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The view side and the hill side

A house on the Tygerberg slope has two faces, and they want opposite things. One looks out over open country and takes everything the afternoon has. The other leans into the hill and barely sees the sun. This free guide walks both — sourced, with nothing invented and nothing to sign.



A hill named for a sightline

Kanonberg is Afrikaans for cannon hill. It is a name that clearly wants to come with a story, and here is the honest position: we could find no verified record of a signal cannon ever standing on this particular hill. The well-documented Cape cannon-signal chain — guns fired to tell inland farmers that ships had reached Table Bay — belongs to a differently named hill out toward Stellenbosch. Borrowing it would make better copy and worse history, so we have left it out.

What the name does describe accurately is the position: high, open, wide-sighted. The ridge it stands on has been on the maps a long time. Seventeenth-century surveyors called the Tygerberg *Luipaerts Berghen* — leopard's mountain — by 1657, because the scatter of small mounds across its flanks looked spotted from a distance. It tops out at about 415 m.¹ The cluster of Bellville suburbs running along it — from Loevenstein up to Kanonberg — includes Welgemoed at 310 m, described as the highest suburb in the city, about 4 km north-west of Bellville's centre and 22 km from Cape Town's.²

Kanonberg itself is a gated estate of 150 freehold stands, launched in 2001 with the first houses completed in 2010. It borders Welgedacht Estate, Van Riebeeckshof and the Tygerberg Nature Reserve, forms part of that reserve's conservation seam, and looks out over the mountains of the Boland.³

Every one of those facts matters for a window. Height means exposure. A nature reserve on one side means no development will ever grow up to shade you from that direction. A view over the Boland means nobody wants a blind that treats the glass like a wall. And an estate means somebody other than you has a say over what appears on the outside of your house.

Two faces, two entirely different jobs

The single most useful thing you can do before spending anything is stop thinking about the house and start thinking about its two faces. On sloping ground they behave nothing alike.

VIEW SIDE

Open, exposed, and hardest after three

Glass built to face the valley, the vineyard rows or the Boland. Nothing between it and the horizon to soften anything — no neighbour's roof, no street trees, no built-up suburb breaking the light or the wind. On a westerly aspect it takes the low late sun full in the face for hours, and it takes the south-easter at close to full strength.

HILL SIDE

Cooler, quieter, and damp in winter

The face turned uphill toward the reserve. Far less direct sun, more of the day in shade, and a genuine tendency to run cold and slightly damp through a wet Cape winter. The complaint here is almost never glare — it is a room nobody wants to sit in from June to August.

Almost every mistake we are called in to correct comes from treating those two as one specification. The heavy fabric that should have gone on the view side ends up spread thinly over the whole house; the hill side gets a shading product when what it needed was an insulating one.

The view side: stop it outside the glass

Start with the geometry, which you can check yourself. At this latitude — about 33.87° south — the December noon sun stands near **79.5°**, almost overhead. The equinox noon sun sits near **56°**. The June noon sun sits near **32.7°**.⁴

That high summer figure is why midday is not the problem. The roofline handles it. The problem starts when the sun drops through the afternoon and begins arriving from underneath every overhang the house has — and on an open ridge stand with clear ground to the west, that goes on until it actually sets. Ultraviolet through those months sits in the very high to extreme band, generally between 11 and 14

