

# Najran

## Architectural Design Guidelines





FIG.1 **NAJRAN ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER AREA**



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The Najran valley as it penetrates the Sarawat Mountains





FIG.2 ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTERS MAP OF KSA

# INTRODUCTION

## Vision

Celebrate and preserve Saudi Arabia's rich architectural legacy inspired by culture, heritage and nature.

### I.1 Guidelines philosophy

The Architectural Design Guidelines (hence referred to as ADG) aim to foster progressive contemporary design that is rooted in the diverse geographic and cultural contexts of the Kingdom.

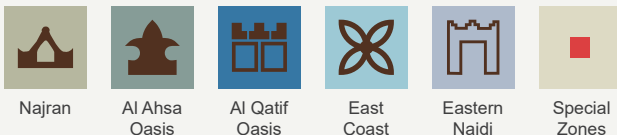
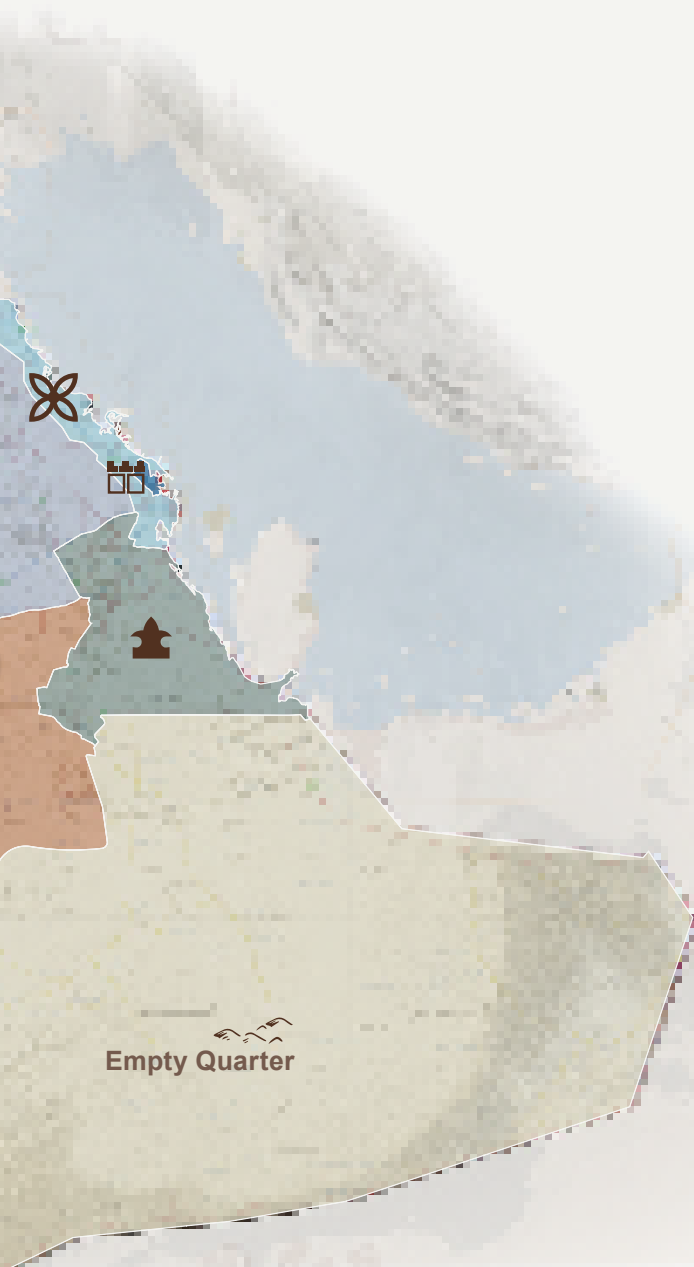
Its propositions are based on the study of historical precedent, taking inspiration from vernacular forms and the embedded knowledge shaped by generations of practice and experience.

The guidelines are forward-looking, intended for a wide range of contemporary development and suited for different levels of prescription. They aim to be succinct, well organized and useful: a positive resource for designers and easy to implement by planning authorities.

### I.2 National context

This volume belongs to a suite of 19 documents, each exploring a different geographic context and describing a distinct architectural character within the Kingdom. Together they form a comprehensive portrait of the architectural heritage of the country.

Though application boundaries for the architectural character have been defined (fig. 2), influences may extend across boundaries. Designers are advised to consult adjacent architectural guidelines documents and confirm the status of their building context with facts on the ground.



### 1.3 **Najran**

The Najran Architectural Character Area is located in the central south of the Kingdom, bordered by the Empty Quarter to the east, the Central Najdi character Area to the north, and the Bisha Desert and the Abha Highlands to the west. Najran city, the capital, is located in the south-west of the region.

The region covers a significant area with a large variation in landscape from the west, mountains and wadis associated with the Abha Highlands and plateaus to the east connecting to the Empty Quarter.

The unique landscape of Najran represents one of the Kingdom's strongest characteristics. For over 4,000 years, local inhabitants have worked with the landscape to create settlements; this has resulted in lands rich in culture, steeped in tradition and built upon a deep-rooted relationship to the earth and nature. Vast desert landscapes, pristine mountains and crucially a proximity to water spurred organic growth and development of Najran's towns and cities, which had distinctive urban and agrarian architectural characteristics.

One of the Kingdom's earliest historic settlements, Najran city is famously built upon an oasis renowned for its agriculture, fed and irrigated by the Wadi Najran. For the Guidelines, Najran city has been identified as the principal example.

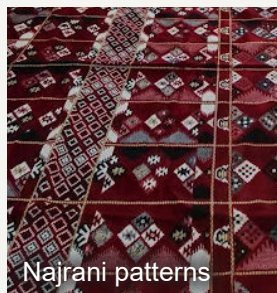
Ephemeral characteristics of itinerant lifestyles, based on a legacy of trade and travel permeate throughout the region. These include historic fortresses, earthen built darbs and traditional souqs.

Since ancient times, Najran has been acknowledged as one of the Kingdom's foremost cities for trade, due to its critical positioning upon a crossroad of the main ancient trade and Hajj pilgrim routes. The region, consisting of 8 Governorates, has experienced substantial development and investment accelerating its socioeconomic positioning, to become one of the Kingdom's most pre-eminent and modern regions.

Over the last three decades, the region has seen significant economic growth and opportunity following the strengthening of the trade links and corridors between neighbouring KSA regions, Abha and Jazan. Opportunities that have been strengthened through the implementation of an advanced aviation and transit system as well as other civic benefits and amenities such as museums, the establishment of quality public parks, gardens, town squares, playgrounds, and streetscapes.

Culturally, the region benefits from a wealth of heritage assets of national importance, including Oroug Bani M'aradh Wildlife Sanctuary, the Neolithic 'kits' and palaeolithic drawings at Al Ukhadood including two World Heritage sites.



FIG.3 **NAJRAN**



## II Topography and landscape

Observations on the links between landscape, climate, culture and the architectural character of Najran.

### II.1 Landscape

The topographical landscape of the region is comprised of three main geographical areas:

- 1 A mountainous area to the west consisting of KSA's tallest peaks that rise to an altitude of 2,000 metres.
- 2 The Wadi, valleys and planes, situated centrally, which are resource rich and used for cultivation and agriculture.
- 3 The vast arid desert to the east that borders with KSA's Eastern Region, known as the Empty Quarter or Al Rub' Al Khali.

The region sits between two opposing geographical contexts. The lush green Sarawat Mountains of Asir (west) and the vast desert sands of Al Rub' Al Khali or Empty Quarter (east).

To the west, at an altitude of 1,200m, the region's capital, Najran city, Habouna, and Badr Al Janoub are situated. Toward the east, the mountainous plateau declines in altitude.

Najran's mountainous plateau is the key source of the region's natural water reservoirs, wells and aquifers. For a millennium, water run-off from these mountains has been channeled to create vast valleys and wadi running east.

The wadi and valleys created within these escarpments and the proximity to natural water sources were highly influential to the region's early settlement. The fertile landscape surrounding these areas created habitable and hospitable

environments for itinerant lifestyles stations and eventually formal settlement, most notably the areas surrounding Wadi Najran, Wadi Habouna, Wadi Qitan and Wadi Sulayyil.

### II.2 Climate

Due to the region's high elevation, temperatures in Najran are generally lower than other regions in the Kingdom and can drop to as low as -10 degrees. The region has moderate climate and humidity and wind speeds which are strong, carrying sand and dust from eastern deserts. The region experiences sporadic and intense rainfalls, which cause great amounts of water runoff causing flash flooding.

### II.3 Culture

The proximity of water within these areas enables vegetation in the valleys and wadis to flourish, creating rooted settlements and extensive farmlands where communities prosper. These settlements have historically had an important commercial and cultural role, as part of historic trade routes linking the southern coast of the Arabian Peninsula with the Mediterranean Sea.

### II.4 Architectural influence

Due to shared environmental conditions, Najran architecture has many similarities with the neighbouring region of Asir. As an example, the horizontal banding that deflects water away from building walls of Asir vernacular was adopted by Najran communities to become the "Midmakh" stripes within Najran dwellings. Midmakh is a visible horizontal banding situated on the external walls to achieve the same anti erosion objective and sense of identity.

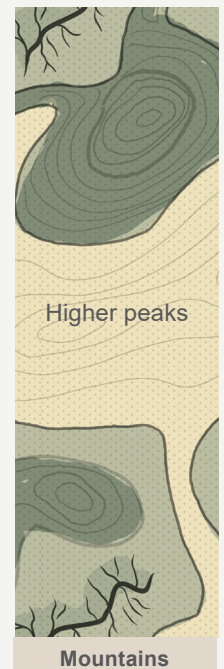
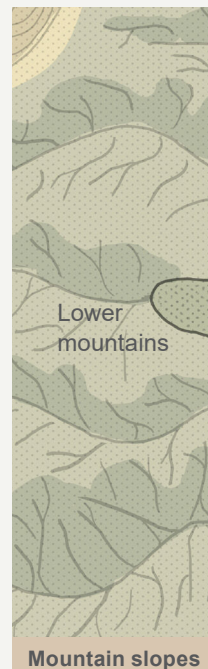
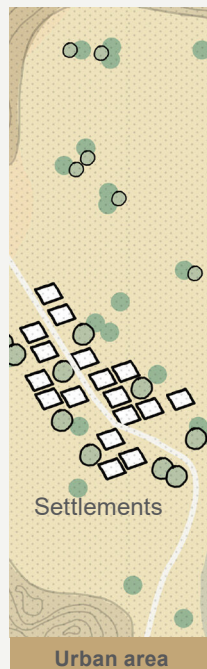
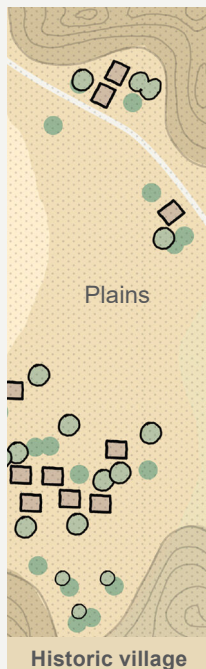
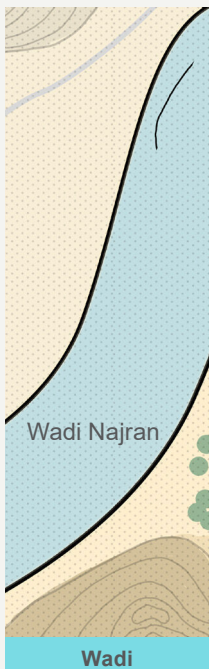
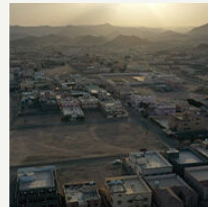
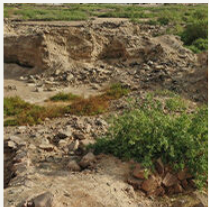
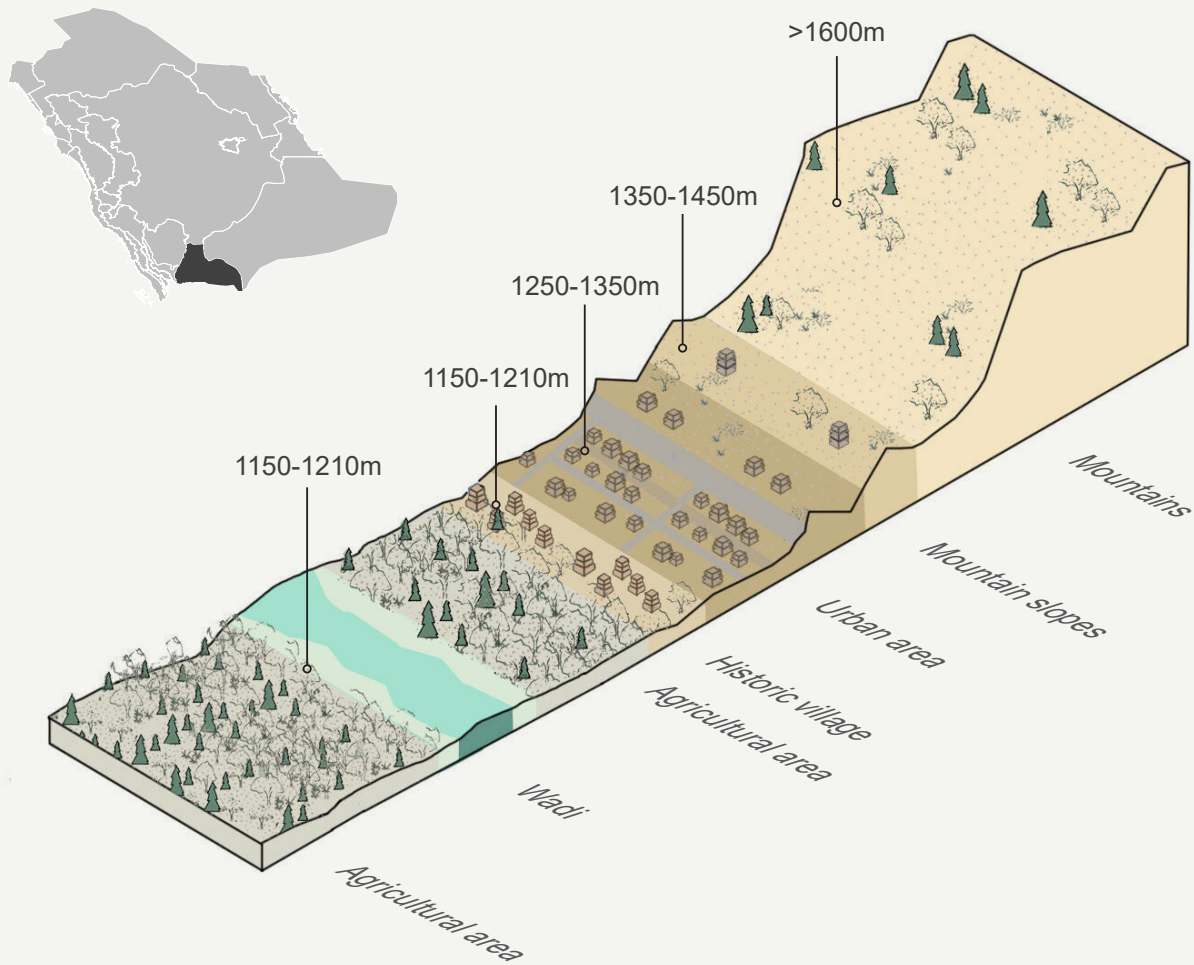


FIG.4 NAJРАН TOPOGRAPHY



### III Overview of Najran Architecture

A summary of the existing character of traditional architecture and settlements in Najran.

#### III.1 Architectural character

Najrani architecture is typically represented by its large turreted earthen towers. Historically, this vertical vernacular form was created to optimize the region's highly valuable and fertile landmass. The towers also provided a protective function for local inhabitants. Predominately built

using earth and locally sourced materials, the towers' architecture developed using innovative design solutions elements to protect the buildings from the harsh and varied climatic conditions inherent to the region, particularly flooding and water-run-off. This in turn, gave rise to the varied construction methodologies and subsequent building typologies identified as: Al Darb, Al-Moshoulq, Murab'a, Al-Mokadum and Qasabas.

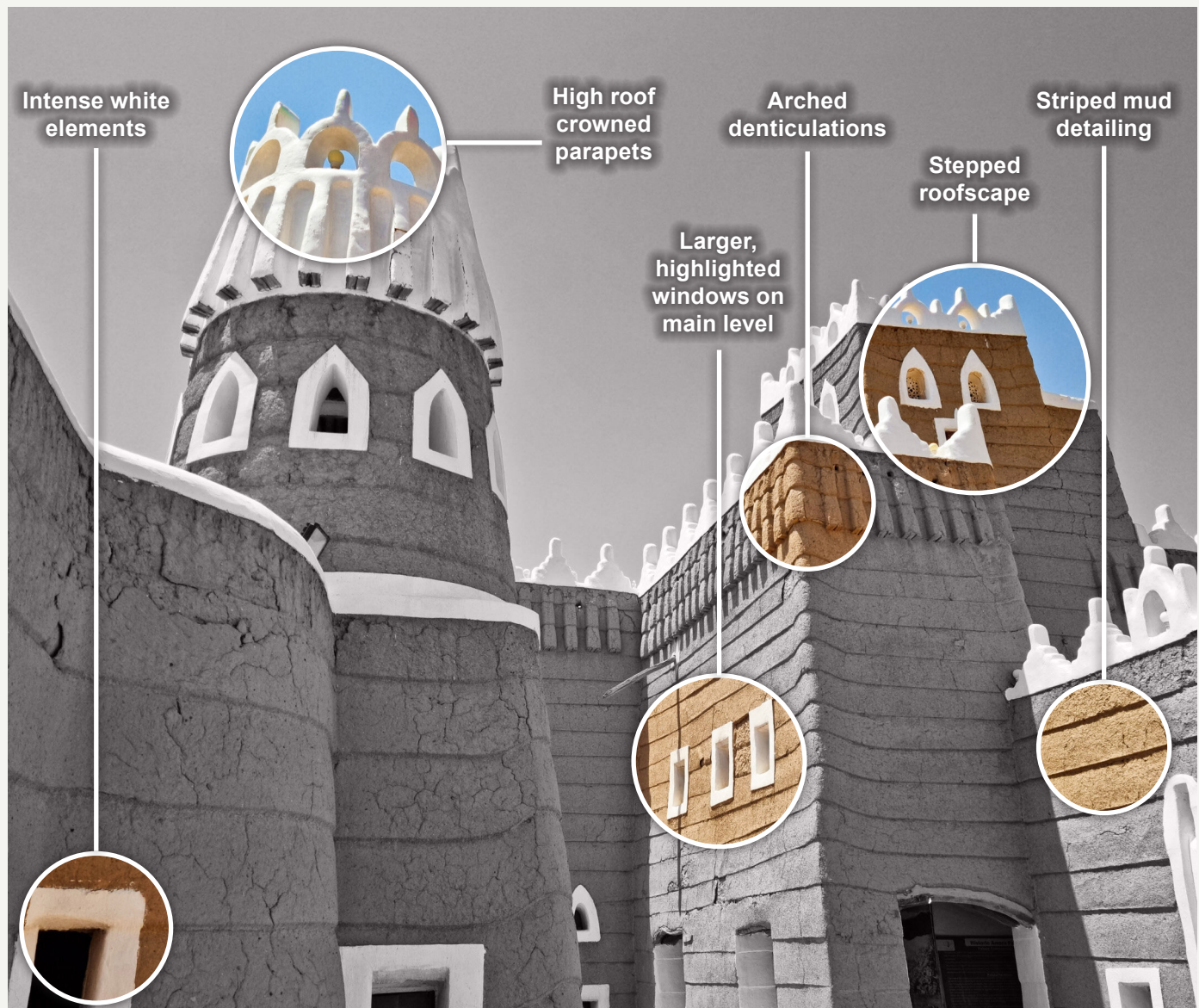


FIG.5 TYPICAL BUILDING FORM, AL EMARAH PALACE, NAJRAN



### III.2 Settlements character

The Najrani agrarian character responds organically to the shape of the wadi and agricultural requirement. The urban character within the valleys and Wadi follows a regular grid structure.

