Origins of Doha Project - Season 4 Archive Report:
Fuwairit Standing Building Recording

June 2016

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1. Introduction

The **Origins of Doha Project** is a University College London Qatar based research project funded by NPRP grant no. 5-421-6-010 from the Qatar National Research Fund (a member of Qatar Foundation). Our project aims include exploring the foundations and historic growth of Doha, setting the city in its regional and global historical context, and studying the transformation of the country resulting from the transition to an oil economy. With the support of the Qatar Museums the **Origins of Doha Project** carried out a program of building recording at Fuwairit, between January and February 2016. This work was undertaken as part of a wider archaeological investigation of the site that include surface mapping and excavation, the results of which are presented in separate reports.

The historic village of Fuwairit, located directly to the south of the archaeological site, contains a number of abandoned buildings dating to the second half of the twentieth century (Figure 1). Despite being an important coastal settlement in the centuries preceding Qatar’s unification the details of Fuwairit’s history remain poorly understood as there are few early written references to the site. The historic buildings at Fuwairit preserve a record of the sites history and represent a unique aspect of Qatar’s history and cultural heritage, contributing to a better understand the changes that occurred in the country in the 20th century. In order to record these structures a detailed photographic, written and drawn record of the site was undertaken. The results of this work are presented in this report.

The building recording undertaken at Fuwairit will compliment similar work undertaken by the **Origins of Doha Project** previously in Doha. Alongside archaeological survey, excavation and the collection of oral histories this work will preserve a record of the site and further inform us of how the state of Qatar developed throughout the 19th and 20th century.

![Fuwairit and Zarqa Archaeological Sites](image)

**Figure 1: Location of the historic village at Fuwairit.**
2. Acknowledgements

This report was made possible by NPRP grant no. 5-421-1-010 from the Qatar National Research Fund (a member of Qatar Foundation). The project is directed by Dr. Robert Carter, Professor at UCL Qatar. All building recording was undertaken with the permission and support of Qatar Museums, whose goal is to develop, promote and sustain museums, art and heritage at the highest global standards for community engagement, education, and enjoyment in Qatar and beyond. All fieldwork was conducted by a professional team of archaeologists consisting of Tracy Cian, Cordelia Hall, David Mackie, Grieg Parker and Ben Sharp and directed by Daniel Eddisford. The statements made within this report are solely the responsibility of the authors.

3. Site Location and Background

The village and archaeological site of Fuwairit is located on the northeast coast of Qatar, centred on Qatar Nation Grid (QNG) reference 215295 475177. Approximately 500m directly south of the archaeological site of Fuwairit the settlement of Fuwairit is largely in ruins (Figure 1). The village consists of low demolished walls, partially ruined buildings as well as a few more recently constructed compounds that are still in use (Figure 2).

Fuwairit appears on British naval maps of the 1820s, and by the middle of the 19th century was occupied by the Al Maadid and Al Bin Ali families, among others, under the leadership of the Al Thani family. It is thought that his father, Thani bin Mohammed, had originally been resident at Zubara but had moved to Fuwairit in the late 18th century (Althani 2012: 19). Like all the coastal settlements of Qatar it was a pearl-fishing town. Mohammed bin Thani moved south to Doha in 1849 or 1850, soon after the defeat of Isa bin Tarif (the powerful ruler of the Al Bin Ali tribe and the nearby town of Huwailah, and a leading opponent of Bahraini rule in Qatar) by a Bahraini force, at the Battle of Umm Suwayya in 1847. Fuwairit continued to be occupied (or was re-occupied), and around 1905 had a population of 100 families of Al Bu Kuwarah and 50 of Al Kibisa.

The Persian Gulf Pilot indicates that Fuwairit was still occupied in 1932 but by the mid 20th century the archaeological site of Fuwairit appears to have been deserted. Aerial images of the site support this, however the earliest aerial photograph of the site in 1947 shows a small settlement had developed to the south of the now abandoned earlier village (Figure 3). By 1958 the newer settlement of Fuwairit had grown in size, and several buildings visible at this time are still standing today (Figure 4). Other buildings visible in 1958 survive today as low piles of rubble at the southern side of the site (Figure 5).

