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**Growthpoint’s development for Bakers Transport in Cato Ridge receives two esteemed awards from SA Institute of Steel Construction**

Growthpoint Properties’ development of the new Bakers Transport warehousing, distribution and office facility in Cato Ridge, KwaZulu-Natal, scooped two coveted category awards and a commendation at the recent Unica Steel Awards 2020.

The project won the Factory and Warehouse category and the Safintra South Africa Metal Cladding category and it earned a commendation for the Architectural category.

“Collaboration is crucial for development excellence and our Trading & Development Team worked closely with Bakers Transport and an excellent professional team, including Ries Shaw Architects. The development and project management of Bakers Transport Cato Ridge is among our biggest industrial sector achievements. We are pleased and humbled that its architectural excellence has been recognised by the South African Institute of Steel Construction (SAISC),” says Rudolf Pienaar, Growthpoint’s Chief Development and Investment Officer.

Growthpoint creates space to thrive with innovative and sustainable property solutions, and its development for leading logistics company Bakers Transport delivered a modern distribution and storage warehouse of 25,700sqm with an office and administration building of 3,000sqm.

“This was a turnkey warehouse and office development, which consolidated several distribution centres into a single centre. Growthpoint led the development’s quality, programme and financial management, with Bakers Transport being a close partner in the development process. This resulted in an impressive facility that is contemporary, highly functional and efficient but also aesthetically pleasing,” explains Pienaar.

“Of course, it helped that Growthpoint has a well-established relationship with Bakers Transport. We previously partnered to develop its tailor-made facility in Samrand, so our team already had a good understanding of their business needs and operational priorities,” adds Leon Labuschagne, Growthpoint’s Head of Industrial Development.

The new Bakers Transport facility is on a triangular, sloping site alongside the N3 Highway. The warehouse with its undercover, saw-tooth dock is positioned for excellent vehicle access and circulation. It is on the most elevated part of the site, with extensive highway visibility. The building’s vibrant colour and sleek and striking angular features stand out on the horizon. The office block is closer to the highway alongside a beautiful pond that creates a natural barrier between the busy national road and provides a pleasing view for staff.

Despite the vast difference in scale between the warehouse and office block, the development’s buildings are designed to create a harmonious group. The detailed design, which uses 204 tons of steel cladding, exudes the sleek, effortless linear quality associated with steel buildings.

As one of the first major developments in the Cato Ridge area, the Bakers Transport buildings have become a landmark. Being first to undertake a major project in an upcoming prime industrial node posed several challenges when developing the premium facility, specifically water infrastructure. The world-class development team introduced several innovative strategies to manage this. The site’s pond doesn’t only add to its aesthetics, but performs essential functions; it supports the site’s stormwater management and harvests and filters greywater.

The building also takes a unique approach to mitigating the build-up of warehouse wind pressure because of the strong winds that prevail in the area. Its design includes a mechanical system of extractor fans and roller shutters, all triggered by wind sensors.

A fine-tuned combination of low-energy lighting and natural light ensures the warehouse is energy efficient. Louvres, screens, deep eaves and solar performance glazing help to moderate internal temperatures and further reduce its energy consumption.

Labuschagne notes the materials used in the development played a key role in its functionality and financial feasibility. “A design that heroes steel allows extensive off-site fabrication and fast on-site erection and installation. Large roof spans permit high volume spaces with fewer internal columns. Structurally efficient, lightweight construction enables cost-effective structures.”

Growthpoint, South Africa’s largest primary JSE-listed REIT, is invested in real estate and communities across Africa, Australia, the UK and Eastern Europe. It is also 50% co-owner of the V&A Waterfront in Cape Town, where the new swing bridge which recently replaced its previous simple long-serving swing bridge was declared the overall winner of the 38th Steel Awards in 2020.

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