



# UMHLANGA RIDGE

NEW TOWN CENTRE

Development Manual

**Volume 3**

**Guidelines and Requirements  
for the Development of  
Business Park Sites**

**Version 1.8  
July 2008**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Development Manual is laid out in three volumes.

**Volume 1** lays out the relationship that the Umhlanga Ridge has to the region, the design philosophies on which it is based, the town planning context and various processes put in place to manage both the development and ongoing operation of the New Town Centre.

**Volume 2** describes the specific architectural guidelines applicable to the mixed-use sites, which comprise the true urban core of the New Town Centre.

This volume, **Volume 3**, describes the specific architectural guidelines applicable to the business park sites which frame the New Town Centre along its frontage with the surrounding major arterial road, the N2 and M41.

The residential precinct lying between the New Town Centre and Prestondale is the subject of a further Development Manual and is not the subject of the above 3 volumes.

## 2. DEFINITIONS

In this document, the following terminology is used:

- 2.1. “**Umhlanga Ridge**” refers to the Umhlanga Ridge New Town Centre;
- 2.2. “**The Association**” refers to the Umhlanga Ridge Town Centre Management Association
- 2.3. “**The Committee**” refers to the Design Review Committee of the Umhlanga Ridge Town Centre Management Association
- 2.4. “**DMA**” means the Durban Metropolitan Area

## 3. THE DESIGN ETHIC OF THE BUSINESS PARK SITES

Although a high profile development entity in their own right, the Business Park sites are nevertheless an integral part of the Umhlanga Ridge New Town Centre. It is intended that the development of these sites should reflect the same qualities that characterise the New Town Centre and its wider area in terms of:

- Consolidating the distinctive sense of place emerging in the area, including La Lucia Ridge Office Estate and Millennium Bridge Business Park;
- Extending the same landscaping quality and general theme that has been established in this wider area and the view of the area as seen from the N2;
- Carrying through the predominantly white architecture that is an emerging characteristic of the area fronting the N2;
- Undertaking all development with the same attention to quality demanded in the area.

While it is understood that the commercial buildings that characterise business parks are different in scale and form from the offices, retail and residential developments in the area, it is nonetheless the intention to promote a predominantly “white architecture” in the Business Park with dove-grey, charcoal and black as integrated secondary colours. Where, owing to corporate identity or branding requirements, there is a desire to use additional colours in the architecture of a particular development, these are to be accommodated as accent colours played against the predominantly white backdrop of the overall development.

#### **4. SITE WORKS AND SITE LAYOUT**

4.1. Much of the site is re-contoured to achieve gentle falls over wide areas. Additional platforming is permitted in respect of individual sites within the following guidelines:

- Platforms should be confined as far as possible to specific aspects of the site’s proposed development e.g. the footprints of the warehouse section, the office component, service yards, trucking areas and car parking areas. Each component is to be regarded as a separate entity and (without compromising the relationship of one element to another) should be expressed as a discrete level in each case.
- Care should be taken to exploit any changes of level within individual sites to achieve trucking dock facilities, covered parking and visual screening of service, plant, parking and trucking areas, for example.
- Extensive earth retaining structures are discouraged and should be ameliorated into several smaller changes in level.
- Earth retaining systems such as Terraforce are permitted, together with reinforced concrete or clay masonry retaining walls, although these must be restricted in height and linear extent as far as possible, be applied in several, smaller falls if possible and be amply planted to allow for the substantial screening of such systems by sustainable vegetation.
- All embankments or retaining systems are to be accommodated entirely within the curtilage of individual sites provided that these requirements may be waived by the Committee in cases of individual merit.
- No retaining structure or embankment may be constructed on a site so as to create, in the Committee’s view, an injurious condition to an adjacent site.

4.2. Each site is subject to the site layout parameters included in the relevant Precinct Plan. Within these parameters, the site development plan submitted to the Committee must deal specifically, *inter alia*, with the following:

- The envelope intended for accommodating the office component of the development must take cognisance of the role this component plays in addressing the N2 (where applicable) and any other major or urban roads onto which the development abuts or from which significant public views are anticipated;

