

العمارة الحديثة في الكويت  
**MODERN ARCHITECTURE KUWAIT**  
**1949-1989**



Modern Architecture Kuwait 1949-1989

source: <https://meemalessa.com/2017/09/20/modern-architecture-kuwait/>





## 16TH DOCOMOMO INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

### DISAPPEARANCE OF MODERN HERITAGE IN KUWAIT, ADAPTIVE REUSE OF AL SAWABER HOUSING COMPLEX

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Flanders  
Opening new horizons





# CONTENT

## 1. INTRODUCTION

## 2. THE EMERGENCE AND PLANNING OF MODERN KUWAIT

### 2.1. PLANNING PROCESSES

### 2.2. THE MASTER PLANS

## 3. ALISON AND PETER SMITHSON'S URBAN STUDY AND MAT- BUILDING

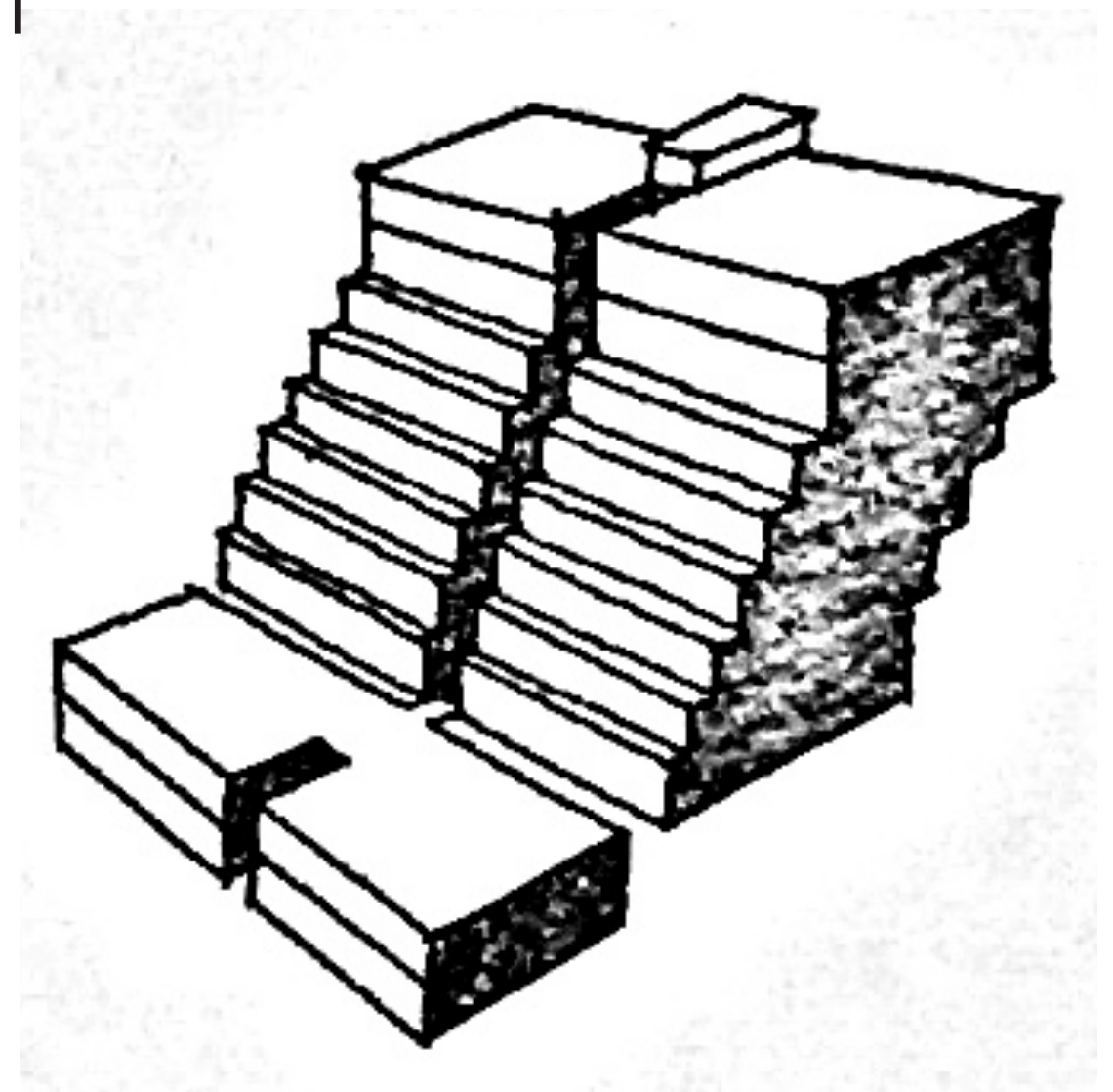
## 4. THE 'AL SAWABER' HOUSING COMPLEX

### 4.1. THE EMERGENCE OF 'AL SAWABER'

### 4.2. ARTHUR ERICKSON'S DESIGN VS. DEVELOPER'S PROJECT

## 5. DESIGN EXPLORATIONS AND CONCLUSION

## 6. BIBLIOGRAPHY





# 1. INTRODUCTION



History of Kuwait, Natinal Museum under construction

source: <https://248am.com/mark/photography/history-of-the-kuwait-national-museum/>



## 2. THE EMERGENCE AND PLANNING OF MODERN KUWAIT

### 2.1. PLANNING PROCESSES



Seafront of Kuwait City, 1950

Transformation of the Old city

source: <https://248am.com/mark/kuwait/more-old-pictures-of-kuwait/>





Aerial view Kuwait City centre

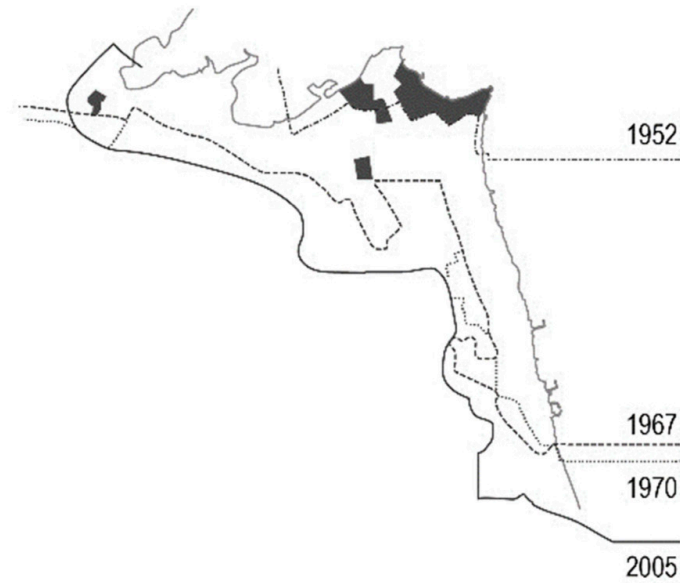
source: <https://248am.com/mark/kuwait/more-old-pictures-of-kuwait/>



