

# AFFORDABLE HOUSING



## New Social Housing Development Newtown, Johannesburg

- Carr Gardens
- Newtown Urban Village

Speed and quality products from members of the  
Concrete Manufacturers Association



**Concrete  
Manufacturers  
Association**



There is an increasing trend in affordable housing away from remote developments to the city centre community housing projects. Instead of travelling for hours each day residents of the new community housing projects are within walking distance of jobs, shops, school, and medical facilities.

## CLIENT

The Johannesburg Housing Company and COPE Housing Association – both non-profit organisations – have achieved another major success for housing and the City.

The housing project was conceived through a proposal call, which was initiated, by the Gauteng Provincial Department of Housing and Land Affairs in 1997. Units were built solely for rental which is a departure from traditional ownership. MHCD Architects & Urban Designers in association with Grinaker Housing were successfully awarded the rights to develop the provincially owned land.

## SITUATION

The land being the site of the old Fordsburg Police Station and an adjacent city block are located on the corner of Bree Street and Malherbe Street, Carr Street and Burgersdorp Road. The sites are well located within the vibrant Fordsburg area, which forms part of the western periphery of the Johannesburg Central Business District. The development is in close proximity to the Oriental Plaza, which sits across the actively trading Bree Street. Public transport into and out of the city by bus and taxi are located on Bree Street to the south and Carr Street to the north, which services a main taxi route to the Newtown taxi terminus. The Braamfontein railway station located to the north of the site is within a 10-minute walking distance to the entrance to the housing complex.



## FINANCE

The success of the development hinged on the speed of construction which facilitated speedy occupation and a low interest bill for the development finance. The interest charges are one of the major cost items in a project of this nature.

The need for speed combined with the requirement of high quality materials to reduce future maintenance costs prompted the contractors to use precast hollow core flooring supplied by Echo Floors.

The decision to use hollow core flooring resulted in a shortening of the contract period by four months. The flooring operation could effectively be taken off the critical path as floors were erected as soon as brickwork was up to level. Brickwork on the next level continued the day after the erection of the hollow core floors.

## SOUNDING IT OUT

The initiative to use the precast hollow core reinforced concrete flooring system not only contributes to Carr Gardens' and Newtown Urban Village's longevity, but was based on the products' many features, Echo Floors (Pty) Ltd have long been considered masters in this field and the company's expertise undoubtedly contributed to the project's overall structural success and appearance.

The company provided a complete service for the supply and installation of the flooring system which included:

- Detailed layout drawings.
- Design and engineer's certificate.
- Site measurement.
- Full installation service using own cranes and installation teams.
- Where necessary, the supply and installation of structural steel over openings.

## TOWARDS URBAN RENEWAL

Carr Gardens and Newtown Garden Village are an integral part of the Johannesburg Metropolitan Council's iGoli 2000 urban renewal strategy - intended to create a living, 24-hour city. Part of the Newton precinct, both developments have undoubtedly added to the transformation of this area and Johannesburg's urban regeneration programme. Moreover, Carr Gardens and Newtown Urban Village represent an excellent opportunity for historically disadvantaged individuals to have access to high quality, affordable housing. These projects are seen as creating a better quality of life in inner-city housing with Newtown itself, being selected as a recipient of central government's housing subsidy.

The development has been designed in response to its urban environment. The buildings define the boundaries of the site responding to the street edge. Balconies overlook the public street while the inner courtyards create a more private space for circulation

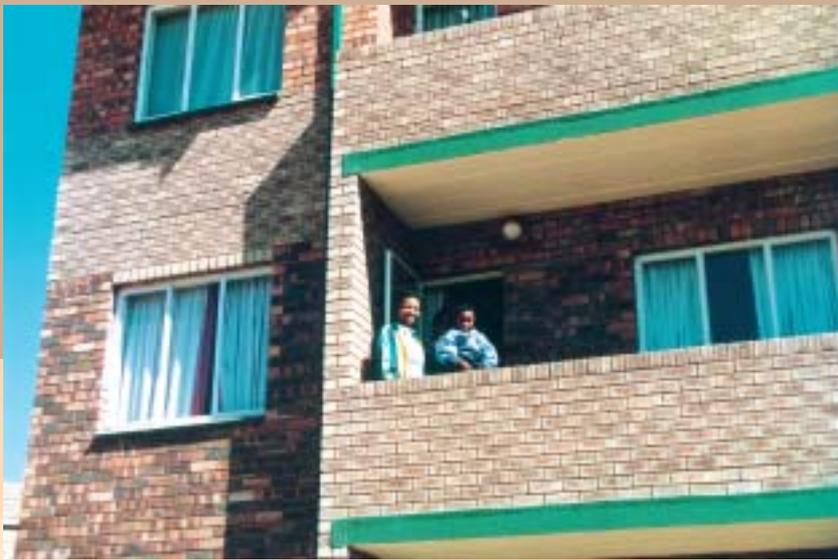




by the residents. The inner courtyards are accessed via a security point and gateway off the quieter side roads. Vehicles and pedestrians are comfortably greeted into this well-defined defensible and environmentally friendly courtyard. The spaces between the buildings have been thoughtfully designed to serve a multitude of functions. These spaces will encourage positive social interaction between the residents. Children may play on the grassed and treed areas and be supervised by their parents while they make use of the clothing lines and built-in garden seating, which is well lit in the evenings.

