

AlUla Central & South

Architectural Design Guidelines

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Architectural Design Guidelines

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1. Introduction

Master Plan Vision

‘Achieving sustainable urban transformation – future resilience and knowledge for the benefit of the local and global community.’

Master Plan 2: AlUla Central and South

The AlUla Master Plan 2 districts house the maximum population within the County and are strong anchors for urban growth. The key districts within Master Plan 2 are AlUla Central, AlUla South, Mughayra, Abu Zuraib and Outer Core Areas.

The intent of the Master Plan Area 2 is to provide support to the other 3 Master Plan Areas, as MP2 earmarks the arrival to AlUla. The MP2 area houses the primary urban and service areas for the wider county.

The Detailed Plan development for AlUla Central and South (2023) is a comprehensive Master Plan for those districts.

RCU
Headquarters

AlUla Central
Core

Support Services
Zone

Agricultural
Farms

Business Park

Support Services
Zone

Urban SEED -
sadr

University

AlUla Governate

ERBA

AlUla FC Sports
Complex



Villa Hegra

Old House
Boutique Hotel

HOP Housing

AlUla Central
Tram Station

Eastern Canyon
Urban Centre

Urban SEED

Tram Depot

Stadium

Hijaz Tram
Station

Hijaz Train
Station

Sayya Park

Urban SEED

Urban SEED

Urban SEED

AlUla Sports &
Outdoor Play
Centre

Urban SEED

Figure 1: AlUla Central and South Illustrative Master Plan (2023)

1. Introduction

The land uses across AIUla Central and South districts are grouped by type (landuse level 1) and broken down into individual land uses (landuse level 2). Each of the land uses has a corresponding land use code.

Figure 2 illustrates the land uses that have been distributed across these districts.

Table.1: Land Use Typologies Guidelines List (Base Districts)

Landuse Code Level 1	Landuse Code Level 2	Land Use Level 1	Land Use Level 2
MU	MU	Mixed Use	Planned Unit Development
	MUR1	Mixed Use	Residential Mixed Use High density
	MUR2	Mixed Use	Residential Mix Use Low to Medium density
RE	R1	Residential	Residential High Density
	R2	Residential	Residential Medium Density 2
	R3	Residential	Residential Medium Density 1
	R4	Residential	Residential Low Density
	R4a	Residential	Residential Low Density - Luxury
	R5	Residential	Residential Special
	R6	Residential	Residential Agriculture
	R7	Residential	Residential Affordable
HO	H1	Commercial Hospitality	Hotel (Low Density)
	H2	Commercial Hospitality	Hotel (Medium Density)
	H3	Commercial Hospitality	Hotel (High Density)
	H4	Commercial Hospitality	Resort
OF	MUO	Commercial Services - Office	Mixed Use Office
	O	Commercial Services - Office	Office
	BP	Commercial Services - Office	Business Park
RT	RT1	Commercial Services - Retail	District Centre Retail & F&B
	RT2	Commercial Services - Retail	Neighbourhood/Local Retail and F&B
	RT3	Commercial Services - Retail	Warehouse Retail
CS	CS	Cultural Services	Cultural Services
	HI	Cultural Services	Heritage Assets
GS	GS1	Government Facilities	Government Offices
ED	ED1	Education Facilities	Kindergarten
	ED2	Education Facilities	School
	ED3	Education Facilities	University
	ED4	Education Facilities	Special Institute
HF	HF1	Healthcare Facilities	Hospital
	HF2	Healthcare Facilities	Health Centre/Clinic
RF	RF1	Religious Facilities	Juma Mosque
	RF2	Religious Facilities	Local Mosque
	RF3	Religious Facilities	Other Facilities
RC	REC1	Recreational Facilities	Stadium
	REC2	Recreational Facilities	Sports Centre
	REC3	Recreational Facilities	Recreational Club
SS	SS1	Support Services	Support Services
	SS2	Support Services	City Support Services

LEGEND

- R1-Residential High Density
- R2-Residential Medium Density 2
- R3-Residential Medium Density 1
- R4-Residential Low Density
- R4a-Residential Low Density - Luxury
- R5-Residential Special
- R6-Residential Agriculture
- R7-Residential Affordable
- MU-Planned Unit Development
- MUR1-Residential Mixed Use High density
- MUR2-Residential Mix Use Low to Medium density
- H1-Hotel (Low Density)
- H2-Hotel (Medium Density)
- H3-Hotel (High Density)
- H4-Resort
- MUO-Mixed Use Office
- O-Office
- BP-Business Park
- RT1-District Centre Retail & F&B
- RT2-Neighbourhood/Local Retail and F&B
- RT3-Warehouse Retail
- CS-Cultural Services
- HI-Heritage Assets
- ED1-Kindergarten
- ED2-School
- ED3-University
- ED4-Special Institute
- GS1-Government Offices
- HF1-Hospital
- HF2-Health Centre/Clinic
- RF1-Juma Mosque
- RF2-Local Mosque
- RF3-Other Facilities
- REC1-Stadium
- REC2-Sports Centre
- REC3-Recreational Club

- OS1-Local Park
- OS2-Neighbourhood Park
- OS3-District Park
- OS4-Settlement Park
- OS5-Wadi Edge Park
- OS6-Plaza
- OS7-Sikkas
- WA-Wadi
- AG-Farms
- CE-Cemetery
- SS1-Support Services (Industrial)
- SS2-City Support Services
- PU1-Public Utility
- PU2-Transport Utility
- SP-Special Projects
- EN1-No build Zones
- EN2-Irrigation Channels



Figure 2: AlUla Central and South Land Use Level 2 Plan (2023)

2. Purpose of this Document

This guideline aims to regulate architectural designs in AIUla County, and specifies the mandatory and advisory design requirements as the case may be.

This guideline outlines the traditional architectural styles found across the AIUla County in terms of heritage, natural features and local architecture. It then highlights the essential elements of such architecture with regards to layout, massing, design and materials and colors. This guideline continues to provide details of the four recognisable architectural styles across AIUla and provides some reference images and interpretations of how these could manifest across AIUla Central and South in this proposal.

Finally a series of plans are shown to illustrate the varying degrees of architectural control across AIUla Central and South and the recommended approaches to take within each area. Areas are broadly divided by their heritage influence with different approaches taken thereafter in terms of architectural flexibility.

The two primary districts across AIUla are described as per the following:

AIUla Central

AIUla Central is a well-established, densely populated urban centre. The surrounding landscape and historical fabric are key to its heritage value. An array of urban and rural heritage sites/features can be traced along AIUla Old Town and Oasis. The AIUla Central includes AIUla East and Eastern Canyon areas.

The aspiration of AIUla Central is conceived as an urban palimpsest. The regeneration plan aims to highlight and nurture the natural and cultural heritage of the site.

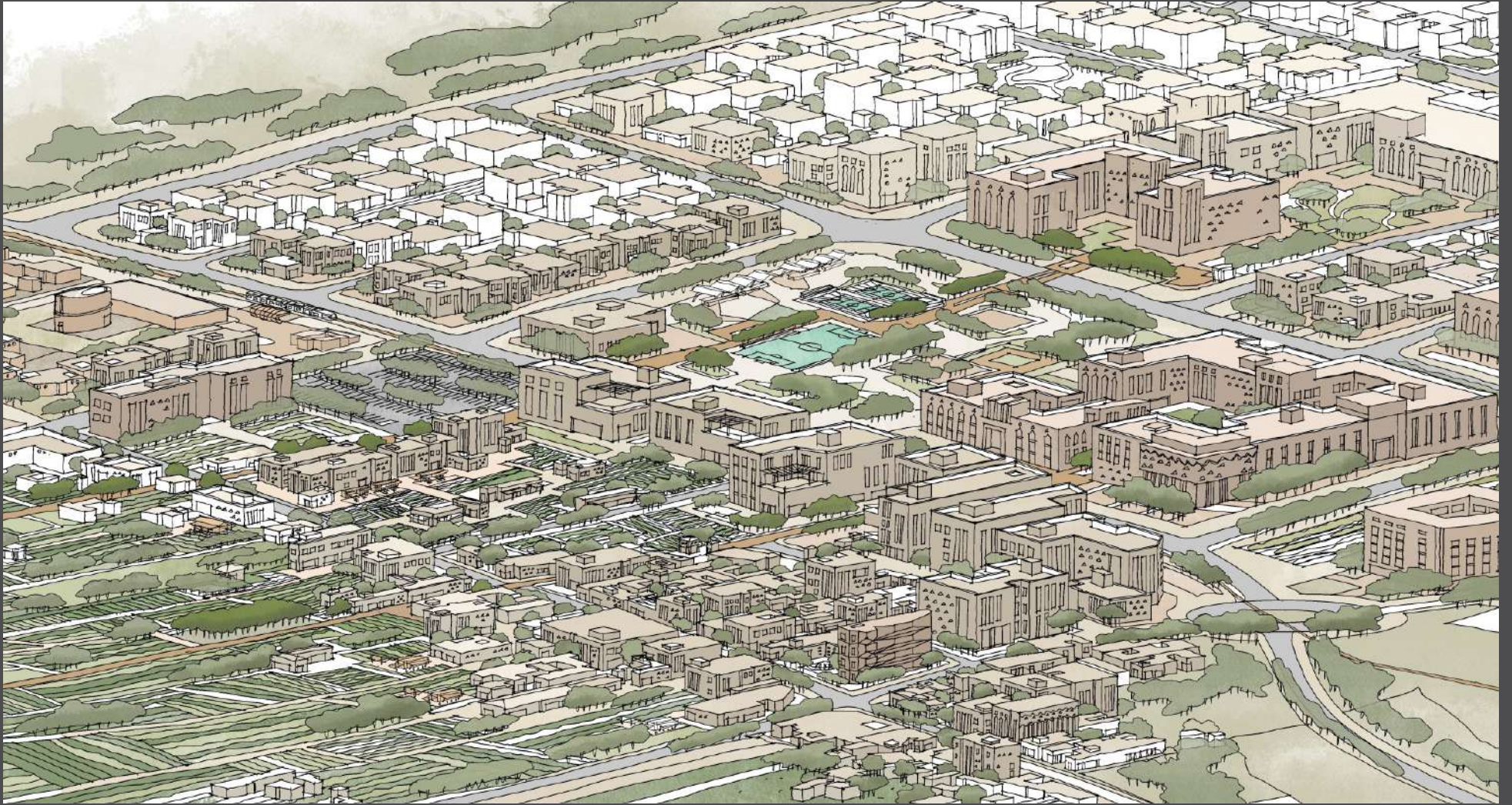
This master plan promotes AIUla Central as a place of encounter between locals and visitors by improving the aesthetic appeal of the site as well as urban life.

AIUla South

The vision for AIUla South is to turn this area into a mixed use urban development with pedestrian oriented neighborhoods that respects the local culture.

The substantial amount of vacant plots provides a significant opportunity to transform the area into a denser vibrant urban hub (ERBA). Introducing new typologies is essential to accommodate the future growth and different family structures anticipated to be housed in the area.

AIUla South shall aspire to reinstate the local vernacular architecture through contemporary development that integrates seamlessly with the surrounding landscape. Developing an improved urban form and architecture appearance informed by the local vernacular.



AIUla Central



AIUla South

3. Architectural Approach

Traditional Architecture

Architectural character in AlUla can be drawn from a range of sources that broadly split into three key categories, as below.

Architecture Heritage

AlUla's strategic location played a vital role in shaping its rich historical background. Starting in the pre-Islamic eras, AlUla was a civic and commercial centre due to its unique location on the famous north–south caravan road. In the later Islamic eras, the city continued to thrive, especially as a way station for pilgrims from Egypt, Iraq, and Syria.

For many decades, AlUla received newcomers from nearby rural areas and other regions, such as Najd and Hijaz, as well as people from Iraq, Syria, Jordan, and Morocco. The making and remaking of the city through its historical eras has resulted in distinct and diverse architectural heritage.

Natural Features

AlUla region is located in the north-west of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The region is positioned between a desert plateau and the coastal Hijaz mountain range, and experiences significant variation in elevation and diverse geological features. Across the desert region, water plays an important role shaping the natural landscape and pattern of human settlement.

AlUla's natural water system comprises limited amounts of surface water from scarce rainfall, typically within Wadi beds and deep water resources. As a result, the region's main settlements sit along Wadi valleys.

Local Architecture

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia spans along a large area of land that is climatically and topographically distinct. AlUla region sits between Central and Western regions of the Kingdom (Najd: a desert plateau and Hijaz: coastal mountain). The social and cultural overlapping of those two distinct regions has resulted in a cumulative architecture language influenced by both.

AlUla's vernacular architecture is indicative of the local climate and social culture, and it bears witness to the social trends and events that happened there. The compact urban fabric with narrow and winding roads maintained the city life around extreme hot weather conditions. The closely clustered courtyard houses provided comfortable micro climate around open spaces. The inward focus of courtyard houses responded to the strict socio-cultural traditions.



Architectural Approach

Traditional Architecture Essential Elements

This section highlights the key essential elements of traditional architecture across the AIUla County.

Layout

Layout can be subdivided into structured and organic patterns, with their key features highlighted below:

Structured pattern

- Contemporary orthogonal grid
- T-shape street system
- Wide roads and streets
- Repetitive blocks organized around a central open space with community facilities
- Compact and dense
- Dense and mature urban landscape in AIUla Central
- High vacancy rate in AIUla South

Organic pattern

- Smaller buildings than the rest of AIUla
- Organic pattern
- Narrow and winding roads
- Clustered urban fabric with buildings sharing party walls
- Small pockets of open spaces
- Compact and dense

Massing

The key massing features of traditional architecture are listed below:

- Simple geometrical shapes (squares & rectangles)
- Simple massing with recessed balconies and loggias
- Simple front plane with ground floor step-backs on buildings with active frontages
- Solid forms
- One to two storey buildings
- Clustered courtyard buildings forming a horizontal urban fabric
- Flat roofs and blank façades with higher solid to void ratio
- Stepped massing
- Human scale
- Grounded and balanced



Figure 4: Structured pattern: Existing orthogonal grid in AlUla Central



Figure 5: Organic pattern: Existing organic growth in AlUla East



Figure 6: Example images of traditional architectural forms

Architectural Approach

Design

Essential design elements that feature in traditional architecture across AIUla are summarised below:

- Simple massing but with a degree of articulation
- Broken into horizontal and vertical volumes
- Square and rectangular openings
- Deep recessed windows with wooden shutters
- Decorative Arabic features including:
 - Colourful metal doors
 - Wall screens
 - Arches
 - Recessed balconies
 - Pergolas
 - Geometric pattern
- Flat roofs with high parapets
- Minimal exterior openings, usually aligned and of the same size
- Minimal and limited framing of openings (mainly through the use of different colour and/or material)
- Inwardness and privacy zoning as an imitation of cultural ethos

Materials and Colors

One of the main elements that defines vernacular architecture in AIUla is the unified colors and materials:

- Locally sourced materials:
 - Mud bricks
 - Sandstone: the use of four to five courses of cut-sandstone at the foot of the wall to protect the fine structures
 - Mud plastering
 - Decorative metal work
 - Decorative wood
- Earthy and neutral external colour schemes



Figure 7: Example images of traditional architectural forms

4. Architectural Styles

Four key recognisable architectural styles are present in the AIUla settlements and form the basis of the architectural character. Part of the differentiation of character amongst settlements is defined by an emphasis on styles by settlement.

A: Arabic Revivalist

Building design that takes cues and motifs from Arabic architecture from across KSA, with particular reference made to Hijaz architecture which encompasses Medina and the surrounding regions. Remnants of such architecture have been found in the regions of Mecca, Jeddah, Taif and Yanbu as well.

Key features which would differentiate this form from another include:

- Rectilinear forms to accommodate higher densities whilst being relatively easy to construct;
- Division of functions by storey, often with a clear articulation of this division on the building façade; projecting or flush mashrabiya on the elevations; use of roof level terraces as another living space;
- Geometric ornamentation on walls, doors and windows; and
- Extensive use of locally sourced materials, including silt clay and palm wood.

B: Contemporary Vernacular

Design which imbues the notion of Arabic architecture in its proportions and fenestration coverage ratios, whilst being modern in its construction methods and materiality. In the Arabic Revivalist there is an effort to use traditional and locally sourced materials (or at least appear to on the outside); in the case of the Modern Arabic style, the colour tones shall be maintained accordingly - however, the use of composite and modern materials together in distinctive ensembles shall be permitted.

Certainly the differentiating factor between the Revivalist and the Contemporary, shall be the reduction of motifs and gestures in the elevations, in favour of a more austere and plain architecture which aims to form a uniform whole with its neighbours and adjacent buildings. Much of the new residential-led blocks shall utilise this style, and is certainly most suited to the single and multiple residential typologies.

C: Modern Arabic

This style goes a step further than its predecessor and brings further austerity along with a grander scale to the architecture of AIUla. This style is that of the civic and community building, and that also of the larger mixed-use and multiple family typology. Materials shall be more of a mixture to express the design of the individual building within its immediate surroundings, whilst still remaining very much in the context of the region and the Kingdom at large. Whilst fenestration coverage gets larger than the Revivalist and Contemporary Vernacular, it does not allow for the curtain wall or exposed steel frame, and still maintains continuity in colour tone, and mild/subtle architectural detail and motif which ties it firmly to this land.

For a city-building project such as this, there shall be great scope for the architects of MP2 to define the form of all community and civic buildings across all of the Urban SEEDs / Community Hubs; it is advised that it take this general form for consistency (albeit with a careful mixture of the other styles described here, where relevant).

D: International Contemporary

This is utilised where a modern outward face is intended to be created; a notion of ‘otherness’, which is not intended to be ‘of AIUla’, but instead representative of openness to the outside world. Taking its name partly from the architectural movement ‘CIAM’ in Europe in the mid-20th Century, this style represents the union of the nation with its overseas counterparts, and the welcoming of other cultures, nationalities, traditions and technologies into the Kingdom as it hurtles forward with its country-wide modernisation initiatives such as ‘Vision 2030’.

KSA has a rich recent history of contemporary buildings in other towns and cities such as Riyadh, Jeddah and Dammam, and is making a big push to re-inventing areas with ultra-modern and indeed avant-garde architecture in NEOM, the Red Sea, Amaala and elsewhere. In AIUla, there shall be moments of this type of architecture, where boundaries shall be pushed in other to create a beautiful juxtaposition of the old and the new. One obvious example of this would be in the ERBA district where contemporary mixed-use and commercial buildings are proposed, but RCU may decide to allocate this style to other areas of the master plan as well.

For now, this is the most restricted type of architecture in the master plan proposal in terms of its coverage; subject to review by the local authority.

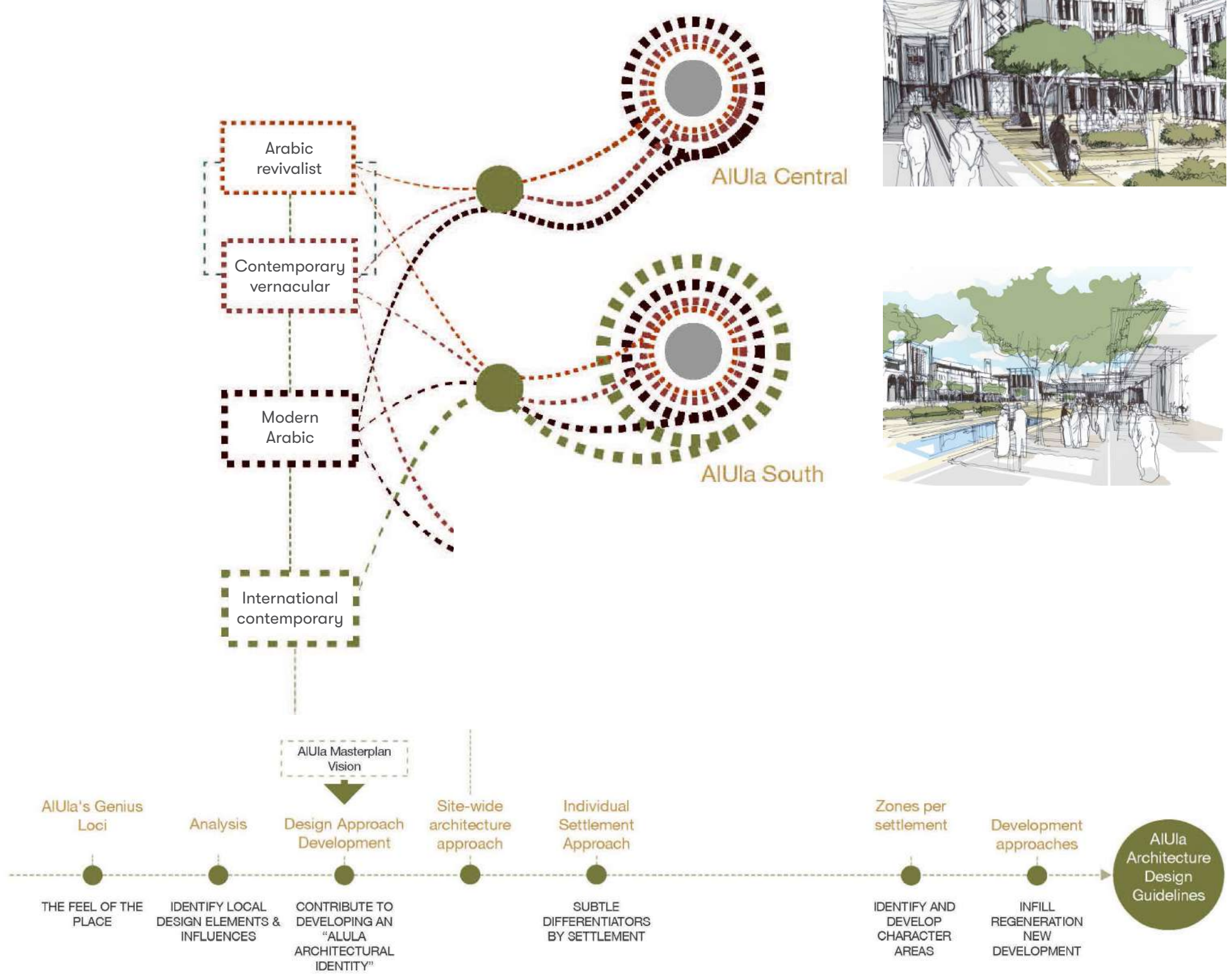


Figure 8: Conceptual diagram showing the interrelationship of the architectural styles across AlUla Central and South

Architectural Styles

A: Arabic revivalist

The below images and sketch represent an idea of the Arabic revivalist architecture style that could be implemented or re-imagined across AlUla. The images are examples only.

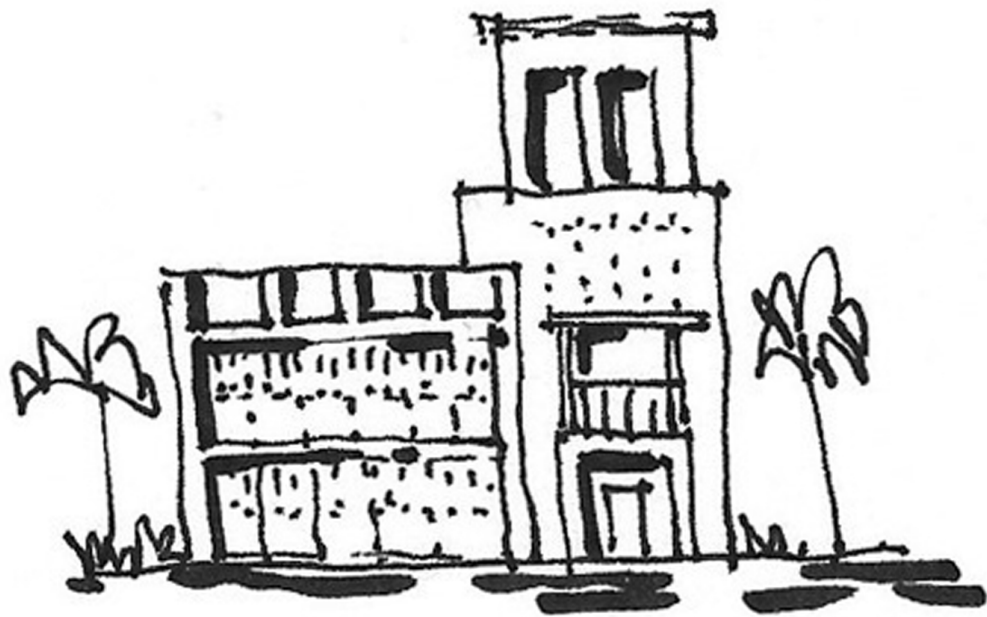


Figure 9: Source: Architectural Guidelines for AlUla Urban Areas May 2020, AlUla Design Studio (UDS)

B: Contemporary vernacular

The below images and sketch represent an idea of the more contemporary architecture style that could be implemented or re-imagined across AlUla. The images are examples only.

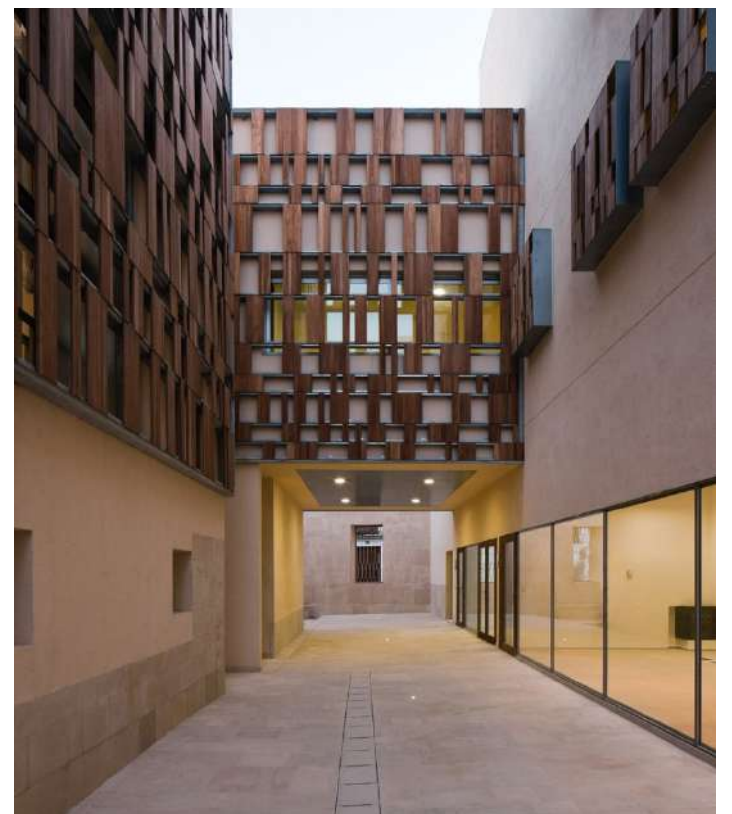


Figure 10: Source: Architectural Guidelines for AlUla Urban Areas May 2020, AlUla Design Studio (UDS)

Architectural Styles

C: Modern Arabic

The below images and sketch represent an idea of the modern Arabic architecture style that could be implemented or re-imagined across AIUla. The images are examples only.



Figure 11: Source: Architectural Guidelines for AIUla Urban Areas May 2020 (AIUla Design Studio (UDS))

D: International Contemporary

The below images and sketch represent an idea of the more contemporary architecture style found internationally that could be implemented or re-imagined across AlUla. The images are examples only.

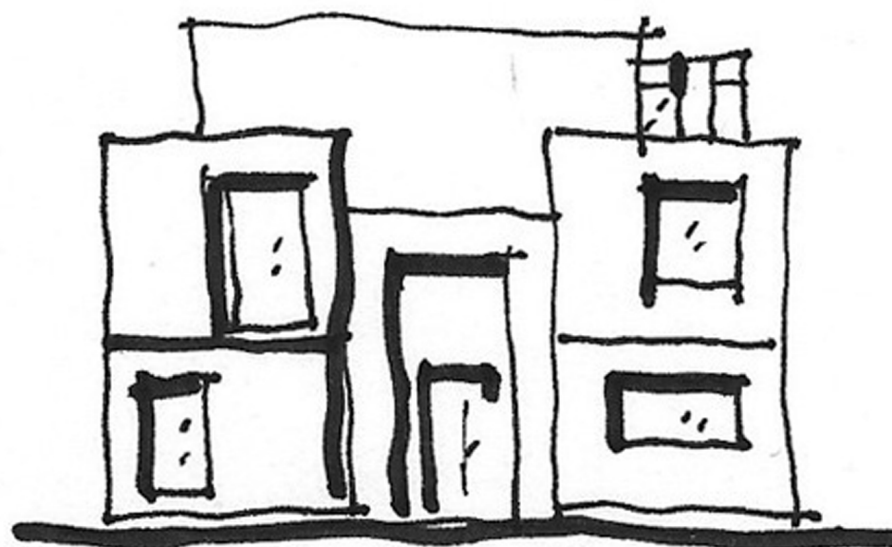


Figure 12: Source: Architectural Guidelines for AlUla Urban Areas May 2020 (AlUla Design Studio (UDS))

5. Degree of Architecture Control

The different areas across AlUla Central and South require different approaches in relation to the architectural styles they will convey. The following identifies different areas of control and highlights which architectural styles can be exhibited throughout.

