

COVERING THE WORLD OF CONSTRUCTION

NOVEMBER 2025

CROWN
PUBLICATIONS

Construction WORLD

Landscaping – a vital and often
OVERLOOKED DESIGN ELEMENT

**SAPOA Innovative
EXCELLENCE 2025
WINNERS**

**Draco Group: precision,
safety and results**

**BUILDING GROWTH WITH
VISION AND INNOVATION**





Franki offers a comprehensive range of geotechnical and marine engineering products, including both design and construction services for the Building, Civil and Mining Industries. **Call Franki today about your next project.**

We Specialize In

- ✓ Ground Improvement
- ✓ Piling
- ✓ Grouting
- ✓ Lateral Support
- ✓ Near Shore Marine Works

FEATURES

04 **Engineering joint venture brings nation's skills development strategy to life**

GIBB and Knight Piésold's JV ensures that a new generation gets experience.

06 **Collective bargaining: ensuring fair play and protection**

Workers' needs are often overlooked in the fast-paced construction industry.

08 **Infrastructure and skills crises to top the agenda at surveying conference**

The conference in November aims to be a platform to address important issues.

10 **Poor infrastructure a key challenge to effective water stewardship**

The challenges of embracing water stewardship in response to water scarcity.

20 **Draco Group: precision, safety and results**

This company has tackled some of SA's most challenging demolition projects.

22 **Landscaping – a vital and often overlooked design element**

BPAS Architects says that landscaping is often an afterthought – but should not be.

23 **Iconic Sun City Hotel to reveal its stylish new look**

From November, most of the hotel's 350 rooms will take in visitors after a major revamp.

26 **Concor's wind energy gamechanger: full BoP under one roof**

Concor has taken full control of the BoP scope of a project near De Aar.

REGULARS

04 MARKETPLACE

20 DEMOLITION

22 ARCHITECTS

26 PROJECTS



ON THE COVER

In South Africa's competitive construction sector - where tight margins and demanding timelines define success - Afri Readymix has emerged as a standout performer. Founded in 2021 in Rustenburg, the company has rapidly grown into a fully integrated supplier to both the mining and general construction industries. With its focus on quality, service, and community upliftment, Afri Readymix is redefining local excellence in construction materials. At the helm is Gerhard Maree, Founder and Managing Director, whose journey combines experience and resilience. After two decades with AfriSam, including 15 years managing its Rustenburg readymix plant, Maree was retrenched in 2020.





Property development has always been a high-stakes endeavour - a sector that sits at the intersection of risk, regulation, and reward. In South Africa, that balancing act has become increasingly precarious. To be a developer in today's market is to navigate a constantly shifting landscape where uncertainty is the only constant, and resilience is the only reliable foundation.

The challenges facing property developers are as diverse as the projects they undertake. On the surface, the sector remains vibrant - construction cranes still dot the skylines of Johannesburg, Cape Town, and Durban - but beneath the scaffolding lies a web of structural pressures that threaten to stifle growth and innovation. Rising construction costs, inconsistent municipal approval processes, infrastructure bottlenecks, and tightening finance conditions all contribute to an environment that demands more from developers than ever before.

Perhaps the most immediate hurdle is financial. The combination of high interest rates, a constrained lending environment, and elevated input costs has reshaped the economics of development. Margins that were already slim have been eroded further, forcing developers to be exceptionally strategic in site selection, project timing, and value engineering. The days of speculative builds are largely gone

- today's projects must be meticulously planned, backed by strong feasibility studies, and anchored in real market demand.

Then there is the issue of approvals and red tape. Many developers cite delays in municipal planning departments as one of their greatest frustrations. Lengthy rezoning processes, inconsistent interpretations of regulations, and capacity challenges within local authorities can turn viable developments into multi-year sagas. These delays not only inflate costs but also dampen investor confidence and make project financing increasingly difficult to secure.

Infrastructure remains another critical bottleneck. The availability and reliability of bulk services - water, electricity, sewage, and roads - are often dealbreakers. Load-shedding, ageing water networks, and slow-paced infrastructure upgrades have forced developers to find creative solutions, from incorporating renewable energy systems to investing directly in service connections. While such measures enhance long-term sustainability, they also raise upfront capital requirements and shift responsibilities that were traditionally borne by the state onto the private sector.

Despite these headwinds, the property development sector continues to show remarkable tenacity. Developers are

adapting by rethinking what - and how - they build. Affordable and gap housing projects are increasingly prioritised as urbanisation continues and the demand for well-located, mid-market accommodation grows. There is also a noticeable pivot toward mixed-use developments that integrate residential, commercial, and lifestyle elements to create self-sustaining communities rather than isolated projects.

Technology is another critical enabler. Digital modelling, data-driven planning, and construction management platforms are improving efficiency, reducing waste, and enabling developers to make better-informed decisions. Sustainability, once considered a niche concern, has become a business imperative. Green design principles, solar integration, and environmentally responsible materials are no longer just "nice to have" - they are essential components of a competitive project.

What distinguishes the most successful developers in South Africa today is not necessarily scale or capital, but agility. Those who can collaborate effectively with architects, contractors, financiers, and municipalities - and who are willing to engage deeply with community and environmental considerations - are finding ways to unlock value even in a challenging market. It's about combining pragmatism with vision: understanding the constraints but still finding room to innovate within them.

As the sector looks ahead, the road will not be easy. Economic uncertainty, political shifts, and infrastructure decay will continue to test the limits of patience and creativity. But adversity has always been a crucible for South African builders. The developers who endure will be those who see opportunity not just in the skyline, but in the systems, partnerships, and people that sustain it.

Wilhelm du Plessis
Editor



Scan for website



TOTAL CIRCULATION:
(Second Quarter '25)
16 627

EDITOR & PUBLISHER
Wilhelm du Plessis constr@crowm.co.za

ADVERTISING MANAGER
Erna Oosthuizen ernao@crowm.co.za

LAYOUT & GRAPHIC ARTIST
Katlego Montsho

CIRCULATION
Karen Smith

MANAGING DIRECTOR
Karen Grant

PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY
Crown Publications (Pty) Ltd
P O Box 140
BEDFORDVIEW, 2008
Tel: 27 11-622-4770

PRINTED BY
Tandym Cape

BAG BY BAG REWRITING THE STORY & BUILDING ROADS THAT LAST


Sephaku
CEMENT

Powered By


DANGOTE
CEMENT



Call us on 0861 32 42 52
www.sephakucement.co.za



Engineering joint venture brings national skills **DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY TO LIFE**

Through the GIBB and Knight Piésold Joint Venture (GKP JV) appointed for the water conveyance infrastructure component of Phase 1 of the uMkhomazi Water Project (uMWP-1), the member firms have joined forces to ensure young candidate engineers, geologists and environmental scientists gain the experience and mentorship they need to achieve professional registration within their respective professions.

The benchmark initiative forms part of the two firms' involvement in the Trans-Caledon Tunnel Authority's (TCTA) uMWP-1, a large-scale water infrastructure development in KwaZulu-Natal, which is aimed at augmenting the uMngeni Water Supply System (MWSS) by transferring water via a tunnel and pipeline from the new Smithfield Dam in the uMkhomazi River.

Skills Development Manager for the programme, Phumie Mayongo, says the TCTA included in the scope of services

for GKP JV to implement a skills development programme, incorporating the recruitment of candidates, with the emphasis on South African black people, the allocation of mentors and facilitation of their professional registration through to the relevant regulatory bodies such as the Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA) and South African Council for Natural Scientific Professions (SACNASP).

"Essentially, it is a compliance requirement that engineering firms need to meet when conducting project work for the



Wherever there was an opportunity to place candidates into these specialist areas, we have done so.”

The programme will help candidates gain the practical and mentorship experience they need to practice as professionals in their fields. “When you get your degree, you don’t register as a professional until you have at least three years practical experience and have been mentored in certain key aspects of the discipline of engineering or science,” explains Gibbons.