Many of the settlements in the north of the country were abandoned in the middle of the 20th century, in part due to the salination of the upper aquifer caused by excessive water extraction with diesel pumps (Macumber 2009: 90-101). In the later 20th century some coastal locations, including Fuwairit appear to have been reoccupied possibly as oil wealth allowed water to be imported to more remote locations.
Figure 2: Location of structures recorded at Fuwairit
Figure 3: 1948 aerial image of Fuwairit, none of these structures survive today.
Figure 4: 1958 Aerial image of Fuwairit showing the buildings that survive today.
Figure 5: Plan of demolished buildings with wall lines shown in red, today these are visible as mounds of collapsed stone building material.

Figure 6: Demolished buildings at the southern side of the site, looking south (IMG_0623).
4. Methodology

Recording Methods
The building recording was conducted in accordance with the 2006 English Heritage guidelines Understanding Historic Buildings. On the basis of these guidelines, a level 3 record was deemed the most appropriate strategy, which is defined as:

"...an analytical record, and will comprise an introductory description followed by a systematic account of the building’s origins, development and use. It will also include all drawn and photographic records that may be required to illustrate the building’s appearance and structure and to support an historical analysis" (English Heritage 2006).

The building survey was conducted on all the abandoned structures on the site. One of the compounds (Building 25) was still occupied and so no attempt to access this building was made. All the other buildings we abandoned and most were accessible. Access was not possible to Buildings 7, 8, 10, and 11 and these structures were recorded from the outside only. A small mosque, Building 2, was being restored by Qatar Museums during the fieldwork and so only a minimal record of this building was made. Except where the limitations summarised above prevented a full record the building survey consisted detailed written account and photographic records, supplemented by a drawn record for some of the structures.

Traditional, Transitional and Modern building styles and materials
The building recording undertaken at Fuwairit divided building styles into three broad categories; ‘traditional’, ‘transitional’ and ‘modern’. Similar divisions were utilised during building recording in Doha (Eddisford and Roberts 2015). These categories are not absolute, and there is some overlap between them, however they do approximately correlate with chronological definitions. Transitional building materials seem to appear in the late 1950s and modern construction methods occurs from the 1970s onward. It is important to note that transitional and modern construction materials did not lead to an immediate change in architectural style, and for some time traditional architectural styles were merely reproduced in the new materials. A brief summary of these terms is provided below.
### Walls

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional Construction</th>
<th>Transitional Construction</th>
<th>Modern Construction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Walls constructed of unworked limestone or beach stone (<em>faroush</em>).</td>
<td>Walls constructed of shell tempered concrete blocks.</td>
<td>Finally modern construction is typically associated with the introduction of reinforced poured concrete frames and concrete block construction. multiple storey buildings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walls bonded by packed mud and gravel.</td>
<td>These concrete blocks are probably being produced locally and are made with a type of shell sand very rich in small gastropods.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unbaked mudbricks made from a mixture of mud and straw and known as <em>libben</em> was sometimes used.</td>
<td>Concrete mortars and renders.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walls rendered with gypsum and mortars or mud.</td>
<td>Traditional house layout and design often maintained.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walls often constructed with minimal foundations.</td>
<td>On older houses modifications are common such as holes cut for air-conditioning units, false ceilings, door blockings and rearrangement of the layout of houses.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stone walls generally between 0.40m and 0.60m thick.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buildings generally single or at most two stories high.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Room size dictated by the length of the danshal roof beams - usually a maximum of around 3 metres.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Ceilings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional Construction</th>
<th>Transitional Construction</th>
<th>Modern Construction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flat roofs built with round mangrove danshal poles bound with jute rope. Sometimes painted with bitumen.</td>
<td>Flat roofs built with square cut roof timbers.</td>
<td>Reinforced concrete floors and suspended ceilings with ducting for power, air-conditioning etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roof built of bamboo or date palm fronds, reed mats and packed mud.</td>
<td>Roof often built in a traditional style but incorporating more modern materials such as plywood and plastic.</td>
<td>Traditional Qatari roofs were flat, as opposed to pitched roofs normally associated with later building methods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ceilings formed an important decorative component to the internal spaces of the building.</td>
<td>Ceilings less decorative.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roofing beams commonly protruded beyond the exterior walls</td>
<td>Metal and plastic water spouts replace wooden ones.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wooden water spouts directed rain water away from the building</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Decoration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional Construction</th>
<th>Transitional Construction</th>
<th>Modern Construction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Little exterior decoration except rectangular recesses or recessed arches.</td>
<td>Traditional decoration reproduced in more modern materials such as concrete.</td>
<td>Mimicking of older design motifs as well as incorporation of more generic pan-Arabic Islamic motifs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilisation of geometric forms often contains elaborate and finely crafted plasterwork.</td>
<td>Wooden doors replaced with decorated metal doors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smaller rectangular niches add architectural elaboration to the interior, as well as creating ledges for oil lamps and other items.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saw tooth decoration in crenulations on top of the building or impressed into wall plaster around door-frames or the top of internal walls</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elaborately decorated wooden doors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windows sometimes featured coloured glass</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Results
A brief summary of each of the buildings recorded on the site is provided below.

