

LEADING

ARCHITECTURE

DECEMBER 2020/JANUARY 2021

& DESIGN



TOWERS MAIN

AN ICON REINVENTED

ONE ON WHITELEY

Marriott Hotel and
Executive Apartments

See Access Differently



An inclined seven-storey glazed curtain wall provides a distinct identity even as it has an aesthetic affinity with the greater Melrose Arch precinct.



One on Whiteley and mixed-use development

This new mixed-use development, comprising a new 5-star Johannesburg Marriott Hotel and Marriott Executive Apartments Johannesburg, and a multi-level apartment building, is seamlessly integrated with the existing principles of New Urbanism already established in the Melrose Arch precinct.

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHS
COURTESY OF BENTEL
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The iconic Marriott Hotel, in tandem with a similar-height One on Whiteley Apartment building (OoW), encloses a common landscaped courtyard for the private use of these two buildings.

Additionally, a double-volume perimeter retail component was envisioned to create a more human-scale interface with the public at street level, and to expand the existing retail/commercial offering within the Melrose Arch precinct. Initially foreseen as a series of separate retail elements, the OoW development now includes a single large tenant in Daytona – a luxury vehicle showroom.

The Johannesburg Marriott Hotel and Marriott Executive Apartments has an aesthetic affinity with the greater precinct, but expressed in materials that provide a distinct identity. These include an inclined seven-storey glazed curtain wall, triple-volume sky-lit atriums, Juliet balconies, a glazed scenic lift and off-shutter concrete features.

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The concept for the design and planning of the OoW component of the building was led by two major influences: a central courtyard and the sweeping city views of the Johannesburg and Sandton CBDs. An elevated first floor enhances the extensive views and sense of sanctuary. Apartments of various sizes wrap the inner and outer façades, offering every apartment a unique and striking view.

The Marriott Hotel is divided into three distinct vertical zones. The multi-volume lower ground and ground floor host the public facilities, such as the Keystone Bistro, The Archer Bar & Eatery Bar, all-day dining, meeting rooms, boardrooms and four-salon ballroom, which can be accessed

from either basement parking or from the adjacent precinct. The majority of the back-of-house kitchen, staff and maintenance facilities are also housed on these two levels, with a 'race-track' type design developed around the public facilities to allow staff access to these facilities without having to cross public spaces.

Level 1, although also a guestroom floor, provides access to the private gym, internal landscaped courtyard, swimming pool and pool bar. Levels 2 to 5 accommodate the rest of the guestrooms.

Levels 6 to 8 are exclusively for long-stay guests in Marriott Executive Apartments (MEA) in either 1-bed, 2-bed or 3-bed

configurations, which mimic residential units with separate kitchens and lounges. The MEA guests have access to the same facilities as the hotel guests, but access for guests to levels 1 to 5 or 6 to 8 are strictly access controlled.

A central corridor with dual loaded apartments forms the spine of the OoW Apartment building. The eight levels of apartments range from studio and 1-bedroom, to larger 2- and 3-bedroom offerings. The ground floor hosts the primary access and concierge where residents and visitors can access directly off Whiteley Road. Two more central cores punctuate the building, connecting all eight floors to the secure, multi-level parking facility, providing quick and direct

access for the residents.

The central landscaped courtyard is situated a few steps down from the first floor, offering these courtyard-facing apartments, a more private vista of the pool and sculpted gardens.

Off-shutter concrete and anthracite-tinted glazing feature prominently in the aesthetic of the hotel, which frames the silhouette of the building at roof level, as well as a horizontal distinction between the public spaces below and the guestrooms above. Dramatic eight-storey high shear concrete walls create visual bookends to the hotel, and visually separate the hotel from the apartments.

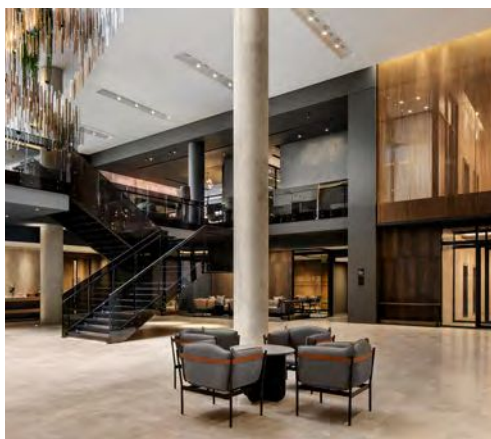
The SE corner double-glazed unitised curtain wall inclines outwards at 3.5° with the floorplate increasing accordingly, while the NE corner curtain wall is vertical. The ground floor has a combination of folding stacking doors, sliding doors, weather-tight vestibules, frameless glass shopfronts, atrium skylights, and a 25m-wide 9m cantilevered glass and aluminium porte-cochere. This theme of expressed raw materials continues internally in the smoked glass balustrades, feature stair and scenic lift, as well as copper wall cladding and wrought iron doors with alternating glass fretwork.

