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CONTENTS

NEWS

- 2 Ed's Notes
- 4 Catching up on the Title Deed Backlog
- 4 Sectional Title Rules for all Tenants
- 5 R3,172 billion for Township Business
- 6 Unlocking Brighton Road's Bright Future
- 6 Pelican Park
- 7 Residential Developments on the Increase
- 8 Three Times the Price
- 8 Collusion Charges

HOUSING

- 10 New Social Rental Stock
- 11 Solid Growth
- 12 Owner-Occupier Investment Drives Growth
- 13 National Property Trends
- 14 Over-protectionism
- 15 House Price Growth Dips

ENERGY EFFICIENCY, GREEN BUILDING & IBTS

- 16 Energy Crisis Needs Collective Action
- 20 Innovative Solar Plant

BATHROOMS, KITCHENS & PLUMBING

- 22 Kingsbury Hospital installs Cobra

BRICKS & PAVING

- 23 13 million Bricks Per Month

INFRASTRUCTURE & MIXED USE

- 26 Design, Sustainability and Usability
- 28 Rosebank's New Residential High Rise
- 29 Renaming Cape Town's Footbridges
- 30 R2,6 million Imizamo Yethu Sports Upgrad
- 32 Commission Fines Group Five
- 32 Collusive Tendering

Industry Buzz, Events & Products

- 33 Dlamini Heads for Harvard
- 34 Black+Decker Announces New Global Branding
- 35 Coatings for Africa 2015



April 2015

HOUSING
in Southern Africa

ED'S NOTES

A degree of honesty

A degree of honesty...fake degrees, money spent on back-up cars, or government jobs for pals – when you cut out all the political speak – all South Africans really, really want is that our basic needs are met, irrespective of which political party is in power.

We want a safe place for our children to live and play, a good education that allows our youth to be self-sufficient, and to instil the confidence that they can make their own way and mark on the world.

One recent media release that caught my attention questioned the fact that the Buffalo City Metro Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Speaker and the City Manager racked up a hefty R1,7 million to have Mercedes Benz back-up cars at their disposal. Perhaps the official vehicles needed to be serviced, however that is taxpayers' money spent on four back-up cars. The metro could easily have bought four new smaller cars for that price! This money could have provided 10 new houses in Minister Lindiwe Sisulu's target of rolling out 1,5 million houses. Every rand counts and government has an overwhelming task to deliver affordable, Gap, Flisp and subsidised housing. Surely everyone needs to be on board and taxpayers' money should always be used wisely. The City Manager cites the fact that a second car was for security reasons – the locals probably wanted to retaliate the unnecessary waste of funds.

With a massive tax bill of R400 billion for public wages each year, the Department of Public Service and Administration recently revealed to the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee that 640 public sector officials have fake degrees, or have misrepresented their qualifications.

There seems to be a disregard for the integrity of the civil service and the law, says Shadow Minister of Public Service and Administration, Joe McGluwa from the Democratic Alliance. So far, the Department has refused to disclose the culprits, but this leads to numerous questions about the human resources model that is being used by government when hiring civil servants.

The Minister of Human Settlements, Lindiwe Sisulu, came under the spotlight recently when she refused to allow the Executive

Mayor of The City of Cape Town's representative to attend an Executive Mayoral event to discuss the Urban Development Settlement Grant.

On that note, The City of Cape Town has again been rated at the high end of the six metropolitan municipalities by the international credit ratings agency Moody's in South Africa, for its sound fiscal position and prudent financial management. The City's Mayoral Committee has welcomed the report and Moody's unchanged rating of the existing long-term rating of A1.za with a stable outlook.

A strong rating allows for a lower interest rate on loans from banks and other financial institutions, which means that the cost of servicing the debt is lower. This rating follows closely on the City receipt of its eleventh consecutive unqualified audit report and its second consecutive clean audit report.

Well done Cape Town Metro!

This issue is packed with informative and interesting news and we as always, welcome your feedback.

Till next month!



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Improvement of security features on NHBRC certificates

The new certificates will come into effect as from **01 May 2015.**

The National Home Builders Registration Council is introducing new certificates with improved security features in order to address security deficiencies.

These include builder registration and home enrolment certificates.

Some of the benefits of these improved security features include:

- Elimination of fraudulent certificates
- Printing will be done on a watermarked paper
- Clear distinction between the original and the reprinted certificate
- Holograms

The new certificates will come into effect as from **01 May 2015.**

Home builders and housing consumers are encouraged to direct any enquiries to their nearest provincial customer care office.



ASSURING QUALITY HOMES



Catching up on title deed backlog

The City of Cape Town's efforts to actively speed up the transfer of historic title deeds are yielding results and more than half of the total backlog identified in 2012 has already been eliminated.

The city announced that, as at the end of January 2015, more than 13 700 historic title deeds have been transferred to previously disadvantaged beneficiaries.

This has been the result of a massive effort by the City's Human Settlements Directorate to clear backlogs pertaining to historic title deeds, some stretching as far back as 30 years. These transfers for older housing projects had previously been hampered from finalisation by intricate and complex processes, including legal, conveyancing and other factors, such as the particulars of beneficiaries.

"In early 2012, the city embarked



on a project, which is still ongoing, to make permanent staff and resources available to address historical transfer backlogs, where these could be completed. In an effort to speed up the processes involved, some of these

transfers are actively being driven by the city's project managers of human settlements housing projects, while others are being attended to at a legal level. We have plans to finalise just over 11 000 of these historic transfers over the coming years," said the City's Mayoral Committee Member for Human Settlements, Benedicta van Minnen.

Key areas where historic title deeds have been transferred include: Khayelitsha, Bloekombos, Wallacedene, Nomzamo, Nyanga, Philippi and Wesbank.

Van Minnen says that the most common reasons why beneficiaries have not received title deeds include: unsigned sale agreements; beneficiaries who cannot be traced; incomplete applications; legal issues over ownership; rezoning issues; unpaid loans by beneficiaries; and conveyancing challenges.

Solutions are also dependent on an intricate partnership between, amongst others, the City, the Western Cape Government's Department of Human Settlements, the Registrar of Deeds, the Surveyor-General, individual developers, project managers, attorneys, the National Department of Human Settlements and, of course, the beneficiaries.

"Owning an asset unlocks economic potential for beneficiaries, it empowers and transforms. We are currently further refining our efforts and will be looking at additional measures to eradicate this backlog," concluded van Minnen. ■

Sectional Title rules for all tenants

While it has become increasingly popular to buy sectional title property to rent out to long term tenants, short term tenants have also become a regular occurrence, according to Mandi Hanekom, from Propell.

Many schemes would like to ban holiday letting but this would not be possible as it restricts the rights of owners' full use and enjoyment of their properties.

Short term lets often breach security measures as holidaymakers tend to be more relaxed than permanent residents.

Section 35 (4) of the Sectional Titles Act as well as rule 10 of the Prescribed Conduct Rules make the scheme's rules binding on occupants of units, whether they are owners, long term tenants or holiday lets. All tenants should receive a copy of the conduct rules with their lease agreement.



"The owner should have a separate list for short term tenants, which deals with issues such as late night parties, lost keys or gate remote controls, security issues or parking infringements," said Hanekom.

In this way, the owner protects himself if he is fined by the body corporate or the HOA for misconduct by tenants. In signing the conduct rules, the tenants accept to abide by the rules. The landlord can then fine the tenant if there is any breach of the conduct agreement. ■

R3,172 bn for township businesses

The Gauteng government has set aside more than R160 million towards revitalising the township economy.

MEC for Economic Development, Lebogang Maile said that they have made inroads in this regard and plans are underway to realise this vision as outlined in the township economy revitalisation strategy.

In addition, the three metros Johannesburg, Tshwane and Ekurhuleni, have set aside R3 billion, R22 million and R150 million respectively, to support the township economy and the township entrepreneurs over a period of five years.

Maile announced that 160 township entrepreneurs involved in light manufacturing and other productive activities will benefit from the R1,6 billion investment in the Riversands/Diepsloot SMME Incubation Hub. Seven new township hubs will be established to assist and support businesses, including Ennerdale,

Hammanskraal, Mabopane and Reiger Park.

Furthermore, the industrial Parks in Katlehong, Orlando, Residentia, Khutsong and Ennerdale will be revitalised said Maile. The provincial government has also in the last three quarters of 2014 made some strides on employment opportunities.

Launched in December 2014, the Gauteng provincial government's initiative 'Tshepo 500 000' aims to provide skills and entrepreneurship training to 500 000 young people of Gauteng.

Maile said that the project has to date received a considerable number of applications through the job portal and a number of young people have already been placed in sustainable employment.

"Our government continues to report on work opportunities created and indications are that we are well on track towards the creation of the one million work opportunities. We have committed ourselves to a more comprehensive and integrated Expanded Public Works Programme and Community Works Programme



by end of this term," concluded Maile.

Over the next four years, the Gauteng Provincial Government's total investment in infrastructure development will be more than R32 billion, while Gauteng municipalities will spend R94 billion over the same period. ■

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Unlocking Brighton Road's bright future



The City of Cape Town is a step closer to its vision of redesigning the important Brighton Road in Kraaifontein, which has the potential to act as a catalyst for investment and the further, well-planned development of this area.

attractive, functional and well-planned urban space with dedicated, safe and comfortable pedestrian areas including wide sidewalks. This includes adequate room for tree planting, greater access to efficient public transport and to non-motorised transport such as cycling.

“This area has experienced rapid urbanisation over the last decade but most of this growth has been in the form of low density, suburban sprawl. Our long-term goal is to create quality urban areas, which will attract investment and further development,” says Johan van der Merwe, Mayoral Committee Member for Energy, Environmental and Spatial Planning.

“We need to literally create an enabling environment to increase investment that will drive job creation. The proposed plan focuses on

enabling Brighton Road as an activity street. Much benefit can be derived from an inclusive, thriving street culture and, in the end, this adds to the experience and diversity of a dynamic city such as Cape Town,” said van der Merwe.

The lack of capacity to accommodate existing traffic demand on Brighton Road, as well as future demand as a result of further urban growth, necessitates the preparation of an arterial management plan for Brighton Road which will include all modes of transport. It will take into account the potential future land use development scenarios and access requirements.

“In addition, it is foreseen that the Brighton Road area could be divided into three precincts, comprising development zones, which will be integrated with public transport,” said van der Merwe. ■

The City's Portfolio Committee for Energy, Environmental and Spatial Planning has recommended to the Executive Mayor and Council that the proposed integrated land use, urban design and transport management plan for Brighton Road be adopted as policy.