The unique features of AlUla’s heritage and landscape shape its local identity and character, with considerable importance attached to maintaining the authenticity of these features and sites. However, AlUla is also a modern city and as such is not intended to be a pastiche of historic styles. For this reason, an approach to stylistic control has been adopted whereby the strictness of architectural control relates directly to the site’s proximity to features of strong historical or landscape significance.

This ‘varying degree of control’ approach allows new development to reinforce AlUla’s local identity in appropriate ways, with in-built flexibility where new development shall have minimal impact on the historic look and feel of the place.

Zones in close proximity to the most significant heritage sites are deemed exceptionally visually sensitive. They require a strong degree of visual coherence and shall make reference to - although not necessarily copy - traditional local architectural styles, colors, textures and materials. Where these zones are located adjacent to key tourist attractions, routes or main thoroughfares they are particularly important for AlUla’s unified sense of place. These zones are afforded the maximum degree of control.

As you move further from these visually sensitive hot spots, the degree of control lessens, allowing AlUla to develop its own distinct, contemporary architecture that references the vernacular in more fluid and adaptive ways. This flexible approach shall ensure that AlUla does not have a single homogeneous character across its urban areas and is able to develop a rich and multi-layered townscape with an overarching sense of history and place.



Figure 13: Sites of significant influence around Hijaz Railway



	Arab Revivalist	Contemporary Vernacular	Modern Arabic	International Contemporary
Heritage sites with significant influence	✓	✗	✗	✗
Areas with strict reference to local vernacular	✓	✓	✗	✗
Areas with a flexible approach to architecture	✗	✓	✓	✓
Contemporary architecture	✗	✓	✗	✓
Open space	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Areas with a flexible modern approach to architecture	✗	✗	✓	✓

LEGEND

- Heritage sites with significant influence
- Areas with strict reference to local vernacular
- Areas with a flexible approach to architecture
- Contemporary architecture
- Open Space
- Areas with a flexible modern approach to architecture
- Environmental Protection Zones



Figure 14: AlUla Central & South Degree of Architectural Control Plan (2023)

Degree of Architecture Control

AIUla Central

This section illustrates the architectural control across AIUla Central. This includes the unified zones in AIUla Central, where the heritage and landscape of the region have significant influence on the architectural and urbanistic approach, and other areas where the local architectural vernacular takes precedence as the guiding light.

The other areas where the approach to the architectural guidelines shall remain more flexible are explored within the Typical Architectural Features section of this chapter.

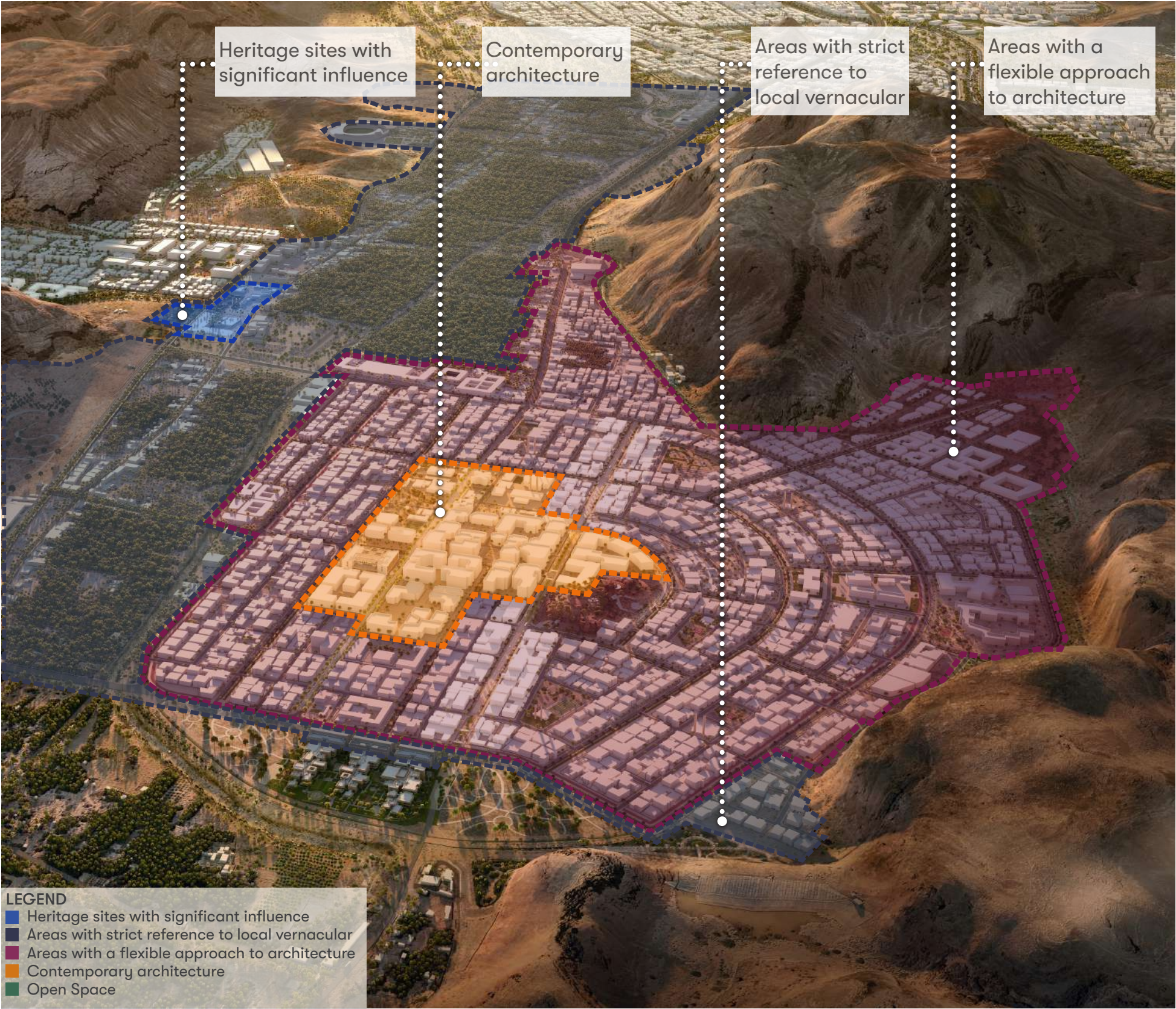


Figure 15: Architectural control across AIUla Central



Figure 16: Example sketches of architectural approaches

Degree of Architecture Control

AIUla South

This section demonstrates the architectural control across AIUla Central. This includes the unified zones in AIUla South, where the heritage and landscape of the region have significant influence on the architectural and urbanistic approach, including along the Hijaz corridor. It also includes other areas where the local architectural vernacular takes precedence as the guiding light.

The other areas where the approach to the architectural guidelines shall remain more flexible - towards ERBA, central core and communities - are also highlighted and are explored within the Typical Architectural Features section of this chapter.



Figure 17: Example sketch of architectural approach

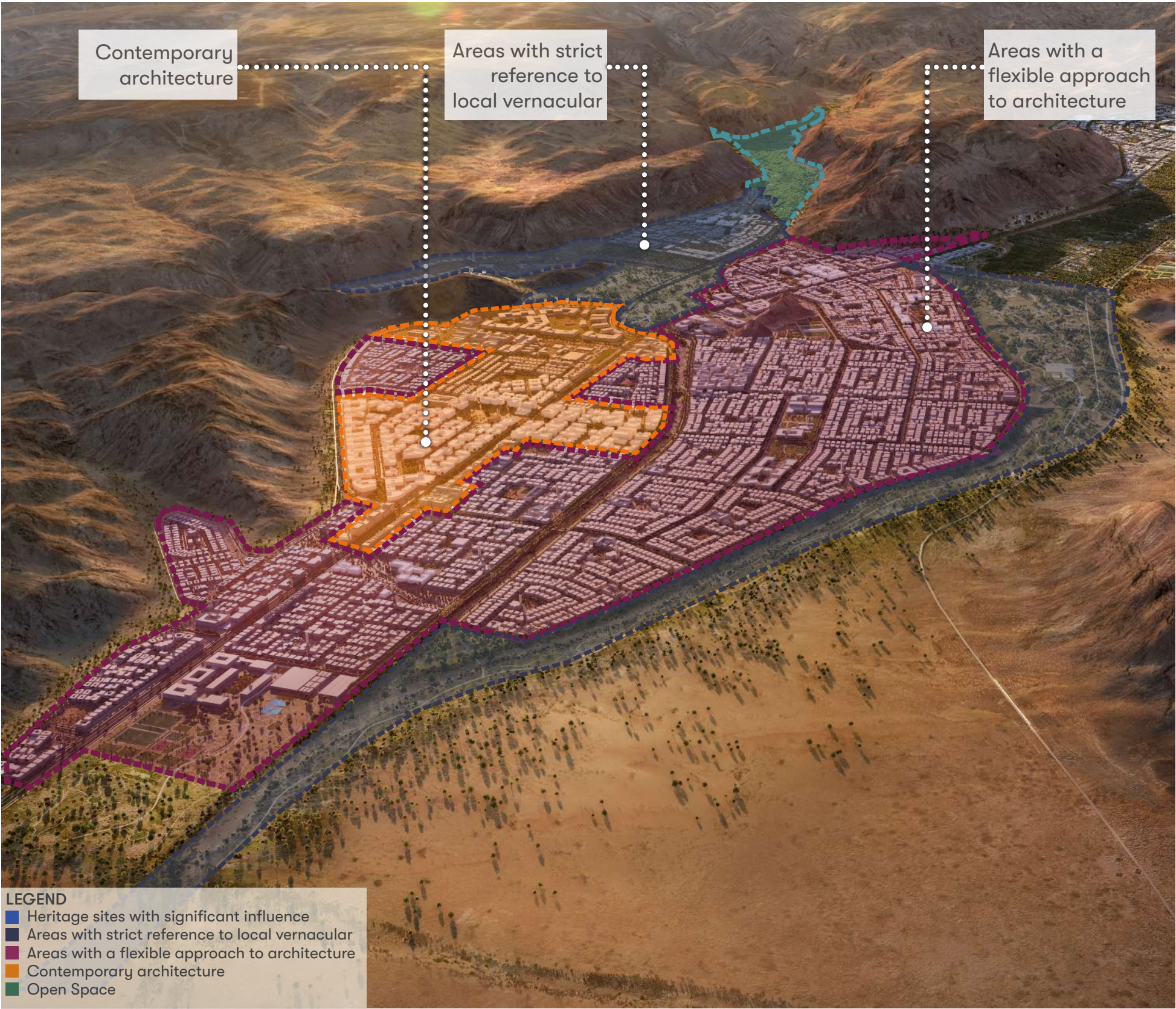


Figure 18: Architectural control across AIUla South

Eastern Canyon

This section demonstrates the architectural control across the Eastern Canyon area within AlUla Central, where the heritage and landscape of the region has significant influence on the architectural and urbanistic approach, and other areas where the local architectural vernacular takes precedence as the guiding light.

The other areas where the approach to the architectural guidelines shall remain more flexible are also highlighted and are explored within the Typical Architectural Features section of this chapter.



Figure 19: Example sketch of architectural approach

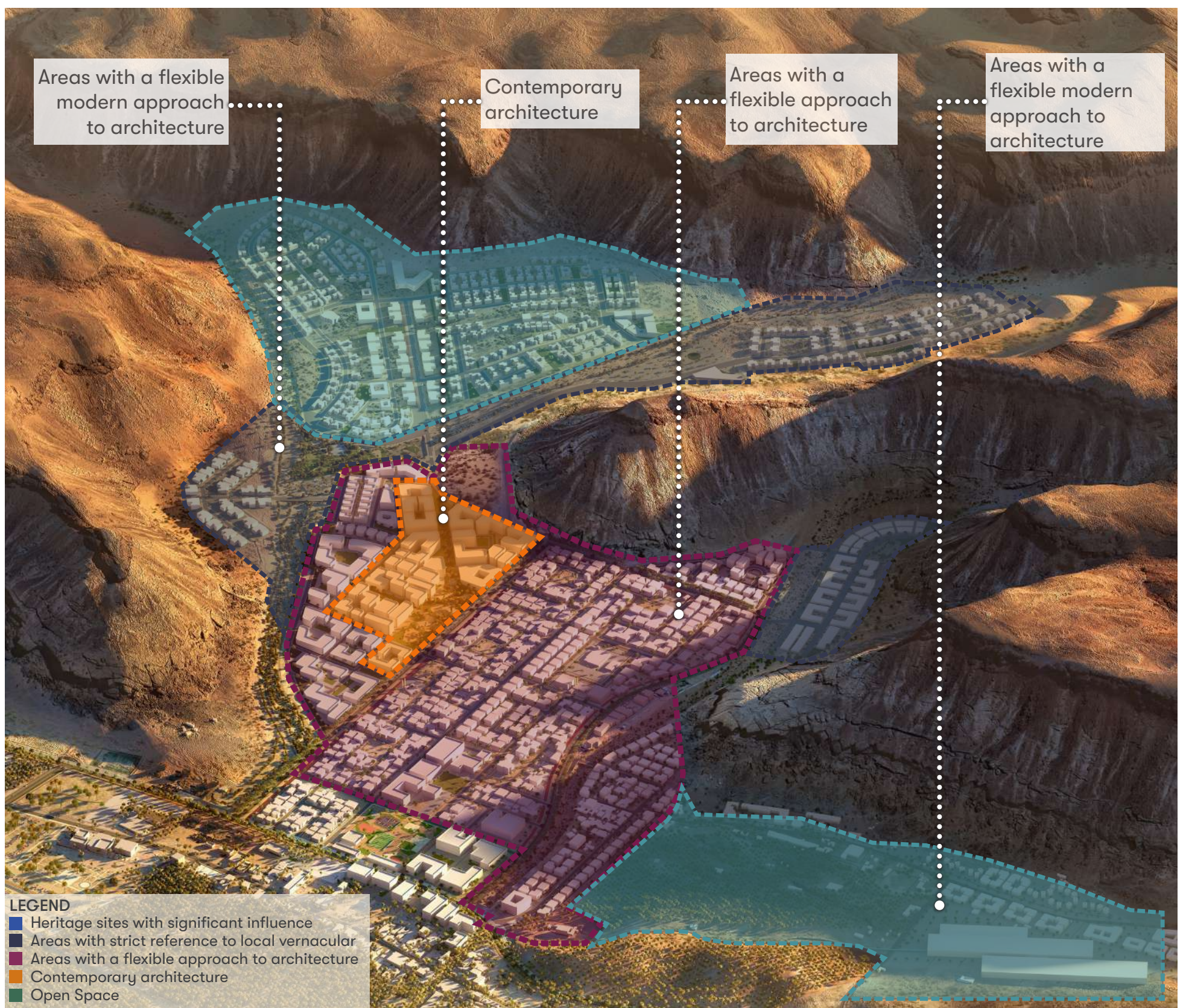


Figure 20: Architectural control across Eastern Canyon

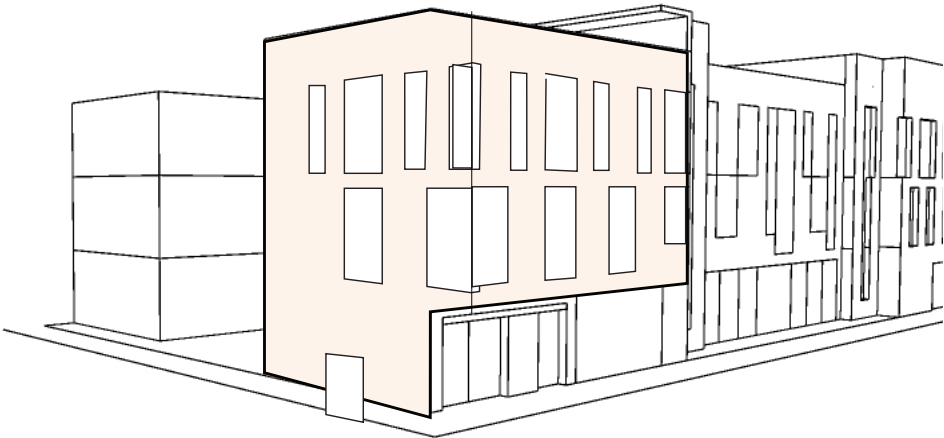
6. Typical Architectural Features

Overview

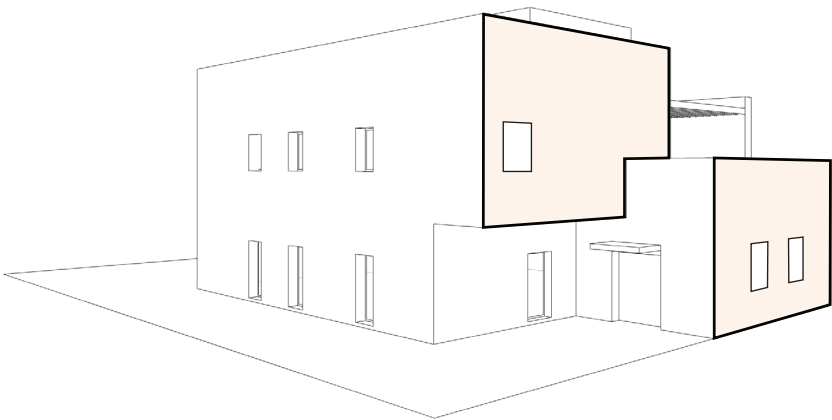
This section provides guidance on the architectural features that shall typically be exhibited across AIUla Central and South areas, aside from those areas that have a specific architectural approach as per the previous chapter.

The themes covered in this section are as follows:

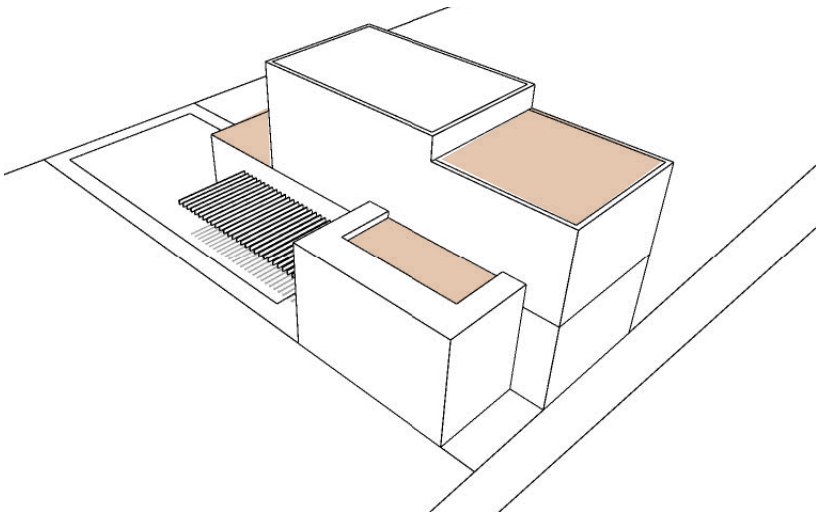
- Façades
- Windows and opening
- Entrances and openings
- Shade structures and screens
- Roofs and parapets
- Fencing and access
- Courtyard and porches
- Exterior staircases
- Arcades/colonnades
- Integration of utilities
- Colors
- Existing morphology
- Materials and finishes
- Surface pattern and texture



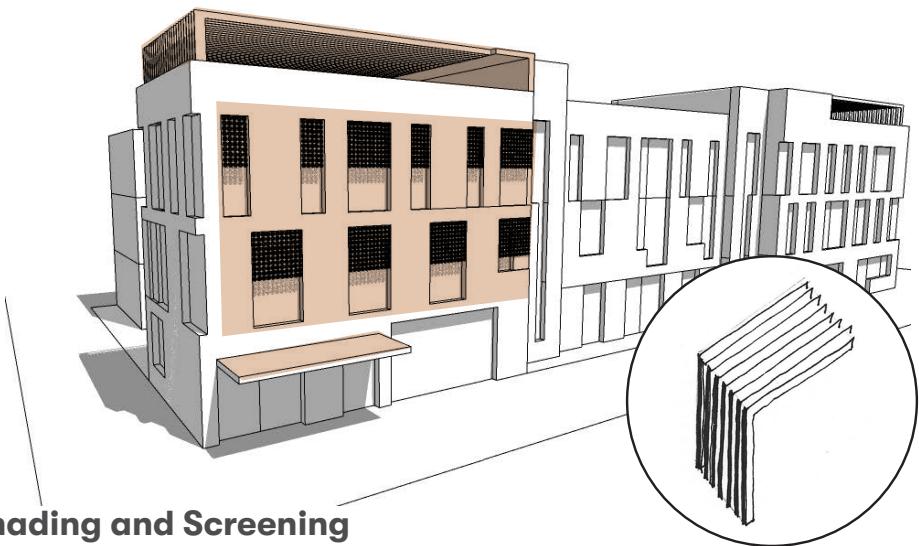
Façades



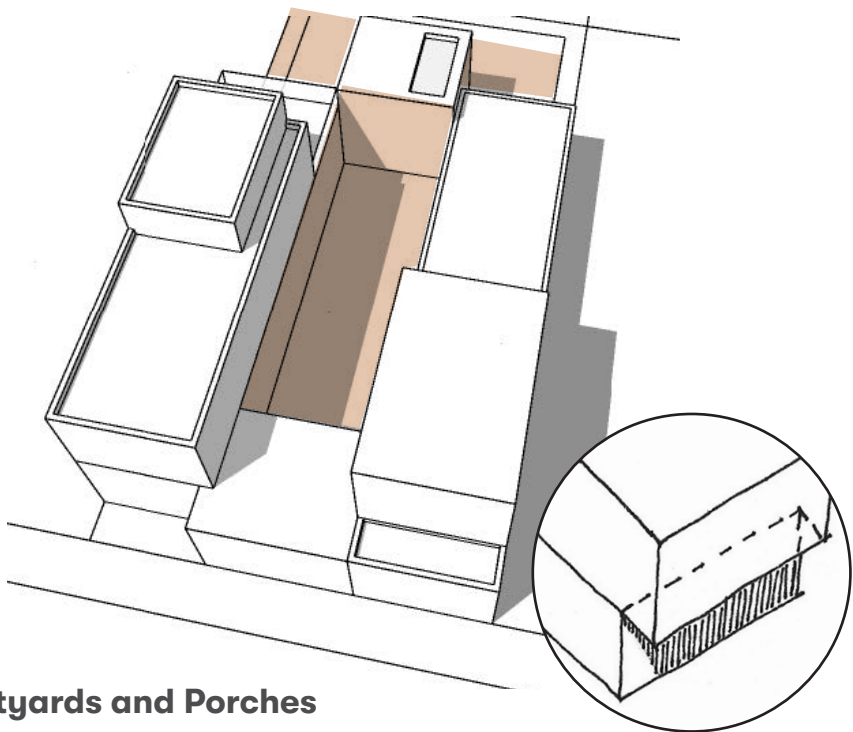
Windows and Openings



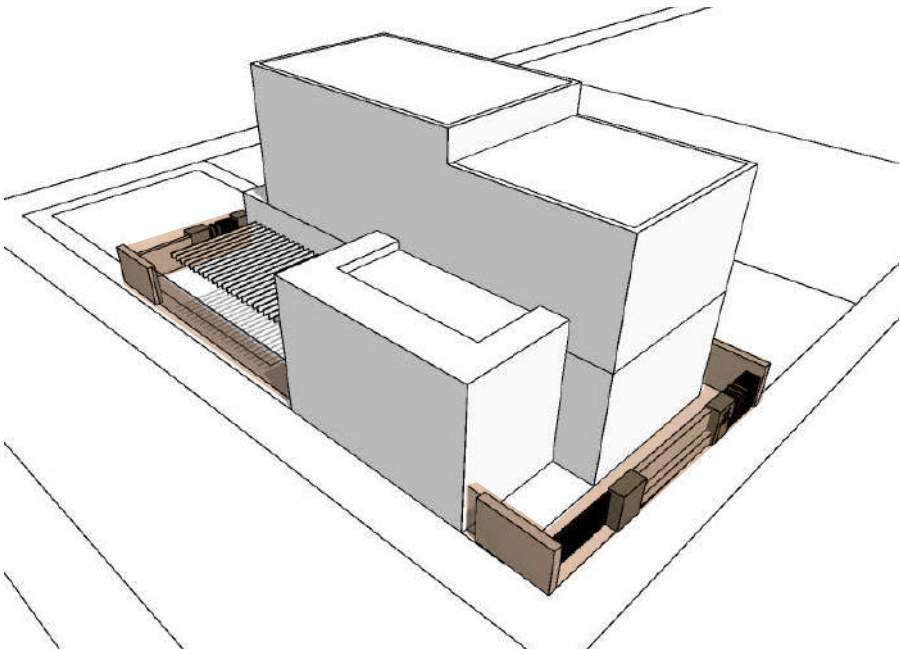
Roofs and Parapets



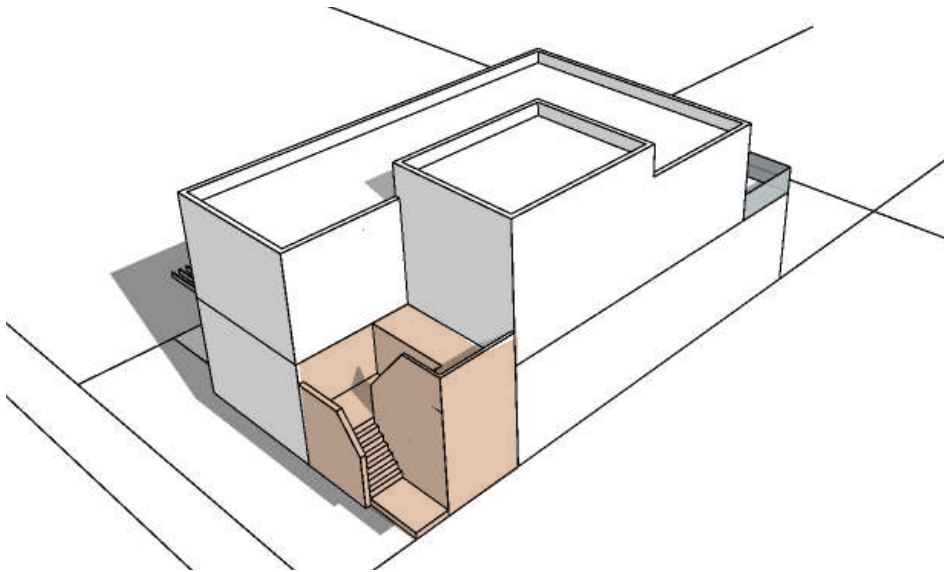
Shading and Screening



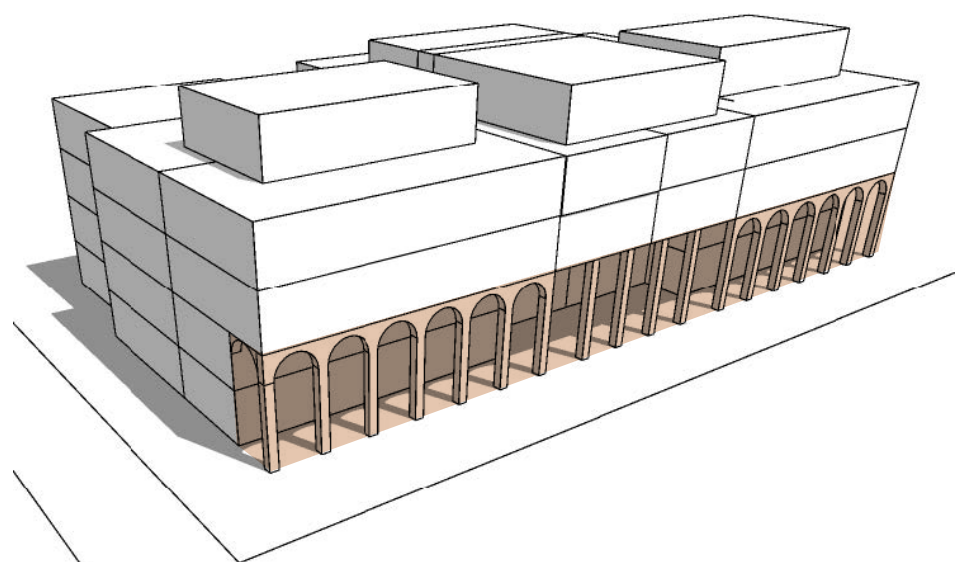
Courtyards and Porches



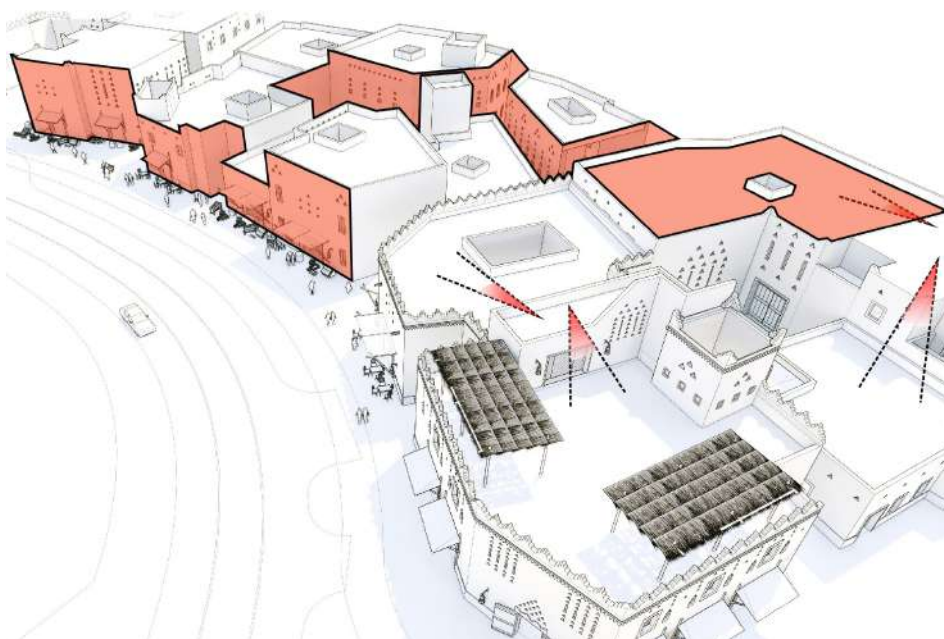
Fencing and Access



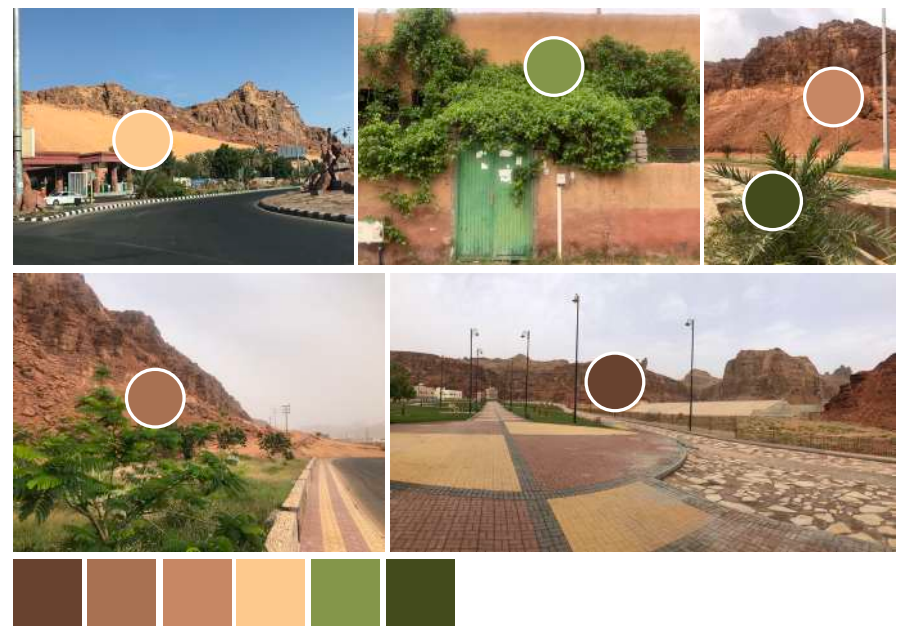
External Staircase



Arcades/Colonnades



Integration and screening of Utilities



Colors



Materials and Finishes



Surface Patterns and Texture

Typical Architectural Features

Façades

This section describes the typical architectural features related to the design of façades.