- The envelope intended for accommodating the warehouse component of the development must similarly take cognisance of the views anticipated from all roads in the wider area with special attention being paid to either mitigating such views and/or treating this component as a significant element of the development's architectural expression;
- The zones intended for accommodating the trucking, car parking and service yard components of the development must be treated with specific reference to screening anticipated views from all roads in the surrounding area and from adjacent developments;
- The points at which it is intended that entrance for various classes of traffic be taken to each site must be designated with due regard to the class, volume and nature of traffic that will be using such points of access and egress and the relationship of these to both the adjacent developments and the arrangement of uses within the development itself;
- Any non-user servitudes that may apply to individual sites must be observed and accommodated within the development intentions of the site or specific proposals put forward as to how such non-user servitude requirements might be accommodated in an alternative manner or dispensed with altogether;
- Landscaping zones to be planted by individual developers and any Estate landscaping that is to be augmented by developers must form a fundamental logic in the site's development and must be consciously designed to further the principles of an integrated, seamless landscape running through the Business Park zone of the New Town Centre and the consolidation of a significant landscaping component alongside the N2 and M41 where applicable;
- Building lines, build-to lines and points of architectural accentuation that may be required must be observed with particular attention being given to demonstrating how the design intentions of the New Town Centre as a whole are being furthered.

4.3. No open-air storage nor outdoor working areas other than service yards are permitted, providing that the Committee may waive this requirement in cases of individual merit. No washing nor repair of vehicles, equipment or plant may take place on a site other than that which is minor and incidental to the day-to-day operations of the enterprise and provided that such activity takes place within a building or within a suitably screened, approved area. Any display or showroom areas are to be designed for the easy and incidental dusting or wiping down of display goods and any maintenance or washing beyond this is to take place in a facility designated for this purpose and in compliance with the requirements noted in the preceding sentence. Any storage of goods in the form of containers, crates, boxes, palletes or stacking is to take place within a suitably screened and approved area and may not exceed a height of 4m provided that the Committee may consent to a waiver in cases of individual merit. Where lightweight roofing systems are intended to provide cover to outdoor storage or yard areas, these are to comply with the following:

- The area designated for such use may not be visible from any adjacent roads;

- The area must be suitably screened from adjacent developments where there is, in the Committee's view, the threat of compromising the outlook of an adjacent development;
- Any structure erected to provide cover to outdoor storage areas is to be of a substantial nature and in keeping with the overall integrity of the development;
- Any outdoor storage area must be suitably screened with earth mounds, planting and/or screen walls designed in the ethic of the overall development.

## **5. PARKING**

- 5.1. No parking is permitted within the building line areas applicable to the M41 or N2, provided that the Committee may consent to limited encroachments of parking into these areas provided that such parking is uncovered surface parking, part of a parking structure integral to the building (but excluding any carports of all descriptions) and suitably screened and landscaped when viewed from these main roads.
- 5.2. A minimum of 50% of all on-site parking is to be covered, provided that where such cover is provided within car-port structures, such carports are to be of a substantial nature in keeping with the architectural ethic of that portion of the building to which they most closely relate. Where the dominant use of a site is for retailing purposes and, in the opinion of the Committee, the requirement for such proportion of shaded parking is inappropriate, the amount of covered parking required may be waived.
- 5.3. Black or silver-grey shade cloth may be used within a car-port structure purely as a short-term shade measure and only on suitably designed and substantial pergolas in order to provide shade for cars and to keep decomposing vegetation off vehicles once approved creepers have established themselves over the pergola. Where shade cloth is to be used as a temporary measure, the structure on which the shade cloth is supported must appear as the dominant element with the shade cloth, either being hidden from view or visible only as a minor element of the carport. Furthermore, shade cloth may only be used as a shading element as a roof and may not be used as a side-screen element nor wrapped around from the roof into a semi-vertical plane in order to screen against an oblique sun angle.
- 5.4. Any parking provided in excess of the minimum required is to be subject to the provisions in 5.2 above.
- 5.5. Where the parking of vehicles, either for storage or display, forms part of a development's "stock in trade", such parking is to be subject to the provisions of 5.2 above.
- 5.6. All uncovered surface parking areas and driveways are to be constructed of approved pavers or concrete reinforced grass blocks of approved quality and suitably grassed to form the parking bays.
- 5.7. All surface car parking areas are, as far as possible, to be fragmented into smaller areas (rather than extensive car parks) and generously landscaped with substantial shade trees.

- 5.8. All trucking areas and areas used for loading and off-loading purposes are to be suitably screened from adjacent developments and roads and constructed of suitably durable and easily maintained materials such as concrete interlocking block, concrete panels or tarmac. No un-surfaced areas, other than areas used exclusively for gardens and landscaping, are permitted.
- 5.9. Apart from the N2 and M41 (which carry the restrictions noted in 5.1 above), no surface parking area may be within 3m of a road frontage provided that the Committee may waive this restriction in cases of individual merit.
- 5.10. All uncovered surface car parking areas are to be suitably screened from adjacent developments and roads by means earth berms and landscaping.

