

Aseer Escarpment

Architectural Design Guidelines



Application Handbook - Low-rise Buildings





Aseer Escarpment Architectural Character Area



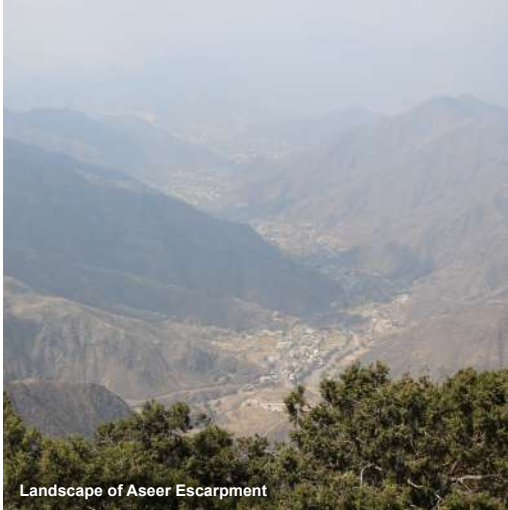
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Application Handbook - Low-Rise Buildings

Aseer Escarpment - Architectural Design Guidelines



Landscape of Aseer Escarpment



Traditional architecture in Aseer Escarpment



Example of low-rise mixed-use building elevation in traditional style in Aseer Escarpment

I Introduction

The purpose of this document is to guide designers and builders of low-rise mixed-use buildings in applying the architectural character of Aseer Escarpment to their projects.

Aseer Escarpment character area is located at the edge of Sarawat mountains in Aseer region. This area consists of lower escarpments, water courses and upper escarpments. It is situated on the cliff of the Arabian shield, which mainly consists of igneous rock sediments. The area features a steep slope with a dense vegetation cover, dominated by juniper trees. A large number of tributaries descend from the top and pour into Shoaib Ridah. This area features the dominant sources of vernacular architecture in the escarpments.

Early settlements as well as modern urban settlements are established along the valley basins and flatter sections of the wadi corridors. A patchwork of buildings and farms are along wadi farms, wadi corridors and terraces. As the latitude increases in places like Rijal Alma, landscape and context influence the materiality of traditional architecture including natural stone, clay, and wood.

Known for their distinctive defensive and fortress like character, traditional dwellings in the Aseer Escarpment stand as a testament to the region's history. Dwellings were made from stone and towered as high as 6 floors. They were recognized for their white framed windows and doors along with their vibrant colored wooden shutters and elaborate decorative motifs.

This handbook is a supplement to the Aseer Escarpment 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

II Low-Rise Buildings

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

Serving the many needs of residents through a wide range 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 introduces inherent differences from historical building types that are the source of architectural identities, and is a primary challenge to their implementation, to be addressed in the compositional rules of this handbook.

Low-rise mixed-use buildings

Low-rise mixed-use buildings are usually subdivided into multiple units that often create a heterogeneity 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 streetscapes, 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 apartment buildings are assigned primarily residential uses, the relationship between public and private spaces become paramount. Access to individual units, ground floor facade design, the provision of outdoor amenity, and the design of boundary treatments and rooftops will be important. The applicants for apartment buildings should follow the guidelines mentioned in this document, along with the additional guidance provided in Appendix A.

This handbook will implement the Aseer Escarpment 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 the Aseer Escarpment.

- 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 (Section 1).
- 3 Assess your design according to each of the 5 guideline categories:

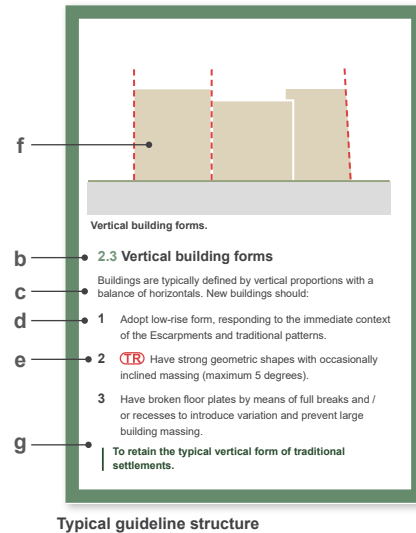
- **Composition:** do your building massing and facade design follow compositional principles? (Section 2)
- **Elements:** do the individual parts of your building properly interpret the architectural character for your style? (Section 3)
- **Materials and Colors:** does your building use acceptable 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:

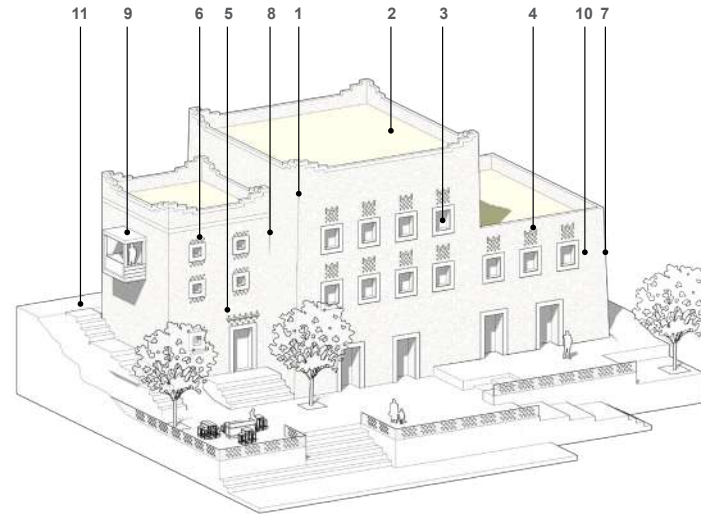
- TR** Mandatory for traditional style
- TN** Mandatory for transitional style
- C** Mandatory for contemporary style

- 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 fulfillment.



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



Example of vernacular Aseer Escarpment architectural elements, for illustrative purposes only

Key features:

- 1 Facades formed with closely knit buildings with breaks through difference in massing.
- 2 Flat roofs with parapets articulated with pointed corners or stepped crenellations.
- 3 Small windows in repetitive pattern, highlighted with colored shutters, white plaster surrounds and decorative motifs.
- 4 Local art is used for decorative patterns and for highlighting elements.
- 5 Clearly defined entrance accentuated by the choice of height and proportion.
- 6 Rhythmic and localized symmetries.
- 7 Gently tapered walls with a maximum inclination angle of 5 degrees.
- 8 Massing broken into vertical volumes with top, middle and base division showcasing tripartite facade character.
- 9 Extruded, screened balconies to facilitate interaction between the building and the street while maintaining privacy and shade.
- 10 General color palette based on locally available natural stone, mainly shades of beige, brown and dark brown and complementary colors derived from the landscape.
- 11 Natural terrain of site respected through design and orientation of buildings.



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

2.3 Vertical building forms

Building massing should adopt a vertical form. At least 50% of the building form should have gently tapered walls with a maximum inclination of 5 degrees. Forms should be compact with strong geometric shapes. Facade should introduce vertical breaks at intervals of around 10 meters or less. This can be achieved with changes in the form, height and massing.

2.4 Flat roofs

Building massing should be designed to have flat roofs. Varied roofline may be created with stepped conjoined units and varying heights.

2.5 Asymmetrical frontages

The overall form and facades should have an asymmetrical composition. Localized symmetry should be maintained in the placement, size, rhythm and patterns of the openings. Openings should be arranged in a repetitive pattern to form horizontal and vertical alignments.

2.6 Simple openings

Openings should consist of small sized windows of simple geometry. Small ventilation windows may be used to bring variety to the facade. A maximum of 30% of the facade's surfaces should be openings. This ratio should respond to the needs of the accommodation and consider solar and wind exposure.

Loggias may be incorporated in frontages and should be encouraged over balconies. Balconies should be used sparingly and should be highlighted in wood, or its equivalent.

