Public Open Space on the Transforming Urban Waterfronts of Bahrain – The Case of Manama City

by

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Abstract

Public open space on the urban waterfront is a unique part of the urban setting of many waterside cities. Since the 1960s, more of these spaces are being provided in an attempt to bring more people to waterside areas. While some cities have been successful in striking a balance between their economic needs and the public's demand for access to the water, others have failed. During this process, the urban waterfront has become synonymous with the idea of public open space.

In Bahrain, since the late 1920s, 'decline' has become the predominant character of the relationship between urban centres and the water. Hasty urban, demographic and economic growth alongside extensive land reclamation and privatization processes has progressively changed the nature of the waterfront. Until the mid 1990s this process took place without sufficient consideration for the cultural and social values of the waterfronts of the Islands. The new millennium saw an even faster depletion of those spaces, which triggered public outcry. Currently, open spaces providing formal or authorized access to the water represent 3 to 8% of the Islands' shoreline.

In reflection of this situation, this research investigates the physical and social nature of the urban waterfront in Bahrain in the context of the current urban growth and land reclamation processes. Theoretically, it uses a multilayered approach in exploring public open space on the urban waterfront. The empirical aspect is case specific, focusing on the Northern and Eastern waterfronts of Manama. This investigation, which is the first of its type in Bahrain, employs a case study method based on an overall qualitative approach. This enables the utilization of many tools, such as archival research, site survey, observation, and interviews, in investigating the physical and functional attributes of Manama's waterfront and the selected public open spaces. The study of this waterfront is able to answer questions related to its accessibility, ownership, water-dependent nature of its uses, and the availability of public open space on it. It also focuses on formal and informal types of waterfronts to answer questions related to how those spaces are publicly perceived and consumed and the processes that shape them.

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Abbreviations

Bahri-I	Al Bahri Park – Phase One
Bahri-II	Al Bahri Park – Phase Two
KFC-I	King Faisal Corniche – Phase One
KFC-II	King Faisal Corniche – Phase Two
Public space	Public Open Space on the Urban Waterfront

Glossary of Arabic and Local Dialect Terms

Baraha, plu. Bara'yeh:	outdoor open space within a built-up area
Cashteh:	picnic in local dialect, usually taking place in a green space. The word could be derived from the Persian word *kusht* which means plantation, cultivation, culture and/or incubation.
Dafneh:	reclaimed land
Fereej or Fareeg, plu Ferjan:	neighbourhood
Gahwa, plu. Gahawi:	traditional coffee shop or coffee house
Hadhra, plu. H'dhoor:	traditional fish traps
Huwala:	people of Arab origin who emigrated from the west coast of the Gulf to the Persian coast and later resettled in the west coast again.
Magbarah, plu. Magaber:	graveyard or cemetery
Mussalla:	outdoor open space designated for prayer areas
Najdi, plu. N'jadeh or N'jood:	Arabs from Central Arabian Peninsula
Saha, plu. sahat:	large open space, could be within built-up area or on the town's fringe
Seef:	beach, or clean part of a coast
Shisha:	water-pipe for smoking, known as "hubble bubble pipe" in English
Suq, plu. Aswaq:	market

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Cahpter 1: Introduction

1.1 Definition of the Problem

The urban waterfront phenomenon materialized nearly five decades ago in post-industrial cities. The main aim of waterfront development was to reuse the centrally-located waterfront lands which were left behind by industrial, railway and port activities. The move was stimulated by public demand for better access to the water through the provision of public space on the waterside. The phenomenon spread from North America to the rest of the world to become one of the outstanding contemporary urban trends. Overall, many of these projects were successful in bringing the public to the waterside.

Other coastal cities are witnessing the phenomenon in a different manner. Cities like Tokyo, Amsterdam, Hong Kong and Dubai grew up over lands reclaimed from the water. The city/water relationship keeps changing, depending on the functions taking place on those reclaimed lands (e.g. airports, hotels, parks, housing and highways), and the overall approach of planning and design authorities towards public access to the water. In some cases, lands were reclaimed to bring the general public to the water in greater numbers, and in many others the new water's edge was restricted to private users.

Manama is one of those cities that has grown up over reclaimed land. But urban development on this type of land results in a different manifestation of the urban waterfront phenomenon than is found in North America and Europe. In Bahrain, land reclamation is a major planning policy with the purpose of providing affordable and buildable land. This is driven both by demand from the government, seeking to accommodate public projects, and from the private sector, seeking land for developments. This is not to say that there exists no empty land in Bahrain with the above-mentioned qualities: there are vast tracts of empty land on the island. However, this land is 90% privately owned and most of it does not feed into the local market through the regular channels. Nevertheless, the government reserve of land is too low, and providing land for public projects through land acquisition from the private sector is too costly and usually considered as a secondary option, the option of first choice being land reclamation. This option brings with it dire consequences. Although reclaimed land is used to accommodate new residential, commercial and industrial areas, it comes with a cost: many of those new developments are, or become, exclusively private. Subsequently many communities have been displaced away from the water and therefore deprived of the use of the water for their economic benefit and leisure needs.

During the past few years the public in Bahrain has started to express their dissatisfaction with the inaccessibility of the sea. Their frustration with the style of urban growth and the decline of public space and access to the water is frequently expressed through statements conveying a sense of loss, deprivation, and social injustice. The public outcry has been followed by informal and later official statistics showing that publicly accessible waterfront in Bahrain represents only 3% to 8% of the country's shoreline.

As mentioned previously, land reclamation from the sea is not restricted to Manama: other cities around the world adopt the same method in satisfying their needs for land to accommodate their growth. However, not many end-up having similar problems to Manama. On the contrary, land reclamation has given many cities new opportunities to reconcile their relationship with the water with environmental and public access requirements. This raises many questions, such as what has led Manama to grow in such a manner? How did it reach the current situation? What is the nature of the available public space on Manama's waterfront? Is there a link between their condition and the land reclamation policy followed in Bahrain?

Given this background, this research is conducted with the aim of understanding the nature of the emerging open spaces on the waterfronts of Manama, Bahrain in the light of the changing relationship between the city and the water.

1.2 Research Aim, Question & Objectives

The main aim of this research is to investigate the relationship between the city of Manama and the water, as manifested in the public spaces on the waterfront. To achieve this aim this study intends to attain the following objectives:

- To understand the historical, social, and spatial values of the public space on the waterfront. This sets out mainly to trace the roots of the current phenomenon and to record the transformations of the waterfront.
- To explore the overall socio-economic, and to some extent the political, mechanisms underlying the provision and consumption of public space on the waterfront in a Bahraini context. This sets out to find what enables the creation of public space on the waterfront in its two generic forms, and how is this linked to socio-economic processes that allow for and thrive on land reclamation. Also, it attempts to discover how the available public open space on the waterfront is consumed; how is it used; what are its economic roles; and how is this linked to the land reclamation process and the physical condition of the open space.
- To establish an understanding of informal, marginal and ephemeral public spaces, with a particular focus on those created on reclaimed land. This type of public open space is rarely studied, particularly in this part of the world. Understanding this space, as in learning how it is physically and socially created,

how is it used, and what roles it plays in the lives of the residents of Manama, could redraw the map of the waterfront's public open spaces. It also could help to reshape formal public space.

Attaining the above-mentioned objectives will contribute to answering the main question of this research: **How do the urban growth and land reclamation processes affect public space on the waterfront, both physically and socially?** As the city keeps growing in the direction of the sea, which is treated as an ultimate natural boundary in other cities, the relationship between the urban areas and the water is repeatedly changed. New spaces are continually being created on the waterfront and others are displaced far from it. This research is an attempt to understand how those spaces are created, how they are displaced and how they are being consumed both socially and economically. To answer this question and to achieve the above mentioned objectives the following research methodology was followed:

1.3 Research Methodology

The methodology of this research rests on a case study strategy with a qualitative approach. This method allowed for the incorporation of a variety of data sources and tools for analysis and interpretation. This variety comes from the large size of the selected case and the long time span covered by this research. The data collection depended on a set of tools. These were 1- archival research, 2- site survey on both macro and micro scales, 3- Semi-structured and casual interviews, and 4) site observations. The need to conduct archival research arose from the need for data relevant to the historical period under study, which is not readily available being dispersed across sites. The archival research could help in shedding some light on the root of the problem in hand. It will help in answering questions related to the followed land allocation methods, development of urban planning regimes in Bahrain, history and forms of land reclamation in Bahrain and how this is relates to the urban growth of Manama.

The survey of Manama's waterfront was conducted in two phases. The first phase was a physical survey of Manama's Northern and Eastern waterfronts. To survey the condition of the waterfront of Manama, a holistic approach was devised based on a number of existing models. This approach worked as a framework which helped to understand the multifaceted nature of the waterfront. This survey was designed to trace

the physical condition of the waterfront and to contextualise its social environment. The data from the survey could help in answering questions related to how much of the waterfront is public. What are the forms of public access to the water? How does land reclamation and privatization of the waterfront affect those forms of access? What are the followed land reclamation styles around Manama? Do those styles affect the availability of public space on the waterfront? Do they affect the forms of public access to the water? What is the physical condition of the available public space on the urban waterfront?

Subsequent to the survey of Manama's waterfront, two representative public spaces within the waterfront area were selected as the locations for the second phase of field work. The basis on which they were selected was their method of formation (formal or informal). The importance of following that division is explained throughout the later sections of this thesis. The two focus areas selected to conduct the interviews were the Al-Bahri waterfront (formal public space) and the Al-Seef waterfront (informal public space). This is where the social aspect of the waterfront was studied by interviewing and observing the users of the two selected public spaces. This strand of the case study method sought to obtain the user's opinion, aspirations, experience and perception of public space on the waterfront. It also answered questions related to how those spaces are used, how they are contested and their overall social condition. In total, 40 interviews were conducted with individuals and groups, totalling 125 respondents.

The semi-structured interviews with government official and other informants were used in obtaining information covering many dimensions of this research. Some were used to trace the history of the waterfronts of Manama, others helped in understanding the practiced urban planning system in Bahrain, while some shed some light on environmental issues related to land reclamation. Nevertheless, some of semi structured interviews were used in understanding the private investment mechanisms in public space.

1.4 Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is divided into ten chapters, overall falling into two parts. Part One (Chapters 1 to 3) introduces the topic of this research, places it in context and defines the research problem, aim and objectives. It also establishes the theoretical underpinnings and conceptual framework of the research, by reviewing and exploring previous theories

and frameworks concerning public space, the waterfront and the two phenomena considered jointly together. The second part (Chapters 4 to 10) describes the methodological approach and the operational framework of this study. It also describes the case of Manama city through the use of frameworks established in Chapter 4. And finally it presents and discusses the study's findings.

Chapter 2 of this thesis illustrates the history of the relationship between urbanity and the water. At the outset it defines the waterfront and focuses on the role of public space in this phenomenon. Then the chapter moves on to a historical review of the phenomenon. It highlights the major pivotal points in its history in terms of technological advances and other influential issues. The historical review is mainly related, in a geographical sense, to cultures of the West. However, the Chapter also highlights the history of the waterfront within Arab/Islamic culture, focusing upon how that culture has responded to the presence of bodies of water in constructing its cities.

Chapter 3 is concerned with the contemporary issues around public space on the waterfront. It starts with a discussion of the ways of defining of public space. It reviews the philosophical underpinnings of physical public space to reach a broad and inclusive definition. Then it proceeds to portray the wider underpinnings of such types of space on the waterfront, based on the characteristics of their natural location, urban setting and stakeholders.

Chapter 4 portrays the research methodology used by the author in collecting and analysing the case study data. The chapter starts with an explanation of why the method of a single case study with a qualitative approach was followed to achieve the research aim and objectives and answer the research question. It proceeds to highlight the research settings and the reasons for choosing the waterfront of Manama and for selecting two focus areas (the formal and informal public space) to investigate. This is followed by an explanation of the data collection process, the operational framework and the data analysis and writing strategy. The chapter continues with an evaluation of the methodological approach and the difficulties faced in executing it. It also suggests possible ways around the identified drawbacks. Overall, the chapter illustrates why a multifaceted approach was devised to survey the condition of the Manama waterfront.

Chapter 5 provides some contextual and historical information about the case study area, drawing from both selected interview data and archival research. The use of the

interview data marks the first use of the study's empirical strand. After giving a brief introduction to Bahrain and its urban planning system, the chapter proceeds to take a glancing look at Manama's urban growth process and what has shaped it, with a particular focus on the role played therein by land reclamation. The chapter then identifies and describes land reclamation styles in Manama, focusing mainly on the effect of those styles on public space on the waterfront. This is followed by a highlight of the underpinnings of the land reclamation process in Bahrain. And the final section links back to the previous sections by exploring the types of public space that exist in Manama and how they have been affected at several levels by the urban growth of the city and the land reclamation process.

Chapter 6 establishes the current state of the waterfront in Manama and its public spaces. This chapter depends primarily on data collected through a survey of Manama's waterfront. It depicts the state of the current cycle of reclamation and the level of urban consolidation and how that is affecting the nature of the public waterfront. The chapter demonstrates the characteristics of Manama's waterfront in terms of land-use, the state of land tenure, the level of integration between the waterside properties and the water itself and the level of water dependency of the activities taking place on the waterside. The previous parameters and the survey are set out to map the economic and industrial uses of the waterfront, including the survey's finding on the nature of the available waterfront in terms of its extent, location and ownership. These parameters were also used to evaluate the physical and visual connectivity of the waterfront with the rest of the urban fabric. And to complement this, the continuity of the waterfront in physical, visual and symbolic terms was also assessed.

In Chapter 7, the tools and measures introduced in Chapter 3 for the analysis of the accessibility of both the waterfront and of public spaces in general, are re-introduced in a collective manner and used in analysing the accessibility of the waterfronts of Manama. This is to achieve two main objectives: first, to assess the accessibility of the waterfront of Manama; and later to correlate that with the way it is used and perceived. Secondly, to highlight the multi-dimensional nature of the waterfront's physical accessibility. The chapter discusses the accessibility of the waterfront on many scales. It starts with a large scale (i.e. city to waterfront zone connectivity) and moves down to issues on a smaller scale (e.g. the effect of the water's quality on its accessibility). Overall, the chapter sets out to highlight the effect of the processes of land reclamation

and physical expansion of Manama on the accessibility of the waterfront. This factor is discussed in Chapters 8 and 9, against the way the waterfront is used and perceived.

Chapter 8 is concerned with the formal waterfront of Manama. This generic form of public space is represented by the Al-Bahri Parks. The chapter starts by examining the physical characteristics of the parks. This is to highlight what types of formal public space are being produced on the waterfront, what factors affect their physical condition and how are they transforming. This is followed by an analysis of how the formal public spaces on the waterfront are perceived and used, in order to answer the question of how the physical arrangement of formal waterfront areas affects the way they are socially consumed. The analysis of the users' perception of the Parks is categorised under three main themes: 1- the park as a place to observe nature, 2- the park as a social place, and 3- the park as a place for leisure.

Chapter 9 follows the same structure as Chapter 8 in the way it portrays the investigation of the informal waterfront. This generic form of public space is represented by the Al Seef waterfront. However, Chapter 9 differs from Chapter 8 by focusing upon the ephemeral state of the studied open spaces: it highlights how they are socially constructed and what role they play in the life of the city dwellers.

Chapter 10 is the concluding chapter of this thesis. It starts by running through the entire study, recapitulating the initial research problem, the main aims and objectives, the research questions, the methodology followed and the findings in each section of the study. This is followed by a list of the conclusions reached by this study and a discussion of its major findings while appraising them in the light of some of the theories discussed in Chapters 2 and 3. That is followed by an explanation of how the findings of this study could influence waterfront provision policies and design guidelines. And the finally the chapter concludes with a list of recommended areas for future research.

Cahpter 2: The Public on the Waterfront

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is concerned with setting out the historical context of the study. At the outset, it defines the waterfront as a contemporary phenomenon and goes back in time to illustrate its roots. The chapter highlights the pivotal historical phases of the phenomenon and what paved the way for current waterfront development. The historical review follows a sequential order and focuses on the waterfront in more advanced countries as these are the source of most available relevant literature. It also attempts to contextualize the phenomenon by tracing the roots of the waterfront within Arab/Islamic culture.

2.2 Definition of the Urban Waterfront

There is a degree of unanimity in the definition of the urban waterfront. Breen and Rigby (1996: 8) "by definition consider the bay, canal, lake, pond, and river, including man-made, under the generic term 'waterfront'". Torre (1989: vii) does the same and includes "the shores of oceans, lakes, rivers, streams, and estuaries" as forms of waterfront. Carr *et al.* (1992: 84) defined the waterfront as a type of space that includes harbours, beaches, riverfronts, piers and lakefronts. The main elements of the earlier definitions do not differ from the main characteristics of the definitions of the coastal zone found in more recent literature. For example, the US Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 defines the term "urban waterfront and port" as "any developed area that is densely populated and is being used for, or has been used for, urban residential, recreational, commercial, shipping or industrial purposes (Section 302(a)(2))." However, an adapted definition from Bruttomesso (2001: 46-8) describes the waterfront as a special border type of urban zone that is both part of the city and in contact with a 'significant' water body. The latter definition is regarded as the most holistic, inclusive and suitable for defining the waterfront when it specifically refers to the urban nature of the areas adjacent to the water and at the same time has some elasticity with regard to the body of water in question.

2.3 A History of Urbanity on the Waterside

The following is an attempt to highlight the major developmental stages of waterfronts around the world. The main objective here is to highlight some pivotal periods and events which shaped the city-water relationship and to illustrate how those events affected the nature of public space on those waterfronts. Most of the following sections revolve around the history of the port-city. That is not to say that waterfront redevelopment or development is confined solely to port cities[1]. The waterfront is "found as a continuous process in most places where settlement and water are juxtaposed, whether or not a commercial port activity is or was present" (Hoyle 1994).

[1] Refer to the work of Josef W. Konvitz *Cities and the Sea* (1978) and *The Crisis of Atlantic Port Cities* (1994) for an extensive historical review of the port city

2.3.1 Early Encounters

The relationship between humankind and water is as old as the story of *homo sapiens* and his evolution. Water covers 75% of Earth's surface and sustains virtually every life form on it (Britannica Concise Encyclopædia 2004). Our bodies are between 50% to 70% water and we are biologically dependent upon it. To satisfy that biological dependency, humans historically needed to locate near fresh water in order to sustain life (Leakey & Lewin 1979). Consequently, it affected a choice between the nomadic lifestyle or settling down in one place (Mumford 1961). Thus, man is believed to have first settled by the water's edge (Mann 1973: 14; Moughtin 2003: 172; Mumford 1961)[1], and subsequently the first civilisations grew up next to bodies of water. Be it a river, lake or sea, most of the major settlements and cities of the old world flourished on the banks of the rivers of the ancient world such as the Nile, Tigris, Euphrates, Indus and Hwang Ho (Benevolo 1980: 17; Woolley 1950: cited in Craig-Smith & Fagence 1995; Kostof 1992: 39; Mann 1973: 14; Morris 1972; Mumford 1961: 55; Torre 1989: 3-5). River banks were the preferred sites for Chinese towns. And their location in reference to the water was reflected on their names (Kostof 1992: 39). For instance, Kostof stated that the "word *p'u* which means 'the bank or reach of a river' is often found appended to town names, as in Chang-p'u" This type of name or reference to the location of a settlement on the water can be found in many parts around the world, including Newcastle in the UK (i.e. Newcastle upon Tyne and Newcastle-under-Lyme).

Furthermore, the so-called urban revolution is thought to have originated in the vast Fertile Crescent with the mechanisms adopted collectively to manage water leading to the birth of the city and its social structure (Benevolo 1980: 16; Toynbee, J cited in Wylson 1986: 3). However, the physical elements of survival, including water and food, were not the only forces shaping prehistoric villages (Kostof 1992: 40; Mumford 1961: 9). Both Kostof and Mumford cautioned against overlooking the other driving forces, a prime example of which is the security of the settlement from outer threats. Security was also among a range of factors which dictated the location of the settlement as being beside a body of water, factors which were commonsensical and/or cosmological.

[1] Jane Jacobs stated the opposite: the first settlements were of an agricultural nature and were not on the edge of bodies of water (Jacobs 1970: 3-48).

Rationally, the pattern of the water's flow, the location of local goods and the productivity of the basin area played a role in deciding the location of the settlement (Kostof 1992: 40). On the cosmological and mythological fronts, water also played a significant role in the urban life of the ancient world (Wylson 1986: 3) in ancient Egypt the settlements were located on the east of the Nile, the west was considered the necropolis. In India the Ghats (the steps) on the Ganges river, the holy river of the Hindus, were the progenitors of many contemporary cities (Samant 2004). In China, cities were built to the north of the rivers, never to the south due to cosmological beliefs. At one and the same time, human beings observed water, tried to control it and feared it. This is reflected in Greek mythology, in which the sea had dozens of gods and goddesses, while the sea itself was a god named Pontos[1]. The Egyptians had many gods of the river, which could reflect the value of water in their everyday life. The people of Mesopotamia had a different god for every form of water, just like the ancient Egyptians. Thus, the story of human beings and water is an evolving and multifaceted one, varying between dependency, exploitation, contemplation and reverence.

2.3.2 Beyond Biological and Spiritual Dependency

The next chapter in the story of humankind, water and urbanity, revolves around navigation, which appears early in the history of urbanity (Wylson 1986: 3). People ferried across the ancient rivers even prior to the discovery of the wheel (Torre 1989: 4). Those ancient arteries became the highways of the ancient world. Being on the water became akin to entering a gateway, a node that was linked to other similar nodes all across the globe (Bird 1980, 1983 cited in Hoyle 1995; Kostof 1992). Through these nodes, surplus goods were exported to other places and food, building materials and people were brought in. This also led to the realisation of new lands to be 'discovered' or conquered. Through navigation, the Vikings roamed the Baltic, the North Sea and the Atlantic. And from their ports, the Romans turned the Mediterranean into a private lake. The Egyptians explored the Red Sea, the Upper Nile and parts of the Indian Ocean. The importance of these gateway settlements was reflected in their design. For example, the design of ports, harbours and piers was of high architectural value in the Greek and Roman world. Their design reflected their power and supremacy. A prime example of this is the port of Caesarea in ancient Judaea (Kostof 1992: 42).

[1] Pontos was the Sea itself and one of the Protogenoi (first born gods). He was the father of all the most ancient of Sea-gods and an offspring of Gaia, the earth mother in Greek mythology

The increment in the strategic and logistical activities at the water's edge necessitated a form of spatial and technical intervention. To prevent floods and to allow for loading and unloading, quays began to be constructed on the waterfront (Girouard 1985: 58; Wylson 1986: 25). Nevertheless, these coastal towns behaved like two way conduits and needed to be regulated and secured. Security meant fortification of the waterside on the basis that being on the water is like being at a gateway and any gateway needed to be protected (Konvitz 1978). In Europe, fortification became widespread after the collapse of the Roman Empire. This, besides the previously mentioned factors, translated into the architecture of the Medieval Fortified City (Wylson 1986: 27). This trend for fortification also arose in many other places, such as China and Japan (Ishida 2001).

2.3.3 The Rise of Renaissance/Post-Medieval Waterfront

By the end of the medieval period and with the rise of the Renaissance era, the European waterside cities came up with fresh approaches to their waterfronts. The city-water relationship began to take on an accommodating form. Kostof described the period by stating: "now the river was a convenience — principal highway, source of drinking water, and power of industry (e.g., to operate grain or timber mills)" (1992: 40). This transformation in the city-water relationship was accompanied by theological, intellectual and economic changes. One of the major manifestations of that transformation was the removal of many forms of fortification: many European cities opened up towards the water and to the rest of the world (Mann 1973: 23; Meyer 1999: 20; Wylson 1986: 6). The new atmosphere was brought about by a functional approach dominated by Mercantilism and later by Capitalism, with the port-city gaining unprecedented acclaim and status, giving new meaning to what Mumford named as the 'Commercial or Trading City' (1961: 410; Wylson 1986: 49). The openness of those newly 'reclaimed' waterfronts was short-lived, however, and soon port activities dominated the Renaissance period waterfront. However, the rise of large nation states in Europe with their expansionist interest in the rich autonomous city states of Northern Italy necessitated the fortification of the latter during the same period.

At this time, two approaches were followed in the spatial treatment of the waterfront; Konvitz highlighted these by stating that: "those who operate the maritime world and those who grant cultural significance to its artefacts...belong to two separate cultures...which have little to say to one another" (Konvitz 1978: 39). The first approach was a practical one and the latter was under the Ideal City planning influence

which started in the early 1400s as an aspect of the Renaissance movement. At that time the maritime 'operators' were far more influential. The bodies of water were, additionally, in most cases, far from being considered visually attractive (Kostof 1992: 40). The Ideal City movement focused on the social and political elaboration of the utopian society in space: many designs were placed in such a way that "the maritime quality of such port cities was made to serve the image of the city as the realization of a perfectly functioning society (Konvitz 1978: 9)." Many of those designs reflected a visual approach to the port city[1]. Although they largely neglected the maritime function of the port, the design of public space and the integration of the harbour, canals and other water elements into the design of the public spaces of the city reflect a burgeoning appreciation of water as a visual element (Konvitz 1978: 7-19). Water was yet again looked upon as something beautiful and of architectural significance, just as the ancient Greeks[2] and Romans had seen it (Wylson 1986: 6, 48).

The importance of the port city during Renaissance times derived from the high value of trade and the control that merchants wielded over cities. However, the polities of Renaissance Europe competed among themselves to trade with the rest of the world through their ports. The competition between these cities became so fierce that in some cases, it generated extreme ideas. For example in 1502 Leonardo da Vinci designed an excavation machine to divert the path of the river Arno. The diversion so created would have linked his city, Florence, to the Mediterranean Sea and disconnected Pisa, its rival city, from a navigable river (Mann 1973: 26). That competition escalated later when it turned from a competition in trade to a competition for control and conquest. Another prime example of that hasty surge for expansion comes from the period between 1660 and 1715: the government of Louis XIV of France built four brand new port cities and rebuilt two more (Konvitz 1978: 4). The drive for maritime domination had a major effect on the urban development of most European port cities (Hoyle & Pinder 1992: 4). Konvitz stated that "the successful extension of Europe's political, economic, and cultural power from port cities had only reinforced the impression that such cities were

[1] "Neither geographers nor any particular legal prerogative or social quality distinguishes port cities as a generic type. Rather, what distinguishes them, in the past and in the present, is their potential for enormous growth and for contact with distant cultures, societies, and economies" (Konvitz 1978: 5)

[2] A substantial amount of the literature of the history of urbanity highlights the value which ancient Greek cities gave to the view of any prominent natural elements adjacent to their cities and one of those, in many cases, is water. But the Greeks praised order too and the city of Miletus is a fine example of how they preferred order over natural views: here they have screened the view of the water in favour of the view of the orderly, well laid-out city (Moholy-Nagy, Sibyl cited in Morris 1972: 27)

indispensable to sea power" (Konvitz 1978: 3). This paved the way for an era of port city development and the European Imperial system's complete dependency on cities such as Antwerp, Hamburg, Liverpool, London and Marseille (Hoyle & Pinder 1992: 1). Hoyle and Pinder (1992: 1-2) take this to another level: they consider these port cities and the maritime networks between them to have played a role in the evolution of the modern world itself.

From this time, then, the waterfront became dominated by ports and port-related activities. This kind of land use on the waterfronts of cities on navigable bodies of water[1] continued all through this period and all through the industrial revolution phase in a pure functional spatial expression (Kostof 1991: 42). Furthermore, the dependency of urbanity on navigable water bodies continued to grow up to the introduction of the railways. Even so, there has never been any replacement of shipping as the major means of moving bulky goods between continents (Craig-Smith & Fagence 1995: 1; Konvitz 1978: xi). Thus, the sustainability of large urban areas depended on the availability of waterborne link routes and it became widely accepted that "ports created cities, and big ports created big cities" (Konvitz 1978; Norcliffe *et al.* 1996), and vice versa (Knapp & Pinder 1992: 155).

Subsequent Baroque designs of waterfronts had a similar approach to the Renaissance Ideal City approach, although with a limited scope; they envisaged the waterfront as the place for palaces not warehouses (Kostof 1991: 42). Yet again, this overlooked the practical aspect and relevance of pre-existing economic and industrial arrangements. Nevertheless, these were the earliest European attempts at trying to "tie the development of commercial and military sea power to an urban context" (Konvitz 1978: 151). Furthermore, they represented a leading step towards the privatisation of the waterfront.

After the functional approach of the 17th century, efforts to monumentalise the waterfront continued to take place in different locations at different times. Those activities aimed to bring non-port related activities to the waterfront. During the 18th century, public spaces were opened up on the waterfront along with public and residential buildings in many port cities such as Bordeaux, London, Algiers and Boston (Kostof 1991: 43-4). So far the spatial relationship between ports and cities remained

[1] This is not to propose that every town situated on a good natural harbour became a port city or vice versa (Hoyle & Pinder 1992: 3-4; Konvitz 1978: xi)

strong. Nevertheless, the prominent public spaces on the waterfront, if not the only ones on the scale of the whole city, were still the quaysides. Prominent examples of such a spatial arrangement are the cities of Rotterdam, Amsterdam and Antwerp (Meyer 1999: 294-5).

2.3.4 The Waterfront in the Age of the of the Industrial Revolution

The Industrial Revolution represents another major chapter in the history of the waterfront. Nearly the whole *denouement* of this revolution was staged on the waterfronts of the industrial cities (Cook *et al.* 2001; White 1991). The changes in this period could be summarised by the scale and the type of activities that took place on the waterfront. Those changes were motivated by the invention of the steam engine during the first Industrial Revolution and the internal combustion engine during the second Revolution. However, during this period most of the major port cities did not escape some major changes in the scale of their ports, the manner in which they operated and the introduction of other uses on the waterfront. The industrialization of 'cityports' and 'cityport regions' during this period depended on the port function; "port related industries derived their raw materials from goods passing through the port, took advantage of the break-of-bulk point and contributed thereby to the provision of employment within the urban area" (Hoyle & Pinder 1981: 4). Thus this period, which later became characterised as one of Fordist Mass Production, is considered as the period of maximum socioeconomic symbiosis between ports and their hosting cities (Norcliffe *et al.* 1996). But this symbiosis was not reflected in the physical arrangement of the port city where, prior to the Revolution and regardless of the intensity of port activities on the waterfront, they had remained easily and informally accessed from the adjacent urban areas (Kostof 1992: 44). But this was increasingly no longer the case: heavy machinery started to be used in the loading and unloading of ships, the scale of the ships themselves changed after the invention of the steam and the internal combustion engines; larger ships meant larger docks, quays and shipyards and subsequently larger handling machinery. Ultimately, the Industrial Revolution meant a near total domination of the waterfront by industrial and port activities (Marshall 2001b: 5). By the end of this period all the planning aspirations of the 17th century to produce a cohesive urban framework appropriate for the utilization of the sea had collapsed (Wylson 1986: 53).

What mostly distinguishes this period from the previous one is that ports became inhuman in their scale. That scale, accompanied by then new modes of transportation, such as railways and later, highways, completely alienated the waterfront from the rest of the city (Marshall 2001a: 18; Saperstein *et al.* 1983). Heckscher and Robinson singled out the railroads and described it thus:

> The railroads were the earliest force to shatter the city's configuration and to efface the lingering uses of the waterfront for recreation [...T]he varied facilities it required for servicing and the secondary employment it generated, blighted the waterfronts. Switching yards and freight terminals — combined with repair sheds and foundries, with mills and factories — compelled residents to flee the shores and made it difficult for anyone to approach them on foot. (1977: 91).

However, this was not the case everywhere. For instance, the British Victorian and Edwardian seaside resorts witnessed their heydays during this period. Although the steam boat was the catalyst for this trend in the early Victorian age, it was gradually outmoded and replaced by the railroad in the later stages (Anderson & Swinglehurst 1978). Thus, what operated to decrease public accessibility to the waterfronts of port and industrial cities at the same time helped in bringing members of the public of all income groups to the seaside resorts (Anderson & Swinglehurst 1978: 18-24).

In the port city, the public's access to other urban open space was drastically reduced during the early years of the Industrial Revolution: the migration from rural areas to the industrial cities and the rapid expansion of the latter consumed the internal open spaces and severed the urban from the rural (Hough 1984: 14). These conditions necessitated the creation of urban parks in their modern sense. Central Park in New York City is a prominent example of that approach: public spaces were neglected in the early plans of the city, given that such spaces already existed on the waterfront. Central Park was subsequently created to substitute the loss of open spaces within the southern area of the city and on the waterfront of Manhattan (Heckscher & Robinson 1977: 88-9).

It is noteworthy that nearly all the research on waterfronts blames the Industrial Revolution for constraining the city's exposure to water (Carr *et al.* 1992: 36; Kostof 1992: 44); ironically and during the first period of the Industrial Revolution, the majority of the canal networks in Europe and North America were laid, adding thousands of miles of canal-side space to the urban and countryside areas of Europe and North America. As mentioned earlier, the rise of the seaside resorts in Britain during the same

period allowed city dwellers to unwind on the waterfront and escape their crowded cities (Anderson & Swinglehurst 1978; Kostof 1992: 46). Thus, just as the Industrial Revolution had some negative impacts on the waterfront, it was also the cause for creating many new ones.

2.3.5 The Post-Industrial Waterfront

Interdependency and symbiosis were key components of the character of the port city till the end of the 19th century. That "intimate interdependenc[y] of urban functions and port activities...involve[ed] a degree of physical proximity that is today impractical because it is technologically outmoded" (Hoyle & Pinder 1992: 4). Furthermore, the role of ports at any scale were gradually diminishing due to the increased involvement of rail and airline transportation (Tunbridge 1988: 68). After the Second World War a vast amount of land close to the centre of many major cities around the world, such as London, New York, Boston and Sydney, was freed of port and industrial activity. Most of those areas were left to a gradual decay. That exodus was primarily influenced by three interrelated factors. Firstly, new technologies led by containerisation, roll-on/roll-off handling methods and bulk cargo facilities necessitated larger handling and storage spaces (Hoyle & Pinder 1992: 11). Containerisation is an axial technological invention which necessitated those changes; it allowed for larger cargo ships for heterogeneous goods to be built which subsequently needed a deeper river, or deep water ports with better inland connection (Cullinane & Khanna 2000; Malone 1996; Mann 1973; McCalla 1999; Meyer 1999). Furthermore, the new technologies reduced the amount of "port-related employment" (Hoyle & Pinder 1992: 11). Thus, ports and cities went their own ways on both physical and socio-economic levels. One of the major examples of that port/city independence is the city of Rotterdam (Graafland 2001: 31).

This geographical relocation of ports and port-related industries is considered the progenitor of the waterfront decline and regeneration phenomena. This is not to say that only port cities are witnessing this phenomenon; "this continuous process [is found] in most places where settlement and water are juxtaposed" (Hoyle & Pinder 1992: 11). Accordingly, the waterfront became, at one and the same time, a source of hope and concern (Jones 1998). Hope, because the redevelopment of the waterfront could be the socio-economic, environmental and spatial cure for many ailing cities. This notion derives from many sources; first, many city officials refer to select earlier examples, such as Baltimore inner harbour, London's Canary Wharf and Sydney's Darlington

harbour, and stamp-copy those examples with a complete disregard for the local context (Breen & Rigby 1996: 14; Jones 1998; Marshall 2001b: 4). Secondly, the waterfront has become the "battleground over conflict between public and private interests (Dovey 2005: 9)." Issues such as gentrification and public's access to the water are sometimes neglected (Breen & Rigby 1996: 8). Nevertheless, there is a widespread disregard for the limited economic overspill of those waterfront redevelopment projects and for their negative effect on the surrounding areas (Marc Levine (1989) citied in Hannigan 1998: 53-4).

2.3.6 The Historic Waterfront in the Arab and Islamic City

The vastness of the area where the Arab and Islamic cultures have prevailed, added to the variety of their cultural and historical backgrounds, necessitates that each culturally defined part of the Muslim world be studied separately, to avoid falling into stereotyping. The waterfront as a morphological part of many Arab-Islamic coastal or riparian cities has not yet undergone substantial research. Many sources which discuss the historic waterfront fail to address the matter adequately when they arrive at the Arab-Islamic city. And *vis-à-vis* the literature that analyses the genesis and nature of the Islamic urban form, this has rarely tackled the matter of those cities' waterfront areas, ignoring the fact that most of the largest Arab-Islamic cities are riverine ones. However, this study does not ignore the fact that many of the coastal or riverine Arab-Islamic cities were originally founded by the Phoenicians, Mesopotamians, Egyptians, Persians, pre-Hellenistics, Greeks, Romans or Byzantines (Lapidus 1967, 2002). Studying the genesis of those cities can highlight how those civilizations approached water in the design of their cities. But it would not tell us about the Arab-Islamic approach to water, and it will not help in understanding how cities, such as Baghdad and Cairo, that were all established next to major water arteries, approached those arteries in the early stages of urban growth.

There are many studies which analyse cities such as Alexandria, Tripoli, Suisse, Tyre, Sidon, and many others. In those studies, few references are made to waterfronts in the periods prior to the Islamic hegemony. However, there is also a dearth of studies analysing those waterfronts during the Islamic periods. There is a lack of research about the waterfront areas of cities created originally by Arabs and Muslims. A prime example of that is the scant research on the waterfront area of the successive cities that form modern day Cairo and Baghdad.

Kostof (1992) has referred to the landscape value of water in Islamic architecture, but his references are at the level of the urban form or at a smaller scale. That neglect of the understanding of the waterfront at the settlement scale is common among the majority of the authors who analyse Arab-Islamic cities. For example, Akbar (1988), Alsayyed (1991), Bianca (2000), and Hakim (1986) analysed the Islamic urban genesis and morphology with no mention whatsoever of the waterfront, although many of the urban settlements studied are coastal or riverine. Some reference was made to natural topographic elements and the way they affected the layout of the typical Muslim city, particularly when commenting on the location of the citadel, but there are no narratives on the canals or rivers and their relationship with the city. Furthermore, Western scholars who studied the historic waterfront did not include the Arab-Islamic cities in their studies. For example, Wylson (1986) did not mention anything about the Islamic waterfront when he discussed the historic waterfront.



Figure 2.1: Satellite image of Taj Mahal (Agra-India 2003) showing two approaches to water.

Source: Space Imaging Inc (2004)

However, following an overview of the literature on Islamic cities it becomes apparent that there are two Islamic approaches to water, depending on its nature. The first is one of full control over, and manipulation of, nature and the second is based on separation and minimum interaction. These two approaches can be traced in the architecture of the Mogul cities. And one of the most prominent examples of that architecture is the design

of the Taj Mahal. The front garden of the mausoleum follows the classical Persian garden[1] the 'chahar bagh' or 'char bagh' (literally meaning 'four gardens'), with pools and water channels dividing the garden into four quarters. Control and manipulation is the approach towards the use of the water in landscape design of this sort. In contrast, the approach towards the design of the garden on the river side is one of separation and seclusion, which is a basic principle in the design of the walled garden in arid situations. While there are many architectural elements adopted from Hindu architecture in the design of Taj Mahal,[2] none was reflected in the treatment of the water's edge; many examples were available in the design of the *ghats*,[3] but for some reason they were not adopted. The same treatment prevailed in many waterfront Mogul buildings such as the Sat Gumbad mosque in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

However, the analysis of the Mogul Garden by Koch (1997b: 141) shed more light on the approach to the water in Mogul landscape architecture. Through Koch's content analysis of Babur's[4] description of his gardens we find that Babur considered the presence of running water as essential for the Mogul garden. It is not clear whether it was essential for irrigation or for other sensual purposes. But this much could be understood from the approach itself: Koch stated that the Mogul garden imitated the Persian walled garden and sited itself next to lakes and rivers all over Hindustan. The main difference between the Persian *char bagh* and the Mogul riverfront garden is that the latter is not walled on the river side. Thus most of the Mogul gardens provided a visual link with the water with a few exceptions, such as the Jal Mahal in Jaipur and the Bari Dhobi Mahal, which provided a platform for active interaction with the water.

On the town scale, the work of Koch highlights another vital part of the Mogul approach towards water. Koch's (1997b) analysis of the waterfront gardens of the cities of Agra and Shahjahanabad shows that the waterfront of the 'garden city' was mostly private; occupied by few members of the ruling family and attendant nobles (fig. 2.2). Koch also highlighted some parallels to that tendency in Ottoman Istanbul and Safavid Isfahan.

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[1] Which is pre-Islamic and specifically of a Sassanid origin.
[2] Refer to Lehman (1980), and Michell (1978) for better understanding of the monument.
[3] For further information about the *ghats* and to understand their public orientation, refer to the work of Samant (2004).
[4] Zahir-ud-din Mohammad Babur (1483-1530), a Muslim Emperor from Central Asia and the founder of the Mogul dynasty of India.

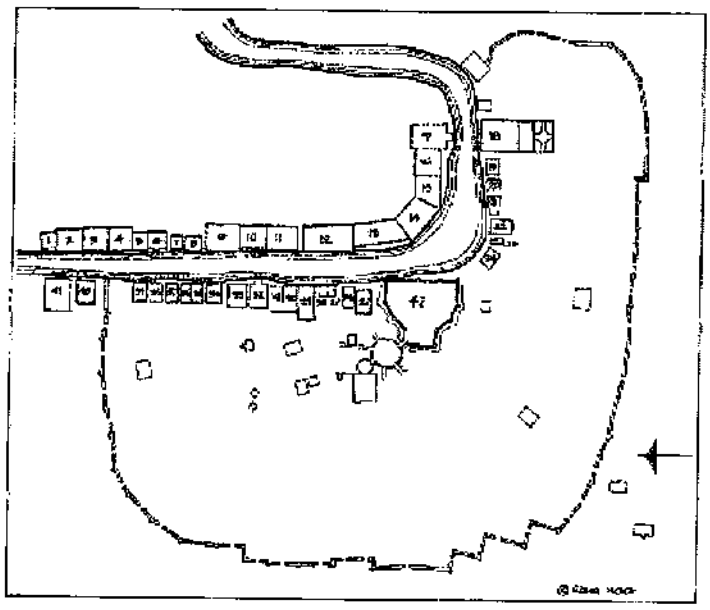


Figure 2.2: Line drawing of a map of Agra

Source: based on an inscription in devanăgañ script, early 18th century. Jaipur Maharaja Sawai Man Singh II Museum, cat. No 126. Drawn by R. A. Barruad and E. Koch in Koch (1997a)

The Gulf region did not have better luck than the rest of the Islamic world. First of all, most of the Arab-Islamic cities of the Gulf did not undergo sufficient analysis of their geneses or their physical, social and economic morphology, let alone their waterfronts. As Waly (1990: 10) described it, the historical record of the Arab cities in the Gulf is a mere documentation of religious, political and cultural events or descriptions padded out, sometimes, with fiction. In line with him, Al Naqeeb described the history of the area as "monotonous tribal events" (1990: 1) from which the settings of political and social events are missing.

However, early settlements on the shores of the Gulf depended on the availability of natural harbours and the security of their locations (Waly 1990). Natural harbours are scarce in the Gulf (Walker 1981: 45-6) and their security has depended on how defendable their locations are from mainland intrusions, whether on the Arab or Persian sides (Rumaihi 1976: 3-4; Walker 1981: 45). Furthermore, in his research about the Gulf ports, Walker recognised five types of harbour in the Gulf, which he classified into: 1- Sheltered mainland anchorages or bays (e.g. Kuwait Bay, Bushire and Jask); 2- island harbours affording a degree of security (e.g. Bahrain, Qais, Hormuz, Qeshm); 3- harbours sited behind the protective barriers of a lagoon coast in sheltered creeks (e.g.

Dubai, Sharjah, and Res Al-Khaimah); 4- riverine ports (e.g. Basra, Uballah); and 5- non-natural harbours and anchorages (e.g. Qatif, Al-Khobar, Doha, Abu Dhabi)" (Walker 1981: 45-6). Cities located on natural anchorage settings had early historical starts but regardless of that fact, human intervention to create a suitable or better anchorage facilities did not emerge until 1917 when Manama built its first pier in Manama Harbour (J. Belgrave 1960: 42)[1]. Thus, prior to that date most of the cities in the first four categories recognised by Walker depended primarily on the natural topography of their harbours and it is likely that a similar relationship with the water prevailed in the other urban areas. This could shed some light on the nature of the waterfronts in this part of the world before the discovery of oil. It gives an image of natural shorelines edging the city houses with boats on the beach or moored in the water.

The discovery of oil during the late 1920s did not support the development of a substantial waterfront; exporting oil necessitated specialised ports in locations far from urban areas and deep in the waters of the Gulf, to allow access for large volume oil tankers. Special ports, such as Sitra in Bahrain and Al Ahmadi Artificial Island in Al Ahmadi port in Kuwait (The Official Web Site of The State of Kuwait 2000) were built in response to that need.

Nevertheless, the Gulf States did not undergo large-scale industrialisation. Thus the urban areas of those cities were rarely separated from their adjacent bodies of water by heavy industrial activities. Furthermore, the present industrial cities in the Gulf are in general, planned cities, which grew in an autonomous fashion away from existing urban areas (e.g. Al Ahamadi in Kuwait) or in some cases, near to existing villages (e.g. Jubail in Saudi Arabia, Sitra in Bahrain and Jabal Ali in Dubai). This gave a good opportunity for the Gulf cities to have better links with the water.

2.4 The Urban Waterfront Phenomenon: Bringing the People back to the Water

2.4.1 The Phenomenon Worldwide

Since its inception in Baltimore, four decades ago,[2] the phenomenon of waterfront regeneration, or what became known as the Baltimore Syndrome, is still in full swing,

[1] The City of Basra must have developed a port facility prior to the harbour of Manama, although no evidence was found during the time allocated by the author to investigate this topic.
[2] The Greater Baltimore Committee itself was inspired by the success of Pittsburgh, Pa. in revitalising its post -industrial riverside on the Allegheny river (The Greater Baltimore Committee 2003).

expanding to new frontiers and taking a variety of shapes (Breen & Rigby 1996; Hoyle 2001a; Shaw 2001). The decline of ports and the industrial areas around them was soon met by redevelopment programmes (Hall 1993: 13). Many factors are considered as the sources of the phenomenon. But the two most important are the economic transition from industrial to post-industrial service base (Connors 1986; Meyer 1999: 1; Norcliffe *et al.* 1996; Tunbridge 1988: 68) and the high concentration of population at waterside locations (Clrake 1972; Cohen *et al.* 1997; Pinder & Witherick 1993: 252; Vitousek *et al.* 1997).[1]

The popularity of waterfront development is, generally speaking, attributed to the availability of redundant old port and industrial areas from downtown waterfronts (Dovey 2005: 9; Hall 1993). Those de-industrialized waterfronts are characterized by their proximity to city centres and offer a variety of scales, uses and development opportunities (Fagence 1995: 1; Shaw 2001: 160). Besides that opportunity, the long negligence and the environmental decay of many waterfronts led to the rise of public pressure for improved, accessible waterfronts which they could use and enjoy (National Research Council 1980: 9). However, Tunbridge (1988: 68) suggested that there is more to it than opportunity and demand. He and Malone (1996: 2) placed waterfront revitalization in a wider perspective. To them, the movement provides a parallel thread to the overall urban regeneration process. And it is affected by the existing motive forces of that movement, besides those factors that are inherently water-related. However, Wood (1965) suggested that waterfronts are naturally prone to renewal and regeneration because they are usually in the oldest parts of the city. In agreement with this, Jones (1998) added that the waterfront movement, particularly in the US, is attributed to a few factors among which are the expanding amount of leisure time and pressures to conserve the architectural heritage of those abandoned waterfronts.

By considering the waterfront as part of the urban regeneration process, it could be understood through theories developed to account for the link between urban regeneration, market mechanisms and the rise in the number of waterfront developments. Is it possible to understand that rise through Schumpeter's (1975: 82) theory of the creative destruction of capitalism? According to this theory, cities might

[1] There are several estimations of the percentage of the Earth's total population that has a coastal dwelling. Although such estimates differ drastically, their authors agree that there is a high concentration of human inhabitants on the riverine, lucustrine, estuarine, and costal zones.

be found to be destroying/renewing their waterfronts in order to invigorate their viability and enhance their competitiveness. To do so, new forms of investment and new or adapted investors market the waterfront as a desired commodity.

As a phenomenon, waterfront regeneration has almost undergone a sufficient degree of documentation and analysis (Hoyle 2001a). However, the relevant theoretical work has always followed the practical part of the process and has been ahead of it (Shaw 2001: 171). For example, the main bulk of the relevant research started to accrue in North America in the 1970s and in Europe in the 1980s (Hoyle & Pinder 1992: 11; Hoyle *et al.* 1988b: xvii). This was nearly a decade after the commencement of the first substantial project to rehabilitate the inner harbour of Baltimore in the mid-1960s (Wylson 1986: 61).

The light of available research illuminated this multifaceted issue from nearly every angle, that is, it provided a general review of the phenomenon (e.g. Bender 1993; Torre 1989); a case study approach based on geographical location (e.g. Breen & Rigby 1996; Bruttomesso 1993a; Marshall 2003); a thematic case study approach (e.g. Vegara 2001); under approaches including the political, managerial and financial (e.g. Bristow 1988; Gordon 1996; Malone 1996); the conservation and preservation angle (e.g. Hoyle 2001a, b, 2002; Hudson 1995; Shaw 2001; Tunbridge 2002; Vegara 2001); a tourism and urban economy approach (e.g. Gospodini 2001; McCarthy 2004); and a users' perception approach (e.g. Kawasaki *et al.* 1995; Krausse 1995; Yamashita & Hirano 1995). The research in this field was accompanied by legislative steps taken by local, regional, national and federal authorities to enable, regulate and stimulate waterfront development such as the acts relating to the redevelopment of London's Docks and the Coastal Zone Management Act in the USA (Goodwin 1999).

The widespread recognition of the phenomenon and its importance resulted in the establishment of the following research centres: The Waterfront Centre - Washington D.C. (1981) (TWC 2004); Association Internationale Villes & Ports - Le Havre (1988) (IAVP 2004); The International Centre Cities on Water - Venice (1989) (The International Centre Cities on Water 2004); and the Japanese Waterfront Vitalization and Environmental Research Centre (WAVE). This importance is reflected in both the amount and variety of the research available and the size and financial value of ongoing and planned waterfront projects. It is estimated that £55 billion is going to be spent on waterfront projects between 2004 and 2009 (Waterfront Expo 2004). Overall, most

waterfront projects have been used as either an extension of existing business districts (e.g. Baltimore Central Harbour, London's Canary Wharf, Manama's Diplomatic area and New York's Battery Park); as a tool in city marketing and a tourist attraction (e.g. Barcelona, Sydney, Newcastle upon Tyne); as residential areas (e.g. New York's Battery Park); or as new city centres in polycentric schemes (e.g. Tokyo's Rainbow Town, Rotterdam). In a few other cases, waterfront developments are intended to improve the public's accessibility to the water area and to natural zones and to rejuvenate the ecology and the environment of the city (Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Task Force 2000); two of the best examples of this are the cities of Vancouver and Toronto, Canada.

The majority of these developments are in the developed world (Hoyle 1999a, 2001a). Hence, most, but not all, of the available literature revolves around topics highly related to those countries, such as the redevelopment of port cities and its link with the process of urban renewal and urban regeneration in post-industrial cities. This is not to say that all the developed world looks at the phenomenon from one point of view: for instance in a North American context, the waterfront is considered to be part of the urban renewal process (Hoyle 2000), whereas in Europe it is regarded as a mere side-effect of the changes in maritime transportation (Hoyle 2000, 2001a; Tunbridge 1988); however, in the UK, it is a component part of post-industrial regeneration. Nevertheless, the popularity of the phenomenon has spread across the world and some studies from both the developed and developing worlds have begun to tackle those cases (Hoyle 2001a). What is limited in size in comparison to the size of the phenomenon is the literature that addresses the anthropogenic waterfront on reclaimed land.

2.4.2 The Urban Waterfront on Reclaimed Land

Hoyle (2000) highlighted that the waterfront phenomenon is not restricted to post-industrial port cities; it has spread to all kinds of waterside settlements, including waterfronts created on reclaimed wet or foreshore lands. That form of land expansion, whether for building or agricultural purposes, is not a new phenomenon (Hudson 1996: 1; Pinder & Witherick 1993: 252) and, contrary to the views of some scholars, it still goes on with no loss of momentum. In fact, many of the former port activities in many post-industrial cities, the main subject of most waterfront research, took place on reclaimed lands (Hudson 1996: 30). Douglas has gone a step further, stating that virtually every coastal city has grown by reclaiming land from the sea (1983: 111).

Unlike the common conception of the genesis of waterfront projects, in many cities around the world, particularly in the Far East, the water has become part of the natural expansion of those cities as a relatively novel site appropriate for experimentation (Bristow 1988: 167; Marshall 2003: 167). In other words, waterfronts became "water frontiers"[1] (Desfor *et al.* 1988: 94; Hudson 1996; Yatsuka 2001: 179). These are not created to revitalize or rejuvenate depressed inner-urban areas as in the case of Liverpool, Baltimore and London. On the contrary, they are created to accommodate economic, industrial, urban and demographic growth near thriving urban areas (Bristow 1988: 168-9; Pinder & Witherick 1993: 234-52). However, the word 'frontier' highlights the discontinuous nature of the waterfront: a locus for contradictions and opposites (Cooper 1993: 158). Cooper suggests looking at it differently; the waterfront is a place of continuity, both historical and ecological. He sees it as, physically, a variable zone of transition rather than an edge.

Few studies produced analytical models in an attempted to understand the growth of cities over their nearby waters. Many of those schemes revolve around the port-city relationship such as Wrenn *et al's* model (Wrenn *et al.* 1983: 9-12). However a few others have focused on urban growth over land reclamation with or without the presence of port activities. Pinder and Witherick (Pinder & Witherick 1993: 264-5) suggested a threefold classification based on the relationship of land uses on the reclaimed land with the established uses of adjacent lands. Their first suggested category is that of *Expansion* reclamation "where the established uses of the old land" expand onto the reclaimed land and maintain their dominance of the zone in terms of land use. The second category is named *Clean-break* reclamation, "where development on the new land constitutes a complete departure from the surrounding established land" (Pinder & Witherick 1993: 264-5) in terms of land use. The third category is that of *Remedial* reclamation which is used to provide "detached overspill space for the amelioration of particularly severe problems." The disadvantage of this scheme is that it mixes two criteria. Although Pinder and Witherick intended to base it on the land use relationship, the third category is based on the location and the locational physical characteristics of the reclaimed land. Hudson (1996) suggested another model to "illustrate the influence

[1] The specific meaning of the word 'frontier' in this context is that of the urban frontier as a "spatial economy in which expansion and displacement are generated less by pioneering individuals than by financial institutions, land-development companies, and the state and its agencies" (Desfor *et al.* 1988: 94 with omission)

of this type of development on the physical form of cities on the shore" . His model is far more inclusive than the Pinder and Witherick model, yet it nevertheless has certain shortcomings. Hudson selected four geographical locations on which to ground his comparison: 1- inland nucleus city, 2- littoral city on a large and deep body of water, 3- littoral city on a straight coast, 4- littoral city on a bay. The model would have sufficed without the inclusion of the two bay schemes. Adding the last two schemes opens the door for some questions concerning other missing categories such as cities on small islands or in other geographical locations. Hudson saw that shortcoming and added another model for cities on estuaries (Hudson 1996: 146). Hudson's Model focuses on the effects of reclamation on the overall urban form, with a relaxed approach to other factors involved, such as the size, process and location of the reclamation with regard to the city. Nevertheless, the model's schemes are tied up with central business districts (CBD) which could be appropriate for the first or the second stages of the growth of the city from its nuclear centre, but does not account for the drastic variations found in littoral cities subsequent to this phase. However, the model and its description is the most inclusive available so far, and it could be applied in many parts of the globe, in contrast to the more narrowly Western oriented ones.

2.5 Conclusion

The Chapter started by reviewing some of the commonly used definitions of the urban waterfront. It showed how most of those definitions focus on the geographical location of the urban waterfront, situating it between a densely populated/urban settlement and a significant body of water. In the second section, the Chapter recounted the history of the urban waterfront. It started by highlighting the link between humankind, urbanity and water. The chapter showed how the story of urbanity begins on river banks throughout the ancient world. That connection has shifted over time from a mere biological need to embrace spiritual and cosmological matters, and latterly, strategic ones. The account given above shows how the mode of human dependency on water has shifted from one to another and how those shifts are linked to our basic needs, technological advancement and spiritualities.

From the history of the waterfront we can see that changes in our perception of the water are linked to changes in our manner of satisfying our need for water. During unsettled times waterfronts were fortified, but they were opened up again in times of peace and with the rise of commerce and industry they became largely given over to port activities.

From a purely functional angle, the latter has taken place at the cost of the spiritual and aesthetic values around the contemplation and use of water. The aesthetics of water have been impaired by the intense pollution inflected on bodies of water by our industrial activities and our use of them as open sewers.

In reviewing the urban waterfront phenomenon, the Chapter shows how the functional approach towards the waterfront has persisted: contemporary urban approaches used in healing the damage caused by the exodus of industrial and port activities from old waterfronts are in line with historical approaches towards bodies of water. Urban waterfront regeneration has reconfigured the aesthetics of the water as its new function. The creation of attractive open spaces on the waterside, besides supporting the provision of residential and business space with waterside prospects, are dependent on the way the water itself actually looks. Thus the post-industrial waterfront rests upon improving the environmental quality of the water, including its aesthetic qualities. One of the major points to note here is that port and industrial activities did not relocate to facilitate public access to the water; they moved because they needed to, and for a variety of reasons, none of which included improving public access to the water.

In response to the nature of the selected case study area, this chapter has given special attention to the urban waterfront on land reclaimed from the water. It has shown how urban expansion on reclaimed land differs from urban waterfront renewal on former docksides or ex-industrial lands. While the latter is mostly regarded as an economic opportunity that rests primarily on bringing more people to the water, urban growth on reclaimed land is used for many other functions that might or might not provide public access to the water. Furthermore, the chapter has highlighted that although many waterfront cities have expanded and still expand over reclaimed land, there is a limited number of studies relating to that type of expansion and to waterfronts on such land. Among those studies, there are two typologies that set out to classify that type of urban expansion: Pinder & Witherick (1993) and Hudson (1996). Both models have some shortcomings, particularly in terms of the criteria used in establishing their categories.

The chapter gave special attention to the Arab/Islamic city to help in providing a context for Manama, the case study city, in future chapters. It highlighted that there is a dearth of research on Arab/Islamic waterfronts. It showed how studies addressing the history of urbanity in Arab/Islamic world have neglected the fact that many of those urban areas are riverine or coastal. By contrast, the chapter attempted to highlight the overall

approach towards water in the Islamic world, and showed how historically there have been two main approaches, one which represents a position of full control, usually used on a small scale, and another representing a position of severance. In the Gulf, the waterfront has been treated as a found space; untouched and used for its natural qualities up to the time of the discovery of oil. What is important to highlight in here is that the cities of the Gulf did not undergo a phase of heavy industrialization. Even after the discovery of oil, the burgeoning industry was accommodated in specialized ports in remote locations. Thus, those cities enjoyed good public access to the water till latter parts of the last century.

Cahpter 3: Understanding Public Open Space on the Urban Waterfront: Potentials and Constraints

3.1 Introduction

This Chapter sets out to illustrate the current issues around public open space on the waterfront. It highlights what could facilitate the provision of waterfront and what we should look for when we attempt to understand the processes that produce it. The Chapter starts out with a short definition of the nature of public space followed by an illustration of why this research distinguishes between formal and informal public space. The third section of the Chapter is a broad analysis of the waterfront's attributes; it is divided into three subsections. The first subsection is concerned with the natural locational characteristics of the waterfront. The second subsection attempts to illustrate the spatial characteristics of the waterfront on macro and micro scales. And finally the third subsection analyses the characteristics of the actors who are involved in production

and consumption processes of the waterfront. This chapter also illustrates possible areas of contestation on the waterfront due to conflicting interests and overlapping jurisdictional boundaries and how these conflicts could be solved or exacerbated based on legislative issues.

3.2 Definition and Roles of Public Open Space

The necessity of defining any space in the built environment is based on a variety of grounds. That necessity emerges from the need to manage space and to optimise its performance, to enable each space to fulfil its function as part of the larger jigsaw puzzle of the built and natural environments. Arendt and Habermas believed that the definition of a space is essential for its continued existence (Swanson 1992: 1-4), that is, a space without definition cannot survive. The ability to define a space enables us, as agents, to understand, perceive, organise and use those spaces (Benn & Gaus 1983: 7-11; Madanipour 2003: 2-3). Thus, the description of public space — or any space in our built or natural environments — could work as a broad design guideline, assessment tool or method of interpretation. It also defines the roles, expectations and responsibilities of the relevant agents. For this study, a working definition of 'public space' is needed as a tool in understanding both the physical and social sides of the waterfront. It will also help in tracing the vision of the providers and the expectations and perceptions of the users. At the same time, it will help in understanding the issues related to ephemeral, informal or temporary space inasmuch as such spaces on the waterfront are part of the case study in this research.

The universality of public space causes the definition to perplex and mutate across different times and locations. Thus, one can ask whether it is possible to have a benchmark descriptive definition of public space of universal application. And the answer may be in the negative for the reasons that follow. Time-wise, there is a dialectic relationship of dependency between the function of public space and its definition: on the one hand, the definition characterises or describes the way the space should 'ideally' function; on the other hand, those characteristics are based on a compilation of empirical work conducted on existing public space and on hypothetical and historical references or assumptions about how particular spaces used to be. Thus, current definitions of space might influence the nature of the spaces created in the future by affecting the preconception of public space. Thus the definition of any space lies in the way it is conceived and perceived, and is largely time-bounded.

Location-wise, the use and appropriation of any public space differs from one location to the next. In any case, the expectations, aspirations, means of production, management and consumption will vary between spaces. But nevertheless, the geographic location of those spaces, even within the same city, influences the type and number of users and uses (Carr *et al.* 1992: 326). Thus, if the definition of public space is a set of characteristics, rules, roles and ways of management and if all of those are affected by the location of such a space then the location could affect the definition itself. This notion and the preceding one were summarised by Goheen as he stated:

> A broadly understood set of meanings comes to attach to public space. A widely shared appreciation of what is expected and acceptable to this particular place arises from the historical process of adjudicating the multiplicity of claims to the enjoyment of the same, public space. (Goheen 1994)

The definitions of public space vary in their area of focus depending on the background of the person defining and the purpose of the definition. In this part of the study some definitions are listed for the sake of acknowledgement and will not necessarily be adopted. Drawing from these definitions, a summary of major characteristics is going to be discussed at a later stage within the wider context of the waterfront.

So what is the definition of public space? Carr *et al.* defines it as "open, publicly accessible places where people go for group or individual activities...some are under public ownership and managed, whereas others are privately owned but open to the public" (Carr *et al.* 1992: 50). This definition highlights four basic elements in defining public space or any space in the built environment: **access, use, control** and **ownership.** Altman in his analysis of types of territories in the built environment recognised that public spaces should be available to the majority of a society's members; he took a step further and addressed the temporal nature of occupancy and control of the public space by its users (Altman 1986: 151). The latter introduces a further dimension to the definition of public space, which is **time.** Altman divided spaces into two major paradigms: primary and secondary territories of a social group. While doing so he added another dimension to the definition of public space and that is the relationship of the users within that space (Altman 1986: 128-35). That is if the users belong to a large social unit as in a tribe or next of kin then that space, which is controlled by them, is a primary space (private) and if a space is controlled by a large number of agents who are not of any relation as in nationality or race, then that space is a secondary one (semi-

public). Thus Altman introduced the '**social**' as a sixth dimension of the characteristics that define space. Furthermore, Altman focused on the necessity of having certain conditions or a set of social norms which any of the users of the public space should follow in order to be granted access to that space. This condition defies the theory of 'unlimited' or 'universal' access. Those norms could mean that only the *appropriate public,* as Mitchell (1995a) named them, are allowed into public space. The same characteristic was introduced by Lefebvre (1991: 73) in his description of social space: to him that space permits, suggests and prohibits activities. But the political rhetoric of public space had changed by the turn of the 20th century (Thompson 2002): what we seek now is not a place for social conformity so much as an inclusive space that serves a heterogeneous society. In such cases, who is supposed to decide what an *appropriate public* is?

However, the above could be characterised as 'control', which has been included as a feature of many other definitions of public space, such as Madanipour's. To him, public spaces are:

> [P]laces outside the boundaries of individual or small group control, mediating between private spaces and used for a variety of overlapping functional and symbolic purposes. Descriptively, therefore, public spaces have been multi-purpose accessible spaces distinguished from, and mediating between, demarcated exclusive territories of households and individuals. Normatively, these spaces are considered public if they have been provided and managed by public authorities, and have concerned the people as a whole, being open or available to them and being used or shared by all members of a community. (Madanipour 2003: 232-3)

Madanipour's definition included many characteristics of public spaces. He highlighted that they should be under public ownership and control (provision and management). He also highlighted how available they should be, to whom they should be available and for what uses. Nevertheless, Madanipour included 'interest' as a major dimension of public space; it should be the concern of the people as a whole for such spaces to become public. Madanipour's definition encompasses Benn and Gaus's (1983) criteria for measuring the public-ness of any space.

However, by taking a concerted look at the above definitions it is possible to list the key characteristics of public space, which are: access, control, ownership, use, appropriation, disposition and modification. Depending on the way they are tackled, these dimensions could be interrelated, juxtaposed and overlapped. For example, 'Control', as per Lynch

(1984: 205-7), could come in five forms of rights to the physical space; 1- the right to be in it, 2- to use it, 3- to appropriate it, 4- to modify it, and 5- to dispose of it. While he considers these as the elements of true ownership, he regards them as separable and not inevitable.

3.3 Formal and Informal Public Space

It is vital at this stage of the thesis to start distinguishing between two types of public space: the 'formal' and 'informal'. Jackson pioneered this approach, stating:

> We should at least recognize that there is another aspect of the landscape, contemporary as well as historical, that we know little about: for those documented spaces — political spaces in the sense that most of them were created by some formal legislative act — are and always have been surrounded by other spaces of a humbler, less permanent, less conspicuous sort. (Jackson 1984: xi)

In the above, formal public space is marked out; however, informal[1] or non-political spaces are yet to be clarified. Low described them as:

> [U]ndesigned and unplanned, but popular, common open space. In the small town and growing city alike, informal open spaces lying just outside the developed area were appropriated for outings, get-togethers, picnics, sports, and games. These spaces are hard to document because they were not formally planned, designated, or designed, and most gave way to urban development long ago. (Low et al. 2005: 21)

This informal open space is identified by a variety of names: "unframed" space (Dovey & Fitzgerald 2000), "lost" space (Trancik 1986: 3), "found" space, "loose-fit" space (Thompson 2002), "undesigned" space, "transitory landscape" (Qvistrom & Saltzman 2006), "unplanned", and "informal" space (Low *et al.* 2005: 21). While they are 'found' spaces' for Thompson, they are 'lost spaces' for Trancik. Yet the descriptions of those spaces by Thompson and Trancik (1986: 3), along with that of Baines (1999) are almost identical: Trancik gave many examples of his 'lost' space to highlight its variety; to him a leftover unstructured landscape at the base of a high-rise building, an unused sunken plaza, surface parking lots, no-man's-lands along the edge of freeways, an abandoned waterfront, train yard, as well as military or industrial sites, are all lost spaces.

[1] The terms 'formal' and 'informal' were used by Carr *et al.* (1992: 50-1) to classify public space based on the process of its formation: informal public space is naturally developed by the public without intervention by the authorities, and formal public space is planned.

But why draw this distinction between formal and the informal open space, why do we need to recognise the informal open space in our environment at all? First of all it is vital to understand the environment that facilitates public life, regardless of the formality of the accommodating space. It is also important to comprehend the variety of available spaces and how they are used, particularly the informal ones; this will provide a unique opportunity for planners, designers and providers to realise the uses and the value of vanishing environments. The latter could help in shaping future formal public space.

3.4 Attributes of Public Open Space on the Urban Waterfront

The high concentration of human settlements on waterfront land exerts immense pressure on those locations and leads to high competition for public open space. Many activities and land uses compete for access to, and a foothold in, such a limited space (Davenport 1980: 197; National Research Council 1980: 13; Wrenn *et al.* 1983). In response to this Christopher *et al.* (1977: 136) consider waterfronts as special natural places that are irreplaceable and where "their maintenance and proper use require a special pattern". Samperi (1986: 47), for his part, considers the waterfront, in comparison with other urban redevelopments, as the most difficult. In line with Samperi, both Fagence (1995) and Forward (1970) consider the waterfront as an important economic and aesthetic area which should be approached with careful investigation as a distinctive resource.

Based on this approach, scholars have attempted to analyse and understand waterfront locations. To do so, many models, frameworks, strategies and structured analytical works have been developed to apply to the waterfront. For this research, a review of those models is vital in acquiring the analytical tools which could help in understanding the waterfront and what affects it. The models and approaches analysed in this study vary on six levels:

1. Agency (who is proposing the framework in terms of public/private or academic/professional),
2. Objective (why is it proposed i.e. evaluation of success, decline or redundancy, feasibility study for future developments, socio-economic impact),
3. Type of waterfront (i.e. old port areas, naval or commercial ports, or newly reclaimed land),

4. timing of the analysis with regard to the development process (before, during or after),
5. scale and timeframe of the framework (is it proposed for the whole process of development or just part of it), and
6. What is it concerned with, both physically and functionally (i.e. water-dependency, land use, architectural conservation).

Most of those models were created initially to synthesise the current city-port relationship (Hoyle's model [1988: 14], or port-city interface, according to Hoyle *et al.'s* [1988a: 249] model of forces and trends, as well as Hayuth [1988], and secondly as policy and design guidelines for the revitalisation and redevelopment of ex-industrial waterfront areas (i.e. Bruttomesso [2001], Samperi [1986], and Wrenn *et al.*[1983a: 9-12]). However, public open space and public access to the water was found to be at the heart of those models. Although land reclamation is a widespread phenomenon, only two models have been proposed to help understand it (Hudson's [1996: 137-48] and Pinder and Witherick's [1993: 264-5]). The two models are broad, lack deeper analytical tools, and do not help in understanding the effect of the phenomenon on the nature and availability of public space.

As mentioned above, the scales covered by those models also vary. Some go beyond city limits to the regional, national, continental, and global scales to include the effective or influential factors on the local waterfront at all levels, including the physical one (i.e. Gospodini [2001] and Riley & Shurmer-Smith [1988]). On the other hand, some frameworks focus on only one or two issues about the waterfront. For example Forward (1969, 1970) focused on the land-use analysis of the waterfront, Craig-Smith (1995a) suggested a water-dependency model, Lynch *et al.* (1976) suggested a model to test the degree of integration with the water, and Campo (2002) recommended a water accessibility model. However, most of these models were analysed by other scholars and few of them concluded that a holistic approach is needed to avoid the deficiencies in each model (Fagence 1995). Nevertheless, both Fagence (1995) and Hoyle (2001a) warned against copycat and 'Disneyfication' approaches to the waterfront, which already mar many locations, and result from following the wrong models. Thus, a framework is needed to provide guidelines for a successful waterfront development and to prevent the mindless reproduction of successful examples. This was raised by Fagence and Hoyle as they stressed the importance of understanding global processes

concurrently with appreciating local characteristics while formulating a strategy for waterfront redevelopment (Hoyle *et al.* 1988a). It was also highlighted by Thompson (2000: 178), who warned of cross-cultural or geographical comparison between different projects. To him a framework proposal is the starting point for criticism.

Thus, a review of the main or recurring schemes from among the above-mentioned frameworks is necessary to come up with an operational model that could be used in understanding and analysing the public space on the waterfront of Manama. This would contribute to a holistic view of the factors that shape those spaces and their consequences. The ultimate aim of this exercise is summarised in Dovey's description of the opportunities and the challenges of the waterfront. He stated:

> The opportunities are those of opening up the city to the water, to new forms of place identity and urban 'becoming'. The challenge is to understand, to manage and to regulate the city in a manner that mediate flows of capital and desire without paralysing them; it is to find ways to reconcile the many desires that create the city with public interest upon which any urban development process must be legitimated. (Dovey 2005: 7)

From the analysis of these frameworks, it is possible to group their aspects under five categories: 1- Natural locational characteristics, 2- Urban and spatial characteristics; 3- Conservation, identity and distinctiveness, 4- Building codes, zoning and land-use and 5- Actors characteristics, jurisdictional boundaries and legislative issues. The following sections discuss these four categories.

3.4.1 Natural Locational Characteristics

Urban space on the waterfront is affected by a number of natural locational and physical aspects. This rests on the fact that urban space is affected by the interaction between societies and their environment (Madanipour 1996: 35). Human social and physical activities are affected in certain ways by nature and in this case by the presence of the water and its characteristics. And vice versa, human activities affect the nature of that natural space by the creation of the urban space. These physical and locational characteristics are usually discussed when any waterfront or public space is analysed. However, they are ordinarily negotiated as part of the description of the location of the waterfront rather than being considered as factors affecting the shape of the urban form. This could be due to the diversity of those littoral urban areas, which renders an inclusive analytical model difficult to define. By contrast, anthropogenic activities have received more attention in terms of analysis and frameworks. Understanding the natural

locational characteristics, besides the urban and spatial ones, has been directly linked to attempts at understanding how the waterfront is humanly experienced and what could affect that experience. For instance, how does the presence, access to and nature of the body of water affect that experience? (Karvinen M. cited in Sairina & Kumpulainen 2006). The following is a review of the major natural locational factors that affect public space.

3.4.1.1 Land and Water Forms

Wrenn *et al.* (1983) paid attention to the configuration of the coastline and the shape and nature of the body of water in forming the coastal urban settlement. They made a division between inland waterfront cities and coastal ones. The five examples used by Wrenn *et al.* are: A- urban area located on a peninsula, B- urban area located on a bay, C- urban area located on banks of a river, D- urban area located on banks of intersecting rivers and E- urban area located on a large body of water. The first two represent coastal cities and the latter three represent inland ones. Wylson placed them into two groups: maritime cities, and water corridors (Wylson 1986). Regardless of that division, the shoreline configuration is a major influence on how the location of the city in reference to the water affects the city-water links. Cities that are located on peninsulas, headlands or small islands (i.e. San Francisco) benefit from longer waterfronts at a short distance from the city centre (Wrenn *et al.* 1983: 26). The same could be said of cities located on the banks of intersecting rivers, estuaries and deltas (i.e. Tokyo). They have many long waterfronts, which increases the chance of public spaces located on the waterfront and also of these being connected to other hinterland public spaces. Also, Craig-Smith (1995b: 34) highlighted that the closer the location of the redevelopment of the waterfront to the urban core, the greater the chance of its success. By contrast, cities which are located on linear shorelines of large bodies of water end up with large urban areas deep in the hinterland and away from the waterfront (i.e. Toronto) (Wrenn *et al.* 1983: 26).

Although Anderson & Swinglehurst (1978) were not attempting to propose a model for analysing the waterfront or the seaside resort, they discussed many influential factors on their growth and success. Two of those factors apply at a regional scale rather at the scale of the city itself. They found that the topography and the location of the original settlement in reference to other major cities played a great role in the growth and popularity of some of the Victorian and Edwardian seaside resorts. They stated that

cities which could be approached by way of a broad valley or a flat hinterland encouraged railway development and thus were linked with big cities considerably earlier than were other cities with major topographic and locational obstacles (Anderson & Swinglehurst 1978: 36)

3.4.1.2 Nature of the Shoreline and the Water's Depth

The configuration of the body of water in terms of shape and depth affect the nature of public space in term of the number of uses and their nature. Wrenn *et al.* recognise that the dimensions and configurations of the body of water affect the water-related uses on the shoreline in general (Wrenn *et al.* 1983: 21). They also suggest a commonsensical relationship between the size and depth of the water body with the number of shoreline activities. The larger and deeper the expanse of water, the higher the number of shoreline uses (supported by Millspaugh [2001:78]). This could also imply higher competition to public space from other types of land uses. However, there is a disadvantage to this configuration: both Hudson (1996) and Wrenn *et al* (1983: 22) recognise that urban areas overlooking deep bodies of water are restricted in terms of their possibilities for expansion over that water, whether in the shape of piers or land reclamation. This could subsequently affect the depth of the waterfront zone and limit the area available for competing uses, forcing them to occupy areas that are parallel to the shoreline instead of perpendicular to it.

More than the nature of the body of water itself, Forward (1970), however, focuses on the nature of the shoreline and what it borders (i.e. sand, steep cliffs, marshes), in his exploration of the factors influencing uses of the waterfront and subsequently its public spaces. In line with Davenport (1980 : 201) and Wardwell (1986: 18) he highlights the importance of shoreline erosion as a current and future consideration for any waterfront development. Countermeasures to shoreline erosion, as in shoreline armouring with revetments or seawalls, could have a number of negative impacts such as the loss of sandy beaches and reduction of public access (Locklin 1999). However, the opposite may also be true: Douglas (1983: 108) has stated that sometimes work on improving accessibility to the water can itself lead to erosion.

3.4.1.3 Water Dynamics

Wrenn *et al* (1983: p. 22) included the tidal and wave dynamics of the body of water and the flow of inland waterways as physical factors influencing the development and use of

the shoreline. Severe fluctuation in water levels and flooding could hinder, or increase the cost of, the intended waterfront development and the value of the waterfront properties (Wood & Handley 1999). This is usually solved by land reclamation, building of dams, levies, floodways, breakwater, control gates, seawalls and the opening of flood plains. With regard to waterfronts built on reclaimed land, Hudson (1996: 81-2) suggests that land reclamation processes are affected by the location, as in the depth of the water and how exposed the place is to strong waves and tidal currents.

3.4.1.4 Water Quality

The quality of the water is another dimension that could affect the waterfront, particularly its accessibility and the variety of its uses (Bruttomesso 2001: 46; Krieger 2004: 41; Locklin 1999; White 1991). The water's quality is considered as one of the main factors instigating the revival of the waterfront, when the improved quality of the water after the rise of environmental awareness in the 1970s and 1980s and the introduction of new protective laws attracted the public's attention to the waterside (i.e. Curll 1991: 139; Hayuth 1988: 54-5; Hudson 1996: 120-31; Tunbridge 1988: 68-9). In line with that notion, Wrenn *et al.* (1983: 23) stated that "without clean water, not even the most innovative and appealing project will succeed in attracting people and activity to the banks of a river or bay." This is supported by two further environmental studies; in Yamashita & Hirano's work (1995: 134) on two Japanese rivers they found that greater participation and use of the river and the river banks depends upon the quality of the environment, which itself rests primarily on the quality of the water and the water's edge. Furthermore, Wood & Handley (1999), in their study of Mersey Basin Waterways, found there to be a link between the value of waterfront properties and the quality of the water, particularly in terms of people's perceptions of it. In line with that, White (1991) highlighted that water that is of visibly poor quality could have a greater impact on the prospects for residential development than commercial considerations; residents do not like to live near polluted water.

3.4.1.5 Climate and Natural Phenomena

The climatic effect on public space is discussed at three levels: the microclimate, seasonal weather conditions and unusual conditions. In Wrenn *et al.*'s (1983: 27) framework, "any waterfront site will be determined in part by regional climate conditions." Under the heading of 'regional climate' they examined the fluctuation in the micro and the seasonal climates. They focused on the consistency of the use pattern

in response to those weather fluctuations and how that could influence development policies. Jinnai (2001: 61), in his study of Tokyo's waterfronts, highlighted how some of the measures to minimize typhoon damage have severed the city from its waterfront. However, miscalculated measures can also have disastrous results. The best example of this is the case of the flood caused by hurricane Katrina in 2005, in the city of New Orleans.

Hudson (1996: 96) highlighted the importance of considering unusual weather, such as that caused by the greenhouse effect, when designing, and reclaiming land for, a waterfront development. This is a climatic change which is mainly manifesting itself through rising sea-levels and many cities around the world are taking measures to resist it by raising the level of reclaimed land and by providing sea defences.

Wrenn *et al.* (1983: p. 27) examined the effect of the differences in microclimatic condition between deep urban areas and the waterfront. These differences can cause wind breeze, fog, higher levels of air saturation and so on, due to the different climatic behaviour of the urban area and the water body. As with water dynamics, most protective climatic countermeasures decrease the accessibility of the water, and in some cases reduce the level of interaction with the water, as is explained in the following Sections.

Besides the above mentioned disasters that are relevant to regional climate, waterfront planners and designers take two more natural phenomena into consideration: earthquakes and tsunamis. The consideration of earthquakes is of high significance when the intended waterfront is built on reclaimed land (Bassett 2005; Hudson 1996: 93; Shiozaki & Malone 1996). Precautions should be taken to avoid the 'liquefaction' effect in the soils of reclaimed areas. These precautions are usually highly costly, in terms of both time and money (Bassett 2005). The effects of tsunami have been exhaustively examined in many studies relevant to cities overlooking the Pacific Ocean on both the Asian and North American sides. However, the general approach is that of disaster management and urban hazard countermeasures; the issue of how to accommodate these measures within an urban design approach is yet to be tackled by urban design scholars.

3.4.2 Urban and Spatial Characteristics

In many studies, the most discussed aspect is the urban character of the waterfront or its adjacent areas. From a review of some of those studies, four main factors have emerged

under the heading of urban and spatial characteristics: urban form, identity and architectural heritage, physical barriers, and land-use. The following is a thematic discussion of frameworks which includes those four categories.

3.4.2.1 Urban Form

Most waterfront studies take an overall view of waterfront developments as large areas of the city which tend to develop outside of its regulatory systems and "can be so insular as to deny the existence of the context into which they insert themselves" (Marshall 2001b: 8). Somehow they become 'moated fortresses' (Falk 1993: p. 24). Overall, urban form has been studied at two levels, the urban form of the waterfront and the interplay between that area and the rest of the urban form of the city, at both physical and functional levels. Deeper analysis places three categories under the two main levels. These are; 1- urban complexity, 2- urban continuity and 3- integration with the water. Public space is considered as a core element in the discussion of these three levels.

