

Menlyn Maine's Central Square will be a vibrant new R1.8bn public piazza

Central Square - the new R1.8 billion mixed-use development within the multi-billion rand Menlyn Maine green city mega project in Pretoria - is set to become an all-new public space in the capital boasting a vibrant piazza, niche shopping, top-end restaurants, pampering outlets, a hotel and commercial offices, according to the developers, Menlyn Maine Investment Holdings, which co-owns and is jointly investing in the Central Square development with the the Government Employees Pension Fund, represented by the Public Investment Corporation.



The Central Square development will include a 30,000m² boutique shopping mall with a piazza as its focal point, a 213-room apartment and conferencing hotel, a 14,500m² office tower, 4000m² state-of-the-art Virgin Classic Gym, and a lush public park. Construction began in November 2014 with Central Square set to open to the public in September 2016.

Speaking at a leasing launch on 28 May, Henk Boogertman, Architectural Director of Menlyn Maine Investment Holdings, said the Central Square development would become the focal hub of the mega 315,000m² Menlyn Maine green city development.

"When Central Square opens on 21 September 2016, it is set to become an exciting new public square and gathering place for the people of the capital city and visitors alike, offering niche and convenience shopping, leisure and entertainment. It will be the buzzing hub at the heart of Menlyn Maine," he added.

"Menlyn Maine is a groundbreaking, mixed-used decentralised green city mega project, and Central Square is the latest development to be launched within the project. Central Square is not a shopping centre; it is going to be a unique mixed-use destination with 30,000m² of boutique retail, a hotel, commercial offices, a public park and home to the only Virgin Classic Gym in Pretoria," Boogertman said.

To be pedestrianised

Central Square is set to be pedestrianised with direct street access to Sun International's spectacular R3 billion Time Square casino, five-star hotel and 8000-seater multi-purpose arena development planned for part of the Menlyn Maine precinct.

Matshepo More, Chief Financial Officer of the PIC, told guests at the recent leasing launch the PIC was very proud to be part of the Central Square development. "The PIC has notable investments in the property sector; however Central Square is one of the biggest new investments the PIC is involved with in terms of a retail and mixed-use development."



Kgosientso Ramokgopa, Executive Mayor of the City of Tshwane, who also spoke at the launch, welcomed the huge investment by Menlyn Maine Investment Holdings and the PIC in the capital city. "A key part of our responsibility as the city is investment attraction and creating the infrastructure and environment needed to secure such investments and developments. The Menlyn area is an important node of the city, which is attracting massive private sector investment," he said.

"As the City of Tshwane, one of our biggest infrastructure projects currently underway in the area of public transport is our multi-billion rand bus rapid transport system. As a key node, Menlyn will become one of the hubs of the system, which is our very own version of Johannesburg's Rea Vaya BRT system. It will offer quality public transport and support developments such as Menlyn Maine," added Ramokgopa.

The mayor also expressed his excitement at the tourism and leisure aspects of the Central Square and broader Menlyn Maine developments. He said the tourism and hospitality sector was one of the new growth sectors for the city.

"We are looking to better exploit the opportunities around tourism in the metro. Quality hotels and leisure attractions are crucial to the growth of tourism. Developments such as Menlyn Maine assist us in building capacity in the hospitality industry and, ultimately, to attract more tourists to our city," he said.

Ramokgopa added that the city was also targeting a low carbon growth strategy, and welcomed the fact that Menlyn Maine was a landmark green city development.

SA's first green, mixed-use city

Menlyn Maine is South Africa's first green, mixed-use city. As a partner of the Clinton Climate Initiative, Menlyn Maine is one of 16 green cities being built in various countries, and the only one in Africa. In line with Menlyn Maine's exceptional sustainability benchmarks, all buildings in the precinct are set to be rated 4 Green Star SA or higher by the Green Building Council of South Africa. It is also targeting a LEED ND certification for the precinct.

Leading shopping centre development, investment and leasing group, Flanagan & Gerard Property Development and Investment, has been appointed as the retail leasing consultant to achieve a singular retail mix at Menlyn Maine Central Square.

"The Central Square boutique mall will be one of a kind in Pretoria, and will complement rather than compete with the neighbouring Menlyn Park super-regional shopping centre. It will be niche and will be tailored to a unique market with the capital being home to a significant number of foreign embassies," said Patrick Flanagan, Executive Director of Flanagan & Gerard.

"The mall will be different from normal shopping centres. It is targeted to be the point of first call for convenience shopping,

while the piazza is set to be a unique public and meeting place with top end restaurants, beauty and pampering outlets, as well as other service offerings," he added.

Central Square will be anchored by an exceptional line-up of grocery shopping from Pick n Pay, Woolworths Food and SuperSpar. Pretoria's only Virgin Active Classic Gym is its fourth anchor. It will also feature 88 hand-picked speciality stores and branches of major banks.

Delicious dining

For its distinctly delicious dining, restaurants already committed at Central Square include Tasha's, Koi, Bistro, Turn 'n Tender, Mythos, Remos, Frank's and Fego. They will be joined by several other cafes, coffee shops, patisseries and eateries.



Central Square will also have around 1,800 basement parking bays and 300 open parking bays, enhancing its ease of access, convenience and pedestrian linkages into the surrounding precinct.

Located minutes away from the N1 motorway's Atterbury and Garsfontein interchanges, Central Square is right off the main arterial of January Masilela Road, and a mere 500 metres from the main entrance of the Menlyn Park Shopping Centre.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>