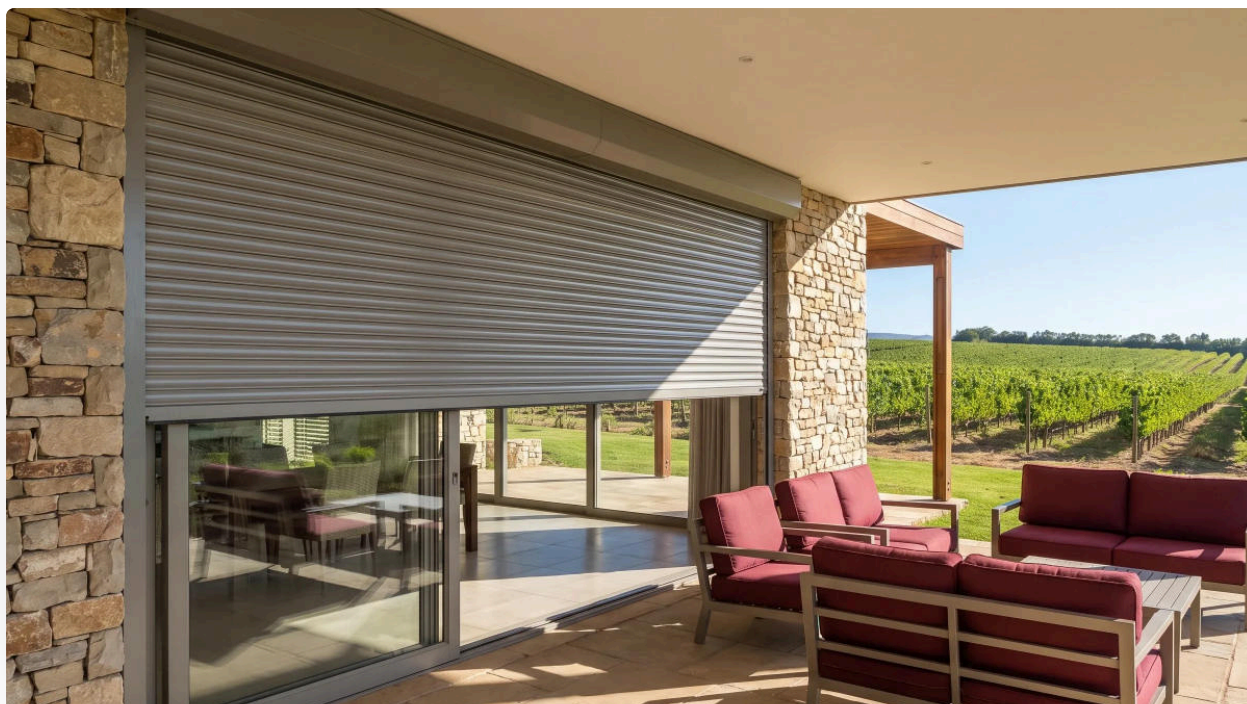
from October into March,⁵ which is the level that fades a rug and a sofa arm over a couple of seasons.

Now the part that is usually skipped. An interior blind is catching light that has already crossed the glass. By then the pane is carrying heat, the fabric picks up the rest, and the room ends up with both. That is genuine glare control and it is worth having. On a wall of view glass it is not heat control.

On the view side we lead with the exterior tier, in this order:

- ✓ **External venetian blinds** — wide aluminium blades outside the glass, tilted or lifted as the afternoon moves. The sun is intercepted while it is still outside the building, and the vineyard and the Boland stay where you can see them, which is exactly why they win here over anything opaque.
- ✓ **Roller shutters** — interlocking aluminium slats that descend outside the pane from a headbox above it. Nothing else we fit rejects as much heat or produces as much darkness, and nothing else is as untroubled by a gale on an open elevation. For the avoidance of doubt: this controls sun, heat and glare. It carries no security rating. That is a separate product and a separate quote, available if you ask.
- ✓ **A folding-arm awning over the terrace** — for the days when it is the sitting-out space, not the glass, that has become unusable. It shades through summer, then rolls back into its cassette and gives the paving its winter sun again.

Behind whichever of those you choose, a sunscreen mesh at 3% or 5% openness is the right interior partner on view glass: it takes the residual glare down without turning the rows of vines into a grey smudge. And where an exterior product genuinely is not possible, that mesh — or a double roller with blackout behind it — is the honest fallback. Better than nothing by a wide margin. Not the same physics, and we will not pretend otherwise.



