

Eastern Najdi

Architectural Design Guidelines



Application Handbook - Low-rise Buildings





Eastern Najdi Architectural Character Area



Contents

I	Introduction	3
II	Low-rise Buildings	3
III	How to use the guidelines	4
1.0	Start Pages	5
	Traditional style	5
	Transitional Style	6
	Contemporary Style	7
2.0	Compositional rules	8
3.0	Architectural Elements	9
	Traditional Elements.....	9
	Transitional Elements.....	10
	Contemporary Elements.....	11
4.0	Colors and Materials	12
5.0	Patterns	13
6.0	Public realm	14
7.0	Dos and don'ts	15
8.0	Worked Examples	16
	Traditional mixed-use worked example	16
	Transitional mixed-use worked example	17
	Contemporary mixed-use worked example	18
A.0	Appendix	19
	Low-rise apartment buildings	19
	Traditional apartment worked example	20
	Transitional apartment worked example	21
	Contemporary apartment worked example	22



Application Handbook - Low-rise Buildings

Eastern Najdi - Architectural Design Guidelines



Heritage Village in Hafar al Batin



Al Aali Palace (Qaryat al Ulya)

I Introduction

The purpose of this document is to help designers and builders of low-rise mixed-use buildings apply the architectural character of Eastern Najdi to their projects.

The Eastern Najdi region, which constitutes the eastern stretch of land between the vast Najdi plateau and the east coast of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which intersects with the northern half of the Eastern Region province. Its location on the plateau alongside the Ad Dahna desert, its richness in wadis, and its water wells – especially in Qaryat Al Ulya – all shaped the region's natural landscape and its built historical trajectory.

Prior to the 20th century, the urban fabric consisted mainly of settlements along pilgrimage routes to Mecca and its proximity to water sources. Existing settlements of the traditional Eastern Najdi are organized around courtyards that historically exist in harmony with the natural landscape. The region's architectural style manifests in minimally-ornamented buildings crowned by double-stepped parapets; this style came as a response to resource limitations imposed by the economic or natural

factors of the region.

Settlements are generally designed inwardly with courtyards to modulate the temperature and for ventilation through fenestrations. Local earth was generally used as building material, or mixtures of mud and hay, alongside wood for doors and windows. Qaryat Al Ulya is the main water resource of the region and established its long-settled area, which enabled agricultural production, namely wheat.

This handbook is a supplement to the Eastern Najdi Architectural Design Guidelines. Designers are recommended to read the full version of the Architectural Design Guidelines to gain a comprehensive understanding of all aspects of the character. Please also consult regulating plans that may describe which styles are applicable to your project area. To access these resources please use the links below



[Link to Full Guidelines](#)



[Link to Regulating Plans](#)



Example of elevation of a Traditional Low-rise mixed-use building in Eastern Najdi

II Low-rise Buildings

Low-rise buildings form a large proportion of the built environment across the Kingdom, and strongly influence people's experience and the character of a place.

Ranging from 1-4 stories, typically in a linear arrangement along roads and accommodating a mix of uses, low-rise buildings are a common building type found everywhere. Addressing their design is an important part of the implementation of the architectural design guidelines.

This building type emerges predominantly from contemporary development patterns: larger rectangular plots of land typically accessed by car from a street on one edge, and interfacing with adjacent properties on the other boundaries. These buildings tend to exhibit a horizontal, rectilinear form and a clear orientation to the street, with distinct sides and backs. This makes their form inherently different from the historical building types that are the source of architectural characters, and is a primary challenge for the application of the architectural character to low-rise buildings, to be addressed by this handbook.

Low-rise mixed-use buildings

Low-rise mixed-use buildings are usually subdivided into multiple units that often create a diversity to the facade, particularly where the ground floor use is commercial or retail.

The establishment of a consistent character for the whole building is another important objective of this handbook. This extends to the neighborhood: the consistent character of the streetscape, and the support of the public realm in conjunction with other low-rise buildings is a high priority.

Low-rise apartment buildings

Where low-rise buildings are primarily comprised of apartments, the relationship between public and private spaces become paramount. In addition to the low-rise building application guidelines, please also observe the guidelines focused on apartment buildings, in Appendix A.

This handbook will implement the Eastern Najdi Architectural Design Guidelines in low-rise building types by harmonizing the needs described above with the requirements of the guidelines.

III How to use the guidelines

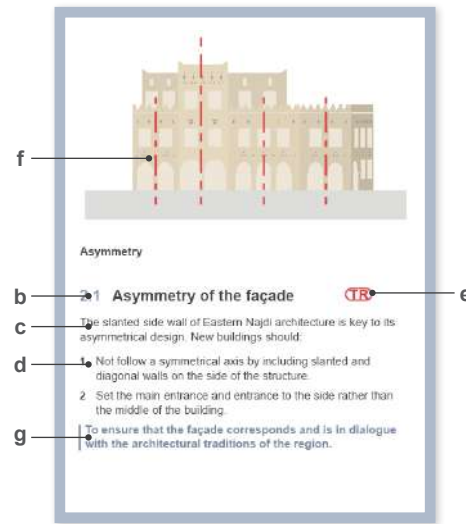
Follow these instructions to create a building that supports the architectural character of Eastern Najdi.

- 1 Consult the regulating plan to determine which architectural style options (Traditional, Transitional, or Contemporary) are permitted at your project location.
- 2 Select from the permitted Architectural styles, and review the list of general guidelines on the style start pages (Pages 5,6 & 7).
- 3 Assess your design according to each of the following guideline categories:
 - **Composition:** do your building massing and façade design follow compositional principles? (Section 2)
 - **Elements:** do the individual parts of your building properly interpret the architectural character for your style? (Section 3)
 - **Materials and Colors:** does your building use acceptable materials and colors in the proportions defined? (Section 4)
 - **Patterns:** do any elements show inspiration from local craftsmanship and culture? (Section 5)
 - **Public Realm:** does your building contribute to the quality and character of the street and the neighborhood? (Section 6)
 - **Dos and Don'ts:** have you avoided common mistakes that lower the quality and character of buildings? (Section 7)
 - **Worked examples:** these are illustrations showing one possibility of how the guidelines can be applied, provided for inspiration. (Section 8)

4 Throughout the document, **mandatory guidelines** for each character style will be marked with the following symbols. Where a guideline is mandatory for all styles, all three symbols will be present:

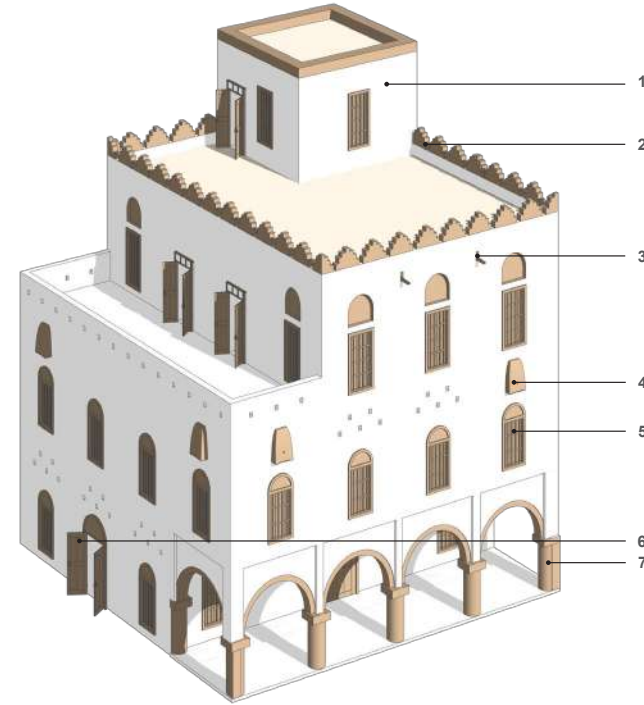
- TR** Mandatory for Traditional style
- TN** Mandatory for Transitional style
- C** Mandatory for Contemporary style

- 5 Guidelines are organized according to the following parts:
 - a. **Section heading:** identifies the general guideline category
 - b. **Header:** identifies the guideline topic
 - c. **Description:** expands upon the topic
 - d. **Instructions:** provides rules and design principles to observe
 - e. **Mandatory symbol:** indicates high priority guidelines that must be complied with
 - f. **Illustration:** non-regulatory diagrams that help visually explain guidelines
 - g. **Rationale:** objective of the guideline, to allow for alternative approaches to fulfilment



Typical guideline structure.

