

## ENVIRONMENTAL AND URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES

### 1 INTRODUCTION

The architectural design guidelines for the DMA, as illustrated by the following drawings, are based upon, *inter alia*, the unique and historical houses situated in Uniondale, Haarlem and throughout the DMA.

A comprehensive study was undertaken of the existing dwellings and structures at Uniondale and Haarlem and contributed to the preparation of guidelines that reflect the traditional vernacular of the area.

The guidelines described below, should be read together with the strategies and proposals described in Chapters 25.2 & 25.3 of the Spatial Development Framework that has been prepared in respect of the DMA. The strategies in the latter section provide the primary environmental guidelines for the planning area.

The purpose of the guidelines is to provide architects, property owners and the EDM with a framework within which individual houses, commercial, industrial and low-cost housing developments can be designed and constructed to ensure an integrated and harmonious architectural language for the region as a whole. The guidelines will also guide the restoration of existing buildings.

It is proposed that the five principles of 'critical regionalism', as advocated in the *Bioregional Planning Framework for the Western Cape* and described in Chapter 25.2.1 of the SDF, be adopted in the planning and design process, namely:

- a) Sense of place.
- b) Sense of history.
- c) Sense of craft.
- d) Sense of nature.
- e) Sense of limits.

As described in Chapter 25.2.3 of the SDF, a place-specific approach to planning, design and management was adopted. Such approach recognizes that any *place* has a distinct character that needs to be recognized and respected.

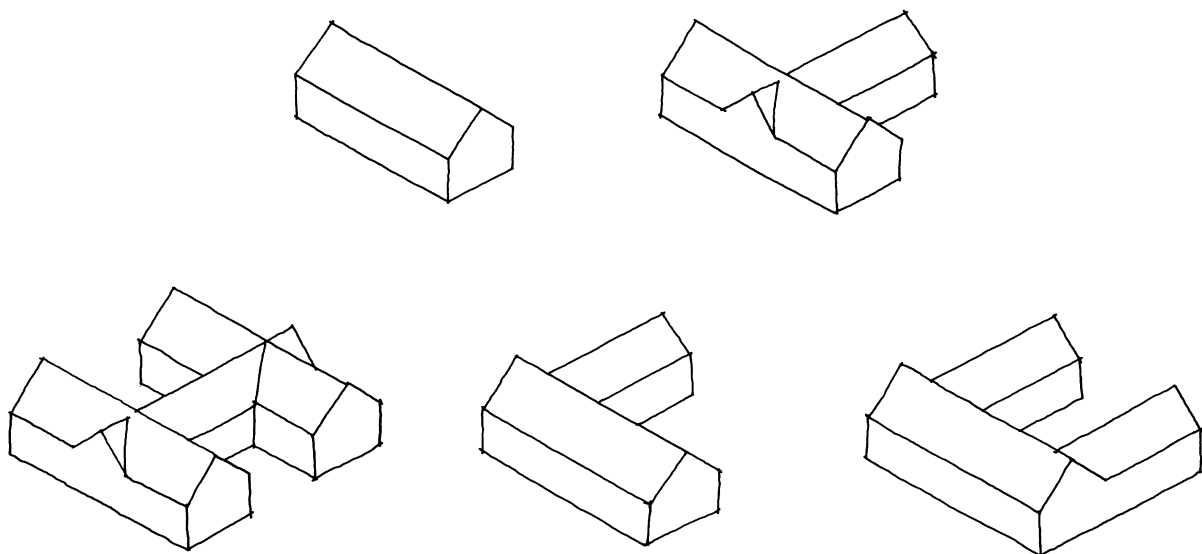
As mentioned above, these guidelines should not only be applied to residential buildings, but also to commercial and industrial buildings. In the latter regard especially commercial buildings are encouraged to adhere to the principles of critical regionalism to ensure that these structures are incorporated into the urban or rural fabric in a sustainable manner.