Vertical and horizontal lines to the OoW Apartments are accentuated with the use of a

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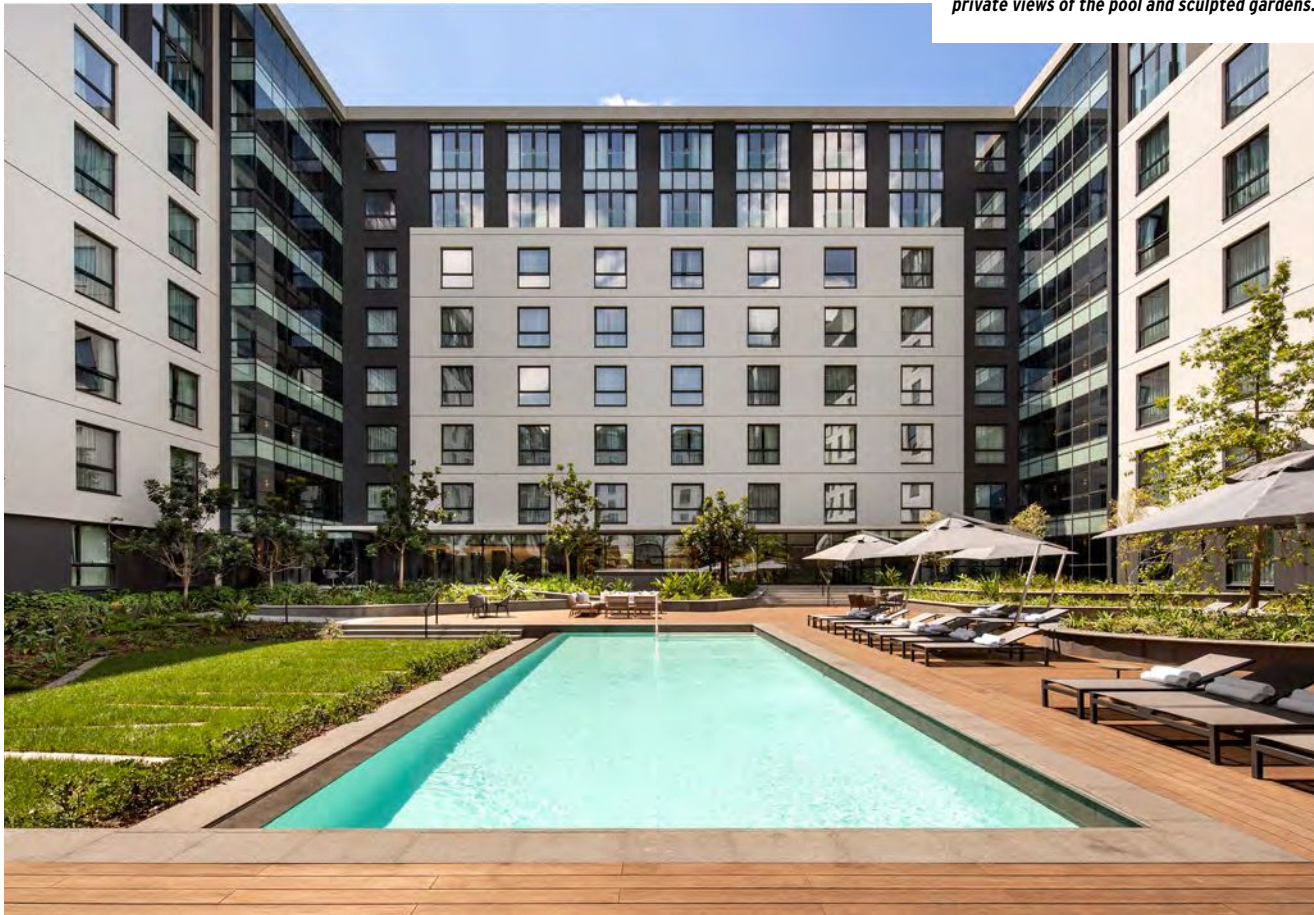


The interior fit-out of the hotel makes use of a natural palette including copper, brass, leather-look porcelain tiles, engineered timber planks, off-shutter concrete and textured wallpaper.





