

JERICO MASTER PLAN REPORT

1. WHAT IS THE JERICHO MASTER PLAN?

The Jericho Master Plan project was funded and implemented by the Directorate-General for Development Cooperation of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs jointly with the Municipality of Jericho, the Ministry of Local Government of the Palestinian Authority and the Governorate of Jericho. The University of Ferrara supervised scientifically and technically the project.

The Jericho Master Plan is composed of a set of planning tools that on one side fully answer the need to preserve the archaeological, historic, cultural, landscape and natural heritage of Jericho, and on the other provide adequate solutions to properly plan the development of the area.

They are:

Master Plan. It is an Urban Master Plan made according to the guidelines set by the Physical Planning Manual of the Ministry of Local Government of the PNA.

Urban GIS. It is a tool that integrates the policies of urban planning and makes It is also an important device for .the implementation faster and more effective .monitoring the results of conservation programs

In addition to these tools an **Emergency Conservation Plan** was introduced to give full protection to Jericho's heritage in the preliminary phase of elaboration of the Master Plan.

A **new digital cartography** of the Municipality of Jericho was made.

According to the project the Municipality of Jericho will establish the **Urban Planning Service** composed of the **Jericho Master Plan Implementation Office**, that will take care of the implementation and monitoring of the Plan, and the **Center for Sustainable Urban Planning**, responsible for training and updating the technical staff of the Municipality.

2. BACKGROUND OF THE MASTER PLAN

A Joint Declaration among the Ministry of Local Government of the Palestinian National Authority, the Governorate of Jericho, the Municipality of Jericho and the Consulate of Italy - Italian Office of Cooperation and Development in Jerusalem, concerning the implementation of the Project *Master Plan of Jericho* was signed on October 14, 2010.

The Steering Committee was nominated on May 31, 2012.

The actual establishment of the Jericho Implementation Planning Unit, the mobilization of the experts and the supply of the equipment took place in July 2012.

A first outcome of the project was the Emergency Conservation Plan (January 2013)

The First Phase of the Plan, mainly consisting in the land use survey, the Spatial Development Framework (made of the Planning Framework, the Sectorial Assessment, the Development Potential and Challenges) ended in March 2013.

In November 2013, according to the procedure set by the Physical Planning Manual of MoLG, the alternative of urban development on which the Master Plan is based was selected by the Municipal Council of Jericho.

In December 2013 the Preliminary Draft of the Master Plan was presented to the Municipality for examination. According to the Physical Planning Manual of MoLG the examination period was to be of 30 days.

In January 2014, at the end of the examination period, the comments and observations by the Municipality were taken into consideration and evaluated jointly with MoLG.

The Master Plan was consequently finalized and delivered to the Municipality of Jericho and to the Ministry of Local Government on February 27, 2014.

The Italian-Palestinian planning team was composed of three senior experts (team leader and two architects/planners), three junior planning and architecture experts from Italy, and one senior expert (planner) and three junior experts (trainees) from Palestine. The junior Palestinian experts were trained in order to be able to work at the implementation and monitoring of the Plan in the Jericho Master Plan Implementation Office.

The Italian Cooperation provided the equipment (computers, printers, plotters, video projectors, etc.), while the Municipality of Jericho provided the premises of the Master Plan office and related services and web connections.

3. MAIN GEOGRAPHICAL AND TOPOGRAPHIC FEATURES OF JERICHO AND ITS REGION

The city of Jericho lies in the Great Jordan Rift Valley – some 250 m below sea level – in a large and almost flat area few kilometres north of the Dead Sea.

The municipality of Jericho is the largest in Palestine, accounting for around 57 sq Km.

The topography of the area is characterized by the following typical features:

The Oasis

The oasis identifies the city of Jericho. The area has been uninterruptedly inhabited for millennia because of the Ein-es-Sultan spring that gave origin to the first human settlement and the oasis. Even now, despite the increasing urban growth, to those arriving from Jerusalem through the desert, the city appears as a spot of green in the dry Jordan Plain.