Building 1
Building 1 consists of a raised majlis opening onto a raised area surrounded by a low ridge and accessed by steps (Figure 7). Building 1 is constructed using transitional materials and the aerial photographs of the site show that it was built sometime after 1958. The walls of the majlis and the raised platform in front of it are built of stone and the building is covered with a brown render. The structure is covered with a transitional roof of square cut beams bamboo and packed mud (Figures 8-12). Plastic drain pipes carry water off the slightly sloping roof on the west side of the building. All the walls contain low windows that would have allowed cooling breezes into the building, these contain metal bars and the remains of wooden shutters (Figure 11). A large doorway in the eastern wall opens onto the raised platform in front of the building. These platform would have been used as an external seating area in cooler months or in the evening.

Figure 7: Building 1 looking southeast (IMG_9857).
Figure 8: Building 1 looking north (IMG_9850).

Figure 9: Building 1 looking west (IMG_9855).

Figure 10: Detail of door construction of Building 1 (IMG_9861).
Figure 11: Detail of window of Building 1 (IMG_9890).

Figure 12: Detail of roof construction of Building 1 (IMG_9931).
Building 2

Building 2 is a small mosque, built after 1958, and possibly replacing an earlier larger mosque (Building 12). The mosque originally utilised transitional building materials and was constructed of shell concrete blocks (Figure 13). The mosque is currently being restored by Qatar Museums using.

![Building 2 looking north, the mosque is undergoing reconstruction in this photo (IMG_9787).](image)

Building 3

Building 3 is a school, built between 1948 and 1958, and constructed of transitional building materials (Figure 19). The building has traditional domestic design elements which are adapted to the nature institutional of the building. The most obvious difference to a domestic building is the large number of external windows, with large windows allowing light into the school and smaller windows higher up presumably also allowing ventilation (Figure 14 and 15). Although only a single story high the school is also taller than most other contemporary buildings. The building does share many features with domestic structures however, the construction techniques are identical, it is enclosed by a compound wall and ranged around a courtyard, and the buildings are shaded by a liwan(Figure 16-18).
Figure 14: Building 3 looking northeast (IMG_9805).

Figure 15: Building 3 looking east (IMG_6440).
Figure 16: Southern colonnade in the courtyard of Building 3 looking south (IMG_0129).

Figure 17: Northern building and colonnaded in the courtyard of Building 3 looking west (IMG_0142).
Figure 18: Traditional roofing over the southern colonnaded looking east (IMG_0169).

Figure 19: Transitional roofing inside Building 3 (IMG_0178).
Figure 20: Internal view of the windows and air vents in Building 3, looking south (IMG_0169).

Building 4
Buildings 4 and 5 are relatively recent house built using modern construction techniques. The adjoining compounds were built together and both houses are very similar in construction, appearance and layout. The external courtyard wall, garages and the house itself are all built of modern poured and reinforced concrete and modern concrete blocks (Figure 21-23).

Building 4 had a single garage northwest corner of the courtyard (Figure 23), a concrete sewerage tank in southwest corner of the courtyard and the house located on the eastern side of the courtyard. The single story house had a water tank on the roof, which was accessed by a metal spiral staircase. Traditional decoration is absent, the facade of the house is broken up with overhanging concrete lintels. The interior of the house has modern fittings and electricity (Figure 24).
Figure 21: Building 4 looking east (IMG_191).

Figure 22: Building 4 looking southwest (IMG_0204).
Figure 23: Garage / outbuilding associated with Building 4, looking north (IMG_0202).