This general character reference model is from the Eastern Najdi Architectural Design Guideline, summarizing the key features of the architectural character.



Key features:

- 1 Flat occupiable roofs.
- 2 Tall parapets with double or triple stepped crenelations.
- 3 Rainwater drainage through vernacular mizab made of wood.
- 4 A long and thin lookout (turmah) located on the upper floor.
- 5 Windows located on upper levels without ornamentation or frames.
- 6 Doors made of local wood which are frameless and unornamented.
- 7 Arcades and sheltered walkways made of semicircular and flat arches with round or square columns.



Traditional **TR**

The most conservative and faithful effort at interpreting traditional architectural form.

START AT PAGE 5



Transitional **TN**

A style suitable to help create gradual transitions between areas of different character style.

START AT PAGE 6



Contemporary **C**

This style keeps the essence of the architectural character that makes it distinct from contemporary architecture of other places.

START AT PAGE 7

1.0 Traditional Style

Start here to review the general guidelines of the traditional style low-rise buildings.

Traditional style buildings should observe as many architectural design guidelines as strictly and as faithfully as possible. The traditional style is suitable for projects near heritage assets and parts of town closer to historic cores.

Note - guideline numbers below correspond to sections 2 through 5 of this Handbook and are not sequential; only the key features relevant to the application of the Traditional style low-rise buildings are shown on this page.

COMPOSITIONAL RULES

2.1 Asymmetry of the façade

Effort should be made to develop the typically repetitive bay structure of low-rise buildings into an asymmetrical façade. This can be done through eaves and parapets on the roofscape.

2.2 Grouping of elements

Eastern Najdi has a strong rectangular and vertical expression. Group sections together and introduce setbacks on the ground and upper levels. On the ground level, this would include shaded arcades. Elements are consistently grouped together, such as openings and fenestrations along upper levels.

2.4 Ornamentation

Use a variety of geometric motifs. They can differ between floor levels, walls (primary and side walls), and openings (main entrances, windows, and shopfronts).

2.5 Entrances and articulation

Include verandas and shaded areas to ensure a procession between the public street and building entrances. Openings and frames should be semicircular.

2.6 Roofscape and rooftop elements

The parapet line and roof silhouette should be flat and rectangular. Each level should gradually step towards the top, with different widths for setback, projecting and roof elements. The diagonal walls will also contribute to the stepping roofscape.

2.7 Solid façades

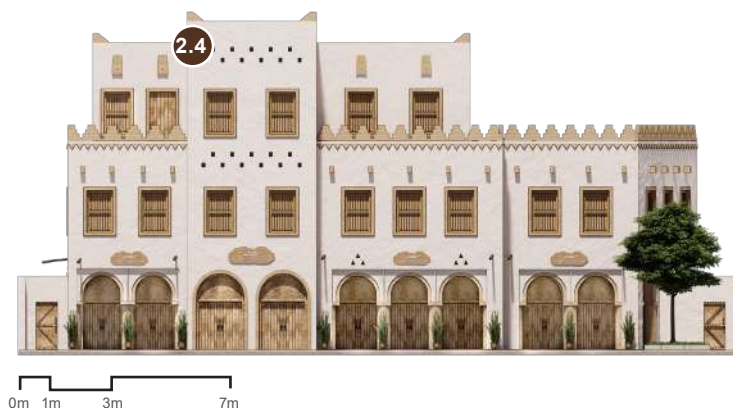
Building façades should have opening proportions of 20-30%. This should be concentrated on the main facade, with less openings on the sides and back of the building.

2.8 Geometry of components

Traditional Eastern Najdi proportions for openings, windows, doors, should adhere to either square, rectangular or arched geometry. They should be simple and orthogonal. Semicircular arcs and arches can be used to define the base of the building.



Axonometric view showcasing an example of the application of compositional rules for traditional style low-rise mixed-use buildings.



Elevation view showcasing an example of the application of compositional rules for traditional style low-rise mixed-use buildings.

TRADITIONAL ELEMENTS

3.2 Doorways and entrances

Storefronts should be placed around the main façade, usually articulated through a shaded walkways or arcade, to differentiate from the main doors to the buildings.

3.3 Windows and openings

Generally, use larger orthogonal windows for main rooms, and slimmer rectangular ones for side walls. Windows are not used on the base level.

3.4 Rooftop elements

Rooftops should have crenelations and stepped merlons at the corners. At upper levels, mizab (drainage spouts) and turmahs (security lookout features) should also be included in the design.

COLORS, MATERIALS AND PATTERNS

4.1 Colors

The building façades should be of natural colours of the materials used such as earth, wood, and mud. Generally these colors can range from dark brown to light beige and pastel coral. Accent colours should be used minimally, for example in the parapet, corner merlons, frames of windows and the arched colonnades. See section 4.0 'Colors and Materials' for more information.

4.2 Materials

The primary wall surface should be a textured cream matt-finish, with wood for windows and doors. Stone can also be used for the colonnades. Select from a natural range, some of which are specified above.

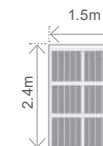
5.0 Patterns

Historical patterns and motifs for the façade and parapet lines should inform the design.

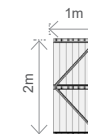
Key traditional architectural features.



3.4 Parapet Type



3.3 Window Type



3.2 Door Type

1.0 Transitional Style

Start here to review the general guidelines of the transitional style low-rise buildings.

Transitional style buildings help integrate traditional architecture with the larger urban context and steer design towards new interpretations of traditional form.

Note - guideline numbers below correspond to sections 2 through 5 of this Handbook and are not sequential: only the key features relevant to the application of the Transitional style low-rise buildings are shown on this page.

COMPOSITIONAL RULES

2.1 Asymmetry of the façade

Develop asymmetry with setbacks and balconies, blended into the structure. To also build on the asymmetry, consider massing with a angled wall to develop a secondary wide terrace.

2.2 Grouping of elements

Different sections should be grouped together, stepping toward the top in a more seamless manner. For example, fenestrations and motifs are more delicate.

Cluster different openings together. On the ground level, for example, incorporate protruding shaded covers just before the colonnade. At each level, place similar windows together, they should be overall lengthier. Generally, the corners, parapets, and banding should be employed to develop a more angular/vertical building line.

2.4 Ornamentation

Decorative elements should be minimal. Doors and windows are simple and orthogonal, with unornamental framing. Above windows, incorporate a semicircular decorative element. At the roof and base level, there should be a horizontal sequence of rectangular fenestrations. Ensure that mizabs are added across different facades of the building.

2.5 Entrances and articulation

Storefront openings should wrap around the base, each entrance placed underneath a shaded arcade. Higher proportion of glass should be used for the openings. The arch is an accent colour different from the colour of the columns. The shaded semicircular veranda is retained but more muted in appearance using thinner and more bare materials.

2.6 Roofscape and rooftop elements

Parapets should be flat, with stepped merlons at the corner. Create a stepping effect only towards the top of the structure.

2.7 Solid façades

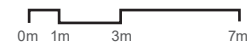
Concentrate openings on the main façade at around 35-40%, particularly around the base where there should be the storefront entrances. There are less openings on the upper levels of the sides and at the back of the building.



Axonometric view showcasing an example of the application of compositional rules for transitional style low-rise mixed-use buildings.



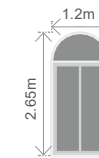
Elevation view showcasing an example of the application of compositional rules for transitional style low-rise mixed-use buildings.



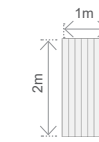
Key transitional architectural features.



3.4 Parapet Type



3.3 Window Type



3.2 Door Type

2.8 Geometry of components

Windows and doors are in the same orthogonal style as the traditional. Other elements take a flatter and more square look, such as corner merlons and setbacks.