He says while the primary objective of the programme is to facilitate the target number of candidates through the programme and see them registered with their professional bodies, there is also a selfish motive, which is to identify strong candidates to retain in the GKP JV’s respective organisations. “I must commend leadership in both GIBB and Knight Piésold on not only recognising the need to comply but in seeing its benefit in terms of adding value to society at large.

“Key to driving the process forward was the appointment of a designated individual – Mayongo – who plays an instrumental role in ensuring we meet the requirements, and that the programme runs as it should. Our client, TCTA, must also take credit for making it a requirement to appoint a Skills Development Manager,” adds Gibbons.

He notes that while the GKP JV provides the mentorship and training, the candidates must apply themselves and be self-motivated in doing so. “We provide support systems to help them achieve their registration and provide whatever support we can, but they have to take responsibility for their own development.”

GIBB bridge professional engineer and mentor, Raesa Khan, who has taken a few candidate engineers under her wing, says realistically, professional registration is a four to five-year process.

“It requires three main things: patience, resilience and hard work. Patience to deal with a long-term process and much trial and error along the way; resilience to be able to accept failure and try again; and hard work combined with the willingness to do things they may not think they can do. Of course, asking questions is key, as is conducting research and engaging in problem-solving processes.”

Knight Piésold mentor, Darren Pillay, says mastering the art of professional communication is the primary knowledge-share he would pass on to the next generation of engineers. “They also need to adopt a risk-adverse mindset - whether during the design or construction phases to ensure Health and Safety measures are achieved – for both workers and the public.” ©

Government. The initiative is aligned with South Africa’s National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS) III and the Construction Industry Development Board’s Building Up Infrastructure and Leading Development (B.U.I.L.D.) Programme. The former places strong emphasis on developing intermediate technical skills and higher-level professional qualifications, especially in science and engineering, and the latter requires that infrastructure projects of over R20-million allocate funding toward skills development and enterprise growth,” he adds.

The resulting programme, which kicked off with an induction event in July 2025, will provide graduates with the mentorship and hands-on project experience that is critical for their professional registration and long-term employment and growth prospects.

GKP JV project manager, Francis Gibbons, says with the project being a water tunnel and pipeline, the bulk of the work relates to civil engineering. “However, there is also a major environmental and geotechnical component, which requires geologists and environmental scientists.



Collective Bargaining: **ENSURING FAIR PAY AND PROTECTION FOR BUILDING INDUSTRY WORKERS**

The construction industry, with the building sector a key player, was among six sectors driving the Western Cape's economy in Q3 2024 (Wesgro). Yet, in this fast-paced and labour-intensive field, workers' needs are often overlooked, and many take jobs unaware of their rights. While some employers comply, others don't. Collective bargaining is vital to securing fair treatment, benefits, and a safer future for thousands of building industry employees.



Danie Hattingh, spokesperson for business at the Building Industry Bargaining Council (BIBC).

“**C**ollective bargaining gives employees a voice,” explains Danie Hattingh, spokesperson for business at the Building Industry Bargaining Council (BIBC). “It ensures that workers are not at the mercy of individual employers’ decisions on pay or conditions but instead benefit from industry-wide agreements that set fair and consistent standards.”

The BIBC is a collaborative body formed by employer organisations and trade unions under the Labour Relations Act to negotiate employment terms in the building industry in its area of jurisdiction. “A common misconception is that BIBC registration is optional,”



Hattingh adds. “But once the collective agreement is gazetted and extended, it becomes legally binding on all building industry employers and employees in the BIBC’s area of jurisdiction which covers the Cape Peninsula and surrounding areas, stretching from Pearly Beach through the Boland to Riebeeck West and westwards to Yzerfontein area, whether they signed it or not.”

Registered employees with the BIBC gain access to a comprehensive package of financial and non-financial benefits that would be difficult, if not impossible, to secure individually.

Financial benefits include:

- Fair wages: Industry-standard pay rates set through collective agreements.
- Holiday pay & bonuses: Lump-sum payouts in December from dedicated funds, giving workers financial security during the annual shutdown.
- Retirement savings: Employer and employee contributions to a pension fund, including death, disability, and funeral benefits.
- Sick pay: Payments during periods of illness, with contributions to other funds maintained.

Many see benefits like holiday pay and pensions as mere deductions and burdens. Rather, they are compulsory contributions that protect employees from irregular, low payments and help build long-term security. “These are not just numbers on a payslip,” says Hattingh. “They are safety nets for your health, your family, and your future.”



Non-financial benefits include:

- Standardised working hours and conditions, protecting employees from exploitation.
- Access to formal dispute resolution through the BIBC's mediation and arbitration services.
- Greater job security through a level playing field that prevents undercutting on wages.

Without BIBC registration, workers are left exposed. They risk being paid below the legal minimum wage, missing out on essential benefits, and facing unfair treatment with little recourse.

Unregistered employers may offer slightly higher take-home pay in the short term, but as Hattingh warns: "That extra bit in your hand today quickly disappears. Without contributions to your pension, holiday fund, or sick fund, you could be left with nothing when you need it most whether that's at Christmas, in retirement, or during a personal crisis."

One example of the BIBC's role came during a review of the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP). The BIBC found skilled workers on commercial projects being paid EPWP rates, well below industry minimums and without benefits. The BIBC intervened, securing back pay and full entitlements for those workers. It has also worked with government and industry stakeholders to clarify EPWP exemption guidelines, ensuring skilled workers receive proper wages and benefits.

"These interventions are not just about correcting a payslip," says Hattingh. "They can change lives, helping

workers and their families avoid financial hardship and plan for the future."

Collective bargaining benefits not just employees, but also the industry as a whole. By standardising wages and conditions, it eliminates the incentive for unprincipled employers to undercut competitors by exploiting workers. This fosters ethical business practices, attracts skilled labour, and reduces industry disputes.

"When everyone plays by the same rules, the industry becomes more stable and professional, benefiting all parties. And, as a key driver of the Western Cape's economy, protecting workers in this vital sector is crucial to sustaining its positive impact," says Hattingh.

Hattingh stresses the importance of employees knowing their rights and to insist on working for registered employers.

- Ask your boss if they are registered with the BIBC.
- Check your payslip to check for holiday, bonus, and pension fund deductions.
- Call, WhatsApp, email, or visit the BIBC with your personal details to confirm.
- Ask for a statement showing all your contributions.

"Collective bargaining is about more than wages," concludes Hattingh. "It's about dignity, fairness, and building a better life for you and your family. Registration with the BIBC is more than just a legal requirement. It is employees' pathway to security, stability, and respect in the workplace." ☺



Infrastructure and skills crises to top the **AGENDA AT SURVEYING CONFERENCE**

The South African Council for the Quantity Surveying Profession (SACQSP) is collaborating with the University of Cape Town (UCT) to present the 15th SACQSP International Research Conference. It will be held in Cape Town from 11 to 13 November and will provide a platform for local and international built industry experts.

“Our partnership with UCT reflects our shared commitment to advancing academic research as a catalyst for innovation, transformation and resilience in South Africa’s built and infrastructure sectors,” says SACQSP President Arthur Quphe.

This year’s conference will show how evidence-based research is helping quantity surveyors respond to unprecedented challenges, from digital transformation to sustainability imperatives, while shaping smarter infrastructure and more resilient economies.

Theme reflects reality

Set against the backdrop of South Africa’s deteriorating public infrastructure, growing project inefficiencies, and a deepening socio-economic crisis, the conference theme is *Quantity Surveying and the Built Environment: Navigating Disruption, Collaboration and a Sustainable Future*.

Western Cape Provincial Minister of Infrastructure MEC Tertius Simmers welcomes the SACQSP and UCT collaboration to advance research that responds directly to the country’s infrastructure and economic challenges.

“Academic insights are key to building smarter, more resilient infrastructure,” says Simmers. “This is especially relevant in the Western Cape where sustainable development and service delivery are top priorities. The conference represents a critical opportunity to align professional innovation with public sector needs”.