2.7 Grounded base

Building should have a solid base with recessed / punched openings and integrated shopfronts. Ground floor facade treatment should provide a solid grounded base and foster a high-quality interface between the building and the street active frontages. Facade materials should be hard-wearing and robust.

A distinct or delineated base should not be proposed, the base should flow through to the middle section. The lower section of the facade should have less window openings. Recessed stone panels or their equivalent should be a common feature.

2.8 Articulated parapets and use of patterns

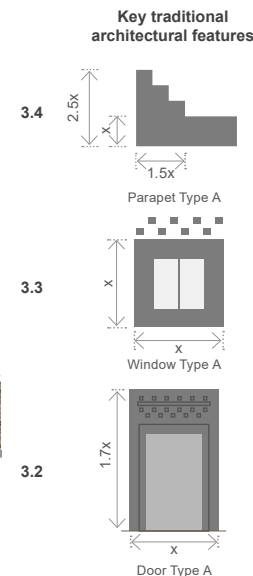
Parapets should be articulated using massing, opening variations, stepping, ornamentalions to highlight the top part of the building.



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



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



TRADITIONAL ELEMENTS

3.1 General details and considerations

Perimeter wall and fence should have low to medium levels of transparency. Main entrance within the perimeter wall should be highlighted.

3.2 Doors and entrances

Generally, doors and entrances should consist of simple orthogonal geometry with width-to-height proportions of 1:1.5 - 1:2.3.

Shopfronts and main entrance should be highlighted with door surrounds painted white. Traditional decorative motifs should be displayed above doors and entrances and be an integral part of the overall design.

3.3 Windows and openings

Building should have small openings articulated with change in materiality and / or color, often as white or lighter colored surrounds that differ from the main facade.

Windows should be square / rectangular shaped with relatively balanced proportions.

Opening surrounds should be recessed or projected from the main facade. Traditional decorative motifs should be displayed above window openings.

Traditional windows should have typical proportions of 1:1 - 1:2.

3.4 Rooftop elements

The roofscape should feature articulated parapets with pointed corners, or stepped crenellations with white painted coping. The rooftop should be clearly defined and articulated with distinct materials and / or features.

COLORS, MATERIALS AND PATTERNS

4.1 Colors

The general palette should be beige, brown, and white.

90% of the building's color palette should be composed of primary colors and 10% should be composed of accent colors. At least 70% to 80% of the facade should be composed of one consistent primary color.

Accent colors should be reserved for highlighting key elements, such as entries, openings, shutters and shading structures.

4.2 Materials

Generally, subject to availability, the use of locally available traditional materials, or equivalent should be encouraged. At least 70% to 80% of the facade should be composed of one consistent material.

Wood or similar material, should be used for elements in openings such as window frames, shutters and shading structures. At least 50% of the facade should use layered stone or other material that closely resemble the local stone in terms of the texture, color, and appearance.

5.0 Patterns

Typical colors and patterns should be used for decoration and highlights and should not exceed 10% of the facade area. Patterns should replicate traditional art patterns from Al-Qatt Al-Asiri art form. Al-Qatt Al-Asiri should be referenced particularly for the interior decorations while geometric patterns should be used on exterior surfaces.

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

2.3 Vertical building forms

Building massing should adopt a vertical form. At least 30% of the building form should have gently tapered walls with a maximum inclination of 5 degrees.

Forms should be compact with strong geometric shapes. Facade should introduce vertical breaks at intervals of around 15 meters or less. Facade breaks should be a minimum of 1.5 meters in depth and 3 meters in width, for the entire height of the facade.

2.4 Flat roofs

Building massing should be designed to have flat roofs. Varied roofline may be created with stepped conjoined units and varying heights.

2.5 Asymmetrical frontages

The overall form and facades should have an asymmetrical composition. Localized symmetry should be maintained in the placement, size, rhythm and patterns of the openings. Openings should be arranged in a repetitive pattern to form horizontal and vertical alignments.

2.6 Simple openings

Openings should consist of medium sized windows of simple geometry. Small ventilation windows may be used to bring variety to the facade. A maximum of 40% of the facade's surfaces should be openings. This ratio should respond to the needs of the accommodation and consider solar and wind exposure.

Loggias may be incorporated in frontages and should be encouraged over balconies. Balconies should be used sparingly and should be highlighted using wood, or its equivalent, either in screens or handrails.

2.7 Grounded base

Building should have a solid base with recessed openings and integrated shopfronts. Ground floor facade treatment should provide a solid grounded base and foster a high-quality interface between the building and the street active frontages. Facade materials should be hard-wearing and robust.

A distinct or delineated base should not be proposed, the base should flow through to the middle section. The lower section of the facade should have less window openings.

2.8 Articulated parapets and use of patterns

Parapets should be articulated using massing, opening variations, stepping, ornamentations to highlight the top part of the building.

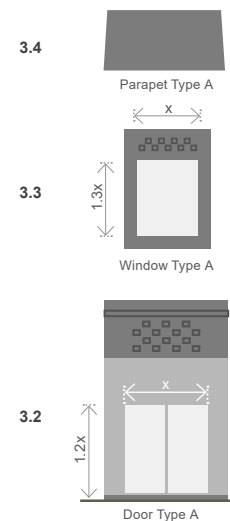


Axonometric view showcasing an example of the application of compositional rules for transitional style low-rise mixed-use building



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

Key transitional architectural features



TRANSITIONAL ELEMENTS

3.1 General details and considerations

Perimeter wall and fence on the main frontage could have medium to high levels of transparency to provide a permeable connection to the public domain and add to the overall quality of the public realm. Side / back boundary wall may have low, medium or high levels of transparency.

3.2 Doors and entrances

Generally, doors and entrances should consist of simple orthogonal geometries with width-to-height proportions ranging from 1:1.5 to 1:2.3.

Shopfronts and main entrance should be highlighted with door surrounds. Door surrounds should be painted white and interpretations of traditional decorative motifs should be placed above the main entrance.

3.3 Windows and openings

Windows should be square / rectangular shaped with relatively balanced proportions. Window openings should be highlighted with change in materiality and / or color, often as white or lighter colored surrounds that differ from the main facade.

Opening surrounds should be recessed or projected from the main facade. Traditional decorative motifs should be displayed above window openings.

Windows openings should have typical proportions of 1:1 - 1:3.

3.4 Rooftop elements

Generally, parapets should be simple and integrated within the overall design of the facade. Articulated parapets should be used to highlight the top part of the building. Articulation may include pointed corners or stepped crenelations.

COLORS, MATERIALS AND PATTERNS

4.1 Colors

The general palette should be beige, brown, and white.

80% of the building's color palette should be composed of primary colors and 20% should be composed of accent colors. At least 60% to 70% of the facade should be composed of one consistent primary color.

Accent colors should be reserved for highlighting key elements, such as entries, openings, shutters and shading structures and / or facade elements.

4.2 Materials

At least 60% to 70% of the facade should be composed of one consistent material.

Wood or similar material should be used for elements in openings such as window frames, shutters and shading structures.

At least 30% of the facade should use stone or an equivalent material either on the main frontage, or as an accent feature on doors and entrances.

5.0 Patterns

Typical colors and patterns should be used for decoration and highlights, patterns should be no less than 10% and no more than 15% of the facade area.

Transitional buildings should utilize interpretations of traditional art patterns.

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

2.3 Vertical building forms

Building massing should adopt a vertical form. Building form may feature gently tapered walls with a maximum inclination of 5 degrees. Tapered walls should be a special feature or highlight element only, and should not exceed 20% of the building form. Forms should be compact with strong geometric shapes. Facade should introduce vertical breaks at intervals of around 20 meters or less. Facade breaks should be a minimum of 1.5 meters in depth and 3 meters in width, for the entire height of the facade.