The central landscaped courtyard was one of the major influences that led the building's design. Courtyard-facing apartments have private views of the pool and sculpted gardens.



wrap-around aluminium canopy at ground floor, and a bevelled off-shutter crest at roof level delineate the functions happening within. The ground-floor showroom is deluged with light from the 7m-high frameless glazing system. Similarly, floor-to-floor glazed sliding doors and oversized windows accentuate the views. Glazed balustrades provide an unobstructed connection between inside and outside. The façade plays with colour and relief in the vertical bands, which dissect the horizontal axis.

The building as a whole epitomises a modern, sophisticated look with a combination of brushed aluminium cladding and powder-coated steel to the external feature elements of solar shading, porte-cochere, entrance vestibule and external covered walkways. This is complemented by the use of steel-and-glass balustrades, and a mixture of off-shutter and hammer-tone concrete feature columns.

Utmost care has been taken to ensure that the double-volume ground-floor spaces are visually accessible to the public externally, with uninterrupted expanses of frameless glass used wherever possible. Internally, the interior fit-out of the Hotel in particular makes use of a very natural palette, including copper, brass, leather-look porcelain tiles, engineered timber planks, off-shutter concrete and textured wallpaper.

In the apartment interiors, selected feature surfaces and zones are covered in additional finishes in a monochromatic style. The use of textured tiles, natural stone and timber add further detailing.

PROFESSIONAL TEAM

CLIENT: Amdec Property Developments
ARCHITECT (HOTEL): Bentel Associates International **ARCHITECT (APARTMENTS):** Osmond Lange Architects & Planners
PROJECT MANAGER AND PRINCIPAL AGENT: Amdec Property Developments
QUANTITY SURVEYOR: D'Arcy Hedding
PROGRAMME & TIME MANAGERS: Orion Project Managers **CIVIL & STRUCTURAL ENGINEER:** Sutherland **ELECTRICAL ENGINEER:** Anderson Consulting Engineers **WET SERVICES ENGINEER:** Sutherland **HVAC ENGINEER:** Acend Consulting Engineers **TRAFFIC ENGINEER:** Arup **FIRE CONSULTANT:** Specialised Fire Technology **SPECIALIST LIGHTING:** Pamboukian lightdesign **ACOUSTIC CONSULTANT:** Mtshali Moss Projects Africa **KITCHEN CONSULTANT:** KDH Catering Design Concepts **VERTICAL TRANSPORTATION:** Proj-i-Tech **INTERIOR DESIGN (HOTEL):** Bentel Associates International; Source Interior Brand Architecture **LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT:** Daniel Rebel Landscape Architects **MAIN CONTRACTOR:** Group 5/ Tri-Star Construction




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An icon renewed

The redeveloped Towers Main building in the Johannesburg CBD designed by AMA Architects for the Diverscity Urban Property Fund is part of a larger spatial transformation that aims to rejuvenate the city and create lively, mixed-income communities and a top quality workplace in the inner city.

PHOTOGRAPHY JOGGIE BOTHA AND SUPPLIED





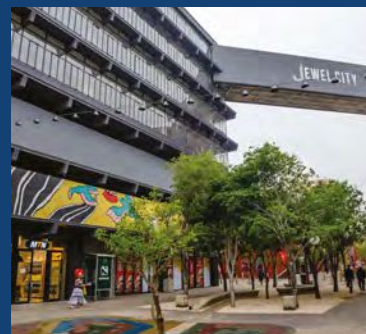
At 30 storeys high, the Towers Main building, rejuvenated by Divercity and designed by AMA Architects, is South Africa's 10th tallest building and a prominent feature of Johannesburg's iconic city skyline.

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The Towers Main building, at 30 storeys high, forms an essential part of the iconic Johannesburg City Skyline. Completed in 1979, the building has stood unoccupied for several years, waiting for an extremely brave developer to breathe new life into South Africa's 10th tallest building.

In 2018, the newly launched Divercity Urban Property Fund became those brave developers, investing R2bn in the Johannesburg CBD as part of their strategy to create thriving mixed-use inner-city precincts. This investment, the largest in the Johannesburg CBD for some years, focused on the redevelopment of the iconic Towers Main building and Jewel City precinct adjacent to Maboneng.

The redevelopment represents a powerful manifestation of ongoing efforts to claw back the Johannesburg central business district from the socially and economically debilitating effects of neglect, grime and crime.

