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The target delivery date is set for September 2011.

Stretched along the Beirut Marina, the one-story construction remains below street level, restaurants and five retail outlets totaling approximately 6,000 sq m of floor space.

DMR (US) with Geopier (Turkey) won the tender for enabling and ground stabilization works, which were completed in April 2009. Construction works on the restaurants and retail outlets started in October 2009 and are being executed by Société Mosawad-Eddé.

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Adjacent to Beirut Marina, the Zaitunay Bay project is a 50/50 joint venture between Solidere and Stow Waterfront Development in the form of a company, Beirut Waterfront Development s.a.l. (BWD). The development is conceived as an urban beach, as it extends the existing seafront boulevard and promenade by a series of overlapping platforms, reminiscent of sea waves, to provide outdoor spaces and public areas for artwork.

The facilities under construction include an apartment and yacht club building, a series of waterside restaurants, specialty stores and public facilities. The project is accessed from the Corniche promenade to the north, the waterside city park to the east and a pedestrian bridge over the boulevard to the south.

Situated on the northeast side of the site, the yacht club is the project’s main building with a total of 14,000 sq m of floor space. It consists of four stories and three basements, accommodating commercial space at ground level, 53 serviced and furnished apartments and a yacht club on upper levels. Nine apartments are to be retained and operated by BWD with managerial support from a third-party operator. The other apartments will be sold.

The design-and-build tender for underground structural work and construction of the basement floors was won by a Hourié – Profond joint venture, based on the design by the Soléthane Bachy Group (France). The works were completed in March 2009. Hourié are currently building the superstructure with interior design entrusted to Dada Associates. The building’s inauguration is expected to take place in February 2012.

The quayside restaurant strip on the southern side of the development comprises 16 restaurants and five retail outlets totaling approximately 6,000 sq m of floor space. Stretched along the Beirut Marina, the one-story construction remains below street level, with its roof being a continuation of the Corniche.

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The competition brief called for a distinctive office building looking towards Beirut’s future. The winning scheme proposes a 20-story triple A office tower that meets the highest international standards in terms of space, structural efficiency, comfort and technical resolution, corresponding to its unique location within the city center.

The concept incorporates a large podium, as a contemporary interpretation of the porous urbanism that creates the unique character of a Middle Eastern souk with its sheltered passageways. The podium introduces filtered natural light and a lower scale storefront in a modern design vocabulary.

In response to the global trend for multi-use, loosely defined working environments, a series of linked green spaces run throughout the tower. Referred to as vertical urbanism, they connect the work spaces to the surrounding city and sea. The building’s design benefits from a shifted core, which allows for greater office depth and flexibility. A single corridor offers access to all offices, thus maximizing the total rental area. All offices benefit from views on the mountains or sea.

The concept has been optimized for Beirut’s mild winters and hot summers using a double-skin façade. The outer skin is a mix of translucient and transparent glazing of a ceramic frit to protect against wind and solar radiation, allowing diffused light to fall in. The inner skin is fully glazed and includes slits, allowing for fresh air to reach the interior.
Conceived as the fifth magnet within the regeneration of Beirut city center, this site is intrinsically linked to Beirut Souks. Located on Patriarch Hoyek Street, the principal vehicular approach to the Waterfront District, it is the last segment within the pedestrian network that connects the Hotel District to the commercial city center. The project includes retail, restaurants and cafés, high-end serviced furnished apartments and the future Beirut Bodyna Spa and Wellness Center.

The winning scheme presented by Peter Marino achieves a successful massing response to the local context by means of a well-planned arrangement and the introduction of a central courtyard, which creates a public destination within the development. The residential wing is entered from the southwest corner, the calmest part of the site, and enjoys easy access to the courtyard with its many public elements. A connection on the rooftop offers access to the spa, roof garden and sun terrace with its spectacular views.

The retail component facing Beirut Souks is highly visible and easily accessible creating a vibrant new commercial area. The stores, restaurants and cafés will benefit from the additional pedestrian traffic that is to cross the courtyard. The wellness center features top design, equipment and professionals to cater for a demanding clientele.
Following the success of Saifi Village, Solidere initiated 178 Saifi Village as its extension. The project is a cluster of five residential buildings with neat modern façades set around a landscaped courtyard, offering a wide range of apartments, including large lofts with 5.75 m high ceilings, mini lofts with a combined living-working space, ground floor maisonettess with private gardens, central hall apartments and a variety of penthouses with generous terraces.

