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BM MARCH APRIL 2023



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Facts about building materials before any purchase



Before starting any construction work, one of the considerations to make is the choice of raw materials. Raw materials could be natural or man-made.

According to Titus Mugambi of Build Draw Designs Limited, a construction company based in Kiambu Town, the choice of raw materials depends on various factors. These include location, availability, cost and durability. He notes that market trends are gradually becoming another factor to consider.

He offers some pointers on some of the common raw materials used in the building industry.

Stones

These are either manually or machine cut. According to Mr Mugambi, machine cut stones are well shaped and have an even surface. They also save on labour cost and mortar since they don't have uneven gaps.



Manually cut stones, on the other hand, are strong, and therefore suitable for foundations.

Sand

According to Pauline Mburu of Talite Suppliers, a company that supplies sand, and which is based in Thika, sand is mixed with cement or lime to make mortar for masonry work and plaster.

There are different types of sand, so it is important to understand the type to use and for what.

For instance, coarse sand is best for building stable structures because it does not expand, while brick sand is best when constructing the floor of the swimming pool as it is soft and finer in texture. You will know that sand has good texture if it does not stick when picked and rubbed on the palms.

Tiles

Tiles are becoming a popular choice for residential and commercial buildings. However, they are among the raw materials that one has to be careful when buying.

Esther Wambui of RAK Ceramics Kenya Ltd says that tiles come in different sizes, shapes, textures and colours.

“They could be porcelain, ceramic, faux wood, or granite. Notably, tiles used in spaces such as the living area might not be suitable for the bathroom due to texture. It is, therefore, important that when buying them, you are keen to ensure that you don’t end up with tiles that won’t meet your needs,” she adds.

Wood (timber)

This is one of the oldest raw materials used in the construction industry due to its versatility.

According to Ms Stella Wanjira of Salma Enterprises Limited, wood can be used in flooring, panelling, construction of roofs, ceiling, doors, exterior cladding and general finishing.

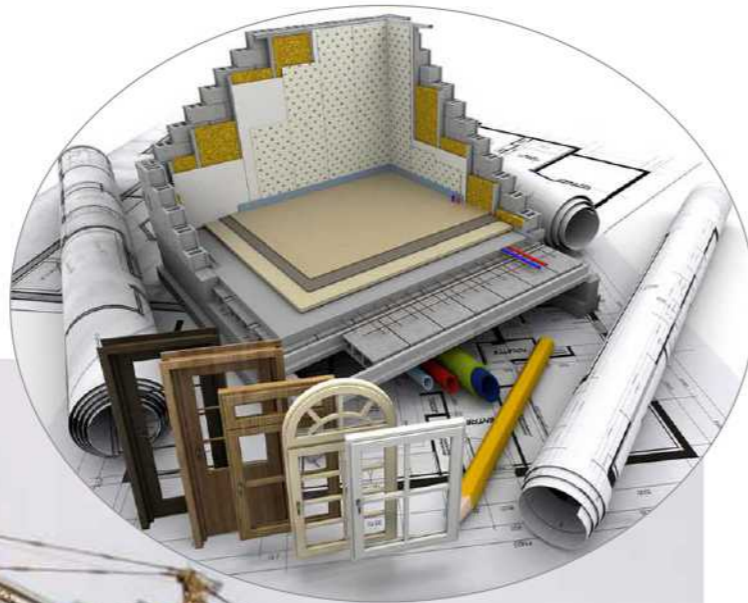


She further adds that wood can be hard or soft, with each variety being used for different purposes. “Wood, besides being a core construction item, is also used in making wood products such as decorative pieces and timber mouldings,” Ms Wanjira says.

Ballast

Popularly known as kokoto, Mugambi describes this as an essential requirement in every construction. Ballast is used in the building of slab pavements, strong foundations, pillars, suspended floors, reinforcement columns and lintels. Ballast comes in different sizes and is used in different stages of construction.

“They occur naturally in different colours — grey,



black, pale pink, even red. To make a building attractive, one can infuse the different colours,”

she says.



