3 Alice Lane

REFURBISHMENT AWARD

The key priority was to fill the vacant building, re-purpose it for alternative uses and re-establish 3 Alice Lane within the greater Alice Lane precinct.

The five-story building was built in the 80's and the dated precast concrete panelling and flush window design detracted from the value of this prime property in the economic heartland of Johannesburg. The existing façade had begun spalling and posed a safety risk. Compared to its recently completed counterparts, it had become dated in terms of its aesthetic design and environmental performance.

With its new transformation, the new façade has been designed using current technology and materials in conjunction with the HVAC system to obtain a balanced design of the building envelope. By using various digital technologies and energy modelling tools, human comfort and energy efficiency has been achieved with the replacement of the existing non-compliant glazing with a double-glazed high-performance unitised façade system. This unitised system is made up of a 'Sun Guard Silver 20' glazing type, which is a high-performance, solar-reflective coated glass product that specialises in blocking heat and delivering energy efficiency that exceeds the minimum regulatory requirements.

Unitised façades consist of prefabricated assembled units that can be moved directly from the factory environment to site for fast installation onto pre-prepared fixings, thus improving efficiencies and overall quality control on site.

There is a secondary double-skin façade; what can be deemed as a giant piece of "Urban Art" infused in built form. This element has been incorporated in the design of this façade to provide for a fresh aesthetic that is on par with other commercial property assets on Alice Lane and thus creates a unique architectural expression for this address. From the outside the perforated façades seem solid; however from the inside the perforated aluminium screen is transparent, opening views and bringing defused light into the interiors. The screen is also used for solar shading to the interiors, thus reducing glare for user comfort.

The fact that the building was live with more than 600 people working there during construction proved challenging in terms of safety, noise and access. Specially designed cantilever scaffolding had to be used to allow all work to be done on the outside of the structure.

This refurbishment embraces the energy of its context but starts to demonstrate the level of skill, technology and design enthusiasm within our architectural landscape and built environment. Consisting of over 900 panels all stitched together like an African quilt, this double skin façade is layered and introduces a three-dimensional dynamic façade plain, which is the first of its kind in the Sandton Central District.

Client: Public Investment Corporation
Architect: ARC Mu:v
Project Manager: Bvi Consulting Engineers
Quantity Surveyor: Equate Africa
Structural Engineer: THS and Associates
Fire Consultant: Specialised Fire Technology
Green Consultant: Solid Green
Landscape Architect: Insite Landscape Architects
Interior Designer: Head Interiors
Main Contractor: GVK-Siya Zama