The City's proposed plan for Brighton Road foresees the creation of an

Pelican Park

Pelican Park, the public/private sector R700 million development is a World Design Capital 2014 project.

It will offer various residential opportunities including 760 Gap market affordable housing units from R320 000; affordable housing from R480 000 to R700 000; and 2 024 government fully subsidised units.

The City of Cape Town has already handed over 1 200 Breaking New Ground (BNG) fully subsidised units to beneficiaries of Pelican Park. A further

700 fully subsidised units are due for completion by December 2016.

“With our partners, we are making progress and this project shows that we cannot rely only on government to fund the large-scale delivery of housing opportunities for marginalised residents. We must draw in the private sector to balance the dynamics of the housing market and we have to devise new ways to ensure delivery of scale. The city cannot do this alone,” said the City's Mayoral Committee Member for Human Settlements,

Benedicta van Minnen.

The development includes two new schools, a regional clinic as well as two properties zoned as places of worship. The commercial precinct opened in November 2014.

The development includes generous open spaces with surrounding houses overlooking central courtyards. The False Bay Ecology Park can be accessed during the day and provides pleasant opportunities for bird watching and a picnic spot overlooking Zeekoevlei. ■



Residential developments on the increase

The shortage of affordable, entry level housing within urban areas is expected to continue in the foreseeable future before it can meet the demand.

“This is an asset class within the property market that investors have typically been reticent to invest in leading to the gap between supply and demand, said Ryan Wintle of Construct Capital, a development, management services and funding solutions specialist.

Construct Capital has converted former commercial buildings into low cost residential accommodation in Germiston, Randburg, Johannesburg CBD and in KwaZulu-Natal Durban’s Point area.

Average rentals range from R3 000 per month to R5 500 for bachelors to three bedroom units.

“Factors contributing to driving this demand includes rapid urbanisation, as rural South Africans move to bigger cities in search of work and a better life for themselves. In order to make a market related return on

Demand for affordable housing for South Africa’s low and middle income earners is exceeding supply, with industry experts predicting that the asset class will show excellent growth potential.

rentals, it is imperative to effectively manage building costs. However, it is equally important not to cut costs on items that can later prove costly. For example we use granite tops in our units as opposed to melamine, which deteriorates,” said Wintle.

“There is massive demand for affordable and safe residential accommodation, yet the commercial banks are cautious of funding this type of development.”

Wintle added, “We feel that this is due to two reasons, firstly, the fact that the tenants sign lease agreements only once the development has been completed. Secondly, these assets are tenanted by numerous short term leases rather than longer term leases, and this usually results in the bank requiring more equity.”

TPN credit bureau, a property rental specialist, said that at the

beginning of 2014, 86% of residential tenants were in ‘Good Standing’. Of this figure, 83% of tenants accommodation is below R7 000 per month.

TPN’s Residential Rental Monitor for 2014 noted that 61% of rentals range between R3 000 to R7 000 per month. This bodes well for developers as there is a strong demand for properties in this category.

Wintle believes that if this type of asset is managed properly, it can provide a good income stream for the investor. Access control is critical and managing non-paying tenants is key,” says Wintle.

Internationally, residential-focused property funds make up a large percentage of the listed property sector. Construct Capital says that the time is ripe for specialised residential listed funds and the creation of a new asset class. ■

Sisulu’s snub

The City of Cape Town Mayoral Committee Member for Human Settlements, Benedita Van Minnen said that the Minister of Human Settlements, Lindiwe Sisulu has excluded the City of Cape Town from attending the Urban Settlements Development Grant for metros.

The country’s second largest metro was overlooked while other metro mayors attended this event. Unfortunately, the City of Cape Town’s Executive Mayor, Patricia de Lille, was unable to attend the event as a result of a three day notice period only. The Executive Mayor was however fully entitled to send a representative.

According to Van Minnen, Minister Lindiwe Sisulu has misused her position as the Minister of Human Settlements to purposefully block service delivery in the City of Cape Town. The Department of Human Settlements



invited all metro mayors to attend a meeting in Johannesburg, where the USDG grant was discussed.

The City’s Executive Mayor, Patricia De Lille, had a long-standing commitment which she could not cancel. De Lille communicated her unavailability to the Minister’s office and added that she would be sending Van Minnen as her representative in her capacity as Mayoral Committee Member for Human Settlements instead.

However, the Minister’s office said it was strictly for Executive Mayors and that there would be no need for

a representative. De Lille wrote to the Minister, insisting that the City of Cape Town should not be excluded due to her unavailability.

De Lille also reminded Minister Sisulu that she was delegating her powers and sending Van Minnen as her representative. Van Minnen duly attended the meeting and Minister Sisulu asked her to leave.

“She personally blocked me from taking part in the discussion that directly impacts my directorate and service delivery in the City of Cape Town,” said Van Minnen. ■

THREE TIMES THE PRICE

According to Makashule Gana, the Democratic Alliance Shadow Minister of Human Settlements, the Portfolio Committee on Human Settlements revealed that in the Northern Cape almost R7million was spent on repairing 32 houses, at a cost of R216 000 per house.

In the Free State, the Department spent almost R80 million to restore and repair 264 houses, at a cost of R302 250 per house.

In the Eastern Cape, R334 million was allocated to repair 3123 houses at R107 000, this is almost the cost of a new RDP/BNG house.

“Considering that the average cost of building a decent RDP house from scratch is an estimated R110 000, it is highly unlikely that such large amounts of money went to the actual restoration of these houses. It would have been cheaper to demolish rather than repair,” says Gana.

This money needs to be accounted for by Minister of Human Settlements, Lindiwe Sisulu.

Questions to parliament will include: Who are the contractors responsible for the original shoddy



Repairing RDP fully subsidised houses comes with a hefty price tag of almost three times the price the original house cost to build. It would be cheaper to demolish the existing house and start over.

workmanship?; the exact nature of the repairs and why did it cost more than it did to build the houses?; What systems have been put in place to monitor the quality of houses being built?

The Department has spent over R2 billion in the last three years to rectify poorly built houses. Due to over-charging, it now seems that far

less houses were fixed. In any event, the need to repair so many houses across the country points to an irregular tender process.

Gana says that the Minister of Human Settlements, Lindiwe Sisulu should ensure that the process of awarding such contracts is objective, transparent and free from political influence. ■

Collusion charges

The Construction Industry Development Board (cidb) has issued collusion charges against 15 construction companies.

Following the Board's investigation into collusive practices in the construction industry, the cidb has served charges on fifteen contractors listed on its Register of Contractors, for contravention of its Code of Conduct for parties engaged in construction procurement.

In terms of the charges, the parties will now have to appear for a formal inquiry, before an independent Investigating Committee scheduled to take place in April 2015.

The fifteen companies are: Murray & Roberts Construction, Basil Read

Holdings, Aveng (Africa), Esorfranki, G Liviero Building, WBHO Construction, Giuricich, Haw & Inglis Civil Engineering, Hochtief Solutions AG, Norvo Construction, Raubex, Rumdel, Stefanutti Stocks Holdings, Tubular Technical Construction and Vlaming.

It has been a protracted process, since allegations of collusion in the construction industry first surfaced in 2011 to a point, where the Commission has finally been able to bring the charges against these construction companies, in terms of the specific legislative and regulatory mandate.

This is a significant step in intensifying the effort to address fraudulent and corrupt behaviour on public sector projects, in the interest

of transparency, fairness and economic transformation in the construction industry.

As the public is aware, there are other companies that have been implicated in the construction collusion scandal. Not all of these construction companies are included in this first phase of the cidb investigation process. At this point, the cidb action is only limited to the fifteen companies that have made disclosure of their participation in collusive conduct, to the Competition Commission. More work is underway to bring all construction companies involved to book, including investigating those companies that have declined to cooperate with the Competition Commission. ■



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NEW SOCIAL RENTAL STOCK

Johannesburg Social Housing Company (JOSHCO) has converted Europa House at 32 Plein Street, Johannesburg, from a 10-storey commercial block into 168 communal rooms with shared bathrooms and kitchens.

The R10 million project is well located on the Rea Vaya Rapid Transit node, as well as the Johannesburg train station. Europa now offers communal living for families as well as individuals. Room sizes vary from 12m² to 22m² and rentals range from R840 to R1 540 per month depending on the size of the unit. Each floor provides separate ablution facilities and a communal kitchen. The residential building has biometric access, 24 hour security and an energy efficient generator.

“Refurbishment of Europa House is a great step in enhancing the image of the inner city since the surrounding buildings are dilapidated and contribute to the current state of urban decay. JOSHCO’s primary objective is to transform the lives of their tenants by providing quality accommodation that is sustainable and energy efficient. It further contributes through its repossession and refurbishment of ‘bad buildings’ in the city,” said the MMC of Housing, Dan Bovu.

Tenants are screened and vetted through the social housing provider’s application process and according to a set criteria. First time tenants are required to attend compulsory workshops on the tenants’ rights, obligations and responsibilities.

JOSHCO offers affordable and secure home rentals for citizens who earn between R3 500 and R7 500 per month. Those in this income bracket do not qualify for fully subsidised government housing nor do they qualify for mortgage bonds.

As part of the inner city regeneration Better Buildings Programme, JOSHCO has taken over the manage-



ment of several buildings in the inner city of Johannesburg in the past eight years. The buildings have been refurbished into quality communal rental accommodation suitable for the lower income group. Communal rental housing provides cost effective accommodation, where the costs of development are minimised by providing rental rooms with shared bathrooms, laundries and kitchens.

JOSHCO, a City of Johannesburg owned entity, has received an unqualified audit over the past eight years (and a clean audit over the last six years). The social housing provider has invested over R1,8 billion towards

making Johannesburg a more liveable city. It has a portfolio of over 7 500 social housing units, with plans to increase this number to 13 600 by June 2017.

The Europa project team included: Project managers: Hoboyi & Associates; Architects: Activate Architects; Quantity surveyors: Enumerate Consulting; Mechanical and electrical engineer: Lebone Consulting Engineers; Structural engineer: Allan Sutton Consulting; Safety consultant: Empowerisk Safety Consultants; Fire consultants: Specialised Fire Technology; and Contractor: LeMay Construction. ■

SOLID GROWTH

FNB's Home Loan division is going strong, having grown advances by 6% on a year-on-year basis as at December 2014.

Achieving 13% over the last three years, this compares well with the growth achieved in the market, excluding FNB, of 0.5% in the last year and 5% over the last 3 years. "We are outgrowing the market in terms of our mortgage loan book," says Marius Marais, CEO of Home Loans at FNB.