## 2 SPECIFIC PLANNING AND DESIGN GUIDELINES

In addition to broad principles of 'critical regionalism', the following specific planning and design guidelines need to be followed:

### 2.1 BUILDING FORM

All new buildings (as well as those to be restored) are required to conform to the basic 'Karoo house' concept. The latter concept may be adapted to the traditional 'letter of the alphabet' building types, which originated in the local vernacular of the Cape. In this topology, the plan form of the building resembles the letters; I, T, L, H, U or variations on the theme (refer to figure 1 below). The latter constitutes the main body of the building and is referred to as the core building.



**Figure 1: Letter of the alphabet type buildings.**

Verandahs form an integral part of the Karoo type house as will be allowed on any side of a house. They should, however, support spaces for the main living areas of the house. These verandahs should have a low-pitched roof from under the eaves of the main roof.



Figure 2: Letter of the alphabet house representing a U shape.

## 2.2 BUILDING PLATFORM

All buildings built on slopes must be designed with stepped levels in response to the slope of the site. Retaining structures should be constructed from rough cut natural stone.

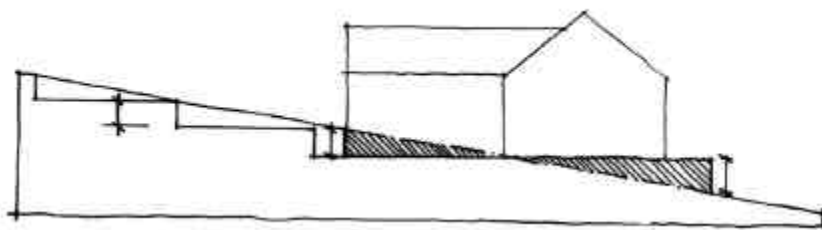


Figure 3: Section through slope illustrating evenly proportioned building.

## 2.3 ROOFS

Double-pitched roofs on all core buildings should be allowed. The utilization of the loft spaces in double-pitched roofs should also be permitted. All roofs should either be of corrugated iron, thatch or corrugated aluminum painted in a visually pleasing colour.



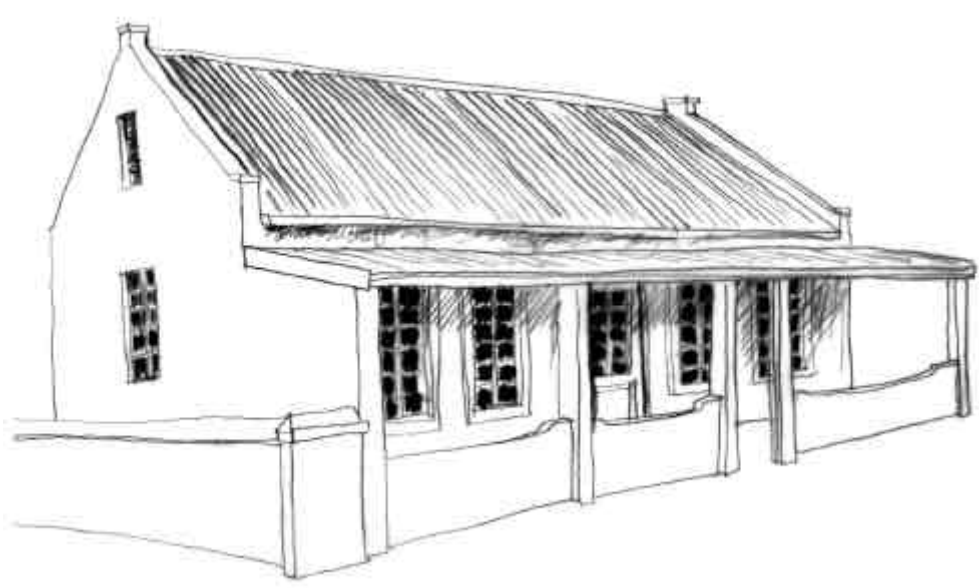
**Photos 1 & 2: Roofs should be double pitched on all core buildings (left), this should also apply to commercial and industrial buildings (right).**

