

THE ONE, STELLENBOSCH

Located just 750 metres from Stellenbosch University, The One is a premium, mixed-use student development that redefines student accommodation in South Africa. Comprising 508 secure residential units – including studios, one- and two-bedroom apartments – the complex places a strong emphasis on community, comfort and convenience.

Two large landscaped courtyards form the heart of the development, surrounded by high-quality indoor and outdoor amenities that support both social interaction and personal well-being.

Ground-floor retail and café-style activation mirror Stellenbosch's characteristic street rhythm, creating a lively, integrated interface with the surrounding

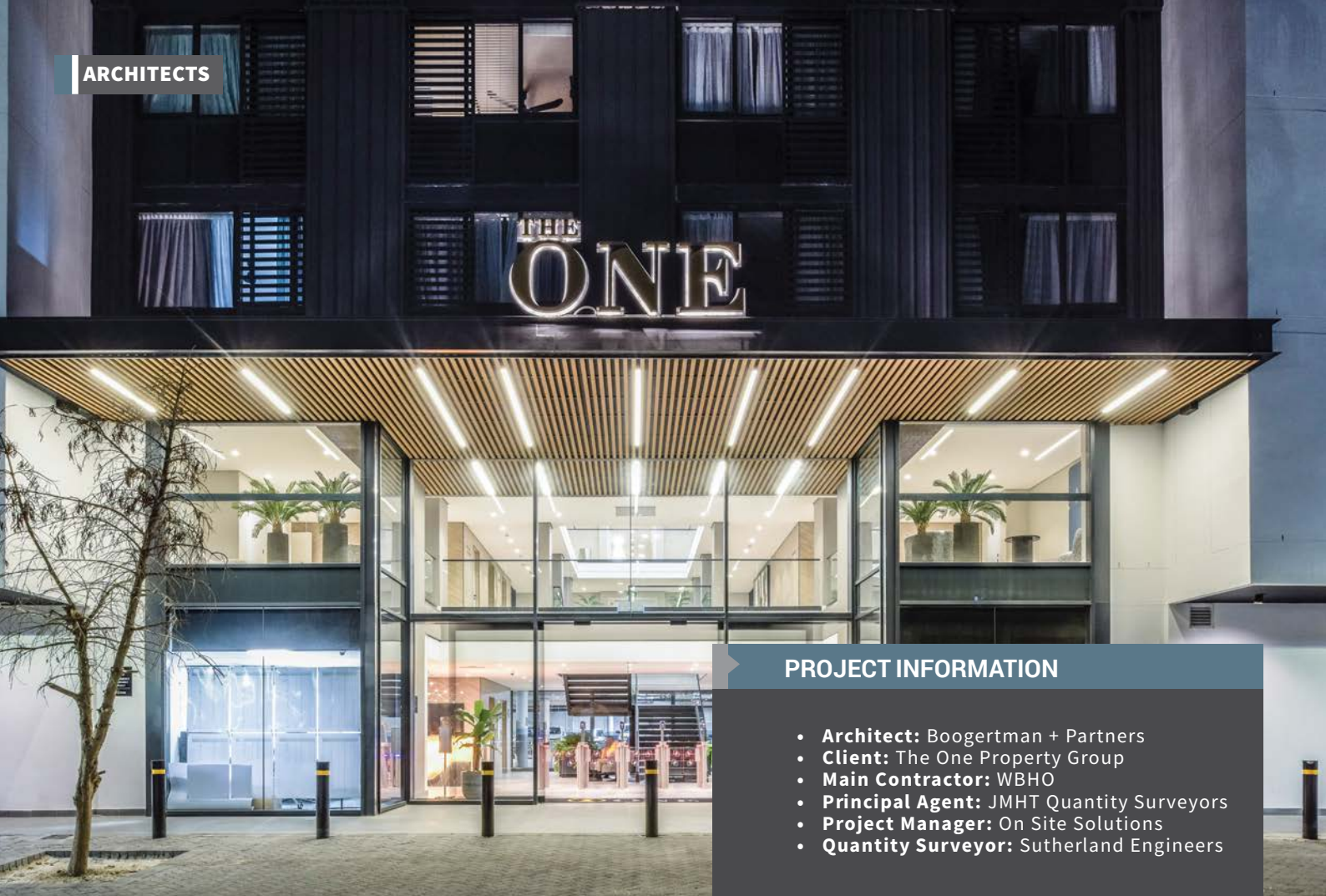
neighbourhood. Communal facilities include a study centre, gym, e-gaming lounge, cinema, games room, pause areas, laundry, and fully equipped kitchens. Outdoor features include leisure zones, shaded study spots, braai areas, and a swimming pool—all designed to support a well-balanced, modern student lifestyle.

