

## PILOT PROJECTS FOR TRADITIONAL AREAS IN BAHRAIN

"Conservation & Urban Design Projects for Traditional Areas"

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Ministry of Municipalities Affairs & UN Development Program: Bahrain

### ABSTRACT:

Bahrain has a rich heritage of built environment dating back to antiquity which left us many important of historical buildings and traditional city areas. However, the historical core areas of Bahrain's two oldest towns, Muharraq and Manama, are now under threat. The concern of the government to seek innovative solutions for Bahrain's cultural heritage resulted in adopting the project of "Capacity Building for Enhancement of Urban Governance: Urban Design Projects for Traditional Areas". A team comprised of an appointed project director and a number of international consultants representing various disciplines were assembled for the project with the assistance of the UN Development Program. A period of preliminary research, studies and design lasted from September 2005 till November 2006.

Consultations cost of US\$323,000 was met by the UN Development Program, and the over-head cost was provided by the Ministry of Municipalities Affairs, Bahrain.

The objectives of this project were to develop a comprehensive approach and implementation strategies that would lead to economic regeneration of the traditional historic areas of Manama and Muharraq and to re-integrate them into the daily life of their surrounding community for the benefit of all stakeholders, while conserving and preserving their character and sense of place.

The aim of this urban regeneration is to provide a living and vital environment for residents, businesses and visitors in which all aspects of everyday life can occur in safe and attractive surroundings instead of creating an urban museum. This environment will retain its traditional character and be the basis for future growth, benefiting all stakeholders and the Kingdom of Bahrain as a whole. Pilot Projects of a variety of types will be crucial to starting the revitalization of old urban areas in Manama and Muharraq.



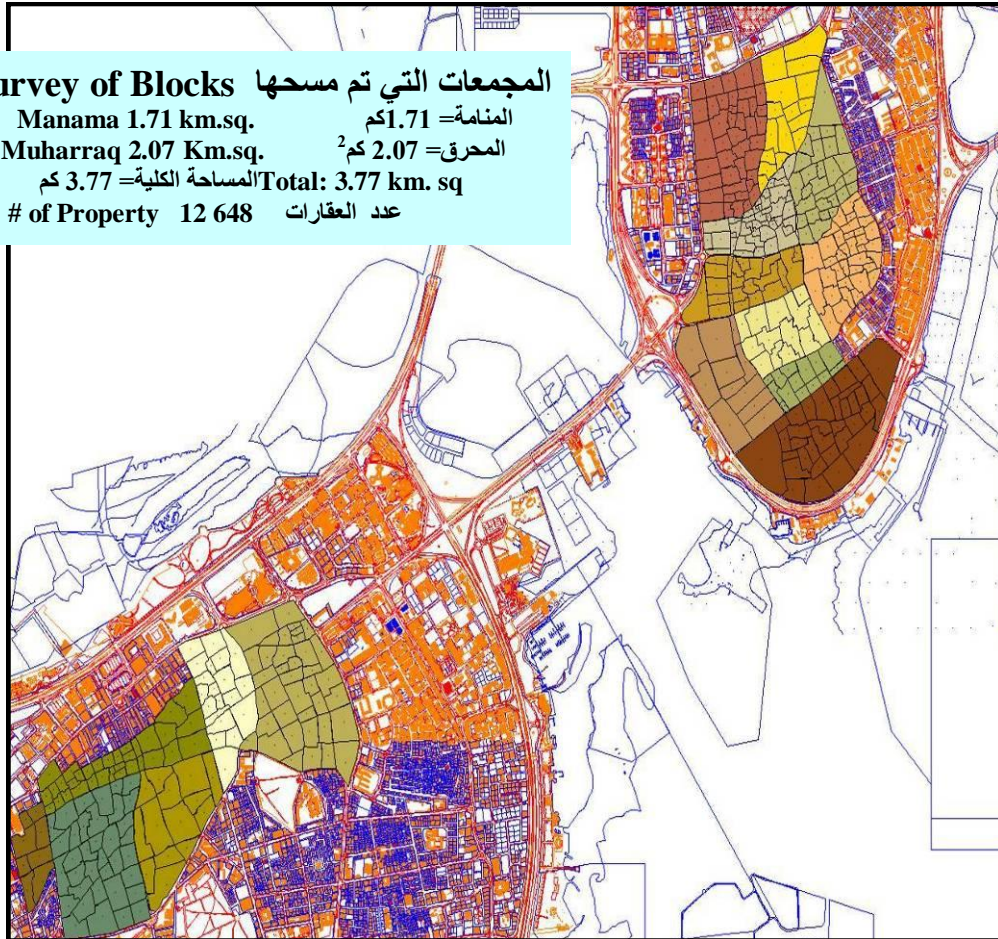
## PROJECT FORMATION:

The Ministry of Municipalities and Agriculture Affairs has been mandated to develop and implement a new urban program which involves a participatory approach and include the concept of sustainable living conditions such as environmental protection and national heritage. The Ministry of Municipalities and Agriculture Affairs is basing this program on the UN system's extensive experience for enhancing national skills and capacity-building programs.

