

Latest Business News

WESTOWN ONE-YEAR-ON AND TAKING SHAPE

October 13, 2023



Westown, Shongweni KwaZulu-Natal – The New City of the West celebrates its first anniversary since breaking ground and what has been planned, sketched, and rendered is now coming to life.

The vast, 100 hectare site is a hive of activity, with local contractors Stefanutti Stocks heading up the construction work with approximately 500 people currently on site. Piling, earthworks, retaining structures and columns of Westown Square are virtually all complete and the walls of the 50 000m² retail experience, the first project within Westown, are going up.

"The speed at which the development team is moving is testament to our unequivocal commitment to the long-term realisation of this ultimate R15 billion investment in eThekwini ," says Carlos Correia, CEO of **Fundamentum Property Group (Fundamentum)**. *"As the first development activity within the greater 100ha Westown development, Westown Square completely moves away from the 'mall concept'. It brings together shopping, dining, living and recreation for all ages, with a national tenant mix enhanced by local niche offerings; all within a setting that reflects the unique character and energy of Shongweni."*

Westown is a mixed-use precinct, within a managed, urban environment with secured and approved development rights of approximately 520 000m² of bulk floor area; the activation of these rights began when the first sod was turned for the construction of Westown Square a year ago, in August 2022.

Designed by MDS Architecture in a joint venture with Boogertman and Partners KZN, Westown Square will 'prioritise the movement of people, social spaces and lifestyle', says Donald McGillivray, MDS Architecture partner. There's a strong focus on open spaces, with parks and gardens, wide, well-lit streets and pavements and cycle lanes throughout. Wetland and plant rehabilitation and the management of the surrounding active green belt is another big part of what will make Westown different to anything of its kind currently in KwaZulu-Natal. Close to 30% of the precinct as a whole is dedicated green space and almost 300 trees will be planted within Westown Square alone.

According to Correia, *"Leasing in Westown Square has far exceeded our expectations. More than 80% of space is already taken by some of the country's biggest retail heavyweights, each bringing their latest generation, premium stores to the underserved Outer West for the*

Type and hit enter...

OUR NETWORKS

FACEBOOK TWITTER
EMAIL SNAPCHA



Read Online
Annual Hard Copy Subscription
Subscribe To Our Newsletter



Privacy - Terms

first time, as well as a tranche of well-known national and international fashion retailers. Today I'm thrilled to announce the involvement of a number of other partners who are coming to Westown in various capacities."

Absa Investment Bank (Absa) is the primary funder of the R1,4Bn Westown Square investment. This catalytic investment, together with the R730million in roads and other infrastructure that is currently under construction by the eThekwini Municipality in partnership with Fundamentum, has enabled Westown to get off the ground and will leverage a further R14Bn investment over the next decade.

"We are proud to have been a major catalyst in this development," says Charles Russon, Chief Executive Corporate and Investment Bank, Absa. *"This new strategically located node being kick-started by the development of Westown Square, will have a positive impact on KZN and the local community to ensure that all stakeholders will benefit."*

JSE-listed **Balwin Properties (Balwin)**, a developer that cares about environmentally responsible building practices and the delivery of high-quality apartments to its valued clients, announced that it will develop Shongweni Park, a 1 260-apartment lifestyle estate at Westown. Shongweni Park will form part of Balwin's Classic range of lifestyle estates and will comprise 20 phases to be built out over the next four years.

" We're very excited with this unique opportunity to further increase our footprint in the province, where our lifestyle estates in Ballito Hills and Umhlanga have proven highly popular with home buyers," says Steve Brookes, CEO of Balwin Properties.

"The show is definitely on the road and KZN is the place to be as far as investment goes," emphasises Correia. *"If you don't get in now, you're going to miss out. It's incredibly exciting to be a part of this catalytic project that is re-energising our city and the province, with full support across all three spheres of government, surrounding communities and local businesses. So far over R4,5Bn has been committed and this investment is set to double within the next couple of years."*

Also revealed today, is the design and composition of what is expected to become one of Westown Square's most popular attractions. With an emphasis on promoting the province's unique arts, craft, food and beverage scene, **The Barn on The Square** – provides a permanent market-like retail space for local artisanal traders. The retail elements inside The Barn are arranged over two main levels, a lower market level and an upper level home to high quality restaurants and bars, a number of which are locally owned and operated.

While each of these individual spaces affords people the opportunity to sit down and sample a unique take on artisanal cuisine, patrons are still able to experience the ambiance of The Barn around the upper level of the central atrium or look out over the piazza like square. This 'spatial heart' of Shongweni's new Westown Square, seeks to reinstate the essence of the community market experience as an exciting and authentically local retail space where people can gather to connect, meet, relax and enjoy themselves.

"As this massive new investment comes out of the ground interest from across a wide spectrum of markets is increasing, demonstrating the attraction of Westown's versatile offering," says Correia. *"With this interest comes the opportunity for growth, development and investment for both the public and private sectors, something the Westown developers have responded to. This development is a significant socio-economic investment for the region, balancing uses and activities, visual appeal and comfort, accessibility and linkage, in order to activate the full potential of the Outer West and sustain it for generations to come."*

Working in parallel with Westown's rapidly changing landscape, the much-needed and critical first phase of the Kassier Road upgrade is moving as quickly (30% of the project is already complete), with the use of traffic by-pass roads to reduce traffic impacts and inconvenience. The next phase of construction includes arterial access roads, bulk water and wastewater infrastructure and is due to commence shortly.

Kassier Road Phase 1A, covering the 3km section from the N3 to Milky Way (MR559), is due for completion in March 2024. Phase 1B, from the N3 Shongweni interchange heading north to the Hillcrest Hospital/Alverstone intersection, will open in advance of the official opening of Westown Square in March 2025, with The West Private Hospital, warehousing and logistics sub-precinct and the first tranch of residential units, being phased in around the same time.

1 ♡ | f 𝕏 P ✉

previous post
Transport Evolution Africa Forum & Expo unites industry in the vision of an integrated Africa

next post
Energy drinks and sleepless nights – SA's cyber security professionals risk burnout

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE



