

Architectural Guidelines

BROADMEAD



4	Introduction
5	Concept Statement
6	Natural Heritage: Kloof
8	Built Heritage: The Manor House
10	Architectural Precedent: Prairie School
12	Architectural Precedent: Agricultural Functionality
14	Site Treatment
16	Landscaping: Outdoor Rooms
18	Material Palette



Introduction

The way a place is designed has a real impact on the experience of life there, so considering overall principles is key in the development of the built environment. These Design Guidelines have been put in place to capture the approach to space, style and form that informs the estate's concept. The historical, architectural and natural heritage of the site have created a unique context for development and approaching it sensitively is key.

The thinking has been shared in this document as a set of principles that work together to guide owners as they undertake their own journeys of architectural design. They ensure a coherent link in style and concept from individual homes to a community as a whole. This document is not a list of dos and don'ts but rather a catalyst for spatial thinking and guidelines for individual expression within a broader framework. They have been grouped according to broad themes, but should be considered collectively during the design development process.

If at any stage you have questions around the estate concept, or its implementation, feel free to get in touch with the principal architect.

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Concept Statement

The concept for Broadmead is one of authentic living. It is a place that gives people the freedom to experience both community identity and individual expression. It's about being connected to your neighbours, surroundings and natural world. Where you can live in a grounded and real way.

Broadmead draws on what came before – on the site, in the landscape and in the area – because that context is what gives any community a sense of place. But it is also inspired by the way we live today, whether in terms of lifestyle, society or resource realities. It takes a craftsman's approach to all things, ensuring consideration of all the details and a seamless integration of the components that make up a fulfilled life. Because of this, the intent in the concept is to approach built form design as place-making rather than the creation of architectural statements for their own sake.

Natural Heritage

Named for the steep, oxide-stained cliffs of Kloof Gorge, the Kloof area is situated on an escarpment and characterised by a hilly landscape. It sits at an elevation of around 500MSL, and was favoured country home location in the early 1900s thanks to its relatively mild climate compared to Durban's heat and humidity.

The area was originally characterised by Sandstone Sourveld Grassland but this has all but disappeared with development today. It does still exist in some undeveloped and protected areas, however, and is still evident at Broadmead, especially the natural forest and valley on the estate. This conservancy makes up around 50% of the overall development. Rehabilitating and preserving it is key to the Broadmead concept, as is carrying its characteristics throughout the rest of the development. The space has been considered in terms of the larger network of natural corridors in the area, as well as the city's D'MOSS framework. On an estate level, the original grassland character of the area will also be extended throughout the developed half of the site by re-establishing the natural landscape along the public roads, intersections and paths.



Principles for Design: Natural Heritage

- The **conservancy will be rehabilitated and restored** to add value to both the community and wider natural context.
- The treatment of the identified **natural nodes and corridors should be considered and integrated in the development of each plot** to create a consistent landscaping backdrop and sense of place.
- The landscaping on **individual plots should mimic the natural qualities of the surroundings**. This includes an approach that incorporates form, colour, texture and composition, along with the use of endemic plant species and nuanced hard landscaping and building material selections.
- The **fringes and focal points within individual plots** should respectfully consider the overall context, with varied textures and thresholds.



Built Heritage

The original manor house on the Broadmead estate comes from the rich tradition of the Arts and Crafts movement. This school of design focussed on finding meaning through artisanal craft around the turn of the 20th Century, predominantly in the United Kingdom, as people were faced with the initial waves of mass industrialisation. This spirit was about building a home for a family that was crafted specifically for them – a place where people could live surrounded by a warm, meaningful and considered spaces and objects. The intimate relationship between the dwelling and the landscape extended this outside too, enabling its inhabitants to live closely within the natural world.

The concept for the estate is not to replicate the form of the manor house in the new homes, though it will remain in Broadmead. Rather, the elements of the material and form used in the home will inform an aesthetic code for the new homes. The artisanal spirit behind the Arts and Crafts movement inspires a use of materials like crafted brick, stonework and timber panelling, with a craftsman's approach as the defining characteristic of spaces and objects.