The Desert

Even if often considered as an empty land the desert is a very important topographic feature and one of the main components of the ecological system of

the region. By surrounding the oasis it defines it, and provides a habitat for many species.

The Wadis

The city area is crossed by two main Wadis : Wadi Qelt in the south and Wadi N'wemeh in the north. For most of the year their riverbeds are dry, but large flows occur in winter time due to storm water.

The Wadis have typical topographic features within the flat area: a smaller deeper riverbed, usually no larger than 5-10 meters, and a larger "valley", the size of which varies, normally with steep shores, sometimes spotted by banana plantations or other crops. Wadi Qelt crosses the city centre of Jericho.

In addition to the two main Wadis , several smaller ones flow across the plain south and north of the city. They fill with storm water during winter, but remain dry for most of the year.

Jordan River

To the east, a few kilometres from Jericho, flows the Jordan River. Even if not within the Municipality boundaries, it constitutes a major element in the history and in the cultural landscape of the city. Now the river is separate from the city life. It is divided from it by the by-pass of road 90 and it is not easily not accessible for military reasons.

The mountains

The city landscape is dominated to the west by the steep slopes of the Western Ridge. Even if they are just outside the city boundaries, they constitute a main limit and, most of all, beautiful scenery for the city.

The agricultural land

In addition to the cultivated land of the oasis Jericho has large tracts of farming land which further emphasize its traditional agricultural vocation and play an important environmental role.

4. CLIMATE

The climate in Jericho area is dry, with very high temperatures in summer and low rainfall. The rainy period is from October to May and the average rainfall is 150 mm/year.

5. WATER

The main water resources in Jericho Governorate consist primarily of groundwater: there are 7 major springs in the Governorate, 5 of which are located near Jericho. Only two are utilized for both domestic and agriculture purposes, the others are used only for agriculture.

The most important source of water in Jericho is Ain es-Sultan spring which provides water both for domestic (42%) and agricultural (58%) use.

In recent years there has been a substantial shift from agricultural to domestic use, possibly related to the increase of permanent and seasonal population and the increase of consumption standards.

Apart from the springs, there are almost 90 wells in the Jericho municipal area. They are mainly of private owners who extract water primarily for their own consumption. Due to its high salinity the water is mainly used for irrigation of crops or date palms. A substantial share of the artesian wells are abandoned either because of the lowering of the water table or because of water salinization.

6. NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

The Jericho Governorate features a quantity of both natural and cultural heritage sites of high interest at local and international scale, thanks to which the region has a high potential in terms of tourist attraction.

The cultural heritage is of outstanding value. Among its most important components are the archaeological complexes of Tell el Sultan, Khirbat al-Mafjar (Hisham's Palace), Herod's Winter Palace, the Mount of Temptation, Jesus' baptism site, the Monastery of St. George, Nabi Mousa.

The nature and the geography of the place are reflected by the structure of the landscape: the region is defined by the plain of the Jordan River to the west and the Western Ridge carved by Wadis to the east, a semi-desert environment

marked by scattered oasis at the foot of the hills. On the southern boundary of the region lays the Dead Sea. All of this creates five different landscapes: the desert, the oasis, the alluvial plain, the mountains, the Dead Sea.

The conservation policies of these landscapes vary considerably.

The Jordan River nowadays is not accessible for military reasons, except for some isolated religious events.

Wadi Qelt Valley is an important natural and historic area.

The desert areas keep their natural feature and are left unused, not only because of their inhospitable characteristics, but also because being mostly in Area C they are not exploitable.

The area of Jericho has been largely developed and therefore has lost most of its features as an oasis. Nevertheless, the western area of Jericho, between the mountains and the two sides of Ain es Sultan Street still keep traces of the ancient rural pattern and water network.

7. MAIN SOCIO ECONOMIC FEATURES

Population

The actual amount of population living in Jericho is a matter of discussion among different local and central government agencies and a definite assessment is not available. According to the most recent official projections by the Palestinian Census Bureau of Statistic (PCBS) the number of estimated permanent inhabitants of Jericho city (Ariha) in 2013 is

Jericho	21 411
Fin as Sultan camp	3.688
Anabat Jaber camp	8.375

Possibly an equivalent amount of persons are temporarily living in Jericho during some periods of the year: tourists, holiday house owners, soldiers, etc.