Specifications

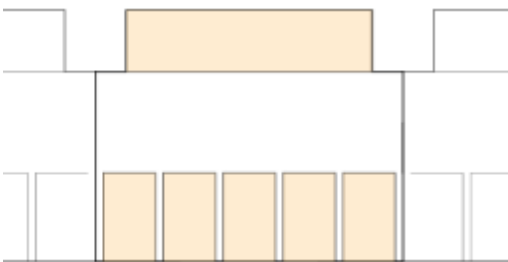
- Simple façade design with sensible decoration motifs to avoid historical pastiche
- A variety of architectural styles is encouraged along the streetscape; however, within a single building, a consistent style, consistent elements and consistent materials should be used
- The design of decks, balconies, railings and similar elements shall be architecturally consistent with the design of the building
- Materials and articulation should be used to create a vertical and/or horizontal rhythm along the facade. This can be done through pop-outs, bays, recesses, arches, banding, columns, or similar features
- Façade design shall consider the control of heat gain and heat loss to and from the building. Architecture elements and details that are important to deal with the desert climate, such as mashrabiya (wooden screen to reduce undesirable solar energy gain and to increase ventilation effect), appropriate number, size, depth and orientation of window openings in response to the façade orientation, overhangs, etc. are encouraged
- Privacy screening shall be considered when appropriate to building function. Such elements shall be considered in early design stages to ensure appropriate integration with the building design
- A special risk study and mitigation measures shall be stipulated for cloth / fabric building façades



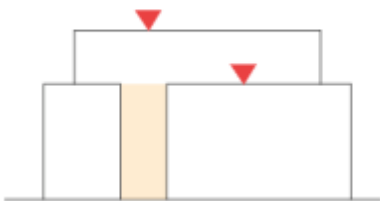
Architecture in Arabic revivalist style celebrates the traditional regional architecture with sober exterior showing typical façade elements.



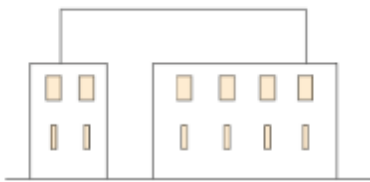
Architecture in contemporary vernacular style. Façades are plain, simple and elegant style.



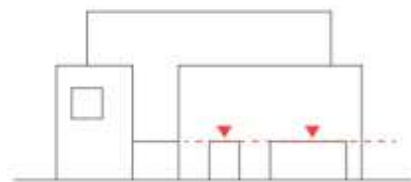
Attractiveness of the arcades and shaded pathway of this typology. Opportunity to create a distinctive rooftop



Vertical breaks to break the monotony of the long façade



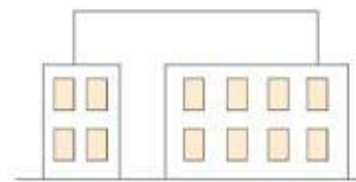
Small openings, but in decent amount along South/East/West façades



Garage door should be aligned with the entrance and on the same height. Entrance should be levelled with the street



Loggia provides shading and privacy



Large openings North facade

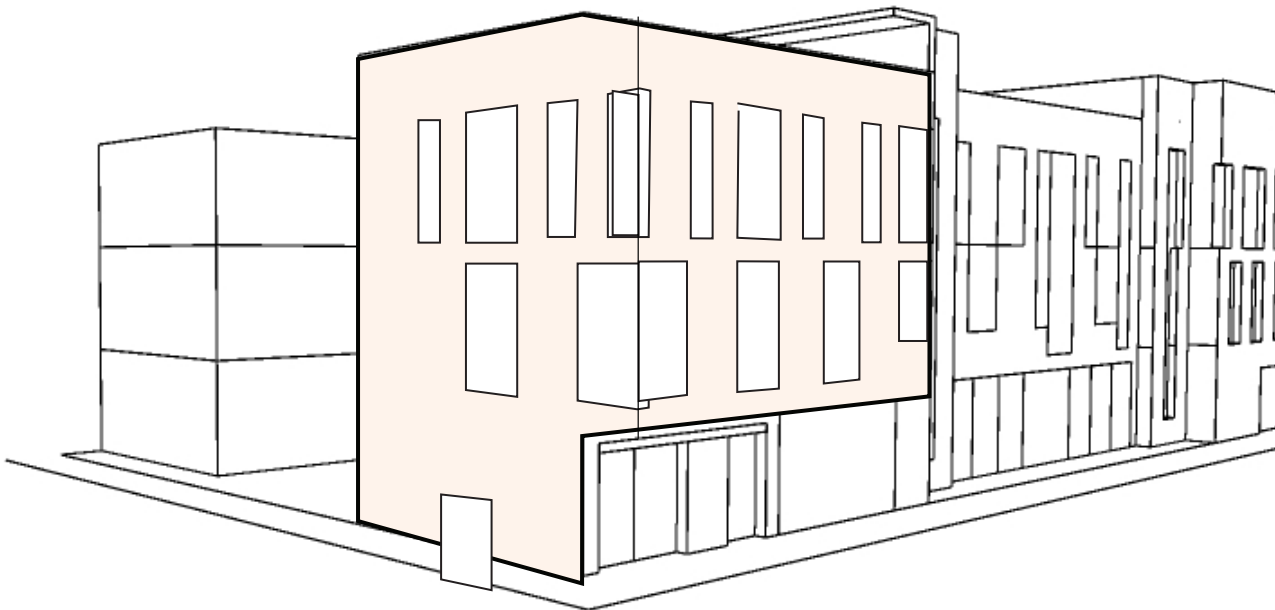


Figure 21: Source: Architectural Guidelines for AIUla Urban Areas. (Public Design Studio / ALFAIUla / RCU)



Open to public realm

All building façades addressing the public realm or public spaces should have a consistent high quality of design and materiality.



Human scale

Façades shall be dimensioned appropriately to human scale.



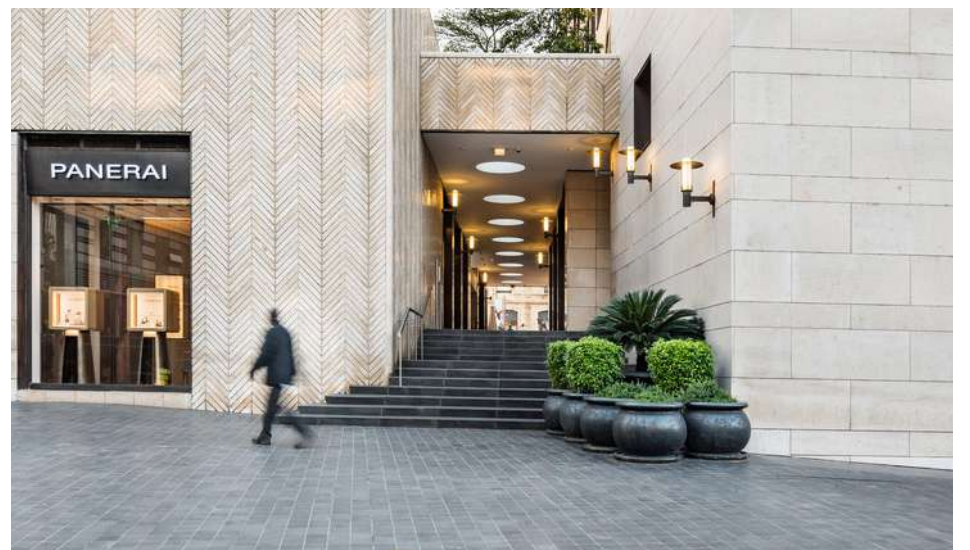
Transition

All building entrances are required to be clearly articulated to indicate a transition from the exterior to the interior of the building. Every main entrance is required to have a special emphasis when compared to the other portions of the building.



Horizontal and vertical volumes

Materials and articulation should be used to create a vertical and/or horizontal rhythm along the façade.



Active frontages

Active frontages on ground floors are encouraged when possible with direct access from the public realm.

Typical Architectural Features

Windows and Openings

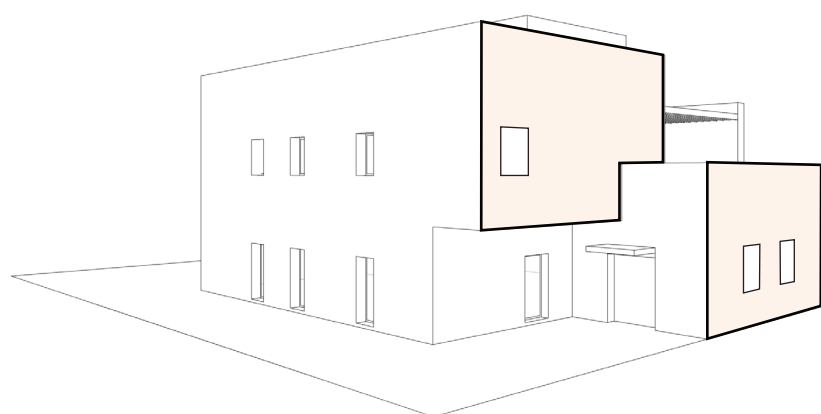
Natural daylight in interiors has two main characteristics: it is extremely pleasant to humans, and it is a free energy. Daylight is associated with many health advantages and therefore has a significant effect on the well-being of occupants. Therefore, designers shall consider occupants physical and psychological well-being in a space in addition to their functional needs. In addition a designer should also consider window orientation and heat. Window orientation in relation to sun movements emerges as a potential solution for addressing limited daylight in Saudi buildings.

The design of windows and openings shall reinforce the architectural language on exterior façades, while providing a connection between indoor spaces and outdoor environments through the introduction of sunlight and views into the occupied areas of the building.

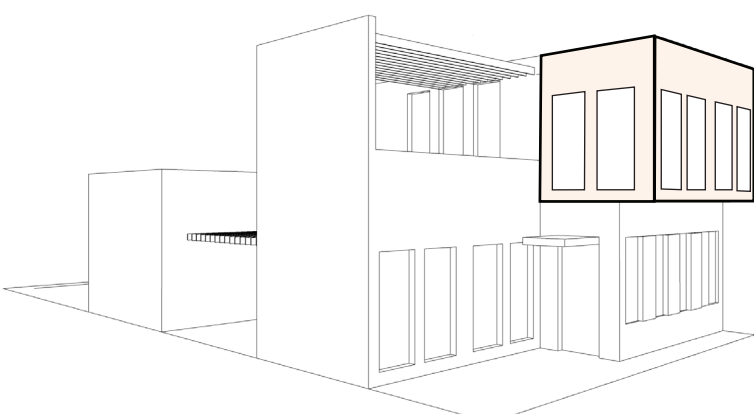
Specifications:

- Percentage of openings should not exceed 50% of building façades
- Extensive use of glass, use of full glass façades and curtain walling is generally discouraged
- Windows and openings shall comply with the appropriate scales and proportions to support the architectural theme. The proportioning system shall be consistent with the overall building mass and layout
- Windows and openings shall be placed in a way to ensure cross ventilation

- The use of operable windows is encouraged to allow breezes and night time cooling of floors and walls where practical
- Buildings with all development plots are prohibited from employing highly reflective mirrored glazing and windows with unreasonable views into adjacent properties
- Shading devices over windows to reduce glare yet still allow sufficient air circulation
- Shape and design of doors and hardware shall reinforce the architectural style for each character area
- At least 70 per cent of the floor areas to have daylight well distributed across to allow occupants to effectively perform their activity inside buildings
- Daylight deeper penetration into the building spaces. The depth of the room is not less than about two and on-half times (2 1/2) the distance between the top of the window and the sill
- Windows are allowed to be covered with security grills / other devices, however, these should be in keeping with the local vernacular



Architecture in contemporary vernacular style. Windows are small in proportion to the external plains.



Architecture in Arabic revivalist style. Windows are emphasised by decorative motifs, changing the appearance of the proportion of void v. solid

Figure 22: Example approaches to windows and openings



Proportion

The proportion of window and door openings should reinforce the overall composition of the building and be inspired by the traditional architecture in AlUla.



Geometry

The simple geometrical ornaments demonstrated by vertical and horizontal repetition of slots and openings are encouraged.



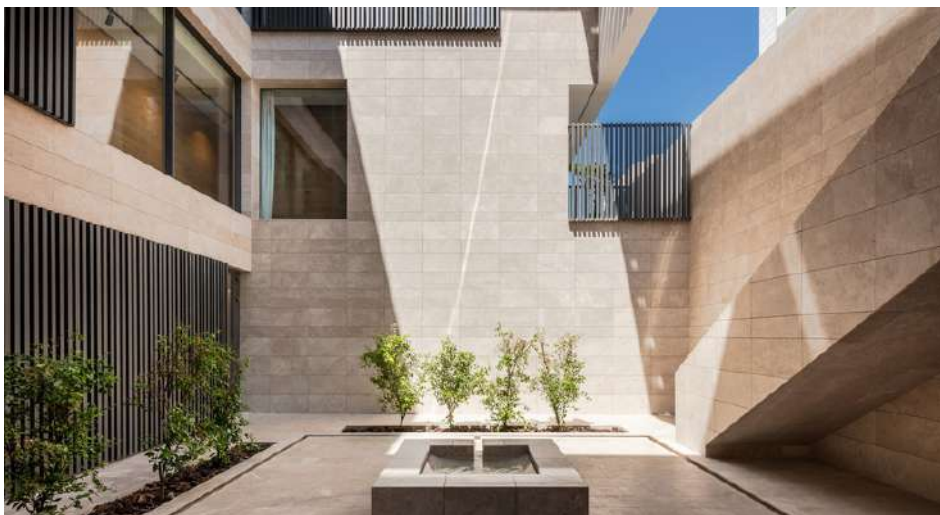
Privacy

External openings should not undermine the privacy and traditions of residents. Narrow and minimal external openings are encouraged within less private façades.



Innovation from Existing

Innovative architectural expression that make abstract reference to regional window frames and external door designs are encouraged.



Private Courtyards

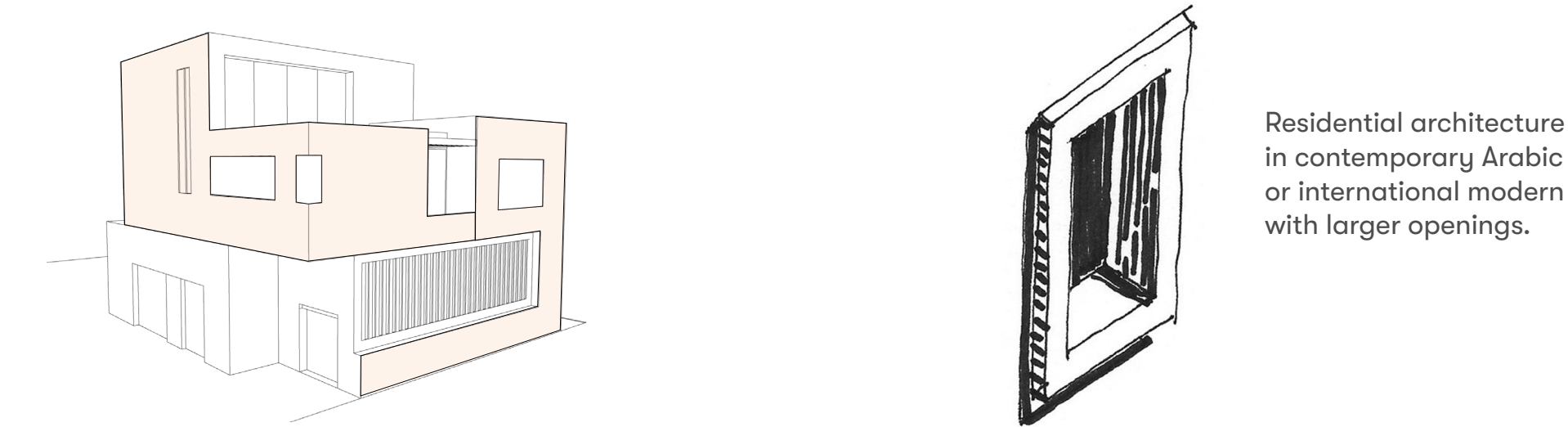
Larger openings are encouraged within the more private courtyard spaces.



Human Scale

Façades shall be dimensioned appropriately to create human scale.

Typical Architectural Features



Residential architecture in contemporary Arabic or international modern with larger openings.

Figure 23: Example approaches to windows and openings



Figure 24: Example approaches to windows and openings and the interface with public space



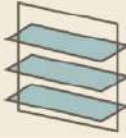

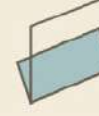

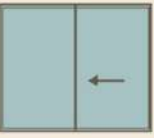


Figure 25: Example approaches to windows and openings



Typical Architectural Features

Table.2: Window and opening typology matrix

	View from outside			View from inside			
							
Capacity to open with solar protection				+++	+++	+++	+++
Ventilation area	+	+		+	+	+++	
Air sealing	+++	+++	+	+++	+++	+++	+
Privacy	+++	++	+	+	+++	+	+
Anti intrusion	++	+	+++	+	+++	+	+

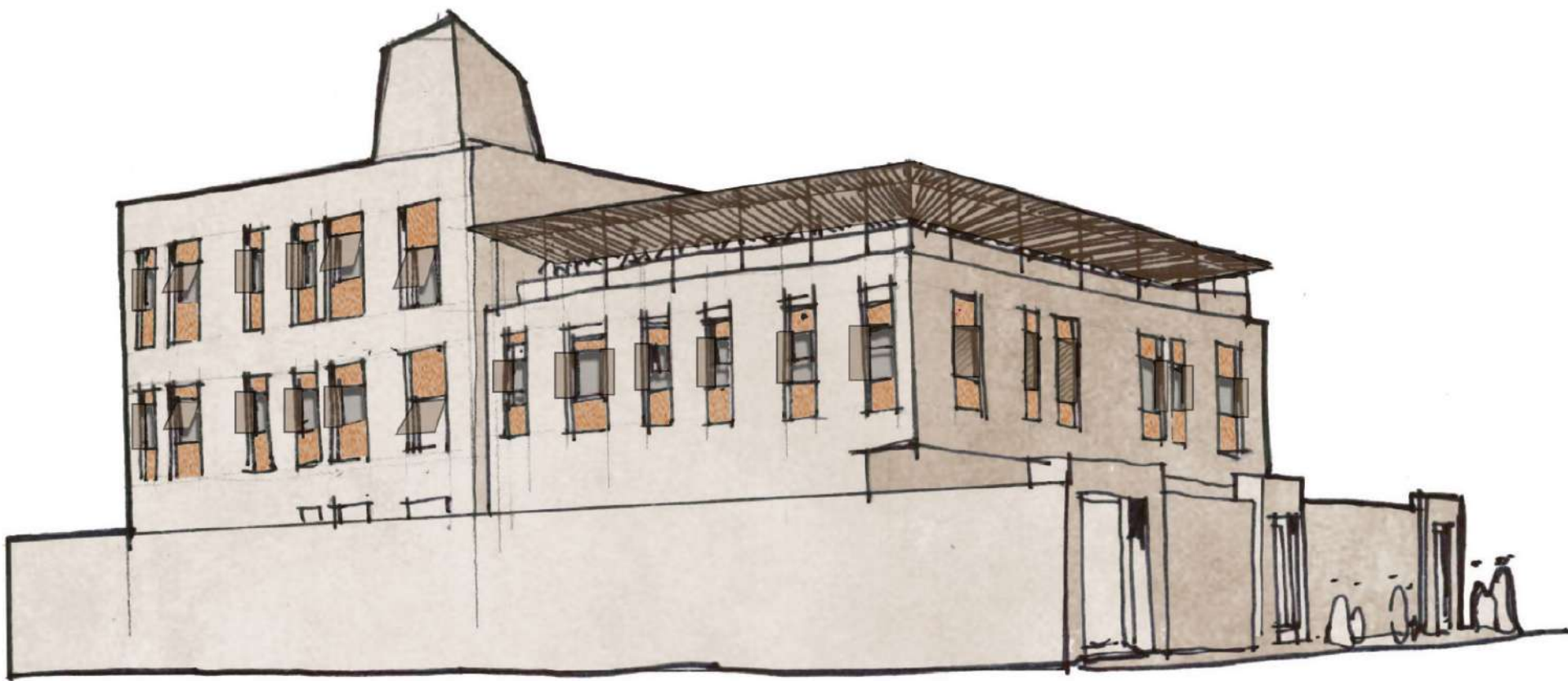


Figure 26: Example approach to windows and openings (Source: Architectural Guidelines for AIUla Urban Areas May 2020 {AIUla Design Studio (UDS)})



Figure 27: Example images showing approaches to windows and openings (Source: Architectural Guidelines for AlUla Urban Areas May 2020 {AlUla Design Studio (UDS)})

Typical Architectural Features

Shade Structures and Screens

Window shades are a design solution to intercept the sun rays before they reach interior spaces through windows and reduce heat. Shading devices are a solution to provide the required daylight while preventing heat and glare. In addition they provide thermal and visual comfort. Shade structures shall enhance the overall representation of the building facade as permanent structures which complement the architectural language.

Specifications:

- Solar shading, projection and overhangs are encouraged to provide solar protection, and create interest within the building design
- Shading structures should be made from appropriate materials that are complementary in finish and colour to the adjacent main building(s)

- Shading screens/panels put above or beside openings.
- Windows (especially those with a high amount of sun exposure), balconies, porches, courtyards, and patios should be designed with measures to protect them from solar heat and prevailing winds
- Traditional patterns - referencing geometric or floral designs - are encouraged on shading panels within new development across the master plan
- Materials can be wood, metallic or fitted glass
- Window-protections shall have a covering/screening function. Covering percentage shall be of at least 50%
- Screens can work both as an independent element or can be attached directly to the volume of the building
- Openings should be covered by claustra or other screening device.



Figure 28: Examples of screening measures Source: Architectural Guidelines for AIUla Urban Areas. (Public Design Studio / ALFAIUla / RCU)



Figure 30: Screens using traditional patterns complement modern Arabic and international modern architectural styles

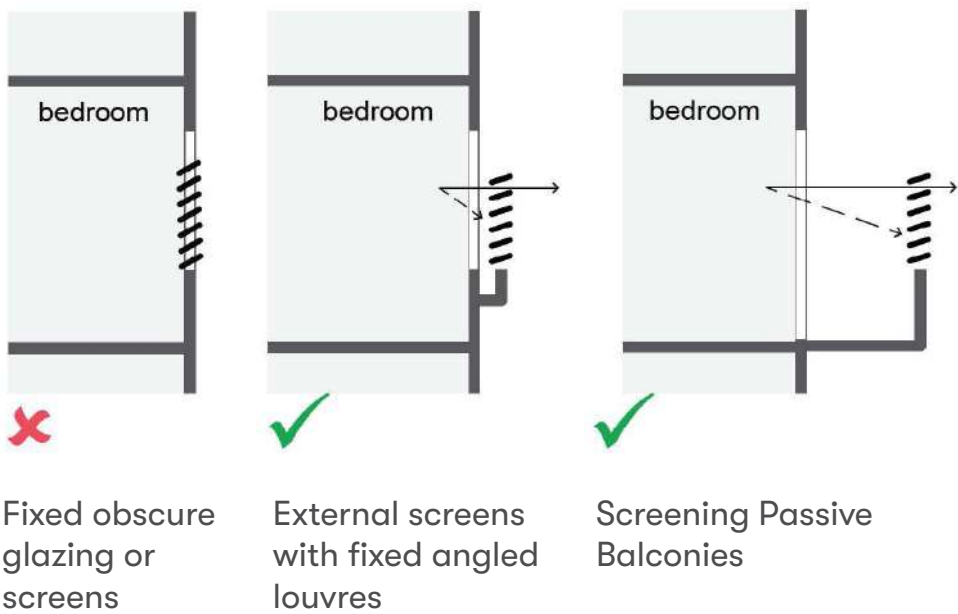


Figure 29: Example approaches to screening from bedrooms (Source: Architectural Guidelines for AIUla Urban Areas. {AIUla Design Studio (UDS) / ALFAIUla / RCU})

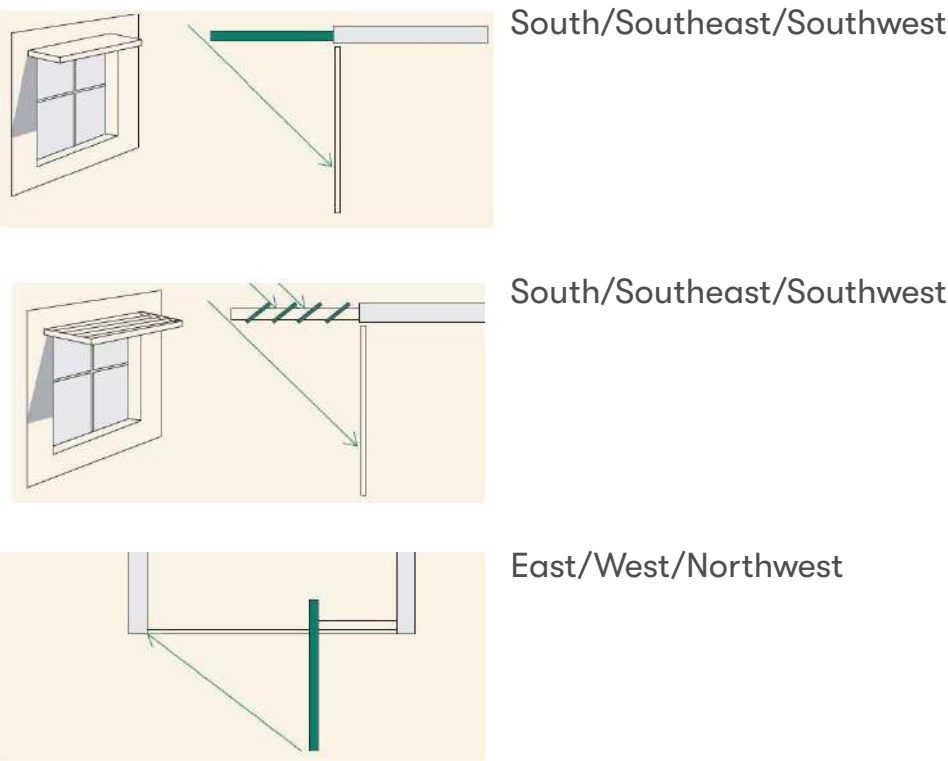


Figure 31: Example approaches to screening different orientations. (Source: Architectural Guidelines for AIUla Urban Areas {AIUla Design Studio (UDS) / ALFAIUla / RCU})



Privacy Screening

Privacy screening shall be considered when appropriate and ensure appropriate integration with the building design.



