

Abha Highlands

Architectural Design Guidelines



Application Handbook - Residential Villas





Abha Highlands Architectural Character Area.



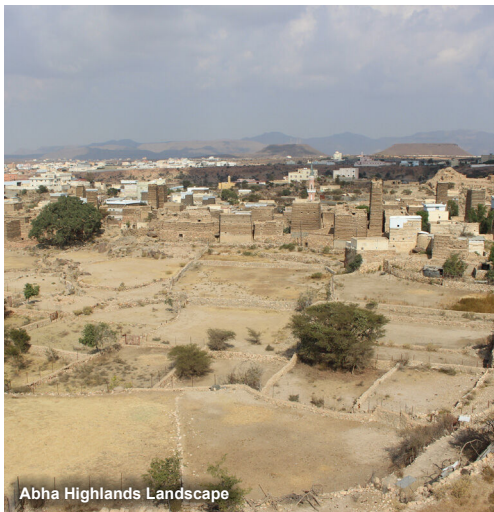
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Application Handbook - Residential Villas

Abha Highlands - Architectural Design Guidelines



Abha Highlands Landscape



Traditional architecture in the Abha Highlands

I Introduction

The purpose of this document is to help designers and builders of single-family residential villa buildings apply the architectural character of Abha Highlands to their projects.

Abha Highlands character area is located within the Sarawat mountain highlands in Aseer region. The character area, owing to the climate and occasional high precipitation rate, features unique vernacular architectural character distinguishing itself from the Sarawat mountains, in the south western region of the Kingdom.

The highland is characterized by the ridge line, hillsides, water courses, some gently sloping plains and disturbed sites. Dry slopes and boulder-strewn wet slopes, ridges and crests are densely covered by Juniperus forest, with shrub, annual and perennial under-story. However, due to human activity, natural vegetation habitats have become significantly fragmented and degraded. Two vegetation groups have been defined reflecting the dryer slopes and wetter slopes.

Within this environment, the areas occasionally hit by heavy rain (e.g., Abha, Sarat Abidah)

showcase use of angled slates as a unique and key building material to help prevent water from getting inside the houses and damaging the walls. Places like Tanaumah and Dhahran Al Janub within the same zone use stones and, traditional mud bricks, respectively as construction material.

The dominant, typical vernacular architecture showcases a tripartite massing with a clear base, middle and top articulation. A solid base, with small and high positioned openings and inserted slates in the middle and, articulated parapets at the top.

This handbook is a supplement to the Abha Highlands 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 single-family residential villa in traditional style in Abha Highlands

II Residential Villas

Residential villas are a widespread and important building type found across the Kingdom. Their design strongly influences people's experience and the character of a place.

Serving the needs of families, residential villas 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: rectangular plots of land accessed by car from a street on one edge, and interfacing with neighboring properties on the other boundaries. Villas generally sit in their development plots with setbacks on all sides as detached units. In denser locations with smaller plots, villas may also be found with zero or minimal setbacks on one or two sides, creating townhouse conditions. The buildings tend to have rectilinear form and a clear orientation to the street, with distinct sides and backs. They are typically surrounded by boundary walls.

These conditions make villas different from the historical building types that are the source of architectural characters. The primary challenge to be addressed by this handbook is the application of the architectural character to these villa conditions.

Single Family-Residential Villas

Designers should apply the architectural character and adapt its compositional principles to the unique challenges of the villa building type. Because architectural character is created at a neighborhood level, designers of villas need to contribute a coherent and attractive streetscape. The treatment of primary facades and boundary walls, and their contributions to the public realm will be crucial. The repetition of identical villas can lead to monotony and anonymity. Though consistency is good, organic variation between neighboring buildings is good for a sense of distinction and ownership. By addressing these primary challenges, single-family residential villas will strengthen the architectural character of Abha Highlands.

This handbook implements the Abha Highlands Architectural Design Guidelines in residential villas by harmonizing their needs 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 Abha Highlands.

- 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)

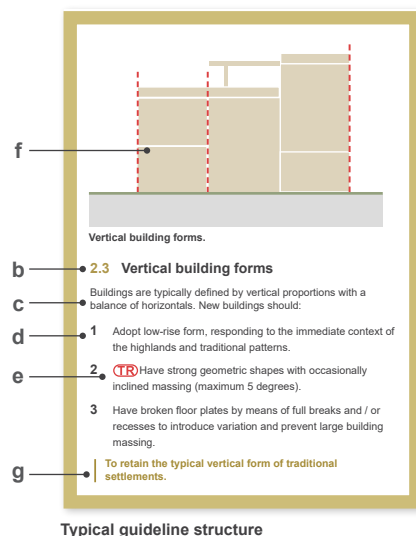
- 4 Throughout the document, **general guidelines** for each character style will be marked with the following symbols. Where a guideline is mandatory for all styles, all three symbols will be present:

TR Mandatory for Traditional style

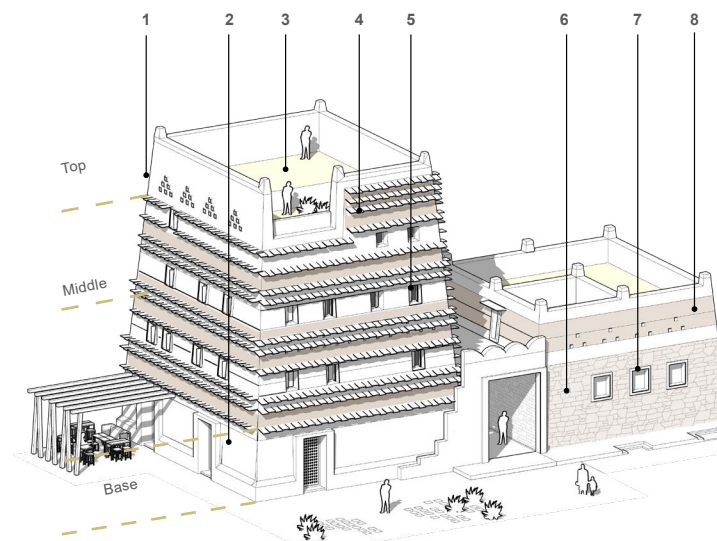
TN Mandatory for Transitional style

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 Abha Highlands Architectural Design Guideline, summarizing the key features of the architectural character.



Example of vernacular Abha Highlands architectural elements, for illustrative purposes only

Key features:

- 1 Compact massing with strong geometric shapes, tapering towards top and flat roofs.
- 2 Well ordered, balanced, clear, yet evenly transitioned distinct base, middle, and top part of the building.
- 3 Flat roofs with articulated parapets, for privacy requirements, usually painted white.
- 4 Clear horizontal articulation, of 'Al-Ragaf' elements. Horizontal articulation emphasized by color banding and decorative elements.
- 5 Facades with localized symmetrical composition. Use of volumes bringing variation through vertical accentuation.
- 6 Solid external walls with base grounded to the street. Low window-to-wall ratio: largely solid areas of wall with small windows.
- 7 Openings with simple geometries, occasionally highlighted with distinct bands.
- 8 General palette of beige, brown, and white.



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 for single-family residential villas.

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 single family residential villa are shown on this page.

COMPOSITIONAL RULES

2.3 Vertical building forms

Building massing should adopt a compact and vertical form, balanced with horizontal banding, responding to the immediate context of the highlands. At least 50% of the building form should have gently tapered walls with a maximum inclination of 5 degrees. Facades should display a clear tripartite character with a clear base, middle and top articulation. Introduce vertical breaks on facades at approximate intervals of 5m, or less. This can be achieved by changes in form, height or 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 symmetries should be maintained in the placement, size, rhythm and patterns of openings, interpreting the general asymmetry of buildings derived from vernacular architecture.