Figure 24: Internal view of Building 4 (IMG_0225).
**Building 5**

Building 5 is located directly to the north of Building 4 and is very similar in appearance and layout, both houses were clearly constructed at the same time (Figure 25-26). The general arrangement of the two compounds are almost identical, except Building 5 has two garages, one in the northeast and one in the northwest corner of the courtyard. Building 5 has identical modern construction to Building 4, utilising reinforces poured concrete and concrete blocks (Figure 27).

![Building 5 looking southwest](IMG_9803)

**Figure 25: Building 5 looking southwest (IMG_9803).**

![Building 5 looking southeast](IMG_0016)

**Figure 26: Building 5 looking southeast (IMG_0016).**
Figure 27: Detail of roof construction in Building 5 (IMG_0065).

Figure 28: Access to the roof of Building 5 (IMG_0070).
Figure 29: Internal view of Building 5 looking northeast (IMG_0081).

Figure 30: Garage attached to Building 5 looking northeast (IMG_9996).

Building 6

Building 6 was also a school, local residents told us that Building 6 was the girls school and Building 3 was the boys school. Building 6 was a single story structure (Figure 31 and 32) constructed of transitional materials, walls were built of shell concrete block and the roof was supported on square cut beams (Figure 33). Although Building 6 utilised traditional building techniques such as the roofing and mangrove lintels wrapped in rope (Figure 33) the layout of the building was different from a traditional Qatari domestic structure. The building consisted of 6 main rooms arranged around a central courtyard and a seventh long room, possibly a classroom, running along the length of the southern side of the building.
Figure 31: Building 6 looking northeast (IMG_9806).

Figure 32: Building 6 looking north (IMG_0313).
Building 7 and 8 are both majlis buildings with associated external courtyard areas, similar in layout and function to Building 1 (Figure 35-37). Building 7 is constructed using transitional materials and is
built of shell concrete blocks, covered in concrete render and painted white. The majlis has metals shuttered windows in all walls and is accessed through a metal door on the eastern side.

Figure 35: Building 7 looking northwest (IMG_0581).

Figure 36: Building 7 looking west (IMG_0582).
**Building 8**

Building 8 is a majlis that is similar in appearance with Building 7, both structures were clearly built at the same time. Building 8 is slightly larger with an extra window in the eastern and western walls (Figures 38 and 39). Building 8 is also constructed using transitional materials with shell concrete block walls and concrete render. As well as a raised area in front of the majlis Building 8 also has a seating area at the rear consisting of concrete benches alongside the building (Figure 40). Like Building 7 this majlis has external electric lights and would have had an air-conditioning units mounted on the wall (Figure 42).
Figure 39: Building 8 looking southwest (IMG_0555).

Figure 40: Building 8 looking northeast with seating area at rear of majlis (IMG_0564).
Figure 41: detail of hole for air-conditioning, window and external light, Building 8 (IMG_0578).

**Building 9**

Building 9 is a large carport consisting of 5 bays; the western two bays are open, the central two bays bricked up with modern concrete blocks and the eastern bay is closed with a locked metal door (Figure 42-43). The structure is built of modern concrete blocks and a gently sloping corrugated iron roof is supported on square beams Figure 44).

Figure 42: Building 9 looking north (IMG_0532).
Figure 43: Building 9 looking northwest (IMG_0537).

Figure 44: Detail of roof of Building 9 (IMG_0549).

**Building 10**

Building 10 is a small rectangular toilet with a sloping roof, located directly to the west of Building 11. The building is constructed of shell concrete blocks with a concrete render (Figure 45 and 46). The roof consists of plywood supported on square cut beams. There is a locked metal door on the western wall and air vents in the northern wall. Three low stone built linear supports against the northern wall would have presumably have supported a water tank (Figure 47).
Figure 45: Building 10 (in foreground) and Building 11 (in background), looking southeast (IMG_0600).