It was determined to bring together a team of international consultants with an intra-ministerial team to review and introduce best practices in applying international standards in an integrated urban approach, focusing on revitalization and preservation of significant urban traditional areas in the Kingdom of Bahrain. The Ministry will apply the above measures in the targeted areas of Muharraq and Manama and will replicate them subsequently in other areas of the Kingdom. On the 3rd of April, 2005, on behalf of the Government of Bahrain; the Minister of Municipalities and Agricultural Affairs signed the agreement with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). Surveys have been carried out in Spring 2006 to cover an area of 3.77 km. sq.; where latest documentation technology was used and more than 20 surveyors were involved in the survey process.

### المجمعات التي تم مسحها Survey of Blocks

Manama 1.71 km.sq.	المنامة = 1.71 كم
Muharraq 2.07 Km.sq.	المحرق = 2.07 كم <sup>2</sup>
Total: 3.77 km. sq المساحة الكلية = 3.77 كم	
# of Property 12 648	عدد العقارات



### **THREE PILOT PROJECTS IN MANAMA & MUHARRAQ:**

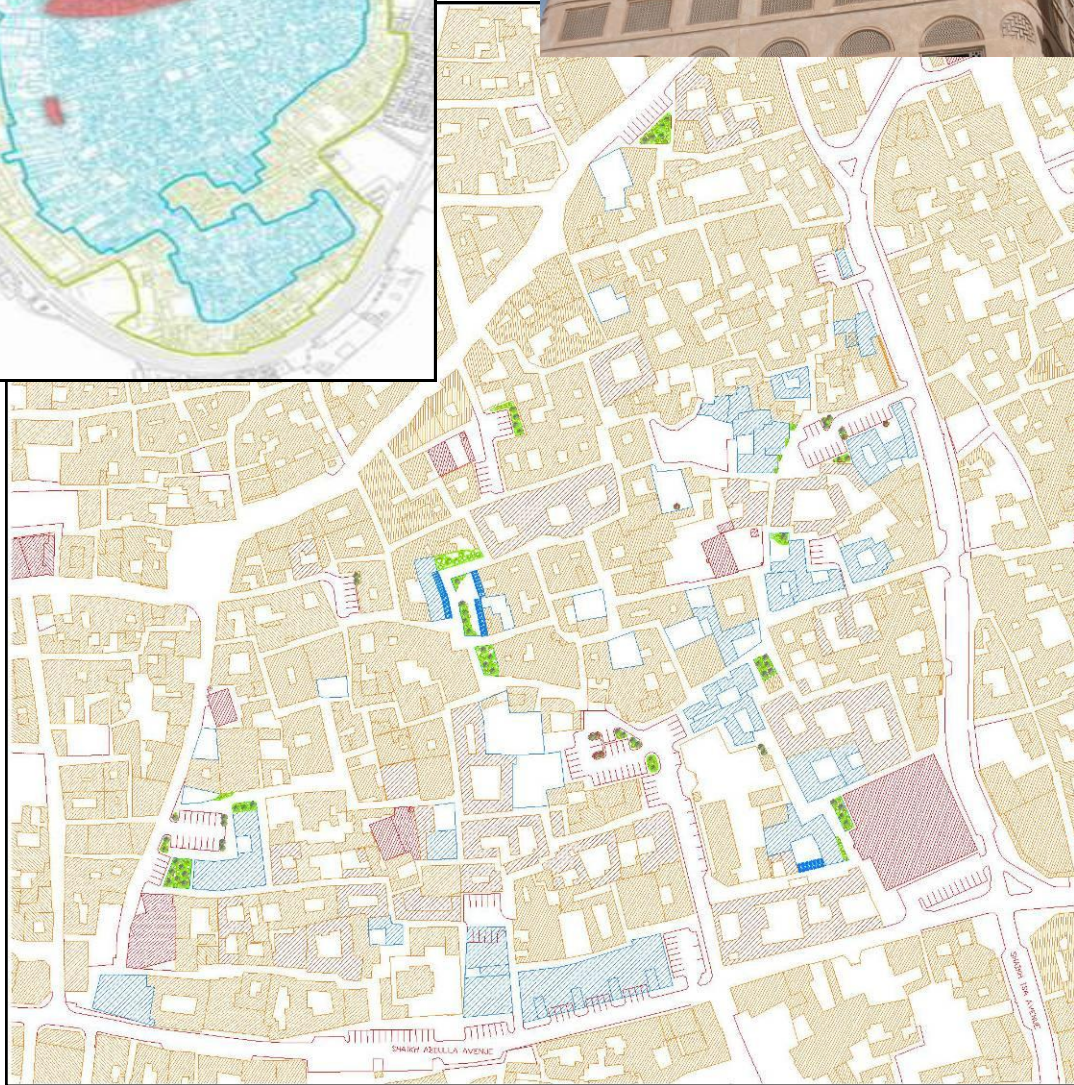
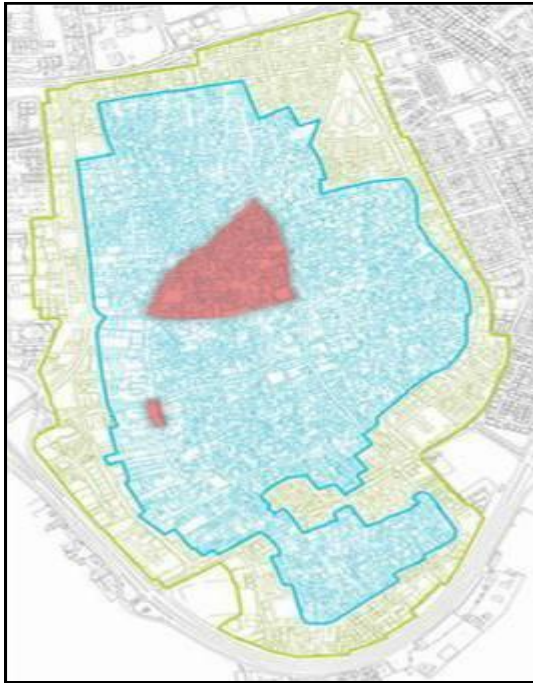
The project has been carried out as an integrated whole, as shown by the backgrounds of the consultants themselves: legal, economics, conservation planning, urban design and coding, restoration, as well as information technology. This demonstrates the importance and interrelationship of each of these areas to the issues involved. It was proposed that the pilot projects in Manama and Muharraq be conducted in the second stage of this current project under the direction of the Project Director, responsible to the Ministry of Municipalities and Agricultural Affairs together with the UNDP. The implementation of both of these projects would create an attractive, middle class residential area, and commercial axis that will be able to compete with the shopping malls.

