



## Tukssport High School and Residences, University of Pretoria Campus

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Preserving historical and botanical treasures were among the major challenges Pretoria building contractors, J.C. van der Linde & Venter Projects, successfully coped with to complete a R49-million contract for the construction of the new Tukssport High School and residences on the University of Pretoria Sports Campus in Hatfield.

Tukssport High School is a new independent co-ed school, catering for about 260 learners from Grade 8 to 12. The special-

ised high school, which opened on 20 July 2015, forms part of the UP High Performance Centre. It allows current and potential high sports performers to receive sports coaching and training while still continuing their schooling.

The new facility – funded by the The Athletics Foundation Trust – is located on a University of Pretoria Veterinary Science Faculty Experimental Farm (Proefplaas) site, historically a quarantine camp for new livestock or game before the animals were taken to dedicated camps.

Among the major challenges the contractors, J.C. van der Linde & Venter Projects, faced on this contract were the historical and environmental values attached to the site. The contractors had to preserve some extremely rare trees on site – which created fairly formidable access problems – and also had to ensure that specified historical structures on the terrain were not damaged during the building process.

Structures such as the old Proefplaas' quarantined animals concrete drinking troughs, had to be preserved – and were in fact incorporated in the design by architects, Neo Dimensions.

The trees on the site are mainly old exotic trees species from the remnants of a UP arboretum. Eight particularly precious trees were identified which included three different species of South African yellowwood trees. Only at the National Botanical Gardens at Kirstenbosch are all four indig-

enous yellowwood species found. So the experimental farm's three yellowwoods, in particular, had to form part of the design, building and provision of services.

J.C. van der Linde & Venter Projects had to ensure that these precious trees were not damaged or threatened by the robust building operations and heavy vehicles traditionally found on any construction site.

J.C. van der Linde & Venter Projects also had to provide an open-air amphitheatre, accommodating 260 students.

Environmental concerns were important in the Neo Dimensions Architects design which the contractors had to follow.

For example, the north façade of the residence block features different bedrooms on each level that protrude, or are recessed, from the façade to create natural sun control over the bedroom windows. Additional steel louvres were provided to the protruding bedrooms with their vertical window design.

All sanitary ware was specified and supplied as water-saving elements.

Coping with the presence on site – in particularly strategic positions – of intrusive objects such as towering trees, as well as relatively small but equally intrusive structures such as historical drinking troughs, is never welcomed by any building contractor.

Nevertheless, J.C. van der Linde & Venter Projects managed to meet all stipulated schedules. Work started on the project in August 2014 and handover took place – on schedule – in July 2015. ▲

### Project information

- Company entering: J.C. van der Linde & Venter Projects
- Project start date: 13 August 2014
- Project end date: 9 July 2015
- Client: University of Pretoria
- Main contractor: J.C. van der Linde & Venter Projects
- Architect: Neo Dimensions Architects
- Project manager: University of Pretoria and Neo Dimensions Architects
- Quantity surveyor: GK Projects
- Structural engineer: DG Consulting Engineers
- Electrical and mechanical engineer: Plantech
- Landscape architect: University of Pretoria