



Architectural Guidelines

January 2026



The architecture should be rooted in the modern tradition, but tied to geographical and cultural context. Critical regionalism is not simply regionalism in the sense of vernacular architecture. It is a progressive approach to design that seeks to mediate between the global and the local languages of architecture. Critical regionalism should adopt modern architecture, critically, for its universal progressive qualities but at the same time value should be placed on the geographical context of the building. Emphasis should be on topography, climate, light; on tectonic form and the tactile qualities of the materials.

- Kenneth Frampton

Index



Introduction	01
Architectural Approach & Philosophy	02
General Standards	03
The Architectural Aesthetics Committee (AAC)	03
Approved List of Architects	03
Non-approved Architects	05
Endorsement Procedures by The Architectural Aesthetics Committee (AAC)	06
General Architectural Principles	07
Architectural Guidelines	
General	09
Specific Materials and guidelines	10
What is not allowed (general)	12



Roofs

Roof Shape	13
Material & Colour	14
What is not allowed (roofs)	15
Facias, gutters and down pipes	16
Chimneys	17
What is not allowed (facias, gutters, down pipes & chimneys)	18

Walls

Stone	19
What is not allowed (stone walls)	20
Face Bricks	21
What is not allowed (face brick walls)	22
Concrete	23
What is not allowed (concrete)	24
Metal sheeting (cladding)	25
What is not allowed (metal sheeting)	26
Plastered & Painted Panels	27
Front Doors	28
What is not allowed (plaster)	29



Windows, Doors & Shutters

What is not allowed (windows, doors & shutters)	30
Plumbing, Washing Lines & Communication Equipment	33
Additions, equipment, statues, garden sheds, etc	33

Building Lines

Coverage	34
Height & Width	34
Access	35
Special Sites	35
Privacy	35
Out Buildings	36
External & Sight Lightings	37
Paving	38
House Numbers	38
Gardens and landscape design (see separate Landscape Guidelines)	39

Introduction

The goal of this development is to create a visually pleasing architectural environment for all residents. Rather than enforcing a one-size-fits-all policy, the aim is to allow for individuality within an overarching architectural framework. This approach doesn't prescribe a specific architectural style, but rather focuses on a flexible design philosophy that encourages creativity.

We believe that once potential residents and their professional architectural and landscape teams understand the conceptual framework of the development, it will benefit both the people and the environment.



Architectural Approach & Philosophy

The conceptual approach of the development is to create appropriate, timeless architecture that fits seamlessly into its natural environment. By “appropriate,” we mean that the design should feel naturally integrated with the landscape, rather than looking out of place or foreign. This development is set in a prime area of the Free State landscape, one of the last untouched regions surrounding the city of Bloemfontein. The goal is to enhance the natural beauty of the land, creating something that complements, rather than clashes with, the environment.

The broader reference for the design is the natural landscape and the typical vernacular Free State agricultural farmsteads nearby. The architecture should subtly reflect these influences, but not copy them directly. The idea is to transform these references into a contemporary Free State architectural language. The aim is to foster a dialogue between the architecture and its context, rather than having them stand in opposition. However, this approach is open to interpretation, and guidelines will be provided to assist potential residents and their design teams. The goal is not to limit individual creativity, but to foster collaboration in creating a space of value for everyone.

The development is located in hills covered with indigenous plants and trees, providing an opportunity to avoid typical suburban architectural styles. Instead, the

focus should be on a critical regionalist approach. This is not a style but a design philosophy that addresses the issue of “placelessness” in modern developments. It rejects the common use of foreign architectural styles, such as Tuscan, Balinese, or Provincial, often seen in South African developments.

This development encourages the use of pavilion-style designs for larger homes. This design concept involves connecting different parts of a house with flat roofs, rather than having a single, large building under one roof. This approach reduces the mass of the building and creates a more open, rural feel. It also allows for the possibility of courtyards, where garages can be concealed or private seating areas created. However, each design will be assessed based on its specific site conditions and overall design approach.

General Standards

01 The architectural guidelines are a manual to be used in planning and designing a dwelling in this development. All development still needs to comply with:

- The National Building Regulations.
- The Standards and requirements of the Local Municipality.
- Environmental regulations.
- NHBRC requirements.

02 An Architectural Aesthetics Committee (AAC) will manage these guidelines with everybody's interest in mind.

03 From time to time these guidelines may be changed by the Homeowners Association (HOA).

04 The HOA can carry out inspections at any stage of the construction phase.

The Architectural Aesthetics Committee (ACC)

This committee will be appointed by the developers of the property and will consist of the following:

- A representative from the Strathearn Hill Homeowners Association (HOA).
- Architects appointed by the developer, specifically Smit Architects.

All development must first be approved by the AAC before final approvals by the Local Authorities are obtained (see the process below: no. 8).

Approved List of Architects

Only qualified, registered professional architects are permitted to design residences at Strathearn Hill. A knowledgeable team of architects have already been identified that will be available for you to choose from. These architectural firms are reputable practices and since they already understand and align with the architectural approach of this development, it is believed that they will guide you smoothly through the design process and approvals.