#### **Pilot Project #1 Muharraq: Cultural Heritage Area**

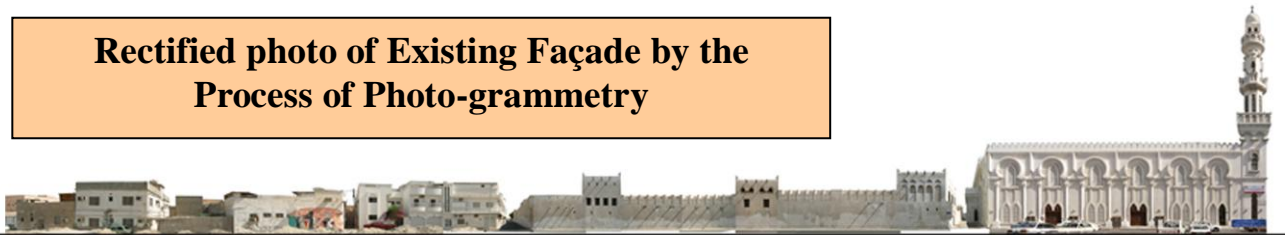
**Team leader: Usam Ghaidan** Architect RIBA, UNESCO Expert

It was proposed to carry out the first Pilot Project for Muharraq in the area of Block 209 that contains many of the recently modernized cultural heritage buildings. The objective of this pilot project is to develop a concept of linkage between the main Heritage buildings to stimulate cultural tourism; to improve the general quality of the urban environment; to repair and improve the traditional buildings through appropriate methods and materials; and to initiate the creation of small businesses to service the cultural heritage tourism industry.