2.6 Simple openings

Openings should consist of small to medium 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.

Balconies / loggias may be incorporated in frontages and should provide hidden and intimate outdoor spaces. Projecting cantilevered balconies should be avoided. The use of recessed balconies is encouraged.

2.7 Solid facades

Generally, facades should express external solid walls that are grounded to the street level. Buildings should have solid facades with recessed / punched openings.

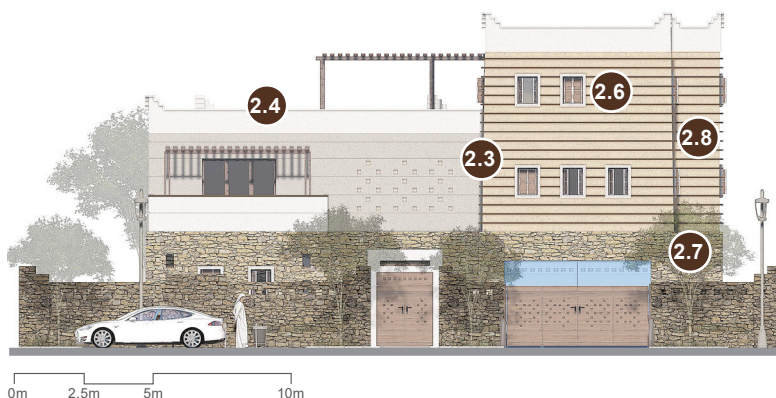
Ground floor facade treatment should provide a solid grounded base and foster a high-quality interface between the building and the street active frontages. Facade materials should be hard-wearing and robust. The base of the entire building should be highlighted using a different material or color, preferably stone or its equivalent.

2.8 Horizontal features and patterns

Buildings should include clear horizontal articulation, of 'Al-Ragaf' elements. Horizontal articulation should project at least 20 cm and up to 30 cm from the facade and should be placed at equal intervals.

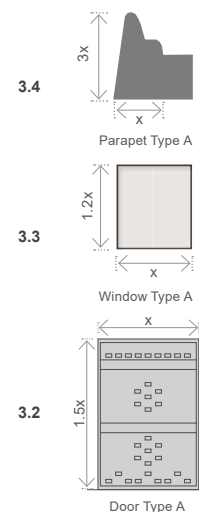


Axonometric view showcasing an example of the application of compositional rules for traditional style building



Elevation view showcasing an example of the application of compositional rules for traditional style building

Key traditional architectural features



TRADITIONAL ELEMENTS

3.1 General details and considerations

The perimeter wall and fence on the main frontage should have low to medium levels of transparency. Blank walls should be avoided.

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 ranging from 1:2 to 1:3.

The main entrance should be highlighted with ornamental door surrounds painted white.

3.3 Windows and openings

Building should have openings articulated 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.

Window openings should have typical proportions of 1:1.2 - 1:2.

3.4 Roofscape

The roofscape should feature parapets with pointed corners or stepped crenellations, painted white.

Rooftop accommodation should occupy between a quarter and a half of the building footprint. The outside should be a continuation of the external walls, not necessarily a different material.

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.

Between 60% to 70% of the facade should be composed of one consistent primary color. Building should use darker tones of primary colors representing the vernacular architecture from the proposed color palette.

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.

Between 60% to 70% of the facade should be composed of one consistent material. The use of metal cladding and curtain walls should be prohibited.

Wood, or its equivalent, should be used for elements in openings (eg. window frames, shutters and shading elements).

Stone, or other material that closely resemble the local stone in terms of texture, color, and appearance should be used to highlight the base.

5.0 Patterns

Typical patterns should be used for decoration and highlights and should not exceed 10% of the facade area.

Patterns should be faithful to traditional art patterns from Al-Qatt Al-Asiri art form.

1.0 Transitional Style

Start here to review the general guidelines of the transitional style for single-family residential villas.

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 single family residential villa are shown on this page.

COMPOSITIONAL RULES

2.3 Vertical building forms

Building massing should adopt a compact and vertical form, balanced with horizontal banding, responding to the immediate context of the highlands. Up to 30% of the building form should have gently tapered walls with a maximum inclination of 5 degrees.

Facades should display a clear tripartite character with a clear base, middle and top articulation. Introduce vertical breaks on facades at approximate intervals of 7m, or less. This can be achieved by changes in form, height or massing. Facade breaks should be around a minimum of 1.5 meters in depth and 3 meters in width, for the entire height of the facade. Variation in materials may be used to feature facade breaks.

2.4 Flat roofs

Roofs should be flat. Parapets should be articulated, provide screening for rooftop equipment and privacy for usable terrace areas.

2.5 Asymmetrical frontages

The overall form and facades should have an asymmetrical composition. Localized symmetries should be maintained in the placement, size, rhythm and patterns of openings, interpreting the general asymmetry of buildings derived from vernacular architecture.

2.6 Simple openings

Openings should consist of moderately 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.

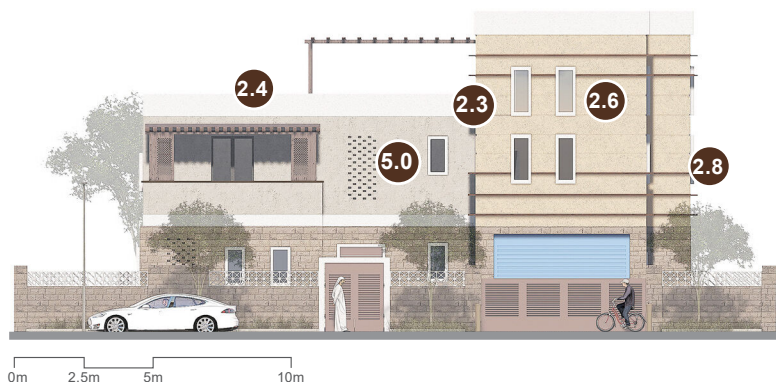
Balconies / loggias may be incorporated in frontages and should provide screened and intimate outdoor spaces. Use of voids should be encouraged to accommodate balconies.

2.7 Solid facades

Generally, facades should express external solid walls that are grounded to the street level. Building should have solid facades with recessed openings. 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. The base of the building should be highlighted using materials, colors or facade elements different from those of the upper floors. Highlights should cover either the base along the entire main frontage, or at least 50% of the base of the entire building.

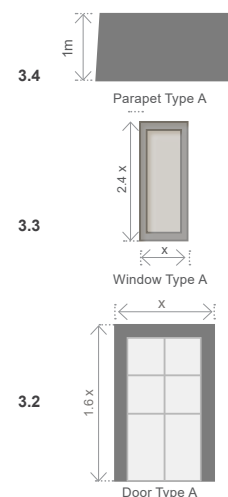


Axonometric view showcasing an example of the application of compositional rules for transitional style building



Elevation view showcasing an example of the application of compositional rules for transitional style building

Key transitional architectural features



2.8 Horizontal features and patterns

Facades should feature horizontal banding features like the traditional vernacular architecture. The feature banding extrusions can project up to 30 centimeters from the facade. Other horizontal facade features, such as horizontal shading devices, patterns or other banding are encouraged, as is horizontal alignment of openings.

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 geometry with width-to-height proportions of 1:2 - 1:3. The main entrance should be highlighted and may include ornamental door surrounds.

