



Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

World Heritage Sites

Historic Jeddah, the Gate to Makkah (Reference Number 1361)

State of Conservation Report

Drafted in October 2024

List of Abbreviations

BRDP	Al Balad Regeneration and Development Plan
GIS	Geographic Information System
HIA	Heritage Impact Assessment
HUL	Historic Urban Landscape
JHD	Jeddah Historical District
MoC	Ministry of Culture
OUV	Outstanding Universal Value
SoC	State of Conservation
WHC	World Heritage Committee

1 Executive Summary

Jeddah Historic District has prepared an updated State of Conservation (SoC) Report for *Historic Jeddah, the Gate to Makkah* in response to the World Heritage Committee's request. This report, to be reviewed during the Committee's 47th session in 2025, presents a detailed assessment of the conservation status of this UNESCO World Heritage site. It outlines significant achievements and ongoing challenges, reflecting the Kingdom's dedication to preserving the site in line with UNESCO's conservation standards.

Key Developments and Achievements:

GIS, Assessments and Conservation Projects

The Jeddah Historic District Programme, Ministry of Culture has developed a GIS covering both the property and its buffer zone. This database includes historical buildings, urban planning, and administrative data, and is managed by the JHD Heritage, Culture, and Archaeology Department to ensure regular updates and maintenance.

Ensuring the Adequate Protection, Conservation and Management of the Property

A comprehensive evaluation of Historic Jeddah's built heritage, including early 20th-century buildings and mosques, has been conducted. This effort establishes categorization and protection levels for individual buildings and urban areas.

In alignment with the strategy to ensure the highest restoration standards, one main new technical guideline has been introduced: "Interior Design for Heritage Buildings", aimed at assisting architects, designers, and developers.

Archaeology has become integral to the preservation and urban regeneration strategy. This approach ensures that archaeological discoveries are conserved and integrated into ongoing restoration projects and urban landscapes.

Significant progress has been made in managing and safeguarding *Historic Jeddah, the Gate to Makkah* through collaboration with residents, stakeholders, property owners, and experts, balancing cultural heritage preservation with urban development. The Historic Jeddah Heritage and Archaeology Committee (HJHAC) ensures compliance with preservation standards, while cultural activities enhance community engagement.

Advise on the JHD Experience

Drawing on ten years of property management experience, the Al Balad Regeneration and Development Plan (BRDP) has been updated to maximize positive impacts and mitigate negative effects on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV). This includes the production of specialized studies and analyses to identify the best urban and regulatory strategies.

The regeneration of the Jeddah Historic District (JHD) is guided by comprehensive conservation methods and practices aimed at preserving the authenticity and integrity of its heritage buildings. A comprehensive intervention plan spanning both medium- and long-term actions (2019–2030) has been established, complemented by a strategy for the adaptive reuse of heritage structures. Serving as a centralized authority on all matters related to Historic Jeddah, the JHD has effectively and carefully executed its mandate, underpinned by its business model, a sound strategic framework and well-defined tools tailored to the district's conservation needs.

Advanced monitoring and predictive modelling systems have been implemented to address groundwater fluctuations and potential risks, ensuring long-term conservation of Al Balad's cultural heritage.

Risk Management and Prevention Plan

A comprehensive Risk Management and Prevention Plan has been developed, identifying key risks and devising strategies and protocols to address them, ensuring a thorough approach to safeguarding the site.

HUL Approach

The HUL approach is being applied to integrate conservation strategies with local development. This method allows for the coexistence of various historical layers, from archaeological findings to modern architecture, enhancing understanding of the city's evolution from past to present, reinforced by hosting a range of cultural activities that play a vital role in revitalizing the historic centre.

HIA Implementation

In line with UNESCO and Advisory Bodies' Guidance and Toolkit, the "Heritage Impact Assessment for Al Balad Booklet" has been developed to address the unique local heritage context. The HIA is now a critical element of the restoration, rehabilitation, and urban regeneration efforts. It is directly linked to building permits and serves as an integral part of the decision-making process within the property, its buffer zone, and the wider surrounding area.

Historic Jeddah is effectively balancing heritage preservation with urban regeneration, harmonizing modern development with historical values. Through cultural activities and the UNESCO Historic Urban Landscape approach, JHD seeks to revitalize Al Balad as a vibrant community while preserving its Outstanding Universal Value. The Kingdom's sustained commitment to these efforts ensures that *Historic Jeddah, the Gate to Makkah* remains a dynamic and culturally significant site in a modern context.