

# PERFECTING THE ART OF



Solole's humble beginnings began in 1994, as the base for a wandering Safari guide who had grown accustomed to a 6000 square kilometre concession in Central Mozambique. In 1996 an abandoned baby springbuck, named Nika, (meaning "gift" in Zulu) needed to be hand raised and rehabilitated. She was soon joined by an abandoned baby bontebok aptly named Mnandi, (meaning "sweet and wonderful" in Zulu). The expansion of the reserve from just two and a half hectares in 1994 to over 300 hectares today is a consequence of a promise to these two delectable young ladies that enough land would be acquired to ensure that they would be free to roam, breed and live in harmony. They have, with unrivalled quadrupedal charm, conducted what has become the consolidation of over eleven properties into Solole Game Reserve.

## Green Robin Hood

Solole Game Reserve is committed to urban conservation. It is an ineluctable reality people will not fight to protect something from which they derive no benefit. A large portion of our population may never see an indigenous large mammal in a natural environment and without this critical exposure wildlife and conservation will dwindle as national priorities. Conservation cannot survive as an arcane luxury peddled to foreign tourists or supported by desultory philanthropic gestures by aged white men.

There is little doubt that the impact of being face to face with a mega-herbivore forms a lasting impression on even the most obdurate soul. Only when conservation becomes important to the population as a whole will the battle be won.

## Natural Erections

Being a green Robin Hood takes money, and in an effort to save this magnificent sanctuary from the avaricious clutches of property developers for perceivable eternity, adjacent properties have been purchased.

According to Lindsay Hunt, owner and trail blazer at Solole, "Our reluctant entry into the property development game confirmed my belief that it is an arena inhabited by felons and cretins who believe wine estates and golf courses are environmentally sensitive. Attempting the impossible has become quotidian, as we assiduously improve the vision that is The Solole Conservancy. The entire development will become part of Solole Game Reserve and will offer the most remarkable environment in which to live. The launch is anticipated before the rains, which leaves adequate time for the sensible to sell over-valued urban monoliths in order to secure a patch of urban paradise."

The 7.7ha property was zoned for 116 houses and a commercial centre. Where many developers would have carved-up the property into a conventional high-density



# NATURAL ERECTIONS



housing estate, the design team was mandated to create an alternative low-density development philosophy in which 4 clusters comprising a total of 40 residential units have been articulated around a wetland system. Over ten thousand indigenous trees have been planted, wetlands and dams have been constructed and the perimeter wall and services will be complete early in the new-year. The future will see a largely organic village built with natural materials, in which all grey water will be recycled and hot water and central heating kindly donated by the sun.

The mission "touch the earth lightly" is central and it is hoped that this ethos infuses the torpid minds of the more competent felons so intent on portentously recreating Provence on the Peninsula or Tuscany in Tokai.

Other than contained food gardens (edible landscapes) and fruiting/nut-bearing trees, decorative gardens and hard paving will be limited in favour of indigenous informal, 'natural' Cape fynbos gardens.

The buildings will be of locally sourced organic materials and will be built by Solole's building team – Natural Erections – which prides itself on the durable, organic and aesthetically pleasing erections which currently grace Solole. Natural Erections has, over the years, perfected the art of building indigenously organic structures, which are not only energy efficient and aesthetically pleas-

ing, but which soothe the soul in a manner long lost on over-civilised sequacious man.

Whilst the development application is currently awaiting final approval from the relevant authorities, it has received unprecedented support from local residents and Ratepayer Associations alike, who view this project as a panacea to the proliferation of high density developments on the Peninsula.

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