This list of preferred Local Architectural firms is:

Smit Architects

 <https://www.smitarchitects.com>

 083 500 6979
083 477 6468

 smitarg@telkomsa.net

Typology Architects

 <https://www.premoconsulting.co.za>

 061 437 6261

 henry@premoconsulting.co.za

XO Architects

 <https://www.xoarchitects.co.za>

 066 156 2610

 info@xoarchitects.co.za

Just-Us Architecture Inc.

 <https://www.justusarchitect.com>

 084 951 0074

 liebenberg.justus@gmail.com

Smit Architects will serve as the Architectural Aesthetics Committee (AAC), but in the cases where Smit Architects is the architects for a residence, another nominated firm will step in to act as the Architectural Aesthetics Committee (AAC). The developer and the Homeowners Association (HOA) reserve the right to add or remove Architects from the approved panel.

Non Approved Architects

Without compromising the vision of the Estate, non-approved architects may be used by homeowners. Homeowners should not appoint a non-approved architect prior to the approval by the AAC of such an architect. The conditions for appointing non-approved architects are as follows:

- Only architects registered with the South African Council for the Architectural Profession (SACAP) will be allowed to submit plans.
- A Curriculum Vitae (CV) of the architect/s must be submitted prior to the submission of sketch plans for approval by the Architectural Aesthetics Committee (AAC).
- The CV should include a portfolio of the architect's previous work, with a specific emphasis on residential projects.
- A meeting with the AAC, including the client, must take place before the design process begins.



Endorsement Procedures by the Architectural Aesthetics Committee (ACC)

During the plan approval process, the AAC shall communicate solely with the architect acting as agent for the owner. Only when approvals are granted by AAC without condition may application for local authority approval be made. Pending receipt of plan approval from the local authority, limited site clearance works can commence.

No encroachment over the boundaries of the erf shall be permitted during construction.

The following documentation is needed for the approval of plans:

- Sketch Plans need to be submitted for approval by the AAC.
- Submission fees are payable to the Homeowners Association at the time of the submission of the plans to the AAC.

Stage 1:

- Sketch Plans 1:100.
- Material list (finishes should be clearly visible on elevations/ perspectives)
- Non-refundable scrutiny fee:
- Approved Architects: R3,000.00.
- Non-Approved Architects: R5,000.00.
- Re-submissions: R2,000.00 /submission.

Stage 2:

- Municipal approval plans before submission to local authorities. To obtain final
- official stamp from AAC.
- Non-refundable scrutiny fee of: R2,000.00.
- Re-submissions.: R1,000.00/submission

Stage 3:

- Feedback within 14 days of submission.

General Architectural Principles

- 01 Buildings should be designed to integrate with the surrounding landscape.
- 02 Buildings must be stepped along slopes to minimize disruption of the natural topography.
- 03 Roofs should be sheet metal or concrete flat roofs (see restrictions). Flat roofs with a pitch of less than 5° must be hidden by parapets or designed with a proper finish. No hipped or tiled roofs are permitted.
- 04 Walls may incorporate natural stone (in panels or walls, but not for complete buildings), red clay bricks, and plastered areas with an earthy color scheme are encouraged. (see pages 18 - 24)
- 05 No boundary walls may be erected without the prior approval of the AAC. The finish of such walls must complement the buildings.
- 06 Any structure, including garden walls, gazebos, pergolas, vines and covered porticos, cannot be erected without prior approval from the AAC.
- 07 No front garden walls are allowed (i.e. for 2/3 of the erf size); only backyard walls are permitted for privacy and for animals. Max 1.7m height for backyard walls.
- 08 Residences may have a maximum of two stories.
- 09 Balcony balustrades should be made of glass within aluminum or steel frames.
- 10 Water collection is encouraged. No open or visible water tanks (e.g., Yo-Yo tanks) are allowed unless enclosed by a stone, brick or plastered wall.
- 11 The only visible water tanks allowed on street-facing facades are steel corrugated tanks, as demonstrated in the image that follows.

12

All swimming pools must comply with local authority safety regulations and SANS 1390 security standards. Walls that form part of the security of a swimming pool must comply with SABS 10134



Note the use of the building material palette: facebrick and stone with sheet metal roofs and corrugated water tanks. Plastered bricks to comply with the prescribed colour palette: External Walls (page 25).

Architectual Guidelines

General

- 01 All the latest information will be updated on the Strathearn Hill website: www.strathearnhill.co.za
- 02 Only one dwelling will be permitted on a stand. No duets or exceptions will be allowed.
- 03 Only single-family residences allowed as per the zoning of the development. Violation of this might result in severe penalties.
- 04 Stands may not be consolidated.
- 05 Minimum size of a dwelling: 250m²



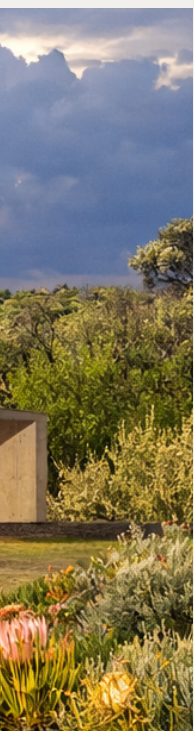
Specific Materials & Guidelines

The aim discussed in the first section, “Architectural Approach and Philosophy,” can only be achieved if everyone embraces it and adheres to the material guidelines. This will ensure visual harmony within the development and with the surrounding natural landscape. Although the guidelines are divided into two main structural elements, roofs and walls, care should be taken to approach the design as a cohesive whole.

