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Investors in the state-of-the-art Jutland Point apartment block, which will soon tower over much of Port Elizabeth's historical centre, are set to become shareholders of the indigenous valley it will be erected on.

The site for this unique development is situated on the valley edge of the city's green lung, the Baakens Valley, according to Australian real estate developer Ian McDonald of 4Front Investment Holdings.

After 80 years of neglect, the indigenous vegetation covering 70% of the site will be rehabilitated," says McDonald, "and buyers will become shareholders of the valley edge that extends down into the kloof."

Due to its position, the developers have embraced a "green" agenda from the outset. "We were concerned about the carbon footprint of the building and also acknowledged the importance that discerning buyers attribute to associating themselves with a progressive, environmentally conscious development."

McDonald says a solar panel supported general lighting system, integrated grey water management system and solar control glass windows – which are all aimed at reducing the building's net heat load – have all been incorporated in the design.

Air-conditioning will use dampers to manually regulate and direct cool air and a system of natural ventilation is designed in the large open foyer, according to him.

"In order to minimise the impact on the valley, the building will be situated on the top portion of the site," says McDonald. "Furthermore, we will only develop 30% of the total area and the previously neglected indigenous vegetation will be rehabilitated."

The architects – Port Elizabeth-based firm Balshaw & Fogarty – took a very sensitive approach to the environment while planning and designing the building. According to Shaun Balshaw, the design strives to be iconic and is unashamedly attempting to set a new standard in the Friendly City.

"Independent research into market drivers and global trends inspired Jutland Point's design and this further acknowledges the international context of which Port Elizabeth is fast becoming a part," he says.

The 45 units – ranging in prices from R4-million to R20-million – are proportionally larger than other similar developments and public areas are spacious and light with minimal wasted space.

“The ecological and historical significance of the site were seriously regarded and respected in the design,” says Balshaw. The original historic manor house was sensitively incorporated into the development, cleverly accommodating a range of communal facilities.

Units range from one to three bedrooms and complex facilities include a pool, gym, mini conference centre, sauna and much more.

Balshaw says finishes were carefully selected not only to enhance the aesthetics of the building, but also with class and durability in mind.

Security includes finger print access, which is supported by CCTV. The building also offers wireless internet access.

“Jutland Point offers spectacular sea, harbour, valley and city views,” says Warren Jack of the Warren Jack Property Group, which markets the development along with other prime commercial and industrial developments in the area.

“Nelson Mandela Bay’s pristine land, unrivalled moderate coastal climate, two harbours, good schools, growth in almost all sectors and a comfortable pace of living all add to its near perfection for local and foreign investors,” he says.

“Port Elizabeth is not only in the sights of overseas investors, but also of blue-chip companies looking for accommodation for company executives.”

Jack says the first apartments, including two penthouses, were snapped up by international investors the moment the project was launched at the end of last year. “This gives us a good indication that we are offering the market what it is asking.”

“Compared to what Perth was like 10 years ago, Port Elizabeth is on the eve of a development leap,” says McDonald. “We have done thorough research over the past two years and established that the city is the perfect location for this project.

“We researched possible locations as well as market needs and Port Elizabeth turned out to be our answer.”

The 13-storey development is a mere 10 minutes away from uninterrupted beaches, all amenities and the airport.

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