Principles for Design: Built Heritage

- The material palette for a dwelling should be chosen with its specific aesthetic quality in mind, bringing out each choice's inherent quality. Palettes can draw on the original house and natural context as a starting point but **any inspiration is welcomed as long as it takes quality and integrity as a starting point.** The durability, functionality and resulting environmental impact should also be carefully considered.
- The overall design of **form, space and elements should embrace simplicity,** with expression coming from artisanal feature elements and details rather than ornamentation.
- The **roof should be the primary form-giving element** – whether it is flat or pitched – including prominent and anchoring chimneys where they are part of the design.
- Walls should be treated as invisible or open recesses or solid elements with framed views.
- Pitched roofs should have fixed 40° to 45° pitches and spans limited to 7m for single stories and 9m for double stories.
- It is encouraged for **roof coverings to extend onto eaves walls** to mimic the form of the main house. As a secondary design element the intention is to emphasise the roof as the primary shelter of the living spaces.
- **Loft storeys are preferred** to full double storey swellings.

Architectural Precedent: Prairie School

The architectural concept for the estate also draws on the principles of Frank Lloyd Wright's Prairie School as a key reference. Stylistically rooted in Arts and Crafts, Wright increasingly embraced modernist style and new technologies as his career progressed and his philosophy developed. His later works are particularly relevant for Broadmead as an illustration of how to bridge Arts and Crafts purism with contemporary style and ways of living.

As a whole, Wright's work is anti-ornamentation, with the primary form of the home serving as its creative expression. The building plan tends to be more cellular than monolithic and dwellings are made up on efficient clusters of spaces whose function informs their aesthetic, and whose forms make up the overall design. Volume and structure are key to the overall concept, more so than a strict layout.

The Prairie School also shares the Arts and Crafts desire to define place within the landscape without imposing on it. In Wright's designs, like the famous Fallingwater, the home seems to grow out of the site itself. The considered landscaping softens the boundary between home and site and provides organic shelter. It is not anti-technology or rustic, however. The style is carefully refined, but the expression deeply resonates with the feeling of the site itself.



Principles for Design: Prairie School

- Use the **topography of the site and landscape itself** as points of departure for design. The residence can mould around the site rather than sitting separately on top of it.
- **Transitional spaces** like garden rooms and outdoor living spaces are key.
- Combining **hard and soft landscaping** helps to blur the indoor/outdoor boundary. Consider **vegetation as a form of enclosure** for the home, with **hard landscaping as an extension of the indoors, outdoors.**
- The overall **proportions for single storey dwellings should be horizontal**, though pinned down by strong vertical chimney forms.
- Horizontal overhangs and sheltering roofs should be considered to **help further blur thresholds.**
- Internal spatial arrangements should be **expressed in the external form.**
- External spaces like courtyards and outbuildings should be connected through considerations such as support elements and glass walls.

“No house should ever be on a hill ...
it should be of the hill. Belonging to it.
Hill and house should live together
each the happier for the other.”

Frank Lloyd Wright



Architectural Precedent: Agricultural Functionality

Agricultural buildings developed from functional needs for protection and shelter, with simple forms and robust construction. Though original timber beams and cladding have since given way to metal, the same principles apply today. Whether in the form of a barn, stable or other functional building, this typology also speaks to the simplicity that people are looking for in their homes in contemporary residences too. The contemporary steel portal frame also allows for spacious internal volumes in line with what people value in their homes. The logic of agricultural yard also helps to section the residence into different functional spaces with the landscaped thresholds between them.

Principles for Design: Agricultural Functionality

- The portal frame as a structural system should be applied to achieve **simplicity in form as well as the sheltering roof** discussed earlier. Structurally this also provides flexibility for openings and internal layouts.
- Consider **large wall openings to connect inside and outside** – these should be used as framing for focal points in the landscape.
- To **optimise natural daylight consider linear forms** and relatively narrow widths.
- The **uninterrupted floor area** and **clear volumes of the portal structure** should be used to inform the living patterns in the home. This allows for the full aesthetic expression of each space's function independently of the structure itself.
- Simple, sheltering structures should make up the **primary architectural concept**.
- Consider residences as an **arrangement of buildings in a complex**, not just single structures. The yard space between them then serves as visual connection with paths, screens and coverings to help to facilitate the movement between spaces. Connections should also be made between spaces and the natural setting too.

