

Redeveloped, rebranded Maluti Crescent will incorporate informal traders

Designed by MDS Architecture and developed by Flanagan and Gerard for Vukile Property Fund, Setsing Crescent in Phuthadijaba is being transformed into Maluti Crescent.

The size of the existing strip-curved mall is being doubled and a new node is being created. The new mall will create a new crescent shape to tie into the existing shopping centre. The layout will be transformed from that of a strip centre overlooking a parking lot into an enclosed shopping mall with two levels of parking. Local informal traders have also been integrated into the scheme.



Pierre Lahaye, MDS Architecture's partner heading the project, says that a number of informal traders are integrated into the design to ensure they are incorporated as part of the overall retail experience for shoppers at Maluti Crescent. "An exterior food court offers a covered area with smoke vents to ensure that the food traders are able to cook in the area and sell their wares. The development has provided the infrastructure, which creates unique opportunities for the traders without requiring excessive capital outlay on their part," he says.

Inspiration from Maluti mountain range



Maluti Crescent has two new feature entrances as well as access from the parkade. Sandstone formations from the nearby Maluti mountain range were the inspiration behind graphical representations on the exterior of the building and at the entrances.

The site is situated at the foot of Parliament Hill, the historical local legislature of the old Qwa Qwa homeland. A number of overhangs on the building demarcate areas of transition, while inviting gatherings and provide opportunities for mingling. The interior features a number of references to local culture through fabrics and tiling patterns, as well as interior accents including stylised mobiles that draw inspiration from oversized Mokorotlos - the traditional Basotho hat.

Double volume court

“The overall design incorporates a second crescent curved mall that ensures visitors are constantly discovering new views as they move along. The existing building steps down along the site, which has a significant fall of around 9m. At the junction of the new and the existing building, we created a new double volume court with a large picture frame window to showcase the panoramic views of the beautiful Maluti mountains,” says Lahaye.



A part of the existing building is already covered and this walkway was revamped to match the new mall additions. “The existing entrance comes directly off the street, which is fairly unique for a regional shopping centre. This was refurbished to tie in with the look and feel of the other new entrances with wall graphics that draw inspiration from the popular local sand art bottles.”

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