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Contributions

The editors welcome news items, press releases, articles and photographs relating to the Construction Industry. These will be considered and, if accepted, published. No responsibility will be accepted should contributions be lost, damaged or incorrectly printed.

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Expert Predictions for the Housing Market in 2023



The last three years have been a whirlwind with the housing market going from scorching hot to icy cold in what seems like the blink of an eye. So what does the housing market have in store for us this year?

inflation continue to abate? Will there be a recession or will the government deliver a so-called "soft landing"?

"With more economic stability, that really could bring more overall balance to the market."

In 2023, the most important factor to watch will be what happens in the broader economy. Will





1. Homes sales will slide

The determining factors of just how much sales will fall include what happens with mortgage rates, housing supply and overall economic conditions. If inflation moves lower and the government eases off its rate hikes, for example, homebuyers may feel things are stable enough to jump back into the market and sales may not slide as much.

Other factors like the strength of the job market, wage growth and consumer confidence could also mitigate the sales slowdown.

2. Mortgage rates are likely to pull back

High mortgage rates combined with high home prices have made a home purchase much less affordable last year as monthly payments increased. Any improvement in rates is welcome news to weary buyers.

“But don’t expect rates to fall back to low as the conditions that made those ultra-low rates possible in 2020 and 2021 — a pandemic and unprecedented actions by the government to keep the economy from collapsing — aren’t likely to repeat any time soon,” says an expert.

3. Home prices will level off

While experts are in agreement that mortgage rates are likely to fall, there is a bigger disparity when it comes to home prices.

The only near certainty is that there won’t be the double-digit price increases that have been the hallmark of the pandemic market.

On the other hand, Danielle Hale, chief economist

at Realtor.com, believes low inventory will keep home prices from falling too far. She thinks prices will tick higher during the first few months of the year before leveling off or going negative after mid-year, ending the year up by 5.4% overall.

“Even though we’ve seen a pullback in demand, we’ve seen a very similar sized pullback in supply,” says Hale.

4. Inventory will remain tight

One of the biggest causes of skyrocketing home prices during the pandemic was a lack of housing supply. This year will see an improvement, but inventory will remain below normal levels.

Still, even as supply improves, the number of homes on the market will remain below pre-pandemic levels. Though it may feel like there are more homes for buyers to choose from, inventory will remain tight.

5. There will be more variability between markets

In 2023, there’s going to be a lot of variability in how the markets are adjusting.

The “Zoom towns” — cities that attracted a large number of pandemic buyers who had shifted to remote work and were looking for more affordable housing — are the metros most likely to see home prices fall significantly, a trend that has already started last year, according to an expert.

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Spend Your Money Wisely by Building Mabati Prefab Houses



A mabati prefab house is built off-site beforehand and later shipped to the desired destination. There is a preconceived notion that people who live in mabati houses in Kenya are poor. Just like a wooden house, people have not embraced the idea of building and living in iron fabricated houses. They prefer the common brick and mortar way of construction. But maybe you should consider going the prefab way. These houses are visually stunning and will make you the talk of the town.

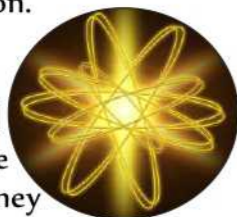
What are the pros and cons of constructing low-cost mabati houses in Kenya?

1. Construction is Fast

One advantage of building a mabati house is that the construction time is reduced compared to the brick and mortar mode of construction. This means you will not have to keep following up with the fundis or worry about your construction material getting stolen while you are away. There is also the issue of the weather which you won't have to concern yourself with. Your home will come ready-made, all you or the workers will have to do is assemble it at a specific location.

2. Energy Efficient

Another good reason you should consider building a mabati house is that it will save you some money



on electricity costs. Reason being, these houses have solar panels on them and unique windows which makes it easier to save on energy. When people construct using the brick and mortar method, materials brought to the site emit toxic chemicals harmful to the environment and humans.

For instance, roofing tiles and plumbing pipes have lead, a poisonous metal which can affect your health. PVC pipes have substances which can cause cancer and other diseases. If environmental and personal health is important to you, you should definitely think of building a prefab house.



