

Central Najdi

Architectural Design Guidelines



Application Handbook - Low-rise Buildings





Central Najdi Architectural Character Area



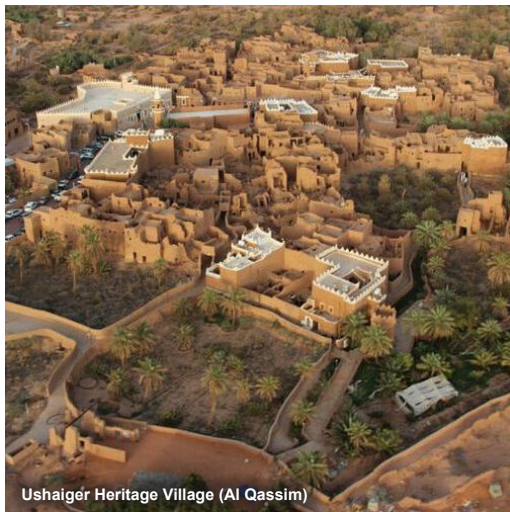
Contents

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



Application Handbook - Low-rise Buildings

Central Najdi - Architectural Design Guidelines



Ushaiger Heritage Village (Al Qassim)



Al Ghat (Riyadh)

I Introduction

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

Central Najdi refers to the heart of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Arabian Peninsula more generally, bordered by the Asir, Hijaz mountain ranges to the West and the Gulf coast to the east. It is generally less humid than the coastal areas of the Kingdom, and is ecologically diverse with various mountain plateaus, ancient waterways and wadis, terraced agriculture as well as acacia trees and shrubs which act as an important wind and dust buffer in the region.

Many of the region's historic settlements are built in relation to its ancient waterways and show a great skill in harvesting and adapting local materials for building. Some of the region's most important and historically preserved sites include Ushaiger, Ad-Diriyah, Riyadh, Al Subaei, as well as historic areas in Qassim region. Apart from the waterways, routes and cities in the region were directly linked to the growth of Islam from the Peninsula, and many of

the existing paths are based on historic pilgrim routes to Mecca and Madinah. Central Najdi architectural style, composed of upward sloping structure is usually made of sun-dried mud. Its design and motifs is what sets its architectural style apart with triangular bands, punched or square peepholes (turmah), five or three stepped parapets, exposed wooden drainage (mizrab) and organic building shapes. Najdi structures are also known for their distinct ventilation systems engineered through shafts and inner courtyards. Narrow streets in between dwellings were also carefully calibrated to funnel air through certain passages.

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



[Link to Full Guidelines](#)



[Link to Regulating Plans](#)



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

II Low-rise Buildings

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

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

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

Low-rise mixed-use buildings

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

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

Low-rise apartment buildings

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

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

III How to use the guidelines

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

- 1 Consult the regulating plan to determine which architectural style options (Traditional, Transitional, or Contemporary) are permitted at your project location.
- 2 Select from the permitted Architectural styles, and review the list of general guidelines on the style start pages (Pages 5, 6 & 7).
- 3 Assess your design according to each of the following guideline categories:

- **Composition:** do your building massing and façade design follow compositional principles? (Section 2)
- **Elements:** do the individual parts of your building properly interpret the architectural character for your style? (Section 3)
- **Materials and Colors:** does your building use acceptable materials and colors in the proportions defined? (Section 4)
- **Patterns:** do any elements show inspiration from local craftsmanship and culture? (Section 5)
- **Public Realm:** does your building contribute to the quality and character of the street and the neighborhood? (Section 6)
- **Dos and Don'ts:** have you avoided common mistakes that lower the quality and character of buildings? (Section 7)
- **Worked examples:** these are illustrations showing one possibility of how the guidelines can be applied, provided for inspiration. (Section 8)

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

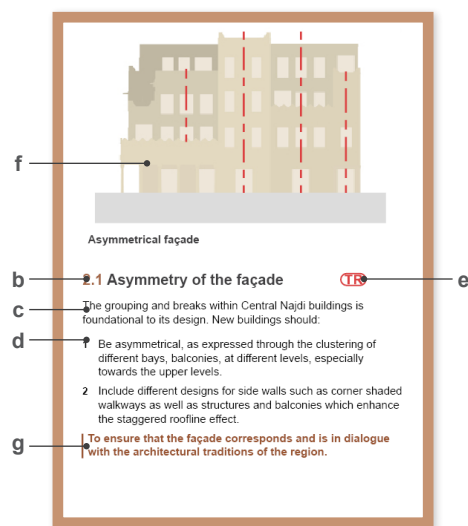
TR Mandatory for Traditional style

TN Mandatory for Transitional style

C Mandatory for Contemporary style

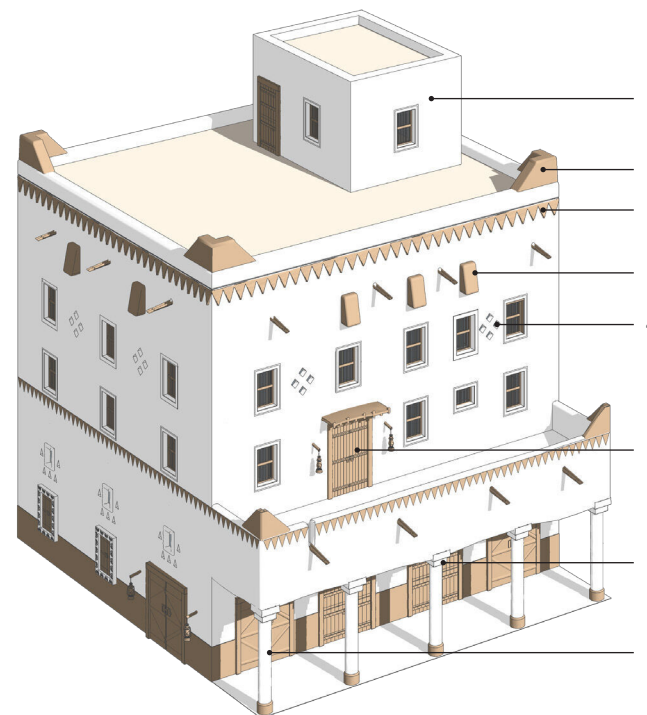
- 5 Guidelines are organized according to the following parts:

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



Typical guideline structure.

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



Key features:

- 1 Flat roofs and open occupiable spaces.
- 2 Tall and crenelated parapets carved as part of the structure with a rain drainage function.
- 3 Triangular bands usually used to indicate the different tiers or levels of the structure.
- 4 Fenestrations which can be decorative or functional to provide ventilation and light within the structure.
- 5 Traditional elements such as turmahs (privacy peephole or lookout point) and mizrabs (drainage spouts).
- 6 Doors made of tamarisk wood with timber shutters and some geometric and triangular design.
- 7 Crowns of columns made of stone blocks that may be carved and decorated.
- 8 Arcades composed of orthogonal or triangular arches.



Traditional **TR**

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

START AT PAGE 5



Transitional **TN**

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

START AT PAGE 6



Contemporary **C**

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

START AT PAGE 7

1.0 Traditional Style

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

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

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

COMPOSITIONAL RULES

2.1 Asymmetry of the façade

Effort should be made to modify the typically repetitive bay structure of low-rise buildings into an asymmetrical façade. This can be done through asymmetric location of main entrances, window groupings and taller building elements.

2.2 Grouping of elements

Central Najdi has a strong vertical and square expression. Sections are grouped together, gradually increasing in height towards the highest rooftop point. The building should express the variation in height and upon the façade across multiple levels with elements consistently grouped together. These include: fenestrations, parapet and corner merlons, for example.

2.5 Ornamentation

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

2.6 Wall to ground relationship

For the traditional style, the base can comprise a different stone or clay material to the remainder of the structure. The use of columns, in the shaded arcade, visually connects the upper level to the ground.

2.7 Solid façades

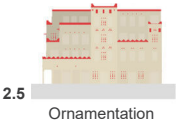
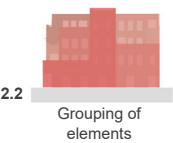
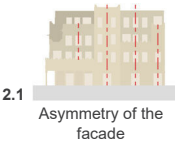
Building façades should have opening proportions of 10-15%. This should be concentrated on the main façade, with less openings on the sides and back of the building.