There are two possible approaches that will ensure enough variety within the development:

- A more contemporary, modern interpretation below, on the left,
- A more traditional interpretation on the right (below).

Both approaches are acceptable. This is a contemporary development, but it is designed with sensitivity toward the beautiful natural setting, while also accommodating the region’s more traditional farmhouse and barn-like architecture. We believe there is enough latitude for both clients and their architects to work within this framework.

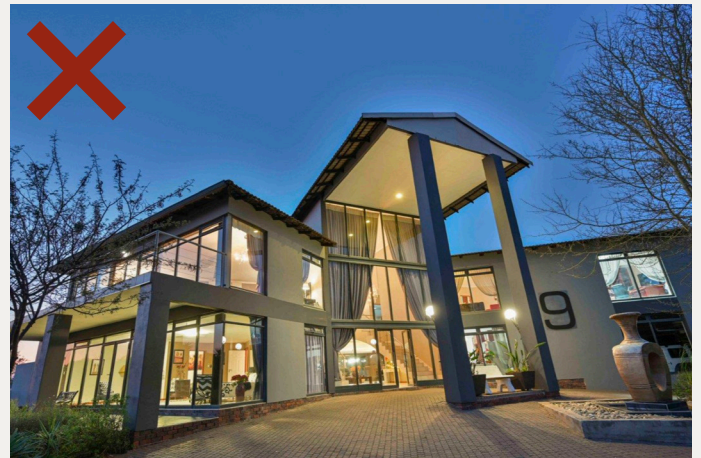


If you are familiar with the architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright, Lake | Flato and Tom Kundig (all from the USA), Glenn Murcutt (Australia), OMM Design, Ora Joubert, Wdesign Architecture Studio, Slee Architects, Earthworld Architects and Veld Architects (all from South Africa), you will have an understanding of the direction we envision for this development.



What is not allowed (in general)

- 01 No oversized entrances (below left).
- 02 No “after thought” added on entrances (below right).
- 03 No themed style architecture, including Tuscan, Balinese, Provincial, Cape Dutch or any foreign architectural style. These might be more fitting in other regions, but not in the Free State (see below).



Roofs

- 01 Roofs to be pitched sheet metal roofs (Chromadek) in combination with flat concrete roofs.
- 02 Roof Pitch:
- 24° for double pitched roofs (see image above left)
 - 12° for mono-pitched roofs (see image above right)
 - Less than 5° “flat roofs” to be hidden by parapets or properly designed.
- 03 Verandahs, frames and links between zones can be flat concrete roofs. This should however not exceed 30% of the total roof surface.



Proposed design, Phase 1, Unit 3, Strathearn Hill (Smit Architects)

Material & Colour

01

Sheet metal colour choices:

- Chromadek Dark Dolphin & Charcoal.
- Either the corrugated or flat rib types are acceptable.

02

As an exception:

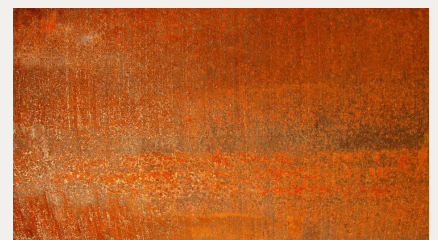
- Corten sheet metal will be allowed (below right).



Dark Dolphin



Charcoal



Corten Steel

03

Flat concrete roofs to be covered with grey/black stone chippings/brown natural colour & pebbles.

04

No shiny flat roofs allowed (sheet metal).

05

Green planted roofs are allowed and encouraged (this can replace the pitch roofs average).

06

Roof overhangs. Maximum 300mm measured from the external wall to fascia line, although shorter overhangs are preferable.

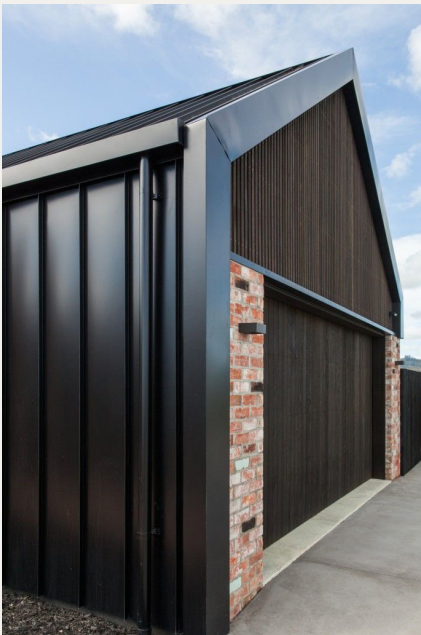
What is not allowed (Roofs)

- 01 No parapet gables of any kind (below left) or Dutch hip roofs (below right) are allowed.
- 02 No shade ports/ fiber glass - plastic roofing or prefabricated awnings to windows.
- 03 No thatched roofs.
- 04 Lean-to roofs are allowed, but subject to the approval by the AAC.
- 05 No tiled roofs, only metal sheeting roofs.



