Newtown Junction

The Newtown Junction mixed-use development in the west of Johannesburg’s CBD forms part of the city’s ambition to revitalise the Newtown area - a precinct already undergoing significant regeneration - and long established as the cultural heart of the city.

Atterbury Property Developments’ new R1.4 billion Newtown Junction mixed-use development in the Joburg CBD recently took top honours and scooped multiple awards at the 2015 SA Property Owner’s Association (SAPOA) Annual Innovative Excellence in Property Development Awards.

Newtown Junction was declared the overall winner at the coveted awards, after also scooping awards for best mixed-use development and the overall transformation award.

Introduction
In a bold move, JSE-listed property owner Attaq and Atterbury Property Developments, in partnership with the City of Johannesburg and South African Heritage Resources Agency, embarked on this R1.3bn landmark project, believed to be one of largest multi-use developments to open in Johannesburg’s CBD since the Carlton Centre in the 1970s. dhk were the lead architects for the development, working with Mashabane Rose Associates on heritage aspects and LP Architects on the retail elements of the development.

Inner City Regeneration
Newtown Junction is an important commercial catalyst for the area, providing new retail and office space and reinvigorating the existing arts and entertainment venues, representing a substantial investment in inner city regeneration. The new development has provided vital extensions to the urban streetscape of this cultural precinct, in the form of a landscaped public piazza, open events space and new routes through the site, for both the visitors to the mall, surrounding arts and events venues, as well as for use by the new office tenants.
Newtown Junction is an important commercial catalyst for the area, providing new retail and office space.

Developing in Newtown Johannesburg requires foresight and courage. It also requires an understanding of and respect for the social, economic, urban and heritage planning dynamics which make this precinct so unique.

Project Components
The development provides 30,000m² GLA of rentable offices on three floors occupied by Nedbank, with approximately 35,500m² GLA of retail space on two levels, all supported by four-levels of basement parking providing 2,546 bays, of which 76 are reserved for hybrid vehicles. While this is not unusual for a mixed-use development, what makes Newtown Junction interesting is the response to the particular context in Newtown, the re-configuration of significant heritage buildings and the requirement to achieve a 4 Star Green Star SA rating for the office component.

The development is situated at a key junction in between the city and transport routes and is bounded by historically significant sites.
To the west of Newtown is the M1 highway over Henry Nxumalo Street, and to the north Carr Street which also has important on- and off-ramps onto the M1 highway. To the east is Mzimhlophe Street, and to the south are Museum Africa, the Market Theatre and Mary Fitzgerald Square.

**Heritage**

The site itself had some very interesting and significant heritage buildings which needed to respond to specific SAHRA requirements, and four structures of particular heritage value. The Edwardian Bathhouse to the east has been preserved and restored, and is Joburg’s most intriguing gentlemen’s public toilet, awaiting re-configuration for a suitable tenant. To the west and underneath the M1 highway is the Station Master’s House, from the time when there was delivery to the market by rail. Many of the tracks still remain, and have been preserved in situ as evidence of this past.

To the south are the Potato Sheds; literally the section of the old Johannesburg Market where potatoes were sold. This heritage...
A public square and landscaped park area forms the heart of the development.

Structure was meticulously documented and surveyed, carefully dismantled, restored and then re-assembled piece-by-piece in the exact same location in a painstaking process requiring the utmost sensitivity. Interesting new retail opportunities have been placed underneath the Potato Shed roofs.

Lastly, a railway bridge received a similar treatment and has been restored and placed in its original position linking to a new extension of the Market Theatre.

Site

The design concept responds to these very strong site determinants, taking into account both vehicular and pedestrian movement. Vehicles have easy access to basement parking from two ends, responding to the natural flow of traffic to the site and based on extensive traffic studies. Deliveries are off Carr Street and Henry Nxumalo where the environment is dominated by vehicles rather than pedestrians. To achieve the
The retail mall is very open in its design, with several street entrances, terraces open to the public square, and atria bringing natural light into the space.

Maximum use of the site, portions of building have been constructed underneath the canopy of the M1 highway, something which required interesting engineering solutions and considerable cooperation from the Johannesburg Road Agency.