TRANSITIONAL ELEMENTS

3.2 Doorways and entrances

All entrances, whether for the main building or storefronts, should be much wider and incorporate glass. Consider the use of arcades to provide shaded walkways along storefronts and entrances.

3.3 Windows and openings

Unlike the traditional, which has smaller square windows, the transitional should incorporate wider, longer and more open windows on all levels. Consider articulating the façade with semicircular arches above all windows. Shutters can be applied to the openings, or alternative design elements can be used instead.

3.4 Rooftop elements

For the transitional style, use a more angular outlook for the roofscape. Parapets should be thicker in width, and have square definition through stepped merlons. Wooden mizabs can still be placed around roofscape.

COLORS, MATERIALS AND PATTERNS

4.1 Colors

The building façades should mimic and build on the natural colours of the materials used in the region such as earth, wood and mud. Accent colours should be used minimally, for example in the parapet, corner merlons, frames of windows and the arched colonnades. See section 4.0 'Colors and Materials' for more information.

4.2 Materials

The primary wall surface should be a cream matt-finish with a clear material differentiation for the openings, frames, and the shaded walkways and colonnades.

Incorporate the use of glass windows and aluminum frames (in brown or hue similar to wood) as part of entrances and windows.

5.0 Patterns

Simplified historical patterns and motifs for the façade and parapet lines should inform the design.

1.0 Contemporary Style

Start here to review the general guidelines of the contemporary style low-rise buildings.

Buildings of this style should aim to retain the essence of the architectural character by skillful and knowledgeable interpretation of traditional forms into contemporary expression.

Note - guideline numbers below correspond to sections 2 through 5 of this Handbook and are not sequential; only the key features relevant to the application of the Contemporary style low-rise buildings are shown on this page.

COMPOSITIONAL RULES

2.1 Asymmetry of the façade

The contemporary style should build on traditional asymmetry. Many sections should be brought together, with a slight stepping effect to the crown of the building. The irregular profile should also be developed through setbacks in the façade, for example, through the angled walls at side massing.

2.2 Grouping of elements

For the contemporary, many of the previous compositional rules apply. Elements such as openings should be generally larger, yet ensure to retain their upright, rectilinear form. They are also accented by a deeper frame color.

2.4 Ornamentation

There are many contemporary approaches to ornamentation such as stencil-like fenestrations and curves. Design should incorporate straight lines to frame and design the façade of the building. Place abstracted decorative motifs around select openings at each level.

2.5 Entrances and articulation

Storefront openings and the main entrance should span the entire frontage tucked within a shaded column structure.

The ground floor and remainder of the structure should use the same material. Columns should not begin separately from the wall, and instead should be a continuous line from the façade.

2.6 Roofscape and rooftop elements

Ensure to articulate stepping to the top level of the structure through the different masses.

2.7 Solid façades

Generally, in the contemporary style, semicircular arches dominate in framing each opening: doors to windows, with aluminum frames. Frames should be slightly recessed, as should the main entrance under a shaded porch.

2.8 Geometry of components

For the contemporary style, feel free but not limited to maximize the use of the semicircular arches. It is used to frame doors, windows, and openings. The arches are adapted into various style and widths to identify different uses of the building.



Axonometric view showcasing an example of the application of compositional rules for contemporary style low-rise mixed-use buildings.



Elevation view showcasing an example of the application of compositional rules for contemporary style low-rise mixed-use buildings.

CONTEMPORARY ELEMENTS

3.2 Doorways and entrances

A projecting shaded structure is used for the storefronts in the contemporary style. All doors are made of higher proportions of glass and occupy the width of the corresponding interior space. Doors may be placed under the shaded arch, or on the side façade for greater privacy.

3.3 Windows and openings

All windows and openings incorporate the semicircular arch in different styles and variations. All windows and openings should be slightly recessed.

3.4 Rooftop elements

Generally, the rooftop should be flush line with the main façade. There should be a transparent glass railing running along the rooftop.

COLORS, MATERIALS AND PATTERNS

4.1 Colors

Use paints and colors which are very similar and in line with the local palette and natural materials. Consider using accent colors, a slightly warmer beige for example, of no more than 10-20% as part of the definitions for the semicircular arches, banding, and signage. See section 4.0 'Colors and Materials' for more information.

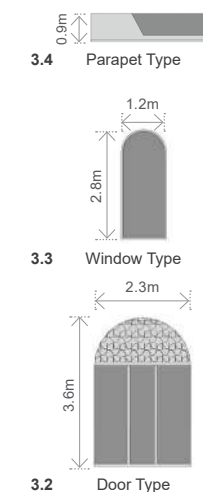
4.2 Materials

As with traditional and transitional styles, the base and structure should be of the same material. More extensive glazing than on transitional style buildings are permissible. Consider using an accent color for the semicircular arches above windows as well as a different material to define the frames and columns, which is close to the traditional.

5.0 Patterns

Extrapolate patterns from existing traditional styles to create new patterns. Wall surfaces and window screens provide good opportunities to apply these new patterns.

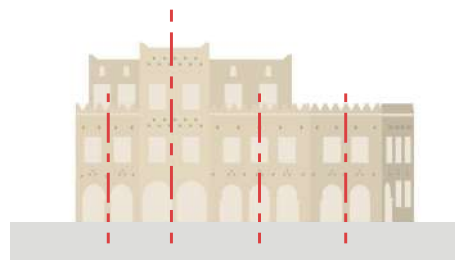
Key contemporary architectural features.



2.0 Compositional rules

The following guidelines provide compositional rules for building design with the Eastern Najdi architectural character, specially adapted for low-rise building types.

The rules apply generally to all three styles (traditional, transitional, and contemporary), with mandatory requirements for specific styles identified by the relevant symbol.



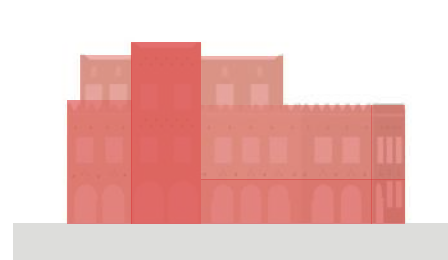
Asymmetrical façade

2.1 Asymmetry of the façade

The asymmetrical grouping of forms and breaks in building massing is a fundamental part of the Eastern Najdi architecture. New buildings should:

- 1 Be asymmetrical, as expressed through the clustering of different bays and balconies, across different levels.

To ensure that the façade corresponds and is in dialogue with the architectural traditions of the region.



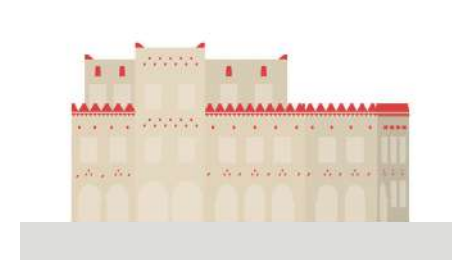
Grouping of elements

2.2 Grouping of elements

Buildings are typically defined by horizontal expansion with newer styles having a more vertical appearance. New buildings should:

- 1 Adopt broad proportions, highlighted by bay organization and setbacks, particularly at the upper levels and the main entrance.
- 2 Embrace strong alignment of frontages, opening, windows arches, and columns to create coherent building lines and streets.

To reflect the typical form of vernacular buildings.



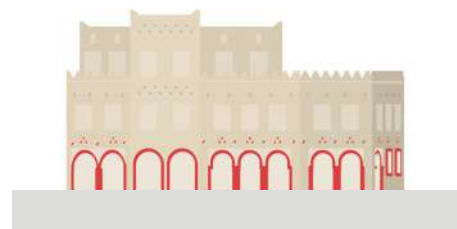
Ornamentations, fenestrations and crenelations

2.4 Ornamentation

In the Eastern Najdi architecture, there is minimal use of ornamentation across the structure. New building should:

- 1 Include different sets of ornamentation across the different structures of the building as well as the different levels.
- 2 Focus ornamentation carefully above openings and windows, and in banding by the roof level.
- 3 Arches should be configured in groups, mainly on the ground level.
- 4 **TR** Turmahs and mizabs (rainwater overflow) should play important roles in the composition of the façade.

To ensure that the ornamentations reflect the style of the Eastern Najdi architecture and distinguish it from other Najdi regions.