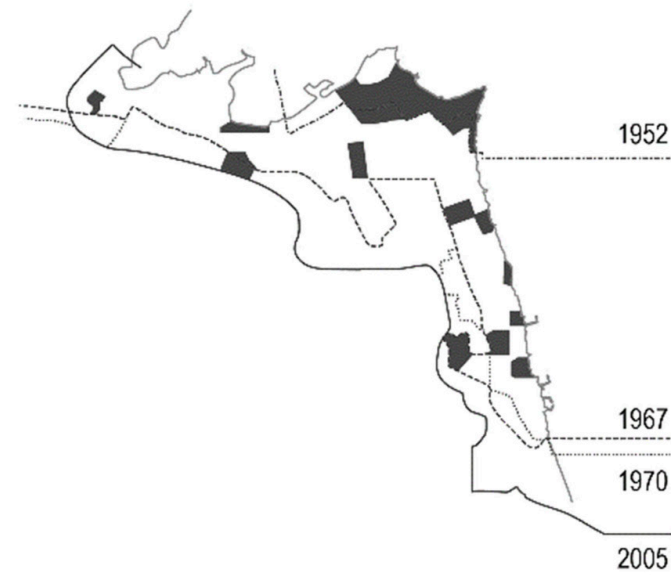
## 2. THE EMERGENCE AND PLANNING OF MODERN KUWAIT

### 2.2. THE MASTER PLANS

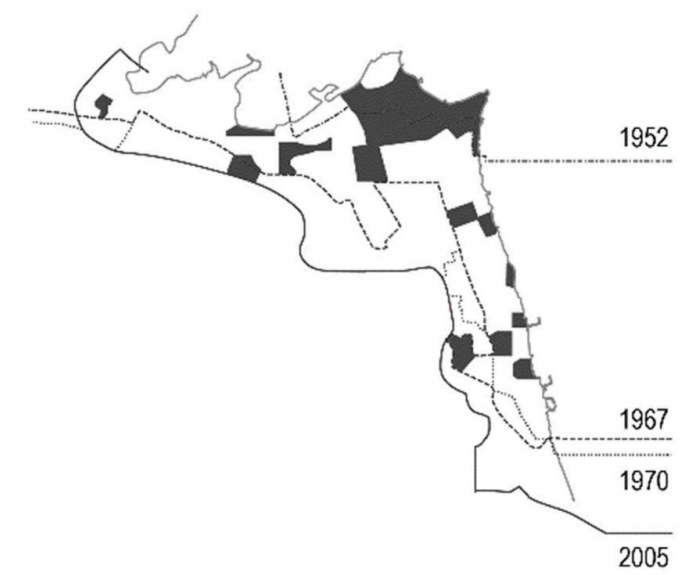
**1952**



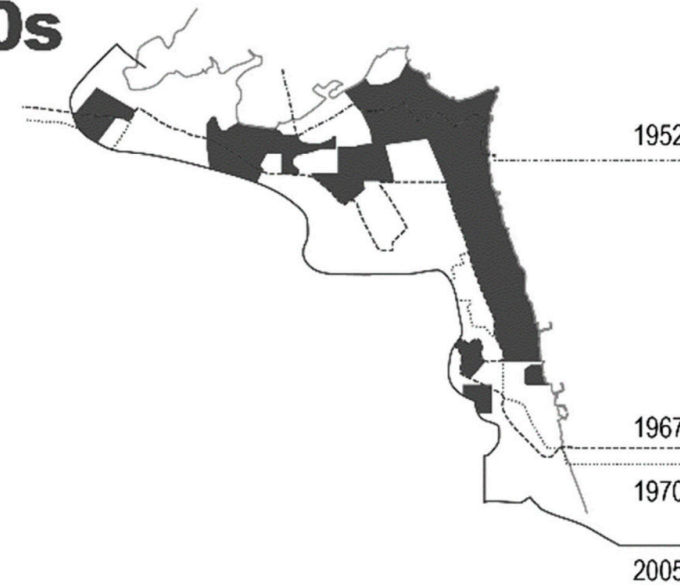
**1960s**



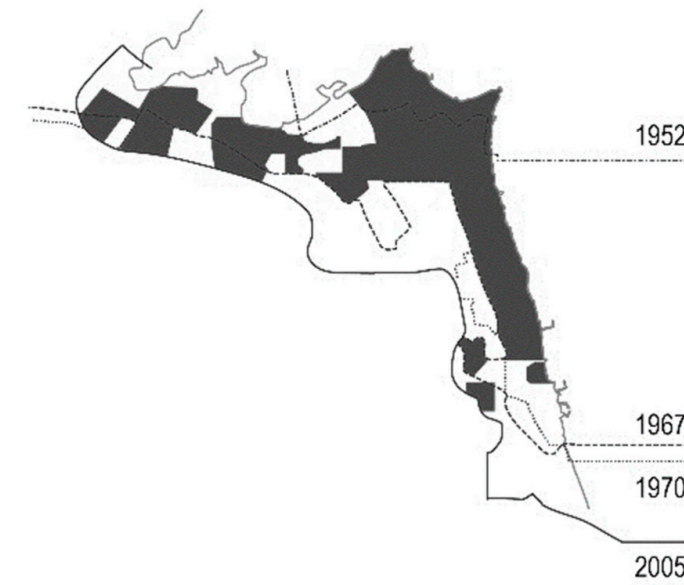
**1970s**



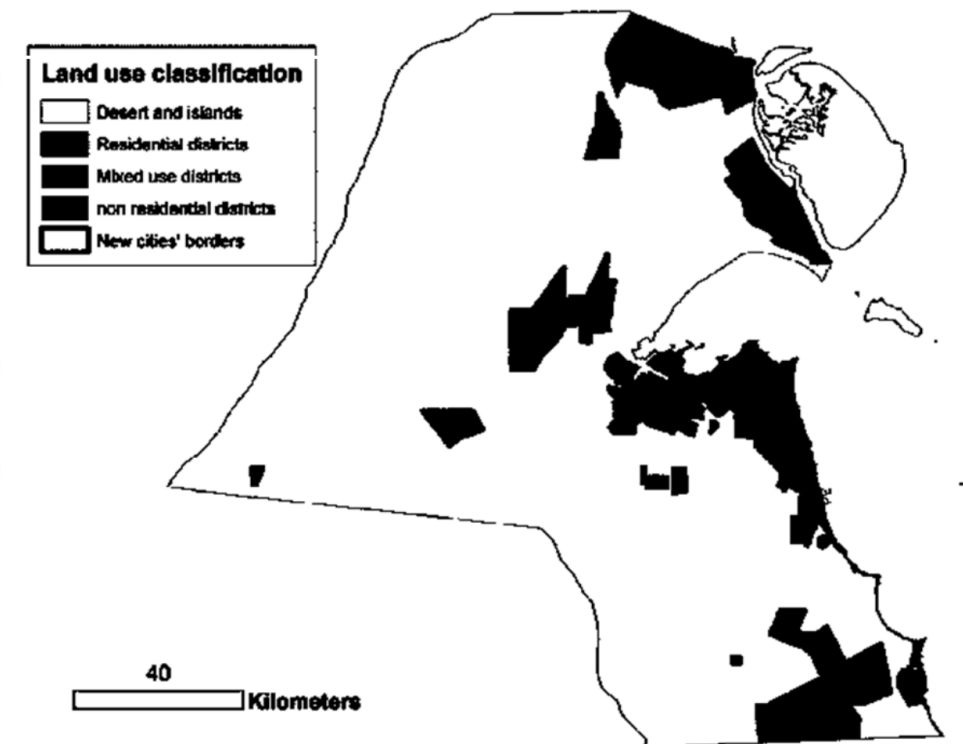
**1980-90s**



**2012**



**2030**



Chronological overview of the Master Plans for Kuwait city; 1952-2030

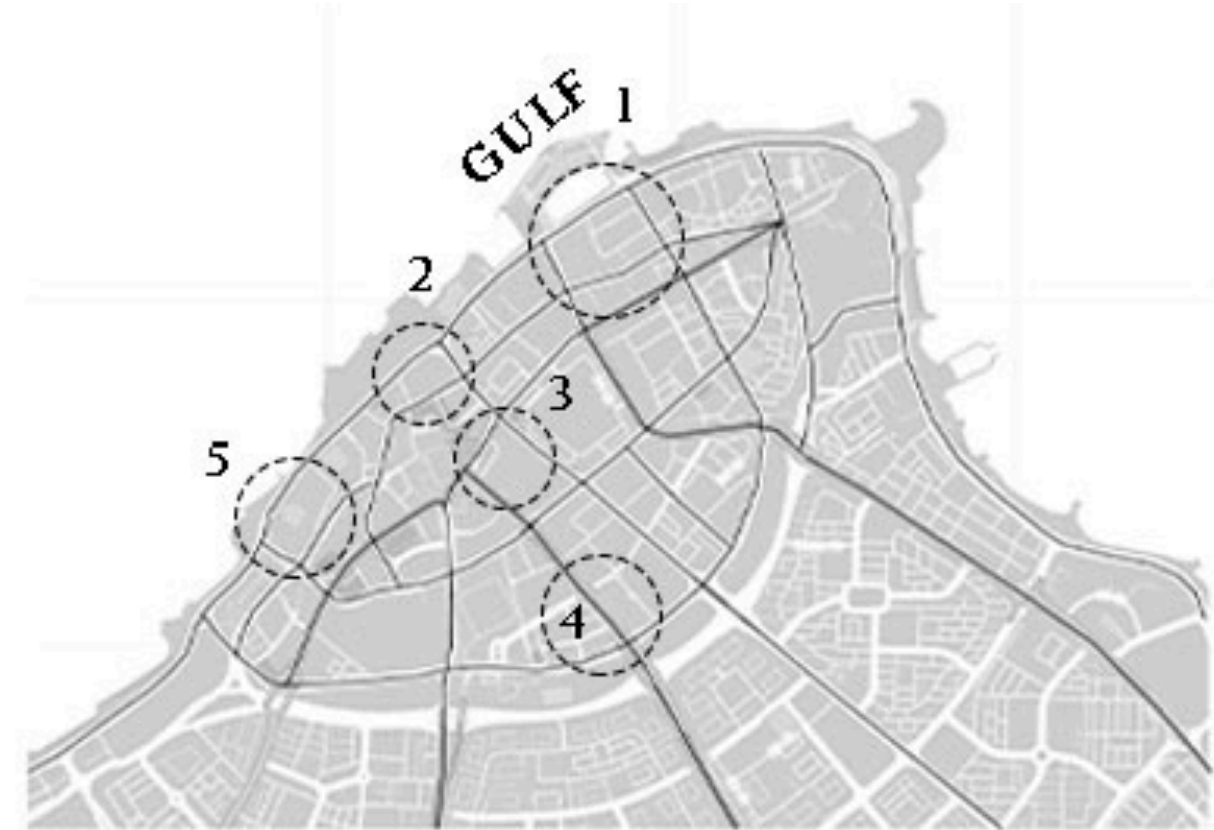
source: Mohamamd ALSayegh 2017 - [https://www.academia.edu/35038745/4KMP\\_Planning\\_Course\\_Introduction](https://www.academia.edu/35038745/4KMP_Planning_Course_Introduction)





# PROPOSALS FOR RESTRUCTURING KUWAIT

In 1968 four architectural firms of international standing were invited by the Government of Kuwait to submit proposals for the reconstruction of a city which had largely disappeared with the oil boom. The general proposals, which covered the city as a whole, were followed by detailed proposals in the form of demonstration buildings. This article is in two parts, the first part dealing briefly with the four general proposals.



Plan of Kuwait showing the four areas selected for the demonstration buildings and a fifth area for Utzon's prize-winning parliament building.