Figure 46: Building 10 looking south (IMG_0593).
Building 11

Building 11 is another small rectangular toilet with a sloping roof, very similar in appearance to Building 10 and located directly to the east of it. The building is again constructed of shell concrete blocks with a concrete render (Figure 48 and 49). The roof is supported on square cut beams. There is a locked metal door on the western wall and air vents in the northern wall.
Building 12

Building 12 is a mosque that first appears on the aerial photographs of the site between 1948 and 1958, making it contemporary with the two school buildings on the site (Building 3 and Building 6). A relatively thin room runs along the western side of mosque, with the mihrab in the centre of the western wall (Figure 51 and 55). This is room is shaded by a liwan and opens on to a courtyard (sahn) that would have originally been enclosed by a now ruined wall (Figure 50, 52 and 54). In the southeaster corner of the courtyard is a partially infilled well (Figure 52). The mosque is constructed of transitional materials. The walls are built of stone and a combination of mangrove and square cut beams are used in the construction (Figure 53).
Figure 50: Building 12 looking southwest (IMG_9817).

Figure 51: Building 12 looking southeast (IMG_0492).
Figure 52: Building 12 looking west with well foreground and ruined courtyard wall to the right (IMG_0506).

Figure 53: Detail of construction of colonnade, Building 12 (IMG_0517).

Figure 54: The liwan of Building 12 looking south (IMG_0524).
Building 13

Aerial photographs of the site show that Building 13 was constructed after 1958 but appears to have been added to an earlier set of courtyard houses that were some of the earliest structures on the site. These earlier houses survive only as ruins directly to the south of Building 13 (Figure 5). Building 13 is a typical traditional Qatari house built of transitional materials Figure 56-61). The house is built of a mixture of stone and shell blocks, mangrove beams and square cut beams. A liwan survives along the eastern side of the building, and would have opened onto a now ruined courtyard (Figure 57 and 58). The flat roof was accessed by stairs at the southern side of the building(Figure 65). Later alterations to the building include the construction of a tank inside one of the rooms and the infilling of part of the colonnade with modern concert blocks (Figure 64 and 66).
Figure 57: Building 13 looking west (IMG_0602).

Figure 58: Elevation of Building 13 looking west.

Figure 59: Building 13 looking east (IMG_0606).
Figure 60: Plan of Building 13.

Figure 61: Detail of roof and colonnade construction in Building 13 (IMG_0645).
Figure 62: Detail of window in Building 13 (IMG_0642).

Figure 63: Internal view of Building 13 (IMG_0648).
Figure 64: Internal view of Building 13 with modern alterations (IMG_0657).

Figure 65: Building 13 looking north, showing ruined staircase (IMG_0769).
Building 14

Building 14 is a relatively large modern structure with a sloping metal roof (Figure 67-69). Built of modern concrete blocks the building is covered in concrete render and yellow paint. Metal I-beams support similar metal cross beams and a corrugated metal roof. There are two large rectangular doors in the eastern wall and windows with metal bars or shutters in all the walls. Sunken channels in the concrete floor drain under the north and south walls. A raised concrete platform in the southern side of the building, and a small similar platform on the northern side of the building, may have housed machinery (Figure 70 and 71). Electrical light fittings are attached to the ceiling. Building 14 appears to have been used as a workshop and is likely associated with the two engine housings, Buildings 15 and 16, located directly to the north.
Figure 67: Building 14 looking southwest (IMG_0279).

Figure 68: Building 14 looking west (IMG_0277).
Figure 69: Building 14 looking north (IMG_0276).

Figure 70: Internal view of Building 14 (IMG_0291).
Figure 71: Internal view of Building 14 (IMG_0293).

**Building 15**

Building 15 is an engine shed, probably originally housing a generator or a pump, similar to Building 16. The structure is built of shell concrete blocks covered with a hard grey concrete render. There is a large open doorway in the eastern wall and windows in the north and south walls (Figure 72-74). The windows would have originally been had shutters although these are now missing. The north, south and west walls contain small rectangular air vents in the lower half.

Building 15 is covered with a wooden planked roof supported on a mixture of square machine cut timbers and round danshal beams, possibly reused from early buildings (Figure 75). Two metal pipes run north-south across the building and appear to have acted as a supporting cross beam for horizontal wooden rafters that were not long enough, or possibly strong enough, to span the entire building. The building is full of hardcore and rubbish making it difficult to see many of the internal features at floor level.
Figure 72: Building 15 looking west (IMG_0356)

Figure 73: Building 15 looking southwest (IMG_0361)
Building 16

Building 16 was probable used as an engine shed for a large generator and is associated with Buildings 14 and 15 directly to the east. Building 16 is constructed of modern concrete blocks and has a flat reinforced concrete roof (Figure 79). The door and window lintels are built of square cut timbers, and the large open doorway is partially collapsed (Figure 76-77). Externally and internally the walls are covered with a hard grey concrete render. A rectangular concrete raised setting in the centre of the structure probably housed a generator (or possibly a pump) (Figure 78). There is no evidence of a door, the windows have metal grills (or evidence of them) but no shutters, suggesting both were open to provide ventilation.
Figure 76: Building 16 looking north (IMG_0381).