Occupying a 2,937 sq m site, the project offers 8,003 sq m of residential space and 1,850 sq m of office space, 530 sq m of cultural space, 179 sq m for stores and 176 sq m for restaurants. The building that opens on the ring road offers serviced offices and a gallery space that is designed for end users in the creative sector. On the ground level, a ‘link-galler’ connects the office building to the cultural space situated above a streetfront café. The building’s difference in end use is reflected in the material used for its façade, which differs from the one used in the four residential structures.

The design is geared towards a contemporary lifestyle as it offers a blend of services and conveys a discrete sense of luxury. Space, light, calm and comfort characterize the townhouse-like residential units that combine a great urban location in the heart of Beirut with the pleasure of a quiet green haven. The creative industries building and gallery provide a natural extension to the Quartier des Arts in Saifi Village.

In 2010, piling works were completed, while excavation works were delayed due to the discovery of archeological remains that are now, with DGA approval, to be incorporated into the landscaped garden.
The renowned Italian architect Renzo Piano perceives the project, in his own words, as a ‘new urban area’ located between the old city of Beirut, the ‘mainland,’ and the reclaimed area, the ‘new continent.’ It is a key development set to complete the urban puzzle with a subtle balancing game between four key concepts: unity and diversity, permeability and privacy, transparency and opacity, construction and vegetation.

The concept proposal has evolved significantly since its early inception and received the Board of Directors’ approval in December 2010. The project includes three towers with podiums. The southern tower accommodates a department store, hotel and serviced apartments, with an observatory and belvedere on the top level offering 360-degree views. The northern tower comprises condominiums, lofts and sky villas, while the western tower offers specialized offices.

Several other buildings of podium height consist of both residential and office components. These elevated podiums connect the project to the surrounding buildings on the ‘mainland,’ thus creating a sense of continuity and urban unity. They include an active ground floor level, several multi-use levels and rooftop suspended gardens.

The active ground floor level is anticipated as permeable and accessible to the public. The retail frontages of a variety of heights are adorned with light, transparent canopies. Trees are essential as unifying elements that help unite the ‘old land’ and the ‘new continent’ throughout the Pinwheel Project. The presence of water, another unifying element, gives the impression of the sea penetrating into the city and provides for a cooling effect in summer.

The rooftop suspended gardens, accessed by panoramic elevators, include both native and Mediterranean plants, with a mix of deciduous and evergreens to maintain a green cover during the seasonal changes. Also at this level, light constructions made of steel, glass and fabric are used for cafes and restaurants. In addition, light structural walkways connect the different plots together to create a continuous rooftop promenade.

The particular function in the multi-use levels is represented through the use of different façade typologies. Glass, steel, concrete, stone, fabric and vegetation constitute the main materials used to interplay with each other. Above the podium, articulated and transparent towers are set to arise, creating a sense of a crystal and lace presence above the trees and gardens. The east-west orientation of the towers provides views over Beirut, the sea and mountains.

FUTURE PROJECTS

PINWHEEL PROJECT

Strategically located between the Port’s First Basin and the historic Foch-Alfanby district, Solidere’s Pinwheel Project is to be a distinctive development that is the gateway to the Waterfront District. The site lies at the crossroads of several main arteries: Port Street and Miraj Alaslan Avenue to the south, Foch Street to the east, Patriarch Hoyek Street and the extension of Allenby Street to the west, and the Ottoman Wall Walk to the north.

Under Study

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SITUATED AT THE HEART OF THE WATERFRONT DISTRICT, SOLIDERE’S PINWHEEL PROJECT IS AN ANCHOR PROJECT THAT AIDS THE CULLTIVE, BUSINESS AND TOURISM SECTORS, AND IS TO COMPLETE THE URBAN PUZZLE WITH A SENSE OF CONTINUITY AND URBAN UNITY.

CONGRESS CENTER

Situated at the heart of the Waterfront District, Solidere’s planned congress center is an anchor project that aims to accommodate a variety of local and international events, including conferences, exhibitions, concerts and theatre performances. The center will be surrounded by public spaces: a square to the north, a linear park to the south, which extends from the waterfront park to the planned Eastern Marina and a sequence of green spaces leading from Khan Antoun Bey Square to the seafront Corniche.

The design brief challenge, which will be subject to an international competition, is to attract a creative, state-of-the-art, sustainable and market responsive solution. This unique landmark project, which serves the government, business, cultural and tourism sectors, has a targeted RUA of 22,000 sq m. The project’s centerpiece is a multi-functional auditorium with a capacity of 2,500 to 3,000 seats, adaptable to various layouts and seating configurations.