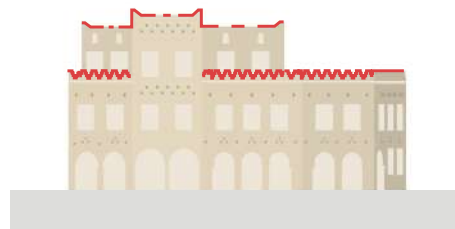
Base detail

2.5 Entrances and articulation

A key compositional characteristic of Eastern Najdi architecture is the entrances and ground level. New buildings should:

- 1 Have semicircular arched verandas to mark the retail openings and building's main entrances.
- 2 Frame access through street semicircular arches.
- 3 More traditional buildings feature wooden shutters, whereas contemporary structures use more glass.

To enhance the designation of internal and external uses of a building by adapting traditional building materials.



Stepping, rectilinear roofscape

2.6 Roofscape and rooftop elements

Roofs and parapets form a distinctive component in Eastern Najdi architecture. The design of new buildings should:

- 1 Be flat.
- 2 **TR** Have triangular stepped parapets for the balcony on the upper level and merlons at corners for the roof.

To retain a consistent and traditional roofscape.



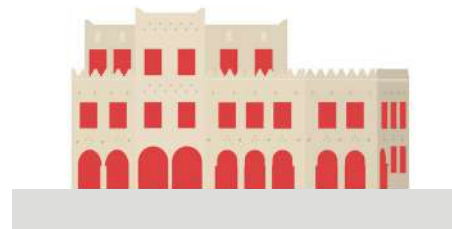
Solid façades

2.7 Solid façades

Eastern Najdi features less openings compared to solid walls. New buildings should:

- 1 On the ground level, provide a shaded arcade and emphasize the doorway.
- 2 Incorporate repetitive rectangular and arched openings.

To soften the presence of solid walls and accentuate awareness of the surrounding environment.



Geometry of components

2.8 Geometry of components

The overall alignment and placement of elements such as doors and windows are key to expressing the design. New buildings should:

- 1 Have orthogonal openings which are not articulated through highly ornamented/recessed frames, replicated on the different levels.
- 2 **TR TIN** Include triangular and rectangular fenestrations in different styles denoting the level, opening, and structure of the building.

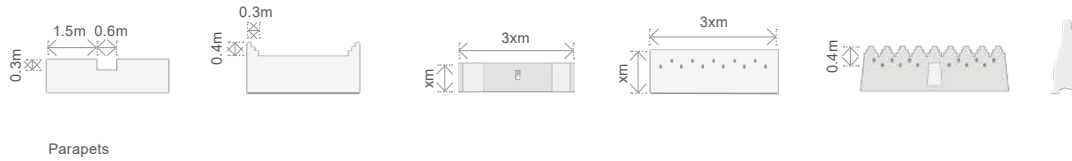
To embrace the distinctive lines, angles and overall composition inherent to the region's traditional architecture

3.0 Traditional Elements

The elements illustrated are examples and should not limit other possible design solutions that follow guideline principles and historic precedents. Element measurements are illustrative and provided to indicate general proportions only.



Top



Parapets

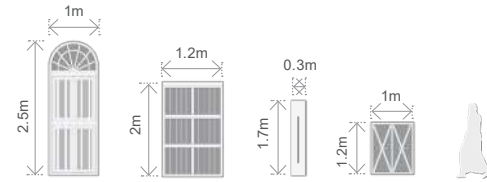
3.4 Rooftop elements

- 1 Be completely flat.
- 2 Incorporate parapets of double-stepped crenelations with a triangular band across the roofline or flat parapets with corner crenelations.
- 3 Add rainwater drainage spouts (mizab) below the parapet, made of wood.

To create functional roof spaces and roofscapes which embrace the typical characteristics of the local area.



Middle

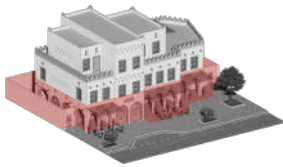


Windows

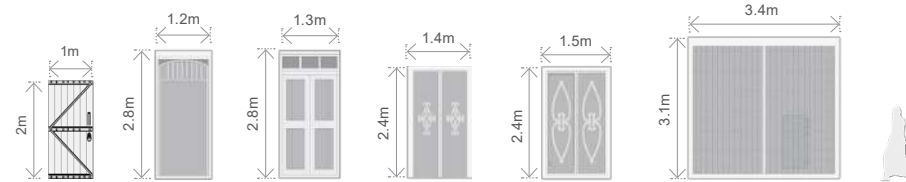
3.3 Windows and openings

- 1 Windows are rectangular.
- 2 Generally more common on above floors, and can be topped by semicircular arches for upper levels.
- 3 Openings of the same style are generally aligned with each other.
- 4 Square openings are usually above windows.
- 5 Windows should generally be made of and framed with wood.

To respond to climate considerations and provide an aesthetic treatment which is distinct to the local area.



Base



Entrance doors

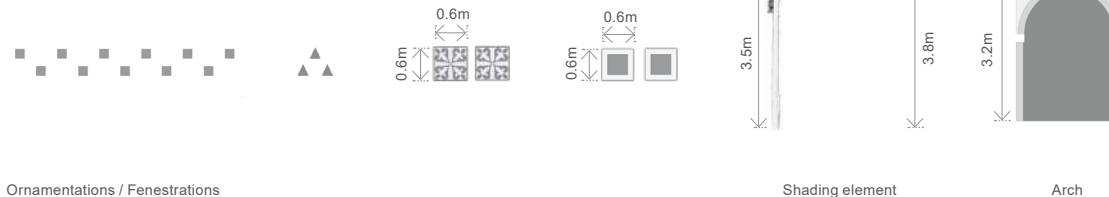
3.2 Doorways and entrances

- 1 Frame doors, and recess openings to add depth and create a sense of entry.
- 2 Doors are made of local wood and show no ornamentation.
- 3 Entrances can have a semicircular arch above and set as part of an arched frame of the street arcade.

To create suitable thresholds within the base which is part of a well-ordered, coherent street scene and responds to local character.



Other elements



Ornamentations / Fenestrations

Shading element

Arch

3.5 Other elements

- 1 Buildings often include shaded arched colonnades.
- 2 Use minimal triangular and rectangular fenestrations.
- 3 Boundary walls, their gates and portals should be designed to complement the building design.

To embed other elements which are frequently part of the overall composition of buildings.

3.0 Transitional Elements

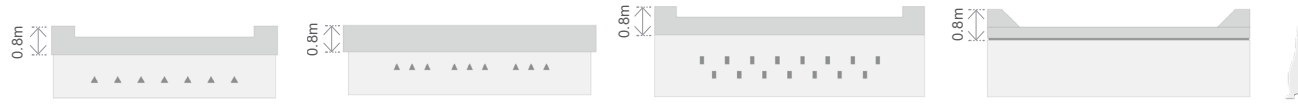
The elements illustrated are examples and should not limit other possible design solutions that follow guideline principles and historic precedents. Element measurements are illustrative and provided to indicate general proportions only.

3.4 Rooftop elements

- 1 Parapets should be flat.
 - 2 Incorporate a merlons on the corners with minimal steps
- To create functional roof spaces and roofscapes which embrace the typical characteristics of the local area.**



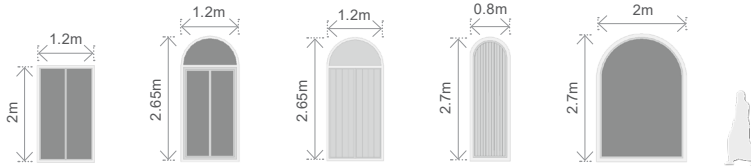
Top



Parapets with fenestrations



Middle



Windows

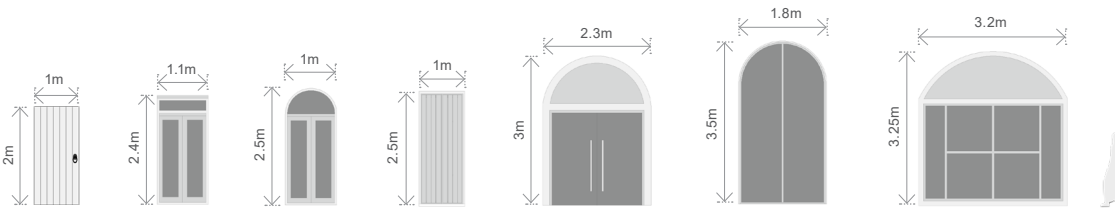
3.3 Windows and openings

- 1 Provide rectangular vertical windows.
- 2 Incorporate openings with frames wider than traditional styles.
- 3 Include semicircular arches with articulated framing.
- 4 Add geometric motifs and openings placed above the windows, with minimal patterns.
- 5 Windows should be crafted from glass and wood or a material that closely mimics its texture and color.