"This can be attributed to both our successful partnership model, internally within FNB and externally with our industry partners. This was on the back of FNB transactional customer growth that has increased its penetration into the South African market by materially increasing its customer numbers."

The growth in market share has been achieved whilst also maintaining the lowest level of credit losses, at 8bp for the last year and an average of 23bp over the last three years, versus an average of 23bp and 82bp for the market, excluding FNB, respectively. The percentage of FNB's home loans that are non-performing, at 2,9%, versus 4,4% for the industry, demonstrates that its superior levels of growth has not come at the expense of credit quality.

"Our strategy is to look for economically profitable growth opportunities on an individual and property basis, which gives us a comprehensive view of the risks we face," says Marais. "We believe we have good risk assessment tools and capabilities, an executive leadership team with many years of home loans experience over different parts of the economic cycle and a consistent approach to the market."

FNB has been successful in growing its customer numbers and Home Loans book in Gauteng and is looking to replicate this success in the other major metropolitan areas.

In terms of its product features such as the Future Use and Flexi options are proving popular with clients, as they provide financial flexibility.

The Future Use option allows clients to save money in the future by registering a higher bond in the Deeds office at the time of taking the loan, thereby allowing them the opportunity, in the future, to borrow without

having to pay further legal fees or wait for the bond registration process of around two to three months before the loan proceeds can be paid out to the client. With the Future Use option, further lending is realized in a matter of days.

In terms of the Flexi option, customers are able to use their Home Loans as an effective savings tools by increasing their repayment amounts. Customers benefit through large interest savings, by paying their loans off quicker, or by having access to some emergency funds available in their home loans, which is accessible at any time.

"We would like to see everyone move onto the Flexi option," said Marais, "We believe this can help customers improve their financial flexibility and resilience by building up some savings within their home loan to assist with unforeseen events."

Customer service is at the core of FNB Home Loan's business strategy, in terms of both lending strategy as well as when customers experience



financial difficulties.

"The impact of assisting customers from when they first start to get into financial difficulty makes a significant difference to the overall debt process," say Marais.

Since the bank started with its Quick Sell programme in 2009 FNB Home Loans has assisted customers to sell 7 500 properties by offering them a workable solution to help them to rebuild their lives without a debt burden that cannot be serviced.

"While we don't expect to see a big difference in our lending criteria in the near future, we are working to make the life cycle of the bond, easier and more efficient," says Marais. ■



OWNER-OCCUPIER INVESTMENT DRIVES GROWTH

Business owners continue to purchase commercial properties at levels experienced in 2012/2013.

This is a vote of confidence in the future of our country's commercial property market, says Brett Webb, Head of Specialised Lending, Specialised Sales and Commercial Markets at Standard Bank.

According to Webb, "Despite the downturn in the economy and expectations that interest rates will increase further in 2015, clients are still buying property, but becoming more selective in their purchasing patterns. To date, negotiated 'owner-occupier' transactions are in line with 2012/2013 figures and experienced a 44% upsurge."

The specialised lending portfolio includes properties worth a minimum of R5 million and clients with a minimum turnover of R10 million and a maximum turnover of R1.2 billion. The typical property purchase agreement is for a period of 10 years. Buyers typically borrow between 70 to 75% of the property's value - the owner-occupiers equity contribution being driven by factors such as demand for the property etc.

One of the strong factors driving the owner-occupier market is that a combined view is taken on the client and the property to determine the client's level of equity contribution where a purchase is concerned.

"There is no doubt that owner-occupiers are taking a longer-term view of the market and are making property investments only when the stability and potential of their markets and company cash flows have been carefully examined. Factors impacting on property purchasing decisions have also been influenced by the rentals being paid in the geographical areas in which businesses operate. In areas that are less in demand rentals have remained static or declined," says Webb.

He goes on to explain, "The major

issue presently impacting the sales of commercial properties is the cost base related to municipal rates and energy increases that in many cases have outstripped the growth in rentals. Where rentals have been low, many potential purchasers of buildings have held back from making an investment when viewing energy and rates costs."

"Where businesses are owner-occupied, they have taken advantage of various subsidy schemes on offer to reduce energy costs. Typically, 'greening' their buildings has involved retrofitting lighting systems and obtaining cost-efficient equipment such as electric motors. It is more difficult to achieve these operational savings when premises are rented and the landlord has to shoulder some of the cost burden involved."

"As was to be expected, the primary area of activity in the owner-occupier segment during 2014 was Gauteng. In KwaZulu-Natal, the commercial property market is fairly evenly split between investors and owner-occupiers. The Western Cape is fundamentally different

with investors rather than owner-occupiers taking the lead on commercial property purchases. The Eastern Cape market is dominated by a few large investors. This makes entry into the market in the Eastern Cape difficult for smaller owner-occupiers and investors in the region."

The Mozambique Corridor, where significant government and municipal spend has taken place, has encouraged the growth of business and stimulated activity in the owner-occupier sector.

"The same dynamics apply near the Coega development area in Port Elizabeth, and industrial development zones that have been established in East London in the Eastern Cape, as well as the Dube Trade Port near Durban's King Shaka International Airport," says Webb.

"What will continue to drive investments by owner-occupiers is the fundamental difference that exists between landlords and business owners looking for a sound investment. The investor needs to weigh the cost of the purchase or building project against rentals that can be achieved." ■





NATIONAL PROPERTY TRENDS

According to the Pam Golding Residential Property Index, “The region has reflected a slow but sure return to above inflation house price growth and above average rental yields. Now we are seeing a scenario where the previously lagging KZN housing market looks set to become the regional outperformer in 2015.”

Golding goes on to say that the revival in the KZN residential market is largely attributable to growing interest in the region’s lifestyle offering. “The relocation of the airport to the North Coast, the prevalence of estates and good schools, along with the relative value for money on offer, has seen an influx of commuters, who have chosen to move to the region with their families. Investors have been re-entering the market, and with demand exceeding supply, the region is experiencing significant stock shortages.”

“In the Highway area, the central areas of Westville and Pinetown have retained their value and we have achieved increased sales here as well as in Kloof/Hillcrest, where PGP sales are up by 67% over last year. In areas such as Montclair and Bluff, where affordability is key, we have gained traction in the market. And turning further south, an increased demand for primary residential property has slowly crept into the South Coast from Amanzimtoti through to Scottburgh

The future looks bright for KwaZulu-Natal’s property market. Since mid-2013 growth in house prices in this region have accelerated sharply, closing the price performance gap first with Gauteng and more recently, the Western Cape.

and even as far as Umtentweni where our sales have increased by 20% to 30% year on year,” says Golding.

The Pam Golding Residential Property Index combines PGP’s own sales data to complement the Lightstone Repeat Sales Index and in so doing, brings the indices more up to date, overcoming the lag caused by the delay in reporting of registrations at the Deeds Office.

The Index notes that nationally, after a temporary setback in 2011, the recovery in house prices has steadily gained momentum, and despite lacklustre economic growth and two modest interest rate hikes during the course of last year, a healthy average annual growth rate of 6,6% was achieved in 2014. This is a marked improvement on the average annual increases of 5,2% and 3,5% recorded in 2013 and 2012 respectively.

For homeowners and investors alike, last year’s stronger increase was particularly welcome since, for the first time 2010, it exceeded the average inflation rate (6,1%).

Golding says, “During the past three years, the leading province in terms of average house price appreciation has been the Western Cape,

where average house prices have exceeded those in the two other major provinces of Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal. “It appears however, that the Cape housing market’s period of price outperformance has come to an end, as growth in the region’s prices peaked last year and is now approaching the national average.”

As 2015 progresses, the Index points out that it is now the lower price band where prices are performing best and look set for positive growth. Reflecting the growing importance of the first-time house buyer in the local residential market. Within the lower price band, regional differences are again evident, with KwaZulu-Natal and the Western Cape the outperformers, while Gauteng price increases have remained broadly in line with the national average.

A further emerging trend is the increasing popularity of sectional title property – as running a freestanding home is becoming increasingly expensive. Further fuelling this trend is the burgeoning demand for student accommodation in suburbs close to tertiary education institutions, which is in turn attracting buy to let investors. ■

OVER-PROTECTIONISM

New proposed laws aim to regulate the property market in significant ways in an attempt to protect both buyers, sellers and local municipalities.

The Property Practitioner's Bill and Home Inspections has been proposed by the South African Local Government Association (SALGA).

Newly created, home inspection agencies will offer to investigate a property on behalf of, and at the cost of, a prospective buyer, an estate agent or even the seller.

They tend to cover issues such as leaks, insulation, damp, structural issues etc. However they may not cover electrical issues as an Electrical Certificate of Compliance must be obtained and issued by a qualified electrician.

"While these kinds of inspections can certainly benefit a prospective buyer in identifying issues with the property that might not be readily apparent there are a few issues with this kind of service," says Bruce Swain, Managing Director of the Leapfrog Property Group.

"Few buyers would be willing to pay money for a report on a property unless they were absolutely invested in buying it. An inspection also does not force the seller to accept a buyer's offer – especially if that's been decreased due to problems that have been highlighted."

It all began with the CPA (Consumer Protection Act) that came into effect in 2011 with the aim of protecting consumers from unscrupulous lenders, retailers etc.

While details on the proposed bill remain unclear, there is talk of the Estate Agency Affairs Board pushing for these inspections to become mandatory. This is something that would increase the red tape as well as the expense incurred by buyers (or possibly sellers).

"As Leapfrog are 100% behind protecting both sellers and buyers from bad deals, the company believe that this is where a qualified, experienced agent is of greater benefit – adding an additional cost to the transaction will likely prove cost prohibitive."

Many municipalities are struggling to collect outstanding rates – to the tune of almost R100 billion.

According to a recent report, SALGA now want to introduce a law that will enable the creation of an agency that can attach the salaries of consumers who owe the municipalities, to recover outstanding rates.

"Naturally municipalities need to be able to collect debt, that's not up for debate. However, we have serious qualms about establishing another agency to do what the courts are already set up to do. This would essentially create another rung in the legal system i.e. this new agency, the

Magistrate's Court, High Court and the Supreme Court of Appeal. Why add another tier to a system that's already more than capable of handling these cases?" says Swain.

Also, what recourse home owners will consumers have if their salaries have been attached by this agency due to incorrect billing by the municipality?

It's also already in a seller's best interest to pay their municipal bills as they won't be able to sell the property without a certificate from the municipality. This may of course only force them to settle their account once they want to sell, but in the interim, there's nothing stopping local government from taking them to court.

