

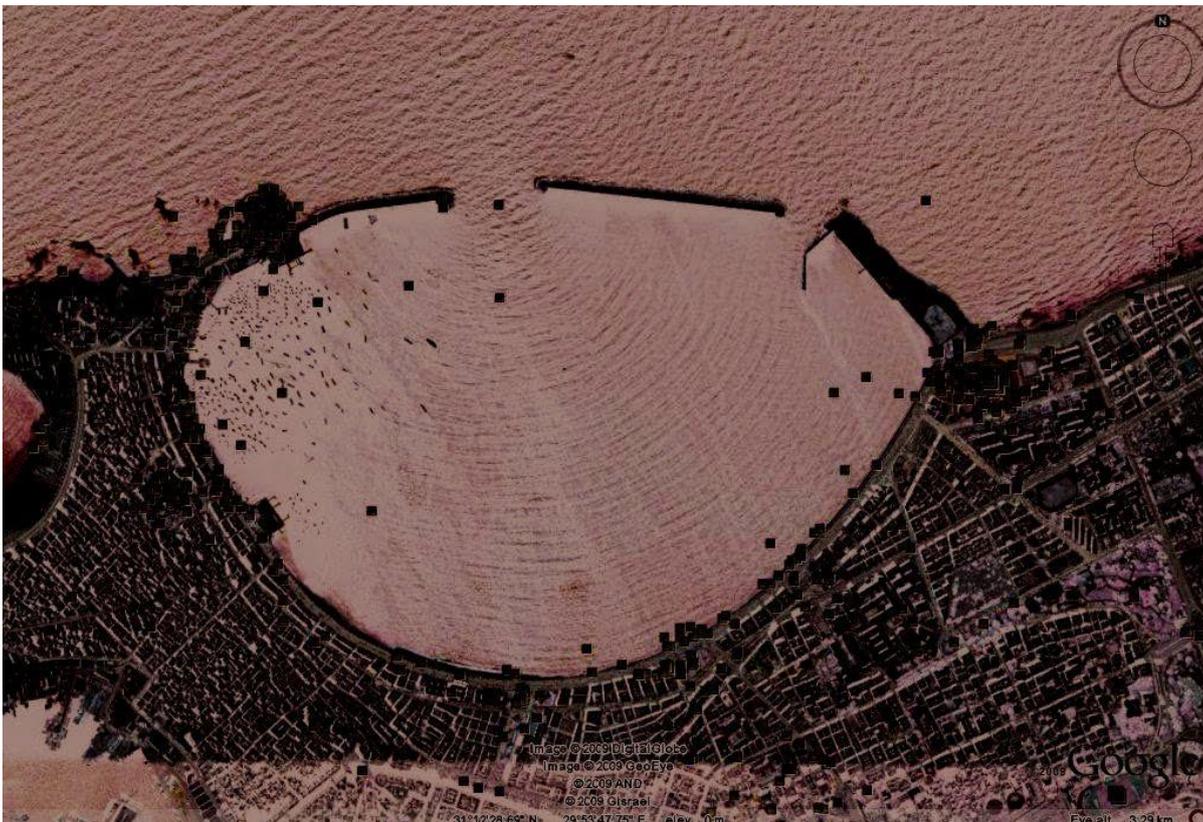
## Danger faces Egypt's neglected Wonder of the Ancient World. Who will save the city of Alexandria?

The City of Alexandria's ancient harbour which over two millennia has provided the backdrop to so many moments in history is in jeopardy. A planned road will close it off from the Mediterranean, crossing the harbour mouth and the site of the Pharos, one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World and on towards the large Egyptian naval base. Alexandrians grumble they were never consulted and that the principal beneficiaries will be military officers living or stationed to the east of the harbour, overlooking the best beaches, whose journey to work will be eased. Members of the Egyptian Hotels Association whose premier rooms overlook the harbour will be the losers as Egypt seeks to retrieve lost tourists.

Who will save Alexandria when successive governors have turned a blind eye towards the illegal demolition of its most beautiful palaces and residences? Currently it has no protector, unlike the pyramids of Giza, Egypt's other Wonder of the Ancient World. There, the government sought to build a Ring Road across the Giza plateau but this was rejected by UNESCO, demanding that work on a planned tunnel under the plateau, the only acceptable solution, must follow completion of a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA).

Alexandrians argue that what is right for the pyramids must surely be right for Alexandria. So why no HIA for the planned harbour bridge?

International supporters of the threatened city suggest that its magnificent library complex, inaugurated in 2002, and popularly titled Egypt's 'Fourth Pyramid', should host a public meeting at which the navy can explain its case, alongside those who strive to preserve the built heritage of the 'Pearl of the Mediterranean'. Why not, they ask, invite to moderate the meeting the Chairman of the library's Board of Trustees, President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, who follows his predecessors in that role?



*Work has started at both ends of the proposed road which will extend between Silsilla peninsula (right), crossing the harbour mouth and the site of the Pharos and historic Fort Qait Bey (top right), onwards to the naval base (left), avoiding traffic on the Corniche which follows the harbour rim (lower).*

Not only Egypt is in extended negotiations with UNESCO which has requested the UK to submit further plans for re-routing the major road which passes close to Stonehenge, another World Heritage Site. 'Liverpool – Maritime Mercantile City' was recently saved from removal from the World Heritage List through withdrawal of excessive development plans.

David Wardrop, Chair UK [Friends of the Alexandria Library](#)  
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