

## Urban heritage and urban planning tools in Algeria.case of Kalaa Beni Hammad.

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### ABSTRACT.

The urban landscape of Algerian cities is undergoing a significant deterioration, whether in terms of planning or management, because despite the efforts made by the State to organize and control urban space, it has not limited the inability of urban planning mechanisms to take care of citizens' concerns, whether by meeting their spatial needs in terms of housing, public facilities... etc., or by taking full care of their urban heritage, which represents a cultural message that reflects the identity and characteristics of its inhabitants and is a fundamental reason for strengthening the belonging and strengthening the cultural identity of citizens (Mohamed Samir, 2012), and a material expression of the importance of successive civilizations, which gives these cities their distinctive intimacy and originality, making them a tourist destination and attraction at a time when the influx of urban heritage and archaeological sites has become one of the most important global industries of interest to all countries, because of the positive effects they produce at all levels (Françoise & David, 2011).

In addition to considering cultural heritage in general and urban heritage in particular, a common human heritage within the meaning of the 1954 Hague Convention and its subsequent protocols, which entrusted the responsibility for its protection to the international community (M , Boumediene, and A, Dilami, 2017), while the notion of cultural heritage has become more global and is not limited to buildings of historical value, but extends beyond all movable property, whether antiquities, documents or writings. Under international agreements, Algeria has been quick to take a number of legal and legislative measures to protect its cultural heritage in general and its urban heritage in particular. It should be noted that despite these measures, much of our heritage has been neglected. without protection and without preventive measures to preserve it. This led to the encroachment on historical monuments, the theft of many archaeological objects and the destruction of many heritage testimonies that reflect a period that embodied the succession of many civilizations that shaped the history of Algeria. (Samiha Hanan Khawadjia, 2016).

Through what has been mentioned, we will try in this research paper, initially, to identify a number of imbalances, whether at the level of legal measures related to the issue of heritage protection or at the level of urban planning mechanisms that characterized urban policy in Algeria, which ignored the issue of urban heritage and was unable to develop a strategy. There are clear definitions for preserving, protecting and using it for the benefit of society and the national economy (Françoise & David, 2011). In a second step, we will make a critical reading of the most important laws that have governed urban heritage from independence to the present day, after which a field study will be presented for one of the archaeological sites, which is the Castle of Bani Hammad in the municipality of Mâadid, and how to protect them, based on a questionnaire distributed to the group of inhabitants, and an interview is also

conducted with a group of specialists in this regard, and relying on geographical information. (Arc gis), it is possible to determine the perimeter that must be protected in addition to the easement space. Finally, a set of recommendations is developed, on the basis of which a new vision is formed to protect our urban heritage and sustain it for future generations.

## **KEYWORDS**

Urban heritage, urban planning tools, Kalaa Beni Hammad, Algeria

## **1-INTRODUCTION**

Because of globalization and sustainable development, it is essential to protect the cultural heritage of nations. In other words, competition and pressure from the global economy jeopardize the cultural diversities that sustain our belonging and identity forever. This research is part of our objectives of promoting cultural heritage for several main reasons: the first is that the will to bequeath goods to future generations constitutes a living memory that bears witness to the history and existence of the human being in a specific region. The second reason is to understand culture and heritage as essential elements of the production and dissemination of goods and services, as well as essential resources for information economies.

The monument of La Kalaa des Beni Hammad is in a situation inconsistent with the elements that compose it, which endangers its existence and durability. The question concerns the various events that endanger its durability. Thus, the difficulties encountered on this site can be described as follows:

- 1-An unlimited site (it is an open site without any protection;
- 2-The anarchic and illicit urbanization in the area of servitude of the medieval rampart in certain places, for lack of the approaches and the obvious limits;
- 3-The overconsumption of the surrounding territory and the non-respect of their buffer zones of the protected area, by the height of the templates of the constructions and obstruction of the fields of visibility;
- 4-The rubble of previous excavations constitute a screen obscuring the site and its monuments.

