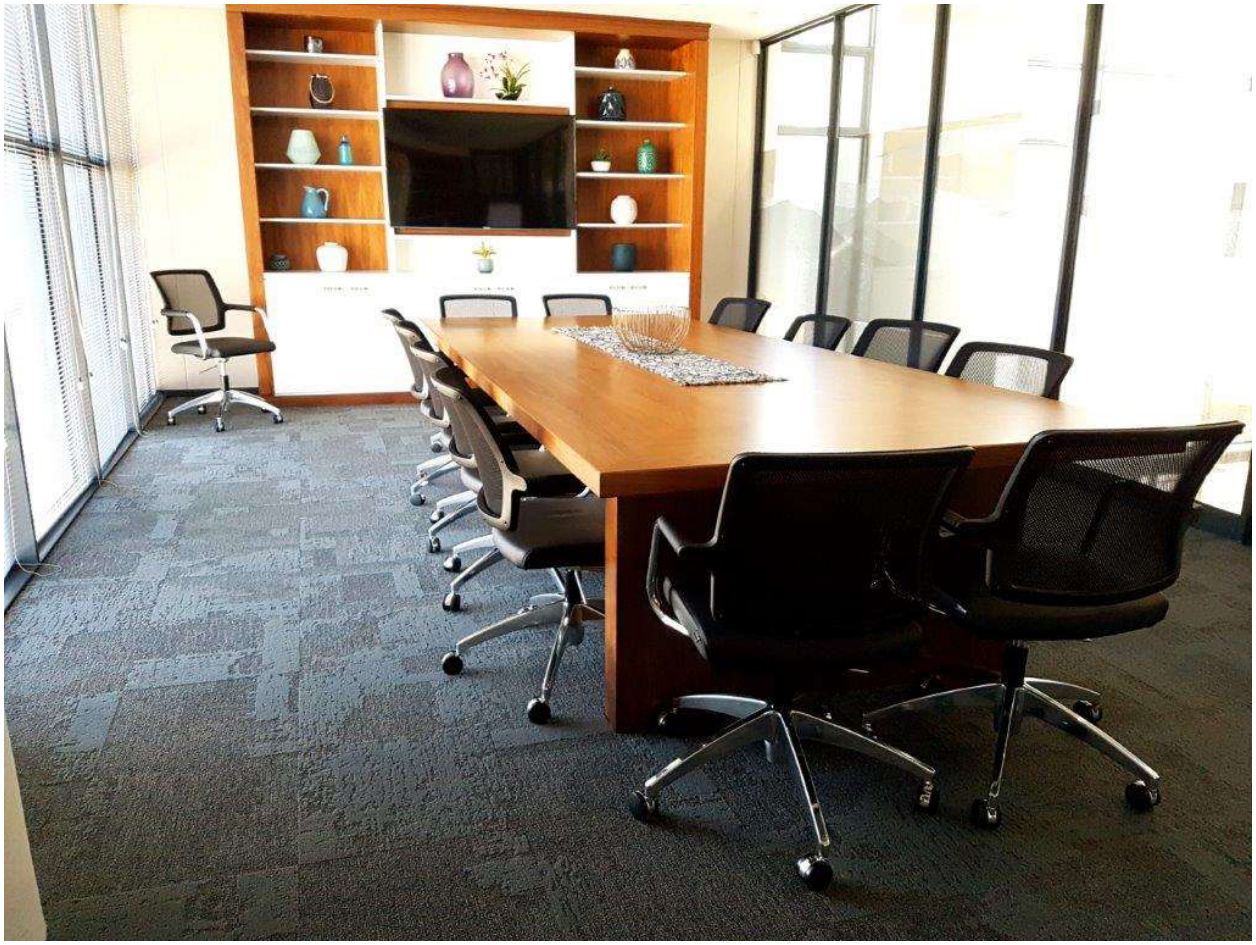
GROWTHPOINT AND SERRA ACHIEVE FIRST INDUSTRIAL GREEN STAR EXISTING BUILDING PERFORMANCE RATING


Milliken
SERRA



Growthpoint and Serra® Services have achieved the first Green Star Existing Building Performance (EBP) rating for an industrial building in Gauteng, with a 5-Star certification for a 7 400 square meter facility in Meadowbrook, Germiston.

Owned by Growthpoint Properties and leased by Serra® in 2016, the light manufacturing building is situated in a mixed industrial and residential area in the east of Johannesburg. The building comprises of a workshop and offices on two floors. An extensive process was undertaken by both landlord and tenant in consultation with Solid Green Consulting to achieve this Green Star EBP 'first'.

Paul Thomaz, Group Marketing Director of Serra® says that as a hygiene service provider and washroom dispenser manufacturer, Serra® is duty bound to highlight health and sustainable environmental practices as they become more relevant:

"From the outset, our discussions with Growthpoint hinged on our mutual determination to regard sustainability as a joint core value. This is in keeping with Serra's all-encompassing philosophy and long-term vision of 'no harm', and our commitment to applying best international practice in reducing our overall carbon footprint".