As the streetscapes move further from the wadi, they become more compact, and courtyards are introduced to infill voids and to determine relationships between buildings. Courtyards are also used by farmers as a place to maintain, secure and organize livelihood, harvest and tools.

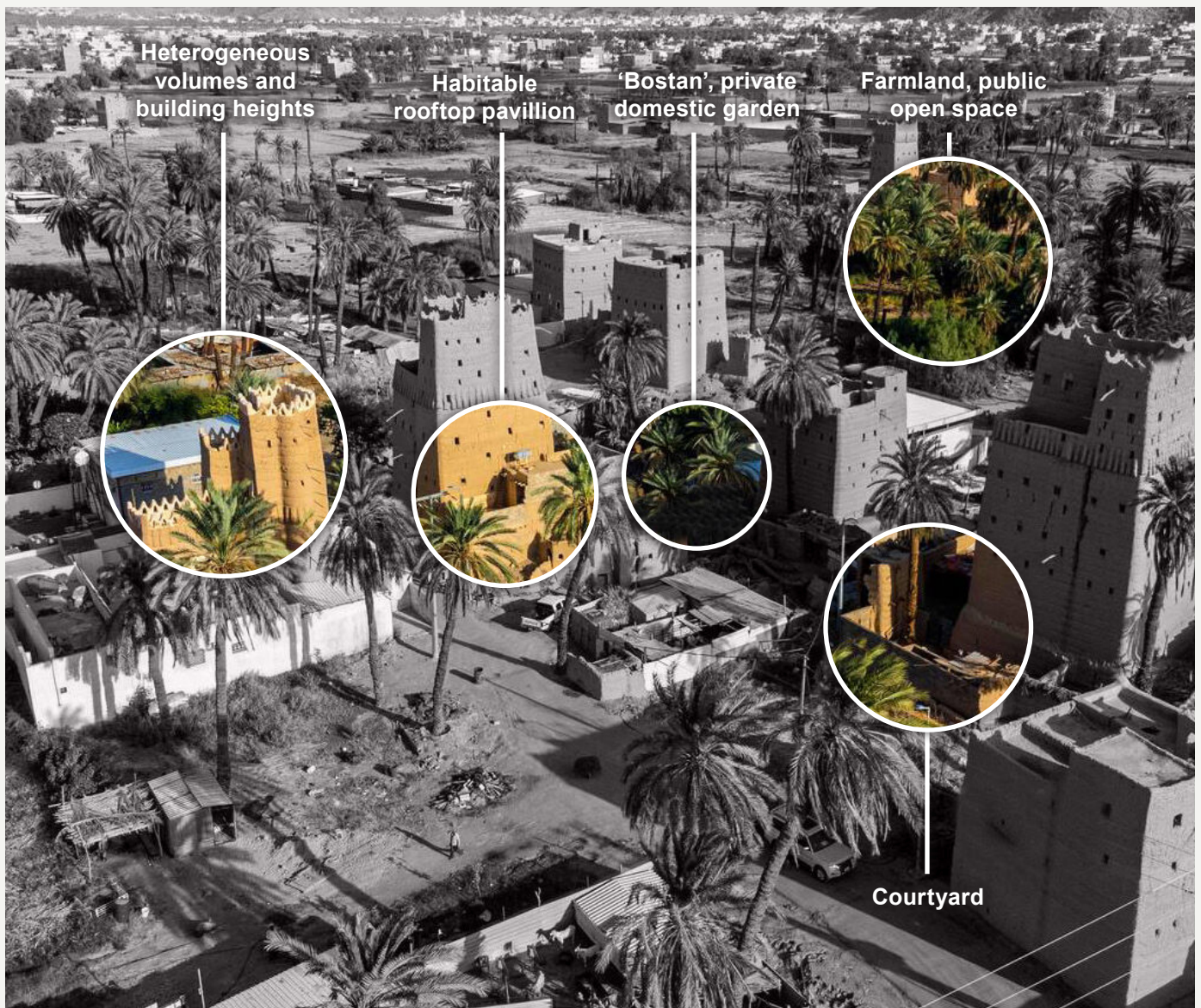


FIG.6 SETTLEMENT FORM, NAJRAN

## IV Analysis of Najran Architecture

The evidence and formal analysis upon which the guidelines are based.

### IV.1 General typologies

Vernacular buildings are typically comprised of simple stacked forms with small punched windows and decorated parapets.

Their size and height was limited by the materials used.

### IV.2 Aspect ratio

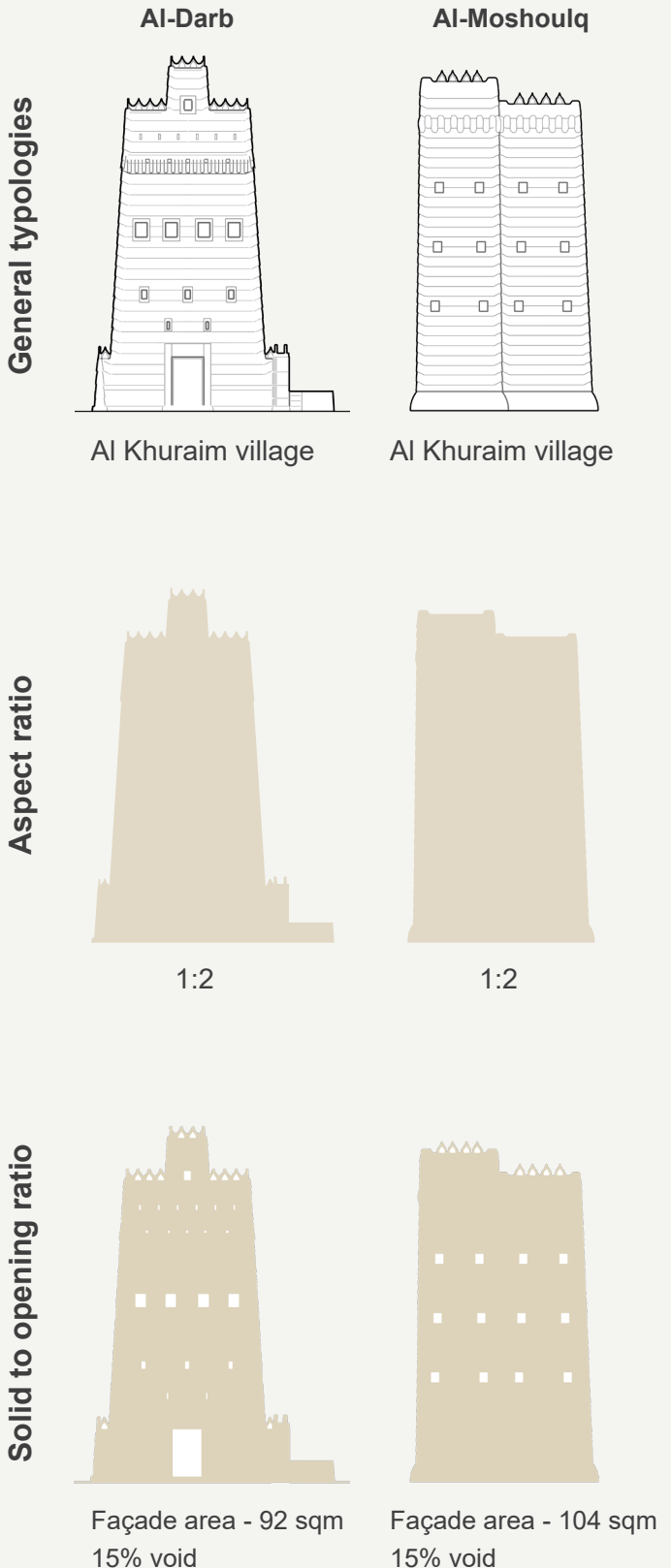
The proportions of vertical and horizontal massing define the relationship of vernacular architecture with each other and with the surrounding context.

To reach a building's required height, staircases are flanked by rooms. Often the width is determined by size of palm trunks, resulting in a building base of 9-12m and a height of 7-8 stories.

### IV.3 Solid to void ratio

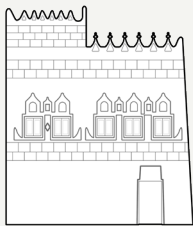
The correct mass to void ratio of a building establishes the correlation between solid surfaces and openings. These correct proportions are reflective of vernacular construction and differ between style and type of building.

Openings are limited by load and tend to have vertical proportion; therefore, the number and size of openings is generally limited at lower levels. Openings are predominately determined by use. In Najran, the ground floor is typically used for crop storage and stabling, as such windows are usually visible from the second storey.

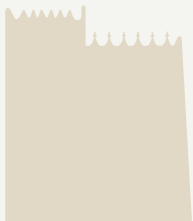


## Vernacular façade studies

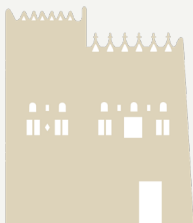
### Murab'a



Al Khuraim village

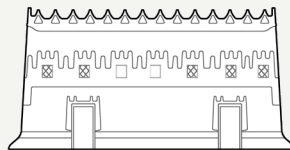


1:1



Façade area - 60 sqm  
20% void

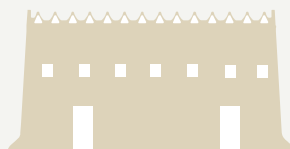
### Al-Mokadum



Al Khuraim village



2:1

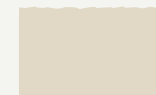


Façade area - 57 sqm  
20% void

### Qasaba



Habouna



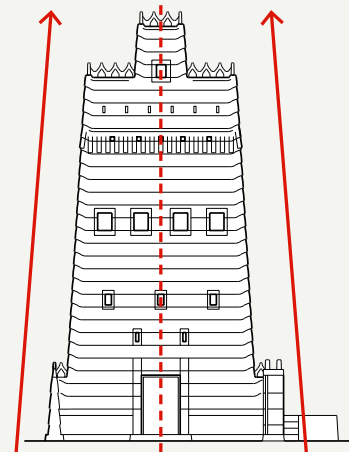
2:1.5



Façade area - 27 sqm  
6% void

#### IV.4 **Verticality**

Developed in thick mud, walls typically decrease as they gain height to ensure stability. This gives Najrani architecture its identifiable slanted facade silhouette.

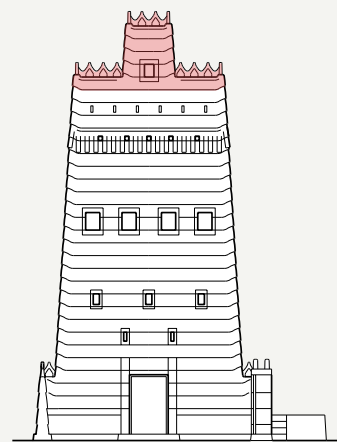


##### **Verticality**

Walls typically decrease as they gain height.

#### IV.5 **Roofscape**

It is commonplace on Najrani roofs to have an independent annex namely the “Kharajah” positioned on top of the building. The requirement for accessing rooftops, including maintenance means that the staircases typically continue beyond the last floor.



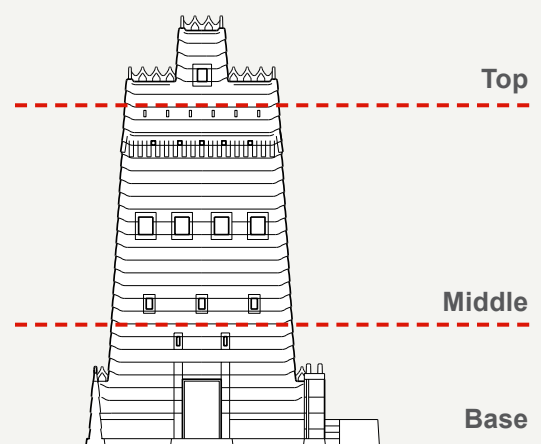
##### **Roofscape**

Most Najrani roofs have an independent annex.

#### IV.6 **Tripartite articulation**

Tripartite articulation is a typical feature of Najrani buildings. Façades are typically split into three separate tiers with their own distinct character:

- base - main entrances
- middle - windows and projecting elements.
- top - crenelation, vent holes and roofscape.

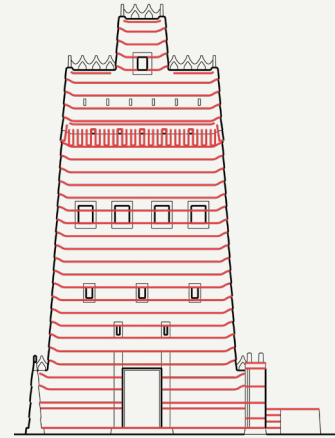


##### **Tripartite articulation**

Façades are typically split into three separate tiers - base, middle, and top.

#### IV.7 Horizontal articulation

Strong horizontal articulation is created by the highly identifiable base and banding of typical regional architecture. The base (“Haykal”) is a supportive foundation layer that provides protection from run-off waters and soil humidity. The horizontal banding or ‘Midmakh’ is a mud render designed to divert rainwater away from the walls. At the parapet edge are finials or “Sharashef”, referencing the historic battlements and defensive architecture.

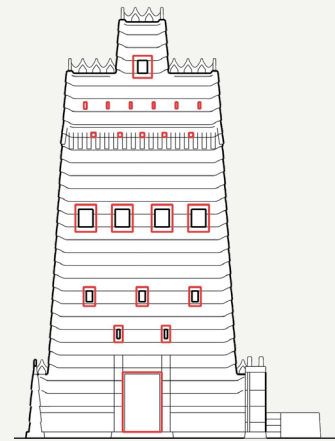


#### Horizontal articulation

A strong horizontal emphasis is achieved through distinct base and banding elements.

#### IV.8 Entrance and openings character

Traditional Najrani buildings have one single door located upon its axis of symmetry. Usually buttressed, to absorb the wall loads transmitted by the wooden lintels, and to form a welcome opening into the dwelling beyond, whilst providing protection to occupants at the threshold.

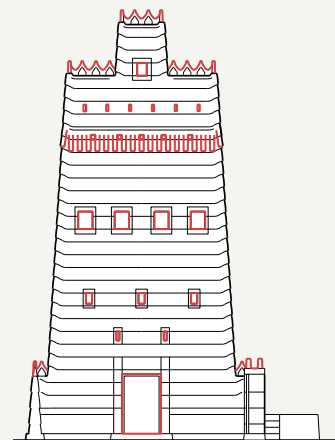


#### Entrance and opening character

Most Najrani buildings have one single door located upon its axis of symmetry.

#### IV.9 Ornamentation

Parapets and window openings are usually weatherproofed with a limestone render or finish. This practical and pervasive finish has now become one of the identifying elements and ornamental highlights of a typical Najrani building.



#### Ornamentation

Parapets and windows sealed with limestone serve as a decorative feature of Najrani buildings.



v **Evolution**

The connection of contemporary design with traditional forms to strengthen the architectural character of a place.

v.1 **Connecting past to future**

The guidelines aim to provide architectural roots for contemporary buildings so that they connect to their historical context, draw upon their local culture and reflect the spirit of a place.

At the same time, a balance between continuity and innovation is needed. Advances in construction technology, material science, patterns of development and specifications for new building uses require buildings that can accommodate these changes while preserving the essence of local architecture.

v.2 **Connecting environment to form**

The guidelines also aspire to connect buildings to their geography. Physical context has traditionally influenced the materials available, the patterns of development and the climate response required from architecture.

These environmental constraints have created a matrix of related, regional building typologies. The guidelines aim to provide a layer of stylistic influence to accentuate these regional building types into distinct characters that can be gathered into a diverse yet related national ‘family portrait’ of architectural character across the Kingdom.

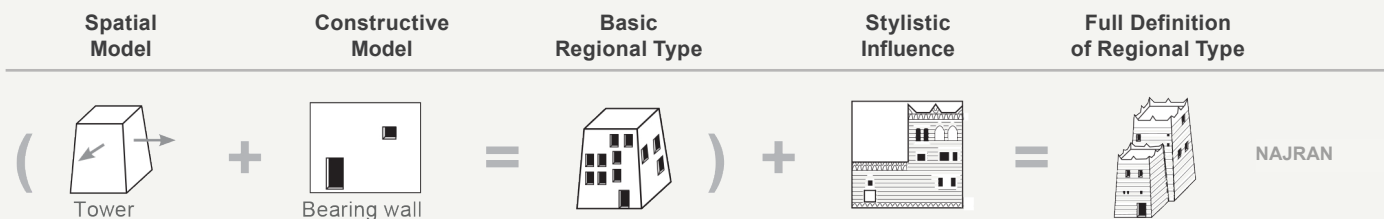
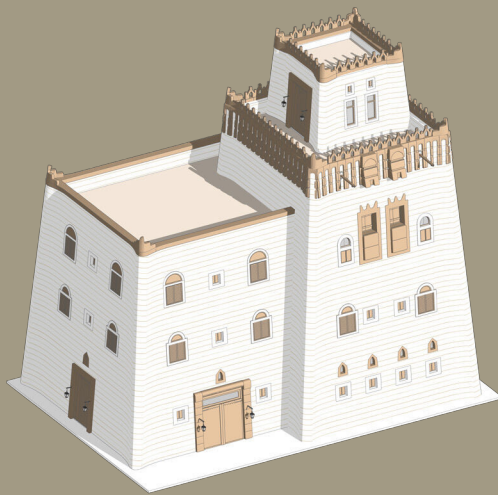


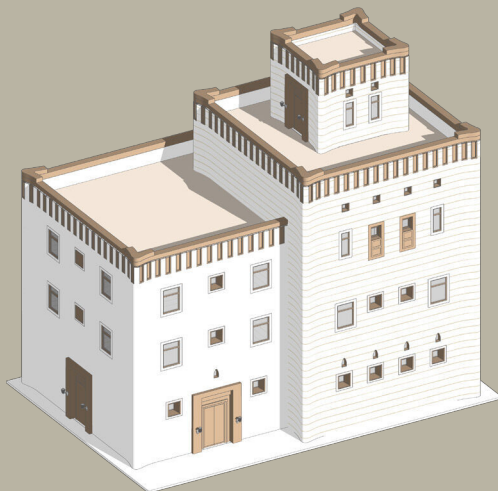
FIG. 7 Character Equation for Najran (after Ishteeaque & Al-Said 2008)



Traditional Style

## TRADITIONAL

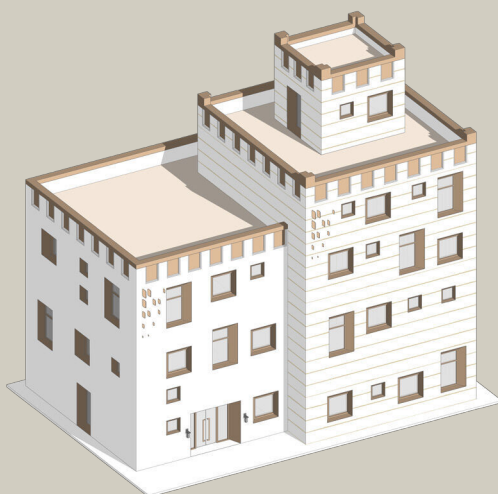
Small regularly placed windows, solid foundation (stone), courtyard entrance, thick tapering earth walls, irregular geometric profile. Towers, with small openings, crenelated parapets, triangular and banded patterning, sitting on a stone base.