"At the end of the day, attempting to protect people (whether as an individual or as organisations) is certainly a noble pursuit but it can over complicate matters – especially if this leads to increased costs," says Swain.

He adds that the old adage of 'buyer beware' remains true and a buyer's best protection is still to do their homework. Swain also believes that SALGA would do better by working to improve the current system, as opposed to complicating it further. ■



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HOUSE PRICE GROWTH DIPS

Year-on-year growth in the average nominal value of middle-segment homes in the South African residential property market softened somewhat further in February 2015, whereas real price growth accelerated up to January on the back of declining inflation.

These price trends are according to the Absa house price indices, which are based on applications for mortgage finance received and approved by the bank in respect of middle-segment small, medium-sized and large homes.

Jacques du Toit, Property Analyst Absa Home Loans says that nominal middle-segment house price growth came to 8,4% y/y in February, down from 8,9% in January and a recent high of 9,9% y/y in September last year. On a month-on-month basis, nominal price growth slowed down further to 0,3% in February from just below 0,9% in January last year.

The gradual declining trend in nominal house price growth since late last year is much in line with continued subdued real economic growth of 1,3% year-on-year (y/y) in the final

quarter of the year. Full-year growth was 1,5% in 2014 (2,2% in 2013 and forecast at 2,2% in 2016). The higher interest rates and continued low level of consumer confidence could also have played a role in the lower house price growth in early 2015.

The average nominal value of homes:

- Small homes (80 m² - 140 m²): R880 000
- Medium-sized homes (141 m² - 220 m²): R1 204 000
- Large homes (221 m² - 400 m²): R1 845 000

In real terms, i.e. after adjustment for the effect of consumer price inflation, house price growth improved further to 4,3% y/y in January this year to its highest level since mid-

2013. This was the effect of headline consumer price inflation slowing down to 4,4% y/y in January on the back of declining food price inflation and a significant downward trend in domestic fuel prices since the third quarter of last year, driven by a major drop in international oil prices in the second half of 2014. Based on recent oil price and US\$/R exchange rate movements, fuel prices were raised again in early March, with an increase in fuel taxes announced in the 2015 Budget to cause fuel prices to jump further in April. These developments will put upward pressure on inflation, which will adversely affect real house price growth in the near term. Against this background, interest rates are forecast to increase later this year and through 2016 to curb inflation. ■

Houses of 80m²-400m², up to R4,2 million

Month	Small houses 80m ² -140 m ²			Medium-sized houses 141m ² -220 m ²			Large houses 221m ² -400 m ²		
	2013	2014	2015	2013	2014	2015	2013	2014	2015
January	376.8	390.2	439.8	427.6	448.5	481.1	442.8	478.3	505.3
February	373.3	395.9	441.8	427.5	452.9	482.1	446.9	482.0	506.5
March	370.5	402.2		427.1	456.1		450.8	486.3	
April	369.5	407.7		427.6	457.9		453.7	490.9	
May	370.5	411.7		428.9	458.9		456.1	495.0	
June	373.6	413.9		430.4	460.4		458.6	497.5	
July	377.7	415.4		431.2	463.3		461.2	498.8	
August	381.6	418.2		431.7	467.2		464.1	499.6	
September	384.0	422.5		432.6	471.3		466.9	500.8	
October	384.4	427.8		434.7	474.7		469.1	502.2	
November	384.4	432.9		438.4	477.4		471.4	503.4	
December	386.0	436.8		443.3	479.5		474.6	504.6	
Average	377.7	414.6	440.8	431.7	464.0	481.6	459.7	494.9	505.9

ENERGY CRISIS NEEDS COLLECTIVE ACTION



Large metros have to be key drivers in the quest to find urgent solutions to the energy crisis. The City of Cape Town, as the fastest growing metro in the country, urges other metros to join them and to actively participate in constructive action to mitigate the impact of the electricity supply shortage on the commercial sector.

According to the City of Cape Town Executive Deputy Mayor, Ian Neilson, metros are the growth engines of the country and the full effect on business operations, investment and job creation in South Africa is yet to be felt.

Economist, Mike Schussler has given a conservative estimate that it is costing business about R6 billion per month for Stage 1 load shedding; R12 billion per month for Stage 2 load shedding; and R24 billion per month for Stage 3 load shedding.

“Given that Cape Town’s output is approximately 11% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and we are mostly affected by Stage 1 and 2 load shedding, Cape Town is probably losing more than R1 billion per month. These estimates comprise the damage caused as a result of no

supply and they exclude the long-term cost of job losses, stunted economic growth, and the drop in investor confidence. We have already signaled that we intend taking back our power. With our partners in the Western Cape Government, Eskom and in the private sector, we must change the energy regime in Cape Town.”

At the Energy Efficiency Forum and in partnership with Eskom, the South African Property Owners Association, Old Mutual and other stakeholders, the city is looking at a range of options to minimise the impact of load shedding on our business sector. “We are also looking at ways in which we can use our pumped-storage scheme at Steenbras Dam to lessen the impact of load shedding. Cape Town is also one of the first cities to promote

embedded generation and we are investigating ways in which this programme can be ramped up to bring more electrons on to the grid through renewable energy,” says Neilson.

He added, “The feasibility of implementing our own demand-response system, whereby businesses can be contracted to reduce demand immediately as opposed to having to implement load shedding, is currently being investigated. We are also stepping up our efforts to diversify our energy mix by, for instance, exploring options in terms of procuring power from independent power producers, particularly renewable energy and gas-fired turbines. This will, however, require the cooperation of National Government and we feel confident that we can find solutions that will also enable us to build more of a gas economy in Cape Town through fuel switching.” This would directly support the growth of larger-scale renewable energy resources in Cape Town and the Western Cape. He concluded that metros must become the energy champions of their residents and of their commercial sector players. ■

Monitoring energy consumption

In partnership with energy service company HVAC, South Africa's leading cement manufacturer, PPC, has been doing its part to take the stress off the national energy grid through predictive production software.

HVAC has been providing technology to PPC's Hercules plant in Pretoria to help monitor electricity consumption and production levels, in order to plan production around peak times.

PPC Group Energy Manager, Egmont Ottermann says, "We have been working with HVAC since 2006, constantly trying to optimise the performance of our equipment so we can minimise energy costs. Essentially, this software helps us monitor factory production and silo levels to ensure stock levels are high enough for us to switch off a unit during peak times."

This energy saving initiative has already been rolled out to five PPC plants and plugs directly into PPC's control systems. According to Ottermann, the Hercules plant alone can consume up to 10 megawatts, depending on which equipment is

being used. Ottermann believes this project has been a resounding success and has improved profitability.

"Load shifting is an important part of reducing the likelihood of load shedding and although each single contribution seems like a drop in the ocean, everyone needs to do their part," implores Ottermann.

"If this power crisis is going to last five years, then we all need to do as much as possible to become energy efficient. This will help reduce the occurrences of load shedding by cutting our peak time use, we can allow that electricity to be distributed elsewhere."

Ottermann says that industry in South Africa is actually on the leading edge of energy efficiency measures. It is not simply a nice to have, it is an absolute business imperative," he says. ■



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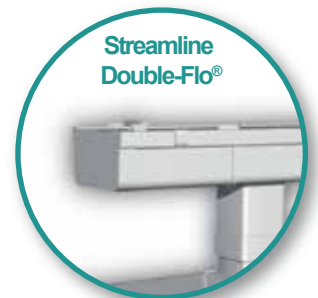
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INNOVATIVE SOLAR POWER PLANT

KaXu Solar One is the first Solar Thermal Electric power plant in commercial operation in South Africa. This public-private partnership helps meet the energy needs of South Africa in a reliable and sustainable manner using innovative technology.

Abengoa, an international company that applies innovative technology solutions for sustainability in the energy and environmental sectors, and state-owned financier, the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC), together with the KaXu Community Trust have launched a 100 MW solar plant in the Northern Cape Province. The plant located near the town of Pofadder will provide clean and sustainable power to approximately 80 000 homes in South Africa.

Minister of Economic Development, Ebrahim Patel, officially inaugurated this innovative solar power plant. KaXu Solar One, the first Solar Thermal Electricity (STE) power plant in South Africa, incorporates a storage system that enables production of 100 MW for two and a half hours after sunset or before dawn.

The project will result in approximately US\$ 891 million of direct and indirect investment in South Africa. It will also generate approximately US\$ 516 million in taxes over the next 20 years, and create 1 000 jobs during its three-year construction period.

The 20 year power purchase agreement is public/private partnership, Abengoa owns 51% of the project, the IDC 29% and the KaXu Community Trust 20%.

Manuel Sanchez Ortega, Vice President and CEO of Abengoa, has stated: "We are proud of the role we are playing to help South Africa meet its ongoing energy demands. This project will leave a legacy that will benefit the community of Pofadder, Northern Cape and the entire country. This would not have been possible without the leadership of the South African Department of Energy."

IDC Chief Executive, Geoffrey Qhena, has declared: "The project is based on a strong public-private sector partnership and forms part of our efforts to support Government's initiatives to introduce alternative sources of energy into the country's energy mix as contemplated in the integrated resources plan".

Fadiel Farao, the Chairperson of the KaXu Community Trust, said that KaXu Solar One will be a catalyst for economic development in the Khai Ma municipality in the Northern Cape. "The project has stimulated the local economy and will go a long way towards helping to generate much-needed economic opportunities for people in this area." The KaXu Community Trust is made up of members of the local community.

Abengoa will build Khi Solar One, a 50MW solar plant using tower technology and has already started the construction of a third project, Xina Solar One, a 100 MW parabolic trough plant. Xina Solar One and KaXu Solar One will be the largest solar platform in sub-Saharan Africa. ■



Nedbank and GBCSA's Green Tool

The Green Building Council of South Africa's (GBCSA), sponsored by Nedbank Property Finance, has developed the Existing Building Performance Tool. According to Robin Lockhart-Ross, Executive Head at Nedbank Property Finance, the tool was developed in 2013.

The tool was used in a number of select properties over the past year and has illustrated the value-add for owners and investors of commercial property, said Lockhart-Ross. Speaking at the 'Greening Existing Buildings' panel discussion, he added that the GBCSA's current suite of Green Star SA rating tools focus largely on the design and construction of new buildings and major refurbishments, which make up about 2% of building stock.

Nedbank sponsored the development of the new EBP tool so that operational and management performance of buildings in the remaining 98% of stock could be assessed on an ongoing basis.