3.3 Windows and openings

Openings in walls should be articulated using changes in materials and / or color. A common approach is to use white or lighter colored surrounds, distinct from the facade color. Opening surrounds should be projected or recessed from the plane of the surrounding facade.

Window openings should have typical proportions of 1:1.2 - 1:3.

3.4 Roofscape

Rooftops should be accessible. Parapets should be highlighted in a different material / color. Parapets should be articulated and painted white.

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. Between 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

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

Wood, or its equivalent, should be used for elements in openings (e.g. frames, shutters and shading elements) and at least 10% of the facade should use stone, or other material that closely resemble the local stone in terms of texture, color, and appearance either to highlight the base, or on the main frontage, or as an accent feature on doors and entrances. The use of metal cladding and curtain walls should be limited to 10% of the total composition.

5.0 Patterns

Typical colors and patterns should be used for decoration and highlights and 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 for single-family residential villas.

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 single family residential villa are shown on this page.

COMPOSITIONAL RULES

2.3 Vertical building forms

Building massing should adopt a compact and vertical form, balanced with horizontal banding, responding to the immediate context of the highlands. 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.

Facades should display a clear tripartite character with a clear base, middle and top articulation. Introduce vertical breaks on facades at approximate intervals of 10m, or less. This can be achieved by changes in form, height or massing. Facade breaks should be around a minimum of 1.5 meters in depth and 3 meters in width, for the entire height of the facade. Variation in materials may be used to feature facade breaks.

2.4 Flat roofs

Roofs should be flat. Parapets should be articulated, provide screening for rooftop equipment and privacy for usable terrace areas.

2.5 Asymmetrical frontages

The overall form and facades should have an asymmetrical composition. Localized symmetries should be maintained in the placement, size, rhythm and patterns of openings, interpreting the general asymmetry of buildings derived from vernacular architecture.

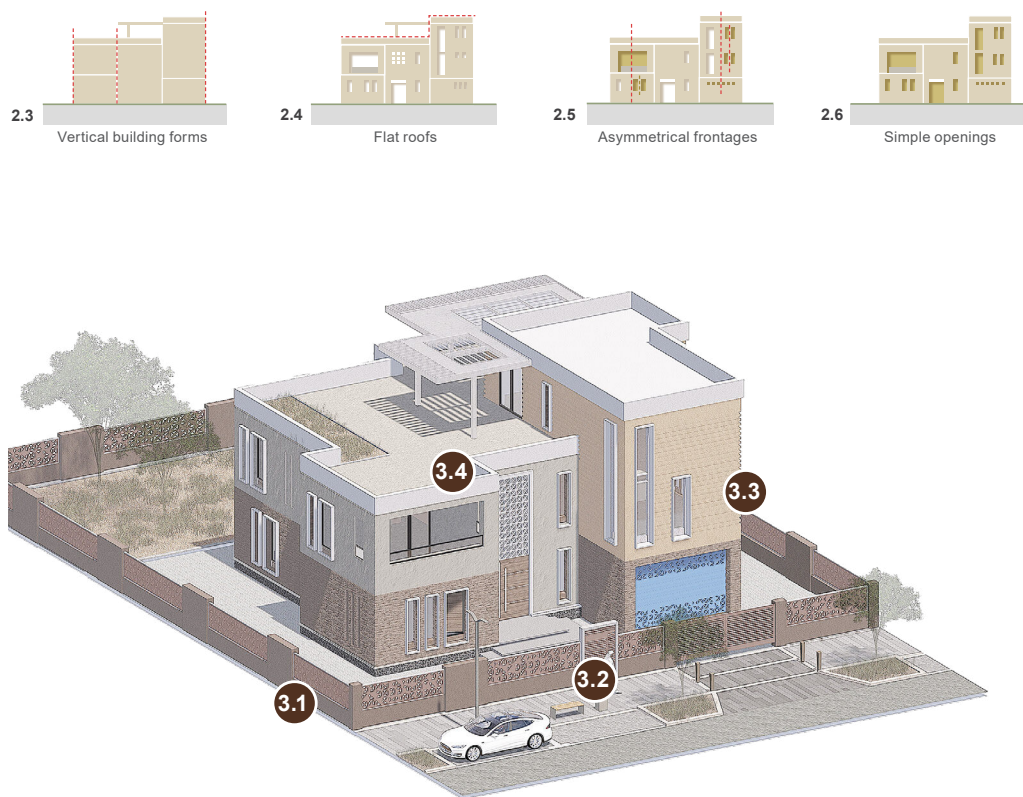
2.6 Simple openings

Openings should consist of moderately sized windows of simple geometry. Small ventilation windows may be used to bring variety to the facade. A maximum of 50% 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 should be incorporated in frontages and should provide screened and intimate outdoor spaces. Use of voids should be encouraged to accommodate balconies.

2.7 Solid facades

Generally, facades should express external solid walls that are grounded to the street level. Building should have solid facades with recessed openings. 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. The base of the building should be highlighted. Highlights should cover either the base along the entire main frontage, or at least 25% of the base of the entire building.

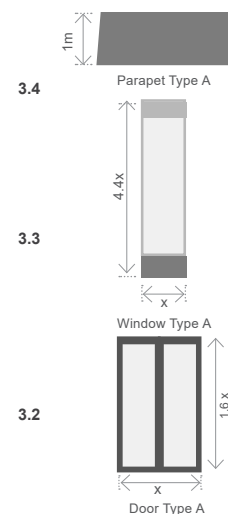


Axonometric view showcasing an example of the application of compositional rules for contemporary style building



Elevation view showcasing an example of the application of compositional rules for contemporary style building

Key contemporary architectural features



2.8 Horizontal features and patterns

Facade should display an abstract interpretation of vernacular elements and use of facade elements to display horizontal articulation.

CONTEMPORARY ELEMENTS

3.1 General details and considerations

Medium to high levels of transparency and integration into architectural and landscape design should be encouraged. Blank walls should be avoided.

3.2 Doors and entrances

Generally, doors and entrances should consist of simple orthogonal geometries with width-to-height proportions of 1:2 - 1:3.

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

3.3 Windows and openings

Building should have openings articulated with simplified detailing and accents.

Window openings should have typical proportions of 1:1.2 - 1:4. Openings may include floor to ceiling windows. Large windows (1:4) and double height windows should feature elements to divide the height to avoid disproportionate scaling.

3.4 Roofscape

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

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. Between 40% to 50% 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

Between 40% to 50% of the facade should be composed of one consistent material.

The use of metal cladding and curtain walls should be limited to 20% of the facade area.

Wood or its equivalent should be used for elements in openings (e.g. frames, shutters and shading elements).

5.0 Patterns

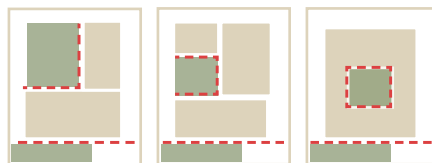
Typical colors and patterns should be used for decoration and highlights and should be no less than 10% and no more than 20% of the facade area.

Contemporary buildings should utilize abstractions of traditional art patterns.

2.0 Compositional Rules

The following guidelines provide compositional rules for building design with the Abha Highlands architectural character, specially adapted for residential villa 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.