PREFAB HOUSE AND EPS PANEL

The expanded polystyrene (EPS) technology involves construction of houses by assembling ready-made EPS foam, sandwiched between a galvanized steel wire mesh that is plastered on both sides with concrete



Prefabricated homes, often referred to as prefab homes or simply prefab, are specialist dwelling types of prefabricated building, which are manufactured off-site in advance, usually in standard sections that can be easily shipped and assembled. CUMA Refrigeration EA. Ltd Houyese are ideal for;

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3. It's Affordable

It is cheaper to build a mabati house than it is to build a brick and mortar one. Most of the money you will save is on labour. You will not go through the hustle of dealing with a fundi who keeps telling you that the building materials are not enough because you will know beforehand exactly what you need. You will also pay fewer workers to build your home. If you are not yet convinced, do some research on how much you will spend on a prefab house and how much it will cost you to build a normal house.

Disadvantages

1. Cost of Land

If you don't already own a plot, that will be the first expense you will incur. You have to buy the land where the prefab house will sit. You also need to figure out how you will have electricity and water in your home now that all these utilities won't come with the house. Before buying land, you might have to do a soil test to ensure that your new house can sit on that land. More additional costs will come from inspections and getting land permits.

2. You'll Need Ready Money

When buying a new house, you can get a mortgage and pay for it over the years and move into your new home. But with a prefab house, you will need to pay for the construction of your home before it is built. The contract should have a payment plan

for the duration you will complete paying. You will need to do proper budgeting before you commit to building a prefab home to avoid it stalling along the way.

3. Low Resale Value

In case you ever feel like selling your mabati house, it might be difficult to sell it. Because there is a notion that mabati houses are for "poor" people, the value of your house will not grow in case you are thinking of selling it. It might take time for people to change their perception when it comes to mabati houses. So you could end up never selling it or finding it difficult to find a buyer.

Bottom Line

Having an open mind when you think of buying a house could be the difference between finding your dream home and having to spend more money fixing a home to make it "perfect". Before settling on going the cheaper route of buying a mabati house, doing proper research will help you make the right decision.



