

SOUTH AFRICAN BUILDER

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Portland: leading the way in WC

Portland Builders was founded in 1988 by Nico Heyns and Helenus Scholtz. The company has since grown steadily and evolved to form the Portland Group which is now a leading supplier of aggregates, ready-mix and hollowcore in the Western Cape.

Portland Builders has been a member of the Boland Master Builders Association (MBA) for 23 years and Portland Readymix a member of Western Cape MBA for 11 years.

The 65 hectare Portland Quarry, situated on the picturesque Vissershoeck Road in Durbanville, produces construction aggregates, primarily crushed stone and dust from the natural deposits of the Malmesbury Hornfels. In 2000 the quarry underwent a major revamp during which new crushers were also installed. Products handled by the crushers include chip and spray, concrete stone (6 mm, 13 mm, 19 mm, 25 mm and 37 mm) for general construction, basecourse from G1 to G4 and sub-base (G5 to G7) for road construction, crusher dust, and 6 mm run-of-crusher (ROC).

In 2001 three Portland Readymix plants were installed. These plants provide a range of concrete types designed for the whole spectrum of the construction industry.



Photos: Pieter Louw

Portland's quarry stone conveyor belt

The products are backed by tight quality control which brings a guarantee of strength and workability on any construction site. The company prides itself on the importance of the cubical shape of their stone in the production of their quality concrete.

Portland Hollowcore panels are manufactured in their purpose-made factory. The panels are reinforced with pre-stressed cables and are formed in an extrusion process using systems imported from Elematic, Finland, in 2008. This manufacturing process ensures that the undersides of the deck panels are perfectly smooth and level. This unique feature eliminates the need for further skimming, making only a textured paint finish necessary to finish the job.

The Portland Hollowcore and Readymix facilities are situated on the quarry premises, making it easy for employers to ensure an effective managing system. Portland works closely with contractors on numerous projects, supplying and installing concrete slabs on site. The company makes use of its own transport fleet for all product delivery.

Current major projects include the Andringa Walk next to Eikestad Mall in Stellenbosch. Andringa Walk 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's hollowcore decking panels. The first level of hollowcore decking is approximately 700 mm higher than the garage roof deck and covers the whole roof area, consisting of apartments, walkways and even rooftop gardens.



Jenny Groenewald, Portland's readymix manager

Hollowcore slabs provide the perfect solution at this level as no propping is required to lay this new deck. The hollowcore 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 itself to be especially efficient, enabling large areas of hollowcore panels to be placed in short periods of time.

Another project taken on by Portland includes the precast walling of Hirsch's Cape Town situated in Milneron. Hollowcore slabs have been used as walling panels for most of these buildings, speeding up the construction process for Isipani Construction.

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

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 stay consistent, Portland Hollowcore is starting to make a great change in the construction industry in the Western Cape. ■



Part of the Portland readymix fleet