3.4.2.1.1 Urban Complexity

Urban complexity is one of the key elements included in nearly every waterfront framework and development policy. These frameworks incorporate both functional and physical complexities and stress their vitality as essential to the success of most waterfront developments (i.e. Bruttomesso 1993b: 43). Although physical complexity is always included in discussion of the waterfront, it is rarely explained. The focus is usually on the multi-functionality and mixed-uses of the waterfront. Physical complexity itself is omitted from the policy, to be solved at the design phase. However, from a review of the few waterfront projects that are globally renowned, it was found that there is a certain degree of repetition in public space themes and approaches (i.e. San Francisco pier 39 and Baltimore Harbour Place).

3.4.2.1.2 Urban Continuity

Bruttomesso (2001: 40) focuses on the 'recomposition' of the waterfront physically, to 're-join' the different activities on the waterfront. He recognises that the urban composition of the waterfront (mostly post-industrial) could be highly fragmented, due to the physical legacies of each historical phase which the area traversed (with regard to post-industrial cities). Work on the waterfront should unify those fragments both physically and functionally. He also recommended that the unifying factor of that physical heritage should be a network of public spaces. In accord with Bruttomesso,

Alexander *et al.* (1977: 136-8) recommended that the area adjacent to the water should be maintained as common land. However, they also linked the width of that common land with the type of water, the density of the development along it, and the ecological condition. In broad terms, the larger the settlement or density, the closer it should be to the water. Alexander's work conforms with the work of Mumford (1940: 220) in which he stated that a continuous environment of public green, including those of the riverside and coastal areas, is an essential element in urban planning.

3.4.2.1.3 Integration with Water

Within the waterfront frameworks, integration with the water came under many names but was discussed mainly on two scales: integration of the waterfront zone with the water and integration of the city with the waterfront zone. The latter is usually discussed with regard to the continuity of the urban form or the accessibility of the waterfront (i.e. Bruttomesso [2001:220]). However, the two scales are also discussed on both functional and physical bases. The functional side is discussed in the context of 'land-use of the waterfront' in a latter part of this chapter.

On the city-waterfront interface, it is, apparently, hard to achieve physical integration between the city and the waterfront zone; particularly when it comes to the continuity of street pattern and the maintenance of building scales. The usual empty waterfront tracts provide the city planner with an opportunity to accommodate large scale projects and developments which cannot be accommodated within older parts of the city (Marshall 2001b: 6). Those projects somehow seem to require an incompatible street pattern in relation to other parts of the city. An example of this can be found in the case of Darling Harbour, Sydney as studied by Marshall (2001a: 31).

One of the methods used to enhance the city-waterfront integration is by increasing the depth of the waterfront zone. Krieger (2004: 33-5) recommends that the waterfront should never be visualised as a thin line separating land and water. To the author, "the broader the zone of overlap between land and water the more successfully a city captures the benefits of its water assets" (Krieger 2001: p. 177). In line with this, Fisher (2004: 56) recommends that "waterfront designers need to give attention to the progression of experiences that lead into the embrace of the city". To him, the connection could be made through a "system of public spaces that opens the city up to the water's edge and at the same time extends inland." Connections could also be made through the public spaces of individual buildings that, in total, form a network of public

spaces leading to the water. He added that it is also possible to make these connections functionally, through the kinds of activities that draw the public to the water's edge (Fisher 2004: 56). On the visual level, building heights should decrease gradually as they approach the water, to allow more buildings access to a visual link with the water (Mak *et al.* 2005; Sayan & Ortacesme 2002).

On the scale of the waterfront-water relationship, Lynch *et al* (1976: 45) suggested a threefold framework to assist the interpretation of that relationship. They divided their model into three levels ranging from the highest level of integration to the lowest. Their model also divided the land-use of the waterfront into four categories: Living Areas, Working Areas, Leisure Areas and Special Areas. However, the model mixes together physical and functional integration with the water. A few of its categories incorporate both the physical and visual accessibility of the water. Although the authors include many analytical points in their model, they run the risk of mixing incompatible attributes of the waterfront. For example, within the 'high' category of integration they judge the integration of living areas based on their physical integration with water, however, within the same category working areas are judged based on their functional dependency on the water which will be discussed later in this chapter.

3.4.2.2 Public Access to the Waterfront

The availability of public space on the waterfront and its overall public accessibility are two axial issues in the relevant research of the waterfront. Improved access to the waterfront is considered to be an element of success by nearly every set of design guidelines, design objectives, planning policy, and analysis frameworks reviewed (i.e. Alexander *et al.* 1977; Donaher *et al.* 1980: 42; Krausse 1995; Malone 1996: 3; National Research Council 1980: 10; Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Task Force 2000: 136-8; Torre 1989: 8; Wrenn *et al.* 1983). It is also a multidimensional factor that is interdependent with virtually all the other relevant issues. Overall, physical, visual, and symbolic aspects are the three main dimensions of accessibility (Carr *et al.* 1992). The spatial accessibility of the waterfront has three sub-dimensions: A) City-waterfront connectivity, B) Inter-waterfront zone continuity and, C) Waterfront-water connectivity (Figure 3.1).

Access, as in the right to be in the space physically, is widely recognised by mainstream literature as a major factor in deciding whether a space is public or private (Altman

1975, 1986; Benn & Gaus 1983; Carmona *et al.* 2003; Carr *et al.* 1992: 138; Gordon 1997; Madanipour 2003: 111; Mitchell 1995a). Hypothetically, public space should be accessible to anyone at any time. Besides its value as a tool for determining to which domain a space belongs, access is used to measure the performance of the space and the city in general.

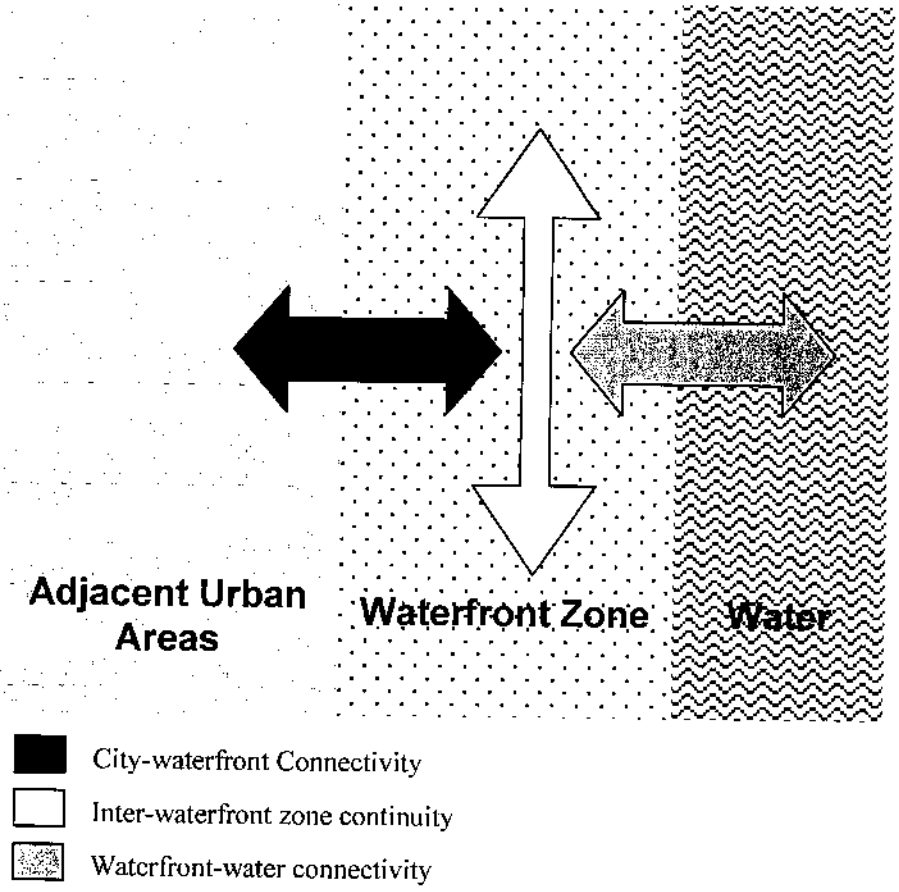


Figure 3.1: Accessibility of the Waterfront

However, access is not a simple quality to be maximized: as noted by Lynch, access is a multifaceted matter that should be tackled on both qualitative and quantitative levels. In this sense he stated:

> To have everything instantly available is no more desirable that it would be to live in an infinity adaptable world. Moreover, access cannot be measured by the sheer quantity of things that can be reached at given levels of cost and expenditure of time. Mere quantity loses its meaning once a satisfying level is attained. Value then turns on the degree of choice offered among accessible resources...This is the principal of diversity, so often mentioned in discussions of city quality. It applies to the entire range of accessible things. A diversity of people, of food, of jobs, of entertainment, of physical settings, of schools, of books, are all desirable. (1984: 191)

Zukin (1995: 262) considers 'diversity' as a basic factor that characterises public urban space besides 'accessibility' and 'proximity'. Building on that, Carr *et al.* (1992: 144) insisted on the removal of physical boundaries to improve the accessibility of public space. To these authors, public space should be well connected with circulation routes to improve its physical accessibility. That accessibility also involves securing access for all types of users, regardless of age, race, ethnicity, nationality, gender or disability, which in many cases is not guaranteed (Carr *et al.* 1992: 139). Somehow, and in many cases, physical accessibility is possible for all the above-mentioned types of user, but some of them could be deterred by certain elements within the public space (Madanipour 1998). For instance, the design quality of public spaces, installations or venues within them, control measures, or other user groups could all keep some users away from the public space (Jacobs 1989; Madanipour 1998). Some scholars have named this type of access 'symbolic access'.

The symbolic accessibility of any space is a dialectic matter: some public spaces are physically accessible by members of the public, yet some users, or all public users, would be intimidated by using those spaces. Commenting on Battery Park, Carr *et al.* (1992: 264) mentioned that the common perception of the park by West Side residents (Manhattan, New York City) is that no matter how well it is designed it will never be open to the whole range of users as long as it is associated with luxury developments; the same could be said about the open spaces in Canary Wharf, London. The design and location of some public open spaces, as well as the limited access points to them, could sometimes alienate some user groups (Low 2000: 35 & 198-9). Low (2006: 81) has also stated that some normatively and physically accessible public waterfronts and other spaces could be symbolically inaccessible. She used Broad Beach in Malibu, California to exemplify how the users of the beach are intimidated by the owners of nearby mansions. She also gave an example of how some housing developments are designed to give all the signs of gated communities without being physically gated, to intimidate unwanted users of the public spaces, while avoiding the provision and management costs (Low 2006: 100).

The latitude in the definition of any space and the uncertainty of the meaning of access create a grey area for abuse by differently-interested parties. This was highlighted by Dovey, who used the case of the Esso building in Melbourne as an example. The investors asked the planning authority for permission to water down the 'active edge'

law, which was vague in its original form. The senior planning officer gave the response that the law could be reinterpreted: 'interest to the public may not necessarily mean access by the public. A creative design solution is called for...' (Dovey 2005: 51). Dovey understands the official statement to mean that 'public interest' was redefined in terms of the capacity to interest the public; and the active edge to mean a visually accessed space only. The previous marks a shift in the style of urban governance from a service providing and managerial one to an entrepreneurial one, focusing on generating tax money and job opportunities through urban development (Harvey 1989).

The above mentioned examples lead to consideration of another dimension of access to public space. As with symbolic accessibility, visual accessibility to public space is dialectic in its nature. Although public spaces should be visually accessible to indicate their public-ness, they also should provide some privacy to their users (Carr *et al.* 1992: 144-5). Nevertheless, a balance should be achieved between the visual privacy of a space and its perceived level of security (Jacobs 1989). On the waterfront, visual access to the water is a primary issue, as it is discussed in a later part of this chapter.

Access to information about any public space is another dimension of its accessibility. Gavison (1983: 113-8) argues that controlling information about a place, whether by making that information available or not, could affect the state of that place. She gave an example about a beach that is descriptively private but normatively public, and attributed this to the fact that either the public do not know about the beach, or it is physically inaccessible.

There are many examples on how different countries are approaching the issue of public access to the water (Refer to Figure 3.2). Most prominent is the United Kingdome's government steps towards improving the public accessibility of its coastline. In 2000 the Countryside and Rights of Way Act was introduced (the CROW Act). This covered the countryside including forests, beaches and so on. It allowed for public access on foot and in some cases on bicycles for many areas of the countryside which were out of public's reach. This was followed by the Marine and Coastal Access Bill in 2009 which focuses on the in which Part 9 focuses exclusively for coastal access. The bill "aims to improve public access to and enjoyment of the English coastline, providing secure and consistent rights for people to enjoy the coast with confidence and certainty". From the previous, we can see that the Bill highlights the many dimensions of access to the water; it highlights the issue of the unobstructed and continuous physical access of the beach,

which includes the visual form of access too. It also highlights the symbolic and information dimensions of access by aiming to make the public access the coastline with confidence and certainty. The latter could happen through public information program that makes the public aware of their rights to access the water. This could be as simple as having a sign that indicates the publicness of those coastlines similar to the ones used in the State of Florida (Figure 3.2).



Figure 3.2: Beach Access Sign, Treature Island, Florida- USA (2005)

The Marine and Coastal Access Bill is highly specific, proposing the creation of a footpath along the circumference of the English coast, planned to be placed on the shoreline (Refer to Figure 3.5), even where this under private ownership. The Bill is disputed by many parties, but especially by riparian/littoral land owners and by natural conservation groups.

Coastal Access 'Models'	Countries	Key Elements of Approach
Country-wide access rights	Denmark, Scotland, Sweden	- rights of access to foreshore, beaches, dunes, cliffs, uncultivated land, etc. on foot, and for short stays and navigation (and other recreational activities in Scotland and Sweden) - exclusions (e.g. wildlife areas, growing crops, curtilage of homes) - restrictions/conditions (e.g. no damage, dogs under control)
Maritime Public Domain	France, Portugal	- public ownership and rights of access on foot and for navigation on the foreshore, beaches and adjacent land (depending on *lais et relais* in France; 50 m landward of high tide in Portugal)
Public ownerships of foreshore and beaches	Netherlands	- public ownership and rights of access to foreshores and beaches on foot and for navigation and recreation
Pedestrian Right of Way along the Coastline	France	- 3 m wide access 'corridor' along the landward boundary of Maritime Public Domain along entire coast; exclusions in vicinity of dwellings
Access to coastal areas, through public/voluntary sector ownerships	Netherlands France N. Ireland other countries	- permissive access on foot, and for walking and cycling on paths, in extensive dunes areas owned by public and voluntary bodies - Coastal Protection Agency acquisition of extensive coastal areas - permissive access on public sector and National Trust properties - public/voluntary sector ownerships (e.g. Scotland, Sweden)
Public rights of way and promoted routes	all countries	- public rights of way on foot +/- cycling and riding provide valuable access to coast – especially where no general rights of access - France: Public Right of Way across/to the Shore - Ireland + N. Ireland: limitations on public right of way networks - development and promotion of longer distance paths for walking and cycling at the coast (e.g. Nortrail)

Figure 3.3: Coastal Accessibility in Some European Countries

Source: (Natural England 2007)

3.4.2.2.1 City-Waterfront Connectivity

From a review of the main foci of waterfront literature, we can find two extremes. On the one hand we can find an absolute focus on city-port relations. It attempts to understand the process of separation between the two paradigms, and the link between new developments situated on empty tracts left by former port activities, and the rest of the city (i.e. Norcliffe *et al.* 1996). And on the other hand, there is a shortage of studies concerned with the effect of land reclamation on the waterfront (i.e. Hudson 1996; Ishida 2001; Jinnai 2001). This attitude ignores the fact that land reclamation is an inherent part of the urban development of nearly every waterside city. Overall, the reviewed studies focus on the importance of removing any physical barriers between the city and the waterfront zone (i.e. Kent 2005; Marshall 2001a, b; Millspaugh 2001; Torre 1989: 8; Tunbridge 1988). For instance, Bruttomesso (2001: 45) holds that opening the waterfront to the public is a prerequisite for all waterfront operations. It is considered as one of the strongest tools used to ensure public access (Pogue & Lee 1999).

Bruttomesso thinks that public acquisition or public ownership is not sufficient for this, as the process requires a high level of intervention (2001: 45). In line with this view, Krieger (2004: 40) states that public access is a 'must' as a condition of success which usually requires overcoming historic barriers — physical, proprietary, and psychological. The physical barriers usually come in the form of highways, railways,

old port and industrial tracts, and private residential and commercial properties that stand between the city and the water. In a few cases those physical barriers are a result of the natural settings of the city in relation to the water (a factor that is rarely discussed in waterfront studies). For instance the city centre of Newcastle upon Tyne, UK, is separated from its quayside by two main barriers: the first is the sheer difference in elevation between the two urban areas and the second is the railway system (O'Brien 1997).

Overall, the focus of those policies and design approaches is on how to improve the public — primarily the pedestrian — accessibility of the waterfront (i.e. Bruttomesso's model). This stems from the notion best summarised by Krieger (2004: 45) who stated: "if access to water was long essential for sustenance, transportation, commerce, and industry, it is now necessary for less tangible, though hardly less important, human needs." Many cities around the globe took drastic action to secure that access by removing or redesigning those barriers. For example the city of San Francisco did not fix the Embarcadero Elevated Freeway after it was damaged in the earthquake of 1989; instead it was demolished in 1994 to allow for a better 'humanistic' link between the dense and busy districts of the city and the waterfront (Figure 3.3). Another approach is the work on the harbour-front of Barcelona, which improved the link between the city, particularly the Ramblas, with the waterfront, by incorporating a sunken longitudinal part of the harbour-front.



Figure 3.4: The Elevated Embarcadero Freeway, known locally as 'The Wall', standing between Market Street and the Ferry Building (circa 1960). 2- The Freeway from street level (circa 1970). 3- Market Street joining the Embarcadero (2006)

Source: 1- Unknown, 2- Geo Images Project – University of California Berkley, 3- Microsoft Corporation 2006, Windows live local

However, access to the waterfront could be hindered by a different type of process. For instance, waterfront development that involves land reclamation generally decreases the public's access to the waterfront (Hudson 1996: 120). Sometimes the nature of the reclamation itself could be a barrier; in this matter Hudson (1996: 84) specifically stated that using poor quality fill could restrict the use of those reclaimed lands as open spaces prior to their development. As with the process and details of land reclamation, reclaiming ex-industrial waterfront requires, in most cases, expensive decontamination

and clearance operations (MacPherson 1993: 42). Without those operations both public and private access to the waterfront are nearly impossible. Nevertheless, waterfront developments generally result from an impetus to improve their economic values and in some cases to turn them into economic engines that benefit the whole city. In few cases this involves commercialization, privatisation and commoditisation of public spaces and facilities which could limit public access to those places (Lloyd & Auld 2003: 6; Zukin 1995).

3.4.2.2.2 Inter-Waterfront Zone Continuity

This matter is inherent to the topic of Coastal Zone Management more than to the subject of the waterfront. The continuity of the publicly accessible shoreline is also one of many strategies geared to improve the accessibility of the water (i.e. The Public Access Plan for California by Locklin 1999; and Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Task Force Report 2000). In many cases this is included in the overall public agenda of public access to the countryside, woodlands and the coast. However, the continuity of the urban area parallel to the waterline is rarely discussed when the waterfront is analysed.

3.4.2.2.3 Accessibility of the Water

The third dimension of the accessibility of the waterfront is the accessibility of the water itself. This aspect is of high consideration in many waterfront developments, if not all of them (Wardwell 1986: 19). It is also one of the most discussed topics within the paradigm of the waterfront, particularly the public's access to the water (i.e. (Carr *et al.* 1992). But the question is: why do we, as human beings, need to access and interact with water? And if access to water is important for our mental and physical health, what about those who live in towns and cities with no nearby bodies of water?

The accessibility of the water is linked to many aspects, such as the quality of the water and other natural locational attributes (Locklin 1999). The immediate area between land and water has been studied to come up with models that help in understanding the two-way relationship. For instance, Owen (1991: 16-8) suggested a model that includes four representative forms of this urban edge; 1) Water edge: building rising straight from the water and blocking public access to it from the land side, 2) Perforated Water Edge: access is achieved through paths at right angles to the water's edge. They reach the water through gaps between the waterside buildings, 3) Set Back Building: there are no buildings right on the water's edge, 4) Bank/Beach: the gap between the water's edge

and the built-up area is large and the water's edge is mostly in a natural state. Although Owen's (1991: 16) analysis is not deep and does not clearly say how each one of those models could affect human interaction with the water, he suggested that "the use of a variety of forms can actually be commercially beneficial". The author shied-off explaining how the latter could be achieved.

Moughtin (2003: pp. 177-8) adopted Owen's model and added three more forms: the bay, the pier, and the body of water that is treated as sewer. However, Moughtin, in his attempt to place an inclusive model of water forms within an urban setting, mixed the treatment of the edge of the water and other larger settings, in which he repeated Owen's model.

Campo (2002) in his attempt to analyse Brooklyn's vernacular waterfront proposed another model. His threefold model is based on the type of interaction with the water that can be accommodated on the water's edge. His categories are: places where you can merely 'see the water'; places where you can be 'above the water'; and places where you can 'touch the water'. These categories are based on the opportunities afforded by different physical settings of the water's edge and so far they are the most inclusive, as they focus on what can be promoted by certain settings rather than on their physical nature.

However, Campo (2002) also highlighted that there are three types of access to the waterfront and subsequently to the water. The first one is access through parkland, a formal kind of access. The second one is access through places whose main function is not recreational yet where public access is 'designated'. The third type is informal access through places "where people have found access to the waterfront even though it has neither been provided nor intended." The third type is quite common in many American cities as observed by Heatwole & West while they were studying urban fishing in New York City. Their observations give a deep insight into that type of access to water and what it involves. They stated:

> Despite the changes, fishing in urban areas can be less than an ideal experience; sometimes it can be downright dangerous. In New York City we have seen fishermen dash across divided expressways to reach a fishing spot. We have watched them tote tackle along electrified railroad tracks, cast from active railroad bridges, perch precariously on slippery ripraps, negotiate dilapidated piers that have ominously undulating surfaces and gaping holes, scramble over sides of bridges and down to the concrete supports, ignore 'no

> fishing' signs with impunity, go over, under, around, and through chain-link fences, and generally trespass on every category of waterfront property. Conversations with planners and researchers in other cities suggest that this behaviour is not unique to New Yorkers. (Heatwole & West 1985)

3.4.3 Conservation, Identity and Distinctiveness,

> [I]n the articulation of urban waterfronts, these issues (the meaning of the public realm in global and post-modern times) are critical. The visibility of these sites means the waterfront becomes the stage upon which the most important pieces are set. In doing so, the waterfront is an expression of what we are as a culture." (Marshall 2001b: 4)

The above excerpt highlights the uniqueness of the waterfront when it comes to issues of conservation, identity and distinctiveness and the interplay between the three, in representing the cultures that produce them. Generally, public space is the locus where those identities are maintained or created and commonly 'public space' is the magical word used to secure public funding. However, in many cases waterfront developments are part of larger urban renewal and regeneration projects (Goodwin 1999; Sairina & Kumpulainen 2006). Their nature does not differ from those projects (Malone 1996: 2). Thus, they are naturally prone to the same global and local agendas and tensions that shape them (Tweedale 1988: 185). The challenges that face the hosting city or the developers are, on the one hand, to achieve distinctiveness and avoid 'Disneyfication'; on the other hand, to maintain, renew or establish an identity while remaining loyal to the local physical and social heritage. This has proven difficult, particularly amidst the current global trend in which urban design, urban land marks and public spaces are used as elements in promoting cities, and as tools for boosting local economies (Daly & Malone 1996: 92; Gospodini 2002; Harvey 1989). This is also accompanied by the overall cardinal objective of such developments: many cities expect that by developing this part of the city, in a copycat manner, the whole economy of the city could be revived (Bruttomesso 2001: 47). To achieve this, signature architectural and urban design projects designed by internationally renowned consultants are used in the city's marketing and branding strategy (Beriatos & Gospodini 2004; Madanipour 1996). And in that context, urban designers and architects consider the waterfront as a new frontier, a place for experimentation and for exploring emerging trends (Greenberg 1996: 195; Shaw 2001: 160).

The issues of conservation, identity and heritage on the waterfront are also problematic, due to the large scale of most of those projects. These large lands are usually empty,

particularly in the case of newly reclaimed lands, where there is no physical heritage to be used as a point of reference (Greenberg 1996: 214). Yet this is problematic in itself, as is the question of how to link the new parts with the old ones (Bruttomesso 2001: 46; Marshall 2001d). Nevertheless, in developing countries, there is a problem with the process of urbanization, as they generally lack a culture of conservation of the built environment (Hoyle 2001a).

For waterfronts with inherited physical heritage, both Falk (1993: 29) and Bruttomesso (2001: 41) called for adaptive re-use of the old buildings within the development area. To them those buildings are the first sign of regeneration and through them, landmarks are maintained which could lead to the realisation or maintenance of local identity. However, this approach comes with its own problems that do not significantly differ from those of other urban areas undergoing redevelopment. Generally they vary between: A) structural problems, where most of those buildings have been built on reclaimed wetlands to obsolete standards; B) access to cars and new services; and C) finding new uses that can be accommodated within those buildings in the light of health and safety laws (Shaw 2001: 161). Shaw (2001: 169) also added that, as with any other urban area, conservation is costly and takes time. Thus, it mainly needs public funding and long term planning. Overall, public funding has become a must in large scale waterfront projects, but in the postmodern economy, with its volatile capital, long term planning is not possible (Harvey 1990: 286). Overall, large urban renewal projects need major investment from private developers. This could lead to difficulties that arise from attempting to match the public's agenda of conservation and the architectural interventions of the private developers, particularly in waterfronts rich with physical heritage. In his study of the revitalization project for Boston's Naval Shipyard, Gordon stated:

> For a wide variety of aesthetic and practical reasons, concentrations of architecturally and historically valuable buildings are unlikely to mesh well with developers interested in new construction and the far-reaching adaptation of existing properties for new purposes. (Gordon 1999)

Conservation and re-use of old waterside buildings could be part of an overall scheme of preserving and enhancing an existing identity as well as an attempt to achieve distinctiveness. This is common in old fishing ports or naval yards (Hoyle 1999b). But in certain cases it could hinder progression, experimentation and/or the creation of new

identities. Marshall, reflecting on the North American experience, warned against extremism in that direction. He stated:

> [W]e have an obsessive desire for everything to be the same, to reduce everything to the lowest common dominator. Modern development must obey strict guidelines so as not to be offensive, expressive or unique. In our search of the contextual, we deny the possibility of new expressions (2001d: 157-8).

However, the other end of that extreme should not necessarily be pursued, as opening the waterfront for new ideas could become limited to successful concepts which have been tried in other locations around the globe. Currently, many high profile waterfront projects are being tagged with the same consultants' names (i.e. Calatrava, Gehry, Rogers, S.O.M, Hadid and so forth). Identities are created through the projects themselves or simply through the names of their architects. This is in line with the post-modern intra-city global competition to attract capital and to encourage urban tourism (Gospodini 2002: 43; Krieger 2004). In the framework of this competition, local bodies seek capital from international real estate investors to finance large scale waterfront developments. However, the international developers bring along their own agendas and standards. They usually lack physical and emotional attachment to the local environment (Banerjee 2001; Madanipour 1996: 142). Hoyle (2001a) considers that striking a balance between local and global powers is a prerequisite to ensure the success of any waterfront development. In this context; Fisher (2004: 47) thinks the design of the waterfront should "recognise the intrinsic qualities of each site". However, Madanipour drew attention to the need of those international real estate developers for local agents who initially highlight the area of investment locally. But could that necessarily ensure appreciation of the distinctiveness of the local environments, as Madanipour assumes? One of the ways of appreciating the distinctiveness of the local environment is by conserving or reviving a substantial number of the waterfront's original uses (Bruttomesso 2001: 43-4). Bruttomesso see it, also, as a means of achieving complexity on the waterfront and a way to "preserve meaningful traces of the identity of those places." However, Madanipour stated that the momentum of the process of global real estate investment could undermine the local agenda and lead to the creation of similar landscapes everywhere (Madanipour 1996: 142). Blurring the two processes of attracting foreign investment and securing public funding could lead to negative effects on the public space.

3.4.4 Building codes, Zoning and Land-use

Building codes, land-use and zoning policies are major dimensions of waterfront developments and their frameworks. They also play a dialectic role in the provision of public space on the waterfront. Most waterfront developments on brown field sites involve re-planning, introducing new building codes and re-zoning the waterfront. In most cases it revolves around changing the planning conditions for former industrial waterfronts, which tends to be a problematic exercise (Komori 1993). It also requires, in some cases, the designation of waterfront districts or zones, prior to any planning or intervention; this is to be granted special planning regulations (Goodwin 1999; Wrenn *et al.* 1983: 54).

The core intention of the frameworks studied in relation to zoning and defining the land-use of waterfront areas is to strike a balance between disparate critical interests in the waterfront (ULI-the Urban Land Institution 2004: 18). It is an attempt to maximize the level of space consumption and in some cases to mediate between contradictory interests. Land-use is also employed as a tool to achieve certain other objectives. These could be divided into two groups: A) Complexity and multiple-use of the waterfront, and B) Functional connectivity and continuity of the waterfront.

3.4.4.1 Complexity of the Urban Waterfront

Nearly every waterfront revitalization or development project around the globe involves mixed-use elements (Tweedale 1988: 185). Bruttomesso (2001: 42) recognises that complexity is an innate feature of many waterfronts. To him, it is the "co-presence of numerous activities which, combined in different percentages depending on the case, gives life to new, 'pieces' of city, sometimes marked by an interesting feature entailing complexity." To Bruttomesso, complexity is a quality achieved through a long process which takes centuries in some cases. But it could also be achieved in a single project over a span of years. That complexity is realized in a few successful projects through intelligent interplay between factors that are essential for the operation of the waterfront and factors which have made a substantial contribution to urban complexity (Bruttomesso 2001: 43). However, complexity is not necessary a magical tool that works in every case, as found by MacPherson (1993: 24) who concluded, through his study of developments on the banks of the Themes (i.e. Chelsea Harbour and Tobacco Dock), that a mixed-use development does not naturally result in success. In this regard,

Bruttomesso stated that the failure of the mixed-use approach could be the result of the domination of a single function. That domination could in one way or another affect the quality and accessibility of the public space.

3.4.4.2 Functional Connectivity, Continuity and Interdependency

Zoning, as an urban planning tool, is found to be used to achieve city-waterfront functional connectivity and interdependency. It is also used to achieve functional continuity and interdependency along the waterfront zone. On this front, Klaassen (1993: 22) stated that interdependency is a factor whereby the different uses on the waterfront affect each other either positively or negatively. Thus, frameworks and strategies focus on increasing the positive mutual impact of the waterfront's uses and to reduce the negatives. In other words, they are used to achieve *synergetic* mixed-use development (ULI-the Urban Land Institution 2004: 20).

Regarding the functional continuity of the waterfront, Bruttomesso (2001: 40) suggests that it should be recomposed; he advises those who are in charge of waterfront projects to concentrate on giving a 'common unitary sense' to the different parts which make up the areas of the waterfront. He added that the first part of this process consists in to re-joining these parts to activate a new unifying and appealing character.

On the level of city-waterfront functional interdependency, Krieger (2004: p. 41) considers that: "[the] success and appeal of waterfront development is intrinsically tied to the interrelationship between landside and adjacent waterside uses". To achieve this, Fisher (2004: 47) suggested "multiple linkages to the waterfront should be created, along with multiple reasons for going there." With waterfronts that accommodate ports this interdependency tends to be of higher significance. Hilling (1988: 21) went all the way by stating that "any analysis of waterfront redevelopment problems which ignores [city/port interdependency] is seriously incomplete".

However this *synergetic* mixed-use and functional interdependency faces both physical and functional obstacles. As mentioned earlier, Marshall (2001a: 28) has stated that most newly opened-up tracts on the waterfront are used to accommodate large scale projects which could not be fitted within fine-grained older urban areas. They are also used to accommodate new functions in relation to the rest of the adjacent urban areas (i.e. shopping malls, sports halls, stadia and so on). Such facilities impact on their immediate context by creating increased traffic and noise levels which render them

incompatible (Marshall 2001a: 28). Furthermore, a synergetic mixed-use approach could lead to stereotyped projects based on commerce plus entertainment (Bruttomesso 1993b: 43). On the bright side, this approach could provide a fresh canvas in which public space could establish itself in physical space, and play a decisive functional role. The previous approach is recommended on a federal level in the US; NOAA stated that integrating compatible, non-water-related uses with the water-dependent ones that have traditionally defined the identity of coasts and waterfronts can provide a more stable economic base (National Ocean Service - National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration 2009).

3.4.4.3 Functional Water-dependency

Water-dependency is mostly used in North American and Australian waterfront studies and in development policies and schemes either as an indicator, a guiding or regulatory tool. It is formulated to measure or specify to what degree a waterside activity is functionally water-dependent. Water-dependency is also used by some specialist institutions as a tool to measure the quality of the accessibility of the waterfront (i.e. New York State Department of State 1999). Overall, the definition of water-dependent use is influenced by the context in which it is developed and used (Conservation Clinic-Center for Governmental Responsibility 2006).

Overall few classifications have been proposed in an attempt to come up with a holistic and inclusive water-dependency model. One such is by Easton (1988), who divided water-dependency into three categories based on the uses that are attracted to the waterfront:

1. Water-dependent uses: those which must have waterfront sites. These include industrial uses such as marine terminals or recreational uses such as small boat marinas,
2. Water-related uses: those which benefit from waterfront sites, particularly for transport of raw materials and finished products. Such uses are often industrial — for example, forest products manufacturers,
3 Water-enhanced uses: those which could occur anywhere but which attract additional patronage as a result of waterfront amenities. Retail and office developments are typical of this type of use (Easton 1988: 21).

In the above classification there is a degree of overlap between the water-dependent and the water-related activities. This was resolved in Craig-Smith's (1995a) threefold classification of water dependency. It is noteworthy to mention that his categories are the basic ones used in most of the US states (i.e. New York and Florida) (Conservation Clinic-Center for Governmental Responsibility 2006). Those three categories of uses on the waterfront are:

1. water-dependent: uses for which waterside locations are indispensible (i.e. ferry and other marine terminals, boat repair and construction yards, marinas and moorings, commercial fishing, and transport);
2. Water-related: uses that maximize the advantages of waterside locations yet could still function efficiently if located away from the water's edge. (i.e. industrial processing plants, some storage and warehousing facilities, and some public utilities);
3. Water-independent: uses which are neither dependent nor directly related to riverside locations. (i.e. apartment buildings, other residential accommodations, hotels, public parks and reserves, and some retailing and servicing complexes) (Craig-Smith 1995a: 4).

To Craig-Smith the third category of uses "utilizes the environmental attraction of waterside locations but (except for marketing and commercial reasons) may be equally well served by locations away from the water's edge." Craig-Smith's classification is inclusive and could give a holistic and accurate view of the uses of the waterfront by including water-independent uses. Yet he still recognises that "the overlap and hybridization of these categories is a particular hazard of this classification" (Craig-Smith 1995a: 4).

To overcome that overlap, other institutions have posited far more sophisticated models and include many categories (i.e. 'water-oriented', 'water-enjoyment', and 'non-water oriented'). However, they have rendered their classifications geographically limited and case specific. Some other analytical frameworks have gone to a deeper level to measure water-dependency through the mode of interaction that is enabled or allowed with the water. For instance, recreational uses such as boat launching, fishing and swimming are considered active forms of interaction with the water and thus water-dependent (New York State Department of State 1999).

Overall, water-dependency models are not generally followed in the planning process of most waterfronts. On the one hand, a few authors (i.e. Hildreth & Johnson [1985] and Fagence [1995: 135]) consider it as a priority guide rather than a rule; on the other hand, these models are superseded by real estate market mechanisms, with land-use efficiency calculations that depend upon economic values (Bristow 1988: 172).

For example, in the State of Florida, a conflict arose between historical working waterfronts and water-related businesses, mainly hotels or restaurants. Local authorities argued that the money brought to the community by water-related uses outweighed the economic value of a working waterfront (Conservation Clinic-Center for Governmental Responsibility 2006). To resolve this problem, the State of Florida came up with its own water dependency definition that regards hotels and restaurants as water-dependent uses.

3.4.5 Actors' Characteristics, Jurisdictional Boundaries, & Legislative Issues

This part is concerned with the stakeholders of waterfront development. Considering the diversity between governmental and planning authorities, this review limits itself to the common factors among stakeholders stemming from studies and frameworks of waterfront developments. From this review, it has been found that the scale and locational factors of any waterfront, added to the high variation and diverse nature of human activities within and around the zone (existing or planned), usually increases the number and diversity of the actors involved in the development process. Most of those stakeholders fall within the following categories: A- governmental authorities (including those concerned in planning, social issues, finance, development, national security and defence and transportation), B- nongovernmental organisations (NGOs), C- investors (public or private) and D- users. The following is a brief review of the actors involved in the waterfront and the jurisdictional boundaries between them.

3.4.5.1 Waterfront Constituency

The waterfront constituency is represented by two main groups; 1- users of the waterfront as a place to live, work and for daily recreation, and 2- occasional users (Manogun 1980; Wood & Handley 1999; Wrenn *et al.* 1983: 29). As per Wrenn *et al.*, the characteristics of the two groups vary significantly depending on the mix of land and

water uses. This division of waterfront users rests principally on the nature of the spaces they use (public or private). Based on this, their interest in the waterfront could vary significantly on the question of how public it should be.

Many frameworks reviewed highlighted the importance of striking a balance between daily and occasional users, while trying to meet their needs. Overall, they recommended allocating ample public space on the waterfront, yet working to maintain a sense of privacy, security and neighbourhood for the residents, in order to dilute any possible tension between the two user groups. Besides that balance there are other sources of tension on the waterfront that must be addressed. One of these is the conflicting interests of local, national, federal and global forces. Another source of tension is specific to historic waterfronts: these locations are associated with the need for economic development, yet they ought to maintain their unique heritage (McCarthy 2004).

Most of the reviewed studies reflect a strong tendency to protect local interests or to create a local community on the waterfront to ensure the success of its development and regeneration (i.e. Bruttomesso 2001; Craig-Smith 1995b: 15; Hannigan 1998; Hoyle 1999a; Norcliffe *et al.* 1996). In this context Craig-Smith stated (1995b: 33), in relation to the two parts of Sydney Harbour: "While recognizing the importance of tourism, neither site must lose sight of the fact that for areas to survive they must also cater for the needs and aspirations of the local population" (Craig-Smith 1995c: p. 33). On the other hand he also highlighted, with regard to the case of Liverpool's waterfront, that favouring national and international tourism in the early stages of some projects could help the local constituency in the waterfront later on (Craig-Smith 1995b: 15). In accordance with that, both Bruttomesso (2001: 44) and Krieger (2004: 36) recommended that the waterfront should be not only a place to live in, but one to visit. Wood and Handley (1999) are sceptical of that approach as they warned against the negative impact of high numbers of visitors on the waterfront's residential areas. However Krausse (1995) stated that there should be no conflict within the waterfront constituency, as to him the waterfront "is a public resource capable of supporting a variety of uses and activities" therefore any development should be "compatible with community values and objectives". There are many examples that show how ignoring

or wrongly approaching this issue could result in displacement or gentrification[1] of existing communities (Norcliffe *et al.* 1996), unequal accessibility to the waterfront, and limited economic overflow from the development (Hannigan 1998: 53).

Nearly all the frameworks studied neglected the fact that waterfronts come in different scales (macro/micro) and could be located on either newly reclaimed land, green field or brown field sites. These factors have a major influence on who will be affected by the waterfront development and the nature of the public space on it. To overcome these problems, proper economic, environmental and social impact assessments should be conducted at an early stage of the planning process (Sairina & Kumpulainen 2006).

3.4.5.2 Ownership of the Waterfront

Ownership is one of the most critical matters affecting the availability of public space on the waterfront (Krieger 2004: 40; Sterner 2003). At this stage, it is vital to explain the three divisions of waterfront lands and their ownership. The first area is the shore itself (areas immediately above the mean high tide). The second area is the foreshore (areas between the mean high and low watermarks) (Countryside Agency 1999: 46). The third area is the offshore: lands submerged under water (areas below the low watermark). In many cases, such as rivers or seafronts with bulkheads on deep waters, only the first and third types are available. Different countries and states have varying approaches to the ownership of the waterfront. Foreshore and submerged lands are usually public, but that should not be taken for granted. For example, in the State of Florida, USA lands below the lines of the mean high tide belong to the state; they can be lawfully sold to private parties by law but only where this is in the public interest (Florida Constitution, Article X, Section 11). In the State of British Colombia, Canada the same rule is applied but foreshore and submerged land cannot be sold to private parities.

[1] Cameron (1992) does not see a link between waterfront development and gentrification, as to him the new housing stock is provided to areas which were previously occupied by industrial activities (brown field sites). This standpoint is limited locationally and does not include waterfront built on green field sites or newly reclaimed lands and the effect of those on existing nearby communities.

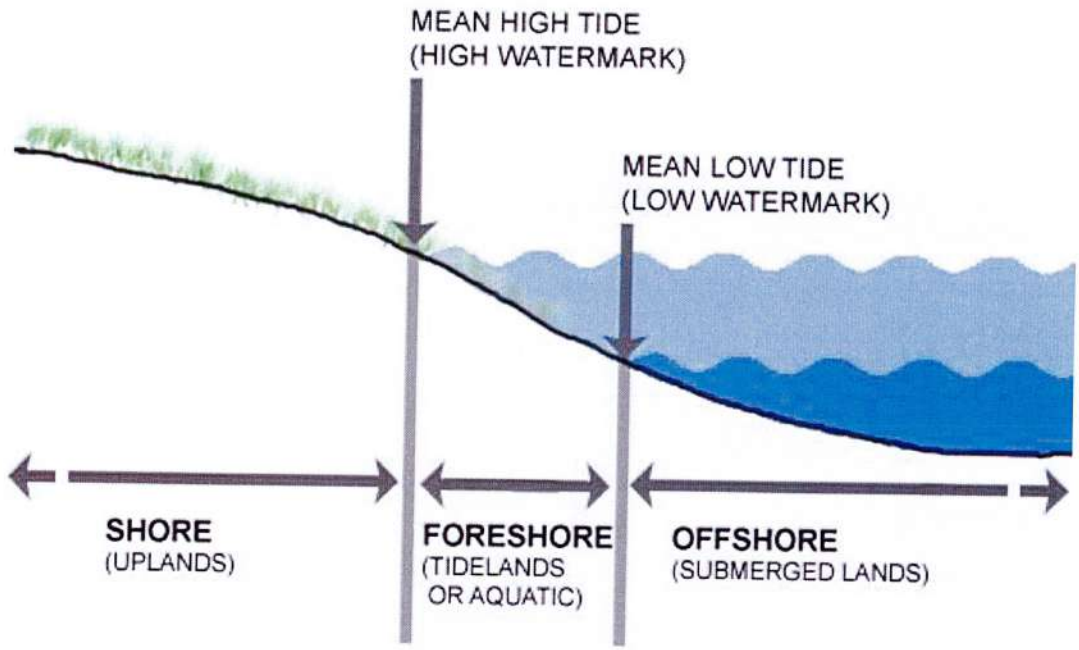


Figure 3.5: Types of Waterside Lands[1]

The term *ownership* is sometimes used in an interchangeable way with other terms. For instance, Lynch (1984) used it as either a part or a proxy for control. To him a true case of ownership is one that satisfies the five spatial rights (access, use, appropriation, modification and disposition). Similarly to Lynch, Carr *et al.* (1992) used the term as a parallel to disposition. Whether it is part of or parallel to other qualities or spatial rights, ownership, in an economic context, is what shapes our cities (Madanipour 2003: 3). And most of definitions of public space rest on the status of ownership and control established through property rights (Blackmar 2006: 51).

Furthermore, ownership and control are cardinal issues of public space and both represent the territoriality of human beings, as Lynch has stated:

> Man is a territorial animal: he uses space to manage personal interchange and asserts rights over territory to conserve resources. People exercise these controls over pieces of ground, and also over volumes that accompany the person. (Lynch 1984)(Lynch 1984: 205)

[1] Tidelands, foreshore, intertidal and aquatic are terms used in naming the land between the mean high tide and the mean low tide.

The above is a general way of looking at control as a basic human behaviour. However, to look deeper into the ontology of control, Benn and Gaus (1983) suggested that we must understand the nature of Agents/actors involved and their standpoints (interest). Thus, control of public space has two basic sides based on the agents/actors axis. The first one is control of the space by the providers/managers and the second one is the limited control by the users. Lynch divided them into formal and informal ownership, the first one is sharply demarcated and protected by law while the second one has invisible overlapping boundaries (Lynch 1984: 205).

Overall, control depends on the degree of belonging of the agents. Providers/managers could control access to a space and the type of activities that take place in it. Users' control is far more sophisticated than that of providers/managers; users, whether individually or as intimate groups, can control temporarily any locus within the public space, preventing other users from sharing it with them; the scale of that control could increase to encapsulate whole public spaces, like the use and domination of certain social groups of a park or a street (Jacobs 1989; Mitchell 2003) (Figure 3.3). In such cases, the symbolic control of access could also include control of the type of activities. Some authors insist that public space should be publicly controlled (Altman 1975: 205); however, Lynch warned against a type of control that could exclude other users (Lynch 1984: 208).



Figure 3.6: Eldon Square, Newcastle, UK (2001) dominated during the weekends by Goth teenagers who keep the majority of other potential users away

Lynch (ibid: 213) linked control and maintenance of space with the size of the space: the smaller they are, the easier they are to manage and be controlled by individuals; larger forms of space need larger organizations to do the same. Public space on the waterfront tends to be mostly large in scale and due to the nature of many as natural borders, they tend to be under the control of large organizations, mainly local governments or municipalities. The scale of public space and its tendency to attract private investment could lead to it being under private control. The state causes these to become liminal spaces, spaces that are owned and controlled privately, yet used by the public (Zukin 1991: 28-9). Which contradicts Mitchell's (1995b: 124) conception of a 'well-organised city'. To him, "once public and private spaces are distinguished from each other they can begin to play complementary roles in urban life; a well-organized city needs both."

3.4.5.3 Land Ownership, Riparian Rights[1] and Public Access Rights

Beyond biological and logistical needs, access to water has taken the form of a social activity (Mumford 1961: 295). The importance of public access to water, whether for physical or psychological reasons, has been recognised and protected by many authorities. The most ancient known law in this context is the Roman law which regarded the water (large bodies of water and running water) as a common good controlled and protected by the state. However, smaller bodies of water (i.e. canals, lakes and pools) were in the ownership of the city or the farmers. Roman Law also differentiated between riparian rights and the right to water usage, as it protected the private ownership of waterside lands while securing the public's right to access the waters within those lands (O. J. Thatcher cited in Internet Medieval Sourcebooks 2003). That could be paralleled to some contemporary public waterfront spaces that are privately owned yet publicly accessed.

Currently most of the waterfront laws that are enacted to secure public access to the waterfront, attempt to strike a balance between the public's rights and riparian rights of shore owners. For example the California Coastal Act states:

> The legislature further finds and declares that the basic goals of the state for the coastal zone are to: . . .(c) Maximize public access to and along the coast and maximize public recreational opportunities in the coastal zone consistent

[1] The term 'riparian' is used in this research to refer to both riparian and littoral lands, many laws and rules use the two terms interchangeably.

> with sound resources conservation principles and constitutionally protected rights of private property owners. (California Coastal Commission 1976)

Riparian rights are inherent in a riparian parcel of land that borders a substantial body of water[1] (refer to Figure 3.4). Overall, those rights, which cover both littoral and riparian lands, can be summarised into 9 categories[2]:

1. The right of access to the water:
   This is basically the right of riparian land owners to access the water, as in touching it or swimming in it or for any other reason. In some cases this right is combined with the right to access the water for navigational purposes;
2. The right to have the property's contact with the water remain intact:
   This right focuses on the physical contact between the shore and the water. In many cases this right is protected by law to the effect that nothing could be erected or built between the shore property and the water. However, this is not a straightforward matter as will be explained in the case of Manama, Bahrain;
3. The right to use the water for navigational purposes:
   Under this category, owners of riparian lands have the right to use it as a base to access the water for navigational purposes;
4. The right to an unobstructed view of the water:
   This right is disputed in many countries; planning bodies and court cases follow earlier court cases in formulating their judgments. However, there is no consistency in the studied court cases: for example in some court cases in the USA, compensation was ordered to be paid to owners of riparian properties for damage caused by the loss of visual link between the property and the water. However, in similar cases in South Africa, the court denied any compensation;
5. The right to receive accretions and erosions to the property:
   This right is well documented yet still disputed. This right allows riparian land owners to annex any accretion to their land that takes the form of a shore. It also makes them forfeit any eroded land that has taken the form of foreshore or submerged land. Beach nourishment, storm defences and similar waterfront treatments are sometimes considered as forms of breaching this right, by fixing

[1] Some definitions clearly state that riparian rights are only reserved for shores bordering navigable waters.
[2] These are taken from the State of Florida-USA, State of Michigan-USA, British Colombia-Canada, the Common Law in the UK and New South Wales-Australia

what has been damaged by nature through reforming the landform in favour of either the shore owners or the public;

6. The right to protect the riparian property from erosion and flooding:
   This is the shore owners' right to protect their property against floods and storms. In most cases, particularly in the USA, this protection takes place on the shore itself and never in the foreshore or submerged lands. This right is in direct conflict with the right to receive accretions and erosions;
7. The right to implement the principle of *ad medium filum aquae*[1]:
   This is the right of riparian land abutting non-tidal and usually none navigable water to extend the land ownership to a line equidistant from each bank to the centre or middle thread of the watercourse (Ministry of Agriculture and Lands 2008). This is known as *Ad Medium Filum Aquae*;
8. The right to water flow of undiminished quality and quantity:
   This is basically the right to use the water for domestic supply and irrigation. It protects the right of the shore owners to receive water of undiminished flow and quality. This was the first right that was withdrawn from riparian rights in most countries. In most studied cases, fetching water for domestic or any other use is either limited by certain quantities/time or needs a special licence;
9. The right to construct facilities on the foreshore land to provide for access to deep water:
   This right complements the right to access the water for navigational purposes. This could be in the form of building a slipway, jetty or a raft. The permitted location for such facility and its condition of permanency varies from one country to another.

Defining or finding a balance between the above mentioned rights and public rights to access the water is important for the economic, environmental and social sustainability of these waterfront sites. Finding such balance is not easy, as stated by Procter:

> Florida has a long and unique history with this fight, and has never really come to a solution that would appease the public, protect the environment, and control development, while at the same time preserve private property rights. (Procter 2004)

[1] Meaning to the middle thread of the stream

The above is based on the fact that private ownership limits public access to the water (Krieger 2004: 40) and also limits the option of development (Wardwell 1986: 18-9). The sought-after balance is not a straightforward procedure; it may involve big court battles between many parties, that is, the public, private owners, the city, port authorities, coast guards, railway authorities, tourism authorities, and local, regional and federal governments (Gospodini 2001). And due to the high profile of waterfront development projects, international investors could be involved in those battles too (Madanipour 1996). It is worth keeping in mind that the official authorities could have conflicting interests and sometimes those interests will be against the public's rights. For instance, the public approach to waterfront redevelopment is not uniform, as some authorities try to reuse those lands as quickly as possible to realise taxes, favouring private investment and jeopardizing the public's rights, such as in the case of the Esso building in Melbourne which was mentioned earlier. Others prefer to take their time in planning the development in such a way as to strike that aforementioned balance between the different parties (Law 1988). Although it will eventually become necessary, striking that balance is generally difficult when there is a shortage of land suitable for urban expansion (Wylson 1986: 43).

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter aimed to illustrate the current issues around public space on the waterfront. It showed what supports its provision, what should we look for when we attempt to understand the effects of both the physical attributes of its hosting environment and the social activities of the society creating it.

The chapter began with an attempt to understand the cardinal nature of public space through its definition. It showed how important it is to have a definition of any space in the built environment. It also showed how such definition could work as a broad design guideline, assessment tool or method of interpretation and how the previous cause the definition to be time and space bounded. In the light of the latter, a definition was not selected, instead a list of attributes were analysed (i.e. access, ownership, control, appropriation, contestation, social interaction). Later, the chapter illustrated the differences between formal and informal public space. It highlighted that understanding the formal and informal public space rests upon the significance of understanding the many forms of environments that facilitates public life. The chapter also highlighted the

unique opportunity which informal public space represents to realise the uses and the value of vanishing environments, which could help in shaping future's public space.

The third section of the chapter gave a broad analysis of the attributes of the urban waterfront; it highlighted the different models which have been placed in order to understand the urban waterfront and demonstrated why those models were placed. It also highlighted the overall tendency to analyse the waterfront within city-port or post-industrial paradigms and why it is important to include other paradigms (i.e. waterfront on reclaimed land) in the study of the urban waterfront.

The first subsection of section three illustrated the natural locational characteristics of the waterfront. It showed how the uses of the waterfront and its relationship with the water and with the rest of the city are deeply related to the following: 1- land and water forms, 2- nature of the shoreline and depth of the water, 3- water's dynamics, 4- quality of the water and 5- the overall climate and natural phenomenon.

The second subsection illustrated the urban and spatial characteristics of public space on the urban waterfront. It focussed on the physical/spatial attributes of the urban form and public's accessibility of the water. The chapter illustrated that to understand the urban waterfront it is necessary to visualise its urban complexity, urban continuity and its integration with the water from many points of view.

Subsection three was set to highlight the issues of identity and conservation on the urban waterfront. It showed that the urban waterfront, in many cases, is under immense pressure to play a role in urban regeneration, urban renewal and the creation of identity. The subsection shows that many cities are attempting to recreate or establish an identity through the development of their waterfronts. It also shows how this tendency could cause the waterfront to be susceptible to global trends and suffer from 'Disneyfication' while ignoring local demands and needs.

The forth subsection of section three analysed the characteristics of the actors who are involved in the public space production and consumption process. It also illustrated the possible contestations of the waterfront through conflicts of interest and overlapping jurisdictional boundaries. It showed how these conflicts could be solved or exacerbated through certain legislative issues.

Cahpter 4: Research Methodology

4.1 Introduction

This Chapter aims to present the methodology used in conducting the investigation, which set out to understand and evaluate the effects of waterfront transformation on the physical and social conditions of coastal public space in Manama. The Chapter is divided into six main sections: the first section demonstrates the methodological approach of this research and why it follows a qualitative approach that rests principally on the case study method. The second section of this Chapter presents the research settings and explains the underpinnings of selecting Manama's waterfront and the two units of analysis to investigate. The third section of this Chapter explains the data collection process: it highlights the sources of data and the tools used in retrieving them. The fourth section explains the operational framework followed for the data collection

phase. That leads to the fifth section, which explains the data analysis and writing strategies followed by the researcher, while the sixth and final section illustrates the methodological approach, the difficulties faced in implementing it in the context of Bahrain and possible ways of avoiding these drawbacks.

4.2 Methodological Perspective

4.2.1 Qualitative Approach

The question of the effect of waterfront transformation on public space focuses mainly on **how** and **why** rather than **how many or how much**; it focuses on tracing the condition of public space on Manama's waterfront in relation to the social process that produce it, which involves a multitude of factors, that is, urban growth, land reclamation, economic transformation, planning regime, land acquisition processes, governmental policies towards providing and financing public space and so on. It also focuses on **how** those spaces are used and perceived, that is, what do they mean to their users, what kinds of social interaction and contestations take place there, how the social environment is affected by the physical setting, while stressing an investigation of the effects of the water's presence. A further strand of enquiry is of a **why** nature, that is, why are informal spaces are being created; and why are we loosing public space in the waterfront in its two forms; the formal and informal?

The questions and data sources extend over a wide range of areas and are set at different scales that are mostly best explored through a qualitative approach. Mason supports this inclination, when she states:

> Through qualitative research we can explore a wide array of dimensions of the social world, including the texture and weave of everyday life, the understandings, experiences, and imaginings of our research participants, the way that social process, institutions, discourses or relationships work, and the significance of the meanings that they generate. (Mason 2002: 1)

This is also supported by Denzin & Lincoln (1994: 2). To them "qualitative research is multi-method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter." The authors elaborated on this by stating that "qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them." This was supported by Mason (2002: 24) where she characterised qualitative research as: "exploratory, fluid and flexible, data-driven and context sensitive." Creswell (2003: 181) stressed the same characteristics: to

him qualitative research is holistic, interpretive, context-dependent in the case where the researcher goes on-site, and emergent rather than refigured.

In this study, the changing nature of the subject matter and the case study area supported the choice taken in adopting the qualitative approach. Based on Mason (2002: 6) "qualitative research should be strategically *conducted, yet flexible and contextual.*" Furthermore, qualitative approach should be based on "sound research strategy" yet should be "sensitive to changing context and situations in which the research takes place." The flexibility offered by the qualitative approach has been a particularly suitable guide for understanding the case of Manama. It has also been flexible enough to accommodate the two scales of the case study: the scale of the whole waterfront (the macro) and the scale of the open public spaces (the micro).

This investigation is concerned with the nature of the process of transformation of the Manama waterfront, the spaces that result from that process and the way those spaces are perceived and consumed. It attempts to illustrate the dynamics of that process economically, socially, culturally and politically in order to answer the following questions: 1) Why is the urban growth of Manama taking its current form? 2) How do those forms affect the social nature of public space on the waterfront and why? 3) How did public space on the waterfront of Manama reach its current condition? 4) How is the nature of the resulting forms of public space related to urban growth and land reclamation processes? 5) Why are informal public spaces still being created and used? 6) How do the different forms of public space respond to their location on the waterfront in both aesthetic and functional ways?

These questions are all of an exploratory nature which strengthens the decision to adopt a qualitative approach. This is supported by Mason (2002: 19) who stated that "qualitative approaches usually entail formulating questions to be explored and developed in the research process, rather than hypotheses to be tested by or against empirical research".

From the literature review it was established that the relevant literature on public space on the urban waterfront is scattered between the following three areas of research: 1- general urban studies 2- as a marginal topic within public space research, and 3- within coastal zone management research. Most of the existing research focuses on the issue of the accessibility of the waterfront to the public and neglects other major affecting

factors, such as why we need to access the waterfront in the first place, the kinds of activities that could take place on the waterfront and what could enable them to do so. Thus, one of the main objectives of this research is to highlight the uniqueness of public space by developing an inclusive methodology for studying it. This is not to say that this study has come up with an original methodology, but that it attempts to draw attention to the areas and topics that should be studied when conducting any research about public space on the urban waterfront.

4.2.2 The Case Study as a Method of Investigation

'Case study' was selected as the main research strategy of this study. This choice is based on the following reasons:

1. This research is not an attempt to understand a generic phenomenon nor to establish or prove a theory. Thus, the waterfront of Manama was not selected as one case from among many. The waterfront was selected because it is the subject of common concern in the city, and requires investigation in order to better understand the issues. Stake named this type of research as the *intrinsic case study*. He described it as:

> [A] study [that] is undertaken because one wants better understanding of this particular case. It is not undertaken primarily because the case represents other cases or because it illustrates a particular trait or problem, but because, in all its particularity and ordinariness, this case itself is of interest...The purpose is not to come to understand some abstract construct or generic phenomenon. (Stake 1994: 237; 1995: 3)

The standpoint of this research in Manama corresponds with Stake's *intrinsic case study*.

2. As per Yin (2003: 21-2) research questions such as **why** and **how** are most appropriately answered by the case study method. As mentioned above, this research is attempting to investigate and understand **how** the urban development of Manama affects the public spaces on its waterfront both physically and socially. It also attempts to trace **how** the emerging open spaces are perceived and socially consumed. Thus the main research questions are of a **how** nature, a type of question which is best answered through case study.
3. This research is context-dependent. According to Flyvbjerg (2004) context-dependent knowledge is at the very heart of the case study as a learning method. This research attempts to understand the phenomenon within its real-life context

and aims to discover the full spectrum of its complexity which, again, is best approached through case study (Miller & Brewer 2003: 22).

4. Case study research is most suitable as a method of research when the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are blurred at the beginning of the research (Yin 2003: 13). In Manama, the phenomenon is the changing condition of public space, and the context is the rapid urban transformation/expansion of the city, particularly on the waterfront.
5. This research covers both current and historical periods of the case study. Within the current period, the author relied on data collected through three field visits and previous personal observations of the case study area at both levels. The latter allowed for a longitudinal dimension to the research which is most suited to the single case study method (Yin 2003: 42).

4.3 Research Settings

Selecting Manama as the research setting of this study was based on the following reasoning: 1- The author's familiarity with the city as the place where he has worked as a professional architect and participated in the design of three waterfront developments. Work on the third project (Amwaj Island) was one of the initial stimuli for this research. Working in the architectural field within Manama also familiarized the author with the relevant planning body and market mechanisms. It helped in tracing sources, and in the availability, and accessibility of data. The author's familiarity with the studied case was an important aspect of the qualitative research approach: Lofland and Lofland (1984: 10) highlighted that familiarity could "provide the necessary meaningful linkage between the personal and emotional, on the one hand, and the stringent intellectual operation to come, on the other". Familiarity of the author with the case, both as an architect and as a user of the open spaces in question, saved time in conducting the longitudinal field work, and thus supported the rationale for founding the rest of this research on a single case study with an ethnographical approach. It also helped speed up the validation process for the information given by the respondents. 2- Manama was also selected because it is one of the fastest growing cities in the Gulf region. And a major part of its urban growth is taking place on land reclaimed from the adjacent waters, providing an ideal yet unique situation to study the urban growth effect on public space and the nature of the emerging spaces. 3- Manama also provided a choice of different types of public space at two levels; A) open spaces with varying levels of social consolidation, and B) two generic forms of public space, formal and informal.

Studying Manama's entire waterfront was not possible giving the limited time of the study and other obstacles. Based on a quick survey conducted early on the first field trip the Northern area, and the Northern part of the Eastern[1] waterfronts (Figure 4.1), were selected, based on the following reasons:

1. The **high popularity** of the two waterfronts in terms of the number of users,
2. The fact that their popularity has brought to the surface certain **conflicting interests** which of itself has been a source of interest, keeping in mind that one of the main objectives of this research is to understand the dynamics of conflicting desires on the waterfront,
3. The **multi functional nature** of these two waterfronts.
4. The **better accessibility** provided by these two waterfronts, in comparison with the south-eastern and southern waterfronts.
5. Each contains a **variety of public spaces** on the waterfront.
6. The **author's pre-existing familiarity** with the Northern area and the Northern part of the Eastern waterfront.

The rest of Manama's waterfront was not selected for the following reasons:

1. The southern waterfront accommodates Toubli's sewage treatment plant on its west side. This blocks accessibility to the water and renders the place publicly undesirable due to the odours emitted from the plant.
2. There is a continuous land reclamation process conducted mostly by private owners on the southern and south eastern waterfronts.
3. These waterfronts have no formal public spaces or any indications of informal ones.
4. The continuous construction work in the area and the creation of many gated communities on these waterfronts makes them inaccessible on the physical, visual and symbolic levels. The same applies in Jufair's waterfront (the southern half of the eastern waterfront).
5. There are a few sensitive locations on the southern and south eastern waterfronts of Manama that are inaccessible to the author for security reasons, i.e. the American naval base and Mina Sulman (Sulman Port).

[1] Which will be referred to as the Eastern waterfront along the rest of this thesis

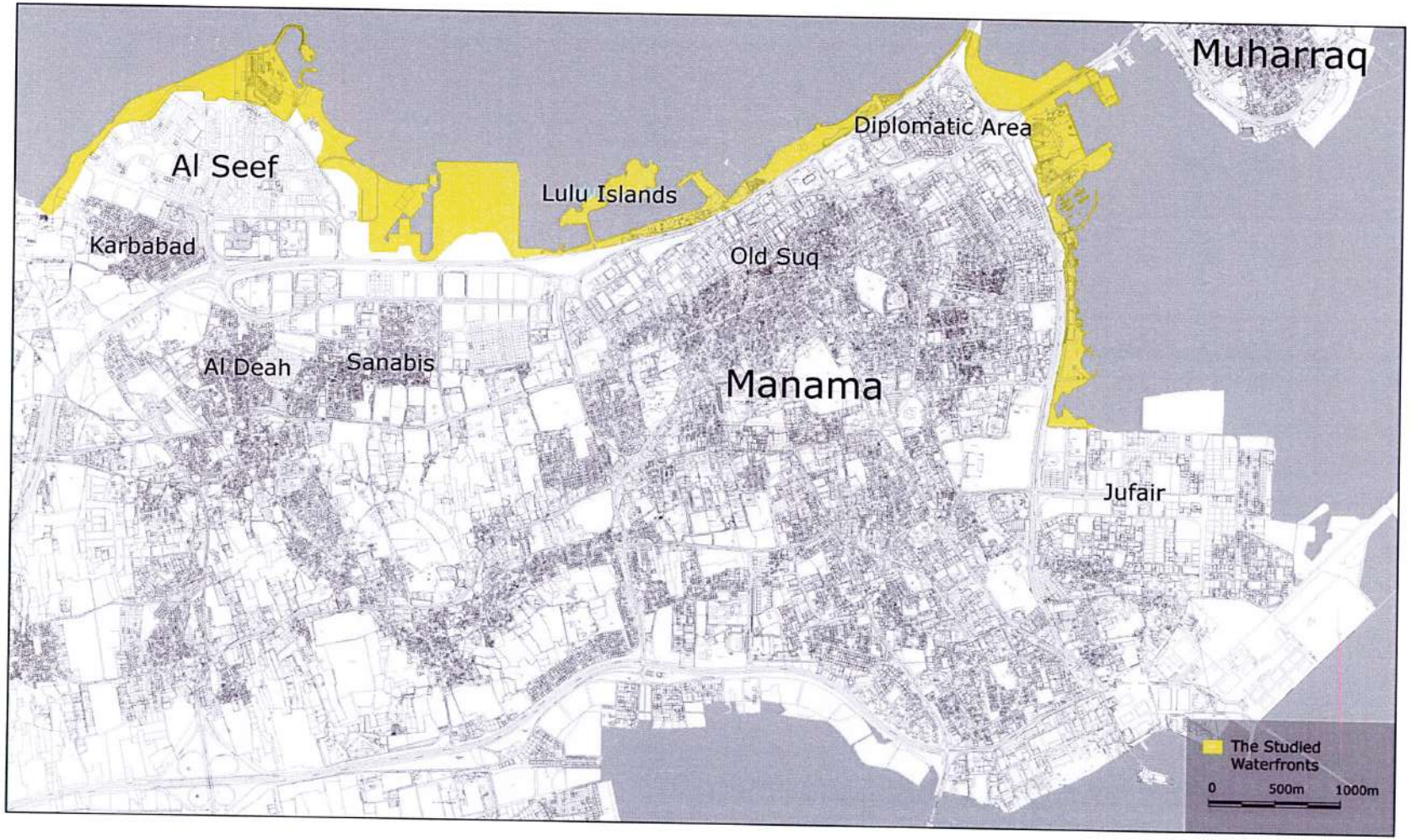
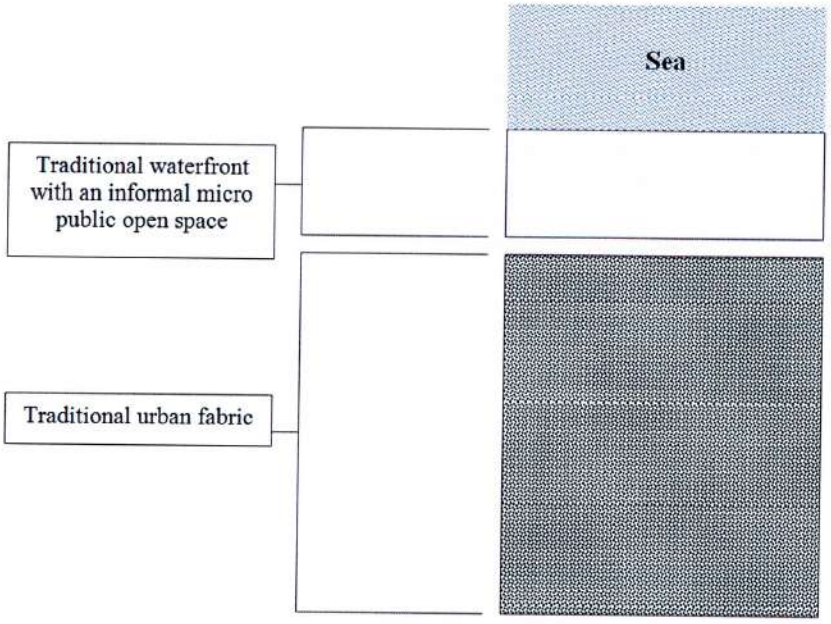


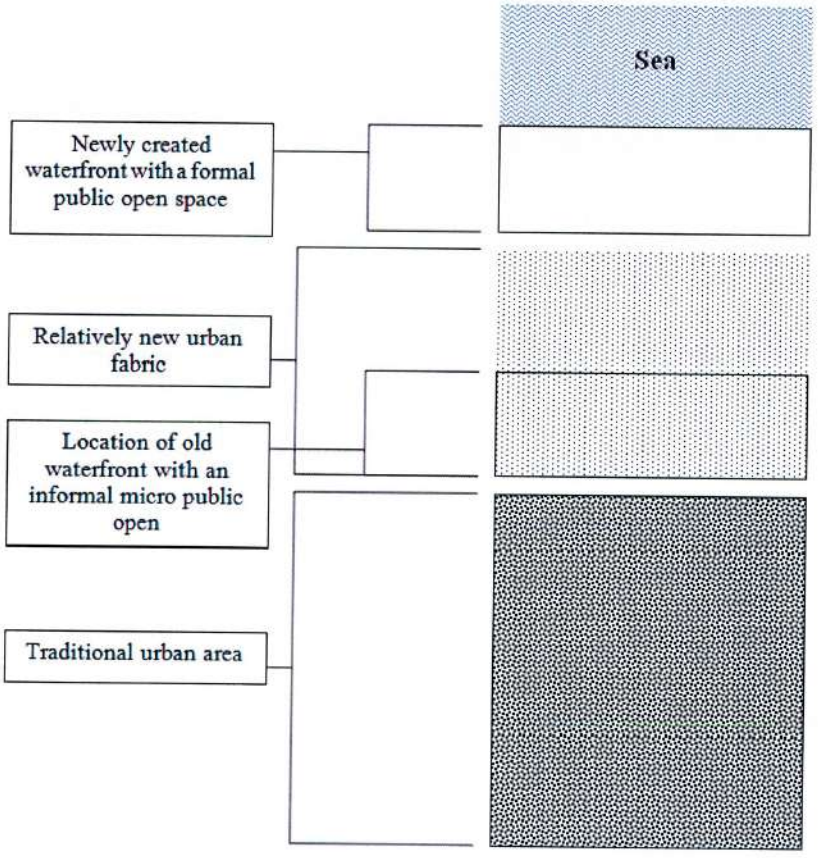
Figure 4.1: Location and extent of the study area

Source: Original Electronic Map from The ministry of Municipalities & Agriculture Affairs (last updated 2003), edited by the Author

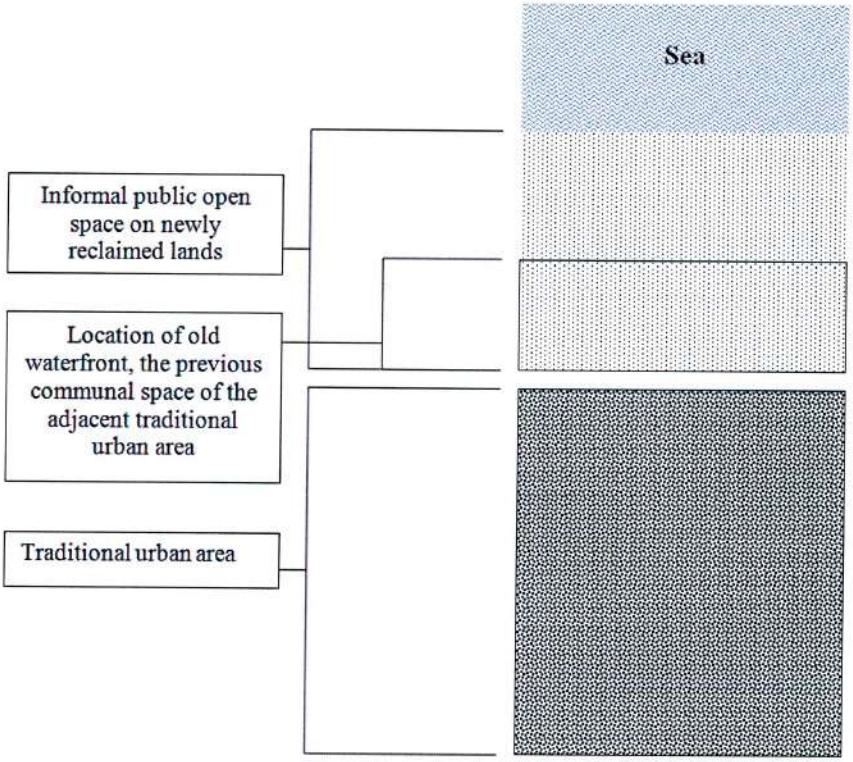
Within Manama, two generic types of public space were selected as embedded subunits of analysis. Prior to that selection and directly following the pilot study, the researcher planned to select three subunits to represent the following models of public space:



A) Informal/Traditional public space on the waterfront



B) Formal public space on the waterfront



C) Informal public open space on newly created lands

Figure 4.2: Different Configurations of Open Space on the Waterfronts of Bahrain

These subunits were selected to represent public space on the waterfront on the bases of: 1- their method of formation (formal/informal) and 2-their scale (macro/micro). Upon conducting the initial stages of the site survey of the Northern and Eastern waterfronts, it was found that there are no public spaces on the waterfront of Manama that could represent the first model (A - traditional waterfront). Spaces representative of that model were found elsewhere in Bahrain, but within a rural context. Given that this research study focuses on public space on the *urban* waterfront, it was not possible to include that type of space within this research. Subsequently, the criterion in selecting the subunits rested primarily on the method of creating the space (formal/informal).

Based on the above, two subunits were selected to represent formal and informal public space (Figure 4.3). These were the Al-Bahri Parks on the Eastern waterfront and the Al Seef waterfront on the North-western waterfront of Manama. The macro study of the Northern and Eastern waterfronts of Manama was designed to answer questions related to the accessibility of the waterfront, ownership of the waterfront, physical and functional water-dependency of the waterside activities and availability of public space.

The micro study of the two subunits was, however, specifically designed to answer the social questions. It attempted to answer the questions of how those spaces are perceived and subsequently consumed by their users.

There are four formal public open spaces on Manama's waterfront. Although all of these parks were visited and surveyed, the author focused on two parks located on the eastern waterfront of Manama named, collectively, the Al Bahri Parks and individually, Al Bahri Park – Phase One (Bahri-I) and Al Bahri Park – Phase Two (Bahri-II). The Al Bahri parks were selected for the following reasons; 1- Al Bahri – I is the oldest waterfront park in Manama and, supposedly, has a higher level of social consolidation than all the other waterfront parks. 2- Al Bahri – II contains the first and only urban beach ever created by a municipality in Manama and in the whole of Bahrain, a unique case which could shed some light on how an urban beach is socially constructed in a contemporary Bahraini context. 3- The two parks are closer than any other waterfront park to large high-density residential areas, representing a unique case where both the physical and social connectivity of the waterfront with the rest of the city can be tested. 4- In terms of density of use, the two parks are of the highest density with the widest range of uses.

Al Seef, as an informal public space, was selected for the following reasons: 1- The large area of the waterfront provides a variety of zones in terms of scale, seclusion and accessibility. 2- Al Seef waterfront has remained open for more than 20 years, longer than many other newly-created spaces on the waterfronts of Manama. That openness, as well as its proximity to old fishing communities, was assumed to be a major factor in shaping and increasing the level of its social consolidation. 3- Based on the number of users and number of arranged events in its open spaces, the Al Seef waterfront is one of the most popular in Bahrain, yet it is also one of the most rapidly-developed areas in the country. The high popularity of those informal waterfronts and the accelerated private development of them render Al Seef of high importance to the understanding of the informal/ephemeral public space.

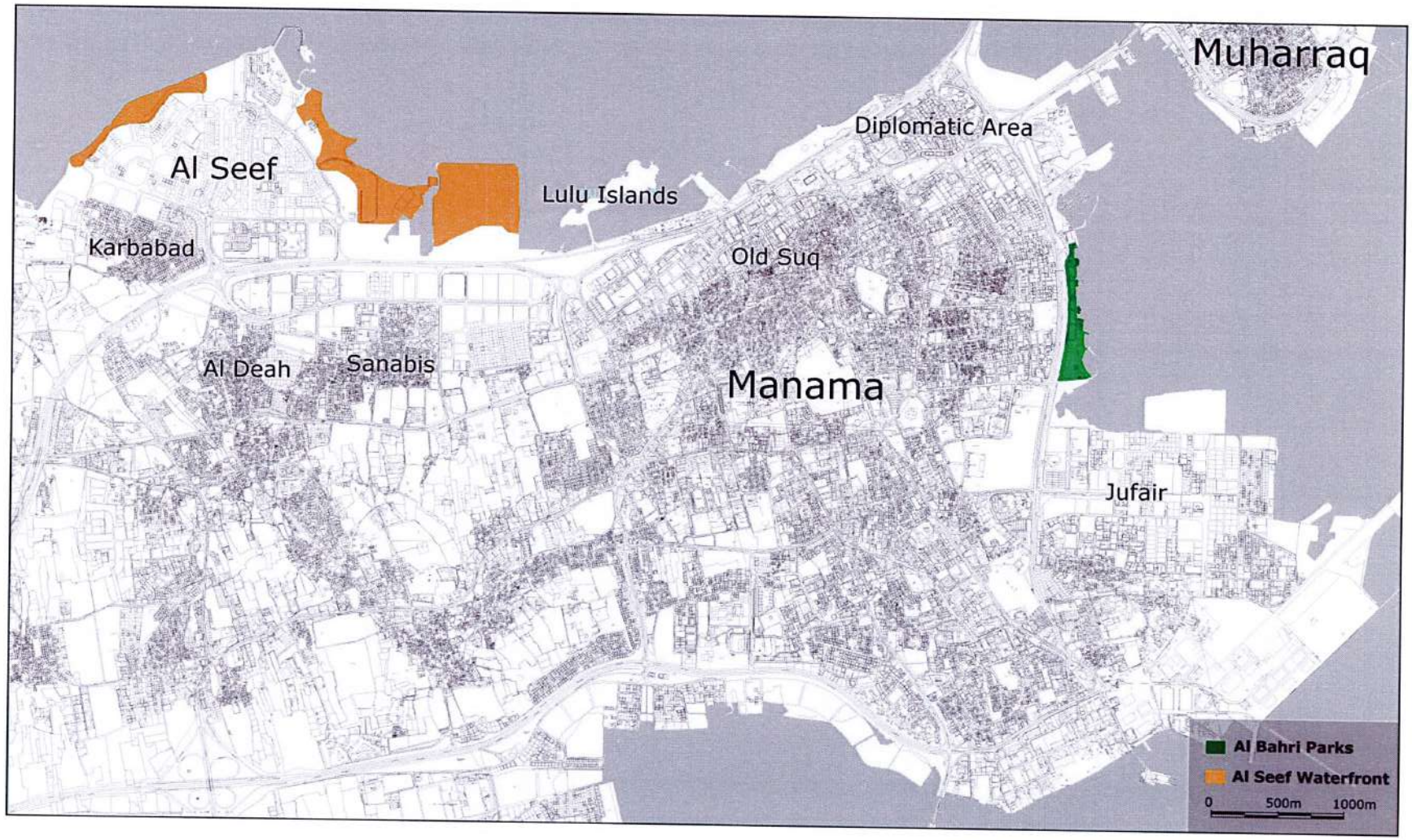


Figure 4.3: Locations of the Two Focus Areas

Source: Original Electronic Map from The ministry of Municipalities & Agriculture Affairs (last updated 2003), edited by the Author

4.4 Data Sources, Methods and Approaches

4.4.1 Types and Sources of the Data Collected

As mentioned above, this research follows a case study strategy with a qualitative approach. Both the strategy and the approach are dependent upon a large volume of empirical data that can be retrieved from a variety of sources. These sources were selected in accordance with the questions that this research is attempting to answer. On that basis, the data sources of this study are divided into three major sets. The first set was identified to address the first area of this research: that is, to understand the historic transformation of the waterfront of Manama. What type of public spaces were there, what were they used for and how did they transform under certain urban developmental processes? To answer these questions the research relied on two sources of data: the first, which was the main one, was archival. The second source of data was a set of interviews with senior citizens who were able to relate their recollections of the old waterfront of Manama. The archival research was of a troublesome nature due to the lack of sources relating to the waterfront of Manama and its public spaces. And access to the historical archive of Bahrain presented many difficulties. To fill the gaps which emerged from those difficulties, the researcher has relied upon historic photographs and maps collected from many sources. He has also retrieved data from autobiographies, history books and memoirs to supplement the pictorial analysis. The interviews with senior citizens also gave a deeper insight into dimensions of Manama's social and urban history that are now almost lost. Some of the informants also provided the researcher with old photographs, but they were unfortunately not directly relevant to the areas under study.