Solar Protection

Solar shading, projection and overhangs are encouraged to provide solar protection, and create interest within the building design.



Window screening

Windows (especially those with a high amount of sun exposure), should be designed with measures to protect them from solar heat and prevailing winds.



Visual Protection from Adjacent Plots

Shading panels can be associated to windows, to provide privacy control and limit visibility from adjacent plots.



Awnings and Canopies

The use of fabric awnings, and metal or wood canopies is encouraged for mixed use buildings. Should be designed to match the main structural elements of the lower façade.



Traditional Patterns

Traditional patterns - referencing geometric or floral designs - are encouraged on shading panels within new development across the master plan.

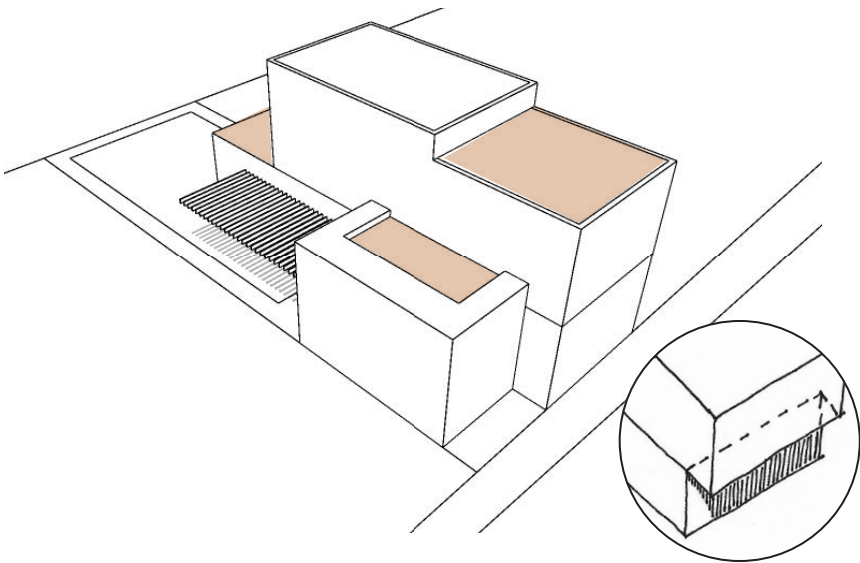
Typical Architectural Features

Roofs and Parapets

The use of the roof level as a living space in traditional homes, expressed a logical response to the hot climate of the region. In order to envisage the cultural traditions of the region, the use of a flat roof as a balcony, roof terrace or garden is encouraged.

Specifications:

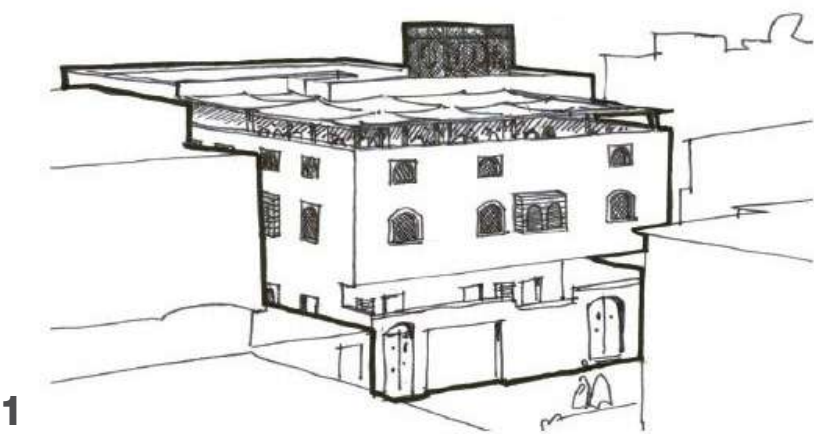
- Rooftops shall be considered as a ‘fifth façade’ and shall contribute to the overall image of the urban settlement as observed from elevated viewpoints
- Roof forms, colors and materials shall be appropriate to the local architecture and integrated within the overall architectural style and form
- Parapets shall comply with the appropriate height and material to prevent overlook from neighbours and to comply with safety requirements.



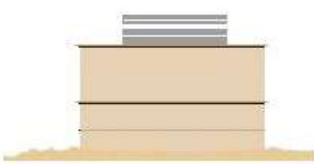
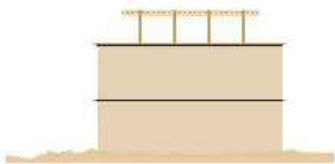
- The use of traditional motif and merlin are encouraged on roof parapet
- Variations in roof heights are encouraged on larger building typologies; monolithic roofscapes shall be avoided
- The use of pavilions, pergolas and awnings are encouraged to support the use of roofscapes as a living space
- All roof top mechanical units, including but not limited to air conditioning, water tanks, and ducts, shall be screened from public view or enclosed in rooftop penthouse/ structure
- In roof gardens or rooftop terrace locations, exhaust vents shall not occur less than 2.5m above the terrace



Two types of structures:



- 1
- Wood and palm, natural materials, visible lightness, tight frame
 - 1.10 m high masonry walls, with shading structure 40 cm higher, permit privacy and ventilation



- 2
- Iron and fabric, larger frame
 - 80 cm guard rail with wood or painted aluminium permit great opening for public space on roofscapes

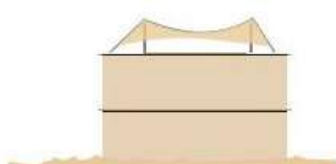
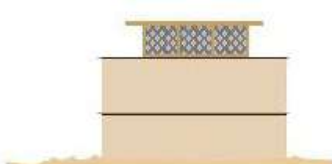


Figure 32: Example of approaches to roofs and parapets (Source: Architectural Guidelines for AIUla Urban Areas. {AIUla Design Studio (UDS) / ALFAIUla / RCU})



Variations in Roof Heights

Variations in roof heights are encouraged on larger buildings to create animation and reduce monolithic forms.



Screening Mechanical Units

Any mechanical units and equipment should be screened to ensure their placement is discreet and make sure they do not contribute to any negative views.



Shade Structures

External openings should not undermine the privacy and traditions of residents. Narrow and minimal external openings are encouraged within less private façades.



Fifth Façade

Balconies should allow for casual overlooking on main streets and connection with the natural landscape.



Flat Roofs

Stepped terraces and building recesses (step-backs) shall be encouraged following the topography of the land to create further visual interest towards the Oasis and natural landscape.



Colors and Materials

Colors and materials shall be appropriate to the local architecture and integrated within the overall architectural style.

Typical Architectural Features

Fencing and Access

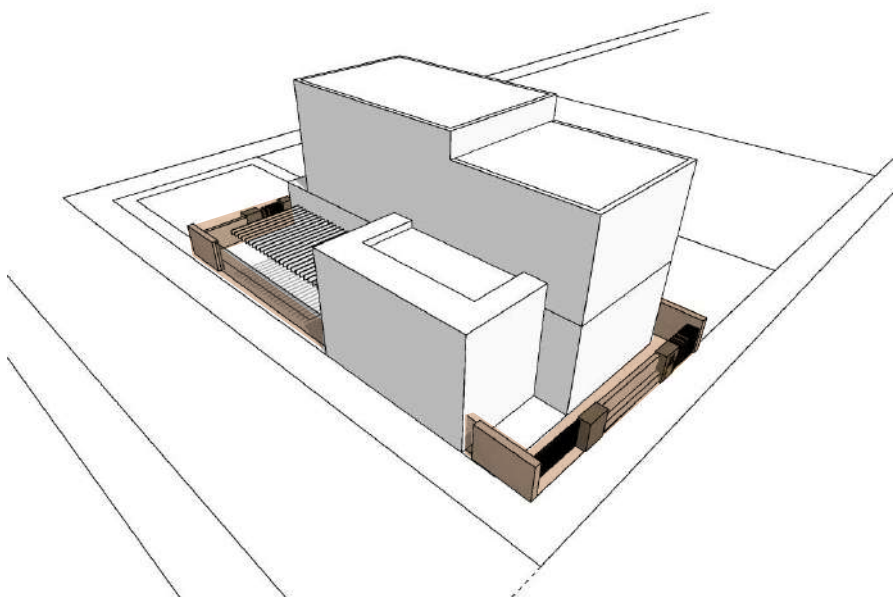
Building entrances and fencing contribute to the street with visual interest while also providing privacy and security, amongst other functions.

Fencing specifications

- Fencing should be complementary to the neighbourhood character
- Fencing elements should do not cause any negative impact on neighbouring properties, or public realm
- It is encouraged that the height of front, side and rear fence should not exceed 2.5m
- Up to 1.2m the use of one material is allowed. This can go higher if the wall is penetrated by openings
- From 1.2 to 2.5m it is required to combine materials and to use light structures (translucent). See options below

Entrances specifications

- Entrances play an important role in establishing the quality and character of urban streets
- Entrances should contribute to the sense of safety in urban streets by including look-out windows for passive surveillance. Screens may be introduced for privacy
- Entrances shall be levelled with the street. If not, the sidewalk shall be accessible from the entrance without projecting stairs or ramps into the public space



Six types of boundary treatment

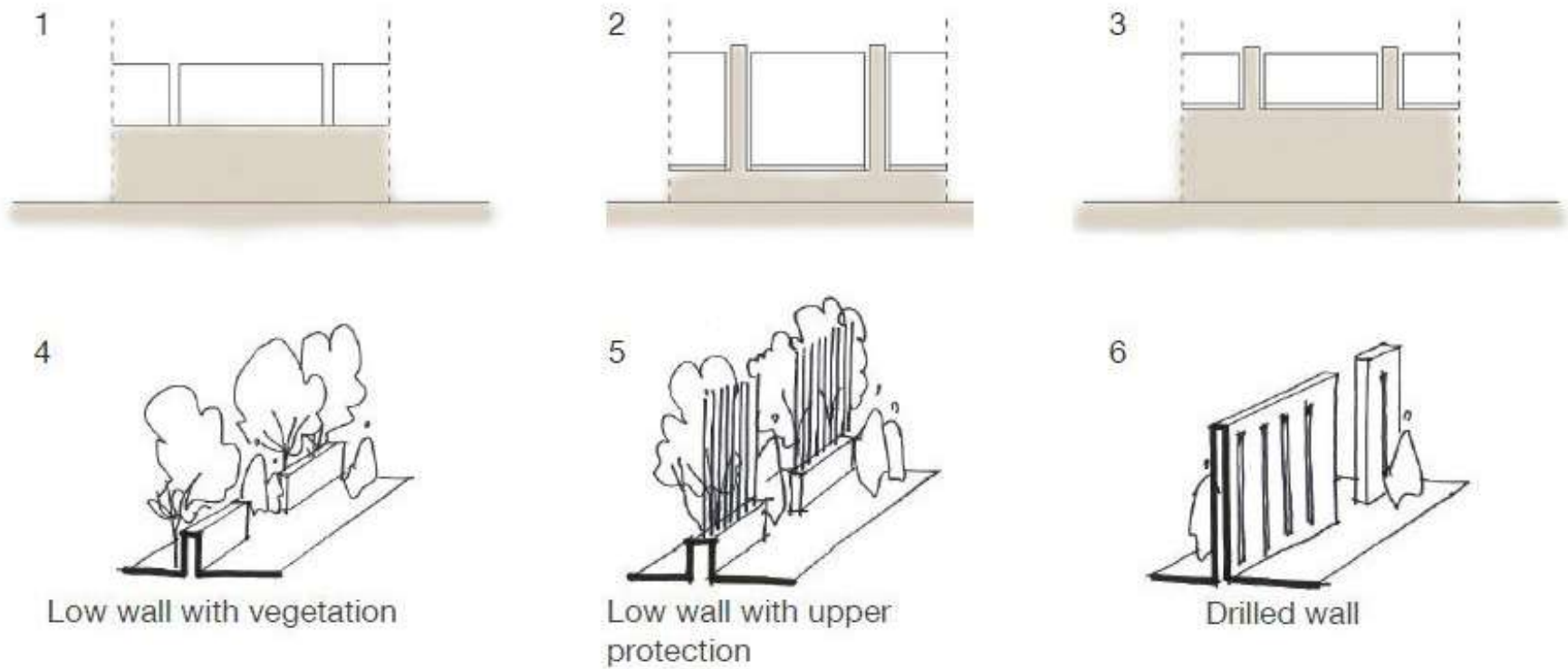


Figure 33: Example of fencing and access (Source: Architectural Guidelines for AIUla Urban Areas. {AIUla Design Studio (UDS) / ALFAIUla / RCU})



Materials

Walls should be combined with other materials to visually decrease their height.



Garage Door

The garage door shall open towards the inside of the plot.



Passive Surveillance

Entrances should contribute to the sense of safety in urban streets by including look-out windows for passive surveillance. Screens may be introduced for privacy.



Uniformity

Fencing design should have a degree of uniformity throughout the community and complements the building and landscape design.



Wall Capping

Wall capping shall be prohibited or visually integrated.



Materials

Where appropriate, design details that signal hospitality and promote personalisation should be incorporated.

Typical Architectural Features

Courtyard and Porches

Courtyards are an important feature of a building. They provide visual interest and amenity space for occupants, whilst providing daylight and responding to climatic factors. Porches also form an important part of the building and offer a buffer between entrances and public spaces.

Specifications:

- To maintain private spaces with a regulated micro-climate, incorporating courtyards across the new developments is encouraged
- Courtyards should have direct visual contact with the sky
- Locating large social areas and amenities such as fireplaces within enclosed courtyards are encouraged
- Courtyard configuration, aspect ratio, orientation, and boundary conditions shall be considered while defining the courtyards to ensure the optimum performance
- If applicable open courtyards should be oriented toward the natural landscape to take advantage of the views

- Open courtyards should avoid opening to the prevailing wind direction, to protect from sand and dust
- If open courtyards need to face the sub-optimal orientation due to plot conditions or other, provide protection at the opening by architectural or landscape elements
- Integrating loggia around the courtyard are encouraged to reinforce the sustainability features of the building
- All the open space design shall comply with the fire safety and accessibility regulation

Recommended ratios for protection from windblown dust and sand:

- For square courtyard: The width/depth to be the same as the height of the building
- For rectangular courtyard: The depth of the courtyard should not exceed 3 times the height of the building unless the long axis is perpendicular to the wind

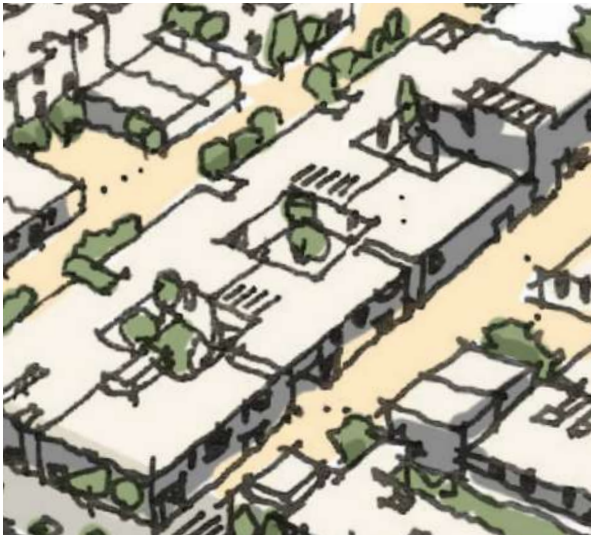
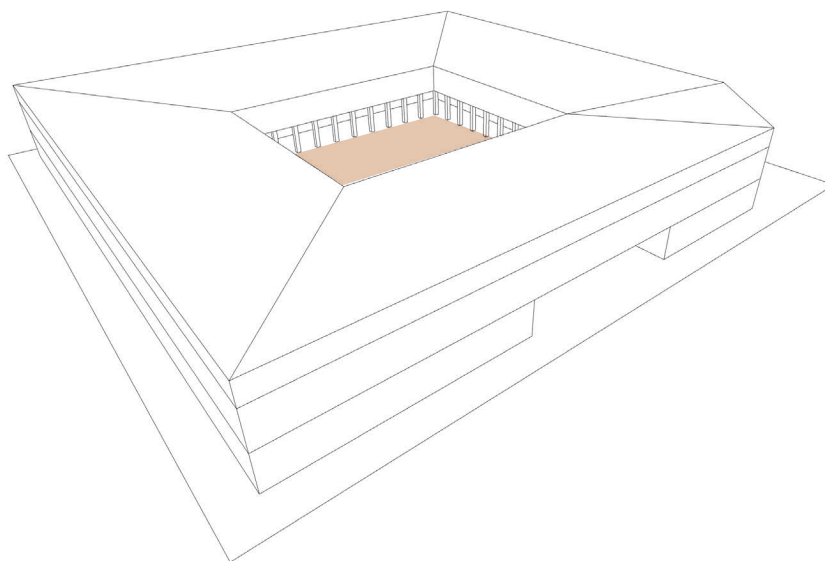
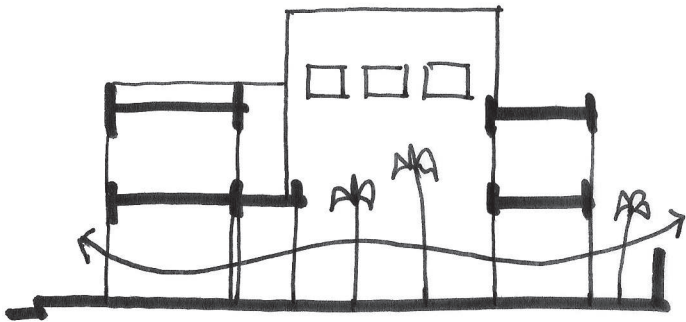
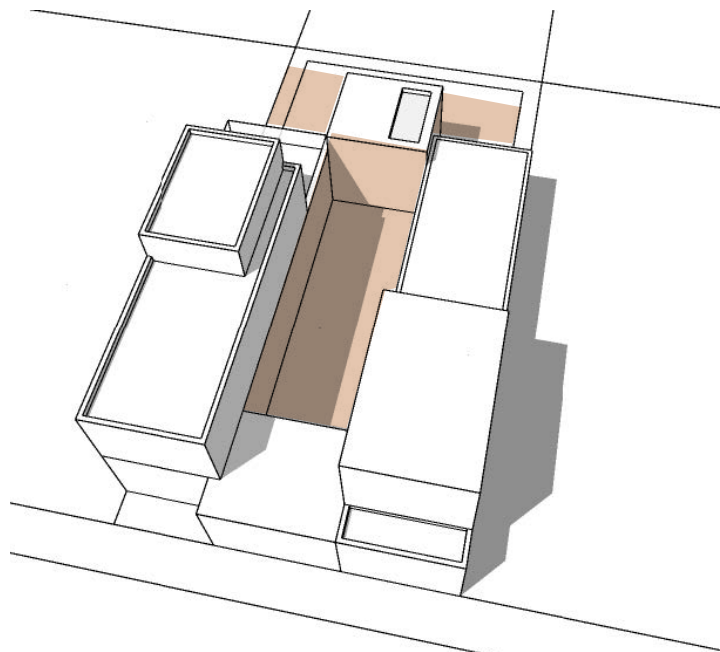


Figure 34: Example approach to courtyards and porches (Source: Architectural Guidelines for AIUla Urban Areas. {AIUla Design Studio (UDS) / ALFAIUla / RCU})



Interior Courtyard

Interior courtyards shall provide indirect natural light to spaces while offering privacy and enclosure.



Planting

Courtyard planting can provide thermal comfort whilst offering visual interest within a courtyard. Planting shall vary based on the scale and type of space.



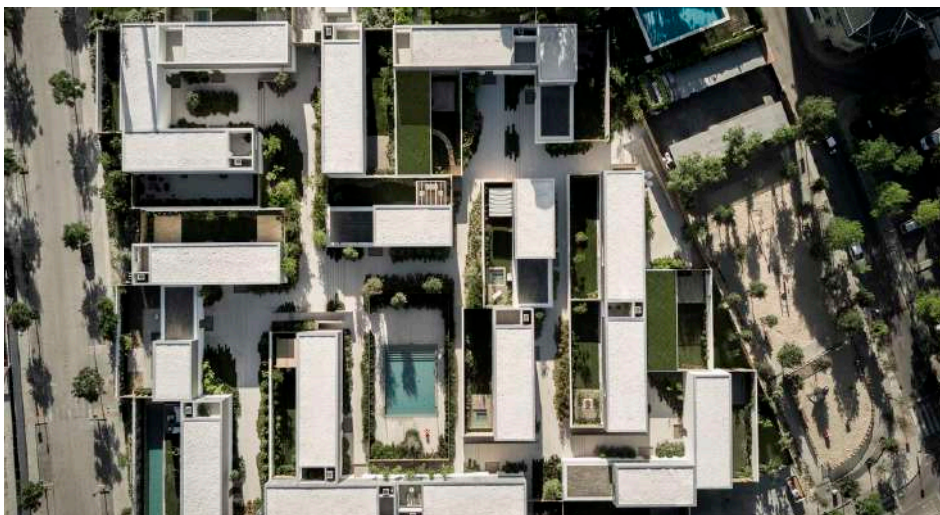
Communal Courtyard

Communal courtyards provide semi-private spaces for occupants with spaces to rest and planting for visual interest/thermal comfort.



Daylight/Sunlight

Courtyards should be arranged in such a way to maximise daylight whilst considering an appropriate level of sunlight in terms of thermal comfort.



Variable Building Massing

Some variation in building massing, form and orientation can create variety in scale and width/depth of courtyards whilst also moderating shading.



Overlooking

Allow overlooking of courtyard spaces to promote some human interaction and provide natural surveillance.

Typical Architectural Features



Figure 35: Example images of courtyards and porches (Source: Architectural Guidelines for AIUla Urban Areas. {AIUla Design Studio (UDS) / ALFAIUla / RCU})



Typical Architectural Features

Exterior Staircases

Buildings shall be integrated with the natural landscape, especially on steep plots. External staircases leading to exposed terraces, or connecting the site to the building are encouraged to respond to site challenges.

Specifications:

- The design of exterior staircase shall reflect and enhance the character of the building and the natural landscape.
- Stone or concrete staircases with solid wall balustrade are encouraged as they resemble the traditional architecture of the region.
- Colors and materials of exterior staircases shall be appropriate to the selected finishes of the building façades.
- Where there is a change in grade along a street or open space frontage, maintain a consistent grade relationship between the public sidewalk and the ground floor. Avoid the use of large retaining walls and exterior stair cases as much as possible.

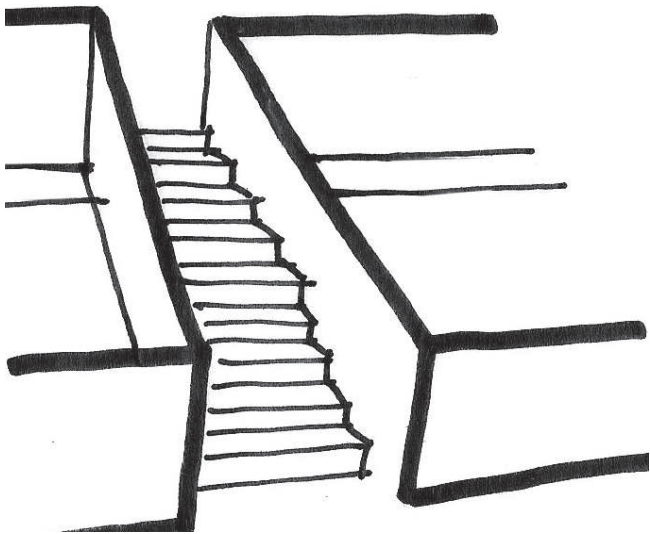
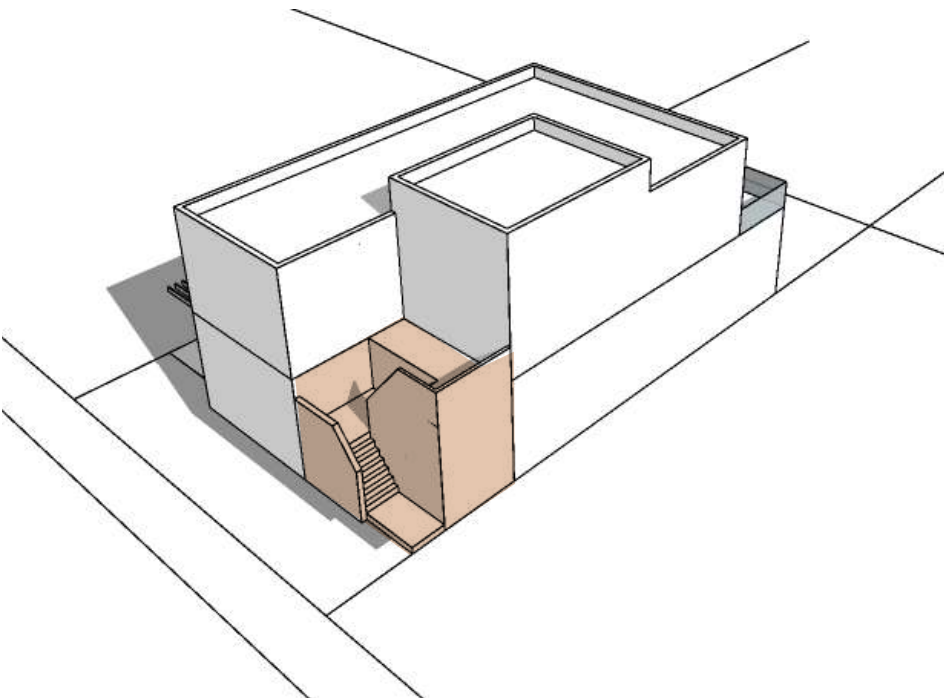


Figure 36: Example approach to external staircases (Source: Architectural Guidelines for AIUla Urban Areas. {Public Design Studio / ALFAIUla / RCU})



Figure 37: Example sketch of external staircases (Source: Architectural Guidelines for AIUla Urban Areas. {AIUla Design Studio (UDS) / ALFAIUla / RCU})



Public Staircases

Staircases in public spaces are encouraged to serve a functional purpose to connect different spaces whilst also offering visual interest and a space for sitting and relaxing.



Building Entrances

Use of external staircases leading to building entrances should be minimised where possible and designed in keeping with architectural vernacular where required.



Materiality

Materiality of staircases shall be appropriate and in keeping with the local vernacular and character.



Character

External staircases can become a feature of an area and enhance the character.



Solid Balustrade

Solid stone or concrete staircases are encouraged with a solid wall balustrade that encapsulates the traditional vernacular of the area.



Colors and Materials

Colors and materials shall be appropriate to the local architecture and integrated within the overall architectural style.

Typical Architectural Features

Arcades / Colonnades

Arcades and colonnades act as a weather protection system creating attractive and distinctive pedestrian friendly environment around walk-ways. Therefore, these building components are encouraged to be integrated into the design of new buildings facing active streets and open spaces.

