

— FREE GUIDE · DUNKELD, JOHANNESBURG

The Dunkeld Window

Brief: *reading the light on a 1904 suburb.*

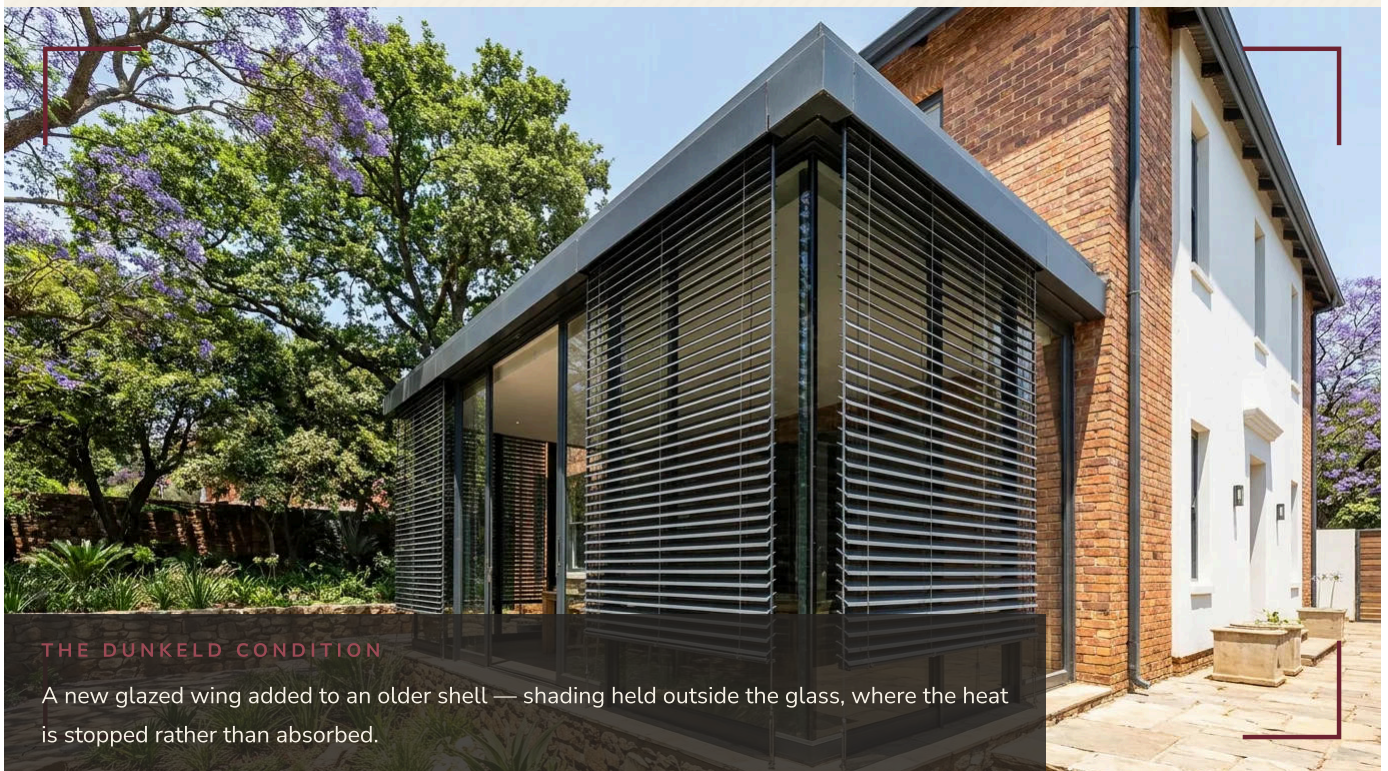
Where the sun actually goes at 26 degrees south, what it does to each elevation of a Dunkeld house by season, and which product answers which opening — with the trade-offs said out loud. Written for the manors and the glass wings bolted onto the back of them.

✓ Free to read — no email needed

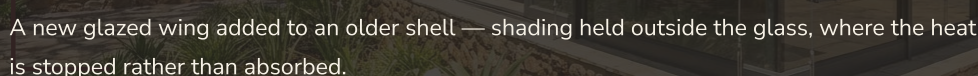
- ✓ Sources listed at the foot

- ✓ No prices quoted, no pressure

Book your free expert measure →



THE DUNKELD CONDITION



A new glazed wing added to an older shell — shading held outside the glass, where the heat is stopped rather than absorbed.

