

# restoration



Reconstructed part of Banque Audi headquarters.

The restoration and revitalization of the Conservation Area and traditional neighborhoods of the city center are widely recognized as a major achievement in urban rejuvenation. Their buildings have recovered their beautiful exteriors, and are enhanced by a landscaped environment, modern interiors and facilities. A vibrant *vieille ville* with pedestrian streets, squares, cafés and shops, the historic core is a meeting place at all times. Urban villages are popular living areas.

The historic core has a rich architectural heritage of monuments, religious, public and private institutional buildings and commercial landmarks. Its recovery has led to a phenomenal market demand for space to accommodate a broad range of office, retail, recreational and cultural uses.

Following Saifi, Wadi Abou Jamil is re-emerging as an urban village.



Fakhry Bey and Allenby streets after restoration.

## restoration process

The BCD Master Plan retained for preservation 265 buildings and 27 public and religious buildings. The buildings were the subject of careful restoration, according to a set of rules established by Solidere in cooperation with urban planning authorities. These involve detailed sector plans and restoration guidelines.

Restoration briefs were established for the retained buildings, based on architectural and photogrammetric surveys, damage assessment and historical research on the original designs and materials. The briefs provided guidelines for articulating the design and restoration strategy to be adopted in each individual case, and were necessarily stricter for buildings classified as of heritage or architectural value.

The projects go through phases of preliminary design approval, restoration permit issuance, mobilization of site works, façade and material sample approvals, site inspection, and, finally, occupancy permit procedure. A dedicated Solidere team monitoring implementation ensures efficient work progress. Restored buildings have to be maintained on a regular basis, and to that effect, owners provide the Municipality of Beirut with a signed commitment to undertake general cleaning and façade maintenance every five years.

Stone repair was an important element of the restoration process, particularly in the Foch-Allenby and Nejme-Maarad area, notable for its faithful reconstitution of elaborate façades and its high quality stonemasonry.

The city center restoration combines authenticity with a progressive outlook. The buildings are rejuvenated through the use of skylight atria, roof gardens, glazed roofs and other features. Interiors are modernized and fitted with modern equipment for functionality, comfort and efficiency.

In residential neighborhoods, this is allied with a high sensitivity to the Mediterranean typology. In office buildings, open plans allow optimal and flexible use of floor area.

The final product of restoration is quality space with a special character. Its success has confirmed that heritage buildings can survive and even create substantial value, provided they are adapted to the needs of contemporary life and business.

Restored buildings on Fakhry Bey street, facing the Souks of Beirut.



# restoration



Recuperated properties: residential building and Starco commercial center.

Recuperated Zokak El Blatt residential building.



## recuperated and sold buildings

Solidere efficiently managed the recuperation process, giving former owners and tenants the opportunity to regain their rights in the buildings retained for preservation.

In addition to fulfilling the requirements applying to all other restoration projects, recuperation contracts outlined the financial rights and responsibilities of involved parties, be they returnee owners or tenants.

With the conclusion of the recuperation process, a total of 146 complete built lots have been recuperated. Of those, 127 buildings have been fully restored, five are currently under restoration, and 14 are under study.

Of the retained built lots whose ownership devolved to Solidere, 37, regrouped into 31 lots, had been sold as is by the end of the year 2003, while one had been leased as is to be restored by its user.

Their restoration is proceeding on the part of their buyers/user, with 26 built lots ready, four under renovation and one under study.

## solidere buildings

Solidere took the lead in restoration, undertaking showcase work on its own properties and closely monitoring other parties' projects.

The 48 built lots remaining with Solidere were regrouped into 42 lots, including five co-owned buildings. Of these, 38 lots were the object of restoration by the Company; the other two are under restoration by third parties, respectively the co-owners and the leaseholder. In addition, Solidere undertook the restoration of two lots on behalf of the Islamic Wakfs, with one completed and another under study.

As at end 2003, six buildings had been sold after restoration, of which one residential and five commercial buildings. Solidere still held by year end 22 restored buildings: 11 destined for office use in the Maarad and Foch-Allenby area, with retail at street level; and 11 destined for residential use in the Saifi, Wadi Abou Jamil and Zokak El Blatt neighborhoods. Of these, five built lots designating six buildings, plus sections in a co-owned building, serve as Company premises.