Figure 77: Building 16 looking east (IMG_0379).
Building 17

Building 17 is a rectangular electricity sub-station measuring 6.05m x 4.05m in plan (Figure 80). Of relatively recent construction the sub-station is built with reinforced poured concrete and modern concrete blocks. The exterior of the building is covered with a concrete render and painted. The minimal decoration on the top of the walls and the corners of the structure are clearly inspired by traditional design motifs and crenulated decoration. The sub-station is in use and locked.
Building 18

Building 18 is a car port built in two phases (Figure 81 and 82). The central two bays are built of unfaced limestone in a traditional style, the walls are thicker and covered in a pale brown render (Figure 84). The two end bays are a later addition, built of shell blocks and covered in a hard grey cement render. The entire building is covered with a transitional style of roof, supported on square cut beams and consisting of wooden planks sealed by tar paper and then covered in a thick layer of packed mud (Figure 83). Metal pipes drain the water from the roof and away from the structure at the rear of Building 18. The three eastern bays are open at both ends, the northern end of the western bay is enclosed by a shell block wall. The roof of the building has partially collapsed and there are two abandoned and heavily rusted cars in the building.
Figure 82: Building 18 looking northwest (IMG_0242).

Figure 83: Detail of roof construction of Building 18 showing metal downpipes. (IMG_0251).
Building 19

Building 19 is a compound house with two phases of construction. A majlis and adjoining small room are constructed in a traditional style (Figure 86, 88-92). A second room to the south of the majlis, the colonnade in front of the majlis and the courtyard wall are all built of shell concrete blocks and are typically transitional in style, reproducing traditional styles and layouts but utilising new building materials (Figure 93 and 95).

The majlis is built of limestone and roofed in a traditional manner. Internally the rooms is decorated with symmetrically placed recessed niches and low external windows and air vents would have promoted air circulation (Figure 92). The later additional room to the south of the majlis is built of shell concrete blocks, roofed with square timbers and plywood and has less decoration. This space is more private, without external windows, and may represented a bedroom.

The colonnade is also transitional, it is constructed of shell concrete blocks and roofed with danshal beams covered with plywood and packed mud (Figure 87). Is likely that the colonnade is contemporary with the transitional room built to the south of the majlis.
Figure 85: Building 19 looking west (IMG_0435).

Figure 86: External facade of Building 19 looking southeast (IMG_0428).
Figure 87: Colonnade of Building 19 looking south (IMG_0434).

Figure 88: Internal view of traditional phase of Building 19 (IMG_0454).
Figure 89: Internal view of traditional phase of Building 19 (IMG_0455).

Figure 90: Internal view of traditional phase of Building 19 (IMG_0456).
Figure 91: Roof detail of traditional phase of Building 19 (IMG_0461).

Figure 92: Roof detail of traditional phase of Building 19 showing air vent (IMG_0464).
Figure 93: Transitional phase of Building 19 looking west (IMG_0438).

Figure 94: Roof detail of transitional phase of Building 19 (IMG_0470).
Figure 95: Entrance to the courtyard of Building 19 (IMG_0473).

**Building 20**

Building 20 is a relatively large car port consisting of 4 open bays, and an eastern bay is closed with a locked metal door (Figure 96-98). This eastern bay is later addition to the structure. The western open bays are constructed of shell concrete block and roofed with square cut beams and plywood, plastic drain pipes remove water from the flat roof (Figure 8099 The metal later eastern additional bay with a metal door is built of modern concrete blocks and is covered with a smoother grey concrete bender,
Figure 97: Building 20 looking north (IMG_0692).