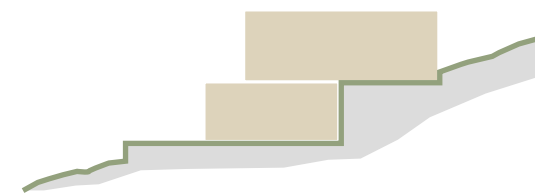
Spatially enclosed spaces and open space hierarchy

2.1 Townscape groupings

Layout of Abha Highlands residential buildings respect the natural terrain and are organized with a hierarchy of open spaces. New buildings should:

- 1 Exhibit layout with spatially enclosed outdoor spaces, courtyards, patios providing climatic comfort while allowing privacy to the inhabitants.
- 2 Feature a continuous treatment of the landscape planting strip along the front setback of each plot.
- 3 Minimize grading and alterations of natural land form. Terracing should be used to adapt to sloping sites.

| To provide privacy and climate comfort.

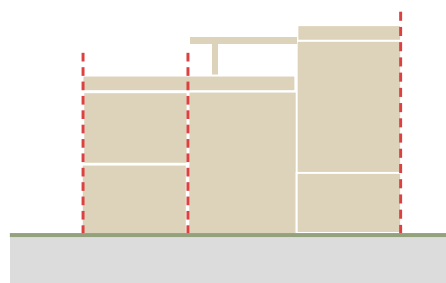


Built form respecting the natural terrain

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 Use retaining walls intentionally to manage slopes, prevent erosion, and create functional spaces, while ensuring they blend seamlessly with the surrounding natural environment.
- 5 Provide open spaces within the plot oriented towards the public frontage.

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



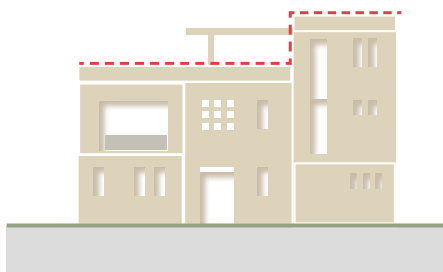
Vertical building forms

2.3 Vertical building forms

Buildings are typically defined by vertical proportions with a balance of horizontals. New buildings should:

- 1 Adopt a low-rise form, responding to the immediate context of the Abha Highlands and traditional patterns.
- 2 **TR** Have strong geometric shapes with occasionally inclined massing (maximum 5 degrees).
- 3 Building massing should incorporate steps in plan form or recesses to introduce scaling and retain the typical verticality of the regions typical building massing.

| To retain the typical vertical form of traditional settlements.



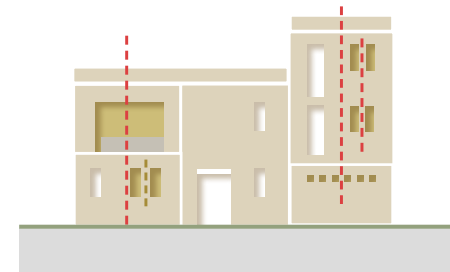
Stepping, rectilinear roofscape

2.4 Flat roofs

Roof and parapets form a distinctive component. The design of new buildings should:

- 1 Have flat roofs with varied rooflines created with stepped conjoined units and varying heights.
- 2 **TR** Have articulated parapets often painted white.
- 3 Always screen MEP equipment, utilities, delivery, refuse containers, and other types of utilities by using parapets or by locating them underground / internalized.

| To maintain the traditional flat roof forms.



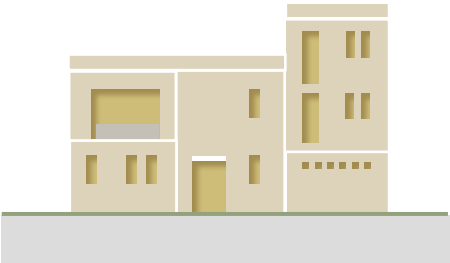
Localized symmetry in opening placement

2.5 Asymmetrical frontages

Frontages have an overall asymmetrical composition. New buildings should:

- 1 Maintain localized symmetry in the placement, size, rhythm and patterns of openings.
- 2 Insure levels of hierarchy on the facade with axial alignments of window openings on different floors.
- 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.



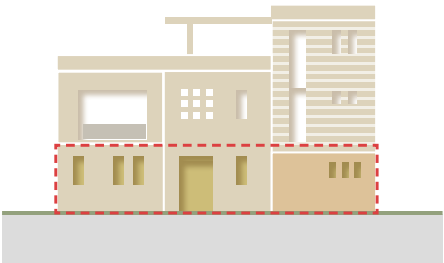
Openings with simple geometries

2.6 Simple openings

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

- 1 Provide small to 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 Include loggias instead of balconies to activate the facade.
- 4 Include recessed or projected opening surrounds to increase the compositional layering and the play of light of the facade.

To maintain the simple articulation of fenestrations and openings of typical traditional settlements.



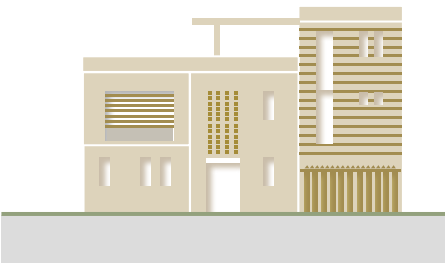
Grounded solid base

2.7 Solid facades

Solid facades are a dominant feature which characterizes vernacular design. New buildings should:

- 1 Have solid facades with recessed / punched openings.
- 2 Provide a solid grounded base as a ground floor facade treatment.
- 3 Highlight the main entrance to the building using large openings and articulations.

To express the grounded, solid architectural character of the vernacular buildings in the Abha Highlands.



Horizontal banding and patterns

2.8 Horizontal features and patterns

Buildings typically feature distinct base middle and top with horizontal features and patterns. New buildings should:

- 1  Reflect and interpret the 'Al-Ragaf' horizontal banding of the vernacular architecture with the use of shading structures, openings, patterns and materials.
- 2 Display horizontal articulation and distinct base / ground floor of the villa using functional elements and / or through use of materials.
- 3 Use patterns and art forms of Al-Qatt Al-Asiri in balanced proportions to highlight features.

To highlight the tripartite character of facades distinct to the Abha Highlands.

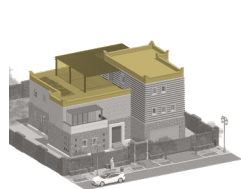
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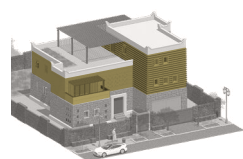
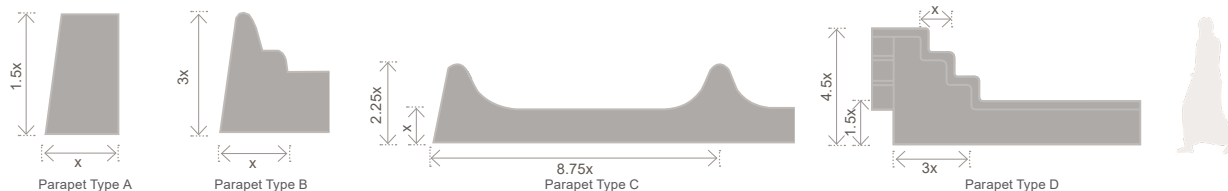
intentionally blank

