A Strategic Approach to urban Management
The Case of Addiriyyah Historical Precinct, Riyadh, KSA

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Abstract:

Addiriyyah was the headquarter of the first Saudi State. It plays an effective role in consolidating the cultural identity of the Saudi citizens. Its artefacts are all but active agents and reminiscent stimuli for long strive to unite the Saudi Kingdom. It was established as a self-sufficient community securing the basic needs for its inhabitants through rural activities in Wadi Hanifa (Hanifa Valley) and its surrounding valleys, while never jeopardising its urban sedentary nature, accommodating the Royal family's headquarter in al-Turaif together with many other traditional quarters.

This paper exhibits the revitalisation scheme of Addiriyyah, based on the author's professional involvement in the project, developing the architectural and urban guidelines for such a sensitive historic and vernacular environment to preserve its distinctive characteristics that illustrates the very beginning of the Saudi state, as well as serving as a model for a strategic approach to urban management in the Arab-Islamic settlements.

Introduction:

Addiriyyah as a reservoir of heritage and the centre of the first Saudi State plays an effective role in consolidating the cultural identity of the Saudi citizens under the flag of H.M. King Abdel-Aziz bin Saud through and in collaboration with genuine dogmatic practices introduced by H.E. Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdel Wahab. This has continued through the followers of H.E. Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdel Wahab.

Addiriyyah was established as a self-sufficient community securing the basic needs of food through rural activities in Wadi Hanifa (area 7) and the Farms (area 6) and its surrounding valleys. The founders and followers of the so-called Wahabi *Da'wa* (call) quartered around the Mosque of Abdel-Wahab in Al-Bujairy (in area 2). Other quarters also exists following the similar urban values such as Samhan (in area 3) and Al-Zahra & Roqaiyya (area 4). Consequently Addiriyyah has acquired a unique rural-urban character, consolidated by distinguished architecture of a vernacular nature. Such a typology has dictated an ecological, responsive lifestyle that developed to maintain the unmissed Addiriyyah physical character.

Therefore, Addiriyyah has exhibited already a remarkable environmental diversity that still survives despite the hindrance represented through the dilapidated status of its original mud-buildings. Also the erosion of its farms has caused the lost of their genuine agricultural productive function and some of them became resorts for some few individuals. Meanwhile, many of the citizens of Riyadh are in severe need for a more conventional/ cultural recreational zones, where Addariyyah could serve best.

Tracing Zanchet and Jokilehto's model of values in Addariyyah (Zanchet and Jokilehto, 1997), values of states (the types of the different artefacts) and values of processes (the more intangible heritage of knowledge and practices) are challenged by cultural pressures conflicting with traditional life style, thanks to the cultural changes and rupture erupted after the oil booming in the Kingdom in the last three decades.

Consequently, such changes have affected negatively the built form and the overall character. The desire now to revitalise Addiriyyah as a cultural centre on a regional level, of Riyadh to provide a long missed and needed cultural centre and recreational zones - as well as the international level having

Addiriyyah exhibiting continuing traditional values, would certainly necessitate wide range of interventions on various levels and scales through a comprehensive urban conservation scheme.

Many questions, however, should be addressed when deciding the suitable approach to area conservation in such a context. Any area conservation intervention should not cause museumification. Addiriyyah persisting livability, which is manifested through its still-practiced traditional and conventional activities, should never be jeopardised. Thus implies the need for sensitive and comprehensive planning/ urban conservation and development scheme (Assi, 2000).

Seeking effective urban conservation guidelines and regulations is a necessity to achieve a comprehensive scheme. We should follow a contextually-driven technique that deals flexibly with the potentials and limitations of each development zones. Thus we are in need for more flexibly woven guidelines that respect the specificity and the contextual demands of each zone in Addiriyyah to permit and encourage the most appropriate policies for development aiming at achieving effective, sustainable high-quality area conservation that complement the historical and architectural integrity as well as the authentic quality of Addiriyyah.

In the case of Addiriyyah, there is a necessity for different Development Policies (DPs), determined by the variations of the homogeneous issues, problems and characteristics of each zone in Addiriyyah. Some areas already preserve a coherent urban fabric, having many of their mud houses in relatively in good condition, e.g. many spots in Al-Turaif (area 1) and Ghasiba (area 8). Other areas were completely demolished and insensitively redeveloped, creating huge urban gaps which obscures the integrated quality of Addiriyyah, e.g., Samhan & Al-Soraiha (area 3). On the other hand we find areas exhibiting different types of problems and status, such as density and undefined architectural character with a general low-environmental quality, e.g., some parts of Al-Bujairy & Al-Moreeh & Al-Zowaihra (area 2) and Al-Zahra & Al Roqaiyya (area 4).