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PROJECT INFORMATION

- **Architect:** Boogertman + Partners
- **Client:** The One Property Group
- **Main Contractor:** WBHO
- **Principal Agent:** JMHT Quantity Surveyors
- **Project Manager:** On Site Solutions
- **Quantity Surveyor:** Sutherland Engineers

Design innovation

The One occupies an entire city block, referencing Stellenbosch's original rectangular grid and "werf" typology, and reinterpreting local heritage through a contemporary lens. The building's perimeter layout encloses two landscaped courtyards, fostering a sense of community while optimising light and airflow.

To remain sensitive to surrounding historical buildings – such as the nearby 1771 Catholic Church, one of the oldest Cape Dutch buildings in the region – the design intentionally breaks down the building's massing through a hierarchy of scale. The elevation is articulated in three sections: a recessed glazed base, a boldly expressed central body, and a lighter cap. Full-height glazing and recessed planes add visual lightness, while Juliette balconies in vertical cladded bands further break the structure's length.

The roofscape alternates between barn-style pitched roofs and flat-roofed interventions at the knuckles between the wings and roof plant areas, wrapped in agricultural-style sheeting to evoke the architecture of Cape wine farms. These variations help the single building read as a collection of structures, reinforcing its village-like identity.

The development also adopts zero building lines along Hofman Road with a slight setback along Dennesig Street, enabling the structure to connect directly with the street edge and enhancing public engagement with the ground floor's commercial component – an innovative approach for this part of Stellenbosch.

Construction innovation and technology

A refined yet durable material palette supports ease

of maintenance while maintaining a high standard of aesthetic quality. Every design decision reflects a focus on safety, sustainability, liveability, and long-term community impact. Special attention was paid to the detailing and durability of common areas and amenities. This is particularly evident in the courtyards, circulation areas, and shared facilities, where careful material choices and robust construction ensure sustained performance.

Side cladding was used as an extension of the roof sheeting creating cavities for a ventilated façade. Composite timber slats with an aluminium internalised structure were used not only for sun screening, but to also create privacy. Each of the 508 residential units, a mix of mainly studios, 1-beds and 2-bed typologies, is designed with functionality and comfort in mind, featuring high-end fixtures and finishes, such as engineered stone countertops, built-in cupboards, desks, and shelves. The units are designed to cater to the needs of a diverse range of residents, ensuring a premium living experience.

Corporate social investment

While privately developed, The One delivers meaningful social and economic impact for the broader community through:

- R35-million in privately raised funding directed towards public infrastructure upgrades and enhanced precinct security.
- Significant job creation during both construction and operational phases.
- A vibrant mixed-use ground floor that enhances the public realm and catalyses economic activity in the surrounding precinct.

- Seamless integration with local urban renewal strategies, particularly through improved street connectivity and pedestrian-first design principles.

Environmental impact consideration

Sustainability is woven into every aspect of The One's design, from site selection to material specification, reflecting a commitment to environmental responsibility and long-term resilience.