## **6. FENCING AND SECURITY**

- 6.1. Perimeter security fence for the outer extent of all Business Park sites facing the N2 and M41 is installed by the primary developer and consists of galvanised welded razor wire diamond mesh on wooden posts 1, 8 m high, and planted up with hostile planting. The fence is erected within the embankment zone facing the surrounding major roads and the intention is for the fence to become hidden from public view within the coastal forest planting to be undertaken along these frontages.
- 6.2. Additional security related to the perimeter fence, if desired by individual developers, is to be separate from the perimeter fence and should observe the following guidelines:
  - Any additional fenceline shall not occur within 2.5m of the perimeter fence at any point;
  - The additional fenceline is to be of visually permeable fencing only and may not consist of any solid panels nor piers;
  - The additional fenceline is to be suitably landscaped so as to minimise its visual impact while remaining an obvious deterrent to would-be trespassers;
  - No barbed nor razor wire is permitted;
  - A horizontally composed, multi-stranded, 2.5m high electrified fence on slender stanchions at 3m centres is recommended.
- 6.3. All perimeter security to individual sites facing onto internal roads within the Business Park area is to be according to a pre-determined design being a simple white pier and white, lightweight steel palisade of vertical members. This may be electrified at the discretion of the individual developer according to the specifications of the pre-determined design.
- 6.4. Additional security beyond this pre-designed item is to be subject to the provisions of 6.2 above.
- 6.5. Security arrangements on common boundaries between sites and not subject to the provisions of 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3 above are to be considered as integral with the design

of the site's development with the following guidelines to apply provided that the Committee may waive any of these in cases of individual merit:

- The boundary line should be secured primarily by means of the fencing systems described in 6.2 and 6.3 above;
- Solid sections of the boundary treatment should not form the general make-up of such treatment, may not exceed a height of 3.5m at any point relative to the neighbouring finished ground level and should not exceed lengths of 15m for any single section;
- The height of the general side-boundary treatment should not exceed 2.5m at any point relative to the neighbouring finished ground level;
- No barbed nor razor wire is permitted;
- Electrification of side boundary walls or fences should consist of no more than 3 horizontal electric strands on white supports with white insulators;
- All boundary treatment is to be suitably landscaped as an integral part of the overall site's landscape design.

6.6. In addition to the requirements as described in this clause, any fencing erected shall be subject to design review and the approval of the Committee

6.7. All gates, gatehouses and arrangements for security personnel dealing with the security of individual sites are to be designed as integral parts of the site's development.

## **7. ARCHITECTURE**

7.1. The ethic of a "white architecture" applies to all buildings within the Business Park area.

7.2. In respect of colour:

- The primary colour is to be in the range of white to silver with clear glazing being regarded as contributing to the primary colour.
- Dove grey is to be considered integral to the architecture's primary colouring provided that, in the event of it constituting a substantial proportion of the development's primary colouring, such use of dove grey is to be off-set by its use on recessive planes and by using white elements in the architecture to frame the dove grey panels or by using white highlighting elements to mitigate the visual dominance of the dove grey. Where dove grey does not constitute a significant proportion of the primary colouring, it may simply be included in the overall calculation of the development's primary colouring.
- The building is to be substantially of the primary colour (i.e. 70% or more of any single elevation and its associated roof).



- The secondary colour is to be in the range of medium grey to darker grey to charcoal to black.
  - Secondary colours should account for no more than 20% of any single elevation and its associated roof.
  - Accent colours (that is, colours not in the primary or secondary ranges) may account for no more than 10% of any single elevation and its associated roof.
  - Facebrick where used, is to be included in the calculation of secondary colouring and generally confined to plinths, single panels or used to make individual points of architectural accentuation.
  - Satin or travertine Roan and Spanish Terracotta facebrick (or similar approved) are the sole facebricks permitted in respect of Business Park sites.
  - Extensive, low-pitched roofs are characteristic of business estates and, because of higher-lying vantage points surrounding the Business Park area, roofs are to be white, silver or very light grey. Apart from the thermal advantages from a warehousing point of view of reducing heat absorption, the impression of roofs from the surroundings will be a powerful one and it is important that the integrity of a “white architecture” be expressed in the roofscape as well as in the other elements of the developments.
- 7.3. Apart from higher quality materials associated with the office component of a development on a site, various sheeting options and industrialised building systems are permitted in respect of elevation treatment. These, however, should be confined primarily to those portions of the development associated with warehousing.
- 7.4. It is nevertheless acceptable that no distinction be made between the warehousing, showroom or office components of the development and a single palette of materials may be used to express the commonality of architectural ethic throughout the development.
- 7.5. The design of an elaborate office or showroom component with a standardised warehouse simply “tacked onto” this is discouraged and the exploration of the warehousing component as an important, even dominant, element of the site’s architecture is encouraged.
- 7.6. The height of a roof structure may not exceed 3m above wall plate level (or equivalent level where no wall plate exists) provided that not more than 10% of any roof section as it appears on any single elevation may exceed this height and provided further that, in cases of individual merit, the Committee may waive this requirement.
- 7.7. Attention must be paid to the way the transition from the roof element of the warehouse component into its facades is handled. Many of the warehouse/factory building systems simply handle this transition as a bullnose crank in the profiled sheeting used and the result is an architecture that is more suited to an industrial development. Care must be taken in the architectural design and detailing of the transition (be this in the form of a cornice line, eaves overhang, sun-screening device or some particular architectural feature).

