

New mall for Birch Acres, Tembisa

Just north of Kempton Park, Birch Acres Shopping Centre is due to open on 28 October 2010. The centre is conveniently situated between the N1 and R21 in the Ekurhuleni Municipality on Andrew Mapheto Drive, being the main road leading into Tembisa from Kempton Park and one of the busiest routes connecting Johannesburg and Pretoria.



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Months of research, planning and development went into 26 000m² plus centre. "Before development commenced, we conducted an extensive feasibility study to determine the viability of developing a shopping centre of this nature at this location," says Steven Herring, developer of Heriot Properties. "Not only did we consider the physical location and other development projects currently underway as well as those planned for the surrounding area but we also asked residents and business owners for their input and their thoughts on the development.

"Besides excellent access and visibility from Andrew Mapheto Drive, the surrounding area has also been earmarked for further business development. Current and planned residential expansion and the resultant densification, as well as planned infrastructure upgrades, will also ultimately contribute towards the upliftment and strengthening of the area."

Research in two areas

The research indicates that the adjacent Birch Acres residential development located to the east of the centre, which mostly offers housing to the upcoming middle class, is a current success and a massive potential market for the new shopping centre.

As part of the research process, Ndzalama Ngwenya of Purple Plumm Brand Communications, the marketing company commissioned to handle the launch and annual marketing plans of the centre, visited Tembisa and interviewed various residents and business owners.

"Overall, feedback was very positive with business owners welcoming the healthy competition and potential new business that the centre will bring to their doorsteps," said Ngwenya. "Residents of various ages and various professions were confident that the centre would help provide employment opportunities and most generally just looked forward to shorter travel distances in order to do one's shopping or seek entertainment."

"One nearby resident even noted that she was confident that the development would increase the value of her property and therefore welcomed the new centre as her neighbour."