

SA AFFORDABLE HOUSING  
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## STEEL AWARDS



### ARCHITECTURAL LANGUAGE

In developing its proposals, the design team undertook extensive research into Durban's industrial and cultural context and found a rich palette of colours, textures and materials which informed the language of the overall design.

The contemporary architectural language merges the language of craft and tradition with the scale and energy that defines the assertive confidence and aspirations of the new South Africa. The reference to craft is expressed in the way the various architectural forms and structure are 'woven' together to form the station's overall multi-layered, logical composition.

### USE OF STEEL

The objective was to select a simple material and texture palette which responded to the principles of the architectural language, while being robust and durable enough to satisfy the client's demanding operational requirements.

The unusual setting-out of the steel structure along the concourse was generated by the location and geometry of the rail platforms while the folded planes resulted in a 'woven' structure, evocative of the basket weaving skills of the KwaZulu-Natal craft culture.

The use of self-weathering (Cor-ten) steel defines the unique and aesthetically striking character of the building, and resonates with Durban's marine and industrial character. The layering of self-weathering steel as the outer skin enclosing the structure creates a visual tension with the soft greys of the concrete base.

"The character of the building will evolve with time as the steel surfaces gradually develop a red-brown patina reflecting the hues and tones of the maritime environment," say the project team.

"By day, sunlight enlivens the juxtaposition of the materials and steel structure, creating diffused woven shadows along the concourse. At night, the station transforms into a glowing woven lantern."

The judges commented that the exploitation of steel as a material is achieved in a number of interpretations. The use of Cor-ten as integument; a structure that is exposed as aesthetic screens; and the dynamic sloping of walls that imply movement, all combine to create a building that when viewed with other materials, provides lines that are clean and aesthetically outstanding.

"The station hovers above the steel structures that define rail travel and various elements are interpreted into the building like a knuckle that punctuates the language of rail travel. This project displays the use of structural steel at its best and is a worthy winner of the architectural category," they concluded.

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### PROJECT TEAM

**Developer/Owner:** PRASA

**Architect:** Arup

**Structural Engineer:** Iliso Consulting

**Quantity Surveyor:** LDM Consulting

**Project Manager:** Arcus Gibb

**Main Contractor:** Grinaker-LTA Building East

**Steelwork Contractors:** Impact Engineering Durban

**Detailers/ Detailing Company:** Precise Structural Modelling

**Corten steel cladding and roofing, balustrades, handrails, gate:** MJ Cheater, Rebon Engineering