Accordingly, a number of imbalances are identified, whether at the level of legal measures related to the protection of heritage or at the level of urban planning mechanisms that characterized urban policy in Algeria, which ignored the issue of urban heritage and were unable to draw up a clear-cut strategy to preserve, protect and employ it in a way that serves society and the national economy. Then we will conduct a critical reading of the most important laws that governed the urban heritage since independence until the present day. After that, we will present a field study of one of the archaeological sites, which is the Bani Hammad Castle in the municipality of Al-Maadid, and how to protect it, relying in this on a questionnaire paper that will be distributed to the group of Residents are also interviewed with a group of specialists in this regard, and by relying on geographic information systems (Arc gis), the perimeter that must be protected can be determined in addition to the easement area. Finally, a set of recommendations are drawn, based on which a new vision is formed to protect our urban heritage and sustain it for future generations. .

## **2-MATERIALS AND METHODES**

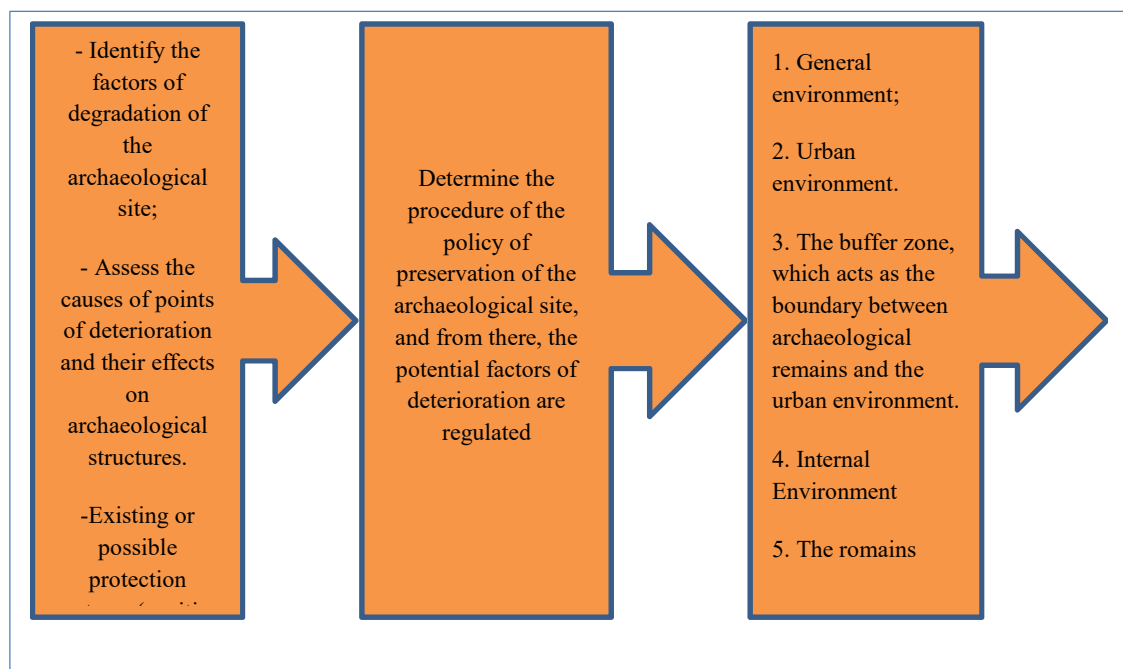
Heritage preservation is an essential element of cultural sustainability, as it helps preserve and promote society's unique cultural and historical heritages. However, measuring the success of heritage conservation efforts can be challenging. In this

article, we will explore the different tools available to measure heritage conservation, including quantitative and qualitative methods. Some challenges related to heritage conservation measurement will also be addressed. (Voisenat, 2023).

