

PASA plays important role in rejuvenation of Joburg inner city

Paragon Architects South Africa (PASA), part of the Paragon Group of architecture and interior architecture companies, has played an important role in the rejuvenation of the Johannesburg inner city with its conversion of the former ANC Shell House headquarters at 51 Plein Street into a 563-unit residential development for client HCI Properties, part of Hosken Consolidated Investments (HCI).



Managed on behalf of HCI Properties by Mafadi Property Management, such has been the success of the project that it is currently 95% let. “The reason why such a high occupancy rate was achieved in as little as six months is because the project responds to a real need in the inner city for affordable accommodation,” PASA Director Thulani Sibande comments. He reveals that it took some convincing for the client to accept PASA’s proposal to convert the iconic building into a low-cost residential development, which is in the heart of Johannesburg, directly opposite the Noord/MTN taxi rank, and in close proximity to Park Station.

“The building works exceptionally well in its current iteration, especially as we included amenities such as an outdoor gym on the podium, which means that tenants do not have to leave the building to avail themselves of such facilities.

“We also included a play area for children, big enough to accommodate netball and soccer, and with a jungle gym. We even incorporated educational facilities such as homework rooms with writing boards, where children can have a safe and quiet area in which to study, thereby giving their parents’ peace of mind,” Sibande elaborates.

PASA has been awarded a Level 1 rating for 2018, in accordance with the Construction Sector Code issued under Section 9(1) of the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE) Act No. 53 of 2003. The latest accreditation was verified by Siyandisa Verification

Services. Reviewed on a yearly basis, it reflects PASA's ongoing transformation and development in the key areas of ownership, skills development, and preferential procurement and supplier development.

Sibande has a National Diploma in Architecture, as well as a BTech and Masters from the Tshwane University of Technology, where he was recognised as Best Architectural Student in 2001. He joined the Paragon Group in 2006, working on such major projects as the Motorola Head Office in Woodmead, Norton Rose Towers, Alexander Forbes, and 4 Sandown Valley Crescent for Zenprop.

He is also a member of the South African Council for the Architectural Profession (SACAP), and has a particular interest in project management. Sibande adds that his personal design philosophy, as epitomised by Shell House, focuses on the comfort level and functionality of buildings.