Worldwide recognition

The conference is recognised globally as a platform for academics, postgraduate researchers and practitioners across Africa and beyond. It showcases the profession’s growing intellectual capital and promotes the generation of knowledge that can guide infrastructure policy, procurement innovation and professional development.

“This conference is more than an academic exercise,” says Quphe, “it is a strategic intervention to ensure the quantity surveying profession remains relevant, equipped, aligned to national priorities, and in step with global best practice. Convening top minds from academia and practice enables us to co-develop solutions that directly impact people’s lives”.

UCT’s role

As academic partner, UCT will play a central role in providing academic support and shaping the research agenda, ensuring that the conference reflects both global standards and local relevance. The partnership strengthens SACQSP’s long-standing commitment to fostering knowledge exchange between academia and industry “UCT is proud to collaborate with SACQSP to

create a platform that elevates research as a strategic tool for development,” says Professor Manya Mooya, Head of UCT’s Construction Economics and Management Department. “In a country grappling with service delivery backlogs, skills shortages and infrastructure decay, academic insight can and must inform how we build our future”.

The conference programme

Quphe points out that research in quantity surveying is no longer confined to cost management. “It now informs policy, guides investment and shapes inclusive infrastructure planning,” he says.

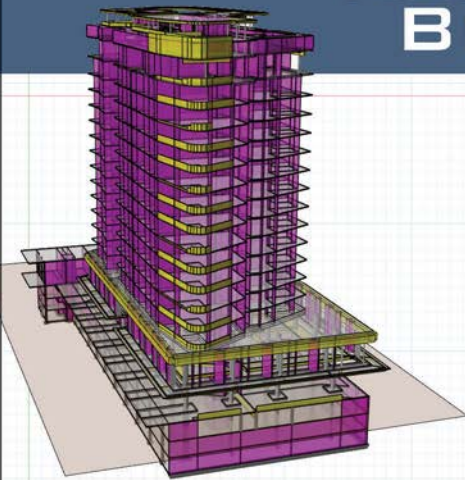
It makes sense then that this year’s conference will highlight how quantity surveyors are contributing to multidisciplinary solutions that address:

- Infrastructure underperformance and cost overruns,
- Skills gaps in the built environment,
- The integration of sustainable building practices and
- The urgent need for digital transformation in construction.


These topics will be delivered through the presentation of academic papers, keynote addresses by global built environment experts, and panel discussions addressing South Africa’s infrastructure and economic recovery.

The conference will also provide a platform to showcase emerging African quantity surveying research talent and innovations. ©


REINFORCED CONCRETE BUILDING SOFTWARE




INDUCTA is a leading Australian software company offering advanced concrete building design software for fast, accurate structural analysis and design.




RCB




SLB




PTD



RCC




FTG



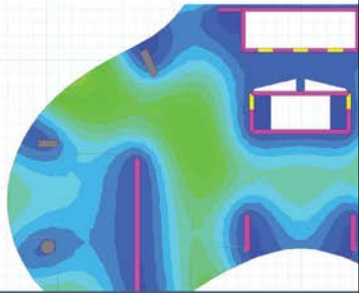
PANELS PLUS

Our suite includes comprehensive tools for the design of reinforced and post-tensioned concrete slabs, columns, walls and precast panels.

Contact us today for a free trial!



www.inducta.com.au | info@inducta.com.au





SRK Consulting (South Africa)
hydrologist, Kivana Singh.

Poor infrastructure a key challenge to **EFFECTIVE WATER STEWARDSHIP**

Many companies are embracing water stewardship in response to water scarcity and climate variability, but sub-standard infrastructure often stands in the way of their progress.

According to SRK Consulting (South Africa) hydrologist Kivana Singh, these infrastructure-related challenges present significant obstacles to companies on their journey toward Alliance for Water Stewardship (AWS) certification. The international AWS standard is a globally applicable framework for major water users to understand their water use and impacts, and to work towards sustainable water management within their catchments.

“The most common issues we encounter include ageing and poorly maintained infrastructure, inadequate wastewater treatment systems and ineffective stormwater management,” said Singh. “We also find that there are often outdated or insufficient monitoring systems, limited stakeholder engagement in infrastructure planning, and a lack of dirty water containment.”

Water loss and quality concerns

This typically leads to significant water losses and deteriorating water quality. Water losses can arise from leaking pipes, faulty valves and ageing supply systems that are prone to inefficiencies, while water quality deterioration is often driven by failing sewer infrastructure, overloaded or poorly maintained treatment systems, and inadequate containment of pollutants. All these factors can result in the release of contaminated water into the environment, she pointed out.

Water shortages – whether due to infrastructure issues or drought – pose a growing risk to businesses as their supply requirements will not be prioritised over residential users in a crisis, she noted. Given the difficulty and cost of transporting water in bulk when supply disruptions occur, there is a strong incentive for



businesses to proactively manage their water-related risks.

“Another important issue is the ineffective management of clean and dirty water flows,” she explained. “In many operations, infrastructure for diverting clean stormwater away from activity areas is either insufficient or poorly maintained.”

At the same time, she continued, dirty water generated from high-risk zones such as workshops, wash bays or chemical storage areas is not always properly contained or treated. This results in the mixing of clean and contaminated water, which can enter surface or groundwater systems and cause pollution.

Better monitoring needed

“Reliable monitoring infrastructure is also a critical gap,” she said. “Without accurate, real-time information on water quantity and quality, it becomes difficult to make informed decisions or to demonstrate compliance with specific AWS criteria. This often stems from outdated or insufficient metering, and limited automation.”

Singh also noted that stakeholder engagement, particularly in infrastructure planning and development, is often overlooked. Without collaboration among authorities, communities and other water users, opportunities for shared knowledge and coordinated action are missed. This limits the potential for efficient,

cost-effective and sustainable solutions.

“The reason the AWS standard is so useful is that it provides a globally recognised framework that helps organisations manage water sustainably at both site and catchment levels,” she said. “Built on principles of continuous improvement, it focuses on five key outcomes: good water governance; sustainable water balance; good water quality status; healthy ecosystems and biodiversity; and safe access to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH).”

She argued that, by encouraging companies to understand their water use, to assess risks and opportunities and to engage stakeholders, AWS promotes a holistic approach to water management.

“This is not a tick-the-box exercise,” she emphasised. “It’s a proactive, evolving process that aligns infrastructure with long-term sustainability goals.”

Following a common framework like the AWS standard, organisations are guided in identifying and addressing infrastructure gaps, such as wastewater treatment upgrades, enhancing stormwater control and implementing pollution prevention measures.

“The standard also emphasises the importance of monitoring and data systems, enabling better decision-making and transparency,” said Singh. “Moreover, AWS reinforces the value of stakeholder engagement, aligning closely with the National Water Act (No. 36 of 1998), which calls for integrated, equitable water management and public participation.”

She explained that the SRK Consulting (SA) team of AWS-credentialed specialists draw on their diverse technical backgrounds to support clients on their water stewardship journey.

“We assist organisations in aligning their water management practices with stewardship principles,” she said. “This helps to achieve meaningful improvements both within their operations and across the catchments they rely on.” ©



WSP LAUNCHES EPC ADVISORY AND AUDIT SERVICES

Building owners have less than two months to comply with energy performance certificates (EPC) registration as the 7 December 2025 deadline approaches. The regulations, introduced in 2020, make it mandatory to display an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) in non-residential buildings in South Africa. Non-compliant building owners risk imprisonment, a fine, or both.

In July 2025, Deputy Minister of Electricity and Energy, Samantha Graham-Maré, said that over 7 000 public and private buildings have registered for the certificate, while 3 884 EPCs had been issued.

“This is a disappointingly slow start, given the Department of Mineral Resources & Energy’s target of reaching 60 000 registrations by the December deadline,” says Alison Groves, Director, Built Ecology, WSP in Africa. “It’s clear that there’s no time to waste and property owners

and building managers must act swiftly to ensure they do not contravene legislation.”

