

## Wind in Jumeirah Village



Wind International Design & Property Development has announced that concept designs for its upcoming project in Jumeirah Village South have been completed. Wind International has designed 14, G + 2, townhouses in a project, which is set amid luscious landscaping and unsurpassed leisure and lifestyle amenities. The designs are being undertaken by Farayand Architectural Engineering Consultancy, a subsidiary of Wind International, based in Dubai.

Nakheel's Jumeirah Village is located between Sheikh Zayed Road and Emirates Road, and delivers a holistic living experience for its residents in the heart of Dubai's most desirable district.

Encompassing more than 6,000 spaciouly constructed villas and townhouses, as well as mid-rise and high-rise buildings, Jumeirah Village is designed to be self-sustained and will include international schools, town and country clubs, community centre, jogging and cycling trails, sports and leisure facilities, medical facilities, and round the clock security - all providing peace of mind and a real sense of community.

Variety forms the central theme of Jumeirah Village with diverse retail and leisure facilities, beautiful landscaping, and distinct architecture combining to create inspired living spaces for the modern family.

Wind International is also behind a further project at Jumeirah Village. That project is a luxurious and highly private G + 4 mid-rise building, where exclusivity and space for comfort had been at the forefront of the thinking behind the designs. Furthermore, its concept designs had already been approved recently.

Wind International News will bring you the latest developments in both projects as they happen.

## Rents in Dubai up despite expectations



*Taken from Zanya*

Estate agents in Dubai believe that rents of residential properties have continued to rise this year despite speculation of a downturn.

Jasmine Ferrer, a property sales consultant for Arabian Homes Real Estate, said: "Rents do vary depending on the location, but on a broad scale, most properties have seen an increase. A two bedroom apartment at one of the residential complexes used to go for Dh75,000 last year and it is now being rented to new tenants for Dh105,000." She added: "New properties will set their rates based on current market prices and since not too many properties are entering the market until 2007, the demand is still high and people can expect that prices will not fall." A large number of tenants who rented property last year have seen an increase that in most cases complies with the 15 per cent rent increase cap set by the Dubai government.

James Grumley from Alpha Properties shares the same perspective on the situation.

He said: "Let me put it this way; a residence at one of the development centres that used to go for Dh90,000 in December 2005 is now being rented for Dh150,000, but people are still very keen on taking it." Grumley believes that as the number of expatriates coming to reside in Dubai continues to rise, the demand will remain high.

He added: "A large number of people are also offered packages by their employers and most of those companies tend to cover the rents." Commercial properties have also been affected by the rising demand

that continues to cater to an influx of international companies keen to secure a location and compete in the business hub of the region.

Omar Al Obaidi, office manager for Pacific Real Estate, said: "In general, any rent property has seen the 15 per cent increase, but with a demand that does not match the supply we have seen commercial property prices increase by a [large] margin.

"An office space that used to be rented for Dh100,000, is now being rented for Dh160,000."

## Wetlands phase begins at International City



*Taken from Zanyya*

Construction at the mixed-use International City real estate development on Emirates Road is entering its most environmentally-sensitive phase.

Project developer Nakheel will soon begin work on the Lake District sector of the development, which includes the preservation of Al Warsan Lake, a man-made wetland inhabited by approximately 180 local and migratory bird species.

Nakheel officials said the area will be turned into a protected sanctuary with an education centre, facilities for bird-watchers and a regulated inflow of fresh water. An undisclosed number of residential units will be built approximately one kilometre from the wetland, the company said.

Other areas of International City include a Central District featuring commercial and retail units and the freehold Residential District, which is divided into 14 architectural styles from various countries and includes 22,235 one bedroom apartments and studio flats. Building work has already been completed on the Dragon Mart retail hub and the entire infrastructure works, the company says.

According to Nakheel, 60 per cent of residential units are set for hand-over by the end of the year, with the remaining commercial and residential units scheduled for completion in summer 2007.

The project is expected to house up to 70,000 residents.

"The completion of infrastructure work eases the construction activity and makes us well positioned to meet our schedule," said Rashid Obaid Al Helli, general manager at International City.

Al Helli said specialists in wetlands and freshwater ecology have formed a project consortium for the Al Warsan Lake stage of the development. The consortium will also include architects, planners and landscape designers.

The wetland pools were formed in the mid-1990s when a series of pits that had been excavated by a construction company as a rock quarry were flooded with excess treated sewage effluent water from the nearby Al Awir Sewage Treatment Plant.

The lakes, which gradually became an important habitat for water birds, were discovered by birdwatchers at the end of 1998 and were originally referred to as Wimpy Pits.

Shaun Lenehan, manager of Nakheel's environmental department, said a low earth ridge will be landscaped around the area to isolate it from interference by fisherman or other real estate development.

"This area is home to around 45 per cent of the bird species in Dubai so it's very important to guarantee its security," he said.

Once completed, Nakheel will focus on building the Forbidden City, a 240,000 square metre replica of the Chinese attraction. It will feature entertainment facilities, shops restaurants and public squares showing Chinese-themed shows.

