



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

State Party

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

State, Province or Region

Maftaq Governorate

Name of nominated Property

Umm Al-Jimāl

Geographical coordinates to the nearest second

32° 19' 37" N, 36° 22' 12" E

Textual description of the boundary(ies) of the nominated property

Umm Al-Jimāl extends over an area of 42,584 hectares and includes a variety of archaeological remains. The ancient town forms a rough parallelogram from south to north. Its remains are visible from the air as a 400m x 800m area of ruins flanked on its sides by the modern village of the same name.

A4 or A3 size map(s) of the nominated property, showing boundaries and buffer zone (if present)

Annex 17 provides two A3 size maps and Annex 14 one A4 size map that show the clear boundaries of the property and buffer zone.

Criteria under which property is nominated (itemize criteria)

Umm Al-Jimāl is proposed to be nominated to the UNESCO World Heritage list under criteria (iii), (iv), and (v):

Criterion (iii): to bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared;

Criterion (iv): be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history;

Criterion (v): be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change.

Cultural Landscape

No

Draft Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

Brief synthesis

Umm Al-Jimāl is an exceptional example of a stunningly preserved rural settlement that showcases local architectural tradition, technological expertise, and adaptation over centuries of foreign and local imperial rule. Located in the Hauran, a basaltic plateau that stretches across Southern Syria and Northern Jordan, Umm Al-Jimāl is nestled in a fork where two wadis (dry riverbeds) join: the intentional placement of the site near these resources and the subsequent construction of a water catchment system allowed the people of Umm Al-Jimāl to thrive in an area with little rainfall.

The bulk of extant basaltic architecture at the site dates from the 5th through the 8th centuries CE, rendering these impressive remains an outstanding testimony to local rural life in the Late Antique and Early Islamic periods. The full occupational history of Umm Al-Jimāl runs from the 1st century CE to modern times; therefore, the site is a vital record of not only ancient civilization, but also of modern life and of shared traditions and culture over the centuries. The involvement of the local community and their investment in Umm Al-Jimāl as their tangible and intangible heritage is an essential component in site preservation and modern sustainability.

Justification for criteria

Criterion (iii): Umm Al-Jimāl's impressively preserved ruins bring local rural life in the ancient Hauran back to life, allowing visitors to walk the original paths of a sustainable agricultural settlement that retained its strong local character over many centuries of outside change and influence. Many local traditions and skills are still alive in the modern Hauranian community.

Criterion (iv): Umm Al-Jimāl is an outstanding example of ancient rural life and sustainable settlement in the Hauran: the array of domestic, religious, and military structures built across the centuries, the still-functioning ancient water catchment system, and their collective state of preservation is unparalleled in the region. The stunning ruins display the unique historical and regional architectural style of the Hauranian people.

Criterion (v): Umm Al-Jimāl is a stunningly well preserved ancient rural town, sustained by a complex water system designed and built according to local Hauranian traditions. The sprawling settlement is testament to the skill, innovation, and tenacity of local communities under centuries of outside authority. The modern community have embraced Umm Al-Jimāl as part of their cultural heritage, yet even now when modernization, climate change, and a lack of economic opportunity threaten many of their Hauranian traditions.

Statement of integrity

Umm Al-Jimāl is the most complete surviving example of an ancient Hauranian settlement and is remarkable because of its integrity. The site offers an holistic representation of structures and community-use areas from more than 150 individual houses to nearly twenty places of worship representing paganism, Christianity, and Islam, as well as large imperial military and administrative structures, and community infrastructure of roads and water management, all enclosed within an intact ancient town wall. No other site offers such a complete ensemble of this significant stage in human history and, though preserved in the form of ruins, the site's excellent preservation, virtually untouched by modern development, makes it an unparalleled testament to ancient Hauranian culture and local human-environment interaction. Despite regional conflict and the irreversible change of climatic and humanitarian crises, ancient Umm Al-Jimāl persists, and local, national, and international partnerships remain committed to maintaining its wholeness.

Statement of authenticity

Umm Al-Jimāl is an authentic representation of traditional Hauranian life, ancient and modern. Key qualities that strongly express the outstanding universal values of the site include: the organic form and design of the settlement, tribal/kinship-based; the traditional Hauranian basaltic architecture and house layout displays the importance of agriculture and animal husbandry; the hundreds of inscriptions from the over the centuries show the evolution of language to modern Arabic; and beyond the physical, the site and the intangible local heritage that it represents and preserves holds strong meaning for the modern people living adjacent to the site, and to all Hauranian communities.

Only one building was reconstructed, and this was later repurposed into the museum and visitor's center. At present, only conservation according to international standards is undertaken. Preparation of the site for tourism will not alter the site's outstanding attributes.

Requirements for protection and management

Umm Al-Jimāl is protected by Antiquities Law 21/1988 administered by the Department of Antiquities of Jordan (DOA) under the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (MOTA). A comprehensive Umm Al-Jimāl Site Management Plan (UJSMP) provides a framework based on the existing management system for the preservation of Umm Al-Jimāl and its outstanding values, and addresses persistent threats to the site including environmental changes, looting, and economic instability. The plan will be implemented by the DOA Site Management Directorate (SMD) who will oversee the formation of the Umm Al-Jimāl Joint Committee (UJ-JC) made up of technical experts and key stakeholders. The tasks of the UJ-JC will be to create the Umm Al-Jimāl Site Annual Plan (UJSAP), and subsequently to regularly report on that plan to the SMD and the DOA Director General. The SMD will provide an expert Umm Al-Jimāl Site Management Unit (UJSMU) whose role is to implement, monitor, and report on the UJSMP. The DOA works collaboratively with stakeholders for the protection of the ancient site and management of the Buffer Zone surrounding it. Key efforts of the UJSMP include the development of amenities and materials to guide tourist behavior and site monitoring for safety and site integrity. In keeping with Umm Al-Jimāl's OUVs, the local community is frequently engaged through print materials, training workshops for site workers, and educational opportunities so that adults and children alike can foster an affinity for the site and cultural heritage generally.

Name and contact information of official local institution/agency

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