To respond to climate considerations and provide an aesthetic treatment which is distinct to the local area.



Base



Entrance doors

3.2 Doorways and entrances

- 1 Frame doors, and recess openings to add depth and create a sense of entry.
- 2 Consider articulating shopfront entrances on the ground floor through the shaded arcade.
- 3 Incorporate semicircular arches above double doors and consider including glass doors for openness.
- 4 Consider the use of wood or equivalent for the main door and shopfronts to increase functionality by creating privacy.

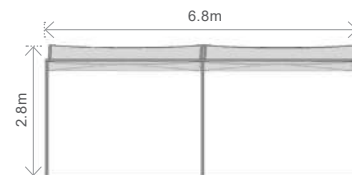
To create suitable thresholds within the base which is part of a well-ordered, coherent street scene and responds to local character.



Other elements



Ornamentations / Fenestrations



Shading element

3.5 Other elements

- 1 Buildings often incorporate shading to enhance the comfort of ground-floor seating areas.
- 2 Use minimal triangular and square fenestrations.
- 3 Boundary walls, their gates and portals should be designed to complement the building design.

To embed other elements which are frequently part of the overall composition of buildings.

3.0 Contemporary Elements

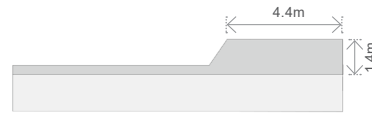
The elements illustrated are examples and should not limit other possible design solutions that follow guideline principles and historic precedents. Element measurements are illustrative and provided to indicate general proportions only.



Top



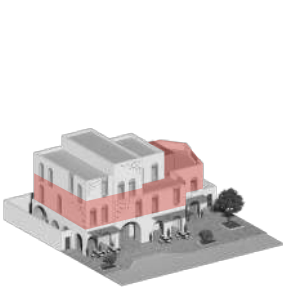
Parapets with notches



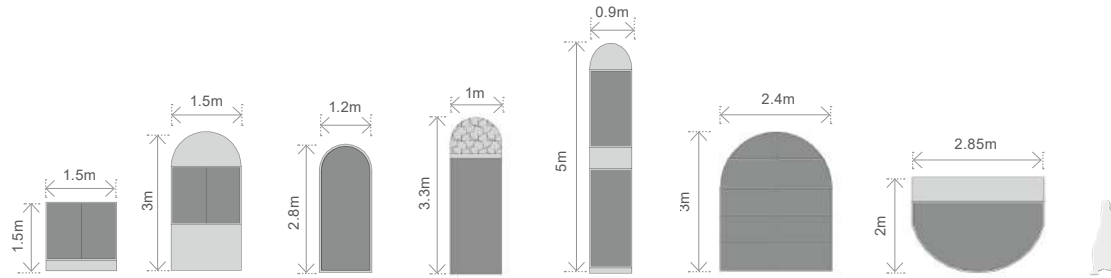
3.4 Rooftop elements

- 1 Create a distinctive grouping of structures, through which an accessible roof is developed.
- 2 Should feature flat parapets which are be flush with the primary building line.
- 3 Consider using glass as part of openings and the railing.

To create functional roof spaces and roofscapes which embrace the typical characteristics of the local area.



Middle



Windows

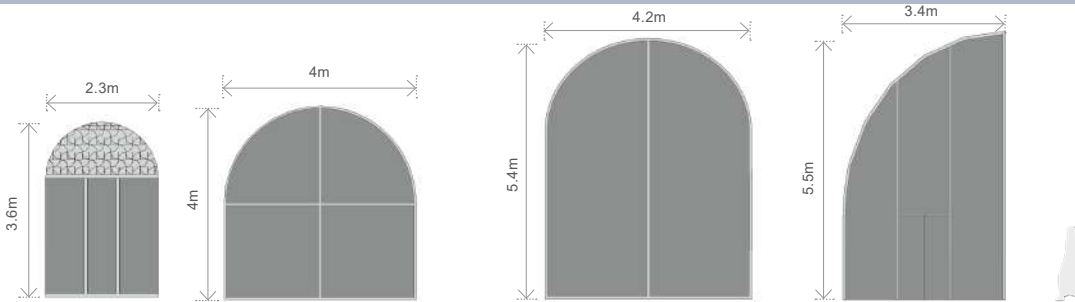
3.3 Windows and openings

- 1 Introduce monumental openings and larger arched windows.
- 2 Develop complex interpretations of the arched windows.
- 3 Emphasize window openings rather than lookouts or square openings above windows.
- 4 Window frames and shutters could be made of metal or another modern material, styled to reflect traditional features in a contemporary manner.

To respond to climate considerations and provide an aesthetic treatment which is distinct to the local area.



Base

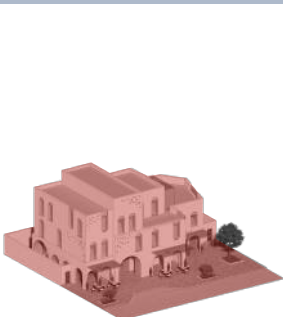


Entrance doors

3.2 Doorways and entrances

- 1 The door opening should be flush with the main building line.
- 2 Consider a shaded timber awning to articulate the main entrance.
- 3 Use wide double doors made of glass with multiple entrances for a mixed-use development.
- 4 Doors could be made of metal or another modern material, styled to reflect traditional features in a contemporary manner.

To create suitable thresholds within the base which is part of a well-ordered, coherent street scene and responds to local character.



Other elements



Ornamentations / Fenestrations

Shading element (top view)

3.5 Other elements

- 1 Buildings often incorporate shading to enhance the comfort of ground-floor seating areas.
- 2 Incorporate appropriate existing vernacular ornamentation into motifs for building decoration.
- 3 Boundary walls, their gates and portals should be designed to complement the building design.

To embed other elements which are frequently part of the overall composition of buildings.

4.0 Colors and Materials

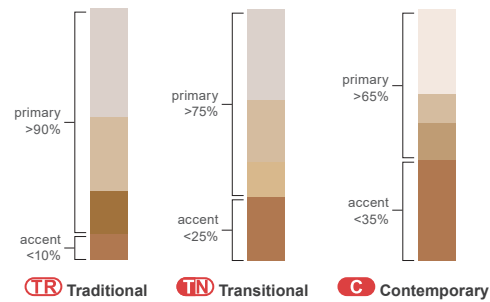
4.1 Colors

The color palette of Eastern Najdi is closely linked to traditional building materials such as stone and brown mud. The surrounding landscape is also an important influence, particularly light pink and earthy yellow colors.

- TR** The base should have the same color changing to rendered light off-white walls above the ground level.
- Generally use natural colors and finishes for the main body of the building with occasional use of brighter colors for accents on specific elements.
- A maximum percentage of accent color, measured as a percentage of the total façade area, is allowed for each style:
 - TR** <10%
 - TN** <25%
 - C** <35%
- For windows' glass, avoid using mirror-like reflective glass with bright colors that do not harmonize with the local environment and character.

To create a townscape in harmony with the surrounding landscape and architectural character.