Economy

The economy in Jericho is dependent on several economic sectors. Due to its characteristics, localization and logistics, tourism and agriculture have comparative advantages and are mainly external market-oriented. At the same time, there are various service sectors (shops, restaurants, etc.) and smaller owner-operated farming that constitute an internal market-oriented sector. It is important to underline that a large part of the economy is supported by the public sector and that this has reached a considerable dimension in the last years.

Agriculture

Being located in the largest open land in Palestine, rich in spring and surface water, fertile soil and warm climate, the lower Jordan Valley is famous since ancient times for its agricultural production.

Today agricultural land still occupies a large percentage of the Governorate and the city, even if it has shown a diminishing trend in recent years. In 2001, approximately 15% of the theoretically farmable land of the Jericho District, corresponding to 40,000 dunums, was supposedly cultivated.

Nowadays more than 30,000 dunums are cultivated, even if the farmed area varies from year to year. Three main types of tenure systems characterize the Jericho district farming. The first is the sharecropping system. In year 2000 this system accounted for around 70% of agricultural employment and used almost half of the existing cultivated land in the Jericho district.

The second system is constituted by owner-operated farms. According to the Jericho Farmers Union this group of farms includes small plots of land (between 10 and 15 dunums) that in rare cases reach a larger extension (60 dunums) and are mostly distributed inside the city. Often these farms develop a non-specialized agriculture with a rather low productivity. Fragments of non-irrigated land are used for sheep and goat rearing.

A third group of farms are operated by the owners themselves with seasonal or long-term labourers and are mainly producers of fruits and vegetables.

In addition there are two large farms, the Mashrua Al Alami project and Al Juneidi. All agricultural production is highly mechanized, with the partial exception of the owner-operated system.

The Jericho Governorate is an area of excellence in agricultural production having very good results also in international trading: dates and fresh herbs are the best performing, with over 30% growth since the last 10 years. Other typical

agricultural products such as bananas and citrus have instead shown a decrease since 2007.

Some of the enterprises working in the food processing sector cover a national and international trading range: among them the Mashroa Al'Alami, that exports dairy products from Jericho in all of Palestine, and several date factories selling on the international market.

According to the local Farmers' Union, the production of vegetables (tomatoes, cucumbers, aubergines, peppers and salads) and fruits (bananas, grapes, oranges and mandarins), typical of this region, has shown a diminishing trend in last years due to a declining supply of water and to problems of salinity of the soil.

On the other side, the production of dates, localized mostly in the southern and eastern areas of the city and district of Jericho, is gaining importance. It is a high-quality product and a very outward market-oriented one.

Industry

Industrial and manufacturing activities can be classified in two main sectors: the first concerns agriculture and food processing (date factories, dairy products, meat processing factories and so on), the second is manufacturing, such as basic mechanic firms, light steel and iron industry, etc.

A number of larger enterprises having some 30 to 60 employees, such as the iron factory and the meat processing factory, are located inside the municipality, while

mineral water production, such as the Jericho Natural Water Company, is instead located outside.

Other smaller scale industrial activities can be found inside the municipality (carpenters, blacksmiths, etc).

Commercial activities

In the city there are many food shops (groceries, bakeries, butchers, greengrocers) and for utilities (tools, clothing, pharmacies, electronics, etc) as well as a number of restaurants and coffee shops.

Commercial activities are mainly organized around the main square and the four roads leading out of it: this area is the centre of the city's trade. Even if most of the shops and stores are operated by the owners these small businesses all together employ a significant share of Jericho's workforce.

Tourism

The tourist sector is considered one of the main economical activities in Jericho, and one with high potential.

It had a considerable increase since 1994 until the sharp crisis of 2000; it has recovered in recent years, thanks to the improvement in the political situation.

