MEDIA RELEASE FROM VUKILE PROPERTY FUND

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***Vukile completes R90-million upgrade and extension of Daveyton Mall for its community***

**Vukile Property Fund (JSE: VKE), the leading retail REIT, has completed the strategic upgrade of Daveyton Mall in the Ekurhuleni Metro, Gauteng, in a project that brings together a vibrant mix of shopping, leisure and community with an R90-million investment in the township economy.**

First opened in 1993, Daveyton Mall is one of the first township malls developed in South Africa. Nearly 30 years later, it has been given a colourful new makeover and exciting extension to better reflect and serve its vibrant community.

“Shoppers can look forward to a beautifully upgraded mall which is on par with other contemporary retail centres in South Africa,” says Laurence Rapp, CEO of Vukile Property Fund.

The mall relaunched on 27 April 2022 after a year-long construction project. Right from the start of the redevelopment, the Daveyton community was engaged in the intent and extent of the mall’s revamp to ensure their vital input for the project.

Creating local economic opportunities with the redevelopment was a priority for Vukile. A Community Liaison Officer was appointed as the first point of contact for local construction SMMEs and labourers. As a result, 13 local SMMEs were subcontracted, and 43 local labourers employed on the project.

Inside and out, the revamped mall embodies its community. Daveyton is known for its many colourful installations at important nodes, intersections, and points of interest. Reflecting its importance as a hub within the community, especially considering the adjacent taxi rank, the redevelopment has ensured that the colour and vibrance of Daveyton is reflected by the mall.

Daveyton Mall’s new entrances have been built into tall, colourful and welcoming beacons that stand out on the local landscape. The original mall structure and new extension have been beautifully woven together, unified by repeating brickwork details.

To ensure its bright and beautiful external aesthetic is extended inside, the mall chose murals and installations for its interior design from more than 50 artworks submitted by local talent. This artwork will be on permanent display, fostering a sense of pride and signalling that the mall isn’t only situated in Daveyton but is part of Daveyton. The internal passages have also been brightened with skylights and higher bulkheads and shopfronts, and glossy tiles.

The mall’s tenants have welcomed its modernisation and refreshed tenant mix, which enhances the overall experience and enjoyment of the mall.

“We have improved the shopping variety by introducing more apparel from famous national brands and a brand-new food court including a welcoming common sitting area with more fast-food offerings. Keeping the tenant mix relevant, appealing and exciting will remain an ongoing exercise,” says Itumeleng Mothibeli, MD SA at Vukile.

For Daveyton Mall shoppers, Vukile has introduced Truworths, Identity, and Footgear to its fashion line-up and Pedros Chicken, Chicken Xpress and Romans Pizza to its fast-food menu. These popular brands join an already successful retail mix led by the mall’s original anchor tenant, Pick n Pay, including OBC Chicken, Mr Price, Pep, Jet and various national and local brands, including Ackermans, Clicks, Sportscene, KFC and Debonairs.

With the community in mind, new outside benches and shading canopies have been added to the mall to cater for the long queues of customers who collect social grants each month. These queues often stretch outside the mall, and the new benches and shading will ensure a more comfortable wait. The mall’s new design also includes free-of-charge promotional areas where community members can display and sell their goods.

Connecting the community with countless opportunities, valuable information and priceless learning, the Daveyton Mall redevelopment has enabled it to offer free in-centre Wi-Fi for customers.

The new mall is also more eco-friendly. With biodiversity and water savings in mind, as well as creating a beautiful environment, nearly 100 indigenous, water-wise trees will provide shade in the parking areas – a giant green leap forward from the previous count of three trees. The largest of these original trees was kept, as were most of the existing gardens containing wild irises.

All the new lighting, interior and exterior, is energy-saving LEDs. Creating a place where patrons can always feel safe and welcome, the parking area and building perimeter have improved illumination, security surveillance and CCTV monitoring at night.

“The successful delivery of the new Daveyton Mall is thanks to the support of the Daveyton community, the new design by VDO Architects’ which heroes the local culture and colour, and the contractor, Radon Projects, which ensured a safe site where opportunities were given to local contractors and workers. We are extremely pleased with outcome of this collaboration and honoured to take this legacy mall into the future with the community of Daveyton,” says Mothibeli.

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