

Site visit: Al Zorah, Ajman

By Paromita Dey on Oct 10, 2015



Al Zorah Beach Residences will be located next to the resorts.

The UAE has often been touted as a concrete jungle, and not without good reason. The impressive towers glittering along the local skyline make it hard to remember the country's history of Bedouin tents and wind towers. It is, perhaps, to counter this seemingly rapid disintegration of greenery that the Government of Ajman joined hands with Lebanese developer, Solidere International, to develop the Al Zorah project in the UAE's Northern Emirate.

Located along the Arabian Sea, Al Zorah Development Company's flagship project spans 540ha, of which 12km is seafront, and is bordered by 100ha of natural mangroves.

The project was launched in 2008, but hit a roadblock with the financial crisis of 2009. Development gathered pace following the 2012 upturn in the UAE's property market, and the company reintroduced Al Zorah at Cityscape Dubai 2014.

The massive project comprises five key districts: The Gateway; Beachfront; Peninsula; Creekside; and Golf Course. The Gateway stands at the project's entrance around Sheikh Mohammad Bin Zayed Road, and features retail facilities and high-rise towers.

Beachfront includes high-end resorts, a beach club, a boardwalk, and beachfront residential serviced apartments.

Peninsula, interconnected by a network of pedestrian passages, features an entertainment complex, a marina, Al Zorah souks, and a lifestyle centre.

Creekside is a residential and hotel quarter with direct access to the waterfront promenade, four marinas, and a mangrove exploration trail.

Imad Dana, chief executive officer of Al Zorah Development Company, tells Construction Week: “As a freehold project, Al Zorah will offer ultimate value to its residents and investors, including 100% ownership of land and the villas.

Construction underway

Construction is nearing completion on the first phase of the development, which is worth \$544m (AED2bn).

“We have completed almost two-thirds of the first phase of the project,” Dana says.

Work to be carried out in phase one involves the construction of two beachfront hotels and resorts, an 18-hole golf course by Nicklaus Design, a clubhouse, 42 golf villas, serviced residential apartments, and four marinas.

A contract worth \$31.1m (AED115m) has been awarded to Aims Group for road development in the first phase. Under its terms, the contractor will develop all road and utility works for the project. Completion of this section is due by the fourth quarter of 2015.

Phase one infrastructure works also include the design and earthworks for four marinas that can accommodate more than 200 boats, the golf course, a road to link Al Zorah with Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Road, and water edge protection across 3.5km of the waterfront.