human capital to manage and monitor. Structures and interventions into the natural landscape will be minimal, focusing on virtual interpretation and visitor centers where information is concentrated. The visitor experience will focus on a unique natural and cultural environment and a sense of discovery, and local engagement through guides and story telling. Stopping points such as rest points, camps and visitor centers will all be low impact and at one with the landscape. The sustainable use of natural resources will be a common theme for the management and interpretation of the sites.

#### 6.1.b Rationale and Approach

The rationale for the management of the World Heritage Site and its various components is summarized in the figure:



## 6.2 Vision

<p>2020</p>	<p><b>Tourism forecast</b> A surge of interest following WHS designation, most likely to come from local area, Najrān.</p> <p><b>The sites/visitor offer</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Himā wells site pathways taken up, restoration work made good and site ready to be open to visitors.</li> <li>2. Guardians and guides trained to take visitors to sites.</li> <li>3. Visitor centre in Himā Township set up (stage 1) in old Amara (tbc).</li> <li>4. App based virtual interpretation prepared and ready to use.</li> <li>5. Najrān Museum complete – opening and WHS linked events activities.</li> <li>6. Guided tours on offer, supported by supplementary experiences such as desert picnics.</li> <li>7. Sustainability message being introduced</li> </ol>
<p>2025</p>	<p><b>Tourism forecast</b> A managed growth in numbers as special tours advertised – main markets Saudis and expats living in Saudi Arabia.</p> <p><b>The sites/visitor offer</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sites visited with local guides; protection measures and site condition being monitored</li> <li>2. Visitor centre in Himā Township complete.</li> <li>3. Desert/eco camps on the edge of the buffer zone offering daytime or overnight facilities.</li> <li>4. Najrān Museum an active partner with events and educational activities.</li> <li>5. All interpretation through virtual means, (possibly including virtual or augmented reality by this time)</li> </ol>
<p>2030</p>	<p><b>Tourism forecast</b> Continued growth in numbers mainly through special tours. Area gains reputation as a prime sustainable/eco-tourism destination. Various attractions linked up with the rock art and inscription sites.</p> <p><b>The sites/visitor offer</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All visits guided or supervised by guards.</li> <li>2. As research into the region continues there is a possibility that more sites might be added to the visitor routes.</li> <li>3. Eco-tourism camps operating with year-round activities.</li> <li>4. Linked visits with the Natural Protected Area.</li> </ol>

### 6.3 Management Framework

#### 6.3.a Priority Categories

All policies are also listed under the following categories:

A. *Urgent and priority actions necessary to avoid further degradation or damage to the sites.* These are gateway policies responding to issues identified as critical and are essential for the ongoing protection and management of the site, and include areas for immediate action.

B. *Essential actions that are necessary for the sustainable management of the sites.* These are actions that are not urgent but need to be considered in a 2-3 year period to support the effective management of the cultural heritage assets.

C. *Actions that are necessary (but not urgent) and/or denote good practice.* These are longer term actions that build on other policies to deliver the longer term vision and aspirations for the sites and region, with actions planned for a five-year time horizon. These are actions also build on existing good practices and seek to find ways in which they can be strengthened and enhanced.

D. *Actions that are desirable for the support of the long term vision for the sites.* These are good practice and aspirational policies linked to the long term objectives for the sites and region and the future sustainability of the cultural heritage assets. They include steps that will need to be taken in support of future projects.

#### 6.3.b Action plan

The Action Plan will subsequently be the key operational document that will emerge from the management plan. As a direct and traceable response to the issues identified, the tasks will clearly establish responsibilities and timeframe for implementation.

Each policy/action will be formulated to be SMART, in that they will be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time bound.

The actions will specifically seek operational efficiencies and reduce duplication; promote partnership working and wherever possible introduce innovative practices.

The management framework will combine all the management policies in a grid (see attached), identifying level of importance and clearly linked to specific sites and thematic groups. Each policy is expanded in the following section.

A) Urgent	B) Essential	C) Necessary	D) Desirable
1 year	2-3 years	2-5 years	3-10 years
1440 AH 2019	1441-1442 AH 2020-2022	1441-1444 AH 2020-2024	1442-1450 AH 2021-2028

	Management resources	Protection, research and conservation	Interpretation
A	M1: The SCTH Najrān Branch resources and capacity will be strengthened to manage the Himā Cultural Precinct Archaeological Park	P1: The site zones identified as core zones for the World Heritage nomination will be fully protected	
	M2: A system of local guardians, rangers and guides in partnership with the local communities living in close proximity to the sites will be established and will form the core of site protection and visitor services offered at the site.	P2: The buffer zone including Jabal Kawbab will be designated and protected as the Himā Cultural Precinct Archaeological Park	
		P3: Himā wells will be conserved and the presentation of the site improved	
B	M3: A risk preparedness plan will be prepared	P4: A region-wide sites database will be established to share all scientific information relating to prehistoric, rock art and inscription sites in the region	I1: An integrated interpretation plan for the The Cultural Rock Arts in Hima Najrān will be adopted
	M4: A visitor health and safety plan will be prepared	P5: A monitoring program as per the WHS nomination and linked to the GIS platform (Policy P4) will be established and implemented	I2: Interpretation material and signage within the site boundaries will be kept to a minimum
			I3: A coordinated digital media presence for the site that combines visitor information with multi-layered interpretation across various platforms will be developed
			I4: Najrān Regional Museum and the Himā Visitor Centre will act as interpretive gateways to the sites
			I5: Local site guardians will be the main point of information and guides at the sites
C	M5: Regular outreach and engagement activities will support the conservation and management of the sites	P6: The buffer zone/ Archaeological Park will be zoned to ensure the most sensitive areas around the nominated sites can be protected	I6: An education component will be developed as part of the interpretation of the sites and rock arts
		P7: Archaeological surveys, research and excavations at the sites in partnership with Saudi Universities and international institutions will be supported	
		P8: A Centre for Rock Art Research will be established in Najrān	
		P9: The SCTH visitor centre will continue to serve research and archaeological teams working in the area	
		P10: All excavations will be protected once investigations have been completed	
		P11: Based on further research, surveys and in the event of new findings, re-evaluate the nominated property and the boundaries of the buffer zone.	
D			

Visitor management	Tourism, planning and infrastructure	Natural environment and sustainability
V1: No vehicular traffic will be permitted within the core areas	T1: Improve access to the sites by stabilising road surfaces	N1: The collective value of rock art sites and their landscape settings will be recognised as a cultural landscape
V2: Areas suitable for rest stops will be identified	T2: Infra-structure works and developments will be discouraged in the buffer zone	N2: The sustainable use of water resources will be promoted and monitored
	T3: All new structures within the buffer zone will conform to strict guidelines in terms of design, materials and impact	
V3: Programmes will be undertaken to raise awareness with local stakeholders on the significance and value of the natural and cultural heritage	T4: The Archaeological Park will become part of a wider eco-tourism destination for Najrān	N3: Waste collection and recycling systems will be established across the region
V4: Optimum visitor numbers at sites at any one time will be established		
		N4: Key views of the rock art sites and significant views from the sites will be protected



## 6.4 Management Policies

### 6.4.a Management resources

#### Category A: Urgent Actions

**M1:** The SCTH Najrān Branch resources and capacity will be strengthened to manage the Ḥimā Cultural Precinct Archaeological Park

M1.1 Provide training for existing staff in SCTH Najrān Branch to support the management of the park, including the management of the ranger programme (M2).

M1.2 Identify any additional areas of expertise that are missing or will be required in the next five years and provide opportunities/scholarships for recent graduates to specialise in these areas.

Responsible	SCTH
Partners	Local Universities
Timeline	1440 AH (2019)
Key performance indicators (KPI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Number of staff trained</li> <li>▫ Number of new appointments made</li> </ul>
Background/Links	Management of the WHS, cultural and natural values, and predicted growth in tourism following inscription will require new areas of competence, including managing the ranger programme (Policy M2)

**M2:** A system of local guardians, rangers and guides in partnership with the local communities living in close proximity to the sites will be established and will form the core of site protection and visitor services offered at the site.

M2.1 Appoint a coordinator in SCTH Najrān Branch to manage the appointment, training and activities of local site guardians and rangers.

M2.2 Appoint site guardians and rangers from the local community.

M2.3 Provide training to guardians and rangers, including the importance of the sites, managing and protecting the rock art and areas of archaeological significance, leading and guiding visitor groups, and basic first aid.

M2.4 Provide a centre/base for rangers in Ḥimā Township in one of the existing buildings.

M2.5 Monitor efficacy of training and organise regular refresher events that also allow site guardians and rangers to share their experiences.

M2.6 Train rangers to use hand held devices/ smart phones to input data into a GIS-based management system to support the regular monitoring of the World Heritage Site.

Responsible	SCTH Najrān Branch
Partners	Local communities near Ḥimā
Timeline	1440H/ 2019
Key performance indicators (KPI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Number of guardians and rangers recruited</li> <li>▫ Number of training programmes organised</li> <li>▫ Number of refresher events organised</li> </ul>
Background/Links	<p>Building capacity for the protection, stewardship, conservation and interpretation of cultural heritage amongst the local population will support local development as well as enhance the continued protection of the cultural heritage.</p> <p>Site guardians will be based at the sites and the Ḥimā Visitor Centre.</p> <p>Rangers will patrol the buffer zone.</p>

**Category B: Essential actions**

<b>M3: A risk preparedness plan will be prepared</b>	
<p>M3.1 Using data from the nomination document and this management plan prepare a detailed risk management strategy that addresses scale of risk and levels of preparedness that will be necessary.</p> <p>M3.2 Consult with the various groups who hold responsibilities for risk management and first response (police, emergency services, Civil Defense).</p> <p>M3.3 Following consultation, identify roles and responsibilities for each sector as well as procedures to be followed in case of an incident.</p> <p>M3.4 Provide training for rangers, local police forces and civil defence teams who will be implementing the plan, including on safeguarding heritage during an operation.</p>	
Responsible	SCTH Najrān Branch
Partners	Provincial Governorate (Ministry of Interior)
Timeline	1441-1442 AH (2020-2022)
Key performance indicators (KPI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Risk management plan prepared</li> <li>▫ Risk management plan agreed and signed off by all parties that are responsible for its implementation</li> <li>▫ Numbers attending training sessions</li> <li>▫ Number of risks managed</li> </ul>
Background/Links	Both natural and man-made risks are low in the area, but the nature of the open terrain and distances to urban centres necessitate a coordinated risk management plan to be in place.

