

Bracken Nature Reserve Education Centre awarded 5-star Green Star rating

The Bracken Nature Reserve Visitor Education Centre in Cape Town has been awarded a five-star Green Star rating from the Green Building Council of South Africa (GBCSA) for its Public & Education Building Design.



Source: Supplied

The centre's buildings will be redeveloped into a community multipurpose venue made with an industrial-type steel portal frame, brick infill walls and a facade that will be a combination of face brick and plaster. The project is scheduled to start in October 2023 and is planned for completion in July 2025.

The redesigned centre will be able to accommodate up to 100 visitors simultaneously, whereas the old building could only accommodate small groups of 20 people at a time.

The sustainable building features of the redeveloped centre will include:

- Lighting that uses a motion sensor-controlled system and LED-efficient fittings;
- High-performance internal vision glazing designed to take advantage of natural daylight;
- Mechanically assisted fresh air ventilation systems that will filter fresh air to enclosed offices and the multipurpose venue using weather louvres and occupancy sensors;
- 50kWp photovoltaic grid-tied system with two 25kVA inverters;
- 3kW backup element for 200-litre solar geyser;
- Rainwater harvesting;
- Waste recycling storage facilities for sorting and collecting operational waste;
- Black water treatment system and black water harvesting system;
- Water-efficient fittings will be fitted onto all taps, waterless urinals will be installed and toilets will be flushed using recycled water from the black water harvesting system;
- No requirement for landscape irrigation. The local weather-wise indigenous ground cover, plant and tree species will be watered during the winter months' natural rainfall;
- Access to water and energy consumption data by means of display screens for all occupants and visitors. This will offer insight into the sustainable operations of the building.



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Additionally, the centre is designed to encourage alternative modes of transport to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and foster healthier lifestyles. Preferential parking bays have been allocated for fuel-efficient transportation, and secure bicycle storage will be provided. There are also cyclist facilities, including showers and lockers on site.

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