WSP’s advisory and support services are available to help building owners comply with the current EPC registration. “Our experts across sustainability, green building and energy management have worked with several organisations to adopt green building best practices in design and building operations,” Groves adds. “This experience puts us in an excellent position to offer advisory guidance to help clients



Alison Groves, Director: Building Ecology, WSP in Africa.

understand what's required to achieve EPC compliance before the December deadline."

Groves adds: "Our immediate focus is on evaluating current building performance and advising on steps to improve energy ratings, which is critical for both compliance and long-term sustainability. Given the current levels of EPC compliance, there is a clear need for expert support in navigating regulatory requirements."

As the EPC registration deadline looms, it's important to note that certification is not a once-off exercise. EPCs are valid for five years from date of issue, meaning that building owners will have to undertake a recertification process periodically. To support clients through the certification cycle, WSP is preparing to offer EPC audit services to ensure compliance with SANS1544:2014, alongside review and advisory services focused on ongoing energy performance improvement.

"Our qualified professionals are ready to support clients through the recertification process," Groves explains. "We anticipate that there will be a growing need for registered EPC Professionals, not only to lead and manage the entire energy performance assessment and issuing of EPCs but to support planning and execution to improve the energy

performance of existing buildings and achieve better ratings at recertification."

Level A certification represents the highest possible energy efficiency rating, while Level G indicates the lowest. Although there are no formal penalties for poor performance, publicly displaying a Level G rating could serve as a powerful incentive. Property owners may feel a sense of reputational pressure or embarrassment, which can motivate them to take action - investing in upgrades that improve energy performance and contribute to a more sustainable built environment.

Groves is hopeful that the EPC process could herald the start of a momentum shift in South Africa, where driving sustainability and increased efficiency have been given lip service by many property owners for too long. "The UK has been doing this kind of certification for nearly two decades resulting in a greater awareness of energy efficiency," Groves explains. "In fact, since 2007, it has been a legal requirement to have a valid EPC when selling, renting, or building a property in the UK."

As property owners and managers become aware of their energy usage through the EPC rating they receive, managing all aspects of a building's energy use and finding solutions that maximise efficiency and improve long-term reliability will begin to hold more perceived value.

"Once the initial EPC is issued, we anticipate an increase in property owners setting energy efficiency goals to improve their original building ratings. This is where we can ensure not only compliance with EPC legislation, but help to reduce energy consumption and costs, and assess and implement self-supply options" Groves says.

WSP's green building expertise is well-renowned in South Africa and encompasses sustainability consulting, advice on sustainable solutions, investigation and advice on sustainable building design opportunities, and building modelling - from concept, verification and certification, for asset optimisation and compliance. "We have an extensive track record of helping clients achieve Green Building Certifications in Green Star, LEED and EDGE, as well as SANS 10400 XA compliance and due diligence assessments on existing buildings," Groves says. "Providing support to comply with EPC registration and improve building EPC ratings is a natural evolution for our service offering."

The EPC advisory and audit service aligns with WSP's Future Ready approach, helping clients design and operate buildings that meet today's standards while anticipating tomorrow's challenges. ©

SA RAIL NEEDS EQUAL FOCUS ON TRACKS AND CONTROL ROOMS

As South Africa restores vandalised rail corridors, the emphasis has largely been on physical infrastructure. GIBB sees an opportunity for promoting enhanced operational excellence and safety, with an equal focus on operational environments, particularly where manual train authorisation is in use.

In a drive to rapidly restore service and boost commuter confidence, many train operators rely on manual train authorisation processes to manage movements between stations. While these procedures are compliant with safety standards, they inherently increase headways (the minimum spacing between two trains so that the second train can safely maintain identical speeds to the first train) and place significant responsibility on both train control officers and train drivers.

GIBB Technologist, Piet Van Nieuwenhuizen says train control centres are environments where split-second decisions can impact safety and network efficiency, and any disruptions can raise serious questions about operational discipline and risk management.

“As South Africa prioritises network recovery, it is critical not to overlook the importance of human performance factors in these control environments. Increased reliance on human judgement under these conditions elevates the importance of discipline, situational awareness and environmental control within train control centres.”

At its core, manual train authorisation must rely on two factors – safety and patronage. The manual process introduces increased operational risk due to the absence of

automated signalling and interlocking systems, making it important to mitigate these risks by adopting strict safety measures.

These include a reduction in speed limits to allow for extended reaction time; the introduction of turnout (points) safety procedures; and the entrenchment of Special Operating Procedures (SOPs) - detailed manual protocols including block section clearance, radio-based movement authority, and documented track occupation to maintain a safe environment, despite the lack of electronic control.

While these measures reduce the likelihood of accidents, they increase the dependency on human performance, which can lead to delays, error or near misses, particularly when personnel are under pressure or during peak periods.

This is where patronage comes into play. Manual operations severely impact the efficiency and capacity of urban rail systems, especially in high-density metro corridors, leading to extended headways (from three to five minutes under automated signalling, to 30 to 24 minutes under manual authorisation), reduced train frequency and lower passenger throughput.

In this respect, it is essential that train control rooms are not noisy or distracting as this directly impacts the safety,



efficiency and decision-making quality in rail operations.

A lack of control room discipline and too many environmental distractions can affect performance. This is because train control relies heavily on clear, real-time communication (voice and data). Background noise can result in mishearing train numbers or commands or lead to misunderstood instructions, resulting in signal violations or routing errors.

In addition, it can reduce situational awareness - where noise and distractions interfere with the controller's ability to monitor multiple systems simultaneously such as signalling, train movement and radio traffic; or detect critical alerts, alarms or irregular patterns in train operations.

Nieuwenhuizen says this can lead to delayed responses. "In emergencies, every second counts. A distracted or overstimulated environment slows reaction times and can prevent timely interventions.

"The train control room is a high-stakes mental workload environment, with train control staff under significant cognitive load. Distractions increase mental fatigue, as well as the risk of memory slips and decision errors," he adds.

Notably, noise pollution studies in control environments (including aviation and power systems) consistently show that higher background noise correlates with more operator mistakes.

This, in turn, affects efficiency and operational flow, which is why control room discipline, such as silence during shift handovers, focused workspaces and structured communication are important for ensuring smooth transitions and clear understanding of operational status, as well as timely coordination across multiple teams (train operators, maintenance, emergency responders).

Nieuwenhuizen says maintaining control room discipline and managing the environment ensure staff can operate with full attention, minimise mistakes and promote the safe and efficient movement of trains.



"Historically, paper-based Manual Authorisation has been used in South Africa to issue movement authority during signalling outages. This involves direct communication between the train driver and the train control officer, with movement instructions documented manually."

With the introduction of modern communications, a hybrid approach has evolved: digital radios and mobile phones now used for voice communication, while the original paper-based authorisation procedures remain in place within train control centres.

To enable improved operation during signalling failures, the system must be capable of determining the precise location of the train, the specific track the train is occupying, the intended route of the train, the movements of other trains within the affected area and the status of key infrastructure, including the position of turnouts (points).

Nieuwenhuizen notes that while engineering consultancies are highly capable of delivering infrastructure design, they are also able to come up with designs and procedures aimed at enhancing safe system implementation.

"One way is to design control rooms that support human performance and reduce fatigue, stress and distraction, applying ISO 11064 standards for ergonomic control room design including desk layouts, lighting, acoustics and line of sight.

"Another is to conduct human factors assessments to identify cognitive load risks and design mitigation strategies, for example, ensuring critical monitors and alarm panels are within the primary visual zone to reduce head movement and distraction," he suggests.

This should include the design of quiet, focused environments that incorporate sound-absorbing materials, enclosed spaces for non-operational staff, and acoustic panels to reduce ambient noise.

"It's important to separate functional zones such as operations, admin and break areas to limit cross-functional distractions, as well as implement intelligent lighting systems to enhance alertness without glare or visual clutter," adds Nieuwenhuizen.

Implementation of standard operating procedures (SOPs) to promote a culture of control room discipline is critical. Key to this is the design of control room furniture and a layout that reduces movement and distraction during tasks, as well as introducing shift planning and alertness management strategies to establish circadian-friendly schedules and break zones.