Even within the same area different types of problems and physical status can be found, which consequently requires more than a single development policy to deal with it. For example, area 2 still preserve coherent clusters of mud-houses especially around Sheikh Abdul Wahab Mosque; however, there are other zones which require complete redevelopment, sensitive enough to be integrated with the already existing original clusters. Moreover, areas such as Al-Zahra & Al Roqaiyya (area 4) and some parts of the Farms (area 6) still contain some mud houses that are still functioning, thus require the adoption of listed-building policy. Yet the physical heritage value in general in areas 4 and 6 is less substantial compared to its other social needs such as the enhancement of their environmental quality mainly for their local community. See fig.1 for more details about the different areas in Addariyyah. Therefore, the need for different types of Development Policies (DP) in the case of Addiriyyah is a necessity.

1. The Concept of Homogeneous Zones for Development:

Categorising current character and status of each homogeneous sector of the built environment, as well as areas sought to be built through intensive surveys, Addiriyyah is practically composed of several homogeneous zones. Each zone represents some distinctive features and urban properties as well as unique type of problems. Each zone does not have to be located in the same area. But rather, it is composed of clusters of deteriorated, dilapidated, or deserted (ruinous) built fabrics or any other condition, stretched on some parts of one or more of Addiriyyah's areas; see fig.2. Therefore, each zone requires a specific strategy/ approach to develop and upgrading it. It is thus a must to define the boundaries of each zone to apply effectively more responsive and contextually based regulations for sustainable reasons and that can secure high applicability of any proposed/ suggested intervention. This has been followed in the case of the Framework plan (FWP) proposed to apply a multi-disciplinary approach to upgrade the Historic Cairo (UNDP, 1997). Following are the defined homogeneous zones of development:

1.1. Development Zone # 1 (DZ1):

This zone is composed of archaeological sites located in areas 1 and 2. It might accommodate excavation activities and controlled and managed by the Department of Antiquity. However, it is recommended to establish co-ordination between the planning authority and the Department of Antiquity to integrate such sites, whenever possible, with the over all planning scheme of Addiriyyah comprehensive development scheme. This is to avoid segregating heritage sites, which creates urban gaps Mayer, 2002).

1.2. Development Zone # 2 (DZ2):

This zone is located in what might be called the heritage core of Addiriyyah where many original/ traditional clusters still intact and some still persistently functioning as residential neighbourhoods. It is located in some parts of areas 1 and 2. This zone is distinguished by its traditionally built mansions mostly of mud structure, still preserving their original residential function. The urban fabric in this zone is still preserving its original spatial structure. It is thus important as a still living source of traditional lifestyle in responsive as well as contemporary manner. However, the fabric of this zone might exhibit some dilapidated status. Actions in such zone, therefore, should be kept as minimal as possible not to alter the persisting traditional quality (the living heritage). Development strategy proposed for this zone, thus, should mainly be pure restoration that should respect the authentic quality and physical features of the built form, preserving not only the physical values of such zone but also its current socio-cultural values as well, defined above as values of processes.

Also in the same zone but in other spots adjacent to the above, those requires only pure restoration, within the same built form, clusters and houses in general, exhibit a more deteriorated environmental quality, e.g., partially demolished or severely altered structures. The authentic quality of the built environment in such spots is drastically challenged. Any intervention thus, only on the architectural level, might be allowed especially to add some contemporary services and amenities that are needed for such areas (adoptive reuse), historic core of Addiriyyah, especially when having the spaces permitting such activities. The development strategy, thus, in such spots within DP2 would permit some guided alteration, as elaborated below, in a way that respect the distinctive urban fabric and spatial structures of the built environmental in such zone, as well as the whole sought revitalisation development scheme of the original, traditional fabric of Addiriyyah, whenever possible.

However, to determine the accurate and most appropriate approach to development within DP2, whither restoration or adoptive reuse, intensive surveys are needed to determine the right intervention as well as the requirements of the local community for which some services might be needed to be introduced to the area. Such surveys are to be pursued through a mansion-by-mansion investigation.

