**NEWS ARTICLE**

First look: Future-proof architecture at the new R140m Waterkloof Hills Combined School in Rustenburg

**20 September 2****022:** Face brick and paving from [Corobrik](http://www.corobrik.co.za) played a prominent role in the future-proofed design of the new state-of-the-art Waterkloof Hills Combined School in Rustenburg, North West. The 11 500 m2 project was built by Royal Bafokeng Platinum (RBPlat) in partnership with the North West Department of Education (NWDoE). Mzansi Wealth was the lead consultant and project manager.

The Waterkloof Hills Combined School was officially opened by Minister of Basic Education **Angie Motshekga** and Minerals and Energy Minister **Gwede Mantashe** in a high-profile unveiling ceremony on 5 August.

“Face brick is durable, long-lasting and keeps its appearance for an extended period. In addition, there is the added benefit of no maintenance, which is important in the context of a school,” comments **Floris van der Walt** from [Olivehill Architects](http://www.olivehill.co.za/).

The school can accommodate 2 155 learners, with 1 280 learners in the primary school (with four streams) and 875 learners in the secondary school (with five streams). A feature of the school is that there are 32 ‘smart’ classrooms equipped for remote learning and teaching.

A total of 180 000 Onyx Satin FBX and 480 000 Ruby Light FBS face bricks, 27 000 Nutmeg pavers and 110 000 plaster bricks for the internal walls were supplied from Corobrik’s Midrand and Springs factories, according to **Gary Westwood**, Sales Manager for Mpumalanga, North West and Botswana.

“A key requirement from RBPlat and NWDoE was durability,” notes van der Walt. This resulted in choosing face brick for all high contact and high traffic areas. For example, in the classrooms themselves, only the front and back walls are plastered brick to cater for the necessary internal services, while all the side walls are face brick.

Face brick was a natural choice in terms of its price point and aesthetic contribution, highlights van der Walt. The architects opted for the combination of Onyx Satin face brick, a dark brown high-end product, contrasted against the lighter orange Ruby Light face brick.

Westwood adds that Onyx Satin is the ‘Rolls Royce’ of Corobrik’s face bricks, used extensively for detailed highlighting work. “Onyx Satin is a simply stunning face brick that we used in very specific focus areas and feature walls,” adds van der Walt.

Commenting on the thoughtful design that went into the project, van der Walt says simply that even a school building can be inspirational and, in turn, inspire its eventual end users. “Even though we had a limited budget, face brick allowed us to heighten the aesthetic appeal of the project and also to future-proof it.”

Westwood says that Corobrik’s collaboration with Olivehill Architects on this project is typical of the extra mile it goes for its architectural clients. Its business development team discussed various options for the school, with husband-and-wife design team Floris and **Irma van der Walt** eventually selecting their final combination based on various samples.

Full-size sample walls were then built on-site to give the architects a better impression of the end product in terms of quality, sizing and colour. Corobrik also supplied a bricklayer trainer to train local bricklayers, thereby assisting with skills development and empowering local communities. “Not only does this translate into better quality at the end of the day, but it means a project that all stakeholders can take pride in,” concludes Westwood.

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**Notes to the editor**

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