## 2.4 STOEP

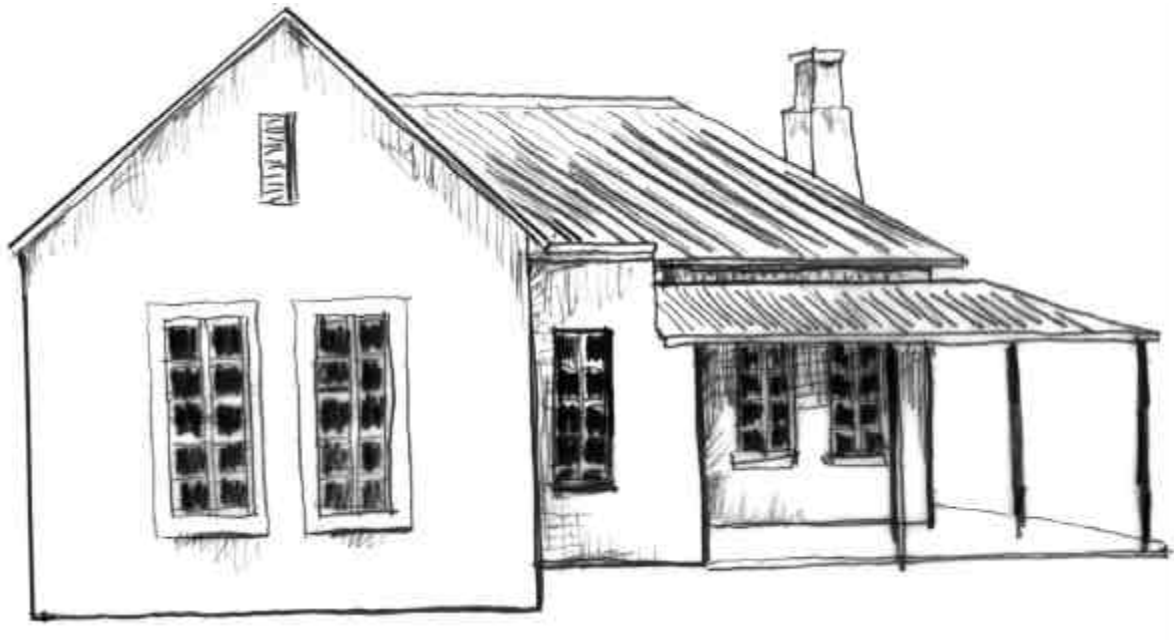
As described earlier, the stoep forms an integral part of the Karoo house. The stoep may have end walls on either side, with or without windows, or may be kept open. The depth of the stoep should be properly proportioned to the abutting building.

The roof material used must be similar to that of the main building. The roof of the stoep is to be low-pitched and supplement the main double-pitched roof.

Plastered/painted masonry, wooden or metal columns should be used to support the roof structure of the stoep if the length so requires.



**Figure 4: Verandah with solid end walls along the length of the core building.**



**Figure 5: Verandah with wooden columns along the front and side of the core building.**



**Photo 3: Example of stoep with partially open end walls supported by plastered columns.**

## **2.5 LINKING ELEMENTS**

There are a number of ways of achieving edge continuity by linking facades of buildings which then define the street edge. The following are examples of such linking elements:

- a) Archways (sometimes closed with 'stable-like' doors), coachman's entrances.
- b) High walls with or without gate openings/doors.
- c) Walls that serve as linking elements on the street façade may be the same height as the wall plate of the building next to it.