1.3. Development Zone # 3 (DZ3):
DZ3a:

This zone occupies parts of the current urban gaps in areas 3 and 4. These areas in general were originally urbanised quarters that were severely altered with roads and roundabouts. Thus the integrated urban quality of Addiriyyah is lost, converted into unconnected/ scattered settlements. However such parts of areas 3 and 4 have a direct contact with what is planned to be the heritage core in Addariyyah, exhibiting persisting traditional values and livability in Addiriyyah, mainly in areas 2 and 4. Consequently, despite of being a complete redevelopment of already vacant spaces, currently used as roads and parking lots, any sought intervention should consider to reweave such spaces with the overall fabric. Furthermore, the traces of the original traditional fabric in this zone can be regained through the historic reference (an aerial photo shot in 1975 for Addariyyah). Thus, the development strategy that

should be pursued in this zone should achieve this goal, making use of the traceable boundaries of the preceding lost fabric as much as possible.

DZ3b:

This zone is defined as occupying parts of areas 2, 3, and 4. Thus it is adjacent to (DP3a). However, these spots are vacant. They also occupy a key location for they are the gate linking Addiriyyah with Riyadh. The development strategy recommended, therefore, should regard this zone as the key development spot of Addiriyyah as a cultural and recreational core accommodating all the required services and activities: commercial, cultural, and touristic. This, however, should be conducted in a way that respect, guided or influenced by, the sought environmental quality of its adjacent zone (DP3a). Consequently, a more harmonised overall development could be achieved.

1.4. Development Zone # 4 (DZ4):
DZ4a:

In some parts of areas 2 and 4 there are urban spots and buildings that have already lost their previous distinctive traditional/ vernacular character. They are also located, relatively, away from the heritage core areas, especially those located mainly in (DP2b), (DP3a), and (DP3b). Moreover, the types of problems affecting these spots are mainly the degraded environmental quality, as well as shortage in social services especially in area 4. Therefore, development strategy for this zone should mainly concentrate at upgrading the environmental quality and the social service levels. This should be reflected on the proposed development guidelines for this zone, seeking not only to achieve traditional-sympathetic appearance, but also more flexible rules to regularise the building developments in different spots of the discussed zone aiming at elevating the current environmental quality of such zone.

DZ4b:

This zone is only located in limited vacant parts of area 4. It creates a gap in this area. Thus, when developed, this area should be integrated with the development strategy of the parts of Al-Zahra (within area 4) located in (DP4a). (DP4b) should be regarded as the potential area that would accommodate all the already missed services and amenities in the part of Al-Zahra located in (DP4a), which suffers congestion and lack of sufficient services. Other development and residential clusters can be permitted in (DP4b) guided by relatively more flexible building regulations as those distinguishing (DP4a) and following the same environmental quality standards.

1.5. Development Zone # 5 (DZ5):

This contains vacant intrinsic areas, which are kept for future expansions of the zones listed above. Thus contextual considerations and experiences of future development and implementation should guide any future intervention in this zone.

2. Strategies of Development Policies:

Careful readings of the different zones of Addiriyyah, their distinctive contextual aspects and problems, suggest different approaches to development for each marked zone. Each approach is an appropriate group of actions that are synthesised to correspond to the actions and interventions demanded to upgrade the different zones in Addiriyyah. Therefore, different development policies (DPs) should be produced; some of them contain sub categories to confront the diverse nature of the environmental phenomena and confront the different degrees of deterioration in each area; see fig.2. These five DPs are explained as follows:

2.1. First Development Policy (DP1):

It concerns with archaeological and excavation sites in areas 1 and 8, thus it complies more with the regulations and laws of the Antiquities Department. This should be investigated separately with the interested groups to decide if archaeological sites should be integrated with the overall scheme as intellectual parks as proposed in the, project done in the area of and the citadel the Roman Theatre in the downtown, Amman, or it is going to be merely fenced and prohibited heritage site (Mayer, 2002).

2.2. Second Development Policy (DP2):

It is a more strict conservation attitude of urban development, which is focusing mainly on preserving the urban fabric and the distinctive architectural typologies with all its details. New development or any alterations of the already existing historic environment are implemented with respect to the historical integrity of the original clusters of historic buildings.

Details and elevations of newly developed structures within this zone (mainly in areas 1 and 2 and some parts of area 4) should follow a strict order echoing the authentic features distinguished to Addiriyyah's traditional architecture; see fig.4. For example, the developer of a new house should employ architectural details and finishing techniques that cope and harmonise well with the surrounding original historical buildings.

Traditional construction techniques are encouraged in this zone, thus serving as a showcase for the know-how of the construction technology and traditional lifestyle. It is also meant to exhibit the physical heritage in its original form and where appropriate enable adoptive reuse, mainly residential especially in area 2, close to Abdel Wahab Mosque. This resembles the conservation efforts practiced in Old Damascus in al-Qimariyyah District close to the Umayyad Mosque where various restoration projects are implemented to rehabilitate many dilapidated historical houses to regain back their architectural merits, consequently, to consolidate the area's historical and architectural integrity.

