

Steel skeletons the start of city's new film studio

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CAPE Town's newest film studios will be complete by the time the first whistle is blown at next year's soccer World Cup.

This was promised yesterday by Nico Dekker, chief executive of Cape Town Film Studios, formerly known as Dreamworld.

At the studio site, on the corner of the N2 and Baden Powell Drive in the direction of Stellenbosch, the two giant steel skeletons of Studio One and Studio 3 are now complete.

These measure 2 100m² and 1 200m² respectively, and stand 15m and 12m high, up to their lighting gantries.

"You'll see the enormous strength of the buildings; at any point you can hang a 1.8 ton load," Dekker explained.

The steel work was completed by manufacturers Anchor Steel Projects, which began winching the giant structural steel framework into place on March 17.

The bulk infrastructure has also been laid – conduits for electricity, sewerage and water.

Turning into the studios from Baden Powell Drive, the grand "access boulevard" is almost complete – which Dekker describes as "My beautiful Yellow Brick Road".

The next step is for the stu-



IN FRAME: The two giant steel skeletons of Studio One and 3 of the Cape Town Film Studios as seen from the corner of the N2 and Baden Powell Drive, near Faure.

PICTURE: MURRAY WILLIAMS

dio structures to be clad.

"It's an incredible process. They are clad with concrete slabs, 150mm each, weighing five tons, which are built on site because it would be too expensive to transport them," Dekker explained.

"It's really exciting, because the project is using a lot of local labour.

"Staff from a 15km radius around the area are receiving preferential treatment for jobs," he said.

The cladding will be completed by the end of the year, bringing the total investment for this first phase to about

R250 million.

Next to these are the production offices. And planning is under way for Studio Two and Studio Four, as well as two large workshops each measuring 2 800m².

"These will be used by production companies for the manufacture of sets, and also art departments, wardrobe and all manufacturing processes to be used on site," Dekker said.

The construction so far has been funded by the City of Cape Town, which contributed R30m, Wesgro, which bought a 10 percent share in the studios for R30m, and the Department

of Trade and Industry, which contributed R16m for the bulk infrastructure.

The investors – Video Vision, the film production company owned by Anant Singh, and Sabido Investments, headed by Marcel Golding, the owners of e-tv and e-sat – have funded the balance.

The development also has a bond with Absa.

Dekker said productions in Cape Town would be "30 to 50 percent cheaper" than in North America and Western Europe.

"Our first pencil bookings, which we can't disclose yet, are for March next year."