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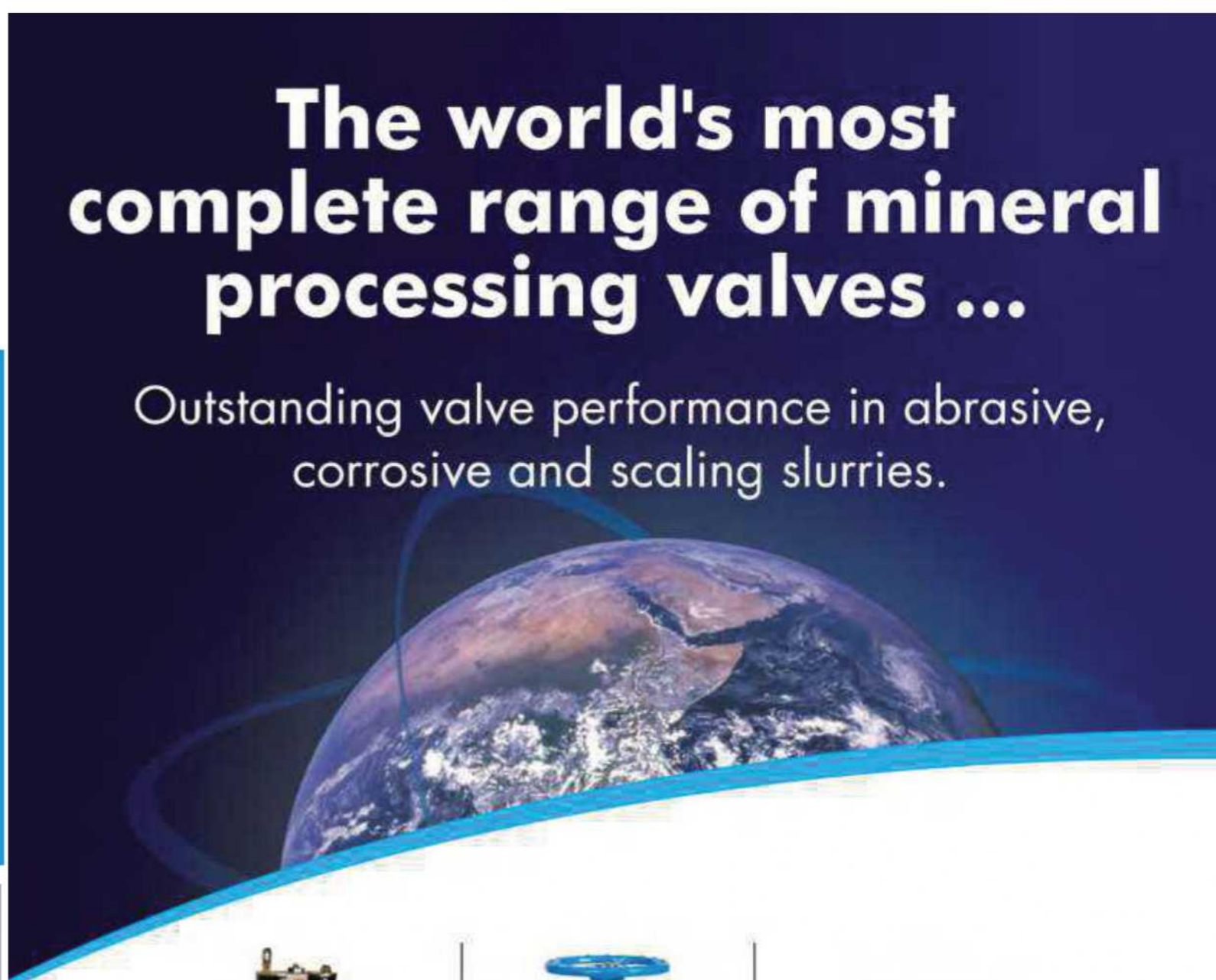
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The spectacular Silverstone Kilimani brand new development in Nairobi



The spectacular Silverstone Kilimani is a brand new development in Nairobi's upmarket Kilimani area comprising a total of 146 private apartments divided across 14 floors, along with 3 pent suites on the terrace floor. These are serviced by 3 lifts, in addition to 2 basements with ample parking. The development provides a vast range of highly-specified one and two bedroomed apartments.

The apartments are in close proximity to Yaya Centre Shopping Mall, Kilimani Police Station, The Nairobi Hospital and downtown Kilimani.

Apartment Features

840 Square feet 1 Bedroom apartment
All apartments are fitted with ceramic tiles in the lounge, dining, kitchen and wet areas while the

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- * Two bedroom apartment - kshs15m
- * Monthly rental - 90,000/month
- * Furnished & serviced options available

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- * Solar-heated water
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OUR PROMISE

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Purple Dot International Ltd, a fast-growing dynamic residential and commercial real estate developer trusted for their proven experience and ethical business approach introduces a Grade A, EDGE Certified New Mixed-Use Development (MUD) project named PURPLE TOWER.

Designed for business, designed for success, Purple Tower offers a whole new experience for businesses in the heart of Nairobi's economic hub. This impressive green commercial high-rise boasts showroom and retail spaces on the ground floor, a restaurant area offering outdoor dining on the second floor, Grade A offices on the third to fourteenth floors, and a conferencing facility on the fourteenth floor. With a

total area of 230,000 sq. ft., spread across 15 levels, this Sh2.5 billion (\$22.5 million) development is centrally located along Mombasa Road, just 500 meters from the Nyayo Roundabout and above the recently completed Nairobi Expressway.

The strategic location of Purple Tower offers substantial reductions in travel time to key urban addresses in Nairobi, including the CBD, Upper hill, Westlands, Industrial Area, Wilson Airport, Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (JKIA), and SGR Terminal, as well as major towns with access to the expressway.

"At Purple Dot International, we believe in delivering quality, reliable, and timely real estate investment

OUR VISION

We aspire to become Africa's leading excellence driven real estate developer with strong focus on trust, reliability and stakeholder relationships.



