

TOP ARCHITECTURAL AWARD FOR BOULDERS**NEWS REPORT****TOP ARCHITECTURAL AWARD FOR BOULDERS**

THE brand new information centre at the Boulders penguin sanctuary near Simon's Town has received a top accolade from the Cape Institute for Architecture (CIfA).

The Institute's regional awards of commendation are made annually in recognition of outstanding architectural design and the Boulders facility has been further nominated for the national award by the SA Institute of Architects to be announced later this year.

"Boulders forms part of the Cape Peninsula National Park (CPNP) and attracts over 360 000 visitors annually," says Paul Britton, CPNP planning manager. "We are proud to share this prestigious award with all those who contributed towards the Boulders development framework plan and I wish to thank the Boulders Advisory Committee for their valuable input," says Britton.

The new facilities, which are also wheelchair-friendly, consist of a turnstile kiosk at the Boulders Beach entrance; and another turnstile kiosk, forecourt, balcony viewing deck, public toilets, information centre and staff and volunteer facilities at the Kleintuin entrance.

According to the architect, Piet Louw, the facilities were designed to recognise the varying tones and colours, namely the blues (water and sky), the greens (vegetation) and the different tones of grey (organic forms of the boulders).

"The building structures attempt to visually integrate with the context while dealing with practical issues such as wind, shade and shelter. The buildings are small and modest, while the architectural elements are bold and strong, like the boulders themselves.

"Due to the harsh climate, stippled plastered surfaces and epoxy coated aluminium were used. Apart from its weathering capabilities, concrete enables wide horizontal distances to be covered," says Louw.

According to the panel of judges, the buildings represent 'a worthy contribution to Cape Town's stature as a major tourist destination'. The citation reads: "To build in a setting of unique scenic beauty is no easy task. Yet the architect rose to that challenge. Not only do the two buildings sit comfortably and unobtrusively in their setting, they also speak about the nature of the place.

"This is evident in the graceful way in which the routes to and from the entrance kiosk wind their way around the Boulders. The colour, texture and scale of the buildings all contribute to a neutrality which is especially harmonious.

"The architect also managed to link the old building, approach to the complex and the rest of the site with a clear and legible circulation pattern. The considered design of the structures around the entrance area frames and celebrates the splendid views at Boulders."

According to Britton, the choice of architect was crucial to the success of the project. "At the outset there was no doubt that Piet Louw and his team were the best qualified for this very complex project which required them to solve many problems within a constrained budget," he says.

"I would also like to commend the builders, GVK Ziya Zama, who not only did an excellent job but also complied with the stringent environmental standards set by SANParks," says Britton.

The main boardwalk at Boulders recently earned the CPNP an honourable mention as part of the Rob Filmer prize to SA National Parks for providing access to people with disabilities.

* Photos available on request from Netacha Bessick at bessick.afrikom@global.co.za .

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