3.0 Traditional Elements

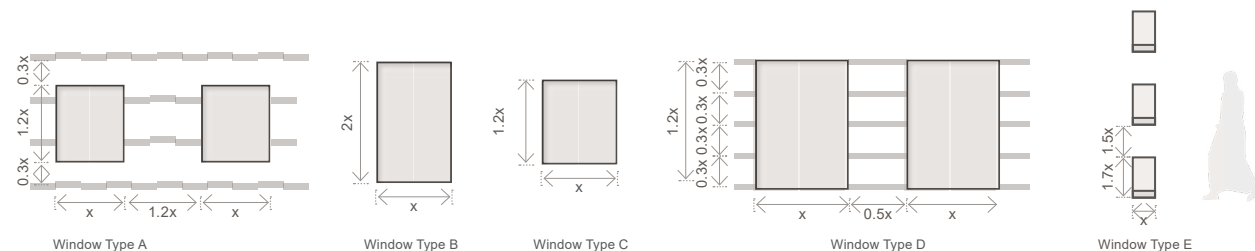
The elements illustrated are examples and should not limit other possible design solutions that follow guideline principles and historic precedents. Element measurements are illustrative and provided to indicate general proportions only



Top



Middle



3.4 Roofscape

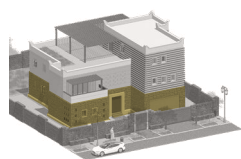
- 1 Use flat roofs and maintain a varied roofline with stepped conjoined units and varying heights.
- 2 Feature articulated parapets with pointed corners or stepped crenelations, often painted white.
- 3 Rooftop elements should be screened and set back from the parapet / building facade. Utilities on 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.

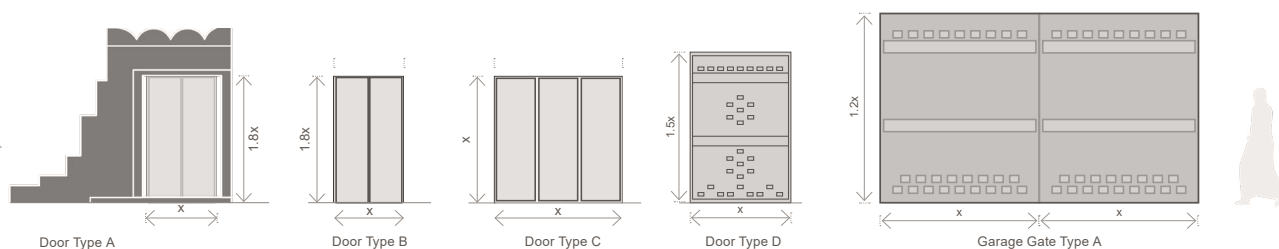
3.3 Windows and openings

- 1 Use simple geometries with square / rectangular windows with proportions of 1:1.2 - 1:2.
- 2 Use recessed / punched openings.
- 3 Arrange openings to have alignments and local symmetries.
- 4 Provide clear horizontal articulations of "Al-Ragaf" elements - projecting slates.
- 5 Highlight openings by using painted frames, colored shutters and distinct horizontal bands.

To observe simple asymmetry characteristic of the traditional architecture.



Base



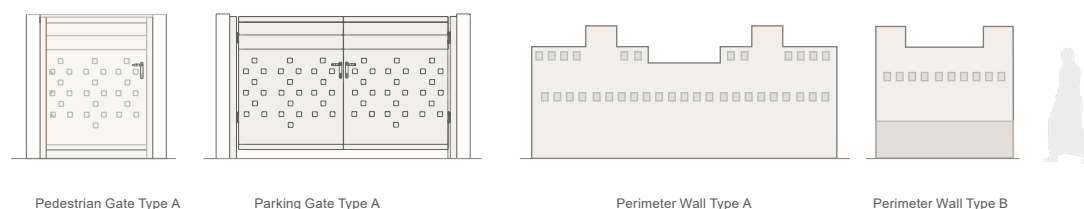
3.2 Doors and entrances

- 1 Clearly define primary entrances with centralized locations.
- 2 Maintain a solid grounded base with simple orthogonal geometries for doors and entrances.
- 3 Highlight entrances with decorative elements such as articulated parapets and tops and pointed corners painted white.

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



Other elements



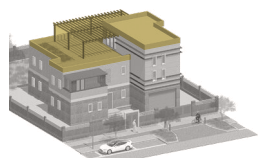
3.1 General details and considerations

- 1 Incorporate local art 'Al-Qatt Al-Aseeri' as decorative patterns to highlight special elements such as windows and entrances.
- 2 Use local stone, or other material that resemble stone, and plaster for the base of the building, mud plaster / bricks for the facades and white plaster for parapets.
- 3 Boundary walls, their gates and portals should be designed to complement the overall villa 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



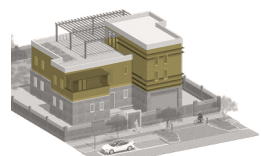
Top



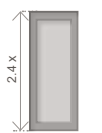
Parapet Type A



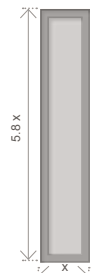
Parapet Type B



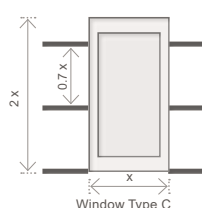
Middle



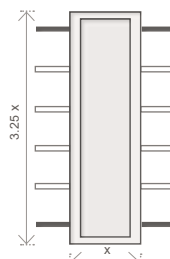
Window Type B



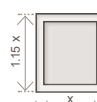
Window Type A



Window Type C



Window Type D



Window Type E



3.4 Roofscape

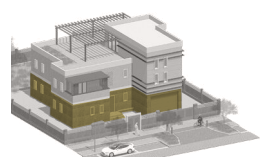
- 1 Parapet could have material continuous with the wall below and integral to overall design.
- 2 Maintain a varied roofline with stepped conjoined units and varying heights.
- 3 Rooftop elements should be screened and set back from the parapet / building facade. Utilities on the roof should be minimized to allow for other uses. Exceptions may be allowed where the parapet is higher and can conceal 'rooftop elements' from view.

To create functional roofscales which embrace the typical characteristics of the local area.

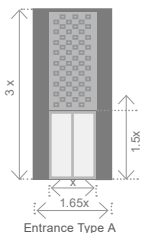
3.3 Windows and openings

- 1 Use simple geometries with square / rectangular windows and recessed openings.
- 2 Arrange openings to have alignments and local symmetries.
- 3 Display horizontal banding using design elements, for example, shading devices, facade articulations, and use of new materials interpreting the traditional Al-Ragaf elements.
- 4 Integrate balconies / loggias within the facades with vertical proportions.
- 5 Use grounded facades with moderate sized openings.

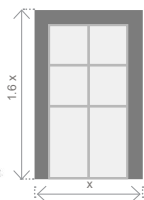
To provide a contemporary interpretation of architecture to maintain the traditional source of the local area.



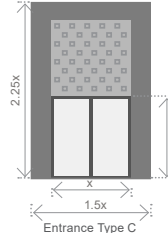
Base



Entrance Type A



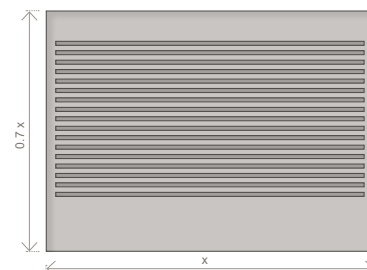
Entrance Type B



Entrance Type C



Entrance Type D



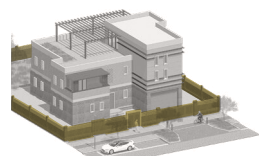
Garage Gate



3.2 Doors and entrances

- 1 Clearly define primary entrances with centralized locations.
- 2 Maintain a solid grounded base with simple orthogonal geometries for doors and entrances.
- 3 Highlight entrances with high floor heights, strong recesses and decorative patterns.