Specifications:

- Arcades are encouraged to extend through the entire street frontage of a block, or for pedestrian amenity where they provide an accessible area for active pedestrian use
- Vertical divisions at street level should be at human scale and evenly spaced
- Arcades may be climatically controlled with retractable glass panels

- Arcades architectural elements such as openings and columns shall be sufficiently proportioned and coordinated with inner façades to maintain visual access to active store-front
- 3-meter minimum depth from face of active store front to exterior face of arcade shall be maintained
- Signage for tenants may not be located on the main façade; however, signage may be located within the arcade opening at the face of the exterior wall
- Traditional elements that are not indigenous to the area and have no functional relevance such as non-local arch forms are generally not encouraged

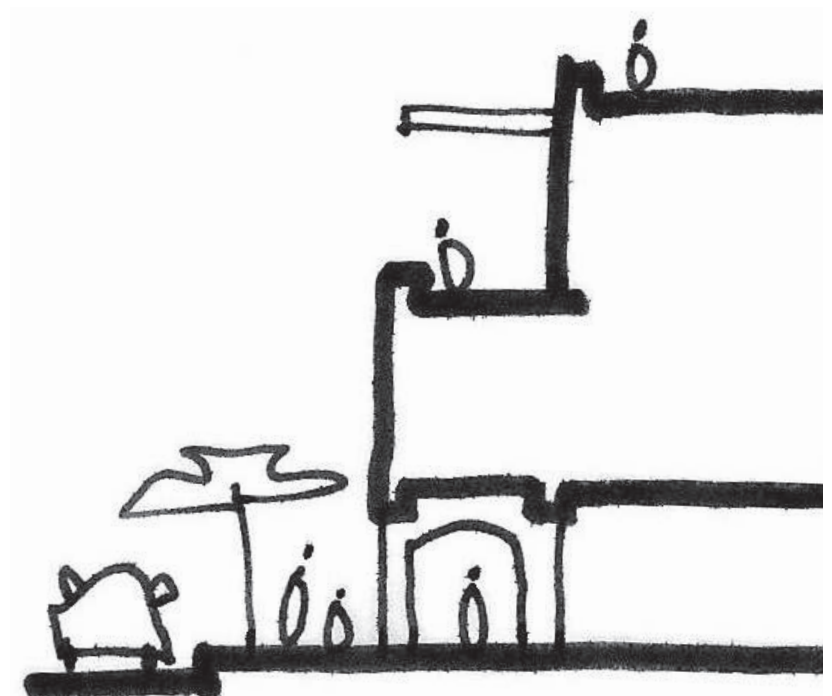
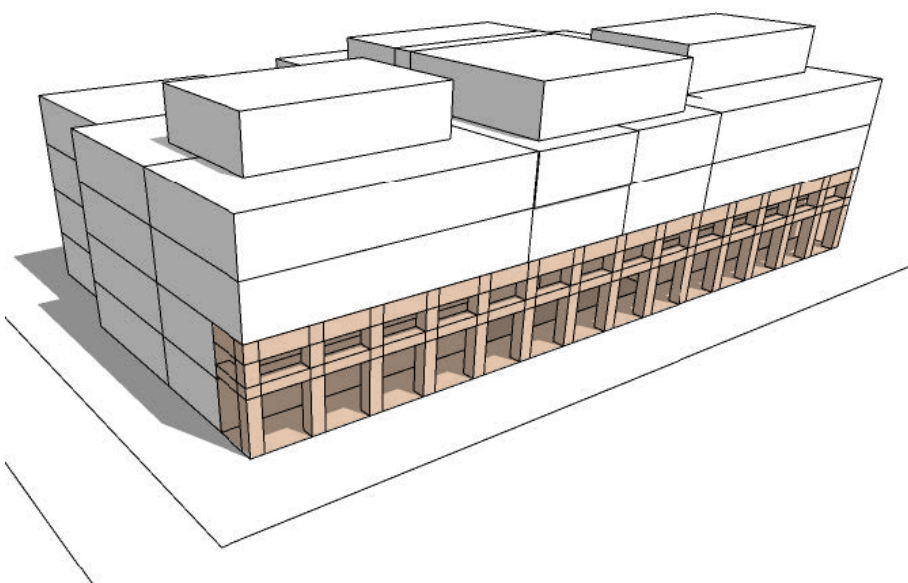
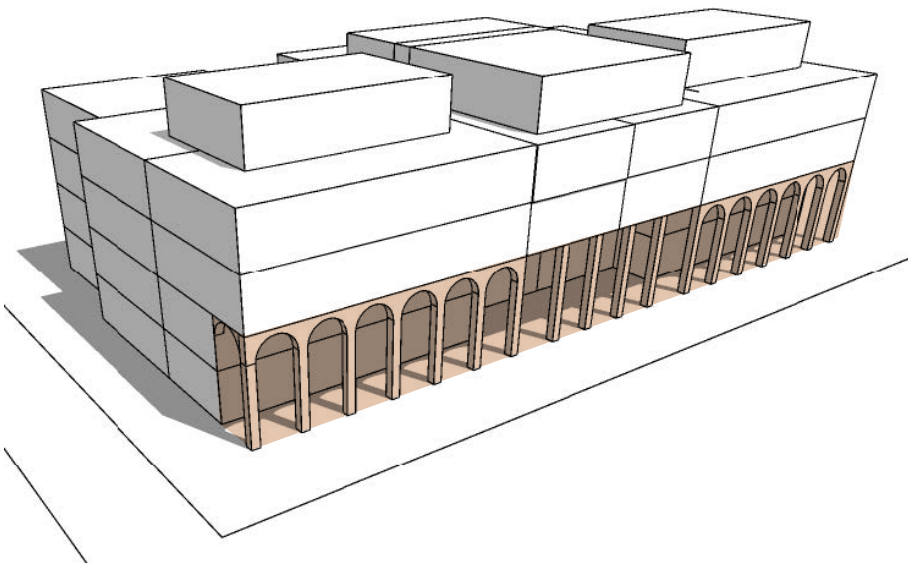


Figure 38: Example approach to arcades and colonnades (Source: Architectural Guidelines for AIUla Urban Areas. {AIUla Design Studio (UDS) / ALFAIUla / RCU})



Extension

Arcades are encouraged to extend through the entire street frontage of a block, or for pedestrian amenity where they provide an accessible area for active pedestrian use.



Signage

Signage for tenants may not be located on the main façade; however, signage may be located within the arcade opening at the face of the exterior wall.



Visual Access

Arcades architectural elements such as openings and columns shall be sufficiently proportioned and coordinated with inner façades to maintain visual access to active store-front.



Scale

Vertical divisions at street level should be at human scale and evenly spaced.



Dimensions

3-metre minimum depth from face of active store front to exterior face of arcade shall be maintained.



Typical Architectural Features

Integration of Utilities (M&E)

Safe, efficient and visually effective integration of utilities are an important element of building design and as such are subject to some guidelines.

Specifications:

- Rooftop located water tanks, AC equipment and any other mechanical/technical items are to be adequately screened to ensure their presence is minimised when viewed from the public realm
- Electrical conduits, gutters and ductwork is to be hidden
- Vents, panels and hatches are to be designed within an overall facade composition, and not located ad-hoc
- Utility boxes and service panels are to be set into enclosures with finishes compatible with overall façade design
- Wall mounted air conditioning units are to be screened and relocated to secondary façades where possible
- All rooftop plant and flues are to be contained within plant rooms or ventilated enclosures that are fully and seamlessly integrated with the lines of the building form
- Service entrances and access doors to electrical, Telecom and other utility rooms shall be integrated into the overall façade design
- Roller shutters shall be integrated within the design of the building wherever possible
- To beautify streetscapes by the design integration of all building elements
- The roofs shall also allow the installation of solar panels for hot water and energy



Figure 39: Example sketch showing approach to utilities along a street (Source: Architectural Guidelines for AIUla Urban Areas. {Public Design Studio / ALFAIUla / RCU})

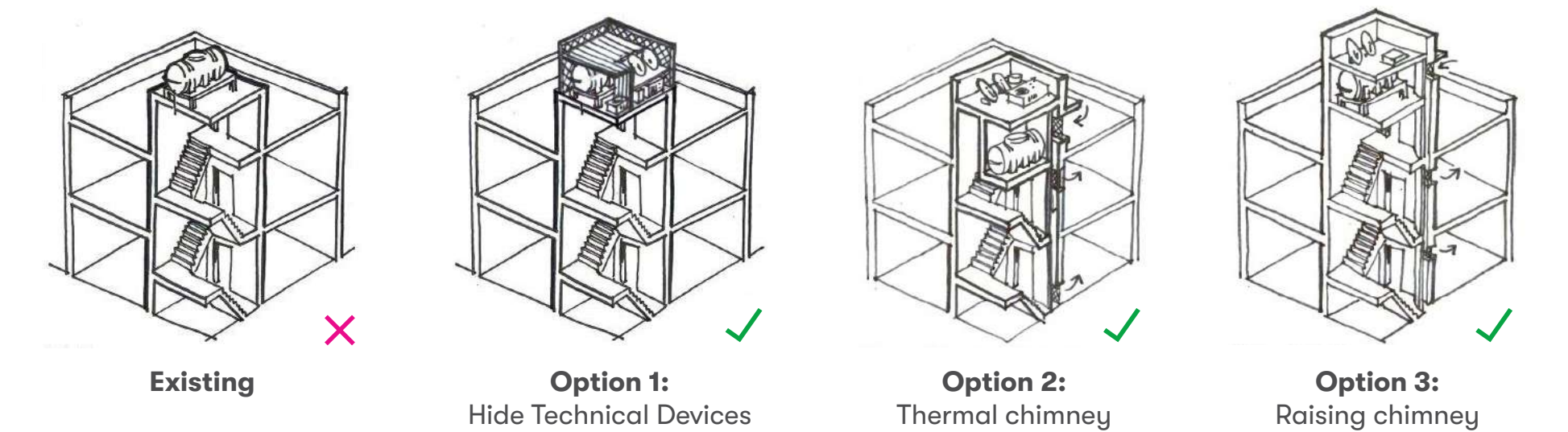


Figure 40: Example approach to internal utilities (Source: Architectural Guidelines for AIUla Urban Areas. {Public Design Studio / ALFAIUla / RCU})



Rooftop Water Tanks

Rooftop located water tanks, are to be adequately screened to ensure their presence is minimised when viewed from the public realm.



Utility Boxes

Utility boxes and service panels are to be set into enclosures with finishes compatible with overall facade design.



Wall Air Conditioning

Wall mounted air conditioning units are to be screened and relocated to secondary façades where possible.



Utility Rooms

Service entrances and access doors to electrical, Telecom and other utility rooms shall be integrated into the overall facade design.



Façade Design

Vents, panels and hatches are to be designed within an overall facade composition, and not located ad hoc.



Solar Panels

The roofs shall also allow the installation of solar panels for hot water and energy.

Typical Architectural Features

Colors

The selection of colors shall be influenced by the natural landscape surrounding each settlement and its existing traditional character that responds to the local environment.

General specifications can be found below, with colour palettes for areas across AlUla explored on the following pages.

Specifications:

- Colors to follow selected palette for each settlement
- Natural earth tones and similar are encouraged
- White as a base colour is not recommended and shall be limited to religious buildings and landmarks
- The dominant base colour shall be of muted sand tone colors, in light shades of pale brown and pale yellow

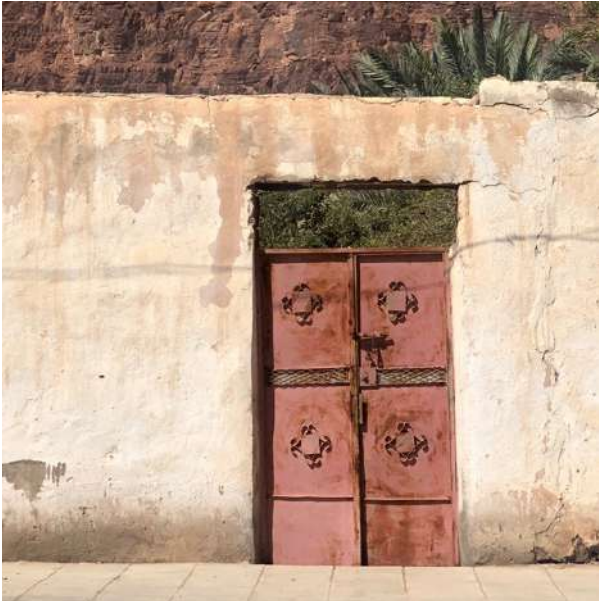


Figure 41: Images representing the core colors of AlUla (Source: Architectural Guidelines for AlUla Urban Areas. {AlUla Design Studio (UDS) / ALFAIUla / RCU})

AlUla Central Color Palette



Figure 42: AlUla Central Inspirational Images

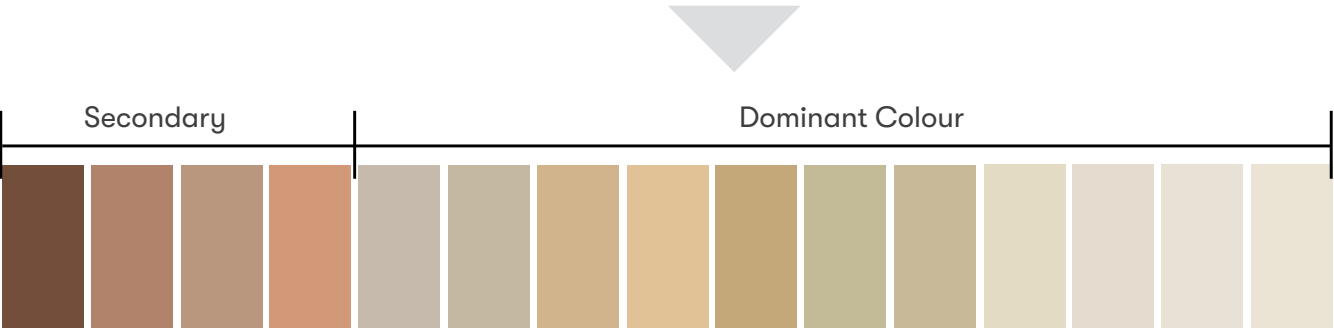


Figure 43: AlUla Central Colour Palette

Typical Architectural Features

AlUla South Color Palette

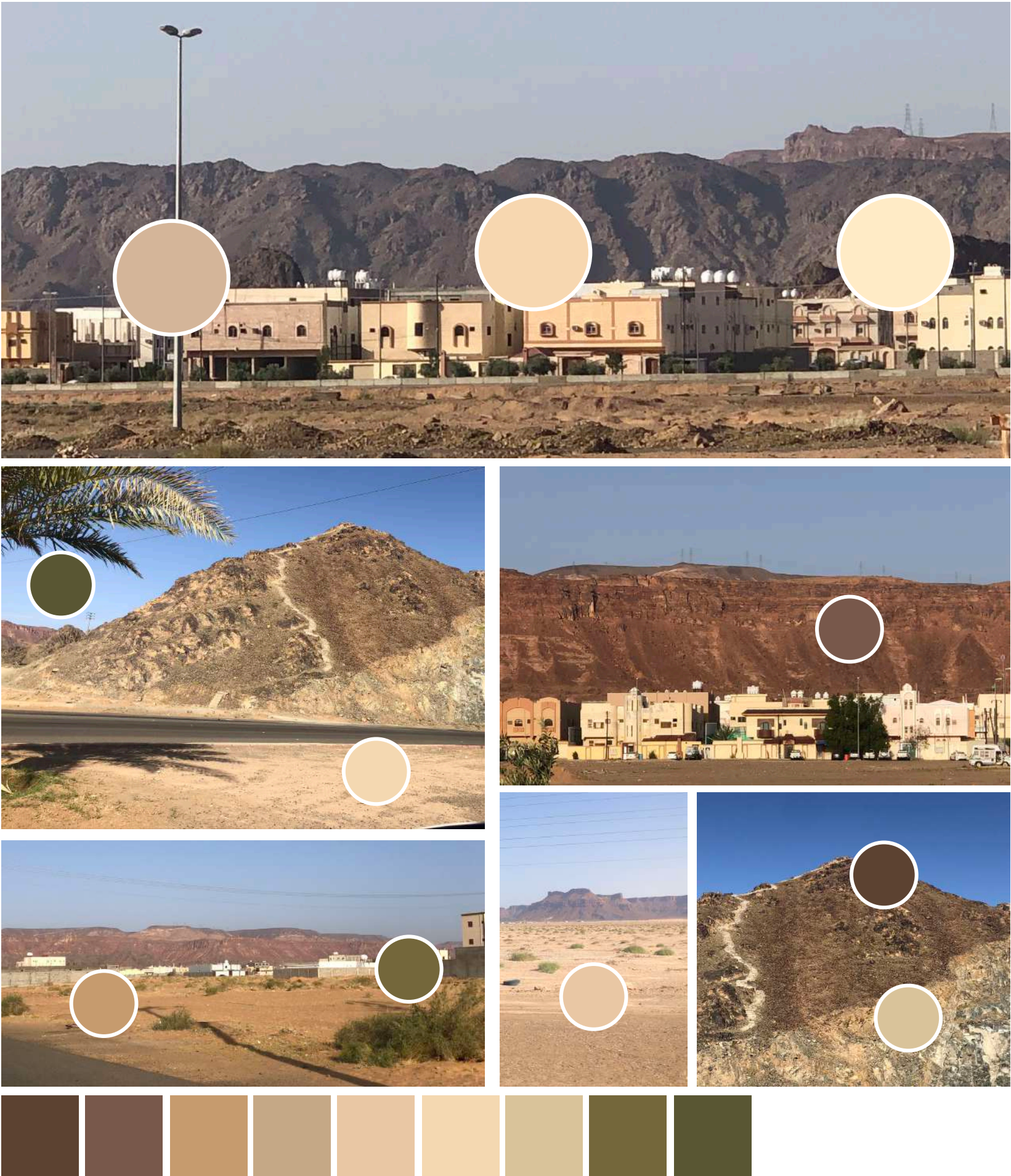


Figure 44: AlUla South Inspirational Images

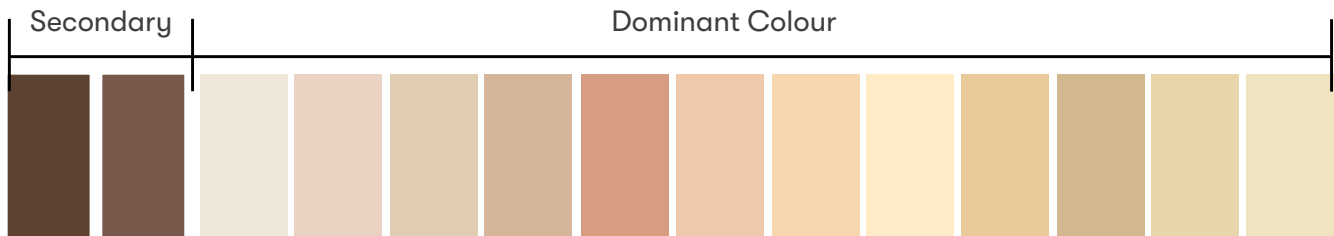
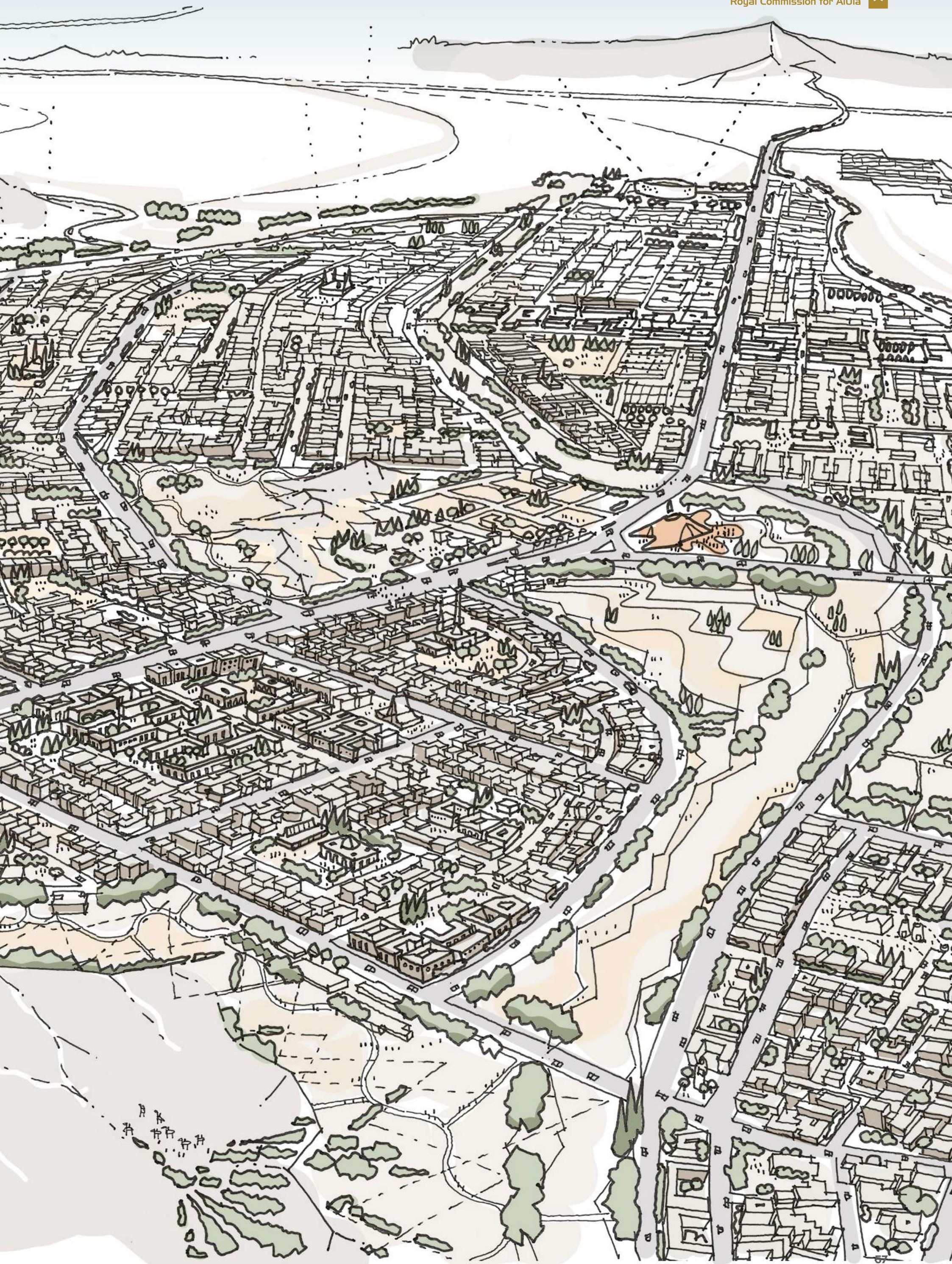


Figure 45: AlUla South Colour Palette



Typical Architectural Features

Existing Morphology

The following images highlight the key morphological features that form AIUla and can be used for inspiring character throughout the area. These can be subdivided into four categories:

Geographic Form and Structure

- Diversity of scale
- Light and shade
- Enclosure



Figure 46: Images of geographic form and structure

Pattern and Texture

- Fine grain
- Distinct identities
- Embedded history



Figure 47: Images of patterns and textures

Form and Continuity

Formal and informal

Landmark identity

Rough and smooth

Carving the landscape

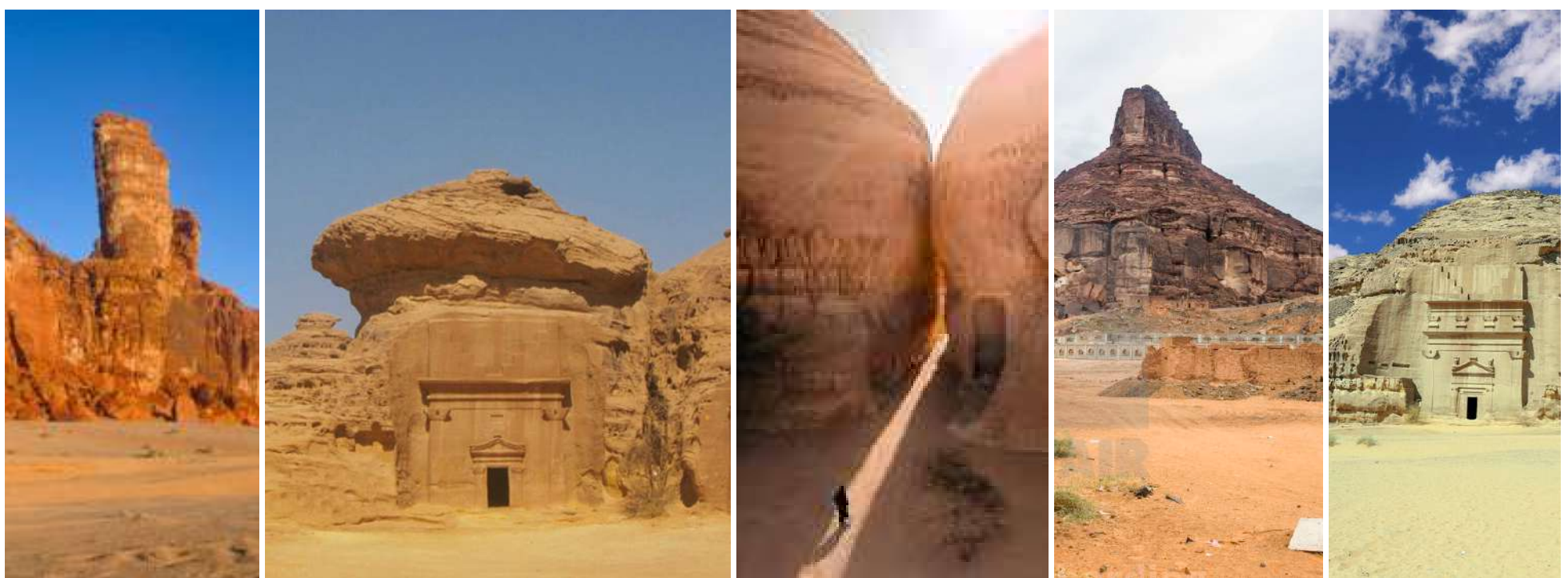


Figure 48: Images of form and continuity

Natural Grid and Rhythm

Learning from the landscape

Site specific architecture



Figure 49: Images of natural grids and rhythms

Typical Architectural Features

Materials and Finishes

External material and finishes shall have a strong relevance to the local context and natural forms and shall contribute to the sustainability goals of AIUla.

Specifications:

- The use of local materials are encouraged such as limestone, traditional bricks and rammed earth
- The use of a limited palette of materials is recommended, however, where a diverse material palette is used they shall be in harmony with the surrounding landscape and convey the local architectural style
- Plain walls with minimal decorative joints are encouraged
- A change in material on the same plane is not permitted unless broken by a recess detail to define a clear separation
- The use of cladding or rendering that mimics the adobe finish is encouraged
- Colors, materials and finishes shall be coordinated with landscape elements including paved surface area and fences to create a cohesive and unified theme
- The use of hardware, lighting and other details to be consistent in material and style with the architecture character
- No visible antennas are allowed
- All flashing sheet metal, vents and pipes shall be covered or painted to match the adjacent surface
- The use of Aluminium Composite Panel (ACP) cladding and Industrial aesthetics are generally discouraged

Natural Stone

- Stone should give an abstract feeling. The façade should be read as a uniform plan, with no visible joints. The application should be horizontal
- Veneer stone wall materials may encompass both natural and manufactured types. Use of local indigenous stone is encouraged



Figure 50: Example of natural stone textures

Stucco - Plaster

- Only smooth or sandy stucco textures are permitted. Hard coating finishes (where additional materials such as glass chunks are mixed in) is not permitted
- The use of stucco finishes that mimic the colour and texture of traditional adobe is encouraged



Figure 51: Example of stucco textures

Rammed Earth

- Rammed earth with horizontal layered appearance is recommended subject to quality control
- Extended eaves and raised footings are recommended to protect walls from rainfall



Figure 52: Example of rammed earth textures

Timber

- Stained or painted wood of various types/species is permitted as accent elements of a façade. Precautions should be taken to mitigate against harsh climatic conditions
- The use of timber shall be limited to doors, shutters and shading elements



Figure 53: Example of timber textures

Glass

- Glazing for doors and windows in shades of grey, brown or clear
- Reflective glass is not permitted

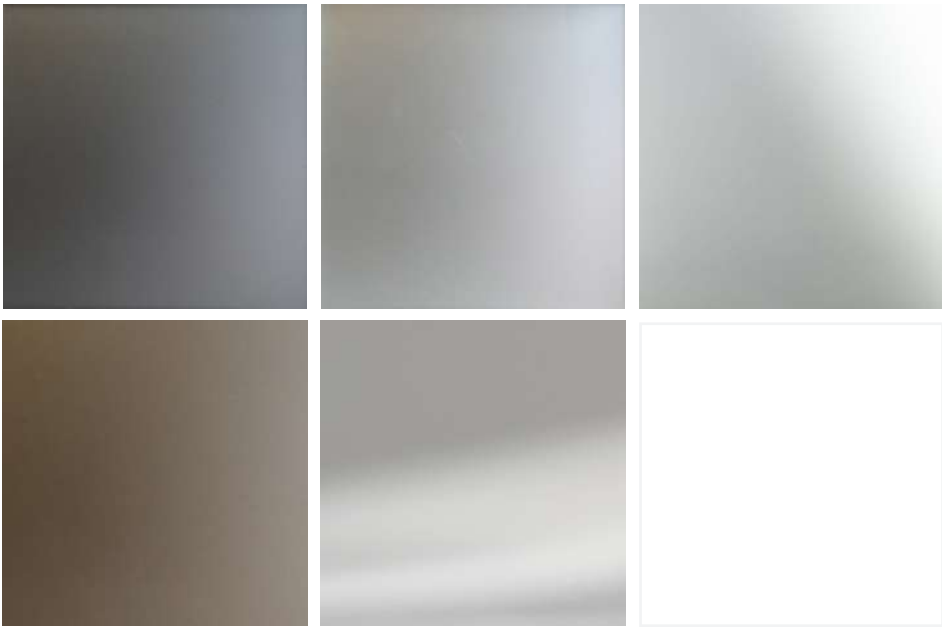


Figure 54: Example of glass textures

Typical Architectural Features

Surface Pattern and Texture

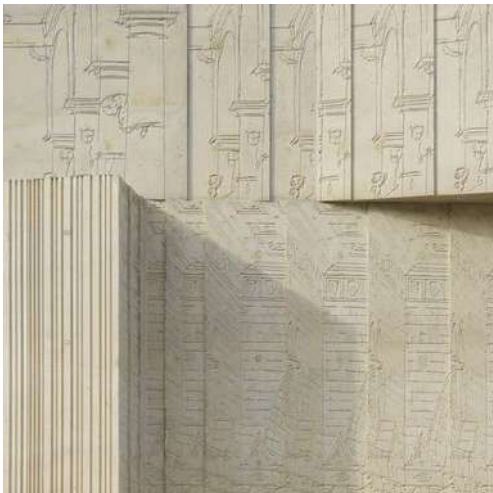
Patterns and textures can bring visual interest to buildings and help develop a strong sense of character into a place. Decorations should be integral to the building fabric and

influenced by natural forms, colors, and texture of the site. The below images represent how natural forms can be re-imagined into building detailing and guide the material palette.