"The GBCSA assists by providing tools like the Existing Building Performance tool and Energy and Water Benchmarking tool that facilitate an intimate understanding of a building's consumption and overall performance, so that stakeholders are able to manage more efficient portfolios and reduce operating costs. With the current energy crisis and the significant focus on environmental sustainability, it's time for all of us to make a change," says Brian Wilkinson, CEO of the GBCSA.

"The EBP tool is expected to return environmental and financial savings for property owners who use it to incorporate green features in their existing buildings, whether this be to increase energy efficiency, improve design elements or educate tenants," says Lockhart-Ross.

Of the 50 projects currently being piloted by the GBCSA EPB Tool, 11 of these are Nedbank buildings. Measured by the GBCSA's Energy and Water Benchmarking Tool, which is

a component of the EBP Tool, both of Nedbank's Menlyn and Ridgeside buildings have already achieved 40% lower than average water consumption than non-green buildings of similar size, and 11 and 20% lower energy consumption than the SANS 204 benchmark respectively.

A key success story of the pilot phase, highlighted at the panel discussion, is the V&A Waterfront, jointly owned by Growthpoint Property Holdings and the Public Investment Corporation (PIC). One of South Africa's top shopping destinations, contributing R33,4 billion to SA's GDP in 2014, the Victoria Wharf Shopping Centre and BP Building are currently

"With the current energy crisis and the significant focus on environmental sustainability, it's time for us to make a change."

being rated using the GBCSA EBP Tool.

Some of the measures that the Waterfront has implemented include installing eight solar rooftops with solar panels for solar energy savings, and drip-feed irrigation that has resulted in 60% less water used than in the previous system.

Existing tenants, also implementing such features, are enjoying the results. Uwe Koetter Jeweller, a tenant at the Victoria Wharf Shopping Centre, has achieved a positive ROI from its sustainability efforts that include the implementation of LED lighting and 100% recycled glass. The reduced carbon footprint, energy consumption and heat load is expected to result in R185 000



savings for the business over the next 10 years. Another green building of note is Black River Park, a modern and diverse business park in Observatory, Cape Town, which lets 75 000m² of space to some of the country's leading brands.

By adapting to more energy-efficient lighting and green break areas that include a vegetable garden and a fruit orchard, Black River Park received a 5 Star rating using the EBP Tool. Management also engaged in tenant education seminars, for which the tool provides all materials.

Black River Park houses one of the largest rooftop-mounted solar photovoltaic (PV) systems in Africa, which is able to generate just under 2-million kWh annually and transmits electricity back into the City of Cape Town's distribution network.

"As one of the top financiers of green buildings in South Africa, we want to ensure that buildings are designed, built and operated in an environmentally sustainable way," says Lockhart-Ross. "This is also central to Nedbank's Fair Share 2030 approach for ensuring that economic, social and environmental challenges that threaten society's long-term success are addressed through goals that encompass affordable energy services while containing carbon emissions, amongst others." ■

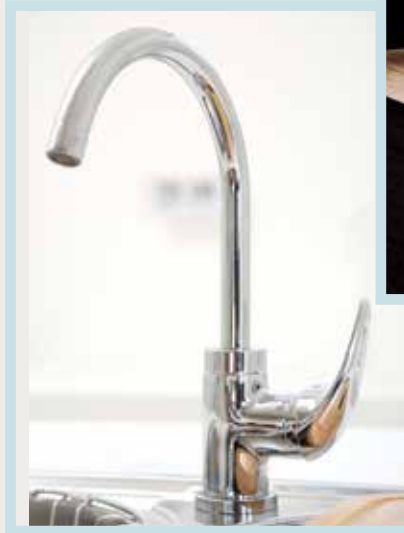


Kingsbury Hospital install Cobra

Cobra's medical range of taps and mixers have been designed in collaboration with South African medical professionals to meet hygienic specifications for the refurbishment of the Life Kingsbury Hospital in Claremont, Cape Town.



The renovation specified 100 x chrome elbow action medical mixers. These state-of-the-art mixers are preferred by medical staff because of the 180 mm-long handles,



which can be operated by the elbow or forearm. The mixers are angled away from the mixer spout, providing both ease of use and limiting the possibility of cross-contamination. Quarter-turn ceramic disk head parts ensure a smooth, effortless turning action.

The mixers boast unique anti-stagnation and water saving devices that drain residual water from the mixer when it is turned off. This prevents the growth of bacteria and aerated flow restrictors that limit water flow to six litres per minute, allowing for significant water savings, in line with green building standards.

In addition to Cobra's medical range, 75 x classically-styled Noka basins and 40 Noka x bath/shower mixers, 15 x Gala single lever sink mixers and 38 x Cobra chrome and Aurora shower heads along with numerous Cobra waste traps/overflows and regulating valves, were supplied and installed. Products worth R400 000 were supplied for seven new bathrooms, two new kitchens, the pharmacy, as well as all the wards in the old and new wings.

These Cobra products were specified not only for their water-saving benefits and superior functionality



but also because of their aesthetics. The products perfectly match the look and feel of the upgraded Life Kingsbury Hospital, which offers excellent patient facilities.

"Cobra's products are also cost efficient, proudly South African and readily available, which made sourcing the exact products really easy," says Roland van Rosenveld from South Architects.

The project was not without its challenges but Robert van Coller, Cobra Regional Technical Sales Representative, says the Cobra technical team drew on its extensive experience to quickly and efficiently resolve those issues.

"Our team rose to the occasion and through working closely with the client and the installers, were able to successfully overcome the challenges," van Coller says. "This once again reinforced Cobra's ability to offer its clients flexible plumbing solutions as well as its position as a leading South African brand."

Life Kingsbury Hospital is a member of Life Healthcare, one of the largest private hospital groups in South Africa, which operates 63 acute care facilities across the country. It prides itself on delivering a special brand of health and care to its patients which, combined with its world-class facilities, has earned it a reputation for being one of the top hospital group in the country.

For more information contact Cobra on 0861 21 21 21 or visit the web on: www.cobra.co.za ■



13 million bricks per month

Ocon Brick manufactured and supplied over 13 million clay stock and semi-face bricks in the first few weeks of January, to fill orders secured late in 2014 and early 2015.

According to Mariana Lamont, Regional Sales Manager for Ocon Brick, the company is on track to meet customer requirements and forecasted manufacturing targets for 2015.

She goes on to explain that at the end of 2014 Ocon had a full order book. "We made a strategic decision

to re-open our manufacturing plant earlier, so that we were ready and available for 2015, to meet customer demand and also to service those who worked through the holiday season."

Lamont says, "We are optimistic about our prospects for this year. It is not without its challenges, such as the electricity supply, but that aside, the order book is looking very healthy going forward. The fact that we offer a superior quality product backed up with reliable and professional technical and sales support, obviously makes us a supplier of choice. There is substantial growth anticipated for the infrastructure, housing and commercial development sector. This year, our manufacturing capabilities and product offering has increased over 30% already and we believe this will give us the edge." said Lamont.

Ocon Brick is one of South Africa's leading suppliers of clay stock and semi-face bricks for the construction sector, whether it is plastered

applications or unplastered design finishes. The products offer many environmental, fire and safety, thermal insulation and longevity benefits.

For further information call Ocon Brick on 011 670 7733. ■



If they have building ambition, we will train them

The NHBRC's strategic focus is to build capacity in the homebuilding environment. This entails assisting homebuilders through training and inspections to achieve and maintain satisfactory homebuilding technical standards, as mandated by the Housing Consumer Protection Measures Act (Act No 95 of 1998). We've established the Eric Molobi Housing Innovation Hub in Soshanguve to provide homebuilding skills to emerging homebuilders.

To find out more visit www.nhbrc.org.za



LITTLE MANHATTAN'S

Little Manhattan, a R2,4 billion project, is being developed by Central Development Projects, which specialises in full title, sectional and high and low density residential projects.

In keeping with government's vision for affordable housing, Little Manhattan moves beyond being an aesthetically pleasing environment to being a blue print for an integrated human settlement. It has been described as a truly sustainable empowerment project that has been intentionally designed to incorporate the likes of convenience and accessibility – concepts that would not ordinarily be assigned to affordable, rental accommodation.

Corobrik has supplied 2,4 million Moroccan Red travertine face bricks for construction of the award winning Little Manhattan apartment complex.

Ockert van Heerden, Corobrik Director of Sales said that Little Manhattan had definitely raised the bar when it came to the provision of affordable accommodation within South Africa's continually growing urban built environment.

Although the initial reason for the choice of this product was its durability and need for little, if any, maintenance, he said that clay brick – and face brick in particular – came with a “desirability factor” and status. This introduced the concept of quality of life into the entry level housing sector.

He pointed out that government had ratcheted up its expectations of affordable housing to far more than simply putting roofs over heads. This required that projects such as Little Manhattan actually enhanced lifestyles and paved the way for those who started out with rental accommodation. Projects such as these ultimately empower potential tenants to the point where they become home owners in their own right.



Little Manhattan has five schools within walking distance and shopping centres nearby. The estate is located on a main arterial route into Pretoria's city centre and is served by Tshwane's Areng rapid bus transit with a stop situated just 100 m from the gatehouse.

The project has 10 phases and all feature Moroccan Red travertine face bricks. Phases 1 -3 rolled out 410 units; Phases 4 -6 will add a further 474 units; Phase 4 comprises 63 units;

Phase 5 - 38 units; and Phase 6 - 42 units. Phases 7 - 10 will add a further 716 units and is due for completion by July 2015. This will bring the total number of units to 1 600.

Van Heerden said he believed that the success of projects such as Little Manhattan hinged on a good balance between aesthetics and practicality. Face brick had exactly this combination and was hard wearing, required little maintenance but still had aesthetic appeal. “Positive

FACE BRICK



characteristics include affordability, longevity and structural strength, flexibility in design and application, natural sound proofing qualities, incombustibility, natural resistance to fire, solidity and security. The enduring natural earthy colours and textures of clay face brick walls significantly reduce maintenance costs," said van Heerden.

He added that five overseas and three South African studies indicated that clay bricks promoted healthy

living which was particularly important in an environment populated by young families. "The inorganic qualities of fired clay deliver mineral content that guarantees a nearly pollution free indoor air quality, which is particularly relevant in a home environment.

A natural propensity to absorb and release humidity from the atmosphere provides a good moisture balance inside apartments and protects against mould growth, which is

widely recognised as a contributing factor to sick building syndrome."

