

## New Estate has Alternative Power

A property development that launched last week in Boskruijn on Johannesburg's West Rand has taken pro-active steps to minimise the inconvenience and danger faced by South Africa's home owners due to power outages.

Solar panels and a generator have been included on the optional extras list, whilst gas appliances were installed to keep food cooking even if Eskom's power supply shuts off. The danger of opportunistic criminal activity within complex by maintenance personnel has also been minimised by use of low-maintenance finishes.

Fulvio De Stefanis, Director of DVG Construction, explains that due to the recent black outs and sustained criminal activities experienced by home owners across Gauteng, "it was imperative for us to offer an appropriate package for the environment in which we live."

Home buyers with a budget of R2.8 – R3.5 million can buy into the exclusive estate to be found along President Fouché Drive in Randburg; this includes VAT, transfer and registration costs as well as all fees.

The rationale behind his company's use of low maintenance, but high quality, finishes relate to the fact that home owners within this price range normally hire outside contractors to complete maintenance and renovation tasks and very often criminal activity is traced back to these on site teams.

The developers considered every detail of a home that normally requires maintenance and repair and started by placing the electrical box and geyser in the garage, eliminating the need for workmen to come into the house. No varnishing treatments are required for the window panes, balustrades or garage doors as they are aluminium, stainless steel and powder-coated respectively. External walls will not have to be painted for years to come because of the Armacoat paint used in the plaster. Even industrial strength paving blocks were used for the internal road.

"High quality materials like these come at double the price, but we've always been proud that we can stand by the quality of our developments for years down the line," assures Managing Director Umberto De Stefanis, who founded the construction and civil engineering works company in 1969 and now runs it with his son Fulvio.

The development of four phases is taking a staggering three years to complete due to the high standard of structural engineering. "Other developers could have it complete in two years, but we only tackle one development at a time" says De Stefanis, "and we are on site ourselves to oversee the structural quality of the buildings – which unavoidably takes time."

DVG has a long history in civil engineering contracts for government and its previous residential developments include the 32 unit SaraLia Village in Buccleah and the 30 unit Kloof Estate in Bedfordview; luxury homes in Benmore Gardens, Waverely and Hurlingham as well as a commercial/industrial properties in Spartan, Kempton Park and Kya Sands.

"The size of the properties in the estate is a substantial 636m<sup>2</sup> and we took care to design the homes in such a way that they are generously spaced inside and out including guest parking for 4 cars outside each unit," comments De Stefanis.

The privacy residents will have is achieved through the strategic placement of frosted glass on windows that are visible to neighbours and the fact that the entertainment areas of each house were positioned in such a way as not to face one another.

The upstairs level of each cluster has three bedrooms (each with its own veranda), two bathrooms (one en suite) and a study, with a nice touch of extra length doorframes imported from Italy.

The entertainment area downstairs has a fitted gas fireplace and gas braai unit, under floor heating, industrial specification wooden laminate floors, granite tops and cherry wood cupboards in the kitchen. A two room staff quarter is built toward the back of the property.