

CONSERVATION STRATEGIES AND METHODS OF DEALING WITH THE HERITAGE IN THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA

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Keywords: conservation, cultural heritage, methods, Saudi Arabia

DOI: 10.48255/1973-9494.JCSCH.21.2021.11

1. Introduction

The rapid progress of urbanisation in the past four decades in many cities of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), and the quest to achieve a rapid civilisational shift to keep up with the times, has led to insufficient opportunities to identify and distinguish the architectural heritage. That is why many traditional areas and their valuable heritage have been neglected, invaded and sometimes removed to make way for the construction of new buildings. As a result, many historical buildings have stopped performing their primary function, either because any changes that have been made are unsuitable, or the spaces are not fit for use as accommodation. They now stand empty, despite their unique architectural values.

This research reflects the importance of the concept of re-use of the building, or the entire heritage region, either for the same use or a new use with limited intervention, as well as taking into consideration the privacy of the building. Hence, there is no development without heritage conservation and protection [1-2]. This paper also discusses methods of dealing with the architectural heritage in the KSA and its conservation and the study employs an analytical inductive approach. The data was collected through the literature and an analysis of one of the heritage sites in the KSA. The study looks at the properties of the heritage architecture and discusses several common strategies for its conservation. The results provided will be helpful to deduce methods of dealing with heritage buildings in the KSA and find a systematic way to deal with historic sites for future conservation plans.

2. The heritage of traditional architecture in the KSA

The local traditional architecture clearly reflects the properties of the heritage components in the Kingdom. It is also a reflection of the ideological and philosophical beliefs that are ingrained in the religion of the Kingdom. However, it is important to be aware that this traditional architecture also reflects the capabilities of previous builders to use a distinct style in their Islamic Arabic structures, characterised by the local image that stems from the spirit of the place and its authentic traditions. It should also be

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noted that traditional architecture is not, as many consider it, merely the use of local raw materials in a primitive form, but is, in fact, the high-tech architecture of its era with regard to methods of construction and formation. This primarily includes functional architecture and is evident in the spatial relationships of the simplest traditional homes [3-4], as well as in the environmental considerations which include a selection of elements, such as wind catchers, *barajeeel* (architectural means of cooling indoor spaces) and advanced construction methods, as seen in the vaults and domes.

Traditional architecture, moreover, reflects local style and character, as it is designed by the local people who are generally isolated from the world around them [5]. In other words, traditional architecture has been influenced by many factors which have been important in supporting and strengthening the local ideas of architecture and urbanisation.

In many areas of the Kingdom, traditional architecture retained its identity, characteristics and distinctive architectural features for a long period of time. This was the result of its relative isolation and its distance from external influences. With modern development in the cities of the Kingdom for more than four decades, as previously mentioned, many of them have been exposed to vast architectural challenges.

In particular, the Kingdom displays new architectural trends and philosophies which deviate from its customs, traditions, and ideological and environmental conditions [6-7]. These changes have been implemented in the name of modernism, when in reality there is no modernism without originality [7-8]. Nations and individuals are always associated with their past; therefore, local people keep their experiences intact and pass them on as lessons for present and future generations.

It is noticeable in the Arabic language that the word "authentic" (*Aseeel*) refers to something that is associated with a certain origin. In the book "Lesan Al Arab", the word "rooting" (*Taaseel*) means consolidating and strengthening something in order to build on to it [9]. Therefore, the "rooting" of architectural values within the heritage components refers to making use of the original values and the thinking processes behind the successful architectural solutions that have already helped to reconcile the human requirements of those ages with the resources available in the surrounding environment.

In many cities, the local and traditional architecture has lost its identity. The specialised authorities in the Kingdom have been alerted to the seriousness of this situation. In brief, the positive and negative factors affecting the urban heritage are as follows:

Positive effects, which give value to the urban heritage, are divided into:

- Historical social effects: these refer to the historical registration of life images in a certain period for a certain community through heritage components.
- Artistic technological effects: these refer to the registration of the artistic and technological models and patterns in a certain period.
- Existential attachment effects: these refer to the registration of the existential attachment of the community to certain events, or a certain memory of the pioneering historians.
- Negative effects, or destructive effects, are divided into:
 - External effects: for example, climatic, biological and natural disasters.
 - Internal effects: for example, structural effects.
 - Human effects: for example, human behaviour and pollutants.

After determining the positive and negative effects on urban heritage, it is important to define the term “conservation”, which can be considered as a single action, or several actions taken together, to prevent damage or erosion of the heritage. It includes all methods that will prolong the survival of the urban heritage, from massive chambers to the smallest work of art [10]. It is also defined as a process by which individuals or groups attempt to protect valued buildings from unwanted change [11]. Generally, conservation maintains the value and purpose of the urban heritage. These values help to set priorities and approaches for intervention in maintenance of the heritage and can be divided into three groups:

- Existential values: for example, symbolism, continuity and memorabilia.
- Cultural values: for example, history, monuments and aesthetics.
- Utilitarian values: for example, functional, social and economic values.