<b>M4: A visitor health and safety plan will be prepared</b>	
<p>M4.1 Train rangers, site guardians and tourist guides in health and safety and first aid.</p> <p>M4.2 Ensure local clinic or health centre is suitably equipped to deliver first response.</p> <p>M4.3 Work with Najrān hospital (air ambulance facility) to airlift in the event of a serious incident (e.g. heart attack).</p> <p>M4.4 Inform visitors through interpretive materials of the risks associated with the sites and include warnings not to climb on loose boulders, rubble or up to the rock faces</p>	
Responsible	SCTH Support Sector
Partners	Ministry of Health
Timeline	1441-1442 AH (2020-2022)
Key performance indicators (KPI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Number staff trained in first aid</li> <li>▫ Number of incidents reported</li> <li>▫ Number of calls to emergency services</li> <li>▫ Efficiency of response to incidents</li> </ul>
Background/Links	Health and safety of visitors at the sites has been identified as one of the higher risk areas due to the remoteness of the sites. Links to Visitor Management & Interpretation

**Category C: Necessary and good practice actions**

M5: Regular outreach and engagement activities will support the conservation and management of the sites	
M5.1 Provide regular update sessions for accredited and registered tour guides working in the Najrān region.	
M5.2 Provide regular briefing sessions for journalists who write on cultural heritage issues	
Responsible	SCTH Media and PR Department
Partners	Tour Guides Association Local and National news outlets
Timeline	1441-1444H/ 2020-2024
Key performance indicators (KPI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Number of articles published</li> <li>▫ Number of awareness campaigns</li> </ul>
Background/Links	Regular outreach and engagement activities will support building awareness with a range of stakeholders and users.

**6.4.b Protection, research and conservation**

**Category A: Urgent actions**

P1: The site zones identified as core zones for the World Heritage nomination will be fully protected	
<p>P1.1 For sites in close proximity to the Ḥimā Township (Ḥimā wells, Saidah, ‘Ān Jamal) maintain fences around the site and check that they are secure and well maintained on a regular basis.</p> <p>P1.2 For sites beyond the inhabited areas (Jabal Dhibah, Minshaf, Najd Khayran) erect discreet boundary markers to identify the boundaries of sites.</p> <p>P1.3 Protect open sites with local guardians/rangers and monitor the condition of the sites carefully.</p> <p>P1.4 There will be no fixed structures beyond what is already in place within the core zones.</p> <p>P1.5 Following monitoring (P1.3) should fencing be deemed a more effective means of protection then this will be extended to the open sites.</p>	
Responsible	SCTH Support Sector
Partners	Guardians, rangers, contractors
Timeline	Immediate effect 1440 AH (2019)
Key performance indicators (KPI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Boundary markers erected around site boundaries</li> <li>▫ Number of rangers appointed</li> <li>▫ Annual reports on condition and protection</li> </ul>
Background/Links	This reflects the proposed approach to safeguard the easily accessible sites in the traditional fencing and guardians, but to maintain the more remote sites in their natural environment of open desert without the disruption of fencing, huts or any other infrastructure. The sites will be guarded by site guardians and/or rangers recruited locally and who have a good knowledge of the area. The local community consider the rock art as their own heritage and have a track record of safeguarding it. All visitors will be guided by the site guardians or guides. The situation will be carefully monitored and should the need arise then the necessary infrastructure will be provided.

**P2:** The buffer zone including jabal Kawbab will be designated and protected as the Ḥimā Cultural Precinct Archaeological Park

P2.1 Use clearly visible boundary markers to identify the boundaries of the Archaeological Park that will include the entirety of the buffer zone.

P2.2 Use Highway signage to indicate the location of the Archaeological Park and its points of entry.

P2.3 Establish a number of gateway/ entry points that makes visitors aware that they are entering the park.

P2.4 Provide signage at the entry points for visitors to book guides and install CCTV at key locations to monitor visitor activity.

P2.5 Show site on official maps

Responsible	SCTH Support Sector
Partners	Ministry of Transport
Timeline	1440 AH (2019)
Key performance indicators (KPI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Boundary markers in place</li> <li>▫ Sign posts to the sites in place</li> </ul>
Background/Links	The clear zoning of an area including the buffer zone as an Archaeological Park will support the establishment of ranger services within the zone and its protection from infrastructure works.

**P3:** Ḥimā wells will be conserved and the presentation of the site improved

P3.1 Carefully remove new walkways between the wells to return the wells to their natural setting and allowing the natural terrain as the base.

P3.2 Work with a conservation expert to remove some of the cement mortar repairs to the top of the wells and replace with more sensitive repairs, using lime-based mortars.

P3.3 Retain the more modern concrete water tanks on site as a more recent layer of the site and evidence of the continued use of the wells up to the present era. Use interpretation signs to explain this to visitors.

P3.4 Install some new interpretation signs at the site, but locate them in discreet locations that do not detract from the natural setting of the wells, such as the site entrance.

P3.5 Provide clearly indicated parking space outside the site entrance and ensure that there is no vehicle access into the site.

Responsible	SCTH Antiquities Sector
Partners	SCTH Najrān Branch, contractors
Timeline	1440 AH (2019)
Monitoring indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Number of wells restored to international conservation standards</li> <li>▫ Interpretation sign for modern tanks installed</li> <li>▫ Interpretation signs installed at the site</li> </ul>
Background/Links	<p>Previous conservation of the wells have been heavy handed and detract from their historic significance.</p> <p>The built up walkways connecting the wells are also a detraction, especially of the setting and grouping of the wells. Nor do the surfaces provide improve visitor movement across the site.</p> <p>Linked to Visitor Management &amp; Interpretation</p>

**Category B: Essential actions**

**P4:** A region-wide sites database will be established to share all scientific information relating to prehistoric, rock art and inscription sites in the region

P4.1 Establish a GIS database for the region to record the sites of rock art, inscriptions and prehistoric monuments as well as finds.  
P4.2 Continue surveys in the region and add the information to the GIS platform, including high quality images.  
P4.3 Where relevant link the database to national level databases and surveys managed by the SCTH in Riyadh.  
P4.4 Use the GIS platform to regularly monitor the condition of the sites (e.g. using hand held devices).  
P4.5 Train rangers to use hand held or smart devices to record condition or incidents of damage.  
P4.6 Make the sites database available to established researchers working in the area.

Responsible	SCTH Antiquities and Museums Sector, I.T. Department
Partners	
Timeline	1441-1442 AH (2020-2022)
Key performance indicators (KPI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Number of sites recorded</li> <li>▫ Number of monitoring reports generated annually</li> <li>▫ Number of rangers trained to use monitoring software</li> </ul>
Background/Links	The region remains largely unexplored and holds within it substantial research potential. A database will not only enable known sites to be monitored, but with the addition of new sites support more scientific research that can lead to a better understanding of this corpus of prehistoric monuments, rock art and inscriptions.

**P5:** A monitoring program as per the WHS nomination and linked to the GIS platform (Policy P4) will be established and implemented

P5.1 Establish a comprehensive monitoring system of key indicators measuring the state of conservation of the sites, especially of the effects of increased visitation and natural deterioration.  
P5.2 Select permanent monitoring stations at both sites in accordance with the WHS nomination document Section 6.a.  
P5.3 Ensure all monitoring data is linked to the GIS database and logged with the SCTH and stored safely.

Responsible	SCTH World Heritage Unit, I.T. Department
Partners	
Timeline	1441-1442 AH (2020-2022)
Key performance indicators (KPI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Number of sites recorded</li> <li>▫ Monitoring reports produced annually</li> <li>▫ State of Conservation reports submitted to UNESCO.</li> </ul>
Background/Links	The property has been established to be in a good state of conservation. The main purpose of the monitoring is to establish any impacts that could occur through increased visitation.

**Category C: Necessary and good practice actions**

<p><b>P6:</b> The buffer zone/ Archaeological Park will be zoned to ensure the most sensitive areas around the nominated sites can be protected</p>	
<p>P6.1 Prepare a detailed masterplan for the buffer zone/ archaeological park and its immediate periphery that establishes protection and activity zones with limits on activities and structures permitted in each zone (see Design Guidelines, p. 84)  P6.2 Ensure that any developments within the ‘core’ area of the buffer zone adhere to the Design Guidelines and obtain SCTH permission before construction (Figure 6.1 Map of buffer zone)  P6.3 Only any intervention in the buffer zone ‘undeveloped’ area is undertaken with the permission of the SCTH and adheres to the Design Guidelines.  P6.4 All tourism facilities to be located outside of the buffer zone boundaries and adhere to eco-tourism standards.</p>	
Responsible	SCTH World Heritage Unit
Partners	Local and central municipalities
Timeline	1441-1444 AH (2020-2024)
Key performance indicators (KPI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Annual monitoring reports for activities within the buffer zone</li> </ul>
Background/Links	<p>Any camps will be established outside of the buffer zone  Areas for picnicking, trekking and other activities will be determined through the masterplan.  The SCTH will oversee permits for tourism projects.</p>

<p><b>P7:</b> Archaeological surveys, research and excavations at the sites in partnership with Saudi Universities and international institutions will be supported</p>	
<p>P7.1 Invite partnerships to continue researching and documenting rock art and inscription sites in the region.  P7.2 Continue to support previous research and partnerships P7.3 Support PhD students to undertake research in the area</p>	
Responsible	SCTH Antiquities Sector
Partners	French CNRS, SCTH Support Sector
Timeline	1441-1444H (2020-2024)
Key performance indicators (KPI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Partnership agreements signed</li> <li>▫ PhD studies being supported</li> </ul>
Background/Links	Policy P9 on facilities for researchers.