## Al Sahra resort set to become holidaymakers' desert oasis



*Taken from Gulfnews*

Al Sahra, a desert resort part of the Dubai Heritage Vision project at Dubailand, hopes to attract 200,000 to 250,000 visitors a year.

Covering 40 million square feet, the resort will showcase Bedouin life and present live shows featuring Dubai's heritage and culture.

Anita Mehra Homayoun, a partner in the multi-million-dollar project, said Al Sahra will open for business after a few corporate events.

"We are holding the first corporate event on September 18. After that we will have a few more corporate events until Ramadan," she told *Gulf News*.

Homayoun, who is also a marketing director at Dubai's Department of Civil Aviation, said she expects the resort to attract tourists from all parts of the world.

"We did thorough market research before starting it. And the type of people who will be interested in staying at Al Sahra are Europeans, Americans, Asians, and even UAE nationals," she said.

A highlight of the project will be the Jumana cultural show. It promises to be an "extravaganza of light, laser, sound and pyrotechnics" and will be staged in an amphitheatre built in the style of an ancient Arabic settlement with a seating capacity for about 2,500 people. The entertainment element will set it apart from Dubai's Al Maha desert resort, Homayoun said.

"Al Maha does not take families. They do not allow children. It is more of a place for adults to go and switch off. We will offer more entertainment," she said. Al Sahra will have 60 residential units in December, with a plan to build 240 more next year.

The complex will house an arts and crafts work area and a souq.

## Dubai eyes global BPO industry



*Taken from Gulfnews*

More than 70 international and regional companies, including ABN Amro Bank and AXA Insurance, have registered to operate in Dubai's new outsourcing free zone that opens in December, a top official said.

Esmail Al Naqi, a director at Dubai Outsource Zone, told *Gulf News* some 55 firms are likely to begin operating before the end of the year in the park located close to the Academic City in South Dubai. Another 20 will join up by June 2007.

The companies will offer business process outsourcing (BPO) services mainly in banking and financial services, information technology, insurance and the healthcare industries.

Nearly 40 per cent of these are from Europe, 20 per cent from the US and the remaining from the Middle East.

"We have been surprised by the response," Al Naqi said. "The outsourcing business is booming worldwide and we want to position Dubai as the leading outsourcing destination in the region." Naqi estimates there would be

some 7,000-8,000 people working in the zone by the end of 2007 and another 5,000 will join each year thereafter.

## Infrastructure

Zone companies, which include Arab Bank and Mashreqbank, will offer services like credit card and insurance claims processing, medical transcription, diagnostics and even online legal and medical consulting.

The project, unveiled in June 2004 as part of a plan to boost knowledge industries in Dubai, hopes to grab a share of the \$350 billion a year global BPO industry with facilities like a zero-tax environment.

Al Naqi estimates European companies could save up to 40 per cent in costs and American companies, 20 per cent, by moving business processes to Dubai.

The Zone hopes to exploit the weaknesses of regional BPO powerhouses like India, South Africa and the Philippines by reducing employee attrition, providing high quality infrastructure, an expatriate-friendly environment and less-interfering bureaucracy.

"We want to complement India, which is moving up the value chain and some of the Indian companies could use this as a disaster recovery zone. We also have our advantages as we offer a better lifestyle for the expatriates," Al Naqi said.

Employees will not be allowed to move jobs within a year of joining a company. Some 60 per cent of the workers in the zone are expected to come from India, 20 per cent from East Europe and the remaining from the Philippines and the Middle East.

## Agencies

Al Naqi said the zone has tie-ups with top recruitment agencies in countries like India, Jordan and Turkey that will allow businesses to hire from these countries. Work visas will be approved in 24 hours.

The zone's location close to a university will also help it access a ready talent pool and it has taken several other steps to keep costs in check, the principal threat to the BPO industry.

Office space will be available at Dh75 per square foot a year, about a third of the Dh250 per square foot it costs on Shaikh Zayed Road.

The park is 10 minutes from the International City, an enclave offering affordable housing, and 20 minutes from Sharjah. It is also building 2,500 studio apartments that will be available on a fixed five-year rent of Dh25,000 a year. An increase in rent will be allowed up to a maximum of 30 per cent once every five years.

Salaries in the zone will start at \$1,000 a month and then scale up with the complexity and the sophistication of the outsourcing operations.

The Outsource Zone has a budget to spend up to \$200 million in building infrastructure until the end of 2007 and will create some five million square feet of office space in the first phase. It expects to recover investments in 12 years.

## Pictures of the Week:



*Pile Checking for Casting for Wind Tower I*



*Tower Crane Reinforcement for Wind Tower II*

## **For the latest progress and pictures from Wind Tower I and II, please visit:**

Wind Tower I

<http://www.farayand.org/wind%20process/process%20page.htm>

Wind Tower II

<http://www.farayand.org/wind%20process/process%20pageii.htm>

*Note: To click on the above links, hold Ctrl and click with the left mouse button simultaneously*