Site Treatment

The spatial development of the sites within Broadmead should carefully consider the relationship between private and common areas. Similarly, a key principle behind the estate's concept is landscaping that embraces the conservancy, as well as the nodes and corridors identified for the re-establishment of the natural heritage of the site. This approach to creating a sense of place should also be considered at a plot level. Considering degrees of public and private space through the arrangement of buildings, as well as landscaped thresholds between spaces is important. The idea for the estate is to allow for these different degrees of engagement for a coherent identity as a whole, without compromising individual residents' expression.



Principles for Design: Site Treatment

- Consider loose fit building plans that **accommodate formal and outdoor living spaces**, with an overall north orientation.
- Concepts for sites should be oriented around the **focal points of the conservancy and landscaped common nodes and corridors**.
- Scale should be considered in a way that considers existing dwellings and **a conversation with the natural context and street boundary**.
- **Entrances on multiple sides of the home** will help with a more nuanced engagement with the plot. These will also allow for a range of public and private points of engagement with the site itself.
- Conservancy facing sites must **consider interaction with the natural edge** in their design.
- The approaches to residences should be **considered with privacy in mind**, as should the relationships with neighbouring plots.
- Landscaping around points of access from the road should be considered in a way that **creates a natural screen**, as well as a transition zone.
- The primary medium for creating boundaries should be **natural landscaping around the dwelling**, although fully integrated barriers to contain pets can be incorporated.
- **Hard edges should be avoided** if possible, and make use of face-brick, concrete and steel screens if required – see the street boundary wall as an example of this.
- The primary delineation of property boundaries should be accompanied by **secondary landscaped edges**, with a considered flows from the outermost threshold through to the dwelling's formal perimeter including pockets and clearings for engagement along the way.



Landscaping: Outdoor Rooms

The landscaping concept for Broadmead draws heavily on the Arts and Crafts movement, most notably the inclusion of “outdoor rooms” that characterised the period. This was the first movement to bring architects and landscapers together to extend the built form of the house out through considered gardening concepts. The result is a series of thresholds that gradually extend outwards from the house getting looser and looser, until they merge with the natural landscape. In this way the landscape becomes an extension of the dwelling and the dwelling is a natural element in itself. The concept highlights the space between structures too, including courtyards and formal gardens. Moving outwards, vegetation is an important part of the enclosure, with borders and pathways used to help define the outdoor living space.

