

Press release

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Designs unveiled for a new mixed use development in Astana, Kazakhstan

Aldar Property launches its latest major mixed use development - Abu Dhabi Plaza, Astana - designed by Foster + Partners. Unveiled at a ceremony attended by The President of Kazakhstan, Mr Nursultan Nazarbayev and the Chairman of Aldar Properties, Ahmed Al Sayegh, the scheme is inspired by its sister project in Abu Dhabi - the Central Market Redevelopment. Abu Dhabi Plaza is a staggered matrix of buildings with a retail and leisure podium and a hotel cluster at the base that rises to form a series of office and residential towers to the north - creating a new landmark on Astanas skyline. The retail podium contains elements which are a reinvention of a traditional marketplace and also incorporate a light rail station and public square.

Situated along Astanas green axis, Abu Dhabi Plaza incorporates a series of temperate year-round winter gardens. And allows light to be channelled deep into the mass of the buildings, creating a network of sheltered pedestrian routes through the site. A highly efficient compact scheme, the organisation of the building into a matrix of blocks is an effective means of maximising the potential for thermal insulation during the colder winter months, when temperatures can reach as low as -40 degrees Celsius.

The cluster formation - where the taller blocks of varying heights rise out of the matrix - has been carefully designed to provide the appropriate views for the different building types. The more exclusive penthouses and the higher residential towers have dramatic views over the city, while the lower rise offices and hotel are more inward facing to reinforce the sense of place.

Sections of the retail mall will draw on the historic legacy of Kazakhstans traditional Bazaars by recreating a bustling marketplace ambience. Light shafts between the blocks are infused with colour by the use of laminated glass panels that flood the spaces below with a dynamic play of light, shadow and patterns.

The design concept has been driven by the extreme local climate and a rigorous process of climate analysis revealed a solution that would maximise solar gain in the colder months with an innovative thermal hot water collecting system for the south façade are being considered. The north façade is heavily insulated to harness heat, and appears like a solid grid interspersed with random glazing. The effect is a distinctive, textured membrane that animates this cooler elevation.

David Nelson, Senior Executive and Head of Design at Foster + Partners said: We are extremely excited to be working on this important project for Astana that will provide a new urban destination - visually and functionally. The design has resulted from a rigorous analysis of the citys extreme climate, which has generated the unusual cluster diagram and has determined a façade that is both distinctive and highly efficient.

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