

KING ABDULLAH FINANCIAL DISTRICT - MASTERPLAN



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All buildings and monorail stations are linked together by air-conditioned footbridges above street level enabling walking distance to all meetings in the Financial District – quite extraordinary for Riyadh.”

DESCRIPTION OF HENNING LARSEN ARCHITECTS

Henning Larsen Architects was founded in 1959 and is an international architecture company with strong Scandinavian roots. Our goal is to create vibrant, sustainable buildings that reach beyond themselves and become of durable value to the user and to the society and culture that they are built into.

Henning Larsen Architects attaches great importance to designing environmentally friendly and integrated, energy-efficient solutions. Our projects are characterised by a high degree of social responsibility – not only in relation to materials and production but also as regards good, social and community-creating spaces.

For more information about Henning Larsen Architects and The King Abdullah Financial District, please visit www.henninglarsen.com.

EXPLANATION OF THE ENTRY

The King Abdullah Financial District (KAFD) in Riyadh is set to become the leading financial centre in the Middle East, providing an attractive working environment for the growing workforce in the financial sector. KAFD offers a wide mix of offices, residential, educational, sports and cultural facilities in different types and densities to appeal to different people and to meet a broad range of demands. During the building phase Henning Larsen Architects acts as consultants ensuring that the proposed scheme achieves a standard that will be seen as a world-class example of sustainable development.

The 1.6 million m² masterplan comprising new buildings of more than three million m² (above ground) has been designed to meet the requirements of one of the world's most recognised green building certification systems, LEED. Henning Larsen Architects is behind the masterplan as well as several distinctive buildings and plazas in the district – many of which have already been pre-certified for LEED. Granted the certification, King Abdullah Financial District will become the world's largest green development project and first LEED-certified district worldwide.

Name of project:

King Abdullah Financial District

Client:

Capital Market Authority and Public Pensions Agency

Location:

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Gross floor area:

1,600,000 m²

Year of construction:

2010 - 2016 (First phase)

Type of assignment:

First prize in international competition

BEHIND THE PROJECT

Leading figures from Henning Larsen Architects:

Designer: Jacob Kurek

Project Manager: Niels Fuglsang

Collaborators: Buro Happold, Møller & Grønberg, DTZ and Geoffery Barnett Associates

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MATERIALS

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Harmony between the buildings in the financial district is ensured by the use of quality materials and light colours. Light surfaces absorb less sunlight and reduce the risk of overheating inside the buildings.

Because of the high density of the King Abdullah Financial District highly reflective facades, mirror glass facades, are avoided to reduce glare from one building to another.

ENERGY/WATER EFFICIENCY

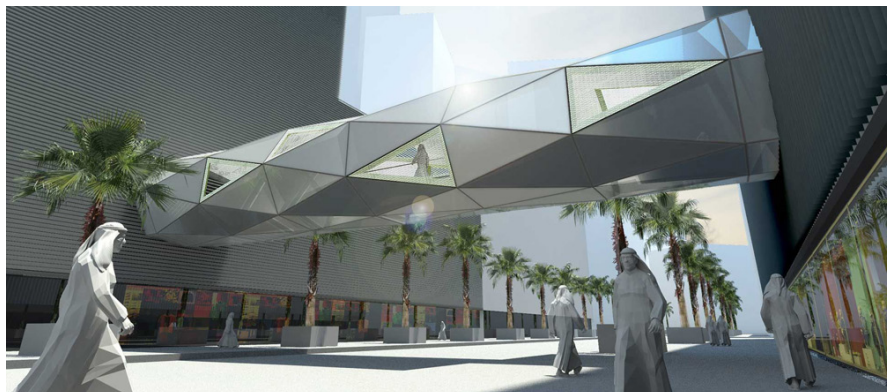
By optimising the building proportions the outdoor temperature has been lowered by 6-8 degrees Celsius. Also the use of light facade materials maintaining humidity, vegetation and water features in the landscape help achieve the lower temperature.

Furthermore, the masterplan includes the following guidelines to ensure sustainability:

- Facades are varied in respect to orientation in order to enhance energy saving.
- Solar cells placed on roofs and integrated into the facades.
- Transparency of facades designed to create the best indoor environment controlling heat from the sun and daylight.
- Shading of facades to reduce cooling loads and to lower outdoor temperature.
- Use of roofscapes to achieve sustainable objectives.
- Skywalks that connect the buildings and an integrated public transport system help reduce the need for cars.
- Skywalks are energy neutral and powered by solar energy.
- King Abdullah Financial District entails district cooling.
- Intelligent lighting reduces energy consumption.

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COMMUNITY IMPACT

The heart of the district is a transformation of the Arabian wadi Hanifa - an oasis or riverbed - transversing the area. The district will become an active and attractive urban space comprising financial institutions, residential and recreational areas, shops, restaurants, hotels, conference and sports facilities.



The district will feature something as unique as a Saudi Arabian monorail connecting the various areas of the district. All buildings and monorail stations are linked together by air-conditioned footbridges enabling walking distance to all meetings in the financial district – quite extraordinary for Riyadh.

The footbridges are placed at an elevated level separated from the street traffic. Due to the hot climate in Riyadh, it is expected that most people will use the secured, ventilated bridges with a floor width of four to six metres. Here, business people will meet to interact and the cafes and shops of the towers will contribute to create a vibrant and attractive environment in the area. A visual connection from the Skywalks to the streets and plazas of the city will help pedestrians to find their way on the elevated bridges.



DESIGN

The vision for King Abdullah Financial District is based on the site and the Arabian landscape, and the main shape of a leaf is forming a whole with the adjoining areas. With the green recreational promenade, the Wadi and the five landmarks in the centre, the District will stand out against the Riyadh skyline as an icon for the pulsating heart of a growing financial world.

LAND USE

Located in the Saudi desert, Riyadh is characterised by extreme heat which preclude walking and makes Riyadh very much a car-oriented city. The infrastructure of the district is an important element of the new development. The aim is to create a modern sustainable city, which is not dominated by cars, but creates public spaces and passages, where pedestrians meet and interact.

Hence, the Masterplan provides guidelines of how to utilise the cold microclimate of the existing wetlands and create recreational and walking areas. In a few years lush palm trees will cast shadows and trains will whisk families and business men through the city centre of Riyadh. King Abdullah Financial District will have become the leading financial centre in the Middle East and have created a variety of recreational activities for the people living in Riyadh and a powerful financial centre for Saudi Arabia and the region.