Transitional Style

## TRANSITIONAL

Framed entrance, punctured window fenestrations, courtyard entrance and parapet treatments can be a blend of traditional and contemporary features. Stone base materiality retained; incorporated into courtyard wall and lower building levels.



Contemporary Style

## CONTEMPORARY

Window hierarchy of framed punched fenestrations. Verticality through stepping of building form to create terraces and a balanced overall mass. Entrance privacy via a courtyard. Modern materials and use of stone encouraged.

## VI How to use the guidelines

The guidelines have been organized to present the rules of architectural character in a clear, efficient and useful way.

### VI.1 Chapter organization

The first chapters sort the guidelines into different dimensions that help define architectural character:

- 1 **Key features** - The most essential characteristics for the architectural character.
- 2 **Composition** - The rules by which buildings are shaped and elements are related to one another.
- 3 **Elements** - The individual parts that are the building blocks of the architectural character.
- 4 **Material and color** - The prevalent materials used and color range found within the architectural character.
- 5 **Pattern** - Common motifs and patterns used in the traditional craftsmanship and material culture of the local character.

These chapters are followed by two sections focused on guideline implementation:

- 6 **Applying the architectural character** - Guidance for the proper interpretation and use of architectural style in new buildings.
- 7 **Worked examples** - Design studies that illustrate the use of architectural character at different scales and strengths.

The document concludes with:

- 8 **Public realm** - An overview of public realm character in Najran.

### VI.2 Guideline formatting

Individual guidelines are formatted graphically to make them more useful:

- 1 **Chapter number and heading** - Guidelines are gathered into major categories for ease of reference.
- 2 **Guideline number and heading** - Guidelines are given a unique 2-digit decimal number and heading for ease of reference and to provide precision in enforcement.
- 3 **General description** - Descriptive text to introduce the guideline topic.
- 4 **Guideline actions** - Instructions clearly identifying the actions to be taken by designers. Each action is numbered for ease of reference and to provide precision in enforcement.
- 5 **Rationale** - Set in colored text and highlighted by a side bar are the objectives and reasons for the guideline. This gives the applicant an opportunity to propose designs that meet the rationale through alternative ways. Alternatives require the approval of the relevant local authority.
- 6 **Illustrations** - Illustrations, photos and diagrams that help explain the guidelines. They are examples only: where contradictions arise between illustrations and guideline text, the text shall overrule the illustration.

The items above correspond to the figure on the facing page.



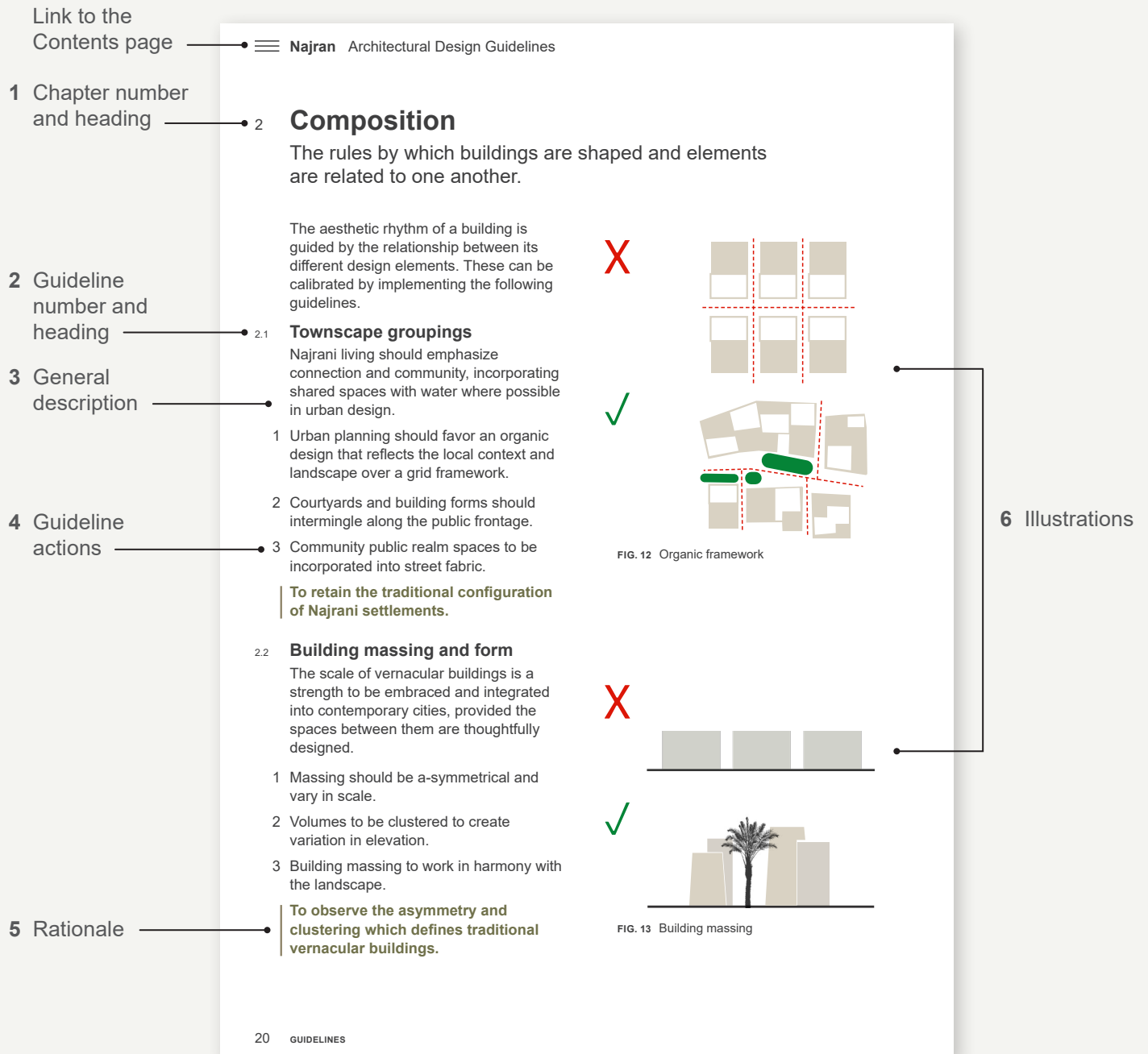


FIG. 8 Typical guideline structure

# GUIDELINES

## 1 Key features

The most important attributes essential for conveying the architectural character of Najran.

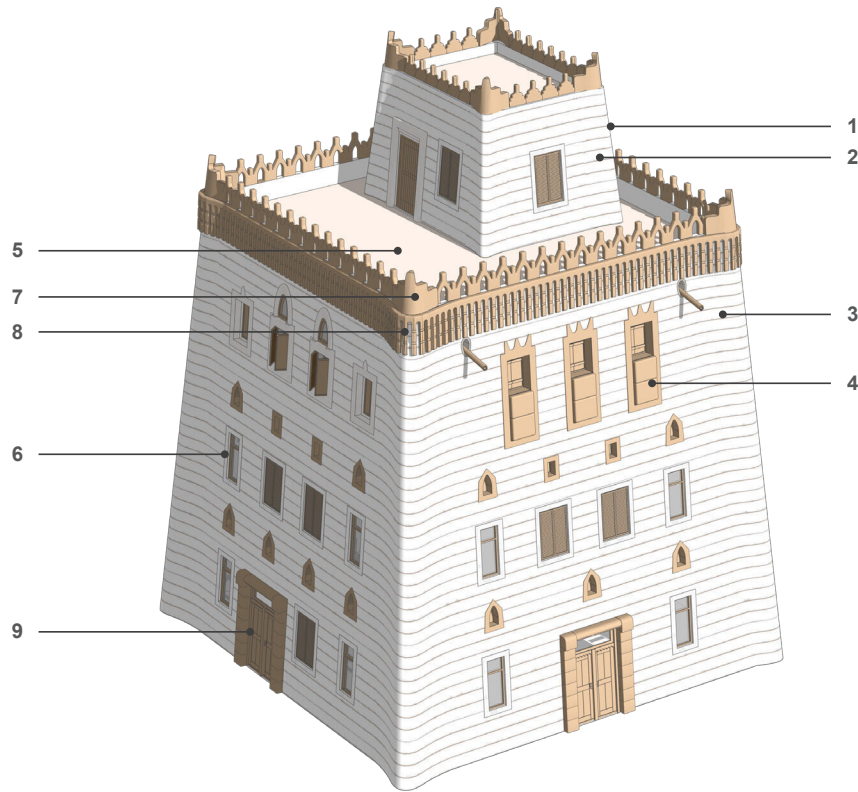


FIG. 9 Najran key features

### Key features:

- 1 Verticality: Slender vertical volumes with multiple horizontal bands running across the entire tapering structure.
- 2 Stepped volumes: Non-leveled building silhouettes, upper level volumes decompose to create a stepped roofscape.
- 3 Horizontal articulation: Striped mud detailing along all façades.
- 4 Opening hierarchy: Larger windows on upper levels and highlighted windows on main floors, both of which are framed.
- 5 Living outdoor spaces: Courtyards and rooftops act as additional living rooms
- 6 General palette: Intense white elements highlighted among prevailing earth tones
- 7 Iconic elements: Strip facades raised at corners, crowned parapets, buttressed doors and framed windows
- 8 Parapets: High roof parapets, crowned and raised at corners.
- 9 Entrances: Entrances are tall, wide and buttressed.



Al Emarah Palace

FIG. 10 Example of Najran architecture



Al-Aan Palace

FIG. 11 Example of Najran architecture

1.1

## Character summary

As contextual and socio-economic factors change, so does the architectural 'design' requirements. Over time, Najran's predominant economy of agriculture and farming have diminished and been replaced by new industrial drivers. Subsequently, the architectural requirements have changed. Buildings such as the defensive towers have become obsolete, so large courtyards within dense urban contexts have been deemed uneconomical.

Many key historic elements of Najrani vernacular architecture remain relevant and require restitution, preservation, or enhancement to maintain practical design interventions and a connection to local heritage and culture.

One key element is the verticality of buildings. In a contemporary context, verticality doesn't always mean height; subtle vertical elements and stepped mass can convey this architectural characteristic.

Similarly, horizontal articulation created by foundational bases, striped facades, raised corners and crowned parapets can be achieved in contemporary architecture by reinterpreting them with subtle, contemporary design interventions and materiality. The hierarchy of openings, recessed doors, and framed windows at elevated levels can also be reimagined in contemporary ways to strengthen architectural and cultural character.

Courtyards, roofs and outdoor spaces remain highly relevant spaces for residents. These cherished, social spaces are a key opportunity to explore new contemporary urban design that is rooted in local tradition.

## 2 Composition

The rules by which buildings are shaped and elements are related to one another.

The aesthetic rhythm of a building is guided by the relationship between its different design elements. These can be calibrated by implementing the following guidelines.

### 2.1 Townscape groupings

Najrani living should emphasize connection and community, incorporating shared spaces with water where possible in urban design.

- 1 Urban planning should favor an organic design that reflects the local context and landscape over a grid framework.
- 2 Courtyards and building forms should intermingle along the public frontage.
- 3 Community public realm spaces to be incorporated into street fabric.

**To retain the traditional configuration of Najrani settlements.**

### 2.2 Building massing and form

The scale of vernacular buildings is a strength to be embraced and integrated into contemporary cities, provided the spaces between them are thoughtfully designed.

- 1 Massing should be a-symmetrical and vary in scale.
- 2 Volumes to be clustered to create variation in elevation.
- 3 Building massing to work in harmony with the landscape.

**To observe the asymmetry and clustering which defines traditional vernacular buildings.**

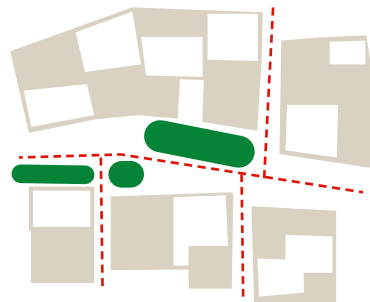
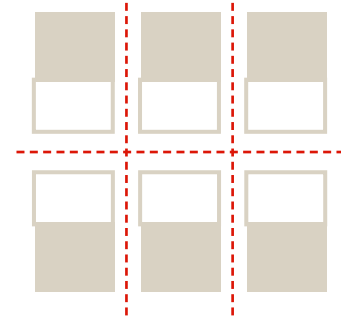


FIG. 12 Organic framework

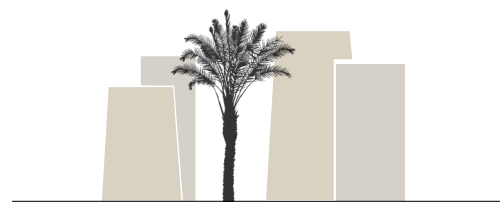


FIG. 13 Building massing



### 2.3 Width-to-height ratio

Employ the prescribed proportions to maintain a cohesive understanding of traditional structures.

- 1 The overall proportion of the building should be higher than it is wide.
- 2 The width-to-height ratio of the whole building should range between 1:1 to 1:1.5.
- 3 The proportions of the secondary groups can be followed to assemble the final width-to-height ratio of the overall structure.

**To ensure that the symmetry and proportions of the building embody the essence of traditional sources.**

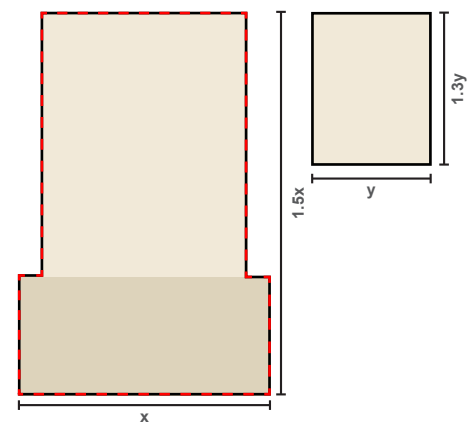


FIG. 14 Width to height ratio of whole structure is 1:1 to 1:1.5

### 2.4 Parapet character

Parapets should be articulated and stand out to frame the top of the building facade.

- 1 Parapets can be used to enhance the verticality of the building.
- 2 Parapet details should read as horizontal elements.

**To incorporate the typical decorative elements of traditional settlements.**

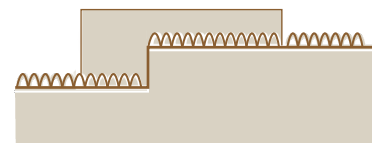


FIG. 15 Parapet character

## 2.5 Opening hierarchy and vertical organization

Openings require a differentiation of prominence.

- 1 Entrances should be highlighted.
- 2 Windows should be reflective of the floor and room configurations within.
- 3 Using various sizes, ornamental techniques such as crafted framework, colour or texture can help to give the openings hierarchy.

**To observe the varied arrangement and clear articulation of openings which defines traditional vernacular buildings.**



FIG. 16 Opening hierarchy

## 2.6 Ground floor articulation

A traditional layout should be used for isolated buildings with courtyards. This condition works well in small blocks and should contain:

- 1 Shared courtyards and Bostan.
- 2 Alleys to connect neighbors.
- 3 Celebrated entrance/opening.
- 4 Small/minimal opening to public facing facades.
- 5 Buildings which are connected to their boundary wall (not offset on all sides).

**To retain the traditional configuration of Najrani settlements.**

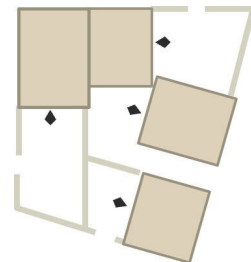
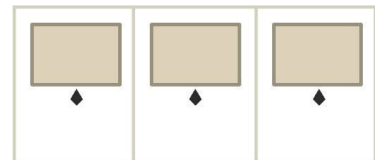


FIG. 17 General layout and base condition

## 2.7 Projections or recesses

External recesses and projections have a large visual impact and therefore must be sensitively designed.

- 1 Recessed openings and projecting element should be used to reinforce the tripartite articulation of the building and the opening hierarchy.
- 2 Recessed openings and projecting elements that assist minimizing direct solar gain on glazing and facades is encouraged.

**To demonstrate local character and provide favorable internal conditions.**

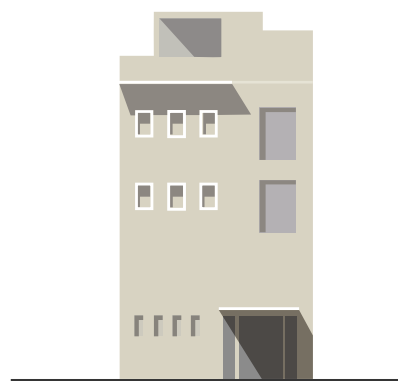











FIG. 18 Projections or recesses

### 3 Elements







The individual parts that are the building blocks of Najran architecture.

TAB. 1 Najran architectural elements




GENERAL ELEMENTS		
	<b>Key characteristics</b>	Refer to "1 Key features" on page 18.
	<b>Building proportion</b>	The ratio of building width to building height. New buildings may be more horizontal in proportion as part of the townscape, however where possible they should remain vertical, and create clear vertical and stepping articulation between courtyard, base, middle and top.
	<b>Window-to-wall %</b>	The percentage of building facade containing openings, projecting windows, or entrances. Should have relatively small windows, large areas of solid wall. Up to 30 - 40% maximum of the facade is openings. Openings should be protected from direct solar radiation.
	<b>Opening proportions</b>	The ratio of opening width to opening height should range from 1:1 to 1:2.5. The composition should be formal and symmetrical, with a clear order, and the openings should generally be vertical.
	<b>Composition</b>	Opening hierarchy should be considered to articulate overall composition of building. Consider privacy - smaller openings at lower levels. If larger opening required, these should be recessed within an arcade to enhance privacy. Larger openings in mid-levels, reducing in size at the top.
BASE ELEMENTS		
	<b>Base</b>	Base should be distinctive. Depending on overall building size and construction method, the base may be characterized by as much as the first 1 - 3 storeys of the building above ground.
	<b>Shop fronts</b>	Retail or commercial façades should typically be located at the ground level and should not comprise of any external surface-mounted and unhoused rolling shutters. Architecturally integrated and concealed rolling shutters should be permitted.
	<b>Entrances</b>	Entrances should form part of a symmetrical composition with the overall building silhouette and adjacent to courtyard entrance.
	<b>Curtilage</b>	Urban furniture, lighting, green areas, and water features should be integrated into the surrounding areas of the building. These elements should emphasize the Najran style by using locally sourced materials, ornamental patterns, native plants, or locally-inspired architectural features and details that merge into the main façade.