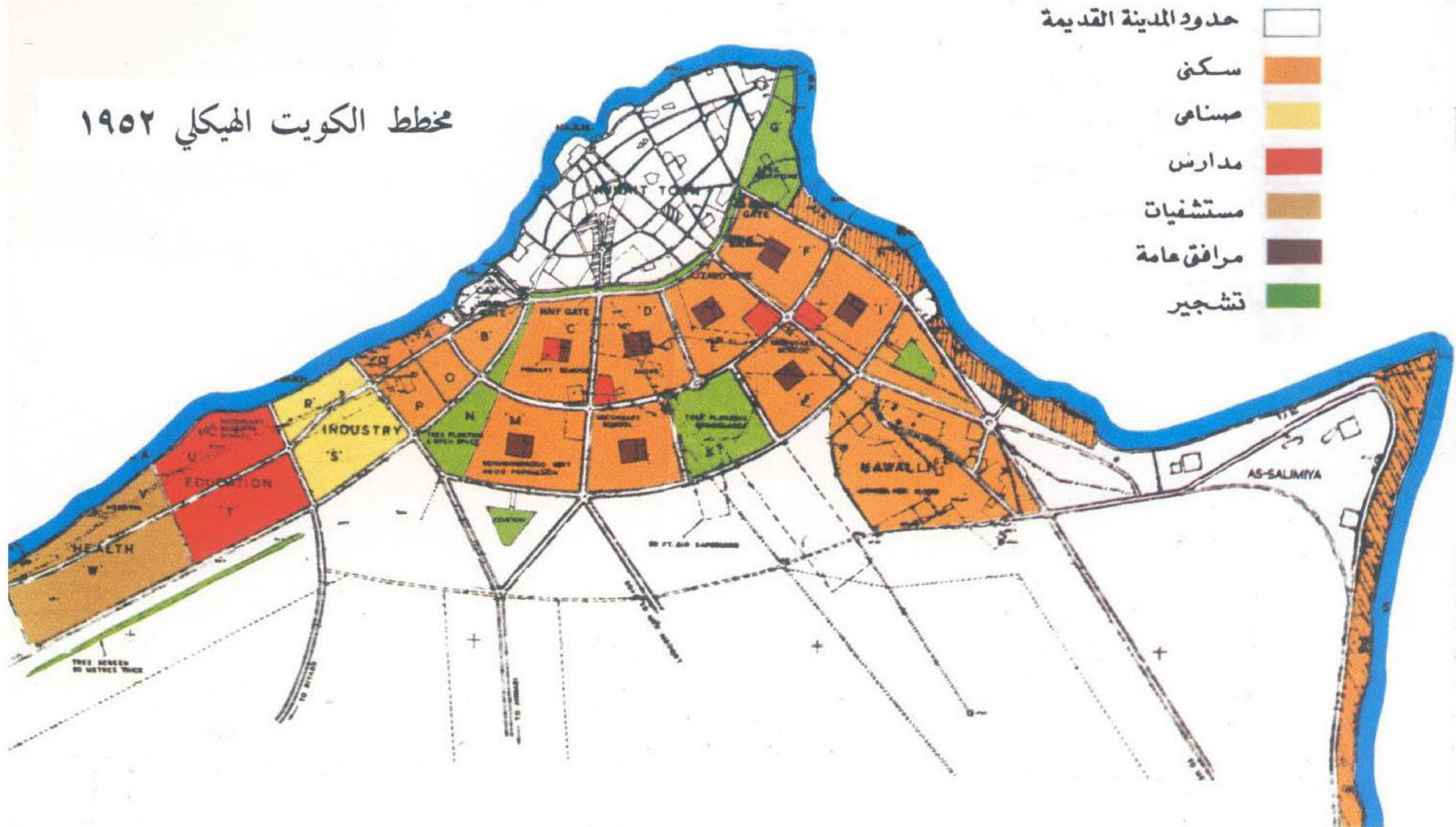
## Key

1. Candilis  
2. Pietila

3. B.B.P.R  
4. Smithson  
5. Utzon



# مخطط الكويت الهيكلي ١٩٥٢



The first masterplan of 1952, Kuwait City

source: <https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Minoprio-Spencelely-and-MacFarlane-development-plan->





Al Sawaber housing complex, Kuwait City, 1997

source: <https://www.imgrumweb.com/hashtag/alsawaber>





The Old Dhow Harbour Kuwait, 1964 and Souk Al Wataniya, Kuwait City, early 1980s.

source: <https://aukt.wordpress.com/2013/10/01/constancy-and-change-in-contemporary-kuwait-city-phd-thesis-by-mohammed-al-jassar/>

TAC: [https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Souk-Al-Wataniya-Kuwait-City-early-1980s-Source-TAC\\_fig1\\_320161290](https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Souk-Al-Wataniya-Kuwait-City-early-1980s-Source-TAC_fig1_320161290)





## Transformation of Kuwait City, 1960

source: [https://www.academia.edu/35038745/4KMP\\_Planning\\_Course\\_Introduction](https://www.academia.edu/35038745/4KMP_Planning_Course_Introduction)



### 3. ALISON AND PETER SMITHSON'S URBAN STUDY AND MAT- BUILDING



Peter Smithson presents the 'Kuwait Urban Study and MAT-building' proposal to the Crown Prince of Kuwait, 1970

source: [https://twitter.com/a\\_alragam/status/1086736952261574657](https://twitter.com/a_alragam/status/1086736952261574657)

