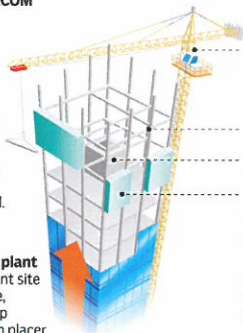# Cape Town's tallest skyscraper

The Portside office tower in Buitengracht Street will be the tallest and "greenest" building in Cape Town with a total height of 142 m. The last tall building to be completed in Cape Town, was the Safmarine Tower in 1993.

Name: **Portside**
Address: **5 Buitengracht Street**
Started/finished: **2011/2014**
Cost: **R1,6 billion**
Developer: **Old Mutual & FirstRand**
Architects: **dhk, Louis Karol**
Engineer: **WSP Group**
Contractor: **Murray & Roberts**
Consultant: **AECOM**

The **height** of Portside's spires reaches to 142 m in the sky. The top of the building is 129 m high. The roof is on the 34th level and 124 m high. A height restriction of buildings taller than 60 m in the city centre was dropped.

The tower is built from the **bottom to the top**: A single concrete core with pillars is constructed. Afterwards glass, water and electricity is installed and finally the interior like walls and ceilings are added.

A **concrete batching plant** was created on a vacant site opposite the main site, allowing them to pump concrete using a boom placer.

Logos of FNB, WesBank and RMB appear at the top.

Cooling towers

Plant and machines

Cranes on corners at different heights

Concrete pillars

Concrete core

Shutters for concrete against elements

The **glass** would have been a light crystal colour, but it was changed to a darker azure.
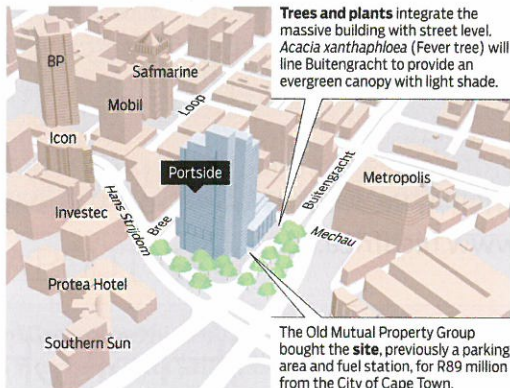
Water tanks

RENTABLE AREA
- FirstRand
- Old Mutual
- FirstRand: Terrace
- FirstRand: Common area
- Old Mutual: Retail
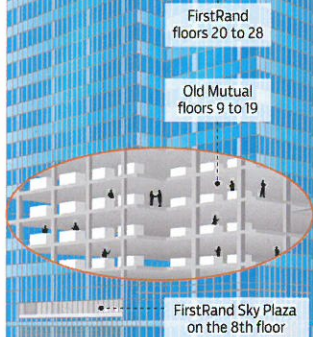- Old Mutual: Common area
- Common area

5 Star Green Design

Portside was awarded a five star "Design" rating under the Green Building Council of South Africa's Green Star rating system. This makes it the first 5 Star Green Star skyscraper in the country.

Portside has focused on the environmental initiatives like energy reduction through an efficient air conditioning system; the storage and reuse of rainwater; the use of low embodied energy materials; and the maximization of natural light through a double glazed façade.

One of the main distinguishing innovations includes the application of LED light fittings throughout the office space.

Trees and plants integrate the massive building with street level. *Acacia xanthaphloea* (Fever tree) will line Buitengracht to provide an evergreen canopy with light shade.

FirstRand floors 20 to 28

Old Mutual floors 9 to 19

FirstRand Sky Plaza on the 8th floor

The atriums on the eighth and ninth levels create natural **terraces** for business and public events.

The base is comprised of a parking **podium** with seven parking levels and 37 m high.

The Old Mutual Property Group bought the **site**, previously a parking area and fuel station, for R89 million from the City of Cape Town.

The inspiration for Portside's block and step profile was **Riverside South** and Grand Central 2, both in London. These are buildings with a step form to reduce the appearance of mass.

FirstRand's large foyer

The **lowest level** is 14,25 m under the ground. The building occupies a whole city block with a surface area of 6 642 m².
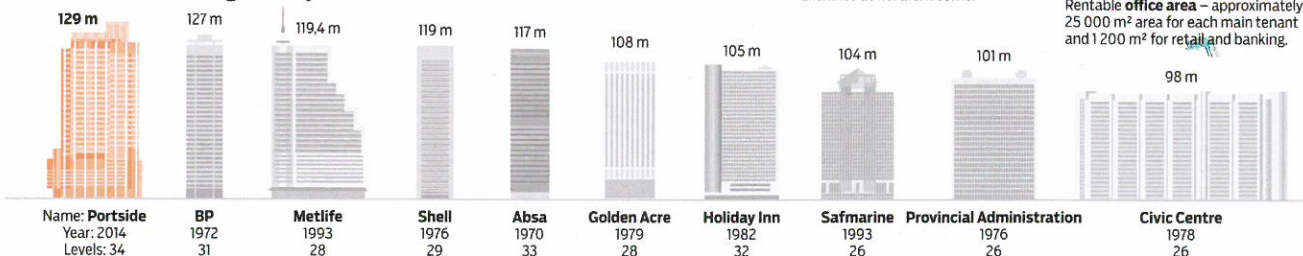
Entrance at northern corner

There are 1 466 **parking bays** in total on ten parking levels. Approximately 70 parking bays are for the use of hybrid or alternative fuel vehicles – 20% of these bays are provided and fitted with electric car charger points.

52 000 m²

Rentable **office area** – approximately 25 000 m² area for each main tenant and 1 200 m² for retail and banking.

Map labels: BP, Safmarine, Mobil, Icon, Portside, Investec, Metropolis, Mechau, Protea Hotel, Southern Sun, Loop, Hans Strijdom, Bree, Buitengracht

The 10 tallest buildings in Cape Town

	Portside	BP	Metlife	Shell	Absa	Golden Acre	Holiday Inn	Safmarine	Provincial Administration	Civic Centre
Height	129 m	127 m	119,4 m	119 m	117 m	108 m	105 m	104 m	101 m	98 m
Year	2014	1972	1993	1976	1970	1979	1982	1993	1976	1978
Levels	34	31	28	29	33	28	32	26	26	26

Sources: dhk Architects, skyscraperpage.com, skyscrapercenter.com, skyscrapercity.com, Leading Architect (Jan/Feb 2013)

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