Fascias, Gutters and Down Pipes

- 01 Timber or fibre cement fascias and bargeboards, finished to a dark colour to match the roof, must be used.
- 02 No white painted fibre cement fasciae allowed. Colour to match roof.
- 03 Gutters and downpipes are not mandatory but may be used. The colour must match the sheet metal (see below left).
- 04 Downpipes must be placed sensitively, and if possible, not visibly exposed. The shallow overhangs provide this opportunity to avoid unsightly bents (see opposite page).
- 05 If downpipes are visible, a purpose-designed solution should be considered, subject to approval by the AAC (see examples above). Options to explore include chains, double downpipes, or even hidden downpipes.



Chimneys

- 01 Depending on the design, chimneys should enhance the aesthetics of the house. Where fireplaces and braai chimneys are visible together, they should either be identical or at least complement each other.
- 02 Two types of chimneys are preferred: brick chimneys with a concrete cowl or stainless steel/dark-colored steel chimneys.



What is not allowed (Facias, Gutters, Down Pipes, Chinmeys)

- 01 No decorated facias and bargeboards.
- 02 No unsightly down pipe with 45° bent to be visible to the street or neighbours.
- 03 No downpipes across facades on any part of the buildings.
- 04 No white gutters or downpipes on facades.
- 05 No traditional chimneys.



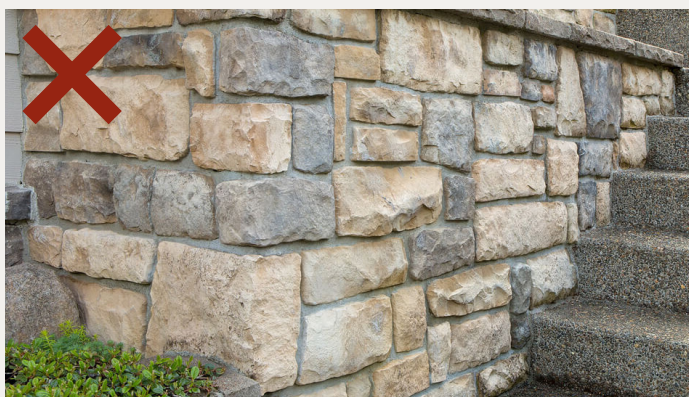
Stone

- 01 Feature walls may be finished in natural stone, but they must be in a natural fieldstone pattern (see image below). A stone sample should be included in the application for approval.
- 02 Drystone stacking can also be used as a stone building method: see below (subject to approval by the AAC).
- 03 Gabions are permitted as feature walls, provided they are in firm steel mesh baskets and do not collapse under their own weight. This method can also be effectively used for retaining walls. The stones used to fill the gabions must match the natural stones used for walls (no white, pink, or other decorative-colored stones).
- 04 Care should be taken not to overwhelm the composition of the building with excessive use of stone, dry stacking, or gabion walls.



What is not allowed (Stone Walls)

- 01 No decorative stone patterns will be allowed, only natural stone patterns.
- 02 No artificial “stones”.
- 03 No stone bricks will be allowed.
- 04 The stones should be in proportion to the scale of the wall and or building.
- 05 No white or pebble-coloured stone walls.
- 06 No stone corner decorations.
- 07 No painted stone walls.



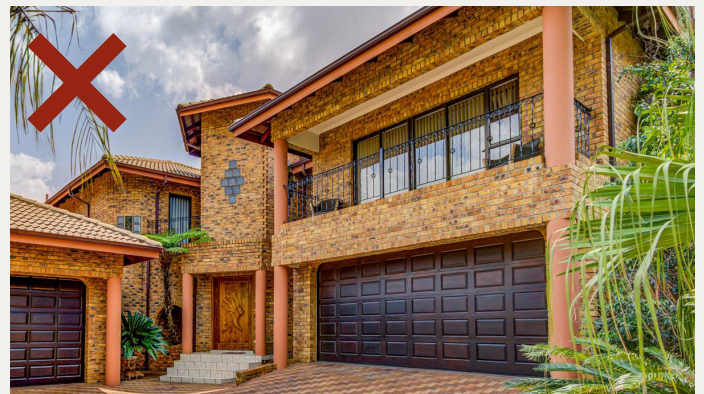
Face Bricks

- 01 Exposed face brick is allowed: Corobrik Firelight Travertine FBX. Exposed face brick to be scratched out every 5th row to create a shadow line (see images below). This technique reduces the overwhelming feeling of excessive brickwork and also adds scale to the building.
- 02 It is recommended to treat walls as panels or boxes, rather than using load-bearing walls with standard windows.
- 03 Brick walls can either be “washed” or built using standard joints as described above. (see images).



