



Park Lane lobby



Dhiraj Ramsaroop, Project Lead, Paragon Architects

Paragon Architects Designs One Of The Tallest Buildings In Sandton

With a lot of the newer buildings in the Sandton area being imposing glass and steel structures presenting a hard skyline, [Paragon Architects](#), wanted to ensure that 1 Park Lane for developer Alchemy Properties had a unique identity.

Designing one of the tallest buildings in Sandton posed a challenge not only in interacting with the street level, but the surrounding area as well. This includes iconic buildings such as Discovery Place and the new Sasol head office.

The distinctive façade of the 20-storey 1 Park Lane was effectively softened by incorporating planting in the façade design, Paragon Architects Project Lead, Dhiraj Ramsaroop, explains. "As we ran through the different façade iterations, we quickly realised it was becoming quite a hard physical mass."

Paragon Architects envisaged a glass-covered building with aluminium fins on the east and west side. In order to soften the façade treatment, it was decided to incorporate planting. Another striking feature of 1 Park Lane is that, while the nine parking levels with 1 000 parking bays are treated as a separate element, they are nevertheless integrated seamlessly with the 11 office floors.

The building envelope consists of a mixture of A2-rated aluminium composite panels (ACP) and unitised glazing in a single energy-efficient system. With the building aiming for a 4 Star Green Star rating, a certain percentage of the east and west façade was blocked out to reduce the heat load on the interior, which in turn improved the efficiency of the HVAC system.

These ACP panels were integrated into the façade design by using current technology to variate the design, which was workshopped extensively with the façade engineers to ensure that the desired building aesthetic was achieved.

Natural ventilation is used for the parking levels, as opposed to the far more energy-intensive alternative of having to install a mechanical ventilation system. This was achieved by cladding the parking levels themselves with 30mm by 40mm aluminium slats, powder-coated in varying shades to add texture to the design. All of the parking levels are above ground, giving the building a unique identity among the larger-footprint buildings in the precinct.

The flagship 1 Park Lane forms part of the Katherine Street Mixed-Use Precinct, a 23 000m² GLA P-grade office development. When Bidvest Financial Services decided to centralise its Braamfontein head office and satellite operations at 1 Park Lane, it turned to leading Paragon Interface to design, space-plan and oversee the fit-out.

The visitor entrance is from Park Lane itself, into a common lobby and reception area that also features a coffee shop. A unique feature of the lobby are the planted walls, and the extensive use of planters and large, free-standing trees that effectively blurs the boundary between the interior and exterior, where streetscape landscaping continues the lush theme.

About Paragon

Paragon, established in October 1997, is an internationally active design business, based in Johannesburg. We deliver commercial architecture, masterplanning, interior design, and space planning to visionary clients in all property sectors, from retail to residential and education.

We are committed to global urban development. We are able and agile. Paragon is flexible and diverse in its approach to design. Each project is unique and not driven by style, but by lifestyle and a response to user needs. Elegant and efficient planning form the core of our designs. We understand the needs of our clients, and know how to generate ever new architectural forms in a competitive property market. ■