2.8 Geometry of components

Traditional Central Najdi proportions for openings, windows, doors, should adhere to square/rectangular geometry. These elements as well as balconies, bays and staircases are envisioned for daily accessible use, and should correspond to the interior layout. Passages and openings should be wide and generous.

2.9 Rooftscape and rooftop elements

The parapet line and roof silhouette should be flat and rectangular. Each level should gradually step towards the top, the rooflines have banding and corner merlons with different widths for projecting bays and rooftop elements.



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



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

TRADITIONAL ELEMENTS

3.2 Doorways and entrances

Storefronts should be placed around the main façade, usually articulated through a shaded walkways or arcade.

3.3 Windows and openings

Generally, use larger, orthogonal windows for main rooms, and slimmer, rectangular ones for side walls, both should feature wooden shutters.

3.4 Rooftop elements

Rooftops should have flat banding and stepped merlons at corners. Where accessible roof space is provided, protect the privacy with high parapet walls.

COLORS, MATERIALS AND PATTERNS

4.1 Colors

Generally, select lighter natural colors for the façade. Employ white accent color for columns and parapets. Earthy pastels and light mustard colors can perform as accent colors and should not comprise more than 10-20% of the façade area. See section 4.0 'Colors and Materials' for more information.

4.2 Materials

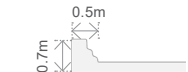
The primary wall surface should be matt-finish cream plaster, limewash, similar to gypsum and clay-mud finish that is typical of the region. Select from a natural range, some of which are specified above in colors.

Windows, doors, and shutters should be a dark timber finish.

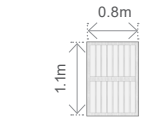
5.0 Patterns

The design should be inspired by historical patterns and motifs for the façade and parapet lines.

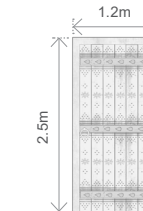
Key traditional architectural features.



3.4 Parapet Type



3.3 Window Type



3.2 Door Type

1.0 Transitional Style

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

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

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

COMPOSITIONAL RULES

2.1 Asymmetry of the façade

Develop asymmetry with setbacks and balconies, blended into the structure. Cluster different openings together.

On the ground level, for example, there can be three different approaches to create shaded sections. One, under the shaded arcade, the second under the porch and the third, a timber projecting shading element.

2.2 Grouping of elements

Building on the vertical expression of the traditional style, vertical breaks should be less emphasized. Different sections, such as doors or windows, should be grouped together, stepping toward the top in a more seamless manner. For example, the band of fenestrations and motifs are delicate. Horizontal banding should not comprise rigid lines which cut through the façade.

2.5 Ornamentation

Above openings, incorporate small triangular fenestrations. For balconies, railings should be slim and made of local, simple materials.

2.6 Wall to ground relationship

Storefront openings should wrap around the base, with shaded entrances. The material/color for the base and columns should be the same as the rest of the structure, for a more continuous line.

2.7 Solid Façades

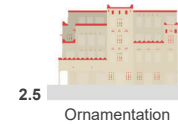
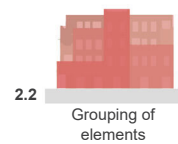
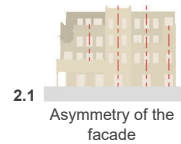
Building façades should have opening percentage of 30%. Concentrate openings on the main façade, particularly around the base where there should be the storefront entrances. There should be less openings on the upper levels of the sides and at the back of the building.

2.8 Geometry of components

For the transitional style, the different components which provide a sense of geometry to the structure should be more blended and in tune with each other. Windows and doors will be in the same style as the traditional. These elements as well as balconies, bays and have more angular shapes.

2.9 Rooftop and rooftop elements

Create a stepping effect only towards the top of the structure and on the side walls.



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



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

TRANSITIONAL ELEMENTS

3.2 Doorways and entrances

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

3.3 Windows and openings

Generally, use larger, rectangular windows for main rooms, and smaller square ones to complement. All openings are wider, typically made of glass, and can include a railing. The main entrance and balcony doors should be made of wood or an equivalent material.

3.4 Rooftop elements

For the transitional style, use a more angular and square outlook for the roofscape.

Use a simpler details such as a horizontal band, rather than corner merlons or triangular banding.

COLORS, MATERIALS AND PATTERNS

4.1 Colors

The building façades should mimic and build on the natural colors of the materials used in the region such as earth, wood and clay. Generally, select lighter natural colors for the façade.

Employ white accent color for the parapets. Earthy pastels and light mustard colors can perform as accent colors and should not comprise more than 20-30% of the façade area. See section 4.0 'Colors and Materials' for more information.

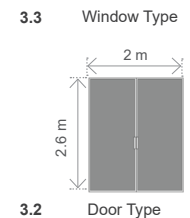
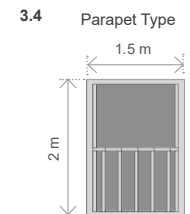
4.2 Materials

The primary wall surface should be matt-finish cream plaster, with a clear material differentiation for the openings (glass or timber), frames (aluminium), and the shaded walkways and colonnades.

5.0 Patterns

Extract and refine historic patterns and motifs, and use them above door and window openings.

Key transitional architectural features.



1.0 Contemporary Style

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

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

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

COMPOSITIONAL RULES

2.1 Asymmetry of the façade

The contemporary style should build on traditional asymmetry. There should be a gradual stepping process from each section to the top roof. The irregular profile should also be developed through setbacks in the façade.

2.2 Grouping of elements

For the contemporary, many of the previous compositional rules apply. Elements such as openings should be generally larger, yet ensure to retain their upright, rectilinear form.

2.5 Ornamentation

There are many contemporary approaches to ornamentation, which can include: stencil-like fenestrations. Incorporate straight lines to frame and design the façade of the building. Place abstracted decorative motifs around select openings at each level.

2.6 Wall to ground relationship

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

The ground floor and remainder of the structure should use the same material. Columns of the arcade should be more angular and slimmer than the transitional style.

2.7 Solid façades

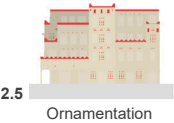
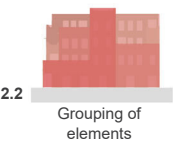
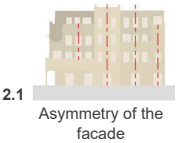
Generally, in the contemporary style the frames should be more pronounced. Use clear, more angular and linear styles, and frames should be recessed. Rather than using thick frames around windows and doors as in the transitional, incorporate more simple framing and have openings of 50%.

2.8 Geometry of components

For the contemporary style, the different structural components which make up the building should be blended and integrated into the structure. Incorporate higher proportion of glass and wider openings, to ensure that the relation between exterior and interior functions are transparent and very open.

2.9 Roofscape and rooftop elements

Ensure to articulate stepping at the top level of the structure. Should be flat, angular, and consider framing of the windows to add to the roof's stepping effect.



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



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

CONTEMPORARY ELEMENTS

3.2 Doorways and entrances

A projecting shaded column structure is used for the storefronts in the contemporary style. All doors are made of metal, glass or an equivalent and occupy the width of the corresponding interior space, bringing in more visibility from the street.

3.3 Windows and openings

All windows and openings should be slightly recessed. For windows, use a chamfered edge, if appropriate. Approximately 50% of the façade could comprise openings.

3.4 Rooftop elements

Generally, the rooftop should be flush with the main façade. There should a transparent glass railing running along each balcony and the different habitable rooms of the roof. Projecting elements can be used in parapets, or an alternative design approach can be considered.

COLORS, MATERIALS AND PATTERNS

4.1 Colors

Use paints and colors which are very similar and in line with the regional palette and natural materials, continuing in the vein of traditional / transitional. Consider using accent colors, with no more than 10-20% of the façade. See section 4.0 'Colors and Materials' for more information.