What is not allowed (Face Bricks)

- 01 No decorative columns.
- 02 No suburban window arrangements.
- 03 No brick arched windows or openings or entrances.
- 04 No decorative corners with bricks.
- 05 No yellow-coloured bricks.



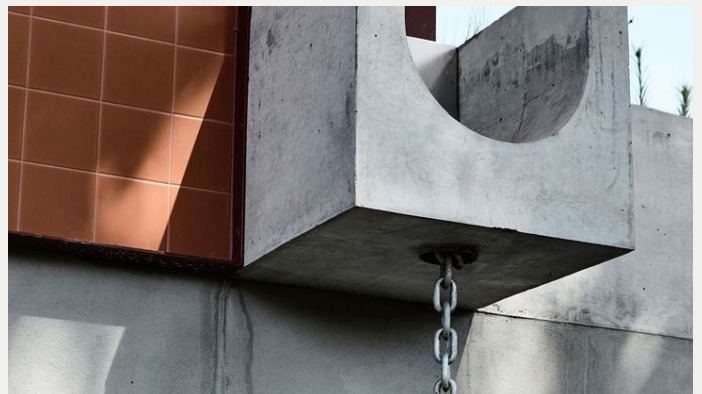
Concrete

- 01 Walls may be constructed with exposed in-situ concrete.
- 02 Concrete walls must be either smooth or textured, with no decorative patterns. Only natural timber formwork is permitted, as shown in the image below.
- 03 The use of concrete is primarily reserved for exposed beams, frames over bay windows, verandahs, garage frames, entrances, or focal areas such as a silo.



What is not allowed (Concrete)

- 01 No decorative corner details.
- 02 No decorative columns.
- 03 No decorative architraves or lintels above doors or windows.
- 04 No precast concrete walls/panels.
- 05 To prevent unsightly water damage to concrete, water drips must be placed below beams, etc.



Metal Sheeting (Cladding)

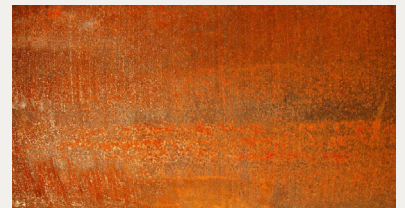
- 01 Except for the fact that only metal sheeting is allowed for roofs, it can also be used as a cladding material to fit into the concept of Free State vernacular.
- 02 The same two colours discussed earlier as roof materials (not to be mixed in one building or one stand), can be used as a wall finish.
- 03 Corten Steel is also an acceptable option.
- 04 Sheet metal color choices include Chromadek Dark Dolphin, and Charcoal. Both corrugated and flat rib types are acceptable.
- 05 This material can be used to finish the service areas, but we rely on your judgement if a client prefers a complete barn look.