OUR MISSION

We are driven to build quality, relevant and trustworthy real estate investment opportunities through ethical and fair business practices.

opportunities to communities across the globe. With over seven years of experience in the real estate market, we are proud to present Purple Tower as a timely and strategic proposition for both local and regional investors in the Kenyan property market." Said Mr. Jiten Kerai, General Manager of Purple Dot International.

To support off-plan buyers and investors, we have partnered with a panel of financiers, including Stanbic Bank, Kenya Commercial Bank, and NCBA Bank, to offer flexible payment options spread over the construction period. Purple Tower is currently at 25% completion, with an estimated completion date of Quarter 3 in 2024.

The consultants team working on the project includes locally reputed Design Partnership Ltd, DLR Group specialized design experts, Metrix Integrated Consultancy, Cost Studio Ltd, and Bosch East Africa. With an impressive global portfolio of projects, including universities in China, the US, and Qatar, hospitals, hotels, and shopping malls.

At Purple Tower, we prioritize sustainability, and that's why we've incorporated energy and water saving measures to achieve EDGE Certification. This



certification encourages the design and construction of sustainable, resource-efficient buildings with reduced window to wall ratio, external shading devices, energy saving lighting used in all internal areas, occupancy sensors and the use of Photovoltaics. Water Saving measures include flow faucets in all bathrooms and kitchen, dual flush for WC in all bathrooms, and water-efficient urinals. Purple Tower's aims to achieve 31% reduction in energy, 34% saving in water usage and 20% saving embodied material energy usage.

With its cube design in the spirit of Vastu principles, Purple Tower offers an open atrium called Brahma in the center that runs the full height of the building, providing increased cross-ventilation and ample sunlight. Amenities include high-speed passenger elevators, with four serving offices, two serving the basement and parking silos, and one dedicated goods/service lift. Additionally, there is 24-hour manned security, CCTV surveillance, and secure entry/exit points.

Purple Tower, the Grade A Commercial Development by Purple Dot International Ltd, has soared to new heights by clinching prestigious awards at the Africa & Arabia Property Awards on 6 October 2022. After a fierce competition of property professionals across the Africa and Arabia regions, Purple Tower emerged as the 5-star Winner in Kenya for both Best Commercial High-Rise Development and Best



Commercial High-Rise Architecture and this year receiving the best International commercial high-rise development 2022-2023. A stunning achievement that cements Purple Dot International Ltd.'s reputation as a trailblazer in the world of commercial real estate.

Purple Dot International twofold business model approach promises to delivering quality projects at the lowest most competitive prices through meticulous research, planning and developing current market-based solutions led by a team of experienced and innovative business partners keen to building a Sustainable Future for the people and planet.

DESIGN CRITERIA & PROJECT GOALS

Redevelopment of the prime plot of land along the busy Mombasa Road highway requires that the Mixed-Use Development comprising of Grade A offices, conferencing facilities, retail showroom space and a restaurant level is sufficiently elevated above level of the new Nairobi Expressway, while fully utilising the several access points/roads in and out of the building/surrounding areas.

The building design and features need to negotiate the challenges posed in managing solar exposure while naturally ventilating spaces, orientating circulation areas to circulate air into central atrium before eventually expelling air through the facade. The design features also require that savings in embodied material energy, consumption of energy and water are achieved to EDGE requirements for a sustainable, green building.



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Tips on Upgrading a New House Plan

Whether you want a chef-inspired kitchen or a relaxing master bath, you can search through thousands of plan options to give yourself the upgrade you deserve when you build. Plus, we offer information on some of our favorite products for every space. Check them out for yourself! Before you start planning for your finishes, though, here are a few of the major spaces and top features that homeowners tend to splurge on when selecting a house.

Finding an awesome house plan is great, but upgrading your house plan to your exact idea of perfection is even better! Choosing every finishing detail and all of your favorite features really makes a house your own. Just think about all the fun you can have selecting finishes to complement your dream home.