2.4 Flat roofs

Building massing should be designed to have flat roofs. Varied roofline may be created with stepped conjoined units and varying heights.

2.5 Asymmetrical frontages

The overall form and facades should have an asymmetrical composition. Localized symmetry should be maintained in the placement, size, rhythm and patterns of the openings. Openings should be arranged in a repetitive pattern to form horizontal and vertical alignments.

2.6 Simple openings

Openings should consist of medium sized windows of simple geometry. Small ventilation windows may be used to bring variety to the facade. Openings should have a maximum share of 50% of the overall facade's surface, according to their solar and wind exposure.

Loggias may be incorporated in frontages and should be encouraged over balconies. A limited number of balconies should be allowed on the facade. Balconies should be used sparingly and should be highlighted using simple orthogonal geometries and may include wood or its equivalent.

2.7 Grounded base

Building should have a solid base with recessed openings and integrated shopfronts. Ground floor facade treatment should provide a solid grounded base and foster a high-quality interface between the building and the street active frontages. Facade materials should be hard-wearing and robust.

A distinct or delineated base should not be proposed, the base should flow through to the middle section. The lower section of the facade should have less window openings.

2.8 Articulated parapets and use of patterns

Parapets should be articulated using massing, opening variations, stepping, ornamentations to highlight the top part of the building.

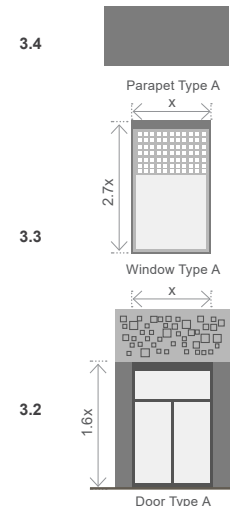


Axonometric view showcasing an example of the application of compositional rules for contemporary style low-rise mixed-use building



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

Key contemporary architectural features



CONTEMPORARY ELEMENTS

3.1 General details and considerations

Perimeter wall and fence on the main frontage could have medium to high levels of transparency to provide a permeable connection to the public domain and add to the overall quality of the public realm. Side / back boundary wall may have low, medium or high levels of transparency.

3.2 Doors and entrances

Generally, doors and entrances should consist of simple orthogonal geometries with width-to-height proportions ranging from 1:1.5 to 1:2.3.

Shopfronts and main entrance should be highlighted using simple orthogonal geometries and may include simple door surrounds.

3.3 Windows and openings

Window openings should be highlighted using simplified detailing and accents such as simple window surrounds and abstract interpretations of traditional decorative motifs.

Window openings should have typical proportions of 1:1 - 1:5.

Openings may include floor to ceiling windows. Large windows (1:5) and double height windows should feature elements to divide the height to avoid disproportionate scaling.

3.4 Rooftop elements

Generally, parapets should be simple and integrated within the overall design of the facade. Articulated parapets should be used to highlight the top part of the building.

COLORS, MATERIALS AND PATTERNS

4.1 Colors

The general palette should be beige, brown, and white.

70% of the building's color palette should be composed of primary colors and 30% should be composed of accent colors.

At least 50% to 60% of the facade should be composed of one consistent primary color.

Accent colors should be reserved for highlighting key elements, such as entries, openings, shutters and shading structures and / or facade elements.

4.2 Materials

At least 50% to 60% of the facade should be composed of one consistent material.

Wood or its equivalent should be used for elements in openings such as window frames, shutters and shading structures.

At least 10% of the facade should use stone or an equivalent material to highlight the facade, or as an accent feature on doors and entrances.

5.0 Patterns

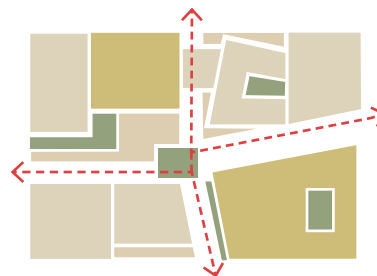
Typical colors and patterns should be used for decoration and highlights, patterns should be no less than 10% and no more than 20% of the facade area.

Contemporary buildings should utilize abstractions of traditional art patterns.

2.0 Compositional Rules

The following guidelines provide compositional rules for building design with the Aseer Escarpment 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.



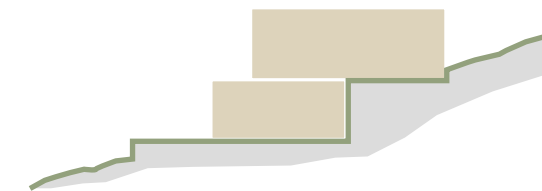
Permeable fabric with hierarchy of open spaces

2.1 Townscape groupings

New developments should contribute to factors like topography of site and its context, figure ground qualities, and public realm. The design of new buildings should:

- 1 Foster human-scale, socio-cultural and family values, with different levels of privacy in the design.
- 2 Promote spatial enclosures to achieve a sense of place with a clear hierarchical variety of open spaces.
- 3 Prioritize walkable and non-car dominated environments with attractive public realm.
- 4 Land use should promote a mix of uses.
- 5 Avoid large blocks (>100m in any direction), or provide mid-block passages for walkability.

| A permeable block structure with mix of uses is essential to create a walkable and vibrant urban space.

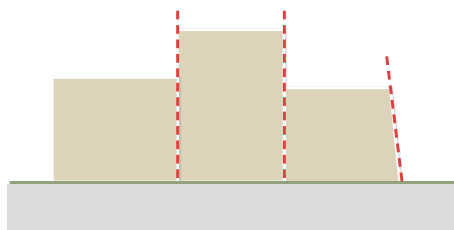


Built form respecting the natural terrain

2.2 Relationship to landscape

- 1 Prioritize the conservation and enhancement of environmental and cultural resources on site.
- 2 Respect the natural terrain and avoid flattening of slopes.
- 3 Use terraces to mitigate slopes.
- 4 Provide usable open space within the plot oriented toward the public frontage.

| To respect and respond to the natural landscape context, climate and environment.



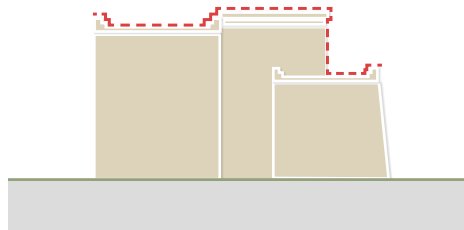
Vertical building forms

2.3 Vertical building forms

Buildings are typically defined by vertical proportions. New buildings should:

- 1 Adopt low-rise form, responding to the immediate context of the Aseer Escarpment and traditional patterns.
- 2 **TR** Have strong geometric shapes with occasionally inclined massing (maximum 5 degrees).
- 3 Have broken floor plates by means of full breaks and / or recesses to introduce variation and avoid large building massing.

| To retain the typical vertical form of traditional settlements.



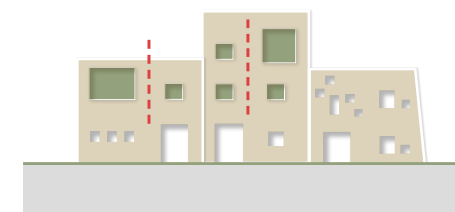
Stepping, rectilinear roofscape

2.4 Flat roofs

Roof and parapets contribute significantly to the character of the place. The design of new buildings should:

- 1 Have flat roofs created with stepped conjoined building volumes of varying heights.
- 2 **TR** Have articulated parapets, supporting privacy requirements and hiding rooftop equipments.
- 3 Always screen MEP equipment, utilities, delivery, refuse containers, and other types of utilities using parapets or by locating them underground / internalized.

| To maintain the traditional flat roof forms.