One of the most common quantitative tools for measuring heritage preservation is the use of surveys and surveys to gather public opinion on heritage conservation. These surveys may ask questions about the importance of heritage sites, the degree of community involvement in conservation efforts, and the effectiveness of preservation strategies. For example, a screenplay study in Edinburgh found that 91% of participants thought heritage was important for the city and its culture (Breuil, M. H, 2010). Another quantitative tool is statistical analysis of the number of visitors, income and economic impact of hereditary sites. This type of analysis can provide a valuable insight into the economic benefits of heritage conservation, such as job creation and increased tourism revenues. For example, a study on the economic impact of cultural tourism in the United States found that the tourisme traditionnel a généré des revenus de 171 milliards de dollars et soutenu 2,3 millions d'emplois. (Job, L ; & Souissi, A , 2019). Finally, geographic information systems (GIS) can be used to assess the extent and distribution of hereditary sites. Geographic information systems can help identify areas of high hereditary value and prioritize conservation efforts. For example, the National History Conservation Fund in the United States uses a geographic information system to map historic sites and identify areas at risk of development. (Pinol, J. L, 2010). In addition to quantitative methods, qualitative tools can also be used to measure heritage conservation. Case studies and ethnographic studies can provide a valuable insight into how communities assess and use heritage. For example, a study on the conservation of traditional architecture in the city of Qasan, Iran, revealed that locals appreciate the preservation of tradition, its cultural value and beauty. Oral history interviews and story stories can also be used to capture intangible heritage, such as cultural practices and traditions. These methods can help preserve cultural knowledge and traditions that can be lost over time. For example, the Smithsonian Centre for Popular Life and Cultural Heritage conducted intensive oral history interviews with musicians, artists and other cultural practitioners. (Hamel, N , 2006). Finally, participatory assessment methods can be used to involve local communities in planning to preserve heritage. These methods can help ensure that conservation efforts are culturally relevant and respond to the needs and values of local communities. (Centre, I. D. R. 1996) For example, the Sukar World Heritage Site in Nigeria used participatory assessment methods to involve local communities in preserving their cultural heritage. Despite the various tools available to measure heritage conservation, there are many challenges associated with this task. One of the main challenges is the lack of consensus on what heritage is and how it should be measured. This can make it difficult to develop unified forecasts to measure heritage conservation. (Murai, M, Therivel, R, & U. 2023). Another challenge is the difficulty of striking a balance between environmental preservation, development and economic growth. In some cases, conservation efforts may conflict with economic development objectives, leading to tensions between environmental conservation actors and developers. (O. Cost-Benefit. 2006). Regarding the case of our research, in a first step, we have made a critical reading of the most important laws that have governed the urban heritage from independence until today, then we presented a field study on one of the archaeological sites, which is La Kalaa de Bani Hammad in the commune of Mâadid, and how to protect it, based on a questionnaire distributed to a group of inhabitants. and a panel of experts interviewed in this regard. to shed light on the state of the site with regard to the erosion of monuments due to various factors of

deterioration, and in order to provide adequate and reliable solutions, We carry out a kind of inventory in order to assess the degrees of site degradation according to the following table:

Figure n(1): A plan to assess the degree of deterioration of the archaeological building



**Source:** Prepared by researchers in 2024.

And based on geographic information systems (Arc gis), it was possible to determine the perimeter to protect in addition to the easement area. Based on the above, a number of recommendations have been made, in the light of which a new vision has been formed to protect La Kalaa from the Beni Hammad in particular and our urban heritage in general, to ensure its sustainability for future generations.