4.2 Materials

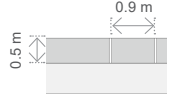
The base and upper level walls should be of the same material. More extensive glazing than on transitional style buildings are permissible. For example, this can be used through larger windows, balustrades and shopfronts.

5.0 Patterns

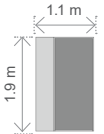
Extrapolate patterns from existing traditional styles to create new patterns.

Wall surfaces and window screens provide good opportunities to apply these new patterns.

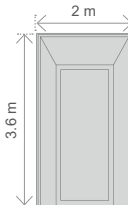
Key contemporary architectural features.



3.4 Parapet Type



3.3 Window Type

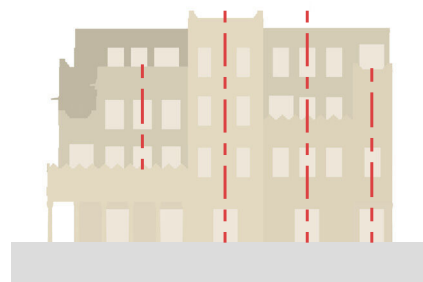


3.2 Door Type

2.0 Compositional rules

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

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



Asymmetrical façade

2.1 Asymmetry of the façade

The asymmetrical grouping of forms and breaks in building massing is a fundamental part of the Central Najdi character. Buildings should be:

- 1 Be asymmetrical, as expressed through the clustering of different bays and balconies, across different levels.
- 2 From ground level shaded arcades to clustered volumes, develop the staggered roofline effect.

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



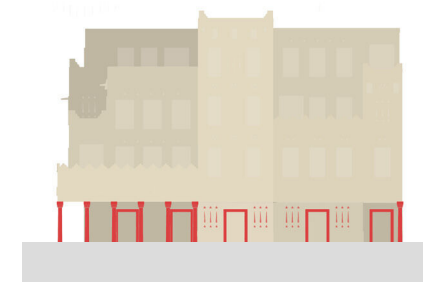
Grouping of elements

2.2 Grouping of elements

Buildings in Central Najdi are defined by their square-like appearance and organization. New buildings should:

- 1 Group vertical sections together that share height to develop the vertical plane, while maintaining horizontal expansion.
- 2 Minimize projections in favour of recessions and setbacks, developing terraces. This is to maintain the building lines.

To reflect the typical form of vernacular buildings.



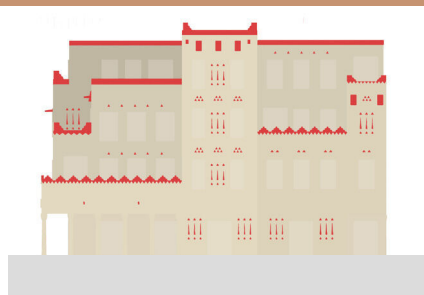
Entrance and articulation

2.3 Entrances and articulation

Wall finishes demonstrate a close relationship with the ground. Entrances develop the threshold between public and private. New buildings should:

- 1 Utilize the same material (derived from traditional) for the base floor and the remaining structure.
- 2 Employ accent colors to frame and articulate openings.
- 3 Columns and shaded walkways (derived from traditional) should use the same material and color as the rest of the building.
- 4 Articulate some entrances through decorative motifs.

To create a grounded architectural language that respects context and defines entry points.



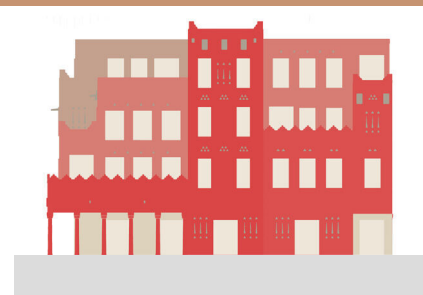
Ornamentations, fenestrations and crenelations

2.5 Ornamentation

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

- 1 **TR** Carefully place elaborate ornamentation above openings and windows, as well as in design for the building's main entrance and side walls.
- 2 Use ornamentation styles to indicate the different structures of the building as well as the different levels, such as crenelations.

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



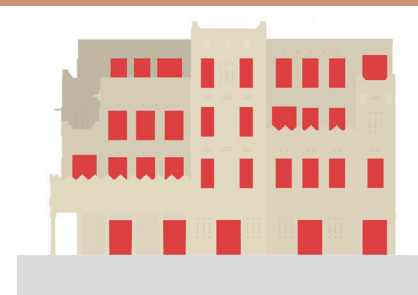
Solid façades

2.7 Solid façades

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

- 1 Predominantly employ rectangular openings.
- 2 Emphasize entrances through fenestrations and decorative motifs placed around the doors and windows.
- 3 On the ground level, provide a shaded arcade, with the rest of the building set behind.

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



Orthogonal geometry of elements

2.8 Geometry of components

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

- 1 The geometry of doors and windows should be simple and orthogonal.
- 2 Windows should be located relative to interior room layouts rather than a rationalized external façade composition.
- 3 **TR** The façade should have variations of rectangular and triangular fenestrations articulating its walls.

To embrace and reinforce the distinctive expressions of traditional sources.



Stepping, rectilinear roofscape

2.9 Roofscape and rooftop elements

Roof and parapets form a joint component in Central Najdi. The design of new buildings should:

- 1 Be predominantly flat, with occasional smaller habitable 'pop-up' rooms.
- 2 **TR** Integrate specific crenelations characteristic to the area and the function of the building.

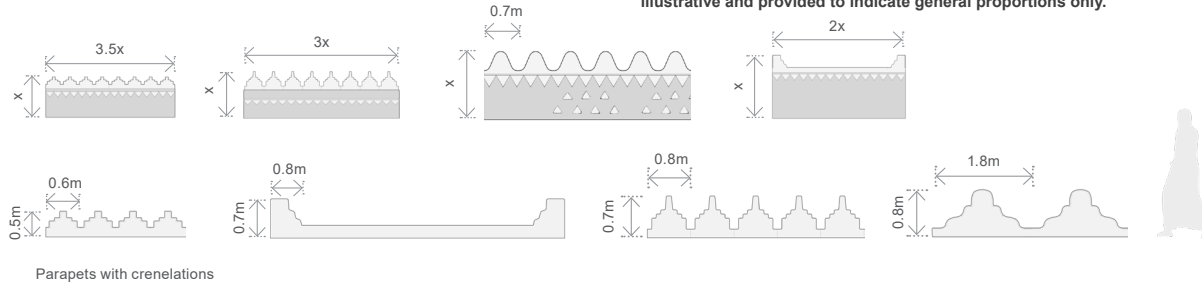
To retain a consistent and traditional roofscape.

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



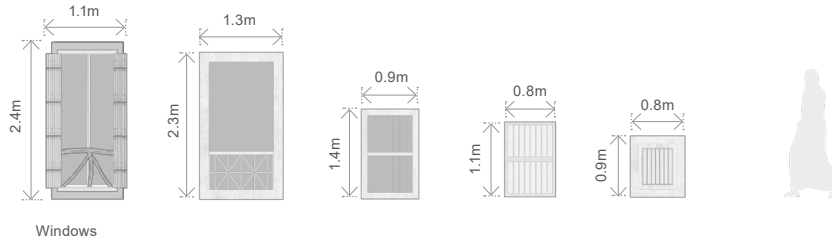
3.4 Rooftop elements

- 1 Be completely flat.
- 2 Should demonstrate a stepping roofscape towards the crown of the building.
- 3 Multi-stepped parapets and crenalations are coated or painted with locally sourced pigments.