According to the city's Chamber of Commerce, the largest group of tourists are Palestinians from the West Bank. They have a long tradition of visiting Jericho in the winter and often they own holiday houses in the city. Another large group is made of Palestinians residing in Jordan, for whom Jericho serves as a hub for visits

to relatives in Palestine. Finally, there are international groups, interested in the city's historical and biblical sites. Key tourist attractions comprehend the archaeological sites.

New tourist facilities have developed in recent years. Today Jericho hosts a very small number of hotels and guesthouses (sometimes run by religious institutions), and usually international guided groups stay in Jericho only for one day.

Parks and outdoor leisure resorts were implemented during the '90s, like the Spanish Gardens and Papaya Park; there are also significant sport structures (the Stadium and the Horse Riding Club).

Tourism has a great potential thanks to the importance of cultural, religious and natural sites. Nevertheless, to exploit this potential in a sustainable way, a broader vision should be promoted. Different kinds of tourism could be developed (a combination of health, leisure, sport/adventure, ecological, agricultural, cultural and religious tourism). The key attractions should be interconnected and sites outside the city (e.g. the oasis, the springs, Wadi el Qelt, the Dead Sea, etc.) should be included. Didactic and educational tourism could be developed. Natural resources should be considered as a fundamental part of the tourist attractions.

THE MASTER PLAN OF JERICHO

OBJECTIVES OF THE MASTER PLAN

The Master Plan is based on five main objectives, which in the meantime are important opportunities for Jericho. They are:

1. The preservation of its world unique historic and cultural tangible and intangible heritage as basic element of the Palestinian identity
2. The preservation of the cultural landscape of the oasis and of the natural landscape of the desert, the range of mountains, the water system made of the Dead Sea, the Jordan river and the Wadis
3. The enhancement of its future role of Palestinian Gate towards Jordan and the rest of the world. A show-case of innovation consistent with sustainable development
4. The reinforcement of the present model of sustainable development through the preservation of adequate space for farming, the development of advanced specialized agriculture, a correct use of the water.
5. The development of sustainable tourism based on tangible and intangible heritage, natural resources and open-air activities and respectful of the environment with an adequate supply of guest houses, cultural tourism facilities, tourist complexes.

1. The first objective is to take advantage of the opportunity to conserve and enhance Jericho and its heritage. Jericho is where for the first time the urban experience took place on the planet, and as a consequence permanent agriculture developed. These are not minor events and the place where they happened holds an absolutely privileged place in the history of mankind. Jericho's worldwide renown for its heritage is an extraordinary asset for its future. The Master Plan will reinforce the unique position of Jericho by improving a correct conservation of its historic built environment and its landscape.

2. The second objective concerns the protection of the natural environment as a major asset both in terms of Jericho's identity and as an economic capital. Jericho is one of the few oases in the Middle East, and the combination of natural elements like the mountains, the desert, the sea and the river is unparalleled in the region. Jordan river must be protected from water abduction and pollution. The Dead Sea cannot be transformed in an artificial water reservoir. The oasis cannot be covered by buildings. Without a serious concern for these issues the Lower Jordan Valley may experience a substantial environmental disaster. The Master Plan must contribute to give a positive answer to these problems.

3. The third objective and opportunity are the result of the foundation of an independent Palestinian State. Given its geographical location Jericho is the only urban place in the West Bank with direct access to countries that are not Israel. From a quiet and isolated oasis at the fringe of Jordan desert Jericho might turn

into the new vibrant international gate of the Palestinian State, the only place with direct access to Dead Sea, and a major tourist destination.

Jericho will in the future easily become an important place for international tertiary and quaternary functions. It will be an attractive city where advanced contemporary activities mix with a unique ancient heritage and it will develop in an urban context where man and nature are correctly balanced.

In addition Jericho has a crucial place in the strategy of maintaining Palestinian control over the Jordan Valley. The best way of enhancing and confirming its role is to give it an undisputable cultural, symbolic and socio-economic international relevance. This will definitely emphasize its Palestinian identity and its historic and environmental uniqueness and will prevent the possibility of Israeli settlements.

