

## New Earth Design Studio

Our common passion for green design and conscious lifestyles led us (Michael and Sandy) to join forces in 2008 to open a new architectural practice. We work predominantly on residential buildings and small scale commercial.

### Green Design:

Green building is the practice of increasing the efficiency with which buildings use resources — energy, water, and materials — while reducing building impacts on human health and the environment during the building's lifecycle, through better siting, design, construction, operation, maintenance, and removal.

[Wikipedia.org/wiki/green\\_building](http://Wikipedia.org/wiki/green_building)

Green design is derived from these environmentally conscious principles; our role is to assist our clients in realising these principles into physical 'built' form.

We offer the standard architectural service at recommended architectural rates and include all aspects of green design into this service. For example, we use 'passive solar design' to ensure that winter sunshine enters the building to be soaked up by the thermal mass of floors and walls which radiate out this warmth through the night. In summer calculated roof overhangs and shutters will shade the building from solar heat gain and well-designed natural ventilation uses prevailing winds for cooling. Providing naturally comfortable thermal environments through zero energy design reduces the need for mechanical heating and cooling (energy and cost saving), and makes for healthier and happier living spaces.

In 2008 we designed an office and restaurant project in the Historic Dorp Street area of Stellenbosch which incorporated passive solar design, rainwater harvesting, solar water heating, low VOC paints and timber sealers, permeable parking area pavers to ease storm water runoff, and later extensive PV arrays. Back then it was all very new but has now become almost commonplace on new builds.

### New earth, new design.

We've had some fantastic clients over the years who have been willing to take the green design route with us. They decide how far along the green spectrum they would like to venture, and we work with their requirements and budgets.

We see it as a no brainer. If you are going to invest in your dream house, and it can be cleverly designed to reduce your water and electricity bills, be a healthier and more comfortable living environment for you and your family, and reduce the environmental impact on the planet before, during and after construction – at no extra cost – why not?

Certain installations like photovoltaic, wind turbines, rain water harvesting and grey/black water re-use are in the league of additional costs, but are worth installing for future cost saving and independence from municipal services. Going green is not just about environmental impacts; the benefits of building and running green buildings make a lot of sense considering South Africa's rising energy costs and water scarcity.