### 3-Presentation of the study area.

The Beni Hammad Kalaa is a remarkable archaeological site located in the municipality of Mâadid . This complex, composed of preserved ruins at an altitude of 1000 m, is located in a mountain site of striking beauty on the southern flank of the Jebel Mâadid. The Kalaa des Beni Hammad was founded in the early 11th century by Hammad, son of Bouloughine, and. It is one of the most interesting and accurately dated monumental complexes of medieval civilization. It was the first capital of the Hammadid emirs and experienced great splendor. The Kalaa contains a large number of monumental remains, including the Great Mosque and its minaret, and a series of palaces, within a 7 km walled perimeter partially dismantled. The mosque, with its prayer hall of 13 ships and 8 rows, is the largest after Mansourah and its minaret is the oldest in Algeria after Sidi Boumerouane. The ruins of the Kalaa testify to the great refinement of the Hamadite civilization, the original architecture and the Palaisian culture of North Africa, and provide an exceptional witness to the currently disappeared Hamadites civilizations. Founded as a military fortress, it was later elevated to the rank of metropolis of the Maghreb, influencing the development of

Muslim architecture as well as other centers of civilization, including the extreme Maghreb, Andalusia and Norman Sicily.

The importance of La Kalaa des Beni Hammad in the history of medieval Muslim Western art and its Outstanding Universal Value made it a World Heritage Site, which was established in 1980 by UNESCO.

The following task aims to concretize the desire of public authorities to enhance cultural heritage for two main reasons. The first is that the desire to leave goods to future generations is a living memory that bears witness to the history and existence of human beings in a well-defined region. The second is the idea that culture and heritage are essential elements of the production and distribution of goods and services, as well as the essential raw materials of information economies.

#### 4-Presentation of the town of Mâadid (place of La Kalaa des Beni Hammad).

The municipality of Mâadid is part of the daïra of Ouled Derradj, It is located in the area of influence of the capital of wilaya M'sila, It occupies an area of 264 Km<sup>2</sup>.

The boundaries of the municipality:

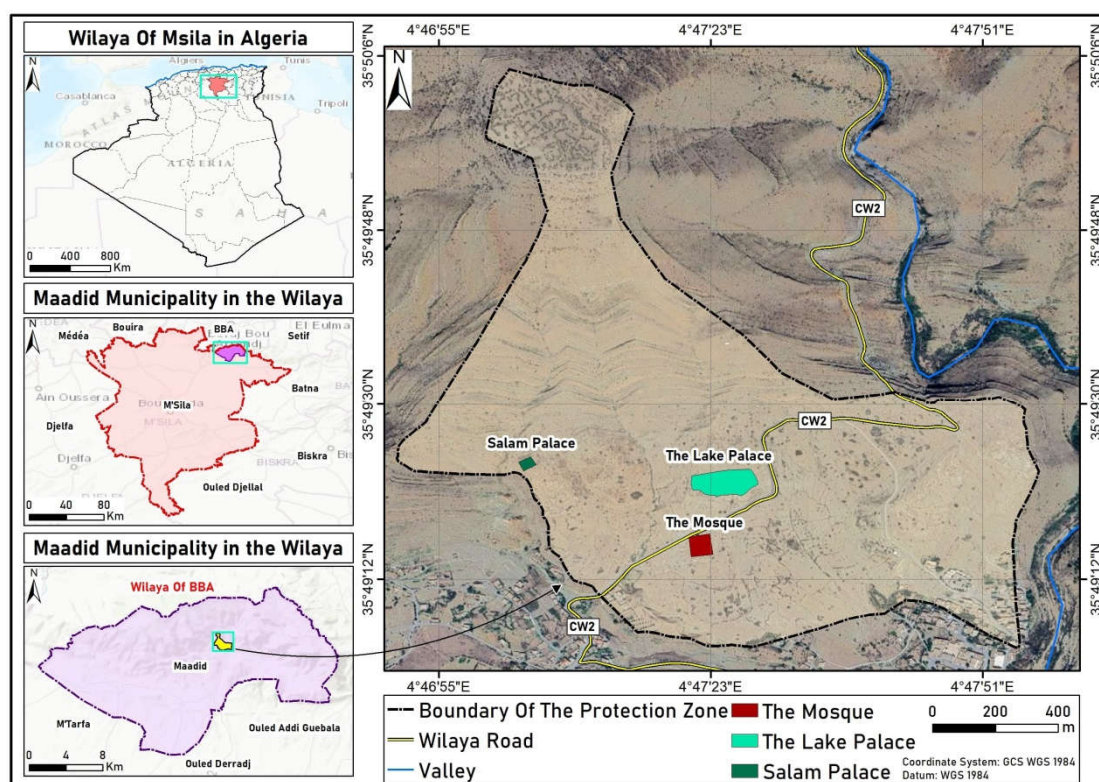
North: Bourdj Bouarairidj.