This implies that Jericho should not become a kind of suburban appendix of Jerusalem or Ramallah made of holiday homes and large scale housing developments.

4. The fourth objective points out the opportunities offered by the reinforcement of the present model of sustainable development. Jericho is still characterized by an exemplary balance between man and nature. A balance that has always been an important social and economic resource has nowadays become a strategic factor for development. Jericho was originated as an oasis at the crossing point between North-South and East-West nomads' routes. Jericho still represents a model of correct environmental balance that by itself is an important capital and a positive model in the present quest for sustainable development. In order to

maintain this important characteristic the Master Plan must preserve the oasis with its network of irrigation canals, the land suitable for agriculture, the system of Wadis . In addition a careful policy of water saving must be implemented

5. The fifth objective concerns the opportunity of developing a more sustainable and durable tourism that does not have a negative impact on the cultural landscape and the natural environment. Tourism attracted by archaeological and historical heritage, by cultural landscapes, by religious memoirs, by natural environment, by local flora and fauna, by intangible traditions is increasing all over the world. It is a tourism that is interested in the preservation of the specific spirit of a place and not in rapidly changing consumption habits. This tourism can be a very important component of a strategy of economic development of Jericho. The Master Plan must introduce planning measures that are consistent with this strategy.

TWO BASIC PRINCIPLES OF THE MASTER PLAN

In order to achieve these objectives of the plan is based on two main principles:

1. It must be made clear that spatial planning is based on the fundamental principle that the property of a tract of land does not imply that this land can be used as one likes and without any limit and control. The rights of any individual landowner must match with the general interests of the community and cannot damage other owners' rights.

The principle is particularly important when a city experiences a major process of change and general guidelines for the future are needed. The future of a town and its potential for development cannot be hampered by individual short-term choices.

2. Sustainability cannot be a fashionable but empty slogan. It is the principle on which all planning actions must be based. This means that the scarcity of natural resources like water cannot be overlooked, that the existence of an adequate amount of green open spaces is necessary, that the desert is not a potentially buildable vacuum, A positive interaction between the oldest city in the world and very modern activities for the future based on sustainability is the motto on which Jericho's urban planning should be based. It would be a very short-sighted vision to lose important future opportunities by coming to terms with contingent requests and interests only centred on urbanization.

THE SPATIAL STRUCTURE OF THE MASTER PLAN

The Oasis

The Oasis is not simply a piece of landscape; it is the very reason of the existence of Jericho. To do away with the balance of green spaces and built spaces means to increase an already existing phenomenon of desertification which in a short time would make life in Jericho's hot summers unbearable.

In this area the physical and functional characters of an oasis are still quite recognizable. It is a complex and rich cultural landscape whose main features are: the irregular and organic shape of the plots, which are mainly defined by the traditional open channel irrigation system that is often still visible and working; a mix of residential and agricultural uses in the same piece of land; villas and detached houses with fruit and vegetable gardens as prevailing building typology; the concentration of most of Jericho's heritage and archaeological sites, which form a system at the foot of the mountain on the north-eastern part of the municipality.

Large plots of high value agricultural lands still exist in this area, although they are menaced by increasing urban development.

This area has the potential of becoming the structuring backbone of a wider cultural and tourist system in Jericho, linking all the main heritage sites through a connective pattern created by footpaths, open spaces and rural spots.

This will be achieved through:

- The creation of wider protection areas around the main archaeological sites by realizing a new set of rural buffer zones.
- The preservation of the rural landscape through a controlled and appropriate urban development in the existing agricultural areas
- The development of a pedestrian and bicycle path in the whole archaeological/landscape area that touches all the archaeological sites, from

Herod's Palace, along Wadi Qelt up to Qasr Hisham, allowing visitors to discover the cultural landscape of the oasis.

- The development of a diffused hosting system in the oasis area (family guest-houses).