<b>P8: A Centre for Rock Art Research will be established in Najrān</b>	
<p>P8.1 Establish a Centre for Rock Art Research to work in partnership with research missions and seek funding to facilitate PhD level studies at international partner institutions of rock art research.</p> <p>P8.2 Through the Centre, introduce lectures or modules on rock art in archaeology departments in both Riyadh and Najrān universities, including input from international scholars.</p> <p>P8.3 Najrān University and Najrān Regional Museum to play an active role in promoting the educational potential of the sites.</p> <p>P8.4 Maintain hard and electronic copies of all reports and publications relating to the rock art sites in the SETH Resource Centre and the Centre for Rock Art Research in Najrān.</p>	
Responsible	SETH Antiquities Sector
Partners	Najrān University, International Missions, Najrān Regional Museum
Timeline	1441-1444 AH (2020-2024)
Monitoring indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Inauguration of the new centre and Najrān Regional Museum</li> <li>▫ Number of modules on prehistory and rock art introduced at Najrān University</li> <li>▫ Number of lectures given on the sites</li> <li>▫ Number of PhDs supported</li> </ul>
Background/Links	The study of rock art and rock inscriptions is undertaken in relatively few institutions in Saudi Arabia. A new Research Centre that can also be linked to a similar centre in Hail will support the promotion of this discipline and engage Saudi scholars in its study.

<b>P9: The SETH visitor centre will continue to serve research and archaeological teams working in the area</b>	
<p>P9.1 Upgrade interior of building as overnight accommodation and office space for research teams.</p> <p>P9.2 Work with research teams to identify their needs that will need to be accommodated in the research/visitor centre.</p> <p>P9.3 In upgrading the research/visitor centre building introduce measures that will reduce energy and water resource use.</p>	
Responsible	SETH Antiquities Sector, SETH Support Sector
Partners	Research teams (consulted)
Timeline	Ongoing
Key performance indicators (KPI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Number of research teams using the facility each year</li> <li>▫ Measured drop in energy and water usage</li> </ul>
Background/Links	The small visitor centre has good facilities for research teams to use as a base, including for overnight accommodation. The two majlis tents provide additional space, that can also be used to host official visitors and delegations.

<b>P10:</b> All excavations will be protected once investigations have been completed	
P10.1 Work with research and excavation teams to identify the best ways in which excavated sites can be protected, including back filling methodologies. P10.2 Identify exposed excavations and undertake necessary actions to protect them. P10.3 Make it a condition of excavation permits to satisfactorily protect and conserve any material exposed as a result of the excavations.	
Responsible	SCTH Antiquities Sector
Partners	Research teams
Timeline	Ongoing
Key performance indicators (KPI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Number of exposed sites protected/conserved</li> <li>▫ All new excavations following protection and conservation policies</li> </ul>
Background/Links	A growing interest in the prehistoric heritage of the region has led to various excavations, especially of tomb structures. Material remains following excavation are being left exposed to the elements and/or foot traffic once the areas are opened to visitors.

**Category D: Desirable and future actions**

<b>P11:</b> Based on further research, surveys and in the event of new findings, re-evaluate the nominated property and the boundaries of the buffer zone.	
P11.1 Evaluate previously unrecorded sites that are brought to light through new surveys to establish their significance. P11.2 Based on the significance, location and levels of threat, identify the means of protection that will be necessary. P11.3 If newly discovered sites are deemed to be scientifically significant, prepare proposals to submit to UNESCO for an extension to the serial site and/or the buffer zone.	
Responsible	SCTH World Heritage Unit
Partners	SCTH Antiquities Sector
Dependencies	Level of research and surveys undertaken in the wider area surrounding the sites.
Timeline	Long term (10 years)
Key performance indicators (KPI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Boundaries re-considered</li> </ul>
Background/Links	The area is under-researched which means there could be further finds that significantly enhance the World Heritage Site and the understanding of the history of the region. However, since none of these desert areas are under threat from development, such surveys may not be seen as a priority.



### 6.4.c Interpretation

#### Category B: Essential actions

<p><b>I1:</b> An integrated interpretation plan for the The Cultural Rock Arts in Hima Najrān will be adopted</p> <p>I1.1 Based on the significance and values of the site agree the key themes, stories and narratives that will form the basis for the interpretation (see Interpretation Plan, p.78).          I1.2 Undertake a study of potential visitor audiences and link this to the selected interpretive themes.          I1.3 Commission interpretive content and the designs for the various forms of interpretive media from designers.          I1.4 Include health and safety warnings within interpretive materials</p>	
Responsible	SCTH Museums Department
Partners	Najrān Regional Museum
Timeline	1441-1442 AH (2020-2022)
Key performance indicators (KPI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Interpretation plan approved</li> <li>▫ Interpretation content completed</li> <li>▫ Interpretive materials designed and produced</li> </ul>
Background/Links	<p>Aim of the interpretation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To provide an integrated and coherent visitor experience across the different sites</li> <li>▪ Help communicate significance and value of the WHS and its environment</li> <li>▪ Communicate behaviour at sites, care for cultural sites and the environment.</li> </ul> <p>Links to Risk Management plan</p>
<p><b>I2:</b> Interpretation material and signage within the site boundaries will be kept to a minimum</p> <p>I2.1 Only essential and directional signage should be placed at the sites. This signage should be uniform in appearance, and sensitive to the environment and natural setting of the sites.          I2.2 Use robust materials for all signage that can withstand the desert environment and harsh sunlight.</p>	
Responsible	SCTH Support Sector, Museums Department
Partners	SCTH Antiquities Sector
Timeline	1441-1442 AH (2020-2022)
Key performance indicators (KPI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Signs approved and placed</li> <li>▫ Durability of the signage over a period of at least 5 years</li> </ul>
Background/Links	The appreciation of the site as an open landscape would be compromised by a clutter of interpretation material.

**I3:** A coordinated digital media presence for the site that combines visitor information with multi-layered interpretation across various platforms will be developed

I3.1 Develop a website for the The Cultural Rock Arts in Ḥima Najrān that includes information for visitors on how to visit the sites as well as interpretive material and links and information on Najrān Regional Museum and other sites in the region.

I3.2 Develop an App that is linked to the website and can be used as a hand held interpretation by visitors at the sites, and include options for augmented reality or other emerging interpretive technologies.

I3.3 Link website to various social media platforms.

Responsible	SCTH Antiquities Sector, I.T. Department
Partners	Technology partner
Timeline	1441-1442 AH (2020-2022)
Key performance indicators (KPI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Website developed and operational</li> <li>▫ Number of visits to website</li> <li>▫ Apps developed and launched</li> <li>▫ Number of downloads for Apps</li> <li>▫ Social media hits</li> </ul>
Background/Links	The increasing use of digital platforms and social media provide an opportunity to remove or reduce interpretive signs and panels at sites. Digital media can also be used to host broader ranging material including activities, accommodation booking and other attractions in the region.

**I4:** Najrān Regional Museum and the Ḥimā Visitor Centre will act as interpretive gateways to the sites

I4.1 Work with the museum curators and designers to develop exhibits and interpretation in Najrān Regional Museum on the wells, rock art and inscription sites that will act as an introduction and gateway to the sites.

I4.2 Develop and implement plans to convert one of the existing buildings in Ḥimā Township to be used as a Visitor Centre.

I4.3 Work with museum designers to develop exhibits and interpretation in the Ḥimā Visitor Centre to act as a local gateway to the sites.

I4.4 Include interactive displays for the Museum and Visitor Centre that will appeal to younger audiences and link to the on-line material and App (Policy I3)

Responsible	SCTH Museums Department
Partners	Najrān Regional Museum, SCTH Najrān Branch
Timeline	Ḥimā Visitor Centre completed by 1441 AH (2020) to coincide with WHS inscription. Interpretive layouts linked to the development of Najrān Regional Museum and completion of the visitor centre.
Key performance indicators (KPI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Number of visitors to the Museum</li> <li>▫ Number of visits to the website through the Museum</li> <li>▫ Number of visitors to the Visitor Centre</li> </ul>
Background/Links	A new regional museum is being constructed in Najrān.

### Interpretation plan

Location	Content	Media	Audience
Najrān Regional Museum	Ancient civilisations Trade and pilgrim routes Travelling in a caravan Ancient scripts Making rock art Rock art symbolism	Panels Artefact displays Interactive displays Hands-on workshops for educational use Prompt and wifi to download App	Najrān residents School groups Saudi families International tourists
Ḥimā Visitor Centre	Ancient trade routes connecting the world Rock art markings and local meaning Life in the desert Local Bedouin culture <i>Importance of protecting the environment</i>	Panels Displays of local handicrafts/ traditions Prompt and wifi to download App	Local community Saudi families from Najrān and elsewhere International tourists School groups on special trips
Ḥimā wells	Importance of water to local livelihoods and travellers	Panel at entrance App: information and augmented reality	Saudi families from Najrān and elsewhere International tourists School groups on special trips
Gated sites: Saidah ‘Ān Jamal	Inscriptions and the stories they tell Pre-historic tombs and markers in the landscape Environment and resilience <i>Health and safety at the sites, no climbing</i> <i>Maintain environment: no rubbish</i>	Panel at entrance App: map locator, information and augmented reality	Saudi families from Najrān and elsewhere International tourists
Open sites: Jabal Dhibah Minshaf Najd Khayran	Rock art: production and meanings Life in the desert <i>Health and safety at the sites, no climbing</i> <i>Maintain environment: no rubbish</i>	App: map locator, information and augmented reality	Intrepid travellers Specialist groups Saudi families on desert excursions
Website	Background Information on visiting Conditions at the sites Booking a guide Links to other sites <i>Environmental messages</i>	Link to download App Short videos	Multiple audiences

**15: Local site guardians will be the main point of information and guides at the sites**

15.1 Train tourist guides accredited by the SCTH to conduct tours of the Cultural Rock Arts in Hima Najrān sites.

15.2 Train a number of local guardians (Policy M2) to welcome and guide visitors around the sites.

15.3 Through the website provide an interface that enables visitors to directly book tours with local guides with an opportunity to do so at Hima Visitor Centre as well (Policy I3).