South: Ouled Derradj.

West: M'tarfa.

Est. : Ouled Addi Guebela.

**Figure n°2,** Situation of the commune of Mâadid (place of La Kalaa des Beni Hammad).



(Source: ArcGIS+ Authors processing2024.)

## **5-The theoretical support of urban heritage.**

### **5-1-The notion of heritage.**

The concept of preservation that we know today is relatively recent, but in practice or real practice, the preservation of heritage in general is not a new idea, but it did not appear in societies before the industrial revolution with the concepts and theories that exist today because of the association of the societies of that time with the traditional ways and means of life, which makes the preservation of buildings a maintenance task (Feidi, 2000). The Athens principles were revised in 1964 in the Venice Treaty or Convention, which concerns historic buildings, and in 1979 the Bora Convention was created to preserve places of cultural importance, followed by the Washington Treaty in 1987, that focused on historic cities and neighbourhoods. (i.e. architectural and urban heritage) , assessment of the importance of heritage therefore plays an important role in determining the value of cultural heritage in general and of built heritage in particular that deserves to be preserved (Al-Ahbabi, 2014).

So that we can read the heritage and ask ourselves how it interacts with the contemporary development of its urban environment. We must first address, even briefly, the notion of heritage:

(...Heritage is the legacy left to us by our grandfathers and fathers from the dawn of history to the present day, on the ideological, cultural, philosophical and artistic levels at the same time...), (Saydawi, 2005).

As for urban heritage, it is about (... everything that man has built, including cities, villages, neighborhoods, buildings and gardens that have archaeological, architectural, urban, economic, historical, scientific, cultural or functional value, and which are identified and classified according to heritage buildings, urban heritage areas and heritage sites...), (Dhahir, 2010).

The second conference of architects and technicians specializing in the archaeological sites of the city of Venice in 1964 AD, under the auspices of UNESCO, proposed several definitions, all of which fall within the concept of heritage, the most important of which are:

(...The concept of a historic monument includes not only separate architectural buildings, but also includes the built and natural environment that testifies to a civilization or that testifies to the significant development of a historical event. This concept applies not only to great monuments but also to simple works that have acquired over time a cultural significance...) (UNESCO, 1964). It should be noted that each archaeological site, ancient or recent, is a living testimony of a society and not a museum piece designed solely to impress us. Society itself is rather a living testimony to one of the stages of human development over time. (Basiouni, 1983).

At certain times in history, artistic expression reflected the content of civilizations and the mentality of societies and was a tool for effectively responding to the needs of those same societies, and all arts, including architecture, were not a goal in itself, that is, in the sense of art for art (Al-Hamshari, 1996).

## **6-Results and discussions of the analytical study of heritage conservation policies in Algeria.**

Architectural heritage represents a true expression of the history and culture of society, and it is the material and moral link that connects contemporaries to their ancestors. It embodies cultural and civilizational values and reflects the tight social and economic structure that characterizes it. our ancestors lived. There is no doubt

that heritage architecture can express the level at which culture appears. At the level of local culture, heritage architecture is local, and at the level of national culture, heritage architecture is national, and this logic. , heritage architecture necessarily belongs to the same level, because architecture represents a material reflection of culture. People who aspire to revive an ancient heritage may have difficulty reviving that heritage unless it still preserves much of the elements of culture. in which this heritage was born, or at least believes that there are elements that contribute to the growth of this civilization in this environment, whether material or cultural, then the goal is to obtain an architecture that adapts to the environment in its global sense, be natural or cultural, and also conform to advanced construction methods and environmentally friendly materials. (Federal Provincial and Territorial Ministers of Culture and Heritage. 2012).