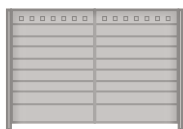
To create suitable thresholds within the base which is part of a well-ordered, coherent street scene and responds to the local character of the area.



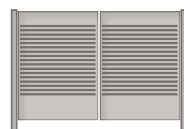
Other elements



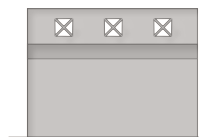
Pedestrian Gate Type A



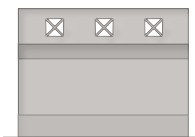
Parking Gate Type A



Parking Gate Type B



Perimeter Wall Type A



Perimeter Wall Type B



3.1 General details and considerations

- 1 General palette of beige, brown and white.
- 2 Incorporate interpretations of decorative patterns and motifs of local 'Al-Qatt Al-Asiri' art as decorative patterns to highlight special elements such as windows and entrances.
- 3 Boundary walls, their gates and portals should be designed to complement the overall villa 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



Parapet Type 1



Parapet Type 2



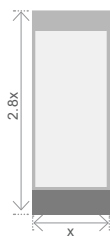
Middle



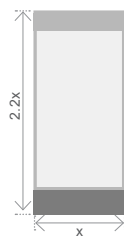
Window Type A



Window Type B



Window Type C



Window Type D



3.4 Roofscape

- 1 Use simple and articulated parapets with simplified detailing and accents.
- 2 Maintain a varied roofline with stepped conjoined units and varying heights.
- 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 functional roofscapes which embrace the typical characteristics of the local area.

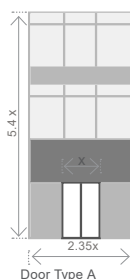
3.3 Windows and openings

- 1 Use simple geometries with more elongated, rectangular windows and recessed openings.
- 2 Arrange openings to have alignments and local symmetries.
- 3 Integrate loggias within the facades with vertical proportions.
- 4 Use grounded facades with moderate sized openings.
- 5 Provide interpretations of horizontal elements with the use of shading devices, opening patterns and rhythm and materials.

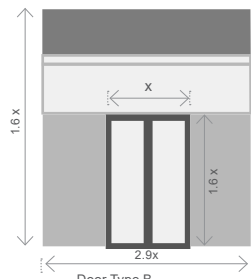
To provide a contemporary interpretation of architecture to maintain the traditional source of the local area.



Base



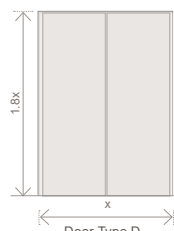
Door Type A



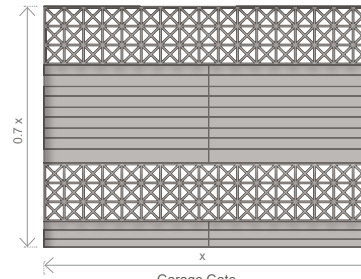
Door Type B



Door Type C



Door Type D



Garage Gate



3.2 Doors and entrances

- 1 Clearly define primary entrances with centralized locations.
- 2 Maintain a solid grounded base with simple orthogonal geometries for doors and entrances.
- 3 Highlight entrances with high floor heights, strong recesses and decorative patterns.

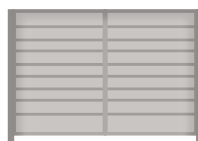
To create suitable thresholds within the base which is part of a well-ordered, coherent street scene and responds to the local character of the area.



Other elements



Pedestrian Gate Type A



Parking Gate Type A



Pedestrian Gate Type B



Perimeter Wall Type A



Perimeter Wall Type B



3.1 General details and considerations

- 1 General palette of beige, brown and white.
- 2 Incorporate abstracted decorative patterns and motifs of local 'Al-Qatt Al-Asiri' art as decorative patterns to highlight special elements such as windows and entrances.
- 3 Boundary walls, their gates and portals should be designed to complement the overall villa design.

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

4.0 Colors and Materials

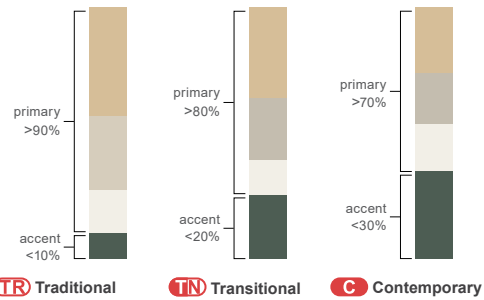
4.1 Colors

The color palette of the Abha Highlands is closely linked to traditional building materials such as mud bricks, stone, wood and off-white render. The surrounding landscape is also an important influence, particularly the desaturated tones of brown, grey and orange found throughout the highlands fields.

- 1 **TR** The base should be brown in color, or similar to mud bricks or stone bases, with rendered earth and off-white tones walls above.
- 2 Generally, use natural colors and finishes for the main body of the building with occasional use of brighter colors for accents on specific elements.
- 3 A maximum percentage on accent color, measured as a percentage of the total facade area, is allowed for each style:
 - **TR** <10%
 - **TN** <20%
 - **C** <30%
- 4 Avoid using brightly colored, mirror-like reflective glass for windows that does 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

4.2 Material

This palette summarizes the prevalent materials found in the architecture of the Abha Highlands.

- 1 **TR** The six large images reflect materials used in traditional architecture; new traditional style buildings should employ these materials as faithfully as possible. At least 70% of the facade should be composed of one consistent material.
- 2 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.

- 3 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.
- 4 Local and sustainable sourced materials should be 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.
 - To respond to the landscape and architectural character.

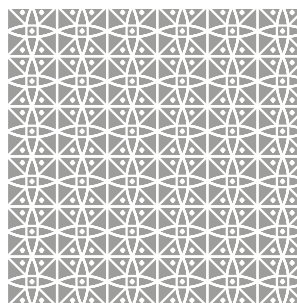
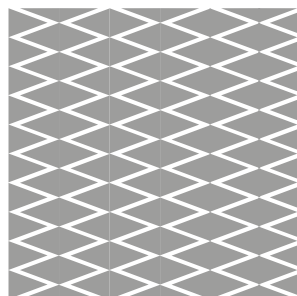
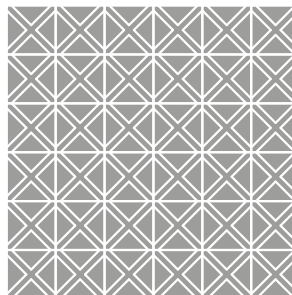
5.0 Patterns

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

5.1 Patterns

New buildings should:

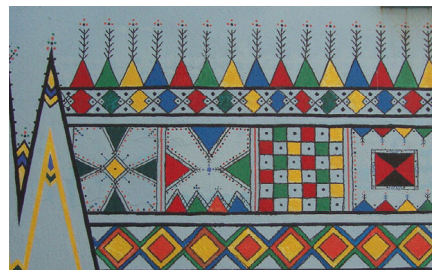
- 1 Create patterns through the use of local materials and craftsmanship.
- 2 Where multiple decorative patterns are applied across a single facade, these should be complementary.
 - **TR** Focus the use of surface patterns to doors, window screens and shutter doors.
 - **TR** Refer directly to historic 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.