01 Why here is different **02** The light here **03** Elevation by elevation

04 What we'd specify, and why **05** The 60-year question **06** What only a site visit answers

01

Why shading in Dunkeld isn't a house-wide decision

Dunkeld was laid out as a township in **1904**.¹ That one fact does more work in a shading conversation here than anything else, because it means two rooms in the *same house* can be a century apart in the way they meet the sun: an original manor with deep reveals and small panes, and — very often bolted onto the back of it — a glass wing built decades later to look at the garden.

The older parts of these houses were generally planned with the main rooms opening north, for winter sun. The newer parts face whichever way the view runs. So the brief here is almost never "blinds for the house" — it's a room-by-room negotiation between period windows that want to keep their proportions and new glazing with a genuine heat problem. Then there's the canopy: jacaranda and oak over these streets change the answer again, and being deciduous, they change it twice a year.

The desk gets you to a shortlist. The room gets you to a specification.

02

The light here: two numbers that decide everything

Johannesburg sits at roughly **26.2 degrees south** and **1,753 m above sea level**.^{2,3} Latitude decides *where* the sun goes. Altitude decides *how hard* it lands.

Where it goes

At midsummer the sun stands almost directly overhead at noon — about 87 degrees above the horizon here.⁴ By midwinter that falls to roughly 40 degrees, and it stays in the northern sky all day, which is why panels and living rooms alike get pointed north.⁵

SUN AT DUNKELD'S LATITUDE — SOLAR NOON, AND WHERE IT RISES AND SETS

SEASON	HEIGHT AT NOON	RISES	SETS
Midsummer (Dec)	≈ 87° — nearly vertical	≈ 26° south of east	≈ 26° south of west
Equinox (Mar / Sep)	≈ 64°	Due east	Due west
Midwinter (Jun)	≈ 40° — low, raking	≈ 26° north of east	≈ 26° north of west

That last column is the part most people miss. In high summer the sun doesn't rise due east — it swings well south of it, and sets well south of west.⁶ So a south-facing window that sits in comfortable shade all year takes direct low sun early and late for a few weeks either side of Christmas. **If a south room is unexpectedly hot in December, that's why.**

How hard it lands

Ultraviolet intensity climbs roughly ten percent per thousand metres of elevation, and Johannesburg's UV index regularly runs 11 to 13 on clear summer days, strongest between 10am and 2pm from October to March.^{7,8} That is a fabric-and-finish problem before it is a comfort one — and fading isn't caused by UV alone: visible light and heat do their share, and ordinary glass stops only part of it.⁹ A blind that cuts glare is also protecting your floors.

And the weather it arrives with

Rain falls almost entirely between October and March as afternoon thunderstorms, and the Highveld is one of the country's hail hot spots — most likely October to December.^{10,11} Winter is the opposite: dry, bright, and cold enough at night for light frost.¹² So anything fitted outside needs a plan for that October storm, and anything fitted inside is also part of your winter warmth.



West elevation, late afternoon. Low sun arrives almost horizontally — under the eave, past the overhang, straight onto the glass. This is the elevation where stopping the heat outside earns its keep.

03

Elevation by elevation

Walk the house with the compass on your phone and note which way each window faces. That one note changes the product more than the room's function does.

NORTH

Protect it — but don't block it

Your winter asset. Nearly-overhead summer sun is comparatively easy to intercept — a deep eave or a folding-arm awning cuts most of it, while the low 40-degree winter sun still slides in underneath and warms the room for free. Full blackout on the north face is usually the wrong instinct: you spend all winter fighting for light you paid to remove. Filtering, not blocking.

WEST

The hard one

Late afternoon, the hottest part of the day, and the sun is low enough to come in almost horizontally under any overhang. This is where interior blinds struggle honestly: once the light is on your blind, the energy is already inside the room. External shading intercepts solar radiation *before* it reaches the glass, which is why it outperforms an internal product on heat.^{13,14}

EAST

Same geometry, cooler hour

Low-angle morning sun, but the house is still cool from the night, so it reads as glare rather than heat. East bedrooms are where blackout genuinely earns its place — and sunrise shifts about 50 degrees across the year, so a blind mounted tight to the frame for a winter sunrise can miss the summer one entirely.