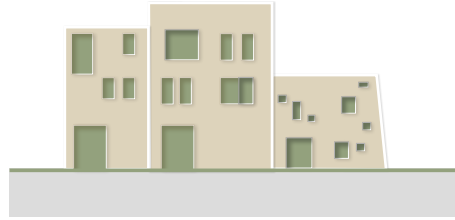
Asymmetrical composition

2.5 Asymmetrical frontages

Frontages have an overall asymmetrical composition. New buildings should:

- 1 Ensure levels of hierarchy on the facade with axial alignments of window openings on different floors.
- 2 Maintain localized symmetry in the placement, size, rhythm and patterns of openings.
- 3 Apply the same level of design quality to all public facing facades or frontages for consistency.

| To observe simple asymmetry characteristic of the traditional architecture.



Openings with simple geometries

2.6 Simple openings

Buildings are typically defined by simple articulations of fenestrations and openings. New buildings should:

- 1 Provide medium sized window openings with simple square / rectangle shapes and relatively balanced proportions.
- 2 Allocate a maximum share of 30% to 50% of the overall facade surface for openings.
- 3 Preferably use loggias with occasional use of balconies.
- 4 **TR** Feature ornamentation and colors on windows and doorways, and use patterns over walls / screenings to reflect the use of art in the vernacular architecture.

| To observe the defensive yet aesthetic character and detail of the escarpment.

intentionally blank



Solid base

2.7 Grounded base

A grounded base is a dominant feature which characterizes vernacular design. New buildings should:

- 1 Have facades that express external solid walls that are grounded to the street level.
- 2 Have a ground floor facade treatment that fosters a high-quality interface between the building and the street, with active frontages.
- 3 Include hard-wearing and robust materials for the facade.

| To express the architectural intent and character of the escarpment.

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Articulated and decorative features

2.8 Articulated parapets and use of patterns

Buildings are typically defined by articulated parapets and patterns. New buildings should:

- 1 Articulate the parapet using massing, opening variations and ornamentation to distinguish the top part of the building.
- 2 **TR** Have articulated parapets, with pointed corners or stepped crenelations.
- 3 Use patterns and art forms of Al-Qatt Al-Asiri in balanced proportions to highlight features and articulate primary frontages.

| To highlight the character of Al-Qatt-Al-Asiri art form while creating attractive facades.

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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



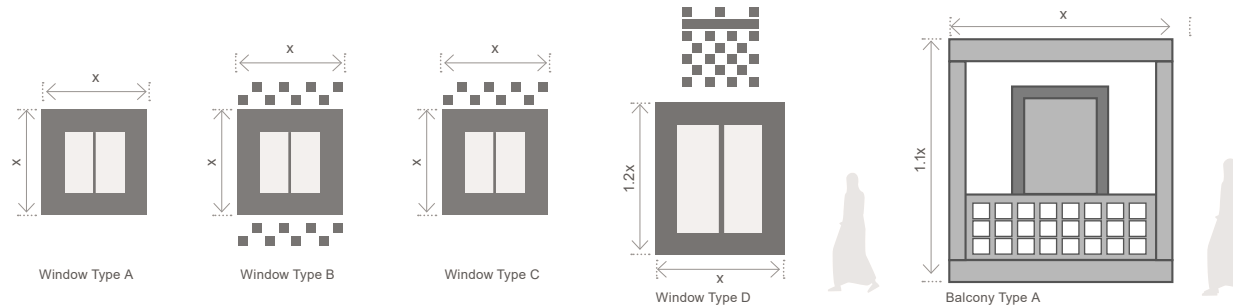
3.4 Rooftop elements

- 1 Use flat roofs and maintain a varied roofline with stepped conjoined building volumes of varying heights.
- 2 Feature articulated parapets, in stepped fashion, and horizontal banding.
- 3 Rooftop elements should be screened and set back from the parapet / building facade. Utilities on the roof should be minimized to allow for other uses. Exceptions may be allowed where the parapet is higher and can conceal 'rooftop elements' from view.

To create roofscapes which embrace the typical characteristics of the local area.



Middle



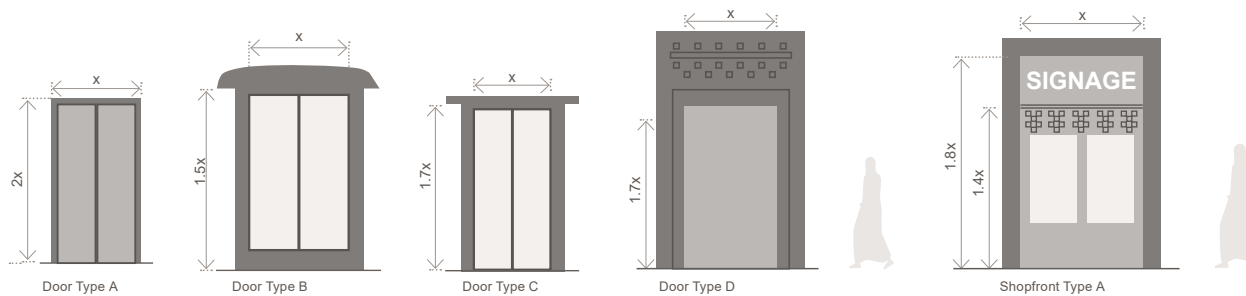
3.3 Windows and openings

- 1 Use simple geometries with square / rectangular windows.
- 2 Use recessed / punched openings.
- 3 Arrange openings in a regular pattern to be aligned with local symmetries.
- 4 Use occasional balconies, preferably on main facades.
- 5 Highlight window openings with window surrounds painted white. Traditional decorative motifs from Al-Qatt Al-Asiri art form should be displayed above window openings.

To observe the defensive yet aesthetic character and detail of the escarpment.



Base



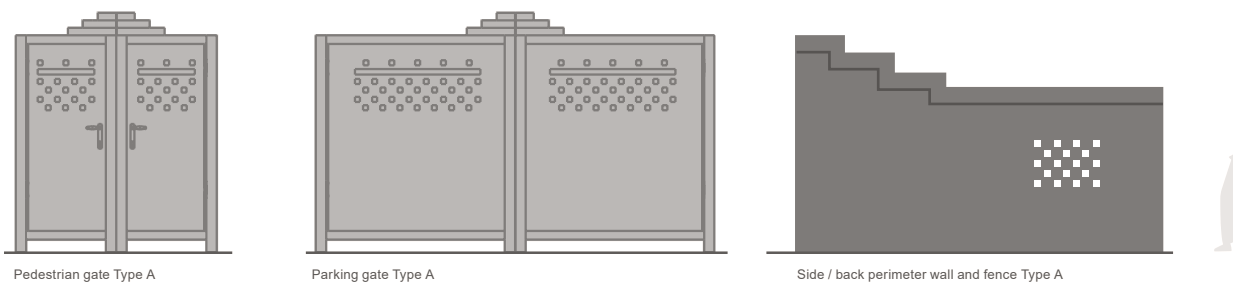
3.2 Doors and entrances

- 1 Clearly define primary entrances as part of a well-ordered street frontage with recessed openings.
- 2 Maintain a solid grounded base with simple orthogonal geometries for doors, entrances and shopfronts.
- 3 Highlight doors, entrances and shopfronts with door surrounds painted white. Traditional decorative motifs from Al-Qatt Al-Asiri art form should be displayed above doors and entrances.
- 4 Have signage above entrances for multi-tenant retail.
- 5 Canopies and awnings may be included to highlight entrances and provide shade.

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



Other elements



3.1 General details and considerations

- 1 Have an overall palette of light earth tone colors of beige, brown and white and incorporate abstracted decorative patterns and motifs of local 'Al-Qatt Al-Asiri' art as decorative patterns to highlight special elements such as windows, door shutters, and entrances.
- 2 Buildings with no perimeter wall / fence should have parking and pedestrian entrances aligned to the building's facade and integrated within the building envelope.
- 3 Perimeter wall and fence on the main frontage should have low to medium levels of transparency. Side / back boundary wall may have low, medium or high levels of transparency.

