

Rec'd 18.12.87.

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The Aga Khan Award for Architecture

**CLIENT'S RECORD**

**CONFIDENTIAL**

**I. IDENTIFICATION**

Project Title LANDSCAPING, DIPLOMATIC QUARTER, ARRIYADH

Street Address DIPLOMATIC QUARTER

City ARRIYADH Country SAUDI ARABIA

Telephone 01-488-3331 Telex 401190 NAKL SJ

**II. PERSONS RESPONSIBLE**

**A. Architect** SEE ATTACHED LIST

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Telex \_\_\_\_\_

**B. Client** ARRIYADH DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Mailing Address BOX 495

City ARRIYADH Country SAUDI ARABIA

Telephone (01) 488-3331 Telex 401190 NAKL SJ

**C. Consultants** (e.g. Economists, Sociologists, Demographers, Engineers)

Name SEE ATTACHED LIST

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Telex \_\_\_\_\_

**D. Contractor** SEE ATTACHED LIST

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Telex \_\_\_\_\_

**E. Master Craftsman** SEE ATTACHED LIST

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Telex \_\_\_\_\_

**III. USE OF EXTENSIVE LANDSCAPING**

- A. Specify type(s) of Use: Low density passive use (picnicing, walking)
- B. User/Occupant
1. Occupation/Profession general public - not just Diplomatic personnel
2. Income Level (check one) High Medium Low ☒ Mixed
- C. Specify any change(s) between planned and actual use:

**IV. PROJECT TIMETABLE FOR EXTENSIVE LANDSCAPING**

(Please specify year and month)

- A. Design: Commencement 1977 Completion 1987
- B. Construction: Commencement 1979 Completion on-going
- C. Date of Project Occupancy \_\_\_\_\_

**V. PROJECT ECONOMICS OF EXTENSIVE LANDSCAPING**

(Please specify amount, currency and date of transaction)

|                           | Amount             | Currency  | Date           |
|---------------------------|--------------------|-----------|----------------|
| A. Total Initial Budget   | _____              | _____     | _____          |
| B. Total Actual Costs     | <u>124,675,000</u> | <u>SR</u> | <u>1987</u>    |
| C. Actual Cost per sq. m. | <u>113</u>         | <u>SR</u> | _____          |
| D. Analysis of Costs      |                    |           |                |
| 1. Land                   | <u>NIL</u>         | _____     | _____          |
| 2. Infrastructure 10% ]   | _____              | _____     | _____          |
| 3. Labour 40% ]           | <u>119,800,000</u> | <u>SR</u> | <u>to 1987</u> |
| 4. Materials 50% ]        | _____              | _____     | _____          |
| 5. Professional Fees      | <u>4,875,000</u>   | <u>SR</u> | <u>1987</u>    |

**E. Cost Comparison**

1. Please indicate how the costs of this project relate to typical building costs in the country (check one):

☒ Average ☐ Above Average ☐ Below Average

**F. Sources of Funds**

1. Please indicate the percentage of funds that came from:

\_\_\_\_\_ Private Sources ☒ 100 Public Sources

2. If funding was public, what percentage was from:

\_\_\_\_\_ local ☒ 100 national \_\_\_\_\_ international sources

(Please continue overleaf if necessary)

**VI. CONSTRUCTION DETAILS EXTENSIVE LANDSCAPING****A. Site and Building Area** (please indicate in square metres)1. Total Site Area: 109 hectares2. Total Ground Floor Area: -3. Total Combined Floor Area (including basement(s), ground floor(s) and all upper floors): -**B. Construction and Technology**

1. Describe the structural system and the basic method of construction

2. Indicate which major building parts were fabricated on-site and which were fabricated elsewhere

**C. Description of Materials**

(please also indicate if locally produced or imported)

1. Foundations

2. Principal structural members

3. Infill

4. Rendering of Facades or Exterior Finishes

5. Floors

6. Ceilings

7. Roofing

8. Other elements (please specify)

**D. Type of labour force** (please indicate percentage)25% Skilled Workers 75% Unskilled Workers**E. Origin of labour force**- Domestic ✓ Foreign

## VII. GENERAL GEOGRAPHY AND CLIMATE

### A. Please describe the local geographic characteristics:

Riyadh is situated near the centre of the Arabian Peninsula, at an elevation of about 580 metres above sea level. The city is located on open desert country, with predominantly limestone geology. Sand dunes, escarpments and deeply incised wadis are the topographic features of the area around Riyadh.