The second set of data was identified to answer the questions on the macro scale that relate to the current overall condition of the waterfront of Manama. After all, one of the main objectives of this research is to understand how the urban development and transformation of Manama affect its public spaces. To that end, the entire waterfront, including its public spaces, should be studied. The data collected in this set were used in answering questions such as, how is Manama's waterfront linked to the rest of the city? How accessible is the waterfront? What functions and projects are being developed there? How water-dependent are those waterside functions? How much of it is public space? What types of public spaces are there? This set of data was retrieved mainly through a site survey of the waterfront. Also, both formal and informal sources were used to gain knowledge about the ownership of the waterfront. Many other sources

were used to fill the gaps in the retrieved data. One of those sources was interviews with both government officials and members of NGOs. Another source was newspaper articles; these helped in establishing a holistic view of some of the conflicts regarding the waterfront of Manama.

The third set of data was identified to answer questions relating to the physical and social conditions of Manama's public space on the micro scale. The physical aspect was addressed through a descriptive approach, depending mainly on a site survey of the two selected public spaces. Another source of data came from the users of those spaces; their anecdotes were used in answering questions related to the spaces' history. Overall, this set of data helped in answering questions regarding how the urban transformation of Manama physically affects the public space. The questions relating to the social environment of those public spaces were answered through data retrieved from many sources but mainly from the users of themselves. Through interviews and observations of these actors within the two selected public spaces, the following questions were answered: how are those spaces perceived by their users and subsequently used? What do they mean to their users? What kind of social interactions take place in those places and how are they affected by the physical settings? This data also answered questions pertaining to the relationship of the social environment and the presence of a body of water.

4.4.2 Data Collection Techniques

As mentioned earlier, the scope of this research stretches across two scales, the macro and the micro, and addresses the process of waterfront development over a long period of time. These two characteristics required a variety of data collection techniques discussed in the following sections

4.4.2.1 Archival Research

The study of Manama's waterfront and the effect of the city's urban transformation on its public space necessitates a review of the historical data. The decision to conduct such an exercise emerged from the need for information about the historical period of interest. It was found that this neither exists in a single location, nor is it readily available. The study covers a period stretching between the late 1920s up to the new millennium. That period was demarcated after initial forays into the archival research where the author reviewed earlier periods and found them to be difficult to link to the

current development of Manama's waterfront. The late 1920s mark the beginning of the modern and bureaucratic style of governance in Bahrain. They also mark a major socioeconomic transformation following the decline of the pearl industry and the rising opportunities for producing oil in industrial quantities in Bahrain.

Archival research provided stories and anecdotes of activities on the waterfront, news items on natural phenomena and disasters, major projects on the waterfront, social and religious events such as wedding parties and religious rites and celebrations, details of disputes and court cases regarding coastal or submerged lands, a description of port life and so on. The archives, supplemented by pictorial analysis and stories gathered from senior informants helped in producing an overall image of the waterfront of Manama. Furthermore, a set of historical maps and photographs was used to produce a set of maps that show the process of land reclamation and urban development from 1930 up to 2004. One of the difficulties faced in studying the historic waterfront through archival research is that most of the source documents focus on particular events and neglect the physical settings which accommodated those events.

By researching this period the author attempted to answer questions related to the nature of the historic waterfront; its physical and social characteristics and how was it linked with the hinterland: How public and accessible was it? How did the decline of maritime culture affect it? And what paved the way for the later urban transformation and land reclamations processes?

To address the contemporary issues relevant to the waterfront and public spaces in Manama, the author used other sources of data such as newspapers and governmental sites on the World-Wide-Web[1]. The aim in accessing those sources was to gain a view of current debates about the waterfront in general and its public space specifically. What are the points of friction between the different interested parties? This include His Majesty the King of the country, the National Assembly with its two houses, the government represented by its planning officials, the municipal councils, the governorates, NGOs, the interested political parties, developers and investors, and members of the public.

[1] The governmental sites on the World-Wide-Web were visited to retrieve official reports and relevant laws legislated by the government.

4.4.2.2 Site Surveys

As stated earlier, this research is mainly focused on an investigation of the condition of public space and how it is affected by urban development and transformation. To do so, it has been necessary to ascertain the current condition of the waterfront on both the macro and micro scales and also to trace its physical and functional status. It has also been important to trace its relation with the water and with the rest of the city. The decision to conduct this exercise was, once again, based on the lack of any pre-existing studies using such an approach on the selected area.

4.4.2.2.1 Site Survey on a Macro Scale

The site survey at the macro level covered the whole Northern and Eastern waterfronts of Manama as indicated in Figure 4.1. The Northern waterfront starts from Sheikh Hamad Causeway[1] on the east to Ra's Al Qal'ah[2] on the west which approximately spans 8.0 kilometres. The eastern waterfront stretches from Sheikh Hamad Causeways in the North to Ra'as Al-Jufair in the south. From the literature review, a checklist was developed in the form of a guideline for viewing the site that organised the researcher's observations. The site survey and observed uses were divided mainly as shown in Figure 4.4. The author retrieved data about: 1- Zoning 2- Land tenure of the waterfront, 3- land-use of the waterfront, 4- Accessibility of the waterfront. Under those main categories other subcategories were inspecting, some were prescribed prior to the commencement of the fieldwork and few emerged during it or later on throughout the analysis stage.

To conduct the survey the following tools were used to retrieve the required data: 1- base maps in both digital and printed formats, 2- satellite images, 3- photographs, 4- walks and drives through the waterfront, 5- observations, 6- semi-structured interviews with planning officials and environmentalists. A digital map of Manama was provided by the Ministry of Municipalities and Agriculture affairs. The original map was updated by the author to match the landline configuration as found on site in the course of conducting the fieldwork. Recent satellite images were retrieved from Google Earth and from the Physical Planning Directorate - Ministry of Municipalities and Agriculture

[1] It links Manama with the Island and city of Muharraq, the second largest city in Bahrain and the home of Bahrain International airport

[2] The English spelling of the names of areas, towns and villages are taken primarily from the official map of Bahrain (Fairy Surveys Ltd. Revised in 1987 and 1991 by the Survey Directorate - Ministry of Housing and in 1997 by the Ministry of Housing - Municipalities and Environment 1998)

affairs. Photographs either taken by the author or provided by others were also used in this exercise. Birdseye views, obtained via access to three nearby high-rise buildings, were also found to be highly informative. The updated digital maps were later used in measuring the waterline length. This was done on AutoCAD software through the use of the 'pline', 'spline' and 'measurement' commands and tools. This provided a near-accurate measurement for those spaces, which had not existed in this accumulative form in any previous report.

For zoning information, two sets of data source were considered: official zoning maps and actual land-use, ascertained through the survey conducted by the author. The use of survey data was to fill the gaps resulting from discrepancies between the original zoning and what has actually taken place on the ground. In other words, wherever the shoreline was built-up, the actual land-use has been recorded from the survey; and wherever it was undeveloped, the zoning maps were followed.

Through the macro-level survey the researcher aimed to discover the following:

1. Who owns the waterfront? And how much of it is in public ownership? Are there any other types of land tenure? And how are the different types of tenure allocated and distributed?
2. What are the uses of the waterfront in terms of work, leisure and living? Are there any conflicts between those uses?
3. How accessible is the waterfront on three basic levels: physically, visually and symbolically?
4. What is the nature of the physical and functional connectivity of the waterfront with the rest of the city?
5. Is there any kind of functional, physical and visual continuity along the waterfront?
6. What is the level of water-dependency of the functions of the waterfront?
7. What is the level of physical integration of the waterside properties with the water?
8. How accessible is the water itself? How that is affected by the different types of shoreline treatments? And how does that affect the uses of adjacent lands?

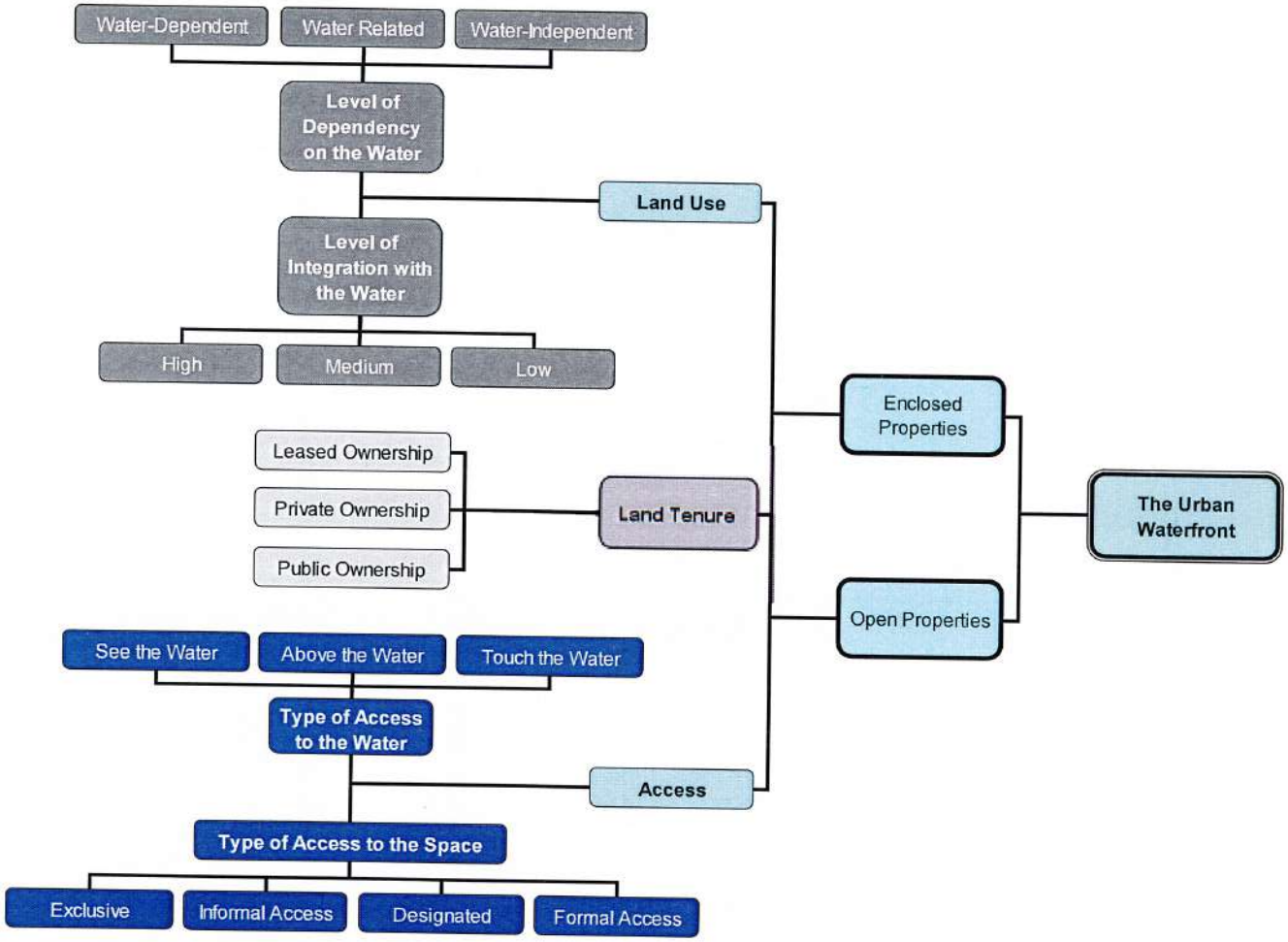


Figure 4.4: Basic Elements in the Analysis of the Urban Waterfront

Adapted from Campo (2002) Lynch et al. (1976 cited in S. Craig-Smith & M. Fagance 1995: p.3) & Wrenn et al. (1983)

All the above questions are related to the main research question: how is the status of the waterfront linked to the current planning regime, the market-led economy and municipal investment strategies?

The site survey of Manama's Northern and Eastern waterfronts was conducted in the following stages: 1- At an early stage of the site survey preparations, the study area was divided into smaller segments for the purpose of referencing and identification. The initial divisions were later refined while conducting the survey. Finally, the Northern and Eastern waterfronts of Manama were divided into 34 areas and four sub-areas[1]. This division of the waterside lands is based on their access, ownership, land-use, zoning and/or the nature of the water's edge. The division does not follow the property demarcation lines, as they are shown on the formal base-maps provided by the Ministry of Municipalities and Agricultural Affairs, in a precise manner. For instance, when a group of bordering plots share the same type of ownership, accessibility, and visual appearance of cohesion they are considered as one space. Also it is important to highlight that waterfronts may be measured either by shoreline length or by total land area (Wrenn *et al.* 1983: 25). But due to discrepancies in defining the land boundaries of the waterfront and the lack of any formalised boundaries in the case of Manama, shoreline length was chosen as the foundation for the preliminary analysis of the two waterfronts. 2- A base map was prepared that shows each of the above-mentioned zones. Many copies of that map were taken in an A4 size format, for easier handling on site. Those copies were used for note-taking and referencing on site. 3- Every one of those defined areas was either personally visited, or attempts were made to access it. Physical access to the spaces was also tested at different times of the day in order to determine the effects of lighting and the presence of different users on the accessibility of those spaces. During those visits, records were taking based on the criteria listed in Figure 4-4. Other sources were explored to cover any information that was not readily available onsite.

The accessibility of the waterfront was tested both on foot and by car. The author designed several walks that start from many areas within Manama and go all the way down to the waterfront. Observations were also recorded of pedestrians crossing to and from the waterfront at both designated and non-designated crossing points.

[1] Refer to page 140 and 141 for a map and the details of those subdivisions

4.4.2.2.2 Site Survey on a Micro Scale

The site survey on the micro scale was executed in the selected subunits of analysis; the Al Seef informal waterfront and the Al Bahri Parks. As mentioned earlier, these two public spaces were selected as representative of formal and informal generic types of public space on the waterfront of Manama. The survey was conducted to give a deeper understanding of the physical condition of the available public space and to enable contextualization of the social settings or as Low (2000) named it 'spatializing the culture' of the two types of public space. To achieve the above mentioned aims the following tools were used: 1- digital maps, 2- printed maps, 3- satellite images, 4- photographs, 5- walks through the site, 6- field notes either hand-written in the fieldwork notebook or recorded on a Dictaphone, and 7- personal communication with government officials and investors or their representatives.

In the case of the Al Bahri Parks, the survey aimed to answer questions such as: 1- What are the overall architectural and landscape characteristics of the parks? 2- How much of their area is really public? 3- How much of their waterline is public? 4- What are the modes of water accessibility within the parks? 5- What are the services provided within the parks? 6- What is the level of maintenance? 7- What is the physical condition of private investments within the parks? 8- How water-dependent are those private investments? 9- What are the physical characteristics that demarcate each part of the two parks? By answering these questions the author aimed also to mark out the objectives and intentions of the designers of these public spaces. This was vital, as the researcher was unable to meet with any of the original designers or access any report about the two parks.

In the case of Al Seef, the physical survey aimed to answer the following questions: 1- What are the physical signs of public's appropriation of these spaces? 2- What are the main features that demarcate the different parts of these spaces? 3- How accessible is the water? 4- What are the physical signs of conflict in those informal public spaces? 5- How are those spaces accessed and what forms of physical barriers exist?

The survey on the micro level was conducted in the following stages: 1- For referencing purposes both Al Bahri parks and Al Seef Waterfront were divided into sub-areas. The different parts of the two public spaces were named either on the basis of the cardinal directions or according to a coding system, as in the case of the Al Seef four sub-areas. However those references, particularly in the case of Al Seef, were no longer useable

after the period of the field work due to the rapid physical changes which have taken place within the zones. Those changes come in the form of buildings constructed in the empty plots, roads being demarcated and paved and in other cases more land reclamation work taking place. Thus the description of the area is strictly limited to the time when the author undertook his second field trip, between October and December 2003. 2- The same stages followed for the survey at the macro scale were followed on the micro scale, but with supplementary notes on the physical conditions.

4.4.2.3 Semi-structured and casual interviews

Interviews were the major method used in data collection regarding Manama's waterfront and the two generic types of public space found there. The choice of carrying out casual interviews was based on three reasons: 1- The interest/agency of the interviewees varies drastically, which would have required the preparation of many different structured interview formats for each group. 2- The data needed to answer the research question does not exist in any one place and had to be retrieved from the relevant individuals. 3- This is an exploratory study and thus it was not possible to approach an interviewee with full knowledge of the right questions to ask. The author followed an overall policy suggested by Madanipour (Personal Communication, 16th October 2003), that in any interview the social, political and economic background of the respondents should be determined. The decision to focus on any of these three categories rests predominantly on the agency and interest of the interviewee in question, which is also influenced by their activity within the space about which they are being interviewed. The following are the main groups interviewed:

1. users of Al Seef and Al Bahri waterfronts and former users of the older waterfront, prior to the reclamation of some areas,
2. users of other waterfront sites within and external to the study area,
3. users of non-waterfront public spaces and other forms of semi-public spaces such as coffee shops,
4. planning and finance officials,
5. non-governmental environmentalists,
6. investors within or near the Al Seef and Al Bahri waterfronts.

The users of the Manama public spaces were interviewed in order to learn about the following areas:

1. The Al Bahri Parks and other formal public spaces on the waterfront of Manama:
2. The meaning of green public space to users.
3. The meaning of the sea and importance of access to the water for them.
4. The meaning of informal public space to them, particularly the non-green spaces.
5. The problems of the two parks and the users' stand point on them, that is, the way the two parks are managed, maintained and/or developed.
6. The accessibility of the parks to their users.
7. The respondent's observations on the history of the park and the process of its transformation.
8. The sources of conflict within the Parks between the many user groups.
9. The respondents' usage of other waterfront public spaces
10. To supplement the data collected through the observations regarding the users themselves (gender, approximate age, ethnicity, income and so on)

The aim of interviewing the users of Al Seef and other informal public spaces was to explore most of the above mentioned topics. However, there was a particular focus on the following areas, due to the special nature of those ephemeral open spaces:

1. The users' knowledge of the spaces, how do they come to know about the space, what makes them use it as public space.
2. The demarcation of the spaces and the cognitive processes of the users.
3. The sense of attachment users feel for the spaces.
4. The history and the social and economic environment of the former waterfront prior to the land reclamation.
5. The meaning of those spaces to users and how that is linked with the presence of water.
6. The economic and industrial uses of the waterfront.
7. The users' knowledge of other public spaces
8. The aspirations of the users and how they visualise the future of those informal public spaces.

9. The methods and processes followed by some of their active users in normalizing or gaining formal recognition of those spaces as officially public.
10. Interviews with users of other formal public spaces and quasi public spaces that are non water-related, aimed at discovering their overall standpoint of the issue of public space.

Interviews with planning and financing officials, aimed at finding out the following:

1. The general policy of the government in providing access to the water in the form of public space.
2. The official aspirations for both formal and informal public spaces on the waterfront of Manama.
3. The mechanism of providing, financing and maintaining formal public space.
4. Challenges and difficulties faced in providing public space, including friction between governmental bodies.
5. The overall approach to municipal investment and the standpoint of public officers in providing areas for private investment within the formal public space.

And finally an interview was conducted with an environmentalist to gain information about the condition of the following:

1. Water quality around Manama
2. The role of NGOs in securing access to the waterfront.
3. To validate the data collected through the survey about the water condition.

Through the interviews, the author managed to contact some social and community activists who were interested either in the topic of the research or generally in the quality of the services in their areas. One of those informants provided the author with old photographs from the adjacent villages of Al Seef. He also paved the way for further interviews with the villagers. The same process was attempted on the Coast of Al Jufair but without success.

4.4.2.3.1 Conducting the semi-structured and casual interviews

In total, 40 unstructured interviews, with individuals and groups (total number of interviewees 119), within the Al Seef and Al Bahri waterfronts were conducted during the second and third field trips. The main plan was to conduct 30 interviews at each site but this proved difficult. Using a qualitative approach, the focus is not so much on the numbers of people interviewed, but on the quality and variety of the stories collected.

This was supported by the fact that early on, the researcher found some interviews to be uninformative and lacking in depth, while others were rich and filled with personal anecdotes. Thus, the aim of the interview sampling was to interview a broad variety of users of the two spaces on the bases of age, gender, ethnicity, income, individuals and groups and type of activity. The researcher also aimed to collect the largest number of individual stories, meanings and aspirations from these users. Other individuals, such as management and maintenance workers in the Al Bahri area were included to understand their side of the story.

To achieve this variety in the type of users, interviews were conducted during different days of the week (work, weekend and holiday) and during different times of the day (early morning, morning, noon, afternoon, evening and late night). Also, the researchers attempted to run interviews in the different parts of both the Al Bahri and the Al Seef waterfronts. Doing so necessitated that both open spaces should be studied simultaneously, due to the limited duration of the fieldwork. For example, the author attempted to visit both spaces during special days such as Eid.

During the pilot study (April 2002) the author conducted two interviews to test three critical issues: 1) his personal ability to start and run an open ended, semi-structured interview, 2) the willingness of the respondents to have their interviews tape-recorded, and 3) the ability to gain entry in certain contexts. These interviews proved to be most useful, as the feedback helped to prepare the author for what to expect in running the main field work.

Within the site, the interviewees were approached while they were engaged in a variety of uses of the waterfront, such as fishing, maintaining their boats' fishing nets, chatting to friends, having a picnic, jogging and so on. Particular attention was taken not to violate the users' privacy. The researcher made himself very visible, particularly at night (for instance in the poorly-lit parts of zone one in Al Seef) to avoid surprising or otherwise distressing the users. When the interviewees were approached, the researcher attempted to be as clear as possible about his intentions and what his research is about. The respondents were also asked for their consent in tape-recording the interview. Many of those interviews led to interviews with other informants, as some of the interviewees showed interest in the matter and guided the researcher to other members of society who have been active in social and community work and interested in the issue of public access to the water or simply having photographs of the waterfronts in

former times. They were contacted and several interviews were conducted with them. The researcher also managed to meet a number of respondents twice over the two years of the field work within some of these open spaces. Some users of other waterfront areas were interviewed to supplement the data collected from within those focus areas.

Nearly all the interviews started with topics relating to the type of activity in which the respondents were engaged with when interviewed. Later on they were directed to certain areas that mainly covered their political, social and economic agendas. The depth of the questions, their focus and their relevance improved after a few interviews. Those interviews were mostly recorded on a Dictaphone and later transcribed. Others were noted down on a notepad and later the full story was either recorded on the Dictaphone or immediately typed by the use of word processor. The locations of the interviews, the weather condition during time of the interview and the activity of the interviewee were usually recorded before the interview started.

4.4.2.4 Observations

The fourth tool used in data collection during the fieldwork was observation. This tool was chosen because the researcher had to learn about the phenomenon in its context, in the field. And the researcher had no control over what was observed (Crano & Brewer 2002: p. 197-8). Another reason for choosing it was because this research attempts to explore an ongoing situation and an unfolding story as it happens, within its context in its natural settings, and observation is one of the best tools with which to do so. Furthermore, using observation as a tool in understanding social life within a particular space and relating that to the space's physical parameters has been used by many scholars (i.e. Jacobs [1960], Low [200], Lynch [1989] and Whyte [1980]). Observation is also used in discovering the behaviour of those observed and their reaction to the presence of others within the space, as part of their contextual parameters. (i.e. Altman [1975,1986]). Porteous (1977: p. 10) stated that "only with an understanding of this behaviour can we logically make changes, whether radical, reactionary or reformist, in the human urban situation". Another reason for selecting this tool is that the required data does not exist in any other format anywhere else; no one has studied these spaces before, and there is no research about formal public space in Bahrain let alone informal space. The researcher needed to immerse himself within the research settings to retrieve their story. Thus, the story of those spaces had to be retrieved first hand through observation.

Many scholars who have attempted to explain observation as a tool in social science tend to dissect and categorise it. Flick classified observational methods along five dimensions: Covert/overt, participant/nonparticipant, systematic/unsystematic, natural/unnatural situation and, self-observation/observation of others (2006: p. 216). With natural observation, that categorization depends mainly on the researcher's level of involvement in the unfolding social events. In that situation, Crano & Brewer (2002: p. 202) focused on the participant-nonparticipant distinction. However, in public spaces, specifically those of informal and marginal nature, it is hard to say that the researcher carried out nonparticipant observation, even if he isolated himself from the event. The mere presence of the researcher within the space includes him in the parameters of the social event, regardless of its nature. Researchers do not hover above the space or turn invisible while observing social behaviour at site and the observed usually tend to react covertly or openly to their presence. Thus, to avoid any confusion, the researcher prefers to use the broader term: 'observation'.

Through observation, the researcher attempted to supplement and to validate the data collected through the interviews. This strategy is supported by Mason when she states that to choose this tool to collect data is to consider that "meaningful knowledge cannot be generated without observation , because not all knowledge is for example articulated, recountable or constructable in an interview" (2002: p. 85). Whyte (1980) also supported the use of observation to validate the data collected through interviews. He found that some interviewees give incorrect information that contradicts with the other evidence.

The observations aimed also to discover the following aspects of the field researched:

1. The full spectrum of the waterfront's uses. Be they social, industrial (fishing) or leisure.
2. The social actions, behaviours, interactions, relationships and events that take place within the targeted space.
3. The daily life of those spaces and special events.
4. The spatial, locational and temporal dimensions of the space.
5. The effect of other contextual parameters such as weather and the presence of other users.
6. The modes of interaction with the water.

7. The physical transformation of the spaces, particularly with informal public space through the process of land reclamation.

4.4.2.4.1 Conducting the Observations

Observations within the two focus areas took place during the second and third field trips. The first visits were broadly unstructured, in order to familiarize the researcher with both public spaces under study; later on a rough framework was laid to systemize these visits and observations. That framework was based on a division of the two places for purposes of referencing. As with the interviews, the time-table of observational sessions was set to cover a variety of days, times-of-day and so on and to make sure that nearly all the targeted areas were covered. Following the timetable was highly problematic as it was set to cover both sites on the same days. Moving between the two sites was time-consuming, especially during busy days and weekends.

To conduct the observations, numerous copies of the maps of the two places were made on A4 size sheets. They were used to record the location of the researcher within the parameters of space, date, time and weather conditions. Within Al Bahri, noting down the observations was particularly difficult as the author had to make his way around with a small notepad, with both the Dictaphone and camera in his pockets, in order to blend in. However, noting down his observations forced him to write in his notepad, or record his speech into the Dictaphone and risk being exposed. In some cases, particularly on busy days, the researcher preferred the seclusion of his car to summarize his observations of certain events and areas. This problem was avoided in Al Seef, where all the areas in question were accessible by car and most observation sessions were made from within or beside the car.

4.5 Case Study Strategy

The author conducted three field trips designated for data collections (taking place in Spring 2002, Autumn-Winter 2003 and Autumn 2004). Each one of those trips had a distinctive overall purpose, yet they shared many similarities. The first field trip was for the pilot phase; at that stage the scope of the research was not defined but revolved around the understanding of Manama's public space. During this trip many public spaces were visited in and around the city. The author arranged walks, took photographs and even conducted two interviews with users. During this trip the researcher's interest in a particular kind of public space grew deeper: the type of space in question is the

waterfront area. The issue of access to the waterfront has always been a problematic and taboo matter in Bahrain[1]. This was a consequence of notice being drawn to the sheer lack of internal open spaces in Manama. It was further underlined after conducting a historic review of the open spaces in the city, in which the researcher found that marginal and coastal spaces were the most important. This more focused direction taken by the study was allowed for by a new transparency in the political life of Bahrain; as a new direction, it needed further literature review. This is by way of explaining the 17 month gap between the first field trip (pilot study) and the second. Besides covering the relevant literature, this gap was used to establish links with informants in Bahrain. An online search was conducted to secure contacts and to find out the actors concerned in these issues. Some of the interviewees were contacted by either phone or email and several of them sent back relevant reports and studies. In the light of the above, the pilot study was exceptionally useful.

The second field trip (October-December 2003) was far focused and programmed than the previous one. The main objective of this trip was: A) to conduct the site survey of the Northern and Eastern waterfronts of Manama, B) to survey the three subunits of analysis, C) to conduct as many interviews as possible with the users of those sites, D) to interview the providers and maintainers of the selected public spaces of Manama. The time of the visit was adapted to the assumption that the warm Bahraini winter would attract more users to the waterfront than the harsh summer. The author also wanted to examine those spaces during the busiest time of the year for the public spaces, that is Ramadan and Eid. In the two months spent conducting this trip many other objectives were added, that is: A) meeting users of other open spaces within and outside of Manama, B) conducting interviews with users of other non-waterfront public spaces, C) gathering more reports and studies about the research area and the case study from local sources. The trip was scheduled to last for three months but was cut short when the researcher felt that he had collected sufficient data.

A third trip (October-November 2004) was decided upon within a few months of returning from the second one. That decision was based on the following: A) Some codes and themes started to appear during the transcription of the interviews and alongside them, some gaps started to emerge. B) The author established new links with

[1] This was prior to the revival of democratic life in Bahrain in October 2002

planning officials and landscape designers in Bahrain and a plan was set to interview them. C) The author wanted to add a longitudinal dimension to the research by conducting more observations of the subunits of analysis. During this trip, which lasted for a month, the author managed to collect extra data, ran extra interviews and went back to validate some of the data collected through the interviews of the first trip.

4.6 Data Analysis and Writing Strategy

One of the big challenges in qualitative research is transforming unruly data collected from the fieldwork and many other sources into an authoritative written format such as a PhD thesis (Wolcott 1994: p. 10). Flyvbjerg highlighted that the same difficulty could be faced in reporting and summarising a case study (2004). Knowing those facts and keeping in mind that the research straddles two scales (macro and micro) with different aims, an inductive approach was used in analysing and writing up the interviews, observations, photographs and the other sources of evidence. A deductive approach was also used, but to a lesser extent in analysing the data collected through the site survey of the Northern and Eastern waterfronts of Manama (the macro scale).

Data collection, analysis and interpretation proceeded in a cyclical and never in a linear mode. Interpretation and analysis began immediately on site during the first field trip. These interpretations helped in redirecting and focusing the scope of the research, and even helped in redirecting the research question. The analysis of the semi-structured and casual interviews began while they were being transcribed and translated. Sometimes it began even earlier than that. For instance, the author's initial decision to transcribe all interviews was cancelled when some were found to be lacking informative data or highly irrelevant. That decision was taken directly after conducting the interview.

Analysing the semi-structured interviews began by transcribing and concurrently translating them. The author decided to translate all the transcribed interviews (from Arabic to English) to ease the process of analysis and to help in reporting the people's voice. The process was long and tedious yet many of the codes and themes began to appear at that stage. The author followed a system in which he tried to keep all the information collected on each site on a particular day in one file. Thus, translations of the interviews conducted, transcriptions of the observations noted on the Dictaphone and photographs taken on that particular day were all placed in one MS Word file. He also included a small map to indicate the location of the observations and interviews, along

with information about the weather. By doing so, themes and codes across the interviews and observations began to be established. After that stage the transcriptions were read many times during which the major themes were established for each subunit of analysis: The subunits were A) the physical condition of Manama's public spaces B) The meanings and uses of those spaces. Other sub-themes were created at later stages which helped in telling the story of those spaces' social environment. The process was eventually followed by a synthesis of the results in a textual narrative which relates the story of the public space of Manama.

4.7 Methodological Assessment

The methodology followed and the tools used were those found to be most suitable for data collection, data analysis and the writing strategy within the temporal and financial constraints of this research. The researcher nevertheless faced the following problems:

1. Access to official reports about public space in Bahrain and waterfront developments was found hard to obtain, particularly in the case of historical ones.
2. The nature of the topic itself has proved to be troublesome as there is a lack of pre-existing general urban studies about Manama; furthermore, there are no serious waterfront studies, and no public space research.
3. The researcher was not able to conduct any interviews with local females or local families and chose to obtain the required information about families and females through their male relatives. This cultural obstacle was anticipated and is one of the early findings of this field trip, in which it became clear to the researcher that this type of field work in Bahrain should be done by a research group that consists of both male and female researchers. Nevertheless, many of the interviewees were expatriates and do not speak Arabic nor English. Thus, any future research group should be multilingual, able to speak, in particular, one of the chief languages of the Indian subcontinent (i.e. Urdu, Hindi or Malayalam).

4 The frequent alerts from both the US and UK foreign affairs authorities regarding imminent terrorist attacks in the Gulf and particularly in Bahrain and Qatar required particular sensitivity from the researcher in ensuring that his activities did not cause undue alarm. This negatively affected the length of the observation sessions and the movement of the researcher within both selected spaces, particularly in the case of the Al Bahri waterfront, due to its closeness to Al

Jufair[1]. It also made the researcher omit part of the original intended survey area, which formed part of the Northern coastline of Al Jufair.

5 Bahrainis have a deep understanding of each other; and can identify another's religious sect and ethnicity from their look, attire and/or accent. This proved to be very inconvenient for the author when attempting to blend in with the users or approach some of them. Al Seef – Zone 4 proved to be the most difficult, as it is highly dominated by users from the nearby villages. Those users were highly territorial and protective of their space on the waterfront and were suspicious of the author's intentions, regardless of his countless attempts to explain his position and the purpose of the research.

6. Many of the interviewees rejected the use of the tape recorder for recording the interviews. The researcher responded to this situation by rushing back to his car (or a more secluded area) immediately after the interview to record whatever he could remember, particularly the most important points of the interview, on a tape recorder. He used his written notes from the interviews as a guide for these recordings and as a stimulus to his memory to recall entire stories. This process was costly in terms of time, as the author could not conduct subsequent interviews rapidly and frequently had to withdraw from the site which wasted valuable time and caused some missed opportunities for a greater number of interviews.

7. Writing notes within the formal public space looked a bit 'out of place'. Generally speaking, Bahrainis do not read or write in parks, particularly on festive days. As a single male, alone in the park, the researcher already looked quite out of place; adding a notepad or a Dictaphone to that image would have created suspicions. The author relied on the same method described above in noting down his observations after taking a walk or sitting within the observed space. As per Babbie (1998: 293) this is a well accepted method of recording field observations.

8. Both al Seef and Al Bahri are marginal public spaces, in which many users seek seclusion and privacy; approaching those users for interviews or observation was highly problematic as it was a form of encroachment upon their privacy, although they were in a public space. Nevertheless, some of the night-time activities in Al Seef – zone 1 were of a risky and unlawful nature, for example, taking drugs,

[1] A neighbourhood with a high concentration of US NAVY personals stationed in Bahrain

drinking alcohol in public, drag racing. Observing those activities or interviewing the participants was most difficult.

9. Running semi-structured interviews proved to be particularly difficult. Open-ended questions and the casual style of the interviews gave the freedom required for the respondents to tell their stories about public space; however that freedom had to be limited as each one of these respondents had an agenda that could direct the interview away from the main story. The researcher had to intervene many times to bring the conversation back to the targeted topic. That was not easy for two reasons: this research is of an exploratory nature and sometimes it is hard to judge if the respondent is drifting away from the main topic, especially during the early days of the interviews when many particulars of this research were not clear. The second difficulty appeared in group interviews, where it was hard to control the flow of the conversation and to keep track of what was said by whom. Transcribing those interviews presented similar difficulties.
10. Reaching Al Seef and moving within it was difficult and time-consuming particularly during weekends, due to traffic jams and road works in and around the Al Seef area. In some cases, a journey that would not take more than 5 minutes on foot took more than 35 minutes by car. Reaching Al Bahri from Al Seef or vice versa was again a time-consuming journey which forced the researcher to limit the site observation sessions to one site per day.
11. Ramadan is a favourite time to study public space but not a recommended time to arrange to meet government officials for the following two reasons: first, the public official working hours are shorter during Ramadan and second, the holy month is the preferred month for taking a holiday.
12. The researcher assumed that the moderate temperatures of the Gulf's winter would attract more people to the waterfront but found out through the interviews that the number of users is actually higher in summer. He also found out from his observations that the number of users could drop significantly with the slightest cold breeze. For these reasons, the researcher spent several days at both sites with nobody to interview or to observe.
13. A few of the municipal officials did not show up for the interview or gave a very short time for the interview.
14. The introduction of new public and governmental bodies with the continuous shuffling, displacement, joining and creation of directorates, municipal councils,

governorates and ministries over the past three years has made it difficult for the researcher to know who is responsible for what. This also led to difficulty in locating the original designers of the Al Bahrain Parks.

15. The number of public holidays during the period of the field trip helped in understanding the two cases during festive times but reduced the number of working days in which the researcher could have used in arranging further interviews with government officials.
16. Some of the government officials whom the researcher intended to interview were contacted as early as five months before the intended interview time. In the course of making those contacts, the researcher introduced himself and the type of research he was conducting. In two cases a list of questions was sent, months before the intended date of the interview. Many of these contacts did not respond to any of the researcher's phone calls while he was in Bahrain. The researcher made the effort to visit the office of one of them in person, to arrange an interview but even that did not help. Another government official behaved as if he himself was the interviewer and requested that the first interview should be an introductory one in which he would get to know 'who I am and what am I after'. On top of that he refused the use of the tape recorder. He was approached again for another interview with no success. Furthermore, one of the common occurrences noticed while conducting those interviews was that the interviewees would never switch off their cellular phones during the interviews; they would answer all incoming calls on both their landlines and mobiles, even though they have an ID caller and a secretary to do this for them. They never mention that they are busy when someone calls at their office during the interview and in most cases, the time agreed for the interview is not respected. This is not universal but nevertheless happened on many occasions, wasting the time and efforts of the researcher.

4.8 Conclusion

This Chapter explains why and how a qualitative approach with a single case study method was used to explore the physical and social attributes of Manama's public space in the context of the urban transformation process. It illustrates the sources of data collected, the tools used and ways of using them. It also reveals how that data was analysed and interpreted. To recap, a qualitative approach has been used in this research because it aims to:

1. Study the impact of urban transformation on public space in Manama, necessitating a holistic approach that rests on a variety of data collection, analysis and interpretation tools. Those tools were used to study different scales, themes and historical periods, which could only be studied through an adaptive and flexible approach such as that of qualitative research.
2. The research aims to explain the way in which those public spaces are socially consumed within the resulting physical constraints of the urban transformation process. That social environment could only be traced through a qualitative approach and at a site where meanings, aspirations, interactions and conflicts unfold through the behaviour and stories of individuals.

Under the qualitative approach a single case study method was selected on the following bases:

1. The research question is of a **how** nature.
2. The researched phenomenon had to be studied within its social and physical contexts.
3. The researcher has no control over either the context or the phenomenon.
4. The boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are unclear.

Although the research includes an element of historical review, it focuses on the current social and physical conditions of the public space of Manama, which makes it a contemporary phenomenon.

And a single case study method (the embedded case study) was selected for the following reasons:

1. The research is of a (modestly) longitudinal nature.
2. The research focuses on one case, Manama's waterfront.
3. The case has embedded subunits of analysis. These are the whole waterfront on the macro scale and the Al Bahri and Al Seef waterfronts on a micro scale.
4. The aim of the research is not to test a theory or to come up with major generalizations.

To survey the condition of the Manama waterfront, a more holistic approach was devised, based on a large number of previous models. This approach worked as a framework to further understanding of the multifaceted nature of the waterfront.

Implementing the above mentioned methods and tools using a qualitative approach also had its drawbacks which were mostly context-related. However, this Chapter has shown how they were used and adapted to suit the physical and social environment of Bahrain. It has also shown why and how other methods and tools could not be used. Finally the chapter explained how the public space of Manama could be explored using a qualitative approach and by the use of a case study method.

Cahpter 5: The Urban Growth of Manama

5.1 Introduction

This chapter is concerned with the physical characteristics of Manama City's waterfront and its public spaces across a particular chronological period. It begins by contextualizing the case study, describing the locational, topographical, political and socio-economic characteristics of Bahrain. Then it moves on to introduce the case study area, its current parameters and location. This is followed by a historical review. Starting in the 1920s; it explores the physical condition and the morphology of the Northern and Eastern waterfronts of Manama and the available public space there over that period and the following eight decades. Later, it introduces the main influences on the transformation of the waterfront, and gives examples of past, contemporary and emerging spaces on the waterfront and subsequently, of types of public space.

Overall, the Chapter is based on the rationale that it is important to analyse the processes of physical expansion. However, identifying the forces underlying the process could shed some light on what threatens the availability of public space. Based on this, the Chapter is an attempt to answer the following questions: 1- what was the nature of the urban and the rural historical waterfronts? 2- what shaped the urban growth of the city? And 3- what patterns could be traced from that growth style? The answers to those questions could establish a basis on which the production and consumption of current public space could be analysed.

5.2 Location, Topography and Weather

The Kingdom of Bahrain is a small city-state located approximately midway along the western coast of the Gulf in a shallow bay (the Gulf of Bahrain) where it is situated between Saudi Arabia and Qatar (Figure 5.1). The country spreads over an archipelago of 33 naturally occurring islands and a growing number of manmade ones (by 2002, the number of islands had reached 90 (Alkalali 2002)). The overall area of land is approximately 711 km2 (2004) and continues to grow (Figure 5.2). Most of the islands are surrounded by large shallows in which the majority of land reclamation is taking place (SOGREAH 2001: 1). The islands are low-lying, with their highest point marking 122m above sea level.



Figure 5.1: Location Map of Bahrain (2003)

Source: Central Intelligence Agency – USA (online maps)

Year	Bahrain in km2	% increase in Area /1956
1956	663.30	
1968	665.30	+ 0.3 %
1976	673.98	+ 1.6%
1986	691.24	+ 4.2 %
1996	703.62	+ 6.0%
1998	709.49	+ 7.0%

Figure 5.2: Increase in area from 1968 to 1998

Source: (SOGREAH 2001)

The weather in Bahrain is extremely hot and humid during the summer (Jun, July and August) and mild to cold, with a small amount of rain, in winter (December, January and February) (Refer to Appendix A).

The main populated islands in the country are: A) Bahrain, the largest island (85% of the total land area) which accommodates Manama, the capital city. It measures approximately 44 km (North-South) x 17 km (East to West). B) Muharraq is the second most populated island and accommodates the city of Muharraq and Bahrain International Airport. C) Sittra is the third most populated island and is characterised by a high concentration of industrial activities. The three islands are connected by a network of causeways.

Since 1986 Bahrain has been connected to neighbouring Saudi Arabia via a 25 km long causeway. New plans are set to connect Bahrain to neighbouring Qatar through the world's longest fixed link causeway to be (around 45km long).

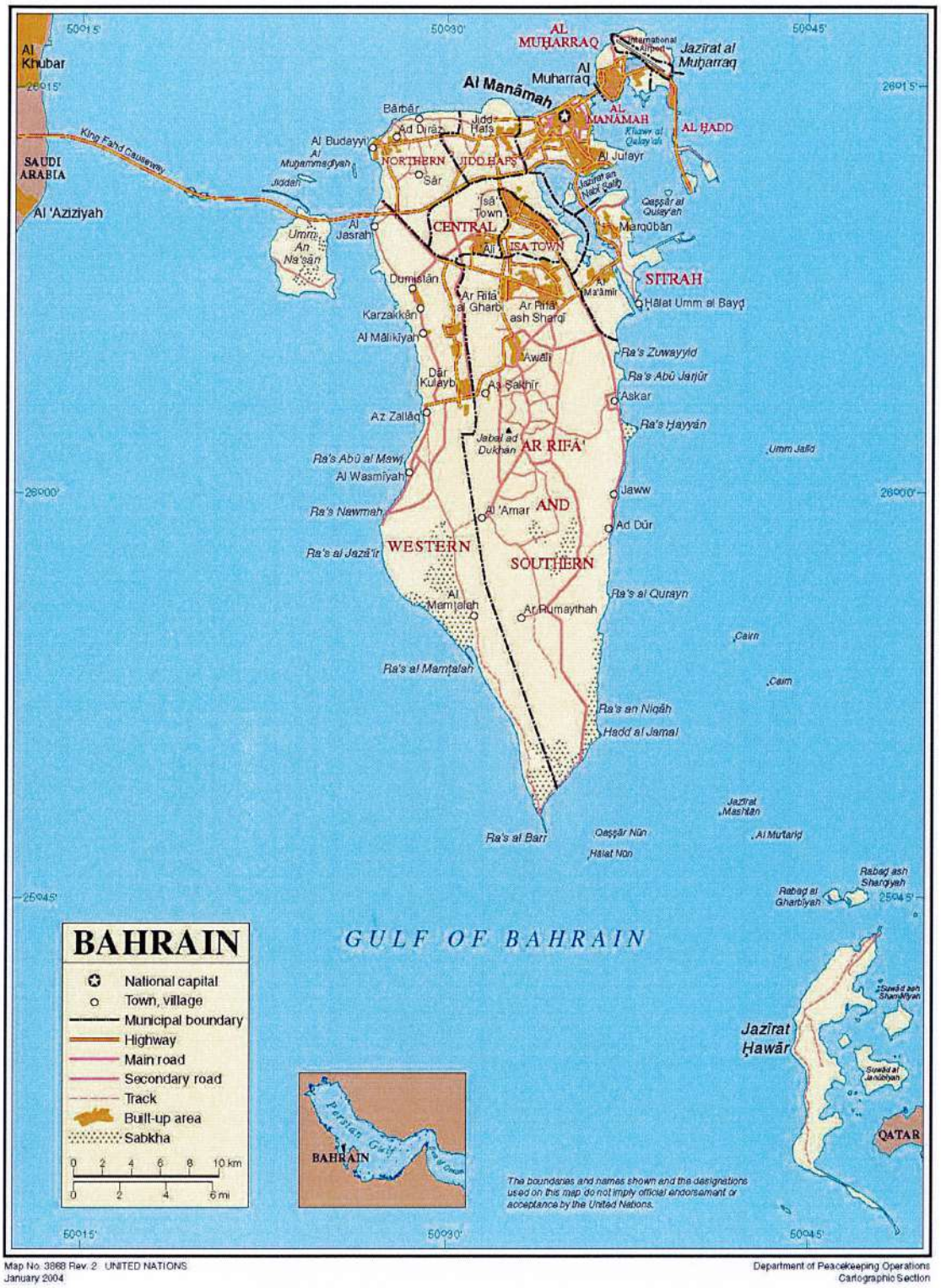


Figure 5.3: Figure 5 3Map of Bahrain (2003)

Source: United Nations Maps (Map No. 3868 January 2004)

5.3 Demographic, Socioeconomic and Political Characteristics

Bahrain's estimated population in 2007 was 753,000 (Department of Economic and Social Affairs - Population Division 2007), making it one of the most densely populated countries in the world (currently ranking 10th with a 1,059 inhabitants/km²)[1]. Ethnically, religiously and culturally Bahrain has, for many generations, hosted a cosmopolitan society. The inhabitants of Bahrain are mainly Arabs of mixed origin — Najdi, Huwala and Baharna (Khuri 1980; Lorimer 1970; Rumaihi 1976). However; the majority of the inhabitants are followers of Islam and divided between the Sunni and the Shi'i sects. Prior to the discovery of oil, the abundance of fresh water in Bahrain used to be a major point of attraction for migrants from neighbouring countries (Faroughy 1951: 14). Stimulated by political stability and a thriving pearl industry, Bahrain became a major financial centre in the Gulf, attracting job seekers from mainland Arabia, Southern Arabia and India (Rumaihi 1976). The discovery of oil in Bahrain in 1932, earlier than all the other GCC[2] countries, attracted more job-seekers to the island and opened it up early on to Western ideals and lifestyles.

Bahrain is ruled through an institutional monarchy: besides the authority of the king, who appoints the government, Bahrain is governed through a bicameral system. Both the upper (assigned) and lower (directly elected) houses of parliament are of equal power. This system was established in 2002, replacing a purely autocratic form of rule and ending an 'emergency state' which lasted for over twenty-seven years. It was also introduced to resolve the country's political, economic and social problems, and to find a way through the political unrest and sectarian tension which dominated the second half of the 1990s. That tension, which has sometimes revealed itself in violent ways, is fed primarily by high unemployment and poverty levels. To ameliorate those

GDP (PPP): $14.9 billion 5.4% growth in 2004 5.6% 5-yr. comp. ann. growth $20,758 per capita
Unemployment: 14.0% (2004 estimate)
Inflation (CPI): 2.3%
External Debt: $6.1 billion (2004 estimate)
Exports: $9.2 billion Primarily petroleum and petroleum products, aluminium, textiles
Imports: $7.1 billion Primarily crude oil, machinery, chemicals

Figure 5.4: Statistical Sketch of the Bahraini Economy

Source: (Kane et al. 2007)

[1] High density is a typical characteristic of small and island states
[2] Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) established in 1981 by Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, U.A.E, Kuwait, Qatar and Oman

levels, the government of Bahrain has been focusing on the diversification of the economy, directing it away from dependency on the depleting oil reserves (Kane *et al.* 2007: 95). Currently, Bahrain is moving towards a more business-friendly environment to attract global investment (Kane *et al.* 2007: 69). It is also developing its tourism sector as part of that policy.

5.4 Planning Regime in Bahrain

Prior to any forms of formal planning in the country, the cities and towns of Bahrain followed a typical Arab/Islamic pattern (being organic and compact). The early beginnings of urban planning in Bahrain, which marks the start of the process of abolishing the norms which had evolved in the planning of the old town, emerged with the establishment of the first Municipal Council in 1919 (Ministry of Municipalities and Agriculture Affairs - Urban Planning Affairs 2009). The municipality acted as a central planning and services unit for the whole of Bahrain. It had varied responsibilities ranging from cleaning the streets and allocating open spaces, all the way to arranging market activities. The municipality was also responsible for the accommodation of the expanding governmental body.

In 1956 planning responsibilities were passed to Bahrain Administrative Council up to the point when it was taken over by a special unit for natural planning in the mid 1960s. It is vital to mention that all these planning bodies were established while Bahrain was a British protectorate. Furthermore, two modern towns were built in Bahrain between the 1930s and 1960s, Awali and Isa Town, designed by American and British firms consecutively. This is to highlight the sheer contrast between the old planning style and what the Islands started to be exposed to.

The most formal steps taken in the creation of an urban planning authority came with the creation of the Planning and Coordination Committee in 1969; this was formed by representatives from nearly all government councils and practiced what was known as "Modern Urban Planning". The committee later was renamed as the Planning and Coordination Council in 1970. The technical and executive unit that supported this council was part of the Ministry of Municipal affairs and Agriculture until the Council was dissolved in 1975; the unit was then moved to the newly established Ministry of Housing under the name of the Natural Planning Directorate. The main government

objective behind establishing such a ministry included "proposing schemes and comprehensive policies to cope with existing problems in order to achieve better living conditions for the citizens all over the country" (Ministry of Housing Municipalities and Environment - Bahrain 1996). In 2003 urban planning, represented by the Natural Planning Directorate, became part of the Ministry of Municipalities and Agriculture Affairs.

As stated previously, planning authorities in Bahrain had been exposed to many foreign forms of planning in the past. That exposure developed into formal cooperation with international bodies and consultant bodies. Most significant is the cooperation with the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN–HABITAT) between 1989 and 2001 to place a study as part of the preparation of land-use master plans for many parts of Bahrain. Currently the most important form of cooperation with foreign consultants is that between the Bahrain Development Board (EDB) and Skidmore, Owings and Merrill (SOM). SOM submitted in 2007 the Bahrain 2030 National Planning Development Strategies. This plan is influential upon the national policies for economy, education, urban planning, business and industry.

Currently, a discretionary planning system is followed in Bahrain where developers cannot develop their land or property without the approval of a planning committee. The planning committee in return have to refer to the zoning bylaws and the master zoning plan of the area where the property is intended to be built. The bylaws and the zoning plans are prepared by the Directorate of Physical Planning. The planning committees are parts of regional municipalities and there are five of them in Bahrain. They consist of a directly elected municipal board and a technical team. The approval of both the board and the team is required for a building permit. However, planning in Bahrain is market-led: many of those master plans and bylaws are continually changing in line with market demand, as will be discussed in the following chapters.

5.5 The city of Manama

Currently, the municipal boundaries of Manama as a city encapsulate more than the area of Manama itself. Following the current official boundaries of the Capital Municipality and of the Capital Governorate, Manama includes many suburban areas and villages, including the area to the west of Karbabad on the far west and Al Nabih Salih Island to the far south (Decree-Law No. 17/2002). This research considers these to be the city

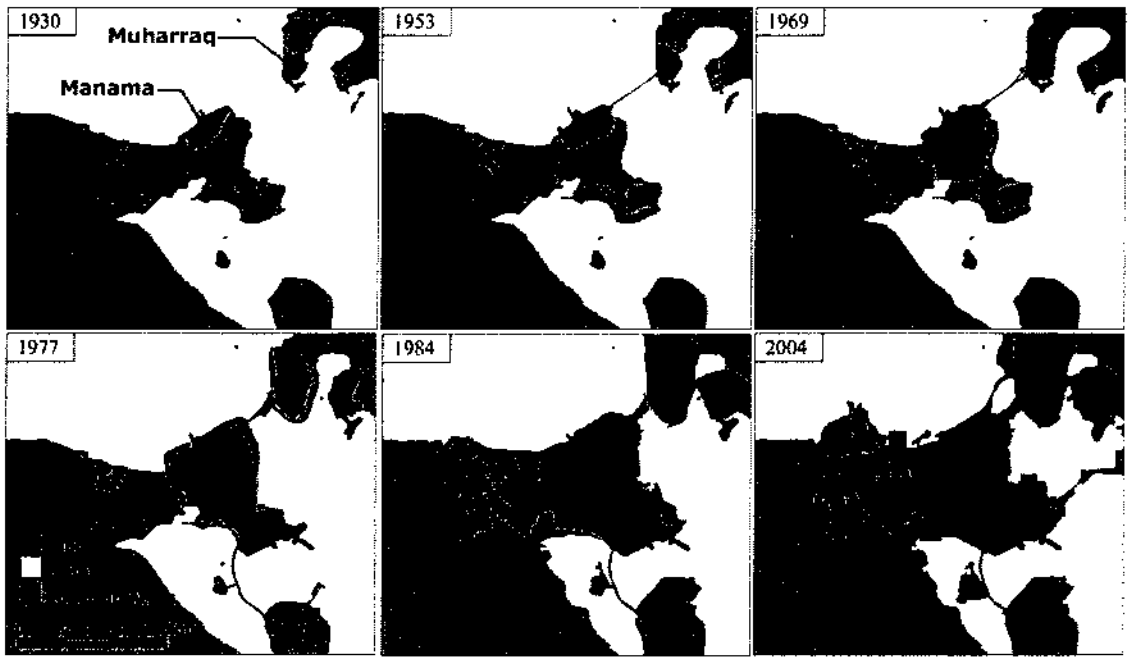
boundaries. Furthermore, this is supported by what the author learned from some of the users of the Al Seef waterfront, that they consider this area to form part of the capital city. Based on this, the author considers the municipal boundaries of the Capital Municipality to be the limits of Manama city.

The history of these formerly-remote or former-village waterfronts is also examined in this Section for the sake of gaining a better understanding of the micro public space which prevails on them. Nevertheless, it is important to understand the process of urban growth and land reclamation to understand how the city, town and village were dissolved into a metropolitan area.

In the 1920s, Manama was a small town composed of the area known currently as the Old Suq with few surrounding residential neighbourhoods. In the 1950s those neighbourhoods include Al Fadhel, Ra' s Rumman, Al Thawowdah, Al Awadi'yah, Al Hora, Al Haleh, Al Gudaibiya, Al Khadar, Al Hamam, Kanoo (Al Hatab), Abu Sorrah, which used to be a village under the same name, then it became a neighbourhood called Bin Sulloom (Saif 1995), Al Na'eem, Al Zararee, Al Makharqah, Al Baghshah, Thalmabad and Al Qal'ah. Those were the neighbourhoods which grew out of the original settlement of Manama and gradually became part of the city. However, the city grew to encapsulate many villages surrounding it, which are nowadays considered as suburbs (i.e. Al Jufair, Abu Ghazaleh, Beld Al Qadeem, and Al Khamees). Prior to this expansion, the whole city was concentrated in the Northern part of the peninsula where the city centre is located. This arrangement provided the city with a variety of waterfronts and subsequently, the inhabitants with a range of public spaces on the water. Overall there were three basic types of waterfront: the urban, the suburban-rural and the remote. Those three types are discussed later in this chapter.

5.6 The Urban Growth of Manama and the Process of Land Reclamation

The shoreline of Manama's waterfront has been changing and shifting physically in the direction of the sea through a long process of land reclamation and shoreline remodelling (Figure 5.5). Manama's current shoreline is in some places 1.5km away from the early 1930s shoreline. This can be found in Al Seef District and the eastern side of the Diplomatic area, where Ra's Romman used to be the farthest north-eastern point of the peninsula on which Manama is built (refer to Figures 6.2 to 6.7).



I. **Figure 5.5: Expansion of Manama through Urban Growth and Land Reclamation**

The process of reclamation, its driving forces, enablers and styles should be understood at the outset in order to clearly grasp the physical morphology of the waterfront of Manama and the nature of its public space. Those influencing factors are discussed in the last part of this Chapter.

The reclamation process was stimulated by many factors that collectively, represent parts of the social process that produce the public space including topography, political orientation, economic forces and technological advances. To be specific, those factors are: 1) the low laying nature of the Manama peninsula, as well as most of the Bahraini islands. This has allowed for more homogeneity, in terms of physical levels, between the mainland and the reclaimed areas, 2) the vast shallow foreshore areas around the capital city[1] (Directorate of Statistics 2000) jointly with, 3) the overall calmness of the waters of the Gulf (SOGREAH 2001) which made that reclamation economically feasible and technologically achievable with comparative ease compared to reclamation taking place in deep and rough waters, 4) land reclamation is an adopted national policy supported by municipal laws[2] and driven by urban planning schemes[3] and the land

[1] The level of the shoreline depends on whether it is one that has been reclaimed or a natural one; the level of reclaimed land differs depending on when it was reclaimed due to the change in the National Survey Datum (NSD) (SOGREAH 2001). The whole shoreline of Manama Capital is manmade and there is not a single location that is left in its original or natural state.
[2] Municipal order No. 4/2000 concerning the permission to reclaim foreshore land
[3] Interview with urban planning senior official (3rd December 2003)

speculation economy. The overall national policy can be found in many governmental reports including the one that was submitted for Agenda 21 which states:

> Shortage of land for development has prompted Bahrain to reclaim more land from the sea by dredging. In the early years of reclamation and dredging activities, only low cost considerations were studied and environmental constraints were not given high priority. Unfortunately most of these reclamation activities have caused an increase in the turbidity of sea water, induced siltation and destroyed benthic communities of these areas. **This dredging and reclamation activity has to continue as part of developmental activities** (Government of Bahrain 1997).

The shortage of land and opting for land reclamation from the sea to accommodate both economic and demographic growth has been mentioned by two of the planning officers interviewed by the author. The former Director of Physical Planning Department stated:

> There is no more empty space for governmental and housing projects, everything is privately owned including the whole coast and many submerged areas. The middle of Bahrain is under the control of Bahrain Petroleum Company (BAPCO); they leased it for 100 years. The south is reserved for military activities and as you can see the north is completely privately owned[1]

The process has taken different shapes and taken place at varying tempos throughout the history of Manama's urban development. The researcher has identified three main styles of reclamation which took place and helped shape today's Manama. The following is a brief description of those styles.

5.7 Styles of Land Reclamation on the Waterfront of Manama

Nearly all the reclaimed areas in Bahrain have been taking place in the shallow foreshore land around the two major cities of Manama and Muharraq. The reclamation came in varying amounts, but was never under one overall considered scheme. The piecemeal approach was undertaken by both the government and the private sector to accommodate residential, commercial, industrial and recently, tourist projects. The latter is one of the major factors that currently shape the waterfront areas of Bahrain. For instance, prior to the building of the Ritz-Carlton in the Al Seef area in the late 1980s, there wasn't a single hotel in the main Bahrain Island with its own private beach. But that has changed recently as the number of hotels, resorts, and clubs with private

[1] Interview with former urban planning senior official (13th December 2003)

beaches grows rapidly all over the country, yet again with a piecemeal approach and no overall urban policy.

Three main generic styles of reclamation were identified by this research, by recording and analysing of the history of land reclamation around Manama. These styles are repeatedly used by either private investors or governmental bodies in reclaiming land from the sea. The styles differ in their scale, process or tempo of reclamation and their proximity to the original shoreline. The three identified styles are:

1. Incremental style: accumulation of annexed small scale reclaimed tracts
2. Large Scale style: reclamation of adjacent large scale submerged tracts
3. Island style: reclamation of satellite foreshore land to create artificial islands

These three styles have a variety of effects on the way the resulting waterfront is used and its meaning. That variety mostly comes from:

1. The varying scales of those reclamations;
2. The process of the reclamation itself;
3. The pace and manner of urban maturity on the reclaimed land;
4. The purpose of the reclamation; and
5. The treatment of the shoreline.

However, through a review of urban growth literature on the many coastal cities around the world in which land reclamation was needed for those cities to expand, the same three styles were found to be used worldwide. They were sometimes used in conjunction with each other, both spatially and temporally, and sometimes in a progressive manner, as in the case of Manama. The following Section includes a description of those three styles of land reclamation from the sea and prominent examples of them in Manama.

5.7.1 Incremental Style

Reclamation in the Incremental style is the oldest process of land reclamation that has ever been recorded in Bahrain. It is not clear when it started to take place around Manama, but there are many historical examples. For instance, in 1937, the government of Bahrain bought an old house on Al Naim's waterfront in order to demolish it and build a hospital on the site. The hospital compound was partially built on reclaimed land (Musamih 2001: 139).

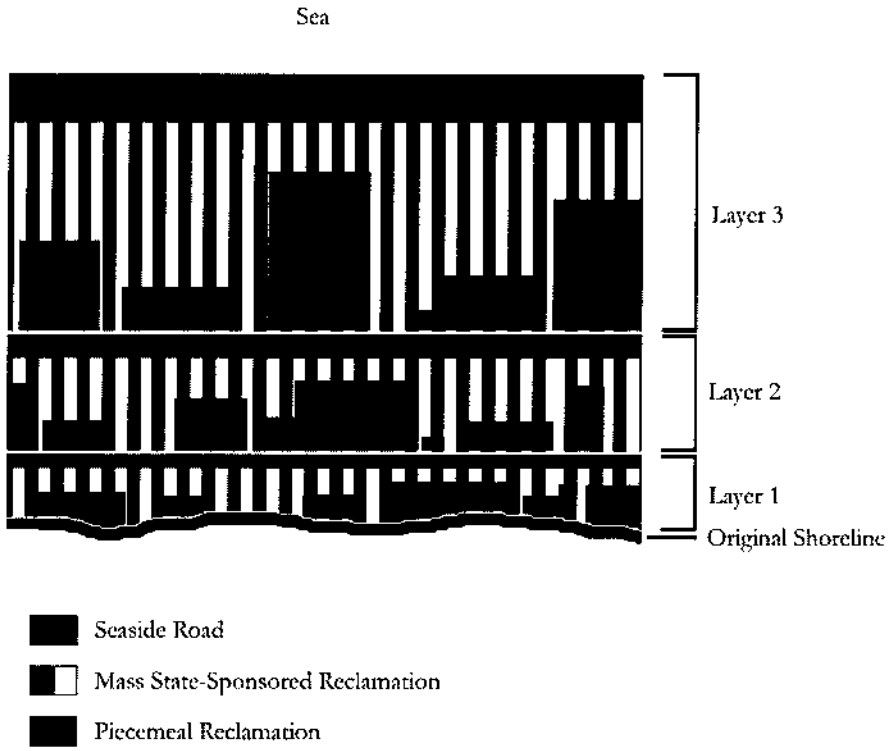


Figure 5.6: Accumulation of Small Scale Tracts – Incremental Reclamation

What can also be noticed from this is that the width of these layers (as in the distance between the old coastal road and the new one) increases with every new layer (Figure 5.7). This can be directly linked with the increment in tract and building sizes in the newly reclaimed land as the result of introducing new building types in the Islands. It is also possible to observe that in recent examples of this style of reclamation, a high level of development/occupancy of the available layer is unnecessary in order for another level of waterside reclamation to be instigated. For example, the central Market area was nearly half empty when reclamations began to the north of it. This pattern of land reclamation could be linked to rising levels of land speculation that maintain large urban areas empty over long periods of time.

Both governmental and private bodies have been involved in the first stage of this process but the second stage is a purely governmental affair. Even the current large scale reclamations that are privately initiated depend upon State intervention to provide a levelled-up shoreline and proper access.

The need to reclaim land at an early stage is not so clear. Overall, most of those reclamations took place next to densely populated areas and from the two examples of

Manama and Muharraq it has been found that most of their urban growth in the former sea areas took place mainly next to the Suq and harbour locations[1]. This is a very classical case found in most of the historical port cities, as discussed in Chapter 2. To situate this process within a wider perspective, some parallels could be drawn with other urban phenomena. The two phases of this Incremental style of reclamation could be linked to the two phases of the Urban Process described by Kostof (1992: 245-80). The first phase of the incremental style, which is the reclamation of small tracts, could be compared to the incremental changes identified by Kostof as part of the Urban Process. The latter stage, which is State intervention, could be compared to what Kostof identified as the 'Hausmannization' process. This is a planned demolition of some parts of the old city, which had been created through incremental change, to allow for straight, wide and grand streets. The two differ, in that one works on water/empty space and the other works in a congested/organic urban form.

The most prominent example of this style of reclamation is the Northern part of Manama; in which many layers of reclamation in that style can be found. The growth northward into the sea started during the late 1920s, at nearly 500 - 600m to the south of the current waterline, with the reclamation of small parcels of land to accommodate mainly residential buildings[2] (Figure 5.8). The sole possible reason for this manner of urban expansion is the requirement to be next to the main hustle and bustle of the commercial and administrative areas of Manama. Unlike the city of Muharraq, which was entrapped in a peninsula surrounded by the sea from three cardinal directions and by Bahrain International Airport in the North, Manama did not suffer from a dearth of land, so this can be eliminated as a possible ground for this style of urban growth. In support of this contention, many 1940s aerial photographs show large, empty and uncultivated lands to the south of Manama.

[1] Refer to the work of Tariq Waly (1990) on the city of Muharraq for better understanding of the urban growth of the city.
[2] This is derived from the analysis of a considerable number of historical photographs of the area, copyrighted to Bahrain National Museum, Bahrain Petroleum Company (BAPCO), and also the autobiography of Sir. Charles Belgrave.

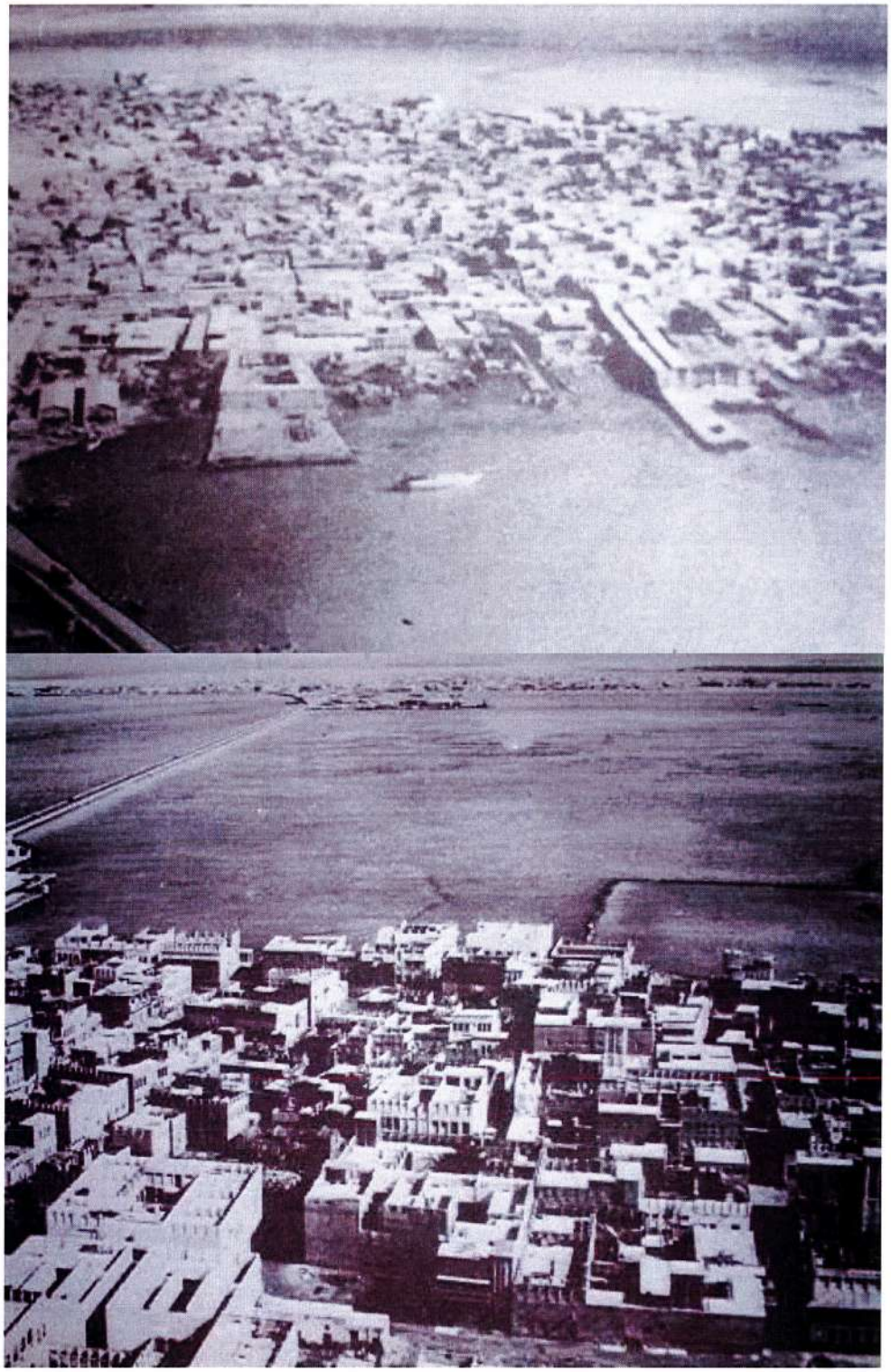


Figure 5.7: Two examples of the Incremental style of reclamation during or after its first stage and prior to State intervention. Above: western side of the city of Muharraq in the early 1960s. Below: eastern side of the city of Manama in the late 1950s

Sources: Bahrain National Museum

5.7.2 Large Scale Style

Historically, the reclamation of adjacent tidal large scale areas is the second type of reclamation that has taken place in Manama and in Bahrain in general[1]. This style of reclamation is usually preceded by one or two stages of reclamation carried out through the Incremental style, such as the reclamation of the Diplomatic Area in the 1970s (Figure 5.9). The mechanism of this style is a clear-cut one which involves the reclamation of a large foreshore land, sponsored by a governmental or a large investment body for the purpose of accommodating a newly planned area, such as the Central Market area and outer Muharraq in the mid 1970s, Sanabis 1 (1983) and Sanabis 2 (1985) (Ministry of Housing 1993: 225) or a large scale single project such as Sheikh Khalifa Bin Sulman Port at Hidd (2003).

This style of reclamation was never initiated by the private sector until the late 1990s, when few large scale tracts were reclaimed for the building of residential compounds in Toubli Bay to the south of Manama, and in stage one and two of the reclamation for the Bahrain Financial Harbour in the location of old Manama harbour.

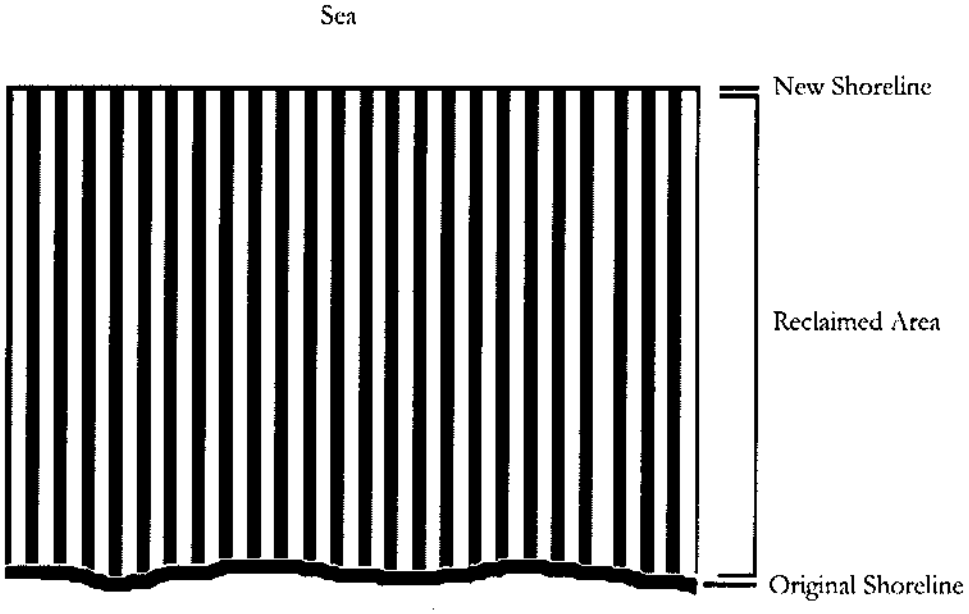


Figure 5.8: Reclamation of Adjacent Large Scale Tracts

[1] Refer to the two maps of Manama in Belgrave (1960, 1970) where this style of land reclamation is most prominent to the north of the Sea road.



Figure 5.9: Large Scale Style: North of Manama, showing the Diplomatic Area being reclaimed in the late 1970s

Source: (Gerard 1973: 34-5)

As mentioned earlier, this style of reclamation is always preceded by one or two cycles of reclamation following the Incremental style, but another pattern was found to take place in relatively remote coastal areas, where the initial layers of reclamation are usually executed to accommodate small to medium scale government housing projects such as Umm Al Hasam (1976) and Sanabis (1979-1980). Those housing projects took place on reclaimed lands right on the waterfront of coastal villages. The nature of those projects (housing) rendered them acceptable to members of the public. This is based on the fact that in 2002, the people of Barbar village protested against the reclamation of several tracts on the coast of their village; however, some of the protesters were ready to accept reclamation if it was to accommodate housing projects for their benefit[1]. The same orientation was expressed by fishermen from Karrana village when they were asked their opinion about the new Northern City planned in the location of their fisheries. The fishermen looked at the short-term benefits, expressing the view that the new 19-island city would provide better mooring places for their fishing boats[2].

[1] Interview with an environmental consultant (15th December 2003)
[2] Interview with a group of fishermen on Karrana coast (11th December 2003)

5.7.3 Island Style

Reclamation of deepwater reefs and coral lands in the form of artificial islands represents the third type of reclamation identified by this research (Figure 5.11). Reclamation in this style is the most recent of the three to be used in Bahrain. Plans to use this style of reclamation began to appear in the late 1980s. Earlier examples do exist, but on a very small scale and were never intended to remain as islands. For instance, a senior member from Al Deah village[1] stated in one of the interviews for this study that the Ministry of Housing had granted two plots of land deep into the tidal area facing his village (Al Deah), to two senior members of the village, Haji Adam and Haji Mansour. He stressed that the link between their houses and the mainland used to be submerged during high tide, and that consequently, they would spend periods trapped in their houses; these conditions remained until the 1980s. Nevertheless, there are examples from Toubli bay in which owners of submerged plots reclaimed their plots as if they were islands. Yet again that was neither the intention nor the desired final outcome. In other terms, those plots were not reclaimed as islands; they formed part of a larger planned area later to be completely reclaimed as shown in Figure 5.12. The author did not come across any historical examples that could represent this style of reclamation although he carried out an extensive investigation of visual documents of both Manama and Muharraq, as discussed in Chapter 4.

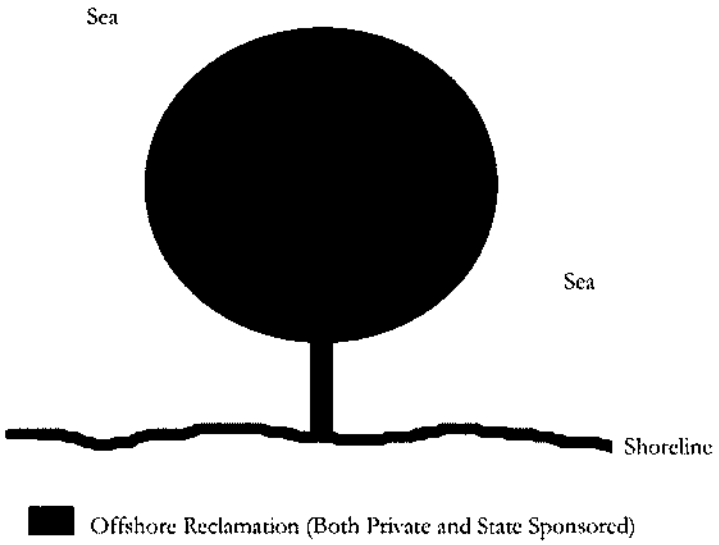


Figure 5.10: The Island Style: Reclamation of Deepwater Reeves and Coral Lands (The Creation of Artificial Islands)

[1] Interview with a senior resident of Al Deah Village (20th October 2004)



Figure 5.11: Piecemeal Reclamation in the Form of Temporary Islands – East of Al Busaytin

Source: Brian J. McMorrow

Thus the first real intention to create an artificial Island came through a state-sponsored proposal lodged by the hitherto Ministry of Housing to create Jawaher Islands and Bandar Al Seef[1] (Figure 5.13). The intention was to create three islands with a total area of 230 hectares to accommodate new residential and recreational uses close to the two largest cities in the country, Muharraq and Manama (Ministry of Housing - Bahrain 1993: 333-4). The project was intended to take place on the coral reefs and the foreshore land between the two islands. This project was not implemented, although Bandar Al Seef was partially reclaimed (0.25km²), not as an island but as an extension of Al-Busaytin District on Muharraq Island in 1992 (SOGREAH 2001: 3). The two projects resurfaced recently at a backstage level in the light of the new circumstances characterised mainly by the construction of Bahrain Financial Harbour[2].

[1] This is unrelated to Al Seef District; Bandar Al Seef was a proposed group of Islands to the northwest of Muharraq Island. Now, it is partially reclaimed but in the form of an extension to the west of Busayteen.
[2] This information was obtained through personal communication with local architects and government officials. One of them stated "Bahrain Financial Harbour (BFH) is located in an area that reached its maximum capacity in terms of traffic; the main consultant and some government officials are trying to rejuvenate the project of Bandar Al Seef to ease the pressure on services of the urban areas to the south of the BFH" (Interview with a former urban planning official, (13th December 2003).

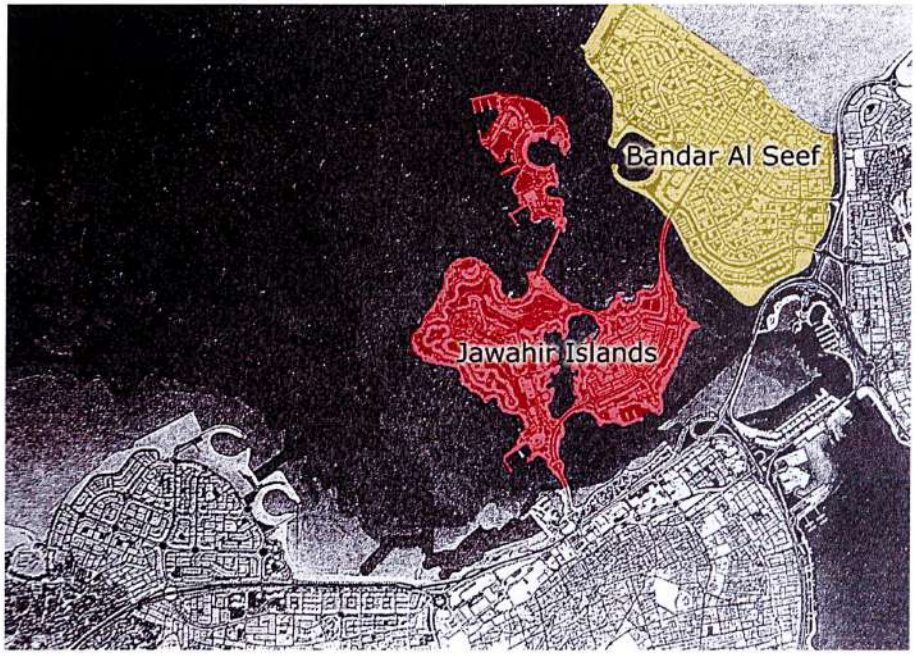


Figure 5.12: Bandar Al Seef and the Proposed Jawahir Islands

Source: (Ministry of Housing 1993: 333)

But the first Islands to be reclaimed by the State were the Lulu Islands; two islands planned originally for recreational purposes, which were reclaimed in 1999 to the north of King Faisal Corniche – Phase II. They were destined to become an extension of the corniche, linked to it by a bridge. These plans were abolished and the new islands were opened for private investment. An Indian investor, the Oberoi Group of Industries, set up a 200-room hotel in a joint venture with IBH Bahrain (Indian Express Newspapers 1999). That project was also abolished, and in November 2004, after a long period of speculation, it was announced that the Lulu Tourism Company (Mouawad Group and the Government of Bahrain, 50% ownership respectively) is to invest BD280 million to build a centre encompassing a hotel, spa, marina, convention centre, aquarium, apartment buildings and villas (Figure 5.14). The project is going to be a business and leisure hub close to the city centre (Economic Development Board 2004)[1] (Figure 5.14).

[1] Currently the Lulu Tourism Company is known as Reef – Real Estate Finance Company - Bahrain



Figure 5.13: Top: Reef Islands Proposal after reshaping the two Islands and adding two more. Bottom left: Durrat Khaleej Al Bahrain as it looks with its final design. Bottom right: Amwaj Islands to the north of Muharraq, the first artificial islands to be occupied in Bahrain

Sources: Lulu Islands (Unknown), Durrat Khaleej Al Bahrain (www.durratbahrain.com), Amwaj Islands (www.Ossisonline.com)

The private sector took the initiative and started projects in this style, such as the Amwaj Islands, to the north of Muharraq Island (currently under construction) and there are many others in the pipeline such as Durrat Al Bahrain and Diyar Al Muharraq.