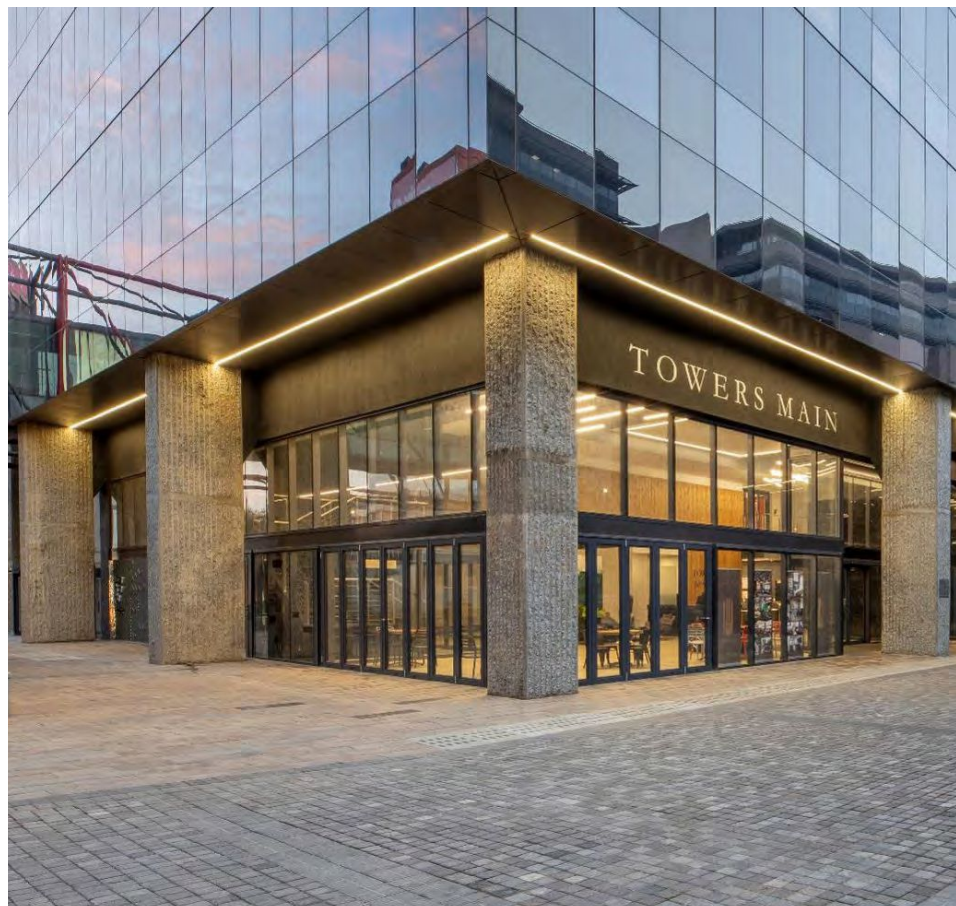
Social and economic transformation in South Africa is intimately dependant on the spatial transformation of our cities. By focusing on transforming our inner cities into lively, mixed-income communities, the regeneration of this tower in an established urban node allows for the creation of communities that reduce disparities in income by facilitating more frequent interactions between people that have means and people without.

This node also facilitates the activation of a rare public space in the city, enforcing the notion that streets are an extension of the living and working environment.

This truly mixed-used building enables Divercity and Absa to simultaneously consolidate their inner-city office space, while also fulfilling their vision of contributing to the community and providing an impetus for the rejuvenation of this part of the CBD.

Rather than catering for gentrified high-end luxury apartments, the scheme provides 20 floors of much-needed low-cost economic residential accommodation in Johannesburg. This translates into 518 apartments (ranging from 16m² studios to 51m² two-bed units) atop of nine floors of office space.

The public ground floor is activated with the commercial and residential receptions, coffee shop, recreational areas, a crèche and a public square with planted enclaves and integrated public transport facilities. The two mixes are deliberately integrated on this level to ensure an interaction between people of various means to allow for diversity, opportunity and prosperity. This high-end commercial and low-cost



Above: The existing façade had long surpassed its lifetime serviceability and a new world-class curtain wall system was designed for the commercial façade.

residential tenant mix is a completely unique situation, which will undoubtedly have a positive social impact on those living within the Absa precinct.

The ground floor also houses the Absa Art Gallery, containing many of South Africa's most prominent artists, with Absa also generously committing to installing several public sculptures throughout the piazza.

The rejuvenation of Johannesburg is largely dependent on activated public spaces where the streets become an extension of the home and office, and therefore the piazza is viewed as a 'Village Park' - an urban oasis that provides a variety of seating spaces, bleacher auditorium seating, planting, art and sculpture available to all citizens. The city's upgrade on Main Street further strengthens the success of the piazza by introducing much-needed traffic calming measures to create a comfortable pedestrian-friendly environment.