Van Heerden added that one of the most important attributes of clay brick was its good thermal performance. Scientific research has demonstrated that clay brick structures are warm in winter and cool in summer and, as a result, cut energy usage substantially. He concluded: "Clay brick is the one man-made walling material that has proven to be more than up to the task." ■

DESIGN, SUSTAIN

Buildings are getting taller and are being constructed at an increasingly rapid pace. World-renowned supertall buildings expert and Aurecon's Buildings Director, MiddleEast and North Africa Buildings, Dr Andy Davids, discusses the possibilities and opportunities involved in cutting down the construction time of tall buildings, the sustainability issues related to tall buildings, as well as staying true to their original design intent.

Q: Technology as well as innovative approaches to engineering solutions is allowing us to construct tall buildings quicker than ever before. What are the timelines involved in new tall building projects and what has been achieved so far?

A: It took around seven years to build the Burj Khalifa, an 830 m skyscraper in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. I was the chief engineer on this project. One of the general challenges that we encountered was the need to find quicker ways to build tall buildings.

Developers and clients can't always wait years for a project to be completed. The design team has since come up with a holistic construction system for building a similar building in half the time. Being able to cut the construction time of a building as tall as the Burj Khalifa in half (or by a third) is a significant achievement. Since then, I have been involved in the design of many megastructures, constructed within mere months.

Q: Modular systems are helping us to construct tall buildings quicker, but doesn't this take away from the individuality and beauty of the buildings?

A: If you look at existing 400 m and 500 m tall buildings, you will see that each one is individually handcrafted and they are unique and beautiful in their own way. A good observation is that this could be the reason why they take so long to build – however, this is not necessarily true.

There's a beautiful hotel in China called the T30 Hotel. The T30 was

prefabricated and the 30-storey tower was erected by 200 Chinese workers in just 15 days. This hotel broke the Broad Group construction company's own past record of building a 15-storey building in just one week. This was possible because modular, prefabricated solutions were used. We are starting to extrapolate these principles to expedite the construction of even taller buildings. The goal isn't to break records, but to deliver a high performing tall building within a shorter amount of time.

Q: Are modular systems being used in tall buildings?

A: In tall buildings modular systems are primarily used for flooring systems and columns. The flooring is pre-engineered and pre-built, so the floor decking and beams are already in place when we start. The columns are also pre-engineered and are brought to site in a cleverly orchestrated way so that the cranes can lift them into place in a relatively short space of time.

With the Shanghai Tower project, the developer wanted us to create a clever product (to build the tower) as opposed to simply designing the building as a one-off project. This led to a focus on creating a modular solution that could be replicated to build additional tall buildings at a quicker speed. This doesn't mean that every building is going to look the same or even perform in the same way, but it gives us the ability to offer mass customisation to countries, cities and developers who need tall buildings within a shorter time frame than what we were able to deliver in the past.



The mass production of modules that can be customised according to the needs of each individual client is now a popular means of construction.

Q: How do engineers fill the gap between technology and architectural visions for tall buildings?

ABILITY AND USABILITY



to cities, or are they the preserve of the rich?

A: Many of the existing tall buildings are upmarket residential buildings or luxury hotels and it's true that most people won't have a chance to live that way. The current and planned tall buildings, however, address a very real and important issue that many countries and cities face – the fact that we are running out of space to house people. This is a key driver of many planned projects.

In China, for example, a single square kilometre typically houses 50 000 people. These people are typically living in 3 to 4 storey buildings (blocks of flats) that cover approximately 50% of the land area. After you have laid the infrastructure such as roads, another 20% of the land space is accounted for. This leaves you with about 30% of the area for recreation, growing food, energy production and so forth.

This is a serious concern because areas in China will eventually run out of land. So with this in mind, tall buildings not only address sustainability issues but in many cases an issue that could mean life or death to large segments of the population. Instead of looking at marginalisation and equality, tall buildings become part of a life and death argument.

If, for example, we can house the same 50 000 people in 10% of the land space thanks to tall buildings, then we are left with 90% of the area for recreation, food production, energy generation and infrastructure, which is an incredible improvement from the current situation. Housing the population of a growing city in these tall buildings is a big winner for all involved – developers, government as well as citizens – and it's a driving force behind tall buildings.

Aurecon will continue to partner with clients and architects to create futuristic buildings that offer remarkable, innovative aesthetics. Whether the requirements are energy saving, tight timeframes or complex structures, our team is willing and ready. ■

A: Buildings are not only becoming taller, but they're becoming more majestic and are able to perform better in terms of energy efficiency and indoor comfort levels for occupants.

We continue to produce what would have been unimaginable a decade ago thanks to world-class engineering solutions that were needed to construct the demanding and visionary buildings that architects have mapped out. Besides being more aesthetically pleasing, they're also becoming more economical and easier to construct.

Design professionals, specifically architects, feel they are less constrained by technology than in the past. As consulting engineers, it's our job to use technical skills so that an architect or a client's vision can be realised. Today, we're able to build magnificently intricate tall buildings that tell a story thanks to

the customised, handcrafted ideas of architects, which leads architects to dream and plan bigger. In turn, the pressure is put on engineers to find workable building solutions to bring the visions of architects to life.

Our ability to create extraordinary and inspirational projects can be attributed to the collaboration that goes on between our design teams and our willingness to cross traditional boundaries. Whether it's unique geometric shapes, complex facades or extreme wind testing and analysis that needs to be done, the engineers on a project need to come up with a workable solution to get the job done. Engineers and architects work very closely right from the start of any supertall building project, so it's a very dynamic and refreshing working environment to be in.

Q: Do supertall buildings add value

ROSEBANK'S NEW HIGH RISE



According to Pam Golding Group Chief Executive, Dr Andrew Golding, “This development is bold in its conception and will offer a sophisticated urban-green lifestyle.

Residents of Park Central will not only appreciate the magnificent sky gardens, manicured parks and roof gardens, but will also enjoy easy access to a host of facilities. The homes will offer a wholly distinctive Johannesburg living experience and a unique investment opportunity.”

Park Central one and two bedroom apartments and three bedroom penthouse units will be sold off-plan and are priced from R1,75 million for an entry-level apartment. Golding says that the development is due for completion by November 2018.

This is an indication of just how much confidence Redefine Properties, which is the second largest listed South African-based property company, has in the future of the Rosebank precinct.

“There has been an ever-growing demand for secure, upmarket sectional title residential property in the area in recent years,” he adds.

“The fact that Park Central will be situated in central Rosebank in close proximity to the Gautrain Station, Rosebank Mall as well as a number of office parks, company headquarters and other commercial facilities, will only assist to stimulate demand.” he says.

Dewald Veldsman of Paragon

Park Central is a multi-million rand, high-rise residential apartment block being developed on the corner of Baker Street and Keyes Avenue in Rosebank. The Redefine Properties development, well-located in one of Johannesburg’s most dynamic and rapidly developing growth nodes, will roll out 445 urban green lifestyle apartments.

Architects says the building will form part of an integrated urban precinct, with a vision to include pedestrian links via the parks to the Gautrain Station through to the Rosebank Mall to assist residents to achieve a integrated lifestyle.

The design is strongly influenced by French-Swiss architect Le Corbusier who between 1931 and 1933, developed the concept of ‘The Radiant City’. Le Corbusier suggested that city planning and building design should always consider the sun, sky, trees, steel and cement in that order of importance. A great deal of attention has been paid to environmental factors with regards to the design of Park Central, as well as in the design of the individual units.

Some of the design elements in Park Central include sky gardens or vertical forests that offer a means to bring green living to high-density design.

Veldman says that the building is designed to be climate responsive and achieve maximum use of light and energy sources. Glazing will also

be designed to take climate and context into consideration and reduce the need for energy to warm or cool the apartments. The building will also employ alternative power supplies such as gas to reduce electricity consumption and reduce reliance on the power grid.

“These homes have broad appeal as is evidenced by the fact that executives, business commuters, single professionals and couples have all already shown an interest in Park Central,” adds Strauss.

“We have also received a number of enquiries from international investors, as well as from other countries in Africa.”

Strauss says that rental market in Rosebank is benefitting from the shortage of quality of accommodation that is currently available in the area.

He adds that the fact that Rosebank is not only a vibrant commercial area in itself, but is also situated close to Sandton, the financial capital of the African continent, only adds to the demand for homes in the area. ■

Renaming Cape Town’s footbridges

According to the City’s Executive Mayor, Patricia de Lille, the renaming of the footbridges include:

- **Al!kunto: /A!kunto (or Klaas Stoffel)** was the first contributor to the Wilhelm Bleek and Lucy Lloyd Archive of /xam and !kun texts. He arrived in Mowbray on 29 August 1870 and stayed until October 1873. He was originally from an area called the ‘Strondbergen’ and belonged to a group of !xam who lived on the plains. He contributed some narratives and a large number of words and sentences to the archive.
- **Tuan Guru: Imam Abdullah Ibn Qadhu Abdus Salaam, known as Tuan Guru, is regarded as the Father of Islam in South Africa.** Tuan Guru was a prince from Tidore in the Trinate Islands and a descendant of the Sultan of Morocco. He was banished by the Dutch invaders to the Cape in 1780 and was incarcerated on Robben Island for 12 years until 1792. After his release, he married Khadija van de Kaap. While on Robben Island, he wrote several copies of the Holy Qur’an from memory, possibly the first Qur’an in South Africa.
- **Ingrid Jonker: the iconic South African poet who committed suicide by drowning at the age of 31 in Sea Point.** Her poem ‘Die Kind’ was read out by former President Nelson Mandela during the opening

The City of Cape Town’s Naming Committee has recommended renaming seven footbridges crossing Nelson Mandela Boulevard and Rhodes Drive. The public participation process includes renaming of the Old Civic Centre in Macassar and the naming of a park to honour the late doctor and trade unionist, Neil Aggett.