Traditional patterns present in the Abha Highlands

6.0 Public Realm

This section focuses on the contributions of single-family residential villas 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

- 1 Select robust materials for longevity, easy cleaning, repair, and sourcing.
- 2 Materials should provide varying textures within a simple color palette to compliment the area's architectural character.

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.

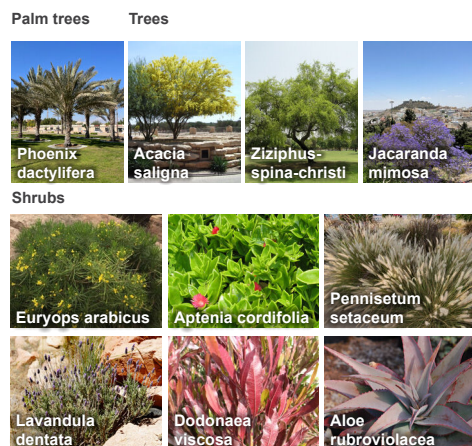
Primary routes allow for full vehicular access, while Barahas / Sahas have restricted access, and Zuqaqs have no access.



6.3 Parking

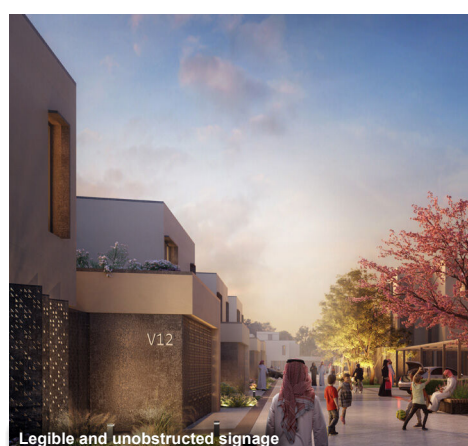
For parking area within the private property ownership:

- 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.



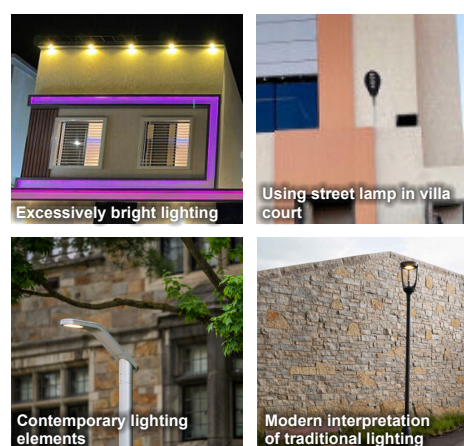
6.4 Planting

- 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.
- 2 Planting in adjacent courtyards should follow the palette of the Abha Highlands.
- 3 Planting should be used to enhance the privacy of the building.



6.5 Signage

- 1 Signage must be well-integrated and coordinated within the overall architectural composition (form, proportion, scale, color, material, surface, size of sign and lettering).
- 2 Signage should always be placed on the main frontage, near the main entrance.
- 3 Signage should be easily legible from the street and unobstructed.



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

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 Abha Highlands.
- 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 Do not use neo-traditional elements that don't reflect the genuine local architectural character such as non-contextual architectural shapes, elements and styles, mere replicas with wrong proportions and decorations.
- 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 services 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 rooftop 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 shall be avoided or treated in an appropriate way that does not cause visual pollution.



8.0 Traditional Small Residential Villa 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, simple orthogonal punched openings, grounded base, distinct tripartite facade character, and articulated parapets. Roof parapets display articulations in the form of pointed corners, and are painted white. Massing also features rooftop rooms constituting half or a quarter of the floor space with outside walls

as continuation of external walls. The building facades have a strong vertical organization. Facades have localized symmetries with some alignments between upper and lower floor windows. Window openings are set equally apart and are highlighted with timber shutters and occasional white surrounds.

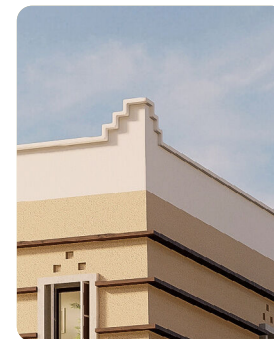
Facades display a distinct base, middle and top part. The base of the building is generally solid, grounded and has a stone finish, or its equivalent. The middle part of the building features Al-Ragaf element - projecting slates at equal intervals providing horizontal banding

to mud finish walls, a distinct feature of the Abha Highlands. Bands around windows are occasionally highlighted with white paint. The top part features white painted parapets.

Patterns from traditional architecture are used to highlight main entrances and other elements.

Perimeter walls are constructed using stone finish, or its equivalent. Garage is incorporated within the building massing. Entrance gates and perimeter walls are articulated using traditional patterns.

- 1 White painted parapets with pointed corners



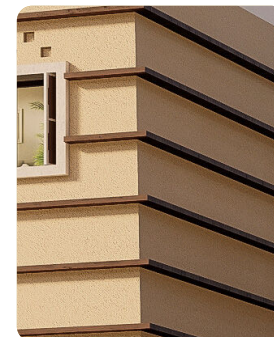
- 2 Windows and openings highlighted with white surrounds and banding



- 3 Highlighted doors and entrances with door surrounds painted white and traditional patterns



- 4 Projecting slates providing horizontal banding appearance





8.0 Traditional Large Residential Villa 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 simple orthogonal punched openings, grounded base, distinct tripartite facade character, and articulated parapets.

Roof parapets display articulations in the form of pointed corners, and are painted white. Massing also features rooftop rooms constituting half or

a quarter of the floor space with outside walls as continuation of external walls. The building facades have a strong vertical organization. Facades have localized symmetries with some alignments between upper and lower floor windows. Window openings are set equally apart and are highlighted with timber shutters and occasional white surrounds.

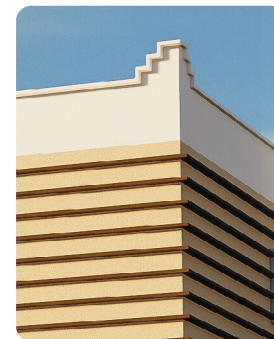
Facades display a distinct base, middle and top part. Base of the building is generally solid, grounded and has a stone finish or its equivalent. The middle part of the building features Al-Ragaf element - projecting

slates at equal intervals providing horizontal banding to mud finish walls, a distinct feature of the Abha Highlands. Bands around windows are occasionally highlighted with white paint. Top part features white painted parapets.

Patterns from traditional architecture are used to highlight main entrances and other elements.

Perimeter walls should have a stone finish or a finish that is equivalent to stone. Garage is incorporated within the building massing. Entrance gates and perimeter walls are articulated using traditional patterns.

- 1 Parapets interpreted from the traditional patterns



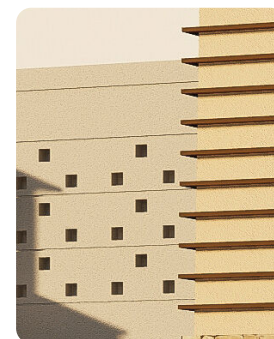
- 2 Opening proportions typical to traditional buildings



- 3 Perimeter wall design and material interpreted from the traditional compound walls



- 4 Special elements like inclined massing, Al-Ragaf elements, small ventilation openings, particular to the local architecture





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

8.0 Transitional Small Residential Villa 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.

The massing features simple rectangular volumes. Other features include simple orthogonal openings, grounded base, distinct tripartite facade character, and distinct parapets. Roof parapets are simple and highlighted with white / lighter gradations of earth tone colors.