**Design**

The design opens up to the natural flow and desire-lines of pedestrians, coming from the south-west corner, and from the east and south east sides of the site – from the City, neighbouring Brickfields residential development and the pedestrianized Market Theatre and Majestic precinct. A public square and landscaped park area forms the heart of the development, providing a much needed facility to the public, offices and retail environment. Various restaurants open up to this space which has sculptures, a water feature and green landscaping. This square is also the venue for various public events, supporting the 24/7 activation of Newtown.

Newtown has a very particular urban texture and the environment is no-nonsense and tough. There was a specific requirement
from a heritage point of view to respond to the palette of red roofs and red face brick due to the proximity of Museum Africa and the Market Theatre. The architecture of the new buildings responds to this in materiality and detailing in a very direct manner, contrasting the heritage elements with the new construction. By using these materials offset with contemporary glazing, clean lines and bold proportions, the new buildings sit confidently within the surroundings. Where there have been new interventions to historic portions of the site, they have been kept clearly contemporary, in contrast to the delicate Edwardian steelwork and detailing. This bold approach in design is in keeping with the spirit of Newtown.

The retail mall is very open in its design, with several street entrances, terraces open to the public square, and atria bringing natural light into the space. The two retail levels are anchored by Shoprite, Pick n Pay, and Edgars. There is a broad mix of tenants, including a cinema complex, gym and a food court that is integrated into the restored Potato Sheds. These retail levels form a definite base to the office levels above.
The mixed-use aspect of the development offers shoppers, office workers, residents and visitors a first-rate, trendy and safe shopping and leisure destination in the Johannesburg CBD. With the introduction of FATTi, Atterbury’s new shopping centre analytics and technology solutions service, current footfall is being accurately measured at nearing 500,000 per month.

Sustainability
Energy management was a crucial consideration in the design of the overall scheme. A state-of-the-art thermal energy storage air conditioning system using ice storage achieves peak energy demand reduction. Two 76m² tanks located in the four basement levels are filled with Cristopia balls and glycol-infused chilled water that make up this ice storage system. Fresh air supply and fresh air ventilation exceeds the SANS minimum by 40% contributing to overall sustainability and a comfortable working environment for occupants.

Nedbank’s offices have achieved a 4 Star Green Star SA Office Design rating awarded by the Green Building Council of South Africa, with the As-Built application currently under review at the time of writing. The three office levels that sit above the mall were configured for the tenant’s requirements, and the floor plate was designed to maximise natural light with views to the exterior or two internal atriums. These office spaces use at least 30% less energy than required under the SANS 204 regulations, using efficient heating and cooling systems, as well as efficient lighting and design elements.
Good practice also dictates a consumption of no more than 200kWh/m² per year for Johannesburg offices, and currently Newtown Junction’s simulations suggest that it will come in at 55% of this value, at around 110kWh. The roof of the offices have Newtown-red roofs which have been pitched and configured to receive photovoltaics in the future, should this prove necessary or viable. The Nedbank offices, true to the company’s commitment to the environment, has facilities for the recycling of waste, and also uses a dual pipe system so that grey water can be used for the flushing system in addition to other more common initiatives such as low flow taps and fixtures that have also been incorporated.

Conclusion
Newtown Junction is a meaningful demonstration of confidence on the part of the developers and the City regarding the future of Newtown. It provides a strong commercial catalyst which complements the residential developments in the precinct, the cultural elements of the Market Theatre and Museum Africa, the educational centre Sci-Bono, new City Lodge, the Majestic and various significant corporate offices in the area.

KEY TO AERIAL VIEW
1. Potato Sheds
2. Museum Africa
3. Mary Fitzgerald Square
4. Market Theatre
5. City Lodge
6. Brickfields
7. Metro
8. Arglo Ashanti
9. Sci-Bono Centre
NEWTOWN JUNCTION
Johannesburg

Overall Winner, Mixed-use Development Winner and Overall Transformation Award Winner at the 2015 SAPOA Innovative Excellence in Property Development Awards