Residents have exclusive access to their own secure clubhouse on the 15th floor. Along with enviable views over the city skyline, this level offers occupants access to a fully equipped business centre, gym, playground and outdoor entertainment area. A rooftop laundry and drying yard completes the comprehensive list of services residents have access to in this mixed-use scheme.

Denser urban living residences nearer to work opportunities is highlighted as an essential strategy to ensure limiting carbon emissions.

Despite the challenge of providing cost-effective construction to ensure that low-income units could be provided, the development ensured that all new



Below: The building has been radically transformed through the complete reuse and repair of the existing structure.

Bottom: The public ground floor is activated with the commercial and residential receptions, coffee shop, recreational areas and a crèche.



systems were implemented with efficiency and long-term sustainability in mind.

Through the complete reuse and repair of the existing structure, the building has been radically transformed into a compliant and safe structure.

The existing façade had long surpassed its lifetime serviceability, and the new façades were carefully designed to be able to be completed without the use of scaffolding and still provide a compliant skin for the new occupants.

The commercial façade implements a world-class curtain wall system. For the residential façade, lightweight steel-framed panels were prefabricated to allow for eleven thousand square metres of façade to be completed within four months.

The pixelated vortex pattern of the residential façade is a fresh urban addition to the Johannesburg skyline, bringing colour and vibrancy to it.

The building completely reused an existing derelict and abandoned concrete structure – rather than demolition, this is the ultimate response to sustainability.

The Absa offices achieve a four-star design rating from GBCSA, with dedicated recycling areas, fuel-efficient parking bays, and new double-glazing replacing the outdated original façade.

Beyond the redevelopment of Towers Main, the scheme also fits into the larger Divercity Property Fund urban vision to integrate the Absa precinct with other key nodes in the city, including Maboneng and the recently completed Jewel City development.



Through active involvement in the City Improvement Districts (CIDs), the CID Forum, the Inner City Partnership and the Johannesburg Property Owners and Managers Association, the links along the Main Street corridor to Carlton Centre and Gandhi Square have also been upgraded and strengthened.

As a result, the project is uniquely positioned to bring the success of Maboneng collaborative hub to the Absa precinct, thereby activating a much larger urban live, work and play environment.

PROFESSIONAL TEAM:

CLIENT: Divercity Urban Property Fund **DEVELOPERS:** lthemba & Atterbury **ARCHITECTS:** AMA Architects
QUANTITY SURVEYOR: Kaofela **STRUCTURAL & CIVIL:** WSP **MECHANICAL, ELECTRICAL, ELECTRONIC & WET SERVICES ENGINEERS:** WSP in Africa **FIRE ENGINEER:** Fenco **SUSTAINABILITY CONSULTANT:** WSP **LIFT CONSULTANT:** Solutions for Elevating **LANDSCAPING:** CPLD Landscape Architects **HEALTH & SAFETY:** Cairnmead **MAIN CONTRACTOR:** WBHO & MOTHEO Joint Venture



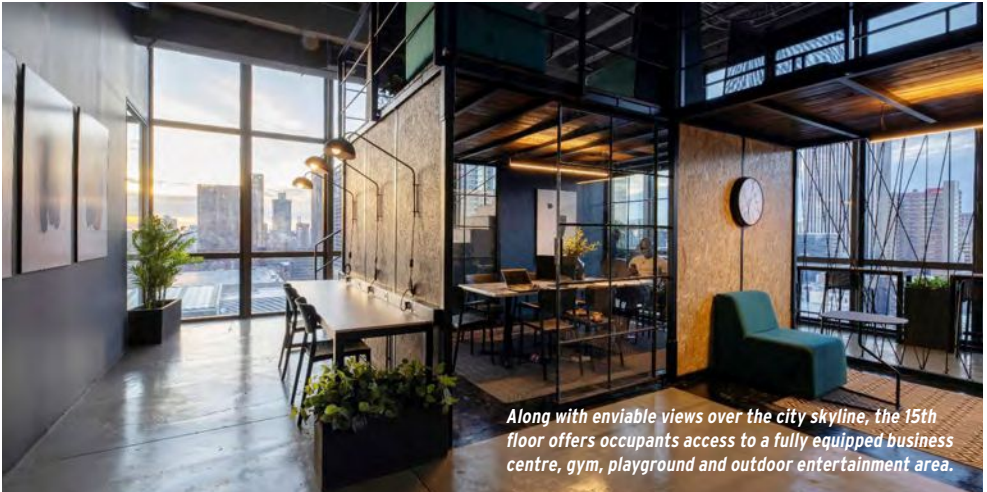
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Along with enviable views over the city skyline, the 15th floor offers occupants access to a fully equipped business centre, gym, playground and outdoor entertainment area.

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