Many of the ancient cities that today have become marginal neighborhoods adjacent to modern urban expansions, and without their historical value, cultural value, archaeological monuments and traditional industry, they would have become similar to the chaotic and spontaneous neighbourhoods that often surround modern cities, because of the poor conditions of modern urban life and the deterioration of the conditions of their urban fabric. Faced with this situation, some see the use of certain surgical solutions, such as the demolition of walls and the opening of streets, to connect the old town to the modern city, This eventually led to successive demolition and renovation operations leading to the old town. , leaving only a few extremely important historical monuments. This was happening in European cities before the Symposium in Milan in 1957, where the idea of preserving the historic centres of cities began to take shape.

The idea of preserving urban heritage has not been imposed in our Arab world with the same influence as we have on modern urban developments, but rather remains a subject of doubt and skepticism and a subject of debate and rejection, even though it has. imposed itself on the other side of the sea and became obvious.

**7-As for the policies adopted by Algeria with a view to preserving heritage, they took place in stages, the most important of which were:**

**A - The phase of colonial policy and strategy 1830-1962**

This stage was characterized by a colonial vision of heritage in general, with an emphasis on Roman heritage in the Maghreb region, in addition to an attempt to transfer ownership of heritage to France.

**B - The stage of renewal of French laws on monuments and historic sites 1962-1967.**

Immediately after independence, Law No. 175.62 of 31/12/1962 renewed the application of French laws relating to monuments, historical and natural sites, excavations and the territorial division of antiquities (Algeria's official newspaper, 1962).

**C - The stage of promulgation of the first Algerian law 1967-1998**

This step was characterized by a growing sense of the need to stimulate heritage preservation organizations in accordance with the promulgation of Decree No. 67-281 of 20/12/1967 on the excavation and protection of historic and natural sites. This legislation specifies four modes of protection:

Inventory, classification and expropriation within the framework of the public utility and the pre-emptive right of the State.



This decree, which remained in force for about 31 years until after 1998 (Algeria's official newspaper. Act No. 281/67(1967).

#### D - Phase of the National Heritage Act 1998-2002

With the promulgation of Law 98/04 stipulating the preservation of cultural heritage, the concept of heritage, limited to monuments and historic sites, has expanded to include living things, knowledge, crafts, traditional industry, the preservation of the historic centers of cities, traditional villages, palaces...etc., (Algeria's official newspaper. Act of 04/98. (1998).

Under this law, the Algerian legislator created commissions whose mission is to protect cultural heritage which are:

- The National Committee for Cultural Property.
- The Willaya Committee for Cultural Property.
- Special committees for cultural property.
- The National Cultural Heritage Fund.