## MIDDLE ELEMENTS

	<b>Wall articulation</b>	Horizontal banding should be noticeable. Banding may be used to differentiate base, mid and top of the building, expressed by materiality, pattern and/or colour changes. Openings should be evenly ordered in legible bays.
	<b>Openings and windows</b>	Openings should be evenly ordered in legible bays and their hierarchy considered. Window and opening design are subject to a large number of compositional guidelines. See expanded guideline “E3.3.1 Windows and openings” on page 28.
	<b>Projecting elements</b>	The entrance bays and arcades can project in front of the main façade, so long as they maintain within the plot boundary. It is important this should not adversely affect circulation or safety in the public realm.
	<b>Recessed elements</b>	Recessed entrances, arcades, or overhangs should be set inwards from the building façade, extending the access or perception of the public realm inside the plot boundary.
	<b>Shutters and shading</b>	Shutters should follow the vernacular language as illustrated within this section. Frequently, in the region they are built into the walls to facilitate the airflow between the exterior and the dwelling.
	<b>Corner features</b>	Found at square corners or other junctions, corner features can be used to assist in architectural way finding, create ‘urban marker’ buildings with increased in height at the corner, mark main entrances, and provide variation in the street wall height.

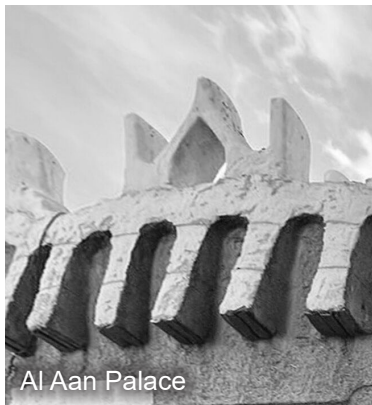
## TOP ELEMENTS

	<b>Roofscape</b>	Roofscapes must be accessible for maintenance and where possible, activated to provide a greater connection between the private internal space and the external context. Utilization of roof spaces as outdoor rooms, at cooler times, is encouraged.
	<b>Rooftop elements</b>	‘Kharjah’ independent annex creates a typical stepped back volume and should be set back from the parapet/building facade. It generally is constructed from a lighter material. Traditionally used as a relaxation space, it is the connection between the roof area and the internal building. Where building plant is located on the roof it should be set back or enclosed so as not to be visible from the public realm.
	<b>Parapets</b>	Parapets extend the perimeter wall above roof level and should read horizontally with balustrade ornamentation, cornices, or materially continuous with the wall below. Parapets are typically low in height and can also act as a safety feature for the roofscape.

## OTHER ELEMENTS AND ORNAMENTATION

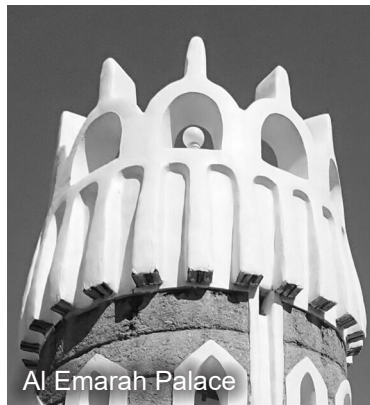
	<b>Materiality</b>	See expanded guideline “4 Colors and Materials” on page 32.
	<b>Colour</b>	See expanded guideline “4 Colors and Materials” on page 32.
	<b>Pattern</b>	See expanded guideline “5 Patterns” on page 34.

## Top



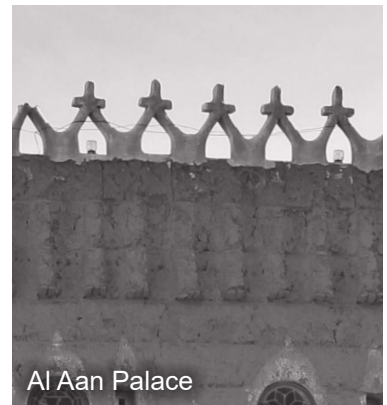
Al Aan Palace

Traditional parapet denticulations



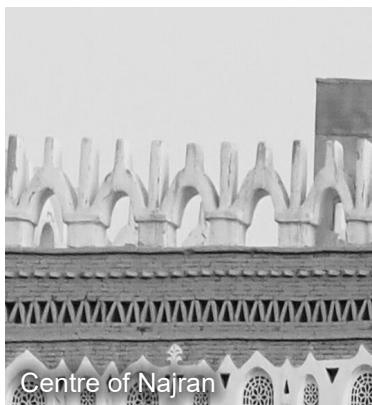
Al Emarah Palace

Arched parapet with denticulations



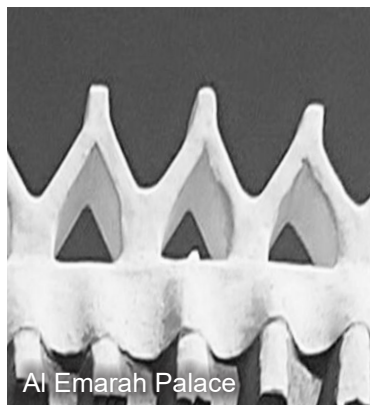
Al Aan Palace

Traditional parapet denticulations



Centre of Najran

Traditional rooftop element



Al Emarah Palace

Traditional rooftop element



Al Khuraim village

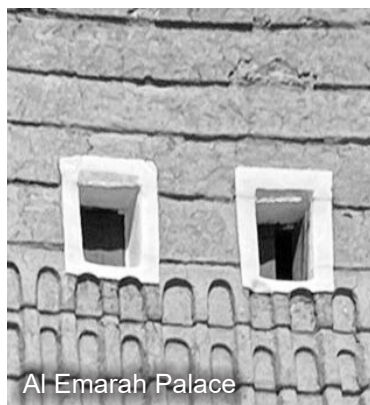
Traditional rooftop element

## Middle



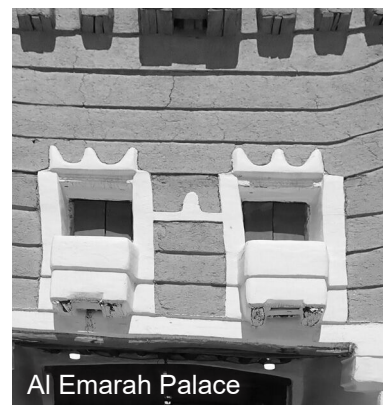
Al Aan Palace

Arched denticulations



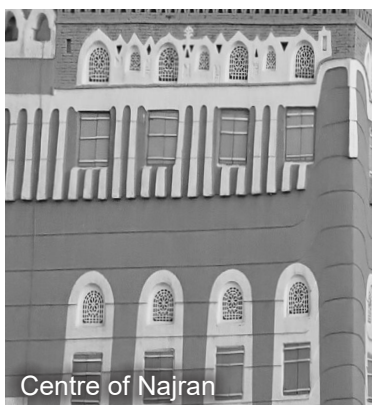
Al Emarah Palace

Typical windows



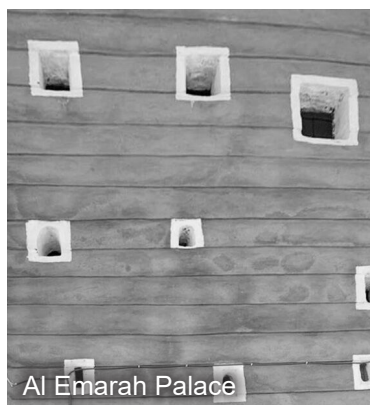
Al Emarah Palace

Typical fenestration



Centre of Najran

Horizontally articulated fenestration



Al Emarah Palace

Discretely articulated fenestration



Al Hamra Palace

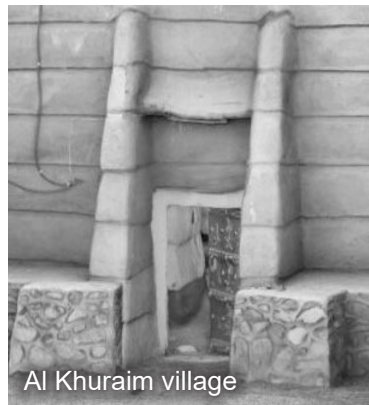
White framed windows



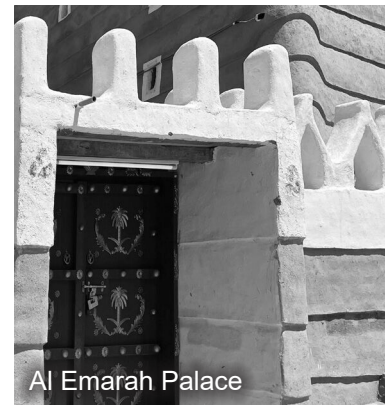
## Base



Najran centre  
Typical entrance



Al Khuraim village  
Ornamented projecting entrance frame



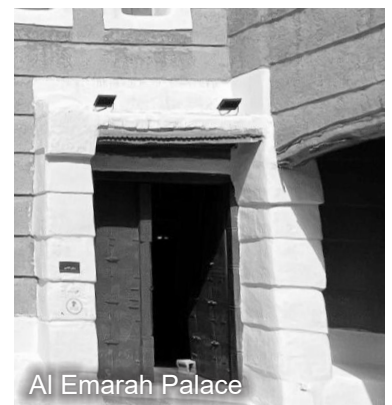
Al Emarah Palace  
Typical projecting entrance frame



Al Emarah Palace  
Traditional projecting frame details

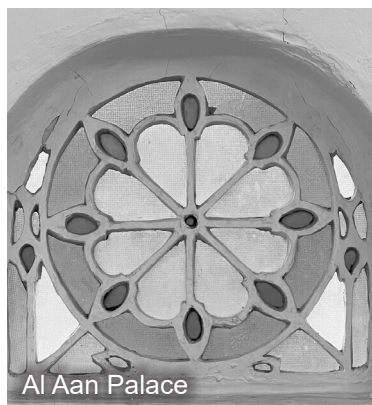


Al Emarah Palace  
Entrance details

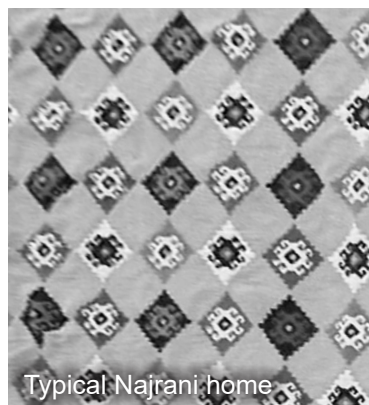


Al Emarah Palace  
Shop front

## Ornaments and other elements



Al Aan Palace  
Stained glass window



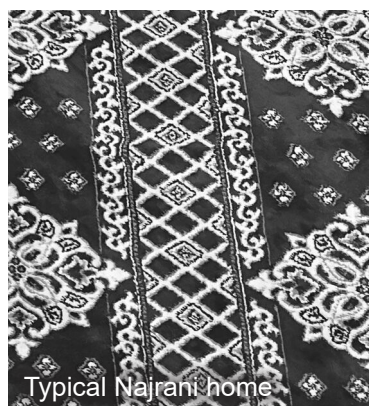
Typical Najrani home  
Carpet patterning



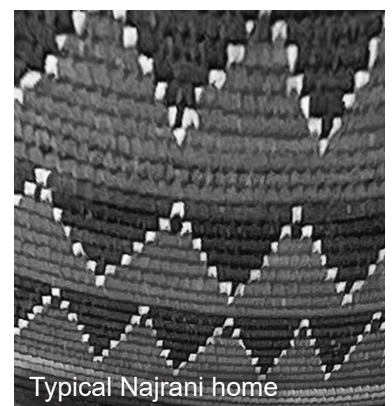
Typical Najrani home  
Wooden carved doors



Typical Najrani home  
Patterned furnishings



Typical Najrani home  
Ornate crafts



Typical Najrani home  
Patterned crafts

### 3.1 Tripartite articulation

Najrani architecture is characterized by distinguishing the base, middle and top sections. The base is usually extendable, while the middle section should feature larger openings capped with a horizontal element or traditional denticulations and the top section should have the option to extend multiple floors. This tripartite articulation is also characterized by a decomposition in the building's volume and through its different elements.

The following elements characterize the different parts of the building:

- 1 A parapet along the wall of the entrance for ornamentation and horizontality continuing the crowning of the entrance.
- 2 Small windows on the lower part of the middle section to cater for interior privacy.
- 3 Larger windows as a horizontal band on the middle section for interior lighting, which are usually the highest and largest row of windows in this section.
- 4 A parapet along the middle section for ornamentation which features crowned crenelations and varying denticulations.
- 5 A horizontal band of small windows on the top section to emphasize horizontality.
- 6 A crowned parapet on the top section to frame the building.

**To reflect traditional Najrani tripartite articulation, architectural elements should be considered in different ways according to the base, middle and top.**

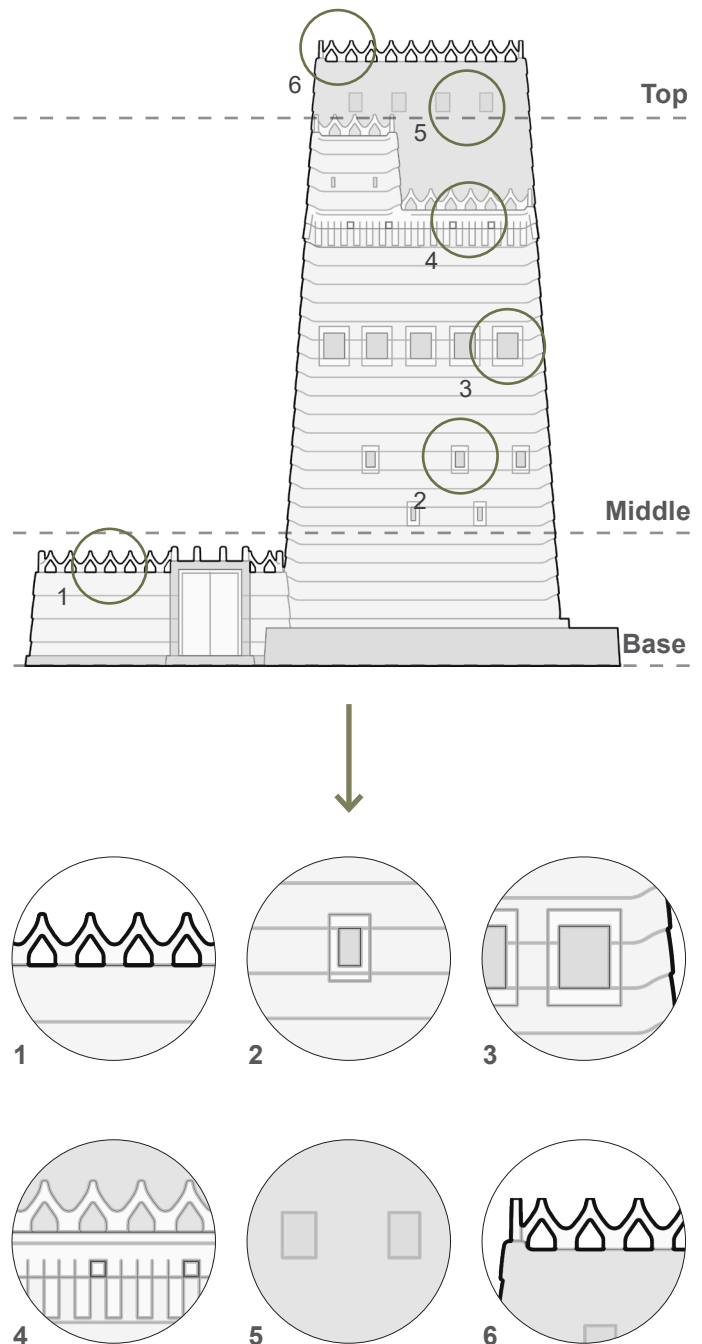


FIG. 19 Tripartite articulation elevations

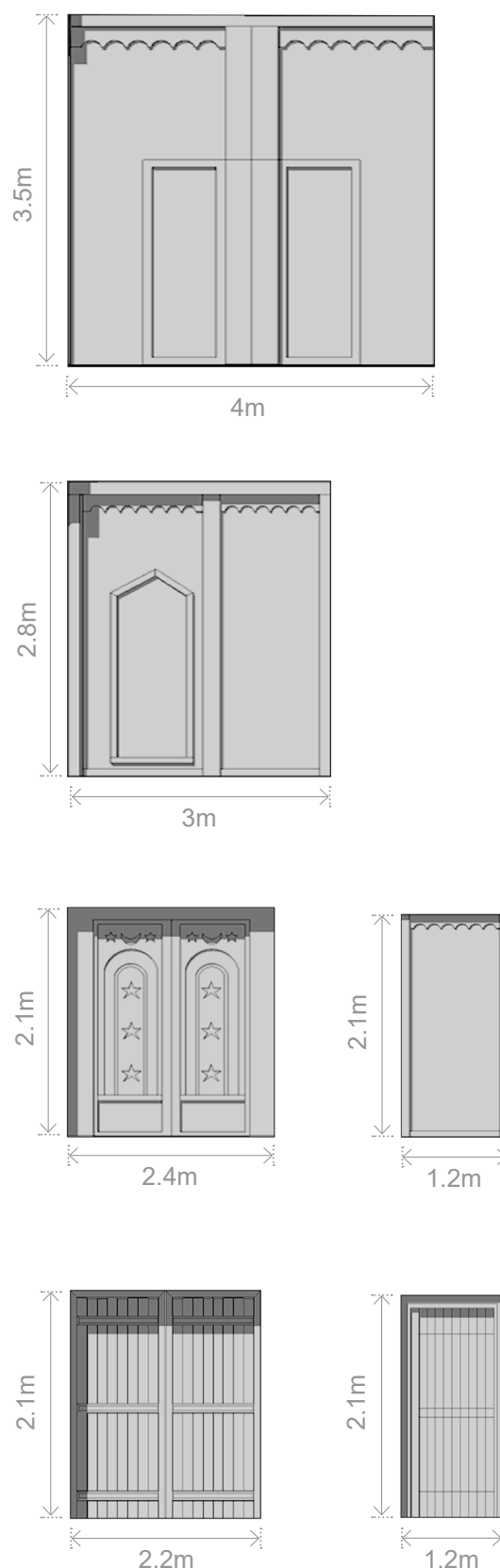
### 3.2 Doorways and entrances

Entrances within Najrani architecture are usually prominent and richly decorated elements.

The following design elements should be considered:

- 1 Entrances should be a focal point of the building, scale and proportion should be adapted to building use either domestic, commercial, or public.
- 2 Entrances and doorways should contain a shading element, if located on a significant route or within the public realm the use of an arcade is recommended to enhance comfort and promote a more walkable cityscape.
- 3 Entrances should incorporate sub-elements from traditional architecture such as buttresses, carvings or relief work or traditional ornamentation.

**To reflect traditional composition and local architecture.**



**FIG. 20** Traditional door elements

### 3.3 Windows and openings

The opening elements on the walls and facade of the building. The following design considerations should be made:

- 1 Windows and openings should try and associate with the internal rooms, dictating the size, order, rhythm and distribution of fenestrations on the external envelope. Openings can follow the proportions of the traditional facade or break away.
- 2 Considerations should be made for integrating openings with the banding of the facade. Other elements from traditional architecture such as surrounding frames or shutters can also be incorporated.
- 3 Fanlights, including arched and triangular frames are more common on the upper floors. Particularly the level of the kharjah. Options for use of larger windows on the ground floor can be explored if privacy screens or designs are incorporated.
- 4 Large amounts of glazing exposed to sun rays, that will result in overheating of the building, are prohibited.