Site surface and texture



Surface and texture interpretation



Site surface and texture



Surface and texture interpretation



Figure 55: Images of patterns and textures

Site surface and texture



Surface and texture interpretation



Site surface and texture



Surface and texture interpretation



Figure 56: Images of patterns and textures

7. Architectural Principles

Overview

This section outlines the architectural principles that shall be applied to different areas across AIUla Central and South districts. These guidelines are bespoke to the area and should be applied in addition to the typical architectural features.

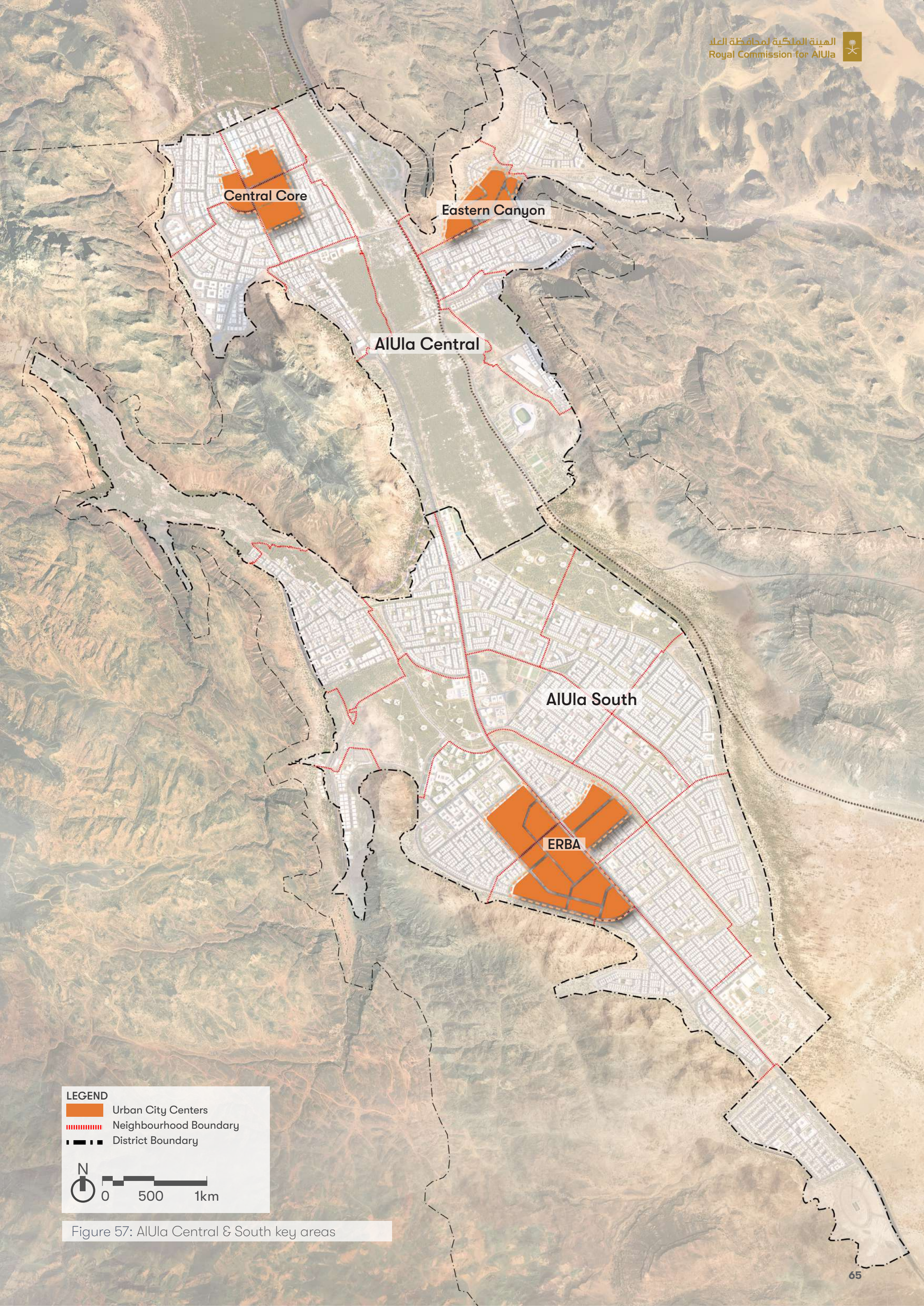
The guidelines are split into two districts - AIUla Central and South - and a series of sub-sections, as below:

AIUla Central

- General principles
- Central Core
- AIUla Eastern Canyon

AIUla South

- General principles
- ERBA



LEGEND

- Urban City Centers
- Neighbourhood Boundary
- District Boundary

N
0 500 1km

Figure 57: AlUla Central & South key areas

Architectural Principles

AIUla Central

General guidelines

This section presents example images for the general approach across AIUla Central. Massing and urban infill shall respect and respond positively to existing structures

embracing diversity through contrasting colors and materials that reflects the natural landscape.

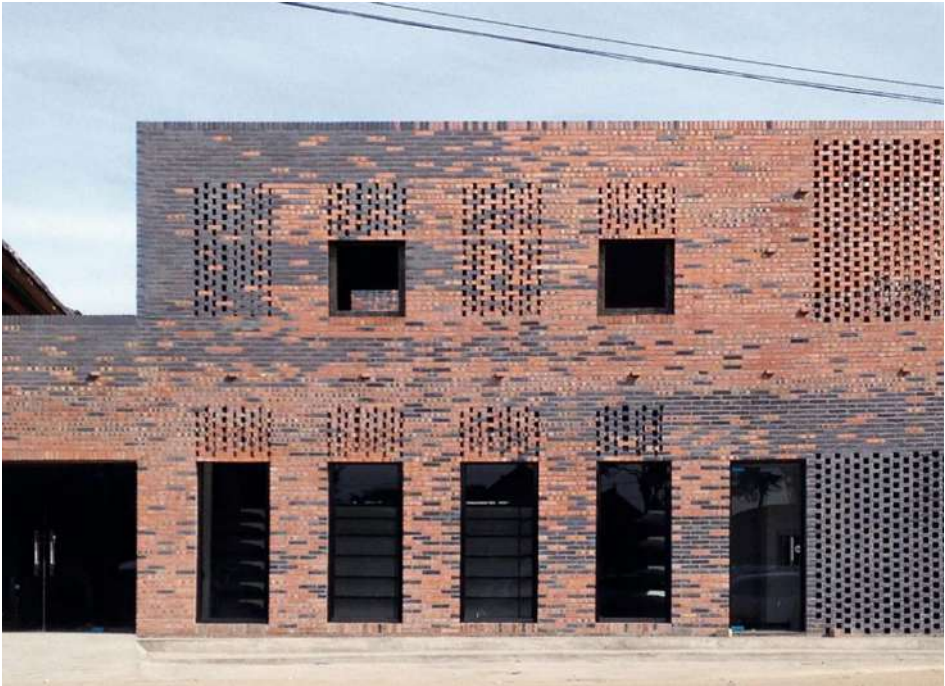
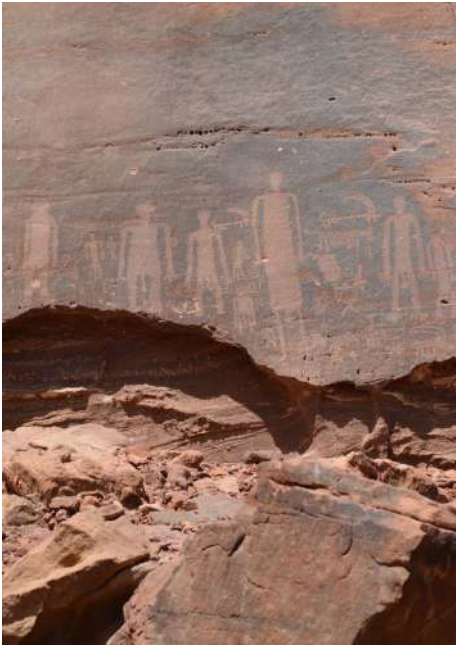
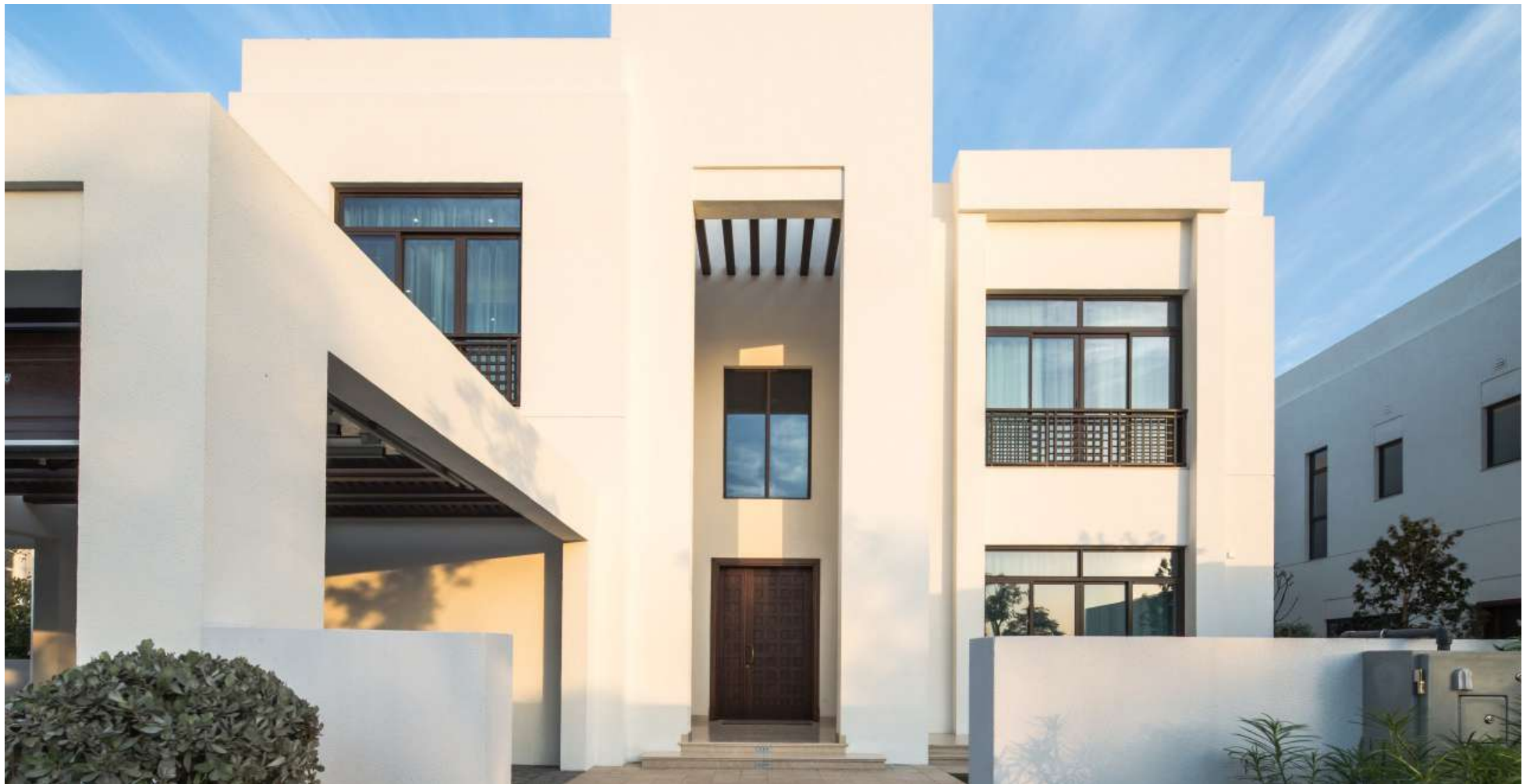
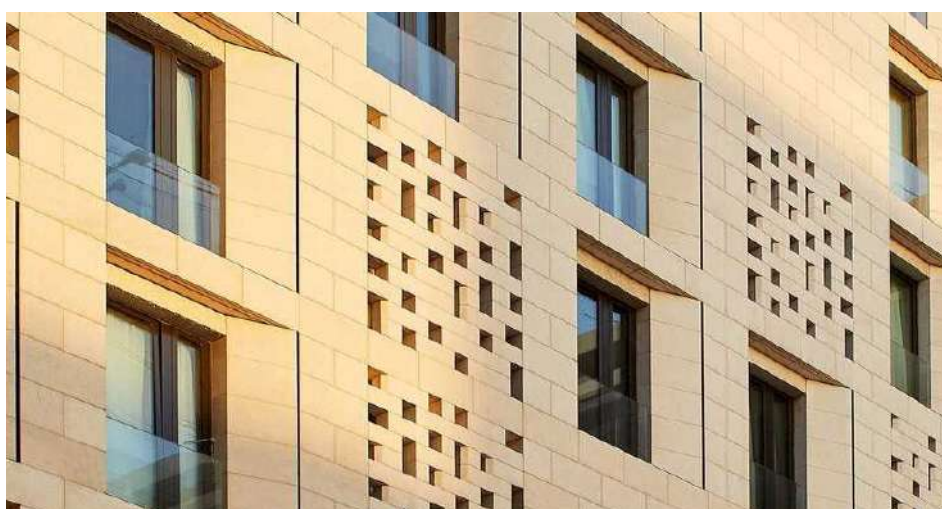


Figure 58: Precedent images of approach to AIUla Central

Vertical proportion of detail and articulation



Variety of architectural expressions



Arcades and arched windows frames

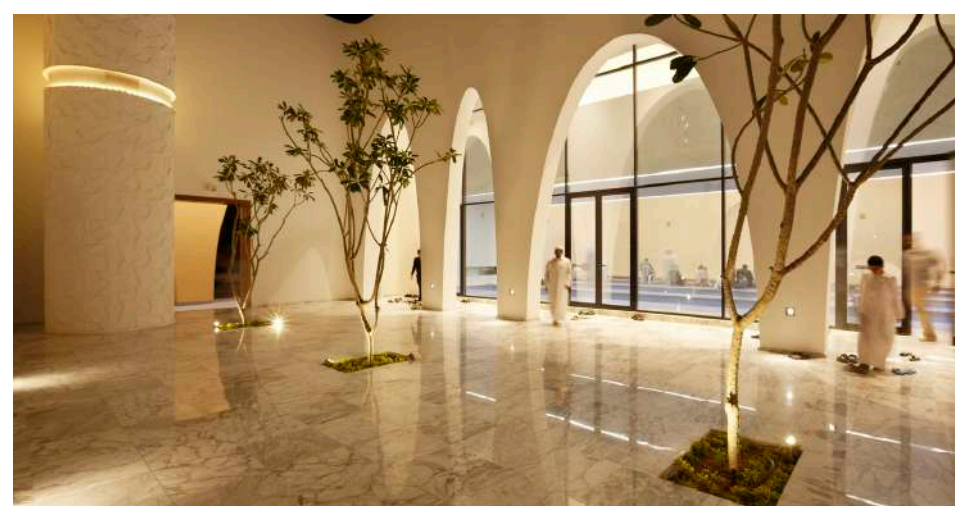


Figure 59: Precedent images of approach to AlUla Central

Architectural Principles

ALULA CENTRAL CORE

Architectural Style: Traditional and contemporary

This is a town deeply connected to its roots, but with all the advantages of contemporary life.

Culture is at the centre of life here, whether it is shopping at a traditional souq, visiting an iconic library or a museum, AlUla Central offers visitors plenty of options in a lively urban environment, interesting night-life and a direct link into the UNESCO World Heritage to the north via the Journey Through Time tram.

Themes

- **VERNACULAR:** modern - Arabic
- **FORM:** diverse
- **THEME:** cultural campus
- **ARTICULATION:** colour and texture
- **RELATIONSHIP TO LANDSCAPE:** buildings frame landscape



Figure 60: Precedent images of approach to AlUla Central Core



Key Design Moves

- The establishment of a new Central Axis with active frontages along the Core Area connected to the AlUla Collections Facility and the Urban Oasis to villa Hegra.
- Creation of a highly connected, multi-modal travel Mobility loop to connect throughout AlUla Central.

Mobility

Clear hierarchy of movement routes and improved public realm, public transport and the introduction of the tram connecting to MP1 make for attractive non-vehicular travel alternatives and a better connected place.

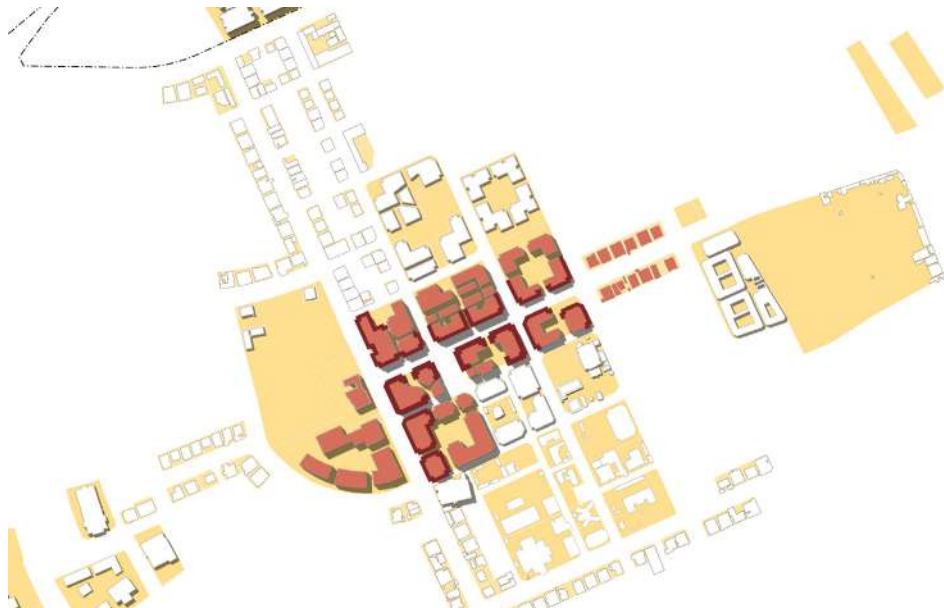


LEGEND

- Proposed Cycle Hub
- Proposed Bus Stop
- Proposed Tram Station
- Mobility/Storage Hubs (for Pods only)
- Bus Routes
- Mobility Loop
- Sub-arterial (Important City Roads)

Form

Taller buildings frame and emphasise the hierarchy of the main axis leading to villa hegra. Marker buildings at both ends terminate views and act as landmarks.



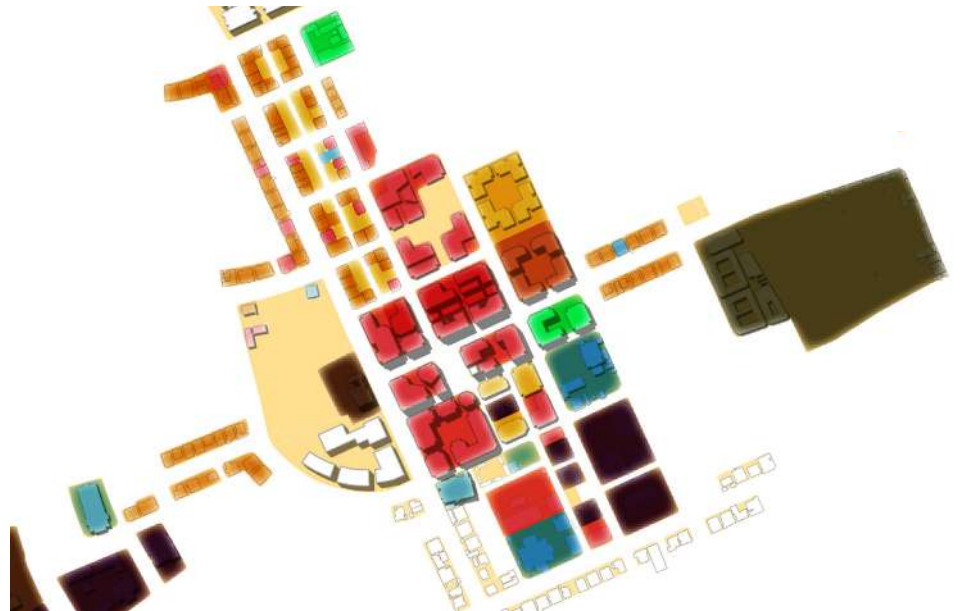
LEGEND

- Active Commercial Frontages
- Retail and Mixed-use buildings

- Enhancement of the pedestrian link between the site and the Old Town.

Mixed-use

Residential, retail, leisure, hospitality and cultural uses are provided across the site mixing both a block level and at building level to activate the public realm and support an active and vibrant central core.



LEGEND

- Retail
- Hotel
- Mixed-use residential
- Residential Plots
- Recreational Plots
- Educational Facilities
- Religious Plots
- Other Landuses

Public space

Enhancing the pedestrian linkages and active spine connected to the park and the interior courtyards and small squares within the finer grain zones.



LEGEND

- Pedestrian connectivity
- Major open space node
- Parks and open spaces
- Farms

Architectural Principles

The style of the central cultural district is contemporary and modern in style, with Arabic influences.

- Diverse building typologies
- Minimal height variation to buildings (except for landmark buildings) - the buildings to frame the surrounding landscape
- Vibrant range of colour palettes with textured accents

- A cultural presence
- A horizontal building language
- Large openings and permeability to the ground floor
- Colour to define building typologies



BUILDINGS OF NATURE

A material and texture palette inspired and embedded in its natural condition



CENTRAL PLACE TO MEET

Central cultural and civic buildings to bring people together under one roof



LAYERS OF HISTORY

Articulation, Expression and Identity to draw from the multi-layered rich history

1. The cultural quarter

Organic grid perforation

Engraved illustration

Textured stone base



Historic reference

2. The recreation and hospitality quarter

Light and shade compression and expansion

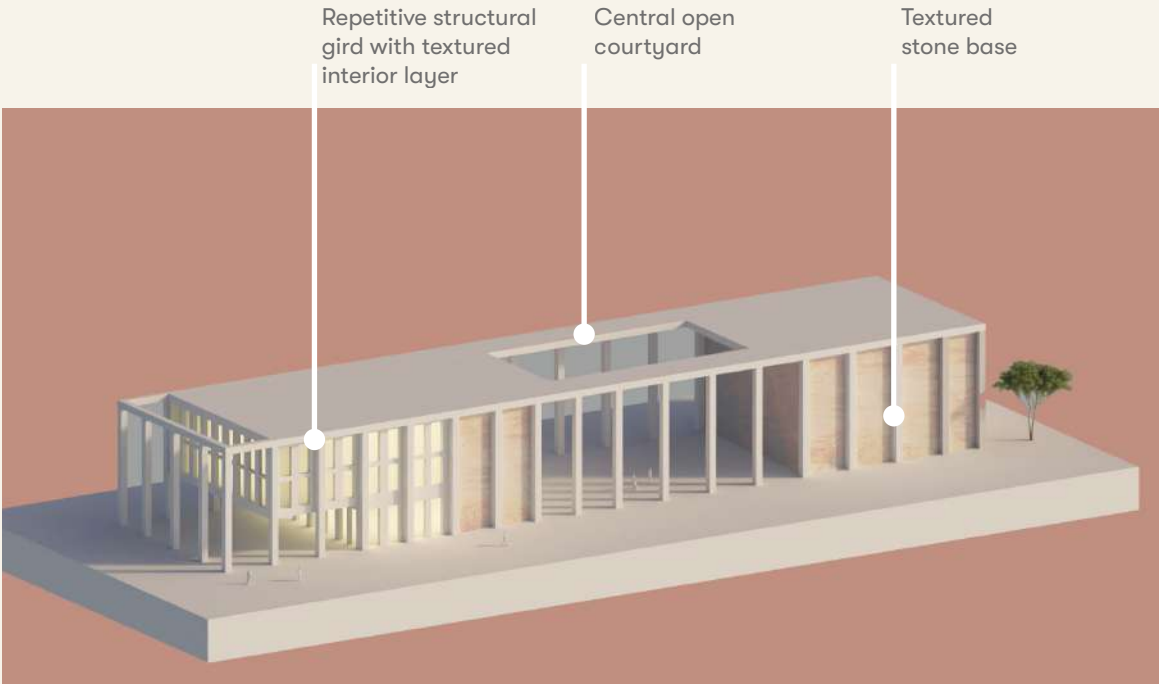
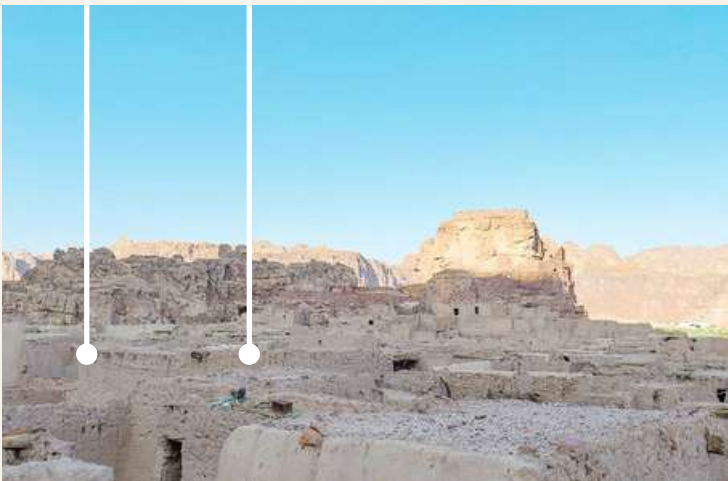
Outer solidity inner texture