(DP2) concerns with the already existing original, traditional buildings. It is meant to preserve the historic ambiance of some specified zones with distinctive architectural features and historic value, as well as in the coherent clusters still exhibit persisting traditional physical character. Urban and architectural interventions in this zone are kept to minimum and they are almost absent. The only consented development in this zone is restoration work, which is a technical process that is conducted to consolidate and preserve the existing endangered or dilapidated structures while respecting their original martial and design, aiming at returning the place as nearly as possible to an earlier state (as specified in the Venice Charter 1964 and the ICOMOS, New Zealand Charter 1992), which is to be determined and specified by the local Addiriyyah planning and urban management authorities (ADA).

(DP2) has also another approach that should be practiced in zones/cases only where restoration is not achievable, yet it is still in the realm of preserving the original traditional context. It is an adoptive reuse for traditional buildings that cannot practice anymore their original function, because of partial demolition or causing hazardous environmental effects in their neighbourhoods etc. This approach is followed to keep such buildings in use so it gives them a reason to survive. It should, however, be kept to minimum, not to detract substantially from the area cultural significance (physical integrity of the historical area) and when such alteration is socially and culturally meaningful to their area (as recommended in Burra Charter 1979 and New Zealand Charter 1992). This certainly would necessitate some alterations or additions to the original structures.

Determining which approach to be followed is based on a case-by-case analysis depends on the structural status and the historical and architectural merits of the building as well as the demands of the community or the neighbourhood where the restoration or the adoptive reuse development is conducted.

2.3. Third Development Policy (DP3):

It is a sensitive development of already vacant lands that requires careful planning. Since such areas (parts of area 2 and all of area 3) were traditionally urbanised before; however, they were drastically altered due to massive redevelopment schemes in the last three decades. Thus, this approach seeks regaining their original fabric wherever possible. Such an approach not only seeks regaining the original urban fabric but also revitalising the mode and concepts guiding such development, i.e., dogmatic references guiding cluster layout design and openings location to secure privacy and practices of Islamic urbanism.

This is pursued in a mode that respects the traditional physical character of Addiriyyah. However, it is relatively less strict in dealing with the built form compared to the second development policy (DP2), for it seeks safeguarding historic and architectural integrity of Addiriyyah, yet in a more flexible way. For example, newly developed buildings might be consented to use modern construction techniques and materials as long as they respect the architectural typology and details, as well as employing typical traditional finishing materials for the outer elevations. Similar approach is followed in the Old Tunis (le-Medina) Tunisia, where the Association of Safeguarding the Medina (the local planning authorities known as ASM) practices necessitate certain architectural design regulations and plan typologies to maintain the courtyard-house type with traditional architectural features for the outer elevations. Same approach is also followed in Turkey, even in the core of Historic Towns, e.g., allowing sensitive modern infillings in the Historic Town in Antaliya.

Since such an approach covers areas of vital importance, that are meant to accommodate economic and cultural activities, it encourages various architectural typologies either that complement an older traced urban fabric, such as the case of Al-Adliyyah Khan built in 1997 in Aleppo reviving commercial activities in the heart of Old Aleppo. This approach also permits a wider room for creativity in design in a way that cope with the over all traditional character of Addiriyyah. It is thus an attempt to rewoven such areas within the overall urban fabric of Addiriyyah aiming at an integrated traditional urban fabric that respect the socio-cultural dimension through a sustainable mood that does not compromise the economic and development potentials. Thus, it resembles the same approach followed in the newly developed quarter of Al-Hafsiyyah, le Medina, Old Tunis (Bejaoui, 1997). Al-Hafsiyyah was also dilapidated zone, creating an undesirable gap in the Historic Town in Tunis. A creative approach, thus, was followed to revitalise the traditional fabric urban, yet in a modern sense that respected the traditional features and urban structural elements of the old town in general.

DP3a:

There are two main sub-categories of (DP3), DP3a and DP3b. DP3a is meant to deal with the vast urban gaps to redevelop urban voids in area 3, which will occur after the removal of the roundabout at Al-Soraiha (part of area 3) and in area 4. It is meant to deal with such areas with immediate proximity to traditional clusters that represent   the distinguishing vernacular character of Addiriyyah. Such development is highly influenced by the urban and architectural typologies and is meant to follow the previous, predating, urban fabric that existed in these zones in Addiriyyah, guided by historical reference (Addariyyah aerial view1975). Moreover, it is an attempt to introduce an urban development that considers dogmatic reference for its urban formation and management. Tracing such a fabric wherever convenient in a way that creates a built environment highly harmonised with the nearby intact traditional urban fabric.