**To reflect traditional facade articulation and local architecture, these considerations to the openings and windows of new development should be followed.**

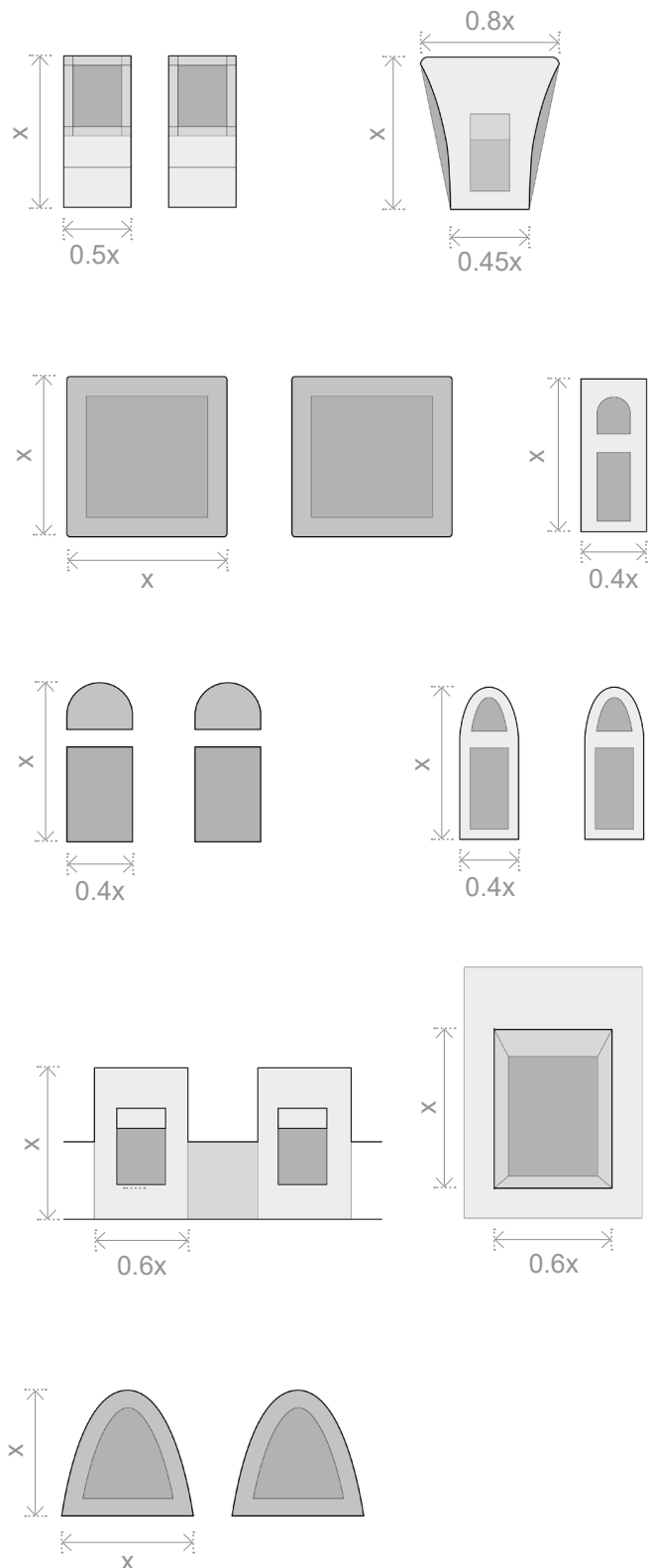


FIG. 21 Traditional window elements

### 3.4 Roofscape perimeter & parapet detail

Parapets provide privacy for outdoor living spaces of the building, while its rich ornamentation of crenelations and decorative banding creates an emblematic feature of Najran, which people immediately associate with the area.

The following design considerations should be made for crowning:

- 1 Kharjah or additional stories might appear at the top of buildings over time, these elements mark the cap of the building and should be articulated through a change in material or texture.
- 2 Opaque or continuous elements should not be used. Depths of protrusions, recesses, element and spacing scale, to be explored.
- 3 Colour and materiality of the parapet element might contrast with predominant textures of the facade.

**To reflect traditional roof treatment and local architecture, these considerations to the crowning elements and parapet application of new development should be followed.**

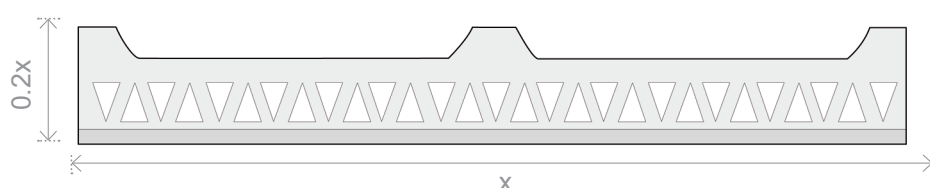
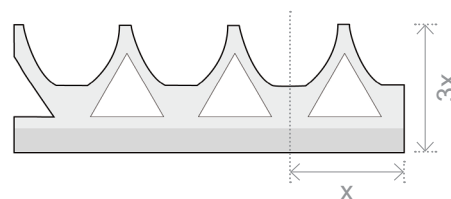
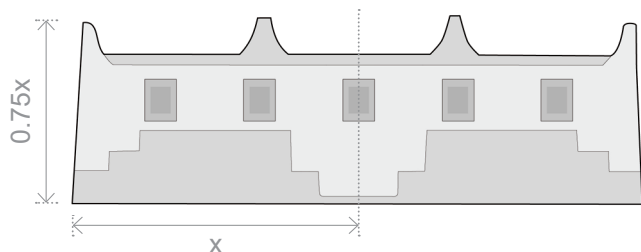
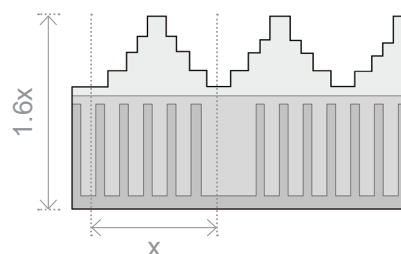
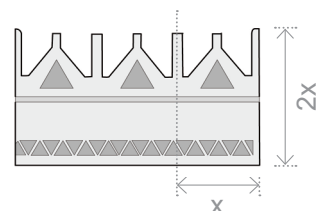
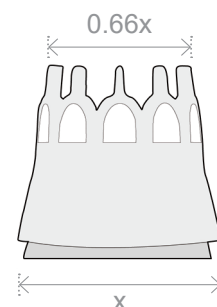
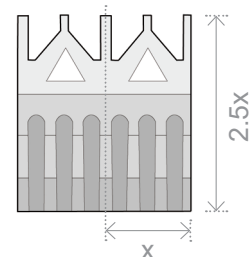


FIG. 22 Traditional parapet details



## 4 Colors and materials

The prevalent materials used and color range found within the architecture of Najran.

Utilizing a unified material and color scheme strengthens the architectural character and contributes to a harmonious and unique urban aesthetic. The following recommendations should be applied in Najran architectural character:

- 1 Use the main color palette for the main building bulk.
- 2 Shades ranging from golden yellow to brown are designated for the majority of the building's massing, while tones spanning from white to ivory are intended to accentuate architectural details, such as parapet edges and window frames.
- 3 Accent colors should be used for up to 5% of the external building colour. To be used on items such as window shutter or frames, doors and door frames.
- 4 Materials used should be derived from the traditional buildings, inclusive of adobe walls and brickwork, stone walls, light colored gypsum finishes to frames and openings or crenelations, as well as decorative colored shutters and doors.

**The intention of this guideline is to create homogeneous colour palette, while enabling creative expression using accent colors.**



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





Al Emarah Palace



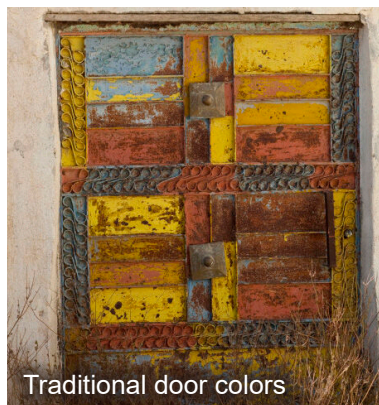
Najran mud houses



House in Allajam Village



Stained glass window



Traditional door colors



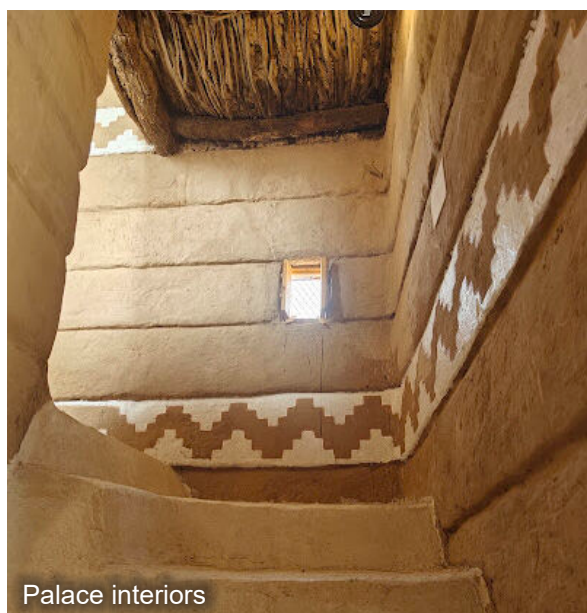
Traditional door colors



Painted blue windows



Traditional weaving



Palace interiors



Traditional carved doors

FIG.23 **COLORS AND MATERIALS**



## 5 Patterns

Common motifs and patterns used in the traditional craftsmanship and material culture of Najran.

The patterns associated with the Najran style are mainly extrusions within the adobe walls. Carved ornamentation is also present to window shutters and entrance doors.

It is the analysis and processing of pattern that yields an opportunity for a new language, all the while still grounded to its source.

In Najran, the images here reflect examples of a pattern process study that can be applied in a similar way to new architecture

- 1 Ensure patterns are derived from a traditional pattern source.
- 2 Patterns to maintain one motif form. So not to mix motif styles.
- 3 Use depth, solid and line work when abstracting patterns.
- 4 Materiality of patterns to be suitable for the pattern and in keeping with Najran materiality.
- 5 Color can be carefully used to highlight pattern details, particularly for window shutters, doors and frames.

**The intention of this guideline is to encourage use of patterning, guided by traditional motifs.**

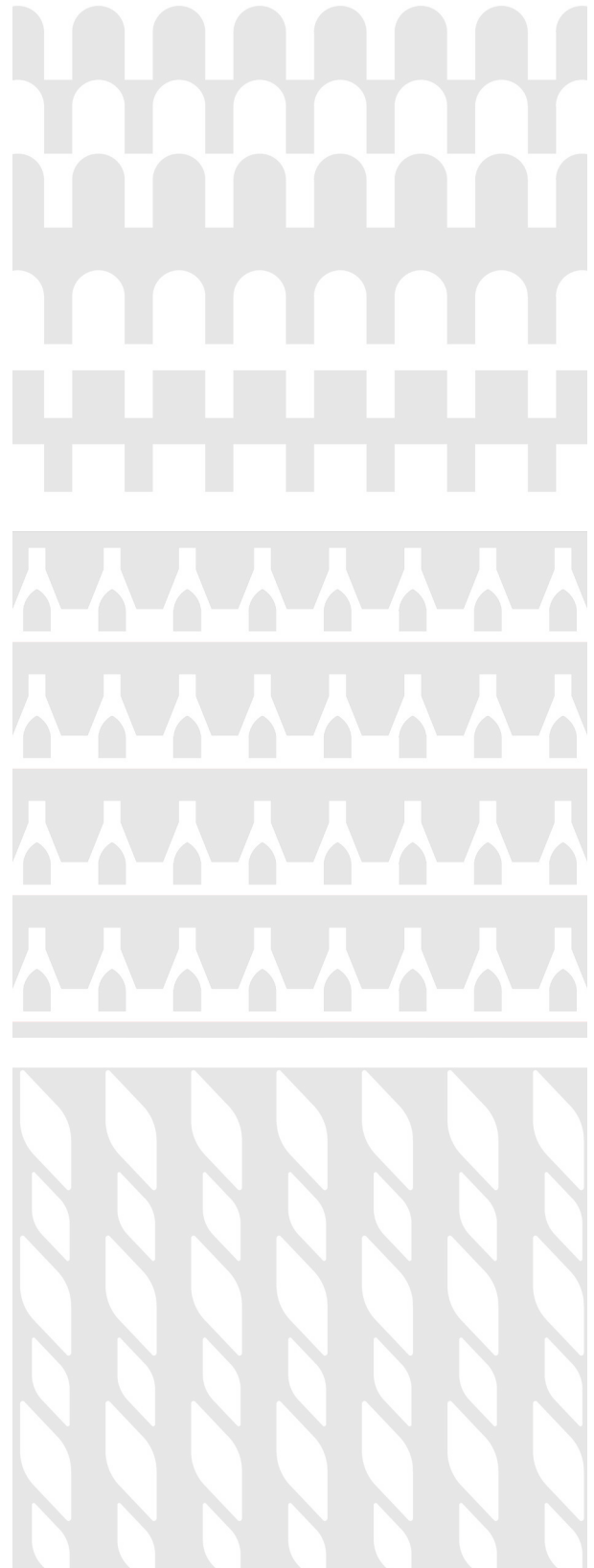


FIG. 24 Patterns abstraction

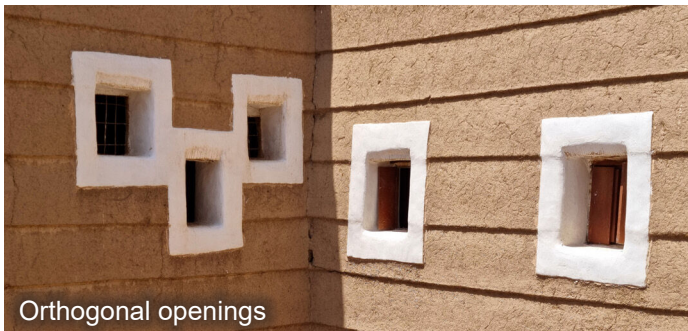




Curved arches on traditional building



Traditional carved shutter



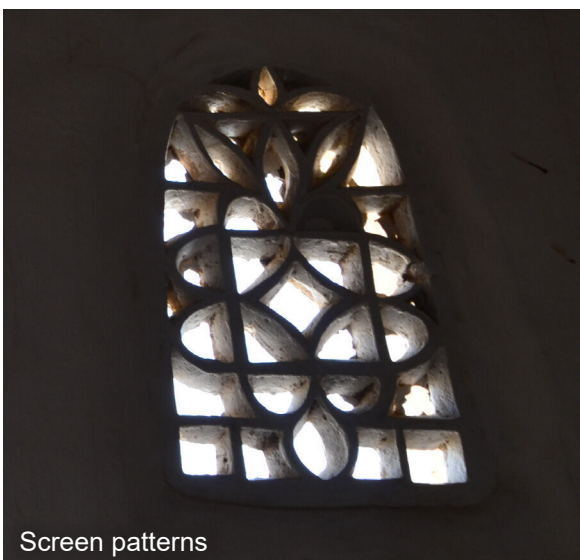
Orthogonal openings



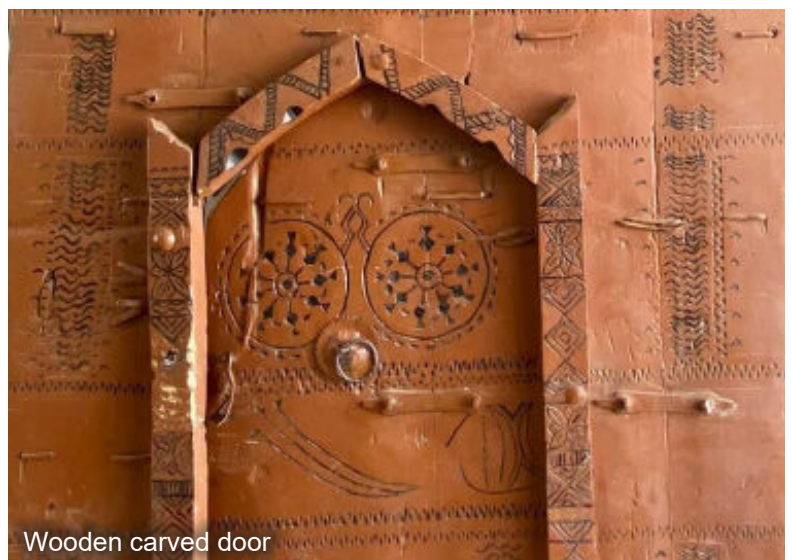
Traditional window pattern



Najran traditional building



Screen patterns



Wooden carved door

FIG.25 PATTERNS



## 6 Applying the architectural character

Guidance for the careful interpretation and application of architectural character to contemporary developments.

### 6.1 Interpretation

Good application of architectural character does not mean direct copying of historical examples. Their contemporary use should involve interpretation: a selective emphasis of characteristics to create meaning and beauty in its new context. Designers can selectively use formal characteristics such as:

- Color (hue, tonality, tint).
- Shape (figure, outline, 2-D geometry).
- Form (volume, 3-D geometry).
- Texture (physical surface quality).
- Line (verticals, horizontals, diagonals, zigzags, curves, dashes, etc.).
- Value (lightness to darkness).

Interpreted elements can be further transformed in the way they relate to one another. Designers can play with compositional rules such as:

- Balance (equality or harmony of parts).
- Contrast (difference of parts).
- Emphasis (strengthening of parts).
- Movement (change, directionality).
- Pattern (repetition, symmetry).
- Rhythm (even and uneven spacing).
- Unity/variety (degrees of variation).

Designing with architectural characters is an interpretive art, an effort to express the spirit and essence of the original architecture in new yet familiar ways.

**To encourage contextually sensitive contemporary design.**

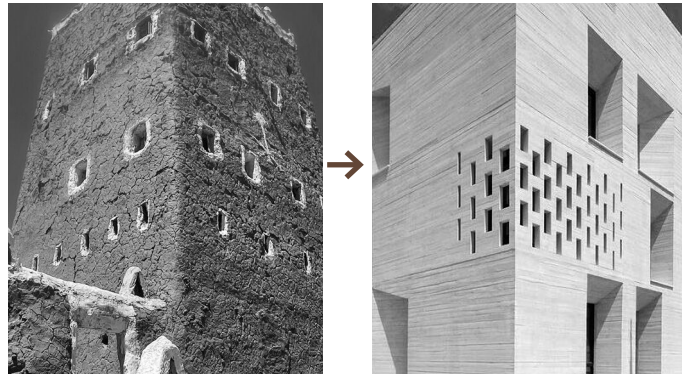


FIG. 26 Example of facade articulation abstraction\*



FIG. 27 Example of ornamentation abstraction\*

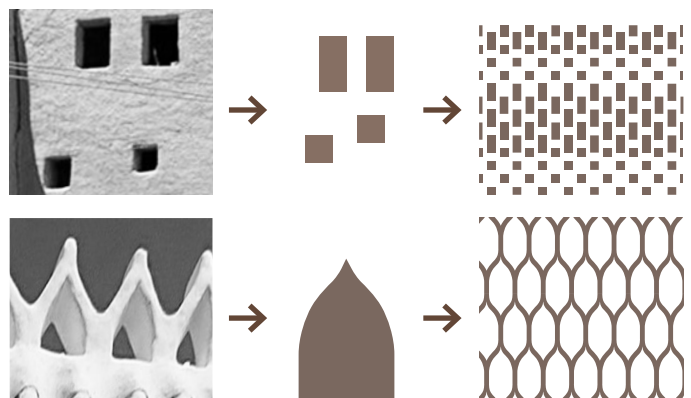


FIG. 28 Examples of pattern abstraction

\*Note: Diagrams in this chapter are for explanation of design concepts only. The examples are taken from a variety of sources, and do not form part of the definition of Najran architectural character.