### B. Please describe the local climatic characteristics:

Riyadh has a typically hot-dry climate. Temperatures vary from a mid-winter daily maximum of under 20°C to a mid-summer daily maximum in the high 40°-'sC. Rainfall averages about 100 mm per year, falling mostly as intensive showers in March and April. Winds are light and dust-storms are infrequent and rarely severe.

## VIII. EVOLUTION OF DESIGN CONCEPTS

Please describe the history of the project, from its conception to its final construction and actual use.

Master Planning for the DQ commenced in 1977 and was a careful and comprehensive exercise. It involved a study of the historic and traditional antecedents of Islamic Arabian towns, as well as current town planning principles and practice. The unique qualities of the site and Arabian culture were also important considerations.

The DQ is self-contained extension of the Riyadh urban area, on a site of about 700 hectares, able to accommodate 120 diplomatic missions, the offices of various national and regional organisations, all necessary administrative, commercial, educational and recreational facilities and housing for an ultimate population of 24,000 persons.

The linear plan which was adopted comprised a curved double boulevard within which a Central Core accommodates shopping, commercial and public functions. Sites for foreign missions line the double boulevard and five residential neighbourhoods stretch beyond.

The traditional Arab city is reflected in the Master Plan's attention to neighbourhood design, each neighbourhood being focussed on a mosque, a commercial centre and a park, from which streets spread out finally ending in a number of cul-de-sacs.

Implementation of the Master Plan has relied on close cooperation between all developers. The Arriyadh Development Authority has maintained close control over designs for all elements, whether public or private. Coordination, not only of the aesthetic aspects, but of the many functional interrelationships of such an integrated urban design has been of primary importance to the successful realisation of the original concept.

### Landscaping

The selected site for the DQ is typical of much of the region: arid desert relieved only by a few natural depressions which attached the sparse rainfall and were home to a few hardy desert plants.

The first on-site activity was the establishment of a plant nursery to provide the needs of the 30 percent of the area of the DQ which was designated as open space.

The landscape scheme provides large areas around the boundary of the DQ, smaller areas within neighbourhoods and a pedestrian walkway network permeating the DQ as a whole. These different spaces have a variety of functions and characters. The passive and active recreational needs of the DQ community are met by walking and jogging tracks, informal "kick-about" areas, quiet sitting spaces, playgrounds, a botanical garden.

The landscaped areas fall into one of two categories: Intensive or Extensive.

The "Intensive", heavily planted and sculptured parks, gardens and walkways are found at locations throughout the DQ. Each of the five neighbourhoods has a formal garden at its centre. Other gardens are located on the edges of the neighbourhoods as a transition into the less formal extensive landscaping. The pedestrian walkway network is intensely developed with planting, paving, shade structures, seats and water features. The main roads are verdant strips dominated by palm trees. This national symbol has been extensively used; a total of 7,700 Phoenix dactylifera having been planted along the road network alone. Even the cul-de-sacs throughout the neighbourhoods are developed as small landscaped recreation spaces for the immediate residents.

The "Extensive" desert-type, sparsely planted areas are located around the wadi edge and the earth berm; here the emphasis is on creating attractive open spaces which are pleasant to use at the same time as being low water consumers and complementary to the desert and wadi environment.

The landscape design philosophy is related to the aesthetic and recreational needs of the DQ's occupants, using a range of design techniques and materials to reduce the overall reliance on water.

The construction of a centrally-controlled, computerised irrigation system using treated sewage effluent from an on-site plant has been a key factor in providing the opportunity to create green, shady and often luxuriant public and private spaces. As soon as landscaped areas, roads and pedestrian ways were laid out, planting was undertaken of the many thousands of trees, shrubs and other plants that already have made the DQ a green oasis.