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



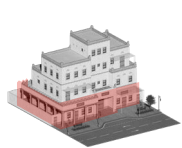
Middle



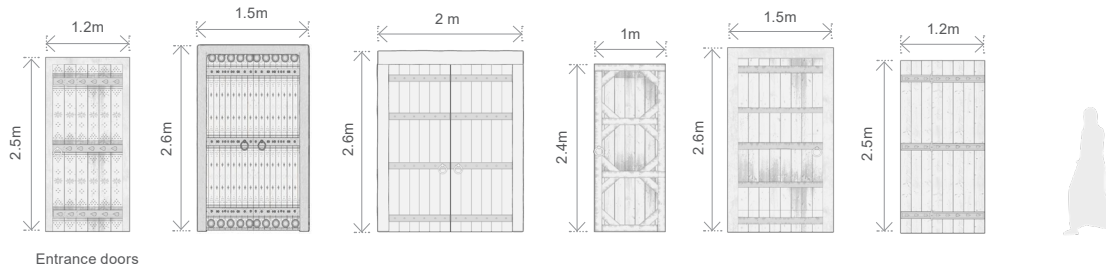
3.3 Windows and openings

- 1 Provide rectangular and small-sized windows.
- 2 Windows may vary slightly in size but remain mostly the same across levels. There are more windows on upper levels, given the shaded arcade and main entrance doorways.
- 3 Include punched peepholes or triangular and geometric shapes at different levels.
- 4 Fenestrations should be placed above windows.
- 5 Window frames and shutters should be generally crafted from wood.

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



Base



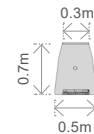
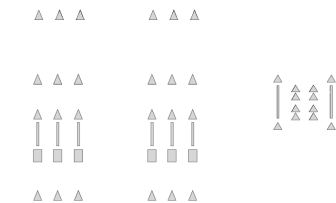
3.2 Doorways and entrances

- 1 Clearly define primary entrances as part of a well-ordered street frontage.
- 2 Frame doors, and recess openings to add depth and create a sense of entry.
- 3 If possible, use local Tamarisk wood for the door and frame.
- 4 Include ornamentation derived from the traditional style.

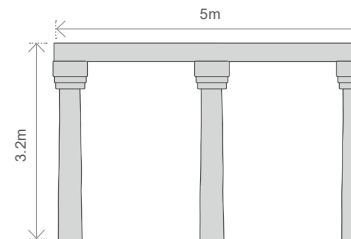
To create suitable thresholds within the base. To create a well-ordered, coherent street scene.



Other elements



Turmah



3.5 Other elements

- 1 In addition to the elements above, buildings should include triangular bands on the façade.
- 2 Show organic shaping, with multiple openings of different sizes as well as drainage spouts and lookouts.
- 3 Boundary walls, their gates and portals should be designed to complement the building design.

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

3.0 Transitional Elements

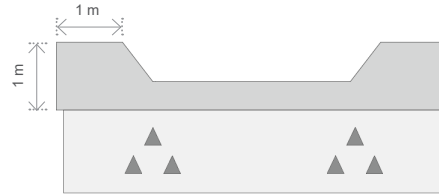
The elements illustrated are examples and should not limit other possible design solutions that follow guideline principles and historic precedents. Element measurements are illustrative and provided to indicate general proportions only.



Top



Parapets (Horizontal banding)



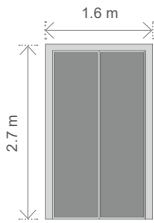
3.4 Rooftop elements

- 1 Be completely flat.
- 2 Roof parapets should be smooth textured with rounded corners.
- 3 Parapets should be more angular, less stepped and not crenelated.
- 4 Railings across the roof can incorporate modern materials, such as metal or glass.

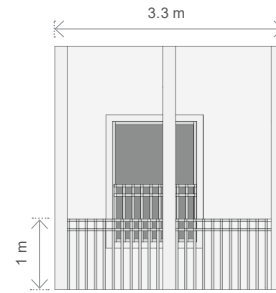
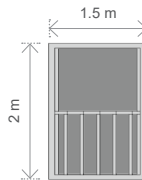
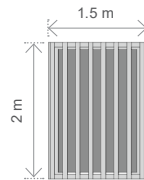
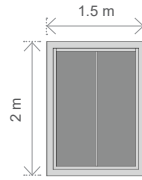
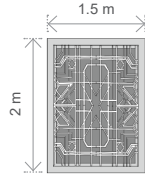
To create functional roof spaces and roofscapes which embrace the typical characteristics of the local area.



Middle



Windows



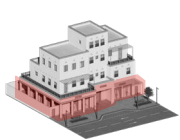
Balcony



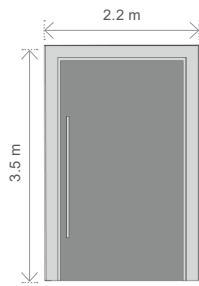
3.3 Windows and openings

- 1 Provide vertical windows which are square or rectangular.
- 2 Limit opening and window styles to two or three and include bigger openings on ground level.
- 3 Incorporate glass for greater visibility.
- 4 Windows should be larger and wider than the traditional styles.
- 5 Window frames and shutters should be crafted from wood or a material that closely mimics its texture and color.

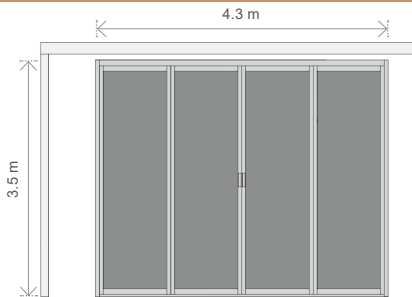
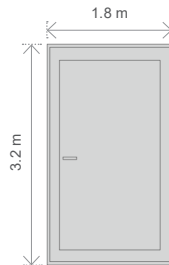
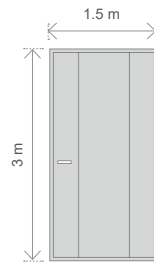
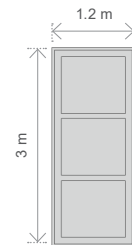
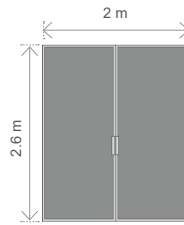
To respond to climate considerations and provide an aesthetic treatment which is distinct to the local area.



Base



Entrance doors



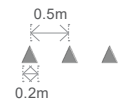
3.2 Doorways and entrances

- 1 Doors should be wide and square.
- 2 Entrances should provide the threshold between public street and private interior.
- 3 Consider articulating shopfront entrances on the ground floor through the shaded arcade.
- 4 Consider wood or equivalent and glass for the main door and shopfronts.

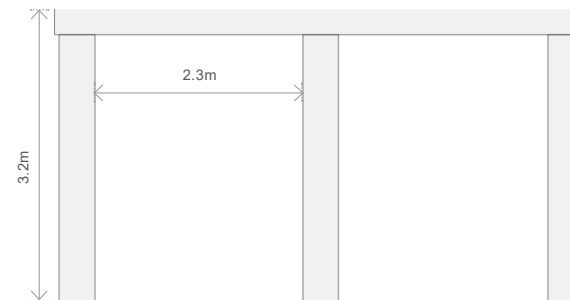
To create suitable thresholds within the base which is part of a well-ordered, coherent street scene and responds to local character rooftop elements.



Other elements



Ornamentations / Fenestrations



Arch

3.5 Other elements

- 1 In addition to the elements above, buildings can incorporate paint and colors which are contextual.
- 2 Provide different ornamentations based on the motifs and patterns of the region.
- 3 Include other traditional elements such as drainage (mizrab) and geometric patterns, using new materials or through minimalist designs derived from traditional.
- 4 Boundary walls, their gates and portals should be designed to complement the building design.

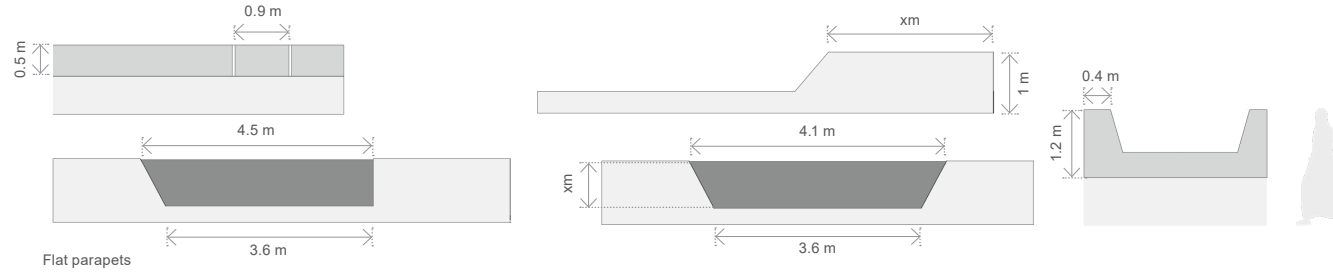
To embed other elements which are frequently part of the overall composition of buildings.