Approximate color proportions



RAL Color codes

RAL codes are part of a universal color-matching system used to provide consistency in architectural finishes. It is recommended that teams verify colors with a physical fan deck. For more information visit www.ral-farben.de/en/

primary colors **accents colors**

Textured plaster wall	Mud wall	Wooden door
Textured plaster wall	Concrete	Plaster
Concrete finish	Smooth plaster wall	Sandstone cladding
Concrete	Plaster	Sandstone cladding
Wooden door	Glass with aluminum frames	Fiberglass with wood finish
Textured brick	Sandstone wall	Natural stone flooring
Sand block	Terracota Blocks	Mud
Sandstone finish	Rammed earth wall	Concrete finish
Cut stone and pebble flooring	Cut stone flooring	Concrete block flooring

4.2 Material

This palette summarizes the prevalent materials found in the architecture of Eastern Najdi.

- TR** The six large images reflect materials used in traditional architecture; new traditional style buildings should employ these materials as faithfully as possible.
- Precious or no-longer available materials may entail the need for substitutions. The smaller images reflect a range of feasible substitutions for the primary images above them, acceptable for use in transitional or contemporary styles, and in a more cautious manner in traditional style.
- When designers can't utilize original materials, they might utilize materials that closely resemble the original materials

present in the area while taking into account material quality in terms of sustainability and durability aspects as much as possible. Poor interpretations or applications of the materials should be avoided.

- Local and sustainably sourced materials are preferred.

To create buildings in harmony with the surrounding landscape and architectural character.

To enhance architectural character through the support of local craftsmanship.

To create buildings with tactile and visual richness landscape and architectural character.

5.0 Patterns

This section provides advice on the interpretation and use of traditional patterns in new projects.

New buildings should:

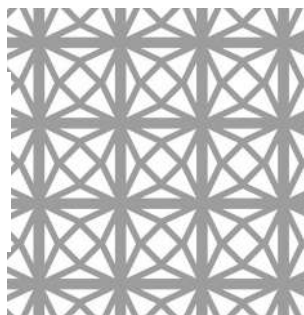
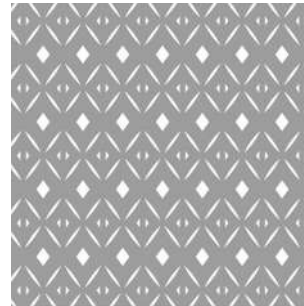
- 1 Create patterns through the use of local materials and craftsmanship.
- 2 Where multiple decorative patterns are applied across a single façade, these should be consistent.
- 3 **TR** Focus the use of surface patterns to doors, window screens and shutter doors.
- 4 **TR** refer directly to historic precedents and be limited to geometric and floral patterns.
- 5 **TIN C** The contemporary use of patterns should involve interpretation and abstraction: a selective emphasis of characteristics to create meaning and beauty in its new context. Designers can selectively use formal characteristics such as:

- Color (hue, tonality, tint)
- Shape (figure, outline, 2-D geometry)
- Form (volume, 3-D geometry)
- Texture (physical surface quality)
- Line (verticals, horizontals, diagonals, zigzags, curves, dashes, etc.)
- Value (lightness to darkness)

- 6 Patterns can be further transformed in the way they relate to one another. Designers can play with compositional rules such as:

- Balance (equality or harmony of parts)
- Contrast (difference of parts)
- Emphasis (strengthening of parts)
- Movement (change, directionality)
- Pattern (repetition, symmetry)
- Rhythm (even and uneven spacing)
- Unity/variety (degrees of variation)

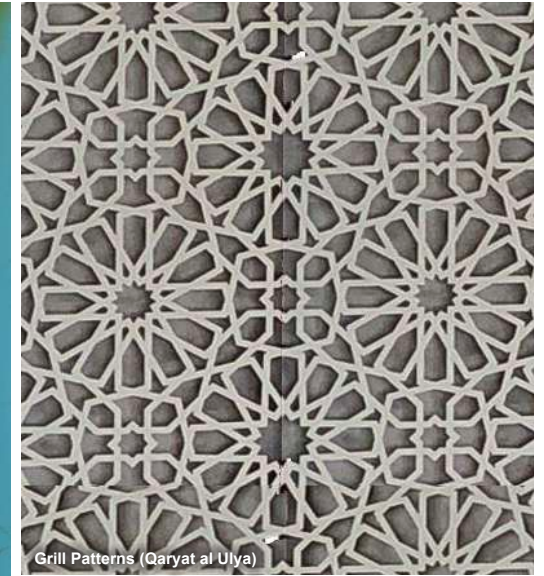
To express the spirit and essence of the original architecture in new yet familiar ways



Patterns



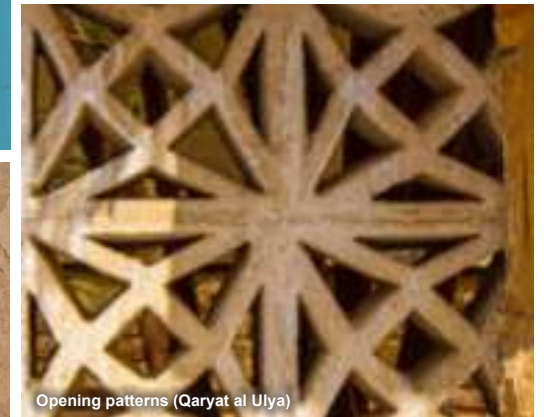
Metal door (Hafar Al Batin)



Grill Patterns (Qaryat al Ulya)



Parapet patterns (Haneeth)



Opening patterns (Qaryat al Ulya)



Parapet patterns



Najdi traditional rug (Qaryat al Ulya)



Parapet patterns (Qaryat al Ulya)



Parapet patterns (Qaryat al Ulya)

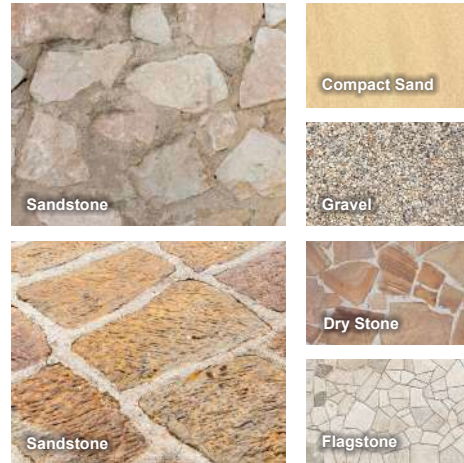
6.0 Public realm

This section focuses on the contributions of low-rise buildings to the surrounding streetscape and public spaces, creating strong character and high quality spaces.

The guidelines apply both to 'semi-public' spaces (public space built by private owners) and 'semi-private' spaces (private space that is generally accessible to the public).

Note: The application of these guidelines should be tailored to the specific project type, scale, and needs. It's essential to ensure that any modifications or additions to publicly-owned spaces are thoroughly coordinated and approved by relevant authorities.

To enhance the character and quality of publicly used spaces in between buildings.



6.1 Paving Materials

Paving guides users through both built and natural areas.

- 1 Select robust materials for longevity, easy maintenance, and repair.
- 2 Use contextual materials that complement surrounding.

To enhance aesthetics, and environmental sustainability in urban landscapes.



6.2 Shading

Shading structures are a critical component of modulating the public's interaction with the outdoors.

- 1 Integrate light shading structures as distinctive features that reflect the architectural style or theme, ensuring they harmonize with other facade elements for a cohesive overall design aesthetic.

To create a pleasant outdoor ambiance for public areas.



6.3 Parking

Parking is a key component in the overall approach to the public realm and for user decision making.

- 1 Parking spaces should not obstruct the use of built areas.
- 2 Unregulated parking in urban areas disrupts visual appeal and public access.

To ensure that parking does not create an obstruction to the development and ensures good flow.

Palm trees Shade trees



Ornamental species

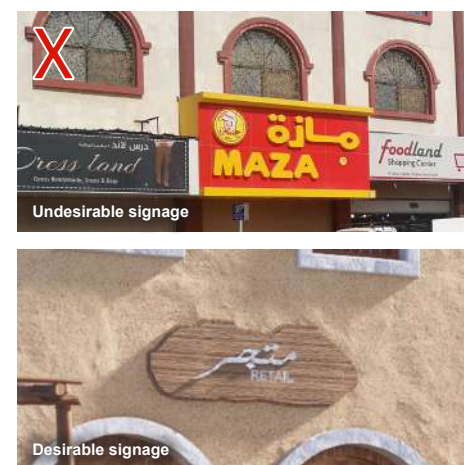


6.4 Planting

Planting should complement and work with existing ecosystems and contribute to a sustainable built habitat.