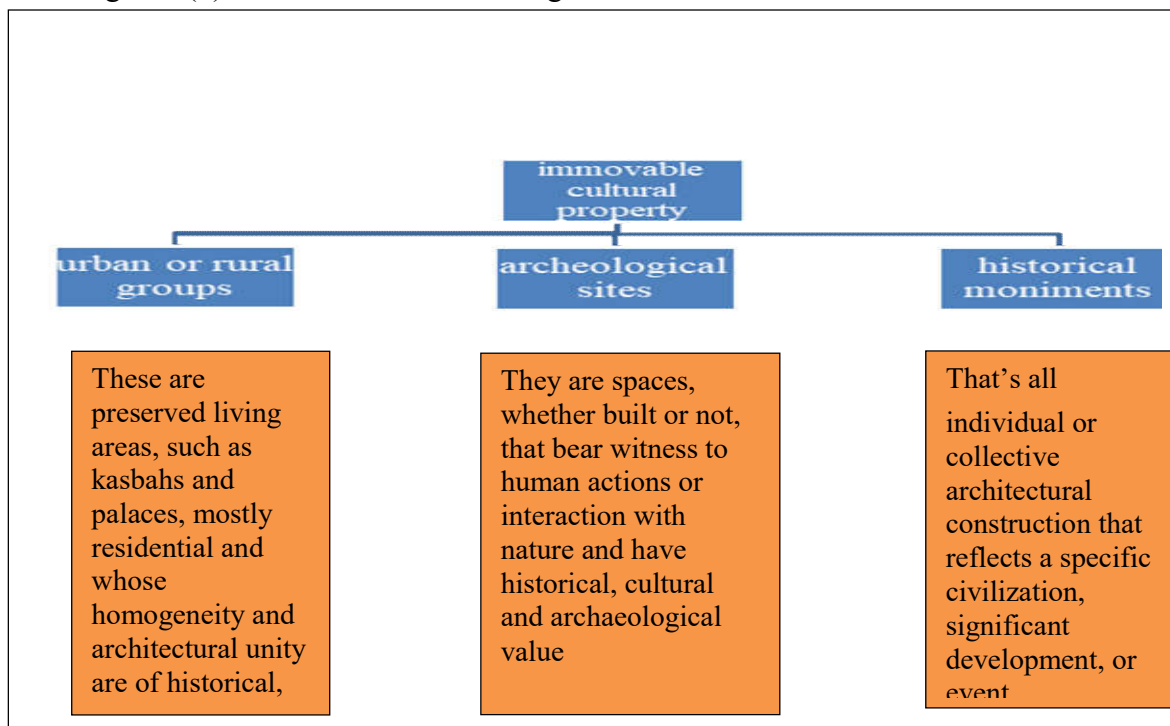
From the above, it appears that there are no committees at the local level, making the process of exploration, inventory and preservation difficult.

#### E - The promulgation stage of Executive Decree No. 03 of 5 October 2003.

This step was characterized by the development of certain plans to protect and reclaim 0. archaeological sites and their protected areas (Algeria's official newspaper. Act No. 3/2003. (2003).

The urban heritage has been divided as follows:

Figure n(3): Division of urban heritage



**Source:** Prepared by researchers in 2024.



### 8-The most important problems facing the preservation of heritage in Algeria.

Following the new orientation of the world, and of course of the Arab world, which stipulates the need to preserve urban heritage, preservation operations have encountered a set of problems, which we summarize as follows:

- 1 - Lack of awareness of the importance of urban heritage.
- 2 - Lack of sufficient funding to complete the conservation process.
- 3 - Weak laws that support this process.
- 4 – the name of the user's involvement in service operations.
- 5 - The lack of appropriate mechanisms that increase the participation of the local community and the private sector in conservation operations.
- 6 - The demolition of many heritage buildings during urban development operations, thus disintegrating the urban fabric representative of the culture and civilization of the nation.
- 7 - Lack of an accurate inventory of heritage buildings.
- 8 - Random restoration by the owners in the absence of an agenda controlling the preservation of the urban heritage.
- 9- Deterioration of the visual environment: As in the Washington Treaty, the importance of a building is integrated into its environment, environmental preservation is therefore an essential element of the preservation of the building and its cultural importance.

### 9-Relations of urban planning instruments in Algeria with heritage.

According to our reading of the Master Plan of Development and Urbanism (MPDU) of the municipality of Mâadid it has been noticed that there is only one study which is the Ground Occupancy Plan (GOP) n°03 located northwest of the center of the urban agglomeration of Dachara, and two proposed (GOP) 01 and 02.