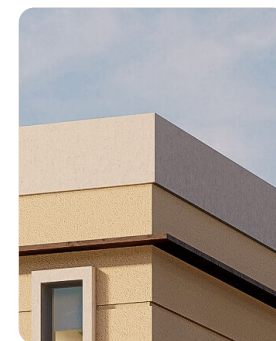
The building facades have a strong vertical organization. Facades have localized symmetries with alignments between upper and lower floor windows. Window openings are set equally apart and are highlighted with white surrounds / frames.

Facades display a distinct base, middle and top part. The base of the building is generally solid, grounded and highlighted using change of color (generally white) or material. Main entrance is highlighted using massing and traditional patterns. The middle part of the building features horizontal banding in the form of projecting

elements or wall articulation at equal intervals providing horizontal banding appearance. The top part features white painted parapets.

The materials used for buildings feature light earth tones used to distinguish the base, middle and top part of the building. Patterns inspired from local traditional art forms are used to highlight main entrances and other elements. Perimeter walls should have a stone finish or a finish that is equivalent to stone and plaster finish and articulated using landscape and patterns. Garage is incorporated within the building massing.

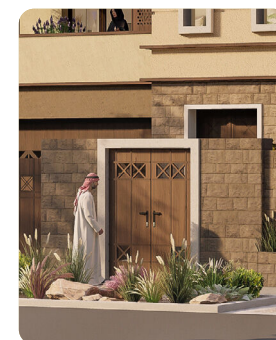
1 Highlighted parapets with white paint



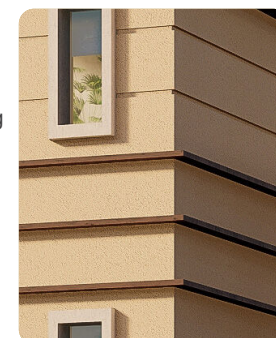
2 Windows and openings highlighted with white surrounds



3 Highlighted doors and entrances with door surrounds painted white and traditional patterns



4 Projecting elements and indentations providing horizontal banding articulation





8.0 Transitional Large Residential Villa 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.

The massing features simple rectangular volumes. Other features include simple orthogonal openings, grounded base, distinct tripartite facade character, and distinct parapets. Roof parapets are simple and highlighted with white / lighter gradations of earth tone colors.

The building facades have a strong vertical organization. Facades have localized symmetries with alignments between upper and lower floor windows. Window openings are set equally apart and are highlighted with white surrounds / frames.

Facades display a distinct base, middle and top part. The base of the building is generally solid, grounded and highlighted using change of color (generally white) or material. Main entrance is highlighted using massing and traditional patterns. The middle part of the building features horizontal banding in the form of projecting

elements or wall articulation at equal intervals providing horizontal banding appearance. The top part features white painted parapets.

The materials used for buildings feature light earth tones used to distinguish the base, middle and top part of the building. Patterns inspired from local traditional art forms are used to highlight main entrances and walls. Perimeter walls should have a stone finish or a finish that is equivalent to stone and plaster finish and articulated using landscape and patterns. Garage is incorporated within the building massing.

1 Parapets interpreted from the traditional patterns



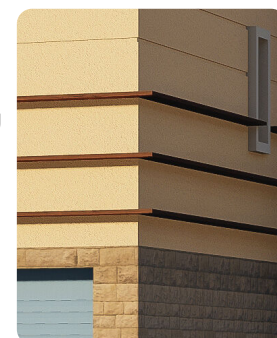
2 Opening proportions typical to traditional buildings



3 Perimeter wall design and material interpreted from the traditional compound walls



4 Projecting elements and indentations providing horizontal banding articulation





8.0 Contemporary Small Residential Villa 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.

The massing features rectangular volumes with occasional inclined walls as highlights. Other features include simple orthogonal openings, grounded distinct base, and horizontal banding.

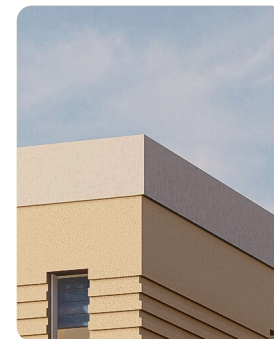
The building facades have a strong vertical organization. Facades have localized symmetries with alignments between upper and lower floor windows. Placement of window openings accentuates the horizontal banding appearance.

The base of the building is generally solid, grounded and highlighted using change of color (generally white) or material. Main entrance is highlighted using facade breaks and abstract patterns. The middle part of the building features projecting elements and indentations at equal intervals providing horizontal banding

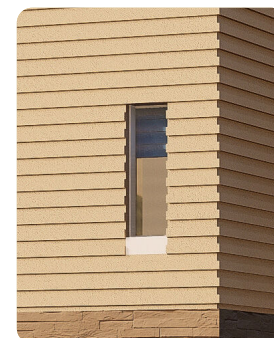
appearance. Roof parapets are simple, in continuation with the external walls.

The materials used for buildings feature light earth tones and / or painted with light gradations of earth tones or off white tones. Patterns abstracted from local traditional art forms are used to highlight main entrances and other elements. Perimeter walls should have a stone finish or a finish that is equivalent to stone and plaster finish and articulated using landscape and patterns. Garage is incorporated within the building massing.

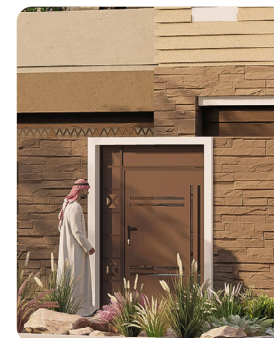
- 1 Occasional inclined massing with simple parapets



- 2 Windows and openings highlighted lintels and sills



- 3 Highlighted doors and entrances with patterns abstracted from traditional art



- 4 Shading elements and indentations providing horizontal banding articulation





8.0 Contemporary Large Residential Villa 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.

The massing features rectangular volumes with occasional inclined walls as highlights. Other features include simple orthogonal openings, grounded distinct base, and horizontal banding.

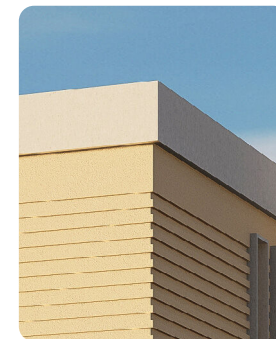
The building facades have a strong vertical organization. Facades have localized symmetries with alignments between upper and lower floor windows. Placement of window openings accentuates the horizontal banding appearance.

The base of the building is generally solid, grounded and highlighted using change of color (generally white) or material. Main entrance is highlighted using facade breaks and abstract patterns. The middle part of the building features projecting elements and indentations at equal intervals providing horizontal banding

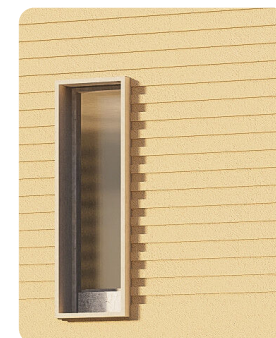
appearance. Roof parapets are simple, in continuation with the external walls.

The materials used for buildings feature light earth tones and / or painted with light gradations of earth tones or off white tones. Patterns abstracted from local traditional art forms are used to highlight main entrances and other elements. Perimeter walls should have a stone finish or a finish that is equivalent to stone and plaster finish and articulated using landscape and patterns. Garage is incorporated within the building massing.

1 Parapets interpreted from the traditional patterns



2 Walls displaying horizontal articulation and openings interpreted from traditional architecture



3 Windows incorporating traditional patterns



4 Articulated perimeter walls and entrance gates