6.2

## Scaling

Architectural characters often come from historical building types of a particular size. When applied to new developments of a dramatically different size, the original character can become distorted or repeated in a way where their quality and craftsmanship are reduced.

When applying architectural characters to new developments, designers should:

- 1 Be sensitive to the challenges of large project sizes. Break down building massing into smaller, more diverse and interesting massing that can better fit traditional elements of architectural character.
- 2 Observe the way elements are related to one another and to interior layouts in the source examples of architectural character.
- 3 Avoid mechanical repetition of elements without a clear design intention.
- 4 Respect the proportion, size and construction logic of the original architectural elements.
- 5 Do not scale and distort small elements into oversized graphic features that ignore the principles behind the use of the original element.
- 6 Pay special attention to building elements visible from the public realm, especially at the ground floor. The closer the element is to the public, the greater the fidelity and quality it should be. Conversely, elements farther away from public view may be more highly abstracted.

**To successfully apply elements of traditional architectural character to large contemporary buildings.**

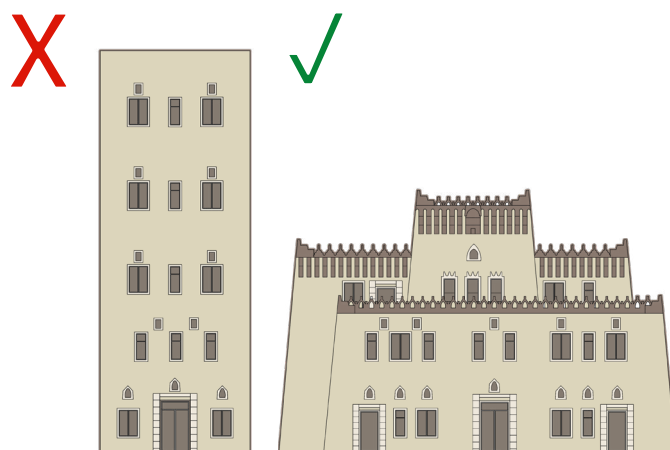


FIG. 29 Break down building massing to better fit traditional elements of architectural character\*

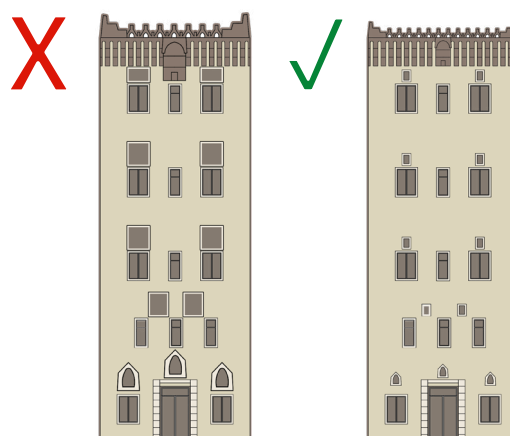


FIG. 30 Do not scale and distort smaller elements into oversized graphic features\*

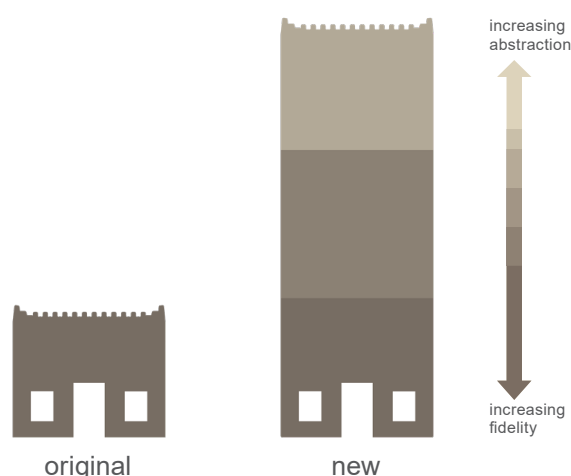


FIG. 31 Pay attention to building elements near the public realm, especially at the ground floor\*



### 6.3 Functionality

Architectural elements should perform functionally like their traditional counterparts, and not be applied superficially like graphic signage.

- 1 Architectural elements should be purposeful, contributing to the climatic or technical performance of a building. (For example: shutters should be operable, providing shading and privacy).
- 2 Architectural characters should not be applied in a superficially like wallpaper on an unrelated building form.
- 3 Architectural elements should not employ material fakery. (For example: the use of one material that pretends to be another).
- 4 Ornamental architectural elements are permitted where they strengthen the character and improve the quality of the building.

**To maintain the functionality of architectural elements.**

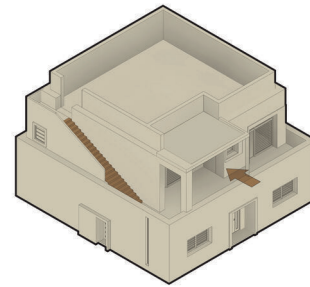
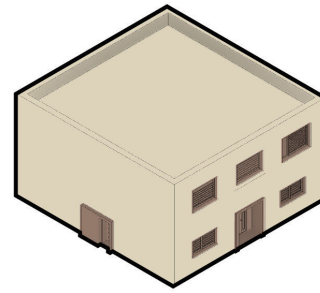


FIG. 32 Example of functional architectural elements\*

### 6.4 Adaptation

The application of traditional architectural styles to new building types requires sensitive adaptation.

- 1 Precious materials from the original may need to be substituted with suitable replacements.
- 2 Some architectural elements may need to be adapted for new building systems or methods of construction.
- 3 Some new building systems may clash with an architectural character, and should be avoided (for example: large space frames, spider-joint glazing, and large areas of curtain wall).

**To apply architectural character through contemporary means.**

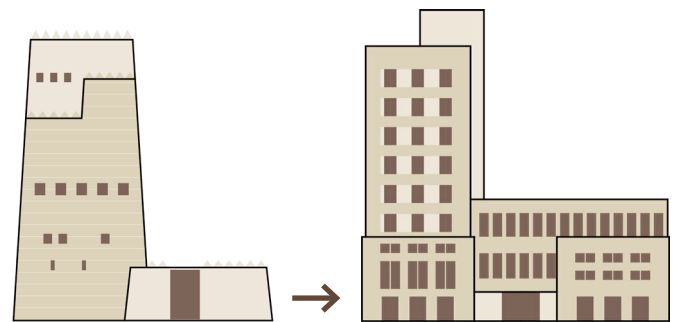


FIG. 33 Adaptation of traditional architectural elements to a contemporary building\*

\*Note: Diagrams in this chapter are for explanation of design concepts only. The examples are taken from a variety of sources, and do not form part of the definition of Najran architectural character.

6.5

## Mixing

Architectural characters are part of living cultures that continually grow and change. The boundaries defining architectural character areas should be understood as provisional, open to influences from all around, rather than as fixed borders. This invites the possibility of styles and character strengths mixing together in large scale projects, particularly in sites located on the edge of two or more characters.

- 1 In large scale projects, when the project site is located at the edge of two or more characters, the adjacent character can influence the project by mixing the characters in different buildings, while prioritizing one above the other based on an analysis of the local context.
- 2 Avoid mixing more than one character within a single building; instead, the mixing should occur across different buildings depending on their location within the project and their functional use.
- 3 When mixing characters, the permitted character (traditional, transitional, or contemporary) should be taken into consideration based on the specified level.
- 4 Exercise informed creativity. Do not slavishly copy architectural characters.

**To propose a clear method for the mixing and blending of architectural characters in large scale projects.**

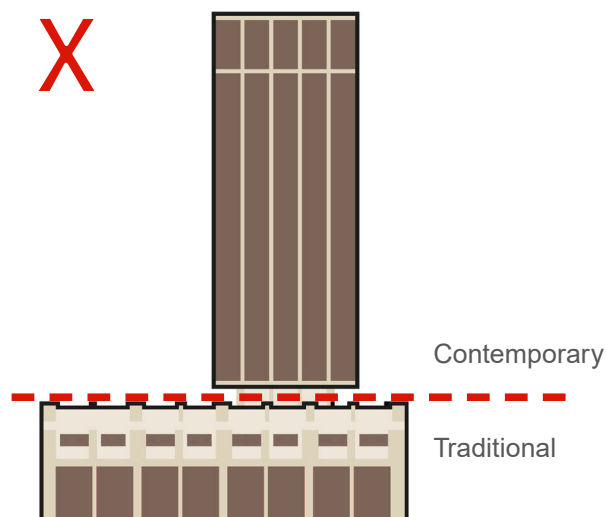


FIG. 34 Do not create hard breaks between mixed sources\*

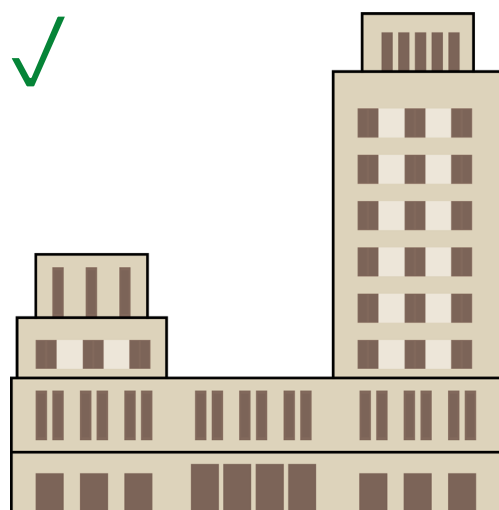
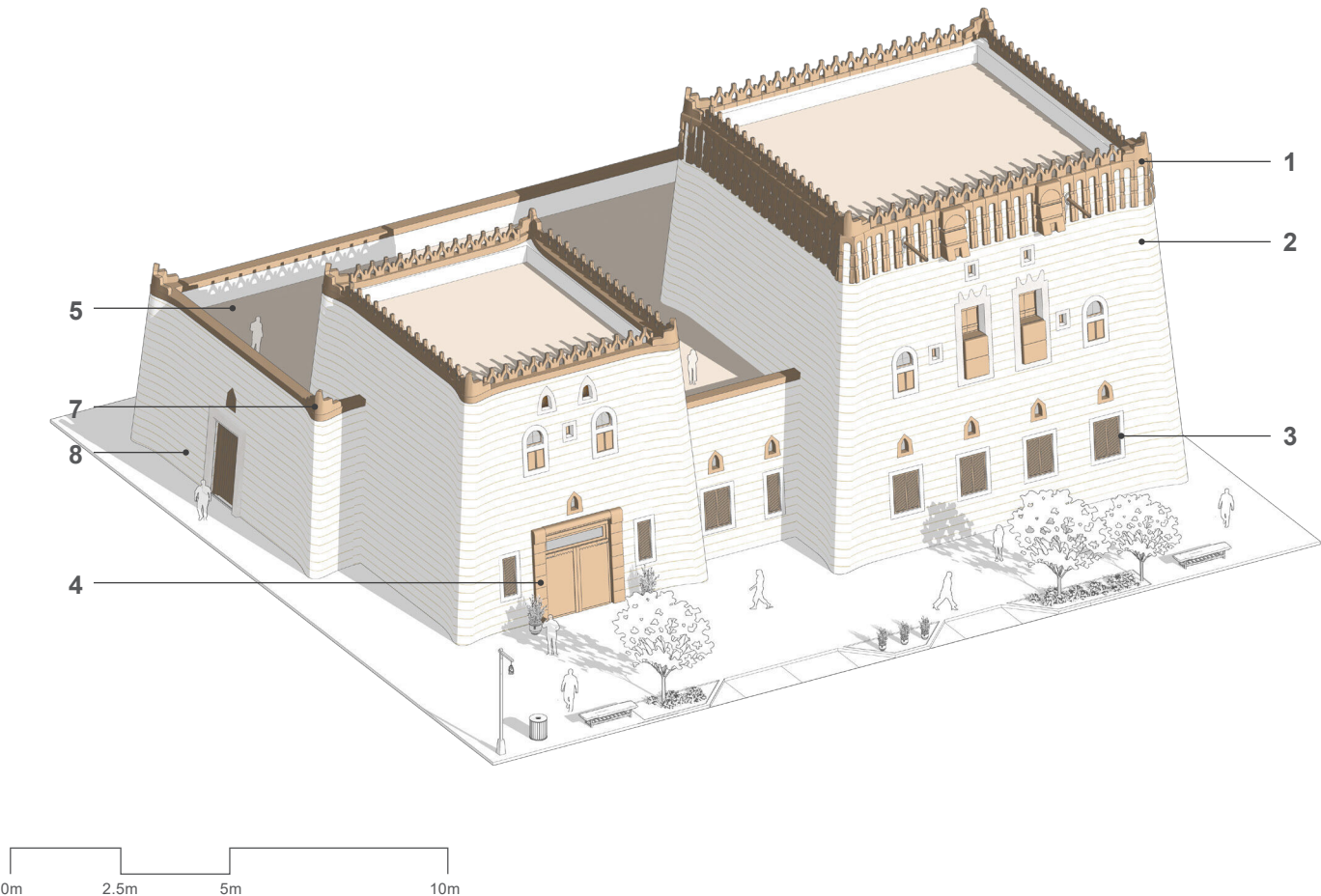


FIG. 35 Create gradual transitions between mixed sources and strengths of character application\*

## 7 Worked examples

A set of design studies illustrating the application of Najran architectural character to buildings, at different strengths and scales.



**FIG. 36** Small size building

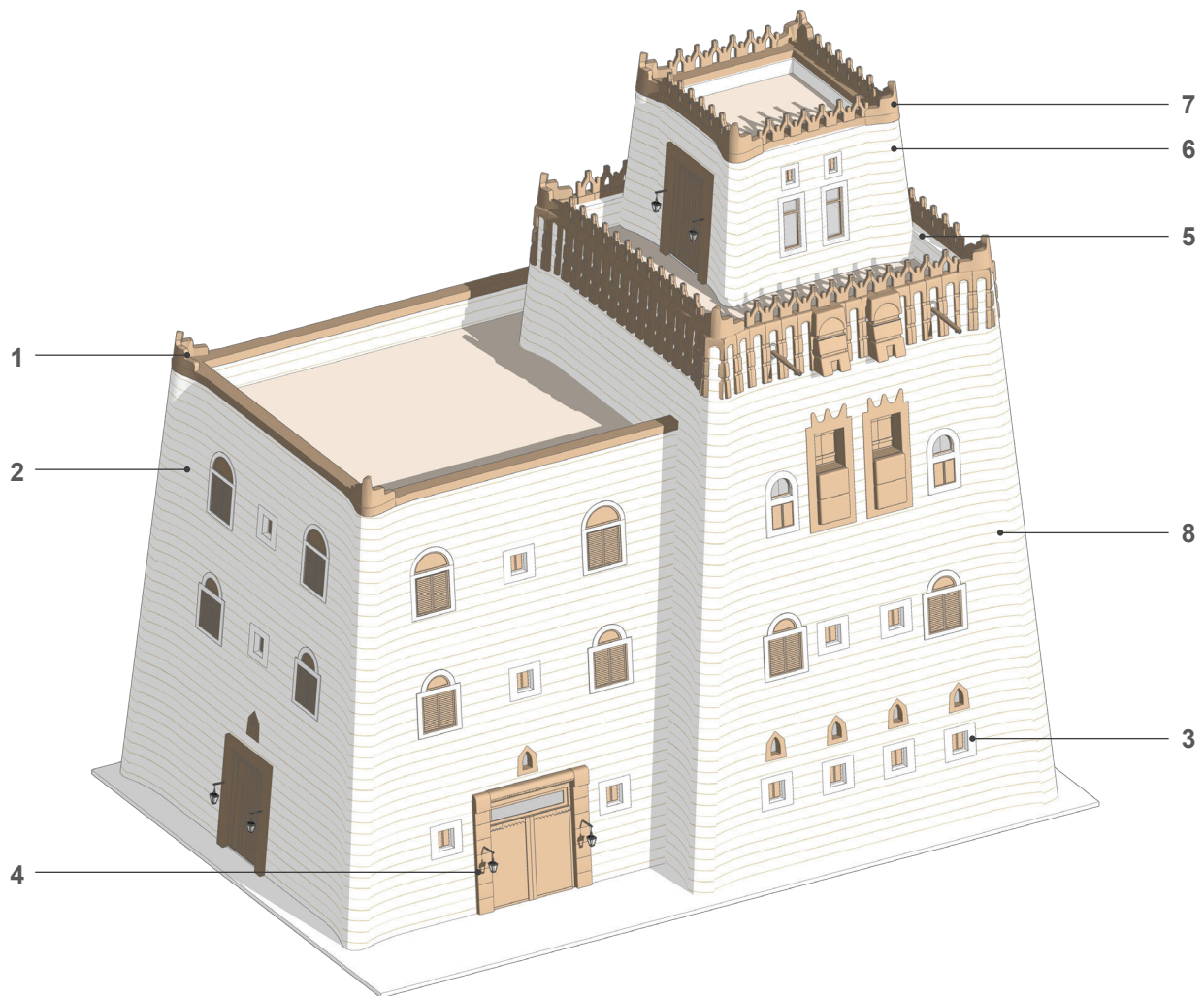
### 7.1 Traditional

New traditional Najran architecture embodies the essence of the vernacular or heritage architecture and contains the key traditional elements and features. Buildings must respect traditional architecture and reference local styles and character, maintaining the key characteristics, such as building composition, massing, elements and materials. Importantly, the architecture should be responsive to its immediate

context, building upon the heritage architecture, either by restoration, or emulation through new construction.

Guideline principles to integrate are:

- 1 Utilize crowned and denticulated parapets for small and large size buildings, flat parapets may be used in large buildings with multiple rooftops.
- 2 Facade horizontal lining treatment to facade and courtyard walls.