SOUTH

Quiet all year — except for a few weeks

Steady indirect light, the easiest wall to live with, and the reason so many studies end up here. Privacy and winter warmth matter more than glare on this side. Just don't assume "south means never any sun" — see the December exception above.

THE CANOPY OVERRIDES ALL OF IT

Johannesburg carries over ten million trees and is often described as one of the largest man-made urban forests in the world.¹⁵ Jacaranda and oak leaf up for the hot months and drop for the cold ones — free seasonal shading, timed almost perfectly. But a tree only shades the windows it stands in front of. That's why two windows on the same Dunkeld wall routinely need two different answers, and why we specify per opening rather than per house.

04

What we'd specify here, and why it beats the alternative

None of these is "the best blind". Each is a trade, stated underneath.

WEST-FACING GLASS

External venetian blinds or roller shutters, ahead of an interior blackout roller

The reason is where the energy gets stopped. An interior blackout absorbs the sun *inside* the room and re-radiates it; an external product holds it off the pane in the first place.¹³

Between the two exterior options: external venetians keep the garden view, because you tilt the slats and still see through; roller shutters close the opening completely and add real insulation and blackout, but you lose the view while they're down. *These are shading shutters — sun, heat and glare control on the outside of the glass. They are not security-rated shutters; that's a different product, which we can quote on request.*

THE TRADE

Exterior products cost meaningfully more than the interior equivalent, need a sound substrate to fix into, and on an older facade may need the heritage conversation in section 05. If the budget only stretches to one exterior product, put it on the west.

ORIGINAL SASH & CASEMENT WINDOWS

Timber venetian blinds, over aluminium

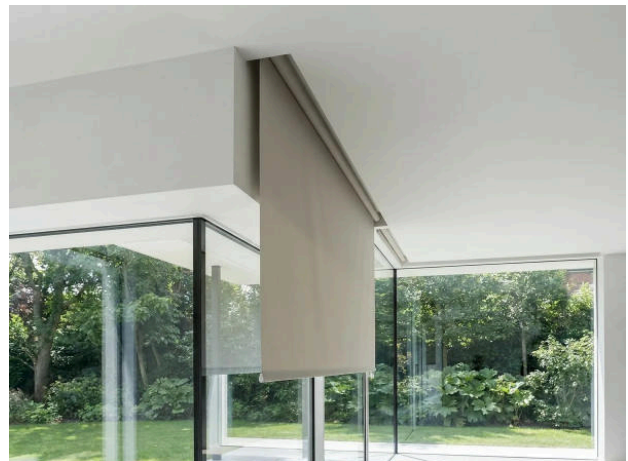
Proportion is the argument. A period window is a composition of small panes and a deep reveal; timber slats sit inside that reveal and read as joinery, where aluminium reads as a modern insert. Timber also tilts, so you can steer low east or west light up onto the ceiling instead of choosing between open and shut.

THE TRADE

Timber doesn't love steam or constant damp. In a bathroom, scullery or laundry we'd swap to aluminium venetians — same tilt control, no warping. Timber is also heavier, which matters on a very wide opening.



Original rooms. Wooden slats inside a deep reveal read as part of the joinery.



The new wing. A roller in a ceiling slot disappears completely when it is up.

NEW GLASS WINGS & DOUBLE VOLUMES

Concealed / recessed roller systems, motorised

On a frameless glass wall the least visible intervention wins, and a roller that lives in a ceiling slot vanishes entirely when it's raised — the architecture keeps doing the talking. It's also the practical answer: on a three-and-a-half metre drop there is no chain a person can reach, so motorisation stops being a luxury.

THE TRADE

Recessing needs a bulkhead and it needs deciding *early* — retrofitting into a finished ceiling means opening that ceiling. Where that isn't possible, a slim surface cassette colour-matched to the ceiling gets close to the same line without the building work. Not invisible. Close.