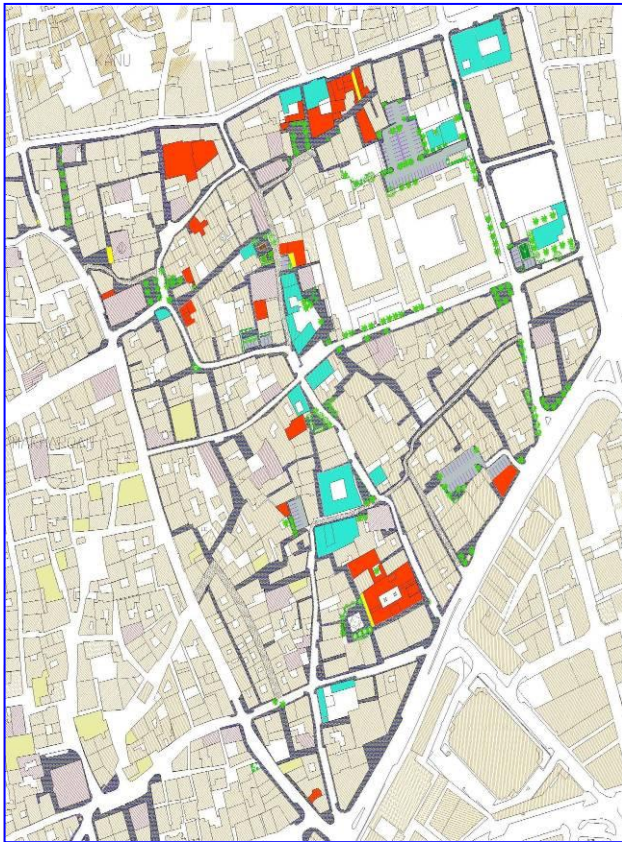
**Rectified photo of Existing Façade by the Process of Photo-grammetry**



## Manama: Al Haman Neighborhood, Pilot Project #2

Team Leader: Victor Allen: B. Arch. M.ScArch. Conservation Architect RAIA

It is proposed to carry out the second pilot project for Manama in the area of Block 301; bounded by Shaikh Abdulla Avenue and *Shaikh Isa Alkabeer* Street, in **Al Haman neighborhood**. This project is intended to complement the current proposed project for the redevelopment of the area around *Bab Al-Bahrain*. This will not only improve the level and quality of goods and services available to the local residents, but would also help attract Bahraini families to move back through the rehabilitation and upgrading of the buildings and neighborhoods. The object of this pilot project is to link up the two projects in order to revitalize the main commercial area in Manama, as well as to repair the urban fabric of **Al Hamam neighborhood** which contains a high quantity of significant traditional and religious buildings.



