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ON NEW DEVELOPMENT**

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project progressing well**

GVK-SIYA ZAMA
 **CONSTRUCTION**

**REDEVELOPMENT OF CAPE TOWN
STATION COMPLETED**



Cape Town Station's redevelopment: **REINFORCING CONNECTION**

GVK-Siya Zama has worked around the clock to complete the redevelopment of Cape Station into a mixed-use residential and retail space, for Eris Property Group. This is despite experiencing one of Cape Town's wettest winters in 10 years, which threatened to derail the process. The site is located between Strand Street, Adderley Street, Old Marine Drive and the existing Station Concourse. This precinct, centred on the station forecourt, is part of a much larger site that extends into Woodstock and measures 36,6 hectares.

The project, which started in 2021 and was completed late last year, is one of the company's largest projects to date, by value, and its largest in the Western Cape. It has opened a direct corridor between Strand Street and the Cape Town railway station. It boasts an unrestricted and pedestrian-friendly thoroughfare through a 'grand entrance' galleria and now contributes to the upliftment and modernisation of the station precinct. It is a shot in the arm for the precinct and has resulted in a vibrant community supported by a vast retail offering and the repurposing of a fairly squalid and defunct facility.

Aligned with similar projects in European cities where less desirable spaces are being transformed into sought-after residential and retail offerings, the 77 000 m² redevelopment incorporates a 22-storey, 3 000-bed purpose-built student

accommodation facility, 6 700 m² of retail space and a new world-class public square.

Architectural considerations

This building connects students through rail and rapid bus transport nodes and has a clean and contemporary style that mimics the existing concourse block.

In terms of landscaping, Station Square forms the main landscape element and seamlessly ties the station to the rest of the Cape Town CBD's infrastructure and pedestrian routes.

The aim of the project was to enhance the station forecourt as a key public open space in the precinct and within the city, to enhance connections between the space and the surrounding urban structure, and providing a dignified and active space for

commuters, shoppers and office worker to sit, relax and engage. The forecourt design also accommodates spill-out spaces for informal retail activities and for periodic events.

Building the precinct

GVK-Siya Zama's Managing Director of its Cape business unit, Chris Maughan, says the purpose was to introduce student accommodation in a transport node that could service both UCT, CPUT and other significant tertiary educational campuses.

"The project had to be completed in time for the 2024 student intake. The 22-storey building required hoisting of some 9 000 000 bricks, which meant many extra hours of crane hook time and additional protection and resources while navigating adverse weather conditions," says Maughan.

While it was not a particularly difficult build, the volume of the project within the time frame posed challenges and required considerable thought, especially the vertical movement of people, plant and materials over 22 floors while the traffic up and down stairwells was a logistical challenge – especially at the height of the project when 999 workers were on site.

Cost innovations

It was a cost sensitive project and the team was challenged to find innovative solutions that still "looked good" and enhanced the overall aesthetic of the design. "Many elements had an industrial look and feel. We had to find ways to retain the architectural features without making the development feel too rudimentary," adds Maughan. Due to the size of the



project, financial consideration played a critical role in product selection, as the smallest design tweak and cost saving had a huge impact on the final project cost. With student safety and wellbeing as primary focus, the development includes several study hubs, seven-a-side football fields on the fourth floor of the building and cinema and relaxation areas to create a safe, enjoyable and practical living space.

Overcoming challenges

The location of the project posed a challenge in terms of security and required considerable additional resources to safeguard materials and project staff.

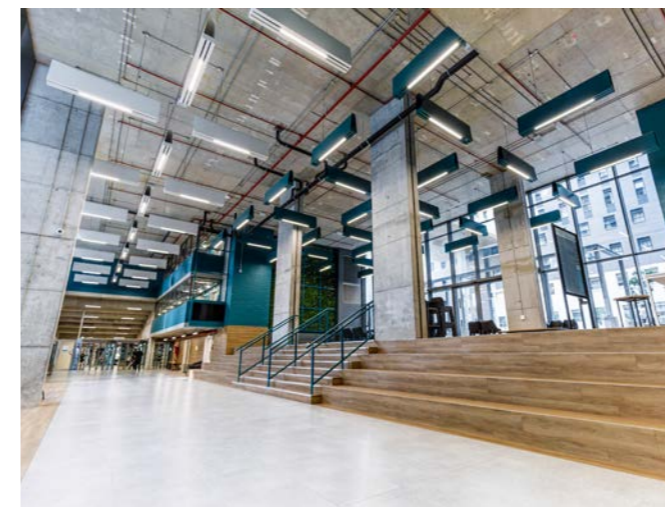
The site is also located “in the teeth” of Cape Town’s notorious southeaster wind and therefore extra measures had to be taken to ensure the safety of materials and people. Scaffolding and plant had to be adequately secured to avoid accidents and injury. The building façade comprised of several different elements ranging from specialised plaster/paint

applications, sheeted cladding, off-shutter concrete, flush painted brickwork, and several different types of Travertine face brickwork. The massive quantities of brickwork coupled with the usage of both cement and clay Maxis added to the production complexities.

The main station façade plays with the light quality of Cape Town with a soft satin type reflection, while the stone-like quality allows it to blend in.

Maughan says the building boasts solar and energy efficient appliances including many safety features, specifically related to fire compliance. “Due the large number of students to be housed in the building, it was essential that control measures were put in place to monitor water and electrical usage alongside an efficient, centralised water heating solution.” He says GVK-Siya Zama is delighted with the outcome of the project. “It showcases our ability to work on large, complex projects within tight budget and time constraints. We also believe our success is due to our ability to attract

the best people in the industry and create a work environment that is supportive and friendly.” Cape Station stands as testament to Eris Property Group, a visionary developer, and a team committed to delivery of this fine project. ©



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