15.4 Provide regular updates and training to guides, especially as new information comes to light.

Responsible	SCTH Najrān Branch, I.T. Department
Partners	Technology partner
Timeline	1441-1442 AH (2020-2022)
Key performance indicators (KPI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Number of accredited guides attending training</li> <li>▫ Number of site guardians trained to guide visitors</li> <li>▫ Guiding take up from visitors</li> </ul>
Background/Links	<p>Since the sites will be managed as open sites in the landscape, the guides play an important role in showing visitors the sites, telling them their story and also making sure that visitor behaviour at the sites is appropriate and safe.</p> <p>Using local guides increases opportunities for local employment and enhances the visitor experience and sense of discovery in an open landscape.</p>

***Category C: Necessary and good practice actions***

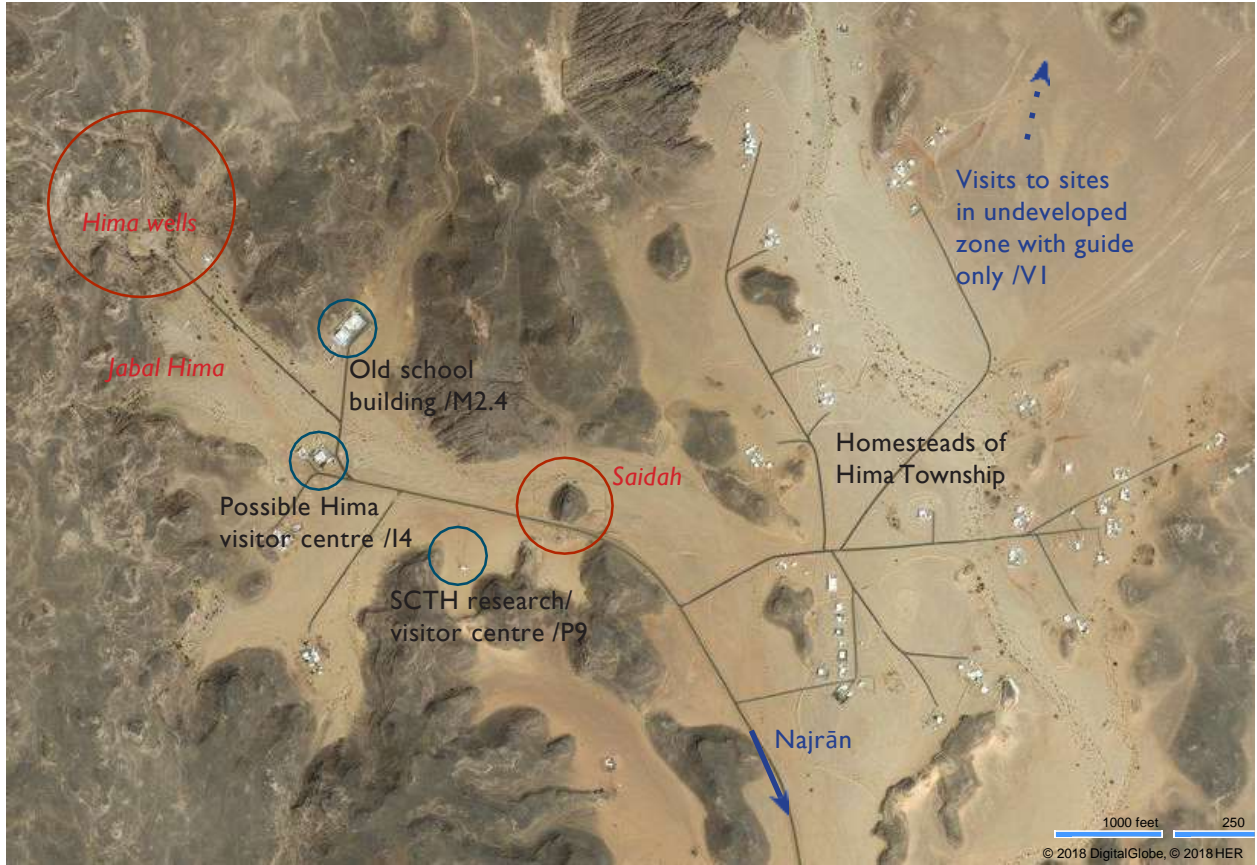
**16: An education component will be developed as part of the interpretation of the sites and rock arts**

16.1 As part of the new Najrān Museum appoint an education specialist to work with the museum designers to develop displays that are suitable and attractive to various age groups.

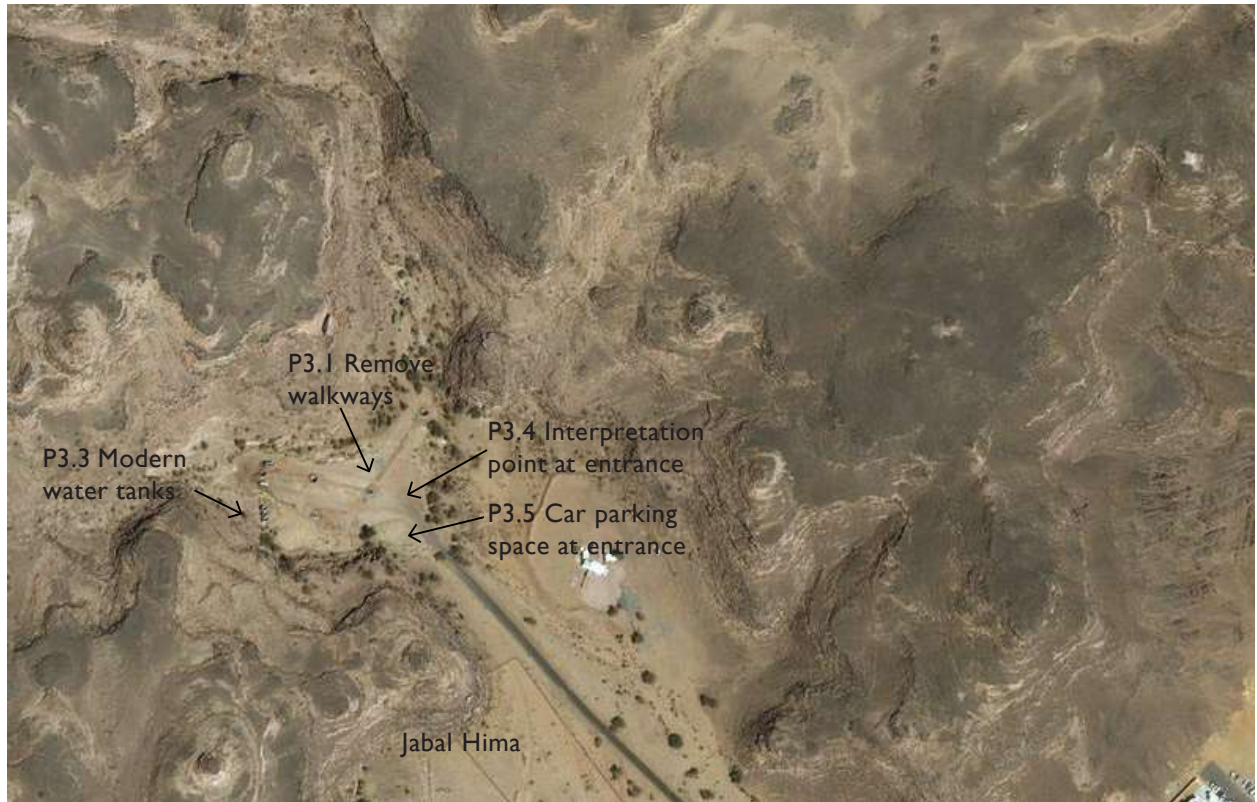
16.2 Commission from an education specialist, educational materials, including teacher guides, linking the exhibition material to the Saudi Ministry of Education curriculum.

16.3 Train education officers to work in the Museum to liaise with schools and guide school visits.

Responsible	Najrān Regional Museum
Partners	SCTH Najrān Branch
Timeline	1441-1444 AH (2020-2024)
Key performance indicators (KPI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Number of school groups visiting the museum</li> <li>▫ Take up of educational materials by schools</li> <li>▫ Number of staff assigned and trained</li> </ul>
Background/Links	



MAP of *Himā* Township (above) and *Himā* wells (below) illustrating cluster of tourism development (base map ©Bing 2018)



**6.4.d Visitor management**  
**Category A: Urgent actions**

<b>V1: No vehicular traffic will be permitted within the core areas</b>	
V1.1 For the gated sites provide clearly marked parking space outside of the entrance and place ‘no vehicle access’ notices on the gates.	
V1.2 For the sites that will not be gated, identify suitable locations where vehicles can be parked that will not pose a danger to the rock art or interrupt views from the sites, and indicate these locations with markers.	
V1.3 Make the site guardians and guides aware of the car parking locations so that they can be enforced.	
V1.4 Visitors traveling to the ‘undeveloped’ zone and sites will be accompanied by a guide or arrange to meet with a site guardian.	
V1.5 All vehicle traffic to the ‘undeveloped’ zone will be monitored with CCTV at key points of access,	
Responsible	SCTH Najrān Branch
Partners	Site guardians and guides
Timeline	1440 AH (2019)
Key performance indicators (KPI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Demarcated car parking spaces provided at gated sites</li> <li>▫ Parking areas marked out at other sites</li> </ul>
Background/Links	Vehicles not only clutter the views from the sites, but the fine dust raised by vehicles can damage the rock art surfaces.