- 1 Rely less on importing plant species and source drought and saline tolerant species.

To ensure that plants do not disturb existing wildlife and natural environment.



6.5 Signage

Signage guides users and aids navigation in public areas.

- 1 Signage should integrate seamlessly with the architecture, ensuring clarity and harmony in form, scale, color, and size.
- 2 Minimize signage conflicts with residences and tree canopies by facing roads and using subdued illumination.

To effectively orient the public in navigating built areas.



6.6 Lighting

Lighting is crucial for nighttime activity and overall design.

- 1 Consistent lighting enhances urban and architectural appeal.
- 2 Architectural lighting should target color temperatures in the 2200K-2700K range for comfort and good color rendering.

To create a harmonious and pleasurable perception of public areas.



6.7 Public realm interface

The shared spaces and walkways of public areas should be used effectively.

- 1 Ensure that mixed-use development and activations of frontages are created throughout public areas.
- 2 Avoid protruding ramps or steps into public property.

To create a distinct and active sense of place.

7.0 Dos and don'ts

This section focuses on easy wins for the improvement of architectural quality and character. Drawing upon best design practice, these guidelines help avoid common mistakes which create visual pollution and hostile environments.

| To avoid common design mistakes.



7.1 Inappropriate materials

- 1 Use durable and quality materials that give the building authenticity, texture and mass while adhering to recommended material palette.
- 2 Do not use building materials alien to the tradition such as metal cladding and high reflectivity and colored glass.
- 3 Do not use low-quality building materials that appear fake or poorly imitate the original materials.



7.2 Saturated colors

- 1 Do not use non-contextual bright and artificial colors that detract from the natural landscape and local architecture.
- 2 Colors should be consistent and integrate well with the built landscape and landscape at large.



7.3 Screens and closures

- 1 Integrate the design of security features with the architecture.
- 2 Do not extend walls with unfinished corrugated metals and other raw sheet materials.
- 3 Do not use razor or barbed wires for typical buildings; utilize deterrents that are inconspicuous or visually appealing.



7.4 Superficial traditional elements

- 1 When integrating traditional elements on existing or new structures, it should be done in a conscious manner adhering to original precepts through which such motifs and elements were used.
- 2 Careless copies of historical motifs, lackluster incorporation of local symbols, poor consideration of proportions, massing, volume, and other instrumentalization of traditional motifs should be avoided.



7.5 Exposed roller shutters

- 1 Exposed roller shutters create noise and visual pollution if not properly concealed.
- 2 It is recommended that shutters are always integrated in the façade and properly mounted.
- 3 The use of high-quality mechanized shutters to ensure durability is advised. Shutters should reflect the color scheme of the construction, design and overall region.



7.6 Exposed building services

- 1 Infrastructural elements such as communication towers, air-conditioning units, satellite dishes, water tanks and ducts, wires, pipes, among other should be discreetly embedded in the design and not exposed or be seen by the public.



7.7 Inconsistent or imported architectural style

- 1 The adoption of building materials, style, and standards which do not comply with local architecture style and character should be avoided.
- 2 Styles should embrace the cultural context and use materials that work with the local context.
- 3 Avoid applying foreign imported architectural elements.



Worked examples demonstrate one possible application to the guidelines and are for illustration only.

8.0 Traditional mixed-use worked example

In Eastern Najdi, traditional architecture emphasizes the use of crenelated parapets and stylized merlons at the corner. Orthogonal openings, with timber shutters and/or minimally ornamented timber, are grouped on the façade to reflect interior zoning.

Retail/restaurants should be highlighted and placed under the shaded arcade. The entryways and arcades feature semi-circular arches, accentuated by a white frame for emphasis. A quintessential

example of Eastern Najdi traditional architecture showcases an embrace of asymmetry, fostering a harmonious connection between the interior and exterior. Distinguished by a roofscape adorned with a string of eaves and parapets, this multidimensional structure defies strict rectangularity. Ornamentation is quite minimal, with assemblages of traditional triangular fenestrations, as well as mizabs and turmahs.

- 1 The roof levels have flat parapets with pointed corners, while some levels feature stepped roofs with crenellations/merlons.



- 2 Windows on the main façade exhibit hierarchy with consistent size, material, and style.



- 3 The main rooftop is simple and has traditional Eastern Najdi patterns.



- 4 The storefronts, boast semicircular arches.





Worked examples demonstrate one possible application to the guidelines and are for illustration only.

8.0 Transitional mixed-use worked example

In Eastern Najdi's transitional architecture, an artful blend of traditional charm and contemporary elements defines the façade. Subtle asymmetry, with occasional setbacks and an integrated main entrance, characterizes the structure. The roofscape subtly steps upwards, incorporating modern angular parapets and horizontal banding.

Recessed windows feature a harmonious mix of simple orthogonal forms, with semicircular arched

with modern frame designs. Storefronts seamlessly integrate rectangular aluminum frames.

Storefronts are set underneath a shaded arcade. Ornamentation is minimal, and the characteristic Najdi decorative is used in combination with other geometric elements. Greater use of glass increases openness.

Offering a balanced fusion of historical context

and contemporary aesthetics, this transitional style in Eastern Najdi encapsulates the essence of heritage in a modern architectural narrative.

Windows are wider, longer and more open, with design nuances such as semicircular arches. The main entryway windows may feature a small square opening. Rectangular, thin aluminum frames surround windows, adorned with recessed semicircular arches. Some windows feature wooden shutters.