Figure 98: Building 20 looking south (IMG_0693).
Building 21

Building 21 is a small single roomed structure that probably represents a workshop. The structure is built of shell concrete block covered in a hard grey concrete render. The building is accessed through a metal door in the south wall and has a single window in the opposite wall (Figure 100 and 101). Plastic pipes drain from the flat roof, which is constructed of square cut timbers and plywood. Located directly to the west of Building 21 is a large vehicle inspection pit, suggesting that this building may have been used as a garage (Figure 103).
Figure 101: Building 21 looking south (IMG_0677).

Figure 102: Building 21 internal view (IMG_0689).
Building 22

Building 22 is a transitional structure built of shell concrete blocks and maintaining many aspects of traditional domestic layout. The house is enclosed by a low compound wall (Figure 104). Three rooms are ranged along the west side of the courtyard (Figure 107) and a small toilet is located in the southeast corner of the courtyard (Figure 108). The main living quarters, at the west side of the courtyard, were probably built in two phases the two northern rooms first and the southern room as later addition (Figure 105). All were built after 1958. Originally all three rooms were linked by internal doors, but these were locked in later in the building's life.
Figure 105: Building 22 looking east (IMG_0739).

Figure 106: Building 22 looking south (IMG_0740).
Figure 107: Elevation of Building 22 looking west (IMG_0743).

Figure 108: Toilet in courtyard of Building 22, looking east (IMG_0747).
Figure 109: Internal view of Building 22 (IMG_0750).

Figure 110: Electrical fuse box and wires in Building 22 (IMG_0754).
Building 23

Building 23 is the oldest domestic structure on the site that is still standing, although several parts of the house are already in ruins (Figure 111). The oldest parts of the building were constructed between 1948 and 1958, although there is at least one later phase of building. The traditional compound house was enclosed by a courtyard wall built of limestone, the southern extent of which has collapsed.

The oldest phase of construction consist of a room against the western wall of the courtyard and a series of rooms along the northern side of the courtyard which are now partially collapsed (Figure 112 and 113). All these buildings are built in a traditional style with typical features such as air vents at floor level and recessed niches.

A later phase of the house is built using transitional materials, walls and pillars are constructed of shell concrete block but the traditional style of architecture is maintained. An additional room is added to the north side of the courtyard and a liwan is added to the exterior of an earlier adjacent structure (Figure 115-117). A large gateway is added to the courtyard wall, creating an impressive entrance that frames the new colonnade of the liwan.

Figure 111: Building 23 looking northwest (IMG_9824).
Figure 112: Ruined structures on the north side of Building 23 courtyard, looking north (IMG_0715).

Figure 113: Ruined structures on the north side of Building 23 courtyard, looking east (IMG_0717).
Figure 114: Internal view of Building 23 (IMG_0723).

Figure 115: Entrance to compound of Building 23 looking west (IMG_0704).
Figure 116: Colonnade and elevation of Building 23 looking west (IMG_0706).

Figure 117: Detail of roof of colonnade in Building 23 (IMG_0721).
Building 24

Building 24 is a large house with two courtyards, none of the house is present on the 1958 aerial image of the site. The house contains a wide range of artefacts abandoned by its last inhabitants (Figures 122, 123 and 125). The house contains traditional, transitional and modern construction, reflecting numerous phases of building. Originally the house would of consisted of a single courtyard with a traditional stone built majlis on the western side (Figure 120, 122 and 123). A second traditional structure stood on the opposite side of the courtyard and is probably contemporary with the majlis.

The next major building phase consists of shell block transitional structures built along the northern, western and eastern sides of the courtyard (Figures 124 and 125). A final major building phase see the addition of a eastern courtyard that incorporated both transitional styles and materials and modern concrete blocks. Older structures were also modified, for example false ceiling were added to rooms around the older western courtyard (Figure 124) and air-conditioning units added.
Figure 119: Building 24 looking northeast (IMG_9834).

Figure 120: Western courtyard of Building 24 looking west. The traditionally constructed majlis is on the left (IMG_0785).
Figure 121: Building 24 eastern courtyard looking east (IMG_6614).

Figure 122: Internal view the traditional roofing in the oldest majlis of Building 24 (IMG_0793).

Figure 123: Widow with metal bars and shutters in the oldest majlis (IMG_0762).
Figure 124: Internal view a later transitional room with a false ceiling added. (IMG_6550).