**Table (1):** Proposed and Studied (GOP)

	GOP	term	surface	Type of Intervention	case
dachara	1	long	24h	management	not studied
	2	long	26h	management	not studied
	3	long	27.5h	management	studied

**Source :** the Master Plan of Development and Urbanism (MPDU).

What is notable in the (MPDU) that there is a contradiction in the plans and especially the plan n°05 which determines the boundaries of the archaeological site, and the plan n°06 which represents the urban boundaries of the agglomeration of Dachara within the boundaries of the archaeological site

This state of affairs gives us today, a predominance of certain activities (school or administrative) above others (reception and services) in certain areas, which are not entirely compatible with the tourist and visiting character of the two archaeological sites and their surroundings.

And according to this plate the boundaries of the archaeological site are not defined and there is invasion of the (GOP) N°03 on the boundaries of the site.

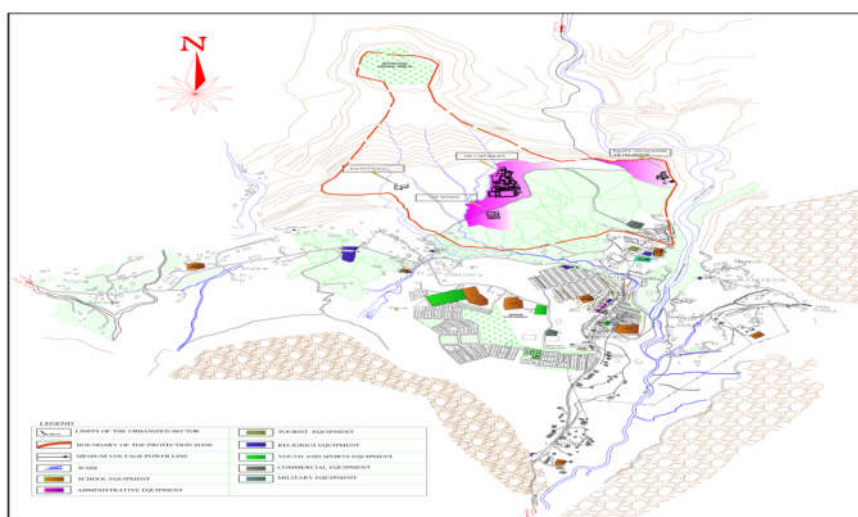
**Figure n°4**Archaeological site of La Kalaa des Beni Hammad).



**Source:** Prepared by researchers in 2024

Through our study of the master plan for development and reconstruction of the municipality of Al-Maadid, it can be said that the mechanisms for managing the area in Algeria were not able to draw a clear strategy regarding the care and management of urban heritage, which often contributed to the deterioration of the latter and its neglect for years.

**Figure(2):**delimitation of the conservatio aera.



**source:** the Master Plan of Development and Urbanism (MPDU)

## 10-conclusion

Urban heritage is a civilizational message that reflects the identity and march of peoples, a material expression of the importance of civilizations and a means to learn about their customs and traditions This makes it a tourist destination and attraction in

an era when tourism has become one of the world's most important industries of interest to all countries, because of its positive effects on all levels. However, many negative impacts on and degradation of the urban heritage have been recorded. This requires the formulation of strategies aimed at developing tourism, preserving archaeological areas and taking into account the socio-economic conditions of the communities that foster this heritage. This is through a number of recommendations outlined below:

- Finding mechanisms that generate greater interest in the need to carry out specialized studies to ensure the preservation of urban heritage
- The need for the framework and mechanisms responsible for managing the preservation of this heritage at the municipal level.
- The need to define responsibilities in the preservation of urban heritage.
- Work to classify all historic cities into the World Heritage Register to ensure sustainability.
- The need to document cultural heritage in general and urban heritage in particular in conservation processes, by exploiting the digital revolution and modern technologies.
- The need for strict laws, prohibiting demolitions and construction without traditional materials permitted in such operations.
- Finding mechanisms that generate greater public interest in protecting the urban heritage of future generations
- Preservation processes must bring social and economic benefits to people with a relationship to urban heritage.

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