7.8. The scale of the architectural elements associated with the Business Park area requires particular attention:

- **Height** – as far as possible the maximum height allowance of 3 storeys is encouraged in respect of the office component of the development in order to bring the warehouse component into scale with the remainder of the development. The height of the warehouse component at eaves should not exceed 12m with height at the pitch of the roof being in the order of 15m
- **Expanse** – the horizontal extent of the warehouse component of the development should be consciously modulated to de-emphasise the scale of warehouse elements
- **Meeting the ground** – because of the sheer extent of the warehouse component, it is important to address the way in which the ground plane is designed as a conscious aspect of the development's architecture
- **Meeting the sky** – the tendency of many factory systems to blur the distinction between façade and roof element requires that particular attention be paid to the architecture of the roof of the warehouse component
- **Attention to scale** – under-scaled or non-existent fenestration in facades not required to provide interior natural light means that many facades in the warehouse component tend to be bland, featureless planes and need to be addressed as a conscious design concern
- **Over-scaling of certain elements** – various elements such as apertures to accommodate trucking and bulk handling can be over-scaled to modulate the sheer expanse of the warehouse component of the development
- **Roofs designed to provide top-lighting** – the roofscape derived from top-lighting concerns has the ability to bring dynamic possibilities to the architecture of the warehouse component and needs careful attention in the overall design of the development
- **Careful integration of mechanical plant** – mechanical ventilation is an important element of warehousing and the plant associated with this must be considered as a conscious aspect of the design
- **Venting as a design opportunity** - ventilation and extraction requirements and how these impact on the architecture of the roof offer interesting possibilities in creating a warehouse architecture of distinction

## 8. LANDSCAPING

The basic principles in respect of landscaping are as follows:

- 8.1. the re-instatement of natural coastal forest is to be used and augmented by individual developers alongside the N2 and M41 and as elsewhere designated in the design parameters governing individual sites.

- 8.2. simple landscaping is sought (such as rolling, manicured lawns with dense shade trees of stature to mitigate the scale and extent of facades) to enhance the clean lines of the anticipated architecture.
- 8.3. any areas, after development, not requiring to be flat are to be re-contoured to create an undulating landscape in keeping with the rest of the surrounding area.
- 8.4. even though the boundaries of individual sites are likely to be treated with security fences, the ethic of trying to create landscapes that flow from one site into another is to be encouraged and developers are required to demonstrate the extent to which the landscaping of a site takes cognisance of that of adjacent developments.
- 8.5. Landscaping plans are to list and motivate plant types proposed for use and are subject to approval by the Committee. Planting palettes are available through the Committee listing plants considered appropriate for use in the business park zone and the forest matrix areas, as well as specifics of their application. While not mandatory, these palettes should be used as a guide and indication of the landscaping intentions for the business park zone.
- 8.6. Attention is drawn to the importance of fragmenting surface car parking, as far as possible, into smaller parking lots with ample shade trees as set out in 5.7 above.
- 8.7. As a minimum sidewalk treatment, the Primary Developer undertakes to provide a paved sidewalk width of 1.84m and lawn and trees as set out in the Precinct Plan. It is the responsibility of individual developers to address the interface of their sites with the adjacent sidewalk and surfacing treatment and to include this aspect as an integral part of the landscaping plan prepared for the site.
- 8.8. The owner is to make provision for a landscaping budget equal to 3% of the building costs with at least one-third of this budget being allocated to planting and the balance to hard/structural landscaping. If required by the Committee, the owner's Quantity Surveyor is to confirm the cost of the hard/ structural landscaping.

