

The Fynbos, a landmark development for sustainable architecture in Africa

By  Sindy Peters

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Construction of The Fynbos, a 24-storey mixed-use development in Cape Town's CBD, will soon get underway. Once complete, the biophilic building will feature 689 apartments, a rooftop sunset terrace, co-working space, fitness centre, as well as a ground-floor plant-based restaurant, tearoom, botanical bar and organic vegetable market.



The Fynbos will include a rooftop sunset terrace. Source: Supplied

Most striking of all will be its exterior, draped in a 1,200m² vertical garden that will require 'flying' gardeners to manage its maintenance.

Biophilic buildings aim to sustain a connection between its occupants and the natural environment, incorporating natural light, materials, patterns, vegetation and ventilation into its design. Various studies have cited [numerous benefits of biophilic design](#), including mood improvement, greater productivity and focus, stress recovery, along with other associated health benefits.

Overseeing the development, Lurra Capital has appointed a team of highly skilled professionals to bring The Fynbos to life.

TwentyEightZeroTwo Architects, with expertise in sustainable design, is playing a central role in the design of the building, while the team at Urban Choreography is lending their knowledge of ecosystems and biodiversity to the project. A sustainability consultant has also been appointed to assess the environmental impact of the development, as well as to offer strategies to minimise resource consumption, reduce its carbon footprint and enhance energy-efficiency.



The Fynbos will include a plant-based restaurant, tearoom, botanical bar and organic vegetable market. Source: Supplied

With explicit targets for sustainability in place, Lurra Capital has its sights set on the highest Green Star rating possible.

Keagan James and Keith Anderson, property practitioners at Dogon Group Properties, shared with us a bit about the design principles being incorporated into The Fynbos, its key green features, and how the development will be future-proofed.

■ ***Describe for us the architectural style and design principles being incorporated.***

The architectural style emphasises harmony between the built environment and nature. The Fynbos will feature flowing, curvilinear forms and use natural materials like stone, wood and glass. The biophilic design incorporates vegetation, which

helps with insulation, adds visual interest and improves air quality.

The apartments at The Fynbos will feature large windows to bring in ample daylight, reducing the reliance on artificial lighting and emphasising views of natural landscapes.



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■ How will the high-rise development blend into the surrounding neighbourhood or contribute to its overall appeal?

Lurra Capital has ensured that the design will integrate well into the neighbourhood. By using materials, colours and biophilic design elements that are consistent with the indigenous flora found on Table Mountain, The Fynbos can blend in and create a cohesive cityscape.

The Fynbos will contribute to the overall appeal of Cape Town's city centre by incorporating green facades and biophilic design elements which will add visual interest and beauty.

“ The Fynbos will be Cape Town's newest landmark that will no doubt enhance the city's attractiveness. ”



The Fynbos will use materials, colours and biophilic design elements that are consistent with the indigenous flora found on Table Mountain.
Source: Supplied

■ What are some of the most notable sustainability features or green building practices being used in the development?

The Fynbos's sustainable features include tastefully integrated solar panels to power the lights in the common areas and the elevators during load shedding. The solar panels will produce double the electricity needed and this will be passed back to residents through reduced levies.

The Fynbos has been designed with energy-efficiency strategies to reduce energy consumption. The vegetation acts as a natural layer of insulation and the apartments will feature double glazing, reducing the need for energy-hungry AC cooling or heating.

The cantilever balconies act as rainwater harvesters to collect and reuse rainwater for irrigation, while the vegetation to be

incorporated will be drought-tolerant, further reducing water demand.



The cantilever balconies will act as rainwater harvesters to collect and reuse rainwater for irrigation. Source: Supplied

■ ***The Fynbos is being touted as Africa's first biophilic building. What criteria are being used to ensure it meets this designation?***

Lurra Capital is actively incorporating elements of nature throughout the design. The Fynbos will facilitate a strong connection between occupants and the natural environment.

“ *This will be achieved by creating spaces that evoke a sense of being in nature.* ”

Lurra Capital also recognises the need for renewable energy sources and sustainable materials and will incorporate them to minimise the environmental impact. The design choices have been informed by research and evidence in the field of biophilic design.



Most striking of all will be its exterior, draped in a 1,200m² vertical garden. Source: Supplied

■ **How will The Fynbos be future-proofed?**

The Fynbos will be future-proofed by incorporating sustainable design practices that address future environmental challenges such as climate change and resource scarcity. This involves energy-efficient systems, water conservation measures and resilient building materials.

Lurra Capital aims to foster a culture of innovation and continuous improvement within the development.

Luxury studio apartments at The Fynbos start at R1.104m and range from 24m² to 40m². The one-bedroom apartments start at R1.920m and range from 34m² up to 58m², while its two-bedroom apartments start at R4.920m and range up to 82m².



Luxury studio apartments at The Fynbos start at R1.104m. Source: Supplied

Currently undergoing Green Star accreditation, The Fynbos, once complete, will be the first biophilic building in Africa. For more information, click [here](#).

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ABOUT SINDY PETERS

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