In general, heritage conservation aims at conveying the cultural message contained in the heritage as a good image, as well as integrating the past, present and future of the society into one continuous system for future generations.

3. Steps in the development of heritage conservation strategies

The strategy developed for heritage conservation has been linked worldwide to the development of human civilisation itself and thus has been the strongest link to the extent to which this civilisation is concerned with the issue of heritage in general. A list of heritage items, which are evidence of this civilisation and are included in conservation strategies, is reported below [12].

- Assembly and display of pieces with archaeological value.
- Archaeological sites of historical value.
- Architectural heritage of single buildings of historical value.
- Architectural and urban heritage also includes whole groups of buildings or neighbourhoods.

The cultural heritage of any country is not viewed as the sole property of that country but is considered the property of all mankind [13]. The conservation of this heritage is, therefore, a universal responsibility and has been laid down in the form of international charters. With these conventions, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation [14] follows up on the work that countries carry out to conserve the heritage along with the provision of necessary funding and expertise to cover heritage conservation requirements [15].

One of the first charters was the Athens Charter in 1931, followed by the Venice Charter in 1964. Both focus on the preservation of historic sites and monuments [16]. It came as a comprehensive code for the practical application of conservation operations and is still a guide for all emerging international conventions [16-17]. Over time, the agreements have multiplied. In the KSA too, heritage conservation strategies have been adopted over time. Figure 1 illustrates the stages in the development of heritage conservation strategies.

The policy of conservation makes historical areas the centre for cultural activities and gives them a central role in the cultural development of the communities around them. Through the recommendations of the Nairobi Charter (1976), conservation policy has focused on the following points:

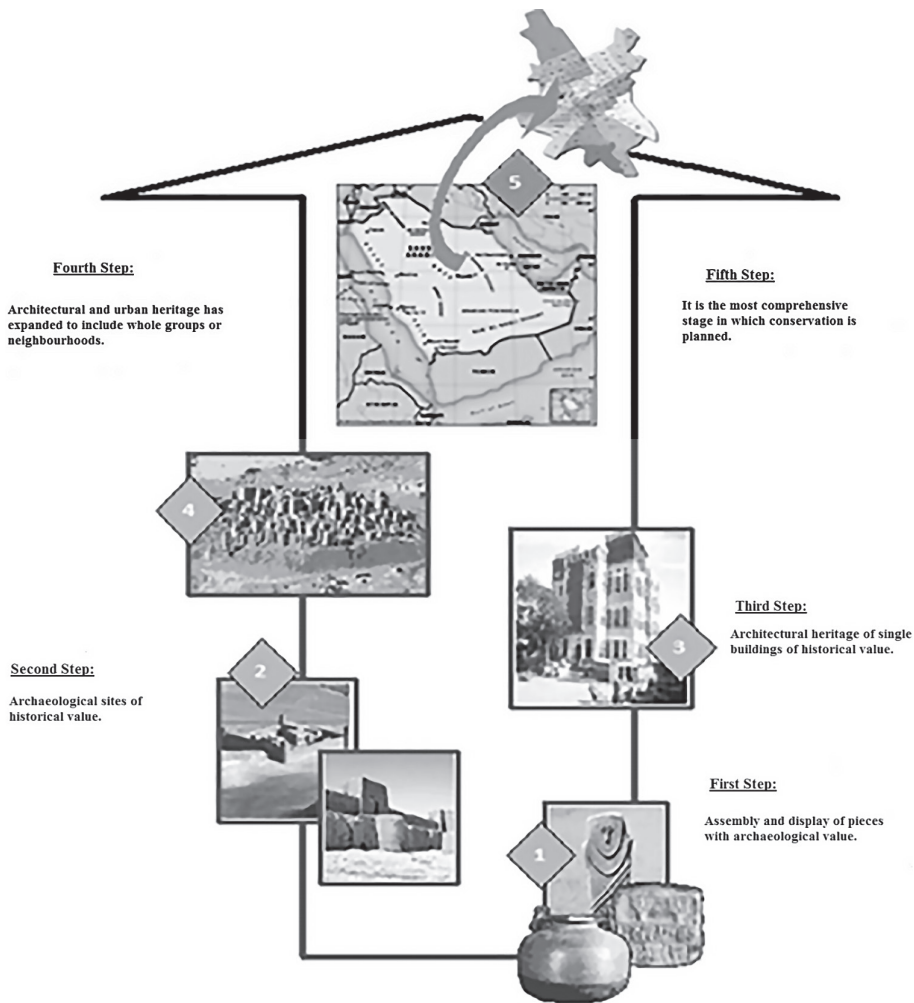


Figure 1. Development stages of heritage conservation strategies in the KSA.

- Historical areas should be protected from defacement while constructing buildings, telephone facilities, installing television antennas, large billboards, posters, and electrical advertisements. When these things are present, appropriate procedures must be taken to remove them. Thus, street pavements, for example, should be carefully planned and maintained [18].
- Historical and surrounding areas should also be spared from the growing environmental damage caused by harmful industries by moving them away from these areas. This can also be done, for example, by taking preventive measures to address the noise and effects of vibration from machinery and vehicles in the vicinity.
- Historical areas that have characteristics from different time periods must make each time period clearly visible.

The concept of conservation policy in the Appleton Charter of 1983 referred to modification of the location, the building or function of the building to suit the contemporary functional standards, which could include adapting the building for a new use [19].

The concept of conservation policy in the Washington Charter of 1987, was to conserve historical cities and urban areas. The Charter ensures that the goal of conservation can be achieved through the following points [20]:

- New activities and functions must follow the character of a historical city or an urban region.
- The process of housing improvement must be one of the primary objectives of conservation.
- Continuous maintenance is decisive for the effective conservation of historical cities or urban regions.

The conservation policy in the Burra Charter of 1999 is concerned with the concepts of rehabilitation, use and adaptation, as methods to preserve buildings and regions of cultural discrimination. It explains that the reason for maintaining these regions is that they enrich the lives of people, provide a deep connection with the society and the environment, and offers past living experiences [21]. This Charter applies to all places of cultural excellence, which include areas with distinct environmental characteristics. Recommendations in the conservation policy of the Burra Charter focus on the following points [21]:

- For the conservation of any place and to make it suitable for use, it is necessary to take into consideration all distinctive cultural and environmental features, without unnecessary attention to one of these values at the expense of others.
- Conservation requires the re-employment of the appropriate visual environment and other relationships that contribute to the cultural distinction of the place.
- Careful intervention to change, taking into account the necessary conservation measures and, at the same time, choosing the least possible change to preserve the cultural excellence of the heritage.

In accordance with the Vienna Charter of 2005, which is one of the latest international conventions, conservation means to disclose the status of the original building within the available materials at the site [18]. This concept has changed from the old concept of restoring the building to its original image and building the missing elements. Furthermore, the concept of re-employment means the re-use of the building or the entire heritage region for the same use, or new use, with limited interventions, taking into account the privacy of the building. This concept adapts to buildings and regions that tolerate minor change for this use. This approach allows for the comprehensive development of all the neighbouring regions, provided that the permitted functions are carefully selected [22].

4. Strategies for dealing with heritage components

Conservation is the main strategy under which there are many sub-strategies to deal with heritage, such as preservation, restoration, consolidation, maintenance and re-use, as illustrated in Figure 2.

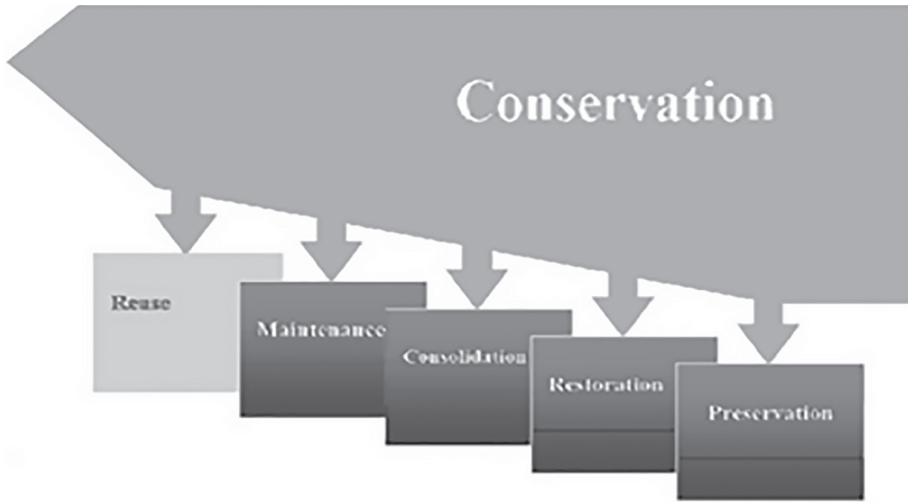


Figure 2. From conservation strategies and related branches to strategies of re-use.

Preservation is limited to taking the necessary measures to prevent further changes or halt the deterioration of heritage components. Conservation is to maintain the components without changing their features in terms of architectural form.

Restoration is the process of restoring the heritage component to its first state, when it was created, taking into account that the restoration is done, so as not to obscure the distinctive architectural features of the component and in a way that makes it easy to distinguish between the old parts and the parts that were built later.

Consolidation means to put together so that the recovery of its durability can be ensured, keeping in mind its continued safety.

Maintenance is the process of daily and periodic care of the heritage component, such as repairing damaged paintwork for wood and metals, and finishing work and paintwork for the walls, as well as any emergency issues in sanitary, electrical equipment and insulation.

Re-use conserves the heritage component by re-using it, either with the same function to meet the requirements of the time or by giving it another function that is different from the original one, which is the focus of this research. The word “adaptive”, means to become familiar with the new situation and, by adding “re-use” to the original word, forms the term “adaptive reuse”, which means re-employment with the adaptation of the heritage component to its new function.