0m 2.5m 5m 10m

FIG. 37 Large size building

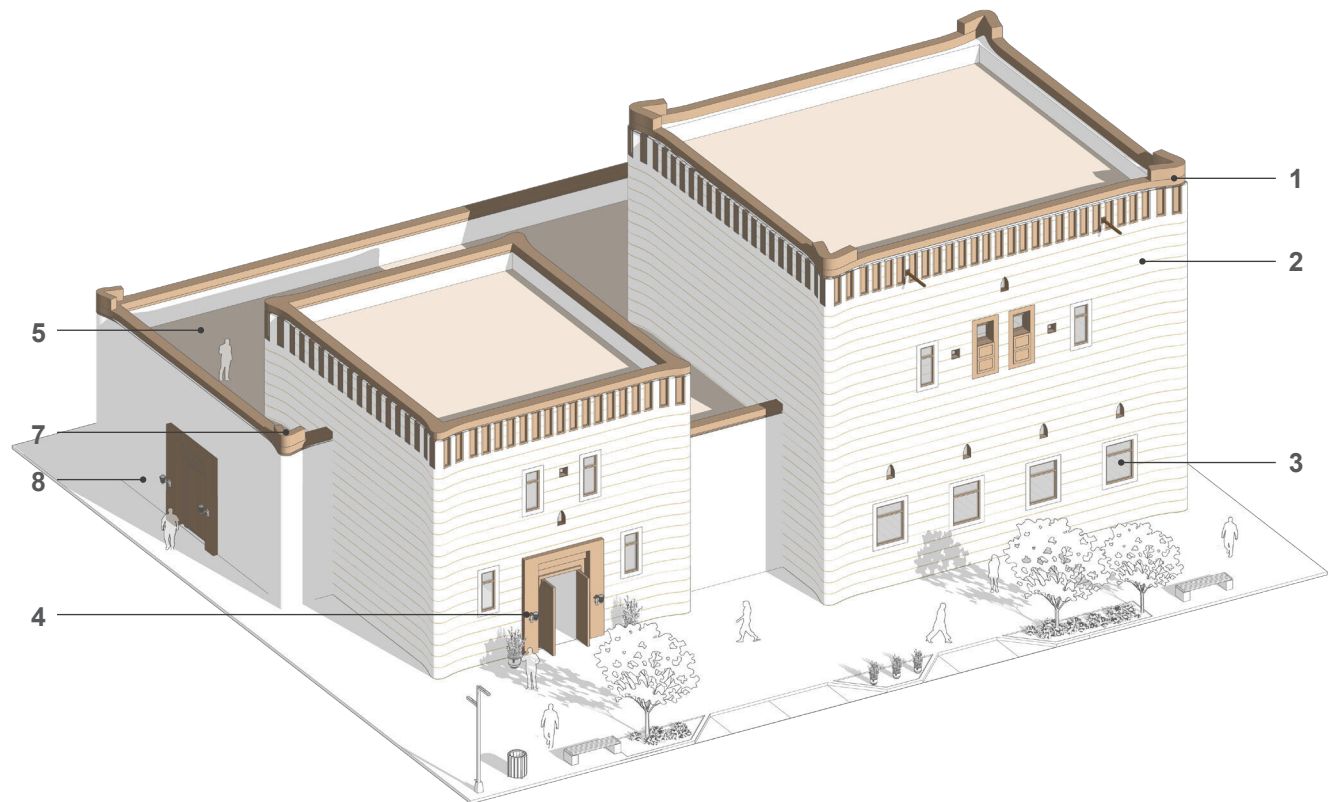
- 3 Punctured frame opening with pointed arch over panel for fenestrations, and consider white washed frames.
- 4 Doors and entrances to be framed with colors and ornaments and integrating as well as lighting elements.
- 5 Roofs can be utilized as terraces and outdoor spaces.
- 6 Building massing should be stepping to

smaller elements as the height increases.

- 7 Apply traditional Najrani rounded edges along the corners of the buildings.
- 8 Use materials which emulate traditional adobe and stone materials.

**New traditional buildings must be concerned with the principles related to improvement of the public realm and the integration of modern amenities and utilities within the building styles.**





0m 2.5m 5m 10m

**FIG. 38** Small size building

## 7.2 Transitional

Transitional Najran architecture blends traditional vernacular elements with contemporary accents. It reinterprets historic styles, adapting key features to create diverse outcomes that preserve local architecture while allowing for modern interiors and amenities. The design is context-based, offering a balance between heritage and modern functionality.

Guideline principles to integrate are:

- 1 Utilize denticulated parapets for small and large size buildings, while flat parapets may be used with multiple rooftops
- 2 Some masses take on traditional facade horizontal lining while others may be neutral with no facade lining
- 3 Consider grouping of square openings, rectangular openings, and pointed arch



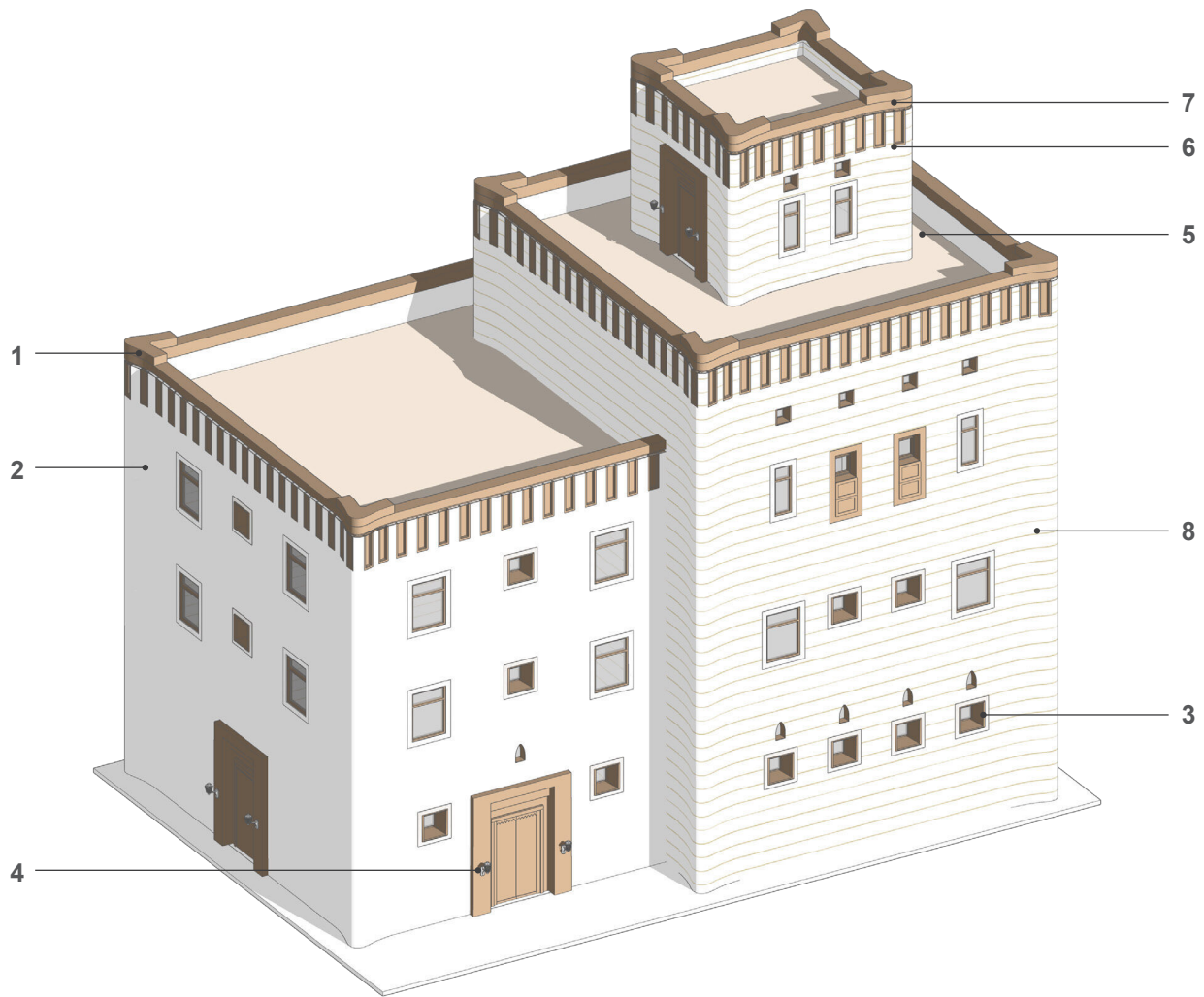


FIG. 39 Large size building

- or square fenestrations, larger buildings typically feature smaller openings on the bottom
- 4 Windows and doors to be ornamented, colored, and framed with white wash or local timber
- 5 Roofs should be utilized as terraces and outdoor spaces
- 6 Building massing should step down to smaller elements as height increases.

- 7 Apply straight edges along the corners of certain masses and traditional Najrani rounded edges along the corners of other masses
- 8 Use materials which emulate traditional adobe and stone

**Buildings should honor traditional architecture while featuring a modern appearance, maintaining key characteristics and proportions.**

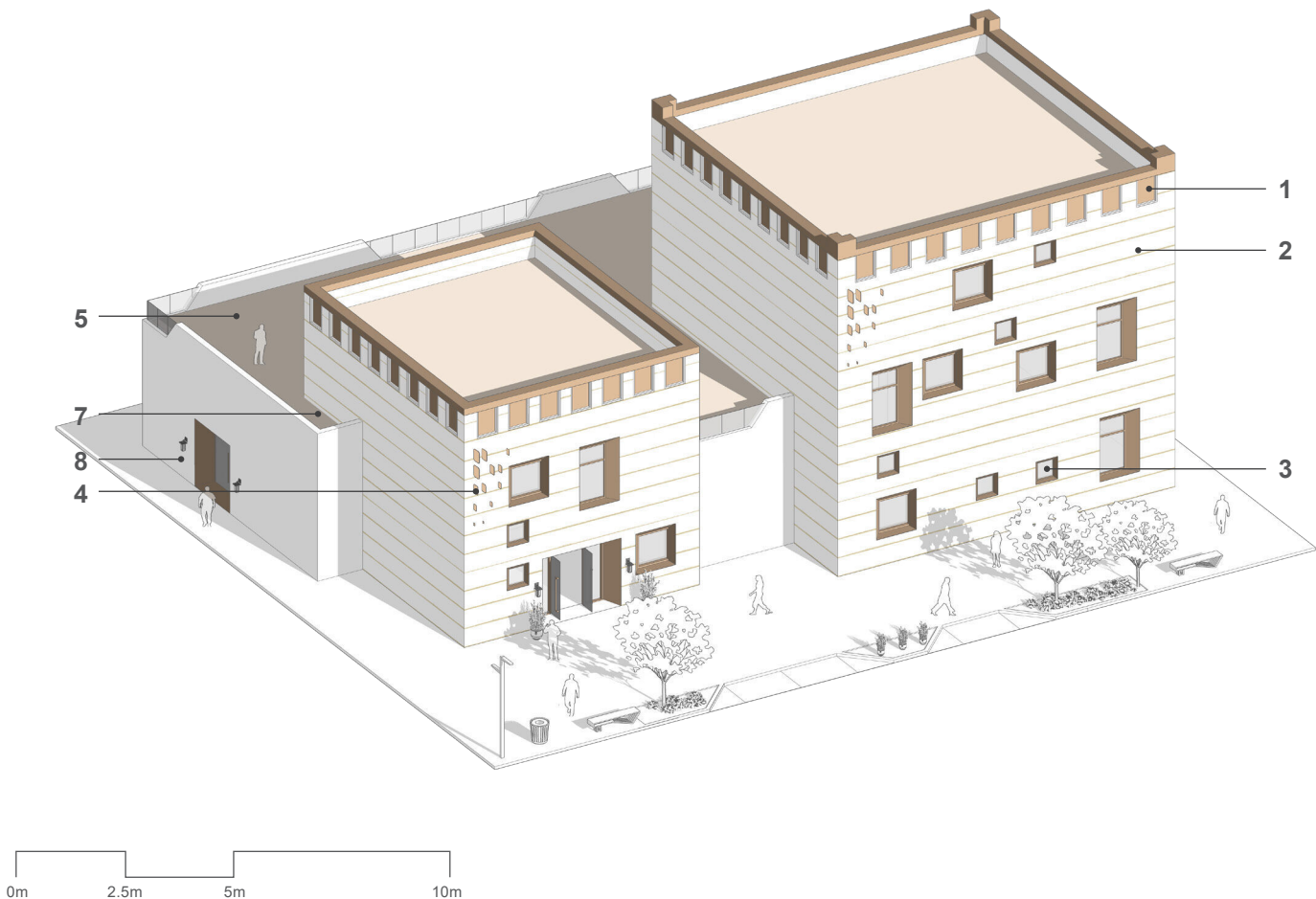


FIG. 40 Small size building

## 7.3 Contemporary

The new contemporary style takes inspiration from tradition but also from nature.

Guideline principles to integrate are:

- 1 Utilize denticulated parapets for small and large size buildings, glass parapets may be used for buildings with multiple rooftops
- 2 The massing can take on larger scaled

facade horizontal lining while others may be neutral with no facade lining

- 3 More limited and singular type of fenestration in this style, but differs in scale according to the interior function
- 4 Patterns for contemporary buildings should be derived from the traditional Najran style and reinterpreted for clean modern styles to be applied to the exterior facade and overall ornamentation. For

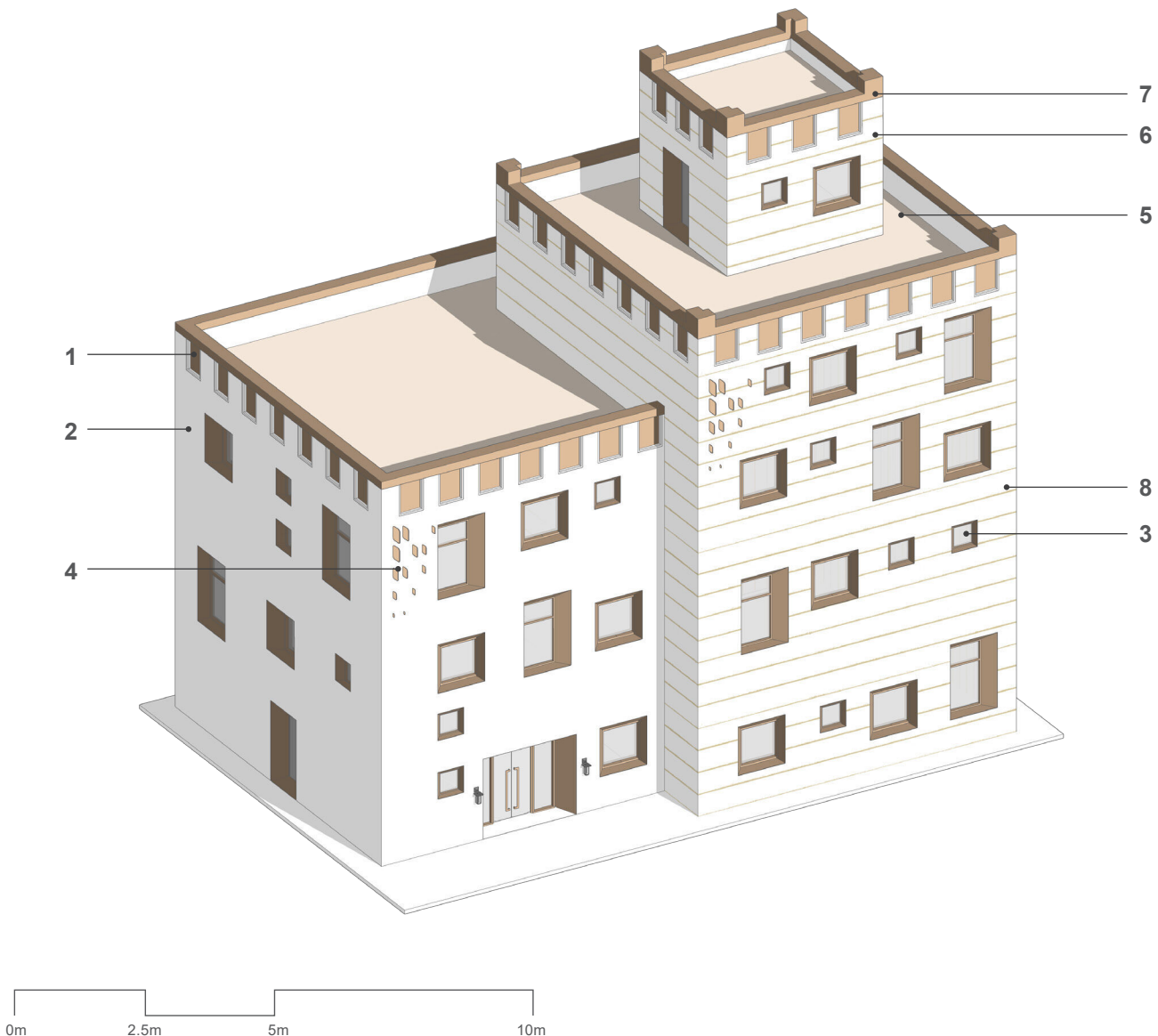


FIG. 41 Large size building

framing accents of colors can be used in the openings and pop-out elements of the facade, such as window and door depth.

- 5 Courtyards and roof terraces to be utilized as secure private spaces.
- 6 General massing should be stepping to smaller elements as the height increases
- 7 The building edges should be straight at the corners of all the masses
- 8 For contemporary buildings, material

should be more refined than traditional and transitional Najran architecture, including plastered walls and carefully cut stone veneer. The textures should be more refined, less porous and overall monolithic.

**Contemporary contextual architecture styles will be interpreted and created, but they must follow the principles of the traditional architecture.**

## 8 Public realm

An overview of public realm character in Najran.

### 8.1 Overview

The focus of the public realm guidelines within this document is to strengthen local character by identifying and enhancing distinct characteristics of public realm in Najran. It is meant to provide high-level principles and recommendations to be further developed in masterplans and public realm strategies within Najran.

These guidelines are not intended to be a comprehensive technical resource. For this the designer should consult the National Public Realm Design Manual prepared by the Ministry of Municipalities and Housing, and support the five key principles identified in it.



- 1 Human scale
- 2 Pedestrian mobility
- 3 Sustainability
- 4 Culture and heritage
- 5 Visual appeal

FIG. 42 National Public Realm Design Manual and its five key principles.

This chapter is organized as follows:

- **General character** - a narrative summary and photographic overview of characteristic public realm found in the character area.
- **Types of public space** - A selection of spatial types that provide the architecture of the area its distinctive character.
- **Materials** - A summary of hardscape

character for Najran.

- **Planting** - A summary of softscape character for Najran.
- **Street furniture** - Suggestions and precedents for suitable street furniture.
- **Lighting** - High-level lighting principles for the enhancement of the public realm.
- **Signage** - High-level signage principles for the enhancement of the public realm.
- **Parking** - High-level parking design principles for enhancement of the public realm.
- **Worked examples** - Visualizations that illustrate the combined intentions of the public realm guidelines.

Together the sections above aim to give a broad overview of public realm that will reinforce the character of Najran.

### 8.2 General character

The adjacent photographs summarize the typical characteristics of the public realm and local landscape in Najran. As set out in the introduction, the area is characterized by its traditional mud-brick architecture and distinct regional style. Key features include intricately carved doorways, decorative plasterwork, and shaded courtyards that promote social interaction in the arid climate. Public spaces, such as local markets and gathering areas, enhance community engagement and reflect the area's cultural heritage. The use of local materials and elements like trees underscores Najran's architectural character, blending rich history with modern vibrancy.



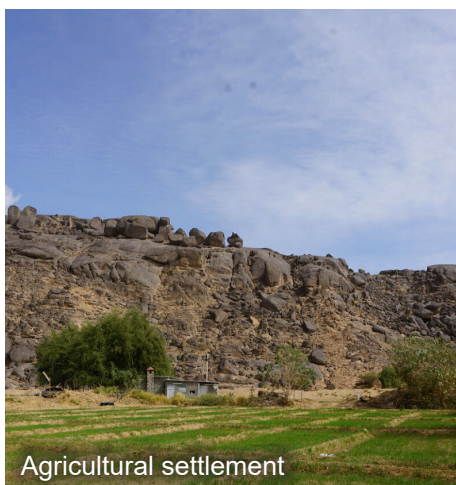


FIG.43 **PUBLIC REALM**



### 8.3 Types of public space

Rural Najran's public realm is characterized by a hierarchy of typical streets and spaces. These typologies are distinguished by their scale, character, and relationship with predominant land uses.