This should be underpinned by user-friendly system interfaces for SCADA, signalling and train monitoring systems; and the implementation of logical display grouping, colour coding, and minimal alarm fatigue to help operators stay focused.

Nieuwenhuizen says training programmes focused on situational awareness, communication protocols and distraction management play a key role in the success of these measures and should be supported by an organisational culture that reinforces best practices in discipline and workspace conduct and fosters a mindset of professionalism, vigilance and pride in safe operations.

"Modern engineering consultancies are well-positioned to ensure that control rooms are not just technically functional, but also safe, efficient and human-centred. By going beyond design to include operational context and behavioural engineering, consultancies can reduce distractions and help implement a truly safe railway system," he concludes. ©



BUILDING GROWTH WITH VISION AND INNOVATION

In South Africa's competitive construction sector - where tight margins and demanding timelines define success - Afri Readymix has emerged as a standout performer. Founded in 2021 in Rustenburg, the company has rapidly grown into a fully integrated supplier to both the mining and general construction industries. With its focus on quality, service, and community upliftment, Afri Readymix is redefining local excellence in construction materials.

At the helm is Gerhard Maree, Founder and Managing Director, whose journey combines experience and resilience. After two decades with AfriSam, including 15 years managing its Rustenburg readymix plant, Maree was retrenched in 2020. Instead of leaving the industry, he acquired the very plant he once managed - "a turning point that turned a difficult moment into a foundation for growth," he recalls. Afri Readymix began operations in March 2021.

Since then, growth has been swift. Within a year, a second plant opened in Boshhoek, followed by a third in Northam in

2024. That same year, the company launched Afri Hardware, offering a full range of building materials "from foundations to finishes." The move, supported by a new brand identity - "From Concrete to Hardware" - marks Afri Readymix's evolution into a full-spectrum construction solutions partner.

Recent investments and new ventures

The company's growth momentum continued in 2025 with two major investments. In January 2025, Afri Readymix



finalised the acquisition of the Noordvaal Centre in Rustenburg, now being transformed into a modern, multi-purpose facility aligned with its forward-thinking image. At the same time, the company extended its retail footprint to the Western Cape with the opening of a new Afri Hardware outlet in Groot Brak, which began trading on 1 October 2025.

Looking to the future, Maree says the next phase will focus on geographic expansion and operational excellence. “We’re planning three new batching plants in three different provinces,” he explains, “because our long-term goal is to grow Afri Ready Mix into a well-known and trusted brand across South Africa.”

Technology and innovation

Technology remains a cornerstone of Afri Ready Mix’s operations. Each batching plant runs on Command CE systems, providing precise control and real-time monitoring. To ensure consistent quality, Go Consult conducts monthly audits. Maree notes that “those audits keep us honest and push us to improve; they’ve also helped us develop more than 300 custom concrete mix designs.” These include high-performance durability mixes for infrastructure projects, fibre-reinforced solutions for mining, and specialised blends for the Bakwena N4 upgrade, supplied through main contractor Raubex.

Partnerships with Chryso Southern Africa further enhance the company’s technical edge. By incorporating

advanced chemical admixtures, Afri Ready Mix has improved product strength, reduced curing times, and lessened its environmental footprint - advances Maree describes as “innovation that delivers real-world efficiency.”

Commitment to sustainability

Concrete production is resource-intensive, but Afri Ready Mix is determined to make it more sustainable. The company is optimising raw-material sourcing to reduce transport distances, reusing aggregates from mine-rehabilitation projects, and testing low-carbon cement alternatives. Maree views sustainability as a continual process rather than a single achievement: “It’s an ongoing journey, and our goal is to make every step - from production to delivery - more energy-efficient and environmentally responsible.”

Rising fuel and electricity costs have challenged operations, yet Afri Ready Mix continues to innovate through energy-saving equipment and smarter logistics planning. “We can’t control fuel prices,” says Maree, “but we can control how efficiently we use what we have.”

Funding and financial discipline

Afri Ready Mix’s expansion has been financed through a balanced mix of in-house funding and external support from financial institutions. This disciplined approach, Maree says, “keeps our growth sustainable - we move forward with confidence, not risk.”



Community development and empowerment

Afri Readymix's success is deeply intertwined with community upliftment. The company prioritises local employment, training, and supplier development, while nurturing entrepreneurship and supporting B-BBEE initiatives. "The development of local entrepreneurs and our BEE partners will always be part of our growth plan," says Maree. "We invest in skills, support schools and projects, and engage with our communities because their success is our success."

This philosophy translates into tangible action. Afri Readymix provides long-term support to Mōrester Children's Home, helping to fund operations through sponsorships. The golf day held on the 9 October 2025, raised R351 000. The company also sponsors youth-sport programmes at Rustenburg High and Frikkie Meyer High, reinforcing its commitment to local development.



Competitive edge and performance goals

Afri Readymix distinguishes itself through customer focus, transparent communication, and technical reliability. Maree summarises the company's approach succinctly: "We don't just sell concrete - we provide solutions. Reliability, consistency, and quality are non-negotiable."

Operating under the Afri Holdings umbrella with shareholders Werner Weiss and Christie van der Mescht, the company employs more than 40 permanent staff and 20 contractors, supported by a fleet of 26 trucks, including subcontracted units.

Despite economic and political uncertainty, Maree remains optimistic. "We're consolidating our operations, maintaining service excellence, and positioning ourselves for sustainable national growth," he says. "We're not only building infrastructure - we're building communities, relationships, and a lasting legacy."

From a decommissioned plant to a regional powerhouse, Afri Readymix's story is one of vision, innovation, and commitment to people. In just a few short years, the company has grown from a single bold idea into a trusted name in construction - proving that when quality and purpose align, the results can build more than structures; they can build a legacy. ©



PERFORMANCE SNAPSHOT

Afri Readymix tracks its success through specific, measurable performance indicators:

- 98 percent on-time delivery
- Zero safety incidents
- Continuous fuel-efficiency improvements
- Revenue and sales growth
- Stronger brand visibility
- Ongoing staff training and development



Benefit from **a wide spectrum of geogrid technologies** at Fibertex

As your trusted partner, we provide stiff uniaxial and biaxial geogrids for critical reinforcement needs, alongside our durable coated multifilament options tailored for retaining wall stability.

**Whatever your project demands,
we have the geogrid for the job.**



DRACO GROUP: PRECISION, SAFETY AND RESULTS

For over 20 years, Draco Group has tackled some of South Africa's most demanding projects in demolition, rehabilitation, asbestos and hazardous waste removal, and bulk earthworks. Backed by a Level 1 BBBEE certification, the company is recognised for delivering high-risk work with safety, precision and efficiency.



Sibanye Stillwater.

Earlier this year, the team faced one of its most demanding challenges: demolishing a 107-metre converter stack at Palabora Mining Company in Limpopo. The stack, already leaning six degrees, stood inside a working smelter operation and on the boundary of the Kruger National Park. A collapse would have posed serious risks to people, infrastructure and the environment.

Using drone technology, digital modelling and precision blasting, Draco Group brought the structure down exactly as planned. It landed neatly within a tight safety zone, with no injuries, no damage and no environmental impact. At 107 metres, it was the tallest stack of its kind ever demolished in South Africa.

The company's demolition portfolio includes projects as varied as the high-reach removal of the Premier Foods facility, the dismantling of the Agrivaal Heritage Site, the implosion of Pretoria's Munitoria Building, and mechanical demolition in Sandton's busy 90 Rivonia precinct.

Rehabilitation is a core focus for Draco Group. At Sibanye Stillwater, the team stabilised land left unsafe by mining, while at the Kopanang Hostels unsafe buildings were removed and the ground prepared for redevelopment. Land contouring, drainage management and soil remediation ensure that disturbed sites are safe, stable and ready for future use.

Draco Group is licensed as a Type 3 Asbestos Contractor under the Asbestos Abatement Regulations of 2020. This accreditation enables the team to handle asbestos removal and hazardous waste safely and legally across schools, public buildings, factories, warehouses, commercial and industrial properties, and municipal projects.