Principles for Design: Outdoor Rooms

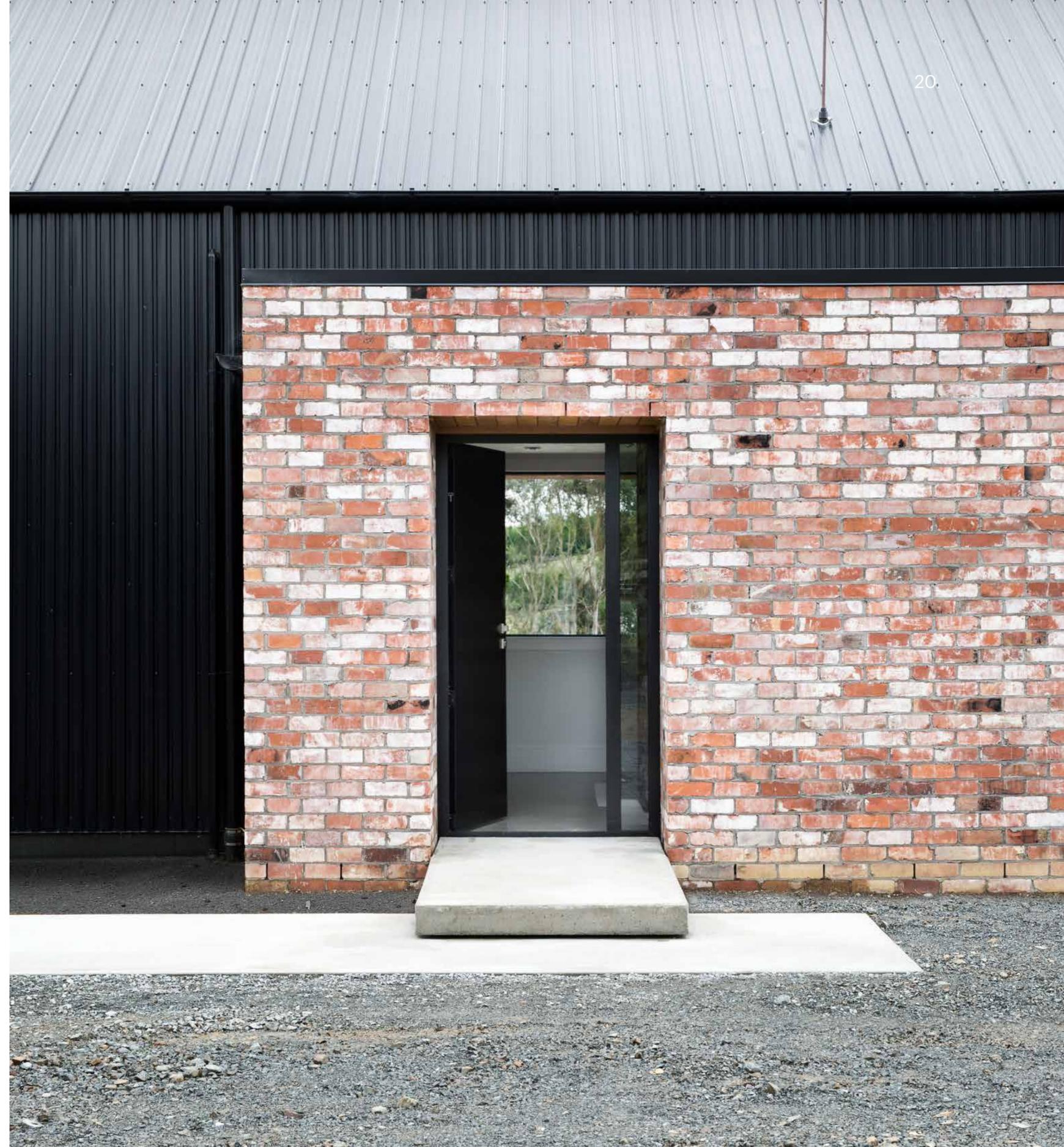
- Make use of the potential of landscape to **create transitional living spaces** between home, outdoor living and natural context.
- Space within the plot should be **defined as a continuum of rooms**, where some are internal, some transitional and some open to the sky.
- Extending the **indoor floor out into the landscape** will help to further blur these hard boundaries.
- Colonnades, screens and other **visually permeable elements** should be considered as a part of this to help extend the edge of the home out.
- These should be defined through **considered figure-ground relationship** between the built elements and spaces they enclose.
- The connections between these spaces should be considered too – with pathways, views and visual focal points to draw people through the site. These connections should have goal and purpose, giving people a **real and connected experience within the natural place**.
- There are **two key thresholds to blur** – that between the house and its immediate surroundings and a second transitional zone between the garden and landscape, both of which can feature outdoor rooms. These should be meaningful places to engage and live in and not simply ornamental considerations. **Any left-over space on a plot should be used to restore the natural setting.**
- Consider compositions of **indigenous trees, shrubs and plants** – looser and wilder at the boundaries of the property and more formal closer to the home.
- Sites on a slope should **consider terracing** to accommodate the outdoor room concept.

“Nature, too, shall have its own life. Yet we should attempt to bring nature, houses, and human beings together into a higher unity.”

Ludwig Mies Van Der Rohe

Material Palette

The material palette for Broadmead has been inspired by all of the precedent captured in this document so far, from the site's historical, natural and architectural context to the design movements of Arts and Crafts and the Prairie School. The overall consideration for materials is that they should reflect their crafting in their finish – brick should look like brick, concrete like concrete, wood like wood, etc. This is inspired by the historical approaches to natural materials but takes into account the modern palette available to architects.