- of South Africa’s first democratic parliament in May 1994.
 - **Dawid Kruiper: a traditional healer and leader of the Xhomi San in the Kalahari.** He was well known for his role in the movie ‘The Gods Must Be Crazy II’. Kruiper spoke for the rights of indigenous people to the United Nations in 1994, and led the way for successful land claims for the San People in South Africa, culminating in the restoration of 40 000 hectares of land in 1999.
 - **Father John Oliver: the Anglican priest from District Six who passed away in 2013.** He founded the Cape Town Interfaith Initiative and spent many years building bridges between the different faiths, highlighting our similarity rather than our differences.
 - **Taliep Petersen: a well-known composer and director of a number of popular musicals.** He worked with David Kramer, with whom he won the Laurence Olivier Award. The highest honour in British theatre, and the theatre industry’s equivalent of the British Academy of Film and Television Arts.
 - **Father Basil van Rensburg: the South African Catholic priest who gained international recognition for his fight against the apartheid regime’s forced removal of the people of District Six.** He mobilised public opinion against the mass removals, writing to newspapers and holding public meetings. He was born in Woodstock in 1930 and passed away in 2002, aged 71.
- “The naming of these footbridges is an ideal opportunity to commemorate the people and events that influenced the fibre and culture of the city. We were pleasantly surprised by the huge interest in this naming process and the eager participation by our residents to take ownership of their city.”
- “Names can have a powerful emotional effect on residents, and this naming process is part of our efforts in building a new inclusive space where all of us feel at home. We sincerely hope that our residents will once again participate with enthusiasm in this final round of public participation,” said the City’s Naming Committee, Brett Herron. ■



R2,6m Imizamo Yethu sports upgrade



According to the City of Cape Town Executive Mayor, Patricia de Lille, sports facilities such as these are vital to encourage development and training in sport. "Since its opening in 2012, the Imizamo Yethu pitch has been home to many tournaments which focus on developing our young soccer players, with three South African Football Association Cape Town junior tournaments and other youth tournaments taking place."

The pitch has also been used for weekly developmental programmes

The R2,6 million upgrade at the Imizamo Yethu sports complex will include the construction of the new club house, change rooms, showers and bathroom facilities, kitchen and communal space.

for children to introduce them to the sport and develop young talent, while local schools utilise the facility for mid-week soccer games. The City has a total of 26 synthetic pitches across the metro in areas such as Langa, Mitchells Plain, Ocean View, Bishop Lavis, Grassy Park and Gugulethu. These amenities represent a combined investment of

R40 million into these areas, and have been welcomed by communities which for years experienced under-investment and lack of development.

In 2012, the city opened the first synthetic pitch in Imizamo Yethu, along with one in Hangberg. Almost R10 million was spent on the construction of these two facilities, which are compliant with FIFA regulations. ■

R1,7m for back-up car rentals

The Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, Pravin Gordhan, revealed that the Buffalo City Metro Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Speaker and the City Manager rented 'back-up' cars to the tune of over R1,7 million in the 2014/15 financial year to date.

According to Kevin Mileham, DA Shadow Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, there is no justifiable reason for these so-called 'back-up' cars.

In fact, this demonstrates how Mayor Zukiswa Ncitha and others effectively rented luxury Mercedes Benz vehicles at the equivalent cost of actually purchasing them.

"This is the same Mayor who was arrested last year for her involvement in the Nelson Mandela Memorial

scandal and for splurging almost R1 million in 2013 on luxury travel and accommodation across the country. It is unacceptable that residents in the Metro receive poor services while the Mayor and executives are renting expensive luxury vehicles."

Mileham says, "It is of utmost importance that strict financial procurement measures are adhered to in order to curb this kind of frivolous

abuse of public funds."

He concludes, "The DA will call for a forensic investigation by the Auditor General into whether the use of such vehicles are justified, whether proper procurement procedures were followed and whether this is a duplication of municipal resources. And whether the SAPS assessed the threat relating to the City Manager's personal security." ■

Executive	Rental car	Rental cost
Mayor	Mercedes Benz ML350/C180	R 684 985.72
Deputy Mayor	Mercedes Benz ML500/350	R 319 068.31
Speaker	Mercedes Benz ML500/350/E200	R 622 466.82
City Manager	Mercedes Benz C180/C200	R 168 555.39
Total		R 1, 795 049. 24

Mediclinic Midstream

Mediclinic Midstream, located in Centurion, will provide 176 beds with 54 specialists at the multi-disciplinary private hospital in Southern Africa. The hospital located in Tshwane offers specialised diagnostic and treatment facilities.

Ferdi Kotzé, Hospital Manager of Mediclinic Midstream, says, “This hospital complements the services currently offered by Mediclinic in the region. We have medical, surgical and obstetric units, critical care, neonatal critical care and paediatric unit, a 24 hour emergency centre, and consulting rooms for the specialists. We have also ensured that there is enough capacity for more nursing units, theatres and consulting rooms to be built in the future, allowing us to grow and further meet our patients’ needs.”

Specialist disciplines at Mediclinic Midstream include cardiology, general surgery, orthopedic surgery, plastic surgery, ENT, neurology, gynaecology and paediatric services along with pathology, radiology, dialysis and all ancillary health services.

Innovation is a key focus area for Mediclinic. This hospital will utilise state of the art technology focusing on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) convergence to all role players in the hospital. All communications and ITC will run over a single fibre-optic network infrastructure to enable fully integrated WIFI and data access. What this means is greater mobility of imaging data through an integrated PACS (picture archive and communication system).

This technology will extend to the theatre complex, where all the operating rooms are multimedia ready to make imaging data such as patient X-rays, MRI scans and electronic medical records available to surgeons.

The hospital has also incorporated several greening and environmental initiatives designed to minimise the hospital’s carbon footprint. Some of these features include solar water heating, inverter controlled air conditioning systems, films on all windows to regulate external heat gain, and rainwater stored in tanks for garden irrigation.

Kotzé continues, “The selected electrical and mechanical fixed installations will further contribute to the energy saving and environmental care initiatives already in place. We have introduced energy saving lighting with electronic control gear and ‘Tri-phosphor’ technology, or LED and solid state light technology in high intensity installations such as operating theatre lights. They not only consume considerably less electrical energy but also reduce the heat load in the building.”

The aesthetics of the building are an interpretation of a modern healthcare facility. The hospital fits in with the ambiance of surrounding areas and buildings and various views

of the surrounding Midstream area are visible as patients move through shortened passages. The wards are flooded with natural light designed to help the healing process of patients, and the nurses stations are placed a short distance from each patient room.

“Mediclinic Midstream encapsulates everything you would want in a hospital today – access to specialists, state of the art technology, sustainability initiatives - and a building designed around what is best for our patients, treatment and healing time,” concludes Kotzé. ■



DTI's Corporate Governance Development Programme

The Department of Trade and Industry will award certificates to women who have completed the Corporate Governance Development Programme, which aims to increase the pool of trained candidates for possible appointment on boards of public and private entities.

The department has to date trained approximately 200 women in its partnership with the Institute of Directors of Southern Africa (IoDSA) and the South African Women Entrepreneurs' Network (SAWEN).

The Corporate Governance Development Programme aims to address

the increasing importance of good governance and ethical conduct in the private and public sector. It provides a platform for business and government leaders to communicate what should constitute ethical and good governance in daily businesses.

One of the policy objectives for the Companies Act, 2008 is to enhance transparency and corporate governance in companies.

The Corporate Governance Development Programme was initiated to promote the principles of good governance espoused in the Companies Act and the King Code of Governance

Principles.

The programme was launched by the former Deputy Minister of Trade and Industry, Elizabeth Thabethe, in September 2013. The focus in 2015 is on the second phase of the programme, which is placing each trainee on a company board as an observer in one meeting to obtain practical exposure regarding the workings of boards.

Most companies have heeded to the request from the department and have opened their board meetings to trainees of the programme to attend meetings as observers. ■



Commission fines Group Five

The Competition Commission has referred a case of collusive tendering against Group Five to the Competition Tribunal.

The collusive tendering was between Group Five and WBHO Construction as well as with Concor, a subsidiary of Murray and Roberts, in respect of the rehabilitation of the

National Route 5, section 4, between Senekal and Vaalpenspruit in the Free State.

Group Five had bilateral collusive agreements with WBHO and Concor respectively, in terms of which Group Five would submit a bid price lower than those submitted by WBHO and Concor, in order to ensure that Group

Five won the tender.

The Commission's investigation found sufficient evidence that Group Five colluded with WBHO and Concor in respect of the Senekal project.

The Commission is requesting the Competition Tribunal to impose a maximum penalty of 10% of Group Five's annual turnover. ■

Collusive tendering

The Competition Commission has referred three cases of collusive tendering in the Western Cape against GVK Siyazama.

The first collusive tendering is between GVK and Neil Muller Construction (NMC) in respect of the Tygervalley Mall project.

The second collusive tendering is also between GVK and NMC in respect of the Akila Trading project. The third

collusive tendering is between GVK and Group Five in respect of the Cape Gate Medi-Clinic.

GVK had bilateral collusive agreements with NMC and Group Five, in which GVK submitted bid prices that were higher than that of NMC and Group Five respectively.

The Commission's investigation found that there is sufficient evidence that GVK colluded with NMC in re-

spect of the Tygervalley Mall and Akila Trading tenders.

The investigation further found that GVK also colluded with Group Five in respect of the Cape Gate Medi-Clinic tender.

The Competition Commission is requesting the Competition Tribunal to impose a maximum penalty of 10% of GVK's annual turnover in respect of each contravention. ■



FOUNDATIONS FOR HOUGHTON BLOCK

Gauteng Piling was entrusted with the provision of foundation piling for a luxury office block development in Eighth Street, Houghton, being built and developed by the Barrow Group.

Ilovo-based M/Architects designed the building, which will feature 2 900m² m of office space, says Ivan Schlapobersky from M/Architects. The former residential property was demolished and great care was taken to preserve existing trees on the periphery of the site.

Kobus Geyer, Site Manager for Gauteng Piling, says the foundations for the 4-storey office block (with double parking basement levels) on over 1 000m² required 77 auger cast in-situ piles, varying between 14 m to 18 m in depth. The diameter of the piles varied: 27 x 500 mm in diameter, 11 x 600 mm, 19 x 750 mm, and 4 x 1 100 mm in diameter.

Auger cast in-situ piles are formed by drilling holes into the ground, placing steel reinforcement into the holes, then filling the holes with concrete. In built-up residential areas, such as Houghton, auger cast piles cause minimal disturbance and are generally favoured for environmentally sensitive sites.

Steel reinforcement employed for the piles consisted of seven high tensile strength steel bars (7Y32), 32 mm in diameter; and spirals of mild steel, 8 mm in diameter with a 200 mm pitch. The rebar cages inserted into the piles were 950 mm in diameter and 4,33 m in length.

Gauteng Piling provided piles for lateral support for a retaining wall against the site's northern boundary.



Geyer added, "The piles will eventually form part of a retaining wall, sprayed with Gunitite - a mixture of cement, sand, and water - through a pressure hose to produce the strong 'lining' of the retaining wall.

Gauteng Piling employed two rigs for the piling project a Williams LDH digger with 5,5t-m torque, and a Soil-mec hydraulic drilling rig.