It is not very clear when private ownership of submerged land started in Bahrain. The earliest example is found as early as 1910; from a case mentioned in the diaries of Charles Belgrave, a Government advisor between 1927 and 1957, in which he stated that in 1932 two entrepreneurs asked the government for compensation for the coral and marine rocks which were removed from their submerged land in 1910. Those rocks were used in building the pier of Manama Harbour (Cited in Al-Khalifa 2000: 306).

The most common type of ownership of submerged land in Bahrain is the ownership of fish traps, or *Hudur*[1]. In 1975 there were 962 *Hadhrah* in Bahrain of which 50% were in private ownership (Khuri 1980: 55) That percentage could have been much higher in earlier years, particularly before the introduction of the Land Registration Law in the 1920s which determined that all unclaimed or non-registered lands now fell into State ownership. The registration announcement No. 1/1350 on 28th December 1931 was the first official registration of those fish traps. Although the registration is a right of use rather than a right of ownership (Hamza 2001: 28), there are many cases in which the government paid compensation for those who lost 'their' *hadhrah* due to land reclamation activities sponsored by the Government.

The direct and indirect effects of this style of reclamation on the adjacent mainland urban areas is unknown as none of these islands is yet completed, but one of the main early environmental effects is the loss of the fisheries and subsequently the loss of their livelihood by the fishermen in those areas[2]; this is a serious concern on a national scale where new studies show that Bahrain could lose its fisheries faster than was formerly predicted (the previous estimate predicted loss within 15 years) (Jassim Al Qaseer cited in Al-A'Ali 2004). Furthermore, those islands would be likely to exert immense pressure on the local road networks, forcing the local and central authorities to plan and implement network expansions. The islands already started affecting some of the coastal villages through which access to these new projects runs. In an interview, a resident of the village of Qalali (Northeast of Muharraq), stated that:

> Since the reclamation work started there (referring to Amwaj artificial Islands) the village itself became like a construction site, the six wheelers cross the narrow streets of the village to reach the site, they come even in the middle of the night. They damaged the roads and the place is full of dust and rubble, we lost our coast and I don't allow my children to play in the streets anymore. The fishermen of the village now have to go deep in the sea to have a good catch; they have lost their *fasht* [Fishery].[3]

This is expected to take place in all the villages in the North of Bahrain, as plans are underway to execute a new Northern City. The same issue is expected to affect the villages of Northern Muharraq, as plans are going ahead to implement the Diyar Al

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[1] *Hudhur* (Plural) *Hadhrah* (Singular) of certain type of fish traps in Bahrain
[2] Interview with an environmental consultant (15th December 2003)
[3] Interview with a male resident of Qalali village where Amwaj Islands are being built (3rd December 2003).

Muharraq project. The effect of cutting through some existing villages to reach the artificial Islands will be further discussed in the next Chapter.

5.8 Motives for and Approaches to Water Reclamation in Bahrain:

From the above historic review it is apparent that residents of the main towns in Bahrain reclaimed land from the sea long before any form of institutional planning authority came to exist in the Islands[1]; understanding the motives behind these reclamations is vital in order to comprehend the origins of the phenomenon. The low-lying and flat nature of most of the Islands means that there is a great deal of land available for urban expansion. But with a closer look at the cases of the towns of Bahrain and its neighbouring countries we find that a shortage of land is not considered so much at the scale of the country, but at the scale of the city and in most cases in a very specific locality, which is the waterfront itself. The origin of this could be adduced to the concept of the city state, which prevailed before those countries were recognised as political entities. For instance, historical aerial photographs show the same phenomenon taking place in the city of Doha, Qatar in the 1940s, just as in the photograph of the town of Hidd in the 1950s, although Qatar is mostly flat and had a comparatively low population density (2 persons per sq. km).

The likelihood of opting for reclaiming land from the sea because it is a 'no man's land' can be shown to be invalid. The case of 1932, which was mentioned in the diaries of the consultant of the Bahraini government, shows that individuals used to own submerged land as early as 1910 (Cited in Al-Khalifa 2000: 306) so it was not a case of unowned land. Furthermore, most of those early reclamations were for residential uses — except in the case of Northern Manama, where other building types proliferated on the waterfront — yet nearly all of those reclamations where for non water-dependent projects, based on the categories established in Chapter 3. Also, they were of a low level of integration with the water, both physically and visually. The reason for this is based on the architectural style of residential buildings at the early stages of land reclamation. Those buildings were typical courtyard houses looking inwards rather than outward towards the sea. Thus being on or near the water for visual reasons was obviously not behind Manama's urban growth style.

[1] The first one was the Land Registration Bureau in Bahrain in 1924

This would lead to both demographic pressure and the prevailing socio-economic structure of these coastal towns to be considered the joint bases of that mode of growth and the subsequent land reclamation. Prior to the discovery of oil in Bahrain in 1932, the socio-economy of the Islands was based on an extended family module[1]. That means offspring of any family would, upon marriage, by preference live with or near to their families for both social and economic reasons (Khuri 1980; Rumaihi 1976; Waly 1990). The economic reasons derived from the fact that all the male members of the family were in the same profession and running a family business. However, the size and the strength of the ties within those extended families differed from one locality to the next within Bahrain. While this could be true for some towns, it does not apply to all towns, particularly Manama, which was multicultural and ethnically diverse and where no socio-economic system could have prevailed alone.

However, the main economic activities in the islands could have forced urban growth in such manner. On the one hand, we find valuable agricultural lands surrounding or bordering the towns, forcing them to grow in the direction of the sea instead of building on green field sites. And on the other hand, those towns economically depended mainly on aquacultural and seafaring activities which necessitated their proximity to the sea. Thus, cheap lands open to development could be available at some distance from those towns, behind the agricultural lands and away from the sea, but yet remain unwanted. This complies with Hudson's justification of land reclamation as he stated, "of all the reasons for reclaiming land, demand for useful space is the most obvious" (Hudson 1996: 47). Here 'useful' could include: buildability, suitability of price or rent in relation to the desired activity and its proximity to the sources of capital.

The final possibility for this style of growth is based on land speculation. The two facts established by George (1912), are of relevance to the case of Manama and Bahrain in general. George adduces two basic facts to explain a rise in the speculative value of land, which are that: 1- land is [hypothetically] fixed in supply and that 2- land is needed for any kind of production. After studying the cycles of reclamation in the Northern parts of Manama, it has been found that the beginning of a new layer of reclamation does not necessarily depend on the urban maturity or the level of occupancy of the previous layer. Sometimes a new layer starts when the previous one is less than 25%

[1] Refer to the work of Rumaihi (1976), Khuri (1980), Al Tajir (1987) and Waly (1990) for a better understand of the historical socio-economy of Bahrain

complete. This suggests that those lands have become unsuitable due to their high rents or prices. Opting for land reclamation could be understood through J. Belgrave's (1960: 204) narrative of soaring rent and land prices during the 1950s; he even rated them on an equal level, in terms of prices, with properties in good locations in the city of London. Furthermore, the expansion of the city towards the sea was mainly state-sponsored even on those early stages. Izzard commented on the phenomenon in Manama during the 1970s, stating:

> This system of creating new land is a weapon in the hands of the government in its attempts to keep down inflation. Land values in the existing town have inflated wildly in response to the pressure of new business coming into the island and seeking premises for offices and for the accommodation of staff. A building boom began in the early 1970s financed by private enterprise, in which many of the wealthy merchant families are involved, but by offering reclaimed land for development at almost 90% below the market rate, the government has frustrated the near-monopolist hold these families had on the development of the modern town. (Izzard 1979: 97-8)

The question here is who has been buying those newly reclaimed, 90% cheaper, lands keeping in mind that until 2002, when a new law was introduced in Bahrain allowing non-Bahrainis to own properties on the islands[1], only Bahrainis were permitted to buy them; and new business coming into the country was not able to benefit directly from that governmental intervention. The same can be understood from Izzard, when she describes the rise in the property prices in Manama in the 1970s:

> Property values in the coveted area adjacent to the old covered bazaar and the customs office have risen so high that the loss of a foot of ground is grudged, and the new high-rise buildings which are replacing the two-or three-storey developments of the 1930s are crowding forward onto the existing narrow roadways and obtruding ruthlessly on each other's light and air. The capital costs of building can be recovered in two years, and returns of 30%, 40% or even more are commonplace in a situation where no foreigner can own land, and private-sector development is in the hands of long-established landlords cashing in on their family holdings. (Izzard 1979: 110-1)

This economic option could have been supported by the dogma of the island's highest authority: in his biography Sir Charles Belgrave stated that in 1953, during a stopover in Venice with Shk. Sulman Bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the hitherto ruler of Bahrain (1942-1961):

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[1] Cabinet of Ministers Decree No. (5) for the year 2002 Regarding the Determination of Areas where non-Bahrainis are Permitted to Own Properties and Lands

> Our party did not show much enthusiasm for Venice; they insisted that it must be unhealthy owing to the water and regretted that the canals had not been filled in to make roads so that cars could drive up to the doors of the hotels. (C Belgrave 1960: 185)

That approach towards water could have shaped the overall policy in Bahrain with respect to the treatment of water. The same approach lead to major privatization of the waterfront. While 90% of the population of Bahrain lives around the coastal areas, only 8%[1] of Bahrain's beaches are accessible by the public. The remainder are withheld under private ownership (Dr. Saeed Abdullah cited in Ravi 2004)

5.9 The Physical Configuration of the Public Space of Manama throughout the Urban Growth Process

This section explores the physical configuration of the historical Northern and Eastern waterfronts of Manama and their available public space. At this point in the thesis it is noteworthy to remind the reader that many parts of the current waterfront of Manama were formerly the waterfronts of nearby villages or remote open spaces.

5.9.1 The Historical Urban Waterfront and its Public Open Space

As per the working definition mentioned in Chapter 3, the waterfront is primarily where urban areas of the city or the town physically meet the sea. This phenomenon was solely represented during the 1930s by the northern waterfront of the city — stretching from Ra's Romman on the east to Al Na'eem on the west — where Manama harbour's was hitherto located[2]. The public space on that waterfront was basically formed of Prior Road (Currently Al Khalifa Road) and a few of the open spaces to its North. Prior Road itself was once submerged land; although there are no historical pictures of that period. But Mr. H. Yateem, in an interview with Clarke (1981: 160) stated that his shopping Mall, to the south of Prior Road, stands at the location of an old seaside house. Bashmi (1994: 28) stated that an office building called Kripal used to stand where there is now Yateem's shopping mall. Besides indicating the location of Prior road, this reflects the

[1] This figure dropped to 3% in 2006, as per a partially published report prepared by SOM (sited in Al Ayam 2006)

[2] The first pier to be built in Manama harbour was in 1901 (Wheatcroft 1988: 84) and many expansions followed up to the 1950s. The idea of dredging a deep water channel to allow larger to boats reach the harbour was ditched and the whole focus shifted towards the south of Jufair where Mina Sulman was built and opened in the late 1960s

changing land-use of the waterfront from residential, to office (services) to shopping (commercial).

By the end of the 1920s after the second[1] complete cycle of Incremental reclamation to the north, the Sea Road (currently Government Road) became a public space on the waterfront. Many private open spaces remained to its south, but they were built over rapidly. Both roads were initially narrow two-way roads with a single lane in each direction[2]. Prior Road was never considered for widening, which could be due to the hitherto prevailing modes of transportation and the private ownership of the tracts on both sides, although there are cases from around the same period when the Government bought up privately-owned buildings and lands in order to widen certain roads or to erect public buildings[3]. Apparently; the Government considered that constructing the Sea Road was more economically feasible than widening Prior Road for the following possible reasons: 1- constructing the road on reclaimed land is cheaper than buying up properties in a prominent place in the town; 2- it would allow for land reclamation on both sides of the new road which can provide a source of income to the Government and 3- it will provide some empty tracts to accommodate the then-expanding Governmental body and the business sector.

The open space to the north of Prior Road was a working waterfront; it was used for boat-building, anchorage of boats of all sizes, as a storage place for coral stone (*froosh*) quarried from the nearby shallows (*f'shoot*) and for base-fishing. After building the Sea Road some of those activities could not take place anymore, such as boat-building and the storage of the rocks that is due to the construction of the bulkhead. It is not clear whether there were access points to the water itself in the form of steps, but from the historical images studied by the author it has been established that nearly the whole waterfront was used as an anchorage for boats and in some places there were makeshift wooden piers. The two roads did not hamper the access to the water from the adjacent parts of the town, due to the small number of cars in the country (around a dozen during the 1930s [C Belgrave 1960:17]). And the fact that the pedestrians in Bahrain used to consider that they had priority on the road and would behave accordingly (J. Belgrave

[1] The first layer was completed by the construction of the Prior Road itself
[2] The first motor car in Bahrain was imported by Shaikh Abdullah bin Isa in the mid 1920s; cars became highly desirable by the 1940s (Wheatcroft 1988)
[3] Charles Belgrave Diaries 1927-1957, note on the 15th November 1931 cited in (M. Al-Khalifa 2000: 296)

1960: 162). Older women and children in some of the remaining villages around Manama still behave in the same way.

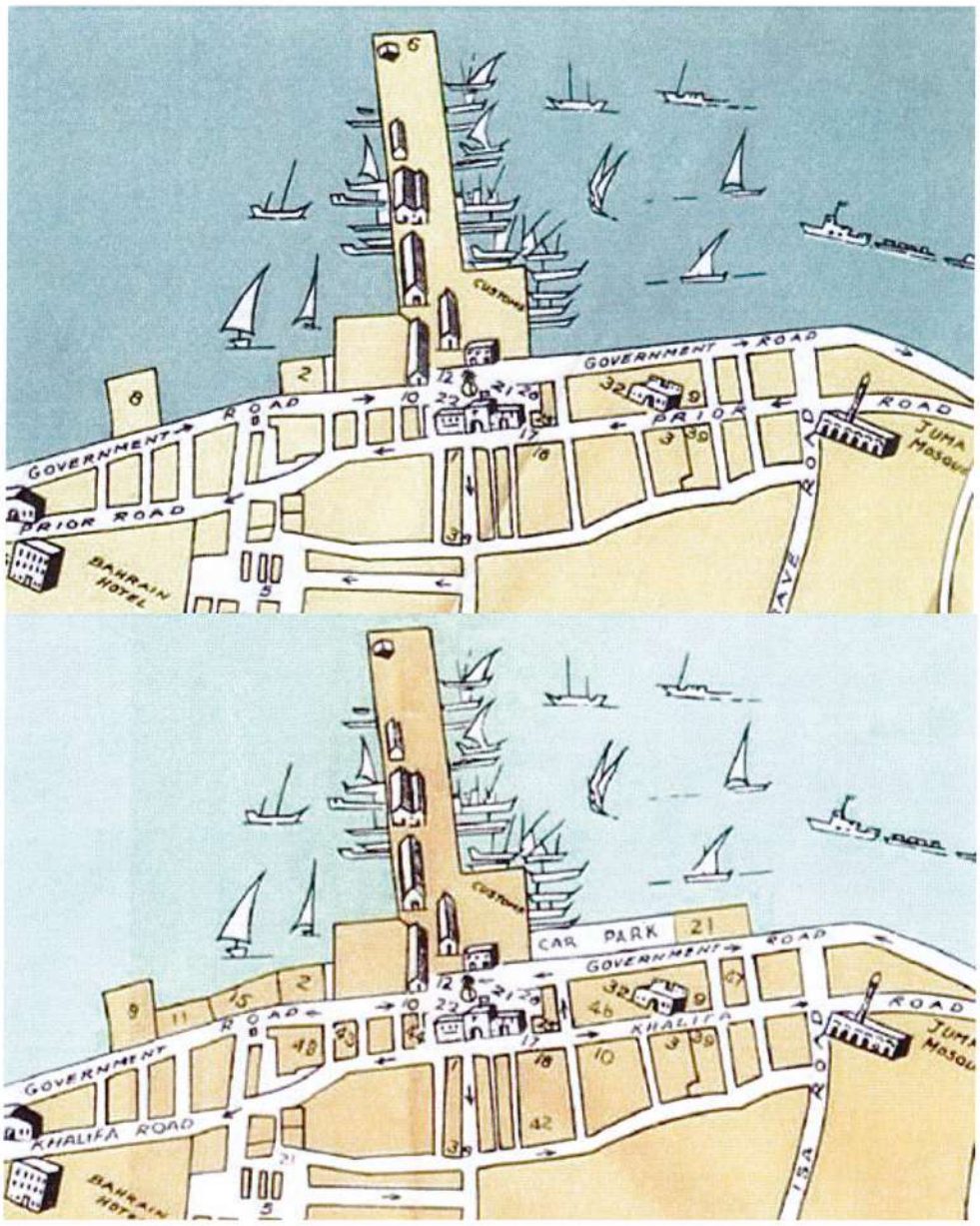


Figure 5.14: Top: North of Manama by the end of the 1950s. Bottom: North of Manama by the end of the 1960s

Source: (J. Belgrave 1960, 1970) Size and orientation edited by the author and vary from the original maps



Figure 5.15: Kids fishing near Manama Harbour circa 1950s
Source: Unknown

By the 1940s the third layer of reclamations started; and by this time the plots to the south of Sea Road were mainly privately owned and had been built over, while the remaining plots were highly priced[1]. Reclamation to the north of the Sea Road, now renamed Government Road, began with the construction of a bus depot (Figure 5.15) and the Eastern Bank (now Standard Chartered Bank). By 1951, Government Road was still a two-way road, with a single lane in each direction, with no island between the two opposing lanes. The bulkhead on the seaside, which was built during the 1940s, accommodated the road lights. The few benches facing the roadside which were put there in an earlier phase, were allowed to remain. Those benches mark a major point in the history of the waterfront of Manama. They were the first elements of an institutionalised intervention used in demarcating public space in the city. During that period there were only six buildings or designated spaces to the north of Government Road: Manama harbour, the bus depot, the bank mentioned earlier, the Hilal Al Mutairi building to the west of the harbour, the Custom House to the south of the harbour and a small car park to the east. The eastern part of Government Road was widened during the 1950s and the benches were removed. By the mid 1960s the biggest progress on the north of Government Road was, yet again, taken by the Government when a large[2] piece of land was reclaimed to accommodate a new government house (Figure 5.17). Subsequently, many other buildings mushroomed on the waterfront, of which none was

[1] This is based on the recurrent trends of land speculation business in the Islands
[2] Large in comparison with the traditional urban fabric to the south of Al Khalifa road (formerly Prior Road)

water-dependent, and Government Road ceased to be a seaside road, hence its change of name.



Figure 5.16: Original Caption: "North-west of Manama with the new Government Building in the background". This image shows the dense urban fabric of Manama in contrast to the scale of the hitherto new buildings on the reclaimed lands

Source: (J. Belgrave 1970)

Moreover, this cycle of reclamation culminated in the reclamation of King Faisal Highway during the second part of the 1970s. This included the reclamation of the Diplomatic area to the northeast of Ra's Rumman (Figure 5.10). The public space to the north and to the east of the highway had been used by members of the public for some time. The open space to the north remained wasteland until after the widening of the highway and the construction of the first phase of King Faisal Corniche Park.

The same process was simultaneously taking place on the eastern side of Manama. There is very little documentation of what was going on the eastern waterfront. That could be due to the lack of a substantial number of prominent buildings there. Furthermore, when the city grew to the east around the area where Shk. Hamad

Causeway[1] was being constructed and to the southeast towards the Gudaibiya Guest Palace, prior to any reclamation, two water-dependent projects were built on that waterfront: the Marin Airport and a sailing club. Yet again there is little information about these two public service buildings.

In common with the northern waterfront, each layer of reclamation of the eastern waterfront culminated with a new seaside road such as Palace Road (currently Old Palace Road) and Al Fatih Highway[2]. The process concluded with the construction of the Al Bahri Corniche (official name: the Eastern Waterfront or Al Fatih Corniche, according to the road signs in the area) which is the second location selected as a focus study area for this research. The Al Bahri Corniche is the first waterfront park to be constructed in Manama in the mid 1980s. The first reclamation to the east of the Al Fatih Highway was for the construction of the Marina Club, which was inaugurated on the 11th November 1981, followed by the reclamation of land for the Bahrain National Museum, which opened in 1988.

This is not to say that the city was expanding only in the direction of the sea; Manama expanded in all directions swallowing palm groves, villages and empty spaces as we are going to see in the following section.

5.9.2 Public Open Space on the Rural Waterfront

The second type of waterfront is of a rural nature. In most cases the public space within this context used to be in the form of a narrow strip of land sandwiched, mostly, between the palm groves of the village and the water[3] (Figure 5.18). Villages that used to have this kind of waterfront are Al Mahooze, Al Khamees to the south, Sanabis, Al Deah and Al Burhama on the northwest and Al Jufair on the southeast. The distance between the village and the coastline varied; for example Bilad Al Qdim had a fishing community although, comparatively, it is situated far from the sea (Toubli Bay). The researcher focused on the villages of the northwest (Karbabad, Al Bid'ha, Al-Deah, Sanabis and Al Burhama), where the first focus area of this research is located.

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[1] The causeway was completed in 1942 and took 11 years to build

[2] It is the continuation of King Faisal Highway and runs in a north-south direction connecting the north of the capital city with Mina Sulman in the south east and further on, the Sitra causeway.

[3] This was discovered via a survey of the northern coastline of the island of Bahrain and through interviews with residents of the villages of Al Deah and Karrana.

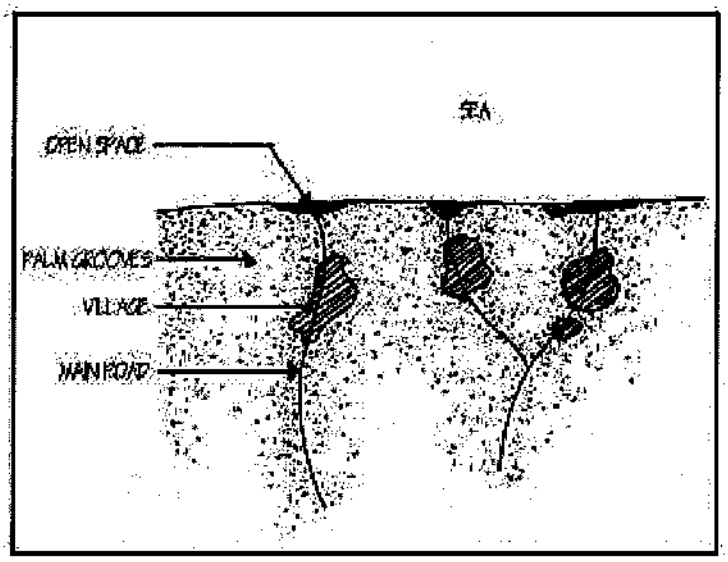


Figure 5.17: A schematic sketch showing the location of the villages among the palm groves

Prior to the 1930s, the villages were relatively small settlements lying between the sea and the palm groves in a recurring pattern that it was still possible to trace, in spite of the rapid pace of land reclamation. We can always locate the original settlements based on the physical urban pattern. Overall, the villages used to be located away from the waterfront and the space between the water and the built-up areas was used for cultivation activities. There could be two environmental and one strategic explanations for this distance from the sea. First the island of Bahrain is low-lying and the spring high tide could be damaging for any construction on the water's edge[1]. The second possible justification of that location could be of the microclimate which the groves provided around the villages. They used to provide a cool and refreshing climate around the villages, as experienced by the author himself in the late 1970s. That microclimate used to attract some of the wealthy city inhabitants to spend their summer on the village beaches, as described by an eye witness:

> This area, next to Ain Al Shiyokh, (The spring of the Sheikhs) used to be a summer camp of the royal family; they used to come from Manama and Muharraq to spend the summer in here.[2]

This custom continued up to the point where most of the buildings of Manama and Muharraq had air-conditioning and the whole idea of coastal summer camping died out.

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[1] This was understood from many interviews with some residents of Sanabis and Al Deah villages during April 2001, Oct-Dec 2003, and Oct-Nov 2004

[2] Interview with a male community service participant from the village of Al Deah (1th December 2003)

The third possible reason for that distance from the sea is strategic: the early settlers could have chosen a location away from the water, where they are camouflaged within the palm groves for security reasons. This is the more plausible given Bahrain's turbulent history so that the only way for any invader to access the coast was via the sea.

The palm groves acted as a soft barrier between the villages themselves and allowed for more control of the waterfront by the villagers. This control and sense of ownership still exist in some coastal areas in Manama and in Bahrain in general, for example among the fishermen of Karrana and Jufair villages, who do not allow fishermen from other villages to use their mooring area, although the original mooring area of Al Jufair has been reclaimed since the 1980s and the one they currently use is a reclaimed private plot next to the Bahrain Specialist Hospital. The same is happening in larger and more open towns, such as the town of Hidd on Muharraq Island. A fisherman from Al Hoora area narrated his ordeal when he moved to live in Al Hidd:

> When I moved to Al Hidd I could not use the bay there; although the fishermen knew that I lived among them; I was still considered an outsider, they will harm you somehow, they will cut your boat loose or do some damage to it until you refrain from using their bay, they do it because you'll compete with them, that's why I still use this bay although it is not as nice as the one in Al Hidd and coming in and out from here is so difficult in low-tide times[1]

Overall, the public space on the waterfront of the village was at a micro scale and only used by the residents of that specific village, particularly when it came to agricultural (fishing) uses. Furthermore, the coastal villages did not contain substantial internal open spaces, as in the form of squares. That is based on the author's investigation in Al Deah village, where he found that most of the inner open spaces on the sides of the streets are the sites of demolished privately-owned buildings. The open spaces found next to the *Ma'tams*[2] of the village are either *Waqf*[3] land or privately owned but left for the use of the public[4]. Those spaces are significant to the Shi'a of Bahrain during the time of their religious festivals, when the *Ma'atams* cannot accommodate the overwhelming number of participants.

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[1] Second interview with Al Bahri amateur fishermen, Al Bahri (20th October 2004)
[2] *Ma'tam* is the Bahraini equivalent of what is known by Hussainiyah (Saif 1995: 26).
[3] *Waqf* is a "pious foundation in which the property is held in perpetuity with the income devoted to charitable purposes or specific group of people" (Akbar 1988)
[4] Interview with a male resident of the village of Al Deah (18th April 2002)

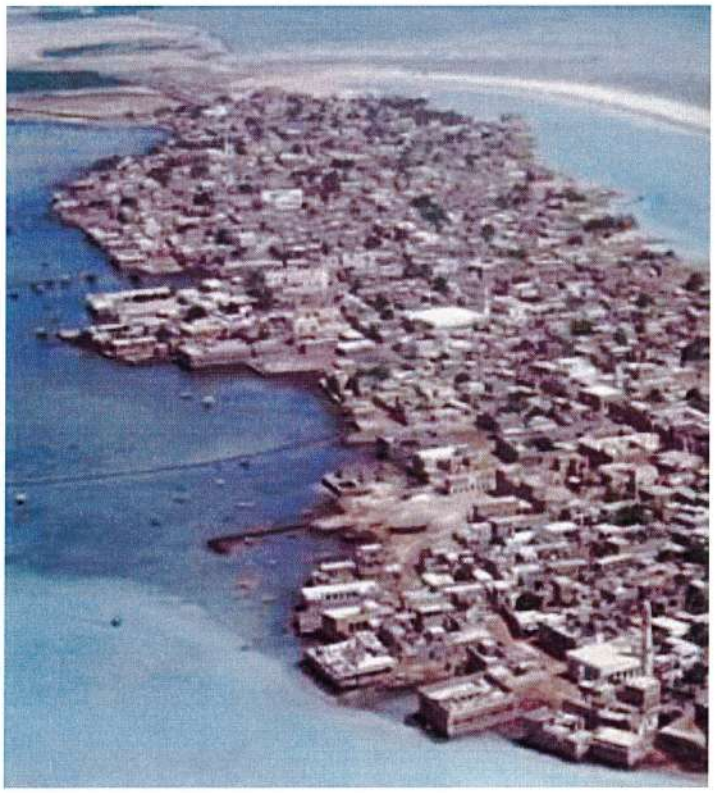


Figure 5.18: The town of Al Hidd in the 1960s

Source: Unknown

The waterfronts of villages to the northeast of Manama city (Karbabad, Al Bid'ha, Al-Deah, Sanabis and Al Burhama), where the first case study is partially located, remained of a rural nature until the reclamation of 1983. The overall view was of a forest-like environment, surrounding the villages with numerous tall and elegant palm trees, as Sir Charles Belgrave[1] described them:

> Along the northern coast of Bahrain there is a narrow strip of land some three miles wide which is under cultivation. The fertile gardens containing date and Loz (Indian almond or terminalia), pomegranate, Banana and fig trees are irrigated from many natural springs and artesian wells [...] The coastal towns have an attractive appearance. Manama's water front is lined with high white houses and beyond the town date gardens extend in an unbroken line down to the water's edge. Roads in the northern part of Bahrain pass through avenues of tall and stately date palms, bearing great bunches of golden, red and yellow fruit during the summer months. (J. Belgrave 1960: 30)

The shoreline itself was very narrow during the mean tide level. But at low tide a large area of the seabed was exposed, around 2km long and deep, and in that particular area

[1] Sir Charles Belgrave was an advisor to the Bahraini Government between the years 1926 to 1957

the fishermen used to moor their boats. But that made them depend on the tide in order to access the waters. This exposed coral reef area (known locally as *Fasht*), allowed three main activities: 1- the use of fish traps (*hadra*), 2- the possibility of fetching water from the fresh water springs (*Kawakib)* without the need to dive in the water to reach them and 3- the exposed basin provided an ideal location for the maintenance of the villagers' fishing boats without the need to remove them from the sea.

Basically, the character of the early waterfront was of a sandy beach leading to very rocky waters. The beach was dotted with tall elegant palm trees with the villages in the background framed by the palm groves on the eastern and western sides.

5.9.3 Public Open Space on the Remote and Open Waterfront

The third type of waterfront used to be of an open nature. The current eastern waterfront was of an open nature famous for its beaches and vast open sandy spaces such as Al Gudaibiya and Umm Al Hassam Beach. In Al Gudaibiya were located an aeroplane landing pad, a horse-racing track and many makeshift demarcated football fields. Gudaibiya beach and its open sandy spaces have been mentioned in many autobiographies but none of the interviewees from that area was old enough to remember it in its original condition. Umm Al Hassam beach was only mentioned by Abdulla (1994). He stated that it was a summer camp over looking Toubli bay prior to the 1980s reclamation. The two beaches used to accommodate one third of the residents of the city of Muharraq and Hidd during the summer (Abdullah 1994: 51; Al-Zayani 1998: 240). However, summer camping in *Barasti* houses (Figure 5.20) ended before the reclamation process started to reshape the waterfront of Manama drastically. Technological advances and the introduction of them in Bahrain affected the habits of the city dwellers and the way they use the waterfronts. The introduction of electricity to Bahrain in 1931 and air-conditioning later on led many people to spend the summer in their city houses. A further issue was that the summer camps had never been safe, as many were vulnerable to fire and when ignited would burn down rapidly (Abdullah 1994: 51; Al-Zayani 1998: 240).

In the 1920s the erection of the Guest Palace on the coast of Al Gudaibiya, far from the densest areas of Manama, acted as a strong magnet which encouraged the rapid growth of the city in the direction of the Palace. Prior to any urban growth towards the lower

Gudaibiya area, the open coastal spaces were used as summer camps. Those public spaces were of a high value as the city lacked any large open spaces (*sahat* or *barahat*, see Appendix II for further details of those spaces).

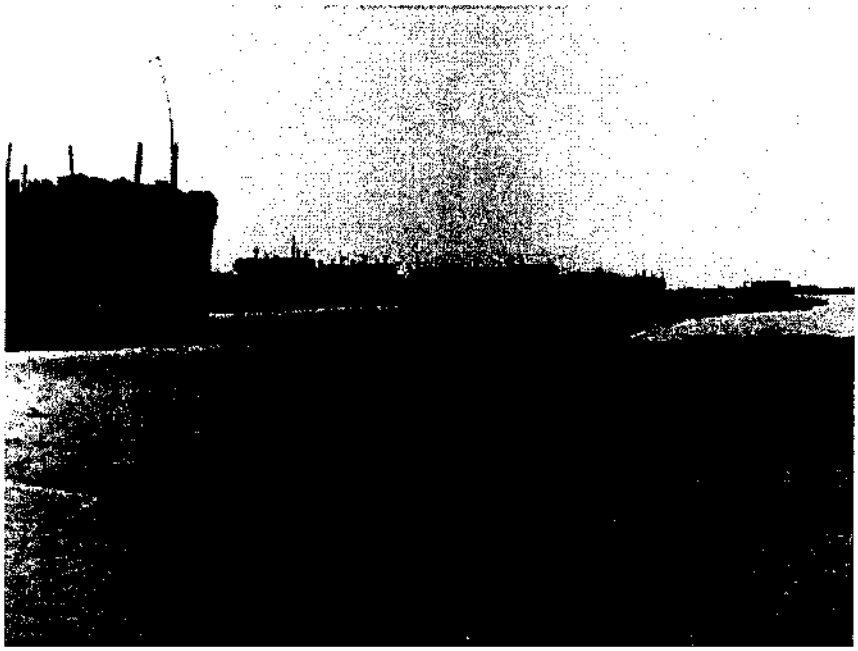


Figure 5.19: Summer camp in Arad, Muharraq Island, showing barasti houses
Source: Abdullah Al Khan

In summary, the public spaces on the first and third types of waterfront were of a large scale (macro scale), in some cases serving the whole city and the neighbouring towns. But the public space on the second type of waterfront used to be of a micro scale, serving the inhabitants of the adjacent villages or neighbourhoods only. There are a very few cases where the beaches of some villages have been used as summer camps, such as the renowned Al Jaboor Beach. Al Jaboor or Al Yaboor beach was lost due to the North of Sanabis reclamation in the early 1980s. It was mentioned with nostalgia during two group interviews conducted on Karrana coast and Al Seaf waterfront (November – December 2003) with some fishermen from the villages of Karrana, Sanabis, Al Deah, and Karbabad, including some who were senior citizens. This beach was a locus of social interaction between the people of those villages and the people of the cities during the summer time[1].

As the urban growth process shaped the waterfront physically, its uses and links with other forms of public space around the city were also transformed. From the above

[1] Interview with a community service participant from the village of Al Deah (11th December 2003)

review of the three types of waterfronts in and around Manama we can see that the city dwellers depended on the three types of public spaces, respectively, to access nature, for their social and leisure activities, and/or for their water-dependent industrial activities. Those three types of use formed an interconnected network of public spaces linked with other inland open spaces such as the *baraha* and *saha*. It is important to mention that the city dwellers also had the habit of camping in private palm groves as a form of leisure/social pursuit and in order to access nature[1].

5.10 Conclusion

This Chapter is the first of four which aim to illustrate the factors that have shaped the production of public space of Manama. It aims to contextualize the topic of this research and to introduce the case study area historically. The Chapter has traced the history of the processes of urban growth and land reclamation in Manama. It highlighted the effects of those processes at two levels: the overall urban settings in term of city-water relationship and the changing typology of the public space throughout that process. To do so, the Chapter has gone back in time to the origins of the land reclamation process in the history of the local area and identified the three key styles of reclamation that have been followed so far. These styles were named by this research as: 1- the Incremental style, 2- the Large Scale style and 3- the Island style. The chapter showed how each style has a distinctive effect on the availability and form of public space on the waterfront.

The Chapter also identified three key historical types of public space on the waterfront in or around Manama. Those types are: 1- urban public space, 2- rural public space and 3- Remote public space. However, it also showed how the three types ceased to exist in their original forms, as an outcome of urban growth and land reclamation processes, and how they were replaced by two generic forms of public space; the formal and informal. It also showed how many historical working waterfronts were turned into mere sites of urban expansion, with their activities replaced by pure leisure public space. Furthermore, it highlighted how Manama's urban growth is diminishing micro-level public space, by displacing local communities and replacing them with new ones of higher densities, which are disconnected from the water.

[1] This is understood from many interviews and also it is a well known fact in the local culture

The last part of this Chapter analysed the motives and driving forces behind this mode of urban growth. It reached the conclusion that regardless of the varied reasons for land reclamation, a shortage of useful land is the chief one. It also brought to the surface both the negative and positive effects of land speculation on the availability of public space. Land speculation is increasing the demand for land and encouraging land reclamation as a source of revenue. Opposed to that, land speculation has caused many tracts on the waterfront to remain empty for a considerable time, which has allowed for public access to the water and later, for appropriation by the public. In the short-term, therefore, land speculation allows for the creation of informal public space.

Cahpter 6: The Urban Morphology of Manama's Waterfront

6.1 Introduction

This Chapter discusses three segments of a fourfold topic. The first segment presents the characteristics of the northern and eastern waterfronts of Manama in terms of land-use. The second segment depicts the state of land tenure for the same area. Subsequently, the third segment illustrates the land-use of these waterfronts and moves on to test their level of water-integration and water-dependency. Because of its importance and magnitude, the fourth segment, which concerns the accessibility of the waterfront, is given the whole of the succeeding chapter. The three segments of this Chapter are principally based on the parameters established in Chapter 3; these parameters and the survey have been set out in order to map the economic and industrial

uses of the waterfront. In particular, the survey was undertaken in order to gain a picture of the nature of the available open space on the waterfront in terms of its quantity, location and ownership. Through the use of these parameters or indicators, this Chapter aims to establish a holistic approach to the understanding and analysis of the waterfront in general and its public space in particular.

6.2 Manama's Waterfront

Prior to going any further in this section it is necessary to discuss at the outset a few common themes that are correlated with much of the discussion that follows. And it is also crucial to mention some basic findings, to give an initial conception of Manama's waterfront in its current state. One of the basic recurring themes is the study of the waterfront in terms of mass and space distribution; or in other terms, the study of the balance between open and enclosed spaces. For instance, if the space is a beach, waterside open land or promenade, it falls under the category of open spaces. And if the space is in the form of a building that is built right on the water and its main activities take place indoors, then it is considered an enclosed waterfront space. There are some paradoxical spaces such as the Ritz-Carlton Hotel (Area 5) (Figure 6.1) and the Marina Club (Area 27) which consist of a group of enclosed spaces, such as restaurants, gyms and cafés, besides including many open spaces on the waterside in the form of beaches, marinas and jetties; those are considered as areas of an open nature based on the spaces nearest to the water. Although the focus of this research is open public space, depicting the state of the indoor space in terms of tenure, water-dependency and integration with the water reveals a substantial amount of information about the current and the future struggle for space on the waterfront. This refers to themes of land reclamation and urban growth cycles established in Chapter 5. Thus the state of these enclosed waterfronts are recorded and analysed too.

The 34 areas and four sub-areas that forms Manama's two waterfronts are located to the east of Al Fatih Highway, the north of King Faisal Highway, the north of Sheikh Khalifa Bin Sulman Highway and the east and north of King Abdullah II Avenue in Al Seef Area (refer to Figures 6.1, 6.2 and 6.13 for location of the areas, roads and highways). The total length of the waterline of the studied area is approximately 24.6km (Figure 4.1). The accumulated length of the open spaces on the waterfront is approximately 20.4km, which represents 83% of the total length of the two waterfronts. Within this category, 60% is under private ownership, 39% is publicly owned and only 1% is leased

open space[1]. These spaces could be categorised in many ways, but to this research the basic division between the formal and informal public space is crucial. The nature of the two types of space will be elaborated upon further at a later point, but at this stage their availability and distribution on the waterfront is the main concern.

The distribution of formal and informal public spaces on the two waterfronts is another concern of this research; depicting how much open space there is in each category and giving an indication of the future availability of public space. For instance, formal public space was found to be represented by four waterfront parks: King Faisal Corniche – I (KFC-I), King Faisal Corniche – II (KFC-II); and the two Parks of Al Bahri Corniche (BC-I and BC-II) (Figure 6.3). This category forms only 10.5% of the total length of the two waterfronts and 13% of the waterline of the available open space. On the other hand, informal public space forms 34% of the total length of the two waterfronts. The three main spaces in this category are split between the Al Seef area (Area 1, 2), the area between the two causeways (Area 21) and Al Jufair (Area 33 & 34). The total length of the informal category is 340% longer than the shoreline length of formal public spaces. How those formal and informal spaces are distributed, who owns them, the land-uses around them or that are planned for them and how this affects their physical connectivity and continuity will all be examined in the following three parts of this chapter.

[1] Only one property was found under this category, that is, a reclaimed land that partially accommodates the Dolphin Park (Area A31-d); the vacant space sandwiched between the park and the sea is accessible from BC-II

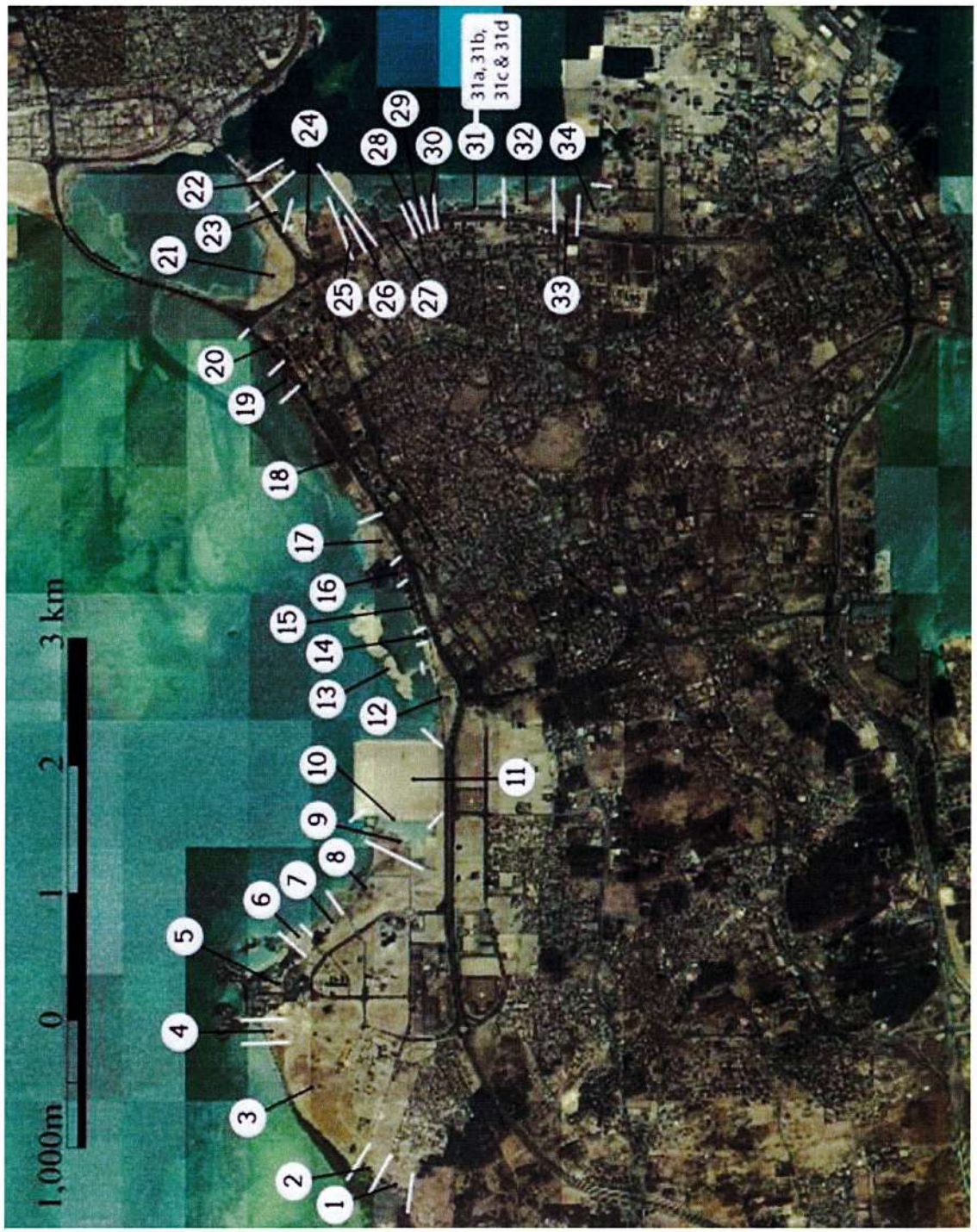


Figure 6.1: Divisions of the Study Area

Source: Satellite images from the Ministry of Works and Housing – Bahrain (2003), edited by the author

Area	Property	Description	Length of the water line m	Ownership
Area 1	Seef – A1	open coast	220	Private
Area 2	Seef – A2	open coast	182	Private
Area 3	Seef – A3	open coast	1230	Public
Area 4	A fenced plot to the west of the Ritz-Carlton Hotel	Construction site	270	Private
Area 5	The Ritz-Carlton Hotel	Beach resort	2817	Private
Area 6	A space to the east of the Ritz-Carlton Hotel	open coast	220	Private
Area 7	Seef Beach 2	open coast	387	Private
Area 8	Seef Beach 1	open coast	600	Private
Area 9	Fenced plots		1820	Private
Area 10	Seef Harbour	Informal mooring area	432	Private
Area 11	East of Seef (The big square)	Open Coast	1470	Private
Area 12	Areas facing Lulu islands (open space)	Open Coast	950	Public
Area 13	Lulu Islands (open space)	Open Coast	2391	Private
Area 14	Al Sher'a Coffee shop	Enclosed café with some outdoor seating areas	81	Public - Leased
Area 15	King Faisal Corniche - Phase – II (KFC – II)	Park	375	Public
Area 16	Ponderosa Area	Open Coast	250	Public
Area 17	Manama Harbour-BFH	Construction site	990	Private
Area 18	King Faisal Corniche - I (KFC-I)	Park	1315	Public
Area 19	Gol-Afshan Persian Restaurant	Provided with outdoor dining areas	200	Private
Area 20	The space to the East of KFC-I	open road-side space	1182	Public
Area 21	Space between the Two Causeways	Open coast	1556	Private
Area 22	Novotel Al-Dana Resort Hotel	Beach resort	600	Private
Area 23	The Space Between Al Dana and The Museum	open road side space	400	Public
Area 24	Bahrain National Museum	Has some outdoor spaces	725	Public
Area 25	Sawani Coffee Shop	Outdoor coffee shop	56	Private
Area 26	Art Centre	Indoor art centre	121	Public
Area 27	Marina Club	Includes jetty and beach	1400	Private
Area 28	Fun land Centre	indoor bowling and ice skating rink	60	Private
Area 29	Layali Zaman	Seaside coffee shop	68	Public - Leased
Area 30	Access to Dream Island	Construction site	94	Private
Area 31	Al Bahri Corniche - I	Park	312	Public
A31-a	Bayt Al Omdah Coffee Shop & Bahrain Tourism Company Jetty	Indoor coffee shop and a derelict jetty	200	Public - Leased
A31-b	Hawar Islands Marine Taxi	Jetty and Sales office	125	Public - Leased
A31-c	Coral Beach Club	Indoor club with a small beach	132	Public - Leased
A31-d	Dolphin Park and Coffee Shop	Coffee shop with open space on the waterside	141	Public - Leased
Area 32	Al Bahri Corniche - II	Park with a beach	575	Public
Area 33	Jufair Harbour	Informal mooring area	325	Public
Area 34	Jufair Beach South	Open coast	320	Public

Figure 6.2: Ownership of the Spaces and Properties on the Northern and Eastern Waterfronts of Manama, Area codes as shown in figure 6.1



Figure 6.3: The Four Formal public spaces on the Waterfronts of Manama. 1: KFC-II (Area 15), 2: KFC-I (Area 18), 3: BC-1 (Area 31), 4: BC-II (Area 32).

6.3 Zoning of the Northern and Eastern Waterfronts of Manama

The current available zones on the waterfront can be summarised in four basic categories: work spaces, leisure spaces, un-zoned spaces and special project areas.

6.3.1 Work Space on the Waterfront

Work spaces represent 16% of the total shoreline length of Manama's waterfront. This percentage has recently risen due to the Bahrain Financial Harbour project (Area 17), the allegedly 'Canary Wharf of the Gulf' (Bahrain Tribune 2003b), which is currently under construction in the location of the old Manama Harbour. Most of the work spaces on the waterfront are in the form of office space. This category was at its peak during the early reclamation process around Manama, based on the fact that most of these reclamations were executed to accommodate both the erstwhile growing service economy and the governmental body.

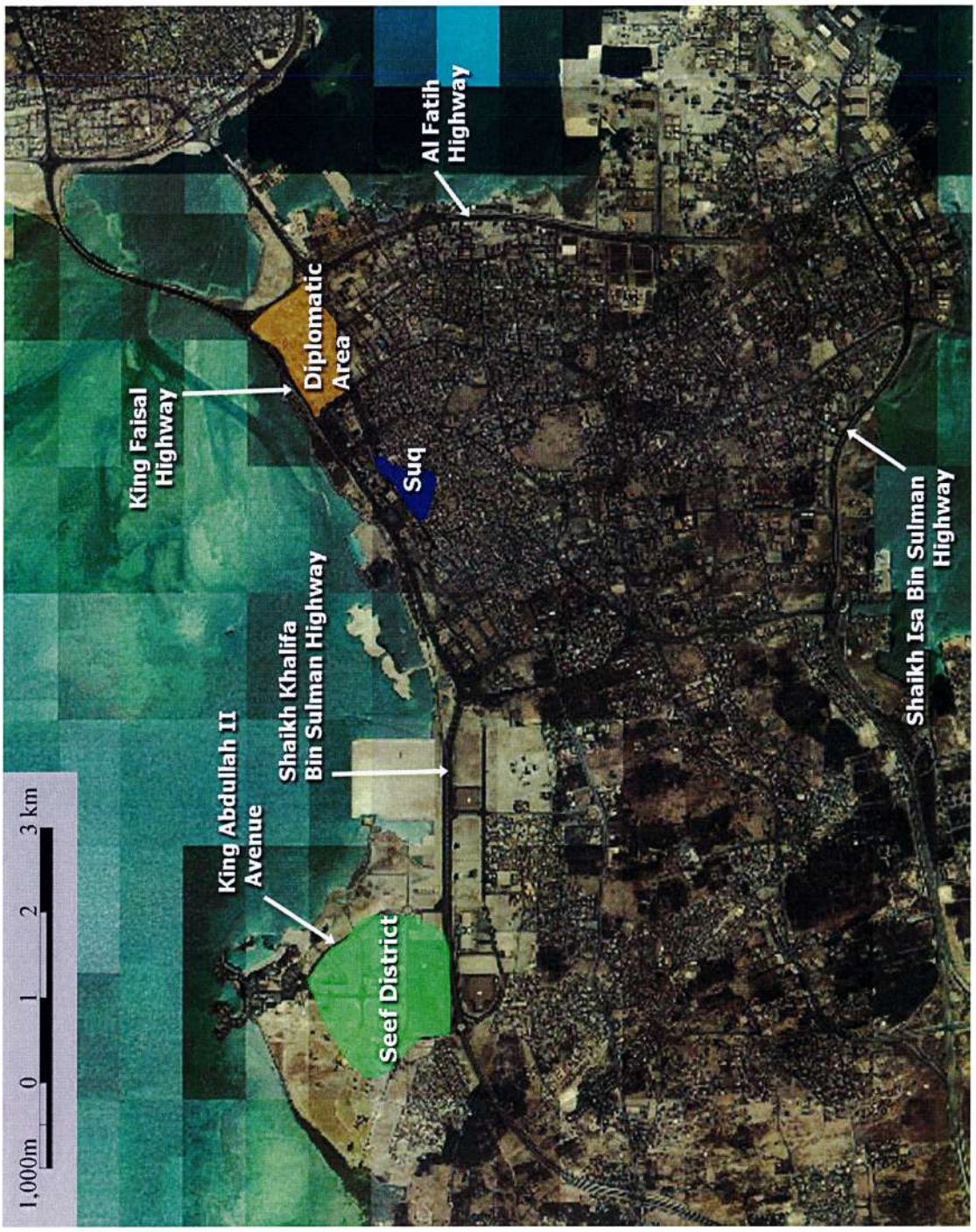


Figure 6.4: The Three CBDs of Manama

Source: Satellite images from the Ministry of Works and Housing – Bahrain (2003), edited by the author

In Manama, the three large land mass reclamations subsequently accommodated the current three CBDs; the Suq (since the 1940s), The Diplomatic Area (1970s) and latterly the Seef District (1980s) (Figure 6.4). At present, two of those CBDs are separated physically from the waterfront by the King Faisal and the Al Fatih highways. Those highways stand as physical barriers that limit the depth of the waterfront zone. Increasing the depth of that zone could substantially increase the percentage of work space within it: it could include most of the north of the Suq area, the Diplomatic area and part of Al Hoora area. That increment could have a positive effect on the marketability of those work spaces, but most importantly it may decrease the pressure on the immediate waterfront space, allowing for more public space at the waterside.

Although the marketing bodies for the office buildings in the north of the Suq and the Diplomatic area do not market these specifically as waterfront office buildings, some of them highlight the sea view as one of their advantages, such as the Bahrain World Trade Centre (Bahrain World Trade Centre 2005). This approach takes us back to the question of what demarcates the waterfront zone. Does having a sea view make a property part of the waterfront? Most of the planned or currently under construction office buildings in Manama are 20 to 50 floors high which naturally would provide a sea view at least at the higher levels. In this case there is a visual link with the water without there being a physical one. In certain contexts this could be constructed as a visual expansion of the waterfront. However, Manama's waterfront is the place which has accommodated most of the urban expansion of the city and nearly all the relatively new building types, in terms of scale and function. For instance, most of the major large-scale shopping malls, nearly all the large hotels and resorts, the national museum and most of the convention and exhibition centres are accommodated in reclaimed lands around the city. This is not unique to Manama as discussed in Chapter 2 & 3, but what makes Manama unusual is that urban expansion over reclaimed land has been accompanied by a sheer lack of regeneration projects in the old quarters of the city. Thus, the waterfront, naturally, has accommodated most of the new high-rise buildings. While having high-rise buildings in the centre of a waterfront city increases the visual accessibility of the water, situating them right on the edge of the water diminishes it by creating a wall of high-rise buildings blocking the view of the water from the rest of the city. This issue was addressed by the original master plan of Al Seef District (Ministry of Housing 1993: p.

225-6) but later alterations to the plan and the zoning regulations of the investment zone, which forms most of the District, have worked against that target[1]. The Bahraini ministerial cabinet decided in 2004 not to set a limit on building height in investment zones (Bahrain Tribune 2004d). That move was later altered to limit the increment to only 50% over the built-up area in investment zones that are five floors and above (Bahrain Tribune 2004a). The issue of the waterfront visual accessibility is discussed further in Chapter 7.

6.3.2 Living Space on the Waterfront

There are no living spaces within the waterfront observed by this research. This was based on both the current zoning maps of Manama and Al Seef District (Physical Planning Directorate 1998a, b) and through survey conducted by the author. The lack of waterfront residential spaces could result from two main factors: first, there are no planning laws that protect the riparian rights of the owners of waterside properties in addition to the protection of public's right to access to the water. Secondly, the current master plans of Manama and all the other planned areas of Bahrain do not show the final reclamation line, the lack of which stands as a major obstacle to any waterfront development. Thus, the following discussion is concerned with both the residential spaces nearest to the two waterfronts of Manama and the ones planned for the newly developed islands such as the Lulu Islands.

The general lack of living space on the waterfront set a relatively new trend in the housing market of Bahrain: most of the current leading private waterfront projects, which are taking place out of Manama, market themselves as areas where the future property owners can live right next to the water (Ossisonline 2004). This rapidly growing investment trend is met by a high demand for these kinds of properties. The high demand is reflected in the rates at which these planned residential units were sold or auctioned. For instance on the 6th January 2005 the project managers of Durrat Khaleej Al Bahrain announced that 550 units were sold out in only one day (Bahrain Tribune 2005b). The majority are marketed as second homes but some, such as Bahrain Financial Harbour, are planned as city 'loft' apartments. Most of these projects are taking place on purposely reclaimed islands or remote sites, avoiding any conflict with

[1] Interview with an architect/urban designer, Ministry of Municipalities and Agriculture Affairs (5th November 2004)

the existing owners of coastal properties. But they still they lack the protection of any planning law that clearly safeguards the riparian rights of the owners. This issue was raised by the ex-director of the Physical Planning Directorate, A. Al Alawi, when he stated that the planning laws of the costal and marine areas need to be formulated in order to accommodate both demographic and economic growth in a planned manner from which everyone would benefit (Al Ayam 2003). Mr. Abdulnoor clearly recognised the three dimensions that need to be handled and balanced in the new legislation: riparian rights, the public's right of access and the accommodation and enabling of demographic and economic growth[1].

Currently there are many residential buildings in both Al Hoora and Al Jufair that overlook the sea. Most of those residential buildings are built with a total disregard to the asset of a sea view. This is due to the same two factors mentioned in the earlier discussion of work space on the waterfront. Nevertheless, the waterfront is barely accessible to pedestrians coming from those residential areas. This mainly restricts the connection between the residential areas and the waterfront to a visual one, where it is available, and limits any further positive effects of the waterfront and its green spaces to the adjacent urban areas.

The residents of Al Seef District are forecast to face the same accessibility problems as those of Al Hoora and Al Jufair but for different reasons; due to the development's pace, its nature and its land tenure status, Al Seef's waterfront is going to be totally inaccessible the moment development is completed, in contrast to how Al Seef was envisaged when it was first planned[2]. This gloomy future was summarised in a statement by a planning officer in the Directorate of Physical Planning:

> There were public beaches, schools, parks and open spaces and it all has gone, the original plan was set to accommodate all of that"[3]

The rapid development of the waterfront in Manama and the rapid loss of public space there, including parts of the formal public spaces, made some of the authoritative figures

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[1] Interview with former urban planning senior official, Ministry of Works and Housing (13th December 2003)

[2] Interview with a planning officer, Ministry of Municipalities and Agriculture Affairs (5th November 2004). This was established also from the author's personal experience with the Al Seef project while he was undertaking his practical training requirement for the BSc in Architecture and Planning in 1986, Nearly all the brochures' presentation documents focused on showing the vibrant public waterfronts.

[3] ibid.

in planning think of creating a replacement on the new islands. Mr. A.K. Hassan, the General Director of the Municipality of Manama, stated in July 2004 that they have plans for public waterfronts on the new islands or for the extension of the current ones, such as the example in BFH. He added that the public's right to access the water was protected in all the tourist projects (Al-Fayhani 2004). Mr. Hassan did not specify which projects will provide public spaces on their waterfronts. Furthermore, he did not clarify how a passage between the high-rise buildings of BFH could be considered an extension of the waterfront. Nevertheless, the developers of most of the island projects currently under construction have made it known that their projects are of the gated community type and most of the created beaches and waterfronts will be private.

> Security is never a compromise on Amwaj Islands. The islands are designed in such a manner that security is handled at the entrance gates for residential areas, thus providing restricted access to these areas. The commercial areas, on the other hand, offer relatively less restriction. (Bahrain Tribune 2005a)

Most of the users of Manama's waterfront interviewed and even some of those who were interviewed off site expressed apprehension regarding those new projects. Some of them said that they expect the road blocks and the gates to be the first things to be built to prevent the public from using those places.

> I bet that they will have guarded gates to stop whoever doesn't live in there. Why wouldn't they? The government did it when they built the *plage* chalets. Have you been to it, if you don't own a chalet you cannot enter the place.[1]

In those projects, that is, Amwaj, Durrat Khaleej Al Bahrain, and Diyar Al Muharraq the commercial areas are generally indoor spaces that are located far from the prime waterfront locations, which are reserved for the owners of the waterfront villas and chalets. The concerns of the General Director of the Municipality of Manama are well-founded, but the solutions he envisaged, are far from what is taking place in on the ground. However, those solutions are yet to be initiated through the introduction of regulatory laws that directly legislate for and clearly specify the rights of the public on the waterfront. Additionally, the planning authorities in Bahrain could have a stronger influence on joint venture projects with the private sector, such as Durrat Khaleej Al Bahrain, of which the Bahraini Government has a 50% stake in the ownership. That

[1] Interview with a picnicking group of young men in Al Seef waterfront (6th November 2003). The *Plage* Chalets were built by the Bahraini Government in the early 1980s and they are still blocked from public use .

influence could take the form of introducing terms and conditions that would secure the public's access to the water, or to make some of the new residential spaces affordable to middle and lower income groups. But the general tendency of the government has been limited to the role of 'sleeping partner'[1]. This keeps the private partner in the driving seat, which allows him to guide the development on the bases of profitability.

Nevertheless, one of the current disadvantages of waterfront living, as perceived by some of the waterfront users, is that the hypothetical waterfront zone is infiltrated by tourism and tourist accommodation. When one of the users was asked if he would live in Al Hoora, just to be next to the waterfront, he said:

> I cannot expose my family to this kind of living, don't get me wrong, I love this place but I can't live in a place where my neighbours are the customers of the next door hotels, you know who those hotels (pointing to the hotels across the highway from BC-I) attract and what business they have, would you let your son or daughter play in the street in such a place?[2]

Similar comments were repeated by a few other interviewees with regard to the living spaces currently available on the waterfront. Those comments appear to be in line with what used to be the social conditions of the neighbourhoods around the European and North American industrial waterfronts in the industrial era. Kenyon stated that "one of the deleterious effects upon local social stability" of the residential areas around the industrial waterfronts is the "high level of anonymity" (Kenyon 1968). However, this phenomenon used to be geographically limited to the area around the harbour or in certain areas of the town known as the 'sailors' town'. The same issues formerly affected Manama. The same could be said about the effect of tourism on the residential areas next to the waterfront. The difference is that these tourist venues are not tied to certain locations within the city, except in the cases where they are water-related or -dependent. Thus they are found scattered in most of the reclaimed areas of the old town where the tourism infrastructure can be accommodated. Thus, the residential areas near the two waterfronts of Manama attract certain sizes of household or, as in similar cases worldwide, they attract 'yuppies'.

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[1] Interview with a property investment officer (3rd December 2003)
[2] Interview with local bank employees in Bahri -I (4th December 2003)

Furthermore, the issue of affordability was also raised by several other waterfront users. The neighbouring areas of the two waterfronts of Manama are the most expensive places in the whole of Bahrain and some of the users who were interviewed realise that:

> We usually see on T.V. and in the newspapers the usual saga of Bahrain, the mother of a million palm trees, or Bahrain, the islands of the tranquil beaches, but where are they? They[1] even kick us out of this beach (referring to Al Seef beach) whenever they have a conference in the Meridian (currently Ritz-Carlton Hotel but members of the public still use the old name), and we have nowhere else to go[...]I don't think we'll have a place in Amwaj, it is too expensive. I don't have BD60,000 to own a place in one of those places, I don't own a car how do you expect me to buy a chalet?[2]

The high land values along Manama's two waterfronts have subsequently inflated the value of both residential and work spaces in those areas. That factor has had the effect of limiting those areas to high income groups. The same is expected to happen in most of the new waterfront developments, bearing in mind another major factor: most of the properties initially purchased in those projects were bought for investment purposes[3]. Thus, even if the values set by the primary developers were low, they were destined to increase substantially through the mechanism of market speculation.

However, the ongoing increment in waterfront living space in Bahrain has affected public space on many levels. On the level of availability, it works to limit the size of that space by increasing the number of private waterfronts. While in practice, most of the new waterfront residential projects are taking place on purposely reclaimed land, there is barely any gap between the reclamation and the construction times, thus diminishing the possibility of the temporary informal public use of these sites, such as in the case of Al Seef and Al Jufair.

With regard to the housing stock in Al Hoora and Al Jufair, it has been found that it is mostly targeting high income groups and short-stay customers[4]. This is based on the fact that the average monthly rent of the waterfront flats visited by the author is around BD 1,000 ($2,666) which is slightly less than one fifth of the GDP per capita in 2003 (Directorate of Economic Planning 2003). Yet again, this is another factor that works to

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[1] Referring to the police

[2] Interview with a group of young men on Al Seef beach (4th November 2003). The same group was re-interviewed in 15th November. They were using the same location although they had lost the view of the sea and the place was like a construction site.

[3] Interview with a real estate manager (3rd December 2003)

[4] Interview with two managers/owner of residential buildings in Al Hoora (19th November)

limit the waterfront to high income groups. The way this trend is affecting the social aspects of the public space is discussed in Chapters 8 and 9.

6.3.3 Leisure Space on the Waterfront

Leisure space forms the largest land-use type on the two waterfronts of Manama; representing 59% of the shoreline length. On the official zoning maps, leisure spaces are usually included under *public services* , which includes all kinds of services such as parks, religious buildings, schools, electricity sub-stations and so on. Thus it is difficult to come up with a fully comprehensive view of the current quantity of actual leisure space and how much is reserved for future leisure uses from the official base-maps only. Furthermore, 34% of the shoreline is un-zoned and 2% is reserved for special projects. On the ground, those un-zoned and special area zones were found to be used mainly for leisure uses and to a lesser extent for work uses.

The 59% of shoreline mentioned earlier includes all private and public, open and enclosed, formal and informal properties on the waterfront that are used for leisure. In actual linear distance, these leisure areas extend over 13.1km of the two waterfronts' total shoreline length, forming the largest land-use type, as can be observed from Figure 6.5. These are either zoned as public services areas or are existing sites used for leisure purposes. These include shopping malls, hotels, coffee shops, museums, art galleries and public spaces in the form of parks. Yet more than two thirds of this shoreline is under private ownership (68%) and the rest is divided between public ownership (26%) and leased tenure (6%). Furthermore, 36% of that 13.1km consists of enclosed spaces, leaving only 8.4km of open space in all its forms.

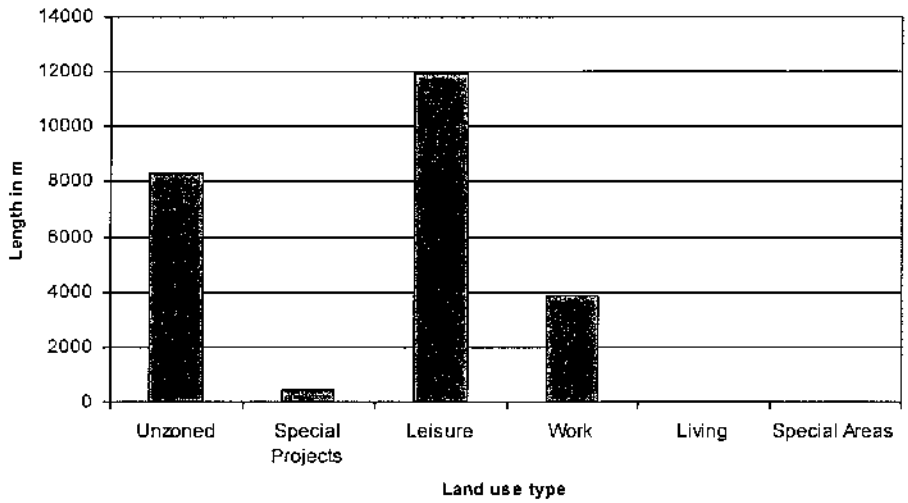


Figure 6.5: Land-use Distribution on Manama's Northern and Eastern Waterfronts

As mentioned earlier, public space in its both formal and informal forms is under threat, but what is also problematic is that leisure spaces that are private or quasi-public, such as hotels and restaurants are also in jeopardy; without the demarcation of an ultimate waterline, the introduction of legislation enforcing riparian rights and with the current lax planning practices, those enclosed private properties that are semi-dependent on the water could be affected negatively. This is based on two basic facts: first, planning practice in Bahrain does not recognise the natural attraction of the sea and does not include any concept of riparian rights in terms of visual and physical accessibility of the water. This legislative shortcoming is recognised by a small number of investment and development consultants in Bahrain. They usually blame it on the developers themselves but on a few occasions, they point to the shortcomings of official urban planning practise in Bahrain. One of the currently major property advisors on the island, DTZ - Bahrain, noted the following:

> Generally development throughout Bahrain has not taken advantage of the natural attraction of the sea and without exception there are no public schemes abutting the coast. (DTZ Bahrain 2005: p. 1)

Another factor that might have a direct link to that disregard of the water; is that the percentage of the planned area of Bahrain is only 11% of the land and 0% of the water (Mckinsey & Company Inc. 2005). McKinsey and Company clearly noted that "the lack of an overall master plan for the country results in significant uncertainty for investors" for all manner of investments but particularly for tourist-oriented ones (Mckinsey &

Company Inc. 2005: p. 27). While private properties on the waterfront form a vital part of the growing tourism industry, if the above-mentioned issues remain unsolved the tourism industry could develop with a total disregard of the water or else mostly opt for the third style of reclamation (Island style) such in the case of the Lulu Islands and Dreams Island, or treat reclaimed land as ordinary. For example, while writing this thesis; a private investor in Bahrain announced the intention to build the largest shopping mall in Bahrain in the Al Seef District (area 11) (Bahrain Tribune 2005c), another waterfront site yet again occupied by another indoor commercial activity.

The issue of affordability is yet another dimension of leisure space on the waterfront. Many interviewees expressed their discomfort with the idea that soon, in order to enjoy the waterfront they will have to join a private club or a hotel. This issue, as well as the other issues relating to the leisure uses of public space, are additionally discussed in Chapters 8 and 9.

6.3.4 Other Zones on the Urban Waterfront

Currently there are no zones that could fit under the category of *special areas*[1]. Special areas is a category used by Lynch *et al.* (1976, cited in Craig-Smith & Fagence 1995: p. 3) to refer to areas in a natural state or a development that recognises the visual advantages of the waterside location. Manama's entire waterfront is man-made with no naturalistic areas and those developments that recognise the view of the water as an asset fall under the categories of work and leisure spaces. There was an opportunity for a naturalistic approach in an area in the south of Manama, overlooking Toubli Bay, but that opportunity was lost after the construction of Sheikh Isa Bin Sulman Highway in the mid 1980s, when most of the areas to the south of the highway became suburban residential areas.

6.3.5 The Dilemma of Zoning and Public Space on the Urban Waterfront

The division between the above mentioned categories is not a clear-cut one and many areas were found to be of a mixed-use nature. While the zoning maps do not refer to any zones on the waterfront as mixed-use, mixed land uses tend to take place either in unzoned areas, or those zoned for special use. The actual zoning terms used on the maps

[1] This is based on the Manama and Al Seef zoning maps and the survey conducted by the author in 2003.

provided by the Ministry of Works and Housing refer to many zones by codes such as "Buildings - 15 Story" or "Buildings - 10 Story" (Physical Planning Directorate 1998b), such zones are classified as investment zones and could, eventually, turn out to be office buildings, residential buildings, offices with shops on the ground floor or even hotels, as in the case of the Sanabis District on the northern coast, and Al Hoora and Al Jufair districts on the eastern coast. Based on the building regulations in Bahrain, there is always a maximum limit for both the building height and the percentage of the built-up area, but there is no minimum limit. Thus, hypothetically speaking, this is an ideal case of flexible planning within the context of the developed world, and could be used both to achieve the recommended mixture of uses on the waterfront and to accommodate a degree of adaptation to economic, social and demographic changes[1]. But in the case of Bahrain, this research study regards it as an unplanned flexibility which is generating some negative results. Those conflicts impact in one way or another on the availability, quality and use of public space as it will be shown in a later part of this thesis.

The current zoning practice has created a degree of conflict at many levels, naturally those conflicts and contestations intensify whenever there is higher competition for land, and there is no land so contested as the waterfront. In Manama some early signs of conflict came to the surface during the 1980s but no documentation of these exists. Areas such as Al Jufair and Al Hoora (both built on reclaimed land) are prime examples of such a case, where the one can find two storey villas next to 10 storey hotels (Figure 6.6 - 2). Many of those hotels are linked to alcohol abuse and prostitution and several of them are located in or near to residential areas. In a few cases these venues are closer to brothels than hotels[2]. There are UK parallels with this socio-economic issue, for instance residents protesting the opening of a new pub in their area fearing the kind of clientele it might attract and the kind of night life it might lead to in their neighbourhood. Another similar issue in the UK is when residents complain about the use of their street by prostitutes as a pick-up area. The main concern of the Al Hoora Residents is how they could let their children play outdoors in the open space in such an environment (Alali 2008).

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[1] This is based on some cases of waterfront development that took place in Europe, North America and Japan, which adopted the mixed use approach in the development or redevelopment process.

[2] This is based on the author's personal knowledge of the matter and two unplanned encounters: the first was with a Turkish procuress flying from Istanbul to Bahrain in December 2000 and the second with an Uzbek prostitute in a coffee shop in Manama in Summer 2001, The two gave firsthand accounts of the scale and functioning of this business in Bahrain.

Furthermore, under the current pro-democratic political system in Bahrain, the residents of these areas became outspoken and started using some of the democratic tools in opposing some of the planners' intentions. In October 2002 around 200 of the residents of the Sanabis area protested the plans for building a hotel close to their residential neighbourhoods (Figure 6.5 -1). They opposed the type of the hotel and its proximity to their houses. Their prime worry came from the possibility of opening venues that serve alcohol in the hotel. Mr. M. A. Mansoor, the representative of the Capital Municipal Council stated during a meeting with the hotel's owners that the land was originally owned by the municipality before it was sold into private ownership and that the original building permit was for a five storey office building. He even questioned how the building permit had turned into a ten storey, five star hotel (Al Ayam 2002b). He also queried the mechanisms through which the plot was re-zoned as investment land rather than as residential land. The General Manager of the hotel said that all their documents and permits had been issued by the official authorities (Al Ayam 2002d). The change in the nature of the building permit and the zone of the plot without the consent of the municipal council of the area show that there is a gap between the Municipal Law and its application in practice. Nevertheless, sometimes such changes take place with the open consent of the council, which lacks the willpower and resources to uphold its own decisions: in March 2005 a land owner was granted permission to build a ten storey building right next to a village and the council's justification for that decision was that the owner bought the land prior to their decision to disallow that height of building next to the village. The irony is that they denied other land owners with similar predicaments a comparable building permit. Their justification for their double standards is that the person behind the latest case is a 'powerful man' who might take them to court and win! (Arrayedh 2005)

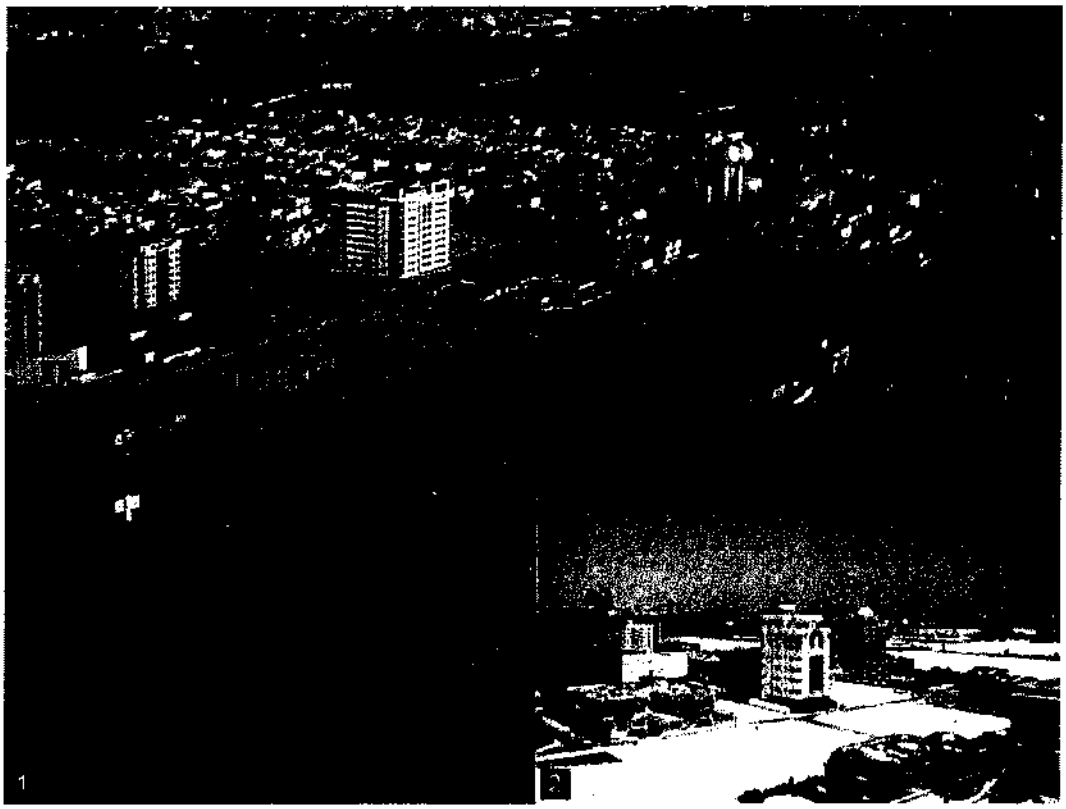


Figure 6.6: North of Sanabis, 2: Jufair - Hotels positioned between two storey residential villas (November 2003)

The public outcry was met by Ministerial Decree no. 281 of 2002 issued by the former Minister of Housing and Agriculture prohibiting the issuing of building permits for hotels, tourist apartments or the conversion of buildings to hotels on the edge or within zones classified as *private residential* (A) and (B) and *row housing* (A) and (B), as well as inside or on the parameters of the villages. The hotel was transformed into tourist flats but the calls for further protests continued (Al Ayam 2002c). The decree was too late: the damage was already done and in many cases is too expensive to remedy. From the above one can observe that zoning practise in Bahrain is oscillating between a regulatory system and a discretionary one. There appear to be broad guidelines, which must be respected, and there is also freedom for the local municipal councils to decide what suits them economically and socially. But does this correspond to what takes place on the ground?

On the 21st of January 2004 Mr. Nabeel Al Hamar the former Information Minister announced in front of the Bahraini Parliament that Bahraini families could be re-housed, in a move to separate tourism from residential areas, which was a step towards establishing tourism zones. This move was faced by another protest but this time it was

a violent one: a restaurant near Al Burhama, another ex-coastal village, was attacked by a mob (Mahdi 2004). Regardless of the mob's political background or motives; their official position was announced that they did not want a venue that serves alcohol in their neighbourhood. This could seem a far-fetched incident, remote from the main issue of this research, which is the public space, but it is one of the many signs of a growing level of extremism in Bahraini society and a sign of the planning system's failure to accommodate or restrain it. Furthermore, this kind of conflict might soon shift to the public space. In fact, the first spark of the 1990s political unrest in Bahrain was the stoning of male and female runners who were participating in the annual Bahrain Marathon for "indecent exposure" (Fakhro 1997: p. 182). This was a violent attack in a public space, allegedly caused by a problem with cultural conformity.

However, the case of the Arabic version of the 'Big Brother' television show, suspended after only 10 days of airing due to extreme public pressure mainly from radical Islamists, demonstrated that the spatial limits of cultural conformity have a certain elasticity. The show was filmed by the MBC2 TV station in a purpose-built waterfront villa constructed on the manmade Amwaj Islands located to the north of Muharraq. The protesters rejected the idea of unrelated men and women living together in the same house (Bahrain Tribune 2004b). Commenting on the conflict, a Bahraini Judge, Sheikh Mohsin Al Asfoor (Shia Department), said:

> "Suppose the programme was ousted from Bahrain and then aired in another country; does this mean that people can watch it because it is not filmed here?" (Bahrain Tribune 2004e)

The three protests: Budayyi (1996), Burhama (2004), and Amwaj (2004), could be politically motivated but what can also be traced from these events is that there are organised groups within Bahraini society who think that they are entitled to tell, and in some cases force, others to conform to their cultural values, whether in tangible or intangible public space. Equally, it could suggest that cultural conformity could be a simple case of 'not in my backyard' ('Nimby-ism').

From the point of view of this research, this is a planning[1] and particularly a zoning problem before it is a political one. The unplanned encroachment of the city on the coastal villages, the permission to open 'tourist' venues within them and the introduction

[1] This view is supported by the Undersecretary for tourism affairs in the Ministry of Information Mr. Abdullazeez Al Riffa'ee (Al Wasat 2005)

of incompatible new uses to those areas, the creation of gated communities among them and then their displacement from the coast to the depths of the higher density urban fabric are the factors that could underlie these cases of absolute cultural contrast entrapped within a limited geographical space. The waterfront of Manama is yet another geographically limited space and there is a fierce competition between a large number of parties to have a foothold within it; yet in the absence of a 'proper', culturally and politically sensitive zoning approach, along with firm, yet lawfully flexible, implementation mechanisms, the problem can only intensify. Cultural diversity and conflict will be discussed in Chapters 8 and 9, which are concerned with the social morphology of public space.

Nevertheless, yet another perplexing issue is the availability of public space under the current urban planning practices in Bahrain, in terms of size and shoreline length. As mentioned in Chapter 5, most of the land reclamation that has taken place around Manama was to accommodate the infrastructure of the economic growth and the demand for housing. Nevertheless, the current trend in the Bahraini economy is still primarily service-oriented, with a rapidly growing tourism sector. Yet the two sectors are still growing under a clear lack of a national plan to regulate and accommodate them. Mr. M. Al Atwi, the Undersecretary for tourism, stated that the tourism sector in Bahrain is unplanned and suffers from a lack of autonomy in both management and finance (Aldin 2004). The lack of a comprehensive urban and economic plan for Bahrain has recently become the country's most debated topic. The establishment of the municipal councils and the restoration of the parliamentary life in 2002 allowed for a space of debate and brought many previously taboo topics to the surface, such as the sensitive issue of land. To overcome the planning problem, the government established a number of committees in the form of think tanks or task forces each in a different area of specialisation. Those think tanks were resigned to the necessity of seeking external help: the National Committee for Planning and Development sought the assistance of SOGREAH, a French consortium, to help in defining marine areas suitable for future development and the demarcation of the final reclamation line. In 2005 the same Committee recommended a longer term master plan and this time Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM) were contacted and a deal was reached, in which SOM was to prepare a comprehensive twenty-year urban plan that would accommodate nearly all aspects of demographic and economic growth (Al Ayam 2005c). These steps are clear signs that the higher authorities in Bahrain lack confidence in their own capacity and the

competence of the local planning bodies; it also reflects general dissatisfaction with the outcome of years of shambolic planning practice.