3.0 Contemporary Elements

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



Top



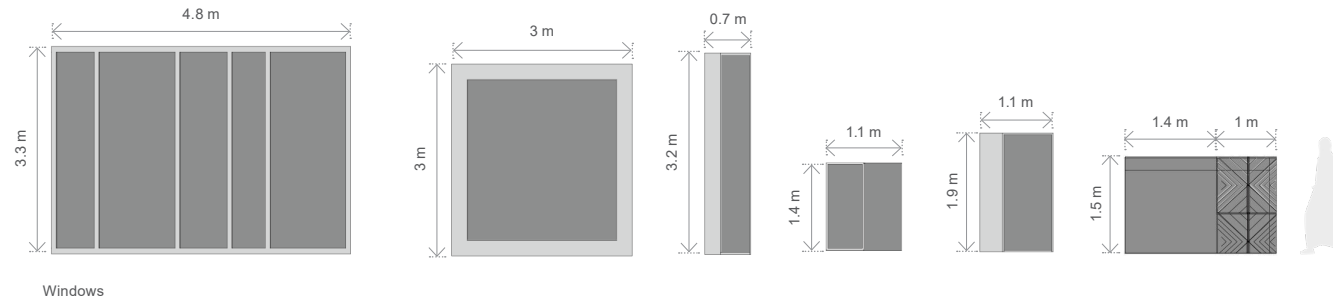
3.4 Rooftop elements

- 1 Be completely flat.
- 2 Feature flat parapets which are flush with the primary building line.
- 3 Limit rooftop spaces place them in between the grouped structures.

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



Middle



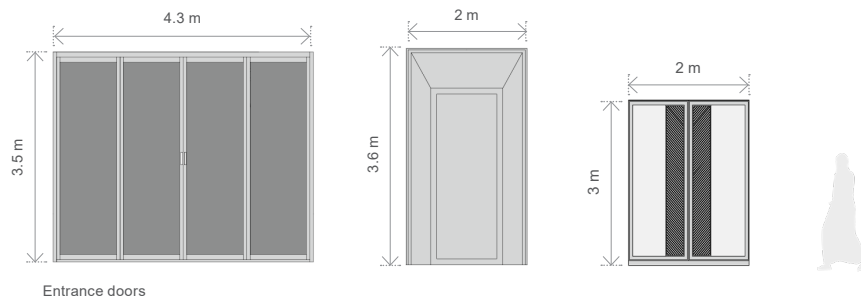
3.3 Windows and openings

- 1 Use large rectangular and square windows.
- 2 Can include screens of abstracted Najdi patterns as well as direct access to balconies and projected bays.
- 3 Window frames and shutters could be made of metal or another modern material, styled to reflect traditional features in a contemporary manner.

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



Base



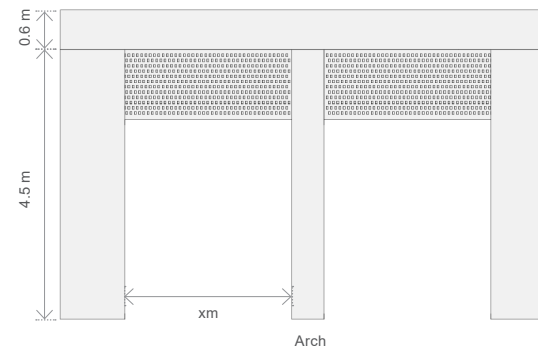
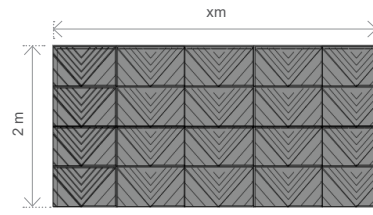
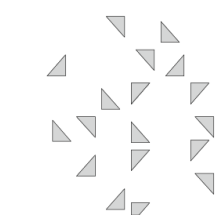
3.2 Doorways and entrances

- 1 Clearly define primary entrances as the street frontage experience.
- 2 Entrances have a minimal threshold, which serves as a guide for the hierarchy size/depth of the other elements on the façade.
- 3 Use wide double doors and incorporate glass for interior/exterior visibility.
- 4 Entrances should be placed under the shaded walkway.
- 5 Doors could be made of metal or another modern material, styled to reflect traditional features in a contemporary manner.

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



Other elements



3.5 Other elements

- 1 Contemporary building motifs should experiment with traditional design.
- 2 Employ abstract geometric planes and more smooth groupings for the structure.
- 3 Boundary walls, their gates and portals should be designed to complement the building design.

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

4.0 Colors and Materials

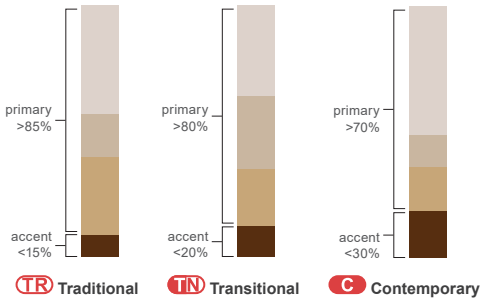
4.1 Colors

The color palette of Central Najdi is closely linked to traditional building materials such as clay, wood and off-white render. The surrounding landscape is also an important influence, particularly the yellow earthy tones of the sand and light pink undertones of dry valleys.

- 1 **TR** The base can have a darker band of color if the materials is of stone, but generally houses share a similar color to the mud of the landscape. White is also used to contrast with the primary color of the building on parapets.
- 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 of accent color, measured as a percentage of the total façade area, is allowed for each style:
 - **TR** <15%
 - **TN** <20%
 - **C** <30%
- 4 For windows' glass, avoid using mirror-like reflective glass with bright colors that do not harmonize with the local environment and character.