5. Methodologies for the re-use of heritage

There are many names for the different approaches (Figure 3) used in the re-use of heritage components, in terms of intervention and special treatments [23]. Conservation maintains the heritage component; although, its original function changes to a different one to meet the needs of its new role.

Recycling in architecture means the heritage component enters the cycle of use again, either with the same original function or a different one altogether.

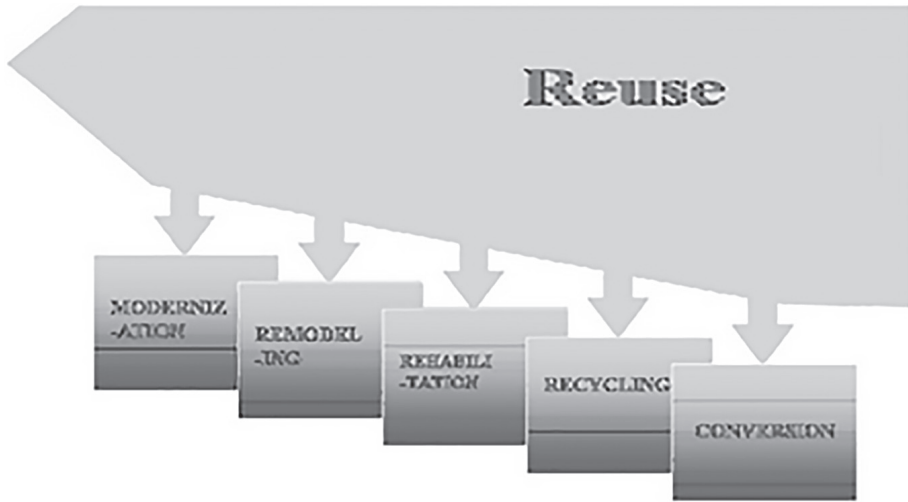


Figure 3. Methodologies for re-use.

Rehabilitation aims to rehabilitate the heritage component, in order to perform its current function in a better way, even though it is customary to use this term in planning, urban design and housing projects in particular, the term is also applied to individual heritage components. Furthermore, anything that is damaged or deteriorated inside or outside the building generally returns to its original state.

Remodelling the heritage components is one of the approaches to re-employment used to incorporate new functions into the old heritage component but must be done very cautiously.

Modernisation is intended to introduce modern elements into the heritage component in order to meet the requirements of the present time, such as incorporating modern lighting methods, or any other new element required by the component to fully carry out its function, while preserving the form of the heritage component and its internal features and distinctive character as much as possible.

It is noted that there are several synonyms with the same meaning, which are "revival", "renovation", and "revitalisation". However, the word "renewal" has the same meaning, and namely that the heritage component, or its remains, can be removed and replaced by another component with the same old characteristics, as if it had undergone a process of substitution. Another term, "re-architecture", has been used by Cantacuzino in his book [24], in which he has clarified many aspects on the subject by expanding the concept of re-using heritage components.

The preparation of programs and future plans is one of the first measures that help activate the process of heritage conservation through re-employment of the heritage components [24-25]. Preparing conservation programmes also provides aid to furthering cultural liberation, to returning to the unique architectural heritage, and contributes to restoring the Arab and Islamic environment which has greatly declined in the face of cultural invasion and unlimited architectural imports.

It is known that, in the process of implementing any project, a series of different studies are needed to reach an optimal solution; the same applies to the conservation

process when re-using the heritage component. Hence, to be properly conducted, two types of studies must be carried out:

- First: studies relating to the current condition of the heritage.
- Second: studies relating to the re-use of the heritage.

Studies related to the current situation are divided into stages. They start with the general urban fabric or the general plan, which includes the study of the location, from the region, the city, the road networks, and the relationship of the building site with the city's axes of power and attractions, to the building site itself or the immediate surrounding area. This naturally involves an examination of the city's streets, buildings, environmental constituents, construction authority and laws. Figure 4 lists the stages in conservation studies to follow, together with the necessary actions to adopt to reach the final solution proposed for the reuse of the heritage components under examination.

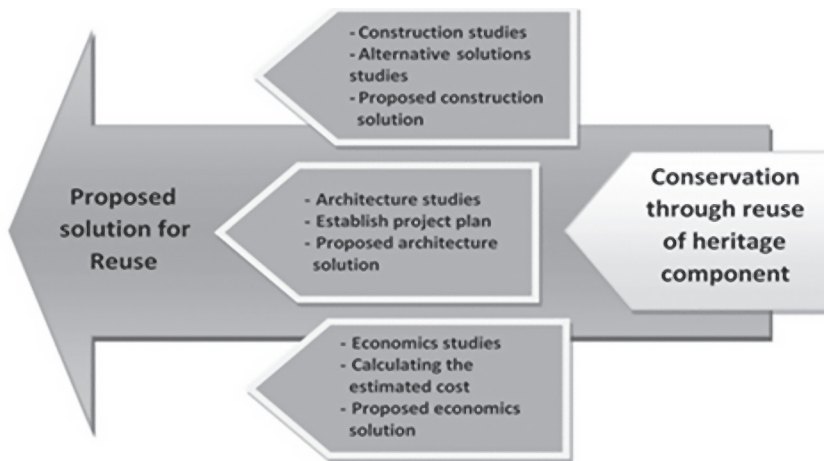


Figure 4. Stages in conservation studies, through the reuse of heritage components, to reach proposed solutions.

