

LA BELLA VITA WINE ESTATE: OVERARCHING ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN PRINCIPLES STATEMENT



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PREPARED FOR

THE AKARANA MASTER HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

BY

BETTESWORTH SCOTT URBAN PLANNERS

1. Background

La Bella Vita Estate is located southwest of Paarl, near the N1, bordered by the Berg River and the Val de Vie Estate. Access is via the R45 and Simonsvlei Road. The estate lies in a scenic rural landscape framed by the Simonsberg, Drakenstein, and Paarl Mountain ranges, an area renowned for its vineyards and upmarket residential estates.

The Estate, governed by the Akarana Homeowners Association, consists of three precincts:

1. **Commercial Farms (red):** Six farms ranging from 10–40Ha, combining farming with potential residential use for owners and workers.
2. **Residential Villas (blue):** Sixteen smallholdings (1–2Ha) supporting large residences, gardens, and small-scale rural activities like vineyards and stables.
3. **Spa and Studio Precinct (green):** A 6Ha area housing the Santé Wellness Spa and La Bella Vita studio apartments.



La Bella Vita Precinct Location Map: Commercial Farms (red); Villas (blue); and Spa and Studios (green)

2. Purpose of the Design Principles Statement

The Estate's vision combines rural living with a Tuscan/Provençal architectural theme. These principles aim to:

- Preserve the Estate's distinctive sense of place across all precincts.
- Allow each precinct to develop its own detailed design guidelines while aligning with overarching principles.
- Ensure sustainable integration of architecture, landscaping, and surrounding rural context.

The principles apply to existing precincts and any future land use changes, ensuring continuity and respect for the estate's identity.

3. Precinct-Specific Guidelines

3.1 Studio and Spa Precinct

- **Design Regulation:** Dense placement of buildings demands strict design oversight via Site Development Plans (SDPs).
- **Approval Process:** All plans (architectural and landscaping) require Body Corporate approval and HOA endorsement.
- **Landscaping:** Must reflect Tuscan/Provençal character, prepared by accredited professionals.

3.2 Residential Villa Precinct

- **Guidelines:** A design manual outlines Tuscan/Provençal themes, balancing regulation with individuality.
- **Approval Process:** Building plans must be approved by the HOA and Master HOA before municipal submission.
- **Landscaping:** Compliant with the design manual, emphasizing hedging, formal gardens, and framing views.

3.3 Commercial Farms Precinct

- **Regulation:** Compliance with zoning, National Building Regulations, and environmental laws (e.g., NEMA, WULA).
- **Architecture:** Homesteads should broadly follow Tuscan/Provençal principles. Functional farm buildings may vary but require strategic placement and screening.
- **Fencing & Landscaping:** Use hedging, traditional gate designs, and plantings to minimize visual impact.

4. Broad Design Principles

4.1 Integration with Rural Context

- Respect natural and cultural landscapes by using indigenous or regionally appropriate vegetation.
- Incorporate vineyards, olive groves, and traditional farm features (hedges, gates).
- Embrace waterwise, energy-efficient technologies with minimal visual impact.

4.2 Tuscan/Provençal Architectural Theme

- **Roofs:** Terracotta tiles (20–30° pitch). Farm buildings may use charcoal-toned roofing.
- **Walls & Windows:** Earthy tones, square/vertical windows, and French-style doors. Shutters and arches encouraged.
- **Building Massing:** Asymmetrical yet ordered layouts. Single or double-storey buildings with articulated spaces.
- **Landscaping:** Formal gardens, courtyards, pergolas, and terraces integrated with architecture.

4.3 Utilities and Lighting

- Conceal utilities (e.g., solar panels, aircon units) from public view.
- Use downward-angled, low-luminosity lighting to preserve rural ambience.

4.4 Land Use

- Land use changes require prior HOA approval, ensuring alignment with the Estate's design ethos.

5. Conclusion

This statement encapsulates La Bella Vita's evolution and its Tuscan/Provençal identity, setting a unified vision while allowing precinct-specific flexibility. By adhering to these principles, the Estate can sustain its unique character, blending seamlessly with the surrounding Winelands while fostering its rural lifestyle and aesthetic harmony.