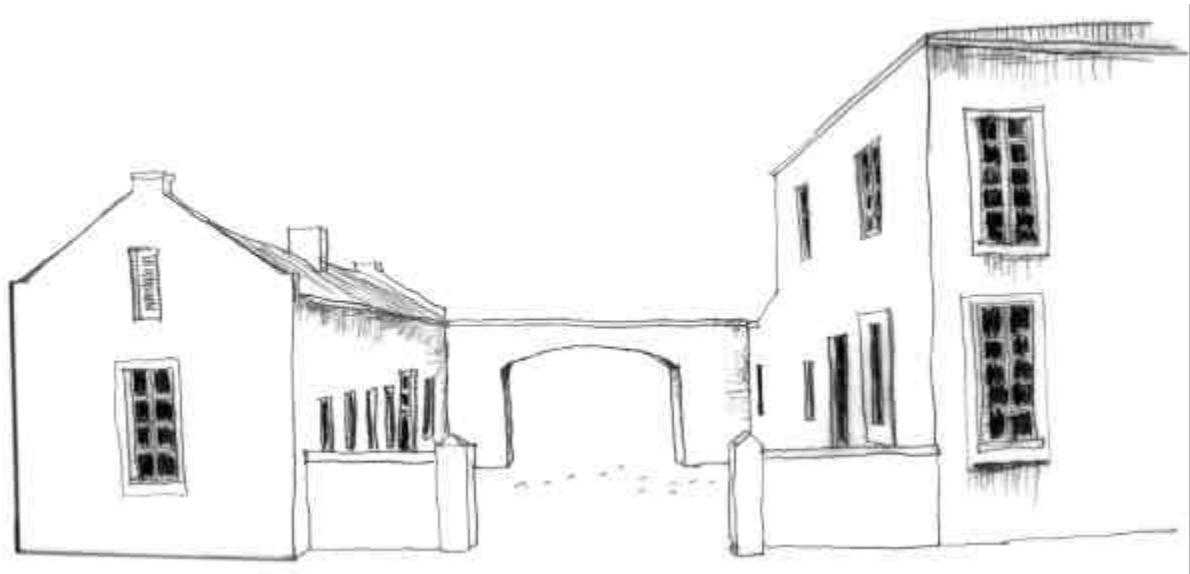


Figure 6: Wall as linking element with vehicle archway.

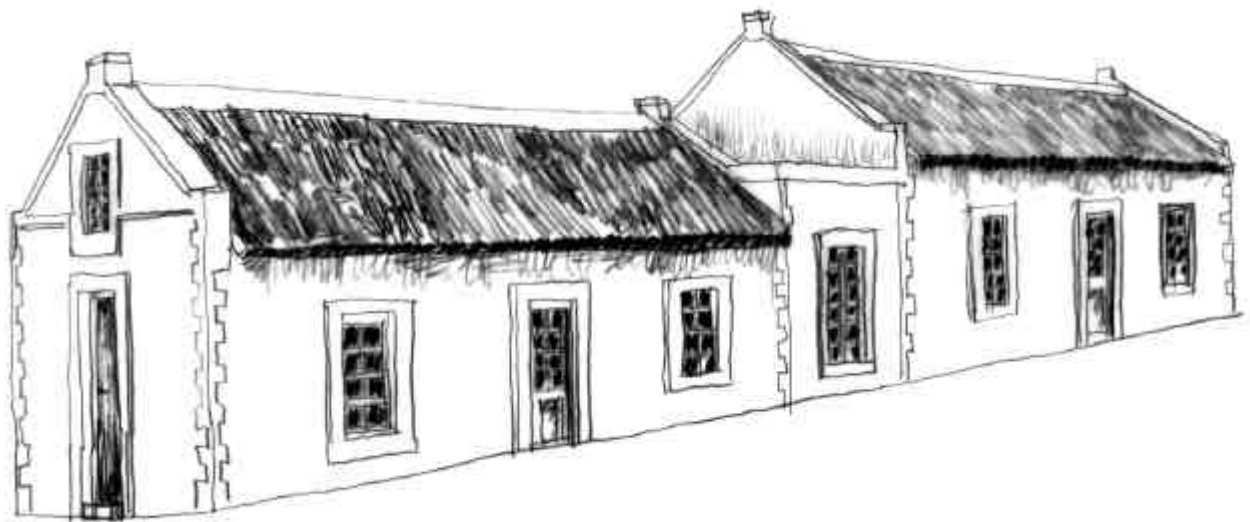


Figure 7: Two buildings linked with a wall element.



Photos 4 & 5: Edge continuity can be created by; for example, building two low-cost houses such as the ones on the left next to each other (right).

## 2.6 EXTERIOR WALLS, PLASTER BANDS AND BOUNDARY WALLS

All exterior walls must be plastered and painted. Simple articulated plaster bands on building corners and around doors and windows are encouraged. These plaster bands may be painted a different colour to that of the main building but should be visually pleasing.

