

NEW GATEWAY TO PETRA

Location: Ma'an, Jordan

Client: Jordanian Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities

Appointed: 2003

Size: 3,000sqm (GIA)

Anticipated construction cost: £12m

This gateway building is designed to choreograph the experience of arrival and movement to the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Petra - to maintain the aura of a 'lost' city that 'reluctantly' reveals its secrets to the visitor.

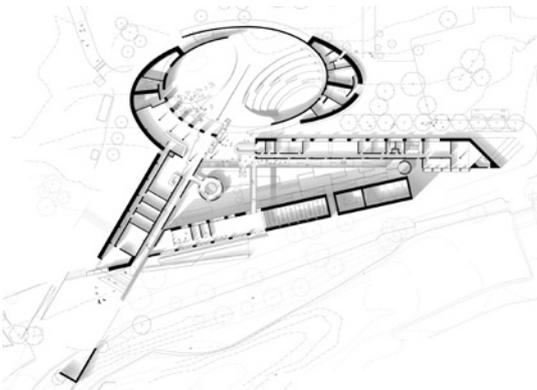
Our design is based on the typical natural features of the ancient Nabataean world, with exhibition galleries wrapped around a garden of frankincense and myrrh trees - the trees that were the foundation of the great wealth of the Nabataeans.

The building design is flexible for the particular needs of the individual user. When facilities need to be closed out of normal hours, or at certain times of the year, it can act as a simple gateway. For those with limited time, there is a 'fast track' exhibition, housed within the thickness of the walls. For visitors who have more time to explore, galleries leading off the 'fast track' ramp focus on the history and archaeology of the site.

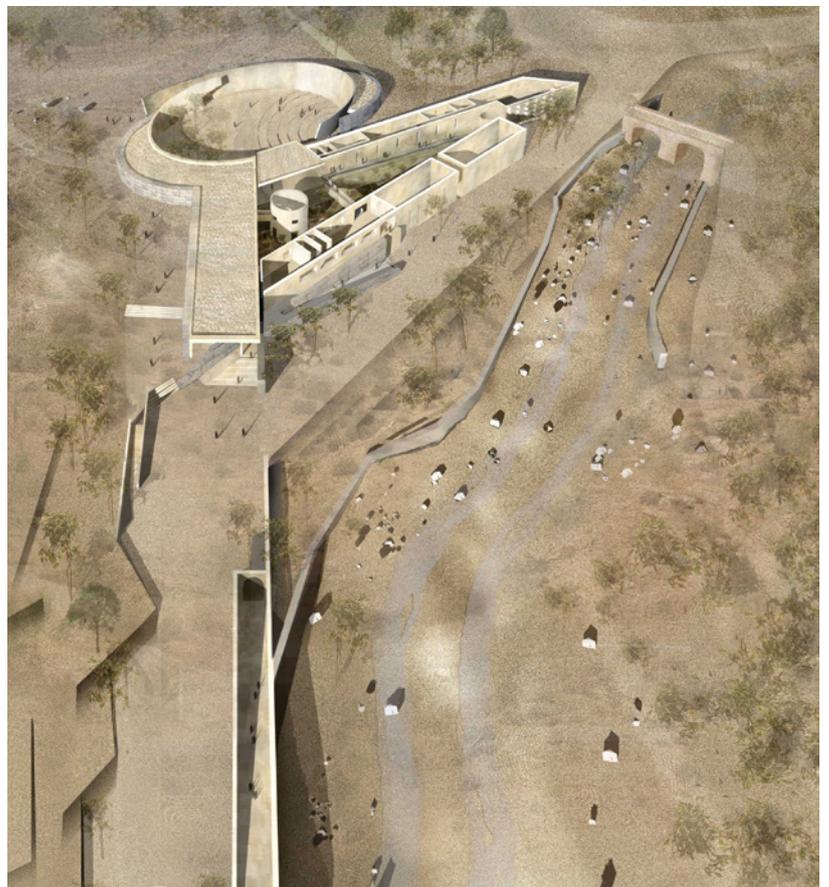
Context

The site is characterised by the impressive rock formations that define its western edge and skyline, but existing scattered buildings interrupt the simplicity of the rocky outcrops.