Rectified Photo of Existing Façade by the Process Photo-grammatry

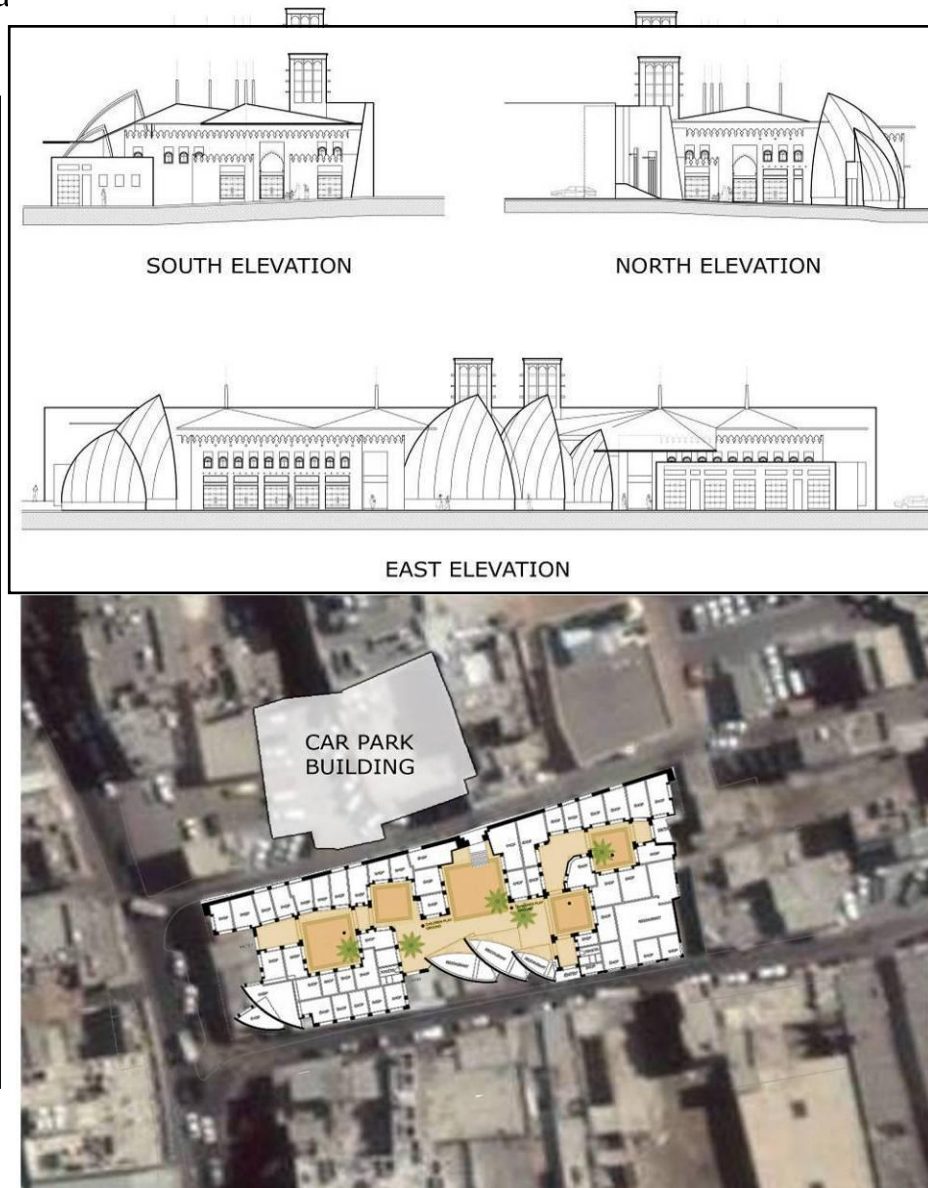


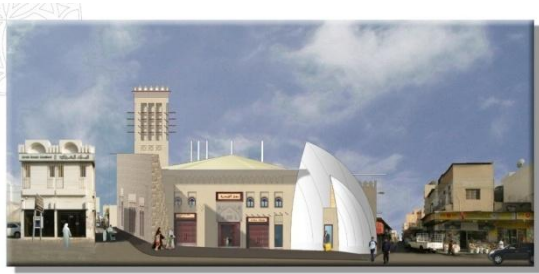
### **Pilot Project #3: Muharraq Development of AlQaisaryah Old Suq**

**Team Leader: Maan Ibrahim Alzahr, B. Sc.( Arch.), M.Sc.(Arch.)**

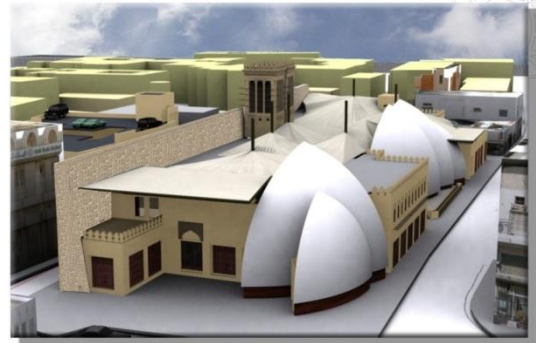
This project, covering an area more than 3,200 square meters within Block 215, would be the smallest and quickest of the three Pilot Projects. A study has already been developed; negotiations with the owners and the tenants are ongoing. Concepts have been prepared involving the renovation of the shops that have been found to be structurally sound, the demolition of those that are not, and the provision of new rental accommodation along with a covered arcade. In addition, proposals for parking across the street have been developed. The old city wall and gate were previously located on this site. As part of the project, proposals developed in cooperation with other Ministries and Departments as to how best preserved and possibly restore parts of the Suq and the historical city wall and ga

**Schematic Conceptual Design for Pilot Project No.3  
(the Traditional Market in Muharraq - Suq Al Qaisaryah)**





NORTH ELEVATION SCALE 1:100



WEST ELEVATION SCALE 1:100

### Conclusions:

- None of the aspects of development can be treated in isolation from the others. An environmental problem cannot be treated in isolation from the surrounding social issues. For physical rehabilitation to be successful and sustainable, it must be coordinated with social programmes. Only by addressing the broader issues in a comprehensive way can development be effective and lasting.
- There is a need for a broker between local communities and government authorities on issues those are important to residents. This can take a number of forms, such as brokering agreements on methods of development and bridging differences between communities and government authorities.
- Historical monuments can be vibrant and important parts of community life rather than a drain on resources. Many such monuments are restored but then padlocked most of the time because of a lack of funding for personnel. However, through adaptive re-use monuments and cultural assets can be returned to their original function as integral parts of daily life.