

new studio: **Allies and Morrison opens new studio in Jeddah**

This week Allies and Morrison opened a new studio in Jeddah.

We are delighted to welcome Zainab Alireza as the Director of our new Jeddah studio. A Jeddah native, Zainab is an urban designer with a keen interest in developing positive public experiences and engaging, inclusive design. She holds a Master's in Housing and Urbanism from The Architectural Association School of Architecture and is a LEED Accredited Professional. She has worked in design practices in London and Seattle.

An advocate for capacity building and community development, she is on the Board of Friends of Jeddah Parks. She co-founded Takween Home of Design & Innovation, an interdisciplinary platform for educating children about design and the city. She also co-directed the Sustainable Cities Lab for Saudi female architects and planners, an innovative forum that explored how women can shape resilience, wellbeing and community development within the KSA Vision 2030.

Our Jeddah studio will better support our clients locally and provide our teams with a home base in the region. The studio is located on the Artisan Lane in the heart of the Al Balad UNESCO World Heritage Site. Our neighbours are makers, from a woodturner to a calligrapher to a natural soap maker. Allies and Morrison has worked in Al Balad for a number of years, on masterplanning, public realm design and architectural projects. Like our studio in Bankside, London, in Al Balad we have a shopfront. It was important to us to be a part of this community, which we are actively shaping as architects, urban designers and landscape architects, to preserve this heritage and secure its future.

The practice has been working in the Middle East for 16 years. There is a common thread that ties together all our work there – an approach to urban design and architecture that is culturally rooted and climate appropriate. We were joint recipients of an RIBA International Prize in 2021 for the Msheireb Downtown Doha Masterplan, a pioneering, compact, walkable, urban neighbourhood.



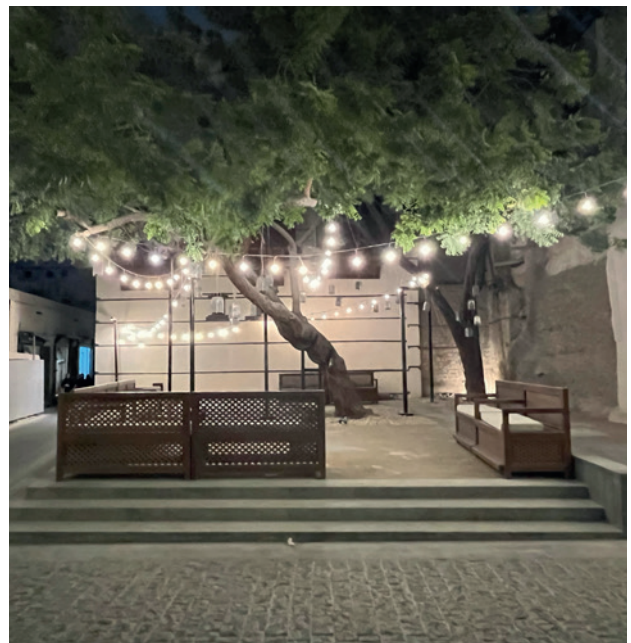
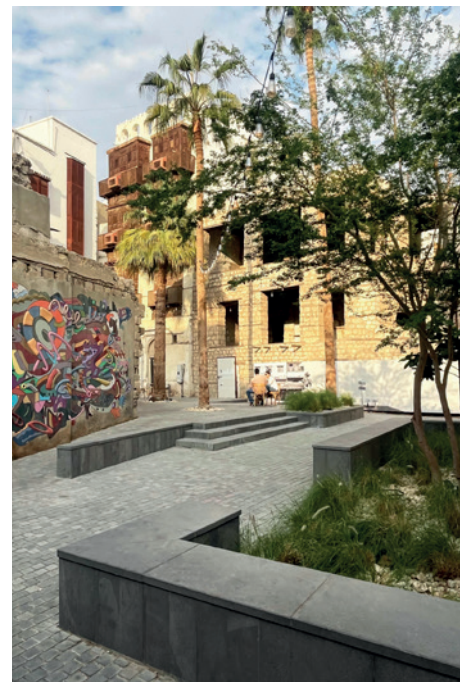
Nouha Hansen, Associate; Zainab Alireza, Jeddah Studio Director; and Jo Bacon, Managing Partner at the opening of our new studio in Jeddah

We have subsequently been commissioned by clients elsewhere in the region who are interested in developing projects and sites that provide these benefits to their cities – in the UAE, Oman and Saudi Arabia.

Our work in Saudi Arabia relates to heritage planning, cultural and religious sites and supporting sustainable urban development policymaking. We have developed masterplans and regeneration plans for two of the country's UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Al Balad and AlUla.

Simon Gathercole, Partner, said: 'After many years working on the regeneration plan of Jeddah's historic district and projects elsewhere across the Kingdom, we are happy to be putting down roots in Al Balad. Our Jeddah studio will provide a base for our work in the region, but what makes it more interesting for us is that we will be right in the heart of this fascinating, culturally engaged community.'

Jo Bacon, Managing Partner, said: 'This will be a base for the region in the most historic of places which has such a commitment for renewal and regeneration. It is exciting to behold and an honour to be working clients who are both protecting and developing Al Balad.'



Views from Jeddah. Clockwise from top left: Al Balad Public Realm Vision, Hajj Route, two images of Public Realm designed by Allies and Morrison, Al Balad Public Realm plan

ABOUT ALLIES AND MORRISON

Allies and Morrison is a practice of architects and urbanists based in London, Cambridge, Manchester, Dublin and Jeddah. We design beautiful buildings that have long life and can adapt over the generations. We also shape enduring places, new pieces of city or settlements at any scale. All our projects are concerned with the crafting of detail and an appreciation for the uniqueness of each context.

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