



Making an impact in the Western Cape

Portland Builders, founded in 1988 by Nico Heyns and Helenus Scholtz, expanded and bought a 65-ha quarry on the Vissershok Road in Durbanville in 2000. The Portland Group has since become one of the leading suppliers of aggregates, readymix and hollow-core slabs in the Western Cape.

Soon after purchase, the quarry underwent a major facelift and new offices were built, an entrance road constructed and new crushers installed. Portland Quarry produces construction aggregates, primarily crushed stone and dust from natural deposits of Malmesbury Hornfels. Products include chip and spray, concrete stone for general construction, basecourse from G1 to G4 and sub-base stone (G5 to G7), crusher dust, and 6-mm ROC.

A year after opening the Portland Quarry, three Portland Readymix plants were installed. These provide a range of concretes designed for the whole spectrum of construction industry work. Products are backed by tight quality control which guarantees strength and workability on the construction site.

Portland Hollowcore's prestressed panels are manufactured in their purpose-made factory. The panels are formed in an extrusion process using Elematic systems imported from Finland in 2008. This process ensures that the undersides of the deck panels are perfectly smooth and level, eliminating the need for skimming and requiring only a textured paint finish.

The Portland Hollowcore and Readymix facilities are situated on the quarry premises, making it easy to ensure an effective management system.

Current projects include Andringa Walk next to Eikestad Mall in Stellenbosch. This is the second phase of the Eikestad Urban Renewal Project, which includes 119 upmarket apartments built on two levels above a newly developed parking garage.

The parking garage is constructed as an in-situ concrete column and beam structure, while the apartments are built using brick loadbearing walls along with Portland Hollowcore's decking panels.

Hollow-core slabs provide the perfect solution as no propping is required. Panels are placed into position using a tower crane which hoists each panel directly off the truck, positioned at street level below. This placing system has proved to be especially efficient, keeping traffic disruptions to a minimum and enabling large areas of hollow-core panels to be placed rapidly.

Also under construction is Hirsh's Cape Town in Milnerton. This is a retail centre with a showroom, office block and two retail blocks of five shops each. Hollow-core slabs have been used as walling panels for most of these buildings, speeding up the construction process for Isipani Construction.

When hollow-core is used for walling, the panels are placed horizontally and are attached to in-situ concrete columns by means of steel clips bolted against steel brackets, and bolted to the columns. This construction method is very fast and efficient and enables a large area of walling to be installed with minimal labour.

Portland has also been involved with the recent construction of Curro Private Schools situated both in Hermanus and Stellenbosch.

While Portland Quarry and Portland Readymix business remains steady, Portland Hollowcore is making an impact on the construction industry in the Western Cape. ■

**More information from Mannetjies Venter at
Tel: 021 972 1111.**

Photographs by: Pieter Louw