Figure 125: Internal view of a later transitional room in Building 24 (IMG_9839).
Building 25
Building 25 is still in use, parts of the building are lived in and other areas such as the carports are used as animal pens (Figure 126 and 127). Therefore we did not enter the building and only made a brief external examination of the building. Building 25 is a large compound house, containing a range of buildings representing several phases of construction. The building is built after 1958. It is similar in appearance and construction to the adjoining compound Building 24.

Figure 126: Building 25 looking north (IMG_9826)

Figure 127: Building 25 with carport in foreground, looking south (IMG_6498)

Building 26
Building 26 survives only as a low mound of collapsed building stone with a few low ruined walls visible (Figure 128 and 129). The 1958 aerial image (Figure 3) shows several compounds in this area of the site, although it was not clear to which of these Building 26 was associated. The building was traditional stone built structure, and like the collapsed building at the south end of the site (Figure
4) this building was probably abandoned and collapsed as it was no longer maintained. The western extent of the building has been truncated by excavation work associated with the adjacent farm.

Figure 128: Remains of 26 Building looking north (IMG_9826)

Figure 129: Remains of Building 26 looking north. The disturbance in the centre of the photo has truncated the building. (IMG_9826)
6. Conclusions and Potential

Despite being an important coastal settlement in the centuries preceding Qatar’s unification the details of Fuwairit’s history remain poorly understood as there are few early written references to the site. The Persian Gulf Pilot in 1932 describes Fuwairit as “on the shore of a small inlet... a walled village in which are several towers”. The economy of Fuwairit, like that of most of the coastal settlements of the region, relied heavily on the pearling trade, and the collapse of the pearling industry in the first half of the 20th century would have had a devastating effect. Between 1932 and 1948 it seems likely the northern town of Fuwairit (today Fuwairit archaeological site) was abandoned and a small settlement established to the south in the now largely abandoned village of Fuwairit (see Figure 3). By 1958 (Figure 4) the village had had expanded, probably to its maximum size, as the country recovered with the help of petrochemical revenues. Many of Qatar’s northern coastal villages are abandoned shortly after this, presumably as a result of the salination of water sources (Macumber 2009), the draw of the growing city of Doha as well as Government initiatives to encourage movement into the capital.

Despite a growing interest in the rapidly disappearing traditional and vernacular architecture of the country, and a desire by the Government to develop the heritage tourism potential of sites in the north of Qatar very little detailed recording of the architecture of these sites has been undertaken. Teams from Copenhagen university have mapped the village of Ain Mohammad and undertaken less detailed surveys of other coastal towns, sadly this work remains unpublished. Therefore the building recording summarised in this report is an important record of a highly threatened heritage resource. In conjunction with similar work undertaken in Doha (Eddisford and Roberts 2014) as well as ongoing archaeological work at Fuwairit and collection of oral histories of the site the record of Fuwairit’s built heritage can help build a better understanding of the history of the site and its inhabitants.

In the 1950 and early 1960s there is considerable growth at Fuwairit, with new houses being built and existing structures being extended. There appears to be investment by the government, buoyed by oil and gas revenue, and a new mosque as well as separate boys and girls schools are built. Similar schools survive at other coastal towns along the north coast such as Jumail, suggesting widespread government investment. However this growth is short lived and there is a significant abandonment of northern towns, and migration to the capital in the 1970s. The large scale expansion of Doha was documented during building recording in the capital (Eddisford and Roberts 2015). At Fuwairit it seems most houses were abandoned, and it seems likely the population was greatly reduced. However the village was likely still inhabited, and some new houses, such as Buildings 4 and 5, were constructed.

Generally there is less alteration and reuse of the older buildings visible at Fuwairit than was seen in Doha. This is probably a reflection of the movement of Qatari families away from the northern coast in the later 20th century and the absence of foreign workers who moved into older buildings in Doha. The farm adjacent to the village does employ some foreign workers today, and some of them occupy the partially ruined remains of Building 25.

The buildings recorded at Fuwairit chart the history of the village and sketch a picture of the wider dramatic changes occurring across the country in the second half of the 20th century. Traditional building materials, methods and designs were utilised until at least the 1960s, a pattern also observed in Doha. The introduction of new oil wealth lead to dramatic changes in the availability of new building materials, the locations Qataris wanted to live in and the way in which houses were built to meet the changing needs of the population.
7. Bibliography


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