The Carr Gardens development owned by the JHC consists of 108 apartments and the Newtown Urban Village, which is owned by COPE, consists of 351 apartments. All one-bedroom units are 35sqm each and two bedroom units of 46sqm each. The buildings are built over three floors with staircases serving two and three units per floor. The careful selection of materials utilised is reflected in the quality of construction techniques and the choice finishes. The JHC buildings are all constructed of face brick and the COPE buildings built of concrete bricks and plaster with pre-cast concrete floor slabs supplied and installed by Echo, timber trusses and concrete roof tiles. Staircases are formed of steel, well detailed and brightly painted. The units internally are carpeted and tiled with ceramic tiles in bathroom and kitchens. All units have balconies with garden units having access to private garden spaces.





The development is owned and managed by the Johannesburg Housing Company who rent the units to beneficiaries earning less than R3,500.00 per month.

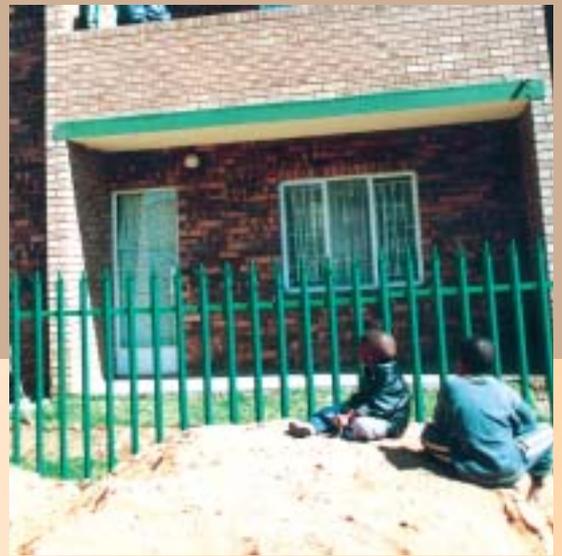
The second phase of construction was an additional 18 residential units. The building of these units has ensured that the existing buildings on the site be recognised as an historic and socially relevant landmark. The architect Michael Hart of MHCD Architects and Urban Designers in close consultation with the National Monuments Council has ensured that the project be seen as a conservation project of historic significance.

The new building will respect the memory of the existing building and its various components and relationship to its past use. In clearly defining the new structure from the old, giving importance to conservation and restoration of remaining structures the Johannesburg Housing Company will ensure that this social housing project will earn its social standing in the city of Johannesburg.

The project has been designed by Michael Hart of MHCD Architects and Urban Designers project managed by Grinaker Housing and built by Cobo Construction.

## All's well that ends well !

The precast hollow core reinforced concrete flooring system – now an integral part of Carr Gardens' overall construction – is indicative of just how innovative the Concrete Manufacturers Association has been in creating dynamic and exciting products for property developers. Its versatility, functionally, ease of supply and installation coupled with its durability speaks for itself.



## THE PROFESSIONAL TEAM

### Housing Associations:

**Carr Gardens** – Johannesburg Housing Company Limited.

**Newtown Urban Village** – COPE Housing Association.

**Architect:** Michael Hart MHCD Architects & Urban Designers.

**Project Managers:** AmproDev.

**Developers:** Grinaker Housing **Engineer:** Willie Vermaak of WJ Vermaak Consulting, Structural Engineers.

**Contractors:** Cobo Construction.

**Floor slab supplied and erected by:** Echo Floors (Member of Concrete Manufacturers Association).

**Roof Tiles:** Marley Roof Tiles (Member of Concrete Manufacturers Association).

**Paving:** Grinaker Precast (Member of Concrete Manufacturers Association).



**Concrete  
Manufacturers  
Association**

PO Box 168

Halfway House 1685

South Africa

Tel: +27 (11) 805-6742, Fax: +27 (11) 315-4683

e-mail: [cma@cis.co.za](mailto:cma@cis.co.za)

Website: [www.cma.org.za](http://www.cma.org.za)



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Pty Ltd