- The improvement of suitable tourist facilities in strategic areas, notably the area of Tell es-Sultan/Mount of Temptation. These can be summarised as follows:

1. Improvement of the tourist facilities (hotels, guest-houses, restaurants) in specific and strategic areas.
2. Creation of a visitors' centre in the area close to Tell es-Sultan's archaeological site, with high standard facilities.
3. Redesign of the public spaces around Tell Es Sultan and Ain Es Sultan, creating a continuous pedestrian system.
4. Mitigation of the negative impact of the illegal building south of the site of Tell es-Sultan.
5. Reorganization of the parking areas, by moving the existing ones in a more strategic and suitable position and clearing the space for public and tourist uses.

City Centre

The area is the heart of the public and commercial life of Jericho. It has high strategic value and a key role in the functioning of the city, and corresponds to the main commercial and institutional part of the town. It features a mix of building typologies (multi-storied buildings with commercial use at ground floor,

lower density housing with backyard or garden, two-storied buildings with commercial use at ground level and storage/office use on the upper floor, etc.). At present the urban fabric is incomplete and disorderly, the continuity of the built fronts along the main roads is interrupted by plots of empty or abandoned land.

Aim of the Plan is the preservation of the area as the commercial core of the city and the reorganization of the urban structure while keeping the relationship with the rural landscape.

This will be achieved through:

- Creation of a vibrant and pleasant commercial area in the heart of the city
- Regularization and improvement of the existing urban pattern
- Environmental upgrading of the Wadi areas
- Rehabilitation of the heritage buildings and complexes
- Redevelopment of the public spaces, creating a network of public squares and green areas
- Implementation and improvement of pedestrian and bicycle connections
- Redevelopment of the empty or neglected land as new residential rural areas with high quality standards, through the following actions:
 1. Preservation of agricultural spots within the city centre
 2. Rehabilitation of existing mud-houses.
 3. Achievement of a controlled development keeping the traditional mixed agricultural-residential pattern of the city.

Wadis

Wadi Qelt is one of the most important environmental systems in the city of Jericho, the one that can be considered the generator of the oasis landscape, connecting and linking the natural environment of the oasis with most of the archaeological sites.

The Wadi itself suffers nowadays from abandonment and pollution. The areas of the city centre along the Wadi are characterized by low environmental quality or uses incompatible with the character of the area, such as large wasteland or underused spaces (close to the municipality); workshops or open-air storage sites; the agricultural wholesale market.

The whole segment of Wadi Qelt that runs inside the municipal boundaries can become a system of open spaces and public activities, for both Jericho citizens and tourists, linked to a wider ecological system.

In this sense the Master Plan foresees:

- Creation of a city park along the urban section of Wadi Qelt as the main entrance and also the central part of a larger tourist and recreational area stretching from Ain Qelt to the Jordan River
- Restoration of an ecological corridor within the urbanized area through the environmental requalification of Wadi Qelt's bed and banks and its surrounding areas

- Limitation of new constructions and definition of a wider buffer zone around the Wadi.
- Redevelopment of the areas to be removed in the future (workshops and wholesale market) with a pattern and uses consistent with the vocation of the site (sports, leisure, tourism and public facilities)
- Creation of new connections, and the reinforcement of the existing ones, between the city centre and the park.

The purpose of the Wadi protection area is to protect the Wadi's riverbed and its immediate surroundings, to ensure public safety by avoiding any obstacle to the natural flows of water. For this reason no new construction, paving or ground re-shaping will be allowed in the Wadi dry bed and in its buffer strip, except for farming, planting or gardening.

The residential development

Unfortunately for too many years Jericho's development went on without a Master Plan and a great amount of land for housing was parcelled and countless building licenses were granted. On the basis of these permits Jericho could have grown as a city of many thousands inhabitants. But the permits largely exceeded local development possibilities, so most of the land has remained un-built although the existing land property and construction rights create a rigid cage that does not allow to successfully answer to the real new needs and opportunities.

Jericho cannot afford to saturate the whole territory with new residential development.

Jericho is a special case (possibility foreseen by the PPM), being different from other situations in Palestine. The rules for cities like Ramallah, Nablus, Hebron etc. cannot be applied as they are to Jericho.