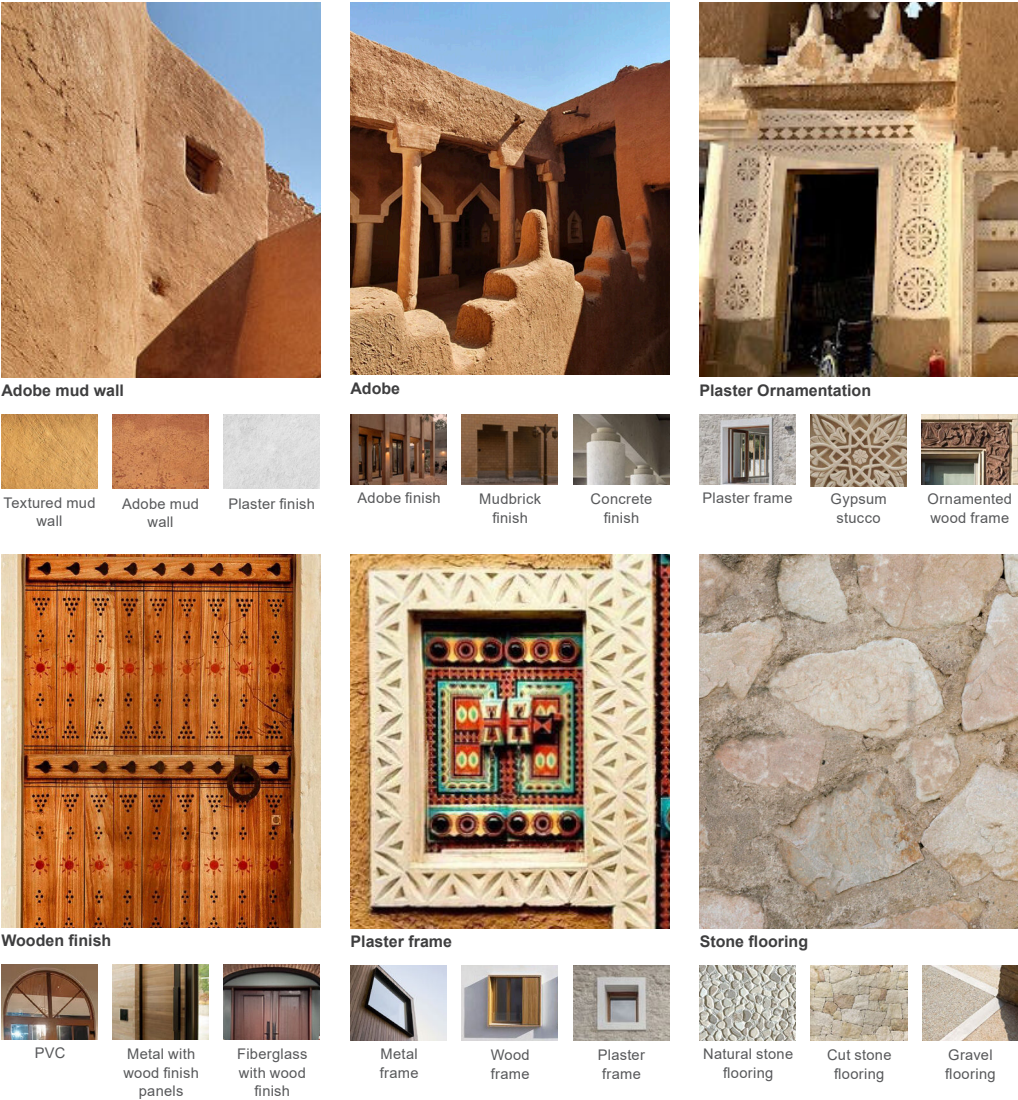
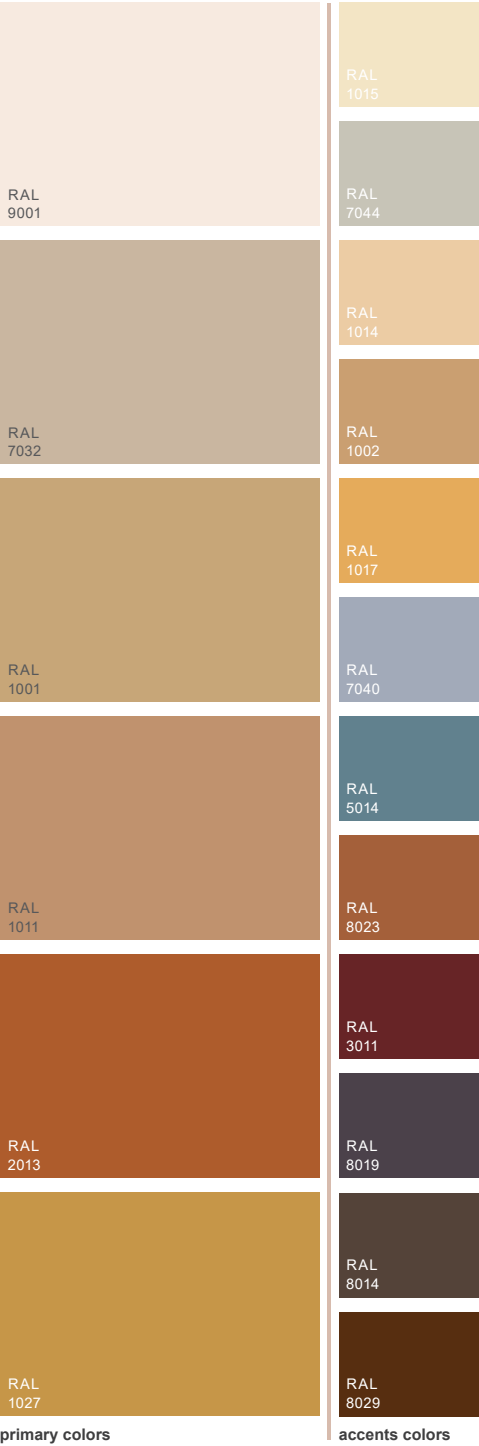
To create a townscape in harmony with the surrounding landscape and architectural character.

Approximate color proportions



RAL Color codes

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



- possible. Poor interpretations or applications of the materials should be avoided.
- 4 Local and sustainably sourced materials are preferred.
- To create buildings in harmony with the surrounding landscape and architectural character.
- To enhance architectural character through the support of local craftsmanship.
- To create buildings with tactile and visual richness landscape and architectural character.
- 1 **TR** The six large images reflect materials used in traditional architecture; new traditional style buildings should employ these materials as faithfully as possible.
 - 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

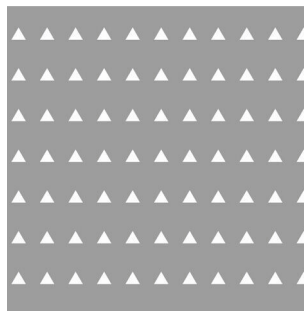
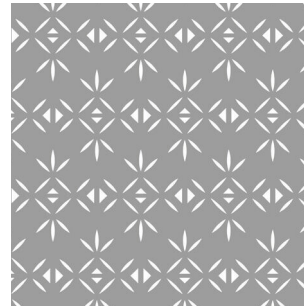
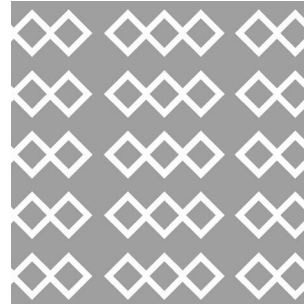
5.0 Patterns

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

New buildings should:

- 1 Create patterns through the use of local materials and craftsmanship.
- 2 Where multiple decorative patterns are applied across a single façade, these should be consistent.
- 3 **TR** Focus the use of surface patterns to doors, window screens and shutter doors.
- 4 **TR** refer directly to historic precedents and be limited to geometric and floral patterns.
- 5 **TIN C** The contemporary use of patterns should involve interpretation and abstraction: a selective emphasis of characteristics to create meaning and beauty in its new context. Designers can selectively use formal characteristics such as:
 - Color (hue, tonality, tint)
 - Shape (figure, outline, 2-D geometry)
 - Form (volume, 3-D geometry)
 - Texture (physical surface quality)
 - Line (verticals, horizontals, diagonals, zigzags, curves, dashes, etc.)
 - Value (lightness to darkness)
- 6 Patterns should be used judiciously on façades: on doors, and other openings, in horizontal bands and around openings.
- 7 Patterns can be further transformed in the way they relate to one another. Designers can play with compositional rules such as:
 - Balance (equality or harmony of parts)
 - Contrast (difference of parts)
 - Emphasis (strengthening of parts)
 - Movement (change, directionality)
 - Pattern (repetition, symmetry)
 - Rhythm (even and uneven spacing)
 - Unity/variety (degrees of variation)

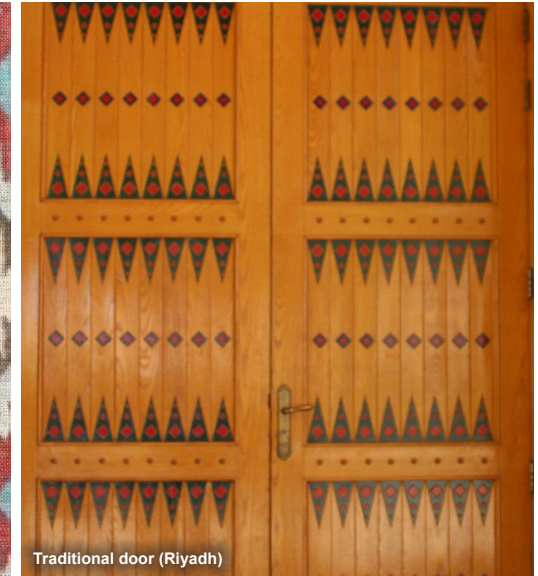
To express the spirit and essence of the original architecture in new yet familiar ways.