**Category B: Essential actions**

<b>V2: Areas suitable for rest stops will be identified</b>	
V2.1 Working with local stakeholders identify areas that would be suitable for use as visitor rest stops, including refreshments and picnicking activities.	
V2.2 Work with local stakeholders in Ḥimā Township to establish a visitor rest area linked to existing buildings in the township.	
V2.3 Establish areas suitable for rest stops within or outside of the buffer zone that will enhance the visitor experience, but in no way not interfere with the sites.	
V2.4 Commission designs for temporary shade structures that could be placed on the agreed visitor route at the sites (see Design Guidelines, p. 84)	
V2.5 Create rest stops using only structures of a temporary nature and that are environmentally sustainable. Rest stops will include toilet facilities (see Design Guidelines); water filling and garbage collection facilities.	
Responsible	SCTH Support Services
Partners	Local Municipality
Timeline	1441-1442 AH (2020-2022)
Key performance indicators (KPI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Number of rest stops created</li> <li>▫ Environmental performance of the rest stops</li> <li>▫ Reduction in garbage at the sites and in the environment</li> </ul>
Background/Links	It is important that there are facilities for visitors in the desert environment, however, these facilities should not disrupt or place pressure on the cultural sites or on the natural environment.

**Category C: Necessary and good practice actions**

<p><b>V3:</b> Programmes will be undertaken to raise awareness with local stakeholders on the significance and value of the natural and cultural heritage</p> <p>V3.1 Build on established links with community leaders to promote the values of protecting the cultural and natural environment.  V3.2 Identify ways in which these messages can be passed onto community members and younger generations, including through social media.  V3.3 Najrān Regional Museum to organise regular events and activities focused on cultural heritage sites and their importance to the region.</p>	
Responsible	SCTH Antiquities Sector, SCTH Investment and Marketing Sector, Najrān Regional Museum
Partners	Ministry of Interior, Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of Culture
Timeline	1441-1444 AH (2020-2024)
Key performance indicators (KPI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Number of awareness events held each year</li> <li>▫ Number of web page visits or social media hits</li> </ul>
Background/Links	<p>The Bedouin communities of Ḥimā have an established respect for the cultural sites and this sense of ownership can be enhanced as more local jobs or economic opportunities are created through tourism and a growing research interest in the sites.</p> <p>As important will be raising awareness amongst the larger community of Najrān Region.</p>

<p><b>V4:</b> Optimum visitor numbers at sites at any one time will be established</p> <p>V4.1 Undertake carrying capacity studies to determine the maximum number of visitors per group to the various sites that will not cause damage to or endanger the rock art.  V4.2 Enforce these numbers through guides and tour booking systems.  V4.3 Based on number of bookings and visitation patterns over the first three years following inscription establish what other visitor facilities or management measures need to be put in place.</p>	
Responsible	SCTH Antiquities Sector
Partners	Local Guides Association, Investment and Marketing Sector
Timeline	1441-1444 AH (2020-2024)
Key performance indicators (KPI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Studies conducted on an annual basis</li> <li>▫ Numbers per group on a guided tour</li> </ul>
Background/Links	<p>Based on the current visitation patterns in Najrān Region and experience of visitors to the rock art WHS in the Hail Region, the management approach for the Hail Cultural Precinct has been to maintain it as an open and natural sites with the minimum of infrastructure that would interfere with the setting.</p> <p>However, should the number of visitors grow to levels where this approach is no longer feasible then more structured management approaches will be introduced, including fences around the open sites and raised platforms and board walks from which to view the rock surfaces.</p>

#### 6.4.e Tourism, planning and infrastructure

##### Category A: Urgent actions

<b>T1: Improve access to the sites by stabilising road surfaces</b>	
T1.1 Lay asphalt road from Himā Township to the ‘Ān Jamal site. T1.2 Lay stabilised road only (not asphalted) to the sites further to the north of ‘Ān Jamal. T1.3 Liaise with the relevant infrastructure agencies to determine location of any future stabilised roads and other infrastructure passing through the buffer zone.	
Responsible	SCTH Support Services, World Heritage Unit
Partners	All relevant infrastructure agencies
Timeline	1440 AH (2019)
Key performance indicators (KPI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Road to ‘Ān Jamal completed</li> <li>▫ Stabilised road laid to sites in the ‘undeveloped’ zone</li> <li>▫ Infrastructure agencies made aware of restrictions in the buffer zone</li> </ul>
Background/Links	Roads north of ‘Ān Jamal will not asphalted so as to avoid through traffic. Visitors will be requested to book and travel with an accredited guide or meet a site guardian to guide them to the sites in the ‘undeveloped’ zone. CCTV cameras will monitor visitor traffic beyond the Hima hub.

##### Category B: Essential actions

<b>T2: Infra-structure works and developments will be discouraged in the buffer zone</b>	
T2.1 Coordinate with local planning and national infrastructure agencies to ensure permits are issued for planned developments within the buffer zones. T2.2 Any intervention or development that is unavoidable within the buffer zone will be preceded by archaeological investigations. T2.3 Ensure all archaeological investigations prior to essential infrastructure works are undertaken by suitably qualified teams and approved by the SCTH.	
Responsible	SCTH
Partners	National Infrastructure Agencies
Timeline	Immediate effect and ongoing
Key performance indicators (KPI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Number of permit applications received by the STCH</li> <li>▫ Number of occasions where infrastructure has been successfully diverted from the buffer zone</li> </ul>
Background/Links	The area including the sites and their buffer zone are not located in any known development corridors. Therefore the pressure for developments, including infrastructure developments is very low, and does not constitute a major risk for the sites.



### Design Guidelines

Location	Design guidelines	Activities
WHS Ḥimā wells	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stabilised sand surface outside gates as car park</li> <li>• Levelled gravel or sand paths for visitors in the site</li> <li>• Maintain existing shade structure in the site</li> <li>• <i>Visitor toilets provided at the Visitor Centre</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visits overseen by site guardian</li> <li>• Guided visits</li> </ul>
WHS gated sites Saidah ‘Ān Jamal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stabilised sand surface outside gates as car park</li> <li>• Any visitor facilities to be of temporary nature, use an ecologically sound construction and be placed outside of the fenced WHS</li> <li>• <i>Visitor toilets provided at the Visitor Centre</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guided visits with a guide or the site guardian</li> </ul>
WHS open sites: Jabal Dhibah Minshaf Najd Khayran	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Area outside WHS zone clearly demarcated as car park</li> <li>• Any visitor facilities (e.g. shade structures) to be of temporary nature, very low impact and ecologically sound and be placed outside of the WHS boundary</li> <li>• <i>Environmentally sustainable visitor toilets provided in the buffer zone</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guided visits only with a guide</li> </ul>
Buffer zone: core zone (Ḥimā Township)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmentally sensitive design using natural materials and reducing energy and water resource usage</li> <li>• All tourism facilities to be built to eco-lodge standards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visits to visitor attraction and visitor centre</li> <li>• Low key visitor services</li> <li>• Retail points</li> </ul>
Ḥimā Visitor Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refurbishment to consider environmentally sustainable materials and seek to reduce energy and water resource usage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visitor centre open to visitors during set hours</li> </ul>
Buffer zone: undeveloped zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any visitor facilities (e.g. shade structures) to be of temporary nature, very low impact and ecologically sound and be placed outside of the WHS</li> <li>• <i>Environmentally sustainable visitor toilets provided in the buffer zone</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desert safaris, camel trecks</li> <li>• Rest points (tents) with basic visitor facilities</li> </ul>
Buffer zone periphery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All tourism facilities (camps, lodges) to be built to eco-lodge standards</li> <li>• All servicing of facilities to be from outside the buffer zone.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desert camps</li> <li>• Eco-lodge</li> </ul>

**T3:** All new structures within the buffer zone will conform to strict guidelines in terms of design, materials and impact

T3.1 Agree design guidelines (p. 84) for such areas that stipulate low rise small imprint structures that are ecologically sound using locally available materials and follow traditional norms of building.

T3.2 Introduce sustainable construction for all new buildings in the Ḥimā Township.

T3.3 Develop incentives to promote sustainable building practices to locals.

Responsible	Local Municipalities
Partners	SCTH Najrān Branch
Timeline	1441-1442 AH (2020-2022)
Key performance indicators (KPI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Number of projects conforming with the Design Guidelines</li> </ul>
Background/Links	Ḥimā Township holds an important position of being located in the buffer as well as playing a gateway position to the sites. Alongside the Ḥimā Visitor Centre and the existing SCTH visitor/research centre, this hub is also the most likely location for a number of ancillary tourism services. It is therefore important that these are

**Category D: Desirable and future actions**

**T4:** The Archaeological Park will become part of a wider eco-tourism destination for Najrān

T4.1 Ensure that the ecologically conscious development of the cultural sites and buffer zone in design (Policy 3) and operation (Policies N2 and N3) is publicised to visitors.

T4.2 By partnering with the Uruq Bani Mu'arid Protected Area and other eco-tourism activities, strengthen the appeal of the sites as eco-tourism and low impact visitor destinations, and through joint marketing increase the appeal of the sites to a wider audience.

Responsible	SCTH Marketing Department
Partners	Ministry of Environment
Timeline	Medium – long term
Key performance indicators (KPI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Promotion of eco-tourism destination</li> <li>▫ Maintaining eco-tourism destination standards</li> <li>▫ Collaborations and partnerships in support of the eco-tourism destination</li> </ul>
Background/Links	One aspect of Najrān Region's tourism is nature tourism with an aim to develop an eco-tourism destinations. There is an opportunity for the Cultural Rock Arts in Ḥima Najrān to become part of this eco tourism destination that will also be beneficial to the protection of the sites.