The landscape and open spaces tie the urban form together. Much of the intensive and extensive landscaping is already complete, this early attention to the visual and micro-climatic benefits of effective landscaping having made the DQ unique in Arriyadh.

In addition to the publicly landscaped areas the Authority, through its Development Control Regulations, requires developers to plant a minimum number of trees, shrubs and climbing plants on their lots depending on the nature and intensity of the development.

front fence. In this way private developments contribute to the overall park-like appearance of the Diplomatic Quarter.

The perimeter extensive landscaping is one long passive recreation area; the opportunity to maximise the topographic situation and respond to a community need was grasped by the designers of the extensive landscaped areas. People are now able to enjoy several kilometers of walking tracks, punctuated by picnic, barbeque and informal recreation sites, extensive views and pockets of denser planting. Clever use has been made of the local stone, expertly merged into the natural landscape and complemented by unobtrusive lighting and seating.

Enthusiasm for outdoor relaxation in family or larger groups is evidenced by the popularity of the extensive wadi-edge areas and the various neighbourhood parks as venues for groups of people to gather at weekends and in the cool of summer evenings. Intensively landscaped parks provide a variety of locations where people can walk under shaded arbours, sit among verdant flower beds, enjoy the sight and sound of running water or watch children play on well-designed and challenging play equipment.

As the various community and commercial facilities in the DO become operational, the network of pedestrian walkways will become more fully used.

## IX. PROJECT SIGNIFICANCE

### 1. In what way is this project important?

Please describe the aspects of the project which represent a particular achievement (for example the technical, economic, or social achievement, or its response to culture, climate, etc.)

The Arriyadh Diplomatic Quarter was developed with local and international expertise and makes a significant contribution to world town planning, architecture and landscape architecture.

As a fully planned and integrated development, the DQ is a showpiece of Saudi national development. Although conceived at a time when national growth reached unprecedented levels, the realisation of the original concept has been carried through into the current period of consolidation and enrichment.

The Arriyadh Diplomatic Quarter has provided a unique, distinctly Arabian, although modern urban environment befitting its primary function as the home of foreign missions represented in Saudi Arabia.

### 2. Please indicate the degree to which the client and users are satisfied with the project.

The Arriyadh Development Authority, as client, is satisfied to a high degree with the innovative design solutions, use of local and foreign materials and plant species, and the resultant appearance and function of each space as well as the overall contribution of landscaped areas to the character of the Diplomatic Quarter. User satisfaction is extremely high, judging by the very high levels of intensive use of all facilities by members of the public.

**X. PRESENTATION REQUIREMENTS**

1. The materials described below are the minimum requirements for project presentation. Please note that standard presentation dossiers are prepared by the Award, and materials should not be mounted or bound. All materials should be clearly identified. The following should be submitted:

- A. Map indicating location of project in city, community, neighbourhood, or landscape.
- B. Ten (10) photographs: preferred and maximum size for A4 presentation (18 × 24 centimetres).
- C. Twenty (20) slides; 24 × 36 millimetres.
- D. Drawings; preferred and maximum size for A3 format presentation (29.7 × 42 centimetres).  
 Site, Roof, and Massing Plans;  
 Floor Plan(s);  
 Elevations;  
 Sections.
- E. Curriculum Vitae, or Firm's Prospectus.

2. The submission of additional materials is encouraged. Please specify any appended materials not listed above.

3. Please indicate other sources of information on the project, e.g. publications, contacts, etc.

The Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture Conference 1984:  
 Designing in Islamic Cultures: Paper, "The Diplomatic Quarter and  
 Ministry of Foreign Affairs Staff Housing Project, Riyadh".

Please note: The submission of this Record is a prerequisite to candidacy for the Award. All information contained in and submitted with the Record will be kept strictly confidential until announcement of the Award is made. Subsequently, such information may be made available by the Aga Khan Award for Architecture for scholarly purposes only. Nevertheless, other persons wishing to publish, reproduce, or reprint such information shall be required to secure prior permission from the author in each instance.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

**ZAHIR OTHMAN (MR)**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**14 DEC 87**

All Materials should be forwarded to:

**The Aga Khan Award for Architecture**  
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