Two prominent Gauteng Master Builders are closely linked with

Gauteng Piling. The company was established in 1996 by former MBSA and MBA North President, Nico Maas (current chairman of GP), and is now run by MD, Hennie Bester, who has served as president of MBA North for an unprecedented three-year spell from 2011 to 2013.

The company has a fleet of 20 auger drilling machines, two cranes, two bore rigs, four Grundo hammers, and two lateral support machines. ■

Dlamini heads for Harvard

Master Builders South Africa (MBSA) has announced that Executive Director, Tumi Dlamini's three-year contract ended in February.

She will shortly depart for the USA. Dlamini has enrolled at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government to study for a Master in Public Administration degree.

MBSA President, Neil Cloete, said that Dlamini played a significant role in raising the profile of MBSA and Women in Construction, opening dialogue with government and other public institutions.

Cloete advised MBSA stakeholders that MBSA Operations Director, Pierre Fourie would manage the affairs of



Tumi Dlamini

the organisation until a new Executive Director has been appointed. ■

Black+Decker announces new global branding

Black+Decker recently announced a new global brand identity for its consumer branded power tools, outdoor power equipment, and home products. The new identity will revitalise one of the world's most recognisable brands through a simplified and focused redesign.

With a heritage of more than 100 years, and as a universally trusted brand, the new Black+Decker identity builds on this reputation providing innovative and reliable products, while providing consumers with a more meaningful, emotional, and empowering experience in their homes.

Mayan Desai, Trade Marketing Manager for Stanley Black & Decker says, "Throughout its history, Black+Decker has consistently provided consumers with innovative, affordable, and quality products. While its roots are firmly planted in the power tool space, over the years there have been a number of additional cat-

egories that have contributed to the Black+Decker range of products, including cleaning and outdoor devices and small kitchen appliances. As a result of this, the brand is deeply entrenched in and around the home."

"The brand extends beyond product features and innovation, it is about being honest, intuitive, involved, and thoughtful. Consumers now make their lifestyle and purchasing decisions in a completely different way, and this new brand identity, and subsequent marketing campaigns and communications, will focus on



providing people with the ideas, advice and expertise to enable them to achieve their goals."

The new Black+Decker logo was designed to be simple, clean and powerful, to build on its position as a strong global brand. The company will launch new products and campaigns to energise the brand as well as engage with its customers. ■

New Bobcat Telescopic Handlers

Bobcat has launched several new telescopic handler models. The first of the new telehandlers is the new TL358 6 m lift height compact telehandler, which is available with two rated capacities of 2.6 or 3 tonne.

Bobcat is also showing the new 13 m and 14 m lift height T35130S and T35140S telehandlers aimed particularly at the rental industry and offering a 3.5 tonne maximum lift capacity. The new TL358 6 m telehandler has a very compact format, with restricted 2.10 m width and height dimensions, allowing easy access to many congested areas and small buildings. If desired, the TL358 can also be supplied with a version of the cab with more height for increased visibility for the operator.

This new model has been conceived and designed to meet many applications and customer needs (primarily in construction, industry and rental) where its overall compact dimensions, powerful 74.5 kW engine and hydraulics, manoeuvrability and true loading capacity offer a very productive alternative to smaller machines limited in performance and use.

The introduction of the new 13 and 14 m models at Intermat 2015 follows on from the launch of the new Bobcat 10, 12, 14 and 18 m lift height telescopic handlers over the

last 12-13 months. Whilst they have a simpler design intended to meet the needs of the rental business, the new T35130S and T35140S telehandlers still offer many of the advantages of the new generation models. Particular attention has been paid to aspects such as the protection of sensitive parts, and intuitive and safe operating to meet the needs of rental users. The easy-to-use compact stabilisers ensure that the full capabilities of all the new telescopic handlers can be utilised in the most confined working areas and close to walls (minimal loss of reach).

As in other new generation machines, the T35130S and T35140S telehandlers offer advanced features such as the Panoramic Cab, which has a large parabolic windscreen providing panoramic visibility especially when handling loads at height. In the cab, there is a new dashboard with digital display and intuitive controls including a joystick with integrated forward/reverse (FNR) control for improved productivity and safety.

The working envelope for the T35130S telehandler has a maximum lift height of 12.55 m and a maximum forward reach of 8.6 m. The Bobcat T35140S telehandler has a maximum lift height of 13.6 m and 9.8 m reach. ■



Moratorium on retrenching engineers

Eskom must reduce the number of white engineers by 1 081 and white artisans by 2 179 in professional and mid-management positions to comply with government requirements.

Mazzone says that Eskom's top priority must be to keep the lights on. "Getting rid of experienced engineers is not the answer. The DA supports the redress of the legacy of the past but does not support repeating the same racially driven mistakes of the past. Eskom needs to make use of its engineers' skills to find a solution to the troubles facing Eskom instead of worsening the problem."

"Forcing experienced engineers out of Eskom on the basis of their race is not only racial discrimination; it is a move that will further damage our

prospects of growing the economy and creating jobs. The electricity crisis requires all hands on deck if we are to mitigate its devastating effects on the economy and job creation."

South Africa faces a severe skills shortage in the engineering sector. Minister of Science Technology, Naledi Pandor, recently stated that despite the high number of students enrolling in engineering each year, South Africa only produces approximately 1 500 engineering graduates yearly – of which only about half go on to practice engineering. "In the face of a major skills shortage, Eskom's decision to axe qualified engineers – simply based on their race – is beyond belief," says Mazzone.

She added, "The shortage of engineering professionals means that



we don't have enough practitioners available for ongoing work. The government in its latest bid at populist rhetoric ignores this fact." ■

Coatings for Africa 2015



Manufacturing Association (SAPMA) and the Oil and Colour Chemists' Association (OCCA).

Dr Blade Nzimande, the Minister of Higher Education and Training, will deliver the opening address on May 11, and about a dozen respected leading paint and coatings authorities from overseas countries will deliver important addresses during Coatings for Africa 2015.

The programme includes:

Dr Anthony Gichuchi from ICL Halox in the USA; Manfred Jorma from BASF in the Netherlands; Udo Schonhoff from Elementis Specialities in Germany; Fernando Saez Camps from the Nubiola Group in Spain; Janos Hajas from BYK in Germany; Paul Dietz from FP Pigments Oy in the

UK; Marco Heuer from Evonik Hanse in Germany; Graeme Billington from Eastman Company in the UK; Mohammed Sanaobar from Wacker Chemie in the United Arab Emirates; and Phil Green from Mirmac Paint Research in the UK.

A host of top-level South African speakers will also address the symposium including industry analyst Anthony Lawrence of Frost & Sullivan, who will give an overview of the coatings market in Africa.

The symposium, which will be augmented by a large-scaled trade exhibition, runs concurrently with two other industry-related trade shows at Sandton Convention Centre: African Construction Expo, and Totally Concrete Expo in May. ■

The event - the largest of its kind on the African continent - is being presented by the SA Paint

Merger & Acquisitions

The Competition Commission has recommended to the Competition Tribunal that it approve the proposed merger between TriAlpha SPV and Dorper Wind Farm.

Post merger TriAlpha SVP will have joint control.

TriAlpha is an investment firm that manages various investment mandates, for mainly institutional clients in various sectors within South Africa.

Dorper Wind Farm is an

independent power producer that generates electricity using onshore wind.

In addition to acquiring a stake in Dorper Wind Farm, TriAlpha SPV plans to acquire Intikon, an independent electricity producing company that operates renewable energy producing plants using solar photovoltaic in South Africa.

Post-merger, TriAlpha SPV will have sole control over Intikon. ■



Diarise 2016 WoodEX for Africa



The next WoodEX for Africa will be held at Gallagher Convention Centre in Midrand, Gauteng, from 9 to 11 June 2016.

WoodEX for Africa focuses exclusively on the timber industry. It is the perfect platform for woodworking professionals to connect with specialised dealers, to catch up with the latest timber trends, to secure new business contacts and to compare deals.

WoodEX for Africa has enjoyed

tremendous support from the local and international timber industry and the event is now established as Africa's leading industry showcase.

Stephan Jooste, Director of WoodEX for Africa, says the organisers are exploring the possibility of partnering with a major international industry exhibition and a decision was made

to present WoodEX for Africa bi-annually from 2016, in order for the event to fit in with the global timber industry calendar. "We would like to thank our loyal supporters for helping us to establish and grow WoodEX for Africa over the past three years, and for all the positive comments and advice received through difficult times from our media and industry partners. With this support behind us, the future of WoodEX for Africa is looking bright."

Following WoodEX for Africa 2014, the event received outstanding feedback from its exhibitors and visitors, with exhibitors reporting positive feedback in terms of the quality of visitors, the great networking opportunities, market exposure and business conducted. Visitors indicated that they were specifically impressed with the outstanding quality of the exhibitors' displays and the professional appearance of the event.

For more information visit www.woodexforafrica.com or e-mail info@woodexforafrica.com ■

Improving security

Security is by far the largest concern for any residential estate and to stay a step ahead of criminals, they need to embrace technology.

More and more estates are now deploying Ideco's Electronic Visitor Identity Management (EVIM) solution to improve access security and enhance the overall effectiveness of existing services.

Ideco Managing Director, Marius Coetzee says that EVIM offers a more effective way of securing the estate. "Residential estates can optimise existing security processes and solutions by deploying cutting edge technology."

"The main problem is that visitors' identities are not verified or accurately recorded. Furthermore, residents' access control is not controlled sufficiently and visitors' access control is easily bypassed," he explains.

Guards normally use a manual visitor record book and open the gate for visitors with a push button solution from the guard house. Not only do visitors often record inaccurate or even false information in the visitors register, but the entries are often il-

legible and indecipherable.

EVIM 'Live' ID checking functionality records visitor data and also verifies the integrity of the visitors' identity. The visitors fingerprint record is also irrefutable proof that the visitor was present when the transaction was recorded and that the visitor gave permission for their details to be verified and recorded.

Furthermore, all EVIM visitor transactions are recorded, processed and archived in a POPI compliant manner. Not only is all data stored offsite, but visitors fingerprints are recorded, transmitted and stored in an encrypted format which cannot be reverse engineered to a latent fingerprint image. No data is stored on the handheld scanning device and all data is transmitted in an encrypted format to a secure offsite hosting engine.

He concludes, "Unlike traditional electronic visitor recording systems which process visitor data via an all

too often non-compliant unsecured Wi-Fi network, the EVIM solution utilises an encrypted HTTPS and APN network which is accessible only to applicable EVIM devices." ■

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