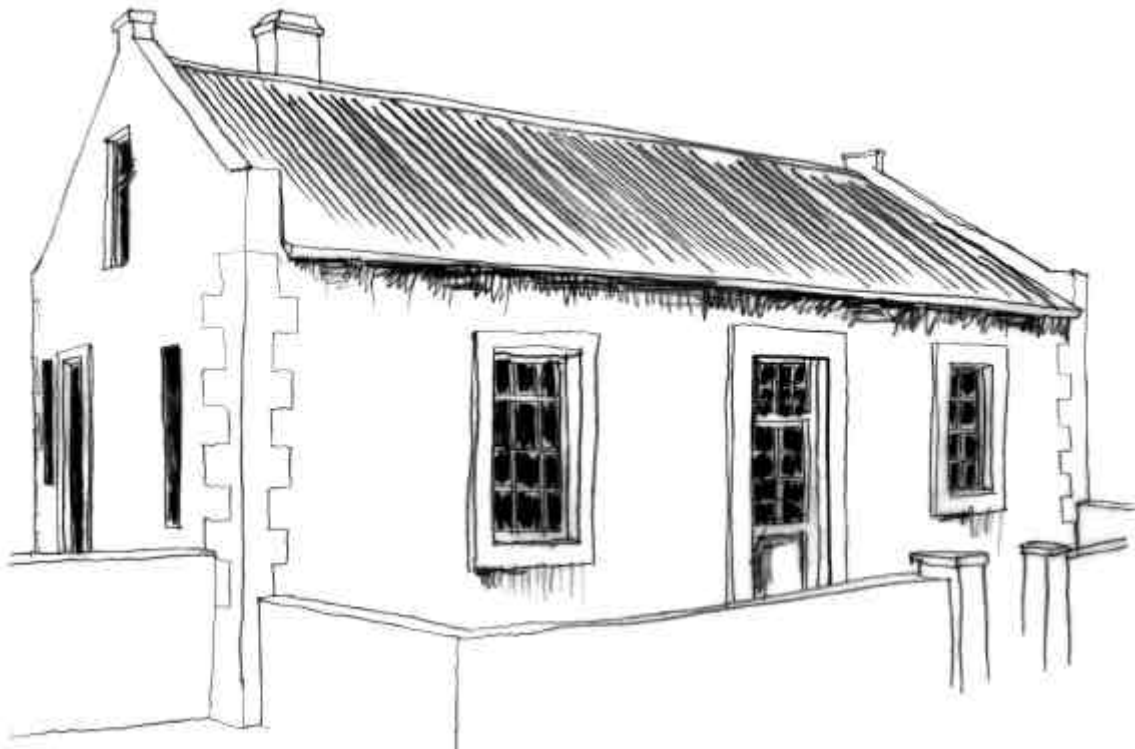
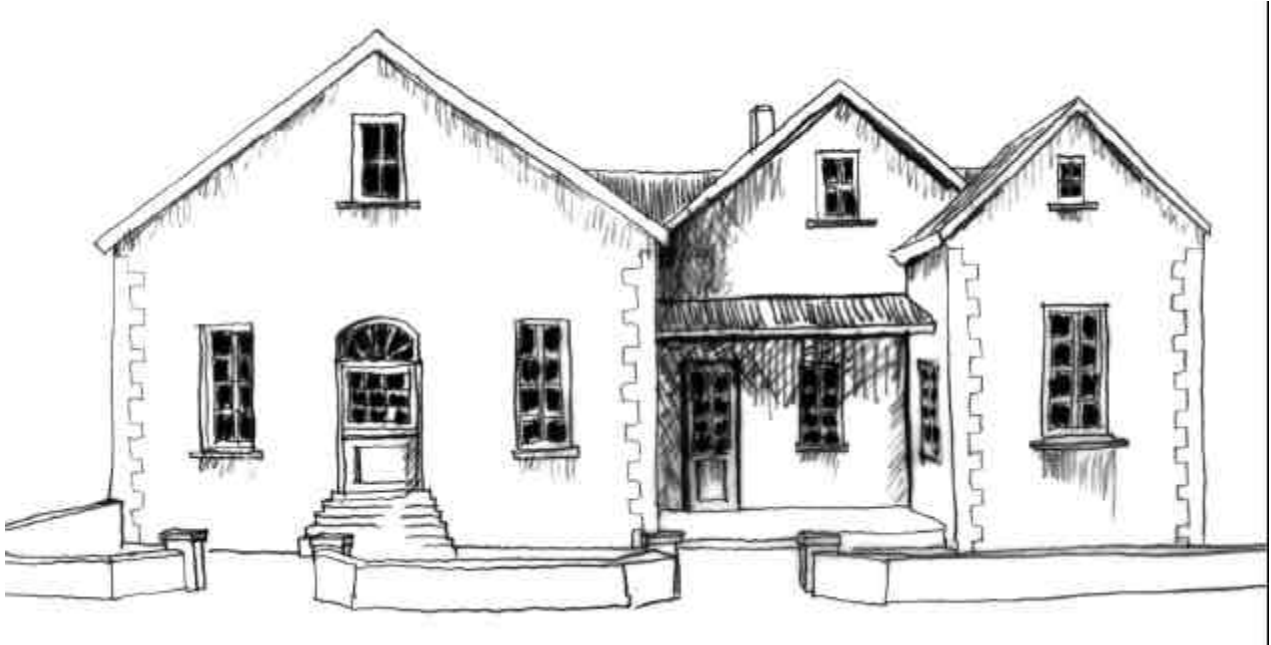