DP3b:

This approach is meant to deal with areas with no direct contact with zones of historical or architectural merits, yet they are located in zones where urban development conducted to weave the different areas and zones of diverse character in an integrated scheme. Thus it is still within the main

approach of redevelopment but not highly influenced by the traditional fabric or its architectural typologies. It should not contradict with the general urban and architectural character of Addiriyyah yet in a more flexible, permitting a wider room for creativity and various interventions in such zones, influenced by a wide range of Addiriyyah's urban and architectural features.

2.4. Fourth Development Policy (DP4):

It is a community-based development policy. It views rehabilitation benefiting primarily its local communities. It aims at empowering the community and improving their quality of life. It is concentrated on areas suffering low environmental quality, e.g., area 4 with high congestion and undefined urban character. The priority, thus, is to enhance the urban quality and to secure necessary services and amenities for the deprived local community. The same approach was followed in the rehabilitation of Bab Qansoreen Area, the action area of the revitalisation project of Old Aleppo, where sustainable development was pursued prioritising the community needs and services with less concentration on architectural conservation for the area was already occupied with huge population crammed in deprived zone of very low environmental quality (GTZ, 1998).

DP4a:

This is the most flexible approach to development of existing urban area, with relatively less restricting architectural regulations. This approach considers mainly the socio-cultural dimension before the physical quality of the area, which is a must in areas 4 and 6, especially when these areas preserve no more any significant structures clusters, which suggest different programme for development.

DP4b:

This approach seeks the best means to develop urban voids and large gaps within areas predominantly distinguished by its urban problems. New interventions and development in general should complement mainly the demands for the missed services mainly in many spots in area 4.

2.5. Fifth Development Policy (DP5):

A contextual approach to development is recommended to be adopted in this zone (DZ5). It can be elaborated in details only when integrated with and complementing the sought development surrounding this zone, which is necessary to guide future development implementations. In general such a zone is composed of the vacant intrinsic areas located among the different development zones in Addariayyah as maintained above. Thus development of such a zone is only determined as complementing the approach of development of each area adjacent to it.

Conclusion:

The above has decided the type of interventions defined on contextual bases and actual needs of the areas to be developed and upgraded. This started by defining the different homogeneous zones (DZs) to weave various packages/ approaches to urban upgrading (DPs) for each homogeneous zone defined above, based on common characteristics and persisting values of each area, as illustrated in fig.2. This is interpreted in a legislative format, guidelines, regularising and defining the most appropriate interventions in each zone in Addiriyyah.

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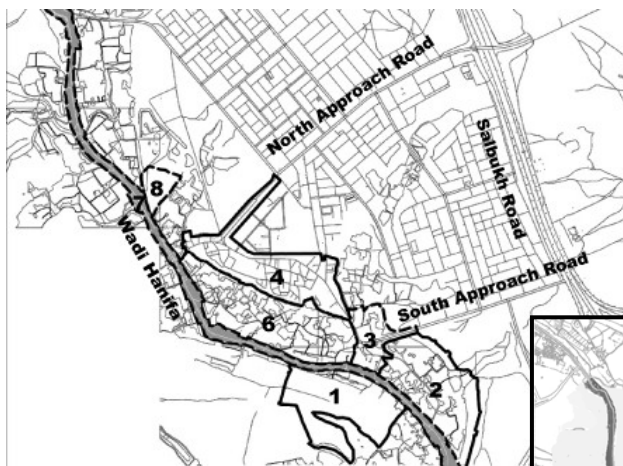
Figures:

Fig.1. Different areas that compose Addariyyah Historical Precinct:

Area 1: Al-Turaif, Area 2: Al-Bujairy & Al-Moreeh & Al-Zowaihra, Area 3: Samhan & Al-Soraiha, Area 4: Al-Zahra & Roqaiyya, Area 5: the undeveloped area southern al-Turaif and Wadi Hanifa, Area 6: the Farms, Area 7: Wadi Hanifa and Area 8: Ghasiba.

Right: Fig.2. Development planning zones, each represents a homogeneous sector that exhibits common status and problems, thus demands special approach to development.

Above: Fig. 3. Traditional Urban Fabric of Addariyyah, especially in areas 1, 2 and some parts in 3 and 8.

Right: Fig.4. Typical mud architecture in Addariyyah.