To embed other elements which are frequently part of the plot.

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



Top



Parapet Type A



Parapet Type B



Parapet Type C



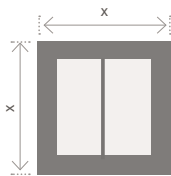
3.4 Rooftop elements

- 1 Use flat roofs and maintain a varied roofline with stepped conjoined building volumes of varying heights.
- 2 Have simple parapets integrated within the overall design of the facade. Articulated parapets should be used to highlight the top part of the building.
- 3 Rooftop elements should be screened and set back from the parapet / building facade. Utilities on the roof should be minimized to allow for other uses. Exceptions may be allowed where the parapet is higher and can conceal 'rooftop elements' from view.

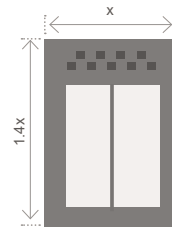
To create roofscapes which embrace the typical characteristics of the local area.



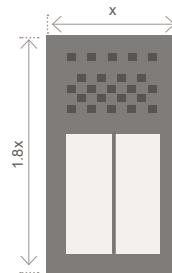
Middle



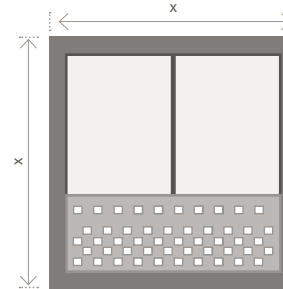
Window Type A



Window Type B



Window Type C



Balcony Type A



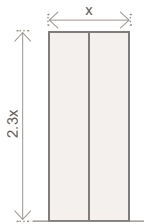
3.3 Windows and openings

- 1 Use simple geometries with square / rectangular windows.
- 2 Use recessed openings.
- 3 Arrange openings in a regular pattern to be aligned with local symmetries.
- 4 Highlight openings with ornamentation, painted frames and shutters and use of patterns over walls / screening.
- 5 Include interpretations of windows with articulated tops and projected balconies.

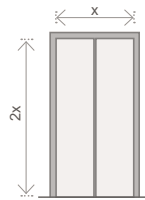
To observe simple asymmetry characteristic of the traditional architecture.



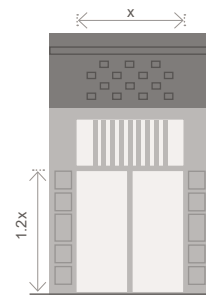
Base



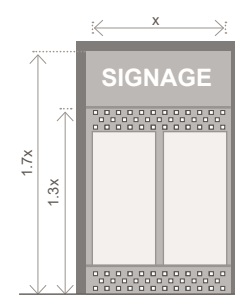
Door Type A



Door Type B



Door Type C



Shopfront Type A



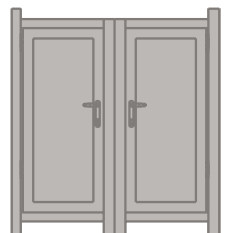
3.2 Doors and entrances

- 1 Primary entrances should be clearly defined as part of a well-ordered street frontage. Provide openings that are recessed into the building facade.
- 2 Maintain a solid grounded base with simple orthogonal geometries for doors, entrances and shopfronts.
- 3 Highlight door shutters, entrances and shopfronts with colors and local art patterns from Al-Qatt Al-Asiri art form.
- 4 Have signage above entrances for multi-tenant retail.
- 5 Canopies and awnings may be included to highlight entrances and provide shade.

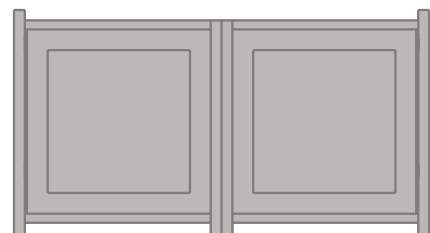
To create suitable thresholds within the base which is part of a well-ordered.



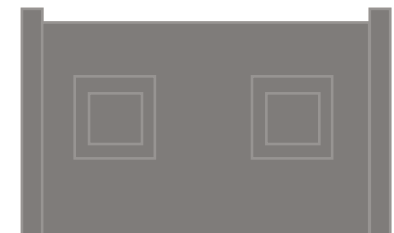
Other elements



Pedestrian gate Type A



Parking gate Type A



Side / back perimeter wall and fence Type A



3.1 General details and considerations

- 1 Have an overall palette of light earth tone colors of beige, brown and white and incorporate abstracted decorative patterns and motifs of local 'Al-Qatt Al-Asiri' art as decorative patterns to highlight special elements such as windows, door shutters, and entrances.
- 2 Buildings with no perimeter wall / fence should have parking and pedestrian entrances aligned to the building's facade and integrated within the building envelope.
- 3 Perimeter wall and fence on the main frontage could have medium to high levels of transparency. Side / back boundary wall may have low, medium or high levels of transparency.

To embed other elements which are frequently part of the plot.

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



Parapet Type A



Parapet Type B



Parapet Type C



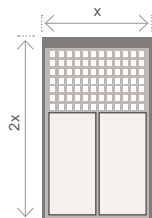
3.4 Rooftop elements

- 1 Use a flat roof displaying simple and articulated parapets with simplified detailing and accents.
- 2 Have rooftop terraces to activate the roof.
- 3 Rooftop elements should be screened and set back from the parapet / building facade. Utilities on the roof should be minimized to allow for other uses. Exceptions may be allowed where the parapet is higher and can conceal 'rooftop elements' from view.

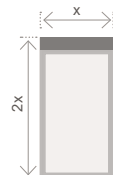
To create roofscapes which embrace the typical characteristics of the local area.



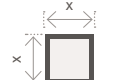
Middle



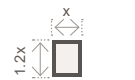
Window Type A



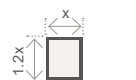
Window Type B



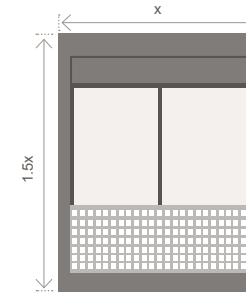
Window Type C



Window Type D



Window Type E



Balcony Type A



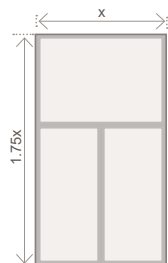
3.3 Windows and openings

- 1 Use simple geometries with square/rectangular windows.
- 2 Use recessed openings.
- 3 Arrange openings in a regular pattern to be aligned with local symmetries.
- 4 Highlight openings with ornamentation, painted frames and shutters and use of patterns over walls / screening.
- 5 Include interpretations of windows with articulated tops and projected balconies.

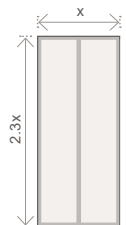
To observe simple asymmetry characteristic of the traditional architecture.



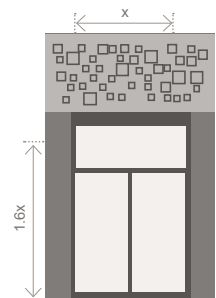
Base



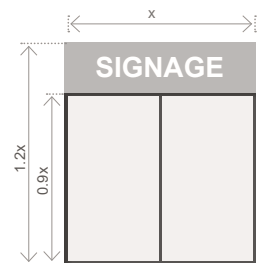
Door Type A



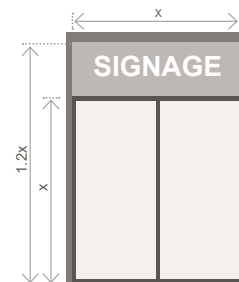
Door Type B



Door Type C



Shopfront Type A



Shopfront Type B



3.2 Doors and entrances

- 1 Primary entrances should be clearly defined as part of a well-ordered street frontage.
- 2 Maintain a solid grounded base with simple orthogonal geometries for doors, entrances and shopfronts. Openings should be recessed into the building facade.
- 3 Highlight door shutters, entrances and shopfronts with colors and local art patterns from Al-Qatt Al-Asiri art form.
- 4 Have signage above entrances for multi-tenant retail.
- 5 Canopies and awnings may be included to highlight entrances and provide shade.

