

Gowrie Farm

NOTTINGHAM ROAD

From the Pastures & Fairways of Gowrie Farm

The Gowrie Farm architectural code



PHOTO: SUPPLIED PHOTO: SUPPLIED
 ABOVE: Some examples of homes that inspired the Gowrie Farm architectural code.

The envisioned harmony of the various homes and buildings on Gowrie Farm has been carefully and specifically conceptualised by developer Guy Smith, and set down in a formal architectural code to ensure that the estate will be both pleasing to the eye and in keeping with the landscape.

'One of the saddest things about architecture today is that people don't build to fit in,' says Guy. 'Years ago there was a synergy between properties and their environment. Houses in an urban environment must work together to create a sense of unity.' While Gowrie Village, which was launched at the end of 2003, derives its inspiration from the villages of the Eastern and Western Cape, the architectural theme of Gowrie Farm is based on the traditional Midlands' farmhouses, which are simple, rectangular structures, single storey, with dominant roofs offering protection from the elements. Designs of these homes are based on a "lettered layout" like the letters of the alphabet, "H", "U" or "L", with covered verandas (unlike the Cape's open 'stoeps').

'The architecture of these old farmhouses is absolutely practical,' says Guy, 'with simple designs because of limited access to building materials, and with specific focus on the climatic conditions of the area. However, these traditional designs can be adapted in modern interpretations, with well-proportioned windows, single levels, and verandas. We can also take advantage of modern building materials and techniques.'

Because of the emphasis on harmony within the landscape, a maximum size of 480m² homes has been set. Guy explains, "We don't want the homes to become massive and start competing with each other in terms of dominance. Each should sit harmoniously within the landscape's contours. Our aim is to try to retain the atmosphere of a country golf course, where normal, everyday people feel comfortable. Buildings should be appropriate for a farming environment within a regional context."

The architectural code is clearly described in the agreements of sale, and Guy emphasizes that the code is not rigid but is a guide, aiming to encourage buyers to be imaginative with the designs of their homes.

Guy's passion for creating living spaces where buildings and people co-exist with ease and are pleasing on the eye has reaped rewards. Within three years, lots at Gowrie Village have increased in price from R80 000 to R300 000, and it's difficult to keep up with demand from the market. But Guy's background is legal rather than being based in construction-developing. "I had always wanted to develop a golf course, so I started with the development of Prince's Grant, north of Durban. By the time I was finished there I was more interested in architecture than golf," he laughs. He has become fascinated with village architecture across the world, and he and his wife Di travel extensively, exploring villages in Greece, France, and the Cape.

Update on the golf course



PHOTO: ALAN BENNEWITH
 According to developer Guy Smith, the greens at Gowrie Farm golf course are progressing well. 'The greens are almost covered, and have been mowed to 5mm, which is close to their final height,' says Guy. 'After the recent good rains, we've started to plant the rough, often using natural grasses, in addition to rye and fesque (the grasses on the links of Scotland's world-renowned golf courses).' It is hoped that by the end of May, the course will be ready enough for homeowners and prospective members of the golf club to be invited to come and play once a month. The official opening of the course is scheduled to take place around November this year.

The Gowrie Village Shopping Centre

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Gowrie Farm
 SYNDICATED GOLF LODGES

Agents for Gowrie Farm

Peter Greene and Rob Dickson of Meander Real Estates are the Midlands agents for Gowrie and Gowrie Farm. Their main sales office is located inside the Junction, adjacent to Gowrie. They can be contacted for sales queries and brochures, and are also the best people to ask about site placements, the Gowrie architectural code etc.

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