The macro-chip shuffle

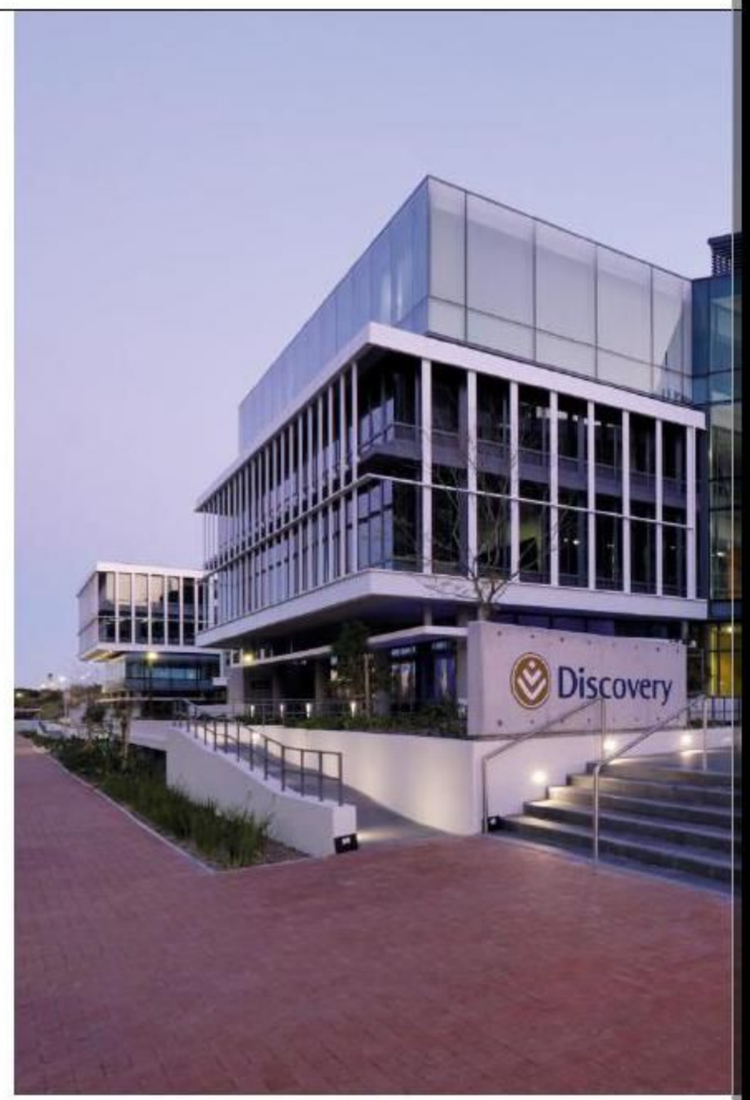
Inspired by shuffling forms, dhk designed a twin development in Cape Town that adapts to its surroundings.

PHOTOGRAPHY DAVE SOUTHWOOD; WIELAND GLEICH

The pair of buildings that make up Sable Park in Cape Town not only form an iconic "face" for the prominent entry point into Century City where they are located, but also offer unobstructed views of Table Mountain.

Continued next page

Conceptually, the buildings are structured as a series of distinct floating boxes that veer off and cantilever beyond one another.