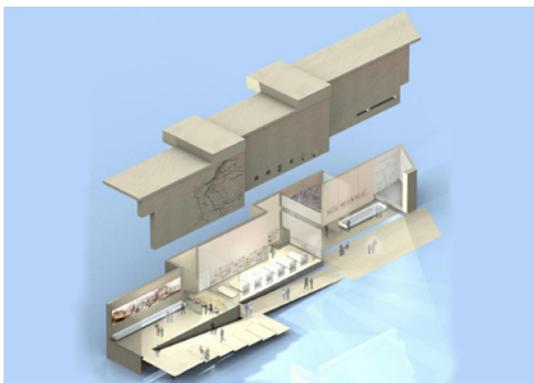
On arrival visitors descend between stone walls on a route aligned on the Petra Gate axis and arrive dramatically into a sweeping oval entrance bowl, or amphitheatre. With only the distant horizon of sky, mountain and foliage visible from within this space, it cuts out the clutter and commerce of the surrounding scene. The visitor building acts as a threshold between two places; the route into the building and out to the ancient world.



Above: Proposed ground floor plan.



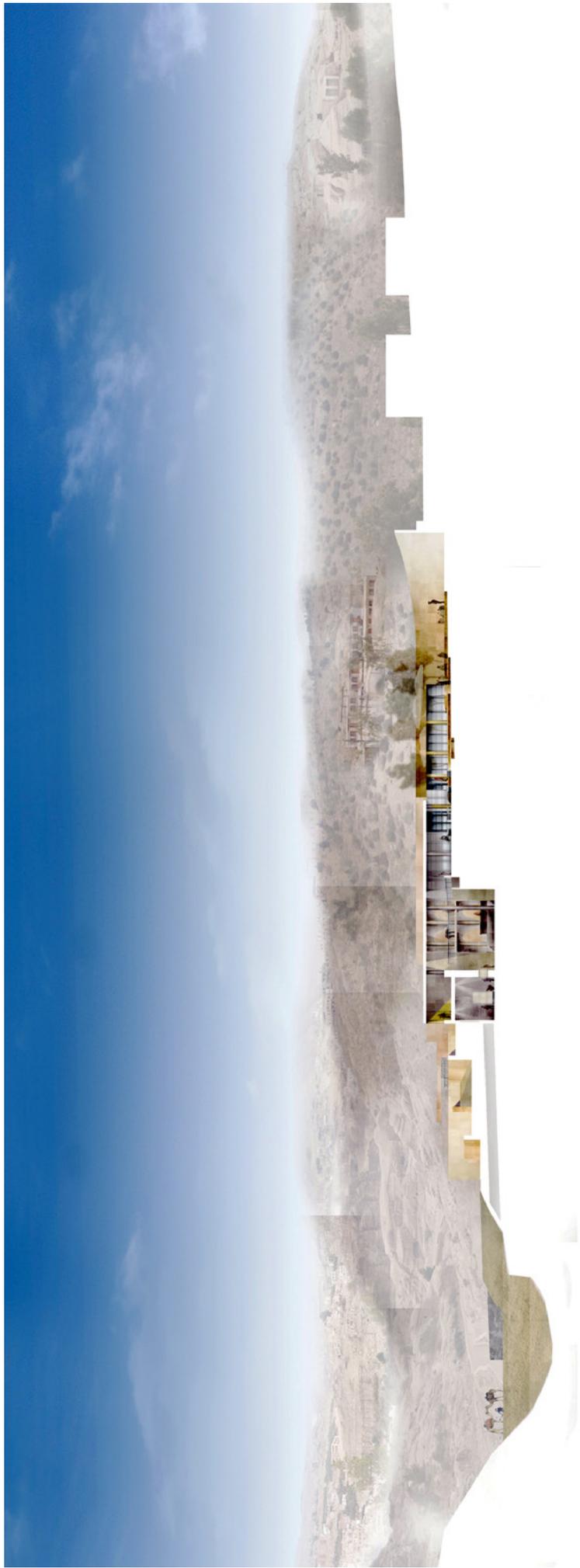
Above: CGI perspective view of the Petra Gateway building.



Above: A fast track and slow track route have been designed to accommodate fluctuating visitor numbers throughout the year.



Above: Elevation to the Wadi looking north west



Above: Section

Gateway to Petra