As mentioned earlier, nearly all the tourism-related infrastructure projects, that is hotels, resorts, restaurants, shopping malls and so forth are taking place on reclaimed and waterfront sites which have an almost complete absence of publicly-oriented spaces. Thus the rapid and unplanned tourist sector will negatively affect the availability of public space. This takes into account that formal public space that is designated for the leisure usage of members of the public represents only 10% of the total length of the two waterfronts. The rest of the public space is informal and falls in areas zoned for investment, un-zoned areas or those reserved for special projects. Thus it could be transformed into a strand of commercial or even residential buildings, but not public spaces. This assumption makes reference to previous cases such as Al Jufair and Al Hoora. Besides the previously mentioned pressures on formal public space, that 10% is facing growing challenges due to the vague terms of the leasing mechanism that governs parts of it, as will be discussed in the next Section.

6.4 Land Tenure of the Northern and the Eastern Waterfronts of Manama

One of the main objectives of the survey conducted by the author was to discover who owns the waterfront. After all, ownership of the waterfront is a vital matter for the public space on it, as it was established in Chapter 2. Land ownership in Bahrain, up to the present, has decided the norms of access to open spaces in general. This is supported by the data collected during the pilot study in which it has been found that there are no privately owned open spaces that are available for the public's use except those preserved for religious reasons in the form of *Waqf*. As well as discovering who owns it, it is important to understand the mechanisms for, and trends in, allocating land that operates in the country in order to trace the effects of that on the availability of public space. What is important to this research is to discover how a public property could come to be owned by, or leased to, a private body and vice versa.

Currently Manama's two waterfronts accommodate two basic types of ownership: the public and the private. *Public ownership* is whatever is owned by the Capital Municipality or by the Government of Bahrain through one of its official bodies. Private ownership is whatever is owned by individuals separately or in a group.

Furthermore, this research considers any property that is held in a joint venture between the government and the private sector as a privately-owned one. This is based on the lack of a service-provision function in most of the public/private joint ventures that have taken place in the past in Bahrain. However, a sub-type was found in the form of public properties that are leased to private parties (*Public-leased*) for the purpose of investment. Of the three types of land tenure, private ownership was found to be the dominant one (taking up 58% of the length of the shoreline of the study area) with a slightly lesser area in public ownership (39%). The *public-leased* from of tenure was found to represent only a small proportion of the area (3%).

Although the number of leased properties on the two waterfronts is minimal, it has been discovered, through interviews with a number of planning and municipal authority figures, that it is expected to increase. So it is vital to discuss at the outset the mechanisms for leasing public land in Bahrain, besides understanding the mechanisms for owning it. It has been found that the process of buying land becomes clear only after knowing the owner of that land; a condition that could become an obstacle due to the lack of a publicly accessible and comprehensive land ownership database. The mechanism is more ambiguous in the case of public lands ownership.

It is relatively easier for investors to identify a public property than to identify undeveloped land but the mechanism followed by the public authority owner in leasing, developing or selling public property is yet another grey zone. There are ambiguities at nearly every level of the process and it is important for this research to draw attention to these ambiguities in the mechanism of land allocation and waterfront investment and how they affect the availability of public space. To reach that target, a few questions had to be answered; such as where is the starting point for the conception of waterfront projects? Which waterfront land is open for investment; leasing, sale or joint ventures and on what basis? What types of investment are allowed on the waterfront? And for how long, in the case of leases?

Overall, given the lack of a master strategic plan for Bahrain in general and for the coastal areas in particular, the conception of projects remains within the domain of the private sector, with the municipal and the civil planning authorities generally acting as recipients of proposals. This concern was expressed in six interviews with municipal and planning authorities in Bahrain (October – December 2003 & November – December 2004). As this Chapter was being written, the issue was raised by MP Isa Al-

Mutawa'a who questioned the mechanism of selling 200km² of submerged land to foreign investors (Al Ayam 2005a). This ambiguous area in the land allocation process, in combination with two other factors — the lack of civil guidelines and codes for investment, and the usual nature of the mushrooming-tourist oriented projects — will negatively affect the volume of accessible public space. As discussed earlier in this Chapter, nearly all the waterfront projects in Bahrain currently under construction are in the form of gated communities. On the one hand, this trend in investment is increasing the amount of waterfront spaces and properties but on the other hand, it is reducing the extent of publicly accessible ones, as discussed in all the three parts of this Chapter.

Furthermore, it has been found that leasing public properties for private investment does not follow fixed rules. Setting an expiry date, a value for the lease and even the type of investment are very elastic. Generally, an established method that depends on relativity[1] is preferred. For instance when an investor approaches any municipality to lease any of their properties, they follow the market value of the adjacent properties in determining the lease value or, if available, they consider the lease value of their own adjacent properties. This might sound like a logical way of valuing a property, but when it is followed by a municipal and planning authority then it may be considered alarming. Those authorities are supposed to lead the market and guide it rather than being guided by it. This observation draws on the experience of many international projects in which the public interest was compromised when the private sector took the lead (see Chapter 3).

The municipal authorities have a better awareness when it comes to the lifespan of leases. This is usually determined by the location and/or the level of urban consolidation in the area of the property[2]. In a waterfront context, if a property is located in a place where the final shoreline is not determined, like most of the shoreline of Bahrain, the lease is usually of an annual lifespan and the municipality recommends a quick-return type of enterprise, in which the investor will make his profit within a year or even few months. This is to prevent any long term commitments that could limit the

[1] Interview with a financial officer, Manama Municipality (8th November 2004)
[2] Ibid.

municipality or the government from developing the area of the leased property in the near future[1].

It has been found through the survey for this study that this kind of short-life lease is limited to small projects that are generally easy to relocate (i.e. Kiosks in Parks). The author could not obtain any information about some of the longer term investments, such as the Coral Beach Club (area 31c), the Gol-Afshan Restaurant (area 19), and the two indoor games areas on both KFC-I and KFC-II. For instance the initial budget of the Coral Beach Club was BD2 million, but since its inception, further extensions have been added and the final construction budget is as yet unknown. The question is how do those projects fit the overall municipal policy of limited investment when they have such large budgets? The location of the Coral Beach club, its design and the digital maps of Manama provided by the Ministry of Works and Housing tell a great deal more. The maps show some lines that run through submerged areas and some basic street patterns that are in compliance with those on the land. The Club is on the edge of one of those future reclamations which are yet to be announced. The natural conclusion is that the investors had some previous knowledge of that reclamation, otherwise why would they pick that specific location in the middle of BC-I and BC-II? This example shows that there is a kind of anticipatory planning for the future reclamations, but that information is limited to certain investors besides the planning authorities. Nevertheless, when that reclamation take place, Manama will lose the only public beach in the whole city; the private one in the Coral Beach Club will remain.

On the ground, the policy followed by the municipal authorities in deciding what type of project is permissible on the waterfront is unclear for less affluent investors, even after years spent chasing up a case with the municipality[2]. This is possibly due to the fact that the bases of this policy were never written down or published[3]. Investors usually do not come to know on what bases their projects have been rejected or accepted[4].

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[1] Interview with a senior financial officer, Manama Municipality (4th & 8th November 2004)
[2] Interview with an entrepreneur, owner of a leased property on Al Bahri Corniche (20th October 2004). He used all the formal channels and even the backdoor routes to open a coffee shop and to expand his horse riding venture in Bahri -I. He wanted to establish a riding school with a fenced area to protect the visitors of the waterfront from the horses. So far the venture is limited to a stable area and a riding area which is part of the park. Hamad has been chasing this matter for more than five years so far with no success. He plans to expand his venture because the current establishment is not profitable in its current state and size.
[3] Interview with a senior financial officer, Manama Municipality (4th & 8th November 2004)
[4] Interview with an entrepreneur, owner of a leased property on Al Bahri Corniche (20th October 2004).

Furthermore, there is no criterion to judge the suitability of the project to take place first, on the waterfront and secondly, within a public space.

However, by reading the current trends in the real estate market in Manama, the tourism industry and both the financial and urban planning policies followed by the Capital Municipality and the Ministry of Works and Housing, the percentage of private and leased properties is expected to rise and of public ones to decrease. This is based on many factors; first, the current projects that are taking place on the waterfront are all of a private nature and situated either on an already reclaimed land or on lands to be reclaimed in the future. All of those projects need access points from the mainland and the access usually takes place through publicly owned spaces as in the case of the Dream Island and its access through BC-I (Figure 6.7), and in the case of the Lulu Islands too. In some other cases the new projects occupy publicly owned land that is already in the form of a public park, such as in the case of Bahrain Financial Harbour, where this is planned to occupy some of the western side of KFC – I (Al Ayam 2004a). Furthermore, the southern section of Manama Harbour was planned to form a link between the two waterfront Parks, KFC – I and KFC- II (Physical Planning Directorate 1998b); the whole Harbour has become a private land under the current circumstances. Lulu Islands which was originally planned to form a continuation of KFC – II turned into a joint venture between the government and the Mouawad Group for constructing a resort and a convention centre.



Figure 6.7: The Space Taken Away from Al Bahri Corniche – I to Provide Access to Dream Island (November 2003)

Secondly, the number of leased public properties has been rising and is expected to continue to rise due to the change in Government policy towards the budgeting and financing of municipal organisations[1]. Currently the Capital Municipality does not have an allocated annual budget from the Ministry of Finance and over the past five years, it has had to sustain itself. The Municipality has had to change its policy towards investment and to seek all possible sources of income[2]. Thus the Municipality has turned into an investment apparatus instead of a service-providing authority and subsequently there has been an increment in the amount of leased municipal land in general[3].

Thirdly, the Capital Municipal Council does not have full control over all of what it owns nor of the public properties within its municipal boundaries. Based on proclamation no. 35/2001 of the Municipalities Law and Act no. 16/2002, the public coastal areas should be under the control of the local municipalities to the extent that they are responsible for their maintenance and investment. But both the proclamation and the Act did not highlight the ownership situation of those properties, which means that those coastal areas, as well as all the other government lands, are actually owned by the Ministry of Finance. This issue was raised by the secretary of Manama's Municipal Council, member Mr. J. Redha, who expressed the wish of the council to have full control including the ownership of those coastal properties in order to support optimum investment (Bahrain Tribune 2004c). That wish contradicts the 3rd clause of Proclamation 35/2001, which states that municipalities are responsible for the 'management' of public amenities that are of a 'local nature'. This shows the deficiency in that proclamation, which does not define the characteristics of the 'local nature' of an amenity nor what are those of a national nature. This leaves the area for open debate and continues to jeopardise the future of public space. Hence, many sites, particularly the waterfront ones are kept under what is called a 'red line'[4], which includes land that is preserved for projects of national interest. It usually takes place with lands that are

[1] Interview with a senior architect, Department of Investment and Property - Ministry of Municipalities & Agriculture Affairs (3rd November 2004)
[2] Interview with a senior financial officer, Manama Municipality (4th and 8th November 2004)
[3] Ibid., this was also recorded through research in the archives of two leading local newspapers and the projects that have been announced to be taking place within public lands or even within some already established parks.
[4] Interview with a planning officer - Ministry of Municipalities and Agriculture Affairs – Physical Planning Directorate (26th October 2004)

either un-zoned or zoned as special project areas. This type of project is regularly conceptualised out of the classical relevant civil and governmental organizations[1].

The limitation or preservation of the management and ownership of coastal properties is paradoxical: on the one hand it delays the occupation of some open spaces on the waterfront till the 'higher authorities' find proper projects suitable for those properties, which is mostly gauged on a financial basis. The delay allows for the public's appropriation of those open spaces for longer periods and to some extent it allows a sort of social construction or cultural spatialization of such open spaces. This was found in the two cases, Al Jufair beach (area 34) and Al Seef beach (areas 7 & 8). On the other hand, when those projects take place on the ground, they tend to hinder the public's access to those places due to their exclusive nature, such in the case of the Lulu Islands, The Blue Dolphin Restaurant, Bahrain City Centre, the Shangri-la hotel and Bahrain Financial Harbour[2]. At the urban planning and design level they tend to bypass any master or local plans regarding the waterfront and eventually force an unforeseen status quo, such as in the case of the Bahrain Financial Harbour. The same could be said about the areas zoned as Special Projects and the un-zoned areas such as the case of Al Seef western beach (area 7) which is un-zoned and was closed to public use after the inauguration of the Blue Elephant Restaurant. Most of the informal public spaces take place on areas of this nature.

Besides the indeterminacy in the state of redline lands in terms of ownership, zoning and planning, land speculation mechanisms in Bahrain are another factor that could, in an unconstructive way, affect both public and private investment. Allowing those lands to remain undeveloped for a long time, particularly in such prominent locations, inflates their prices. For instance, the coastal areas such as Al Seef district, Al Hoora, the Diplomatic Area and Al Jufair are the most expensive areas in Bahrain (Al Ayam 2005b; Bahrain Financial Harbour Inc. 2002). As mentioned earlier these factors mean that many areas remain open for years, subsequently paving the way for the creation of an informal public space. But their high value in terms of land price makes it impossible to preserve them for public use on a permanent basis.

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[1] Interview with a senior planning official – Physical Planning Directorate (3rd December 2003) & Interview with a real estate manager and a former head of department at the Ministry of Works (3rd December 2003)

[2] Based on the 1998 zoning map of Manama in which the southern section of Manama Harbour was marked as public property linking the two Phases of King Faisal Corniche, this possible link has been lost due to the current work on Bahrain Financial Harbour (Physical Planning Directorate 1998b).

This transformation is not a major concern for the users of the informal spaces and surprisingly, many take it for granted. In a sense they have become used to being relocated whenever there is newly reclaimed land, but what they don't realise is that the current trend in waterfront development will not allow for this displacement to take place as it did in the past. Only three interviewed groups of young men had the percipience to realise that 'their' place on the waterfronts of Al Seef and Al Jufair is likely to give way for the mushrooming of office buildings and five star hotels. The others talk about better access, lighting, coffee shops and jetties and so on. Their basic concern is how to improve the place rather than how to keep it or turn it into a public space. One of the fishermen interviewees stated:

> We know that this place is not going to stay like this, the municipality asked us to move out many times, we have been moving from one place to another till we reached here, my boat used to be anchored in front of my father's house there in Gudaibiya, look at us now. We are thinking of writing a letter to the King to ask him to preserve this coast as it is for the use of the fishermen and the people...we cannot trust all the others, we might open their eyes on this land, then they will take it, only the King can solve this issue[1]

This concern was paralleled by the way the users of Al Bahri Corniche feel about the leased properties on that waterfront. Due to the formal nature of that waterfront the general concern was focussed on the accessibility of the water, both physically and visually, rather than the availability of the space itself in the future.

> There is major a problem here, the number of privately owned places in here is increasing rapidly on the account of the open public spaces, and the coffee shops are growing in both size and number. That hotel or health club is too big and took a big space of the waterside, the wall is too high and intrusive, it blocked the sea view completely...the place is open and nice, the location is brilliant; the only annoying thing is that the number of private places in the place is increasing in an alarming way...They just want to invest in the number of people using the place by renting as many shops and coffee shops in the place. For years they did nothing except cutting the branches off these trees and that is only when they started to fall because of the wind...Most of those places are not in the benefit of the general public...This place was a public space and now it is turning little by little to private places, how is this thing increasing?![2]

Even when there is a concern about the availability of the space, it is focused on the size and not on the prime subsistence of it.

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[1] Interview with a group of fishermen on the beach of Al Jufair (20th October 2004)
[2] Interview with a 53 year-old man with his family who is a frequent user of Al Bahri Corniche (27th November 2003)

However, the previous Sections have illustrated, to some extent, the mechanisms followed in the transformation of the ownership of some public space to private hands. Exploring the counter-mechanism, from private to public is yet another critical issue for this research. The importance of knowing if there are any available legislative methods to gain more publicly-owned land on the waterfront rests on the following: although 90% of Bahrain's population lives around coastal areas, only 8% of Bahrain's coast is publicly-accessed and the rest is withheld under private ownership (Dr. Saeed Abdullah cited in Ravi 2004). Nevertheless, and as found by the author, there is a rapid growth in those waterfront developments that are of a private nature. Besides the legislative tools some other methods have been suggested by some of the interviewed users of both the eastern and northern waterfronts, such as the reclamation of more land in front of the privately owned waterfront and turning that land into new public spaces. This is indeed possible given the lack of riparian rights in Bahrain, but difficult to implement due to the rising number of water-dependent projects in Manama, as will be discussed in the land use Section. What is available now is the *amiri* decree 8/1970 regarding seizure of land for the public benefit. This decree, as it is clear from its title, can be used by any governmental body to acquire ownership of any land for the purpose of public benefit. The flexibility of this law, where public benefit or wellbeing is not defined, could support any re-acquisition of private waterfront land.



Figure 6.8: The local press coverage of the Many Protests against Land Reclamation in Coastal Areas

This tool has been used by government bodies since it was issued and in some cases it has not even been used for the public benefit. This happened in the case of Al Zeera vs. Ministry of Works and Housing in which the Ministry seized a plot of land belonging to Messrs Al Zeera allegedly for the public benefit, in accordance with that decree but with the intention of reselling it to a private investor to build a shopping mall (Al Ayam 2002a). The reason for mentioning this case is that it brought to light some deficiencies in the *amiri* decree no. 8/1970. The lawyer of Messrs. Al Zeera alleged that this law contradicted Clause 9 of the National Charter which set down the condition that any law

permitting the seizure of private property for the public benefit should specify what is meant by 'public benefit'. That condition is currently missing from decree 8/1970 but this is rectifiable.

Decree 8/1970 came into effect after demonstrations had taken place in many coastal villages against the development of their beaches for private projects (Figure 6.8). The villages of Al Mahaz'zah (2003), Barbar (2002) and Al Ma'ameer (2004-05) all took to the streets to protect their waterfronts from private investment and to some extent they were successful. In the cases of Barbar (Al Ayam 2004c) and Al Mahaz'zah, the municipal councils of the area bought up some of the private lands on the waterfront to ensure the public's access to the water; in certain other cases, the municipal councils used a different legal tool, which was the postponement of any development of waterfront private land until such time as they should find a solution; in effect, they simply stopped giving building permits for these lands for two years.

When the senior citizens of Al Deah, Sanabis and Al Hoora were interviewed about their reactions to the reclamation which had taken place in their area, they had the same reaction, that is, they did nothing[1]. This might have been due to the ban on public protests which was in place before the constitutional and national reforms of 2002. Nevertheless, even with the availability of some municipal and parliamentary tools to allow protest and prevent the reclamation and development of the waterfront for private uses, most of the protests were in the form of pleas to the King of Bahrain. Even some of the interviewees expressed the same tendency to go through no other process other than to petition His Royal Highness the King of Bahrain[2]. This is a reflection of the prevailing patriarchal system of rule in Bahrain, which could be regarded as another tool for securing public space on the waterfront. The latter proved effective and a new law was introduced in 2006 (Law 20/2006). It is designated for the protection of public spaces on the waterfronts of cities and villages. The law prohibits the transference of those lands into private ownership. However the law is weak, in that it sets a precondition that those lands should be of a public nature before they can be protected.

[1] This is in reference to many interviews conducted by the author in Al Deah, Al Seef and Al Jufair (April 2002, November – December 2003 and November – December 2004). The author selected some of the relatively old interviewees to focus on their memories of the place prior to the reclamation, the uses of the place and their hitherto reaction to the reclamation and privatisation.
[2] ibid.

It does not state that those lands should already be public, but nevertheless, any waterfront land that is already under private ownership cannot be affected by this law.

6.5 Land Use of the Northern and Eastern Waterfronts of Manama

In this Section, two sets of criteria are used in analysing the land-use of the waterfront and the way it could affect the availability and quality of its public space. The first set of criteria discusses land-use on the basis of its water dependency (the highest category is water-dependent and lowest is water-independent); while the second set discusses land use in terms of its level of integration with the water (High to Low). The two sets, which were discussed in Chapter 3, are close to each other in terms of outcome and description of land-use. But the two could in some cases have dissimilar values, which could furnish a deeper description of the land-use, as can be seen in Figure 6.9. The two sets also could be differentiated on the basis that the second, 'integration', set indicates the integration of the physical more than the social, unlike the 'dependency' set which focuses on the use of the space.

Understanding the land-use of the waterfront could illuminate the nature of its complexity and diversity. Knowing how much of that use is water-dependent could give an indication of the style of future developments and land reclamations on the waterfronts of Manama. This is based on the hypothesis that the more the uses are water-dependent, the less possible it is that they could be relocated or displaced. In addition, comparing land-use with the zoning of the waterfront underlines the way in which the current practice of zoning in Bahrain influences the uses of the waterfront. The degree of water-dependency and integration with the water may be further discussed from the angle of the continuity of the waterfront. How does water-dependency affect the balance between the open and the enclosed spaces on the waterfront, and subsequently their integration and the continuity of the waterfront?

Area Code	Space Name	Current Level of Integration with the Water	Future Level of Integration with the water	Current Level of Water Dependency
Area 1	Seef – A1	Low	Unknown	Water-independent
Area 2	Seef – A2	Low	Unknown	Water-independent
Area 3	Seef – A3	High	Unknown	Water-dependent
Area 4	Fenced plot- west of the Ritz-Carlton Hotel	Low	Unknown	Unknown
Area 5	The Ritz-Carlton Hotel	High	High	Water-dependent
Area 6	A space to the east of the Ritz-Carlton Hotel	Medium	Unknown	Water-related
Area 7	Seef Beach 2	High	Unknown	Water-dependent
Area 8	Seef Beach 1	High	Unknown	Water-dependent
Area 9	Fenced plots	Low	Unknown	Water-independent
Area 10	Seef Harbour	High	Low	Water-dependent
Area 11	East of Seef (the big square)	Medium	Low	Water-dependent
Area 12	Areas facing Lulu islands	Unknown	Unknown	n/a
Area 13	Lulu Islands (open space)	Unknown	High	n/a
Area 14	Al Sher'a Coffee shop	Medium	Medium	Water-related
Area 15	King Faisal Corniche – II (KFC – II)	Medium	Medium	Water-related
Area 16	Ponderosa Area	Low	High	Water-independent
Area 17	Manama Harbour-BFH	High	Medium	Water-related
Area 18	King Faisal Corniche - I (KFC-1)	Medium	Medium	Water-related
Area 19	Gol-Afshan Persian Restaurant	Medium	Medium	Water-independent
Area 20	The space to the East of KFC-I	Medium	Unknown	n/a
Area 21	Space between the Two Causeways	High	Unknown	Water-dependent
Area 22	Novotel Al-Dana Resort Hotel	High	High	Water-dependent
Area 23	The Space Between Al Dana and The Museum	Low	Unknown	n/a
Area 24	Bahrain National Museum	Medium	Low	Water-related
Area 25	Sawani Coffee Shop	Medium	Medium	Water-related
Area 26	Art Centre	Low	Low	Water-independent
Area 27	Marina Club	High	High	Water-dependent
Area 28	Funland Centre	Low	Low	Water-independent
Area 29	Layali Zaman	Medium	Medium	Water-related
Area 30	Access to Dream Island	Low	Low	n/a
Area 31	Al Bahri Corniche - I	Medium	Medium	Water-related
A31-a	Bayt Al Omdah Coffee Shop & Bahrain Tourism Company Jetty	Low	Low	Water-related
A31-b	Hawar Islands Marine Taxi	High	High	Water-dependent
A31-c	Coral Beach Club	High	High	Water-dependent
A31-d	Dolphin Park and Coffee Shop	Low	Low	Water-independent
Area 32	Al Bahri Corniche – II	Medium	Medium	Water-related
Area 33	Jufair Harbour	High	Unknown	Water-dependent
Area 34	Jufair Beach South	High	Unknown	Water-related

Figure 6.9: Level of Water-Dependency and Integration with the Water of the Properties located on the Northern and Eastern Waterfronts of Manama - December 2003 (Source: The Author)

Currently, nearly 45% percent of the shoreline length of the two waterfronts is occupied by water-dependent uses. As mentioned earlier, these are considered water-dependent uses because they cannot take place or function away from bodies of water. What is interesting is that 98% of these water-dependent spaces are open spaces. This indicates that nearly all the enclosed spaces on the waterfront are either water-related (21.3% of the total shoreline length) or water-independent (12.2%).

In all, 53% of the shoreline length comprised by the enclosed spaces is water-independent. A prime example of that type of property is the Funland Centre (Area 28), which is an indoor bowling and ice-skating rink[1]. The two activities have no relationship with the outdoor surroundings. Nevertheless, the building is right on the water's edge with its back to the water, and has no windows on any side. Overall, the building has neither physical nor visual links with the water, nor does it allow for any form of public access to the water (Figure 6.10). When it was first built, it used to function as part of the Al Bahri Corniche[2], but now the centre is severed from the rest of the waterfront by the ongoing construction of the Dream Islands.

Current State of Water-Dependency	Length of the Shoreline in M	Percentage of the Total Length of the Shoreline
Water-Dependent	11074	45.0
Water-Related	5237	21.3
Water-Independent	2994	12.2
Unknown	270	1.1
Inapplicable	5017	20.4
Current Level of Integration with the Water		
Highly Integrated Space	10914	44.4
Moderately Integrated Space	6579	26.8
Low or Non-Integrated Space	3758	15.3
Inapplicable	3341	13.6
Total shoreline length	24592	

Figure 6.10: Characterisation of Manama's Northern and Eastern Waterfronts According to Levels of Water-dependency and Integration with the Water – 2003

[1] The value of both the location and the view of the water were recognised later when a coffee shop was built on the southern side of the building. The design of the coffee shop (Layali Zaman – Area 29) utilises part of the space entrapped between the Funland building and the sea, where an indoor seating area is located. That area is usually well-used in the summer, because it is air conditioned and has a good view of the sea.

[2] This is based on the personal experience of the author as a user of the two spaces when a teenager

Generally speaking, it is possible that the integration with the surrounding area could have been there when those waterfront projects were designed and built but was later damaged by other projects or mismanaged, as in the case of Funland Centre (Figure 6.11).

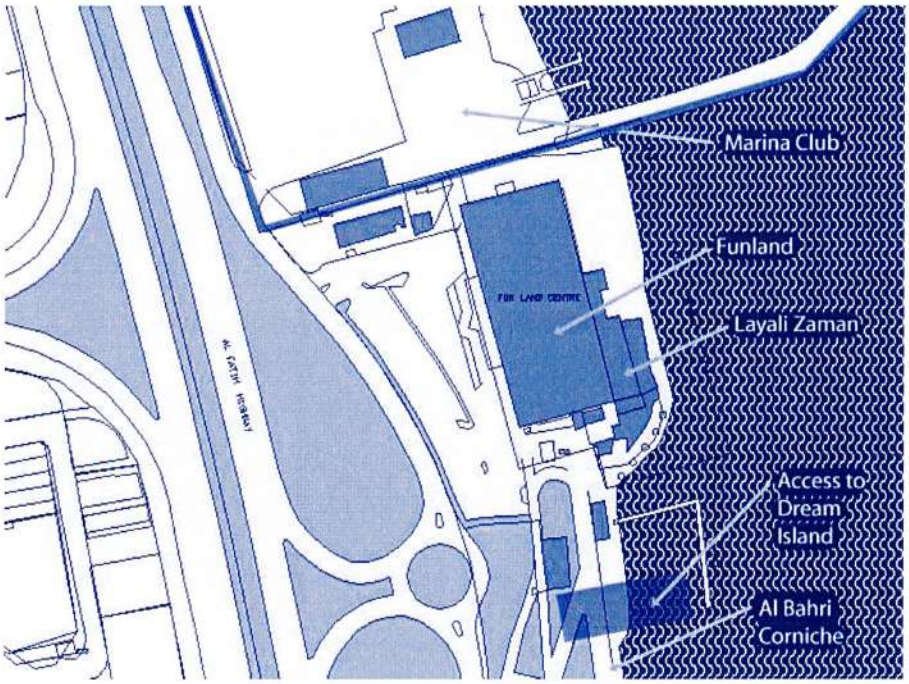


Figure 6.11: Areas to the North of Al Bahri Corniche - 2003
(Edited by the Author)

The northern part of the eastern waterfront has three cultural and to a certain extent tourist-oriented projects (Figure 6.12): Bahrain National Museum, Al-Sawani Restaurant and the Art Centre, which are all owned by the Ministry of Information, so regardless of the Directorate they now work under, they shared the same client at the point when they were designed and built. What is common to the three buildings is that they are public-oriented, but that orientation is not foregrounded when their urban settings are analysed. The Art Centre (Area 26), which is a public space, although with a limited number of public users, has little connection with the surrounding in both physical and visual terms. This is possibly due to the design's approach towards natural light control. The building is accessible from the road-side by means of the parking lot, and not from the waterside. Once again, it is not possible to access the water from this property. Although these buildings supplement the diversity and complexity of the waterfront's uses on both cultural and economic levels, they simultaneously hamper both its continuity and the visual and physical accessibility of the water. Instead of functioning

as part of the waterfront they perform as independent entities (Figure 6.12 & 6.13). As has been observed, visitors to such spaces rarely use the other spaces on the waterfront

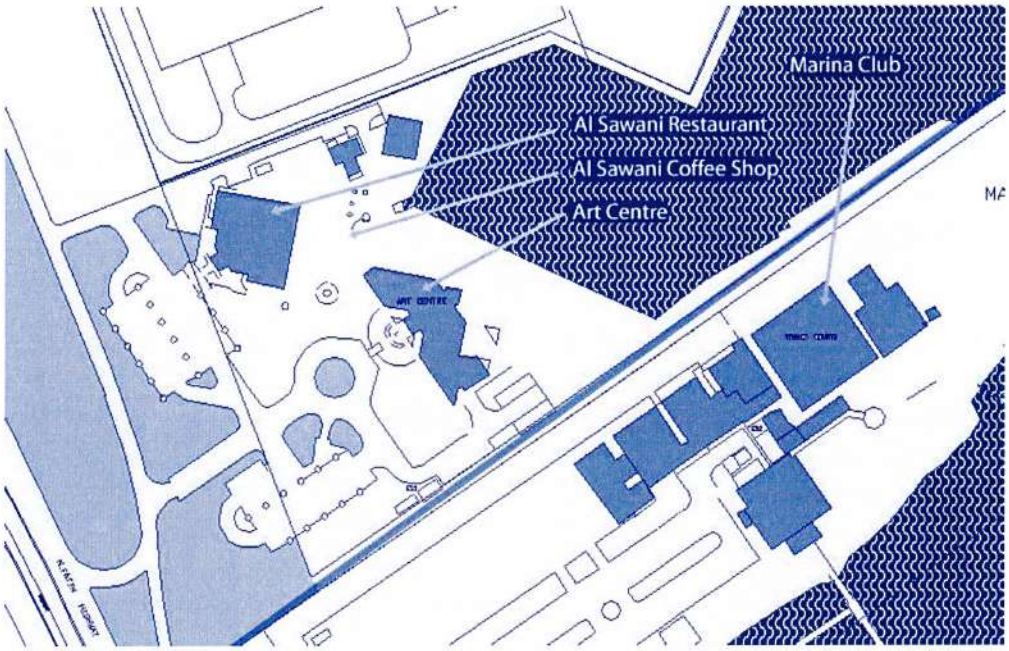


Figure 6.12: Areas between Bahrain National Museum and Marina Club - 2003
(Edited by the Author)



1- Location of the Culture Village and Bahrain National Theatre 2- Bahrain National Museum (BNM)
3- Waterfront open space (part of BNM) 4- Al Sawani Restaurant
5- Art Centre 6- Waterside open space (part of the art centre)
7- The Marina Club

Figure 6.13: The North of the Eastern Waterfront 1995 (Edited by the Author)
Source: Unknown

The existence of this kind of building on the waterfront in its current form is a result of a multi-layered failure in current zoning and land-use policies in Bahrain. First, there is a lack of a concept of water-dependency and related policy; after a content analysis of the relevant literature it has been found that water-dependency or any similar approach is not mentioned in any of the current building codes, zoning and land-use documents issued by the Ministry of Works and Housing, not even in the most optimistic and relevant Bahraini discourse. The second reason is that there is a lack of official design guidelines securing the maximum benefit from such scarce and prime locations on the waterfront. This is in the light of the belief that not every space on the waterfront should have a water-dependent use, but at least none should obstruct the continuity of public space along the shoreline. The later issue even applies to some of the water-dependent spaces that are privately owned.

Furthermore, one of the prime examples where water-dependency and integration with the water can differ is in buildings that are classified as landmarks, icons or symbolic. Drawing on some renowned waterside landmark buildings around the world; many of these are water-independent, such the Sydney's Opera House and Bilbao's Guggenheim Museum. However, those landmarks and the waterfront complement each other when the urban and landscape designs have been sensitive enough to handle that symbiosis. But in the case of the National Museum of Bahrain, the relationship between the two is one of complete alienation: the entire museum compound is fenced around with a 2m high wall, the total area of the compound is 122.7ha but the built-up area is 16.8ha (13.6% only). The open spaces to the front and the back of the museum, along with the spaces around Al Sawani restaurant and the Art Gallery, could have been integrated to boost the urban quality of Manama's waterfront. This would have enhanced the continuity of the waterfront and increased the area of publicly accessible open space. Furthermore, it would have placed the building of the national museum on the map of the landmarks of Manama.

6.6 Conclusion

This Chapter set out to highlight part of the process of that is producing public space on the waterfront. It showed how formal public space on the waterfront has become limited (only 10% of the waterfront length) and continuously contested through the current processes of commodification and privatization. It illustrated the cycles of reclamation and how the current cycle could potentially eliminate informal public space.

Furthermore, it highlighted how isolated the waterfront has become from the rest of the urban fabric of Manama and how it has turned into a fragmented space with a few macro public spaces scattered alongside it. These resulting spaces are neither linked to each other nor to the other inner city open spaces.

Later on, this chapter analysed work spaces on the waterfront of Manama and highlighted that these are the fastest growing land use type. It showed how this type of land-use is already a great challenge to the existence of public space in its both generic forms, the formal and the informal. Although much of the historic waterfront of Manama has always been occupied by work space, this chapter showed how that work space is quickly turning the mainly water-independent or water-related, displacing the water-dependent work functions from the city and limiting the opportunities for water-dependent mixed use areas.

From the analysis of current living space on the waterfront of Manama in terms of availability, affordability and urban setting it has been established that although the available living space within the waterfront zone is limited, it is becoming providing fierce competition with the need for public space. The Chapter showed how the current trend in living space on the waterfront in Bahrain is elitist and highly exclusive. And it illustrated how that housing trend will work to shift substantial parts of Manama's waterfront to the private domain of high income groups.

Furthermore, this Chapter highlighted that leisure is the major function occupying Manama's waterfront. However, it showed that the approach towards quantifying and analysing leisure space in general and on the waterfront specifically should be finely tuned to overcome the overgeneralization of leisure as a category and its inclusion within services zones. It also showed that most leisure functions on the waterfront fall into the private domain, and are with physically enclosed spaces.

As a contribution to answering the main question of this research, 'how do urban growth and land reclamation processes affect public space', this Chapter showed how the two processes are affecting the hinterland open spaces within former waterfront urban areas. It showed how the new functions that are mainly accommodated in the relatively newly reclaimed areas are infiltrated by tourist venues that cause social disruption to the nearby villages and neighbourhoods. However, it also showed that there is a feeling of entrapment arising from the confluence of conflicting social and cultural forces within a

limited public space. This sense of entrapment has not been addressed by the urban planning authorities in Bahrain.

Furthermore, this Chapter analysed the prevailing urban planning and management approaches. It highlighted that the following factors will tend to reduce the size of public space:

1. There are many loopholes in the relevant regulatory laws that are creating grey areas which open the way for abuse.
2. As with the above loopholes, there are overlaps in the roles of the relevant providing and managing bodies. These overlaps and loopholes are creating challenging conditions for those bodies regarding the ownership and control of the waterfront.
3. The recent changes in the method of financing the local municipalities and the solutions that later arose opened the way for direct private investment in public space. This is turning large areas of formal public space into private space.
4. There is a general official and public sensitivity about land ownership and land reclamation issues in Bahrain; that sensitivity is elevating most of Manama's waterfront to the area of 'national interest' which removes it from any wholesome planning process and turns most of it over to large scale projects with no overall public orientation, as this chapter exemplified.

Later on this Chapter emphasised the criticality of the current situation, where nearly two thirds of the shoreline in the study area is under private ownership; later this was linked with the issue of legislation on riparian rights law and water-dependency criteria.

Nevertheless, the chapter re-introduced two main elements in analysing the waterfront: water-dependency and the level of integration with the water and the surrounding areas. It stressed on that the two should be used together in such a way as to arrive at a sound visualisation of the morphology of the waterfront. In line with this it showed how many public-oriented buildings on Manama's waterfront are neither integrated with the surrounding areas, nor dependent on the water, which emphasises the need to apply these two criteria in future waterfront planning.

Cahpter 7: Access and Accessibility of Public Open Space on the Urban Waterfront

7.1 Introduction

As established in Chapter 3, the accessibility of the water and the spaces nearest to it are the main concerns of the literature that discusses the issue of waterfront development and its public open spaces. In this chapter, some of the analytical tools and measures used by prior scholars are re-introduced in a collective manner and used in analysing the accessibility of the northern and eastern waterfronts of Manama. This is to achieve two main objectives: first, to assess the physical, visual and to some extent the symbolic accessibility of the Manama's waterfront; and later, to correlate this with the way it is used and socially constructed. Secondly to come-up with a framework that could help future studies of waterfront accessibility, through highlighting the multi dimensional nature of physical accessibility with regard to public space.

The latter multifaceted approach used in analysing the accessibility of the waterfront has helped to shape the structure of this Chapter. That is to say, this Chapter is divided into four main sections following the multifaceted approach: the first discusses the waterfront on the basis of the types of access to it. The second section highlights the types of access to the water itself and the distribution of those types along the shoreline of the study area; leading into the third section, which is concerned with the physical treatment of the shoreline and the way it affects the accessibility of the water; just as the fourth section attempts to do, through depicting the condition of the water itself.

It is important to discuss at the outset a few general issues about the accessibility of Manama's waterfront at the urban planning level, prior to proceeding any further in detailing the waterfront's accessibility at a smaller scale. At this level, the connectivity of the two waterfronts with their adjacent urban areas is discussed, based on their vehicular and pedestrian accessibility. Complementing this, the continuity of the waterfront in physical, visual and symbolic terms was also assessed. The following discussion is founded on the basis that the two waterfronts are macro spaces, serving the citizens of Manama and the other Bahraini cities.

7.2 Vehicular Accessibility of Manama's Urban Waterfronts

The northern and eastern waterfronts of Manama, as in most of the Arab Gulf cities, are separated from adjacent urban areas by a set of highways. Three highways, along with the southern Sheikh Isa Bin Sulman Highway, form an orbital artery around the city. King Faisal Highway runs on an east-west axis and stands between the northern waterfront and northern parts of Manama such as the Diplomatic area, the Suq area, and the Central Market area (Figure 7.1). To the west of the Central Market area, the highway connects with Sheikh Khalifa Bin Sulman highway, which separates the north of Sanabis and Burhama from the waterfront. Visually, the continuous reclamation to the north of Sheikh Khalifa Bin Sulman Highway is transforming the highway into an inland route. Currently, it is becoming more difficult to see the sea from the highway and it will be harder in the future, once the open areas to the north of the highway are developed. Further to the west, King Abdullah II Avenue joins Sheikh Khalifa Highway in a T-junction. The latter is stretched out between the inner Al Seef district and the waterfront. On the eastern waterfront, Al Fatih Highway runs in a north-south axis and

separates the eastern waterfront from Al Hoora, Gudaibiya and the eastern side of the Diplomatic area.

Overall, the waterfront is reasonably accessible by motorized transport, due to the network of highways mentioned above. From the southern end of Al Jufair Beach (Area 34) up to King Abdullah II Avenue's junction with Sheikh Khalifa Bin Sulman Highway, the network of highways spans 8.2km. Within that distance there are in total seven formal vehicular entry/exit points to both the eastern and northern waterfronts. Five of those entry/exit points on the highways lead either directly or indirectly to public open spaces on the waterfront. Within the Al Seef area there are five more access points to the waterfront but only one of them is of a formal nature. The road network in the Al Seef area is incomplete and the access points to the waterfront differ rapidly in terms of quantity and quality. During the three fieldwork periods (April 2002, October-December 2003 & November 2004) the access points changed from four to three and then to two. This issue is going to be discussed further in its place.

The highway access points are located, logically, on the south-north and the east-west bound lanes of the highways. So the waterfront is comfortably accessible to users arriving from the south on the Al Fatih highway or from the east on the King Faisal Highway. Conversely, vehicular access to the waterfront is problematical for users coming from the south-west or the west. This condition has been created by two factors: the first is that none of the entry-exit points are located on crossroad junctions nor do they have the flexibility of that kind of crossing, which could allow direct access to the adjacent urban areas. The first factor would not be a problem in itself, were it is not accompanied by a second factor: only two (T1 & T3) of the six traffic light points along the two waterfronts allow for a U-turn. To illustrate: in order to enter KFC-II, the user must approach from the east or the leading roads from the south east and users coming from the west on King Faisal Highway must enter the inner roads of northern Manama, then find a way to go north again to the highway, in order to access the waterfront area. The same goes for users of the eastern waterfront approaching from the north on Al Fatih Highway who want to use the northern entrance of the waterfront: they have to enter Al Gudaibiya at traffic light No. 2 (T2) and then find a way to get back to the highway. Otherwise, they have to use the southern entrance of the waterfront by turning into Al Jufair at traffic light no. 1 (T1) and then drive around Al Fatih Islamic Centre to reach the southern end of the waterfront.

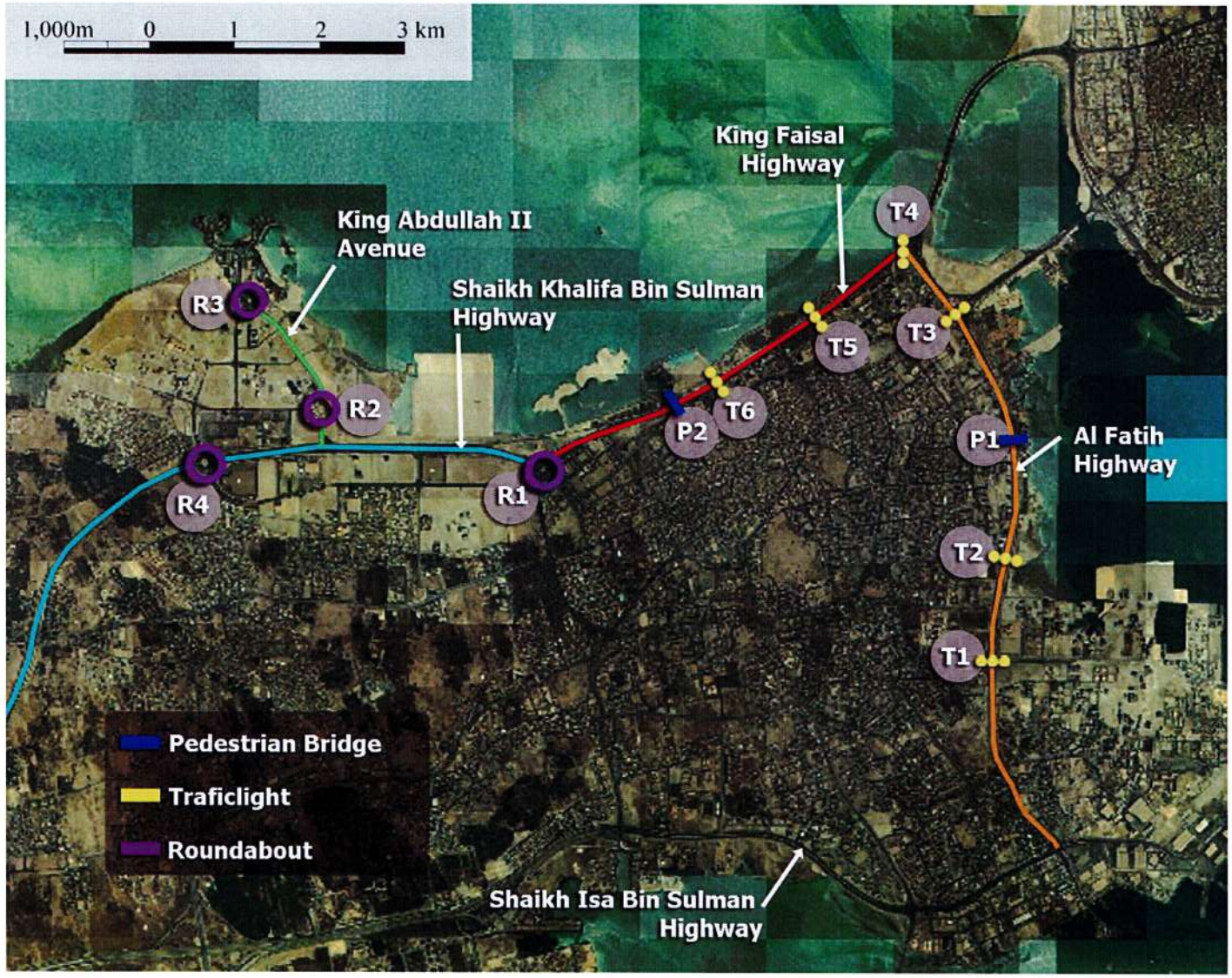


Figure 7.1: The Road Network around Manama in 2004

Source: Satellite Image from the Ministry of Works and Housing, edited by the author

On normal working days and outside of rush hours, the above-mentioned manoeuvres to access the waterfront are not a significant problem, but during weekends and holidays, when the waterfront is in highest demand, these manoeuvres could be unbearably time-consuming. On many occasions, it has taken from 45minutes to 1 hour to drive from the Al Seef Waterfront to BC-I, a journey that should normally take 10 minutes. In November 2003 and during the night of Eid,[1] it took a round 1 hour and 20 minutes for the same journey.

7.3 Pedestrian Accessibility of Manama's urban waterfront

The adjacent areas of the two waterfronts can be divided into two types, based on their physical accessibility to pedestrians coming to and from the waterfront. The first type consists of those built-up areas that have no major highway separating them from the waterfront. The second type is formed by the built-up areas that are separated from the waterfront by major highways. There are only two areas of the first type: the Al Jufair and Al Fatih districts on the eastern waterfront and Al Seef district on the northern waterfront. That leaves the rest of Manama separated from the waterfront by a series of highways.

Both King Faisal and Al Fatih Highways are provided with a fence in the central reservation that prevents the pedestrians from crossing over at any point other than the designated ones. But the number of proper designated crossing points is two only, and those crossing points come in the form of pedestrian overpasses (Grade-Separated) on the two highways (Figure 7.2). The two overpasses have been built and maintained by private funding. They share the design principle of elevating pedestrians by means of mechanical elevators instead of ramps. The one on Al Fatih highway has a guard room attached to it. Opting to have elevators instead of ramps could be due to an insufficiency of the space necessary to accommodate ramps. This is not to say that pedestrians do not make use of the traffic light-monitored (At-Grade) crossings to traverse the route to and from the waterfront but, strictly speaking, not all of those traffic

[1] This is the night of the last day of Ramadan. According to the traditions of Arabic culture, the day starts on the preceding night: for instance what is known as Friday night in Western culture is called Saturday night in Arabic culture

light-monitored crossings are suitable for pedestrian crossing due to some design detail problems in which they favour the car.

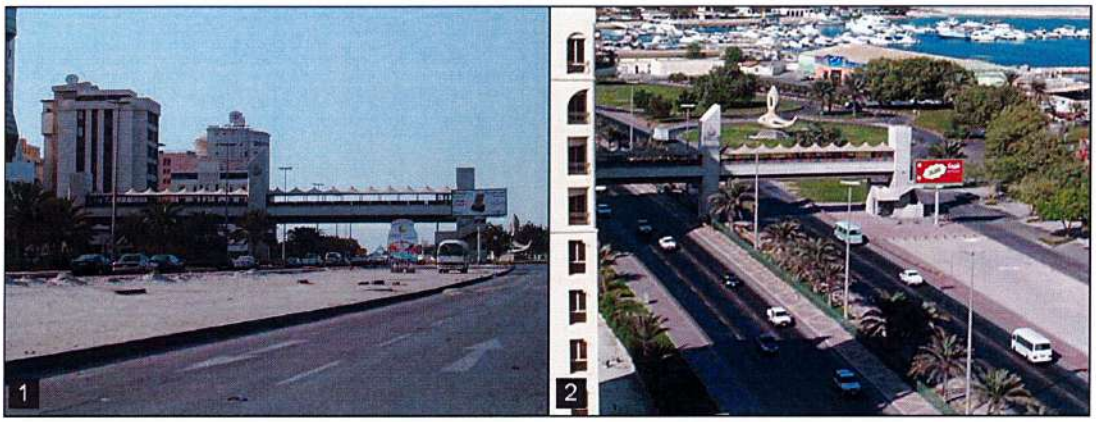


Figure 7.2: The Overpass on Al Fatih Highway (December 2003). (Source: the Author)

To understand pedestrian movement between inner city blocks and the waterfront, one must understand the nature of those blocks in terms of their land-use and special design. The northern city blocks, and as noted in Chapters 5 & 6, are more or less of an administrative, commercial and a business nature; they accommodate the Old Suq area, the Central Market area, and the Diplomatic area which hosts a number of ministries, administrative buildings, banks and foreign embassies. The eastern blocks of Manama are of a mixed nature and contain a high proportion of residential and tourist land-uses. Nevertheless, those blocks are close to the densely-populated older quarters of Gudaibiya and Hoora areas. The number of pedestrians crossing the highway to the eastern waterfront from the adjacent urban blocks could be anticipated to be higher than the number of those crossing to the northern waterfront, based on the current land-use of those blocks. But other factors need to be taken into consideration when analysing pedestrian movements, besides the land-use factor. For instance there is an acute shortage of parking space in both the Diplomatic and the Suq areas. Some users of those areas park in the car parks available on the other side of the highway that serves KFC-I. Nevertheless, on festivals, public holidays and out of working hours, some users of KFC-II use the vacant car parks to the south of King Faisal highway. Further, many of the users of KFC-II who arrive at the capital by means of public transport alight at Manama's central bus station, which is close to the overpass leading to the waterfront. So even when there are no residential areas bordering the northern waterfront, the temporally-determined need for vacant car parks and the location of mass transit nodes could determine the volume of the pedestrian movement to and from the waterfront.

This study found mixed opinions about the pedestrian accessibility of the waterfronts of Manama. On the Al Bahri side, some users think that it is appropriately accessible and that the overpass is ideally located and adequate for the time being[1]; however, all of those who gave these kinds of positive comment have never actually used the overpass. That reflects a general mindset about the overpass which focuses on its availability, without regard to its effectiveness. Otherwise why would a substantial[2] number of users continue to jaywalk the crossing instead of using the overpass (refer to Figure 7.3), at the risk of being killed? Many pedestrian road accidents take place on these two highways (Bahrain Tribune 2003a) even after fixing the fence on the central reservation. "I have seen women and children crossing the highway in a dangerous way to reach the park of the corniche" This was the comment made by the manager of a residential building facing BC-I This could be the outcome of several design and management problems besides the other accessibility problems, as will be discussed later on. The separation of the waterfront form the rest of the city by these highways has prevented some people from using it. One of the interviewees stated:

> [...]yes I like King Faisal Corniche and it was somehow close to me in Qufool but crossing the highway was so risky from the central Market area side.[3]

The two overpasses are designed only to traverse the width of the highways, regardless of where the pedestrian may be headed after crossing. In both cases the users must cross another service road to reach the waterfront after having crossed the highway. This, alone, would not be challenging, but in the case of the overpass of King Faisal Highway, the service road in question is the main entrance to the KFC-II and leads directly from the highway (about 50m away). Furthermore, on the BC-I side, the overpass leads to an island between the highway and the service road (Figure 7.3). The curb of the service road has a ramp to enable wheel-chair users and adults with prams and pushchairs coming from the overpass side to cross over. But there is no ramp on the other side of the road, meaning that the disabled person in a wheel chair will be stranded in the service road. That is based on the assumption that he or she has managed to access the overpass in the first place: the elevators are frequently vandalised and out of order.

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[1] Interview with a married professional couple from India in Bahri -1 (18th November 2003) and with another single local middle aged man (18th November 2003)

[2] This is based on the observation by the author of the two overpasses and other 'popular' crossing areas during October-November 2003 and November 2004. The archive of two local newspapers was also searched for the news of pedestrian accidents on the orbital chain of highways of the capital.

[3] Interview with a young man from Sudan in Bahri-I (17th November 2003)

Even when they are operational, they are usually locked, as in the case of the overpass of Al Fatih Highway. This was observed during the three field trips and was confirmed in an interview with an owner of one of the residential buildings on Al Fatih Highway (November 2003). On three occasions the author tried to reach the watchman to open the door leading to the elevator lobby with no success: he was never there. This managerial blunder, which results from the wrong design decision in the first place, forces many women with pushchairs to use the stairs of the overpass to cross the highway. This was noticed by the author on three occasions during October 2003 and November 2004.



Figure 7.3: View of Al Fatih highway from the Overpass showing the fence in the central reservation (November 2003), 2- kids crossing from the middle of Al Fatih highway to reach the football field in BC-II (December 2003), 3- View of the traffic on King Faisal Highway from the overpass (April 2002), 4- King Faisal Highway from the overpass showing the fence on the central reservation; to the left it shows part of the bus stop and the taxi rank.

Besides the land-use of the adjacent urban blocks, their level of urban consolidation and the completeness of the road network also affect the mode of pedestrian movement. Without a complete road network in the adjacent blocks, it is hard to judge the performance of the overpasses or the permeability of the roads separating the waterfront

from the adjacent built-up areas. For instance, the overpass on Al Fatih highway does not lead to the inner built-up areas; instead the users either turn north or south alongside the highway after crossing it from the waterfront side. The sidewalk and the highway itself is approximately 1.2m higher than the ground level of the adjacent area, which in combination with the wide planter prevents most users from crossing over from the adjacent areas to the sidewalk that leads to the overpass. Three of the overpass users interviewed did not know how to reach it from the inner roads of Al Hoora and had to walk all the way south to traffic light (T2) and then north to the overpass. The location of the overpass in relation to the roads leading from the adjacent built-up areas deters many users of the waterfront from its use; instead they prefer to take the risk of jaywalk the six-lane highway and climbing the fence in the central reservation.

The informal waterfronts are less fortunate than the formal ones in terms of physical accessibility. This is possibly due to their provisional state, awaiting development. That state could discourage any formal planning authority from providing proper crossings to these informal waterfronts. For instance the popularity of Area 11 (Figure 6.1) among its users has not helped to create pressure on the provider authorities to organise proper pedestrian or vehicular access to the area. There were a few promises from the local municipal council to improve the pedestrian crossing, but all they came up with was fencing the highway (Al Ayam 2004b). However, when it was announced that the area was to house the largest shopping mall, water park and hypermarket in Bahrain, plans to improve its vehicular access and to provide a pedestrian overpass were released simultaneously.

Overall, pedestrian inconveniences in Bahrain are not limited to the waterfronts alone. Manama, in common with most other Bahraini cities and towns, is not pedestrian friendly; it is as Bernard Fonquernie described it "a country for cars, not for people to walk" (cited in Smith 2003).

7.4 Accessible Spaces on the Urban Waterfront

This Section discusses the physical accessibility of the spaces nearest to the water. The discussion depends primarily on the data collected by the author by means of a thorough survey of Manama's two waterfronts. Overall, 28 areas out of a total 34 main and 4 sub-areas are physically accessible in one form or another (Figure 7.4). The shoreline length of those 28 accessible areas is approximately 18,521m, which accounts for 78% of the

total shoreline length of the two waterfronts. There are few fully inaccessible spaces on the northern and eastern waterfronts of Manama; most of those that come under this heading are currently construction sites or their access is blocked by an ongoing construction in the connecting spaces. For example, the Lulu Islands (area 12 & 13) were inaccessible at the time of the fieldwork due to the ongoing construction of the Pearl roundabout flyovers, and the islands themselves are due to be reshaped. Again, most of the old Manama Harbour (area 17) is not accessible due to the ongoing construction of the Bahrain Financial Harbour. Furthermore, the 4.4ha to the north of Bahrain National Museum (area 24), which formed the museum's open-air quarters and formerly hosted the Cultural Village, is similarly blocked to public use due to the ongoing construction of the Bahrain National Theatre (refer to Figure 6.12). Another 1.3ha of open spaces is within the museum's compound and overlooking the water, but is yet again blocked off from members of the public.

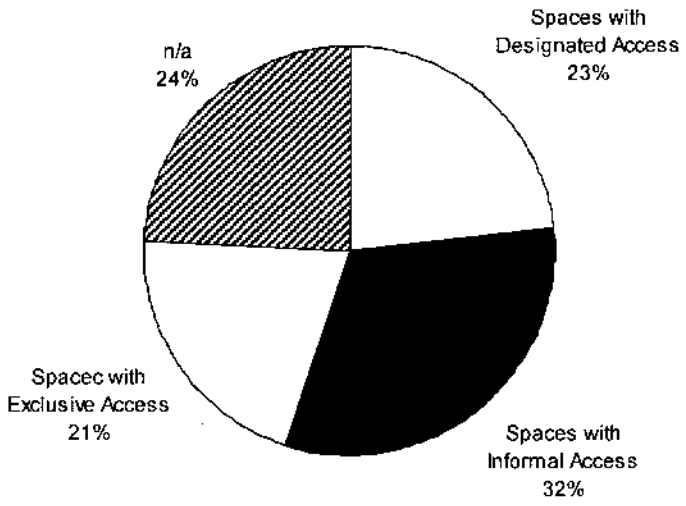


Figure 7.4: Distribution of types of access to the Northern and the Eastern waterfronts of Manama

Nevertheless, there are a few other open spaces that are inaccessible because they are fenced-out or blocked by existing buildings. For instance, the 2.84ha open space to the east of the Marina Club (area 27) is currently inaccessible even to the members of the

club[1]. A similar inaccessible open space lies to the east of the Art Centre (area 26): it can only be entered from the Art Centre, although no one was observed to be using it (Figure 6.12 & 6.13).

Furthermore, the spaces within the study area were divided into three main categories based on their type of physical accessibility. These were: spaces with designated access, spaces with informal access and spaces with exclusive access. The following three sections provide a description of them.

7.4.1 Spaces with Designated Access

Only eleven spaces were found to have designated access, forming 47.1% of the accessible shoreline length and 32.4% of the total length of the study area. These types of space come in two main forms: parks and open spaces. Ten out of the fourteen accessible spaces with designated access are undeveloped open spaces which vary in their level of designated accessibility (Figure 7.5); the remainder are parks on the waterfront. The category itself is an ambiguous one. Designation is enabling on both physical and jurisdictional levels, but this is not the case in the study area of this research: the researcher considers some of these spaces to be categorised as with designated access for minimal reasons; some of those spaces are considered to be with designated access just because they are cleaned on a daily basis and they are provided with rubbish bins for the use of the public by Manama Municipality. These bins are a sign of recognition of the public's use of the area by the authorities.



Figure 7.5: Jufair Beech - November 2003

[1] By the end of 2004 both the club and that open space were put-up for sale for BD27,200,000 by the proprietor company: General Organisation for Social Insurance, GOSI (Trade Arabia News Service 2004). Prior to that announcement there were many proposals and speculations about the development of the properties, from which an overall conception of their future could be drawn (Bahrain Tribune 2002).

Within the category of open spaces with designated access, two types of ownership were found and both allowed provisional access only. The first type was open spaces that were privately owned but used by members of the public. They are catered for by the Municipality of Manama in terms of general upkeep and the Ministry of the Interior and the Coast Guards in terms of security. The Ministry of the Interior is interested in what takes place on the land and keeps an occasional eye on the boats moored by such spaces. The Coast Guards are represented by undercover patrols which monitor the informal harbours along the coasts of Bahrain, including Manama's waterfronts. Police patrols were observed in the course of the researcher's visits to those open spaces, but most of these encounters were at night. The Coast Guards were noticed and identified by members of the public, who mentioned this when the issue of security at the waterfront was discussed with them. These were regular users of those waterfront open spaces and most of them were amateur fishermen with speed boats moored alongside those open spaces. The control of the informal harbours is of high concern to government officials and this was reflected in current planning approaches under which the informal harbours are to be eradicated and formal ones provided[1] in their place, just as is currently taking place in Samaheej, Sitra and Budayyi.

These areas are represented by area 10 in Al Seef. The second type is represented by state-owned open spaces that are un-zoned or awaiting further reclamation to take place in due course, such as Jufair Beach (Area 34) on the eastern waterfront (Figure 7.5).

The other type of space that has 'designated access' is represented by the four parks on the waterfront. Their total length is 2577m, representing 45% of the total length of the spaces with designated access. There is an area of ambiguity in the case of BC-I, in which 4 sub-areas were added to the list due to their special condition. Those spaces (Areas 31-a, 31-b, 31-c & 31-d) are on long term leases and vary in their nature and accessibility. The source of ambiguity is that those spaces are situated within a larger space with designated access, but they are under another category of accessibility, which is spaces with exclusive access.

[1] Interview with an urban planning senior official – Directorate of Physical planning (3rd November 2003)

7.4.2 Spaces with Informal Access

Spaces that are informally accessed can be in either public or private ownership. These are generally accessible tracts with no formal designation to enable access to them. In some cases they are fenced private spaces with clear signs that their owners do not want the public to use their land. The no entry signs could be as simple as a sign written on plywood, mounted on a stick; or they could extend to a block wall boundary (Figure 7.6-3 & 4). Plots with fences of different heights are found in Area A9 in Al Seef, some of them are three concrete blocks high (0.6m) and others are 2.0m high. These are still accessible due to neglect or partial dereliction of these excluding boundaries. They are mostly used by members of the public to get through to the water.

Another example of informal use can be found in Area A11 in Al Seef district: a dredging pipeline and its platform, one of the popular places for fishing locations in spite of clear signs that prohibit sitting on the pipeline and the floating platform (Figure 7.6-1 & 2). A similar space is found in the BC-I (Area A31a) where the Bayt Al Umda coffee shop is combined with a jetty used by Gulf Tours. Here they moor their boats/restaurants, while to the north of that jetty there is a derelict jetty and some derelict boats are anchored to it. There are clear signs excluding the public from it but the place is nevertheless favoured by young amateur fishermen who find it one of the best places for fishing in that area and use it regardless of the signs and the hazardous situation[1] (7.6-5 & 6).

[1] This was observed by the author and the opinions of the users were taken through unstructured interviews on the water (December 2003-November 2004)



Figure 7.6: Informal access to some spaces on the waterfronts of Manama, Oct & Nov. 2003

The total waterfront length of these spaces does not make them very significant at present, but if each landowner decided to fence his/her land off, this would become one of the greatest barriers between the public and the water. Current figures show that this type of fenced-off land represents 17.7% of the length of Manama's northern and eastern waterfronts and 22.8% of the length of the accessible waterfronts within the study area. That percentage could go up to 54.4% (the percentage of privately owned waterfront open land) if every land owner on the waterfront decided to take similar action and fence off his/her land. Such an action could be encouraged by the existing bylaws land owners are obliged to follow a municipal bylaw which requires them to fence their undeveloped

land with a fence of at least 0.6m high (Figure 7.7). This bylaw is not followed strictly in the country, but a substantial number of land owners do follow it. Additionally, fencing is a way used by land owners of protecting their land from illegal rubbish dumping: a substantial amount of building rubble and other types of rubbish could be found in Al Seef in Area 9 and many warning signs were found prohibiting the dumping of rubbish. Finally, some land owners try to prevent the use of their land as a temporary access point for heavy vehicles, trying to reach un-reclaimed sea-land, which could damage the levels of the surface soil on their land[1].



Figure 7.7: 1- Building rubble in Al Seef - area 9 (October 2003). 2- Building rubble and a 'three block high' fence in Al Seef-area 9 (October 2003). 3- A fence around one of the plots in Al Seef - area 9 used for shade by some amateur fishermen in day-time and used as a screen that blocks the view from the main road by the night-time users of the area (October 2003). 4- The road works of the Blue Elephant restaurant (November 2003).

From observation of area A9 it was noticed that these fences also provide visual cover for certain illegal activities such as, ironically, rubbish dumping and public alcohol consumption, which is prohibited in the Kingdom of Bahrain. Alcohol consumption and

[1] Interview with a property investment officer who used to hold a senior position in the Ministry of Works and Housing (3rd December 2003)

some other prohibited activities were discussed with some of the users of both BC-II and Al Seef areas 7, 8, 9 & 11. Besides this, the detritus of those activities, in the form of alcohol empty bottles and cans and sometimes even syringes, were found in some of the isolated areas.

Physical barriers, as well as certain activities taking place within those spaces, gentrify large areas of the waterfront. While boundary walls prevent some user groups from physically reaching the water other physically able users are deterred from those spaces for personal security reasons. If the percentage of this type of space grows, this will not just affect the number of accessible spaces, it will affect what can be done on the water and who can do it.

7.4.3 Spaces with Exclusive Access

This is another problematic category: spaces with exclusive access are accessible spaces but under certain conditions which make them exclusive. The category includes hotels, coffee shops, clubs, restaurants and jetties (Figure 7.8). They vary in their level of exclusiveness: for instance, a coffee shop requires the user to buy food or drink in order to gain the right to sit there for a reasonable time, such as one or two hours. A hotel or club would require a far more sophisticated transaction to admit access to its waterfront. The user should either rent a room in the hotel, be a member of its available clubs or dine in one of its waterfront restaurants. The nature of the access acquired to the sub-spaces within the hotel dictates the type of access and interaction with the water that is permitted. In the case of coffee shop users, instant access to the waterfront is available; but in the case of the hotel or club users, access usually requires a longer period of time and a greater amount of resources.



Figure 7.8: Spaces with Exclusive Access; 1- The Ritz-Carlton Hotel and Spa (area 5) October 2003, 2- Coral Beach Club (area 31-a) November 2003.

There are many examples of this type of space within the study area. In the Al Seef area the most prominent space of an exclusive nature is the beach of the Ritz-Carlton Hotel; this is one of the few hotels in Bahrain with a private beach. On the eastern waterfront is the Marina Club. It is the second largest single entity on both the northern and eastern waterfronts of the Capital and has an area of approximately 18.4 hectares (this includes the area of the enclosed marina and the newly reclaimed land to the east of the club). Its waterfront length is approximately 1400m long. In total, spaces with exclusive access represent 20.7% of the total length of the study area. This percentage is on the increase, given that most of the new developments on the waterfront itself or on artificial islands to the north or east of Manama are tourism-oriented and of an exclusive nature. Furthermore, this type of space is consuming even spaces within formal spaces that have designated access. This is taking place in both BC-I with its many coffee shops and its access route to the new Islands, and also in KFC-I and KFC-II through the growing number of restaurants and indoor play areas. As illustrated in Chapter 5, the current cycle of land reclamation and urban growth is bringing more water-dependent land uses to the waterfront. This section shows that this type of land use usually takes place in the form of exclusively accessed spaces. That, in conglomeration with the fact that this type of land use will most probably take place on existing open space that is informally accessed or accessed with a kind of formal designation, gives an indication that the waterfront is going to be highly inaccessible to a large slice of the Bahraini society.

7.5 Access to the Water

As mentioned in the methodology section on the survey regarding access to the water, three generic types were found. At the two extremes are spaces that promote most interaction with the water, *touch the water*, and those that allow for the least level of interaction, *see the water*.

7.5.1 Touch the Water

'Touch the water' is the term I suggest for the highest level of access to the water. It could include a simple activity such as the mere touching of the water, or it could be a highly water-dependent activity such as swimming, water surfing, kite surfing and so on. The significance of recording this degree of detail on accessibility comes from the incomplete picture achieved through recording the accessibility only of the spaces nearest to the water. Many of those spaces that are accessible actually provide minimal

or zero access to the water. This defies one of the main reasons for being next to the water.

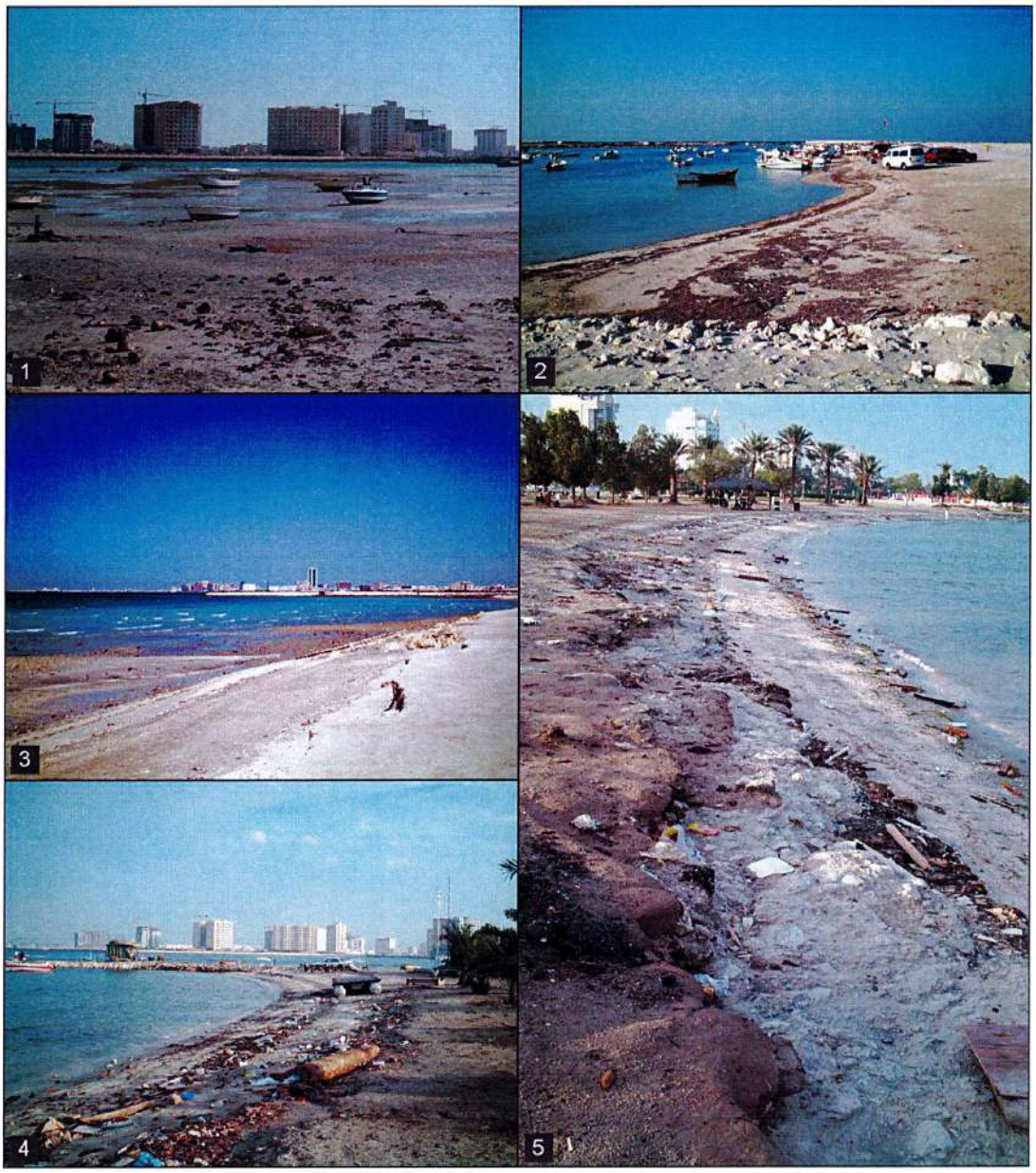


Figure 7.9: Areas with 'touch the water' access, 1- Al Jufair Harbour (area 33) December 2003, 2- Al Seef Harbour (area 10) November 2003, 3- Al Seef beach 2 (area 7) April 2002, 4 & 5- The beach of Al Bahri Corniche-II (area 32) November 2003

On Manama's northern and eastern waterfronts the length of the waterline allowing users to touch the water is approximately 12,849m representing 53.9% of the total length of the two waterfronts (Figure 7.9). Of that, 55.6% is situated within spaces that offer designated access, which could seem to indicate that the sea is highly accessible in Manama. But there are other issues that need to be considered in this case, issues such

as the ownership of the land from which the water is accessed and its status in future plans, the condition of the water itself and the condition of the shoreline and the seabed.

Of the four parks on the waterfronts of Manama, BC-I is the only one that provides a beach where the water can be touched. When this park was first opened, it had two small beaches spanning 375m in total. The two promoted active water-based uses and were very popular.[1] However, the northern one was ruined by the laying of a surface water discharge pipe with an inspection station next to it and the southern one is not usable in its current condition due to the amount of junk and debris that have accumulated there.

Overall, public open space that provides a *touch the water* level of interaction with the water is limited to Al Jufair Harbour (area 33), Al Jufair beach (area 34), and Al Seef (areas 2, 3, 8) all of which are informal public spaces. But the one most suitable to promote the maximum interaction with the water is Area 8 in Al Seef.

7.5.2 Above the Water

The 'above the water' category provides less access to the water than 'touch the water' and subsequently less interaction. As mentioned in Chapter 3 'on the water' means that a limited level of interaction with the water is possible. There are ten areas within the study area that provide this kind of access to the water, spanning 5,882m in total and representing 24.7% of the total length of the waterfront (Figure 7.10). Only 40.2% of that length is within areas with designated access in which the users could have some sort of interaction with the water without touching it. In those areas, the shoreline is usually made of rip-rap or bulkhead and in some cases it is a combination of both. Three out of the four parks on the waterfront in the study area are made of the latter combination.

Most of the spaces of the 'touch the water' access type in the Al Seef area are either privately owned or un-zoned and in both cases the possibility that those spaces will remain open for public use is very slim. This assumption is based on two factors derived from real estate market trends in the islands. The first factor is that land values in the Al Seef area, for example, are the highest in Bahrain: they doubled between 1995

[1] This was mentioned in four interviews, two of which were with users of the park, one with an investor and last one was with a property owner across the road.

and 2000 and are still rising. Furthermore, this trend has been encouraged by the liberalization of property ownership laws that have led to foreigners being able to own properties in certain areas in Bahrain which has increased the level of demand in the local real estate market. Based on the Cabinet of Ministers Decree No. (5) for the year 2002 regarding the determination of areas where non-Bahrainis are permitted to own properties and lands, most of the study area is either specifically named in the decree or falls under the classified categories of which foreigners are permitted 100% ownership.

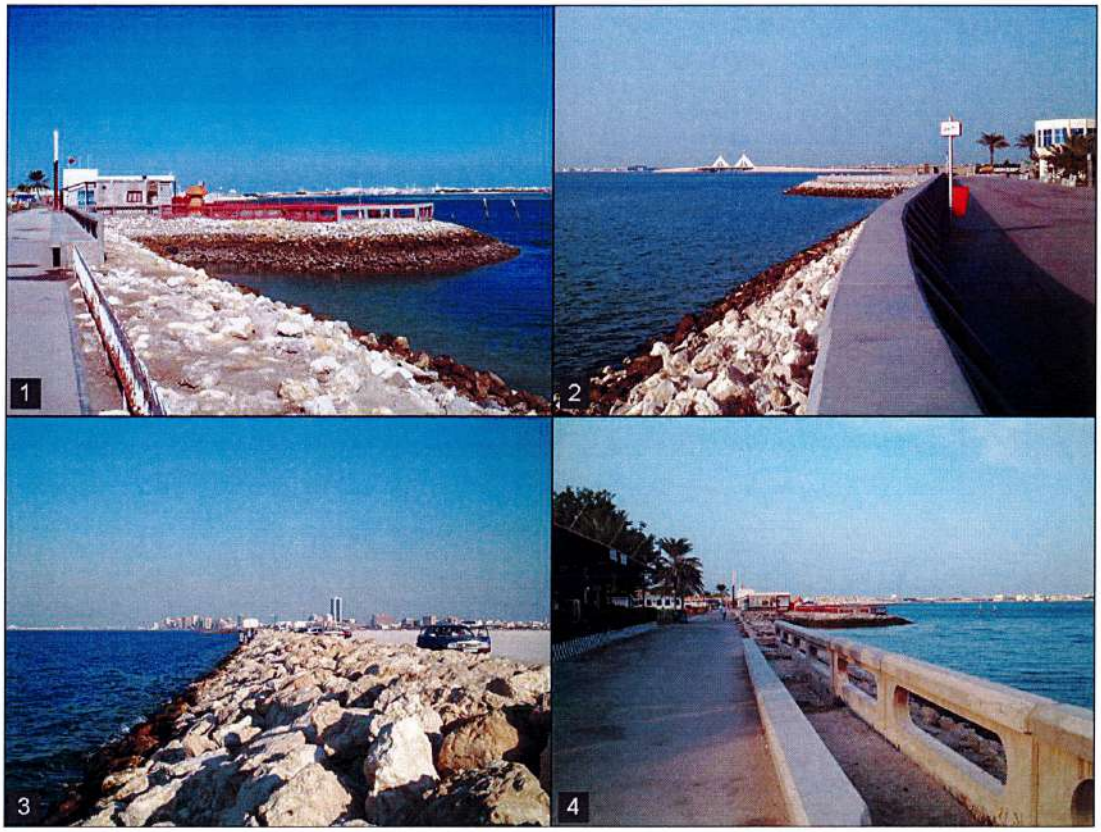


Figure 7.10: "Above the Water" Access.

The increasing returns from investment in land can be traced in the percentage growth in the value of transactions in relation to the number of transactions: the number of transactions grew by 19% between 1990 and 2000 but the value of those transactions grew by 170%[1]. This growth in land value could become the victim of its own success: market indicators show that there was no growth in the number of construction projects in Bahrain between 1989 and 1999, and the number of building permits issued in 1999 is 20% less than the number of permits in 1989. These figures are not expected to rise in

[1] Raw Data from the Bahrain Land Registry Directorate cited in Bahrain Financial Harbour Inc. Private Placement Memorandum, October 2002

coming years due to a severe shortage of construction material in the Island[1] and the subsequent astronomical increments in the costs of construction. Therefore, the existing open spaces on the waterfronts will remain open for the use of the public during the coming few years but not beyond that; their value, is too high to be left for the use of the public from a market point of view.

7.5.3 See the Water

This type of access is limited to spaces with exclusive access to the water, or those where the water is completely inaccessible. There are ten spaces within the study area that offer this type of access and only one of the spaces has designated access: that space is BC-I in which the design of the bulkhead and the rip-rap below it do not permit more than seeing the water. Thus, designating access to a space on the waterfront does not subsequently imply high access to the water; issues such as design and maintenance are crucial to providing an adequate level of accessibility to the water. Therefore, understanding each type of shoreline, as well as its treatment and the way it influences and promotes interaction with the water is vital in the design of the waterfront. The following is an analysis of the available types of shoreline treatments on the two waterfronts of Manama.

7.6 The Nature of the Shoreline and the Water Itself

The nature of the water's edge is another key element in the issue of the accessibility of the water. As mentioned earlier, no matter how accessible the space nearest to the water, the nature of that diaphragm between land and water is what finally dictates the character and the intensity of the interaction between the two.

There are different types of treatments of the shoreline within the study area. It is noteworthy to remember at this point that all of the study area lies on reclaimed land, which in itself dictates the treatment of the shoreline. The different treatments found are: rip-rap (rock protection), a combination of rip-rap and bulkhead, rubble, jetties, piers and beaches, of sandy or coral nature.

[1] Saudi Arabia, the largest source of sand, enforced a pre-existing ban on exporting sand (Unknow - Gulf Daily News 2003); nevertheless, the reconstruction of Iraq and the outstanding economic growth in China is affecting the amount of available construction steel worldwide and increasing its prices.

7.6.1 Bulkheads & Rip-raps

Most of Manama's northern and eastern waterfronts are protected by either a rip-rap or a combination of bulkhead and rip-rap (Figure 7.10-2 & 3); these represent 61.5% of the total waterfront length of the study area. This kind of treatment of the shoreline does not promote a high level of interaction with the water. Throughout the three field trips the most recorded activity along rip-rapped areas was fishing, even at night-time; the second most frequent was passive sitting; the author did not come across any other uses.

The same is found in three out of the four formal public spaces on the waterfront of Manama. It has been observed that the use of bulkheads limits the nature of the interaction with the water to a passive one. Bulkheads work as visual barriers too, such as in the case of KFC I: users can only see the sea either while standing next to the bulkhead or walking within close proximity to it, which limits the area within the park in which the passive interaction can take place. The bulkhead in KFC II is low and the rip-rap below it is within the reach of the users. For example, the users managed to sit on the bulkhead to have a better view of the firework show which took place as part of the National Day celebrations in December 2003 (Figure 7.11).



Figure 7.11: KFC-II (area 15), 1- Users are able to sit next to the bulkhead and still see the water (April 2002), 2- A larger number of users manages to sit on the bulkhead itself and the rip-rap on busy days such as the National Day celebrations (December 2003)

Source: 1- The Author, 2- Abdullah Al Khal – Al Ayam Newspaper, Bahrain

The case of BC-I is far more sophisticated than KFC-I & II, and three designs were used there: the most common treatment is on the main waterside promenade, the *original* design there was to have a bulkhead with horizontal openings and linear planters on the walkway side (Figure 7.10-4). The planters were planted with *Bougainvillea* which is a thorny plant. Due to the low maintenance of the place in general and the unsuitability of the plant type for a saline water environment, the plants died within a short time and the

planters were left barren for a while; later a few of them were and paved and became like bench seating (Figure 7.10-1).

The second type of design was used around the octagonal mini-peninsulas that project from the main waterside promenade: the octagonal spaces are designed to provide shaded areas for sitting and picnicking. But the height of the bulkhead design was excessive, almost 1.4m high with balusters. The steel reinforcements of the balusters were the first victims of the high salinity of the air and water and soon most of the balusters collapsed; leaving unsafe gaps in the bulkhead (Figure 7.12-2). The bulkhead was, supposedly, designed to provide a safe and a secluded space for family groups. The end result is an unsafe and unappealing space due to these problems with the design detail (Figure 7.12-1).