Earthworks complement the company's offerings. Teams of engineers and operators handle complex excavation and grading, manage drainage, and prepare groundworks to the exact standards required for each site. Specialised work includes roadway, bridge, channel and footing excavations,

borrow pits, dredging and underground excavation.

Safety is built into the way Draco Group runs its projects. A dedicated safety officer manages each site, and work begins every morning with toolbox talks that address the risks of the day. Staff receive regular training in first aid, fire-fighting and SHE practices, along with instruction in fall arrest, scaffolding and risk assessment. Workers are issued with protective gear, and strict audits are carried out before and during each project.

The same care is given to how materials are managed.

Steel is recovered and recycled, while concrete is crushed for reuse in roadworks or as fill, reducing landfill waste and putting resources back into circulation.

The company also draws on local subcontractors wherever possible, providing employment in nearby communities and giving workers the chance to gain experience on active projects. Work with organisations such as the Palabora Foundation ensures that projects contribute to the wider community as well as the site itself. ©



Palabora Mining Company (PMC) - Compromised Converter Stack.



Munitoria Building Implosion.

LANDSCAPING – A VITAL AND OFTEN OVERLOOKED DESIGN ELEMENT

Too often, landscaping is left until the very end of a building project – an afterthought once the structure is complete. But this approach comes at a cost, warns Timothy Snyders, Landscape Architect at Truform, part of the BPAS Architects group.



“Clients and architects naturally prioritise the building itself, but when outdoor spaces are given less attention, you end up with compromised designs, retrofitted solutions, and higher long-term costs,” he says. “The missed opportunity is enormous – not only financially, but also in the loss of meaningful, functional, and sustainable outdoor spaces.”

Landscapes set the first impression, shape how people interact with their surroundings, and often determine the long-term success of a project, he emphasises.

Beauty, experience and value

Snyders explains that landscape architecture is about far more than decoration. “It’s about creating spatial experiences – spaces that spark intrigue, encourage discovery, and complement the built environment,” he says. “This holistic approach enhances not only the aesthetic but also the value of a property.”

With global movements around urban greening and backyard biodiversity gaining traction, South Africa is no exception. Landscape architects are increasingly integrating local species to support thriving ecosystems while creating habitats for birds, insects, and other fauna.

Equally important is the human dimension. “In an era of excessive screen time, outdoor spaces provide vital relief,” notes Snyders. “Research shows that even just looking at greenery reduces stress and supports healing. That’s how far-reaching the value of landscape design really is.”

Common landscaping pitfalls

According to Snyders, two mistakes crop up time and again. The first is treating soft landscaping as an afterthought rather than a design driver. “Plants bring fragrance, seasonal colour, texture, and dynamism –

qualities hard surfaces alone cannot provide,” he says.

The second is a lack of integration between buildings, landscapes, and pedestrian flow. “People will always carve their own paths if circulation isn’t considered. That’s how lawns and planting beds get worn down. When movement is planned early, the landscape feels intuitive and seamless.”

When landscaping is part of the initial design process, the benefits are clear. Site topography, circulation routes, shading, and gathering spaces inform the architecture, rather than being awkwardly bolted on later. “It results in a development that feels intentional and complete,” Snyders explains. “It’s about cohesion rather than afterthoughts.”

Context-specific landscaping

For local homeowners and developers, authenticity is key. “We’re seeing a strong shift toward landscapes that respond to South African realities instead of international fads,” says Snyders. This includes greater use of endemic plants, locally sourced materials, and partnerships with local artists and craftspeople.

“These choices aren’t just about aesthetics; they build resilience against water scarcity, climate pressures, and urbanisation, while also celebrating our cultural and ecological uniqueness,” he adds.

Ultimately, he believes outdoor design has transformative potential. “A well-designed outdoor space improves wellbeing, encourages social connection, enhances architectural expression, and elevates property value. For developers, it attracts investors and buyers. For homeowners, it unlocks potential they may never have imagined. At its best, landscape architecture doesn’t just complement a building – it enriches everyday life.” ©



ICONIC SUN CITY HOTEL TO REVEAL ITS STYLISH NEW LOOK

In 1979 South Africans were enchanted with what was Africa's most glamorous hotel, but 46 years on and the grand dame Sun City Hotel has been showing her age. Nips and tucks over the years helped, but last year Sun International set about giving the famous entertainment and leisure mecca a complete facelift so gone is the drab, and back is the dazzle.

Brett Hoppe, Sun City General Manager says, "From the day that Sun City Hotel first opened its doors South Africans have streamed through them, all caught up in the magic and the dream that Sun City offered. We promised the glamour of Vegas, balanced by world-class family leisure and entertainment facilities. But at 46 our hotel was looking tired, so we knew we had to restore the hotel to its former glory. There was nothing like it back then, and after the refurbishment we know that guests will agree there is nothing like it now."

From November this year, most of the hotel's 350 rooms will be ready to reopen in time for the 2025 Nedbank Golf Challenge and the busy December season. From the glamorous new *porte cochère* to the attractive new rooms, visitors will fall in love with the magic of this iconic hotel all over again. The upgrade also included the hotel lifts,

its giant octagon pool and the smoking casino entrance, and transforming the Sun Terrace into a contemporary space for leisurely dining.

Inside each elegantly refurbished room, guests will be greeted by a soft and harmonious palette of white and soft neutrals, lifted by pops of warmer gold and turquoise. The new contemporary bathrooms and coffee bar lead past plush king sized beds, to the mid-century modern outdoor terrace décor with sweeping views over the pool and the 18-hole Gary Player Golf Course beyond.

Ryan Ilgner, Director at interior design company Solebi-Blacksmith, says Sun City Hotel's new look reflects the perfect marriage between local Tswana culture and contemporary luxury, "Drawing inspiration from Tswana artistry, the new interior design features bold geometric motifs that echo the intricate patterns found in the newly

renovated guest rooms. These rich visual elements serve as a subtle yet powerful tribute to the region's cultural identity, grounding the modern space in authenticity and storytelling.

The new guest journey

"The wow factor hits you the moment you approach the reimagined *porte cochère*. Beautifully sculptured granite floors in intricate patterns greet you, setting the tone for the luxurious experience that lies ahead. A mesmerizing light display ceiling dazzles with its stunning visuals, guiding you toward the newly designed entrance, where a frameless view offers an unobstructed sightline of the hotel lobby. This first impression is just the beginning of a truly wonderful journey.

The new Sun Terrace restaurant

"The iconic Sun Terrace restaurant has undergone a stunning transformation—an inspired fusion of Tswana cultural heritage and sleek, contemporary design. This reimagined space will now redefine the guest experience, offering not only world-class dining but also panoramic views of the breath-taking landscape—open vistas never before revealed from this beloved venue.

"A standout feature of the transformation is the installation of retractable glass doors that create a seamless transition between the indoor and outdoor. Whether opened wide to let in the warmth of an African sunset or closed for a cosy, climate-controlled ambiance, they maintain a continuous connection to the lush resort grounds.

Interactive dining

"At the heart of the dining experience is an interactive live cooking theatre, where chefs prepare dishes in full view, turning culinary mastery into performance art. Guests will be welcomed by the aromas of freshly baked croissants, barista coffees, and sizzling delicacies, setting the tone for a sensory-rich dining journey.

Entertainment area

"The transformation extends beyond the plate. A grand central staircase now leads guests down to an entertainment pool level alive with energy. At its core: a dedicated DJ island, where curated soundscapes create a vibrant mood by day or night. From dancing under the stars to lounging poolside with signature cocktails, the space is a celebration of both indulgence and freedom.

Pool area

"The adjacent resort pool area is now a multi-layered sanctuary, blending family fun with elevated sophistication. Children's play zones ensure carefree moments for families, while private cabanas with luxury daybeds offer seclusion for those seeking refined relaxation. These elevated retreats include refreshment stations, lounge-style dining, and personalised service, delivering the ultimate in exclusivity.