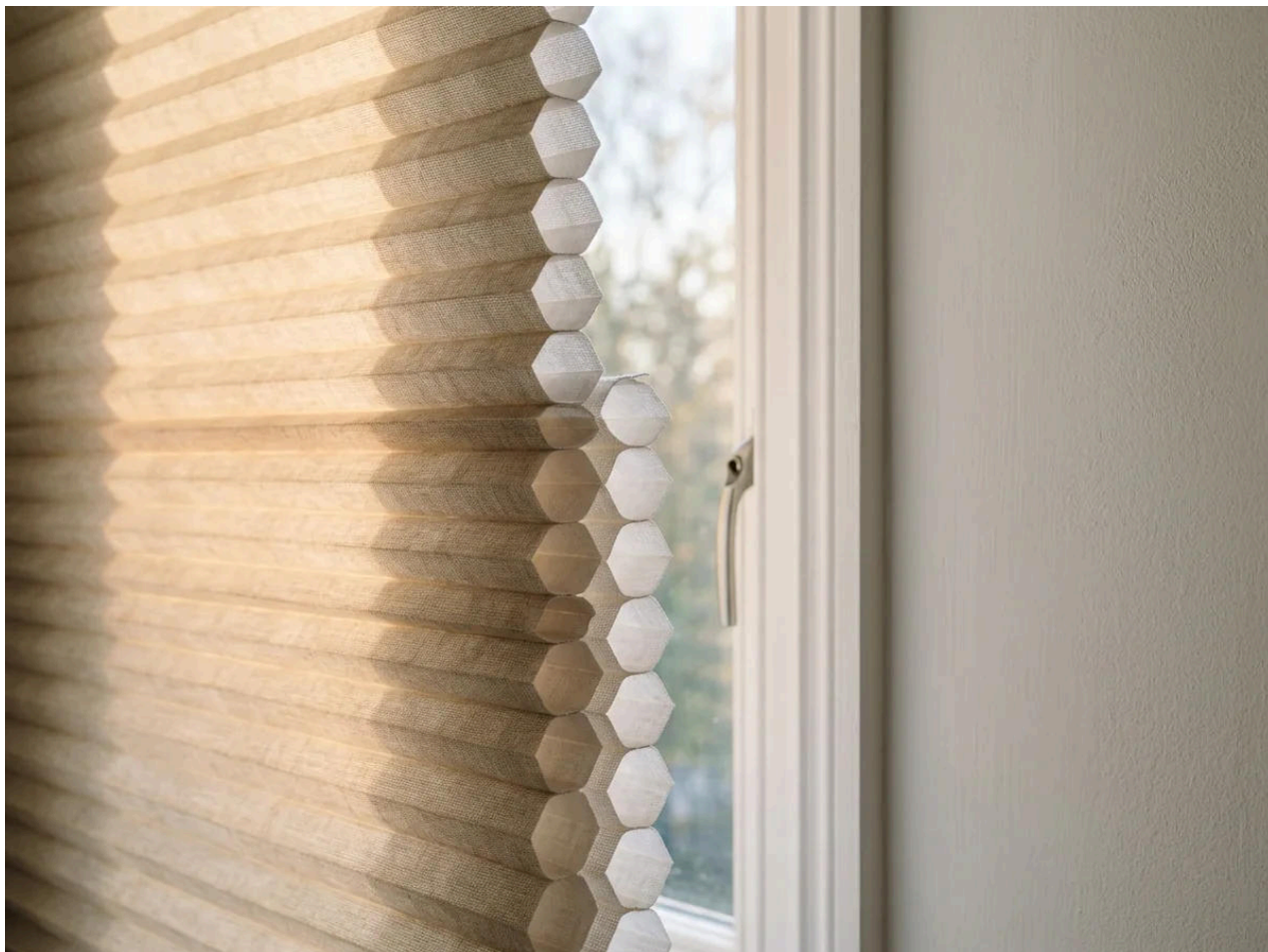
BEDROOMS, NURSERIES, ROOMS THAT SWING HOT AND COLD

Cellular honeycomb blinds

The air trapped inside the cells does insulating work no single-layer fabric does — worth having in a Highveld winter where the night drops toward freezing while the day is warm and bright.¹² Specified top-down/bottom-up, you also get privacy at the bottom of the window and daylight at the top.

THE TRADE

Honeycomb is not as happy on a very wide span as a roller, and it's a softer product — a hard-wearing family room may be better served by a blackout roller on the same window.



Why honeycomb behaves differently. The cells hold a layer of still air against the glass — the same reason a double-glazed unit works, achieved with fabric.

EVERYDAY GARDEN-FACING GLASS

Sunscreen roller blinds

A single smooth sheet of open-weave fabric on a tube: it cuts glare while you keep looking at the garden, which is the whole point of a garden room. Where a north or east elevation only needs the edge taken off, this is usually the entire answer.

THE TRADE

Sunscreen *reduces* heat, it doesn't stop it. On a west elevation, pair it with something outside the glass or accept the compromise knowingly. And if you need true darkness, that's a blackout roller or a day-night double.