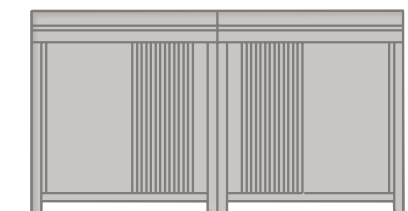
To create suitable thresholds within the base which is part of a well-ordered, coherent street scene.



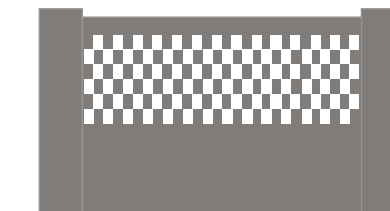
Other elements



Pedestrian gate Type A



Parking gate Type A



Side / back perimeter wall and fence Type A



3.1 General details and considerations

- 1 Have an overall palette of light earth tone colors of beige, brown and white and incorporate abstracted decorative patterns and motifs of local 'Al-Qatt Al-Asiri' art as decorative patterns to highlight special elements such as windows, door shutters, and entrances.
- 2 Buildings with no perimeter wall / fence should have parking and pedestrian entrances aligned to the building's facade and integrated within the building envelope.
- 3 Perimeter wall and fence on the main frontage could have medium to high levels of transparency. Side / back boundary wall may have low, medium or high levels of transparency.

To embed other elements which are frequently part of the plot.

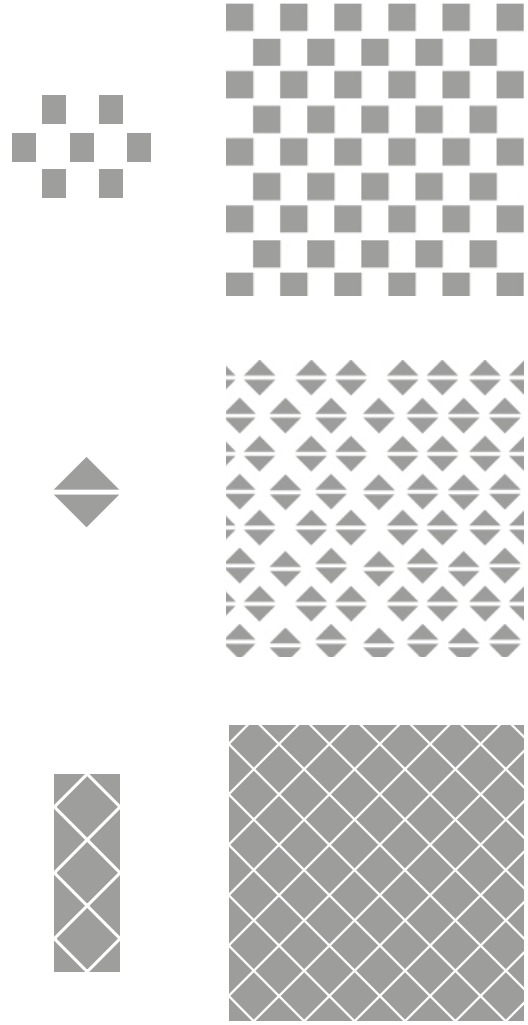
5.0 Patterns

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

5.1 Patterns

New buildings should:

- 1 Create patterns through the use of local materials and craftsmanship.
- 2 Where multiple decorative patterns are applied across a single facade, these should be complementary.
 - **TR** Focus the use of surface patterns to doors, window screens and shutter doors.
 - **TR** Refer directly to historic precedents and be limited to geometric patterns. Decorative patterns should not exceed 10% of the total facade area.
 - **TN** The transitional use of patterns should be inspired from historic precedents while preserving the balance, rhythm and movement of traditional patterns. Decorative patterns should be between 10% to 15% of the total facade area.
 - **C** The contemporary use of patterns should interpret and abstract from historic precedents while maintaining a degree of balance. Decorative patterns should be between 10% to 20% of the total facade area.
- 3 The 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)
- 4 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)



Patterns

To express the spirit and essence of the original architecture in new yet familiar ways.
 To encourage contextually sensitive contemporary design.



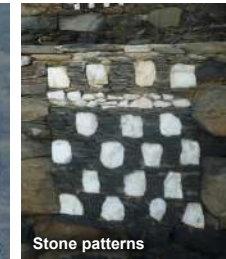
Stone patterns



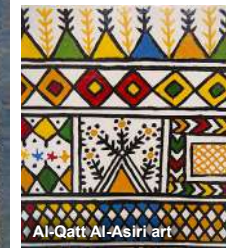
Patterns on wooden shutters



Decorative patterns



Stone patterns



Al-Qatt Al-Asiri art



Al-Qatt Al-Asiri art



Colors and patterns on wooden shutters



Stone patterns



Colored wooden shutters

Traditional patterns present in the Aseer Escarpment

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 need. Ensure that any modifications or additions to the public-owned spaces are coordinated and approved by relevant authorities.

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



6.1 Paving materials

- 1 Select robust materials for longevity, easy cleaning, repair, and sourcing.
- 2 Make subtle changes to highlight various typologies.
- 3 Contextual materials complementing the surrounding architecture to be used.

The materials palette has been designed to be simple and sensitive to the existing character area.



6.2 Vehicular access

- 1 Sidewalk must be accessible from the entrance without projecting stairs or ramps into the public space.
- 2 Safe interaction between pedestrian and vehicular areas including legibility and clear zoning of paving materials.

Primary routes allow for full vehicle access, while Barahas / Sahas have restricted access, and Zuqaqs have no access.



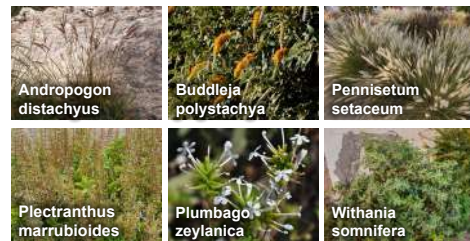
6.3 Parking

- 1 Legible, universally accessible, and safe link between parking and destinations should be planned.
- 2 Planting should respond to shading and screening where necessary.
- 3 The design of parking bays should be integrated with the landscape design, with coordinated surface materials.
- 4 Intersperse parking spots with planting and seating areas.
- 5 Sufficient clearance for pedestrian movement should be provided between parking bays and buildings.

Trees



Ornamental species



6.4 Planting

- 1 Planting should be limited to xeriscape solutions within urban areas, mainly in gathering spaces (Saha / Baraha) with a varied mix of indigenous and naturalized species.

Tree and shrub planting should complement the overall character of the Aseer Escarpment area.



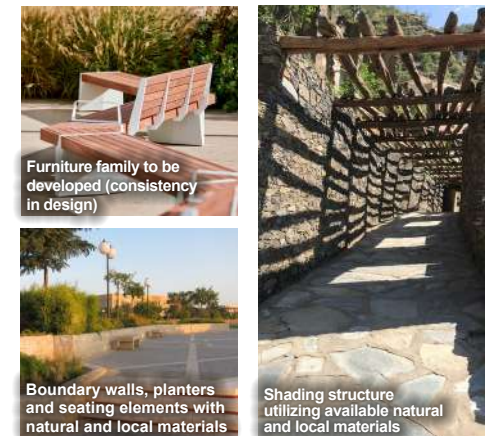
6.5 Signage

- 1 Signage must be well-integrated, coordinated and legible within the overall architectural composition (form, proportion, scale, color, material, surface, size of sign and lettering).
- 2 Signage should avoid conflicts with adjacent residential uses (orient signage towards roads, min. illumination only), and public realm tree canopies.