## **9. SIGNAGE AND LIGHTING**

- 9.1. A major reason for purchasing a business site adjacent to the N2 or M41 is to capitalise on exposure to these highways. It is therefore important that companies be permitted to display signage on those facades facing surrounding roads.
- 9.2. Nevertheless, signage must be governed by the following guidelines and any waivers granted by the Committee in this regard will be in terms of considerations of individual merit:
  - No company name may appear other than as an integral part of the building's design
  - Pylon signage is expressly forbidden provided that, if designed as an integral part of the main building and not exceeding 12m in height, the Committee may waive this requirement in respect of a single pylon only
  - Only the name of the company having naming rights to the building may be displayed on the building's façade

- Where a development has been designed as a series of discrete units or wings of a building, more than one company name may be displayed provided that only one name appears on each unit and that the sign is suitably reduced in scale to relate to the unit to which it applies
- Subject to the provisions of 9.3 below, no product may be displayed nor advertised
- All other signage, such as advertising billboards, is expressly forbidden
- Not more than one sign may be displayed on any one façade of a building provided that the Committee may waive this restriction where the length, proportions and form of the façade merit such waiver
- No sign may project above the point at which the façade of a building meets the roof of the building provided that, in the case of a parapet wall or façade extending above the meeting point of the façade with the roof, the sign may not project above the top of such parapet
- No characters nor items of a sign may exceed 1,2m in height and the sign as a whole may not exceed 10m in length provided that the Committee may, in the individual circumstances of a development, decide that such size may be inappropriate and reduce or increase such sizing parameters
- Should the sign envisaged not suit the proportions noted above, the guide will be followed that the overall area of the entire sign shall not exceed 12 sq. m subject to the proviso noted above
- The favoured fixing method of signs discourages backing boards affixed to a building or signwriting directly onto the façade of a building
- The favoured fixing method encourages each character of a sign to be pin mounted individually at least 20mm from the surface of the façade
- Where backing boards are to be used as the basis of a sign, such boards are to be designed as integral parts of the building's architecture
- Lighting of signage is to be predominantly in the form of concealed lighting
- Lighting shining directly through the material forming the sign is discouraged and waiver in this regard is to be in terms of specific design merit and in the case of signs designed as integral parts of the building and in terms of established corporate signage codes
- Wherever appropriate, the lighting of the façade of buildings by means of floodlights installed within the landscaping of the property is to be encouraged
- No flashing nor moving components on signage is permitted
- As far as possible the signage on buildings will be confined to monochromatic colours in the range from silver to white to grey to black

- Only in instances of corporate livery or branding will accent colours be used in a sign with such colours being timeless rather than faddish colours that tend to date
  - Materials used in the manufacture of signs are to be of high quality, preferably matt finish and of enduring materials and colourings
- 9.3. In the case of show rooms or components of buildings designed expressly for retail or display purposes, product names and goods may be displayed. In such instances, the following guidelines apply:
- The name of the enterprise, undertaking, concern or 'dealership' authorised to trade in and display particular products may be displayed once per street frontage of the site
  - The name of a product, brand or corporation in which a dealership is authorised to deal may be displayed once per street frontage related to that component of the building dealing with such product, brand or corporation
  - Where more than one product, brand or corporation is carried by a dealership, a maximum of two (and preferably one) may form the subject of a sign per component of the overall development
  - Where several components of an overall development exist, the principle is to create an identity for each component based on the naming of a particular product, brand or corporation held within an overall dealership
  - Similarly, the display of product or products related to a brand or corporation held within an overall dealership should be used to consolidate the identity of the component of the overall development to which it relates
  - Only in instances of particular merit are goods or products to be displayed in the open and to a very limited extent
  - Where display is not to be within a building, covered display areas, preferably behind a shopfront, are encouraged
- 9.4. Each site is permitted, as an integral part of its site entry, a sign that observes the above provisions but which does not exceed an overall area of 5 sq.m.
- 9.5. The address of the concern may also be reflected as an integral part of the site's entrance subject to the above guidelines and provided that the address does not exceed 200mm high and 1 200mm long.
- 9.6. Teardrop freestanding banners, free standing temporary signboards, banners, rotating (whirligig) signs, sandwich boards, bunting, sails, posters, balloons, blimps or other inflatable devices are all prohibited. The erection of flags is prohibited unless specifically approved by the Design Review Committee. In the event of such approval, the flags shall at all times be maintained in compliance with the conditions of approval and the rules of the Association and in a condition that in the opinion of the Town Manager is acceptable.

- 9.7. Signs relating to security services contracted on a particular site are to be limited in their numbers and displayed discreetly.
- 9.8. All mechanical plant, masts, and antennae are to be designed and placed as an integral part of the overall development of a site and no such plant or services are to be surface mounted on the outside facades of a building other than as a conscious expression of the building's architecture.
- 9.9 All lighting on the exterior of a building or within the surrounds of a development on a site is to be of a white light type.

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