A unified colour palette

Repeating building module and grid

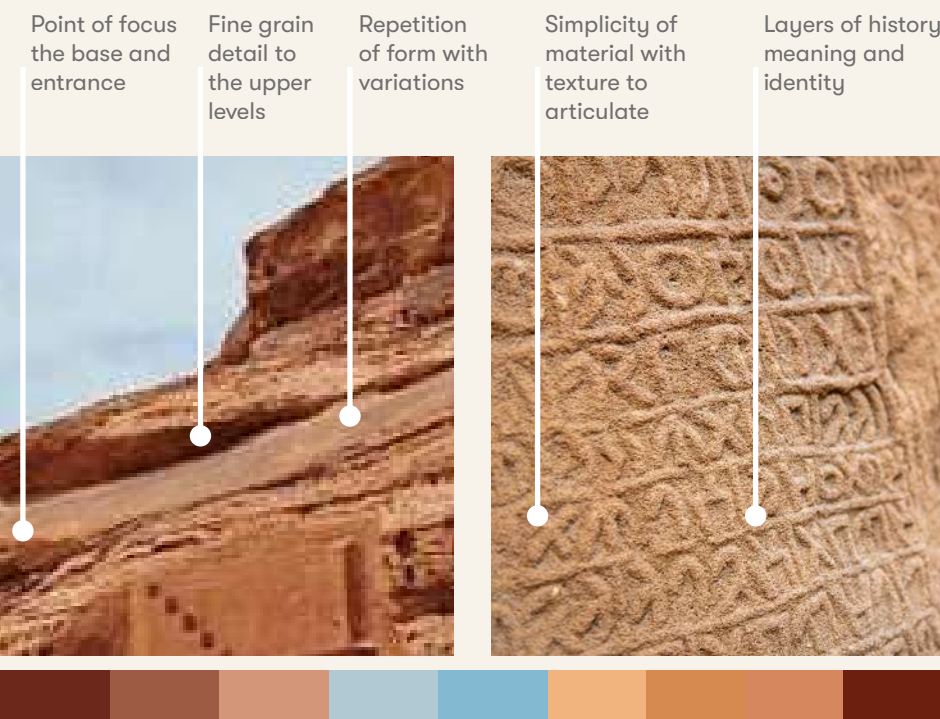


Historic references

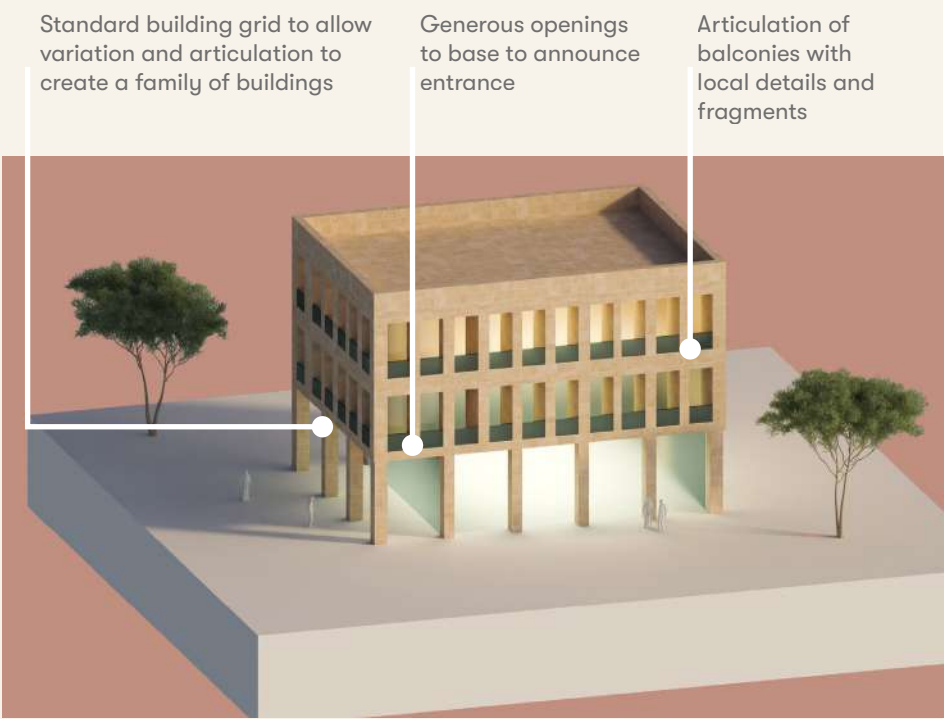


Architectural translation

3. The living and retail quarter

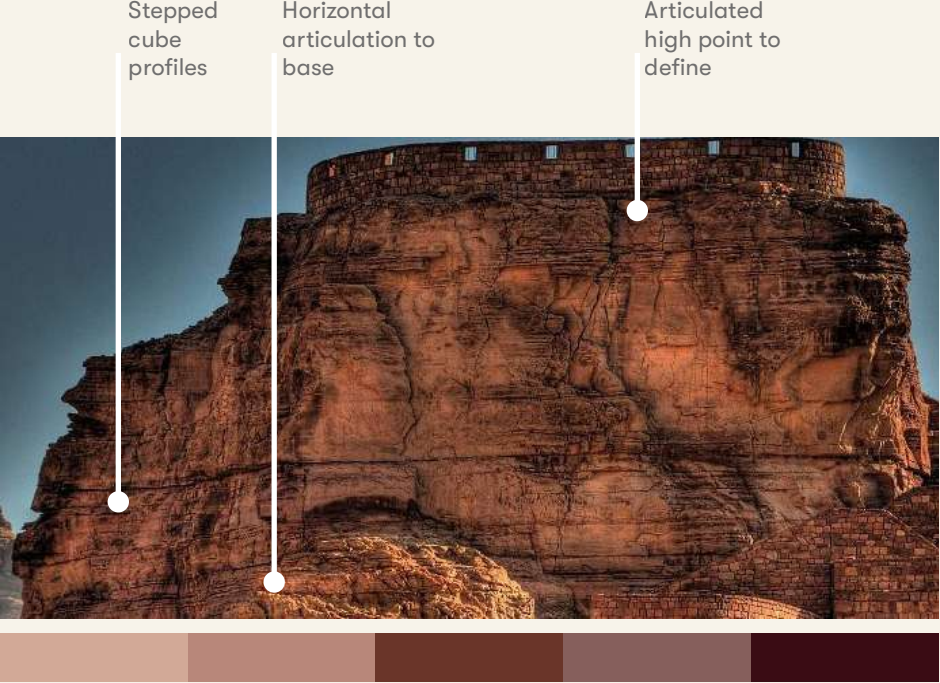


Historic references



Architectural translation

4. The cultural heart/core

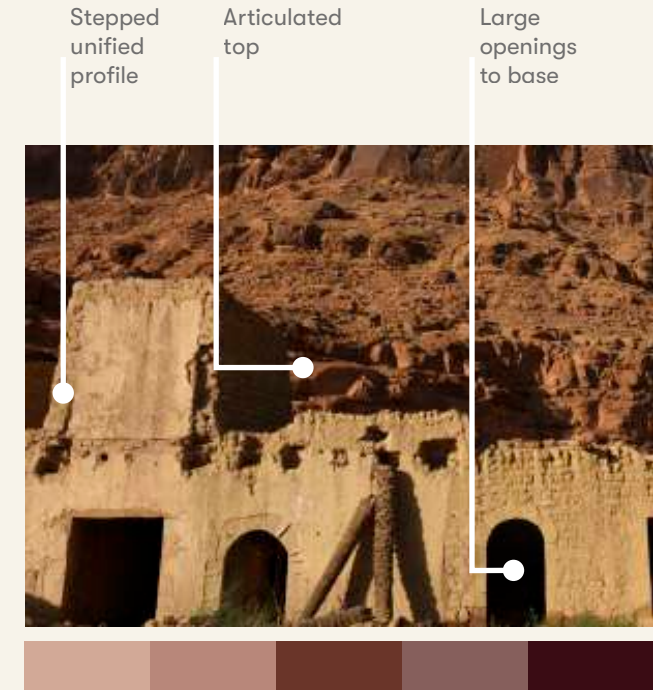


Historic references



Architectural translation

5. The residential quarter



Historic references



Architectural Principles

This district shall have five distinct zones:

- Cultural Heart and Core facing the street;
- Living and Retail Quarter providing residential, childcare and amenity spaces;
- Cultural Quarter providing innovative cultural and leisure spaces for all;
- The Recreation and Hospitality Quarter providing community amenity; and
- The Residential Quarter providing accommodation for all needs

Figure 61: The cultural quarter



Architectural Principles



Figure 62: The recreation and hospitality quarter



Architectural Principles

The Residential and Retail Quarter will be a modern mixed use neighbourhood.



Figure 63: The living and retail quarter



Architectural Principles

The Residential Quarter is a highly activated mixed use district with a distinctive character that transitions from the centre to the more residential areas around it.



Figure 64: The residential quarter



Architectural Principles

ALULA EAST

Embedded in the landscape

- The overarching theme for this landscape-led area is 'embedded in the landscape', with the style representing a contemporary feel with a regional building style and local influences.
- Granular building forms dispersed in the landscape
 - Minimal height variation (except for landmark buildings)
 - Buildings embedded in the landscape
 - Simple colour palettes with textured accents
 - Vibrant colour palette to public buildings
 - Strong horizontal and vertical articulation
 - Contrast of natural and man-made colors



A HIDDEN OASIS

An spectacular hidden landscape with natural geological enclose.



FRAMING THE LANDSCAPE

New buildings to frame the landscape both for internal views and externally.

Themes

- **VERNACULAR:** Modern - local
- **FORM:** Granular
- **THEME:** Landscape led
- **ARTICULATION:** Colour and embellishment
- **SCALE:** Familiar
- **RELATIONSHIP TO LANDSCAPE:** Embedded in landscape



ORGANIC FORMS IN THE EARTH

Historic interventions have been significant but inspired by nature.



The hospitality complex has been defined by the natural linear language of the site. A long linear park provides access and amenity to the canyon, while creating a long vista to frame the landscape view. Accommodation has been located either side of this Central Park and benefits from the privacy of the surrounding canyon walls.



Architectural Principles

EASTERN CANYON

A Cultural Mixed Use Master plan

1. Hospitality in the landscape

The response for this exclusive hospitality enclave is set within the canyon, responding to views and using the topography to emphasise the sense of enclosure.

The hospitality complex has been defined by the natural linear language of the site. A long linear park process access and amenity to the canyon and a long vista to frame the landscape view. Accommodation has been located either side of this Central Park and benefits from the privacy of the surrounding canyon walls.

2. A historic oasis

AlUla East is defined by geographic enclosure. An Oasis in the middle of the desert. Architectural colour palettes shall take inspiration from the colour and the texture in its context.

The architectural style is modern but respectful. It utilises a series of strong textures and colors to create a clear horizontal and vertical language of form as a counterpoint to the marbled landscape behind. Large private views are opened out to the landscape with more solid elements to provide privacy to the entrance approach to the accommodation. This holistic design approach ensures the majestic landscape is experienced at all scales of development.

Variety of textures
and form

Horizontal layers
of geology



Figure 65: Image showing form of existing Eastern Canyon area

3. The local heart

The local centre celebrates the Oasis nature of the edge of the Wadis and creates ‘hidden worlds’ which are truly developed in harmony with the landscape. The architecture is diverse, fragmented and fine grain to respond to its rich context.

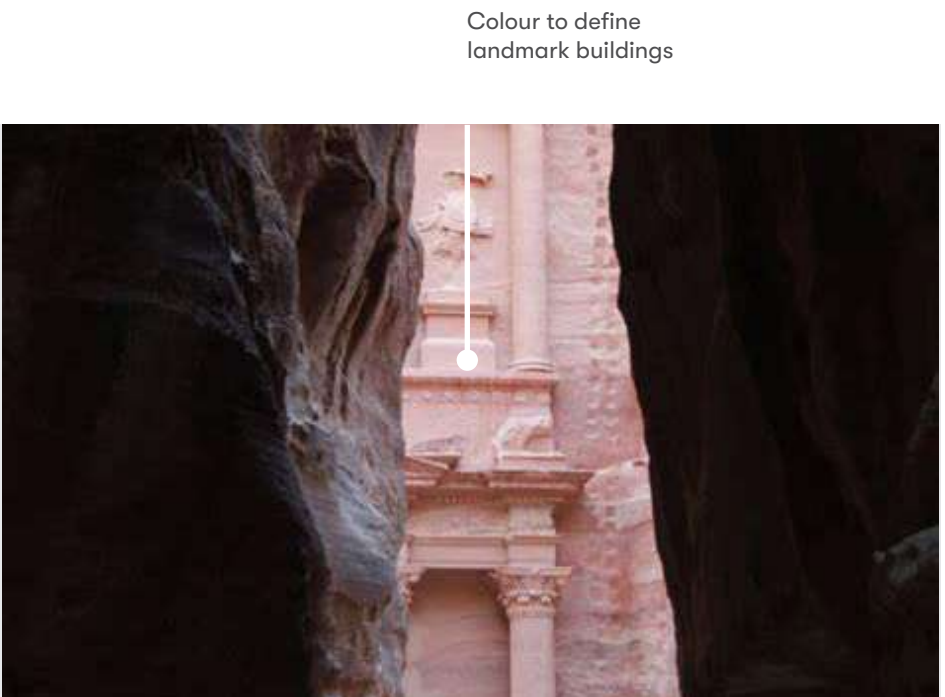
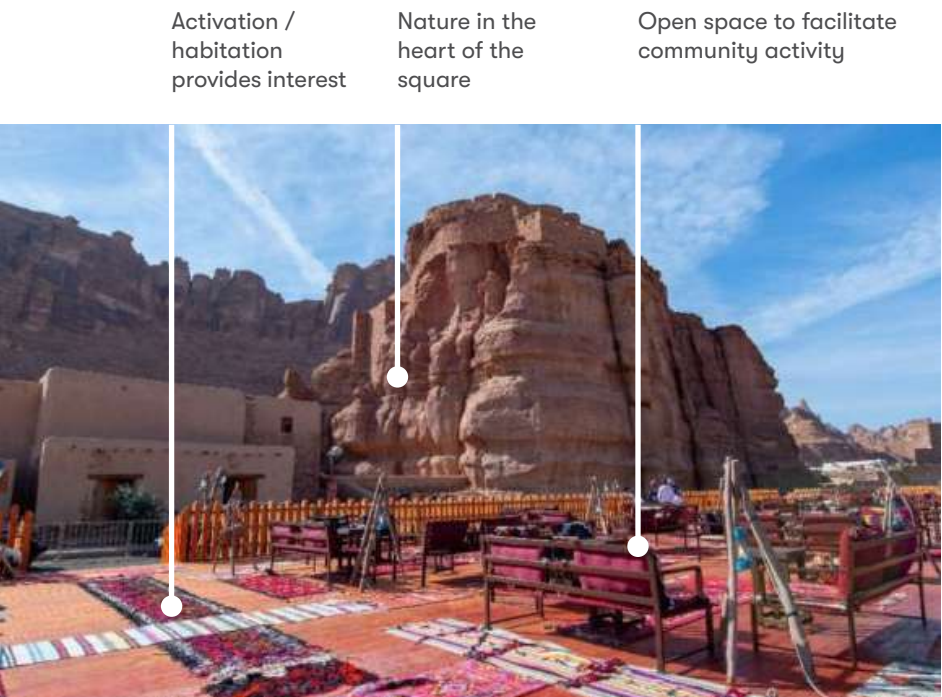
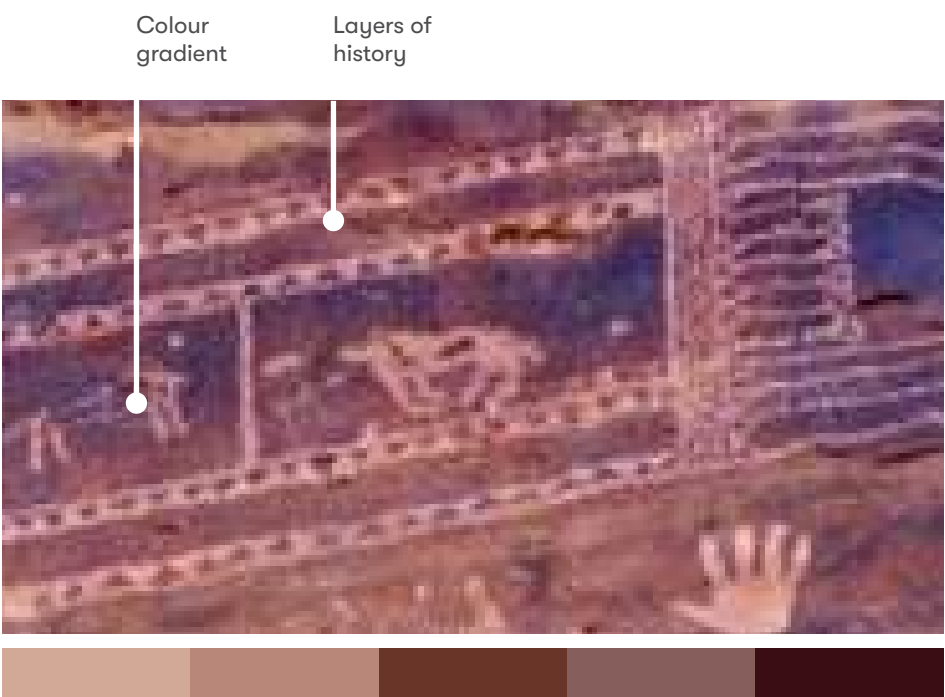
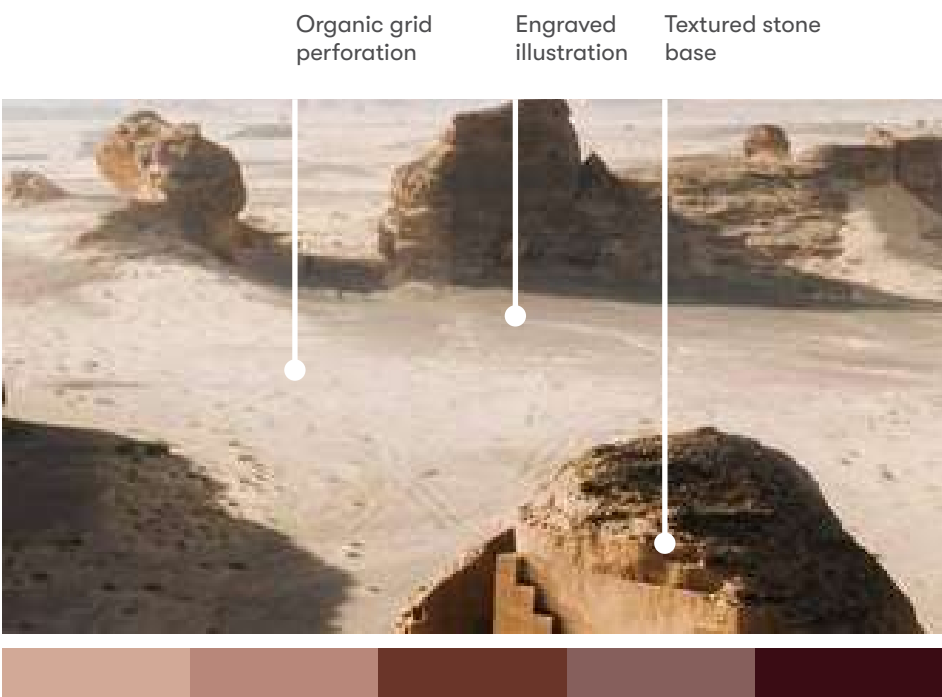


Figure 66: Historic reference images

Architectural Principles



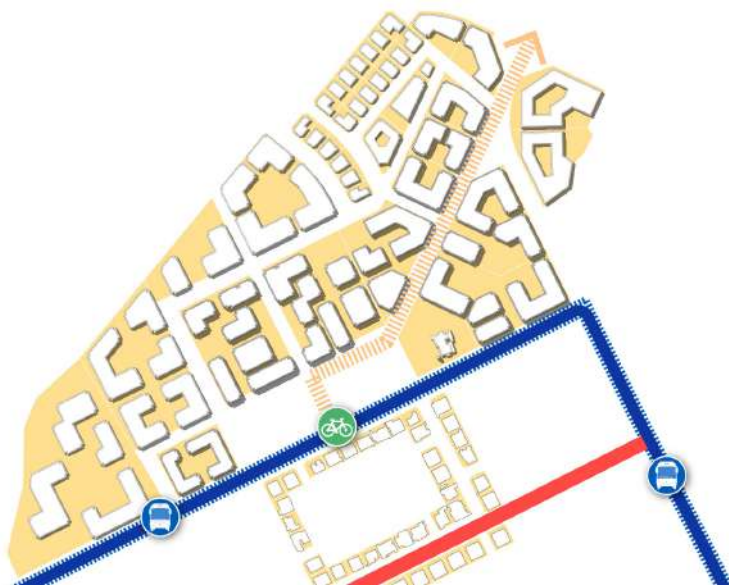
Figure 67: The local heart

Key Design Moves

- The establishment of a new center within eastern canyon with active frontages towards the planned unit developments in the canon area.
- The pedestrian open spaces shall be the dominant features of the center.

Mobility

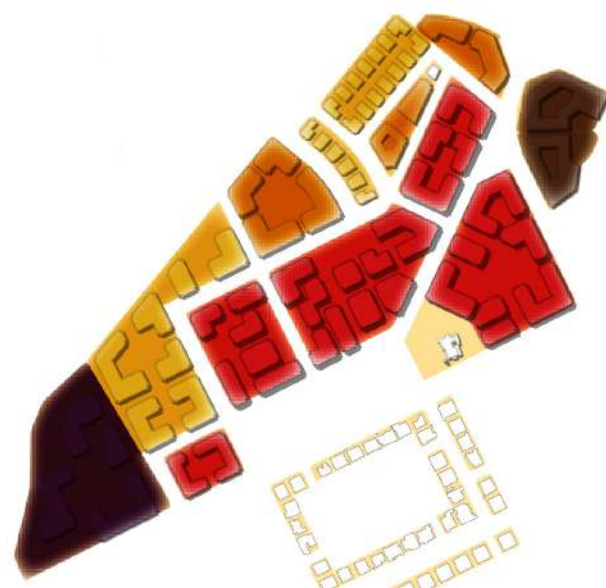
Minimizing the impact of roads, the mobility road is the loop reaches the souther edge of the center.



- LEGEND
- Proposed Cycle Hub
 - Proposed Bus Stop
 - Cycleways and cycle friendly streets
 - Bus Routes
 - Mobility Loop
 - Sub-arterial (Important City Roads)
 - Main Pedestrian Connections

Mixed-use

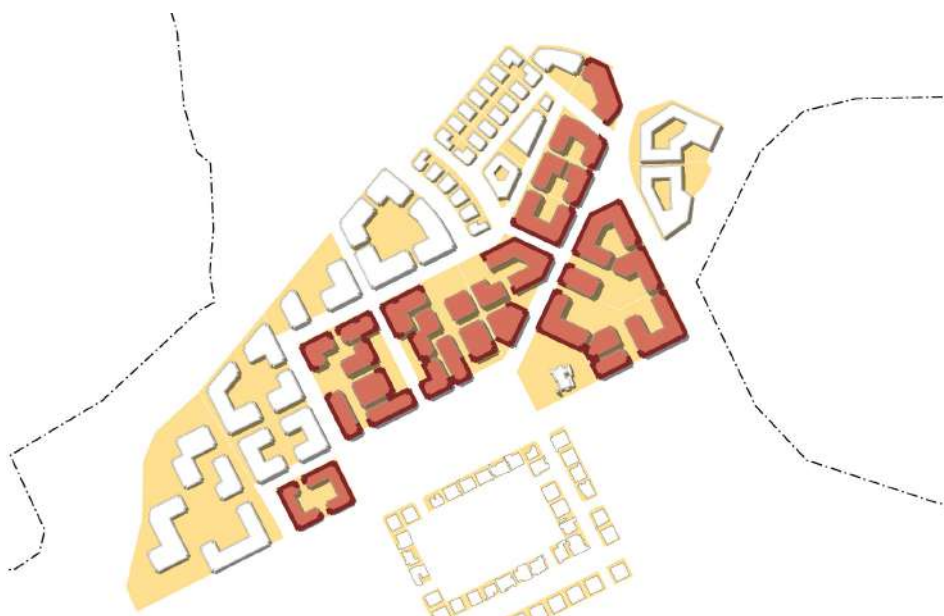
Special Residential, mixed-use offices, retail, and cultural uses are provided across the site mixing both a block level and at building level to activate the public realm and support an active and vibrant core.



- LEGEND
- Mixed-use Offices
 - Mixed-use residential
 - Residential Plots
 - Other Landuses

Form

Taller buildings frame and emphasise the main axis leading to fish-tail canyon in the East. Marker buildings at both ends terminate views and act as landmarks.



- LEGEND
- Active Commercial Frontages
 - Mixed-use offices

Public space

Enhancing the pedestrian linkages and active spine connected to the park and the interior courtyards and small squares within the finer grain zones.

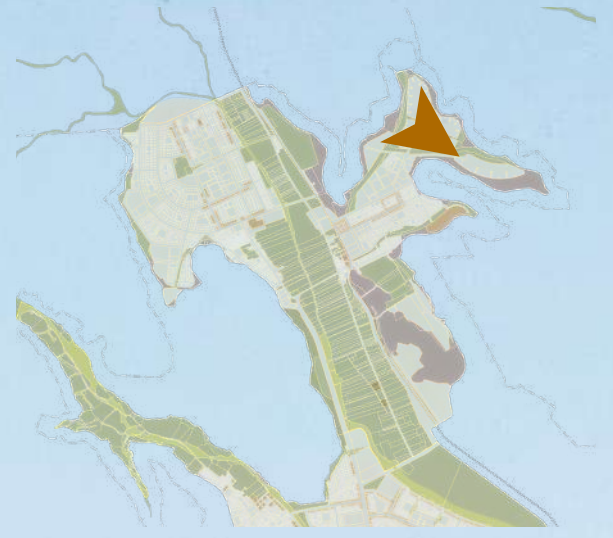


- LEGEND
- Pedestrian connectivity
 - Hiking trail
 - Major open space node
 - Parks and open spaces

Architectural Principles

The architectural style is modern but respectful. It utilises a series of strong textures and colors to create a clear horizontal and vertical language of form as a counterpoint to the marbled landscape behind. Large private views are opened out to the landscape with more solid elements to provide privacy to the entrance approach to the accommodation. This holistic design approach ensures the majestic landscape is experienced at all scales of development.

Figure 68: A historic oasis



Architectural Principles

ALULA SOUTH

General guidelines

The below images offer some precedent as to the approach for the AlUla South district.

Massing and Urban infill shall respect and respond positively to existing structures.

Courtyard house/ block as response to social and environmental needs.



Variations in roof heights - higher in CBD and lower in residential areas.

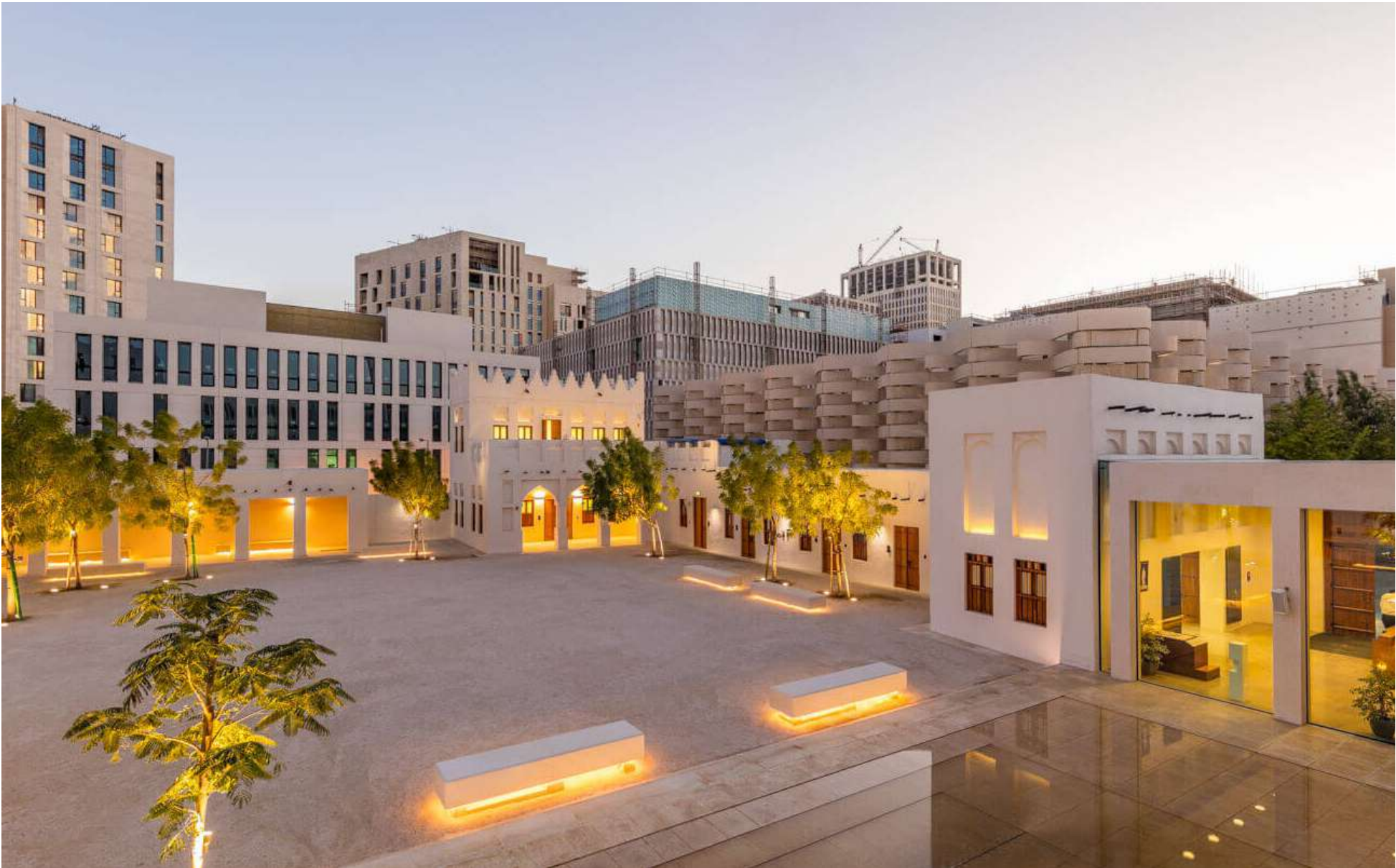


Figure 69: Example approaches to the AlUla South district

Responses to an approved skyline that works in harmony with surrounding landscape.