Key features include:

- Walkability and urban integration: Proximity to campus and town centre promotes walking and cycling. Semi-pedestrianised streets, concealed parking, and cycle infrastructure reduce car dependence and contribute to a healthier, more sustainable precinct.
- Energy efficiency: Rooftop solar panels assist with water heating, reducing energy consumption and operational costs.
- Landscaping strategy: A robust water-wise landscaping plan features mostly indigenous, hardy species chosen for their shade/sun tolerance. Strategic courtyard planning and drainage systems manage runoff and mitigate flooding risks.
- Indoor environmental quality: The building's internal courtyards and natural ventilation strategies promote thermal comfort and daylight access, enhancing the quality of life for residents.

Health and safety

Fully compliant with all national health and safety regulations and building codes. Robust construction methods, secure access control, and thoughtful spatial planning ensure the safety and well-being of all residents. Construction in the midst of a well-established residential neighbourhood was carefully managed with time and sound restrictions implemented during certain hours.

Quantifiable time, cost, and quality outcomes

The project faced the extraordinary challenge of tight

timelines with the necessity of making units available for the start of the academic year. Despite its scale and complexity, the project was completed on time and within budget. All 508 units were pre-let before completion, demonstrating strong market demand and validating the project's financial and design approach. WBHO, a trusted contractor with extensive experience in large-scale developments, ensured that The One met high construction standards, on time for the January 2025 student intake.

Risk management


The One addresses a long-standing shortage of quality student housing in Stellenbosch. By offering a differentiated product that blends affordability, functionality, and design excellence, the development de-risks long-term vacancy and contributes to a sustainable rental ecosystem. The pre-letting of all units prior to handover speaks to the success of the market positioning and risk mitigation strategy.

The One sets a new benchmark for integrated student living in South Africa. It proves that high-density development can be both heritage-sensitive and future-facing, and that student housing can play a leading role in urban renewal.

Key achievements include:

- Blending contemporary living with heritage-inspired design.
- Reinvigorating a previously degraded area of Stellenbosch.
- Promoting sustainability through walkability and density.
- Elevating the student experience through community-focused amenities.
- Acting as a catalyst for precinct-wide development, with several adjacent sites now earmarked for future projects.

By prioritising design, community, and contextual sensitivity, The One delivers more than accommodation – it contributes to a holistic urban lifestyle and a sustainable future for the town of Stellenbosch. ■




THE
ONE


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WINNER
Residential Project of the Year 2025



Boogertman + Partners was **Highly Commended** in the Architects category for 'The One – Stellenbosch'. **From left:** Sonja Paul (Project Interior Designer); Christa Burger (Landscape Architect); Marius Badenhorst (Associate) and Caitlin Jones (Interior Designer) and (in the front) Trishal Ramjee (Associate).



GIC was **Highly Commended** for the AfriSam Innovation Award for Sustainable Construction for 'New Mapulaneng Regional Hospital'. **From left:** Thabo Mvelase; Stanford Nkuna, Olebogeng Manhe; Sylvia Montwedi; Ian Connellan and Fezile Deli.



dhk Architects received a **Special Mention** for 'Longkloof Precinct'. **From left:** Guy Briggs (Partner + Executive Director, dhk Architects); Martin Lardner-Burke (Partner, dhk Architects); Tim Irvine (Head: Asset Management, Growthpoint Properties) and Peter Fehrsen (Founding Partner, dhk Architects).



GASS won a **Highly Commended** award in the Architects category for 'Barlow Park Lifestyle Centre (Phase 2)'. **From left:** Marco Teixeira; Wandile Mntambo; Jennifer Schafer; Eugenie Lombard; Georg van Gass and Lizelle McLean.



GVK-Siya Zama was the **winner** in the Building Contractor category with 'Transnet SOC Head Office'. **From left:** Takalani Rambau (Takgalang Consulting); Graham Wilson (Osmond Lange Architects); Jabu Serithi (GVK-Siya Zama); Buhle Mtongana (Transnet); Jessie Verster (Osmond Lange Architects); André Pieterse (GVK-Siya Zama); Jaco Strydom (GVK-Siya Zama); Eben Meyburgh (GVK-Siya Zama) and Mhlengi Madiba (Lodemann).