There is no doubt that the re-use of heritage components with new functions is in line with current ideas since, in addition to conservation of the buildings' characteristics and their urban structure, re-use helps in developing the surrounding area, including the urban fabric as a whole. Based on the above, the levels for implementing the conservation strategy for the re-use of heritage components have been limited to the following three, as shown in Figure 5.

- First: application at the level of the heritage component.
- Second: application at the level of the heritage space (directly surrounding area).
- Third: application at the level of the urban fabric (general plan).

Based on the above, it is evident that a practical application of heritage conservation projects sponsored by government agencies using their experts and equipment is necessary and must be preceded by evidence and models completed by the same agencies. These projects must certainly meet basic conditions so that their authentic-

ity and modernism are not in contrast with each other. There is a wide area of convergence between them, represented by contemporary innovation and creativity, which are, at the same time, based on Arab and Islamic characteristics. Among these pioneering examples in the Kingdom is the development project for the Al-Turaif neighbourhood, in the historical town of Al-Diriyah, which combines many of the conservation models.

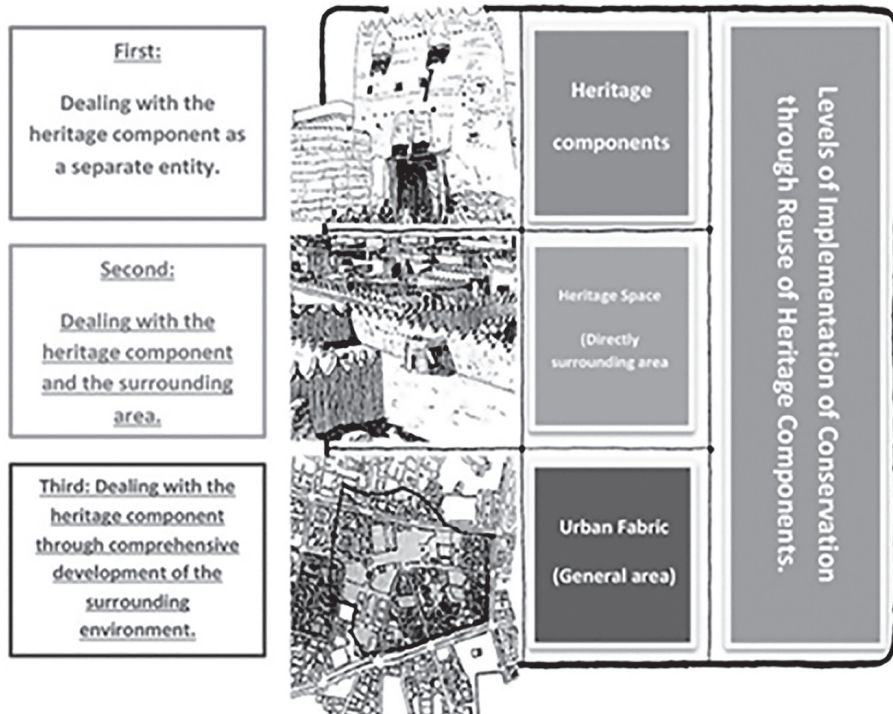


Figure 5. Showing the three levels of implementing conservation strategies for heritage components.

6. Conservation project on the heritage in KSA

Al-Diriyah is a name attributed to its people, for it is the fortress of the Al-Durua, a tribe that settled in the Hanifa valley; the date of their arrival coincides with the establishment of the town of Al-Diriyah in 1446 A.D at the same location [14, 26]. Later, in 1744 A.D., it became the capital of Saudi Arabia [14, 26], representing a pivotal point in the history of the Arabian Peninsula in particular, and in Arab and Islamic history in general; since it was a period of stability and prosperity, it managed to unite most of the Arabian Peninsula under the umbrella of one state. In the heart of the Arabian Peninsula, Al-Diriyah became a destination for trade, culture, knowledge, communication and economic transactions. It was also a centre for business exchanges and a reference point for pilgrimage routes to various parts of the region and a vital link between Asia, Europe and Africa (Figure 6).



Figure 6. View of the most important landmarks in the historical town of Al-Diriyah, North-West of Riyadh.