6.6 Lighting

- 1 Architectural lighting should target color temperatures in the 2200K-2700K range for comfort and good color rendering.
- 2 Utilize lighting temperature to differentiate routes and define in between characters.
- 3 Utilize modern lighting that is low energy, low heat, and dust resistant.
- 4 Lighting design should be consistent and comply with the general theme and character of the area.



6.7 Street furniture

- 1 Carefully selected to provide continuity, coordination and limiting clutter.
- 2 Consider consistency of design (furniture family).
- 3 Be integrated into the public realm, flexible and movable where required.
- 4 Be easily maintained and repaired with easily available / replaceable components.

7.0 Dos and Don'ts

This section focuses on basic design moves to improve architectural quality and character.

They identify common mistakes that cause visual pollution and hostile environments so that designers can eliminate or minimize them.

To raise the overall quality and character of buildings by avoiding 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 Non-contextual colors

- 1 Do not use non-contextual bright and artificial colors that detract from the natural landscape and local architecture of the Aseer Escarpment.
- 2 Have limited colors to generate a harmonious appearance of the building.
- 3 Use a spectrum of earth tone colors adhering to the recommended color palette that perfectly harmonize with each other.



7.3 Screens and closures

- 1 Have all exterior walls and perimeter walls designed to be fully integrated with the overall architectural composition.
- 2 Do not use substandard / low quality materials such as exposed precast concrete, plastic or metal sheets.
- 3 Do not use exterior surface-mounted rolling shutters.
- 4 Do not have bulky and unarticulated fences.



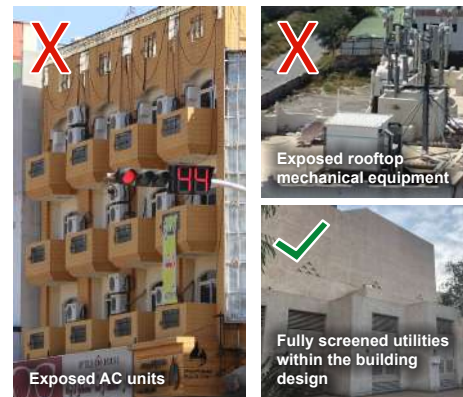
7.4 Superficial traditional elements

- 1 Use traditional elements that reflect genuine architectural character and contextual architectural shapes.
- 2 Reflect and interpret traditional elements sensitively. Have a selective emphasis of characteristics to create meaning and beauty in its new context.



7.5 Projecting and shading elements

- 1 Avoid having buildings generally lacking shading and projecting elements.
- 2 Avoid shading elements that are not integral to the building and public realm.
- 3 Incorporate light shading structures used as character-defining features to reflect the architectural style or theme consistent with other facade elements. Have shading elements such as screens and awnings be of solid but light (perforated) appearance.



7.6 Exposed service elements

- 1 Avoid uncoordinated and exposed conduits, machinery, ducts, water tanks, pipes, wires, satellite dishes and other utilities.
- 2 All site building services, utilities and mechanical equipment visible from the main road should be hidden / screened from view with the help of landscaping / enclosures.
- 3 Any roof top equipment should be setback from the edge of the building and properly screened behind the parapet or enclosure.



7.7 Topography

- 1 Respect the natural terrain, flattening of slopes should be avoided.
- 2 General slopes should be stabilized with rip-rap or terracing method.
- 3 Generally, large retaining walls should be avoided or treated in a good way that does not cause visual pollution.



Examples demonstrate one possible application to the guidelines and are for illustration only



1 Stepped parapets



2 Punched window openings with colored timber shutters, white surrounds and pattern highlights



3 Main entrances highlighted using traditional art and patterns



4 Projected timber balconies

8.0 Traditional Mixed-Use Worked Example

The massing and design of elements adopt traditional forms and patterns, traditional architectural elements and decorations, and traditional materials and colors in a sensible way.

The massing features thick inclined walls for vertical volumes and also regular rectangular walls with simple orthogonal punched openings, articulated parapets and projecting balconies.

Roof parapets feature stepped articulations and crenelations.

Facades have a strong vertical organization and localized symmetries with alignments between upper and lower floor windows. Window openings are equally spaced and highlighted using white surrounds, colored shutters and overhangs with white painted geometric patterns. The building also features occasional projecting balconies.

The base is generally grounded and solid. Frontages feature large openings along the base, supporting the commercial use at the ground floor.

The materials used for buildings feature stone, or its equivalent, as a primary building material. Patterns from traditional architecture are used to highlight windows and doors.

Perimeter walls along the main frontage are discouraged.

Public realm features stone and timber finish for street furniture elements.



Examples demonstrate one possible application to the guidelines and are for illustration only

1 Accentuated parapets accommodating terraces



2 Window openings with colored shutters, white frames and overhead panels for patterns



3 Main entrances highlighted using patterns inspired from traditional art



4 Projected enclosed balconies



8.0 Transitional Mixed-Use Worked Example

The transitional model is a progression of the traditional form, which allows simplified and less 'crafted' detail. Many of the traditional features remain present, but some variations signal an evolution and reinvention of specific elements.

Overall form should follow the compositional rules described in this document (Sections 1 & 2). The massing features thick inclined walls for vertical volumes and also regular rectangular walls with simple orthogonal punched openings, articulated parapets and projecting balconies.

Roof parapets feature stepped articulation and crenelations.

Facades have strong vertical organization and localized symmetries with alignments between upper and lower floor windows. Window openings are equally spaced, framed with white surrounds and accentuated by geometric patterns and colored shutters. The building also features occasional projecting balconies.

The base is generally grounded and solid.

Frontages feature large openings along the base, supporting the commercial use at the ground floor.

The materials used for buildings feature stone, or its equivalent, as a primary building material. Patterns from traditional architecture are used to highlight windows and doors.

Perimeter walls along the main frontage are discouraged.



Examples demonstrate one possible application to the guidelines and are for illustration only

8.0 Contemporary Mixed-Use Worked Example

The form and style of contemporary buildings should distill the essential qualities and values of vernacular architecture in a new contemporary expression and address the needs of contemporary living, reflect the changes in construction and availability of skills and materials, yet respect and celebrate the local natural character and traditions.

Overall form should follow the compositional rules described in this document (Sections 1 & 2).

The massing features simple rectangular form, orthogonal openings, articulated parapets and terraces.

Roof parapets are highlighted with the use of colors, materials and / or indentations.

Facades have strong vertical organization and localized symmetries with alignments between upper and lower floor windows. Window openings are set equally apart and are highlighted using change in materiality or color.

The base is generally grounded and solid. Frontages features large openings along the base, supporting the commercial use at the ground floor.

The materials used for buildings feature both stone finish, or its equivalent, and plaster.

Patterns abstracted from traditional architecture are used to highlight elements.

Perimeter walls along the main frontage are discouraged.

1 Parapets highlighted with indentations



2 Window openings with colored shutters, white highlighted lintels and frames



3 Highlighted main entrance



4 Highlighted loggias



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.

Ground level

The ground floor may rise above the level of the main sidewalk to provide additional privacy and security for occupants.

The change of level may be contained within the building envelope and should not be visible from the street. Sidewalks should be accessible from the entrance without projecting stairs or ramps into the public space.

If grade changes are required, universal accessibility should be ensured.

