

## Lanseria will support growth of 'aerotropolis'

The acquisition of Lanseria International Airport by a consortium of investors, announced on Friday (16 November), would enhance the economic growth potential of the areas west of Johannesburg, says Harith investor relations director Pule Molebeledi



Harith is a pan-African infrastructure development fund manager and part of the consortium that bought the airport.

The City of Johannesburg envisages the development of an "aerotropolis", or "airport city" in the area, which is an integral part of Africa's economic hub.

The consortium comprises the broad-based women's empowerment company Nozala, the Government Employees Pension Fund - through the Public Investment Corporation - and Harith.

The consortium has agreed to a capital expenditure plan, developed by the existing management team, for the next three years.

With regard to the City of Johannesburg's vision for the development of an aerotropolis, the plan includes the development of a new runway; the upgrade of aircraft parking bays; a new multi-storey parkade and the continued expansion of the terminal building and associated retail infrastructure. It also includes the potential to develop the remaining property owned by Lanseria, Molebeledi said.

Harith chief executive Tshepo Mahloele said they were impressed with the business model employed by the group of private investors who had owned and developed the airport over 21 years.

"We envisage that Lanseria will continue developing and entrenching its critical role as a low-cost alternative to OR Tambo airport. This asset will significantly add to our transport assets across the continent," he said.

Lanseria is one of the few large and privately owned infrastructure assets in South Africa. Due to its strategic location and modern infrastructure it has been able to attract business from privately owned aircraft and scheduled airlines.

This growth was forecast to continue, and potentially accelerate, as new entrants into the South African low-cost carrier market use Lanseria alongside more regional airlines, Molebeledi said.

Source: *Business Day* via I-Net Bridge