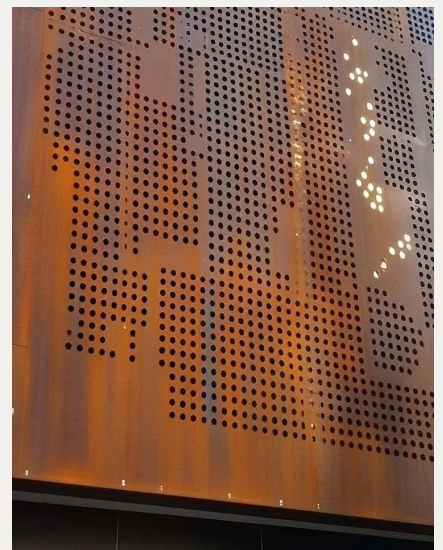
Dark Dolphin



Charcoal

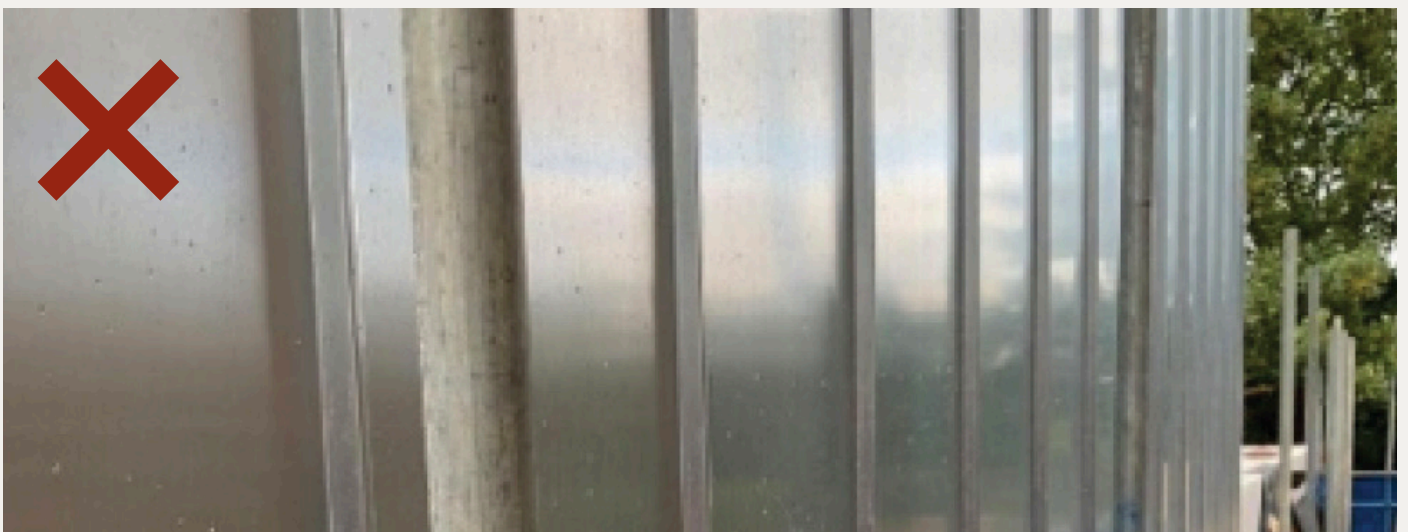
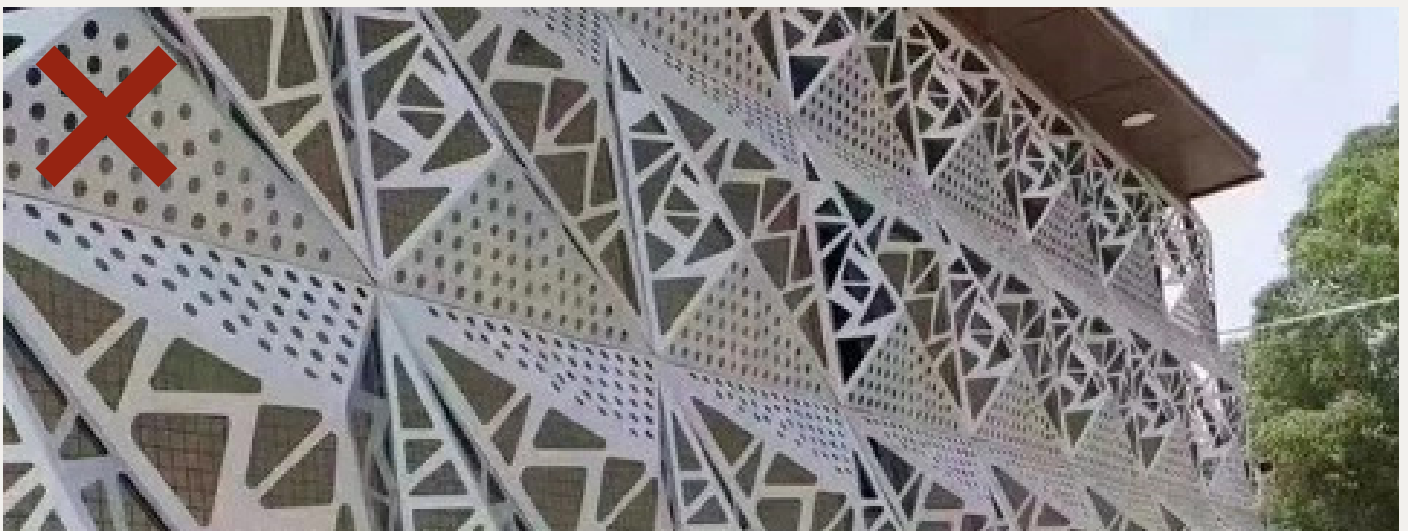


Corten Steel



What is not allowed (Metal Sheeting)

- 01 Do not mix different colored sheeting on a single facade, unless treated as a detail.
- 02 No other colours, including shiny sheeting, will be allowed.
- 03 All sheet metal edges must be properly and safely detailed to prevent injuries or an unfinished look.

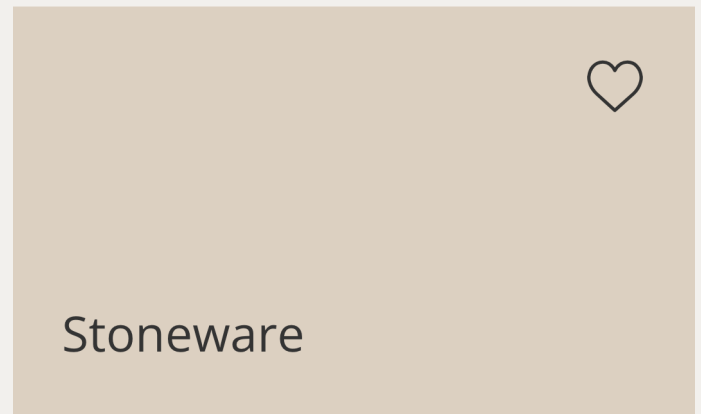
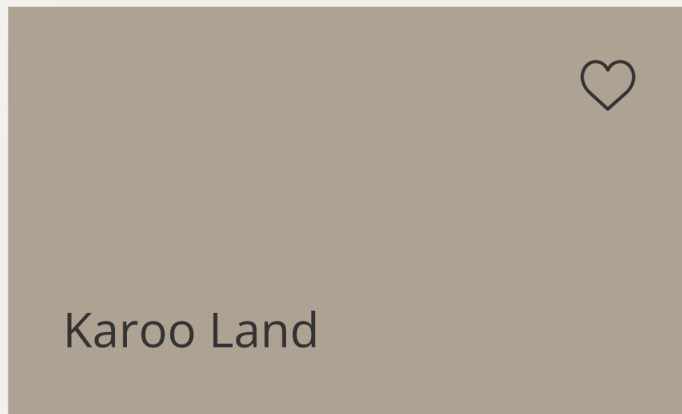


Plaster & Painted Panels

- 01 Paint colours: natural colours are encouraged, although other palettes will be considered, but must be approved by the AAC.