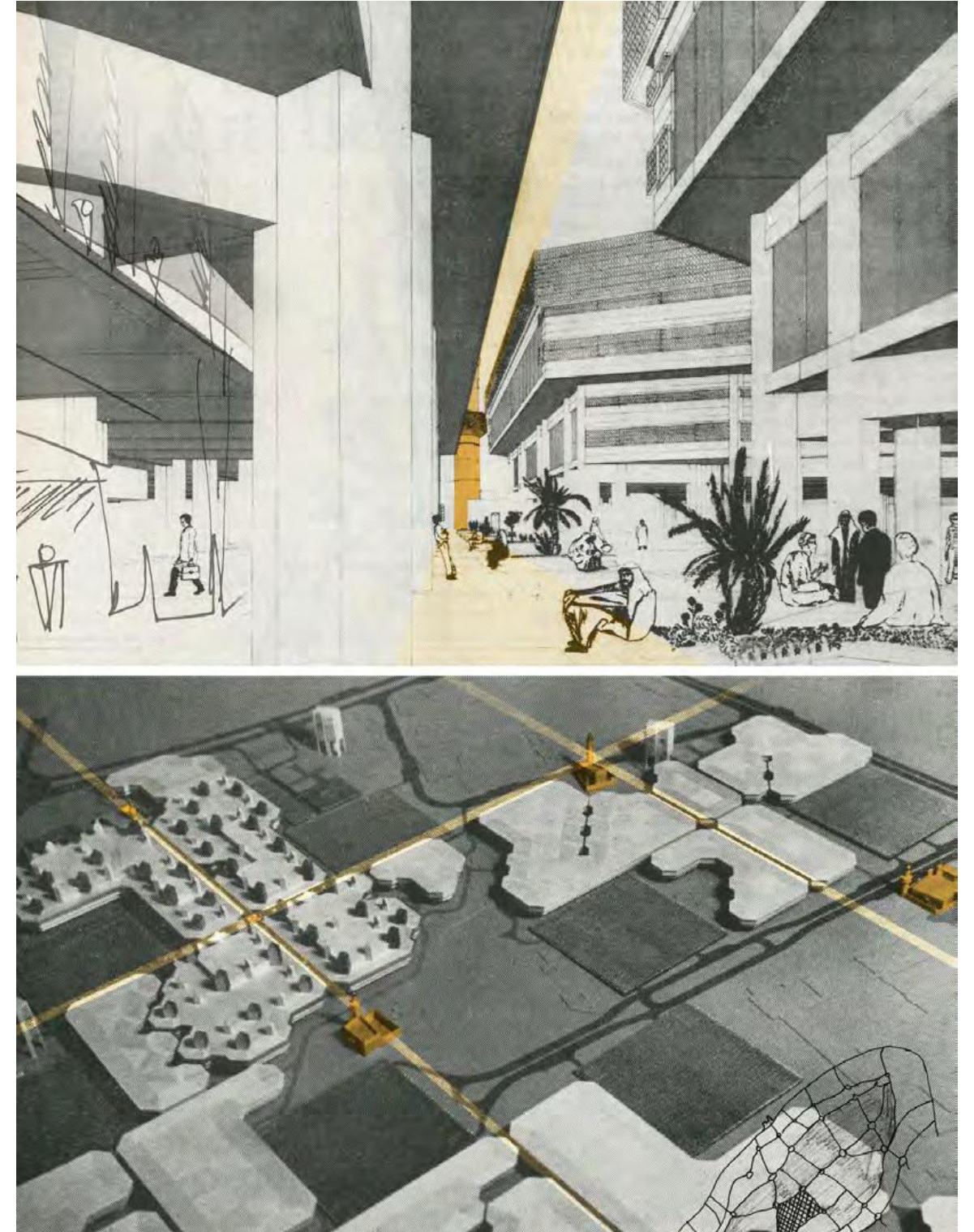
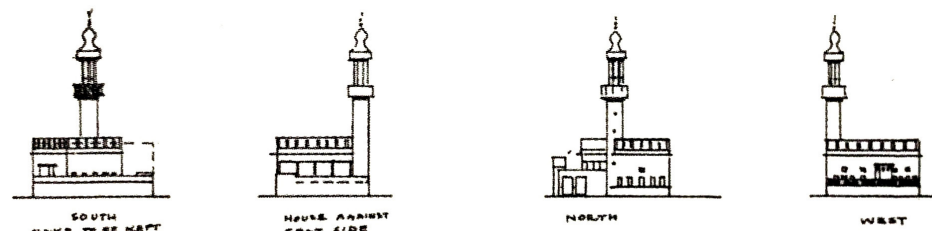
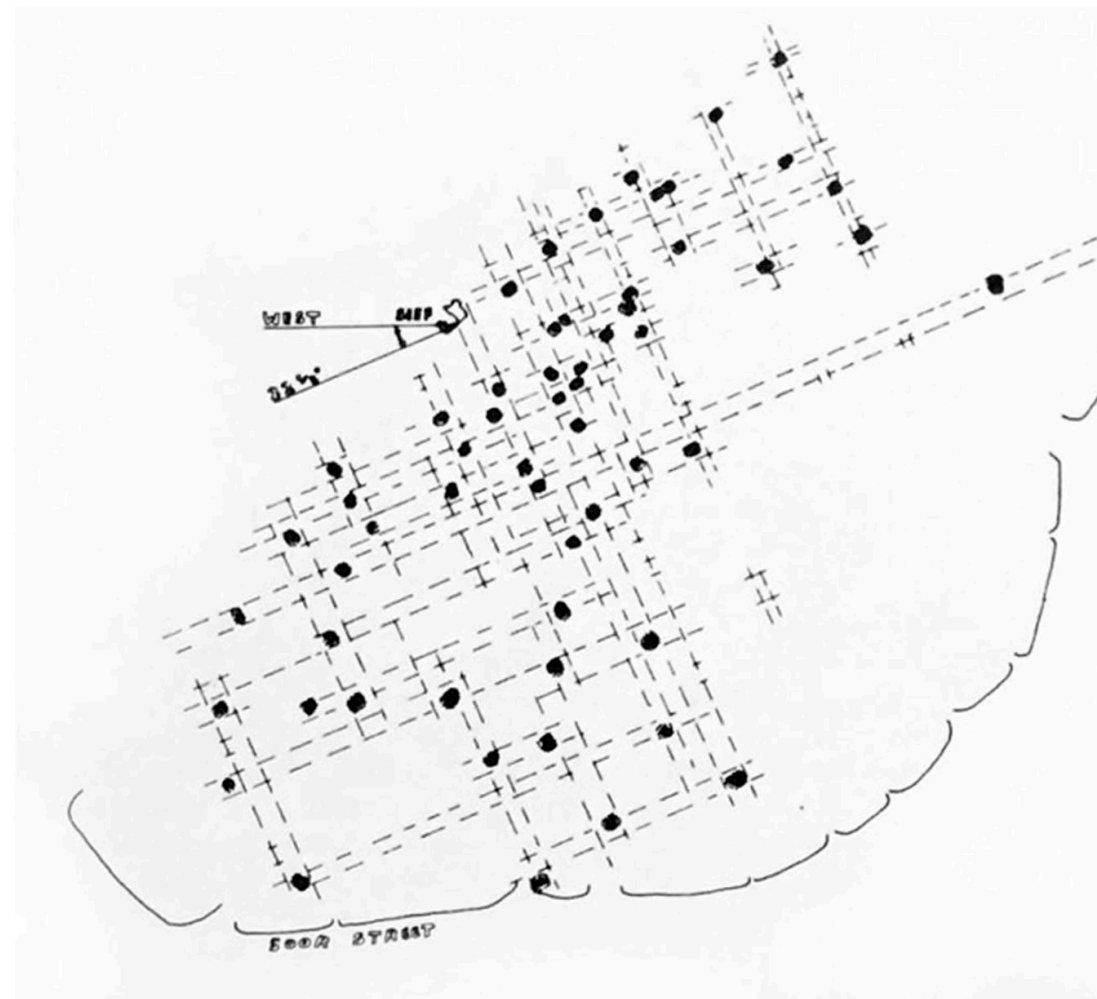
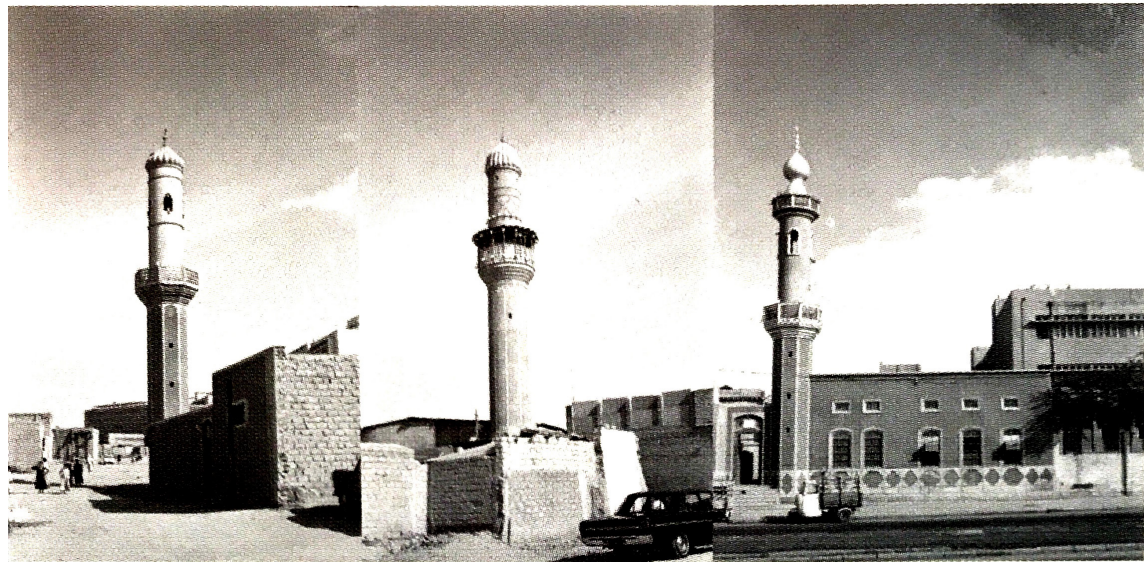
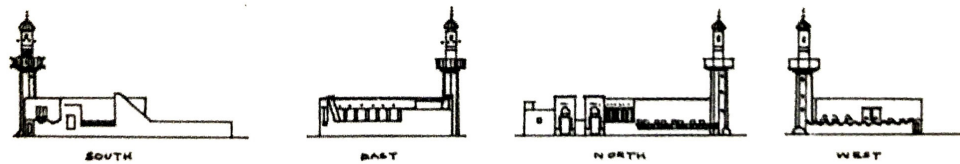


Figure 130: Two composite montages of Alison and Peter Smithson; one is a re-worked perspective of a galleria within their Kuwait's Mat-Building, and the other is a photograph of their model for the same building demonstrating the importance of the old mosque for their proposal. Source: Rapha   Memon (based on the original Smithson's images published in *AR*, 1974).

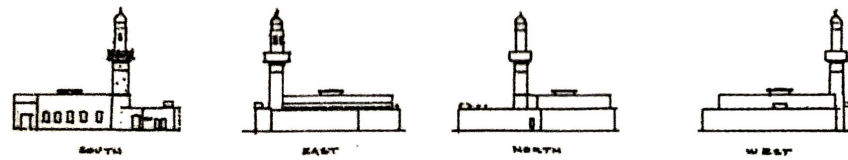




AL WAZAN



AL HAMAD



AL FLEIJ



Survey of the existing Mosques

Site plan showing the minarets fixed to the galleries in the MAT-building

Urban form grid study of 1969 Report

source: Risselada, M. [Image] (2005) NAI Publishers.



## 4. THE 'AL SAWABER' HOUSING COMPLEX

### 4.1. THE EMERGENCE OF 'AL SAWABER'



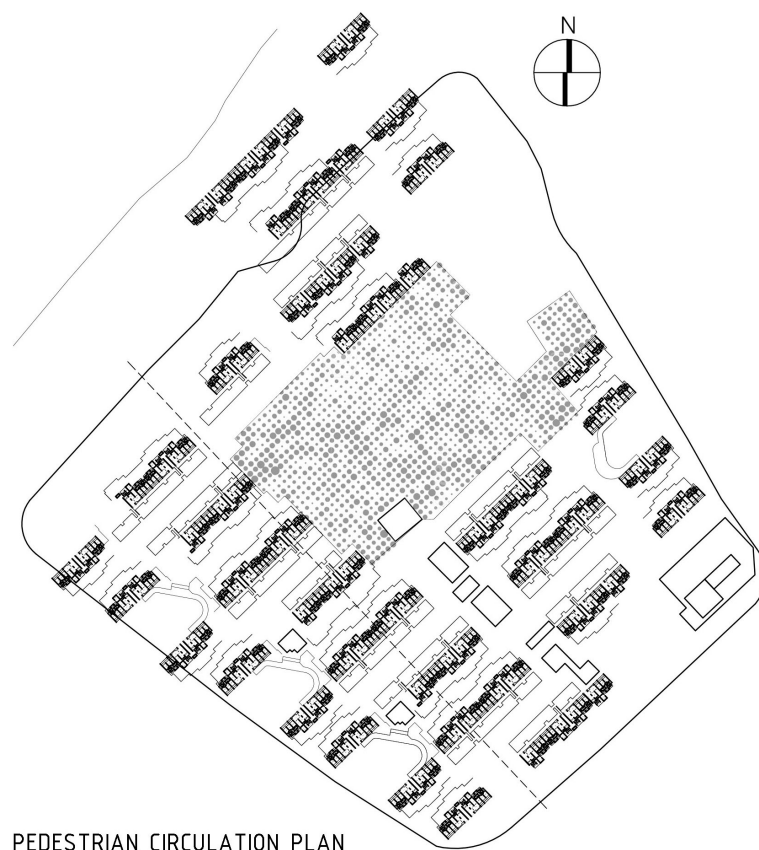
Design Model of the original design for Al Sawaber by Arthur Erickson, 1976  
source: <https://www.arthurerickson.com/unbuilt->