6.1. Al-Turaif neighbourhood in the historical town of Al-Diriyah

The neighbourhood of Al-Turaif is considered one of the most important historical landmarks of Al-Diriyah, located in northwest Riyadh. It contains the most important historical buildings, palaces and monuments. In the era of the first Saudi state, it also included most of the administrative buildings, such as the Salwa palace, which was established in the late 12th century A.H, as well as the mosque of Imam Mohamed bin Saud, the palace of Saad bin Saud, the palace of Nasser bin Saud and a traditional guesthouse containing a Turaif bath. The district of Al-Turaif was designated as World Heritage in 2010 by UNESCO through conservation plans for this area as a visitor centre and museum [14, 26-27]. These days, the site is full of parks, entertainment venues, museums, and cafes, which attract many visitors. It was included in the world heritage site list after the Al-Turaif Neighbourhood was registered and then approved on July 29, 2010, becoming the second Saudi site on the world heritage list, after the enigmatic archaeological site of Mada'in Saleh (al-Ula) (Figure 7).

The area has been the subject of many development projects, ranging from rehabilitation of the historical sites after documenting and restoring them, to equipping the architectural facilities to accommodate cultural and recreational activities and events within the project for the historical development of Al-Diriyah, which aims in its entirety to become a cultural heritage centre [14].

The Al-Turaif neighbourhood is considered to be the most important landmark for the development of Al-Diriyah since it was the residence of Imam Mohamed Bin Saud and his family, thus it was the seat of government in the first Saudi state. The neighbourhood is also home to most of the important landmarks of the city, palaces and historical buildings, including the Salwa Palace and the mosque of Imam Mohammed Ibn Saud [14].



Figure 7. Al-Turaif neighbourhood in the historical town of Al-Diriyah development project; (a) external view; (b) aerial view; (c) inside view.

The Saudi Commission for Tourism and National Heritage took over the development of Al-Turaif neighbourhood as part of a comprehensive program for the development of the historical town of Al-Diriyah, which aims at reconstructing and transforming it into a cultural tourism centre at national level and placing it in the ranks of world heritage sites [28] (Figure 8).

The project includes the establishment of five museums in several historical palaces in the neighbourhood, simulating the history of the first Saudi state. These include the Museum of Al-Diriyah, the Museum of Social Life, the Military Museum, the Arabian Horses Museum, the Museum of Commerce and Finance, as well as the Centre of Architecture and Heritage Building Methods. The external ruins of the Salwa Palace are to be used for sound, light and multimedia presentations, in which the walls of the palace will be used as screens for a visual and narrative drama that tells the story of the first Saudi state.

The neighbourhood includes Al-Turaif's market, which consists of thirty-eight shops dedicated to handicrafts and traditional restaurants, as well as a centre for visitor reception at the entrance to the neighbourhood and a centre for district management at Fahad Bin Saud Palace, managed by the Saudi Commission for Tourism and National Heritage. There is also the allocation of the Ibrahim Bin Saud Palace as the Documentation Centre for the history of Al-Diriyah, which is managed by the King Abdul Aziz Department. In addition to the creation of corridors and public spaces within the neighbourhood, there is a need to construct pavements and to provide illumination, so as to highlight the heritage value of the neighbourhood [28].



Figure 8. Aerial view of the Al-Turaif neighbourhood.

In general, the museums introduce the history of the first Saudi state through a system of museum components and activities and offers an open view to the visitors among the restored ruins within a designated corridor. It contains displays of the most important spaces of the palace and the events that took place there, in addition to a closed display that includes paintings, sculptures, and museum pieces [28-29].

Moreover, the museums present the customs, traditions and tools, which were once used during the period of prosperity of the first Saudi state in the palace of Omar Bin Saud and the mud buildings adjacent to it. The Military Museum is located within the buildings adjacent to the palace of Thanayan Bin Saud and displays the military aspects in the history of Al-Diriyah, such as tools of war and military battles; an independent museum exhibition also takes place within the palace of Thanayan Bin Saud and displays the story of the defence of Al-Diriyah in its late era.

The Military Museum also aims at introducing Arabian horses and how they were taken care of during the prosperous period of Al-Diriyah. It is located within the buildings adjacent to the palace of Imam Abdullah bin Saud and the adjacent horse stables.

The Museum of Commerce and Finance is located within the buildings of Beit Al-Mal and Masala Moudhi, and presents the economic prosperity witnessed by Al-Diriyah. It provides tourist guidance services for visitors to the Al-Turaif neighbourhood. The offices are located in a modern building opposite Salwa Palace. It offers sound, light, and multimedia presentations. The show features an audio drama that tells the history of the first Saudi state, as well as light projections on Salwa Palace using sound and light technology and five multimedia presentations at selected locations in the neighbourhood.

The Documentation Centre of the History of Al-Diriyah is located in the palace of Ibrahim Bin Saud. It houses a documented reference to the history of Al-Diriyah and Al-Turaif, as well as serving as the headquarters for the task force that performs the re-

search, documentation and studies. The centre works as the administrative headquarters of Al-Turaif neighbourhood and is located in Fahd Bin Saud Palace. The centre manages all the administrative affairs of the Al-Turaif neighbourhood. It also offers traditional products and local handicrafts and is part of a range of renovated buildings dedicated to these activities in the area, as well as a restaurant complex and other visitor services. Imam Mohamed Ibn Saud Mosque has been re-used as a prayer hall, maintaining its original dimensions of approximately 2200 square meters.