Building typologies and heights

The landscape of Jericho is made of low-rise buildings that do not overcome the top of the trees and allow for an open view. The city centre, apart from a few unfortunate buildings that reach 5 floors in height, is made of fabric never higher than 3 floors that contributes to the balance between buildings and open spaces. Buildings such as the Intercontinental Hotel and with the new addition to the Jericho Resort should not be repeated.

The maximum height in the whole of Jericho, in order to preserve consistency among all parts of the built and un-built fabric, should keep on being of 3 (maximum 4) floors.

In some parts of Jericho – in the Oasis and on the edge between the rural and the urban landscape - the Master Plan introduces a new definition of Rural Residential Zone, in order to provide proper typologies and layout that respect the traditional Jericho urban morphology. They consist of rural houses surrounded by gardens, orchards and small scale farm productions, and at the same time allow for small-scale non-residential services and facilities for tourists and local residents. In

creating new complexes it is suggested to design patterns, blocks and access roads consistent with the existing topography and to respect historic traces. Buildings can be aggregated; clusters of traditional mud-houses can be adopted as a model for the new ones, possibly in a composite form rather a straightforward addition of single volumes.

Distances and setbacks

A general rule – internationally accepted and applied – fixes a minimum distance of 10 meters between buildings. This is to guarantee privacy, lighting, ventilation, etc. This is also introduced in the Building Regulations for Jericho, and becomes a more specific rule in the single plots' cases. In fact, the minimum distance of the building from the edge of the plot is of 5 meters on all sides.

Main Roads

The main axes leading to the centre of Jericho - Jerusalem Street, Amman Street, Ein es-Sultan Street, Hisham Palace Street - have a strategic function and importance for the entire city. They can have either a commercial or a tourist vocation.

Amman Street should be considered as the main axis for the strategic development of Jericho, meaning in future strong connections, exchange and trade with Jordan.

Jerusalem Street is the city gate from the south and though in a disorderly manner is characterized by commercial, tourist and institutional activities. A better

organization of the two sides of the road can strengthen but also re-assess its role, turning it into a really urban street.

Ain es-Sultan Street is historically one of Jericho's most important axes, connecting the city centre to Tell es-Sultan's archaeological site along the cultural landscape of the oasis. Specific rules contained in the Master Plan aim at preserving and strengthening its character as "Garden Street", lined by private gardens, orchards, cultural and tourist activities.

Hisham Palace Street is one of the most important roads in Jericho; it connects the city centre to the archaeological site of Hisham Palace, crossing agricultural fields and archaeological sites. This defines it as a particular street in Jericho, allowing moving out of the built fabric and moving into an agricultural landscape. This characteristic should be reinforced in order to make it a real cultural and tourist path.

Sustainable architecture

In order to avoid high consumption of electric power, an increase of local temperature resulting from a massive use of air conditioning, waste of water, etc., new buildings must be environment-friendly, i.e. they must be based on passive solar energy design, water saving technology, recycling and depuration of waste water, appropriate building materials.

New development

The major case of new development is the one called Jerusalem Gate Project.

Jericho Gate Project is a new development located in an area south of Jericho, close to Jerusalem Street. From a geographic and morphological aspect it belongs to the system of the cultural landscape of the desert, but its purpose is to provide a new kind of residential and tourist neighbourhood, including all the related services and facilities.

Being a very wide area, a detail plan is necessary; the JMP provides the guidelines for intervention in this area, which can be summarised as follows:

Wadis :

- Respect the buffer zones of the Wadis;
- No buildings are permitted inside these areas; only agriculture, gardens and open green areas are allowed, in order to reinforce the wadi banks.

Building types and Materials:

- The design of buildings types must be inspired to the architectural tradition of the region. Building materials should be those traditionally used in the lower Jordan Valley.

Green spaces

- The green spaces must be no less than 70% of the total surface of the development.
- All the trees and plants must be autochthonous of the lower Jordan Valley region