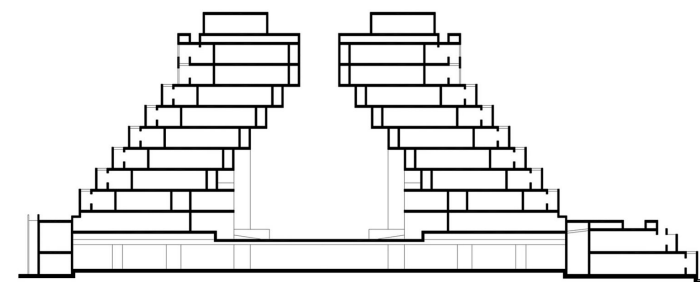
## 4. THE 'AL SAWABER' HOUSING COMPLEX

### 4.2. ARTHUR ERICKSON'S DESIGN VS. DEVELOPER'S PROJECT

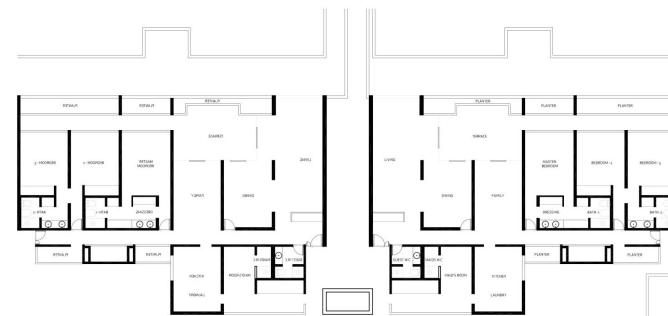
ARTHUR ERICKSON  
Design 1976



PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION PLAN  
900 Units (250 sqm)



TYPICAL 'A' SECTION



DWELLING TYPE

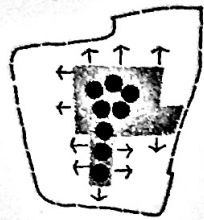




# Planning Principles

The following planning principles respond to the specific project site conditions and user requirements. They are the key elements in the approved development concept of Part B, and they have been extended and developed in the course of the work on Part C.

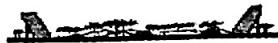
The project gardens are the unifying element and focal point of the community.



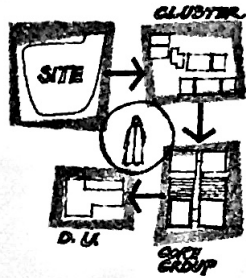
The east-west alignment of residential buildings provides a good climatic orientation for all dwelling units.



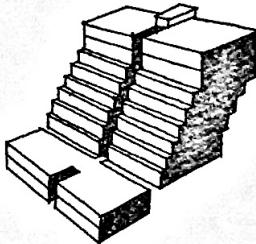
Edge buildings provide enclosure for the project garden and protection from outside visual intrusion.



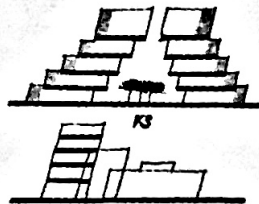
A clear hierarchical organization, from site to neighbourhood cluster to core group to dwelling unit, clarifies the individual's relationship to the whole community.



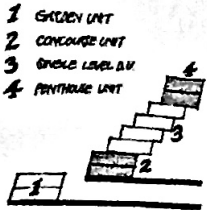
Core groups of up to 20 dwelling units are the basic building blocks of the project.



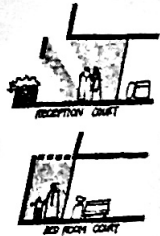
The stepped building form gives the dwelling units the character of hillside villas, and clearly distinguishes the project from existing non-Kuwaiti apartment buildings.



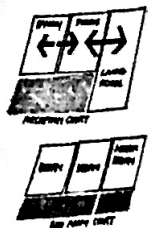
Several different dwelling unit types respond to different conditions in different locations within the building.



Every dwelling unit has its own private landscaped courtyard, protected from visual intrusion and screened from direct sun.



Major rooms have identical internal and external relationships in all dwelling unit types.



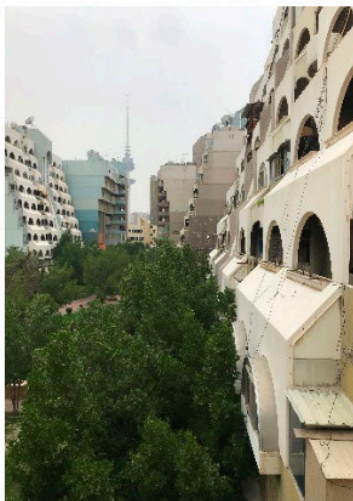
1 The gardens are the unifying element.



3 Edge buildings providing enclosure



6 The steeped buildings.



9 Equal internal and external relationships.

Planning principles of the initial design by Arthur Erickson, 1976

Traces of the initial planning principles

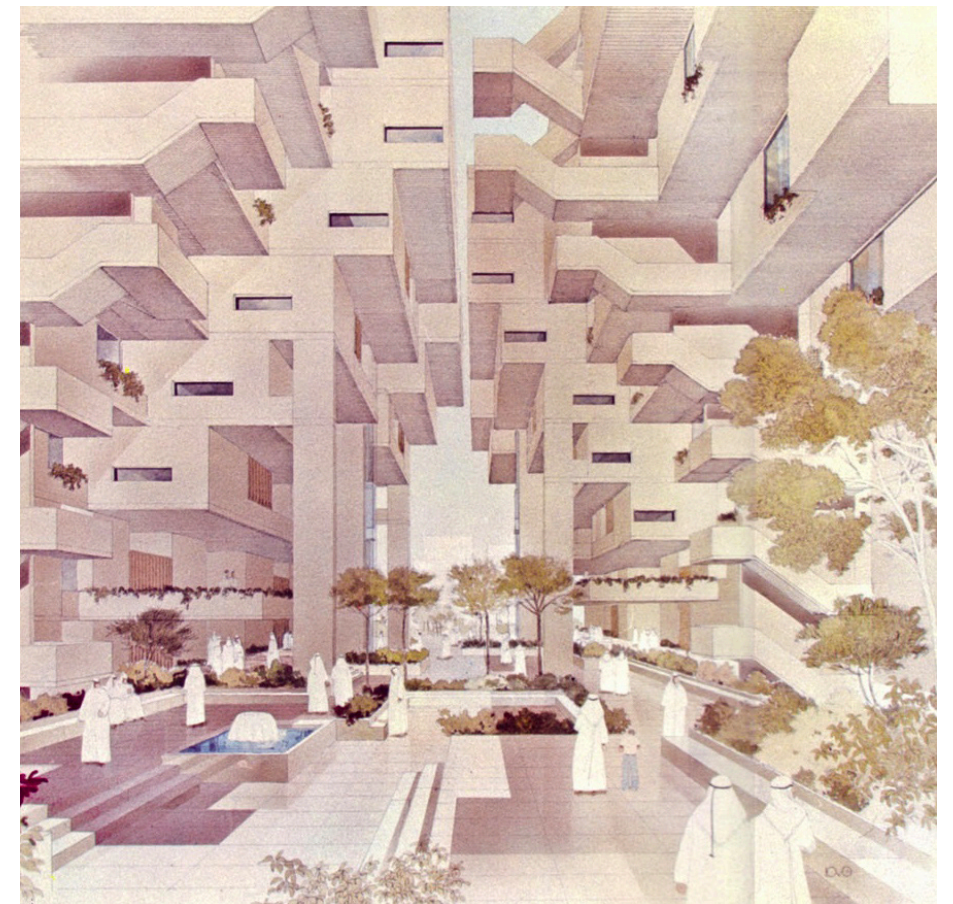
source: Camacho, R [Image] (2017) (p.134, 135,206,207,276)

Mosquera, D. [Image] (2018).



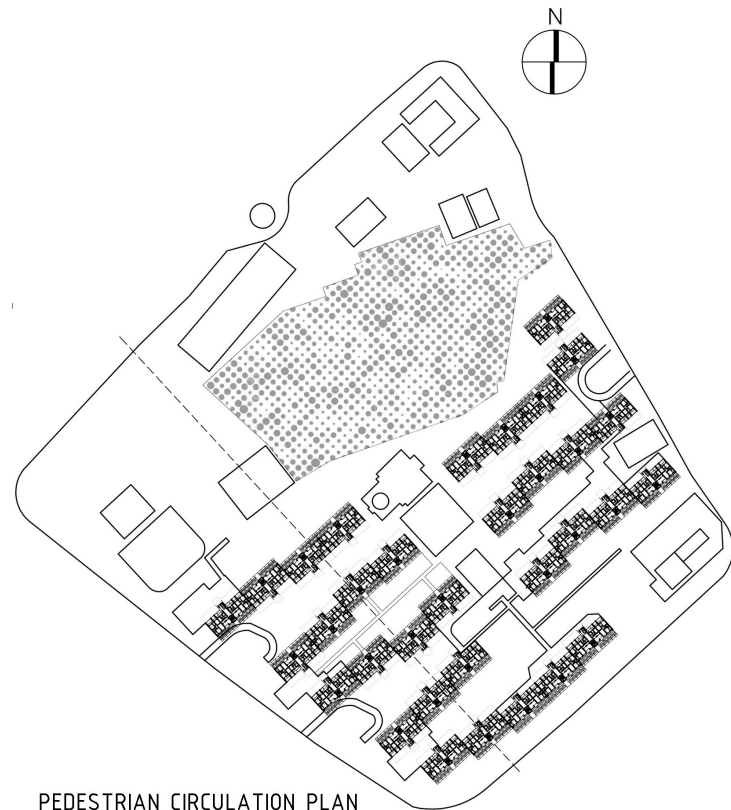


Initial design by Arthur Erickson, 1976  
source: <https://www.arthurerickson.com/unbuilt->