7. Results

There is a great need to implement heritage conservation projects that are sponsored by government agencies, using their experts and equipment, and should evidently be preceded by research and models prepared and developed by the same agencies. This study has looked at the most prominent aspects and aims of the development project at Al-Turaif, in Al-Diriyah (northwest Riyadh) and highlighted the most significant elements. In sum:

- The aforementioned activities should be carried out in the Museum of Social Life, the Military Museum, the Arabian Horses Museum, the Museum of Commerce and Finance and the Centre for Architecture and Heritage Building Methods, while the external ruins of the Salwa Palace can be used for sound, light and multimedia presentations. The palace walls can also be used as screens for a visual narrative drama that tells the story of the first Saudi state.
- The initiatives, to be set up in the main square and all the other squares and avenues in the neighbourhood, will allow for celebrations, festivals and official and local activities to be organised and acknowledged, the gardens in the neighbourhood providing a suitable atmosphere for family gatherings, as they are characterised by calm and tranquillity.
- The area's green fields, various plants, palm trees and other types of trees and vegetation, all of which contribute towards the reduction of pollution and air purification, are beneficial for the environment and the people living and working in the neighbourhood or simply visiting.
- The conservation of the historical character of the entire neighbourhood through its heritage components, such as the restoration of the five historical palaces and their re-use as museums. These include the Museum of Al-Diriyah, the Museum of Social Life, the Military Museum, the Arabian Horses Museum and the Museum of Commerce and Finance. A group of mud buildings were also selected for restoration and re-employment for contemporary purposes while preserving their primary characteristics. The Mosque of Imam Muhammad Bin Saud is one of the buildings with a historical dimension located in the neighbourhood and can be re-used as a prayer hall in its original dimensions with a total surface area of about 2200 square meters.

After an analysis of the development project for the Al-Turaif Neighbourhood in the historical town of Al-Diriyah, including the heritage components located on the site, as well as the implementation of the methods of conservation and their re-employment, it can be concluded that the conservation strategy should be implemented in the neighbourhood based on the previous gradient descending. Moreover, all five re-employment methods should be used in the neighbourhood as follows:

Conversion: This method should be applied in the case of the Museum of Al-Diriyah, the Museum of Social Life, the Military Museum, the Arabian Horses Museum, the Museum of Commerce and Finance, as well as the Centre of Architecture and Heritage Building Methods, while the external ruins of Salwa Palace should be re-used for sound and light shows.

Recycling: This method should be adopted for the Mosque of Imam Mohammed Bin Saud and the Mosque of Sabala Moudhi.

Rehabilitation: This should be applied in the case of the Museum of Al-Diriyah, the Museum of Social Life, the Military Museum, the Museum of Commerce and Finance, the Arabian Horses Museum, in addition to the Centre for Architecture and Heritage Building Methods.

Remodelling: The five palaces should be remodelled into museums, as previously described.

Modernisation: This refers to the process of modifying something to meet current requirements or habits. Al-Turaif Market consists of 38 shops dedicated to traditional handicrafts and restaurants, as well as a visitor reception centre at the entrance of the neighbourhood, and the administrative centre of the neighbourhood is held at Fahd Bin Saud Palace.

There are situations in which a building may be re-employed without significant changes. This occurs when the requirements of the new role converge with the requirements of the original function of the building or when the building is of particular importance and converted into a tourist spot, thus retaining the building as it is. This concept is followed when dealing with the five historical palaces, the Mosque of Imam Mohamed bin Saud and the Mosque of Sabala Moudhi.

Moreover, a function that has similar requirements to the original function is introduced. There are cases where a building is re-employed by undergoing several changes and additions. When a heritage construction is extended, the most obvious and simplest solution is to replicate the original design with the addition of contemporary elements to modernise it. Doing so is generally not desirable because the length of time between the two buildings is so great that it is difficult to find the materials used in the original building. This is in addition to the difficulty of finding enough available craftsmen.

It can be noted that the concept of compatibility, even though successful in the work of extensions is the most difficult to achieve, because finding a strong compatibility between old and modern buildings requires studying the old building, its compositional elements and historical background to obtain the desired compatibility, and comes through the compatibility of form, material, or colour. This is followed by dealing with additional contemporary components, such as the use of the external ruins of the Salwa Palace for sound and light presentations.

As previously discussed, the Al-Turaif project contains certain elements that have been developed according to a methodology that combines the strategies of the international charters to conserve the urban heritage and the natural and historical elements of the neighbourhood, showing how important conservation strategies are, including their role in determining how the heritage components in the Kingdom are dealt with.

The Museum of Social Life presents everyday life, customs, traditions and tools used during the period of prosperity of the first Saudi state at the Omar Bin Saud Palace and its mud buildings.