TERRACES & ENTERTAINING AREAS

Folding-arm awnings on a wind sensor

Retractable shade that folds itself away before an October thunderstorm arrives, rather than fabric left stretched out in a hailstorm.¹⁰ A walled Dunkeld garden is usually gentler on an awning than an open stand — exactly the sort of thing that changes the arm specification.

THE TRADE

An awning shades the terrace, not the room behind it. If the glass onto that terrace is the real problem, it's a companion to a blind, not a replacement.

Tick what sounds right for your house

Nothing is sent anywhere by ticking these. They simply travel with you — into the window schedule below, and into the enquiry form if you decide to book a measure, so you don't retype anything.

- | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| ☐ | SUNSCREEN ROLLER BLINDS |
| ☐ | BLOCKOUT ROLLER BLINDS |
| ☐ | DAY-NIGHT DOUBLE ROLLERS |
| ☐ | TIMBER VENETIAN BLINDS |
| ☐ | ALUMINIUM VENETIAN BLINDS |
| ☐ | CELLULAR / HONEYCOMB BLINDS |
| ☐ | CONCEALED / RECESSED SYSTEMS |
| ☐ | EXTERNAL VENETIAN BLINDS |
| ☐ | ROLLER SHUTTERS (SHADING) |
| ☐ | FOLDING-ARM AWNINGS |
| ☐ | MOTORISATION / AUTOMATION |
| ☐ | NOT SURE YET — ADVISE ME |

Nothing shortlisted yet

OPTIONAL

Want this marked up for your house?

Tell us which rooms are the problem and we'll email you this same guide with your elevations noted against it — which of the sections above apply to your windows, and which don't.

It's a document, not a sales call. Nobody phones you off the back of it unless you ask us to.

05

The 60-year question — real, and specific to a suburb this old

Under section 34 of the National Heritage Resources Act, no structure older than 60 years may be altered without a permit from the provincial heritage authority — and "alter" covers work affecting a building's appearance, not only its structure. Age alone triggers it; the house doesn't have to be a declared heritage site.^{16,17} In Gauteng that authority is PHRA-G, whose approval is sought before building plans go to the City of Johannesburg.¹⁸

Dunkeld was laid out in 1904, so many of its original houses are well past that threshold. In practice, for window coverings:

- Blinds fitted **inside** an existing reveal are not building work, and this doesn't apply to them.
- Anything fixed to the **outside** of an older facade — external venetians, external roller shutters, an awning on a street elevation — changes the appearance of the structure. On a house past 60 years, worth confirming before anything is ordered.
- In neighbouring Illovo, where much of the stock is clusters and apartments, the equivalent constraint isn't heritage at all — it's the body corporate's rules on what the building looks like from outside.

We're not heritage consultants and won't pretend to be. But we'll raise it at the measure rather than after manufacture, and we're happy to work from your architect's drawings if

there's already a professional on the job.

06

What we'd still need to check on site

Everything above can honestly be worked out from a desk. Here is what cannot:

- 01 **The true reveal depth — measured in three places.** Whether a blind fits inside the reveal, and whether a concealed cassette hides in it, comes down to millimetres. Old plaster is rarely square, so we measure top, middle and bottom, and the smallest number counts.
- 02 **What is actually behind the plaster.** An external venetian or a shutter headbox needs a substrate that will hold it for years. Old brick, a cavity, a lintel in the wrong place or a timber lath ceiling all change the fixing — sometimes the product.
- 03 **Where the power comes from for a motor.** On a concealed ceiling system that's a design decision, not a detail: battery or hard-wired, where the transformer sits, whether a chase can be cut. Best resolved before the ceiling closes.
- 04 **Real wind exposure on the terrace.** Awning span, projection and arm choice depend on how exposed that corner is. A walled Dunkeld garden and an open stand two streets away are different specifications.
- 05 **Which windows the trees actually cover, and when.** Standing in the room at the hour that bothers you is the only reliable way to know whether the canopy already solves half the problem — and whether it will still be doing that in June.

That's the honest reason for the visit. It's free, and you get a written per-window quote out of it whether or not you go ahead.

Get it measured properly, or get a rough number first.

Both are free and neither commits you to anything. Most people take the first one; the second exists because some people want a ballpark before they let anyone into the house, and that's fair.