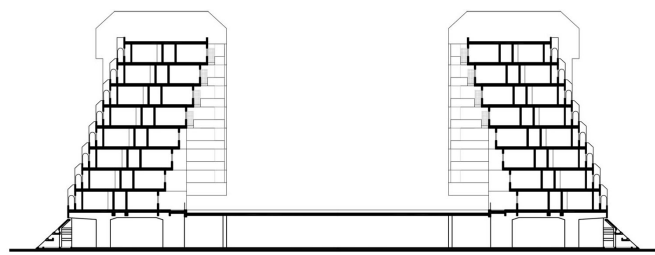




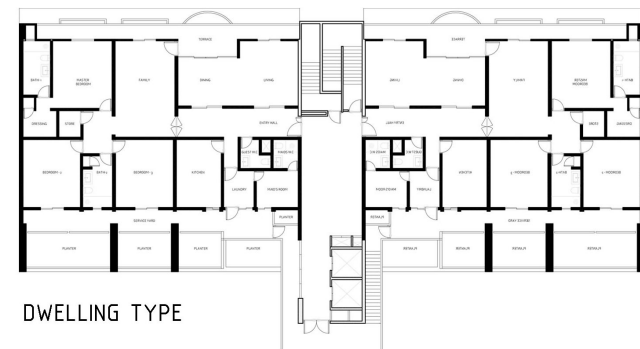
EAST ASIA CONTRACTORES CORPORATION  
Built project \_\_\_\_\_ 1989



PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION PLAN  
500 Units (295 sqm)



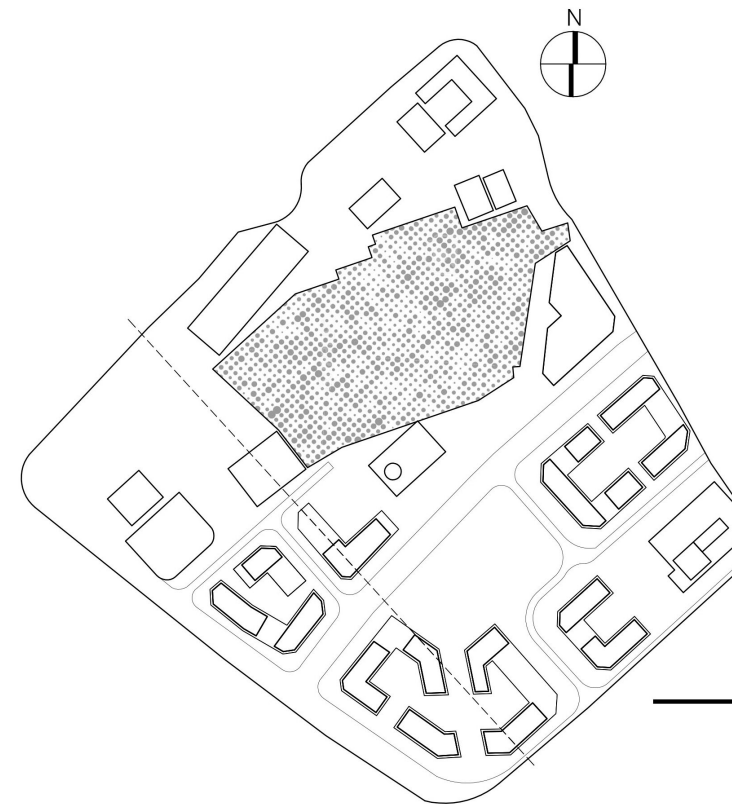
TYPICAL 'A' SECTION



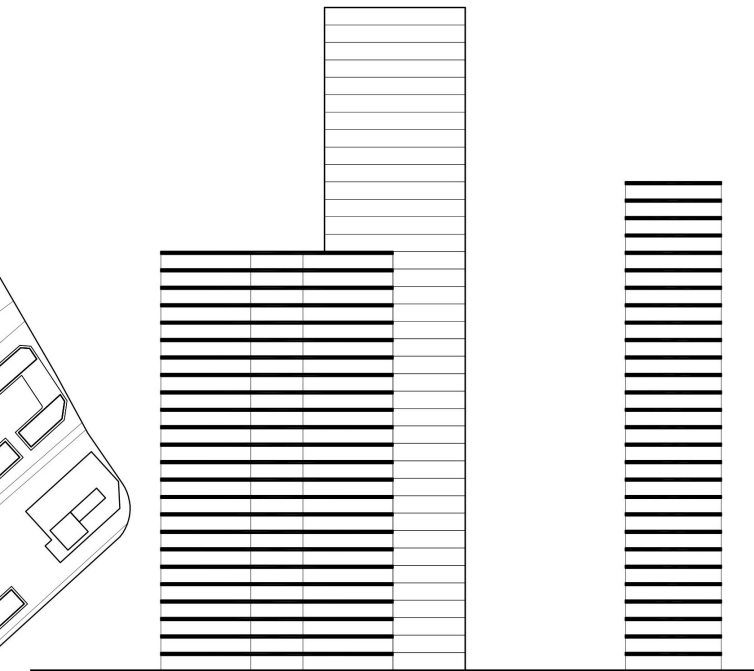
DWELLING TYPE



GULF CONSULTANT  
Design \_\_\_\_\_ 2030



PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION PLAN  
2000 Units (600.000 sqm)



TYPICAL SECTION



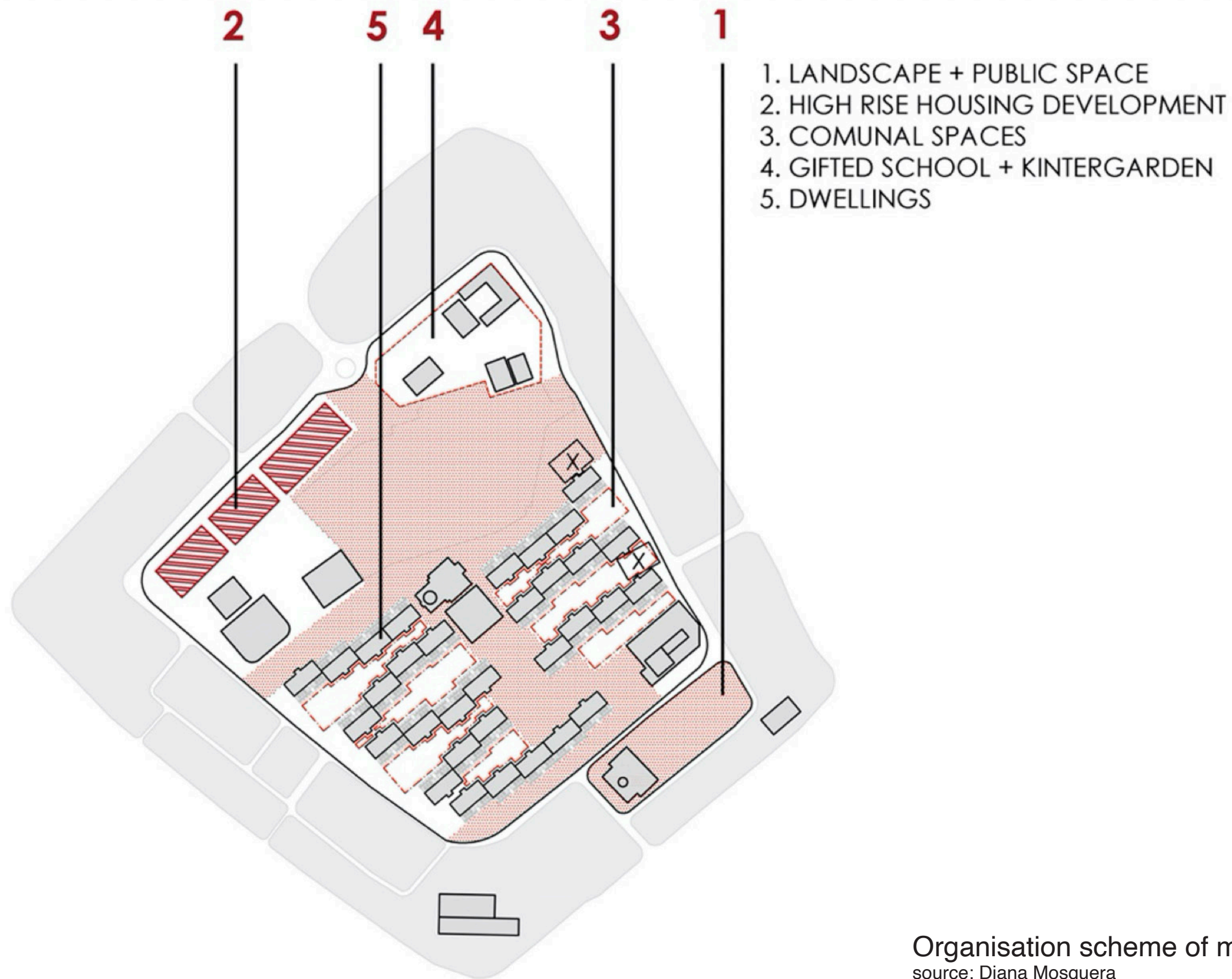
Top view Al Sawaber complex, Kuwait City, 1989 versus urban development plans of Kuwait city, 2030

source: <http://mlalmusaileekh.blogspot.com/2016/10/al-sawaber-with-my-indulgence.html>

[http://gckuwait.com/portfolio\\_page/kuwait-city-urban-development-2030/](http://gckuwait.com/portfolio_page/kuwait-city-urban-development-2030/)



## 5. DESIGN EXPLORATIONS



Organisation scheme of masterproject of Al Sawaber, Kuwait  
source: Diana Mosquera





