

Legacy Corner - contemporary architecture with a classical edge

The Michelangelo Towers design team to add further design excellence to the Sandton built environment

South Africa, Johannesburg –October 2008: Bentel Associates International (BAI), the architects responsible for the highly acclaimed Michelangelo Towers and Mall, have designed the mixed-use complex currently under construction at Legacy Corner in the heart of Sandton's business and shopping district. The property, situated at the corner of 5th Avenue and Maude Street, is the last undeveloped site in the Nelson Mandela Square Block.

The developers of this prestigious project are Legacy Hotels & Resorts International, a privately owned company with a portfolio of four and five star hotels, bush lodges and resorts across Africa and the Indian Ocean islands. The group primarily targets the luxury corporate and leisure markets and their flagship hotel, the Michelangelo, is a member of Leading Hotels of the World.

The Legacy Corner development will have direct access to Nelson Mandela Square and the advantages of close proximity and easy access to Sandton City, the Michelangelo Towers Mall and the Sandton Convention Centre. The development includes an apartment block, four parking levels, the four-star Da Vinci Hotel (Legacy's fourth in the area) and retail space.

Construction commenced in 2007 and completion of the total project is expected by 2010 in time for the World Cup. "We are hoping to open the retail component by June 2009 and the hotel and the apartments a couple of months thereafter," says Franc Brugman, Architect and BAI Director. Brugman and his team were the design force behind the Michelangelo Towers and they look set to produce the same level of design excellence at Legacy Corner.

The Mall component will include three high-end retail levels, two of which will link to the upper and lower levels of the Nelson Mandela Square. The tenant mix is expected to complement the existing retail facilities in the Square and the Michelangelo Mall.

The six-level Da Vinci hotel will have approx 175 rooms topped by 80 apartments and three large penthouses on five levels. A rooftop leisure terrace will offer a fitness facility, a pool, a spa, a sun deck and spectacular city views. The apartment block will provide its

target market of urban and suburban professionals with a sophisticated urban lifestyle in an innovative setting with a sense of privacy and exclusivity.

Johannesburg makes more revenue from tourism than Cape Town and the Sandton central areas have become exceptionally popular not only with locals but also with international travellers from around the world including Africa. The development is expected to become a sought after destination.

"Our team is very excited about this project," says Brugman. "As with the Michelangelo Towers we are aiming to make another iconic design statement for Legacy in the heart of Sandton. The building will be contemporary with a classical edge. The design is unique in a contemporary manner but with timeless and elegant features, textures and finishes. However, this project will differ from the Michelangelo in that the Michelangelo was more classical in terms of its overall architectural design. The perfectly situated Legacy Square will have excellent aesthetics while at the same time complementing and respecting the surrounding built environment, especially in terms of materials and finishes."

The successful collaboration of Bentel Interior Design and acclaimed designer Stephen Falcke, responsible for the impressive interiors at the Michelangelo, will be handling the interior design.

As with the Michelangelo, the combination of a hotel and apartments has proved to be a winning formula for the Legacy Hotel Group. The apartments will be for sale with the useful option of putting them back into the hotel rental pool. Buyers who decide on this option will be able to choose from a range of finishes. All the apartments in the hotel pool will be able to utilise the hotel's concierge and other service facilities.

Brugman says that an important part of the design brief from Legacy was to focus on sustainable issues. "As with many of the other buildings we design we are increasingly focusing on various aspects of sustainability and energy efficiency. Clients are looking more closely at environmental issues and maintenance and operating costs and many are realising that initial capital outlay will be offset in the medium to long-term."

Legacy recently committed to the Heritage Environmental Rating Programme in Africa, whereby all its properties will undergo continuous assessment and receive independent accreditation for

being environmentally responsible. The company aims to ensure that their properties reduce the impact of their operations on the environment.

Brugman says the team are currently examining several sustainable solutions including alternative sources of power, back-up power and solar energy. "We are aiming for a thermally efficient façade to ensure that there will be no thermal build up in the structure, especially in the north and west facing facades. We are also looking at utilising heat transfer systems for water heating."

"BAI are moving towards being a fully committed sustainable practice," adds Brugman. "South Africa is currently in the process of adopting the Australian Green Star Code which will include best practice standards that are applicable and customised to the South African built environment."

BAI, who also designed the Hilton Hotel in Sandton, has established itself over the last 50 years as an international award-winning design practice specialising in retail, mixed-use, entertainment and residential complexes.

"Within the context of increasing globalisation the last decade or so has firmly entrenched BAI as an international design company. We are finding that our international clients are using our architecture here in South Africa as a benchmark," says Brugman.

The company currently has numerous projects underway in southern Africa including the designs for Gautrain stations and various ACSA developments. BAI is also very active in India where they currently have over 50 projects. Recent design highlights include South City Mall in Kolkata, Lagos Palms in Nigeria and Accra Mall in Ghana.

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About Bentel Associates International:

Since its inception in the 1960s, Bentel International Associates (BAI) has been one of South Africa's foremost pioneers of outstanding commercial architecture. More recently, the challenges of transformation and expansion into the international arena have

served to increase its capabilities and expertise. The award-winning company has developed into a major multi-disciplinary design practice and has significantly contributed to the proud reputation of South African architecture both locally and internationally.

BAI is committed to excellent commercial design, and its achievements include major retail centres, and prestigious and commercially viable office, hotel and apartment buildings in southern Africa, West Africa, the Middle East and India.

Over 50 years of extensive commercial experience and expertise has enabled the company to respond efficiently and comprehensively to the needs and requirements of prestigious clients such as Abrand, Attfund Properties, Anglo American properties, Actis, First National Bank, Investec, Liberty Life, Pareto, Pick 'n Pay, Persianis properties Limited, Sasol, Sanlam, Shell SA and the Legacy Group. An exceptionally co-operative attitude and an excellent service mindset characterises all BAI operations.

BAI offers a wide range of specialist skills including commercial architectural design and development, property development consulting, master planning, project management, interior design, graphic design and store and retail tenant mix planning.

Operating from offices in Johannesburg, Cape Town and Mumbai, a dedicated team of 120 architects and designers maintain a consistent focus on quality, functionality, aesthetics and the commercial viability of design whilst always respecting the context in which a building is situated.

Designing excellent commercial buildings that enhance the built environment and quality of life

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