"As the first Industrial sector site to receive this recognition in Gauteng, Serra® has achieved another milestone in a history of numerous 'firsts' both in our industry and in the broader South African context. We are especially proud of this achievement as we are celebrating our 35th anniversary this year."

Errol Taylor, Head of Asset Management: Industrial at Growthpoint Properties, remarks, "*It is interesting to note that this small but prominent corner of Meadowbrook has become a shining example of green building in South Africa. Serra's premises are directly adjacent to Growthpoint's award-winning 5-Star Office Design v1 certified Grundfos development".*

"*The EBP certification for the building occupied by Serra is part of a pilot programme to develop an industrial EBP rating tool for the GBCSA, which can be used by everyone in the industrial property sector. Growthpoint works in close collaboration with our clients and professional teams to achieve optimal environments for occupants while ensuring that our buildings operate efficiently, sustainably and with minimal impact on the environment. We believe it is important to certify our green buildings because a recognised building rating provides an important independent verification of environmental performance."*

Dashiell Coville, Sustainable Building Consultant at Solid Green, explains that the GBCSA's

Existing Building Performance (EBP) tool focuses on the operational phase of an existing building's lifecycle, to enable facilities management to set in place policies, plans and processes to optimise the operations and performance of the building:

"*The certification process for industrial buildings requires a lot more tenant engagement than for office buildings, as industrial tenants are typically in charge of all aspects of property management and cannot simply gain credit from the landlord's green policies.*"

Key features of the Meadowbrook building's performance include energy and water efficiency. "*Serra consumes in the region of 16kWh/sqm/year, which is an 85% improvement on a typical light industrial building of this scale (106kWh/sqm/year),*" says Coville. "*This is the ongoing targeted consumption level. Thanks to reduced consumption, as well as energy efficiency and the renewable energy initiatives implemented, the consumption in 2019 was lower than in 2018.*"

A large solar photovoltaic system on the roof provides renewable energy to the facility. 130 panels, with a capacity of 25kWp, were installed as phase 1; and Thomaz advises that the aim is to install a further 110 panels for phase 2 – with capacity for 550 panels in total. He adds, "*Three lithium-ion battery banks*

provide the office component with 24 hours of uninterrupted power. In winter – June through to end August – these are bled during peak load periods (06h00-09h00 and 16h00 to 18h00) to reduce our electricity consumption and carbon footprint."

Thanks to the water saving initiatives implemented as well as the efficient habits of the Serra staff, the facility has demonstrated an 88% improvement in water consumption on a typical light manufacturing industrial building of this scale, and this is the ongoing targeted consumption level.

The Serra building uses cutting-edge energy and water monitoring systems to accurately report on consumption. Data is monitored via online dashboards and used to analyse trends and highlight problem areas; and the utility metering process is outsourced to a specialist contractor who manages meter reading and processing.

Periodic audits and occupant surveys are carried out to ensure that sufficient fresh air is provided (to meet or exceed national design standards), that lighting levels are optimal, and that temperatures are comfortable. This all translates into a healthier, more productive space.

Taylor says that the current global COVID-19 pandemic has clarified the importance of work settings that have a positive impact on the health of people and the environment. "As people slowly return to their desks and workbenches after the hardest levels of the COVID-19 lockdown, the design and operation of workspaces to safeguard occupant health and wellbeing will undoubtedly become the priority for all responsible businesses. Factors such as good ventilation and air quality are going to be the defining features of healthy workspaces.

"*Certified green buildings are certainly among those best positioned to provide superior healthy working environments. In addition, energy and water savings translate to valuable cost savings, which will be more important than ever to businesses as they focus on recovering from the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis.*"

Serra is constantly reviewing its approach to recycling within the building in order to improve its waste management practices. The goal is to integrate recycling both at a manufacturing and operations level. Recycling bins for paper, glass, plastics and aluminium cans will be situated within the office space as well as the warehouse waste storage area and collected weekly by the waste management contractor. Thomaz explains that the 3R principle has been implemented. For example, all bonded paper is reused or repurposed where possible in printers, and then recycled after shredding as product bulk packaging. And all stainless steel offcuts are either repurposed or recycled (if not fit for purpose) – resulting in a wastage factor of less than 2%.

An extensive Building User's Guide was developed for the facility's ongoing operations, which includes recommendations around several factors to provide the most efficient, healthy and enjoyable working environment. These include indoor emissions; choice of materials and finishes; and design considerations such as thermal comfort, ventilation, daylight, internal noise levels, and the provision of quiet spaces.

Marloes Reinink, director at Solid Green Consulting, notes that it has long been widely acknowledged that the management of buildings is critical to enhancing users' health and well being – both in terms of productivity, and mitigating disease and absenteeism.

"*As the links between sustainable practices and public health become more apparent, building professionals and their clients will need to be proactive in navigating the way forward. We must work together towards creating sustainable buildings that are enablers of health*" she concludes.

Source

Property Wheel