"With this visionary transformation, the Sun Terrace and pool emerges as a dynamic cultural and lifestyle destination. From serene breakfasts over newly unveiled vistas to vibrant evenings echoing with music and laughter, the new Sun City Hotel leisure and dining offering sets a bold new benchmark for what a luxury African escape can be." ©





STOPPING FIRES

BEFORE THEY START!



Intelligent
Fire Stopping Buildings



ASPfire

+27 11 452 2169
michael@aspfire.co.za
www.aspfire.co.za



Chat to us on LinkedIn



Concor has embarked on its first fully wrapped Balance of Plant (BoP) contract - covering both civil and electrical scopes - at the De Aar 2 South Wind Energy Facility, showcasing its turnkey engineering and construction capabilities.



CONCOR'S WIND ENERGY GAMECHANGER: FULL BoP UNDER ONE ROOF

In a milestone achievement for South Africa's renewable energy sector, Concor has taken full control of the Balance of Plant (BoP) scope on the TotalEnergies Renewables De Aar 2 South Wind Energy Facility in the Northern Cape.

This marks the first time the company is delivering a fully wrapped BoP contract under its own direct engineering and construction management. Not only is Concor the main contractor for the 25 turbine project spread across five farms near Philipstown, but it is also responsible for both the Civil BoP (CBoP) and Electrical BoP (EBoP) - from design and engineering through to execution including the Eskom Distribution self-build scope. This comprehensive self-perform approach represents a bold departure from traditional contracting models and signals Concor's evolution into a truly turnkey BoP provider.

"With over 13 years of experience in renewable energy infrastructure, more than 10 wind farms successfully completed since 2012 and a further six wind farms currently in various phases of construction, Concor is no stranger to the demands of this sector," says Stephan Venter, Contract Director at Concor. "But this project sets a new benchmark. By taking full ownership of both the engineering and construction elements, we are reducing interfaces, improving accountability and de-risking the process for our clients."

This strategic shift positions Concor at the forefront of renewable project delivery in South Africa, offering clients



Clearing and grubbing activities underway on the De Aar 2 South Wind Energy Facility project, forming part of the initial site establishment and earthworks phase.



Cut-to-fill activities in progress on the De Aar 2 South Wind Energy Facility project, optimising on-site material use for road construction and turbine platform preparation.

a streamlined single-source BoP solution that enhances coordination and ensures delivery certainty.

The 5,473 hectare facility is on a fast track programme, with early works launched in November 2024 and completion expected by Q3 of 2026. The company's scope includes 54 km of gravel road infrastructure, starting with the realignment and upgrading of 15 km of the existing Kranskop district road to accommodate heavy turbine components. Additionally, 41 km of new internal access roads are being constructed, supported by extensive blasting and cut-and-fill earthworks to adapt to the local terrain.

A major innovation lies in Concor's design of the turbine foundations. A unique central pit, 7 metres in diameter and filled with G7 material, has been incorporated to address the region's geological challenges, reducing stress on the 22 metre diameter concrete bases. Each foundation uses 600 m³ of specially designed readymix concrete, batched on-site making use of two brand new modified 45 m³/hr Karoo plants to ensure consistency and quality. Smart rock sensors embedded in the foundations monitor internal temperatures, allowing real-time adjustments to mitigate the risk of thermal cracking.

As part of the Electrical Balance of Plant (EBoP), Concor is

responsible for trenching and laying 13km of 33kV medium voltage cabling from each turbine's Power Transformer Kiosk (PTK) to a termination overhead line (OHL) structure. This is linked via an extensive 80km 33kV OHL network to the IPP substation, which steps up the voltage to 132kV utilising a 165 MVA power transformer. The project also includes the construction of a new adjacent Eskom Distribution 132kV Switching Station (SWS) and an extension of a 132kV OHL to an upstream Eskom Main Transmission Substation (MTS).

The project has not been without challenges. A high water table impacted 11 of the 25 turbine bases, requiring the installation of subsoil drainage systems. In addition, heavy seasonal rainfall necessitated robust stormwater management to protect both access and internal roads.

Environmental compliance has remained central to Concor's operations, guided by the Environmental Management Programme Report (EMPR). Teams receive regular training to uphold environmental protocols and safeguard heritage and biodiversity in this sensitive landscape.

"Our execution reflects Concor's depth of experience in remote, large-scale projects," says Concor Project Manager Gideon Niemand. "We are delivering to the highest standards, with environmental responsibility and engineering excellence at the core of everything we do."

Through innovative engineering, efficient planning, and environmental stewardship, Concor is helping shape a more sustainable energy future - one turbine at a time. ©



Michell Bezuidenhout,
Director – PCC, Africa,
EC South Africa.

AECOM PRESERVES THE PAST WHILE BUILDING THE FUTURE

As South Africa celebrated Heritage Month on October, AECOM reflects on how preserving history is not only a cultural responsibility but also a critical part of its Sustainable Legacies strategy. By integrating heritage into new developments, the company ensures that structures of historic value continue to inspire, educate, and shape communities, while giving the next generation of professionals hands-on experience with projects that demand technical skill, creativity and sensitivity.

This philosophy found powerful expression in the new Head Office of the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development and Land Reform (DALRRD) in Pretoria. Delivered through a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) project, the 90 000 m² development combined modern office facilities with the meticulous restoration of a historic heritage building on site. AECOM provided full Quantity Surveying (QS) services to the DRD Design and Construct Joint Venture, with work commencing in

February 2021 and reaching completion in February 2023.

Balancing preservation and progress

The new campus includes a two-level super-basement, five four-storey office blocks, and a host of integrated infrastructure such as an auditorium, gym, backup power, advanced AV and VC systems, and carefully curated artworks. Yet at the heart of the project was the painstaking effort to conserve and restore a building that had suffered extensive neglect.





“When we first saw the heritage building, it was in a very poor condition, as fires had caused structural damage, large trees were growing inside, and people had even been living there,” recalls Estia Cronje, Cost Management Professional at AECOM. “We had to reinforce much of the structure, and nearly all the original woodwork and detail had to be reinstated. Some elements, like custom door handles, took six months to manufacture. With heritage projects, you never know if materials still exist or if anyone can replicate the craft. It takes three to four times longer than a conventional build, but the result speaks for itself.”

The restored building now sits proudly within landscaped grounds that evoke South Africa’s agricultural heritage. Its design links past and present, as the façade of the new structure symbolises the country’s provinces and mineral wealth, while the heritage building itself remains a testament to early 20th century architecture.

The project also embraced art and inclusivity. A nationwide competition led to the selection of nine artworks, each representing an aspect of South African culture. These pieces now form part of the site, ensuring the building is not just a workplace but also a celebration of national identity.

For many, the building also carries personal meaning. “One of my colleagues’ parents got engaged in the original building,”

adds Cronje. “Its history goes back more than a century, and it was important to make sure it remained recognisable after restoration.”

A lasting legacy

For AECOM, the project was about more than just technical achievement. It was about creating a lasting legacy. “It is a once-in-a-lifetime project,” says Michell Bezuidenhout, Director – PCC, Africa, EC South Africa. “The detail, cost, time, and stakeholder engagement involved were enormous. But more than that, it is about creating sustainable legacies, preserving the past while building for the future. This project gave younger professionals the chance to research the building’s history, work alongside specialist craftsmen and integrate heritage with modern requirements. That experience is invaluable.”

Both old and new elements were woven together with care. Restoring features such as gates, signage, and façades required extraordinary effort, but the end result stays true to the original. “The pride comes from knowing we played a role in preserving one of South Africa’s key heritage buildings,” says Michell.

The DALRRD Head Office is more than just a workplace. It is a masterclass in architectural storytelling, where design reflects the land, culture, and history of South Africa. It symbolises how sustainable development can respect heritage while meeting the needs of a modern government department. As the nation reflects on its heritage this September, AECOM reaffirms its commitment to designing for the future while honouring the past, a principle at the heart of its Sustainable Legacies approach. ☺



SAPOA PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT AWARDS FOR INNOVATIVE EXCELLENCE 2025 WINNERS

The South African Property Owners Association (SAPOA) has announced the winners of the 2025 Property Development Awards for Innovative Excellence, the country's most prestigious recognition of achievement in commercial property development.



