

# ETHIOPIA COFFEE VILLAGE

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## Key Recommendations & Next Steps

*A concise client summary of the Schematic Design Review*

Companion to the Schematic Design Review · Status: Draft for discussion · May 2026

### Position

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The Coffee Village rests on a strong, ownable concept: a sequence of “coffee-bean” pavilions set within the hilly Yeka landscape. The idea is the right one for a national coffee destination and the architectural image is genuinely compelling. The concept should be retained and backed.

The submitted package, as reviewed, is an advanced concept presented as Schematic Design. It is stronger as an idea than as a resolved place. Detailed Design should not be authorised until the conditions in the Detailed-Design Gate below are satisfied. The single most useful reframing for the next stage is that coffee should not merely be the subject of a museum — it should be the operating system of the whole place: a living coffee landscape with the museum embedded in it, memorable for the experience it creates rather than the silhouette it presents.

### The eight priorities

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1. Fix one name, one mission and one architectural language; confirm the weathering-steel-and-timber direction and resolve it technically, unless the client formally instructs a material change.
2. Reframe the project as a living coffee destination, with the museum as one part of a wider coffee landscape, value chain and public life.
3. Design a defined, inhabited public heart (a Coffee Court / Origin Court) reachable without a museum ticket, around which ceremony, markets, events and everyday gathering happen.
4. Make the all-weather, universally accessible connecting spine a primary architectural element, structured around three visit loops (full heritage, short public, free community).
5. Rationalise the pavilion structure and envelope into a buildable, repeatable system, and prove one prototype pavilion before repeating it.
6. Re-conceive the signature roof “crack” as a controlled daylight and conservation device, and design the building so the media technology is a replaceable fit-out.
7. Deepen cultural authenticity beyond the bean: Ethiopian spatial grammar, the coffee ceremony as the emotional climax, and a local craft-and-labour strategy.

8. Make the economic and community mission physical: a public-facing innovation centre, a national coffee marketplace, and real space and income for farmers, women, youth and cooperatives.

## The Detailed-Design Gate

Detailed Design should not be authorised until these four gates are satisfied and reviewed.

#	Gate	What it must contain
1	Design definition	Confirmed name and mission; schedule of accommodation, reconciled areas and visitor capacity; curatorial masterplan; defined visitor routes and programme.
2	Technical feasibility	Integrated team appointed; structural and geotechnical concept; civil, grading and drainage; fire and life-safety strategy; MEP and façade; roof-light daylight and conservation strategy; universal accessibility.
3	Operational viability	Parking, coach and service movement, accessible bays and arrival resolved; free, ticketed, premium and professional zones; staffing, security, maintenance; phasing and cost reconciliation.
4	Cultural and economic delivery	Community and farmer/cooperative participation made physical; innovation-centre operating model; retail and marketplace strategy; opening-day versus mature landscape strategy.

## Immediate next steps

1. Confirm the official project name and a single mission statement.
2. Require the design team to submit a Detailed-Design-readiness package against the four gates before proceeding.
3. Appoint or confirm the full technical consultant team, and appoint a museum/experience designer and a landscape ecologist and agronomist.
4. Commission a curatorial masterplan and an operations and revenue model in parallel with the next design stage.
5. Require an opening-day landscape strategy and a long-term restoration plan as two distinct submissions.
6. Require a community and economic participation plan that states who earns from the Coffee Village after it opens.

7. Issue the Design Team Response Schedule (Appendix A of the Review) and require a line-by-line response, with discipline owner and status, reviewed before Detailed Design.
8. Validate the coffee-planting concept with Ethiopia's national coffee research and regulatory institutions before the landscape concept is fixed (see the accompanying references annex).

*The ambition should not be reduced; it should be made more precise. A national landmark is achieved when a visitor moves through it and feels it could only belong to this country, this culture and this story. That is the standard to hold the next stage to.*