Figure 8: Articulated plaster bands on the corners of the core building.



Photos 6 & 7: Examples of low-cost housing settlements where plaster bands have been used.

Enclosure may be constructed in the form low plastered walls, picket fences or corrugated iron fences with a maximum height of 1.0m and painted the same colour as the rest of the house.



**Figure 9: House illustrating a low plastered wall providing enclosure.**

## **2.7 CHIMNEYS**

Chimneys are important elements in the architectural composition of the house. Plastered and painted masonry chimneys will be allowed. The colour of the chimneys should be the same as the colour of the main structure.

## **2.8 SERVICE FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

Gas cylinders, refuse bins, washing lines, and water storage tanks should be within an area enclosed by a wall. Sewerage systems are to be laid underground and not be closer than 3.0m from any foundations. All sewerage systems must be positioned in such a manner to prevent pollutants from draining into sensitive ecosystems. As a precaution, all septic tanks should be adequately lined to prevent leakage. These service facilities and infrastructure must comply with national safety standards.

Water storage tanks may be used to collect rainwater run-off from roofs. These tanks should be positioned in the least visible manner. Efforts should be made to hide these water tanks with proper planting of trees and shrubs.

Solar panels will be allowed provided that it is flush with the roof material and that it is the same colour as the roof material or positioned in an unobtrusive manner.

## **2.9 VISTAS OF NEIGHBOURING PROPERTIES**

Buildings should be planned, designed and placed in a manner that will respect and not obstruct the primary vistas of the region.

## **2.10 NOISE MITIGATION**

Measures are required to regulate noise levels and to reduce noise levels through design intervention, namely by ensuring that outside living and working spaces of neighbours are not located directly alongside one another.

If generators are required, it should be housed in a fully sound proof structure. No noise from generators should be heard on neighbouring properties.

## **2.11 COMMUNICATION STRUCTURES**

Television antennas and other similar structures should wherever possible be fitted below the main building eaves line or alternatively in unobtrusive sites. Telephone and electrical reticulation must preferably be laid underground.

## **2.12 LANDSCAPING**

It is recommended that indigenous plants and plants with historical or agricultural connotations be used in the general landscaping of the region. Non-invasive exotic plants may, however, be used.

## 2.13 ADVERTISING

Advertising on commercial and industrial properties should be kept small in relation to the façade of the building. Historical features of buildings should be kept in mind in considering advertisement placing.

If advertisements make use of external lights, it should be fixed to building walls and be as unobtrusive as possible.



Photos 8 & 9: Advertising that adhere to the historical attributes of buildings.

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