Figure 7.12: Bulkhead details and maintenance could hamper the level of interaction with the water, BC-I (December 2003)

The design and maintenance of the bulkhead dictates the level of interaction with the water; the same is applicable to the detailing of the rip-raps below them. Rip-rap[1] and rubble areas provide a better opportunity for interaction with the water than the bulkhead areas. They are not generally safe, but users are ready to take the risk and access the water for fishing purposes. Furthermore, even if the design of the bulkhead was suitable and promoted active interaction with the water, such as the one in KFC-II, the maintenance and the slope degree of the rubble beneath it could work negatively. For instance, on the one hand if the slope is too steep, then it is hazardous for base fishing, and on the other hand, if it is too gentle then the fishing lines could get entangled in it

[1] Loose stone thrown down in water or on a soft bottom to form a foundation for a breakwater or other work. More widely, loose stone used for revetments, embankments, or the like; also, a structure made of this. (Oxford English Dictionary 2004)

and again this does not suit base fishing. This opinion was obtained through five interviews with users of Al Seef (area 11), BC-I, BC-II and Jufair Harbour (area 33). Base fishing is one of the most frequently observed types of active interaction with the water on the two waterfronts of Manama. This is not to say that all waterfronts should promote onshore fishing activities, but at least they should regulate them and provide suitable areas for them as well as promoting other active interaction with the water, particularly in low lying areas.

7.6.2 Rubble

The use of rubble in reclamation is quite common in Bahrain particularly when the reclaimed land is small and it is reclaimed for a private client. This type of shoreline is a result of reclamation through the use of two types of materials, the first uses building rubble in reclamation. The second material is a mixture of small rocks and sand (Figure 7.10-3). The second method is considerably safer for both the users and the environment. But when either is left without an embankment this could lead to the same result when the issue of interaction with the water is considered. Within the study area, shorelines with rubble represent 22.9% of the total length: the largest areas are the west and north of Al Seef (areas 1, 2, & 3) and the area between Sheikh Isa bin Sulman Causeway and Sheikh Hamad causeway (Area 21). The two areas are used differently and the level of interaction between the users and the water in them is high. Users are willing to take the risk, particularly in the Al Seef area where professional fishermen use that area to moor their fishing boats and to access their fish traps.

7.6.3 Beaches

All the beaches in the study area are manmade; their total length of approximately 3,561m representing 15.6% of the total length of the northern and eastern waterfronts of Manama. Of that, 57% is within areas with designated access and 34.2% is within exclusive spaces such as hotels and clubs. The figures could give a misleading result about the availability of beaches in Manama. Those beaches that are within public reach represent a substantial percentage of the available beaches, but the area that could be used for water-based activities is very limited. For instance, the only formal public beach in Manama is the one in BC – II but, and as mentioned earlier, the northern beach has been ruined by the surface water discharge pipe that runs through it; while the southern beach is eroded and full of debris, which makes it unusable (Figure 7.9-4 & 5).

During the time-span of the survey, not one person was seen using that beach for swimming. There is a further issue which prevents this beach from being used and that is the safety of the swimmers: there are no floating buoys to demarcate a swimming area which is out of bounds to small speed boats and jet skis. Jet skis were observed there on many occasions rendering it completely unsafe. Furthermore, on most occasions there is no one there such as a lifeguard or even a caretaker to take charge. On one occasion three young men drove their jet skis into the marina area of the beach; and tried hard to splash water on the children who were standing on the beach watching the jet skies and the caretaker was there and did nothing. When he was approached by the researcher to ask his opinion about the incident he said that what happened was normal and within the law, showing a clear lack both of knowledge of the law and understanding of the dangers of mixing swimming with motorized water-based sports.

The majority of the beaches in the Al Seef area are eroded and the rubble used in reclaiming the area is exposed; Areas 1, 2 and 3 in Al Seef are of this type, Areas 1 & 2 are not suitable for any water-based activity; the beach is eroded, the water too shallow and the seabed is of a rocky nature with a thin layer of silt on top, making it impossible to use. Thus, Area 1, 2 & 3 are not considered as beaches according to the classification of this research. Further, the whole Seef district is reclaimed over a *fasht*[1], of which the reclamation surpassed its edge on the eastern side, while on the northern and western sides vast areas of the *fasht* are still exposed. This encourages fishing activities in the area more than any other; Area 3 is the home of over 100 small fishing boats and its water is home of many *Hadras*.

The two beaches of Area 7 and 8, which span 987m, are the only beaches in Manama in a useable state. They are clean and the overall condition of the water is acceptable. Furthermore, only a small section there is used for mooring fishing boats, unlike the beach in Area 10 which has become completely dominated by fishing activities (Figure 7.9).

7.7 The Quality of the Water

Furthermore, in the course of conducting the survey, a count was made of water discharge pipelines on Manama's waterfront: nine major ones are located within the

[1] Sing. Fasht pl. F'shoot is the local name for coral reefs

study area. These are the Municipal ones, supposed to be surface or storm water outlets only and never to be linked to the sewage system. There are also many smaller ones, which look as if they are informal features: three of those are located on Al Bahri waterfront and they are possibly linked to the coffee shops and the other services in the park, while one of them has direct egress from the Dolphin Park. The odour on hot days indicates that they are linked with the sewage system; other indications of this are the substantial and continuous discharge from these outlets, which does not conform with Bahrain's low annual rainfall (around 74mm [Directorate of Statistics 2004]). The outlets are active even during the hottest and driest months of the year. The intensity of the discharge during the summer-time was not observed by the author but was noted and discussed in few interviews with some of the waterfronts' users. The main observation came from an interview with a group of fishermen in Al Jufair Harbour - area 33 (November 2003 & December 2004).

Nevertheless, young men and teenagers like to fish around those outlets for a certain type of small fish known locally as *maid*. It is commonly known among the fishermen of Bahrain that the *maid* fish can be found around sewage drains in high quantities. This was observed on both Al Bahri and Al Seef areas. In the Al Bahri area this occurs next to the wave breaker of the park's northern beach. On the Al Seef side this is found in Area 11 at the mouth of the harbour. The large number of fish in those areas reflects the high concentration of organic matter in the water around the outlets. An environmentalist confirmed these assumptions in an interview in which she wondered how the Ministry of Works and Housing could provide beaches on Lulu Islands and plan high profile projects on the waterfront while they are still pumping untreated sewage in the sea in that area[1].

The same was confirmed by a senior engineer form the Capital Municipality, who remarked: "all of the water around Manama is unsuitable for swimming due to its contamination with untreated wastewater."[2] That was denied by a former senior planner who said all these outlets discharge surface and storm water only, although the contamination of the water and the dumping of untreated sewage water in the shallows is noted in many government reports (General Commission for the Protection of Marine

[1] Interview with an environmental consultant (15th December 2003)
[2] Interview with a senior engineer in Manama municipality. Manama, December 2003

Resources Environment & Wildlife 2003; Ministry of State Municipalities Affairs and Environmental Affairs 2002).

In the course of an interview with a user of the beach of a five star hotel in the Al Seef area, she remarked "I don't swim in the sea of that area and I don't allow my kids to either, we suffer from a rash whenever we swim there."[1] On the eastern waterfront the case was confirmed by identifying several buildings across the road that are connected directly to the discharge pipelines. These were identified by their owners to be connected directly to the new pipeline which was laid through the northern beach of BC-II[2]. These buildings are connected through their septic tanks, in which only the liquid waste goes through to the sewage pipeline. Thus, most of the surface water outlets on the northern and eastern waterfronts of Manama emit water containing untreated sewage. Furthermore, there are many small discharge pipes of an illegal nature which connect directly to restaurants and coffee shops, as in the case of the Ponderosa Restaurant next to Manama harbour, and the Turkish coffee shop in BC-I.

In Summary, the quality of the water is the final frontier which can determine the level of interaction with the water and thus its accessibility. The quality of the water could go further than affecting the level of interaction only; it could also affect the land-based activities on the waterfront and in many cases determine the value of the properties overlooking it. If the water is smelly and looks like open sewage, as was the condition of many European rivers in the past, it could result in a negative perception of the waterfront regardless of who owns it, how accessible it is or how good its design.

7.8 Conclusion

This Chapter set out to discuss the accessibility of the waterfront, and how accessibility has been negotiated through urban expansion of Manama and the process of land reclamation. It showed how, through those processes, the link between the waterfront and the rest of the city has passed through different phases and suffered many setbacks.

The Chapter concluded that although the planners of Manama have focused, over the past four decades, on vehicular accessibility, the modern network of roads and highways

[1] Interview with a female user of the Ritz-Carlton Hotel beach (10th December 2003)
[2] Interview and site tour with the owner and manager of two buildings in Al Hoora area which is located across the road to the west of Al Bahri Waterfront (19th November 2003)

does not provide good access to the waterfront. Furthermore, the same network has become a burden in itself by becoming the most hampering element for pedestrian accessibility to public space through multiple errors on the macro and the micro scales. The Chapter shows how poor design details and management can affect supposedly adequate pedestrian crossings.

Additionally, the Chapter sought to introduce a multifaceted approach to the assessment of the accessibility of public space by showing the many layers of the factors influencing it. On a macro scale, it analysed the link between the waterfront and the rest of the city, clarifying how the waterfront is alienated from the rest of the urban fabric. Subsequently it introduced a method of classifying spaces on the waterfront based on their level of accessibility which helped in illustrating how those spaces are currently accessed and how they would be in the future. That analysis, together with the conclusions reached in Chapter 6 regarding land use ratios and patterns on the waterfront led to the conclusion that Manama's public open space on the waterfront is facing a severe threat from the current planning practices and the current modes of rapidly-expanding tourism, real estate and service businesses. If the conditions described in this Chapter prevail without any bold and swift intervention from the planning authority to alter the above mentioned outcomes, public space will diminish quicker than ever before.

Furthermore, and as part of this multifaceted approach, the second layer of factors affecting the accessibility of public space was introduced. This layer sought to answer the question: "Now that we are there, what can we do with the water?" To answer this question, a key factor in the overall matter of public space had to be highlighted, that of the nature of the water and access to it. What modes of interaction that could take place with the water in these places? The chapter reintroduced to the Bahraini context three modes of interaction with the water based on their intensity; *touch the water, see the water* and *on the water*. It showed that most of the public open spaces that provide a touch the water mode are spaces that are either unplanned or privately owned. When that fact is linked to the above-mentioned state of urban and economic planning in Bahrain and the current condition of formal public open spaces on Manama's waterfront, it leads to one conclusion, the *touch the water* mode is only going to prevail in exclusively accessed open spaces.

The issue of the water's accessibility was additionally investigated by introducing a series of additional influential factors. This level goes deeper into the physical enablers of the three modes of interaction with the water. It illustrated the different treatments of the shoreline and the quality of the seabed immediately next to public open space. It also highlighted how the planning and the management of these interventions are affecting the nature of the interaction with the water negatively. It has reached the conclusion that formally and informally accessible public space is providing a very limited access to the water itself, and with very few activities. It highlights that the newly reclaimed areas are currently situated in the shallows but the accelerating rate of change shows a trend towards more deep water reclamation taking place, which means higher and rougher embankments that provide less accessibility to the water. Additionally, it highlights the issue of sedimentation and how beaches in the newly reclaimed areas could be hazardous for public use due to the sedimentations of silt, soft soil, proximity to strong currents and the gaps in the seabed only concealed by a thin layer of sand. It concluded that most of the beaches in the informally and formally accessed spaces are not safe for the use of the public.

Moreover, this chapter highlighted the issue of water quality and how that affects the use and accessibility of the waterfront. It reached the conclusion that Manama's waters are unsafe due to the high number of untreated surface water discharges and that there are no plans to solve this problem in the near future.

Overall, the multifaceted approach of this chapter shows how sophisticated the issue of the accessibility of the water is. It shows how even if open space is accessible, whether by car or on foot, many other factors must be considered to understand its future accessibility and what type of water-related activities could take place in it in the light of the modes of interaction with the water, treatment of the shoreline and quality of the water.

Cahpter 8: Formal Public Open Space on the Urban Waterfront of Manama: Al Bahri Parks

8.1 Introduction

This Chapter is concerned with the formal public space of Manama. It is divided into two main Sections; the first is concerned with the physical characteristics of the focus area. And the second Section deals with the way it is perceived and used. Overall, the Chapter is set to trace the social process that produces informal public space. It attempts to answer the question of how the physical arrangement of those spaces affects the ways they are socially consumed.

As mentioned in Chapter 2, the waterfront is an urban edge or a diaphragm lying between a body of water and an urban area. That unique location, being central yet concurrently an edge, is highlighted through the three subsections of the second Section

of this Chapter where three objectives are achieved. The first objective is to highlight the effect of the social and physical environments that affect the users' perception of those open spaces stressing their unique location on the water. The second objective is to illustrate the way those spaces are used in relation to their social and physical attributes. The third objective is to trace the way users' activities are negotiated between themselves within those public spaces.

8.2 The physical Characteristics of Al Bahri Parks

Al Bahri Parks (Figure 8.1) represent the generic type of Manama's formal public space. Bahri-I was built in the mid-1980s and its expansion (Bahri-II) was built in the late 1990s. The two parks are located on the eastern waterfront of Manama to the North of Al Fatih Grand Mosque, which is one of the landmarks of Manama built on land reclaimed in the early 1970s. Al Fatih Highway separates the two parks from the rest of Manama. However a pedestrian overpass located near the northern entrance of Bahri-I was built to reduce that isolation (see Chapter 7). The two are almost the same size (60,647m² and 60,934 m² respectively) but differ in shape: Bahri-I takes a linear shape, extending across a north-south axis (approximately 740m x 81m) (Figure 8.2), while Bahri-II has a rectangular shape (approximately 367m x 166m) and located to the south of Bahri-I (Figure 8.3). Although Bahri-II was created to form an extension of Bahri-I, the designs of the two do not reflect that; there is no physical integration and the two differ in their design and in the facilities provided within them. That separation is supported by a group of trees, which used to act as the southern terminus of Bahri-I and currently separates the two parks physically and visually.

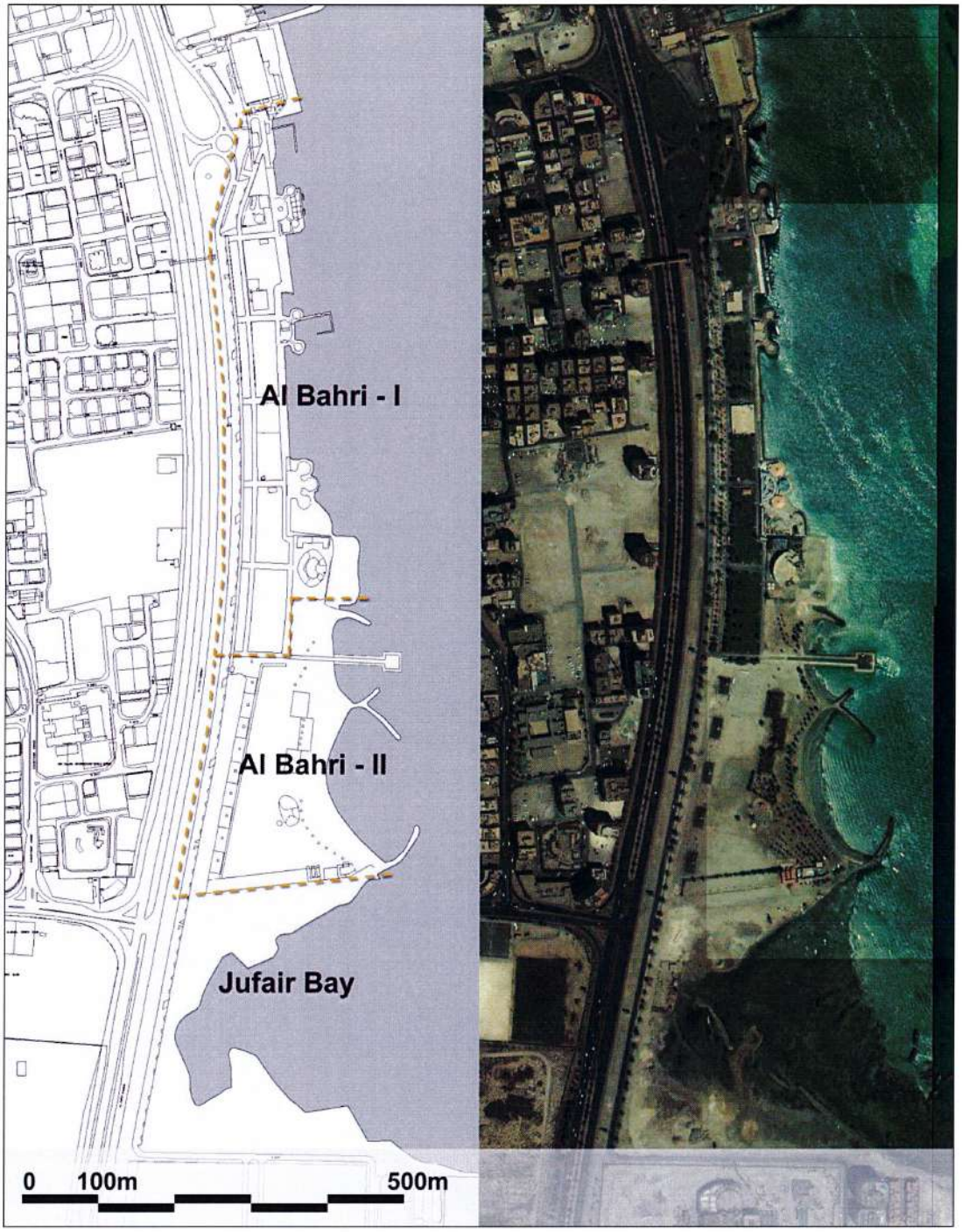


Figure 8.1: Map and Satellite Image of Al Bahri Parks

Source: Original electronic map and Satellite Image from Ministry of Municipalities & Agricultural Affairs (last updated 2003), edited by the Author

8.2.1 Physical Characteristics of Bahri-I

Bahri-I was the first of its kind in Bahrain: at that time it was thought that Manama reached its maximum limit in terms of land reclamation on the eastern coast and that a

three shaded areas there were no other shaded spaces and when the park was first opened most of the planted trees were too small to provide any shade. Thus, these three sitting areas were the only shaded sitting areas in the entire park. Furthermore, the accessibility of the water in Bahri-I was limited to a visual one ('See the water') due to the design of the water's edge and the material used. Thus swimming is prohibited and fishing is not promoted.



Figure 8.4: Map and Satellite Image of Bahri-I

Source: Original electronic map and Satellite Image from Ministry of Municipalities & Agricultural Affairs (last updated 2003), edited by the Author

waterfront park is a natural terminus on that side[1]. The idea of placing a public space on the waterfront to be used as a physical terminus for the urban areas and as a deterrent for any further land reclamation is still widely circulated in the local media by MPs and Municipal Councils. This was repeated many times when the cases of Al Akr, Sitra's eastern coast, Barbar and Sanad were debated. As discussed in Chapter 2, the same idea was trendy in most of the Arab Gulf's cities and for comparable reasons; such as: 1- to overcome the then chronic traffic problems in old coastal cities and towns by providing highways along their waterfronts, 2- greening and beautifying those cities by providing corniches and green spaces along those highways 3- defining the edges of cities which was assumed to provide a permanent solution for the ownership issues relevant to submerged and coastal lands. The corniche of the Eastern Province on the eastern coast of neighbouring Saudi Arabia is a prime example of this trend (CH2M Hill Int. 1981 report cited in Al-Abdullah 1998). Other Arab Gulf cities which did not follow that trend in the 1980s have followed it in the 1990s or even in the new millennium, such as Doha city. Thus, the construction of Bahri-I was part of a wider trend that swept the Gulf and represents a segment of the Bahraini answer to that trend.

Bahri-I has a simple geometrical design concept (Figure 8.1): the park follows an elongated gridiron pattern in which it is divided mainly into two types of green space running side by side along a north-south axis. The green spaces on the east are turfed over and some large trees are planted at their western edges. When the park was first opened, those green spaces accommodated the only indoor spaces, that is, toilets and an arcade (indoor games room). The green spaces on the west are sandy and planted with shrubs and trees only. Three walkways run through the park in a north-south direction along those green spaces: one in between and two on their sides. The walkways are linked by five east-west walkways which are used in separating the green spaces and to link the park with the car park that runs all along its western side. That angled car park runs all along the service road that leads to the park. The capacity of the car park proved to be inadequate early after the opening of the park. To overcome that problem, the traffic island between the service road and the Al Fatih highway was opened up for visitor parking during busy days (Figure 8.2).

[1] Interview with a former urban planning senior official – Directorate of Physical Planning (13th December 2003)



Figure 8.2: Added car park areas in front of Bahri-I (November 2004)

Prior to the construction of Bahri-II the three north-south walkways used to terminate with the southernmost east-west walkway. On the northern side, the western walkway terminates with the most northern east-west walkway, the central walkway converges to meet the eastern walkway which used to lead to Fun Land Centre and the car park in front of it and at a later stage to Layaly Zaman *Gahwa*. That end is currently blocked and the northern end of the park terminates in an abrupt way due to the ongoing work of Dream Islands which is another private waterfront development in the form of artificial islands to the east of Bahri-I.



Figure 8.3: Central shaded areas in the projecting peninsulas in Bahri-I – (November 1990)

The eastern walkway is the seaside promenade and currently most of the services and commercial outlets are located along its edges. To its east there were originally three peninsulas designed to provide a semi-secluded sitting area. The seclusion was enhanced by two rectangular planters placed between each peninsula and the main promenade. Each one of those peninsulas used to provide one central shaded area and three hexagonal terraces projecting from that central area (Figure 8.3). Besides these

From the analysis of the original implemented design of the park it is possible to understand the main intention behind this layout[1]. Overall the park was designed to be used in the late afternoons and at night. The green spaces on the west were designed to provide both a visual barrier and an acoustic buffer against the car park, the service road and the Al Fatih highway. Having no fences maintained a strong visual link between the park and the surroundings. The western green spaces were never meant to provide any sitting areas hence the lack of any designated sitting places within them. The green areas to the east are the main and largest green spaces of the park; they were designed to provide sitting areas through the benches located on the peripheries of each green space and the grass itself. The three peninsulas were designed to fill the gap and provide a more private and secluded sitting area.

8.2.2 Bahri-II

Bahri-II was built in the late 1990s (Figure 8.5). It is considered as an expansion of Bahri-I although the design of the link between the two does not reflect this (Figure 8.6). As noted earlier, of itself Bahri-II is a unique waterfront park in Manama; and is the only park that provides an urban beach in Manama. The park is served by the same service road that leads to Bahri-I and the car parking strip alongside that road. An unmade-up (dirt) car park is provided between the car parking strip and the western side of Bahri-II. On busy days, as with Bahri-I, visitors of the park use the open space to the south of the park and the traffic island separating Al Bahri Parks from Al Fatih highway to park their cars.

[1] The author could not obtain the original design layout of the park and draws his analysis of the original design from his experience of the park when he participated in a landscape design studio and later a plant material course that formed part of his BA degree studies.

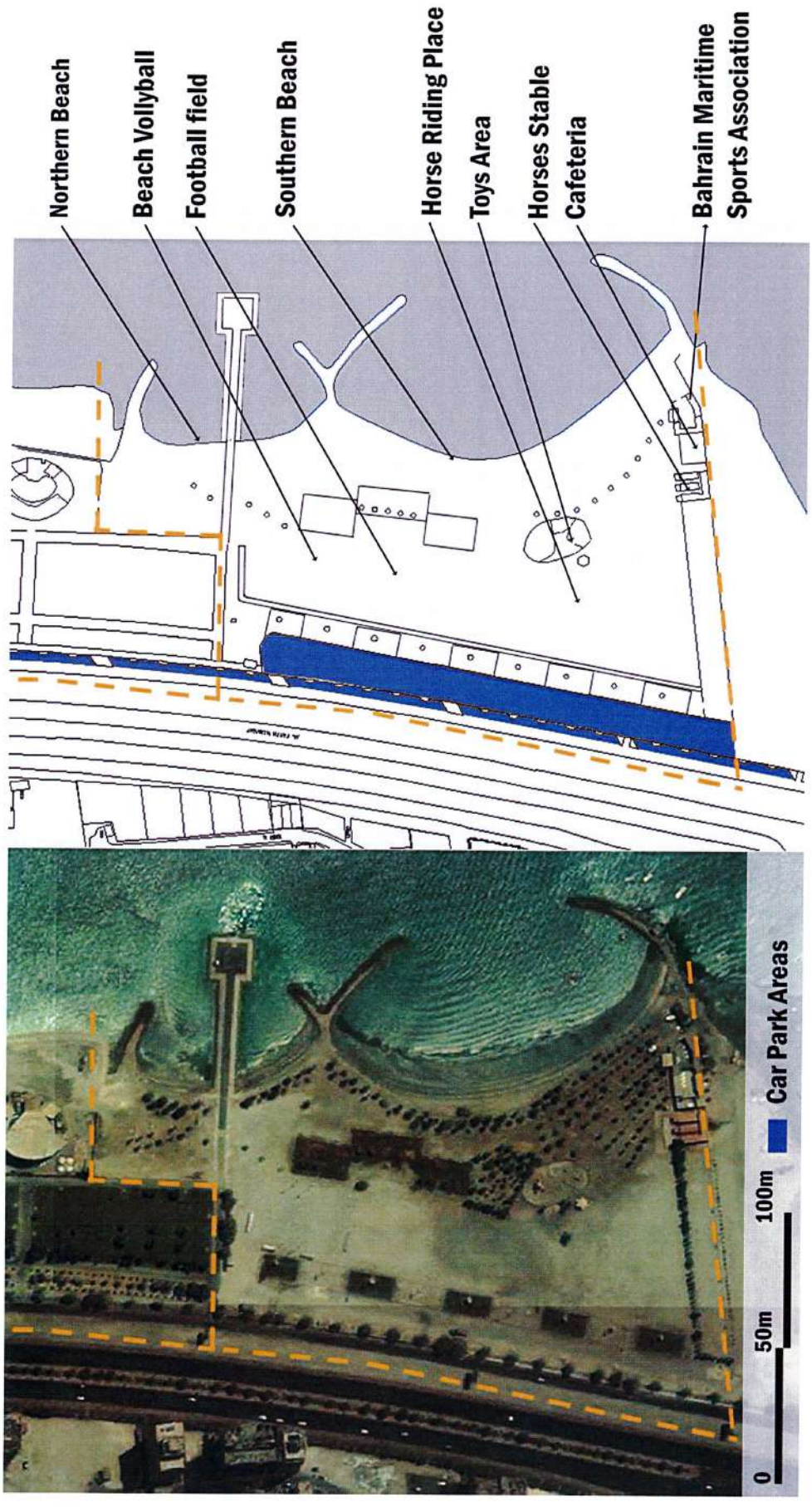


Figure 8.5: Map and Satellite Image of Bahri-II (December 2003)

Source: Original electronic map and Satellite Image from Ministry of Municipalities & Agricultural Affairs (last updated 2003), edited by the Author

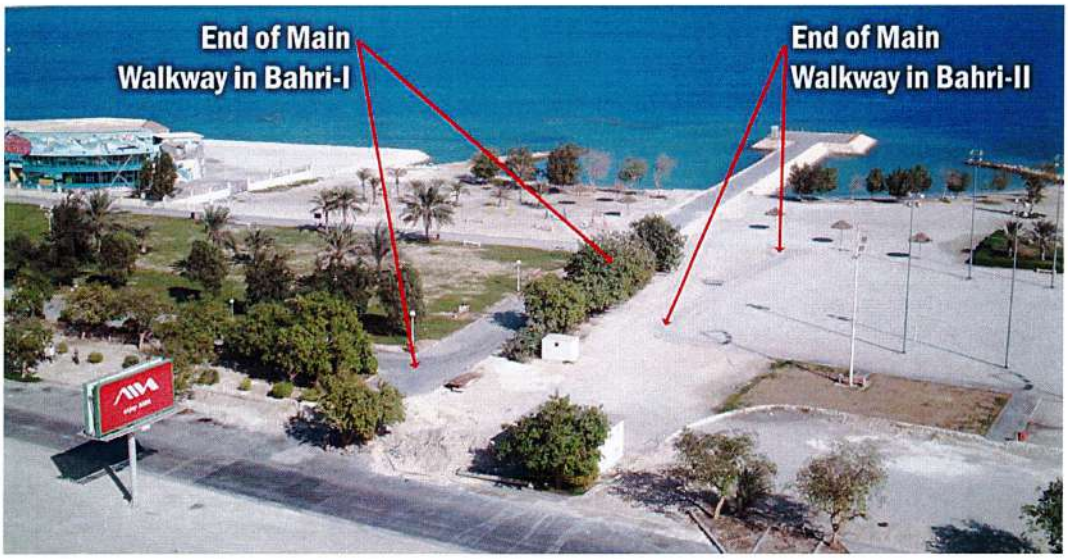


Figure 8.6: The link between Bahri-I & Bahri-II (December 2003)



Figure 8.7: Bahri-II showing the playing areas (December 2003)

The layout of Bahri-II follows two distinct patterns: on the eastern side, where it meets the water, the layout follows an overall organic pattern and on the western side a rectangular geometrical pattern (Figure 8.7). On the eastern side, the park has two beaches of unequal length. A group of trees and green spaces to the east of these beaches separates them from the playing area. The sandy playground area is divided into spaces following their designated functions: a beach volleyball playground is located in the north, a football field is in the middle and a horse riding area terminates the area to the south (Figure 8.8-1). An outdoor children's play area is located to the east of the horse riding area (Figure 8.8-2). Furthermore, there are five turfed spaces stretched along the western side of the playgrounds divided by sandy rectangles of similar size. In contrast with Bahri-I, Bahri-II has only one paved walkway: this runs in a north-south direction between the playgrounds and the five turfed spaces. The southern end of the park is demarcated by the Bahrain sailing club building and by the

horse stables. A row of trees spans the distance between those buildings and the car park on the west and further separates Bahri-II from Jufair Beach and Harbour (areas 33 and 34).



Figure 8.8: 1- Horse riding area, 2- Children's outdoor play area

The shaded sitting areas are scattered throughout the eastern side of Bahri-II and are made of palm frond umbrellas. Another shaded sitting area is located next to the fenced toy area, and made of a prefabricated fibreglass shell structure, just like the ones located in the three peninsulas of Bahri-I. All the benches next to the main lighting posts originally had shade-giving fixture on the posts, but most of them were vandalized. Other similar fixtures were added in 2004 in the sandy areas on the western side of the park, along with two spectator's stands on the western side of the playing fields (Figure 8.9).



Figure 8.9: Lighting and added stands in Bahri-II (October 2004)

The overall theme of Bahri-II is that of a natural beach environment: this is reflected in its layout, the accessibility of the water, and the materials used in both hard and

softscapes. The layout mainly follows the geometrical manifestation of functions that are accommodated within the park. For instance in the beach volleyball and football areas the layout of the green spaces is a mere offset of those rectangular spaces. On the beach area, the trees are planted along curved lines that are an offset of the beach line itself. Materials-wise, Bahri-II was intended to have the general appearances of a sandy beach park with minimal green spaces. None of the shaded areas are provided with benches; and only three benches are located in turfed spaces. This reflects the intention of the designers to keep the park as informal as possible and to reflect the nature of the beaches in Bahrain as a 'desert island'.

8.2.3 Lighting of the Al Bahri Parks

The lighting of the two parks follows two different schemes. In Bahri-I the lighting comes from a group of scattered post lights (white fluorescent). Since it opened, the lighting has been dim; however, the distribution of these lights has apparently also been affected by the private outlets which mushroomed in the park through the years. The park has many dark areas at night, particularly after 10pm on week days. These dark areas depend for their lighting on the park's private outlets. Thus, once those outlets are shut down those areas sink in deep darkness. This is assisted by a lack of maintenance of the existing lights: a large number are out of order. Many of the users interviewed in the informal spaces of Al Seef complained about the lighting in Al Bahri. Two of the users interviewed in Al Bahri-I made similar comments about the dark areas and questioned the suitability of the parks for family use at night times.

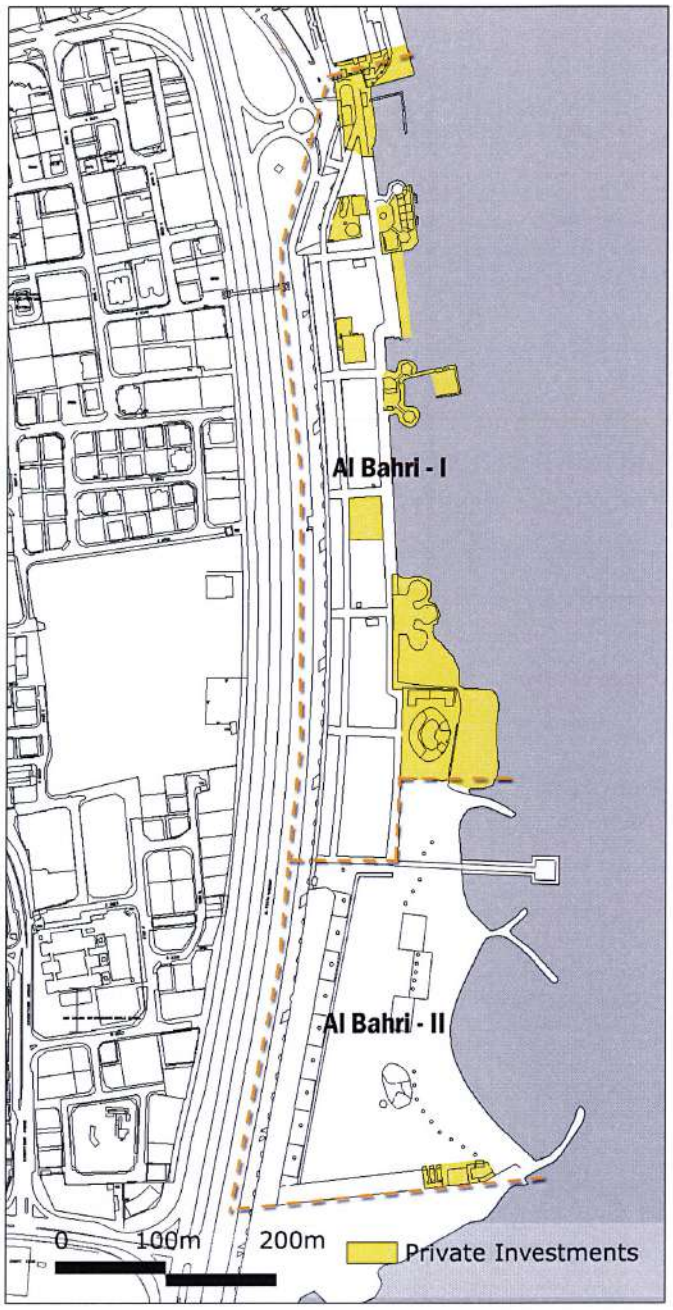


Figure 8.10: Private investment in Al Bahri Parks – December 2004

Source: Original electronic map from Ministry of Municipalities & Agricultural Affairs (last updated 2003), edited by the Author

However, Bahri-II has a different style of lighting, depending upon a group of flood-lights placed along its western edge (Figure 8.9). The deficiencies of that lighting system were soon apparent and other large, as well a smaller, flood-lights were placed at a later stage at the north, west and east sides of the playing area. However these additional lights were never observed to be illuminated during the author's visits to park. This was noticed by the author in the course of three field trips and the same observations were made by two interviewees. As mentioned earlier, the beach area in

Bahri-II is separated from the rest of the park by a group of trees. These trees in combination with the long distance between the location of the flood-lights and the beach make the beach area poorly-lit at night-time.

8.2.4 Physical Transformation, Management and Funding of Al Bahri Parks

Since its construction Bahri-I has witnessed many physical changes. Being more recent, Bahri-II has undergone fewer changes. The changes in Bahri-I are in line with the overall transformation of Manama's waterfront and the public open spaces in Bahrain in general. Change came slowly and in many forms but mostly in the shape of the long term privatisation of parts of the parks. When Bahri-I was first built, the services in it were at a bare minimum: there were two toilet buildings (one for males and one for females). The only other indoor building in the park was an arcade located in the northern half of the park. These three buildings were all located within the eastern green areas and immediately on the east-west walkways. On the one hand, this made them highly accessible and at the same time meant that they did not block the view of the sea from the parks' main open spaces. On the other hand they were not visible from the roadside, giving the highway users a continuous green and penetrable view provided by the trees of the park. Nevertheless, these blocks created a U-shaped outdoor room opening towards the direction of the sea.

The openness of the green spaces and the wide open vistas towards the sea have altered over the years. Bahri-I is currently suffering from the excessive number of private outlets that occupy its waterfront and block its sea views. Although only 23% of the area of the two parks is occupied by private properties, nearly 58% of its waterline is blocked by those properties. The park has also lost 100% of its waterfront seating areas. All the octagonal peninsulas have been turned into private outlets, in the form of coffee shops, a dolphinarium, a seaborne taxi reservation desk and a three star restaurant. All the original benches in Bahri-I have been removed and the ones provided in Bahri-II have been vandalized and displaced. Furthermore, some other outlets are built away from the waterline but right on what was originally open green space.

There have been many factors contributing to that change, but the main one is the Manama Municipality investment policy which was discussed in Chapter 6. The Municipality has always been trying to generate sources of revenue, even before the

changes in Government policy towards the funding of local municipalities, introduced in 2000[1]. That factor instigated a high rate of investment in public open spaces, which was in most cases not monitored properly due to a lack of relevant experience on the part of the Municipality[2]. This mismanagement made the park a victim of its own success: since its opening Bahri-I has remained one of the most popular parks in Manama. The large number of users has attracted more investors and continues to do so[3].

The lack of proper feasibility studies on the part of investors and the municipality resulted in the financial failure of some of the private investment in the park[4]. This was admitted by actors on both sides; but what was noticed on the ground was that water-dependent and water-related investments are usually the main losers. They are usually transformed into more socially-problematic types of consumption, in the form of outlets with higher and faster profitability. For example, what is now the Bayt Al Omdah coffee shop was originally a jetty for Gulf Tours, where the company used to launch its restaurant-boats. The project was financially successful for a while and then turned unprofitable[5]. It was later turned into a *gahwa* and its jetty became a dumping ground for old, rusting boats. The same happened with the water-related Dolphin Park (the dolphinarium): its Saudi owner did not make enough profit in the first few years of its opening, which led him to open a *gahwa* next to it[6]. Even the owner of the horse riding business applied for the opening of a full horse riding school in Bahri-II but the main component of that school is yet another traditional coffee shop. The owner admitted that he cannot foresee any financial success for the school without the *gahwa* part[7].

The second factor affecting the transformation of public open space is an external one but is highly linked to the first factor. The popularity of Al Bahri Park can be linked to the lack or the poor condition of the public open spaces of Manama in general and the rapid depletion of the green open space within or around the city. This will be discussed further in the following sections of this Chapter.

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[1] Interview with a senior financial officer – Manama Municipality (4th & 8th November 2004)
[2] ibid
[3] ibid.
[4] ibid.
[5] Interview with an entrepreneur who leases a horse riding place in Al Bahri Corniche (20th October 2004). And with another user who used to enjoy the trip on board these restaurant-boats (28th November 2003).
[6] Interview with a financial officer - R & D Directorate – Ministry of Municipalities and Agriculture Affairs (8th November 2004).
[7] Interview with an entrepreneur who leases a horse riding place in Al Bahri Corniche (20th October 2004).

8.3 Perception and Use of Al Bahri Parks

This part of the Chapter is concerned with the way in which formal public space is first perceived and later used. Recording and analysing the way formal public space is perceived and used by certain groups and avoided by others will highlight a twofold objective. The first objective is to shed some light on the differences and similarities between this particular type of urban space and other hinterland urban open spaces. The second objective is to emphasize the differences and similarities between the two generic types of public space: the formal and informal. This will help in distinguishing these public spaces on the bases of function, planning and design requirements. However, the perception of any place is a dialectical matter: in one way it usually takes place before the use of the space and in another way the use of the space is indicative of the way it is perceived. Thus, recording users' perceptions is based on both their direct propositions about the space through their speech and body language and indirectly through the way they use the space.

From users' recorded perceptions of public space and from the results of the literature review of the roles of the public space in Chapter 2; it is possible to categorise the user's perceptions under three main themes. The first is concerned with the perception of public space as a place to be in touch with nature. The second theme focuses on the perception of public space as a place for leisure, and the third theme is about the perception of the public space as a place for social interaction. This is not to say that formal public space is not perceived or used differently but the three categories identified in this study were found to be the dominant ones. Furthermore, there is a margin for overlap between the three categories, as social activities and accessing nature may form part of leisure. It is also conceivable that the three could take place concurrently in the activities of the same person or group of people. A group of users could be socialising, while accessing nature and regard this as a leisure activity. However, there are many other leisure activities that cannot be considered as either social activities or a form of accessing nature. Therefore, although observing nature could be part of leisure, the reverse is not necessarily true. For the purposes of this research leisure is considered to be a subjective matter and discretionary. Thus any activity, anywhere could be considered as a form of leisure if it is regarded as such by

the person practicing it[1]. This research finds it necessary to differentiate between these three while attempting to understand any public space.

8.3.1 Observing Nature in Al Bahri Parks

As established in Chapters 2 and 3, being in touch with nature is one of the basic human psychological needs. However it has been determined in Chapter 5 that the places to observe nature by Bahraini city dwellers come in three basic forms, as shown in Figure 8.11: seaside open space, remote open space and green space (mostly agricultural). The latter two, being green or open, used to be features of the physical attributes of many historical waterfronts around Manama. In those spaces the presence of the water was the dominant feature. Accessing the water used to form part of the experience of the space. Figure 8.11 shows that current waterside space can only be found in the form of a waterfront park or an informal open space. It also shows that the only remaining green open space on the waterfront of Manama is to be found in the form of a park. To this research, it is crucial to establish an understanding of two matters of relevance to formal public space. The first one is to know if these spaces are considered as places where nature can be observed and used accordingly. The second matter is concerned with the effect of the presence of water and the ability to access it on the way those spaces are experienced as places to observe nature. This is a vital strand in the attempt of this study to distinguish generic types of public space. Thus the following section concentrates mainly on the role of the water as an aspect of observing nature through a waterfront park. Furthermore, it attempts first to understand how formal public space is perceived and subsequently used, and later to trace any link between the perception and the use of these spaces with the presence of the water while taking into consideration the physical constraints within particular localities.

[1] Refer to the work of Aydin-Wheater (2002) on the historical process that resulted in the formation of leisure as an unequivocal activity or a part of time distinguished from other forms of activities such as work.

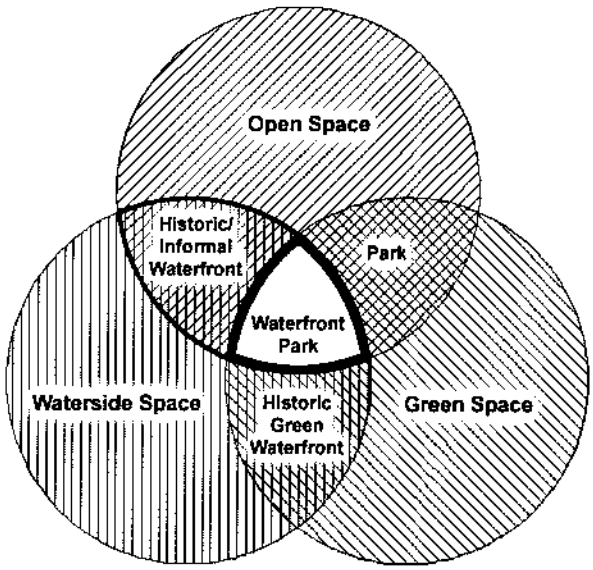


Figure 8.11: The current types of open space on the waterfront based on their geographical location within the Bahraini context

Prior to the 1920s, when the park in its western conception was introduced in Bahrain, the main form of 'green' space used to be the palm groves that were used by members of the public for *cashteh*[1] and camping. The main purpose of *cashteh* was to observe nature away from the urban crowds. It also used to involve water-based activities, whether the body of water in question was a spring, pool or a beach. Some of the remote and rural waterfronts around the city of Manama used to provide a form of public space that was both green and on the waterfront. For example Jaboor Beach on the north coast and Bu Ghazal beach on Toubli Bay in the south of Manama (refer to Chapter 5) were a kind of green and rural waterfront. But the process of coastline reclamation and privatisation, which was discussed in Chapters 5 and 6, concurrently with urban expansion on the northern Green Belt, nearly eliminated that type of public space from the entire country.

Currently Al Bahri parks are used by many users for the *cashteh* (Figure 8.12), besides other uses. But does that mean that the waterfront park has replaced the historic green waterfronts where one could be in touch with nature? The perception of the Al Bahri Parks as places to observe nature has been recorded through interviews with users of a

[1] '*Cashteh*' means picnic in local dialect

variety of locations on the waterfront of Manama. Through those interviews it has been found that some of them perceive the Al Bahri Parks to be places in which to observe nature.



Figure 8.12: A day out for a Bahraini family in Al Bahri-I, Eid al Adha day, 1nd February 2004

However, this perceived 'nature' seems to be limited to green space only and for some reason does not include the water. This means that one element was removed from the composition of the traditional green waterfront, the water itself. For instance, one of the interviewees stated that she comes to Al Bahri Parks because it is the only green space she likes in the town; when she was asked what it is that she especially likes in that particular place, she answered that she likes the greenery, the trees and to be in touch with nature[1]. 'Nature' in that context might include the sea but the fact that she does not name it indicates that it is not at the top of her list of attractions. This, supported by the fact that her visits to the place usually take place at night, regardless of the season, and her favourite place to sit is at the western end of the central green spaces, away from the sea, indicate that the 'green' quality of the place is her first priority in selecting the place.

However, some of the interviewed users of the Al Seef open spaces hold a different perception of Al Bahri with regard to its greenness: on the one hand the majority of them do not use Al Bahri parks and do not perceive them as green space or as spaces where

[1] Interview with a middle aged married woman from India in Bahri-I (18th November 2003).

one can observe nature. One of them commented on Al Bahri Parks in the following words:

> The place is too dark and gloomy, there is no sea breeze because the sea has become like a pond surrounded on each side and there are many buildings on the waterside. Unlike in here...this place is open and bright...and the sea breeze is fresh...in Al Bahri or even King Faisal [corniche] the water is dirty...the Bahri sea is smelly...we swim here sometimes, especially in the summer[1]

The above statement could be influenced by the location of Al Bahri and the preferred prevailing wind in Bahrain. As mentioned in Chapter 3, the preferred prevailing wind in Bahrain is the Shamal which comes from the Northwest. Al Bahri Parks stretch across the central part of the eastern waterfront of Manama, which means that the prevailing wind passes all through the city before reaching the waterfront.

A group of users interviewed on Jufair Harbour (area 33), the other major informal open space on the waterfront of Manama, stated that they also do not like Al Bahri Parks on the basis that it does not provide a good environment[2]. Three of them agreed that the park is not a healthy place and they cannot visualize it as a place to observe nature. One of them stated that he does not venture into it at all, although he spends hours every week sitting in the harbour area, only 40 meters away from the southern end of Bahri-II. He added that there is nothing for him or his children in the park and does not see it as a place to observe nature; another one stated that his children use the sandy football field in Bahri-II only and never use any other parts of the park; to him his children just need an open space to play. In his opinion, observing nature is realised through the prospect of the waters of Jufair harbour.

The perception of Al Bahri Parks by the users of other public spaces in Manama is also shared by some of its users; some of the users of Bahri Parks interviewed don't think that the two parks are green or healthy places; one of the interviewed joggers stated:

> I jog here because it is the only place near my house where I can do it without the hazard of jogging next to a road, it is still too close to the highway though and the air is too polluted...in summer-time the place gets too humid because

[1] Interview with three Bahraini young men in Al Seef (15th November 2004).
[2] Two interviews with a group of mature fishermen in Jufair Harbour (28th November 03, 20th October 04)

> it is right on the seaside and at that time I don't jog here, I use the gym...this place becomes like jogging in a sauna[1]

In another interview with a group of seven men who were having their lunch break in Al Bahri, one of them stated:

> Man-2 commenting on the increasing number of private outlets: "but those places take up a big piece of the natural space, they reduce the green spaces and they eat up the seaside"
>
> Man-3: just like that place, it is as if the sea is just for him, he damaged the place (referring to the owner of the club [Area 31c])
>
> Man-2: this place is supposed to be green and full of trees from its beginning to it is end, should not be filled with any buildings, even the trees which they are using are wrong (pointing to the trees on the western side of the eastern green spaces), after sometime they might start falling on us...The green grass is very nice but these trees are not.
>
> Man-3: [...] look at that palm, when you look at it your heart aches[2]

The above excerpts present two different opinions: the first one focused on the quality of the air more than the aesthetics of the place, while the second group focused on the visual qualities and details of the place, that is, the openness of the views and the type and condition of the trees. The two highlight the way that different users hold different reservations with regard to their experience of observing nature, being green or near the sea is not the sole matter.

8.3.1.1 Users' Perception of Al Bahri Parks through Behavioural Mapping

However, one of the issues that were noticed is that the interviewed users of Al Bahri always list the sea, when considering why they visit it. This could be misunderstood when taken out of context, that is, if the focus is only on the sequence of listed items, without paying attention to the interviewees' body language when they are referring to the sea. In some cases, this body language gave the researcher the impression that the interviewees delayed mention of the sea because they believed it to be an obvious factor which they did not need to mention, or because it was the cardinal reason for their presence in that particular space and should be mentioned in the last place, in order to stress its aesthetic and cultural value. For example, one of the interviewees in Bahri-I stated:

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[1] Interview with a 33 year old male jogger from Germany (10th December 2003).
[2] Interview with a group of bankers taking their lunch break in Bahri-I (4th December 2003).

> We come to here because it is quiet at this time of the day and it is a pleasant place where we can be away from our grim work places, we don't care whether it is hot, humid or cold...we like the greenery here and that... [He looked towards the sea][1]

However, a second method was applied, in order to check how influential the presence of the sea is in the selection of public space. As mentioned in the methodology Chapter, the user's perception could be ascertained through the behavioural mapping of the place. For instance, it has been found that a sea view or access to the sea ranks low in the users' criteria for selecting a place to sit within the Park. In the criteria used by picnickers in finding a suitable area, the provision of arboreal shades in day time, being on the grass, the distance from other users and being close to one's car all ranked higher than the view of, or the proximity to the sea. On busy days such as the *Eid Al Fitr* holiday, the National day or on long weekends, competition for a shaded place on the grass in Bahri-I was observed to be severe. The same was not found with regard to the view of the sea (Figure 8.13).



Figure 8.13: Family groups in Bahri-I seeking the shadow of the trees (December 2003)

This may give an impression that many users select Al Bahri Parks for their green quality rather than their proximity to the sea or the provision of a sea view. Yet this impression could be misleading in the absence of adequate seating areas that provide both shade and a view of the water. The users do not have enough choice in the first place, particularly in Bahri-I. As illustrated in earlier this was not the case when the

[1] ibid

park was first opened, but with the invasion of private investment in Bahri-I, visual access to the water was severely impeded.

In Bahri-II there are few areas to sit that provide a good or largely unobstructed sea view. Some of them are within grassed areas and others are in sandy areas. In busy days these seating areas remain empty or partially occupied, particularly the sandy ones. For instance, during the National day (16th December) holiday of 2003, Bahri-I was very busy around noon time: the majority of the users were there to have a picnic or even a barbeque, which is not allowed in the park anyway. However many users could not find a seating place that was both grassed and shaded. Some family groups decided to sit in shaded areas without starting their picnic or barbeque, awaiting one of the shaded spaces in the eastern green areas to be vacated. One family group waited for up to 45 minutes before moving to a vacant shaded place in Bahri-I.

Another example is taken from the observations of the second day of the National day holiday (17th December 2003). It was another warm, sunny and busy day in Bahri-I. Around noon, a young Bahraini man along with his partner and their male friend decided upon their arrival in the park not to wait for a shaded seating area to become vacant. They didn't look far; they simply decided to sit on the curb of the western green area. They sat nearly 15m away from an ongoing digging site for a major sewage drain pipe that was planned to run alongside Al Bahri Parks. Heavy machines were in operation at that location, although it was a holiday. The place they picked was not shaded, not even grassed, and the curb they sat on was situated between one sandy area and an asphalted walkway. They left the place as soon as they finished eating their barbequed meal. Their action implies that they simply needed an outdoor space where they could sit and have their barbeque.

Concurrent with the above-mentioned events, during the first and second days of the national day holiday, it was observed that no one was using the shaded sitting areas in Bahri-II in the day-time. This could be related to the comparatively long distance between those areas and the car park. In the afternoon, when the sun was low in the sky and lost some of its strength, that situation changed. One family was noticed sitting in the eastern grassed space of Bahri-II. That family, somehow, had managed to park their car right next to the place where they were sitting, although they were in the middle of the Park. The author found out later that there is a small opening in the curb that separates Bahri-II from Al Jufair Harbour (area 33) which the family must have utilised.

That family chose to sit in a grassed space, but away from the shaded seating areas. Most likely they were there because of the grass and the seclusion which is achieved by maintaining a distance from the others, besides the ability to station their car right next to them.

To understand the degree of influence held by the provision of both grass and shadow in comparison to the sea view, the two parks were observed at night. The following are observations from the same National holiday period. In Bahri–I, after sunset, the number of users started to pick up, until by 9.00pm it had become crowded. At this time, the criteria of selecting the place to sit changed from the day-time approach, although being on the grass and close to ones' own car remained the most prominent motivations. The lighting factor became important too; the unlit eastern green side of Bahri-II was empty while family groups in Bahri-I were sitting not more than three metres away from each other. No groups were found sitting in the well-lit western sandy areas of Bahri-II although they are right next to the car park. But the green areas within the same location were very crowded and filled by family groups who parked right next to their seating area. Thus, being on the grass is apparently one of the most important factors that influence the users of Al Bahri when they select an area to sit within the two parks. For the sake of finding such a place, other factors such as privacy can be sacrificed while other criteria are maintained, such as the proximity to the car park, which will be explored further in the next chapter. Some family groups chose to sit next to an abandoned construction site for the extension of an arcade in Bahri-I, a place which is poorly lit and is a source of hazard for children who were playing on an unfinished wall and inside the construction site (Figure 8.14-1). The only advantage of that location is the grassed ground and its proximity to the car park and to the northern vehicular entrance to the park. In this condition, both safety and privacy were sacrificed.



Figure 8.14: 1- Families sitting picnicking next to an abandoned construction site in Bahri-I (December 2004), 2 & 3 individuals and bachelor groups sitting near the sea when given the choice both at day and night times in King Faisal Corniche – I

Source: photos 2 and 3 are of unknown source

Nevertheless, in other waterfront parks, such as the King Faisal Corniches (area 15 & 18) it has been found that, given the choice, some users would use the green spaces and others would use the benches that are located next to the water, where they can observe the sea and the horizon even at night (Figure 8.14 2&3). It has been observed that in King Faisal Corniches, users compete for those benches on weekend nights. However, it was also observed that users are generally bachelors, joggers or walkers who take a rest for few moments on those benches before going somewhere else, while family groups prefer the grassed-over areas. Al Bahri Parks do not provide these choices; thus, one could say that a substantial number of users select them basically because they have green space rather than because of their waterfront. It also highlights that green means the provision of grass, which somehow became a chief element in the users' observation experience.

8.3.1.2 Waterfront and Hinterland Public Open Space

The perception and the subsequent view of Al Bahri parks as urban green space rather than public space could be linked to the condition of inner urban green space[1]. When Bahri-I was constructed, over twenty years ago, there were many other regional parks serving Manama, that is, Al Andalus, Al Sulmaniyah, the Water Garden and Adhari parks. At that time, they were all newly-built or refurbished and were highly attractive[2]. The same could be said about the neighbouring city of Muharraq, where the Muharraq Grand Park and the Casino Park were also popular. These parks had different functions as well as providing green spaces: for instance Adhari and the Water Garden performed in part as theme parks serving Manama and the whole of Bahrain. They used to attract many visitors after the opening of King Fahd Causeway in 1986[3]. Al Andalus and Al Sulmaniyah were simple open green spaces located in the middle of highly populated areas of Manama. Beside those parks, Manama had many neighbourhood parks such as Al Hoora Park and Umm Al Hassam Grand Park. For some reason, nearly all of those parks declined in a rapid way and some had their functions changed or claimed by certain user groups, at the same time alienating the majority of other user groups[4]. Adhari and the Water Parks declined to the point where Adhari Park has been closed up to the time of conducting this study. Al Sulmaniyah Park underwent years of decline and later on years of refurbishment until it was eventually reopened in late 2004. The rest of the parks, such as Umm Al Hassam and Al Hoora are still suffering from the incursions of private investment.

Besides that, other factors such as the increasing percentage of urbanites in Bahrain, the substantial number of people living in flats and conventional houses without access to a private outdoor space (in 1991, 73% of the total households in Manama lived in those two types of housing unites: Directorate of Statistics 1993: p. 28) and the depletion of the palm grove areas around the city may all have played a role in the perception and popularity of Al Bahri Parks in comparison to other inner urban parks.

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[1] In a report conducted by Al Ayam Newspaper (Al Ayam 2003) a group of interviewees expressed their dissatisfaction with the condition of public spaces in Bahrain: many of them considered these public spaces as dead spaces, including Al Bahri Parks.

[2] This is based on the personal experiences of the author and the comments of some of the interviewees who used to use those parks in the past.

[3] Interview with a financial officer - Ministry of Municipalities & Agriculture Affairs (8th November 2004).

[4] Interview with a young man from Sudan in Bahri-I (17th November 2003).

8.3.1.3 Observing Fauna in Al Bahri Parks

Chapter 2 showed that public demand for access to nature gave rise to the urban waterfront phenomenon. Access to nature involves being in touch with both flora and fauna. However, the users of Al Bahri Parks interviewed for this study made no reference to being in touch with any type of fauna in the park. The only interaction with animals happens at the horse riding establishment in Bahri-II. The rides are very controlled and usually accompanied by a guide, regardless of the age of the riders or the type of animal. As mentioned earlier the owner of the riding place applied to enlarge his business, which involves fencing off the riding area to stop members of the public from mixing with the projected riding school's trainees[1]. These plans were rejected by Manama Municipal Council.

The exposure to nature through the proximity of fauna, whether they be aquatic, land or air based, is negligible in Al Bahri Parks. Recreational fishing does take place in the park, but in a limited, informal and hazardous way. Seabirds, such as seagulls, are not common in either park. Other types of fauna that could be found in the place are mostly unwelcomed to visitors. Those are either rodents living in the gaps of the bulkhead's buttressing rocks, or stray cats feeding on rubbish in the large open bins. The usual common pursuits in a seaside park or an urban beach, such as feeding the birds and collecting seashells, do not take place in Al Bahri Parks. The distressing condition of the beaches in Bahri-II was discussed earlier but to this research, and also arising from the relevant literature; the dominant factor in the absence of a substantial quantity and variety of fauna in those green spaces on the waterfront is the fact that they are too busy and crowded.



Figure 8.15: 'It is not important to see the sea, smelling it is enough'

Source: (Khalil 2005)

[1] Interview with the manager of a leased horse riding establishment in Al Bahri-II (20th October 2004).

8.3.1.4 Observing Nature and the Microclimate of Al Bahri Parks

Besides observing nature visually, it may be experienced through other senses, including the auditory, olfactory and kinaesthetic. This suggests that being near the sea even where it is not visible, could still be part of the appeal of some open spaces. Could this be true in the case of Al Bahri Parks?

On the olfactory level, the interviewed users of Al Bahri did not make any positive references to the sea breeze. On the contrary, many users kept referring to the bad odours emanating from the sea. A user of the Turkish coffee shop who was sitting in its outdoor seating area stated:

> I come to this place on nearly every weekend, but sometimes the humidity of the sea is too high and my friends don't like it... we either go inside the *gahwa* or move to any other *gahwa* in Manama that has indoor air-conditioned space...playing cards is impossible on humid nights...sometimes the smell from the sea is too strong, it forces us to leave"[1]

The same comments were recorded from other users in Bahri-I and three of the users of Al Sawani *Gahwa*. Some of them tend to change coffee shop and visit the hinterland ones instead. The pungent smell could be linked to the number of the surface water discharge pipes on the waterfront, particularly next to the Al Sawani Restaurant and *gahwa* (area 25). A regular customer of this open air *gahwa* stated:

> I like open air *gahawi*...I do smoke shisha but I don't like to be trapped in its smoke in an indoor *gahwa*. We usually come to here on weekend nights and prefer to sit next to the water, but sometimes the smell of the water is too strong; we end up sitting on the far benches, it smells like sewage...on some nights we can smell it in the whole place and we end up going to other *gahawi*..."[2]

A year later a second interview took place with the same user but in another hinterland *gahwa*, when asked why he switched places, he stated the following:

> I still like outdoor *gahawi* like the Sawani but this one is closer to my house and the place is less humid...and we don't get the smell of the sewage"[3]

Having established that the user had not changed his social and income status and did not change his place of residence, it was apparent that the lack of an open air coffee shop

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[1] Interview with a 30 years old male, Bahri-I (4th November 2004)
[2] Interview with a Bahraini male in his 30s in Al Sawani Coffee Shop (15th December 2003)
[3] ibid

in his area of the same standard as the one which he used to use on the waterfront was behind the latter's selection. Thus the common dominator between the two coffee shops was being open-air. Nevertheless, the repellent factor which he did not like was the quality of the water which was articulated in its smell.

On the auditory level, the loud noise of the traffic on the nearby Al Fatih Highway engulfs most of the sounds and noises in the park including the sound of the waves. This, besides the olfactory problems, renders the non-visual factors of the Al Bahri Parks undesirable.

8.3.2 Al Bahri Parks as a Place for Leisure

This study highlighted earlier that 'leisure' is the largest land-use type on the waterfront of Manama. Leisure functions extend along 59% of the total waterline length. This section is concerned with the leisure activities that take place within Al Bahri Parks. Historically and as established in Chapter 5, the seafront in its urban, rural or remote localities used to be seen as a place for leisure. Other fresh water bodies, such as springs and water channels were also used for leisure purposes. However, in those days leisure on the waterfront was mostly water-dependent, but is that the case now? The following Section explores that question in Al Bahri Parks. It is an attempt to answer the question of whether the two parks are perceived as spaces for leisure by their users. Furthermore, it aims to establish a link between the physical and social characteristics of the two parks and the ways they are perceived. It also attempts to discover if that 'leisure' is linked to the presence of the water; and if so, how dependent or active that link is.

Many forms of leisure activity have been recorded and observed in Al Bahri Parks. However, the main leisure activities within Bahri-I do not deviate from the common uses of any hinterland urban park. The users mainly stroll, sit, have a picnic or a barbeque within the public areas. But what else is there that enables other forms of leisure in the two parks? In the early days of Bahri-I, swings used to be the only park entertainment facilities available in the entire park. However, through private investment interventions, a few other entertainment facilities and food serving outlets were added to the park at subsequent stages. These are the rides placed to the north of the park, the arcades in the centre, the dolphinarium to the south and the five *gahawi* scattered along its length. The rides area is limited to a mini theme park that extends its service area through the provision of a train ride that traverses the park (although this

was shut in 2004 due to the construction work on Dreams Islands). However, the majority of these private investments are food-oriented interventions that are either water-independent or to some extent water-related. The water-related ones are basically the *gahawi* which are built right on the water's edge and benefit from the sea view. Those are Layali Zaman (area 30) and Bait Al Omdah (area 31a). The Turkish *gahwa* also benefits from the sea view, although it is built away from the water. The *gahwa* that is attached to the Dolphin Park (the dolphinarium) does not benefit from any external view.

Bahri-II facilitates similar activities as Bahri-I but with a few additions. These extra facilities, such as the beach and the green areas next to it, give Bahri-II similar characteristics to the traditional *seef*, with its beach-oriented open green spaces. However, the lack of a proper maintenance programme for the park and the inadequate coordination between different relevant municipalities and ministerial directorates has in practice rendered the beach area unusable. Furthermore, the open sandy playing fields of Bahri-II give it some of the characteristics of the traditional *saha*. Being the newer of the two parks, Bahri-II has fewer private investment facilities. The horse riding establishment is the only form of that investment. But there have been many attempts to expand that business, as noted earlier.

Regardless of the number of facilities in the two parks and how many leisure activities they provide, there is a list of officially prohibited activities far longer than the ones that are allowed. These prohibited activities are listed on two signs posted in Bahri-I. The oldest one states:

1. Keep it clean
2. Don't damage the plants
3. Parents, look after your children.
4. Playing football on grass is prohibited.
5. Use of bicycles and motorcycles not allowed.
6. Pets not allowed.
7. Swimming not allowed
8. Video cameras not allowed
9. Alcohol forbidden

The newer sign includes the above points and adds the following:

1. No rollerblades or roller-skates
2. Loud speakers are prohibited
3. Vehicles are not allowed in the park except for permit holders

It is noteworthy to mention that the two signs were posted prior to the construction of Bahri-II. However, these rules are mostly unobserved by the users of the park and the private outlets within it; and only rarely are they enforced by the caretakers of the park. This set of rules could reflect what the designers' and managers' of the park aimed for given that a minimum number of uses reduces conflict between the users. As discussed in Chapter 2, this approach is common among designers and managers of public space who intend to reduce conflict in the targeted public space. The design of Bahri-II reflects a change in policy, allowing more activities and subsequently more interaction among the users in comparison with Bahri-I. But how does this policy affect the perception of the two parks as places for leisure?

The users of Al Bahri Parks interviewed gave mixed responses regarding their leisure activities in the two Parks. Their statements reflected the fact that the two parks are mainly perceived and used as urban open spaces with limited links to the water. For instance, when one of the frequent users of Bahri-I was asked about his leisure activities in Al Bahri parks, he started by commenting on King Faisal Corniche before moving to describe his activities in Al Bahri parks:

> [...] I like it because although there are few places where you can sit next to the water; at least you can hear the water there, I like the view of the sea and the openness... I do not do much here (Bahri-I), most of the time I walk through it and sometimes I sit, although I never sit when I am alone...There are no places here where one could sit next to the water to contemplate the view, the beach is so isolated and dark...I feel like a pervert when I go there alone...well, I come to it out of convenience, I live in Umm Al Hassam[1]

The above excerpts indicate that the user is keen to have a better visual access to the water. He has also highlighted another important issue: what type of leisure activity could a single adult perform in a waterfront park and how would that endeavour be perceived by the others within Bahraini culture. When the same person was asked about any other active interaction with the water, he reported none. Similarly, the majority of the users of Al Bahri interviewed focused on the visual access to the sea when they were

[1] Interview with a Sudani male in his 30s in Bahri-I (17th November 2003)

asked about the link between their leisure activities and the water; they hardly had any other form of interaction with the water.

In an interview with two middle-aged men who were smoking *shisha* in the Turkish *gahwa* in Bahri-I, when they were asked if they practise any water-related leisure activities in the park, one of them answered:

> No, at the moment there aren't any, unless they still arrange the rides down there, where they used to take the people in rounds in boats and charge BD5. In general, the seashores of Bahrain are not utilised in the right way...you can notice that they are not utilised for tourism. You go to the seashore and you stand and see the sea! There are so many things and sports which they could encourage and enable.[1]

When asked if they practised any water-related activities elsewhere, the second man stated that he sometimes fished, but on Muharraq Bridge or Sitra Causeway, not in Al Bahri Parks. Yet again this type of answer is common among interviewees of Al Bahri Parks: they usually use the place for water-independent leisure activities and when they practise a water sport, they go to other waterfront places that are mostly informal.

However, when asked of how the two parks might be improved, many respondents suggested the provision of more facilities that are water-independent. Although that might continue to hamper the provision of water-related activities let alone the water-dependent ones, some of them asked for more rides, more arcades, and two asked for more *gahawi*. Only three interviewees made a link between the increase in private investment facilities in the park and the blocking of the sea view. Even then, one of them asked for more rides to substitute for the closure of Adhari Park[2].

A group of men were asked about their leisure activities in Bahri-II while accompanying their families. In response they only referred to their use of the park's children's playground near the football field[3]. When they were asked about swimming by the southern beach, they rejected the idea entirely. They have never used that beach for swimming. One of them emphasised the presence of a big sewage pipe there and that the water is polluted. Some of the users of the facilities of Bahri-II interviewed made similar remarks: in an interview with a group of six young men and teenagers who were

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[1] Interview with two Bahraini men smoking *shisha* in the Turkish Coffee Shop in Bahri-I (4th November 2004)
[2] Interview with a 50 years old father from India (18th November 2003)
[3] Interview with a group of bankers picnicking in Bahri-I (4th December 2003)

part of a bigger group, coming in private cars from Muharraq to play beach volleyball, one of them stated that they only come to the park to play volleyball because they do not have a similar facility in Muharraq. None of them used the beach even when it was in a better condition and all their remarks concerned the distance of the toilets from the volleyball place and the lack of a prayer room. When they were asked directly about the reason for not using the beach, one of them stated that they have never considered it; they swim in informal places around Muharraq but never had the idea of using the beach at Bahri-II. However, one of them referred to the size of the beach and how small it is.

The above is not an attempt to limit the leisure activities in Al Bahri Parks to water-independent ones only. It rather intends to highlight how limited these are and how that is linked to the physical condition of the available facilities in the two parks. For instance, the only water-dependent activity in Bahri-I is fishing but it is on a limited scale, informal, unprovisioned and dangerous. Bahri-II in its original design and early condition could have overcome this issue and provided a better link with the water but this had not been achieved there at the time of conducting the three field trips.

8.3.2.1 Transformations in Leisure Trends

Many of the early private investment facilities in Bahri-I were water-dependent. However, they gave way to another form of private investment. The latter form is mostly water-independent, leisure-providing places that are based on food consumption and other indoor activities. When private investment started to take place in the Al Bahri Parks, its main aim was to benefit the great volume of the Park's users.[1] However, from the interviews it has been found that not all users were happy with this type of investment or leisure. This transformation or invasion of private investment into a public space is not limited to Al Bahri: it happens in nearly every waterfront and hinterland park. Nearly all the neighbourhood parks within Manama turned into *gahawi* in a recurring pattern that follows the same process. As observed by the author in both Al Mesh'al and Umm Al Hassam parks, the process usually begins by leasing part of the park to build a small *gahwa* where the main type of consumption is the smoking of *Shisha*. This habit had swept the Gulf since the mid 1980s[2] and by the 1990s had

[1] Interview with a senior financial officer – Manama Municipality (4th and 8th November 2004).
[2] There are many references indicating the rise of this practice in southwest Asia and north Africa but none refer specifically to Bahrain although the phenomenon is recognised by the local media and by the Anti-Smoking Society – Bahrain (ASSB).

become an established phenomenon (Anti Smoking Society - Bahrain 2005). The *gahwa* usually took the form of a small kiosk with some shaded seating areas limited to a particular area of the park. This development subsequently initiated a series of events first it alienated most conservative Bahraini[1] families from that park and later, it paved the way for the further privatisation of the park based on the argument that the remaining public areas are unused[2]. Nine of the married male interviewees expressed their discomfort with the presence of *gahawi* in the parks. The author had a firsthand experience of Umm Al Hassam Park which he used to use regularly so that he was able to monitor its total commoditisation over the years until finally its remaining public area was closed off in 1999. In other cases, entire parks became occupied by a single *gahwa,* as happened in the case of the Al Mesh'al and Umm Al Hassam Parks.

Visually those *gahawi* has a negative impact on the overall atmosphere of the hosting park. Investment in the architectural side of these *gahawi* is limited due to the short length of the leases given[3]. The leasing municipality does not usually give long-term leases for private investment on waterfront sites except in exceptional cases but the author could not trace the official mechanism for obtaining these. However, those short term leases discourage investors from allocating adequate budgets to the architectural realisation of their investment. The end result of this policy and attitude is a scattering of shabby outlets in nearly every formal public space.

8.3.3 Al Bahri Parks as Social Places

The past two Sections have focused on the ways that the Al Bahri Parks are perceived and subsequently used in terms of provision of leisure and places to observe nature. However, this section focuses on the way the two parks are used socially. It is an attempt to highlight the effects of the parks' physical attributes on the way they are perceived and used as places for social interaction. These interactions, such as exchange, conflict and control, are later linked with the fourfold criteria of dependency, integration, access and land tenure used in Chapters 6 and 7.

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[1] Bahrainis represent 20% of the population of Manama (Smith 2004); alienating them from the parks means the removal of the only society members who could have a say in how the park should be managed, as only Bahrainis can vote in the local municipal elections.

[2] Interview with an architect/urban designer - Ministry of Municipalities & Agriculture Affairs - General Directorate of Common Municipal Services (5th November 2004).

[3] Interview with a financial officer – Manama Municipality (8th November 2004).

Furthermore, two more dimensions are focused on within this section. The first one is the space/time factor: where and when the social interaction takes place and how is it affected by the physical attributes of the two parks. The second factor is the characteristics of the Al Bahri parks' users in terms of gender, ethnicity, income and age. The final juxtaposition of users' social interactions and their characteristics facilitates a better understanding of the link between the processes of producing these spaces and their current physical and social environments. Thus any observed form of interaction, regardless of its scale or the number of the actors involved in it, is taken into consideration by this research. However, due to the constraints of the permitted word-length, it is not possible to list, narrate and analyse all the social activities that have been observed to take place within Al Bahri Parks. Therefore, to bring forward the above-mentioned links, the following sections focus on the dominant and distinctive social activities that were observed in Al Bahri Parks.

8.3.3.1 The Users and the Social Uses of Al Bahri Parks

As mentioned earlier, Al Bahri Parks jointly are one of the largest park areas in Manama and attract a large number of users who practise a variety of social activities. These activities vary between gatherings of groups of friends in one of the *gahawi,* to short walks taken by couples. It is hard to decipher or isolate social activities in the two parks as they are mostly mixed with other types of activities such as leisure and fitness. Although most of the activities in the park could be considered leisure activities, they are distinguished here because they are performed by groups and the main focus of the visit to the park is on socialising. However, due to the location of the park and its physical isolation from the rest of the city, it is not used as an everyday public space. People do not traverse it to reach their work or to use its outlets on a daily basis, as the case with other hinterland urban open spaces. Thus, whoever is in the park is there for the park or the services provided in it.

One of the most common social activities in the two parks is picnicking[1]. It usually takes place on holidays and weekends and intensifies at night-time[2]. In winter months,

[1] In this study, picnicking is used in its widest and most inclusive sense. This inclusiveness is based on the three fundamental conditions for a picnic within a social framework. Thus, this study considers any gathering of two or more persons within the outdoor areas of the park and which involves the consumption of any type of food, drink or smoking is a form of picnicking.

[2] This is based on observation over several winter seasons, while more longitudinal research is needed to cover all the seasons over a longer time span, which this research program could not accommodate.

picnickers come at any time of the day but mainly from noon onward except on rainy or windy nights. They stay late on the weekends and Ramadan nights — until 2:00AM). Some of the outlets stay open until even later during Ramadan. In the summer, picnicking takes place only after 4 to 5pm.[1]. A substantial number of interviewees stated that they are not bothered by the hot and humid summer days or nights. For example, a group of male colleagues stated that they spend two hours in Bahri-I to take their Thursday lunch break in the form of a picnic. They stick to this even in the hottest months of the year[2]. The author could not verify this, as none of the field trips took place in the summer, but many of the interviewees gave a similar response regarding their use of the park in the warmer seasons. However, during cold and rainy weather the number of park users decreases drastically, and activities, with the exceptions of jogging and walking, take place indoors. In good weather picnicking and strolling in the park become the dominant activities.

Most of the above-mentioned social activities are performed by mainly low income family groups who are apparently conservative[3]. While the presence of middle income groups is rare, high income groups do not have any presence in the park. Although many of those families dress like locals, their spoken language and sometimes their accent reveal them not to be Bahraini, or to be Bahrainis from other origins such as Yemen, Egypt, Palestine and Pakistani. These groups are dominated in number by females, particularly the Bahraini ones. For example, some of the observed Bahraini family groups consisted of ten women with only one man. Some other groups consisted purely of females. It is also not common to see Western or Far Eastern families picnicking in the park; however a few of them use the semi-public facilities in the park such as the *gahawi* or for individual exercise. Besides the overall absence of these ethnicities, there are other social groups who no longer use Al Bahri Parks: groups of expatriate male bachelors, family groups from other non-Bahraini or Arab nationalities or even middle or high income Bahraini families and liberal local family groups.

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[1] This was not observed by the author but was noted through the interviews with the users of both waterfronts.

[2] Interview with a group of seven Bahraini men in Bahri-I (4th December 2003).

[3] Although a population count and direct feedback from the users with regard to their income was not possible as explained in Chapter 4 the author has based this on the users' appearance including their cars, their apparel and their overall behaviour.

8.3.3.2 The Perception of Al Bahri Parks as Places for Social Interaction

The method of investigating how the two parks are socially perceived derives from two main sources: observations of how they are used, and casual interviews with some of the users. These give an insight into many forms of social activity while highlighting many hidden dimensions such as ethnic and cultural conflicts. Overall the perception of the parks as places for social interaction depends primarily on the way they are experienced. For instance, social conflict, levels of control and challenges between different user groups, and social exchange all play a role in shaping that experience. Nonetheless, that perception rests also on the standpoint of the interviewees with regard to bigger social groups, that is, whether he or she is part of a bigger family group, part of a group of friends or alone when visiting the Al Bahri Parks.

From observation of the two parks, many social groups, mainly families, use them as the place for social interaction. Overall they appear to be coexisting peacefully with the other groups around them. Usually, on weekends and festive days, the grassed areas of both Bahri-I and Bahri-II are occupied by social groups of all sizes, but mainly dominated by extended family groups. Although most of the feedback from the casual interviews was negative[1] with regard to the appropriateness of the two parks for social interaction, the overall atmosphere there, especially on festive days, was that of a happy crowd. Overall, it was observed that there is a modest amount of social interaction between the different social groups. In most cases it is limited to passive forms of interaction that is, seeing and hearing. In other words, different social groups do not actively socialize with each other in the park. Members of each social group mingle primarily with the other members of the same group. This is reflected in the way most picnicking groups arrange themselves physically. Members of those groups sit in a circular layout facing inward. And whenever the group is divided into two groups, one for each gender, they follow the same sitting arrangement.

However, a few signs of discomfort were also observed too. For example a few of the accompanying male members within family groups appeared to be edgy, on the alert, and in a defensive mode while keeping a watchful eye on the nearby men, particularly the bachelors. However, others appeared to be relaxed, particularly where there was a

[1] The source of the negativity could be due to the fact that most of the unstructured interviews were conducted with non-family groups.

larger number of men within the group. Overall, the majority of users disregarded the many dangerous practices performed in the park. To give an example, many children were noticed using fireworks in between other picnicking groups or near busy walkways. Other mature users were noticed using open fires or gas burners while cooking. Another group was noticed using an electric generator to light their picnicking place which involved running the electrical wires across the western walkway of Bahri-I. Other users allowed their children to ride their electrical scooters all over the park. Although many of the users appeared to be blasé about those behaviours, a few felt differently. For instance a middle income Bahraini man who was interviewed in Bahri-I stated, regarding the social quality of the park:

> Corniche Al Bahri used to be so busy in the past, on Thursday nights there used to be no place to park the car, it used to be full of **respectable** families, but no more. [1]

His colleague stated:

> This is not the place for football, there is a place for it in there (indicating to Bahri-II), most families insist on playing on the grass, all the families bring footballs with them and play here, we are here to relax but we have to keep an eye on the balls.

Another example of disapproval of common behaviour within the park came from a middle income Indian woman who was interviewed in Al Bahri-I; she stated the following:

> [...] weekend time is the most difficult for us, as you can see we only sit after we finish our walk but during the weekends the place is full of families. They don't sit on the benches, they sit on the ground near the benches and they keep all their picnicking stuff on top of them...they don't use them properly and they don't let us use them...They don't watch after their kids who cause many troubles for us and for themselves, the young ones get lost and could be in danger: look, there are no barriers between here and the car park and the highway.[2]

She continued commenting on the behaviour of the other users, particularly the locals, stating:

> They usually trash the place, parents never watch their children, they never forbid them from littering in the place, they use the place for their picnic and

[1] Interview with a group of seven Bahraini men in Bahri-I (4th of December 2003).
[2] Interview with an Indian married couple who have been living in Bahrain for the past two decades – Bahri-I (18th November 2003).

> leave behind all their rubbish on the grass...we stopped using the park during the weekends.

Furthermore, the above statements show that while some of the parks' users disapprove certain behaviours in the park, they continue using them in spite of that. However, users of other public spaces hold diverse perceptions of Al Bahri. For this research, it is crucial to discover their perceptions in order to draw attention to why some users use a variety of open spaces on the waterfront in addition to knowing why some specifically do not use the formal ones. These perceptions come from two groups, based on what type of open space they use on the waterfront. The first group is composed of a few users of informal public space (Al Seef and Jufair). The second group is several users of semi-public spaces on the waterfront (Al Sawani gahwa [Area 26] and The Ritz-Carlton Hotel [Area 5])

Some of the male interviewees in Al Seef do use Al Bahri when they are with their families. They stroll or take their children to the arcade, the rides or the playground area. For example, two of them stated that they consider Al Bahri parks to be a place for families[1]. However, these are low income users, middle or high income interviewees in Al Seef hold a different perception of Al Bahri Parks. Many of them do not use them and do not consider them good social places for families; one of them stated:

> No we don't use them, alone or with our families. Bahraini families don't like to use the same place that is frequented by bachelors, the minute the two groups get mixed you'll find the families abandoning that place...they don't like places with lots of Indians too[2][3]

Another interviewee stated:

> I don't think that Al Bahri corniche suits **decent** families; the place is full of low class coffee shops (*gahawi*)[4]

Another high income male interviewee in Al Sawani *Gahwa* (area 26) stated:

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[1] Interview with three young men in Al Seef (28th October 2003) and interview with a group of eight young men in Al Seef (4th November 2003).