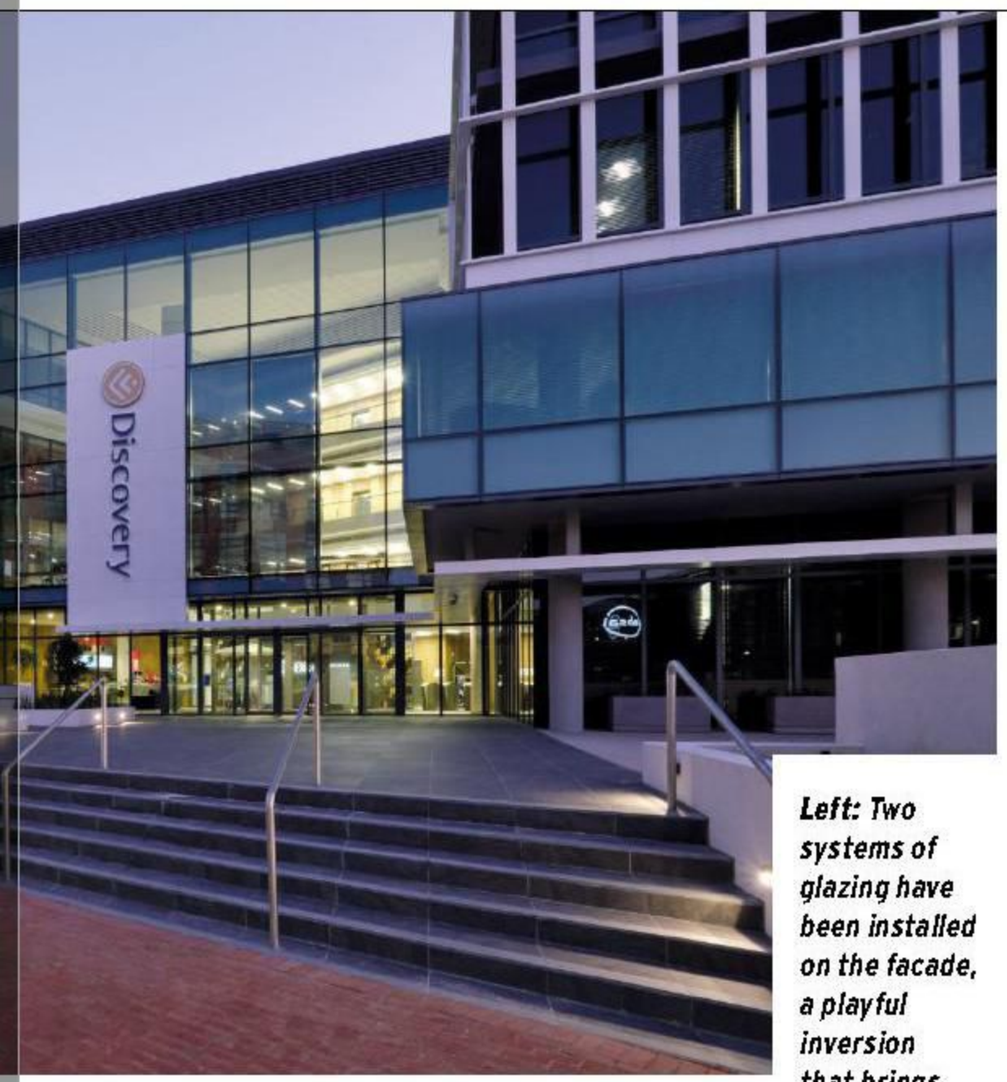
Leading South African architecture and urban design studio, dhk, has completed Sable Park in Century City in Cape Town. The commercial development comprises two buildings – one of 8 000m² and another of 8 300m² – and sits at a prominent entry point into Century City, forming an iconic front face for the suburb. Situated at the southern edge of the blossoming Bridgeways Precinct, it boasts unobstructed panoramic views of Table Mountain.

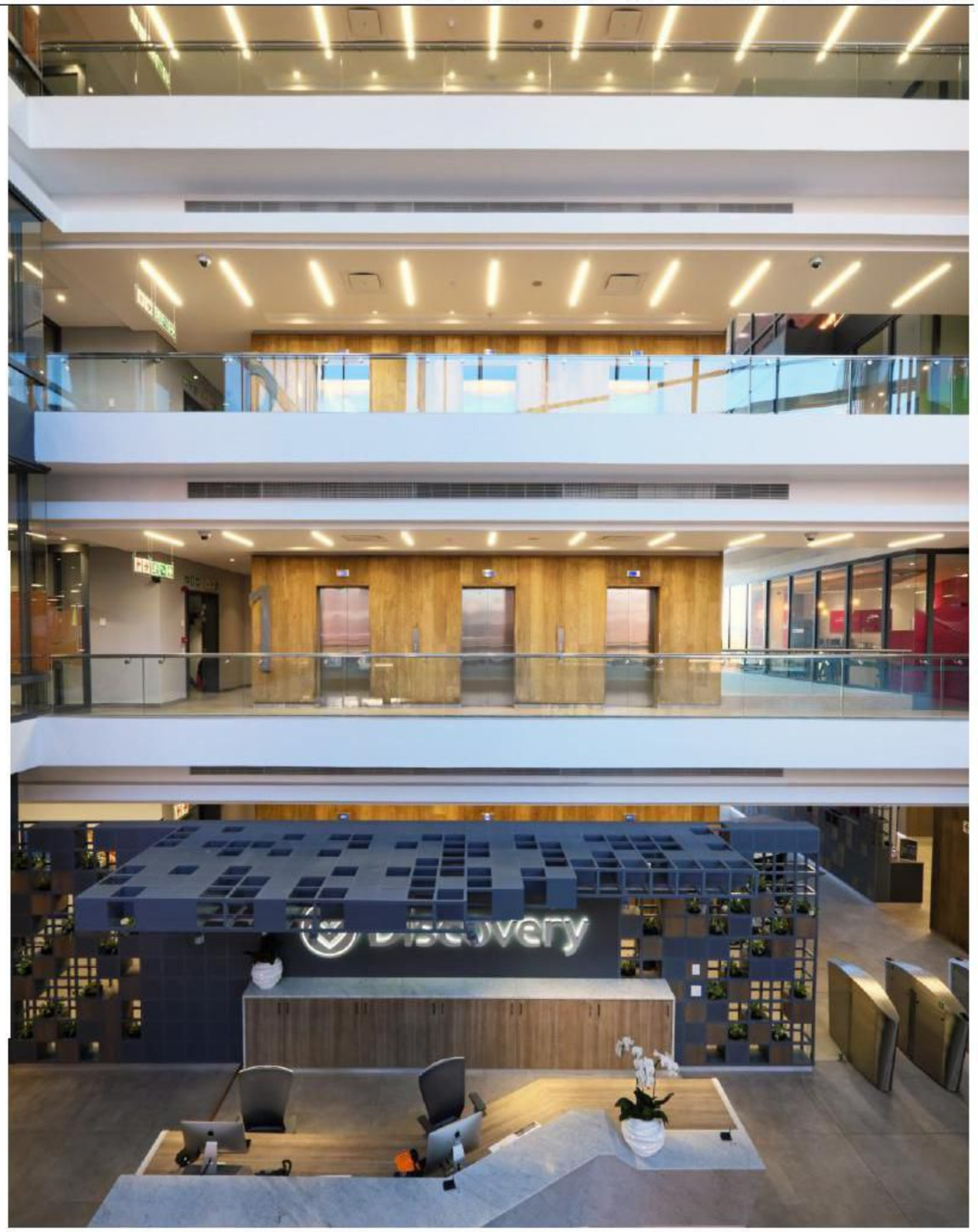
Originally dubbed the 'macro-chip shuffle', the buildings' composition was inspired by shuffling forms that operate independently and adapt to their immediate surroundings. The development was intentionally designed to appear as a single large complex, and simultaneously as four small independent volumes, depending on where it is viewed from. The four volumes are further broken down into thirds – a double-height layered mass and a single-height crystalline cube. Each of these thirds shift and jump on the horizontal and vertical plain to achieve maximum views and optimal orientation. A large part of the buildings' concept was manifested in its structure – creating distinct floating boxes that veer off and cantilever beyond one another.