Patterns



Traditional patterned rug (Riyadh)



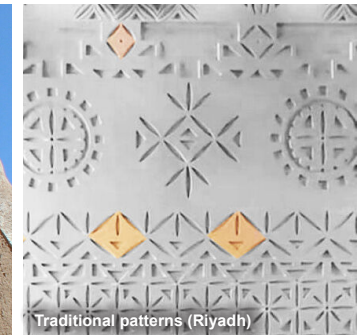
Traditional door (Riyadh)



Fenestrations (Riyadh)



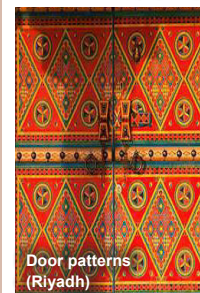
Parapet details (Riyadh)



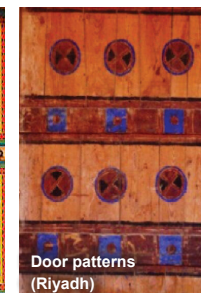
Traditional patterns (Riyadh)



Triangular bands (Riyadh)



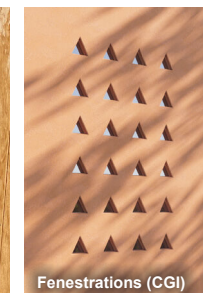
Door patterns (Riyadh)



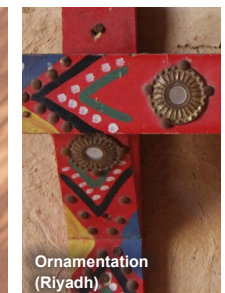
Door patterns (Riyadh)



Door details (Riyadh)



Fenestrations (CGI)



Ornamentation (Riyadh)

6.0 Public realm

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

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

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

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



6.1 Paving Materials

Paving guides users through both built and natural areas.

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

To enhance aesthetics, and environmental sustainability in urban landscapes.



6.2 Shading

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

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

To create a pleasant outdoor ambiance for public areas.



6.3 Parking

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

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

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



6.4 Planting

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

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

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



6.5 Signage

Signage guides users and aids navigation in public areas.

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

To effectively orient the public in navigating built areas.



6.6 Lighting

Lighting is crucial for nighttime activity and overall design.

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

To create a harmonious and pleasurable perception of public areas.



6.7 Public realm interface

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

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

To create a distinct and active sense of place.

7.0 Dos and don'ts

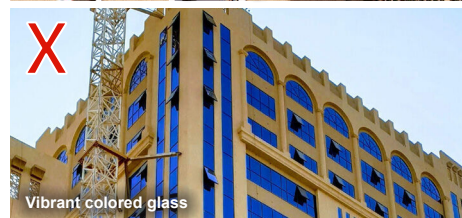
This section focuses on easy wins for the improvement of architectural quality and character. Drawing upon best design practice, these guidelines help avoid common mistakes create visual pollution and hostile environments.

| To avoid common design mistakes.



7.1 Inappropriate materials

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



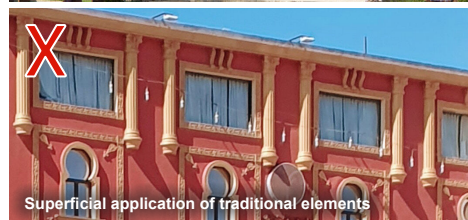
7.2 Saturated colors

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



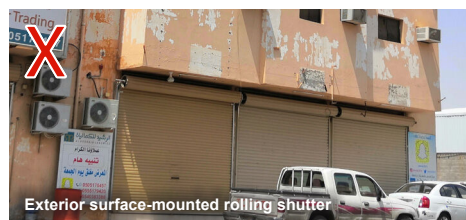
7.3 Screens and closures

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



7.4 Superficial elements

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



7.5 Exposed shutters

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



7.6 Exposed building services

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



7.7 Inconsistent or imported architectural style

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



8.0 Traditional mixed-use worked example

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

Retail/restaurants should be highlighted and placed under the shaded arcade.

The general building profile is irregular—this style embraces asymmetrical volumes, resulting in a playful integration of sections. Across the multiple levels of this building, there are varied parapet styles, and column-supported bases, contributing to a distinctive asymmetrical charm.

Central Najdi's square expression is evident, as is the vertical building line, with terraces developed through setback.

Further geometric ornamentation through fenestrations around windows promotes traditional architecture. It also introduces aesthetic variety on the façade. Earth-tone, natural colors and regional materials evoke the traditional as well, providing contrast between different elements (white frames of windows, timber shutters, etc.).

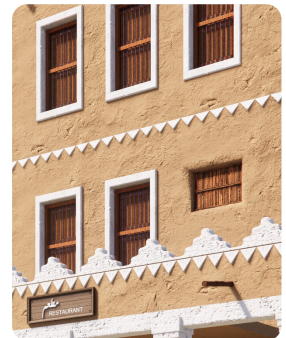
1 Projected façade elements are supported by columns, with white-painted ornaments and frames.



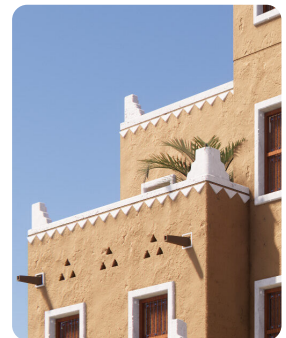
2 Stepped parapet lines, mizabs and intricately designed merlons.



3 Rectangular windows with wooden shutters and white frames.



4 The building volumes are asymmetrically arranged with projections and recesses.





8.0 Transitional mixed-use worked example

In the transitional style, the evolution from traditional is clear through the preservation rather than abstraction of architectural elements. This style likewise incorporates orthogonal and rectangular openings. They are grouped on the façade per the interior zoning. Earth-tone, natural colors and regional materials evoke the traditional landscape.

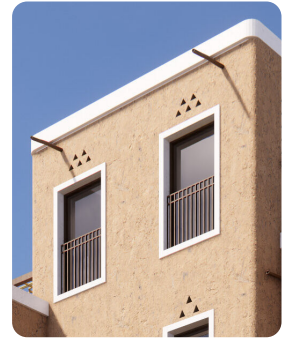
The use of glass, however, develops the openness of the building. Retail/restaurants should be highlighted and placed under the shaded arcade.

The characteristic Najdi triangle should be used as ornament across the varying levels of the building. Asymmetrical volumes combine to develop this overall structure, setbacks developing terraces. White parapets wrap around at the level of each habitable rooftop.

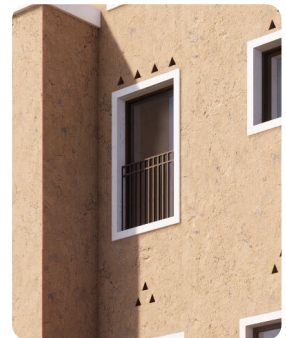
1 Projected façade elements are supported by columns, with minimal ornaments.



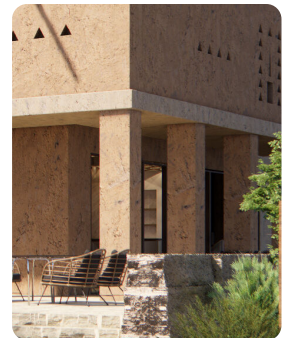
2 Mizabs and triangular ornaments in the transitional style with white-marked parapets.



3 Simple rectangular windows with simple or no shutters and white frames.



4 Columns blend with the rest of the façade.





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

8.0 Contemporary mixed-use worked example

The contemporary style in Central Najdi produces an architectural language situated in tradition, while simultaneously embracing modernity. Maintaining the sense of asymmetry through various volumes brought together, this example emphasizes the use of glass. It is utilized at the railings for balconies and verandas. Large orthogonal and rectilinear openings – doors and windows alike – are set within recessed frames, with much larger opening proportions.

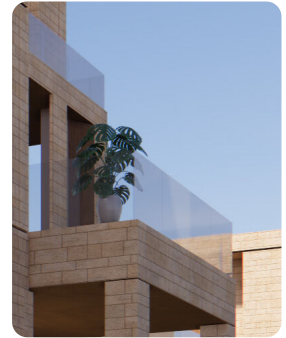
The shaded arcade is now projecting structure, of timber and glass. Add abstracted decoration based on historical motifs along openings, and linear ornamentation along the façade.

The roofscape adopts a stepped configuration inspired by historical architectural styles. Balconies, windows, doors, and entrances are cohesively integrated into the building's form, reinforcing an open and harmonious aesthetic.