Terrace doors on the view side. The slats do their work before the glass gets warm — which is the entire difference between shading and mopping up.

One honest limit on mesh

Sunscreen gives daytime privacy only

Mesh trades on the outside being brighter than the inside. Once that flips at dusk, so does the privacy — and on an open estate stand with long sightlines and no canopy, people are caught out by it. The fix is decided at specification stage — a blackout layer sharing the bracket — and a heavier mesh is not it.

The hill side: insulate, don't shade

Turn to the uphill face and the whole conversation changes. This side loses the low winter sun early, and the winters here are properly wet: the June average runs to about 141 mm of rain, where February manages roughly 20 mm under afternoon highs near 27 °C.⁶ A room on this side runs cold, and it holds damp.

A roller blind does very little about that. A **cellular honeycomb blind** does, because the air held inside its cells sits against the glass and insulates. Of

everything we make, it is the one thing people buy for warmth rather than for daylight. In bathrooms, kitchens and sculleries on this side, sealed aluminium slats beat timber every time; Kanonberg is well inland, so the coastal salt-corrosion story does not apply, but winter condensation in a low-airflow room absolutely does.

The same restraint applies to north-facing glass anywhere on the house. That low 32.7° June sun reaching deep into a north room is free warmth. Hang something opaque there in the middle of a February heatwave and July loses it too — which is why north glass gets something adjustable, and the heavy artillery is saved for the west.



A nursery on the hill side. The cells hold a layer of air against the glass, and that layer is what keeps the room warm.

The glass nobody can reach

Estate architecture built after 2010 tends toward the double-volume great room, the tall stairwell window and the uninterrupted glass wall onto a terrace. All three are lovely, and all three are awkward to operate by hand.

Three answers we use here regularly. **Motorisation** on anything above reach or wider than about three metres of fabric — one command rather than a chain doing the work of a whole wall. **Concealed ceiling-recessed systems**, where the fabric

drops from a slim slot and every bracket disappears, which is the detail that keeps a minimal room minimal — bear in mind this is a build-or-renovation decision, difficult to retrofit into a finished ceiling. And **panel glides** beside a wide terrace door, because they stack right back and clear the opening instead of bunching in front of it.



The stairwell window. Nobody is fetching a ladder for this twice a day, which is the practical argument for a motor.

Wind, from two directions, in two seasons

An open ridge position feels weather that a sheltered suburban courtyard never does, and it gets it from opposite quarters depending on the season.

Through summer it is the south-easter — the Cape Doctor — blowing on most afternoons from roughly late October to early April.⁷ Through winter it is the north-wester bringing the rain fronts in. Any exterior product on this estate therefore has to be rated for wind arriving from both directions, not just the one everybody talks about.

Practically, that means one standing rule: **motorised, outside and exposed means a sensor**. Not an upgrade, not an upsell — it draws the fabric in before the gust

lands instead of depending on somebody being home. Where the building's own mass genuinely shelters a courtyard, we will tell you to put that money elsewhere.



Open terrace, open country. An awning here lives or dies on its sensor as much as its fabric.

Who signs off the outside of your house

Kanonberg is a security and lifestyle estate with 24-hour access control.³ Estates of this kind in South Africa normally run an architectural committee or homeowners' association process for anything visible from outside a home — colour, exterior fittings, an awning cassette, a motor housing, external shading rails.

We are deliberately not quoting a clause from anyone's rulebook here, because we have not sourced Kanonberg's own document and will not paraphrase one we have not read. What we will say is how we work with it: a blind fitted inside the reveal is a furnishing decision, and anything fixed to the outside of the facade is a building decision. We say which is which before a quote goes out, and we can provide low-profile hardware, discreet colour matches and the technical sheets a submission asks for — but we will not describe an approval as a formality, and we do not lodge one on your behalf.

Inside the reveal is your decision. Outside the facade is a conversation with the estate. We will tell you which one you're having before you fall in love with a product.