Together, these spaces create a diverse public realm which caters for residents and visitors alike, and contributes to the distinct character of the Area.

The plan illustrates a typical hierarchy of urban spaces and streets in rural Najran. The following spaces are considered to be the principal typologies:

- Public open spaces: Semi-public areas between buildings, serving as communal gathering points and transitional zones within settlements.
- Alleys: Local pathways of varying width and footfall which connect spaces and streets across settlements.
- Bostan: Semi-private open spaces, known as a residential back yard.

Specific areas might include additional variations in these typologies, reflecting local scale, character and use. Parks and recreation areas should also be provided.



FIG. 44 Typical urban plan

<b>Street</b> (public open space)	<b>Bostan</b> (private open space)	<b>Farm</b> (semi-public open space)
<b>Alley</b> (mostly private space)	<b>Building Cluster</b>	<b>Wadi</b>

**Paving**  
Dry stone paving. Gravel could be used on smaller Alleys.

**Lighting**  
Wall mounted lights avoid space take in narrow passageway. Warm light color provides atmosphere and highlights building material texture.

**Planting**  
Street planting.

**Furniture**  
Public seating located at widest points of Alleys, along building walls, away from private entrances

**Furniture**  
Seating beneath trees

**Planting**  
Single tree and low shrubs as a central feature

**Paving**  
Depaved area of gravel stone around planting with informal border  
Flag stone paving. Increase in paving size from Alley indicates a moment to pause.

**Lighting**  
Wall mounted lantern lights

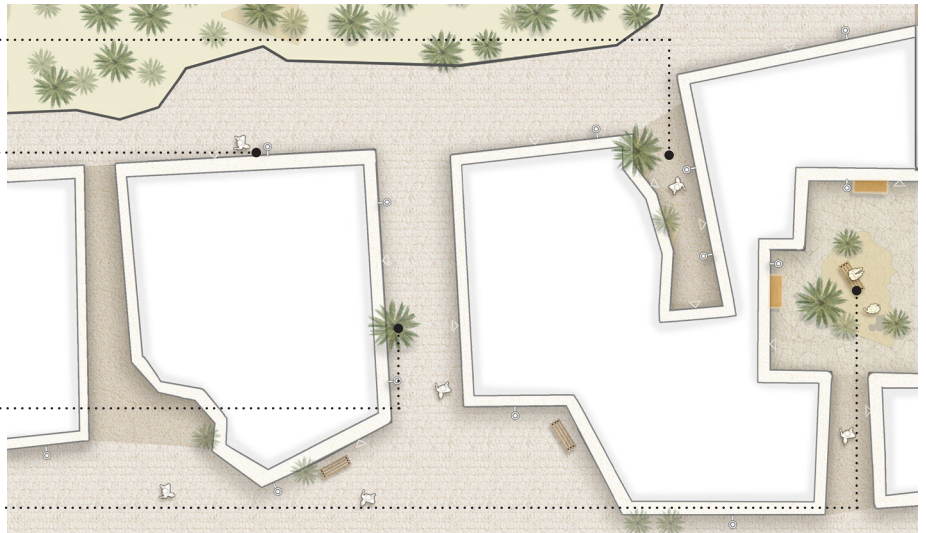


FIG. 45 Settlement on oasis edge

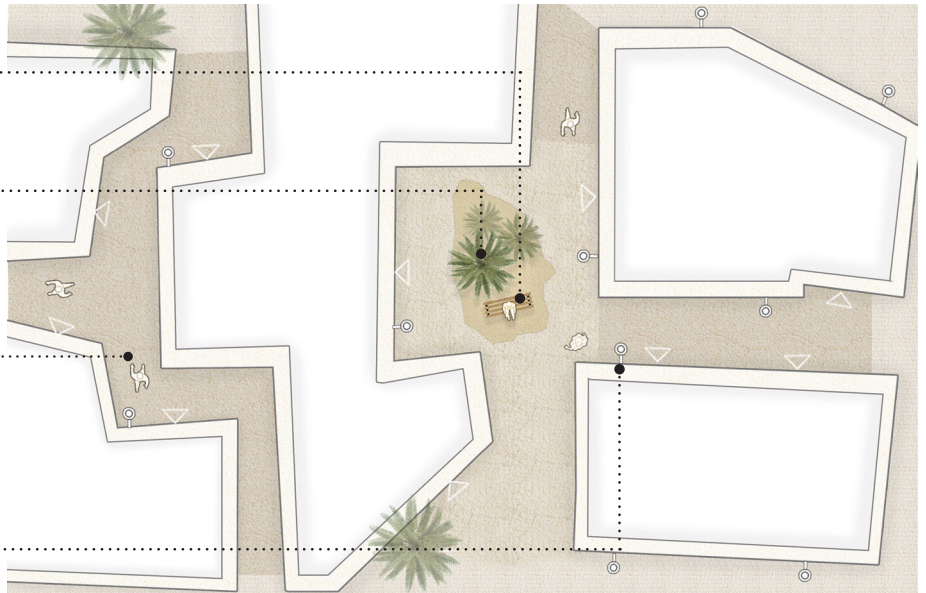


FIG. 46 Narrow alleyways

**Paving**  
Dry stone paving.  
Depaved area of gravel stone for play area with informal border

**Planting**  
Planting pockets define seating areas and bring shade to open space

**Furniture**  
Benches located beneath tree adjacent to play area  
Informal seating

**Lighting**  
Wall mounted lantern lights



FIG. 47 Saha (Open plaza)

Typically occur beyond agrarian villages and between urban settlements.



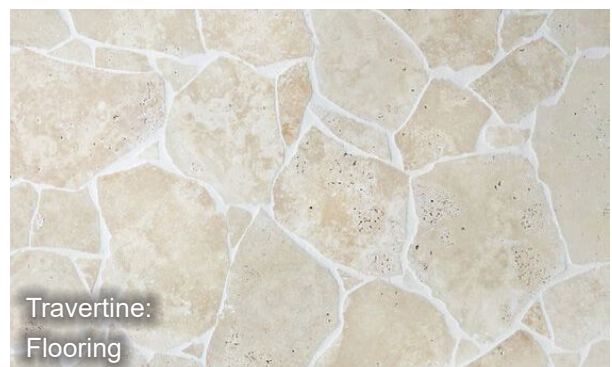
## 8.4 Materials

The suggested palette for materials to be integrated in Najran has been conceived to be simple and sensitive to the existing character of the area.

### Key considerations

- 1 Select locally sourced Saudi materials with low embodied carbon, such as palm fronds, and high content of reused or recycling aggregates from ruin sites or community waste.
- 2 Areas with higher footfall, such as souks and commercial areas or pedestrian walkways, need paving and should have higher specification and materials that are durable, minimizing the need for regular repair and replacement.
- 3 Select materials that have longevity and that can be easily cleaned, repaired and sourced – so high-quality materials such as granite or basalt and similar igneous rocks.
- 4 De-pave and rely less on concrete where possible to improve the microclimate and use suitable sands or aggregates in place of paving.
- 5 Materials should provide varying textures complementing the area's architectural character and color palette.
- 6 Employ subtle changes to paving to highlight difference between typologies
- 7 Map and discover existing streetscapes and ensure materials are replaced only when necessary to minimize carbon footprint.
- 8 Using a larger paving format to emphasize more prominent routes.
- 9 Consider incorporating special patterns to emphasize important places or spaces.

**To design public spaces which complement the material and environmental properties of the area.**





8.5

## Planting

Tree planting should compliment the agricultural character of Najran, building on existing traditions and fostering future-oriented sustainable practices.

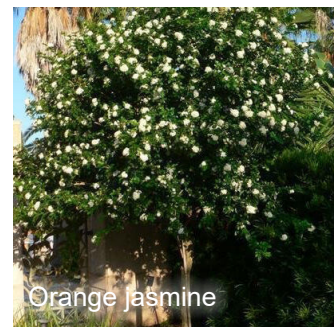
### Key considerations

- 1 The tree landscape character should carefully calibrate and work with existing aquifers, rainwater, irrigation, and canal systems.
- 2 Rely less on importing new tree species, and source existing drought tolerant and saline water resistant as well as native and locally adapted species.
- 3 Adopt an informal layout, to avoid overly linear or formal planting for a characterful contribution to the quality of routes and spaces.
- 4 Be planted where shade can be best utilized or where shade is necessary to encourage using the public realm.
- 5 Consideration should be given to how a tree is seen and how trees can be used as wayfinding markers.
- 6 Planting should be relatively limited within the urban area, mainly found in baraha areas.
- 7 Contribute to maintaining and enhancing oasis areas, using multi-layered planting where appropriate comprising a variety of palm species, fruit trees and fodder grasses and consider additional habitat value such as fruits for birds.
- 8 Minimize understory and decorative planting should be minimized. If under story planting is necessary, it should be functional e.g. herbs or edible.

**To ensure that planting projects work with the existing ecosystem and provide multiple values for the public.**



Night blooming jasmine



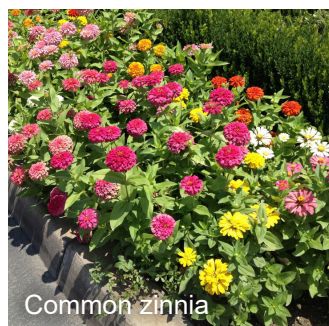
Orange jasmine



Lemon tree



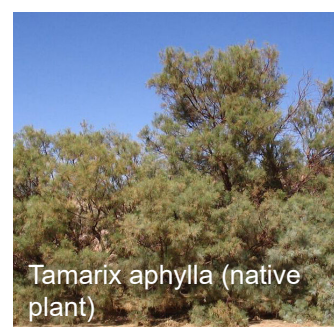
Cape leadwort



Common zinnia



Grain sorghum

Ziziphus muconata  
habitusTamarix aphylla (native  
plant)

Acacia tortilis

Date palm (phoenix  
dactylifera)



## 8.6 Street furniture

Street furniture should be selected to provide continuity and co-ordination. Colors and style of furniture should blend into the context rather than stand out as features. In general, the design of street furniture should find opportunities to use local materials, respond to the local landscape and cultural heritage, and celebrate local craft skills.

### Key considerations

- 1 Be distributed evenly across all areas with reference to space types above.
- 2 Not obstruct pedestrian movement nor clutter public open spaces.
- 3 Show a color and material consistency.
- 4 Be minimal in the public realm as traditionally was the case and potentially movable.
- 5 Feel ephemeral and informal, acknowledging the historic condition of street furniture in the region.
- 6 Give consideration to accessibility with seating distributed at suitable intervals and heights.
- 7 Be of high quality, coherent, and rationalized to minimize street clutter.
- 8 Avoid duplication by rationalizing and combining elements.
- 9 Be easily maintained and repaired with replaceable components.
- 10 Be retained and improved where existing furniture has heritage value.
- 11 Boundary walls should contribute to the landscape character and setting of the area.

**To provide thoughtful, inviting, and locally-relevant outdoor public furniture.**



FIG. 48 Seating



FIG. 49 Trash bin



FIG. 50 Shading



FIG. 51 Planter



8.7

## Lighting

Lighting fixtures are street furniture elements that enhance visibility and wayfinding at night. However, lighting design can also be utilized to highlight important buildings or parts of buildings.

### Key considerations

- 1 Type, texture, color and design of the lighting fixture must follow the architectural design language of the building.
- 2 Source and research existing and traditional lighting methods to innovate a modern take that is contextually relevant.
- 3 Lighting element placed on the floor should be decided carefully so it doesn't obstruct pedestrian mobility on the sidewalk.
- 4 The type, design, consistency and size of lighting fixtures can either degrade and disrupt a scenic area or rather enhance the architectural and urban setting.
- 5 The sequence and intensity of lighted areas must not be decided randomly as it guides the journey of pedestrians. Lighted areas draw people's attention and thereby determine the path that users walk.
- 6 The typical light color is white and yellow shades. Incorporating other colors should have a reasonable justification and used with care to not create visual pollution or degrade the quality of the space or building.

**To use lighting elements in enhancing the user experience and perception of building and public space.**



FIG. 52 Ceiling light



FIG. 53 Wall hanging light



FIG. 54 Free standing light



FIG. 55 Bollard

## 8.8 Signage

The main purpose of signage is to communicate a specific message to the public. Signage can be promotional to persuade customers into a commercial area and supports the orientation of members of the public in reaching their desired destination.

### Key considerations

- 1 Signage font, material and color should follow and complement the architectural design language of the building thus should be straightforward, simple in design, and accurately orient the public to the location.
- 2 Inconsistent and unregulated sizes, colors, heights and typography distort the character of a place and reduce the architectural value of buildings, contributing to the city's overall visual pollution. It should be carefully designed to maximize efficiency in conveying the message as well as maintaining the theme and character of the area.
- 3 The width and alignment of wall signage boards must be consistent across the building as well as across the entire street frontage in the area.
- 4 Readability of signage depends on the distance it is viewed from. The maximum distance a signage is to be viewed from by a target receiver is from the opposite side of the street.

**To create a consistent visual language across the city and be effective for the orientation of members of the public.**



FIG. 56 Main signage



FIG. 57 Wall hanging signage



FIG. 58 Free standing signage



FIG. 59 Column signage



## 8.9 Parking

Street front parking is provided for customers of active retail frontages, and for visitors to access building entrances as well as for residents of a building. Undesignated parking spaces disturb the visual appeal of the district, but it also may affect public access.

### Key considerations

- 1 The width of parking lots must always be enough for easy parking for all sizes of anticipated vehicles. For this, parking angles are a necessary consideration. Parallel spaces are also common.
- 2 Parking spaces for those with limited or hampered mobility should always be prioritized and provide easy access to main areas.
- 3 Parking must never become a physical obstacle that limits access to spaces. Parking must consider other vehicles such as bicycles and motorcycles as well as the navigation of pedestrians between the parking areas.
- 4 Parking spaces accompanied by shading structures and vegetation is an advantage as it helps protect vehicles from the climate.
- 5 Creating a planted buffer between the parking and the pedestrian sidewalk or the bike lanes is encouraged where possible.

**To ensure that parking spaces attend to multiple needs and work with their surroundings.**



FIG. 60 Parking example



FIG. 61 Road side parking - Type 1



FIG. 62 Road side parking - Type 2



## 8.10 Public realm worked examples

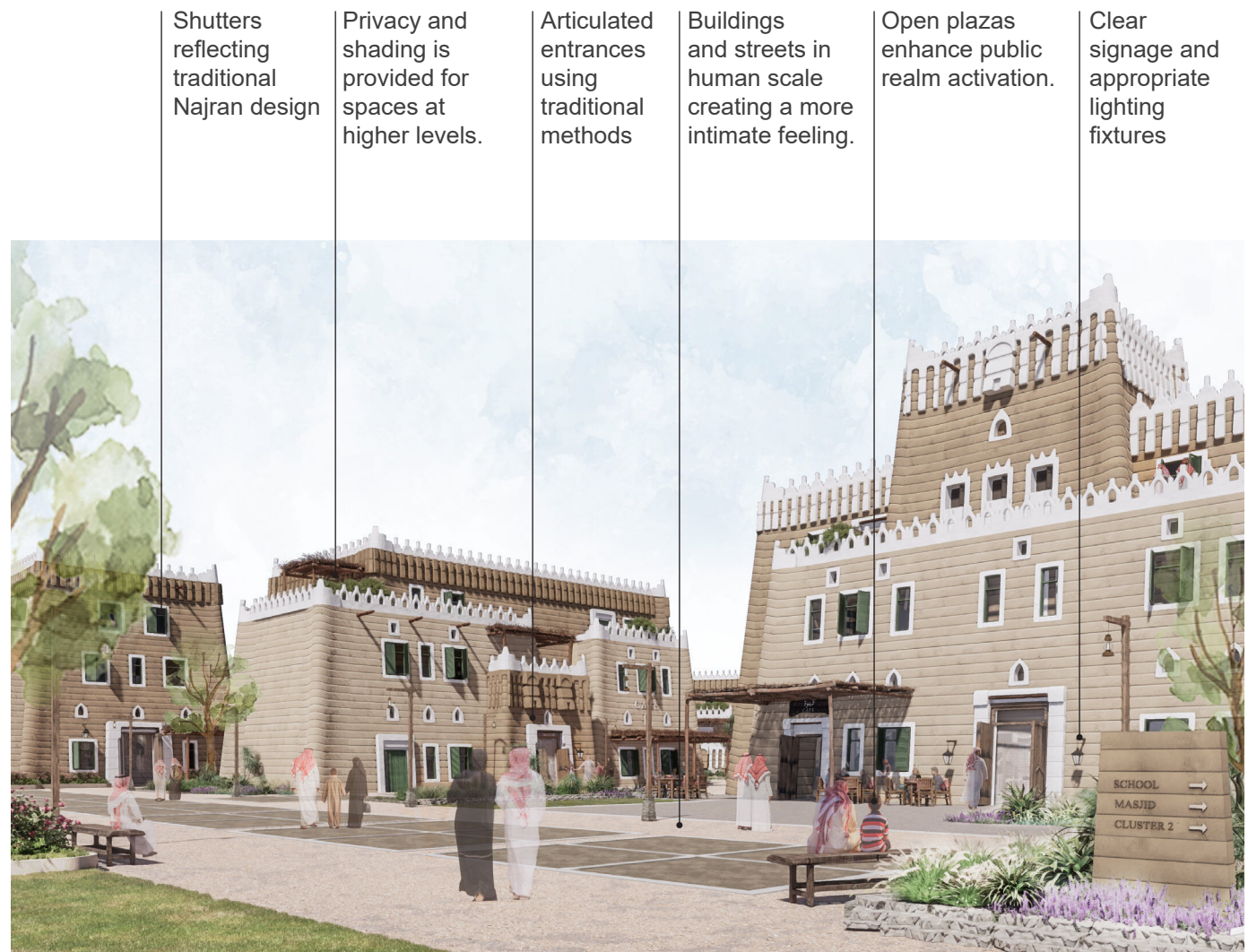


FIG.63 PROPOSED VIEW OF LOCAL URBAN SQUARE IN NAJRAN

Najran architecture should take reference from the past and traditional buildings, as a source of inspiration for future developments. Materials, colour and texture should be carefully considered within buildings and the Urban landscape.

The following guidelines should be considered.

- 1 Use high and low level native planting to create attractive localized environments. This also reduces the heat island effect in

modern urban environments, contributing to cooler, comfortable outdoor spaces.

- 2 Material selection prioritizes the use of natural and locally sourced materials such as clay, stone, tamarisk wood, and palm materials.
- 3 Elements such as hanging lanterns on external walls or minimal street lamps are used as the lighting strategy to help reinforce the built context's sense of character.

Planting areas act as an accent in the public realm.

Shading in open areas through large trees.

Stepped massing

Shading structures that can be crafted locally.

Active retail frontages.

Implementation of complete streets with public infrastructure eg. cycle paths



FIG.64 PROPOSED VIEW OF LOCAL STREET IN NAJRAN

- 4 Modern buildings should be adapted to respond to their local environment, be cleaned of visual pollution, and reformed to suit the values of traditional local culture, such as privacy and security.
- 5 Restaurants, cafés, shops to use utilize low level native planting, to help create attractive green environments define spaces.

- 6 Modern canopy designs, incorporating regional ornamental patterns and colors, should be used to provide shading to the public realm and seating areas.

**To create public realms which connect with the built heritage of the region and express a strong sense of place.**



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