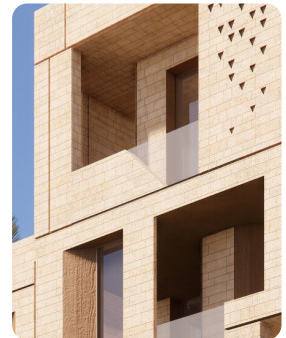
- 1 Projecting structure provides shading to shopfronts.



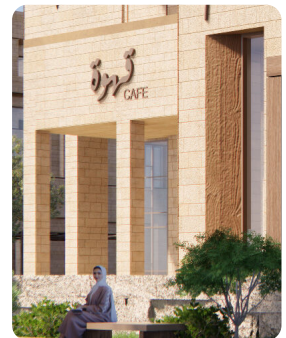
- 2 Balconies incorporated into the façade.



- 3 The windows are vertically oriented, rectangular, and recessed, occasionally featuring wooden shutters.



- 4 Storefront arcade with slender columns and glass surfaces.



A.0 Appendix: Low-rise apartment buildings

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

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

Entrances and articulation

Main and secondary entrances in the region's traditional style are distinct yet deeply rooted in tradition. The main entrance, with its recessed access and large double door, embodies the asymmetrical aesthetic of traditional Central Najdi architecture. Secondary private entrances are seamlessly integrated, expressing a vertical and square character that aligns with other façade elements for visual harmony.

Solid façades

The building façade should connect with neighboring residences and the street, framing both public and private areas. Exhibiting a vertical and square character, façades should incorporate balconies projecting from side walls, echoing the stepped effect typical of traditional Central Najdi architecture for a cohesive design. Ground floor external amenity spaces aim for a balance between privacy and communal living, integrating ornamentation, textured finishes, and planters inspired by Central Najdi aesthetics.

Roofscape and rooftop elements

The building façade should connect with neighboring residences and the street, framing both public and private areas. Exhibiting a vertical and square character, façades incorporate balconies projecting from side walls, echoing the stepped effect typical of traditional Central Najdi architecture for a cohesive design. Ground floor external amenity spaces aim for a balance between privacy and communal living, integrating ornamentation, textured finishes, and planters inspired by Central Najdi aesthetics.

Secondary frontage

Privacy is a priority for all façades, and it is important to ensure that openings do not provide visual access to private interior spaces. Side windows feature geometric motifs and nuanced designs, maintaining a visual rhythm consistent with the traditional Central Najdi style. Enhanced security and privacy for front-facing windows include wooden shutters, geometric framing, and nuanced recessed frames. Ground floor street-facing windows, if present, are kept smaller than other windows for resident comfort.

Privacy

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



Apartment Building Axonometric



Apartment Building Front Elevation

1 Enhance usefulness of roof terraces with shading.



2 Maintain privacy between neighbors on side façades.



3 Maintain privacy and security at ground level.



4 Emphasize primary shared entrances.





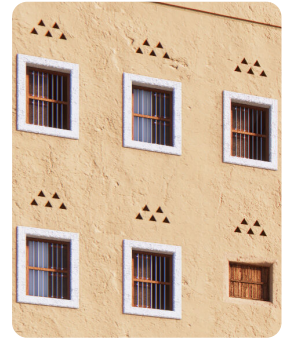
A.0 Traditional apartment worked example

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

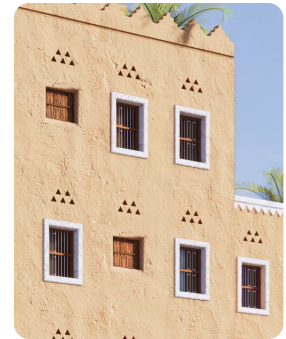
The double door timber main entrance is placed under a protruding cover. As privacy is of significant priority, secondary entrances are seamlessly integrated, and the use of greenery is employed to

cover. Characteristic Najdi triangle fenestrations are placed across openings. Such geometric and vegetal ornamentation are employed to promote the traditional architecture and to introduce aesthetic variety on the façade. These openings should also be carefully placed so they introduce ventilation and light into the building. Habitable rooftops/terraces with shading provide open space for inhabitants.

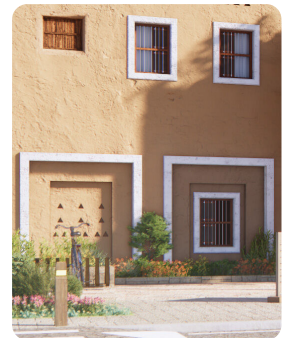
1 Ornaments placed above rectangular windows.



2 Rectangular windows with wooden shutters and white frames.



3 Use of greenery and window shutter to enhance privacy on the ground floor.



4 Recessed doors with white frame.



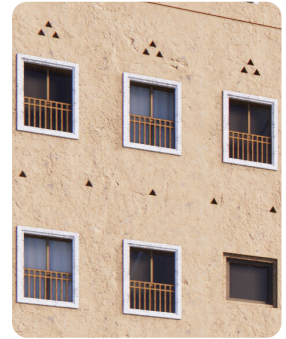


A.0 Transitional apartment worked example

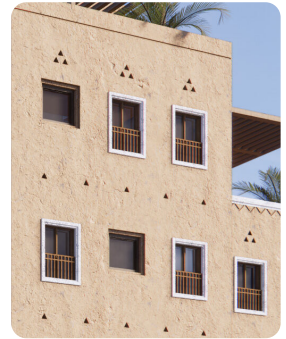
In the transitional style, evolution from the traditional is made evident through the preservation rather than abstraction of architectural elements. This style uses the same character and style of the traditional through orthogonal and rectilinear openings. Facades exhibit a strong vertical and square character, with covered terraces developed through setback.

The main differences between the traditional and transitional is through wider openings for windows and doors occupying more space on the façade. Additionally, the engravings, ornamentations are muted from the traditional. Fenestrations are more minimal and only one to two styles are used to indicate different massing and volumes of the structure. Additionally, the parapets use a cubic and geometric indentation.

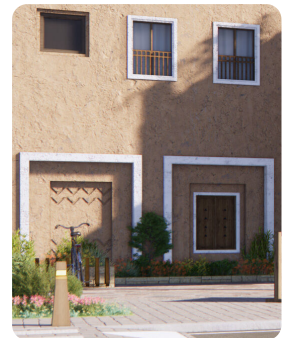
1 Ornaments placed above rectangular windows.



2 Simple rectangular windows with simple or no shutters and white frames.



3 Use of greenery to enhance the privacy on the ground floor.



4 Recessed doors with white frame.





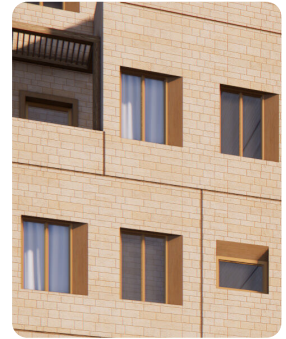
A.0 Contemporary apartment worked example

Like in the mixed-use example, in the contemporary residential style of Central Najdi, the essence of the architectural character is preserved through skillful reinterpretation and utilization of traditional forms. This example emphasizes the use of glass. Orthogonal and rectilinear openings – doors and windows alike – are set within recessed frames, with slightly larger opening proportions.

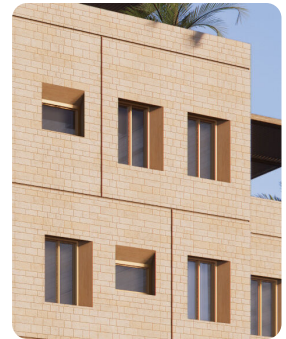
The volume and massing is retained in this style but is blended more seamlessly with little breaks in the façade walls. The main entrance is placed under a protruding cover, slightly recessed within a frame. This design adds abstracted decoration based on historical triangular motifs along openings, and linear ornamentation along the façade.

The balconies, windows, doors, and entrances seamlessly integrate into the structure, contributing to a sophisticated and open aesthetic.

1 Sleek contemporary rectangular windows.



2 Windows recessed within the façade.



3 The use of greenery to enhance the privacy on the ground floor.



4 Recessed doors with white frame.