#### 6.4.f Natural environment and sustainability

##### Category A: Urgent actions

N1: The collective value of rock art sites and their landscape settings will be recognised as a cultural landscape	
N1.1 Launch programmes to raise awareness with local stakeholders on the significance and value of the natural and cultural heritage.	
N1.2 Build local awareness of keeping the environment clean and free of rubbish, especially plastics (Policy N3).	
Responsible	SCTH “Leave No Trace” Program, Antiquities Sector
Partners	Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of Culture
Timeline	1440 AH (2019)
Key performance indicators (KPI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Awareness programmes launched</li> <li>▫ Awareness included in various forms of visitor information</li> <li>▫ Visible reduction in rubbish at the sites and in the landscape.</li> </ul>
Background/Links	Despite the remoteness of the sites and the low population densities in the region, plastic waste is notably evident at all of the sites. The easy availability of disposable plastic (water bottles), limited garbage disposal facilities and little awareness of the longer term environmental damage that can be caused compound the problem.

##### Category B: Essential actions

N2: The sustainable use of water resources will be promoted and monitored	
N2.1 Ensure all new visitor services in the region include sustainable water use plans, including where water resources are obtained from and how water waste is minimised.	
N2.2 All visitor services within the buffer zone to have waste management systems that comply with national ecological standards and do not negatively impact on the environment.	
Responsible	SCTH Support Services
Partners	Ministry of the Environment, Water and Agriculture
Timeline	1441-1442 AH (2020-2022)
Key performance indicators (KPI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Amount of water saved or recycled.</li> <li>▫ Environmental monitoring</li> </ul>
Background/Links	The scarcity and importance of water is part of the ‘story’ of Ḥimā Cultural Precinct, and provides ample opportunity to continue to promote sensitive approaches to water usage. This also links to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (see Section 6.5)

N3: Waste collection and recycling systems will be established across the region	
<p>N3.1 Establish waste disposal points at the visitor areas, including visitor centres, rest stops and at the sites themselves, including options for recycling.</p> <p>N3.2 Establish regular waste and recycling collection from these points. N3.3 Establish a regional recycling plant/service.</p> <p>N3.4 Use interpretive messages and media to make visitors aware of the implication of poor environmental practices.</p> <p>N3.5 Encourage visitors to use re-fillable water bottles that they can fill up from water filling stations at the rest stops.</p>	
Responsible	SCTH Najrān Branch, Local Municipalities
Partners	Recycling firms
Timeline	1441-1442 AH (2020-2022)
Key performance indicators (KPI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Monitor waste in the landscape/at the sites</li> <li>▫ Use of water filling stations (water used/visitor)</li> </ul>
Background/Links	Plastic waste is one of the key issues in the buffer zone, polluting the natural environment and detracting from the visitor experience. It is common practice to throw rubbish into the environment rather than seeking bins.

**Category D: Desirable and future actions**

N4: Key views of the rock art sites and significant views from the sites will be protected	
<p>N4.1 Undertake view-shed studies to determine views of the sites from key vantage points, to include landscape features and land formations that contribute to the understanding and study of the sites.</p>	
Responsible	SCTH World Heritage Site Unit
Partners	Local Municipality
Timeline	Medium – long term
Key performance indicators (KPI)	
Background/Links	At the present time the views to and from the sites are well protected, but the future growth in tourism may necessitate some developments at the site that would require careful consideration of views.

### **6.5 Sustainable Development Indicators**

As one of the core objectives for the management of the sites and their natural, social and cultural environment, management policies specifically ensure that sustainable development is promoted. The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) provide the essential benchmarks for sustainable development.

The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) are relevant to this Management Plan in that as long as the communities and their environment are safeguarded, so too will cultural sites. Cultural heritage can be a driver for local social and economic development, but this development also needs to be sustainable and equitable for its benefits to support site protection. The following section identifies how the management policies in this Management Plan support the various SDGs.

*SDG 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.*

*SDG 4.5: By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations.*

*SDG 4.7: By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.*

These goals are addressed in Policy M2, the training provided to site guardians, rangers and tourist guides, all of whom will be recruited locally; Policies V3, I6 and N3 and the Interpretation plan supporting the communication of sustainability to local users, visitors and as part of educational activities connected with the sites.

*SDG 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.*

*SDG 6.3: By 2030, improve water quality by reducing pollution, eliminating dumping and minimizing release of hazardous chemicals and materials, halving the proportion of untreated wastewater and substantially increasing recycling and safe reuse globally.*

*SDG 6.4: By 2030, substantially increase water-use efficiency across all sectors and ensure sustainable withdrawals and supply of freshwater to address water scarcity and substantially reduce the number of people suffering from water scarcity.*

One of the key themes of this nomination is the efficient management of water and continued efficiencies are promoted in Policy N2. The impact tourism growth, especially around Himā Township is recognized could have on resources is recognized and planned for in the Tourism Management Plan.

*SDG 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.*

*SDG 7.2: By 2030, increase substantially the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix.*

Policy T3 and the design guidelines include environmental guidelines, and advocate the use of renewable energy sources for all tourism services.

*SDG 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.*

*SDG 8.3: Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services.*

*SDG 8.4: Improve progressively, through 2030, global resource efficiency in consumption and production and endeavor to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation, in accordance with the 10-year framework of programs on sustainable consumption and production, with developed countries taking the lead.*

*SDG 8.6: By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training*

*SDG 8.9: By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products.*

The recommendations for tourism development contained in the Tourism Management Plan specifically focus on the promotion of sustainable and locally inclusive tourism.

*SDG 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.*

*SDG 9.1: Develop quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, including regional and trans-border infrastructure, to support economic development and human well-being, with a focus on affordable and equitable access for all.*

Although this desert region is scarcely populated the Policies T1 and T2 recommend low impact infrastructure and eco-tourism focused development that is intended to protect the natural environment and improve the region's resilience.

*SDG 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries.*

*SDG 10.2: By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.*

The proposed management structure for the sites is specifically inclusive of local Community groups, their active participation in site management and tourism activities, with economic outcomes as shown in Policies M2, T3 and V2.

*SDG 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.*

*SDG 11.4: Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage.*

*SDG 11.A: Support positive economic, social and environmental links between urban, peri-urban and rural areas by strengthening national and regional development planning.*

*SDG 11.B: By 2020, substantially increase the number of cities and human settlements, adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, resilience to disasters, and develop and implement, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, holistic disaster risk management at all levels.*

Policies N1, N2, N3 and N4 focus on sustainability and resilience.

*SDG 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.*

*SDG 12.3: By 2030, halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reduce food losses along production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses.*

*SDG 12.5: By 2030, substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse.*

*SDG 12.8: By 2030, ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature.*

*SDG 12.B: Develop and implement tools to monitor sustainable development impacts for sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products.*

Policy N3 focuses on actions that will reduce waste and ensure waste recycling.

*SDG 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.*

*SDG 15.5: Take urgent and significant action to reduce the degradation of natural habitats, halt the loss of biodiversity and, by 2020, protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species.*

*SDG 15.9: By 2020, integrate ecosystem and biodiversity values into national and local planning, development processes, poverty reduction strategies and accounts.*

*SDG 15.A: Mobilize and significantly increase financial resources from all sources to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity and ecosystems.*

Low impact tourism, sustainable water and waste management practices in Policies V3, T3, T4, N2 and N3 and the TMP all intended to protect the environ of this desert.

*SDG 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.*

*SDG 17.17: Encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships.*

Through the implementation of this Management Plan and the Tourism Development Plan, the local communities and Municipalities of Najrān will be empowered to engage in sustainable tourism and environmental protection, showcase the benefits and develop partnerships beyond the region.

## 7.ACTION PLAN

### 7.1 Category A: Urgent actions

These are actions responding to issues identified as critical and are essential for the ongoing protection and management of the sites, and include areas for immediate action. These actions should ideally be undertaken within 1440 AH. (2019).

Action	Responsible	Partners
M1.1 Provide training for existing staff in SCTH Najrān Branch to support the management of the park, including the management of the ranger programme (M2)	SCTH	
M1.2 Identify any additional areas of expertise that are missing or will be required in the next five years and provide opportunities/scholarships for recent graduates to specialise in these areas.	SCTH	
M2.1 Appoint a coordinator in SCTH Najrān Branch to manage the appointment, training and activities of local site guardians and rangers.	SCTH	
M2.2 Appoint site guardians and rangers from the local community.	SCTH Najrān Branch	Local communities near Ḥimā
M2.3 Provide training to guardians and rangers, including the importance of the sites, managing and protecting the rock art and areas of archaeological significance, leading and guiding visitor groups, and basic first aid.	SCTH Najrān Branch	Local communities near Ḥimā
M2.4 Provide a centre/base for rangers in Ḥimā Township in one of the existing buildings	SCTH Najrān Branch	
M2.5 Monitor efficacy of training and organise regular refresher events that also allow site guardians and rangers to share their experiences.	SCTH Najrān Branch	
M2.6 Train rangers to use hand held devices/ smart phones to input data into a GIS-based management system to support the regular monitoring of the World Heritage Site.	SCTH Najrān Branch	
P1.1 For sites in close proximity to the Ḥimā Township (Ḥimā wells, Saidah, 'Ān Jamal) maintain fences around the site and check that they are secure and well maintained on a regular basis.	SCTH Support Sector	Site guards, rangers, contractors
P1.2 For sites beyond the inhabited areas (Jabal Dhibah, Minshaf, Najd Khayran) erect discreet boundary markers to identify the boundaries of sites	SCTH Support Sector	Site guardians, rangers, contractors