Small recessed windows with minimal framing w-shutters and window screens.



Arcades / overhang around active public spaces.



Figure 70: Example approaches to the AlUla South district

Architectural Principles

ERBA

A new heart for AlUla county

The Entertainment, Retail, Business and Administration (ERBA) precinct is the new civic heart of the county for AlUla residents. A modern area with local soul, designed for the human scale, welcoming residents to be part of the new experience.

It shall be home to a thriving mix of business, retail, offices, restaurants, entertainment, residential, and open space activated 24 hours a day, that can be enjoyed year-round.

Themes

- **VERNACULAR:** modern - international
- **FORM:** monumental
- **THEME:** civic campus
- **ARTICULATION:** form over embellishment
- **REGIONAL CODE:** GRAND
- **RELATIONSHIP TO LANDSCAPE:** buildings mimic land profile



Figure 71: Inspirational images for the ERBA district

Key Design Moves

- The master plan establishes a dedicated mixed-use ERBA district in AlUla South, linked to the hospital and university to the west.
- Downgrading of the 375 highway (Al Madinah Al Manuwarah Road) as it passes through part of AlUla South allows better and more east-west connectivity. This is further emphasised by a sequence of public squares.

- It is surrounded by active frontages through a mix of retail, F&B and leisure uses, which also respond to the naturalised Wadi corridor.
- The ERBA shall be characterised by a high-quality pedestrian environment, giving people have a true sense of ownership over it.

Mobility

Clear hierarchy of movement routes and improved public realm, public transport and the introduction of attractive non-vehicular travel alternatives and a better connected place.

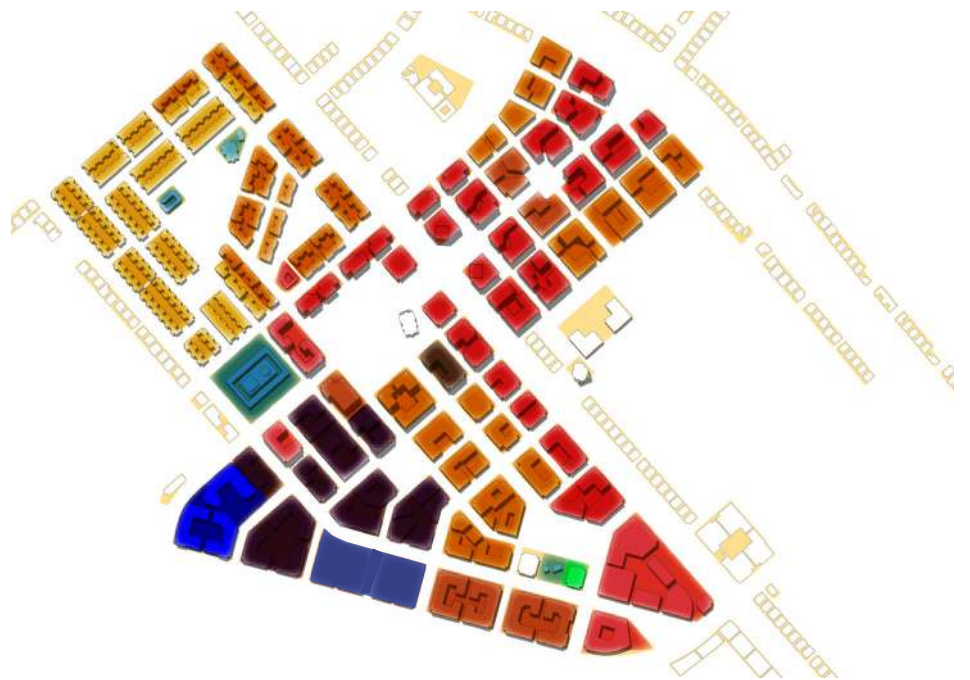


LEGEND

- Proposed Cycle Hub
- Proposed Bus Stop
- Mobility/Storage Hubs (for Pods only)
- Bus Routes
- Mobility Loop
- Sub-arterial (Important City Roads)

Mixed-use

Residential, retail, leisure, governmental, offices, hospitality and cultural uses are provided across the site mixing both a block level and at building level to activate the public realm and support an active and vibrant central core.



LEGEND

- Mixed-use Residential
- Residential
- Commercial Services
- Cultural Services
- Recreational Plots
- Educational Facilities
- Religious Plots
- Government Facilities
- Healthcare Facilities

Form

The building heights increase from east to west in the confluence of the main central squares, framing them and establishing importance.



LEGEND

- Active Commercial Frontages
- Mixed-use buildings and retail

Public space

Enhancing the pedestrian linkages and active spine connected to the park and the interior courtyards and small squares within the finer grain zones.



LEGEND

- Pedestrian connectivity
- Major open space node
- Parks and open spaces

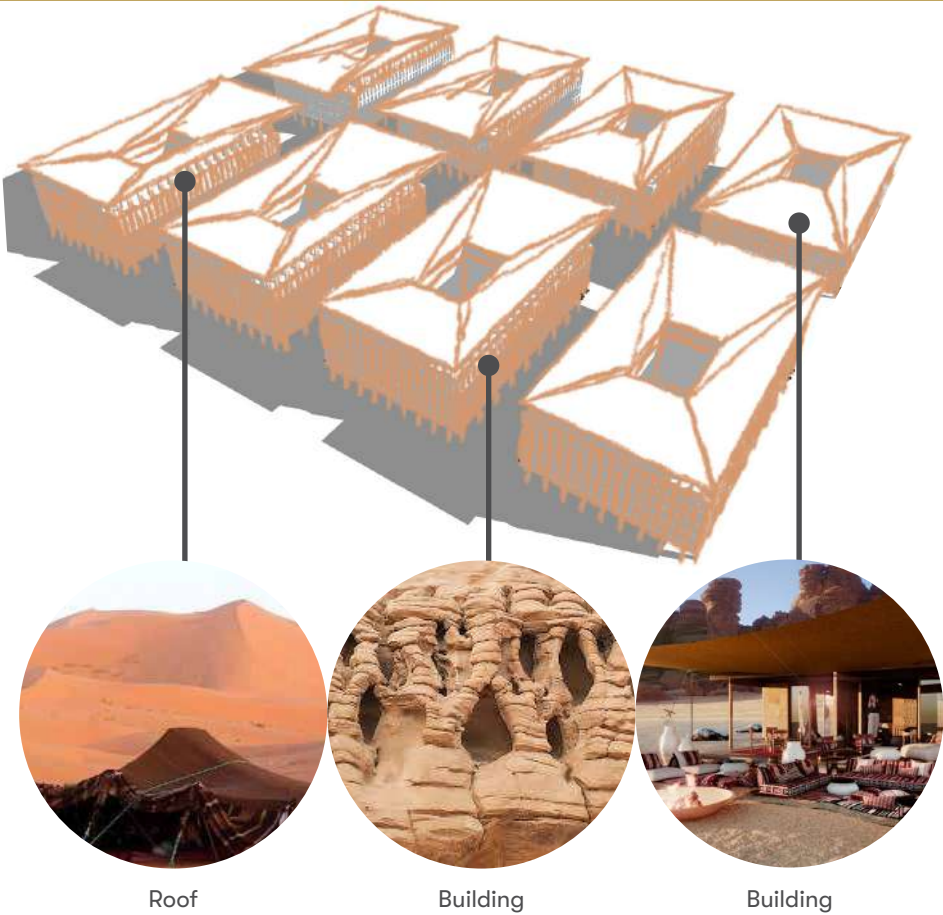
Architectural Principles

The Municipal District

The buildings in ERBA have been conceived as a diverse complex of grids and textures. A range of different building grids provide a primary focus - different scales, rhythms and variations offer different identities to the different building typologies providing human scale and variance in contrast to the flatter landscape terrain.

These buildings are then given depth and character with a secondary material palette which sits behind the unifying grid. This is provided by different hues and textures which draw from the architecture and landscape of the region. Thirdly signature landmark buildings are characterised by stinging monolithic form, height and vibrant colour.

The texture and patter language draws from organic forms of the surrounding typography, archaeological remnants and local textures from the textile history of the place.



Focus area
entrance to tomb

Engraved
illustration to
top to tomb

Textured
stone
base

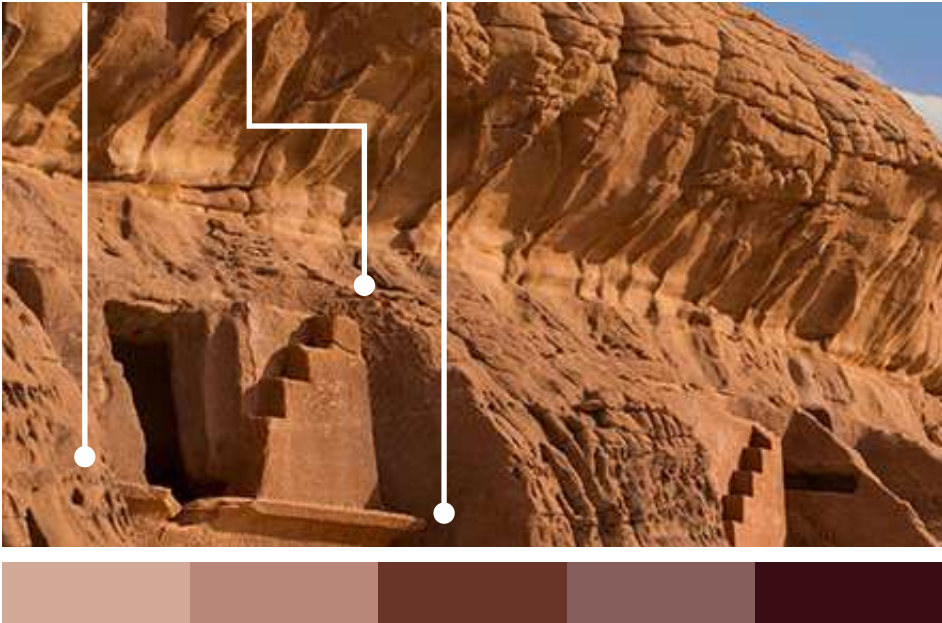


Figure 72: Historic reference for Municipal Quarter

Focus area to
the base of
building

Textured roof form to draw
from patterns in nature

Articulation to
the top of the
building

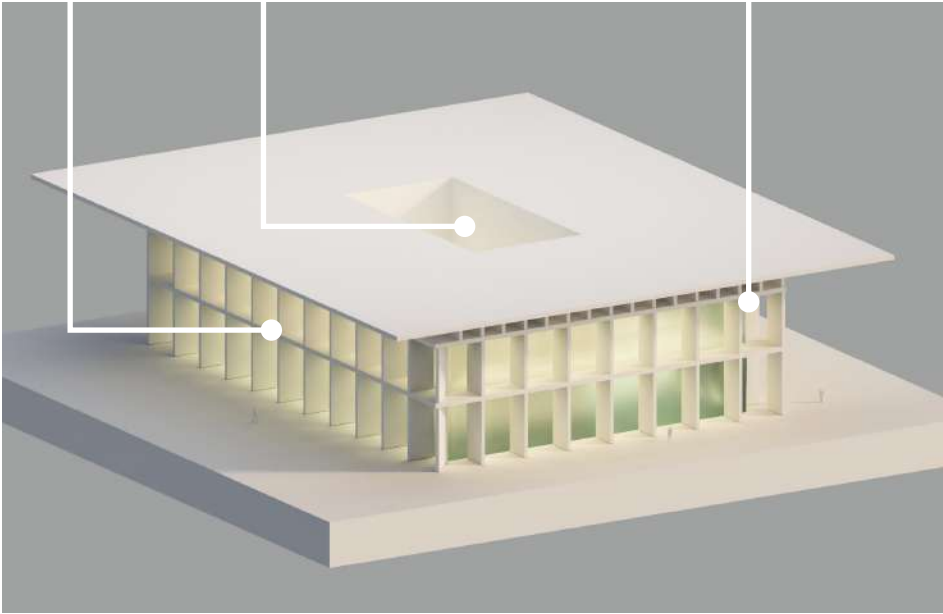


Figure 73: Architectural translation of historic reference



Figure 74: Historic references for Municipal Quarter showing repetition of form



Figure 75: The municipal district

Architectural Principles

The Leisure and Business District

The leisure and business district is defined by a rich mix of business, leisure, hotel, hospitality, residential and retail uses. The architectural style is unified but diverse. As a centre of innovation the buildings are modern and defined by simple geometric form but offer a fine grain in their diversity of grain and pattern.

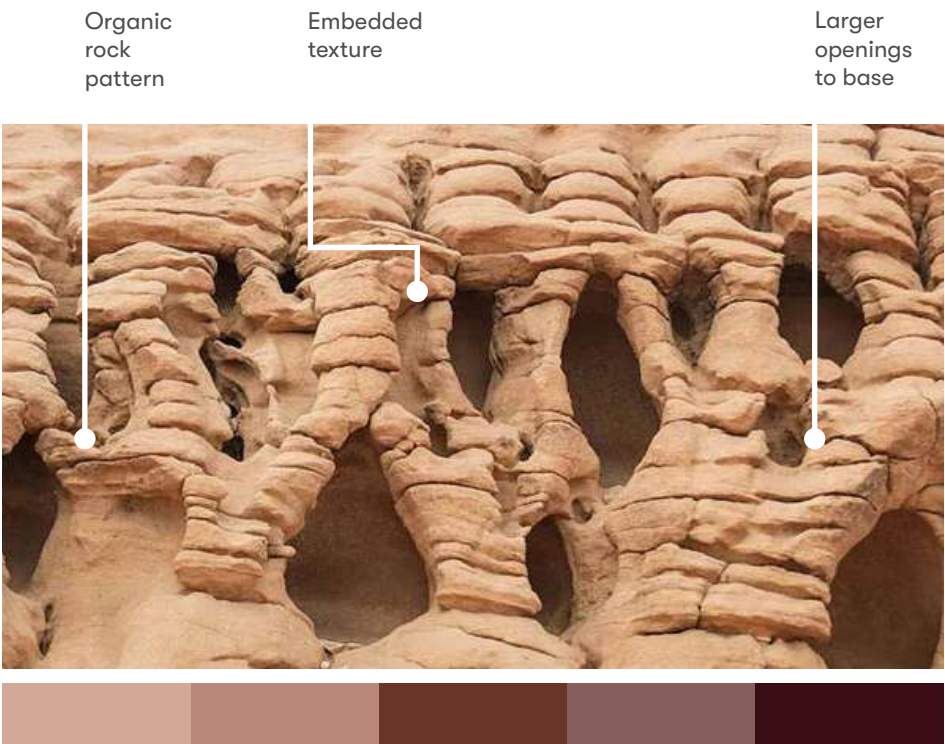


Figure 76: Historic reference for Leisure and Business Quarter

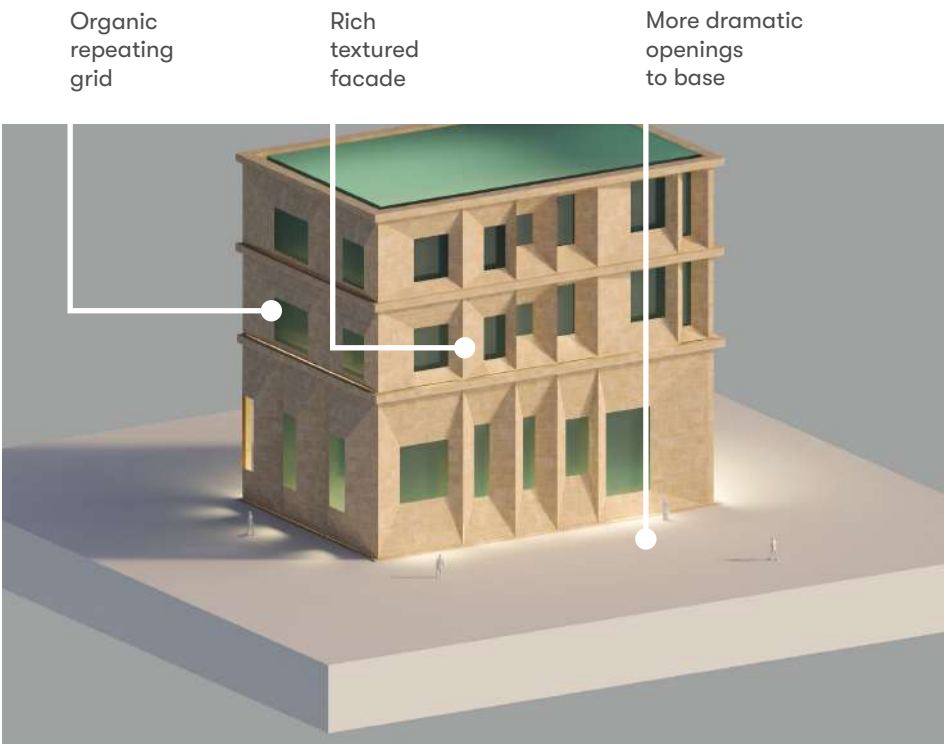


Figure 78: Architectural translation of historic reference

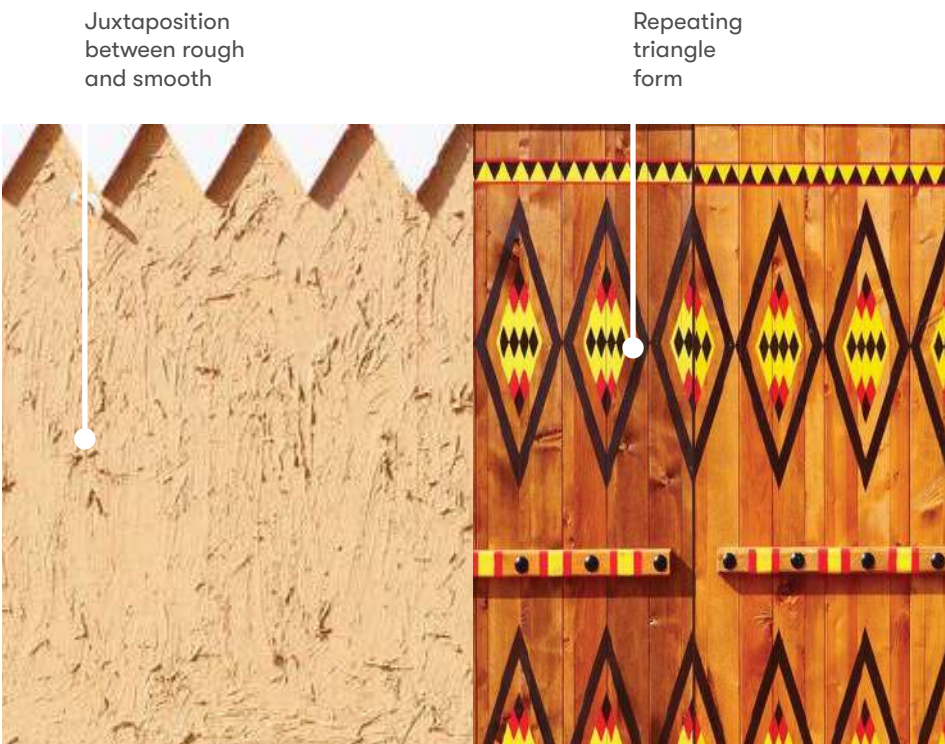


Figure 77: Historic reference for Leisure and Business Quarter



Figure 79: Architectural translation of historic reference



Figure 80: The leisure and business district



Figure 81: The leisure and business quarter



Architectural Principles

The living and exchange quarter

An integrated residential district provides embedded retail and leisure experiences for the residents. A high quality city offer for those living in downtown ERBA.

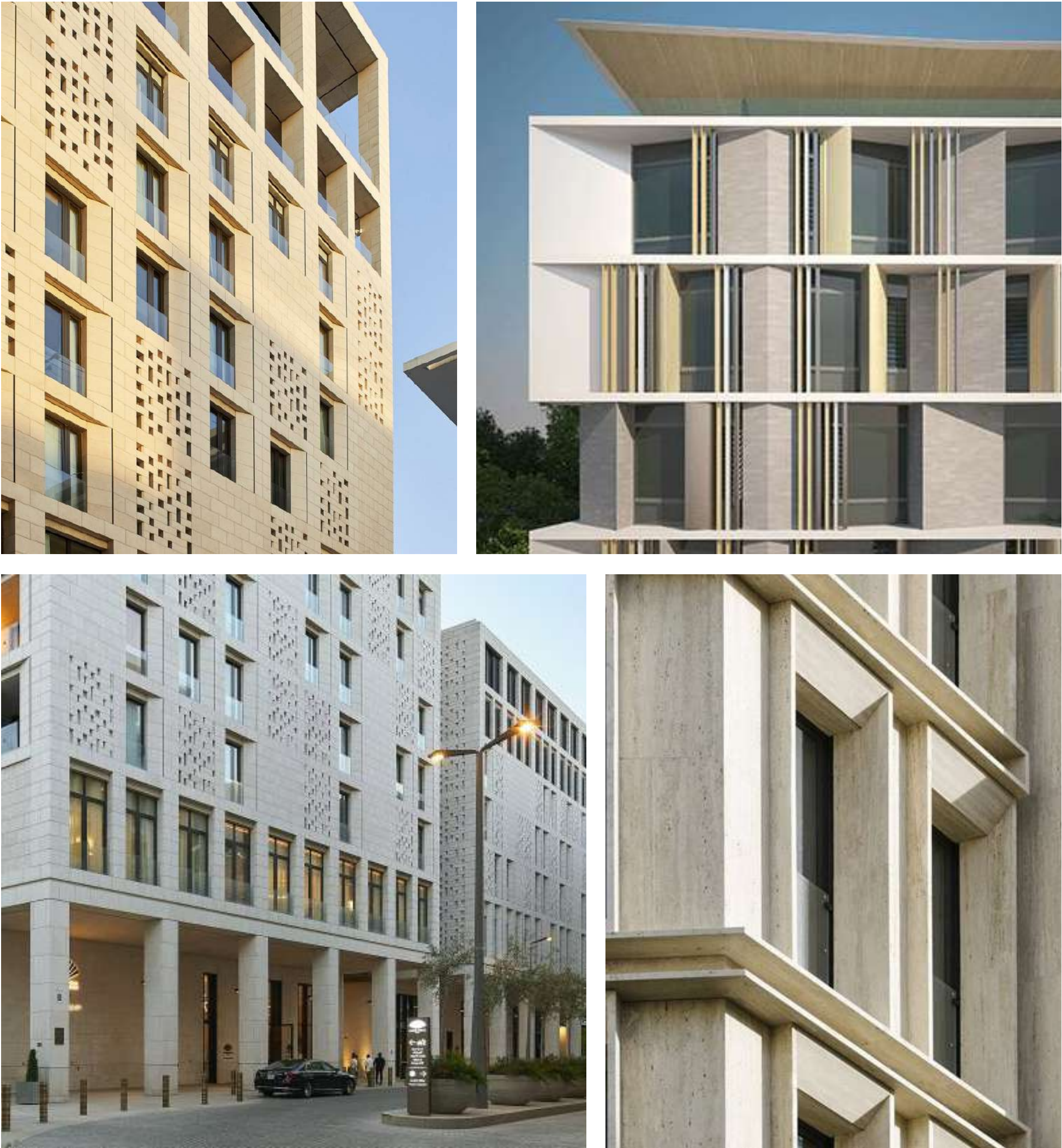


Figure 82: Example approaches to the living and exchange quarter



Figure 83: The leisure and business quarter

Architectural Principles

The Learning Quarter

The learning district shall have three distinct zones: the university quarter, which faces the street and provides shared public spaces for learning; the living quarter which provides residential, childcare and amenity spaces; and the community quarter which provides innovative cultural and leisure spaces for all.

The three distinct zones of the learning district:

- The university quarter,
- The living quarter
- The community quarter

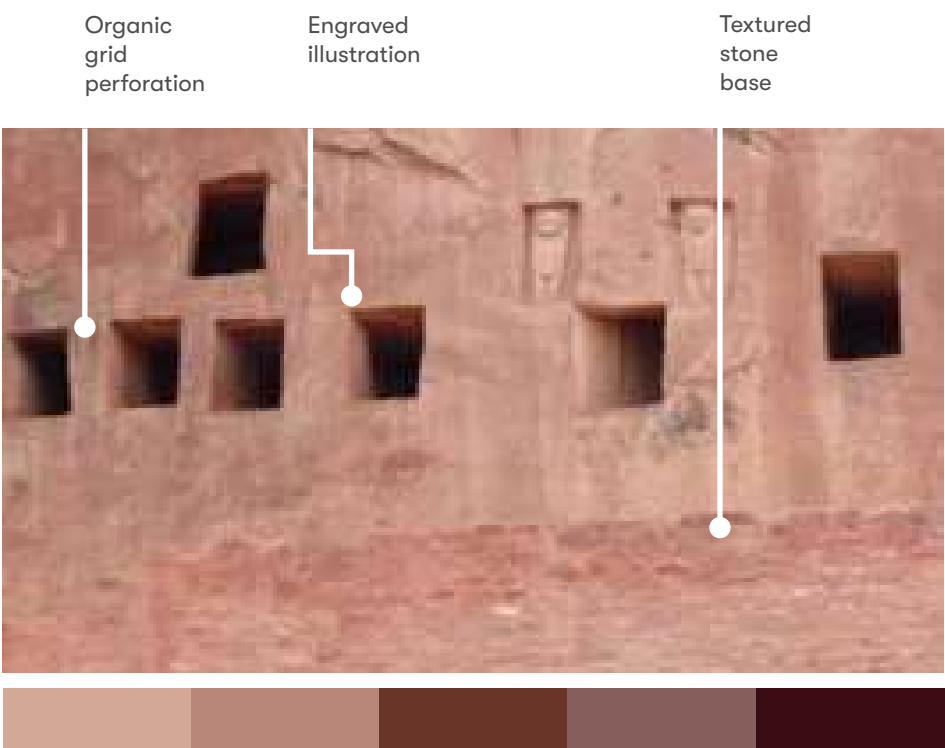


Figure 84: Historic reference for Learning Quarter

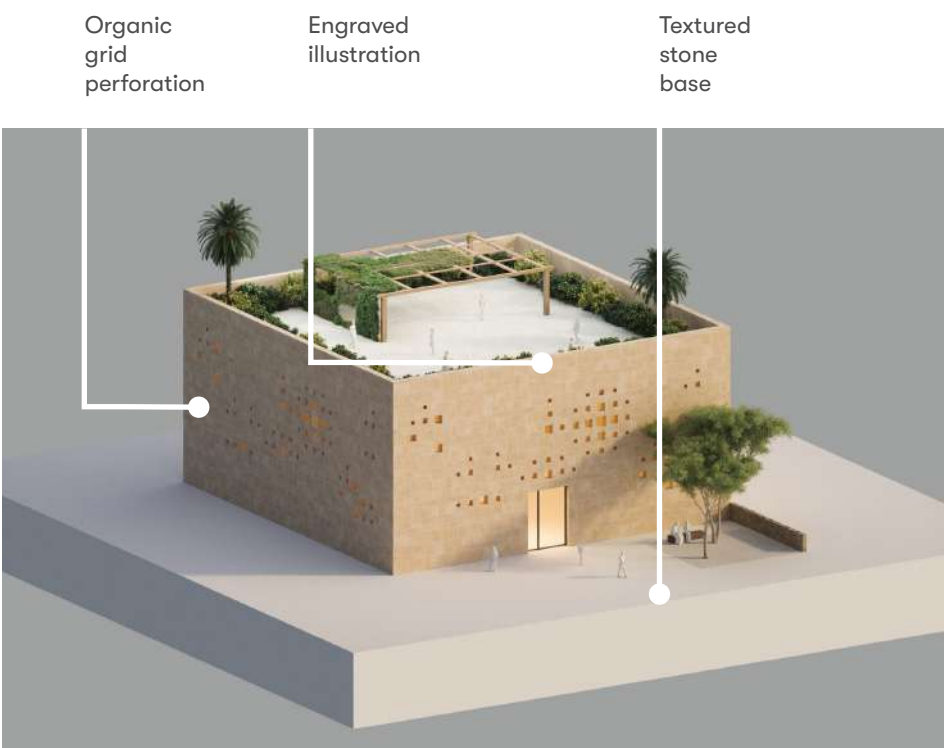


Figure 85: Architectural translation of historic reference

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8. List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Full name
RCU	ROYAL COMMISSION FOR ALULA
RCU CZP	RZU COUNTY ZONING AND PLANNING
MP2	MASTER PLAN AREA 2
MP1	MASTER PLAN AREA 1
FAR	FLOOR TO AREA RATIO
GFA	GROSS FLOOR AREA
N/A	NOT APPLICABLE
ERBA	ENTERTAINMENT, RETAIL AND BUSINESS AREA
KSA	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia



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