Windows and openings

Generally, windows may be placed above the ground level or above the street's eye-level height to provide privacy and security for occupants.

Windows should be equipped with appropriate shutters and screening, and may be set back behind a 'privacy strip' to allow for additional shade and privacy while still allowing for light penetration.

Small openings may be provided at the base of the building to naturally ventilate the basement.

The arrangement, sizes, proportions, materials and colors of windows and openings at the ground floor should be in compliance with guidelines and composition rules provided in the previous chapters.

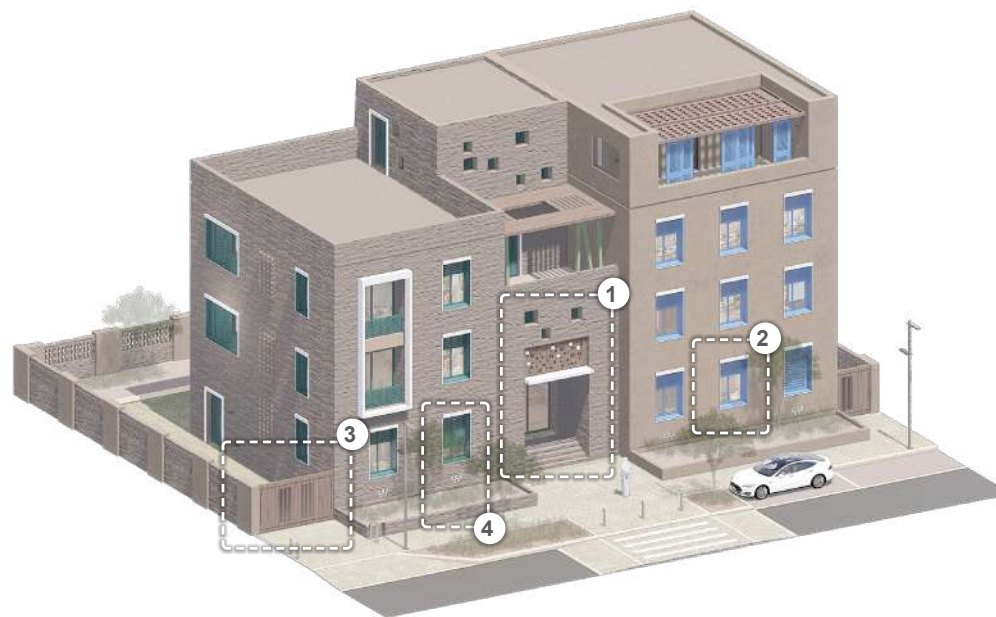
Entrances

Primary entrances, whether pedestrian or vehicular should be well defined, clearly visible, and accessible from the sidewalk. Entrances should level with and should not extend onto the sidewalk.

Canopies and awnings may be used above entry doors to highlight entrances and provide shade.

If the plot is surrounded by a perimeter wall / fence, parking and pedestrian entrances should be integrated inside the perimeter wall / fence and should be consistent with the building's overall design, material and color palette.

Buildings with no perimeter wall / fence should have parking and pedestrian entrances aligned to the building's facade and integrated within the building envelope.



Axonometric view showcasing an example of application of design considerations for low-rise contemporary style apartment building



Elevation view showcasing an example of application of design considerations for low-rise contemporary style apartment building

Perimeter walls and fences

Walls and fences should be decorative and complementary to the building's architectural style and materials and should be uniform in construction, design, material, color and pattern.

Perimeter walls and fences extending across long lengths should provide at least one of the following elements to break the wall's linear rigidity:

- Continuous landscaping at the base of the wall.
- Decorative screens or niches in the wall.

Front yards and landscape treatment

Building may be set back from the property boundary to allow for a planted front garden / yard.

The front garden / yard may act as a comfortable, functional and safe private space that is well connected to the public domain, both physically and visually to add to the overall quality of the public realm.

The choice of landscaping for the front garden / yard should respect and contribute to the street and public domain character while screening to maintain privacy.



1 Elevated ground level



2 Elevated windows to maintain privacy



3 Perimeter wall and gates consistent with the overall building design



4 Front garden / yard



A.0 Traditional Apartment Worked Example

The massing and design of elements adopt traditional forms and patterns, traditional architectural elements and decorations, and traditional materials and colors in a sensible way.

The massing features thick inclined walls for vertical volumes and also regular rectangular walls with simple orthogonal punched openings, articulated parapets and projecting balconies.

Roof parapets feature stepped articulation and crenelations.

Facades have strong vertical organization and localized symmetries with alignments between upper and lower floor windows.

Window openings are equally spaced and highlighted using white surrounds, colored shutters and overheads with white painted geometric patterns. The building also features occasional projecting balconies.

The base is generally grounded and solid. The main entrance is clearly highlighted on the facade, recessed and adorned with traditional colors and patterns.

A landscape strip, in front of the facade, partially conceals the elevated windows of the ground floor.

The materials used for buildings feature stone, or its equivalent, as a primary building material. Patterns from traditional architecture are used to highlight windows and doors.

Gates along the main frontage feature articulations, materials and patterns consistent with the overall design of the building.

1 Stepped parapets



2 Clearly visible and highlighted main entrance



3 Projecting balcony



4 Landscape strip partially concealing the elevated windows of the ground floor





Examples demonstrate one possible application to the guidelines and are for illustration only

1 Accentuated parapets accommodating terraces



2 Clearly visible and highlighted main entrance



3 Projecting balcony



4 Landscape strip partially concealing the elevated windows of the ground floor



A.0 Transitional Apartment Worked Example

The transitional model is a progression of the traditional form, which allows simplified and less 'crafted' detail. Many of the traditional features remain present, but some variations signal an evolution and reinvention of specific elements.

Overall form should follow the compositional rules described in this document (Sections 1 & 2). The massing features thick inclined walls for vertical volumes and also regular rectangular walls with simple orthogonal punched openings, articulated parapets and projecting balconies.

Roof parapets feature stepped articulation and crenelations.

Facades have a strong vertical organization and localized symmetries with alignments between upper and lower floor windows. Window openings are equally spaced, framed with white surrounds and accentuated by geometric patterns and colored shutters. The building also features occasional projecting balconies.

The base is generally grounded and solid. The main entrance is highlighted on the facade, recessed and

accentuated with interpretations of traditional colors and patterns. A landscape strip, in front of the building's facade, partially conceals the elevated windows of the ground floor. The materials used for buildings feature stone, or its equivalent, as a primary building material. Patterns from traditional architecture are used to highlight windows and doors.

Gates along the main frontage feature articulations, materials and patterns consistent with the overall design of the building.



Examples demonstrate one possible application to the guidelines and are for illustration only

A.0 Contemporary Apartment Worked Example

The form and style of contemporary buildings should distill the essential qualities and values of vernacular architecture in a new contemporary expression and address the needs of contemporary living, reflect the changes in construction and availability of skills and materials, yet respect and celebrate the local natural character and traditions.

Overall form should follow the compositional rules described in this document (Sections 1 & 2).

The massing features simple rectangular form, orthogonal openings, articulated parapets and terraces.

Roof parapets are highlighted with the use of colors, materials and / or indentations.

Facades have a strong vertical organization and localized symmetries with alignments between upper and lower floor windows. Window openings are set equally apart and are highlighted using change in materiality or color.

The base features the building's main entrance and elevated window openings partially concealed behind a landscape strip, ensuring privacy on the ground floor.

The materials used for buildings feature both stone finish, or its equivalent, and plastered walls. Patterns abstracted from traditional architecture are used to highlight elements.

Gates along the main frontage feature articulations, materials and patterns consistent with the overall design of the building.

1 Parapets highlighted with indentations



2 Clearly visible and highlighted main entrance



3 Highlighted loggias



4 Landscape strip partially concealing the elevated windows of the ground floor