Action	Responsible	Partners
P1.3 Protect open sites with local guardians/ rangers and monitor the condition of the sites carefully	SCTH Support Sector	Site guardians, rangers, contractors
P1.4 There will be no fixed structures beyond what is already in place within the core zones	SCTH Support Sector	
P1.5 Following monitoring (P1.3) should fencing be deemed a more effective means of protection then this will be extended to the open sites.	SCTH Support Sector	Site guardians, rangers, contractors
P2.1 Use clearly visible boundary markers to identify the boundaries of the Archaeological Park that will include the entirety of the buffer zone	SCTH Support Sector	Ministry of Transport
P2.2 Use Highway signage to indicate the location of the Archaeological Park and its points of entry	SCTH Support Sector	Ministry of Transport
P2.3 Establish a number of gateway/ entry points that makes visitors aware that they are entering the park	SCTH Support Sector	Ministry of Transport
P2.4 Provide signage at the entry points for visitors to book guides and install CCTV at key locations to monitor visitor activity	SCTH Support Sector	Rangers
P2.5 Show site on official maps	SCTH Support Sector	Ministry of Transport
P3.1 Carefully remove new walkways between the wells to return the wells to their natural setting and allowing the natural terrain as the base.	SCTH Antiquities	SCTH Najrān Branch, contractors
P3.2 Work with a conservation expert to remove some of the cement mortar repairs to the top of the wells and replace with more sensitive repairs, using lime-based mortars	SCTH Antiquities	Conservation expert
P3.3 Retain the more modern concrete water tanks on site as a more recent layer of the site and evidence of the continued use of the wells up to the present era. Use interpretation signs to explain this to visitors.	SCTH Antiquities	SCTH Support Sector
P3.4 Install some new interpretation signs at the site, but locate them in discreet locations that do not detract from the natural setting of the wells, such as the site entrance.	SCTH Antiquities	SCTH Support Sector
P3.5 Provide clearly indicated parking space outside the site entrance and ensure that there is no vehicle access into the site.	SCTH Antiquities	SCTH Support Sector
V1.1 For the gated sites provide clearly marked parking space outside of the entrance and place 'no vehicle access' notices on the gates.	SCTH Najrān Branch	
V1.2 For the sites that will not be gated, identify suitable locations where vehicles can be parked that will not pose a danger to the rock art or interrupt views from the sites, and indicate these locations with markers.	SCTH Najrān Branch	
V1.3 Make the site guardians and guides aware of the car parking locations so that they can be enforced.	SCTH Najrān Branch	

Action	Responsible	Partners
V1.4 Visitors traveling to the 'undeveloped' zone and sites will be accompanied by a guide or arrange to meet with a site guardian.	SCTH Najrān Branch	Guides and site guardians
V1.5 All vehicle traffic to the 'undeveloped' zone will be monitored with CCTV at key points of access.	SCTH Najrān Branch	
T1.1 Lay asphalt road from Himā Township to the 'Ān Jamal site.	SCTH Support Services, World Heritage Unit	All relevant infrastructure agencies
T1.2 Lay stabilised road only (not asphalted) to the sites further to the north of 'Ān Jamal.		
T1.3 Liaise with the relevant infrastructure agencies to determine location of any future stabilised roads and other infrastructure passing through the buffer zone.		
N1.1 Launch programmes to raise awareness with local stakeholders on the significance and value of the natural and cultural heritage.	SCTH "Leave No Trace" Program, Antiquities Sector	Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of Culture
N1.2 Build local awareness of keeping the environment clean and free of rubbish, especially plastics (Policy N3).		

### 7.2 Category B: Essential actions

These are actions that are not urgent immediacy but need to be considered in a 2-3 year period to support the effective management of the cultural heritage assets. These actions should follow Category A actions, being implemented between 1441 and 1442 AH (2020-2022)

Action	Responsible	Partners
M3.1 Using data from the nomination document and this management plan prepare a detailed risk management strategy that addresses scale of risk and levels of preparedness that will be necessary	SCTH Najrān Branch	Provincial Governorate (Ministry of Interior)
M3.2 Consult with the various groups who hold responsibilities for risk management and first response (police, emergency services, Civil Defence).	SCTH Najrān Branch	Provincial Governorate (Ministry of Interior)
M3.3 Following consultation, identify roles and responsibilities for each sector as well as procedures to be followed in case of an incident.	SCTH Najrān Branch	Provincial Governorate (Ministry of Interior)
M3.4 Provide training for rangers, local police forces and civil defence teams who will be implementing the plan, including on safeguarding heritage during an operation.	SCTH Najrān Branch	Provincial Governorate (Ministry of Interior)
M4.1 Train rangers, site guardians and tourist guides in health and safety and first aid	SCTH Support Sector	Ministry of Health
M4.2 Ensure local clinic or health centre is suitably equipped to deliver first response	SCTH Support Sector	Ministry of Health

Action	Responsible	Partners
M4.3 Work with Najrān hospital (air ambulance facility) to airlift in the event of a serious incident	SCTH Support Sector	Ministry of Health
M4.4 Inform visitors through interpretive materials of the risks associated with the sites and include warnings not to climb on loose boulders, rubble or up to the rock faces rock faces	SCTH Support Sector	SCTH Najrān Branch
P4.1 Establish a GIS database for the region to record the sites of rock art, inscriptions and prehistoric monuments as well as finds.	SCTH Antiquities and Museums Sector, SCTH I.T. Department	
P4.2 Continue surveys in the region and add the information to the GIS platform, including high quality images.	SCTH Antiquities and Museums Sector, SCTH I.T. Department	
P4.3 Where relevant link the database to national level databases and surveys managed by the SCTH in Riyadh.	SCTH Antiquities and Museums Sector, SCTH I.T. Department	
P4.4 Use the GIS platform to regularly monitor the condition of the sites (e.g. using hand held devices).	SCTH Antiquities and Museums Sector, SCTH I.T. Department	
P4.5 Train rangers to use hand held or smart devices to record condition or incidents of damage.	SCTH Antiquities and Museums Sector, SCTH I.T. Department	
P4.6 Make the sites database available to established researchers working in the area.	SCTH Antiquities and Museums Sector, SCTH I.T. Department	SCTH Najrān Branch
P5.1 Establish a comprehensive monitoring system of key indicators measuring the state of conservation of the sites, especially of the effects of increased visitation and natural deterioration.	SCTH World Heritage Unit, I.T. Department	SCTH Najrān Branch
P5.2 Select permanent monitoring stations at both sites in accordance with the WHS nomination document Section 6.a.	SCTH World Heritage Unit	SCTH Najrān Branch
P5.3 Ensure all monitoring data is linked to the GIS database and logged with the SCTH and stored safely	SCTH World Heritage Unit, I.T. Department	SCTH Najrān Branch
I1.1 Based on the significance and values of the site agree the key themes, stories and narratives that will form the basis for the interpretation (see Interpretation Plan)	SCTH Museums Department	Najrān Regional Museum
I1.2 Undertake a study of potential visitor audiences and link this to the selected interpretive themes.	SCTH Museums Department	Najrān Regional Museum
I1.3 Commission interpretive content and the designs for the various forms of interpretive media from designers.	SCTH Museums Department	Najrān Regional Museum
I1.4 Include health and safety warnings within interpretive materials	SCTH Museums Department	

Action	Responsible	Partners
12.1 Only essential and directional signage should be placed at the sites. This signage should be uniform in appearance, and sensitive to the environment and natural setting of the sites.	SCTH Support Sector, Museums Department	SCTH Antiquities Sector
12.2 Use robust materials for all signage that can withstand the desert environment and harsh sunlight.	SCTH Support Sector	
13.1 Develop a website for the Himā Cultural Precinct that includes information for visitors on how to visit the sites as well as interpretive material and links and information on Najrān Regional Museum and other sites in the region.	SCTH Antiquities Sector, I.T. Department	Technology partner
13.2 Develop an App that is linked to the website and can be used as a hand held interpretation by visitors at the sites, and include options for augmented reality or other emerging interpretive technologies.	SCTH Antiquities Sector, I.T. Department	Technology partner
13.3 Link website to various social media platforms.	SCTH Antiquities Sector, I.T. Department	Technology partner
14.1 Work with the museum curators and designers to develop exhibits and interpretation in Najrān Regional Museum on the wells, rock art and inscription sites that will act as an introduction and gateway to the sites.	SCTH Museums Department	Najrān Regional Museum, SCTH Najrān Branch
14.2 Develop and implement plans to convert one of the existing buildings in Himā Township to be used as a Visitor Centre.	SCTH Museums Department	Najrān Regional Museum, SCTH Najrān Branch
14.3 Work with museum designers to develop exhibits and interpretation in the Himā Visitor Centre to act as a local gateway to the sites.	SCTH Museums Department	Najrān Regional Museum, SCTH Najrān Branch
14.4 Include interactive displays for the Museum and Visitor Centre that will appeal to younger audiences and link to the on-line material and App (Policy I3)	SCTH Museums Department, Najrān Regional Museum	Technology partner
15.1 Train tourist guides accredited by the SCTH to conduct tours of the Cultural Rock Arts in Himā Najrān sites.	SCTH Najrān Branch, SCTH I.T. Department	Technology partner
15.2 Train a number of local guardians (Policy M2) to welcome and guide visitors around the sites.	SCTH Najrān Branch, SCTH I.T. Department	Technology partner
15.3 Through the website provide an interface that enables visitors to directly book tours with local guides with an opportunity to do so at Himā Visitor Centre as well ((Policy I3).	SCTH Najrān Branch, SCTH I.T. Department	Technology partner, Site guardians and guides
15.4 Provide regular updates and training to guides, especially as new information comes to light.	SCTH Najrān Branch, SCTH I.T. Department	Technology partner