ON-SITE MEASURE, KANONBERG



Mesh on the inside of view glass. The job is never just to stop the sun — it is to stop the sun and keep the reason the window is there.

Five things a guide cannot settle for your house

- ✓ **Which face each room is actually on.** Estate homes are frequently turned to catch the view rather than squared to the street, so you cannot read the aspect off the road. A phone compass settles it in ten seconds a room, and everything above depends on it.
- ✓ **How sheltered the stand really is.** Two houses on the same estate — one tucked behind the building's own mass, one out on open ground — are different jobs in the same south-easter.
- ✓ **What the wall is made of, and what the ceiling void allows.** The substrate decides the fixing for an exterior system; the void decides whether a concealed box is even possible.
- ✓ **The electrical** A motor needs something to run from; a rechargeable tube needs to be reachable. Both change what can go on tall or wide glass.

side.

- ✓ **What the estate has a say over.** Better established before a quote than after an order.

That is why we do not charge for the visit. Each of those five is trivial to settle on site and awkward to settle once something is already on the wall.

Have the guide read for your own two faces

Someone walks both faces of the house with a compass and a sample case, then writes the quote out window by window. Free, no obligation.

[Request a free measure](#)

— GET STARTED

Which face brought you here?

Tell us the rooms and what they do wrong, and one of our expert consultants will be in touch to arrange your free measure.

- ✓ Free in-home measure, no obligation
- ✓ Written, itemised per-window quote
- ✓ Anything needing estate sign-off is flagged before quoting

REFERENCES

Sources

Every figure quoted above has a line here to stand on. The sun angles are derived from this latitude with standard solar geometry, and the arithmetic is shown in the body of the page rather than borrowed from someone else's table. Where we could not verify something, notably the cannon, we said so instead of filling the gap.

- 1 Wikipedia — [Tygerberg](#): the 1657 name *Luipaerts Berghen*, given for the spotted look of the mounds across the range; a summit around 415 m; Bellville built up its slopes.
- 2 Wikipedia — [Welgemoed, Bellville](#): an altitude of 310 m on the Tygerberg Hill slopes, described as the highest suburb of the city; the collective of neighbouring suburbs stretching from Loevenstein to Kanonberg; roughly 4 km north-west of Bellville's centre and 22 km from Cape Town's.
- 3 Gated Estates — [Kanonberg Lifestyle Estate](#): launched in 2001 with the first houses completed in 2010; 150 freehold stands; 24-hour security, open green space, walking trails, a dam and a clubhouse; bordering Welgedacht Estate, Van Riebeeckshof and the Tygerberg Nature Reserve, part of that reserve's conservation seam, with views over the mountains of the Boland.
- 4 Solar altitudes derived for latitude $\approx 33.87^\circ$ S. Noon height is what is left of 90° once you subtract how far the latitude sits from the sun's declination, and that declination reaches $\pm 23.44^\circ$ at the solstices — so about 79.5° in December, 56° at the equinoxes and 32.7° in June. Reconciled with [the Cape Town sun data published by timeanddate.com](#).

- 5 [Nomadseason's Cape Town UV index page](#): readings that sit between 11 and 14 through October to March, which is the very high to extreme band. An aggregator rather than a primary dataset, and flagged here as one.
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- 6 Climate figures for Bellville, the weather station covering Kanonberg, from [Climate-Data.org](#) and [weather-and-climate.com](#): the year peaks in February at afternoon highs around 27 °C with only about 20 mm of rain, and bottoms out in June, the wettest month at roughly 141 mm.
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- 7 The two seasonal winds, from [Wikipedia's Cape Doctor page](#) and [Cape Town Magazine's account of it](#): a south-easter on most afternoons from roughly late October into early April, and a north-wester carrying the rain fronts in through winter from the opposite quarter.
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The advice on this page is ours, and it costs nothing. It is not an estate approval — that authority sits with the architectural committee or homeowners' association, and we identify what needs their sign-off before a quote goes out rather than after.