[2] Many of the interviewees used the noun 'Indians' to refer to bachelors coming from the Indian subcontinent.

[3] Interview with two Bahraini young brothers in Al Seef (10th December 2003). Both men work for the Ministry of Defence. Apparently, the two are of a good income and both practise a costly hobby: collecting and operating remote-controlled miniature cars.

[4] Interview with a middle aged Egyptian man in Al Seef (9th December 2003). Highlighting was added by author.

> I never bring my wife with me to a place like this let alone picnicking in Al Bahri, if they (his wife and kids) want such a thing I take them to Al Bandar Club[1] where the kids can swim and eat in the restaurant...I like to barbeque but I do that at home, I have a large garden[2]

The previous excerpts highlight a sort of conflict between different user groups. These conflicts are on the bases of ethno-economic factors, marital status, age and income group. There is also a conflict on the level of cultural acceptance of certain behaviours in public.

Many of the interviewees pointed to users from the Indian sub-continent as groups they do not like to mix with. In most cases they referred to groups of single men from those countries, who compose the majority of the 'cheap imported labour force' in Bahrain, as the deterrent group. Although the South East Asian groups do not have a substantial presence in Al Bahri Parks (apart from the fact that most of the outlets in the park are operated by males from Southeast Asia), they are dominant in King Faisal Corniche-II[3]. This could be linked to two factors: the first is that King Faisal Corniche-II is the nearest waterfront park to the Market bus station in Manama. This is the main bus station in the city and many of these young men arrive in the city through it. The second factor is that King Faisal Corniche-II is closer to the Old Suq area than any other waterfront park. The older housing stock of the Old Suq area provides cheap accommodation from which many of these expatriates benefit.[4]

However, young Bahraini users groups made similar reference to those park users from the Indian sub-content. Ala'a, a young man of 19 interviewed in Al Seef stated:

> we usually go to Al Balaj[5], and we avoid the weekends to avoid the Indians...have you seen them, they come in loads in buses and flood the place...we go to there later at night and stay till early in the morning; they don't show up during those times"[6]

Yet this young man was talking about a time that he spends with his family, so the question arises of whether this is still a case of conflict between different user groups on

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[1] A private club on the eastern coast of Sitra Island, it has its own private beach and marina.
[2] Interview with a young Bahraini man in Al Sawani coffee shop (15th December 2003).
[3] This is based on five visits to the park (three on weekends and two in midweek) during October – December 2003 and October-November 2004.
[4] There are no statistics that prove this in numbers.
[5] Al Jaza'er Beach, one of the few public beaches in Bahrain, approximately 24KM to the south of Manama.
[6] Interview with ten male university students in Al Seef (6th November 2003).

the mixed bases of social configuration and racial belonging. The following statement stresses the conflict between family groups and male bachelors. In an interview with a group of young men from Al Deah and Sanabis, Abbas, a 26 year old married man, stated:

> The corniche is full of families and expatriates during the weekend; we don't feel comfortable to sit in there...it is not our place...somehow they (families and expatriates) divide themselves on the two corniches and we come to this place.[1]

This could be understood from a different perspective: Abbas was talking about himself as part of a group of male bachelor friends. In this case he was not worried about his family group being harassed by single men; however his statement shows that he and his friends are repelled by other user groups. In this case it is family groups and expatriate groups. Therefore, Ali and Abbas's statements point out that the dominance of certain user groups in certain public spaces repels other groups from using those spaces.

But do local family groups reject the presence of all people coming from the Indian subcontinent? In an interview with a Pakistani family in Al Bahri, they stated that they blend easily with the locals and never face any problems while using the place[2]. Another Indian family had many reservations about the way the two parks are used and managed but they clearly stated that they were never targeted on a racial basis[3]. However, this is not the first time expatriates from different ethnic or income groups were seen by local users as a deterrent. Many of the interviewees, particularly those who used to use Adhari Park during the 1980s, made the same point about their fellow Saudis. A middle aged mother of two in the Ritz-Carleton Hotel said in the course of an interview:

> we stopped going to Adhari after the opening of the causeway, I could not stand the behaviour of the Saudis [...] no we had no substitute at that time, no more public parks and only private ones, I used to take my family to the Bankers Club till it was shut, then we moved to Al Bandar till it became low class and then we moved to this place.[4]

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[1] Interview with three young men in Al Seef (3rd November 2004).
[2] Interview with a Pakistani family who were picnicking in Al Bahri-I (27th November 2003).
[3] Interview with a married couple from India in Al Bahri-I (18th November 2003).
[4] Interview with a Bahraini mother who was watching the fireworks of the national day celebration from the beach of the Ritz-Carlton Hotel in Al Seef (16th December 2003).

However, this study was able to establish that certain semi-public places within Al Bahri are blamed by family groups for attracting unwanted users. Nearly every adult interviewee complained of the *gahawi* and of their customers in Bahri-I. A group of fishermen in Jufair beach blamed the *gahawi* for discouraging many family groups from using the Park in any way[1]. They, personally, did not use those *gahawi* and blamed them for the deterioration of social conditions in the park and the drop in its number of users. However, the same comment was also made by another group of men, although they use the *gahawi* as a bachelor group and use the park in both bachelor groups and as part of family groups. The following are excerpts from that interview:

> Author: Do you think that the presence of *gahawi* affected the use of the place by the families?
>
> Man B: Yes [The rest of the group followed by approving his answer], the biggest attraction for the youths here are the *gahawi,* they are not used by the families that much, the young men are the majority of the users. And those who come to use the *gahawi,* I mean the young man who comes to sit in the *gahawi,* come and smoke his *shisha* and while leaving he'll start harassing the families who are sitting nearby, and sometimes they do that while sitting in the *gahwa.* And the families when they walk around usually pass in front of the coffee shops, the young men sitting in the coffee shops pass some irritating words or hints. The families don't feel comfortable in here
>
> Author: Do you use any other waterfront?
>
> Man C: The corniche, King Faisal Corniche (Man B repeated the same answer)
>
> Man A: I go to Arad, next to the fort, there are two coffee shops there and sometimes we go there.
>
> Man B: Yes me too
>
> Author: Do you go for the *gahwa* or the corniche?
>
> Man A: We go for the *gahwa.*
>
> Author: But there are so many *gahawi* all around, why do you go to the one on the waterfront?
>
> Man A: Because it is on the seaside and it is open-air, what else can one do on the corniche? Just sit? But when one use the *gahwa* there is better chance to pass the time by chatting to my friends and the friends of my friends which does not take place on the corniche unless one is with his family then it is

[1] Two interviews with a group of mature fishermen in Jufair Harbour (28th November 2003 & 20th October 2004).

> logical to just visit the corniche. But if you are alone what would you do on the waterside…stand next to the water?...It is better to go to the *gahwa* and rest.[1]

The previous comment on how some users abuse the location of the *gahwa* in the form of people watching and harassing of females could only be referring to the Turkish *gahwa*; it is the only one with an outdoor seating area that overlooks the promenade of Bahri-I. However, a group of young men, who were barbequing in Al Seef beach, gave a different account on the issue of the use of *gahawi* and *shisha*, when they were asked if they use the *gahawi* in Al Bahri, one of them said:

> There are many *gahawi* in Riffa and Isa Town, why should we come all the way to Manama to use the *gahawi* of Al Bahri?[2]

Another group of young men stated that they only go to the *gahwa* when the weather gets too hot or too humid for them to sit outdoors in Al Seef[3]. Although many of the interviewees blame the *gahawi* for attracting unwanted groups of young male teenagers or adults, none of them was able to establish a link between the sexual harassment which some family groups and females faced and the users of the *gahawi*. Furthermore, all the stories about harassment, save one, were hearsay. Only one of them was of a firsthand yet anecdotal nature in which the interviewee saw a father not being able to defend his family when a group of young men targeted them verbally. It is possible to understand that many of the interviewees believe the clients of the *gahawi* to be trouble-makers but what was observed is the reverse. If those alleged trouble-makers are intent upon harassing the female users of the two parks, then the best time for them is on the busiest days. However it was noticed that the *gahawi* are actually least busy on those particular days. Ten of the interviewed users of the *gahawi* of Al Bahri-I stated that they try to avoid using them during the weekends and go to other *gahawi* to avoid the crowds. They even highlighted the problem of finding a vacant car park particularly on summer nights[4].

In spite of that, many of the interviewees believe that the park is not safe, particularly at night; they consider that one or two caretakers are insufficient (in fact, only one was

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[1] Interview with a group of seven adult males picnicking in Bahri-I (4th December 2003).
[2] Interview with a group of ten young men in Al Seef (6th November 2003).
[3] Interview with a group of eight young men in Al Seef (4th of November 2003 and 3rd of November 2004).
[4] Interview with seven Bahraini men in Al Bahri-I (4th December 2003), interview with three Bahraini men in Al Sawani Coffee Shop (15th December 2003), and an interview with a Bahraini man in the Turkish Coffee Shop in Bahri-I (4th November 2004).

noticed at all times). One of them stated that he avoided coming to Al Bahri Parks at night-time because it is not safe. The two parks are open 24 hours a day and the caretakers leave by 5pm. On late evenings on weekends and holidays, a police patrol consisting of three men roams the park on foot and as a group; they leave at about 12am[1]. Undercover police have some presence in the park, particularly during festive days.

Furthermore, other interviewees avoided the park on busy days or all together to avoid trouble. Many of the interviewees referred to the crowdedness of the formal public space as a negative characteristic. Words such as *zahma* (crowded) or *muttroos* (full) were repeated many times when interviewees tried to highlight the problem. Some of them highlighted the issue of the distance between the seating locations of families in the park. They clearly stated that they do not like to be so close and went further to generalise that as a personal preference of all Bahraini families. This contradicts what was observed in Al Bahri. Many of the Bahraini families who use Al Bahri Parks tend to accept those short distances between groups on busy days. However, it should be borne in mind that 'busy day' users are generally on low incomes and ethnically mixed. It is also crucial to know that most of the interviewees who give negative comments about the parks' crowdedness are non-users. Furthermore, they are mostly of middle or high income and use informal or semi-public spaces on the waterfront. However, a middle income regular user of the park gave the following statement when he was asked on which days he avoids coming to Al Bahri-I:

> [...]Thursday nights particularly in the summer, the place is too crowded (*zahma wayed*) and you can never find a place to sit, look at those places, they get filled by people and there is no chance to sit and enjoy the place[2]

However, others are not bothered by the crowdedness: a Bahrain teenager who regularly plays football in Bahri-II made the following statement:

> We use the place even on busy days; we were here on the 3rd day of Eid...no the crowd does not bother us.[3]

Thus, the crowdedness in the two parks could work on many levels and lead to a variety of results with different users. While it discouraged several of the respondents from

[1] Interview with a police patrol in Bahri-I (18th November 2003).
[2] Interview with seven men in Bahri-I (4th December 2003).
[3] Interview with a group of teens and young men who play football in Bahri-II (9th December 2003).

using it on certain times or at all times, it did not affect others. And conversely, the crowdedness of the two parks is an attraction for some others.

8.4 Conclusion

The Chapter set out to answer two main questions concerning the two areas. The first was regarding the nature of public space on the waterfront in the light of the urban growth and land reclamation processes of Manama. The second was how those spaces are perceived and subsequently used. The Chapter started by illustrating the physical condition of the Al Bahri Parks, the selected representative generic type of a formal public space. The exposition covered the layout, design, hardscape and softscape used, as well as the lighting and physical and visual accessibility. It also marked any major physical changes that had taken place both historically and between the three field trips in and around the place. It also highlighted the level of water-dependency in the park's various functions and the accessibility of its water areas.

The chapter highlighted that, unlike the historic green waterfront, Bahri-I was designed to accommodate leisure activities at the water-independent or water-related levels only. Bahri-II, which was designed to be an urban beach/park serving Manama, used to accommodate water-dependent activities, but these were lost. Thus, both the original design of Al Bahri-I as well as the way Bahri-II is being developed are not responsive to their proximity of the water. The Chapter also highlighted that a combination of design, management and funding shortcomings have negatively affected the physical and visual accessibility of the sea and the overall architectural quality of the park. Overall this has reduced the park's functional water-dependency level.

The second part of this chapter illustrated how the physical condition of the two parks affects the way they are perceived as places for leisure, observing nature and social interaction. Overall, the two parks are perceived by most of the users interviewed as places to observe nature. A number of the respondents (including users and non-users) do not share that perception and prefer other informal or semi-public places in which to observe nature, even when those places do not have any vegetation. One of the significant findings of this research is that observing nature in Al Bahri Parks does not usually include observing the sea with all its sensory attributes (visual, auditory, olfactory and kinaesthetic). This was an outcome of the study of users' behaviour within the park, focusing on users' preferences regarding where to sit. Overall, there are

very few places in Al Bahri Parks that are able to provide a choice of experiencing nature that includes both sea and greenery. The Chapter also emphasised how this perception is linked with a number of issues, that is, physical constraints, managerial shortcomings, planning errors and funding policy.

Furthermore, the Chapter explored the way in which Al Bahri Parks are experienced as places for leisure. It focused mainly on the way the leisure activities are linked to the water. It showed how the two parks in their current physical condition cannot accommodate water-dependent activities. It also highlighted the fact that nearly all the leisure activities in Al Bahri Parks fall within the category of water-independent, with few at the water-related level. The study also emphasised the shift in the nature of leisure that is provided by private investment within the park. It showed how in time it has turned towards both indoor and water-independent uses. However, the Chapter also showed how some of interviewed users do practise water-related leisure activities but in places other than the two parks: an indication rather of the shortcomings of the two parks and than of users' leisure preferences.

The final part of this Chapter focused on the social dimension of Al Bahri Parks. It concentrated on the way the two parks are socially conceived and used. The study showed that there is competition for space in the park on two levels. The first level is permanent and arises between the parks' users and the private investment facilities. The second is between the users themselves and occurs at the parks' busiest times. At such times, the competition for space creates a sense of crowdedness that is partly due to conflicting interests between different actors. As a result of this the two parks are socially stratified and are dominated by low income family groups who are apparently conservative. Bachelor male groups, whether locals or not, do not use the two parks particularly their public areas. This chapter also highlighted that middle income groups have a reserved presence in Al Bahri Parks. A limited number of middle income groups use Al Bahri Parks mainly at less busy times. Their use of the two parks is primarily limited to certain semi-public spaces such as the horse riding establishment. The Chapter also highlighted that high income groups do not use the park. Furthermore, the Chapter showed that many of the low income respondents from the Al Seef focus area (informal public space) do not use Al Bahri Parks due to their crowdedness. They also avoid it because of being made to feel unwelcome by the dominant social groups within the two parks.

The study of Al Bahri Parks highlighted a form a stigma around the presence of *gahawi* within the parks. The users of the *gahawi* are widely blamed for the sexual harassment and the subsequent clashes that follow such behaviour within the parks. However, the study concluded that either the link is weak or there is no link between the two on the basis that the *gahawi* are least used during busy days when such conflicts arises.

Cahpter 9: Informal Public Open Space on the Urban Waterfront of Manama – Al Seef Waterfront

9.1 Introduction

This chapter is concerned with the Al Seef waterfront, the second focus area on the waterfront of Manama. As an informal space, Al Seef represents the second generic type of the public space. This Chapter complements the previous, one as it aims to highlight how informal public spaces are perceived, used and socially constructed. Alongside these main objectives it aims, also, to outline users' characteristics.

As established in Chapters 5 and 6, economic, political, social and technological factors through time have provided many informal public spaces in Manama that have been in a continuous ephemeral state of evolution. The urban expansion process and the cycles of land reclamation discussed in Chapter 5 showed that the marginal open spaces are the

first victims of these cycles, yet, at the same time, new ones are being introduced in the process. The four factors established earlier showed that the current style of land reclamation on the waters of Manama, the current pace of urban growth, the decreasing period between the land reclamation stage and the actual building of the intended projects, as well as the rise in the level of water-dependency of the new projects on the waterfront could reduce or even eliminate the opportunities for informal open spaces on the waterfront in the near future. That makes it important to highlight how these diminishing open spaces are currently perceived and used, and what role they play in urban life. It will also show if there is a link between contemporary informal public space and the traditional version.

The Chapter is divided into two main sections: the first section illustrates the physical attributes of Al Seef's informal public space. The aim of this section is to contextualise the social attributes of this public space and to highlight the importance of the finer details of such an open and barren space in dictating the nature of the uses and users of the place. Furthermore, it enables the drawing of parallels between this form of informal public space with other urban or non-urban forms of open space such as; marginal space, planning leftover space, woodlands, ephemeral public space and so forth. The second main section of this Chapter is concerned with the way the Al Seef waterfront is perceived and used. It aims to highlight the way those uses are influenced by the main physical, functional and spatial attributes of the area (i.e. water dependency, water integration, accessibility and land tenure).

9.2 The Development of Al Seef

The Al Seef waterfront lies on 100% reclaimed land. The area was reclaimed in four stages beginning in 1979 (Figure 9.1). The first stage was represented by reclamation to the north of Sanabis village to accommodate 414 housing units for low income locals (Ministry of Housing 1993). The second stage was executed in 1983 and is represented by 2.6 sq km of reclaimed land that covers the area from Pearl Roundabout[1] on the east to Ras Al Qal'ah on the west. The area was planned to accommodate large scale projects, besides providing an eastern high speed access route to the Capital. The third stage was reclaimed in 1985 and added 1.6 sq km of reclaimed land to the north east of

[1] Also known as The Central Market Roundabout, it was reclaimed in 1977.

the second stage. It was originally planned as a mixed-use district accommodating housing, business, commercial and service areas.

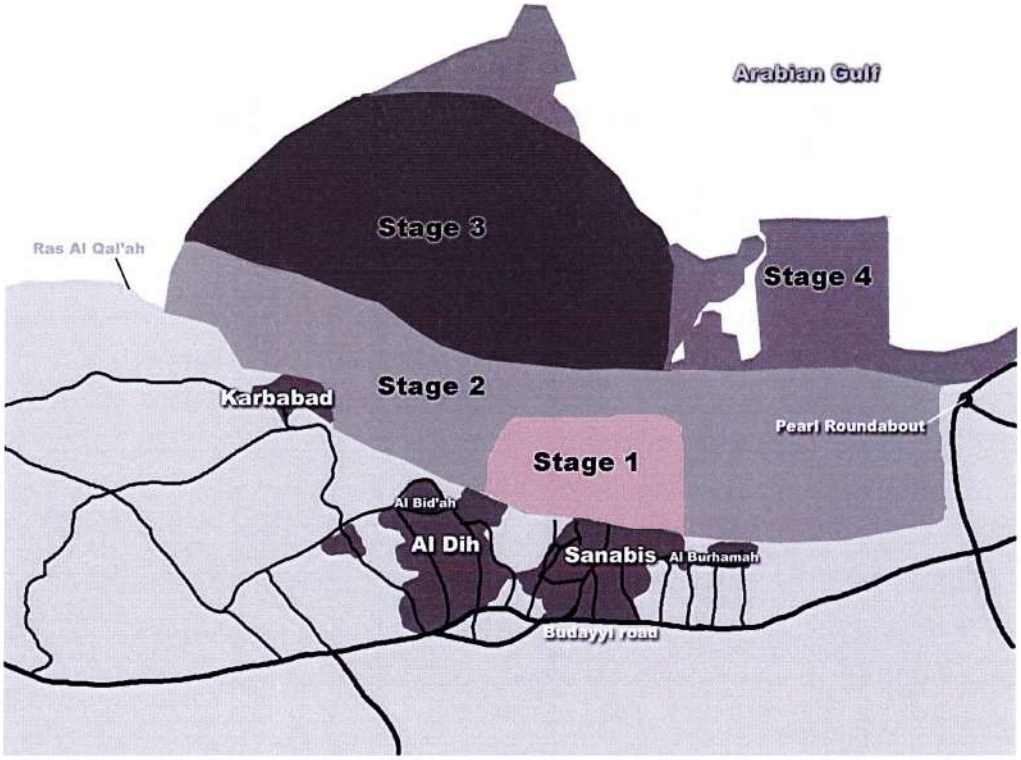


Figure 9.1: The Reclamation Stages of North of Sanabis and Seef Areas

The fourth stage is represented by the piecemeal reclamations to the east of stage 3. It started with reclamation for the Meridian Hotel (currently the Ritz-Carlton Hotel) and other privately owned plots on the east and north east sides of stage three. The most prominent part is the large square shaped tract to the north east of stage two. What should be noted about stage four is that it is an ongoing process. The first three stages were entirely sponsored by the government[1]; however stage four has been of mixed sponsorship (private or public) depending on the ownership of the land[2]. The focus areas, which are the subject of this chapter, lay entirely on the coast of stages three and four of Al Seef.

[1] 'Government' in this research is used interchangeably to refer to the Ministry of Housing, The Ministry of Housing, Environment and Municipalities, The Ministry of Works, The Ministry of Works and Housing and the Housing Bank.

[2] 'Private' in this context refers to non-governmental owners or investors. It is possible to buy submerged land in Bahrain and to reclaim it privately.

Based on the 1980 base-map of stage three, the district, known as Al Seef, was zoned to be a mixed-use area that would include middle to high density residential and commercial areas. Some plots were allocated for services that included educational, religious, recreational, and other miscellaneous public services. At that time the capital, Manama, lacked the space for large scale projects such as shopping malls, hotels and conference centres and local planners compensated for that by providing large tracts in the newly reclaimed zones in both North Sanabis and Al Seef. However, the district, which originally took the shape of a semicircular projection into the waters of the Gulf, was planned to have an un-zoned waterfront with many public beaches (zoning map 1983 [Physical Planning Directorate 1983]). Most of that was abolished; the Meridian Hotel was the first project in the area and was built directly on the water with its own private beach and marina. Gradually, nearly all the other plots which had originally been reserved for services were sold by the Ministry of Housing to investors[1]. Land prices kept escalating, nearly doubling every five years. At present, land value in Al Seef is the highest in Bahrain.

9.3 Al Seef Waterfront

Al Seef waterfront, as an informal public space, is unique and almost exclusive to this locality. However, it has some parallels in the natural and built environments. Some of the attributes of the 'found', the 'left over', or the 'loose-fit' space in a western context can be found in the informal public space of Al Seef. While the latter spaces are usually 'old' and have been excluded from succeeding urban trends, Al Seef's open spaces are relatively new and have been created as part of a new and ongoing urban development process. Al Seef's open spaces have been formed through the land reclamation process that is planned to accommodate Manama's future urban expansion and the current local and global urban trends which old Manama, it is assumed, is unable to accommodate.

The focus area within Al Seef waterfront spans over a group of beaches and open spaces. It includes two of the traditional spaces identified in Chapter 5: *seef* and *saha*. As mentioned in Chapter 4, the waterfront has been divided by the author into four zones (Figure 9.2) for the purpose of referencing. The following is a description of the physical attributes of each of those zones.

[1] Interview with former senior urban planning official – Directorate of Physical Planning (3rd December 2003).

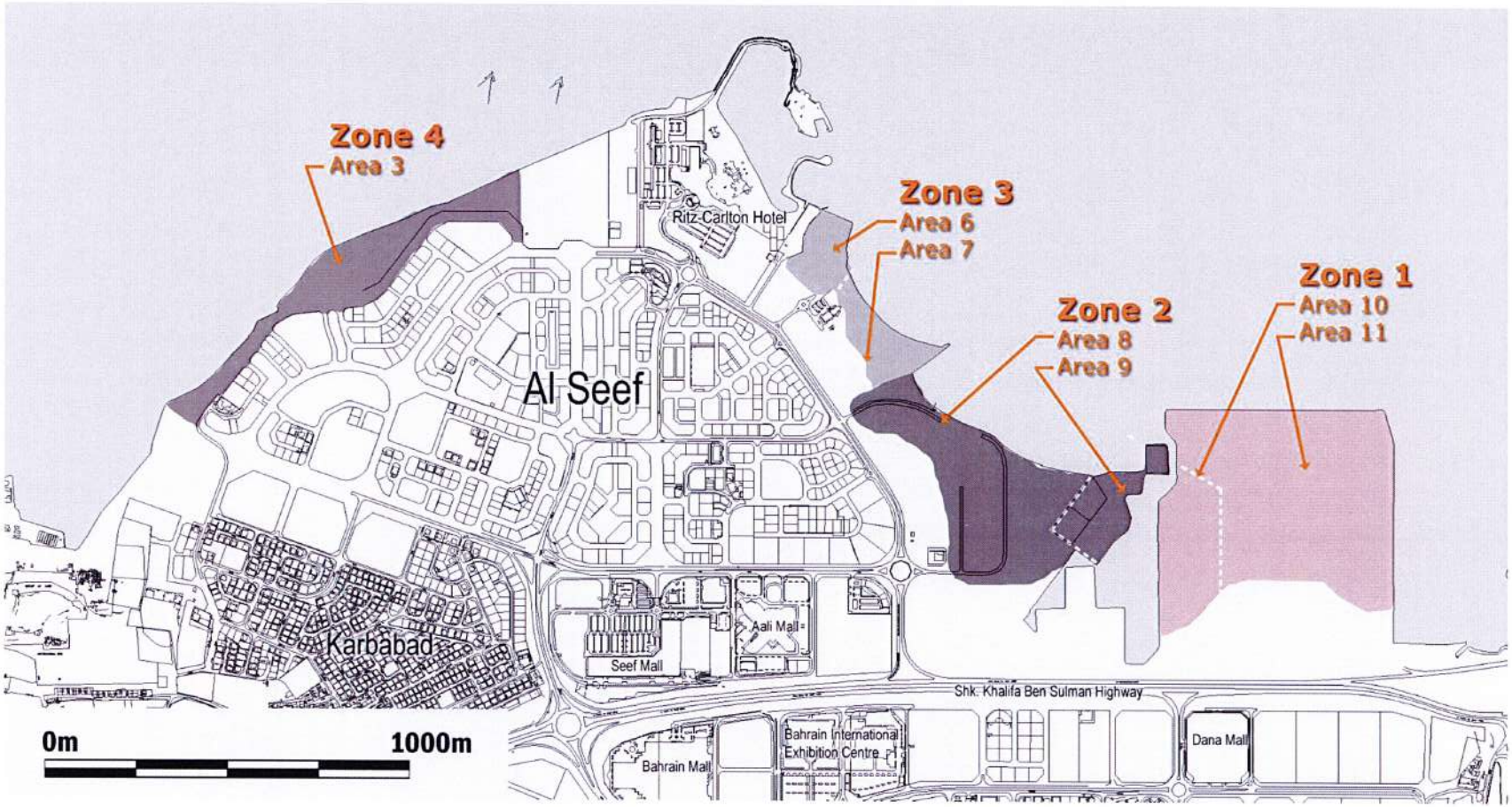


Figure 9.2: Map of the Four Zones in Al Seef Area

Source: Original Electronic Map from The ministry of Municipalities & Agricultural Affairs (last updated 2003), edited by the Author

9.3.1 Al Seef Waterfront - Zone One

Zone 1 is located to the north of Shk. Khalifa Ben Sulman Highway opposite the new Burhama area. The whole area took shape when a large area of a rectangular form (640m x 720m) was reclaimed in 2001 to the east of Al Seef area (Figure 9.3). That rectangle trapped a small body of water which in time became a harbour used by both professional and amateur fishermen. It became known among the locals as Al Seef Harbour. The zone is bordered by the waters of the Gulf to the north and the east, the harbour on the west, and Shk. Khalifa highway to the south.



Figure 9.3: View of zone 1 & 2 in Al Seef Area (Taken from the top of Moayyed Tower, October 2003)

The full Height Reclamation Method was used in reclaiming the large rectangle (Figure 9.3), with boulders placed higher than the main land level by 1.5m on the eastern and northern sides of the zone. The rip-rap edge is made of large boulders and has a steep slope towards the sea (Figure 9.4). The rest of the western side is a sandy beach used by the fishermen to take their boats in and out of the water. Overall, the zone is in public ownership but has large private segments within it.

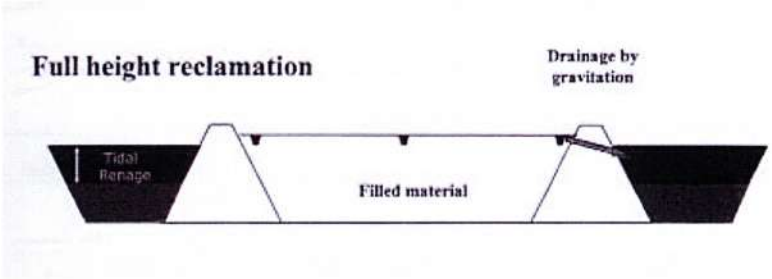


Figure 9.4: Reclamation Level of Al Seef Zone 1

Source: (SOGREAH 2001: p. 3)

At the time of the field work, Zone One, just like the other three zones, was empty of any prominent structures except for two that are located to the east and west of the zone and both are of a makeshift or temporary nature. The first structure is a fishermen's hut located on the western beach (area 10). The second is a large surface pipe stretching from the south to the north along the eastern side of the zone (in area 11). The pipe has been used to pump dredged sand to a construction site to the South of the zone where the Pearl roundabout was being constructed. The beach area of the zone is easily accessed from the main unmade-up road that runs parallel to the beach from the south to the. There are many small fishing boats scattered along the beach and around the fisherman's hut (Figure 9.5).

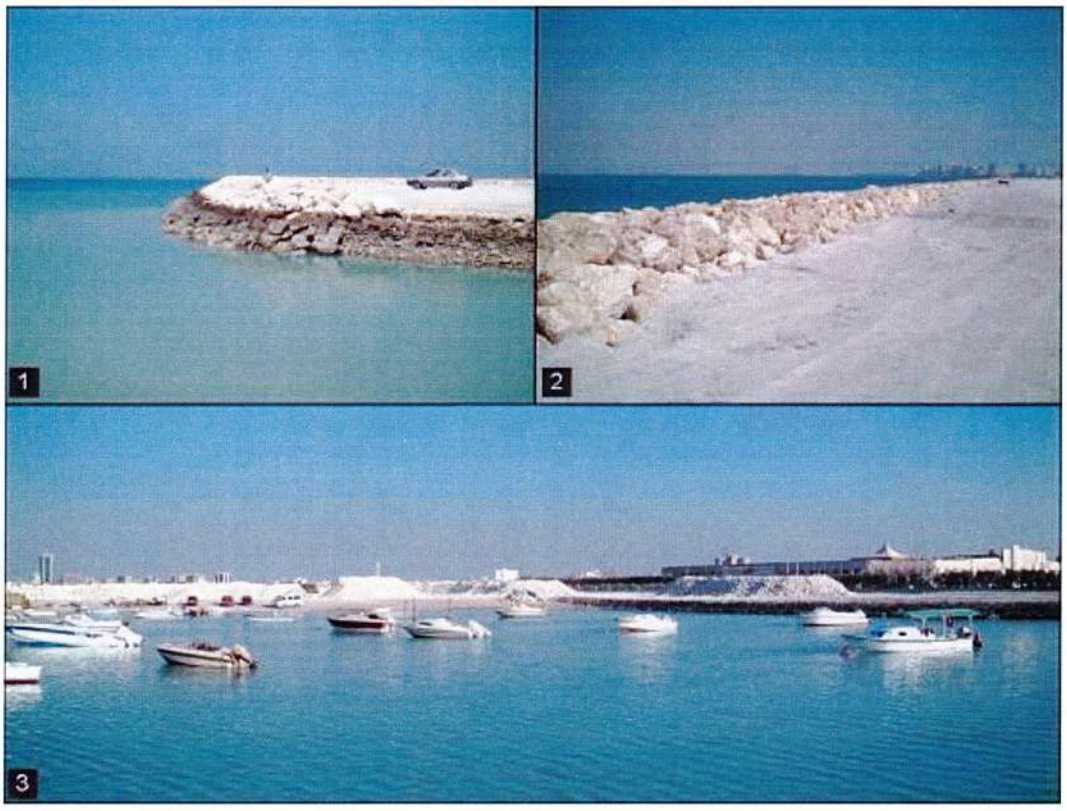


Figure 9.5: 1 & 2 Zone 1 (area 11) in Al Seef (October 2003). 3- Al Seef Harbour looking toward area 10 of zone 1

There is only one entrance to the zone that is open to the public, located at the south-west end of the zone. The zone can be accessed with relative ease from the Al Seef area by both foot and car. Regardless of the means of transportation, all will have to go via the unmade-up road that links the zone with King Abdullah II Avenue (Figure 9.2). At night-time that access is well-lit due to its proximity to Shk. Khalifa Highway. But the general lack of lighting in other parts of the zone affects the distribution of its uses as

will be discussed in a later section of the Chapter. Although the Southern part of the zone benefits from the lights of Shk. Khalifa Highway, this area remains the least used.

9.3.2 Al Seef Waterfront - Zone Two

Zone Two (Figure 9.3) is situated between Al Seef Harbour on the east, the Gulf to the north, King Abdullah II Avenue to the west and the south west, and finally Shk. Khalifa highway to the south. The zone can be accessed from the two entrances of King Abdullah II Avenue. And it can be entered through an informal unmade-up road from the north through Zone Three. Zone Two is of mixed ownership but mostly private.

The roads and the existing structures in this zone divide it physically and visually into three areas: the first is a 550m long sandy beach to the north of the zone (area 8) (Figure 9.6). The beach is easily accessible through the unfinished loop-road that runs through the zone. The well compacted soil of most of the beach, except the eastern side, makes it highly accessible by cars. At night-time the beach area benefits, if in an uneven way, from the lighting of the loop-road.



Figure 9.6: The beach of Zone 2 (area 8), Al Seef (November 2003)

The second area is the south of area 8. It is composed of the open spaces to the south of the beach area where the main loop-road runs. An electricity sub-station, located at the south-west end, is the only prominent structure in this zone. There are also few abandoned makeshift structures and other types of remnants scattered around the three asphalted areas located in the southwest part of the zone. These are the remainders of the many festivals and other activities which have taken place in this area. Currently the area hosts a go-cart racing track. These structures are targets for many forms of

vandalism. The whole area benefits from the street lights that either run through it or around it, allowing for many night-time activities.

The third area of this zone is formed by a group of fenced plots to the north east of the zone (area 9). These plots were reclaimed privately during the fourth phase of reclamation of Al Seef District. Building rubble is the common material used for their reclamation. The height of the block-wall fences varies between 0.6m to 2.0m but most are in a dilapidated state and riddled with gaps. That condition allows some access to 'unofficial' users. Access to the water through those plots is difficult and it can only be undertaken on foot, although reaching the water at night-time would be too hazardous, due to the harsh character of the water's edge. This area has no lighting at night and the presence of those boundary walls works to increase their darkness and isolation.

9.3.3 Al Seef Waterfront - Zone Three

Zone Three is situated on the north-east side of Al Seef District directly to the north west of Zone Two (Figure 9.7). To the northwest of the zone lies the Ritz-Carlton Hotel compound. The Sail residential building and the Blue Elephant restaurant[1] border it on south-west and Zone 2 is located in the south-east. The zone is divided into two main areas: the beach area to the south (area 6) and the open area to the north (area 7). The beach area is a narrow strip of land, trapped between the sea and the Sail and the Blue Elephant restaurant buildings. The southern part of the beach is sandy and similar in nature to the one in Zone 2. However, the top soil of the northern part has been eroded and the coral stones of the reef, upon which the whole district rests, have become visible. The northern area of this zone is of a higher elevation than the beach area. This could be due to its later reclamation date as the planning authorities in Bahrain continuously increase the specified reclaimed level. The southern part of Zone Three is un-zoned and under public ownership, while the northern part is in a private ownership.

[1] Under construction – December 2003.



Figure 9.7: View of Zone 3 in Al Seef Area (Taken from the top of Moayyed Tower, October 2003)

The zone can be accessed from two points; one through the entrance road of the Ritz-Carlton Hotel's marina, and another from the south through the main loop-road. The second access point is not clearly evident and only few users of the waterfront use it. What has made this access point difficult for cars has been some ongoing work on the extension[1] of the service road. That road passes along the south of the Sail building and the Blue Elephant restaurant and extends to reach the main loop-road of Zone 2. The road extension is higher than the rest of the area and visitors driving ordinary saloon cars cannot traverse it to reach the Zone. The work on this road completed the separation of Zone 2 from Zone 3. This separation started earlier through the construction of a small pier which eventually became the main distinguishing feature dividing the two zones.

Zone Three has many sources of lighting: in the north it benefits from the lights of the marina's boundary wall. Furthermore, it receives some light from the access roads and from the pool-deck of the Sail Building. Two of these light sources are of private ownership and they are not available every night.

[1] The work on the extension started in the course of conducting the field work.



Figure 9.8: The beach of Zone 3 (area 7) in Al Seef (December 2003)

9.3.4 Al Seef Waterfront - Zone Four

Zone Four takes the shape of a crescent extending from the north to the west of Al Seef waterfront (Figure 9.9 & 9.10). Its north-eastern end is bordered by a fenced construction site and empty unfenced tracts border it all the way down to its southern end. On the waterside, the zone faces a historical water channel that formerly linked the Fort of Bahrain with the sea. Unique to this zone, and not found in the other three zones, part of what was officially recognised as a 'public' beach still exists in Zone 4. However, that beach appears as an un-zoned area in the updated zoning maps of Al Seef (Physical Planning Directorate 1998a). Nevertheless, the beach area was never upgraded to be suitable for public use.

The zone is an empty 1,700m long waterfront that does not host any kind of services. There are no roads there except for the informal unmade-up roads, which are in poor condition; the marks left by heavy vehicles render them so difficult to drive through. Furthermore, the use of building rubble in the reclamation of the zone adds to the hazards of the place. The place is totally dark at night owing that to the lack of any road lights and the absence of adjacent buildings.

The beach itself is full of building rubble, which has been illegally dumped in the area, besides rubbish and debris left by visitors or which has drifted from the sea. Driving or walking on the unmade-up roads is perilous due to the softness of the soil in some places and the unknown nature of the immediate subsoil. The sea in Zone 4 is very shallow and the seabed is of a reef type.

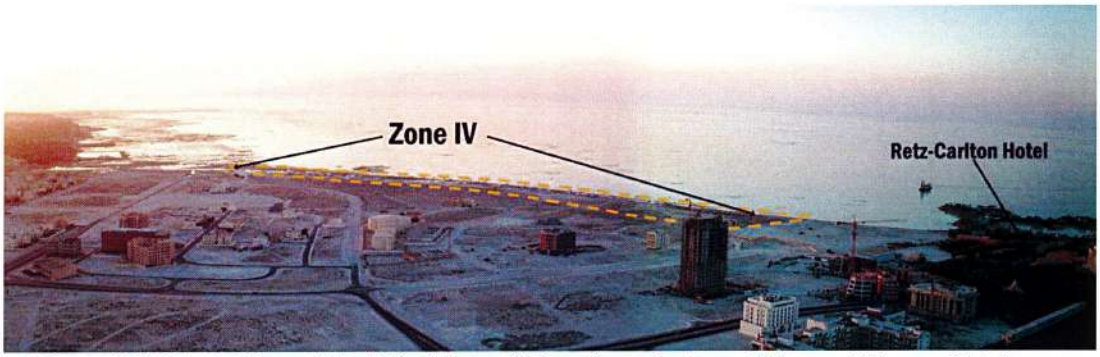


Figure 9.9: View of Zone 4 in Al Seef Area (Taken from the top of Moayyed Tower, October 2003)

The prominent structures in Zone 4 are two fishermen's huts located in the north. The two makeshift huts, which are approximately 100m apart, are built close to the water's edge. They are built on hard soil which allows the users to park their cars right next to them.

Zone 4 may be accessed by car and by foot, although the latter was never recorded by the author in the course of his visits to the zone. There are two main access points leading to the zone; one is located close to the southern end of the zone, where a paved single carriageway leads to it and terminates in a dead end. This is the most used access point to the area, particularly at night-time. The second access point is a twisted informal unmade-up road that leads to the northern end of the zone. The author avoided using that access road, although the attempt was made on five different occasions: three of them were during daytime and two were at night. He lost his way all five times. Although a few users who are familiar with the zone use that access point with ease, it is not a reliable access to the zone for first time users.



Figure 9.10: Al Seef Zone 4 (Area 3) October 2003

9.3.5 Other Informal Public Spaces in Manama

As mentioned in the methodology chapter, some other public spaces in and out of Manama were studied, although not in any depth. Three interviews and many observation sessions were conducted in areas 33 and 34 on the eastern waterfront of Manama. The two areas are the northern and southern flanks of a small bay located between Al Fatih Islamic Centre and Bahri-II. It is identified by the locals as either Jufair beach or Jufair bay. The bay is basically a space left out between two reclaimed areas. It is currently used for mooring purposes by fishermen from mainly Al Hoora and few from Al Jufair village. For the past two decades members of the public have been using the southern flank for recreation purposes. On the surface, it is used similarly to the way Al Seef beach in Zone 2 is used, but on a closer look at who uses it and when it is used, it has been found that the place is a hybrid between Al Seef Zone 2 and Al Seef Zone 1. The coast of the village of Karrana is the other informal space where the author conducted one interview. It is the nearest vernacular coast to Al Seef that is still used solely by the villagers. Data from the above mentioned informal waterfronts were used in supplementing the data retrieved from the main focus area in Al Seef.

9.4 Perception and Use of Al Seef Waterfront

The earlier parts of this chapter illustrated the physical characteristics of the four zones of Al Seef waterfront. The purpose of that narrative was to contextualize the social aspects of the waterfront which are the concern of this part of the chapter. It is the concern of this Section to answer the question of how the two processes of urban growth and land reclamation around Manama have affected the way informal public spaces are perceived and used. The researcher explored the way Al Seef is perceived and used under three main themes. The first focuses on Al Seef as a place to observe nature. The second discusses Al Seef as a place for leisure and the third examines Al Seef as a social area. Unlike the case of Al Bahri Parks, there is an economic sub-theme in the case of Al Seef waterfront. This economic side is tackled under the heading of the 'leisure' and 'social' main themes. Furthermore, the following three Sections are also tested against the four themes discussed in Chapters 6 and 7.

As mentioned earlier, certain parallels will be drawn throughout the following three sections. Some are between Al Seef and other similar spaces that are located within different cultures or geographical areas while other parallels run through history to

highlight the links between Al Seef and other historical forms of public space in Bahrain.

9.4.1 Observing Nature in Al Seef Waterfront

As discussed in Chapter 5, observing nature inside or in the immediate vicinity of the cities and towns of Bahrain used to take place in three types of spaces: the waterfront (*seef*), green space (*nakhal* or *doolãb*), and remote open space (*saha*). Chapters 5 and 6 as well as Figure 8.1 show that *seef*, as an open space, does not exist in a formal way on the waterfront of Manama. All the public spaces that are not in the form of a green park, publicly owned, and designated or planned for the use of members of the public, are currently 'found' spaces. However, there are a few locations on the waterfront of Manama where one can locate that type of found open space, particularly in locations where new land reclamation is taking place. Al Seef waterfront is one of them and it accommodates both *seef* and *saha*. Thus, observing nature in Al Seef waterfront can be satisfied either by being in the open space itself or by interacting with the water. The main question here is: do the users of Al Seef perceive it as a place to observe nature? To answer this, the same methods followed in analysing the green spaces of Al Bahri Parks have been applied in Al Seef Waterfront.

One of the main questions asked to all the interviewees in Al Seef was about its major attracting factors. The researcher found that the majority of them rank the water as either first or second on the list of the reasons given for why they use that place. Many of the interviewees made reference to the water, the openness of the space and the fresh air. For example, one of them stated:

> We come here most of the time, [referring to the Al Seef-area 8]...the sea is like a routine, we have to come and punch the card in here [being sarcastic as coming to the Al Seef beach became a routine job]...we finish our jobs and come straight to here, sometimes we finish in the evening and I come to here to smell the air...I have to come here, particularly with the other guys, and Hassan...we have to come here every day...The weather is so nice in here, especially in this area, it is better than the other area which you have mentioned, the one with the two huts [area 3].[1]

Another respondent who was interviewed in Al Seef, Zone 2, said:

[1] Interview with a group of young men - Al Seef, Zone 2 (4th November 2003)

> My wife needed to buy few things from Seef Mall and my son and his friend wanted to go with her, I know that the minute we reach there they will rush to the arcade that's why I decided to bring them here to get some fresh air. They spent the whole weekend playing indoors with their Playstation and that is not healthy for them.[1]

The above two excerpts shed some light on the way informal open space on Al Seef waterfront is perceived by two of its users. However, the stress on openness and fresh air was dominant in nearly all the interviews in Al Seef. Other issues were also highlighted and eulogized by the respondents in Al Seef: the condition of the water, the waterside, the beach and its accessibility, both physical and visual. The majority of the interviewees expressed a deep knowledge of the quality of the water in the areas which they use and in the other surrounding areas. For example one of them stated while commenting on swimming in the area near King Faisal Corniche-II:

> No, it won't be nice, the sea in there is deep, it is a *khour* and then behind it is a *fasht*, that is not good, for someone who does not know how to swim properly, that would be deadly, but here the beach is gradual, it gets deep little by little.[2]

Then he commented on the issue of swimming in the Al Seef area by stating

> You'll have to walk for about 200 to 300m till it becomes deep; I think it is 200m.

Another interviewee within the same group interrupted by saying:

> When it is *May'yat helal*[3] then 100 to 150m is enough to reach deep waters, in here there are no corals, it is a nice sea.[4]

Then they were asked again about King Faisal Corniche and if they would dive there. A third man in the group stated:

> I don't think so, the rocks in there make it difficult to reach the water, and the rocks are very slippery. But in here, if you swim for 100m you'll reach deep water that is good for diving, it is so clean[5]

---

[1] Interview with a middle-aged Egyptian man - Al Seef, Zone 2 (9th December 2003).
[2] Interview with a groups of eight young men and teenagers picnicking - Al Seef, Zone 2 (4th November 2003).
[3] Literally this means 'waters of the crescent', and is the Arabic local name of the high tide during the birth of the new moon which is the highest tide.
[4] Interview with a groups of eight young men and teenagers picnicking - Al Seef, Zone 2 (4th November 2003).
[5] ibid

When the same group were asked about other water-based activities, particularly fishing, one of them answered:

> Some people do [fish in here], they fish for 'maid', although fishing in here is dead and buried, and it is too little compared to the past. This is because the area was reclaimed and the fish fled, it is not like before, but that place where the two chalets are, is good for fishing [being sarcastic, he meant the makeshift huts in Zone 4, area 3], real fishing, *Safi* and *Shuri* (local names of fish) . It is a fishing place.[1]

The author asked the same group about the popularity of fishing for 'maid' in certain areas of Al Seef and one of them stated:

> There are a few sewage discharge pipes in this area and 'maid' fish like that, it is like Sitra Causeway and Jaww coast, you'll find this type of fish in that type of places where there is so much sewage water.[2]

The type and amount of information mentioned in the above excerpts from only one interview with the users of Al Seef shows the depth of the knowledge they hold about the water and its accessibility. They know where to swim and where not to, how deep the water is in different areas at different times (that is, low and high tides), good places for fishing and the nature of the seabed and the beach. This is common among respondents in Al Jufair beach and Karrana. This knowledge reflects a deep link between the 'use' of those spaces and the presence of the water. It also draws attention to the fact that observing nature in those spaces is linked with the presence of water and its accessibility. Furthermore, respondents' knowledge about the nature of the seawater adjacent to formal public space illustrates that they have tried it or tested it and decided not to use it, due to its unsuitability.

However, the above interviews reflect the high value of interacting with the water as one of the criteria used by respondents in selecting open space on the waterfront. Some more examples of that link will be discussed in the Sections on the leisure and social uses of the Al Seef waterfront.

9.4.1.1 Users' Behaviour

Among the issues focused upon in this research are the criteria followed by the users in selecting a place to sit within the four zones. This is an attempt to highlight how the

[1] ibid
[2] ibid

physical, visual and to some extent, the symbolic access to the waterfront and to the water itself, besides other spatial attributes, affect those criteria. Also it is an attempt to link observation of nature with the overall behaviour of users of the space. One of the major findings is that the majority of users try to be as close as possible to the water when they select where they sit. For instance throughout Zone 4 (area 3) and on many different days, and at different times on those days it has been found that users who seek a seating place always locate themselves close to the sea, even in areas where physical access to the sea is prohibited (areas 1 and 2) or where it cannot be seen at low tide. However, due to the remoteness of the area and the rough terrain that leads to it, nearly all the visitors to the area come in cars and nearly all of them park their cars on the narrow strip of land that is sandwiched between the informal unmade-up road and the beach. The same behaviour was recorded at night-time regardless of the type of activity intended. Furthermore, nearly all the activities in that area take place in that particular narrow strip. In some locations the strip is so narrow it forces the visitors to sit nearly three meters from the unmade-up road. Passing traffic could present a danger to the users of the space at night due to the lack of any lighting except that which comes from the cars' headlights. Opting to use these locations just to be on the waterside and accepting their dangers, even at night-time, indicates that a high status is given to being next to the water and having an unobstructed visual and physical access to it. Nevertheless, it indicates the high level of contact with nature that can be achieved through that accessibility and how much that is valued by users of the space.

9.4.1.2 Microclimate of Al Seef Waterfront

Observing the other, non-visual, parts of nature in Al Seef includes the other auditory, olfactory and kinaesthetic senses. This means that being near the sea without seeing it could still be an attraction of a particular space. In Al Seef, the other non-visual qualities of the place that are related to the presence of the sea are prominent. The sea breeze, the freshness of the air and the sound of the waves were all highlighted by the respondents in Al Seef. For example in an interview with two Bahraini men who were fishing on the west side of Zone 1, area 11 one of them stated:

> Sometimes one can have a bad day at work or even at home, doing this (fishing) even if we don't catch anything, can wash away all those distresses,

there is something unique about the sea breeze, it can have that refreshing power[1]



Figure 9.11: Bahraini women in Al Seef, Zone-2, April 2002



Figure 9.12: Users of Al Seef on the Beach, Zone-2, November 2003

The expressed feelings about, and perception of, the sea and the waterfront as a place to relax and to observe nature have been expressed by many other respondents in Al Seef. Their experiences in the places and subsequent attachment to the sea together, with all its qualities reflected in the microclimate of the place could be supported by the physical attributes of the waterfront itself. For instance, in every one of the four zones of Al Seef it is possible to touch the water and to be on or above it, which maintains both a visual

[1] Interview with two middle aged men - Al Seef, Zone 1 (2nd December 2003).

and physical link. Nevertheless, the remoteness of the waterfront from major traffic routes allows for the sound of the waves to form part of the overall atmosphere and add to the quality of the place. The significance of this experience is that it is simultaneously close to the city yet has a sense of remoteness. This was highlighted in two interviews in Zones 2 & 3. A group of teenagers mentioned that they like to meet in outdoor areas whenever the weather permits. Nevertheless, they do not like to venture far in remote areas as most of them neither drive nor own cars. They highlighted that Al Seef is a good location in that sense. The place is easily accessible to their parents when they drop them and pick them up later, yet they feel as if they are out of town[1]. Another group of young men highlighted the same factors while they were praising the good qualities of the place[2].

9.4.1.3 Flora and Fauna in Al Seef

As mentioned earlier, Al Seef is a piece of reclaimed land awaiting development. Overall the whole studied area is poor in vegetation. However, on the fauna level, many of the users of the Al Seef Waterfront perform sports fishing in all four Zones. For the majority of respondents, who perform that activity, fishing forms a way of being in touch with nature. This was recorded in Al Jufair harbour too. For these respondents the place where one can be in touch with nature is either the deep sea which they access through their small fishing and leisure boats, or the informal waterfront.

Moreover, there are a few other activities that are indicative of nature observation within these informal spaces. For instance, seashell collection is one of the most common activities performed by visiting children. Moreover, seabirds are present in the Al Seef open areas in big numbers particularly in Zone 1. The presence of these birds can support other activities such as bird-spotting; this was not personally observed by the author but Al Seef is listed on the World Wide Web as one of the best places for bird spotting in Bahrain. Al Seef also is the location where many horse breeders and caretakers bring their horses to ride and to bathe in the seawater (Figure 9.13). Other marine and aquatic animals have attempted to use the place, such as the endangered green turtle (Figure 9.14); however, this is on a limited scale and proved to be fatal as Al Seef is not environmentally managed.

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[1] Interview with ten male university students - Al Seef, Zone 3 (6th November 2003).
[2] Interview with eight young men - Al Seef, Zone 2 (4th November 2003).

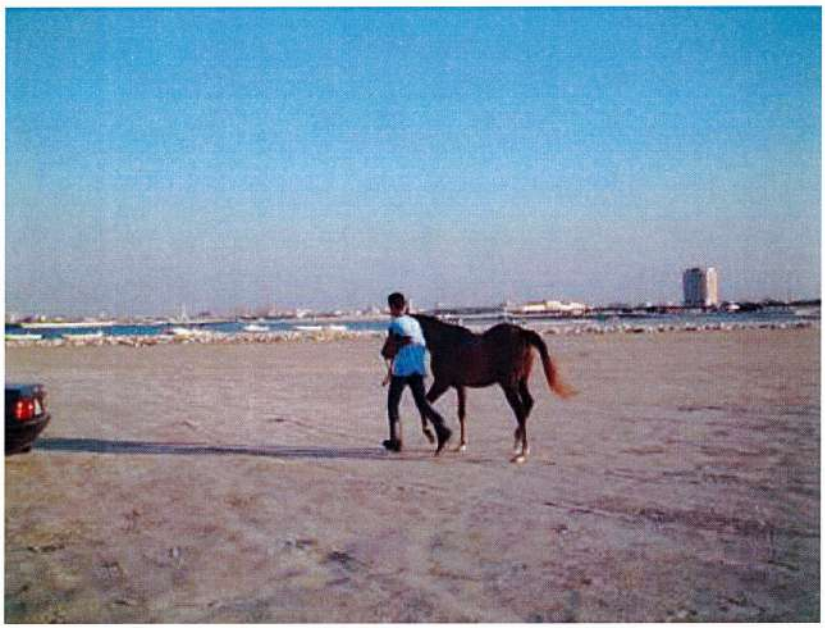


Figure 9.13: Horse riding, walking and bathing is common in Al Seef, November 2003



Figure 9.14: A Green Turtle found dead in Al Seef- Zone 3, November 2003

9.4.2 Al Seef as a Place for Leisure

As discussed in Chapter 3 the peripheral urban open space, whether it is *seef* or *saha*, has been a vital locale for many social and economic activities of the inhabitants of Bahraini cities. It has also highlighted that the coexistence of social and economic uses within public space is what has shaped the maritime culture of Bahrain. It also showed that leisure formed a substantial part of that culture. Currently leisure activities on the waterfront form a large proportion of the global waterfront phenomenon. In line with

that, Chapter 6 confirmed that leisure on the waterfront of Manama is a dominant activity in terms of land use proportion (59% of the total shoreline length).

One of the main issues which were observed on Al Seef waterfront was that its users read the physical attributes of its open spaces and utilised them in achieving different objectives. To the first timers, those open spaces could all look like each other; flat, barren, and sandy reclaimed land. But to the frequent users, each part is used for diverse activities during different times of the day, by different age, sex and income groups. These diverse activities include many forms of leisure; for example sitting, strolling, fishing, jogging, kite surfing, swimming, horse riding, dog walking, sunbathing, picnicking, barbequing, playing football, car racing, model car racing, kite flying, shell collecting and so on. The large scale and openness of these reclaimed lands has encouraged a higher level of organised leisure and these spaces are used to host formal festivals such as the National day. In 2003 a temporary go-cart racing track was placed in Zone 2 of Al Seef. Although the latter organised activities have created few conflicting issues with other regular users, they acted as attractions and made many visitors aware of the availability of such waterside open space[1].

Overall, most of the mundane activities in the Al Seef waterfront are performed individually or by small social groups. These activities vary between water-dependent, water-related and water-independent nature. However, all the leisure activities that are either organised by governmental bodies or created through private investment are water-independent (indoor festival pavilions, go-cart racing track and so on). These are located in Al Seef in order to benefit in a major way from the large open space that is close to the heart of the Capital and well linked with the rest of the Island.

Most of the respondents who use the Al Seef waterfront on a regular basis perceive it as a venue for water-dependent or water-related leisure activities. For instance, a male respondent, who was with a western kite-surfing group, stated:

> If I can't practise it [his hobby] here in Bahrain I will leave, this hobby is my life!...there are only two places where we can practise it, here and near Al Durrah project, now Al Durrah is closed off so we only have this place.[2]

---

[1] Interview with ten male teenagers who were barbequing in the Al Seef – Zone 2(6th of November 2003).
[2] Interview with a Belgian woman and two men from South African and Australian - Al Seef, Zone 2 (9th December 2003).

In an interview with two American mothers who were in the company of their children they referred to how 'fun' Al Seef (Zone 2) is: they like it especially in winter when there are few people using it in the daytime. Both of them have a family membership with one of the waterfront clubs, but they still like Al Seef. To them the place is so informal they do not have to go through the protocol of going to a club which is frequented by high income users[1] (Figure 9.15). They mostly like the idea of having their car nearby.



Figure 9.15: Families enjoy the informality of Al Seef (Zone-2), December 2003

Respondents who use Jufair beach and harbour (areas 33 & 34) use it in a similar way, although they come from a lower income group. They mentioned that they do swim in the harbour area and do not use the nearby beach of Bahri-II. Unlike Zone 2 of Al Seef, Jufair harbour is cluttered with rubbish and driftwood, which the person could clearly see on the beach and in the basin of the bay at low tide. On top of that, there are many motorboats in the harbour and on the beach, making it difficult to use for swimming. Besides that, there are some health issues in relation to the quality of the water and the presence of many large size rats. Two of the respondents agreed with the researcher's observations regarding the condition of the harbour, but they highlighted that the water is clean and calm in the harbour's inner waters. But they emphasized that their problem is with access to those parts. They added that both the children and the fishermen in their boats are usually aware of each other's presence. One of them stated that his kids spend most of their summer holiday 'soaking' in the waters of the harbour. With regard to the rats, one of them stated that the rats never bother them. Area 10 in Zone 1 of Al

[1] Interview with two American mothers - Al Seef, Zone 2 (2nd December 2003).

Seef shares some of the characteristics of Jufair Harbour but is not as cluttered. In spite of that, it was also used for swimming by both the fishermen and their children before it was reduced to an enclosed and useless body of water. From the examples of the Jufair and Al Seef harbours, it is possible to say that in some places and with certain income groups water-dependent leisure and some water-based economical activities can coexist.

Furthermore, Al Seef is also perceived as a place for leisure by the respondents who do not practise water-dependent or water-related activities. To some of them, Al Seef is a place to pass time in a leisurely way, regardless of the activity carried out. The following was recorded in an interview with a group of young men who use Area 8 in Al Seef as their meeting place:

> Man 1: we are here all the time, regardless of the weather or the time, whenever we have spare time we come to this place. When it is too cold we sit in the car, during the heat (summer) we come here mostly during late afternoons. It is better than sitting at home.
>
> Man 3: it is gloomy at home, we come to here to forget our troubles, and we come to here to forget all our work weariness, we throw it all in the sea.[1]

Comments similar to the above were made by most of the regular users of Al Seef and Al Bahri interviewed for this study. However, in many cases these informal spaces were used due to their openness and proximity to urban areas. Activities such as jogging, horse riding, dog walking, car racing and so on are all water-independent activities and are performed there due to the two above-mentioned characteristics. This was noted in the following three interviews. The first was with a man who was walking his dog:

> I usually walk the dog here or in Jufair beach (area 34)...I can't go to any of the parks because dogs are not allowed there and these open spaces are the only places where I can walk the dog...sometimes my wife comes along with me to exercise too.[2]

A respondent who live in Al Seef and jogs regularly in Al Seef – Zone 2 stated:

> During midweek I jog in the evenings but at the weekends I try to do it during late afternoons to avoid the hot sun...The place is free of fast traffic and is not polluted, it is very convenient for me to run in here...The place is sandy but if you wear the right shoes you'll have no problem.[3]

---

[1] Interview with a group of young men - Al Seef, Zone 2 (4th November 2003).
[2] Interview with an older Welsh man - Al Seef, Zone 1(December 2003).
[3] Interview with a 32 year old man who jogs in Al Seef, Zones 2 & 3 (23rd October 2004).

One of the common activities in Al Seef is car washing, waxing or even maintenance. Many young men were seen to be engaged in that activity almost all around the waterfront of Al Seef. In an interview with two men who were washing their cars in Zone 4 (area 3) one of them stated, after being asked about the reason for coming all the way to the waterfront to wash and wax their cars:

> Why not, look at the view and feel the atmosphere. Back in the town I don't have a private car park in front of our house and I don't like to wash my car in the middle of the street, in the middle of the town. In here we turn a daunting job to a leisure one...my wife sometimes come with me to here but back in the town she doesn't like to stand with me in the street while I am doing this...other friends come along to wash their cars in here too.[1]

From these interviews and the observation of these spaces it is possible to say that the informal public space of Al Seef is generally perceived by its regular users as a place for leisure. Regardless of the nature of the performed leisure activities, whether they are water-dependent or independent, the interviewed users refer to the sea as the major attraction for them.

As mentioned in Chapter 3, leisure can include many activities. However, many of those activities are discussed with regard to their social side rather than their leisure side in the following section.

9.4.3 Al Seef Waterfront as a Social Place

This section is concerned with the way Al Seef waterfront is used socially. It attempts to highlight the effects of the physical attributes of the four zones on the way they are perceived and used as venues for social interaction. These interactions, such as exchange, conflict and control, are later linked with the fourfold criteria of dependency, integration, access, and land tenure introduced in Chapters 6 and 7. As with Al Bahri Parks, the space/time factor and the users' characteristics are also discussed throughout this section. Nevertheless, it also focuses on certain dominant activities to exemplify the many forms of social interaction which were observed in Al Seef.

[1] Interview with two young men from Al Deah village who were washing their cars - Al Seef, Zone 4 (7th November 2003).

9.4.3.1 The Users and the Social Uses of Al Seef Waterfront

The users of Al Seef vary along all dimensions in terms of their age, gender, ethnicity, income and group composition. Among these, many types of social grouping such as parties of young men, teenagers, and all sizes of family visit the place. This was noticed at all times: weekends, midweek, day and nights and festive days. However, high income groups use Al Seef in a limited way, such as for a quick stroll and particularly as a meeting place for young lovers who tend to meet away from the eyes of the public yet not in a completely private place[1]. It was observed that family groups tend to use the place during weekends or festive times, while bachelor groups visit the place throughout the week.

Moreover, Al Seef is used for many social activities by its varied user groups. One of the most common forms of these activities is picnicking. It takes place in all the four zones with a high concentration in Zones 2 and 3. On summer working days, picnickers show up late in the afternoon and stay till about 12:00pm. During the summer holidays and weekends they start to show up late in the afternoon and that activity continues until the early hours of the next day (3:00am) sometimes. On winter working days (excluding Ramadan days) few picnickers show up during the day or night. However, on holidays and weekends, a few families show up early in the afternoon (12:00am); their numbers increase and then gradually and climax at about 1:00am. During Ramadan (which coincided with two of the field trips) users of the place tend to stay on later at night.

9.4.3.2 Social activities in Al Seef

The respondents gave contradictory feedback with regard to the suitability of Al Seef for social interaction. This contradiction could be linked to the socio-economic group, age and marital status of the interviewed user, as well as the characteristics of the zone under discussion. It also depended on the question of who does it suit and when. For instance, some of the respondents think that Al Seef is a good place for family groups but not for lone females. Others think it is a bad place for families all together. Another opinion is that the place is good for all social groups, as long as they know what to expect, where to sit and how to define their territory. The following are excerpts from a few of those responses:

[1] Interview with three Bahraini men in their twenties who were sitting in their car - Al Seef, Zone 1(3rd November 2004) Also interview with a 19 year old Bahraini female in the Ritz-Carleton Hotel (10th December 2003).

A high-income Bahraini respondent, who is also a frequent user of the open space in area 8, didn't think that Al Seef was a good social space for families. He stated:

> No, we don't come here with our families, can't you see the place became like a brothel, it does not suit us...[1]

The respondent usually meets his friends in area 8, they gather to test their model racing cars. To him Al Seef is one of the few places where he can meet others who share the same hobby. To him the place is all right for men, but not for women.

The same concept is shared by two other men, one of whom is of a middle income and the other of whom has a low income. The two were fishing together in area 10 in Al Seef; the author asked them if they use the beach in area 8 or 7 in Al Seef and whether they bring their families along with them. They stated:

> Ali: Many families use that place [Zone 2] but many mischievous people use it too; they even come to this place [Zone 1].
>
> Author: But I heard that more mischievous people come to this place (Zone 1) than that one (Zone 2 and 3).
>
> Ali: We have nothing to do with them, each one of us is minding his own business.
>
> Hassan: Yes, we have nothing to do with them.
>
> Author: What kind of mischievous things happen in here?
>
> Ali: Between brackets?
>
> Author: Feel free to say anything please
>
> Ali: It is mostly alcohol related things, usually groups of men or young men have a kind of camp in here, temporary camp or you can say a picnic.
>
> Author: Is that all, is it limited to alcohol?
>
> Ali: Are you asking about drugs?
>
> Author: Have you noticed that too?
>
> Hassan: We have no idea
>
> Ali: We don't go near them
>
> Author: What about sex related issues?

[1] Interview with two Bahraini young men - Al Seef, Zone 2, (10th December 2003).

> Ali: This is a common thing in here, whoever has a girl and does not have a place to go comes to here.
>
> Hassan: We don't have any business with those too.[1]

However, A 19 year old man, who was interviewed with his friends in Area 7, stated:

> I don't mind coming here [Al Seef] with my friends to barbeque or sometimes just sit, but my family needs more than this [pointing to the area around].[2]

To this young man, Al Seef is not suitable for family groups for other reasons than its social connotations; to him the place lacks the basic amenities of public space. However, his friend highlighted a different matter, stating:

> There are no places for us [teenagers and young men] in the whole of Bahrain; Adhari is shut and the Water Garden is for the Indians...we are sick of strolling in the malls.[3]

To this group of friends, Al Seef is a refuge where they get together away from the public parks and their dominant users who, as we have seen in Chapter 8, alienate the teenagers. It is also a place where they could meet away from the mall which they have tried and become bored of.

As mentioned earlier some of the respondents think that Al Seef is a good place for everyone as long as they know where to put themselves. This was highlighted by a regular user of area 8. He stated the following while commenting on how to avoid conflicts with other social groups:

> This place is ours (north of area 8), and that place (east of area 8) is for the families.[4]

This comment reflects how the users of Al Seef perceive the open space, position themselves within it and behave according to its temporal and spatial attributes. Overall, it highlights that the users draw a social map of the space according to various factors and allocate themselves a place within that. The Al Seef waterfront enables incompatible social groups to use different places the simultaneously, or at the same place but in different times, to minimise chances of friction. This is possible for the

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[1] Interview with two 40 and 60 year old Bahraini men who were fishing - Al Seef, Zone 1 (2nd December 2003).
[2] Interview with ten male university students - Al Seef, Zone 3 (6th November 2003).
[3] *ibid.*
[4] Interview with three young men - Al Seef, Zone 2 (3rd November 2004) .

following reasons: first of all, the large dimensions of the Al Seef open space allow for a bigger number of users to use it simultaneously without crowding. Secondly, although it is large, there are a few factors that limit the number of the users; one of them is that not many people know that a place like Al Seef exists. Others know that a place as such exists but do not know how to access it. Thirdly, the diversity of the physical nature of the four zones, including their accessibility, remoteness and lighting, dictates the nature of the users of each space. It specifically allows non-family groups to comfortably use certain places away from the families.

The differential accessibility of Al Seef's waterfront is manifested in the form of different levels of physical barriers. These barriers can consist of rough terrain or sometimes of ongoing construction work. For example works on the connecting road to the Blue Elephant Restaurant and the blockage of the northern entrance of Zone 3 in Al Seef resulted in a situation where only 4x4 or larger cars were capable of reaching that zone.

The darkness at night-time in most of those informal spaces (Al Seef area 1, 2, 3, 4, 7 and most of the northern parts of area 10) provides instant privacy for those who seek it. In the day-time users achieve privacy by way of another option; they use their cars to create semiprivate outdoor spaces that are visually disconnected from the rest of the space. This action reflects a high level of control and appropriation of space where the users of informal public space strengthen the borders of their private spheres, through the use of their cars.

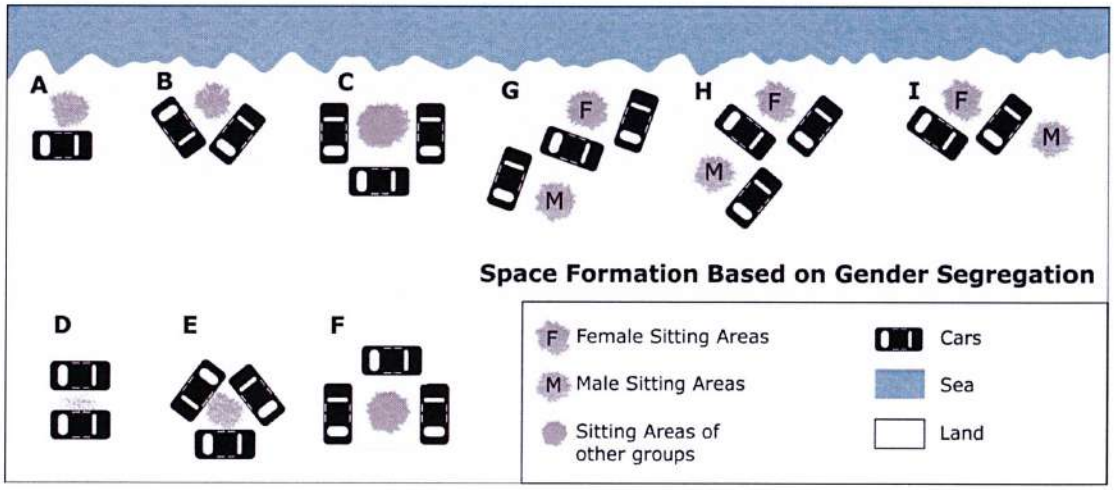


Figure 9.16: The Use of Cars in Creating Semiprivate Spaces in the Informal Waterfront

Figure 9.11 shows that cars are also used for segregating members of the same social group (layouts G, H & I). This is commonly practised by conservative family groups who tend to segregate the seating places of the males from the females. On busy days most of these arrangements are abolished and only users who do not mind proximity or like to be close to other users of the space show up. In other cases an effect is produced similar to when people stand together in a busy train: their private space bubbles get smaller (Figure 9.17).



Figure 9.17: Al Seef Zones 2 and 3 during what is known in Bahrain as 'Black Monday', the day when the Island witnessed a 100% blackout in the middle of summer (23rd August 2004).
Source: Unknown

However, cars are also used for other purposes in Al Seef; some users position them in a certain way during the late afternoon to provide some shade from the low sun, others use them to block strong winds. To others, cars represent a refuge while using the busy Seef shopping mall; young Bahraini women who smoke cigarettes use their cars to take short 'smoke drives' away from the mall. One of them stated that she and her friend drive to Zone 4 of Al Seef to smoke their cigarettes away from the eyes of the public. They use the secluded nature of that waterfront area and its proximity to the shopping mall[1]. It is noteworthy that while the sight of a woman smoking in public is socially unacceptable by many social groups in Bahrain, a woman smoking the traditional *gedo* or *gado* in public is widely accepted particularly by the Shi'a sect, within certain frameworks.

[1] Interview with a 19 year old Bahraini girl in the Ritz-Carlton Hotel (10th of December 2003).

Analysing the way cars are positioned by different age groups highlights also how they use the place through time and space. It was observed that many teenagers and young men park their cars at some distance from the water. The majority of them then follow the layout A, B, C, D, E and F as in Figure 9.17 with an apparent disregard for the direction or the view of the sea. In most cases their main concern is to seek privacy from other traffic around the location. This was noticed in nearly all the zones of Al Seef except area 8 which is dominated by families. This attitude was noticed at Al Jufair beach too and in many other areas all around Bahrain. The common dominator between these places is not the sea: many of these locations are inland ones. What they have in common is their remoteness, openness and marginal nature. Thus, the one could say that those groups do not use Al Seef as a waterfront. That notion could be supported by the knowledge that some young men place their cars between the place where they sit and the sea; they expose themselves to the ongoing traffic. Their main purpose for being in the place is to see and to be seen. This attitude was observed in Al Seef area 8[1] (the bachelors' area near the loop-road).

The high vehicular accessibility can sometimes be a disadvantage. The use of cars to create a semiprivate or visually secluded outdoor space is carried out even at night-time when many groups try to avoid being exposed to the headlights of passing cars. Family groups avoid some areas that are narrow, where passing cars get too close to where the groups sit. This was noticed in area 7 in Al Seef, which is mostly used by bachelor males at night-time. However, there is a general etiquette followed by most of the drivers in other areas that they are exclusively used by bachelors at night. Drivers using areas 10 and 11 in Al Seef and area 34 in Jufair tend to turn off the headlights of their cars as they enter the place particularly where others cars are parked. That custom is observed to protect the privacy of the others within the area.

The use of cars in informal spaces to gain a higher level of control takes a variety of forms. One of the most common is that many of the users play music in their cars while they are sitting outside them. Some of them play religious chants while others listen to recitals from the Qur'an. For example, during the weekend nights of Ramadan in Al Seef, it was possible to hear different genres of music, recitals of the Qur'an and religious chants from every direction. The users were not competing with their music;

[1] For further information about the way cars are used in social interactions, particularly between the two genders within a Bahraini context, please refer to the work of Schumacher (1987).

the distances between them were ample to dampen down the sound level of whatever was played sufficient to allow each group to enjoy what they were listening to.

Through the observation of activities in the informal spaces it has been found that the use of these spaces and the convenience of being next to one's car are highly linked. Most of the users do not venture far from their cars. The following was noted during one of the late night visits to Al Seef – Area 8, in Ramadan 2003:

> A group of young men with two cars parked on the roadside in Zone 2 near the beach, one of the cars is a pickup. The same group was here last night. They are fully equipped with *shisha* tools; they even have a small gas burner with a propane gas cylinder to light up the charcoal. It is a big group. The six men were playing a board game called Carrom[1] while listening to blues music, smoking *shisha*, and eating cakes. One of them is trying to light up the charcoal by keeping it in a metal tray and then spins the whole thing.[2]

As expressed by few of the respondents, the amount of gear which the users of Al Seef bring along with them to perform a variety of activities would hardly be useable if they had to sit away from their cars.

Another example could shed more light on the link between the nature of the activities performed and the distance from the performer's cars in Al Seef. A frequent user of Area 7 comes to the place nearly every afternoon, mostly during lunch breaks with his girlfriend. When the weather permits, they position two deckchairs, which most probably are always kept in their van, near to the van to catch the sun (Figure 9.18). He usually wears shorts only, while she wears a bikini top and shorts. He usually drinks one or two cans of beer while she drinks a fizzy diet drink. The two come to the place even during the weekend. They change their clothes inside the van, keep their cold box in the van and never sit away from it. On windy days they spend their lunch break inside the van, yet park it on the seaside. The van in this case is being used as an extension of their home.

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[1] Carrom, Carums, Karom or Karum is most popular on the Indian subcontinent although versions of it are played right across Asia encompassing the Middle East including Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Yemen, Central Asia from Turkmenistan to Afghanistan and as far East as China, Malaysia and Indonesia. Strangely, in both Scandinavia and China, versions using small cues in the same way as for Billiards exist. (Masters 2002).

[2] Observations in Al Seef, Zone 2 during 3rd and 4th November 2003.



Figure 9.18: The extension of private space through the use of cars

However, vehicular access to the waterside is one of the hotly debated issues in Bahrain. It is mostly seen as a source of trouble: vehicular access allows for more illegal rubbish dumping and unauthorised land reclamation on the waterside. In many cases local municipal councils and environmental organisations opted to block access to vehicles, as in the case of Toubli Bay. The same was proposed by the Northern Municipal Council in September 2005 to stop any further reclamation of the northern coast and to secure public access to the water (Bahrain Tribune 2005d). All of these decisions were taken without conducting or commissioning any field studies to come-up with a full evaluation of the source of the problem.

There is an overall norm followed by the users of the place, as if they follow an unwritten law. Everyone minds his or her own business: passersby usually greet those who are sitting down, although only where they are both bachelor groups only; greeting a family group is considered as intrusion of their privacy[1]. Most of the conflicts in Al Seef are not between the users; they are between the users and the law, as the police patrol the area to prevent prohibited activities[2]. Overall, users of Al Seef regard it as a safe place.

[1] Interview with two men in their twenties who were washing their cars - Al Seef, Zone 4 (7th November 2003).
[2] Interview with a group of young men - Al Seef, Zone 2 (4th November 2003).

Conflicts in Al Seef also emerge between private investors and other users of the space. Overall, most of these investments or other interventions are not sited there in order to benefit from the visitors to the place or the provision of water. These temporary investments or interventions are there to make use of the open spaces. The latest addition to Al Seef was the go-cart racing track which was constructed in December 2003 (Figure 9.19). Picnicking there became almost impossible due to this installation, as one of the interviewees stated:

> The noise and the smoke became unbearable, my family stopped coming with me because of that. We used to come here for the sea breeze and this is what we get now. Many trucks pass from here also and they create so much dust.[1]



Figure 9.19: Go-Cart racing track in Al Seef

9.4.4 Fishing

Fishing is the second most common activity on the Al Seef waterfront. Fishing in the Al Seef context could be categorised under the headings of sport, social, leisure and nature-observing activities. Thus it will be discussed as such. Many of the respondents who practise this hobby (in Al Seef and other informal waterfronts i.e. Jufair and Karrana waterfronts) use makeshift sheds. One of the first questions that should be asked here is why fishing is popular in the informal waterfront and not in the formal ones? Part of the answer to this question may be found in Chapter 7 where the accessibility of the water and the nature of the water's edge are discussed. But a substantial component of the answer emerged through the interviews with those who practise fishing.

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[1] Interview with three young men who were picnicking - Al Seef - Zone 2 (5th November 2004)

Before going any deeper in the discussion of fishing, it is vital to explain what type of fishing is being practised in both the formal and informal public spaces of Manama. Both recreational and professional fishing are taking place in or from those open spaces. Recreational fishing includes both onshore and deep-sea types. Professional types are mostly deep-sea and drift-net fishing. Al Bahri-II is also used to access two fish traps (*Hudhoor*) placed in its nearby shallows (Figure 9.20). Onshore fishing take place in formal public space too, but in a limited form and it is not provided for.



Figure 9.20: Fish Traps in Al Bahri

Both types of fishing are mostly practised by males only. Recreational fishing is practised by nearly all ages (the youngest interviewee who was fishing was 10 years old, the oldest was 65 years old, both in Al Seef - Figure 9.21). The physical barriers mentioned in Chapter 7 play a role in the type of the users. For instance, older men from the nearby villages, who do not drive cars, have no presence on the waterfront of Al Seef[1]. Although many children practise fishing in Al Seef, they find it difficult to reach the water; first they have to cross at least one major highway[2] (except for children coming from Karbabad) and then walk 2 to 3 kilometres to reach the sites in Zone 1 where they can practise onshore fishing.

[1] This was observed by the author and was brought up in a few of the interviews with residents of Al Deah village. Old men from those villages do not usually drive and can't walk to the waterfront due to the long distance and the hazardous route.

[2] Interview with a 12 year old boy from Al Deah who was fishing - Al Seef, Zone 1(2nd December 2003)



Figure 9.21: 1, 2, 3 & 4 Fishing Activities in Al Seef. 5- Fishermen's makeshift huts in Al Seef

Fishing represents a large part of the social environment of Manama's public space. Control, conflict, appropriation, attachment and exchange can all be found within this single type of activity. However, it is vital to remember that fishing is mostly taking place on or from reclaimed land and that those reclamations took place in the waters of fishing communities, such as the villages to the north of Bahrain, south east and south of Manama. Thus, fishing on these waterfronts can be visualised as those former-fishing communities reclaiming their waterfronts. This was established by learning the place of residence of those interviewees who were practising fishing. In Al Seef the majority of them come from the nearby villages of Al Deah, Sanabis, and Karbabad. Fishing in

Zone 4 is largely dominated by people from the three villages, while in the case of Jufair Bay most of the interviewees were either still living in Al Hoora or originated from it though currently living elsewhere.

Fishing in both Al Bahri and Al Seef was practised individually or organised and carried out collectively. The latter form was manifested with different degrees of organisation. It started on a basic scale where a few children from a nearby village get together to go fishing, all the way up to the scale of a group of men building a hut on the beach where they can watch-over their fishing boats. When it is practised individually, the fishermen tend to recognise or know others in the area. They follow each other and watch over each others' cars. This was noted in nearly all the interviews with the fishermen in Al Seef. In one of those interviews a Filipino man stated:

> I don't know those guys in person, but I recognise some of them, they are familiar faces to me...yes I tend to follow where they fish because they know the place better than me but I keep a distance not to compete with them.[1]

Some fishermen prefer to fish in a solitary way, away from everyone and without any communication with others, this was not the usual case but it does exist in Al Seef. What should be noted here is the ability of the space to accommodate this solitary attitude. This type of space can only be found in informal public spaces, such Zones 1 and 4 in Al Seef.