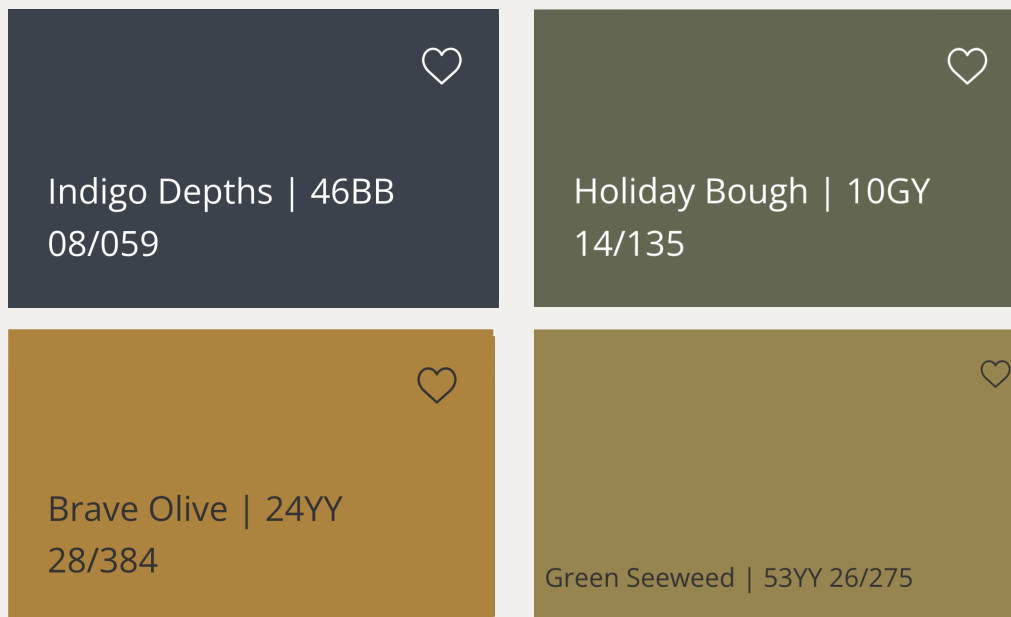


Standard Weather guard fine texture



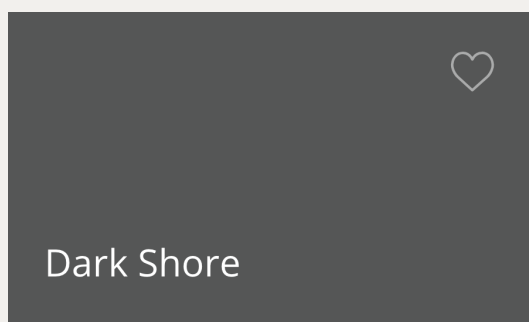
Front Doors

- 01** No carved patterns or animal- motives will be allowed.
- 02** Dulux Standard Weather Guard (fine texture) approved bright colours that fit the colour scheme of the residences.



Exterior Boundary Walls

- 01** Dulux Standard Weather Guard (fine texture) approved colour that fit the development



What is not allowed (Plaster)

- 01 No plastered effects or patterns.
- 02 No plastered profiles surrounding windows/ doors.
- 03 No plaster and painted door or window surrounds.
- 04 No artificial stone patterns.



Windows, Doors & Shutters

- 01 See front doors with colours above.
- 02 Only charcoal grey, matt black or natural aluminum may be used for the rest of the house.
- 03 Burglar bars to be aligned with window design or a clear type will be allowed.
- 04 Alternatively use moveable or foldable aluminum shutters (colour finishes to match those of windows and doors: natural, charcoal or black as below).



05

Natural treated materials to serve as shading devices can also be considered.



06

Shy away from standard catalogue windows. Consider windows as planes, rather than an opening in a load bearing wall. However, punched in windows can be used on the southern side and as focal windows, with privacy in mind.



- 07 Clear glass must be used.
- 08 Glass thickness must conform to National Building Regulations.
- 09 Garage doors: Horizontal-slatted natural hardwood planks are acceptable, but Aluzinc/ Chromadek steel is encouraged. Other finishes may also be considered, provided they match the doors and windows.

What is not allowed (Windows, Doors & Shutters)

- 01 No timber window frames (due to maintenance).
- 02 No diagonal bay-windows (only geometric boxed type).
- 03 No cottage pane window and doors.
- 04 No arch windows.
- 05 Garage doors should not dominate the streetscape. No patterns or mirrors are allowed.