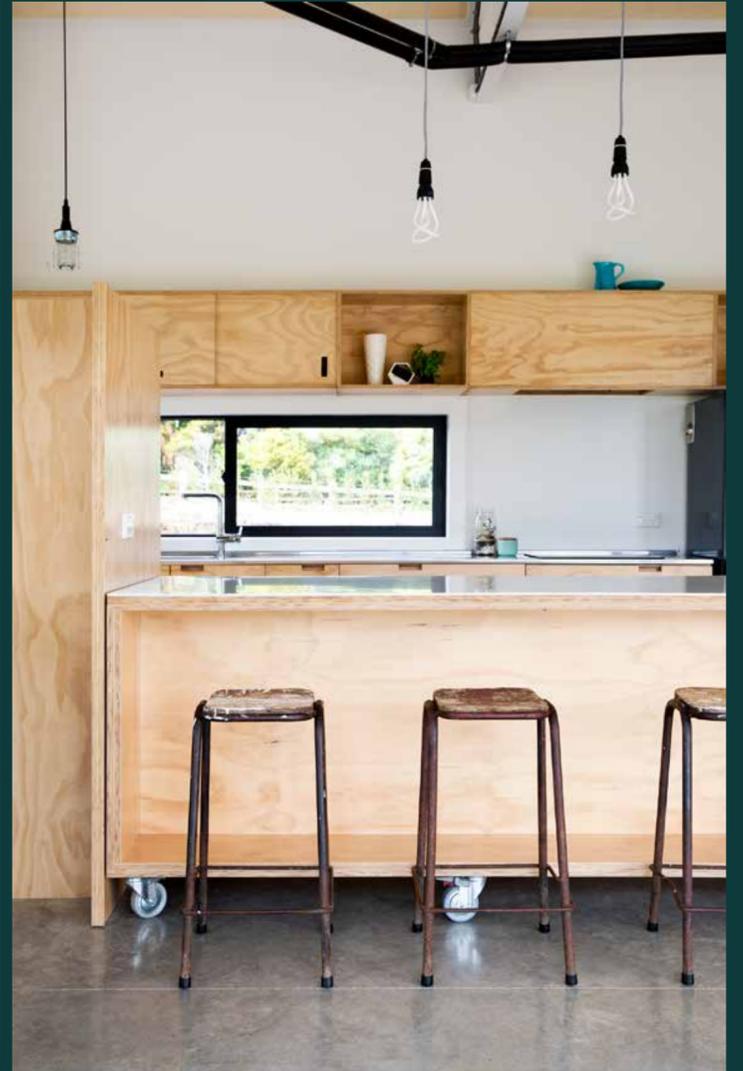
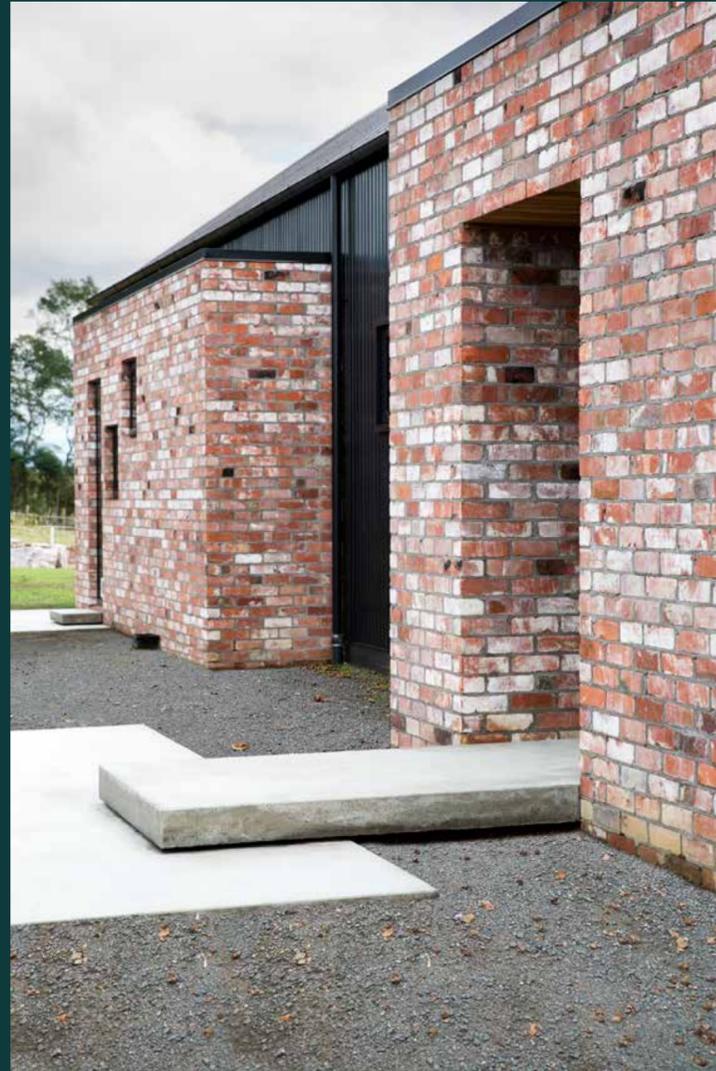
Principles for Design