The physical nature of most of the informal public space allows for a high level of users' appropriation, control and to some extent the feeling of ownership. The fishermen's sheds are the most appropriate example that highlights those characteristics. Four fishermen's sheds are located within the two focus areas or so close to them that it was difficult to leave them out of this research. Three of those are located in Al Seef; two in Zone 4 - area 3 and one in Zone 1 - area 10. The fourth is located to the south of Bahri-II, right on Jufair Harbour. Other sheds were recorded in the villages of Karrana, Jannusan, Barbar and Jufair. The way those sheds were built reflects how the owners feel about the future of the place and also what they think or feel about the ownership of the place. In Barbar, Karrana and Jannusan, those sheds are not built on reclaimed land or on beaches that still 'belong to' the villages and are only used by the fishermen from those villages. Those are of a more permanent nature: the three are equipped with a

[1] Interview with a 42 year old Filipino man who was fishing - Al Seef, Zone 1 (4th December 2003)

separate toilet and one of them is completely enclosed and equipped with air-conditioning. The largest and oldest of the three was the one visited in Karrana.

However, the three sheds within the Al Seef focus area are of a makeshift nature: most of them are made of leftover materials; largely wood. They are equipped with electrical generators for lighting at night. The shed in Jufair harbour (area 33) is unique among the other sheds visited. It is a designed or pre-planned shed that has been built through collective planning and financing by its owners. It has a simple metal frame structure that is fitted on four heavy, but loose concrete slabs. The structure is encased by a membrane that could completely conceal it from all four sides as well as the roof. This is to adapt it to any weather conditions and wind direction as the fishermen use it all year long[1]. The U-shape bench and the central table are fixed to the ground but can be dismantled and removed if it was necessary to move the shed to somewhere else. The design reflects how the owners adapted to the situation in terms of ownership of the land, weather, privacy requirements and the public nature of the harbour.

Those sheds serve many purposes: in the first place they are used in a way similar to a social club. The users of the clubs are a group of people who have the same interests or job: a combination of professional fishermen and amateurs. What they have in common is that they all practise deep-sea fishing and most of them own speed boats that are anchored in nearby shallows. Besides the accommodation of social exchange, these sheds have been used as watching or security stations. In the absence of police and royal coast guard patrols, certain parts of the coast with these unregulated harbours were acting as playgrounds for thieves[2]. The fishermen opted to build those sheds and to have them manned nearly round the clock, to keep a watch over their boats and in some locations to protect the *hudhoor*[3]. This is not needed anymore, as there are frequent police and royal coastguard patrols. Such security precautions were unnecessary in the past when these anchor areas were right in front of the fishing villages or the eastern neighbourhoods of Manama, prior to the major land reclamations[4].

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[1] Interview with ten fishermen who were sitting in their shed - Jufair Harbour, Area 33 (28th November 2003)
[2] This was retrieved from many interviews.
[3] Interview with a group of twelve fishermen sitting in their shed on the coast of Karrana, (11th December 2003), interview with three fishermen from Al Deah and Karbabad sitting in their shed - Al Seef, Zone 4 (30th October 2003) and interview with ten fishermen sitting in their shed - Jufair Harbour, Area 33 (28th November 2003)
[4] Interview with three fishermen from Al Deah and Karbabad sitting in their shed - Al Seef, Zone 4

These sheds, or what could be called in different contexts, clubhouses, have parallels in Bahraini History; they are so similar to what used to be known as *el door*. Those similarities are in the nature of the users and the commonality of their social and income backgrounds and interests; *el door* were the gathering places of pearl divers, where they used to socialize together. The sheds are places for contemporary fishermen. Just as in the case of *el door*, the sheds are places for social gatherings and for the discussion of many topics, including political ones. These sheds could be visualised as the iconic expression of the public's ownership of the waterfront. Many of the users of those sheds interviewed in this study think of those waterfronts as their own or as a replacement for their lost coasts.

That type of appropriation causes conflict in many cases. For example, the users of Jufair beach were asked to vacate this location in more than one incident. They received several letters from the local municipality asking them to move away but they ignored them[1]. They felt that they had the right to be there, as they were deprived of their waterfront through the continuous reclamation on the eastern coast of Manama, and were simply tired of moving. None of the other fishermen in the study area were asked to move their sheds, although in late 2004 the shed in Al Seef, Zone 1 – area 10, was removed due to the closure of Al Seef bay.

Although fishing is a form of leisure and social exchange, it is also a form of economic employment on these waterfront open spaces. Fishing for many of these users is the only source of income before being a leisure activity[2]. That mix of leisure and business is in some cases or in certain locations a source of conflict. For example, in late 2003 only few speed boats were anchored in Zone 2 – area 8 in Al Seef. In late 2004 that beach was dominated by speed boats which had moved from Al Seef Harbour after its closure. The conflict here was between the fishermen and the other users of the beach such as the swimmers or surfers. For example in an interview which took place on a windy day with a group of Westerners who were kite-surfing in area 8, one of them stated:

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[1] Interview with ten fishermen who were sitting in their shed - Jufair Harbour, Area 33 (28th November 2003 & 20th October 2004)

[2] Interview with a 51 year old ex farm owner from Al Deah (18th April 2002), and interview with a community service participant from Al Deah village (11th December 2003)

> [...]we need a large place, clean beach with no rocks or debris or many boats as those...We like the windy days and the fishermen don't like it, they tend to avoid fishing on those days which we like. Sometimes the place gets filled with their boats[1]

This is not to say that the two (fishing and other activities on these open spaces) should not mix, but to stress that they should be regulated. This matter was discussed with nearly all the interviewed fishermen from these sheds, who expressed their willingness to pay for better-regulated facilities that do not obstruct the other uses of the place. One of the interviewed users of the Jufair Harbour shed said that he can conceive of a public park and a small fishing marina mixing together easily. He said that many visitors to Al Bahri come to watch them while they haul in their catch or while they are fixing their boats. He thinks it could become an attraction and add to the quality of the place[2]. Another Bahraini man who was fishing in Al Seef, Zone 1 – Area 10 went into the details of a small project which he had tried to establish. He wanted to set up a seaside fish farm that could be both used as a marina and for recreational onshore fishing. He stated that his project could easily be part of a larger public space[3].

However, the use of the informal spaces of Al Seef as a base for deep sea fishing faces two other problems. One of them is occasional but the other is scheduled to take place in the near future. Al Seef's informal spaces usually get closed off whenever there is a high profile meeting or conference in the Ritz-Carleton Hotel (area 5). This affects all types of uses of those spaces, including professional fishing. However, the biggest challenge for fishing in Al Seef comes from the overall tendency of the planning and security authorities in Bahrain; they were aiming to limit the number of fishing harbours particularly the informal ones[4]. Regardless of that tendency, the rate of development within the study area will eliminate those fishing harbours sooner than any master plans. In late 2004, Al Seef Harbour was shut as has been illustrated in Chapter 8. Jufair harbour is going to be next, as the reclamation around it is getting tighter.

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[1] Interview with a Belgian woman and two men, one from South Africa and another from Australia - Al Seef, Zone 2 (9th December 2003)
[2] Interview with ten fishermen who were sitting in their shed - Jufair Harbour, Area 33 (28th November 2003)
[3] Interview with two Bahraini men who were fishing - Al Seef, Zone 1 (2nd December 2003)
[4] Interview with a former urban planning senior official – Directorate of Physical Planning (December 2003).

9.5 Conclusion

This Chapter started out by illustrating history of Al Seef and how it was formed over the past three decades. Then it moved to reveal the physical attributes of the Al Seef waterfront. It brought out the main features of each one of the four zones and focused on their: 1- pedestrian and vehicular accessibility, 2- lighting, and 3- modes of access to the water. This part also highlighted the major physical transformations that took place over the fieldwork period. Along with the modes of access, the water-dependency of the waterside functions was also discussed. The physical and functional survey aimed to contextualize the social attributes of these spaces to achieve an overall illustration of the way informal public space is perceived and used in Bahrain. It also answers the question of what types of informal open space are being produced on the waterfronts of Manama under the current modes of urban growth and land reclamation processes.

The second part of this Chapter focused on the way Al Seef as an informal public space has been perceived and used. This part was subdivided into three sections following the themes of observing nature, social activities and leisure activities. It also highlighted an economic subtheme. The Chapter showed how those informal spaces are parallel to the historical urban or remote waterfronts. These parallels were drawn based on the level of functional and physical water-dependency and integration of these spaces. It also showed that their similarities are driven by the variety of modes of access to the water (on, see, touch) and the high level of user appropriation allowed.

The Chapter also highlighted that Al Seef is considered by many users as a place to observe nature, although it is not a green space. This was observed from users' behaviour in the space, focusing chiefly on their criteria in selecting a place to sit. It was also driven by their comments on the waterfront's microclimate: Al Seef's openness, fresh air and the presence of the sea were mentioned by the interviewees as factors attracting them to the place.

Al Seef was found to promote many leisure activities: the users of these open spaces read them, map them physically and socially and use them accordingly for their leisure and social activities. The Chapter showed how leisure in Al Seef comes in different forms and on many scales, varying from a single person strolling or taking a break in his car, to a large scale festival. These activities were found to cause few conflicts between users; they also created opportunities for social interaction. One of the strongest

promoters of leisure in Al Seef is its high level of vehicular accessibility and the varied modes of water accessibility. On top of this, its openness encourages users' appropriation of the space (i.e. erecting tents, building sheds, forming a semi-private space with cars, having a beach fire, or a barbeque).

The Chapter also discussed Al Seef as a place for social interaction, and attempted to link the fourfold criteria introduced in Chapters 6 and 7 (water-dependency, water integration, access, and land tenure) with the many forms of social interaction such a as exchange, conflict and control. In this part, also, users were generally profiled according to income, age, gender, ethnicity and group composition, to help in understanding the many factors involved in their social interaction. The Chapter showed how they manage to use the place with minimum of conflict by dividing it spatially and temporally. It also highlighted the important role the car plays in the way Al Seef is used.

The final part of this chapter highlighted how the different modes of access to the water in Al Seef promote many types of fishing. As a major observed activity, fishing was found to function in several ways: as a leisure activity, a form of observing nature and a major source of social exchange and conflict. Fishing and all its related activities (i.e. boat maintenance, fishermen gathering...etc.) are the triggers for users' appropriation of space within the public space.

Cahpter 10: Research Conclusions and Discussion

10.1 Introduction

This is the concluding chapter of this exploratory study of public space in Manama. Chapters 2 and 3 of this thesis introduced the theoretical and conceptual framework, and the tools of analysis that have assisted in examining the transformation processes of public space and its current condition both physically and socially. Chapters 5 to 9 portrayed how that transformation process has taken place on the waterfront of Manama. This Chapter, in its first section recapitulates the entire study by highlighting the initial research problem, the main aims and objectives, the research questions, the methodology followed and the findings for each part of the study. This is followed by the second section, which includes the conclusions reached. The Chapter then proceeds to discuss

the major findings of this research while linking them to some of the theories discussed earlier. Subsequently the Chapter moves into its fourth section to discuss how the results reached by this research could influence the policies that shape public space in terms of quantity and quality. The Chapter concludes with some recommendations for future research.

10.1.1 Research Problem

The waterfront as a phenomenon has been recognised since the 1960s after it was first incepted in North American cities. The spread of the phenomenon to the rest of the world has taken place in two types of urban space: 1- derelict and abandoned port or dockland (London, Rotterdam, New York), 2- reclaimed costal land (Tokyo, Dubai, Bahrain, Singapore). Regardless of the motives for the two spatial types, most of the resulting projects are used to facilitate and to accommodate demographic and economic growth. The waterfront became the place where the city recreates its identity to be used as part of city marketing and global inter-city competition. This approach is dominated mostly by architectural and iconic solutions. However, many of these projects brought some 'high quality' public spaces to the forefront of the waterfront; many others resulted in the privatisation of the waterfront.

In Manama, Bahrain the waterfront phenomenon takes a unique format. The city is expanding in a manner similar to the 'edge cities' of North America. But unlike these American cities, the urban growth of Manama is taking place on reclaimed lands from the water. The growth of the city keeps changing the city-water relationship and changing the nature of the public spaces entrapped between the two paradigms. Along this process some public spaces on the waterfront are being created both formally and informally. Others have ceased to exist. The pressure on existing public space comes from the fact that 90% of Bahrain's population lives around its coastal areas, 92% of the population is urban yet only 3 to 8% of Bahrain's coasts can be formally accessed by the general public. The rest is withheld under private ownership. Thus the urban growth process, the current land ownership situation in Bahrain, and the land reclamation process are affecting not only the nature of public space but also its availability. Another major assumption is that the current studies which are attempting to quantify public access to the water are short sighted, because they ignore the existence of many informal modes of access to the water.

Theoretically, public space in general and as part of the physical setting of the city, has been exhausted. Much research has explored, analysed and provided design guidelines to the different types of public space, that is, the street, the square, the park and so on, but few have targeted these as they appear on the waterfront although they exist in nearly every city and on many different scales. At the outset, this research found that there is a need for a special approach to public space that pays attention to the variety of its geographic settings and its special requirements.

There is also a special need to understand contemporary public space in Bahrain amid current socio-economic and demographic changes, as there is a sheer lack of research in this area. On the ground, some formal public space has been provided and many found spaces where claimed by the public. While the formal public spaces suffer from partial privatisation or transformation into other functions, many informal open spaces are diminishing rapidly. This investigation assumes that this situation limits the choice of public space in Manama and that it must exert immense pressure on the providers of formal public space to conserve it, to be creative in the forms of private investment within it, and to maximise its functional capacity.

10.1.2 Research Aims, Objectives and Main Question

Based on above-mentioned assumptions and the highlighted gaps in research, this study aims to help build a new understanding of the nature of the public space in Manama in particular and in other global locations to a limited extent. It attempts to emphasise that waterfront public space is a distinctive form of space different in nature to the hinterland type and should be approached sensitively in terms of provision, planning and design. It also attempts to highlight the importance of the complementary role which is played by informal public space. Another objective of this research is to trace the social process that produces public space using a set of analytical tools obtained from previous research and used collectively. Highlighting the importance of using those tools in such a holistic and multi-layered approach to the understanding, analysis and provision of public space is one of the objectives of this research.

To further deepen the understanding of such space, this research aims to draw a social image of its uses. To do so, it attempts to understand how it is used, perceived and in other cases conceived by users. Included within that, is an analysis of social friction and contestation between the different user groups.

All the above are linked to the main research question: how do the processes of urban growth and land reclamation affect the nature of the public space in Manama?

10.1.3 Research Methodology

The nature of this research is problem-centred and to a large extent case-related as the phenomenon is somehow unique to the city of Manama. The aims and questions of this research are of a **how** and **why** nature which has influenced the inquiry strategy and methodology. Being the first to handle both public space and the waterfront collectively within this specific geographic setting, this investigation had to employ a case study strategy with an overall qualitative approach. This enabled the researcher to utilise a large number of data collection, analysis and interpretation tools within the case study method. The investigation employed a sequential procedure to answer a set of sub-questions which subsequently led to the answers to the main research questions.

The data sources for this study are divided into three major sets based on the identified areas of this research. The first set of data was collected to help in understanding the historical transformation of Manama's waterfront. It involved an array of methods, such as archival research, casual interviews with senior citizens, pictorial analysis, and the study of old maps of Manama. This part aimed to: 1- trace the urban growth of Manama, 2- identify modes of land reclamation, 3- identify the types of the public space emerging through those two processes. And finally 4- narrate the social and economic life that takes place in the different types of spaces on the waterfront.

The second set of data was identified to answer questions about the current condition of the waterfront. It works on a macro scale and involves a site survey of the northern and north-eastern waterfronts of Manama city. This was to achieve a holistic view of the physical condition, land tenure, ownership status and accessibility of the waterfront in an attempt to link that view with the current condition of the public space. A set of tools was used in collecting and analysing the data relevant to this empirical strand of enquiry. These tools were adopted from previous research and were later adapted and used in this research in a collective manner. The results of this analysis were used in answering the following questions: 1- how do the urban growth and land reclamation processes affect the nature of the waterfront? 2- what types of public spaces are emerging on the waterfront and how is this related to the urban growth process? 3- how does the ownership status affect the availability of public space? 4- how do the different water-

dependency levels of the uses of the waterfront affect the nature of public space? 5- what patterns could be traced from the current modes of urban growth and land reclamation and how do these patterns affect the future of public space?

The final empirical part of this research concentrates on the physical and social attributes of public space. It works on a micro scale and focuses on two generic forms of public space: the formal and the informal. It starts with a physical survey of the two selected public spaces: Al Bahri and Al Seef waterfronts. The social environment within those two spaces was traced under two main themes: how it is perceived and how it is used. The two themes were always linked with the presence of water as a major influential part of the physical setting of these spaces. The two major tools which were used in data collection for this part of the empirical work are observation and casual interviews with the users. This data was used in answering the following questions: 1- who uses these spaces and why? 2- what is the effect of the physical condition of those spaces on their social environment? 3- what is the effect of the presence of water on the way those spaces are used and perceived and how is that related to the level of water accessibility? 4- what are the differences between the two types of space and do they play a complementary role in satisfying the need for public access to the water?

The empirical work was conducted through three field trips (in 2002, 2003 and 2004). Each one of those trips had a set of targets to achieve. The first was of an exploratory nature while the latter two were more focused. The data collected on those trips, supplemented with the data collected though the archival research, were analysed and written up using an inductive approach. A deductive approach was used in a limited way in the analysis of the data collected of the northern and eastern waterfronts of Manama.

A few challenges arose while conducting the empirical work. These varied between a lack of previous research about public space and the waterfront in Bahrain, and the denial of access to official reports. Approaching females in public or users who do not speak English or Arabic constituted another kind of problem. The slight political unrest in the Islands caused some of the interviewees to entertain suspicions about the researcher's intentions; and this could have affected their statements. The latter was exacerbated by the nature of the public space studied as it was considered at specific parts of the day as a place for seclusion and contemplation. Approaching users during this time was highly difficult.

10.2 Research Findings & Conclusions

The conclusions reached by this study cover many research and practical areas; they vary in geographical scale and the locations to which they are relevant (area, region, city, and country). Furthermore, the conclusions and recommendations vary according to the nature of the actors who could benefit from them (policy makers, urban planners, urban and landscape designers, municipal councils). However, this research highlighted fourteen main issues faced by public space. Many of these are challenges that threaten the physical existence of public space in its two generic forms, while causing damage to its social environment by leading to its stratification. These issues are:

1. Overall chronic land shortage in Bahrain, accompanied by an entrepreneurial style of urban governance (led to increased pressure for more land reclamation).
2. Lack of an overall planning policy for the waterfront (led to the current growth of private water-dependent projects and the subsequent reduction of public space).
3. Lack of long-term urban growth guidelines that govern the growth of Manama city and the absence of a holistic view of the multifaceted nature of waterfront accessibility (led to the seclusion of existing public space from the rest of the city and reduced its social, economic, and environmental roles on both the micro and the macro scales)
4. The growth of residential and work space on the waterfront (led to the creation of private waterfronts)
5. Wrong type of ministerial and municipal investment (led to the privatisation of formal public space)
6. Institutional overlap of authority, particularly on the issue of ownership of public space (led to slow or no action towards the improvement or protection of public space)
7. Absence of a proper municipal revenue generation policy (led to the encouragement of direct private investment within formal public space as a source of municipal revenue; also led to improper and mono-functional investment)
8. Lack of institutional coordination (resulted in a fragmented waterfront with large open spaces fenced off from the public. And direct damage to existing public space i.e. sewage pipeline running through a public beach).

9. Lack of riparian-rights legislation in Bahrain (led to continuous land reclamation and loss of indigenous/informal public space. It also led to the loss of the aesthetic value of the sea in many architectural projects and the inability to define a waterfront zone)
10. Lack of institutional understanding of the special nature of public space (led to water-independent public space which subsequently limited its functional capacity).
11. Lack of institutional understanding of the effect of the land reclamation process on the provision of informal public space (led to the rapid depletion of that type of spaces alongside an ever-exacerbated public demand for public space)
12. Absence of a clearly defined law that protects the public ownership of the waterfront (led to the current shortage in public space).
13. Overall misinterpretation of the currently available relevant laws that are apparently protective of public space on the waterfront (led to slow NGO and Parliamentary movement towards the protection of the public ownership of the waterfront while depending on the wrong legislative tools).
14. An institutional lack of awareness of the public's demographic nature, demands, behaviour, perception and aspirations for public space (led to the provision of functionally limited public space).

10.3 Discussion of the Research Findings

The genesis of this research started with the assumption that public space on the waterfront of Manama is both limited and diminishing. From that starting point a main research question emerged: how have the urban growth and land reclamation processes been affecting the public space of Manama both physically and socially. Many aims, objectives and sub-questions emerged at later stages to answer that main research question. The results reached could be categorised based on the area they cover; some relate to the question that asks: "**what is the phenomenon.**" The second group answers questions around: "**what is causing the phenomenon.**" And the third group answers questions relating to "**how is that phenomenon manifested**" both physically and socially.

10.3.1 The Special Nature of Public Open Space on the Urban Waterfront

Theoretically, this research tried to discover if there is a universal or a holistic theory that could be used in the understanding of the waterfront in general and public space specifically. Many relevant works were studied and found useful yet limited to certain geographic locations or cultures and/or to a limited area of the topic of the waterfront (i.e. economy, social, urban settings, and so on). Wrenn *et al* (1983) and Marshall (2001a, b, c, d, e, 2003) were found to be the most rigorous as they covered many aspects of the waterfront, yet they fell short of approaching the issue of public space. While benefiting from the work of previous authors, this research used many frameworks to cover smaller aspects of the topic of public space in a holistic way. What this research suggests is that in studying public space there are major topics that should be covered one way or another. Overall they should encompass the economic, social, physical, environmental and political attributes of that space. Nevertheless, this research suggests that any adopted method should be localized. For instance, many frameworks (i.e. Hoyle [1999a], Sairina & Kumpulainen [2006]) highlight the importance of public participation in the process of the waterfront development. This research supports the position of Sairina & Kumpulainen of approaching public participation with extreme caution. Assuming that members of the public always know what is best for them has proved to be a fallacy. This is not to say that public participation should be abolished all together, but it should be preceded by a public awareness programme. For example, this research found that many informants would actually inflict further damage to the waterfront if the matter was left in their hands; they would adhere to personal interest above all other considerations.

10.3.2 Changing Trends in Land Reclamation and Urban Growth

This research highlighted three types of reclamation which have taken place on the coast of Manama. To understand their effects on the availability of public space, this investigation showed how some of those reclaimed lands were used by members of the public as informal public space. It highlighted three factors that have played a role in allowing for informal public use of those spaces; 1- the overall accessibility of the reclaimed land; 2- the time gap between the reclamation and the construction of the project, and 3- the water-dependency level of that project. In the past many reclaimed

lands were left empty and accessible for long periods (some for more than twenty years, as in the case of Al Seef); this allowed for the creation of many informal public spaces. Nevertheless, many of the waterside projects were water-independent both functionally and in their physical arrangement. This allowed for more reclamation to take place between these projects and the water and allowed for the creation for newer informal public spaces. On top of that, most of the reclamations were either on a small scale or large scale tracts adjacent to the old shoreline.

These informal public spaces are highly versatile, allowing for many forms of social interaction, economic uses and access to nature; they also allow for the user's appropriation, which leads to a form of attachment with the space. Although none of these spaces are green they are considered to be places from which to access nature due to the high accessibility of the water. The users in many of those spaces can touch the water, swim in it or even go fishing. This investigation found out that heightened public feeling regarding the loss of the waterfront arises from changes in the three factors mentioned above. First of all, there is a construction boom on the island and many of the old informal public spaces are being built upon. This is accompanied by a change in the nature of the waterside projects: most of the new ones are water-related or water-dependent either functionally or in their physical arrangement. However, many of the new lands are reclaimed for specific projects. This reduces the time gap between reclamation and the beginning of the construction of the buildings for that project which limits the chances for informal public use of those spaces. There is also a rise in the number of reclamations in the 'island style'. These never allowed for public appropriation due to their difficult accessibility.

Adopting land reclamation as the main planning policy in providing the land needed in Bahrain is affecting public space in other ways too. One of them is the inability or the unwillingness to provide new public spaces. This is directly linked to the fact that the final reclamation line is not yet decided and there are no riparian rights in Bahrain! It also affects the quality of existing public space: one of the attractions of these spaces is the ability to see the horizon, but reclamation right in front of those open spaces by the use of the 'Island style' of reclamation turns the sea to a mere channel. This is exactly what has happened in KFC-I by creating Bahrain Bay, in KFC-II by creating the Reef Islands and in Al Bahri waterfront by creating the Dream Islands. This practice removes

a vital element from the way in which those spaces were experienced in the past. It also affects the visual accessibility of the water, limiting it to the immediate water only.

10.3.3 A Wider Perspective on Access and Accessibility

A major part of this research has focused on the accessibility of the waterfront. This is an attempt to arrive at a more holistic way of approaching this subject by first studying previous relevant research and then supplementing it with findings from the empirical strand of this study. The work of Carr *et al.* (1992) gave the major guidelines for structuring the accessibility of any space under the categories of: 1-Physical, 2-Visual, and 3-Symbolic. Then each one of these forms of access was explored and widened, besides examining the special issues regarding the accessibility of the waterfront. The work of Carr *et al.* was complemented with the work of Benn & Gaus (1983) who suggested other forms of access.

On the physical side, the research found that linking access with the geographical setting of the waterfront is important. The work of Wrenn *et al.* (1983) in conjunction with the work of (Alexander *et al.* 1977) helped in developing an understanding of the accessibility of the waterfront. Wrenn *et al.* suggest that cities on small peninsulas have the best opportunity to link their urban centres with the water, due to the short distance between the coastline and any part of the city. This is true of Manama, yet many other obstacles contribute to isolate the city from the waterfront. This is mainly linked to the street patterns of the city, as most of the major new roads are parallel to the waterfront. This is what Alexander *et al.* recommended against when seeking higher accessibility for the waterfront. However, old Manama, particularly the Suq area, had all of its streets perpendicular to the waterfront. Besides the environmental benefits, this physical arrangement helped in enhancing the physical and visual link of many parts of the city with the waterfront. It also maximized the waterfront area. The visual link with the water is currently maximized by all the high-rise buildings that are mushrooming on the waterfront. However, although this allows for a larger number of people to visually access the water from their work, living and leisure spaces, these buildings block the view of the water from the rest of the city.

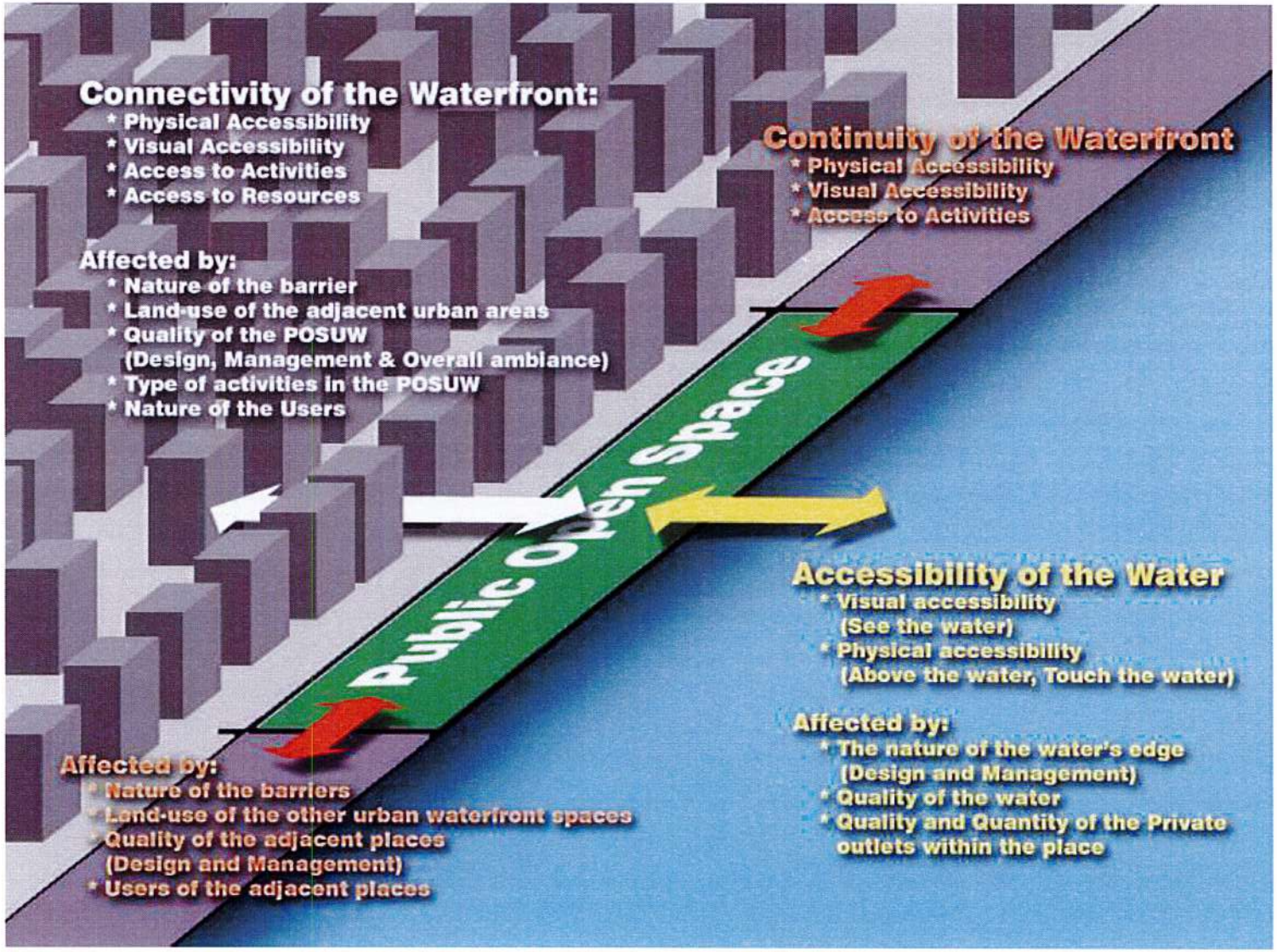


Figure 10.1: Accessibility of Public Open Space on the Urban Waterfront in a Wider Perspective

What further weakens the link between the urban core of Manama and the waterfront is the latter's discontinuity, in agreement with Bruttomesso's (2001) work. But Bruttomesso suggested functional as well as spatial continuity. What this research suggests is a functional diversity that is synergized by public space. This diversity is what Lynch (1984) called for when he commented on the quality of accessibility and stressed on the importance of the diversity of what we access. This position was reached after finding out how popular informal public space is in Manama, which shows that the public needs a variety of spaces that enable many forms of activity. However, the connectivity of these spaces should be approached with care, as many users use these public spaces to access nature and to seek a kind of isolation and partial privacy while outdoors. A high level of accessibility could remove that quality from these spaces. This is in light of one of the findings of this research, that many of the users of these spaces are there to see and to be seen. So far few places on the waterfront, although having a high level of vehicular accessibility, were found to promote that activity. Allowing higher levels of access could spread this activity and eliminate the others.

That leads us to the significance of managing the visual accessibility of these spaces and how crucial it is to understand the interplay between the different forms of access to make any space work. The effect of lighting, the effect of clarity of access and the effect of physical shelters and barriers and so on, all of these were found to play a role in deciding the type of activity and the nature of the users. However, this research found that access could also be hampered by certain user groups, in support of what was suggested by Low (2000), Jacob (1989) and Altman (1975, 1986). In Bahrain it was found that low income groups dominate formal public space. Nevertheless, certain age groups keep away from others and so on. Understanding this is important for the provision of a more inclusive space. Satisfying the needs of middle and higher income groups to access the water through such venues could reduce their demand for private space on the water. In contrast to Al Bahri, Al Seef was found to host a range of income groups; this could be linked to the large dimensions of the waterfront. The large size allowed for different income and age groups to use the space without interacting with each other.

On a smaller scale, this research found that different forms of access to the water played a role in the number of activities that can be performed in such a space. It also plays a role in deciding how 'nature' is accessed. Three major elements decide the nature of

that access; 1- the nature of the water's edge, 2- the quality of the water, 3- the nature of the body of water. The work of Campo (2002) in conjunction with the work of Hudson (1996) and Wrenn *et al.* (1983) gives a holistic guideline to understanding this particular aspect of the water's accessibility. On the waterfront of Manama, large parts of the Al Seef waterfront allow for 'touching the water': this supports many water-dependent activities and allow for better access to nature. In contrast to this, the Al Bahri waterfront does not allow for 'touching the water' which limits the users' experience of a 'waterfront' space. This situation led to a kind of disregard for the presence of the water. The weak link between the public space and the water led to a reduction in the users' attachment to the water in the formal public space, compared to their attachment in the informal spaces. This research concluded that formal public space in Bahrain, and this includes the newly-provided spaces, are water-independent, similar in nature to the hinterland walking parks. In the light of the fact that only 3% of Bahrain's coastline is public, is it affordable to furnish it with water-independent public space?

10.3.4 The Economic Value of Public Open Space on the Urban Waterfront

This investigation highlighted that the accessibility of the water and the availability of public space in Bahrain, as in the rest of the world, is facing competition from the sharp rise in the number of iconic buildings mushrooming on the waterfront. Entrepreneurial governance working on attracting volatile global capital is using architecture and urban design as tools of reimaging or reinventing the identity of Manama. This is also with the aim of competing with neighbouring Dubai in attracting foreign capital and tourists. As Madanipour (2003) and Dovey (2005) have suggested, global investors might neglect local needs or culture. The signs of this are already appearing on the waterfront of Manama. Many of those projects are not providing public access to the water, indeed most form gated communities. Some of the spaces provided are elitist in nature and fall under private control. They display all the symbols of denying public access and mostly members of the public do not know that they are permitted to access the water through them.

In compliance with what Harvey (1989) described, Bahrain suffers from an extreme case of 'entrepreneurial urban governance'. The Bahraini government directly invest in private projects. In their nature, most of those projects are on a large scale, many take place on the waterfront, most are taking place outside of the formal planning and

decision-making process, and nearly all of them are creating gated communities or privately controlled new areas. Hudson (1996) considered a lack of suitable land as a proper justification for land reclamation. In Bahrain, there is no lack of suitable land, on the contrary, the planning authorities have been keeping large areas of the island unplanned and out of the market. On the other hand the same authority has adopted a long term policy of land reclamation to satisfy the need for land on the Island. Justifying land reclamation might have worked in the past, as Izzard stated (1979), but currently most of the reclamations are designated for large scale projects that are partially owned by the government. The reclaimed land does not feed into the market in any way. How does that affect the availability and quality of public space? It does that in many ways: first of all the growth of the city towards the sea is pushing the water away from the old urban centres. Secondly, it is creating many private projects on the waterfront that are water-related or water-dependent: these are not accessed by members of the public and cannot be pushed away from the water to allow for new land to come between them and the water.

Regarding the economic uses of the waterfront, the research found that informal public space accommodates economic uses in the form of fishing and other uses that are of a temporary nature and can overlap with other leisure and social uses. Overall, those spaces are considered by many fishermen as replacements of their lost coasts. The conclusion reached shows that these activities can coexist with no or minimal conflicts. However, it also showed that mixing these activities enriches the overall social and cultural environment of these spaces. This is so similar to the atmosphere that has been described as prevailing on the coasts of the fishing villages. What is crucial to highlight here is that the scale and agency of economic activities on the waterfront plays a great role in their acceptance and their subsequent coexistence locally.

In formal public space economic activities comes in two basic forms, permanent as in shops and coffee shops and temporary, as in the form of street vendors. The effect of these activities on the social environment works in two ways: the street vendors work only on festival days, and mostly add a traditional touch to the place by selling traditional food. However, the coffee shops act as repellents to families and women and as a force of attraction on bachelor and teenage males. What is striking in here is the rising number of these coffee shops and their blockage of the sea view besides their tendency to expand over the adjacent green areas. Their low architectural quality has a

negative effect on the look of the whole locale. This works to downgrade public space and to keeps certain income groups away from it. The responsible municipality allows for this type of economic use of the waterfront in order to generate income from them by renting parts of the open space unaware that benefiting from the economic value of this public space could arise through many other sources and the approach they have taken is not the best way. Renting parts of the public space reduces its size and exerts immense pressure on the remaining open space. It leads to crowding of the remaining open spaces which could lead to higher friction between the users which by ultimately leads to the alienation of certain income groups from the public space.

10.3.5 Historical Continuity

Traditional forms of public space in Bahrain took many forms. As we have seen in this study, some of these public spaces were pure social spaces varying in their degrees of public-ness while others were meant to provide access to nature. One of the major findings of this research is that current informal public space has deeper links with traditional public space. Besides their accommodation of many water-dependent activities, these spaces were found to hold a unique quality: these informal spaces are capable of accommodating 'social space' that is linked to the water. This was found to be the only social link to the historical maritime culture of Manama. Furthermore, the research concluded that these spaces are the natural continuation of vernacular public space. They are used and perceived accordingly. On the other hand, formal public spaces are perceived as 'green' spaces that allow access to nature. However, this type of access to nature is different from the historical one due to the lack of access to the water and the crowdedness of these spaces. The severed links between the waterfront and the urban centres of Manama prevent them from being everyday spaces, which could limit their economic and social value.

Although physically separated from the rest of the city, this public space does not exist in isolation from the depleted condition of the hinterland public spaces of Manama. That depletion has exerted immense pressure on the public space on the urban waterfront. Due to that pressure, public space on the urban waterfront has been turned into arcade, theme park and festive park as the other parks were being privatised. This research does not see anything wrong with those extra facilities in the public space on the urban waterfront but when they become the only ones available in the absence of

water-dependent public space, this becomes a wasteful way of using the waterfront space.

10.4 Recommendations for Policy Makers, Planners and Urban Designers

The following are a few recommendations which this research is suggesting based on its findings and conclusions:

As discovered by this research, there is a limited chance of success for any waterfront development that accommodates public space without enacting laws that regulate and protect riparian rights and the public's rights to access the water. Thus this research strongly recommends the introduction of such laws in Bahrain in conjunction with the demarcation of a final land reclamation line. This is somewhat specific to the Bahraini case but could be generalised to countries that have not introduced those two laws yet.

The outcome of this research highlighted the social impact of land reclamation and the subsequent physical separation of some urban areas from the waterfront. As a tool to predict, address and accommodate any future social impacts of the above-mentioned two processes, it is recommended to carry out a social impact assessment for every large-scale waterfront project. This research recommends that a social impact assessment should be a compulsory exercise to be paid for by developers of the waterfronts and commissioned by the relevant governmental body. Its results should be submitted with every planning or building permission request for such projects.

To overcome the problem of institutional overlap, the research recommends that ownership, control and management of the waterfront should be gathered under one formal body that depends heavily on public consultation in matters such as the provision, design and management of public space.

Parallel to the introduction of the above-mentioned laws, this research recommends the introduction of a water-dependency approach in planning and zoning the waterfront to maximise the benefits of being on the waterfront. On the zoning codes level, it recommends a special code for leisure spaces that is separate from the services code, in order to improve the communication between different stakeholders. However, in order to be able to properly implement the planning laws and strategies on the waterfront, this

research recommends the introduction and demarcation of a waterfront zone in any city that has a waterfront.

When designing a waterfront park it is vital to maximize the accessibility of the water, particularly the physical and visual accessibility, in order to maximize the benefit of that unique location. The water accessibility model (touch, see and above the water) which was reintroduced by this research is recommended to be used in this regard. The link could promote many other sources of water-dependent investment within those formal waterfront parks (fishing, marina, and maintenance of boats, arrangement of trips in the water, water taxi and so on). Overall this could in time rebuild the lost maritime culture and help in rebuilding the city's identity through a bottom-up approach rather than following the widely adopted iconic and architectural solution.

Furthermore, the research recommends the introduction of a multi-layered approach to the issue of the water's accessibility, to be used as a basic principal in the design of public space. It should be understood and analysed on the following scales 1- accessibility of the waterfront space from the rest of the city (connectivity of the waterfront) 2- accessibility of the public space from other waterfront places (continuity of the waterfront) and 3- accessibility of the water (the design of the water's edge, the quality of the water, the quality of the adjacent submerged land). To improve the continuity of the waterfront and to maximise public access to it, this research also recommends and calls for a higher level of coordination between the different bodies on the waterfront. This could be formed through the creation of a designated formal body that is responsible for coordination, i.e. the waterfront task force or the waterfront committee. One of the specific and practical recommendations for Manama's waterfront is the integration of all the public buildings on the waterfront by demolishing the entire length of unnecessary boundary walls.

The research highlighted many physical and social qualities of informal public space which are recommended to be introduced in the future formal public space. Two of those qualities are a high level of user control and built-in adaptability of the spaces to accommodate demographic and cultural changes. The users' attachment to their cars and their insistence to be close to them should also be taken into consideration when designing future public space.

This research recommends that the local planning and security authorities in Bahrain protect the micro informal public spaces and move away from the tendency to reduce the fishing ports to only twelve in the whole country. Contrary to that, this research recommends improvement of the physical condition of all the existing fishing harbours and enhancing their links with the adjacent urban and settlement areas through the planning laws and land ownership reforms. Furthermore this research recommends the integration of the newly provided fishing harbours with public space.

This research nevertheless recognises the difficulty of introducing any new laws to any system. It has come up with a recommendation for two temporary solutions that are specific to the Bahraini case. The main essence of these recommendations is to increase public ownership of the waterfront while awaiting the introduction of the new planning laws. The first depends basically on the reclamation of more land directly in front of the privately owned waterfront. This is possible given the current lack of any riparian rights but would be difficult to implement due to the rising number of water-dependent projects in Manama and the important financial implications. What is available now is law 8/1970 regarding land seizure for the purpose of the public interest. This law, as may be understood from its title, could be used by any governmental body to gain ownership of any land, even a beach or submerged land, for the purpose of the public interest. The flexibility of this law, where public interest is not defined, could be used in resuming ownership of any private waterfront land. This is also a costly solution but could help in providing public space or access to the water through undeveloped land.

10.5 Research's Main Contribution to Knowledge

This research is the first of its kind that addresses public open space in relation to land reclamation from the sea. It is also the first that discusses public open space on the waterfront in the context of Bahrain. The research analyses the two paradigms of public space and the waterfront together, but in the Bahraini context, under a particular condition, that of continuous land reclamation from the sea. This research reintroduced land reclamation from a new angle and raised and answered many questions related to it in terms of water accessibility and riparian rights. It also portrayed a deeper understanding of the process on both a long and a short term basis. It showed how land reclamation could be part of an economic system that steers a planning regime into ignoring the rights of the public to better access, in favour of financial gain. It showed

the long term effects of such policy on the quantity and quality of public open space on the waterfront.

Furthermore, this research studied the relationship between the city and the newly created land in an attempt to understand the created waterfront and the forms of public open space on it. Only by tracing those links through space and time could a full appreciation be gained of the effect of land reclamation on the city in general and on the waterfront in particular.

This research, additionally, highlighted how the waterfront in the case of Bahrain, or any similar situation, could be central, marginal, ephemeral, formal or informal public space. On this front, this research emphasized the importance of the marginal and ephemeral spaces on the waterfront when land reclamation is an adopted planning policy and the sea is treated as undeveloped land. It showed how people react to such conditions. It also showed how by understanding the physical and social attributes of those spaces and by introducing instrumental modifications to them and to planning and economic approaches, they could become more important as social and leisure spaces, even under the overall land reclamation policy. These changes could also enhance their complementarity with formal public open spaces on the waterfront, by providing an alternative way to experience the waterfront.

10.6 Recommended Further Research Areas

1. Water-related public open space, both contemporary and historical. On both global and regional scales (the Gulf).
2. Typology of public open space in Bahrain and the Gulf, both contemporary and historical
3. The transformation of social space in Bahrain
4. Informal marginal public open space in the Gulf
5. The nature of public open space in the Islamic city in response to the scale of the city (large, medium and small)
6. Port-city relationship in the context of the Gulf
7. The waterfront phenomenon in the Gulf region
8. The waterfront in the Islamic city

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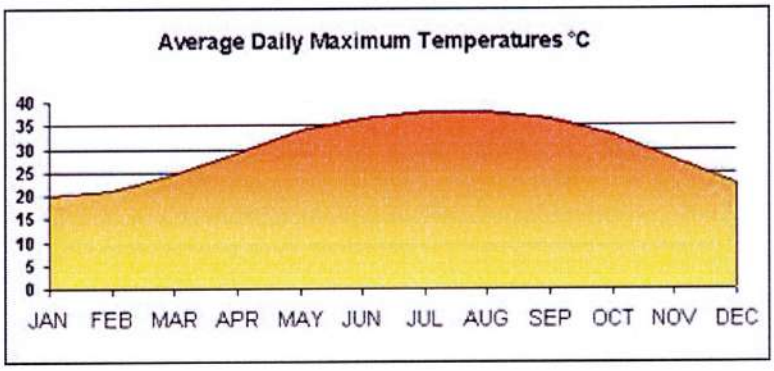
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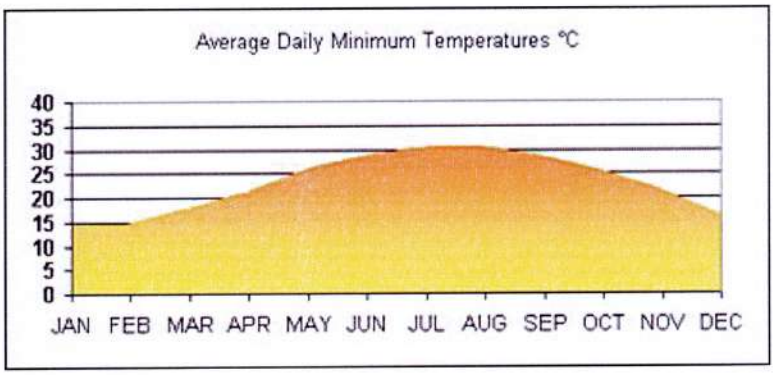
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Appendices
Appendix I: Characteristics of Bahrain's Climate

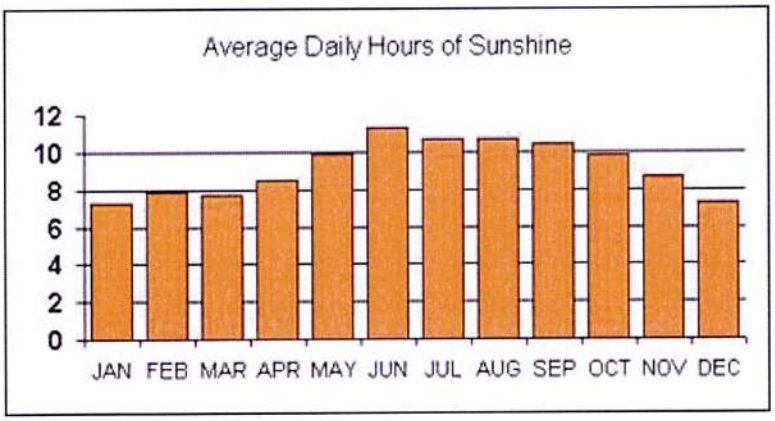
1. Average Daily Maximum Temperature



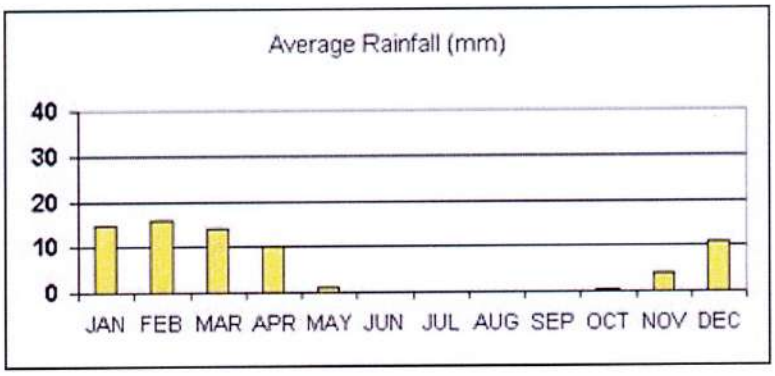
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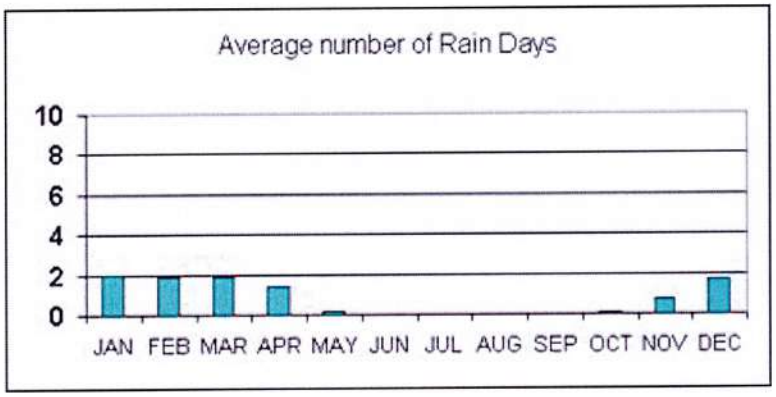
3. Average Daily Hours of Sunshine



4. Average Total Precipitation



5. Average Number of Rain Days



Appendix II: Al Saha and Al Baraha in Bahrain

The researcher opted to use the term *saha* to refer to the open space that is on the fringes of the town, based on the terminology used by some of the interviewees. However, *seef* is the specific term used to name the *saha* that is between the town and the sea, depending on its width[1]. Here, two types, the coastal and the non-coastal, are discussed. This is to bring to light the differences between the *saha* and *baraha* within a Bahraini context and subsequently to introduce the *saha* as a type of public open space that is required and used in Bahrain. *Al Baraha* and *Al Saha* are two of the most common types of public space in Bahraini cities. While Al Baraha was a focus of the research, Al Saha was somehow neglected. There is a common misconception of the Baraha in Bahrain and the Gulf: it is held to be not only the ideal traditional/vernacular public space in Bahrain, but the only type of Bahrain public space. Yet, strictly speaking, Al Baraha is a semi-public space, located in neighbourhoods inhabited by a clan or tribe. Al Baraha has parallels in western cities, in what Kostof has named 'the clan piazza' (Kostof 1992: 125). These are described by Kostof as family squares surrounded by the clan's property. "The stronger the clan's grip on the city, the less likely it was that there would be a proper central piazza". Kostof used Genoa as an example of city that remained without a large public space till 1460. He also showed how when the public wanted public buildings or open squares they would build them in open spaces away from these clan neighbourhoods (in undeveloped land, gardens, vineyards, even woods). Manama and the city of Muharraq were built following the same clan or tribal structure. The cities' neighbourhoods are named after particular tribes/clans or guilds. The real public spaces, although unplanned, were either external to the city or in open spaces between these family neighbourhoods. Those spaces are called *saha* (sing) or *sahat* (plu). And as with the city of Genoa, the growth of the public sector and the formation of a bureaucratic system in Manama, which started in the 1920s, took place on open spaces (*sahat*), palm groves (*nakhal*) and waterfronts (*seef*).

Hakim (1986: p. 61) has reported that *saha* in Arabic terminology used by the locals in Tunisia refers to a public square or a public place that is usually formed at a Y-junction of three primary streets. These *sahat* are within the urban fabric of the city and usually used as a multi-purpose space. From Hakim's description of the *saha* in North African Islamic, contexts, *saha* is the equivalent of the square in the European medieval city. He

[1] Some further research is needed to determine what distinguishes *assā'ha* from *asseef* in terms of the width of the space.

goes on to describe other spaces as part of the urban morphology of the Arab-Islamic city. Two of those are outside the city walls: one is used occasionally (the *mussalla*, prayer area) and another regularly (the *Magbara*, public cemetery). In Bahrain, *saha* is an open space that is larger than the *baraha*. Yet it could be a space that is either located within the city's urban fabric or on its fringes. The medium scale of Bahraini towns and cities rendered those spaces important particularly in the two densest cities, Manama and Muharraq. The medium scale allowed city dwellers to reach those public open spaces with relative ease (as they were less than 2km from the centre of the town)[1]. The open spaces around the old Bahraini cities had similar characteristics to those of Old Tunis, where those spaces accommodated public cemeteries (in Bahrain, these were located to the north of old Muharraq, south west of Manama and southeast of West Riffa). Nevertheless, the old *musalla* of East Riffa is on the western fringes of the city. There are other parallels with the *saha* in other Islamic cities and towns, used for many different purposes, such as the open spaces used for playing *Chougân* in historic Persian cities. Al *Saha* in the case of Bahrain is similar to open fields and woods in a western context: they attract users from different age groups and for many different purposes.

These parallels do not explain the fundamental nature of this type of space nor why it does not appear in the records. Akbar (1988: p. 7) stated that in the literature relevant to understanding the traditional form of the Arab-Islamic city, the focus is usually on the product rather than the societal process. Conversely, the researcher found that the bulk of the historical record on the socio-political environment in Bahrain focuses on the event and overlooks the locale. Thus, on the one hand there is a focus on the physical attributes of the built form that ignores its societal processes and on the other hand we have a chronology of placeless events. With an absence of the physical remainders that could demarcate these *sahat* and the lack of any references to them in the record of the events which took place in them, the *saha*, as part of the urban morphology of the old town, have been lost. Only the *magbara* and the *mussalla* continued to exist, due to their physical remains.

There is a third factor which could have assisted in the negligence of this type of open space: most of the research relevant to the morphology of the Arab Islamic city focuses on large-scale cities, such as Baghdad or Cairo, or on small-scale settlements. In both

[1] This is based on two informal interviews with five residents of the city West Riffa and three others, two from Manama and one from Muharraq (15th April 2002).

cases, *saha* as a space type has less importance, due to the scale of the settlement. In the large-scale city, the focus is usually on the spaces that are accessed by most of the city-dwellers on a daily basis. This is not applicable to the *saha*. The same could be said about villages, where we find mostly one or two public open spaces in heart of the village which are accessible to all village dwellers. These are usually large enough to accommodate most collective activities. The latter defies the need for marginal *saha*. However, in medium-scale cities, such Manama and Muharraq in Bahrain, the situation is different and the hierarchy, if there was one, of public open spaces, is not the same. Going back to the example of Tunis, we find from Hakim's diagram (1986: pp. 68-9) that there are some *sahat* on the fringes of the city but still within the city walls. The origins of this could have been a marginal *saha* that turned over time into a square, with shops serving both locals and others from outside the city.

However, the *saha* has a very transitory nature in the Bahraini context: due to its open and almost unmarked physicality, *saha* is the first victim of the city's urban expansion. In the city of Muharraq, the origin of the city is recorded as being in the middle of the island, which means that the nuclear centre was originally surrounded by *sahat* separating it from the sea. The expansion of the town forced its dwellers to look for other locations for *sahat*, whether to accommodate their everyday industrial, social and cultural activities or just the occasional ones. From C. Belgrave's account of a wedding party in Muharraq in the late 1920s, it is possible to gather how those *sahat* might be used:

> We crossed to Muharraq in a launch and drove out to the plain behind the town where a crowd of people were assembled to watch the riding and dancing [...] The men of the family and their retainers were dressed in their most colourful robes, some wearing long undercoats of vermilion, green and scarlet, with white or coloured headcloths and brown or black cloaks. They carried swords and daggers, long flintlock Arab guns and sometimes spears. The horsemen, led by one of the senior members of the family, first cantered and then galloped up and down the course, flourishing their weapons and uttering shrill shouts. Most of them rode bareback, but a few of them had heavy Arab Saddles with gaily embroidered saddle-cloths decorated with coloured tassels; some of the best riders performed tricks as they rode, displaying skills and horsemanship. We walked over to another part of the plain to watch the dancing. There were two long lines of men, every man carrying a gun or sword; the lines of men advanced and retired with short shuffling steps, chanting as they moved [...] (C Belgrave 1960: p. 57)

The back of the town which C. Belgrave mentioned above, can be to the north or the east of the town where the residential quarters are mainly located away from the suq.

However, being located in a peninsula and surrounded by the sea from the east, south and west, Muharraq's dwellers located their large public cemetery to the north of the old town and immediately on the edge of what Waly (1990: p. 74) named the 'Tribal Muharraq'. The open spaces to the north could have been used for other recreational activities but there is no record of this. What is apparent is that the city needed large tracts to accommodate new building types, such as schools (Al Hida'yeh Al Khalifi'yeh, first school in Bahrain, built in 1919) and sports clubs (Bahrain Sports Club). When the island became completely built up and there was no longer any space for a *saha* the people of Muharraq used the new vast tracts provided by the land reclamation of the 1970s[1]. *Al Dafnah*[2] became the new ground for the *saha*. This is the account of one the users of *Al Dafnah*:

> We used to play in there [Al Dafneh] even at night time during Ramadan...many games, day-time one is football, there were few good *sahat* for football...at night time we had many other games... I personally used to chase stray dogs...there was a homeless crazy guy, dark skinned one, who used to scare us, he had a kind of hut in Al Dafneh, I think he used to live in it...it was hard for us to play anywhere else, Al barayeh and the streets and the alleyways of the *fereej* [neighbourhood] are full of parked cars but were nice for hide and seek[3]

Furthermore, the citizens of the city of West Riffa (south of Manama) used to benefit from many open spaces around the town and within the town; the spaces around the town included a *magbarah*, a water spring that used to be frequented by the town dwellers for fresh water, even after most of the town's houses were connected to the water network, and many open fields were used for a variety of activities but basically for recreation. Two of the interviewees from Riffa stated that they used to walk about two kilometres to reach these football grounds[4]. The author himself used to do the same in the late 1970s. Unlike Manama and Muharraq and due to a combination of physical barriers, land ownership and political issues, those grounds were saved: both West and East Riffa grew in other directions but not down to the valley where the *sahat* are. The whole place currently represents the recreational destination of the dwellers of the two cities. However, the *sahat* in the towns had a different fate. As in any other town, those

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[1] This is based on two informal interviews with five residents of the city West Riffa and three others, two from Manama and one from Muharraq (April 2002). And an interview with an architect who used to be a resident of old Muharraq (18th November 2004).

[2] *Al Dafneh* in the local dialect refers to the reclaimed areas.

[3] Interview with Ali, a 36 year old man originally from Al Halah, Muharraq (15th April 2002).

[4] Interview with five middle aged men from the city of West Riffa (April 2002).

spaces are usually private property so they are eventually developed, but sometimes they fall victim to a basic misconception of their nature on the part of the authorities. The following is an anecdotal example of this:

> In West Riffa the competition for a good place to play football inside the town was high[1]. In the middle of the town, right in between what was known as *shemal* (North) and *yenoob* (South), the two divisions of the town, was the best football field. And due to that location no certain user group was able to maintain full control on it. The disagreements between the teenage groups on who should play there were usually settled through football matches between the rival groups; the *shemal* and *yenoob*. The feuds and the intensity of the matches led to name that football field *Sahat Elderby* (The Derby Field). In the early 1980s the municipality of West Riffa (it does not exist now) decided to build on the popularity of that space and formalise its public-ness. The municipality decided to place a local park in the place of the football field. The place was turned into a green oasis in few months. However, the park did not gain any popularity and was empty all the time. None of those user groups came back and *sahat elderby* turned into a memory.

Manama had similar *sahat* to the south of the city; many of them were used in both formal and informal ways. Two of the most famous are the *saha* to the northwest of Gudaibiya Palace and the one which used to be to the west of the Guest Palace. Both were used for police parades on national occasions. Another *saha* is next to Manama Fort, or what was named later the Police Fort. One of the records of the official uses of that *saha* comes from C. Belgrave's (1960) description an event in 1937:

> The King [Abdulaziz Bin Saud, of Saudi Arabia] was present at the Torchlight Tattoo which I had arranged. It was a novel form of entertainment in Bahrain and as few people had seen such a spectacle it made a great impression on the vast audience which witnessed it. The performers were the police, the town watchmen and several hundred schoolboys. The show was held on the open ground in front of the Manama fort and for the occasion we had raised seats two or three tiers high.

While the *sahat* between the urban areas of Manama vanished quickly and long ago, the memoir of C. Belgrave may give some impression the mentality of the planning authority during the 1930s and up to the 1950s. C. Belgrave himself was behind turning many of those *sahat* into formal local parks, particularly the ones along major roads such as the ones on Shk. Isa Al Kabeer Road (originally named Belgrave's Road).

[1] This is from the authors' personal experience and an interview with five middle aged men from the city of West Riffa (April 2002).

While Manama expanded to fill up these open spaces, substitutes have always arisen. These substitutes were always informal ones, such as the informal use of the newly reclaimed land on the waterfronts of Al Hoora, then Jufair and currently Al Seef. The planning systems that followed in the 1960s and 1970s allowed the dwellers of Manama better access to the newly opened-up areas. This can be traced from Izzard's description of Manama:

> Like all towns in the process of redevelopment, there are empty spaces and irritating distances. Roundabouts, corniches, traffic islands, one-way systems, all the devices of the town planner are here installed, in preparation for the day when dusty open spaces, dying palm trees, decayed mud houses and shanty towns made of palm branches and packing cases be integrated into one composite urban entity. (1979: pp 95-6)

But what can be noted in here is the gradual withdrawal of the official usage of these open spaces.

Currently, there are many examples of *sahat* that are still in use. But, as argued in Chapters 5 & 6, they face severe challenges for many reasons, particularly those on the waterfront. Nevertheless, since the new system of municipal organization was introduced in Bahrain in 2002, nearly all the Municipal Councils of the five provinces of Bahrain either planned or initiated what they termed *sahat sha'abiyah*[1]. This is a promising tendency but it should be based on both a deep understanding of the nature of the *saha* in Bahraini culture, and a careful reading of the needs of contemporary Bahraini society.

[1] Communal public open spaces that are not in the form of parks or squares: they are basically multipurpose open spaces.

Appendix III: Lists of Interviews

List 1: Casual Interviews Conducted in Al Seef and Al Bahri Waterfronts during Second & Third Field Trips

Interview No.	Date	Location / area concerned	Zone	# of interviewees	Sex	Age/s	Type of Activity	Taped	Nationality / Ethnicity
1	18 April 2002	Al Deah		1	M	51	Fixing his car	No	Bahraini
2	20 April 2002	Al Deah		2	M	13 & 15	Playing football on the northern open spaces near Al Seef	No	Bahraini
3	28 October 2003	Seef	1	3	M	21, 21, 19	Fishing	Yes	Bahraini
4	30 October 2003	Seef	4	3	M	30s & late 40s	Fishing	Yes	Bahraini
5	4 November 2003	Seef	2	8	M	Teenage to early 20s	Picnicking (later smoking *Shisha*)	Yes	Bahraini
6	6 November 2003	Seef	3	10	M	Teenage to early 20s	Barbecuing	Yes	Bahraini – mixed ethnicities
7	7 November 2003	Seef	2	2	M	Mid 20s	Washing his car	No	Bahraini
8	17 November 2003	Seef	1	3	M	15 to 19	Sitting in their car watching the area	No	Bahraini – mixed ethnicities
9	17 November 2003	Seef	1	5	M	21 to 35	Sitting in two cars parked near each other	Yes	Bahraini
10	17 November 2003	Bahri	2	1	M	34	Sitting	No	Sudani
11	18 November 2003	Bahri	1	2	M & F	Early 50s & late 40s	Exercising	No	Indian
12	18 November 2003	Bahri	1	3	M	30s	Working	No	Bahraini
13	27 November 2003	Bahri	1	6	M & F	49, 53, 54, 36, F28	Sitting	No	Pakistani
14	27 November 2003	Bahri	1	3	M	Early 20s	Walking through	No	Omani
15	28 November 2003	Bahri	2	10	M	Late 30s to Early 40s	Coming back from fishing trip and passive sitting in fishermen's hut	Yes	Bahraini
16	2 December 2003	Seef	1	1	M	Early teenage	Fishing	Yes	Bahraini
17	2 December 2003	Seef	1	2	M	Early 40s & Mid 50s	Fishing	Yes	Bahraini
18	2 December 2003	Seef	2	2	F	Middle aged mothers	Watching over their kids swimming in the sea	No	American
19	3 December 2003	Qalali		1	M	Early 50s	Work in his office	No	Bahraini
20	4 December 2003	Seef	1	1	M	Early 40s	Fishing	No	Filipino

21	4 December 2003	Seef	1	1	M	Mid 50s	Walking the dog	No	Welsh
22	4 December 2003	Bahri	1	7	M	Mid 20s to Early 50s	Lunch break picnic	Yes	Bahraini – mixed ethnicities
23	4 December 2003	Bahri	2	1	M	Early 50s	Working	No	Bangladeshi
24	9 December 2003	Bahri	2	6	M	Late teens	Playing football	Yes	Bahraini – mixed ethnicities
25	9 December 2003	Seef	2	1	M	40s	Watching over his children	No	Egyptian
26	9 December 2003	Seef	2	3	Mixed	Late 20s to Early 30s	Kite surfing	No	Belgian, South African, Australian
27	10 December 2003	Seef	2	2	M	Late 20s to Early 30s	Model car racing	No	Bahraini
28	10 December 2003	Bahri	2	1	M	30s	Jogging	No	German
29	10 December 2003	Seef		2	F	Mother 40s, daughter 19	Watching over the children, pool area, Ritz-Carleton Hotel	No	Bahraini
30	10 December 2003	Seef		2	M & F	Early 40s	Sitting in the main coffee shop of the Ritz-Carleton Hotel	No	Bahraini
31	11 December 2003	Karrana		15, only 5 actively engaged in interview	M	18 to 65 years old	Passive sitting in fishermen's hut	Yes	Bahraini
32	15 December 2003	Al Sawani Coffee shop		3	M	Mid 30s	Smoking *shisha*	No	Bahraini – mixed ethnicities
33	16 December 2003	Seef		2	M & F	55,45	Watching fireworks from the Ritz-Carleton Hotel	No	Bahraini
34	20 October 2004	Juffair Beach		5	M	Mixed ages but all above 30	Sitting in their own shed, main activity fishing	Yes	Bahraini
35	20 October 2004	Al Deah		1	M	Late 60s	Arranged interview in his house	No	Bahraini
36	23 October 2004	Seef	1	1	M	Early 40s	Fishing	No	Bahraini
37	23 October 2004	Seef	2	1	M	32	Jogging	No	Bahraini
38	1 November 2004	Al Hoora		1	M	Mid 20s	Managing one of the residential buildings (Sea Star)	No	Indian
39	4 November 2004	Bahri	1	2	M	30+	Smoking *shisha*	No	Bahraini
40	15 November 2004	Seef	2	3	M	Early 20s	Sitting	Yes	Bahraini

List 2: Semi-structured Interviews with Officials and Other Informants

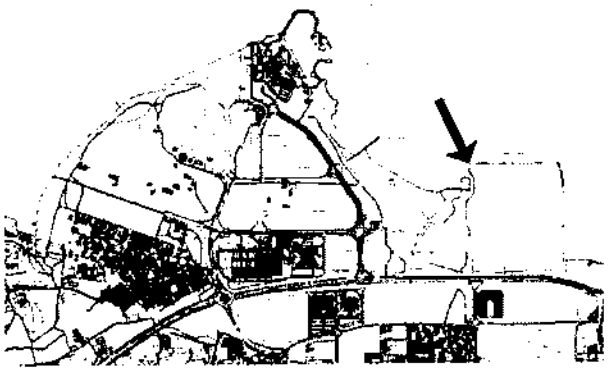
No.	Name	Organisation	Date
1	Owner & Manager	Fully furnished serviced flats building - Short stay lets	19 November 2003
2	Property Manager	Fully furnished serviced flats building - Short stay lets	19 November 2003
3	Real Estate Manager – Former Senior official	Investment Group Private Sector – Formerly in Ministry of Works	03 December 2003
4	Urban Planning senior official - 1	Directorate of Physical Planning – Ministry of Municipalities and Agriculture Affairs	03 December 2003
5	Community Service Participant	Al Deah Charity Fund	11 December 2003
6	Former Urban Planning senior official	Directorate of Physical Planning – Ministry of Municipalities and Agriculture Affairs	13 December 2003
7	Environmental Consultant -Managing Director	Environmental Consultant – Private Sector	15 December 2003
8	Urban Planning senior official - 2	Central Planning Unit - Ministry of Works & Housing	20 December 2003
9	Site Engineer 1 - Site Engineer 2	Manama Municipality	20 December 2003
10	Entrepreneur	Owner of Leisure Establishment – Bahri Park	20 October 2004
11	Senior Landscape Architect	Department of Parks & Gardens – Northern Area Municipality	24 October 2004
12	Architect – Urban Planner	Directorate of Physical Planning - Ministry of Municipalities and Agriculture Affairs	26 October 2004
13	Senior Architect	Investment & Property - General Directorate of Common Municipal Services	03 November 2004
14	Senior Financial Officer	Finance Affairs – Manama Municipality	04 – 08 November 2004
15	Architect – Urban Designer	Directorate of Physical Planning – Ministry of Municipalities and Agriculture Affairs	05 November 2004
16	Financial Officer	Ministry of Municipalities and Agriculture Affairs	08 November 2004
17	Architect – Managing Director	Private Architectural Consultant - Class A	18 November 2004

Appendix IV: Interview Sample

Location: Al Seef, as indicated on map
Zone: I
G. Date: 2-12-03
H. Date: 8-10-1424
Visit Time: Started at 4:20pm
Duration: 4 hours approximately

Tape No.: 4
Tape side: Side A
Number of interviews conducted: 2
No. of Interviewees: 3 (2 & 1)
Day: Tuesday

Weather conditions: not so humid but hot in the non-shaded areas
Temperature: 28°c
Humidity: 48%



Interviewee A:

Name: Ali
Age: late 30s or early 40s
Nationality/Ethnicity/Belief: Bahraini, Muslim-Shia
Education: Bachelor's Degree in Mechanical Engineering from a local university
Work: Superintendent in Aluminium factory, previously worked at a petrochemical factory for 11 years
Marital Status: Married with five children

Interviewee B:

Name: Hassan
Age: 60+
Nationality/Ethnicity/Belief: Bahraini, Muslim-Shia
Education: No form of formal education
Work: Driver in a cleaning company
Marital Status: Married with seven children

The two men were sitting on the random rubble near the water, engaged in fishing. After the author had introduced, himself he asked the two interviewees about the nature of their activity in the place.

Ali: We are fishermen (Haddagah حدّاگه) all the time in general; in the day we don't go out to sea in our boats, but we spend our time on the seashore.

Author: So you have a speed-boat moored in this area?
Ali: I have one in Sittra.

Author: Whereabouts?

Hassan: In the Fishermen's Harbour (Bandar El Sayadeen).

Author: Do you pay any municipal fees to use the harbour or to moor your boat in the jetty area?

Both interviewees: No, it is free.

Hassan: But the problem there is in going back to the harbour: if you go back before 7pm it is ok but after 7 the coast guards don't let you in, you'll have to stay out in the open sea till the morning. What if I don't want to stay till the morning? I want to go back home, I have work the next day. They don't let us in!

Author: I thought this rule was abolished.

Hassan: No it is still in use.

Author: Only in Sitra?

Both interviewees: Yes.

Author: What about the other harbours?

Ali: No it is not applied anywhere else.

Author: So you come to this place when you don't have the chance to go Sittra for your boat.

Ali: Yes when we don't have the time or we are just coming out of work we come here; I just left work and to come here directly.

Author: When did you start coming to this place?

Ali: Approximately since it was reclaimed.

Hassan: Almost three years ago.

Author: What type of fish do you catch here?

Ali: That's not important for us, whatever we catch is ok and sometimes we catch nothing, we don't eat most of what we fish (followed by laughter).

Author: Don't you eat fish?

Ali: We do but we don't like the kind and quality of the fish in this area.

Hassan: Fish is the best food for me.

Author: What do you catch here?

Hassan: Gargufan, Shu'om, Fad'ha and sometimes Yanam.

Author: Do you use that beach (pointing to zone 2 and 3)?

Hassan: We used to fish there three years ago but we don't use it any more.

Ali: We don't usually go there, it does not suit us.

Author: But I have seen so many families using the place, it looks fine to me.

Ali: Many families use that place but many mischievous people use it too; they even come to this place.

Author: But I heard that more mischievous people come to this place than that one.

Ali: We have nothing to do with them, each of us minds his own business.

Hassan: Yes, we have nothing to do with them.

Author: What kind of mischievous things happen in here?

Ali: Between brackets?

Author: Feel free to say anything please.

Ali: It is mostly alcohol-related things, usually groups of men or young men have a kind of camp in here, temporary camp or you could say a picnic.

Author: How long do they stay here?

Ali: For 2 to 3 hours, they bring their cars and park them in a special way, and they have a barbeque accompanied with drinks, they spend their time doing that.

Author: Is that all, is it limited to alcohol?

Ali: Are you asking about drugs?

Author: Have you noticed that too?

Hassan: We have no idea.

Ali: We don't go near them.

Author: What about sex related issues?

Ali: This is a common thing here, whoever has a girl and does not have a place to go comes here.

Hassan: We don't have any business with those too.

Author: Is that boy (a teenager fishing few metres away from where the interview was taking place) with you guys?

Ali: No.

Hassan: We always see him here, this is the second time.

Author: Do you come to here on specific days or times?

Ali: No we don't have specific times; sometimes we come at dawn and sometimes in the afternoon or around dusk.

Author: Is this dependent on your free time?

Hassan: Yes.

Ali: It depends on our mood. Sometimes one can have a bad day at work or even at home, doing this (fishing) even if we don't catch anything, can wash away all those distresses, there is something unique about the sea breeze, it can have that refreshing power.

Author: Are your visits to the place affected by the different seasons?

Ali: No, we come here any time; we don't care whether it is summer or winter and we don't care if we catch something or nothing.

Hassan: We try to avoid boredom.

Ali: In other words we kill time here.

Author: Don't you think that fishing is a good hobby?

Ali: It is but (he diverted the attention to his fishing line and said)...come on let us start something.

Author: Is there any sign?

Hassan: Yes but all are small…today all the fish are small.

Ali: See (and he showed the author the bucket where they keep their catch; there were small fishes in it).

Ali: No Hassan, look there are big fishes today (pointing to somewhere in the water).

Author: Do you think that this hobby or this place in general could be improved?
Ali: For everyone?

Author: Yes, sure.

Ali: Well...in Bahrain, all around Bahrain without any exception....except maybe Zallaq, there are no places designated for the citizens, no place for people like us, who like fishing and the sea in general. There are no places that are organised or ordered. This makes the people reluctant to come to the seaside. This could be a big source of income if someone starts to invest in it in the right way.

Author: Do you have any idea how this could happen?

Ali: In the simplest ways, ok, I was involved in the project, it was part of the government's small industries programme, I am one of the people who started it and was willing to make a semi-artificial tank, that is by fencing an area on the seaside to keep a jetty or a harbour for the fishermen and charge a small entrance fee to compensate for the value or cost of the harbour. By fencing off part of the water, it could become a fish farm. By doing that I was going to benefit from both sides. So it is going to increase the fish stock in our area and at the same time it is going to become a source of income.

Ali: In this area, if someone decided to provide a single jetty or a harbour you'll find the people fighting for a place on it, but there is no one interested in doing that, most of the investors are after a fast profit.

Author: And if someone did provide a jetty here...(Ali interrupted)

Ali: Under one condition, no more reclamation. We don't have any law to protect the seashores, it does not exist.

Hassan: And the people are not informed. While sitting here you just see a car coming and dumping rubbish or sand in front you.

Ali: The beaches must be owned by the government (public ownership), our problem is that the sea is owned by individuals (private), I am talking about the sea which is not reclaimed yet. So when the investors come to invest in here they keep the possible future reclamations in their minds. When he (the investor) comes and sees the Meridian (the Ritz Carleton Hotel) is on the beach but after few years it is in the middle of the city, he'll know that his investment is not secure. And this discourages investors from keeping their money in these kinds of projects.

Author: Did you make any feasibility study of your project?

Ali: Sure.

Author: Did you show it to anyone?

Ali: Yes, I did present it to the Institute (Bahrain Training Institute, BTI); it is a must to do that before presenting it to the Development Bank (Bahrain Development Bank – BDB). But then I found out that the whole project was a commercial one (the project of helping small industries). It was a cake of BD30,000,000 and each one wanted to have piece. I found out that the whole process was a scam and I decided to forget about it.

Author: Did you think of a specific location for your project?

Ali: No, I did not decide that, but I was thinking of the area between the villages of Jaww and Askar based on the fact that the area is remote and there is a possibility for the fish to grow safely there; and that area is a naturally good fishery. On top of that, the tanks of the Directorate of Fisheries are located there, that would have helped in case I needed fish or advice.

Author: Do you think that this project might materialise in the future?

Ali: There are so many similar projects all around the world.

Author: I know that, but I am talking about the case of Bahrain.

Ali: No, there are no laws to protect the fish stock and the fisheries here, no laws opposing, or to organise, the reclamation of the sea, the reclamation of the water. I am from Belad Al Qadeem (a village on Toubli Bay). We used to have a waterfront, the unique thing about that sea, Bo Ghazal Sea, is the mangrove plants and when the reclamation started they killed it all. It should have been protected, it was a safe haven and a nursery for the fish, all kinds of fish were there and once they reclaimed the beach the fish vanished. On top of that they built a sewage water treatment plant there. The sea became dead and smelly....they have used all kinds of material to reclaim the water, even toxic ones.

Author: Were there many fishermen in your village?

Ali: So many, that was the best fishery for shrimps and many villagers were fishermen. When the fish vanished from here the fishermen started to go to other places. I remember that I had never fished anywhere except in Bo Ghazal sea before they reclaimed the sea, then I started to go to the area next to the Dry Dock (south of Hidd in Muharraq Island), and nowadays we have to go to places further than Fasht Al Dibal (a coral reef far from the main island, Bahrain) to start seeing some fish. They pump all kinds of chemicals in the sea water and kill all the natural habitats of the fish and they are not providing anything that could substitute for that. They are killing and eroding all the time, for the sake of a fast profit, on the account of the future generations.

Author: Do you have any other hobbies?

Ali: Me and my friend like to watch football.

Author: Do you go to watch football in the stadium?

Both interviewees: No we don't go.

Hassan: Don't talk about Bahraini football; we watch international football at home

Ali: We have ART (Satellite TV Channels).

Hassan: I like the English league.

The chat turned into a pure talk about football and an argument about which league is stronger, after that the author managed to bring the interview back to the main topic of this research.

Author: Do you like to swim in the sea?

Both interviewees: Sometimes.

Author: Whereabouts?

Ali: In open sea when we go fishing by boat, far from the beach

Author: Are you married?

Both interviewees: Yes

Author: Any kids?

Ali: Yes, five.

Author: Do your kids like the sea

Ali: My kids are sea fanatics, both the boys and the girls.

Author: Do they like to fish, eat seafood and swim in the sea? Do they go with you on your fishing trips?

Ali: Yes, in the past I used to take the whole family fishing, including my wife. They are crazy about the sea, I have no idea why!

Author: Why are you surprised? We are an island nation after all.

Ali: I don't think that's the reason, they simply follow me

Author: So if you think that the love of the sea could be influential, what should be done to nurture or to plant the love of the sea in the hearts of the new generations?

Ali: The schools could arrange for school trips but we'll have the problem of safety. It is so dangerous for inexperienced people or those who do not know how to swim. So imagine the kids, controlling kids in such an environment is so difficult. So safety first and then we'll think of what else to do. They could arrange for trips to nearby places, such as *fashts* and islands and they could even charge some money or even the school could do it for free. They could go for two to three hours and then take them back. Going over a Banoosh (big wooden boat larger then a Dhow) or a Tarrad (speed boats or small yachts) is a big incentive for kids.

Author: Do your kids know all the types of fish which you catch?

Ali: Yes.

Author: How did they learn them?

Ali: At home, by repeating the names in front of them.

Author: What about those kids who are not exposed to this sea-loving life?

Ali: They learn the names at their schools.

Hassan: The different kinds of popular fish in Bahrain are included in the curriculum.

Ali: All of us, as Bahrainis, love the sea subconsciously; even the people who are scared of the sea would want to sail through it. But that is difficult, it is a costly operation.

Author: Do you think that Bahrainis exaggerate in their reaction to the weather conditions?

Ali: In which sense?

The author gave them an example of how the local users of Seef disappeared from zone 2 because the weather turned slightly windy.

Ali: I don't agree with you.

Hassan: Yes I saw some people wearing winter clothes! I don't feel that it is cold or it is winter.

Ali: For other people this is cold.

Author: Do you come to here on hot days?

Hassan: That does not affect us

Author: Have you seen many people fishing in this area?

Ali: On the weekend, on Thursday afternoons and on Fridays the place gets filled

Author: I have noticed that the users of this place are scattered into three places, is there any specific reason for that?

Hassan: There is a reason for that, the three places provide different types of fish, in this area you'll find Shu'om and Gargufan, and there you can find Yanam and sometimes Balool and Ginniz. But the rocks are bad over there, whenever you pull the line it gets entangled, it is too steep and deep, so the line goes deep and gets stuck.

Author: Do you think that we have enough shops selling proper fishing equipment?

Ali: Yes they are available, all types are available.

Author: But I have noticed that most of the people fishing here don't use proper fishing equipment, is there a reason for that?

Hassan: Like what? Are you talking about fishing rods? We have those.

Author: Why don't you use them?

Hassan: Fishing rods are good for big fish, and here there are only small fish.

Author: That is one thing, but what about fishing for small fish in a better way, like the use of special baits and that kind of stuff, is this because the people here don't know about them or can't afford them? Is there a reason for this?

Ali: Most people know those types and the advanced methods, but this has something to do with the people's familiarity with their sea.

Author: So, this is because they think their methods are the best for this sea?

Ali: Yes, it is not out of ignorance. Notice this, the price of this shrimp (which they were using as a bait) is more expensive than the normal bait (the one which the author was suggesting), we have tried shrimps here and we found out that its smell and ease of use is more convenient and far more successful.

Author: So our fish is clever and greedy!

Ali: Our fish is rusty just like us (followed by laughter).

Hassan: Look at that boy, he is using the rod.

Ali: My fishing rod is in the car, the pleasure of catching a big fish with the rod is great but when the catch is small, it is too disappointing, it is not nice, unlike doing it by the use of just the line: even if the catch is ever so tiny, it is like catching a whale.

Author: Have you ever caught any big fish in here?

Ali: Yes, when it is high tide it is possible to catch big Shu'om, It all depends on luck, we cannot take it for granted.