Plumbing, Washing Lines and Communication Equipment

- 01 All exposed plumbing and washing lines shall be fully screened from street elevation and any other elevation from which it may be visible (including neighbours).
- 02 All communication instruments such as telephones, fax, and internet must be connected to the fibre-optic network made available at the boundary of each erf and no independent, overhead, or otherwise exposed connections shall be permitted.

Additions, Equipment, Statues, Garden Sheds etc.

- 01 Subsequent to the completion sign-off by the AAC of any works conducted on the development, no alterations or addition shall be permitted and nothing may be further erected whether temporary or permanent, without application having been made to, and approval granted by the AAC and which restriction shall also apply in respect of external play equipment, jungle gyms, statues, garden sheds, and their like.
- 02 Any new refurbishments, building or additions should go through the same process as with the initial building process approval (including drawings by a professional, proposal to the AAC for approval).

Building Lines

- 01 Street building lines: Min 5m - from street reserve line. (But within green zone).
- 02 Side and rear building lines: 3.5m.
- 03 No covered structures may be built on the boundaries.
- 04 Services yard walls may be constructed on to the site boundaries (should be indicated on approval drawings).

Coverage

- 01 Stands 1200m² and less. - 50% for a single storey and 40% for a double storey.
- 02 Stands 1200m²- 2000m² - 40% for a single storey and 30% for a double storey.
- 03 Stands 2000m² and more: 30% for a single and double storey.

Height & Width

- 01 Height restriction; - 3.2 meters per floor excluding the roof. To a maximum of 8.5 meters to the roof pitch for double storeys.
- 02 Height will be directly influenced by the contours. Floor levels will be limited to a height of 500mm above the applicable contour line.
- 03 Chimneys are excluded from this restriction.
- 04 Loft spaces will be evaluated as a storey if deemed to be habitable.

Access

- 01 Only one point of access to each dwelling stand is allowed with a maximum width at the street of 6m.

Special Sites

- 01 The AAC reserves the right to interpret the guidelines at its discretion. The AAC permits variations, these are in respect of specific site conditions, and should not be permanent amendments to the guidelines. A written motivation must be provided. The Municipality reserves the right to refuse plans, even if endorsed by the AAC.

Privacy

- 01 The Homeowners must aim to achieve the best situation for each site to provide privacy to their neighbours.
- 02 Placement of doors, windows and balconies must be done sensitively.

Out Buildings

- 01 Outbuildings may be no larger than 20% of the area of the main dwelling.
- 02 A garage is classed as an outbuilding.
- 03 No carports allowed.
- 04 A separate roofed gazebo or barbeque is classed as an outbuilding.
- 05 Outbuildings should preferably be attached, or semi-attached to the main dwelling by means of a link, veranda or pergola.
- 06 No garage outbuilding may be double story unless connected to the main house.
- 07 Outbuildings are defined as accommodated for a domestic worker, games rooms, studios, etc. Bona fide outbuildings will only be permitted where the Mangaung Municipality is satisfied that they are ordinarily associated with the main dwelling and do not serve as a second dwelling on the stand.

External & Sight Lighting

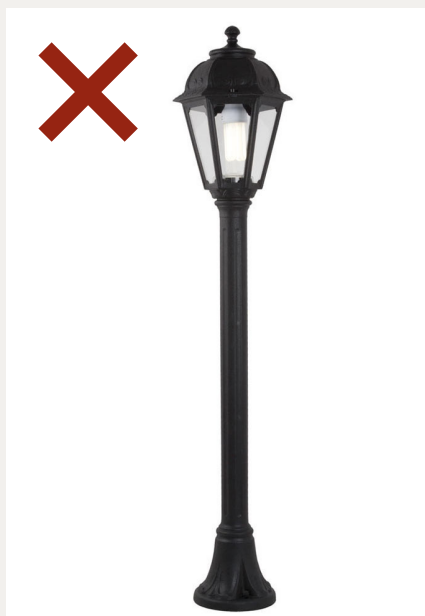
01

All external lighting must be shaded above the horizontal plane. Bollard outdoor type lighting is recommended.



02

These kind of decorated romantic lighting or floodlights will NOT be allowed.



Paving

- 01 The use of clay or concrete pavers for parking and access roads to properties are permitted: Corobrik Nougat.
- 02 Grass-blocks are also allowed to avoid too much hard surfaces.



House Numbers

- 01 Standardised house numbers will be provided.

Gardens & Landscape Design (See Seperate Landscape Guidelines)

01

A landscape design is required with the submission of working drawings for each property at a scale of 1:100. This must indicate the following:

- Adjacent areas of private/public open space.
- All grading, retaining work including gradients and structural elements.
- Paving, water features, swimming pools, pumps and filters, fences, gazebos and other structural elements.
- Details of storm water treatment.
- Details of finishes.
- Any requested extension of a garden onto an adjoining verge or open space showing detail and extent. Approval is required from the HOA and AAC on the basis that the ongoing maintenance is the responsibility of the property owner.
- Extend of lawns and planting and list of plants to be used.

