

PROJECT FEATURE

THE SIGNATURE

THE SIGNATURE
De Waterkant, Cape Town

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Investec Property

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QUANTITY SURVEYORS
Kahts & Sparks

TOWN PLANNERS
Planning Studio

CIVIL & STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS
S&T Consulting Engineers

**ELECTRICAL, MECHANICAL,
FIRE & WET SERVICES**
SolutionStation Consulting Engineers

TRAFFIC ENGINEERS
Kantey & Templer Consulting Engineers

ENERGY EFFICIENCY CONSULTANT
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Developed by Signatura and designed to accommodate their new head office, this distinctive mixed-use building in the vibrant heart of Green Point's De Waterkant Village offers city living whilst still respecting the character of the neighbourhood.

Brief

The brief to Darryl Croome Architects was to design Signatura's flagship project that would house their new office as well as a mix of high-end one to three bedroom apartments with exclusive penthouses, tenanted commercial area and appropriate parking. The sloped site posed level challenges that were overcome by careful design and planning of the programme that responded to the street and urban interface. The site's location on the Fan Walk offered an opportunity to enhance the unique streetscape

Site

The property has a Mixed Use 2 zoning, which is basically one of the most 'use permissible' zonings within the City. Therefore, it was proposed that the development utilise mostly existing rights as afforded by the Municipal Planning By-Law. Only some relatively minor land use applications were required to ensure an appropriate built form and to facilitate an appropriate reduction in parking requirements due to the location



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NORTH ELEVATION

of the property. Due to the minor nature of the departures triggered, the City agreed that public advertising was not required and considered & approved the application under delegated authority. This facilitative and practical working relationship with the City contributed to the success of the project in terms of the timeous delivery of a well-designed project.

Concept

The building was conceived as two independent but integrated blocks, joined with a multi-volume and multi-levelled atrium, providing for public access to commercial spaces at street level. The front block, comprising of commercial space and luxurious flats facing Table Mountain, shares a pedestrianised forecourt with Somerset

Road, whilst the lower block, predominantly residential facing the harbour, stretches to Prestwich Street and responds to the Victorian scale and character of Liddle and Cobern Streets. The perimeter podium envelope helped to reduce the scale of the street façade and reference the historic row housing and warehouse massing which allowed generous terrace areas above.

Design

The Victorian docklands architecture, unique to the area, has been expressed in a raw industrial aesthetic, while recognising the contemporary demands of high-end, inner-city living. Face brick, off-shutter concrete, black steel, expansive glass, with perforated aluminium screens, provide a distinctive language for this iconic building. The residential tower blocks are set back and developed in brick concrete, steel and glass with recessed balconies, Juliet ledges and sun screening elements give articulation to the façades.

Reminiscent of the world-renowned V&A Waterfront with its distinctive dockland settings, The Signature experience is all about combining an industrial aesthetic with a contemporary edge. This approach has directly influenced the carefully selected palette of materials with floor-to-ceiling glazing, off-shutter concrete and floating white bulkheads. The warmth of timber vinyl floors is complemented with designer kitchens, vanities and BICs, while track and LED strip lighting illuminate the living spaces. Natural materials, as in timber decking, are used for all balconies and terraces, while planted terraces and roof gardens are a distinctive feature of the building. The interior planning was designed to maximise the views and natural light. Open plan kitchens and living rooms read as larger spaces that flow into one another and are visually linked to the outdoors.

Structure

There was an existing storage facility that was totally demolished. A bulk earthworks contract was



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carried to excavate a basement across the entire site to an average depth of 10m. The excavation was largely in hard rock and lateral support was in the form of a soil nails, rock anchors and Gunnite. In one area where there was an original basement, lateral support was provided by anchoring through and keeping the existing retaining wall before demolishing the foundation to the wall and excavating deeper.

The structure to the building consisted of pad footings founded on rock, reinforced concrete columns and shear walls that supported post tensioned flat slabs and a concrete roof. A major one metre deep transfer structure, at first floor above the parking levels, supported columns to enable the introduction of an internal gallery and lightwell in the residential floors. Seismic loads were allowed by strategically placed shear walls and cores.

At roof level six independent pools were constructed as secondary structural elements on top of the roof slab. The lift shaft structure above the parking levels consisted of a steel structure which was clad in glass for the scenic lifts.

Sustainability

The Signature was energy modelled to optimise performance, aid design decisions and balance high-end client's expectations within a tight budget. With optimal orientation of the longer axis being

east to west, there was a challenge to optimise the variance between north and south façade with regards to performance, solar gain and daylighting. The solar gain and daylighting challenges were mitigated with recessed balconies, strategic floor overhangs, full length fenestration and sliding external shutter panels, penthouse skylights and glass enclosed walk ups to their roof gardens, pergolas on the terraces, passively vented atrium design and linking circulation landings. For acoustic and thermal performance clear double-glazing



was installed on the lower levels and the upper penthouse levels. By moving the enclosed glazed penthouse walk ups from roof to penthouse level this increased daylighting, performance and mitigated the hot box effect.

The hot water is generated with high COP heat pumps on the roof with capacity to add solar thermal in future. The ring main from centralised storage is highly insulated, not cast into any walls or concrete, wrapped in calico material and sealed with polymeric emulsion to ensure continuous insulation barrier to reduce operational losses. Hot and cold water is metered and sub metered in real time to detect any leaks. All services, water sanitary ware, lighting and equipment are of the

highest efficiency and energy ratings. Insulation was placed under all UFH mats throughout all floors. Finishes are low VOC with face-brick and off shutter concrete reducing embodied energy of plaster finishes and paint and aid future maintenance. To future proof the building the offices and mixed-use zones are open zones that have been dry walled to allow flexibility as needs change of the tenants. A well point has been sunk with allocated space for plantroom and water storage to be available later.

Landscaping

Given the location of the project, in a very urban and sometimes hostile environment for plants,



the project required a very deliberate landscape response to provide a green layer to the architecture. Mature indigenous trees were planted on the perimeter streets at spacings determined primarily by space available between parking bays, sidewalks and municipal services.

Prior to construction the pedestrian connectivity around the site was very complicated and dominated by parked cars. In the new design, sidewalks were widened. Feature planting at the main pedestrian entrance combines texture and seasonal colour. Planting on the second, third and rooftop levels occur in perimeter planters, and the plant selection was made with views and privacy in mind with trailing groundcovers to help break the

horizontal lines of the building when viewed from street level. Internal atrium planters were filled with coarse-textured and shade-tolerant species. A bespoke planter/bench unit was installed in the lobby of each floor and these were planted with trailing indoor plants to ultimately provide a multi-storey green trellis climbing above the main foyer below. Irrigation is by means of non-potable water and a drip system.

Conclusion

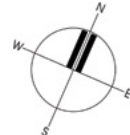
This project's location allows residents to access the CBD easily as well as the surrounding retail, nightlife and distinct landmark locations that make Cape Town fantastic.



4TH FLOOR PLAN



2ND FLOOR PLAN



GROUND FLOOR PLAN