1 Stepped roofscape with angular parapets featuring horizontal banding.



2 Some windows feature wooden shutters, while others have simple metal frames.

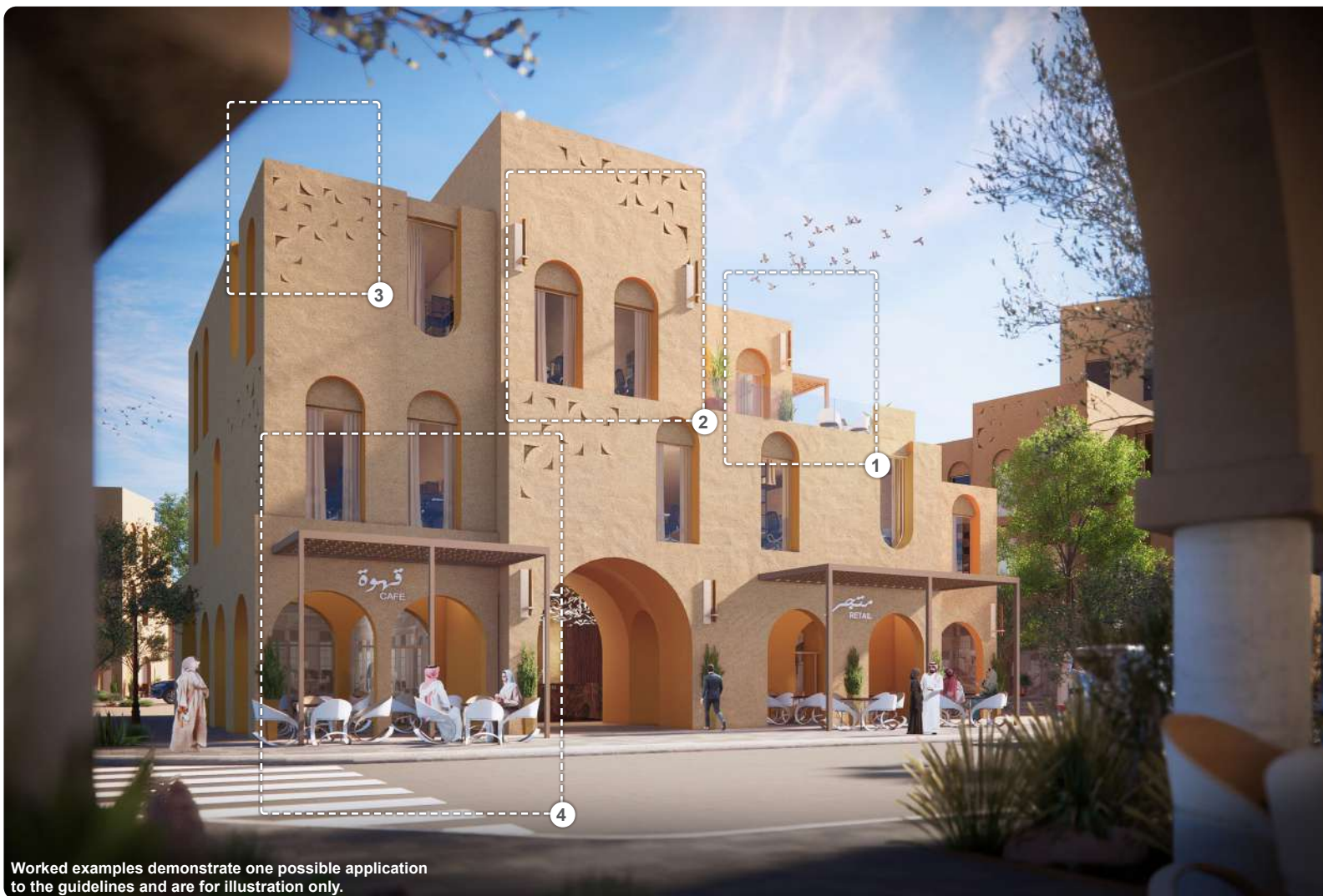


3 Simplified fenestrations used to decorate the top part of the façade.



4 Storefronts feature arched openings that span the base, ensuring proportional balance.





Worked examples demonstrate one possible application to the guidelines and are for illustration only.

8.0 Contemporary mixed-use worked example

This example of contemporary architecture in Eastern Najdi reflects a dynamic fusion of tradition and modernity, where elements from the traditional asymmetrical style are harmoniously incorporated with contemporary principles. Maintaining the sense of asymmetry through various volumes brought together, this example emphasizes the use of glass with much larger opening proportions. It is utilized in large arched windows in both upright and U-shaped forms.

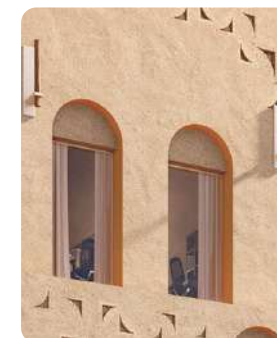
The shaded arcade, one continuous line from the façade to the colonnade, is forwarded by a timber awning projection. There is an abstracted decoration based on historical motifs along openings of the façade. The roofscape, building on historical style, is stepped but does not feature crenellations or merlons.

The interplay of asymmetry, innovative geometries, and the creative integration of traditional elements result in a contemporary architectural language that respects Eastern Najdi heritage while embracing modern design paradigms.

1 Stepped roofscape seamlessly extending the wall material.



2 Elongated windows with semicircular arches.



3 Abstracted ornamentations expressed through a slight recess on the façade.



4 Storefronts feature semicircular arches and maintain shaded corridors.



A.0 Appendix: Low-rise apartment buildings

This appendix focuses on design issues important to low rise apartment buildings, for example, the relationship between public and private spaces, access to individual units, ground floor facade design, the provision of outdoor amenity, and the design of boundary treatments and rooftops.

Apartment building design should follow the guidelines for traditional, transitional and contemporary style in the rest of this handbook, but also observe the guidance notes in this appendix.

Entrances and articulation

The main entrance features a large double door in an arched frame, while secondary entrances blend seamlessly with vertical breaks for balance. Setbacks and habitable balconies add dynamism, echoing traditional Eastern Najdi styles.

Roofscape and rooftop elements

The roofscape, featuring parapets, is distinctive in Eastern Najdi architecture. Triangulated three-stepped crenelations are recommended as part of the design. Privacy for rooftop terraces is achieved with crenelated parapets. Recessed designs ensure resident privacy and tranquility. Varied roof lines create engaging asymmetry, shaping both the interior and exterior experience.

Solid façades

The façade on the ground level is generally opaque. It connects the building with neighboring areas, defining public and private spaces. The main entrance, notable for its size, symbolizes this connection. Façades feature a blend of elements such as windows, ventilation openings, ornaments, and parapets, for a balanced composition.

Secondary frontage

Privacy is prioritized across all façades, with openings designed to prevent visual access to private interior spaces. Side windows feature Eastern Najdi geometric motifs and intricate ornamentation like wooden shutters, maintaining a visual rhythm. Ground floor street-facing windows are fewer and smaller for resident comfort. Enhanced security and privacy for front-facing windows include wooden shutters and slightly recessed frames.

Doorways and entrances

Doors align with interior room layouts rather than exterior composition. They are typically made of timber, flush with the façades, featuring natural geometrical engraved motifs. Doors can be framed with two columns and a slight recess. Simple orthogonal openings and generously scaled doors are recommended. Ground floor amenities can incorporate elements like screens or planters to delineate spaces.

Privacy

Ground floor windows on street frontage should maintain privacy and security for residents. This may be achieved by using smaller windows, elevated windows, adjustable attractive security screens, and by setting back from the boundary with planted buffer zones and landscaping details.



Apartment Building Axonometric



Apartment Building Front Elevation

- 1 Parapet crenelations are triangular.



- 2 Maintain privacy between neighbors on side façades.



- 3 Maintain privacy and security at ground level.



- 4 Emphasize primary shared entrances.





Worked examples demonstrate one possible application to the guidelines and are for illustration only.

A.0 Traditional apartment worked example

In Eastern Najdi, traditional architecture emphasizes the use of orthogonal openings (rectangular), grouped on the façade to reflect the interior zoning, which also serves to develop the stepping effect.

The double door acting as the main entrance is placed under a protruding cover. As privacy is of significant priority, secondary entrances are seamlessly integrated into the design of the base and façade.

Geometric ornaments and fenestrations, above windows and crenelations is used to promote the traditional architecture and to introduce aesthetic variety on the façade. The design is enhanced by the strategic placement of mizab elements along the roofline of the building

Use building materials that evoke the same traditional style for the walls, windows and frames. Colors are smoothly contrasted in the design enhancing variety

and allowing the crenelated parapets and opening frames to pop out.

1 Ornaments placed above rectangular windows. Parapets include horizontal banding.



2 Arched decorated entrance doorways.



3 Traditional arched elements on façade for private entrances.



4 Windows with shutters for privacy.





Worked examples demonstrate one possible application to the guidelines and are for illustration only.

A.0 Transitional apartment worked example

In the transitional style, evolution from the traditional is made evident by adopting its main characteristics more minimally and by a muted incorporation of traditional ornamentation. This style uses the same identity and style of the traditional through semicircular and orthogonal openings, grouped on the façade above the windows through slimmer frames and abstracted traditional shapes for squares and triangles.

Openings for windows and doors occupy more space on the façade than in the traditional. There are many more windows and wider openings on the ground level. In addition, a slightly recessed semicircular arch is placed above openings. There are some projecting elements, such as mizabs.

Fenestrations are more minimal and only one to two styles are used to indicate massing and volume proportions of the structure. Additionally, the parapets have a cubic and geometric indentation with stepped corners, creating a simplistic design.

1 Simple ornaments placed above glass windows.



2 Arched and generous entrance.



3 Transitional arched elements on façade.



4 Windows with shutters for privacy.





Worked examples demonstrate one possible application to the guidelines and are for illustration only.

A.0 Contemporary apartment worked example

In the worked example of the contemporary style of Eastern Najdi, the traditional is expressed through innovative use of materials and addressing the rhythm of the façade. The design employs large frames and recessions that span multiple levels. It creates a continuous relationship between the different masses of the building. In this way, the asymmetry is retained by blending the overall geometry to few styles.

The opening proportions for the main entrance and windows on upper levels are much wider and take up more space on the façade. Ground-floor windows have screens with simple patterns for privacy, while upper-floor windows are rectangular or occasionally arched with simple frames. Entrances have arched tops with a slight recess.

Ornamentations inspired by the traditional styles are only used minimally as a design element.

1 A flat and blended parapet.



2 Arched and wide entrance.



3 Amenity and shaded spaces.



4 Shuttered windows in the ground level