Both buildings have four storeys with two levels of underground parking. The buildings comprise a concrete backbone and glass-and-aluminium façade cladding with a massive offset concrete cube that is both functional and attractive. dhk associate director and lead architect on the project, Henry Abosi, says, "On an abstract level, the spaces are duplicated and the volumes are inverted. This simple application was the singular method to the complexity of the resultant macro-articulation that forms a setting for a series of tableaux with an iconic mountain backdrop. In effect, this complex was set out in scenes that take inspiration from aspects of cinematography and film."

In accordance with the shifting floor plates, two systems of glazed façade have been installed over the three levels of office. A deliberate, yet playful interchange of these systems contributes to the aesthetic complexity of the buildings.

Internally, the buildings have two wings with a central core and full-height atrium bringing light into the centre of the expansive floor plates. The wings are connected by a series of bridges spanning across the atrium at the edge of the main core. The core is a standalone element that is exposed on both sides of the building. From the rear, this concrete cube protrudes and is visible from over a kilometre away. It forms the proverbial 'heart' of the building, circulating people left to right, up and down, and into different chambers in the building.





***Left:** Two systems of glazing have been installed on the facade, a playful inversion that brings complexity to the appearance of the building.*

***Right:** A central core and full-height atrium bring light into the centre of the expansive floor plates.*

Each building encloses a landscaped courtyard, bringing nature into the very fabric of the buildings and providing outdoor breakaway places for staff. On the upper levels, a wrap-around terrace takes advantage of the buildings' prime position, offering additional outdoor spaces for the offices located on this level.

Sable Park is the newest addition to Bridgeways Precinct, a new neighbourhood that merges lifestyle and commercial functions. Also located in the precinct is Bridge Park, a twin development with over 18 000m² of premium-grade office space, and Axis, a mixed-use development that is nearing completion – both of which were also designed by dhk.

PROFESSIONAL TEAM

ARCHITECT: dhk architects **DEVELOPER:** Rabie Property Group **PROJECT MANAGER:** Cogent Development Management **STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS:** Aurecon **MECHANICAL ENGINEERS:** BVI Engineering **ELECTRICAL ENGINEERS:** QDP Light and Electrical Design (Pty) Ltd **FAÇADE ENGINEERS:** LH Consulting Engineers **ENVIRONMENTAL:** Ecosense Environmental Consultants **LANDSCAPING:** Planning Partners **QUANTITY SURVEYOR:** RLB/Pentad Quantity Surveyors **MAIN CONTRACTOR:** WBHO **FIRE CONSULTANT:** Solution Station Consulting Engineering **SUSTAINABILITY CONSULTANT:** PJ Carew Consulting **LAND SURVEYOR:** David Hellig & Abrahamse **INTERIOR DESIGNER:** dhk thinkspace **LIGHTING CONSULTANT:** QDP Lighting & Electrical Design (Pty) Ltd **LIFT CONSULTANT/WET SERVICES:** Ekcon Engineers

dhk

dhk Architects
Tel: +27 (0)21 421 6803
Email: hello@dhk.co.za
www.dhk.co.za