THE ONE WE'D RECOMMEND

The free expert measure & written quote

A consultant comes to the house with samples, measures every opening precisely, and works through the five things in section 06 that no guide can answer.

- Free, in your home, at a time that suits you
- Exact per-window pricing, itemised in writing
- Fabric and slat samples judged in your own light
- No obligation and no follow-up pressure

[Book my free measure →](#)

IF YOU'D RATHER START ALONE

Your ballpark, in about two minutes

Pop in rough sizes for the windows that matter and we'll send a budget range by the next working day — enough to know whether the project is the size you thought it was.

Not sure how to measure? Leave it. The consultant measures for free, and you get exact per-window pricing rather than a range.

[Open the window schedule →](#)

THE WINDOW SCHEDULE

Rough sizes in, budget range back.

One line per window. Millimetres are ideal but centimetres are fine — tell us which in the notes. Print it, walk the house with it on paper, and type it in afterwards if that's easier.

Your windows

Nothing here is binding, and none of it replaces a measure. It's the fastest honest way to a number when you're still working out the size of the job.

Window schedule — Dunkeld Blinds*Rough sizes for a budget range. Final sizes confirmed at the free measure.*

RoomWidth (mm)Drop (mm)FitProduct

ROOM

e.g. Lounge

WIDTH (MM)

1800

DROP (MM)

2100

FIT

Inside the reveal



PRODUCT

Not sure yet — advise me



1 window

Your schedule travels with you to the enquiry form on the home page — nothing is uploaded and nothing is sent until you fill in your details and press send there. We use those details only to answer your enquiry (POPIA).

ONE MORE FREE THING

Or just take the guide with you.

If you're not ready to talk to anyone, that's genuinely fine. Leave your rooms and we'll email you this guide marked up for your own elevations — read it in your own time, and come back whenever the project is real.

You can also carry on reading about your area: [Hyde Park](#), [Illovo](#), [Saxonwold](#) or [Melrose](#).

WHERE THESE FACTS COME FROM

Sources

Every climate, geography and regulation claim above is traceable to one of these. Where we could not verify a number — the exact share of heat an external product rejects, or the precise split of what causes fabric to fade — we've described the mechanism instead of inventing a figure.

- 1 Dunkeld, Gauteng — laid out 1904**
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dunkeld,_Gauteng
- 2 Johannesburg coordinates ($\approx 26.2^\circ\text{S}$)**
geodatos.net — [Johannesburg coordinates](#)
- 3 Johannesburg elevation, 1,753 m**
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Johannesburg
- 4 Solstice sun altitude at Johannesburg**
timeofsunrise.com — [Johannesburg solstice](#)
- 5 North-facing orientation and seasonal tilt, Johannesburg**
solarific.co — [solar angles, Johannesburg](#)
- 6 Sunrise and sunset move along the horizon through the year**
[Weber State University](#) — [The Sun and the Seasons](#)

- 7 **UV index in Johannesburg, by hour and month**
[nomadseason.com — Johannesburg UV index](#)
- 8 **Solar UV radiation and photoprotection in South Africa (peer-reviewed)**
[Wright et al., *Photochemistry and Photobiology*, 2023](#)
- 9 **UV, visible light and heat all contribute to fading**
[windowfilm.com — how UV damages furniture and floors](#)
- 10 **Highveld thunderstorm and hail season, Oct–Mar**
[Mail & Guardian — SA Weather Service on the storm season](#)
- 11 **Hail most common October to December**
[The Citizen — thunderstorms and damaging hail](#)
- 12 **Johannesburg climate: summer rain, dry cold winters, light frost**
[climatestotravel.com — Johannesburg climate](#)
- 13 **External shading intercepts sun before it reaches the glass**
[Heatwave Toolkit — why shading needs to be external](#)
- 14 **Solar heat gain and window treatments**
[Zola Windows — solar heat gain and window treatments](#)
- 15 **Johannesburg's urban forest — over 10 million trees**
[SA Garden & Home — Johannesburg's urban forest](#)
- 16 **National Heritage Resources Act 25 of 1999, section 34**
[Text of sections 33–35, NHRA 25 of 1999](#)
- 17 **Heritage processes in South Africa — the 60-year rule explained**
[The Heritage Portal — heritage processes FAQ](#)
- 18 **PHRA-G, the Gauteng provincial heritage authority**
[The Heritage Portal — PHRA-G](#)

