

Durban gets its first As Built 4 Star green building

A great news story for Durban, the Shepstone & Wylie premises in Ridgeside Office Park is the first building in the city (and only the second in the country) to be awarded its 4 Star Green Star SA – Office As Built v1 rating.

The building was developed jointly by long-term property investor, Beare Holdings and Maponya Developments, one of South Africa's leading property developers. Their involvement is another good news aspect of the story – and one that is particularly relevant with Durban hosting COP17 – as it demonstrates that not only is the city committed to environmentally responsible development, its private sector is too. And it is only the second in the country to achieve this rating, the building and its development team have put Durban firmly on the green building map.

The formal evaluation of green buildings in South Africa is conducted by the Green Building Council of South Africa (GBCSA). Formed in 2001, it has developed the rating tools used to formally evaluate "green" buildings and all evaluations are handled by expert examiners.

"For the developers of green buildings, the rating process is strict and exhaustive," explains Maponya Developments director, Donald Borthwick. "Success requires teamwork, and we were fortunate to work with a highly dedicated professional team, led by respected green consultant, Richard Humphrey of Aurecon."

The first step in the rating process is securing a building's design rating, and the Shepstone & Wylie building was awarded its Design 4 Star rating in December 2010. While being awarded a design rating is challenging in itself, the step up required to achieve the As Built rating is massive – requiring focus, precise attention to detail and much hard work," continues Borthwick. That's why this award is so prestigious and why we are so proud of the whole team. Special mention must go to Group Five, which was responsible for ensuring that procurement, technical standards and on-site behaviour complied with the green commitments made."

The decision to go the green building route was one driven largely by the developers – Julian Beare of Beare Holdings and the directors of Maponya



Developments.

"For us, it was simply the right thing to do," elaborates Borthwick. "We are completely committed to going green and want to push the envelope in this exciting area. Going green also makes good business sense – both for us the developers and for the building's tenants, who are already enjoying the improved working environment and cost-saving benefits."

Shepstone & Wylie, one of the largest legal firms in KZN, has settled well into its new home. Electricity savings have been much larger than originally expected (in the region of 50 percent), while the focus on daylight, noise reduction, fresh air and the elimination of VOCs, has made the working environment both attractive and healthy.

"Having learnt some hard lessons with this first building, we intend rolling out further green projects, particularly in Ridgeside. Green buildings make sense on many levels and they achieve a number of goals – they contribute to sustainability, they are more pleasant buildings to occupy and they save energy, leading to significant cost savings."

The Shepstone & Wylie building represents another green milestone: one of the first "green leases" in South Africa.

A green lease is where the tenant agrees to contribute to a building's green features that reduce operating costs – on the understanding that it will benefit from the significant energy savings. Generally, reductions in operating costs are enjoyed by the tenant but are paid for by the landlord. In this case, Shepstone & Wylie have agreed to pay for an ice storage

system that reduces the building's electricity bill.

Going forward, Borthwick believes that green leases will be a big driver of green buildings, especially as the impact of constantly increasing electricity bills becomes obvious to property occupiers.

Contact

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A complex technical process is required to get the As Built rating. The professional team that helped get this green rating for the Shepstone & Wylie building included:

Primary green consultant:

Richard Humphrey – Aurecon

Green consultant:

Karen van Helsdingen – Organi Carbon

Project manager:

Garry Hamilton – Maponya Developments

Architect: Raewyn Gowar, Evolution Architects

Mechanical Engineer: Richard Humphrey – Aurecon

Electrical engineer:

Shepherd Nkosi, Aurecon

Structural engineer: Mark Howard, Goba

Quantity surveyor: Tony Scott, Scott & Schou

aurecon



MAPONYA
DEVELOPMENTS



GROUP FIVE
structured ingenuity

Shepstone & Wylie
ATTORNEYS

Beare Holdings (Pty) Ltd



GOBA

CONSULTING ENGINEERS
AND PROJECT MANAGERS