Upgrading the Kitchen

The kitchen makes a statement both in functionality and style. Whether you want a country kitchen in a chic farmhouse or a sleek modern layout in a contemporary home, our house plans offer all the possibilities. The key is to find fixtures and features that match your home's style while also providing uniquely amazing components.

spaces. An impressive gas cooking range and a modern oven are some relatively simple ways to add value to your house. Many homeowners also love the look of refined finishes like quartz countertops and beautiful cabinetry.

Perhaps the most fun part of designing a kitchen is getting to choose your new perfect fridge. Whether it's built to blend into the cabinets, or it's a smart fridge that hooks up to your phone, explore some of the best refrigerators made by some of the most reputable companies!

Kitchens have a variety of great features to choose from. Don't let anything go unnoticed and ensure that your new kitchen stands out for the right reasons!

A Spa Bath Like No Other

Everybody could use a spa bath. The idea of upgrading your house plan doesn't get much more tempting than when you think about a spectacularly relaxing oasis. Just imagine unwinding in a jacuzzi tub after a long day at work or with the kids. Or letting the stress melt away under a warm waterfall shower. Adding high-end finishes to the vanities can also greatly increase a home's value!



Some of our favorite areas to explore while upgrading your kitchen center around the cooking



Windows Galore

One easy way to create curb appeal is by choosing the right windows for your home. For a Craftsman plan, you may want to consider windows with

divided lights for detail, while a modern plan would be better finished with large, sleek panes. Always purchase from a reputable company to ensure that the style is durable and your home is protected.

Doors

Both your front door and garage doors contribute to curb appeal. Picking a unique but fitting door for your home's style will give you great property value in return. There are so many gorgeous ways to at a custom touch with your doors!

Other Little Things That Go a Long Way
There are so many ways to upgrade your house that we couldn't possibly list them all here. From crown molding and tray ceilings, to built-ins and centerpiece fireplaces, to even an outdoor kitchen or entertainment space... use your imagination! We know that you will love making every inch of your home custom and enjoyable.

Your home is a unique expression of you!



HARVEY TileEco®
A DIVISION OF MACSTEEL

The green roof tile

Welcome to the future of roofing – a technological breakthrough from Harvey Roofing Products: the Harvey EcoTile®.

Harvey EcoTile® is a mineral composite roof tile. By utilising 98% waste material, Harvey EcoTile® is 100% recyclable yet provides superior functional benefits to other roofing options.

Harvey EcoTile's® technological design advantage ensures an interlocking, lightweight tile that is low on maintenance, weatherproof and virtually unbreakable in normal use.

Your building's roof is one of its most important elements in function, aesthetics, surface area and investment. Increase its functional performance and green credentials with one innovative product – Harvey EcoTile®.



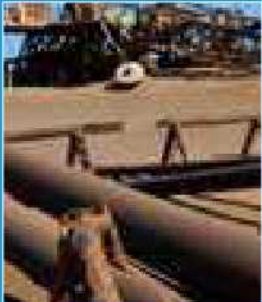
- Lightweight
- Low Maintenance
- Durable
- Weatherproof
- Attractive
- Easy to Install
- Paintable
- SANS 10400-T
- Waste Material
- 100% Recyclable
- Waterless
- Community Projects

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SyldonServ



SyldonPower



SyldonTel



SyldonEnv



Syldon and Partners is a wholly Kenya owned limited liability firm established in May, 2000 in Kenya to undertake consultancy services in design, installation and maintenance of Electrical, Mechanical Services and Management Information Systems (MIS), Civil and Structural works.

There are two directors, Eng. G.N. Olando – Managing Director in charge of all Electrical Services and general management of the firm. Eng. Calleb Olali is Director in-charge of mechanical services. Other core staff members include Assistant Electrical Engineer John Ruddy Munda and Assistant Mechanical Engineer Felix Olando.

Eng. H.S Roorpra, Eng. Peter Chege are associates of the firm and backstops Eng. Olando and Eng. Olali in all electrical and mechanical assignments respectively. Eng. Victor Ongewa and Eng. Cyrus Njungu are associates in-charge of power sub-stations and transmission/distribution lines respectively.



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