Action	Responsible	Partners
V2.1 Working with local stakeholders identify areas that would be suitable for use as visitor rest stops, including refreshments and picnicking activities.	SCTH Support Services	Local Municipality
V2.2 Work with local stakeholders in Himā Township to establish a visitor rest area linked to existing buildings in the township.	SCTH Support Services	Local Municipality
V2.3 Establish areas suitable for rest stops within or outside of the buffer zone that will enhance the visitor experience, but in no way not interfere with the sites.	SCTH Support Services	Local Municipality
V2.4 Commission designs for temporary shade structures that could be placed on the agreed visitor route at the sites (see Design Guidelines)	SCTH Support Services	
V2.5 Create rest stops using only structures of a temporary nature and that are environmentally sustainable. Rest stops will include toilet facilities (see Design Guidelines, p. 82); water filling and garbage collection facilities.	SCTH Support Services	Local Municipality
T2.1 Coordinate with local planning and national infrastructure agencies to ensure permits are issued for planned developments within the buffer zones	SCTH	National Infrastructure Agencies
T2.2 Any intervention or development that is unavoidable within the buffer zone will be preceded by archaeological investigations.	SCTH	National Infrastructure Agencies
T2.3 Ensure all archaeological investigations prior to essential infrastructure works are undertaken by suitably qualified teams and approved by the SCTH.	SCTH	National Infrastructure Agencies
T3.1 Agree design guidelines for such areas that stipulate low rise small imprint structures that are ecologically sound using locally available materials and follow traditional norms of building.	Local Municipalities	SCTH Najrān Branch
T3.2 Introduce sustainable construction for all new buildings in the Himā Township.	Local Municipalities	SCTH Najrān Branch
T3.3 Develop incentives to promote sustainable building practices to locals.	Local Municipalities	SCTH Najrān Branch
N2.1 Ensure all new visitor services in the region include sustainable water use plans, including where water resources are obtained from and how water waste is minimised.	SCTH Support Services	Ministry of the Environment, Water and Agriculture
N2.2 All visitor services within the buffer zone to have waste management systems that comply with national ecological standards and do not negatively impact on the environment.	SCTH Support Services	Ministry of the Environment, Water and Agriculture
N3.1 Establish waste disposal points at the visitor areas, including visitor centres, rest stops and at the sites themselves, including options for recycling.	SCTH Najrān Branch, Local Municipalities	Recycling firms

Action	Responsible	Partners
N3.2 Establish regular waste and recycling collection from these points.	SCTH Najrān Branch, Local Municipalities	Recycling firms
N3.3 Establish a regional recycling plant/service.	SCTH Najrān Branch, Local Municipalities	Recycling firms
N3.4 Use interpretive messages and media to make visitors aware of the implication of poor environmental practices.	SCTH Najrān Branch, Local Municipalities	
N3.5 Encourage visitors to use re-fillable water bottles that they can fill up from water filling stations at the rest stops.	SCTH Najrān Branch, Local Municipalities	

### 7.3 Category C: Necessary and good practice actions

These are longer term actions that build on other policies to deliver the longer term vision and aspirations for the region, with actions planned for a five-year time horizon. These are actions also build on existing good practices and seek to find ways in which they can be strengthened and enhanced. These actions have a five year time horizon and to be completed by 1444 AH (2024).

Action	Responsible	Partners
M5.1 Provide regular update sessions for accredited and registered tour guides working in the Najrān region.	SCTH Media and PR Department	Tour Guides Association
M5.2 Provide regular briefing sessions for journalists who write on cultural heritage issues	SCTH Media and PR Department	Local and National news outlets
P6.1 Prepare a detailed masterplan for the buffer zone/ archaeological park and its immediate periphery that establishes protection and activity zones with limits on activities and structures permitted in each zone (see Design Guidelines)	SCTH World Heritage Unit	Local and central municipalities
P6.2 Ensure that any developments within the 'core' area of the buffer zone adhere to the Design Guidelines and obtain SCTH permission before construction	SCTH World Heritage Unit	Local and central municipalities
P6.3 Only any intervention in the buffer zone 'undeveloped' area is undertaken with the permission of the SCTH and adheres to the Design Guidelines	SCTH World Heritage Unit	Local and central municipalities
P6.4 All tourism facilities to be located outside of the buffer zone boundaries and adhere to eco-tourism standards	SCTH World Heritage Unit	Local and central municipalities
P7.1 Invite partnerships to continue researching and documenting rock art and inscription sites in the region	SCTH Antiquities Sector	French CNRS, SCTH Support Sector
P7.2 Continue to support previous research and partnerships	SCTH Antiquities Sector	French CNRS, SCTH Support Sector
P7.3 Support PhD students to undertake research in the area	SCTH Antiquities Sector	French CNRS, SCTH Support Sector

Action	Responsible	Partners
P8.1 Establish a Centre for Rock Art Research to work in partnership with research missions and seek funding to facilitate PhD level studies at international partner institutions of rock art research.	SCTH Antiquities Sector	Najrān University, International Missions, Najrān Regional Museum
P8.2 Through the Centre, introduce lectures or modules on rock art in archaeology departments in both Riyadh and Najrān universities, including input from international scholars.	SCTH Antiquities Sector	Najrān University, International Missions, Najrān Regional Museum
P8.3 Najrān University and Najrān Regional Museum to play an active role in promoting the educational potential of the sites.	SCTH Antiquities Sector	Najrān University, International Missions, Najrān Regional Museum
P8.4 Maintain hard and electronic copies of all reports and publications relating to the rock art sites in in the SCTH Resource Centre and the Centre for Rock Art Research in Najrān.	SCTH Antiquities Sector	Najrān University, International Missions, Najrān Regional Museum
P9.1 Upgrade interior of building as overnight accommodation and office space for research teams.	SCTH Antiquities Sector, SCTH Support Sector	Research teams (consulted)
P9.2 Work with research teams to identify their needs that will need to be accommodated in the research/visitor centre.	SCTH Antiquities Sector, SCTH Support Sector	Research teams (consulted)
P9.3 In upgrading the research/visitor centre building introduce measures that will reduce energy and water resource use.	SCTH Antiquities Sector, SCTH Support Sector	Research teams (consulted)
P10.1 Work with research and excavation teams to identify the best ways in which excavated sites can be protected, including back filling methodologies.	SCTH Antiquities Sector	Research teams
P10.2 Identify exposed excavations and undertake necessary actions to protect them.	SCTH Antiquities Sector	Research teams
P10.3 Make it a condition of excavation permits to satisfactorily protect and conserve any material exposed as a result of the excavations.	SCTH Antiquities Sector	Research teams
I6.1 As part of the new Najrān Museum appoint an education specialist to work with the museum designers to develop displays that are suitable and attractive to various age groups.	Najrān Regional Museum	SCTH Najrān Branch
I6.2 Commission from an education specialist, educational materials, including teacher guides, linking the exhibition material to the Saudi Ministry of Education curriculum.	Najrān Regional Museum	SCTH Najrān Branch
I6.3 Train education officers to work in the Museum to liaise with schools and guide school visits.	Najrān Regional Museum	SCTH Najrān Branch

Action	Responsible	Partners
V3.1 Build on established links with community leaders to promote the values of protecting the cultural and natural environment	SCTH Antiquities Sector, SCTH Investment and Marketing Sector, Najrān Regional Museum	Ministry of Interior, Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of Culture
V3.2 Identify ways in which these messages can be passed onto community members and younger generations, including through social media.	SCTH Antiquities Sector, SCTH Investment and Marketing Sector, Najrān Regional Museum	Ministry of Interior, Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of Culture
V3.3 Najrān Regional Museum to organise regular events and activities focused on cultural heritage sites and their importance to the region.	SCTH Antiquities Sector, SCTH Investment and Marketing Sector, Najrān Regional Museum	Ministry of Culture
V4.1 Undertake carrying capacity studies to determine the maximum number of visitors per group to the various sites that will not cause damage to or endanger the rock art	SCTH Antiquities Sector	Local Guides Association
V4.2 Enforce these numbers through guides and tour booking systems	SCTH Antiquities Sector	Local Guides Association, SCTH Investment and Marketing Sector
V4.3 Based on number of bookings and visitation patterns over the first three years following inscription establish what other visitor facilities or management measures need to be put in place.	SCTH Antiquities Sector	Local Guides Association, SCTH Investment and Marketing Sector



#### 7.4 Category D: Desirable and future actions

These are actions linked to good practice and aspirational policies linked to the long term objectives for the region and the future sustainability of the cultural heritage assets. They include steps that will need to be taken in support of future projects. A time horizon of up to ten years is foreseen, with actions being implemented between 1442-1450 AH (2021-2028)

Action	Responsible	Partners
P11.1 Evaluate previously unrecorded sites that are brought to light through new surveys to establish their significance.	SCTH World Heritage Unit	SCTH Antiquities Sector
P11.2 Based on the significance, location and levels of threat, identify the means of protection that will be necessary	SCTH World Heritage Unit	SCTH Antiquities Sector
P11.3 If newly discovered sites are deemed to be scientifically significant, prepare proposals to submit to UNESCO for an extension to the serial site and/or the buffer zone.	SCTH World Heritage Unit	SCTH Antiquities Sector
T4.1 Ensure that the ecologically conscious development of the cultural sites and buffer zone in design (Policy 3) and operation (Policies N2 and N3) is publicised to visitors.	SCTH Marketing Department	Ministry of Environment
T4.2 By partnering with the Uruq Bani Mu'arid Protected Area and other eco-tourism activities, strengthen the appeal of the sites as eco-tourism and low impact visitor destinations, and through joint marketing increase the appeal of the sites to a wider audience.	SCTH Marketing Department	Ministry of Environment
N4.1 Undertake view-shed studies to determine views of the sites from key vantage points, to include landscape features and land formations that contribute to the understanding and study of the sites.	SCTH World Heritage Site Unit	Local Municipality



PART 4  
APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1. REFERENCE SOURCES

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