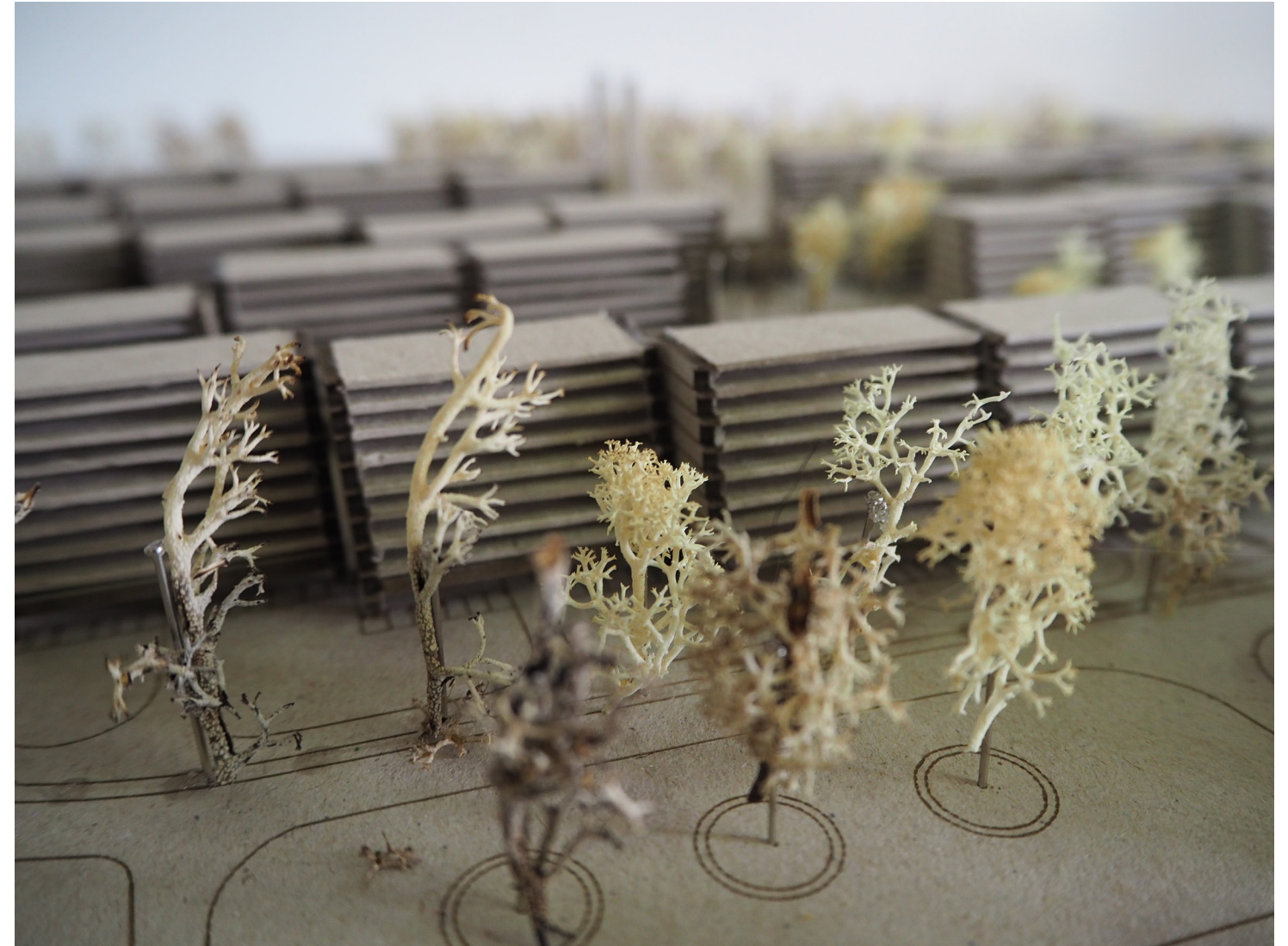
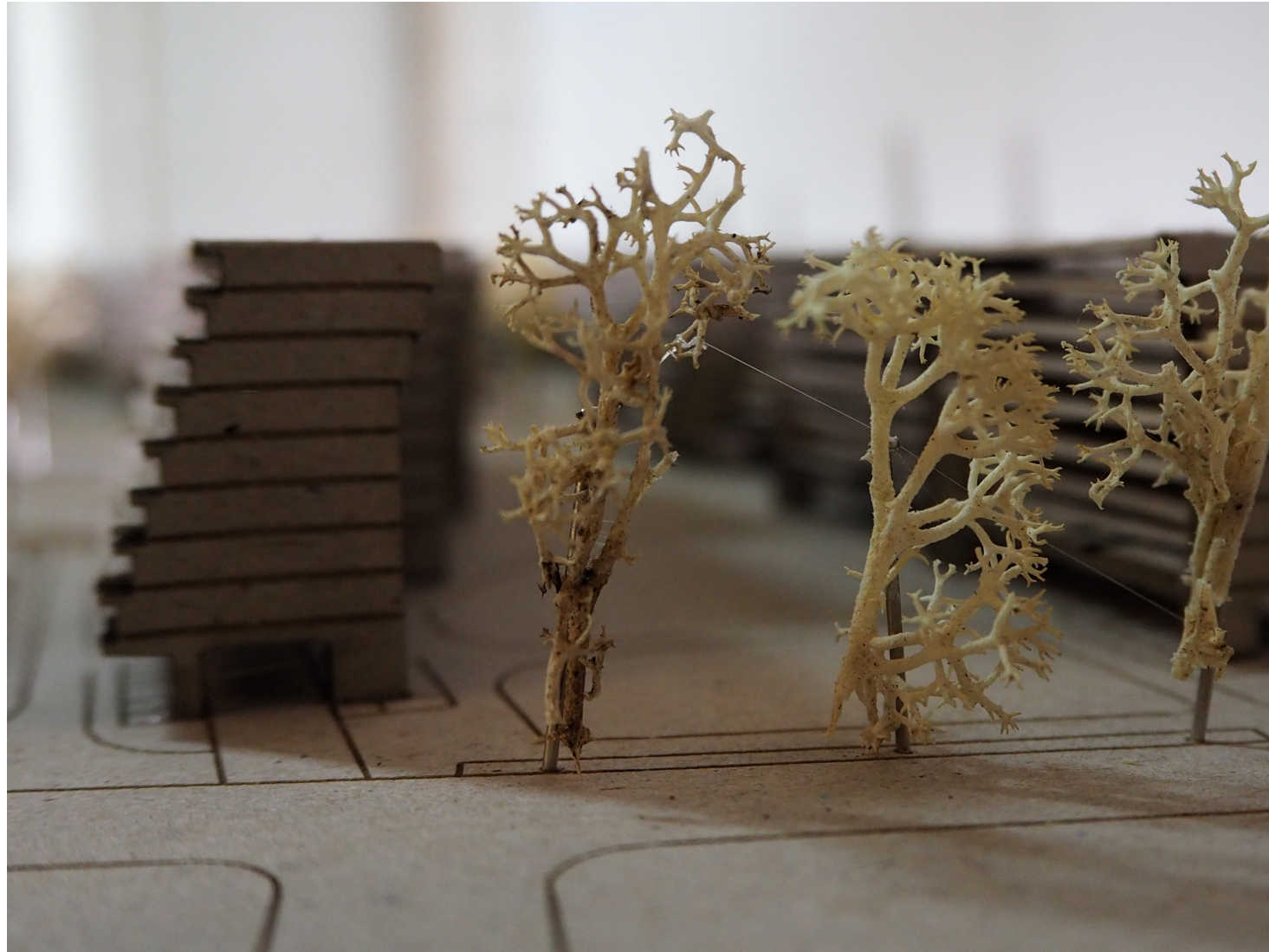
Floorplan and sections of masterproject of Al Sawaber, Kuwait  
source: Diana Mosquera





Model of masterproject of Al Sawaber, Kuwait  
source: Diana Mosquera





Details of model of masterproject of Al Sawaber, Kuwait  
source: Diana Mosquera





East Asia Contractors Corporation, Kuwait City, Kuwait, 2019, before demolition versus during demolition of Al Sawaber.  
source: Arab times 2018 and Tareq Alhouli 2019