- Materials should be finished in a way that **brings out their natural qualities**. A palette should tend towards restraint with **a few carefully-chosen finishes**.
- Where possible, **painted surfaces should be kept to a minimum** for external facades. When used they should ideally have a direct visual relationship with the interior of the dwelling to express a relationship between the two.
- Naturally-coloured and textured alternative coatings to **blend in with the natural landscape palette** are encouraged.
- Roofs should either be finished in **pre-painted grey sheet metal or natural zinc**, with **planted concrete** for flat roofs.
- Consider the **interplay between texture and colour** in material choices. These allow for the home to sit lightly in the landscape, as does the **contrast between solid and transparent materials** in the overall palette.

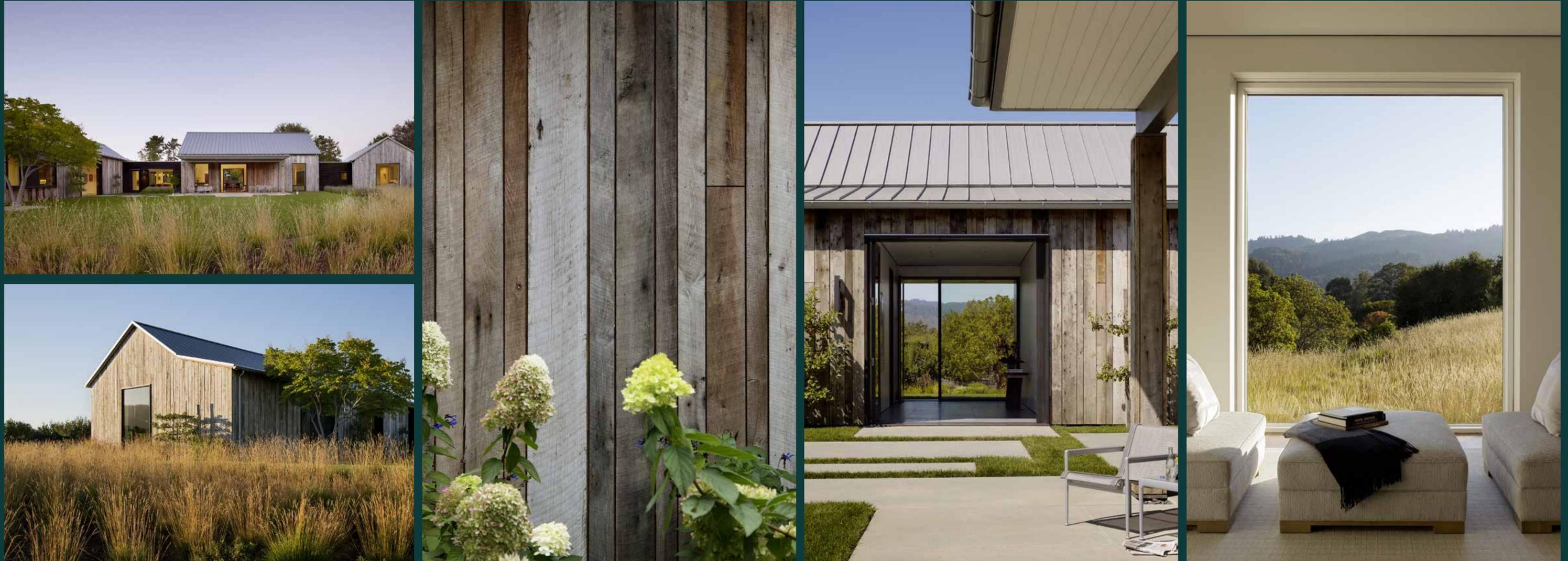
A fulfilled life is one lived in harmony with nature and other people. It requires us to balance the universal needs of family, community and connection to the natural world to find a unique expression that is true to who we each are.

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Principles for Design: Inspiration Board 1



Principles for Design: Inspiration Board 2



Principles for Design: Inspiration Board 3