Solidere leases space in its restored buildings. By end 2003, 12 agreements relating to commercial buildings or sections thereof, and 10 agreements relating to residential properties, had been signed. This resulted in the occupation of around 12,891 sq m of commercial space and 14,475 sq m of residential space. The decrease in the latter figure compared to 2002 is due to the exercise by some previous tenants of their options to buy.

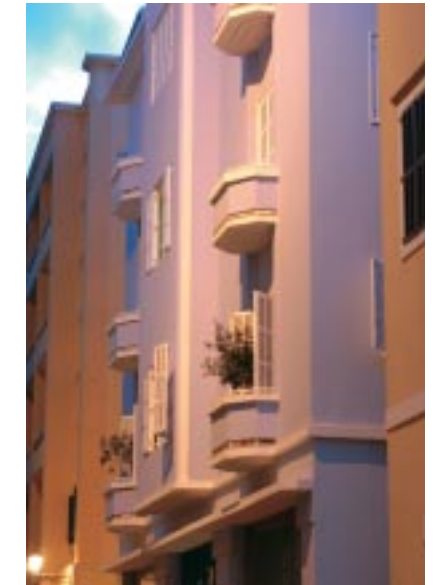
The implementation of restoration concepts in the 18 other Solidere built lots is proceeding, with eight at the construction stage and 10 under study.

### grand theatre

The Grand Theatre block is being developed by Solidere as an integrated project consolidating the historic building on lot 891, the lot 870 building and the vacant lot 1521. The concept design by Architecture Studio (France) will be submitted to the Directorate General for Urbanism in Summer 2004. The works undertaken on the existing buildings involve strengthening their structure and making stone repairs on their façades.

### saifi

Two restoration projects are under way in Saifi. Lot 332 is a building of five stories, two of which have already been sold. Lot 741 consists of three restored buildings, already occupied, and a four-story infill building. The project is developed around an internal garden designed by Ilya - Stevenson. Parking facilities accommodating more than 50 cars are provided under the garden and in the new building's three basement floors.



Saifi restored residential building.

Stone repairs on the Grand Theatre façades.



## restoration



### zokak el blatt

Lot 670 Zokak El Blatt is restored as per Fouad Menem's design into a two-story building. Solidere has applied for a building permit for an additional floor. The parking spaces required for the building permit are to be provided in the adjacent lot 1144 Zokak El Blatt, a six-story infill building with 128 car spaces on six basement floors.

*Zokak El Blatt residential neighborhood.*



*Lot 1015 Mina El Hosn restored building.*

### wadi abou jamil

In Wadi Abou Jamil, lot 799 Mina El Hosn, under restoration as per Fouad Menem's design, is a seven-story building including one- to three-room flats and two duplex apartments with roof gardens.

Three projects are under restoration as per Ayman Sanioura design. Lots 800 and 802 Mina El Hosn consist of two Levantine houses with four floors each, two above and two below the Rue de France street level, separated by an empty lot. The two houses, almost completed, will remain unoccupied until completion of an infill building in similar style on the empty lot.

Lots 1133, 1134, 1135 and 1136 Mina El Hosn are a group of four Levantine houses, structurally comprising two buildings with a common circulation. The buildings comprise three stories each, two above and one below the Rue de France street level. Solidere is currently regrouping these lots and the recently purchased lot 1135, into one building lot. The project is under re-design to provide four apartments, consisting of two apartments on the first floor, and two duplex apartments with reception areas at Rue de France level and bedrooms and family area below, overlooking Wadi Abou Jamil Square, currently under design.

Lot 797 Mina El Hosn consists of two buildings of seven and five stories.

Lot 1015 Mina El Hosn is a five-story building restored following Ziad Akl's design. While the apartments are all occupied, the shops on the north side have not yet been marketed. Under construction in the southern edge of the building is an underground car park serving the building, to be covered by a private garden.

## public and religious buildings



*Al Omari mosque after restoration.*



*Lots 800 and 802 under restoration.*



Nineteen religious buildings located in the BCD attest to the spiritual value of central Beirut. Solidere has assisted in their restoration, and 12 places of worship are now in use and drawing increasing numbers of people.