The exterior part of the project allows for an additional 3,000 sq m of surface area to be used as a supplementary space for temporary structures to accommodate seasonal events. The project also includes income-generating activities that can function autonomously, such as food and beverage outlets and tourist shops.

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Solidere has proposed the construction of the Beirut City History Museum on an archeological site north of Martyrs’ Square, where excavations in the mid-1990s unearthed such significant finds as the Phoenician Tell, the Bronze Age city gate and remains from the Persian, Hellenistic, Byzantine, Medieval and Ottoman periods. Shortly after, Solidere commissioned Michel Macary (France), known for his design of the Louvre extension, to undertake an initial study of the Tell and explore the concept of a site-specific museum.

The museum’s design will be integrated with the Martyrs’ Square underground parking, the Petit Serail and the landscaped garden at the Martyrs’ Square and Tell site. Recently, Solidere commissioned renowned Italian architect Renzo Piano to study Martyrs’ Square’s urban and architectural design, including the Beirut City History Museum, in cooperation with the Ministry of Culture.

Additionally, and to safeguard the site while providing vehicle and pedestrian access in what is a heavy use environment, Solidere commissioned Dar Al Handasah to study three road options and to carry out a detailed design of the most appropriate one. The chosen option incorporates a two-way road and bridge structure on the east side of the Tell with underpasses to ensure a pedestrian connection to the museum.

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Originally known as Le Grand Théâtre des Mille et une Nuits (The Grand Theatre of One Thousand and One Nights), this venue built in the late 1920s is of great historical importance to the city of Beirut. It consisted of a theatre and a small hotel or pension, with small shops along the street front arcade.

The old Italianate theatre, which hosted a number of small shows, performances and events in its glory years, and was later converted into a cinema, had fallen into disrepair and was finally home to militants and squatters during the civil war.

To honor the memory of the Grand Theatre, and after years of studies to determine the best use for the building, Solidere proposes to restore the old structure in its original design as a boutique hotel with the theatre as its centerpiece.

Plans for the Grand Theatre Hotel are now well underway and it promises to become a spectacular destination, with the original charm and drama of the theatre preserved. To date, the main façades have been restored, and strengthening works have been carried out to the footings. To lend the project greater importance and provide additional needed space, the adjacent building on lot 870 will be rebuilt as original and, together with an empty site to the south, will become part of lot 891.

The design aims to unite varying aspects and scales of urban development through a combination of faithful reconstruction and bold modern intervention that respect the existing structures. Several massing options were investigated by the architects who decided on a series of cantilevered structures to support modern extensions that seemingly hover over the existing building and accommodate suites and roof gardens. The gaps between the modern interventions offer pleasant perspectives from within and allow natural light to penetrate the rooms.

The concept minimizes the number of locations where the new structures penetrate the existing building and ensures that they remain clear of the main historic spaces.
Located on 9,000 sq m of land behind the Beirut Exhibition Center, the Beirut Fitness Center (BFC) is the second of the temporary projects along the pedestrian trail aimed at heralding Solidere’s development of the reclaimed land area. Envisioned as an urban country club, the BFC is a distinct refuge for anyone seeking to work out, enjoy sports and rejuvenate body and soul.

Designed by Bernard Khoury, the structure seems to be turned into itself, and yet it is open to the elements and full of natural light. The facility offers, among other things, tennis and squash courts, a gym, spa, swimming pool and a 400 sq m climbing wall that is unique in the Middle East. The venue also offers a 1,250 sq m landscaped garden.

Extensive use of glass walls and meandering passages around the tennis courts and garden give the facility an air of permeability. The center’s eye-catching entrance and climbing wall are the only visible components above ground. The center features photovoltaic panels and rainwater capturing systems to help safeguard the environment.
In 2010, Solidere witnessed the completion of the South Souks, opening of the Waterfront District and launch of innovative projects designed by preeminent architects such as Renzo Piano, Nabil Gholam, Peter Marino and Fumihiko Maki. These achievements were complimented by significant progress on the North Souks department store designed by Zaha Hadid and the luxurious Zaitunay Bay, set to launch its quayside restaurants in fall 2011.

Those and other signature developments, catering to residential, business and tourism demands, will enhance the Solidere real estate portfolio and ensure an increased and sustainable rental income stream. As Beirut continues to attract regional and international investors, Solidere builds on its legacy of developing the finest city center in the Middle East.

Complementing Solidere’s own initiative in undertaking high quality real estate projects, a large floor area has been the subject of restoration and new construction by third-party developers. The Company provides them with development briefs based on sector plans and adapted to project sites. Land use is prescribed by the developer on a market driven basis, with the Company’s approval.