Overall winner – sustainability award.

For decades, these awards have represented the highest accolade in South African property and a hallmark of distinction celebrating visionaries, innovators and pioneers who shape the nation's built environment. The 2025 winners exemplify the fusion of cutting-edge technology, environmental responsibility, and human-centred design that defines world-class development.

“Each of the winning projects embody the spirit of innovation and inclusivity that drives South African property forward — building spaces that connect people, strengthen communities and create lasting value,” says SAPOA Chief Executive Officer, Neil Gopal.

A panel of esteemed judges from across the property and architecture professions conducted a rigorous evaluation of submissions, assessing each development on economic and financial considerations, design, function and fit, user satisfaction, tenancy, environmental sustainability, social transformation and overall impact.

“The awards stand as a powerful reflection of South Africa's property sector at its very best – visionary, bold and resilient. Each project is a living testament to excellence, transforming the way we live, work and connect. At a time when sustainability, adaptability and community-centric design are more crucial than ever, this year's entries prove that South Africa isn't just keeping pace with global trends, it's setting them,” adds Nonku Ntshona,

Chair of the SAPOA Property Development Awards.

2025 SAPOA Property Development Awards for Innovative Excellence – Winners

Overall Winner

Canopy by Hilton Cape Town Longkloof – Growthpoint Properties/dhk Architects

Innovation Award

Amazon's Corporate Head Office – Paragon Architects

Transformation Award

Princess Mkabayi Mall – Moolman Group/Twin City/Green Giraffe Properties/MDS Architecture

Category Winners:

- **Commercial Office Development of the Year**
Irene Link Precinct Building E – Abland Property Developers/ Giflo Property Developers/SOM Group/Nsika Architecture & Design
- **Corporate Office Development of the Year**
Amazon Corporate Head Office – Paragon Architects
- **Industrial Development of the Year**
Rhenus Logistics Facility– Improvon/Actis/Nedbank/Studio-Mor Pty Ltd.
- **Innovative Development of the Year**
V&A Waterfront Desalination Plant – V&A Waterfront/Revel Fox & Partners

- **Interiors of the Year (Small Development)**
Exemplar REITail Head Office – McCormick Property Development/Design Build Collective/Living Planet Architects
- **Interiors of the Year (Large Development)**
Amazon AWS Interior – Design Partnership
- **Mixed-Use Development of the Year**
Canopy by Hilton Cape Town Longkloof – Growthpoint Properties / dhk Architects
- **Other Developments' of the Year**
Constantia Life Great Oaks Retirement Village – Constantia Life Developers/Genius Loci/ MDA Project Managers
- **Refurbishment of the Year**
Primedia Head Office – Paragon Architects
- **Residential Development of the Year**
The One Stellenbosch – Boogertman + Partners Architects
- **Retail Development of the Year (Large Regional Mall >25,000 m²)**
Parkdene Boulevard – Abland Property Developers/Retail Africa/Skyscape Architects
- **Retail Development of the Year (Small Boutique <25,000 m²)**
Leaping Frog Retail Centre – Abcon Developments/Bar Architects/Dorpstraat
- **Rural & Small Town Development of the Year**
Princess Mkabayi Mall – Moolman Group/Twin City/Green Giraffe Properties/MDS Architecture
- **Student Accommodation of the Year**
Thrive @ Crescent Studios – Thrive Student Living/



Left: Neil Gopal, SAPOA Chief Executive Officer. Right: Nonku Ntshona, Cahair of SAPOA Property Development awards

Growthpoint Properties/Feenstra Group/TJA Architects Pretoria

The awards were announced during the SAPOA Annual Convention at Sun City, attended by leading developers, architects, investors and policymakers from across South Africa's property landscape. The influential property industry gathering was sponsored by Fortress Real Estate Investments, Growthpoint Properties, Old Mutual Property, Pareto, Resilient REIT, the South African National Energy Development Institute (Sanedi) and Vukile Property Fund. ©



Overall winner.



HERITAGE PRESERVED: GVK-SIYA ZAMA COMPLETES 96 RISSIK STREET FOR TRANSNET

GVK-Siya Zama has officially completed the restoration of 96 Rissik Street in Johannesburg, delivering Transnet's new head office while safeguarding one of the city's most prominent Edwardian landmarks. Completed just prior to Heritage Month, the project stands as a celebration of Johannesburg's architectural legacy, ensuring that a building once left to decay now endures as a reminder of the city's rich history and heritage.

Moreover, the restoration anchors the broader regeneration of Johannesburg's inner city. By weaving heritage into the fabric of modern infrastructure, the project strengthens the city's renewal efforts and positions the CBD as a place where history and progress coexist.

"This marks not only the completion of a restoration project, but the revival of a piece of our shared history, made even more meaningful as the handover took place on the eve of Heritage Month," says Jabu Serithi, Managing Director of GVK-Siya Zama's Gauteng operations. "By choosing to restore rather than replace, our client honours that legacy while creating something entirely new, a bridge between historical roots and contemporary aspirations."

The redevelopment carefully balanced conservation with forward-looking design. Original timber windows, decorative plasterwork, tiled passages, and the Transnet Heritage Library were meticulously protected, while new features such as glass-fronted meeting rooms, flexible office layouts, and a landscaped atrium create a vibrant, post-COVID working environment.

Together, these choices ensure that the building remains

both functional and culturally significant.

Externally, the restoration reinstated the building's historic northern entrance, widened pavements, and returned its facades to their Edwardian clarity. Inside, previously hidden elements such as fireplaces, fanlights, and a historic railway control panel were revealed and retained, reinforcing a tangible link to the building's origins.

The project also extended its impact beyond the site itself. Built-environment students gained rare, hands-on training in heritage refurbishment, while nearby schools and communities benefited from support initiatives ranging from uniform donations to winter relief programmes. In this way, the restoration became a platform not only for architectural renewal but also for social investment.

"Adaptive re-use is not a compromise between past and future; it is a model for sustainable, culturally rooted development. This building stands restored not just for today, but as our collective contribution to the generations who will follow - a reminder that we chose to be custodians of our heritage while being architects of our tomorrow," concludes Serithi. ☺



TAKING CONSTRUCTION TO THE NEXT LEVEL.

269,000 net square meters of exhibits / 139,000 attendees / 2,000 exhibitors / 150 education sessions

 **CONEXPO
CON / AGG**

MARCH 3-7 / 2026 / LAS VEGAS / NEVADA



2023 Attendee Mike Simon,
Dirt Perfect Excavation

No matter what sector of construction you're in, you'll leave **CONEXPO-CON/AGG** with new ideas, new relationships, and new opportunities to grow your business, and your place within the industry. This isn't just North America's largest construction trade show, it's taking construction to the next level.

[LEARN MORE AT CONEXPOCONAGG.COM](https://www.conexpoconagg.com)

xylem
Let's Solve Water



Dewatering solutions: Your Task. Our Force.

Your Partner on the Construction Site

On any construction site, from foundation work to tunnelling, controlling water is critical to keeping your project on schedule and on budget. Unwanted water from rainfall or high groundwater tables doesn't have to cause delays. Xylem is your single, expert partner, offering complete dewatering solutions tailored to the unique demands of the construction industry. We combine decades of experience with a deep understanding of your operational needs, ensuring your site stays dry and your project keeps moving forward.

The Legendary Reliability of Flygt

When your project's progress depends on reliable dewatering, you need the toughest equipment on the market. Our fleet is headlined by the legendary reliability of Flygt submersible pumps—the original and the best workhorses for construction sites around the globe. The iconic Flygt BIBO offers unmatched wear-resistance, while the versatile Flygt 2600 series easily handles the abrasive water and suspended solids common in excavations. With a Flygt pump on your site, you have a guarantee of performance, backed by comprehensive support for total peace of mind.

Don't let water challenges slow you down. Contact our experts today to design your complete solution.



xylem.com