The Military Museum is located within the buildings adjacent to Thanayan Bin Saud Palace and presents the military aspects in the history of Al-Diriyah, such as war tools/

weapons/arms and battles. An independent museum exhibition has also been dedicated to Thanayan Bin Saud Palace, which presents the story of the defence of Al-Diryah in its last days.

The Museum of Commerce and Finance, located among the buildings of Beet Al-Maal and the Sabala Moudhi Mosque, shows the economic prosperity within Al-Diryah, as well as trade, currencies, balances, and *el-awkaf* (donated assets).

8. Conclusion

The conservation of heritage is a call for authenticity, and an attempt to free oneself from the consequences of foreign influences. It is a sincere effort on the part of the concerned parties to try to build a distinguished local identity by spreading awareness among the people based on constructive analytical vision and enlightenment. This depends on the correct understanding of the elements of traditional architecture and its heritage components, not only by surveying archaeological sites and excavations, but also conveying the message to future generations that there is a truly rich urban heritage.

There is no dispute about the concept of heritage as a stock of value that has gained its status and importance through its material continuity across the ages. Hence, it is necessary to support all aspects and views aimed at including all the heritage components registered in the programming of strategies for public conservation. Furthermore, they must be followed by complementary strategies, such as re-employment with its various methods.

The call for heritage conservation should be seen as a national mission of great importance and an invitation to use the spirit of urban, Islamic and Arab heritage. This can be done through the spatial relations of the building components, the high-level privacy of the interior design, the advantages of local environmental materials and the integration of the urban planning with the surrounding environment, in order to establish a harmonious urban setting. As well as further cultural liberation, there must be a return to the distinctive urban heritage and the recovery of its unique values, which have been lost in the face of western cultural invasion. The modern urban situation is not to be handled by embracing slogans or beliefs in the principles of individuals or in the doctrines of the west, but by asserting the authenticity of Arab Islamic urban heritage and believing in the foundations of the Arab Muslim civilisation and the values of its existence.

Nevertheless, raising the level of social awareness of urban heritage and the need to conserve it must be supported by introducing authentic Arab arts, while adopting continuous media and artistic activity in order to promote the message of the Arab Islamic urban heritage in all levels of society. Finally, after presenting the conservation strategies and methods of re-employment of heritage components and results, it is important to identify some general recommendations to preserve the heritage components of the Kingdom, which are limited to the following points.

- Setting the objectives of the conservation strategy: the conservation strategy should be formulated within a comprehensive urban development plan and take into consideration methods of re-employment and appropriate use, as well as the development and renewal of the heritage component with its new role, in light of the changing circumstances of the society.
- Reviewing conservation laws: problems of conservation of heritage components are limited to protection against degradation, demolition, and destruction caused by natural and human influences, therefore, new regulations and laws must be established, and the existing legislation must be reviewed.

- Listing heritage components: it should be noted that these lists are not in themselves a guarantee of conservation, but they are the first step in the conservation process. These lists should be supplemented with information, maps, images and detailed diagrams. They should also be periodically reviewed, in order to add other components whenever necessary and to keep it updated for the future.

In the field of heritage management, it is necessary to consider the need to establish national cadres and train a sufficient number of young people in the Kingdom in cooperation with international bodies in this field.

Acknowledgements

The author thanks all the associated personnel in any reference that has contributed to the purpose of this research.

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Biographical notes

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Summary

The rise of a nation starts with heritage awareness, therefore, the architectural heritage, in particular, the historical heritage of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), not only adds value for the nation as a whole, it is also an integral part of the heritage of humanity. A country cannot develop without the conservation and protection of its heritage. The aim of this research is to suggest that clear methods and strategies are required for the protection and conservation of the heritage components present in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. In this research, several elements are addressed, such as urban heritage, heritage conservation and heritage / historical buildings. Several common strategies in the process of heritage conservation are explored. The research also includes the evaluation of one of the local heritage sites registered on the list of protected world heritage. The results provided in this research can help the concerned bodies to deal more appropriately with the heritage components present in the KSA.

Riassunto

L'ascesa di una nazione inizia con la consapevolezza del proprio patrimonio culturale. Il patrimonio storico del Regno dell'Arabia Saudita (KSA), in particolare, non solo aggiunge valore per la nazione nel suo insieme, ma è anche parte integrante del patrimonio dell'umanità. Un Paese non può svilupparsi senza la conservazione e la protezione del suo patrimonio. Lo scopo di questa ricerca è di suggerire metodi e strategie chiare necessari per la protezione e la conservazione del patrimonio del Regno dell'Arabia Saudita. In questa ricerca vengono affrontati diversi elementi, come il patrimonio urbano, la conservazione del patrimonio e il patrimonio architettonico. Nel lavoro sono presentate diverse strategie comuni nel processo di conservazione del patrimonio. La ricerca prevede anche la valutazione di uno dei siti del patrimonio locale iscritti nell'elenco dei patrimoni dell'umanità protetti. I risultati forniti in questa ricerca possono aiutare gli enti interessati a trattare in modo più appropriato le componenti del patrimonio presenti nella KSA.