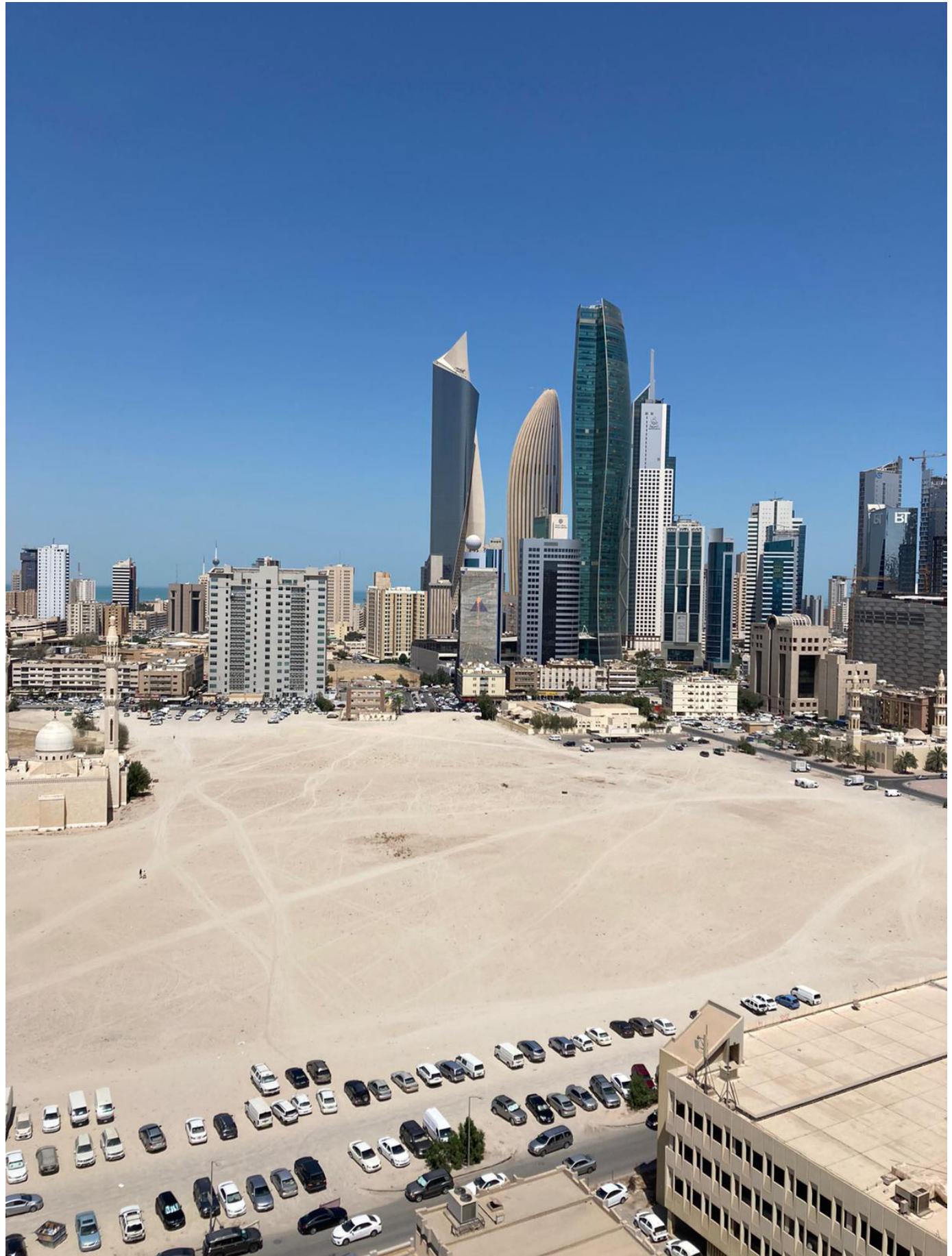


## CONCLUSION



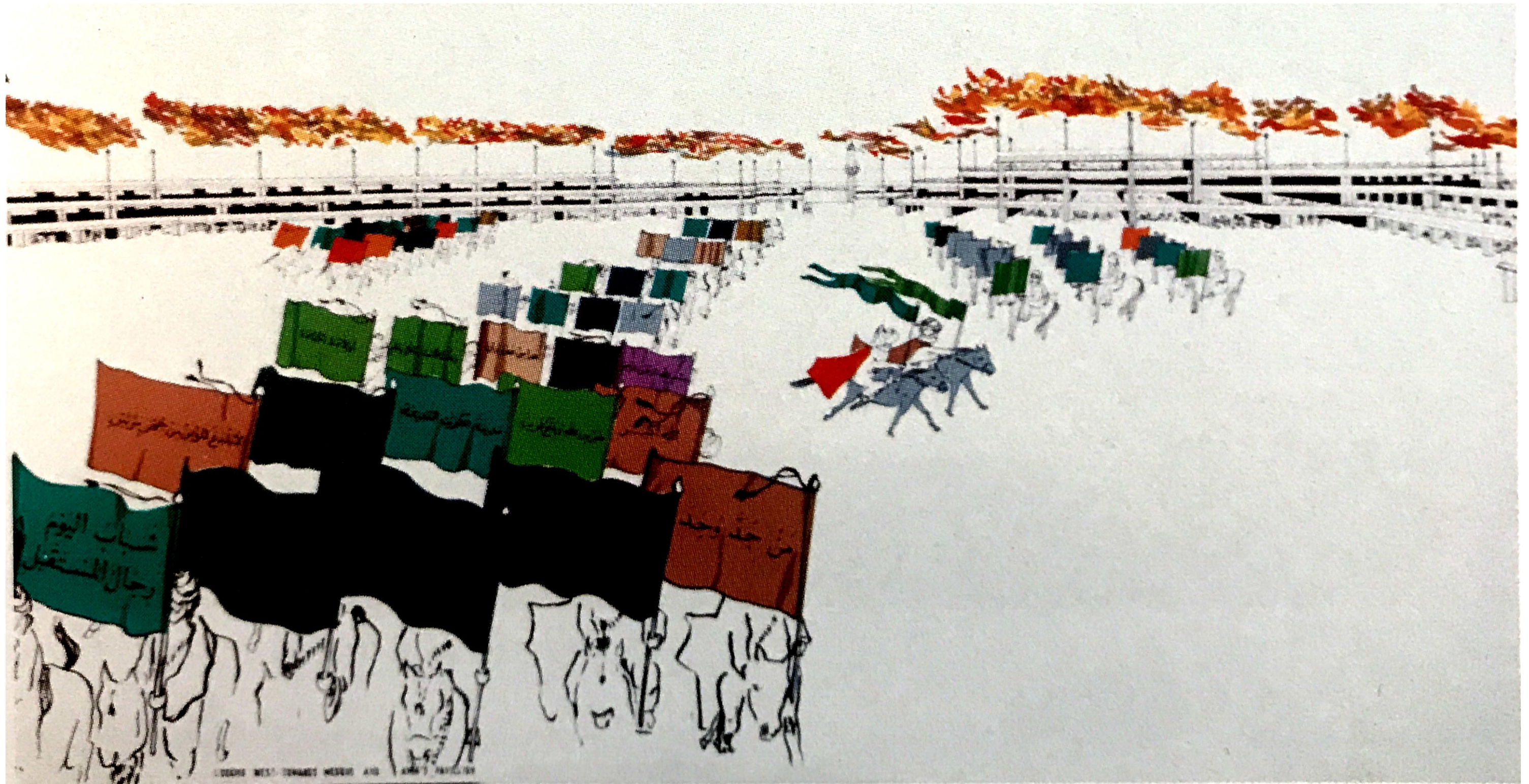
Demolition of Al Sawaber housing complex, 2019  
source: <https://alqabas.com>





Current situation of Al Sawaber housing complex, 2021  
source: Diana Mosquera



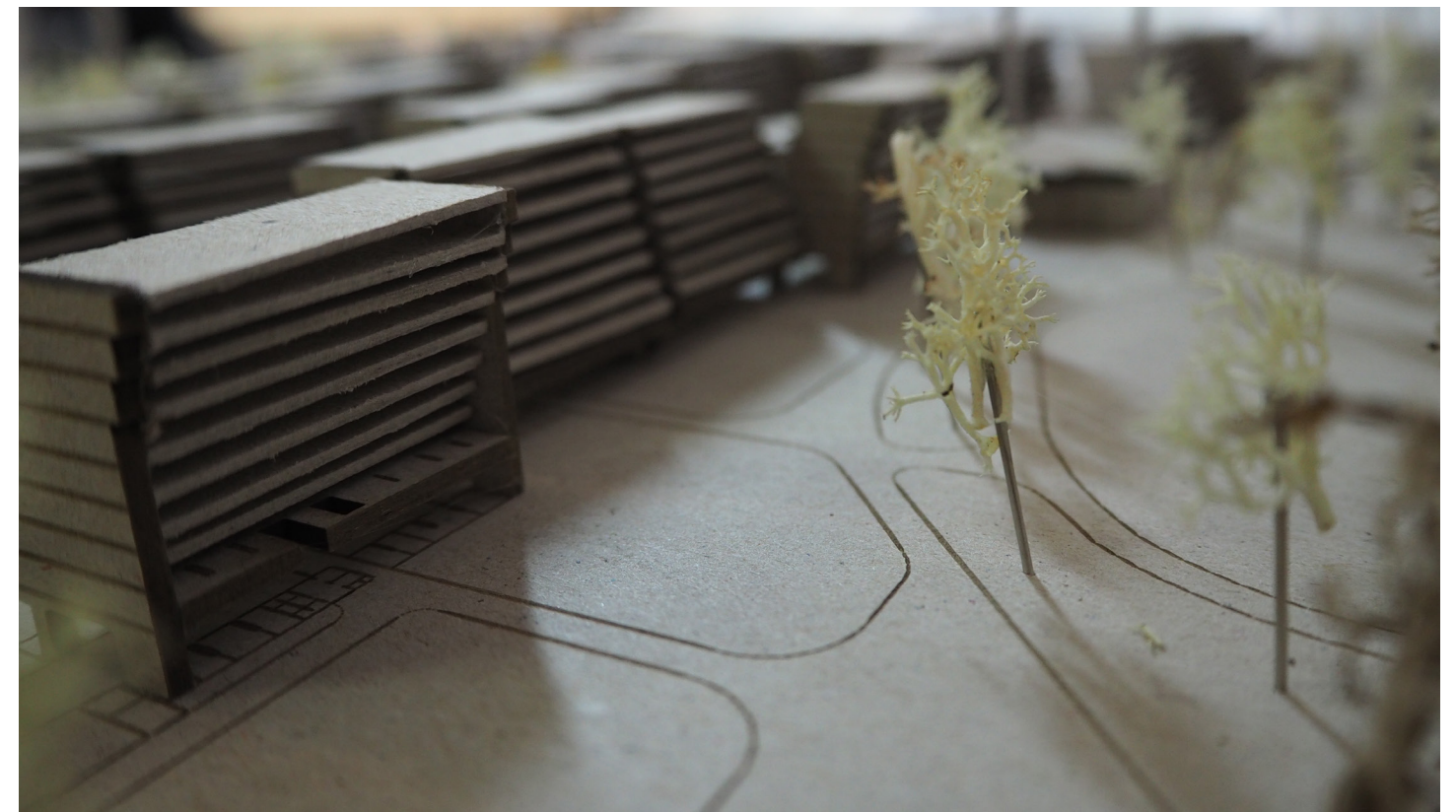


Perspective of an equestrian display in the Organgerie Maidan - a montage of battlefield display  
source: Risselada, M. [Image] (2005) NAI Publishers.



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