

# Emira granted REIT status, wins Menlyn award

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JSE-listed Emira Property Fund, which owns a diversified portfolio of office, retail and industrial properties, has been granted REIT status by the JSE and has won the Fulton Awards Innovative Construction Award for the Podium in Menlyn.



The Podium.

It also announced that experienced property professional, Gerhard Van Zyl has been appointed an independent non-executive director of the board of Strategic Real Estate Managers, the authorised management company of Emira, pending regulatory approval.

"The Real Estate Investment Trust (REIT) is the international standard for property investment and we are pleased to among the first South African investments to adopt this structure, which is globally recognised by investors," says James Templeton, Emira CEO.

Boosting the representation of independent non-executive directors on the board, Van Zyl brings a wealth of experience in the property sector. He has served as CEO of both Vukile Property Fund and SA Corporate Real Estate Fund, and, before that, as MD of Gensec Property Services.

"Gerhard's sector knowledge will no doubt be a valuable asset which will benefit Emira and our management company. These developments progress the company's good governance practice and strengthen its foundation for sustainable growth," adds Templeton.

## Winning development

The Concrete Society of Southern Africa (CSSA) presents the Fulton Awards, hosted every two years at a gala evening event.

"We strive for innovation in our properties and developments and it is great to be formally acknowledged for this with the Innovative Construction award. Improving the quality of our property portfolio is one of the company's goals and our investment in the A-Grade, and now award-winning, office building certainly furthers this goal," says Templeton.



The Podium at Menlyn.

The 9,000m<sup>2</sup> first phase of the development, which will eventually comprise approximately 16,000m<sup>2</sup>, was complete in May 2012. Tenants include Safcol, Waymark, Hatch and Zurich.

The Podium at Menlyn enjoys prime position at the intersection of Atterbury and Lois Streets, directly opposite Menlyn Park Shopping Centre. Its design takes full advantage of

this prominent corner in Menlyn, which is fast becoming an A-Grade business hub with more than 300,000m<sup>2</sup> of mixed-use development including retail, offices, hotels and residential units planned.

### **Timeless classical design**

As the gateway to the Menlyn node, the company's overall brief for the building was simple - a timeless, classic design that is also cost-effective to maintain.

Architects Boogertman and Partners, credit the success of the project to combining creative design talent, technical and project management expertise and the support of its dynamic interior architect department.

This standout business address uses triangular geometry in a union of glass curtain walls and off-shutter concrete. It is partly inspired by ancient engraved artworks found in the Blombos Caves on the Southern Cape coast, creating a bridge between a 77,000-year-old culture and the future of South Africa. Inspiration was also drawn from the ancient Chinese Tangram dissection puzzle.

Even the basement and lift lobby artwork makes use of these triangles to create 'geometric garden' within an urban space, creating the impression of a digital landscape. The artwork transforms the basement into an exciting space, through which to enter.

"We're delighted Podium at Menlyn received this prestigious award and we would like to thank the professional team, contractor and our staff who contributed to the project.

"The company will continue to grow and improve its property portfolio with quality development and acquisitions and unlocking value with refurbishments, extensions and redevelopment," Templeton concludes.

The company's assets comprise 146 properties valued at R9.1bn and listed investments of R600m, with a market capitalisation of R7.7bn